



Employment Land Availability Assessment

2023-2024

Foreword

The Employment Land Availability Assessment (ELA) is a monitoring document reporting on employment sites that have been built out, those which are allocated through the Local Plan and/or have planning permission for employment use. This assessment reports on completions, commitments and losses of employment land in the Borough.

The previous edition of the Council's ELA was published in 2023 and addressed a gap in monitoring documents by reporting on the 2017-2023 financial years. The last ELA discussed a large monitoring period and the changes to the Use Class Order and monitoring processes during that time. The format of the previous ELA was therefore amended to reflect these changes. Going forward, the ELA will continue to be updated annually alongside the Council's other monitoring documents and follow the structure of this ELA.

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The National Planning Policy Framework (2023) sets out the Government's planning policies that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) implement to drive economic development and enable conditions where businesses can adapt, invest and expand. The framework states that Local Plans are the key to delivering sustainable development, and it is these Local Plans that contain local planning policies, site allocations and guidance. The monitoring and reporting of employment land will not only ensure that the current Local Plan is 'working', but will also inform the next Local Plan.
- 1.2. Effective and consistent monitoring is needed to robustly take account of all residential, employment and strategic development in the local area. The Council has produced this 'Employment Land Availability Assessment' report along with other monitoring reports:
 - an annual 'Residential Land Availability Assessment' report;
 - an annual 'Strategic Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment';
 - an annual 'Housing Implementation Strategy'; and
 - an 'Authority Monitoring Report'
- 1.3. The outcome of this monitoring work is used to inform subsequent reviews of planning policy documents going forward.
- 1.4. This Employment Land Availability Assessment reports on employment completions, commitments and losses for the period of 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024. Primarily, it is intended to assess the supply of identified employment land within the Borough, against the objectives, policies and proposals of:
 - National Planning Policy Framework (2023)
 - National Planning Practice Guidance
 - Local Plan 2011 – 2031 (adopted 2019)
 - Identified Employment Land Supplementary Planning Document (2020)
 - Employment Land and Premises Study (2017)
- 1.5. As of the 1st April 2019, in line with the adoption of the new Local Plan, there is no minimum threshold for employment units monitored.
- 1.6. Table 1 below shows the Use Class Order definitions of types of employment land uses in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 (as amended), which initially came into force on 1 September 2020.

Table 1. Definitions of Employment Land in accordance with the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) (Amendment) (England) Regulations 2020 (as amended)

New Use Class	Definition
E (g)	i) office ii) the research and development of products or processes or iii) any industrial process (which can be carried out in any residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area)
B2	General industrial
B8	Storage and distribution

2. Requirements for Employment Land

- 2.1.** The Council's adopted Local Plan 2011-2031 provides a Vision and Spatial Strategy for the Borough's delivery of employment land. The Plan's Spatial Strategy is informed by the Objectively Assessed Need (OAN), a report evidenced by both the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment (HEDNA 2017) and the Employment Land and Premises Study (2017).
- 2.2.** The Employment Land and Premises Study (2017) took account of the state and quality of the Borough's existing employment use land stock. The study identified an Employment use land requirement of 8.25 hectares (including 5-year buffer) for the period of the Plan's adoption in 2019, to 2031.

Table 2. Total hectares of employment land identified in the Council's Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) by Use Class for 2019-2031

	E(g) i/ii)	E(g) iii) / B2	B8	Total
Total	0.74	7.24	0.27	8.25

- 2.3.** Although the Borough is a densely built-up urban area, viable and sustainable opportunities have been identified to deliver the identified employment land requirements. The Spatial Strategy makes the following provision for new employment land:
- 5 hectares of Eg), B2 and / or B8 use land at the Wigston Direction for Growth Allocation
 - 0.55 hectares of Eg), B2 and / or B8 use at the land adjacent to Magna Road which is now an Identified Employment Area in South Wigston.
 - 2.67 hectares of Eg), B2 and / or B8 use land at Oadby Sewage Works
 - 0.98 hectares of new office / commercial floorspace within the town centre of Wigston and the district centre of Oadby

3. Employment Land Supply

3.1 The needs of Employment use land identified is for the period 2019 to 2031. This ELA reports on the 2023-2024 monitoring period. The following section discusses employment land supply relating to completions and commitments in the Borough for the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

Employment Land Completions

3.2 Table 3 below illustrates net completions in the Borough for 2023-2024 by Use Class and shows a completion of change of use to an office in Wigston and a loss of an office in South Wigston. The Council acknowledges redevelopment at the Former F R Brookes site, Magna Road, South Wigston, now known as Genesis Park. As discussed in the previous ELA, the site was previously occupied by one large building and had been vacant for many years due to a lack in market demand for such a large single building. In 2021, the Council permitted an application for the erection of smaller commercial units for a mix of E(g)(i), E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 uses. The Council records this change of use as a no net loss of employment land.

Please note that to illustrate unknown and/or complex site sizes, the Council is assuming a 0.5 site size ratio.

Table 3. Net completions in the Borough for 2023-2024 (in square metres)

Employment Site	Application number	E(g) i/ii	E(g) iii / B2	B8	Mixed Employment Use (square metres)	Total
Flat 3 Beth-El House Launceston Road Wigston Leicestershire LE18 2GN	22/00370/COU	63				
26 Blaby Road Wigston Leicestershire LE18 4SB	22/00463/COU	-39				
Total net across the Borough		24				24

*Mixed Employment Use is a combination of two or more of the Use Classes E(g), B2 or B8 outlined in applications for a loss or gain of employment land. (24 square metres equates to 0.0048 hectares)

3.3 All completions in the 2023-2024 monitoring period have been on previously developed land.

Employment Land Commitments

3.4 Table 4 below shows one committed development relating to employment land for the 2023-2024 monitoring period.

4.1 For the purpose of this report 'committed' development, refers to:

- Granted planning permission, but not yet commenced
- Granted planning permission and currently under construction, or
- Granted planning permission, subject to a signed S106.

Table 4. Net commitments in the Borough for 2023-2024 (in hectares)

Employment Site	Application number	E(g) i/ii)	E(g) iii) / B2	B8	Mixed Employment Use (hectares)	Total
Wigston Direction for Growth Land East Of Welford Road Wigston Leicestershire	21/00028/OUT				5	
Total net across the Borough					5	5

Employment Land Requirement and Supply

4.2 As mentioned, the need identified is for the period 2019-2031. Table 5 identifies net completions and commitments from 1st April 2019 onwards in relation to the identified need to be delivered across the Borough.

4.3 Please note that this assessment includes committed sites that have been granted planning permission. This does not indicate that the development will successfully be completed. Also, the Table does not include the sites that are currently allocated within the Local Plan.

4.4 Additionally, the non-inclusion of a site in the assessment does not in any way rule out future development on that site, providing the proposal is in keeping with the principles outlined in National Planning Policy Framework at the time the site comes forward.

4.5 As Table 5 shows, the Council is set to over provide by 0.014 hectares.

Table 5. Employment land requirement and supply position as of 31st March 2024 in relation to the needs identified in the OAN

Completions		E(g) (i/ii)	E(g) (iii) / B2	B8	Mixed Employment Use	Total
[1]	Net completions from 01/04/2019 to 31/03/2023 (in sqm)	171	-1072	687	-4488	-4701.92
[2]	Net completions this monitoring year, 01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024 (in sqm)	24	0	0	0	0
[3]	Net completions from 1/04/19 to 31/03/24 [1] + [2] = [3] (in sqm)	195	-1072	687	-4488	-4678
[3a]	Net completions from 01/04/19 to 31/03/2024 (in hectares*)	0.039	-0.214	0.137	-0.898	-0.936
[4]	Total net committed at 2023-2024 (in hectares)	0	0	0	5	5
[5]	Total complete and committed [3a] + [4] = [5] (in hectares)	0.039	-0.214	0.137	4.102	4.064
[6]	Need identified (in hectares)	0.74	7.24	0.27	0	8.25
[7]	Remaining need [6] – [5] = [7] in hectares	0.701	7.454	0.133	-4.102	4.186
[8]	Remaining Allocations (in hectares)	0.98	0	0	3.22	4.2
[9]	Residual need [7] – [8] = [9] (in hectares)	-0.279	7.454	0.133	-7.322	-0.014

*Please note that to illustrate unknown and/or complex site sizes, the Council is assuming a 0.5 site size ratio. Please note, numbers are rounded to the nearest whole number.

4.6 The Wigston Direction for Growth Allocation of 5 hectares of employment land has an outline application for flexible use across the three employment Use Classes (Eg, B2 and / or B8 use land). When the Reserve Matters application comes forward, the Council will seek to fulfil as much of the identified employment land needs as possible.

4.7 The delivery of remaining need will be largely dependent on the market over time due to employment delivery predominantly being market led.

4.8 As of 31st March 2024, the Council is five monitoring years into the adopted Plan and has completed and permitted 4.064 hectares net (over 5 ha gross) of the identified employment land need. This equates to 49.3% employment land need achieved within 42% of the Plan period.