



# Isley Woodhouse

Planning Statement



# Planning Statement for Isley Woodhouse

Land south of East Midlands Airport.

On behalf of Caesarea Planning Services and Harworth Group.

Date: 27 June 2025 | Pegasus Ref: P18-1419

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## Document Management.

Version	Date	Author	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for revision
V01	March 25	Elanor Wright		Draft
V02	March 25	Elanor Wright		Incorporate comments and update with new Local Plan consultation information.
V03	April 25	Elanor Wright		Final Draft
V04	April 25	Elanor Wright		Additions to S106 Appendix – FINAL
V05	June 25	Elanor Wright		Affordable Housing Statement added

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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning Statement is submitted in support of an outline planning application for a proposed new settlement, known as Isley Woodhouse, on land south of East Midlands Airport.
- 1.2. The planning application is submitted on behalf of Caesarea Planning Services and Harworth Group who are joint promoters and applicants.
- 1.3. The application site (herein called 'the Site' and referred to as 'Isley Woodhouse') extends to approximately 313.39 hectares (ha) and is situated on land south of East Midlands Airport, west of Diseworth and directly adjacent to Isley Walton. The entirety of the Site lies within the District of North West Leicestershire.
- 1.4. The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing structures within the Site and the erection of up to 4,250 new homes across a range of tenure and types; the delivery of a local centre and two neighbourhood centres, accommodating a range of community uses; new schools, one secondary and two primary; employment space; and open space and landscaping, with circa 44% of the Site being retained as green space. The development proposals also include associated infrastructure and highways improvements, including the realignment of the A453 on the western side of the Site.
- 1.5. The Description of Development is:

*Outline application with all matters except access reserved for a new settlement of up to 4,250 new houses, including employment space with ancillary offices, a local centre and two neighbourhood centres, a new secondary school and two new primary schools, residential institutions, hotels, demolition of existing structures, with associated infrastructure, including strategic highway improvements, drainage, ground modelling, landscaping, open space, sports facilities with changing and parking facilities, and access (including the realignment of the A453).*
- 1.6. The Site is proposed to be allocated as a new settlement accommodating up to 4,500 new dwellings in the emerging Local Plan for North West Leicestershire, which covers the Plan Period 2020–2040 (however, the Plan Period is likely to be extended to 2042).
- 1.7. A consultation on extending the Local Plan is currently underway and this includes the proposal to reduce the number of dwellings at the Isley Woodhouse allocation from 4,500 to 4,250 to bring it in line with the planning application.
- 1.8. Within the Plan Period Isley Woodhouse is expected to deliver approximately 1,900 new dwellings. However, if the extended Plan Period is brought forward, this will be increased to 1,950, to reflect the additional years of the Plan.
- 1.9. An extended period of pre-application engagement has been undertaken by the applicant team with a specific public engagement exercise undertaken at the end of 2024. Prior to the application submission, a final Member Briefing Session was held on the 31<sup>st</sup> March. The applicant team will also meet with Diseworth Parish Council separately. The feedback received through the pre-application engagement process has directly informed the application proposals.

- 1.10. The Isley Woodhouse application seeks to deliver much needed homes in an area of significant employment growth. Indeed, employment growth in the surrounding area has been exponential in recent years and housing delivery has simply not kept pace with this change.
- 1.11. A disparity between housing and employment provision has therefore arisen and the Isley Woodhouse proposals seek to address this issue directly.
- 1.12. The Site is uniquely well placed to deliver much needed housing through a new settlement which is well connected, in a sustainable and accessible location and which is absolutely in line with the Council's aspirations and ambitions, as well as those of central Government.
- 1.13. The purpose of this Planning Statement is to provide the Local Planning Authority and interested parties with the information necessary to appraise the application proposals against the wide range of established and emerging policies and guidance.
- 1.14. This Planning Statement is structured as follows:
- Section 2 Describes the Site and surrounding area, providing a detailed description of the surrounding context, the existing site conditions and the opportunities and constraints presented by these.
- Section 3 Describes the application proposals in detail.
- Section 4 Identifies the relevant planning policy and guidance.
- Section 5 Sets out a detailed appraisal of the application with regard to the relevant policies and guidance. It considers the application in terms of the sustainability and suitability of the proposals, with specific regard to the conclusions of the Environmental Statement.
- Section 6 Draws together our conclusions.
- 1.15. The planning application is supported by a number of other reports and statements, these are:
- Application plans and drawings
  - Design and Access Statement
  - Statement of Community Involvement
  - A full Environmental Statement

## 2. The Site and Surrounding Area

### The Application Site – Location, Size and Context

- 2.1. The Site extends to 313.39 ha of farmland which lies to the south of East Midlands Airport (EMA) and Donington Park motorsport circuit, generally between the settlements of Diseworth to the east and Tonge to the west.
- 2.2. The Site is entirely within the District of North West Leicestershire. The majority of the Site lies within the Parish of Isley-cum-Langley, with a small portion of the south-western area extending into Breedon on the Hill Parish. It falls entirely within the Worthington and Breedon Ward.
- 2.3. The Site's northern boundary is formed by the single carriageway A453/Walton Hill and Melbourne Road; to the east and south the boundary is formed by fields; and to the west the Site is bounded by the Ramsley Brook.
- 2.4. The Site Location Red Line Plan below shows the Site boundary in context with its immediate surroundings.

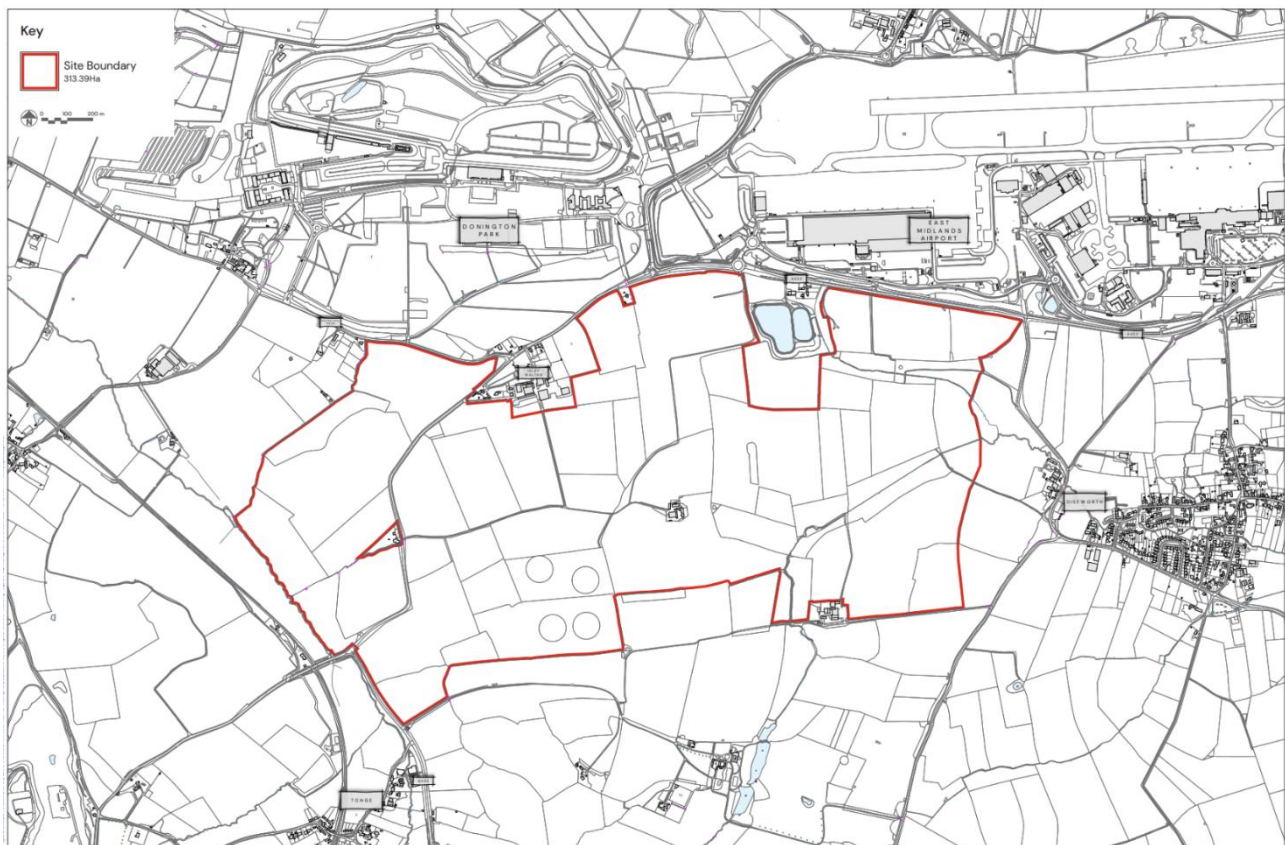
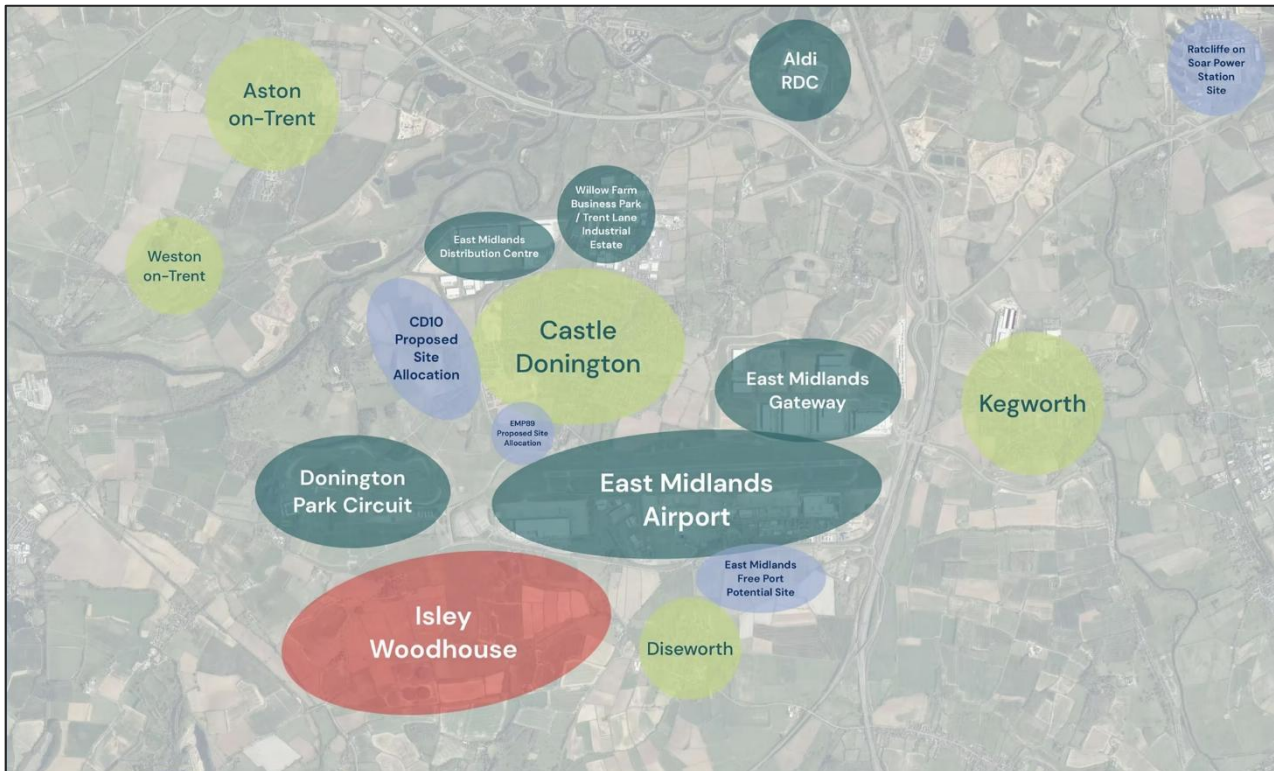


Figure 1: Site Location Red Line Plan

## The Surrounding Area

- 2.5. The immediate surrounding context for the Site is varied, comprising development, including significant employment sites, EMA and residential settlements; the local road network and the convergence of a number of trunk roads as a part of the Strategic Road Network; open farmland; and small pockets of woodland.
- 2.6. Alongside the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) which run across the Site, there are several surrounding the Site, including Sustrans Route 15, connecting Bellton and EMA, which passes close to the south-east boundary and Sustrans Route 6 which follows a disused former railway line to the west, known as the Cloud Trail.
- 2.7. The closest settlements to the Site are Isley Walton, Diseworth, Tonge, Breedon on the Hill and Castle Donington.
- 2.8. Isley Walton is a small hamlet directly adjacent to the Site's northern boundary. Diseworth village, which is a conservation area, is directly to the Site's east, lying circa 850 m from the Site boundary. The historic hamlet of Tonge, which is also a conservation area, is located approximately 500 m to the south-west of the Site, in close proximity to Breedon on the Hill which lies around 1.4km from the Site. Castle Donington is a larger market town and lies beyond EMA approximately 3 km to the north of the Site.
- 2.9. Langley Priory Estate is approximately 700 m to the south of the Site, which takes its access from the gatehouse just outside of the Site's boundary, at the south-west corner.
- 2.10. The A453, forming part of the northern Site boundary, is a single carriageway road, connecting to the M1 Junction 23a to the east via Finger Farm Roundabout. This links via a dual carriageway section of the A453 to Junction 24 of the M1 and the A50 further to the north-east. To the south-west the A453 links to the A42 Junction 14.
- 2.11. There are significant areas of employment in the vicinity of the Site. To the Site's north, across the A453 are EMA; the DHL Distribution Centre; Pegasus Business Park; and Donington Park motorsport circuit.
- 2.12. East Midlands Gateway, a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange and logistics hub is located circa 2.8 km to the north-east of the Site, with East Midlands Distribution Centre, which includes the Marks and Spencer distribution centre, located circa 3.2 km to the north.
- 2.13. Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station site lies approximately 8 km to the north-east. The Power Station is being decommissioned and will be available for employment redevelopment in 2025 (consent for its redevelopment has already been granted through the Power Station's Local Development Order for 810,000 sqm of floorspace).
- 2.14. East Midlands Parkway train station is adjacent to the Power Station, providing direct connections to London St Pancras in the south and Sheffield in the north.
- 2.15. The Site context plan overleaf shows the Site in context with the surrounding settlements and employment sites.



**Figure 2: Site Context Plan**

Existing Site Conditions

- 2.16. The Site is predominantly agricultural land, comprising arable fields of varying scales, with some pastoral farming fields along the tributaries of the Diseworth Brook. Across the Site there are hedgerows and hedgerow trees of varying quality. Four circular plantations known as ‘The Dumps’ lie within the south-eastern area of the Site.
- 2.17. The Site’s topography is undulating. It rises from the east and west to a central high point with another high point in the south-eastern corner, with the western portion of the Site being the lowest point.
- 2.18. Agricultural land associated with Manor Farm and Woodhouse Farm is contained within the application boundary. The buildings comprising High Barn Farm sit within the western portion of the Site, but they are excluded from the red line. The proposals currently work around High Barn Farm, on the basis that it is retained in-situ.
- 2.19. A section of the single carriageway A453 runs through the western part of the Site, from which accesses to High Barn Farm and Manor Farm are taken.
- 2.20. This Site is privately owned and therefore public access is restricted. However, there are eight PRoW which cross the Site. These are Footpaths L89a/1; L89/1; L89/2; L89/3; L96/7; L98a/1; L98/3; and L98/2. In the south-eastern corner of the Site the boundary follows the line of the regional Cross Britain Way.
- 2.21. The majority of the Site lies within Flood Zone 1 and therefore has a low risk of fluvial flooding. Overall, the Site is at a very low risk of surface water flooding. The Site’s western boundary is

located partly within Flood Zones 2 and 3, due to the proximity of the Ramsley Brook, which flows adjacent to the Site. However, the topography rises steeply away from the Ramsley Brook to the east, where the built development is proposed to be located.

- 2.22. There are no statutory heritage or ecological designations within the Site boundary and the Site is located outside of any Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs), with the closest being the Nottingham City Council AQMA, circa 11.5 kilometres north-east of the Site.

### 3. The Proposal

3.1. The application seeks outline planning permission for a new settlement delivering up to 4,250 new homes.

3.2. The Description of Development is:

*Outline application with all matters except access reserved for a new settlement of up to 4,250 new houses, including employment space with ancillary offices, a local centre and two neighbourhood centres, a new secondary school and two new primary schools, residential institutions, hotels, demolition of existing structures, with associated infrastructure, including strategic highway improvements, drainage, ground modelling, landscaping, open space, sports facilities with changing and parking facilities, and access (including the realignment of the A453).*

3.3. The application is made in outline (with site accesses and the realignment of a section of the A453 being unreserved) and therefore the detailed design of the scheme and final layout remain unknown at this stage and will be brought forward through Reserved Matters submissions. However, extensive pre-application engagement with the Local Authority and relevant bodies, alongside the responses to the public engagement exercise, have informed the outline proposals.

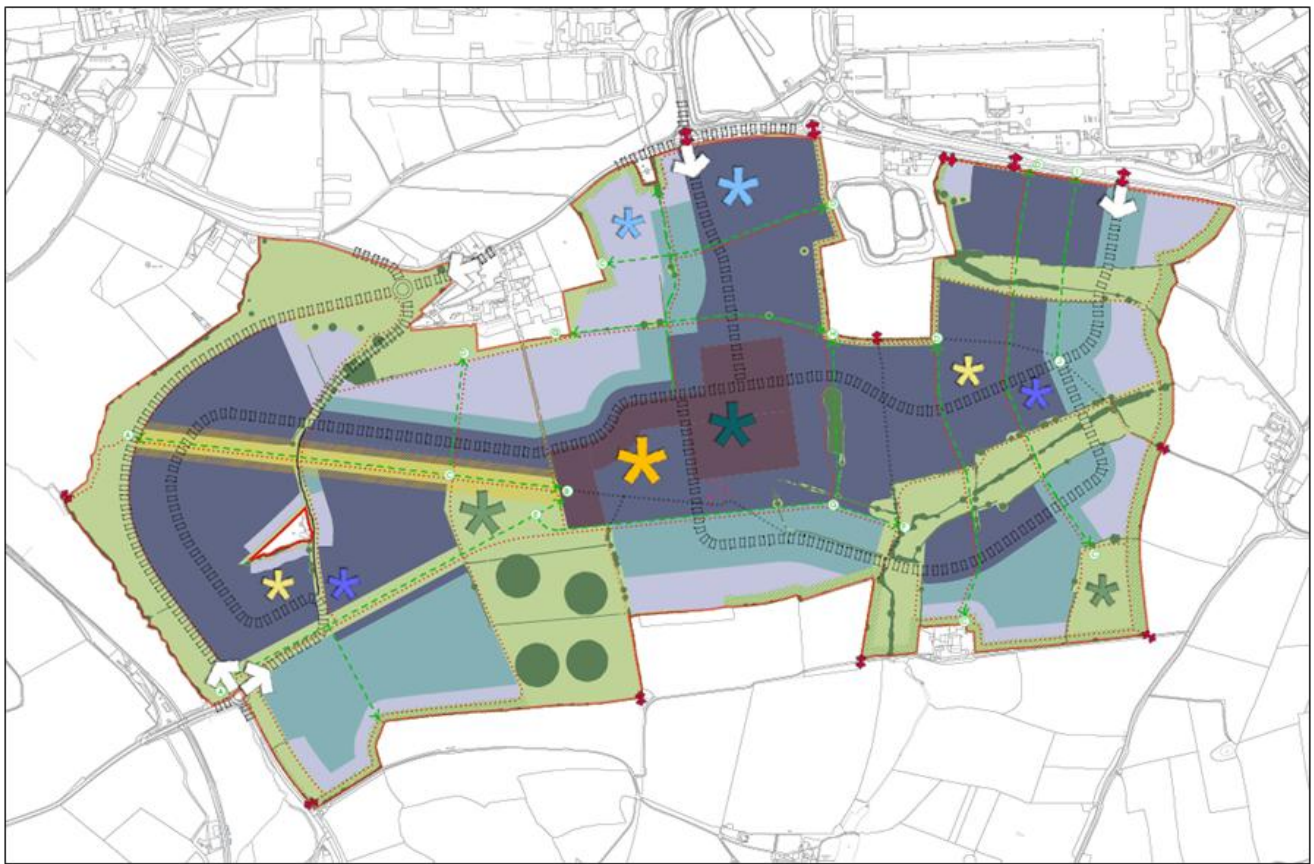
#### **Development Parameters**

3.4. The documentation submitted in support of the outline scheme establishes the principle for what could be delivered on the Site and sets the parameters for the proposed development.

3.5. In this context, a Parameters Plan is submitted in support of the planning application which fixes the key aspects of the development. This will enable planning conditions to be drawn up and agreed to control the implementation of the proposed scheme.

3.6. The Parameters Plan is contained at Figure 3 and defines several key elements:

- Built form areas, including residential dwellings and indicative locations for employment, primary and secondary schools, the local centre and neighbourhood centres.
- Indicative road infrastructure and vehicular access points into the Site.
- Maximum building heights across the Site.
- Illustrative alignment of pedestrian and cycle connections.
- Landscape elements, including retained vegetation, landscape buffer planting, areas of open space/green corridors and the indicative location of outdoor sports pitches.



**KEY**

**Built Form Parameters**

Includes incidental open spaces, drainage areas, internal roads, pedestrian/cycle links.

- Built Form  
Maximum Height - 9.5m
- Built Form  
Maximum Height - 11.5m
- Built Form  
Maximum Height - 13.5m
- Built Form  
Maximum Height - 17.0m
- Employment  
Approximate Location
- Primary Schools  
Approximate Location
- Secondary Schools  
Approximate Location
- Local Centre  
Approximate Location
- Neighbourhood Centre  
Approximate Location
- Buildings to be Demolished

Proposed building heights are in relation to the proposed ground levels  $\pm 0.75m$  (refer to proposed cut & fill plan).

**Access & Movement Strategy**

- Vehicular Site Access  
(refer to detailed plans)
- Primary Street Corridor  
Illustrative alignment, includes realigned A453
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW)  
Retained PRoW alignments within site. Routes to be upgraded in-line with sitewide walking and cycling strategy
- Public Rights of Way (PRoW)  
PRoW route to be closed/diverted in-line with sitewide walking and cycling strategy
- Pedestrian & Cycle Routes  
Proposed illustrative alignments
- Existing A453  
Retained within site
- Pedestrian & Cycle Connections

**Landscape Parameters**

- Retained Tree & Hedgerow Planting  
Except to allow for Access & Movement Parameter
- Landscape Buffer Planting  
Woodland, scrub and grassland corridor, including pedestrian and cycle routes where shown.
- Open Space/Green Corridors  
Except to allow for Access & Movement Parameter, includes:  
1. Proposed landscaping  
2. Open Space Typologies (allotments etc.)  
3. Drainage Areas  
4. Pedestrian/Cycle Links  
5. Play Spaces  
6. Services & Utilities  
7. Sport Facilities & Pavilion Buildings  
8. Biodiversity Enhancements
- Landscape Corridors  
Must be provided between letters.  
A-B - Minimum 45m wide public open space corridor. Linear alignment.  
C-D - Minimum 25m wide public open space corridor.  
E-F - Minimum 35m wide public open space corridor. Linear alignment.  
G-H - Minimum 50m wide public open space corridor. Protecting existing woodland  
I-J - Minimum 15m wide public open space. Linear alignment.
- Built Form Flexibility  
Area of flexibility to accommodate specified landscape corridor width and built form
- Outdoor Sports Pitches  
Approximate location

Figure 3: Parameters Plan

## Illustrative Masterplan

- 3.7. The Illustrative Masterplan is shown at Figure 4 and shows one way in which the Site could be delivered, working within the development parameters established through this application and specifically the Parameters Plan.
- 3.8. The Illustrative Masterplan includes:
- The new settlement of Isley Woodhouse providing land for circa 4,250 new homes, delivered through a variety of housing typologies, heights and densities, that respond to the existing context.
  - Four access points into the Site, alongside a realigned section of the A453.
  - A variety of public open space, covering circa 44% of the Site, including new view corridors, watercourse corridors, landscape buffers, additional sports and play facilities and the retention of the Dumps plantation.
  - An area of circa 10 hectares of employment use.
  - Two primary schools and a secondary school.
  - Two Neighbourhood Centres and one Local Centre.
  - Central and local sports facilities.
  - A focus on active travel with primary and secondary active movement corridors that respond to existing and future desire lines across the Site.

## Summary of Built Components

### Residential Component

- 3.9. The development proposals provide approximately 129.56 hectares of residential development, delivering up to 4,250 new dwellings.
- 3.10. The scheme will deliver a range of dwelling types, sizes and tenures across the Site providing accommodation for people of different ages and lifestyles. The proposals will offer a range of sizes, from apartments through to terraced, semi-detached and detached homes. The provision will include rental properties as well as affordable housing and those to purchase on the open market.
- 3.11. It is proposed that affordable housing will be provided in line with North West Leicestershire's Local Plan requirements.

### Employment Component

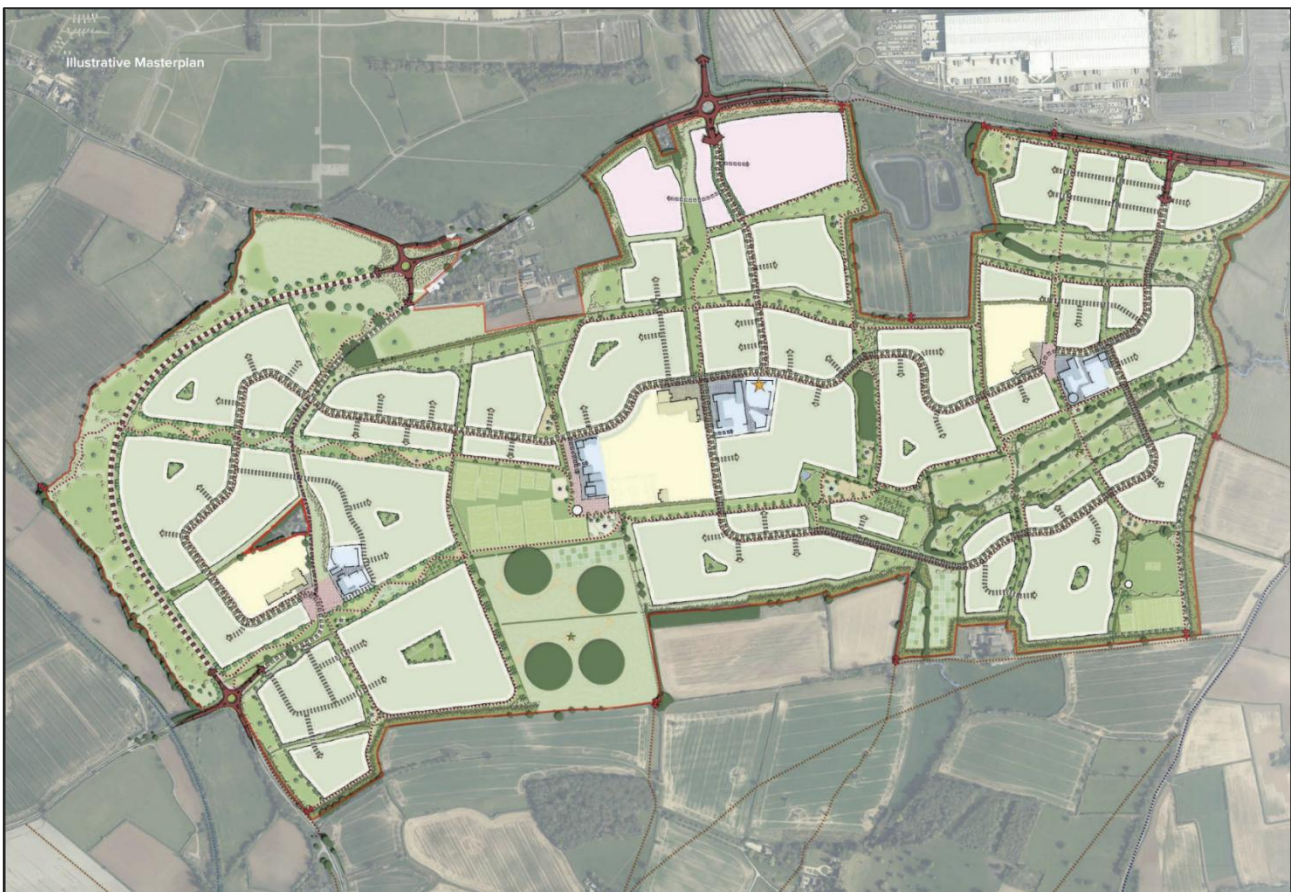
- 3.12. 10.29 hectares of land is designated for commercial use capable of delivering up to 23,000 sqm of employment space. The proposed units will be smaller in scale than the neighbouring employment development in order to avoid direct competition with neighbouring provision and to expand the employment opportunities for new and existing residents in the area.

Education

- 3.13. The proposals include two, two-form entry primary schools of circa 3 hectares each, one each in the eastern and western areas of the Site, and a central secondary school of 6.5 hectares, located centrally within the Site.
- 3.14. Both of the primary schools have been oversized in order to allow flexibility in the future, should they need to be expanded.
- 3.15. The education provision has been determined following consultation with North West Leicestershire District Council and the Education Authority.

Local and Neighbourhood Centres

- 3.16. The neighbourhood and local centres will provide a diverse mixture of uses, with the opportunity for local shops and services, each with a public realm space, ensuring that these spaces remain active and vibrant throughout the day.



**Figure 4: Illustrative Masterplan**

**Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and Open Space**

- 3.17. Existing landscape character and features and the visual amenity of the Site have been carefully considered through the planning and design process and have been key factors in

informing and shaping the Isley Woodhouse proposals and the overall green infrastructure and landscape strategy. This approach has entailed close collaboration between landscape, engineering, ecological consultants and other professionals. The resultant landscape and green infrastructure components of the scheme are an important and integral part of the proposals and have been embedded into the design.

- 3.18. The Parameters Plan fixes and defines the location and disposition of the key strategic green infrastructure and landscape areas. However, other areas of greenspace and drainage will be included within the 'built form' parcels which collectively will break up development and provide further open space in addition the strategic green infrastructure. The exact locations of these will be dependent on the detailed design of the built form and therefore cannot all be fixed at this time. The Illustrative Masterplan provides a more realistic understanding of these likely spaces and demonstrates one way in which the Green Infrastructure Strategy could be delivered.
- 3.19. The Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy for the Site proposes a series of linked multi-functional spaces that will deliver landscape, amenity and biodiversity benefits as well as perform Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) functions, responding to flood risk, pollution control and climate change issues.
- 3.20. The GI Strategy includes the retention of conserved mature trees and planting, particularly along the existing watercourses, within The Dumps plantations and around the perimeter of the Site. This conserved existing planting will be appropriately and actively managed for arboricultural and biodiversity benefits. Conserved planting will also be reinforced by significant new woodland, tree and scrub planting; the creation of new broad landscape areas around the development and the provision of new mixed habitats (including some wetland areas/ponds as part of the sustainable drainage strategy) to satisfy biodiversity objectives, including areas for farmland birds.
- 3.21. Some green spaces of the Site will be seeded with locally appropriate grass seed mixes and include permanent grassland swards and managed appropriately to offer favoured habitats for farmland birds. Retained hedgerows will be reinforced and new native tree planting will be implemented around Site boundaries, within hedgerows and along the watercourse corridors, to provide a robust landscape structure and extend and link the existing habitat network.
- 3.22. Other areas of green space such as community allotments, orchards and informal play spaces have also been considered and included on the Illustrative Masterplan, which offer additional open space facilities. The proposed development will provide sports facilities and pitches, with changing and parking facilities. The indicative locations of sports pitches are provided on the Parameters Plan, which have been sized to be able to accommodate a number of different sized playing pitches for football, rugby and cricket.
- 3.23. Existing Public Rights of Way have been sought to be retained and enhanced, however there are proposed diversions, primarily within the greenways, to facilitate more legible and logical network connections through the green spaces across the Site. Additional and enhanced routes with new footpaths and cycle links are proposed to provide additional connectivity, which links with the open space provided as part of the GI Strategy.
- 3.24. At the Reserved Matters stage, detailed planting and management plans will be prepared that will set out how the above embedded strategy will be delivered.

## Phasing

- 3.25. If outline planning consent for the scheme is granted in 2026, it is anticipated that development would commence in 2027, with the first dwellings being occupied in 2029. It is assumed that the build out period will be circa 25 years, with the Site being completed in 2050.

## 4. Planning Policy

4.1. This Section sets out the Planning Policy context for the development proposals. It identifies the national and local policies of relevance and also sets out other policies which should be material considerations in the determination of this planning application.

### The National Planning Policy Framework

4.2. National planning policy is set by the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The NPPF seeks to promote sustainable development, in order to meet the development needs of the Country. The 'presumption in favour of sustainable development' lies at the heart of the NPPF, to ensure that sustainable development is positively pursued.

4.3. The NPPF states that the planning system has three overarching objectives for achieving sustainable development, these are:

- ***“an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;***
- ***a social objective – to 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 well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and***
- ***an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”***

4.4. The NPPF requires that these objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and in the application of NPPF policies. However, paragraph 9 goes on to state:

*“they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.”*

4.5. Achieving sustainable development is dealt with through Section 2 of the NPPF. Paragraph 11 states that Plans and decisions should apply the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

4.6. For Plan making this means that Plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development, which meets the area's development needs; aligns growth and infrastructure; improves the environment; and mitigates and adapts to the effects of climate change.

- 4.7. Paragraph 11 requires that strategic policies provide for objectively assessed needs, as a minimum, unless the policies of the NPPF would restrict this or the adverse impacts of doing so would demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the NPPF taken as a whole.
- 4.8. For decision taking, it means approving proposals without delay, which accord with the Development Plan. Where the Development Plan is absent, silent or where the relevant policies are out of date, paragraph 11 explains that permission should be granted unless:
- “any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination.”*
- 4.9. Section 3 of the NPPF deals with Plan making. Paragraph 15 states that Plans should provide *“a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for meeting housing needs and addressing other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings.”*
- 4.10. In this context, Plans should, inter alia, be positively prepared, being aspirational whilst deliverable, with the objective of contributing to achieving sustainable development.
- 4.11. At paragraph 20, the NPPF identifies that strategic policies should *“set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and quality of development”* including making the provision for, inter alia, homes, employment, retail, leisure, commercial development, infrastructure, community facilities and measures to address climate change.
- 4.12. Paragraph 22 goes on to state that:
- “Strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period from adoption to anticipate and respond to long-term requirements and opportunities, such as those arising from major improvements in infrastructure. Where larger scale development such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timescales for delivery.”*
- 4.13. With regard to examining Local Plans, paragraph 36 states that Plans needs to be considered ‘sound’ through assessment. In order to be found ‘sound’, Plans should be positively prepared; justified; effective; and consistent with national policy.
- 4.14. ‘Positively prepared’ means providing a strategy which seeks to meet the objectively assessed need of the area, as a minimum, including, where practical to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development, accommodating unmet need from neighbouring areas.
- 4.15. Section 4 sets out the national requirements for decision making. Paragraph 39 directs that Local Planning Authorities should approach decision making on development proposals in a positive and creative way and that decision makers at every level should seek to approve applications for sustainable development, where possible.

- 4.16. Paragraphs 40 to 47 discuss pre-application engagement and front loading. They identify that *“early engagement has a significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.”* Going on to state that good quality pre-application discussions enable better coordination between the resources of the public and private sector, which in turn has improved outcomes for the community.
- 4.17. Paragraph 42 specifically identifies that the more issues that can be resolved at pre-application stage, the greater the benefits. This includes with the consideration of infrastructure improvements and the delivery of affordable housing.
- 4.18. Paragraph 43 is clear that pre-application discussions should not be limited to statutory consultees and encourage the participation of other consenting bodies on all of the fundamental issues relating to the acceptability of proposed development, in principle.
- 4.19. With regard to determining planning applications, paragraph 48 identifies that planning law *“requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Decisions on applications should be made as quickly as possible, and within statutory timescales unless a longer period has been agreed by the applicant in writing.”*
- 4.20. With regard to emerging Local Plans, paragraph 49 states that Local Planning Authorities may give weight to relevant policies, according to:
- a) *“the stage of preparation of the emerging plan (the more advanced its preparation, the greater the weight that may be given);*
  - b) *the extent to which there are unresolved objections to relevant policies (the less significant the unresolved objections, the greater the weight that may be given); and*
  - c) *the degree of consistency of the relevant policies in the emerging plan to this Framework (the closer the policies in the emerging plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given).”*
- 4.21. In relation to arguments of prematurity, importantly, paragraph 50 clarifies that these are unlikely to justify a refusal of planning permission, other than in limited circumstances where both:
- a) *“the development proposed is so substantial, or its cumulative effect would be so significant, that to grant permission would undermine the plan-making process by predetermining decisions about the scale, location or phasing of new development that are central to an emerging plan; and*
  - b) *the emerging plan is at an advanced stage but is not yet formally part of the development plan for the area.”*
- 4.22. Further, *“Refusal of planning permission on ground of prematurity will seldom be justified where a draft plan has yet to be submitted for examination....Where planning permission is refused on grounds of prematurity, the local planning authority will need to indicate clearly how granting permission for the development concerned would prejudice the outcome of the plan-making process.”*

- 4.23. Planning conditions and obligations are also dealt with through Section 4. Paragraph 56 identifies that Local Planning Authorities should consider whether otherwise unacceptable development could be made acceptable through the use of planning conditions and obligations, stating that obligations should only be used where it is not possible to address unacceptable impacts through planning conditions.
- 4.24. Paragraph 57 explains that planning conditions should be kept to a minimum and only imposed *“where they are necessary, relevant to planning and to the development to be permitted, enforceable, precise and reasonable in all other respects.”* The paragraph also identifies that agreeing conditions early in the process is beneficial to all involved and can speed up decision making. In addition, planning conditions *“that are required to be discharged before development commences should be avoided, unless there is a clear justification.”*
- 4.25. With regard to planning obligations, these must only be sought where they are:
- a) *“necessary to make the development acceptable;*
  - b) *directly related to the development; and*
  - c) *fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.”*
- 4.26. Section 5 deals with delivering a sufficient supply of homes. It identifies that, in order to support the Government’s objective to significantly boost the supply of homes, it is important that sufficient, varied land comes forward, where it is needed, with the aim of meeting an area’s identified housing need and with the appropriate mix of housing types for the local community.
- 4.27. Housing needs should be informed by the relevant assessments and should take account of accommodating neighbouring needs, where this is necessary. These factors should form the basis of establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. When establishing the level of need, the requirement for different types and tenures to provide for different groups within the community should also be considered, including catering for families and older people as well as providing affordable housing.
- 4.28. Paragraph 71 explains that mixed tenures can deliver a range of benefits, including creating diverse communities and helping to support build out rates.
- 4.29. With regard to identifying land for homes, paragraph 77 states that:
- “The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided that they are well located and designed, and supported by the necessary infrastructure and facilities (including a genuine choice of transport modes).”*
- 4.30. In this context, when identifying suitable locations for such development, the NPPF states that strategic policy-making authorities should:
- a) *“consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area’s economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains;*

- b) *ensure that their size and location will support a sustainable community, with sufficient access to services and employment opportunities within the development itself (without expecting an unrealistic level of self-containment), or larger towns to which there is good access;*
- c) *set clear expectations for the quality of the places to be created and how this can be maintained (such as by following Garden City principles); and ensure that appropriate tools such as masterplans and design guides or codes are used to secure a variety of well-designed homes to meet the needs of different groups in the community;”*

4.31. Section 6 deals with building a strong, competitive economy. Paragraph 85 advises that planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. Furthermore, it advises that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development.

4.32. Paragraph 85 states that the approach taken *“should allow each area to build on its strengths, counter any weaknesses and address the challenges of the future.”*

4.33. In this context, planning policies should, inter alia, *“seek to address potential barriers to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or housing...”*

4.34. Promoting healthy and safe communities is dealt with through Section 8. It recognises that the planning system can play an important role in facilitating social interaction and creating healthy, inclusive communities. It encourages the creation of healthy, inclusive and safe places which paragraph 96 explains should:

- a) *“promote social interaction, including opportunities for meetings between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres, street layouts that allow for easy pedestrian and cycle connections within and between neighbourhoods, and active street frontages;*
- b) *are safe and accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion – for example through the use of well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and*
- c) *enable and support healthy lives, through both promoting good health and preventing ill-health, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs and reduce health inequalities between the most and least deprived communities – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.”*

4.35. In order to ensure that right provision of social, recreational and cultural facilities and services is delivered, paragraph 98 directs that planning policies and decisions should plan positively for the provision of facilities and services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments. This includes ensuring an integrated approach when considering the location of housing, community services and facilities and economic uses.

- 4.36. Paragraph 100 identifies that the importance of delivering a sufficient choice of early years, school and post-16 places, to meet the needs of existing and new communities. In this overall context, paragraph 101 goes on to state that significant weight *“should be placed on the importance of new, expanded or upgraded public service infrastructure when considering proposals for development.”*
- 4.37. When considering open spaces and recreation, paragraph 103 recognises that *“a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities”*. This can deliver wider benefits for nature and can help support efforts to address climate change.
- 4.38. Existing Public Rights of Way and access should be protected and enhanced, taking opportunities to provide better facilities through, for example, adding links to existing rights of way networks, including National Trails.
- 4.39. Section 9 deals with promoting sustainable transport. Paragraph 109 states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals so that transport solutions can be identified and so that places are well-designed and sustainable. This should include:
- Ensuring movement patterns are an integral part of the design of schemes, so that they can contribute to making high quality places.
  - Understanding and addressing the potential impacts of a development on the transport network.
  - Realising opportunities for existing and proposed transport infrastructure, including changing transport technology and usage.
  - Identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote the use of public transport as well as cycling and walking.
  - Identifying, assessing and taking account of the potential environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure. This should include taking opportunities for avoiding and mitigating adverse impacts and to seek net environmental gain.
- 4.40. With regard to significant development, this means focussing on locations *“which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.”* Therefore, for larger scale sites, planning policies should support an appropriate mix of uses, to minimise the number and lengths of journeys required to undertake activities such as shopping, leisure pursuits, education and employment.
- 4.41. This can be achieved through the provision of *“attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans)”*.
- 4.42. Paragraph 116 advises that development should only be prevented or refused on highway grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual and cumulative impacts on the road network would be severe, considering all reasonable future scenarios.

- 4.43. Within this context, paragraph 117 advises that planning applications should include for giving priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, both within the scheme and for neighbouring areas; address the needs of people with reduced mobility and disabilities; create places that are safe, secure and attractive, minimising the chance of conflict between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles; respond to local character and design standards; allow for access by service, emergency service and delivery vehicles; and enable vehicle charging.
- 4.44. Paragraph 118 advises that all developments that will generate significant amounts of movements should be required to provide a Travel Plan and the application should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment so that the likely impacts of the development can be assessed.
- 4.45. Section 10 deals with supporting high quality communications and identifies that reliable communications infrastructure is essential for social well-being and economic growth.
- 4.46. Section 11 deals with making effective use of land. Paragraph 124 states that planning policies and decisions should promote the effective use of land in order to meet the need for homes and other uses.
- 4.47. In this regard, planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land. For achieving appropriate densities, this means taking into account:
- a) *“the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, and the availability of land suitable for accommodating it;*
  - b) *local market conditions and viability;*
  - c) *the availability and capacity of infrastructure and services – both existing and proposed – as well as their potential for further improvement and the scope to promote sustainable travel modes that limit future car use;*
  - d) *the desirability of maintaining an area’s prevailing character and setting (including residential gardens), or of promoting regeneration and change; and*
  - e) *the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places.”*
- 4.48. To help ensure that land is used efficiently, whilst also creating beautiful and sustainable places, area-based character assessments can be used, alongside Design Codes, as directed by paragraph 130.
- 4.49. Achieving well-designed places is dealt with through Section 12 of the NPPF. It states that high quality, beautiful and sustainable buildings and places are fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve. It seeks to ensure that developments:
- a) *“will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
  - b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*

- c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of street spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

4.50. Paragraph 136 recognises the importance of trees not just mitigating the impacts of climate change but in contributing to the quality and character of urban environments, stating that policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined and that opportunities are taken wherever possible to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments.

4.51. With regard to design quality, paragraph 137 states that:

*“Design quality should be considered throughout the evolution and assessment of individual proposals. Early discussions between applicants, the local planning authority and local community about the design and style of emerging schemes is important for clarifying expectations and reconciling local and commercial interests. Applicants should, where applicable, provide sufficient information to demonstrate how their proposals will meet the design expectations set out in local and national policy, and should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that can demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.”*

4.52. Policies for meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change are set out in Section 14. Paragraph 161 confirms that the planning system should support the transition to net zero by 2050, including taking full account of all climate impacts.

4.53. With regard to climate change, paragraph 164 states that new development should be planned in ways that avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change and which can help to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as through location, orientation and design.

4.54. Paragraph 166 advises that in determining planning applications, Local Planning Authorities should expect new development to, inter alia, *“take account of landform, layout, building orientation, massing and landscaping to minimise energy consumption.”*

4.55. Flood risk is dealt with through paragraphs 170 to 182 of the NPPF. Policy seeks to steer developments, where possible, to locations which are not at risk from flooding and to ensure that development does not result in an increased risk of flooding elsewhere.

- 4.56. Section 15 deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. It states that planning policies and decisions *“should contribute to and enhance the natural environment”*. This can be achieved by minimising impacts on, and providing net gains for, biodiversity.
- 4.57. Paragraph 187 states that valued landscapes should be protected and enhanced and that the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, including the benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land and trees and woodland, should be recognised.
- 4.58. With regard to habitats and biodiversity the NPPF directs that when determining planning applications which cause significant harm to biodiversity, where impacts cannot be mitigated, should be refused. Paragraph 193 goes on to say 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 or enhance public access to nature where this is appropriate.”*
- 4.59. With regard to ground conditions and pollution, paragraph 196 requires that planning decisions ensure that a site is suitable for its proposed use, taking into account ground conditions and any risks arising from land instability and contamination.
- 4.60. Paragraph 198 identifies that planning policies and decisions should also ensure that development is appropriate for its location with regard to pollution, considering the likely effects (including cumulative effects) on health, living conditions and the natural environment.
- 4.61. Paragraph 199 seeks to ensure that decisions sustain and contribute towards compliance with values or national objectives for pollutants, taking account of air quality management areas and clean air zones. It also seeks to ensure that opportunities to improve air quality or mitigate impacts are identified.
- 4.62. Section 16 of the NPPF considers conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It states that Local Planning Authorities should require applicants to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected by proposals, including consideration of the contribution made by their setting.
- 4.63. The potential level of harm to a heritage asset should be considered in determining planning application and, where development would lead to less than substantial harm to a heritage asset, the harm should be weighed against the public benefit of the proposal.
- 4.64. With regard to non-designated heritage assets, paragraph 216 directs that:
- “In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.”*

### **The National Planning Practice Guidance**

- 4.65. The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) is an online based Government guidance. Launched in March 2014, it replaces and consolidates 7,000 pages of previous planning guidance on a range of topics including flood risk, heritage and design. The NPPG provides supplementary and supporting context for the NPPF and should therefore be read in conjunction with the NPPF.

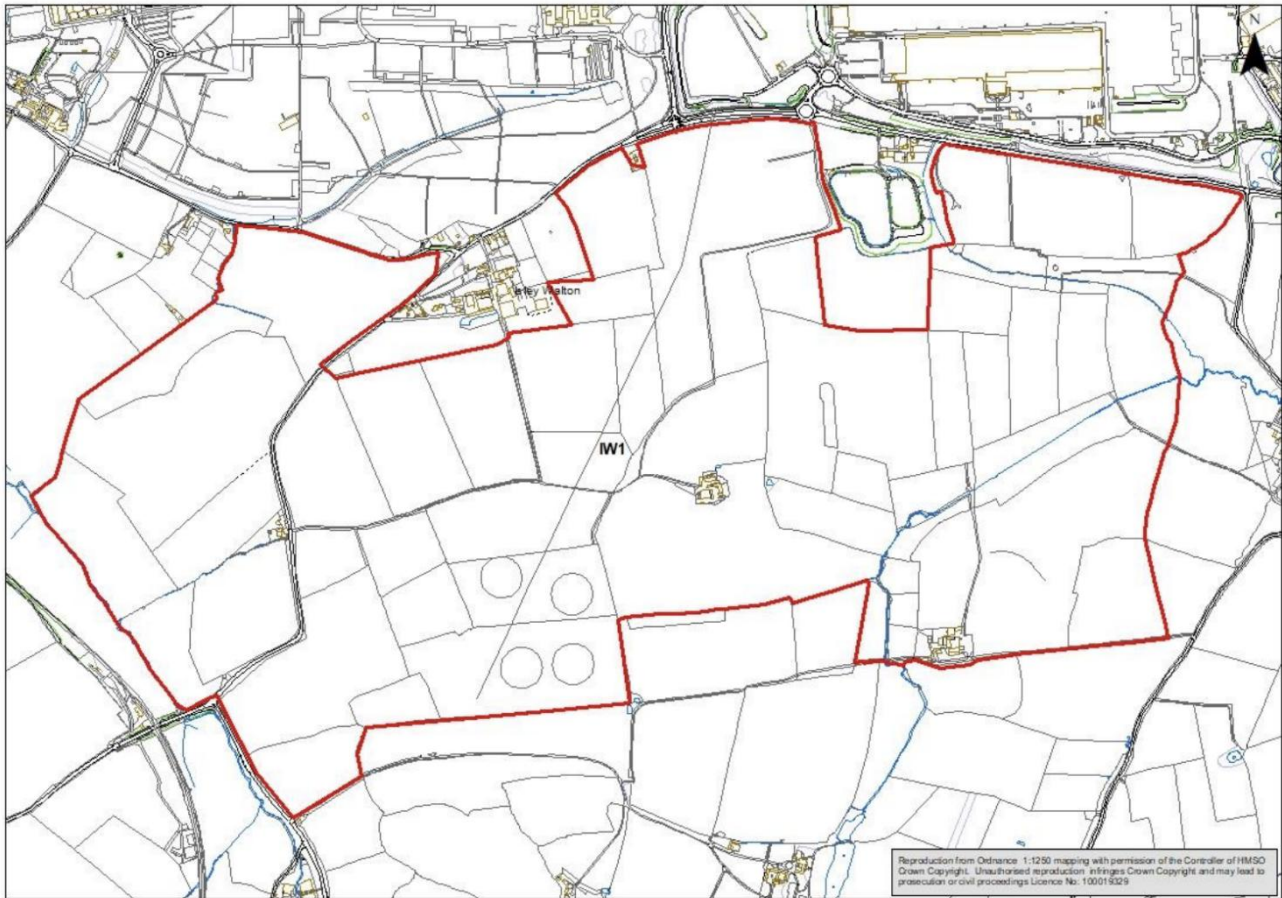
- 4.66. The NPPG also provides procedural guidance on matters including the use of planning conditions and obligations as well as on planning appeals. The document provides guidance on issues of prejudice and prematurity alongside providing detailed technical guidance for both authorities and applicants on the production of planning studies, such as housing and economic land availability assessments.

### **Local Planning Policy**

- 4.67. The local planning policy context is set by North West Leicestershire District Council's Local Plan.
- 4.68. North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan which, as currently drafted, will cover the Plan Period of 2020 to 2040. However, NWLDC is currently undertaking a further review to extend this period by a couple of years, with the likely Plan Period ending in 2042.
- 4.69. A consultation on extending the Local Plan is currently underway and this includes the proposal to reduce the number of dwellings at the Isley Woodhouse allocation from 4,500 to 4,250 to bring it in line with the planning application.
- 4.70. The emerging new Local Plan sets the tone, ambition and policy context for the District over the coming years and provides the context for the Isley Woodhouse proposals. Consequently, it is the key document for consideration in determination of this planning application, rather than the existing Local Plan, for which the Plan Period ends in 2031.
- 4.71. In this context, this section of the Planning Statement deals with the emerging new Local Plan and its policies first, before identifying the existing policies which currently cover the District, but which, given their impending replacement, should be weighted accordingly.

### The Emerging North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan

- 4.72. The emerging new Local Plan will likely cover the Plan Period to 2042, with a minimum Period to 2040. The most recent Local Development Scheme for the Local Plan anticipates the Regulation 19 consultation taking place in May–June 2026, with submission of the Plan for Examination to the Secretary of State in August 2026, followed by the Plan's adoption in July 2027.
- 4.73. The new Local Plan sets out the long-term spatial vision for development, through the promotion, distribution and delivery of sustainable development throughout the District. In doing so it takes account of the Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire, directing development to locations that provide access to jobs, services and infrastructure as well as where there are options for journeys made other than through the use of the private car, whilst also recognising the need to protect the countryside.
- 4.74. The emerging Local Plan proposes to allocate Isley Woodhouse as a new settlement under draft Policy IW1, in recognition of NPPF paragraph 77 (previously 73) and the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan, discussed further as a material consideration, below. The draft Policy wording and Location Plan (Figure 5) is extracted below:



**Figure 5: Draft Local Plan New Settlement Allocation IW1 Location Plan**

- (1) *“Land to the south of East Midlands Airport and Donington Park Circuit and to the west of Diseworth (316Ha) is allocation for a new, standalone village. When complete, Isley Woodhouse village will comprise:*
  - (a) *Some 4,500 new homes, around 1,900 of which will be built by 2040.*
  - (b) *A mix of market and affordable homes, including plots of land for those who want to build their own home in accordance with draft Local Plan Policies H4, H5, H7 and H10.*
  - (c) *Homes suited to the elderly, and those who need care, such as bungalows, sheltered and extra care facilities, nursing or care homes in accordance with draft Local Plan Policies H4 and H11.*
  - (d) *Some 23,000sqm of employment floorspace (industry and warehousing) located along the A453 frontage to include start-up premises suitable for small businesses. By 2040 some 4,600 sqm of employment floorspace will have been delivered.*
  - (e) *Primary and secondary schools.*

- (f) *A main village centre plus smaller neighbourhood centres with facilities such as convenience stores, pubs/restaurants/cafes, health services, community venue etc.*
  - (g) *Formal and informal open space to include children’s play areas, sports pitches, recreation routes and cycling and walking links.*
- (2) *The planning and delivery of Isley Woodhouse will be underpinned by the following key principles:*
- (a) *Putting the health and wellbeing of residents and workers at the forefront by creating an accessible, safe, sociable and inclusive environment where healthy choices are easy to make.*
  - (b) *Striving for carbon neutrality, including by incorporating measures to minimise energy consumption whilst maximising benefits from on-site renewable energy generation and energy efficient buildings.*
  - (c) *Achieving exceptional design quality based on a bespoke design code.*
  - (d) *Delivering the infrastructure needed to serve the development.*
  - (e) *Making sustainable travel – walking cycling, public transport and the use of electric vehicles – a realistic option for residents and workers.*
  - (f) *Creating a village which caters for all stages of life.*
  - (g) *Ensuring residents’ day to day needs can be met as far as possible within the village.*
  - (h) *Enabling people to live close to where they work by creating a village with a range of house types and tenures, including plentiful affordable housing, with sustainable transport links to nearby employment areas.*
- (3) *A comprehensive masterplan and phasing plans are needed to bring the development forward. These must be approved by the District Council and should provide for:*
- (a) *A mix of house sizes, tenures and types, including provision suited to older people and for self- and custom-built homes and which reflects the requirements of those in greatest need, in particular for affordable housing.*
  - (b) *The identification of essential infrastructure, including all necessary on-site and off-site highway improvements, and its delivery in a co-ordinated and timely way.*
  - (c) *A comprehensive landscaping strategy that retains, enhances and capitalises on existing landscape features and is informed by the Council’s Landscape Sensitivity Study (2020).*
  - (d) *The achievement of national biodiversity net gain requirements as a minimum.*

- (e) *The conservation and enhancement of heritage assets both on-site and within the vicinity of the site.*
  - (f) *A strategy to address the noise from East Midlands Airport and Donington Park Racing Circuit, including mitigation measures to protect the amenity of residents.*
  - (g) *Linked phasing for housing, employment and infrastructure.*
- (4) *To ensure that a cohesive development is delivered which meets the principles and requirements outlined, the Council will only approve planning applications that adhere to the comprehensive masterplan (or any updated masterplan agreed with the Council) and the bespoke design code."*

- 4.75. The supporting text for Policy IW1 states that the proposed new settlement accords with the Strategic Growth Plan and also enables a longer-term view to be taken beyond the end of the proposed Plan Period.
- 4.76. At paragraph 4.110, the supporting text identifies the need for a masterplan to establish how the site will be developed. It states that NWLDC will work with the site promoters and other stakeholders to achieve this. It also identifies that IW1 *"lists some key principles which should govern the progression of this new settlement from planning stages to implementation."*
- 4.77. Paragraph 4.111 recognises the need to consider how, where and when new infrastructure will be required to support the new community at Isley Woodhouse and how this will be delivered. It notes other developments proposed within the vicinity of the new settlement, notably EMP90, the Freeport site, and CD10 the proposed housing allocation on land west of Castle Donington. In combination these sites, together with the redevelopment of the Ratcliffe on Soar Power Station, outside of the District, are recognised as having the potential to have a cumulative impact. It states that, once the impacts are known, mitigation measures *"will consider how connections to and through the Isley Woodhouse site can be made as sustainable as possible, whilst recognising that journeys by car will be a significant component of all transport movements locally."*
- 4.78. Paragraph 4.112 confirms that the infrastructure needs for IW1 are likely to be significant, covering various requirements across not only transport, but also education, health and recreation, which will, primarily, need to be funded by the development. It recognises that this means that the delivery will need to be *"phased across the lifetime of the development in order to ensure that development remains viable, consistent with national policies. The Regulation 19 version of the Plan will provide more details regarding what infrastructure is required."*
- 4.79. Recognising the reason for the location of the new settlement, supporting paragraph 4.113 identifies the need to ensure that Isley Woodhouse contains a range of house types, sizes and tenures, including affordable housing, to ensure that people working locally have the choice to live close by.
- 4.80. In order to ensure that future development is genuinely sustainable, supporting paragraph 4.115 states that the new settlement needs to be of an *"exceptional quality, reflecting its setting within the wider rural landscape."*

- 4.81. The various emerging policies contained within the new Local Plan generally direct development principles, but due to the broad scope of the proposed allocation IW1, there is some overlap between their requirements and those of IW1.
- 4.82. The new Local Plan sets out a range of objectives which identify what the District Council is seeking to achieve through the Local Plan and new development. The objectives cover a variety of matters, including the need to deliver on housing requirements and to balance the growth of new homes with economic growth.
- 4.83. Several of the emerging objectives are relevant to this planning application, including, objective 1 which identifies the need to enable health and wellbeing; objective 2 to ensure the delivery of a range of new homes; objective 3 which aims to achieve high quality development; objective 4, which seeks to reduce the need to travel; objective 7 which seeks to ensure that new development mitigates and is adaptable to climate change; objective 8, conserving and enhancing heritage; objective 9, conserving and enhancing the natural environment; and objective 11 which seeks to ensure the delivery of sufficient infrastructure.
- 4.84. Proposed Strategic Policy S1 deals with the future development needs. It identifies the need for NWLDC to deliver 13,720 dwellings over the Plan Period, which equates to 686 dwellings per annum (although this is to the 2020 Plan Period and will be updated accordingly as the Plan is extended to 2042).
- 4.85. Policy S1 identifies that future development should help to meet the Local Plan objectives, placing particular emphasis on the need to deliver high-quality design; address climate change; deliver new infrastructure; and contribute towards creating healthy places.
- 4.86. Policy S2 establishes the proposed settlement hierarchy. Isley Woodhouse, new settlement, is the exception in the hierarchy, which is based on established settlements, as it has its own place as an independent new location for a large amount of growth during the Plan Period and beyond.
- 4.87. Emerging Strategic Policy A1 will cover the design of new developments. It will be based on the updated NWLDC Good Design SPD, once completed, which will have significant weight in decision making. Whilst these design principles will be relevant to Isley Woodhouse, the key requirements and principles for the new settlement are set out through Policy IW1, which includes high level requirements in relation to design.
- 4.88. Draft Policy AP2 considers amenity and requires that development is designed to minimise its impact on both existing and future residents. It directs that development should not have significant impacts on the living conditions of existing residents.
- 4.89. Draft Strategic Policy AP3 deals with Renewable Energy. It states that:
- “Proposals for renewable energy generation as part of new housing developments should be proportionate to the scale of the proposed development and appropriate to their setting.”*
- 4.90. The emerging policy for dealing with reducing carbon emissions is dealt with through Policy AP4, which requires all new development to contribute to NWLDC’s aim of being a carbon neutral District by 2050. To achieve this, the Policy requires new development to demonstrate how they achieve energy efficiency targets in line with latest standards; demonstrate that measures have been taken to minimise energy consumption, following the

energy hierarchy; and, for major developments, demonstrate that measures have been taken to reduce lifecycle carbon emissions and maximise opportunities for the reuse of materials. Part 2 of the emerging Policy states that renewable energy generation should be maximised as much as possible on site.

- 4.91. Health and wellbeing are considered through emerging Policy AP5, which requires that development maintains and improves the wellbeing of residents through encouraging healthy lifestyles. Development which does this and tackles the causes of ill health and inequalities will be supported.
- 4.92. To achieve this the draft Policy states that NWLDC will, inter alia, seek to ensure that homes are high quality; that facilities help to ensure healthy and resilient communities; support the delivery of safe walking and cycling links, increasing access to active travel; increase the access to and the protection of green and blue spaces, sports facilities and other recreation opportunities; and maintain and improve access to services such as health and education.
- 4.93. Emerging Policy AP6 will deal with Health Impact Assessments. This will be a new policy which has no existing equivalent in the current Local Plan. There is currently no standardised approach to these assessments, which NWLDC is currently trying to establish with Leicestershire County Council and other Leicestershire authorities. As such, no proposed policy wording is currently suggested.
- 4.94. Draft Policy AP7 deals with flood risk. It states that development will be directed to areas with the lowest risk of flooding, having regard to the Environment Agency flood risk maps. Proposals will be supported which have a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment and which does not increase the risk of flooding.
- 4.95. In this context, emerging Policy AP8 considers Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS). It requires that all major development proposals include SuDS for the management of surface water run-off, unless it can be demonstrated that SuDS are not feasible.
- 4.96. Proposals delivering SuDS must demonstrate that they have considered all four areas of good SuDS design, which are quantity; quality; amenity; and biodiversity. Arrangements must also be put in place for the management and maintenance of SuDS in the long term.
- 4.97. Draft Policy H1 identifies the housing strategy and confirms the delivery requirements for NWLDC over the Plan Period. It confirms that the overall distribution of homes will be guided by the development strategy and settlement hierarchy. It also confirms that the Plan includes a 10% flexibility allowance.
- 4.98. Housing types and mix is dealt with through Policy H4. It identifies the need to achieve mixed, balanced communities through delivery a range of types and tenures. It sets out the HENA dwelling size breakdown as a starting point and states that any deviation from the HENA figures must be justified, for both market and affordable housing.
- 4.99. Draft Policy H5 looks at affordable housing. It states that affordable housing will be provided on site for major residential and mixed-use developments. However, the exact breakdown is subject to further viability testing. It requires that affordable housing is integrated within the design and layout of schemes. It states that a lower proportion of affordable housing will only be accepted where it is demonstrated through a viability assessment that the full requirement cannot be achieved.

- 4.100. Self-build and custom house building is dealt with through Draft Policy H7. Policy IW1 identifies that the new settlement will be required to accommodate plots for people who want to build their own home, in accordance with Policy H7.
- 4.101. H7 states that on general market sites of 30 or more, the requirement will be for the delivery of a minimum of 5% of the site's capacity as serviced plots for self-build or custom build housing. A lower proportion will only be accepted where a viability assessment clearly demonstrates that the policy requirement cannot be achieved.
- 4.102. Draft Policy H10 sets the space standards for the District. It requires that all new housing meets or exceeds the Nationally Described Space Standard, or any update, for gross floor area and storage space.
- 4.103. The requirement for accessible, adaptable and wheelchair user housing is considered through Draft Policy H1. It requires all new homes to meet the Building Regulations requirements for accessible and adaptable homes.
- 4.104. On developments comprising 10 or more dwellings, this means at least 9% of all market housing will need to meet Building Regulations requirements for wheelchair and adaptable dwellings. For affordable homes at least 23% of homes will need to meet the Building Regulations wheelchair user dwelling standards. Exceptions will only be considered where it is demonstrated that provision of safe, step-free access is not viable.
- 4.105. Draft Policy Ec9 relates to the safeguarding of East Midlands Airport. It states that development proposals within the Safeguarded Area will be consulted on with the Airport and the relevant safeguarding principles will be applied.
- 4.106. The delivery of infrastructure to support development is considered through Draft Policy IF1. It identifies that the infrastructure necessary to support new development includes, but is not limited to, affordable housing; community facilities; transport, including highways, footpaths, cycleways and public transport; green infrastructure; the provision of superfast broadband communications; utilities; and flood prevention and sustainable drainage. These points are generally covered by the requirements of Policy IW1.
- 4.107. Securing provision of the relevant infrastructure will be achieved through a variety of ways, including through planning obligations and financial contributions.
- 4.108. Draft Policy IF2 identifies that major new development will be required to make provision for new community facilities. For the new settlement, these are outlined in Policy IW1.
- 4.109. The Council's expectations for the delivery of green infrastructure is set out through Draft Policy IF3. It requires development to contribute to new green infrastructure which *"connects to and enhances the existing network of multi-functional spaces and natural features throughout the district."*
- 4.110. Draft Policy IF4 states that the provision of open space, sport and recreation facilities will be required in order to meet the needs of the community. The requirement for facilities will have regard to the scale of development proposed and likely population characteristics arising from the proposed development, as well as local evidence of need.

- 4.111. Draft Policy IF5 considers the transport infrastructure requirements for new development. Proposals that are likely to generate significant amounts of movements on the local highway network will need to be supported by a Transport Assessment or Transport Statement.
- 4.112. Development will be required to maximise accessibility to sustainable modes of transport by providing well-designed pedestrian and cycle links within the development; where necessary, provide a bus link within the development; and take opportunities to link to existing footpaths, cycleways and bus routes within the wider area.
- 4.113. Development that will have a demonstrable impact on transport will be required to make a financial contribution towards public transport services; sustainable transport measures necessary to make the development acceptable and any offsite highway improvements necessary to mitigate the impact of development.
- 4.114. Parking for new development is dealt with through Draft Policy IF8, which requires development to provide the appropriate levels of vehicle and cycle parking, in line with the latest guidance published by NWLDC and Leicestershire County Council.
- 4.115. Draft Policy En1 is the emerging strategic policy dealing with nature conservation and biodiversity net gain. Policy En1 will seek to ensure that development provides biodiversity net gains which are consistent with the prevailing national planning policy at the time at the point of determination of the planning application.
- 4.116. Development will be required to follow the hierarchy of avoid; minimise; restore; and offset. On-site provision will be prioritised, wherever practicable. Any off-site provision should be well located to the proposed development. A management plan will be required which details *“how the post-development biodiversity values of the site and any supporting off-site provision will be secured, managed and monitored in perpetuity.”*
- 4.117. Draft Policy En6 deals with land and air quality and requires planning application that are likely to result in significant adverse impacts on air quality to be accompanied by an air quality assessment.
- 4.118. The conservation and enhancement of the historic environment is dealt with through Draft Strategic Policy En7 which requires planning applications to accord with national policy.

The Current North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan

- 4.119. Current local planning policy is set by the Local Plan, which was initially adopted in November 2017, but was then subject to a partial review with the adoption of the amended Local Plan in March 2021. The Local Plan sets out the planning policies for the District over the Plan Period to 2031.
- 4.120. The Local Plan sets out the long-term spatial vision for development, through the promotion, distribution and delivery of sustainable development throughout the District. It recognises the growth opportunities afforded to the District given its *“highly accessible position in the middle of the country”* and that this has consequently made the area particularly attractive to inward investors, with significantly more people employed in the transport and logistics sector (19.8%) than nationally.
- 4.121. North West Leicestershire District Council’s spatial vision encourages sustainable growth. The District’s ‘vision’ is set out on page 19 of the Local Plan and states:

*“Businesses will choose to locate and grow in this area, taking advantage of its excellent location in the centre of the country, close to major road and rail networks and a major international airport. The East Midlands Enterprise Gateway, focussed on East Midlands Airport, Donington Park and the East Midlands Gateway Rail Freight Interchange, will be recognised as a key destination in its own right. This strongly performing economy will be reflected in low unemployment and reduced instances of deprivation.”*

- 4.122. The Local Plan sets out a range of objectives which identify what the District Council is seeking to achieve through the Local Plan and new development. The objectives cover a variety of matters, including the need to deliver on housing requirements and to balance the growth of new homes with economic growth.
- 4.123. Many of the objectives are relevant to this planning application, including, objective 1, which seeks to promote the health and wellbeing of the District’s population; objective 2, which identifies the need to support the delivery of new homes balanced with economic growth to meet the needs of the community; objective 3, which seeks to ensure that new development is of high quality design and layout; objective 4, which aims to reduce the need to travel to services, facilities and jobs; objective 7, which looks to enhance community safety; objective 8, which looks to prepare, limit and adapt to climate change; objective 9, which states that new developments need to be designed to take account of and reduce flood risk; objective 10, which identifies the need to conserve and enhance the identity, character and diversity of local distinctiveness of the District’s built, natural, cultural, industrial and rural heritage as well as heritage assets; objective 11, which identifies the need to protect and enhance the natural environment and biodiversity; and objective 14 which identifies the need to deliver the necessary infrastructure for the area.
- 4.124. Policy S1 sets out the housing and economic development needs for the District, at the time of adoption, and confirms that NWLDC will seek to work to deliver the necessary housing and employment to support sustainable growth in the District.
- 4.125. Policy S2 then sets the Settlement Hierarchy, which seeks to direct most development to the larger settlements in the District, which are identified as the Principal Towns followed by the Key Service Centres.
- 4.126. Policy S3 identifies that land outside the ‘Limits to Development’ is countryside. The Policy sets out criteria under which development in the countryside would be supported. The Policy then sets out separate criteria with regard to the design and form of development proposals which would enable them to be supported. The criteria include that proposals do not undermine (either individually or cumulatively) physical or perceived separation between developments; that the development can be well integrated with existing development; and that the development is accessible, or will be made accessible, by a range of sustainable transport modes.
- 4.127. Policy D1 considers the design of new development. It states that the Council will support proposed developments that are well designed. The policy requires that:
- “All developments must be based upon a robust opportunities and constraints assessment and be informed by a comprehensive site and contextual appraisal”.*
- 4.128. It also requires that all new development *“should have regard to sustainable design and construction methods.”*

- 4.129. Amenity is dealt with through Policy D2. The Policy requires that development proposals should be designed to *“minimise their impact on the amenity and quiet enjoyment of both existing and future residents within the proposed development and close to it.”* In this regard, development proposals will be supported where they do not have a significant adverse impact on the living conditions of existing or new residents and where they do not generate a level of activity, noise, vibration, pollution or unpleasant odour emission which cannot be mitigated.
- 4.130. Policy H6 has regard to housing types and mix and confirms the Council’s ambitions for development to deliver a range of housing types, including provision for elderly people and affordable housing.
- 4.131. Development and infrastructure are considered through Policy IF1. It requires that development *“will be supported by, and make contributions to as appropriate, the provision of new physical, social and green infrastructure in order to mitigate its impact upon the environment and communities.”* In this regard, contributions may be secured through planning obligations or a Community Infrastructure Levy charge (should the Council bring this into effect). On or off-site infrastructure may be secured through a financial contribution and may include the long-term management and maintenance of the infrastructure.
- 4.132. Policy IF4 considers transport infrastructure and new development. It identifies that the Council, working with the highway authorities, will ensure that development takes account of the impact on the highway network, alongside the environment, and incorporates accessible connections to the transport network to enable ‘travel choice’. In this context, new development will be expected to maximise accessibility by sustainable modes of transport, having regard to both the nature and location of proposed development.
- 4.133. Parking provision and new development is dealt with through Policy IF7. Policy IF7 requires that development incorporates adequate parking provision for vehicles and cycles, in order to minimise the impact on the environment and avoid highway safety problems. Parking should be designed as an integral part of development proposals to ensure that it does not dominate the public realm. When considering new development, the Council will have regard to local highway and parking conditions; the most up to date 6C’s design guidance; Transport Assessments and Travel Plans associated with the proposals; and seek the minimum requirement specified in the 6C’s guidance relating to cycle parking.
- 4.134. Policy En1 considers nature conservation. It states that new development will be expected to maintain existing ecological networks, hotspots and landscape features for biodiversity, as well as for other green infrastructure and recreational uses.
- 4.135. Policy En6 considers land and air quality. It states that development proposals should avoid any unacceptable adverse impact on soils of high environmental value and ensure that soil resources are conserved and managed in a sustainable way.
- 4.136. The conservation and enhancement of North West Leicestershire’s historic environment is dealt with through Policy He1 which states that there will be a presumption against all development which would lead to harm or total loss of a heritage asset, unless the harm or loss is necessary to achieve sustainable development with substantial public benefit which would outweigh the harm or loss. It requires that proposals for development should:
- Conserve and enhance significant heritage assets.

- Retain buildings and other features which form part of the significance of a heritage asset or its setting.
- Contribute to local distinctiveness, built form and scale of heritage assets through the use of appropriate design, materials and workmanship.
- Demonstrate a clear understanding of the significance of the heritage asset and of the wider context in which the heritage asset sits.

4.137. Policy Cc1 confirms the Council's support for renewable energy generation.

4.138. Policy Cc2 considers flood risk. The Policy identifies the ways in which the impact of flooding will be minimised. Proposals will be supported where:

- They are located in an area which is not at risk of flooding, unless the Sequential Test and, if necessary, Exception Test identified in the National Planning Practice Guidance proves that the development is acceptable.
- A site specific Flood Risk Assessment is prepared which considered the issues of flooding from all sources.
- Suitable flood risk protection/mitigation measures can be agreed.
- There will be no increase in the risk of flooding for properties elsewhere and run-off rates are appropriate for the site in question.

4.139. Policy Cc3 has regard to sustainable drainage systems and requires that sustainable drainage systems should be incorporated into developments in accordance with national and local standards.

#### **Other Material Considerations**

4.140. There are a number of other Supplementary Planning Documents, Strategies and Plans which are relevant to this application and which should be a material consideration in assessing the proposals. The key documents of relevance to this planning application are set out below.

#### Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan

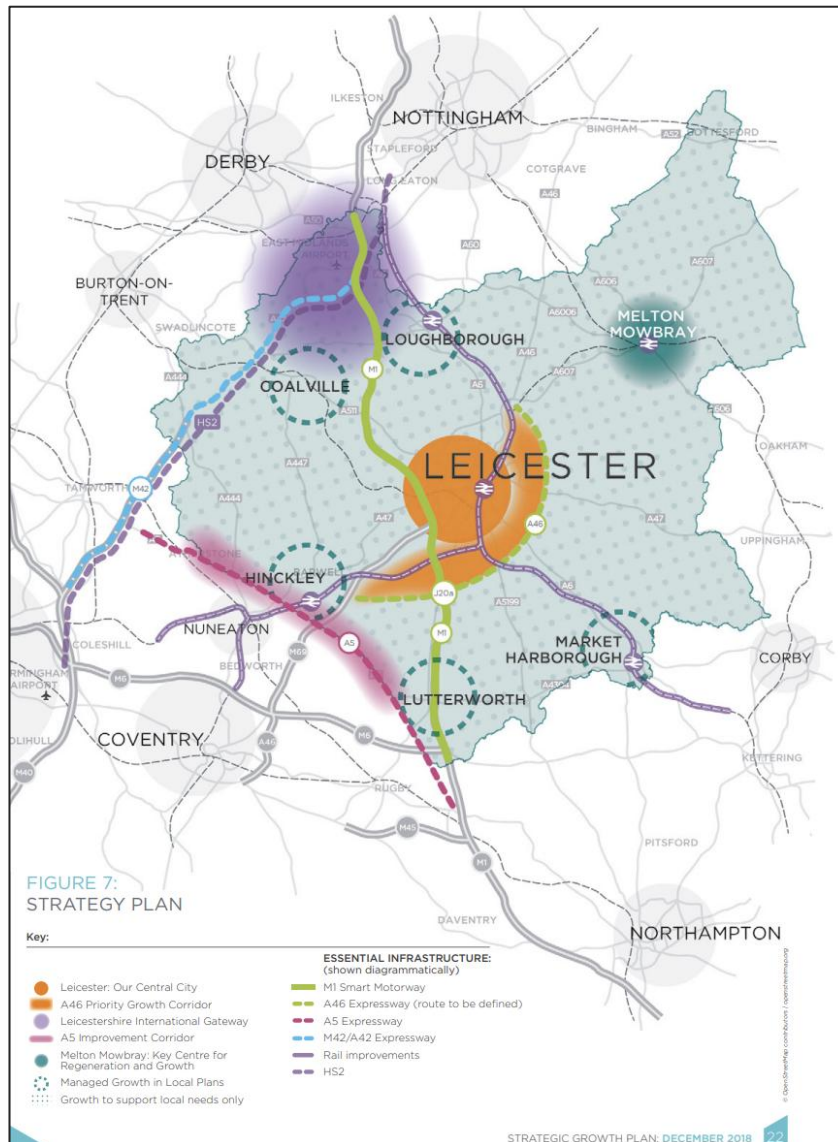
4.141. The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) is a non-statutory Plan, published in December 2018, which covers the period to 2050. It was prepared by ten partnership organisations, including the LLEP, Leicestershire County Council and North West Leicestershire District Council.

4.142. The SGP presents the long-term vision for growth for the region and provides an agreed framework for the preparation of future individual Local Plans and other strategies. It states that, in order to deliver the strategy, Local Plans will be prepared *"in line with this spatial strategy to ensure that growth is delivered in a way which responds positively to our aspirations."*

4.143. The SGP recognises the locational advantages afforded to Leicester and Leicestershire, specifically with regard to its connectivity, lying, as it does, *"at the heart of the UK"*. It is explicit in its support for growth and identifies broad strategic locations where the partnership

organisations believe that growth should take place. One such location is the ‘Leicestershire International Gateway’, which is identified as a key and important location for growth.

4.144. The ‘Strategy Plan’ at Figure 5 identifies the extent of the Leicestershire International Gateway area in context with other areas of growth for the City and County.



**Figure 6: Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan – Strategy Plan**

North West Leicestershire Economic Growth Plan

4.145. The Economic Growth Plan covers the period 2020–2025 and updates the previous 2019 Growth Plan.

4.146. The document, in its own words, “creates a clear pathway to support local growth and provides a framework for delivery of key objectives and resources”.

4.147. The document confirms NWLDC’s intention that the District is carbon neutral by 2050 and, in alignment with the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan, sets out the priorities to create the conditions for new investment and growth.

4.148. The Economic Growth Plan recognises the importance of creating the right environment to continue to support sustainable economic growth and identifies the need to deliver the appropriate housing for the workforce along with access to facilities and good connectivity.

North West Leicestershire Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment

4.149. The NPPF requires that Local Planning Authorities understand the land that is available for potential development within their area, to enable them to identify land for housing and employment development.

4.150. In this context, in 2021, NWLDC prepared a Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA). The SHELLA forms part of the Evidence Base for the preparation of the new Local Plan and Isley Woodhouse is contained in the report in both the assessment of housing and economic land availability.

4.151. The SHELAA identifies that the Site is considered potentially available for development and this is one of the contributing factors to its proposed allocation in the new Local Plan.

Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document

4.152. The NWLDC Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) identifies the current approach to affordable housing. It was last updated in 2021 to deal with changes to Government policy at that time. It identifies a requirement for 30% affordable housing on major development schemes.

Good Design SPD

4.153. The Good Design SPD supports the design policies in the Local Plan and was adopted in 2017.

4.154. It details NWLDC’s policies for good design, which are based on a series of place making principles. The policies apply to all development across the District.

4.155. NWLDC is in the early stages of updating the Good Design SPD and, once adopted, the new document will replace the existing SPD.

Neighbourhood Plans

4.156. Breedon on the Hill has recently had its Neighbourhood Plan ‘made’ and Long Whatton and Diseworth are in the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan.

4.157. The Breedon on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan went to Referendum on the 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025 and over 85% of votes were in its favour. The Neighbourhood Plan came into force on the 27<sup>th</sup> March when NWLDC agreed to ‘make’ it.

4.158. The Breedon on the Hill Neighbourhood Plan covers the period from 2020 to 2040. It identifies that Isley Woodhouse is proposed to be a new settlement in the emerging Local Plan and sought to impose an area of separation between the village and the proposed new settlement. However, the Neighbourhood Plan examiner found this premature, but the Plan

retains that *"the Parish Council will ensure that this matter is addressed by the emerging Local Plan."*

- 4.159. The Submission version of the Diseworth and Long Whatton Neighbourhood Plan has recently been issued to NWLDC.
- 4.160. It also covers the period to 2040 and similarly confirms that the Parish Council will seek to ensure that an area of separation is secured between Diseworth and Isley Woodhouse through the new Local Plan.

## 5. Appraisal of the Planning Application

### Introduction

- 5.1. This section of the Planning Statement appraises the application against the relevant local and national planning policies. It also brings together the key findings of the various documents submitted in support of this planning application, to reach a logical conclusion about the merits of the proposed scheme.
- 5.2. The emerging new Local Plan sets the tone, ambition and policy context for the District over the coming years and provides the context for the Isley Woodhouse proposals. Consequently, it is the key document for consideration in determination of this planning application, rather than the existing Local Plan, for which the Plan Period ends in 2031.
- 5.3. As such, for local policy, this appraisal has primary regard to the emerging policies, given that these will provide the conditions for the assessment of suitability and the delivery of Isley Woodhouse.

### NWLDC New Local Plan – New Settlement: Isley Woodhouse (Proposed Allocation IW1)

- 5.4. The proposals for Isley Woodhouse have been developed in the context of the emerging Local Plan allocation IW1. As such, this sub-section of the Planning Statement deals with Proposed Allocation Policy IW in detail, setting out how the proposals, subject to this application, accord with the Policy and the ambitions of NWLDC for the delivery of the new settlement.
- 5.5. Specifically, this sub-section considers how the application responds to the key underpinning principles, set out in IW1, which form the framework for the delivery of the Site, taking each in turn:

- a) *“Putting the health and wellbeing of residents and workers at the forefront by creating an accessible, safe, sociable and inclusive environment where healthy choices are easy to make.”*

A healthy and inclusive environment will be fostered at Isley Woodhouse through its design and delivery. Working with the principles of walkable neighbourhoods, the scheme will implement the 15-minute settlement concept. This means that all daily needs are accessible within a 15-minute walk or a short cycle journey from home.

Not only will this help promote modal shift, but it will simultaneously deliver physical and mental health benefits, enabling a greater level of social interaction and creating a sense of community.

The new village centres will each provide a cluster of uses, including homes, workplaces, shops and schools. These centres will become community hubs for residents to enjoy.

- b) *“Striving for carbon neutrality, including by incorporating measures to minimise energy consumption whilst maximising the benefits from on-site renewable energy generation and energy efficient buildings.”*

The Environmental Statement submitted in support of this application includes a chapter on climate change which identifies how the scheme will respond to the need to address climate change.

It confirms that all dwellings and non-residential buildings will be designed to comply with the forthcoming Future Homes Standard and Future Buildings Standard, respectively. This will ensure that these buildings benefit from high fabric performance, efficient building services and low carbon heating. As a result, they will be 'zero carbon ready', with operational energy emissions reducing to zero once the UK electricity grid has fully decarbonised.

A Sustainability Statement is also submitted in support of this application which sets out the way in which the Site will address energy requirements. It identifies that, in order to reduce the operational energy demand at the Site, Isley Woodhouse will be designed and delivered in line with the 'energy hierarchy' taking a fabric first approach, embedding this within the scheme.

With regard to on-site renewable energy generation, the Site will comply with all relevant standards at the time of building delivery. Options being explored currently include Solar PV systems and air source heat pumps.

*c) "Achieving exceptional design quality based on a bespoke design code."*

Isley Woodhouse is a proposal of significant scale with a build out period of circa 25 years. This planning application is therefore necessarily made in outline. In this context, as an outline application, it is not appropriate to set the detailed design at this stage. Instead, this will come forward through future Reserved Matters applications and future Design Codes.

However, the principles for these future detailed submissions can be set now. In this regard, the Site's bespoke Design and Access Statement sets clear principles for the minimum design standards to be achieved within the Site and this will help inform any future Design Codes for the scheme.

The Design and Access Statement identifies the different character areas of the Site and how these should be treated in design terms. Alongside the identities for each character area, it sets out the overarching design principles governing the delivery of the site as a whole, from street and active travel provision, through to the delivery of open space and green and blue infrastructure. It follows current guidelines and policy requirements and sets the minimum standards to be achieved in delivering the Site.

*d) "Delivering the infrastructure needed to serve the development."*

It is vital to the success of Isley Woodhouse as a new settlement that the necessary infrastructure is in place at the right time. This includes roads and services but also includes landscaping to help assimilate the development and to ensure that a pleasant environment is created from the outset. The Site accesses and realignment of the A453 will be delivered within the early stages of the scheme, as will some of the perimeter landscaping.

The schools will be delivered in line with the education authority requirements, which formed part of the pre-application engagement discussions with the education authority.

There are thresholds for student numbers, which will be adhered to, to ensure the viability and sustainability of the schools.

In order for Isley Woodhouse to thrive and be truly sustainable, it is also proposed that the active travel infrastructure is delivered early in the development, so that this is, as far as possible and practicable, in place from the outset, supporting and promoting travel choices.

The delivery of the Site over a 25 year period will mean that it is phased. However, the phasing will ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place at the appropriate time. Final decisions on timing for delivery can be discussed with the relevant authorities as the scheme progresses and can be secured through planning conditions and obligations.

*e) "Making sustainable travel – walking, cycling, public transport and the use of electric vehicles – a realistic option for residents and workers."*

The Isley Woodhouse proposals prioritise active travel by making this the most convenient and efficient way to get around. This will be achieved through the design of the movement network, which will include primary and secondary active travel routes for pedestrians and cyclists.

The active travel routes will be integrated into primary streets and green corridors. Where possible, they will also connect to the existing network of routes around the site.

*f) "Creating a village which caters for all stages of life."*

The Isley Woodhouse proposals include a mixture of housing types and tenures. The new settlement will offer a range of sizes, from apartments through to terraced, semi-detached and detached homes. The provision will include rental properties as well as affordable housing and those to purchase on the open market.

Isley Woodhouse will include other specific house types which reflect the changing world, including senior living properties. The Site will be built out over circa 25 years and will continue to respond to the needs of the population throughout its various phases of delivery.

*g) "Ensuring residents' day to day needs can be met as far as possible within the village."*

As noted above, Isley Woodhouse will be delivered on the principle of the 15-minute settlement. This will ensure that all day to day needs can be met within a 15-minute walk or short cycle journey from home. The village centres will include homes, workplaces, shops and schools and will be the hub of activity for the local community.

*h) "Enabling people to live close to where they work by creating a village with a range of house types and tenures, including plentiful affordable housing, with sustainable transport links to nearby employment areas."*

As noted above, Isley Woodhouse will include a mixture of housing types and tenures. The new settlement will offer a range of sizes, from apartments through to terraced, semi-detached and detached homes. The provision will include rental properties as well as affordable housing and those to purchase on the open market.

The ambition is to deliver higher density village centres, placing more people close to the facilities and workplaces available in these locations.

The proximity of residents to the village centres will enable the centres to thrive and will further help to promote active travel.

Active travel routes will run throughout the Site and connect to existing routes in the Site’s vicinity, meaning that walking and cycling to work is a genuine choice for residents at Isley Woodhouse.

All homes will be within 400 metres of a bus stop, which will provide sustainable connections to the wider area, including the surrounding settlements and employment sites.

### National and Local Policies – Sustainable Development

- 5.6. The NPPF is clear, sustainable development should be pursued in a positive way, which is why the ‘presumption in favour of sustainable development’ lies at the heart of national policy.
- 5.7. The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan responds to the need to deliver sustainable development by focussing on three broad locations for growth, where the partner organisations believe that growth could most sustainably and advantageously be delivered.
- 5.8. The Strategic Growth Plan recognises the locational advantages afforded to Leicester and Leicestershire specifically, highlighting its position “*at the heart of the UK*”. In this context, its identification of the Leicestershire International Gateway, highlighted in purple through the Strategy Plan, demonstrates the suitability of the area to accommodate sustainable growth.
- 5.9. NWLDC has taken the lead from the Strategic Growth Plan and proposed to allocate a new settlement within this area. The red oval superimposed on the image below shows the approximate location of Isley Woodhouse at the heart of the Leicestershire International Gateway area.

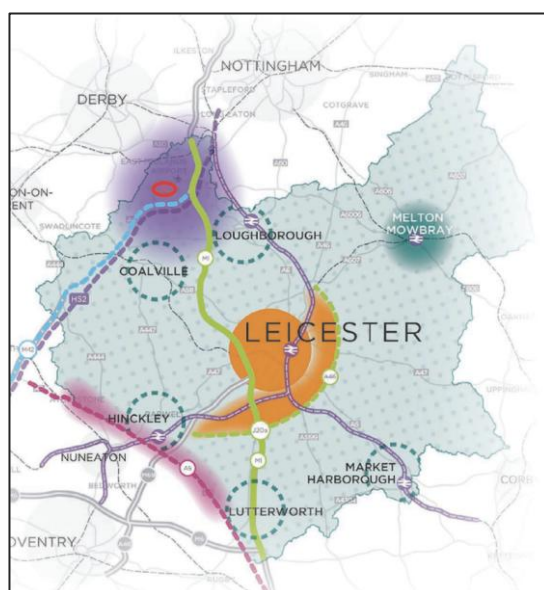


Figure 7: Strategic Growth Plan Strategy Plan with Isley Woodhouse Location Added

- 5.10. This is the starting point for the planning application for the new settlement of Isley Woodhouse. It is demonstrably following local and regional growth ambitions, according absolutely with the Strategic Growth Plan and the emerging Local Plan.
- 5.11. The locational advantages recognised by the Strategic Growth Plan have been capitalised on through the delivery of employment development, which benefits from the excellent access to the Strategic Road Network.
- 5.12. However, the delivery of housing has not kept pace with the exponential growth in employment sites and a disparity between the two has arisen.
- 5.13. Travel data shows that 80% of the area’s workers commute into the general East Midland Gateway area, with there currently being only circa 6,000 homes within a 2.5 km radius of the key employment sites, which include EMA; East Midlands Gateway Strategic Rail Freight Interchange; and East Midlands Distribution Centre. This lack of local housing increases car dependence, creating an additional traffic burden, which both reduces the efficiency of local businesses and negatively impacts on carbon emissions and local air quality. The present balance of jobs and homes in the area is considered unsustainable.
- 5.14. With the likelihood of further jobs being created on these sites over the next couple of decades, alongside NWLDC’s declaration that the District will become a Net Zero Carbon District by 2050, these is a clear need for new quality housing to be delivered close to where people work at these important employment sites.
- 5.15. The Isley Woodhouse proposals seek to bridge this gap by delivering houses close to jobs. This is the scheme’s *raison d’être*. It is demonstrably sustainable.
- 5.16. Through its reason for being, Isley Woodhouse addresses all three of the overarching objectives of sustainable development:
- An economic objective – the scheme will support businesses by enabling employees to live close to where they work, increasing the potential pool of talent available for employers, by delivering a greater choice of homes and the ability to achieve a better work/life balance for workers. The reduction in in-commuting of workers will also benefit the road network by reducing the need for workers to travel to the area, particularly at peak times. The Site also delivers circa 10 hectares of employment space in a demonstrably attractive and sustainable location for business.
  - A social objective – Isley Woodhouse will enable people to live close to where they work, increasing their choice of travel options. Its proximity to existing employment sites means that it is perfectly situated to ensure that active travel becomes a real choice for workers, with the key employment sites all being within a 2 to 5 km radius of the new settlement. In turn, this will create a healthy and vibrant community where active travel is a way of life. This meets the needs of present and future generations through creating, from the outset, an accessible and safe environment, rather than the need to retrofit concepts to existing settlements. By delivering the infrastructure for residents to safely get around without using a car and connecting new routes within the Site to existing routes in the wider the area, the scheme helps to meet the needs of future generations by ensuring that sustainability is imbedded in the scheme. New generations born at Isley Woodhouse will see sustainable travel and sustainable travel infrastructure as the norm, which will help support and encourage the next generation to strive for sustainable living.

- An environmental objective – The proposals make effective use of the Site by delivering circa 4,250 new homes in a location needing significant housing to match its recent employment growth. In this regard, it makes effective use of the land. Through reducing in-commuting and changing commuter patterns by promoting and encouraging sustainable travel, the scheme will help in addressing climate change. It supports national and local ambitions to transition to a low carbon future and economy.

#### Biodiversity and Ecology

- 5.17. Isley Woodhouse will achieve a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain through a mixture of on-site biodiversity unit delivery and offsetting.
- 5.18. While offsetting will be minimised where possible, the proximity of EMA and its necessary safeguarding presents some obstacles in the creation of new habitats, limiting, for example the capacity for the site to deliver bodies of open water and restricting the planting species available for delivery. In order to comply with emerging Policy Ec9, the airport safeguarding measures and guidelines will be adhered to.
- 5.19. Notwithstanding, the green infrastructure will incorporate structurally diverse and species rich planting, using locally native species. New habitats which are not currently found on the site will be created throughout the green infrastructure space, including species-rich meadow grassland and wet grassland.
- 5.20. Where possible the landscaping will seek to deliver a mosaic of different, complimentary habitats, including, for example, through swales to provide shelter for local fauna with foraging opportunities in close association.
- 5.21. In line with paragraph 193 of the NPPF the scheme will seek to deliver biodiversity net gains through integrated proposals which enhance public access to nature.
- 5.22. The delivery of the landscaped areas will be phased to maximise biodiversity benefits through enabling the maximum length of time for habitat parcels to develop, meaning that some of the perimeter landscaping and habitat creation is well established and already delivering benefits by the time that the later phases of the scheme come forward.
- 5.23. Within the site there will also be species specific targeted mitigation, including the delivery of bat boxes, bird boxes, hibernacula, log piles and bat hop-overs.
- 5.24. Overall, the Site's design will maintain and improve upon the conservation status of notable habitats and species, in accordance with the requirements of local and national policy.

#### Drainage and Flood Risk

- 5.25. The application is supported by an Sustainable Drainage Strategy which, in line with emerging Policy AP8 and NPPF paragraph 182 uses Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to provide the treatment to surface water runoff.
- 5.26. The Site is largely located in Flood Zone 1, with only a small part of the Site, adjacent to the Ramsley Brook, being located within Flood Zones 2 and 3. However, all of the area subject to built development is within Flood Zone 1. As such, the application accords fully with national policy which directs development to the areas at least risk of flooding.

5.27. The NPPF also directs that development should not increase the risk of flooding in surrounding areas. Not only does Isley Woodhouse accord with this requirement, but it actually presents the opportunity to deliver betterment to Diseworth which currently suffers with flooding issues. Perhaps counter intuitively, delivery of development on the Site will reduce flows into the watercourses which feed into Diseworth. This is achieved through careful drainage design. Reducing the flows, means that some properties currently at risk of flooding within Diseworth, will be effectively lifted out of risk. In this regard, the proposals go above and beyond national requirements.

#### Noise

5.28. The surrounding context for Isley Woodhouse has the potential to create a noisy environment. The application proposals are capable of according with World Health Organisation guidelines on acceptable levels of noise, subject to mitigation measures being secured. The noise chapter of the Environmental Statement and associated Noise Assessment comprehensively deal with the noise context and how this can be appropriately mitigated through both design and planning conditions.

5.29. In recognition of noise as a constraint for the Site, early work was undertaken to understand how this could affect the emerging proposals. The baseline information obtained through the noise assessment work identified that the majority of the Site sits comfortably within the guideline acceptable levels of noise for residential development. However, the noise contours illustrated that some of the northern portion of the Site, directly adjacent to the A453, would not be an appropriate location for residential development. This informed the design of the scheme and is the key reason behind the proposed location for the employment component of the development.

5.30. Mitigation will be embedded within the design of the scheme through various measures, including the location and orientation of buildings to help reduce noise levels across the development, wherever possible.

5.31. The supporting text for emerging Allocation Policy IW1 recognises noise as a possible constraint for development and identifies that a full Noise Assessment will be required with any planning application for the Site. This planning application adheres to this requirement.

#### The Historic Environment

5.32. There are no statutory designations within the Site and the Site is not located within a conservation area.

5.33. However, there are conservation areas located near to the Site at Wilson, Tonge and Diseworth. The closest of these is Tonge Conservation Area, lying circa 400m south-west of the Site.

5.34. There are also a number of Listed Buildings close to the Site, with the closest being a Grade II Listed Building at Isley Walton.

5.35. In line with national policy requirements, the proposals respect their surrounding context through seeking to minimise the scheme's impact. Around Isley Walton, Tonge and Diseworth, the closest settlements, this is achieved by setting development back from the Site boundary to enable significant landscaping to be delivered and also includes ensuring a lower density and lower building heights for development in these locations.

## Design Principles

- 5.36. The Design and Access Statement details the extensive and iterative design process which has been undertaken and which has resulted in the proposed scale and form of development presented in this planning application.
- 5.37. This process included extensive pre-application consultation with various authorities and bodies over an extended period of time, as set out in the Design and Access Statement. This consultation informed the evolution of the proposals from the outset. The quality and quantity of the pre-application engagement undertaken reflects the significant benefit it can provide to a scheme, as identified in paragraph 40 of the NPPF.
- 5.38. Resolving issues, as far as possible, at the pre-application stage is recommended by the NPPF (paragraph 42) and the applicant team has sought to do this through their extensive pre-application engagement.
- 5.39. As part of the pre-application work, the Isley Woodhouse proposals were subject to an independent Design Review, undertaken by Design: Midlands. The considerations taken from this review have further helped shape the scheme presented in this planning application.
- 5.40. The Site has also been subject to community engagement, which is set out in the Statement of Community Involvement. This included a stakeholder workshop to help ensure that the proposals address technical and local perspectives.
- 5.41. All of this work has culminated in the design approach taken to the Site as a whole and to the principles underpinning the proposals. This pro-active approach accords absolutely with the requirements of the NPPF and its ambitions for community and stakeholder engagement.

## Built Development

- 5.42. As a new settlement delivering some 4,250 new homes, Isley Woodhouse will have a long build out period of circa 25 years. In this context, it is impossible to absolutely pinpoint now what the designs of the later phases of the scheme should be. The Site needs to retain flexibility to enable it to respond to change, not just in the way in which people live their lives, but in design requirements and development standards.
- 5.43. National policy places sustainable development at the heart of the planning process and consequently flexibility is prerequisite for a scheme of this scale, with its associated timeframe, to ensure that it can respond to changing circumstances.
- 5.44. The supporting Design and Access Statement sets clear principles for the minimum standards of design to be achieved within the site and this will help inform any future Design Codes for the scheme, in line with IW1 of the emerging Local Plan and the provision for the use of Design Codes made through the NPPF.
- 5.45. The Design and Access Statement identifies the different character areas of the Site and how these should be treated in design terms. These proposals will help ensure that each character area responds to its context through creating its own distinctive attributes.
- 5.46. The individual character areas will seamlessly integrate with one another whilst retaining their own sense of identity, reflecting their immediate surroundings and setting, not just within the site itself, but the wider area. Thus, helping the scheme assimilate within its surroundings.

- 5.47. This approach removes the possibility of a bland indistinguishable development, plagued by uniformity. It instead seeks to ensure that there are distinguishable areas within the wider Site, whilst providing a continuity of design. In turn, this helps to form individual neighbourhoods and strengthen community cohesion through generating a true sense of place and civic pride.
- 5.48. The response to context will be particularly important and helpful when considering development in closest proximity to nearby settlements. Lower building heights and densities in these areas are proposed in direct response to this context and will help mitigate the impacts on surrounding settlements. Lower densities will protect neighbouring amenity and help to ensure that the proposals are not overbearing, in line with both NPPF paragraph 135(f) and emerging Local Plan Policies AP1 and AP2.
- 5.49. A healthy and inclusive environment will be fostered at Isley Woodhouse through its design and delivery. Working with the principles of walkable neighbourhoods, the scheme will implement the 15-minute settlement concept, ensuring that all daily needs are accessible within a 15-minute walk or a short cycle journey from home.
- 5.50. Not only will this help promote modal shift, but it will simultaneously deliver physical and mental health benefits, enabling a greater level of social interaction and creating a sense of community, in line with paragraph 96 of the NPPF. It will open up opportunities for people to meet and come into contact with each other by encouraging active travel with strong, legible pedestrian and cycle connectivity to key locations. The connections will be generous and well-designed to create safe, inclusive spaces and to help promote good health.
- 5.51. The proposals include two Neighbourhood Centres, which will each have a two-form entry primary school, one within the western and one within the eastern area of the Site. A larger Local Centre sits centrally within the scheme; this will house a new secondary school. The school provision has been identified following the pre-application engagement responses received from the education authority.
- 5.52. Alongside the schools, the new village centres will each provide a cluster of uses, including homes, workplaces and shops. This provision aligns exactly with the requirements of NPPF paragraph 98. The centres will become community hubs for residents to enjoy. This is similarly in line with NPPF paragraph 96 and will help create community cohesion.
- 5.53. The proposals seek to deliver higher density village centres, placing more people close to the facilities and workplaces available in these locations. The proximity of residents to the village centres will enable the centres to thrive and will further help to promote active travel. This integration of homes alongside other spaces will help reduce health inequalities by ensuring that everyone has access to the shops and other facilities they need, again in line with NPPF requirements and emerging Policy AP5.
- 5.54. The sub-section below discusses green infrastructure and open space, within which the built development will integrate. The central green corridors running through the site provide recreational and active travel opportunities for the community and are the backbone of the proposals. They will ensure that all residents at Isley Woodhouse have access to vital green spaces, as directed by the NPPF.

Delivering High Quality and Affordable Homes

- 5.55. The Site has the capacity to deliver a significant number of new homes. The Design and Access Statement sets clear principles for the levels of design to be achieved within the site and this will help inform any future Design Codes for the scheme.
- 5.56. The Isley Woodhouse proposals include a mixture of housing types and tenures. The new settlement will offer a range of sizes, from apartments through to, terraced, semi-detached and detached homes. The provision will include rental properties as well as affordable housing and those to purchase on the open market. This approach will ensure that the Site's delivery accords with proposed allocation IW1 and responds to the benefits outlined in paragraph 71 of the NPPF with regard to creating diverse communities.
- 5.57. The Design and Access Statement identifies that cues for the building design could be taken from the surrounding vernacular whilst at the same time encouraging innovation and contemporary approaches.
- 5.58. Homes on the site will need to meet key energy efficiency standards, whilst also being affordable for local people and people working at nearby employment sites.
- 5.59. In this regard, the emphasis of the Isley Woodhouse proposals is on the quality of design and efficient and affordability for local people.
- 5.60. With this in mind, we have analysed the expected salary levels of jobs within a 5-mile radius of EMA. For a detailed review of the economic circumstances of the area and within North West Leicestershire specifically, the Socio-Economic Chapter of the Environmental Statement provides a detailed review and conclusions on the effects which the development of the Site could have locally.
- 5.61. Data from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Business Register and Employment Survey show that within a 5-mile radius of EMA the jobs within the transport and storage, manufacturing and the professional scientific and technical sectors account for the highest proportion of employment, at 17.4%, 14.5% and 11.6% respectively. Combined, therefore, these sectors account for over 43% of the total employment within this 5-mile radius, supporting around 30,000 jobs.
- 5.62. Drawing on data from the ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings it is demonstrated that the gross median annual salary for all industries in the East Midlands is £30,326. However, the gross annual salary for the transport and storage sector is £31,292 and for the professional scientific and technical and manufacturing sectors the gross median annual salary is £31,828.
- 5.63. There is a perception that jobs in these industries are invariably low paid. However, this is not the case and the figures above demonstrate that the median annual salary for a significant number of jobs in close proximity to the Site is above the average salary for the East Midlands. Consequently, in order to create a diverse community at Isley Woodhouse and to ensure that there are houses available for everyone, a range of types and tenures must be provided, from affordable through to more aspirational homes.

#### Affordable Housing Statement

- 5.64. Emerging Policy H5 will set the affordable housing requirements for the future of the District; however, it does not currently identify these requirements, which are subject to further viability testing. As such, in accordance with current local policy requirements on affordable housing, it is proposed that up to 30% of the dwellings provided will be affordable.

- 5.65. The exact mix of unit types and sizes will be subject to further consultation with NWLDC and will be secured through the Section 106 Legal Agreement. Detailed design of the affordable housing provision will then come forward for each phase of development at the Reserved Matters stage.
- 5.66. Clearly, with a build out programme stretching some circa 25 years into the future, flexibility will need to be maintained to ensure that the new settlement can respond to changing circumstances in the market. Notwithstanding, the proposals in this application accord with current local policy and national requirements for affordable housing.

#### Employment Provision

- 5.67. In accordance with emerging Policy IW1, the northern central portion of the site will contain employment provision covering circa 10.39 hectares and providing approximately 23,000 square metres of employment space.
- 5.68. The proposed provision of units will be smaller than the surrounding uses, to avoid direct conflict, to diversify job opportunities for residents and to respect the context of the rest of the new settlement.
- 5.69. The location of the employment responds positively to the identified noise constraints for the site which would prevent more sensitive uses, such as housing, being located in this area. In this regard, the proposals meet the requirements of Section 11 of the NPPF in making effective use of land.
- 5.70. The juxtaposition of employment and housing will be carefully managed and building heights will progressively tier down from the highest point in the east, to the lowest in the west.

#### Green Infrastructure and Open Space

- 5.71. The public open space strategy for the Site creates a variety of green corridors which respond to existing features within the site and to the wider area. To the east, this includes the existing watercourse corridors and to the west it responds to long distance views associated with Breedon on the Hill and Melbourne through the creation of two 50 metre wide landscape corridors.
- 5.72. These green and view corridors were the starting point for the proposals and were drawn from the Council's Landscape Sensitivity Study (2020); they form the backbone to Isley Woodhouse. Development has specifically been designed around these spaces in a landscape-led approach to the scheme. Indeed, over 44% of the Site area will be open space which will be enshrined through the establishment of the development parameters.
- 5.73. The Green Infrastructure Strategy recognises the sensitive edges to the Site and responds to these accordingly. The eastern side of the site, closest to Diseworth, will contain a 40 metre landscape corridor, which will include woodland planting, scrub and grassland. This will help to screen the development from Diseworth and ensure that impacts on the village are minimised.
- 5.74. Key habitats, such as the Dumps plantation will be retained in recognition of the need to protect habitat spaces, minimising impacts on biodiversity. As such, this will largely be preserved as a natural environment. Alongside the Dumps plantation the proposals include extensive retention of category A and B trees, in line with national policy.

- 5.75. In line with the ambitions of the NPPF, the delivery of publicly accessible green infrastructure helps to improve access to green space. Public access within the site is currently restricted to the PRoW which cross it. The application proposals will enable significant areas of green space to be made accessible, providing a substantial benefit not just to new residents within Isley Woodhouse, but for those in the surrounding area who will have the opportunity to utilise the space, connected through active travel links. This aligns with paragraph 103 of the NPPF, the emerging Policy AP5 as well as IF4 whilst also according with the requirements to Draft Allocation IW1.
- 5.76. The overall strategy also accords with emerging Policy IF3 ensuring that it *“connects to and enhances the existing network of multi-functional spaces and natural features throughout the district.”*
- 5.77. Importantly, the delivery of the green infrastructure landscaping will be phased to ensure that it can help to provide screening for the development as early as possible. This has added biodiversity benefits, by ensuring that habitats can mature and have the chance to deliver biodiversity net gain benefits early in the Site’s delivery.
- 5.78. Sports provision will be integrated within the development proposals. Key provision will be made at the centre of the Site, adjacent to the Local Centre, to help ensure that it is accessible to all parts of the wider Isley Woodhouse community. The provision will be linked to the leisure facilities and Secondary School to help integrate uses and prolong the use and benefits of these spaces.
- 5.79. The delivery of sports provision is made in line with the local requirements and follows the advice received during the pre-application engagement.
- 5.80. Whilst there is extensive green infrastructure within the site, the outline proposals have been drawn up having careful regard to the requirements of EMA, in line with the safeguarding requirements of emerging Policy Ec9.

### **Connectivity**

- 5.81. As previously mentioned, the *raison d’être* for Isley Woodhouse’s location is its proximity to jobs and its accessibility. Its sustainable position to deliver new homes is recognised through the proposed allocation Policy IW1.
- 5.82. The integrated movement network delivers a clear hierarchy of streets, which will include segregated cycleways and footways to encourage active travel. In line with paragraph 110 of the NPPF, the proposals overall will limit the need to travel and offer a genuine choice of transport modes.

### Pedestrian and Cycle Connectivity

- 5.83. The creation of a new settlement provides unrivalled opportunity to place active travel connections at the heart of design. The Isley Woodhouse proposals grasp this opportunity with the proposed delivery of an extensive network of new footways and cycleways which traverse the Site, as required through emerging Policy IF5.
- 5.84. In line with paragraph 109 of the NPPF, the proposals will deliver *“attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking (drawing on Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans)”*. The proposals have been drawn together

following consultation with NWLDC; Leicestershire County Council; Active Travel England; and local communities and have been devised in line with the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan.

- 5.85. The advancement of active travel has an array of benefits, as identified in the NPPF. The connections provided through the Isley Woodhouse proposals will help to reduce congestion, improve air quality and public health and ensure that people have genuine choice.
- 5.86. Although there is a plethora of PRow around the Site, the existing cycle infrastructure in its vicinity is limited and currently the Site is not connected to the available routes. Consequently, the Isley Woodhouse proposals seek to link the Site with the surrounding employment areas and settlements, as well as to the existing recreational routes.
- 5.87. As such the active travel proposals extend beyond the Site with links to the 'Airport Trail' permissive path which runs around the perimeter of EMA and with the potential to connect to the adjacent Sustrans routes.
- 5.88. Broadening the sustainable travel options beyond the Site will support an increase in sustainable and active travel journeys and help to promote modal shift, in line with national and local policy ambitions.
- 5.89. The opportunity for this wider connectivity underlines the reason why the Site is a perfect location for a new settlement. The proximity of Isley Woodhouse to surrounding employment opportunities and centres mean that active and sustainable travel options are a genuine choice. EMA; Pegasus Business Park; the DHL Distribution Centre; and Donington Park all lie within 2 km of the site: East Midlands Gateway Strategic Rail Freight Interchange; East Midlands Distribution Centre; and Willow Farm Business Park all lie within a 5 km radius of the site.
- 5.90. In this regard, the proposed allocation of Isley Woodhouse as a new settlement aligns directly with NPPF requirements, as set out through paragraph 109. In proposing to allocate Isley Woodhouse, NWLDC has focussed on a location which is and *"can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes."*
- 5.91. The emerging proposals respond to the NPPF by:
- Giving priority to pedestrian and cycle movements, within the scheme and connecting to the wider area.
  - Ensuring movement patterns are an integral part of the design of schemes, so that they contribute to making a high quality place.
  - Realising opportunities for existing and proposed transport infrastructure, including changing transport technology and usage.
  - Creating routes which are safe, secure and attractive, minimising the potential for conflict between pedestrians, cyclist and vehicles.

#### Access and Road Infrastructure

- 5.92. Alongside the delivery of active travel connections, there is a need for highway upgrade works to create vehicular access to the Site and to ensure that the impacts of the development are mitigated.
- 5.93. The Transport Assessment submitted in support of the planning application sets out, in detail, the proposals for off-site highway mitigation and details the Site accesses, which are also covered in the Design and Access Statement.
- 5.94. The application therefore aligns with paragraph 109 of the NPPF through considering the potential highway impacts of the development on the surrounding network and in identifying proposed mitigation and transport solutions. The provision of a Transport Assessment also ensures that the proposals meet the requirement of emerging Policy IF5.
- 5.95. The access strategy includes the realignment of the A453 within the western portion of the Site, to ensure that it integrates with the existing road network and to deliver a significant strategic improvement to the existing route.
- 5.96. The realignment will improve safety through removing an awkward section of the A453, which contains some sharp bends with blind corners. This would be replaced with a new piece of road on a gentle curve, which provides improved visibility and, consequently, driveability for all users, including HGVs.
- 5.97. This highway upgrade presents the opportunity to significantly improve the flow of vehicles on the A453, improving the performance of the network from the A42 at Tonge, to the south of the Site, through to junctions 23a and 24 of the M1, to the Site's east. This would benefit all key developments along the road corridor, including EMA and Donington Park.
- 5.98. The need for strategic improvements in this location has been recognised for some time. Indeed, it was highlighted in the Midlands Connect 'Levelling Up Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Derby and Derbyshire: The Road to Success' report, published in February 2022. This report identified the need for a link between the A50, near Junction 1, and the A42, near junction 14, and recommended it as a long-term option for the Road Investment Strategy.
- 5.99. The introduction of the Castle Donington Bypass goes some way to delivering this link, but it is only part of an improved access corridor. By improving the alignment and safety of the A453, as proposed through the Isley Woodhouse scheme, Isley Woodhouse could help complete this improved link, in line with the ambitions expressed by Midlands Connect for the wider area.
- 5.100. In this regard, rather than having a detrimental effect on road safety, the proposals offer a real chance to resolve an existing issue and, as such, they conform to the requirements of the NPPF at paragraph 115.
- 5.101. The existing A453 will be integrated within the Site, forming one of its primary streets in the western area. This will have added benefits for existing residents who take their access from this section of the A453 as the volume and speed of traffic travelling on this route will reduce.
- 5.102. The access strategy proposes four vehicular access points into the Site, all of which are taken from the A453.
- 5.103. The Site's accessibility to the Strategic Road Network, is also a significant benefit, meaning that residents will have easy access to major roads which can take them to all parts of the

country. Whilst there is a focus on moving away from the private vehicle, it should be recognised that some journeys via the private car will remain part of life and, for some, will continue to be essential.

- 5.104. The proximity of Isley Woodhouse to Junctions 23a and 24 of the M1 is another locational advantage, which minimises the length of journey time for residents to reach the Strategic Road Network and these wider connections. As such, even when private car journeys are generated from the development, these are minimised through proximity and do not necessitate travelling through surrounding towns and villages.
- 5.105. The Transport Assessment also has regard to cumulative impacts of the proposed developments of the scheme, including taking account of proposed Local Plan growth and the potential Freeport employment site which is proposed to come forward to the east of Diseworth.
- 5.106. It is recognised that the Isley Woodhouse scheme will have an impact on the Strategic Road Network and that cumulative effects need to be addressed. In a bid to seek a holistic solution to the potential cumulative effects of various developments, the Isley Woodhouse promoters have joined with other developers to consider how this could be achieved.
- 5.107. A comprehensive mitigation scheme has been devised, which is divided into component parts which relate to individual scheme's impacts.
- 5.108. Isley Woodhouse is identified as having an impact at Finger Farm roundabout and therefore, the application includes proposals for significant works to this roundabout, to mitigate the scheme's impacts. The current and emerging details for this scheme are set out in the Transport Assessment.
- 5.109. The holistic approach to finding a strategic highway solution has been well received and it is anticipated that this piece of work will continue to evolve to secure a solution.
- 5.110. Within the Site, in line with paragraph 136 of the NPPF the streets within the Site will be designed to incorporate nature, primarily through tree planting. The NPPF advises that trees can make an important contribution to the character and quality of environments, whilst also mitigating the impacts of climate change. This principle has driven the outline scheme and is captured in the proposals set out in the Design and Access Statement.

#### Public Transport

- 5.111. The choice of travel options at Isley Woodhouse will include public transport opportunities and in this regard, bus stops will be provided within 400 metres of all homes.
- 5.112. Whilst the day to day requirements of residents will be met within walking and cycling distance at the local village centres, this public transport provision will enable access to locations further afield. It will also help address the needs of people with reduced mobility or disabilities, enabling them to travel without using private vehicles.
- 5.113. In addition to this provision, the potential for a future tram connection was discussed at the Design Review. It is expected that if the tram was extended towards the Site, it would likely terminate south of EMA. Consequently, the proposals include the capacity for a bus connection to this terminus, providing easy access to the tram network.

- 5.114. The Site is also well located in relation to the East Midlands Parkway train station, which is circa 8 km to the east, offering rail connectivity to many locations, including London.
- 5.115. As such, the proposals also accord with the NPPF through identifying and pursuing opportunities to promote the use of public transport, as well as cycling and walking.

### **Landscape and Visual Impact**

- 5.116. Any new development necessarily introduces change into a landscape. However, it does not follow that that change need be unwelcome or unacceptable. With the emerging Site Allocation IW1, NWLDC has recognised the fact that a significant level of new housing is required within the District and that a new settlement is the best option to deliver this, with minimal impacts on existing residents.
- 5.117. The locational choice of Isley Woodhouse is born from the consideration of various factors, including landscape and visual impact. The proposed allocation of IW1 demonstrates that NWLDC has, in principle, deemed that development in this location can be made acceptable.
- 5.118. In line with the NPPF's requirements to protect most valued landscapes, the Site and its immediate context does not include any designated landscapes or features, nor does it include any landscapes recognised as being of particular higher value or sensitivity. As such, it is a sensible and logical location for a new settlement within the District.
- 5.119. The approach to landscaping provision and treatment of the Site boundaries helps to reduce the impacts of the development and also helps to assimilate it with its surroundings.
- 5.120. The strategic visual corridors are proposed because the landscape and visual impacts of the proposals have been considered and addressed from the outset. In line with national policy, these important views have been maintained and will continue to be the focal direction once the development is delivered.
- 5.121. The public open space strategy for the Site creates a variety of green corridors which respond to existing features within the site and to the wider area.
- 5.122. These green view corridors to Breedon on the Hill and Melbourne were the starting point for the proposals and were drawn from the Council's Landscape Sensitivity Study (2020); they form the backbone to Isley Woodhouse. Development has specifically been designed around these spaces in a landscape-led approach to the scheme. Indeed, over 44% of the Site area will be open space which will be enshrined through the establishment of the development parameters.
- 5.123. The Green Infrastructure Strategy recognises the sensitive edges to the Site and responds to these accordingly. The eastern side of the site, closest to Diseworth, will contain a 40 metre landscape corridor, which will include woodland planting, scrub and grassland. This will help to screen the development from Diseworth and ensure that visual impacts are minimised.
- 5.124. Overall, the proposals and the approach to green infrastructure accord with the requirements of paragraph 187 of the NPPF, through protecting most valued landscapes and recognising the intrinsic and natural beauty of the countryside by respecting its character and delivering a sensitively designed scheme.

## 6. Summary and Conclusions

- 6.1. This Planning Statement is submitted on behalf of Caesarea Planning Services and Harworth Group to accompany a planning application for a new settlement of up to 4,250 new dwellings.
- 6.2. The planning application is made in outline with all matters, apart from access, reserved for future approval. The application is accompanied by an ES and a Parameters Plan which sets the limits for development within the site.
- 6.3. The application Site is located entirely within North West Leicestershire District. The majority of the Site lies within the Parish of Isley-cum-Langley, with a small portion of the south-western area extending into Breedon on the Hill Parish.
- 6.4. The Site extends to approximately 313.39 hectares and is situated on land south of East Midlands Airport, west of Diseworth and directly adjacent to Isley Walton.
- 6.5. The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing structures within the Site and the erection of up to 4,250 new homes across a range of tenure and types; the delivery of a local centre and two neighbourhood centres, accommodating a range of community uses; new schools, one secondary and two primary; employment space; and open space and landscaping, with circa 44% of the Site being retained as green space. The development proposals also include associated infrastructure and highways improvements, including the realignment of the A453 on the western side of the Site. The proposals also include circa 10 hectares of employment land to complement the employment provision which already exists within the area and diversify further the offer.
- 6.6. It is recognised that the Isley Woodhouse scheme will have an impact on the Strategic Road Network and that cumulative effects need to be addressed. The Isley Woodhouse promoters have joined with other developers to consider how a holistic solution could be achieved.
- 6.7. A comprehensive mitigation scheme has been devised and Isley Woodhouse is identified as having an impact at Finger Farm roundabout. Therefore, the application includes proposals for significant works to this roundabout, to mitigate the scheme's impacts.
- 6.8. The holistic approach will continue to evolve to secure a solution.
- 6.9. The proposed Description of Development is:
- Outline application with all matters except access reserved for a new settlement of up to 4,250 new houses, including employment space with ancillary offices, a local centre and two neighbourhood centres, a new secondary school and two new primary schools, residential institutions, hotels, demolition of existing structures, with associated infrastructure, including strategic highway improvements, drainage, ground modelling, landscaping, open space, sports facilities with changing and parking facilities, and access (including the realignment of the A453).*
- 6.10. In direct and positive response to Government direction, the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan has identified the 'Leicestershire International Gateway' as an important strategic location for growth.

- 6.11. NWLDC has taken the Strategic Plan's lead in considering its growth ambitions for its emerging Local Plan and has proposed to allocate the application Site in the new Local Plan, under Draft Allocation IW1. Draft Allocation IW1 lies at the heart of the Leicestershire International Gateway and consequently directly accords with local, strategic growth ambitions.
- 6.12. In proposing to allocate the Site, the Council has confirmed the acceptability of the location, in principle, for significant growth and, specifically, for the form of development proposed through this planning application.
- 6.13. The proposals within this application are the result of an extensive period of pre-application engagement with statutory authorities and relevant bodies and follow a period of public consultation. The application responds positively to the feedback received throughout this process.
- 6.14. The Isley Woodhouse application seeks to deliver much needed homes in an area of significant employment growth. Indeed, employment growth in the surrounding area has been exponential in recent years and housing delivery has simply not kept pace with this change.
- 6.15. A disparity between housing and employment provision has therefore arisen and the Isley Woodhouse proposals seek to address this issue directly.
- 6.16. The Site is uniquely well placed to deliver much needed housing through a new settlement which is well connected, in a sustainable and accessible location and which is absolutely in line with the Council's aspirations and ambitions, as well as those of central Government.
- 6.17. The application site is land of the right type, in the right location and is available now to deliver sustainable growth, in line with all of the relevant local and national policies.
- 6.18. In this overall context, should the application proposals be found demonstrably acceptable through the determination process, there is no impediment to the Council issuing a decision on a planning application, in advance of the adoption of the Local Plan,
- 6.19. For all of these reasons, planning permission should be granted, without delay.

## Appendix

### 7. Section 106 Legal Agreement Obligations

It is anticipated that the application will be subject to a Section 106 Legal Agreement and this may include the following heads of terms:

- Affordable Housing.
- Community Facilities.
- Sports Provision.
- Health/GP Provision.
- Education Provision (one secondary school and two primary schools, to meet the needs of the new settlement).
- Long term management and maintenance of open space.
- Any agreed off-site highways works.

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)  
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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