

13. Introduction

13.1.1 Scaptoft, Thurnby and Bushby form part of the built up area of Leicester, referred to as the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA). They are suburbs that have grown up over time centred on the historic cores of Scaptoft and Thurnby, both of which have Conservation Area status. The settlements benefit from access to local services and facilities within the village centres, but also to a wide range of higher order retail, health, education and cultural services in the wider Leicester area. There is also access to employment opportunities within the PUA. Bus services to Leicester are available for residents.

13.1.2 The Leicester PUA, including these settlements, is at the top of the District's settlement hierarchy reflecting this relative ease of access to a wide range services and facilities. The Core Strategy 2011 sought to ensure that development within these settlements safeguarded their identity. Since 2011 over 260 dwellings have been built and outstanding residential commitments stood at about 700. When built out the latter will impact on the separation between Scaptoft village and built development to the south.

13.1.3 Given its sustainable position on the edge of Leicester and land availability, as evidenced through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2016, the Local Plan allocates a Strategic Development Area (SDA) on land north of Scaptoft (Policy SCI). As well as meeting local needs, the delivery of 1,200 dwellings on this allocation could help to meet any unmet need arising from other local authorities within Leicester and Leicestershire. The Scaptoft North SDA will involve the relocation of the Scaptoft Golf Course to a location south east of Houghton on the Hill, as well as the potential replacement of the Local Nature Reserve with a Local Wildlife Site in a slightly different location. No further housing development (beyond existing commitments) is planned within Bushby or Thurnby.

13.1.4 Policy GD7 Green Wedges will ensure the continued separation of Scaptoft village from Leicester whilst protecting the Thurnby Brook valley slopes as urban development extends eastwards and providing public access along public rights of way and the disused railway line. Opportunities to improve public access and recreation in the Green Wedge within the SDA will be taken as part of the master planning process.

14.1 Introduction

14.1.1 Market Harborough is the main settlement in the District, located in the far south on the border with Northamptonshire. It is an historic market town with a Conservation Area covering the town centre and providing the backdrop to a wide range of shops, services and facilities. The town is relatively self-contained with a good range of employment opportunities and good public transport links. There is a train station on the Midland Mainline providing regular services to London and Leicester, and numerous bus services connecting the town with urban centres and surrounding rural areas. The opening of a new hospital in the town early in 2017 has enhanced access to health services for the local population.

14.1.2 Since 2011 there have been over 900 dwellings completed in Market Harborough and there are just over 2,000 outstanding housing commitments. This high level of commitments reflects the fact that the Core Strategy 2011 identified Market Harborough as the main focus for development within the District and set out the principles for a strategic development area (SDA) to the north west of the town. Planning permission is in place for 1,500 homes (and associated development) at the SDA and the site is due to be built out over the next 10 years. A new road linking the north of the town to the west will be delivered as part of the scheme, providing an element of relief to the town centre.

14.1.3 Whilst Market Harborough benefits from a partial bypass, the adverse impacts of traffic on the town, particularly the centre, are of growing concern to residents and businesses. Future housing growth and changing employment needs mean that the pressure on the town's roads will continue to grow. In recognition of this, the Market Harborough Transport Strategy, led by Leicestershire County Council, contains a number of proposed measures to help deal with traffic around the town, including junction/traffic signal improvements, enhanced walking/cycling facilities, public transport improvements, lorry weight restrictions and a possible relief road.

14.1.4 Traffic is just one of the constraints taken into account in determining the level of development to be directed to the town in the Local Plan. Others include safeguarding the landscape setting, preventing coalescence with neighbouring settlements, avoiding areas of flood risk, safeguarding employment land and the limited availability of potential housing land (evidenced through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2016).

14.1.5 Designated as a Sub-Regional Centre in the settlement hierarchy, Market Harborough remains a good location for development and the continued prominence the town is an important element of the spatial strategy for the District. However, its constraints and high level of housing commitments have been taken into account in arriving at a suitable development strategy for the town. As a result the Local Plan sets out a target of at least 1,145 dwellings (in addition to completions and commitments) to 2031. The majority of these homes will be delivered on 3 sites (Policies MH1 Overstone, MH2 East of Blackberry Grange and MH3 Burnmill Farm).

14.1.6 Alongside housing provision, the Local Plan aims improve the sustainability of the town by providing suitable land to support business needs. It allocates 24 hectares of employment land across 3 sites to support business growth. These comprise land at Airfield Farm originally identified in the SDA Master Plan 2013 (Policy MH4), an extension to the existing Airfield Business Park close to the SDA (Policy MHS), and land at Compass Point Business Park which formed part of a previous allocation(Policy MH6). Several employment areas around the town are also afforded protection from potential loss to other uses, particularly housing, through Policy BE3 Existing employment.

14.1.7 Growth in the town's population and changing spending habits will also impact on the types of shops and other facilities needed in the town centre. In order to accommodate changing requirements, sites are allocated in the Plan to support retail and other town centre uses in Policy RT1 Retail needs and for tourism/leisure use in Policy RT4 Tourism and leisure . Development of these sites presents opportunities to enhance the town's heritage assets and their setting.

15.1 Introduction

15.1.1 Lutterworth is a market town located in the south west of the District, just off Junction 20 of the M1. Its position close to the County border means that that it is influenced as much by Warwickshire and Northamptonshire as it is by Leicester and Leicestershire. The town has a wide range of services, facilities and shops, most of which are focused around its historic core, a designated Conservation Area. Employment opportunities are concentrated to north of the town centre (to the east of Leicester Road) and at Magna Park, a large strategic distribution / logistics development located to the west of the town. The historic village of Bitteswell, a Conservation Area, lies close to the north western edge of Lutterworth.

15.1.2 Lutterworth is influenced heavily by transportation, with the M1 and A5 on each side of the town and the A426 passing through the town centre then linking to the M6 to the south. The impact of through traffic, particularly HGV movements, is of local concern and the town centre is an Air Quality Management Area. There is a long standing desire within the local community for a by-pass to resolve traffic issues. Lutterworth's central location and access to major routes means that it is within the 'Golden Triangle' in terms favourable locations of logistics operations. As a result there are opportunities for further strategic storage and distribution warehousing in the Lutterworth area.

15.1.3 Since 2011 the town has seen over 260 dwellings built and there are about 500 dwellings with planning permission. Many of these dwellings are to the north of the town in accordance with the Core Strategy 2011. However, more recently a development of 250 dwellings was allowed on appeal in the south east corner of the Area of Separation (as retained in the Core Strategy).

15.1.4 Given its location, accessibility and level of services, Lutterworth is identified in the Local Plan as a Key Centre and an appropriate location for significant housing and employment development. Whilst few suitable housing sites were identified adjacent to the existing built up area, land for a Strategic Development Area (SDA) to the east of the M1 was assessed as developable through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2016 and selected through the process described in Chapter 3.

15.1.5 This East of Lutterworth SDA (Policy L1) is proposed to deliver 1,500 dwellings to 2031 (and further dwellings to 2036), 10 hectares of general employment land, and 13 hectares for non-strategic distribution. The new

settlement will be largely self sufficient but will also provide additional support to Lutterworth in its role as a Key Centre. The SDA will provide a new 'spine road' linking the A426 to the north of Lutterworth to the A4304 to the east of the M1 Junction 20, via a new bridge over the motorway. This road is predicted to remove some through traffic from the town centre thus helping to improve air quality.

15.1.6 In addition to the employment land to be provided as part of the **SDA**, land to the South of Lutterworth Road/Coventry Road (Policy L2) is allocated for industrial/commercial development and several employment areas around the town are afforded protection from potential loss to other uses, such as housing, through Policy BE3 Existing employment areas. Magna Park's role as a leading regional and national distribution hub is maintained and safeguarded in Policy BE2 Strategic distribution. The policy also sets out an upper limit for further non rail-served strategic storage and distribution, as well as setting out the criteria against which proposals for such development will be assessed.

15.1.7 The Local Plan also redefines the Lutterworth, Bitteswell and Magna Park Area of Separation (Policy GD6), taking into account completions and commitments. This is particularly important in safeguarding the setting and character of Bitteswell and in protecting residential amenity.

16.1 Introduction

16.1.1 Fleckney is a large village close to the edge of the District's northern border, located 9 miles south of Leicester and 9 miles from Market Harborough. Its village centre offers a good range of shops and services to meet everyday needs and there are bus services to Leicester and Market Harborough. Businesses on the Churchill Way Industrial Estate provide employment opportunities. The Grand Union Canal runs to the west of village and Fleckney Brook through the centre.

16.1.2 Based on its level of services and facilities, Fleckney was first identified as a Rural Centre in the Core Strategy 2011 and it remains so in the Local Plan. Compared to the other larger Rural Centres (Kibworth and Great Glen), very few housing completions have taken place since 2011. However, there are housing commitments for nearly 170 dwellings.

16.1.3 Fleckney is considered a sustainable settlement and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, 2016 identified several deliverable sites. As a result the Local Plan identifies a minimum target of 295 dwellings (in addition to completions and commitments) for the village to 2031. As part of this, the Local Plan allocates land at Arnesby Road (Policy F1) to accommodate at least 130 homes. This reflects the strategic importance of the delivery of homes in Fleckney, but the community will have the opportunity to identify how the remainder of the homes are delivered through a neighbourhood plan being prepared by Fleckney Parish Council.

16.1.4 To enable employment opportunities to grow alongside new housing and to reinforce the role of the existing industrial area, the Local Plan allocates Land off Marlborough Drive (Policy F2) for industrial and commercial development. Furthermore Policy BE3 seeks to protect Churchill Way Industrial Estate and nearby Victoria Works from loss to other uses such as housing.

17.1 Introduction

17.1.1 Kibworth straddles the A6 lying some 7 miles north west of Market Harborough and 9 miles south east of Leicester city centre. The village comprises 2 parishes, Kibworth Beauchamp and Kibworth Harcourt. The cores of both parishes have Conservation Area status. The village has a good range of shops, services and facilities, including a secondary school, along with some employment opportunities. There are bus services to Leicester and Market Harborough, but its railway station closed in 1968. The village of Smeeton Westerby lies close to the southern edge of the village. The A6 is a barrier to movement across the settlement and has a detrimental impact on local air quality leading to the declaration of an Air Quality Management Area.

17.1.2 Based on its level of services, Kibworth was first identified as a Rural Centre in the Core Strategy 2011 and it remains so in the Local Plan. It is the largest Rural Centre and has seen significant housing development since 2011, primarily as a result of the build-out of a large allocation dating from the 2001 Local Plan. There have been over 400 dwellings completed since 2011 and there are planning commitments for nearly 450 further homes.

17.1.3 Given the high number of commitments already in place, there is no minimum target set for Kibworth in the Local Plan. However, in order to improve the village's sustainability by ensuring that land for business growth is available to accompany housing development, land south and west of Priory Business Park (Policy K1) is allocated for business and light industrial development.

