

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) for the Melton Local Plan Update

Scoping Report

Melton Borough Council

October 2023

Quality information

<u>Prepared by</u>	<u>Checked by</u>	<u>Verified by</u>	<u>Approved by</u>
Emily Baker Graduate Environmental Planner	Ian McCluskey Associate Director	Ian McCluskey Associate Director	Nick Chisolm-Batten Technical Director
Antonio Vinti Environmental Consultant			

Prepared for:
Melton Borough Council

Prepared by:
AECOM Limited
3rd Floor, Portwall Place
Portwall Lane
Bristol BS1 6NA
United Kingdom

T: +44 117 901 7000
aecom.com

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Melton is a borough in Leicestershire at the heart of the East Midlands, it is named after its principal town Melton Mowbray. Large parts of the borough are rural in nature and support agriculture, with a range of distinct settlements throughout.
- 1.1.2 Melton Borough Council are in the process of preparing a Local Plan Update to take account of changing circumstances affecting the area, updates to the local evidence base, alongside any relevant changes in national policy. The Melton Local Plan Update will make focused changes to the existing Plan as a result of the Local Plan Review.
- 1.1.3 AECOM is commissioned by Melton Council ('the Council') to lead on Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in support of the Melton Local Plan Update.
- 1.1.4 This document is an SA 'scoping report', which sets out the background information, policy context and key issues in relation to a range of sustainability issues. This is one of the first outputs from the SA process, and it sets the framework for future work.

1.2 What is Sustainability Appraisal (SA)?

Introduction to SA

- 1.2.1 SA is a mechanism for considering and communicating the likely effects of a draft plan, and alternatives, in terms of sustainability issues, with a view to avoiding and mitigating adverse effects and maximising the positives. The aim is to ensure that the plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development.
- 1.2.2 SA must be undertaken in accordance with specific procedural requirements, as established by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes ('SEA') Regulations 2004. Two key procedural requirements of the SEA Regulations are that:
1. When deciding on 'the scope and level of detail of the information' which must be included within the key output report - namely the report published for consultation alongside the draft plan - there is a consultation with certain nationally designated authorities, namely the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England; and
 2. A report (the 'SA Report') is published for consultation alongside the draft plan (i.e. the draft Local Plan Update) that 'identifies, describes and evaluates' the likely significant effects of implementing 'the plan [i.e. the Local Plan Update], and reasonable alternatives'.
- 1.2.3 This scoping report is concerned with item 1 above. It presents a suggested scope for the SA so that the statutory consultation bodies and other interested stakeholders can provide timely comment.

1.3 Scoping explained

Introduction

1.3.1 Scoping essentially involves identifying a 'framework' of sustainability issues and objectives that should be a focus of, and provide a methodological framework for, the appraisal of the emerging plan (and reasonable alternatives). In order to facilitate the identification of sustainability issues/objectives, scoping firstly involves review of the 'context' and 'baseline'. Scoping therefore involves the following steps:

1. Context review - a review of existing policy and issues/objectives established by Government, the Council and other key organisations.
2. Baseline review - a review of the current situation locally and a consideration of how this might evolve in the absence of the plan.
3. Key issues summary - a summary of the key (in the sense that the plan may have an effect) problems and opportunities identified through steps (1) and (2).
4. SA Framework development - a refinement of the key issues

Structure of this report

1.3.2 Scoping steps 1 to 4 have been completed, and the outcomes are presented for consultation within this report. Rather than presenting the outcomes of steps 1 to 4 sequentially within this report, the outcomes of steps 1 to 4 are presented under the following thematic headings in turn:

- Air quality
- Biodiversity
- Climate Change Resilience
- Climate Change Mitigation
- Economy
- Equality and diversity
- Health
- Historic Environment
- Housing
- Landscape and townscape
- Soil and land
- Transport
- Water

1.3.3 These themes reflect the anticipated broad scope of sustainability issues/objectives likely to be of greatest relevance to the Melton Local Plan Update. It is intended that presenting the scoping information under these themes will help enable the reader to easily locate the information of greatest interest to them.

1.3.4 It should be noted that 'waste' has been scoped out as a discrete SA theme. Waste planning for Melton is undertaken at a sub-regional level, and the Local Plan Update will not affect the adopted Leicestershire Mineral and Waste Local Plan to 203, which will remain as part of the Melton Development Plan once the Local Plan Update is adopted.

1.3.5 The discussion of scoping under each SA theme is presented in Sections 2 to 13. A final section then discusses 'next steps'

1.4 Melton Local Plan Review and Update

1.4.1 In April 2022, Melton Council agreed to commence a 5-year review of the adopted Local Plan.

1.4.2 As a result of the review, it was recommended that an updated Local Plan should be prepared. Key considerations were as follows:

- Whilst the Local Plan has performed well since its adoption (in terms of housing and employment land delivery), an up-to date Local Plan is required to continue to lever in investment to deliver vital infrastructure to support development and growth.
- Government has been clear that local planning authorities should not delay the Local Plan process whilst waiting for any changes proposed to the wider planning system nationally to come into force.
- The need to reflect policy and legislative changes since Adoption.
- The revised corporate context, particularly the need to reflect the climate emergency declaration.
- Aspirations for improvement.

1.4.3 The review focused on the key areas of the Plan that require updating, refreshing or changing for a variety of reasons (recognising that some elements of the Plan remain effective and relevant). Some key points of note from the review are as follows:

- The spatial strategy continues to provide a sound basis the delivery of new development.
- Housing allocations do not need to be updated.
- Employment growth strategies for Melton Mowbray and rural areas need to be updated.
- Town centre policies need updating.
- A range of social and housing related policies could benefit from updates.
- Landscape and heritage focused policies and areas of separation do not need to be revisited.
- Climate change policies need to be updated.
- Site specific policies do not need to be updated or refreshed.
- Sustainable neighbourhood policies need to be updated.

1.4.4 The outcomes from the review will guide the scope of the Local Plan update, and this will need to be reflected through the sustainability appraisal.

1.4.5 The Council has now gained approval to consult on the first stage of the Local Plan update process, which will be to explore a series of 'issues and options' (which summarises those 'Issues' identified in the Five-year Review document (for those policies that require an update). The SA Scoping Report is being prepared to accompany the Issues and Options consultation.

2. Air quality

2.1 Focus of topic

2.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Air quality management;
- Access to Green Space; and
- A roads / strategic road network.

2.2 Context review

2.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion.

Table 2.1: Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
International	
Directive 2010/75/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 November 2010 on industrial emissions (integrated pollution prevention and control)	2010
National	
The Environmental Targets (Fine Particular Matter) (England) Regulations 2023	2023
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
Environment Act	2021
Clean Air Strategy	2019
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide concentrations	2017
Local	
Leicestershire County Council - Public Health Strategy 2022-2027	2022
Melton Local Plan	2018
Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (2011-2026)	2014
Melton Borough Climate Change Strategy Information	N/A

2.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The Directive on industrial emissions sets out rules on the prevention and control of pollution caused by industrial activities. It also details the rules designed to prevent or reduce emissions into the air, water, and land. Furthermore, it outlines ways to avert waste generation to achieve a high level of environmental protection.

- Air quality features in Chapter 9 and Chapter 15 of the NPPF. The NPPF states the following:
 - Chapter 9: significant development should be focused on locations which are currently, or can be made to be, sustainable. Through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes, congestion and emissions can be decreased and air quality improved.
 - Chapter 15: new and existing developments should be prevented from contributing to, being at risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of air pollution.
 - Chapter 15: planning policies and decisions should comply with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, appropriately considering the presence of Air Quality Management Areas, Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts of individual sites. Opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts should be identified, like traffic and travel management and the creation or enhancement of green infrastructure. These opportunities should be considered at the plan-making stage to ensure a strategic approach is adopted and there is an effective limitation of issues. Local air quality action plans should also be considered and adhered to.
- The Environment Act 2021 introduces the need for the Secretary of State to set an annual mean particulate matter (PM2.5) level target. This links to the Environmental Targets (Fine Particulate Matter) (England) Regulations 2023, which sets out to ensure annual PM2.5 concentrations are equal to or less than 10 micrograms per cubic metre by the 31st December 2040.
- The Clean Air Strategy identifies how the Government will tackle all sources of air pollution. The strategy proposes goals to cut public exposure to particulate matter pollution and outlines required action to meet these goals. The proposed measures include new legislation and local powers to act in areas with air pollution issues.
- The 25-year Environment Plan discusses air quality; stating that the Government will take action to expand net gain approaches to include air quality improvements, as well as planting more trees in urban areas to improve air quality and changing fuel supplies to reduce air pollution.
- The UK plan for tackling roadside nitrogen dioxide is an air quality plan focused on bringing nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) within statutory limits in the quickest time possible. The plan identifies that improving air quality and reducing carbon emissions is also important and wants to position the UK at the forefront of vehicle innovation by making motoring cleaner.
- The Leicestershire County Council Public Health Strategy 2022-2027 outlines the vision for health and wellbeing in the county, including Melton Borough. The strategy aims to protect and improve the health and quality of life of everyone in Leicestershire through the following. This includes taking a multi-agency approach on air quality issues; promoting open spaces, active travel and collaborative approaches to improve it.

- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. The main policies linked to air quality are:
 - Policy C9 - Healthy Communities; and
 - Policy EC4 – Other Employment and Mixed-use Proposals.
- The Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (LTP3) covers the city of Leicester and the county of Leicestershire, and is the key mechanism for delivering integrated transportation at the local level. It recognises the importance of air quality on human health and the wider environment. One of the aims of the LTP3 is to improve air quality – including through offering more active and public transportation opportunities, and limiting the growth of traffic.
- Melton Borough Council declared a ‘Climate Emergency’ in 2019, recognising the magnitude of the climate change issue and the role the council needs to play to tackle it and reduce emissions. A reduction in emissions will contribute to improving air quality by reducing pollutants released into the atmosphere. Consultation on the Melton Borough Climate Change Strategy closed in Spring 2022.

2.3 Summary of baseline

Air quality management

- 2.3.1 According to the latest Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) from 2021¹, local road traffic is the air pollution source of most concern. This is linked to the concentration of emissions and the proximity of residential dwellings to the local road network. An area of particular concern is Melton Mowbray, especially on and around the ring road in the settlement. This is due to the level of nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) – a combustion gas and primary pollutant linked to vehicle exhaust. However, according to this ASR, the annual average NO₂ levels across all monitoring locations in the borough are within the national objective level of 40 µg/m³. Given there are no exceedances in monitored pollutants in Melton Borough, no Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) have been declared.
- 2.3.2 Additionally, data from the last five years demonstrates an overall decrease in average NO₂ emissions. There has been a significant decrease at some monitoring locations between 2019 and 2020.
- 2.3.3 Other air pollution sources in the borough are linked to local industrial, commercial, domestic and agricultural activities. There are several industrial estates and developments within Melton Borough, which are mostly concentrated in and around Melton Mowbray. In this industrialisation are 13 Local Authority Pollution Prevention & Control (LAPPC) permitted industrial processes and 31 Environment Agency permits.
- 2.3.4 Primary domestic emissions are linked to the use of solid fuel appliances.

¹ Melton Borough Council (2022) ‘Air quality annual status report 2021’ can be accessed [here](#).

Access to green space

- 2.3.5 Green areas play a crucial role in mitigating air pollution by absorbing gaseous airborne pollutants and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. This helps reduce air pollution and enhances air quality.
- 2.3.6 Studies² have demonstrated that the presence of trees in public areas can effectively decrease air pollutant levels by approximately 7%.
- 2.3.7 Melton Borough has a number of open spaces, including (but not limited to) allotments, parks and gardens, and natural and semi-natural greenspace. These contribute a total of over 259ha of open space accessible to residents³.
- 2.3.8 However, there is variation in the level of access to open space across Melton Borough. For example, the Open Space Study⁴ indicates there are no parks and gardens in the North Melton analysis area, nor are there any in the Melton East analysis area. Given their rural nature, it is likely smaller and less populated settlements within the borough have a greater level of access to the surrounding landscape.

A roads / strategic route network

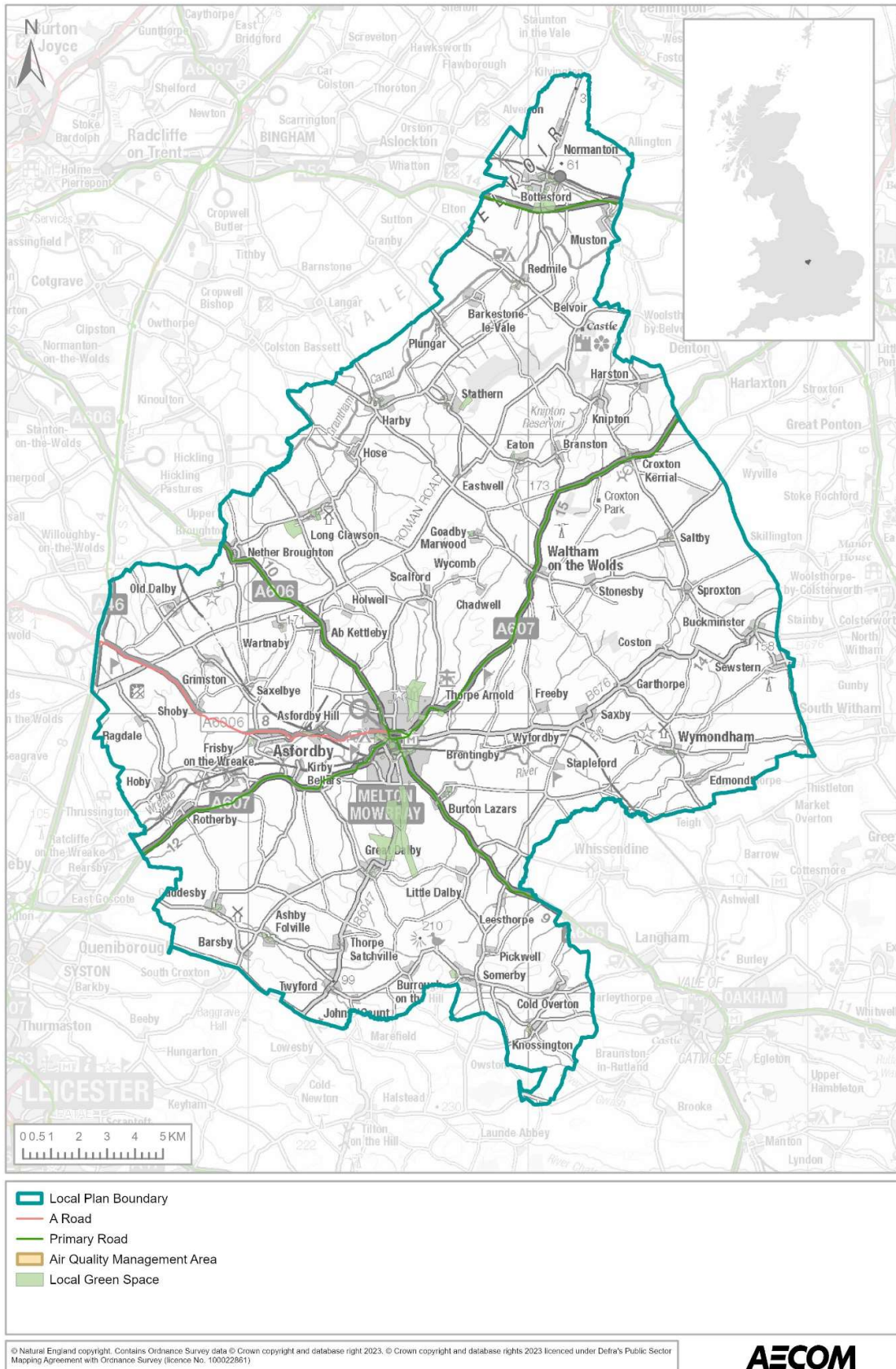
- 2.3.9 Though no air quality management areas have been identified in Melton, the areas of greater concern are typically correlated with the strategic road network and key junctions (as shown in Figure 2-1).
- 2.3.10 Within Melton Borough are two A roads – the A607 that runs in a south-west to north-east direction, and the A606 that runs in a south-east to north-west direction. Both of these strategic roads pass through the centre of Melton Mowbray, and allow for connections to locations including Oakham, Stamford, West Bridgford, Belgrave, and Grantham. Furthermore, the M1 motorway is a 25 minute drive from the west of the Melton Mowbray, whilst the A1 is a 25 minute drive to the east of the town. Given this, Melton Mowbray suffers from considerable vehicular congestion, particularly on the ring road and arterial routes.

² Science Direct (2016) 'Air pollution removal by trees in public green spaces in Strasbourg city, France' can be accessed [here](#).

³ Knight Kavanagh & Page (2014) 'Melton Open Space Study – Open Space Assessment Report' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴ Ibid.

Figure 2-1 Potential air quality issues in Melton Borough



2.4 Summary of future baseline

- 2.4.1 Whilst no AQMAs have been declared in Melton Borough, it is recognised vehicle emissions are a key source of pollution locally. This is especially true in Melton Mowbray, given the ring-road and the two A roads that run through the town centre. New development in the borough will likely lead to increased vehicles on the road, which will increase pressure on the strategic road network and Melton Mowbray.
- 2.4.2 However, it is noted investment in active and sustainable transport provision in the borough could help reduce emissions linked to traffic and congestion. This is due to offering a greater variety of transport and access opportunities that do not rely on private vehicles. This could include investment in and improvements to the public right of way (PRoW) network, to make active transportation a more viable and appealing form of transport in the borough. It could also include an encouraged shift towards electric vehicles (EVs), which do not have any associated tail-pipe emissions.
- 2.4.3 There is also a likely reduction in congestion through the town and on the arterial roads and ring road as a result of the planned Melton Mowbray Distributor Road. This should help to improve air quality in areas that are currently under pressure.
- 2.4.4 It is noted that future development could result in the encroachment / loss of green infrastructure. This has the potential to impact upon air quality due to changes to pollutant absorption. This will be especially prevalent in more urban areas of the borough, like Melton Mowbray, as the open space provision is generally lower than in the more rural areas. As such, it will be important to guide development towards enhancing existing green infrastructure and open space – to ensure green space provision remains consistent and pollutant absorption is increased.

2.5 Key sustainability issues

- 2.5.1 The following key issues have been identified through the baseline review for this topic:
- There is a clear legislative and policy framework that seeks to manage air quality on the international, national and local scale. This is important for the maintenance of human health and the environment.
 - There are no AQMAs within the Melton Borough. Whilst no exceedances in air pollutants have been recorded, it is noted Melton Mowbray experiences a large volume of traffic and associated vehicle pollutants. This is due to the intersection of two A roads (A606 and A607) and the proximity to the strategic road network. As such, it is possible new development within or in proximity Melton Mowbray itself, as well as in the borough, will increase the number of private vehicles using these roads. This will increase the air pollutants linked to vehicle emissions, and decrease air quality.
 - There are over 259ha of accessible open space / green space in the Melton Borough. However, the more rural areas of the borough are likely to have increased access to these spaces.

2.6 Scoping decision

2.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the air quality topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in **Table 2.2** below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 2.2: Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal question
Protect and improve local air quality and reduce the potential for negative effects on human health and the environment.	Will the option / proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement road traffic measures to reduce air pollution? • Facilitate a move towards low emission / zero emission vehicles? • Improve sustainable transport infrastructure, including walking and cycling routes, and public transport in order to promote healthy, active lifestyles and travel choice? • Protect and promote greenspaces and healthy environments in urban areas to alleviate air pollution?

3. Biodiversity

3.1 Focus of topic

3.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- International, national and local biodiversity and geodiversity designations;
- Priority habitats and species; and
- Ecological networks.

3.2 Context review

3.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 3.1: Key sources and evidence

Document title	Date
International	
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations	2017
The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands	1971
National	
Environmental Improvement Plan	2023
Defra Policy Paper: Changes to the Habitat Regulations 2017	2021
Environment Act 2021	2021
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services	2011
The Natural Choice: Securing the value of nature	2011
UK Biodiversity Action Plan	2007
Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006	2006
Countryside and Rights of Way Act	2000
Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981	1981
Local	
Melton Local Plan	2018
Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan 2016-2026	2016
Melton Borough Biodiversity and Geodiversity Study	2016
6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy (various docs)	2010

3.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The new Local Plan will need to have regard to the NPPF, which states that opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design, especially where this can secure measurable net gains for biodiversity. The Environment Act includes further provisions in relation to biodiversity, including parameters for biodiversity gain as a condition of planning permission. This is furthered through the 25 Year Environment Plan which also sets out how the Government will address the effects of climate change, supported by a range of policies and initiatives, which the new Local Plan will need to align with. The Environmental Improvement Plan 2023 is the first revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan, and sets out a new plan on how the government will work with landowners, communities and businesses to deliver the ten goals for improving the environment, matched with interim targets to measure progress.
- The UK Government has placed regulations on Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to lead in responding to biodiversity losses by adopting clear environmental and planning policy requirements to encourage developers to take account of biodiversity impacts. Notably, the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifies priority species and habitats requiring conservation action. Although the UK BAP has been superseded, it has been used to draw up statutory lists of priority species and habitats.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - Policy SS3 – Sustainable Communities (unallocated sites).
 - Policy SS4 – Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood (Strategic Development Location).
 - Policy EN2 – Biodiversity and Geodiversity.
 - Policy EN3 – The Melton Green Infrastructure Network; and
 - Policy EN11 – Minimising the Risk of Flooding.
- The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Biodiversity Action Plan focuses on species and habitats of a local conservation concern. It also looks at habitat creation in the wider countryside, and puts forward action plans for specific habitats and species – which includes calcareous grassland and floodplain wetland in Melton Borough.
- The Melton Borough Biodiversity and Geodiversity Study evaluates sites with potential to accommodate development under the adopted Local Plan. It also assesses the value and significance of biodiversity and geodiversity features across the borough, including designated sites and important habitats. It makes recommendations as to the level of protection that should be given to important sites, designated or otherwise, and suggests mitigation options that could be adopted.
- The 6Cs Green Infrastructure Strategy provides an overarching strategic framework to 2026 for green infrastructure planning, investment and delivery by stakeholders working across the environmental, economic and social sectors. It takes a long term and holistic view of green infrastructure requirements.

3.3 Summary of current baseline

Internationally designated sites

- 3.3.1 Whilst there are no internationally designated sites for biodiversity and / or geodiversity within the plan area, Melton Borough is approximately 8km north / north-east of the Rutland Water Ramsar and Special Protection Area (SPA).
- 3.3.2 The Rutland Water Ramsar⁵ was first designated as a Ramsar site in October 1991. Covering approximately 1,339 ha, it is described as a large, artificial, and freshwater reservoir fringed by wetland habitats. This includes lagoons, reed swamp, marsh, and damp meadows. Recreational use is a conservation issue, such as water sports, fishing and walking and cycling routes, as well as the use of chemicals to control summer algae blooms. Over 45% of the site is managed by the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust and Anglian Water, as a nature reserve⁶. The Ramsar site shares an overlapping designation with Rutland Water SPA, and the citation for the site states the site qualifies as a wetland of international importance by regularly supporting over 20,000 waterfowl in the winter⁷.
- 3.3.3 The conservation objectives for the Rutland Water designation aim to ensure that the integrity of the site is maintained or restored as appropriate, including⁸:
- The extent and distribution of the habitats of the qualifying features.
 - The structure and function of the habitats of the qualifying features.
 - The supporting processes on which the habitats of the qualifying features rely.
 - The population of each of the qualifying features.
 - The distribution of the qualifying features within the site.

Nationally designated sites

- 3.3.4 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are nationally designated locations across the UK that are recognised for rare and vulnerable species which are of scientific interest. These sites contain biodiverse ecological, geological and physiological environments which are to be protected and maintained in a favourable condition. There are 15 SSSIs within the Melton Borough boundary (see . The status of a SSSI can change overtime; as such, they are monitored by Natural England (Table 3.2).

⁵ RSIS (no date) '46. Rutland Water' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶ Natural England (2018) 'Rutland Water SPA Conservation Objectives supplementary advice' can be accessed [here](#).

⁷ Natural England (2014) 'Rutland Water SPA Citation' can be accessed [here](#).

⁸ Natural England (2019) 'Rutland Water Conservation Objectives' can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 3-1 International and Nationally Designated Sites for Ecological Conservation in Melton Borough

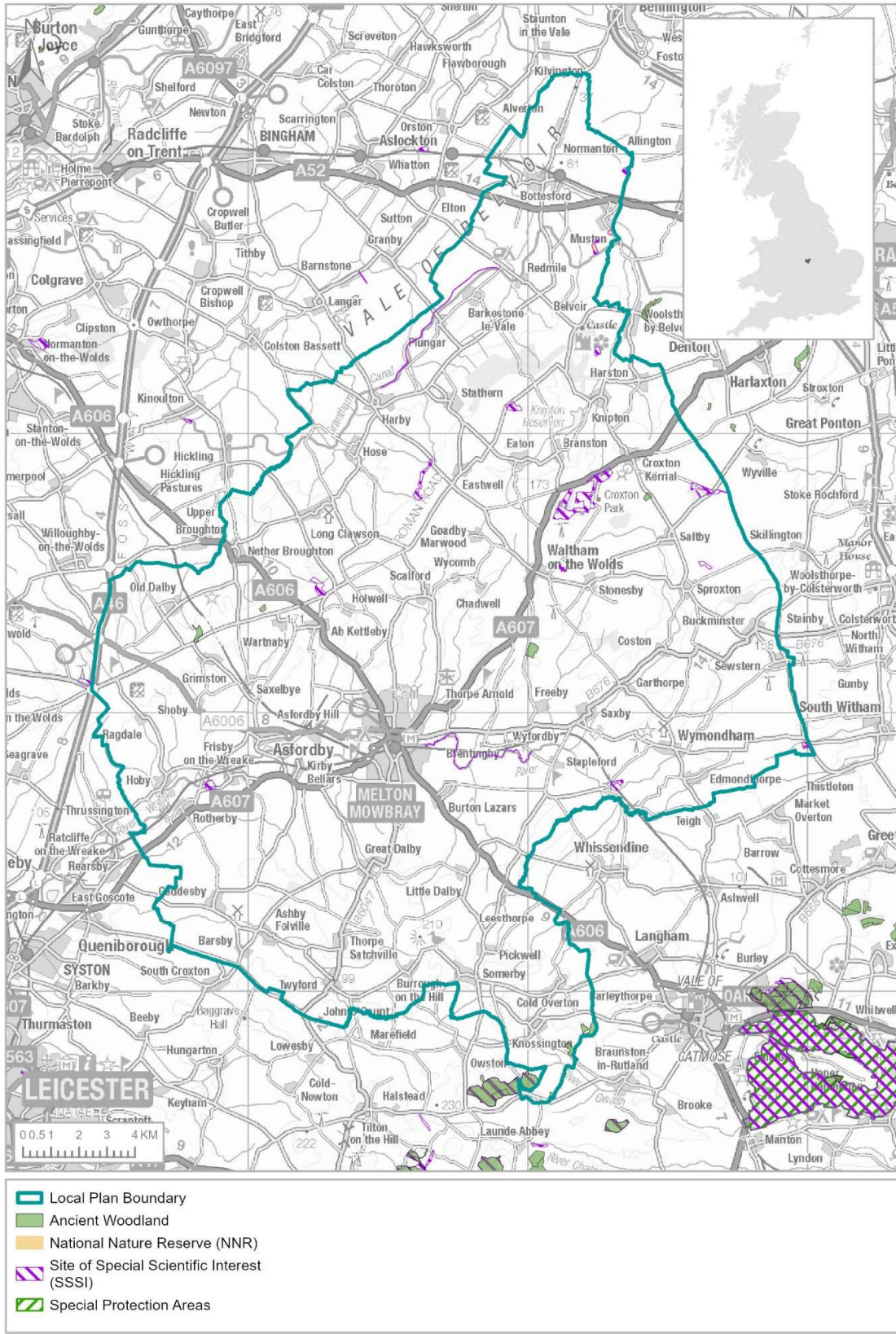


Table 3.2: SSSIs designated in Melton⁹

SSSI	Description	Condition Summary	Reasons for designating
Debdale Meadow 4.33ha	An outstanding example of traditionally managed neutral grassland.	100% favourable	Supports a wide range of plants that are characteristic of the clay soils of the Midlands. Unimproved meadows of this type are rare in lowland Britain.
Muston Meadows 8.76ha	Contains some of the best remaining examples of neutral clay grasslands in the Midlands.	100% favourable	Fine examples of neutral ridge and furrow grasslands with a range of plants, and the field ponds and boundary hedgerows / verges that support biodiversity.
Cribb's Lodge Meadows 4.16ha	Two ridge and furrow meadows separated by a disused railway line. There is a rich herb flora community – and the two field ponds and associated vegetation provide additional interest.	100% favourable	The site contains some of the best examples of species-rich neutral grasslands in Leicestershire and is representative of grassland on clay soils.
Wymondham Rough 5.97ha	A species-rich grassland with a multitude of plant communities.	88% favourable, 12% unfavourable-no change	The site contains some of the best remaining examples of neutral clay grassland in Leicestershire, and is representative of grassland developed on clay and alluvial soils.
Harby Hill Wood 16.94ha	Potentially ancient woodland dominated by ash, sycamore, hawthorn and elder, with wild daffodils. There are additional diverse plant species.	85.79% favourable, 14.21% unfavourable-no change	Ash-sycamore woodland, grassland and spring-fed marshes, notable for its colonies of wild daffodils.
Holwell Mouth 15.48ha	A valley cut into clays; the centre of the site is occupied by spring-fed marsh with various plant species. The whole designation provides suitable feeding and breeding	100% unfavourable-recovering	The site includes some of the best examples of neutral marsh in Leicestershire and is representative of marsh developed on somewhat base-poor clay soils.

⁹ Natural England (no date) 'Designated Sites View' can be accessed [here](#).

SSSI	Description	Condition Summary	Reasons for designating
	conditions for a range of birds and insects.		
Stonesby Quarry 3.22ha	A former quarry that has developed a semi-natural vegetation comprising mostly grassland and scrub.	100% unfavourable-recovering	Some of the best remaining areas of limestone grassland in Leicestershire, and is representative of swards development on soft limestones.
Croxton Park 97.31ha	Old hollow trees, scrub filled valleys, ponds and large expanses of grassland	100% unfavourable-recovering	Medieval in origin, and the best remaining example in Leicestershire of ancient parkland with unimproved rough pasture around the trees. The lichen flora is amongst the richest in the East Midlands and there is a diverse community of breeding birds.
Frisby Marsh 10.17ha	A complex of wetland habitats, grassland and woodland with a rich plant community.	100% unfavourable-recovering	The site contains some of the best remaining areas of marsh in Leicestershire.
River Eye 6ha	Natural structural features of the river support a range of plant and animal species, including damselflies.	100% unfavourable-recovering	Comprises an exceptional example of a semi-natural lowland river. It is representative of clay streams in central and southern England.
King Lud's Entrenchments and The Drift 23.91ha	Fine examples of limestone grassland with a number of different grass species. Semi-natural broad-leaved woodland dominate by ash and sycamore also provides interest.	84.04% unfavourable-recovering, 15.96% unfavourable-no change	Some of the best remaining examples of limestone grassland in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire, and is representative of swards development on soft limestones.
Terrace Hills Pasture 11.26ha	Old pasture on a large undulating field that has been used for industrial activity in the past. There are a number of plant species on the site that support a variety of	78.14% unfavourable-recovering, 21.86% unfavourable-declining	Some of the best remaining examples of calcareous old pasture in Leicestershire, and is representative of sward on calcareous soils in central and eastern England.

SSSI	Description	Condition Summary	Reasons for designating
	insects, including butterflies.		
Sproxton Quarry 5.41ha	Geologically important site, with small scale cycles and rare ammonites.	100% unfavourable-no change	Provides one of the finest and most complete sections of the lower Lincolnshire Limestone Formation.
Grantham Canal 9.45ha	Floristically rich canal banks with a number of different species that support breeding bird communities.	100% unfavourable – no change	Some of the best areas of open water and associated marginal habitats in Leicestershire, and representative of slow river vegetation communities.
Briery Wood Heronry 5.73ha	Mature oak and ash woodlands that are home to around 30 breeding pairs of herons.	100% unfavourable - declining	The largest heronry in Leicestershire.

3.3.5 As shown by Table 3.2, the majority of the SSSIs are in favourable or unfavourable-recovering condition. Two are in unfavourable-no change condition, and one is in unfavourable-declining condition.

3.3.6 One of these SSSIs is also designated as National Nature Reserve (NNRs). This is Cribb’s Lodge Meadows SSSI (though the NNR is designated as Cribb’s Meadows).

3.3.7 Additionally, Sproxton Quarry SSSI is also designated as a Local Geological Site (LGS).

Locally designated sites

3.3.8 The lack of internationally designated sites and the relatively low number of nationally designated sites means locally designated sites have an increased importance for the communities of Melton Borough.

3.3.9 Within Melton Borough there are 245 designated Local Wildlife Sites (LWS). This includes: Scaford Brook, Melton Country Park, Nottingham Road Hedgerow, Melton Railway Sidings (east and west), Melton Railway Sidings (north), Bull Field, Leicester Road Grassland, Bottesford, and Walktham on the Wolds.

3.3.10 In addition to these LWS designations, there are 217 candidate Local Wildlife Sites. These areas are undesignated for either one of three reasons: due to the landowners not wishing them to be, or the landowners have not been approached, or a formal designation is pending.

3.3.11 Furthermore, there are ten Local Geological Sites (LGS) within the borough as reported in the 2022 Annual Monitoring Report. As aforementioned, one overlaps with the Sproxton Quarry SSSI.

Priority habitats and species

3.3.12 The UK Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) identifies priority species and habitats requiring conservation action. Although the UK BAP has been superseded BAP priority species and habitats have been used to draw up statutory lists of priority species and habitats in England.

3.3.13 There are a variety of BAP Priority Habitats located within Melton Borough. This includes:

- Coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.
- Good quality semi-improved grassland.
- Lowland calcareous grassland.
- Lowland dry acid grassland.
- Lowland meadows.
- Purple moor grass and rush pasture.
- Ancient woodland (15 areas of ancient and ancient re-planted in total).
- Deciduous woodland; and
- Woodpasture and parkland.

3.3.14 These habitats are mapped in

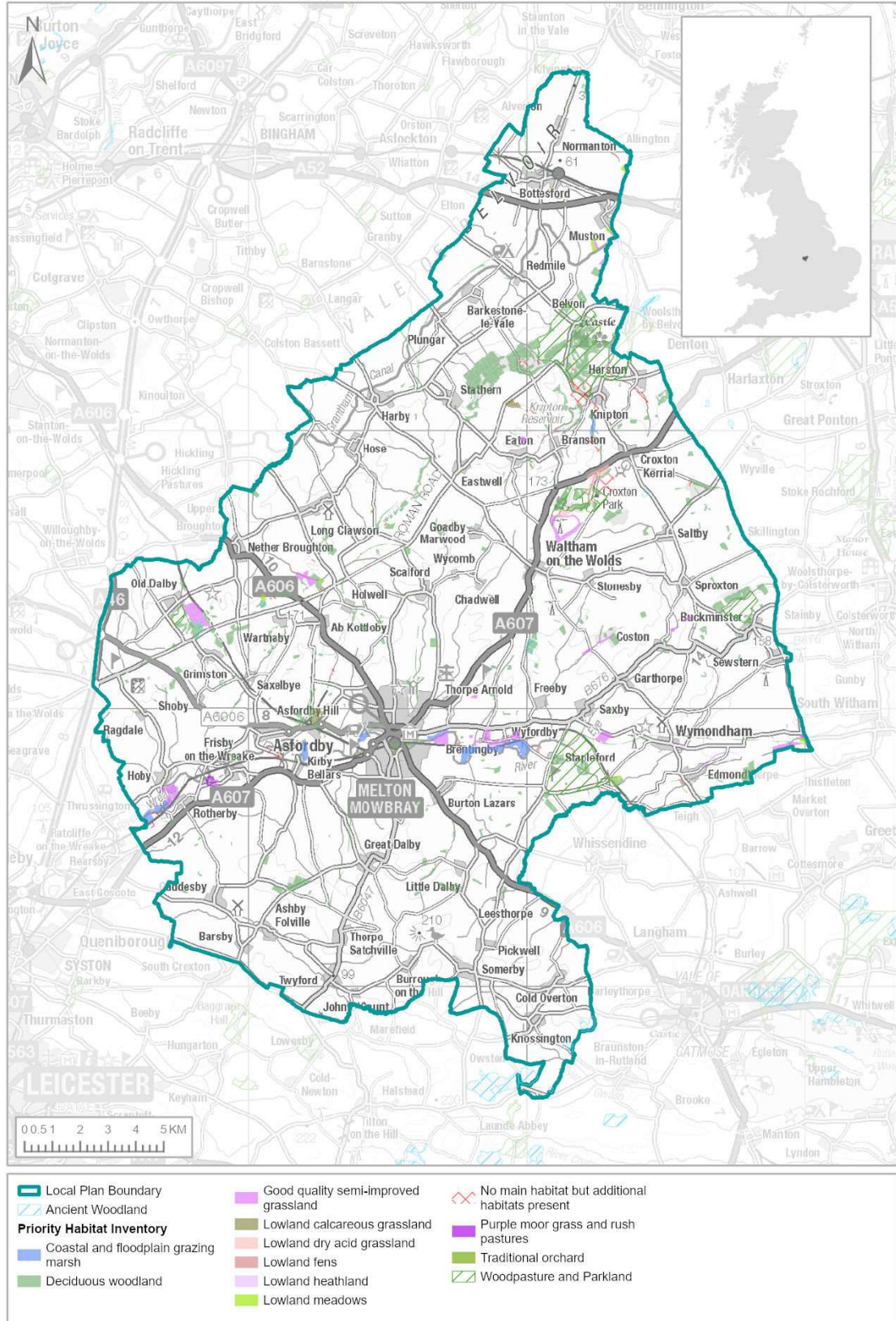
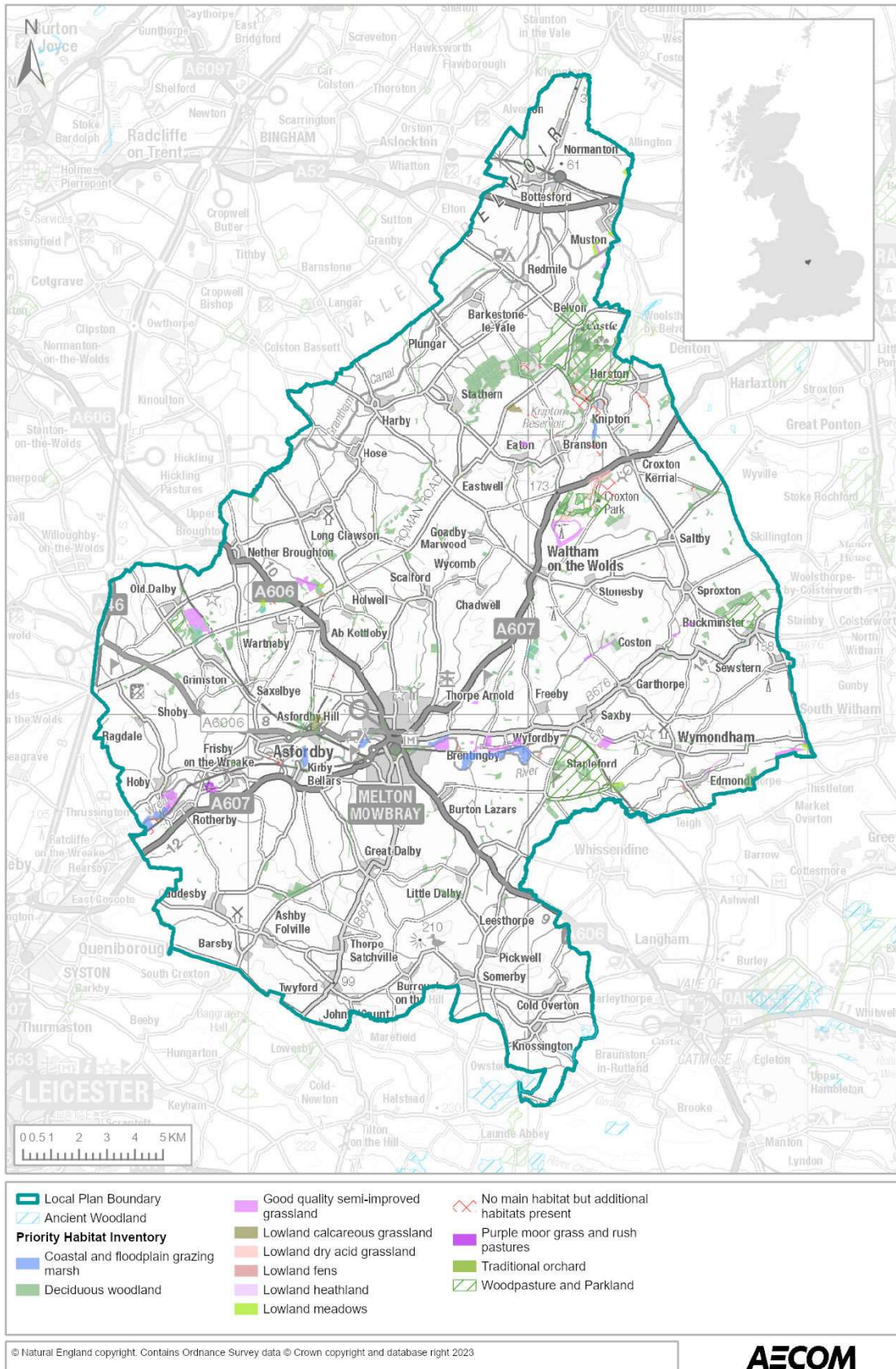


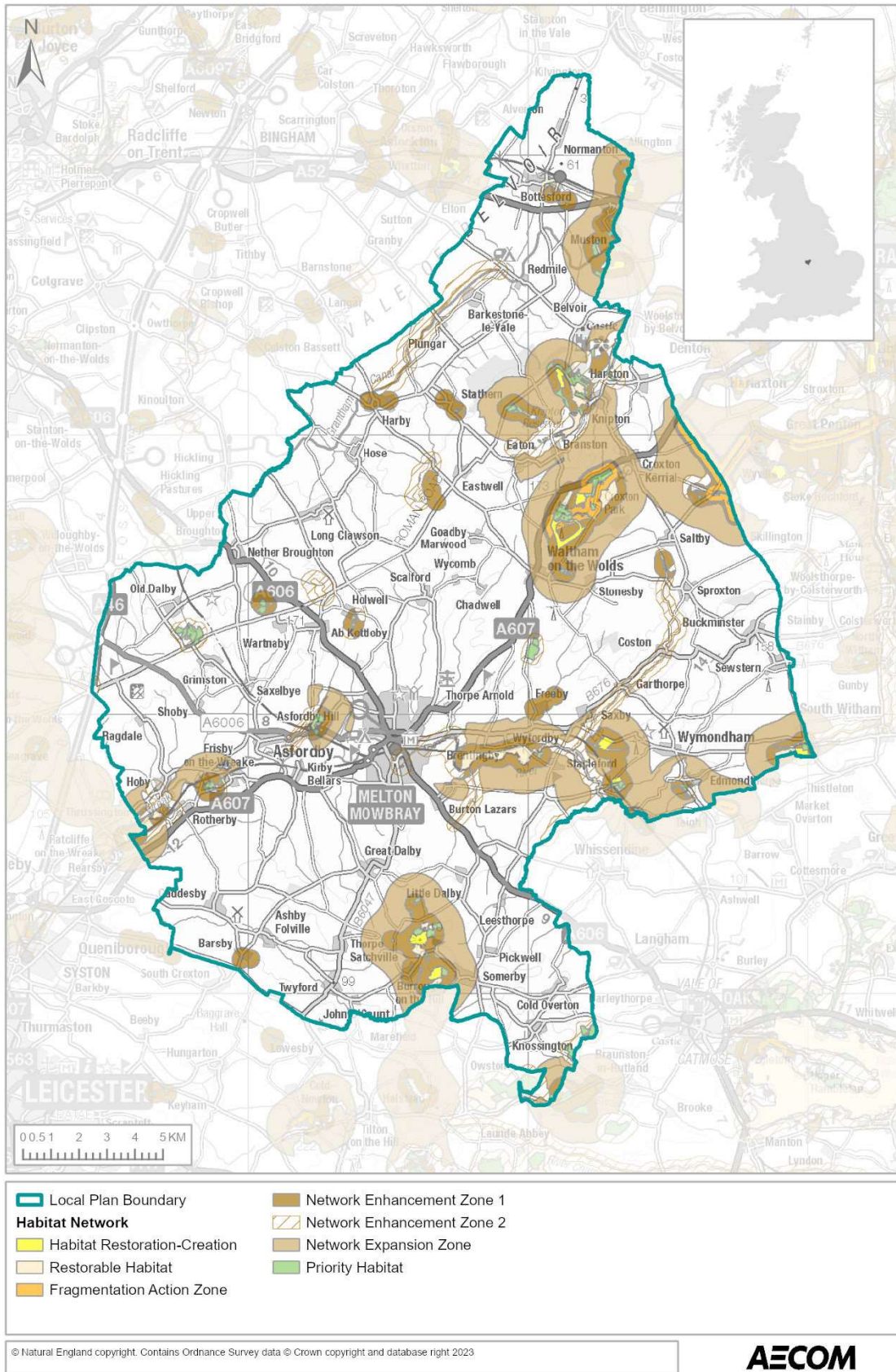
Figure 3-2 Priority Habitat Inventory in Melton Borough



Ecological networks

- 3.3.15 It is considered that support will be given through the Local Plan Update to establish coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures. Trees notably make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, and that opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments (such as parks and community orchards).
- 3.3.16 Ecological features of interest which could be impacted by new development areas include trees, hedgerows, watercourses, road verges, and rail sidings. As these features play an important role in providing connectivity corridors and refugia for migrating and foraging species, it will be important for the new Local Plan to consider the potential implications on such features within the plan making process.
- 3.3.17 Figure 3-3 shows the existing habitat constraints and opportunities within Melton Borough. It shows that while habitat network opportunity areas are most prominent to the east of the borough, biodiversity constraints and wildlife corridors extend throughout Melton Borough. Where possible, opportunities should be sought to protect and enhance key features, opportunity areas and corridors, particularly those linear in nature and extending alongside main settlements. Habitat connectivity is critical for maintaining healthy species, as it promotes biological diversity and can restore fragmented populations.

Figure 3-3 Habitat Constraints and Opportunities in Melton Borough



3.4 Summary of future baseline

- 3.4.1 Designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity are sensitive to a number of pressures, including recreation, noise and light, pollution, severance or land use change. Increased levels of development are likely to encourage a greater number of people using sites for a variety of activities, which could result in the disturbance of habitats and species. This is of particular concern for several SSSIs that are in unfavourable-no change and unfavourable-declining condition.
- 3.4.2 It is also a concern for locally designated sites, which are likely to be utilised more by the population of Melton given there are more of them and as such are more easily accessible. However, it should be acknowledged that the Local Plan Update does not intend to allocate significant amounts of land (at least for housing).
- 3.4.3 Habitats and species will potentially face increasing pressures from future development within Melton Borough, with the potential for negative impacts on the wider ecological network. This may include a loss of habitats and impacts on biodiversity networks, which may be exacerbated by the effects of climate change. This has the potential to lead to changes in the distribution and abundance of species and changes to the composition of habitats. As such, development should include green infrastructure enhancement opportunities. It is expected that biodiversity enhancement will start to be increased across Melton Borough as a result of biodiversity net gain requirements and local nature recovery strategies.

3.5 Key sustainability issues

- 3.5.1 The following key issues have been identified through the baseline review for this topic:
- There is a strong legislative and policy framework seeking to protect and enhance biodiversity. There is a need to reverse the declines that have been experienced in biodiversity and to achieve 'net gain'.
 - There are several internationally, nationally and locally designated sites for biodiversity and geodiversity within and in proximity to Melton Borough. Development has the potential to have effects for these designations through encroachment on their boundaries and interference with biodiversity connectivity. There may also be potential for enhancement and net gain activities. As such, development should seek to engage with conservation and improvement projects for these sites and include green infrastructure in the design as much as possible.
 - Locally important wildlife sites and habitat species / networks are important for Melton, and the new plan should help to preserve, enhance and expand habitats by making links to a nature recovery strategy.

3.6 Scoping decision

3.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the biodiversity topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Table 3.3 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 3.3: Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Protect, restore and enhance habitats and their connectivity achieving net gains in biodiversity and positive outcomes for health and wellbeing.	<p>Will the option / proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the integrity of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites within and in proximity to Melton? • Manage existing and potential future pressures on habitats and species in Melton? • Protect and enhance priority habitats, as well as the habitats of priority species, during both the construction and operational phases of development? • Protect and enhance ecological networks? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity to the potential effects of climate change? • Encourage opportunities for engagement with Melton's biodiversity resource?

4. Climate change adaptation

4.1 Focus of topic

4.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Climate change impacts;
- Flood risk as a key issue;
- Heat island effect; and
- Green and blue infrastructure.

4.2 Context review

4.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 4.1: Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
National	
Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances	2022
Planning practice guidance: Flood risk and coastal change	2022
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
National Infrastructure Assessment	2021
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting	2018
UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2017	2017
Flood and Water Management Act 2010	2010
The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National strategy for climate and energy	2009
Local	
Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy and Action Plan	2023
Melton Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2020-2024	2020
Melton Local Plan	2018
Melton Borough Council Level 1 and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment - Addendum Report	2016
Melton Borough Council Level 1 and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment	2015

4.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- Making allowances for climate change in flood risk assessments helps to minimise vulnerability and provide resilience to flooding and coastal change. This includes peak river flow and peak rainfall intensity. The UK Government has released guidance on how these allowances should be applied to aid in the writing of strategic flood risk assessments and development applications. The UK Government has also released advice on how to take account of and address the risks associated with flooding and coastal change in the planning process – including strategic flood risk assessments, specific flood risk assessments and how to account for uncertainty in mitigation strategies.
- Chapter 14 of the NPPF is dedicated to meeting the challenges associated with climate change including flooding, and states the following regarding climate change adaptation:
 - Plans should take a proactive approach to adapting to climate change, considering the long-term implications of flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes and the risk of overheating from rising temperatures.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan seeks to manage land resources sustainably, recover and reinstate nature, protect soils and habitats, increase resource efficiency, improve water quality, and connect people with the environment.
- The National Infrastructure Assessment is published every five years and analyses the UK's long-term economic infrastructure needs to create a strategic vision and recommendations. The baseline report focuses on three key strategic outcomes: reaching net zero, reducing environmental impacts, and adapting to a changing climate and supporting levelling up. The baseline report states that climate change will increase pressures on all sectors, including economic infrastructure. Chapter 3 of the report highlights that infrastructure needs to adapt to the growing risks of extreme weather.
- The National Adaptation Programme outlines the Government's response to the second Climate Change Risk Assessment, demonstrating the actions the government is currently taking and actions it will be taking in the future. It highlights the high-risk flooding and coastal change poses to communities, businesses and infrastructure, the high risk an increase in temperature poses to health, wellbeing, and productivity, as well as the impacts climate change could have on water and energy supply shortage, natural capital, food production and trade and pests, diseases, and invasive non-native species.
- The UK Climate Change Risk Assessment is published every five years as dictated by the Climate Change Act 2008. It is an assessment of the risks to the UK arising from climate change and the subsequent adaptation programme to address said risks in combination with delivering climate change resilience. The 2017 assessment identified six priority risk areas:
 - Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses, and infrastructure.

- Risks to health, well-being, and productivity from high temperatures.
 - Risk of shortages in the public water supply, and for agriculture, energy generation and industry.
 - Risks to natural capital, including terrestrial, coastal, marine, and freshwater ecosystems, soils, and biodiversity.
 - Risks to domestic and international food production and trade; and
 - New and emerging pests and diseases, and invasive non-native species, affecting people, plants, and animals.
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 provides for better and more comprehensive management of flood risk for people, homes, and businesses, in addition to aiding in safeguarding safeguard community groups from unaffordable rises in surface water drainage charges and protecting consumer water supplies.
 - The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National strategy for climate and energy outlines a five-point plan to tackle climate change, with the following points being of relevance to climate change adaptation:
 - Protecting the public from immediate risk; spending money on flood protection, implementing a heat wave plan in the NHS and aiding communities affected by coastal erosion.
 - Preparing for the future; factoring climate risk into the decision-making process, changing infrastructure methods, managing water, and adjusting farming practices.
 - Supporting individuals, communities, and businesses to play their part, raising awareness, and providing a variety of support for individuals, communities, and businesses.
 - The plan outlines working towards these five points through several chapters: transforming our power sector, transforming our homes and communities, transforming our workplaces and jobs, transforming transport, and transforming farming and managing our land sustainably.
 - The Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2023-2045 outlines Leicestershire County Council's approach to achieve net zero by 2030, and takes a long term view of climate change mitigation to 2045. This includes collaborative work with neighbouring authorities, and covers six key areas: transport, building and energy, resources and waste, business and economy, community, and nature and land use. The accompanying five year Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan 2023-2027 sets out how Leicestershire County Council will work with residents, businesses, the public sector, volunteers and community organisations to deliver the Net Zero Strategy during this period of time.
 - The Melton Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 is designed to present a clear focus for the council during this period. Priority 4: Protect our climate and enhance our natural environment is of relevance here. The focus of Melton Borough Council includes ensuring council operations are carbon neutral by 2030.

- To achieve this, the Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 indicates Melton Borough Council will reduce emissions across all council activities, and promote and encourage more active transport opportunities.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - Policy EN3 – The Melton Green Infrastructure Network.
 - Policy EN8 – Climate Change.
 - Policy EN10 – Energy Generation from Renewable and Low Carbon Sources.
 - Policy EN11 – Minimising the Risk of Flooding; and
 - Policy EN12 – Sustainable Drainage Systems.
- The Melton Borough Council Level 1 and 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) report and the Addendum provides supporting evidence (to the Local Plan) pertaining to flood risk within the borough. The SFRA informs decision-making regarding the location of new development and the preparation of sustainable policies for the long-term management of flood risk.

4.3 Summary of current baseline

Climate change impacts

- 4.2.3 The UK Climate Projections (UKCP18) programme is a climate analysis tool that provides the most up-to-date assessment on potential future climatic changes in the UK based on climate model simulations¹⁰. Projections can be downscaled to a regional level across the UK, allowing for specific evaluations of a selected area. The UKCP18 projections conclude the effects of climate change under a high emissions ‘worst case’ scenario known as the ‘business as usual’ scenario RCP8.5¹¹. The UKCP18 projection conclusions for the East Midlands are shown in the figures below.
- 4.2.4 The UKCP18 projections indicate there will be an approximate 3°C increase in mean winter air temperature between 1981-2080 and an approximate 5.05°C in mean summer air temperature for the same period. It also predicts an approximate 0.5mm / day increase in mean winter precipitation rate, an approximate 0.62mm / day decrease in mean summer precipitation rate, an approximate 0.83% decrease in mean winter relative humidity and an approximate 7.82% decrease in mean summer relative humidity. If these changes occur, Melton Borough may face a range of risks, including:
- Increases in cases of heat related illnesses and deaths during the summer period as well as illnesses and deaths related to exposure to sunlight.
 - An increase in the risk of injuries and deaths caused by storm events, due to both the increase in quantity and magnitude.

¹⁰ Met Office (no date) ‘UK Climate Projections (UKCP)’ can be accessed [here](#).

¹¹ The RCP8.5 emissions scenario assumes there is fast population growth, low technical development rate, slow GDP growth, a massive increase in world poverty and high energy use and emissions. It also assumes no climate change mitigation or adaptation techniques are engaged with.

- Changes to water resources, in terms of quality and quantity.
- An increased risk of flooding, including changes in vulnerability to 1 in 100 year floods, and a need to upgrade flood defences.
- Soil erosion due to flash flooding.
- Loss of species that are at the edge of their distribution, particularly their southern edge, and a spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution.
- Increased drought events, both in quantity and magnitude; and
- Heat related impacts to local infrastructure, e.g., road surfaces melting.

Figure 4-1 Mean air temperature changes in the East Midlands region under UKCP18 climate modelling

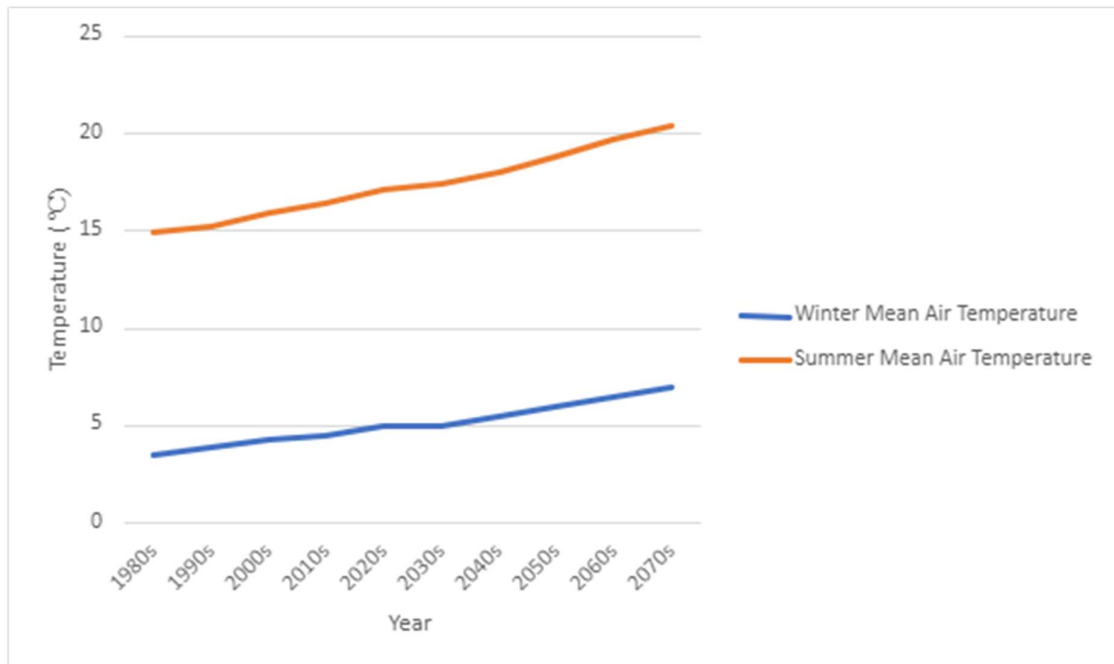
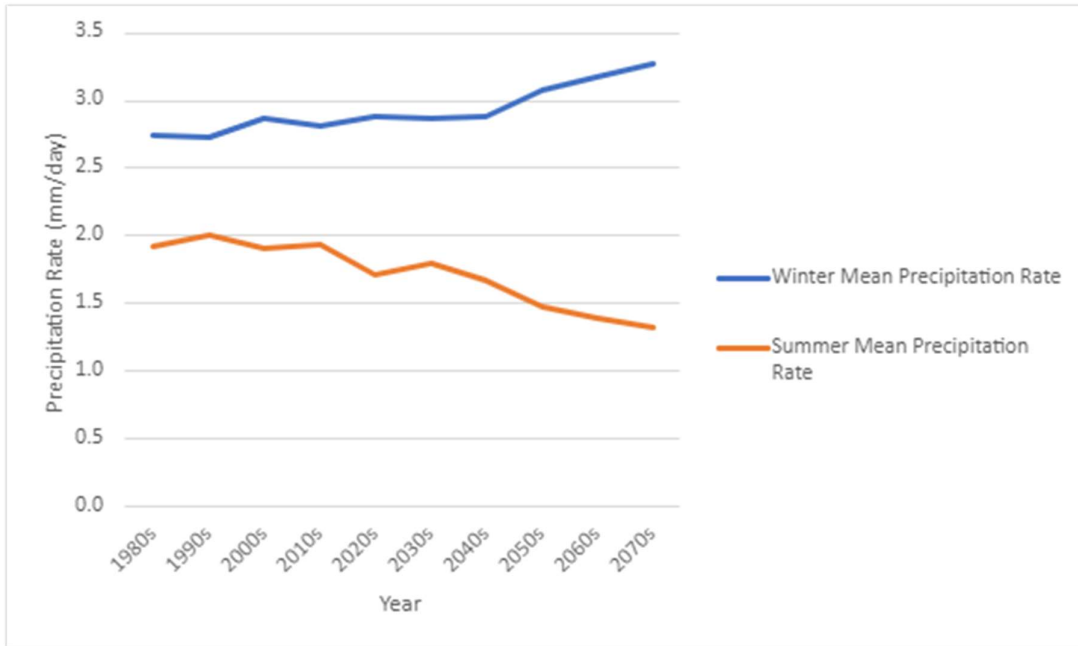


Figure 4-2 Mean precipitation changes in the East Midlands region under the UKCP18 climate modelling



Fluvial flood risk

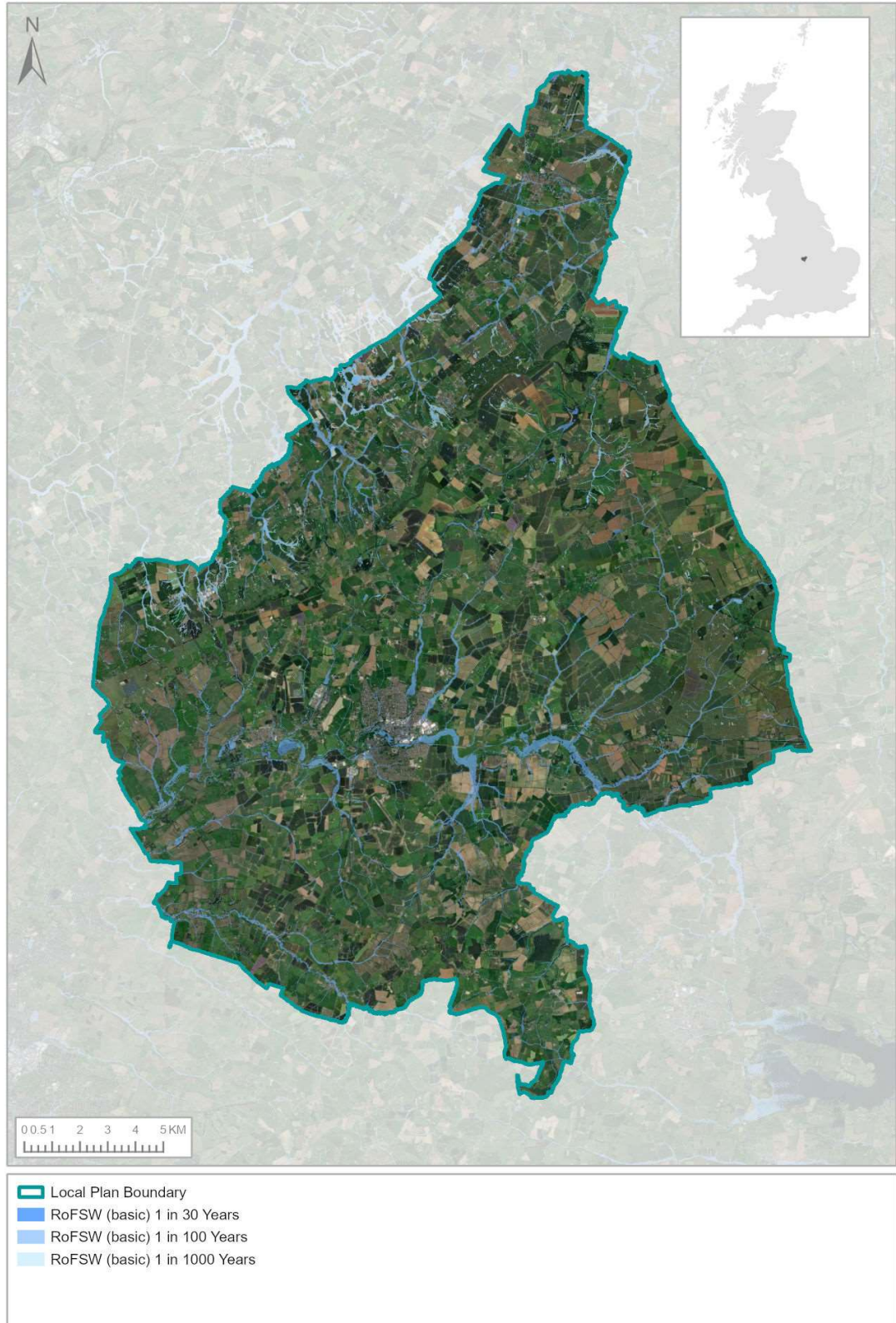
- 4.3.1 Fluvial flood risk in the borough is mostly associated with the River Wreake (Eye) and its tributaries, and the River Devon. Figure 4-3 shows that whilst the majority of the borough is within Flood Zone 1, there are areas of the borough that fall within Flood Zones 2 and 3. Melton Mowbray, Asfordby, and Bottesford are areas at particular risk of fluvial flooding within the borough – this is due to a watercourses passing through these settlements (in the case of Bottesford, it is the River Devon, and in the case of Melton Mowbray and Asfordby it is the River Wreake / River Eye).

Figure 4-3 Fluvial Flood Risk in Melton Borough



Surface water flood risk

- 4.3.2 Flooding due to surface water runoff is usually caused by intense rainfall, and often occurs in lower lying areas when the drainage system cannot cope with the volume of water.



AECOM

shows the areas susceptible to surface water flooding in the borough include mostly urban areas – as with fluvial flood risk, areas of higher surface water flooding risk include Melton Mowbray, Asfordby and Bottesford. This is due to

a larger amount of development, which subsequently leads to a greater number of impermeable surfaces.

Reservoir flood risk

- 4.3.3 Reservoirs are artificially created ponds or lakes that are usually formed by building a wall, known as a dam, across a river. If one of these dams failed, water could escape from the reservoir, resulting in land or properties being flooded. If a reservoir is properly maintained, the likelihood of it failing and causing flooding is extremely low. However, in the event of a dam collapse, a large volume of water could be released, quickly flooding a large area and possibly causing significant property damage or even loss of life. Such a scenario is extremely unlikely to occur and reservoirs in the UK have an excellent safety record.
- 4.3.4 The reservoir flood maps available on the Environment Agency website are 'outline' maps, meaning that they show only the areas that might be flooded in a realistic worst case reservoir failure scenario. This means that the extent of the flooding shown is the worst that could realistically happen. The maps indicate land adjacent to the banks of the River Devon and the River Wreake / River Eye are most likely to be affected by a reservoir flooding.

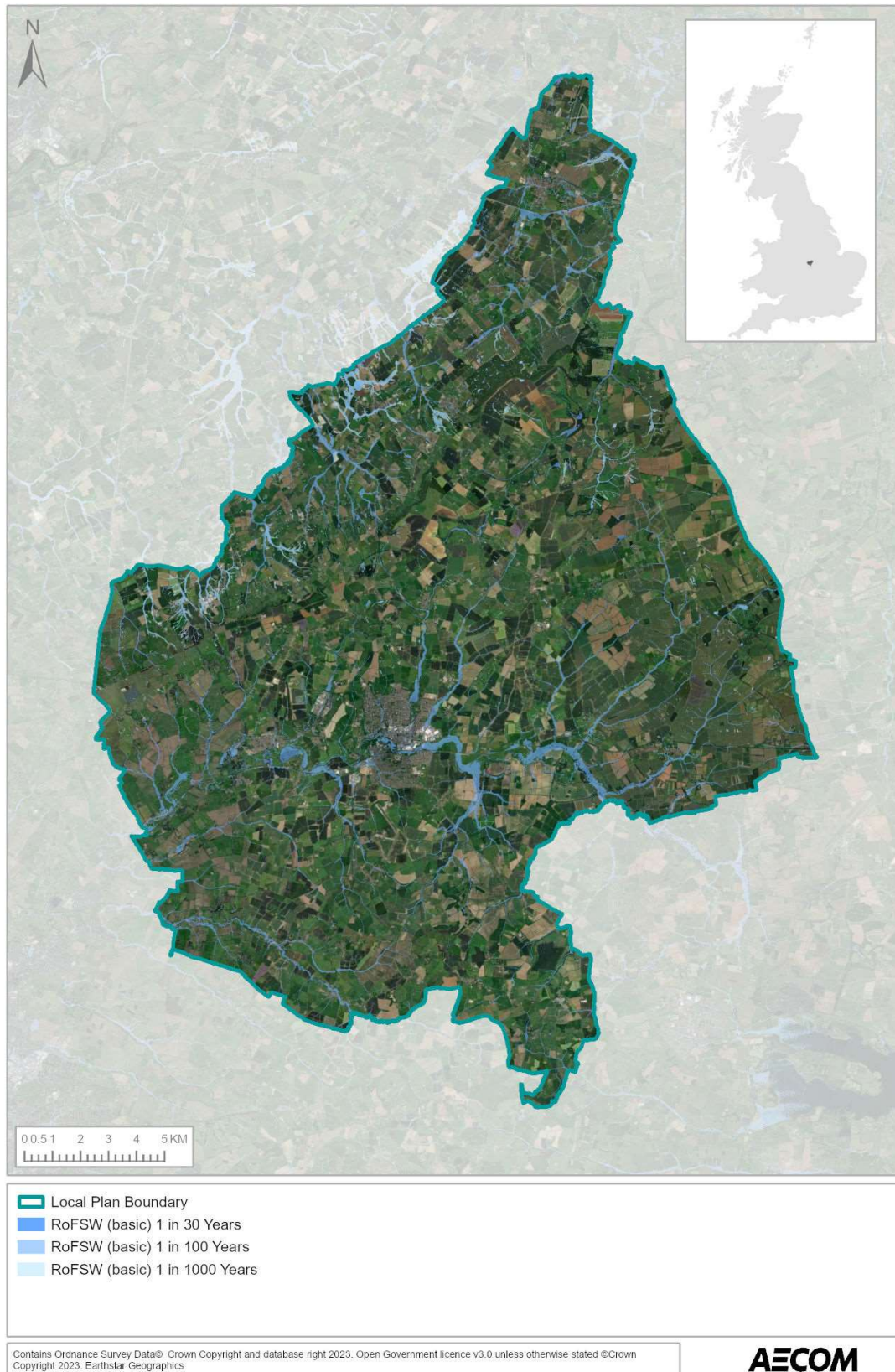
Groundwater flood risk

- 4.3.5 In comparison to fluvial and surface water flooding, the current understanding of the risks posed by groundwater flooding is more limited. Recorded instances of groundwater flooding in the borough have occurred in Frisby and Melton Mowbray. Other flood risk

Other flood risk

- 4.3.6 Failure and/or overtopping of the Grantham Canal is a specific issue raised in the SFRA and covered in the Adopted Local Plan in the flooding policy.

Figure 4-4 Surface Water Flood Risk in Melton Borough



Green and blue infrastructure

- 4.3.7 Green and blue infrastructure in England delivers an estimated £6.6 billion in health, environmental and climate change benefits every year. By extending and improving the connectivity of habitats we can build resilience to the impacts of climate change and ensure cities are habitable for the future¹².
- 4.3.8 Green and blue infrastructure in Melton Borough includes a full range of green spaces that can stand alone or form part of a network – and includes (but is not limited to) rivers, designated and non-designated biodiversity and geodiversity sites, road verges, recreational provision and allotments. It has the potential to play a major role in climate change adaptation and mitigation, contributing shading and cooling in urban areas, and multifunctional benefits including flood alleviation. The green infrastructure network also incorporates attractive routes promoting sustainable transport alternatives to the car, such as cycling.

Heat island effect

- 4.3.9 The Urban Heat Island effect describes the elevated temperatures felt in towns and cities compared to rural surroundings, due to artificial surfaces absorbing and releasing heat, and heat being trapped in more built-up areas due to topography and the layout of buildings.

¹² GOV.UK (2023) 'Press release – Natural England unveils new Green Infrastructure Network' can be accessed [here](#).

4.4 Summary of future baseline

- 4.4.1 Climate change has the potential to increase the occurrence of extreme weather events in Melton Borough. This is likely to increase the risks associated with climate change, with an increased need for resilience and adaptation. Specifically, new development areas have the potential to increase flood risk through factors such as changing surface and groundwater flows, overloading existing inputs to the drainage and wastewater networks and / or increasing the number of residents exposed to areas of existing flood risk.
- 4.4.2 In terms of climate change adaptation, it is anticipated that flood risk concerns can be mitigated in part by the inclusion of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and high-quality design within new development areas which incorporates permeable areas and materials. Moreover, the Melton Borough SFRA is a useful evidence source that can be used to inform policy development.
- 4.4.3 Rising temperatures can have effects on human health and the natural environment.

4.5 Key sustainability issues

- 4.5.1 The following key issues have been identified through the baseline review for this topic:
- 4.5.2 The following key issues have been identified through the baseline review for this topic:
- The majority of Melton Borough is within Flood Zone 1, however there are areas within Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3 which are largely associated with the waterbodies in the borough – the River Devon, the River Wreake, and the River Eye. It will be important that the Local Plan guides development away from these areas at increased risk or ensures design measures are considered in development proposals.
 - Surface water flood risk also occurs throughout the borough. Particular areas of concern are along the central belt of the borough, by Asfordby and Melton Mowbray.
 - Recorded instances of groundwater flooding in the borough have occurred in Frisby and Melton Mowbray.
 - Whilst reservoir flooding is extremely unlikely, it is noted land along the banks of the River Devon and the River Wreake / River Eye are most likely to be affected if a reservoir failure scenario occurred.
 - There is a large network of green infrastructure throughout Melton Borough which supports nature-based solutions in enhancing climate resilience. It will be important for an integrated catchment management approach to be adopted to align with local nature recovery strategies and plans.
 - Climate change is likely to increase the potential for negative health outcomes due to local issues such as flooding, heat and extreme weather events.

- There could also be wider impacts associated with climate refugees, changing food growing patterns, biodiversity disturbances etc. There is a need for Melton Borough to become more resilient to the effects of climate change.

4.6 Scoping decision

4.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the climate change adaptation topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in table 4.2 below, are proposed as part of the IA framework.

Table 4.1 Proposed objectives and assessment questions

IA objective	Appraisal questions
Support Melton’s resilience to the potential effects of climate change, particularly flooding.	<p>Will the option / proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at medium to high risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change? • Improve and extend green and blue infrastructure networks to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change? • Sustainably manage water run-off through the use of SuDS, reducing surface water runoff without increasing flood risk elsewhere? • Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development areas?

5. Climate change mitigation and resources

5.1 Focus of topic

5.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Energy consumption in the borough.
- Trends in greenhouse gas emission (by sector and per capita); and
- Steps that can be taken through Local Plans.

5.2 Context review

5.1.2 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 5.1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
International	
<u>UN Paris Agreement</u>	2016
National	
<u>Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener</u>	2021
<u>National Infrastructure Assessment</u>	2021
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>The Sixth Carbon Budget</u>	2020
<u>Blueprint for a resilient economy</u>	2019
<u>Clean Air Strategy 2019</u>	2019
<u>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</u>	2018
<u>The Clean Growth Strategy</u>	2017
<u>The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National strategy for climate and energy</u>	2009
<u>Climate Change Act 2008</u>	2008
Local	
<u>Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy and Action Plan</u>	2023
<u>Melton Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2020-2024</u>	2020
<u>Melton Local Plan</u>	2018

5.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The UN Paris Agreement is an international treaty on climate change with the aim to limit global warming to below 2 degrees Celsius, preferably to 1.5 degrees Celsius, compared to pre-industrial levels. To achieve this, the planet should be climate neutral by the mid-century.
- Chapter 14 of the NPPF is dedicated to meeting the challenge of climate change, and states the following regarding climate change mitigation:
 - The planning system should shape places to contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience, encourage the reuse of existing resources, and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure.
- The Clean Growth Strategy, Clean Air Strategy and the Net Zero Strategy are a collection of documents seeking to progress the Government's commitment to becoming net zero by 2050 under the UK Climate Change Act 2008. The documents outline how the Government will tackle air pollution sources whilst maintaining an affordable energy supply and increasing economic growth. This parallels with the 25 Year Environment Plan, which seeks to manage land resources sustainably, recover and reinstate nature, protect soils and habitats, increase resource efficiency, improve water quality, and connect people with the environment. The documents interlink with the Government's commitment to decarbonising transport, which recognises the need to undertake action to adapt the transport sector and increase resilience to climate change risks.
- The National Infrastructure Assessment is published every five years and analyses the UK's long-term economic infrastructure needs to create a strategic vision and recommendations. The baseline report focuses on three key strategic outcomes: reaching net zero, reducing environmental impacts, and adapting to a changing climate and supporting levelling up. The baseline report states that climate change will increase pressures on all sectors, including economic infrastructure.
- The Sixth Carbon Budget is the legal limit of UK net greenhouse gas emissions and requires the country to reduce emissions by 78% by 2035 relative to 1990 levels. This puts the country on track to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest. The first five carbon budgets have already been put into legislation and run up to the year 2032.
- The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National strategy for climate and energy outlines a five-point plan to tackle climate change, with the following points being of relevance to climate change mitigation:
 - Limiting the severity of future climate change through a new international climate agreement; leading international efforts.
 - Building a low carbon UK; cutting emissions and investing in energy efficiency and clean energy technologies.
 - Supporting individuals, communities, and businesses to play their part, raising awareness, and providing a variety of support for individuals, communities, and businesses.

- The plan outlines working towards these five points through several chapters: transforming our power sector, transforming our homes and communities, transforming our workplaces and jobs, transforming transport, and transforming farming and managing our land sustainably.
- The UK Climate Change Act 2008 established a framework to develop an economically viable emissions reduction path. The Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order of 2019 put in place the legally binding target of achieving net-zero emissions by 2050. The Climate Change Act includes the following:
 - The UK Government must reduce greenhouse gas emissions by a minimum of 100% of 1990 levels by 2050.
 - The Act requires the Government to produce legally binding carbon budgets – a cap on the amount of greenhouse gases emitted in the UK over a five-year period.
 - The Committee on Climate Change was set up to advise the Government on emissions targets and report any progress to parliament.
 - The Act requires the Government to assess and prepare for the risks and opportunities linked to climate change for the UK. The Committee on Climate Change’s Adaptation Sub-Committee advises on these risks.
- In May 2019, the UK Parliament declared a climate emergency, with a view to explicitly acknowledging that human activities are significantly affecting the climate, and actions to mitigate and adapt to climate change should be paramount. This declaration has been mirrored by several local planning authorities across the country. Further context is provided by the recent commitment by environmental law firm Client Earth to request that all local authorities with emerging Local Plans to “explain how they will set evidence based carbon reduction targets and ensure these targets are then central to their new planning policy”¹³. Additionally, in response to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Green Alliance’s ‘Blueprint for a Resilient Economy’ report outlines the following five essential building blocks to support new long-term employment opportunities, thriving businesses and a healthier, fairer society, whilst protecting against the potentially devastating future impacts of climate change and nature’s decline:
 - Invest in net zero infrastructure.
 - Restore nature.
 - Stop wasting valuable resources.
 - Ensure clean air and healthy places; and
 - Make the recovery fair.
- The Net Zero Leicestershire Strategy 2023-2045 outlines Leicestershire County Council’s approach to achieve net zero by 2030, and takes a long term view of climate change mitigation to 2045. This includes collaborative work with neighbouring authorities, and covers six key areas: transport, building and energy, resources and waste, business and economy, community, and nature and land use. The accompanying five year Net Zero Leicestershire Action Plan 2023-2027 sets out how Leicestershire County Council will work with residents, businesses, the public sector, volunteers

¹³ Client Earth (2019) ‘Lawyers put local authorities on notice over climate inaction’ can be accessed [here](#).

and community organisations to deliver the Net Zero Strategy during this period of time.

- The Melton Borough Council Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 is designed to present a clear focus for the council during this period. Priority 4: Protect our climate and enhance our natural environment is of relevance here. The focus of Melton Borough Council includes ensuring council operations are carbon neutral by 2030. To achieve this, the Corporate Strategy 2020-2024 indicates Melton Borough Council will reduce emissions across all council activities, and promote and encourage more active transport opportunities.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - Policy EN3 – The Melton Green Infrastructure Network.
 - Policy EN8 – Climate Change.
 - Policy EN10 – Energy Generation from Renewable and Low Carbon Sources.
 - Policy EN11 – Minimising the Risk of Flooding; and
 - Policy EN12 – Sustainable Drainage Systems.

5.3 Summary of current baseline

5.3.1 In 2019 Melton Borough Council declared a climate emergency – recognising the magnitude of the climate change issue and the role the council must play in tackling climate change and reducing carbon emissions.

5.3.2 At the time of writing, the council have formed a Climate Change Working Group made up of councillors and an officer¹⁴, and consultation on climate change has begun with the view to produce a borough-wide climate strategy¹⁵.

Gas and electricity consumption

5.3.3 Melton Borough Council works with authorities operating in Leicestershire to deliver projects supporting net zero and sustainability. The home energy grant is one such project – and helps residents improve the warmth of their homes whilst reducing energy bills, carbon emissions and fuel poverty. This could include various insulation techniques, the installation of small-scale renewable energy infrastructure, and energy efficient features¹⁶.

5.3.4 Figure 5-1 demonstrates mean gas consumption is fairly consistent across the borough. However, it can be seen that slightly lower mean figures are generally found by the towns of Bottesford, Melton Mowbray, and Asfordby. Rural areas, record slightly higher mean gas consumption. The exception to this is the rural LSOA to the east of the borough, by Croxton Kerrial, which records the lowest energy consumption in the borough. Figure 5-2 shows that mean electricity usage is generally consistent across the borough, but with slightly lower figures recorded in the more built-up areas of the borough. The group of LSOAs around Melton Mowbray record the lowest mean electricity usage in the borough.

¹⁴ Melton Borough Council (2023) 'Our pledge' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁵ Melton Borough Council (2023) 'Our strategy' can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁶ Leicestershire County Council (2023) 'Green Living Leicestershire home energy grant' can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 5-1 Mean Gas Consumption in Melton Borough

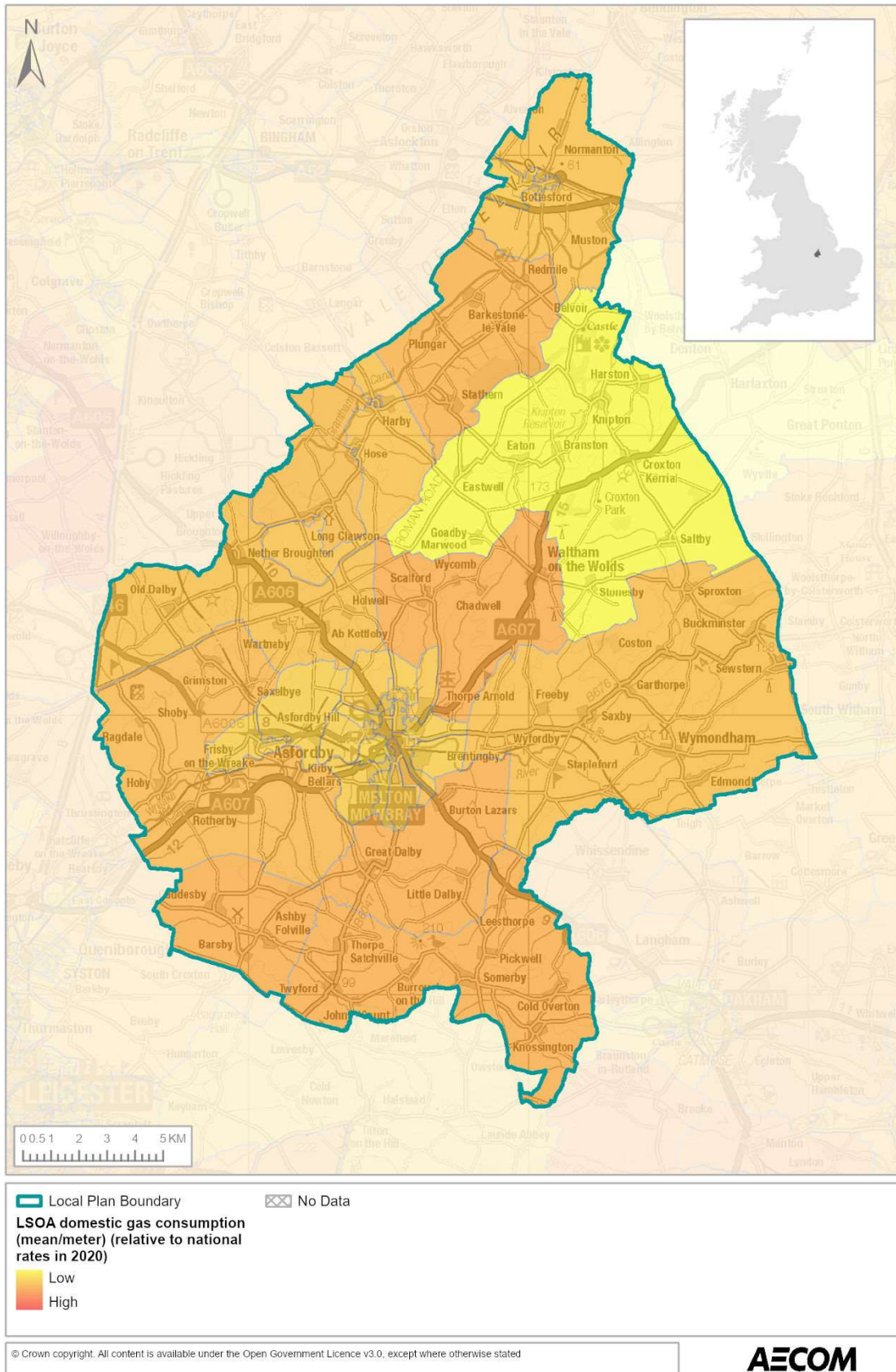
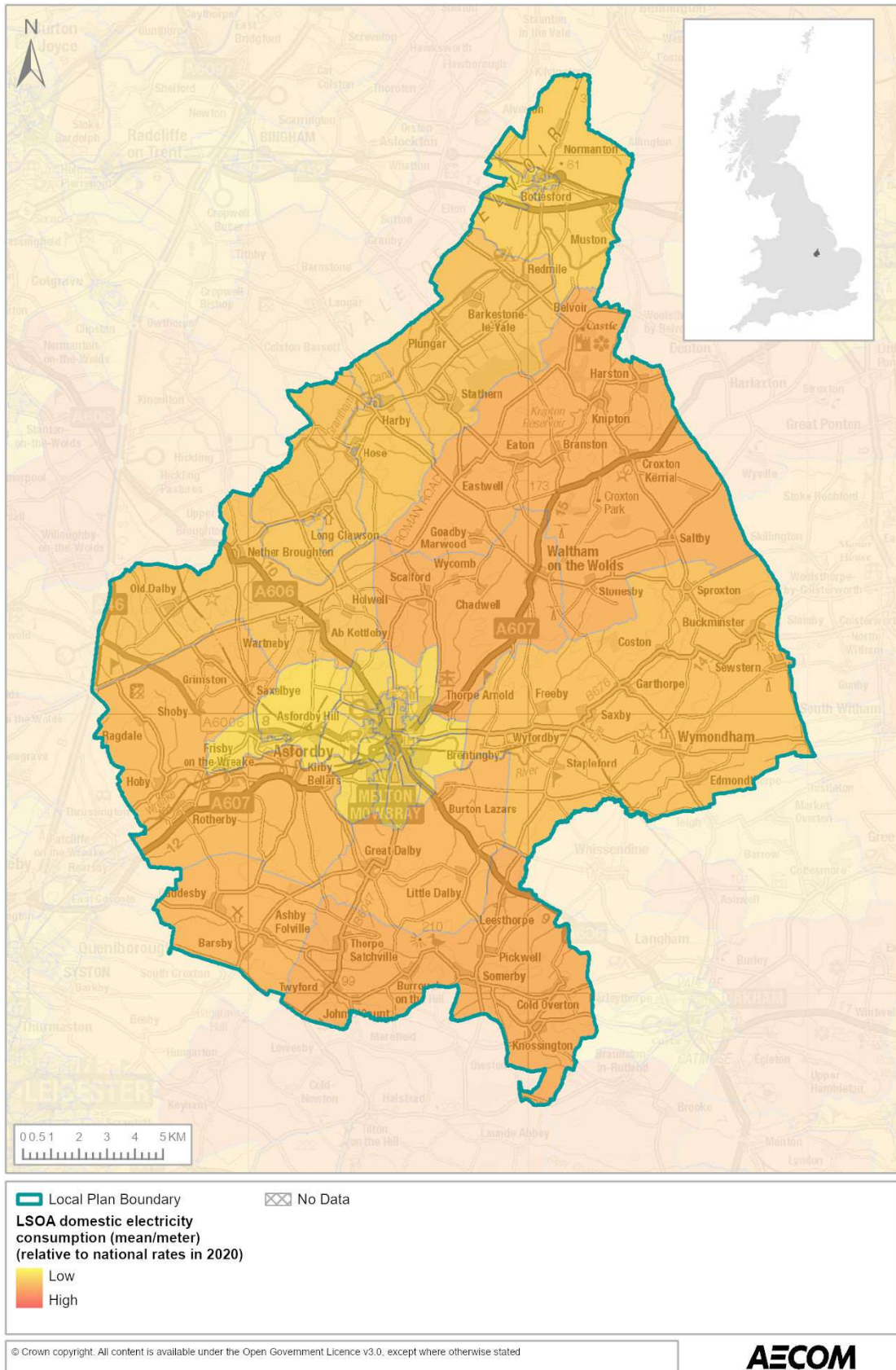


Figure 5-2 Mean Electricity Consumption in Melton Borough

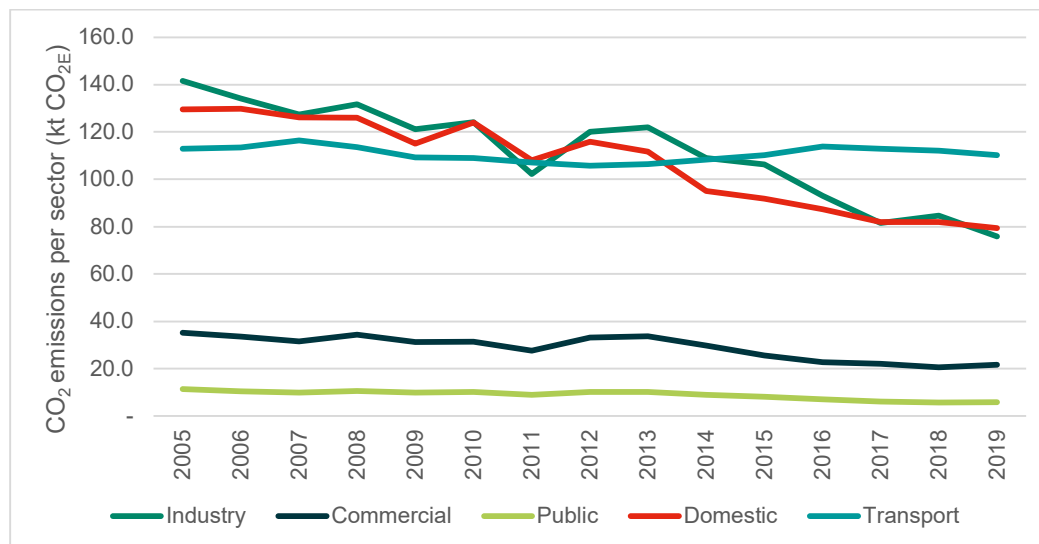


Installed renewables

- 5.3.5 At the end of 2021, Melton Borough had 1,340 photovoltaic / solar energy, 20 onshore wind, two anaerobic digestion, and one sewage gas installations across its area – totalling 1,363 renewable energy installations. This is 49 more installations in comparison to the previous year. In combination, these 2,432 renewable energy installations had a 26.7 megawatt capacity at the end of 2021, generating 30,010 megawatt hours together for the year¹⁷.

Emissions trends

Figure 5-3 CO₂ emissions in kilotons CO₂ equivalent¹⁸



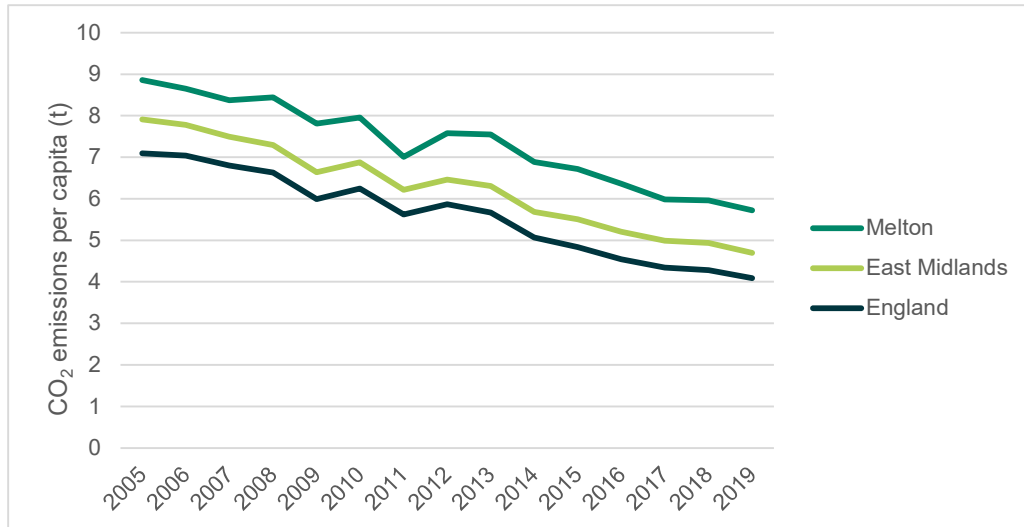
- 5.3.6 As shown in Figure 5-3, the largest contributing sector to CO₂ emissions in Melton is the transport sector. Though this sector has experienced an overall decrease of approximately 2.6 kt CO₂ between 2005 and 2019, this is the lowest decrease across the different sectors. Notably there have been two periods where emissions linked to transport have increased – between 2005-2007, and 2012-2016. The industrial sector has experienced the largest decrease – 65.6 kt CO₂ between 2005 and 2019.
- 5.3.7 The uptake of Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) will contribute positively towards the reduction of road transport related emissions. In line with assumptions made by the Department for Transport’s ‘Road to Zero’ report (2018)¹⁹, it is assumed that ULEV uptake will increase rapidly in the coming decade and therefore aside from HGVs, all vehicles could be ultra-low emission (powered either by hydrogen or electricity) by 2030.

¹⁷ GOV.UK (2022) ‘National statistics – Regional Renewable Statistics’ can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁸ GOV.UK (2021) UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019’ can be accessed [here](#).

¹⁹ HM Government (2018) ‘The Road to Zero: Next steps towards cleaner road transport and delivering our Industrial Strategy’ can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 5-4 CO₂ emissions per capita (in tons) for Melton in comparison to regional trends²⁰



5.3.8 Figure 5-4 shows that CO₂ emissions per capita in Melton are currently higher than the regional and national averages, but have broadly followed the same decreasing trend.

5.4 Summary of future baseline

5.4.1 A continued shift towards renewable energy installations and usage should reduce the reliance on fossil fuels across the UK. This should help continue the decreasing trend in CO₂ emissions linked to the domestic and industrial sector in the borough.

5.4.2 CO₂ emissions per capita in Melton can reasonably be expected to continue to decrease in line with regional and national trends. This could be encouraged through the adoption of more energy efficiency measures, renewable energy production and new technologies. However, an increase in population could possibly contribute to an increase in the absolute levels of CO₂ emissions, particularly in the period before new energy infrastructure is established.

5.5 Key sustainability issues

5.5.1 Considering the baseline information and the policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to climate change mitigation:

- The transport sector remains a key challenge in terms of reducing CO₂ emissions in the borough. In line with national and regional policies and plans, the new Local Plan should guide development towards the most accessible locations in Melton in order to encourage active transport infrastructure improvements and encourage sustainable transport technologies. Opportunities to influence per capita emissions could also be sought, particularly by planning for integrated and connected development.

²⁰ GOV.UK (2021) UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2019' can be accessed [here](#).

- There is also a clear role for the new Local Plan to play in respect to minimising built environment emissions. This can be achieved by directing growth to locations associated with the greatest opportunity, and setting standards through development management policy that go over-and-above the requirements set out in Building Regulations.
- Consideration should be given to methods of onsite renewable heat and power generation, recognising that this can lead to efficient energy utilisation.
- Additionally, the new Local Plan will have a role to play in terms of strategic solutions. The provision of separate sites for renewable energy can be planned for to serve both new and existing communities. This could include larger scale renewable power generation and storage.

5.6 Scoping decision

5.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the climate change mitigation topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Table 5.2 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 5.2 Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Take proactive measures to help achieve zero carbon targets for Melton.	<p>Will the option / proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport? • Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria? • Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources? • Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources? • Maximise resource efficiency? • Reduce embodied carbon in new developments?

6. Economy

6.1 Focus of topic

6.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Current and emerging economic sectors
- Economic activity
- Commuter patterns
- Education, skills, and productivity

6.2 Context review

6.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 6-1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
National	
<u>Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill</u>	2022
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>Go Big - Go Local: The UK2070 report on a New Deal for Levelling Up the United Kingdom</u>	2020
Local	
<u>Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy 2021-2030</u>	2021
<u>Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan</u>	2018
<u>Leicester and Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth</u>	2018
<u>Melton Local Plan</u>	2018
<u>Melton Economic Development Strategy</u>	2015

6.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The new Local Plan will need to have regard to the NPPF, which has an overarching objective to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth. Local Plans are required to positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area taking account of unmet needs from neighbouring areas. Strategic policies are expected to make sufficient provision for employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development.
- Currently in its report stage, the government's Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill seeks to address disparities between different parts of

the UK aiming to spread opportunity more equitably by growing the economy in the places that need it most and regenerate towns and cities.

- Geographical inequality is also the central concern of “Go Big – Go Local: The UK2070 report on a New Deal for Levelling Up the United Kingdom” which proposes a major programme of investment in transport, skills and the advanced economy; with devolution of powers; and funding from Whitehall.
- Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy outlines the strategic growth plan for the region to build a productive, innovative, inclusive and sustainable economy, underpinned by four strategic pillars (Productive, Innovative, Inclusive and Sustainable).
- The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (2018) seeks to support economic recovery and growth through several priorities including:
 - Creating conditions for investment and growth.
 - Securing essential infrastructure
 - Focusing on strategic locations and growth
- Leicester and Leicestershire 2050: Our Vision for Growth provides a long-term vision that will address the challenges for growth in the region. The strategy will be delivered through Local Plans.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - EC1 – Employment Growth in Melton Mowbray
 - EC2 – Employment Growth in the Rural Area (Outside Melton Mowbray)
 - EC3 – Existing Employment Sites
 - EC4 – Other Employment and Mixed-use Proposals
 - EC5 - Melton Mowbray Town Centre
 - EC6 – Primary Shopping Frontages
 - EC8 – Sustainable Tourism
- The Melton Economic Development Strategy sets out Melton Borough Community Partnership’s priorities for Melton Borough’s economy. These are reflected in the Local Plan, which aims to deliver those sustainable economic development priorities spatially.

6.3 Summary of current baseline

Employment and economy

- 6.3.1 The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in Melton was estimated to be worth £1.38 billion in 2021 representing a growth of around 96% since 1998.²¹ Since 2014 Melton’s GDP grew at a similar rate (25%) to the average growth rate for the East Midlands as a whole (24%).²¹

²¹ ONS (2021). *Regional gross domestic product: local authorities*. Available [here](#).

- 6.3.2 The Melton Economic Development Strategy (2015) describes that the main employment sectors in Melton are Manufacturing and Accommodation and Food Services sectors are the largest employers in the borough. The Melton Local Plan anticipated this to be the case into the future, suggesting that ‘manufacturing is forecast to experience significant growth up to 2036’.
- 6.3.3 **Error! Reference source not found.** presents a list of 15 sites within the borough that will be retained for employment uses (within Classes B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order). The majority of these sites are in proximity of the borough’s larger settlements, notably Melton Mowbray and Bottesford.

Table 6-2 Employment facilities listed for retention in the Melton Borough Local Plan

Site

C3(i) Masterfoods HQ, Waltham.
EC 3(ii) Asfordby Business Park, Asfordby Hill.
EC3(iii) Holwell Works (Melton Mowbray Business Park), Asfordby Hill.
EC3(iv) Stanton Plc (St Gobain), Asfordby Hill.
EC3(v) Saxby Road Area (Incorporating Hudson Road Estate), Melton Mowbray.
EC3(vi) Crown Business Park, Old Dalby.
EC3(vii) Six Hill Business Area, Six Hills.
EC3(viii) Old Dalby Trading Estate, Old Dalby.
EC3(ix) Melton And Kettleby Foods, Melton Mowbray.
EC3(x) Leicester Road Estate, Melton Mowbray.
EC3(xi) Normanton Lane, Bottesford.
EC3(xii) Orston Lane, Bottesford.
EC3(xiii) Hickling Lane Employments Sites, Long Clawson.
EC3(xiv) Snow Hill Industrial Estate, Melton Mowbray.
EC3(xv) Burrough Court, Burrough on the Hill.

- 6.3.4 In addition to the existing employment sites, the Melton Local Plan notes two additional brownfield sites within the borough that represent potential significant employment site opportunities: ‘Holwell Works’ and ‘Asfordby Business Park’.
- 6.3.5 Key employment sites and employment allocations are mapped in figure 6-1. These sites are identified in the Adopted Local Plan Policy EC3.

Figure 6-1 Key Employment Sites (Policy EC3) and allocations

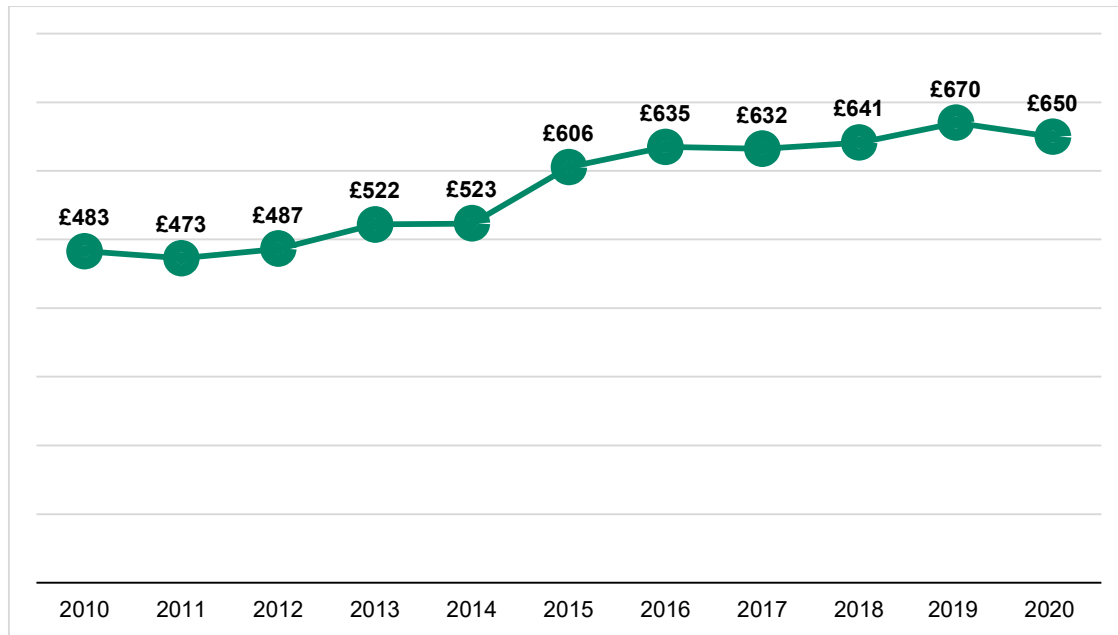


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- 6.3.6 An area’s productivity can be measured in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) per hour. The most recent ONS data (as of June 2023) shows the 2020 productivity per job filled in Melton Mowbray (no information was available for Melton Borough) was £49,577, significantly below the UK average of £58,100.
- 6.3.7 The GVA figures for Melton Mowbray for the decade up to 2020²² (2) show a general positive growth trend, driven by a large jump between 2014 and 2015. In 2020, the final year on the graph, there was a slight decrease from the town’s peak in 2019, however this drop is most likely due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Figure 6-2 Melton Mowbray GVA (£million) 2010-2020



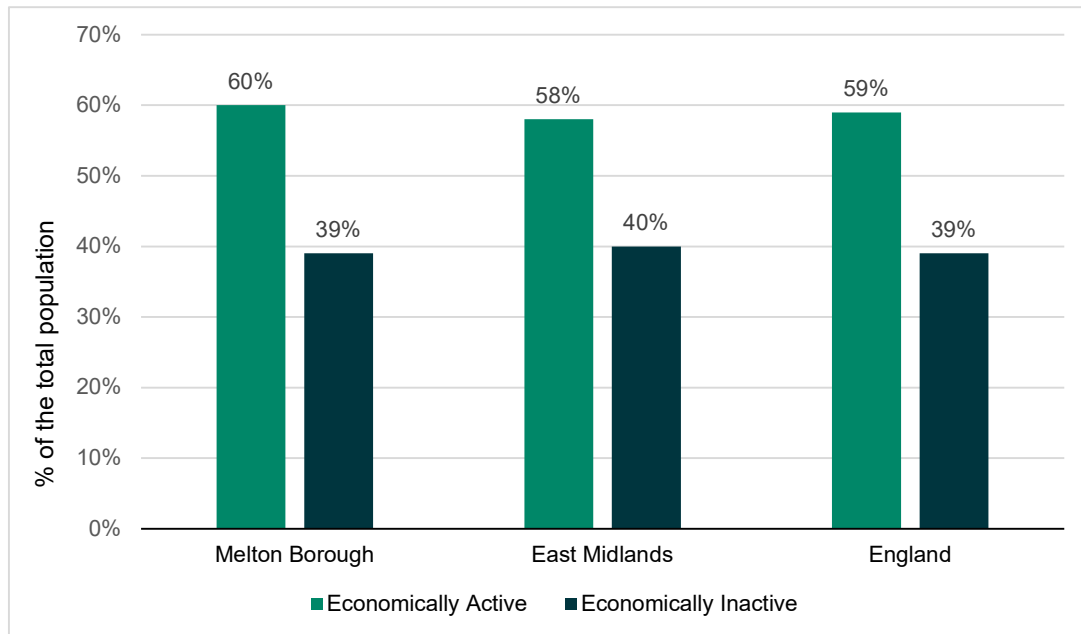
- 6.3.8 Data from the 2021 Census²³ shows that 60% of the 16+ resident population (excluding full time students) of Melton Borough were economically active²⁴ in 2021 with 39% economically inactive (e.g. retired, looking after family and other). The proportion of the population that is economically active in Melton Borough is slightly higher than both the regional and national average (for the East Midlands, 58% of the population were economically active and 40% economically inactive; for England the equivalent figures were 59% and 39%, respectively).

²² ONS (2023) 'UK gross value added (GVA) and productivity estimates for other geographies' can be accessed [here](#).

²³ Nomis (2021) 'TS066 – Economic activity status' can be accessed [here](#).

²⁴ Economically active people are those who are either in employment or unemployed and actively seeking work.

Figure 6-3 Economic activity rates in Melton Borough, the East Midlands and England (%) (2021 Census)

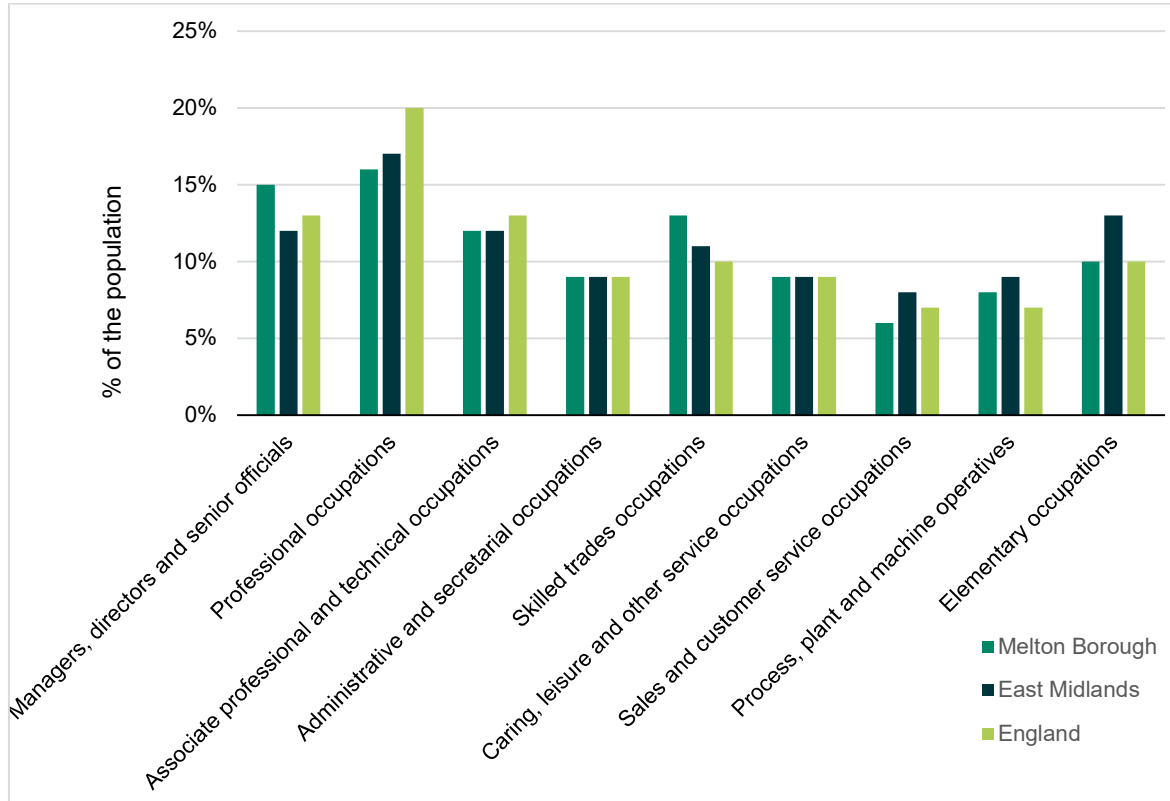


6.3.9 Figure 6- shows the 2021 Census²⁵ occupations of residents aged 16+ in employment in Melton Borough, the East Midlands, and England. The data shows the common professional occupation sector was ‘professional occupations’, accounting for 16% of the total (although this is lower than the equivalent figure for East Midlands and England). The next two most common occupation sectors were ‘managers, directors and senior officials’ (at 15% of the total) and ‘skilled trades occupations’ (at 13% of the total).

6.3.10 The smallest sectors in Melton Borough are ‘sales and customer service occupations’ (at 6% of the total) and ‘process, plant and machine operations’, (at 8% of the total). These are also the smallest sectors in the two wider geographies.

²⁵ Nomis (2021) ‘TS063 - Occupation’ can be accessed [here](#).

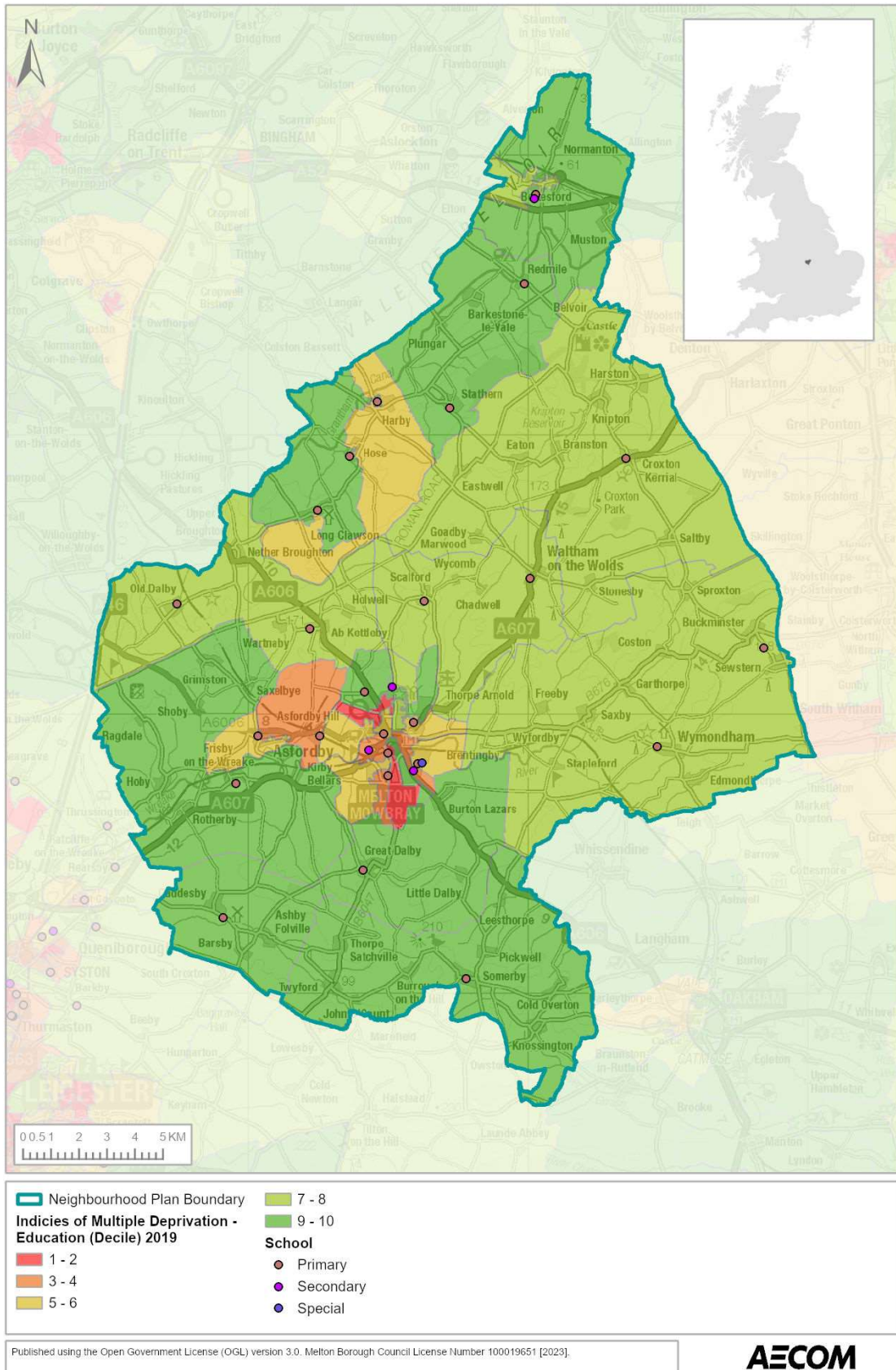
Figure 6-4 Occupations in Melton Borough (%) (2021 Census)



Education and skills

6.3.11 Figure 6-5 shows the range of education and skills deprivation around Melton Borough. It shows that the borough generally scores positively for this domain; areas to the very north and very south of the borough score especially well. However, there are still pockets of deprivation within the borough, mostly concentrated in Melton Mowbray.

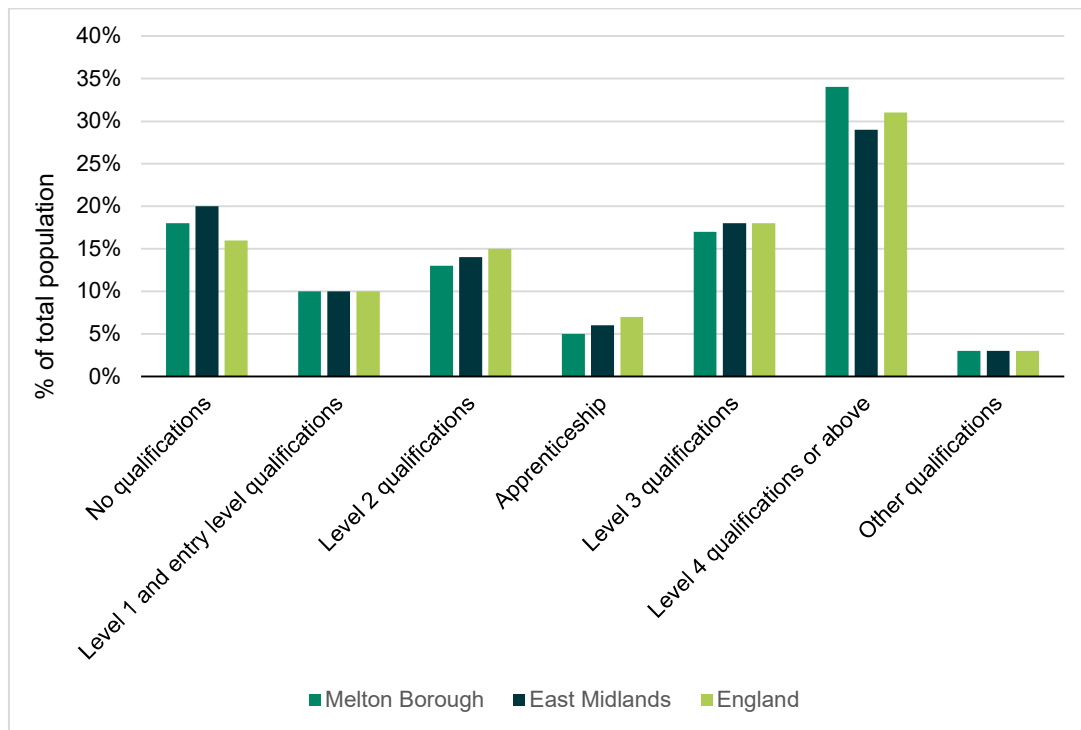
Figure 6-5 Education, skills & training IMD domain



6.3.12 The Department for Education’s local authority skills levels report (2022)²⁶ shows for each Local Planning Authority (LPA) in England the proportion of 16-64 year olds with level 3+ qualifications to support measurement of the Government’s levelling up mission covering skills. The lowest scoring LPA is at 36.9% and the highest at 94.8%. For Leicestershire, the proportion of 16-64 year olds with a Level 3+ qualification was 61.9% which is above the average (54.1%) seen across the 151 authorities.

6.3.13 Figure 6-6 uses the 2021 Census data to show the highest level of qualification distribution for residents over 16 in Melton Borough and compares to the regional and national averages. On one end of the scale, it shows 34% of Melton Borough’s population has a higher proportion of individuals with Level 4 qualifications or above when compared to the regional and national equivalent figures. On the other end of the scale, 20% of residents over 16 in Melton Borough have no qualifications; this is lower than the equivalent figure for East Midlands, but higher than the national equivalent figure.

Figure 6-6 Highest level of qualification (%) (2021 Census)



Commuter patterns

6.3.14 The larger settlements within Melton Borough, Melton Mowbray and Bottesford, are well connected to other parts of the UK. Both settlements benefit from being connected to larger towns and cities outside of the borough (including, but not limited to, Nottingham and Leicester) through public transport services (including trains and buses) and by private transport along main roads which pass through them.

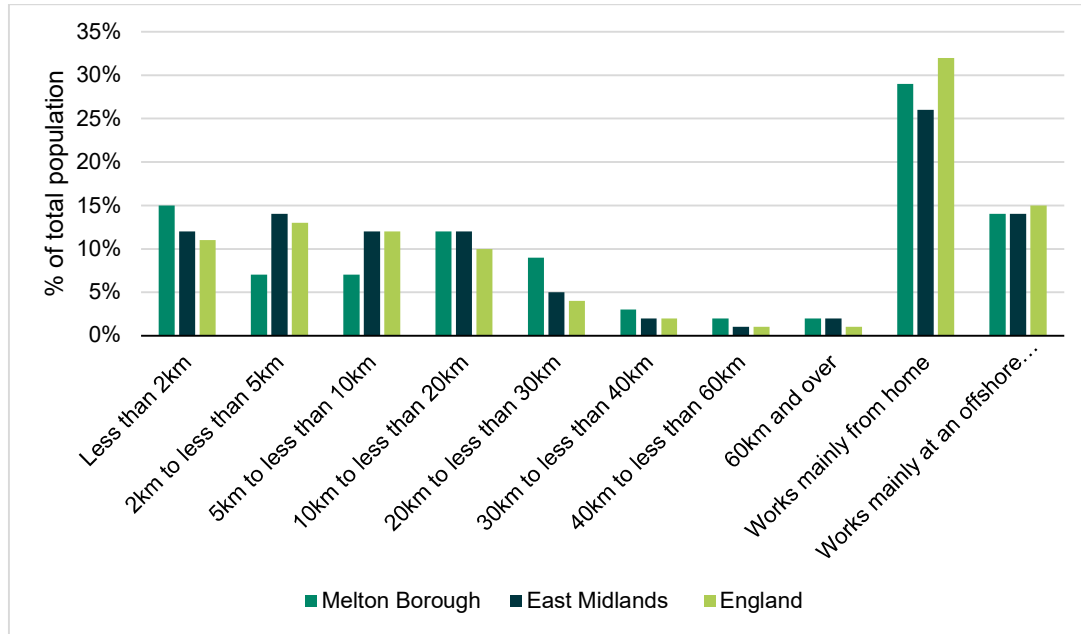
6.3.15 Outside of these two settlements, transport options are generally limited to private vehicles.

²⁶ Department for Education (2022) ‘Local authority Skills levels England’ can be accessed [here](#).

6.3.16 The closest airport is East Midlands Airport, approximately 20 miles west of the borough.

6.3.17 Figure 6-7 shows ONS 2021 Census data²⁷ for the distance travelled to work in Melton Borough and compares it to regional and national averages. The data shows a substantial proportion of residents working from home (29%) which is higher than the regional average but lower than the average for England. The majority of residents (41%) travel less than 30 km to work in Melton Borough, with around 7% travelling 30 km.

Figure 6-7 Distance travelled to work (2021 Census)



Note: the cut-off category is 'works mainly at an offshore installation, in no fixed place, or outside the UK'

Links to the wider region

6.3.18 Melton Borough has strong links with the wider Leicester and Leicestershire area. The Borough is part of the Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Partnership (LLEP), and accounts for 4.4% of all employment within the LLEP area.

6.3.19 The LLEP Economic Growth Strategy (2021) notes that over the past decade, the region has delivered several nationally significant projects, and achieved Enterprise Zone status for two Enterprise Zones covering four separate sites (including a manufacturing zone in Melton Borough).

²⁷ Nomis (2021) 'TS058 - Distance travelled to work' can be accessed [here](#).

6.4 Summary of future baseline

- 6.4.1 Factors such as rising energy prices, inflation and workforce shortages are likely to continue to slow down the rate of economic growth at local, regional and national levels. This will directly affect Melton Borough's rate of GDP/GVA recovery.
- 6.4.2 The major employment sectors identified above are expected to continue to grow in Melton Borough; however the Local Plan acknowledge that growth in a range of economic sectors is essential for the borough's economic future. It notes that the forecast employment growth areas within the borough are manufacturing, professional and other private services and information and communication.
- 6.4.3 The net-zero transition is forecast to create up to 725,000 new jobs²⁸ in low-carbon sectors such as buildings retrofit, renewable energy, and electric vehicles. Melton Borough has the potential to benefit from this economic opportunity as the region it sits within is home to several UK and world-leading centres of new technology and innovation. Notably, the region is especially renowned for its innovation towards the automotive sector and is home to the UK's only automotive focused Enterprise Zone.
- 6.4.4 Whilst existing commuting patterns are likely to continue, the trend for hybrid working is likely to reduce the frequency of commuter journeys.
- 6.4.5 The data considered above shows that working-age people in the borough have a higher qualifications profile than England, with a larger proportion with higher qualifications and a lower proportion with no or low qualifications.

6.5 Key sustainability issues

- 6.5.1 Melton Borough has a key role in supporting the sub-regional and even national economy in terms of supporting economic growth, including via improved national productivity (i.e. economic output per worker / hours worked).
- 6.5.2 Net-zero transition offers opportunities to grow the economy and improve skill levels particularly in buildings retrofit, renewable energy and electric vehicles. It will be important to provide training opportunities to help upskill the local workforce to take advantage of the potential opportunities created.
- 6.5.3 The provision of quality employment development, housing, public services and well-designed public realm will help attract skilled workforce to the borough.

²⁸ Climate Change Committee (2023) 'A Net Zero workforce' can be accessed [here](#).

6.6 Scoping decision

6.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the Economy topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Table 6-3 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 6-3 Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Build upon key industries and support growth, timely investment in infrastructure and economic diversification that has tangible benefits to the lives of local residents whilst addressing social inequalities.	Will the option/ proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet local employment land requirements? • Support traditional and emerging sectors of Melton Borough’s economy? • Enhance the vitality of Melton Borough’s local centres? • Improve accessibility to employment opportunities? • Enhance training and educational opportunities?

7. Equality

7.1 Focus of topic

7.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Protected characteristic groups.
- Levels of deprivation.

7.2 Context review

7.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 7-1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
International	
United Nations - The 17 Goals	2015
Universal Declaration of Human Rights	1948
National	
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality and human rights 2018	2018
Building for Equality: Disability and the Built Environment	2017
Equality Act 2010	2010
Planning Practice Guidance	Various
Local	
Leicestershire County Council - Public Health Strategy 2022-2027	2022
Equality Framework for Local Government (EFGL) 2021	2021
Melton Local Plan	2018
Melton Sustainable Community Strategy 2015-2025	2015

7.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948. There are 30 Articles, seeking to ensure that all humans are treated as free and equal regardless of social background.
- UN Sustainable Development Goals are 17 life changing goals outlined by the UN in 2015. The following are of particular relevance for equality and diversity:
 - Goal 5 Gender equality: This is a human right and vital for a peaceful, prosperous world.

- Goal 10 No inequality: The poorest 40% of the population should be able to grow their income faster than average; and
- Goal 16 Peace and justice: There is a need for inclusive societies with strong institutions that provide justice for all.
- The Equality Act 2010 legally protects people from discrimination both in the workplace and in wider society. The Act ensures that individuals with certain 'protected characteristics' are not indirectly or directly discriminated against. The Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) is set out under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010. Under the duty public bodies must try to:
 - Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act.
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

The Act explains that 'due regard' for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people due to their protected characteristics.
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.
- Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include that planning policies should: "Provide the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship, whilst guarding against the unnecessary loss of community facilities and services".
- Is Britain Fairer? The state of equality of human rights is a report published by the Equality and Human Rights Commission. It reviews how the UK is performing as a nation on equality and human rights. It reveals there has been progress, but serious challenges remain that must be addressed, including:
 - Poverty has changed little, and for children it has increased. The government needs to take radical action to reverse these trends.
 - Disabled people are not enjoying the progress felt by other groups and are in danger of 'being left behind'. There should be an acute focus on improving life in Britain for disabled people.
 - Women's equality has improved, but full equality has not been achieved. There is an urgent need to improve the experiences of women across Britain; and

- Black African, Bangladeshi and Pakistani people are still the most likely to live in poverty and deprivation. Gypsy, Roma and Travellers face multiple disadvantages across different areas of life. There is a need to address the multiple factors that contribute to this trend.
- Building for Equality: Disability and the Built Environment is a House of Commons Report from 2017, which states that: “There is a real need for a proactive, concerted, effort on the part of ‘mainstream’ systems and structures - be that national and local government or the professionals responsible for creating and changing our built environment—to take seriously the challenge of creating an inclusive environment”.
- The PPG Chapter on housing for older and disabled people sets out a definition for older, disabled and vulnerable group and how such matters can be assessed and addressed in Local Plans.
- The Leicestershire County Council Public Health Strategy 2022-2027 outlines the vision for health and wellbeing in the county, including Melton Borough. The strategy aims to protect and improve the health and quality of life of everyone in Leicestershire through the following:
 - Build on the strengths of people in the communities.
 - Promote healthy living and healthy places.
 - Protect communities and individuals from harm.
 - Provide services that meet community needs; and
 - Work in partnership to transform the way we deliver services.
 - It also sets out the need to address health inequalities.
- The Equality Framework for Local Government intends to help councils to:
 - Deliver accessible, inclusive and responsive services to customers and residents in their communities including those from under-represented groups.
 - Employ a workforce that reflects the diversity of the area they are serving.
 - Provide equality of opportunity for all staff; and
 - Meet the requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty and support any aspirations to exceed these.

It seeks to do this by:

- Identifying the areas of activity that councils need to address to deliver good equality outcomes.
- Helping councils to understand how they can build equality into processes and practices.
- Supporting organisations to become inclusive employers; and
- Enabling councils to informally self-assess their progress on the equality improvement journey and determine where and how they need to improve.

- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - Policy C6 - Gypsies and Travellers.
 - Policy C7 - Rural Services; and
 - Policy C9 - Healthy Communities.
 - Policy C2 - Housing Mix
- The Melton Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the needs and hopes of the community – allowing organisations to work efficiently and collaboratively towards a common goal to improve quality of life in the borough. To enhance the quality of life for everyone in Melton Borough and achieve a sustainable, prosperous and vibrant communities, the strategy outlines several aims and objectives. These will also contribute to equality through improving standards of living and providing opportunities for improved education and employment levels.

7.3 Summary of current baseline

Index of Multiple Deprivation

- 7.2.3 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD 2019) measures multiple deprivation for each local authority area as a whole and for smaller areas within each authority, known as Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs). Melton Borough ranked 249th out of 317 local authorities in England in the overall IMD 2019, where one is the most deprived (rank of average score).
- 7.2.4 The ranks of the individual domains are shown in Table 7.2 overleaf for the 2015 and 2019 IMDs. It shows the overall deprivation in Melton Borough has decreased, as the borough has moved from 238th to 249th (where the first is most deprived). The biggest change is seen in the ‘Crime’ domain, where the borough has moved from 175th in 2015 to 244th in 2019, which indicates crime has become less of an issue for the borough based on this metric.
- 7.2.5 There are small decreases in relative deprivation for the ‘Income’ and ‘Employment’ domains, and small increases in relative deprivation for the ‘Education, skills and training’ and ‘Living environment’ domains. Bigger changes are seen in the ‘Health and disability’ domain – which has become more deprived, and ‘Barriers to housing and services’ – which has become less deprived. It is noted that though these domains have experienced changes over the four year time period, the ‘Health and disability’ domain remains relatively un-deprived in comparison to other local authorities, and the ‘Barriers to housing and services’ domain remains relatively deprived.

Table 7-2 Melton Borough Indices of Multiple Deprivation – 2015 and 2019

IMD Domains	IMD rank 2015 ²⁹	IMD rank 2019 ³⁰
Overall IMD	238	249
Income	265	260
Employment	267	260
Education, skills & training	219	223
Health & disability	268	234
Crime	175	244
Barriers to housing & services	60	102
Living environment	156	161

7.2.6 None of the 30 LSOAs in the borough are within the 10% most deprived neighbourhoods in England for IMD³¹. However, several of the LSOAs in Melton Borough fall within the top 10% for individual deprivation domains.

7.2.7 For example, LSOA Melton 004E is in the top 10% for various deprivation domains, as demonstrated in Table 7.3 below. Broadly speaking, these LSOAs cover the southern extent of the borough, and extend to the eastern and western borough boundaries as far as Nether Broughton and Belvoir. They do not include the settlements of Melton Mowbray or Asfordby.

Table 7-3 LSOAs within Melton Borough in the top 10% most deprived for various domains

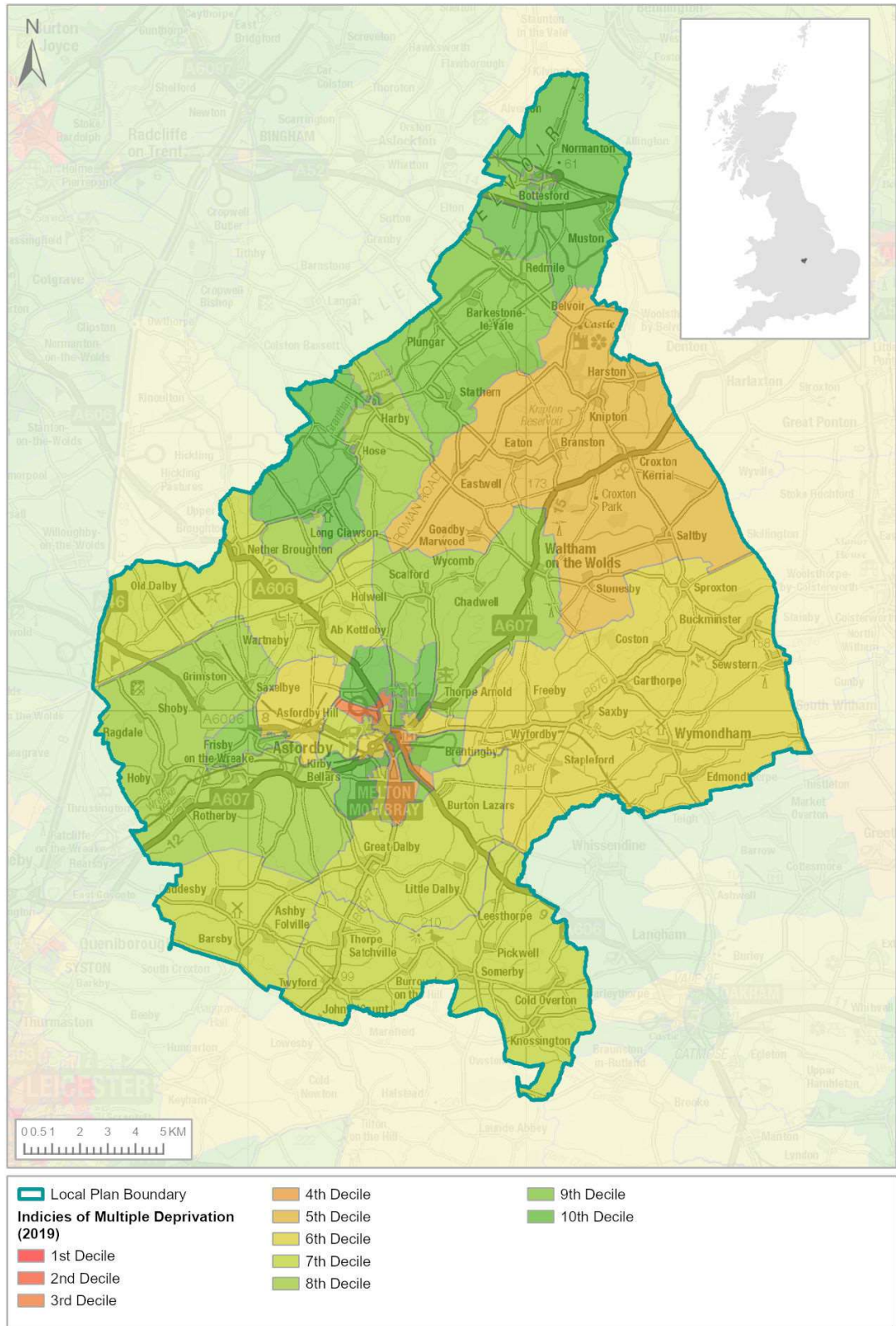
LSOA	Number of domains within the 10% most deprived	Deprivation domain
Melton 004E	1	Education, skills and training.
Melton 003C	1	Barriers to housing and services.
Melton 003D	1	Barriers to housing and services.
Melton 006A	1	Barriers to housing and services.
Melton 006B	1	Barriers to housing and services.
Melton 001C	2	Barriers to housing and services, and Living environment.
Melton 006D	2	Barriers to housing and services, and Living environment.

²⁹ GOV.UK (2015) 'English indices of deprivation 2015' can be accessed [here](#). Download File 10: local authority district summaries.

³⁰ GOV.UK (2019) 'English indices of deprivation 2019' can be accessed [here](#). Download File 10: local authority district summaries.

³¹ GOV.UK (2019) 'English indices of deprivation 2019' can be accessed [here](#). Download File 1: index of multiple deprivation.

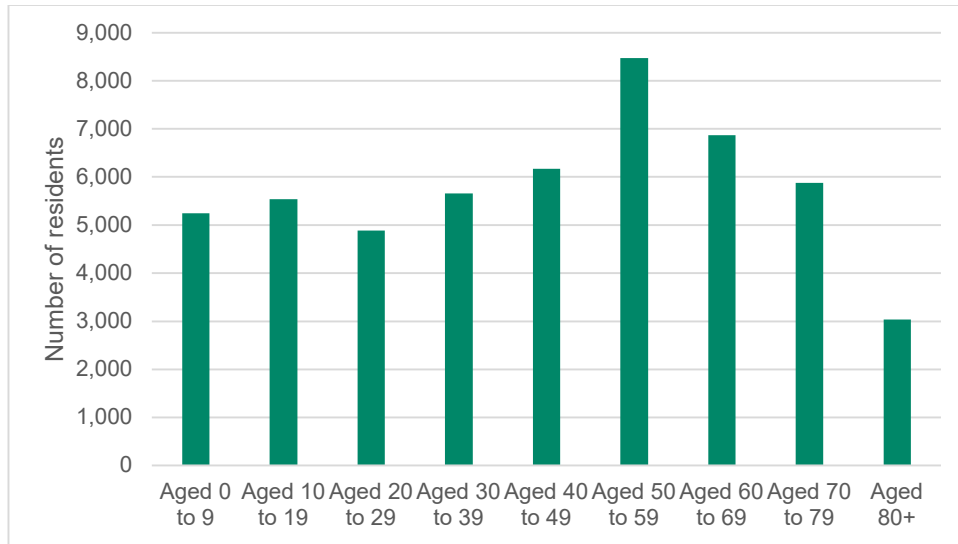
Figure 7-1 IMD Overall Ranking for LSOAs in Melton Borough



Age and sex

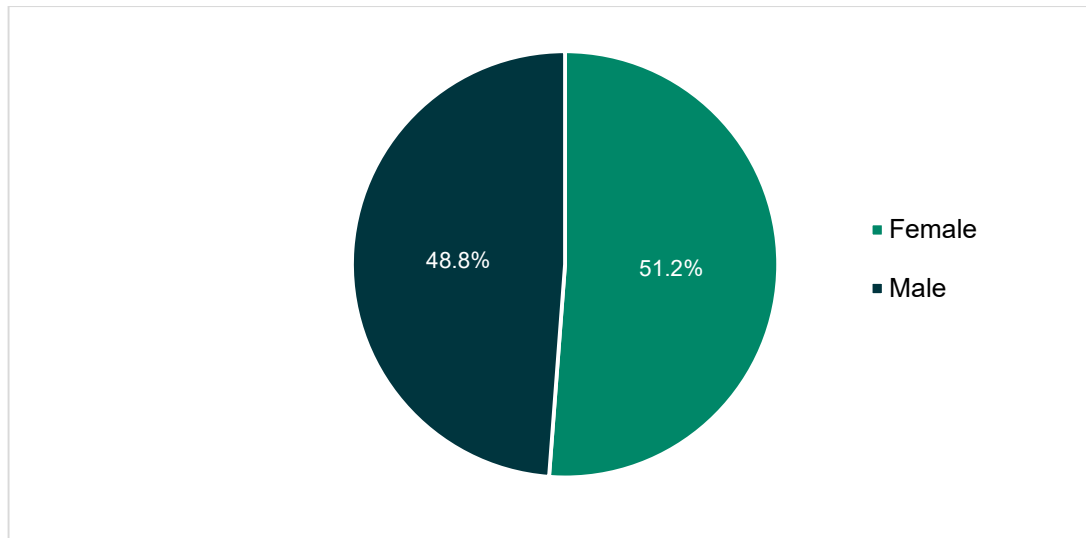
7.2.8 According to the 2021 Census data³², Melton Borough is home to 51,752 people. The age breakdown of the population is visualised in Figure 7-2. The largest age group is the 50 to 59 year olds, followed by the 60 to 69 year olds.

Figure 7-2 Age structure of the population of Melton Borough



7.2.9 The 2021 Census data³³ also provides data on the sex of Melton Borough's residents. The data reveals that the borough split 51% female to 49% male. This is the same as the national split.

Figure 7-3 Sex of the population of Melton Borough



³² Nomis (2021) 'TS007 - Age by single year' can be accessed [here](#).

³³ Nomis (2021) 'TS008 - Sex' can be accessed [here](#).

Disability

7.2.10 Figure 7-4 shows that Melton Borough has a lower percentage of residents that are disabled and have day to day activities limited a lot in comparison to regional and national trends. However, the borough does experience a greater percentage of disabled people who have day to day activities limited a little compared to the East Midlands area and England as a whole.

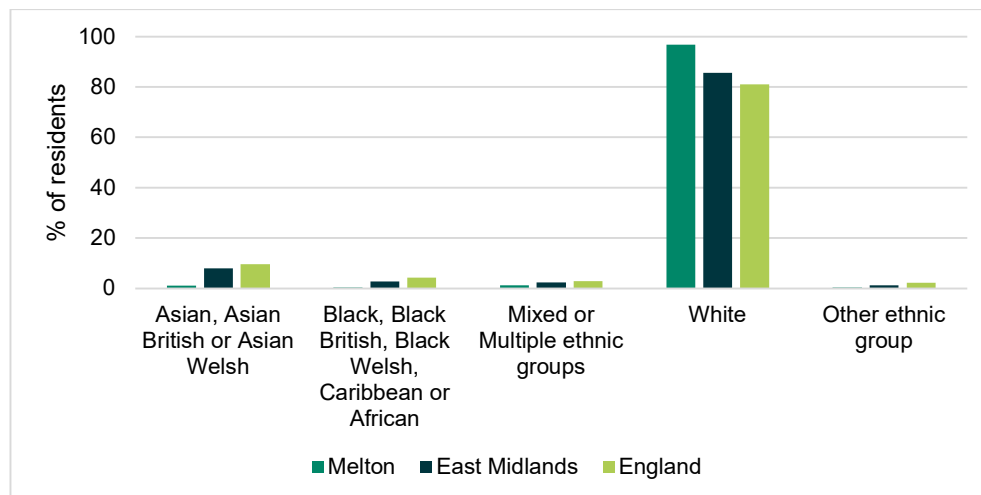
Figure 7-4 Percentage of the population limited in their daily activities by disability or illness (ONS, 2021)³⁴



Race / ethnicity

7.2.11 Figure 7-5 shows that Melton Borough has a higher percentage of residents of 'white' ethnicity in comparison to regional and national trends, and a lower percentage of all other ethnic groups.

Figure 7-5 Ethnic groups in Melton Borough compared to regional and national trends (ONS, 2021)³⁵

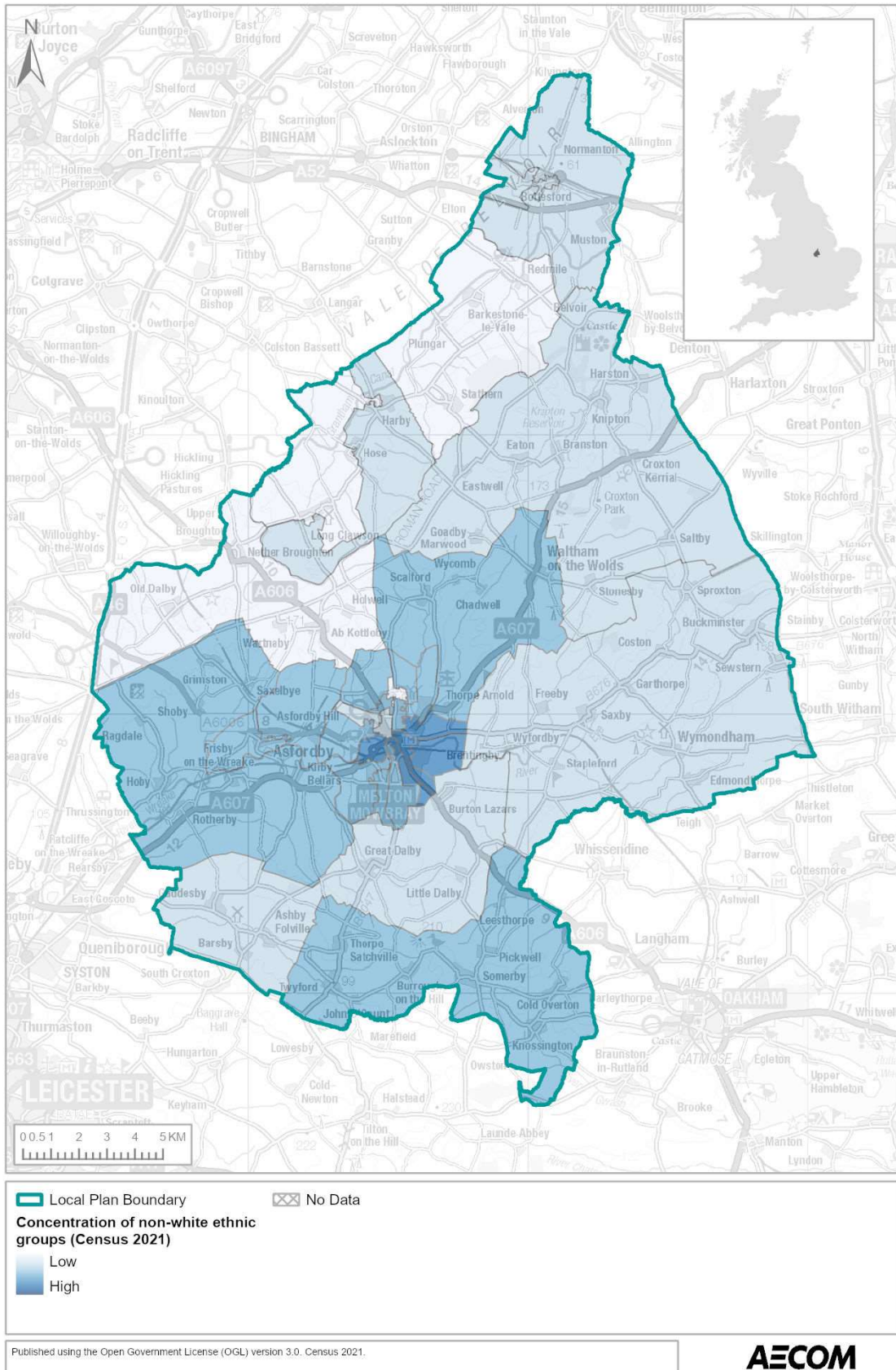


³⁴ Nomis (2021) 'TS038 - Disability' can be accessed [here](#).

³⁵ Nomis (2021) 'TS021 - Ethnic group' can be accessed [here](#).

- 7.3 Whilst the majority of people are recorded as being of 'white' in Melton (at higher rates than nationally and the East Midlands) there are spatial concentrations of ethnic minority communities. Figure 7-6 shows that there is a higher concentration of non-white ethnic groups in the centre and south of the borough, especially in the town of Melton Mowbray and the surrounding residential areas, when compared with the rest of the borough.

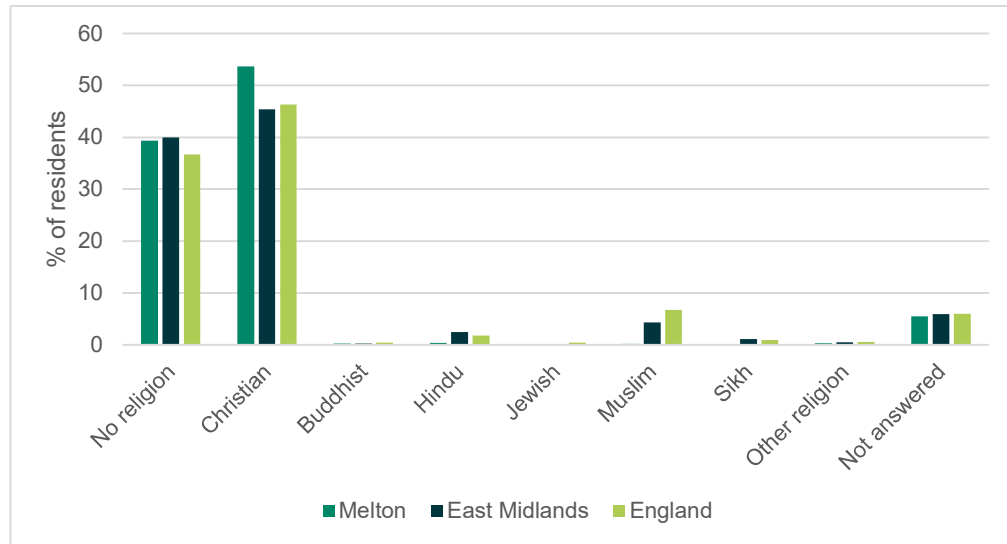
Figure 7-6 Concentration of Ethnic groups in Melton Borough



Religion / belief

7.3.1 Figure 7-7 overleaf shows the majority of Melton Borough’s population identifies as Christian. This is more than the regional and national trends. The second highest percentage of people state that they have no religion. All other religions are lower than the regional and national averages, and Muslim populations are significantly lower.

Figure 7-7 Breakdown of religion in Melton Borough in comparison to regional and national trends (ONS, 2021)³⁶

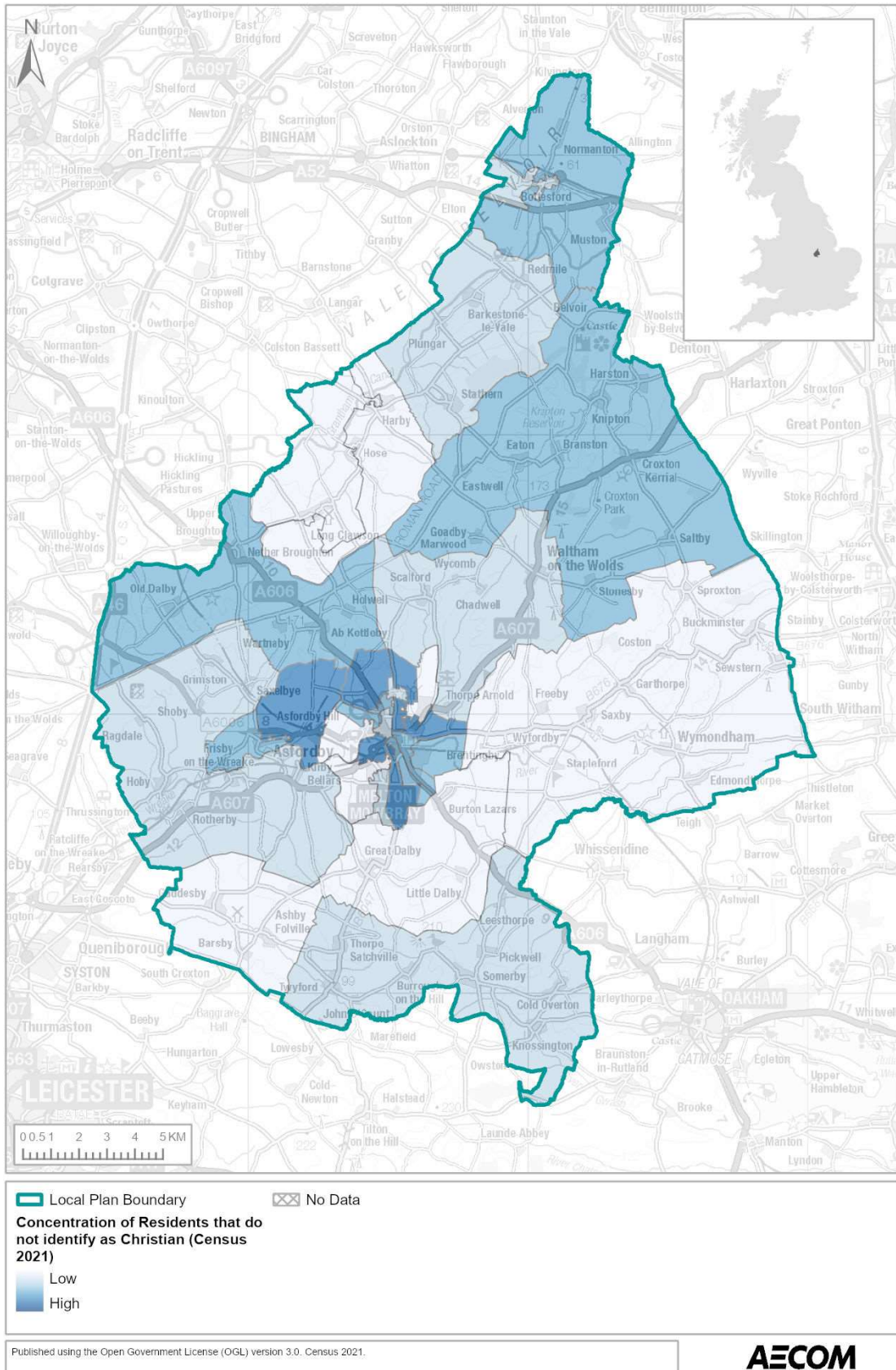


7.4 Figure 7-8 shows the spatial distribution of residents that do not identify as Christian (though this also includes those identifying with no-religion). It indicates that the areas within and around Melton Mowbray have a higher proportion of communities that identify as non-Christian compared to the rest of the borough. However, this should be read in the context of relatively low levels of diversity.

7.5 Other areas with a higher religious mix include the LSOAs by Bottesford, Croxton Kerrial, and Old Dalby. Generally, the more rural parts of the borough have higher proportions of residents who identify as Christians.

³⁶ Nomis (2021) 'TS021 - Ethnic group' can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 7-8 Concentration of residents that do not identify as Christian



Gender identity

7.5.1 For the first time, the 2021 Census collected data on gender identity of UK residents over 16 years old. This data is presented in Table 7.4.

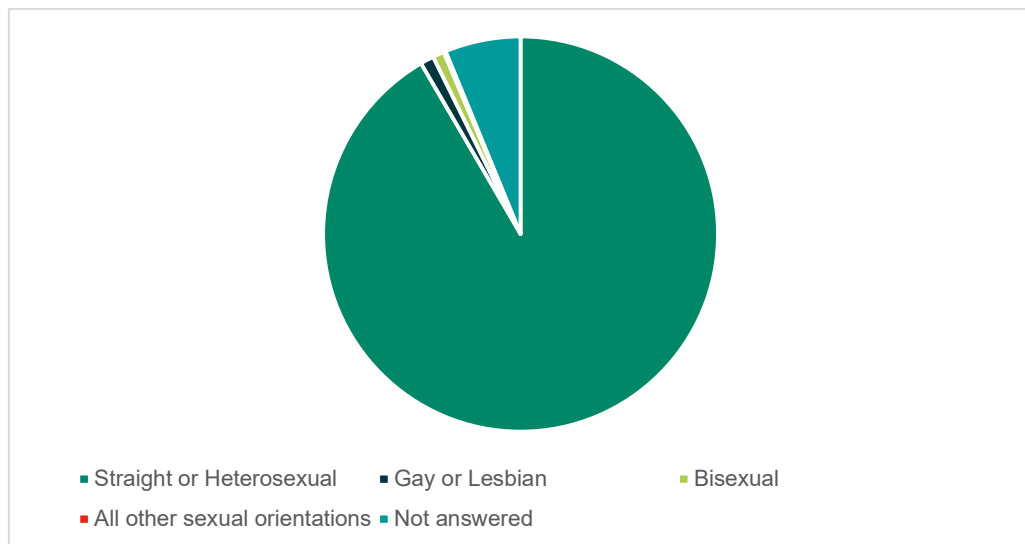
Table 7-4 Gender identity in Melton Borough³⁷ (data voluntarily provided and for over 16s only)

Gender identity	Total
Gender identity the same as sex registered at birth	40,738
Gender identity different from sex registered at birth but no specific identity given	55
Trans woman	31
Trans man	21
All other gender identities	29
Not answered	2,070

Sexual orientation

7.5.2 In terms of sexual orientation, the 2021 Census shows 39,330 residents (91.6% of the population) in Melton Borough identify as heterosexual, with 479 residents (1.1%) identifying as gay or lesbian, and 403 residents (0.9%) identifying as bisexual. 74 residents (0.2%) identify as other sexual orientations; the remaining 2,657 residents on Melton Borough (6.2%) did not answer the question. This is demonstrated in Figure 7-9.

Figure 7-9 Sexual orientations in Melton Borough



³⁷ Nomis (n.d.) 'TS078 – Gender identity' can be accessed [here](#)

Benefit claimants

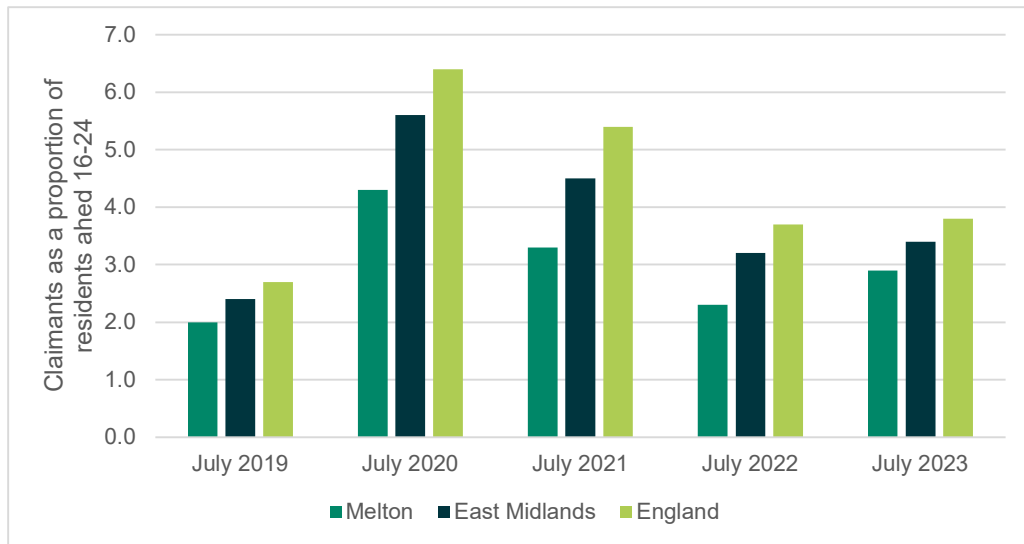
- 7.5.3 Out of work benefit claims provide an indication of the proportion of population that experience a limiting condition. This includes disability, those that are carers, people without a job, and those with incapacity.
- 7.5.4 Table 7-5 shows the benefit claimant count for residents (all usual residents aged 5 and over) of Melton Borough, East Midlands, and England. It shows that in both the years 2011 and 2021, there is consistency across all three geographical regions; the proportion of people providing unpaid care is the same or within one percentage point.
- 7.5.5 The table also shows that the total proportion of people providing unpaid care remained the same across all three geographies between 2011 and 2021 (around 10%). However, it is notable that the people who do provide unpaid care, on average, are doing so for more hours each week in 2021 compared to 2011.

Table 7-5 Unpaid care in Melton Borough³⁸

		Melton Borough		East Midlands		England	
		2011	2021	2011	2021	2011	2021
People providing unpaid care	Up to 19 hours per week	3,707 (7%)	2,489 (5%)	311,813 (7%)	210,087 (5%)	3,452,636 (7%)	2,303,725 (4%)
	20 to 49 hours per week	549 (1%)	757 (2%)	63,603 (1%)	86,759 (2%)	721,143 (1%)	969,769 (2%)
	50 or more hours per week	1,017 (2%)	1,258 (3%)	114,833 (2%)	131,452 (3%)	1,256,237 (2%)	1,404,771 (3%)

³⁸ Nomis (n.d.) 'TS039 - Provision of unpaid care' can be accessed [here](#)

Figure 7-10 Benefit claimant count in Melton Borough in comparison to regional and national trends



Marriage / civil partnership

7.5.6 The Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act 2013 legalised same-sex marriage in England, Wales and Scotland in 2014. In 2019 there were 212,000 same-sex families in the UK, having increased by 40.0% since 2015³⁹.

7.5.7 According to 2021 Census data, 51.2% of the population of Melton Borough are married or in a registered civil partnership; this figure is higher than the average for England at 44.7%. Melton Borough has a lower than average population that have never married or registered in a civil partnership (29.7% in comparison to 37.9% for England), and has a higher level of separation and divorces⁴⁰.

Pregnancy / maternity

7.5.8 Live birth rate figures show there were 442 births across the borough in 2021, which is an increase from 2020 (436 live births).⁴¹ However, the Total Fertility Rate (TFR)⁴² for Melton Borough in 2021 was 1.61, which is a decrease from 2020 where the rate was 1.66.

7.5.9 Despite the fall in TFR between 2020 and 2021, the borough's TFR remains higher than the TFR of East Midlands and England, which was 1.54 and 1.55, respectively.

³⁹ Office for National Statistics (2019) 'Families and households in the UK: 2019' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁰ Office for National Statistics (2021) 'Build a custom area profile – Melton' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴¹ Nomis (n.d.) 'Live births in England and Wales : birth rates down to local authority areas' can be accessed [here](#).

⁴² The Total Fertility Rate (TFR) is the average number of live children that a group of women would bear if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year throughout their childbearing lifespan.

Safety and security

- 7.5.10 Feelings of safety and security are key to ensuring personal wellbeing. Everyone is vulnerable to feeling unsafe, but this may be particularly acute for people belonging to certain protected characteristic groups, including young people, older people, disabled people, women, and people belonging to a particular ethnic group, or sexual orientation.

Community cohesion and participation

- 7.5.11 The development of communities which are functional, safe, and enjoyable places to live and work, requires the promotion of community cohesion and good relations between different groups. Encouraging participation in civic engagement and dialogue with all people in the community; particularly those belonging to protected characteristic groups, is an important step in working towards achieving cohesion with communities. For people belonging to protected characteristic groups, their feelings of a lack of cohesion (or exclusion) may be more acute than those of other people. As such, it is important to ensure the needs of different groups are met through ongoing consultation and engagement activities which form part of the Local Plan process, and that equality monitoring is undertaken to show fair representation throughout the consultation process. Examples of community groups within the borough include:

- **Courtside Melton Mowbray** - a not-for-profit community interest company whose social purpose is to bring people together and help them to be active;
- **Melton Space** – a non-profit community workshop that provides social and creative workshop space equipped with a broad range of activities;
- **Melton Mencap** – a local charity who provide a range of clubs/activities for children, young people and adults with learning disabilities; and
- **Melton Learning Hub** - a charitable organisation that is committed to supporting young people throughout Leicestershire.

7.4 Summary of future baseline

- 7.5.12 Given the larger proportion of 50 to 59 year olds and 60 to 69 year olds in Melton Borough, it is likely there will be a spike in retired age and old age dependent people needing assistance. This, exacerbated by the national ageing population and the higher proportion of people living with disabilities or long-term health issues, is likely to result in greater demands for social care and healthcare services. This will also require the built environment to adapt to suit the needs of people who are less mobile and more susceptible to factors such as disease and air pollution.
- 7.5.13 As the live birth rate has increased from 2020, it is likely the borough will experience an increase in population over the new Local Plan period. It will be important to ensure future development considers this and promotes suitable development types. This could include a range of housing types and additional open green spaces.

7.5 Key sustainability issues

7.5.14 Considering the baseline information and the policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to this topic:

- The policy context is clear in that there is a need to reduce inequalities, support community groups with ‘protected characteristics’ and embrace diversity.
- Melton Borough has experienced a decrease in overall deprivation between 2015 and 2019. Most notably, the ‘Crime’ deprivation domain has decreased from 175th in 2015 to 244th in 2019 – indicating crime has become less of an issue in the borough. There has been a decrease in relative deprivation linked to the ‘Health and disability’ domain, indicating more of the population are suffering from long-term health conditions and disabilities.
- The largest age group in Melton Borough is the 50 to 59 year olds, followed by the 60 to 69 year olds. It is likely more demand for services and housing will come forward over the plan period, reflecting the needs of the older generation living in the borough.

7.6 Scoping decision

7.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the equality topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Table 7.5 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 7-6 Proposed objective and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Support equitable outcomes for all communities by tackling inequalities, embracing diversity and improving accessibility.	Will the option / proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable people from all background to access services and facilities equitably? • Ensure that decisions do not disproportionately affect minority populations in an adverse manner? • Ensure that the needs of all communities and people are met in an equitable way? • Reduce the inequalities suffered by minority groups, including those with protected characteristics? • Reduce sex based discrimination and inequalities?

8. Health

8.1 Focus of topic

8.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

8.2 Context review

8.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 8.1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
National	
<u>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</u>	2018
<u>Equalities Act 2010</u>	2010
<u>Green Infrastructure and the Urban Fringe: learning lessons from the Countryside in and Around Towns programme</u>	2007
<u>Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review 10 Years On</u>	2020
<u>Healthy High Streets: good place making in an urban setting</u>	2018
<u>Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England</u>	2010
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance</u>	2009
<u>Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE)</u>	2010
<u>Planning for Sport Guidance</u>	2019
<u>Planning practice guidance: Healthy and safe communities</u>	2019
<u>Spatial Planning for Health: An evidence resource for planning and designing healthier places</u>	2017
<u>Space for people: Targeting action for woodland access</u>	2017
Local	
<u>Leicestershire County Council - Public Health Strategy 2022-2027</u>	2022
<u>Leicestershire Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2032)</u>	2021
<u>Leicestershire County Council - Delivering Good Health and Prevention Services (2022-2027)</u>	2021
<u>Melton Local Plan</u>	2018
<u>Melton Sustainable Community Strategy 2015-2025</u>	2015

8.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The NPPF recognises the role of development plans in helping to deliver access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity, therefore contributing to the health and wellbeing of communities.
- The health benefits of access to nature, green spaces and green infrastructure are further discussed in the 25 Year Environment Plan. Additional guidance is available through the Healthy and Safe Communities Planning practice guidance.
- The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on public authorities to consider how their policies or decisions affect people who are protected under the Equality Act. Therefore, the new Local Plan will need to demonstrate 'due regard' to the Public Sector Equality Duty.
- Inequalities are also addressed in the 2020 Health Equity in England Report which examined progress in addressing health inequalities in England, 10 years on from the landmark study Fair Society, Healthy Lives (The Marmot Review). It identified a growing health gap between less and more deprived areas. This means an increased amount of people can expect to spend more of their lives in poor health with a stalled, or even declining, life expectancy.
- Green Infrastructure and the Urban Fringe: learning lessons from the Countryside in and Around Towns (CIAT) programme identifies the urban fringe area around towns and cities as having critical importance to rural and urban communities, demonstrating how to maximise the potential of this resource and utilising it to provide a linked Green Infrastructure. The CIAT programme subsequently informed the foundation for Natural England's Green Infrastructure Guidance.
- Healthy High Streets: good place making in an urban setting Provides informs planning decisions on how high streets can be used as an asset to improve the overall health of local communities. It highlights how good quality design and furniture, and accessible safe communal spaces can be used to create healthier, safer and more cohesive local communities.
- The 'Healthy and safe communities' planning practice guidance considers ways in which planning can positively contribute to healthier communities. This is to be achieved through good design and utilising green infrastructure (GI) to maximise health and wellbeing benefits. The impacts of noise on health is the subject of the Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) which aims to promote good health and a good quality of life through the effective management of noise. The health impacts of sports and recreation are considered in the 'Planning for sport guidance' which sets out twelve planning-for-sport principles to help the planning system provide formal and informal opportunities for all to take part in sport and be physically active.
- The 'Spatial planning for health' provides guidance for planning and designing healthier places. It illustrates the linkages, and strength of evidence, between spatial planning and health. The health benefits of woods and trees is explored in the 'Space for people' policy paper which identifies targeted actions to enhance access to woodland.

- The Leicestershire County Council Public Health Strategy 2022-2027 outlines the vision for health and wellbeing in the county, including Melton Borough. The strategy aims to protect and improve the health and quality of life of everyone in Leicestershire through the following:
 - Build on the strengths of people in the communities;
 - Promote healthy living and healthy places;
 - Addressing health inequalities; and
 - Provide services that meet community needs.
- Leicestershire Joint Health & Wellbeing Strategy (2022-2032) is a plan to improve the health and wellbeing of children and adults in Leicestershire and to reduce health inequalities.
- Leicestershire County Council - Delivering Good Health and Prevention Services (2022-2027) identifies key areas of focus for the delivery of health-related services in Leicestershire.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - EN7 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation; and
 - C9 – Healthy Communities.
- The Melton Sustainable Community Strategy sets out the needs and hopes of the community – allowing organisations to work efficiently and collaboratively towards a common goal to improve quality of life in the borough. To enhance the quality of life for everyone in Melton Borough and achieve a sustainable, prosperous and vibrant communities, the strategy outlines several aims and objectives. These will also contribute to health by providing opportunities for everyone in Melton to be active and healthy.

8.3 Summary of current baseline

Population and age structure

- 8.3.1 Data from the 2021 Census indicates the population of Melton has increased by 2.7% since the last census in 2011. It has increased from just under 50,400 in 2011 to around 51,800 in 2021. The population here increased by a smaller percentage than the overall population of the East Midlands (7.7%), and by a smaller percentage than the overall population of England (up 6.6% since the 2011 Census)⁴³.
- 8.3.2 Between the last two censuses, the average median age of Melton residents has increased by four years, from 43 to 47 years of age. This borough also had a higher average median age than the East Midlands as a whole in 2021 (41 years) and a higher average median age than England (40 years)⁴⁴.

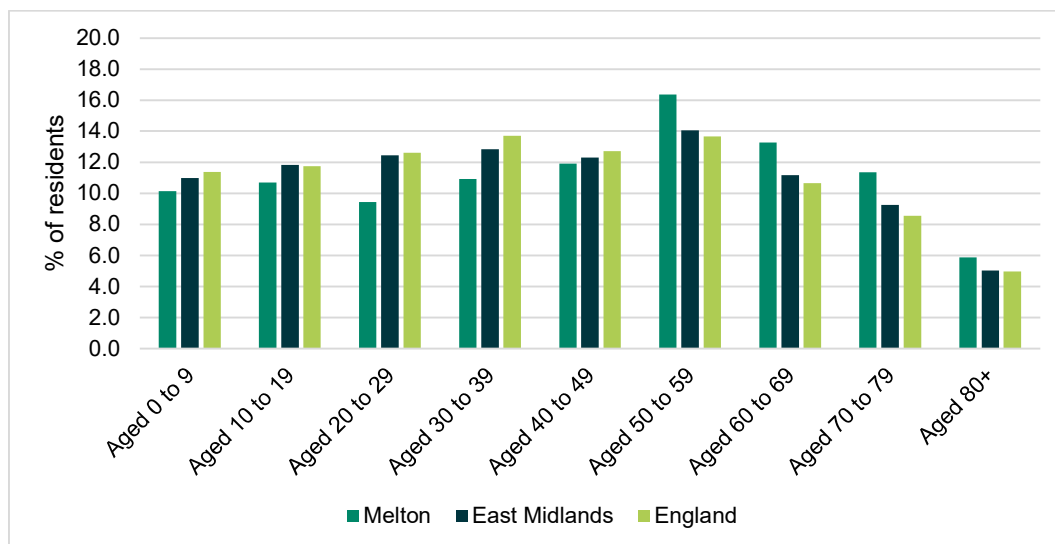
⁴³ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E07000133/>

⁴⁴ Ibid.

8.3.3 The number of people aged 65 to 74 years rose by just under 1,700 (an increase of 34.1%), while the number of residents between 35 and 49 years fell by around 2,300 (20.7% decrease)⁴⁵.

8.3.4 The population age distribution at the time of the 2021 Census for Melton, the East Midlands region and England is shown in Figure 8-1. It shows the 20 to 29 age group in Melton makes up a significantly lower proportion of the community in comparison to the regional and national average, and the 50 to 59 age group makes up a significantly higher proportion. Overall, the figure demonstrates Melton has a smaller proportion of younger people, and a higher proportion of older people.

Figure 8-1 Population age profile – Melton, East Midlands and England

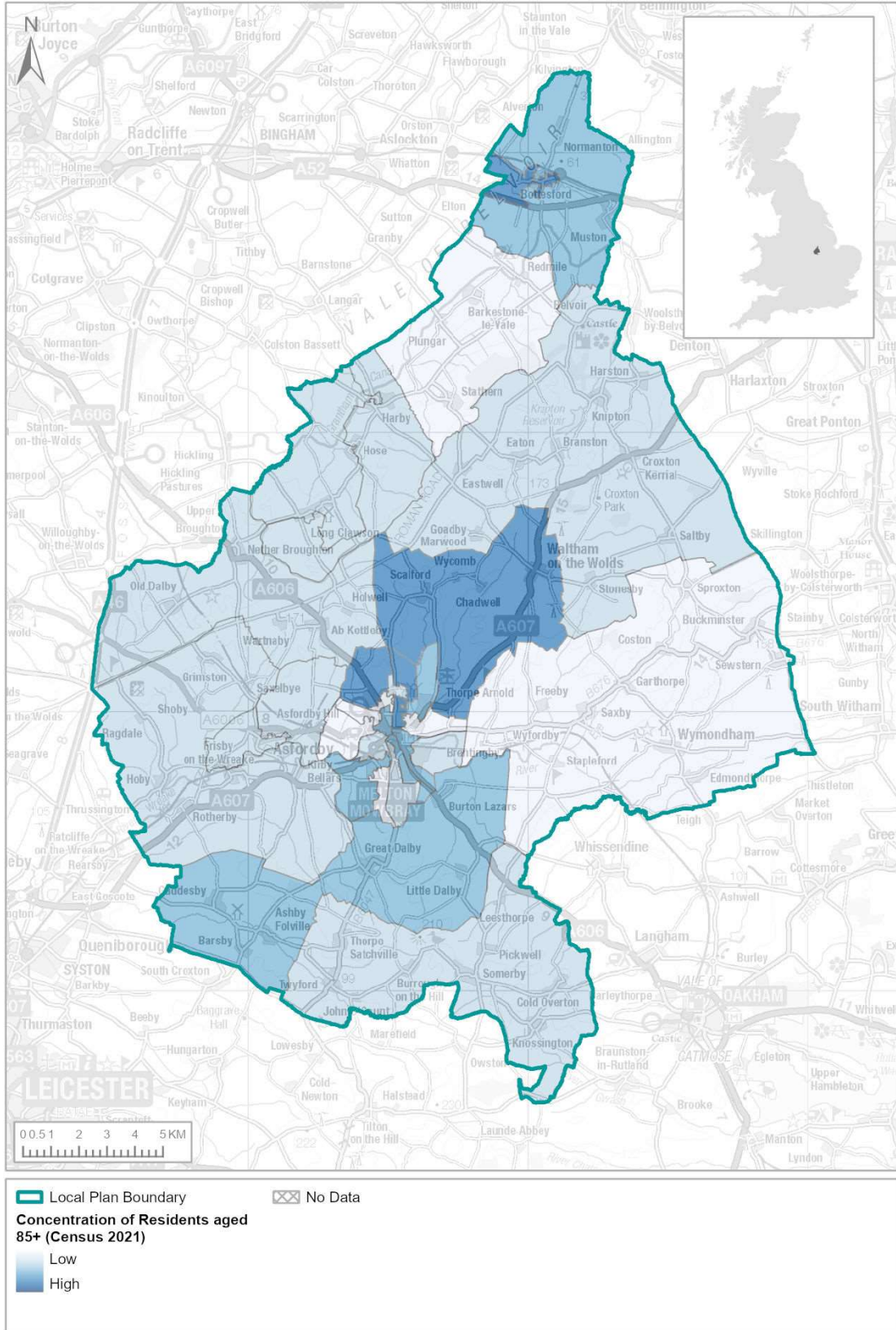


8.3.5 Figure 8-2 below shows the spatial concentration of residents aged 85+ across the borough. There are higher concentrations of elderly people in the following locations:

- Bottesford / Normanton / Muston
- Walford on the Wolds
- Scalford / Wycomb / Chadwell
- Melton Mowbray (parts of)
- Great Dalby / Little Dalby
- Gaddesby / Barsby / Ashby Folville

⁴⁵ Ibid.

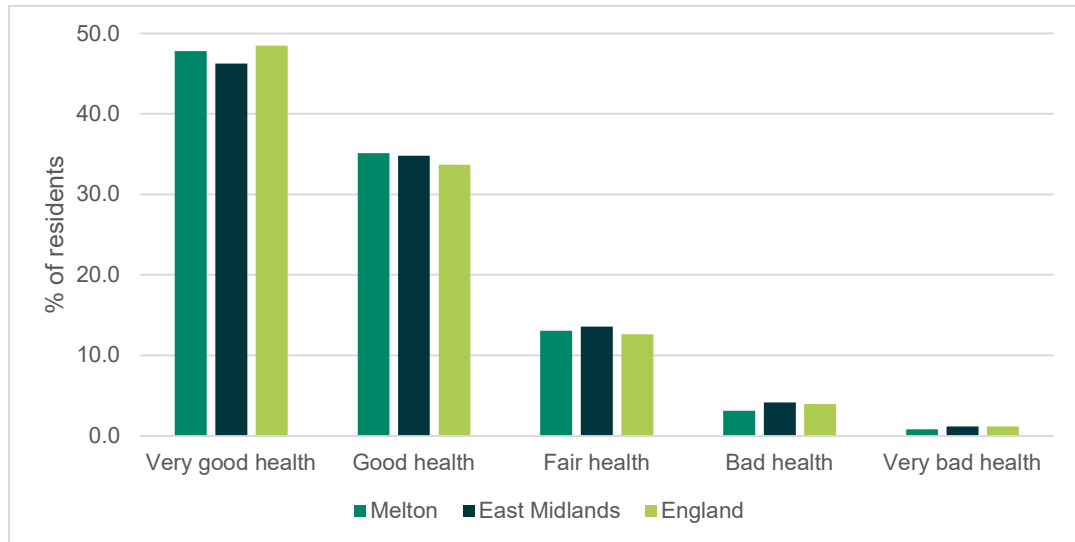
Figure 8-2 Concentrations of 85+ residents



General health

8.3.6 Census data from 2021⁴⁶, presented in Figure 8-3, shows Melton Borough has a greater average of residents reporting ‘very good’ and ‘good’ health than the regional trend, and a greater average of residents reporting ‘good’ health in comparison to England’s figure. Additionally, Melton has a lower average of residents reporting they have ‘bad’ or ‘very bad’ health than regional and national trends.

Figure 8-3 General health for Melton, East Midlands and England



Education

8.3.7 According to the Leicestershire County Council website⁴⁷, there are 26 schools within Melton Borough. This is a mix of nursery, primary, secondary, sixth form and further education facilities. Figure 8-4 below illustrate the distribution of primary, secondary and special schools across the borough.

⁴⁶ Nomis (n.d.) ‘TS037 - General health’ can be accessed [here](#).

⁴⁷ https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools-colleges-and-academies/find-a-school?keywords=Melton&place_or_postcode%5Bvalue%5D=&sort_by=search_api_relevance&page=2

Figure 8-4 Location of school provision in Melton



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Health services and facilities

- 8.3.8 Leicestershire NHS Foundation Trust operates from a number of sites, including Melton Mowbray Hospital in the borough⁴⁸. The NHS indicates there are six GP surgeries within the borough, as well as eight pharmacies and five dental surgeries. Figure 8-5 below shows the distribution of medical practices.

⁴⁸ <https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/service/community-hospitals/>

Figure 8-5 Location of medical facilities



8.3.9 The most recent NHS waiting list data for the University Hospitals of Leicestershire NHS Trust shows that across the county 118,111 patients are currently (end of July 2023) waiting to start treatment, of which 53.9% of patients were waiting within 18 weeks. This is below the national average for England (58%) and below the NHS operational standard for 92%. It is important to recognise this figure is for the whole county; there is not data for Melton Borough specifically⁴⁹.

Leisure facilities

8.3.10 Physical activity is important for physical and mental health and wellbeing, and prevents long term health conditions – including those linked to heart and lung issues.

8.3.11 Leisure facilities include playing pitches, play areas, private gyms, and community facilities and spaces. It can also include active travel infrastructure and activities.

8.3.12 Within Melton Borough there are six leisure centres⁵⁰, which provide access to swimming, gyms and other sports. These are:

- Melton Sports Village
- Waterfield Leisure Centre
- Melton Wellness House
- Space 2B Studios
- Jubilee Sports
- Good Life Health Club

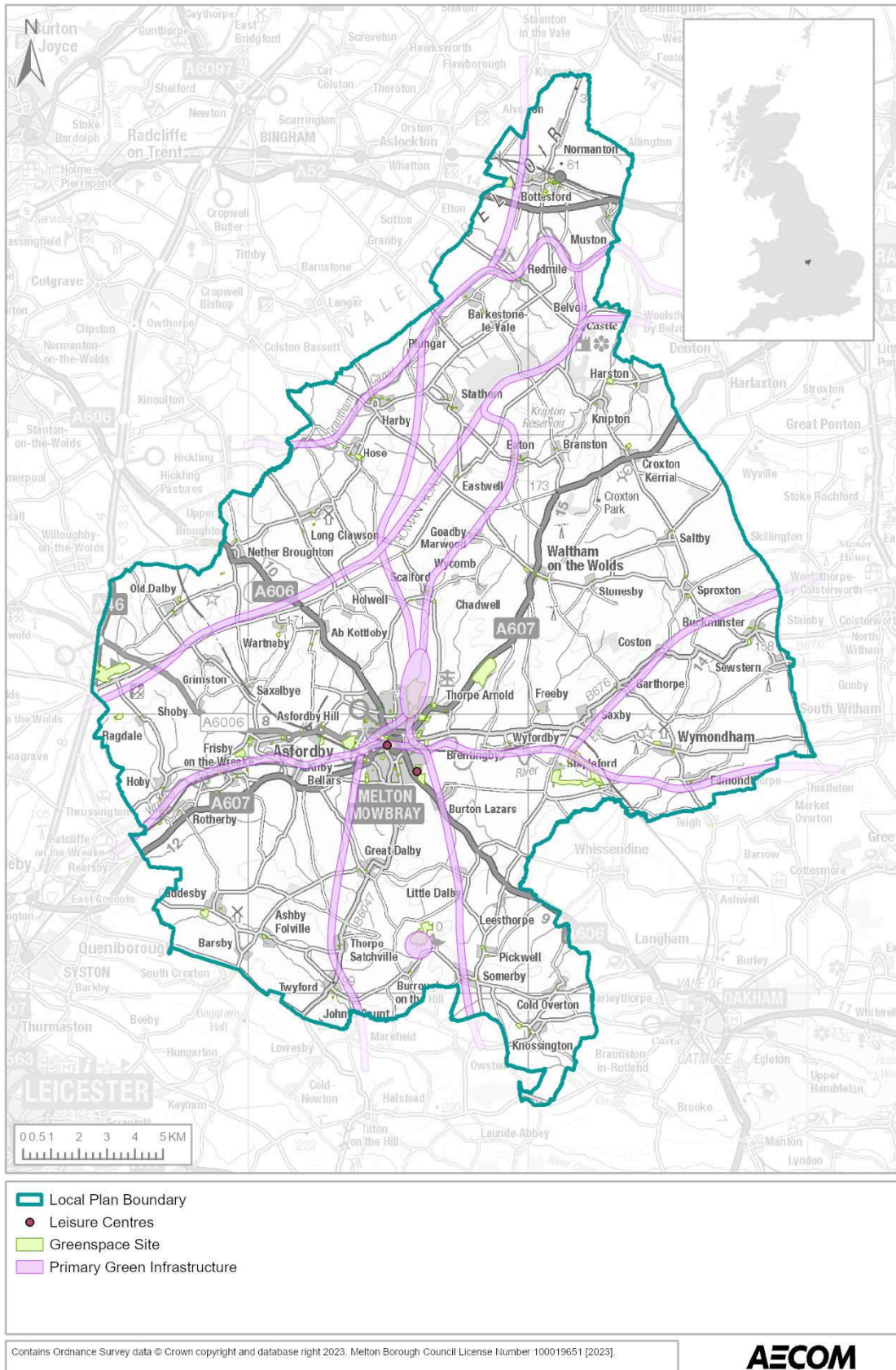
Green and blue infrastructure networks

8.3.13 Green infrastructure (GI) networks comprise parks, woodlands, wetlands, rivers, private gardens, street trees, allotments, playing fields, green roofs and sustainable drainage systems. They have been linked to a number of positive effects on human health and well-being including improved physical health by encouraging physical activity, reducing stress, and lowering blood pressure. GI networks have also been shown to provide mental health benefits such as reducing anxiety and depression and promoting social interaction.

⁴⁹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/statistical-work-areas/rtt-waiting-times/rtt-data-2023-24/>

⁵⁰ <https://discovermelton.com/live/leisure-sport-recreation/>

Figure 8-6 Leisure and recreation facilities and networks



Health and wellbeing indicators

8.3.14 Prepared by Public Health England, the Public Health Profiles are designed to act as a ‘conversation starter’. They help local government and health services understand their community’s needs, so that they can work together to improve people’s health and reduce health inequalities. The latest summary report⁵¹ for was published in March 2020; key trends include:

- The health of residents in Melton is generally better than the national average. The life expectancy at birth in Melton for males is 80.7, and for females it is 83.8. In comparison, the national life expectancy for males is 79.6, and for females it is 83.2.
- Approximately 10.5% of children live in low income families – regionally it is 16.6% and nationally it is 17%.
- 18.9% of children in Year 6 are classed as obese. This is slightly higher than the regional average (18.7%) but lower than the national average (20.2%).
- Levels of teenage pregnancy and smoking during pregnancy are significantly lower than the regional and national average.
- The under 75 mortality rate from all causes are lower than the regional and national averages.
- The suicide rate is higher in the local authority in comparison to the regional figure (9.64 per 100,000 people vs 8.73). This 9.64 is on par with the national figure.
- The percentage of physically active adults is marginally better than the regional and national average.

8.4 Summary of future baseline

8.4.1 Melton Borough is experiencing an ageing population, with many more residents likely to hit retirement age during the updated Local Plan period, which may place an extra burden on care facilities and health services. It is recognised that accessibility to key health and leisure facilities varies throughout the borough, which could exacerbate capacity concerns in the more densely populated areas.

8.5 Key sustainability issues

8.5.1 The following key issues emerge from the scoping exercise:

- There are many cross-cutting health issues and opportunities of relevance to the Local Plan Update. A key consideration would be to ensure that new and existing communities have good access to community infrastructure such as schools and healthcare infrastructure and sports and leisure facilities. This reflects the current varied level of accessibility to schools, health services and leisure facilities throughout the borough.

⁵¹ Public Health England (2020) ‘Local Authority Health Profile 2019: Melton’ can be accessed [here](#).

- It will be important to avoid creating or exacerbating capacity issues and to invest in new or upgraded community facilities particularly in areas accessible to the most deprived areas.
- Provision of, and access to, green infrastructure is highly relevant to health objectives. It will therefore be important to ensure the delivery of high-quality GI within development sites and facilitate strategic offsite enhancements, in line with higher level policy. Notably, developer contributions can be harnessed to provide formal facilities (e.g. parks, sports pitches) or improved access to the countryside, including improved access to river / stream corridors and woodlands.
- There are areas of deprivation ... (often linked to poor accessibility). It will be important to ensure that community benefits generated by development can be effectively harnessed to help the most deprived neighbourhoods. There is also a need to consider communities or sectors of the population with protected characteristics under the Equality Act (2010). Key issues relate to accessibility to community infrastructure, GI and regeneration within the deprived urban areas.
- The population of Melton Borough is aging, as is the case in many parts of the country. Specialist older persons accommodation is associated with a range of specific site-selection criteria; for example, enabling ease of walking (also mobility scooter and wheelchair) access to local shops and ensuring parking space for carers.

8.6 Scoping decision

8.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the 'Health' topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Table 8.2 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 8-2 Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Improve generational health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities between residents.	<p>Will the option / proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the impacts of pollution on health? • Improve healthy life expectancy whilst reducing health inequalities? • Create and maintain safe public spaces? • Maintain and / or enhance the quality of life of all residents? • Create dementia-friendly environments? • Enhance the provision of, and healthy access to, open spaces and green and blue infrastructure?? • Encourage healthy choices and active travel modes, including walking and cycling? • Protect and enhance community facilities, public infrastructure and health care facilities?

9. Historic environment

9.1 Focus of topic

9.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Designated assets and areas.
- Locally important features; and
- Heritage at risk.

9.2 Context review

9.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 9.1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
National	
<u>Historic England: Heritage and Climate Change</u>	2022
<u>National Model Design Code</u>	2021
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>Historic England Advice Note 1 (Second Edition): Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management</u>	2019
<u>Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance: Analysing Significance in Heritage Assets</u>	2019
<u>The National Design Guide</u>	2019
<u>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</u>	2018
<u>Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3 (Second Edition): The Setting of Heritage Assets</u>	2017
<u>Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment</u>	2016
<u>Historic England Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans</u>	2015
<u>Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning: 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans</u>	2015
<u>Historic England: Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance</u>	2008
<u>Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990</u>	1990
<u>Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979</u>	1979
<u>Planning Practice Guidance</u>	Various

Document title	Date
Local	
Melton Local Plan	2018
Melton Borough Landscape and Historic Urban Character Assessment Report	2006

9.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- Understanding the significance of a place is the crucial element that supports the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment. Significance is the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations due to its heritage interest. This interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.
- The new Local Plan will need to consider the principles set out in the NPPF, which seek to conserve and enhance historic environment assets in a way that compliments and works with their significance. As such, there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The NPPF pursues planning policies and decisions that are understanding to local character and history without preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation and change. The NPPF supports the use of area-based character assessments, design guides and codes, and masterplans to help ensure that land is used efficiently while also creating beautiful and sustainable places.
- The NPPF indicates proposed plans should ensure the design of streets, parking areas and other transport elements reflect current national guidance including the National Design Guide and the National Model Design Code. Design codes can set out a necessary level of detail in sensitive locations. In the case of the historic environment, they can indicate specific ways to maintain local character. The National Model Design Code states that schemes should respect the historic assets of a site and its surroundings and make use of existing structures where possible.
- The messages in the NPPF are supported by the National Planning Practice Guidance. The key point made in this document is that local planning authorities should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment in their Local Plans.
- Historic England is the statutory body that helps people care for, enjoy, and celebrate England’s spectacular historic environment. Documentation created and distributed by Historic England provides essential information for local planning authorities, neighbourhood groups, developers, consultants, landowners, and other interested parties on historic environment considerations, and are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect changes in legislation. The following documentation is particularly relevant:

- Historic England’s Heritage and Climate Change strategy document details the impacts climate change could have on heritage in the future and highlights the role of heritage in climate action. The vision of the document is to ensure the role of heritage in the global fight to limit climate change and its impact on people and places by 2040 – working to mitigate, manage risk and adapt.
- Historic England Advice Note 1: Conservation Area Appraisal, Designation and Management highlights various methods to manage change whilst allowing for the conservation and enhancement of historic areas. The document emphasises the importance of understanding the various types of interest that underpins designations and recognises the importance of putting in place a variety of controls to ensure positive contributions to the significance and value of conservation areas.
- Historic England Advice Note 12: Statements of Heritage Significance offers guidance on effectively describing heritage significance to aid local planning authorities in reaching a conclusion on potential impacts of proposals on heritage assets. Understanding the significance of heritage assets enables landowners and development applicants to receive effective, consistent, and timely decisions.
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 The Setting of Heritage Assets offers advice on understanding setting, how it contributes to the significance of heritage assets and how to appreciate that significance. It also highlights the importance of different views and interpretations that contribute to heritage asset settings. The document outlines a five stage approach to conducting an assessment of setting.
- Historic England Advice Note 8: Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA) provides support to all stakeholders involved in assessing the effects of certain plans on the historic environment. It offers guidance on how to appropriately consider heritage during every individual stage of the SA/SEA process and establishes the basis for fully comprehensive evaluations.
- Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning 1: The Historic Environment in Local Plans assists local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants, and other interested stakeholders and groups to implement the historic environment policies contained within the NPPF.
- Historic England Advice Note 3: The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans offers advice for the identification of potential sites for development, ensuring the historic environment plays a positive role in allocation and evidence collection. Moreover, the document details a number of steps to ensure that heritage considerations are fully integrated into any site selection methodology.

- Historic England: Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance ensures Historic England takes a consistent approach when enacting its governmental statutory advisor role. It highlights the challenges of modernising heritage protection and proposes an integrated approach to making decisions to help combat this challenge.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan and the National Design Guide recognise and reiterate the role of the historic environment in supporting healthy and thriving ecosystems, landscapes, and cultural values. Of note in the 25 Year Environment Plan is ‘Goal 6: Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment’.
- The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act introduced laws relating to the granting of planning permission for building works, with a particular focus on listed buildings and conservation areas. It protected listed buildings and conservation areas by creating special controls for the demolition, alteration or extension of buildings, objects or structures.
- The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act provides protection to ancient monuments through a schedule designation and allows the Secretary of State to designate areas of archaeological importance. Moreover, the Act makes provision for the investigation, presentation and recording of matters of archaeological or historical interest and regulates operations or activities that have the potential to affect monuments and archaeological areas.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - Policy EN6 – Settlement Character; and
 - Policy EN13 – Heritage Assets.
- The Melton Borough Landscape and Historic Urban Character Assessment Report identifies the historic character of different areas in Melton Mowbray; discussing their unique features and characteristics, and their historic sensitivity. However, it is noted this report is older; as such, the information it presents may not be as accurate for today’s historic landscape.

9.3 Summary of current baseline

The historic context of Melton and its settlements

- 9.3.1 Melton Borough is home to a wealth of historic environment assets and has been heavily influenced by key historical periods – from as early as before Neolithic times. By Domesday, most of the villages and hamlets were in existence. A number of industries have existed within the borough, including knitwear. And during World War II a considerable amount of land was ploughed to help the war effort.

Heritage assets and areas

Listed buildings

9.3.2 Listed buildings are nationally designated buildings that are protected through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A structure can be awarded a listed designation for its architectural and / or historical interest. Heritage and historic environment assets can be presented with a listed designation to ensure its preservation; for its architectural and/or historic contribution, for a specific feature on the structure, or for the land contained within the structure or beneath it.

9.3.3 According to the National Heritage List for England⁵², and shown by Figure 9-1, there are 717 listed buildings within Melton Borough. Of these, 26 are Grade I listed, 64 are Grade II* listed, and the remaining 627 are Grade II listed.

Scheduled monuments

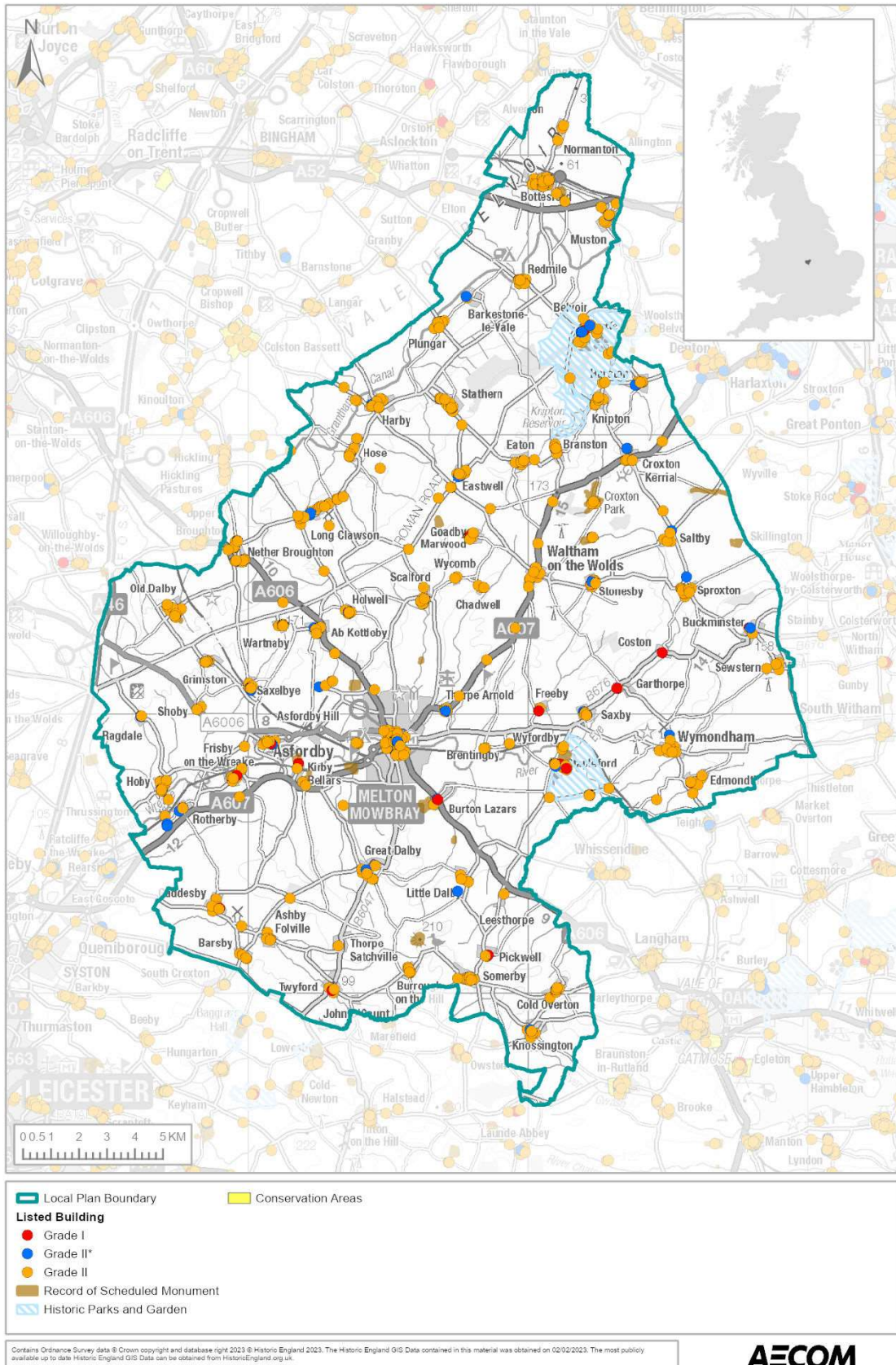
9.3.4 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act allows for the investigation, presentation, and recording of matters of archaeological or historical interest, making provision for the regulation of operations or activities that could affect ancient monuments and archaeological areas. Scheduled monuments are nationally designated sites which are protected under this legislation.

9.3.5 According to the National Heritage List for England⁵³, and shown by Figure 9.1 below, there are 36 scheduled monuments within Melton Borough.

⁵² Historic England (no date) 'National Heritage List for England – Search the List – Advanced Search' can be accessed [here](#). To use, select which heritage categories to view, their grade and select Melton from the drop down box for District / Unitary Authority / Borough.

⁵³ Ibid.

Figure 9-1 Designated historic assets in Melton Borough



AECOM

Registered parks and gardens

- 9.3.6 Historic England's 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England', established in 1983, include two registered parks and gardens within Melton Borough. As shown in Figure 9._, these are Grade II* [Belvoir Castle \(Historic England List Entry Number: 1000957\)](#) and Grade II [Stapleford Hill \(Historic England List Entry Number: 1000966\)](#).

Conservation areas

- 9.3.7 Conservation areas are designated due to their special architectural and historic interest. Conservation area appraisals are a tool to demonstrate an area's special interest, detailing the reasons for the designation and providing a greater understanding and articulation of the area's character. Ideally, appraisals should be regularly reviewed as part of the management of the conservation area and can form a management plan.
- 9.3.8 According to the Melton Borough Council website⁵⁴, there are currently 45 conservation areas in the borough. These conservation areas recognise the character of the areas in question, and ensure the continued safeguarding of local heritage. This includes physical structures and the surrounding environment.
- 9.3.9 However, according to the conservation area webpage, there are only 43 conservation area appraisals, and some were published over 20 years ago. Given this, it is concluded there is a gap in baseline information concerning conservation areas in Melton Borough; this reflects two areas not having an appraisal, and the likelihood of some out of date appraisals.

Non designated assets

- 9.3.10 It is noted that not all of an area's historic environment features are subject to statutory designations and non-designated features contribute a large part of what people come into contact with on a day to day basis. Although not designated, many buildings and areas are of historic interest and are important to local communities (see Figure 9).
- 9.3.11 The local Historic Environment Record (HER) for the area identifies important and distinctive structures or features that positively contribute to the local sense of place and distinctiveness. Following a review of the HER via Heritage Gateway⁵⁵, it is concluded that there are 3,092 local records within the Melton Borough, covering a range of built and archaeological assets spanning a range of periods. The HER will be reviewed in greater detail to determine the potential impacts of non-designated heritage features resulting from the provisions within the new Local Plan.

⁵⁴ Melton Borough Council (2022) 'Conservation Areas' can be accessed [here](#).

⁵⁵ Heritage Gateway (no date) 'More Detailed Search' can be accessed [here](#). Type Melton into the Administrative location box and press search for results.

Heritage at risk

- 9.3.12 Since 2008, Historic England has produced an annual Heritage at Risk Register, which highlights historic environment assets that are seen to be 'at risk'. According to the 2022 Heritage at Risk Register for the Midlands⁵⁶, there are 16 heritage assets within Melton Borough that are considered at risk.
- 9.3.13 One of the entries is the entire Melton Mowbray Conservation Area, whilst the remaining 15 are place of worship entries.
- 9.3.14 However, it is important to recognise that Heritage at Risk registers for areas outside of London do not always contain information about the status of Grade II listed buildings. As such, it is currently not possible to determine whether any of the Grade II structures within Melton Borough are at risk. The register should be reviewed in greater detail to determine whether any heritage features which are currently at risk are likely to be impacted by the proposals within the new Local Plan.

9.4 Summary of future baseline

- 9.4.1 New development within Melton Borough has the potential to impact on the fabric and setting of heritage assets, for example through unsympathetic development that does not fully consider the contribution of assets (designated or non-designated) to the historic character of the area. Existing historic environment designations, implemented through the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979, offer a level of protection to designated heritage assets and their settings.
- 9.4.2 New development could present the opportunity to enhance the historic landscape in Melton Borough through improving the historic setting of heritage assets, contributing to the understanding and interpretation of assets through working to reveal their significance, helping to produce management plans for heritage assets viewed as 'at risk' and updating evidence bases to compliment information and data. This should be achieved through implementing proposals that consider the historic environment in their design.

9.5 Key sustainability issues

- 9.5.1 The following key issues have been identified through the baseline review for this topic:
- There is a wealth of both designated and non-designated heritage assets within and in proximity to Melton Borough, including listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, and registered parks and gardens. Development of the new Local Plan provides an opportunity to deliver a spatial strategy and policies that avoids or minimises negative impacts to the historic environment, whilst promoting enhancements and the productive use of heritage assets.

⁵⁶ Historic England (2022) 'Heritage at Risk Register – Midlands Register 2022' can be accessed [here](#).

- There are currently 45 conservation areas in Melton, but only 43 have conservation area appraisals. Additionally, some of the 43 appraisals were published before the turn of the 21st century and are likely out of date. This represents a gap in the historic environment baseline.
- There are 15 heritage assets within Melton that are considered to be at risk – these features should be considered carefully through the Local Plan and following SA stages.

9.6 Scoping decision

9.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the historic environment topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Table 9.2 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 9.2: Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by their settings; whilst supporting engagement and enjoyment of the historic environment.	<p>Will the option / proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect and enhance the significance of buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their setting? • Protect and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of conservation areas and their setting? • Protect and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of registered parks and gardens, and their settings? • Protect and, where possible, enhance the wider historic environment, including historic landscapes? • Conserve and enhance archaeological resource, including features listed on the Leicestershire and Rutland HER? • Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the environment? • Ensure that, where possible, development contributes to improved public understanding of assets and their settings?

10. Housing

10.1 Focus of topic

10.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Types and tenure of housing
- Housing delivery rates
- Affordability
- Housing Market Areas
- Quality of housing

10.2 Context review

10.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Document title	Date
International	
<u>United Nation’s 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development</u>	2015
National	
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2023
<u>The Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change report Ready for Ageing?</u>	2013
<u>Planning Practice Guidance</u>	Various
Local	
<u>Housing Strategy 2021-2026</u>	2021
<u>Melton Housing Mix & Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document</u>	2019
<u>Melton Local Plan</u>	2018

10.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, establishing 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to work towards achieving by 2030. SDG 11 relates to sustainable cities and communities, with the principle objective of seeking to “ensure access to all to adequate, safe and affordable housing”.
- Key messages from the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) include that planning policies should:
 - Support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering a well-

- designed and safe built environment, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural wellbeing.
- Support the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of housing via strategic policies which should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance. In addition to the local housing need figure, any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for.
 - Assess and reflect the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community. Where a need for affordable housing is identified, planning policies should specify the type of affordable housing required and expect it to be met on-site where possible.
 - Recognise the important contribution of small and medium sized development sites in meeting housing needs. Local Plans should identify land to accommodate at least 10% of their housing requirement on sites no larger than one hectare, and neighbourhood planning groups should also consider the opportunities for allocating small and medium-sized sites.
 - In rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites where appropriate.
 - Authorities should consider whether allowing some market housing would facilitate the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs.
- The Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change report *Ready for Ageing?* (2013) warns that society is underprepared for the ageing population. The report says that 'longer lives can be a great benefit, but there has been a collective failure to address the implications and without urgent action this great boon could turn into a series of miserable crises'. The report says that the housing market is delivering much less specialist housing for older people than is needed. Central and local government, housing associations and house builders need urgently to plan how to ensure that the housing needs of the older population are better addressed and to give as much priority to promoting an adequate market and social housing for older people as is given to housing for younger people.
 - The UK's Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on housing offers clear guidance for local authorities, planners, and developers involved in housing projects. It covers aspects like design, sustainability, affordable housing, and community involvement.

- The PPG aims to create well-designed, sustainable communities, efficiently use land, and engage local communities in planning while balancing housing demand with environmental and social concerns.
- The Melton Borough Housing Strategy (2021-2026) sets out the Council's ambitions to ensure good quality homes for all, to deliver housing growth to meet the needs of a growing population and to provide support, advice and assistance to help people live well in their homes.
- The Melton Housing Mix & Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document provides further detail and guidance on the interpretation of Local Plan policies related to housing.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - Policy C1 (A) – Housing Allocations
 - Policy C1 (B) – Reserve Sites
 - Policy C2 – Housing Mix
 - Policy C3 – National Space Standard and Smaller Dwellings
 - Policy C4 – Affordable Housing Provision
 - Policy C5 - Affordable Housing through Rural Exception Sites
 - Policy C6 – Gypsies and Travellers
 - Policy C8 – Self Build and Custom Build Housing
 - Policy C9 – Healthy Communities
 - Policy SS1 – Presumption in favour of Sustainable Development
 - Policy SS2 – Development Strategy
 - Policy SS3 – Sustainable Communities

10.3 Summary of current baseline

Type and tenure of housing

- 10.3.1 Table 10-1 presents the housing type mix in Melton. According to 2021 Census data, the two most common housing types in Melton are Detached and Semi-detached, which account for 41% and 36%, respectively, of the overall type mix. The remaining housing types are found in smaller proportions, with Terraced accounting for 15%, Flats accounting for 5%, and mobile or temporary structures accounting for under 1% of Melton's housing type mix.

Table 10-1: Type of Households in Melton

Type of Household (2021)	Units	% total
Detached	9,348	41%
Semi-detached	8,215	36%
Terraced	3,349	15%
Flat	1,620	8%
A caravan or other mobile or temporary structure	72	<1%
Total	22,604	

Source: *nomis*

10.3.2 Turning to tenure, Table 10-2 presents the housing tenure mix in Melton. According to 2021 Census data, the majority of the area's households own their house (71%). Turning to renting tenures, 17% rent privately and 11% of the population rent socially. Less than 1% of the population live rent free. Shared ownership, the middle ground between renting and ownership tenures, accounts for 1% of households in the Parish.

Table 10-2: Tenure of Households in Melton

Tenure of household (2021)	Units	% total
Private Ownership	16,031	71%
Private Rent	3,880	17%
Social Rent	2,415	11%
Shared Ownership	249	1%
Lives Rent Free	22	0%
Total	22,597	

Source: *nomis*

Delivery rates

10.3.3 The Melton Local Plan (2018) identified the need for 5,325 additional homes in the borough over the Local Plan period (2018-2036) (or 296 homes per annum as an annual average). The majority of these new houses will be delivered in the Melton Mowbray Main Urban Area, which has been identified as a priority location for growth within the borough. The remaining housing will be in Service Centres and Rural Hubs with a small proportion of windfall development in the rural area. The specific allocations are as follows:

- Melton Mowbray: 3,676
- Service Centres: 1,316
- Rural Hubs: 333

10.3.4 Between 2018 and 2021 MBC have published a Housing Delivery Test. The Test functions as an annual measurement of housing delivery in the area of relevant plan-making authorities and is calculated by the dividing the net homes delivered over a three-year period by the number of homes required over the three-year period. Whilst in 2018, the test indicated that housing delivery was at 84%, the scores recorded for 2019/2, 2020/21, and 2021/22 were 100%, 141%, and 197%, respectively. These trends indicate that delivery of housing within the borough so far has exceeded the annual average identified in the Local Plan.

10.3.5 MBC's 'Five-years' housing land supply and housing trajectory report (July 2023)⁵⁷ estimates that the expected Housing Delivery Test scores for 2022/23 and 2023/24 will be 166% and 173%, indicating that the rate of housing delivery within the borough will exceed Local Plan annual delivery targets.

Melton Housing Market Area

10.3.6 The Melton Local Plan (2018) identifies that Melton Borough forms part of the wider Leicester Housing Market Area (HMA). This means that when households who live in the HMA move home, the vast majority move within this geography. Within the HMA, Local Authorities work closely together, particularly when planning for housing, the economy and the infrastructure needed to support growth.

10.3.7 The housing market in Melton Borough also has links to other neighbouring areas however, including the neighbouring districts of Rushcliffe, Newark and Sherwood, Rutland, and South Kesteven.

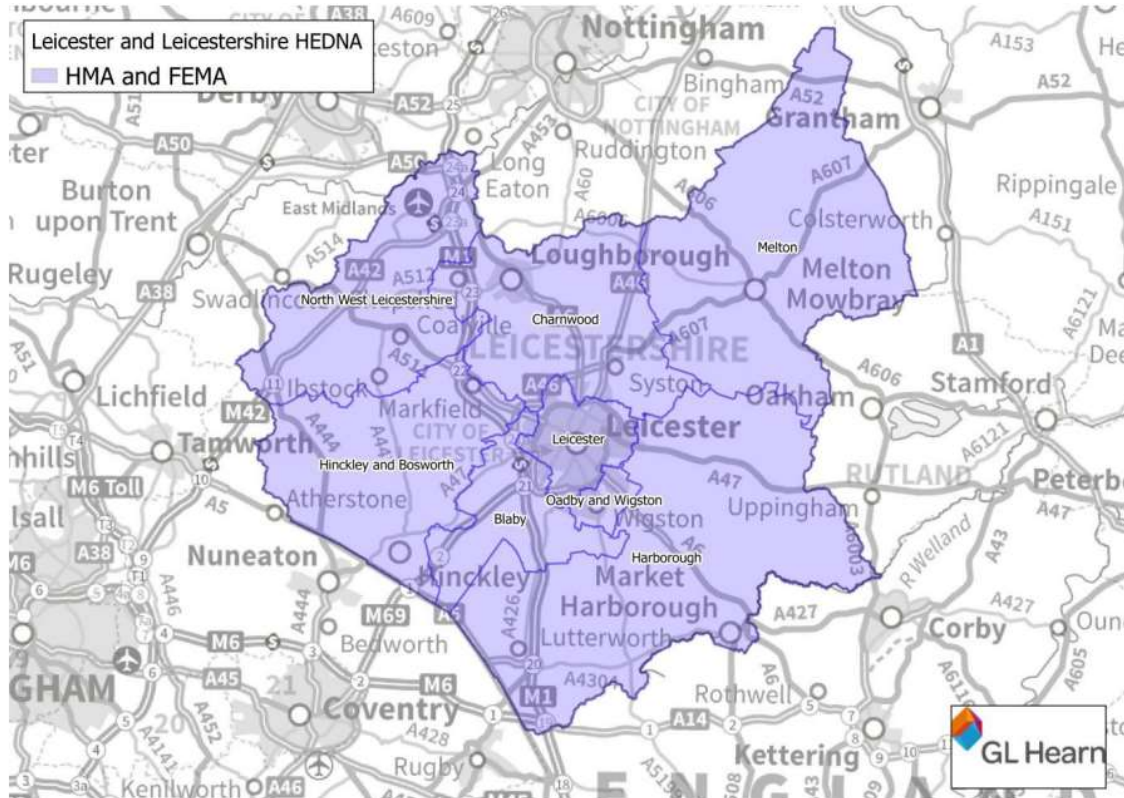
10.3.8 Figure 10-1, taken from the Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment for Leicestershire, shows the total area of the Leicester and Leicestershire HMA.

10.3.9 A housing and economic needs assessment (HENA) was published in 2022 which reviewed the functional housing and economic geographies, concluding that:

- the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are an appropriate 'best fit' for the functional HMA using local authority boundaries.
- Leicester and Leicestershire remains a good approximation for the Greater Leicester FEMA.
- The evidence points to a wider sub-regional market for logistics/distribution development.

⁵⁷ Available at: https://www.meltonplan.co.uk/files/uqdl/2778e0_70638fd75836418ea9bc2a234813e831.pdf

Figure 10-1: Leicester and Leicestershire HMA and FEMA



Source: Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities and the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Housing & Economic Development Needs Assessment⁵⁸

Affordability

- 10.3.10 The Melton Local Plan identifies that Melton Borough’s housing mix has complications with affordability, especially on the cheaper end of the market. This is because the borough has ‘...few smaller ‘entry-level’ properties, properties such as terraced houses or flats and a large proportion (40%) of larger, detached houses’ (for more detail, see Table 10-1).
- 10.3.11 Melton Borough Council’s Housing Needs Study⁵⁹ suggests that ‘the greatest need for both market and affordable housing [in Melton] is for two and three bedroom houses and bungalows’. More smaller houses are required to facilitate downsizing for older households, support lower income households, and for young families looking to buy their first home.
- 10.3.12 It is not just the lack of smaller houses in the borough that has led to affordability issues in the borough – house price appreciation is also a contributing factor. As mentioned in the Local Plan ‘...to buy one of the cheapest 25% of homes sold in the borough, residents need to earn more than the national average wage’. Table 10-3 presents the median sale price for different house types in Melton between 2013 and 2022.

⁵⁸ Available at: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d246bd_fcf0b00c54f8428a919577e9042f3e8a.pdf

⁵⁹ Available at: https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d246bd_bc5be47bc51f463794aea7d92d6206ac.pdf

10.3.13 It shows that there has been steady house price appreciation across the past ten years, with an average of 5.9%-7.3% annual price growth depending on the house type. These rates of growth may also be a contributor to affordability issues in the borough.

Table 10-3: Median Sales Data for Dwellings in Melton (2013-2022) Source: VOA

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	% Growth
Detached	£226,500	£245,975	£261,000	£273,000	£292,000	£299,998	£300,000	£340,000	£365,000	£373,750	65.0%
Semi-Detached	£135,000	£146,000	£154,950	£166,000	£174,975	£185,000	£185,000	£185,000	£210,000	£234,000	73.3%
Terraced	£116,000	£125,000	£130,000	£132,500	£140,000	£149,000	£153,500	£161,000	£172,000	£190,000	63.8%
Flats	£85,000	£88,750	£105,623	£113,000	£126,000	£115,500	£140,000	£144,950	£141,000	£135,250	59.1%

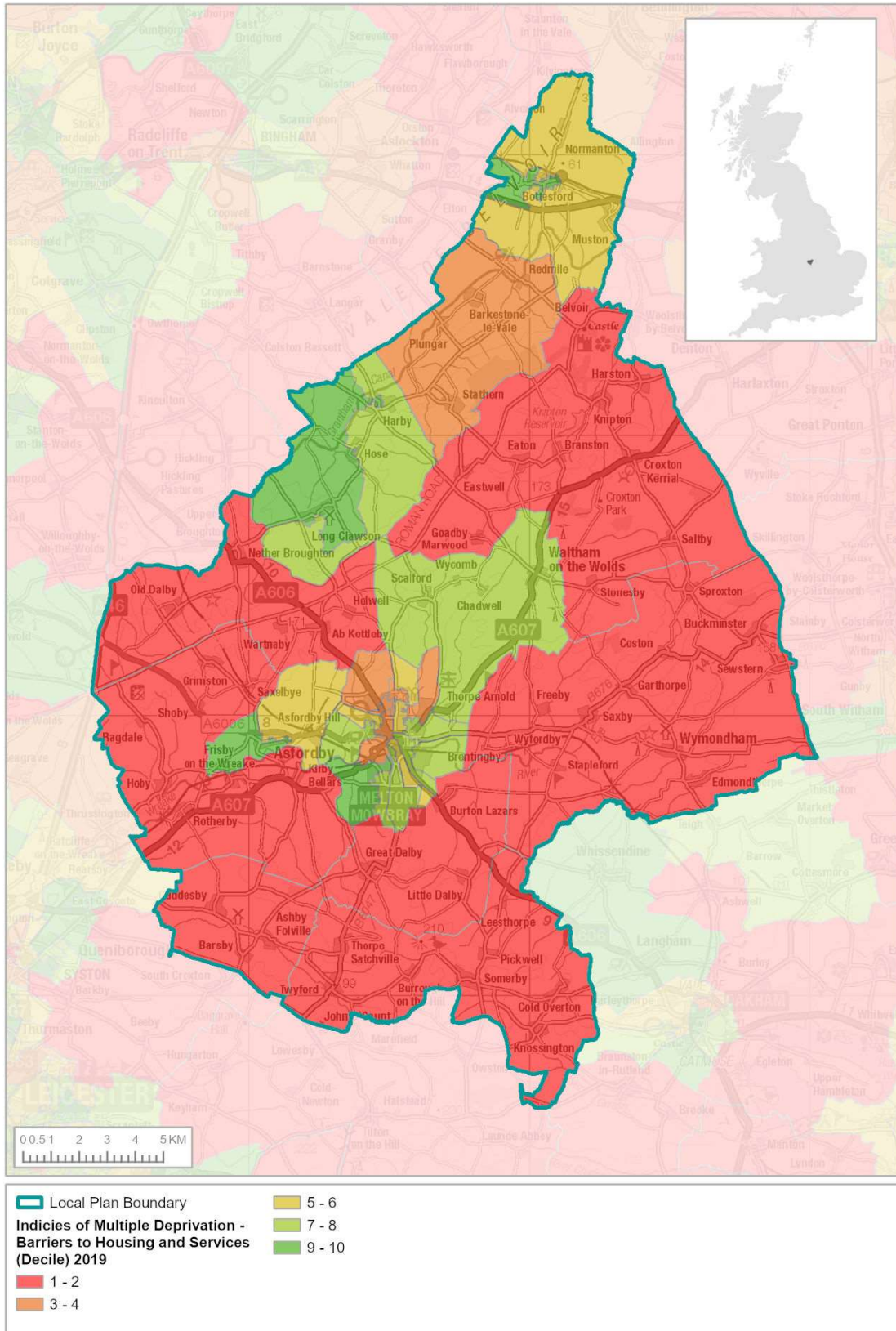
10.3.14 To address affordability issues in the borough, the Melton Local Plan (2018) seeks to deliver around 1,300 homes on affordable tenures across the Local Plan period.

Quality of housing stock

10.3.15 Figure 10-2 illustrates the relative proportion of homes that are in a poor condition across Melton Borough, as per the 2019 Indices of Deprivation.

10.3.16 The data illustrates that areas around the urban centre of Melton Mowbray are amongst some of the least deprived areas in the country for this domain. In contrast, the areas surrounding Melton Mowbray generally contain some of the most deprived areas for this domain. This is especially the case to the east of Melton Mowbray.

Figure 10-2: Index of Multiple Deprivation Living Environment Deprivation Domain for Melton Borough



10.4 Summary of future baseline

- 10.4.1 Given the consistency of recent housing completions, there is good potential for above-target housing completions to continue being achieved going forward.
- 10.4.2 The focus of growth within the Melton Mowbray urban area will continue to ensure the majority of development comes forward at the borough's most sustainable settlement. However, this could potentially mean that settlements across the rural area will see only very limited growth going forward. This could potentially impact the future vitality of some settlements and their services.

10.5 Key sustainability issues

- 10.5.1 The following key issues emerge from the context and baseline review:
- Melton Borough has achieved high and sustained rates of housing completion for several years, consistently delivering above identified levels of overall housing need and above the housing target in the adopted Local Plan. The adopted Local Plan housing target averages at 296 homes per annum.
 - According to MBC's Housing Market Delivery Tests for 2018 to 2021 (the last year they were published), the rate of delivery for each year except 2018 was above the Plan's aim of 296 homes per annum.
 - The vast majority of housing growth has taken place within the urban area of Melton Mowbray. The remaining growth will be focussed on Service Centres. Finally, a very limited growth will take place in Rural Hubs.
 - There is evidence of poorer quality housing in the areas surrounding the urban area of Melton Mowbray, especially to the east.
 - Affordability of housing is a key issue due to a low number of smaller houses in the borough, as well as local wages not being high enough.

10.6 Scoping decision

- 10.6.1 Considering the key issues discussed above it is proposed that the topic of housing should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Table 10.4 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 10-4: Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Support timely delivery of an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures.	<p>Will the option / proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support timely delivery of an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures to meet objectively assessed housing need in sustainable locations?• Support delivery of a range of good quality, affordable and specialist housing that meets the needs of Melton's residents, including older people, people with disabilities and families with children?• Enable managed growth at rural communities where to do so would help improve the sustainability of these settlements?

11. Landscape

11.1 Focus of topic

11.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Nationally protected areas.
- National character areas.
- Local landscape character; and
- Landscape sensitivity.

11.2 Context review

11.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 11.1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
International	
<u>The European Landscape Convention</u>	2000
National	
<u>National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)</u>	2021
<u>National Model Design Code</u>	2021
<u>National Design Guide</u>	2019
<u>A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment</u>	2018
<u>National Character Areas</u>	Various
<u>Countryside and Rights of Way Act</u>	2000
Local	
<u>Melton Local Plan</u>	2018
<u>Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study</u>	2015
<u>Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study: Wind Energy Development</u>	2012
<u>Melton Landscape Character Assessment Update 2011</u>	2011
<u>Melton Borough Landscape and Historic Urban Character Assessment Report</u>	2006

11.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The European Landscape Convention promotes the protection, management and planning of the landscapes and organises international co-operation on landscape issues.
- The new Local Plan should consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which gives great weight to conserving and enhancing protected landscapes, landscape character, and scenic beauty.
- The scale and extent of development within these areas should be limited and development within their setting should be mindfully located and designed to avoid / minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas. The NPPF also recognises the role of green infrastructure in landscape settings, as well as the positive contribution that land remediation can have on despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated, and unstable land.
- The National Model Design Code states that all design codes should include a landscape and open space strategy that incorporates the existing natural features and new structural elements. It recognises that landscapes can be major drivers in the design process.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan and National Design Guide outline the same aims as one another, focusing on creating a cleaner, greener country that puts the environment first and celebrates the variety of natural landscapes and habitats present in the UK. Design is focused on creating beautiful, enduring, and successful places, which respond to local character and provide a network of high quality and green open spaces. Of note is 'Chapter 2: Recovering nature and enhancing the beauty of landscapes' and 'Goal 6: Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment'.
- The Countryside and Rights of Way Act allows for greater freedom for people to explore the countryside, giving greater protection to natural features.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - Policy SS3 – Sustainable Communities (unallocated sites).
 - Policy SS4 – Melton South Sustainable Neighbourhood (Strategic Development Location).
 - Policy EN1 – Landscape.
 - Policy EN3 – The Melton Green Infrastructure Network.
 - Policy EN4 – Areas of Separation.
 - Policy EN10 – Energy Generation from Renewable and Low Carbon Sources.
 - Policy D2 – Equestrian Development; and
 - Policy D3 – Agricultural Workers' Dwellings.

- The Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study provides evidence that helps inform decisions around the direction of growth and landscape and / or open space protection in Melton. This includes protected open areas and local green spaces, as well as an appraisal of the sensitivity of settlement fringes and as assessment of landscape setting, in order to ensure new development considers these factors and conserves them wherever possible.
- The Melton and Rushcliffe Landscape Sensitivity Study: Wind Energy Development Report assesses the landscape sensitivity of Melton to wind turbine development at a range of scales. It concludes landform scale varies across the study area, and can be relatively large on the extensive undulating landscapes of the Vales and Wolds. Reflecting the scale of the landscapes across the borough, the assessment concludes all of the Landscape Character Units assessed are of either 'moderate-high' or 'high' sensitivity to wind turbine developments of over 75m to blade tip, and all but one of the Landscape Character Units have a 'high' sensitivity to turbines of over 110m to blade tip.
- The Melton Borough Landscape and Historic Urban Character Assessment Report, and the updated 2011 report, identifies the character of different areas of the borough in order to help inform policy and planning decisions. It splits the borough into 21 landscape character areas, each with their own distinctive characteristics and sensitivities. It is noted these two reports are older; as such, the information they present may not be as accurate for today's landscape.

11.3 Summary of current baseline

Nationally protected landscapes

National character areas

11.2.3 National Character Areas (NCAs) are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries. The NCAs divide England into 159 distinct natural areas based on their landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, historic, cultural, and economic characteristics. This makes them valuable in creating decision making frameworks for the natural environment, especially for cross-boundary collaboration. Melton Borough overlaps with four different NCAs:

- NCA 48: Trent and Belvoir Vales.
- NCA 74: Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds.
- NCA 75: Kesteven Uplands; and
- NCA 93: High Leicestershire.
- The statements of environment opportunities (SEOs) for each NCA can be found below.

11.2.4 The SEOs for NCA 48: Trent and Belvoir Vales⁶⁰ are as follows:

- SEO1: Maximise the use of sustainable agricultural practices that protect and enhance ecological networks in order to help safeguard the long-term viability of farming in the area while benefiting biodiversity, landscape character, carbon storage as well as water quality, availability and flow.
- SEO2: Enhance the woodland and hedgerow network through the planting of small woodlands, tree belts, hedgerow trees and new hedgerows to benefit landscape character, habitat connectivity and a range of ecosystem services, including the regulation of soil erosion, water quality and flow.
- SEO3: Enhance the rivers and their flood plains for their ecological, historical and recreational importance, their contribution to biodiversity, soil quality, water availability and in regulating water flow and the important role they play in underpinning the character of the area; and
- SEO4: Maintain and enhance the character of this gently undulating, rural landscape. Promote and carefully manage the many distinctive elements that contribute to the overarching sense of place and history of the Trent and Belvoir Vales.

11.2.5 The SEOs for NCA 74: Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds⁶¹ are as follows:

- SEO1: Promote sustainable agricultural practices in this important food producing area to conserve the soil resource and protect water quality, while also ensuring the distinctive historic field pattern and important grassland and broad-leaved woodland habitats are conserved and restored.
- SEO2: Conserve and manage Rutland Water reservoir and nature reserve for its internationally designated habitats and for the variety of recreational and education assets it provides.
- SEO3: Protect tranquillity levels in the rural landscape and ensure new development on the urban fringe incorporates green infrastructure into the design, maintains the vernacular and links with the wider countryside.
- SEO4: Where new development is planned on the urban fringe consider integrating multi-functional greenspace into the design with links to the surrounding countryside; and
- Additional opportunity: Conserve and manage the suite of SSSIs and Local Sites to protect and improve their condition.

11.2.6 The SEOs for NCA 75: Kesteven Uplands⁶² are as follows:

- SEO1: Manage and enhance the agricultural landscape and soils of the Kesteven Uplands, continuing the long tradition of mixed farming which

⁶⁰ Natural England (2013) 'NCA Profile: 48: Trent and Belvoir Vales (NE429)' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶¹ Natural England (2012) 'NCA Profile: 74 Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire Wolds (NE341)' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶² Natural England (2014) 'NCA Profile: 75 Kesteven Uplands (NE560)' can be accessed [here](#).

has shaped the area, securing viable and sustainable food production, while seeking to enhance biodiversity and improve water quality and availability.

- SEO2: Protect and significantly increase the extent, quality and connectivity of the unimproved and limestone grasslands throughout the NCA, to enhance biodiversity, ecological networks, water availability and quality, climate regulation and sense of place.
- SEO3: Manage and expand the native woodlands throughout the Kesteven Uplands to reinforce the area's wooded character, benefit biodiversity, increase the potential for biomass, access and recreation, and help to regulate climate change and water quality.
- SEO4: Protect, manage and promote the area's rich historic environment including the significant limestone geology, the historic parklands, the manor houses and medieval monastic buildings, and deserted medieval villages, while also improving access and interpretation to enhance people's understanding and enjoyment of the landscape; and
- Additional opportunity: Conserve the strong settlement character of the Kesteven Uplands villages and ensure that new development is sympathetic to this, protecting its tranquil characteristics away from major urban influences.

11.2.7 The SEOs for NCA 93: High Leicestershire⁶³ are as follows:

- SEO1: Protect and appropriately manage the strong visual and historic character of this varied and sparsely settled rural landscape of broad rolling ridges and wide secluded valleys – maintaining the settlement pattern and features of High Leicestershire, in particular its areas and features of archaeological and heritage interest, including the field patterns, ridge and furrow, ancient woodlands, country houses and village churches – to enhance sense of place and history so that the area can be enjoyed by all for its tranquillity.
- SEO2: Sustainably manage the moderately fertile soils, arable crops, livestock, grassland, woodlands, coverts and spinneys that contribute to sense of place while maintaining viable food production, enhancing biodiversity networks and encouraging farmland birds and mammals and rarer arable plants.
- SEO3: Manage and enhance the recreational assets, such as the rights of way network, country parks such as Burrough Hill and waterbodies such as Eyebrook Reservoir, and improve access to these assets and the open countryside from the city of Leicester and surrounding rural communities, to maintain a sense of place, enhance soil and water quality and have a beneficial effect on people's health and wellbeing; and
- SEO4: Manage, conserve and enhance the woodlands, hedgerows, streams, rivers and field ponds – including the rivers Chater, Gwash and Eye Brook, their tributaries and the Eyebrook Reservoir – to enhance biodiversity and soil quality and improve water quality, flow and availability.

⁶³ Natura England (2013) 'NCA Profile: 93 High Leicestershire (NE497)' can be accessed [here](#).

Landscape, townscape and villagescape character

Local landscape character

- 11.2.8 Landscape, townscape, and villagescape character play an important role in understanding the relationship between people and place and identifying recognisable and distinct patterns in the landscape which make one area different from another. Landscape, townscape and villagescape character assessments can both help identify the value of landscapes and townscapes, in terms of visual and amenity value.
- 11.2.9 Though they are older documents, the Melton Borough Landscape and Historic Urban Character Assessment Report and the Assessment Update identifies 21 local character areas (LCA) in Melton Borough. The distinct characteristics of each LCA are summarised in Table 11.2 and shown in

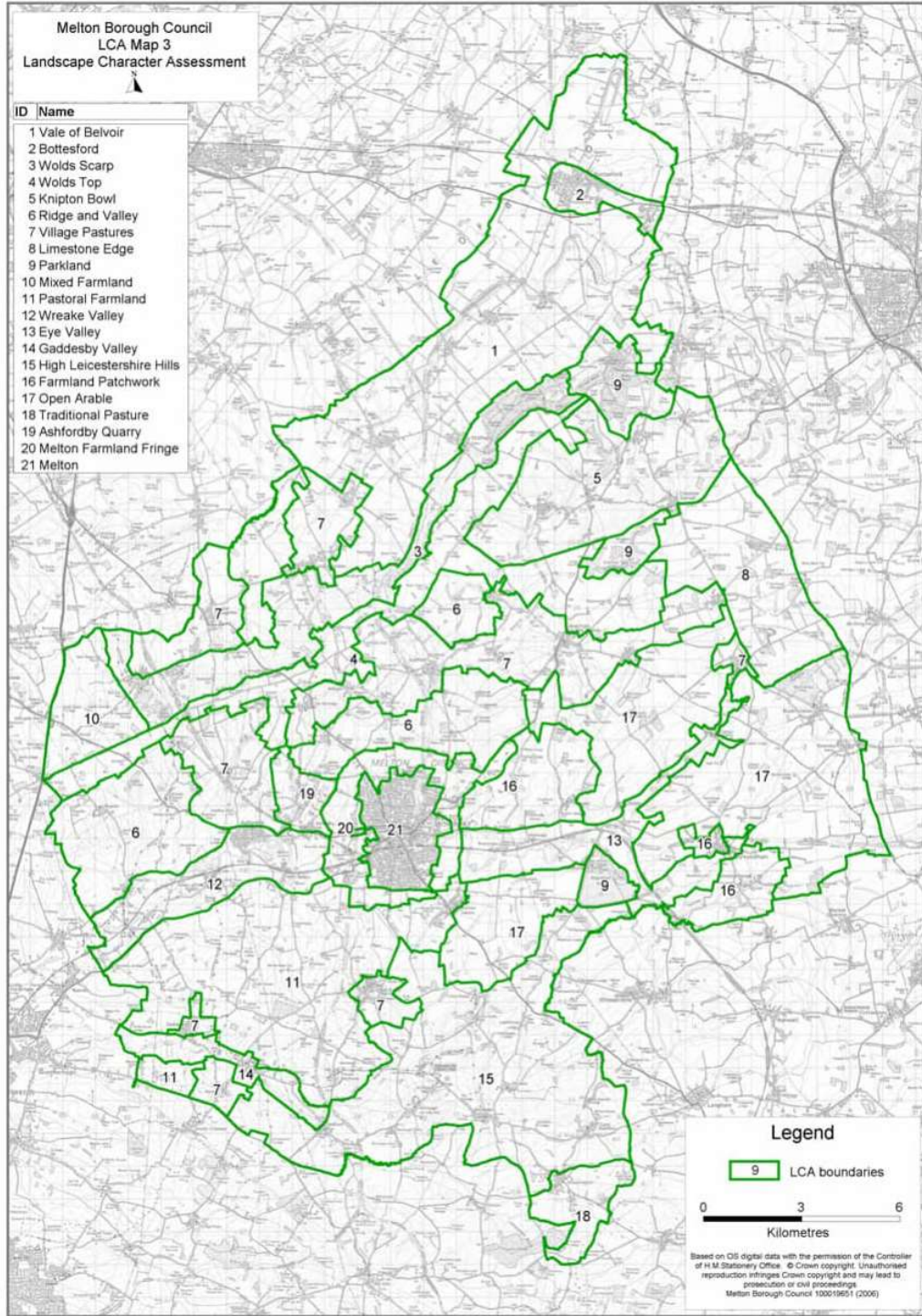


Figure 11-1 LCA map

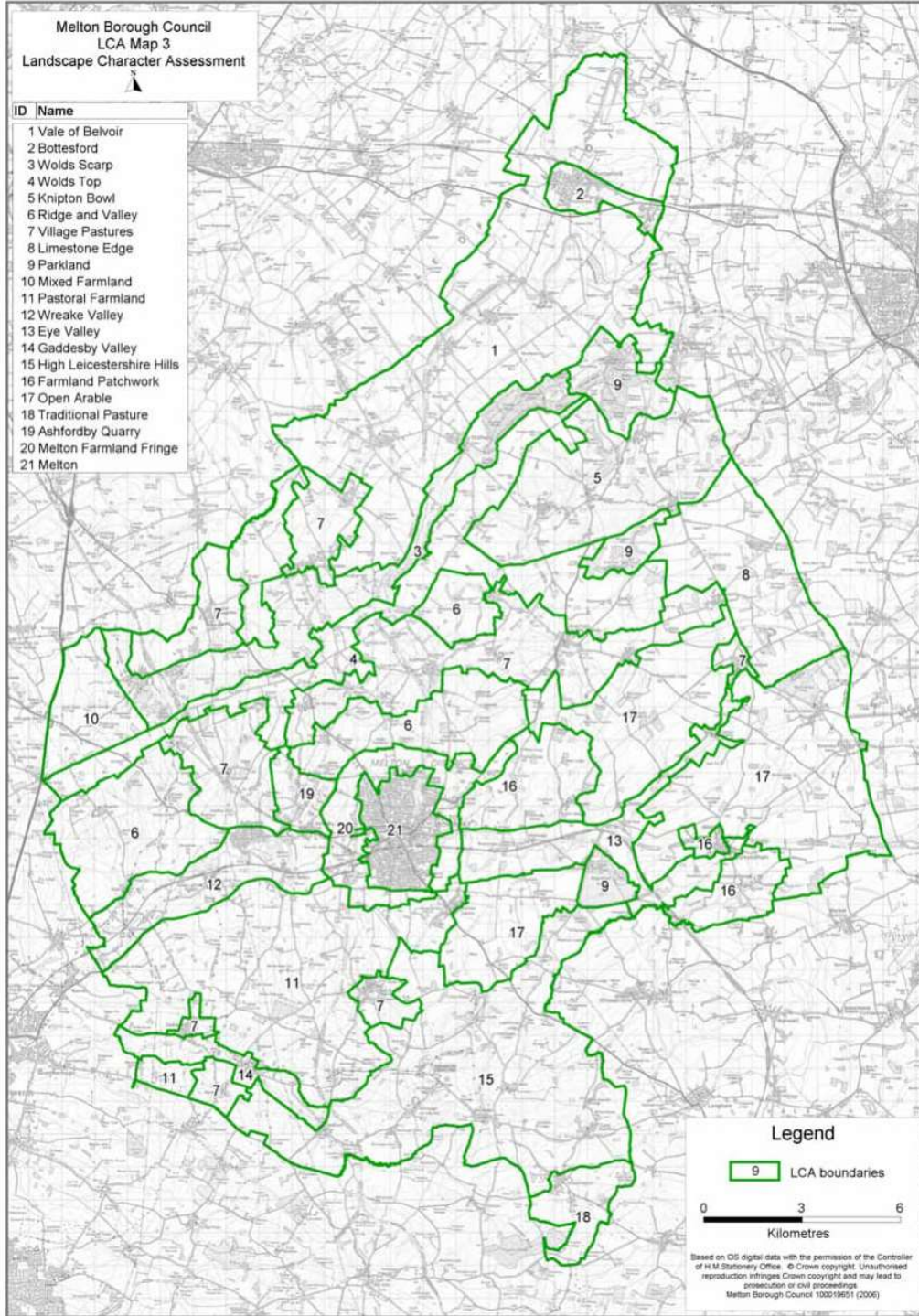


Table 11.2: LCA details

LCA	Landscape character description	Distinct characteristics
1 Vale of Belvoir	An expansive gentle vale landscape with a strong pattern of medium scale rectangular shaped pastoral and arable fields with managed hedgerows and the Grantham canal, punctuated by nucleated villages with prominent church spires.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expansive vale. • String of nucleated villages. • Strong rectangular field pattern of mixed farming bounded by hedges; and • Local stone in houses and churches.
2 Bottesford	A nucleated townscape, prominent within the Vale, and nearby village with surrounding pastures, streamsid es and transport routes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town prominent in vale. • Dominated by church at centre. • Stream running through; and • Closely associated pasture.
3 Wolds Scarp	A pronounced locally dramatic northwest facing escarpment landscape, with a distinct pattern of traditional small scale regular & irregular shaped pastures, woodland and historic features.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prominent scarp landform. • Pattern of small traditional pastures. • Woodland; and • Ridge & Furrow.
4 Wolds Top	An even elevated wold top landscape with medium to large scale predominantly arable fields, homogenous and open with scattered ash trees but generally lacking distinctive qualities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narrow strip of elevated land. • Open and homogenous; and • Large scale regular arable fields.
5 Knipton Bowl	An outstanding, beautiful well managed bowl landscape with limestone rim and a diverse mosaic of historic features, traditional pastures, arable land, parkland, woodland, wetland, water & nucleated villages, and a strong pattern of small to medium regular and irregular shaped fields, fine trees and woodland.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse landcover. • Mosaic of old unimproved pastures. • Preserved Medieval field systems; and • Local stone buildings.
6 Ridge and Valley	A broadly homogenous gently rolling ridge & valley landscape with contrasting large scale arable fields along ridgelines and smaller scale pastures in the valleys, with	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling landscape. • Large scale open arable fields along ridgelines. • Small scale enclosed pastures on valley sides and floors; and

LCA	Landscape character description	Distinct characteristics
	managed hedges and scattered mostly ash trees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Few buildings.
7 Village Pastures	A distinctive traditional pastoral landscape and attractive nucleated villages with a strong pattern of small fields often with historic features, enclosed by abundant hedgerow trees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional stone built villages. • Small field with Ridge and Furrow; and • Enclosed by ancient hedgerows with abundant hedgerow trees.
8 Limestone Edge	A gently rolling and homogenous low limestone plateau edge with a strongly rectangular pattern of large scale arable fields and blocks of conifer plantations, generally lacking naturalness and diversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elevated area on limestone edge. • Homogenous arable landscape. • Large scale open field pattern; and • Blocks of conifer woodland.
9 Parkland	Historic parkland landscapes with historic houses/castles and a diverse mosaic of ancient, traditional & contemporary agricultural and parkland features and patterns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic buildings. • Parkland landscape or remnant parkland. • Plantation woodlands. • Ornamental tree groups and specimens; and • Arable on former parkland.
10 Mixed Farmland	A typical gently rolling lowland farmland landscape with contrasting intensive and traditional units, varied field sizes and scattered trees as well as recreational land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixture of agricultural use and recreational land. • Shallow valley. • Variety of field sizes; and • Large, visually prominent agricultural buildings.
11 Pastoral Farmland	A typical, pleasant, rural, gently rolling lowland pastoral farmland landscape, generally well managed, with diverse field shapes and sizes, good hedges and scattered trees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling topography. • Well managed pastoral landscape. • Scattered farmsteads. • Thick stock proof hedges; and • Irregular shaped fields.
12 Wreake Valley	A gentle lowland river valley landscape with contrasting sinuous river course and regular pattern of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Wreake. • Green wedge running into Melton Mowbray.

LCA	Landscape character description	Distinct characteristics
	small to medium scale pastoral fields with distinct wetland and water areas from former gravel pits, and small-nucleated villages situated along the rising slopes of the valley edge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • String of villages on edge of the valley; and • Valley floor worked for sand and gravel and restored to wetland habitat.
13 Eye Valley	A mixed rather discordant river valley landscape, with traditional small scale pastoral land to the north and contrasting large scale intensive open arable land to the south, which suppresses the natural river valley landscape.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small scale pastoral landscape to the north. • Large scale intensive open arable fields to south; and • Sparse hedgerows and tree clumps.
14 Gaddesby Valley	A gentle valley floor with sinuous river course and mixture of country houses, parkland, orchards, pastoral farmland and horticulture.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted to valley floor. • Houses set in parkland. • Farmsteads and horticulture; and • Traditional pastures and orchards.
15 High Leicestershire Hills	Classic landscape influenced by the requirements of sporting estates with attractive stone villages amongst rolling pastoral hills and escarpment, and a range of field shapes and sizes enclosed by well-managed often chamfered hedges, woodland, parkland, copses, green lanes, wide grass road verges and some more intensive arable land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling hills and pronounced escarpment. • Well preserved sporting estates. • Historic features, green lanes and parkland; and • Unimproved grassland.
16 Farmland Patchwork	A gently rolling lowland mixed farmland landscape with a distinct patchwork of small to medium scale regular shaped pastoral and arable fields with blocks of game cover and small woodlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape influenced by game shooting. • Blocks of trees, woodland, game cover crops; and • Patterned patchwork landscape.
17 Open Arable	A contemporary large scale blocky intensively farmed open arable landscape superimposed upon an older smaller scale and strongly irregular patterned landscape. The subtleties are subdued but evident.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intensively farmed, large scale open landscape. • Past field enlargement through hedge and woodland removal; and • Pattern of historic landscape still evident in places.

LCA	Landscape character description	Distinct characteristics
18 Traditional Pastures	An untypical traditional pastoral lowland landscape with a rich green colour and pronounced irregular pattern of small fields enclosed by thick hedgerows with abundant trees and ancient woodlands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irregular pattern of small fields. • Rolling low hills. • Pastoral. • Green; and • Hedges, hedgerow trees and ancient woodland.
19 Ashfordby Quarry	A disturbed, excavated, large scale, former colliery landscape now in industrial use.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial landscape – former colliery. • Large scale. • Disturbed; and • Continued industrial use.
20 Melton Fringes	A mixed urban fringe ridge and valley and valley floor landscape, mostly pastoral farmland, MOD and recreational land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling landscape of fields and hedges. • Mixed pasture and arable land. • Clear distinction between urban edge and countryside. • Housing estates remain unscreened; and • Some industrial and other land uses (e.g. MOD).
21 Melton Mowbray	A mixed urban fringe ridge and valley and valley floor landscape, mostly pastoral farmland, MOD and recreational land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rolling landscape of fields and hedges. • Mixed pasture and arable land. • Clear distinction between urban edge and countryside. • Housing estates remain unscreened; and • Some industrial and other land uses (e.g. MOD).

Landscape sensitivity of Melton Mowbray

11.2.10 Landscape sensitivity studies have only been undertaken for the town of Melton Mowbray and the surrounding areas (LCA 21), according to Figure 11.2.

Areas of separation

11.2.11 The Melton Borough Areas of Separation, Settlement Fringe Sensitivity and Local Green Space Study discusses areas of separation. These are pockets of land between settlements that are an important part of the spatial strategy of the Melton Borough, as they prevent coalescence and urban sprawl effects. This allows settlements to maintain their unique characteristics and features and helps preserve local identity.

Tree preservation orders

11.2.12 Implemented by local planning authorities, Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) are designated to protect specific trees, groups of trees or woodlands in the interests of their amenity value. When considering 'amenity'; the local planning authority will likely take into consideration the following criteria⁶⁴:

- Visibility: the extent to which the trees or woodlands can be seen by the public; and
- Individual, collective, and wider impact: considering the importance of the trees or woodlands in relation to their cultural or historic value, contribution to and relationship with the landscape and / or their contribution to the character or appearance of a conservation area.

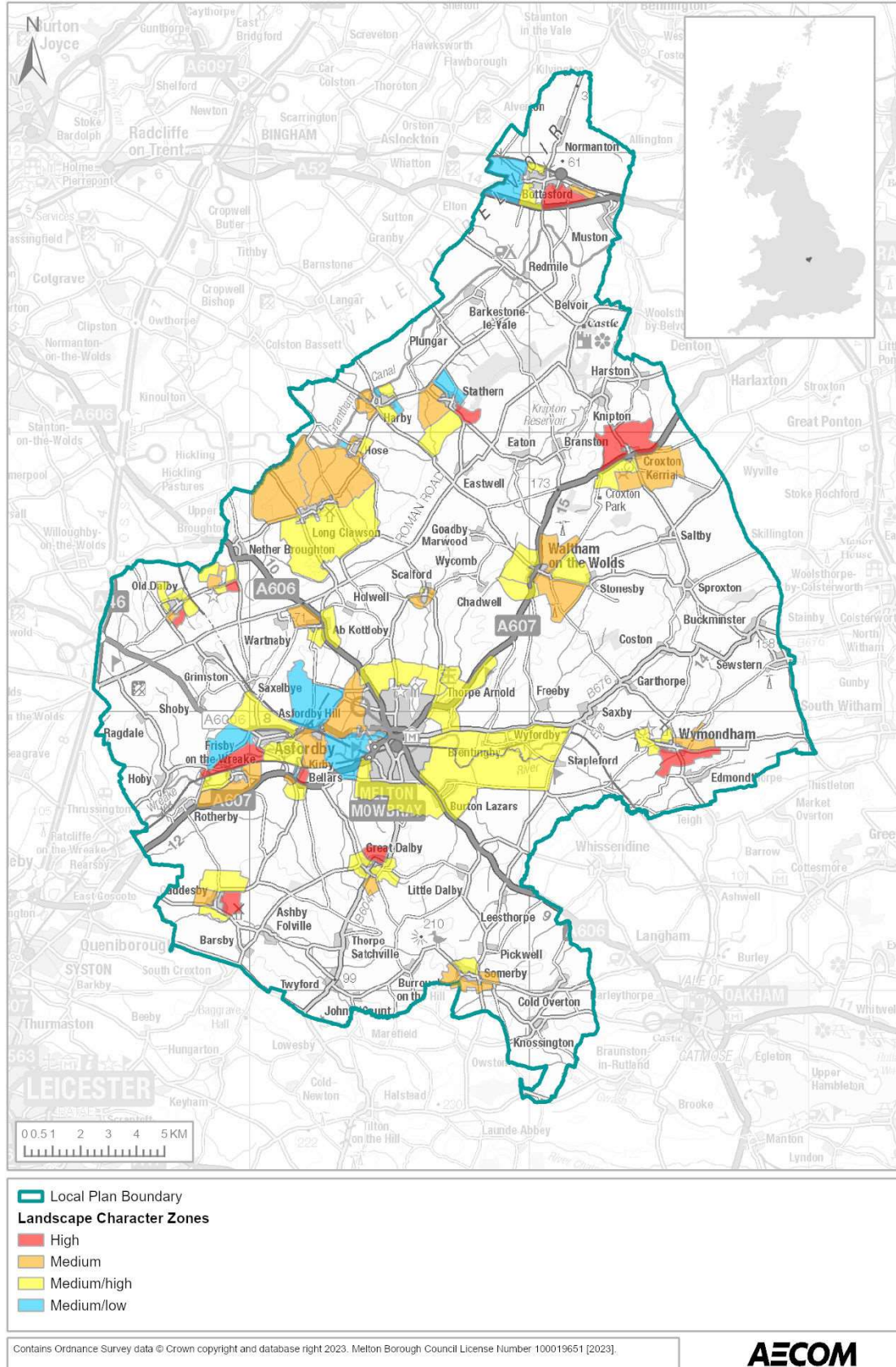
11.2.13 Figure 11-3 maps the TPOs across the borough, which demonstrates that the majority of TPOs are located within settlement centres, with a significant amount noted in Melton Mowbray.

Visual amenity

11.2.14 It is useful to note that views of and across areas are also an important factor to consider in the planning process, as the scale, height, and mass of development can ultimately impact on important views without appropriate assessment. Changes like development and landscape change can see these important views and vistas degraded overtime.

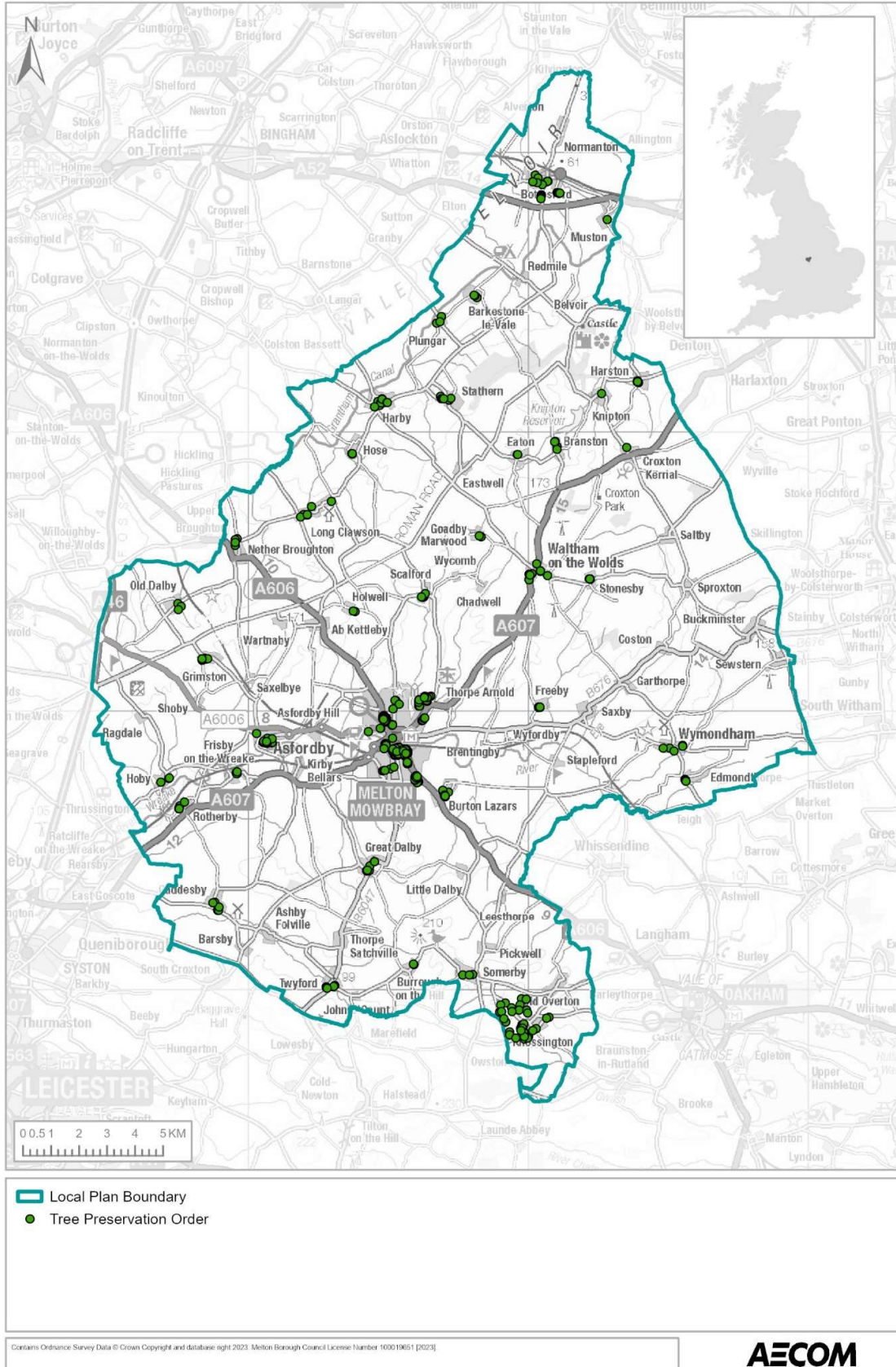
⁶⁴ GOV.UK (2014): 'Tree Protection Orders – General' can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 11-2 Landscape sensitivity around selected settlements



AECOM

Figure 11-3 Tree Preservation Orders



11.4 Summary of future baseline

- 11.3.1 New development has the potential to lead to small, incremental, but cumulative changes in landscape, townscape and villagescape character and quality within the Melton area. This includes the loss or damage of features and areas with an important visual amenity value, and the coalescence of settlements.
- 11.3.2 It should be noted that the planning system has tools in place to offer a degree of protection to the landscape; therefore, new development will not necessarily result in harm. Furthermore, locally distinctive landscape and townscape features, characteristics and special qualities can be protected, managed, and enhanced through appropriate planning policies. It is further recognised that new development that is appropriately designed and landscape led could support the area's intrinsic landscape character and quality. This could include regeneration that improves village setting, delivering green infrastructure improvements and / or new recreational opportunities and the identification and / or enhanced framing of key views.

11.5 Key sustainability issues

- 11.4.1 The following key issues have been identified through the baseline review for this topic:
- The landscape evidence for Melton is relatively dated, with local evidence documents ranging from 2006 to 2015.
 - Whilst the local evidence documents do discuss landscape character of the entire borough, the main focus is primarily on the landscape capacity and sensitivity of Melton Mowbray. This represents a gap in the baseline information available.
 - The borough sits within four different NCAs and has over 20 local character areas. These areas should be treated individually to ensure key features and characteristics are protected and enhanced where possible.

11.6 Scoping decision

- 11.5.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the landscape topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in **Table 6.1** below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 11.3 Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Protect and enhance the character and quality of Melton's landscapes, townscapes and villagescapes?	Will the option / proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the distinctive qualities of the NCAs and LCAs within and surrounding Melton?

SA objective

Appraisal questions

- Protect and enhance key landscape, townscape and villagescape features which contribute to local distinctiveness?
 - Protect locally important viewpoints contributing to sense of place and visual amenity?
 - Improve understanding of Melton's distinctive landscape, townscape and villagescape resources?
-

12. Soil and land

12.1 Focus of topic

12.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Soil resources / agricultural land;
- Brownfield sites;
- Contaminated land;
- Mineral resources; and
- Waste.

12.2 Context review

12.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 12.1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
National	
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
National Planning Policy for Waste	2014
Waste Management Plan for England	2013
Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England	2009
Local	
Resources and Waste Strategy for Leicestershire (2022-2050)	2022
Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2019-2031)	2019
Melton Local Plan	2018

12.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The new Local Plan will need to consider the principles outlined in the NPPF which pursue the protection of high-quality soil resources. It recognises the wider benefits of natural capital and the need to consider the long-term implications of climate change and ways in which to build resilience in this respect. The NPPF encourages efficient land use, utilising brownfield land opportunities and land remediation schemes where appropriate and delivering environmental gains.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan discusses measures to improve soil quality, restore and protect peatlands, reduce pollution, maximise resource efficiency and minimise environmental impacts. Of note is ‘Chapter 1: Using and managing land sustainably’, ‘Chapter 4: Increasing resource efficiency, and reducing pollution and waste’, ‘Goal 5: Using

resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently’ and ‘Goal 8: Minimising waste’.

- The National Planning Policy for Waste outlines the UK Government’s goal of a more sustainable and efficient approach to resource use and management. It states that local planning authorities should ensure sufficient opportunities are taken to meet the identified needs for the management of waste streams and that provision for waste management is considered appropriately.
- The Waste Management Plan for England identifies measures being taken to move towards a zero-waste economy, including a national waste plan which seeks to identify measures to move towards a circular economy in which resources are kept in use for longer. The Waste Management To do this, there needs to be a maximisation in the value of resources used and a minimisation in the waste created.
- The Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England policy paper seeks to ensure that all soils in England will be managed sustainably, and degradation threats minimised successfully by 2030. This policy paper also seeks to secure sustainable and resilient water resources in addition to the improvement in waterbody quality.
- The Resources and Waste Strategy for Leicestershire (2022-2050) sets a direction for the long term management of material resources for the benefit of the residents and communities of Leicestershire through a series of strategy objectives and policies.
- The Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan (2019-2031) includes a spatial vision, spatial strategy, strategic objectives, and core policies which set out the key principles to guide the future winning and working of minerals and the form of waste management development in the County of Leicestershire over the period to the end of 2031.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Several policies refer to the need to protect high quality agricultural land including EN2, SS3, SS4, SS5 and D2.

12.3 Summary of current baseline

Soil resources / agricultural land

- 12.3.1 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) classifies land into six grades (plus ‘non-agricultural land’ and ‘urban’), where Grades 1 to 3a are recognised as being the ‘best and most versatile’ (BMV) land, and Grades 3b to 5 of poorer quality. In this context, there is a need to avoid loss of higher quality BMV agricultural land.
- 12.3.2 There was a post-1988 ALC assessment undertaken in Melton Borough – which indicated there were small areas of Grade 2 ‘Very Good’, Grade 3a ‘Good’ and Grade 3b ‘Moderate’ agricultural quality land to the south and east of Melton Mowbray (Figure 12-1).

12.3.3 In the absence of a full ALC assessment, the provisional ALC dataset provided by Natural England⁶⁵ (Figure 12-2) has been consulted. This demonstrates the majority of the Melton Borough is classified as Grade 3 'Good to Moderate' agricultural land. There is large urban area encompassing the settlement of Melton Mowbray in the southern part of the borough, and a large area of non-agricultural land to the north by Stathern. There are areas of Grade 4 'Poor' agricultural quality land that could be partially related to watercourses in the borough. Areas of Grade 2 'Very Good' agricultural land is located mostly to the north of Melton Mowbray, especially around Waltham on the Wolds, Croxton Kerrial and Stathern. One area of Grade 1 'Excellent' agricultural quality land is located in Wymondham.

⁶⁵ Natural England (2011) 'ALC map East Midlands' can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 12-1 Post-1988 ALC for Melton

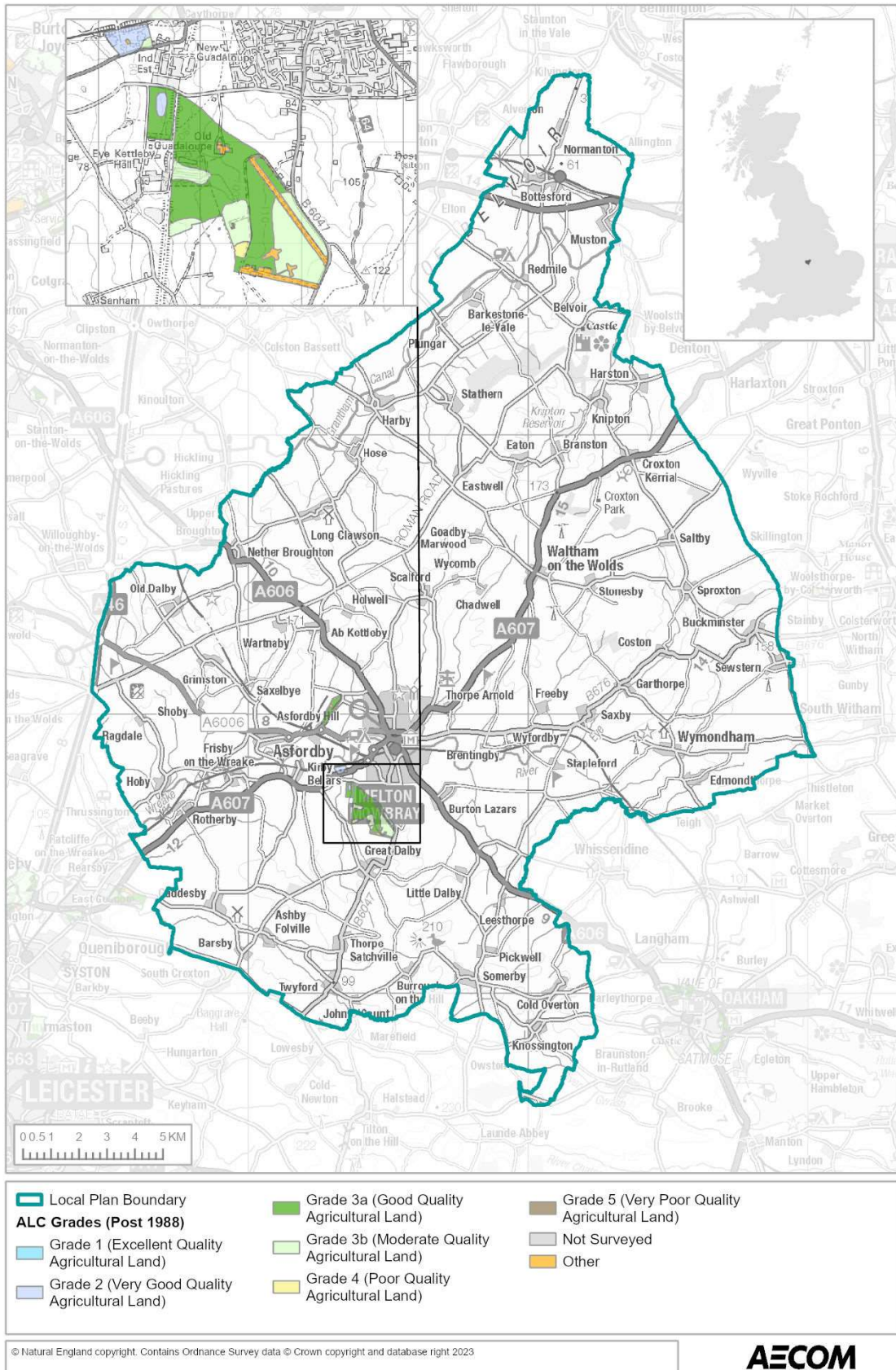
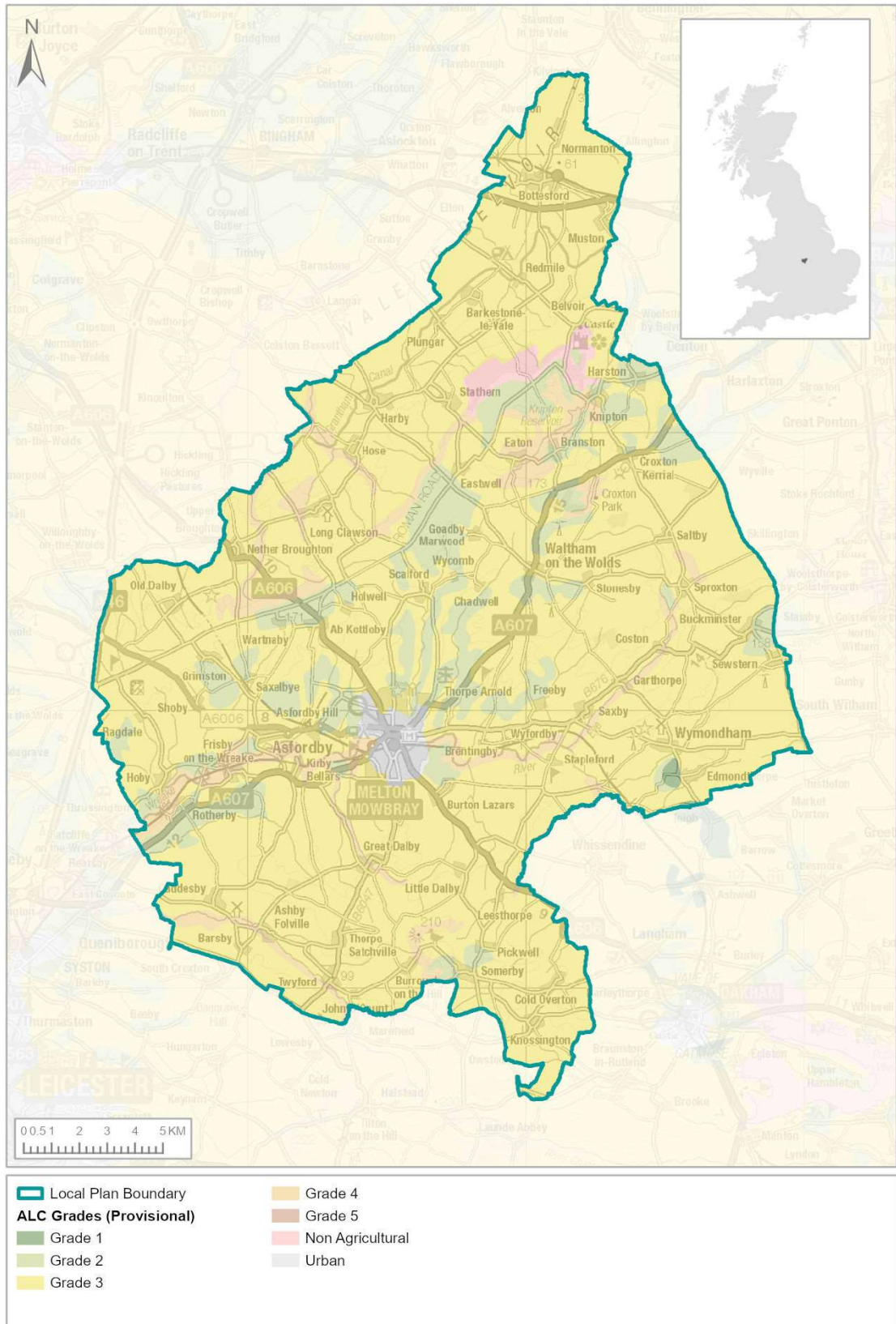


Figure 12-2 The provisional ALC for Melton



Land use

12.3.4 Under the Housing and Planning Act, the Council must keep a register of brownfield land suitable for housing development and update it at least once a year. According to the latest register from June 2022⁶⁶, there are 24 brownfield sites in Melton Borough, which have a minimum capacity of 906 net dwellings. Figure 12-3 shows the majority of these brownfield sites are within or in proximity to Melton Mowbray. Brownfield sites are also more common on the western side of the Borough.

Figure 12-3 Brownfield Sites in the Melton Borough Land Register (2022)⁶⁷



⁶⁶ Melton Borough Council (2021) 'Brownfield Land Register' can be accessed [here](#).

⁶⁷ Melton Borough Brownfield Land Register (2022) Mapping Portal can be accessed [here](#). [Last accessed 04/10/2023].

Contaminated Land

12.3.5 Figure 12-4 illustrates that contaminated land is prevalent across the borough in both urban and countryside locations. Notable concentrations are within Melton Mowbray and Asfordby

Figure 12-4 Contaminated land

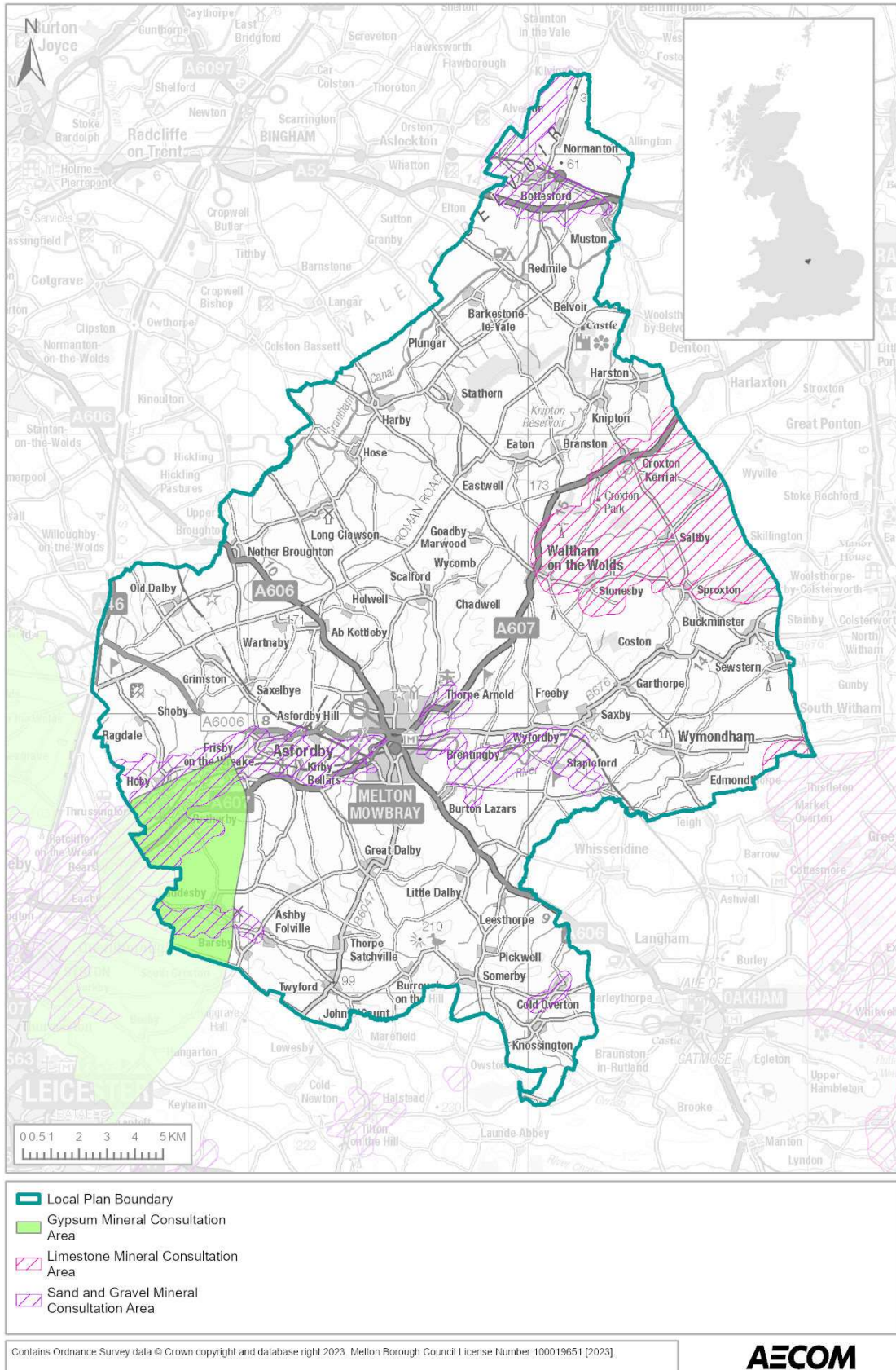


Mineral resources

12.3.6 Mineral resources are defined as natural concentrations of minerals or bodies of rock that have the potential to be of economic interest in the present or the future due to their inherent properties. As minerals are a non-renewable resource, minerals safeguarding is deployed as the process through which it is ensured that non-minerals development does not needlessly prevent the future extraction of mineral resources⁶⁸.

⁶⁸ UK Government (2014) 'Guidance: Minerals' can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 12-5 Mineral Safeguarded Area



Balance between supply and demand

- 12.3.7 The most recent Leicestershire County Council Local Aggregate Assessment⁶⁹ estimates that permitted reserves of sand and gravel on 31st December 2021 were 2.53 million tonnes; this will provide sufficient reserves for 2.2 years, based on average sales over the 10-year rolling period (2012-2021). Therefore, there will be a potential shortfall of sand and gravel reserves within Leicestershire over the period to 2031 of approximately 10.56 million tonnes.
- 12.3.8 The estimate for the County's igneous rock suggests that permitted reserves on 31st December 2021 were 312 million tonnes. This will provide sufficient reserves for 24.1 years. This is more than sufficient to maintain the Government's requirement for a landbank of at least ten years.

Waste

- 12.3.9 According to the Leicestershire Minerals and Waste Local Plan, Melton Borough is home to one of the County's two materials recovery facilities (MRFs).
- 12.3.10 The same Plan identifies that in 2020, Melton Borough's recycling rate was approximately 44%. At the time, this was the median rate when compared to all of Leicestershire County's respective boroughs, and the same rate as the national figure, which was also 44%. This rate was lower than the UK's target to recycle 50% of household waste by 2020.
- 12.3.11 Finally, the Plan notes that the amount of waste sent to landfill in Leicestershire was 31.8% in 2019/20, which was much higher than the average landfill rate for local authorities in England, for the same time period (8.5%).

12.4 Summary of future baseline

- 12.4.1 It will be important for the new Local Plan to take a proactive approach to protecting BMV land as part of new Local Plan spatial strategy and site selection process. Agricultural land is primarily a national resource, and as such its loss should be avoided where possible in line with higher level policy.
- 12.4.2 In this respect, it is recognised that there will be a need to make efficient use of land, including by making best use of Melton Borough's previously developed / brownfield land. There is also a need to make best use of existing buildings, ahead of demolition and rebuild.
- 12.4.3 Future development should also seek to support minerals and waste planning, being factored into masterplanning and building design (e.g. adequate space for waste sorting, storage and collection).

⁶⁹ Leicestershire County Council (2021) 'Local Aggregate Assessment' can be accessed [here](#).

12.5 Key sustainability issues

12.5.1 The following key issues have been identified through the baseline review for this topic:

- The provisional ALC data indicates that Melton Borough is underlain with mostly Grade 3 agricultural land outside of the urbanised areas, although there are also large patches of Grade 2 land in the central region of the Borough. However, the data does not differentiate between Grade 3a land (BMV) and Grade 3b (not BMV). As a finite resource, Grade 2 and 3a land should be protected where possible. Opportunities to investigate and identify more precise ALC data should be sought where possible.
- Melton Borough has a number of brownfield sites that should be prioritised for development where appropriate; demonstrating an efficient use of land and resources.

12.6 Scoping decision

12.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the Soil and Land topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The topic of waste management and minerals planning have been scoped out of the SA as such matters are dealt with by Leicestershire County Council in a separate plan. However, the local plan update could have secondary effects in terms of mineral resources and the consumption of resources, which are reflected in the appraisal questions below/

12.6.2 The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in **Table 6.1** below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 11.3 Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Protect important soil and mineral resources, promote the effective use and restoration of land and buildings, and sustainably manage waste and minerals.	<p>Will the option / proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid the loss of BMV agricultural land? • Prioritise the re-use of brownfield land where appropriate? • Support the remediation of contaminated land? • Protect the integrity of mineral resources? • Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction, operation and maintenance of new infrastructure?

13. Transport and accessibility

13.1 Focus of topic

13.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Rail network
- Bus network
- Active travel routes
- Road network and congestion
- Electric vehicle (EV) charging
- Planned investment in new routes and infrastructure
- Local services and facilities

13.2 Summary of current baseline

13.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 13-1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
International	
United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development	2015
Directive 2002/49/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 25 June 2002 relating to the assessment and management of environmental noise	2002
National	
UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy	2022
Bus back better	2021
Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Green Britain	2021
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
National Infrastructure Strategy	2020
Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy	2019
Planning practice guidance	2019
Transport Investment Strategy: Moving Britain Ahead	2017
Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE)	2010
The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006	2006
Local	
Interim Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy	2021
Leicestershire County Council Cycling and Walking Strategy	2021
Melton Local Plan	2018
Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (2011-2026)	2014

13.2.2 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The UN's Sustainable Development Goals list three Goals in relation to sustainable transport. Goal 3 - Good Health and Well-being, Goal 9 - Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure, and Goal 11 - Sustainable Cities and Communities.
- Directive 2002/49/EC aims to provide a common basis for combating the harmful effects of exposure to environmental noise. It seeks to control noise in built-up areas, in public parks and other quiet areas in urban settings, in quiet areas in open country and near to schools, hospitals and other noise-sensitive buildings.
- The UK electric vehicle infrastructure strategy sets out the UK Government's vision and action plan for the rollout of electric vehicle charging provision across the country. It also outlines the intention to end the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030, and for all new cars and vans to be fully zero emission at the tailpipe by 2035.
- Bus Back Better is the national strategy that aids in delivering better bus services across England through service reform. This includes service planning and delivery.
- Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain sets out how the UK government will deliver emission reductions and associated benefits in the country; presenting the path to net-zero transport in the UK and the commitments and actions necessary to make progress on this path.
- The Local Plan will need to consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which influence plans and development proposals to ensure they consider transport issues from the earliest stages, address any known issues, and maximise opportunities to increase accessibility to sustainable transport. Larger developments are expected to limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes. However, it is recognised that sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural environments.
- The National Infrastructure Strategy states that transport networks are vital for jobs, businesses, and economic growth. As such, the government will continue its efforts with decarbonising the transport sector to meet the net zero emissions target by 2050.
- The Future of Mobility: Urban Strategy details the national approach to maximising transport innovation in cities and towns, focussing on sustainable and accessible modes of transport, like walking and cycling.
- National Planning Practice Guidance identifies the importance of local planning authorities when undertaking an assessment of the implications of transport when developing or reviewing their Local Plan. This allows local authorities to ensure a strong transport evidence base is developed, which can support the preparation and / or review of the Local Plan.
- The Transport Investment Strategy sets out investment priorities to improve the connectivity, effectiveness and reliability of transport network whilst simultaneously reducing impacts on the natural environment.

- Furthermore, the document places great emphasis on making cycling and walking the natural choice for shorter journeys, or as part of longer journeys.
- The Noise Policy Statement for England states that transport planning systems should make provision for reducing environmental noise, which can cause an increased risk of health effects when left unmanaged.
- The Environmental Noise (England) Regulations 2006 apply to environmental noise, which includes noise from transportation. The regulations require consistent noise mapping and action planning for road, rail, and aviation noise, in addition to large urban areas. Furthermore, the regulations necessitate the production of noise action plans based on the noise maps, allowing for the identification of areas that are exposed to the highest levels of noise. The action plans also provide suggestions to reduce noise levels in these areas.
- The purpose of the Interim Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy (MMTS) is to provide a transport policy framework for Melton Mowbray until the full MMTS is completed. The MMTS provides a long-term, evidence-based plan for future transport investment in the town to support Melton Borough Council's Local Plan to 2036.
- Leicestershire County Council Cycling and Walking Strategy sets out the County's vision to become a place where walking and cycling are safe, accessible and obvious choices for short journeys and a natural part of longer journeys, helping to deliver healthier, greener communities.
- Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - IN1: Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy (MMTS)
 - IN2: Transport, Accessibility and Parking
 - IN3: Infrastructure Contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy
 - C9: Healthy Communities; and
 - EN8: Climate Change.
- Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 3 (2011-2026) transport strategy sets out the latest version of Leicestershire's strategic approach to manage and develop the County's transport system in the future.

Rail network

- 13.2.3 There are two railway stations in Melton: Melton Mowbray, and Bottesford. Both of these stations are operated by East Midlands Railway.
- 13.2.4 Melton Mowbray Station offers services to Birmingham through Leicester, to the west. Additionally, trains run from Stansted Airport through Peterborough, to the east.
- 13.2.5 Bottesford Train Station offers services to Grantham to the east, and Nottingham to the west.

Bus network

- 13.2.6 According to 'Bustimes',⁷⁰ the borough is served by a number of bus services. To the south, the majority of these services pass through Melton Mowbray, offering journeys to areas including Leicester, Oakham, and Grantham. In the north of the borough, a number of services also pass through Bottesford, offering services to Bingham, Grantham, and Newark on Trent. A more limited bus service is found in the remaining areas of the borough.
- 13.2.7 Bus providers within the borough include Arriva Midlands, Bland's, Centrebus (North), Marshalls of Sutton-on-Trent, Sharpes of Nottingham, and Vectare.

Active travel routes

- 13.2.8 The Leicestershire County Council Cycling and Walking Strategy (2021) notes that the County's network of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) is an important part of local infrastructure that supports safe active transport opportunities to access a variety of locations. Melton Borough has many of its own Public Rights of Way (PRoW)⁷¹; although, many of these are intermittent and do not offer continuous travel throughout the borough.
- 13.2.9 There are three National Cycle Routes that run through the borough: 48, passing through Asfordby; 64 passing through Melton Mowbray; and 15 by Bottesford. There is also one Regional Cycle Route, the 'NB', which passes through Little Dalby.⁷² These are shown in Figure 13-1.
- 13.2.10 The Interim Melton Mowbray Local Plan notes that the town's supporting infrastructure to support walking and cycling is 'of a generally low quality, intermittent nature both on and away from the highway network, particularly in respect of cycling'.

Road network and congestion

- 13.2.11 As shown in Figure 13-1, five primary routes service the borough. These are the A52 (passing by Bottesford), and the A607 and A607 (both passing through Melton Mowbray). These connect to nearby urban centres such as Nottingham, Grantham, Leicester, and Stamford. The Interim Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy notes that the A607 is recognised as a regionally important road, having been included in the Government's 'Major Road Network'.
- 13.2.12 Both the Interim Melton Mowbray Transport Strategy (IMMTS) and Melton Local Plan note that congestion within Melton Mowbray is a significant long-standing issue in the borough, to the point where the town is at its capacity for peak hour traffic flows.
- 13.2.13 The IMMTS notes that congestion is created by the large volume of traffic that is funnelled through the town centre as a result of the area's road major network passing through it, for which there is no alternative.
- 13.2.14 The Melton Local Plan notes that the congestion in the town is having adverse effects on the perception of the town, and the quality of life of its residents.

⁷⁰ <https://bustimes.org/localities/melton-mowbray>

⁷¹ <https://footpathmap.co.uk/map/?zoom=12.3&lng=-0.84073&lat=52.84307>

⁷² <https://www.opencyclemap.org/>

Figure 13-1 Melton Borough Strategic Route Network

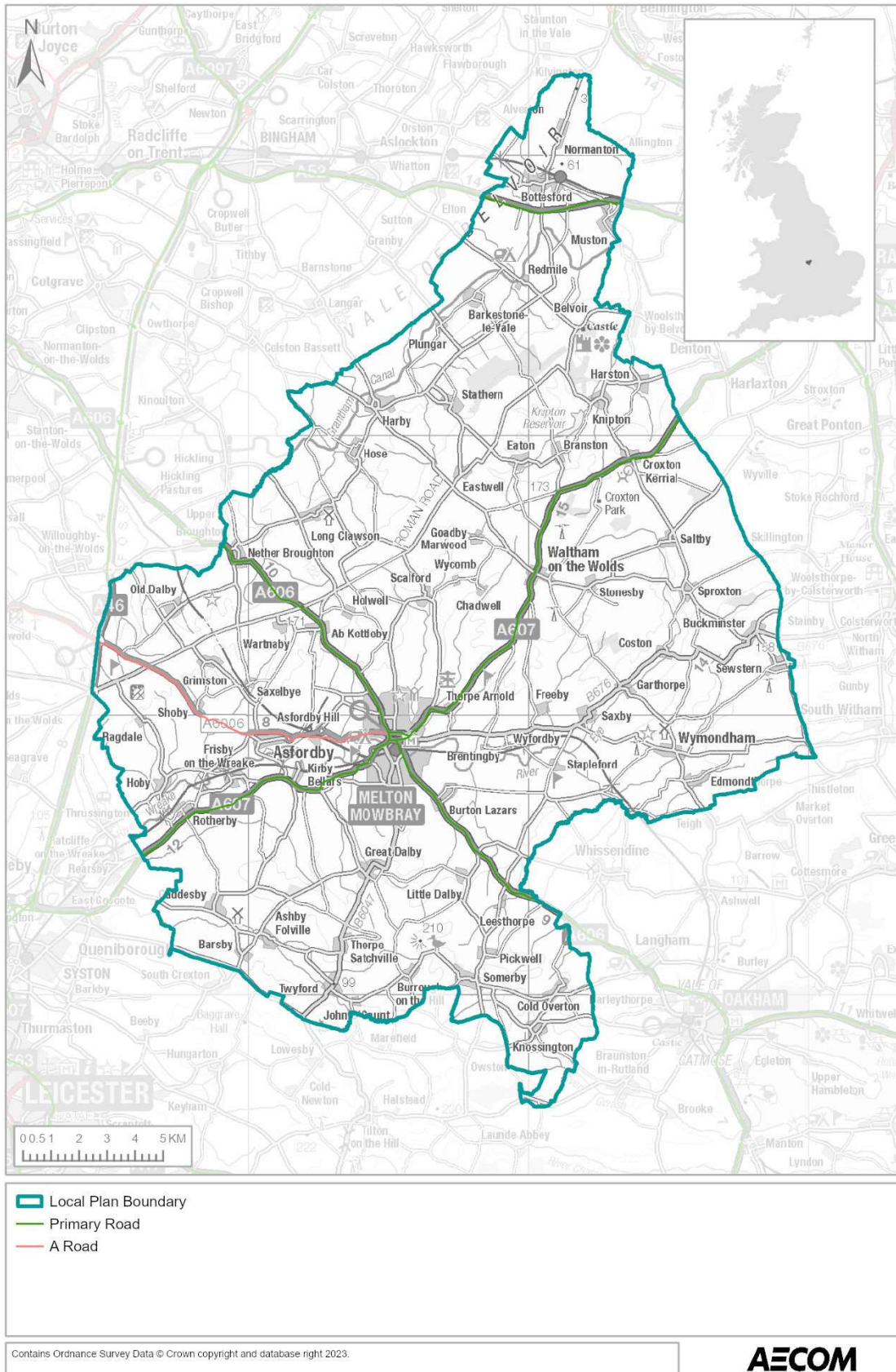
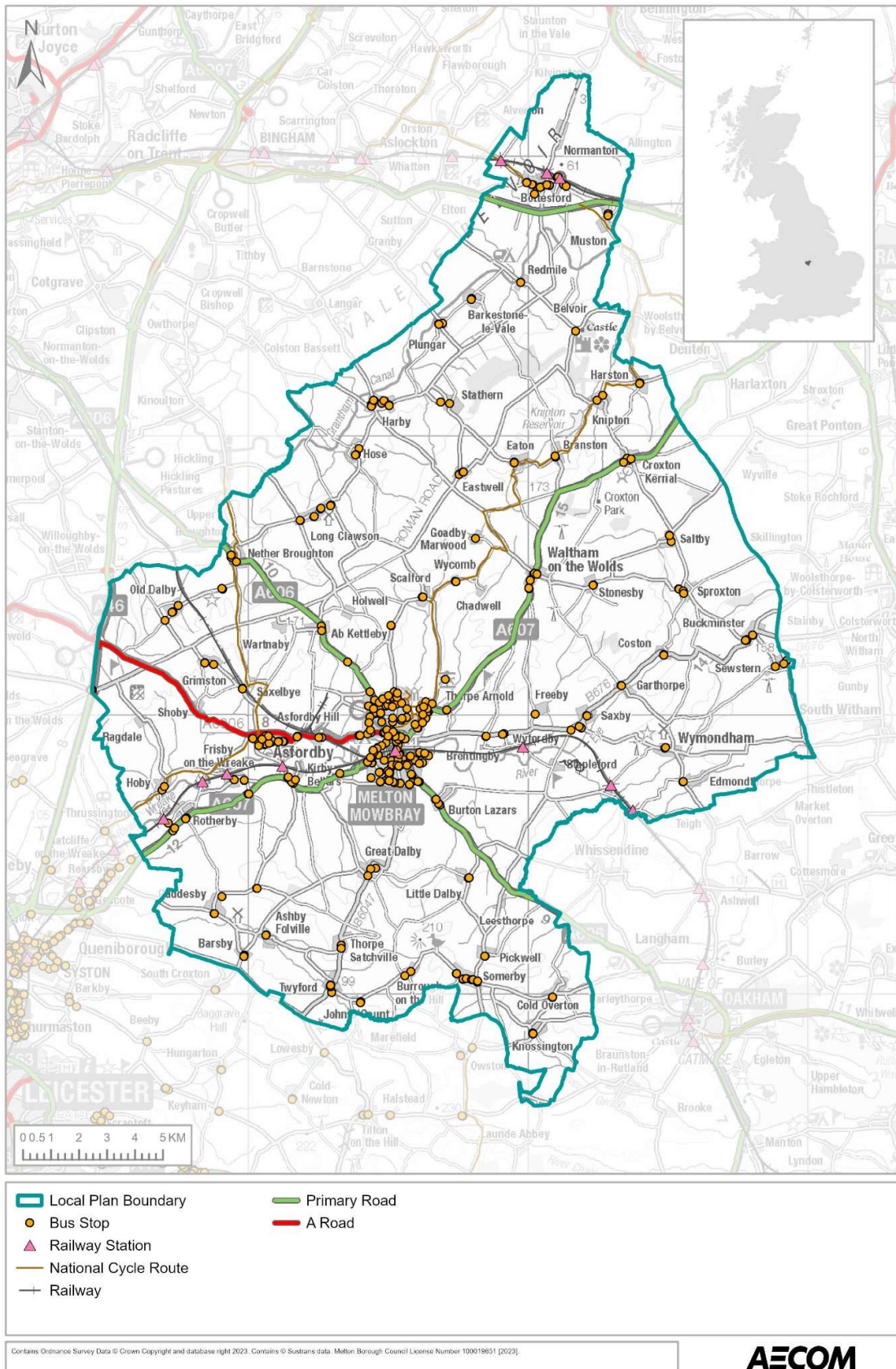
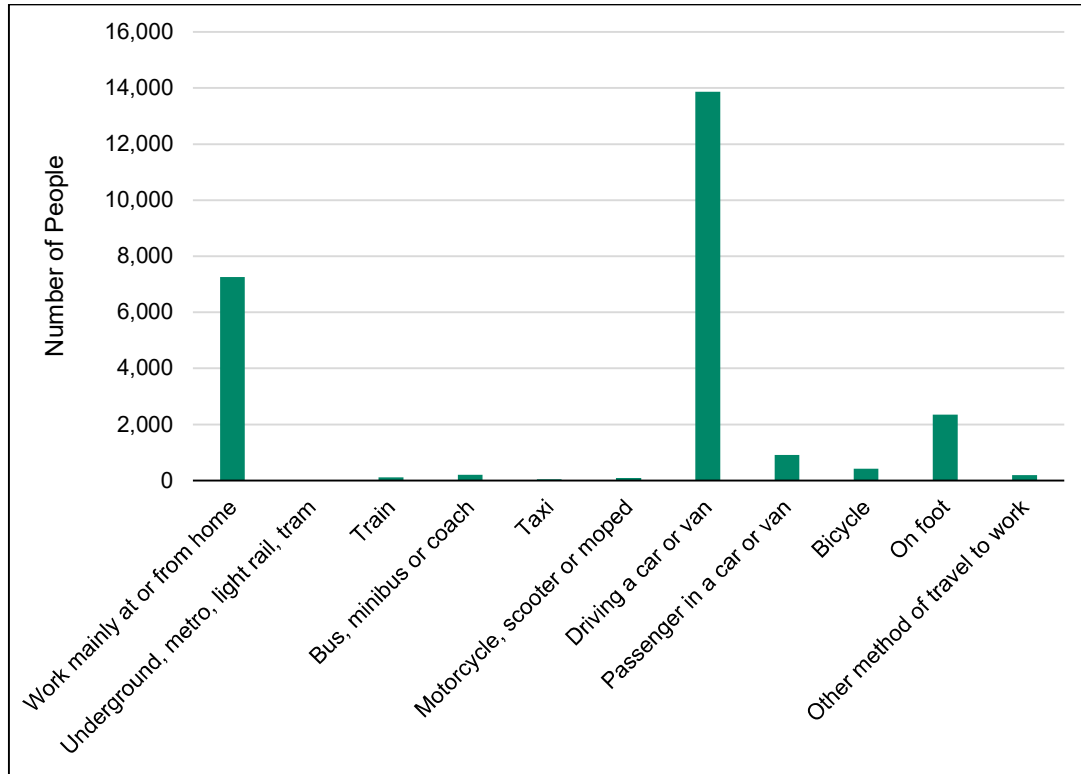


Figure 13-2 Melton Borough Transport Infrastructure



13.2.15 The 2021 Census data (Figure 13-3) indicates that the majority of the working population in Melton Borough uses a car or van to travel to work. However, as demonstrated in Figure 13-4, a large proportion of Melton Borough population indicate they mostly work from home. Of the working age residents in Melton Borough that do travel for work, most people travel up to 30km for work, although the most common distance band in Figure 13-4 is 0-2km. A small proportion of working aged residents who have to travel for work have a journey of over 30km.

Figure 13-3 Melton Borough Method of transport to work (2021)⁷³



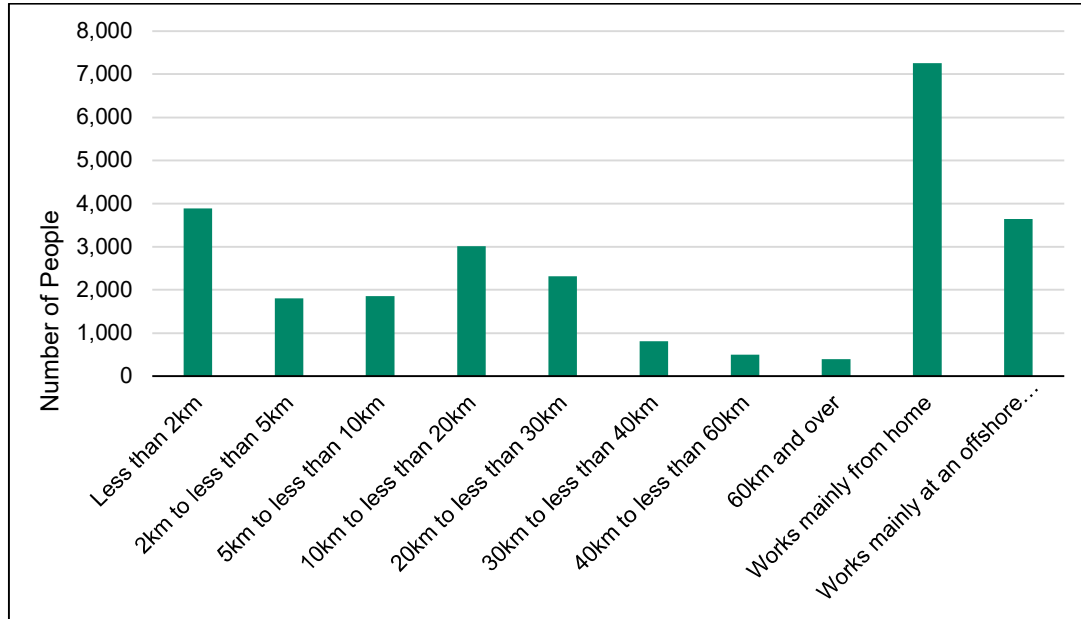
Electric vehicle (EV) charging

13.2.16 Zapmap⁷⁴ maps EV charging points across UK. It shows that there are currently 12 EV charging points in Melton Borough, all serviced by different operators. The majority of the EV charging points are located in the town Melton Mowbray.

⁷³ Nomis (n.d.) 'TS061 – Method used to travel to work' can be accessed [here](#).

⁷⁴ <https://www.zap-map.com/live/>

Figure 13-4 Distance travelled to work by Melton Borough residents⁷⁵



Note: the cut-off category is 'works mainly at an offshore installation, in no fixed place, or outside the UK'.

Planned investment in new routes and infrastructure

13.2.17 The Melton Mowbray Interim Transport Strategy notes that a key project within its strategy is the proposed Melton Mowbray Distributor Road (MMDR), which has at least £50 million earmarked by Government towards its delivery. The MMDR seeks to address Melton Mowbray’s most urgent transport priorities, including congestion, by upgrading the road infrastructure around the periphery of the town. The MMDR is currently at the early proposals stage.

13.2.18 The Melton Local Plan also notes the proposal of the ‘Melton Park Greenway’ – a series of measures that improve accessibility and the attractiveness of walking and cycling connections through the Melton Country Park to the town centre.

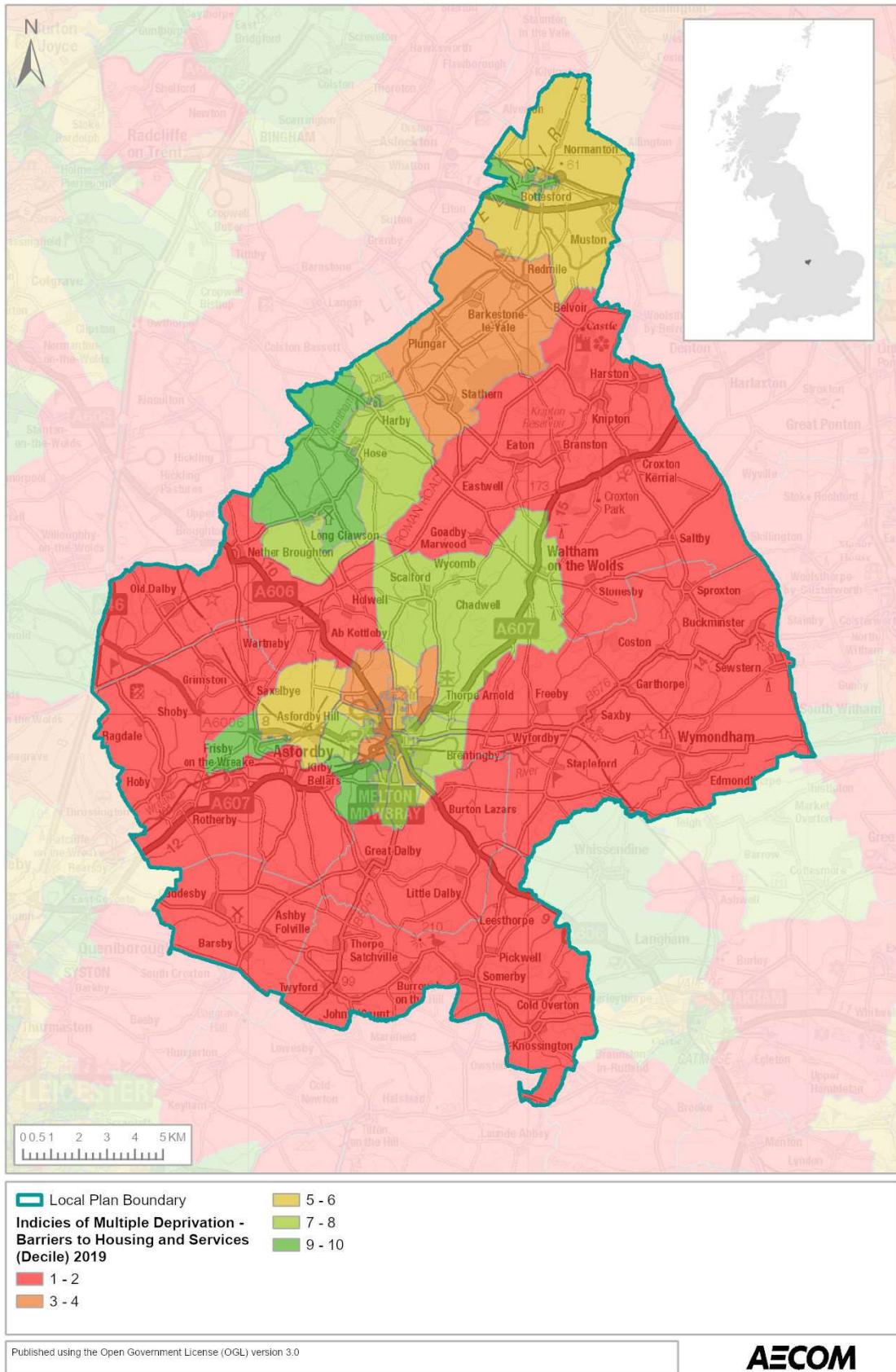
Local services and facilities

13.2.19 Figure 13-5 maps the 2019 IMD ‘barriers to housing and services’ domain and shows the varying levels of deprivation across the borough in this respect. The least deprived areas included the borough’s larger urban centres of Melton Mowbray and Bottesford. The less urbanised areas to the south, east and west have higher deprivation linked to access to services and housing.

13.2.20 Public and active transportation in these areas could be more limited than other parts of the borough, contributing to accessibility issues.

⁷⁵ Nomid (nd.) ‘TS058 – Distance travelled to work’ can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 13-5 IMD Barriers to housing and services (2019)



13.3 Summary of future baseline

- 13.3.1 The cumulative impacts of new development has the potential to increase traffic and contribute to already-experienced congestion, as well as create new problem areas in this respect. This is likely to be more pronounced during peak times, as per the baseline. However, the delivery of coordinated development within Melton Borough has the potential to lead to improvements to the sustainable transport network, alleviating congestion issues and facilitating modal shift.
- 13.3.2 It is important to recognise the impact of COVID-19 may have on future transport movements. Travel decreased during the lockdowns implemented by the government, and many workplaces have become more flexible when it comes to where you work. As such, high levels of home working are likely to continue, and therefore there will be a need to ensure new homes and neighbourhoods are suitably equipped to support this change in lifestyle.
- 13.3.3 There are opportunities to improve transport networks within Melton Borough in accordance with the Leicestershire Local Transport Plan 3, especially active and public transport systems. Similarly, the provision of infrastructure to promote at-home (i.e., remote) working is likely to positively contribute towards these aims.
- 13.3.4 Whilst the negative effects of new development on the transport network are likely to be mitigated in part by new infrastructure, there will be a continuing need for development to be situated in accessible locations. This is especially important given existing pockets of deprivation linked to access to services and housing.

13.4 Key sustainability issues

- 13.4.1 Considering the baseline information and the policy context review, the following key issues are identified in relation to transport:
- There are various modes of travel within Melton Borough, but using a car and driving to work tends to be the most favoured mode of transport.
 - There are two train stations in Melton Borough that allow for travel within and outside of the borough. In addition to these train and metro lines, there are several bus services that travel through the borough. These all allow for sustainable transportation to a variety of locations, including Leicester, Bingham, and Grantham. Continued investment in the sustainable travel networks has the potential to increase modal shift and reduce reliance on the private vehicle.
 - There are opportunities to expand and improve connectivity of active transport corridors throughout the borough in particular in the urban areas, supporting health and wellbeing objectives.
 - The recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic has the potential to change travel patterns in the short, medium, and longer term. Development should seek to enhance local connections in response to changing local demands.

13.5 Scoping decision

13.5.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the transport topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Figure 13-3 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 13-2 Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
<p>Ensure that provision of transport infrastructure reflects local population and demographic needs, promotes sustainable modes of travel, connects new housing to employment, education, health and local services and maximises accessibility for all.</p>	<p>Will the option/ proposal help to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve transport infrastructure throughout the borough including active and public transport? • Meet future transport trends and service those of all abilities? • Encourage active transport to improve the communities health in the longer term, whilst benefiting the environment? • Improve transport to ensure sustainable and active modes are most desired as used to connect people to places? • Ensure infrastructure is in place to support flexible working arrangements and positive changes in travel behaviours that emerge in response to crises such as COVID19.

14. Water quality

14.1 Focus of topic

14.1.1 The following issues are a focus of this chapter:

- Water resources and quality
- Wastewater treatment
- Drinking Water Protected Areas and Safeguarding Zones
- Nitrate Vulnerable Zones
- Source Protection Zones

14.2 Context review

14.2.1 Set out below is a list of key evidence sources, followed by a discussion of some of these evidence sources.

Table 14-1 Key sources of evidence

Document title	Date
International	
The Water Environment Regulations	2017
National	
Environmental Improvement Plan	2023
Nature market frameworks	2023
Plan for Water: our integrated plan for delivering clean and plentiful water	2023
The review for implementation of Schedule 3 to The Flood and Water Management Act 2010	2023
The Retained EU Law (Revocation and Reform) Bill	2022
Storm overflows discharge reduction plan	2022
National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)	2021
Water cycle studies	2021
Environmental Targets under the Environment Act	2021
Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources	2020
Working together to improve drainage and environmental water quality: An overview of Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans	2019
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment	2018
The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017	2017
The Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) (England) Regulations	2015
Future Water: The Government's water strategy for England	2011
Water for Life	2011
Flood and Water Management Act 2010	2010

Water Industry Act	1991
Planning Practice Guidance	Various
Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill: reforms to national planning policy	Emerging
Local	
Severn Trent Water Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan Level 2 Strategic Planning Area Overview: Lower Trent SPA	2023
Severn Trent Water Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan Level 2 Strategic Planning Area Overview: Soar SPA	2023
Severn Trent Water Draft Water Resources Management Plan 2024 consultation	2022
Severn Trent Water Green Recovery report	2022
Humber River Basin District River Basin Management Plan	2022
Water Resources East - Draft Regional Water Resources Plan for Eastern England	2022
Severn Trent Water 2019 Water Resource Management Plan	2019
Melton Local Plan	2018
Leicestershire Country Council Local Flood Risk Management Strategy	2015

14.3 Summary of current baseline

14.3.1 Key messages from the evidence sources identified above include:

- The Environment Act 2021 protects and enhances our environment for future generations. Targets linked to water quality and availability include:
 - Abandoned metal mines target: Halve the length of rivers polluted by harmful metals from abandoned mines by 2038, against a baseline of around 1,500 km.
 - Agriculture target: Reduce nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and sediment pollution from agriculture into the water environment by at least 40% by 2038, compared to a 2018 baseline.
 - Wastewater target: Reduce phosphorus loadings from treated wastewater by 80% by 2038 against a 2020 baseline; and
 - Water Demand Target: Reduce the use of public water supply in England per head of population by 20% from the 2019/20 baseline reporting year figures, by 2037/38.
- The Water Environment Regulations (2017) applies to surface water and groundwater. It details the need to prevent further deterioration in aquatic ecosystems as well as ensuring the protection, enhancement and restoration of water bodies is a key consideration in development proposals.
- The new Local Plan should consider the principles outlined in the NPPF, which states that new and existing development should be prevented from contributing to, being at risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution.

- An overview of Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans outlines the benefits of working to ensure drainage and wastewater systems are sustainable, robust and resilient to future pressures. It sets out how organisations with interests and / or responsibilities relating to drainage, flooding and protection of the environment can make improvements by implementing Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans.
- The Water Framework Directive (WFD) encourages a catchment-based approach for water management for the 100 water catchments in England and Wales. The main objectives of the WFD are:
 - To enhance the status of aquatic ecosystems and associated wetlands and prevent further deterioration to them.
 - To promote the sustainable use of water.
 - To reduce the pollution of water, especially by ‘priority’ and ‘priority hazardous’ substances; and
 - To ensure the progressive reduction of groundwater pollution.
- The 25 Year Environment Plan discusses measures to restore and protect peatlands and use water more sustainably. Of note is ‘Goal 2: Clean and plentiful water’. The Environmental Improvement Plan is the most recent revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan – of note is ‘Goal 3: Clean and plentiful water’.
- Water cycle studies help identify what strategic plans and new developments need to include to meet the expectations of the Environment Agency.
- Future Water: The Government’s water strategy for England sets out how the water sector will look by 2030 for both people and wildlife. The vision also includes valuing and protecting water resources and delivering water to customers in a fair, affordable, and cost-reflective manner.
- Water for Life highlights the government’s vision for a more resilient water sector. It highlights the impact of climate change and population growth on our water sources, which are already stressed and expected to become more so. It also highlights current and future issues associated with the water sector, like poorly performing ecosystems, and how these will be remedied.
- Future Water and Water for Life have been superseded by the Plan for Water. This plan will deliver clean and plentiful water – a healthy water environment, and a sustainable supply of water for people, businesses, and nature. It sets out measures to transform and integrate our water system, address sources of pollution, and boost our water supplies through more investment, tighter regulation, and more effective enforcement. The best way to manage supply and pollution pressures is by taking an integrated approach across a whole catchment.’
- The Planning Practice Guidance provides advice on how planning can ensure water quality is maintained and enhanced, and how the delivery of adequate water and wastewater infrastructure can be achieved. Concerns over water supply, wastewater and water quality will depend on the character of the area in question.

- The Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan covers seven strategic planning areas that broadly align with river basin catchments in the area. It indicates a number of waterbodies require improvements in their storm overflow. The relevant Plans for Melton Borough are Lower Trent and Soar.
- Melton is served by Severn Trent Water. The associated Water Resource Management Plan (WRMP) sets out the actions this water utility company will take to provide a secure and sustainable supply of water for their customers within Melton and beyond. It is acknowledged Severn Trent Water is in the process of adopting a new WRMP; consultation on the draft ended in February 2023.
- Severn Trent Water's Green Recovery report highlights the company's dedication to sustainable water management and environmental resilience. It lays out a strategy for safeguarding water resources, reducing water wastage, and promoting water conservation, while contributing to a healthier and more sustainable environment in the regions it serves.
- The Humber River Basin District River Basin Management Plan provides a framework for protecting and enhancing the benefits provided by the water environment. It works to:
 - Prevent deterioration of the status of surface waters and groundwater.
 - Achieve objectives and standards for protected areas.
 - Aim to achieve good status for all water bodies.
 - Reverse any significant and sustained upward trends in pollutant concentrations in groundwater.
 - Reduce / end discharges, emissions and losses of priority hazardous substances entering surface waters; and
 - Progressively reduce the pollution of groundwater and prevent / limit the entry of pollutants.
- The Water Resources East – Draft Resources Plan for Eastern England provides a roadmap for addressing water resource challenges in the Eastern region, which it notes to be 'seriously water stressed'. This Plan outlines strategies and actions to ensure a sustainable and resilient water supply, balancing the needs of agriculture, industry, and communities, while also safeguarding the environment for future generations.
- The adopted Melton Local Plan is the key document that guides future development in the area. Policies relating to this theme include:
 - EN3 – The Melton Green Infrastructure Network
 - EN9 – Ensuring Energy Efficient and Low Carbon Development
 - EN11 – Minimizing the Risk of Flooding
 - EN12 – Sustainable Drainage Systems

- Leicestershire County Council's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy 2015 is a framework designed to address and manage flood risks within the county. The Strategy outlines the Council's approach to flood risk assessment, prevention, and response.

Water resources and quality

- 14.3.2 Melton Borough is mostly located within the Humber River Basin District,⁷⁶ while a small area of the borough is located within the Anglian River Basin District.⁷⁷
- 14.3.3 The areas of Melton Borough in the Humber River Basin District are within the 'Soar' and 'Trent Lower and Erewash' management catchment areas. Within the Soar management catchment area, the borough sits within one operational catchment: Nottinghamshire South B, which covers most of the area in the borough north of Melton Mowbray.⁷⁸ Within the Trent Lower and Erewash catchment area, the borough sits within two operational catchments: the Soar River that covers most of the borough, and the Wreake River, which covers a small area of land within the central western part of the borough.⁷⁹
- 14.3.4 The areas of Melton Borough in the Anglian River Basin District are within the 'Welland' and 'Witham' management catchment areas. Within the Welland management catchment area, the borough sits within one operational catchment: Welland Upper, which covers a small area in the south of the borough by Knossington.⁸⁰ Similarly, the Witham catchment area, the borough sits also within one operational catchment: Witham Upper, which covers a small area in the east of the borough by Sewstern.⁸¹
- 14.3.5 Figure 14-1 illustrates the categorisation of water courses in Melton according to the Water Framework Directive. None of the water courses are categorised as being in good condition, with a mix of 'moderate' and 'poor' dominating.
- 14.3.6 Figure 14-1 also shows that a small part of the east of the borough overlaps with a Drinking Water Safeguard Zone.

⁷⁶ Environment Agency (2021) 'Humber River Basin District' can be accessed [here](#).

⁷⁷ Environment Agency (2021) 'Anglian River Basin District' can be accessed [here](#).

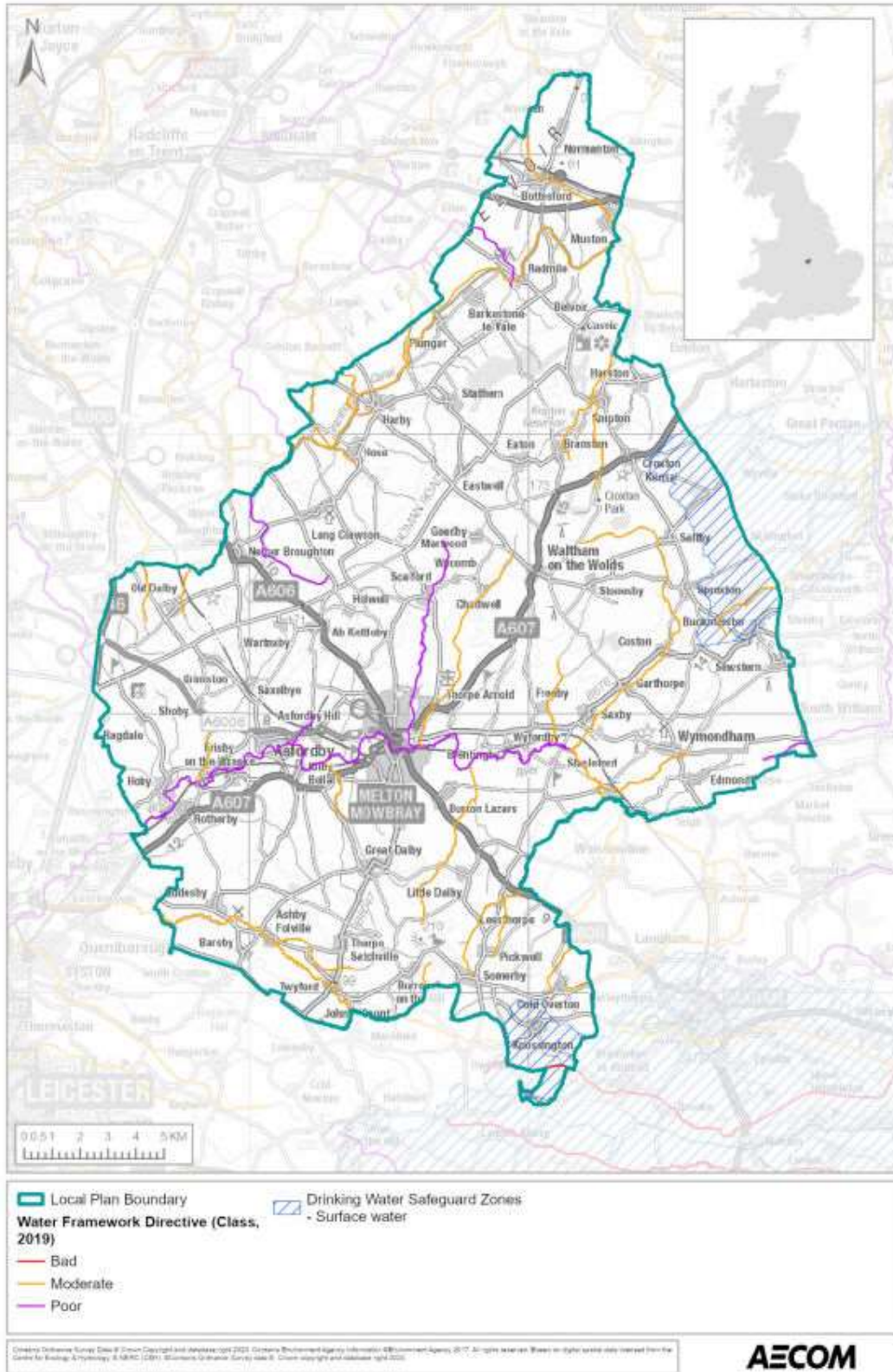
⁷⁸ Environment Agency (2021) 'Trent and Lower Erewash Management Catchments' can be accessed [here](#).

⁷⁹ Environment Agency (2021) 'Soar Management Management Catchments' can be accessed [here](#).

⁸⁰ Environment Agency (2021) 'Welland Management Catchments' can be accessed [here](#).

⁸¹ Environment Agency (2021) 'Witham Management Catchments' can be accessed [here](#).

Figure 14-1 Water quality



Soar Operational Catchment

- 14.3.7 Within the Soar operational catchment there are 35 water bodies.⁸² The majority of these had a 'moderate' or 'good' ecological status. However, nine water bodies recorded 'poor' ecological status, while one water body recorded 'bad' ecological status. All water bodies recorded a 'fail' in their latest chemical assessment.
- 14.3.8 Challenges to this Operational Catchment come from agriculture and rural land management, water industry, and urban and transportation – caused by poor livestock and nutrient management, transport drainage, and sewage discharge.

Wreake Operational Catchment

- 14.3.9 Within the Wreake operational catchment there are 16 water bodies.⁸³ Three waterbodies scored 'bad' ecological status; the remaining 13 scored 'moderate' ecological status. All water bodies recorded a 'fail' in their latest chemical assessment.
- 14.3.10 Challenges to this Operational Catchment come from agriculture and rural land management, and water industry – caused by poor livestock and nutrient management, and sewage discharge.

Nottinghamshire South B Operational Catchment

- 14.3.11 Within the Nottinghamshire South B operational catchment there are 16 water bodies.⁸⁴ Seven waterbodies scored 'bad' ecological status; the remaining nine scored 'moderate' ecological status. All water bodies recorded a 'fail' in their latest chemical assessment.
- 14.3.12 Challenges to this Operational Catchment come from agriculture and rural land management, urban and transport, and water industry – caused by poor livestock and nutrient management, poor soil management, land drainage, transport drainage, and sewage discharge.

Welland Upper Operational Catchment

- 14.3.13 Within the Welland Upper operational catchment there are 20 water bodies.⁸⁵ One waterbody scored 'good' ecological status, eight scored 'moderate' ecological status, five scored 'bad' ecological status, and six scored 'poor' ecological status. All water bodies recorded a 'fail' in their latest chemical assessment.
- 14.3.14 Challenges to this Operational Catchment come from agriculture and rural land management, urban and transport, local and central government, and water industry – caused by poor livestock and nutrient management, transport drainage, barriers (ecological discontinuity), and sewage discharge.

⁸² Environment Agency (2021) 'Soar River Operational Catchments' can be accessed [here](#)

⁸³ Environment Agency (2021) 'Wreake Operational Catchments' can be accessed [here](#).

⁸⁴ Environment Agency (2021) 'Nottinghamshire South B Operational Catchments' can be accessed [here](#).

⁸⁵ Environment Agency (2021) 'Welland Upper Operational Catchments' can be accessed [here](#).

Witham Upper Operational Catchment

- 14.3.15 Within the Witham Upper operational catchment there are 21 water bodies.⁸⁶ Two waterbodies scored 'good' ecological status, 15 scored 'moderate' ecological status, and four scored 'poor' ecological status. All water bodies recorded a 'fail' in their latest chemical assessment.
- 14.3.16 Challenges to this Operational Catchment come from agriculture and rural land management, local and central government, and water industry – caused by poor livestock and nutrient management, land drainage, riparian/in-river activities, and sewage discharge.

Wastewater treatment

Soar Strategic Planning Area (SPA)

- 14.3.17 Within the Severn Trent area of the Soar SPA, there are 58 wastewater treatment works catchments serving a residential population nearing 1,038,809 people and 382,756 properties.
- 14.3.18 According to the Severn Trent DWMP for the Soar SPA, many wastewater treatment works would struggle to accommodate future pressures from climate change, growth, and urban creep by 2050 and still maintain permit compliance without investment.

Lower Trent Strategic Planning Area (SPA)

- 14.3.19 Within the Severn Trent area of the Lower Trent SPA, there are 107 wastewater treatment works catchments serving a residential population nearing 1,317,055 people and 535,699 properties.
- 14.3.20 As with the Severn Trent DWMP for the Soar SPA, the Severn Trent DWMP for the Lower Trent SPA shares the same concerns about the ability of existing wastewater treatment works to meet rising future demand in the face of pressures from climate change, growth, and urban creep by 2050.

Drinking Water Protected Areas and Safeguarding Zones

- 14.3.21 Drinking Water Protected Areas (DWPA) for surface water are defined by the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England & Wales) Regulations 2017 (or WFD Regulations) as locations where raw water is abstracted for human consumption providing, on average, more than 10 cubic metres per day, or serving more than 50 persons, or is intended for such future use. Drinking water protected areas are based on the River Basin Management Plan water body area within which the abstraction is located.⁸⁷ There are no DWPA within Melton Borough.
- 14.3.22 Drinking Water Safeguard Zones are catchment areas that influence the water quality for their respective Drinking Water Protected Area. They are identified where the protected area has been assigned as being "at risk" of failing the drinking water protection objectives of the Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England & Wales) Regulations 2017.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ Environment Agency (2021) 'Witham Upper Operational Catchments' can be accessed [here](#).

⁸⁷ DATA.GOV.UK (2022) 'Drinking Water Protected Areas (Surface Water)' can be accessed [here](#).

⁸⁸ DATA.GOV.UK (2023) 'Drinking Water Safeguard Zones (Surface Water)' can be accessed [here](#).

14.3.23 There is one DWSZ for surface water within Melton Borough: 'Anglian SWSGZ1003 Cringle Brook', located to the far north-east of the borough, by Saltby. There are no DWSZ for groundwater within Melton Borough.

Nitrate Vulnerable Zones

14.3.24 Nitrate Vulnerable Zones (NVZs) represent areas at risk from agricultural nitrate pollution, identifying rules in relation to the use of fertilisers and manures as well as the requirement to prevent water pollution from farming areas.⁸⁹ The entire area within Melton Borough lies within one of several NVZs, including: Surface Water S309 – Soar R NVZ, Surface Water S317 – Smite R NVZ, Surface Water S375 - Lower Witham NVZ, and Surface Water S832 - River Welland NVZ.

Source Protection Zones

14.3.25 Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) have been defined by the Environment Agency in England and Wales to protect groundwater sources such as wells, boreholes, and springs that are used for public drinking water supply.⁹⁰

14.3.26 There is one SPZ within Melton Borough, which includes Zones 1,2, and 3. This is located in the east of Melton Mowbray town centre. It is also worth noting that Melton Borough is adjacent to an SPZ (Zone 3) on its eastern border.

14.4 Summary of future baseline

14.4.1 Future development has the potential to affect water quality and availability through increased consumption and pollution, wastewater discharges, water runoff and modification. Severn Trent Water will strive to maintain adequate water services over the plan period, therefore, it will be important for new development to avoid negative impacts on water quality, and contribute to reducing consumption and improving efficiency.

14.5 Key sustainability issues

14.5.1 The following key issues have been identified through the baseline review for this topic:

- Melton Borough sits within five operational catchments with a number of water bodies; there are varying ecological statuses across these water body catchment areas, but all have a failed chemical test. Any level of development has the potential to increase pressure on these water bodies and cause a decrease in ecological quality.
- There are 165 wastewater treatment works in the Soar and Lower Trent Strategic Areas. Both of the respective Severn Trent DWMP note that many of these wastewater treatment works would struggle to accommodate future pressures from climate change, growth, and urban creep by 2050 and still maintain permit compliance without investment.

⁸⁹ GOV.UK (2021) 'Nitrate vulnerable zones' can be accessed [here](#).

⁹⁰ GOV.UK (2017) 'Groundwater protection' can be accessed [here](#).

- There is one DWSZ for surface water and one SPZ within Melton Borough. Inappropriate development types should be focused away from these areas and mitigation measures employed to ensure negative impacts are minimised.
- Melton Borough is entirely covered by NVZ designations. Development in the borough therefore has the potential for negative impacts to water quality. Any future development should ensure that mitigation measures are employed to minimise these negative impacts.
- Storm overflows threaten water quality through discharging excess sewage and rainwater into rivers, lakes or the sea when the sewage system is under strain. The Local Plan should refer to the Storm Overflow Discharge Reduction Plan and the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan to ensure the threat is reduced.
- The Local Plan should consider the four water targets included under the Environment Plan to help maintain water quality in the Melton Borough area.

14.6 Scoping decision

14.6.1 Based on the key issues discussed above, it is proposed that the ‘Water’ topic should be scoped-in to the SA. The following objectives and assessment questions, presented in Table 14.2 below, are proposed as part of the SA framework.

Table 14.2 Proposed objectives and assessment questions

SA objective	Appraisal questions
Ensure the sustainable management of water resources, helping to protect and enhance value with regards to the environment, human health and economic growth.	Will the option / proposal help to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support improvements to water quality consistent with the aims of the Water Environment regulations? • Ensure that appropriate drainage and waste water infrastructure is available to serve the borough’s needs.

15. Proposed SA framework

15.1 Introduction

- 15.1.1 Table 15.1 below sets out the proposed SA Framework, which is amalgamated from each of the previous topic sections. The framework consists of a series of sustainability objectives, supported by a range of supporting ‘questions’.
- 15.1.2 The objectives and questions have been derived from the key sustainability issues, and will form a methodological framework for appraising the plan (and reasonable alternatives).
- 15.1.3 The intention is not for every aspect of the plan to be appraised against every criteria/question within the IA Framework. Rather, the questions help guide the assessment of how a plan (and options) performs against each of the SA objectives.

Table 15.1: The SA Framework

SA objective	Appraisal questions <i>Will the option / proposal help to:</i>
<p>Air Quality</p> <p>Protect and improve local air quality and reduce the potential for negative effects on human health and the environment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement road traffic measures to reduce air pollution? • Facilitate a move towards low emission / zero emission vehicles? • Improve sustainable transport infrastructure, including walking and cycling routes, and public transport in order to promote healthy, active lifestyles and travel choice? • Protect and promote greenspaces and healthy environments in urban areas to alleviate air pollution?
<p>Biodiversity</p> <p>Protect, restore and enhance habitats and their connectivity achieving net gains in biodiversity and positive outcomes for health and wellbeing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the integrity of internationally, nationally and locally designated sites within and in proximity to Melton? • Manage existing and potential future pressures on habitats and species in Melton? • Protect and enhance priority habitats, as well as the habitats of priority species, during both the construction and operational phases of development? • Protect and enhance ecological networks? • Achieve a net gain in biodiversity? • Increase the resilience of biodiversity to the potential effects of climate change? • Encourage opportunities for engagement with Melton’s biodiversity resource?

SA objective

Appraisal questions

Will the option / proposal help to:

Climate Change Resilience

Support Melton's resilience to the potential effects of climate change, particularly flooding.

- Ensure that inappropriate development does not take place in areas at medium to high risk of flooding, considering the likely future effects of climate change?
- Improve and extend green and blue infrastructure networks to support adaptation to the potential effects of climate change?
- Sustainably manage water run-off through the use of SuDS, reducing surface water runoff without increasing flood risk elsewhere?
- Ensure the potential risks associated with climate change are considered through new development areas?

Climate Change Mitigation

Take proactive measures to help achieve zero carbon targets for Melton.

- Promote the use of sustainable modes of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport?
- Increase the number of new developments meeting or exceeding sustainable design criteria?
- Generate energy from low or zero carbon sources?
- Reduce energy consumption from non-renewable resources?
- Maximise resource efficiency?
- Reduce embodied carbon in new developments?

Economy

Build upon key industries and support growth, timely investment in infrastructure and economic diversification that has tangible benefits to the lives of local residents whilst addressing social inequalities.

- Meet local employment land requirements?
- Support traditional and emerging sectors of Melton Borough's economy?
- Enhance the vitality of Melton Borough's local centres?
- Improve accessibility to employment opportunities?
- Enhance training and educational opportunities?

Equality and diversity

Support equitable outcomes for all communities by tackling inequalities, embracing diversity and improving accessibility.

- Enable people from all background to access services and facilities equitably?
- Ensure that decisions do not disproportionately affect minority populations in an adverse manner?
- Ensure that the needs of all communities and people are met in an equitable way?
- Reduce the inequalities suffered by minority groups, including those with protected characteristics?
- Reduce sex based discrimination and inequalities?

SA objective

Appraisal questions

Will the option / proposal help to:

Health

Improve generational health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities between residents.

- Reduce the impacts of pollution on health?
- Improve healthy life expectancy whilst reducing health inequalities?
- Create and maintain safe public spaces?
- Maintain and / or enhance the quality of life of all residents?
- Create dementia-friendly environments?
- Enhance the provision of, and healthy access to, open spaces and green and blue infrastructure??
- Encourage healthy choices and active travel modes, including walking and cycling?
- Protect and enhance community facilities, public infrastructure and health care facilities?

Historic Environment

Conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets and the contribution made by their settings; whilst supporting engagement and enjoyment of the historic environment.

- Protect and enhance the significance of buildings and structures of architectural or historic interest, both designated and non-designated, and their setting?
- Protect and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of conservation areas and their setting?
- Protect and enhance the special interest, character and appearance of registered parks and gardens, and their settings?
- Protect and, where possible, enhance the wider historic environment, including historic landscapes?
- Conserve and enhance archaeological resource, including features listed on the Leicestershire and Rutland HER?
- Support access to, interpretation and understanding of the historic evolution and character of the environment?
- Ensure that, where possible, development contributes to improved public understanding of assets and their settings?

Housing

Support timely delivery of an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures.

- Support timely delivery of an appropriate mix of housing types and tenures to meet objectively assessed housing need in sustainable locations?
 - Support delivery of a range of good quality, affordable and specialist housing that meets the needs of Melton's residents, including older people, people with disabilities and families with children?
 - Enable managed growth at rural communities where to do so would help improve the sustainability of these settlements?
-

SA objective

Appraisal questions

Will the option / proposal help to:

Landscape and townscape

Protect and enhance the character and quality of Melton's landscapes, townscapes and villagescapes?

- Support the distinctive qualities of the NCAs and LCAs within and surrounding Melton?
- Protect and enhance key landscape, townscape and villagescape features which contribute to local distinctiveness?
- Protect locally important viewpoints contributing to sense of place and visual amenity?
- Improve understanding of Melton's distinctive landscape, townscape and villagescape resources?

Soil and land

Protect important soil and mineral resources, promote the effective use and restoration of land and buildings, and sustainably manage waste and minerals.

- Avoid the loss of BMV agricultural land?
- Prioritise the re-use of brownfield land where appropriate?
- Support the remediation of contaminated land?
- Protect the integrity of mineral resources?
- Encourage recycling of materials and minimise consumption of resources during construction, operation and maintenance of new infrastructure?

Transport

Ensure that provision of transport infrastructure reflects local population and demographic needs, promotes sustainable modes of travel, connects new housing to employment, education, health and local services and maximises accessibility for all.

Will the option/ proposal help to:

- Improve transport infrastructure throughout the borough including active and public transport?
- Meet future transport trends and service those of all abilities?
- Encourage active transport to improve the communities health in the longer term, whilst benefiting the environment?
- Improve transport to ensure sustainable and active modes are most desired as used to connect people to places?
- Ensure infrastructure is in place to support flexible working arrangements and positive changes in travel behaviours that emerge in response to crises such as COVID19.

Water

Ensure the sustainable management of water resources, helping to protect and enhance value with regards to the environment, human health and economic growth.

- Support improvements to water quality consistent with the aims of the Water Environment regulations?
 - Ensure that appropriate drainage and waste water infrastructure is available to serve the borough's needs.
-

16. Next steps

16.1 Consultation on the Scoping Report

16.1.1 This SA Scoping Report will be sent for consultation with the three statutory bodies (Natural England, Historic England, the Environment Agency) and will also be made available for wider-consultation with the community. Once feedback has been gathered, the Scoping Report will be finalised taking account of comments received. This will form the basis for future sustainability appraisal work.

16.2 Subsequent stages for the SA

16.1.2 Melton Council is currently consulting upon a series of 'Issues and Options' related to the outcomes from the Five-Year Plan Review.

16.1.3 At this stage of plan-making the Council proposes some 'Options' to be considered and asks for views for updating or introducing policy. The focus is on the update of adopted policies, but also covers other amendments such as a potential update of the Vision and Objectives.

16.1.4 The 'options' presented in the issues and options report are high level options and do not equate to reasonable alternatives that require consideration through the sustainability appraisal. Therefore, no appraisal work has been undertaken at this stage in relation to the issues and options paper.

16.1.5 Should reasonable alternatives present themselves when the plan becomes more refined and detail is added, then the SA will be used to explore and appraise such alternatives. There will also be a need to consider the sustainability implications of new / amended policies as they develop.

