

APPENDIX

Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Draft Local Plan 2020-2039 (Regulation 18) Consultation Leicestershire County Council Officer Comments (August 2021)

N.B. – Additional comments related to particular policies are interspersed appropriately between the specific questions posed by Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

	Question	Page/para number (if relevant)	Comments
1	Overarching/ general comments		<p>There is a need for closer partnership working on the evolution of the draft Local Plan, so that the working through of solutions becomes less challenging and robust progress is made and resolution reached. A more 'arms-length' approach is taken by HBBC in comparison with some other districts in Leicestershire which means advice and the working through of solutions is more challenging to progress and help resolve. The County Council considers therefore that partnership working arrangements between the Borough Council, the County Council and other partners, notably Highways England, need to be formalised as a matter of urgency. The County Council will also need to secure substantial funds from the Borough Council and other partners in order to meet the (as yet unidentified) cost of the work to identify transport mitigation measures and strategy required to support delivery of the Draft Local Plan.</p> <p>The inclusion of a Local Plan review trigger policy is also required. This is needed to handle future anticipated 'knowns' such as the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) dealing with the redistribution of unmet need arising from Leicester City which will be informed by current ongoing joint evidence work, the outcome of the NSIP process on the Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI), future national planning reforms etc, as well as triggering a review in the light of other significant future unforeseen changes in circumstances. Officers are concerned that progression to a Regulation 19 Local Plan before Christmas 2021 is a significant challenge, particularly in light of the transport evidence and resulting mitigation strategy/strategies likely to be required. As such, a request to lengthen the timeframe before consultation on Regulation 19 of the Local Plan is made.</p> <p>In making this request it is acknowledged that the Borough Council has less than a five year housing land supply, and the desire is to work with the Borough Council to put in place a new Local Plan which provides both a framework for dealing with the short term situation together with a sustainable and deliverable longer term strategy to deliver planned growth in the borough. Discussion is encouraged and welcomed with officers at H&BBC on the most appropriate approach to achieve both the short and longer term aims.</p> <p>Given the functional connectivity of the Borough with settlements and communities within and outside of Leicester and Leicestershire and the likely challenges the transport evidence will reveal on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) and local road</p>

		<p>network, a co-ordinated strategy-led approach at a 'wider than borough' area is required involving the County Council and other partners including Highways England, Leicester City Council and Warwickshire County Council.</p> <p>The Local Highway Authority (LHA) is supportive of the development plan process; whilst providing for the future growth of Leicester and Leicestershire will be challenging in many regards (including in respect of highways and transport), a Plan-led approach offers the greatest opportunities to address those challenges as compared to seeking to deal with the impacts of ad-hoc, 'unplanned' growth.</p> <p>The LHA would therefore wish to see the successful adoption of a new Local Plan for the Borough. However, it has been asked to provide very little input into the Plan's development to date. For example, whilst noting that this draft of the Plan contains no site allocations, the future housing numbers and employment land provision are/will be, presumably, informed by some considerations of potential sites available. In the absence of the LHA having any understanding of those potential sites, there is a risk that some may not be acceptable in principle on highway grounds (for example because they would be contrary to <u>Policy IN5 of the Leicestershire Highways Design Guide</u>). Should that be the case, this would have material implications for the contents of the Plan and/or its deliverability.</p> <p>Given the influence of rail connectivity on the Borough (via Hinckley Railway Station or stations outside Leicestershire), it is perhaps surprising how little reference is made to rail in this draft Plan. For example, it would be helpful for the Plan to at least to reference the <u>Leicester and Leicestershire Rail Strategy</u>, but a policy that actively supported securing rail improvements serving Hinckley might also be considered.</p> <p>The early reference to the Strategic Growth Plan is welcomed in setting the general context in which the new Local Plan is being developed. However, in terms of specifics it is surprising that no reference is made to the fact that the Borough abuts the western end of the A46 Priority Growth Corridor, with cross-boundary implications of growth that will need to be considered.</p> <p>It is also surprising that the Plan does not acknowledge the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and current uncertainties over the long-term implications this will have on society, including on transport provision and travel behaviour (encompassing trends such as increased home working). It is suggested the emerging evidence relating to these potential long-term implications be reviewed and incorporated as necessary as the development of the plan progresses.</p> <p>It is noted that the Local Plan discusses the requirement to provide capacity to store and manage waste in an appropriate manner within policy PMD01 (High Quality Design) and INF01 (Infrastructure and Delivery). The inclusion of waste considerations is supported. Nevertheless, given that waste has significant environmental impacts (such as, but not limited to, the carbon impact from waste being sent to landfill) increasing the scope of how waste would be managed from developments should be promoted. Therefore wider consideration should be given to:-</p> <p>a) That residential developments are designed to minimise waste arisings through providing adequate internal storage capacity (to avoid products being disposed of prematurely) and home composting facilities.</p>
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- b) That the residential developments are designed to allow the effective segregation of recyclables and waste to ensure such waste can be managed according to the waste hierarchy. In particular it should be noted that, subject to the outcome of current consultations, residential properties will need capacity to store separate containers for the following types of waste – green (garden); plastics; metals; glass; paper and card; food; and residual waste. As such developments should be designed to allow residents to effectively sort and store such wastes separately prior to their collection. This includes sites where there may be shared facilities (e.g. flats).
- c) That as part of current consultations the government is proposing to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme for all drink containers (e.g. bottles, cans etc). The regulations may require all commercial enterprises that sell such drinks to provide ‘reverse vending machines’ to accept public returns. As such commercial premises should be designed to be able to accommodate this type of infrastructure in a convenient and easily accessible location.
- d) It is supported that waste management facilities would be deemed critical infrastructure within the proposed Local Plan. It is however noted that the referenced infrastructure capacity study considers that county wide the impact of development does “...not have any bearing on decisions around which settlements are able to accommodate growth.”

Any development would increase household waste arising in Leicestershire. Nevertheless, some waste facilities operated by the Council would be directly impacted by residential developments, some of which are already at capacity. Such waste would be required to be accommodated within the existing infrastructure managed by the Council with the greatest impact likely being at the Barwell, Coalville and Whetstone Recycling and Household Waste Sites and the Bardon and Whetstone Waste Transfer Stations. As such it should be noted that where the impacts of the household waste generated by developments cannot be managed within the infrastructure provided within that development then appropriate Developer Contributions should be provided to ensure capacity can be maintained at Council sites, as per the Council’s Planning Obligations Policy document (10th July 2019).

Leicestershire County Council in its role as the County Planning Authority deals with planning matters in relation to the safeguarding of minerals and waste development. Although the safeguarding of specific waste sites is of concern to us, these sites are typically confined to existing employment areas and as such are considered unlikely to be adversely impacted by allocated development.

Preventing the sterilisation of potential mineral reserves contained within Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) is of particular concern to the County Planning Authority due to the local and national strategic importance of minerals, their finite status and benefits to the economy.

It is noted that Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) are listed as an assessment criterion as outlined in the Sustainability Assessment Criteria (SAC) and are scored negatively. Although specific site allocations have not yet been proposed, it is

		<p>considered that including MSAs in the SAC meets the requirement of Table 4 c) of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. <i>Table 4 c)</i> states that:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">“applications that are in accordance with the development plan where the plan took account of the prevention of unnecessary mineral sterilisation and determined that prior extraction should not be considered when development applications came forward”</p> <p>Providing that the prevention of mineral sterilisation is taken into account in site allocations, moving forward these allocated sites could be considered as being exempt from mineral safeguarding considered as outlined in Policy M11 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. However, this would need to be accompanied by a determination that prior extraction of mineral reserves is not necessary in order for <i>Table 4 c)</i> to apply for each site allocation that falls within an MSA.</p> <p>There are four existing mineral sites in the Hinckley & Bosworth District that the County Planning Authority considers to be of strategic importance and should be safeguarded in line with Policy M12 of the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Assessment Sites AS32, AS33 and AS686 are located within a close proximity to Desford Brickworks and Assessment Sites (LPR32, LPR42 A, LPR 42 B, LPR 110 , LPR117, LPR120, LPR121, LPR94, AS415, AS417, AS419 are within close proximity to Cliffe Hill Quarry. In the event that these sites are proposed as site allocations, these should be accompanied by Minerals Assessments to consider the potential impacts of development at these sites on existing minerals sites and any associated strategic mineral infrastructure, and ensure that it is not incompatible.</p> <p>The draft plan, at this stage provides insufficient detail to respond fully regarding specific education infrastructure required.</p> <p>A number of existing schools within the District are currently operating at the upper limit of their site capacity and may not accommodate substantial housing growth, particularly some of the smaller village schools.</p> <p>The County Council would welcome an opportunity to discuss the draft allocations at the earliest opportunity to crystallise the potential educational infrastructure requirements.</p> <p>In these circumstances, the Local Plan should make provision to secure additional land for expansion of existing schools, or sites for additional schools in the area, with suitable scale of development to ensure the viability and sustainability of new schools (700 dwellings for primary, 4500 for secondary), along with suitable financial contributions.</p> <p>Wherever possible new SEND provisions will be attached to existing or new primary or secondary schools in the locality, accepting there will be circumstances where pupils with specialist needs may need to attend schools further afield.</p> <p>From an Early Years perspective, it is expected that new provision will be developed in each locality, either attached to schools or placed separately in community hubs.</p>
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			<p>Reserved sites for expansion of existing, or the construction of new schools will need to reflect statutory guidance from the DfE regarding reasonable walking distances from home to school of 2 miles for primary pupils and three miles for secondary pupils.</p> <p>The County Council has a statutory duty to provide every child with a school place. The draft Local Plan recognises that school's function best when placed at the heart of the communities they serve. This connection is particularly important as, by ensuring pupils are educated in their local communities, support can be more easily given into local employment and progression beyond, and it can help with the transition into healthy and participatory adulthood.</p> <p>Green Infrastructure is referenced as needing to be proactively planned at the outset and multifunctional. Some clarity around what is meant by multifunctional may help in assessment of suitability as the plan is delivered. In addition, how is the location of green space being managed to ensure that growth creates infrastructure that is at the heart of communities, makes it a place for social activity, physical activity, active travel etc. - to reduce the incidence of green space being placed at the least valuable location within a development proposal.</p> <p>How the use of Health Impact Assessments is being considered or delivered to maximise the positive contribution potential of developments on the health, wellbeing and vitality of communities should be explained further.</p> <p>The inclusion and acknowledgement of the importance of Neighbourhood Plans is welcomed.</p> <p>It is suggested that reference be made within the Local Plan to make it clear that development encouraging the move to a low carbon circular economy will be supported.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The emerging Local Plan will be the strategic planning document for the Hinckley and Bosworth area and should be used to direct the policies within Neighbourhood Plans for settlements across the Borough. However, in formulating strategic policy within the emerging plan significant weight is placed on policy within existing neighbourhood plans which are based on the out of date Core Strategy. This has the potential to constrain plan makers and result in less sustainable outcomes. A better approach would be to include a policy which facilitated an early review of Neighbourhood Plans in order that they remain policy compliant.</p> <p>The incorporation of the basic principles of the SGP is supported as is the need to take into account the provisions of SoCGs in respect of Leicester City's unmet need and cross border issues with Nuneaton/Warwickshire.</p>
2	Do you have any comments on the Spatial Portrait of		<p>More consideration should be given for the wider landscape character area in terms of biodiversity and the ecological networks in terms of spatial distribution. For example, linear corridors such as hedgerows, fragments of woodland, buffer zones, steppingstones and enhancing important wildlife corridors. This could also include tributaries, canals, and rivers, disused railway</p>

	the Borough?	<p>P.13 Para 2.5</p> <p>P.14</p>	<p>sidings, as well as areas of existing tree cover in the local area.</p> <p>The healthy life expectancy figures have been updated to cover 2017-19 rather than 2016-18 used: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/life%20expectancy#page/1/gid/1/pat/6/par/E12000004/ati/401/are/E07000132/iid/90366/age/1/sex/1/cid/4/tbm/1 This should be considered for the final plan. It is also worth considering that although they are 'higher' than England averages, only males are showing as significantly higher (and this has actually decreased with the update).</p> <p>The data relating to the activity levels of Hinckley & Bosworth residents is incorrect. The latest Active Lives data shows 59.8% of residents are classed as active, which is lower than the England average of 61.4% and the Leicestershire average of 61.7%. Updated data for children and young people is not currently available at local authority level due to lower reporting during the Coronavirus pandemic. Point 2.17 references residents being considered to be in relatively good health, however opportunity could be taken to highlight health challenges which exist, such as 60.6% of adults being classified as obese. Identifying some of the public health challenges may support identification of measures to growth that will help maximise positive impacts and minimise negative impacts. Up-to-date health profiles have been developed by public health which may support this.</p> <p>ADD: 2.5 ...with nearby Bosworth Battlefield being of significant international historical and cultural interest, <i>and as a designated heritage asset of national</i> importance.</p> <p>Bosworth Battlefield carries a <i>national</i> rather than international designation for its importance, although the site is undoubtedly of international <i>interest</i>.</p> <p>Para 2.12 is poorly expressed.</p> <p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The two areas that stand out are the need for development to be capable of meeting the needs of the ageing population and the need for affordable housing within rural communities where there is the greatest affordability gap.</p>
3	Do you agree with the Plan Vision? If not, what changes do you suggest?		<p>Include in the vision reference to the Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) and the strategic steer this provides for future growth within the borough. So, adjacent to one of the proposed ends of the A46 Priority Growth Corridor, the A5 Improvement Corridor, the MIRA Enterprise Zone (Engineering Skills Training Centre at MIRA, Centre for Connected Autonomous Vehicles) etc. Refer to wider connectivity into Nuneaton and Bedworth Borough and wider Warwickshire County, Blaby District and importance of proposed M1 J20a, North West Leicestershire District and Charnwood Borough with the Leicestershire International Gateway (and more recently the Development Corporation and success with the Freeport initiative), and connection with parts of the Borough, notably Ratby and Groby, with the City of Leicester.</p> <p>The vision is the first (and only?) reference made in the Local Plan to the 'Midlands Engine' (ME). In the light of the vision being</p>

		P.17 Para 3.2	<p>that the Borough should be a key part of the ME, it would be helpful if the Spatial Portrait explained the current role of the Borough in the ME and also if the Plan could also set out how that role might change going forward. From a highways and transport perspective, this will be important to understand in terms of likely changes in travel patterns (employees and distribution of materials, goods, etc.) and any transport measures/infrastructure that might be required to enable any such changes.</p> <p>It seems slightly inconsistent to refer within the vision to the borough's role in the ME but not to its role in the Leicester and Leicestershire (L&L) sub-region/housing market area (and by extension, the implementation of the L&L Strategic Growth Plan).</p> <p>It is also suggested that the vision should include explicit reference to the environment and associated key aspirations for the Borough, especially in respect of the climate emergency.</p> <p>The vision could demonstrate integration of ecosystem services into the wording far more prominently-seems to focus on the beauty of the environment-Beauty needs definition somewhere in the document.</p> <p>More reference should be made to ecological networks and the services they provide, how these play an active role in human health and recreation as well as the significance to declining biodiversity and associated habitats.</p> <p>The multiple mention of healthy people and the wider determinants of health such as work and home environments are particularly welcomed. This supports the objectives of the planning system (sustainable development) clearly and effectively.</p> <p>Regarding 6. <i>Natural Environment</i> – a re-wording is suggested to align more closely with the July 2021 revision of the NPPF.</p> <p>Reference should be made to Biodiversity net-gain – see NPPF, paras 174 and 179: . . . <i>plans should [...] b) promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.</i></p> <p>Reference should be made to a new requirement in the NPPF, to integrate biodiversity within design of developments – see NPPF 180d: [. . .] <i>opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.</i></p> <p>ADD: The Borough is a place where our historic and cultural assets will be respected <i>for their intrinsic significance and for the positivity benefits they can bring to social cohesion, sense of place and</i> to attract new investment and tourism to support our thriving economy</p> <p>Use of the word 'attractive' could also include functional-for people and nature. More emphasis that development has a great role to play in making landscaping functional for nature and not just aesthetically pleasing.</p>
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			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The vision is supported especially the statements that “Development will primarily focussed in the urban area where it will be closest to key services, opportunities and facilities” and “Social infrastructure will be supported in rural communities with sustainable development in key centres....”</p>
4	Do you agree with the Spatial objectives? If not, what changes do you suggest?	P.20	<p>Having referred to the Strategic Growth Plan in the introduction chapter, and to the Midlands Engine in the spatial vision, it is surprising that neither of these key strategic challenges/aspirations are acknowledged through the spatial objectives. Suggest expansion of spatial objective 3 to include reference to the ambitions of the SGP and benefits to residents and businesses of the Borough from new and improved infrastructure within the Borough and elsewhere in Leicester and Leicestershire, such as recognising the pivotal role of new infrastructure in Blaby District, in particular proposed J20a of M1.</p> <p>Objective 3 (Infrastructure) refers to meeting the “...future infrastructure needs of the borough...”. In the context of the SGP (and equally Midlands Engine) however, it will increasingly be necessary for individual districts/LPAs to consider future transport infrastructure requirements on a cross-boundary, cumulative basis (recognising where the provision of new/improved transport infrastructure in one district will also be critical to unlock/support growth in other, neighbouring districts, or even neighbouring HMAs - e.g. the importance of the A5 corridor to growth across Hinckley and Bosworth, other areas of Leicestershire, and adjacent districts within Warwickshire/the West Midlands). It is suggested that the objective be amended to reflect this.</p> <p>Objective 7 (Climate Change) – it is suggested that the wording of this objective could be strengthened to better reflect the context of recent national/local ‘climate emergency’ declarations and associated policies/priorities (conversely, the current form of wording feels a bit ‘weak’/‘out-of-date’ in relation to this).</p> <p>Under 6. <i>Natural Environment</i> emphasis should include the word recover/restore too. Nature recovery is key to healthy ecosystems, as well as habitat creation and enhancement etc.</p> <p>There is no mention of sustainable food options being explored within people social objectives (place?) or environment sections. Creating and protecting food growing spaces in and around a locality can be beneficial for health and the environment both in rural and urban spaces, alongside the economy if commercial spaces are identified. However, we do acknowledge the section on takeaway outlets and fast food etc. This may seem aspirational, but some Local Authorities have explored this as https://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2020-09/FINAL%20Food%20PAN%202020.pdf and can be seen as timely with current concerns around climate change and carbon reduction considerations.</p> <p>ADD: 9. Historic Rural and Built Environment and Townscape To conserve and enhance the Borough’s historic environment and the unique townscape character of the its towns and villages.</p> <p>The current objective appears not to identify that the archaeological and historical significance of the historic environment is not confined solely to the Borough’s towns and villages.</p>

		<p>P.19 Point 6.</p> <p>P.21 Point 4.2</p>	<p>Add in the word 'restore' nature.</p> <p>Typo in Borough.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The Spatial Objectives are supported with Objective 12 being seen as key to the delivery of the wider plan objectives.</p>
<p>5</p>	<p>Do you support the preferred strategy for growth set out above for the local plan? If not, what do you consider would be a reasonable alternative strategy for growth?</p>		<p>The scale of growth takes as a starting point the most recent Standard Method and then includes a 10% contingency. This is supported, but it is necessary to note that this 10% contingency should not be relied upon to absorb the proportion of unmet need from the City which is to be identified later in 2021/2022. This will be expressed in a SoCG for L&L dealing with apportionment to the Leicestershire districts, and will specify the amount to be provided within H&B Borough.</p> <p>A Local Plan review trigger is required to 'future proof' the Local Plan so an appropriate additional amount is then included in the scale of provision if the draft Local Plan proceeds ahead of the SoCG being published.</p> <p>Concern raised that the intent to review the Local Plan five years from adoption is too long into the future given timeframes of potential changing circumstances.</p> <p>With regards to distribution, it is considered that the 70% urban areas/30% rural split needs to be more focused on urban areas and less on rural. Urban areas offer a greater degree of connectivity to key services and facilities and employment opportunities and greater scope for sustainable forms of travel. The SGP anticipates a shift towards the provision of more future growth on strategic sites with the ability to plan for, and secure funding for associated infrastructure together with S106 developer contributions. Strategic sites are more likely to be appropriately located adjoining existing urban areas rather than in connection with existing villages in more rural settings unless they form new freestanding settlements.</p> <p>The spatial distribution needs to also be informed by further transport work and by the aspirations of infrastructure providers, including County Council infrastructure providers. So exploring scope to utilise existing or anticipated spare capacity and siting potential allocations in areas where more than one community can be served.</p> <p>The urban area being the focus for new development in the borough as the most sustainable location for strategic level growth fits with aspirations around connectivity for active travel to services, shopping, socialising and employment. Would this mean any development more rurally would then effectively 'price out' those needing more affordable homes in this location?</p> <p>In the current absence of any formally published comprehensive transport evidence base and information about potential sites, it</p>

		<p>is not possible for the Local Highway Authority (LHA) to express a definitive view at this time on the preferred strategy.</p> <p>However, from its knowledge and through its involvement with the development of Local Plans for areas adjoining the Borough (including Charnwood, Blaby and the City of Leicester), the LHA would make the following observations that are likely to have material implications for arriving at a preferred strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The A5 in the Hinckley area is already failing functionally, in terms of its capacity and disruption caused by the frequent rail bridge strikes. It is possible that without a strategic scale intervention, the corridor’s ability to enable further growth will be significantly limited. Without such intervention, the impacts of growth would likely result in the displacement of traffic to far less suitable and appropriate routes within and around Hinckley and across the boundary in Warwickshire. (e.g. impacting on Nuneaton). • The M1 between Junction 21 and 21a and the Leicester Western Bypass from J21a around to the Hobby Horse roundabout at Syston (both parts of the Strategic Road Network – SRN) are also failing functionally. The highways impacts of any proposals for growth, especially towards the north east of the Borough, are likely to have a material impact on these parts of the SRN, which when combined with the cumulative impacts of growth proposed in adjoining areas, is likely to prove challenging, complex and costly to address. • Notwithstanding the proposed Major Road Network project on the A50/A511 corridor, there is evidence (emerging from other Local Plan work) to suggest that further measures are likely to be required along the corridor to ensure that it can continue to play its relevant role in enabling growth and in providing access to jobs and key services and facilities in the City of Leicester. <p>Regardless of the eventual preferred strategy, it is likely that a coordinated, strategy-led approach will be required to address the transport challenges of seeking to accommodate further growth (housing and employment) in the Borough, one involving cross-boundary coordination and cooperation (within and without Leicestershire) and including Highways England. The LHA would expect the Plan to provide policies and text that underpin this approach and provide a robust basis for seeking developer contributions towards mitigating measures to address cumulative impacts within and without the Borough/Leicestershire.</p> <p>The LHA also notes the emerging Local Plan’s continued reliance on the Barwell and Earl Shilton SUEs as principal strategic sites for meeting the Borough’s future housing growth requirements. Whilst the principle of the two SUEs was established through the 2009 Core Strategy, it is noted that development has yet to commence at either site. Furthermore, the draft Plan indicates that housing delivery across these two sites during the emerging plan period (i.e. 2020-2039) will be less than half the total allocated through the 2009 Core Strategy. Additionally, the draft Plan indicates that the total housing growth envisaged at the Earl Shilton is now significantly lower than the original allocation set out within the 2009 Core Strategy. All of the above has potentially significant implications for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The delivery of supporting transport infrastructure previously committed to through the 2009 Core Strategy. • The cumulative impacts of the Barwell/Earl Shilton SUEs when considered in conjunction with other planned (or potential future) developments within and without Hinckley and Bosworth Borough (recognising the substantial changes that have
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		<p>P.27 Para 4.16</p>	<p>taken place in this respect since 2009).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In light of the preceding point, the specific transport infrastructure required to address these cumulative impacts. <p>Given these changes and potential wider implications, has consideration been given to the inclusion of updated policies for the two SUEs within the draft Plan?</p> <p>(NB: LHA comments in respect of the Plan’s viability are provide in response to Q33.)</p> <p>Sustainable development should also factor in the need for ‘Doorstep’ green spaces that provide ‘wedges’ and ‘corridors’ throughout development so that it has a cumulative impact to nature networks. This includes providing buffers between the A5 Growth Corridor employment and residential sites. The urban area of Hinckley is becoming more urbanised through the development in Warwickshire such as the proposed warehousing between the Longshoot and railway line.</p> <p>A definition is needed on what is meant by valued assets.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>Overall the Spatial Development Strategy is welcomed as it seeks to provide a balance between the delivery of self-sustaining strategic development areas in locations close to the existing urban area where it is closest to key services, employment opportunities and other facilities and delivering development in key centres thereby enhancing their sustainability. In particular, Para 4.3 recognises need to take account of population growth, economic growth and by implication unmet needs elsewhere.</p> <p>Importantly the plan recognises that larger strategic developments will be delivered over more than one Local Plan period and as such strategic allocations will provide an ability to bring forward additional housing in the event of other sites not coming forward in the projected time scales.</p> <p>The Settlement Hierarchy is seen as appropriate recognising the ability of individual settlement to support communities and services. It is noted that the proposed housing allocations are directed to Settlements and not tied to Parishes and the constraints of parish boundaries. This is seen as important in the planning of future sustainable growth. Accordingly, to be consistent with the Local Plan future Neighbourhood Plans also need to be settlement based.</p> <p>Para. 4.20 provides for housing numbers to be increased by an additional 10% over the standard method calculation to provide flexibility and resilience. The Local Plans Expert Group report, 2016, set out recommendations for a 20% allowance of developable reserve sites to provide extra flexibility to respond to change. It is also important to note that Harborough District Council includes a 15% contingency over and above their minimum housing requirement and that the Local Plan Inspector specifically commented that this was to provide resilience and was not to be regarded as the Council's contribution to meeting Leicester's unmet needs. Any increase over and above 10% should be directed primarily to the Hinckley urban area and key</p>

			centres rather than being directed to a new settlement. However, the currently proposed allocation of a minimum of 1596 dwellings to the Hinckley urban area and a minimum of 200 homes to each key centre is supported being entirely consistent with the promotion of the County Councils sites at Middlefield Farm, Hinckley (as part of a larger strategic development) being located in a sustainable location on the edge of the existing urban area and Barton Road, Barlestone where the development would provide additional open space in addition to valuable housing required to meet the current shortfall in housing delivery.
	<i>Other Comments on Chapter 4 – Spatial Development Strategy</i>	P.24-25	<p>The chapter makes only passing reference to the Strategic Growth Plan in paragraph 4.14, despite the potentially significant implications this could have for the borough’s future growth and infrastructure requirements.</p> <p>Comments on proposed spatial hierarchy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will the ongoing review of the spatial hierarchy consider the implications of the Strategic Growth Plan on the proposed categories and allocation of specific settlements to each category? In particular, the current spatial hierarchy is silent on either the “Priority Growth Corridor” or “A5 Improvement Corridor” as identified through the SGP and consequently unclear as to how it aligns with this. • Has consideration been given to identifying Groby and Ratby in a separate ‘Edge of Leicester Urban Area’ category, given their much closer physical proximity, stronger transport links and resulting ‘satellite settlement’/‘dormitory community’ characteristics in comparison to the other settlements across the borough identified as ‘key rural centres’?
		P.30 Para 4.21	The text states that the 2021 SHELAA as being published alongside the draft Local Plan, whereas the document that has actually been published is the 2020 SHELAA.
6	We consider a new settlement will be required to help meet future growth needs in the borough. How can this best be reflected in policy?		<p>It is suggested, taking as a starting point the joint evidence work being undertaken on potential growth options and constraints and the inclusion of a criteria based policy in the draft Local Plan setting out requirements for the creation of a sustainable community in the form of a freestanding new settlement embracing the Garden Communities concept. This could potentially form a further ‘node’ in the ring of market towns surrounding Leicester City.</p> <p>The lack of a further radial route out from the City means there is not a ‘natural’ intersection point, further emphasising the importance of transport evidence in informing consideration of the potential location for a new settlement.</p> <p>Recognition is given to the longevity in planning for a new settlement, delivery of which would be likely to begin in the next round of plan making beyond 2039.</p> <p>It will be important that any new settlement is of a scale that ensures it will contain a range of economic and social services and facilities that means it is likely to function as a true ‘free standing’/largely self-contained community, or alternatively is located close to existing urban areas (and associated services and facilities) in locations accessible via sustainable modes of travel, as opposed to becoming a car-oriented dormitory housing estate.</p>

		<p>From a transport perspective, it would be very helpful if the new Plan could at the least identify (under-pinned by evidence) the likely area of the Borough in which any new settlement may be located in the future. It would also be helpful if the Plan could set out the 'journey' by which proposals for the new settlement (and supporting measures and infrastructure) will be developed and how, in the meantime, any proposals that might come forward that could hamper or frustrate delivery of the new settlement (or potential infrastructure required to enable it) will be dealt with.</p> <p>A new settlement should not only be sustainable for jobs, education, services, and public transport but also access to natural greenspaces that are in themselves sustainable sites. This is not mentioned in the section. They should also give due regard to providing new habitat as well as restoring and enhancing existing areas, providing access to nature too locally to residents.</p> <p>A self-sustaining new settlement, the population living there and the surrounding populations would benefit from a targeted, specific health impact assessment looking at risks to health, mitigation, population health profile and opportunities to improve health further. This would provide a baseline for monitoring impact and allow gathering of best practice for future development.</p> <p>Education infrastructure requirements for a new settlement will be driven by the size and location of the new settlement. In order to establish new school provision, settlement sizes would ideally correlate with de minimis pupil yield ratios per form of entry for Primary education (210 pupil places) and Secondary education (150 pupil places).</p> <p>Based on current pupil yield rates, c700 dwellings would generate a requirement for 210 place primary school (the smallest primary school to be considered) and c4,500 dwellings would generate a requirement for a new secondary school.</p> <p>Based on a "minimum of 1500 homes" for a Garden Village or New Town as set out in 4.13 of the Draft Local Plan, a 420-place primary school would be required. However, a settlement of this size would not sustain a new secondary school provision. Early discussion regarding potential location of any new settlement would therefore be welcomed in order to identify potential secondary education requirements.</p> <p>Wherever possible new SEND provisions will be attached to existing or new primary or secondary schools in the locality, accepting there will be circumstances where pupils with specialist needs may need to attend schools further afield.</p> <p>From an Early Years perspective, it is expected that new provision will be developed in each locality, either attached to schools or placed separately in community hubs.</p> <p>For new settlements, and other large-scale developments where new schools would be required, the provision of suitable land for school sites, alongside financial contributions must be provided by the developer.</p> <p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p>
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			Whilst a new settlement (garden village) would be self-sustaining, given the spatial objectives outlined in the draft plan it is considered that priority should be given to the delivery of a SUE to the North of Hinckley, which from the County Council's perspective as a landowner was the preferred option detailed in the earlier Directions of Growth consultation as it would deliver housing and additional community infrastructure, such as schools, in a location close to key services, employment opportunities and other community facilities.
7	Do you agree with the approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change?	P.32 Para 5.4	<p>The LHA has no objection to the overall approach proposed, but it is suggested that paragraph 5.4. could be strengthened by adding an extra bullet point covering: "provision of infrastructure/facilities to support low and zero-carbon vehicle technologies (e.g. electric vehicle charging points)."</p> <p>Additionally, it is suggested the chapter and planned approach should be reviewed and updated as necessary in light of the Government's recently published Transport Decarbonisation Plan: https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-decarbonisation-plan</p> <p>Placing an emphasis on carbon reduction - particularly through the prioritisation of active travel, development of walkable communities and locally accessible facilities is welcome to both combat climate change, but to also improve health & wellbeing outcomes for residents. This also links to 1 - Healthy Communities and Places within the spatial objectives due to obvious links around air quality. There are co-benefits between these areas - particularly around air quality and active lifestyles (which leads to improvement in wellbeing).</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The proposals are broadly supported. The proposal to reduce the need for car travel needs to be supported by the allocation of sites well related to existing services and employment. There is also potential to mitigate climate change by delivery of off-site renewables which would make a valuable addition to the proposed strategy by providing additional flexibility and resilience and opportunities for off-setting.</p>
8	Once site allocations are set out in the next draft of the Local Plan the policy CC02 will include a list of those site allocations which will need to address recommendations made in the	P.34	<p>This approach is supported.</p> <p>CC02 Flood Risk - Mentions enhancing existing defences but perhaps it should state <i>create new</i> defences.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The proposed policy appears to follow accepted best practice and is therefore supported. However, in applying the sequential test it is important that, in circumstances where the function of the development proposed is to support the sustainability of a particular settlement or key centre that the test be based on the potential to deliver an alternate site of a lower flood risk within the same settlement, as housing located some distance away within the wider borough would fail to fulfil that function.</p>

	Borough Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2. Do you agree with this approach?		
	<i>Comment on CC03 – Sustainable Drainage Systems</i>	P.38	SUDS provided should be in addition to other green space-SUDS have limited recreational opportunities and should be the only green space or habitat created in development.
9	Do you support the overall proposed strategy for high quality design in the borough? Are there any other issues the policy should address?	P.44 Point E	<p>The Local Highway Authority (LHA) recognises the role that high-quality design can play in respect of providing safe, healthy and attractive environments, and that reflect local distinctiveness.</p> <p>However, like very many other authorities across the country the LHA has insufficient funding to maintain even its most important highway assets (such as its most heavily trafficked A roads) and accordingly does not have the funding to maintain non-standard materials; bespoke street furniture; trees in the highway; or other such elements that might be used to create high quality environments. Thus, the LHA would like to see the policy amended such that those promoting the use of such elements in a new development are required provide a supporting strategy for their long-term maintenance.</p> <p>Additionally bullet point (e) of the proposed policy, specifically the section that refers to: "...including electric vehicle charging points <u>where feasible</u>..." is a bit weak (i.e. implies that EV charging points are 'nice to have' rather than essential infrastructure) and should more strongly articulate the need for EV charging points to be a standard feature of all new developments (with any exceptions being very rare).</p> <p>More detail on what high quality in design means for nature-policy is not robust enough on this to date. Developers tend to push responsibility onto consumers rather than implement good design in construction more could be done around integration of nest and shelter for bats and birds. Likewise, more advice given around the importance of landscaping and appropriate lighting.</p> <p>The context setting around the impact of poor design is welcome, although it could be clearer of the direct connection between poor design and health (inactivity, air quality, social cohesion and wellbeing etc.), which could reinforce the need to put health and wellbeing first in the design of new developments. Active travel, air quality and accessibility are all considered, but a design that truly improves health and wellbeing of residents needs to have a wider lens than just active design- including the impact of design by the wider determinants of health. Health impact assessment used within Leicestershire covers direct influences on health behaviour such as diet and mental wellbeing; community and social influences such as neighbourliness, pride in local area, crime and social support; living environmental conditions such as healthy food, attractiveness and housing need and type; economic conditions such as income and employment; access to services including food growing, training and employment support and macro-economic, environmental and sustainability factors such as climate change. The plan contains all of this, but it may be a consideration to bring it together into a measurable format to inform design.</p>

		P.44 Point A	<p><i>ADD:</i> ...including the local pattern of development, building form and landscape character, style detail and materials and the archaeology, history and culture of the local area.</p> <p>Clearer reference to the constituent elements of the historic environment could be made, alternatively, elements could be dropped and instead referred to simply as 'historic environment'.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The proposed policy appears to follow accepted best practice and is therefore supported.</p>
10a	Should the Active Design and Travel Policy apply only to new residential development or should other development types be included?	P.48-51	<p>Given that the title of the policy includes 'Active Travel' it is unclear what the justification is for confining its application solely to new residential developments. The policy should also be applicable at least to employment developments and other types of development that are likely to generate significant numbers of employees and/or visitors.</p> <p>Links to employment development would be welcomed to help strengthen the case for and facilitate workplace health initiatives. There seems to be obvious application of 'healthy streets and space's active design principle to any new retail areas and all would apply to any new educational development.</p> <p>The use of Active Design principles is welcomed to encourage active lifestyles. In particular, highlighting that 'making physical activity the easiest and most practical option in everyday life' is particularly strong in promoting design that can help to deliver this. Walkable communities, local places to play, high quality active infrastructure are all beneficial. In addition, maximising the safety and visibility of these interventions is key - maximising natural surveillance - while taking measures to reduce reliance on inactivity (such as slowing traffic speeds) will support this agenda.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>Against the background that there are significant advantages to co-locating housing with a range of other uses such as employment and community facilities there is merit in other development types being included in order to achieve a co-ordinated approach.</p>
	<i>Other comments on the proposed Active Design and Travel Policy and supporting text</i>	P.48-51	<p>It is surprising that no reference is made to the Government's latest 'Gear Change' vision for cycling and walking (published in 2020: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf). In relation to this, the policy and/or supporting text should reference the need to develop proposals in accordance with the Government's latest Cycle Design Guidance (LTN 1/20).</p>
10b	Is the threshold of 10 or more		<p>The LHA has no definitive view on the appropriateness of the proposed threshold as this will presumably need to take account of a range of wider factors (including viability).</p>

	residential dwellings appropriate?		<p>However, it is suggested that any such threshold should not apply to requests for ‘passive provision’ (e.g. the safeguarding of land within a development) to facilitate future active travel infrastructure by the LHA or other third-parties, as such a requirement could in certain circumstances be appropriate for developments of less than 10 dwellings.</p> <p>It would be fair to suggest that interventions would/should be proportionate. Whilst smaller developments may not be expected to provide significant infrastructure (i.e. cycle routes), measures can still be made at a small scale that could deliver lasting change for residents of the scheme through smaller practical measures (such as cycle storage at dwellings, design encouraging natural surveillance to encourage safer neighbourhoods for active travel, social function, play etc.).</p> <p>Health Impact Assessment (HIA) fits in here - healthy communities and improvements around health and wellbeing for the population spans much wider than just active communities, although this is an important principle. It would be good to see a threshold where a rapid HIA would be triggered as required by the developer using the planning portal designed by LRS. This brings together considerations around how development will impact a person’s mental health, access to services, healthy eating, smoking, active travel opportunities, social connectivity, education, economic wellbeing and many more factors. It also allows considerations around groups who are particularly at risk around these areas and consider mitigating factors. The process allows monitoring against these factors, which also gives an opportunity to monitor success around maintaining and improving good health.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>It is considered that in practice a threshold of 10 would be too low as these are likely to be located within the existing limits of development and therefore be constrained by existing infrastructure.</p>
11	Should the housing mix policy apply to all residential developments or only to developments of 10 or more dwellings?		<p>This figure is lower than some other local examples, so should ‘catch’ more developments within its reach. It also mirrors the trigger for Health Impact Assessments to be completed in other areas nationally. Ideally, there could be a scoping exercise done for those under 10 to pick up circumstances where the policy does need to apply.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The proposed housing mix needs to accord with the currently available housing needs information and should be applied to all major developments. However, the policy also needs to recognise that house types need to reflect the needs of the population and be adaptable meeting the demands of the ageing population. Accordingly, there may be little need for single bed accommodation outside the urban areas and therefore the mix should be adjusted to reflect this. For smaller sites, particularly in smaller rural settlements it would be more appropriate to meet local demand/needs.</p>
	<i>Comment on PMD05 Open Space,</i>		<p>There is lots of reference to general open space and would welcome a commentary to the development of specific green space developments which bring communities together in a common purpose i.e. allotments and yield significant and well researched</p>

	<i>Sport and recreation facilities</i>	P.58 Point i	health and wellbeing benefits. <i>ADD: nature</i> networks
	<i>Comment on Policy HO02 Housing Mix, Size and Type</i>		Whilst there is acknowledgment of increasing demand from the older population there is a lack of specifics with regards to models of specialist accommodation for older people with vulnerabilities which offer an alternative to residential care homes i.e. Extra Care Housing / Sheltered Living. These would offer sites of multiple units including single and two bedroom options. These developments would require some communal facilities as well as accommodation for the provision of care and support services. At this time H&B has no affordable Extra Care Housing provision.
12	Do you agree that the nationally described space standards should apply to all new dwellings?		Yes, evidence shows that poor quality and overcrowded housing are associated with increased risk of cardiovascular diseases, respiratory diseases, depression and anxiety. The mention of sufficient private garden/green space is welcomed, particularly as the pandemic emphasised the need for such space to maintain health and wellbeing, and highlighted and in some cases widened the inequalities within this area within our communities.
			<u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u> Meeting minimum national space standards is seen as desirable as well as accepted good practice and is therefore supported.
	<i>Comment on Policy HO04 Housing Density</i>	P.64-65	It is suggested that the second sentence of the policy should be amended as follows (additional text underlined): <i>"However, unless justified through principles of good design <u>and/or essential infrastructure requirements</u>, to ensure the efficient use of land...etc."</i>
13	How can the emerging national design code guidance on density be better incorporated into the policy on housing density?		Reference to numerical targets being used for proposed developments that lack a coherent design rationale are concerning - implying that such developments would still be supported should they meet the density requirements. Density must be considered alongside other measures - such as accessibility of open space, provision of active travel infrastructure, space for social function, place for play etc and therefore ensuring residents have easy access to local amenities should be the overriding concern - with developments encouraged to consider how higher density elements of projects could free up land for other health and wellbeing amenities. High housing density can also conflict with space for nature such as trees in gardens and hedgerows.
			<u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u> Housing density should be pitched at a level that provides a good quality of life for future occupants whilst delivering an economic return to the developer/landowner sufficient to secure the delivery of the housing.
	<i>Comments on Policy HO05 – Accessible Housing and</i>	P.67 Para 7.14	The LHA would question whether 'pepper potting' such dwellings around larger sites is necessarily the best approach to meeting accessible housing needs, at least from a transport perspective. In this regard, it would potentially make more sense to locate accessible dwellings on such larger sites as close as possible to existing or planned public/passenger transport routes and stops, to

	<i>supporting text</i>		<p>minimise walking distances and thereby maximise the ability of accessible housing occupants to use these services.</p> <p>Equally, there may be transport (and possibly wider) benefits to clustering accessible dwellings together within larger sites, in terms of supporting the efficient provision of specialist/targeted (e.g. social care) transport services to such dwellings where required.</p>
14	Do you agree with the policy approach to Self and Custom build housing?		The Criteria Based approach is relatively typical of most local authorities and the criteria themselves are reasonable and achievable and for the benefit of all. Consideration of health need is also welcomed.
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The policy should also include a provision whereby in circumstances where there is no demand for self and custom build plots that have been actively marketed over a six month period the ability exists for the developer to reincorporate the plots within the wider site to ensure a timely completion to the overall development.</p>
15b	If the accommodation assessment identifies an evidenced need to allocate land for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation should this be through the local plan or a separate Development Plan Document?		Needs of this population can at times be complex due to inequalities - not in the least a much-reduced average life expectancy. Consideration should be given to providing socially rented pitches or at least a proportion of new pitches to be socially rented, and that if the local plan fails to deliver new private pitches further socially rented pitches would be considered. A separate document may allow this to be explored in more detail and adapted when needed.
16a	Do you have any comments on the broad approach to securing affordable housing?		<p>Avoidance of clustering of affordable housing is welcome, as is design to make it indistinguishable. Affordable housing should provide residents with equitable access to local amenities and equal opportunity to live a healthy lifestyle – such as parks, public transport links, town centres, leisure provision, and other local amenities.</p> <p>However, the estimated need for affordable housing seems to have been informed by Housing Needs Study (2019), but there is no mention of how the pandemic and the long-term effects (particularly financial) may have/will exacerbate this need.</p>

			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The policy should be caveated by the addition of the words ‘<i>up to</i>’ in respect of the proposed percentages. It is noted that the level of affordable housing can take account of the viability of individual sites in order that delivery of the housing is not compromised which is supported.</p>
16b	Where 100% affordable housing schemes are proposed and supported with Affordable Homes Grant from Homes England should they be exempt from providing other planning contributions as explained in the supporting text to the policy?	P.74 Para 7.32	<p>As planning contributions are sought to fund transport (as well as other) infrastructure and services that are necessary to support the development, it will be necessary to identify how any exemptions applied will be funded and delivered through other sources should this proposal be taken forward.</p> <p>Planning Obligations Paragraph 7.32 states that 100% affordable housing proposals where grant are sought from Homes England will be exempt from all other infrastructure requirements. The residents of these properties will still require access to local infrastructure, and it will fall to other organisations such as the County Council to pay for this infrastructure out of public money as opposed to the developer. The County Council strongly recommends that this be removed as any such requests should be subject to viability testing in the same way as all developments.</p> <p>Paragraph 7.32 also raises concerns regarding developments of 100% affordable housing schemes supported with Affordable Homes Grant attracting zero developer contributions for other infrastructure. Some types of affordable housing may generate increased pupil yield compared to market housing. In the absence of developer obligations, a lack of funds for education infrastructure may lead to a deficiency of school places.</p> <p>Any proposals should not hinder conversations around building health and applying Health Impact Assessments into the design of schemes.</p>
17	How can the Local Plan best deliver the necessary employment land and premises required to meet its identified needs?		<p>It is difficult to answer this question in the absence of an identified employment need or potential site options for meeting this need. However, the proposed policy <i>EPO1 – Scale and distribution of new employment sites</i> correctly identifies transport a key factor in deciding the best locations for new 'strategic' employment development and the LHA would therefore welcome the opportunity to engage/input to the appraisal of sites for potential inclusion in the emerging Local Plan. The Plan should be underpinned by an evidence base, including in respect of highways and transport, that assesses the impacts of potential employment sites and identifies appropriate mitigation, including to address cumulative impacts.</p> <p>From its knowledge and through its involvement with the development of Local Plans for areas adjoining the Borough (including Charnwood, Blaby and the City of Leicester), the LHA would make the following observations that are likely to have material implications in respect of potential new employment sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The A5 in the Hinckley area is already failing functionally, in terms of its capacity and disruption caused by the frequent rail

			<p>bridge strikes. It is possible that without a strategic scale intervention, the corridor’s ability to enable further growth will be significantly limited. Without such intervention, the impacts of growth would likely result in the displacement of traffic to far less suitable and appropriate routes within and around Hinckley and across the boundary in Warwickshire.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The M1 between Junction 21 and 21a and the Leicester Western Bypass from J21a around to the Hobby Horse roundabout at Syston (both parts of the Strategic Road Network – SRN) are also failing functionally. The highways impacts of any proposals for growth, especially towards the north east of the Borough, are likely to have a material impact on these parts of the SRN, which when combined with the cumulative impacts of growth proposed in adjoining areas, is likely to prove challenging, complex and costly to address. • Notwithstanding the proposed Major Road Network project on the A50/A511 corridor, there is evidence (emerging from other Local Plan work) to suggest that further measures are likely to be required along the corridor to ensure that it can continue to play its relevant role in enabling growth and in providing access to jobs and key services and facilities in the City of Leicester. <p>It is likely that a coordinated, strategy-led approach will be required to address the transport challenges of seeking to accommodate further growth (employment and housing) in the Borough, one involving cross-boundary coordination and cooperation (within and without Leicestershire) and including Highways England. The LHA would expect the Plan to provide policies and text that underpin this approach and provide a robust basis for seeking developer contributions towards mitigating measures to address cumulative impacts within and without the Borough/ Leicestershire.</p> <p>In relation to the matters covered in paragraphs 8.7 to 8.9, maintaining the ability to regulate changes in employment use/type as far as possible will be important to ensure that where this is likely to result in significant changes in transport impacts/requirements, such changes can be assessed and where necessary mitigated. As such, any mechanisms provided within the Local Plan policies that facilitate this are welcomed.</p> <p>(NB: LHA comments in respect of the Plan’s viability are provide in response to Q33.)</p> <p>The provision of a wide portfolio of employment land tailored to the findings of the H&B Employment Land and Premises Study and Economic Regeneration Strategy, informed by the recently published Warehousing and Logistics Study (May 2021) and the transport evidence to be undertaken, is recommended. Regard needs to be given to the opportunity to co-locate new housing with new employment and the possibility of an element of unmet employment need from the City also needing to be accommodated. This is likely to be proportionate to the scale of unmet housing to be accommodated in the Borough.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The draft plan recognises the need to encourage economic growth and aspires to meet the demand for high quality premises across the whole borough. It is therefore important to meet the need for sites well located to communities to encourage greater economic activity without the need to commute outside the area to find well paid highly skilled employment and support the supply chain of the strategic logistics and distribution sites. Clearly, there remains a need to encourage further inward investment</p>

			in the logistics sector to further enhance economic activity. The plan also recognises the need to address Leicester City's unmet employment needs for which additional allocations should be made in accordance with the SoCG.
	<i>Comment on Policy EP02 – New Employment Development</i>	P.81 Point C	For bullet point (c) it is suggested replacing “ <i>bus</i> ” with “ <i>passenger transport</i> ” (to reflect that options other than conventional bus services, such as rail or demand responsive transport, may also have a role to play in providing access to new employment sites). The Policy should push for net gain for biodiversity not just no net loss. This should include sites that are not ‘valued’ sites- employment sites in Hinckley & Bosworth should have a massive contribution to nature restorations.
18	Should some key employment areas/premises that are of particular significance to Hinckley & Bosworth’s portfolio of employment areas be afforded additional protection over and above category A areas? If so, should this include all category A areas, some category A areas, or a mixture of category A & B areas? What extra evidence would be needed to warrant this special policy designation?		It is considered that the levels of protection detailed in the draft policy should afford sufficient protection for the existing key employment areas. This view is congruent with Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner.
19	Do you have any comments on the planning for Strategic Distribution		Strategic Distribution developments normally have widescale highways and transport impacts in respect of employees’ origin and of the movement of goods and materials. Thus, the impacts of any sites within the Borough are likely to spread beyond its boundaries/the boundary of Leicestershire. The Plan should recognise this and provide a robust policy basis for addressing widescale impacts, including on a cumulative, cross-boundary basis as necessary.

	developments in Hinckley and Bosworth, and how local policy could be formulated?		<p>The process of identifying future strategic distribution needs and locations through the Local Plan will need to consider how such needs and locations might be influenced by the SGP and associated growth in neighbouring LPAs. Similarly, it will need to take account of the potential implications of the HNRFI, should this be approved through the NSIP process.</p> <p>It is advised that the joint work with other partners in L&L continues, to consider the recommendations in the recently completed Warehousing and Logistics Study (May 2021), and identify the collective next steps which may include a ‘rolling reserve’ approach or possibly a maximum policy limit over a certain timeframe across the Areas of Opportunity identified in the study.</p> <p>The Borough and L&L have a distinct geographical appeal for this sector given the central location of our area nationally, and the impacts of this use are far greater than L&L. This emphasises the importance of a joint approach in responding to this fast changing, evolving sector.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The planning of further strategic distribution developments should have regard to the ability of the site to be access via the strategic highway network and the additional infrastructure investment that may be required to support the development.</p>
20	Taking into account the recent creation of Class E planning uses and the implications for employment uses and sites/premises, what changes if any do you think should be made to the Economic Prosperity section and policies?	P. 88 P.89 Para 8.30	<p><i>AMEND:</i> With reference to EP06 MIRA Technology Park Enterprise Zone – no reference is made to the proximity of the nationally important and internationally significant registered Bosworth Battlefield. Whilst the Enterprise Zone may not encroach upon the battlefield in its current designated form, the significance of the battlefield may be detrimentally affected by ill-considered development within its setting.</p> <p>Paragraph 8.30, relating to Policy EP06 (MIRA Technology Enterprise Zone) and supporting text, identifies who HBBC will engage with to determine the boundary for the special policy area and specific aspirations for growth and development. In relation to this, it is suggested that it will be equally important to involve the relevant highway/transport authorities (Leicestershire CC, Warwickshire CC and Highways England) in any discussions concerning the special policy area boundaries given the potential implications for the strategic and local road networks and any future transport infrastructure aspirations in and around the area (e.g. in relation to the A5).</p> <p>Additionally, whilst there is not a question that explicitly references the proposed Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI) proposal, nevertheless the Local Highway Authority (LHA) wishes to make some observations in relation to this. The LHA recognises that the HNRFI remains a proposal at this time; that it will be subject to the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) process; and that no NSIP application has yet been submitted by its promoters. It is therefore, perhaps to some extent, understandable that the draft Plan contains little in respect of the HNRFI. However, from experience with the East Midlands Gateway site (near Castle Donington) <i>if</i> the HNRFI is permitted and developed it is likely to have a very significant highways and transport impact and thus could have a material implications for the deliverability of sites that will (ultimately) be included in the new Local Plan. It is therefore surprising that this draft Plan does not include or suggest the need to include in its next version a Policy in respect of triggering a review of the Plan should the HNRFI gain approval.</p>

			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>Whilst protecting employment uses wherever feasible and economically viable Policy should be made as flexible as possible to maximise the potential for premises/areas to remain in a beneficial economic use within the general Class E use class.</p>
	<p><i>Comment on Policy TDC01 Sustainable Town Centres</i></p>		<p>Section 9 on town centres is very focussed on retail and there is no acknowledgement that since the pandemic, there has been a seismic shift to on-line retailing and that our town centres need to adapt and become places/centres that people visit not just for shopping, but for events and other leisure activities.</p> <p>There is no acknowledgement that there may be more restaurants, bars and cafes to meet this need and less A1 uses. There should be consideration to protect prime retail sites, especially when lots of the larger vacant units are likely to remain empty unless they are sub-divided or other uses found.</p>
21a	<p>Should policy define the expected extent of search for sequentially preferable sites? As a minimum, the nearest Town, District or Local Centre should be assessed. Further options could include always assessing Hinckley Town Centre, assessing all Town, District and Local Centres in the Borough, using development size thresholds or using catchment area distances, which could also include defined centres of neighbouring local</p>		<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>Sequential tests should relate only to those centres which the impact assessment identifies as being within the catchment area of the proposed development, including those situated in neighbouring authority areas.</p>

	authorities.		
21b	Should permissions for E use in or edge of centre be conditioned to exclude light industry (the former B1c use)?		Yes, the LHA would support a policy approach that helps to regulate any changes of use that are likely to have significant implications from a transport perspective
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>Whilst protecting employment uses wherever feasible and economically viable Policy should be made as flexible as possible to maximise the potential for premises/areas to remain in a beneficial economic use within the general Class E use class.</p>
21c	Where retail use is proposed in-centre, should it be conditioned to prevent Change of Use to other E class uses?		<p>Yes, the LHA would support a policy approach that helps to regulate any changes of use that are likely to have significant implications from a transport perspective.</p> <p>However, a change of use from retail to restaurant or cafe without the requirement for scrutiny would create a risk or an increase in access to unhealthy foods, which links to healthy weight and associated public health indicators. It is acknowledged that the restaurant or café may serve healthy options, but without the need for planning permission for a change of use there will be less known within Environmental and Public Health around the aims of the business and target customers etc. and so less opportunity to support and influence.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>Whilst protecting employment uses wherever feasible and economically viable Policy should be made as flexible as possible to maximise the potential for premises/areas to remain in a beneficial economic use within the general Class E use class.</p>
21d	Where particular non-retail E class uses can pass the sequential test and be permitted because they require large site footprints difficult to accommodate in-centre, should they be subject to conditions restricting change of use to retail?		Yes, the LHA would support a policy approach that helps to regulate any changes of use that are likely to have significant implications from a transport perspective
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>Whilst protecting employment uses wherever feasible and economically viable Policy should be made as flexible as possible to maximise the potential for premises/areas to remain in a beneficial economic use within the general Class E use class.</p>

22a	What should the role of Policy TDC02 be if the Government introduces a permitted development right to change Class E use to Class C3 (residential)?		The role should require an appropriate assessment of impacts of change of use - specifically health impact assessment. The assessment should consider a range of potential health impacts - such as whether the change impacts the broader community's access to amenities that support physical activity, healthcare, access to healthy food, the ability to access amenities within a walkable community etc and the scope for returning infrastructure to such uses in the future should it be needed - noting the potential challenges of converting back to other uses once it is residential.
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>To ensure a mix of compatible uses, including residential, that maximises economic activity, encourages future investment and maximises potential foot fall in the future.</p>
22b	Should the borough consider the use of an Article IV Direction to help protect any particularly valuable Town Centre uses?		Yes, the LHA would support a policy approach that helps to regulates any changes of use where this is likely to significantly reduce access to key services or facilities via sustainable modes of travel, and could thereby adversely affect the sustainability of an existing settlement and/or wider planned development.
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>Given the rapidly changing retail economy and the potential for a reduced demand for office space in the future such a policy could have the effect of sterilising areas of the town centres where alternative uses can maintain it as a thriving vibrant centre.</p>
22c	Is there a role for Primary and/or Secondary Shopping Frontages to help with the definition of key locations at ground floor level in Policy TDC02? If so, should primary and secondary frontages be defined for the District Centres (as recommended in the Town and District Centres		No comment.

	Study 2017) or any other centre?		
	<i>Comment on Policy TDC03 – Hot Food Takeaways and Betting Offices</i>	P.100 Point B	It is suggested that bullet point (b) should be widened to include traffic and parking (or alternatively an extra bullet point added to cover residual traffic impacts).
23	Could the measure of “over-proliferation” of facilities be improved and does the measure need to be individually tailored to suit centres in different levels of the centre hierarchy?		No comment.
24	Are the criteria for safeguarding against the loss of public houses in urban and rural areas reasonable and proportionate and are there any other criteria the Borough Council should include to safeguard against the loss of public houses?	P.104	<p>The LHA has no views or suggestions on the specific criteria to be applied in relation to this.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the LHA would support a policy approach that helps to regulate any changes to the of use of public houses and/or other key community facilities where this is likely to significantly reduce access to such facilities via safe and sustainable modes of travel, and could thereby adversely affect the sustainability of existing settlements and/or planned developments.</p> <p>Equally, the LHA would support policy provisions that facilitate the diversification of public houses where this is likely to positively contribute to the range of key services and facilities accessible via safe and sustainable forms of travel and thereby encourages safe and sustainable travel behaviour.</p> <p>Recognition of public houses as potential heritage assets is supported.</p> <p><i>ADD: Below 10.7: Where the community facility is a heritage asset, the council will seek retention of the building and any features of interest or representative of its character, notably including historic statuary and commemorative monuments, memorials or plaques, in accordance with national and local policies.</i></p>
	<i>Comments on Policy CLT03 Cultural and</i>	P.109	Reference should be made to the Leicester and Leicestershire Tourism Growth Plan, the impact of the pandemic on the sector and

	Tourism Facilities		<p>the importance that the sector plays in the economy.</p> <p>It is positive that sustainable transport is mentioned but it may not be realistic to expect new/enlarged tourism attractions to be accessible by sustainable transport given that most are in rural areas.</p>
25	Do you have any comments on the approach to Heritage and Conservation?	P.114 Para. 11.1	<p>The section on the Natural Environment draws heavily for its evidence base on the HBBC Green Infrastructure Strategy 2020. This document is considered lacking in vision and depth as regards biodiversity, and for reasons that are unclear, it is based on a partial evidence base that excludes many natural assets. It is not felt that this evidence base (as regards biodiversity) is fit for purpose of informing the Local Plan.</p> <p>Candidate Local Wildlife sites are omitted from the strategy maps Fig.5.5 (biodiversity assets) and as a result they are also omitted from the collated GI assets strategy map (Fig.5.1). Candidate LWS have the same status in planning terms as notified LWS; they are of equivalent quality and significance to LWS. All candidate LWS are sites that are known through recent survey data to meet the published criteria for designation of LWS. 5.42 refers to more than 45 LWS and notes a lack around Witherley and around Hinckley; in fact there are 230+ candidate and notified LWS, including many hedges in Witherley, and grasslands, hedges and other habitat around Hinckley and especially in the area south of Burbage.</p> <p>It is noted that potential and historic LWS are included; these sites are part of the natural assets of the Borough, but do have lower status than candidate LWS as the designation is not supported by recent survey data that demonstrated they meet LWS criteria. Omission of candidate LWS seems to be an oversight, the reasons for which are unclear as the spatial information is available through annual data supply from Leicestershire and Rutland ERC to HBBC.</p> <p>The GI Strategy proposes several options for redressing biodiversity loss, including ‘re-wilding’ of highway verges and private garden management. Whilst any biodiversity improvements in these assets is welcome, the impact is minor and it is not going to solve the problem of rapid biodiversity decline. Fig 5.5 shows a handful of small ‘network enhancement zones’ based around SSSIs; but it is considered that this is completely inadequate. It fails to address one of the core reasons for ecological networks, which is to create large connected networks of habitat throughout regions, which will facilitate resilience and adaptation to the impacts of climate change on natural species distribution. In this context, the river and waterway corridors through the Borough are of special importance, and it is of concern that these are not identified on the maps as key elements in the biodiversity network.</p> <p>Regarding the Historic environment, there is no mention of the Heritage Action Zone status that the borough council have, or any description of the area of focus in Hinckley Town Centre of that scheme.</p> <p>There are also series of amendments suggested regarding the heritage section:</p> <p>AMEND: 11.1: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the heritage asset’s conservation, including sustaining significance (NPPF, paragraph 199).</p>

		<p>P.115 Para. 11.3</p> <p>P.115 Para. 11.4</p> <p>P.116 Para 11.10</p> <p>P.120</p> <p>P.120 Para 11.29</p>	<p>Heritage policies should be amended to take into account recent changes to the NPPF, notably including NPPF Para 198:</p> <p><i>In considering any applications to remove or alter a historic statue, plaque, memorial or monument (whether listed or not), local planning authorities should have regard to the importance of their retention in situ and, where appropriate, of explaining their historic and social context rather than removal.</i></p> <p>ADD: 11.3: ...Heritage assets are categorised as designated (such as listed buildings) and non-designated (<i>such as assets recorded on the HER or</i> identified by the local planning authority).</p> <p>AMEND: 11.4: ...<i>The HER provides the most comprehensive register</i> of archaeological remains and historic buildings within the borough, <i>the majority</i> of which are non-designated.</p> <p>ADD: 11.10: <i>Recognising the role of the Leicestershire & Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) in</i> identifying non-designated heritage assets and adopting a list of local heritage assets;</p> <p><u><i>Regarding HE03 Preserving the Borough’s Archaeology</i></u></p> <p>DELETE: Where applicable, justified, and feasible the Borough Council will require remains to be preserved in situ ensuring appropriate design, layout, ground levels, foundations, and site work methods to avoid and adverse impacts on the remains.</p> <p>AMEND: 11.29: Where archaeological remains are found <i>and their preservation on site is justified</i>, the Borough Council will seek to resist development which adversely affects <i>their significance</i>. Where preservation is not <i>required</i>, mitigation may including excavation, analysis of remains and public dissemination of results, which will be <i>undertaken</i> by an organisation approved by the Leicestershire County Council’s Archaeology Team and the Borough Council before any works start...</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council’s interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The policy appears to follow accepted best practice. However, archaeological trenching should only be required in advance of the determination of planning application in circumstances where there is strong evidence, provided by the desk based assessment and a geophysical survey (where appropriate) carried out in accordance with the proposed policy, of potential for assets of significance to be present on site.</p>
26	Do you support the approach to green wedges set out in the policy?	P.125	<p>The Local Highway Authority (LHA) has no objection to the general approach/principle of the planned green wedges, but suggests that an additional bullet point/category be added to those listed under the sentence beginning: <i>“The following land uses will be acceptable in the Green Wedge...”</i> covering: <i>“other, essential transport infrastructure”</i>.</p> <p>The health benefits of access to green space have long been documented. The considerations around sing the space for</p>

			community food growing and educational purposes are also welcomed on top of mental health and physical activity benefits.
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The policy is supported subject to the limits of development being reviewed in advance of the designation being made in order not to sterilise potential sustainable development the benefits of which would significantly outweigh any harm to the integrity of the settlements protected by the green wedge.</p>
	<p><i>Comments on Policy NAT03 – Trees, Hedgerows, Woodlands and Development</i></p>	<p>P.127</p> <p>P.127</p>	<p>The correct terms are 'Ancient Semi-natural Woodland' (ASNW) and 'Planted Ancient Woodland Site' (PAWS).</p> <p>This policy only includes woodlands in NE's inventory of ancient woodland, woodlands within statutory sites, ancient/veteran trees (not defined) and TPO trees. This ignores the mature plantation woodlands within the borough which have huge biodiversity and landscape value. This is completely inadequate, and feel sure it is not what is intended; it runs counter to other parts of the plan that rightly flag up the value of woodlands and trees for carbon sequestration. An absolutely basic requirement of climate change mitigation is to protect existing woodland – but this policy falls far short.</p> <p>The policy that <i>'On development sites of 0.5 hectares or more a tree canopy cover of 20% of the site area will be sought. This will principally be achieved through retention and planting of trees, but where it can be demonstrated that this is impractical the use of other green infrastructure (e.g. green roofs and walls) can be used to deliver equivalent benefit'</i> feels inappropriate. Whilst green roofs and walls are welcome in their own right, they are not an adequate compensation for loss of tree cover or failure to meet the 20% requirement; they will not have the same value for carbon sequestration. Small woodlands have limited biodiversity value on small sites unless connected to off-site woodland. Instead I feel it would be better for the shortfall of trees to be offset elsewhere, through contributions to another woodland planting scheme of higher value and greater size – and this may contribute also to the GI aspiration to increase trees cover in the Western and Southern GI Zones. An offsetting site or sites should be sought in these areas.</p> <p>Within the policy text, it would be helpful to state that tree-planting schemes should be informed by ecology surveys of the intended site, and that trees and woodlands should not be planted on habitats of local biodiversity value, such as species-rich grasslands, as described in the local BAP.</p> <p>Trees within Conservation areas are not mentioned under protection of Trees.</p>
	<p><i>Comments on Policy of NAT07 - Protecting Biodiversity</i></p>		<p>The policy text on Internationally and Nationally Designated Sites does not distinguish between these two designations, and the wording of the policy applies only to nationally designated sites (i.e SSSIs). This is not in accordance with the NPPF paragraph 175 (or the later text in the policy, 12.31 and 12.34.)</p> <p>Specific wording on the R Mease is required: part of H&B is within the catchment of the river, which is an SAC, an internationally designated site. The policy should ensure that there is no adverse impact on the site; protection is covered in Part 1 of <u>ODPM Circular 06/2005: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation – Statutory Obligations and their Impact within the Planning System.</u> A</p>

		<p>P.135</p>	<p>development that has a significant effect on this site will require an ‘Appropriate Assessment’, and this decision has to be made on a precautionary basis. An appropriate assessment is required where there is a probability or a risk that the plan or project will have significant effects on a site.</p> <p>The policy in NAT07 on Locally Important Sites should refer to sites and habitats that meet the published criteria for designation as Local Wildlife Sites. There has not been comprehensive survey coverage of all land in the Borough to identify presence of LWS; new sites emerge all the time, and old sites are lost. Land does change in value over time and sites can gain or lose their LWS status. The policy should be future-proofed. We need to be able to protect sites that emerge or develop or are discovered in the future. I recommend that the policy is amended to: <i>“Where a proposal is likely to result in harm to locally important sites (including habitats or species of principal importance for biodiversity, and sites that meet the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland criteria for designation as a Local Wildlife Site), developers will be required to accord with the following sequential approach: . .”</i> See: https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2016/8/22/Guidelines_LWS.pdf</p> <p>Irreplaceable habitats also include old species-rich grassland, including that marked by ridge and furrow, and species-rich hedgerows that meet Hedgerow Regulations ecological criteria.</p>
		<p>P.133 Para 12.29</p>	<p>LWS are designated by the Panel, as stated correctly in the text, but RIGS are designated by a separate group. It would be helpful to state that the Leicestershire and Rutland Environmental Records Centre maintain a register of LWS. LNRs are covered by legislation – the National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 – and are therefore statutory designated sites; they are notified by the local authority, not the LWS Panel, and accepted by Natural England.</p> <p>LWS are designated in accordance with published criteria, which reflect the priorities in the local Biodiversity Action plan – but the criteria are in a separate document: https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2016/8/22/Guidelines_LWS.pdf</p> <p>Consideration should be given to Local Wildlife Sites (LWS), whilst these do not have the same statutory protection they are still significantly important for local wildlife. Greater emphasis on their role locally, as well as spatially linking up priority habitats and notable features.</p>
	<p>Comments on Policy NAT08 -Enhancing Biodiversity and habitat connectivity</p>	<p>P.134</p>	<p>Buffers should be considered around nationally and internationally important sites to minimise development impact.</p> <p>Biosecurity should also be referenced, in terms of our contribution to minimising the spread of pests and diseases.</p>
			<p>Part of NAT08 policy is not in accordance with earlier wording in NAT07 on the Avoidance-Mitigation-Compensation hierarchy. <i>“On site features should be retained, buffered and managed favourably to maintain their ecological value, connectivity and functionality in the long-term. The removal or damage of such features shall only be acceptable where it can be demonstrated the proposal will result in no net loss of biodiversity and where the integrity of local ecological networks can be secured.”</i> It is recommended the last sentence is replaced by reference to the hierarchy.</p>

		<p>P.140 Para 12.47</p> <p>P.139 Para 12.44</p> <p>P.139</p>	<p>In the accompanying text, this statement does not in any sense agree with national Biodiversity Net-gain policy: <i>compensatory measures should be of equal or greater size or quality than the area lost as a result of the development. In addition, newly created habitats should be in place in time to provide fully the ecological functions that they are intended to compensate for.</i>" It is recommended that this is deleted.</p> <p>Private gardens are not sustainable as there is no commitment from developers or householders to make them good for biodiversity or nature. That is, unless covenants are placed on development sites to ensure this occurs through the sale of property.</p> <p>The list of habitats present in H&B include the typo 'lowland fears' and it is not clear what it is intended. However, the list doesn't correlate with the BAP – so the text here is incorrect. See: https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/sites/default/files/field/pdf/2017/1/25/LLR_BAP_Space_for_Wildlife_2016-26_part_1.pdf</p> <p>LBAP habitats relevant to H&B are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadleaved woodland • Eutrophic standing water • Field margins • Heath-grassland • Hedgerows • Lowland wood-pasture and parkland • Mesotrophic lakes • Neutral grassland • Reedbed • Wet woodland • Rivers (<i>in preparation</i>) • Floodplain wetland • Mature trees • Roadside verges • Rocks and built structures • Sphagnum ponds • Springs and flushes • Urban habitats <p>The contributions of the River Soar are not mentioned.</p>
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		Para 12.46	
27	Do you agree with the 'major developments' threshold set out in the biodiversity policy or should a different threshold be applied for the additional biodiversity gains measures?		<p>Policy NAT08 Enhancing Biodiversity and habitat connectivity is not completely in accordance with the NPPF or with the emerging Environment Bill, which includes a mandatory 10% gain in biodiversity value for most development (exemptions are currently unclear, but may include some change-of-use, householder and permitted development; a final response to the 2019 consultation is not available as yet). Smaller development may be able to take a simpler approach to calculation, but at present it appears as though most will be subject to the mandatory 10%.</p> <p>The policy should be aligned to the mandatory requirement and require 10% net-gain for major and minor development. The phrase in the policy that 'All development should provide a net gain in biodiversity where possible' is weak, and not aligned to the NPPF. The NPPF wording used in 174 is that '<i>Planning policies and decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by [. . .] d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity</i>' and 179 is that '<i>. . . plans should [. . .] and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.</i>'</p> <p>In the question, it is not clear to what the 'additional biodiversity gains measures' for major developments are; minor development can also have impacts on ecological networks if it is in the wrong place (an example would be a small housing development that severs an existing green corridor such as a linear woodland along a former railway line). There is little value in singling out major developments or determining a local threshold; net-gain is needed for all development bar the few exemptions, and this policy needs to be in accordance with the emerging Environment Bill.</p>
			<p><u>Comments from Strategic Property Services in respect of the County Council's interests as a Landowner</u></p> <p>The general principles need to be incorporated within the planning of all sites, wherever feasible, with a view to maximising biodiversity gains. In practical terms only sites where there is a need to provide public open space will be to feasible to deliver an on-site solution. Consideration therefore needs to be made for a requirement for off-setting.</p>
28	Do you have any comments on the policy for development within the countryside?	P.141-144	<p>It is suggested that an additional <i>bullet point should be added to the policy under "Development in the countryside will be considered sustainable where..."</i> stating "residual traffic and transport impacts are addressed, as necessary, in accordance with policies HT01 to HT04*".</p> <p>*NB – policy references listed here are notwithstanding our later comments on the proposed transport chapter/policies</p>
	<i>Comment on Policy NAT11 – Blue Infrastructure</i>		<p>There is no mention of the Upper Soar as a site for Biodiversity enhancement. However, future development proposals will impact on this tributary.</p>
29	Do you agree with the approach to		<p>The principle of a Plan policy in respect of highways and transportation is welcomed and something that the Local Highway Authority (LHA) supports.</p>

	<p>highways and transportation set out in policy HT01?</p>		<p>In the current absence of any formally published comprehensive transport evidence base and information about potential sites, it is difficult for the LHA to comment definitively on whether the Policy and supporting narrative are likely to be sufficiently robust in terms of dealing with the impacts of further growth in the Borough, especially cumulative impacts and seeking to secure funding (including from developers), which could be considerable in quantum.</p> <p>But, reflecting its comments on other aspects of the draft Plan⁽¹⁾, the LHA’s preliminary view is that the policy and text is too generic and is unlikely to provide a sufficiently robust basis for seeking developer contributions towards mitigating measures to address cumulative impacts within and without the Borough/Leicestershire. The LHA would welcome the opportunity to work with HBBC and other relevant partners to review jointly the evidence work to date; to support HBBC in undertaking work to explore options for and pathways towards the delivery of required highways and transport mitigation measures (including to address cumulative and cross-boundary impacts); consider how this might impact on assumptions about potential sites to be included in the next version of the Plan; and also to review how this affects the contents of the Plan, including policy HT01.</p> <p>A particular issue that will ultimately need to be addressed is how the Local Plan will incorporate/respond to ongoing and planned work to support the Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) and the emerging Local Plans of adjacent districts in and around the SGP ‘Priority Growth Corridor’, noting that this work could identify a need for significant changes to the Plan in transport terms (e.g. transport mitigation measures identified to accommodate the Local Plan could be superseded by ‘bigger’ mitigation requirements to deal with wider growth identified through the SGP/adjacent Local Plans). Correspondingly, if the Local Plan is to be submitted prior to the conclusion of the SGP transport work, the LHA considers that it would need to include a policy setting out an appropriate review trigger/mechanism to ensure that the Plan is updated as necessary to reflect the outcomes of the SGP and adjacent Local Plans work as and when this emerges (i.e. as per the suggested approach to the HNRFI set out in the LHAs response to Q20).</p> <p>In respect of more detailed aspects of the Policy and supporting text:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is a notable absence that no reference is made in the text to the Strategic Road Network and the roles and responsibilities of Highways England (albeit there is mention in text that supports policy HT04). • The wording of the Policy uses phraseology that is inconsistent with that of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), e.g.”.... <i>residual cumulative impacts of development on the transport network are not significant...</i>” whereas the NPPF states: “...or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe...” • The lack of reference to the Government’s (cycling and walking) ‘<u>Gear Change</u>’ document and to its national bus strategy ‘<u>Bus Back Better</u>’ is surprising. It would be helpful to cross reference the LHA’s <u>passenger transport policy and strategy</u> and also to its new <u>Cycling and Walking Strategy</u>. Further reference could be made to appropriate supporting infrastructure here - such as safe, secure cycle storage with good natural surveillance (at popular locations such as parks, town centres etc) but also storage for cycles at homes and workplaces. This is crucial to making active travel a more feasible and convenient form of travel. How are development proposals to be designed to encourage a slowing of traffic speed and consistently prioritise the pedestrian or cyclist above private or motorised vehicles?
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			<i>(1) Especially the LHA's view that it is likely that a coordinated, strategy-led approach will be required to address the transport challenges of seeking to accommodate further growth (employment and housing) in the Borough, one involving cross-boundary coordination and cooperation (within and without Leicestershire) and including Highways England. The LHA would expect the Plan to provide policies and text that underpin this approach and provide a robust basis for seeking developer contributions towards mitigating measures to address cumulative impacts within and without the Borough/ Leicestershire.</i>
	<i>Comment on Policy HT02 – Parking Standards</i>	P.152	It is suggested that policy HT03 should be cross-referenced within HT02 to clarify that EV charging facilities are covered separately.
30	Are there any other locations or criteria you think would be acceptable to support the delivery of HGV parking facilities?	P.152-153	<p>The Local Highway Authority (LHA) would expect the need for HGV parking facilities to be driven by evidence, including in respect of additional demand generated by any future sites allocated through the emerging Local Plan and/or growth in neighbouring areas. At the time of writing, there is insufficient evidence or knowledge of such potential growth in and around the Borough to comment on possible increases in locally generated HGV parking demand that might arise.</p> <p>That said, it is possible that there could be pressure/need for additional HGV parking facilities in those parts of the Borough located around or closest to the A42/M42 and M69 corridors (noting that most of the M69 is either within or very near to the Borough and that whilst the A42/M42 does not pass through the Borough, it similarly passes very close by at certain points) arising from strategic/long distance HGV traffic using either of these routes.</p> <p>Consideration should also be given to the HGV driver workforce around their access to services needed for their health and wellbeing (inc. exercise/access to restrooms/access to healthier food and water etc), when looking at practicality and suitability of parking facilities. Loughborough University have done work around lorry driver health and lack of provision around the aforementioned considerations leading to poor mental and physical health within this population.</p>
31	Should the policy set different electric vehicle charging infrastructure requirements for different types of non-residential uses, for example rapid charging points at commercial/retail developments or		<p>It seems logical that the type of EV facilities provided should be aligned with anticipated demand in terms of length of stay; i.e. an emphasis on 'rapid'/'ultra-rapid' chargers for short-stay uses/facilities and on relatively slower/'standard' chargers for long-stay uses/facilities.</p> <p>However, it is less clear why the proportions of overall parking spaces to be either 'actively equipped' with EV charging facilities of one form or another, or 'passively equipped' for future provision, should differ from one form of development to another, given the vastly expanded EV charging provision that will be needed in most locations in future to support the mass transition to EVs.</p> <p>It is suggested that the policy should include a starting point of seeking passive provision as a minimum for every new off-street parking space provided within all new developments (both residential and non-residential), other than in exceptional circumstances (i.e. so that any parking spaces that are not actively equipped with EV facilities from 'day one' can be equipped with such active facilities at minimum cost/disruption as demand rises in future).</p>

	<p>more charging points at long stay locations such as employment sites?</p>		<p>On-street/off-street charging needs to be backed up by a range of other solutions, hubs, destination charging as well as sustainable alternative transport modes, such as passenger transport and cycling and walking as fall-back options.</p> <p>There is a need to focus on where people are stationary for long periods of time and allow the EV chargers to utilise this so that there is then less emphasis on public chargepoints.</p> <p>There may also need to be a reconsideration of what may have traditionally been considered as long stay destinations such as employment sites and making them appropriate to a post-Covid world.</p>
32	<p>Do you agree with the approach of seeking to safeguard land along the A5 corridor? Are there any constraints or issues which could preclude the Council, in conjunction with the A5 Partnership, from safeguarding this land?</p>		<p>Whilst the principle of an A5 specific policy is welcomed, it is not apparent from the way that it is presently drafted that its intention is to seek to safeguard land for the future strategic upgrade of the A5 through the Borough. Options for the route's upgrade adjacent to Hinckley appear to be extremely limited and the LHA would welcome any planning policy protection that could be afforded to seeking to safeguard the route's upgrade. Were the opportunity to be lost to achieve the route's upgrade, this would likely have a material impact on the ability to deliver any further growth (including expansion of existing facilities, e.g. at MIRA) in the A5 corridor (within or without the Borough/ Leicestershire).</p> <p>Additionally, and notwithstanding any actions pursued through the A5 Partnership, any policy to secure developer contributions and safeguard land for the future upgrade of the A5 within Hinckley and Bosworth's emerging Local Plan would need to be 'mirrored' by equivalent provisions in the Local Plans of adjacent Warwickshire Districts to be fully effective. The LHA would wish to be involved in any future discussions with the relevant local planning authorities and other highway authorities (i.e. Warwickshire County Council and Highways England) to advance a coordinated approach to these matters through the various Local Plans.</p> <p>Whilst evidence has yet to be published that definitively links the enabling of growth (in the Borough and more widely) to the need for the A5's strategic upgrade, based on knowledge of the corridor's current functionality a link is likely to be demonstrated. In that respect, whilst is understandable that due to the corridor's relative importance – e.g. as identified in the Strategic Growth Plan – the Plan as drafted treats it separately from the local road network (i.e. separate from HT01), in other respects it, i.e. the LHA's view that a coordinated, strategy-led approach will be required to enable growth, it would be more appropriate not to treat it separately. A compromise could be to redraft and combine the text supporting HT01 and HT04 and then renumber HT04 as HT02, such that Policy HT01 and 'new' HT02 follow directly on from the redrafted text. In redrafting the text, it is suggested that reference to the low railway bridge and the issues arising from its frequent striking should be referenced.</p> <p>Additionally, if (when) a link is demonstrated between the delivery of growth and the A5's strategic upgrade, the current draft text referencing funding is weak and may call into an Inspector's mind whether the Plan is 'sound' and deliverable. Challenges to growth presented by Strategic Road Network impacts are becoming increasingly common for Plans being developed across the wider Housing Market Area, and so it will be important to continue to work jointly with Highways England (and other partners as relevant) to identify and agree a suitable way forward; ensuring that there is a coordinated approach to dealing with SRN impacts underpinned by a Plan that contains a coherent narrative about the infrastructure delivery 'journey' is likely to be important to</p>

			<p>agreeing the way forward.</p> <p>With regard to the specific wording of the draft policy HT04 (as currently numbered):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although welcomed, it is unclear why just cumulative impacts are covered. Given the poor functionality of the corridor, it is highly probable that even the impacts of a single development could have a material impact. • As per the LHA's comments on Policy HT01, the wording of HT04 is inconsistent with that used in the National Planning Policy Framework. <p>Safeguarding of land along the A5 corridor should include for space for nature such as hedges, SUDS, trees and open space buffers between the road and residential development. Open space buffers also allow for species to move along the road network. Any development next to the corridor should ensure that buffers are built into design.</p>
	<i>Comment on INF01 Infrastructure and Delivery</i>	<p>P.160 Para 14.3</p> <p>P.160 Para 14.6</p>	<p>States that an Infrastructure Delivery Plan will be prepared and kept up to date so that local infrastructure can be identified, costed, and planned for to deliver the requirements of the plan. This is positive.</p> <p>Infrastructure requirements are split into critical, essential, and desirable. Highways, bus services, primary and secondary education, special education is referred to as critical, but post 16 education is not referred to unless this fall under the 'further education' banner. This should be more specific. Early Years and libraries are classified as essential infrastructure but Civic Amenities (waste) is not referred to at all in any of the categories. This needs to be added to the essential infrastructure category. It is suggested that it would be better to make reference to the requirements in the County Council's Planning Obligations Policy here so that other areas such as public health which are referred to in this document aren't missed out in the future.</p>
33	Should the policy be amended to reflect emerging Government proposals for infrastructure funding and planning gain set out in the Planning White Paper?		<p>Whilst there is not a question that explicitly references the affordability of infrastructure and the Plan's viability, the Local Highway Authority (LHA) nevertheless wishes to make the following observations.</p> <p>Although there is a current absence of any formally published comprehensive transport evidence base and information about potential sites, from its knowledge and through its involvement with the development of Local Plans for areas adjoining the Borough (including Charnwood, Blaby and the City of Leicester), there are likely to be some considerable highways and transport challenges in seeking to accommodate further growth in the Borough (as highlighted in LHA's responses to questions relating to the preferred housing strategy and delivery of employment land).</p> <p>The costs associated with addressing these challenges could be significant – especially where delivery of growth is reliant on addressing issues on the Strategic Road Network (including the M1, A5 and A46). Should it be that the costs of addressing issues were to rest solely with developers, there is a risk that this would render the Plan unviable. It will be important, therefore, for HBBC to work jointly with the LHA, Highways England and other highway authorities as necessary (e.g. Warwickshire County Council) to continue to develop evidence that identifies the impacts of its Plan proposals for growth; to identify the mitigating measures and infrastructure regard to enable that growth; and to identify and agree with the highway authorities appropriate</p>

			<p>delivery pathways and potential funding sources.</p> <p>It is the LHA’s anticipation that what is agreed will be reflected in the Plan in terms of a narrative for the infrastructure delivery ‘journey’ that we are on and the coordinated, strategy-led approach required towards the development and delivery of projects. In this context, there is a notable absence of any specific reference to the need for developer contributions towards addressing cumulative and cross-boundary impacts and associated infrastructure requirements within either the proposed infrastructure and delivery policy or supporting text.</p>
<p><i>Comment on Policy INF03 Telecommunications Infrastructure</i></p>	P.164 Para 14.16	<p>There are a number of suggested revisions to wording relating to Policy INF03, these are <i>highlighted</i> below:</p> <p>‘The key consideration for telecommunications in the Local Plan is to ensure that <i>there is universal coverage of gigabit capable broadband infrastructure for all homes and businesses in Leicestershire and new developments are fully equipped and future-proofed to provide full-fibre gigabit capable broadband provision.</i> The development of high-speed broadband technology and other communications networks will also play a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities, services and employment.’</p>	
	P.165 Para 14.19	<p>‘Superfast Leicestershire has indicated that 95.2% of properties in Hinckley & Bosworth were able to receive superfast broadband <i>(as of April 2020)</i> (the latest date for which full figures are available), which is slightly lower than the 96% county-wide average.’</p>	
	P.165 Para 14.20	<p>‘The key consideration for telecommunications provision is to ensure that new development is fully equipped and future-proofed to provide superfast broadband infrastructure and ensure retrospective installation is not required. Superfast Leicestershire has particularly highlighted the role which planning policies can play in securing this – the installation of fibre optic cables within new developments is a service which BT Openreach will generally provide to developers free of charge, but if not appropriately-timed it becomes prohibitively expensive. <i>The proposed development should allow mechanisms for securing a full fibre broadband provision for each premise and business from at least one network operator, provided on an open access basis. Such provider must deploy a Fibre to the Premise (FTTP) access network structure in which optical fibre runs from a local exchange to each premise. The optical fibre may be point-to-point or may use a shared infrastructure such as a Gigabit Passive Optical Network (GPON).</i></p> <p><i>To promote competition and consumer choice, the proposed development must engage with and secure, where possible, additional broadband provision from a variety of additional network operators including those providing services under a vertically integrated model. Such operators own the passive and active infrastructure and offer services to end users directly or through communications providers under a wholesale supply provision.</i></p>	
	P.165 Para 14.21	<p>‘The policy also addresses planning applications or prior notification applications for the installation of satellite dishes, microwave antennae, radio masts, cabinet boxes and other types of telecommunications apparatus which require planning permission. <i>It would be beneficial to have policies that support the expansion of electronic communications networks, including next generation mobile technology (such as 5G) and full fibre broadband connections. The proposed development will be required</i></p>	

			<p><i>to work with all engaged network operators to further this aspiration within the Hinckley & Bosworth areas and to seek to leverage improved gigabit capable network deployment to surrounding areas.</i> When considering such applications, the Borough Council will also have regard to the legal requirements placed upon telecommunications operators to provide an adequate service, and any technical and operational constraints that may be faced.'</p>
	<i>Glossary</i>		<p>There is no definition of some terms such as 'irreplaceable habitat', 'locally important site', 'Local Wildlife site', 'biodiversity net-gain', 'ecological network', 'ancient or veteran tree', biodiversity accounting metric' and 'priority habitat'. This will need to be addressed.</p>

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