



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

Local Plan Site Selection Paper - October 2025

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A site selection paper is a key evidence document prepared as part of the development of a Local Plan. Its purpose is to explain the process by which potential development sites are identified, assessed, and selected for allocation in the plan.
- 1.2 This paper outlines the site selection methodology, which typically includes a series of stages such as the initial identification of sites (from sources like the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment), the application of planning constraints and policy filters, sustainability appraisal, and comparative analysis of site suitability, availability, and achievability.
- 1.3 It ensures that the selection process is transparent, consistent, and aligned with national and local planning objectives, helping to justify why certain sites are proposed for allocation while others are not.

2.0 The current context

- 2.1 The site selection process for a Local Plan is an evolving and iterative exercise that continues throughout the plan-making period. At this stage, the process remains ongoing, with some stages of assessment, refinement, and consultation still to complete. Initial work involved identifying the breadth of potential sites through sources such as the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), various call for sites exercises, receipt of ad-hoc submissions from promoters/developers and existing planning permissions/applications. However, sites are subject to further scrutiny, considering aspects such as planning constraints, sustainability, infrastructure capacity, and alignment with the spatial strategy.
- 2.2 As the Local Plan progresses, the site selection process undergoes multiple subsequent stages. These include detailed technical assessments, engagement with statutory consultees and infrastructure providers, and the application of policy filters to ensure sites are deliverable and consistent with national and local planning objectives. The process also incorporates feedback from public consultation and the Sustainability Appraisal, which helps to evaluate the environmental, social, and economic impacts of site options.
- 2.3 Importantly, the selection of sites is not final until the Local Plan reaches its publication stage. Even then, sites may be subject to further change following representations and examination by the Planning Inspectorate. This ensures that the final set of allocations is robust, justified, and capable of meeting the area's development needs sustainably. The ongoing nature of the process reflects the importance of transparency, evidence-led decision-making, and responsiveness to emerging information and stakeholder input.

- 2.4 The three stages of the site selection process and development of reasonable alternative spatial strategy options are set out in the boxes below.

3.0 Stage 1: Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)

Role

- 3.1 A Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) is a key technical document used in the preparation of a Local Plan. It provides an evidence-based assessment of land within the Borough to determine its potential for housing and economic development. Below is a summary of what it is and how it contributes to site identification and selection.
- 3.2 A SHELAA is a technical assessment of land availability, suitability, and achievability for housing and employment uses. It is guided by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG). It does not allocate sites or grant planning permission but informs plan-making by identifying potential development sites.

Methodology

- 3.3 More information on the sourcing and processing of site submissions can be found in the Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) Methodology, available on the Borough Council's website. The Hinckley & Bosworth SHELAA Methodology is based on a Leicestershire-wide methodology, jointly agreed by the partnership of Leicestershire authorities, this can also be found on the Borough Council's website

Sources of sites

- 3.4 Sites are put forward to the Borough Council mainly via the Call for Sites exercise(s), where sites are submitted from landowners, site representatives, house builders, agents etc. Other sources for potential development sites include the brownfield register, existing allocations in the adopted Local Plan, lapsed planning permissions, and Council-owned land.

Number of sites considered

- 3.5 As September 2025, the number of sites on our SHELAA database is approximately 330. This number is an approximate at this time due to the current Call for Sites not closing until 17 October 2025. To be clear, this number of sites does not feature in the latest published version of the SHELAA (2022), but will feature in the upcoming reviewed SHELAA, due for publication in late 2025. This number of sites comes from the Call for Sites which has been continuously open throughout the production of the Local Plan, up to the 17 October 2025. More information can be found on the SHELAA pages of the Borough Council's website.

- 3.6 Due to the Call for Sites being ongoing whilst this paper was being written, the final number of sites considered for this Local Plan will feature in the updated version of this paper, which will be made available alongside the Sustainability Appraisal work at Regulation 19 in 2026.

Sites not considered in the SHELAA

- 3.7 Sites are not considered in the SHELAA if they are below 0.25ha (or cannot deliver five dwellings), as per the methodology, however small sites are considered otherwise in the Local Plan process, to help meet the requirements of para 73(a) of the NPPF.

Analysis of sites

- 3.8 The analysis of sites is a wide-ranging process, involving multiple different avenues of data gathering and scrutiny. The analysis follows the SHELAA methodology closely. This process includes (but not limited to):

- GIS and online map-based constraints mapping to desktop review:
 - Natural environment constraints, such as Local Wildlife Sites, Site of Special Scientific Interests (SSSI), Tree Preservation Orders (TPO), etc.
 - Historic environment constraints, such as listed buildings
 - Flood risk
 - Planning designations such as open space, green wedge, community facilities, employment areas
 - Proximity to services and community facilities
 - Contamination, waste safeguarding, and historic landfill sites
- Site Visits – every site is visited by officers to determine on-the-ground constraints, such as topography, access, present infrastructure such as pylons, electricity boxes, or waste treatment
- Consultation with key stakeholders such as Leicestershire County Council's Ecology & Archaeology teams, the Local Highways Authority and Severn Trent Water.
- Officers undertake desk-based research to investigate planning history, land ownership, and any other planning or non-planning related designations.

- 3.9 A variety of assumptions are then applied to the sites, including net densities, developable area calculations, and potential development numbers.

- 3.10 Officers also actively engage with site representatives to discover more information about a site and query (where needed) if we are accurately representing their proposals. Developer panels are held as and when appropriate during the review of the SHELAA Methodology on a semi-regular basis.

Possible Outcomes

- 3.11 The SHELAA sites are then assessed for their: suitability, availability, achievability, development capacity, market interest, build rate, and timeframe for development.
- 3.12 The determination of a site's suitability, availability and achievability combined with timeframes for development directly informs the overall site assessment as either: Deliverable, Developable; or Non-developable.

Reasons for discounting sites

- 3.13 There are various instances where a site would be discounted in the SHELAA process or assessed as non-developable such as the existence of Red Constraints. Red Constraints mean no feasible development potential can be demonstrated due to the overwhelming nature of the constraint long-term. These sites are thus deemed non-developable and are not taken forward for consideration.
- 3.14 For a site to be 'developable/deliverable' the site must meet all three criteria: suitable, available, and achievable. If one of these three criteria is not satisfied, the site is deemed non-developable (but not necessarily meaning that constraints could not be overcome).
- 3.15 Therefore, for sites to proceed through the Local Plan process, a holistic view of the outcome of the SHELAA and all other factors must be taken to determine whether a site should proceed to Stage 2.

4.0 Stage 2: Detailed evidence gathering and site assessment

- 4.1 The second stage involves a more in-depth technical analysis of the sites that were either deemed deliverable or developable through the SHELAA or identified as not currently developable but potentially developable with intervention and/or mitigation.
- 4.2 This stage of site assessment for the Local Plan preparation is underpinned by a comprehensive suite of technical assessments and evidence base documents. These were produced either directly by the Council or commissioned from specialist consultants acting on the Council's behalf. The evidence base is instrumental in shaping the spatial strategy and informing site allocations, and includes, but is not limited to, the following key areas:
- **Transport and Accessibility:** A detailed transport analysis is currently being undertaken to assess the cumulative impact of proposed development across the borough and the wider area. This work is being carried out in collaboration with a partnership of South Leicestershire authorities (Blaby DC, Harborough DC, Oadby & Wigston BC in partnership with Hinckley and Bosworth) to ensure a coordinated approach to transport planning and infrastructure delivery.
 - **Highways Consultation:** Ongoing engagement has been maintained throughout the plan-making process with the Local Highways Authority (Leicestershire County

Council) to assess the capacity and suitability of the local road network. The Warwickshire Highways Authority is also engaged with where development proposals may affect the A5, a part of the Strategic Road Network, which separates both counties.

- In addition, National Highways has been consulted in relation to sites that may affect the Strategic Road Network (SRN), ensuring that any potential impacts are appropriately considered and mitigated.
- Water Infrastructure: The Council has consulted with Severn Trent Water to understand the capacity of existing water supply and wastewater infrastructure, and to identify any necessary upgrades or constraints that may influence the location and scale of future development.
- Education Provision: Leicestershire County Council has provided advice on school place planning, including the projected demand for primary and secondary school places arising from proposed housing growth. This input has informed the identification of infrastructure requirements and potential developer contributions.

- 4.3 These technical assessments and stakeholder inputs form a critical part of the evidence base, ensuring that the Local Plan is both deliverable and aligned with strategic infrastructure planning. However, this is not the comprehensive list of the work that supports site selection.
- 4.4 The full list of evidence base documents can be found in Appendix 5 List of Key Evidence Base Documents to support the Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan (2024-2045). This is available alongside the Regulation 18 draft Local Plan.
- 4.5 The outcome of this stage gives a refined list of potential site options, with some sites not progressing further.

5.0 Stage 3: Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

- 5.1 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been integral to the site selection process for housing and employment growth in the Local Plan. It provides a structured and transparent framework for assessing the environmental, social, and economic implications of potential development sites. Sites are evaluated against a consistent set of sustainability objectives, including climate resilience, biodiversity protection, accessibility to services, and contribution to local economic needs. This process helps identify sites that perform well across multiple criteria and highlights where mitigation may be required to address potential adverse impacts.
- 5.2 The SA does not determine site allocations but informs decision-making by presenting evidence on the relative sustainability of options. It supports compliance with legal requirements under the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive and ensures

that site choices are justified and robust. The findings of the SA have been used alongside other planning considerations—such as deliverability, infrastructure capacity, and alignment with the spatial strategy—to guide the selection of preferred sites for inclusion in the draft Local Plan. The SA Appraisal is currently being undertaken with JBA Consulting and primarily focuses on the potential site options identified in Stage 2. .

- 5.3 The appraisal tests various growth scenarios against the sustainability objectives outlined in the SA framework. The output of this stage includes a set of defined reasonable alternative spatial strategies, each representing a different growth scenario.

6.0 Next stage: Regulation 19

- 6.1 The Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan will contain the final set of allocations for development the borough council wish to include to meet identified needs to 2045. This Site Selection Paper will be reviewed and updated to detail the next stage of the process of site selection that was used to inform the final selection of allocations and will be available alongside the draft Plan at Regulation 19 stage in 2026.