



CABINET – 16 DECEMBER 2025

STRATEGIC SPATIAL AND TRANSPORT PLANNING

**JOINT REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE AND THE DIRECTOR OF
ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT**

PART A

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to advise the Cabinet of the proposals for strategic spatial and transport planning work in the light of matters arising from the emerging Local Plans and concerns that have been expressed by local communities, Members, and Members of Parliament, about the traffic impacts of new development (growth) in Leicestershire. This report sets out proposals for the preparation of a Spatial Development Strategy, and seeks approval for the Council to share initial evidence work it has developed as the Local Transport Authority (LTA) with the district councils and developers and to undertake initial scheme feasibility and development work.
2. The report also advises the Cabinet as to how the proposed initial work and the scheme feasibility/development work will be used by the LTA to input into strategic planning, including to assist the evolution of the Local Plans to submission stage and in bringing forward strategic sites that are allocated in those Plans.

Recommendations

3. It is recommended that:
 - a) The Cabinet notes:
 - i. The current strategic spatial planning and strategic transport planning issues and the concerns raised by local communities about the traffic impacts of new development;
 - ii. That the Local Transport Authority (LTA) supports the principle of a Plan-led approach to development and that should the LTA consider it cannot support a Local Plan:

- There will nonetheless continue to be a demand for new homes and jobs to meet the needs of Leicester and Leicestershire's growing population; and
 - In the absence of an up-to-date Local Plan there will be a risk of greater levels of unplanned, speculative growth that will present even more challenges for the provision of infrastructure and services;
- iii. That it is considered to be in the best overall interests of communities for the County Council to move towards a longer-term approach to strategic spatial and transport planning;
 - iv. That the success of the proposals set out in this report rests on successful collaborative working with the district councils and commitments to that way of working being demonstrated by the districts through Local Plan policies and narratives as appropriate;
- b) That, accordingly, the following actions be undertaken as detailed in the report:
- i. The preparation of a Spatial Development Strategy;
 - ii. Identification and development of schemes to alleviate the transport impacts of growth, based on initial evidence work undertaken to date;
 - iii. The sharing with the relevant authorities and developers of initial evidence work that has been undertaken by the LTA and, as it emerges, the outcomes of the further scheme identification and development work in paragraph 3.b.ii above;
- c) That, the Director of Environment and Transport be requested to explore any opportunities to streamline and align the strategic spatial and transport planning work in order to mitigate the traffic impacts of new development including new ways of working where appropriate.

Reasons for recommendation

4. To respond to increasing concerns expressed by local communities, Members, and Members of Parliament about the traffic impacts of new developments that are faced across the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area.
5. A number of new Local Plans are being prepared by district councils in Leicestershire, and the LTA is finding it increasingly difficult to support them. Concerns raised by the County Council about emerging Local Plans in terms of service and infrastructure provision are often not properly addressed, due to pressure on the local planning authorities from the Government to expedite production of their Local Plans and deliver new housing.

6. Sharing initial evidence work and of the outcomes as they emerge of the proposed scheme identification and development work with district councils will give the LTA the best opportunity to have a constructive influence on the content of Local Plans and establish a sound basis for seeking developer contributions towards the delivery of transport schemes.
7. The LTA is engaged in confidential pre-application discussions relating to strategic-scale sites proposed to be allocated in the Local Plans and, by sharing evidence with developers, has the opportunity to have a positive/constructive influence on those developments.
8. A broader, holistic consideration of strategic spatial planning and transport planning issues on a wider geographical basis is needed in order for the County Council, with limited resources, to address the necessary support for and mitigation of future growth.

Timetable for Decisions (including Scrutiny)

9. The County Council's officers best understanding as to the district councils' current timetables for the Local Plans' development is shown in Table 1 below, noting that the EiP timings are subject to the availability of Planning Inspectorate resources.

Table 1: Understanding of the Current Timetable for the Local Plans

Local Plan	Best Understood Current Timings	
	Submission	Examination in Public
Blaby	Summer 2026	Autumn/Winter 2026
Charnwood	December 2021	Currently ongoing
Harborough	Spring 2026	Autumn 2026
Hinckley and Bosworth	Spring 2026	Winter 2026
Melton	Autumn 2025	Summer 2026
North West Leicestershire	Spring/Summer 2026	Autumn/Winter 2026
Oadby and Wigston	Spring/Summer 2026	Autumn/Winter 2026

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

10. In 2018, the County Council, Leicester City Council, the seven district councils, and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) approved the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (SGP), which provides the long-term vision for planned growth for the Highway Management Authority (HMA) up to 2050.
11. In 2021, the County Council and its partners (Leicester City Council, the seven district councils and the LLEP), commissioned the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (HENA). The HENA, published in June 2022, provides evidence that across Leicester and Leicestershire, the

projected housing need from 2020 to 2036 is 91,400 dwellings, and that the employment land need from 2021 to 2036 is 344 hectares.

12. In October 2024, the Cabinet received a paper on the strategic planning issues associated with the emerging Charnwood Local Plan. This included principles for the future engagement of the LTA in other Local Plan processes in light of the County Council's experience of the Charnwood Local Plan.
13. The Local Transport Plan 2025-2040 (LTP4) Core Document was approved by the Cabinet on 22 November 2024 and subsequently by the County Council on 2 July 2025.
14. The Cabinet has approved responses to Local Plan consultations. Those most relevant to this report are listed in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Recent Local Plan Response

Local Plan	Date of Cabinet Meeting
Oadby and Wigston 2020-2041 Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Consultation Draft	7 February 2025
Harborough Local Plan 2020-2041 Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Consultation Draft	18 March 2025
Hinckley and Bosworth Regulation 18 (2025 version)	18 November 2025

15. In October 2025, the Cabinet received a paper on the next steps for delivering the LTP4. The Cabinet resolved, inter alia, that the draft key 'policy positions' that are intended to form the basis of the Enabling Travel Choice Strategy be approved for the purpose of consultation.

Resource Implications

Funding of development of Spatial Development Strategy

16. It is understood that funding from the Government for progressing the development of a SDS will be made available to the authorities across a devolved area. The amount of funding, the timescales for receipt, and the recipients currently remain uncertain.

Funding of Initial Scheme Feasibility Work

17. It is proposed to make use of £500,000 of funding from the Department's Advanced Design Budget that already had provision for work to support local plan development. This can be accommodated within the Medium-Term Financial Strategy 2025/26 to 2028/29 as approved by the Council in February 2025, subject to the outcomes of this year's annual refresh. This initial work will provide the basis for business cases that could, potentially and over time, help to secure multi-million pounds worth of investment in Leicestershire's transport system.

Funding of Infrastructure

18. As set out in Part B of this report, securing the delivery of infrastructure, transport or otherwise (such as education, waste and health), to support the needs of Leicester and Leicestershire's growing population is becoming ever more challenging.
19. This is particularly the case where strategic transport infrastructure is required to seek to mitigate the cumulative impacts of development sites across a relatively wide area of the County.
20. The Cabinet, at its meeting in October 2024, considered a report on strategic transport planning issues associated with the emerging Charnwood Local Plan and, inter alia, agreed principles that would guide the Local Highway Authority/LTA in its engagement on future local plans:

'Where evidence demonstrates significant cumulative impacts arising from planned growth, the appropriate delivery mechanism for infrastructure which is critical to the successful delivery of the Plan growth is a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), which should be developed concurrently with a Local Plan if it is to receive the support of the County Council.'
21. The Response to the Charnwood Borough Council Community Infrastructure Levy Draft Charging Schedule Consultation is the subject of a separate report for consideration by the Cabinet at this meeting.
22. The Director of Corporate Resources has been consulted on the content of this report.

Legal Implications

23. National planning policy requires public bodies to work together constructively, actively, and on an ongoing basis when preparing Plans for strategic matters like housing, infrastructure, and environmental protection.
24. The Director of Law and Governance has been consulted on the content of this report.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

25. This report will be circulated to all Members.

Officers to Contact

Zafar Saleem
 Assistant Chief Executive
 Tel: (0116) 305 4952
 Email: Zafer.Saleem@leics.gov.uk

Ann Carruthers
Director, Environment and Transport
Tel: (0116) 305 7000
Email: Ann.Carruthers@leics.gov.uk

Janna Walker
Assistant Director, Development and Growth
Tel: (0116) 305 7215
Email: Janna.Walker@leics.gov.uk

PART B

Background

Strategic Spatial Planning Issues

26. The population of Leicestershire is projected to increase by 23% to 830,618 between 2018 and 2043. This is higher amongst all age bands in comparison to the East Midlands and England averages.
27. To seek to meet the needs of growing population, a (Local) Plan-led approach represents, in principle, the best current way to seek to coordinate the delivery of new homes and places of work with the provision of the necessary infrastructure and services required to enable and support growth. The County Council supports a Plan led approach in principle and, in its role as the LTA, it continues to commit considerable resources in seeking to support the district councils in the development of their Local Plans and underpinning transport evidence bases.
28. The SGP, whilst a non-statutory document, nevertheless sets out a future spatial vision that sees growth more focused in major strategic locations with less pressure for development in villages and rural areas. Those strategic locations include around the east and south of the City of Leicester, around East Midlands Airport and along the A5 corridor.
29. Within the context of the SGP's spatial vision, the district councils and Leicester City Council are currently preparing the next round of Local Plans. However, preparation of the Local Plans in recent years has been complicated and disrupted by numerous, significant changes to national planning policy, made by the previous and the current Governments.
30. Most recently, in December 2024, revisions were made to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and to the way in which the Government calculates housing requirements for areas across the Country (known as the 'Standard Method' (SM)). Even prior to these changes, there were challenges to the HMA's ability to meet its original housing requirement of around 88,000 dwellings between 2020 and 2036, as the City of Leicester fell short of being able to meet its identified need by around 19,000 dwellings (unmet housing need).
31. By virtue of a Statement of Common Ground (June 2022) agreed by all of the Leicestershire local authorities, the County Council, the district councils and Leicester City Council agreed to an apportionment of the City's unmet housing need. However, the changes to the SM in December 2024 resulted in marked changes to housing requirements, as shown in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Comparison of Previous and Revised Housing Requirements

Area	Housing Requirement in dwelling per annum		% Change
	Previous SM	Revised SM	
Blaby	341	539	+58%
Charnwood	1111	992	-11%
Harborough	534	735	+37%
Hinckley and Bosworth	472	663	+40%
City of Leicester	2464 (The Previous SM included a 35% uplift in housing requirements for the 20 largest urban areas in the Country, which included the City of Leicester)	1588	-36%*
Melton	231	369	+60%
North West Leicestershire	372	617	+66%
Oadby and Wigston	188	389	+107%

32. Where there has been a marked increase in housing requirements, it is unclear as to whether the affected districts will be able to meet that increase or, as per the City of Leicester, will need to declare an unmet housing need. The requirement for Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, for instance, which has an area of 9.5 square miles (24 square kilometres), has increased by over 100%.
33. The Government has brought in transitional arrangements to provide for Local Plans that had reached their Regulation 19 Stage by 12 March 2025 (the stage at which the Local Plan-making body considers that the Plan is ready for submission for EiP), thereby enabling such Plans to proceed without the need to take account of the changes to the NPPF and SM. However, these Plans will need to be subject to an immediate review after successfully completing their EiP and after being adopted.
34. The implications for the making of Local Plans across the HMA is a sub-optimal situation whereby:
- In the absence of a national planning framework that truly recognises and fosters the cross-boundary development of Plans, the confines of district boundaries are increasingly becoming a limiting factor on the scope for considering differing spatial options for the scales of growth requirements. In practice, given the present circumstances, there are, at the least from a strategic transport perspective, likely to be no better alternative spatial strategies to those that are set out in the current round of emerging Local Plans.
 - Plans are being brought forward in four different tranches (see the appendix for more details), causing an ever more isolated and piecemeal

approach to their development and to underpinning evidence. This fragmentation does nothing to aid attempts to prioritise and coordinate investment in the infrastructure required to enable growth.

- c) Some areas, such as Oadby and Wigston Borough Council, are now assessing whether they can meet their revised SM housing requirement, whilst others are proceeding based on previous SM requirements (see also appendix).
 - d) Should an area be unable to meet its revised SM housing requirement (for whatever reason(s) as suitably evidenced), there is a risk that this will have a ripple effect across the HMA, requiring any unmet need to be met elsewhere across the HMA. This again does not aid efficient and effective strategic planning.
35. This uncoordinated situation is a far from an ideal basis on which service providers, such as the County Council, can plan for, seeking to meet the needs of the HMA's growing population, including from transport, education and waste perspectives.
36. However, in seeking to achieve its mission of seeing 1.5 million new homes delivered over the lifetime of this Parliament (by 2029), the Government is placing significant pressure on the Local Plan-making bodies to bring forward their development expeditiously. It is also important to stress that the absence of a Local Plan for an area does not mean that there will be no new development; rather, it brings the risk of unplanned, speculative development that is even harder for service providers to mitigate.

Strategic Transport Planning Issues

General Context

37. As the population of Leicester and Leicestershire increases, so will demands for travel (by individuals and, for example, through increased travel by businesses in order to meet the goods and services needs of a growing population).
38. Evidence work, including that referenced in the next section of this report, points to one fundamental conclusion: the County Council cannot 'prevent' growth. Therefore, unless significant changes occur in societal behaviours and expectations, the extent to which the impacts of growth on the County's transport system can be mitigated in the future are very limited.
39. Leicester and Leicestershire will not be unique in this regard, given that levels of transport congestion are already more acute in other parts of the country, especially in the southeast.

Transport Evidence

40. The December 2024 changes to the NPPF embedded into national planning policy a ‘vision led’ approach to transport planning. However, there has since been little or no guidance as to what that means in practice and transport evidence work to date has been predicated on a continuation of the current societal behaviours and expectations (one of the key reasons why the LTA is preparing its Enabling Travel Choice Strategy is to set out its expectations as to how a ‘vision led’ approach should be applied in Leicestershire).
41. The key pieces of transport evidence are summarised below:
- a) *Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Assessment Stage 1:*
This piece of evidence was undertaken in support of the SGP. It looked at four options for potential spatial strategies for the HMA, one of which equated to the SGP’s spatial vision. An overall conclusion was that in terms of strategic transport impacts, there is no ‘magic bullet’ to meeting the needs of the area’s growing population, such as a strategy that avoids the need for significant investment in strategic transport infrastructure. It also concluded that there was no evidence to suggest why the SGP’s spatial vision should not continue to be pursued. Of the four options that were tested, none performed markedly better or appeared to be more readily deliverable in strategic transport terms.
 - b) *Local Plan transport evidence:* The evidence generated to date is, in principle, demonstrating similar significant issues. That is:
 - i. Cumulative impacts across areas or along particular corridors. By way of examples, the evidence prepared for the new Charnwood Local Plan demonstrates that the Plan’s relatively ‘dispersed’ housing spatial strategy results in cumulative impacts at multiple locations across the district. Conversely the evidence in respect of the emerging new Harborough Local Plan shows that its relatively more focused spatial strategy has more focused impacts, most particularly on the A6 corridor and on the A5.
 - ii. There are no longer any straightforward or inexpensive ways to mitigate the strategic transport impacts of growth.
 - iii. The scale of strategic transport investment (for all modes) required to address the impacts of growth is becoming increasingly beyond that which a CIL, combined with likely future levels of public funding, can afford. This situation is compounded where development (planned or speculative) is coming forward and gaining planning permission in advance of a CIL being in place; this represents a loss of potential CIL income.

Section Concluding Comments

42. The previous round of Local Plans in Leicestershire (their preparation stemming from around 10 to 15 years ago) represents the last that were, in relative terms,

straightforward to address from a strategic transport planning perspective. In most cases, sites were able to come forward with relatively localised impacts that were capable of being addressed by their developers either by them delivering directly a transport improvement or indirectly by helping to deliver a scheme via a Section 106 contribution. Where the delivery of growth required coordinated public investment to help to enable it, the then Local Enterprise Partnership had Growth Deal monies to award; schemes delivered at M1 Junction 22 and A42 Junction 13 are two examples of such publicly funded schemes that helped to enable growth.

43. However, the scale of investment in the Country's transport system (at the least) has failed to keep pace with the increased travel demands generated by a growing population. As further growth is coming forward, there is no longer appropriate and suitable transport capacity to support it. Thus, in the absence of strategic infrastructure improvements traffic conditions on existing routes will continue to deteriorate and/or traffic will be displaced on to far less suitable routes, with potential asset management, safety and environmental consequences.
44. This situation would be challenging enough to deal with even if national planning policy was stable; Local Plans were proceeding at a geographic scale appropriate to the scale of growth that they were being required to provide for, and they were coming forward in a coordinated way; and where not every Local Plan is, effectively, a priority for investment (because the Government is putting pressure on every LPA to achieve the delivery of their Local Plans). The strategic spatial planning backdrop is very far from ideal, compounding the challenges faced by the LTA.
45. It is unsurprising that local communities, Members, and Members of Parliament are increasingly vocal in their concerns about the impacts of new developments (growth) on their areas, especially with regards to traffic impacts. Most recently, 'Villages Together', a coalition of currently 20 Parish Councils, has raised concerns about the cumulative impacts of traffic from new development on roads in their areas, whilst other parties have a particular focus on concerns about the A6 south corridor and the Kibworth villages, and in respect of significant housing growth proposals in and around the A5, A444 and Norton Juxta Twycross.
46. Whilst supporting a Plan-led approach in principle, it is becoming more common for the LTA to conclude that growth is not deliverable without severe traffic impacts on the County's road network (severe is a term used in the NPPF). By extension, it is hard for the LTA to agree that it is in the best overall interests of local communities to support the Local Plans on which it is being consulted. This is exemplified by the concerns that it has expressed with regard to the Harborough Local Plan (as set out in a report to the Cabinet in March 2025) and most recently the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan (as set out in a report to the Cabinet on 18 November 2025).

47. However, if the population continues to grow there will continue to be the need for more new homes and jobs regardless of the strategic issues and local concerns; it is better to try and plan for meeting those needs rather than to leave it to speculative market forces. The LTA 'objecting' to the Local Plans will not stop the pressures of growth.
48. Even in perfect circumstances – where the optimum planning policy framework existed to provide for the coordinated delivery of growth with infrastructure and where it was also possible to make a sufficient quantum of funding available – the nature and scale of the transport infrastructure that is required to enable the HMA's future growth is not deliverable in the shorter-term.
49. As a result, it is difficult to see how, in the shorter term, it will be possible to avoid continued further traffic impacts on local communities. However, in response to local concerns and the planning reforms paragraphs 52 to 67 set out proposals for work that are intended to tackle the strategic spatial and transport planning issues to provide more positive prospects in the medium to longer-term (such as looking forward over the next decades).

Initial Actions to Date in Raising Strategic Issues

50. The County Council has been proactive in taking opportunities to raise strategic spatial and transport planning issues in responses to the Government's consultations (such as its response to a consultation on reforms to the NPPF). That consultation included the Government's plan to introduce SDSs across the country.
51. The County Council's officers have also been in discussions with National Highways and Homes England to explore joint opportunities to plan for the HMA's growing population and these discussions have helped to inform the further work proposals, outlined below.

Proposed Strategic Planning and Transport Planning Work

Preparation of a Spatial Development Strategy

52. The December 2024 revisions to the national planning policy set out the Government's intention to introduce a more strategic approach to planning, that more effectively provides for the amount of development that the Country needs, notably housing, and supports the delivery of the associated infrastructure.
53. The Government proposes to introduce SDSs. Subject to its enactment, the Planning and Infrastructure Bill (which it is understood is now cleared for Royal Assent), will place a duty on upper tier county councils, amongst other bodies, to prepare an SDS for their areas.
54. The Government's stated main purposes for the introduction of SDSs include that:

- a) The current planning system does not provide effective mechanisms for strategic planning across local authority boundaries (except for London). This means that planning in England is undertaken on a scale that is too local, and identifying effective sustainable development locations, along with the appropriate supporting infrastructure, is not happening.
 - b) The housing need in England cannot be met without planning for growth on a larger than local scale, and that reform is needed to introduce effective new mechanisms for cross-boundary strategic planning. A nationally consistent system is needed to address the problem and set a planning framework that provides for the amount of development the Country needs, notably housing, and supports the delivery of infrastructure required to support that development.

- 55. SDSs will be produced across England and will set the strategic patterns and scales of development across an area. They will be part of the overall Development Plan for an area. This means that the Local Plans will have to be in general conformity with the relevant SDS, and that SDSs will be used to guide the determination of planning applications. More particularly, SDSs will:
 - a) Provide a spatial strategy that guides local plans and enables growth;
 - b) Identify key infrastructure requirements to enable the spatial strategy to be implemented;
 - c) Identify strategic locations for development and an indication of the scale of development required;
 - d) Identify areas where protection or restoration of the natural environment is required; and
 - e) Apportion and distribute housing need to the most appropriate locations.

- 56. The County Council's officers' best understanding is that an SDS could potentially cover the administrative areas of Leicestershire, the City of Leicester and of Rutland (LLR).

- 57. Preparation of an SDS for LLR will provide opportunities:
 - a) To coordinate better the use of a wide range of evidence, including in respect of transport, education, health, waste, environment and energy supply, to identify where best to locate growth across the area from a service provision perspective, both public (such as transport, education, waste and health) and private, (such as utilities such as power and water).
 - b) To explore how services and facilities can be brought to places, thereby avoiding/reducing the need to travel by car (a key principle of the proposed Enabling Travel Choice Strategy).
 - c) To consider how best to phase and prioritise the delivery of growth and infrastructure investment across the area by place/location and over time.
 - d) To establish the basis for a possible area-wide CIL.
 - e) To provide a foundation for the future development of strategic business cases to secure investment in infrastructure (which would be reflective of

the Government's intention to move towards 'place based' business cases).

58. The County Council's officers are engaging with the Planning Advisory Service and the MHCLG, jointly with the City Council and Rutland Council, to seek advice on the preparation of an SDS, including the requirements of the supporting evidence. It is understood that a toolkit for Local Authorities at various stages of devolution will be made available early in 2026 so that the preparations can begin in earnest. The County Council's preparations will include staff recruitment to support the development of the SDS.
59. The preparation of an SDS is a medium-term action, and the effects of its delivery 'on the ground' will only be seen in the longer term. The next section of this report sets out proposed work for the immediate future, that is over the next few years.

Scheme Identification and Development Work

Initial Evidence Work

60. In the light of the concerns it has raised about the Local Plans, over the past 10 months, the LTA has been undertaking some initial evidence work, which has been funded from within existing budgets.
61. This initial work has included starting a proactive approach to:
 - a) *Planning for potential new future transport networks across south Leicestershire.* This work has begun to consider how future transport networks, including passenger transport, might be better planned around an understanding of how people need to move around as part of their daily lives. This early thinking has been used to inform the development of the Enabling Travel Choice Strategy.
 - b) *Exploring the potential benefits of improving strategic transport orbital connectivity around the east and south of the Leicester Urban Area.* This work has focused on understanding how this might help to provide traffic relief to M1 Junction 21 and the connecting Local Road Network; remove longer-distance strategic journeys from lower order roads in the districts of Oadby and Wigston, Harborough and Blaby; and how this might help to open land for future development in the SGP 'Priority Growth Corridor'.
 - c) *Understanding more about the make-up of journeys made along the A6 south corridor, including through the Kibworth villages.* The particular focus has been on developing an understanding of the lengths of and the origins and destinations of journeys. This in turn has helped to develop an understanding as to the quantum of journeys that have the potential to transfer to other means (modes) of travel other than by car as a potential way to reduce traffic levels.

62. Whilst this initial work has not reached any definitive conclusions, it has provided a positive basis for identifying and taking forward the further work that is set out below.
63. In seeking to continue to influence positively the content of emerging Local Plans in the interests of local communities, it is considered that it would now be beneficial to share the details about this initial work with the district councils (as the LPAs) and the developers of sites that are likely to have allocations included in those Plans.

Further work

64. Building on the initial evidence work and in response to local concerns an initial set of scheme identification and development work has been identified. Whilst listed separately, there are overlaps between the pieces of work:
 - a) *To develop a multi-modal, mapped strategic vision for the HMA's future transport system.* This will build on the initial thinking to understand how transport needs to facilitate peoples' movements across the HMA (including, for example, to access health care, jobs, education, and social and leisure activities). This will be used to identify patterns of travel demand and movements, segregated to help ascertain those with the greatest propensity to transfer to active (cycling and walking) and sustainable (such as passenger transport) modes, and which are more likely to remain as vehicular trips by virtue of their distance and/or distribution and/or nature (for example larger goods vehicles). This will provide the basis for an HMA mapped strategic 'Transport Vision'. Ultimately, this work will provide an evidence-based approach to identifying the strategic transport investment that will be required to enable the HMA's future growth. In turn, this would provide a platform for the future development of business cases to seek to secure public investment. It will also provide useful evidence to inform the future development of CIL (district or County-wide).
 - b) *To examine options for improving strategic transport orbital connectivity around the east and south of the Leicester Urban Area.* It is intended that this work will consider options (such as in terms of route and design standards) for a new multi-modal route running from the A47 East to at least a new junction on the M1 (J20a) somewhere to the south of Junction 21. It will expand on the initial work to consider in more detail the potential benefits of such a route in terms of providing traffic relief in and around M1 Junction 21 and existing roads across south Leicestershire. This work also has the potential to support the development of a strategic business case for the creation of a J20a, which is essential to enabling the delivery of the scale of housing and employment growth envisaged in the SGP 'Priority Growth Corridor', especially in the district of Blaby.
 - c) *To examine options for the A6 corridor to the south of the City of Leicester, including the Kibworths villages.* The initial work points towards

the conclusion that providing a new road around the villages is the only solution to address the current traffic problems and suitably mitigate future growth, in particular as proposed to come forward in the districts of Harborough and Oadby and Wigston. This work will consider options (such as in terms of route and design standard) for a road around the villages and develop an initial understanding of its potential benefits and costs. This in turn will give an indication of its value for money, which will affect the strength of any business case for securing public investment.

- d) *To explore options for the use of the Eastern District Distributor Road (EDDR) reservation in Oadby.* Land has been reserved for the EDDR for many years; had the scheme been completed as was originally intended in the 1990s, it would have formed part of the missing section of the A563 Outer District Distributor Road between the A47 East and A6 South. This work will explore how a scheme in the corridor might help support the delivery of the significant scale of growth proposed to come forward on the boundary of the districts of Oadby and Wigston and Harborough. It will also consider what role a route along the corridor could play in addressing problems on the A6 corridor through Oadby; how it might be used to reduce the existing use by traffic of less suitable routes in the area; how it might provide for new active travel (walking, wheeling, cycling) opportunities; and provide opportunities for new passenger transport connections.

65. As indicated in Part A of this report, it is intended that this work will be funded by the use of £500,000 from within the Department's Advanced Design Budget.
66. In the light of resources available and the levels of funding likely to be available in future year budgets, consideration will be given to developing proposals for further pieces of work for inclusion in future Highways and Transport Capital and Works Programmes.
67. Again, it is considered that it would now be beneficial to share details of this work with the district councils and site developers.

Next Steps

68. The further work outlined above will be beneficial to the development of the SDS.
69. The sharing of the details of the initial evidence work and the outcomes of the scheme identification and development works as they emerge will be beneficial to the LTA's future input into other areas of strategic planning, for example:
- a) *To work with the LPAs to:*
- i. Explore how this can help to inform the Local Plans' further development, including in respect of policies.
 - ii. Seek to ensure that at the least Local Plans do not fetter the delivery of long-term strategic transport solutions.

- iii. Establish and put in place lawful mechanisms to seek to secure developer contributions towards known and emerging strategic transport infrastructure, including to provide evidence to support the development and implementation of a CIL.

b) To work with developers to:

- i. Be proactive in seeking to influence how growth comes forward; a current example of this is the A5 Concept Link.
- ii. Seek to secure direct delivery by developers of transport infrastructure as part of new development or to secure developer contributions towards such delivery.

- 70. Discussions will also be sought with the district councils which are bringing forward the Local Plans in Tranche 3 (as set out in the appendix), to explore the opportunities to streamline and align the strategic spatial and transport planning work and identify solutions across a wider geographical scale.

Conclusion

- 71. As the population of the HMA continues to grow so will demand for new homes and jobs, which in turn will need new infrastructure to be provided by the County Council, in particular, transport, education and waste infrastructure.
- 72. As explained in this report, the current approach to strategic spatial and transport planning to meet that demand faces many challenges, including successive and significant changes to national planning policy, marked changes as to the way that housing requirements are calculated, and investment in the Country's transport system failing to keep pace with the travel demands generated by a growing population.
- 73. New homes and jobs will continue to be delivered but, from a transport perspective, there is no inexpensive or straightforward means to support and mitigate this growth that will have no resultant impacts on traffic conditions in local communities.
- 74. In the absence of a short-term remedy for local concerns the proposals set out in this report will help to tackle the strategic spatial and strategic transport planning issues across the HMA in the longer term.
- 75. The proposals seek to achieve, at an LLR geography, a more coordinated approach to locations for growth and prioritisation of its delivery relative to the prioritisation of investment in the infrastructure and services necessary to support it.
- 76. The work proposed will provide a sound evidence base to enable the LTA to make more positive and constructive input into spatial planning. In particular, this evidence will help to identify, agree and implement mechanisms to secure funding to enable the future delivery of infrastructure, including via the implementation of CIL.

77. The success of the proposals set out in this report rests on successful collaborative working with the district councils. It will be important that commitment to the approach is demonstrated through Local Plan policies and narrative as appropriate. The current round of emerging Local Plans will not be able to address every strategic issue, but it is vitally important that they go as far as is possible (within the confines imposed by national planning policy and regulation) in laying the foundations for a better future of strategic spatial and transport planning. They should not do anything to fetter the achievement of that better future, including the delivery of strategic transport infrastructure required to enable Leicester and Leicestershire's long-term growth.
78. The proposals will also form a coherent basis for ongoing discussions with National Highways and Homes England, and they seek to establish better ways to coordinate efforts and investments to provide for the needs of the HMA's growing population.

Equality Implications

79. There are no equality implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Human Rights Implications

80. There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

Background Papers

Report to the Cabinet on 23 November 2018: Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan – Consideration of Revised Plan for Approval

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&Mid=5185&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet on 16 September 2022: Leicester and Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Housing and Employment Needs

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=6776#AI72573>

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=6776>

Report to the Cabinet on 22 October 2024: Strategic Transport Issues Associated with the Emerging Charnwood Local Plan

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/documents/s185920/Charnwood%20Local%20Plan%20Cabinet%20221024.pdf>

Report to the Cabinet on 13 September 2024: Proposed Response to Consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MID=7509#AI79926>

Report to the Cabinet on 22 November 2024: Local Transport Plan (LTP4): Outcome of Consultation and Approval of Core Document

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7511&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet 7 February 2025: Response to the Oadby and Wigston Local Plan (2020-2041) Pre-Submission Consultation Draft

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7873&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet 18 March 2025: Proposed Submission Draft (Regulation 19) Harborough Local Plan 2020-2041

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7874&Ver=4>

Report to the County Council on 2 July 2025: Local Transport Plan 4

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=134&MId=7859&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet 28 October 2025: Delivering the Local Transport Plan (LTP4) 2025-2040 – Next Steps

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7880&Ver=4>

Report to the Cabinet 18 November 2025: Response to the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Regulation 18 Local Plan Consultation 2025

<https://democracy.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=135&MId=7881&Ver=4>

Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Transport Assessment Stage 1

<https://www.llestrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/latest-updates/publication-of-strategic-growth-options-and-strategic-transport-assessment-stage-1/>

Appendix

Local Plan Preparation Status

This page is intentionally left blank