



Harborough District Council

## **Statement of Consultation**

**November 2024**

## Contents

1. Introduction .....	2
2. Plan Production Timeline.....	3
3. Summary of Process and Main Issues .....	4
Appendix 1: Notification email .....	32
Appendix 2: Digital Poster .....	39
Appendix 3: Regulation 18 Press Release .....	40
Appendix 4: Extract from Members Monthly Newsletter, February 2024 .....	40
Appendix 5: Consultation Database Contacts .....	41
Appendix 6: Digital Noticeboard .....	43

# Harborough Local Plan 2020-2041

## Statement of Consultation

### 1. Introduction

#### 1.1 Purpose

1.1.1 The purpose of this statement is to provide a summary of the Council's consultation process, feedback and outcomes for the preparation of the Harborough Local Plan 2020-2041. In accordance with legislative requirements the statement sets out the following information:

- Who has been consulted;
- How they were consulted;
- A summary of the main issues raised in response to the consultation;
- Next steps – How the issues raised have been actioned/will be taken into account in the Proposed Submission.

1.1.2 This is the first consultation statement following Regulation 18 consultation on Issues and Options between 16 January and 27 February 2024. Further consultation on a Proposed Submission will be undertaken in early 2025 in accordance with Regulation 19. This document will be updated to provide information on the representations made on the soundness and legal compliance of the Proposed Submission version of the Plan, in accordance with Regulation 22.

1.1.3 This statement demonstrates that consultation on the preparation of the Harborough Local Plan 2020-2041 has been undertaken in accordance with the relevant Regulations and the adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

1.1.4 The Statement of Community Involvement sets out how the Council will consult and involve the public and statutory consultees in planning matters. Full details of the current adopted Statement of Community Involvement can be viewed here [Statement of Community Involvement | Harborough District Council](#)

#### 1.2 Background

1.2.1 The new Local Plan will provide the strategic planning framework for the district for at least 15 years from adoption. The current Local Plan spatial strategy will be updated by a new strategy to deliver the required scale of development in appropriate and sustainable locations. Current Development Management policies will be reviewed and updated as necessary. In line with national planning policy, strategic policies in the new Plan will set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places and make sufficient provision for development needs and supporting infrastructure. It will also provide for the conservation and enhancement of the district's natural, built and historic environment as well as planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.

1.2.2 Where appropriate the new Plan will also set out non-strategic, more detailed policies for specific areas, neighbourhoods or types of development in line with national planning policy. Such policies can also be set out in neighbourhood plans. The new Plan will support the continued preparation of neighbourhood plans across the district by providing a clear strategic policy framework. It will identify which policies are strategic and provide the policy

context for the preparation or review of neighbourhood plans prepared by Parish Councils or neighbourhood forums on behalf of their local communities.

1.2.3 Once adopted, the new Local Plan will replace the Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 adopted in April 2019.

1.2.4 The Issues and Options and associated Sustainability Appraisal, together with a range of supporting and evidence documents were published and subjected to a six-week period of public consultation between 16 January and 27 February 2024 under Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) 2012 Regulations. We consulted specific consultation and statutory bodies, local amenity and residents' groups, businesses and individual residents. A variety of consultation techniques were used in accordance with the Statement of Community Involvement.

### 1.3 Structure of Statement

1.3.1 This Statement of Consultation consists of four sections:

- Section 1 – Introduction – outlines the Purpose, Background and Structure of Statement
- Section 2 – Plan Production Timeline – describes the timeline for preparing the Local Plan
- Section 3 – Summary of the Main Issues – provides a summary of the main issues raised during Regulation 18 consultation and how the representations received have been considered by the Council.
- Section 4 – sets out the Appendices supporting Section 3. The Appendices detail the consultation material, including which bodies and persons were invited to make representations.

## 2. Plan Production Timeline

2.1.1 The creation of a new Local Plan requires a number of thorough and robust stages of consultation. This is to enable early and ongoing engagement with the local community, businesses and organisations to develop a comprehensive document, tailored to meet the needs of the area in terms of strategy and the policies required.

2.1.2 Table 1 identifies and describes the main consultation stages.

**Table 1: Key Local Plan Stages**

Issues and Options (Regulation 18)	The Issues and Options set out the issues and options that need to be addressed by the Local Plan for how we could plan for the future of the district. This was accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal Report and a range of supporting evidence. Consultation was open for a six-week period.	16 January to 27 February 2024.
Proposed Submission (Regulation 19)	Following analysis of comments received during the Issues and Options consultation the Proposed Submission Draft will be prepared and stakeholders and the public will be invited to comment on the Plan for a minimum of six weeks prior to the new Local Plan being submitted to the Secretary of State for examination.	Between January and March 2025 (estimated)

Submission of the Local Plan for Examination (Regulation 22)	Following the Proposed Submission consultation, there is an opportunity to make minor changes to the Plan in response to the comments made, before the document, evidence and comments received are submitted to the Secretary of State. An independent examination is then carried out. Those who have submitted comments to the Proposed Submission consultation have the right to ask the Inspector to be heard in person at the Examination.	Between May and June 2025 (estimated)
Adoption*	The Plan will be adopted and will replace the saved policies of the Harborough Local Plan 2011-2031 to form the development plan, alongside the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan and 'made' Neighbourhood Plans.	Between May and December 2026 (estimated)

*\* Indicative only at this stage as dependent on detailed arrangements for Examination by the Planning Inspectorate and decisions/recommendations by the Inspector including the need for and scope of any main modifications arising out of the Examination.*

### 3. Summary of Process and Main Issues

3.1 As set out in Section 2 the Council has undertaken consultation on the Issue and Options under Regulation 18 so far. Below is a summary of how consultation was carried out. It should be noted that, in addition, we have continued to engage with elected Councillors and relevant agencies throughout the time that the new Local Plan has been in preparation.

#### 3.2 Issues and Options Consultation

3.2.1 The Issues and Options for the Harborough Local Plan 2020-2041 was the first stage of the process and invited views on a range of planning issues and potential options for the future development of the district. This consultation under Regulation 18 was carried out for six weeks between 16 January and 27 February 2024. Generic and specific questions were asked in relation to six chapters on Spatial Strategy, Environment and Sustainability, Health and Well-being, Housing Needs, Town Centres, Retailing, Leisure and Tourism, Transport, Local Services and Infrastructure. A Sustainability Appraisal was published alongside the Issues and Options consultation document.

3.2.2 To ensure the Local Plan process considers all potential sites for development the Council carried out another 'call for sites' during the consultation period to allow landowners and site promoters to put forward potential development sites for consideration during the preparation of the Local Plan. This information informs the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and will be made public when an updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is published alongside the next iteration of the Local Plan.

3.2.3 In order to ensure that the public consultation engaged as wide as audience as possible, in addition to the main consultation documents, a user-friendly Summary Guide leaflet was produced and a QR code was created to help people more easily take part. Supporting background documents were also made available to view on the website.

3.2.4 A series of staffed drop-in events were held across the district to provide interested parties with more information on the consultation documents and associated evidence base,

how to respond and an understanding of what happens next. These were advertised in the local press, social media and mentioned at meetings held before and during the consultation. In total, around 300 people visited the drop-in events which were held at the following locations:

**Table 2: Drop-in events**

24 January 2024	Market Harborough – Council Chamber, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, The Symington Building, Adam and Eve Street	10.30am to 8pm
31 January 2024	Scraptoft – Community Hub (Lounge), Malsbury Avenue	3.30pm to 7.30pm
6 February 2024	Lutterworth – The Wycliffe Rooms (Community Hall), George Street Masonic Hall	3.30pm to 7.30pm
7 February 2024	Broughton Astley – Broughton Astley Village Hall, Station Road	3.30pm to 7.30pm
13 February 2024	Kibworth – The Old Grammer School (Main Hall), School Road	3.30pm to 7.30pm

3.2.5 As well as the well-attended drop-in events the Council consulted with all the individuals and organisations registered on its planning policy consultation database as well as the specific and Duty to Co-operate bodies as detailed in Appendix 3.

3.2.6 In addition to sending information to contacts on the planning policy consultation database, all the necessary information and consultation documents were published on the authority’s website and made available for inspection at the Council’s offices for the duration of the consultation period, including Ground Floor display of Regulation 18 exhibition boards which were in situ for the duration of the consultation for those unable to attend a staffed event.

3.2.7 Social media was used and press releases were issued to Harborough Mail, Swift Flash, Resident’s newsletter, Member’s newsletter and Parish newsletters to publicise and get people talking about our plans, and various meetings were attended, including presentation to Annual Parish Liaison meeting on 23 November 2023. A copy of the article published in the Harborough Mail on 8 January 2024 is available at [Public consultation to launch into Harborough's new local plan \(harboroughmail.co.uk\)](https://www.harboroughmail.co.uk/public-consultation-to-launch-into-harboroughs-new-local-plan)

### 3.3 Main issues and feedback

3.3.1 3,449 individual representations were received from 236 respondents during the consultation. The following table shows which section of the document the responses were made against.

**Table 3: Comments and representations received by chapter**

Chapter of Issues and Options Document	Number of representations received
Introduction	421
Strategic Policies: Spatial Strategy	1651
Environment and Sustainability Policies	297
Health and Well-being Policies	231
Housing Needs Policies	619
Town Centre, Retailing, Leisure and Tourism Policies	68
Transport, Local Services and Infrastructure Policies	162

3.3.2 The breakdown of respondents by category is set out in Table 4 below. Some respondents fall into more than one category, e.g., sometimes a landowner is also a local resident, sometimes a local resident is also representing a local community group etc.

**Table 4: Issue and Options consultation responses by respondent category**

Respondent Category	Responses	Percentage
Member of the public	101	42%
Landowners, developers, agents	89	37%
Harborough Parish Councils	19	8%
Neighbouring local authorities (including LCC); Statutory Consultees (Appendix A from SCI)	9	4%
Infrastructure providers; Statutory Consultees (Appendix A from SCI)	6	3%
Community and civic groups/societies	4	2%
Statutory Consultees (Appendix A from SCI)	4	2%
National interest group	3	1%
Harborough District Councillors	1	0%
Harborough Neighbourhood Plan Forums	1	0%
Special Interest groups	1	0%

3.3.3 The following summarises the consultation responses to the questions in the Issues and Options. It should be noted that these are summaries of key issues raised and do not reference each individual response to questions. In some instances, responses from specific organisations are summarised or quoted to provide further detail on the issues that have been raised. There is no requirement to reply directly to each of the representations individually. It will however be necessary to show at submission of the plan for examination how comments made at this stage of the plan preparation process informed the policies and proposals of the final plan, both in terms of policy development and the allocation of future development sites. To that aim each topic area along with a summary of issues raised contains details of the Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account to inform future iterations of the plan.

### **3.4 Sustainability Appraisal**

- Most respondents considered the approach to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to be appropriate, at this early stage of the Local Plan process and it was welcomed by statutory bodies. Those commenting suggested the SA framework covered relevant topics and identified appropriate objectives, based on an understanding of the key issues. Commentators generally agreed that it is necessary to test growth and spatial options, for the SA to have regard to new information / evidence as it emerges and be updated accordingly, and that the SA should inform the preparation of the Plan.
- Some, including stakeholders and statutory bodies, suggested new or additional information for inclusion in the baseline and PPP review contained within the SA report. Detailed observations were made in respect of SA's objectives 1,2,3,5,6,8, and 12 around the consideration of Climatic Factors, Biodiversity & Geodiversity, Cultural Heritage, Air, Flood Risk and Sustainable Travel, and specifically about the approach to appraising the plans impact on Heritage.
- Site promoters / developers had most to say about the findings of the SA Report, both generally and more specifically in terms of additional site options that should be

appraised and its detailed findings for individual site options. Notably, that some site assessment criteria are not supported for strategic sites and that the potential for negative impacts to be mitigated is not considered. Comment was particularly strong about; the benefits of higher growth options being understated in respect of specific SA objectives, the report's conclusions for Option 4 (Strategic Sites), and the importance of the cumulative effects of policies and sites being fully considered and thoroughly tested.

- Anglian Water, disagree with the decision that SA Objective 1 is scoped out of the appraisal of site options on the basis that locating development in locations which have existing infrastructure capacity would utilise that embedded (capital) carbon in accordance with the sustainability hierarchy. Historic England note the uncertainty of effects in respect of heritage and recommend further assessment as the plan progresses and more detailed assessment work (separate to the SA) for potential site allocations. More generally, the public commented on how difficult it is to understand and comment on the SA approach and its findings.
- The suggestion that the SA ignores the option of reducing or ceasing growth, was popular amongst the public and some Parish Councils /Neighbourhood Forums. A number of site promoters / developers consider that other reasonable options require assessment (e.g. high growth to meet the Strategic Growth Plan proposals including new strategic road infrastructure, Option 3 including sites of greater than 1,500 homes) and comment that the SA report could better explain the options tested (growth and distribution), how they were formulated (to accord with PPG) and why they were selected as reasonable alternatives.
- The Habitat Regulations report prompted only limited comment, concerning the lack of explanation for the scoping out of the River Mease SAC from consideration.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Consultants on behalf of the Council made a small number of changes in response to the consultation responses, including amendments to baseline information, review of plans and programmes, key sustainability issues and a number of the SA objectives. Further details of the way in which consultation comments informed subsequent stages of the Sustainability Appraisal process are set out within the Sustainability Appraisal Report.

### **3.5 Vision and Objectives**

- Generally, respondents considered the Corporate Plan provided a useful starting point for preparing a Vision for the Local Plan, but many thought the Vision should be expanded to include specific reference to other matters.
- A common comment throughout the responses from developers was that a reference should be added on the delivery and distribution of housing, including contributions to unmet housing needs of Leicester City. Other respondents wished to see references made to infrastructure and services (such as highways, education, and healthcare), addressing climate change, natural environment, and sustainable development. Leicestershire County Council were keen for the vision to capture the role of the Plan in starting the journey of pivoting the delivery of growth across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area to the spatial strategy set out in the Strategic



Growth Plan to 2050. Others wanted the vision linked to neighborhood planning. A few respondents emphasized the Vision should be relevant to the entire plan period.

- Most respondents welcomed the objectives but suggested additions or amendments to the wording.
- Some respondents suggested that the order of the objectives could be rearranged, reprioritised or streamlined.
- Most developers generally supported Objective 1, particularly the reference to making an appropriate contribution to meeting the justified unmet housing needs of other authorities within the Leicester and Leicestershire housing market area. Conversely, some respondents thought Harborough should not take on others' housing needs.
- Suggestion that Objective 1 should include reference to infrastructure, First Homes, housing affordability issues and market housing.
- Support for Objective 2 but comments that it should be expanded to provide support for mitigation measures, regeneration of existing employment areas, and zero emission vehicles. Others think the objective should include provisions to ensure that the district capitalizes on its location and relationship with Leicester and others think it should acknowledge the high level of rural businesses in the district.
- It was suggested that Objective 3 should refer to the scale (and not just location) of new housing and employment. Other respondents from the developer sector suggested that sustainable locations should be further defined.
- A respondent thinks that the PUA should be included within Objective 4.
- Comment that Objective 5 should be adapted to include protection of the countryside, separation of villages and towns, and protection against urban sprawl.
- Responses from the public suggested that the language in Objective 6 is not strong enough, whereas responses from developers suggested the language should be kept flexible. CPRE remarks that Objective 6 should be revised to reflect the wider cross-cutting impact of climate change. Leicestershire County Council suggests that sustainable cross boundary development and associated infrastructure should be added in terms of tackling climate change.
- Historic England recommends widening of Objective 7 to incorporate heritage assets and their setting.
- Natural England welcomes Objective 8 but suggests that nature recovery should be specifically mentioned. Leicestershire County Council suggests amendment to the wording and that exploration in the district for Country Park designation is supported.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Responses to consultation were generally supportive of both the Corporate Plan being used as a starting point for the Vision and the proposed Objectives, subject to further amendments. Details of the consultation responses were considered by elected Councillors at a series of member briefings taking into account consultation responses to further refine the Vision and Objectives to better reflect climate change, methods to enhance the natural environment, and deliver sustainable development. Following feedback, Objectives were streamlined to enable a greater focus on outcome-based objectives, as opposed to process-based objectives. Objectives were broadened to encompass a range of responses. For example, in relation to delivering homes, the objective was broadened to include provision of housing to meet the specific needs of different groups of communities, rather than listing specific groups or types of accommodate needs.

### 3.6 Duty to Cooperate and Effective Joint Working

- Most respondents expressed overall support for the identified strategic planning matters. Some members of the public commented that there should be greater emphasis on increasing biodiversity, protecting the environment and the provision of social and community infrastructure. The strategic planning matter relating to 'Housing requirements and distribution (including unmet need issues)' elicited most comment with the public expressing disagreement the apportionment of Leicester's unmet need to the district and site promoters supporting the approach or advocating the potential for Harborough to increase its contribution to unmet need.
- Responding Duty to Cooperate partners and prescribed bodies were in general agreement with the matters set out and expressed a willingness to engage with the Council, with a number making specific reference to when and how their input will be helpful in the coming months. There were suggestions for additional strategic matters or where a stronger emphasis would be helpful in future collaboration with Duty to Cooperate partners and prescribed bodies. These included:
  - Supporting healthy places that enable and support healthy choices and behaviours
  - Protecting and safeguarding finite resources
  - Identifying and supporting mineral related infrastructure
  - Sustainable transport and infrastructure planning
  - Referencing and giving effect to the Strategic Growth Plan
  - Emphasising sustainable transport and cross boundary infrastructure planning.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- There was overall support for the strategic planning matters identified. The key issues identified were used as a basis for further discussions with relevant duty to cooperate partners and prescribed bodies to support the development of the evidence and inform the preparation of the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan. The Council produced a Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance that sets out details of the engagement and liaison carried out under this duty, and this will be published alongside the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan.

### 3.7 Scale of Housing Growth

- A vast majority of site promoters/developers supported high levels of growth. Most Parish Councils supported a medium level of growth. Several members of the public object to taking the unmet housing requirements from Leicester City Council. CPRE questioned the reliability of the data.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Assisting Leicester City Council to meet its unmet housing need is a key element of the duty to cooperate across Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities. The planned amount of housing in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan therefore not only addresses our own needs but also contributes a modest proportion towards meeting Leicester City's housing need. In making provision for housing, the Proposed

Submission Draft Local Plan will build in headroom to the residual requirement to account for the risk of slower or lower delivery. The consultation responses were helpful in highlighting the range of differing views in relation to this issue; with strong support at both ends of the spectrum for both the high and low growth options as well as for the medium growth option. Taking account of the range of views expressed, the medium scale of growth was considered to be the most appropriate scale of housing growth. This took account of consultation responses together with the need to balance the benefits of growth with potential environmental implications, alongside the requirements of national planning policy to plan positively and to meet the needs of neighbouring authorities unable to meet their housing needs in full.

### **3.8 Plan Period**

- The majority of respondents pointed out that 15 years was a minimum policy requirement. Many also suggested that the plan period should be extended to allow for potential delays in the plan making process.
- Some supported the base date due to alignment with the evidence whereas others wanted the base date moved forward to align with the evidence.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Preparation of the plan is on track to be adopted by 2026, ensuring compliance with paragraph 22 of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **3.9 Settlement Hierarchy**

- Most respondents supported the proposed settlement hierarchy. However, members of the public and Parish Councils were concerned over the lack of local services, facilities and other community infrastructure. They were keen to ensure that increased service capacity is delivered alongside new development.
- Majority of site promoters welcomed the proposed changes to the settlement hierarchy. However, others questioned the justification for changing the current settlement hierarchy and the placement of settlements within the proposed hierarchy. Some felt that assessment of some settlements close to the Leicester urban area did not adequately take account of their proximity and access to services and facilities within the urban area.
- Some respondents, including Leicestershire County Council, commented on lack of reference to potential new settlements in the settlement hierarchy. The County Council were also concerned that the Strategic Growth Plan was not referenced and felt there should be clarity on how sites adjoining the Leicester urban area at Oadby and/or Evington fit into the settlement hierarchy. Anglian Water considered that the overall settlement hierarchy approach is necessary and appropriate to guide growth at a scale which supports sustainable growth, investment and service provision. In their view, a focus on strategic housing allocations around Leicester potentially represents the most sustainable option for growth.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The settlement hierarchy underpins the spatial strategy of the Local Plan. The importance of the relationship between levels of development and growth with

access to local services and facilities was strongly reinforced by respondents. A hierarchy of settlements has been defined in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan based on the role and function of each settlement taking account of accessibility to services and facilities to support development, together with responses raised. This was amended, to take account of responses raised to include land adjoining both the built up areas of Leicester City and within the Borough of Oadby and Wigston within the highest tier in the hierarchy.

### **3.10 Housing Spatial Options**

- Support was received from a wide range of respondents for the spatial options on the location of housing development. Many suggested a combination or hybrid of the options.
- Alternative suggestions included a new town and no growth or considerably lower growth.
- Numerous developers referenced the settlement hierarchy and offered various views on the proportion of growth to distribute against the different levels in the hierarchy. Several commented that the distribution of development should reflect the deliverability of sites, and some highlighted the risk of relying on a small number of strategic sites.
- Neighbouring authorities, including Leicester City Council, North Northamptonshire Council, Melton Borough Council, and West Northamptonshire Council noted the possible cross boundary implications of the spatial options.
- Concern was expressed by a couple of respondents that the options did not respect existing neighbourhood plans.
- Some respondents emphasised the impact of growth on certain settlements whilst others highlighted certain settlements and sites that could accommodate more growth.
- Mixed views were submitted on the individual spatial options.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- There was no universal agreement on the approach to the location of housing development but overall, it was considered that the options or a combination of options were reasonable alternatives to consider. Deliverability and infrastructure were two of the main issues highlighted by respondents to consider in the development of a housing spatial strategy. Consultation responses were used to confirm the settlement hierarchy as a sound basis to develop the development strategy. Concerns around over reliance on strategic sites and potential deliverability delays or issues arising were important in informing the preparation of the development strategy. Further consideration of the options for the location of housing development are explored in the Development Strategy and Site Allocations papers taking account of the consultation responses and updated evidence on deliverability and infrastructure.

### **3.11 Scale of Employment Growth**

- Most respondents supported that the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment is either an appropriate evidence base, or a reasonable start point on which to formulate employment policies. Site promoters / developers, some Parish Council / Meeting / Neighbourhood Forum and the public

commented most strongly that it could be considered out of date and requires updating. The implications of BREXIT / COVID-19 pandemic and the need to understand; local market conditions, take account of strategic warehousing and re-visit some of the studies assumptions, were included amongst common reasons for a refresh.

- In terms of proposed alternatives, most respondents support Option B and either Options B or C as most appropriate. Option A was favoured most strongly by the public, whilst several site promoters / developers specifically object to this option as being too simplistic, a number suggesting that a comprehensive review of employment land is needed. Some Parish Council / Meeting / Neighbourhood Forum expressed preference for Option A alongside suggesting Option B as prudent, if appropriate. Option C only gained specific support from a couple of site promoters / developers.
- Respondents supporting Option B comment on the importance of encouraging sustainable growth, supporting a range of jobs and businesses, the logic of co-locating homes and jobs, and providing flexibility and choice to the market. A few suggest HENA figures should be regarded as a minimum.
- For a variety of reasons, a longer-term approach which provides additional land for employment is generally supported.
- There is no consensus on whether other evidence is required but suggestions; a local employment needs assessment, an urban capacity study, a critical appraisal of existing and candidate allocations and an investigation into the inward investment potential of Harborough.
- Few commented, and no consensus is provided, in terms of other scale of growth options that we can consider. A couple of site promoters / developers favour even higher growth, and a few suggest supporting agriculture, tourism, and more ambitious town centre regeneration. Many comments raise location or distribution points, rather than new options for the scale of growth.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The Council used responses received to inform the scope of commissioned specific evidence to understand employment supply/demand. The Council continued to work with partners to ensure the scale of employment growth in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan is fully supported and in line with national planning policy and takes account of the points raised in the consultation responses.

### **3.12 Location of Employment Growth**

- Most respondents support Option 1 (to increase the density of existing employment areas) to make more efficient use of employment land in sustainable places, particularly the public and Parish Council / Meetings / Neighbourhood Forums. Support for Options 2 (current approach) and 3 (co-locating jobs & homes growth) was equal but lower than for Option 1 and drawn from a wider range of respondent types including some site promoters / developers and some L&L Local authorities. Both these options generated positive comment around access, sustainability, and the potential to reduce travel. Several respondents consider that no single option provides a satisfactory solution, all having their limitations.
- All options generated several objections, predominantly from site promoters / developers. Comments include that Option 1 is not feasible (e.g. BNG, SUD's,

parking make higher densities difficult to achieve) and doesn't match with the greatest demand for industrial uses or Plan objectives. Option 2 could result in coalescence, an uncharacteristic settlement pattern, or misalign with and dilute the scale of growth in strategic locations. A number suggest Option 3 may cause smaller settlements to stagnate.

- No clear alternative options are suggested for consideration by more than 1 respondent. Suggestions include a hybrid (for various reasons), locating growth in edge of settlement locations, or in accessible locations desired by the market irrespective of their relationship to settlements.
- Most respondents, across all respondent types, support the current approach of specific policies for managing development at Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground and Leicester Airport. Comments suggest that transport and environmental impacts are of greatest concern.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Responses to the distribution of employment growth were mixed. The Council updated the employment evidence in response to the consultation responses received and a diverse range of employment opportunities are promoted in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan, including support for existing employment areas and focusing additional strategic B8 provision at Magna Park, because of the strategic road access advantages, as well as the availability of space to support both current and future business needs. The overall approach to Bruntingthorpe Proving Ground and Leicester Airport remains unchanged with continued support for automotive and aviation activities while ensuring high design standards and minimal environmental impact.

### **3.13 Approach to Strategic Warehousing**

- Most respondents provide no comment about the appropriateness of the Warehousing and Logistics in Leicester and Leicestershire: Managing Growth and Change study as an evidence base to formulate policy.
- Overall, a similar number of respondents either support the study, object to it, or suggest it as a starting point for considering the needs of the sector. Site promoters / developers are the most detailed and technical in their criticism of the appropriateness of the study, and generally suggest that it significantly understates future need. Various reasons for this are suggested. Leicester & Leicestershire local authorities, Parish Council / Meeting / Neighbourhood Forums and some other site promoters/developers are more supportive of the study, a few suggest it needs updating. The public are less encouraging of the sector in principle, and generally suggest future need is over-stated.
- A few respondents suggest additional data and research that could inform policy formation, one site promoter/developer advocates the use of an alternative methodology for forecasting future need.
- Several respondents, including site promoters/developers, a statutory consultee, and other local authorities, note the shortfall is yet to be apportioned and indicate a willingness to engage further on this, the identification of additional sites and understanding the impact of growth particularly on the SRN.



- Most respondents support the current approach to focus growth at Magna Park, for a variety of reasons. A similar number of respondents in total either object to this approach or suggest that growth should, instead or also, be directed to other locations within Area of Opportunity. Comments related to both standpoints identify the potential impacts, both positive and negative, of concentrating warehousing from the specific perspective of the type of respondent including Parish Council / Meeting / Neighbourhood Forum, the public, other local authorities, and site promoter / developer.
- Several respondents suggest issues for consideration should Magna Park be the focus of strategic warehousing, including cumulative impact on the SRN, housing need, and nationally significant sites e.g. DIRFT.
- Several new sites are promoted for development, including one crossing the Harborough / Rugby administrative boundary. An assessment of how well Magna Park and candidate sites perform against criteria set out in the Warehousing and Logistics in Leicester and Leicestershire: Managing Growth and Change study is suggested as necessary evidence for the proposed approach.
- In general respondents support some flexibility of uses at Magna Park. However, comments vary, and most do not strongly suggest a move away from the sites primary purpose as a distribution centre. A small number, including local authorities, canvass caution that flexibility should not allow main town centres uses or result in a type of development that cannot safely and satisfactorily be accommodated the surrounding road network.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The Council strengthened the evidence base, including the Harborough Local Housing and Employment Land Evidence and Strategic B8 Needs Analysis, and continued engagement with neighbouring local authorities to ensure the approach to strategic warehousing accords with national planning policy and responds to the points raised in the consultation. The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan includes additional strategic B8 provision at Magna Park that offers strategic road access advantages, as well as the availability of space to support both current and future business needs.

### **3.14 Small and Medium Housing Sites Requirement**

- Several respondents supported the provision of small and medium housing sites in accordance with national policy. Some respondents suggested small and medium housing developments could be delivered through site allocations whilst others suggested the subdivision of sites. Developers emphasised the importance of identifying viable small and medium housing sites. HBF highlighted difficulties of securing implemented planning permission if small sites are not allocated. Others advocated a flexible policy approach to guide development outside allocations. HBF suggested that over 10% of the Local Plan housing requirement could be allocated on small sites and that a range of sites should be considered. Others reiterated that the best way to diversity the housing market and deliver small and medium housing developments is to maximise choice and competition. Some developers emphasised the practical difficulties of sub-dividing sites. Other ways suggested to help diversity the housing market included a move away from big sites and market towns, more

affordable housing, infill plots and redevelopment, and custom and self-build housing or community led projects. One respondent objected to small and medium housing sites on the basis that small sites give piecemeal development and lack of joined up infrastructure.

- Responses to the question on the subdivision of sites to allow small and medium houses were split from respondents that promoted sites for development. Half objected citing reduced viability and market interest for master builder. Supporters of subdivision often qualified the support that it would be subject to market interest or phasing. Subdivision was not supported by parish councils and neighbourhood forums where it would reduce Section 106 contributions and others suggested it was unrealistic to expect large developers to sub-divide land to enable smaller builders' companies to enter the market. Others suggested smaller developments were generally better quality.
- Leicestershire County Council responded, in its role of landowner, that sub-division would only be realistic in circumstances where the two parts of the sites could be developed independently and viably.
- Leicestershire County Council recognised that sub-division of sites can stimulate a more diverse and competitive housing market but would only be acceptable within a policy framework that, at least, allowed for cohesive master planning and for sub-division of contributions.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- A range of comments were received on the provision of small and medium housing sites to meet national planning policy requirements to promote the development of a good mix of sites. The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan supports delivery of a balanced mix of housing, including allocation and support for a range of housing sites across the district through both the Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plans.

### **3.15 Site Selection Methodology**

- There was general agreement with the methodical approach from site promoters, Parish Councils, statutory consultees, and the public. The comments mainly related to stage 4 (technical assessment and deliverability of sites) and stage 5 (emerging new Local Plan policies and Neighbourhood Plan policies) of the methodology.
- At stage 3 (assessment of sites against the preferred spatial strategy) there were comments from site promoters suggesting that sites should not be excluded just because they were outside the chosen spatial strategy. Other site promoters suggested that sites close to the urban area of Leicester should be preferred due to the agreement for Harborough district to take unmet housing need from Leicester.
- At stage 4, site promoters would like to see technical work they have completed included in the assessment. They would also like more engagement with site promoters at this stage, or a modification process built in for fact checking as a minimum. Site promoters also asked that opportunities arising from the development, as well as recognition of mitigation opportunities be recognised in the assessment. Historic England requested their advice note be used.
- At stage 5, neighbourhood plan groups and parish councils felt that additional weight should be given to neighbourhood plans and their allocations, and that allocations should be automatically taken forward into the local plan. Site promoters felt the



Council should consider the age of the made neighbourhood plans, and that given the new Local Plan will have a new spatial strategy, all neighbourhood plan allocations and policies should be tested against this before taking them forward.

- The Environment Agency requested consideration of the effects of climate change and careful consideration to ensure sensitive receptor development e.g. housing is not located in such proximity to commercial or employment sites that this could have adverse effects on one or the other party. Further comment at this stage from site promoters and the county council included reference to ensuring sufficient infrastructure, ensuring viability in terms of transport infrastructure, and consideration of potential for renewable energy infrastructure and connectivity.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The site selection methodology, amended as necessary to address the issues raised in responses to consultation, was applied to all sites selected through the subsequent site selection process. Comments received were used to inform and further strengthen the relationship between the consideration of sites through Neighbourhood Plans and through the Local Plan.

### **3.16 Strategic Green Designations**

- Most respondents supported the current approach of using Green Wedges, Areas of Separation and Countryside designations to manage development. Support was particularly strong amongst members of the public, Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Forums. Some suggested additional Green Wedges and Areas of Separation to help guide development, protect the identity of settlements as well as providing green spaces for people and wildlife. Support for continued allocation within Neighbourhood Plans was also given.
- Several site promoters objected to the current approach, suggesting these policy tools are too restrictive on development while others suggested that these policy tools should only be used in the most sensitive locations.
- Among members of the public and Parish Councils there was little appetite for reviewing Green Wedge/ Area of Separation designations to take account of allocations. Rather they were in favour of retaining and, where possible, extending the designations to strengthen their contribution to local green infrastructure.
- In general, site promoters supported the review of Green Wedge and Areas of Separation boundaries to take account of potential allocations. Some felt that without such a review achieving a sustainable spatial strategy in the new Local Plan could be undermined.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Evidence was updated and the Green Wedges, Areas of Separation and Countryside designations remain a feature in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan to manage development as supported by most respondents and preserve the rural character and rich heritage of the District. In response to consultation comments, two additional Areas of Separation are proposed, in order to retain the distinctive identities of specific settlements. Green Wedge boundaries were reviewed in line with responses received, to ensure that the Local Plan plans positively, whilst maintaining their role.

### 3.17 Design Quality

- One respondent complemented the current approach to design stating that the quality and appearance of buildings in Market Harborough is high.
- There was some support for preparing a district wide design code, related to an updated design policy in the Local Plan in collaboration with stakeholders. Some respondents referenced the NPPF and Levelling Up and Regeneration Act. Other comments received are summarised below:
  - A design code needs to be correctly defined and carefully applied and the application considered in relation to progressing the development.
  - The essential policy framework delineated in the new Local Plan is critical in ensuring the practicability and longevity of a design code.
  - It is also important to consider that these codes do not prohibit permission in principle through requiring too much detailed and technical work upfront which could slow down the overall planning process.
  - To ensure we have genuinely sustainable development, these requirements must be enforced.
- Other respondents did not consider a district wide design code, related to an updated design policy in the Local Plan would be an appropriate approach. A summary of the comments included:
  - The Local Plan can only set high level design criteria. Specific design guides and codes should be created through neighbourhood planning, so they are developed in line with specific local requirements.
  - District design code would be overly restrictive and limiting of community decision making.
  - Further design codes not necessary if the current code ensures housing is built to a high standard and in keeping with the surrounding environment.
- Respondents that considered further design codes necessary set out the following issues to consider:
  - Greater attention should be paid to net zero carbon and wildlife friendly developments, or health and wellbeing of residents.
  - Support for the implementation of design codes for large development, biodiversity net gain and a design code with measures for resilience to climate change including net zero development.
  - It was emphasised that a design code needs to be specific but not overly prescriptive.
  - One of the key points identified was that design needs to be in keeping with the local area as well as being distinctive.
  - Suggestion that a design policy could be cross referenced in the green infrastructure policy.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Responses demonstrate that design is a key issue to address in the Local Plan and that understanding the balance between prescription and flexibility requires careful consideration. Part 2 of the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan set out key development management policies that guide development standards for planning applications for development, ensuring high-quality design, safety and sustainability

benchmarks, whilst allowing for design innovation. Detailed comments received in relation to design codes will be used to inform the preparation of any future work.

### **3.18 Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change**

- A range of potential policy interventions relating to climate change mitigation and adaption were suggested by respondents, including:
  - Maximising opportunities for on-site multi-functional green and blue infrastructure provision focusing on nature-based solutions, carbon sequestration and managing flood risk through sustainable drainage systems as part of wider Green and Blue Infrastructure provision
  - Ensuring new development is in sustainable locations to minimise the distance of private vehicles and associated carbon emissions and maximising opportunities for the provision of active travel and the use of public transport.
  - Considered design - such as passive design measures and potentially exploring building energy efficiency standards above buildings regulations, including tree/roof cover in public spaces, rainwater harvesting collection, maximising the use of sustainable materials and construction methods in new development.
  - Community-led Renewable Energy Projects such as the provision of renewable energy initiatives at the community level including solar panel installations on public and private buildings, wind turbines and community-owned renewable energy facilities and maximising the provision of electric vehicle charging in residential and employment development.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan adopted a holistic approach to the environment, integrating climate action and nature conservation informed by the consultation responses and strongly influenced by the Climate Change and Renewable Energy Study. Responses received relating to the location of new development helped inform both the development strategy and site selection methodology as outlined above. Comments relating to the prioritization of sustainable active travel modes, the retention and enhancement of green and blue infrastructure networks, sustainable drainage, energy efficiency, renewable energy generation and sustainable construction techniques informed the preparation of specific policies within the Local Plan.

### **3.19 Flood Risk**

- There was overwhelming support for the preparation of an up-to-date Strategic Flood Risk Assessment as part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan. There was recognition that the SFRA and the associated sequential test forms an important element in identifying suitable and sustainable locations for new growth.
- Both the Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority (Leicestershire County Council) strongly supported the approach. Natural England welcomed the commitment to Sustainable Drainage Systems as both an effective way of both managing surface water and contributing to biodiversity net gain.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- An up-to-date Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was available to inform the Proposed Submission Local Plan in accordance with national planning policy, and the incorporation of Sustainable Urban Drainage within major developments to effectively manage surface water was supported. Consultation responses informed detailed policies within the Local plan relating to flood risk and sustainable drainage.

### **3.20 Water Supply and Wastewater Management**

- Most respondents agreed that an up-to-date understanding of water supply and wastewater capacity issues is crucial. River pollution, aquifer protection, potential negative impacts on wildlife and pressure on ageing drainage systems were referred to in comments by some members of the public and Parish Councils.
- The Environment Agency and the Lead Local Flood Authority were strongly supportive of the approach. Natural England, in highlighting the importance of maintaining and improving water quality, advocated policies on water efficiency, Sustainable Drainage Systems and water sensitive design to manage water on site as part of climate change adaptation. Both Anglian Water and Severn Trent were supportive and referring to their role in the Water Cycle Study as an initial step in their involvement in the Local Plan process.
- Some site promoters were keen to have the opportunity to understand the implications of this study given that it will contribute to the identification of an appropriate strategy and site selection. The Home Builders Federation urged a reliance on the standards set out in the Building Regulations rather than pursuing higher standards through Local Plan policy.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Respondents clearly consider it important to understand issues around water supply and wastewater capacity in preparing the Local Plan. A Joint Water Cycle Study Scoping Report was available to inform the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan in line with responses received.

### **3.21 Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

- It was widely recognised that biodiversity and geodiversity are important issues, with continued support for the existing policy. Comments were made about the need for protection and enhancement of existing habitats with ongoing management plans. It was suggested that integrating green corridors and wildlife habitats within urban areas will enhance biodiversity. Some advocated support for farmers and agricultural land whilst others encouraged the creation of natural spaces.
- Some requested further information and explanation about Biodiversity Net Gain and Local Nature Reserve Strategies in the Local Plan.
- Others suggested that as the Local Nature Reserve Strategies emerge it will be important for the Local Plan to take this into account.
- In terms of Biodiversity Net Gain there was some support for a higher than 10% target whilst others argued against this approach stating it conflicts with national policy guidance, so anything above would need to be clearly evidenced and justified. Concern was expressed over council resources for Biodiversity Net Gain policy implementation, accurate measuring, reporting, management and enforcement.

Other concerns raised were regarding the impact of Biodiversity Net Gain on the housing delivery and viability of development. Also, there is need for the policy wording and/or supporting text to be clearer about the differentiation between the mitigation hierarchy and the Biodiversity Net Gain delivery hierarchy.

Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Recognition of the importance of biodiversity and geodiversity is welcomed. The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan continues to protect and support enhancement of biodiversity and geodiversity, including contribution to the delivery of the emerging Local Nature Reserve Strategy in accordance with consultation responses and national planning policy.

### **3.22 Heritage Assets and the Historic Environment**

- There was broad support for the proposed approach of preserving and enhancing the heritage assets of local and national significance. It was suggested that it is also important to identify and protect locally significant assets by working with communities to enhance and develop them.
- It was suggested that measures for adaptive reuse of historic buildings to address the needs of climate change should be considered, as well as integrating heritage conservation into new developments.

Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Preserving and enhancing our heritage and rural character underpins the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan in line with consultation responses. Comments received informed a detailed policy as well as site specific requirements, seeking to integrate heritage conservation into new development.

### **3.23 Healthy Communities**

- There was support for both option 1 (continue with the current approach of incorporating health and wellbeing with the other themes and issues explored in the Local Plan, such as green infrastructure, open space and design codes) and option 2 (create a specific planning policy that encourages healthy lifestyles and improves the wellbeing of the communities in the district based upon evidence) as well as a proposed combination for both approaches. It was suggested that the most effective approach would be to cross reference health with other themes such as green infrastructure, open space and climate change. Others considered that there is merit to having a health section or policy to give greater prominence and set out expectations.
- Physical and mental health benefits of access to green and blue routes and spaces, as well as incorporating active travel should be emphasised. Increasing the use of walking and cycling links as well as improving accessibility will help to promote the health and well-being of local communities.
- The other benefits of green infrastructure were also recognised such as helping to mitigate health risks such as urban heat stress, noise pollution, flooding and poor air quality.

### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan incorporates a suite of policies aimed at achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places, including specific requirements for a Health Impact Assessment in line with unanimous support for policies aimed at achieving healthy, inclusive and safe places which enable and support healthy lifestyles and mixed views on the approach to be adopted.

### **3.24 Blue-Green Infrastructure**

- There was support for continuation of the existing approach with many respondents agreeing that access to Blue and Green Infrastructure provides health and well-being benefits. Specifically, the canal network was identified by some as important asset for the district that needs to be protected and enhanced.
- There was support for reference to the current assets in the district particularly as they have strong links with historic landscape character, urban grain and townscape as well as with specific heritage assets and/or setting.
- It was recognised that Blue and Green Infrastructure plays an important role as a wildlife habitat supporting a wide range of biodiversity and providing a link between other green spaces and habitats.
- Continue to protect, improve and enhance Blue and Green Infrastructure, including improved connections of the Blue and Green Infrastructure network.
- Support the identification of natural and semi-natural features as important assets.
- Apart from the excellent work on the canal much else in the Blue and Green Infrastructure has been left. The River Welland, especially through the park, needs some serious work to prevent it flooding for instance.
- There were limited comments submitted in response to the consultation question on alternative approaches to Blue and Green Infrastructure. Some respondents did not identify an alternative approach whilst others had no comment. The few suggestions included:
  - Introduce more sites of this nature across the district
  - More community engagement
  - New developments should seek to remove existing culverts and avoid culverting new sections of the watercourse
  - Opportunities should be sought to remove impoundments such as weirs within watercourses, as these structures prevent the migration of fish and other natural processes.

### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Responses to the consultation showed strong support for the continued protection, improvement and enhancement of Blue and Green Infrastructure. The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan continues to support the protection and enhancement of high-quality multi-functional green and blue infrastructure as well as open spaces informed by the Blue and Green Infrastructure Study in line with responses received.

### **3.25 Open Space, Sport and Recreation**

- It was acknowledged that open space, sport and recreation promotes good health and wellbeing within local communities. There was support for continuing with a



similar approach with a greater emphasis on accessibility and inclusivity in recreational spaces.

- Some requested that more open spaces and facilities for sports & recreation are provided, with reference to a new leisure centre at Broughton Astley.
- It was recommended that the latest evidence and standards in the Green Infrastructure Framework provides a basis for the approach.
- Any forthcoming policy setting out quantity provision standard could define the actual on-site standards for natural and semi natural green space typology where a district wide provision was identified in the Provision for Open Space Sport and Recreation - Delivery Plan.
- It was suggested that the recommendations on park design from Make Space for Girls should be considered where possible.
- Maintenance and improvement of existing public open spaces, sports and recreational facilities should also be given policy support.
- Objection was raised to the expansion of 3G turf football pitches due to likely harmful impact on the environment. To prevent further microplastic pollution there should be robust containment measures in place.
- The role played by neighbourhood plans to identify local open space, sports and recreation sites should be acknowledged.
- Involve local people and groups as early as possible.
- Open areas and country parks should be managed with local engagement, with a target of getting residents of all ages closer to nature and being empowered to protect and enhance their neighbourhood.
- Clearer information should be provided to enable to comment more effectively rather than asking for comments on generic policies
- There were no significant changes suggested to the Council's current approach to open space, sport and recreation in the Local Plan. Comments included:
  - The role played by neighbourhood plans in the identification of local OSSR sites should be acknowledged.
  - Support for the options and recommendations put forward in the Open Space Strategy.
  - Developers identified potential open space provision as part of their development proposals.
  - It was suggested that the north of the district needs the Local Plan to identify sites for higher level facilities.
  - Create multi-use recreational spaces that cater to a wider range of activities, age groups and users. There is the opportunity to share some open space for school and community use e.g. all-weather pitches.
  - There is a role for parish councils to maintain public parks and open spaces
  - Reinstate the requirement for developers to pay a commuted sum to cover the first fifteen years of any new estates' life, to cover the grounds maintenance and repairs costs of such developments. All areas of public open space, play areas and verges should be managed by the Council.
  - It was considered that the information and evidence provided does not explain clearly what is being done. Every strategy seems to be so high level. Clearer information is requested to enable to comment more effectively.

Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- There was broad support for continuing to include standards for the amount and type of open space, sport and recreation provision required in future developments within the Local Plan. Updated evidence was used to embed local standards in the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan.

### **3.26 Local Green Space**

- Most respondents supported the identification of Local Green Spaces in Neighbourhood Plans. Those that supported the identification of Local Green Spaces in Neighbourhood Plans and made comments remarked that Neighbourhood Plans have been created by the local community to preserve and protect green spaces that the local community consider important to their settlement because residents understand the value of the area. It was also suggested that Local Green Spaces should be identified in Neighbourhood Plans with local consultation. Others reiterated that it is essential the Local Green Space sites are identified locally, ideally through neighbourhood plans. Over 90% of the Local Green Spaces sites identified in the Kettering Local Plan were rejected by the Inspector because they had not been identified locally and were not therefore considered 'special'.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Responses mainly supported designation of Local Green Spaces through the neighbourhood planning process. The opportunity to identify Local Green Spaces will remain with Neighbourhood Plans and not the Local Plan in line with the consultation responses.

### **3.27 Affordable Housing**

- Generally, there is support from the public for the policy for affordable housing requirements to remain at 40%. It is recognised that there is a national crisis in terms of affordable housing delivery, and it is recognised that there is a national crisis in terms of affordable housing delivery. Whilst supported there is a clear request for evidence to support the policy approach however on a site-by-site basis and subject to viability.
- Comments from the site promoters and developers highlight the level of historic shortfall and that the plan should seek to increase delivery by adopting a high growth scenario, rather than seek affordable housing as a percentage.
- The level of need is high 439 dwellings in the HENA (2022) when considered against the standard method for figure of 534 for Harborough District.
- The glossary in the Local Plan should be expanded to include First Homes. The role of First Homes should be considered within the emerging Local Plan.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Responses mainly supported the provision of affordable housing at 40%, subject to supporting evidence and a viability assessment. Updated evidence, including the Harborough Local Housing and Employment Land Evidence and the Harborough Local Plan Viability Assessment, support the continued affordable housing requirement of 40% on sites capable of accommodating 10 dwellings within the Proposed Submission Local Plan in line with consultation responses. The glossary



for the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan includes definition of affordable housing consistent with national planning policy.

### **3.28 Mix of Housing**

- General support for HENA mix of housing on larger sites, the mix on small to medium sites should be viewed on a site-by-site basis based on up-to-date evidence and flexible to support the delivery of development to guide development over the course of the Local Plan.
- The Council should consider setting a site threshold that the mix should apply to potentially over sites over 100 dwellings.
- In response to the question as to how the Local Plan should respond to the delivery of bungalows, there was general support that bungalows should be encouraged, however if this does not place a policy requirement on their delivery and that there is flexibility. There were comments in terms of that bungalows are not the most efficient use of a site and that should not be introduced as a blanket approach in terms of a requirement for all development.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Responses mainly supported the mix of sites identified in the Housing and Economic Needs Assessment, provided this is supported by evidence and provides flexibility over the plan period. The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan sets out the expectation for residential development to provide an appropriate mix of housing types, tenures and sizes, aiming to address changing housing needs in response to consultation responses and to reflect the Harborough Housing and Employment Study.

### **3.29 Older Person and Specialist Housing**

- Generally, most respondents were in support of specific site allocations for specialist housing that are near or with access to existing services.
- There were some suggestions by developers and promoters and Leicester City Council for a criteria-based approach to address and understand the needs of the district individually before selecting sites.
- Site promoters and developers took the view that the Council should allocate sites as a proportion on strategic sites.
- Parish councils/meetings/neighbourhood forums supported provision as a requirement for all development and sites above a threshold

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The consultation responses reinforce the Council's evidence on the projected ageing demographic make-up of the district. The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan supports the provision of supported and specialist accommodation in line with the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Employment Needs Study and other evidence, including representations, to ensure a robust, deliverable approach that meets the requirements of national policy and local needs.

### **3.30 Accessible and Adaptable and Wheelchair User Dwellings**

- Site promoters and developers broadly disagreed with the requirement for all dwellings to meet the M4(2) standard (accessible and adaptable dwellings) and 10%-25% of dwellings to meet the M4(3) standard (wheelchair user dwellings) as these standards are set out in the Building Regulations and it is not necessary to repeat within the local plan, this view was also supported by the Home Builders Federation.
- It was identified that setting M4(2) standards as a requirement for new homes in the district may not be an appropriate approach since it would not take into consideration site characteristics or location, which may not be most suitable for those with access or mobility issues.
- It was suggested such requirements should be subject to a whole plan viability assessment.
- The requirements were supported by several neighbouring parish councils/neighbourhood plan forums
- Most comments disagreed that a different approach is necessary between market housing and affordable housing
- The same accessibility standards would provide greater resilience in housing stock and ensure equitable access to suitable housing for all segments of the population.
- It should be at the developer's discretion which standards are applied to the different tenures across their site.
- Respondents suggested a distinction needs to be made between M4(3)a wheelchair adaptable housing and M4(3)b wheelchair accessible housing.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan sets out requirements for a percentage of major developments to meet technical standard M4(3)A and M4(3)B of the Building Regulations to address the needs outlined in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Employment Needs Study. All policies were assessed for their impact on viability in accordance with relevant government guidance to address concerns raised in responses.

### **3.31 Space Standards**

- Site promoters and developers referred to paragraph 135 (and footnote 52) of the NPPF and the Planning Practice Guidance, in that any policy requiring use of the nationally described space standard will need to be fully justified, including evidence that takes account of the need, viability and timing.
- It was suggested that there needs to be an understanding on the impact of viability of such a policy.
- Many neighbouring parish councils/neighbourhood plan forums supported the requirement to use nationally described space standards.
- Incorporating these standards can ensure a minimum quality and size of living space, which is crucial for the well-being and comfort of residents.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- It recognized that Building Regulations amendments were subject to public consultation, however no specific timeframe was provided, and further uncertainty

has since been created by a change in Government. The Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Employment Needs Study and other evidence support policies on accessibility. All policies must be assessed for their impact on viability in accordance with relevant government guidance. In line with consultation responses, the potential to use space standards was explored, but insufficient evidence of need as required through national planning practice guidance was identified.

### **3.32 Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers**

- There was not a clear preference among the four options identified in the consultation document, with each receiving a similar level of support.
- Leicestershire County Council highlighted that transit need is not mentioned. They added there is a huge need for local authority managed transit sites in Leicestershire. It was suggested that and broadly it has been identified that a site in the north of the county and one in the south would help with accommodating unauthorized caravans. They suggest that a transit site would only need to be big enough to hold between 6 and 12 caravans and would not necessarily be in use all year round. Suitable land suggested for transit sites included disused depots or car parks, or car parks in use but under-utilized.
- Leicestershire County Council also noted the possibility of converting existing housing stock into single Gypsy and Traveller pitches, where the property becomes the amenity block and the garden/driveway is large enough to accommodate a caravan, which they say would enable Gypsy and Travellers to live in appropriate accommodation without the need to allocate land specifically for the purpose.
- Most comments suggest sites capable of accommodating up to 10 pitches would be appropriate. Leicestershire County Council noted that small family sites tend to be 2-6 pitches, with sites of 5 and above being more financially viable, also noting that sites of 10-15 pitches are manageable, but more costly to run.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Further specific evidence was commissioned to strengthen the evidence and provide detailed information on the identification and assessment of sites and used to inform the preparation of detailed policies.

### **3.33 Self-build and Custom Housebuilding**

- Site promoters and Parish Councils agree that any provision for self-build must be based on local evidence of identified need, including the self-build register. Some site promoters would like to see a flexible approach to self-build, with opportunities for provision outside of the spatial strategy and adjacent to settlements of all scales. They would like to see a criteria-based policy for self-build. The public were keen that settlements at the bottom of the hierarchy were exempt from this idea.
- Site promoters would like to see flexibility that any plots not sold within 12 months would return to market housing.
- Site promoters were largely against the idea of relying on provision of self-build plots on larger sites while some Parish Councils and public supported it. Site promoters state that there would be issues with consistency of design principles as well as practical challenges in the build phase. These include provision of independent construction access and infrastructure, health and safety issues on sites, and

uncertainties over deliveries. They also suggest that provision of self-build on large sites would slow delivery of much needed housing. Finally, they state that there cannot be any evidential justification for creation of the threshold wherein self-build plots will be required, and housebuilders cannot all be expected to provide a custom build option as part of their product.

- Parish Councils, public and site promoters were supportive of identifying smaller sites for self-build. Some site promoters felt this could cause difficulties in ensuring delivery rates due to timescales as the Local Plan covers a 20-year period and the requirement for need from the self-build register to be met within 3 years.
- There was general agreement from all parties that the local connection test set out would be appropriate if the Council were to introduce one. There were some comments that a family test would be difficult to prove, and that it is too restrictive and discounts longer term connections to the area.
- Parish Councils and the public were equally divided in whether the Council should introduce a Local Connection test. Some felt that without the test the system is open to abuse by small scale builders and others felt that justification for having it ensures local needs and connections are prioritised resulting in improved community cohesion and accommodating vulnerable members of the community. However, others felt that introducing a test could deter people from exploring other forms of development which have less impact on the existing settlement.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan sets out requirements for integration of self-build and custom plots in larger housing developments in response to consultation responses, local evidence and viability testing.

### **3.34 Town Centres, Retailing and Leisure**

- Overall support that existing town centres should be supported and protected to ensure they are sustainable and thrive. Comments also state that it is important that the Local Plan recognises the services (including retail) that meet the day-to-day needs of communities in villages without a centre as defined by the Local Plan, with an objective of introducing a spatial strategy and policies that will support the retention and improvement in the availability of such services over the course of the plan period.
- Statutory Consultee support for the consideration of High Street Heritage Action Zones as are aware of the need for flexibility for space in towns and villages.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- The Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan protects and supports the enhancement of community services and facilities that meet the day-to-day needs of local communities without a defined centre in line with the consultation responses and continued support for the ongoing promotion and protection of town and village centres.

### **3.35 Tourism**

- Overall support for proposals which encourage tourism and the growth in visitor numbers. Such an approach is likely to support economic growth and the availability of job opportunities in the local area and if done sustainably.
- It is recognised that the canal network within the district is an important visitor attraction, as well as providing links to other visitor destinations and attractions in the locality. Foxton Locks is a visitor attraction of local and regional importance which plays a significant role in supporting the local visitor and tourist economy. Appropriate and sensitive development can help to enhance the role of the canal network as an important element of the local visitor economy and thus encourage more visitors to the area by making it an attractive environment for people to enjoy as a recreational resource.
- Specifically, Natural England suggests that new policy should include the support for biodiversity enhancement and access to nature as this can be an essential part of creating nature-rich, beautiful places which would be attractive for tourism. In addition, safe traffic-free routes for walking and cycling can also increase visitor numbers and boost tourism. However, additional visitor numbers must avoid harm to designated nature conservation sites and other sensitive locations and would need to be carefully planned and managed.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Support for tourism and important attractions in the district is noted. It is recognized that the Local Plan must adopt a balanced approach in line with consultation responses, and the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan supports tourism and leisure activities, while protecting the character of the area.

### **3.36 Transport**

- Several developers supported Option A to continue with the approach in the current Local Plan which recognises the rural nature of the district and encourages more sustainable transport modes whilst acknowledging that private cars have an important role for residents in the context of the spatial strategy.
- CPRE supported Option B that promotes policies actively encouraging sustainable transport. The organisation recommends effective policies will embed it into site selection, location and design and that consideration must be given to policies which require greater financial contributions towards public transport or improving cycling/walking infrastructure in preference to road and junction upgrades. Some developers recognised Option B accords with national policy but needs to be considered on a site-by-site basis. Several developers recommended greater emphasis will need to be had on Option B to encourage a significantly improved transition to active travel and sustainable modes of transport. Numerous Parish Councils supported the emphasis on sustainable transport but acknowledged the role of private cars for residents. In support of Option B, Natural England suggested strong links to climate change and green infrastructure.
- The options most popular with the public was Option A and Option B.
- Most respondents suggested a combination of Option A and Option B. The rural nature of the district was recognised but also the emphasis placed on the active delivery of sustainable transport modes alongside additional housing growth. Members of the public emphasised the importance of implementing mitigation solution in a reasonable timescale.

- Leicestershire County Council supported a mixture of Option A and Option B acknowledging the spatial strategy and the need for and actively promoting sustainable transport at the same time as recognising a need for private car use. The County Council added that any option should include consideration of safe walking routes, provision of suitable transport links and sufficient parking, planned around local community hubs.
- Several respondents pressed for recognition of the continued role of private car use given the spatial spread and rural nature of the district whilst accepting policies should actively encourage opportunities to promote public transport and active travel.
- Option C that allows for development and accepts that junctions and links will continue to operate above capacity was the least popular option. Leicestershire County Council advised that Option C is likely to lead to poorly accessible and therefore unattractive sites and/or negative feedback of increased traffic problems adversely impacting sustainable travel opportunities. Others suggested it would mean continuing with a transport system that is already above capacity in the centre of Lutterworth.
- One respondent suggested that Option C appears to be the most realistic.
- Historic England advised that any approach should consider impacts on the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings.
- One respondent recommended air quality impacts should inform the appropriate strategy. Statutory consultees suggested that any options for transport infrastructure provision and approach should be informed by a robust evidence base and close working with the relevant highway authority. Leicester City Council suggested further assessment of cross-boundary infrastructure.
- The site promoter for South Whetstone indicated that strategic scale opportunities have the potential to address a variety of the options and broader considerations.
- One respondent referred to the CIL tests that development can only be required to mitigate its own impacts and cannot be required to address existing issues and shortfalls in provision.
- Some developers expressed support the option that encourages growth in locations that have greater access to more sustainable forms of transport use.
- A respondent highlighted safe walking routes and absence of traffic alleviation and bypass in Kibworth.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- There was no consensus amongst respondents to the various options for delivering necessary growth whilst seeking the most sustainable forms of movement and mitigating any adverse impacts. Accepting that junctions and links will continue to operate above capacity was the least popular option and demonstrates strong support for policy intervention. In line with consultation responses, the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan promotes sustainable transport options and active travel, as well as setting clear requirements for safe access, servicing and parking arrangements to ensure that new developments are designed to support safe, efficient and inclusive transport networks for all users.

### **3.37 Local Services and Infrastructure**



- Support for continuing with the current approach of seeking on-site provision and financial contributions to a wide range of infrastructure where new development requires the provision was provided from developers suggesting that it allows for onsite provision which means new infrastructure in a variety of places across the district rather purely focused on places with larger infrastructure project requirements. Other respondents supported Option A on the basis that it appears to be working. Conversely another respondent suggested the Council has not been sufficiently supporting contributions towards a wide range of services and facilities and recommended prioritisation of public sector services and inclusion of active/low carbon travel as well as biodiversity, green spaces and natural habitats contributions. Another suggested that infrastructure provision should be aimed towards the delivery of net zero.
- Several respondents, mostly developers, suggested a blended approach of Option A and Option B. However, it was recommended that further evidence is required to fully assess the options, including evidence on viability and infrastructure delivery.
- A supporter of Option B suggested it allowed the district to develop whilst retaining the community focus of its various and varied settlements. Another respondent that supported Option B suggested there has been incremental developments that are cumulatively very significant but individually did not justify infrastructure development and pooling funds would mitigate this.
- One respondent considered the infrastructure led approach of Option C the most realistic. Some supporters of Option C and others wanted it acknowledged that infrastructure has not grown to support development. It was suggested that a brake should be put on housing development where infrastructure improvements do not take place. Some developers suggested that Option C aligned with the requirements of the NPPF. Numerous Parish Councils supported Option C on the basis that it allows existing settlements to protect their identities and does not put further burden on existing infrastructure in smaller settlements.
- A respondent recognized strengths and potential weaknesses of each option, but on balance suggested Option C or B.
- A respondent cautioned against Option 3 that tends to result in enlargement of existing infrastructure to the point where it is too large to be optimum.
- A respondent emphasised the importance of delivering infrastructure at the earliest stage of any development and before any sites come forward, whose development will impact on existing infrastructure capacities.
- Numerous developers emphasised that planning obligations must be necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, directly related to the development; and fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind.
- A respondent used the answer to this question as opportunity to suggest a bypass is needed in Kibworth and train station using hub. Others suggested infrastructure improvements and additional facilities.
- Leicestershire City Council was of the view that, in practice, there isn't any choice to be made between the artificial set of options and suggested an approach which draws on all three options is likely to be the most appropriate in order to ensure that all communities have the necessary infrastructure to meet their future everyday needs with strategic developments delivering the needs of the new community in a way that compliments existing provision locally and smaller developments providing the necessary funding to enhance existing provision. Kibworth Harcourt Parish Council reiterated the view that an approach which draws on all three options is likely to be the most realistic and practical approach.

- A respondent suggested that cross boundary infrastructure should be given further consideration. Another respondent suggested the review of transport infrastructure offers opportunity to address congestion and air quality.
- Historic England recommended any approach should take into accounts impact on the historic environment, heritage assets and their settings.
- Severn Water provided some policy wording recommendations in response to this question. National Gas used the answer to this question to confirm one of more National Gas Transmission assets within the district.
- NHS Property suggested that new development should make a proportionate contribution to funding healthcare and that healthcare infrastructure should be clearly identified in the Local Plan and planning policies should enable the delivery of healthcare infrastructure and prepared in consultation with NHS and based on evidence.

#### Council Response/How the Council has taken this into account

- Further evidence collected to inform the preparation of the Proposed Submission Draft Local Plan, including the whole plan viability assessment and infrastructure delivery plan, to address the points raised in consultation and ensure that the approach to local service and infrastructure provision is robust, sustainable, and deliverable.



## Appendix 1: Notification email

<p>Parishes – poster &amp; PR.</p> <p>SENT 12/01/24</p>	<p>Dear Parish Councils and Meetings,</p> <p><b>RE: Issues &amp; Options Consultation, promotional material</b></p> <p>On 19 December 2023 and 4 January 2024, I emailed you regarding the forthcoming Issues and Options public consultation, which will be open for comment from <b>Tuesday 16 January to Tuesday 27 February 2024.</b></p> <p>As part of the communication plan to raise awareness, promotion across parishes is vital. I therefore request that you please consider;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• featuring the <a href="#">Council's promotional press release</a> in parish circulars, and</li> <li>• printing and displaying the attached poster on parish notice boards.</li> </ul> <p>When the consultation has opened, you will be emailed again with a direct link to the relevant web pages.</p> <p>Thank you for supporting this vital activity to shape our District for future generations.</p> <p>In the meantime, if you have any queries about this consultation, please do not hesitate to contact the Strategic Planning Team. You can telephone the team direct on 01858 821160 or send an email to <a href="mailto:planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk">planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p><b>Tess Nelson</b> Head of Strategic and Local Planning Harborough District Council</p>
<p>Parishes – LAUNCH</p> <p>Sent 16/01/24</p>	<p>Dear Parish Councils and Meetings,</p> <p><b>RE: Public Consultations now open</b></p> <p>Today, Harborough District Council has opened four public consultations regarding strategic and local planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues and Options (Regulation 18)</li> <li>• Call for Sites 2024</li> <li>• Great Easton Conservation Area Appraisal</li> <li>• Local List on Non-Designated Heritage Assets (proposed additions)</li> </ul> <p>All four consultations are open for six weeks; the deadline for comments is 23:55hrs on <b>Tuesday 27 February 2024.</b></p>

### **How to submit comments**

Participation is easy – all four consultations can be viewed on our dedicated webpage, where you can also submit your comments.

It is crucial that we understand which elements of each document you are responding to, therefore please use our online consultation page to submit comments within the relevant chapters of interest.

**[View consultations and submit comments here](https://harborough.oc2.uk/) or type the following address into your internet browser:**

**<https://harborough.oc2.uk/>**

### **Issues & Options consultation**

The purpose of the Issues & Options consultation is to seek views on the development options for a new district-wide Local Plan. At this early stage of plan-making, the consultation is about the overall strategy. It asks questions about how much development is needed and where it should be built. Specific development sites will be considered in more detail at later stages.

Please help us to spread the word by forwarding this invitation to local associates, friends, and family members.

### **Issues & Options Drop-in events**

Planning for the future is a complex process, therefore as part of our commitment to involve residents, businesses, community groups, Town Councils, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings in the preparation of new planning policy documents, I am pleased to confirm that Council Officers will host five public drop-in events across the district.

The public drop-in events are designed to provide interested parties with more information on the consultation document, how to respond and an understanding of what happens next. Venues, dates and times are as follows:

- 24 January, 10.30am to 8pm: Market Harborough – Council Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of The Symington Building, Adam & Eve Street, LE16 7AG.
- 31 January, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Scraftoft – Community Hub (Lounge), Malsbury Ave, LE7 9FQ.
- 6 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Lutterworth – The Wycliffe Rooms (Community Hall), George Str, Masonic Hall, LE17 4ED.
- 7 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Broughton Astley – Broughton Astley Village Hall (Boughton Hall), Station Rd, LE9 6PT.
- 13 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Kibworth – The Old Grammar School (Main Hall), School Rd, LE8 0JE.

Further information about the new Local Plan and associated supporting evidence is online at the following web address:

**[www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan](http://www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan)**

If you have any queries about this consultation, please do not hesitate to contact the Strategic Planning Team. You can telephone the team

	<p>direct on 01858 821160 or send an email to <a href="mailto:planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk">planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p><b>Tess Nelson</b> Head of Strategic and Local Planning Harborough District Council</p>
<p>Members – LAUNCH</p> <p>Sent 16/01/2024</p>	<p>Dear Members,</p> <p><b>RE: Public Consultations now open</b></p> <p>Today, Harborough District Council has opened four public consultations regarding strategic and local planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues and Options (Regulation 18)</li> <li>• Call for Sites 2024</li> <li>• Great Easton Conservation Area Appraisal</li> <li>• Local List on Non-Designated Heritage Assets (proposed additions)</li> </ul> <p>All four consultations are open for six weeks; the deadline for comments is 23:55hrs on <b>Tuesday 27 February 2024</b>.</p> <p><b>How to submit comments</b> Participation is easy – all four consultations can be viewed on our dedicated webpage, where you can also submit your comments.</p> <p>It is crucial that we understand which elements of each document you are responding to, therefore please use our online consultation page to submit comments within the relevant chapters of interest.</p> <p><b><a href="https://harborough.oc2.uk/">View consultations and submit comments here</a> or type the following address into your internet browser:</b> <a href="https://harborough.oc2.uk/">https://harborough.oc2.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Issues &amp; Options consultation</b> The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on the development options for a new district-wide Local Plan. At this early stage of plan-making, the consultation is about the overall strategy. It asks questions about how much development is needed and where it should be built. Specific development sites will be considered in more detail at later stages.</p> <p>Please help us to spread the word by forwarding this invitation to local associates, friends, and family members.</p> <p><b>Issues &amp; Options Drop-in events</b> Planning for the future is a complex process, therefore as part of our commitment to involve residents, businesses, community groups, Town Councils, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings in the</p>

	<p>preparation of new planning policy documents, I am pleased to confirm that Council Officers will host five public drop-in events across the district.</p> <p>The public drop-in events are designed to provide interested parties with more information on the consultation document, how to respond and an understanding of what happens next. Venues, dates and times are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 24 January, 10.30am to 8pm: Market Harborough – Council Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of The Symington Building, Adam &amp; Eve Street, LE16 7AG.</li> <li>• 31 January, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Scraftoft – Community Hub (Lounge), Malsbury Ave, LE7 9FQ.</li> <li>• 6 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Lutterworth – The Wycliffe Rooms (Community Hall), George Str, Masonic Hall, LE17 4ED.</li> <li>• 7 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Broughton Astley – Broughton Astley Village Hall (Boughton Hall), Station Rd, LE9 6PT.</li> <li>• 13 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Kibworth – The Old Grammar School (Main Hall), School Rd, LE8 0JE.</li> </ul> <p>Further information about the new Local Plan and associated supporting evidence is online at the following web address:  <a href="http://www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan">www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan</a></p> <p>If you have any queries about this consultation, please do not hesitate to contact the Strategic Planning Team. You can telephone the team direct on 01858 821160 or send an email to <a href="mailto:planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk">planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p><b>Tess Nelson</b>  Head of Strategic and Local Planning  Harborough District Council</p>
<p>Database contacts – LAUNCH</p> <p>SENT  16.01.2024</p>	<p><b>RE: Public Consultations now open</b></p> <p>Today, Harborough District Council has opened four public consultations regarding strategic and local planning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Issues and Options (Regulation 18)</li> <li>• Call for Sites 2024</li> <li>• Great Easton Conservation Area Appraisal</li> <li>• Local List on Non-Designated Heritage Assets (proposed additions)</li> </ul> <p>All four consultations are open for six weeks; the deadline for comments is 23:55hrs on <b>Tuesday 27 February 2024.</b></p> <p><b>How to submit comments</b>  Participation is easy – all four consultations can be viewed on our dedicated webpage, where you can also submit your comments.</p>

It is crucial that we understand which elements of each document you are responding to, therefore please use our online consultation page to submit comments within the relevant chapters of interest.

**[View consultations and submit comments here](#) or type the following address into your internet browser:**

**<https://harborough.oc2.uk/>**

### **Issues & Options consultation**

The purpose of the consultation is to seek views on the development options for a new district-wide Local Plan. At this early stage of plan-making, the consultation is about the overall strategy. It asks questions about how much development is needed and where it should be built. Specific development sites will be considered in more detail at later stages.

Please help us to spread the word by forwarding this invitation to local associates, friends, and family members.

### **Issues & Options Drop-in events**

Planning for the future is a complex process, therefore as part of our commitment to involve residents, businesses, community groups, Town Councils, Parish Councils and Parish Meetings in the preparation of new planning policy documents, I am pleased to confirm that Council Officers will host five public drop-in events across the district.

The public drop-in events are designed to provide interested parties with more information on the consultation document, how to respond and an understanding of what happens next. Venues, dates and times are as follows:

- 24 January, 10.30am to 8pm: Market Harborough – Council Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of The Symington Building, Adam & Eve Street, LE16 7AG.
- 31 January, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Scraftoft – Community Hub (Lounge), Malsbury Ave, LE7 9FQ.
- 6 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Lutterworth – The Wycliffe Rooms (Community Hall), George Str, Masonic Hall, LE17 4ED.
- 7 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Broughton Astley – Broughton Astley Village Hall (Boughton Hall), Station Rd, LE9 6PT.
- 13 February, 3.30pm to 7.30pm: Kibworth – The Old Grammar School (Main Hall), School Rd, LE8 0JE.

Further information about the new Local Plan and associated supporting evidence is online at the following web address:

**[www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan](http://www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan)**


If you have any queries about this consultation, please do not hesitate to contact the Strategic Planning Team. You can telephone the team direct on 01858 821160 or send an email to [planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk).

	<p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p><b>Tess Nelson</b> Head of Strategic and Local Planning Harborough District Council</p>
<p>One Week Remaining: REMINDER</p> <p>Sent 21/02/2024</p>	<p><b>RE: Harborough District Consultations – closing on 27 February</b></p> <p><b>One week to go</b> The following consultations remain open for comment on our website, until 27 February 2024:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Issues and Options (Regulation 18)</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Call for Sites 2024</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Great Easton Conservation Area Appraisal</a></li> <li>• <a href="#">Local List on Non-Designated Heritage Assets (proposed additions)</a></li> </ul> <p><i><b>If you saved draft comments online, please remember to submit these by the deadline of 23:55hrs on 27 February 2024.</b></i></p> <p><b>How to submit comments</b> Participation is easy – all four consultations can be viewed on our <a href="#">dedicated consultation webpage</a>, where you can also submit your comments.</p> <p>It is crucial that we understand which elements of each document you are responding to, therefore please use our online consultation page to submit comments within the relevant chapters of interest.</p> <p><b><a href="#">View consultations and submit comments here</a> or type the following address into your internet browser:</b> <a href="https://harborough.oc2.uk/">https://harborough.oc2.uk/</a></p> <p><b>Spread the word</b> Please help us to spread the word by forwarding this invitation to local associates, friends, and family members.</p> <p><b>More information</b> Further information about the new Local Plan and associated supporting evidence is online at the following web address: <a href="http://www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan">www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan</a></p> <p>If you have any queries about this consultation, please do not hesitate to contact the Strategic Planning Team. You can telephone the team direct on 01858 821160 or send an email to <a href="mailto:planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk">planningpolicy@harborough.gov.uk</a>.</p> <p>Yours sincerely,</p> <p><b>Tess Nelson</b></p>

	Head of Strategic and Local Planning Harborough District Council
--	---

## Appendix 2: Digital Poster

# Have your say...




## On the future vision for Harborough District

Harborough District Council is preparing a new Local Plan.

The Local Plan is an important strategy which includes policies for environmental protection, job creation, and house building, as well as identifying where investment is needed for infrastructure such as health services, roads and schools.


The Council seeks your views on a wide range of topics to inform the new local plan:



### How to get involved

Full details are available on our dedicated local plan consultation page <https://harborough.oc2.uk/>  
Read the consultation and submit your comments online between **16 January and 27 February 2024**.

Or scan the QR code



[www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan](http://www.harborough.gov.uk/new-local-plan)



## Appendix 3: Regulation 18 Press Release

Issued 22 December 2023

### No changes for council's new local plan

Independent specialist planning advice has been sought by the council following the release of the government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

The advice was requested by Harborough District Council to see if the new NPPF will affect the decision taken by Full Council on 18 December 2023 to progress with the development of its new local plan 2020-2041.

The advisory note from Intelligent Plans and Examinations based on a review of the revised NPPF (December 2023) and its implications for the Harborough Local Plan stated:

*'From our review of the revised NPPF there are no revisions or amendments contained in the document that require the Council to reconsider any of the recent decisions that it has taken concerning its new Local Plan. In a number of respects, the revisions serve to reinforce the rationale for those decisions.'*

*'Our advice to the Council is to maintain its progress in preparing its new Local Plan on the basis of the revised NPPF, which contains no revisions or amendments that would justify a different approach being taken at this time.'*

Cllr Phil Knowles, Leader of Harborough District Council, said: "Throughout this process we have committed to be open and transparent with residents. Pressing ahead with a new Local Plan has not been an easy decision to take but we have sought special planning advice and Kings Counsel advice throughout to ensure we were doing the right thing for our district and our residents.

"This latest advice will also be published on our website so everyone can see the lengths we are going to in order to ultimately protect the Harborough district from unwanted speculative development in places that our communities don't want it. Between 2020-2023 the council delivered around 1,000 homes per year and has two large strategic sites allocated at Lutterworth East and Scraftoft North. By including these completions and commitments it means only approximately 340 dwellings per year need to be planned for going forward. Officers will continue to plan for 340 houses per year during the local plan period which was clearly explained and stated to all at our recent Council meeting by our Director of Planning."

Public engagement in what the new local plan should contain will start in the new year, with the first public consultation in the preparation of the district's new local plan, the 'Issues and Options' consultation running from 16 January 2024 to 27 February 2024.

The target completion of the new local plan is May 2025.

*The advisory note referenced above has been published on our website and [can be found under 'Reports'](#).*

## Appendix 4: Extract from Members Monthly Newsletter, February 2024

## Consultations



There are a number of consultations which the council is currently seeking people's views and opinions on.

These include budget proposals, Local Plan, call for sites, the Great Easton Conservation Area Appraisal and Local List on Non-Designated Heritage Assets.

For the full list and further information visit [www.harborough.gov.uk/consultation](http://www.harborough.gov.uk/consultation)

Please continue to share details of these with residents so that they engage in as many as possible.

## Appendix 5: Consultation Database Contacts

- **Strategic Planning contact database contacts including development industry, community groups and public:** 994 contacts
- **Harborough District Parish Councils** (plus 4 weeks advance notice)
- **Market Harborough Neighbourhood Plan Forums** (there isn't a Parish Council for Market Harborough)
- **Elected Members**
- **Statutory bodies** (statutory consultees) emailed, in accordance with Appendix 1 of Harborough's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) 2020:
  - **the Coal Authority:** [planningconsultation@coal.gov.uk](mailto:planningconsultation@coal.gov.uk)
  - **the Environment Agency:** Planning Liaison ([planning.trentside@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:planning.trentside@environment-agency.gov.uk)), plus 3 named contacts emailed.
  - **the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (known as Historic England):** 4 named contacts emailed.
  - **the Marine Management Organisation:** n/a
  - **Natural England:** 2 named contacts, plus Consultations Team ([consultations@naturalengland.gov.uk](mailto:consultations@naturalengland.gov.uk)).
  - **Network Rail Infrastructure Limited (company number 2904587):** 2 named contacts emailed plus the Town Planning team ([townplanning.lne@networkrail.co.uk](mailto:townplanning.lne@networkrail.co.uk) )
  - **Highways England:** 8 named contacts emailed including [planningm@highwaysengland.co.uk](mailto:planningm@highwaysengland.co.uk)
  - **a relevant authority any part of whose area is in or adjoins the local planning authority's area:**

- County Council contacts for Education, Planning, Minerals and Waste, Green Infrastructure, Archaeology, Gypsy & Traveller Liaison, Assets Management,
- Leicestershire Police Designing-out Crime Officer,
- Northamptonshire County Council
- West Northants JPU
- North Northants JPU
- Rutland Planning
- Rugby Planning
- Leicestershire LPAs and
- Neighbouring Parishes contacted by email.
- any person—
  - (i) **to whom the electronic communications code applies by virtue of a direction given under section 106(3)(a) of the Communications Act 2003:** Mobile Operators Association (Mono Consultants) emailed, 1 Named contact for EE via BT.com, and [planningliaison@MBNL.com](mailto:planningliaison@MBNL.com), o2 Press Office, Ericsson (for Three), Vodafone,
  - (ii) **who owns or controls electronic communications apparatus situated in any part of the local planning authority's area:** As above at(i)
- if it exercises functions in any part of the local planning authority's area—
  - (i) **a Primary Care Trust established under section 18 of the National Health Service Act 2006(9) or continued in existence by virtue of that section:** 10 Leicestershire LLR/CCG/primary care named contacts emailed and 1 local GP surgery emailed.
  - (ii) **a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 6(1)(b) or (c) of the Electricity Act 1989(10):** 4 named contacts at Western Power Distribution emailed, and 3 named contacts who are agents for National Grid.
  - (iii) **a person to whom a licence has been granted under section 7(2) of the Gas Act 1986(11):** British Gas Planning Liaison team emailed [generalenquiry@britishgas.co.uk](mailto:generalenquiry@britishgas.co.uk)
  - (iv) **a sewerage undertaker:** (one named contact at Anglian Water Services Ltd plus [spatialplanning@anglianwater.co.uk](mailto:spatialplanning@anglianwater.co.uk), and 4 named contacts at Severn Trent, plus [growth.development@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:growth.development@severntrent.co.uk) and [growthdevelopment@severntrent.co.uk](mailto:growthdevelopment@severntrent.co.uk))
  - (v) **a water undertaker:** as iv Above
- **Homes England:** 7 named contacts emailed including generic [midlands.consultation@homesengland.gov.uk](mailto:midlands.consultation@homesengland.gov.uk)
- **where the local planning authority are a London borough council, the Mayor of London:** n/a

Appendix 6: Digital Noticeboard

# Have your say... on the future vision for Harborough District



Harborough District Council is preparing a new Local Plan, a strategy to shape future development and to enable heritage and environmental protection.

The Council seeks your views on a wide range of topics to inform the new local plan.

Read the consultation and submit your comments online between **16 January & 27 February 2024:**

To take part, visit our dedicated local plan consultation page <https://harborough.oc2.uk/> or scan the QR code

