

Title of Report	LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – STRATEGIC WAREHOUSING	
Presented by	Sarah Lee Principal Planning Policy Officer	
Background Papers	<p>Item 6 Report to Local Plan Committee 18 November 2025</p> <p>Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Strategic Warehousing & Logistics Need (September 2021)</p> <p>Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Distribution Need and Apportionment Study (2025)</p> <p>National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024)</p>	Public Report: Yes
Financial Implications	The cost of preparing the Statement of Common Ground and its supporting evidence is met by all the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities making agreed contributions.	
	Signed off by the Section 151 Officer: Yes	
Legal Implications	The Local Plan is required to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and other government guidance and requirements.	
	Signed off by the Monitoring Officer: Yes	
Staffing and Corporate Implications	No staffing implications are associated with the specific content of this report. Links with the Council’s Priorities are set out at the end of the report.	
	Signed off by the Head of Paid Service: Yes	
Purpose of Report	To consider the draft Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground for strategic warehousing (January 2026) at Appendix A to this report so that the view of this Committee	

	can be forwarded to Cabinet and Council when they consider the Statement of Common Ground.
Recommendations	<p>THAT THE LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE:</p> <p>1. PROVIDES ANY COMMENTS ON THE STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO STRATEGIC WAREHOUSING DATED JANUARY 2026, AT APPENDIX A TO THIS REPORT FOR CONSIDERATION BY COUNCIL AT ITS MEETING ON 12 MAY 2026</p>

1.0 BACKGROUND

- 1.1 A statement of common ground is formal, written agreement between local planning authorities dealing with cross-boundary strategic matters. Having a statement of common ground in place helps to ensure effective, transparent cooperation, identifying agreed facts and any outstanding issues. Such statements can be an important way to demonstrate effective joint-working (NPPF paragraph 36c).
- 1.2 The statement of common ground presented in this report is concerned with strategic warehousing. Once confirmed, the 'Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities - Statement of Common Ground relating to Strategic Warehousing Need January 2026' in Appendix A ('the SoCG 2026') will replace an agreed statement on the same subject dating from 2021 which dealt primarily with the following matters of evidence and process:
- it affirmed how much additional land/floorspace needed to be found in Leicester and Leicestershire to meet outstanding needs to 2041 based on evidence dating from 2021.
 - it affirmed the Areas of Opportunity identified in the 2021 study which are the broad areas where the additional floorspace is most likely to be located
 - it affirmed the next steps the authorities agreed to take to ensure needs are properly planned for across the Leicester and Leicestershire area.
- 1.3 More recently, the Leicester & Leicestershire Needs Update and Apportionment Study 2025 ('the Study') updates the amount of additional strategic warehousing floorspace needed and recommends how this could be distributed ('apportioned') between the Leicestershire authorities. The Study's findings were reported to 19 November 2025 Local Plan Committee and helped inform the selection of sites for inclusion in the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan.
- 1.4 The SoCG 2026 reflects this latest evidence and explains how the signatory authorities intend to respond to it. Its preparation has been overseen by a steering group of officers and the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities' Members Advisory Group has agreed it for consideration by the individual authorities.
- 1.5 This report is structured as follows:
- Section 2 summarises key findings from the Study
 - Section 3 describes the content of the SoCG 2026
 - Section 4 sets out the next steps.

2.0 LEICESTER AND LEICESTERSHIRE NEEDS UPDATE AND APPORTIONMENT STUDY (2025)

2.1 To recap, the Study finds that there is need for some 3.06million sqm of strategic warehousing floorspace in Leicester and Leicestershire for the 22-year period 2024-46¹. This figure is in addition to sites which already have planning permission.

Table A: Leicester and Leicestershire Need for Strategic Warehousing 2024-46 (additional to sites with planning permission)

Rail-served need	1,349,600 sqm
Road-served need	1,709,600 sqm
Total	3,059,200 sqm

2.2 Table B below shows how the Study apportions the floorspace to the authority areas in Leicester and Leicestershire. [Note this table is a 'cut down' version of Table 2 in the SoCG 2026 itself].

Table B: Apportionment by district/borough 2024-46 (additional to sites with planning permission)

North West Leicestershire	1,333,600 sqm
Harborough	566,400 sqm
Hinckley & Bosworth	428,800 sqm
Blaby	650,000 sqm
Charnwood	80,500 sqm
Total	3,059,300 sqm

2.3 Table C shows how the Study apportions the additional floorspace to the three highways corridors in North West Leicestershire identified as broad locations for strategic warehousing. The figures in the third and fourth columns have been adjusted to correspond with the Local Plan end date of 2042 (i.e. 18 years rather than 22 years).

Table C: North West Leicestershire apportionment (additional to sites with planning permission)

	2024-2046	2024-2042	
	Floorspace	Floorspace	Land (estimate) ²
M1 J23a/J24; A50 J1	890,600 sqm	728,673 sqm	209 ha
Bardon (J22)	113,800 sqm	93,109 sqm	27 ha
A/M42 J11,12,13	329,200 sqm	269,345 sqm	77 ha
Total	1,333,600 sqm	1,091,127 sqm	313 ha

3.0 LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES - STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND RELATING TO STRATEGIC WAREHOUSING NEED (JANUARY 2026)

3.1 The text of the SoCG 2026 is included in Appendix A. The following paragraphs describe its key content section by section.

¹ 2023/24-2045/46

² Assumes 1ha of land can accommodate 3,500sqm of floorspace but, in practice, this ratio will vary from site to site.

Section 1 - Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) and Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA)

- 3.2 The SoCG 2026 affirms that the eight local planning authorities and two highways and transport authorities in the HMA and the FEMA have jointly prepared the SoCG 2026.

Section 2 - Purpose

- 3.3 This section confirms that the SoCG 2026 addresses the following key strategic matters; a) the Duty to Cooperate and joint working; and b) the need and apportionment of strategic warehousing floorspace in Leicester and Leicestershire for the period to 2046.

Section 3 – Background and context

- 3.4 This section confirms that the SoCG 2026 will replace the SoCG dating from 2021. The SoCG 2026 will be reconfirmed and updated as necessary.

Section 4 - Key strategic matters on which the authorities agree

- 3.5 This is the substantive part of the statement.
- 3.6 **Duty to Co-operate and Joint working** (paragraphs 4.1-4.2). This explains the means by which the authorities have worked together effectively on this issue.
- 3.7 **Strategic warehousing need to 2046** (paragraphs 4.3-4.7). The authorities affirm that a) the study is the best evidence of strategic warehousing needs available; b) the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities should provide for 3,969,400sqm of additional floorspace between 2023 and 2046³. Once sites with planning permission are factored in, the need figure reduces to 3,059,200sqm and the intention is that this will be met within Leicester and Leicestershire.
- 3.8 **Apportionment of additional floorspace required to 2046** (paragraphs 4.8-4.10). The SoCG 2026 states that the authorities agree the apportionment shown in Table 2 in the statement (reproduced below).

District / Borough *	Completions + Commitments		Residual Need Apportioned		Total	Apportionment incl. completions + commitments
	Rail	Road	Rail	Road		
North West Leicestershire	-	221,100	240,000	1,093,600	1,554,700	39%
Harborough	-	257,000	-	566,400	823,400	21%
Hinckley & Bosworth	-	327,000	-	428,800	755,800	19%
Blaby	-	105,100	650,000	0	755,100	19%
Charnwood	-	0		80,500	80,500	2%
Total	-	910,200	890,000	2,169,200	3,969,400	

Source: IcenI analysis

³ between 2023/24 and 2045/46

3.9 This Council's total apportionment is the highest by some considerable margin. Note that the figures in the table are for 2023/24 to 2045/46 (22 years).

3.10 **NWLDC Apportionment** (paragraphs 4.11-4.13). The SoCG 2026 includes a specific section explaining how this Council is responding to the Study's findings in its new Local Plan. The text of the statement, which reflects the decisions this Committee has made most recently at its 19 November 2025 meeting, states the following:

- North West Leicestershire is allocating suitable sites for strategic warehousing in the new Local Plan. The council has identified sufficient, suitable sites to meet the apportionment for A/M42 location but there are insufficient suitable sites in the M1 J23a/J24; A50 J1 and the Bardon (J22) locations
- The new Local Plan will include a criteria-based policy for considering proposals on unallocated sites (new Local Plan Policy Ec4)

3.11 In addition, the 19 November 2025 Local Plan Committee report highlighted the following:

"The NPPF states that Local Plans should be reviewed within 5 years of adoption (paragraph 34). The position will need to be re-evaluated when the new Plan is reviewed. This would include an assessment of any newly available land at J24 and at Bardon, and also an updated assessment of needs" (paragraph 5.7).

3.12 This necessity for review has also been reflected in the wording of the SoCG 2026.

3.13 By signing the SoCG 2026 the other authorities will confirm their support and agreement to this Council's approach (paragraph 4.13). Having such agreement in place will be helpful for the Local Plan Examination.

3.14 The SoCG 2026 does not include equivalent sections for the other authorities. This is because the other authorities have not yet resolved how they are addressing the Study's findings and/or they have sufficient sites to meet their apportionment. This is not considered disadvantageous for this Council.

- Harborough – the sites proposed in the Regulation 19 plan are sufficient to meet HBC's apportionment for its plan period.
- Blaby – has not yet resolved how the Study's findings will be addressed.
- Hinckley & Bosworth - has not yet resolved how the Study's findings will be addressed.
- Charnwood – has very recently adopted its Local Plan and has not yet resolved how the Study's findings will be addressed.

3.15 **Hinckley National Rail Freight Interchange (HNRFI)** (paragraphs 4.14-4.18). Whilst the Development Consent Order application for this proposal was refused on highways grounds, the decision letter affirmed that there is a need for the development. The Study identifies that it is feasible that a suitable development could come forward if the reasons for refusal were addressed. The SoCG 2026 identifies that the principle of **rail-served** development in this location should be retained and safeguarded for the future. This does not infer support for any particular future scheme.

- 3.16 **Transport** (paragraphs 4.19-4.20). This section outlines Leicestershire County Council's over-arching concerns as the local highway authority about the ability of the strategic and local road networks to accommodate the amount of new strategic warehousing floorspace the Study identifies. The SoCG 2026 affirms that the apportionment figures will need to be tested in greater depth through authorities' own Local Plans.

Section 5 – Maintaining and updating this statement

- 3.17 This section includes an acknowledgement that planning for this sector can be challenging. The authorities agree to a) testing the apportionment figures through their Local Plans; b) jointly monitor planning permissions and their implementation; and c) update the evidence base as appropriate. The statement also commits the authorities to on-going joint work on this topic.

Appendices to the SoCG 2026

- 3.18 These contain a map showing the district/borough boundaries and updated monitoring data which will be populated with the 1 April 2025 position.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 The SoCG 2026 will be considered by each of the authorities through their governance processes.
- 4.2 The SoCG 2026 is being presented to this Council's Cabinet on 24 March 2025. A decision on the statement will then be made by Council at its meeting on 12 May 2026. The views of this Committee and of Cabinet will be forwarded to Council to help inform its decision.

Policies and other considerations, as appropriate	
Council Priorities:	- Planning and regeneration
Policy Considerations:	The Local Plan is required to be consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework and other government guidance and requirements.
Safeguarding:	None discernible.
Equalities/Diversity:	An Equalities Impact Assessment of the new Local Plan will be undertaken to accompany the Regulation 19 version of the plan.
Customer Impact:	No issues identified.
Economic and Social Impact:	The SoCG 2026 deals with the provision of new strategic warehousing floorspace which in turn will impact positively on the economy of the district in the form of additional investment and jobs.
Environment, Climate Change and zero carbon:	The decision, of itself, will have no specific impact. The new Local Plan as a whole will aim to deliver positive environmental and climate change impacts and these will be recorded through the Sustainability Appraisal.
Consultation/Community/Tenant Engagement:	Further consultation on the Local Plan, including its approach to strategic warehousing outline in this report, will be undertaken at Regulation 19 stage.
Risks:	A risk assessment for the new Local Plan has been prepared and is kept up to date. As far as possible control measures have been put in place to minimise risks, including regular risk review.
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