

Settlement Audit and Hierarchy Report

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Section A: Introduction and Background

1 Introduction

- 1.1 Blaby District Council is reviewing its Local Plan. The new Local Plan will, amongst other things, seek to identify the quantity and locations for growth for the next 15 years (up to 2038). As part of the Local Plan review, the Council has considered a range of options for the strategic location of growth.
- 1.2 The current Core Strategy and Delivery Development Plan Documents (DPDs) will be replaced by the new Local Plan. The review allows Blaby District Council to reconsider the most appropriate locations for growth, including housing, employment, retail, health, education, leisure, community and other uses.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Settlement Audit and Hierarchy Report is to provide a consistent, open and transparent assessment of the sustainability of all settlements within the District of Blaby in order to provide evidence that will inform the most suitable locations for growth in the emerging Local Plan.
- 1.4 Previous versions of the Local Plan, including the Core Strategy 2013 and Delivery DPD 2019, have sought to accommodate development within and adjacent to existing towns and villages (an 'urban concentration' approach). The distribution of development has largely been informed by the ability of each settlement to accommodate further growth by virtue of available services, facilities, employment and transport opportunities.
- 1.5 The factors considered when identifying whether a settlement is able to accommodate further growth include:
 - Its sustainability in terms of access to services and facilities, employment and transport choice;
 - Environmental and policy constraints including flooding, bio-diversity, historic environment etc.; and
 - The availability of suitable sites to deliver houses.

- 1.6 The Settlement Audit and Hierarchy Report contains three distinct sections:
- Section B: Assessment of available services, facilities, employment and transport choice. Each of the settlements is scored based on their ability to access services, facilities, public transport and access to employment.
 - Section C: Assessment of Environmental Constraints. This section considers the specific environmental and physical constraints that have the potential to limit growth in all or part of the settlements¹.
 - Section D: Potential distribution. Seeks to inform the distribution of housing based on the findings of Sections 1 and 2.
- 1.7 In order to provide a consistent, open and transparent approach to the assessment of towns and villages, the report adopts a scoring mechanism which seeks to rank the sustainability of each of the settlements.
- 1.8 It is acknowledged that the quantum of development attributed to each settlement cannot be entirely informed by the settlement's score or rank. There are other factors that influence the potential for a settlement to accommodate growth, such as the availability of sites, Regional and National growth infrastructure aspirations, and physical and environmental constraints to growth.
- 1.9 A fundamental change in the emerging Local Plan from previous versions is the potential to consider delivery of growth through New Settlements. This approach is widely supported by Central Government (through the New Garden Villages programme) and has been identified as a potential option in the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan. The methodology adopted in this report may not be entirely suitable when assessing New Settlements given that the assessment partly relates to existing and not anticipated services and facilities. Each of the proposed new settlements will be considered individually.
- 1.10 Section B of the report provides information on the sustainability of each settlement based on their access to services and facilities, sustainable transport and employment. Section C of the report summarises the constraints within the District that could influence a settlement's ability to accommodate growth. Section D contains a commentary on each settlement which summarises their ability to accommodate growth in a sustainable manner based on access to services and facilities, sustainable transport and employment. In some cases it is not possible to attribute housing numbers based on these considerations alone. The ability to accommodate growth is

¹ A more detailed assessment in relation to Climate Change and Health impacts is made in relation to the detailed assessments of specific sites.

also informed by physical or policy constraints, even when there are wide ranging services available.

2 Background

- 2.1 A Settlement Hierarchy study was prepared in 2012 to inform the previous Local Plan (Core Strategy). This was based on information gathered from an audit of services, facilities, employment opportunities and access to public transport available in each settlement.
- 2.2 The Council updated the Settlement Audit in 2019 and included information concerning the availability of services and facilities, access to key employment sites and availability and frequency of public transport. The settlement audit is a key document underpinning this settlement hierarchy report and consequently informing the most sustainable pattern of development (primarily housing and employment).
- 2.3 In updating its Local Plan, Blaby District Council have considered a wide range of strategic options for where new development should be located. Options included:
- Continuing to concentrate development around the fringes of Leicester;
 - Concentrating development in an extended area around the fringes of Leicester;
 - Distribution amongst existing settlements;
 - Provision of infrastructure led new Strategic Sites / Garden Villages; and
 - Provision of a single stand-alone New Settlement.
- 2.4 The options for the strategic location of development were the subject of an Issues and Options consultation between July and September 2019 and were the subject of a Sustainability Appraisal. The potential options for distributing development and identifying potential sites are the subject of further consultation in January 2021.
- 2.5 Evidence will be gathered on an ongoing basis in order to assess and understand the impacts of the different options.
- 2.6 Blaby District Council undertook a 'Call for Sites' as part of a 'Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment' (SHELAA) in 2019. This sought to identify potential housing and employment sites in the District, many of which are closely associated with existing settlements.
- 2.7 Following analysis of the strategic options and available sites, the Council's emerging Local Plan considers a multi-faceted approach to accommodating new development including provision of new settlements and managing growth in existing towns and villages.

- 2.8 A substantial proportion of the growth to be delivered up to 2038 is on committed sites that already have the benefit of planning permission including the New Lubbesthorpe Sustainable Urban Extension which is likely to continue delivering houses for the majority of the plan period. Other allocations are identified in the Local Plan (Delivery) DPD (2019).
- 2.9 Given the requirements for growth, and in light of the options considered, a proportion of new development will continue to be focussed on existing settlements. This Settlement Hierarchy, coupled with an assessment of constraints and opportunities, will help to identify those settlements that are most able to accommodate this growth.
- 2.10 Section B of the report provides evidence to identify which settlements are most able to accommodate growth based on:
- 1) Availability of services and facilities within (or near to) settlements;
 - 2) Access to transport choice including public transport (but also the potential for walking and cycling); and
 - 3) Access to large scale employment opportunities.
- 2.11 Section C of the report considers the environmental and policy constraints to development in each of the settlements. Natural environment constraints (such as flooding and designated ecological value) and policy / built environment constraints (such as heritage assets - Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings etc.) are both considered.
- 2.12 In order to provide an open, transparent and robust assessment which informs the settlement hierarchy, a scoring system has been applied. By using these scoring matrices the report considers how settlements perform against their ability to access services and facilities, public transport and key employment sites².
- 2.13 The report is a technical report which seeks to assess the relative sustainability of settlements within the District. It is part of the Local Plan evidence base but is not itself a statement of Council policy.
- 2.14 The review of the Local Plan has allowed Blaby District Council to consider a new approach to the strategic development of its area, including the potential to deliver new settlements. It is appropriate to consider new settlements as a reasonable option for the delivery of growth. However, in the context of this study, it is not possible to assess potential new settlements options based on their existing access to services and facilities. This will be the subject of a separate exercise which considers the potential for each new settlement to deliver the necessary services, facilities, public transport infrastructure and employment opportunities.

² Key employment sites are defined in the Council's latest Key Employment Sites Study

3 Local Context

- 3.1 The District of Blaby is a diverse administrative area encompassing: urban areas (primarily where settlements abut the fringes of the City of Leicester); modest size villages (which have a strong functional relationship with Leicester but also contain a range of services and facilities that allow them to be more self-sustaining); and, rural areas comprising smaller and more dispersed villages, some of which have a functional relationship with other towns including Hinckley.
- 3.2 The District contains twenty seven settlements including two towns (Blaby and Braunstone Town), villages of various sizes, small hamlets and a new settlement currently being developed at New Lubbethorpe. The built-up parts of six settlements are defined as part of the Leicester Principal Urban Area (PUA) in the current Blaby Local Plan (Core Strategy) 2013. The remaining villages vary greatly in terms of size, population, level of service provision (including access to public transport) and character.
- 3.3 Travel-to-work patterns indicate a strong functional relationship between the City of Leicester and many of the settlements in the District (particularly those closest to the City).

4 Key Principles

- 4.1 The Key Principles which will inform the settlement hierarchy are;
- Highest ranking settlements are those with access to the widest range of essential services and facilities where the need to travel is minimised. Where there is a need to travel, a realistic choice of transport (including walking, cyclin and public transport) is available;
 - Housing, employment and other development required is distributed in a way that is commensurate with the ability of the settlement to cope with additional growth and the wider role of the settlement;
 - Where services and facilities are not available within individual settlements, the ability to access services, facilities, public transport and employment in nearby settlements will be assessed where this does not rely on the private car;
 - The likelihood of new facilities being provided as a result of new development or other delivery programmes will be considered;
 - Development is preferred in settlements where there will not be adverse impacts on the built and natural environment, such as increased flood hazards, impact on areas / buildings of historic value or the character of settlements (including important gaps between towns and villages);

- To plan positively for the growth in the more sustainable settlements and avoid high levels of sporadic growth in smaller settlements;
- To allow an appropriate level of development that will help to protect services and facilities in settlements that support a wider hinterland, for example Rural Centres, such as Stoney Stanton, and Blaby, the District's only Town Centre;
- To be consistent with strategic priorities as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2019).

4.2 Blaby District Council has considered potential options for New Settlements in order to help meet the Council's housing requirements. Because of the unique nature of new settlements and the unique opportunities and challenges that they offer, a separate assessment will be made of the potential to access existing and deliver new services and facilities.

5 National Planning Policy context

5.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It also provides a framework for the development of Local Plans.

5.2 Paragraph 31 of the NPPF indicates that:

“The preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals.”

In order to be 'justified' Local Plans must be:

“an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence.”

5.3 The key messages contained in the NPPF that will influence the settlement hierarchy are that it should result in plan-led sustainable development that takes account of the different roles and character of different areas.

5.4 In accordance with the NPPF, the hierarchy should recognise the role of both urban and rural areas. Paragraph 103 of the NPPF states:

“.....Significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes..... “

- 5.5 In terms of recognising the role of rural areas, paragraph 78 of the NPPF states that Local Plan policies should:

“...promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive...”

- 5.6 Blaby District Council is able to shape the distribution of housing within the District. However, it does not have complete discretion regarding the quantity of housing that will need to be delivered. The housing requirements for the District of Blaby are determined through the Standard Method as identified in the NPPF and set out in more detail in the Planning Practice Guidance. In addition, the Council is working with its Housing Market Area partners to assess the scale and distribution of any unmet housing needs.

Section B: Availability of Infrastructure, Services and Facilities

6. Methodology

- 6.1 The availability of services and facilities is a key consideration that underpins the ability of a settlement to accommodate growth and ultimately informs the distribution of growth (including housing, employment and other development). The availability of services and facilities within settlements allows easier access without reliance on the private car to travel substantial distances. The approach is consistent with the objectives of sustainable travel set out in the NPPF.
- 6.2 The most important services are those that allow a community to gain access to education, health services, food retailing, community meeting places and superfast broadband (to reflect the increasing importance of on-line access to work, retail, and leisure pursuits). It is therefore considered that access to early year's education, groceries (food etc.), health care and on-line services are the fundamental requirements of any successful and sustainable settlement. Community buildings are considered important as they offer venues for education, health and well-being events and social interaction (crèche, Scouts, hobby groups, etc.).
- 6.3 The most important services and facilities are therefore considered to be;
- A Primary school
 - A Convenience / General store
 - GP facility
 - Community building
 - Superfast broadband
- 6.4 Desirable services and facilities are those that add value to the community but are less important to meeting basic needs or the effective functioning of a settlement. Often there is an expectation that residents would travel greater distances to access them. These include:
- Pharmacy
 - Post Office
 - Supermarket
 - Newsagent
 - Bank
 - Leisure Centre
 - Public House
 - Library
 - Petrol station
 - Dentist
 - Secondary school

- 6.5 There are other facilities that can add value to a community but are not essential to meeting basic needs. These include:
- Church / faith buildings
 - Optician
 - Café / restaurant
 - Recycling facilities
- 6.6 Appendix A identifies which services and facilities are found in each of the settlements. Further evidence will be gathered which seeks to identify where there are capacity constraints in the services and facilities or whether there is potential to add capacity. This is particularly important in the case of schools and GP practices where the existence of a facility does not guarantee availability to new residents.
- 6.7 The report is mindful that services within a settlement may be a substantial walking distance to some residents. For the purposes of this report the settlement score is based on the majority of households being within a 800 metre (or 10 minutes walking time) of the service or facility. In some cases, where settlements abut higher order towns and villages, the services may be accessible in a different settlement.
- 6.8 For the purpose of this report, the distance to services and facilities has initially been measured using walking time isochrones or 'as the crow flies' distance in order to show the population residing within an accessible walking and cycling distance. It is acknowledged that there are more sophisticated measures of walking times which are based on the shortest available routes using streets and other pedestrian routes. That approach has been used in the assessment of individual site options. For the purposes of establishing a settlement hierarchy, the isochrones methodology is considered a proportionate approach.
- 6.9 Suitable walking times have been informed by 'Building for Life' standards which suggest that the preferred maximum walking distance to town centres is 800m (this is approximately a 10 minute walk time). This is considered a satisfactory benchmark for the purposes of the accessing essential facilities.
- 6.10 In order to provide an open and quantitative assessment of the access to services and facilities, the matrix at Appendix A indicates the score for each of the settlements:
- 3 points are awarded where there is access to the 'most important' services and facilities;
 - 2 points where there is access to the 'desirable services'; and
 - 1 point where there is access to the other services.

Summary of Results

- 6.11 The matrix attached as Appendix A sets out how each settlement has scored in terms of its access to services and facilities. The maximum score of 41 is achieved where all services and facilities (most important, desirable and other) are available within the settlement.
- 6.12 **Enderby** is the only settlement that has access to all services and facilities. The town of **Blaby** is the next highest scoring settlement scoring 39. **Braunstone Town, Leicester Forest East, Countesthorpe, Glenfield, Narborough, and Stoney Stanton** contain all of the 'most important' services and facilities and have an overall score above 30 points. **Whetstone** also scores 30 points but does not have a GP / medical practice of the most important services.
- 6.13 Of the remaining settlements adjacent to the Principal Urban Area of Leicester **Glen Parva** and **Kirby Muxloe** have lesser access to services and facilities than other settlements within and adjacent to the urban area. However, most services and facilities are available within these settlements and there is generally better access to higher order services and facilities within Leicester City Centre.
- 6.14 **New Lubbethorpe** is also adjacent to the Urban Area of Leicester. At the time of drafting this report, development is ongoing and the community is evolving. A primary school has been delivered but other infrastructure, services and facilities identified as part of the approved masterplan for the area are yet to be implemented. Lubbethorpe adjoins Leicester Forest East and Braunstone Town, both of which have all of the 'most important' services and facilities and can be easily accessed on foot or by bicycle.
- 6.15 Other settlements which score above 20 points in the more rural areas of the District (away from the urban area of Leicester) include **Cosby, Croft, Huncote, Sapcote** and **Sharnford**.
- 6.16 Based on an assessment of available services and facilities, these settlements afford greatest access without reliance on transport by private cars. The relationship between access to services, sustainability and scope for further growth is considered in more detail later in this report.
- 6.17 Eight settlements scored 10 or less points. These settlements include: **Aston Flamville, Elmesthorpe, Kilby, Leicester Forest West, Littlethorpe, New Lubbethorpe, Potters Marston** and **Wigston Parva**. These settlements are generally considered to be those which are least sustainable with the exception of New Lubbethorpe (which is considered in paragraph 6.14 above) and Littlethorpe which has a strong functional relationship with Narborough and is almost entirely within an 800m walking distance of some of the key services.

- 6.18 The availability of services within settlements is dynamic and changes over time. This has a potential for the scores recorded in this document to change over time (either up or down). The Local Planning Authority intermittently conducts an audit of services and facilities in order to update data. The audit involves Parish Councils who assist with data gathering utilising their local knowledge. The settlement audit which informs this document was last updated in 2019.
- 6.19 Access to services and facilities provides one measure of sustainability and the ability of settlements to accommodate growth. Other factors include the availability of public transport, access to employment and the existence of physical, environmental and other constraints.

7 Access to sustainable transport

- 7.1 Access to a choice of transport modes (other than private motor vehicles) is a further measure of a settlement's sustainability. Settlements that have a fast, frequent and direct public transport service to higher order centres (containing employment, retail, leisure and health services etc.) and those that can access these by walking and cycling are considered most sustainable. Subject to other planning considerations, these settlements are preferred locations to accommodate growth.
- 7.2 In order to provide an open and quantitative assessment of a settlement's access to sustainable transport modes including public transport and dedicated cycle routes, the matrix at Appendix B indicates the score for each of the settlements.
- 7.3 Points were awarded on the basis of the quality of public transport (including the frequency and availability of services at weekends). Additional points were scored where settlements had: access to a park and ride facility; a dedicated cycle route to a higher order centres / employment; and demand responsive public transport³.

³ 'Arriva-Click' operate a demand responsive mini-bus service in parts of Blaby District. This allows access to goods and services without reliance on private motor vehicles.

7.4 Points were awarded on the following basis:

- Five (5) points are awarded for public transport services where there is a train service, a bus service with a frequency of 20 minutes or better to higher order centres (including a Sunday service);
- Four (4) points are awarded for a bus service only with a frequency of 20 minutes or better and a Sunday service;
- Three (3) points for a bus service with a frequency of 20 minutes to 1 hour and a Sunday Service;
- Two (2) points for a bus service with a frequency of 20 minutes to 1 hour but no Sunday Service;
- One (1) point for a public transport service with a frequency less than 1 hour and no Sunday service; and
- One additional (1) point for a permanent Park and Ride facility within or adjacent to the settlement.
- One additional (1) point where a dedicated cycle route was available within a settlement within 3 miles of a key employment site or higher order services and facilities.
- One additional (1) point where demand responsive public transport was available.

7.5 The matrix at Appendix B indicates the transport choice scores for each of the settlements.

7.6 The ranking of access to public transport and cycle routes above is based on the principles of Leicestershire County Council's Highways, Transportation and Development Guide which seeks to prioritise sustainable transport modes over the private car. Buses and trains are the main forms of public transport in the District of Blaby. Other forms of public transport (Trams / light rail, etc.) do not currently operate in the District. Innovative ways of providing public transport are emerging including a demand responsive flexible minibus service⁴, which transports multiple passengers all heading in the same direction to agreed destinations. This was initiated as part of the New Lubbethorpe Sustainable Urban Extension development and covers northern and central parts of the District.

7.7 Additional points have been awarded where there is realistic potential to Cycle to higher order centres, services and facilities or where part of the National Cycle Network runs through or adjacent the settlement. Dedicated cycle routes are more likely to be used as a realistic alternative to private cars particularly where they allow access to services, facilities and employment within a three mile travel distance⁵. The availability of off-road / exclusive cycle ways is generally more prevalent in settlements in or close to the urban area.

⁴ 'Arriva-click'

⁵ 2018 National Travel Survey flags up that 3 miles in the East Midlands is the most recorded distance for cycle journeys. Other benchmarks include the Manual for Streets.

7.8 An assumption has been made in the report that all settlements have access to pedestrian routes (public footpaths, bridleways and other routes accessible to people on foot), and that no additional points need to be awarded for pedestrian accessibility. Section 6 above considers the accessibility of services and facilities by foot and it is not necessary to duplicate this assessment in the context of sustainable transport accessibility.

Summary of Results

7.9 **Narborough** is the only settlement within the District of Blaby that has a passenger train station and a frequent bus service to higher order centres (including a Sunday service). The train journey to Leicester from Narborough is some 12 minutes – representing the quickest journey time from any settlement in the District to Leicester City Centre. The service also goes directly to Birmingham (via Hinckley and Nuneaton). Narborough scored 8 points.

7.10 **Braunstone Town** and **Leicester Forest East** both have a wide range of transport choice including:

- High frequency bus services to Leicester (including Sundays);
- Access to demand responsive public transport; and
- Dedicated cycle lanes to Leicester.

Both settlements scored 8 points.

7.11 **Glenfield** and **Glen Parva** are also adjacent to the Leicester Urban Area. Both have a bus service with a frequency of 20 minutes or greater and a Sunday service. **Kirby Muxloe** has a 20 minute – 1 hour frequency and Sunday bus service. The Parish is also adjacent to Meynell's Gorse Park and Ride. There are dedicated cycle lanes along the A47 into Leicester.

These settlements scored 6 points.

7.12 **Lubbesthorpe** does not currently benefit from a bus service but does have dedicated cycle lanes and a demand responsive public transport system (scoring 2 points). It is also located adjacent to **Enderby**, **Leicester Forest East** and **Braunstone Town / Thorpe Astley**, all of which have frequent public transport services. The masterplan for **Lubbesthorpe** identifies a bus service from the development using a bus-only route that links to the A47 Hinckley Road.

7.13 **Countesthorpe**, **Blaby** and **Enderby** (in addition to **Narborough**) have a public transport service to higher order centres with a frequency of 20 minutes or better and a Sunday service. All of these settlements have access to a dedicated cycle lane and score 6 points.

7.14 **Leicester Forest West** has a frequent bus service but no other sustainable transport options and scores 4 points.

- 7.15 **Whetstone, Huncote, Cosby and Croft** and have a bus service with a frequency between 20 minutes and 1 hour and a Sunday service and all score 3 points.
- 7.16 The remaining settlements have a lower frequency service (less than one bus per hour and no Sunday Service). These settlements score 1 point only and include **Aston Flamville, Elmesthorpe, Kilby, Potters Marston, Sapcote, Stoney Stanton, Sharnford** and **Thurlaston**.
- 7.17 **Wigston Parva** does not have bus services from the settlement and scores 0 points.

8. Access to Employment

- 8.1 The potential for new and existing residents to access a wide range of employment opportunities without travelling substantial distances by private car is a further measure of sustainability and a consideration in identifying those settlements that are preferred locations to accommodate growth.
- 8.2 Some of the settlements within the District of Blaby contain 'Key Employment Sites'⁶. These are the main areas of employment for Offices, Light and General Industry and Storage and Distribution uses. The sites are those which are most likely to be retained for employment in the longer term and which accommodate substantial employment opportunities. The settlements that contain Key Employment Sites are:
- Blaby
 - Braunstone Town
 - Croft
 - Enderby
 - Glen Parva
 - Glenfield
 - Kirby Muxloe
 - Narborough
 - Stoney Stanton
 - Whetstone
- 8.3 A substantial proportion of jobs in Blaby District are also within the retailing, health, education, leisure and public service sectors. Employment in these sectors is mostly dispersed. However, Leicester City Centre, Hinckley Town Centre and Fosse Park and the Motorways Retail Area provide a focus for jobs in the retail and office sectors. The city centre of Leicester is close to some settlements in Blaby District and affords access to employment opportunities. The Town Centres of Blaby and Hinckley are close to the

⁶ As identified in the 'Blaby District: Assessment of key Employment Sites Report' (2016).

different parts of the District and also provide some access to retail and service sector jobs.

- 8.4 The methodology is based on whether a settlement has access to Key Employment Sites within defined sustainable travel time periods. Settlements with the greatest access to employment opportunities (Key Employment Sites, Fosse Park and Leicester City Centre) score most highly.
- 8.5 Some office, retail and leisure employment opportunities are available in Blaby and Hinckley Town centres but these are less substantial.
- 8.6 Census data indicates that a substantial proportion of employees will use private cars to travel to work and changing working patterns are resulting in increasing home working, accelerated by the COVID global pandemic. However, in order to be consistent with sustainability principles and account for inclusivity, access to employment by walking, cycling and public transport has been given greater weighting. The following scoring has been applied to each settlement:

Access to jobs	Points scored
A Key Employment Site or Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park within 800 metres (10 minute walk time) or less than 10 minute bus journey time	4 points
Key Employment Site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park within 20 minutes public transport, 3 mile cycle time or 20 minute walk time (1 mile).	3 points
Key Employment Site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park within 20 - 40 minutes public transport travel time.	2 points
Key Employment Site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park 40 minutes to 1 hour public transport travel time.	1 point
Key Employment Site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park More than 1 hour public transport travel time.	0 points

- 8.7 The methodology for scoring is based on the potential to access job opportunities by a variety of sustainable transport modes in the shortest times. In the context of access to employment, the most sustainable

settlements can access employment opportunities by sustainable transport modes within a 10 minute journey time and score the most points 10 minutes. Scores are then tiered in 10 minute intervals down to 1 point (40 minutes to an hour travel time). All settlements within the district are able to access a Key Employment Site in less than one hour using sustainable transport. No points were awarded to those settlements where journey times using sustainable transport were more than 1 hour.

- 8.8 The methodology is broadly consistent with the Department for Transport's 'Core Accessibility Indicators' which score Local Authority areas on their ability to access employment opportunities. Employment areas that can be easily accessed by walking, cycling and public transport score more highly.
- 8.9 Calculations of employment availability are not an exact science. Employment levels will vary based on the occupation of individual units and economic cycles. The locations within or adjacent to the District of Blaby which have a concentration of 5,000 or more employment opportunities are: Fosse Park / Grove Farm Triangle and Meridian Business Park; and Leicester City Centre. Hinckley Town Centre and Braunstone Industrial Estate also contain substantial numbers of employment opportunities. Large centres of employment in Rugby Town Centre, Nuneaton Town Centre and Magna Park (Lutterworth) were considered too remote.
- 8.10 Travel times for public transport were sourced from the Traveline East Midlands web-site. Travel time assessment is made at settlement level and calculated from the centre of town / village to the specified destinations. Journey times may be shorter or longer from the fringes of settlements.

Summary of Results

- 8.11 The settlements with the best access to large scale employment opportunities are **Braunstone Town, Glenfield and Enderby**. These settlements are within a 20 minute walk time of the key employment sites in the junction 21 and junction 21a area (Fosse Park, Grove Park, Meridian Business Park and Optimus Point). These settlements score 4 points.
- 8.12 The settlements of **Narborough** and **Littlethorpe** are within 20 minutes public transport time of the centre of Leicester (primarily because of the train station at Narborough). **Narborough** also contains Key Employment Sites. **Croft** and **Huncote** are located within 20 minute public transport time of the large scale employment opportunities adjacent to M1 junction 21. All these settlements score 3 points.
- 8.13 Travelling times (using public transport) to the Key Employment Sites from **Whetstone** and **Blaby** are between 20 to 30 minutes. The travel times are based on trips to Leicester City Centre. The employment sites concentrated around junction 21 are closer geographically, however, there is no direct public transport service from these settlements and journey times for public transport are greater. These score 3 points.

- 8.14 Leicester City Centre contains a high concentration of employment opportunities including offices, retailing, higher education, health care and leisure facilities. The settlements within Blaby District that adjoin Leicester are some 20 minutes public transport travel time to Leicester City Centre. Journey times to Leicester City Centre and other Key Employment Sites from **Kirby Muxloe** and **Glen Parva** are some 30 minutes. Both settlements score 2 points.
- 8.15 Other settlements which do not contain Key Employment Sites but have access to them by public transport in less than 40 minutes travel time include **Countesthorpe**. These score 2 points in terms of their access to employment.
- 8.16 **Stoney Stanton, Sapcote** and **Sharnford** have an infrequent public transport service to key employment areas (including Hinckley Town Centre) with journey times being approximately 40 minutes by public transport. These score 1 point.
- 8.17 Most remaining settlements score 1 point as they can only access key employment opportunities between 40 minutes to 1 hour (including **Aston Flamville, Kilby** and **Potters Marston**).
- 8.18 **Wigston Parva** scores 0 points as it has no public transport service to access employment opportunities.

Section C: Constraints

9.1 Access to services and facilities, public transport and employment opportunities are key determinants of the ability of settlements to accommodate further growth. However, the distribution of development will also be influenced by the ability of settlements to accommodate growth taking into account constraints.

9.2 Key constraints include:

- Flooding (as informed by the Council's Strategic Flood Risk Assessment);
- Strategic Planning Policy Constraints (Green Wedges / Areas of Separation / Countryside areas which separate individual settlements enabling them to retain their identity);
- Access / transportation (including inability of transport networks to accommodate further growth);
- Important areas of bio-diversity / geo-diversity and important habitats (primarily protected areas);
- Areas of importance to the historic environment (including heritage assets such as Listed buildings, Conservation Areas and Scheduled Monuments);
- Contaminated and unstable areas of land; and
- Topographical constraints.

9.3 It is difficult to score constraints in a matrix. However, it is possible to identify areas where development would not normally be considered acceptable because of these constraints.

9.4 Flooding

9.4.1 There are two main rivers that cross the District of Blaby (the Rivers Sense and Soar). The floodplains of these watercourses limit development opportunities in the following areas:

- North and west of Littlethorpe / south of Narborough;
- North west of Cosby;
- East of Enderby St Johns / Braunstone Town;
- South of Sharnford;
- North and east of Croft;
- South-west of Huncote; and
- North of Whetstone and Blaby / south and west of Glen Parva.

9.4.2 Other watercourses influence the potential for growth in the following areas:

- West of Glenfield;
- South of Lubbethorpe;
- East of Countesthorpe; and
- Within and to the South-East of Whetstone.

9.5 Green Wedges and Areas of Separation

9.5.1 The Blaby District Local Plan Core Strategy and Delivery DPD have policies relating to Green Wedges and Areas of Separation. These areas are considered to be strategically important in terms of preventing coalescence of settlements so that they can retain their individual identities.

9.5.2 Blaby District Council intermittently undertakes Strategic Green Wedge Reviews which identify areas where Green Wedges boundaries could be amended, mainly to accommodate growth.

9.5.3 The current Local Plan identifies Green Wedges where development is largely restricted. These are:

- Between Blaby and Glen Parva (Sence Valley);
- Between Whetstone, Blaby and Countesthorpe;
- Between Whetstone, Enderby, Glen Parva, Braunstone, Blaby, Littlethorpe, Narborough and Cosby (Soar Valley South);
- Between Glenfield, Kirby Muxloe, Kirby Fields and towards Ratby, Groby and Leicester;
- Between Glenfield towards Beaumont Leys, Anstey and Groby; and
- From Elmesthorpe towards Barwell and Earl Shilton.

9.5.4 There are four Areas of Separation within the District of Blaby. Areas of Separation are different to Green Wedges in that they do not perform a strategic role at the fringes of the Principal Urban Area, instead they are important strategic gaps between settlements which are further away from the PUA. Most built development (including housing and employment) is not normally considered appropriate within these areas, which are:

- Between Huncote and Narborough;
- Between Lubbethorpe and Leicester Forest East
- Between Stoney Stanton and Sapcote; and
- Between Whetstone and Cosby.

9.6 Accessibility and Transportation Constraints

- 9.6.1 Blaby District contains junctions sections of the local and strategic road network that where junctions and links are operating close to their operating capacity. Previous studies have identified that areas on the key radial (A50, A47, A5460 and A426) and orbital (A563) routes into and around Leicester City experience congestion and delays.
- 9.6.2 Junction 21 of the M1 and the road network around Fosse Park, Grove Park and Meridian Business Park in particular experience high volumes of traffic and congestion and delays at peak hours. Various improvement schemes have sought to address this and have had a positive impact. There are still capacity constraints at this junction that would need to be mitigated by any substantial development that materially increase vehicle movements in this area.
- 9.6.3 Transport-related responses to Blaby District Council's Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and other transport evidence indicate that there are areas where transportation has an influence on the ability of a settlement to accommodate further growth. However, in most cases there are potential mitigation measures that can reduce adverse impacts. As a result of this, no insurmountable transport constraints have been identified that, in principle, rule out further growth in any of the settlements. It is assumed in this report that impacts can be mitigated through improvement schemes (such as junction improvements, road widening etc.) and / or investment in sustainable and public transport. Transport modelling will be commissioned in order to assess the impacts of the plan generally and strategic sites specifically.

9.7 Natural Environment Constraints

- 9.7.1 Many of the sites protected for their bio-diversity / geo-diversity value within the District of Blaby are remote from main settlements and are unlikely to be threatened by growth (primarily housing and employment). Notwithstanding this, there are areas of importance to the Natural Environment that abut, or are in close proximity to settlements.
- 9.7.2 Natural environments that are designated and therefore afforded some form of protection include Sites of Special Scientific Interest, Local Nature Reserves and Local Wildlife Sites.
- 9.7.3 Settlements which are influenced by important designated natural environment interests (both within the site and off-site) include:
- North East of **Enderby** - Enderby Warren (SSSI)
 - East of **Narborough**, south of **Enderby St Johns** - Narborough Bog (SSSI)
 - North of **Croft** - Croft Hill (SSSI).

- 9.7.4 Local Wildlife Sites are located adjacent to some settlements. These have a lesser status than SSSIs or Local Nature Reserves, but may still contain important areas of bio-diversity that need assessing and protecting if development is proposed.
- 9.7.5 The Council's habitat surveys have identified that some settlements have protected species recorded within their boundaries or at their fringes. In such cases, development may be acceptable only where appropriate mitigation measures are introduced. In the interests of protecting such sites, details of the species identified or the specific location are not identified in this report. Notwithstanding this, in most cases the identified species occupy only a small part of the site and may not preclude development of a wider area.

9.8 Heritage Asset Constraints

9.8.1 The presence of heritage assets and their settings may constrain the ability of settlements to accommodate additional growth. Designated heritage assets include Scheduled Monuments, Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas. The presence of 'non-designated' heritage assets may also inform the detailed design of development proposals.

9.8.2 Scheduled Monuments (SMs) are key considerations that could influence development form. The following SMs are located within or adjacent to settlements where additional growth potential has been identified in the SHELAA:

- Moated site and garden enclosure (west of Glenfield);
- Kirby Muxloe Castle (north-east of Kirby Muxloe);
- Lubbethorpe deserted medieval village (south of Lubbethorpe / north of Enderby);
- The Rabbit Warren (west of Beggars Lane, Leicester Forest East)

9.8.3 There are 11 conservation areas in the District at:

- Aston Flamville
- Blaby
- Cosby
- Countesthorpe
- Croft
- Enderby
- Glenfield
- Grand Union Canal
- Kirby Fields (Kirby Muxloe)
- Narborough, and
- Wigston Parva

9.8.4 The majority of settlements contain at least one listed building.

9.8.5 The settlement hierarchy report has concluded that heritage assets would not act as an 'in principle' constraint to development. However, specific sites are likely to be influenced by the proximity of heritage assets and these are considered in more detail as part of individual site appraisals.

Summary

9.9 The key constraints that have the potential to limit growth are:

- Floodplains to the south of **Glen Parva** and to the east of **Braunstone Town** (that limit the potential for growth to the south of the PUA), and north-west / south-west of **Glenfield** that limits potential growth to the PUA in a westerly direction.
- Floodplains to the north of **Blaby**, north and west of **Littlethorpe** and west of **Cosby**. Areas with potential for flooding also exist within **Whetstone** and parts of **Lubbesthorpe**.

Section D: Settlement Summaries

- 10.1 Appendices A, B and C show the scores for each of the settlements in terms of: their access to services and facilities; public transport; and employment. Appendix D shows the cumulative scores. Greatest weight has been afforded to those settlements that can provide services within the settlement and therefore allow opportunities for both existing and new residents to access these without the need for extensive travel.
- 10.2 The findings of the assessments including the sustainability scores and constraints are summarised for each settlement below:

Settlement: Aston Flamville
Aston Flamville has a very limited range of services and facilities (only a church) and is ranked the least sustainable settlement in the District. Given the poor access to services, employment and transport choice it is considered that Aston Flamville is not a sustainable settlement to accommodate further growth.
Settlement: Blaby
Blaby is the third ranked settlement within the District of Blaby and the second best served settlement outside of the Principal Urban Area. Blaby has the District's only town centre and offers access to retail facilities, employment and primary education. It is well connected to higher order services and facilities by a frequent public transport service. There are some physical and policy constraints that limit the area for growth. Blaby has important Green Wedge areas to its south and west and both floodplain / Green Wedge to its north. It is broadly considered a sustainable location for growth but has some constraints.

Settlement: Braunstone Town

Braunstone Town is the second highest ranked settlement in the District of Blaby. It has access to a wide range of services and facilities including the major employment sites at Grove Park, Meridian Business Park, Meridian Leisure and the District's best-served retail location at Fosse Park. In addition, Braunstone Town has frequent public transport links to higher order services in Leicester City Centre. Parts of the settlement are close to the Meynell's Gorse Park and Ride.

Braunstone Town adjoins the Urban Area of Leicester – a key focus for growth in previous local plans. Braunstone Town has limited opportunities for additional housing growth because of a lack of available development sites and the constraints identified in paragraph 10.5.3 below.

Based on the assessment of access to services, facilities, public transport and key employment areas, Braunstone Town is a settlement that is able to accommodate further growth. Notwithstanding this, it is constrained by floodplain and Green Wedge to the east, existing built development to the north and south and the M1 motorway to the west. It is anticipated that some growth may occur as a result of infill and brownfield development. Opportunities will mainly be on limited brownfield sites whose availability for residential development will depend mainly on whether they are required for continued employment use.

Settlement: Cosby

Cosby is ranked as the 14th most sustainable settlement in the District of Blaby. It has a primary school, convenience store and post office which offer some of the essential services and facilities required to accommodate sustainable communities. Notwithstanding this, the village has very limited employment opportunities and the bus service to higher order centres has a less than a 20 minute frequency. The Motorways' Employment area can be accessed in less than 40 minutes.

There are some policy and physical constraints to the north (Green Wedge), east (Area of Separation) and north-west (floodplain) of the village.

The village has a modest level of service provision and employment opportunities, and has access to a 40 minute bus service providing links to key employment areas and higher order services and could accommodate some additional growth.

Settlement: Countesthorpe

Countesthorpe is the eighth most sustainable settlement in the District of Blaby. It has a secondary school / sixth-form college and a small retail centre. There are few job opportunities within employment sites within the village resulting in substantial out-commuting. All essential services are present within the village and some employment opportunities exist in local schools, shops and other services.

Countesthorpe scores lower than other villages with a functional relationship to Leicester (including Blaby, Whetstone, Narborough and Enderby) . However, the primary and secondary schools and sixth form college, a small retail centre and lack of physical constraints entail that the village has potential for some growth.

Frequent public transport alternatives are available. However, travel times to key employment opportunities and higher level services are greater than in the other larger villages – which are closer to Leicester City Centre and other key employment opportunities in the vicinity of junction 21 of the M1.

Countesthorpe has some potential to accommodate further growth given its access to services and facilities (including primary and secondary education) and transport choice.

Settlement: Croft

Croft is ranked as the joint 12th most sustainable settlement in the District of Blaby. It contains four of the essential services and facilities (convenience store, community building, primary school and broadband). There is a bus service to Leicester City Centre although this is infrequent (approx. 1 hourly). Notwithstanding this, the key employment areas around junction 21 are only some 20 minutes travelling time.

The village has physical constraints to the north and east (mainly floodplain).

The settlement of Croft has a limited range of other services and facilities and there are some limited employment opportunities available (associated with the nearby quarry), access to leisure, secondary education and other services is mainly reliant on the private car.

This modest level of service provision entails that only limited growth would be appropriate and this would help to meet mainly local needs, including rural exceptions housing and would help to support services and facilities.

Settlement: Elmesthorpe

Elmesthorpe is ranked equal 20th in the list of settlements. It contains only one of the essential services and facilities (a village hall) and has superfast broadband. The bus service is infrequent (although Hinckley Town Centre – a key area of employment can be accessed in less than 20 minutes by public transport).

The Parish of Elmesthorpe extends to the boundary of Earl Shilton (a higher order centre which is part of the Sub-Regional Centre of Hinckley and therefore a suitable location for some further growth according to the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan). Elmesthorpe has very limited potential to accommodate further growth because of its limited offer of services and facilities. A small level of growth (partly to meet local needs) within and adjacent to the settlement of Elmesthorpe would be appropriate.

Settlement: Enderby

Enderby is the highest ranked settlement in the District of Blaby. It has access to a wide range of services and facilities both within the settlement (including all the essential services, a secondary school, leisure centre and key employment sites), a district centre, easy access to nearby higher order services including the major employment and retail sites at Fosse Park and Grove Park / Meridian Business Park. In addition, it has frequent public transport links to higher order services in Leicester City Centre and a Park and Ride facility.

Based on access to available services, facilities, public transport and key employment areas, Enderby is theoretically the most able settlement to accommodate further growth. Notwithstanding this, it is constrained by physical boundaries to the north (M69), existing built development to the south (Narborough) and a strong defensible boundary (Whistle Way recreation route) to the west. Further growth would be acceptable on sites that do not undermine the strategic functions of the Green Wedge and on infill and previously developed land.

Settlement: Glenfield

Glenfield is the third highest ranked settlement. It has access to a wide range of services and facilities both within the settlement (including all the 'essential services'). It has frequent public transport services to the higher order services in Leicester City Centre and multiple employment opportunities including Leicestershire County Council's County Hall, Optimus Point employment site and Glenfield hospital. The village has a centre containing most services and facilities.

Based on the assessment of access to services, facilities, public transport and key employment areas, Glenfield has a good range of services that could sustain further growth. Notwithstanding this, it is constrained by floodplain and Green Wedge to the south, north and west, and existing built development to the east. There are some potential transport capacity constraints on the Strategic Road Network – including the A46 and M1. The impact of substantial scale growth would need to fully assess potential transport issues. It is anticipated that some additional growth may occur as a result of infill and brownfield development.

Glenfield is considered in principle to be a suitable and sustainable location for additional growth, subject to demonstrating that transport, flooding and other environmental constraints can be satisfactorily addressed.

Settlement: Glen Parva

Glen Parva is the 11th highest ranked settlement. It has all essential services, except medical facilities but limited access to other services and facilities. It also has frequent public transport access to the higher order services in both Blaby Town Centre and Leicester City Centre.

Based on potential access to services, facilities, public transport and key employment areas, Glen Parva is a sustainable location for some growth. Notwithstanding this, it is constrained by floodplain and Green Wedge to the south and west, and existing built development to the north and east. It is anticipated that some growth may occur as a result of infill and brownfield development, however, there are only limited opportunities for large scale growth.

Settlement: Huncote

Huncote is ranked as the 12th most sustainable settlement. It has a primary school, convenience store, post office and superfast broadband so offers some of the essential services and facilities required to enable sustainable communities. The village has limited employment opportunities but has a bus service which is able to access the large employment areas adjacent to junction 21 in less than 20 minutes.

Huncote has some constraints including an Area of Separation and areas of Flood Zone 3.

Huncote's modest level of service provision and good access to key employment areas and higher order service would allow for a modest amount of additional growth in order to meet local needs and support local services.

Settlement: Kilby

Kilby has a very modest range of services and facilities and is ranked as equal 20th. The village has a primary school and superfast broadband. Other services include a public house. The village has access to infrequent public transport services and is not well located to higher order centres and employment opportunities. Given the low level of services within the village and limited access to higher order services it is considered that only very limited additional growth could be accommodated mainly infill and small scale growth to meet local needs.

Settlement: Kirby Muxloe

Kirby Muxloe is the 9th highest ranked settlement. It has access to most essential services and facilities. There are multiple employment opportunities nearby. Public transport to higher order services (mainly Leicester City Centre) are frequent but take longer to access key centres, services and facilities than others in the Leicester Urban Area. Meynell's Gorse Park and Ride facility is adjacent to the village.

Kirby Muxloe is constrained by floodplain and Green Wedge to the north and east, and existing built development to the south and east. Kirby Muxloe Castle (a grade I listed building and Scheduled Monument) is a constraint to growth to the north-east of the village. In light of the availability of services and facilities and access to public transport some growth is reasonable in locations that do not have environmental constraints.

Settlement: Leicester Forest East

Leicester Forest East is ranked seventh. It has access to a wide range of services and facilities within the village (including all essential services) and has frequent public transport and cycle links along the A47 to higher order services in Leicester City Centre.

Based on the assessment of access to services, facilities, public transport and access to key employment areas, Leicester Forest East could sustain further growth. It is constrained by existing development to its north and east. Transport evidence has identified some capacity issues on the A47.

Settlement: Leicester Forest West

Leicester Forest West has a very limited range of services and facilities (only a pub and service station). It is ranked as equal 20th. The village is on a public transport route with frequent service running between Hinckley and Leicester. Given the lack of services it is not considered an appropriate location for further growth.

Settlement: Littlethorpe

Littlethorpe is ranked joint 18th most sustainable settlement. It has two of the essential services required for sustainable communities including superfast broadband and a community building. The village has some other services including public houses and very limited employment opportunities. There is a bus service.

Whilst the level of services and facilities within Littlethorpe itself are limited, it is located close to the centre of Narborough which contains a wide range of services and also the only passenger train station within Blaby District. The strong functional relationship between Littlethorpe and Narborough entail that occupiers of new development could access services and public transport opportunities.

Littlethorpe has some policy and physical constraints including Flood Zone 3 (to the north and west) and Green Wedge (to the north, south and east).

Littlethorpe has only a basic level of service provision and access to public transport. However, because of its strong functional relationship with Narborough it has good access to higher order services and facilities and key employment areas (including those in the centre of Leicester). As such a modest amount of growth could be accommodated within the built up area of the village and small scale growth on the edges of the village envelope. Large scale growth is likely to have an adverse impact on the character of the village.

Settlement: Lubbesthorpe

New Lubbesthorpe is a large mixed-use development that has been under construction since 2014. The remainder of Lubbesthorpe comprises a loose collection of mainly agriculture related dwellings. The 'settlement' has a newly built primary school and Key Employment Site (close to Enderby, south of the M69). Lubbesthorpe is ranked joint 18th most sustainable settlement at present but has consented services and facilities that is likely to improve its ranking. The village is not yet on a public transport route but has built in cycle routes and access to Arriva Click demand responsive public transport.

Whilst there are currently few services and facilities within Lubbesthorpe itself, it is located between the settlements of Leicester Forest East, Enderby and Braunstone Town / Thorpe Astley.

There are some policy and physical constraints in Lubbesthorpe Parish. These include a Scheduled Ancient Monument to the south of the Parish and one to the west. There are areas of Flood Zone 3 adjacent to Lubbesthorpe Brook to the south. The area is bounded by two motorways which have the potential to result in noise and air pollution. The concentration of permitted growth also provides a market constraint to future growth. Lubbesthorpe is a potentially sustainable location for growth but this will mostly be met by existing permissions.

Settlement: Narborough

Narborough is the fifth (equal) highest ranked settlement in the District. It has access to a wide range of services and facilities within the settlement (including all the essential services) and has good access to nearby large employment centres (Carlton Park and the retail / office / industrial employment sites at Fosse Park and Grove Park / Meridian Business Park). It has frequent public transport links to higher order services in Leicester City Centre (by both bus and train).

Based on the assessment of access to services, facilities, public transport and key employment areas, Narborough is one of the settlements most able to accommodate further growth. Notwithstanding this, it is constrained by built development to the north, Green Wedge / floodplains to the east and south, and a strong defensible boundary (Whistle Way recreation route) and Area of Separation to the west. The village would be a suitable location for growth as part of infill and limited brownfield development opportunities.

Settlement: Potters Marston

Potters Marston has a poor range of services and facilities (only a church) and is ranked 23rd (out of 25) settlements in the District. There is limited public transport and poor access to employment opportunities. Given the lack of services it is considered that no further growth at Potters Marston would be appropriate.

Settlement: Sapcote

Sapcote is ranked as the 15th most sustainable settlement in the District of Blaby. It has a primary school, convenience store, community building and superfast broadband offering the potential for sustainable communities. The village has limited employment opportunities and only has an infrequent bus service to Hinckley.

Constraints include policy and physical limitations to the north (Area of Separation) and west (floodplain) of the village.

There has been substantial growth to Sapcote since the adoption of the previous Local Plan. Whilst it is a potentially suitable location for some limited growth, substantial growth adjacent to the village would be constrained.

Settlement: Sharnford

Sharnford is ranked as the 16th most sustainable settlement. It contains four of the essential services and facilities (small convenience store, Doctor, primary school and superfast broadband). There is an infrequent bus services to Hinckley Town Centre, which is approximately 30 minutes by public transport.

The village has physical constraints to the south (mainly floodplain).

Whilst the settlement of Sharnford has a reasonable range of services and facilities there are very limited employment opportunities available and access to retail, leisure, secondary education and other services is reliant on the private car. Only limited development is considered appropriate given the reliance on private motor vehicles.

Settlement: Stoney Stanton

Stoney Stanton is the ninth highest ranked settlement in the District of Blaby. There is access to a wide range of services and facilities within the village (including all the essential services).

Stoney Stanton has infrequent public transport links and does not contain any Key Employment Sites. Notwithstanding this, there are employment opportunities in nearby Hinckley Town Centre.

It is constrained by an Area of Separation to the south, and a development exclusion zone surrounding the Calor Gas Works to the north.

In light of access to services, facilities and public transport and Stoney Stanton's role as a rural centre for the southern Villages in Blaby District (providing higher order services to surrounding villages) a modest level of additional housing growth within and adjacent to the village would be appropriate.

Settlement: Thurlaston

Thurlaston is ranked 17th. It has a limited range of services and facilities (including a primary school, superfast broadband and a public house).

The village has poor public transport service and is not well located to access higher order centres and employment opportunities. Given the poor level of services within the village and limited access to higher order centres only limited additional growth (mainly infill and meeting identified local needs) would be appropriate.

Settlement: Whetstone

Whetstone is the 8th best served settlement in the District. It has all the essential services, except a GP, and a local shopping centre. There are key employment sites within the village and in nearby Blaby entailing that job opportunities are available without the need to rely on private motor cars.

When assessed against available services and facilities, public transport and access to large scale employment areas, Whetstone scores lower than the other large villages (Blaby, Narborough, Countesthorpe and Enderby that are close to the edge of Leicester). However, there is good access to employment opportunities, good transport links to higher order centres (mainly Leicester) and local shopping facilities

Settlement: Wigston Parva

Wigston Parva has a very poor range of services and facilities (only a church / mobile library), limited public transport services and poor access to employment opportunities, it is ranked 24th out of 25 settlements. Given the lack of services it is considered that no further growth at Wigston Parva would be appropriate.

Appendix A: Access to Services and Facilities Matrix

Most Important Services Desirable Services Other Services	Primary school	Convenience store	GP facility	Community building	H/S broadband	Total points	Pharmacy	Post Office	Supermarket	Newsagent	Bank	Leisure centre	Public house	Library	Petrol station	Dentist	Secondary school	Total	Faith buildings	Optician	Café / restaurant	Recycling facilities	Total	Overall total
1 – Aston Flamville	x	x	x	x	√ ⁷	2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	0	√	x	x	x	1	3
2 – Blaby	√	√	√	√	√	15	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	x	20	√	√	√	√	4	39
3 – Braunstone Town	√	√	√	√	√	15	√	√	√	√	x	√	√	√	√	√	√	20	√	x	√	x	2	37
4 – Cosby	√	√	x	√	√	12	√	√	x	√	x	x	√	√	x	x	x	10	√	x	√	x	2	24
5 – Countesthorpe	√	√	√	√	√	15	√	√	x	√	√	x	√	√	x	√	√	16	√	√	√	√	4	33
6 – Croft	√	√	x	√	√	12	x	√	√	√	x	x	√	√ ⁸	√	x	x	12	√	x	x	x	1	25
7 – Elmhurst	x	x	x	√	√ ⁹	5	x	x	x	x	x	x	√	x	x	x	x	2	√	x	√	√	3	10
8 – Enderby	√	√	√	√	√	15	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	22	√	√	√	√	4	41
9 – Glenfield	√	√	√	√	√	15	√	√	√	√	x	x	√	√	√	√	x	16	√	√	√	√	4	35
10 – Glen Parva	√	√	x	√	√	12	√	√	x	x	x	x	√	√	x	√	x	10	√	x	√	x	2	24
11 – Huncote	√	√	x	x	√	9	x	√	x	√	x	√	√	√	√	x	x	12	√	x	√	√	3	24

⁷ Superfast broadband is partly available (2 points).

⁸ Mobile library (1 point)

⁹ Superfast broadband is partly available (2 points).

Most Important Services																								
Desirable Services	Primary school	Convenience store	GP facility	Community building	H/S broadband	Total points	Pharmacy	Post Office	Supermarket	Newsagent	Bank	Leisure centre	Public house	Library	Petrol station	Dentist	Secondary school	Total	Faith buildings	Optician	Café / restaurant	Recycling facilities	Total	Overall total
Other Services																								
12 – Kilby	✓	x	x	x	✓	6	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓ ¹⁰	x	x	x	3	✓	x	x	✓	2	11
13 – Kirby Muxloe	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	12	✓	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	x	10	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	26
14 – LFE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	15	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	✓	x	14	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	33
15 – LFW	x	x	x	x	✓	3	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x	✓	x	x	4	x	x	x	x	0	7
16 – Littlethorpe	x	x	x	✓	✓	6	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	x	x	x	x	2	x	x	x	x	0	8
17 – Lubbesthorpe	✓	x	x	✓	✓	9	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	0	x	x	x	x	0	9
18 – Narborough	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	15	✓	✓	x	✓	x	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	x	14	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	33
19 – Potters Marston	x	x	x	x	✓ ¹¹	2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	0	✓	x	x	x	1	3
20 – Sapcote	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	12	x	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓	x	x	x	8	✓	x	✓	x	2	22
21 – Sharnford	✓	✓	✓ ¹²	✓	✓	13	x	✓	x	✓	x	x	✓	✓ ¹³	x	x	x	7	✓	x	x	x	1	21
22 – Stoney Stanton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	15	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓	✓	x	x	14	✓	✓	✓	✓	4	33
23 – Thurlaston	✓	x	x	✓	✓	9	x	x	x	x	x	x	✓	✓ ¹⁴	x	x	x	3	✓	✓	x	✓	3	15
24 – Whetstone	✓	✓	x	✓	✓	12	✓	✓	✓	✓	x	x	✓	✓ ¹⁵	✓	✓	x	15	✓	x	✓	✓	3	30

¹⁰ Mobile library (1 point)

¹¹ Superfast broadband is partly available (2 points).

¹² Evergreen Hall - Tuesday AM, Thursday PM (1 point)

¹³ Mobile library (1 point)

¹⁴ Mobile library (1 point)

¹⁵ Mobile library (1 point)

	Primary school	Convenience store	GP facility	Community building	H/S broadband	Total points	Pharmacy	Post Office	Supermarket	Newsagent	Bank	Leisure centre	Public house	Library	Petrol station	Dentist	Secondary school	Total	Faith buildings	Optician	Café / restaurant	Recycling facilities	Total	Overall total
25 – Wigston Parva	x	x	x	x	√ ¹⁶	2	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	√ ¹⁷	x	x	x	1	√	x	x	x	1	4

¹⁶ Superfast broadband is expected imminently (2 points).

¹⁷ Mobile library (1 point)

Appendix B: Availability of Sustainable Transport by Settlement

Settlement	Train service and frequent bus service and Sunday service 5 points	High Frequency bus service (20 mins or better) and Sunday service 4 points	Moderate frequency bus service (20 mins to 1 hour) and Sunday Service 3 points	Moderate frequency bus service (20 mins to 1 hour) and no Sunday Service 2 points	Infrequent bus service (less than 1 per hour) and no Sunday service 1 point	Park and ride facility in or adjacent to settlement 1 point	Access to demand responsive public transport 1 point	Dedicated cycle lane / National Cycle route 2 points	Total
Aston Flamville					✓				1
Blaby		✓						✓	6
Braunstone Town		✓				✓	✓	✓	8
Cosby			✓						3
Countesthorpe		✓						✓	6
Croft			✓						3
Elmesthorpe					✓				1
Enderby		✓				✓	✓	✓	8
Glenfield		✓						✓	6
Glen Parva		✓						✓	6
Huncote			✓						3
Kilby					✓				1

Settlement	Train service and frequent bus service and Sunday service 5 points	High Frequency bus service (20 mins or better) and Sunday service 4 points	Moderate frequency bus service (20 mins to 1 hour) and Sunday Service 3 points	Moderate frequency bus service (20 mins to 1 hour) and no Sunday Service 2 points	Infrequent bus service (less than 1 per hour) and no Sunday service 1 point	Park and ride facility in or adjacent to settlement 1 point	Access to demand responsive public transport 1 point	Dedicated cycle lane / National Cycle route 2 points	Total
Kirby Muxloe			✓			✓		✓	6
Leicester Forest East		✓				✓	✓	✓	8
Leicester Forest West		✓							4
Littlethorpe					✓			✓	4
Lubbesthorpe							✓	✓	3
Narborough	✓						✓	✓	8
Potters Marston					✓				1
Sapcote					✓				1
Sharnford					✓				1
Stoney Stanton					✓				1
Thurlaston					✓				1
Whetstone			✓						3
Wigston Parva									0

Appendix C: Access to Employment

	Key employment site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park within 800 metres (10 minute walk time) 4 points	Key employment site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park within 20 minutes public transport, 3 mile cycle time or 20 minute's walk time (1 mile). 3 points	Key employment site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park within 20 - 40 minutes public transport travel time. 2 points	Key employment site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park 40 minutes to 1 hour public transport travel time. 1 points	Key employment site / Leicester City Centre / Fosse Park More than 1 hour public transport travel time. 0 point	Total
Aston Flamville				✓		1
Blaby		✓				3
Braunstone Town	✓					4
Cosby			✓			2
Countesthorpe			✓			1
Croft		✓				2
Elmesthorpe			✓			2
Enderby	✓					4
Glenfield	✓					4
Glen Parva			✓			2
Huncote		✓				3
Kilby				✓		1
Kirby Muxloe		✓				3
Leicester Forest East		✓				3
LFW			✓			2
Littlethorpe		✓				3
Lubbesthorpe		✓				3
Narborough		✓				4
Potters Marston				✓		1
Sapcote				✓		1
Sharnford				✓		1
Stoney Stanton				✓		1
Thurlaston			✓			2
Whetstone			✓			3
Wigston Parva					✓	0

Appendix D: Cumulative Scores

Settlement	Services and facilities available	Access to public transport	Access to large employment centres	Total Score Rank (in brackets)
Aston Flamville	1	1	1	3 (25)
Blaby	39	6	3	48 (3)
Braunstone Town	37	8	4	49 (2)
Cosby	24	3	2	29 (14)
Countesthorpe	33	6	1	40 (7)
Croft	25	3	2	30 (12=)
Elmesthorpe	10	1	2	13 (20=)
Enderby	41	8	4	53 (1)
Glenfield	35	6	4	45 (4)
Glen Parva	24	6	2	32 (11)
Huncote	24	3	3	30 (12=)
Kilby	11	1	1	13 (20=)
Kirby Muxloe	26	6	3	35 (9=)
LFE	33	8	3	44 (6)
LFW	7	4	2	13 (20=)
Littlethorpe	8	4	3**	15 (19=)
Lubbesthorpe	9	3	3	15 (19=)
Narborough	33	8	4	45 (4=)
Potters Marston	3	1	1	5 (23)
Sapcote	22	1	1	24 (16)
Sharnford	21	1	1	23 (17)
Stoney Stanton	33	1	1	35 (9=)
Thurlaston	15	1	2	18 (18)
Whetstone	30	3	3	36 (8)
Wigston Parva	4	0	0	4 (24)