

**North West Leicestershire
Economic Growth Plan
Evidence Base**

2022 - 2025

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1 North West Leicestershire

- 1.1 North West Leicestershire sits at the axis of the Midlands, strategically located 25 miles from Birmingham, Derby, Leicester and Nottingham. The District is at the centre of the national transport network, hosting East Midland's Airport, the M1 corridor and also main line rail services provided at East Midlands Parkway. The A42/M42 and the A50 provide an important East/West connection.
- 1.2 It is an area primed for economic growth, particularly having development prospects that are of national and international significance. Our location has proved to be a major attraction to inward investors and developers and our indigenous businesses are looking to grow again after the Covid Pandemic and exiting the EU, which has brought much uncertainty. We have an experienced workforce, excellent natural environment (including being at the heart of the National Forest) and have areas of attractive and accessible countryside.
- 1.3 Delivering economic growth is critical to the wellbeing and prosperity of the District's population. It is essential to factor in resilience to our work to respond to external impacts such as Covid and EU Exit and the impacts they have in the local, national and international economies. These external influences can have dramatic effects on our residents, businesses and future funding.
- 1.4 North West Leicestershire District Council is keen to ensure that opportunities are realised, so that our growth potential can be fully grasped. At the same time, we also recognise that a number of challenges need to be addressed, in particular sustainable access to areas of employment and new opportunity, making sure that local residents have the skills that businesses need to be successful and maximising the economic impact of visitor spending in the area. Many sectors, including Hospitality, Logistics and Care are experiencing staffing challenges both locally and nationally. The economy appears to have bounced back after the Pandemic but its resilience could be tested at anytime.
- 1.5 This Economic Growth Plan sets out how North West Leicestershire District Council, working with partners, will work to stimulate growth within our local economy. We already have a strong track record of partnerships - internally within the District, and across the wider County, the Region and nationally. The plan sets out our ambitions, but is also realistic as to where the public sector can make a difference and where our limited resources will be best applied. The plan runs from 2022-25.

2 Background to the Growth Plan

- 2.1 The 2019-21 Economic Growth Plan sought to give the District a structure on which economic development could be achieved and sought flexibility as strategies from Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership and central Government were produced. The growth plans structure was based on making the most of the areas strongest assets in terms of People, Place and Business and ensured that these three gears of the economy function effectively together.
- 2.2 With the focus on Economic Recovery after the massive impact of Coronavirus and the UKs withdrawal from the European Union, there have been a number of local, regional and national short term recovery plans. As of autumn 2021 a number of growth plans are beginning to emerge such as 2021 Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy.
- 2.3 The Government's Plan for Jobs was announced in summer 2020 as a package of measures to support jobs in every part of the country, to give businesses the confidence to retain and hire, and to provide people with the tools they need to get better jobs. This involved the Jobs Retention Scheme; the Kickstart Scheme; new jobs being created through massive investment in new infrastructure including the Green Economy. Additional monies were also announced in the Chancellor's Autumn Statement in October 2021 with a further £500m of funding to support and extend the Plan for Jobs.
- 2.4 The emerging LLEP Economic Growth Strategy identifies a series of priority sectors. Even though not all of the key growth areas identified within LLEP Economic Growth Strategy are relevant priorities to the North West Leicestershire area, the District has a significant role to play in delivering Leicestershire's planned growth. Therefore it is essential that the policy context for the NWL Economic Growth Plan refresh is consistent and supportive of the wider growth agenda when addressing local priorities.

3 Strategic Context

Leicester and Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy

- 3.1 Partners across Leicester and Leicestershire have been working with the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP) over the past year to develop a new Economic Growth Strategy, which will set out the area's priorities in the period up to 2030, to grow the economy and assist in the recovery after the Pandemic.
- 3.2 The LLEP Strategy seeks to deliver a successful recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic and further capitalise on the phenomenal transformation of the local economy over the past 10 years. Pre-Covid, Leicester and Leicestershire generated £24.5 billion in GVA, with 42,000 businesses and 538,000 jobs, and testament to its resilience and growth potential, we expect this to increase to £30.2 billion and 568,000 jobs by 2030.
- 3.3 The LLEP Growth Strategy will build on the global research and development and entrepreneurial expertise of Leicester and Leicestershire's three Universities, and excellence in science and engineering. The region is now home to several UK and world-leading centres of new technology and innovation in space and earth observation, sports science, life sciences, IT and cyber technologies, and automotive engineering.
- 3.4 Leicester and Leicestershire is also the UK's central logistics hub, having gained significant jobs and investment due to the area's strategic location. Agriculture and Food & Drink production remains a key sector in Leicester and Leicestershire, producing £1.8 billion in GVA and accounting for 43,900 jobs. There is the opportunity to further build a sustainable visitor economy that currently supports 58,000 jobs in Leicester and Leicestershire.

East Midlands Freeport

- 3.5 Another significant new opportunity is the emerging East Midlands Freeport, which will benefit from the existing Maritime-operated rail facility at East Midlands Gateway, and existing and proposed railheads at Ratcliffe-on-Soar Power Station and East Midlands Intermodal Park. The Freeport, at full build out across the three sites, is expected to generate 61,700 jobs. Within Leicester and Leicestershire, the site is based around the East Midlands Airport and Gateway Industrial Cluster (EMAGIC) in North West Leicestershire - and is expected to contribute £600 million in GVA annually, and 9,900 jobs within Leicester and Leicestershire.
- 3.6 The Freeport will bring significant investment to develop and drive innovation, alternative energy sources and green technology supporting SME's and large regional employers, including Rolls-Royce, Toyota, and Alstom (formerly Bombardier). The East Midlands Freeport bid was submitted to Government in February 2021 by a consortium led by the Local Enterprise Partnerships representing Leicester, Leicestershire, Derby, Derbyshire, Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. It included private sector businesses and local authorities, with support from universities, business groups, local MPs and the East Midlands Development Corporation.

Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire

- 3.7 In 2018, the nine local authorities (Leicester City Council, and Leicestershire County Council and the 7 district authorities of Blaby, Charnwood, Harborough, Hinckley and Bosworth,

Melton, North West Leicestershire, and Oadby and Wigston) and Leicester and Leicestershire Local Enterprise Partnership agreed The Strategic Growth Plan setting out aspirations for the development of new housing and infrastructure in the period up to 2050.

- 3.8 The Strategic Growth Plan identified that around 187,000 new dwellings will be needed between 2011 and 2050 to house the area's growing population, with 96,580 required by 2031 and a further 90,516 by 2050. In addition, it was also estimated that between 367 and 423 hectares of employment land will be required by 2031 to meet future demand.
- 3.9 The LLEP Economic Growth Strategy adopts and aligns with the principles and priorities outlined in The Strategic Growth Plan, including priorities to create the conditions for investment and growth – balancing the need for new housing and jobs with protection of our environment and built heritage and focusing more development on strategic locations – which will allow better planned communities in terms of housing, employment, transport and services.
- 3.10 The North West Leicestershire Economic Growth Plan Refresh will need to be considered in the context of the LLEP Economic Growth Strategy, the Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan and the Council's other strategic documents such as our Zero Carbon Roadmap as well as other important national, regional and local strategies and plans. A list of relevant strategies can be found in Appendix A of this report.

4 People

Demographics

- 4.1 North West Leicestershire covers 279 sq km and in 2020 had a resident population of 104,800¹ and is expected to rise by around 31% by 2043². In the past 10 years the District's population has increased by 11.9% - at a faster rate than the East Midlands Region (8.0%) and for Great Britain (6.5%) over the same time period. Nearly 62% of the population are of working age³. The main settlements in the District are, Coalville (34,575) and Ashby de la Zouch (12,370)⁴. Other key settlements include Castle Donington, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham.

Economic Activity Rates

- 4.2 Economic activity rates for all people in the District stands at 77.6% – far lower than Leicestershire (83.6%) and below the East Midlands (78.4%) and Great Britain (78.4%)⁵. For men the economic activity rate is 88%, considerably higher than for women (68.8%). Male economic activity rates in the District is higher than regionally (82.2%) and nationally (82.0%) and in line with county's 88%. The low rate of economic activity for women appears to be attributed to a high percentage stating the reason of 'looking after family or the home' as the reason behind the economic inactivity. There were 13,800 16 – 64 year old people inactive, of which 4,500 stated that they were looking after family/home – this is 32.2% of all inactive and above Leicestershire's 28.9%; East Midland's 19.1% and GB's 19.3%.
- 4.3 In terms of Jobs Density – the District performs extremely well – this measures the level of jobs per resident aged between 16 – 64 years and North West Leicestershire has the third highest proportion (1.09) in the whole of the East Midlands – meaning that there is practically one job available for every resident aged 16 – 64. Only Blaby & Derbyshire Dales have a higher ratio. This illustrates the vibrant employment situation and reflects the location of the District. Comparisons for the East Midlands as a whole and GB are 0.81 and 0.87 respectively
- 4.4 Unemployment within North West Leicestershire had historically been higher than across Leicestershire. However, in recent years the Claimant Count has dropped below the County average ⁶and currently 3.0% of the working age population are claiming work-related benefit. The claimant rate in 2021 is significantly lower than the regional and national average as presented in Chart 1 below. During the early days of the 2020 Coronavirus Pandemic the number of claimants soared but slowly this has fallen. In August 2021 there were 1,965 (3.0%) compared to Leicestershire's 3.1%; the East Midlands 4.5% and GB's 5.3%.
- 4.5 Pre-pandemic there were 1,035 (1.6%) claimants in NWL and this rose to 2,720 at its height in August 2020.

¹ ONS Population Estimates 2021 NOMIS

² ONS/CLG 2016 based Population & Household Projections

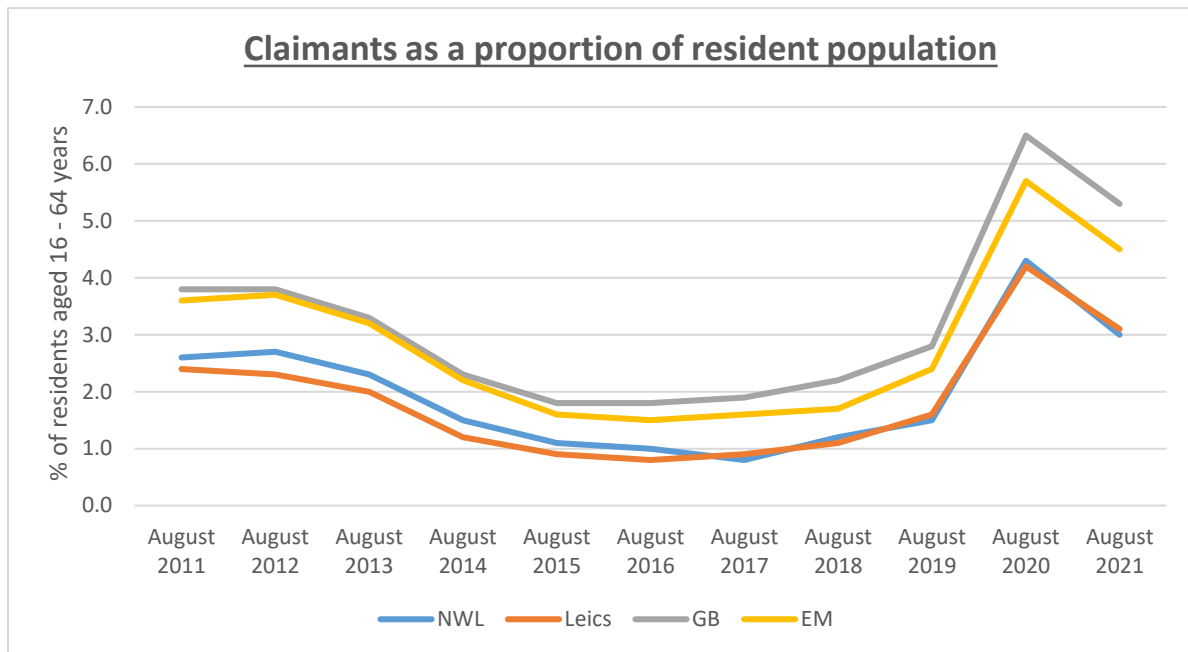
³ ONS Mid-year population estimates 2020

⁴ 2011 Census

⁵ ONS Population Survey July 2020 – June 2021 Published 2021

⁶ NOMIS DWP October 2021

Chart 1. – Claimant Count as a percentage of resident population



Source: Nomis: ONS Data relates to August of each year.

- 4.6 There remain pockets of higher claimant rates and lower economic activity across the District, especially in the wards of Coalville West; Castle Rock; Greenhill and Blackfordby. But rates are still relatively low compared to regional and national figure.

Young People

- 4.7 The youth claimant count across North West Leicestershire, aged 18-24 years, is 4.9%, this is above the County average (4.1%) and lower than both the regional (5.6%) and national (6.7%) averages. Obviously with the pandemic hitting from March 2020, youth unemployment soared to more than double to stand at 575 in August 2020 – an increase of 171% but has since fallen by 37% to stand at 360 young people. This percentage rate fall was higher than that experienced in the County, regional and nationally.

Skills and Qualifications

- 4.8 In the past, a major challenge for North West Leicestershire has been the level of skills and qualifications attainment within the local workforce and the ability of local labour to compete. However, in the past three years, according to the ONS Annual Population Survey 2021⁷, the percentage of the working age population with an NVQ4 or above has risen to stand at 40.5% in 2020. This compares with only 22% in 2004. In 2014 the figure still only stood at 28.0% and in the following years the figures have increased. The figure of 40.5% for NWL compares unfavourably to that of Leicestershire (42.5%) and GB (43.1%) but higher than the East Midlands (37.2%) This rise could be due to an increase in higher skilled employment opportunities, an influx of higher qualified individuals moving into the area as new housing comes forward as well as local residents aspiring to better employment.

⁷ ONS annual Population Survey 2021 January – December 2020

- 4.9 87% of the resident population aged 16-64 years have at least an NVQ1 or higher qualification – lower than Leicestershire (89%); East Midlands (87.5%) and Great Britain (87.7%). There are no statistics for those with no qualifications in North West Leicestershire, as the 2020 sample size of this group was too small to be reliable.
- 4.10 Anecdotally, it is often suggested that there is mismatch between the skills requirements of employers and the skills of young people leaving education. Gaps between potential employees and businesses needs to be filled. Businesses need to engage with young people directly, and through their education providers, parents and carers to help inform their career choices and career pathways of the future workforce at an early stage.
- 4.11 The District Council, working in partnership with the LLEP, the Employment Hub and local schools and colleges are committed to improve the information available on local growth sectors both now and in future years and to improve the links between businesses and the education sector.

Earnings

- 4.12 As presented in Table 1, workplace average hourly pay for jobs in North West Leicestershire* is above the Leicestershire and regional averages but below the national average. In terms of residence-based earnings**, although higher than the East Midlands average, North West Leicestershire residents average earnings were below Leicestershire and the national averages.

(* The wage paid to employees working in the District)

(** the wage paid to residents living in the District but whom may work elsewhere)

Table 1. - Median Hourly Pay by Workplace and Residence

	Workplace (2020)			Residence (2020)		
	Men £	Women £	Total £	Men £	Women £	Total £
North West Leicestershire	14.42	12.54	14.01	14.41	11.63	12.72
Leicestershire	14.44	12.46	13.72	15.67	12.14	13.52
East Midlands	14.52	12.80	13.82	14.29	11.49	12.59
Great Britain	15.70	14.42	15.24	15.00	12.59	13.79

Source: Nomis (2021 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings)

Key Objectives – People.

- 1) Encourage entrepreneurial activity by delivering programmes of support including business start-up workshops with specific support to assist more young people and women to start a business or to consider self-employment
- 2) Help new and existing businesses to recruit local people. For example, by continuing to support the Airport Academy at East Midlands Airport and continue working with employment groups at SEGRO and Mercia Park
- 3) Work with partners to ensure that the workforce needs of businesses are met and help to raise skill levels and productivity
- 4) Work with partners to ensure that the skill and training provision can best meet the changing technological needs across different sectors
- 5) Encourage local businesses to become Disability Confident Employers and to adopt a more open recruitment policy so that those furthest from the labour market can access employment opportunities
- 6) Work with partners to ensure residents can access careers advice and relevant information on future employment opportunities with local companies in key growth sectors
- 7) Assist the LLEP and other partners to facilitate relationships between local businesses and schools and colleges. This will ensure that future employment needs are met and opportunities are highlighted, particularly in growth sectors
- 8) Maximise opportunities to get local people into work during the construction phase of development sites, alongside creating opportunities for apprenticeships and school visits to encourage new generations into the industry
- 9) Develop and enhance North West Leicestershire District Council's apprenticeship programme and provide volunteering and work experience opportunities within the organisation
- 10) Promote the employment and training opportunities provided by partner organisations, such as the Leicester Employment Hub, to support those furthest from the labour market into employment
- 11) Promote the use of leisure facilities and workplace health interventions and countywide sport and leisure initiatives to ensure that employees and employers are aware of the benefits of health and physical and mental wellbeing in the workplace and the impact this has on increased productivity
- 12) Monitor the progress of the proposed HS2 route and ensure that any resulting employment opportunities from both the construction and implementation phases of HS2 are promoted locally

- 13) Promote initiatives, including the Kickstart programme and self-employment and pre-employment training, to support residents back into the workplace.
- 14) Ensure the provision of robust support for residents and businesses impacted by any potential local redundancies.

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5 Place

- 5.1 Our location and environment has been a considerable driver for the economy of North West Leicestershire, be that in terms of natural capital and the location of strategic national and international transport links.
- 5.2 The District lies at the heart of the National Forest which is rapidly developing as a tourism destination and a natural environment. The district contains a number of leisure and visitor attractions and facilities such as Donington Race Circuit, the 1620's House at Donington le Heath, Moira Furnace, the Conkers Visitor Centre, Ashby Castle, the National Forest Youth Hostel and prestigious hotels.
- 5.3 Much of the district remains rural in character with attractive countryside in places. The principal town is Coalville and smaller settlements are found at Ashby de la Zouch, Castle Donington, Ibstock, Kegworth and Measham.
- 5.4 Coalville, as the main retail centre, is changing with the combination of private sector and public sector investment on projects such as improving the public realm, the Belvoir Shopping Centre, the New Market and the new leisure centre. The District Council are also investing in a number of strategic assets in the town centre.
- 5.5 North West Leicestershire is located in the centre of England, on the western boundary of the East Midlands within close proximity to the major cities of Birmingham, Leicester, Derby and Nottingham. It has excellent strategic motorway links but no rail passenger services. HS2 (East) is due to run right through the District, following the A42, to East Midlands Parkway but there will be no stops within the District.
- 5.6 The location of regional and nationally significant activities at East Midlands Airport (EMA) and Castle Donington, inevitably means that more people commute into the District than leave it to find work. EMA handles over 4.9 million passengers a year (pre-pandemic), it is a significant UK passenger airport serving over 90 international and domestic destinations. East Midlands Airport is home to the UK's largest dedicated air cargo operation, making it the country's most important airport for express freight. Handling over 440,000 tonnes of goods each year, EMA is a hub for DHL, UPS, FedEx and Royal Mail.
- 5.7 Despite the devastating impact the pandemic has had on the passenger operation, the cargo operation has gone from strength to strength. The critical role the airport played in the rapid movement of PPE to frontline healthcare providers in the early days of the pandemic, combined with the rise in demand for dedicated air cargo flights due to a lack of bellyhold capacity on long-haul passenger routes, has meant the airport broke a number of records in 2020 and 2021. December 2020 being the busiest ever month which saw an increase in volume of goods rise by 43% compared with December the previous year. In 2020 an additional 50,000 tonnes of goods passed through the airport, an increase of 13% from 2019.
- 5.8 With such accessible road links the district sees a large flow of both inbound and outbound commuters with 19,246 residents commuting outside of the district for employment but 26,699 commuters traveling in. This makes a net inflow of 7,453, according to the 2011 Census.

- 5.9 The economic, physical and social profile of an area is the result of generations of activity and can have differing imprints in different communities. Whilst the profile may change rapidly as industries decline and new activities come in, the sense of place can be more resistant to change. For Ashby, with an ancient castle and a home in the history books, it is rather different to Coalville, as the name implies, Coalville developed rapidly in response to massive industrialisation.
- 5.10 New development relies on the timely provision of infrastructure and investment – this includes essential utility services, as well as a host of other factors including access to transport, schools, and open space, community and health and leisure services. Preserving the best of the past and addressing deficiencies to develop new amenities will be an important element in successfully planning for growth.
- 5.11 The North West Leicestershire Local Plan was adopted in November 2017, providing the local planning framework to coordinate future investment. It was followed by an immediate partial review which was adopted in March 2021. A wider ranging review is underway and will look ahead to 2039.
- 5.12 Of major significance to North West Leicestershire has been the development at the East Midlands Gateway by SEGRO and also Mercia Park, an I M Properties development at Appleby Magna.
- 5.13 The SEGRO development includes a Strategic Rail Freight Interchange (SRFI) which provides nationally significant rail and road connected large-scale distribution and storage facilities alongside the expansion occurring at East Midlands Airport, such as UPS and DHL. SEGRO Logistics Park East Midlands Gateway has become an established site which has now seen most plots acquired. Companies such as The Very Group, DHL / Mars, DHL / Caterpillar; Amazon; Games Workshop and GXO. These employers, attract labour from a very wide catchment area, including Derby, Nottingham and Leicester as well as from within North West Leicestershire.
- 5.14 At the time of preparing this evidence base, the construction of Mercia Park is well underway with DSV moving into their purpose built unit in Autumn 2021 and the construction of 5 massive logistics hubs for Jaguar Land Rover due to be completed in 2022. Again this will see a large number of staff commuting into the district from neighbouring authorities as well as creating new opportunities for local residents.
- 5.15 HS2 (East) will run close to both SEGRO Park and East Midlands Airport and there is proposed to have a major HS2 hub at East Midlands Parkway.

Employment Land and Premises

- 5.16 Ensuring an adequate range of choice of land and premises in areas where the market wishes to invest is a fundamental requirement of any plan to promote growth. The district benefits from a wide range of existing provision from older industrial estates to new employment parks. For example, there are modern mixed use premises at Ivanhoe Business Park in Ashby; a mixed older development on Westminster Industrial Estate at Measham and Bardon Industrial Estate adjacent to the M1 which encompasses warehousing, industry and offices. New development has also been provided at Bardon Road Coalville whilst planned development at Regs Way Bardon will provide further

floorspace to consolidate the importance of the Bardon employment area to the local economy.

- 5.17 Alongside all this are specialist facilities such as the air freight depot at East Midlands Airport and the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange at SEGRO Logistics Park East Midlands Gateway. Mountpark – home to Amazon; John Lewis and Pharmacy 2 U has also been developed in recent years. Tungsten Park at Bardon has also been developed in 2021 and work has started on the creation of 332,000 sq ft of industrial and logistics space on 53 acres at Bardon Hill, which will provide a number of new industrial units ranging from 28,000 sq ft to 116,000 sq ft.
- 5.18 The District has a number of key areas which look to accelerate infrastructure projects and programmes in order to achieve benefits of economic growth. Within the District, the A511 Growth Corridor, Mercia Park and the cluster of freight and logistics related activity at the East Midlands Enterprise Gateway represent major opportunities. It is important we work with partners to secure the required public and private investment to develop and accelerate such investment in infrastructure.
- 5.19 The North West Leicestershire Local Plan review will identify further opportunities to ensure that the district remains competitive.
- 5.20 Local evidence from a recent Employment Land Report suggests that up to 2039 there will be a need for about 55ha of land for business and industrial space, with some of this already in place and being developed. Separate evidence commissioned jointly by the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities identifies an ongoing need for additional land to be provided for strategic warehousing. Continuing joint work will look to agree how this need will be met across Leicester and Leicestershire. Any additional requirements in North West Leicestershire will be addressed as part of the local plan review.
- 5.21 The foundation of any economy is its small businesses and enterprises. Separate evidence to support the local plan identifies that there is a demand for small office and business space. The Local Plan will explore ways in which the planning system can help to deliver this. We will also look at what other steps the Council can take to support such provision.

Housing

- 5.22 The district has attracted a wide range of the major house builders and recent build rates have been the highest recorded. Major development at Coalville (3,500 homes), Ashby de la Zouch (2,000 homes) and Castle Donington (1,000 homes) are underway. These new developments are attracting people from a wide area taking advantage of lower house prices than seen nationally, the quality of development, the quality of life offered and from good access to most parts of the country and access to attractive places, such as the National Forest.
- 5.23 There will be a continuing need for additional housing which will be addressed through the Local Plan review. In addition to new market housing, more affordable homes will be required to meet the needs of both local residents but also those moving into the area to take advantage of the employment opportunities, particularly in the northern part of the district around East Midlands Airport.

- 5.24 The Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019. Ensuring that new development minimises carbon emissions will be a key aim of the local plan review. Evidence has been commissioned to identify ways in which this can be done through new policies.

Low Carbon

- 5.25 Low carbon technologies and the push to reduce carbon emissions are never far from the news, and over the coming decades, developments in low-carbon technologies will create many new jobs and necessitate large investment and changes in infrastructure.
- 5.26 The importance of a sustainable low carbon economy is vitally important today and for future generations. At the heart of the National Forest, North West Leicestershire District Council is committed to ensuring that growth is sustainable and in balance with the local environment.
- 5.27 North West Leicestershire District Council declared a climate emergency on 25 June 2019 and commissioned specialist environmental consultants to help develop the council's response to the need to reduce the council's and district's carbon emissions.
- 5.28 This activity led to the development of our Zero Carbon Roadmap and Action Plan which was adopted by the council on 31 March 2020. The Action Plan summarises recommended activity to achieve the ambition of a net zero carbon council by 2030 and a net zero carbon district by 2050 and is based around key workstreams including buildings, power, waste, transport, forestry and land use and industry.
- 5.29 Whilst tackling the emissions from the council's own operations is imperative and the initial focus, it represents just 1.5% of the total emissions from the wider district, so it is important for the council to show leadership to influence wider district emissions. Some examples of the council's efforts are listed below:
- In November 2019 a food waste collection trial was launched, and extended in 2020, to cover 4000 homes with the ambition to provide the service district wide.
 - In September 2021 a fleet management strategy was approved which will see the introduction of battery electric vehicles for cars and vans in the council's fleet and a switch from diesel to waste food fuel (HVO) for all other vehicles.
 - As of October 2021 electric vehicle charging points have been installed in a total of five council owned carparks across the district to support residents to switch to electric vehicles.
 - Whitwick & Coalville Leisure Centre, which will open early in 2022, has solar panels installed and the redevelopment of the Hermitage recreation site gives the opportunity to improve biodiversity.
 - The annual free tree scheme, run in partnership with the National Forest since 2008, has provided over 129,000 trees for planting for by residents and community groups.
 - The council's housing service, as part of their retrofit programme, has previously trialed a number of low emission solutions, including biomass boiler, air source heat pumps, solar thermal and solar PV installations, with over 360 air source heat pumps installed in tenants' homes by 2021.
 - The government Green Home Grants contributed to fund a programme of improvements to 56 Council properties which were completed in September 2021 and a further 76 EPC E rated properties have benefited from cavity wall insulation and top

up loft insulation. The social housing new build design specification has improved from energy rating EPC B to A.

- The council has embraced agile working and is planning to move to smaller, more energy efficient office accommodation in 2022.
- A cycling and walking strategy is under development in 2021/22 to encourage sustainable travel and increase connectivity within North West Leicestershire and into neighbouring authorities
- The council's zero carbon ambition is built into the substantive review of the Local Plan, including consideration of renewable energy, energy efficiency standard for new homes and provision of electric vehicle charging points for residential and employment developments.

5.30 In 2018 the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership launched the Energy Infrastructure Strategy. The Council will work with the LLEP to support local businesses to increase efficiency and to aspire to be at the forefront of developments in low carbon infrastructure.

Connectivity

5.31 Businesses with major transportation and logistics requirements are drawn to areas with excellent transport connections to major urban areas, a locally available and competitive labour force and competitive land values.

5.32 For example, the existing opportunities for multi-modal freight around East Midlands Airport and at the SEGRO Logistics Park are evidence of this. There has been significant investment on the M1 between Junction 24 (which serves SEGRO Logistics Park) and Junction 25 which has been upgraded to SMART Motorway status. However, further improvements are required to improve connectivity to these assets. This will require a co-ordinated programme between the Highways Agency, Midlands Connect, the local highways authority and the District Council.

5.32 Despite the district's excellent location, and the external connectivity opportunities regionally, nationally and globally, there remain a number of challenges to be tackled in relation to connectivity.

5.33 Other potential connectivity issues include:

- Congestion on Motorway/Trunk routes, notably at key junctions.
- The proposed HS2 (East) line presents an opportunity to ensure improved connectivity to the proposed East Midlands Hub Station at East Midlands Parkway to serve our residents and businesses and potential links into East Midlands Airport and the Freeport.
- There are no passenger rail services in North West Leicestershire although a freight-only rail line currently connects Leicester with Burton-on-Trent via Coalville and Ashby.
- The need to improve sustainable transport connectivity to key employment sites such as the Mercia Park development and continued enhancements across the public transport network.
- The area is heavily reliant on car borne transport as a means of getting to work. Public transport and other sustainable modes (cycling, walking, car share etc.) could be improved to allow more local residents to connect to job opportunities within and outside the district boundaries.

5.38 For many years there have been calls for the re-opening of the former Ivanhoe Line (often referred to as the National Forest Line) operating between Burton-on-Trent and Leicester encompassing the areas of Moira, Ashby de la Zouch and Coalville. However, the cost of reopening the line has meant that this has not been viewed as a feasible option to date. However, the introduction of a new rail passenger service remains a long-term ambition. With new housing developments along the route of the line, the proposed viability of reopening the line may be improved.

5.39 Developing high speed broadband connectivity is also a major priority for the District and we continue to work closely with Leicestershire County Council to ensure investment is made in the digital connectivity, notably in rural areas. Many of our more rural communities are missing out on connectivity to high speed broadband and the benefits that this brings.

Town and Local Centres

5.40 Investment in our town and local centres is a major component in improving their attractiveness, both for local people wishing to live there and investors committing resources to economic growth. Local “Place Planning” will help to coordinate investment and make the greatest impact.

5.41 The current Coalville Regeneration Framework has seen large scale investment by the Council and the private sector to bring recent regeneration schemes forward. Projects such as the New Market, the Belvoir Shopping Centre, the new Leisure Centre and the public realm improvements to Marlborough Square and the investment in the Marlborough Centre will have a tremendous impact on the town.

5.42 The Ashby Business Improvement District (BID) was formed in 2022 following the successful ballot in 2021. The Ashby BID will facilitate the delivery of regeneration of Ashby town centre and drive new and repeat footfall through the creation of events and initiatives that support high street business growth.

5.43 The Local Plan will also review the approach to planning for our town and local centres, to ensure they provide opportunities to meet the needs of our communities.

Visitor Attractions

5.44 The visitor attractions and the tourism businesses with North West Leicestershire are integral components to the growth of the visitor economy. These assets include:

- 280 square kilometres (108 sq miles) of attractive English countryside.
- Two main towns of Ashby de la Zouch with its attractive shopping streets and lanes and Coalville with its heritage sites and green spaces.
- Being at the Heart of the National Forest has brought large areas of newly planted woodland, including the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Wood, together with ancient woodland and regenerated open spaces such as Sence Valley Forest Park, Saltersford Valley Picnic Area, Cloud Trail and Grace Dieu Woods.
- The family attraction of Conkers, Hicks Lodge Cycle Centre, Snibston Colliery Park and a diverse range of award winning festivals such as Download – International rock festival and Timber – International Forest Festival

- Bardon Hill being the highest point in Leicestershire offering views of all surrounding counties.
- A strong social and industrial heritage offer that includes Coalville, mining heritage, Ashby de la Zouch Castle, Grace Dieu Priory, Swannington Incline Plane, Moira Furnace and 1620s Manor House.
- A good range of restaurants, bars, artisan food producers and specialist markets and events throughout the year.
- Around 75 accommodation providers offering between them over 4,000 bed spaces
- Over 100 pubs, restaurants and bars, tea rooms, coffee houses and farm shops.
- Over 15 unique visitor attractions.
- The international motorsport circuit Donington Park – home to major motorsport events and festivals including the internationally renowned ‘Download’ Festival.
- The international East Midlands Airport.

Visitor numbers

- 5.45 There were an estimated 1.27m tourism visits to North West Leicestershire in 2020, 63.3% lower than in 2019 due to the impact of the Covid 19 Pandemic and lockdowns. Between 2014 and 2019, however, the district had seen the total number of visits by rise by 11.4%.
- 5.46 In 2020, North West Leicestershire saw 0.19m staying visits – those visits made by guests in paid accommodation or stays with friends and relatives in local homes. The COVID-19 pandemic restricted the usual business of accommodating visitors to the district, with lockdowns, phased reopening and local authority tiering reducing the number of viable trading days for businesses. Even when permitted to re-open, there was much to be done by businesses to be able to re-open for guests safely with the vast majority of businesses having to adapt operations, change their offer or reduce capacity to be able to do so.
- 5.47 Visitors also faced restrictions as to movement between areas and had to weigh the perceived risks of travel during a pandemic. As a result, it is estimated that North West Leicestershire received 318,000 fewer overnight guests than in 2019. In the 5 year period 2014 to 2019, there had been gradual growth in staying visits, with stays up by 4% during that time.
- 5.48 North West Leicestershire’s day visit market had been performing well prior to COVID with good levels of growth in Day Visits between 2014 and 2019 (12.8%). In 2020, estimated day visits totalled 1.08m, compared to 2.95m day visits in 2019 (-63.4%). Lost footfall was felt across the visitor economy; with many visitor attractions and facilities used by visitors (particularly those indoors) suffering significantly with many remaining closed for many months and much of the area’s events activity cancelled.
- 5.49 The Visitor Economy is one that North West Leicestershire District Council, Marketing Leicester and Leicestershire and The National Forest Company wishes to develop further. There is clear potential for the Council to link with these wider efforts to support and develop initiatives in order to extend the length of time spent in the area and increase visitor expenditure.

Economic Impact

- 5.50 The value of tourism activity in North West Leicestershire was estimated to be £83.99m in 2020. By comparison, the district’s visitor economy was worth £218.65m in 2019. The

estimated financial losses of £134.7m sustained due to the COVID-19 pandemic were borne not just by those businesses offering goods and services direct to the visitor, but also those businesses that supply and support front-line visitor services.

- 5.51 The total economic impact comprises the expenditure of visitors on goods and services, totalling £63.621m (2020). In 2020, the largest visitor spending sector was Shopping (£20.631m), followed by Food and Drink (£17.135m), Accommodation (£11.180m), Transport (£7.427m), Recreation (£7.247m). Further to this, indirect and induced economic effects of local businesses and residents spending tourism revenues locally, were estimated to account for a further £20.368m (2020).
- 5.52 In 2020, the district's day visitor market accounted for 51.4% of the value of tourism activity (£43.17m). The staying visitor market accounted for the remaining 48.6% of economic value (£40.82m). In the five year period 2014 to 2019, direct expenditure by visitors had grown by £26.3m (+18.9%) and total economic value by £35m (19.1%)

Development of initiatives and opportunities

- 5.53 In partnership with the National Forest Company we continue to support the development of plans and initiatives including:
- Heart of the Forest Masterplan - The Heart of the Forest is approximately 10 square miles in the centre of the National Forest in North West Leicestershire, a landscape previously scarred by coal and clay mining which has been transformed since the creation of the National Forest in the early 1990s. This Vision looks ahead to the next 25 years and how we can further establish the area to demonstrate that enterprise, people and habitats can work together to mitigate and adapt to climate change whilst also improving the experience and wellbeing of our communities and visitors.
 - National Forest Design Guide for Sustainable Tourism and Accelerator Programme – the production of a design guide which will support tourism accommodation providers to transition to net zero, establish local supply chains, work with local communities, and provide for nature. A programme of expert advice to help existing and new developers and operators implement the seven principles outlined in the guide.
 - Timber Festival – a founder sponsor of an extraordinary award winning three day camping festival of music, forest, arts and ideas, helping to put the area and the National Forest on the map and attracting an increasing audience.

Key Objectives – Place.

- 15) Support the work of the Coalville Project and the Coalville Regeneration Framework including the renewal of Marlborough Square, support for the Newmarket, deliver aspiration for a new cinema, ongoing support to increase occupancy and footfall on the high streets
- 16) Develop a framework of opportunities for the land adjacent to the new Leisure Centre, the Hermitage Recreation Ground and the existing Hermitage Leisure Centre Building
- 17) Support the work of the Ashby Project and support the emerging Ashby Business Improvement District to maximise new investment in the market town.
- 18) Continue to support and develop our smaller local centres to be vibrant hubs for their communities, businesses and visitors and to encourage residents to shop local
- 19) Support proposals for increased inward investment within North West Leicestershire and the National Forest to develop the sustainable tourism offer and support the visitor economy and rural diversification
- 20) Collaborate with the National Forest to deliver the Heart of the Forest Masterplan
- 21) Facilitate the development of the wider East Midlands International Gateway including investment in infrastructure, such as transport links and utilities, and support the continued development and use of the Strategic Rail Freight Interchange
- 22) Work with public transport operators to encourage the transition from traditional vehicles to more sustainable options such as electric or hydrogen.
- 23) Through the substantive review of the Local Plan consideration will be given to how the planning process can support the increased use of renewable energy, energy efficiency standards for new buildings and provision of electric vehicle charging points for residential and employment developments.
- 24) Ensure there are sufficient employment sites and premises in the district and help to identify gaps in provision by working with developers and partners, particularly for incubation, and follow-on space
- 25) Work with developers, agents and partners, such as Invest in Leicester and the Department for International Trade, to promote North West Leicestershire as a destination, to attract new inward investment into the district and to assist with indigenous business expansions
- 26) Through the planning process, continue to encourage quality sustainable design, sustainable construction methods and materials, green infrastructure and public realm within the setting of the National Forest and across the district
- 27) Support the continued roll out of Superfast Leicestershire to improve digital connectivity of homes and businesses across the district
- 28) Deliver the south east Coalville and Money Hill developments and ensure that the people living in these new homes have relationships with their town centres and local services
- 29) Explore opportunities to provide better public transport connections to major employment areas and encourage the take up of car share solutions to reduce the number of private vehicles on the road

- 30) Work with a range of partners to maximise the provision of affordable housing within North West Leicestershire to ensure that residents have access to good quality affordable homes
- 31) Continue to contribute to the work of the East Midlands Development Corporation to facilitate landmark developments including the emerging East Midlands Freeport.
- 32) Support aspirations to open and restore the Ashby Canal
- 33) Support aspiration for the reinstatement of the Ivanhoe Line led by the Campaign to Re-open The Ivanhoe Line (CRIL) and align to improved walking and cycling networks.

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Business

- 6.1 North West Leicestershire is home to some major national and multi-national businesses including Barratt Developments (Construction); DHL (Logistics); Refresco (Food & Drink Manufacturing); Plastic Omnium (Manufacturing); Pall-Ex (Logistics); Amazon (On-line retailer and warehouse); PWC (Accountants); East Midlands Airport (Transportation) and Istock Brick (Building Materials).
- 6.2 In research undertaken by De Montfort University looking at the Top 200 Leicester, Leicestershire & Rutland businesses by turnover, 2019, 52 were based in the District⁸. This is another indicator as to how businesses are attracted to North West Leicestershire as a location in which to do business (see Appendix B for the full list). In addition to the larger businesses, North West Leicestershire has a number of dynamic growing small and micro businesses.
- 6.3 The number of business enterprises⁹ in 2020 in the District stood at 4,340 – 800 higher than in 2010, which shows a rise of 22.6%. This compares with a 27.1% rise in Leicestershire; 28.4% in the East Midlands and 31.6% nationally. This shows that the District is under performing in the growth of its business stock.
- 6.4 The major sectors in terms of the numbers of businesses in 2020 saw Professional, Scientific and Technical being the lead sector with 16% of the total business enterprise stock, followed by Construction (12%) and Business Administration and Defence (8%) Presented in Table 2. The sector breakdown is similar to that in GB as a whole although there are slightly higher proportions of enterprises in Production; Transport and Storage; Motor Trades; Wholesale; Finance & Insurance; Property; Public Administration & Defence and Education. The following sectors are slightly under represented: Agriculture; Forestry & Fishing; Construction; Retail; Accommodation & Food Services; Information & Communication; Professional, Scientific and Technical; Business Administration & Support Services; Health and Arts, Entertainment, Recreation & other Services.

⁸ De Montfort University research - Top 200 Companies Survey based upon turnover and site of business Registered Office

⁹ An enterprise is the smallest combination of legal units (generally based on VAT and/or PAYE records) which has a certain degree of autonomy within an Enterprise Group

Table 2. - Business Enterprises by Sector 2020

	NWL (Number)	NWL (% of Total)	Leics (% of Total)	EM (% of Total)	GB (% of Total)
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	195	4.5	5.9	6.0	4.9
Production	345	8.0	7.6	7.1	5.5
Construction	540	12.4	13.0	13.0	12.7
Motor Trades	165	3.8	3.3	3.6	2.8
Wholesale	220	5.1	4.7	4.1	3.7
Retail	275	6.3	6.6	7.4	7.6
Transport & Storage	280	6.5	5.3	7.0	4.5
Accommodation & Food Services	220	5.1	5.0	5.9	5.9
Information & Communication	245	5.6	5.6	5.4	8.4
Finance & Insurance	125	2.9	3.2	2.8	2.3
Property	175	4.0	3.8	3.5	3.7
Professional, Scientific & Technical	685	15.8	15.3	13.8	17.3
Business Administration & Support Services	365	8.4	8.8	7.7	8.7
Public Administration & Defence	25	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.3
Education	95	2.2	1.9	1.7	1.7
Health	125	2.9	3.5	3.7	3.8
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation & Other Services	260	6.0	5.8	6.6	6.4
Total	4,340	100	100	100	100

Source: Inter Departmental Business Register ONS 2021

- 6.5 Sectors which have seen the highest growth have been Public Administration and Defence (150% higher – though from a low base); Financial & Insurance (up 92%); Property (75%) and Mining, Quarrying and Utilities (up 67% - but again from a small base). Only one sector experienced a decline in the number of enterprises – namely Wholesale (-8.3%) with the Retail sector remaining with 275 establishments over the 10 years. Table 3 shows a more detailed breakdown.

Table 3. - Business Enterprises by Sector 2010 & 2020

	NWL 2010	NWL (% of Total)	NWL 2020	NWL (% of Total)	% change 2010- 2020
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	185	5.2	195	4.5	5.4
Mining & Quarrying	15	0.4	25	0.6	66.7
Manufacturing	275	7.8	320	7.4	16.4
Construction	460	13.0	540	12.4	17.4
Motor Trades	160	4.5	165	3.8	3.1
Wholesale	240	6.8	220	5.1	-8.3
Retail	275	7.8	275	6.3	0.0
Transport & Storage	225	6.4	280	6.5	24.4
Accommodation & Food Services	205	5.8	220	5.1	7.3
Information & Communication	185	5.2	245	5.6	32.4
Finance & Insurance	65	1.8	125	2.9	92.3
Property	100	2.8	175	4.0	75.0
Professional, Scientific & Technical	495	14.0	685	15.8	38.4
Business Administration & Support Services	230	6.5	365	8.4	58.7
Public Administration & Defence	10	0.3	25	0.6	15.0
Education	70	2.0	95	2.2	35.7
Health	100	2.8	125	2.9	25.0
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation & Other Services	245	6.9	260	6.0	6.1
Total	3,540	100	4,340	100	22.6

Source: Inter Departmental Business Register ONS 2021

- 6.6 In terms of the size of business enterprises, 3,755 businesses are classified as Micro (0 – 9 employees) representing 86.7% - this is lower than for the County; Region and GB as a whole – but with regard to large enterprises (250 employees plus), the District has a higher percentage of enterprises (0.7%) – 30 enterprises in total. See Table 4.

Table 4. - Business Enterprises by Size (Proportion of Total Stock) 2020

Enterprises	North West Leics	Leicestershire	East Midlands	Great Britain
Micro (0-9)	86.7	89.2	89.1	89.6
Small (10 -49)	9.8	8.7	8.9	8.5
Medium (50 – 249)	2.8	1.7	1.6	1.5
Large (250+)	0.7	0.4	0.4	0.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Source: Inter Departmental Business Register ONS 2021

- 6.7 From Table 5 below it can be seen that, although the district has experienced healthy growth in the number of new enterprises between 2014 and 2019 rising by 22.7%, the past year has seen a healthy 9.1% rise – much higher than the regional & national averages though below the County average.

Table 5. - Count of Births of New Enterprises 2014, 2017, 2018 & 2019

	2014	2017	2018	2019	% Change 2014-19	% Change 2018-19
NWL	440	445	495	540	22.7	9.1
Leicestershire	3,300	3,165	3,385	3,800	15.2	12.3
East Midlands	22,035	22,390	22,770	24,370	10.6	7.0
Great Britain	345,500	368,755	364,265	383,605	11.0	5.3

Source: ONS Business Demography 2020

- 6.8 Business Start Up rates within the District have accelerated after coming out of the 2008/2009 global economic recession and have continued to increase year on year, with the exception of 2014. In 2019, NWL has seen the number of Births of Business Enterprises per 10,000 population increase to 52 – higher than the East Midlands figure but below that of the County & national averages. See Table 6.

Table 6. - Number of New Births of Business Enterprises per 10,000 population

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
North West Leicestershire	46	50	53	44	48	52
Leicestershire	49	50	64	46	48	54
East Midlands	48	54	52	47	47	50
GB	55	60	64	57	56	59

Source: ONS Business Demography 2020 & Population Data 2021

- 6.9 Business Start Up rates have exceeded failure rates since 2014, indicating growth in the business base.
- 6.10 From Table 7 below it can be seen that, business deaths have grown over the years, particularly more so between 2018/19 in North West Leicestershire, whereas they have fallen in the County & Region. This can be partly due to the growth in Business Starts but firms may need more support to stay in business.

Table 7. - Count of Deaths of Enterprises

	2014	2017	2018	2019	% Change 2014-19	% Change 2018-19
NWL	405	415	415	475	17.3%	14.5%
Leicestershire	2,465	3,805	3,085	2,950	19.7%	-4.5%
East Midlands	15,780	23,595	20,285	20,190	27.9%	-0.5%
Great Britain	241,790	341,620	306,250	330,175	36.6%	7.8%

Source: ONS Business Demography 2020

- 6.11 The number of Deaths of Businesses per 10,000 population in NWL has kept below the Births figure which is a positive sign although in 2017, along with a slowdown in new enterprises, there has been an increase in Business Deaths as presented in Table 8.

Table 8. - Number of Deaths of Business Enterprises per 10,000 population

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
North West Leicestershire	42	42	39	41	41	46
Leicestershire	37	41	40	55	44	42
East Midlands	34	39	37	49	42	48
GB	40	37	39	44	44	55

Source: ONS Business Demography 2020 & Population Data 2021

- 6.12 Table 9 below shows the total number of enterprises per 10,000 population with North West Leicestershire performing well compared with Leicestershire, the East Midlands and GB in 2019.

Table 9. - Number of Total Enterprises per 10,000 population

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
North West Leicestershire	440	440	452	450	444	451
Leicestershire	416	428	454	454	440	444
East Midlands	361	377	388	398	393	403
GB	398	413	435	445	442	451

Source: ONS Business Demography 2020 & Population Data 2021

- 6.13 Table 10 below shows that the survival rate of new businesses in North West Leicestershire in 2018 had fallen to 85.9% – lower than the county; region and nationally and in fact the lowest of all Leicestershire districts. It has also fallen since 2014, when 92% of businesses survived their first year.

Table 10. - Survival of Businesses 2014 & 2018

	Births 2014	1 year survival	1 year percentage	Births 2018	1 year survival	1 year percentage
North West Leicestershire	440	405	92.0%	495	425	85.9%
Leicestershire	3,300	3,085	93.5%	3,385	3,085	91.1%
East Midlands	22,035	20,565	93.3%	22,770	20,750	91.1%
GB	345,500	318,975	92.3%	364,265	325,515	89.4%

Source: ONS Business Demography 2020

Gross Value Added (GVA)

- 6.14 The strength of the North West Leicestershire economy is illustrated in the latest Gross Value Added Statistics (GVA). GVA measures the value of goods and services produced in an area, industry or sector of an economy.
- 6.15 As presented in Table 11, GVA in the Leicester and Leicestershire area is £23.6bn. In North West Leicestershire it is £3.2bn. The broad industry areas with the largest share of GVA are Manufacturing and Transport & Storage. In 2018 these had the largest share of employees.

Table 11. - NWL Industrial Breakdown 2018

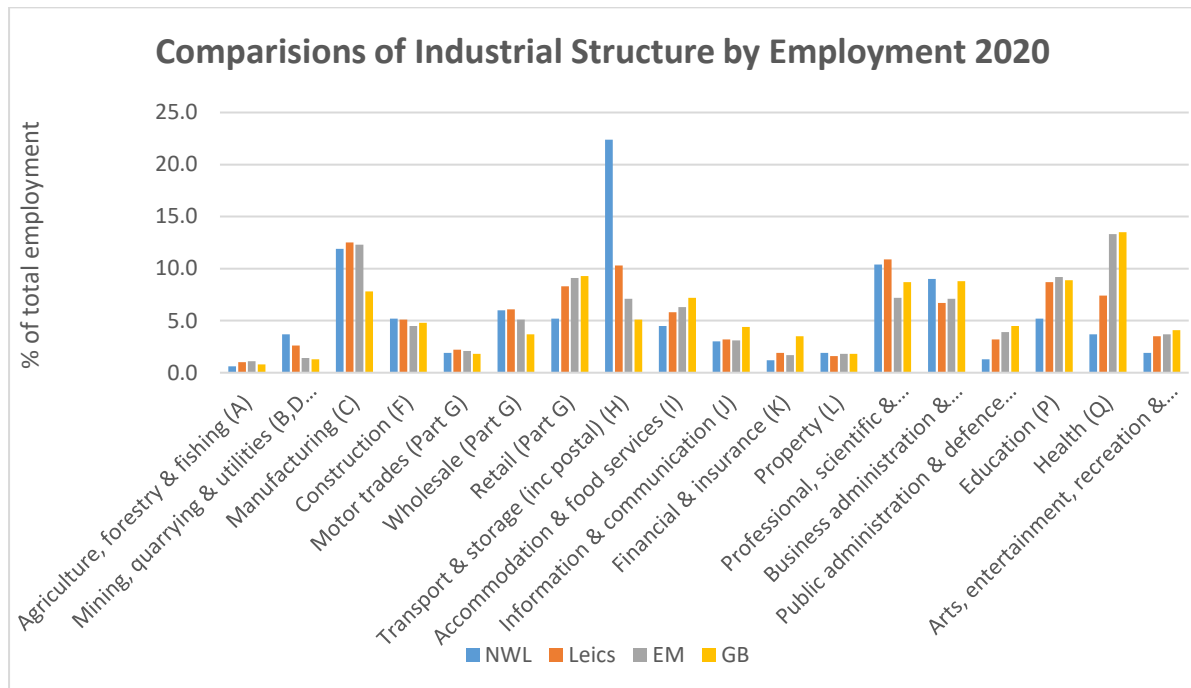
Industry (Broad Industry Area)	2018 Employees	2018 GVA
1 : Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	340	23,829,508
2 : Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	2,625	288,563,933
3 : Manufacturing (C)	8,130	563,577,409
4 : Construction (F)	3,700	355,645,325
5 : Motor trades (Part G)	1,625	92,231,961
6 : Wholesale (Part G)	3,750	180,967,276
7 : Retail (Part G)	3,500	119,985,915
8 : Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	9,375	476,589,551
9 : Accommodation & food services (I)	3,650	69,074,646
10 : Information & communication (J)	1,705	92,610,976
11 : Financial & insurance (K)	700	60,530,768
12 : Property (L)	1,125	142,219,020
13 : Professional, scientific & technical (M)	5,325	206,632,775
14 : Business administration & support services (N)	7,565	225,857,060
15 : Public administration & defence (O)	750	40,714,286
16 : Education (P)	3,250	131,113,674
17 : Health (Q)	2,250	73,151,080
18 : Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	1,910	77,836,478
Column Total	61,275	3,221,131,641

Source: ONS Regional Gross Value Added (balanced) by Industry: all NUTS Level Regions, ONS Business Register and Employment Survey

Note: Gross Value-Added figures have been derived from data supplied by the Office for National Statistics that considers the Leicester, Leicestershire, Rutland and Northamptonshire area as a whole. The data supplied has been broken down by the number of employees contained within that area and within each of the industry areas. Data has then been applied by each local geography. As a result, the data supplied should be treated with caution. - GVA Data supplied by the LLEP.

6.16 North West Leicestershire has a well-balanced diverse economy with a much lower reliance on the Public Sector, (such as Health, Education and Public Administration) than in the Region and Nationally, with only 10.2% of employees in the District within this sector compared with the regional and national figures of 26.4% and 26.9% respectively. Chart 2 below compares the employment structure (workplace based) of the District against that of the County, East Midlands and Great Britain.

Chart 2. - Comparisons of Industrial Structure (2020)



Source: BRES 2021 Broad Industry Group Classification

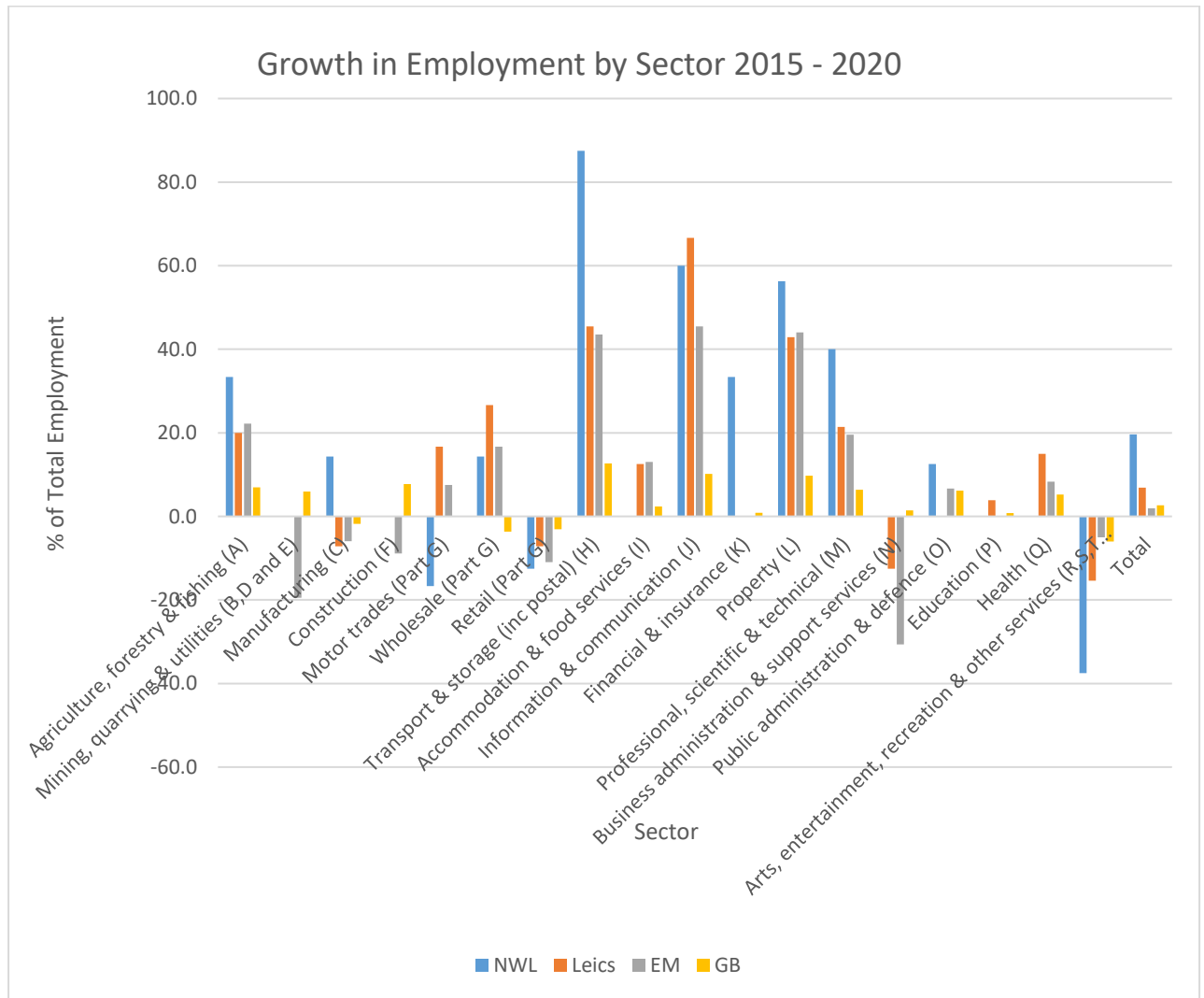
6.17 Chart 2 shows the sectors where North West Leicestershire has a much higher proportion of workers is in Transport and Storage – unsurprising with East Midlands Airport residing in the District and the home to major logistics companies such as DHL; UPS; Amazon and GXO and many other national and international companies. In 2020 this sector accounted for 22.4% of all employment compared to 10.3% in Leicestershire; 7.1% in the East Midlands and 5.1% in GB. This represents 15,000 employees and has increased by 87.5% since 2015, where the sector represented 14.3%.

6.18 Manufacturing accounts for 11.9%; Professional, Scientific and Technical Activities 10.4%; Business Administration 9.0% and Wholesale 6.0% are the other largest sectors.

6.19 As shown in chart 3, In 2020 there were 11,000 more jobs in North West Leicestershire than in 2015, to now stand at 67,000 (a rise of 19.6%). This growth has been far higher than the County (6.9%); region (1.9%) and nationally (2.7%)

6.20 The chart below shows that there has been higher growth in certain sectors such as Transport & Storage; Information & Communication; Property; Professional, Scientific & Technical; Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing; Financial & Insurance & Manufacturing.

Chart 3. – Growth in Employment by Sector



Source: BRES 2021 Broad Industry Group Classification

Key Sectors

6.21 Based on the analysis of Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data and a range of other sources considered in the development of the Economic Growth Plan, there are five key sectors that will be prioritised for growth within the District. These sectors are:

- Business and Professional and Scientific Services (linked to town centre regeneration)
- Manufacturing
- Logistics and Distribution
- Construction
- Creative/Cultural/Tourism Sector (Despite the sector suffering significantly due the coronavirus pandemic, the sector has demonstrated growth over a longer period of time.)

6.22 Another sign of the strong North West Leicestershire economy is that it is the home to 52 of the Top 200, according to research by De Montfort University in 2021. This indicates that the District is one of the most dynamic places to do business. This represents 26% of the total number of the Top 200. Further details are included in Appendix B.

Key Objectives – Business.

- 34) Work with partners to provide local businesses with advice and support, with particular focus placed on high growth businesses and those in priority growth sectors
- 35) Continue to provide support to businesses providing key local services within our towns, highstreets, rural communities and markets
- 36) Enable programmes of support specifically relevant to the growth and development businesses in the creative sector.
- 37) Explore and promote external funding opportunities to enable local businesses to access grants and funding that assist business growth, to increase productivity and boost local employment
- 38) Ensure there is sufficient workspace and support for new enterprises and business start-ups
- 39) Promote tourism and sustainable tourism businesses that support forestry, agriculture, land based rural diversification and outdoor leisure and promote the area as a sustainable tourism destination.
- 40) Facilitate programmes that assist businesses in staff recruitment and upskilling. For example, hosting jobs and skills fairs with particular emphasis on those furthest from the labour market and promoting a more open recruitment policy.
- 41) Increase innovation activity amongst the wider SME and business base through initiatives such as the MIT Regional Entrepreneurship Acceleration Program
- 42) Ensure there is a “soft landing” package for potential investors to make informed decisions about locating to North West Leicestershire
- 43) Continue to collaborate with IM Properties to facilitate the Employment Partnership throughout the construction and occupation phase of Mercia Park
- 44) With the Leicester Employment Hub, encourage local businesses to get the most from their apprenticeship levy to create new apprenticeship opportunities and upskill their existing workforce
- 45) Help local businesses and education providers to collaborate on upskilling workforce and readying future generations for work within the local economy.
- 46) Provide advice and support to existing businesses to cut energy costs, reduce and off set carbon emissions, reduce waste, recycle more, increase efficiency and promote a circular economy.
- 47) Engage with organisations on key business parks in North West Leicestershire to discuss potential for photovoltaics, electric vehicle charging points and another carbon reducing measures
- 48) Encourage local businesses to reduce the carbon intensity of their operations and improve energy efficiency in a Local Business ‘Carbon Action’ group.
- 49) Promote opportunities for exporting and global trade to support business growth post EU Exit.

- 50) Provide specialist advice such as environmental health, planning, building control and licensing to local businesses to ensure that they are compliant with regulations.

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7 Resources and Implementation

- 7.1 At the time of preparing this evidence, there remains some uncertainty regarding Covid recovery; the challenges of the EU transition and the future national funding arrangements. It is not fully evident as to where future funding will come from for both Infrastructure projects and Skills related activity.
- 7.2 Partnerships will be critical to the success of the delivery of the refreshed Economic Growth Plan, notably with Leicestershire County Council, Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership and the East Midlands Development Corporation. North West Leicestershire has a key role to play in designing interventions that will have the maximum impact on the District. There will also be opportunities to collaborate formally and informally with other Districts (within Leicestershire and outside) and across other counties and LEP areas, for example the Derby and Nottingham LEP, D2N2 – particularly with regard to the East Midlands Enterprise Gateway and proposed Freeport. Working with the National Forest and its partners is another key relationship to support sustainable economic growth.

8 Delivery

- 8.1 The North West Leicestershire Economic Growth Plan has been developed against the backdrop of the emerging Leicester & Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy and a variety of National initiatives.
- 8.2 The success of the Growth Plan will be monitored by the extent to which the objectives set out in the document are achieved, but also by considering the outcomes they bring.
- 8.3 Strong local governance is required. The refreshed Economic Growth Plan will be underpinned by the Council Delivery Plan and a number of Council Service Plans that bring together expertise from various disciplines to deliver the Council's key business facing services.
- 8.4 Progress on the delivery of the strategy will be overseen by the Council's Economic Development & Regeneration Team and reported to the Portfolio Holder for Business and through the Council's reporting framework.
- 8.5 We are keen to develop interventions that are evidence based, well thought out and measurable. We would look for projects to have a clear process for identifying any added value and demonstrate a clear understanding of any positive and negative economic impact on the District – and where there may be negative economic impacts how these could be mitigated.
- 8.6 The successful implementation of this plan will be enabled through strong partnerships and require input from North West Leicestershire District Council, local businesses, the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership, the Leicestershire Growth Hub, the East Midlands Development Corporation, the National Forest, Leicestershire County Council, Leicester Employment Hub, East Midlands Chamber of Commerce, the SMB Group, Department for Work and Pension, Leicester-Shire and Rutland Sport, neighbouring authorities and other regional bodies.

Appendices

Appendix A - A list of current relevant strategies

The refreshed North West Leicestershire District Council Economic Growth Plan is informed by the following national/regional and local strategies and legislation:

The Local Government Act (2000) recognised the leadership role of local authorities in promoting the economic, social and environmental wellbeing of their areas by undertaking a wide range of activities to improve the quality of life of local residents and businesses and those who commute or visit the area. - [Local Government Act 2000 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://legislation.gov.uk)

The updated National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - provides a planning framework relating to how planning policies are applied with a presumption in favour of achieving sustainable development, taking account of economic, social and environmental dimensions. The framework shifts emphasis towards positively seeking opportunities for development unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. - [Policy paper overview: National Planning Policy Framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

Plan for Growth – “Build Back Better” – Our Plan for Growth March 2021 - sets out the government’s plans to support growth through significant investment in infrastructure, skills and innovation, and to pursue growth that levels up every part of the UK, enables the transition to net zero, and supports our vision for Global Britain. - [Build Back Better: our plan for growth - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

UK Government Net Zero Strategy - Build Back Better:

In 2020, the Government set out their 10 point plan for a green industrial revolution, laying the foundations for a green economic recovery from the impact of COVID-19 with the UK at the forefront of the growing global green economy. This strategy builds on that approach to keep the country on track for UK carbon budgets, the 2030 Nationally Determined Contribution, and net zero by 2050. It includes:

- our decarbonisation pathways to net zero by 2050, including illustrative scenarios
- policies and proposals to reduce emissions for each sector
- cross-cutting action to support the transition

[Policy paper overview: Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk)

UK Government: Greening Finance: A Roadmap to Sustainable Investing – [A Roadmap to Sustainable investing.](https://www.gov.uk)

UK Government: The Ten Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution – [Ten Point Plan for A Green Industrial Revolution.](https://www.gov.uk)

The **Midlands Engine for Growth** is a strategic plan to drive growth in the Midlands as part of the Government’s devolution proposals with an emphasis on boosting productivity and supporting growth in manufacturing as well as inward investment, skills development and improving transport connectivity through the Midlands Connect project. - [Midlands Engine | The Heartbeat of Britain’s Economy](https://www.gov.uk)

The Ten Point Plan for Green Growth in the Midlands Engine sets out, with a unified voice, the actions to be taken in partnership which will accelerate the region's and the UK's path to net zero.

Exceptional work in low carbon is already underway across the vast Midlands Engine Partnership landscape, making the Midlands a leading location for Green Growth. But the potential for more is phenomenal.

This Plan gives a focus to complement existing partner initiatives, capitalising on the wealth of economic opportunities presented by the shift to low carbon and enabling nature's recovery. It is how we can drive collective action today to safeguard the environment for future generations.

[Green Growth | Midlands Engine](#)

The **Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership (LLEP)** The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership formed in May 2011 is a partnership of private, public and third sector organisations that drives economic regeneration and development across the sub region and in 2021 launched the 2021-30 Economic Growth Strategy, which seeks to deliver recovery and growth based on the 4 pillars of Productive; Innovative; Inclusive and sustainable - <https://llep.org.uk/>

Leicester & Leicestershire Economic Growth Strategy Evidence Review 2021 to 2030 - [Leicester & Leicestershire Economic Recovery Strategy – Evidence Review \(llep.org.uk\) LLEP Delivery Plan 2021/22](#)

Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Delivery Plan Review 2021 to 2022 - <https://llep.org.uk/app/uploads/2021/04/LLEP-Delivery-Plan-2021-2022-FINAL.pdf>

Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Local Skills Report 2021 – March 2021 - [LLEP-Local-Skills-Report v2.pdf](#)

Leicester & Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Energy Infrastructure Strategy November 2018 - [Energy infrastructure Strategy \(llep.org.uk\)](#)

Leicestershire County Council Draft Strategic Plan 2022 to 26 (October 2021) – This sets out Leicestershire County Council's Vision of "An inclusive county in which active communities, great connections and greener living enable everyone to prosper, be happy and healthy". This is generated through 5 strategic outcomes:

- Clean, Green Future
- Great Communities
- Improving Opportunities
- Strong Economy, Transport & Infrastructure
- Keeping people safe & well

[Leicestershire County Council Strategic Plan 2022-26](#)

Leicestershire County Council's Prospectus for Growth (February 2019) - Sets out the major national, regional and local transport infrastructure projects and their link to economic growth. This includes:

- The A42 Expressway– an aspiration to upgrade the A42 to motorway standard, improving east-west connectivity.
- Coalville Transport Strategy

[Prospectus for Growth Leicestershire - February 2019 \(low resolution\)](#)

The Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester & Leicestershire 2050: Our vision for growth (2018) -

Leicestershire and Leicester Strategic Growth Plan: - The sub regional Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) has been prepared by the nine local authorities in the region and the LLEP. It is a long term non statutory plan which seeks to address the challenges and opportunities that arise throughout the area for the period to 2050. The plan looks to

- calculate the areas housing and employment needs; accommodating the areas housing and employment needs and align growth; infrastructure and services
- Provide an agreed scale and direction for future growth, reflecting the evidence available and the will of the partners
- Create a single consistent strategic framework for Local Plans, economic investment plans, transport and other infrastructure plans
- Ensure that Leicester & Leicestershire is positively positioned to take advantage of private sector inward investment opportunities and national programmes for investment
- Provide the right conditions for the growth of indigenous businesses, and, at the same time, protect the area's natural resources, environment and historic assets.

[Final Plan Published - Strategic Growth Plan LCC | Strategic Growth Plan LCC \(llstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk\)](#)

National Forest Tourism Growth Plan (2017): - this sets out an ambitious 10-year strategic plan on how to realise the potential of the Forest as a visitor destination and how tourism will contribute to transforming lives, the landscape and the economy.

[National-Forest-Tourism-Growth-Plan-Web-Document.pdf \(nationalforest.org\)](#)

North West Leicestershire District Council Local Plan 2017 and the Local Plan Review: - A key objective of the Local Plan is to seek to promote sustainable economic growth across the District. It seeks to achieve this through facilitating the growth of existing businesses, fostering new local enterprise, contribute to reducing the need for out commuting and help to increase the sustainability and self-containment of communities to enable the development of a vibrant, diverse and sustainable business community.

The Local Plan includes policies and identifies sites to enable sustainable growth in key sectors and priorities identified through the Economic Development Strategy namely broadband infrastructure, provision of employment land, Tourism, Leisure and other Town Centre uses.

The North West Leicestershire Local Plan was adopted in November 2017. It was followed by an immediate partial review which was adopted in March 2021. A wider ranging review is underway and will look ahead to 2039.

The review will be supported by a range of evidence, including future employment and housing needs.

[Local Plan 2011-2031 - North West Leicestershire District Council \(nwleics.gov.uk\)](https://www.nwleics.gov.uk)

In July 2021 York Aviation produced a report on Aviation Jobs in the UK on behalf of Airlines UK in conjunction with Heathrow Airport; the Manchester Airports Group and TUI, indicating the importance of the airline industry. Over 20,000 aviation-related jobs are provided in the East Midlands with around 2,056 residing in North West Leicestershire.

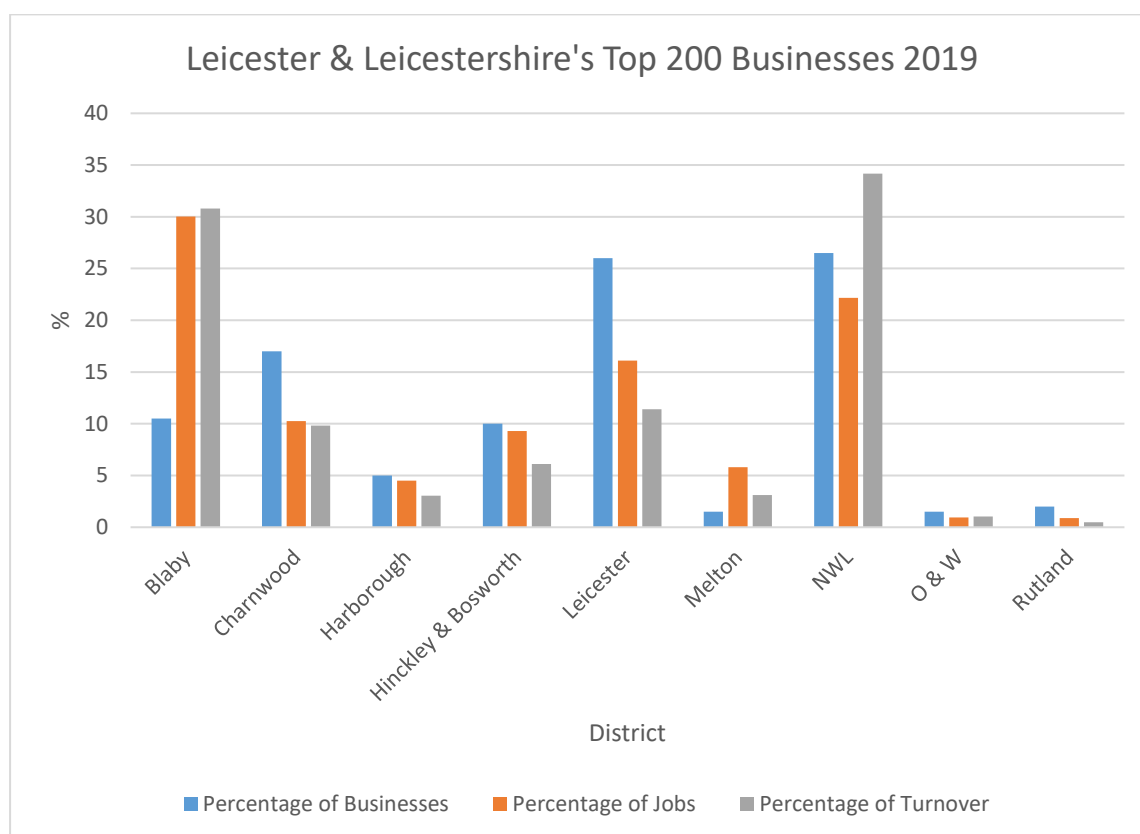
<https://airlinesuk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Aviation-Jobs-in-Great-Britain.pdf>

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Appendix B - 2019 Leicestershire's Top 200 Businesses – Great Performance by NWL Businesses

- In July 2021 NWLDC have obtained the Top 200 Leicestershire businesses through work undertaken by De Montfort University. These are businesses whose registered offices are within the City or County, based on the highest turnover. Many businesses use professional services such as accountants or solicitors so Leicester City does have a number of County businesses but they are registered there.
- 52 of the Top 200 are based in North West Leicestershire, indicating that the District is one of the most dynamic places to do business. This represents 26% of the total number of the Top 200. It is home to a number of long-established companies such as Aggregate Industries, Ibstock Brick, These companies are from a range of sectors, Construction - Barratt Developments; Bloor Investments and Davidsons; Quarrying and Building Materials – Aggregate Industries Ltd; Ibstock Brick and Breedon; Logistics – Ceva
- Of the Top 200, sectors which have come forward in particular are Property development; Motor Trade; construction and manufacturing, seeing increased turnover.
- The top NWL companies have a combined turnover of £13.1 billion (up from 2017s £10.7billion) and have a combined workforce of over 37,100 (around an additional 2,000 jobs). Not all of these jobs will be based in North West Leicestershire but it still indicates the importance of these companies nationally.
- Nearly 35% of Leicestershire & Rutland's Top 200 business turnover is produced by NWL businesses.
- Five businesses have made the Top 200 for the first time namely: Aceso Healthcare Group Holdings; Lafarge Caudon Ltd; Wilson Vale Catering; J A Ball (Construction); & Interlevin Holdings.
- 21 of the 52 are placed higher than in 2017; 4 remain in the same position; 5 new entrants, 2 returners and 20 fell to lower positions. Two have dropped out of the ranking – GO Plant (acquired by a non-Leicestershire business) and A M Norris (Plumbers).

Chart 4. - Percentage of Leicester & Leicestershire's Top 200 Businesses 2019 by District



Source: De Montfort University 2021

Top North West Leicestershire Businesses - listed by Turnover

2019 Ranking	2018 Ranking	Name	Staff	Turnover	Sector	Location
2	2	Barratt Developments	6,419	£4,763,100,000	Construction	Coalville
4	4	Bloor Investments Ltd	3,867	£1,695,988,000	Construction and motorcycle manufacturer	Measham
5	5	Aggregate Industries UK Ltd	3,577	£1,296,620,000	Quarrying	Bardon
10	14	Graham Bell (Holdings) Ltd - Available Car	772	£421,136,000	Motor Sales	Castle Donington
11	13	Ceva Logistics Ltd	3,984	£399,589,000	Supply Chain Logistics	Ashby de la Zouch
13	11	Ibstock PLC	2,668	£391,402,000	Brick Manufacturer	Ibstock
14	13	Breedon Southern Ltd	1,075	£384,513,000	Quarrying	Breedon-on-the-Hill

15	16	Plastic Omnium Automotive Ltd	1,174 8	£380,060,000	Plastic manufacturer	Measham
18	22	Refresco Drinks Ltd	1,040	£284,721,000	Soft drinks	Kegworth
27	32	Airline Investments Ltd	1,051	£214,685,000	Airline	Castle Donington
29	32	Aceso Healthcare Group Holdings Ltd	1,097	£196,343,000	Healthcare services and products	Coalville
31	42	Ceva Freight UK Ltd	281	£190,582,000	Air & Sea Freight	Ashby de la Zouch
34	46	Davidsons Developments Ltd	237	£176,585,000	Construction	lstock
42	N	Board24 Ltd	344	£151,584,000	Fibreboard Manufacturer	Coalville
43	40	MWUK Ltd	643	£146,497,000	Clothing	Castle Donington
44	61	Breedon Cement Ltd	236	£141,726,000	Construction Materials	Breedon on the Hill
58	149	HBB Relocation Services Ltd	14	£100,338,000	Real Estate	Kegworth
62	N	Plastribution Ltd	69	£92,454,000	Plastics	Ashby de la Zouch
63	119	Fannin (UK) Ltd	111	£88,793,000	Laboratory Equipment	Measham
64	78	Kone Cranes Demeg UK Ltd	540	£87,046,000	Crane supplier	Ashby de la Zouch
65	61	Lafarge Cauldron Limited	126	£84,068,000	Construction materials	Coalville
71	62	HLD Holdings Ltd (Pall-ex)	328	£79,707,000	Logistics	Ellistown
74	89	Beumer Group Ltd	136	£77,247,000	Materials Handling	Coalville
78	64	Ashfield Healthcare Ltd	928	£70,992,000	Pharmaceutical staff provider	Ashby de la Zouch
81	70	Harlow Bros Holdings Ltd	511	£69,085,000	Construction Materials	Long Whatton
82	87	East Midlands International Airport	558	£68,898,000	Air Transportation	Castle Donington
84	88	Ashfield Healthcare Communications Group Ltd	588	£67,291,000	Medical Education & Communications	Ashby de la Zouch
91	103	Roca Limited	108	£62,541,000	Bathroom fixtures & accessories	Coalville

95	84	Hormann (UK) Ltd	142	£60,739,000	Domestic & Industrial Door Supplier	Coalville
106	82	Paul John Construction Leicester Ltd	76	£50,984,000	Building Engineers	Coalville
117	187	CET Group Holdings Ltd	460	£44,667,000	Construction Services	Castle Donington
119	108	Fannin (UK)	72	£40,869,000	Laboratory equipment	Measham
126	126	Forest Holidays Group	635	£36,520,000	Holiday organiser	Moira
131	N	Cellar Trends Holdings	75	£35,188,000	Branded alcoholic drinks supplier	Ashby
132	122	Homag UK	68	£34,554,000	Woodworking Machinery	Castle Donington
138	195	PKF Cooper Parry Group Ltd	396	£32,026,000	Accounting, auditing & financial services	Castle Donington
145	N	Caetano UK	15	£30,871,000	Coach Distributor	Coalville
147	137	TDP Textiles	143	£30,368,000	Apparel Supplier	Moira
148	N	Wilson Vale Catering	726	£30,366,000	Catering	Ashby
149	136	HBB Relocation Services	10	£30,347,000	Real Estate	Kegworth
159	177	Motors (Coalville)	36	£27,866,000	Ford Dealership	Coalville
160	167	Crusher Manganese Steels (CMS Cepcor Ltd)	75	£27,830,000	Crushing equipment supplier	Coalville
161	155	Vitax (Synchemicals)	210	£25,577,000	Horticultural Chemical Supplies	Coalville
163	150	Charterhouse Holdings PLC	91	£27,165,000	Clothing and footwear wholesaler	Castle Donington
164	187	CET Group Holdings	302	£27,148,000	Infrastructure Support	Castle Donington
168	152	AB Produce	132	£26,257,000	Wholesaler of fruit and vegetables	Measham
169	N	J A Ball	30	£25,990,000	Construction	Coalville
178	158	Matsuura Machinery	68	£24,266,000	Machine tools supplier	Coalville
180	178	Winbro Group UK	175	£24,050,000	Gas Turbine supplies	Coalville
184	179	HK Wentworth	215	£23,591,000	Chemical manufacturer	Ashby
188	154	Hill-Rom	170	£23,102,000	Medical support systems	Ashby
194	N	Interlewin Holdings	41	£21,902,000	Refrigeration Units	Castle Donington

N – New entry

Source: De Montfort University July 2021

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