

SGP Growth Options Study and Constraints Mapping Study and Transport Assessment Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do the Strategic Growth Options and Constraints Mapping Study and the Strategic Transport Assessment relate to the Strategic Growth Plan?

The Strategic Growth Plan (SGP) for Leicester and Leicestershire sets out a vision and strategy for where development should take place in the county and city over the next two and a half decades – up to 2050.

The aim is to focus a substantial amount of new growth in major strategic locations and reduce the amount in existing towns, villages and rural areas.

This type of growth would also help secure major infrastructure improvements for roads, rail, health services and more. Developer contributions will never fully cover the cost of major infrastructure and cases for Government support will always need to be made.

The plan was agreed by all nine councils in Leicestershire and Leicester in 2018 - Leicester City Council, Leicestershire County Council, Blaby District Council, Charnwood Borough Council, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Harborough District Council, Melton Borough Council, North West Leicestershire District Council and Oadby and Wigston Borough Council.

The Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership was also involved in preparing the SGP.

It is worth noting that while it is backed by all councils, it is not a statutory document. However, the level of co-operation required to develop it is significant.

There is much more information here: <https://www.lstrategicgrowthplan.org.uk/>

Further studies have been jointly commissioned by the Leicester & Leicestershire Authorities to inform the delivery of the Strategic Growth Plan.

The **Strategic Growth Options and Constraints Mapping Study** (SGO Study) has been prepared by AECOM to assist the partnership when considering locational choices around delivery of the long-term vision set out within the Strategic Growth Plan to 2050 and to determine whether they offer suitable and appropriate solutions to deliver sustainable locations for new communities and economic growth.

The **Strategic Transport Assessment Stage 1** (STA1) was prepared by Leicestershire County Council as the Local Transport Authority, commissioned in a consultancy role for this piece of work. Through assessing and comparing the respective transport implications of four differing housing distribution scenarios between 2036 and 2051, it is intended to provide a further piece of evidence to help identify how growth should be distributed across Leicester & Leicestershire over the long term.

These studies are technical evidence, and their publication is intended to support the delivery of the Strategic Growth Plan, not dictate decision-making processes for any individual local planning authority given local plans remain of primary importance.

2. What can you tell us about Stage 2 of the STA?

Stage 2 of the STA will assess the strategic transport impacts and requirements arising from the long-term growth in Leicester and Leicestershire to 2050 and beyond. Evidence informing the local plans being produced for up to 2041 will feed into establishing what the long-term distribution will be, and what should be tested through STA Stage 2.

3. Does the SGO Study mean it is more likely that development will take place in certain areas?

The Strategic Growth Options Study identifies possible development sites that could deliver the SGP's vision for growth. These sites have been previously submitted to planning authorities through their local plan 'call for sites' process.

The corridors/clusters and sites identified in the Strategic Growth Option Study have been assessed in various ways. However, it is not the intention that the study will dictate the decision-making process for individual authorities in respect of local plans, particularly because much more detailed assessment is needed through the local plan process which will be led by the Local Planning Authorities, working in conjunction with Leicestershire County Council and other partners.

It should also be noted that the study includes more strategic housing and employment sites than are needed between 2031 and 2050. Furthermore, land availability does not remain static – new sites may be promoted and current options may fall away.

4. What are the corridors and clusters in the SGO Study for?

The study divides the Leicester and Leicestershire area up into corridors and clusters based on their proximity to existing economic clusters, transport corridors/hubs, and locations with existing services and social infrastructure. The various corridors/clusters have been individually assessed against a variety of criteria to determine their general suitability for strategic growth based on the constraints and opportunities identified. The SGP sets out an overall spatial strategy for growth, identified on the strategy plan, across various zones. Some of the corridors/clusters broadly align with these zones and others do not.

The corridors/clusters are also rated according to their potential to achieve sustainable growth.

5. Does it matter if a corridor/cluster scores well but doesn't align with the growth zones identified in the SGP?

Both the Strategic Growth Options Study and Strategic Transport Assessment are very long term, high-level documents which look at possible areas for growth up until 2050. It is worth noting, however, that the Strategic Growth Options Study identifies sites to deliver far more homes and land for employment than the city and county need on strategic sites after 2031 and by 2050; it identifies sites for in excess of 120,000 homes and 1,000 hectares of employment land.

It may be, therefore, that some sites will become suitable for development after the SGP's plan period i.e. beyond 2050. Furthermore, lead in times for certain types of new settlements identified in the Strategic Growth Options Study would be substantial.

Critically, decision making will take place through the rigorous local plan process, which is led by local planning authorities, working in conjunction with others including local communities.

6. What does publishing the SGO Study and STA1 mean for the planning of development across Leicester & Leicestershire?

Overall, the findings from the two studies have provided further evidence in support of the spatial strategy set out within the SGP.

Each local authority has an annual target for home building set by Government. However, 'strategic planning' across different authority areas helps get the best out of development in terms of funding for infrastructure and improvements to services such as roads, health services etc.

The SGP is about strategic planning over the long term and managing growth to ensure people have not only homes and jobs, but also the infrastructure required to support them whilst minimising negative impacts on, and creating benefits for, the environment we need to protect.

Significant strategic developments usually require Government funding, and having a strategic plan backed by evidence can help secure the funding required for these projects.

7. The Strategic Transport Assessment identifies lots of locations for transport improvements, does it mean these will happen?

The Strategic Transport Assessment is an initial assessment of the impact of growth up to 2051 on the highway network, and the effectiveness of high-level mitigation that may be best placed to address that impact. Scenario 2 modelled in STA1 is based on the spatial housing distribution set out in the SGP.

It essentially takes a first look at what transport improvements may be needed if development takes place as set out in the Strategic Growth Plan. Given the Strategic Growth Plan is long-term, things may change.

Therefore, as the preferred areas for growth are decided upon, more detailed transport modelling will be undertaken to determine what mitigation is required to support that particular growth. The report highlights the importance of planning strategically, securing funding, and delivering the required transport infrastructure.

8. Are you consulting the public on the SGO Study or STA1?

There was significant consultation for the Strategic Growth Plan when it was developed.

The Strategic Growth Options study and Strategic Transport Assessment are published evidence. Consultation took place with relevant stakeholders and

developers in producing the evidence, to ensure that both studies were well informed.

These studies provide evidence that will help partner authorities to better understand opportunities for development when preparing their respective local plans. Local plans will be subject to consultation as they are prepared and formalised.

9. What happens next?

Charnwood Borough is currently at the tail end of the Local Plan making process taking their latest Local Plan through to adoption, Leicester City is about to embark on hearing sessions as part of their Local Plan Examination. All other Leicestershire authorities have committed to submitting a new local plan by the Government's June 2025 deadline. The Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are committed to working together in the production of the strategic elements of these local plans, whilst continuing to facilitate the delivery of the longer-term aspirations of the SGP. Both the Strategic Growth Options and Constraints Mapping Study and the Strategic Transport Assessment will inform this work going forwards.

10. Who can I contact for further information?

Contact details for each of the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities can be found on the [Strategic Growth Plan website](#).