

Charnwood 2026 Planning for Our Next Generation Further Consultation

October 2008

Foreword

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The Council has a responsibility to plan for the future needs of the borough: to provide new homes and jobs in the right places at the right time and to protect the environment for the benefit of future generations. Yet this task must be undertaken in a changing world and in an age where rapid advances in technology and scientific understanding are changing how we communicate, work and live. These changes are affecting the way we shop, where and how we work and the life choices we make. We are living longer too; and have higher expectations for a future where we enjoy good health and greater prosperity.

We are also aware of the many challenges that lie in front of us. There is growing concern about climate change yet we must build many more houses to meet the predicted future demand and provide land for new jobs to maintain our position as an attractive location for business and to ensure continued prosperity. We must also not forget about those communities in areas of relatively higher need or the desire to protect and enhance our natural and built environment and heritage.

Our plans must provide certainty for the future whilst being flexible enough to deal with a changing world. We have tried in the past to fit new housing and jobs around the borough in a piecemeal way but this has in places resulted in unacceptable pressure on infrastructure such as transport, healthcare and schools. There is also concern that smaller communities are losing their individual character or are being taken over by larger communities. Instead, our plan sets out a vision for two large new communities planned from the start with new schools, jobs, surgeries, shops and play areas required to create quality places built to high environmental standards where people want to live and work.

Many people agree that there is a need for more housing, better quality jobs and a greater range of services and facilities but not everyone is prepared to accept new development close to them. However, we should bear in mind that any of the potential locations for future development will have pros and cons and all are likely to have local impacts.

Planning for the future is not an easy task and difficult decisions must eventually be taken. This consultation document therefore provides a genuine opportunity for people to have their say about the options and the large amount of evidence gathered over the last few years. We cannot take these decisions alone but with your help we can work towards a balance that helps to achieve the best outcome for the benefit of future generations.

Councillor Hilary Fryer

Cabinet Lead Member for Planning and Development

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ALL COMMENTS SHOULD BE SENT TO US BY FRIDAY 5th DECEMBER 2008

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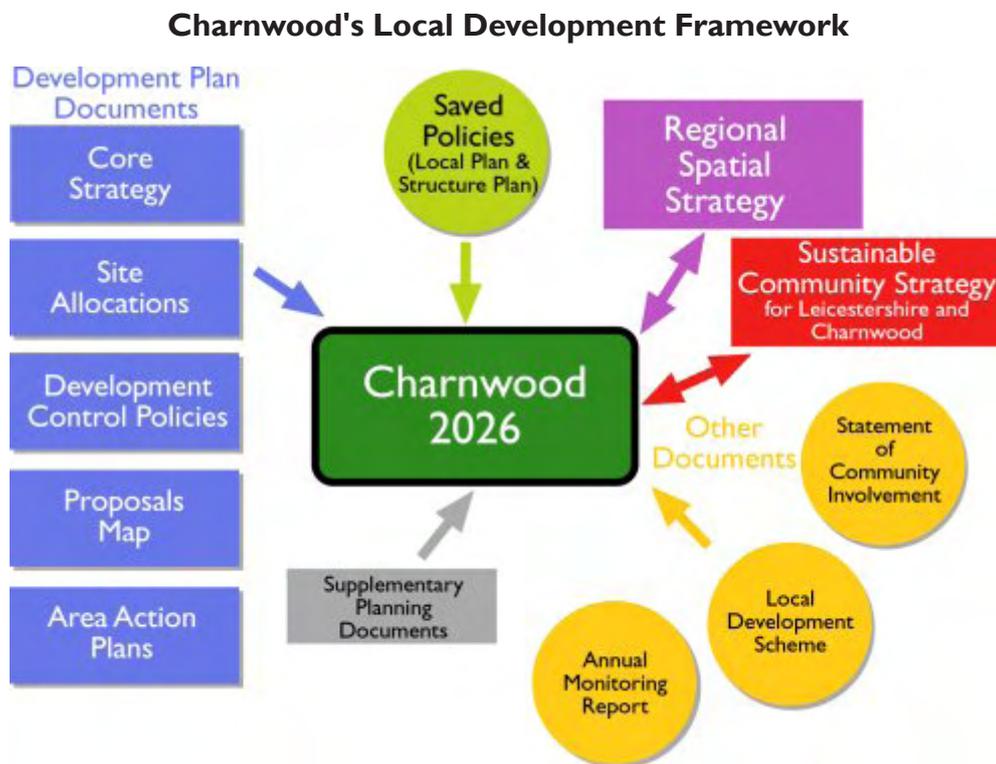
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Chapter 1: Introduction

What is Charnwood 2026?

- I.1** Charnwood 2026 is the name given to the Charnwood Local Development Framework. The Local Development Framework is a folder of planning documents prepared by the Council in consultation with stakeholders and the public. These documents will collectively set out the spatial strategy for the Borough and gradually replace the adopted Borough of Charnwood Local Plan. The requirement to prepare Local Development Frameworks was introduced by the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- I.2** The Council has published a project plan called the Local Development Scheme detailing the planning documents it intends to prepare and the timetable for their production. This includes both Development Plan Documents which set out planning policy and Supplementary Planning Documents, which set out more detailed guidance on these policies. The diagram below illustrates the types of documents that will make up the Local Development Framework and how it relates closely to the Regional Spatial Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy.



What is the Core Strategy?

- I.3** The first Development Plan Document to be prepared by the Council is the Core Strategy. It takes account of community priorities in the Sustainable Community Strategy and sets out the

Council's vision and overall strategy for future development in Charnwood over the next twenty years - including the broad directions for growth to deliver future requirements for homes, jobs and other strategic development. All other documents produced as part of Charnwood 2026 Local Development Framework will need to reflect and be in agreement with the Core Strategy.

- 1.4** The Core Strategy makes strategic allocations that are central to the achievement of the overall strategy and require long lead-in times. For Charnwood this relates to the proposed sustainable urban extensions and Science Park. Smaller non-strategic allocations will be made in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

What has happened so far?

- 1.5** The Council has been preparing its Core Strategy since 2004. Since then the Council has produced a number of consultation documents that have identified the key issues affecting the Borough and discussed the alternative ways to address them.
- 1.6** In May 2004 an Issues Paper was published, which was followed by an Issues and Options Paper in June 2005. These consultations asked stakeholders what they thought were the main issues facing Charnwood and what the vision and key spatial objectives of the strategy should be. A wide range of comments were received helping to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report in 2006. Summaries of the responses to these consultations can be viewed on our website at: <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/corestrategyarchive>.
- 1.7** Since the Core Strategy Preferred Options Report was published in 2006, government projections have predicted an increase in household formation. These projections have been taken into account in the draft Regional Plan and the scale of housing growth for Charnwood has had to be revised. Preparing a fresh consultation document which takes account of the increased growth provides an opportunity to prepare a range of new studies and take account of the latest national and regional policies. It has also been an opportunity to align the Core Strategy vision and objectives with the review of the Sustainable Community Strategy for Charnwood prepared by the Local Strategic Partnership Charnwood Together.
- 1.8** In reviewing the preferred options for this latest consultation document, the Council has engaged with key groups and organisations to ensure it has identified and considered all the reasonable alternative approaches to meet our future development needs. During September 2007 the Council consulted statutory agencies, Parish Councils, local interest groups and range of other stakeholders on alternative strategies to inform this consultation. During the last six months the Council held a series of workshops and focus groups to develop approaches to a number of topic areas. There have also been on-going discussions with a range of statutory agencies and infrastructure providers to discuss the constraints and opportunities of possible growth options and policy approaches. These discussions have inputted into the sustainability appraisal process, which has been a central part of the preparation of the Core Strategy. Much of this work is reflected in the Background Papers and the Sustainability Appraisal Report which



accompany this consultation document.

- 1.9** There have also been on-going discussion with promoters of sustainable urban extensions in the Borough which has informed our proposals. This is a very important part of the process of understanding the deliverability of proposals and has helped us undertake a broad and equitable assessment of all the options.
- 1.10** The other key influence on the preparation of the proposed strategy and a key input into the sustainability appraisal has been the evidence base studies undertaken to inform Charnwood 2026. Evidence base studies can be viewed on the Council's website at <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/evidencebase>. There are a number of new studies that have been prepared since 2006 that have helped inform this Core Strategy consultation document:
- Settlement Hierarchy Review (2008)
 - Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Needs Assessment (2007)
 - Housing Land Availability Assessment (2007)
 - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2008)
 - Retail and Town Centre Study (2008)
 - Phase I Habitat Survey (2008)
 - Species Report (2008)
 - Transport Assessments for Charnwood 2026 (2008)
 - Strategic Housing Market Area Assessment (2008)
 - Leicester and Leicestershire HMA Employment Land Study (2008)
- 1.11** There are a number of other studies currently being prepared including a Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Affordable Housing Viability Assessment. As work progresses we will need to commission further studies.

What is the Sustainability Appraisal?

- 1.12** Sustainability appraisal is an iterative process that considers the effects of proposals against an agreed set of objectives representing key indicators for the environment, economy and society. The process provides a means to evaluate proposals and to make informed judgements about their contribution towards or away from the agreed sustainability objectives.
- 1.13** Following consultation on the proposed scope and approach to sustainability appraisal, assessments have been prepared to accompany each of the consultation documents produced so far. Building on this work, a further sustainability appraisal has been prepared to assess the alternative directions for growth, alternative options and the preferred approaches in this document. The results of these assessments are available in a Sustainability Appraisal Report from our website at: <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/charnwood2026>.

What is this consultation about?

- 1.14** This further consultation and the accompanying sustainability appraisal provide an opportunity for everybody to comment on the options available and the proposed strategy. No final decisions have been made yet and we want to know what you think.

Next Steps

- 1.15** The comments we receive in response to this consultation will help the Council to prepare a formal draft of the Core Strategy which must be in a form that can be submitted to the Secretary of State. As part of this consultation there may be other detailed proposals that come forward which will need to be considered by the Council before a final decision is made.
- 1.16** Once the Council has agreed a formal draft Core Strategy, there will be a further six week public consultation on this formal draft before it is submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration. The submission Core Strategy document will be considered by an independent Inspector on behalf of the Secretary of State. The Inspector will consider the representations made and decide whether the strategy is sound. The Inspector's Report will be binding upon the Council and any changes recommended must be made before the Council can adopt the core strategy.

What is in this Report?

- 1.17** This report is made up of a further four chapters:
- **Chapter 2:** Context – sets out the spatial portrait of the Borough and the context for the Core Strategy, outlining the main national, regional and local policies that need to be taken into account;
 - **Chapter 3:** Vision for Charnwood – outlines the key issues facing the Borough, the evidence of these issues, sets out our vision for what we would like Charnwood to be like in 20 years time and our objectives to achieve this vision;
 - **Chapter 4:** Development Strategy for Charnwood – considers how many new homes and jobs need to be planned for in light of the Draft Regional Plan and where these should go, including consideration of the most suitable locations for major new sustainable urban extensions. It also sets out the policy approach to a number of key issues to ensure the future development needs are met in the most sustainable way;
 - **Chapter 5:** Implications of the Development Strategy - Applies the development strategy to north and south Charnwood and demonstrates how the vision will be delivered.



Chapter 2: Context

Spatial Portrait for Charnwood

- 2.1** Charnwood's diversity and contrasts, from the bustle of urban life to rural tranquillity, provide a dynamic mix and makes the Borough an attractive place to live, work and visit. With a population of 164,800 the Borough sits centrally between the three cities of Nottingham, Derby and Leicester. It extends from the main County town of Loughborough in the north to the edge of Leicester to the south.
- 2.2** Just over a third of the population live in the thriving university town of Loughborough. As the largest County town in Leicestershire, the town is an important centre for business, commerce and retailing. Much of the town's vibrancy is due to the mix of cultures present in the town. A string of larger settlements extend northwards from the edge of Leicester along the valley of the River Soar. The more rural areas are on the higher rolling landscapes of the Charnwood Forest to the west and the Leicestershire Wolds to the east, along with the area along the River Wreake and part of High Leicestershire.
- 2.3** Many of the larger settlements were linked to the textile and clothing trades. With the closure of many of the factories in recent years there have been quite significant impacts on settlements like Shepshed, Sileby and Anstey which have increasingly become dormitory settlements for Leicester and Loughborough.
- 2.4** The Charnwood Forest area, part of the National Forest, has a distinctive character of wooded upland areas with rocky outcrops. It draws many visitors particularly to Bradgate Park. With Charnwood Forest and the river valleys, the Borough's comprises a rich biodiversity resource and the Council is proud of its record in preserving and protecting wildlife habitats and species. The Borough contains 17 Sites of Special Scientific Interest and over 200 Local Wildlife Sites. Both the River Soar and River Wreake are regionally significant in their role as strategic wildlife corridors.
- 2.5** Charnwood's historic environment is rich and varied, with over 1,000 listed buildings; 36 conservation areas; 21 Scheduled Ancient Monuments; and 3 historic parks and gardens and another 200 properties on the locally prepared list of buildings of interest.
- 2.6** Borough residents enjoy easy access to a range of formal and informal recreational facilities, including Bradgate Park and Beacon Hill in the Charnwood Forest and Watermead Country Park, where former gravel workings have been transformed to provide an alternative recreational destination to the Forest. There are well used Leisure Centres in Loughborough, Mountsorrel and Syston. However there are deficiencies in recreational facilities in some communities.
- 2.7** Loughborough is a thriving commercial centre with strong associations, not only with further and higher education, but also engineering and pharmaceuticals. It is the main retail and cultural centre in the Borough, boasting a varied shopping experience, Leisure Centre, Museum and the successful Town Hall Theatre. The presence of Loughborough University is significant and

brings many benefits for the Borough, not least for the local economy. There are issues relating to the impact of a large student population on the town, particularly in terms of student accommodation and pressures on the local housing market.

- 2.8** Because of its location close to the three cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby, Charnwood's housing market is relatively buoyant. Over the last 10 years new housing development has been concentrated in Loughborough and Shepshed and the larger Soar and Wreake valley settlements. However, in much of the Borough there are real problems of affordability. Recent research to inform the Regional Housing Strategy found that across much of the Borough house prices were more than 4 times average incomes. There is a range and mix of house types and sizes in the Borough, although the Housing Needs Survey 2003/05 identified a shortage of flatted accommodation compared with demand.
- 2.9** Whilst Charnwood is relatively affluent, there are pockets of deprivation where communities suffer from poor access to jobs, poor housing and lack of facilities. This can be a problem that affects both urban and rural communities. Recent work has identified areas of relatively higher need in eastern and western Loughborough, Mountsorrel and in South Charnwood (in parts of Syston and Thurmaston).
- 2.10** The Borough is easily accessible from the M1, the Midland Mainline between Sheffield and London and the nearby Nottingham East Midlands Airport. The A6 linking Loughborough with Leicester, the A60 to Nottingham, and the A46 to Newark are the main trunk roads in the area. While there is a good local road network, and reasonable bus and rail services to larger settlements, accessibility is an issue for those in the more rural areas. The network of cycleways and footpaths is reasonably good especially around Loughborough. The National Cycleway traverses the Borough from Shepshed south to Watermead Country Park.
- 2.11** There are problems of congestion in the peak hour on the main A6, A512, A60 and Forest Road approaches to Loughborough and on the A6 and A46 towards Leicester in the south of the Borough. A number of rural communities, particularly the Wolds villages of Wymeswold and Burton on the Wolds suffer from the impact of heavy goods vehicles using the east- west route from the A46 towards the M1. Traffic congestion has resulted in air quality problems in parts of the Borough, particularly along the A6 and A512 in Loughborough and Melton Road in Syston where Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been designated.

The Strategic Context

- 2.12** The spatial strategy for the Borough needs to take account of national planning policy statements and the East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. The Regional Spatial Strategy is being reviewed and a revised Regional Spatial Strategy, also known as the Regional Plan, is expected to be approved in the spring 2009
- 2.13** The Regional Spatial Strategy, together with the saved policies of the Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Structure Plan, the Charnwood Borough Local Plan and the Minerals and Waste Local Plans make up the development plan for Charnwood. Development Plan Documents



proposed as part of the Charnwood Local Development Framework and the Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework, prepared by Leicestershire County Council, will replace Local Plan policies as they are approved.

- 2.14** In preparing its proposals the Council must take account of national policies set out in Planning Policy Statements and national guidance in Planning Policy Guidance Notes. These documents set out the government's intentions for the use and development of land and set out the ground rules for local planning authorities to follow in preparing Local Development Frameworks.
- 2.15** The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 sets out the duty of planning to secure sustainable development. Planning Policy Statement 1 emphasises the key role planning plays to facilitate and promote sustainable and inclusive patterns of urban and rural development and the creation of sustainable communities that will stand the test of time, where people want to live, and which will enable people to meet their aspirations and potential. A well used definition of sustainable development is: *Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.*

The Sustainable Community Strategy

- 2.16** The Local Government Act places a duty on all local authorities and their partners to produce a sustainable community strategy that will help improve the economic, social and environmental well-being of their area.
- 2.17** Charnwood Together, the Local Strategic Partnership involving the Borough and County Councils, public service providers and statutory agencies, local businesses, voluntary organisations and the local community, produced a fresh sustainable community strategy for Charnwood in September 2008. An equivalent partnership 'Leicestershire Together', acting across Leicestershire, also produced a new Sustainable Community Strategy in May 2008.
- 2.18** The Local Development Framework is required to have regard to the Sustainable Community Strategy in setting out its vision and strategy for the future of the Borough. Since work commenced on the Core Strategy in the 2004, it has sought to take account of the Sustainable Community Strategy. The review of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the corporate plan have provided an opportunity to closely align the three documents to ensure the Local Development Framework delivers the spatial elements of these strategies. This demonstrates the commitment that the council and its partners have in creating truly sustainable communities and in shaping good places to live and work.
- 2.19** With this in mind, the review of the Sustainable Community Strategy and the preparation of the Core Strategy have been based on a shared evidence base. Joint stakeholder consultation has also been undertaken to develop a single vision and set of spatial objectives for both strategies. It has also helped with the essential collaboration between partners which is particularly important in the context of major growth and the need for co-ordination in the delivery of infrastructure to benefit both existing and new residents and businesses.

2.20 Related to this is the Leicestershire Local Area Agreement, which is essentially the delivery plan for the Sustainable Community Strategies. It is a written agreement about the priority outcomes for an area and sets out how public, voluntary and private sector bodies within an area will work together to improve the quality of life for residents over a three year period. The second Local Area Agreement for Leicestershire was signed in June 2008 to cover the period 2008-11. This has provided an opportunity to align the 35 priority local indicators in the Local Area Agreement with those of the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Development Framework.

The Three Cities New Growth Point

2.21 The Government announced the New Growth Points initiative in December 2005. The initiative is intended to provide support to local communities who wish to pursue large scale and sustainable growth through partnership with Government. The three Counties (Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire) and three Cities (Leicester, Derby and Nottingham) submitted a bid for designation as one of the New Growth Points in June 2006 based on housing proposals in the draft Regional Plan. This bid was accepted in October 2006 and has resulted in some initial funding for 2008-11 to support growth. Charnwood will have a key role to play in delivering the Three Cities New Growth Point proposals and as such will benefit from this funding.

2.22 New Growth Point status is not a statutory designation but is a long term partnership between Government and local partners linked to early delivery of housing and ensuring that infrastructure and service provision keep pace with growth. The Three Cities New Growth Point is also bringing authorities together to ensure a co-ordinated approach to issues such as developer contributions and green infrastructure.



Chapter 3: A Spatial Strategy for Charnwood

What are the Issues?

- 3.1** To gain an understanding of the key issues the Core Strategy needs to address the Council consulted on an Issues Paper in May 2004 when the Council invited local residents, businesses and other key stakeholders to highlight the issues that they felt needed addressing through the Local Development Framework. Subsequently the Council published an Issues and Options Paper in June 2005, which set out a range of issues which had been identified through this earlier consultation. The June 2005 paper was also informed by work on the Sustainability Appraisal Framework. Consultants were engaged to undertake a “baseline assessment” of the Borough to identify key sustainability issues. This has been continuously updated since 2005 and the most up to date baseline assessment is set out in the Sustainability Appraisal Report which can be viewed on the Council’s web site <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/charnwood2026>.
- 3.2** Consultation on the Issues Papers, work on the baseline assessment for the sustainability appraisal and new national and regional policies have helped to identify the following key issues for Charnwood:
- **Reducing the Borough’s impact on Climate Change:** Climate change is now widely recognised to be the most significant issue facing the future of the region. The issues cut across all land use and affect the environment, economy and quality of life. The issue must be addressed as part of a coherent strategy to deal with this long-term problem that demands an immediate and coordinated response.
 - **A growing and ageing population:** The Borough’s population is forecast to grow from 164,800 in 2007 to 177,300 by 2029. The draft Regional Plan requires the provision of 19,300 homes in Charnwood between 2001 and 2026. Although Charnwood has a slightly younger age profile due to the presence of Loughborough University, reflecting national trends the Borough also has an ageing resident population. A key issue for the Local Development Framework will be how to meet the housing needs of an expanding and ageing population.
 - **The local economy:** Overall the local economy is strong, with the area benefiting from Loughborough’s strengths in the high technology sector and also from the presence of Loughborough University. It is important for the local and regional economy that we build on these strengths. However, there is a high degree of polarisation in the Borough’s occupational structure with a combination of a high skilled and low skilled workforce. There remains a high share of manufacturing jobs and a comparatively low share in the growth sectors of financial and business services. There has been a loss of jobs against national trends associated with the steep decline in the textile industry. This has impacted on some of the traditional industrial villages like Shepshed, Sileby and Anstey which have suffered a significant decline in their employment base. There is a net outflow from the Borough of some 11,000 workers, with over 50% of those residents leaving Charnwood and travelling to Leicester to work. The labour market balance has been worsening since

2001, with the Borough being dependent on jobs provided in adjoining local authority areas like Leicester.

- **A lack of affordable housing:** Increasing house prices in recent years has meant that affordability issues increasingly affect communities throughout Charnwood. The Borough has one of the highest house price to income ratios in Leicestershire. The 2003 Housing Needs Survey identified particular needs within Shepshed, Barrow/Quorn, Thurmaston, East Goscote, and the Wreake Valley villages. The lack of affordable housing is a particular issue for the smaller rural communities where the potential for additional provision is limited. In terms of housing type the Borough has a smaller proportion of terraced housing and flatted accommodation in the Borough when compared with the national average.
- **A concentration of certain types and tenures of housing in some locations:** There are communities in the Borough that are unbalanced due the concentration of one household type, tenure, size or type of housing. This is a particular issue in Loughborough where concentrations of student households have resulted in unbalanced communities in parts of the town. Some wards close to the University are made up of more than 20% student households. Issues that result include the impact on public facilities such as schools, property price increases limiting access to affordable homes for first time buyers, out of term time vacancies, poor housing management and maintenance, poor quality student population accommodation, high levels of car ownership and low level anti-social behaviour.
- **The impact of heavy volumes of traffic:** Although less of an issue compared to parts of Leicester City, some routes within Charnwood suffer from high volumes of traffic. Along with the M1 Motorway, the A6, A60, A46 and A512 provide key transport routes linking the Three Cities and Loughborough. A number of routes within and around Loughborough and on the main approaches to the City experience some congestion at peak times. Air Quality Management Areas have been designated in Loughborough and Syston as a result of the impact of traffic on air quality in these areas. High volumes of heavy goods vehicles impact on some communities for example Hathern and a number of Wolds villages.
- **Real travel choice by public transport, cycling and walking is limited outside the main urban areas:** In Loughborough and Shepshed, the Soar Valley communities and settlements close to the edge of Leicester, residents enjoy reasonably good access to public transport, cycling and walking facilities although only some of the current provision is good enough to provide a realistic alternative to car use. Outside these areas and in the more rural communities access to public transport is more limited. Residents usually have to rely on the car to access services and facilities in the larger settlements.
- **Pockets of deprivation:** The Borough has some considerable pockets of deprivation. These include parts of Loughborough in Hastings, Lemyngton, Southfields, Storer and Shelthorpe wards. Five of the ten most deprived Super Output Areas in Leicestershire fall within these Loughborough wards. Other noticeable pockets of deprivation in Charnwood fall within south Charnwood and the Soar Valley villages. These are areas where residents have lower than average incomes, suffer poor health and have lower levels of educational attainment.
- **The shopping and cultural facilities:** Loughborough is the main shopping and cultural destination within the Borough and continues to be relatively buoyant. However its



catchment and market share is affected by the sustained growth of the nearby higher order centres of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham. All these centres have seen significant increases in quality retail floorspace in recent years. Without improvements to Loughborough town centre, further trade could divert to these larger centres with a resulting detrimental impact on the town centre. Local shopping and other facilities are provided in the larger settlements. Some, like Shepshed and Sileby, have suffered a decline in recent years in part associated with the loss of local employment. Other centres like Thurmaston have expanded. The key issue is how the role of these centres can support local shopping, cultural and leisure needs in the future. In the smaller rural communities of the Forest and Wolds there has been a loss of local services and facilities increasing the difficulties of access to services and facilities for these communities.

- **Deficiencies in green space provision:** The Green Space Strategy identifies a need for further Country Park facilities, district parks in Loughborough, Birstall, Shepshed and Syston and smaller parks and recreation grounds across the Borough.
- **Flooding along the Rivers Soar and Wreake:** A number of the Borough's settlements extend along the Soar and Wreake Valleys making many communities vulnerable to potentially increased flood risk. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment suggests that the impact of flood events are likely to increase as a consequence of our changing climate although the depth of flood events rather than their extent is predicted.
- **Crime and the fear of crime in local communities:** The overall crime rate for the Borough, at 88.2 per 1,000 people, is slightly below the figure for Leicestershire of 96 per 1,000. Loughborough Town Centre is a crime hotspot with a crime rate of around 180 per 1,000. Crime and the fear of crime is an issue that factors highly in local resident surveys.
- **Built heritage:** With over 1,000 listed buildings, 36 conservation areas, 21 scheduled ancient monuments and 3 historic parks and gardens, the Borough has a rich built heritage. There are, however, problems resulting from development pressures and neglect. There are some long standing issues with a number of historic structures and buildings that have been placed on the 'at risk' register.
- **Maintaining settlement identity:** The Borough has a relatively high population density reflecting the concentrated settlement pattern arising from the settlements extending along the Soar and Wreake valleys from Leicester. There have long been local concerns about the potential loss of settlement identity through further development. The need to provide for future homes and jobs in the Borough can be expected to increase the pressure on the remaining areas of open land between settlements.
- **Maintaining local landscape character:** The Borough is made up of a series of distinct landscapes from the Charnwood Forest to the Wolds. The Charnwood Forest also forms the eastern edge of the National Forest. Policies are needed to ensure that where development does take place, it reflects the character of the Charnwood landscapes.
- **Sustainable design quality:** Many of the settlements in the Borough have a strong local distinctiveness through the use of local materials and building styles. In particular the Charnwood Forest villages have a strong local character and identity. Some recent developments have not reflected this local distinctiveness and have not made a positive

contribution to the quality of the Borough's urban areas. More can be done to ensure that new developments incorporate sustainable design principles.

- **Biodiversity:** Compared to other parts of the East Midlands the Borough contains significant areas of ecological interest mainly focussed on the Charnwood Forest and the river valleys of the Soar and Wreake. Some of these areas, including nationally designated sites, are in a poor state and face continued pressures from future development. Regionally significant biodiversity corridors along the river valleys pass through the Borough. There are issues associated with the decline and fragmentation of key biodiversity corridors.
- **Use of natural resources:** In common with other areas, Charnwood residents and business consume natural resources through the use of minerals, energy and water resources and create waste. It is a key national objective to minimise resource use, waste and increase the contribution to energy production from renewable sources. Charnwood does not stand out as an area of excessively high energy use and recycling rates have improved significantly in recent years. Across Leicestershire, energy generation from renewable sources is has been limited and there is scope to increase this in the future.



Our Vision

- 3.3** The Sustainable Community Strategy vision for the Borough is: *'An improved quality of life for everyone living and working in Charnwood'*
- 3.4** It sets out four priority themes for delivering the vision:
- People Matter
 - Places & Environment Matter
 - Prosperity Matters and
 - Partnership Matters.
- 3.5** The Council's Corporate Plan takes forward these themes and sets out the Council's priorities and objectives for the Borough up to 2011, within the context of the Council's aspiration to be 'Leading in Leicestershire'.
- 3.6** The Local Development Framework will be a key tool in helping to deliver the shared vision on the ground. It will providing a clear strategy and policies to make the best use of future development opportunities to provide real and lasting benefits and deliver the changes necessary to make Charnwood's towns and villages more sustainable communities.

A Spatial Vision for Charnwood

People Matter

A vision for healthy and strong and accessible communities - healthy, cohesive and engaged communities leading to active citizens and civil renewal.

By 2026 the student population in Loughborough is making positive contributions to the Borough's economy and diversity. Steps to manage and reduce adverse impacts on particular parts of the town, in conjunction with Loughborough University and other partners have been successful in achieving a more balanced residential mix and a consequent improvement in those environments.

The effect of designing out crime principles as a matter of routine has also reduced the opportunities for criminals and reduced the fear of crime.

Everyone in the Borough, young and old, has the opportunity of enjoying the healthy lifestyle offered by quality leisure and sporting activities, as well as national healthcare facilities and treatment. The availability of diverse and exciting cultural opportunities in towns and rural areas contributes to healthy living. Charnwood Forest retains its special landscape character and through its designation as a Regional Park, recreational and tourism pressures have been effectively managed.

Places & Environment Matter

A vision for creating safe and liveable areas – greener, cleaner and safer living environments, with a focus on deprived areas.

By 2026 Charnwood will be widely regarded as an excellent place to live, work and visit. The essential characteristics and diversity of the Borough's landscape, ecology, heritage and built environment have been preserved. The variety of lifestyle choices, from urban to suburban and from larger village to rural isolation makes the Borough attractive to established residents and new arrivals alike.

New sustainable communities have been substantially completed to the west of Loughborough and to the east of Thurmaston/north of Hamilton providing homes for nearly 20,000 people along with jobs, shops, services and other community facilities. Through these strategic land allocations a clear strategy for longer term growth in Charnwood up to 2026 and beyond has been established.

Green spaces have been connected together to provide 'green infrastructure networks' across the district and into neighbouring districts providing multi-functional benefits including recreational space, biodiversity enhancement, flood protection and helping to improve the overall environment and the health and well-being of the population.

The local environment is clean and safe and a clear emphasis on recycling, sustainable development and energy efficiency means that the Borough is contributing actively to reducing global environmental problems. Our targets for recycling have been met and good progress has been made in implementing our "Zero Waste" strategy.

Air quality has improved in those locations where traffic congestion was problematic, the congestion reduced through increased use of quality, integrated public transport and other alternatives to motor vehicle use. There has been a substantial reduction in the incidents of severe flooding across the Borough.

The quality and coverage of public bus services has improved alongside integration with rail services. Loughborough railway station and its forecourt have been enhanced as part of the redevelopment of the eastern gateway of the Town, and there are regular mainline rail services from Loughborough and frequent local services serving Loughborough, Barrow upon Soar, Sileby and Syston. The road network is in good condition.

Shepshed and Thurmaston have benefited from investment and concerted action to address their unique problems. The opportunity sites in Loughborough town centre have been developed and it is an attractive, vibrant and vital place where people choose to shop and spend their leisure time.

Prosperity Matters

A vision for maximising opportunities for a dynamic Charnwood economy - thinking and planning ahead to retain and enhance the strong Charnwood economy.



By 2026 Loughborough is a key sub-regional centre for shopping, leisure and entertainment within the Three Cities sub area. It is also a key business and commercial centre, offering a clear alternative to the cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby. Pedestrianisation has been extended and Loughborough's reputation as a "green" and "walkable town" has been secured. This is complemented by the local facilities and employment opportunities available in many of our other towns and villages.

The population is decently housed and a good variety of housing types and tenures is available, making living in the Borough more achievable for people of all ages and incomes. In meeting the Borough's housing and employment needs development has been directed to the main urban centres of Loughborough, Shepshed, Birstall and Thurmaston. Whilst full use has been made of available previously developed land and buildings, it has been necessary to identify areas for growth to meet the future requirements for new homes and jobs.

In the smaller towns and villages some small scale growth has helped meet local needs for homes jobs and additional community facilities.

The economy of Charnwood is strong and is a key contributor to the East Midlands regional economy. Unemployment remains below the national average and those pockets of higher than average unemployment in 2004 are now close to the rate for the Borough as a whole. Decline in the traditional manufacturing sector has been more than offset by expansion in high added value manufacturing, hi-tech and knowledge based industry and the development of sports and cultural industry clusters.

A second Science Park has been provided at Loughborough. The presence of Loughborough University plays a pivotal role in the local economy through education, research, and dynamic business initiatives. The growth needs of the University have been accommodated and large companies such as FKI, AstraZeneca, Lafarge and 3M continue to thrive alongside a wide range of small and medium enterprises and the priority given to new business and inward investment has enabled new talent to become established. Improved conference and hotel facilities draw people to the Borough.

Partnership Matters

A vision for supporting and developing joined up thinking and action – from networking to action delivery stage improving working across all sectors in the Borough.

By 2026 the Council has worked with its partners, other agencies and the local community to address the key concerns of the community identified through the Sustainable Community Strategy and development plan process. Effective and decisive partnerships have been established and significant investment has been identified to deliver the identified improvements in physical environment required across the Borough.

Spatial Objectives

- 3.7** In order to deliver this vision we have identified a set of joint spatial objectives for the Local Development Framework and Sustainable Community Strategy. The objectives reflect national and regional planning policy and provide the basis for the preferred spatial strategy including core policies. The objectives are set out within the key themes of People Matter, Places & Environment Matters, Prosperity Matters and Partnership Matters.

Spatial Objectives: People Matter

SO1: to reduce the need to, and distance of, travel by car and increase use of walking, cycling and public transport. In particular to improve access by public transport to key services and facilities including the key employment centres of Loughborough, Leicester and Nottingham East Midlands Airport;

SO2: to secure the provision of accessible facilities and services to meet the needs of all local people, having regard to the particular needs of the young, old and “hard to reach”;

SO3: to promote health and well being, for example by ensuring that residents have access to health care, local parks, green spaces and natural environment, the countryside and facilities for sport and recreation, creative and community activities.

Spatial Objectives: Places and Environment Matter

SO4: to reduce social exclusion and deprivation and increase educational attainment particularly in those parts of the Borough identified as areas of relatively higher need;

SO5: to protect and reassure our communities through the reduction of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime;

SO6: to promote stronger, cohesive and balanced communities having regard to changes in demographics, for example would be influencing the type of housing provision;

SO7: to reduce contributions to climate change and to promote prudent use of resources through patterns of development, design, transport measures, reducing the use of minerals, energy and water and minimising waste and encouraging re-cycling in support of achieving a carbon neutral Borough;

SO8: to develop integrated transport schemes and measures to improve safety and reduce the adverse environmental and other impacts of traffic on local communities, for example in and around Loughborough and settlements close to Leicester;



SO9: to protect the historic environment and identity of the Borough's locally distinctive towns, villages and neighbourhoods;

SO10: to reduce the risk to people and properties through flooding in vulnerable locations such as parts of Loughborough and the Soar and Wreake valley villages;

SO11: to protect the special and distinctive qualities of all landscapes, and to pay special attention to impacts upon Charnwood Forest and its environs and to support the National Forest Strategy;

SO12: To maintain and enhance the range of ecological sites, habitats and species found in Charnwood and seek to deliver biodiversity gain and reverse habitat fragmentation;

SO13: To create distinctive and quality places for local people by requiring high design and increasing higher environmental standards in new development and by encouraging improvements in existing properties to be more environmentally friendly.

Spatial Objectives: Prosperity Matters

SO14: to sustain and enhance Loughborough town centre as a prosperous, attractive and vibrant destination for shopping, entertainment and leisure as well as a place to live;

SO15: to capitalise on the benefits of Loughborough University, especially those associated with its reputation as a centre of sporting excellence, research into innovation, new technologies and sustainability;

SO16: to ensure that there is a network of vibrant 'local' centres so residents have access to a range of shops, services and facilities;

SO17: to meet needs for homes, including affordable housing in line with regional requirements;

SO18: to provide all communities in Charnwood with access to quality jobs and improved standards of life by safeguarding key employment sites and creating opportunities for new high quality employment sites, including a new Science Park at Loughborough;

SO19: to encourage the local economy towards a higher share of higher-value, higher quality, innovative industries and services and ensure labour market balance by providing for a mix of jobs and access to training including those for less skilled members of the community;

SO20: to encourage thriving and diverse sustainable rural enterprise and farming and the promotion of local foods and local energy sources.

Spatial Objectives: Partnership Matters

SO21: To continue to improve partnership working with a view to achieving better outcomes for the Charnwood Together vision.



Chapter 4: Development Strategy for Charnwood

Introduction

- 4.1** This chapter sets out the proposed development strategy for the Borough. The proposed strategy seeks to deliver the vision and objectives outlined in the previous chapter and meet the draft Regional Plan requirements for new homes and jobs. It is based on the outcomes of the sustainability appraisal, evidence base, feedback from other consultations and local circumstances. The proposed strategy also responds to the issues, opportunities and priorities set out in the Leicestershire and Charnwood Sustainable Community Strategies.
- 4.2** A detailed sustainability appraisal of the alternative options has helped to inform the choice of the proposed approach and is available at: <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/charnwood2026>. The alternative options are also set out in this consultation document. The Council would like to hear your views about the proposed strategy and these alternatives to help us in preparing for the submission of the Core Strategy to the Secretary of State next year.

Overall Principles and Priorities

- 4.3** The preferred development strategy is based on delivering **sustainable development**, the Government's core principle for planning. This means providing for new development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
- 4.4** With this in mind there are two key themes arising from this national policy context which underpin the preferred strategy. The first is tackling climate change. The second is achieving patterns of development that reduce the need to travel and encourage the use of public transport when travelling is necessary. These themes are not mutually exclusive and generally they point to more energy efficient development in the future that is focused in accessible settlements that present the best range of services and facilities.
- 4.5** There will, however, inevitably be some trade-offs between the social, economic and environmental aims of sustainable development. It is therefore important that the Council has identified the priorities for the Borough which can inform the Council's decisions. In 2007 Charnwood Borough Council undertook consultation on 'Alternative Strategies for the Future Development of the Borough' to seek views on what these priorities should be. This consultation has informed the proposed development strategy which is based on a priority to safeguard environmental features and the identity of individual settlements. There is also a strong focus on regeneration in the urban areas and the need to support local needs in the rural areas.

Settlement Hierarchy

- 4.6** Providing new homes and jobs in those places best able to support them is an important part of creating sustainable development. Reflecting this, the draft Regional Plan says that the majority of future development should be concentrated in large urban areas whilst providing for the needs of other settlements and rural areas to maintain them as sustainable communities supporting a wider catchment. The urban areas within this Borough are Birstall and Thurmaston, which form part of the Principal Urban Area of Leicester in the south of the Borough, and the Sub Regional Centre of Loughborough in the north. The Council is proposing to include Shepshed as part of the Sub Regional Centre as evidence suggests that these settlements function as mutually supportive urban settlements.
- 4.7** The Council has assessed the characteristics of all the villages in Charnwood to learn more about the way they function and to find out what range of services and facilities they provide. The assessment shows that the villages in Charnwood are within 15 km of the city or 10 km of Loughborough and are strongly influenced by their services, facilities and jobs. It also shows there are a number of large villages that function as service centres for smaller villages that are located along the River Soar and close to the edge of Leicester. These Service Centres have a good range of services and facilities including a primary school, food shop, post office, surgery, library, good public transport services, recreation and community facilities and good access to a secondary school. The close proximity of other settlements to the urban areas and service centres within this Borough or to large centres in neighbouring authority areas suggests there are no remote rural settlements in Charnwood.
- 4.8** The assessment has been used to amend the proposed settlement hierarchy from that shown in the 2006 Preferred Options Report. The conclusions are set below:

Settlement Hierarchy for Charnwood

SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY
<p>PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA OF LEICESTER</p> <p>Including the urban areas of Birstall and Thurmaston</p> <p>Part of the continuous built up area of Leicester defined as the Principal Urban Area of Leicester in the draft Regional Plan.</p>
<p>SUB-REGIONAL CENTRE</p> <p>Including the urban areas of Loughborough and Shepshed</p> <p>The towns which function as mutually supportive urban settlements with very strong social, economic, and physical links. Loughborough is defined as a Sub-Regional Centre in the draft Regional Plan and</p>



is the main focus for shopping, services and facilities in the North of Charnwood.

SERVICE CENTRES

Including Anstey, Barrow Upon Soar, Mountsorrel, Quorn, Rothley, Sileby, Syston

Large sustainable settlements along the Soar Valley and close to the edge of Leicester, which have good accessibility by public transport and a range of services and facilities capable of serving people from nearby villages and rural areas.

OTHER SETTLEMENTS

Including Barkby, Burton on the Wolds, Cossington, East Goscote, Hathern, Newtown Linford, Queniborough, Rearsby, Thrussington, Thurstaston, Woodhouse Eaves, Wymeswold

Smaller rural settlements where the availability of four or more key services and facilities mean they are able to serve some of the day to day needs of village residents and residents have bus access to higher order settlements.

(The key services and facilities are a primary school, general store, village hall, an hourly weekday bus service to at least one main centre and ready access to significant employment opportunities by public transport, walking and cycling).

SMALL VILLAGES AND HAMLETS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Including Barkby Thorpe, Beeby, Cotes, Cropston, Hoton, Prestwold, Ratcliffe on the Wreake, Seagrave, South Croxton, Swithland, Ulverscroft, Walton on the Wolds, Wanlip, Woodhouse, Woodthorpe

The rural settlements with very limited or no services and facilities, where residents rely on higher order settlements for their day to day needs.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.9** The Principal Urban Area of Leicester is defined in the draft Regional Plan as the continuous built up area of the city and includes settlements outside the city boundary. These settlements continue to be part of Charnwood but they also form the physical edge of the city and have strong links to it for work, leisure and services. As this is a regional policy definition it is not realistic to consider an alternative approach.

- 4.10** The Sub-Regional Centre of Loughborough is also identified in the draft Regional Plan. The Council considered defining Shepshed as a service centre, however Shepshed is one of the main towns in Leicestershire and has a long established, functional and interdependent link with Loughborough. These towns are closely linked with good transport links for journeys to work, shopping, education and services. In planning terms, the two towns effectively function as part of a wider urban system straddling the M1 Motorway corridor in the vicinity of J23. It is important for the future success of both settlements that Shepshed is included as part of the Sub-Regional Centre and that these settlements continue to complement and support each other.
- 4.11** The Service Centres are those villages that serve the surrounding communities with a good range of services and good transport links. The Council also considered including East Goscote, Hathern and Wymeswold as Service Centres, however these villages do not act as a local centre for a wider area due to the close proximity to the much larger centres of Loughborough and Syston.

See Also:

- [Charnwood Borough Council Settlement Hierarchy Assessment \(August 2007\)](#)
- [Charnwood Core Strategy 2026 Settlement Hierarchy Review \(September 2008\)](#)
- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas](#)



Question 4.1

Do you agree that Shepshed should be considered as part of the Loughborough Sub-Regional Centre?

Question 4.2

Which settlement do you live in and what sort of place would you like it to be in twenty years time?

Question 4.3

Any Other Comments?

Location of New Development

4.12 The settlement hierarchy will guide the scale and distribution of all types of new development to provide the most sustainable pattern of development. In accordance with Government guidance, priority will be given to maximising appropriate opportunities for the development of previously developed land and buildings within settlement limits (see paragraph 4.19). Based on an assessment of the availability of land and the capacity and needs of settlements, the Council proposes the distribution of development set out in the table overleaf.

Alternative Approaches

4.13 Locating a larger scale of development away from the urban areas of Leicester, Loughborough and Shepshed has been considered. This would, however, undermine the overall principle of focusing development where there are the most services and facilities. It would also put too much pressure on the Service Centres most of which have seen significant growth over the past 40 years. The Council also considered locating an even greater proportion of development in the urban areas; however this would reduce the opportunity for some of the service centres to overcome current deficiencies or regeneration issues. The Council is therefore proposing to focus development in urban areas whilst providing the opportunity to support development in some Service Centres where this helps to maintain the centre as a vibrant and sustainable community or overcome problems such as an affordable housing shortage or a need for more employment.

4.14 The Council also considered making provision for a larger scale of development in 'Other Settlements' and 'Small Villages and Hamlets in the Countryside' to improve the future sustainability of these settlements. Evidence suggests that whilst some of these smaller settlements have local shops and facilities within walking distance, all are too small and too close to larger settlements to act as centres for their surrounding areas. There are no parts of the Borough that are more than 7km (less than 4.5 miles) from a Service Centre or Urban Area. This means that development can be focused in Service Centres and Urban Areas and still meet the needs of these smaller villages locally. In addition the frequency of bus services serving these villages is too low to offer a realistic alternative to car use for trips to larger settlements. There is a risk that allowing market housing will merely exacerbate their dormitory role with increased travel, usually by car. The Council concluded that 'Other Settlements' and 'Small Villages and Hamlets in the Countryside' would require a disproportionate amount of development to make them sustainable and this would undermine the role and function of the higher order settlements and the development strategy of the plan.



LOCATION OF DEVELOPMENT

MAIN URBAN CENTRES

The majority of new development will be directed to locations within or adjoining the settlement limits of the Principal Urban Area of Leicester and the Sub-Regional Centre of Loughborough and Shepshed.

Over the period 2001-2026, this will include locating at least 35% of new homes within and adjoining the Principal Urban Area and at least 40% of new homes within and adjoining the Sub-Regional Centre. Sites will be allocated in the Core Strategy and Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

SERVICE CENTRES

A smaller scale of development will be appropriate to locations within or adjoining the settlement limits of Service Centres.

The Core Strategy will set out the proportion of overall housing development that will be located in Service Centres over the period 2001-2026. Sites will be identified within the Site Allocations Development Plan Document to support selected Service Centres as sustainable communities. Further work will be done to identify those settlements where this might be appropriate.

OTHER SETTLEMENTS

Limited small-scale development within the defined settlement limits will be acceptable where it meets the needs of the local community and there are at least four of the key services and facilities identified in the settlement hierarchy.

Housing development will be restricted to small scale affordable housing schemes (of up to 9 dwellings) to meet an identified local affordable housing need.

SMALL VILLAGES AND HAMLETS IN THE COUNTRYSIDE

Small Villages and Hamlets will have no settlement limits and will be within the open countryside. The countryside is not suitable for development other than that related to countryside uses like agriculture and forestry. However, the Council may consider the development of affordable housing as an exception where this meets a proven local need and where development can be sympathetically related to the existing settlement form.

See Also:

- [Charnwood Borough Council Settlement Hierarchy Assessment \(August 2007\)](#)
- [Charnwood Core Strategy 2026 Settlement Hierarchy Review \(September 2008\)](#)
- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas](#)



Question 4.4

Do you agree that housing development in **Other Settlements** should be restricted to affordable housing to meet an identified local need?

Question 4.5

Do you agree that the settlement limits should be removed from all **Small Villages and Hamlets**?

Question 4.6

Do you think the settlement limits should be removed for the **Other Settlements** as well as for **Small Villages and Hamlets**? (This would restrict future development to affordable housing only).

Question 4.7

Do you agree that further development in **Service Centres** could help to address local issues or improve service provision?

Question 4.8

Any Other Comments?

Directions for Growth

4.15 This section considers the requirement for new development in Charnwood as set out in the draft Regional Plan. It proposes general directions for housing growth based on the evidence collected, the sustainability appraisal and an analysis of the deliverability of proposed development schemes. It is important to note that if new evidence comes to light, the proposed strategy may have to be reviewed. This is true for all the elements of the preferred strategy and the aim of this consultation is to ensure everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the Council's consideration of the options before coming to a decision.

Scale of Housing

4.16 The draft Regional Plan requires the Council to make provision for a minimum of 19,300 homes between 2001 and 2026. The table below sets out how many homes have already been built or given planning permission since 2001 and how many more homes will need to be built by 2026 to meet the draft Regional Plan requirements.

Draft Regional Plan Proposed Minimum Requirement (2001-2026)	19,300
Draft Completions (April 2001–March 2008)	5,228
Draft Commitments (planning permissions not completed)	4,107
Draft Residual Requirement (2008-2026)	9,965

4.17 Whilst it is useful to understand these figures, it is important to recognise that the Council will need to plan for more than 9,965 homes to ensure there is a good enough supply of sites to meet the draft Regional Plan requirement if larger sites are not completed by 2026. The Council will therefore identify an annual housing target for each of the following plan phases to ensure that the draft Regional Plan requirement is delivered by the end of the plan period:

- 2006-2011
- 2011-2016
- 2016-2021
- 2021-2026

4.18 This approach will require the housing supply to be carefully managed and could mean that more housing is granted planning permission than can be delivered before 2026. It is important that we take a long term view and plan for the most sustainable scale and form of development, even where this may continue to be delivered beyond 2026. This is particularly important in light of the partial review of the Regional Plan due to start next year which may increase the Borough's housing requirement further.



Meeting the housing requirement

- 4.19** The settlement hierarchy shows that the priority is to build new homes and create jobs on previously developed land within urban areas. However there are only 28 large brownfield sites identified within urban areas that could potentially be developed for new homes (approximately enough to accommodate 1,150 new homes) and a very limited supply of brownfield sites for new businesses. Whilst the Council is undertaking further work to identify potential capacity within the urban areas, the majority of new development will need to be built on greenfield sites adjoining urban areas.

Sustainable Urban Extensions

- 4.20** To meet the Council's aim of focusing the majority of development in urban areas, it is proposed that most of this greenfield development is delivered in the form of sustainable urban extensions. These are large scale developments comprising of homes, jobs, community facilities, shops and green spaces. They are described as sustainable urban extensions as they are large enough to deliver significant new infrastructure (such as parks, roads, schools and drainage) and a good range of services and facilities to support the new homes and jobs. These proposed new communities would create an opportunity for everyone to work together to design from scratch a development where people will want to live and work with the right mix of homes, jobs, well-planned infrastructure and green spaces, making the most of the potential of green technologies in a way that has not been possible in more piecemeal developments in the past.
- 4.21** The Council has considered a number of alternative locations for sustainable urban extensions in the Borough. They are described in detail in Appendix A along with a summary of their advantages and disadvantages. They are:

South Charnwood

East of Thurmaston/North of Hamilton
East of Thurmaston/South of Syston
East of Thurmaston/South of Syston/North of Hamilton
North of Birstall
North of Glenfield/South of Anstey

North Charnwood

South of Loughborough
South West of Loughborough
West of Loughborough
West of Shepshed
East of Loughborough
East of Loughborough on and around Wymeswold

- 4.22** Following detailed consideration of all the options around the edge of Leicester, Loughborough and Shepshed, two general directions for growth are being proposed to the east of

Thurmaston/north of Hamilton and to the west of Loughborough as shown on the Key Diagram. It is proposed that these locations be the focus of large scale growth of the urban areas of Leicester and Loughborough over the next 20-30 years. Within these directions for growth it is proposed that the following two sustainable urban extensions be allocated within the Core Strategy:

East of Thurmaston and north of Hamilton

4.23 The area east of Thurmaston performed best against the range of sustainability criteria and has the potential to bring forward a deliverable scheme. There is sufficient land available in this location to accommodate an urban extension large enough to support new infrastructure, such as a secondary school, which is needed to create a sustainable community. Of the options considered, this proposal would have the least landscape impact, the most potential to bring about changes that would benefit the existing community, in particular the priority neighbourhood within Thurmaston, and would be well-related to the city and its services, facilities and employment and to the local shopping centres and supermarkets at Hamilton and Thurmaston. It is important that development within this direction of growth also protects the separation between Thurmaston and Syston and ensures that the built up area of the city does not extend further north, away from the central concentration of jobs, services and facilities.

West of Loughborough and north of Garendon Park

4.24 Loughborough and Shepshed sit within an environmentally sensitive area, with Charnwood Forest to the south and the Soar River corridor to the east. These sensitive environmental areas have been a key consideration in the appraisal of the alternative locations for growth in north Charnwood. Following extensive assessment, the Council considers that a sustainable urban extension west of Loughborough provides an opportunity to continue to protect these important landscapes and biodiversity areas whilst making provision for deliverable development which is closely related to the services and facilities in both Loughborough and Shepshed including the University, Science Park and the employment areas to the north of Loughborough and east of Shepshed. This location provides an opportunity to integrate new development with the existing community of Loughborough, supporting and consolidating the provision of local services and facilities, which could bring benefits to the existing residents including those in the west Loughborough priority neighbourhood. This includes securing public access to the Garendon Historic Park and Gardens.

Alternatives Approaches

4.25 Appendix A sets out all the alternative directions for growth which have been considered. It provides an assessment of each option against key sustainability appraisal criteria and the overall priorities of the Core Strategy.



- 4.26** The Council considered meeting the housing requirement entirely on small sites within and adjoining the urban areas. However, the scale of housing needed and the desire to create sustainable development that adds value to the communities they serve meant that a strategy that sought to deliver the housing requirement entirely on smaller sites in an incremental and piecemeal way would have placed an undue and unacceptable pressure on existing communities.

See Also:

- Appendix A
- Sustainability Appraisal
- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Draft Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Local Development Framework Evidence Base Studies](#)

Question 4.9

Do you agree with identifying sustainable urban extensions rather than a large number of smaller extensions to urban areas?

Question 4.10

Do you agree that future growth of Loughborough and Shepshed should be focused west of Loughborough/north of Garendon Park?

Question 4.11

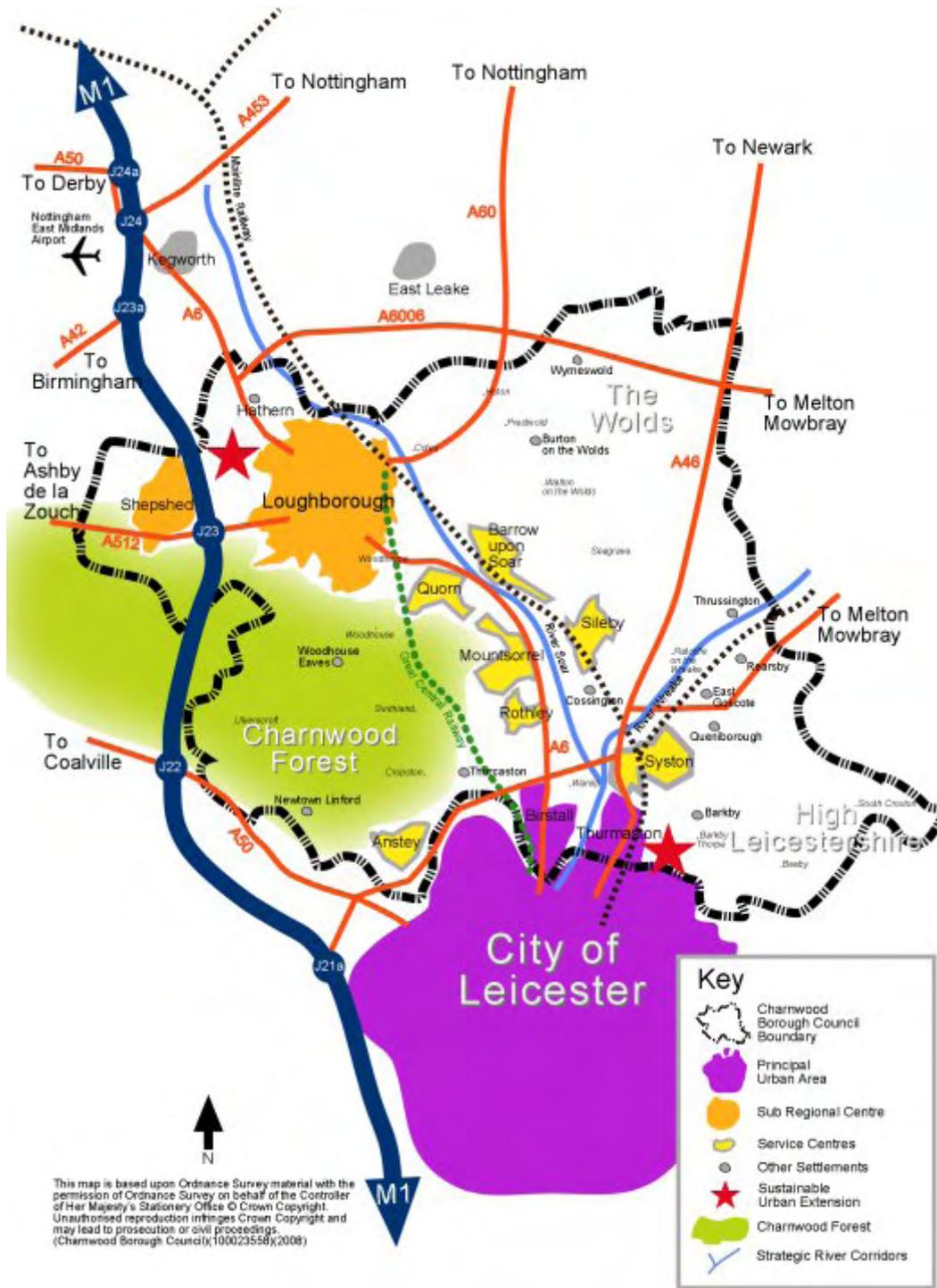
Do you agree that future growth of Leicester should be focused east of Thurmaston and north of Hamilton?

Question 4.12

Any Other Comments?

Key Diagram

Key Diagram



Employment Provision

- 4.27** There have been a number of important employment studies undertaken in the East Midlands, Leicestershire and Charnwood and generally speaking all of the studies have found that there will be a decline in demand for industrial floorspace and a significant increase in demand for office space over the next 10-15 years in the East Midlands. Within traditional employment areas, jobs are shifting from factories to offices which occupy space at higher densities. The overall requirement for employment land is therefore forecast to remain static. However, this hides a more dynamic picture across the region in which there is a mismatch between the location of old industrial sites and the needs of modern businesses. Specifically there are issues with the poor quality of some employment sites and a shortage of sites for high-tech uses.
- 4.28** The most recent of the studies is the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study. It suggests that there is actually a need for more land for offices, industry and small-scale warehousing in Charnwood. In north Charnwood this additional land will help to provide choice and competition in the Borough's employment land market and in south Charnwood additional land will meet the demand arising from firms displaced from Leicester, as poor quality sites there are redeveloped. It also notes a desire to provide a "ladder" of available property types to meet the needs of firms as they grow.
- 4.29** The Council would like to create a prosperous, enterprising and dynamic low carbon economy that makes the most of locations that minimise the need for people to travel and which benefit from renewable energy opportunities. Drawing on the evidence base and guided by policy in the draft Regional Plan, it is therefore proposed that new employment land is allocated to support the sustainable urban extensions. In line with advice in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study, this land will be allocated specifically for high value offices, industrial uses and small scale warehousing and will provide for the first zero carbon employment development in the Housing Market Area.
- 4.30** Complementing this strategic provision, the Council proposes to allocate a specific site for a Science Park west of the university and south of the A512 at Loughborough within the Core Strategy. This proposal reflects research commissioned by Leicestershire County Council into the demand and feasibility for establishing high quality Science Parks within Leicestershire. The study concluded that the best locations for additional provision are in Leicester and Loughborough as close as practicable to the universities, with sites large enough to allow a mix of size of units so that firms could move within the site as they grow.
- 4.31** The allocation recognises the special circumstances arising on the existing science park, which is located adjacent to the University. This site is restricted to uses that are directly related to the University's own activities. The Council will work with its partners and other public agencies to assist with investment in advanced infrastructure to attract users to this site. The proposal is to extend the existing allocation. Not all of this site will be developed as there are significant areas of woodland and wildlife interest that will need to be protected and incorporated within the development area. The site is expected to attract blue chip and high end research and development companies attracted by the high quality environment afforded by the site, helping

to consolidate Charnwood's role as a location of choice for biosciences, environmental science and sport development.

- 4.32** The Council is conscious that the science park is very close to the M1 Motorway and is aware that its location will be attractive to the storage and distribution sector as well as other investors looking for a large site close to the strategic road network. The Council is keen to ensure that new employment development does not lead to commuting from other large centres but attracts people to live and work in the Borough as part of its principles of sustainable development. New employment will therefore be restricted to research and development uses that are complementary to the research and development activities at the university or other research and development firms in the Borough.
- 4.33** The proposed allocation of a science park in the Core Strategy effectively brings forward the science park proposals from the Science Park Development Plan Document, which will no longer continue to be prepared.
- 4.34** As a general principal the Council proposes to manage and maintain the level of employment land in the Borough over the plan period. This means that the best quality employment sites will need to be safeguarded to ensure they are not lost to other uses such as housing. This has been a particular problem in Service Centres and smaller settlements since the year 2000 when new government policy was introduced that called for greater use of previously development land for housing. As the economy has restructured, large traditional firms have closed leaving behind land and premises unsuited to the needs of a new employment market. This has led to the redevelopment of many sites for other uses and has left many settlements without any local employment, leading to commuting and undermining other services and facilities.
- 4.35** Saved Policy E8 in the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan seeks to safeguard employment land but this will need to be refined and replaced by new policies in the Development Control Development Plan Document in due course. Where the Council has assessed that existing employment sites are of poor quality, it will need to decide if they could be used for other uses such as housing development or if another solution is appropriate. The Council will therefore identify the amount of employment land lost to alternative uses since 2001 (the start of the plan period) and seek to rebalance provision within those communities where there is a local demand. The Council will work with its partners and other agencies to overcome barriers to provision and will consider setting up a delivery vehicle to provide freehold premises. Where there is a need for new local employment sites the Council will allocate sites in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.36** Whilst studies suggest demand for industrial and warehousing is in balance with supply, most of this supply is located predominantly in South Charnwood. This places Loughborough at a competitive disadvantage and restricts its economic potential within the three cities area. The available office space at the existing science park is constrained to university related uses and its potential to contribute towards a high value employment sector is limited. As such the



Council does not consider that a 'do nothing' approach, where no further employment provision land is made available, is appropriate as the sustainability appraisal highlights that this would adversely affect the Borough's economy and the well-being of its population.

- 4.37** The Council set out two further options which accepted the general scale of provision recommended in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study but considered distributing the strategic requirement either in any settlement in the Borough or concentrating it in urban areas. The sustainability appraisal suggests that wider distribution may help to support smaller settlements by providing local jobs and minimising the need to travel to larger centres but their more peripheral location is less likely to be attractive to inward investors and larger firms. Concentrating employment provision in urban areas is more likely to realise inward investment but the opportunity to support the ambition for mixed use sustainable urban extensions and to plan comprehensively for zero carbon development will be weakened.
- 4.38** The alternative options to the Science Park proposal were set out in the Science Park Development Plan Document published in February 2006 and it is not the Council's intention to restate them as part of this consultation. The Council would, however, invite comments on this proposal. To view the Science Park Development Plan Document go to our website at <http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/charnwood2026>.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Economic Strategy 2006-2020](#)
- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [Charnwood Employment Land Study \(September 2006\)](#)
- [Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area Employment Land Study \(October 2008\)](#)
- [Charnwood 2021 Science Park Development Plan Document Preferred Options Report \(February 2006\)](#)
- [Demand and Feasibility Study for Establishing High Quality Science Park\(s\) \(January 1999\)](#)
- [Planning Policy Guidance 4: Industrial, Commercial Development and Small Firms](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 4 Consultation Draft: Planning for Sustainable Economic Development](#)

Question 4.13

Do you agree that there should be further employment land in the Borough and that it should be located at strategic urban extensions and at the science park?

Question 4.14

Do you agree that development at the Science Park should be restricted to research and development firms that complement the university's activities or other research and development firms in Loughborough?

Question 4.15

Do you think the Council should consider alternative types of employment on the science park if a large single employer was interested in locating there?

Question 4.16

Do you think we should seek to replace all the employment land lost since 2001 in addition to replacing the poor quality sites that are left in the Borough?

Question 4.17

Any Other Comments?



Loughborough University

- 4.39** Loughborough University and Loughborough College are important contributors to the local economy, both in terms of the number of people they employ and the investment they attract to the town. The University is not only important to the local economy, but also has a role in helping to ensure a more varied 'knowledge' based economy for the wider area. The University's reputation for excellence in research and education ensures Loughborough is recognised nationally and internationally. However, that success has imposed additional demands and pressures on the surrounding community.
- 4.40** The large numbers of students that live in the area near to the university create social stress and imbalance in the local property market. Concerns of the local community include:
- The erosion of the sense of community that is normally part of a stable, balanced community
 - The exclusion of first time buyers to the detriment of social balance and community facilities
 - Congestion and disturbance during term time, sharply contrasted with an air of abandonment during holiday periods
 - Higher incidence of anti-social behaviour, particularly at unsocial hours
- 4.41** Loughborough needs a solution that minimises the pressures that a large student population places on the host community, but which allows Loughborough University to build upon its reputation for excellence in research and education.
- 4.42** Within the town centre, the proportion of permanent residential housing is low and the opportunity for conflicting lifestyles is reduced. The town centre enjoys excellent public transport linkages with the University and the opportunity to include elements of student housing in redevelopment schemes can play an important part in ensuring that redevelopment projects of wider benefit to the town are financially viable.
- 4.43** The preferred approach is to set out Loughborough University campus and the town centre as the only appropriate locations for new purpose built student accommodation. This reflects and further tightens the approach set out in the adopted Supplementary Planning Document on Student Housing Provision in Loughborough (2005), as no provision is made for new purpose built student accommodation elsewhere in the town, which is allowed for in some circumstances in the current guidance. The Council would therefore work with the University and other partners to maximise new purpose built student accommodation on the campus. The town centre area, where purpose-built student accommodation would be acceptable in principle, would be defined in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.
- 4.44** Within the town centre, purpose built student accommodation will be acceptable where it contributes to the regeneration of the town centre and where it is part of a mixed use development, and where it includes active frontages providing year-round activity that contributes to the vitality and viability of the town centre. The preferred approach would to

set out occupancy restrictions, secure management controls and ensure that amenities of local residents are protected.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.45** An alternative approach would ensure the university is the primary location for new purpose built student accommodation. This could be achieved by taking a regulatory approach ensuring that proposals for additional academic and ancillary accommodation are matched by an increase in purpose built student accommodation in line with the increase in student numbers. The sustainability appraisal indicates that this approach would have positive effects against a number of criteria, including the potential to reduce crime and anti social behaviour, and in terms of ensuring the housing stock meets the needs of the community.
- 4.46** Although making the university the primary location for new purpose built accommodation has many benefits in terms of sustainability, the mechanism to achieve this through planning system has a number of complexities. The university may seek to develop a variety of different uses on the site, many of which it would be difficult to demonstrate how they individually would generate a requirement for further student accommodation. Demonstrating and justifying the link between academic development and student accommodation indicates that a regulatory approach is unworkable through the planning process. There is a number of long-term commercial risks for the university purpose built student accommodation. Having a complex mechanism for delivering student housing may place prevent the University from effectively planning for the future, which would be detrimental to it maintaining its position as a centre of excellence in research and education.
- 4.47** Other alternative option is to do nothing and not provide a direction to the location of new purpose built student accommodation. This approach would not perform well against a number of sustainability criteria by not tackling issues of student balance in parts of Loughborough.

See Also:

- [Student Housing Provision in Loughborough Supplementary Planning Document \(2005\)](#)
- [Communities and Local Government Evidence Gathering: Housing in Multiple Occupation and possible planning responses \(2008\)](#)

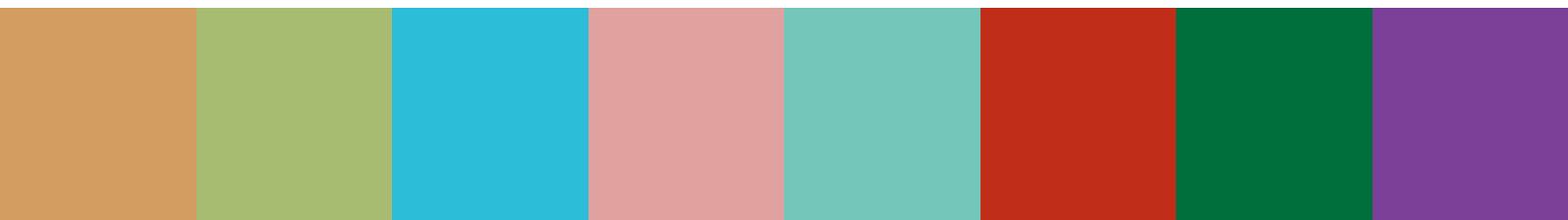


Question 4.18

Do you agree with the approach to student housing in Loughborough?

Question 4.19

Any Other Comments?



Transport - Managing Travel Demand and Widening Transport Choice

- 4.48** Transportation improvements will be needed to support the Borough's continuing growth and prosperity. There have been a number of studies undertaken to better understand the transport implications of growth. In December 2006 Leicestershire County Council published an Assessment of Highways and Transportation Implications of Sustainable Urban Extensions at Selected Broad Locations in Leicestershire – Technical Report. This was followed up by a Further Assessment in April 2007. These assessments were undertaken to inform the County Council's comments on the draft Regional Plan. The purpose of the County Council assessments was to be considered in broad transport terms whether there was a workable location for a sustainable urban extension in each of the five broad areas across the County, defined in the draft Regional Plan. The County Council's work identified an Eastern Distributor Road as the most beneficial in highway terms for Loughborough. The work undertaken by the County Council did not however provide an equitable assessment of all the directions for growth options identified in Appendix A and there is insufficient certainty about the deliverability of an Eastern Distributor Road.
- 4.49** In September 2008 Charnwood Borough Council published an assessment undertaken by consultants MVA called 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessment for the Charnwood 2026 LDF'. MVA developed a Boroughwide transport model, which utilised the County Council's traffic data where it was available, to enable all the directions for growth options to be broadly assessed on an equal and consistent basis. The model tests the broad impact of a variety of transport measures and takes account of traffic flows, capacity and congestion. It was considered important that further transport work was commissioned to ensure a consistent and comprehensive assessment of all the options has been undertaken which reflects current guidance and best practice.
- 4.50** As part of the Council's aim to reduce our impact on the global climate and in order to minimise any adverse environmental and social impacts from increased traffic, transportation solutions will need to be designed to reduce the need for travel and the distances travelled, especially by car. This will be challenging. Travel to work data shows there are high levels of commuting throughout the Borough and the Borough has the fourth highest levels of out commuting of districts in the East Midlands especially to Leicester.
- 4.51** Most of the Borough's population has access to bus services of half hour or better frequency but away from the main towns and inter urban routes provision is generally restricted to hourly weekday daytime services or even less frequent. Significant improvements to bus and rail and demand responsive community transport (such as community taxi services) will be needed as well as measures to change travel behaviour and get people walking and cycling more especially for shorter trips.
- 4.52** To achieve real change the Council proposes to work in partnership with the transport authorities, transport providers, developers and other interests to seek to ensure future travel demand is managed as part of integrated and sustainable solutions providing proper alternatives



to the car and making maximum use of existing infrastructure. It is proposed that road improvements be considered as a last resort after the scope for all other options has been fully utilised. In all cases it would be important for transport solutions to demonstrate good value for money and deliverability.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.53** Whilst schemes to constrain car use are usually unpopular, responses to previous consultations have shown some recognition of the need to do more to reduce current high levels of car use and the impact on the environment. There is a strong steer from national and regional guidance to achieve more sustainable solutions to traffic related problems.
- 4.54** The alternatives to our preferred approach are limited. Attempting to build our way out of congestion by giving priority to road improvements might bring benefits in the short to medium term. However experience tells us that over time it would be unlikely to encourage more use of public transport, reduce car dependency or cut congestion. Implementing more radical measures such as congestion charging or other pricing mechanisms might discourage car use but would probably only be acceptable to the public if high quality alternative travel choices were available. These are not considered to be realistic options at present.
- 4.55** The sustainability appraisal highlights the likely negative impacts of new road space and traffic on landscapes and townscape in terms of visual intrusion, noise and air pollution, lighting, biodiversity and the likely effects on areas that flood. These factors apply to either approach but the preferred approach presents an opportunity to reduce the need for new road space and to promote more responsible transport modes from the outset. The preferred approach scores higher in terms of its contribution to the accessibility of services and facilities to a wider population, helping to reduce poverty and social exclusion, and the economy as reduced congestion will assist business.
- 4.56** Taking all factors into account our preference is to focus on securing balanced and integrated land use and transport solutions that reduce car dependency in a sustainable manner.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Draft Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF \(September 2008\)](#)
- [Leicestershire County Council's Assessment of Highways and Transportation Implications of Sustainable Urban Extensions at Selected Locations in Leicestershire: Technical Report \(December 2006\)](#)
- [Leicestershire County Council's Further Assessment of Highways and Transportation Implications of Sustainable Urban Extensions at Selected Locations in Leicestershire: Technical Report \(April 2007\)](#)

- [Planning Policy Statement 13: Transport](#)
- [Towards a Sustainable Transport System Supporting Economic Growth in a Low Carbon World \(October 2007\)](#)
- [The Eddington Transport Study \(December 2006\)](#)
- [Stern Review of the Economics of Climate Change \(October 2006\)](#)
- [Building Sustainable Transport into new Developments \(April 2008\)](#)
- [Manual for Streets \(March 2007\)](#)
- [Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 \(March 2006\)](#)
- [Highways, Transport and Development \(HTD\) guidelines](#)

Question 4.20

Do you agree with our approach to transport?

Question 4.21

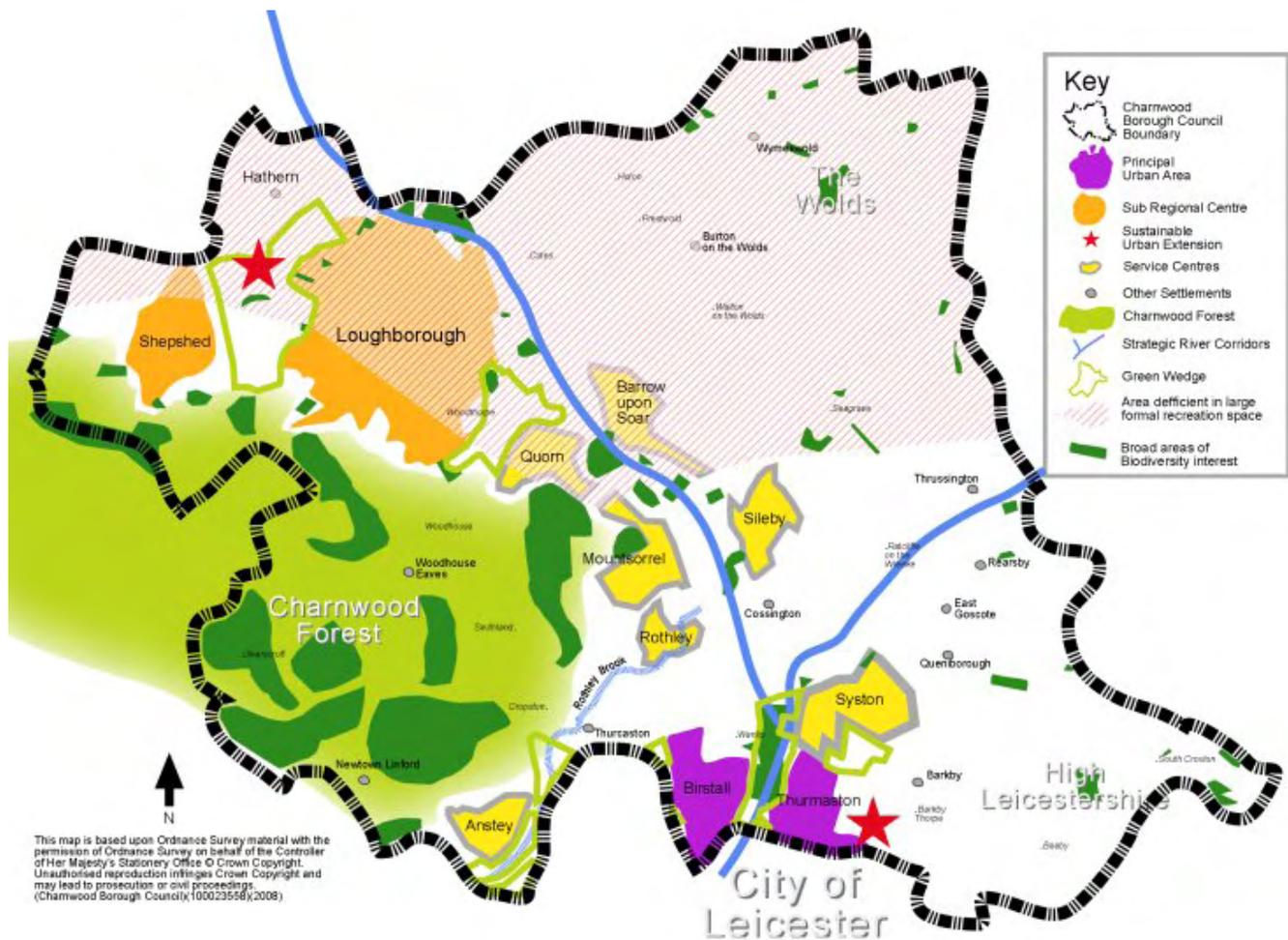
Any Other Comments?



Green Infrastructure

- 4.57** Green infrastructure comprises wildlife habitats, public open spaces, formal and informal recreational facilities, historic sites and areas, woodlands and landscapes. It is the network of multi-functional green space that contributes to the high quality natural and built environment of the Borough. It consists of both public and private assets, with and without public access, and in both urban and rural locations. These elements of green infrastructure should create a linked, coherent and ecologically robust network of green space.
- 4.58** In Charnwood the strategic network of green infrastructure is identified in the diagram below and includes the following:
- Charnwood Forest Regional Park;
 - Strategic River Corridors of the Soar and Wreake, including the Grand Union Canal and Watermead Country Park;
 - Rothley Brook Corridor;
 - Green Wedges.
- 4.59** The strategic elements of green infrastructure are those key landscape features which provide an overall framework within which a series of local corridors of green infrastructure can be created and enhanced. The network must link in with the wider Green Infrastructure network beyond the boundaries of the Borough.
- 4.60** The overall aim is to develop a comprehensive network of multi-functional green space across Charnwood to ensure a hierarchy of green spaces for people and for wildlife. To achieve this there needs to be a net increase in green infrastructure across the borough, targeted to those areas that are deficient.
- 4.61** Compared to other parts of the East Midlands, the Borough contains significant areas of ecological interest. These are mainly focused in the west of the Borough, around Charnwood Forest, and along the strategic river corridors. It is important to ensure that this ecology is protected and where possible there is a net increase in biodiversity particularly in the east of the district where biodiversity is poor. This will mean ensuring existing wildlife sites are adequately protected; improving connectivity between habitats within areas of strong biodiversity and ensuring weaker areas of biodiversity are better connected with the wider biodiversity network.
- 4.62** There is also a need to provide recreational open space to contribute towards the health and well-being of the population. Evidence suggests that:
- The north of the Borough is not well served by large open spaces (100 hectares or more); and
 - The more rural parts of the Borough do not have limited access to formal public open spaces (e.g parks and play space).

Green Infrastructure within Charnwood



- 4.63** Whilst Charnwood has a generally good level of playing pitch provision, gaps in junior playing pitches need to be addressed. Evidence has identified needs for open spaces across the Borough ranging from district park provision of 20 hectares to local park provision of 3 hectares.
- 4.64** The Borough has a large network of public rights of way, including the 'Leicestershire Round' long-distance footpath and parts of the National Cycle network. Opportunities to enhance the rights of way and local cycle network occur when significant new developments are being considered. More than 75% of households in the county are within 250 metres of a right of way. However, within Charnwood there are significant numbers of properties more than 500 metres from any path, and these areas lie in Birstall, Mountsorrel and parts of south west Loughborough. Within the Borough, the Charnwood Forest area has a lower density of paths.
- 4.65** Compared to many areas within the East Midlands, the Borough of Charnwood contains a diverse range of landscapes ranging from the upland areas of the Charnwood Forest in the west and high Leicestershire in the east, to the broad river valleys of the Soar and the Wreake. There is a need to ensure that the landscape character is safeguarded and enhanced and that new development allows a continuity of character with the surrounding landscape.



Charnwood Forest Regional Park

4.66 Charnwood Forest is an area valued for its distinctive and special qualities in terms of its landscape character, biodiversity, geology, historical importance and recreational role. The Charnwood Forest area extends across into the neighbouring districts of Northwest Leicestershire and Hinckley and Bosworth.

4.67 A Charnwood Forest Regional Park has been proposed in the Draft Regional Plan to serve the people living within the Three Cities Sub-Region. The strategy for this significant green infrastructure asset is to protect and enhance its natural features, whilst delivering complementary development which maximises social benefits to those living in the area. The strategy will be achieved through positive spatial planning and land management under the themes set out below.

4.68 Creating linkages:

- Habitat creation and enhancement will be prioritised to those areas where it would maximise biodiversity benefits and reverse habitat fragmentation.
- A network of strategic green spaces and access routes will be created to address gaps in current provision, maximise access to and from the settlements surrounding Charnwood Forest, and link to other significant assets in the Green Infrastructure network.
- Appropriate new developments within or just outside the boundary of the Regional Park will act as gateways to the Park, with their layout, built design, landscape treatment, access arrangements, and Green Infrastructure provision reflecting local landscape and settlement character and integrating with the wider Regional Park.

4.69 Complementary development:

- Sustainable leisure and tourism related development will be focussed on those areas which best complement growth, are linked to areas of population by Green Infrastructure networks and are accessible by sustainable (non-car) transport modes, whilst protecting the natural and cultural features of the Regional Park.
- The establishment and development of a Charnwood Forest Regional Park will be a long term project. It will incorporate large and small scale schemes, public and private landowners, and existing and new projects. Given these factors, and in order to maximise the potential benefits, the definition of the Park needs to incorporate a degree of flexibility. A Regional Park Plan will be required to provide the framework for the long term development of the two themes proposed for the Park.

National Forest

4.70 Charnwood Forest is at the eastern edge of The National Forest. The National Forest is a nationally designated area which covers an area of 200 square miles and extends from the East Midlands region into the West Midlands. The National Forest Company's objectives of supporting woodland creation, bringing about positive landscape change and habitat creation can complement the approach in the Charnwood Forest Regional Park. The potential for wood

based economy will be maximised, particular in relation to building materials and wood fuel which can be utilised as part of sustainable developments located within or adjoining the National Forest area.

River Soar and River Wreake Strategic River Corridors

4.71 The recreational and tourism potential of the Strategic River Corridors will be maximised particularly where this complements the approach to the regeneration of deprived areas, and where this would serve as complementary diversionary recreational activity to the Charnwood Forest Regional Park. It will be important through the overall development strategy to establish greater linkages with the Charnwood Forest Regional Park.

Green Wedges

4.72 Green wedges are areas of open land which influence the form and direction of urban development, preventing coalescence and maintaining the physical identity of settlements adjoining Leicester and Loughborough. Green wedges have a positive role to play providing access from within built-up areas to the open countryside and creating links to the wider green infrastructure network. Whilst green wedges will be safeguarded from incremental development, they are intended to be flexible to allow for planned development to the edge of the settlements. They are designed to change and grow with development, not to prevent it. The Green Wedges will be defined in the Site Allocation Development Plan Document.

Rothley Brook

4.73 Rothley Brook is a significant landscape feature and is part of the strategic Green Infrastructure network which is important in creating landscape, wildlife and access linkages between the Green Infrastructure network in Charnwood, and those in the wider surrounding area.

Alternative Approaches

4.74 We considered having separate policies for Charnwood Forest, The National Forest, Biodiversity, Geodiversity, Leisure and Recreation, Countryside and Landscape, and Settlement Identity rather than a single more strategic policy, which considers them all together.

4.75 Whilst there are similar benefits arising from both approaches, the sustainability appraisal does recognise the benefits arising from the proposed approach in terms of the net increase in green infrastructure benefit that would be secured. The appraisal draws out the benefits that the preferred approach would have in being able to address conflicts between different aspects of green infrastructure, such as between some recreational activity and the impact upon biodiversity. A co-ordinated approach also recognises that different elements of green infrastructure can perform a number of functions including providing wildlife habitats, promoting well-being amongst local people and helping to mitigate the causes of climate change. These



multiple benefits can be maximised if there is an integrated approach to green infrastructure.

- 4.76** Significant funding is available for the provision of green infrastructure which is available to areas where growth is proposed. Being able to access this 'New Growth Point' funding will be more effective if a coordinated approach is taken towards green infrastructure, rather than treating different elements in isolation.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Draft Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Charnwood Phase I Habitat Survey & Species Report \(August 2008\)](#)
- [Creating a Green and Prosperous Future: A Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan for Central Leicestershire \(March 2008\)](#)

Question 4.22

Have we identified the most important features of green infrastructure within the borough?

Question 4.23

Do you agree that dealing with all the green infrastructure assets in a single approach is the most appropriate way of achieving a net improvement?

Question 4.24

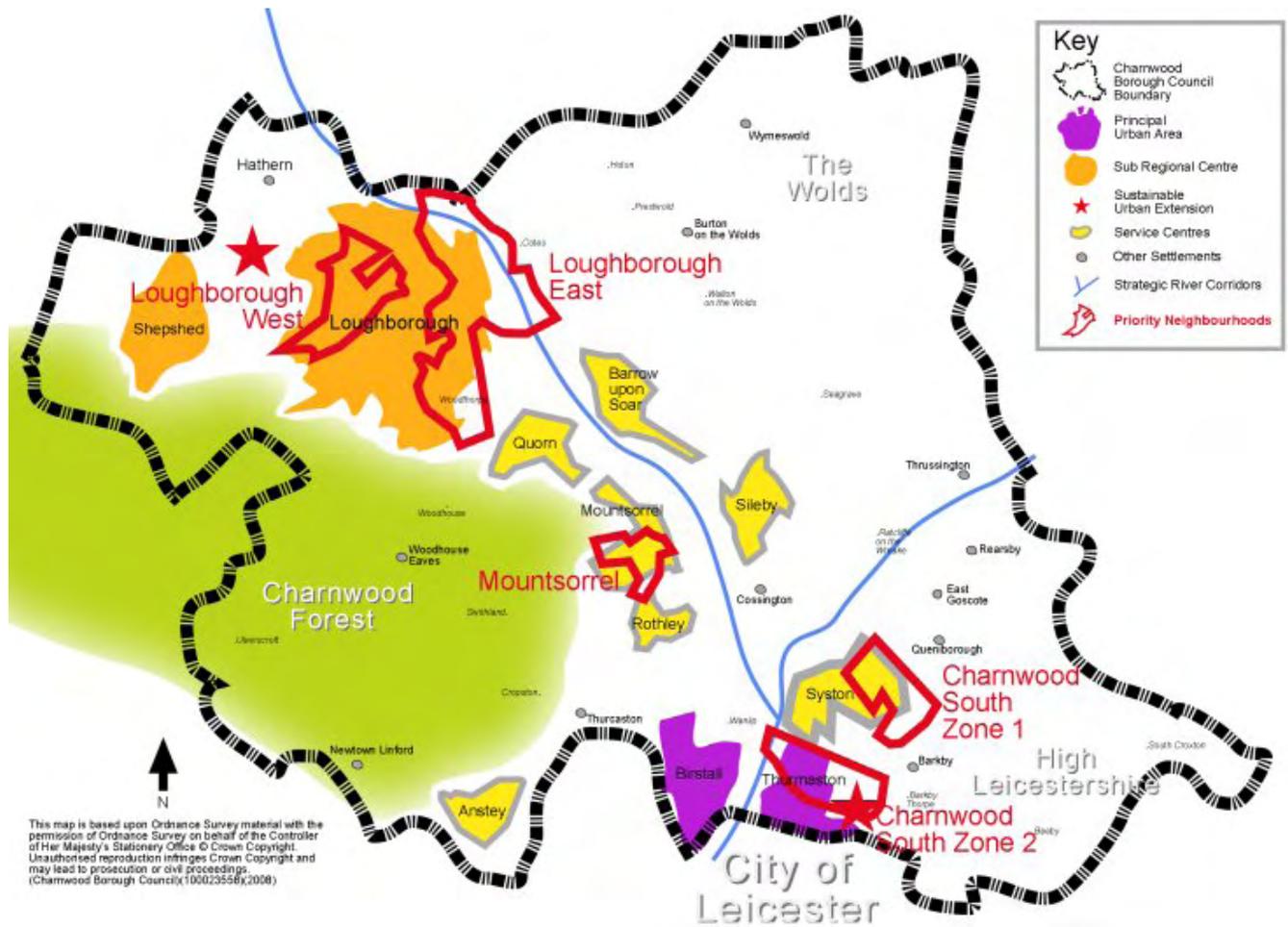
Any Other Comments?

Regeneration

- 4.77** The preferred approach to regeneration is to increase the prosperity and quality of life of the whole Borough, tackle deprivation, social exclusion, community cohesion and low educational attainment in priority areas, and to create better places to live and work. The Core Strategy will therefore provide a framework for action over the plan period helping to identify opportunities to make real improvements in the quality of life for people living and working in the Borough, to coordinate the strategies and programmes of partners and target funding and to add value to the built environment and economic prosperity of the Borough.
- 4.78** Whilst on the whole the Borough is relatively affluent, the Index of Multiple Deprivation and Charnwood Renewal Framework have confirmed that there are small areas within certain wards in Loughborough, and to a lesser extent some of the communities in the Soar Valley and villages close to the edge of Leicester, where households continue to suffer high and concentrated levels of deprivation. These areas are affected by one or more kinds of deprivation including low economic activity, high unemployment and limited access to local job opportunities, poor health, low skills levels and educational achievements, lack of access to open space and recreational facilities and poor environment and housing.
- 4.79** The Indices of Multiple Deprivation are used by the government to measure a range of economic, social and housing issues which allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation. The Indices show that parts of east Loughborough suffer from the worst overall deprivation in Leicestershire, with particular issues in relation to income, employment, health, crime and income affecting older people and children. They also show that parts of west Loughborough is ranked in the top 10 for overall deprivation in Leicestershire, with particular issues in relation to income, employment, health, education and training and crime. Parts of Mountsorrel are identified in the top 10 most deprived areas in the Borough and parts of Thurmaston are ranked within the 20% most deprived areas in the District. The most prominent forms of deprivation identified in parts of Thurmaston are income deprivation affecting older people, education skills and training deprivation and living environment relative to other parts of the Borough and County.
- 4.80** The Sustainable Community Strategy has responded to these issues by declaring areas of East Loughborough, West Loughborough, Mountsorrel and South Charnwood (parts of Thurmaston & Syston) as priority neighbourhoods where focused effort will be made to overcome hardship. Further attention will also be afforded to parts of Shepshed and Sileby prioritised in the Council's Economic Development Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy for economic regeneration.



Charnwood Priority Neighbourhoods



- 4.81** Working with other partners, agencies and local communities, it is proposed that the Council will take action to improve the quality of life for residents living in areas of relative deprivation. This will include securing opportunities through the Local Development Framework for employment, new community facilities, maximising the potential for tourism, environmental and housing improvements, and better access to open space, education and training and public and community transport, cycling and walking links.
- 4.82** The Council has approved a masterplan for Loughborough Town Centre which seeks to identify opportunities to improve the public realm, its environment and accessibility, particularly by public transport, walking and cycling. It also identifies sites and buildings for redevelopment. These measures seek to ensure that the town centre will be a successful, attractive and vibrant place that will support the strategy for growth in the Borough.
- 4.83** The main areas of employment in Loughborough are currently concentrated on the northern and eastern edge of the town in traditional industrial estates. The restructuring of the employment base presents opportunities for renewal of some of these sites to ensure that they can continue to provide opportunities for future employment needs. On the eastern edge

of Loughborough, former rail sidings provide an opportunity for an eastern gateway to the town centre. The Great Central Railway, the Grand Union Canal and land at Windmill Road present further opportunities. The Council considers that these opportunities on the eastern edge of Loughborough should be considered together as part of a comprehensive strategy for regeneration.

- 4.84** The proposal to concentrate future housing growth in two sustainable urban extensions West of Loughborough and East of Thurmaston/North Hamilton provides an opportunity to create sustainable new communities that will attract investment, enhance existing infrastructure and provide economic prosperity, which will also benefit the priority neighbourhoods and the wider host communities. It is essential that the Council works with its partners and the local community to masterplan these sustainable urban extensions in a way that respects the concerns of the host community whilst maximising the opportunities to address issues in the priority neighbourhoods.
- 4.85** Elsewhere in the Borough, it is recognised that there are particular structural and physical issues in Shepshed and Thurmaston which limit their potential economic and social prosperity. At Shepshed a number of studies undertaken in the past have recognised issues with the role and function of the town centre and its public realm. The settlement also has a lack of self-containment with many residents travelling elsewhere for services and work.
- 4.86** There are pockets of deprivation in Thurmaston which has some of the most deprived households in Charnwood. There are difficult structural issues within the village arising from the physical barriers presented by the A607 and the Midland Mainline railway, which undermine community cohesion and social inclusion. There is also a relatively poor physical environment as a result of unsympathetic or poor quality development over the years and areas that are deficient in recreation space. The opportunities presented by the close proximity of Watermead Country Park and the waterfront area have not been fully realised. There are also issues with the vitality and viability of the local centre at Melton Road, which is not far from the ASDA superstore to the north.
- 4.87** Due to the particular issues in parts of East Loughborough, Shepshed and Thurmaston, the Council will consider preparing an Area Action Plan for each settlement to provide the planning framework to guide regeneration and to assist in reaching agreement with the local community, partners and agencies as to the best way to address the issues. Area Action Plans are statutory planning documents prepared as part of the Local Development Framework and, when approved, will form part of the development plan. These plans would provide the catalyst for getting key landowners and agencies to work together to make a real and significant difference in these communities. It is important to be clear from the outset that addressing difficult issues will require difficult decisions to be made.
- 4.88** The issues in parts of Mountsorrel and Sileby are as important as any other of the priority areas but can be addressed through multi-agency action and allocations of land in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.



4.89 Whilst sustainable urban extensions and other land use interventions may assist priority neighbourhoods they are only one strand of a wider regeneration strategy. They should be viewed alongside the work of other partners and agencies working in Charnwood. These issues can only be addressed through the better integration of all strategies and programmes, partnership working and effective community involvement much of which is addressed in the new Charnwood Sustainable Community Strategy. The general regeneration priorities identified for the Borough include:

- Support for the role and function of the Borough's district and local centres: to re-instil confidence in the larger towns and villages of Charnwood that serve as service centres by a variety of public realm improvements.
- Retention and creation of small employment centres within Service Centres to improve their sustainability and to replace local industrial employment that has been lost;
- To restructure existing employment space to facilitate the movement from traditional employment sectors to new high tech and knowledge based sectors and industrial floorspace to the provision of office space;
- To provide premises for, and support to, business start-ups and micro-businesses (including those in the creative sector) across the Borough; to ensure that Charnwood can provide a spectrum of business property sizes of good quality and connectivity to accommodate growing businesses;
- To support existing businesses, and to ensure that Charnwood is seen as a business-friendly environment that encourages inward investment;
- to work with partners to improve the image of Charnwood and to positively market its economic potential;
- to develop Charnwood as an exemplar centre for low carbon living, working and travelling;
- To exploit the potential of Loughborough for the 2012 Olympics and use this as a catalyst to drive local regeneration and environmental improvement;
- To address the skills gap at both the lower and higher ends of the skills spectrum to meet changing requirements created by both business needs and climate change / sustainability drivers;
- To promote and link the Borough's tourism assets to provide a tourism destination / offer; to connect with and exploit regional links such as the National Forest, Greater Great Central Railway, Grand Union Canal;
- To exploit Charnwood's waterfront (rivers, canal, Watermead Country Park) and open spaces (Charnwood Forest and possible linear park) better as an amenity for both residents and visitors and to provide better access for local residents;
- Target New Growth Point funding to assimilate growth within host communities to help address issues of social exclusion and improve community cohesion;

Alternative Approaches

4.90 The Council considered maintaining its regeneration focus on meeting the specific needs arising from deprivation in the Priority Neighbourhoods and Sibley and Shepshed and not seeking to make proactive interventions to improve the built environment. However, it is recognised that

delivering a multi-agency response to the issues and community priorities identified in the sustainable community strategy requires the Council to take a lead role in the place-shaping agenda through the preparation of planning frameworks, the allocation of land and the coordination of investment.

- 4.91** The Council could choose not to allocate sustainable urban extensions and allocate land for housing on smaller sites but this would dilute the added value and investment that would arise in priority neighbourhoods from larger scale sustainable developments. The Council could consider not identifying new land for employment but this would not provide for jobs in the areas of greatest need or provide for future economic prosperity and growth.
- 4.92** The Council could decide not to focus its attention on Shepshed and Thurmaston but this would deny these communities the opportunity to comprehensively tackle the structural problems and pockets of deprivation that exist in these settlements and would lead instead to uncoordinated and piecemeal interventions that are less than the sum of their parts.

See Also:

- [Town Centre Masterplan \(August 2007\)](#)
- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [Charnwood Sustainable Community Strategy \(October 2008\)](#)
- [Leicestershire Sustainable Community Strategy \(March 2008\)](#)
- [Charnwood Economic Development Strategy \(March 2004\)](#)
- [Leicester and Leicestershire HMA Employment Land Study \(October 2008\)](#)
- [Places in Charnwood Report \(January 2008\)](#)
- [Priority Neighbourhoods Profiles](#)



Question 4.25

Do you agree with our approach to Regeneration?

Question 4.26

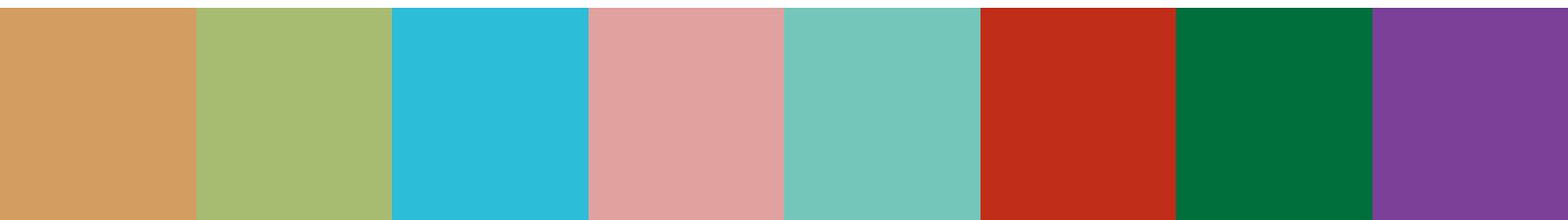
Are there any other general regeneration priorities that we should be considering?

Question 4.27

Do you support the idea of Area Action Plans for Shepshed and Thurmaston?

Question 4.28

Any Other Comments?



Delivering Well Designed, High Quality Developments

- 4.93** Charnwood is an attractive and vibrant Borough with an impressive and diverse legacy of architecture, settlements and landscapes. Many settlements in the Borough have a strong local character related to their layout, the use of local materials and buildings styles.
- 4.94** Good quality design can make a difference in shaping our built environment, and the sustainability of development, and our quality of life can be enhanced by more careful thought about the places we create. All new development provides the opportunity to create surroundings that future generations will cherish. Good design is not just about the improvement of the appearance of our towns, villages, buildings and public spaces. It is as much about improving people's quality of life and enhancing equality of opportunity, economic vitality and the efficient use of resources.
- 4.95** The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) is the government's advisor on architecture, urban design and public space. CABE has launched the 'Buildings for Life' standard, developed with the Home Builders Federation, which is supported by government as the standard for the design quality on new homes. Using this standard CABE has carried out a quality audit of the new development across the country. Developments taking place in the East Midlands performed poorly with over half being assessed as poor.
- 4.96** Some recent developments in Charnwood have not reflected the traditional local building styles and could have made a greater contribution to the quality of the Borough's environment. The Local Development Framework and the Core Strategy in particular is the major opportunity to raise the standard of design and the Council will require higher standards of design than have been accepted in the past.
- 4.97** For residential schemes the 'Building for Life' standard will be used as the basis to audit the quality of new developments. The Council will work with CABE and with neighbouring authorities to train staff and carry out audits in an objective way. Gradually increasing targets for design quality will be phased over the period of 3 years from the adoption of the Core Strategy, in recognition that there are a number of residential schemes that have planning permission that predate 'Building for Life Criteria'. The aim will be to ensure that all major new housing developments achieve a good standard of design as defined by the 'Building for Life' standard. The approach is complementary to other approaches in the Core Strategy which seek to minimise the use of energy in new developments.
- 4.98** For non-residential developments, the approach will be to set out a series of key design criteria to guide the determination of applications for planning permission. These will be based on those principles in the Council's Supplementary Planning Document 'Leading in Design'.
- 4.99** In addition to addressing concerns about design quality of new development, the preferred approach is to apply national planning policy which seeks to conserve and enhance the built heritage. The Borough contains a number of buildings which do not have a statutory listing but are locally listed for their local historical or architectural importance. The preferred



approach will make reference to the need to conserve and enhance the character and appearance of locally listed buildings.

Alternative Approaches

4.100 No alternative approaches have been identified. The preferred approach is to encourage a higher standard of design which is maximises sustainability benefits.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Draft Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Charnwood Borough Council Supplementary Planning Document: Leading in Design \(July 2005\)](#)
- [CABE 'Buildings for Life' standards \(www.cabe.org.uk\) \(February 2007\)](#)
- [CABE Housing Audit Assessing the Design Quality of Housing in the East Midlands, West Midlands and the South West \(February 2007\)](#)

Question 4.29

Do you agree with our approach to Design?

Question 4.30

Any Other Comments?

Affordable Housing

- 4.101** On all new housing developments, the Council will seek to secure an appropriate mix of housing, in terms of dwelling sizes, types, tenures and affordability, to meet identified needs.
- 4.102** The initial outcomes of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment for Leicester and Leicestershire suggest a shortfall of 309 affordable homes per year in Charnwood to 2026. This is around 40% of the overall housing requirement for the Borough. This estimate is based on a range of considerations, including the projected number of new households (primarily young people trying to get a foot on the ladder), the prices of entry level homes, incomes, lending conditions and the availability of deposits; compared with the current supply of affordable homes. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment updates the Housing Needs Survey undertaken in 2005 and continues to reinforce the Charnwood Housing Strategy priority to provide affordable homes in the Borough.
- 4.103** This estimate of the shortfall in affordable housing is significantly greater than the number of affordable homes that have been built in recent years. The Council currently requires market housing sites of 15 homes or more to provide 30% affordable housing. In order to meet the proposed affordable homes target, the Council will need to consider increasing the current requirement for the proportion of new homes that must be affordable and also consider reducing the threshold for when affordable homes are required. It is proposed that the type of affordable homes required will be determined on the basis of local needs and will include a mixture of social rented homes and intermediate homes where individuals can purchase part of their home and rent the other proportion from a social landlord.
- 4.104** There are a number of other factors that will also be taken into account in setting out a policy approach including the type of land available for housing, which is primarily greenfield sites, the large amount of new development proposed overall and the need to create communities that have a mixture of housing types. It is proposed that a large proportion of new development will be delivered as part of the proposed Sustainable Urban Extensions; this will therefore be the focus for the delivery of a large proportion of the affordable homes. The need for affordable homes in Service Centres will be a key influence on the amount of housing that will be planned in these villages.
- 4.105** It is important that the Council researches the impact of providing affordable housing on the financial viability of different types of sites being proposed in the Borough. The Council has therefore commissioned an Affordable Housing Economic Viability Assessment. This study will be consulted on separately with key stakeholders in the autumn.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.106** The Council is considering two alternative approaches, increasing the requirements uniformly across the Borough and varying the requirements for different parts of the Borough based on the sub-areas identified in Chapter 5 to help target areas in most need based on the findings



of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Draft Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Regional Housing Strategy 2004-2010 \(July 2004\)](#)
- [Charnwood Borough Housing Needs Survey Update \(July 2004\)](#)
- [Strategic Housing Market Assessment \(due to be published in November 2008\)](#)
- [Charnwood Borough Council Housing Strategy \(2005\)](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing](#)

Question 4.31

Do you agree that we should consider increasing the proportion of affordable homes we require on new housing sites from 30%?

Question 4.32

Do you agree that we should consider lowering the threshold for sites that qualify for providing affordable homes?

Question 4.33

Any Other Comments?

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 4.107** There is a long tradition of Romany Gypsies and Irish Travellers in Britain enjoying a nomadic or semi-nomadic lifestyle either following seasonal work patterns or other cultural activities. This way of life is not always well-understood by all and there are occasions where gypsies and travellers are victimised and discriminated against as a consequence of their cultural differences. At the same time there are legitimate concerns amongst existing communities about unauthorised encampments and their management.
- 4.108** Not all gypsies and travellers are engaged in active travel or follow seasonal working patterns. For many gypsies and travellers there are advantages in being settled for longer periods during life stages to enable children to attend school, to access health care or because they are elderly. For these people a permanent pitch is required with sufficient space to accommodate caravans for immediate family as well as their amenity needs. Gypsies and travellers that are engaged in active travel require transit sites to meet their short term needs. These sites should be located close to services and facilities and offer basic amenities for day to day needs.
- 4.109** Travelling showpeople are defined by their distinctive occupation - often travelling around the country to provide fairs, rides and amusements with associated catering and other stalls for short periods of time. Showpeople therefore require a base where equipment can be stored and tested at the end of the show season whilst providing a permanent home for family members who are unable to travel during the year.
- 4.110** The draft Regional Plan translates the pitch requirement arising from the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment published in April 2007. It requires the provision of 11 new pitches and 10 transit pitches for gypsies and travellers and 9 plots for travelling showpeople in Charnwood Borough.
- 4.111** The Council's preferred approach is to provide for a residential site (between 5 and 10 pitches), a transit site (between 5 and 10 pitches) and accommodation for travelling showpeople (sufficient for up to 5 families) in each of the sustainable urban extensions. This provision should be considered as a minimum level to fulfil the requirement set out in the draft Regional Plan.
- 4.112** In addition, a criteria based policy will be provided to help inform the location of any further sites required in the future. These will need to be allocated in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. The policy will also assist in the determination of planning applications for gypsy traveller and showpeople sites that arise on sites not allocated in the development plan.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.113** Stakeholder workshops held during 2008 considered how the requirement for pitches could be met, guided by sustainability appraisal. The workshop considered not allocating sites at all but this would not satisfy the requirement to provide sites and was discounted. Two further options considered concentrating sites in Loughborough and on the edge of the Leicester Principal Urban Area or distributing them around all settlements in the borough. However,



these two options would delay the realisation of sites until a later Development Plan Document could be prepared and would rely on sites coming forward through market forces. The sustainability appraisal showed that greater benefits would arise from concentrating sites in larger settlements as these provide the greatest access to services and facilities. The final option was to include provision within the specific sustainable urban extensions in the Core Strategy as this was considered to present the greatest opportunity to create socially inclusive and balanced communities.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy\(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Draft Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Leicestershire, Leicester & Rutland Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment 2006-2016 \(April 2007\)](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing](#)

Question 4.34

Do you agree with our approach to meeting the needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople?

Question 4.35

Any Other Comments?

Renewables/Low Carbon Energy Generation

4.114 Recognising that climate change is occurring, the Council has committed to reducing the Borough's impact on the climate. It has demonstrated this by signing the Nottingham Declaration and setting in place a challenging programme to minimise its own impact on the environment. The declaration can be viewed at:

<http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/housingbuildings/localauthorities/NottinghamDeclaration>

4.115 Evidence suggests energy use in buildings accounts for 40% of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions. Emissions resulting from personal transport also make an important contribution. The planning system is fundamental to reducing the impact on climate change of the people of Charnwood.

4.116 The Council's approach for renewable and low carbon technology should be understood in the context of the 'energy hierarchy', which seeks to reduce the carbon emissions from development by a sequence of steps. The first step should be to reduce the need for energy in the building's design, secondly to use energy more efficiently within the building and finally through supplying energy from renewable sources.

4.117 Nationally, improvements are being brought in through the Building Regulations which will improve the environmental performance of buildings, requiring housing to be zero-carbon by 2016 and other development by 2019. The challenge for Charnwood is to identify the local opportunities to reduce carbon emissions to help contribute towards these targets. A feasibility study has been carried out to assess the potential for renewable and low carbon energy generation across Charnwood. The study examined the opportunity for large-scale renewable energy installations across the borough which has the potential to be connected to the national grid. It also examined specific opportunities for energy generation to inform the selection of sustainable urban extensions.

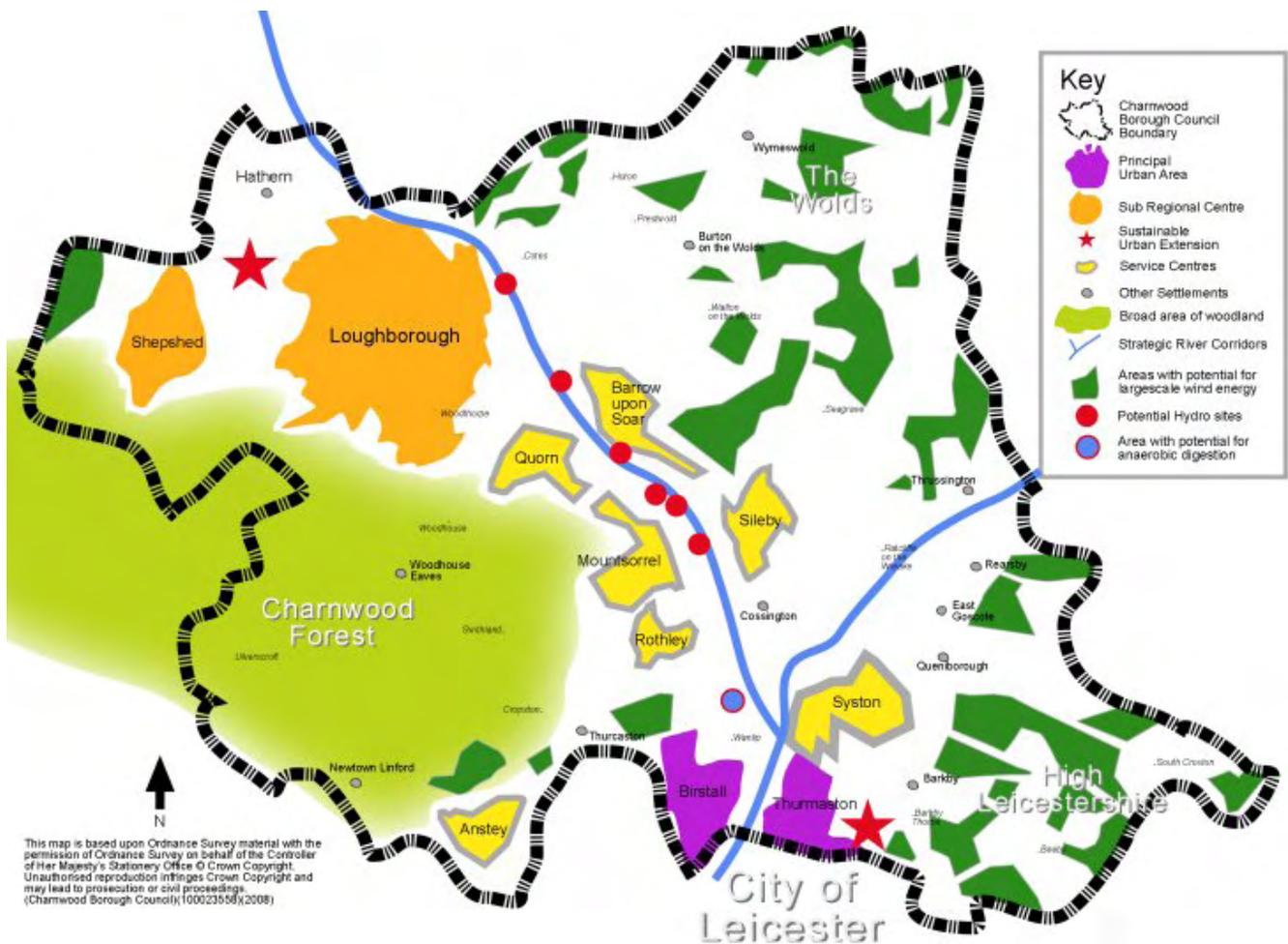
4.118 Evidence indicates that there is significant potential for wet biomass (residue from livestock farming), dry biomass (energy crops) and in large-scale wind energy generation across Charnwood. There is an existing waste facility at Wanlip that generates energy through anaerobic digestion, which has the potential to expand. The Borough also contains some of the main opportunities in Leicestershire for hydro-electric generation along the River Soar. The large areas of woodland in the West of Charnwood provide an opportunity for wood fuel to be used to power buildings which are close to these areas of woodland.

4.119 The opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy generation associated with the proposed locations for growth indicate that there are justifiable local circumstances to require development to be zero carbon in these Sustainable Urban Extension locations in advance of the Building Regulations. Opportunities for Sustainable Urban Extensions to be exemplar zero-carbon development exist through the use of New Growth Point Funding.



- 4.120** Ambitions of reducing the carbon emissions of the Borough are challenging and the provision of large scale renewable and low carbon energy generation have an important role to play. It is proposed to take a positive policy approach which is supportive of new large-scale grid connected renewable or low carbon energy installations, provided environmental and amenity criteria are met. The policy would not place blanket exclusion to any part of the Borough for wind turbines. The sustainability appraisal recognises that such an approach could have significant landscape impacts, particularly for large-scale wind energy, and there may also be ecological, flooding concerns with other forms of energy installation.
- 4.121** The University is developing a long term strategy for the future development of its campus, which will examine ways to reduce energy consumption and innovative means of meeting its future energy requirements, including renewable and low carbon energy generation. The Council and the University are discussing the feasibility of a decentralised energy network that could be used beyond the boundaries of the university campus and science park.

Potential within Charnwood for Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation



- 4.122** Policy 2 of the Regional Plan (Promoting Better Design) indicates that all new developments of more than 10 dwellings, or for others uses exceeding 1,000m² floorspace, should secure at least 10% of their energy from decentralised and renewable or low-carbon sources unless it can be demonstrated by the applicant, having regard to the type of development involved and its design, this is not feasible or viable. Although the Regional Plan forms part of the Development Plan, it is considered necessary for the Core Strategy to reflect this requirement to remove any ambiguity of partners about the relationship between the different levels of planning policy, and to provide certainty to developers.
- 4.123** It is important to recognise that creating energy efficient and zero carbon development is likely to involve innovative materials, design and layouts. This is likely to mean that future development looks different from what we are used to.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.124** Options considered under this policy area include adopting national minimum standards for new build development, and not to include a positively worded policy for large-scale renewable energy. Although the Sustainability Appraisal has identified negative effects with the proposed approach, it is concluded to be appropriate in the context of reducing contributions to climate change.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [East Midlands Draft Regional Plan, Secretary of State Proposed Changes \(July 2008\)](#)
- [Renewable Energy Study \(October 2008\)](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement: Planning & Climate Change - Supplement to Planning Policy Statement 1 \(Reference\)](#)
- [Nottingham Climate Change Declaration](#)



Question 4.36

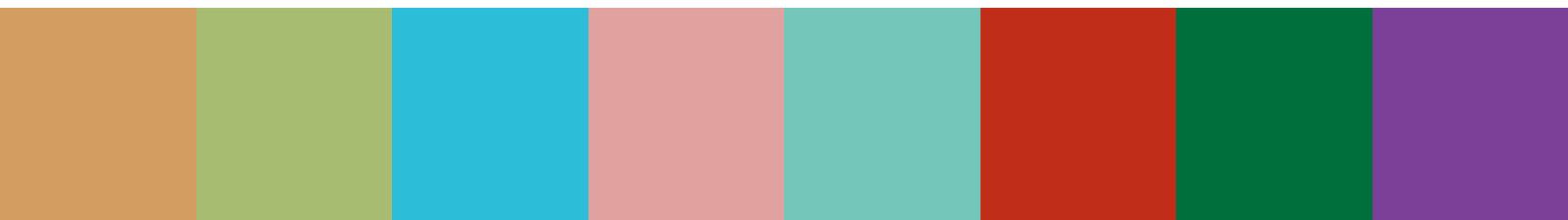
Do you agree with our approach to large-scale renewable energy?

Question 4.37

Do you agree that sustainable urban extensions should be zero-carbon in advance of the Building Regulations?

Question 4.38

Any Other Comments?



Retail and Town Centres

- 4.125** Retail provision in Charnwood reflects trends in shopper behaviour and patterns of development which have occurred across the UK in recent years, resulting in significant change in the appearance and role of town centres. The continued increase in the proportion of shopping for food and ‘convenience goods’ (everyday essential items) which takes place in supermarkets, often in out-of-centre locations, has reduced the viability and representation of the smaller, traditional independent food shops in town centres and so reduced the footfall of shoppers. At the same time, spend on ‘comparison goods’ (clothing, footwear, household and recreational goods) has grown significantly but is increasingly concentrated in the larger town centres where more modern shop units, larger stores and “high street” names provide a greater draw.
- 4.126** Loughborough performs well given its position close to the retail centres of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham, but the town centre will face continued competition from these larger centres over the period of the Core Strategy.
- 4.127** Evidence suggests that there will be a requirement for new retail floor space over the period of the Core Strategy. Generally speaking, in the short term there is little need for further shopping floor space in the Borough, and what is required can be accommodated in vacant units in Loughborough town centre. Up to 2016 opportunity sites identified in the Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan will provide the scope to address the forecast need. Beyond 2016 further floor space may need to be accommodated outside the existing Town Centre Core Area.
- 4.128** The Borough will be served by a hierarchy of centres and, at the top, Loughborough Town Centre will be the main focus for retailing, leisure, cultural and business activities in the Borough. The Council will support the role of Loughborough Town Centre by:
- Supporting the regeneration of town centre opportunity sites into mixed use schemes;
 - Supporting improvements to the public realm;
 - Encouraging some diversification of uses within central areas;
 - Supporting increased provision of commercial leisure development;
 - Focussing new comparison floorspace towards Loughborough Town Centre; and by
 - Supporting short-stay car parking facilities needed to safeguard the Town Centre’s vitality and viability.
- 4.129** There is a requirement for new food and groceries retail floor space over the period of the Core Strategy which will be met by provision within or on the edge of the Loughborough town centre and by new provision with the sustainable urban extensions in north and south Charnwood.
- 4.130** Loughborough Town Centre will be supported by a series of District and Local Centres. The role of these centres is explained in more detail in the strategies for north and south Charnwood. The approach will be to allow new development within District Centres where this is needed to support their vitality and viability.



- 4.131** Amendments to town and district centre boundaries will be considered in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.132** Alternative approaches that were considered include spreading new retail floorspace between Loughborough Town Centre and District Centres. The sustainability appraisal indicated that although this alternative approach may support the vitality and viability of District Centres, Loughborough's role may be threatened by the expansion of competing centres at Nottingham and Leicester. The preferred approach may also have significant positive effects in terms of locating retail and commercial development where it is most accessible by a variety of non-car modes thereby improving air quality and ensuring accessibility for those without access to a car. The preferred approach allows for retail and commercial development which will help to support the regeneration in Shepshed and Sileby District Centres and in Thurmaston Local Centre.
- 4.133** Other alternative approaches that have been considered are to maintain the current policy restricting the level of non retail uses within certain frontages in Loughborough Town Centre. The sustainability appraisal indicated that this alternative approach may lead to higher levels of vacancy and may limit broader appeal of the town centre by not providing activity across the day and night time.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [Retail and Leisure Study \(September 2008\)](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 6: Planning for Town Centres](#)

Question 4.39

Do you agree with our overall approach to retail and town centres?

Question 4.40

Do you agree with our approach of focussing new retail floor space towards Loughborough Town Centre?

Question 4.41

Any Other Comments?



Infrastructure Provision

- 4.134** It is important that the necessary improvements or provision of new physical and community infrastructure is delivered to support the new development proposed. This will need to be done in partnership with other agencies such as the Local Education Authority, the Primary Care Trust, utility companies and the Local Highways Authority.
- 4.135** For all new developments the Council will require adequate infrastructure, services and facilities to support the proposal. Consideration will also be given to opportunities to overcome some of the deficiencies in current infrastructure for example by providing affordable housing, sports pitches or reducing the risk of flooding.
- 4.136** It is proposed that the Council will seek to secure this provision by negotiating a legal agreement with the owners, applicants or developers involved including agreement about the programme for the delivery of any provisions sought. Consideration will be given to the need for the provision or contribution towards a range of benefits including:
- Affordable or special needs housing
 - Schools
 - Sustainable transport
 - Improvements to the natural and built environment
 - Drainage infrastructure including Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems
 - Green infrastructure including maintenance where appropriate and encouraging the provision of multi functional spaces and buildings
 - Social and community facilities
 - Recreation and sports facilities
 - Mitigation to offset impact on any existing green infrastructure.
- 4.137** It is proposed that detailed requirements will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document on developer contributions. This information is currently set out in the Borough Council's 'Section 106 Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document'. This approach provides flexibility to update requirements on a regular basis and to consider the implications of the proposed Community Infrastructure Levy and whether it would be appropriate for Charnwood.

Alternative Approaches

- 4.138** No alternative approaches have been considered as the Council needs to include policies to maintain and improve the Borough's physical community infrastructure and ensure the necessary contributions associated with proposed new development are secured.

See Also:

- [East Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy \(March 2005\)](#)
- [Planning Policy Statement 12: Local Spatial Planning \(Reference\)](#)
- [Circular 05/05 Planning Obligations \(July 2005\)](#)
- [Community Infrastructure Levy Report \(August 2008\)](#)

Question 4.42

Do you agree with the list of things developers should contribute towards?

Question 4.43

Any Other Comments?



Chapter 5: Implications of the Development Strategy for North and South Charnwood

Introduction

- 5.1** As highlighted in the Settlement Hierarchy, there are two distinct urban influences within Charnwood - the city of Leicester and the towns of Loughborough and Shepshed. These urban influences create a locally recognised split between north and south Charnwood. This split was reflected in the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan (2005) and is clear from travel to work patterns.
- 5.2** Whilst the majority of the Structure Plan has now expired, this split between the Borough's north and south settlements, continues to be very relevant, reflecting the way the Borough functions. There continues to be a clear split between these settlements where residents look to the city for work, hospitals, leisure and cultural activities and those in the rest of the Borough, which look to the Sub-Regional Centre of Loughborough and Shepshed. The city's influence stretches as far as Rothley and those settlements south of the River Wreake. This distinction between north and south Charnwood provides the basis for a more detailed consideration of the implications of the overall development strategy set out above.

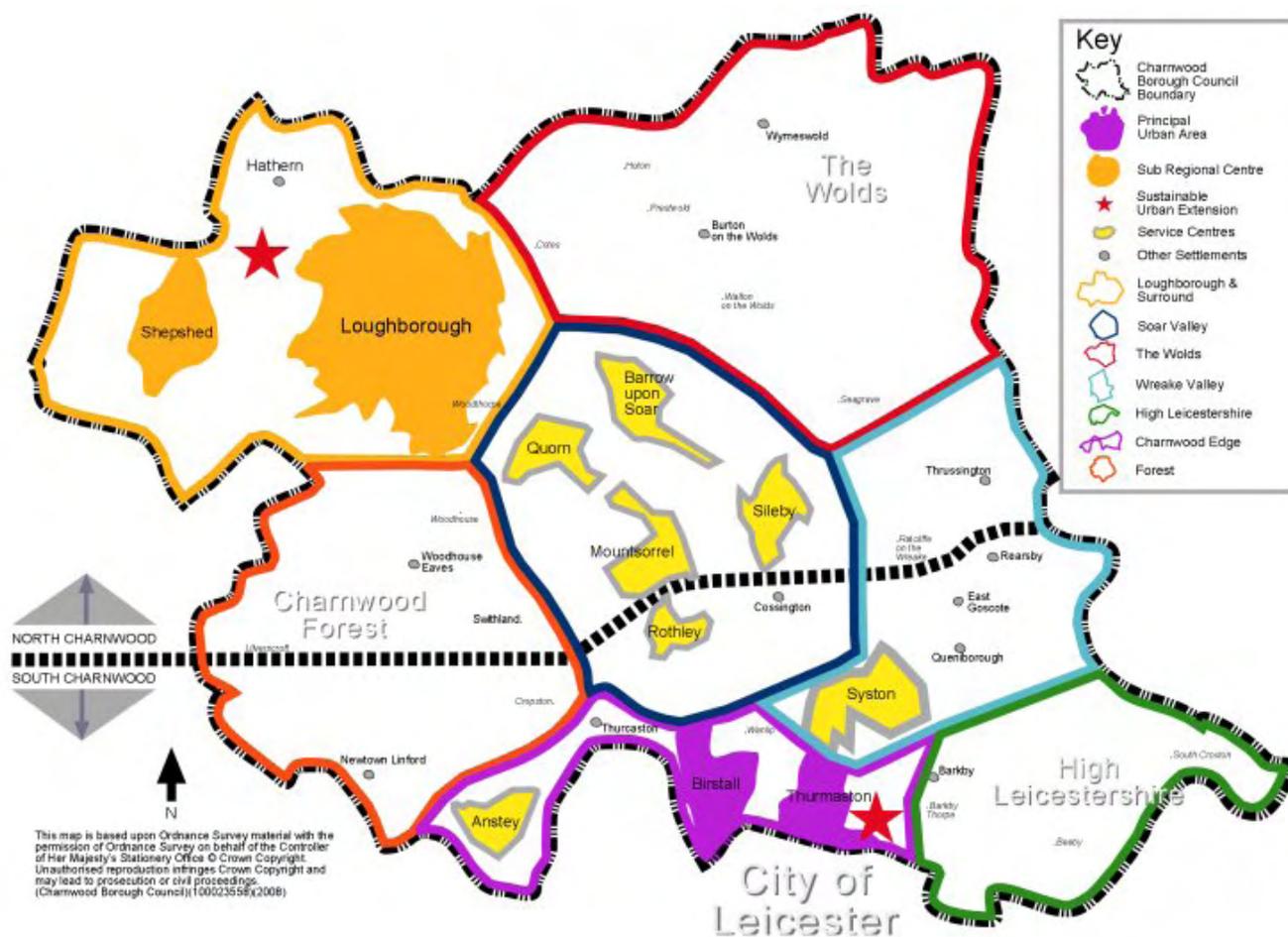
Sub Areas

- 5.3** Within this very broad split between north and south Charnwood, different parts of the Borough have their own locally distinctive character. These areas can be recognised as being based around the two urban areas of Loughborough in the north and Leicester in the south of the Borough, the Soar Valley which stretches between Loughborough and Leicester and four distinctive rural areas of the Wolds, Wreake Valley, High Leicestershire and Forest. These sub-areas of the Borough are described in more detail below:

- **Loughborough and the surrounding area** – this area comprises the urban areas of Loughborough and Shepshed. It also includes Hathern and the Soar Valley villages of Quorn and Barrow Upon Soar. The area relies on Loughborough for shops, services and facilities. There are also a number of sub-areas within Loughborough itself. These relate to East Loughborough, Central Loughborough, Shelthorpe, Woodthorpe, the Forest side of Loughborough, Old Ashby Road, Maxwell Drive and Alan Moss Road and University areas.
- **The Wolds** - this area includes the villages north east of Loughborough, these villages rely on Barrow Upon Soar and Loughborough for shops, services and facilities.
- **The Forest** – this area includes the villages within Charnwood Forest including Woodhouse on the north side and Newtown Linford to the south. These villages have a fair bus service and look to the Service Centres of Quorn and Anstey as well as Loughborough and Leicester for shops, services and facilities.

- **Soar Valley** – this area stretches between Loughborough and Leicester and comprises five of the seven Service Centres. It is the focus of service provision for the Wolds, the northern part of the Forest and to a less extent the Wreake Valley. The settlements in this area are focused around the River Soar, the railway line which runs from Leicester to Nottingham and the A6.
- **Wreake Valley** – this area comprises the villages focused around the River Wreake which flows from Melton Borough into Charnwood. It includes the Service Centre of Syston. These villages look to Syston and Leicester City for shops, services and facilities.
- **High Leicestershire** – this south east corner of the Borough is the corner of a larger landscape area which also covers parts of Melton Borough and Harborough District. It includes Barkby, Barkby Thorpe, Beeby and South Croxton. These villages rely on Thurmaston, Hamilton and Leicester City for shops, services and facilities.
- **Charnwood Edge** – this area comprises the settlements of Birstall and Thurmaston which adjoin Leicester and the villages close to the edge of the city including the Service Centre of Anstey.

Sub Areas of Charnwood



Question 5.1

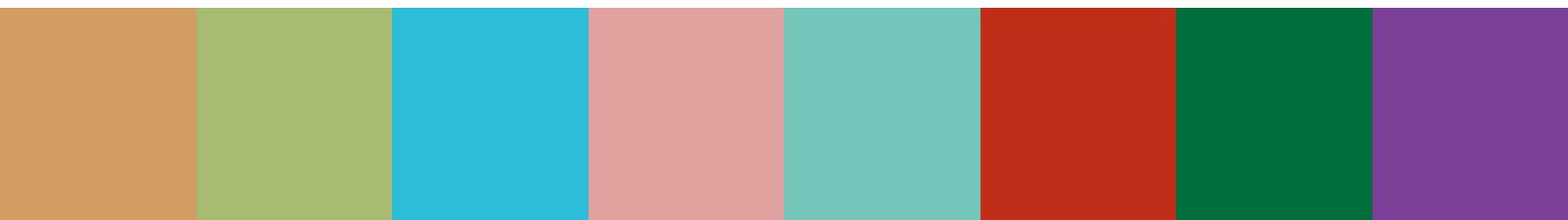
Do you agree with the boundaries drawn for each sub areas?

Question 5.2

Which sub area do you live in and what do you think are the key issues and opportunities?

Question 5.3

Any other comments?



South Charnwood

5.4 South Charnwood is primarily influenced by the city of Leicester. Thurmaston and Birstall form part of the Principal Urban Area of Leicester as they are physically joined to the city and the majority of people in the south of Charnwood look to the city for work, leisure and shopping. The Service Centres of Anstey, Syston and Rothley provide lower order services to the smaller settlements further out in the southern part of the Forest, the Wreake Valley and High Leicestershire. This section will identify the key implications of the overall strategy for this part of Charnwood.

New Housing and Employment Development

5.5 The emerging Regional Plan requires that provision is made for at least 19,300 homes over the period 2001-2026. It states that 6,780 of these dwellings should be built within and adjoining the Principal Urban Area of Leicester, including sustainable urban extensions as necessary.

5.6 As outlined above in Chapter 4, there is little opportunity to develop previously developed land in south Charnwood so the Council consider the most sustainable way of providing the level of new homes required is to comprehensively plan a sustainable urban extension to the city to the east of Thurmaston and to the north of Hamilton. The Council is proposing to identify a site in the Core Strategy for around 5,000 homes and at least 25 hectares of employment in this growth area. It is proposed that 25 hectares of employment will be delivered during the plan period, with a further 25 hectares held in strategic reserve.

5.7 For the new residents of the sustainable urban extension the Council is proposing new employment areas close to and well connected to their new homes, which will give residents the opportunity to choose to live close to where they work. Due to the size of the development proposed, this urban extension will provide a range of supporting facilities, including a local shopping centre, recreational facilities, schools and possibly health facilities. The aim would be to create a community where people can walk and cycle to key facilities and use public transport to access the city and the facilities it offers.

5.8 This size of the development also provides an opportunity for existing residents. It would be a large enough development to bring significant benefits to the community of Thurmaston, which includes some of the most deprived communities in Charnwood in terms of income, education, skills and training and health. The sustainable urban extension could help to regenerate this community by providing new employment opportunities and community facilities.

5.9 This scale of development could be accommodated within the landscape without compromising the settlement identity of Syston, Barkby and Barkby Thorpe. It would provide homes well-related to the city, where the majority of people in south Charnwood work. As well as access to the city's jobs, new residents would benefit from access to the two city hospitals, shops, restaurants, swimming pools and leisure centres, the existing good public transport links and easy access to Watermead Park and open space within the Green Wedge area which



extends out of the city. It would also provide an opportunity to provide improvements for existing residents and is well related to the priority neighbourhood within Thurmaston. More details about the proposed sustainable urban extension are set out below.

- 5.10** In addition to this the Council propose to make provision for further development elsewhere adjoining the Principal Urban Area within Site Allocations Development Plan Document. This would ensure the most is made of the opportunity to locate new homes and businesses where they have access to the benefits of the city and good public transport links.
- 5.11** It is also proposed to make some smaller scale housing and employment allocations within or adjoining Service Centres in South Charnwood in the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. However, the location of these allocations will be informed by evidence about the capacity of settlements and the need for development to meet local needs. This will include an analysis of the role of different settlements and their relationship with other settlements within their housing sub-markets.

Retail

- 5.12** The main focus for higher order goods and services for communities in South Charnwood is Leicester, which is easily accessible by a choice of transport modes. Some of the villages in South Charnwood are also well-connected to Loughborough Town Centre such as Rothley. The District and Local Centres will be supported and provide for the more day-to-day needs of those living in South Charnwood. They are:

District and Local Centres in South Charnwood

District Centres	Local Centres
Anstey	Kingsgate Avenue, Birstall
Rothley	Bradgate Road, Anstey
Birstall	Wanlip Lane, Birstall
Thurmaston*	Melton Road, Syston
Syston	Melton Road, Thurmaston
	Lonsdale Road, Thurmaston
	Humberstone Lane, Thurmaston
	Silverdale Drive, Thurmaston
	Rothley

District Centres	Local Centres
	Went Road, Birstall
	Clover Walk, East Goscote
	Link Road, Anstey
	Rose Tree Avenue, Birstall

** Thurmaston will be reviewed in light of wider regeneration aspirations for the settlement and its juxtaposition to the proposed sustainable urban extension*

- 5.13** Where it is needed to support vitality and viability, appropriate new retail floorspace, office space, residential development and commercial leisure development will be encouraged within District Centres in keeping with their role and function within the hierarchy.
- 5.14** The role of Thurmaston District Centre has changed significantly since it was designated in the Borough of Charnwood Local Plan. Previously Thurmaston District Centre was composed of a Co-operative food store and a small parade of shops, but this has been redeveloped and includes shops selling a range of goods more associated with town and city centres. The proposal for a sustainable urban extension and the desire to regenerate Thurmaston provides an opportunity to review the role of Thurmaston District Centre and the Council will consider removing its designation as a district centre in order to limit its further expansion.
- 5.15** The network of Local Centres will be supported to ensure their continued vitality and viability, ensuring the needs of communities across Charnwood are catered for.

Regeneration

- 5.16** The Council propose to support development which helps with the regeneration of those areas of relatively higher need, particularly in parts of Syston and Thurmaston. In particular the Council proposes to safeguard existing employment, services and facilities and support opportunities for new provision.
- 5.17** There is a particular need to work with the local community and other partners in Thurmaston. The Council will consider preparing an Area Action Plan for Thurmaston which covers the whole community including the priority neighbourhood. Thurmaston has suffered from the severance of the A607 dual carriage way and the railway line, which collectively split Thurmaston into three. The historic centre of the village around Melton Road has been cut off from the



rest of village by the A607. There is an opportunity to consider public realm improvements, improved links to Watermead Park and improved community facilities as part of this process with the community.

5.18 Specific regeneration objectives in south Charnwood include:

- To exploit the opportunity created by major regeneration in Leicester City and to create new employment and prosperity in the south of Charnwood;
- To consider opportunities to improve the vitality and viability of Syston District Centre;
- To work with partners and the local community to prepare a masterplan for the East of Thurmaston/north of Hamilton sustainable urban extension to ensure the provision of new infrastructure such as green spaces, affordable housing, recreational land and new roads contribute to the wider regeneration of the existing community as well as serve the needs of the new residents and businesses; and
- To consider the preparation of an Area Action Plan for Thurmaston

Green Infrastructure

5.19 South Charnwood has a range of green infrastructure assets already, with the southern entrances to Charnwood Forest, Watermead Country Park, Rothley Brook, and the River corridors of the Soar and Wreake.

5.20 Generally speaking biodiversity tends to be stronger in the West than the East. Development provides opportunity to strengthen linkages in the network of wildlife sites.

5.21 With Bradgate and Watermead Country Parks most of South Charnwood is well catered for in terms of large recreation areas. However there are deficiencies in smaller scale open space provision which needs to be addressed to ensure there is a comprehensive network of green space. In South Charnwood areas that have been identified as being deficient in local park provision include east of Syston, south of Thurmaston and in East Goscote. Syston, Thurmaston and Anstey also lack provision of outdoor play areas.

5.22 We also propose to retain the Green Wedges within this part of the Borough. These are green spaces which penetrate the urban area and provide access to open spaces for residents and employees to enjoy. There are four Green Wedges which extend out of the city into south Charnwood:

- Beaumont Leys/Glenfield/Anstey/Groby,
- Beaumont Leys/Birstall/Thurcaston/Cropston/Anstey
- Birstall/Thurmaston/Leicester
- Thurmaston/Syston/Hamilton/Barkby/Barkby Thorpe.

Question 5.4

Do you have any comments on the proposals for South Charnwood?



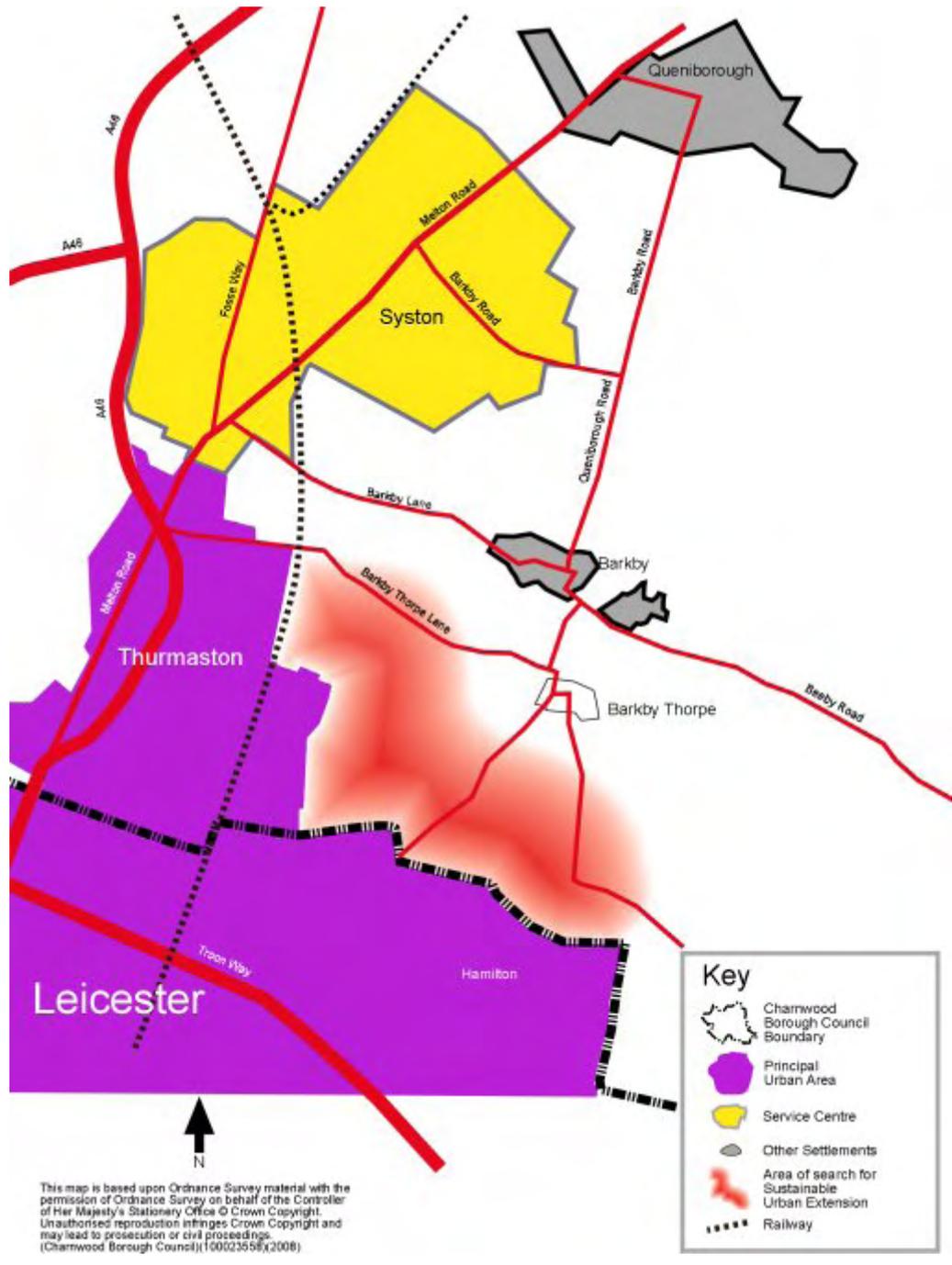
Sustainable Urban Extension to Leicester

5.23 It is proposed that a sustainable urban extension to Leicester be delivered on the land east of Thurmaston and north Hamilton within the area of search shown broadly on the map below. It is proposed that a sustainable urban extension in this area of search will include:

What is proposed that a sustainable urban extension in this area of search will include.

- About 5,000 new homes
- At least 25 hectares of employment
- Affordable housing
- A new Secondary School
- 2 new Primary Schools
- A large formal park
- Zero carbon development
- A new centre with shops and facilities
- Possible flood reduction scheme
- Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople
- A comprehensive package of transport measures (see paragraph 5.27)

Proposed Area of Search for Sustainable Urban Extension



5.24 New Local Centre: It is proposed that the sustainable urban extension provide a new local centre providing for the shopping needs of the new community and a new centre and community focus for the east side of Thurmaston beyond the railway line. This area is currently cut off from the facilities and shops in Thurmaston, so this centre would meet their needs as well as those of the new residents in the proposed development. This will be in addition to the existing



facilities along Melton Road which serves the western side of Thurmaston and the shopping complex on the A607 Asda roundabout.

- 5.25 New Schools:** Initial discussions with Leicestershire County Council suggest that this extension will also support the provision of two new medium/large primary schools and one new secondary school. The schools would be a key element of this proposed new development and the focus of community activity. The secondary school, in particular, will benefit both new and existing residents in Thurmaston and Syston. It also provides an opportunity as part of the proposed reorganisation of secondary education in the County and the 'Building Schools for the Future' programme.
- 5.26 Affordable Housing:** It is proposed that the sustainable urban extension includes a mix of uses including affordable housing. This will be a mixture of social rented accommodation and intermediate housing where residents can buy a proportion of a property and rent the other proportion from a Housing Association or a similar organisation.
- 5.27 Transport:** The main transport implications of this option located within the Leicester travel to work area will be in and out of the City in particular at peak times. The proposed development will need to provide a comprehensive package of transport measures including significant improvements to transport infrastructure primarily for access by bus, cycling and walking but also in the form of additional highway links. Consideration will also be given to the potential role for park and ride, a new rail station, travel plans and other demand management measures. Bus corridor improvements and new road capacity would help residents access cultural facilities, higher education, hospital care, comparison shopping and leisure facilities in the City Centre. There will also need to be improved access by all modes to local facilities at Hamilton and Thurmaston. Additional highway links and traffic management measures may be needed to help mitigate the impact of traffic on the nearby communities of Barkby, Barkby Thorpe, Queniborough, Syston and Thurmaston and to improve access towards the A607. Initial costings suggest that such a package of measures could be funded by this growth option.
- 5.28 Reduction:** The proposed road improvements provide an opportunity to provide flood reduction measures which will reduce the flooding downstream in Syston. This would involve online storage of water which would relieve the flow of flood water as it travels from the city northwards.
- 5.29 Employment:** It is proposed that at least 25 hectares of strategic employment land to complement the scale of housing growth and to benefit existing residents of Thurmaston, Barkby, Barkby Thorpe, South Croxton and Hamilton. A further 25 hectares will be held in a strategic reserve to be released within the plan period if required. This site will help to meet the projected demand for employment arising from firms based in Leicester who are currently located on sites earmarked for redevelopment. The provision of serviced sites should be made in advance of housing development to provide jobs in advance of homes. The site will provide high quality offices, industrial and small-scale warehousing that will add value to south Charnwood's employment offer and complement the desire for this sustainable urban extension to be a demonstrator for zero carbon development.

- 5.30 Green Infrastructure:** It is proposed that a comprehensively planned extension where green infrastructure forms an integral part for the benefit of new and existing residents. In particular we would extend the Green Wedge area northwards from the city into the development area and maintain the Green Wedge between Thurmaston and Syston. The Green Wedges provide a link to Hamilton Country Park to the south and Watermead Park to the west. We are also proposing a new country or district park east of the development to provide formal access to the Countryside north east of the city. The existing and new green infrastructure, also including parks, sports areas and children's play areas, will be linked together to form a network of open spaces.
- 5.31 Renewable and low Carbon Energy Generation:** A Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Feasibility Study has been conducted for Charnwood and identified area to East of Thurmaston as an appropriate location for micro-wind energy generation and is located close to locations that would be suitable for large-scale wind energy generation. Wet biomass and dry biomass are also two forms of low carbon energy generation with potential in this location. The scale of development also indicates that Combined Heat and Power is a viable option for meeting the energy requirements of the Sustainable Urban Extension. The scale of development and opportunities for different forms of renewable and low carbon energy generation indicate an opportunity for the urban extension at East of Thurmaston to be zero carbon in advance of national requirements in The Building Regulations.
- 5.32 Gypsy, Traveller & Showpeople Accommodation:** It is proposed that this sustainable urban extension will include sites for gypsies, travellers and showpeople to contribute towards the identified need in this borough. Provision should be made for a permanent site (between 5 and 10 pitches) and a transit site for gypsies and travellers (between 5 and 10 pitches) and a permanent site for showpeople (sufficient for up to 5 families). It is likely that the site for showpeople will be located adjacent to employment uses as a consequence of the need to store and test fairground equipment.

Question 5.5

Is there anything else that we should consider in planning for this sustainable urban extension?

Question 5.6

Any other comments?



North Charnwood

5.33 North Charnwood is primarily influenced by the urban towns of Loughborough and Shepshed. The majority of residents look to these towns for work, leisure and shopping. The Service Centres of Barrow Upon Soar, Quorn, Mountsorrel and Sileby provide services to the smaller settlements in the Soar Valley, Charnwood Forest and the Wolds. This section will identify the key implications of the overall strategy for this part of Charnwood.

New Housing and Employment Development

5.34 As outlined above the emerging Regional Plan requires that provision is made for at least 19,300 homes over the period 2001-2026. It states that outside the Principal Urban Area of Leicester homes should be mainly provided at Loughborough, including sustainable urban extensions as necessary.

5.35 As is the case in the south Charnwood, there is little opportunity to develop previously developed land within Loughborough, Shepshed or the other Service Centres in north Charnwood. The Council consider the most sustainable way of providing the level of new homes required is to comprehensively plan a sustainable urban extension adjoining the Sub-Regional Centre, it is therefore proposed that around 3,500 homes and 20 hectares of employment are planned on land west of Loughborough and north of Garendon Historic Park and Gardens. This approach will help strengthen the role of Loughborough and Shepshed as mutually supportive urban systems and as the largest Sub-Regional Centre at the centre of the Three Cities Sub-Region.

5.36 For new residents of the sustainable urban extension the Council are proposing a development which will include a mix of uses including affordable housing and high quality employment. New employment areas would be close to and well-connected to new homes, which gives people the opportunity to choose to live close to where they work. Due to the size of the development proposed, this urban extension will be able to provide a range of supporting facilities, including a local shopping centre, recreational facilities, schools and possible health facilities. The aim would be to create a community where people can walk and cycle to key facilities and use public transport to access to town centres of Loughborough and Shepshed.

5.37 The size of the development also provides an opportunity for existing residents. It would be a large enough development to bring significant benefits to the existing residents and businesses in west Loughborough and Shepshed. The sustainable urban extension could help to regenerate these communities by providing new employment opportunities and community facilities and providing access to green infrastructure.

5.38 This scale of development could be accommodated within the landscape without compromising the settlement identity of Shepshed and Hathern. It would provide homes well-related to the towns where the majority of people in north Charnwood work and where residents can benefit from the hospital, shops, restaurants, swimming pool and leisure centre in the town centres, the existing good public transport links and easy access to Garendon Historic Park and Gardens

and Charnwood Forest. It would also provide an opportunity to provide improvements for existing residents and is well related to the priority neighbourhood within north Loughborough. More details about the proposed sustainable urban extension are set out below.

- 5.39** In addition to this, the Council propose to allocate further homes and jobs on smaller sites within and adjoining the Sub-Regional Centre and Service Centres to make the most of the opportunity to locate new homes and businesses where they have access good public transport links and a range of services and facilities. It may not be appropriate to locate development in all of the Service Centres and the selection of sites will be informed by evidence about the capacity of settlements and the need for development to meet local needs. This will include an analysis of the role of different settlements and their relationship with other settlements within their housing sub-markets.

Student Housing

- 5.40** Future purpose built student housing will be acceptable at Loughborough University campus and on sites within the Town Centre identified by the Site Allocations Development Plan Document. Town centre sites will form part of mixed use development with active frontages that provide year-round activity that contribute to the vitality and viability of the town centre. Student housing is considered in more detail in the Loughborough University section in Chapter 4.

Retail

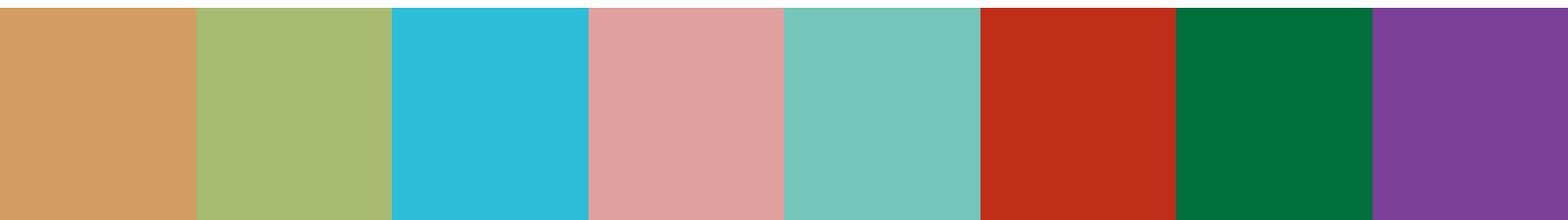
- 5.41** Future shopping provision will be focused in Loughborough Town Centre to strengthen it as a sub-regional centre and to maintain its position in relation to the three cities of Derby, Nottingham and Leicester. In the short term up to 2011, there is a modest requirement for new comparison floorspace across the whole borough which can be met by through the letting of currently vacant units within the town centre. Up to 2016 new comparison floorspace will be required and it is proposed to focus this on the opportunity sites in the Loughborough Town Centre Masterplan. Beyond 2016 the Allocations Development Plan document will consider changes to Loughborough's Core Area in order to accommodate future retail floor space.
- 5.42** Evidence suggests that within Charnwood there are opportunities to enhance the town centre by the addition of new commercial leisure uses such as bowling alleys, cinemas and hotels there is also scope to increase the proportion of food and drink outlets . The Council believes that a greater diversity of uses within the town centre may be acceptable provided the vitality and viability is not adversely affected.
- 5.43** Loughborough town centre will be supported by a series of District Centres and Local Centres, which in north Charnwood are located at:



District and Local Centres in North Charnwood

District Centres	Local Centres
Barrow Upon Soar	Quorn
Sileby	Market Place, Mountsorrel
Shelthorpe, Loughborough	Leicester Road, Mountsorrel
Gorse Covert, Loughborough	Swan Street, Sileby
Shepshed	Adj. 47 Rothley Road, Mountsorrel
	Adj. 105 Rothley Road, Mountsorrel
	Belton Road, Loughborough
	Heathcote Drive, Sileby
	Park Road, Loughborough
	Thorpe Road/McCarthy Road, Shepshed
	Anson Road, Shepshed
	Charnwood Road, Shepshed
	Corner of Charnwood Road/Springfield Road Shepshed
	Sharpley Road, Loughborough
	Browning Road, Loughborough
Derwent Drive, Loughborough	
Melton Road, Barrow Upon Soar	

5.44 Where it is needed to support vitality and viability, appropriate new retail floorspace, office space, residential development and commercial leisure development will be encouraged within District Centres in keeping with their role and function within the hierarchy. The particular needs in Shepshed and Sileby will be supported to help improve their retail offer and vitality and viability.



- 5.45** The network of Local Centres will be supported to ensure their continued vitality and viability, ensuring the needs of communities across Charnwood are catered for.

Regeneration

- 5.46** The Council proposes to support development which helps with the regeneration of those areas of relatively higher need, particularly in parts of Loughborough, Shepshed and Mountsorrel. In particular the Council proposes to safeguard existing employment, services and facilities and support opportunities for new provision.
- 5.47** There is a particular need to work with partners in Shepshed. The Council will consider preparing an Area Action Plan for Shepshed. This would seek to tackle the structural problems in the settlement including, the poor public realm, parking problems, poor vitality and viability of the district centre, the shortage of local jobs, out migration of younger families, low educational attainment, crime and antisocial behaviour.
- 5.48** The East Loughborough Priority Neighbourhood lies adjacent to the Town Centre, railway station, has significant employment and a high black and minority ethnic population. However there are parts of some wards that suffer from low income and employment, health and disability, low education and skill levels, poor quality living environment and high crime rates. Whilst there are projects in place to renew this part of the town (such as the Eastern Gateway and Town Centre Master Plan), these efforts need to be matched with focused action to increase the access of the community to these opportunities. As such, the Council will consider preparing an Area Action Plan to coordinate the existing and proposed regeneration projects in East Loughborough and to act as a further catalyst to address deprivation in the area.
- 5.49** The West Loughborough Priority Neighbourhood also has areas that are affected by low education attainment, skill levels and employment levels. There is also a high proportion of students living in the area which skew the age profile particularly in term time. There are also particular issues around the deprivation of children, crime and fear of crime and social exclusion. The proposal to develop land to the west of Loughborough for a sustainable urban extension provides an opportunity for communities in west Loughborough to access Garendon Historic Park and Gardens and other green infrastructure networks that will assist with health and well-being. The provision of new employment nearby and at the Science Park provides job opportunities but this will need to be supported by partner's initiatives to raise skill levels and educational attainment in the area.
- 5.50** The Mountsorrel Priority Neighbourhood has a high proportion of population under the age of 15 which places particular stress on local youth services. Other issues in the priority neighbourhood include low educational attainment and low income levels. A high proportion of local people commute elsewhere for jobs as a result of the restructuring of the local employment base. The Council will seek to identify new sites for local employment in the Site Allocation Development Plan Document and work with its partners and other agencies to develop approaches to address deprivation.



5.51 Specific regeneration objectives in north Charnwood include:

- To maintain the vitality and viability of Loughborough town centre in the face of increasing competition from the three cities of Derby, Leicester and Nottingham;
- To support the early delivery of the Town Centre Masterplan and completion of the Inner Relief Road;
- To encourage the regeneration of East Loughborough by building upon both private and public sector mixed use investment. The Loughborough Eastern Gateway, Windmill Road and Greater Great Central Railway schemes will be linked by an overarching vision and planning framework agreed with local people to drive this high priority regeneration initiative;
- To cement the reputation of Loughborough as a centre for advanced and clean environmental technology: building upon the reputation of the University; the major employers; and Energy Technology Institute;
- To support the University in its role as an international leader in sport, bioscience and environmental sciences; the successful implementation of the Science Park is seen as key to the town's future;
- To work with partners and other agencies to address particular issues of deprivation in the West and East Loughborough and Mountsorrel Priority Neighbourhoods;
- To work with partners and the local community to prepare a masterplan for the west of Loughborough sustainable urban extension to ensure the provision of new infrastructure such as green spaces, affordable housing, recreational land and new roads contribute to the wider regeneration of the existing community as well as serve the needs of the new residents and businesses; and
- To consider the preparation of Area Action Plans for Shepshed and East Loughborough

Green Infrastructure

5.52 North Charnwood has a range of green infrastructure assets already, with the northern entrances to Charnwood Forest Regional Park and the River corridor of the Soar. There are also a number of local wildlife sites and parks in between these larger formal open spaces. Generally speaking biodiversity tends to be stronger in the West than the East.

5.53 Residents living in the north of Charnwood do not have access to large recreational spaces. There are also deficiencies in smaller scale open space provision which need to be addressed to ensure there is a comprehensive network of green space. In North Charnwood areas that have been identified as being deficient in local park provision include parts of Shepshed, north and south Loughborough, Quorn, Barrow upon soar, Mountsorrel and Sileby. Thurmaston Hathern, Loughborough, Mountsorrel and Shepshed have been identified as lacking provision of outdoor play areas.

5.54 Development of the sustainable urban extension provides the opportunity to strengthen linkages in the network of wildlife sites. Particularly within Charnwood Forest, but also to ensure the East of the Borough is better connected with the surrounding areas of biodiversity. The Charnwood Forest Regional Park is a key opportunity. New developments within or just

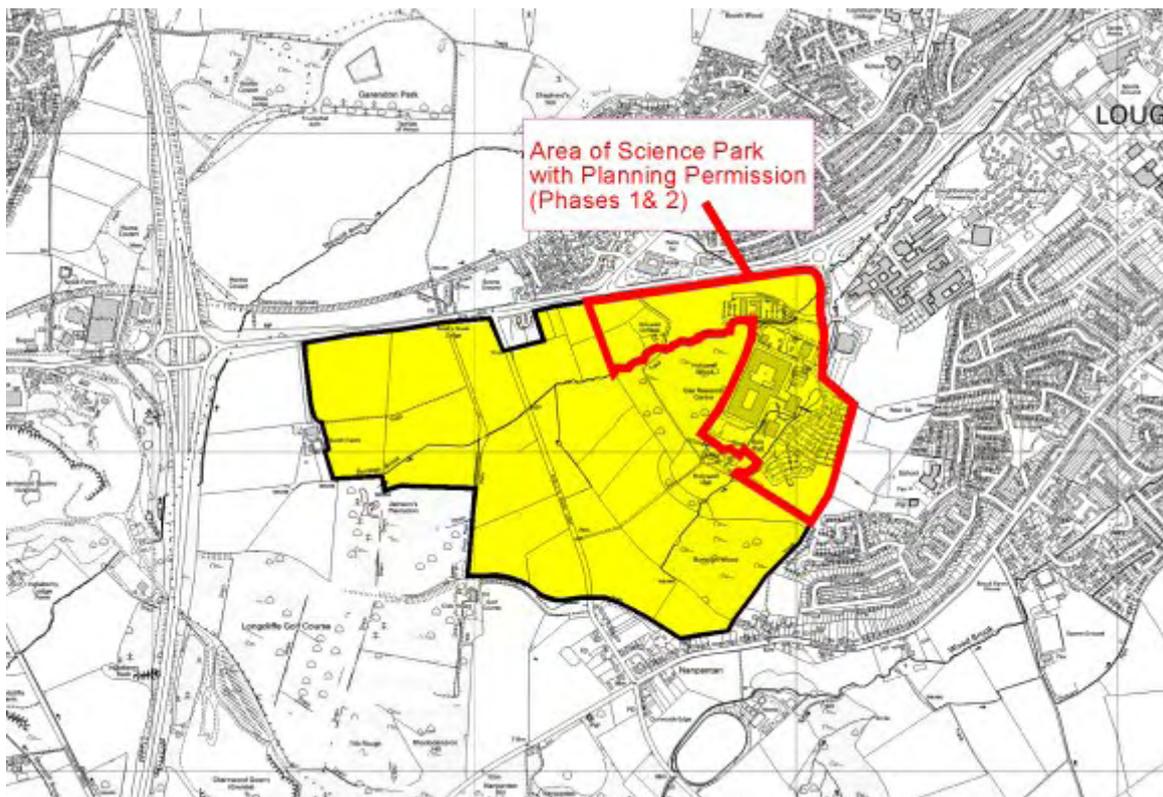
outside the boundary of the Regional Park will act as gateways to the Park, with their layout, built design, landscape treatment, access arrangements, and Green Infrastructure provision reflecting local landscape and settlement character and integrating with the wider Regional Park.

- 5.55** The Green Wedges will be retained within this part of the Borough. These are green spaces which penetrate the urban area and provide access to open spaces for residents and employees to enjoy. In association with the preferred direction for growth, areas of green wedge will be defined in the Core Strategy between Loughborough and adjoining the settlements of Shepshed and Hathern. The existing areas of green wedge between Loughborough and Quorn will be safeguarded unless an identified local need for development justifies a review of these boundaries.

Science Park

- 5.56** It is proposed that the existing 23 hectare Science Park is extended to form a strategic level science park allocation of up to 50 hectares (net) to the west of Loughborough University. 27 hectares of land will be specifically for uses that are demonstrably connected with the university. The balance of the allocation would provide for research and development uses associated with the university or other research facilities elsewhere in the Borough.

Proposed Science Park



- 5.57** The proposed Science Park would complement the urban extension west of Loughborough which specifically benefits from its location close by the existing Science Park and Loughborough University. This development is expected to realise 50 hectares of developable employment land in total. The site however will be significantly larger than 50 hectares in order to accommodate approximately 50% of the site will be landscaped to create a parkland setting including woodland planting appropriate to the site's location within and adjoining the National Forest, excluding Holywell and Burleigh Wood and those areas developed before December 2005. Development of the site would provide an opportunity to consider a flood attenuation scheme on the upper tributaries of the Burleigh Brook, which would help relieve flooding downstream in the town centre.

Question 5.7

Do you have any comments on the proposals for North Charnwood?

Sustainable Urban Extension to Loughborough

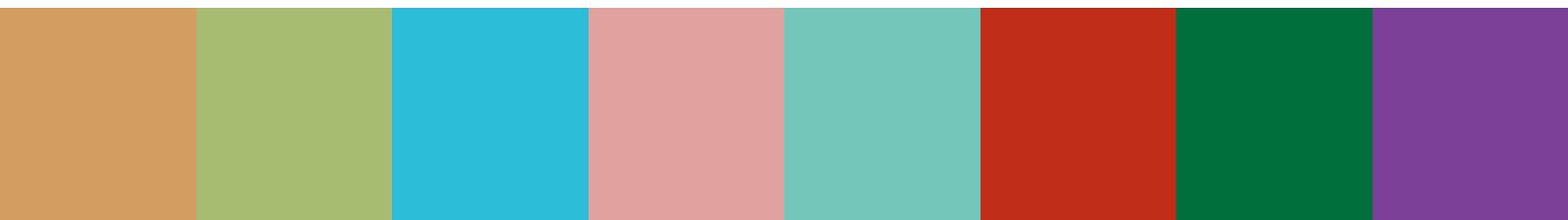
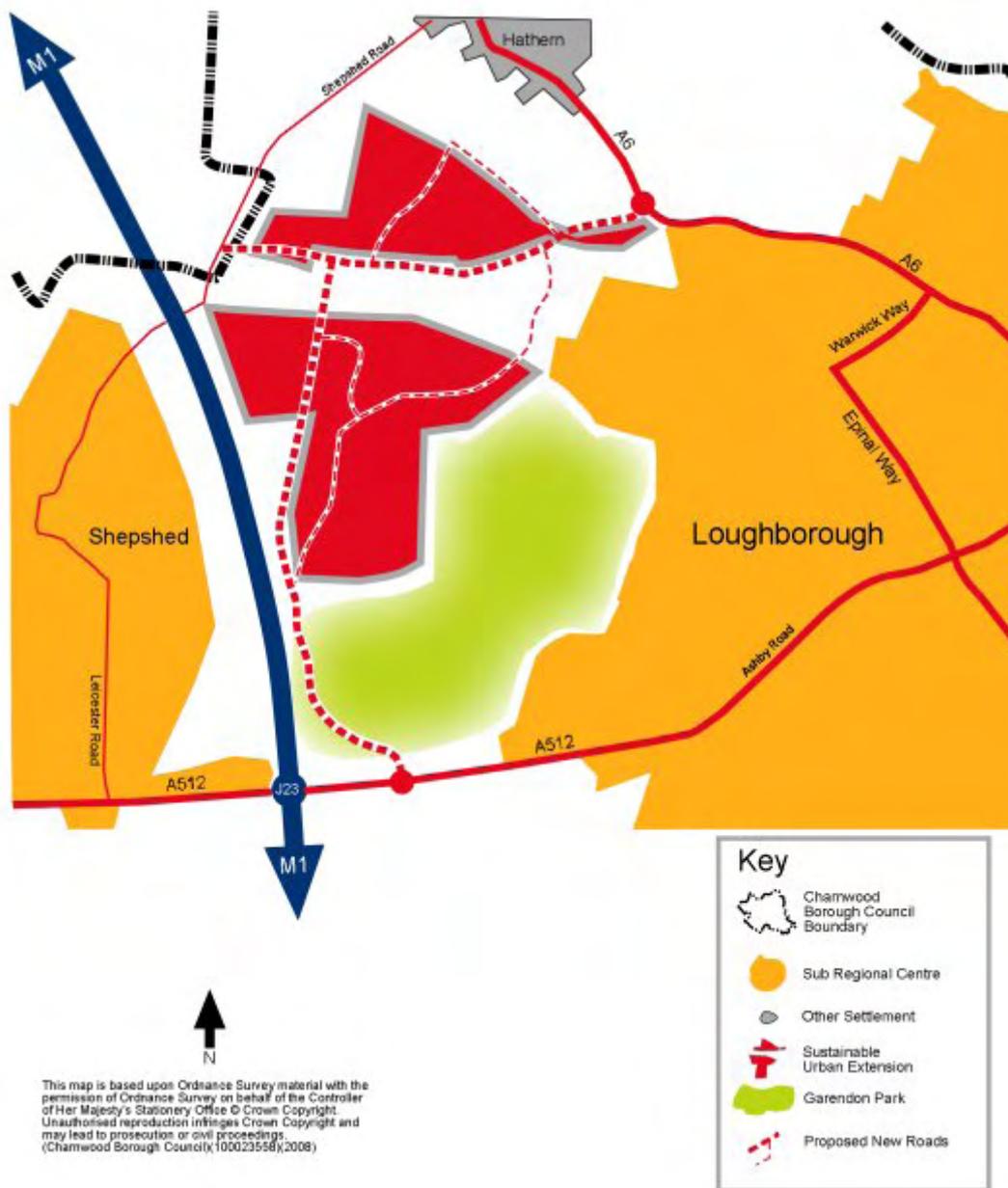
5.58 It is proposed that a large sustainable urban extension to Loughborough be delivered on land west of Loughborough and north of Garendon Historic Park and Gardens as shown on the map below. It is proposed that this sustainable urban extension will include the following:

What is proposed that a sustainable urban extension in this area will include.

- About 3,500 new homes
- 20 hectares of employment
- Affordable housing
- 2 new Primary Schools
- Public Access to Garendon Historic Park and Gardens
- Zero Carbon Development
- A new centre with shops and facilities
- Possible flood reduction scheme
- Sites for Gypsies, Travellers and Showpeople
- A comprehensive package of transport measures (see paragraph 5.64)



Proposed Sustainable Urban Extension to Loughborough



- 5.59 New Local Centre:** It is proposed that the sustainable urban extension will provide a new local centre containing a medium sized food store, as well as other commercial community facilities to serve the needs of the new community and surrounding areas of north Loughborough and Shepshed.
- 5.60 New Schools:** Initial discussions with Leicestershire County Council suggest that there will be a need for two medium primary schools west of Loughborough. There is existing capacity within secondary schools within Loughborough and Shepshed so there will be no requirement for a new secondary school.
- 5.61 Affordable Housing:** It is proposed that the sustainable urban extension includes a mix of uses including affordable housing. This will be a mixture of social rented accommodation and intermediate housing where residents can buy a proportion of a property and rest the other proportion from a Housing Association or a similar organisation.
- 5.62 Employment:** It is proposed that 20 hectares of strategic employment land to complement the scale of housing growth and to benefit existing residents in Loughborough and Shepshed. In view of the specific role of the science park, this site will provide an alternative location for high quality offices, industrial and small-scale warehousing that will add value to Loughborough's employment offer. The provision of serviced employment sites should be made in advance of housing development to provide the opportunity for employment before housing development commences.
- 5.63 Transport:** This growth option located on the edge of Loughborough between the town and Shepshed is well placed to reach a range of key local destinations located nearby. A comprehensive package of significant improvements to transport infrastructure will be needed to ensure high quality access by bus, cycling and walking to both Loughborough town centre where main shopping, leisure and other services and facilities are located; to Shepshed town centre and to employment areas north of the town, the Science Park, the University, secondary schools and the proposed Park. Park and ride, travel plans and other demand management measures will also be considered. In order to help mitigate the traffic impact of development in this location a new link road will be provided between the A512 and A6 north together with necessary improvements to Junction 23 of the M1 and any other highway and traffic management measures that may be required. Initial costings suggest a suitable package of measures could be funded by this growth option.
- 5.64 Green Infrastructure:** It is proposed that the urban extension will include provision for comprehensively planned green infrastructure to provide a network of multi-functional green spaces including parks and recreation areas, informal areas, natural and semi-natural habitats and green corridors. Green infrastructure will be an integral part of the development, and development west of Loughborough would secure the provision of a new country park to meet identified deficit in open space in the north of Charnwood. This park would provide full public access to Garendon Historic Park and Gardens and the retention and restoration of the park, and the listed buildings within it, for the benefit of new and existing residents. There will also be improved links to existing green infrastructure, such as Charnwood Forest.



- 5.65 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Generation:** A Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Feasibility Study has been conducted for Charnwood and identified West of Loughborough as an appropriate location for micro-wind energy generation and is close to significant areas of woodland to the West of the Borough. Wet biomass and dry biomass are also two forms of low carbon energy generation with potential in this location. The scale of development also indicates that Combined Heat and Power is a viable option for meeting the energy requirements of the Sustainable Urban Extension. The scale of development and opportunities for different forms of renewable and low carbon energy generation indicate an opportunity for the urban extension at West of Loughborough to be zero carbon in advance of national requirements in The Building Regulations.
- 5.66 Gypsy, Traveller & Showpeople Accommodation:** It is proposed that this sustainable urban extension will include sites for gypsies, travellers and showpeople to contribute towards the identified need in this borough. Provision should be made for a permanent site (between 5 and 10 pitches) and a transit site for gypsies and travellers (between 5 and 10 pitches) and a permanent site for showpeople (sufficient for up to 5 families). It is likely that the site for showpeople will be located adjacent to employment uses as a consequence of the need to store and test fairground equipment.

Question 5.8

Is there anything else that we should consider in planning for this sustainable urban extension?

Question 5.9

Any other comments?

Appendix A: Appraisal of Alternative Directions for Growth

Introduction

This appendix sets out the alternative broad directions for growth that the Council has considered for sustainable urban extensions to the Principal Urban Area of Leicester and to the Sub-Regional Centre of Loughborough and Shepshed. It provides an assessment of the sustainability of each direction for growth, a summary of the contribution each direction for growth could make to an overall strategy for the Borough's future development and the reasons for their inclusion or otherwise in the proposed strategy presented in this consultation document.

Sustainability Appraisal

The assessment of the alternative directions for growth below is based on the Sustainability Appraisal, evidence base studies and feedback received from stakeholders, both from external statutory bodies and local interest groups and internal officers from across the council's service areas.

The information in this appendix is drawn from the main Sustainability Appraisal report which accompanies this report. The sustainability framework consists of 27 sustainability criteria and detailed appraisal of proposals. This appendix seeks to translate these into key advantages and disadvantages. The full Sustainability Appraisal can be viewed online by following the links from http://www.charnwood.gov.uk/charnwood_2026.

Transport Evidence Base

This appendix also includes the conclusions of the 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF' study, commissioned by the Borough Council. This assessment analysed the changes to the levels of congestion created as a result of the development and the application of a package of mitigation measures. This allowed a direct link to be established between the impact of the development and how well the mitigation to be provided assists in reducing the impact of the development specifically. Congestion is seen as a more appropriate measure than traffic increase, because the latter fails to take into account of spatial variations of spare (highway) capacity across the borough.

The study first investigated what happens if development is added to the existing network with no mitigation. It then considered the effect of a number of mitigation measures: Park and Ride, bus enhancements and smarter choices e.g. measures that change people's behaviour such as travel plans. The study then considered the effect of highways improvements.

The results show that options close to an existing urban area tend to induce lower levels of congestion compared to development options that are located further away from the present urban areas. This is due to:

- Interaction with existing adjacent facilities,
- The presence of existing bus, cycle and pedestrian facilities,
- Reduced travel distances to existing facilities, and
- A greater number of routing options to/from the site.

The study focused on the Sub-Regional Centre direction for growth options. It found the main impact of options in the south of the Borough would be on Leicester and these would require a further separate assessment. Their Study suggests that over the period to 2026 general traffic levels will increase and that none of the north Charnwood options are fully mitigated with the combination of highway and non car mode mitigation measures (such as Park and Ride, bus enhancements and travel plans) tested.

Directions for Growth

Five alternatives directions for growth have been considered adjoining the Principal Urban Area. Within Charnwood there are a number of areas where development could adjoin the Principal Urban Area. Firstly there is land adjoining Birstall or Thurmaston, settlements within Charnwood that form part of the Principal Urban Area of Leicester. Secondly there is land adjoining Hamilton and Glenfield, communities outside Charnwood's boundary which form part of the Principal Urban Area. Possible directions for growth have been identified in the area north of Glenfield, north of Birstall and east of Thurmaston. Due to the amount of land in the area east of Thurmaston, three different options have been considered, focusing development east of Thurmaston and north of Hamilton, east of Thurmaston and south of Syston or a combination of these two options spreading development both north and south from the east of Thurmaston.

Six possible directions for growth have also been considered for the Sub-Regional Centre of Loughborough and Shepshed. These relate to the west, south west, south and east of Loughborough and west of Shepshed. The area on and around Wymeswold Airfield has also been appraised as it has been raised by a number of respondents to Core Strategy consultations as a suitable site for development as the airfield is a previously developed site.

Please Note: This appendix includes an illustrative map outlining an area of land within each direction for growth appraised. In order to appraise all the options fairly, the maps include an amount of land required to accommodate a 4,875 dwelling urban extension, supporting employment and other infrastructure (such as shops, landscaping and schools). This baseline assessment reflects the requirement in the Draft Regional Plan published in 2006. Where this scale of development could not be accommodated within the general growth area, the scale of development that could reasonably be accommodated was mapped and appraised. The areas shown for each option take account of nationally designated constraints such as Sites of Scientific Interest (SSSI) and flood risk but are not constrained by land ownership. They do not necessarily reflect proposals submitted to the Council by landowners and developers.

The baseline assessments provide a means to appraise the options on an equitable basis to enable a balanced view to be taken of the preferred directions for growth. A more detailed review of the appropriate form and scale of sustainable urban extensions for the two preferred growth areas is shown in the main part of this document although it is recognised that further work will need to be undertaken before they can be taken further forward.



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR DIRECTIONS FOR GROWTH TO THE PRINCIPAL URBAN AREA OF LEICESTER

Alternative Location A: East of Thurmaston/North of Hamilton

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 4,875 dwellings (NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option A: East of Thurmaston / North of Hamilton



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

The three options east of Thurmaston are the best performing of all of the options for south Charnwood, across the range of sustainability criteria. All three options are close to the South Charnwood priority neighbourhood which includes some of the most deprived households in Leicestershire. The options around Thurmaston therefore offer the greatest potential to bring about the regeneration of Thurmaston and for new infrastructure, employment, facilities and affordable housing to benefit deprived households. These options are also the least critical in relation to their impact on species, have the least impact on settlement identity impact and perform well in terms of their access to higher order services, access to the countryside and attractiveness to investors. All the Thurmaston options would, like all the options, site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would need to cross flood risk areas and if so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25. All the Thurmaston options could affect the capacity of the Thurmaston Dyke which runs under the railway causing a potential drainage problem which would need to be overcome.

This option is differentiated from other options around Thurmaston because it has less impact on settlement identity as it would maintain a Green Wedge between Thurmaston and System and like all

the Thurmaston options can be accommodated within the landscape without compromising the settlement identity of Barkby and Barkby Thorpe. This option would also be better related to the city and its services and facilities. It would therefore have the most potential to minimise the need to travel by car, along with the option which spread development from south of Syston to north Hamilton, as it could utilise current city bus routes into the city, which could be extended.

Whilst this location includes land within the bowl of the landscape east of Thurmaston it also extends south to the ridge at Hamilton which would have a localised impact on the landscape effecting Barkby and Barkby Thorpe. This means it would have more landscape impact than the east of Thurmaston/south of Syston option, which also sits within the bowl of the landscape and includes the flatter land south of Syston, but less impact than the other South Charnwood options. This option would also have a greater impact on the historic environment, due to its proximity to the deserted mediaeval village of Hamilton.

Following appraisal of all the options for South Charnwood and consideration of the deliverability, this option has been identified as the most sustainable direction for growth for a Sustainable Urban Extension to the Principal Urban Area of Leicester. The area of search proposed in Chapter 5 does not include the land east of Hamilton, which was appraised as part of this option (the southern most element of the broad location considered). It was concluded that development in this location would be more related to Hamilton, relying on existing facilities and services including the primary and secondary schools, shops and other community facilities. It is therefore unlikely to form an integral part of a Sustainable Urban Extension, which would have a mix of uses and its own communal focus for services and facilities. It is therefore more appropriate to assess this land against other potential smaller scale urban extensions to Leicester, in the Site Allocation Development Plan Document.

Transport Assessment Findings

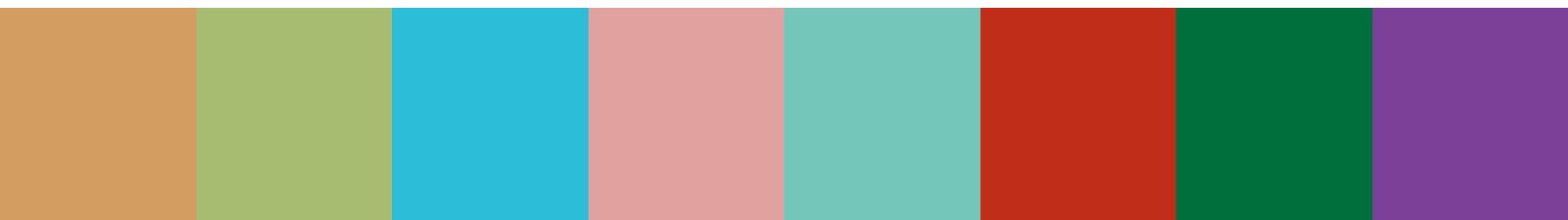
The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council when considering the development options north of Leicester found that the potential residents of the developments would tend to use Leicester as their main service centre for trips outside the development. As the consultant's model only covered Charnwood the developments need to be tested further in terms of their impact on the Leicester City area.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>The options around Thurmaston are the least critical in relation to their impact on species, although there could be some impact on habitat connectivity.</p> <p>This option would include land within the bowl in the landscape east of Thurmaston, which would limit views from the nearby villages. However it also includes the land on top of the ridge at Hamilton, which would be visible, although this</p>	<p>This is the worst option in terms of potential impact on the historic environment due to its location close to the deserted mediaeval village at Hamilton.</p> <p>The Thurmaston options could affect the capacity of the Thurmaston Dyke which runs under the railway causing a potential drainage problem. Access routes will need to cross land at risk of flooding so may need to be assessed against</p>



Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>would be a localised impact. This option would have the least impact on settlement identity.</p> <p>This option is primarily grade III agricultural land, with very limited grade II land. This and the option north of Glenfield would have a similar impact on soil resources as all the Thurmaston options. This is less impact than the north of Birstall options and more impact than the north of Glenfield option.</p> <p>The Thurmaston options offer the greatest potential for integrated development with the existing community, and for new infrastructure, facilities and affordable housing, to benefit deprived households.</p> <p>This option would utilise current city bus routes which could be extended. A package of transport improvements could help air quality issues in Syston.</p> <p>Good access to the countryside, Watermead Country Park and leisure facilities and has the potential to improve access for whole community.</p> <p>This option would have good access to employment, healthcare, retail provision and a range of cultural, media and sport activities in the city centre, Thurmaston and Hamilton.</p> <p>The options around Thurmaston could improve the skills and employability of deprived households.</p> <p>This option is potentially attractive to investors due to its proximity to Leicester, access to the strategic road network, existing employment areas in Thurmaston and an attractive landscaped setting.</p>	<p>Planning Policy Statement 25.</p>



Alternative Option B: East of Thurmaston/South of Syston

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 4,875 dwellings (NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option B: East of Thurmaston/South of Syston



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

The three options east of Thurmaston are the best performing of all of the options for south Charnwood, across the range of sustainability criteria. All three options are close to the South Charnwood priority neighbourhood which includes some of the most deprived households in Leicestershire. The options around Thurmaston therefore offer the greatest potential to bring about the regeneration of Thurmaston and for new infrastructure, employment, facilities and affordable housing to benefit deprived households. These options are also the least critical in relation to their impact on species, have the least impact on settlement identity impact and perform well in terms of their access to higher order services, access to the countryside and attractiveness to investors. All the Thurmaston options would, like all the options, site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would need to cross flood risk areas and if so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25. All the Thurmaston options could affect the capacity of the Thurmaston Dyke which runs under the railway causing a potential drainage problem which would need to be overcome.

This option is differentiated from other options around Thurmaston because it has the least impact on the landscape as it is located within the bowl of the landscape east of Thurmaston and includes the flatter land south of Syston. This option would also have a less impact on the deserted mediaeval village of Hamilton than the other east of Thurmaston options.



This option would however have a greater impact on settlement identity, removing the Green Wedge between Thurmaston and Syston. It would further connect Syston to Thurmaston, a settlement which is not currently part of the Principal Urban Area of Leicester. This option would further increase the northern extent of the Principal Urban Area and be relatively further away from the higher order services and facilities in Leicester than some other options. This option would be less well related to the city and therefore has less potential to minimise the need to travel by car due to the distance from higher order services available in the city and distance from current city bus routes.

This location was not the preferred option as it is not as well related to the city and its employment, facilities and services as the east of Thurmaston and north of Hamilton option. It would also have a significant impact on the settlement identity of Syston.

Transport Assessment Findings

The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council when considering the development options north of Leicester found that the potential residents of the developments would tend to use Leicester as their main service centre for trips outside the development. As the consultant's model only covered Charnwood the developments need to be tested further in terms of their impact on the Leicester City area.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>The Thurmaston options would have the least impact on species, although there could be some impact on habitat connectivity.</p>	<p>More adverse impact on settlement identity than the other Thurmaston options. It would join Syston and Thurmaston.</p>
<p>This option would have the least landscape impact as it includes land within the bowl in the landscape east of Thurmaston and the flatter land south of Syston, limiting views from the nearby villages.</p>	<p>Some impact on the historic environment due to its location close to the deserted mediaeval village at Hamilton.</p>
<p>The Thurmaston options offer the greatest potential for integrated development with the existing community, and for new infrastructure, facilities and affordable housing, to benefit deprived households.</p>	<p>Due to its distance, a lack of current bus routes and infrequent rail services, has the least access by non-car modes to services in Leicester.</p>
<p>Package of transport improvements could help air quality issues in Syston.</p>	<p>This option would cover predominantly grade III and some grade II agricultural land impacting on these soil resources.</p>
<p>Good access to the countryside, Watermead Country Park and leisure facilities and has the potential to improve access for whole community.</p>	<p>The Thurmaston options could affect the capacity of the Thurmaston Dyke which runs under the railway causing a potential drainage problem. Access routes will need to cross land at risk of flooding so may need to be assessed against Planning Policy Statement 25.</p>

Appendix A: Appraisal of Alternative Directions for Growth

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>The options around Thurmaston could improve the skills and employability of deprived households.</p> <p>This option is potentially attractive to investors with proximity to Leicester, access to the strategic road network, existing employment areas in Thurmaston and an attractive landscaped setting.</p>	<p>There is good access to Syston and Thurmaston services and facilities but would be further away from employment, healthcare, retail provision and a range of cultural, media and sport activities in the city centre.</p>



Alternative Option C: East of Thurmaston/South of Syston/North of Hamilton

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 4,875 dwellings (*NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation*)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option C: East of Thurmaston/South of Syston/North of Hamilton



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

The three options east of Thurmaston are the best performing of all of the options for south Charnwood, across the range of sustainability criteria. All three options are close to the South Charnwood priority neighbourhood which includes some of the most deprived households in Leicestershire. The options around Thurmaston therefore offer the greatest potential to bring about the regeneration of Thurmaston and for new infrastructure, employment, facilities and affordable housing to benefit deprived households. These options are also the least critical in relation to their impact on species, have the least impact on settlement identity impact and perform well in terms of their access to higher order services, access to the countryside and attractiveness to investors. All the Thurmaston options would, like all the options, site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would need to cross flood risk areas and if so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25. All the Thurmaston options could affect the capacity of the Thurmaston Dyke which runs under the railway causing a potential drainage problem which would need to be overcome.

This option is differentiated from other options around Thurmaston because it would be better related to the city and its services and facilities than the option east of Thurmaston/south of Syston. It would therefore have better potential to minimise the need to travel by car, along with the preferred location, as it could utilise current city bus routes into the city, which could be extended.

As development would be spread along the edges of Hamilton, Thurmaston and Syston in this option, it would have a significant landscape impact. This impact would be greater than the option east of Thurmaston/south of Syston which is located within the bowl of the landscape east of Thurmaston and includes the flatter land south of Syston. This option would also have a significant impact on the settlement identity of Syston removing the Green Wedge and further connecting the two communities. This would increase the northern extent of the Principal Urban Area. It would create a very spread out development which would make it difficult to create community hubs, with schools, health facilities and shops, that are accessible to existing and new residents in the area. This option would also have an impact on the historic environment, due to its proximity to the deserted mediaeval village of Hamilton.

This location was not the preferred option as parts of the location are not as well related to the city and its employment, facilities and services as the east of Thurmaston and north of Hamilton option. There is also concern that the development would be more spread out making it more difficult to create accessible community hubs. It would also have a significant impact on the settlement identity of Syston.

Transport Assessment Findings

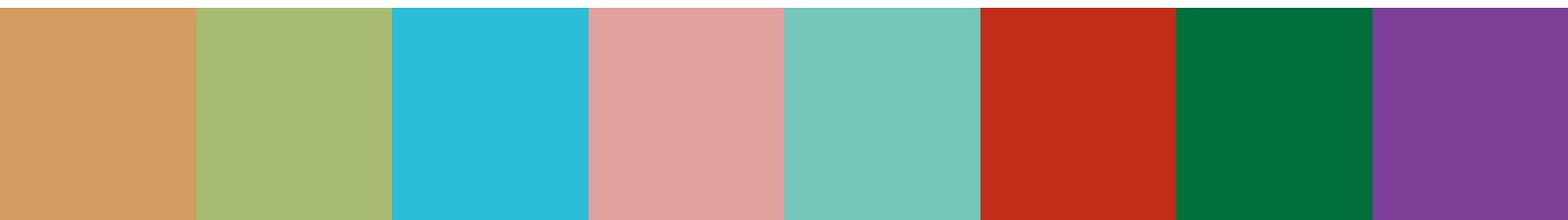
The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council when considering the development options north of Leicester found that the potential residents of the developments would tend to use Leicester as their main service centre for trips outside the development. As the consultant's model only covered Charnwood the developments need to be tested further in terms of their impact on the Leicester City area.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>The Thurmaston options would have the least impact on species, although there could be some impact on habitat connectivity.</p> <p>This option would utilise current bus routes which would need to be extended and improved. It provides a similar opportunity to minimise the need to travel by car as the Thurmaston/Hamilton and Glenfield options.</p> <p>The potential transport infrastructure to support this option could help to alleviate the air quality issues in Syston.</p> <p>This would have less impact on soil resources than the Birstall or Thurmaston/Syston options.</p> <p>The Thurmaston options offer the greatest potential for integrated development with the</p>	<p>The effect of spreading development would mean this option would have a greater landscape impact than the other options around Thurmaston. It would include the land on the prominent ridgeline at Hamilton as well as the land within the bowl in the landscape east of Thurmaston and flatter land south of Syston.</p> <p>There would be a more adverse impact on settlement identity than the east of Thurmaston/north of Hamilton option. It would further join Syston and Thurmaston.</p> <p>Some impact on the historic environment due to its location close to the deserted mediaeval village at Hamilton.</p> <p>The Thurmaston options could affect the capacity of the Thurmaston Dyke which runs under the</p>



Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>existing community, and for new infrastructure, facilities and affordable housing, to benefit deprived households.</p> <p>There is good access to Syston and Thurmaston services and facilities but parts of this area would be further away from employment, healthcare, retail provision and a range of cultural, media and sport activities in the city centre.</p> <p>The options around Thurmaston could improve the skills and employability of deprived households.</p> <p>There is good access to the countryside, Watermead Country Park and leisure facilities and has the potential to improve access for whole community.</p> <p>This option is potentially attractive to investors due to its proximity to Leicester, access to the strategic road network, existing employment areas in Thurmaston and an attractive landscaped setting.</p>	<p>railway causing a potential drainage problem. Access routes will need to cross land at risk of flooding so may need to be assessed against Planning Policy Statement 25.</p>



Alternative Option D: North of Birstall

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 4,000 dwellings (NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option D: North of Birstall



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

This option has the most potential to reduce the need to travel by car as it has access to good quality alternatives including a high frequency bus service and the national cycle route 6. It also has less impact of historic interests than the east of Thurmaston options, which are located in close proximity to the Hamilton deserted mediaeval village. This option has no significant flooding issues and would be attractive to inward investors.

This option is, however, in an elevated position and would have the most significant impact on the landscape of all the options. It would also have a significant impact on the settlement identity of Rothley and the most impact of all the options on protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species. This option and the north of Glenfield option are further away from the most deprived communities, than the east of Thurmaston options, and would not offer the same scope to tackle social exclusion. The provision of new employment, schools and services would not benefit the most deprived communities. This option is also detached from Birstall and Leicester by the A46 and is some distance from the city centre, which means that despite having good public transport links, the access to higher order goods is not as good as it is for other options. It would also have an impact on a significant area of grade II agricultural land and therefore the most impact on soil resources of all the options.

This is not the preferred option as it does not perform as well against the range of sustainability criteria as the locations east of Thurmaston. There is also a constraint of the scale of development that could be accommodated in this location due to the proximity of other settlements. One of the underlying



principals of the preferred approach is to make provision for carefully planned sustainable urban extensions that provide a mix of homes, jobs and community facilities. It is unlikely that a smaller urban extension than proposed would be able to support and deliver the same range of services and facilities.

Transport Assessment Findings

The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council when considering the development options north of Leicester found that the potential residents of the developments would tend to use Leicester as their main service centre for trips outside the development. As the consultant's model only covered Charnwood the developments need to be tested further in terms of their impact on the Leicester City area. However within the model's constraints, north of Birstall may be the best of the edge of Leicester options in terms of transport implications.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>No significant harm to historic or archaeological interests.</p> <p>This option provides the best opportunity to reduce the need to travel by car with good quality access to alternatives in the form of a high frequency Loughborough-Leicester bus service and National Cycle Route 6.</p> <p>This option has no flooding issues as it is located in Flood Zone I and has no access constraints.</p> <p>This option would have frequent bus access to employment, healthcare, retail provision and a range of cultural, media and sport activities in the city centre and Loughborough town centre.</p> <p>This option (like all the options) has good access to the countryside including Watermead Country Park and local leisure centres (Soar Valley Leisure Centre) and to Leicester City Centre.</p> <p>This option has good access to the strategic road network and some public transport services make it attractive for investors and innovative companies.</p>	<p>This option would have the most impact on protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species, which in this area are associated with the woodland landscape along the Rothley Brook and across the area;</p> <p>This option would extend the Leicester urban area across the A46 and along the Soar Valley in an elevated position impacting on landscape and townscape character. It would have the most impact on settlement identity reducing the separation from Rothley.</p> <p>This option is predominately grade II agricultural land and would have the most impact on soil resources.</p> <p>Due to the distance from Loughborough and Leicester this is the worst option for access to higher order services.</p> <p>It would not provide new infrastructure, facilities and affordable housing where it is most needed.</p> <p>It does not offer an opportunity to remedy deficiencies in open space provision and is unlikely to reduce health inequalities, along with the</p>

Appendix A: Appraisal of Alternative Directions for Growth

Advantages	Disadvantages
	<p>Glenfield option, but may increase physical activity.</p> <p>The lack of close proximity to deprived communities means this and the north of Glenfield options have the less potential to help to improve the skills and employability of deprived households than the other options;</p>



Alternative Option E: North of Glenfield/South of Anstey

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 2,462 dwellings (*NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation*)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option E: North of Glenfield / South of Anstey



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

This option, along with the east of Thurmaston and north of Hamilton option, has good access to employment and higher order services in the city. It also has good access to the shopping and leisure activities at Beaumont Leys. It would have the least impact on soil resources and less impact on historic interests than the east of Thurmaston options, which are located in close proximity to the Hamilton deserted mediaeval village. This option would be attractive to inward investors.

This option, like the option north of Birstall, is further away from the most deprived communities than the east of Thurmaston options and would not offer the same scope to tackle social exclusion. The provision of new employment, schools and services would not benefit the most deprived communities. It also has the least potential to reduce the need to travel by car due to the easy access to the M1, A46 and A6. This option is also located in the sensitive landscape separating Anstey from Leicester. Whilst the north of Birstall option has the most impact on biodiversity, this option could also disrupt biodiversity networks and isolate protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species and therefore would have more impact on biodiversity than the east of Thurmaston options. This option would like all the options site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would potentially need to cross flood risk areas and if so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25.

This is not the preferred option as it does not perform as well against the range of sustainability criteria as the locations east of Thurmaston. There is also a constraint on the scale of development that could be accommodated in this location due to the proximity of Anstey and Charnwood Forest. One of the underlying principals of the preferred approach is to make provision for carefully planned sustainable urban extensions that provide a mix of homes, jobs and community facilities. An urban extension of this smaller scale would not be able to support the range of services and facilities that are required to deliver a sustainable urban extension.

Transport Assessment Findings

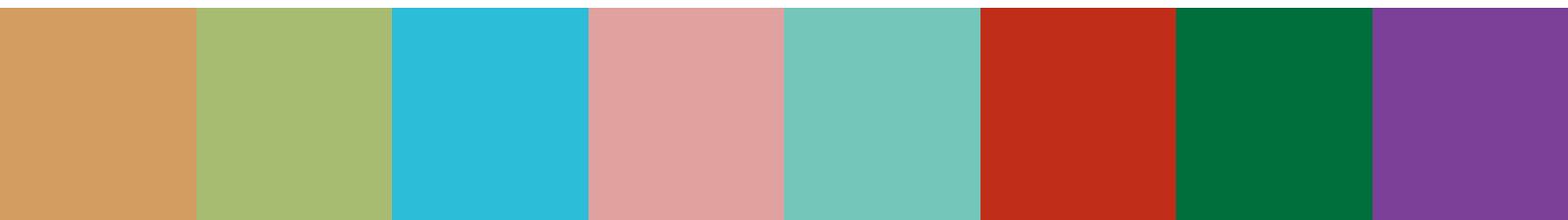
The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council when considering the development options north of Leicester found that the potential residents of the developments would tend to use Leicester as their main service centre for trips outside the development. As the consultant's model only covered Charnwood the developments need to be tested further in terms of their impact on the Leicester City area.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>This option would have less impact on species than the Birstall option but more than the Thurmaston options due to the potential to disrupt biodiversity networks and isolate protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species.</p> <p>There would be no significant harm to historic or archaeological interests.</p> <p>This option has no significant flooding issues as it is in Flood Zone I, although access routes may need to cross land at risk of flooding so may potentially need to be assessed against Planning Policy Statement 25.</p> <p>This option is primarily grade III agricultural land, with very limited grade II land. This and the option east of Thurmaston/North of Hamilton would have the least impact on soil resources.</p> <p>There is good bus access to employment, healthcare, retail provision and a range of cultural, media and sport activities in the city centre. It also has good access to Beaumont Leys shopping and leisure activities and Glenfield Hospital. Although the bus services are not as frequent as other</p>	<p>This option would be located in an area which provides a buffer to the edge of the urban area and is therefore considered to be a sensitive landscape separating Anstey from Leicester.</p> <p>This option provides one of the worst opportunities to reduce travel by car, despite having access to a reasonable bus service into the city, due to its easy access to the M1, A46 and A6.</p> <p>This option would not be located close enough to the most deprived communities in the Borough to offer the same scope to tackle social exclusion. It would not provide infrastructure and affordable housing where it is most needed.</p> <p>It does not offer an opportunity to remedy deficiencies in open space provision and is the less likely to reduce health inequalities, along with the Glenfield option, but may increase physical activity.</p> <p>The lack of close proximity to deprived communities means this and the north of Birstall options have the less potential to help improve the skills and employability of deprived households.</p>



Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>locations this option offers a similar level of access to services as the east of Thurmaston/ north of Hamilton option.</p> <p>There is good access to the countryside and open space including Bradgate Park. It also has good access to the city centre and Beaumont Leys shopping and leisure centre.</p> <p>Very good access to the strategic road network and some bus routes make it attractive for investors and innovative companies.</p> <p>This option, as with all other options has the potential to be sited within an attractive landscaped setting, which would be potentially attractive to investors.</p>	



ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS FOR DIRECTIONS FOR GROWTH TO THE SUB-REGIONAL CENTRE OF LOUGHBOROUGH/SHEPSHED

Alternative Option A: South of Loughborough

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 2,100 dwellings (NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option A: South of Loughborough



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

This option and the west of Loughborough option have less landscape impact than the other options. All the other options would have a significant impact on either the Charnwood Forest or the River Soar corridor. This option offers the best opportunity to reduce the need to travel by car as it has the best access to the town with a high frequency bus routes to the higher order services in Loughborough. It also offers the best opportunity to provide new jobs, infrastructure and services that will benefit the most deprived households, due to its proximity to the south Loughborough priority neighbourhood. It is an attractive location for inward investors and there would be no significant harm to historic interests.

Development in this location would, however, have a significant impact on the settlement identity of Quorn and Woodthorpe. It is not considered possible to differentiate the degree of this impact from the east of Loughborough, Wymeswold airfield and west Loughborough options. This option could be highly damaging for protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species, disrupting links between the forest and urban fringe. With the exception of east Loughborough, it would also have the most significant impact on grade II agricultural land. This option would also be less well located for employment associated with Loughborough University and north east of Loughborough. This option would like all the options



site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would potentially need to cross flood risk areas and if so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25.

This is not the preferred option. Although it performs reasonable well in relation to social factors such as proximity to the town centre and deprived communities, it would have significant environmental impacts on biodiversity and the settlement identity of Woodthorpe and Quorn. In economic terms it is not well related to employment within the town. Employment in Loughborough is focused in the north east and around the university and this location is not well related to these areas. There is also a constraint of the scale of development that could be accommodated in this location due to the proximity of Quorn and Charnwood Forest. One of the underlying principals of the proposed strategy is to make provision for carefully planned sustainable urban extensions that provide a mix of homes, jobs and community facilities. An urban extension of this smaller scale is unlikely to be able to support the range of services and facilities that are required to deliver a sustainable urban extension.

Transport Assessment Findings

The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council found in initial tests that south of Loughborough provided the most usage of existing public transport of all the options and had the least negative impact on the highway network. When combined with a south west Loughborough option the negative highway impact was higher but much improved on the sum of the two options. As the two options combined appeared able to accommodate the most development for the least negative impact on congestion they were tested in more detail as one option.

A south and south west of Loughborough option was further tested using a package of transport measures including a Park and Ride, bus enhancements, measures to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport and a new link road between the A512 and the A6 south.

Overall the assessments showed that the congestion impacts of the cumulative mitigation packages are lowest for west of Shepshed and south west and south of Loughborough. West Loughborough appears as the next ranked option in terms of congestion. All produce a lower congestion impact than any of the options on the eastern side of the town, with or without an Eastern Distributor Road. In other words, more development may be accommodated for the same 'level' of congestion across the Borough to the west of the town than to the east of the town. Clearly however, congestion on individual roads would be very different. The indicative cost for the package of measures tested for the south and south west of Loughborough option was £14.6 million. The options west, south and south west of Loughborough are cheaper to mitigate to a similar, or greater level, than those to the east of the town but more expensive than the west of Shepshed option.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
There would be no significant harm to historic or archaeological interests.	Would have the second most damaging impact on biodiversity after the east of Loughborough

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>This option has the most potential to minimise the need to travel by car and maximise current transport infrastructure.</p> <p>This option includes some grade II agricultural land, but would have less impact on soil resources than the east of Loughborough option.</p> <p>This option has no significant flooding issues as it is in Flood Zone I, although access routes may need to cross land at risk of flooding so may potentially need to be assessed against Planning Policy Statement 25.</p> <p>Reasonable access to healthcare and retail provision at Shelthorpe and the town centre.</p> <p>There is excellent access to Loughborough town centre by public transport, providing access to a range of cultural, media and sport activities. This and the west of Loughborough option provide the best access to higher order services by public transport.</p> <p>Close to some of the most deprived communities in the south and east of the town. This and the west of Loughborough option offer the most potential for links to be made with the existing community and for new infrastructure, affordable housing and employment to benefit deprived households.</p> <p>Good access to leisure centre and the countryside. New open space provision would be accessible to deprived communities in south Loughborough. This option has potential to increase physical activity of new and existing communities and reduce health inequalities.</p> <p>The attractive countryside and reasonable access to the M1 is likely to be attractive to employers.</p>	<p>options due to its proximity to Charnwood Forest. It would be highly damaging for protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species, impacting upon ancient woodland, non statutory sites and disrupting links between the forest and urban fringe. Associated road infrastructure would also come extremely close to statutory and non-statutory sites that support important species.</p> <p>This option would impact upon the settlement identity of Woodthorpe and Quorn</p> <p>It would be less well located for employment associated with Loughborough University and north east of Loughborough.</p>

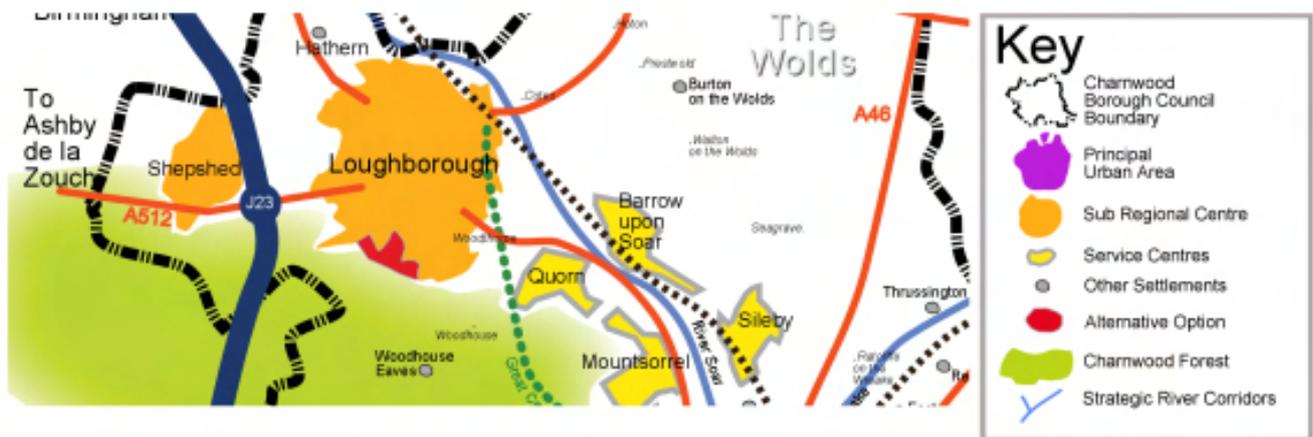


Alternative Option B: South West of Loughborough

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 1,240 dwellings (*NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation*)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option B: South West of Loughborough



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

This option would have the least impact on settlement identity due to the landform and the distance from Woodhouse Eaves. It provides a good opportunity to reduce the need to travel by car as this option is close to the town centre and has the potential to maximise the current transport infrastructure. It is also well located for the town centre and high order services as well the Charnwood Forest and employment associated with the University and Science Park. It is an attractive location for inward investors and there would be no significant harm to historic interests.

This option would, however, be one of the worst options for its significant landscape impact, it falls within the Charnwood Forest designation which has been recognised at a regional level to be of high landscape importance. It would have the second most damaging impact on biodiversity after the east of Loughborough option. It would be highly damaging for protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species, disrupting links between the forest and urban fringe. Whilst this option is close to some of the most deprived communities it is not as close as some other options. Whilst this option includes some grade II agricultural land, although it would be less damaging than the east of Loughborough option. This option would like all the options site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would potentially need to cross flood risk areas and if so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25.

This is not the preferred option due to the significant impact this location would have on Charnwood Forest and biodiversity. The Charnwood Forest is a regionally significant asset which includes a number of statutory and non-statutory sites that support important species. There is also a constraint of the scale of development that could be accommodated in this location due to the proximity of Charnwood Forest. One of the underlying principals of the proposed strategy is to make provision for carefully planned sustainable urban extensions that provide a mix of homes, jobs and community facilities. An urban extension of this smaller scale is unlikely to be able to support the range of services and facilities that are required to deliver a sustainable urban extension.

Transport Assessment Findings

The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council found in initial tests that south west of Loughborough would have a less significant impact on the highway network than most other options. When combined with a south Loughborough option the negative highway impact was slightly higher but much improved compared with the sum of the two options. As the two options combined appeared able to accommodate the most development for the least negative impact on congestion they were tested in more detail as one option

A south and south west of Loughborough option was further tested using a package of transport measures including a Park and Ride, bus enhancements, measures to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport and a new link road between the A512 and the A6 south.

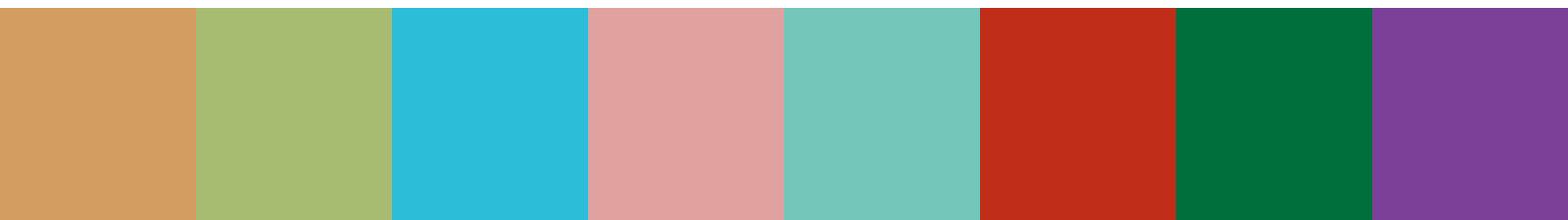
Overall the assessments showed that the congestion impacts of the cumulative mitigation packages are lowest for west of Shepshed and south west and south of Loughborough. West Loughborough appears as the next ranked option in terms of congestion. All produce a lower congestion impact than any of the options on the eastern side of the town, with or without an Eastern Distributor Road. In other words, more development may be accommodated for the same 'level' of congestion across the Borough to the west of the town than to the east of the town. Clearly however, congestion on individual roads would be very different. The indicative cost for the package of measures tested for the south and south west of Loughborough option was £14.6 million. The options west, south and south west of Loughborough are cheaper to mitigate to a similar, or greater level, than those to the east of the town but more expensive than the west of Shepshed option.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>It would have least impact on settlement identity due to the landform and distance from Woodhouse Eaves.</p> <p>No significant harm to historic or archaeological interests.</p> <p>This option and those south and west of Loughborough have the most potential to minimise</p>	<p>This option would have the second most damaging impact on biodiversity after the east of Loughborough options due to its proximity to Charnwood Forest. It would be highly damaging for protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species, impacting upon ancient woodland, non statutory sites and disrupting links between the forest and urban fringe. Associated road infrastructure may</p>



Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>the need to travel by car and maximise current transport infrastructure.</p> <p>This option has no significant flooding issues as it is in Flood Zone 1, although access routes may need to cross land at risk of flooding so may potentially need to be assessed against Planning Policy Statement 25.</p> <p>There is good access to Loughborough town centre by public transport, providing access to a range of cultural, media and sport activities. This and the west of Loughborough option provide the best access to higher order services by public transport.</p> <p>Reasonably close to some of the most deprived communities in the south of the town. This and the west of Loughborough option offer the most potential for links to be made with the existing community and for new infrastructure, affordable housing and employment to benefit deprived households.</p> <p>Good access to the leisure centre and countryside. New open space provision would be accessible to deprived communities in south and east Loughborough. This option has potential to increase physical activity of new and existing communities and reduce health inequalities.</p> <p>The attractive countryside and reasonable access to the M1 is likely to be attractive to employers.</p>	<p>also have a significant impact on statutory and non statutory sites that support important species.</p> <p>This option includes some grade II agricultural land, but would have less impact on soil resources than the east of Loughborough option.</p> <p>This option would be one of the worst options for landscape impact because it falls within the Charnwood Forest designation.</p> <p>This option is further away from the most deprived communities than other options.</p>

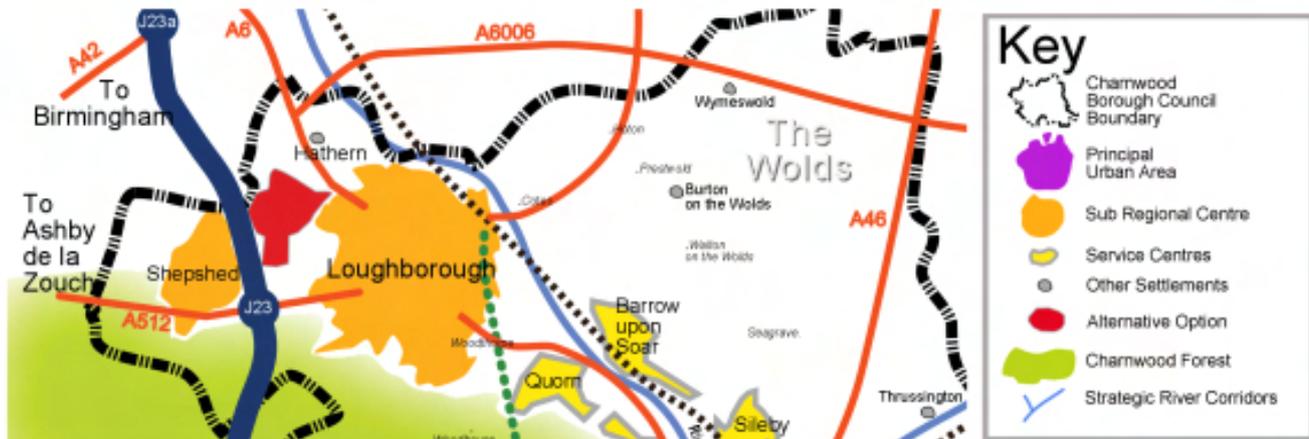


Alternative Location C: West of Loughborough

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 4,875 dwellings (NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option C: West of Loughborough



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

This option is one of the best performing options across the range of social, economic and environmental sustainability criteria. It would be the least damaging option around Loughborough for biodiversity. The only north Charnwood option which performs better is west of Shepshed. This option would have less landscape impact than most of the options as it is already subject to the urban influences of the motorway and the towns of Shepshed and Loughborough. This option is closely related to the deprived households within the west Loughborough priority neighbourhood. This option therefore has the potential to provide jobs, affordable housing and services where they can benefit one of the most deprived communities.

This option and those south and south west offer the best opportunities to reduce the need to travel by car and maximise the current transport infrastructure. Both Loughborough and Shepshed town centres are accessible by public transport providing access to high order services. It also very well related to the employment associated with the University and Science Park and reasonably well related to the employment area north east of Loughborough and employment in Shepshed. It is an attractive location for inward investors.

This option would, however, have an impact on settlement identity of Shepshed and Hathern, the degree of which could not be differentiated from the east of Loughborough options and the south of Loughborough option. Whilst this is one of the least damaging options for biodiversity, it could, however



disrupt the strong biodiversity network in this area, which is important for protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species. This option includes some grade II agricultural land, however it would be less damaging to soil resources than the east of Loughborough option. This option would have an impact on the setting of Garendon Historic Park and Garden. This and the options at east Loughborough and at Wymeswold Airfield would have an impact on historic interests. This option would, like all the options, site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would need to cross the Black Brook and so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25.

Following appraisal of all the options for North Charnwood and consideration of the deliverability, this option has been identified as the most sustainable direction for growth for a Sustainable Urban Extension to the Sub-Regional Centre of Loughborough and Shepshed. The urban edge of Loughborough is very sensitive with the river corridor of the River Soar to the east, Charnwood Forest to the south and south west and a number of villages located close to the urban area. This option provides an opportunity for development to be well related to the services and facilities available in both Loughborough and Shepshed without compromising the Borough's regionally important environmental assets. It also provides an opportunity to secure public access to Garendon Historic Park and Gardens for the whole community and help with the restoration of the park and monuments.

Transport Assessment Findings

The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council found in initial tests that of the larger options tested west of Loughborough performed best in terms of overall impact, congestion and average trip length. This was due to its location between Loughborough and Shepshed town centres.

A west of Loughborough option was further tested using a package of transport measures including a Park and Ride, bus enhancements, measures to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport and a new link road between the A512 and the A6 north.

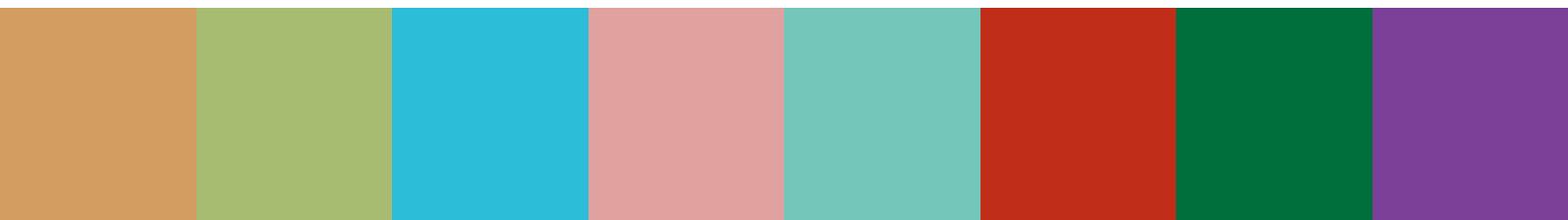
Overall the assessments showed that the congestion impacts of the cumulative mitigation packages are lowest for west of Shepshed and south west and south of Loughborough. West Loughborough appears as the next ranked option in terms of congestion. All produce a lower congestion impact than any of the options on the eastern side of the town, with or without an Eastern Distributor Road. In other words, more development may be accommodated for the same 'level' of congestion across the Borough to the west of the town than to the east of the town. Clearly however, congestion on individual roads would be very different. The indicative cost for the package of measures tested for the west of Loughborough option was £12.8 million. The options west, south and south west of Loughborough are cheaper to mitigate to a similar, or greater level, than those to the east of the town but more expensive than the west of Shepshed option.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>This option is the least damaging option around Loughborough for biodiversity. It could, however, disrupt the strong biodiversity network in this area, which is important for protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species. This area is already subject to urban influences and is considered to have the least impact on landscape.</p> <p>This and the south and south west options have the most potential to minimise the need to travel by car and maximise current transport infrastructure.</p> <p>This option is close to healthcare and retail provision at Gorse Covert, the town centre and Shepshed and well located for employment north east of Loughborough and at Loughborough University. Loughborough and Shepshed town centres are accessible by public transport providing access to full range of cultural, media and sport activities. This and the south option provides the best access to higher order services by public transport.</p> <p>This option is close to one of the most deprived communities in the town. This option and the south of Loughborough option offer the greatest potential for links to be made with the existing community and for new infrastructure and affordable housing to benefit deprived households.</p> <p>There is the opportunity to open up public access to Garendon Historic Park and Garden and there would be reasonable access to the countryside including Charnwood Forest. This option has potential to increase physical activity of new and existing communities and reduce health inequalities. This option and the east and south west of Loughborough options offers the best access to countryside.</p>	<p>This option would have significant impact on settlement identity of Shepshed and Hathern, the degree of which could not be differentiated from the east and south Loughborough options. This option would impact on Garendon Historic Park and Garden and therefore has the worst impact on historic or archaeological interests.</p> <p>This option includes some grade II agricultural land, but less impact on soil resources than the east of Loughborough option.</p> <p>This option would located development in Flood Zone I, however road infrastructure would need to cross land at risk of flooding associated with the Black Brook, so will need to be assessed against Planning Policy Statement 25.</p>



Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>This option is close to the university, science park and employment in Shepshed and north east Loughborough. Direct access to M1 and East Midlands Airport are likely to be attractive to employers.</p> <p>As with all the options this option has the potential to provide education and training opportunities. This and the south option offer greatest potential to help improve the skills and employability of deprived households.</p>	

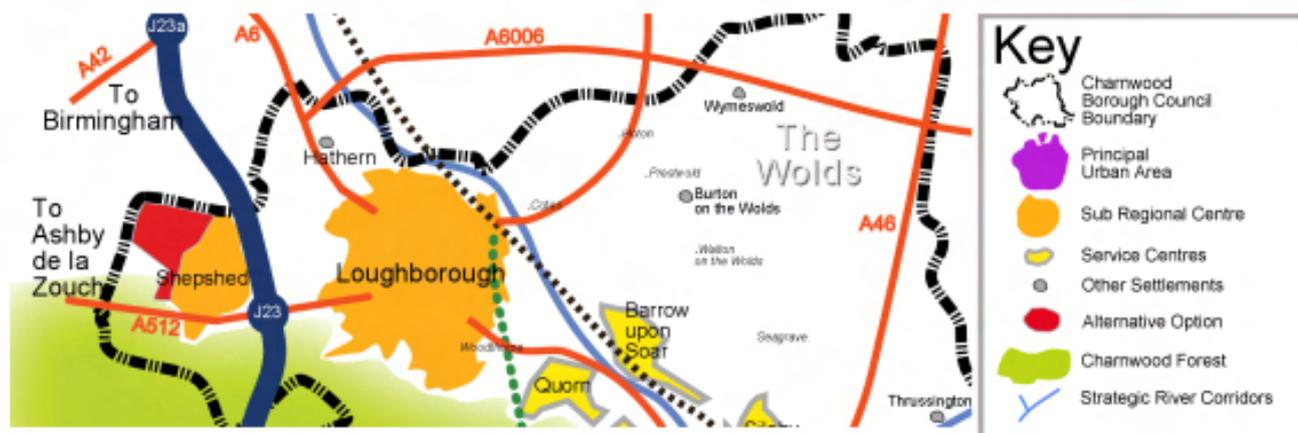


Alternative Option D: West of Shepshed

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 4,875 dwellings (NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option D: West of Shepshed



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

This option would be the least damaging option of all options for biodiversity. This option would have less impact on settlement identity than the other options, with the exception of the south west Loughborough option. It is an attractive location for inward investors and there would be no significant harm to historic interests. This option is well located for employment in Shepshed and is reasonably near the employment associated with the University and Science Park. This option offers good potential to integrate development and for physical links to be established with the existing community providing access to new facilities, jobs and affordable housing to existing and new residents.

Development in this location would, however, have significant landscape impacts due to the ridge lines and proximity to Charnwood Forest, which has been recognised at the regional level to be of high landscape importance. It is also more remote from higher order services in Loughborough than other options, which makes it less effective at minimising the need to travel by car. Whilst this option may help regenerate Shepshed, it is too remote from the most deprived households in Loughborough to help deal with the issues identified in priority neighbourhoods. There is good access to the countryside from this location, however it is on the margins of the Charnwood Forest and there is poor access to the Loughborough leisure centre compared to options adjoining Loughborough. This option includes some grade II agricultural land, however it would be less damaging to soil resources than east Loughborough. This option would, like all the options, site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would potentially need to cross flood



risk areas and if so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25.

This is not the preferred option as it does not perform as well across the range of social, economic and environmental sustainability criteria as the west of Loughborough option. In particular due to the distance between this location and the higher order services and facilities in Loughborough. It would also have a significant landscape impact because of the ridgelines and undulating landform which slopes down to the Black Brook.

Transport Assessment Findings

The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council found in initial tests that of the larger options west of Shepshed performed slightly less well than the best performing west Loughborough option in terms of overall impact, congestion and average trip length.

A west of Shepshed option was further tested using a package of transport measures including a Park and Ride, bus enhancements, measures to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport and a new link road from the development to the A512.

Overall the assessments showed that the congestion impacts of the cumulative mitigation packages are lowest for west of Shepshed and south west and south of Loughborough. West Loughborough appears as the next ranked option in terms of congestion. All produce a lower congestion impact than any of the options on the eastern side of the town, with or without an Eastern Distributor Road. In other words, more development may be accommodated for the same 'level' of congestion across the Borough to the west of the town than to the east of the town. Clearly however, congestion on individual roads would be very different. The indicative cost for the package of measures tested for the west of Shepshed option was £7.3 million. The options west of Shepshed is cheaper to mitigate than all the other options.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>This option is the least damaging option around the Sub-Regional Centre for biodiversity, although there is the potential to disrupt biodiversity networks.</p>	<p>This area has an undulating landform falling away beyond Tickow Lane to the valley of the Black Brook before rising to a prominent ridge. This option would therefore have a significant landscape impact, urbanising important areas of open land and affecting the Charnwood Forest setting. The landscape impact of this option would be similar to that of the south option.</p>
<p>This option would have less impact on settlement identity than the other options with the exception of the south west option.</p>	
<p>This option does not cause significant harm to historic or archaeological interests.</p>	<p>Despite being close to a high frequency bus route it performs less well in terms of minimising the need to travel by car as it is further from</p>

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>This option has no significant flooding issues as it is in Flood Zone I, although access routes may need to cross land at risk of flooding so may potentially need to be assessed against Planning Policy Statement 25.</p> <p>This option is fairly close to healthcare and retail provision within Shepshed town centre and has reasonable access to employment within Shepshed and Loughborough University.</p> <p>This option offers good potential to integrate development and for physical links to be established with the existing community providing access to new facilities, jobs and affordable housing to existing and new residents.</p> <p>There is good access to the countryside however this option is on the margins of the Charnwood Forest. Compared to the options closer to Loughborough, there is poor access to the leisure centre. There is scope to accommodate a district park which would meet an identified need for access to open space within Shepshed. This option has potential to increase physical activity of and reduce health inequalities.</p> <p>As with all the options there is potential to provide education/training through schools and work based training in new employment.</p> <p>This option is well located for employment in Shepshed. It is also reasonably near the university and science park and may be able to capitalise on the benefits of these assets. Employment development in this location is likely to increase inward investment and the culture of enterprise and innovation in the town. Reasonable access to the MI and East Midlands Airport are likely to be attractive to employers.</p>	<p>Loughborough.</p> <p>This option includes some grade II agricultural land, but would have less impact on soil resources than the east of Loughborough option.</p> <p>Shepshed town centre offers access to some cultural and sporting attractions but this location is more remote from higher order services in Loughborough including the hospital.</p> <p>There are pockets of deprivation in Shepshed, however this option performs less well than the south, southwest and northwest Loughborough options due to its remoteness from the most deprived communities.</p> <p>It may help regenerate Shepshed but is too remote from the most deprived areas in Loughborough to improve their skills/employability.</p>

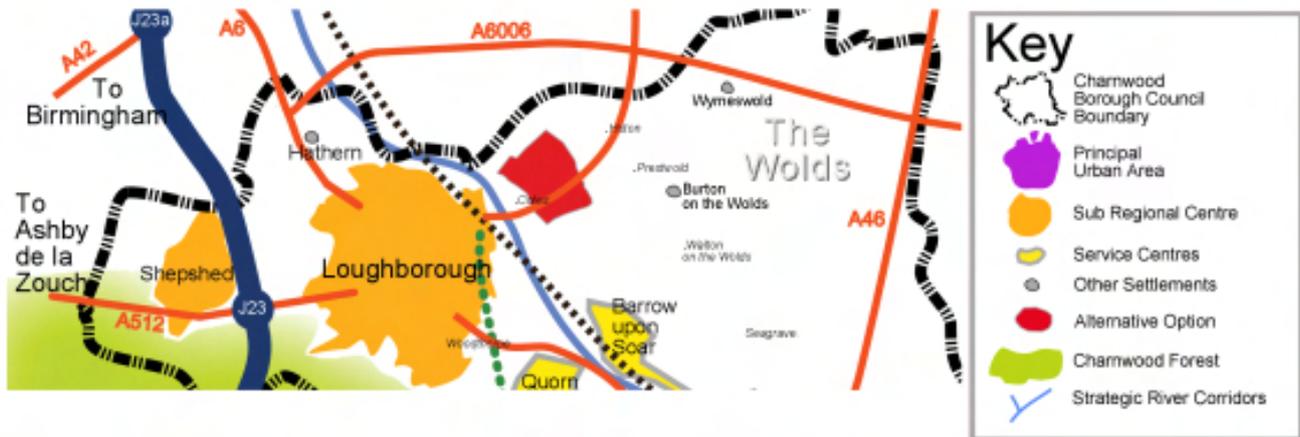


Alternative Option E: East of Loughborough

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 4,875 dwellings (*NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation*)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option E: East of Loughborough



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

This option has good access to the countryside and offers an opportunity to create a river side park for the benefit of existing and new residents and employees working in this area, where there is an identified deficit of open space. This option is well located for higher order services and employment in the town centre and the main employment area north east of Loughborough.

Development east of the River Soar would, however, be the most damaging for biodiversity of all the options. The required supporting road infrastructure to provide improved links into Loughborough would need to cross the floodplain of the River Soar, with associated flood risk and impacting on this strategic river corridor and biodiversity. This area is rural in character and this option would extend the urban influence of Loughborough significantly further east. This option and the Wymeswold airfield and south west of Loughborough options would have a greater landscape impact than the other options. This option also includes the largest single tract of grade II agricultural land in the Borough and would therefore have the most impact on soil resources of all the options. It would be very difficult to safeguard the settlement identity of Cotes, although this option's impact on settlement identity is no different from the impact arising from options at Wymeswold airfield, west Loughborough and south of Loughborough on nearby settlements. This option would, like all the options, site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would need to cross flood risk areas and so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning

Policy Statement 25.

Although this location is reasonably close to the town centre, rail station and the deprived communities in east Loughborough, the river valley is likely to be a major barrier to deprived households accessing new affordable housing, employment and school provision, as they will be too far away from the existing social networks. This option does not have the benefit of a number of established high quality and high frequency bus services that other options around Loughborough do. This option would have an impact on Prestwold Hall and its registered historic park and garden and the site of the deserted medieval villages of Cotes. This option and the options at Wymeswold Airfield and west of Loughborough would have an impact on historical interests.

This location is not the preferred option as it does not perform as well, across the range of social, economic and environmental sustainability criteria, as the west of Loughborough option. This option does not perform well against a number of the environmental aspects, due to the impact of development on the regionally important River Soar Valley and nationally important ecological sites and its landscape impact. Although this location is reasonably close to the town centre, railway station and the east Loughborough priority neighbourhood, the separation from the town by a wide river valley limits scope for physical links and integration with the existing communities or for tackling social exclusion issues. There are also major concerns about the deliverability of this option, which will require significant road improvements that would need to cross the floodplain.

Transport Assessment Findings

The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council found in initial tests that the east Loughborough (Cotes) option had a slightly better impact in terms of overall impact, congestion and average trip length than the worst performing Wymeswold airfield option.

Two east of Loughborough (Cotes) options were further tested using a package of transport measures including a Park and Ride, bus enhancements, measures to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport and two options for a new link road. The first option considered was a full eastern distributor road between the A6 north and A6 south, as identified in the County Council's Assessments of Transport Implications of Sustainable Urban Extensions at Selected Broad Locations in Leicestershire (December 2006 and April 2007). The second option considered was a partial eastern distributor road between the A6 south and the A60.

Overall the assessments showed that the congestion impacts of the cumulative mitigation packages are lowest for west of Shepshed and south west and south of Loughborough. West Loughborough appears as the next ranked option in terms of congestion. All produce a lower congestion impact than any of the options on the eastern side of the town, with or without an eastern distributor road. In other words, more development may be accommodated for the same 'level' of congestion across the Borough to the west of the town than to the east of the town. Clearly however, congestion on individual roads would be very different. The indicative cost for the package of measures tested for the east of Loughborough option was £84.5 million for the full eastern distributor road and £46.5 million for the partial eastern distributor road. This initial assessment of costs indicates that the cost of the east Loughborough mitigation package is significantly higher on a per resident basis than the other options.



Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>This option has good access to the main employment area, the town centre and higher order services including retail and a full range of cultural, media and sport activities.</p> <p>This option has good access to the countryside. The River Soar area could provide opportunities for a Riverside Park recreation resource for the east of Loughborough where there is an identified deficit of open space, potentially reducing health inequalities and increasing physical activity. There is also potential to integrate Prestwold Historic Park and Garden into recreational use.</p> <p>As with all the options there is potential to provide education/training through schools and work based training in new employment.</p>	<p>The east of Loughborough options are the most damaging options for biodiversity due to the impact road infrastructure would have on the River Soar, designated a Strategic River Corridor, the Biodiversity Enhancement Area and wetland habitats. The area contains several nationally important ecological sites which support protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species.</p> <p>This option would extend urban influences into a river valley and unspoilt rural area. The land rises away from Cotes to the east which would increase the visual impact of this option, together with the impact of road infrastructure through the river valley.</p> <p>It would be very difficult to safeguard the identity of Cotes and would impact on the rural identities of Hoton and Prestwold.</p> <p>There would be an impact on Prestwold Hall and its registered historic park and garden, the hamlet of Cotes and the village of Hoton. The site of the deserted medieval village of Cotes is also a Scheduled Ancient Monument.</p> <p>This option does not have a high quality, frequent existing bus services compared to the other options around Loughborough. It could be difficult to develop a network of bus links given the separation from Loughborough and remoteness from other densely populated areas.</p> <p>This option is within the largest single tract of grade II agricultural land in Charnwood, having the worst impact on soil resources.</p> <p>There are significant flood risk issues in this area associated with the River Soar. This option would located development in Flood Zone I, however road infrastructure that would cross the floodplain to reach the town centre, so will need to be</p>

Appendix A: Appraisal of Alternative Directions for Growth

Advantages	Disadvantages
	<p>assessed against Planning Policy Statement 25.</p> <p>The separation from the town would limit scope for physical links and integration with the existing communities or to tackle social exclusion issues. The river valley is likely to be a major barrier to deprived communities using new facilities. Affordable housing would also be too far away from existing social networks of the people that need it most.</p>

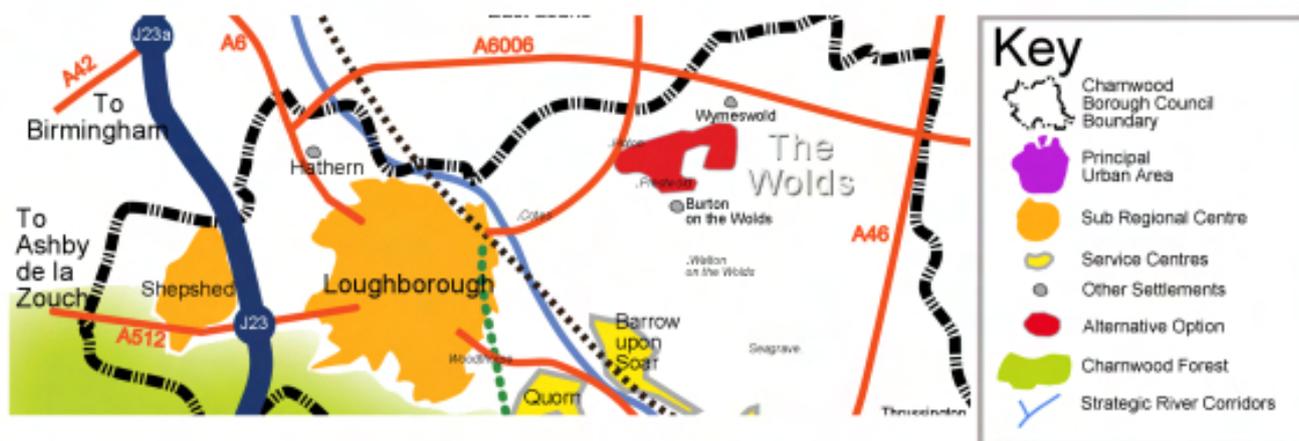


Alternative Option F: East of Loughborough, on and around Wymeswold Airfield

Below is an assessment of the impact of developing an urban extension of:

- 4,875 dwellings (NB: this scale of development was considered for appraisal purposes only and is not being proposed as part of this consultation)
- Employment provision
- Green Infrastructure
- Community Facilities including Schools

Alternative Option F: East of Loughborough, on and around Wymeswold Airfield



Sustainability Appraisal Summary

This option would have the least impact on the soil resources of the Borough, it would make use of previously developed land of the airfield and is the only option which includes the redevelopment of a brownfield site. This option has good access to the countryside and offers an opportunity to integrate open spaces with Prestwold Historic Park and Gardens. Although this location is in an elevated location it would be on relatively flat land and therefore less visible than the other option east of Loughborough.

Significant development east of the River Soar would, however, be the most damaging for biodiversity of all the options.

This area is rural in character and this option would have a major impact on the character and setting of Hoton, Wymeswold, Prestwold and Burton on the Wolds. This option and the east and south west of Loughborough options would have the most significant landscape impact of the north Charnwood locations. This option would impact on Prestwold Hall and its registered historic park and garden. This option and the options at east and west of Loughborough would have an impact on historical interests.

This option has the least potential to reduce the need to travel by car. Its distance from the town and lack of existing transport infrastructure mean it is the option most likely to lead to a reliance on the

car. The distance from higher order services and employment opportunities available in Loughborough and other urban areas makes walking impractical and cycling much less attractive. This is irrespective of the level of self containment as a development of this size could not offer the full range of services and facilities that are available in Loughborough itself. Due to the distance from the town, there is also very limited scope for physical links and integration with the existing communities or to tackle social exclusion issues. New residents would also be some distance from the town's services and this would mean there is a greater need to travel and it would be very difficult to develop high quality public transport links. This option would also have poor access to leisure facilities. This option would, like all the options, site development to remain away from land with a significant risk of flooding, however related road infrastructure would need to cross flood risk areas and so would need to be assessed against the exception test set out in Planning Policy Statement 25.

This is not the preferred option as it does not perform well across the range of social, economic and environmental sustainability criteria and a freestanding new settlement would be contrary to the urban concentration strategy set out in regional policy and underpinning this strategy. This option would have significant impact on the regionally important River Soar Valley and nationally important ecological sites. It is a significant distance from the centre of Loughborough and higher order services and employment and there is also limited scope for physical links and integration with the existing communities or to tackle social exclusion issues. There are also major concerns about the deliverability of this option, which will require significant road improvements which will need to cross the floodplain.

Transport Assessment Findings

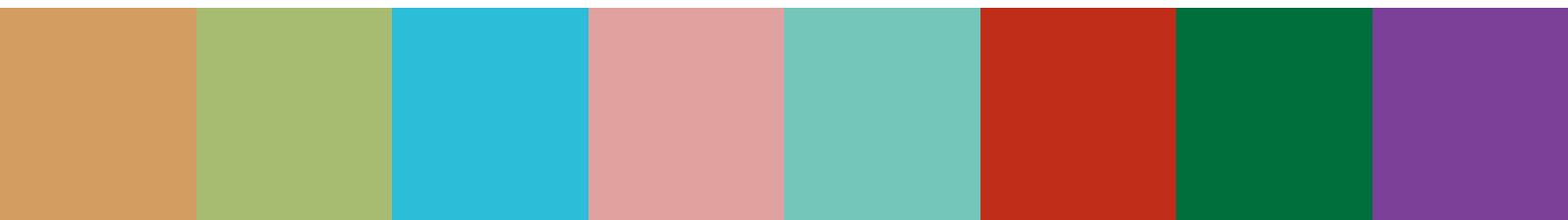
The 'Delivering Strategies: Transport Assessments for the Charnwood 2026 LDF', commissioned by the Borough Council found in initial tests that the Wymeswold Airfield option had the worst impact of all the north Charnwood options in terms of overall impact, congestion and average trip length. As there was a slightly better performing option east of Loughborough at Cotes the Airfield option was eliminated from further consideration in the more detailed assessments.

Sustainability Appraisal - Key Advantages and Disadvantages

Advantages	Disadvantages
<p>It is the only option which involves some redevelopment of brownfield land. This option would have the least impact on soil resources and grade II agricultural land.</p> <p>There may be potential to integrate open space within this option with Prestwold Historic Park and Garden for recreational use.</p> <p>This option has potential to increase physical activity of new residents, with good access to the countryside.</p>	<p>The east of Loughborough options are the most damaging options for biodiversity due to the impact road infrastructure would have on the River Soar, designated a Strategic River Corridor, the Biodiversity Enhancement Area and wetland habitats. The area contains several nationally important ecological sites which support protected and Biodiversity Action Plan species.</p> <p>This option would extend the urban influences into the river valley and a very rural area. Development, although in an elevated location,</p>



Advantages	Disadvantages
	<p>would be on relatively flat land and therefore less visible than the other east Loughborough option.</p> <p>This option would have a major impact on the individual identity, character and setting of Hoton, Wymeswold, Prestwold and Burton on the Wolds.</p> <p>There would be an impact on Prestwold Hall and registered historic park and garden and Hoton.</p> <p>This option is the worst for its potential to minimise the need to travel by car. It could be expected to have unsustainable patterns of travel due to its distance from the town and the difficulties of developing effective bus links.</p> <p>Significant concerns have been raised about flooding due to the road infrastructure that would be required to cross the floodplain to reach the town centre.</p> <p>Remote from the jobs and services in Loughborough and other settlements, including the hospital, retail, cultural, media and sport activities. Its location makes walking to jobs and service impractical and cycling much less attractive.</p> <p>The separation and distance from the town would limit scope for physical links and integration with the existing communities or to tackle social exclusion issues. The river valley is likely to be a major barrier to deprived communities using new facilities. Affordable housing would also be too far away from existing social networks of the people that need it most.</p> <p>Poor access to leisure facilities and therefore performs worse than other options on access to leisure facilities and reducing health inequalities.</p> <p>The distance from the town means this option offers the least potential for increasing skills and employability.</p>



Appendix B: Glossary

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR): A report submitted to the government by local planning authorities or regional planning bodies assessing progress with and the effectiveness of a Local Development Framework.

Area Action Plan (AAP): The planning portal's definition is a type of Development Plan Document focused upon a specific location or an area subject to conservation or significant change (for example major regeneration).

Brownfield Land: Land which has previously been developed. The term may encompass vacant or derelict land, infill sites, land occupied by redundant or unused buildings, and developed land within the settlement boundary where further intensification of use is considered acceptable.

Community Strategy: Local authorities are required under the Local Government Act 2000 to prepare these, with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic wellbeing of their areas. Through the Community Strategy, authorities are expected to co-ordinate the actions of local public, private, voluntary and community sectors. Responsibility for producing Community Strategies may be passed to Local Strategic Partnerships, which include local authority representatives.

Core Strategy: Spatial vision and strategy for the Borough including key policies and proposals to deliver vision.

Deprivation: A standard of living or quality of life below that enjoyed by the majority to the extent it involves hardship, inadequate access to resources and underprivilege. Often expressed and measured across a range of social, economic and environmental indicators to create a rounded picture of 'multiple deprivation'. The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 combines a number of indicators, chosen to cover a range of economic, social and housing issues, into a single deprivation score for each small area in England. This allows each area to be ranked relative to one another according to their level of deprivation. See:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/communities/neighbourhoodrenewal/deprivation/deprivation07/>

Development Control Policies: These will be a suite of criteria-based policies which are required to ensure that all development within the areas meets the spatial vision and spatial objectives set out in the Core Strategy. They may be included in any Development Plan Document or may form a standalone document.

Development Plan: Development Plan Documents and the Regional Spatial Strategy make up the Development Plan. Under the Planning Acts the Development Plan is the primary consideration in deciding planning applications.

Development Plan Document (DPD): Documents prepared by the local planning authority setting out the main spatial strategy, policies and proposals for the area.

Examination: The purpose of the Examination is to consider if the development plan is sound. The majority of representations made at Examination will usually be 'written representations'. However, in some instances a Planning Inspector may allow representations to be examined by way of oral hearings, for example round table discussions, informal hearing sessions and formal hearing sessions.

Greenfield Sites: These are sites which have never been previously developed or used for an urban use, or are on land that has been brought into active or beneficial use for agriculture or forestry i.e. fully restored derelict land.

Green Infrastructure: The Town and Country Planning Association defines this as the Sub-regional network of protected sites, nature reserves, greenspaces and greenway linkages. Green Infrastructure should provide (where possible) multi-functional uses, i.e. wildlife, recreational and cultural experience, as well as delivering ecological services, such as flood protection and microclimate control. It should also operate at all spatial scales from urban centres through to open countryside”

Housing Market Area (HMA): A geographical area which is relatively self-contained in terms of housing demand; i.e. a large percentage of people moving house or settling in the area will have sought a dwelling only in that area.

Index of Multiple Deprivation: A ward-level index made up from six indicators (income; employment; health deprivation and disability; education; skills and training; housing; and geographical access to services). Index of Multiple Deprivation can help to identify areas for regeneration.

Issues and Options: The preparation of issues and options papers are the first step in preparing the Local Development Framework. They suggest different ways to address the issues facing the Borough and help guide the preparation of Local Development Documents. All Issues and Options papers are open for public comment before the Preferred Options stage is reached.

Local Development Documents (LDDs): These will be Development Plan Documents (which form part of the statutory development plan) or Supplementary Planning Documents and will be contained within the Local Development Framework. Together they will deliver the spatial planning strategy for the area.

Local Development Framework (LDF): The Local Development Framework (LDF) is a non-statutory term used to describe a folder of documents, which includes all the local planning authority's local development documents. An LDF is comprised of:

- Development Plan Documents (which form part of the statutory development plan)
- Supplementary Planning Documents

The Local Development Framework will also comprise of:

- the Statement of Community Involvement
- the Local Development Scheme



- the Annual Monitoring Report

Local Development Scheme (LDS): A three year project plan outlining the Council's programmed for preparing the Local Development Framework.

Local Strategic Partnership: A non strategy, multi-agency partnerships, which match local authority boundaries. LSP's bring together at a local level, the different parts of the public, private, community and voluntary sectors; allowing different initiatives and services to support one another so that they can work together more effectively. Charnwood has two LSP's, Charnwood Together and Leicestershire Together.

New Growth Point: designed to provide support to local communities who wish to pursue large scale and sustainable growth, including new housing, through a partnership with Government. 29 areas were named as New Growth Points across the East, South East, South West, East Midlands and West Midlands. If all of the proposed growth is realised New Growth Points would contribute around 100,000 additional dwellings by 2016, an increase of around 32 per cent on previous plans for housing supply in these areas. They will share in £40m in 2007-08 for a first round of infrastructure projects and to support growth-related studies, masterplanning and capacity-building in the New Growth Points. This money will help overcome local infrastructure problems, unlock sites for new housing and enhance the local environment.

Principal Urban Area: Identified in the Draft East Midlands Regional Plan as settlement conurbations that can develop into sustainable urban communities where people will wish to live work and invest. They are areas where significant levels of new development will be located. In Leicestershire the Principal Urban Area is Leicester.

Priority Neighbourhoods: Priority Neighbourhoods seek to reduce social exclusion and deprivation and increase educational attainment in those parts of the Borough identified as areas of relatively higher need. Priority neighbourhoods work with local people to improve quality of life in defined specific areas with a significant concentration of inequalities at a Borough level. The priority neighbourhoods in Charnwood Borough are Loughborough East, Loughborough West, Mountsorrel, South Charnwood (Syston and Thurmaston)

Regional Plan: Statutory document that replaces Regional Planning Guidance and sets out regional strategies and policies.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): A site identified under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000) as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (basically, plants, animals, and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).

Spatial planning: Spatial planning goes beyond traditional land use planning to bring together and integrate policies for the development and use of land with other policies and programmes which influence the nature of places and how they function. This will include policies which can impact on land use by influencing the demands on, or needs for, development, but which are not capable of being delivered solely or mainly through the granting or refusal of planning permission and which may be

implemented by other means.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI): Outlines the approach of the authority to involving the community in preparing the LDF and significant planning applications.

Sub Regional Centre: Centres identified in the Draft East Midlands Regional Plan for their ability to perform a complementary role to the Principal Urban Areas. They have been selected on the basis of their size, the range of services they provide, and their potential to accommodate further growth. They have the capacity to support sustainable development which should support the individual role and function of the Sub Regional Centre. Development in Sub Regional Centres should not be of a scale and character that prejudices the urban renaissance of the Principal Urban Area (Leicester).

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD): Documents that expand on policies and proposals in Development Plan Documents.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA): An appraisal of the social, economic and environmental implications of a strategy, policies and proposals. Will ensure that proposals contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Sustainable development: Meeting our own needs without prejudicing the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS): a sequence of management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable fashion than some conventional techniques.

Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE): The Planning Portal glossary defines an urban extension as development that involves the planned expansion of a city or town and can contribute to creating more sustainable patterns of development when located in the right place, with well-planned infrastructure including access to a range of facilities, and when developed at appropriate densities.



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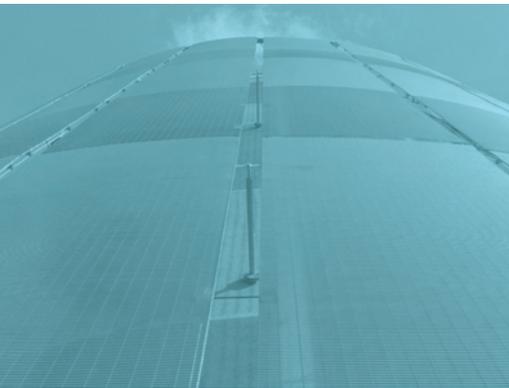
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