



Hinckley & Bosworth  
Borough Council

**HINCKLEY & BOSWORTH BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY REVIEW**

**December 2021**

# 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The purpose of this study is to review and update the borough settlement hierarchy to inform the preparation of the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council (HBBC) Local Plan (2020-2039). The settlement hierarchy groups settlements to reflect the availability of facilities and services within those settlements and understand their current role within the borough's spatial growth strategy. The study will identify those settlements in the borough that are the most sustainable, based on the range of facilities and services present. It focuses in particular on the rural settlements and assists in understanding their potential to sustain and accommodate future growth based upon a number of sustainability considerations such as the provision of existing services, amenities and accessibility.
- 1.2 The ranking of each settlement in the hierarchy, and so its suitability to accommodate additional development in sustainability terms, should not be taken to mean that there is suitable land for development in such a settlement, or that environmentally it would be appropriate. The Settlement Hierarchy Review is only one of a number of evidence base documents used to inform the level of housing and employment growth that can be accommodated within each of the settlements throughout the borough, to ensure that adequate provision can be made to deliver the preferred strategy for growth.
- 1.3 This document includes a review of the existing settlement hierarchy and the methodology on which it was based to determine if it is still relevant and appropriate, and then to prepare a review of the status of the settlements within the existing hierarchy as set out in the HBBC Core Strategy (2009) and Site Allocations DPD (2016). This review is necessary to reflect changes that have occurred since the publication of the Core Strategy, to ensure that the settlements are appropriately categorised in relation to the services and facilities they provide. It is also necessary to inform the future growth options for the borough, identifying sustainable growth locations, based upon the services and infrastructure available and the population they are able to sustain.
- 1.4 This review will focus on the rural settlements hierarchy. The rural settlements are more susceptible to changes in the provision of facilities and services over time which can affect a settlement's status, whereas the settlements of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton are established urban settlements which remain defined as the 'Urban Area' based upon their scale and services provided.
- 1.5 Whilst the study considers existing facilities, it does not assess existing capacity or where improvements are required to accommodate growth. It will be the role of the Infrastructure Capacity Study to identify the surplus or deficiencies in services and infrastructure.

## 2 POLICY CONTEXT

### **The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and Planning Practice Guidance**

- 2.1 The National planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2021) provides the national planning policies against which the HBBC Local Plan will be prepared. The core principle of the NPPF is the delivery of sustainable development in the right locations, balancing social, environmental and economic considerations.
- 2.2 The NPPF requires authorities to meet objectively assessed needs for housing and employment provision for the period which is being planned for.
- 2.3 For the supply of a large number of homes, the NPPF states *“Working with the support of their communities...strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help to meet identified needs in a sustainable way.”* (Para.73).
- 2.4 Notably for rural housing it states *“To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.”* (Para.79).
- 2.5 In supporting a prosperous rural economy, planning policies and decisions should enable *“...the retention and development of accessible local services and community facilities, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, open space, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship.”* (Para.84d).
- 2.6 The Planning Practice Guidance acknowledges that the *“...location of new housing can also be important for the broader sustainability of rural communities...A wide range of settlements can play a role in delivering sustainable development in rural areas...”*<sup>1</sup>.

### **The Existing Hierarchy and the Core Strategy (2009)**

- 2.7 The settlement hierarchy was established as set out in Chapter 4 of the Core Strategy. The Core Strategy defines the settlement hierarchy as:
- Urban Area (comprising the main settlements of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton);
  - Key Rural Centres (split into three categories of ‘relating to Leicester’; ‘standalone’ and ‘within the National Forest’);
  - Rural Villages; and
  - Rural Hamlets.
- 2.8 Table 1 below sets out which settlements fall into the various levels of the hierarchy in the Core Strategy (2009).

#### Key Rural Centres

- 2.9 Defined as:

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<sup>1</sup> Housing needs of different groups (Rural housing) – Paragraph: 009 Reference ID: 67-009-20190722

Villages that have a population over 1500 people and Include the following services / amenities:

- A primary School
- A local shop
- Post office
- GP
- Community/leisure facilities
- Employment and
- A 6 day a week bus service (hourly)

2.10 The Planning Inspector for the Examination of the Core Strategy<sup>2</sup> referred to the rural settlement hierarchy in the context of the spatial strategy for the borough. In discussing Key Rural Centres (KRCs), the Inspector considered the assessment criteria to be acceptable and no alternative basis for assessment was proposed during the preparation of the plan. The Inspector concluded that the general approach to rural development in the Core Strategy satisfactorily addresses matters of sustainability and the approach to defining and the principle of a settlement hierarchy remains valid and important in the planning of and sustaining rural settlements.

2.11 The KRCs provide localised provision of facilities and permit access by foot, cycle and local bus and can minimise car journeys not only for those people who are living in the KRCs, but also the rural villages and hamlets surrounding these centres. The groupings of settlements relate to different areas throughout the borough and therefore have different roles to play within the KRC classification namely; KRCs relating to Leicester, KRCs within the National Forest and stand alone KRCs.

2.12 The Core Strategy identifies three anomalies within the classification for KRCs:

- Bagworth and Thornton – the villages have the population to support the above services but few were identified, although employment land is in close proximity (Merrylees Industrial Estate and Interlink Industrial Park), and a shop and primary school were recorded in Thornton
- Barlestone – there was no employment provision identified at the time despite having population and services to support a KRC.
- Stoke Golding – no bus service on Saturdays at the time of the Core Strategy.

### Rural Villages

2.13 Rural Villages are defined as villages with more limited services than KRCs. Because rural villages have limited services they are, in principle, less sustainable than KRCs as car travel will be required to access employment and main services. However some development is considered necessary to ensure existing services and community cohesion can be maintained. The Core Strategy states that the following services are considered key to the functioning of a village:

- A primary School
- Community and/or leisure facilities
- Bus services considered essential
- A public house or hot food takeaway is desirable but not essential

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<sup>2</sup> Report on the Examination into the Hinckley & Bosworth Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD

## Rural Hamlets

- 2.14 The Core Strategy categorises Rural Hamlets as having limited or no services and that they generally rely on KRCs surrounding urban areas for schooling, employment and the provision of goods and services. Development is confined to infill housing, local choice housing and conversion of agricultural buildings to employment uses.

**Table 1: The Rural Settlement Hierarchy as defined in the Core Strategy (2009)**

<b>Key Rural Centres</b>	<b>Rural Villages</b>	<b>Rural Hamlets</b>
Markfield	Higham-on-the-Hill	Barton in the Beans
Groby	Stanton Under Bardon	Botcheston
Ratby	Sheepy Magna	Bradgate Hill
Barlestone	Nailstone	Cadeby
Desford	Twycross	Carlton
Newbold Verdon	Witherley	Dadlington
Bagworth	Congerstone	Fenny Drayton
Thornton		Kirkby Mallory
Market Bosworth		Norton Juxta Twycross
Stoke Golding		Orton on the Hill
		Peckleton
		Ratcliffe Culey
		Shackerstone
		Sibson
		Stapleton
		Sutton Cheney

- 2.15 Further to the identified hierarchy, a number of other Hamlets existed in the borough but were not identified in the Core Strategy at that time as they did not have a defined settlement boundary.

### **3 METHODOLOGY**

#### **Outputs of the Study**

3.1 The purpose of this Settlement Hierarchy Review study is to:

- Assess the availability and accessibility of services and facilities within each settlement throughout the borough;
- Categorise and define the relative importance the facilities / services towards sustaining a settlement population – weighting the criteria accordingly;
- Assess the accessibility of settlements based upon the current provision of public transport; and
- Inform the grouping of the settlements into a hierarchy reflecting their ability to accommodate sustainable growth based upon the availability and accessibility to facilities and services.

#### **Methodology**

3.2 Through reviewing the background information that informed the settlement hierarchy within the Core Strategy, the methodology used to establish the hierarchy was not explicitly set out as it was considered through other studies including the rural housing numbers assessment and housing potential study. This study aims to provide clear justified and weighted criteria against which settlements can be initially compared on a quantitative basis. This is useful to provide an indicative ranking of each of the settlements, identifying those that have a clear distinction between the availability of services and facilities.

3.3 There is no available guidance at the national or local level with regards to establishing a settlement hierarchy. In determining the methodology for this study, the approach used to inform the existing settlement hierarchy was reviewed, along with a number of other similar studies.

3.4 A number of studies reviewed used only a quantitative method of defining a hierarchy, allocating a score to a settlement against a number of criteria i.e. the type and/or number of facilities or services provided or the regularity of a bus service. Various weightings are attached to each of the criteria, depending how important they are deemed to be to sustaining a settlement. Other studies applied a mix of a quantitative audit with a qualitative assessment, having regard to other locally important issues or factors in determining their status within a hierarchy that cannot be accounted for in a scoring system.

3.5 As referred to above, the hierarchy used to inform the preparation of the Core Strategy was based on a simple audit of whether certain facilities were present within the settlements and a qualitative assessment of their status in the hierarchy. It defined each of the classifications in the hierarchy using types of facilities that should be included as a minimum within each settlement. In reviewing this approach, it was considered that the definitions were too restrictive, evident through the anomalies encountered for Bagworth and Thornton and Barlestone (Core Strategy para. 4.32).

3.6 The methodology for this study seeks to take this approach forward, providing a quantitative assessment based on a range of weighted criteria. This will form the basis of the settlement hierarchy, providing a provisional ranking of the settlements. The final hierarchy will be established through a qualitative assessment of each of the settlements to consider whether any special circumstances are evident to justify why a

settlement does not fall within a classification within the hierarchy. This approach should allow any anomalies such as those referred to above to be considered further.

- 3.7 The three classifications of settlement (Key Rural Centre, Rural Village and Rural Hamlet) established by the Core Strategy are still considered to be a sound basis for establishing a hierarchy of settlements. However whilst Key Rural Centres were further categorised as relating to Leicester<sup>3</sup>; 'standalone' or 'within the National Forest' in the Core Strategy, this is no longer considered necessary. In practical terms these definitions made minimal overall difference to the approach to these settlements. The Local Plan 2020-2039 will set out where settlements within the same hierarchy will have any different requirements where appropriate.
- 3.8 Whilst the Core Strategy hierarchy classifications will remain, their definitions will be revised to accommodate the qualitative assessment. The estimated population of each settlement will be considered in the qualitative assessment, but will not be used as an indicator with the quantitative assessment. The study comprises the following steps:
- 3.9 Stage 1: Quantitative assessment of facilities and services
- Review existing evidence base studies to inform the availability of facilities and services including:
    - The Community, Cultural and Tourism Facilities Review (2021)
    - The District, Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review (2021)
    - Employment Land and Premises Study (2019)
    - Infrastructure Capacity Study – Phase 1 Baseline Assessment
  - Further desk-based / field study if required to complete missing data and identify availability of services
  - Score the availability of facilities and services based upon their weighting in Table 2
  - Rank settlements based upon their audit score
- 3.10 Stage 2: Qualitative assessment of settlements
- Conduct qualitative assessment of each settlement having regard to circumstances which influence the quantitative score
- 3.11 Stage 3: Proposed Settlement Hierarchy
- Update and finalise the settlement hierarchy using the redefined classification of settlements

### **Definition of audit criteria / scoring**

- 3.12 The services and facilities categories set out in Table 2 below have been identified using a combination of those used to define the Core Strategy settlement hierarchy, a review of other settlement studies and the Council's latest work relating to an audit of community facilities<sup>3</sup> and District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres<sup>4</sup>. The facilities have been defined to justify their respective category and weighting, based on the sources identified above and professional judgement.
- 3.13 The score for each category reflects its importance and provides a distinction between the facilities or services to sustaining a settlement or those that provide a service which is likely to serve more than one settlement. A score will be allocated for the inclusion of a facility, rather than how many of them are present. This allows for a

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<sup>3</sup> The Community, Cultural and Tourism Facilities Review (2021)

<sup>4</sup> District, Local and Neighbourhood Centres Review (2021)

provisional ranking based on the availability of a range of services, rather than a number of a particular type i.e. a number of retail units. This will however be considered in the qualitative assessment. This allows for a simple and clear ranking and classification within the provisional hierarchy. The higher the score, the more sustainable the settlement is considered to be at the end of Stage 2.

3.14 Primary facilities / services are those that are considered essential to meet day to day needs and meet a local need and are accessed with a high frequency by the local population. The secondary facilities / services are those that meet a day to day need but are unlikely to be accessed with the same frequency by the majority of the community as the primary facilities. Secondary facilities are also likely to have a wider catchment and are not essential to sustaining a single settlement. These criteria are also consistent with those that informed the provisional categories and scoring of facilities within District, Local and Neighbourhood centres within the District, Local and Neighbourhood centres Review and community facilities within the Community, Cultural and Tourism Facilities Review.

**Table 2: Services and Facilities assessment criteria**

<b>Services and Facilities criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
<b>Primary Facilities</b>	
<b>Primary School</b> State funded primary schools will generally cater for a local demand and provide an accessible and important day-to-day facility. Schools can extend their regular service such as before and after school clubs, pre-school nurseries, and the facility can be used for other community uses or act as a local community hub.	10
<b>Secondary School</b> State funded secondary schools are often located in larger settlements and serve a wider community. Significant numbers of secondary school pupils travel by public transport or school buses. In addition to education, schools also provide a valuable focus for community leisure activities.	10
<b>GP Surgery</b> Doctors' surgeries provide an essential healthcare service which should be accessible within a small catchment and meet a local demand. Category includes both permanent surgeries and part-time surgeries.	10
<b>Supermarket / Convenience Store</b> A supermarket or grocery store is a regular necessity. Village shops in rural communities are important, providing goods locally and readily available, and are likely to be used on a day-to-day basis, particularly for those who do not have regular access to a car.	10
<b>Post Office</b> Post offices are a key community facility offering a range of services and facilities, particularly in rural areas.	10
<b>Community / Village Hall</b>	10



<b>Services and Facilities criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
Community or village halls are a key facility that enables a range of social, recreational and cultural activities. The facility provides a space for clubs, groups and community social events.	
<b>Employment Area</b> Local employment opportunities may reduce the need to travel by car.	10
<b>Secondary Facilities</b>	
<b>Pre-school / Nursery</b> Local childcare can be particularly important for working families. The assessment includes private childcare facilities, nurseries and Pre-schools. It is generally assumed most primary schools will include some provision of this category so only separate facilities have been included.	5
<b>Other Educational Facility</b> This includes fee paying/independent schools. Fee paying schools tend to serve a wider catchment than the settlement they are located within and may play a more limited role in meeting the needs of residents of that settlement perhaps through the provision of some community/leisure activities. This more limited role reflects their secondary facility status compared to the primary status of state funded primary/secondary schools	5
<b>Library</b> Libraries form an important service and help to support education and provide access to IT services. Libraries can offer space for adult learning, children's reading groups, room hire and exhibition and display space.	5
<b>Public House</b> Public houses can provide a community focus as they stand or can diversify their function to a number of other services such as a community room, small shop or youth centre.	5
<b>Mobile / part-time post office</b> A key facility but only offering a time-limited service.	5
<b>Takeaway / Restaurant</b> Provide residents with a choice of food outlets as well as providing employment opportunities. In some cases a Café/Restaurant is deemed to offer separate service despite being within the same unit as a shop/pub, therefore has been added to the assessment.	5
<b>Place of worship</b> Places of worship provide facilities for social and recreational activity in addition to its primary purpose.	5
<b>Pharmacy</b> The provision of a chemist/pharmacy plays an integral role in maintaining the health of the community and can provide valuable health care advice and services in the absence of a doctor's surgery. Pharmacies provide an important service to those who do not have	5

<b>Services and Facilities criteria</b>	<b>Score</b>
regular access to private transport or in locations with limited public transport.	
<b>Dentist</b> As with the provision of a chemist/pharmacy, a dentist is a service beneficial to the overall healthcare provision that a settlement can offer. However a demand for a dentist is usually less frequent than that for a GP.	5
<b>Indoor/outdoor sports and play facilities</b> These facilities are an important leisure and play resource contributing to the health and well being of communities. The relevant typologies have been selected from the Council's Open Space study <sup>5</sup> and include <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play Provision for Children and Teenagers</li> <li>• Outdoor Sports Facilities</li> <li>• Indoor Sport and Recreation</li> </ul>	5
<b>Other retail / services</b> These are all relatively important services that would be used regularly by the community but are not considered to be an essential day to day facility. This category includes a variety of shops and retail which can reduce the need to travel outside of the village. They differ from other shops by providing comparison goods and some services.	5

#### Bus Service Provision (accessibility)

<b>Bus Service Frequency</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Weighting</b>
Hourly or better 6 days a week	Good	10
Daily 6 days a week	Reasonable	5
Infrequent	Limited/None	0

### **Settlement Hierarchy Classification**

- 3.15 Once the settlement audit and scoring has been completed, the provisional hierarchy can be established by defining the settlement classifications. The classification in the Core Strategy of Key Centres, Rural Villages and Rural Hamlets is well established. In reviewing the current settlement hierarchy, no clear reasons have been identified to justify a change to the classifications, however it is important to review how each classification is defined having regard to the assessment criteria above.
- 3.16 For Key Rural Centres it was considered the Core Strategy criteria was too rigid leading to several anomalies in classification. The revised definition allows for flexibility in the range of services expected in a Key Rural Centre but focuses on a broad minimum set of primary facilities and a strong range of secondary facilities and good public transport links. As noted above the population criteria has been removed however this will be considered in the qualitative assessment where appropriate.

<sup>5</sup> Open Space and Recreation Study (October 2016)

**Table 3: Key Rural Centres**

<b>Core Strategy Criteria</b>	<b>Revised Definition</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Villages that have population over 1500 people</li> <li>• A School</li> <li>• A local shop</li> <li>• Post office</li> <li>• GP</li> <li>• Community/leisure facilities</li> <li>• Employment and</li> <li>• A 6 day a week bus service (hourly)</li> </ul>	<p>A KRC will contain a majority of the following primary services / facilities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary School</li> <li>• Secondary school</li> <li>• Supermarket / Convenience store</li> <li>• Post Office</li> <li>• GP</li> <li>• Community / Village Hall</li> <li>• Employment Site</li> <li>• A frequent 6 day a week bus service</li> <li>• At least 5 secondary facilities/services</li> </ul>

3.17 For Rural Villages the definition is revised from the Core Strategy. The purpose of the change is to allow for flexibility in the range of services that may be expected in a Rural Village. The revised definition sets out the primary facilities likely to be found in such settlements, particularly a primary school, and expects a broad range of secondary facilities and an expectation of a reasonable bus service.

**Table 4: Rural Villages**

<b>Core Strategy Criteria</b>	<b>Revised Definition</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A primary School</li> <li>• Community and/or leisure facilities</li> <li>• Bus services considered essential</li> <li>• A public house or hot food takeaway is desirable but not essential</li> </ul>	<p>A rural Village should normally contain at least the following facilities / services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A primary school</li> <li>• At least one other primary facility/service</li> <li>• A daily bus service 5 or 6 days a week</li> <li>• At least 3 secondary facilities/services</li> </ul>

### **Rural Hamlets**

3.18 The definition for this classification remains as set out in the Core Strategy, as having limited, if any services and generally rely on surrounding urban areas or KRCs for providing a majority of facilities and services. The audit and scoring will allow for an assessment of the availability of existing facilities and services within each Hamlet to inform policy criteria to safeguarding their use and where possible, promote new facilities.

### **Estimated Settlement Population**

3.19 Table 5 provides an estimate of the existing population for each settlement to understand the context of the number of facilities and services the population sustains. For the settlements defined as Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages in the 2006-2026 Local Plan, an estimate of the population for each settlement has been calculated utilizing the small area data from the 2011 Census, as the Census does not provide the figures at settlement level. It has been possible to factor-in estimated population growth since the 2011 Census. Recent population data is not readily available for smaller settlements such as rural hamlets.

3.20 The relevant outputs areas from the 2011 Census were assigned to one of the settlements classified as a KRC or rural Village or classed as an entirely rural area. The 2011 Census population has been compared to the 2017 ONS mid-year population estimated for each lower super output area which are the smallest geography for which the mid-year estimates are produced. This resulted in an estimated rate of population change for each lower super output area. These estimated rates of population change have been applied to all output areas based upon the lower super output area they fall into, in order to produce a 2017 population estimate for that output area. This approach is considered to provide the best estimated settlement population as opposed to using the lower super output areas which include a wider area than just a settlement.

**Table 5: Settlement Population (2017)**

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Estimated Population (2017)</b>
Groby	6,480
Markfield	5,140
Ratby	4,760
Desford	3,340
Newbold Verdon	3,090
Barlestone	2,670
Market Bosworth	2,260
Stoke Golding	1,810
Bagworth	1,540
Thornton	1,040
Higham on the Hill	900
Stanton Under Bardon	750
Witherley	670
Sheepy Magna	630
Nailstone	500
Twycross	400
Congerstone	380

## 4 STAGE 1: QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF FACILITIES AND SERVICES

4.1 A survey of the community facilities available in each settlement was completed in summer 2021 through the Community, Cultural and Tourism Facilities Review. The study collated information using on site surveys, desk top research and consultation with the parish councils. The review provides an audit of the availability of the following facilities for each settlement:

- A community, village or parish hall or church hall (where applicable)
- Places of Worship (in the rural area only)
- Public Houses (in the rural area only)
- Educational facilities including;
  - Primary Schools including Infants and Juniors
  - Lower and Upper Schools
  - Secondary Schools
  - Grammar Schools/Fee paying schools
  - Training facilities
  - Colleges
  - Libraries
- Healthcare Facilities including;
  - Hospitals
  - Health/medical Centres/Doctors Surgeries

4.2 The District, Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review identified the respective centres for each settlement which provide an area comprising a range of retail and non-retail services and public facilities. The existing centres were subject to an audit, identifying which units had changed, been lost or remained the same since the study published in 2015. Units in proximity of the existing centres were also identified to inform whether the boundaries of the centres should be revised. This information has been used to understand the availability of retail and non-retail services within each settlement.

### **Quantitative Settlement Scoring**

The settlements are ranked by score in the table below. The table shows the primary and secondary facilities available for each settlement, and an assessment of the available bus service. The table is colour coded to show the classification each settlement was in within the Core Strategy (2009) – Key Rural Centres in red, Rural Villages blue and Hamlets in green. The table shows one notable anomaly, Nailstone, which scores poorly for a Rural Village. The table also shows that both Thornton and Bagworth score much lower than the other Key Rural Centres. Higham-on-the-Hill, a Rural Village, scores the same as two Rural Hamlets - Kirkby Mallory and Stapleton, although Higham on the Hill is the only one to include a primary school. The table also highlights a number of Rural Hamlets have no recognised services at all.

**Table 6: Settlement Scoring Hierarchy**

Settlement	Primary Facilities / Services							Secondary Facilities / Services										Bus Service	Score	
	Primary School	Secondary school	GP Surgery	Convenience Store	Post Office	Community / Village Hall	Employment Area	Pre-school / Nursery	Other Educational Facility	Library	Public House	Mobile / Part-time Post Office	Takeaway / Restaurant	Place of Worship	Pharmacy	Dentist	Indoor/outdoor sports and play facilities			Other Retail / Services
Desford	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Good	125
Groby	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Good	125
Market Bosworth	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Good	125
Markfield	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Good	120
Newbold Verdon	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Good	110
Ratby	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	Good	110
Stoke Golding	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	Good	100
Barlestone	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	Good	95
Thornton	✓			✓	✓	✓					✓			✓			✓	✓	Good	70
Bagworth				✓	✓	✓	✓							✓			✓	✓	Good	65
Twycross						✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	✓	Reasonable	55

Settlement	Primary Facilities / Services							Secondary Facilities / Services										Bus Service	Score	
	Primary School	Secondary school	GP Surgery	Convenience Store	Post Office	Community / Village Hall	Employment Area	Pre-school / Nursery	Other Educational Facility	Library	Public House	Mobile / Part-time Post Office	Takeaway / Restaurant	Place of Worship	Pharmacy	Dentist	Indoor/outdoor sports and play facilities			Other Retail / Services
Sheepy Magna	✓					✓					✓	✓		✓			✓		Reasonable	45
Congerstone	✓					✓					✓			✓			✓		Reasonable	40
Stanton Under Bardon	✓					✓					✓			✓			✓		Reasonable	40
Witherley	✓					✓					✓			✓			✓		Reasonable	40
Higham on the Hill	✓						✓							✓			✓		Reasonable	35
Kirkby Mallory						✓	✓							✓			✓	✓	Limited/None	35
Stapleton						✓					✓			✓			✓		Good	35
Botcheston						✓					✓						✓		Good	30
Norton-Juxta-Twycross						✓	✓							✓			✓		Limited/None	30
Peckleton						✓	✓					✓	✓						Limited/None	30
Shackerstone						✓					✓			✓			✓		Reasonable	30

Settlement	Primary Facilities / Services							Secondary Facilities / Services											Bus Service	Score
	Primary School	Secondary school	GP Surgery	Convenience Store	Post Office	Community / Village Hall	Employment Area	Pre-school / Nursery	Other Educational Facility	Library	Public House	Mobile / Part-time Post Office	Takeaway / Restaurant	Place of Worship	Pharmacy	Dentist	Indoor/outdoor sports and play facilities	Other Retail / Services		
Sibson						✓					✓			✓					Reasonable	25
Sutton Cheney						✓					✓		✓	✓					Limited/None	25
Cadeby						✓								✓					Reasonable	20
Carlton										✓				✓			✓		Reasonable	20
Copt Oak						✓				✓				✓					Limited/None	20
Dadlington						✓				✓				✓					Limited/None	20
Nailstone	✓													✓					Reasonable	20
Ratcliffe Culey										✓	✓			✓			✓		Limited/None	20
Fenny Drayton														✓			✓		Reasonable	15
Barton in the Beans														✓					Reasonable	10
Orton-on the-Hill										✓				✓					Limited/None	10
Shenton														✓			✓		Limited/None	10



Settlement	Primary Facilities / Services							Secondary Facilities / Services										Bus Service	Score	
	Primary School	Secondary school	GP Surgery	Convenience Store	Post Office	Community / Village Hall	Employment Area	Pre-school / Nursery	Other Educational Facility	Library	Public House	Mobile / Part-time Post Office	Takeaway / Restaurant	Place of Worship	Pharmacy	Dentist	Indoor/outdoor sports and play facilities			Other Retail / Services
Brascote											✓								Limited/None	5
Sheepy Parva													✓						Limited/None	5
Wellsborough									✓										Limited/None	5
Upton																	✓		Limited/None	5
Atterton																			Limited/None	0
Bilstone																			Limited/None	0
Bradgate Hill																			Limited/None	0
Far Coton																			Limited/None	0
Little Orton																			Limited/None	0
Odstone																			Limited/None	0
Osbaston																			Limited/None	0
Pinwall																			Limited/None	0

Settlement Key:

	Key Rural Centres – Local Plan 2006-2026
	Rural Villages – Local Plan 2006-2026
	Hamlets – Local Plan 2006-2026

## 5 STAGE 2: QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT OF SETTLEMENTS

### Bagworth

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- 5.1 Bagworth is in the north-east of the borough within the same parish as the settlement of Thornton, which is located approximately a mile to the east.
- 5.2 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Bagworth was classified as a Key Rural Centre, however in the 2009 Core Strategy it was acknowledged that Bagworth was one of three anomalies to the criteria used for designating a settlement as a KRC. The Core Strategy concluded that Bagworth had a population to support the range of services preferably offered by a KRC, however these had not materialised despite significant housing growth.
- 5.3 One of the main reasons behind designating Bagworth as a KRC was to assist in securing additional services to ensure the settlement fulfilled its potential. Since the publication of the Core Strategy a convenience store including post office has opened on the site of a former public house. Furthermore, the District Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review removed the joint status of a Neighbourhood Centre it had shared with Thornton as the settlements are linear in nature and there was no clear reason as to why they shared this single centre classification.
- 5.4 Bagworth benefits from the primary facilities of a community hall, convenience store (including post office facilities) and employment areas but its residents rely on travelling to other KRCs for other primary services, such as a GP surgery and primary and secondary schooling. In terms of population it is the second smallest of the KRCs, only larger than Thornton.
- 5.5 The provisional settlement assessment scoring is lower than other KRCs but somewhat higher than other Rural Villages in the borough. Furthermore, considering the linear nature of the settlement, a lack of a defined centre and lack of key facilities, it is concluded that it is no longer appropriate to regard Bagworth as a KRC. Whilst the settlement lacks a primary school it does include a broad range of services sufficient to be considered a Rural Village. It is concluded that Bagworth should be defined as a Rural Village in the 2020-2039 Local Plan.
- 5.6 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Village

### Barlestone

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- 5.7 Barlestone is located centrally within the borough approximately 8 miles north of Hinckley. It offers a range of services and facilities with a population of around 2,670.
- 5.8 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan Barlestone was classified as a Key Rural Centre, although in the 2009 Core Strategy it was acknowledged that it was one of three anomalies to the criteria used for designating a settlement as a KRC. The Core Strategy concluded that Barlestone does not have any employment area provision despite having the population and services of a KRC.
- 5.9 Notwithstanding the lack of an employment area Barlestone benefits from a range of primary facilities including a primary school, GP surgery, convenience store, post office and several community halls. It also includes a range of secondary facilities including

pubs, takeaway/restaurants, place of worship and a dentist. Barlestone however does not have a secondary school with Market Bosworth and Desford being the nearest school locations. Overall it is concluded that Barlestone meets the definition of a Key Rural Centre set out in table 3.

#### 5.10 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Key Rural Centre.

#### Desford

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5.11 Desford is located to the east of the borough. It offers a broad range of services and facilities with a population of around 3,340.

5.12 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Desford was classified as a Key Rural Centre. It benefits from all the key primary facilities including a primary school and secondary school, a GP surgery, convenience stores (including post office), a community hall and employment areas. Desford also offers a broad range of secondary facilities including a library, pub, takeaways, dentist and pharmacy. Desford meets the definition of a Key Rural Centre set out in table 3.

#### 5.13 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Key Rural Centre.

#### Groby

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5.14 Groby is located in the east of the borough close to the urban area of Leicester and offers a broad range of services and facilities. It has a population of around 6,480 making it, in population terms, the largest rural settlement in the borough.

5.15 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Groby was classified as a Key Rural Centre. It benefits from all the key primary facilities including three primary schools and a secondary school, a GP surgery, convenience stores, post office, community halls and employment areas. Groby also offers a broad range of secondary facilities including a library, pub, restaurant/takeaways, dentist and pharmacy. Groby meets the definition of a Key Rural Centre set out in table 3.

#### 5.16 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Key Rural Centre.

#### Market Bosworth

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5.17 Market Bosworth is located centrally within the borough approximately 7 miles north of Hinckley. It offers a broad range of services and facilities with a population of around 2,260.

5.18 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Market Bosworth was classified as a Key Rural Centre. It benefits from a range of facilities including a primary school and two secondary schools (including one private school), a GP surgery, convenience store, a village hall and an employment area. It also offers a broad range of secondary facilities including retail and restaurants, pubs, a dentist and library. The only facility it lacks is a post office which closed several years ago however a part time post office operates several

days a week from the community hall. Market Bosworth meets the definition of a Key Rural Centre set out in table 3.

#### 5.19 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Key Rural Centre.

#### Markfield

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5.20 Markfield is located in the north east of the borough close to junction 22 of the M1 and offers a broad range of services and facilities. It has a population of around 5,140 making it, in population terms, the second largest rural settlement in the borough.

5.21 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Markfield was classified as a Key Rural Centre. It benefits from all the key primary facilities including a primary school and a secondary school, a GP surgery, convenience stores, post office, community hall and employment area. Markfield also offers a broad range of secondary facilities including a library, pubs, restaurant/takeaways and a pharmacy. The only secondary facility Markfield lacks is a dentist. Markfield meets the definition of a Key Rural Centre set out in table 3.

#### 5.22 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Key Rural Centre.

#### Newbold Verdon

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5.23 Newbold Verdon is located centrally within the borough approximately 8.5 miles north of Hinckley. It offers a broad range of services and facilities with a population of around 3,090.

5.24 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Newbold Verdon was classified as a Key Rural Centre. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a primary school, a GP surgery, convenience stores (including post office), a community hall and employment area. Newbold Verdon also offers a broad range of secondary facilities including a library, pub, takeaways, places of worship and pharmacy. Newbold Verdon does not have the primary facility of a secondary school or the secondary facility of a dentist however it continues to meet the definition of a Key Rural Centre set out in table 3.

#### 5.25 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Key Rural Centre.

#### Ratby

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5.26 Ratby is located in the east of the borough close to the urban area of Leicester and offers a broad range of services and facilities. It has a population of around 4,760 making it, in population terms, the third largest rural settlement in the borough.

5.27 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Ratby was classified as a Key Rural Centre. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a primary school, a GP surgery, convenience stores (including post office), community halls and employment areas. Ratby also offers a broad range of secondary facilities including a library, pubs, restaurants/takeaways, places of worship and pharmacy. Ratby does not have the

primary facility of a secondary school or the secondary facility of a dentist however it continues to meet the definition of a Key Rural Centre set out in table 3.

#### 5.28 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Key Rural Centre.

#### Stoke Golding

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5.29 Stoke Golding is located to the south of the borough, within two miles of Hinckley and has a population of around 1,810. It is the third smallest KRC ahead of only Thornton and Bagworth.

5.30 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Stoke Golding was classified as a Key Rural Centre. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a primary school, secondary school, a GP surgery, convenience store, community halls and employment area. Stoke Golding also offers a broad range of secondary facilities including pubs, restaurants/takeaways and places of worship. Stoke Golding does not have the primary facility of a post office or the following secondary facilities - library, pharmacy and dentist. But because of the proximity of Stoke Golding to Hinckley the settlement relies upon availability of these services in the urban area. Nevertheless it is concluded that Stoke Golding continues to meet the definition of a Key Rural Centre set out in table 3.

#### 5.31 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Key Rural Centre.

#### Thornton

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5.32 Thornton is in the north-east of the borough within the same parish as the settlement of Bagworth, which is located approximately a mile to the west.

5.33 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Thornton was classified as a Key Rural Centre, however in the 2009 Core Strategy it was acknowledged that Thornton was one of three anomalies to the criteria used for designating a settlement as a KRC. The Core Strategy concluded that Thornton had a population to support the range of services preferably offered by a KRC, however these had not materialised. It was also noted that Thornton benefits from being in close proximity to the Merrylees Industrial Estate.

5.34 One of the main reasons behind designating Thornton as a KRC was to assist in securing additional services to ensure the settlement fulfilled its potential. Since the publication of the Core Strategy there has been little change in the number and type of services available in Thornton and has lost a public house. Furthermore, the District Local and Neighbourhood Centre Review removed the joint status of a Neighbourhood Centre it shared with Bagworth as the settlements are linear in nature and there was no clear reason as to why they shared this single centre classification.

5.35 Thornton benefits from the primary facilities of a primary school, community hall and convenience store (including post office facilities) but its residents rely on travelling to other KRCs for other primary services, such as a GP surgery and secondary school. In terms of population it is by some distance the smallest of the KRCs. Whilst Merrylees Industrial estate is in close proximity, and Thornton is served by a regular bus service to this employment site, it is not however within a reasonable walking distance being over 1.5 miles from the centre of the village.

- 5.36 The provisional settlement assessment scoring is lower than other KRCs but somewhat higher than other Rural Villages in the borough. However the settlement more closely aligns with the definition of a Rural Village than a KRC as set out above. Furthermore, considering the linear nature of the settlement, a lack of a defined centre and lack of significant new facilities available since the last settlement hierarchy classification, it is concluded that it is no longer appropriate to regard Thornton as a KRC. Therefore it is considered it should be defined as a Rural Village in the 2020-2039 Local Plan.
- 5.37 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Village

### Congerstone

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- 5.38 Congerstone is located to the north of the borough, to the north west of Market Bosworth. It has a population of around 380 making it, in population terms, the smallest identified Rural Village.
- 5.39 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Congerstone was classified as a Rural Village. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a primary school and community hall whilst secondary facilities include a pub, place of worship and play facilities. Congerstone meets the definition of a Rural Village as set out in table 4.
- 5.40 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Village.

### Higham on the Hill

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- 5.41 Higham on the Hill is located to the south west of the borough, roughly between Hinckley and Nuneaton. It has a population of around 900 making it, in population terms, the largest identified Rural Village.
- 5.42 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Higham on the Hill was classified as a Rural Village. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a primary school and employment area whilst secondary facilities include two places of worship and play facilities. Normally Rural Villages should contain at least three different categories of secondary facilities. Whilst Higham on the Hill only offers two secondary facilities it is considered it generally meets the definition of Rural Village as set out in table 4.
- 5.43 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Village.

### Nailstone

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- 5.44 Nailstone is located to the north of the borough, and north of Barlestone and has a population of around 500.
- 5.45 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Nailstone was classified as a Rural Village. It only has one primary facility - a primary school and one secondary facility - a place of worship. As set out in table 4 normally Rural Villages should contain a primary school and one

other primary facility and at least three different categories of secondary facilities. Nailstone falls short of this level of provision of services and it is concluded that Nailstone be revised from a Rural Village to a Rural Hamlet in the 2020-2039 Local Plan.

#### 5.46 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Hamlet.

### Stanton Under Bardon

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5.47 Stanton Under Bardon is located in the north east of the borough close to junction 22 of the M1 and has a population of around 750.

5.48 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Stanton Under Bardon was classified as a Rural Village. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a primary school and community hall whilst secondary facilities include a pub, two places of worship and play facilities. Stanton Under Bardon meets the definition of a Rural Village as set out in table 4.

#### 5.49 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Village.

### Sheepy Magna

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5.50 Sheepy Magna is located in the west of the borough between Market Bosworth and Atherstone and has a population of around 630.

5.51 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Sheepy Magna was classified as a Rural Village. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a primary school and community hall whilst secondary facilities include a pub, place of worship, part time post office and play facilities. Sheepy Magna meets the definition of a Rural Village as set out in table 4.

#### 5.52 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Village.

### Twycross

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5.53 Twycross is located to the north west of the borough, to the north west of Market Bosworth. It has a population of around 400 making it, in population terms, the second smallest identified Rural Village.

5.54 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Twycross was classified as a Rural Village. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a community hall and employment whilst secondary facilities include a pub, takeaway/restaurant, place of worship and play facilities. Twycross is also home to Twycross House, an independent school comprising of primary and secondary education facilities.

5.55 Normally Rural Villages should contain a primary school that serves the local community. Whilst Twycross lacks such a state funded primary school the independent school will serve some local needs and offer local employment opportunities. Twycross also offers a range of other facilities that are normally found within a Rural Village. It is



concluded that Twycross should remain defined as a Rural Village as set out in table 4.

#### 5.56 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Village.

#### Witherley

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5.57 Witherley is located in the west of the borough, close to Atherstone, and has a population of around 670.

5.58 In the 2006-2026 Local Plan, Witherley was classified as a Rural Village. It benefits from the following key primary facilities - a primary school and community hall whilst secondary facilities include a pub, place of worship and play facilities. Witherley meets the definition of a Rural Village as set out in table 4.

#### 5.59 Recommended Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification – Rural Village.

#### Rural Hamlets

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5.60 The Rural Hamlets listed in table 6 (chapter 4) have been reviewed. The list comprises of 16 rural hamlets identified in the Core Strategy and a further 13 that have been identified through this review.

5.61 Whilst the level and type of facilities in these settlements varies all have very limited facilities compared to the settlements identified as Key Rural Centres and Rural Villages. None of the identified Rural Hamlets have primary facilities of schools, GP surgeries, convenience stores or post offices. Some Hamlets do have community halls and a small number have employment areas. Also a number of Rural Hamlets also have secondary facilities such as pubs and places of worship and some have relatively frequent bus services.

5.62 However none have the facilities or services that would meet the definition of Rural Village and so all the identified Hamlets in the 2006-2026 Local Plan will remain as Hamlets in the Local Plan 2020 – 2039 Settlement Hierarchy Classification.

## 6 STAGE 3: PROPOSED SETTLEMENT HIERARCHY

6.1 Through the analysis of the characteristics of each settlement the following hierarchy is proposed. In summary the key changes proposed are -

- Bagworth reclassified from Key Rural Centre to Rural Village
- Thornton reclassified from Key Rural Centre to Rural Village
- Nailstone reclassified from Rural Village to Rural Hamlet
- Several additional smaller settlements have been assessed through this study and classified as Rural Hamlets

**Table 7: Proposed Local Plan 2020-2039 Settlement Hierarchy**

Hierarchy Classification	Characteristics	Settlements
Urban Area	The focus of key transport, retail, employment and leisure facilities in the borough. Provides the services to meet the day to day needs of residents and is generally accessible to the surrounding area by public transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hinckley</li> <li>• Burbage</li> <li>• Barwell</li> <li>• Earl Shilton</li> </ul>
Key Rural Centres	Provide a range of services to meet most of the day to day needs of residents and act as a focal point to help meet the needs of the surrounding rural communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Barlestone</li> <li>• Desford</li> <li>• Groby</li> <li>• Market Bosworth</li> <li>• Newbold Verdon</li> <li>• Markfield</li> <li>• Ratby</li> <li>• Stoke Golding</li> </ul>
Rural Villages	More limited than key rural centres but may provide some of the services to meet day to day needs of residents such as a school, regular public transport, village pub and community hall/centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bagworth</li> <li>• Congerstone</li> <li>• Higham-on-the-Hill</li> <li>• Sheepy Magna</li> <li>• Stanton under Bardon</li> <li>• Thornton</li> <li>• Twycross</li> <li>• Witherley</li> </ul>
Rural Hamlets	Small rural settlements with limited to no services. Reliant on surrounding larger settlements to meet the day to day needs of residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Atterton</li> <li>• Barton in the Beans</li> <li>• Bilstone</li> <li>• Botcheston</li> <li>• Bradgate Hill</li> <li>• Brascote</li> <li>• Cadeby</li> <li>• Carlton</li> <li>• Copt Oak</li> <li>• Dadlington</li> <li>• Far Coton</li> <li>• Fenny Drayton</li> </ul>

Hierarchy Classification	Characteristics	Settlements
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kirkby Mallory</li> <li>• Little Orton</li> <li>• Nailstone</li> <li>• Norton-Juxta-Twycross</li> <li>• Odstone</li> <li>• Orton-on the-Hill</li> <li>• Osbaston</li> <li>• Peckleton</li> <li>• Pinwall</li> <li>• Ratcliffe Culey</li> <li>• Shackerstone</li> <li>• Sheepy Parva</li> <li>• Shenton</li> <li>• Sibson</li> <li>• Stapleton</li> <li>• Sutton Cheney</li> <li>• Upton</li> <li>• Wellsborough</li> </ul>