



Luton Local Plan

Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report

Luton Borough Council

Final report

Prepared by LUC

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Luton Borough Council commissioned LUC in February 2026 to produce a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Scoping Report for the new Luton Local Plan.

1.2 SEA is an assessment process designed to consider and communicate the significant sustainability issues and effects of emerging plans and policies within them, including their alternatives. SEA iteratively informs the plan-making process by helping to refine the contents of plans, so that they maximise the benefits of sustainable development and avoid, or at least minimise, the potential for adverse effects.

1.3 The purpose of this Scoping Report is to provide the context for, and determine the scope of, the SEA of the new Luton Local Plan and to set out the framework for undertaking the later stages of the SEA.

1.4 The Scoping stage of SEA involves:

- Reviewing other plans, policies and programmes.
- Considering the current state of the environment in the plan area (in this case Luton Borough).
- Identifying any key environmental issues which may be affected by the new Local Plan.
- Setting out the ‘SEA framework’, which comprises specific sustainability objectives against which the likely effects of the Local Plan can be assessed.

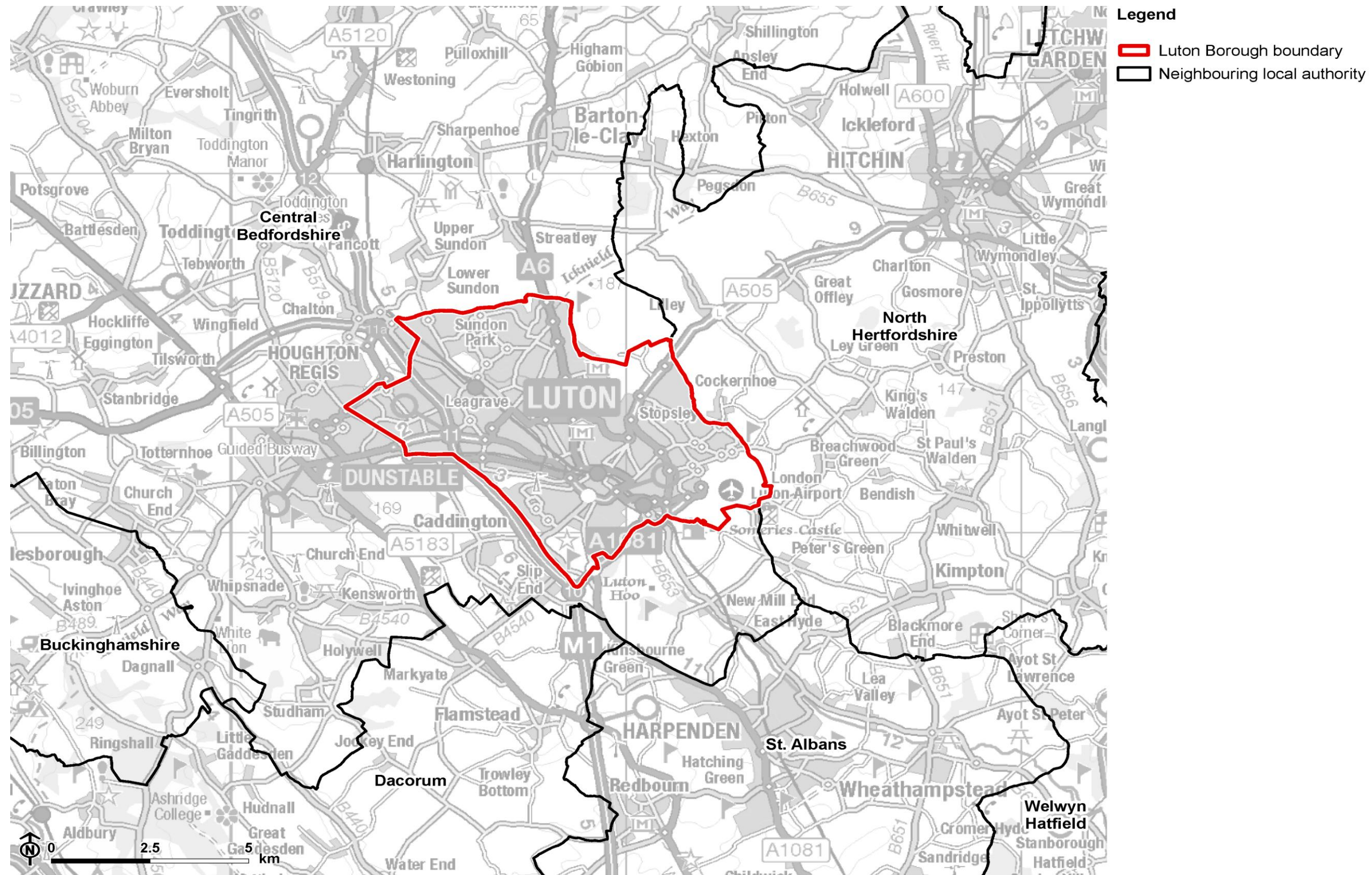
The Plan Area

1.5 Luton Borough covers an area of 43.35 km² and is a densely populated town with a rich cultural diversity. Luton is one of three boroughs located in Bedfordshire in the East of England, alongside Bedford and Central Bedfordshire. It is the smallest of the three unitary authorities in the area but has a higher population than Bedford (239,090 [\[See reference 1\]](#)).

1.6 Surrounded by Green Belt to the south and the north east and situated within the Chilterns National Landscape, the town benefits from easy access to high quality landscapes, wildlife areas, parks and other sub-regional leisure attractions, such as Luton Hoo, Dunstable Downs, and Woburn Abbey. At the same time, the town benefits from good strategic north-south access to the midlands and to Greater London via the M1 and Midland Mainline Railway. It is also served by London Luton Airport which is growing and plays an important role in the economy of the town.

1.7 The location of Luton Borough is shown in **Figure 1.1** overleaf.

Figure 1.1: Location of Luton



Created by LUC - Figure 1.1: Location of Luton Borough 24/02/2026
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Luton Local Plan

1.8 Luton Borough Council adopted the Luton Local Plan 2011-2031 in November 2017, and it is therefore more than five years old. The adopted Local Plan sets out the vision, objectives, spatial strategy and planning policies for Luton Borough for the period up to 2031. The adopted Luton Local Plan was introduced as part of the Luton Development Plan alongside the Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies (adopted in 2014). This plan sets out strategic policies on which future waste management and mineral extraction will be assessed. It identifies strategic sites for mineral extraction, non-hazardous waste landfill and other waste management activities.

1.9 The Luton Borough Council planning policy team is now embarking on producing a new Local Plan and is in the early stages of this process. An initial public consultation on a Community Involvement Paper – Issues and Options took place in late 2024/early 2025.

Strategic Environmental Assessment

1.10 For new Local Plans it is necessary to conduct an environmental assessment in accordance with the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive (European Directive 2001/42/EC), as transposed into law in England by the SEA Regulations [See reference 2] and which remains in force despite the UK exiting the European Union in January 2020.

1.11 In October 2023, the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill received royal assent. The Levelling-up and Regeneration Act outlines a number of reforms to the planning system, including the replacement of the current SEA regime with a new requirement for an Environmental Outcomes Report (EOR). Consultation took place in 2023 on the proposals for EORs and the Government published its response in March 2026 along with a roadmap for the introduction of the new

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system, which is expected to be in place by the end of 2027. The specific requirements will be set out in forthcoming regulations, along with information about transition arrangements; however, at present the requirement for SEA remains as set out in existing legislation. Any changes to the legal framework for carrying out SEA will be addressed as appropriate as the Local Plan is prepared. The potential change to EORs has been considered as far as possible during the preparation of this report, for example the baseline information has been presented in terms of quantifiable indicators where possible. At the time of writing, Government guidance on the new plan-making system continues to refer to the requirement for SEA, noting that ‘your plan will need to carry out SEA if it meets criteria set out in regulation 5 of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. We expect that all local plans will need to carry out SEA.’

1.12 Local Plans being prepared under the new system are no longer required to be subject to Sustainability Appraisal, as was previously required under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 for Local Plans prepared under the previous system.

1.13 The SEA process comprises a number of stages, with Scoping being Stage A as shown below:

- Stage A: Setting the context and objectives, establishing the baseline and deciding on the scope.
- Stage B: Developing and refining options and assessing effects.
- Stage C: Preparing the Environmental Report.
- Stage D: Consulting on the Local Plan and the Environmental Report.
- Stage E: Monitoring the significant effects of implementing the Local Plan.

Habitats Regulations Assessment

1.14 The requirement to undertake Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) of development plans was confirmed by the amendments to the Habitats

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Regulations published for England and Wales in July 2007, updated in 2010 and again in 2012 and 2017 [See reference 3]. The Regulations translate Directive 92/43/EEC on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora (Habitats Directive) and 79/409/EEC (Birds Directive) into UK law and remain a legal requirement despite the UK exiting the European Union.

1.15 The purpose of HRA is to assess the impacts of a land-use plan against the conservation objectives of a European site and to ascertain whether it would adversely affect the integrity of that site, either alone or in combination with other plans or projects.

1.16 The HRA of the Luton Local Plan will be undertaken separately but the findings should be taken into account in the SEA where relevant (for example to inform judgements about the likely effects of potential development locations on biodiversity).

Health Impact Assessment

1.17 Although not a statutory requirement, Health Impact Assessment (HIA) aims to ensure that health-related issues are integrated into the plan-making process. Sustainability objectives that address health issues will be included as part of the SEA process as health is one of the topics required by the SEA Regulations to be addressed in the assessment. In addition, the Council will carry out a separate HIA for the new Local Plan.

Equalities Impact Assessment

1.18 The requirement to undertake formal Equalities Impact Assessment (EqIA) of development plans was introduced in the Equality Act 2010 but was abolished in 2012. Despite this, authorities are still required to have regard to the provisions of the Equality Act, namely the Public Sector Duty which requires

public authorities to have due regard for equalities considerations when exercising their functions.

1.19 In fulfilling this duty, many authorities still find it useful to produce a written record of equality issues having been specifically considered. Therefore, the Council will be producing an EqIA addressing how the Local Plan is likely to be compatible or incompatible with the requirements of the Equalities Act 2010.

Approach to Scoping

1.20 There are five tasks involved at the Scoping stage of SEA:

- Stage A1: Setting out the policy context for the SEA of the Luton Local Plan (i.e. key Government policies and strategies that influence what the Local Plan and the SEA need to consider).
- Stage A2: Setting out the baseline for the SEA of the Local Plan (i.e. the current and likely future environmental conditions in Luton Borough).
- Stage A3: Drawing on A1 and A2, identify the particular sustainability problems and/or opportunities ('issues') that the Local Plan and the SEA should address.
- Stage A4: Drawing on A1, A2 and A3, develop a framework of SEA objectives and assessment criteria to appraise the constituent parts of the Local Plan in isolation and in combination.
- Stage A5: Consultation on the scope of the SEA.

1.21 This Scoping Report fulfils the requirements set out above with a view to establishing the likely significant effects of constituent parts of the Local Plan both in isolation and in combination. In accordance with national Planning Practice Guidance (PPG), published on-line by the Government, the Scoping Report should be proportionate and relevant to the Local Plan, focussing on what is needed to identify and assess the likely significant effects.

Meeting the Requirements of the SEA Regulations

1.22 The relevant sections of the Scoping Report that are considered to meet the SEA Regulations requirements are signposted below (the remainder will be met during subsequent stages of the SEA of the Luton Local Plan). This information will be included in the full SEA Report at each stage of plan making to show how the requirements of the SEA Regulations have been met.

1.23 The SEA Regulations [See reference 4] require the responsible authority to prepare, or secure the preparation of, an 'environmental report', which in this case will comprise the SEA report. The report shall identify, describe, and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of the following (requirements in green shaded text below, where each requirement is met is provided in the bullets below):

Implementing the plan or programme; and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and geographical scope of the plan or programme. (Regulation 12(1) and (2) and Schedule 2)

- The full SEA Report that will be produced to accompany consultation on the Local Plan will constitute the 'environmental report' and will be produced at a later stage in the SEA process but will include the relevant parts of the Scoping Report as noted below.

An outline of the contents and main objectives of the plan or programme, and of its relationship with other relevant plans and programmes.

- Covered in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 and Appendix A.

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The relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan or programme.

- Covered in Chapter 3.

The environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected.

- Covered in Chapter 3.

Any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan or programme including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directive 79/409/EEC on the conservation of wild birds and the Habitats Directive.

- Covered in Chapters 3 and 4.

The environmental protection objectives, established at international, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan or programme and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation.

- Covered in Chapter 2 and Appendix A.

The likely significant effects on the environment, including short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive effects, and secondary, cumulative and synergistic effects, on issues such as: (a) biodiversity; (b) population; (c) human health; (d) fauna; (e) flora; (f) soil; (g) water; (h) air; (i) climatic factors; (j) material assets; (k) cultural heritage,

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including architectural and archaeological heritage; (l) landscape; and (m) the interrelationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l).

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SEA process.

The measures envisaged to prevent, reduce and as fully as possible offset any significant adverse effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SEA process.

An outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SEA process.

A description of the measures envisaged concerning monitoring in accordance with regulation 17.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SEA process.

A non-technical summary of the information provided under paragraphs 1 to 9.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SEA process.

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The report shall include such of the information referred to in Schedule 2 to these Regulations as may reasonably be required, taking account of:

- Current knowledge and methods of assessment;
- The contents and level of detail in the plan or programme;
- The stage of the plan or programme in the decision-making process; and
- The extent to which certain matters are more appropriately assessed at different levels in that process in order to avoid duplication of the assessment. (Regulation 12 (3))

- This Scoping Report and the Environmental Report will adhere to this requirement.

In terms of consultation, the SEA Regulations require that:

- When deciding on the scope and level of detail of the information that must be included in the environmental report, the responsible authority shall consult the consultation bodies. (Regulation 12(5))
- This Scoping Report is being published for consultation with the three statutory bodies (the Environment Agency, Historic England, and Natural England).

Every draft plan or programme for which an environmental report has been prepared in accordance with regulation 12 and its accompanying report (“the relevant documents”) shall be made available for the purposes of consultation in accordance with the following provisions of this regulation.

As soon as reasonably practical after the preparation of the relevant documents, the responsible authority shall:

- Send a copy of those documents to each consultation body;

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- Take such steps as it considers appropriate to bring the preparation of the relevant documents to the attention of the persons who, in the authority's opinion, are affected or likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the decisions involved in the assessment and adoption of the plan or programme concerned, required under the Environmental assessment of Plans and Programmes Directive ("the public consultees");
- Inform the public consultees of:

- (a) the address of the website at which the relevant documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge;
- (b) the fact that a copy of the relevant documents may be obtained by email from the responsible authority;
- (c) the fact that a copy of the relevant documents may be obtained by post from the responsible authority, provided that it is reasonably practicable for the authority to provide a copy by post;
- (d) the address, email address and telephone number for the purpose of requesting a copy of the relevant documents either by email or by post;
- (e) whether a charge will be made for copies of the relevant documents provided by post and the amount of any charge; and
- (f) the telephone number which can be used to contact the responsible authority for enquiries in relation to the relevant documents

The period referred to in paragraph (2) (d) must be of such length as will ensure that the consultation bodies and the public consultees are given an effective opportunity to express their opinion on the relevant documents. (Regulation 13 (1), (2), and (3))

- Public consultation on the Local Plan and accompanying SEA Reports will take place as the Local Plan develops. The intended programme and key stages for plan preparation are set out in the Local Plan Timetable.

Where a responsible authority, other than the Secretary of State, is of the opinion that a plan or programme for which it is the responsible authority is

likely to have significant effects on the environment of another Member State, it shall, as soon as reasonably practicable after forming that opinion:

- Notify the Secretary of State of its opinion and of the reasons for it; and
- Supply the Secretary of State with a copy of the plan or programme concerned, and of the accompanying environmental report. (Regulation 14 (1))

- Unlikely to be relevant to the Luton Local Plan, as there will be no effects beyond the UK.

1.24 In terms of taking the SEA Report and the results of the consultations into account in decision-making, the SEA Regulations require (relevant extracts of Regulation 16):

As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme for which an environmental assessment has been carried out under these Regulations, the responsible authority shall:

- publish the plan or programme, as adopted, its accompanying environmental report and a statement containing the particulars specified in paragraph (4) (“the relevant adoption documents”) on a public website at which the documents may be viewed and downloaded free of charge;
- provide a copy of the relevant adoption documents by email to any person who requests a copy, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of that person’s request;
- provide one copy of the relevant adoption documents by post to any person who requests a copy, as soon as reasonably practicable after receipt of that person’s request, unless it is not reasonably practicable to provide a copy by post for reasons connected to the effects of coronavirus, including restrictions on movement;
- make available a telephone number for the public to make enquiries in relation to the relevant adoption documents;

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- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SEA process.

As soon as reasonably practicable after the adoption of a plan or programme the responsible authority shall inform (i) the consultation bodies; (ii) the persons who, in relation to the plan or programme, were public consultees for the purposes of regulation 13; and (iii) where the responsible authority is not the Secretary of state, the Secretary of State, that the plan or programme has been adopted, and a statement containing the following particulars:

- How environmental considerations have been integrated into the plan or programme;
- How the environmental report has been taken into account;
- How opinions expressed in response to: (i) the invitation in regulation 13(2)(d); (ii) action taken by the responsible authority in accordance with regulation 13(4), have been taken into account;
- How the results of any consultations entered into under regulation 14(4) have been taken into account;
- The reasons for choosing the plan or programme as adopted, in the light of the other reasonable alternatives dealt with; and
- The measures that are to be taken to monitor the significant environmental effects of the implementation of the plan or programme.

- Requirement will be met at a later stage in the SEA process.

1.25 The SEA Regulations also require that the responsible authority shall monitor the significant effects of the implementation of each plan or programme with the purpose of identifying unforeseen adverse effects at an early stage and being able to undertake appropriate remedial action (Regulation 17(1)). This requirement will be met after adoption of the Local Plan.

Structure of the Scoping Report

1.26 This chapter describes the background to the preparation of the Luton Local Plan and the requirement to undertake SEA. The remainder of this Scoping Report is structured into the following sections:

- Chapter 2 describes the other plans, policies and programmes of relevance to the SEA of the Luton Local Plan.
- Chapter 3 presents the baseline information which will inform the assessment of the policies and sites in the Local Plan.
- Chapter 4 identifies the key environmental issues in Luton Borough of relevance to the Local Plan and considers the likely evolution of those issues without its implementation.
- Chapter 5 presents the SEA framework that will be used for the appraisal of the Local Plan and the proposed method for carrying out the SEA.
- Chapter 6 describes the next steps to be undertaken in the SEA of the Local Plan.
- Appendix A sets out the international, national and sub-national plans, policies and programmes which are of most relevance to the Local Plan.

Chapter 2

Relevant Plans and Programmes

2.1 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires:

- a) “an outline of the contents and main objectives of the Plan and its relationship with other relevant plans or programmes” and
- b) “the environmental protection objectives established at International, Community or Member State level, which are relevant to the plan and the way those objectives and any environmental considerations have been taken into account during its preparation”

2.2 In order to establish a clear scope for the SEA it is necessary to review and develop an understanding of the objectives contained within international and national policies, plans and strategies that are of relevance to the Luton Local Plan. Given the SEA Regulations requirements above, it is also necessary to consider the relationship between the Luton Local Plan and other relevant plans, policies and programmes.

2.3 This chapter summarises the relationship of the Luton Local Plan to the relevant international and national policies, plans and programmes which should be taken into consideration during preparation of the plan and its SEA, as well as those plans and programmes which are of relevance at a County/sub-regional level. The objectives of these plans and programmes have been taken into account when drafting the SEA framework in Chapter 5. An outline of the content and main objectives of the Local Plan will be described in subsequent SEA reports, as this emerges through the plan-making process.

The Implications of Brexit

2.4 As of the end of January 2020 the UK has left the EU. Principally, the UK's environmental law is derived from EU law or was directly effective EU law. As a result of Brexit, the European Union (Withdrawal) Act 2018 converts existing EU law which applied directly in the UK's legal system (such as EU Regulations and EU Decisions) into UK law and preserves laws made in the UK to implement EU obligations (e.g. the laws which implement EU Directive). This body of law is known as retained EU law and could be subject to future, post-Brexit amendments.

2.5 As set out in the Explanatory Memorandum accompanying the Brexit amendments [See reference 5], the purpose of the Brexit amendments to the SEA Regulations is to ensure that the law functions correctly after the UK has left the EU. No substantive changes are made by this instrument to the way the SEA regime operates.

2.6 Relevant international plans and policy (including those at the EU level) are transposed into national plans, policy and legislation and these have been considered in this chapter and in Appendix A.

Relationship with Other Relevant Plans or Programmes

2.7 The Luton Local Plan is not prepared in isolation and must be in conformity with a range of international and national plans and programmes. In addition, the Luton Local Plan will comprise any 'made' Neighbourhood Plans within the Borough (there are currently none in Luton).

International

2.8 At the international level, there is a wide range of plans and programmes which act to inform and shape national level legislation. Planning policy in England at a national and local level (i.e. the NPPF and Local Plan) should be aware of and in conformity with the relevant legislation. The main sustainability objectives of international plans and programmes which are of most relevance for the Local Plan and the SEA are provided in Appendix A.

National

2.9 There is an extensive range of national policies, plans and programmes that are relevant to the Local Plan and the SEA process. A pragmatic and proportionate approach has been taken with regards to the identification of key national policies, plans and programmes, focusing on those that are of most relevance. A summary of the main objectives of the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance of relevance to the Local Plan and the SEA is provided below. In addition, the main sustainability objectives of other national plans and programmes which are of most relevance to the Local Plan and SEA are provided in Appendix A.

The National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Practice Guidance

2.10 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) [See reference 6] is the overarching planning framework which provides national planning policy and principles for the planning system in England. The NPPF was originally published in March 2012 and has since been updated and revised several times, with the most recent version published in December 2024 (and amended further in February 2025). At the time of writing, consultation has recently closed in relation to a further update to the NPPF; however until such time that an

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updated NPPF is formally published the December 2024 version remains current. That revised Framework revoked previous changes from its 2023 iterations and places a greater emphasis on ensuring up to date Local Plans are progressed using housing numbers defined by the Standard Method (removing alternative housing). The revisions also sought to change Green Belt policy changing the 'exceptional circumstances' test for plan-making and introducing the 'Grey Belt' and 'Golden Rules'. The revised Framework also strengthened the Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development, the presumption of the use of brownfield land, identified specific economic development that should be supported, and removed references to 'beauty'.

2.11 The three overarching objectives of the planning system are set out in paragraph 8 of the NPPF, which should be pursued in mutually supportive ways so that net gains are achieved across each of the different objectives:

- “an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
- a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
- an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”

2.12 The New Local Plan must be consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, which states:

“Succinct and up-to-date plans should provide a positive vision for the future of each area; a framework for meeting housing needs and addressing other economic, social and environmental priorities; and a platform for local people to shape their surroundings”.

2.13 A local planning authority is also required to have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State when preparing a Local Plan **[See reference 7]**.

2.14 Paragraph 20 of the NPPF states the need for strategic policies in plan making, which set out the overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, making sufficient provision for:

- “a) homes (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development;
- b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat);
- c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and
- d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

2.15 The National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) **[See reference 8]** provides guidance for how the Government’s planning policies for England are expected to be applied. Sitting alongside the NPPF, it provides an online resource that is updated on a regular basis for the benefit of planning practitioners.

2.16 The overarching nature of the NPPF means that its implications for the SEA relate to multiple topics which this report seeks to address. Considering the importance of the NPPF to the English planning system, the relevance of

the Framework and its implications for the plan making process and the SEA is provided in more detail below. Sustainability topics are addressed separately below, but consideration of issues often cuts across topics. The summary provided below is not absolutely comprehensive and the NPPF is intended to be read and applied as a whole during plan making.

Biodiversity (including Flora and Fauna)

2.17 The NPPF sets out the approach Local Plans should have in relation to biodiversity and states that Plans should “identify, map and safeguard components of local wildlife-rich habitats and wider ecological networks, including the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites of importance for biodiversity; wildlife corridors and stepping stones that connect them; and areas identified by national and local partnerships for habitat management, enhancement, restoration or creation”. Plans should also “promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and identify and pursue opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.” A strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure is to be supported through planning policies.

2.18 The NPPF states that the planning system should protect and enhance sites of biodiversity or ecological value and soils in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or quality, while also encouraging the reuse of previously developed land.

2.19 The Luton Local Plan should seek to maximise any opportunities arising for local economies, communities and health as well as biodiversity. This should be inclusive of approaches which are supportive of enhancing the connectivity of green infrastructure and promoting the achievement of biodiversity net gain. The SEA process should support the identification and maximisation of potential benefits through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of both negative and positive significant effects.

Population and Human Health

2.20 In relation to health and wellbeing, healthy, inclusive and safe places which promote social integration, are safe and accessible, and enable and support healthy lifestyles are supported through the Framework. The Building for a Healthy Life design toolkit [See reference 9] can be used by local authorities to assist in the creation of places that are better for people and nature.

2.21 One of the core planning principles is to “take into account and support the delivery of local strategies to improve health, social and cultural well-being for all sections of the community”. It is identified in the document that “a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities”. Furthermore, “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” is supported. Importantly, Local Plans should also “contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible”. Additionally, larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns are required by the NPPF to be guided by policies set within a vision that looks at least 30 years ahead [See reference 10]. The need for policies to be reflective of this longer time period is to take account of the likely timescale for delivery.

Air, Water and Soils

2.22 The NPPF states that new and existing development should be prevented from “contributing to, being put at an unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability”. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided. Plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account implications for water supply. Furthermore, strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and

quality of development, and make provide sufficient infrastructure for water supply and wastewater.

2.23 The new Luton Local Plan presents an opportunity to consider incorporating targets for water efficiency and the level of water consumption and grey water recycling in any new development. The Local Plan also can ensure that development is sited away from areas of high flood probability and that appropriate water drainage is in place in line with flood risk strategies. The SEA process should seek to identify and address potential negative effects on the water environment, including implications relating to wastewater.

2.24 The new Local Plan can seek to ensure the appropriate protection of soil quality, including best and most versatile agricultural land. Further to this the Local Plan should ensure that new development does not conflict with current mineral operations (there are no active quarries in Luton but mineral companies do operate rail-served depots, concrete batching and asphalt plants in the town, which are essential to the supply of minerals needed to support the provisions of the Local Plan) as well as long-term mineral resource plans. The SEA process should inform the development of the new Local Plan by helping to identify alternatives which would avoid areas of highest soil quality and best and most versatile agricultural land (in so far as this is relevant to Luton Borough), as well as those which would promote the use of brownfield land.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

2.25 Climate change adaption and mitigation, energy efficiency and waste minimisation measures for new development including through the promotion of renewable energy schemes are also supported through the NPPF. One of the core planning principles is to “support the transition to net zero by 2050 and take full account of all climate impacts including overheating, water scarcity, storm and flood risk and coastal change. It should help to: shape places in ways that contribute to radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions, minimise vulnerability and improve resilience; encourage the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings; and support renewable and low carbon energy and associated infrastructure”. Furthermore, local planning

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authorities should adopt “a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures”.

2.26 The SEA can consider the contribution the alternatives make in terms of contribution to climate change mitigation as well as climate change adaptation.

2.27 Although Local Plans can no longer require levels of the Code for Sustainable Homes, they can promote the Home Quality Mark to support residents in understanding the quality and performance of new build homes and can also set targets for developers to provide for a given percentage of energy used by a new development to come from on-site renewable or low carbon technologies. Revisions were made to the Building Regulations 2022 [See reference 11], setting minimum energy efficiency standards which are increasing the performance values of properties. From 15th June 2022, all new build homes are required to produce at least 31% less carbon emissions. Local Plan policies can further support the development of renewable energy technologies where appropriate, in line with climate change mitigation strategies and targets. The UK Green Building Council has produced a resource pack which is designed to help local authorities improve the sustainability of new homes. The New Homes Policy Playbook [See reference 12] sets out minimum requirements for sustainability in new homes that local authorities should introduce, as well as proposed stretching requirements should local authorities wish to go further. For non-residential uses BREEAM assessments can be used by local authorities to ensure buildings meet sustainability objectives.

Material Assets

2.28 The delivery of new housing is considered to support local communities by meeting housing needs and addressing shortages. The new Luton Local Plan can have a significant influence on addressing inequalities including those relating to health and will need to consider the appropriate siting of new development, particularly large development sites that are likely to include new service and facility provisions. The Local Plan can ensure that new

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development is located in areas which can improve accessibility for existing as well as new residents and ensure that future development does not exacerbate existing inequalities. The SEA process can support the identification and refinement of options that can contribute to reducing inequalities and support the development of policy approaches that cumulatively improve the wellbeing of local communities.

2.29 The Framework sets out that in terms of economic growth the role of the planning system is to contribute towards building a “strong, responsive and competitive economy by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity. There is also a requirement for the planning system to identify and coordinate the provision of infrastructure. Furthermore, planning policies should address the specific locational requirements of different sectors.

2.30 Local planning authorities should incorporate planning policies which “support the role that town centres play at the heart of local communities, by taking a positive approach to their growth, management and adaptation”. Local Plans are required to “set out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth, having regard to the national industrial strategy and any relevant Local Industrial Strategies and other local policies for economic development and regeneration”.

2.31 The new Local Plan should seek to maximise the potential benefits of nearby strategic growth, whilst at the same time ensuring the vitality and viability of smaller localised economies. Ensuring that services and facilities within the Borough’s district and neighbourhood centres are maintained and enhanced is also important and will also provide support for local communities. The SEA process can support the development of the new Local Plan to ensure that its policies are considerate of impacts on the economy in Luton Borough. The process can also be used to demonstrate that impacts on the viability of Luton town centre and other local centres have been considered.

2.32 The NPPF encourages local planning authorities to consider transport issues from the earliest stages of plan making so that: opportunities to promote

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sustainable transport are identified and pursued; the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified and assessed; and opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure and changing transport technology and usage are realised. The framework also states that the planning system should actively manage growth patterns in support of these objectives.

2.33 Growth will inevitably increase traffic on the roads which also has implications for air quality, and the new Local Plan and SEA process can seek to minimise effects of this nature through appropriately siting new development, identifying where mitigation may be needed and requiring the necessary transport provisions and contributions from new development. The Local Plan, as supported by the SEA, should seek to identify opportunities to maximise the potential for alternative modes of transport to the car and reduce the need to travel, therefore reducing emissions, through the consideration of alternatives and assessment of significant effects. This includes potential opportunities that may arise as a result of the delivery of new infrastructure.

Cultural Heritage

2.34 The NPPF states that in relation to the historic environment plans should “set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats”. Where appropriate, plans should seek to sustain and enhance the significance of heritage assets and local character and distinctiveness, while viable uses of assets should be considered. Plans should take into account the wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring. They should also consider the contribution the historic environment can make to the character of a place.

2.35 The new Local Plan can offer enhanced protection for designated and non-designated heritage assets and their settings, including any potential archaeological finds in line with heritage protection and enhancement plans. The SEA has a role to play by identifying which alternatives could offer opportunities to secure the protection and enhancement of assets as well as

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those which might have significant impacts in terms of their appropriate use and setting.

Landscape

2.36 In relation to landscape, the NPPF sets the planning principles of recognising the intrinsic beauty and character of the countryside as well as protecting and enhancing valued landscapes. Reference is included with regards to this purpose at National Parks, The Broads and National Landscapes.

2.37 The Local Plan should be supportive of an approach to development which would protect the landscape character of Luton Borough and its surrounds. Where appropriate it should also seek to protect the identity of the built-up areas of Luton. The SEA should identify those alternatives which contribute positively to landscape and townscape character.

Other National Policies, Plans and Programmes

2.38 Numerous other policies, plans and programmes (PPPs) at a national level are of relevance to the preparation of the Luton Local Plan and the SEA. Unlike the NPPF, most of the documents are focussed on a specific topic area which the SEA will consider. There will be some overlap between SEA topics covered by these plans and programmes where those documents contain more overarching objectives. However, the plans and programmes considered of most relevance to the SEA have been grouped by the topics they most directly seek to address, and the sections below each topic heading summarise the implications of the national PPPs for the Local Plan and the SEA.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

2.39 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

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- Clean Power 2030 Action Plan: A New Era of Clean Electricity (2024)
- Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (2023)
- Powering up Britain (2023)
- The Environment Improvement Plan (2023)
- British Energy Security Strategy (2022)
- UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021)
- The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy (2021)
- The Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021)
- The UK Hydrogen Strategy (2021)
- Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021)
- National Infrastructure Strategy: Fairer, faster greener (2020)
- The Energy White Paper: Powering our net zero future (2020)
- Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020)
- Sixth Carbon Budget (Climate Change Committee, 2020)
- Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management: Policy Statement (2020)
- The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2020)
- The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations (2020)
- Net Zero – The UK’s contribution to stopping global warming (2019)
- The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 and The Flood and Water Regulations (2019)
- Climate Change Act (2008) and Climate Change Act 2009 (2050 Target Amendment) Order (2019)

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- The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate (2018)
- Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England (2018)
- The Clean Growth Strategy (2017)
- National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) (2014)
- Waste Management Plan for England (2013)
- The Energy Efficiency Strategy: The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK (2012)
- The Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewable Sources Regulations (2011)
- The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National Strategy for Climate and Energy (2009)
- The UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009)
- Planning and Energy Act (2008)

Implications for the Local Plan and SEA

2.40 The Local Plan should set out policies to achieve climate change adaptation while also encouraging development which would help to minimise carbon emissions.

2.41 The Local Plan should help to ensure that new development is energy efficient and promotes the use of sustainable construction methods and materials, as well as reduce their carbon emissions. In addition, the Local Plan should seek to allocate development in areas where sustainable transport patterns can be best achieved and encourage development to make use of more sustainable sources of energy, potentially through the delivery of renewable energy development. The Local Plan should also ensure that risk from all sources of flooding as a result of climate change is managed effectively and should ensure that development is resilient to future flooding. This could

include the Local Plan setting out approaches to encourage the appropriate use of SuDS to minimise flood risk. The Local Plan should also consider the handling of waste in line with the waste hierarchy.

2.42 The SEA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SEA objectives relating to the mitigation of climate change and adaptation to climate change, sustainable construction, flooding and sustainable transport.

Population and Human Health

2.43 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024)
- Homes England Strategic Plan 2023 to 2028 (2023)
- Green Infrastructure Framework (2023)
- White Paper Levelling Up the United Kingdom (2022)
- A fairer private rented sector White Paper (2022)
- The State of the Environment: Health, People and the Environment (2021)
- National Design Guide (2021)
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2021)
- COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan (2021)
- The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper (2020)
- Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments (2020) Addendum (2021)
- Public Health England, PHE Strategy (2020-25)
- The Housing White Paper 2017: Fixing our broken housing market
- Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space Standard (2015)

Chapter 2 Relevant Plans and Programmes

- Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change Report Ready for Ageing? (2013)
- Fair Society, Healthy Lives (2010)
- Laying the foundations: housing strategy for England (2011)
- Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England (2010)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2006)

Implications for the Local Plan and SEA

2.44 The Local Plan needs to consider the requirements for infrastructure as this has the potential to have a significant impact on the environment, and it should be prepared to ensure that the population has access to sustainable low carbon infrastructure and services and facilities and that there is sufficient capacity within them to serve the increased population. This should include healthcare, education and open space.

2.45 Local Plans should maximise the well-being benefits of well-designed local green spaces and ensure that the provision of open space and green infrastructure is of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the needs of the Plan area, encourage healthy and active lifestyles, creates fair, safe and inclusive communities, and improves the sustainable transport network including active travel networks within the Plan area.

2.46 The provision of an appropriate level of housing over the plan period will help address issues of disparity in terms of access to decent housing in the plan area. The provision of new housing should be considerate of local needs with regards to housing size, tenure and type, including the needs of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople.

2.47 The SEA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SEA objectives relating to health and wellbeing, social inclusion, and sustainable transport.

Biodiversity (including Flora and Fauna), Landscape and Soils

2.48 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Chilterns Nature Recovery Plan (in preparation)
- Climate Adaption Management Plans
- Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (2024)
- The Environment Improvement Plan (2023)
- Working with Nature (2022)
- Establishing the Best Available Techniques for the UK (UK BAT) (2022)
- The Environment Act (2021)
- The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations (2019)
- Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations (2015)
- Biodiversity offsetting in England Green Paper (2013)
- Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011)
- Defra right of way circular (01/09) (2011)
- Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2010)
- Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009)
- England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles (2008)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006)
- Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) (as amended)
- National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act (1949)

Implications for the Local Plan and SEA

2.49 The Local Plan should be prepared to limit the potential for adverse impacts on biodiversity and geodiversity as well as important landscapes (including those that are designated) and higher value soils. The Local Plan should help to ensure that ecological features and biodiversity are managed, protected and enhanced and that opportunities for habitat restoration or creation are encouraged. The Local Plan should also help to ensure that environmental pollution is minimised in order to protect land and soils and ensure the efficient extraction of minerals. The Local Plan should also help to ensure that designated and valued landscapes are protected and enhanced, and that development should be sympathetic to local character and history including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting.

2.50 The plan should also take into account non-designated landscapes identified as particularly sensitive to development and non-designated habitats which form part of wider ecological network. The Local Plan also presents opportunities to promote the achievement of net gain in biodiversity.

2.51 In terms of the location of development, the Local Plan can encourage the re-use of brownfield land and protect more valuable agricultural soils from development, in so far as this is relevant to Luton Borough. The allocation of new sites for development and updated planning policy can also be used to achieve better habitat connectivity through the provision of new green infrastructure and the requirement for biodiversity net gain.

2.52 The SEA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SEA objectives relating to the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, character of landscapes and townscapes, green infrastructure and contaminated land.

Cultural Heritage

2.53 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

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- Historic England Corporate Plan (2022-23)
- Heritage Statement (2017)
- Sustainability Appraisal and Strategy Environmental Assessment: Historic England Advice Note 8 (2016)
- Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England (2010)
- Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act (1990)
- Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979)
- Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act (1953)

Implications for the Local Plan and SEA

2.54 The potential impact of new development on the historic environment, including local character as well as designated and non-designated heritage assets and their respective settings, should also inform the preparation of the Local Plan. The Local Plan should set out a positive strategy for conserving, enhancing and enjoying heritage assets and their settings, including wider historic townscapes and landscapes. The Local Plan can help to realise the wider benefits of historic environment enhancements which include contributions to well-being and addressing the climate and biodiversity emergencies. Particular regard may be given to protecting heritage assets which have been identified as being 'at risk' (both at the national and local levels). Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plans to address these issues and site options should be considered with regard to the potential for related issues.

2.55 The Local Plan should consider the contributions that the historic environment can make to the success of development and for the enhancement of the historic environment from sustainable development proposals.

2.56 The SEA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SEA objectives relating to the historic environment and the character of landscapes and townscapes.

Air and Water

2.57 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- The National Framework for Water Resources 2025: Water for Growth, Nature and a Resilient Future (2025)
- Plan for Water: Our Integrated Plan for Delivering Clean and Plentiful Water (2023)
- Air Quality Strategy for England (2023)
- Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans: guiding principles for the water industry (2022)
- Flood Risk Management Plans 2021 – 2027 (2022)
- National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2022)
- River Basin Management Plans (2022)
- Managing Water Abstraction (2021)
- Environment Act (2021)
- National Chalk Streams Strategy Chalk Stream Strategy (2021)
- Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources (2020)
- The National Framework (2020)
- Clean Air Strategy (2019)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2018)
- Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations (2017)
- UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations (2017)
- Drought response: our framework for England (Environment Agency, 2017)

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- Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations (2016)
- Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations (2016)
- Environmental Permitting Regulations (2016)
- Air Quality Standards Regulations (2016)
- Water White Paper (2012)
- National Policy Statement for Waste Water (2012)
- Flood and Water Management Act (2010)
- Groundwater (England and Wales) Regulations (2009)
- Flood Risk Regulations (2009)
- Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England (2008)
- Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007)
- Environmental Noise Regulations (2006)
- Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (2003)
- Environmental Protection Act (1990)

Implications for the Local Plan and SEA

2.58 Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plans to promote the efficient use of water and limit all types of pollution including water and air pollution. They should also seek to limit pressure on the wastewater treatment (WwT) infrastructure and water supply. The allocation of sites for development should take account of areas which are of highest sensitivity in relation to these issues, including Source Protection Zones (SPZs) and Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs). To limit the potential for air quality issues to be intensified as development is delivered over the plan period, local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plan to factor in the contribution that specific site options can make to achieving modal shift and limiting the need for residents to travel.

2.59 The SEA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SEA objectives relating to air pollution, water quality and waste management.

Material Assets

2.60 The relevant national PPPs under this topic are:

- Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy (2025)
- The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy (2025)
- The Plan for Change (2024)
- Kickstarting Economic Growth: Milestone: Raising Living Standards in Every Part of the United Kingdom (2024) and Rebuilding Britain (2024)
- Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024 (2024)
- UK Invest 2035: The Modern Industrial Strategy (2024)
- Future of Transport: Supporting Rural Transport Innovation (2023)
- Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Report to Parliament (2022)
- The Growth Plan (2022)
- Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021)
- Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth (2021)
- Agricultural Transition Plan (2021 to 2024)
- Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020)
- Agriculture Act (2020)
- UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2018)
- The Road to Zero (2018)
- LEP Network response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper Consultation (2017)

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- Highways England Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2017)
- Transport Investment Strategy (2017)
- Airports: The Government's View Summary Document- Moving Britain Ahead (2016)
- National Infrastructure Delivery Plan (2016-2021)
- Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration (2013)

Implications for the Local Plan and SEA

2.61 The Local Plan should allocate land to support the projected level of economic growth required over the plan period. Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in Local Plan policies to promote sustainable economic and employment growth to benefit all members of the community and to reduce disparity in the plan area. This should include support for the infrastructure required for the economy to function successfully. Employment sites should be located in areas that enable local people to be able to access new employment opportunities. Local planning authorities should consider setting out approaches in their Local Plan to promote the viability of Town Centres as well as Local Centres.

2.62 Limiting congestion and associated benefits for air quality and climate change as well as public health should inform the preparation of the policies for the Local Plan and its site allocations. The Local Plan should also encourage walking and cycling as alternative modes of transport by providing safe and attractive walking and cycling infrastructure, as well as recognise the multiple benefits they bring in terms of physical and mental health, reducing carbon emissions and reducing air pollution. Furthermore, the selection of site options for development should be informed by issues such as the potential for access to new and existing public transport nodes and active transport routes and specific highways capacity issues. The selection of individual site options

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should also be informed by their proximity to essential services and facilities which is likely to reduce the need for residents to regularly travel long distances.

2.63 The SEA is able to respond to this through the inclusion of SEA objectives relating to economic growth and employment and the provision of sustainable transport.

Sub National

2.64 Below the national level there are further plans and programmes which are relevant to the Local Plan and the SEA process. These plans and programmes sit mostly at the sub-regional and borough level and details are provided below with further details in Appendix A.

- Levelling up the East of England: 2023-2030
- Luton 2040 A Place to Thrive Economic Strategy
- Transport East, Transport Strategy 2030-2050 (2023)
- Planning School Places for Luton (2025)
- Bedfordshire Natural Capital Assessment, Part 1: Mapping, valuation, and opportunities for enhancement across Bedfordshire (June 2021)
- Bedfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Bedford Borough Council, Local Transport Plan 2011-2021
- Central Bedfordshire Council Transport Strategy April 2011 to March 2026
- Luton Corporate Plan 2023-2028
- Luton 2040 Vision
- Active Luton Strategy 2023-2028
- Domestic Abuse Strategy 2023 to 2028
- Fairness strategy: A town built on fairness and social justice (August 2023)
- Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027

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- Economic Growth Strategy for Luton (2025 – 2032)
- Luton 2020-2040- A Place to Thrive- Inclusive Economy Strategy
- Luton Town Centre Masterplan Framework (2020-2040)
- Luton Climate Change Guide (undated)
- Luton Town Centre Delivery Plan 2025 - 2030
- Library Strategy 2020 to 2025
- Luton Energy Strategy 2018 to 2035
- Luton's Population and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 to 2028
- Prosperity through Procurement: a five year strategy 2019 to 2024
- Waste Management Strategy 2018 to 2028
- Reducing Health Inequalities in Luton: A Marmot Town (2022)
- Luton Annual Report of the Director of Public Health (2024)
- Luton Sport and Physical Activity Strategic Delivery Plan (2024 – 2040)
- Luton Local Transport Plan (LTP) 5 (Draft)
- Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan 2023-2033
- Luton Parking Strategy 2024 - 2030
- Electric vehicle chargepoint strategy 2022 to 2025
- Luton Bus Service Improvement Plan 2025 - 26
- Air quality annual status report 2024
- Luton Employment and Skills Strategy 2022-2027
- My climate action plan Becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2040 (2021)
- Luton Net Zero: Climate Policy and Action Plan
- Luton Net Zero Roadmap and Progress Report
- Resilient and Adaptive Communities: Making Luton and Dunstable resilient to climate change

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- Harnessing Momentum Our strategy for Arts, Culture and Creative Industries in Luton 2017-2027
- Curating Luton (2021) Our Town-wide Heritage Strategy 2021 to 2031
- Plaiter's' Lea: The Hat District Conservation Area Appraisal (2020)
- Plaiters' Lea: The Hat District Conservation Area Management Plan (2020)Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record
- The Luton Education Strategy for children and young people 2019
- Hertfordshire Local Transport Plan 2018 -2031
- Listed Building Heritage Partnership Agreement

Implications for the Local Plan

2.65 The new Local Plan needs to consider the above sub national plans for the east of England and Luton Borough.

2.66 The Local Plan should support the aim to transition towards net zero and support adaptation to climate change. The Local Plan should meet the commitments that Luton Borough Council made to reduce its own emissions following the declaration of a climate emergency in 2020.

2.67 The Local Plan offers the opportunity to maximise the well-being benefits of well-designed open spaces and areas for recreation. The Local Plan should help to ensure that the provision of open space and areas of recreation is of sufficient quantity and quality to meet the needs of the plan area, encouraging healthy and active lifestyles. The Local Plan should also consider opportunities for biodiversity enhancement within open spaces and across Luton Borough.

2.68 The provision of an appropriate level of housing will help address issues of inequality in relation to housing in the plan area and support economic growth. The provision of new housing should be considerate of local needs, including the needs of Travellers. The new Local Plan should support economic growth

within Luton Borough, including supporting the rural economy and infrastructure requirements. This economic growth should align with the aims in the East of England. A Masterplan has been prepared for Luton Town Centre which should be taken into consideration.

2.69 The Local Plan should encourage the use sustainable forms of transport such as walking and cycling and public transport. The Local Plan should also support the infrastructure requirements to enhance and decarbonise transport within Luton Borough. Transport plans for the East of England and the Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire authorities have been produced and should be taken into consideration.

Surrounding Development Plans

2.70 Development in Luton Borough will not be delivered in isolation from those areas around it. Given the interconnection between Luton Borough and the surrounding areas there is potential for cross-boundary and in-combination effects where development is proposed through development plans in neighbouring authorities. This is of particular importance with Luton Borough being part of the Bedfordshire Housing Market Area and Functional Economic Area. As such, a summary of the plans for the following local authority areas which surround Luton Borough is also provided in Appendix A:

- Central Bedfordshire
- North Hertfordshire
- Dacorum
- St. Albans

2.71 As the SEA progresses, consideration will be given to the extent to which the content of these other plans could lead to in-combination effects with the Luton Local Plan, for example as a result of any large-scale new development being proposed in close proximity across the borough boundaries.

Chapter 3

Baseline Information

3.1 Baseline information provides the basis for predicting and monitoring the likely sustainability effects of a plan and helps to identify key sustainability issues and means of dealing with them.

3.2 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations requires information to be provided on:

- (2) the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment;
- (3) the environmental characteristics of areas likely to be significantly affected;
- (4) any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan including, in particular, those relating to any areas of a particular environmental importance, such as areas designated pursuant to Directives 2009/147/EC [the 'Birds Directive'] and 92/43/EEC [the 'Habitats Directive'].

3.3 This section presents the relevant baseline information for Luton Borough. Data referred to have been chosen primarily for regularity and consistency of collection, to enable trends in the baseline situation to be established, and also to enable subsequent monitoring of potential sustainability effects.

Biodiversity (including Flora and Fauna)

3.4 There are no European designated nature conservation sites within Luton Borough. The nearest is the Chilterns Beechwoods which is a designated Special Area of Conservation (SAC) located in Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire, Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. The area is 1285.86 hectares, it is a collection of sites dispersed across Beds, Herts, Berks, Bucks and Oxon

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and the site character is Heath, Scrub, Maquis and Garrigue, Phygrana (4%), Dry grassland, Steppes (8%) and Broad-leaved deciduous woodland (88%) [See reference 13]. Its zone of influence (12.6 km buffer) does however fall within the south-western extent of Luton Borough.

3.5 There are two SSSIs (seen in **Table 3.1** below) that fall either wholly or partially within the Borough. There is also an additional SSSI bordering the edge of the Borough: Galley and Warden Hills [See reference 14].

Table 3.1: Summary of SSSI in Luton

SSSI Name	Main Habitat	Area (ha)
Dallow Downs and Winsdon Hill	Calcareous Grassland	41.1702
Cowslip Meadow	Neutral Grassland	6.3563

3.6 Dallow Downs and Winsdon Hill: Dallow Downs and Winsdon Hill SSSI supports lowland calcareous grassland with a characteristic downland flora. The species composition varies throughout the site as a result of topography and management history. It is dominated by grasses such as upright brome *Bromopsis erecta*, quaking-grass *Briza media* and fescues *Festuca* spp. A wide range of typical chalk grassland plants are present, the most frequent including rough hawkbit *Leontodon hispidus*, salad burnet *Sanguisorba minor*, common birdsfoot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, glaucous sedge *Carex flacca* and common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*. Dallow Downs and Winsdon Hill SSSI supports the largest Great Britain population of the Nationally Rare¹ great pignut *Bunium bulbocastanum*. Great pignut is an umbelliferous plant of limey soils that has a limited distribution in Great Britain, being mainly confined to the chalk hills between Tring and Cambridge.

3.7 Cowslip Meadow: Cowslip Meadow SSSI is of special interest for its species-rich meadow characterised by the nationally rare NVC type MG5

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crested dog's-tail *Cynosurus cristatus* – common knapweed *Centaurea nigra* grassland.

3.8 There are 25 County Wildlife Sites in Luton. The biggest sites are: Galley and Warden Hill, Bradger's Hill, Cowslip Meadow, Fallowfield, Bluebell Wood, Hay Wood, Dallow Downs and Leagrave Common, including Waulud's Bank. There are also 14 District Wildlife Sites, which are designated via the Local Sites Partnership using criteria on the Bedfordshire Recording and Monitoring Centre website.

3.9 Galley and Warden Hills is Luton's principal site and is owned by Luton Borough Council, even though it lies outside the borough. It is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and on 3 March 1993 became Luton's first nature reserve. It is a nationally important site because of its wide range of chalk grassland communities of wild flowers and butterflies [See reference 15]. District and County Wildlife Sites in the Borough are in the process of being reviewed, including for their potential for biodiversity net gain.

3.10 There are eight priority habitats of national importance present in Luton Borough (Ancient and/or species rich hedgerows, chalk rivers, eutrophic standing waters, lowland calcareous grassland, lowland meadows, lowland wood pasture and parkland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wet woodland), as well as 11 Priority Species (Great Crested Newt, Linnet, Reed Bunting, Spotted Flycatcher, Grey Partridge, Bullfinch, Song Thrush, Water Vole, Pipistrelle Bat, Common Fan Foot moth, pale shining brown moth) [See reference 16].

3.11 Central Bedfordshire Council is responsible for developing the Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Bedfordshire and is working closely with Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership, Luton Borough Council and Bedford Borough Council along with a range of other partners and stakeholders. The Local Nature Recovery Strategy aims to identify local actions and locations where nature recovery can be delivered. Central Bedfordshire Council is currently at the stage of reviewing public responses on what could be done to help nature [See reference 17].

3.12 A map showing the designated biodiversity and geodiversity assets is provided in **Figure 3.9**. It should be noted that the boundaries are from the current 2017 Local Plan and some sites may have changed designation and/or boundaries since the adoption of the Local Plan.

Population and Human Health

Population

3.13 Luton's population in 2021 was 225,300 which is an 11% increase since 2011, above the national average which was 6% over the same time period. By 2023, the population had increased further to 231,000. Luton's population increase is higher than the increase for the East of England (8.3 per cent). Regionally the largest population increase was in Bedford (16.6%) and the lowest in North Norfolk (1.5%). Luton has a population density of 52 people per hectare which is greater than some London boroughs. **[See reference 18]**.

3.14 The population of Luton comprises approximately 112,900 men and 112,400 women. Luton's population is younger than average, with a higher proportion of younger people than nationally and a lower proportion of older people. The under 15 age group account for 21.9 per cent of the Luton population compared with 17.4 per cent nationally. The 15 to 64 age group account for 66.3 per cent of the Luton, a similar proportion to the national figure (64.2 per cent). The majority of this percentage is made up by people aged 30-45. The 65 and over age group represents 11.8 per cent of the Luton population compared with 18.4 per cent nationally. The 0 to 14 year age group grew by 12 per cent, the 15 to 64 age group grew by 11 per cent and those aged 65 and over grew by 11 per cent between 2011 and 2021. The age group of 55 to 59 year olds and 90 and above both had growth of over 30 per cent between 2011 and 2021 with the number of 25 to 29 year olds falling by 12 per cent **[See reference 19]**.

3.15 The number of households in Luton grew from 74,300 to 78,900 between 2011 and 2021, a growth rate of 6.2 per cent. The total population growth in Luton was 10.9 per cent which indicates that household overcrowding in Luton is increasing. Neighbouring authorities Bedford and Central Bedfordshire had population growth of 17.7 per cent and 15.7 per cent with household growth of 17.4 per cent and 15.7 per cent respectively.

3.16 According to the 2021 Census, the largest ethnic group in Luton is White: English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish or British although this has reduced by around 10% since 2011. In 2021, 37.0% of Luton residents identified their ethnic group within the "Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh" category, up from 30.0% in 2011. The 7.0 percentage-point change was the largest increase among high-level ethnic groups in this area. **Table 3.2** below shows the breakdown of Luton’s population by ethnic group [\[See reference 20\]](#).

Table 3.2: Luton Population by ethnic group (2021)

Ethnic group	% of population
Asian, Asian British or Asian Welsh	37
Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African	10.1
Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups	4.3
White	45.2
Other ethnic groups	3.5

3.17 In Luton, the percentage of households including a couple with dependent children rose from 21.9% in 2011 to 23.0% in 2021. During the same period, the regional percentage fell from 21.0% to 20.2%. The percentage of households including a couple without children in Luton fell from 13.4% to 11.7%, while the percentage of households including a couple with only non-dependent children increased from 6.1% to 6.6%.

3.18 The population in Luton Borough is spread across 20 wards. Ward changes in 2023 resulted in the creation of a new ward, increasing the total number of wards from 19 to 20. In 2024, Challney was estimated as the ward with the highest population, being in the 17,000s [See reference 21]. **Table 3.3** below presents the population change between 2011 and 2021 by ward in Luton Borough, prior to the creation of a new ward in 2023. The table shows that the majority of the wards have experienced a population increase. Stopsley was the only ward to experience a population decrease, but this was minimal. South was the ward which experienced the highest population increase with an additional 3,676 people moving into the ward between 2011 and 2021 [See reference 22].

Table 3.3: Estimated populations by ward in Luton Borough for 2011 and 2021

Ward	Population in 2011	Population in 2021	Population Change
Barnfield	7,736	8,196	0.58%
Biscot	16,118	16,624	0.31%
Bramingham	7,207	7,268	0.08%
Challney	13,470	15,460	1.4%
Crawley	7,070	8,437	1.8%
Dallow	16,393	17,990	0.94%
Farley	11,996	13,610	1.3%
High Town	9,046	11,018	2%
Icknield	7,629	8,097	0.60%
Leagrave	11,998	13,892	1.5%
Lewsey	12,519	13,707	0.91%
Limbury	7,904	8,540	0.78%
Northwell	8,153	8,639	0.58%

Ward	Population in 2011	Population in 2021	Population Change
Round Green	11,623	12,698	0.89%
Saints	14,382	16,501	1.4%
South	13,987	17,663	2.4%
Stopsley	7,021	7,006	-0.020%
Sundon Park	7,949	8,450	0.61%
Wigmore	11,000	11,465	0.42%

Housing

3.19 In 2024, it was estimated by the Office for National Statistics that full-time employees could typically expect to spend around 7.7 times their workplace-based annual earnings (£37,600) on purchasing a home in England. This is a decrease compared with 2023, when it was 8.3 times their workplace-based annual earnings. Average house prices in England and Wales decreased by 2.6% in 2024, while average earnings increased by 5.6%. However, since 1997 earnings have doubled while house prices have more than quadrupled [\[See reference 23\]](#).

3.20 The Housing affordability ratio is defined as housing affordability estimates calculated by dividing house prices by annual earnings to create a ratio. It can be used to compare affordability over time and between areas. A larger number reflects a less affordable area [\[See reference 24\]](#).

3.21 At the local level, housing affordability improved in 289 out of 318 (91%) local authorities in 2024. Average house prices increased in 20% of local authority districts in England and Wales, while average earnings increased in 87% of local authorities in 2024. In Luton, the housing affordability ratio was 7.9 in 2024, and like other local authorities, has steadily increased in recent years with the exception of the year 2023-2024 when it decreased from 9.1 to 7.9.

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This figure has increased by 39% since 2011 from 5.7 to 7.9 in 2024 [See reference 25].

3.22 The average house price for a property in Luton Borough as of 2024 was £280,721 which is lower than both the regional average (£338,000) and the England average (£293,000) [See reference 26].

3.23 The percentage of households in the social rented sector increased in Luton but fell across England. In Luton, the percentage of households in the social rented sector rose from 15.8% in 2011 to 16.4% in 2021, while across England it fell from 17.7% to 17.1%. During the same period, the regional percentage fell from 15.7% to 15.5%. Private renting in Luton increased from 22.6% to 29.0%, while the rate of home ownership decreased from 60.2% to 53.9% [See reference 27].

3.24 The 2019 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment for Luton provides evidence on the potential supply of both housing across Luton Borough. It identifies an estimated capacity of 16,657 dwellings [See reference 28]. A new SHLAA will be produced as part of the evidence base for the new Local Plan.

3.25 During the period 2018/19-2021/22, 2,284 dwellings (net) were delivered against a cumulative annual target of 1,700 (425 units per year) – an over delivery of 584 units. 544 homes (net) were completed during the same period on strategic housing sites, and 238 dwellings on allocated housing sites. Between 2011/12 and 2021/22, across the town as a whole, 6,002 homes (net) were completed, an over delivery of 1,327 dwellings against the cumulative annual target [See reference 29]. Housing completions compared with the Luton Local Plan housing requirement is shown in **Table 3.4** below. **Table 3.5** contains Affordable housing completions on eligible sites 2018/19-2021/22.

3.26 When looking at **Table 3.4** and **Table 3.5** it is important to note that new housing provision does not reflect the identified housing need stated in the Local Plan [See reference 30]:

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- 42.3% were one bed properties – with the identified need at 1% of delivery.
- 31.4% were two or three bedroom flats – with the identified need at -1% of delivery.
- 11.5% were 3 bedroom houses – with the identified need being 70% of delivery.
- 9.2% were houses with 4 or more bedrooms, against an identified need of 17%.
- 5.6% were two bedroom houses, against an identified need of 13%.

Table 3.4: Housing completions compared with the Luton Local Plan housing requirement

Year	Cumulative annualised plan target	Net gain in homes
2011-12	425	490
2012-13	850	351
2013-14	1,275	147
2014-15	1,700	415
2015-16	2,125	624
2016-17	2,550	798
2017-18	2,975	873
2018-19	3,400	627
2019-20	3,825	791
2020-21	4,250	474
2021-22	4,675	412

Table 3.5: Affordable housing completions on eligible sites 2018/19-2021/22

Unit provision on eligible sites	Total units provided	Total affordable units provided	% of total units provided
Total units provided on eligible sites	825	494	59.8%
Of which Units provided through 100% AH developments	471	471	57.1%
Of which Units provided in other developments	92	23	2.8%
Of which, units provided in unviable developments	0	Units that could have been provided: 43	% of total that could have been provided: 5.2%

Education

3.27 Luton Borough Council published its ‘Planning School Places for Luton’ report in October 2025 [See reference 31] to outline the Council’s strategy to ensure there are sufficient school places for the town’s children over the next five years. It sets out the pupil projections for the town and considers demand at local place planning areas. The report found that pupil forecasts indicate there will be a significant shortfall in capacity in the next five years, both in the mainstream and special school sector. The council is dependent on receiving adequate capital funding from the Department for Education to develop additional school places above the current built capacity. The report finds that the main risks to sufficiency of school places continues to be inward migration from abroad, high birth rate and pupil yield from new housing.

Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

3.28 During the 2021 Census, 0.7% of the people of Luton Borough described themselves as White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller [\[See reference 32\]](#).

3.29 Policy LLP20 of the adopted Local plan show existing Gypsy and Traveller sites to be at safeguarded sites at 14 and 72 Wigmore Lane. Gypsy and Traveller and travelling showpeople pitches and plots will be permitted or allocated in accordance with current government policy to meet the needs identified in the Gypsies and Travellers Accommodation Assessments updated as necessary.

3.30 A Gypsy and Travellers Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was completed in 2015 to establish the need for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation in the Borough [\[See reference 33\]](#). The study identified a potential need for 19 Gypsy and Traveller permanent pitches over the plan period but, allowing for existing supply, needs were already met over the first five years, whereas there was a need for an additional 14 pitches over the remaining 15 years of the plan. Need for a transit site of 10 pitches was also identified. The study has not identified a need for additional Travelling Showperson provision. Following a detailed assessment of the travelling activities of residents living on the public site at St Thomas's Road and the Stopsley Mobile Home Park, it was found that none of the residents met the new definition of a Traveller as set out in the revised PPTS. Therefore, the need for additional accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers in Luton as required by PPTS for the period to 2031 was for no additional pitches [\[See reference 34\]](#). A new GTAA will be carried out for the new Local Plan taking into account the Government's reversion to the definition of Gypsies and Travellers used in the Planning Policy for Travellers Sites to that adopted in 2012.

Health

3.31 Health is a cross-cutting topic and as such many topic areas explored in this Scoping report influence health either directly or indirectly. In the 2021 Census, 43.1% of the population of Luton Borough identified themselves as being in very good health and 6.2% in bad health or very bad health. Approximately 16.6% of people in Luton Borough are disabled under the Equality Act where their day-to-day activities are limited a lot [\[See reference 35\]](#).

3.32 Health statistics for Luton Borough are shown in **Table 3.6** below [\[See reference 36\]](#):

Table 3.6: Health in Luton

Domain: Infants and children's health

Indicator	Luton	England
Under 18 conception rate per 1,000 females (2021)	16.3%	17.8%
Infant Mortality Rate (2019-21)	5.45%	3.93%
Year 6: Prevalence of obesity (2021-22)	25.9%	20.2%

Domain: Adults' health and lifestyle

Indicator	Luton	England
Adults smoking (2021)	16%	14.4%
Physically active adults (2021-22)	58.7%	66.3%
Obese adults (2021-22)	60.6%	62%

Domain: Diseases and poor health

Indicator	Luton	England
Under 75 mortality rate from all causes (2021)	389.5	330.5
Under 75 mortality rate from all cardiovascular diseases (2021)	91.9	71.7
Under 75 mortality rate from cancer (2021)	149.4	132.3
Admission episodes for alcohol-related conditions (2021-22)	772.5	663.7

Life Expectancy

3.33 The average life expectancy at birth in 2019 for Luton residents was 78.1 years for males and 82.5 years for females. This is lower than the regional average of 80.3 years for males and 83.7 years for females and the England average of 79.6 years for males and 83.2 years for females. Life expectancy is 9.7 years lower for men and 4.1 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Luton than in the least deprived areas [\[See reference 37\]](#).

Obesity and Physical Activity Levels

3.34 Being overweight or obese carries numerous health risks, including increased likelihood of type 2 diabetes, cancer, heart and liver disease, stroke and related mental health conditions. It is estimated this health issue places a cost of at least £5.1 billion on the NHS and tens of billions on the wider UK society every year.

3.35 In Luton, 25.9% of year 6 children are obese compared to the national average of 20.2%. However, 60.6% of adults are obese which is below the national average of 62% [\[See reference 38\]](#).

3.36 In 2023/24, Sport England conducted surveys that focussed on understanding Luton’s engagement in sport. The survey required respondents to identify if they were ‘active’ (at least 150 minutes of physical activity per week), ‘fairly active’ (an average of between 30 – 149 minutes of physical activity per week) or ‘inactive’ (30 minutes or less of physical activity per week) [See reference 39]. The results are shown in **Table 3.7** below.

Table 3.7: Sport England Physical Activity Levels Survey (2023/24)

Area	Active	Fairly Active	Inactive
Bedfordshire & Luton	59.0%	13.0%	28.0%
East of England	63.9%	12.4%	23.7%
England	63.7%	11.2%	25.1%

3.37 In 2023/24, 63.1% of adults in Luton Borough were physically active. This is below the national average of 63.7%. A total of 25.8% of adults stated that they were physically inactive in Luton which is higher than the national average of 25.1% [See reference 40].

Perception of Well-being

3.38 Residents of Luton reported having slightly lower levels of life satisfaction (7.30 out of 10.00) than the average for UK (7.45) in the 2022/23 period. Average figures recorded relating to ‘feeling the things done in life are worthwhile’ were lower than the UK (7.95 and 8.16, respectively) whilst ‘happiness’ in Luton Borough was marginally higher than the UK (7.64 and 7.39, respectively). Levels of high anxiety recorded at 2.64 for Luton Borough in this period. This was a decrease of 0.11 from the previous period (2020/2021) [See reference 41].

Open Space

3.39 Parks and open spaces are important to the community they serve. They benefit local communities and provide meeting and social spaces, health and wellbeing, the local economy, community and safety, climate cooling and increasing the appearance and profitability of the area. Open spaces provide opportunities for outdoor exercise and offer the opportunity to help increase levels of health and reduce obesity. They also help to maintain good mental health and reduce stress by encouraging relaxations through interaction with the natural environment.

3.40 The current open space provision in Luton shows a total of 56 sites are designated as open space [See reference 42]. There are six district parks, and 28 neighbourhood parks. However, nearly half of Luton's neighbourhoods have poor access to Green Space. A report by Friends of the Earth found the following [See reference 43]:

- 19% of neighbourhoods in Luton are in the bottom category, with very small gardens, no green space within a five-minute walk, and limited access to spaces further afield.
- 29% of neighbourhoods have limited access due to homes having very small gardens, while public spaces are less accessible either because of the limited number of them or because they are more than five minutes' walk for most residents.
- 29% of neighbourhoods have moderate access to green spaces, with small gardens and either some public green space within five minutes' walk, or good access further afield.
- 24% of neighbourhoods have good provision, with either large gardens and access to small public spaces within five minutes' walk, or smaller gardens but large public spaces within the same distance.
- 0% of neighbourhoods have the best access, with large gardens and significant public spaces less than five minutes' walk away.

3.41 Luton contains two parks that Historic England has included on its 'Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England'. They are Wardown Park to the north of the central area, and Putteridge Bury on the north east edge of the town, which lies mostly within Hertfordshire. Such parks are considered by Historic England to make a significant contribution to the richness of the local scene in terms of green space and nature conservation.

3.42 Luton Borough Council was successful in its bid to The Big Lottery Fund and was awarded £500,000 to support a variety of Play projects. The Big Lottery Portfolio consists of the following projects [\[See reference 44\]](#):

- **Ashcroft Recreational Park:** This project aims to improve play facilities in Ashcroft Park located in the East of Luton, an area of deficiency as identified in the Luton Play Strategy.
- **B1 Café:** The b.1 cafe project is a new project which provides after school play facilities for hard to reach young people between the ages of 11 and 16.
- **Free to play:** The Free to Play project provides an inclusive play project for children and young people with disabilities, their siblings and young carers.
- **Mayne Avenue Open Space:** The project will part fund provision of children and young people's play facilities in Mayne Avenue Open Space, an area deficient in quality play provision.

Deprivation

3.43 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) uses Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOA) to measure deprivation at local authority and county level. The seven distinct domains of deprivation (Income; Employment; Health Deprivation and Disability: Education and Skills Training; Crime: Barriers to Housing and Services: and Living Environment) which when weighted and combined from the IMD 2025 have been mapped for the borough (see **Figure 3.3**).

3.44 The IMD is one way to monitor and assess the health and wellbeing of communities. New datasets, methodologies and geographies have been used to produce the 2025 Indices of Deprivation, meaning that the latest outputs are less directly comparable to previous indices.

3.45 The IMD data for Luton shows that Luton's deprivation ranking is currently 33 out of 296 authorities. Luton's highest deprivation rankings are in Income (8th), Education, Skills and Training (16th), Barriers to Housing and Services (16th), Income Deprivation Affecting Children (8th) and Income Deprivation Affecting Older People (39th) [\[See reference 45\]](#).

Crime and Safety

3.46 High levels of crime, or perceptions of being unsafe, can have an extremely negative impact on peoples' physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

3.47 Between December 2024 to November 2025 there were 22,696 total crime offences in Luton with an overall crime rate of 94.9 per 1,000 population. This is higher than the average crime rate across the East of England (78.8) and higher than the average across all of England (91.0). The highest rate of crime over this period was violent crime and sexual offences accounting for a rate of 32.6, followed by anti-social behaviour (13.3).

3.48 The overall crime rate in Luton has decreased from 121.2 per 1,000 people between Sep-2018 to Aug-2019 to 94.9 per 1,000 people between Dec-2024 to Nov-2025 [\[See reference 46\]](#).

Air, Water and Soils

Air Quality

3.49 Air pollution is associated with a number of adverse health impacts. It is recognised as a contributing factor in the onset of heart disease and cancer. Additionally, air pollution particularly affects the most vulnerable in society: children, the elderly, and those with existing heart and lung conditions. There is also often a strong correlation with equalities issues because areas with poor air quality are also often less affluent areas. Air pollution is the largest environmental risk to public health in the UK. Poor air quality is associated with approximately 28,000 and 36,000 deaths a year. It is estimated that nationally the total cost for the NHS and social care system will be £1.6 billion between 2017 and 2025 for air pollutants (fine particulate matter and nitrogen dioxide) **[See reference 47]**.

3.50 The Luton 2023 Air Quality Annual Status Report **[See reference 48]** found road traffic is the main source of pollution in the borough with both the town and the motorway providing significant traffic volumes. Other sources include London Luton Airport and local industry, which is distributed in pockets around the borough. At present the main pollutant of concern is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). There is a list of measures to improve air quality in Luton:

- The Luton DART which connects London Luton Airport with national rail services in under four minutes, this new airport transfer by fully automated and electrically powered shuttle aims to increase rail modal share by making travelling to the airport by public transport more convenient.
- The launch of LBC's "Engines off" anti-idling campaign following a decision by Councillors in March 2022 to educate, engage and as a last resort fine drivers in an effort to reduce engine idling.
- The launch of Cycling UK's "Making cycling e-asier – National e-cycle scheme" pilot in Luton & Dunstable. The scheme offers free skills and

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confidence sessions and e-cycle loans to encourage people to consider e-cycles as an active travel option for everyday journeys.

- Council's new Electric vehicle chargepoint strategy 2022 to 2025. This strategy provides a policy framework from which EV chargepoint solutions will be brought forward over a three year period

3.51 There is an obligation on all local authorities under Part IV of the 1995 Environment Act to review regularly and assess air quality in their areas and to determine whether or not national air quality objectives are likely to be achieved. Where exceedances are considered likely, the local authority must declare an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and prepare an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) setting out the measures it intends to put in place in pursuit of required air quality improvements.

3.52 There are currently three Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) within Luton Borough:

- **Luton AQMA1**- 24 dwellings in the vicinity of the M1 motorway, declared on 3rd November 2011 as a result of Nitrogen dioxide NO₂.
- **Luton AQMA2**- An area encompassing 431 premises in the vicinity of the M1 motorway either side of Junction 11, declared on 31st March 2005 as a result of Nitrogen dioxide NO₂.
- **Luton AQMA3**- From Dunstable Road by Kenilworth Road through to Stuart Street and Chapel Viaduct by Latimer Road, including Castle Street to Holly Street and Telford Way, declared on 1st April 2016 as a result of Nitrogen dioxide NO₂.

3.53 The distribution of annual mean NO₂ concentrations were marginally up compared to 2021. The 2022 results mark a continuation of the reduced pollutant levels observed in Luton since the COVID-19 induced lows of 2020. As a result of no exceedance of the annual mean NO₂ objective being recorded within AQMA 1 & 2 for the last five years, pending the completion of a period (6 - 12 months) of enhanced passive monitoring to include previously unmonitored locations, the council propose to revoke both AQMAs. In accordance with the recommendations of the Luton Town Centre Air Quality Management Area

Review, the council propose to extend the area along Castle Street Southward to the Stockwood Crescent / Castle Street / Cowper Street / London Road junction to ensure that all relevant hotspots are captured within the amended AQMA [\[See reference 49\]](#).

Water

3.54 Luton Borough is located within the Thames River Basin District. The management and operational catchment within the Basin is the Lee Upper. There are two water bodies in this operational catchment: Lee (from Luton Hoo Lakes to Hertford and Lee from Luton to Luton Hoo Lakes). This can be seen in **Figure 3.6** which shows the watercourses in Luton Borough.

3.55 The River Lea runs through Luton in the suburb of Leagrave, at this location the source of the river is located. The river also passes through Luton Hoo into Hertfordshire and Essex before flowing into London where the river meets the Thames [\[See reference 50\]](#).

3.56 Source Protection Zones (SPZs) are defined around large and public potable groundwater abstraction sites, and they provide additional protection to safeguard drinking water quality by constraining the proximity of an activity that can impact the quality of drinking water. There are three Inner Protection Zones in Luton, two in the central part of the Borough and one in the south west of the Borough [\[See reference 51\]](#).

3.57 Water quality has improved in Luton since 1990 and the majority of watercourses in the Borough meet at least the moderate status. Key threats to water quality in the Thames basins include [\[See reference 52\]](#):

- the climate emergency;
- the biodiversity crisis;
- physical modification;
- pollution from agriculture and rural areas;

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- pollution from water industry waste water;
- invasive non-native species;
- pollution from towns, cities and transport;
- changes to water levels and flows;
- chemicals in the water environment;
- pollution from abandoned mines; and
- plastics pollution.

3.58 The River Lea has been categorised as having Poor Ecological Potential and Fails to Achieve Good Chemical Status under the Water Framework Directive (WFD) [See reference 53]. The Luton Lea Catchment Management Plan has themes and objectives to improve the River Lea to benefit the local communities, environment, and economy. The key outcome from the improvements to the River Lea’s restoration should be the environmental benefits, with educational and health benefits as a secondary outcome. Themes and objectives include community engagement and participation, promoting appropriate and sympathetic land management, improving water quality and water quantity [See reference 54].

3.59 Water authorities – Anglian Water and Affinity Water - are responsible for the public water supply in Luton. These water authorities carry out tests to ensure the public water supply meets the required standards and provide reports on it [See reference 55] [See reference 56].

3.60 Water supply for the majority of the Luton area is provided by Affinity Water. A small area in the north of Luton’s boundary falls within Anglian Water’s Ruthamford South Resource Zone. Wastewater treatment is provided by Thames Water and Anglian Water.

3.61 Affinity Water’s Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP) 2024 [See reference 57] sets out the key challenges the area faces and the strategy for ensuring a safe, resilient water supply. The WRMP identifies population and

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housing growth, water leakage, 10% globally rare chalk stream which needs protecting as some of the key challenges for the region's future water supply.

The WRMP aims to:

- deliver a secure and wholesome supply of water to customers and other sectors to 2100;
- deliver environmental improvement and social benefit;
- increase the resilience of the regions water systems; and
- deliver at a cost that is acceptable to customers.

3.62 Thames Water published its Water Resources Management Plan 2024 [See reference 58]. The Water Resources Management Plan identifies the main challenges as a growing population, a changing climate and an increasing drought risk. The plan aims to tackle leaks and reduce demand for water in the area while planning and developing new water sources.

3.63 Anglian water published its WRMP24 in April 2025 [See reference 59]. The plan identifies main challenges of license capping, reducing the amount of water taken from sensitive environments, enhanced resilience to drought and adapting to climate change. The intended outcomes of the plan include:

- supply meets demand;
- positive impact on communities;
- resilient businesses;
- investing for tomorrow;
- flourishing environment;
- a smaller footprint; and
- fair charges, fair returns.

3.64 Ruthamford South is a Water Resource Zone within Anglian Water WRMP24 water resource zones. The area is vulnerable to baseline growth and growth associated with OxfordCambridge Arc, Climate Change and extreme

drought. In addition, there is potential for sustainability reductions in the Cam and Ely Ouse to significantly increase baseline scenario deficits in Environmental Destination scenarios. Across the region, there are three strongly interlinked programmes to combat strategic risk and issues: water metering program, leakage reduction and water efficiency measures [See reference 60].

Flood Risk

3.65 Luton is identified as Flood Risk Area (the ‘Luton and Dunstable Surface Water Flood Risk Area’) within the Flood Risk Management Plans. While most of Luton Borough falls within Flood Zone 1, there is some land within Flood Zone 3 which means there is a high probability of flooding from rivers and the sea. The main areas of flood risk are associated with the River Lea watercourse. There are also some areas of Flood Zone 2 [See reference 61]. This is shown in **Figure 3.7**.

3.66 Luton is also at high risk of surface water flooding [See reference 62] arising from the rapid expansion of Luton in the 1950s to the 1980s without proportionate upgrade to the sewerage system, topography funnelling surface water towards Luton’s centre, loss of greenspace to development that could hold back water and reliance on pumped drainage that becomes overwhelmed with heavy rain. Luton Borough Council identified 14 Critical Drainage Areas across the borough in 2020 with up to 9,360 properties at risk of surface water flooding from a 1 in 100 annual chance event. As Luton develops further with increasing population further pressure will be placed on the ground’s ability and water infrastructure to absorb and manage water, increasing the risk of surface water flooding.

3.67 Luton’s Local Flood Risk Management Strategy [See reference 63] identifies these critical drainage areas in Luton and those that are high priority and require work to reduce their flood risk and improve drainage potential.

3.68 Luton experiences regular flooding events, the main sources of which are weather events, increased pressure on sewerage network, poor maintenance, development and planning issues and fluvial flood risk. Large parts of Luton have experienced severe flooding events. In May 2007, the wettest day on record for Luton caused major travel disruptions via surface water flooding of several main roads. Combined surface water and Main River flooding in Wardown Park caused cancellation of the Luton Carnival that cost the Council more than £300,000 and the loss of approximately 100,000 additional visitors to the area for the event [\[See reference 64\]](#). In September 2023, Roads across Luton ‘badly flooded’ after heavy downpours which led to the fire service receiving 33 weather related calls in 14 hours [\[See reference 65\]](#).

3.69 There are a number of flood alleviation schemes throughout the borough. Remaining Green Belt areas should be protected from future development in order that Luton continues to be provided with some flood water storage capacity. Opportunities to identify sites where developer contributions could be used to fund future flood risk management schemes. The Council should look at opportunities to make space for water to accommodate climate change [\[See reference 66\]](#).

3.70 The Luton Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment [\[See reference 67\]](#) was produced in 2013 and is due to be updated. The assessment found the following:

- In many areas current flooding is exacerbated by unattenuated discharges of surface water to fluvial systems and/or the poor conveyance of hydraulic structures. With the prospect of climate change it is considered that these causes of flood risk will worsen unless management practices are changed and/or mitigation measures are implemented.

3.71 The Central Bedfordshire Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was produced in 2017 [\[See reference 68\]](#). The plan found the following:

- As a result of Luton Borough’s SWMP, areas in Central Bedfordshire (Houghton Regis) have been identified as Critical Drainage Areas which may affect Luton downstream. Opportunities for upstream storage in these areas could be investigated as part of cross boundary partnership working.

- In the Upper Lee Catchment, there is a new flood storage area at Houghton Regis to reduce the level of risk in Luton - this scheme incorporates a new £8.5 million flood storage area to benefit 600 residential and commercial properties. The flood storage area can hold back 140,000m³ of water, equivalent to 56 Olympic sized swimming pools, at times of heavy rain and it will then allow it to drain slowly and under control into the Houghton Brook – cutting the risk of flooding to people and property along the Houghton Brook and River Lea in Luton.

3.72 The climate in Luton is expected to change, presenting a series of risks for the Borough. Climate change is estimated to result in milder wetter winters and increased summer rainfall intensity. This combination will increase the pressure on existing sewer systems effectively reducing their design standard, leading to more frequent flooding [\[See reference 69\]](#).

Soils

3.73 The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system [\[See reference 70\]](#) provides a framework for classifying land according to the extent to which its physical or chemical characteristics impose long-term limitations to agricultural use. The principal factors influencing agricultural production are soil wetness, drought and erosion. These factors, together with interactions between them, form the basis for classifying land use into one of five grades, where 1 describes land as excellent (land of high agricultural quality and potential) and 5 describes land as very poor (land of low agricultural quality and potential). Land falling outside these scores is deemed to be ‘primarily in non-agricultural use’, or ‘predominantly in urban use’. Grade 3 can be further separated into grades 3a and 3b, although this requires further local surveys and therefore such data is only available for small areas. Grades 1, 2 and 3a are considered to be the best and most versatile agricultural land.

3.74 The majority of land in Luton is urban. However, land surrounding the built-up area is predominantly Grade 3 Agricultural Land [\[See reference 71\]](#). This is shown in **Figure 3.8**.

Contaminated Land

3.75 Under Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, Luton Borough Council is responsible for regulating contaminated land. This requires surveying Luton, determining contaminated land, ensuring a solution is found, and identifying who should bear the costs of the solution.

3.76 In accordance with Section 78R of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, the Council is also required to maintain a public register of contaminated land, which serves as a permanent record of all regulatory action undertaken to ensure remediation of any site that has been classified as contaminated. There are currently no entries on the public register.

3.77 The definition of contaminated land from Part IIA Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended), Section 78A is: ‘any land which appears to the local authority in whose area it is situated to be in such a condition, by reason of substances in, on or under the land, that:

- significant harm is being caused or there is a significant possibility of such harm being caused; or
- significant pollution of controlled waters is being, or is likely to be, caused’

3.78 Local authorities are required to take a strategic approach in inspecting their area and are required to publish this as a part of a written strategy. A guide for development on potentially contaminated land for Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire was published in 2012. The purpose of this guide is to provide developers, planning agents and other applicants with details of the information required by local authorities for sites that may be affected by land contamination or for when sensitive end uses are introduced to a site **[See reference 72]**.

3.79 Luton has lots of ‘land affected by contamination’ but very little in the way of sites formally determined as contaminated land under Part 2A of the EPA 1990. A site on Guildford Street was initially referred to the Environment Agency due to pollution of the aquifer, and Luton Borough Council has subsequently

accepted that the site no longer meets the definition of contaminated land set out in s.78A(2) of the Act.

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

Climate Change

3.80 Climate change presents a global risk, with a range of different social, economic and environmental impacts that are likely to be felt within Luton Borough across numerous receptors. A key challenge in protecting the environment will be to tackle the causes and consequences of climate change. The consequences include predictions of warmer, drier summers and wetter winters with more severe weather events all year as well resulting in higher sea levels and increased river flooding. A strong reaction is required from planning to ensure appropriate action can be taken to help species and habitats adapt and to enable the agricultural sector to continue to deliver diverse, affordable and good quality produce.

3.81 There has been a general trend towards warmer average temperatures in recent years. 2024 was provisionally the fourth warmest year on record for the UK, with a mean temperature of 9.78°C, which is 0.64°C above the 1991-2020 average. Only 2022, 2023 and 2014 recorded higher average temperatures. All the top ten warmest years for the UK in the series from 1884 have occurred since 2000, with five of them in the most recent decade **[See reference 73]**.

3.82 As a mostly urban borough, Luton is particularly likely to experience the Urban Heat Island Effect. The nearest UK climate station to Luton, Rothamsted, found its annual yearly average temperature from 1991-2020 to be 14.1°C which was slightly below the regional average (14.36 °C) over the same period of time but slightly higher than the UK average (12.79 °C) **[See reference 74]**. Luton is within the top 30 local authorities in terms of number of priority

neighbourhoods for adaptation, containing 45 priority neighbourhoods for adaptation [\[See reference 75\]](#).

3.83 Heavy rainfall and flooding events have been demonstrated to have increased potential to occur in the UK as the climate has generally become wetter. For example, for the most recent decade (2015-2024) UK winter half-years (October to March) have been on average 6% wetter than 1991–2020 and 16% wetter than 1961–1990 compared to little change for the summer half-year [\[See reference 76\]](#).

3.84 With 2025 recorded as the UK's warmest and sunniest year on record, July and August experienced several heatwaves particularly in central England. In total, the rainfall for 2025 was 1,041.2 mm – this is 90% of the 1991–2020 average and the mean temperature was 10.09°C which is 0.95°C above the 1991-2020 average [\[See reference 77\]](#). 2025 was recorded as the sunniest year on record from 1910, 1118% of the 1991-2020 average. In 2025, the UK's sunniest spring was recorded with a total of 653 sunshine hours [\[See reference 78\]](#).

3.85 The IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report (2023) highlights that greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions are predicted to continue into 2030 making it likely that global warming will exceed 1.5°C, which in turn means that GHG emissions will become harder to maintain below 2°C. As a result of this, increased global warming will occur and elicit climate hazards such as increased incidences of heatwaves, droughts, increased global monsoon precipitation, tropical storms, very wet and very dry weather. Our natural land and ocean carbon sinks will become less effective, sea levels will rise, become more acidic and experience deoxygenation amongst other climate events [\[See reference 79\]](#). The Paris Agreement is a legally binding international treaty involving 196 Parties. The overarching goal of this agreement is to limit global warming increasing to 1.5°C by the end of the century. Achieving this goal still requires a lot of action but since 2016 when the agreement was established, low – carbon solutions and new markets for climate resilience have been sparked.

3.86 The Tyndall Centre has undertaken work to calculate the ‘fair’ contribution of local authorities towards the Paris Climate Change Agreement. Based on the analysis undertaken the following recommendations were made for Luton Borough (note that at the time of writing the carbon budget setting tool is no longer available online):

- Stay within a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emissions budget of 4.4 million tonnes (MtCO₂) for the period of 2020 to 2100. At 2017 CO₂ emission levels, Luton would use this entire budget within 7 years from 2020.
- Initiate an immediate programme of CO₂ mitigation to deliver cuts in emissions averaging a minimum of -13.1% per year to deliver a Paris aligned carbon budget. These annual reductions in emissions require national and local action and could be part of a wider collaboration with other local authorities.
- Reach zero or near zero carbon no later than 2042. This report provides an indicative CO₂ reduction pathway that stays within the recommended maximum carbon budget of 4.4 MtCO₂. At 2042 5% of the budget remains. This represents very low levels of residual CO₂ emissions by this time, or the Authority may opt to forgo these residual emissions and cut emissions to zero at this point. Earlier years for reaching zero CO₂ emissions are also within the recommended budget, provided that interim budgets with lower cumulative CO₂ emissions are also adopted.

3.87 Luton Borough Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2020. To tackle the climate emergency, Luton Borough Council pledged to ensure that Luton is a carbon neutral town by 2040. In 2021, Luton Borough Council adopted a “My Climate Action Plan” which describes the actions the Council will take to reduce carbon emissions. It also includes actions relating to Luton’s governance, procurement and investment to improve the consideration given to the carbon impact of the decisions made [\[See reference 80\]](#).

3.88 Luton Borough Council released a progress report in 2024 outlining its progress on their Net Zero Roadmap and Action Plan. It covered policies and initiatives that have been delivered in the following areas and provided further detail [\[See reference 81\]](#):

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- Strategic decisions – Luton 2040, Climate Change Advisory Board, and Health Equity Town (Marmot Town).
- Local Policies – Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, EV ChargePoint Strategy (2022-25), Luton Town Centre Design Guide – SPD, Luton Tree Policy and Tree Management Strategy, Luton’s Employment and Skills Strategy, and Integrated Impact Assessment toolkit – Environmental Assessment refresh. Those in progress include: Council Housing Design Brief and Council Housing Net Zero Guide, Local Transport Plan 5 – refresh of the existing policy, Urban Planning and Development – review of the Local Plan, and Nature recovery and biodiversity.
 - Awareness raising – Climate Action Teachers Champions (CATCh) Programme, Climate Change Guide, Over 200 Luton businesses completed Staff Travel Plans by now, Carbon Literacy Training, Net Zero Innovation Programme, World café Guide, The Strategy Rooms, Community Climate Action Guide, and Save the Planet Level 1 Qualification in Environmental Awareness.
 - Pilot projects – Low carbon retrofit home, Sustainable Drainage Scheme (SuDS) in schools, Private Sector Housing Energy Campaign, HACT Carbon retrofit credits scheme, and Making Cycles Easier (MCE) project and Council staff e-bike scheme.
 - Leadership projects – The DART, Bus Improvement Service Plan, Hat Gardens, and The Stage.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

3.89 The Government regularly publishes Local Authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics. Emissions for Luton Borough between 2005-2023 have fallen from 5.9t per capita to 2.5t per capita [See reference 82]. Per capita emissions in the plan area within the scope of influence of the local authority fell almost every year between 2005 and 2023, except from 2009-2010, 2011-2012 and 2020-2021 where the per capita emissions rose. This is shown in 8. It should be noted the figures in **Table 3.8** do not account for Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) figures in Luton Borough.

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In 2023, LULUCF accounted for 1.9Kt carbon dioxide emissions in Luton Borough.

Table 3.8: Carbon dioxide emissions estimates in Luton Borough 2005-2020

Year	Total Emissions (kt)	Per Capita Emissions (t CO ₂ e)
2005	1,102.4	5.9
2006	1,104.1	5.9
2007	1,058.2	5.6
2008	1,036.1	5.4
2009	932.9	4.8
2010	993.4	5.0
2011	900.1	4.4
2012	939.3	4.6
2013	908.8	4.3
2014	814.4	3.8
2015	778.9	3.6
2016	741.4	3.4
2017	706.2	3.2
2018	696.6	3.1
2019	661.0	3.0
2020	583.7	2.6
2021	610.1	2.7
2022	583.9	2.6
2023	567.0	2.5

3.90 In Luton Borough the main contributor of emissions was from domestic and transport. However, between 2005 and 2023, the levels of emissions from domestic and transport have dropped significantly for Luton Borough, by 51% and 23% respectively. This is shown in **Table 3.9**.

Table 3.9: Changes in carbon dioxide emissions by sector for Luton Borough between 2005 and 2023

Source of emissions	2005	2023
Industry	148.0	47.3
Commercial	199.9	73.8
Public Sector	72.8	40.3
Domestic	416.9	202.7
Transport	261.4	200.4
Grand Total	1,102.4	567.0

3.91 **Figure 3.2** shows the per capita CO₂ emissions of Luton Borough compared to neighbouring authorities. It is clear there are nearby boroughs which have higher levels of emissions (Buckinghamshire, Central Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes) and lower levels of emissions (Watford, Stevenage and Three Rivers).

Overall Energy Consumption

3.92 The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy produced the following consumption figures for Luton Borough in 2023. These figures are presented as Ktoe (kilotonnes of oil equivalent):

- All fuels – A total of 249.8 Ktoe across domestic, transport and industrial and commercial use.

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- Coal – A total of 0.4 Ktoe predominantly through industrial and domestic use.
- Manufactured fuels – A total of 0.2 Ktoe through domestic and industrial and commercial use.
- Petroleum – A total of 72.8 Ktoe predominantly from road transport.
- Gas – A total of 115.8 Ktoe predominantly through domestic use.
- Electricity – A total of 53.2 Ktoe through domestic and industrial and commercial use.
- Bioenergy and wastes – A total of 7.4 Ktoe predominantly through road and transport.

3.93 Table 3.10 below highlights the energy consumption for Luton between 2005 to 2023 by type. With the exception of energy from bioenergy and wastes, the consumption of coal, manufactured fuels, petroleum, gas and electricity fell between 2005 and 2023 [\[See reference 83\]](#).

Table 3.10: Energy Consumption in Luton Borough by Type

Energy Type	Energy Consumption in Ktoe (2005)	Energy Consumption in Ktoe (2023)
Coal	0.9	0.4
Manufactured Fuels	0.3	0.2
Petroleum	94.3	72.8
Gas	163.3	115.8
Electricity	71.3	53.2
Bioenergy and Wastes	1.9	7.4
Total	332	249.8

Renewable Energy

3.94 Renewable energy is recognised as an important contributor to reducing reliance on fossil fuels and adapting to climate change. Within the East of England, there was a total of 196,747 sites that were capable of generating renewable energy across wind, solar, wave, hydro and biomass renewable sources in 2024. This represents 12% of all the sites within the UK that generate renewable energy. In 2024, the East of England generated a total of 16,022 GWh (Gigawatt hours) of renewable energy. This is a 757% increase in renewable energy generation since 2011.

3.95 In 2024, a total of 2,658 photovoltaic panels and 2 onshore wind turbines were installed in Luton. This is an increase on 2014 when 1,007 photovoltaic panels and no onshore wind turbines were installed [\[See reference 84\]](#).

3.96 Luton's Vision for a Net Zero Town by 2040 highlights the importance of renewable energy in homes through increasing the amount of renewable electricity through roof solar photovoltaics (PV). The vision highlights actions for non-residential buildings as a key part of the roadmap to becoming net zero by 2040 through improving energy efficiency and increasing on site renewable electricity generation, increasing the amount of renewable electricity through rooftop solar PV and improving efficiencies in manufacturing systems [\[See reference 85\]](#).

3.97 Luton Borough Council has outlined its current activities, actions and programmes to reduce its harmful emissions. The following information has been summarised [\[See reference 86\]](#):

- **Transport:** Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plans (LCWIP), Electric Vehicle Chargepoint strategy, Staff travel plans for local businesses, Investment in liquid to gas biofuel for council fleet, Deliver bus priority measures on key routes (guided busway Luton to Dunstable), Educational programmes including Bikeability Training and e-cycle/e-cargo hire, and £19.15 million awarded to the Council to fund its Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) Programme.

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- **Homes:** £34m investment programme into insulating council properties, including hard to treat, Solar Together programme in conjunction with Central Bedfordshire and Bedford Borough Council, Trials of ground source heat pumps in new builds, Currently 82% of council homes are EPC rating C or above and 15 communal sites have access to heat pumps as secondary heat source, Launch of the Borough's first ECO-Demo house, and Developed the Town's first Net Zero Housing Design brief for New Builds.
 - **Businesses and Public Sector Buildings:** Public Sector Decarbonisation grant - £7.7m award, Whole lighting solutions with IoT controls - joint funding from LBC and Salix, achieves 85% plus lighting energy reduction from buildings, Procurement – frontline services based at Kingsway Depot continue to source 90% of equipment locally, new heating and control system at Central Depot, biomass and gas instead of oil and 100 local businesses given Carbon Awareness training.
 - **Biodiversity and Resilience:** Luton Tree and Rewilding strategy, increased green spaces, Trialling new robotic mowers with lower emissions, Green Flag status achieved and maintained for six district and neighbourhood parks, SuDS in Schools, Resilient and adaptive communities and GRACE project, Innovative Resilience Fund.
 - **Education and Awareness Training:** Climate Change guide, Climate Change e-learning module for LBC staff, Carbon Literacy training, NZIP Energetic Lifestyles project, COP26 school packs, Launch of the nationally recognised School's CATCh Programme, and Developing the Town's first Community Climate Action toolkit.

3.98 Luton Borough Council provided an update on the above schemes within its Luton Net Zero Roadmap and Action Plan 2024 Progress Report [[See reference 87](#)].

3.99 Luton Borough Council alongside Bedford and Central Bedfordshire Councils launched the Solar Together initiative through iChoosr (now called Switch Together), which aims to make solar panels more affordable. Battery storage can also be obtained under the scheme, which stores any unused energy generated by solar panels for future consumption. Not only can the scheme enable residents obtain solar panels and battery storage at a lower

price but can help lower energy bills and support the town's ambition to become net zero by 2040 [\[See reference 88\]](#).

Material Assets

Geology and Minerals

3.100 Luton is situated in the gap carved through the chalk hills by the River Lea, and the influence of the chalk geology is significant, providing the setting for the town. Luton lies within the northern end of the Chilterns National Landscape (formally referred to as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty or AONB) [\[See reference 89\]](#).

3.101 The Minerals and Waste Local Plan: Strategic Sites and Policies found no sites in the borough are identified for mineral extraction [\[See reference 90\]](#). However, the area has a history of chalk and clay extraction.

Brownfield Land

3.102 The Council has a duty to prepare, maintain and publish a Brownfield Land Register. This Register is a list of previously developed sites that are under construction for residential development, have planning permission for residential development or may be suitable for residential development. As of 2024, there are a total of 111 sites on the Brownfield Register [\[See reference 91\]](#). However, not all of these sites are deliverable and nor have they been granted planning permission. The Council will further update the Brownfield Land Register as the new Local Plan progresses.

Waste

3.103 Waste management is a fundamental part of the services provided by Luton Borough Council. The costs of collecting, recycling and disposing of waste in 2015-16 totalled £13.6m - that's around £170 for each of Luton's households. At the heart of the Council's new strategy is a drive to promote wider social responsibility for managing waste. Everyone in Luton needs to work together - it is up to everyone to play their part and rise to the challenge of meeting the vision which is to quite simply: Waste Less, Recycle More. The Council are committed to doing all they can to increase recycling, reuse and recover value from the waste generated in the town [\[See reference 92\]](#).

3.104 There are a number of small, locally placed recycling banks across the Luton, this is to dispose of small quantities of waste, such as glass bottles, food tins and in some cases, clothing. There are two Household Waste Recycling Centres (HWRCs) – Tidy Tips in Luton: Eaton Green Road Tidy Tip and Progress Way tidy tip.

3.105 Between 2022 and 2023, a total of 83,293 tonnes of waste was collected in Luton Borough, of which 75,040 tonnes consisted of household waste. 24.9% of this household waste was sent to be recycled, composted or re-used resulting in 75.1% of waste not being recycled. This is significantly lower than the regional average recycling rate of 44.7% for East England and the national recycling rate of 41.7% for England. In relation to non-household waste, only 19% of waste was recycled, composted or re-used [\[See reference 93\]](#).

3.106 Recycling rates identify that Luton could do better to improve its recycling [\[See reference 94\]](#):

- Dry recycling rate: Luton ranks 8th out of 16 comparable councils.
- Composting rate: Luton ranks 14th out of 16 comparable councils.
- Total recycling rate: Luton ranks 12th out of 16 comparable councils.

3.107 In 2021 an Anti-Littering Action Plan was adopted with three main focus areas [\[See reference 95\]](#):

- **Prevention:** Actions include Raise awareness within key partners to the impact of litter and their social responsibility. Use visual examples of the local impact of litter to motivate change. Promote Zero tolerance of littering in a drive to change behaviour. Lobby to have littering added to school curriculum and promote social responsibility amongst the youth. Promote Keep Britain Tidy agenda locally.
- **Intervention:** Work with groups to deliver bespoke campaigns and toolkits. Intervene where necessary to improve the Local Environmental Quality Standard. Target root causes of littering.
- **Collaboration:** Undertake robust enforcement and transparent performance monitoring. Support community schemes to tackle littering and clean ups throughout the year. Deliver effective and consistent messaging on social responsibility to do the right thing with litter.

Economy

3.108 Nationally, employment rates increased between October 2024 and September 2025. However, Luton's employment rate was below the national figure. The percentage of people in Luton who are in employment was 67.1%, which is below the averages for the East of England (78.6%) and Great Britain as a whole (75.6%). There were decreases in the number of people claiming unemployment related benefits in Luton (and nationally) from 7% in October 2024 to 6.8% in September 2025. As of September 2025, 10,595 people between the ages of 16 and 65 were on universal credit in Luton Borough. This equates to 6% of people (2024 population) aged 16-65. The number of claimants is significantly above the regional and national figures at 3.2% and 3.8% respectively [\[See reference 96\]](#).

3.109 In 2023, the total output (Gross Value Added, GVA) in Luton Borough reached £6,639 million. The trend in GVA has been steadily increasing over the

years for Luton, with decreases from 2008-2009, 2010-2012 and 2019-2020 [See reference 97].

3.110 The Gross Weekly Pay in 2025 in Luton Borough for full time workers was £709 per week for full time workers which is lower than the regional average (£804.9) and the national average (£766.6). This equates to £36,868 a year in Luton Borough compared with £41,854.8 and £39,863.2 regionally and nationally [See reference 98].

3.111 In the period from October 2024 to September 2025, 70.6% of people in Luton were economically active. Across the East England region this figure was higher at 81.8% within the same period. About 4.8% (5,000) of people were unemployed in Luton, which is higher than both the regional (3.9%) and national averages (4.3%) [See reference 99]. Luton's workforce is distributed across a wide range of sectors, with only 38.1% of the working population employed as a manager, director, senior role, professional occupation or associate professional occupation compared to the East of England (53.4%) and Great Britain (53.2%) averages [See reference 100]. Between Jan 2024-Dec 2024, approximately 45.1% of the population of Luton have a Level 4 qualification and above (degree (BA, BSc), higher degree (MA, PhD, PGCE), NVQ level 4 to 5, HNC, HND, RSA Higher Diploma, BTEC Higher level, professional qualifications). This is higher than the regional figure for East of England at 43.7% and lower than the national figure for England at 47.2% [See reference 101].

3.112 Official Labour Market Statistics (2024) data presented in **Table 3.11** below show that a higher percentage of people are employed in Administrative and support service activities than the national and regional averages. In Luton, 29.4% of people work in Administrative and support service activities compared to the regional average of 11.7% and the national average of 8.6%. Similarly, 9.2% of people work in Transportation and Storage which is higher than the regional average (5.7%) and national average (5.0%), 9.2% work in education compared to the regional average (9.1%) and national average (8.6%), and 3.2% of people work in Real Estate which is higher than the regional average (2.3%) and national average (1.9). However, there is a lower number of people employed in Wholesale and Retail Trade; Repair of Motor Vehicles and

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Motorcycles, which has the highest percentage of employees for the region and nation [\[See reference 102\]](#).

Table 3.11: Employee jobs in Luton Borough in relation to regional and national averages (2024)

Employee Jobs by Industry	Luton Borough	East England	Great Britain
Mining and Quarrying	0.0%	0.1%	0.2%
Manufacturing	5.5%	7.2%	7.3%
Electricity, gas, steam and air conditioning supply	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%
Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities	0.2%	0.7%	0.7%
Construction	3.7%	6.5%	5.0%
Wholesale and retail trade; repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles	10.1%	14.9%	13.7%
Transportation and storage	9.2%	5.7%	5.0%
Accommodation and food service activities	4.6%	7.0%	7.8%
Information and communication	1.6%	3.2%	4.5%
Financial and insurance activities	0.4%	1.8%	3.4%
Real estate activities	3.2%	2.3%	1.9%
Professional, scientific and technical activities	5.5%	8.7%	9.3%
Administrative and support service activities	29.4%	11.7%	8.6%

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Employee Jobs by Industry	Luton Borough	East England	Great Britain
Public administration and defence; compulsory social security	3.2%	3.8%	4.9%
Education	9.2%	9.1%	8.6%
Human health and social work activities	11.9%	12.7%	14.2%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	1.4%	2.4%	2.5%
Other service activities	1.1%	1.9%	1.9%

3.113 In 2025 there were 7,955 businesses in Luton. The majority of these (91.7% or 7,295) were micro businesses which have fewer than 10 staff. There were 530 (6.7%) small businesses, 95 (1.2%) medium and 35 (0.4%) large businesses in Luton Borough. Combined small and medium sized (not micro) make up 625 (7.9%) businesses. In the year leading up to 2025, the number of businesses in Luton increased by 55 [\[See reference 103\]](#).

3.114 Luton Airport plays an important role in the Luton economy. Further growth at the airport will also bring more visitors to the areas around the airport, supporting the tourism economy and generating increased GDP and more jobs (13% of jobs in Luton currently are in the tourism sector). By 2043, inbound tourist activity via the airport could be supporting around £150 million in GDP each year across the Three Counties area and around 2,030 jobs in the tourism sector [\[See reference 104\]](#). Luton town centre encompasses the Town Centre Shopping Area, The Mall. The shopping centre spans one million square foot, has more than 122 retailers and food outlets. The Mall attracts 18 million visitors per year, with gross annual sales of around £200 million [\[See reference 105\]](#).

3.115 Luton is well served by a range of convenience food shops and services including banks, estate agents, hairdressers, cafes, restaurants, pubs and takeaways. The centre's mix of units is broadly similar to the national average. Luton Borough's vacancy rate of 18% in 2014 was higher than the national

average of 12%, however this figure is likely to have changed since the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes in shopping habits [\[See reference 106\]](#).

Transport

3.116 There are two 'Gateways' from Luton onto Highways England's Strategic Road Network (SRN). Firstly, the A1081/A505 connects the south and east of Luton including the town centre and airport to M1 Junction 10a and Dunstable Road and Hatters Way link the town centre to M1 Junction 11. Secondly, The A6 north of Luton and the A505 in east Luton and towards Hitchin also form part of the Major Road Network (MRN).

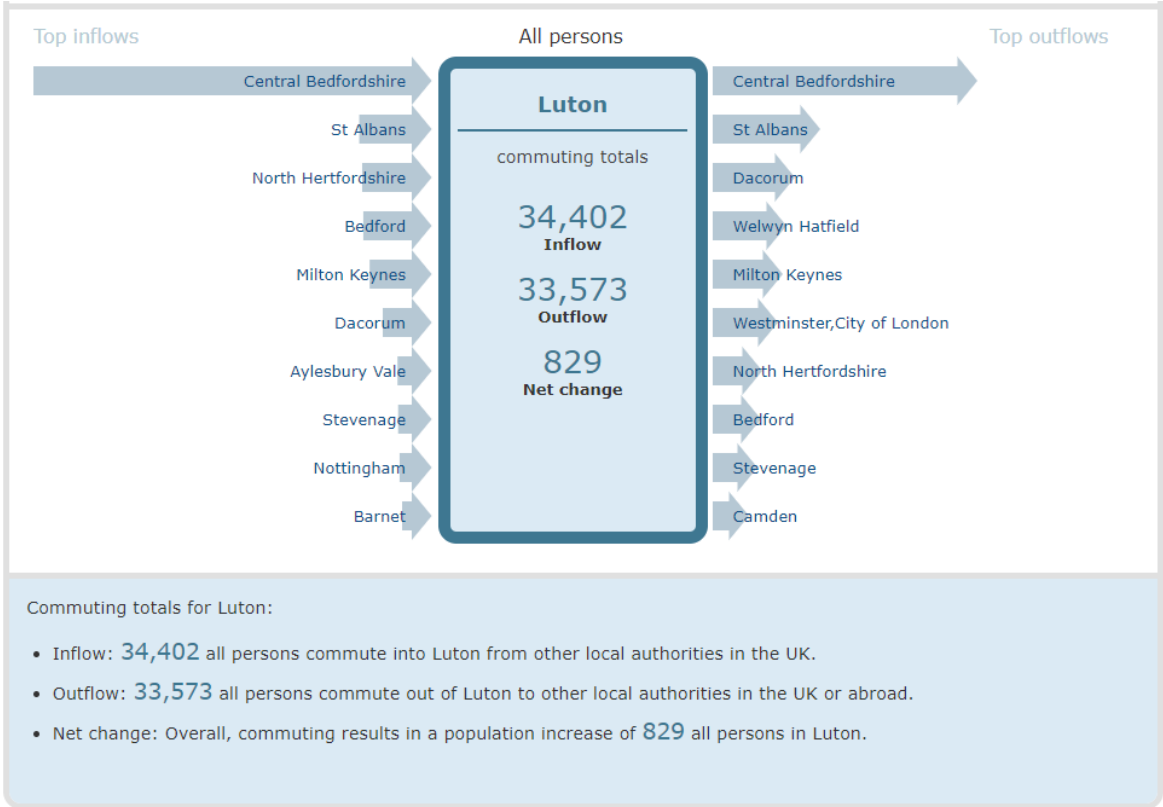
3.117 There are three rail stations in Luton: Luton, Leagrave and Luton Airport Parkway. Luton Station has service operated by East Midlands Railway and Thameslink, providing services throughout the East of England, down to London and further south onto London and Brighton. At Leagrave Station there are four trains per hour to both Bedford and Brighton, with the latter travelling via Luton Airport, St Albans, London (just 35 minutes away), Gatwick Airport and Burgess Hill. Additional services leave the station for Kent and Three Bridges. Luton Airport Parkway railway station is well connected from London and the south. Travel from Central London to London Luton Airport in just 35 minutes with the Luton Airport Express.

3.118 London Luton Airport (LTN) is the UK's fifth busiest airport. It's a major base for low-cost airlines and is located 56 km (35 miles) north-west of central London. Airlines from the airport fly to and from more than 30 countries across Europe, the Middle East and North Africa. Car ownership in Luton is relatively low (75%) compared to other local authorities in England and Wales. This is below neighbouring authorities Central Bedfordshire (86.7%) and North Hertfordshire (84.5%) [\[See reference 107\]](#).

3.119 21.5% of people aged 16 years and over in employment in Luton work mainly at or from home. However, at the time of Census 2021, UK government guidance and lockdown restrictions resulted in unprecedented changes to travel

behaviour and patterns [See reference 108]. Additionally, there was an equally high inflow of people commuting into Luton (34,402 people) as commuting out (33,573 people). The vast majority of in and outflows of Luton Borough were to Central Bedfordshire and St Albans, most people travel to work by car or van, followed by bus, mini bus or coach and train [See reference 109]. Commuting trends from the 2011 Census are demonstrated in Figure 3.1 below [See reference 110]. Luton has high levels of in and out commuting for work, particularly given its relationship with neighbouring authorities.

Figure 3.1: Flows of commuters in and out of Luton Borough (total)



3.120 Luton Borough Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Transport Plan 5 [See reference 111], which has the following Vision: ‘By 2040, Luton will have a sustainable transport network enabling inclusive growth, providing access and improving health and wellbeing for all. Connections to and

from the town will link residents, workers and employers to key economic hubs within the region, London and nationally.’

3.121 The transport links within Luton Borough are shown in **Figure 3.4** and services and facilities in Luton Borough are shown in **Figure 3.5**.

Cultural Heritage

3.122 Luton has a range of unique assets that contribute to the character and distinctiveness of the area. These assets include:

- Conservation Areas;
- Historic Parks and Gardens;
- Listed buildings; and
- Scheduled Monuments.

3.123 Some heritage assets, non-designated heritage assets, archaeological sites, historic buildings, parks, formal gardens or battlefields, are considered to be of national importance. Non-designated heritage assets include a list of local heritage assets that do not meet the strict criteria for national designation but are of local importance.

3.124 Luton’s Town-wide Strategy for 2021-2031 [\[See reference 112\]](#) finds there are 116 nationally Listed Buildings in Luton. Only St. Mary’s Church is listed as Grade I due to its rich architectural detail evidencing deep and meaningful heritage significance, only because it has been consistently maintained and refurbished. The Town Hall is listed as Grade II because of its’ interior and exterior neo-classical and Art Deco architectural features. The 144 ft. clock tower, incorporating the town’s Coat of Arms and distinctive clock bell, has undergone recent structural repairs coinciding with the launch of the 2021 strategy. Conservation Areas are declared by the Local Authority for those areas which possess ‘special interest’, the ‘character and appearance’ of which is desirable to ‘preserve and enhance’. They represent a familiar and often

Chapter 3 Baseline Information

cherished local scene thus have greater protection against undesirable changes.

3.125 Luton has five designated Conservation Areas

- George Street Conservation Area
- High Town Conservation Area
- Luton South Conservation Area
- Plaiters' Lea (Hat District) Conservation Area
- Rothesay Road Conservation Area

3.126 Four scheduled ancient monuments;

- Dray's Ditches
- Neolithic enclosure known as Waulud's Bank
- Strip lynchets on Stopsley Common
- Two bowl barrows on Galley Hill, 880 m north east of the golf course club house

3.127 Four sites nationally listed as Registered Parks and Gardens:

- Luton Hoo (on the border of Luton and within Dunstable Local Planning Authority);
- Putteridge Bury;
- Wardown Park; and
- The Improvement Garden

3.128 Luton Council has adopted a Local List of buildings that are of local architectural or historic interest. The buildings and structures that are on the Local List are non-designated heritage assets and their setting, and although not statutorily listed, have been identified by the Council as having local interest **[See reference 113]**.

3.129 The designated heritage assets within Luton Borough can be seen in **Figure 3.10**.

Heritage at Risk

3.130 Historic England has a Heritage at Risk Register [[See reference 114](#)] which includes historic buildings, Grade II* and Grade I listed buildings (Grade II listed buildings are only included for London), sites and Conservation Areas at risk of being lost through neglect, deterioration or decay. The register aims to highlight those places and buildings in greatest need of repair.

3.131 Three assets in Luton are on the Heritage at Risk Register. Historic England classifies building conditions as 'very bad', 'poor', 'fair' or 'good'. The condition of buildings or structures on the Heritage at Risk Register typically ranges from 'very bad' to 'poor', 'fair' and (occasionally) 'good' reflecting the fact that some buildings or structures capable of use are vulnerable to becoming at risk because they are empty, under-used or face redundancy without a new use to secure their future. Assessing vulnerability in the case of buildings in fair condition necessarily involves judgement and discretion. A few buildings on the Register are in good condition, having been repaired or mothballed, but a new use or owner is still to be secured. Buildings or structures are removed from the Register when they are fully repaired/consolidated, and their future secured through either occupation and use, or through the adoption of appropriate management [[See reference 115](#)].

3.132 The heritage assets on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register and their condition are set out below:

- **High Town Road:** Heritage Category – Conservation Area; Condition – Very Bad
- **Plaiters Lea, Town Centre:** Heritage Category – Conservation Area; Condition – Very bad
- **George Street/Town Centre:** Heritage Category – Conservation Area Condition – Poor

Historic Landscape Characterisation

3.133 Historic England published Historic Landscape Characterisation guidance that sets out the methodology for identification and interpretation of the varying historic character within an area beyond individual heritage assets into Historic Landscape Characterisation types [See reference 116]. The Historic Landscape Characterisation types present within Luton include [See reference 117]:

- Civic provision;
- Communications;
- Enclosed Agriculture (Typically Ancient Form);
- Enclosed Agriculture (Typically Modern Form);
- Enclosed Agriculture (Typically Pre-Modern Form);
- Industry;
- Orchards Horticulture and Aquaculture;
- Recreation;
- Settlement;
- Unimproved land; and
- Woodland and Forestry.

Landscape

3.134 National Character Area (NCA) profiles created by Natural England are used to define the specific combination of landscape, geodiversity, biodiversity, history, culture and economic activity in the area. NCAs follow natural lines in the landscape instead of administrative boundaries.

3.135 Luton falls within the Chilterns National Character Area [\[See reference 118\]](#) (see **Figure 3.11**):

- **Chilterns National Character Area:** Chilterns is one of several NCAs within a Chalk outcrop stretching from East Anglia to Dorset and the South Downs. To the north-east, the Chiltern escarpment lowers into the East Anglian Chalk. In the south-west, the escarpments of the Chilterns and Berkshire and Marlborough Downs face each other across the Goring Gap. From the north-west facing escarpment, the dip slope descends south-east into the London Basin. Here, the Chalk is overlain by younger bedrock. Thames Valley is a distinct area of the Chilterns.

3.136 There are no National Parks in Luton. However, Luton lies partly in the northern end of the Chilterns National Landscape. The Chilterns is a landscape of remarkable beauty and distinctive character with a unique interaction of geological, ecological and cultural heritage features. The Chilterns was designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in 1965, with an extension in 1990. It now extends over 833 km² of mainly privately-owned land and is referred to as a National Landscape. The Chilterns is a home and a workplace for over 80,000 people and some 1.6 million people live within 8 km of the National Landscape. In particular, the Chilterns was designated to protect its special qualities which include the steep chalk escarpment with flower-rich downland, woodlands, commons, tranquil valleys, ancient routes, villages with brick and flint houses, chalk streams and a rich historic environment of hillforts and chalk figures [\[See reference 119\]](#).

3.137 The 2014 Luton Borough Landscape Character Assessment [\[See reference 120\]](#) was prepared for the Borough to support the adopted Local Plan. Through the study, landscape opportunity areas were identified: Northern Urban Edge, Bramingham Wood, Houghton Brook Corridor, Upper Lea Corridor, Lower Lea Corridor, Stopsley Common, Stockingstone Road greenspace, Dallow Downs and Runley Wood, Wigmore, Southern end of Hart Hill, Area adjacent to Someries Farm, Stockwood Perimeter, Guided Busway Corridor, Eastern Fringe and Vauxhall Way. An updated Landscape Character Assessment will be prepared to support the new Local Plan.

3.138 The 2015 Green Infrastructure Plan for Luton [See reference 121] identified key elements of the GI network:

- The chalk valley side extending from Warden and Galley Hills southwards into the town;
- The Lea Valley;
- Dallow Downs valley side and Guided Busway corridor;
- Stockwood Park/Luton Hoo; and
- Northern urban edge.

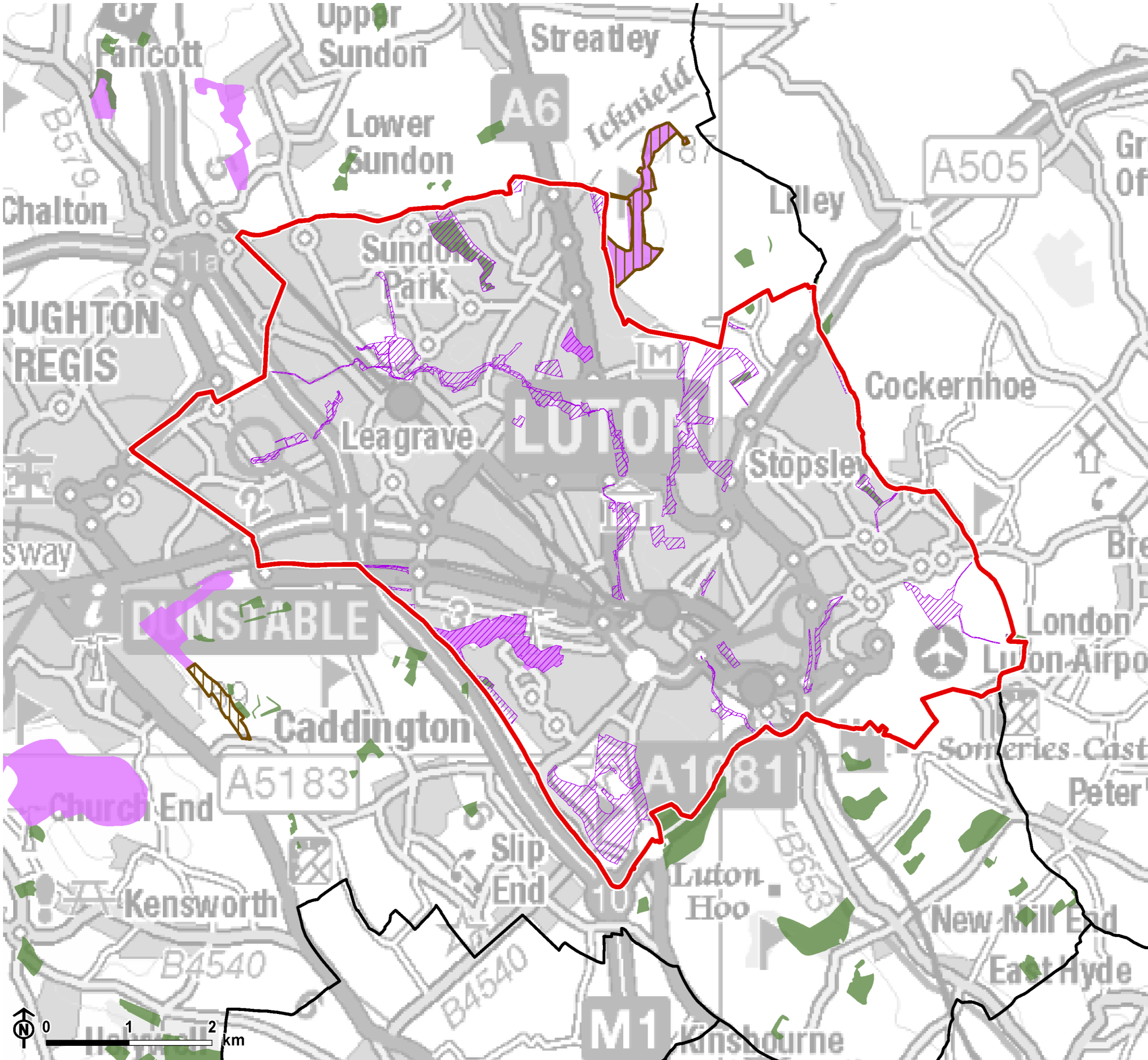
Difficulties and Data Limitations

3.139 The SEA Regulations, Schedule 2(8) require the Environmental Report to include "...a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information".

3.140 At this stage, given the content and purpose of the SEA Scoping Report, it is considered appropriate to note the following data limitations which were identified as the report was prepared:

- Some data is quite aged as it was prepared to support the current Local Plan and will be updated as part of the evidence base for the new Plan but is not yet available.
- Data was not available on existing services and facilities outside of / close to Luton.
- GIS data was not available for sport and recreation facilities.
- Priority habitats and species data is 18 years old.

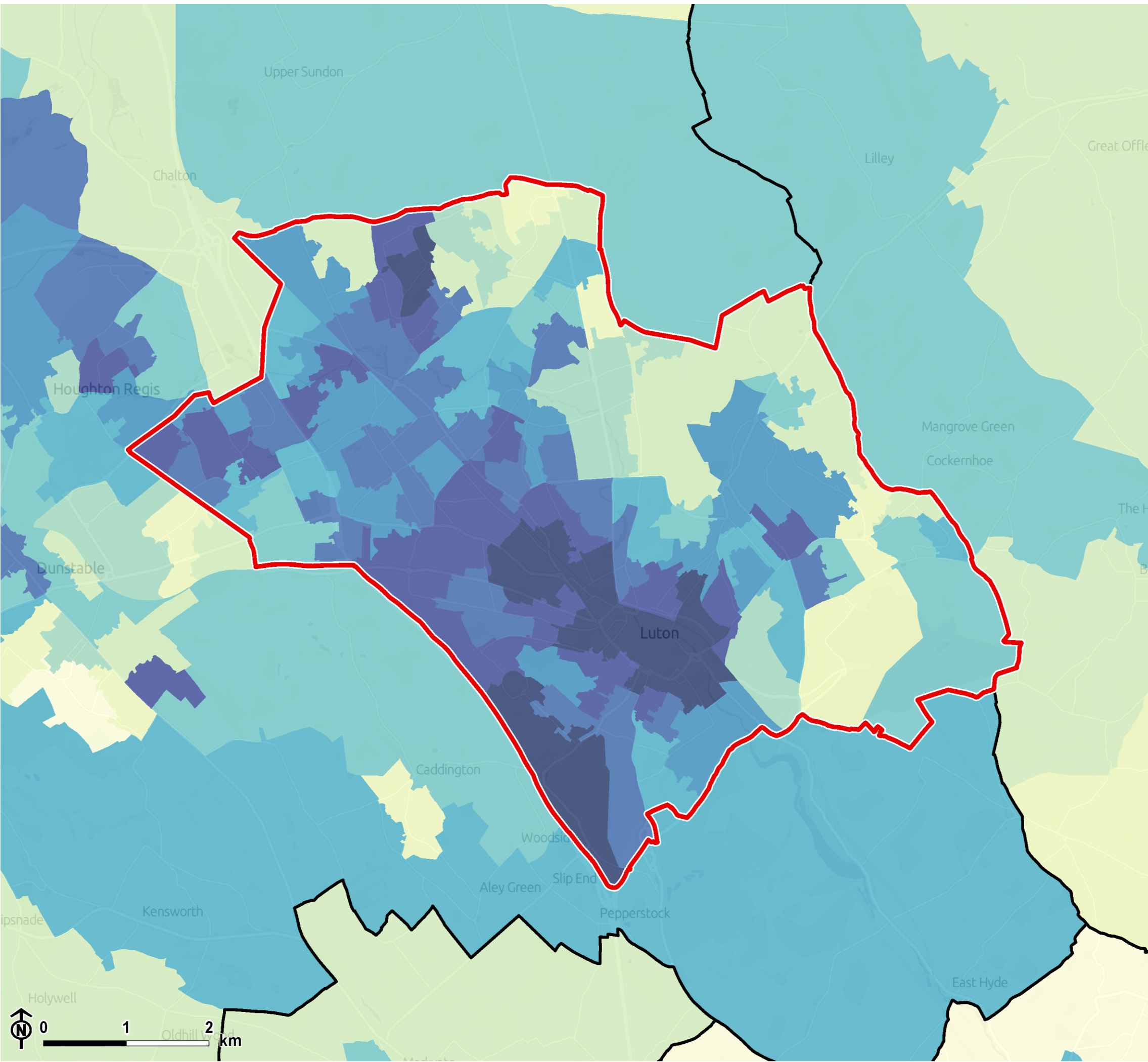
3.141 Where data limitations have been identified, if relevant updates sources become available at a later stage of the SEA process, they will be used to update the baseline information informing the appraisal work.



- Legend**
- Luton Borough boundary
 - Neighbouring local authority
 - Ancient woodland
 - Site of Special Scientific Interest
 - Local Nature Reserve
 - Local Wildlife Site



Created by LUC - Figure 3.2: Designated Biodiversity and Geodiversity Assets 22/05/2026
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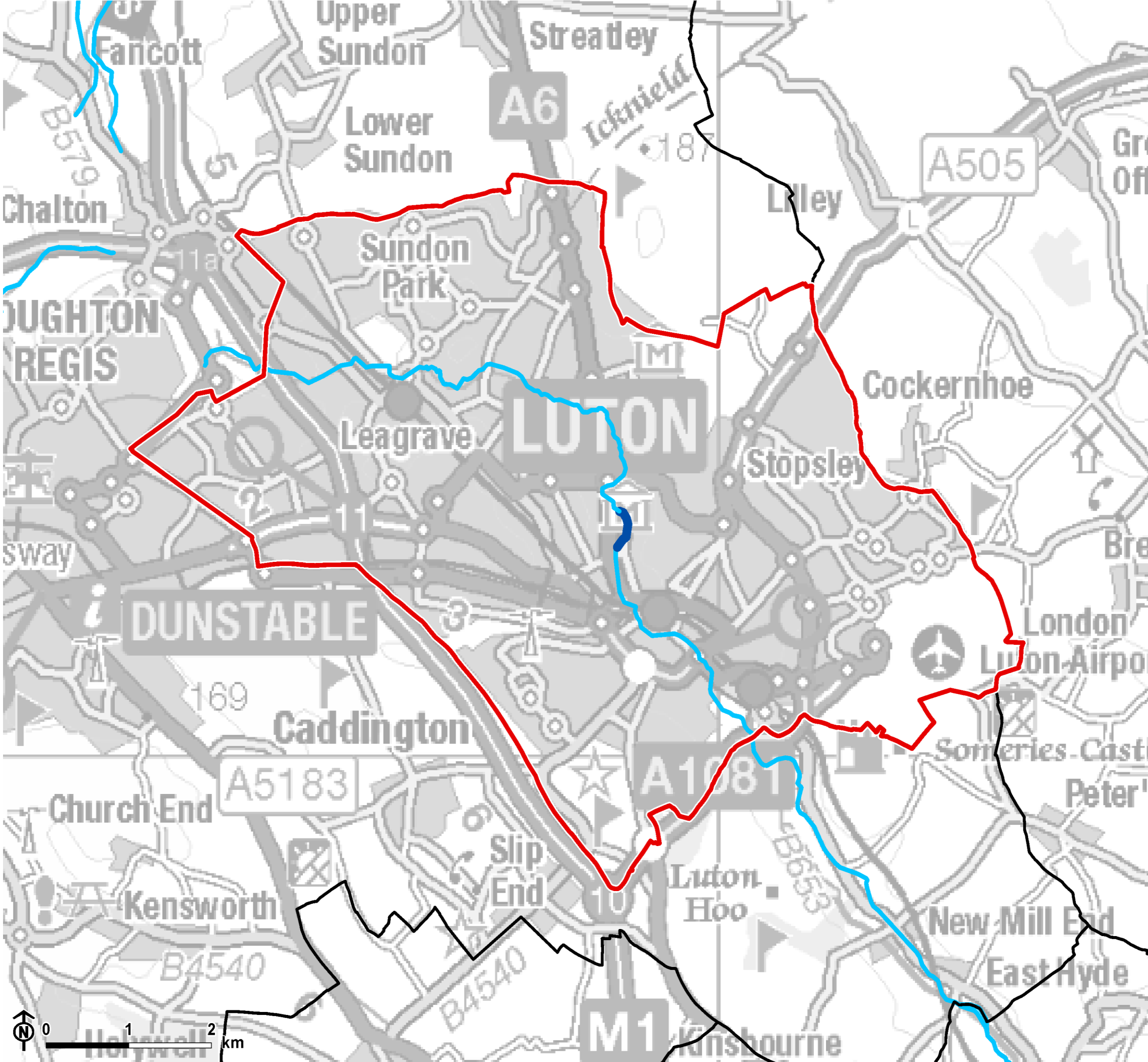
- Luton Borough boundary
- Neighbouring local authority

Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) 2025

IMD Decile

- 0 - 10% (most deprived)
- 10 - 20%
- 20 - 30%
- 30 - 40%
- 40 - 50%
- 60 - 70%
- 70 - 80%
- 80 - 90%
- 80 - 90%
- 90 - 100% (least deprived)

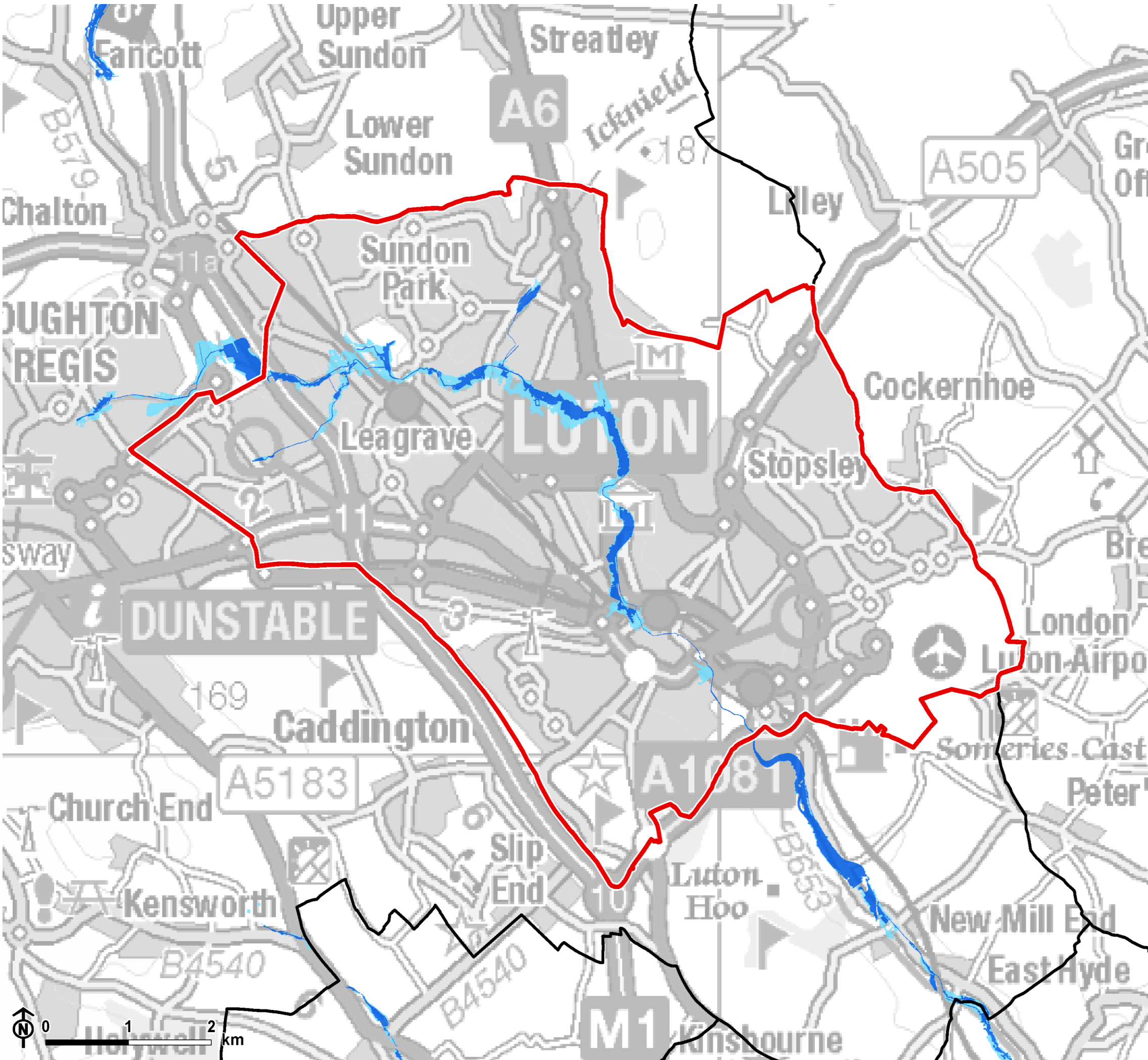
Created by LUC - Figure 3.3: Indices of Multiple Deprivation 24/02/2026
 Data produced by Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG). Boundaries used for data provided by Office of National Statistics (ONS). Contains OS data © Crown Copyright and database right 2026 Contains data from OS Zoomstack.



- Legend**
- ▬ Luton Borough boundary
 - Neighbouring local authority
 - Watercourse**
 - ▬ Inland river
 - ▬ Lake

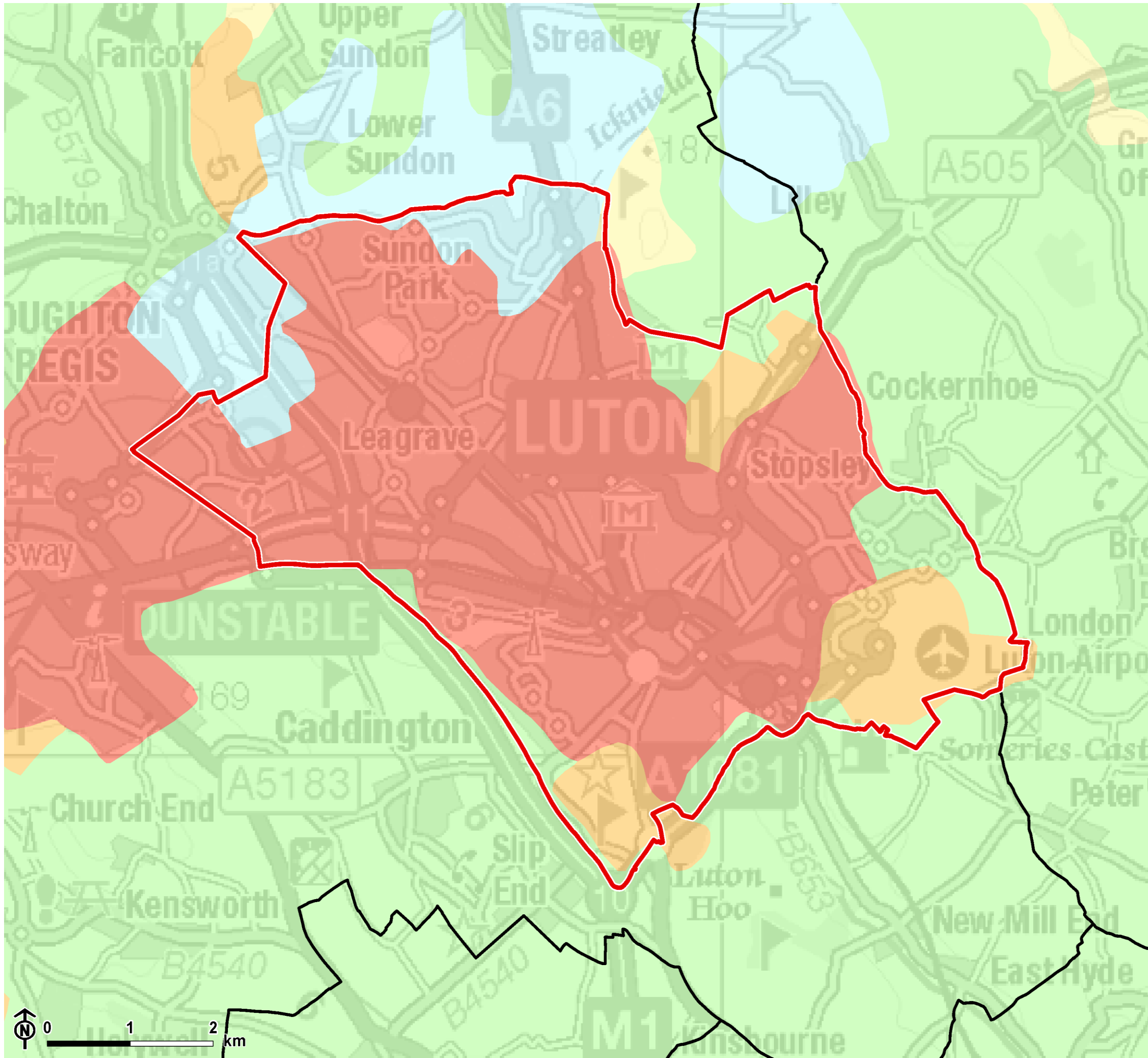


Created by LUC - Figure 3.4: Watercourses in Luton 22/05/2026
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- Legend**
- ▬ Luton Borough boundary
 - Neighbouring local authority
 - Flood zone 2
 - Flood zone 3





Legend

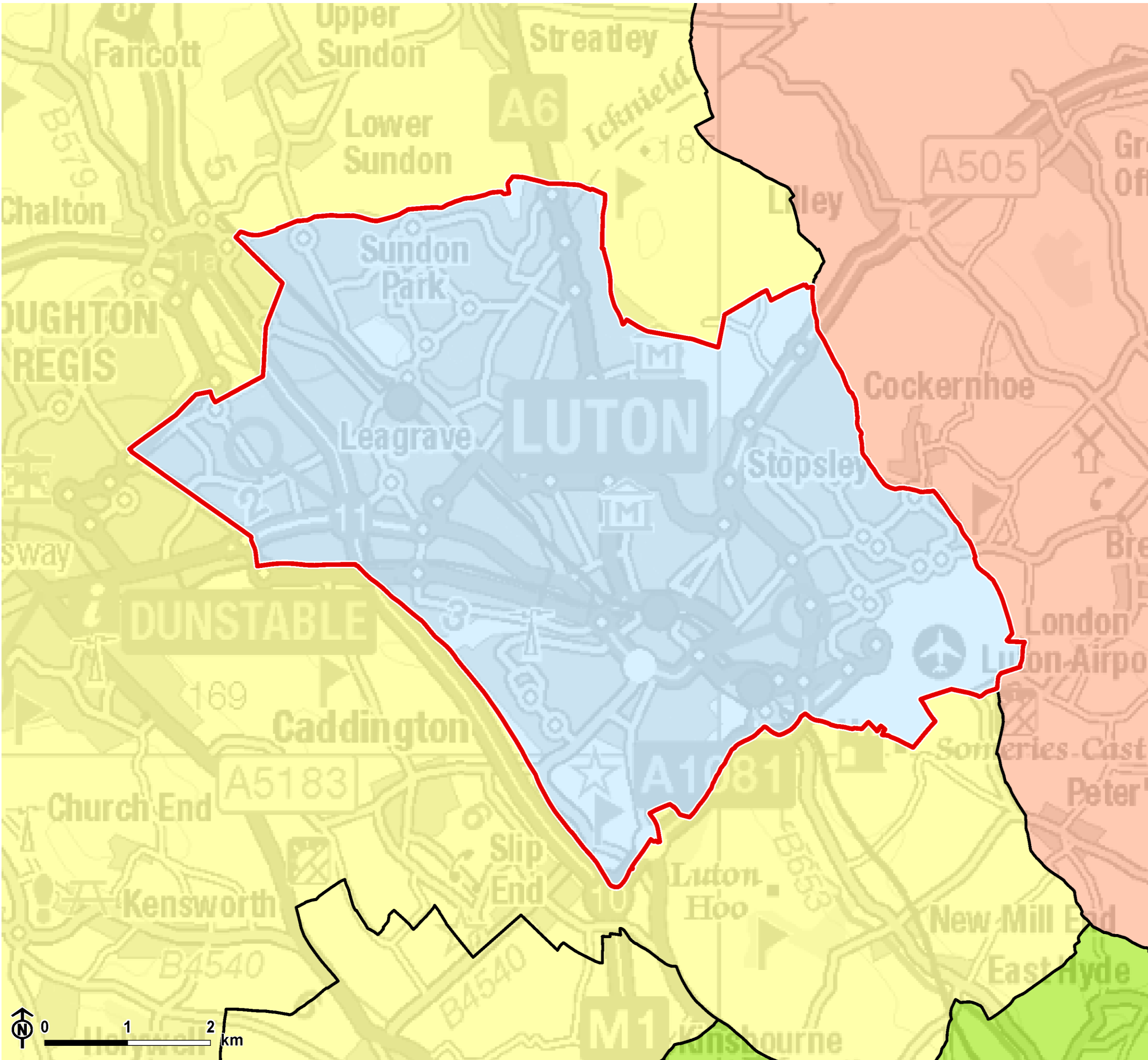
- Luton Borough boundary
- Neighbouring local authority

Agricultural Land Classification (ALC)

- Grade 2 (very good)
- Grade 3 (good to moderate)
- Grade 4 (poor)
- Non agricultural
- Urban



Created by LUC - Figure 3.6: Agricultural land Classification 22/05/2026
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Legend

- Luton Borough boundary
- Neighbouring local authority

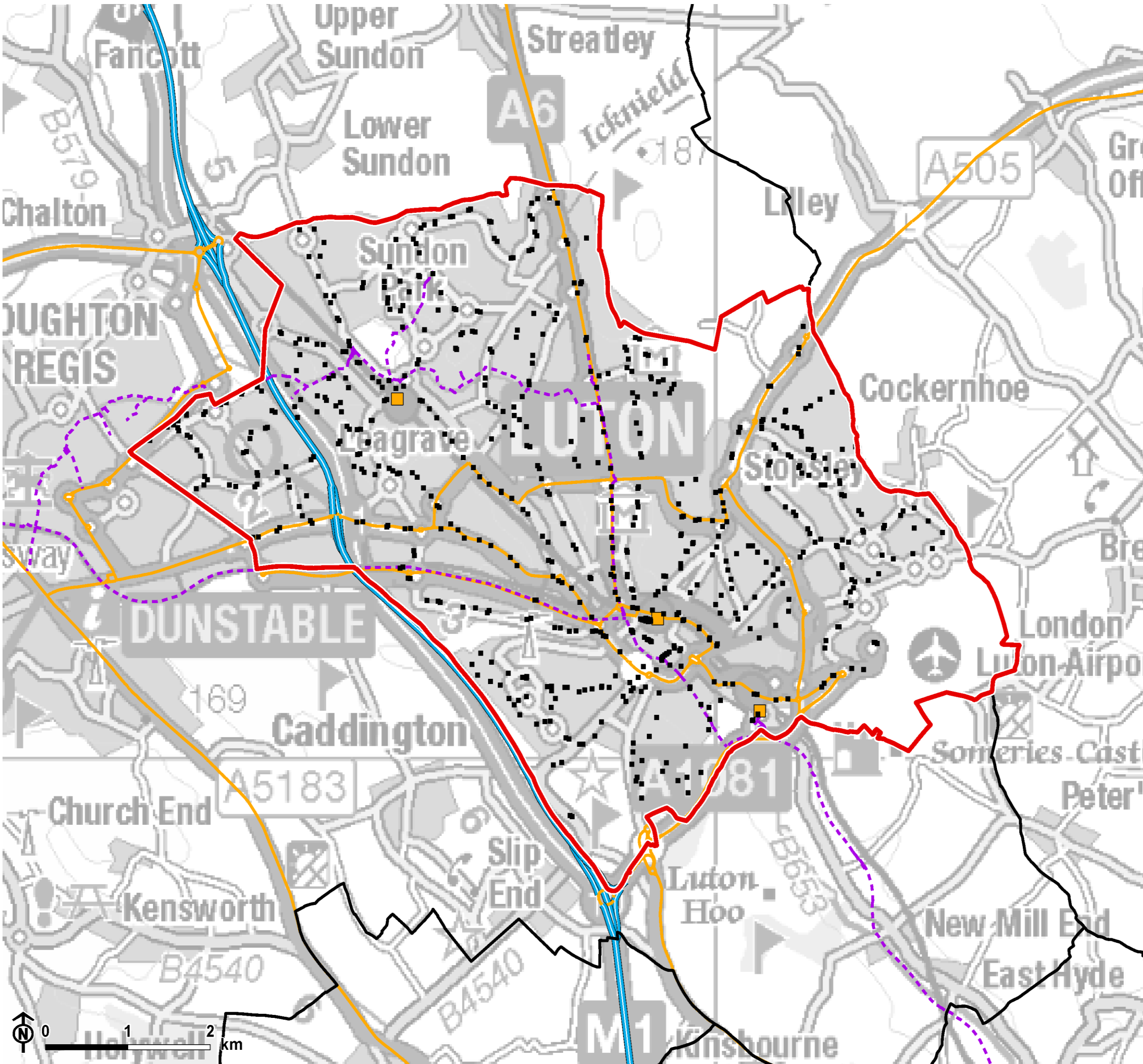
UK local authority CO2 emissions 2023

Per Capita Emissions (tonnes per person)

- 2.3
- 3.1
- 3.2
- 3.4

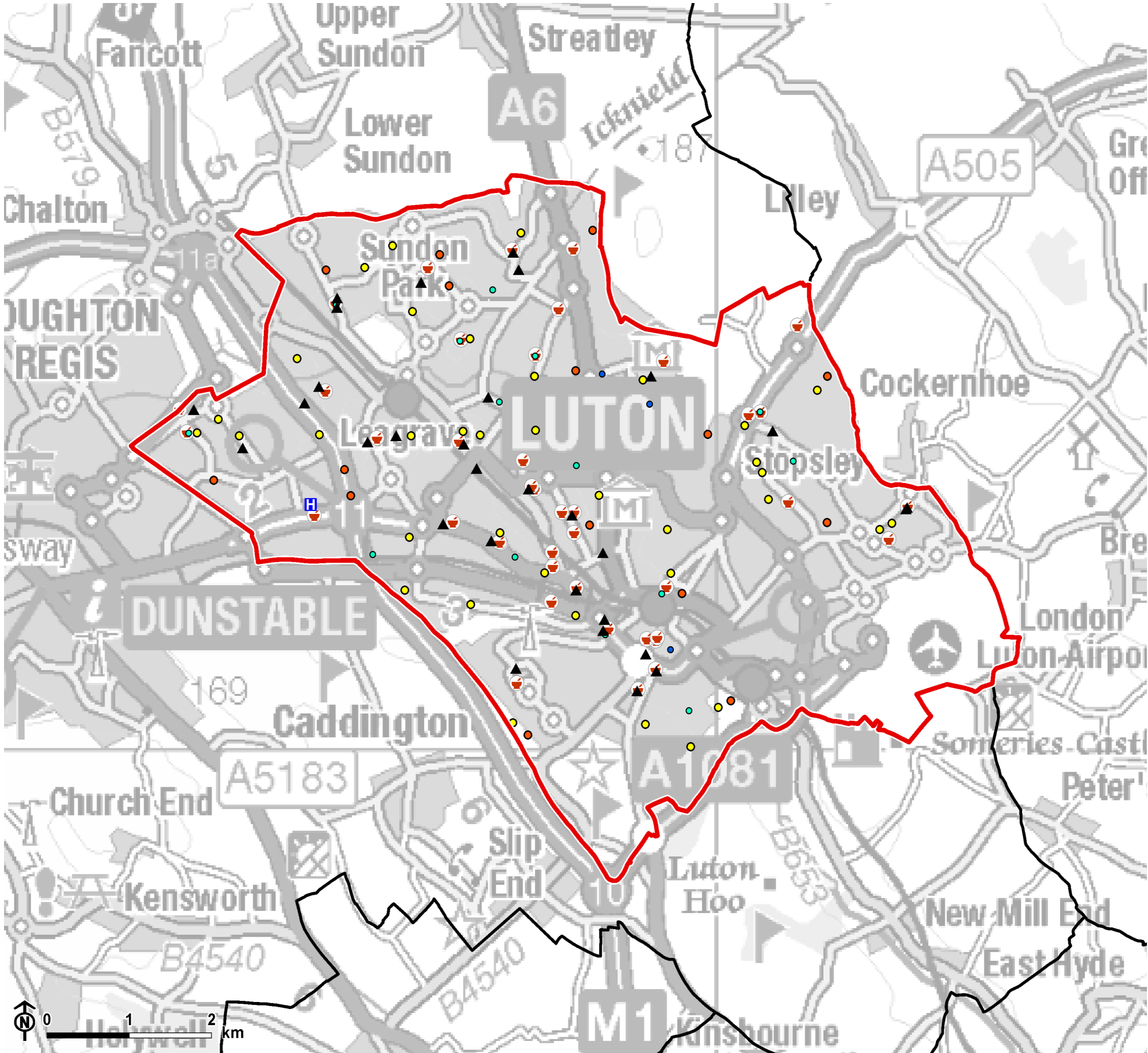


Created by LUC - Figure 3.7: Per Capita CO2 Emissions compared to Neighbouring Authorities 22/05/2026
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- Legend**
- Luton Borough boundary
 - Neighbouring local authority
 - Bus stop
 - Railway station
 - National cycle network
 - A road
 - Motorway



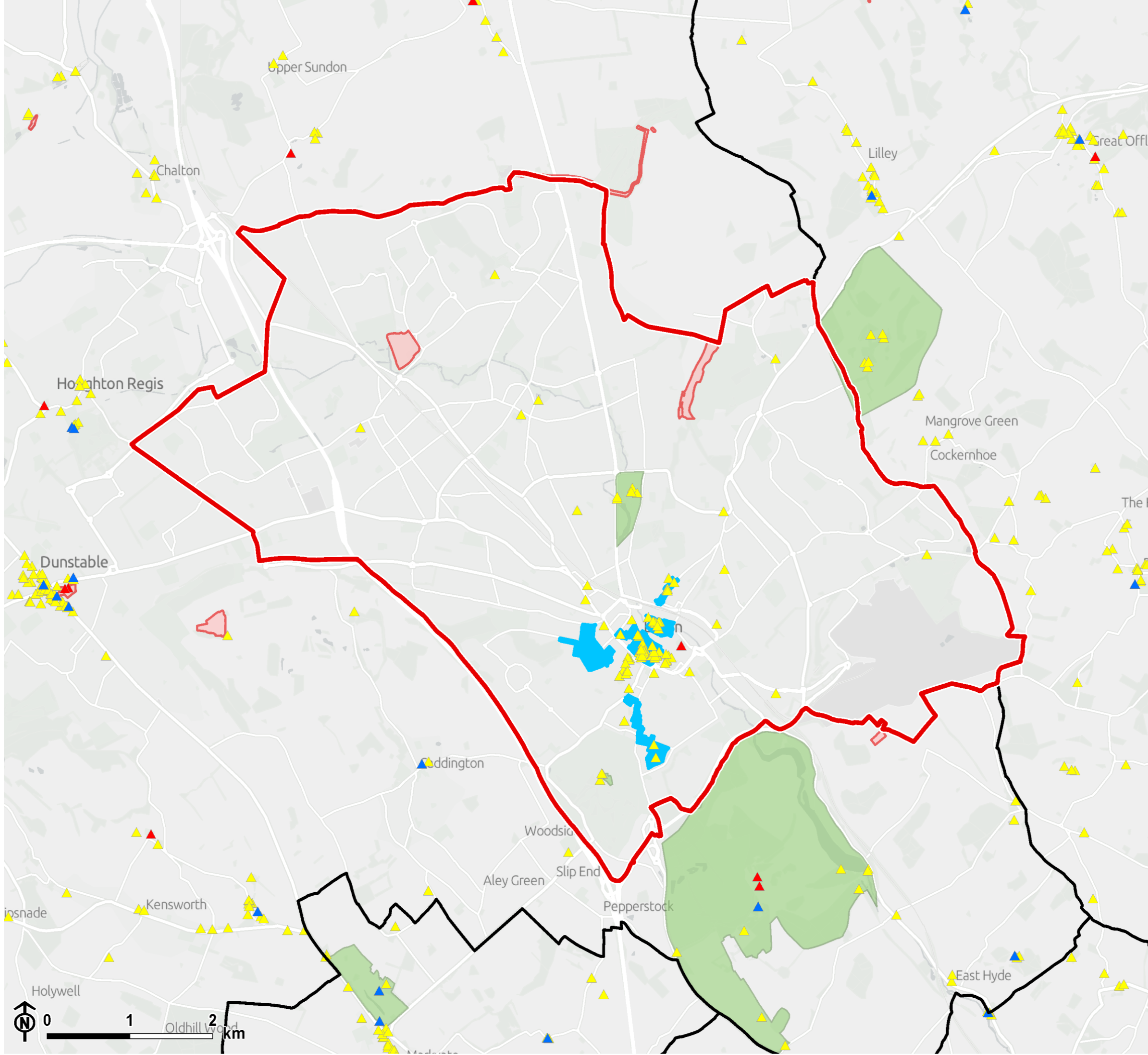


Legend

- Luton Borough boundary
- Neighbouring local authority
- GP surgery
- H Hospital
- Pharmacy
- Post office
- Primary school
- Secondary school
- College



Created by LUC - Figure 3.9: Services and facilities in Luton 22/05/2026
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 Contains data from OS Zoomstack.

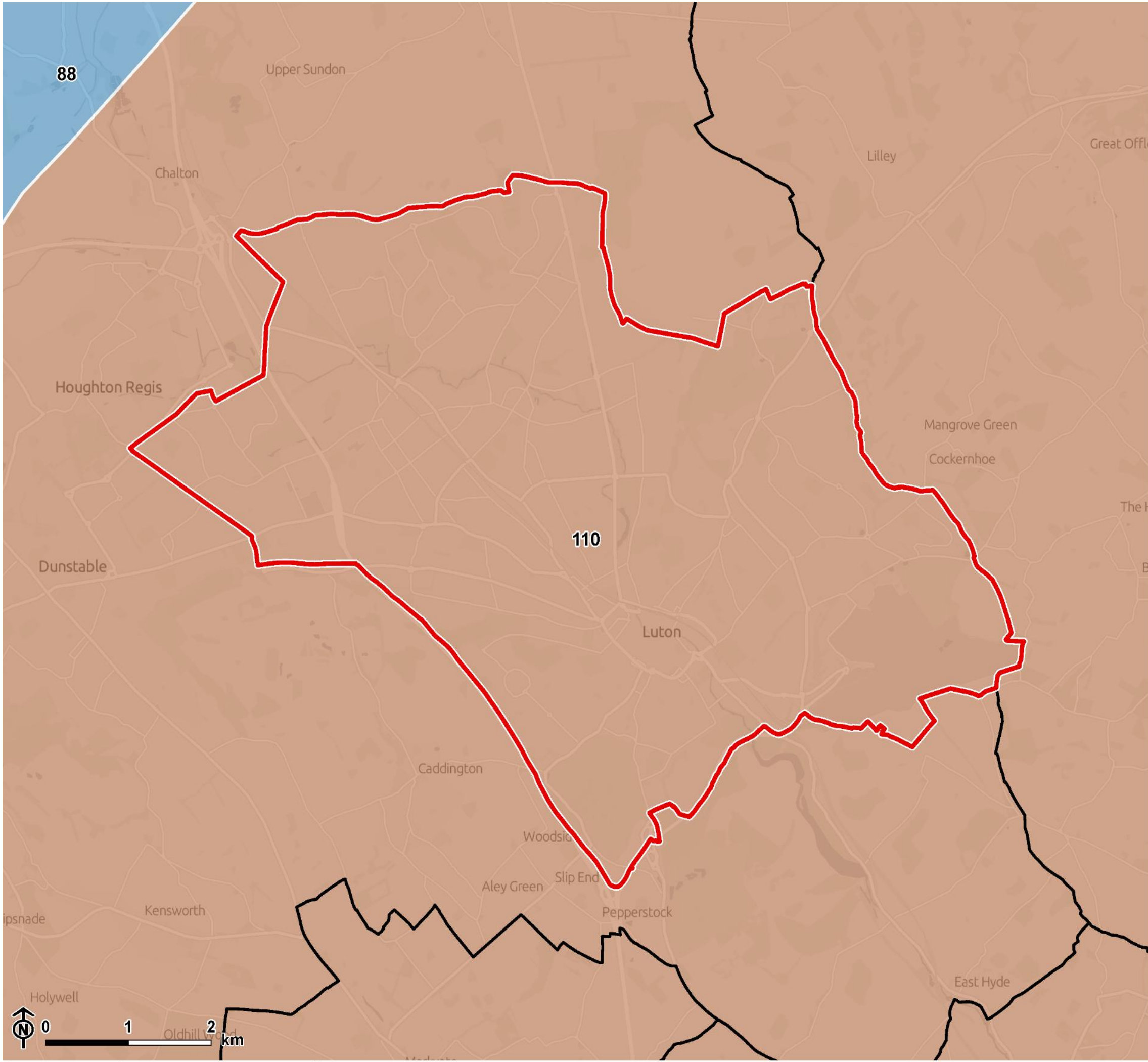


Legend

- Luton Borough boundary
- Neighbouring local authority
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Scheduled monument
- Conservation area

Listed building

- ▲ Grade I
- ▲ Grade II*
- ▲ Grade II



Legend

- Luton Borough boundary
- Neighbouring local authority

National Character Area

- 88: Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire Claylands
- 110: Chilterns

Created by LUC - Figure 3.11: National Character Areas 24/02/2026
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Chapter 4

Key Sustainability Issues and Likely Evolution without the Plan

4.1 Analysis of the baseline information has enabled a number of key sustainability issues facing Luton Borough to be identified. Identification of the key sustainability issues (and consideration of how these issues might develop over time if the new Local Plan is not implemented) helps to meet the requirements of Annex 1 of the SEA Directive, which is to provide information on “the relevant aspects of the current state of the environment and the likely evolution thereof without implementation of the plan; and any existing environmental problems which are relevant to the plan”.

4.2 Key sustainability issues for Luton were previously identified through the SA/SEA Scoping process in 2017 for the adopted Local Plan. These issues have been considered as a starting point but have been fully reviewed and updated during the preparation of this SEA Scoping Report for the new Local Plan, in light of the updated policy review and latest baseline information and to reflect the fact that the process being undertaken is now SEA rather than an integrated SA/SEA. The current set of key sustainability issues for Luton is presented overleaf.

4.3 It is also a requirement of the SEA Regulations that consideration is given to the likely evolution of the environment in the plan area (in this case Luton Borough) if the new Local Plan was not to be implemented. This analysis is also presented overleaf in relation to each of the key sustainability issues.

4.4 The information collated shows that, in general, the current trends in relation to the various social, economic and environmental issues affecting Luton would be more likely to continue without the implementation of the new Local Plan, although the policies in the adopted Luton Local Plan would still go some way towards addressing many of the issues. In most cases, the new Local Plan

offers opportunities to directly and strongly affect existing trends in a positive way, through an up-to-date plan which reflects the requirements of the NPPF.

4.5 Key sustainability issues in Luton (including environmental problems as required by the SEA Regulations) are set out below:

- Hotter, drier summers are expected as a result of ongoing and accelerating climate change, which have the potential for adverse effects on human health and the natural environment. The new Local Plan offers another opportunity to update the Borough's approach to managing the effects of the changing climate and associated weather events, particularly in the design of new buildings, whole developments and green infrastructure. Therefore, without the new Local Plan, this issue is likely to be less well addressed.
- Luton has a young population with a higher number of younger people (under 15) than older people (65+) which can result in increased pressures on certain services and facilities such as nurseries and schools, with shortfalls already acknowledged. The new Local Plan offers an opportunity to improve access to and increase availability of such services and facilities. Without the new Local Plan, there is likely to be an increasing strain on services and facilities which do not meet local demand.
- Household overcrowding remains an issue due to population growth throughout Luton. Without the new Local Plan, the required housing is less likely to be delivered to meet this population growth.
- Luton has health and well-being issues including low life expectancy, high childhood obesity rates, low physical activity levels and high inactive physical activity levels. The new Local Plan could contribute to tackling issues of health and wellbeing and general health disparities through policies that strongly support uptake of active modes of transport, access to green space, community facilities, improved public realm and other recreation opportunities, in particular in more deprived areas.
- Nearly half of Luton's neighbourhoods have poor access to green space due to very small gardens, no green space within a five-minute walk, and limited access to spaces further afield. The new Local Plan presents an opportunity to help address any existing deficiencies in accessible greenspace and to consider the multi-functionality of the green infrastructure network at a more

strategic level to ensure there is connectivity between the walking and cycling network as well additional greenspace.

- There are relatively high levels of deprivation throughout the Borough. The new Local Plan offers an opportunity to reduce the level of deprivation in areas through appropriately planned growth and regeneration. Therefore, without the new Local Plan, deprivation is less likely to be effectively tackled.
- Crime and safety are a significant concern, with high crime offences and an increased overall crime rate. The new Local Plan will provide opportunities to seek to reduce crime in Luton through policies and objectives to make the borough and the streets safer. Delivering growth and regeneration through the new Local Plan may also contribute to reducing crime and fear of crime.
- Economic performance has been poor across Luton. Luton experiences a low employment rate, a higher number of people claiming unemployment related benefits, a high number of claimants, low gross weekly pay, high rates of unemployment, low Level 4 and above qualifications and a decrease in the number of businesses across Luton in the year leading up to 2023. Trends of poor economic performance are likely to continue without the preparation of a new Local Plan. The new Local Plan offers the opportunity to plan a co-ordinated approach to employment which will lead to increased employment opportunities across the Borough.
- Luton is in Flood Zone 3 and experiences regular flood events. Without the new Local Plan, flood risk will continue to affect the Borough through increased and higher intensity flooding. The new Plan offers an opportunity to plan strategically to locate new development in areas at lower risk from flooding, therefore reducing the number of properties and economic assets at risk from flooding.
- The main air pollutant of concern in Luton, Nitrogen Dioxide, has increased. Without the new Local Plan this trend may continue. The new Plan offers the opportunity to address this issue by promoting sustainable travel and ensuring that the potential air quality impacts of new development are assessed and managed accordingly.
- Luton is mostly urban but does, however, contain pockets of Grade 3 agricultural land which requires protection from development. The new Local Plan provides an opportunity to ensure that this resource is not lost or

compromised by future growth by prioritising the development of brownfield land and poorer agricultural land over the best and most versatile grades. Therefore, without the new Local Plan, agricultural land is less likely to be protected.

- Luton has low levels of recycling for both household and non-household waste. The new Local Plan provides an opportunity to adopt up to date policies seeking to minimise waste, increase re-use and recycling. It will also provide an opportunity to deliver adequate space in new developments for waste facilities capable of accommodating recyclable waste.
- Luton has three assets on the Heritage at Risk Register: High Town Road, Plaiters Lea and George Street / Town Centre conservation areas. The new Local Plan provides an opportunity to draw on the most up to date evidence to ensure that new development is sited and designed so as to conserve, enhance and encourage enjoyment of the historic environment as well as improve accessibility and interpretation of it. Therefore, without the new Local Plan, the historic environment is less likely to be protected and enhanced and the condition of assets may worsen.
- Small parts of Luton fall within the Chilterns National Landscape. The new Local Plan offers an opportunity to take into account the most recent landscape-related evidence and to ensure that sensitive landscapes and townscapes are protected and enhanced, with development being located and designed to take account of the variation in character and sensitivity across Luton. The new Local Plan also offers the opportunity to take into account the new requirement for local planning authorities to seek to further the purposes of National Landscape. Without the new Local Plan, this issue is less likely to be addressed as it is more likely that piecemeal and ad-hoc developments would come forward.

Chapter 5

Sustainability Framework

5.1 The development of a set of SEA objectives (known as the SEA framework) is a recognised way in which the likely environmental and sustainability effects of a plan can be described, analysed and compared.

5.2 The proposed SEA framework for the Luton Local Plan is presented below. The SEA framework comprises a series of SEA objectives against which the sustainability of the Local Plan will be appraised. The appraisal of the Local Plan options, policies and site allocations against these SEA objectives will be guided in part by the appraisal questions accompanying each objective. The appraisal of site options could be carried out using site-specific assessment criteria that can be developed in relation to each SEA objective in order to ensure consistency. The questions included in the framework are not exhaustive, and some may be more relevant to certain elements of the Local Plan than others.

5.3 All of the topics specifically required by the SEA Regulations (set out in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations) are clearly addressed by the headline SEA objectives, as listed under each SEA objective below.

SEA Objective 1: Reduce greenhouse gas emissions and develop a managed response to the effects of climate change

Appraisal Questions

- Will it reduce greenhouse gas emissions from domestic, commercial and industrial sources?
- Will it plan and implement adaptation measures for the likely effects of climate change?
- Will it include energy efficiency measures?
- Will it reduce energy consumption?
- Will it encourage the development of renewable energy resources?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Climatic factors

SEA Objective 2: Protect and enhance biodiversity assets

Appraisal Questions

- Will it conserve and enhance both designated and undesignated ecological assets?

- Will it have a detrimental impact on the presence or condition of local biodiversity/geodiversity?
- Will it help to deliver Biodiversity Net Gain?
- Will it maintain and enhance woodland/hedgerow cover and management?
- Will it encourage the development of new biodiversity assets and linkages to existing habitats within/alongside development including the delivery of Local Nature Recovery Strategies?
- Will it provide and manage opportunities for people to come into contact with wildlife whilst encouraging respect for and raising awareness of the sensitivity of biodiversity?
- Will it conserve both blue and green spaces?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Biodiversity, flora and fauna

SEA Objective 3: Maintain and enhance the character and quality of the landscape including the natural beauty of the Chilterns National Landscape

Appraisal Questions

- Will it safeguard and enhance the character of sensitive landscapes and local distinctiveness and identity?
- Will it help to further the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the Chilterns National Landscape?
- Will it improve the condition of parks and open spaces?

- Will it help to raise the profile of geographically rare chalk streams?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Landscape

SEA Objective 4: Conserve, restore and enhance green infrastructure

Appraisal Questions

- Will it increase access to existing green space?
- Will it improve and diversify current green spaces?
- Will it provide new green spaces?
- Will it protect and raise awareness of existing green spaces?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Landscape
- Human health
- Biodiversity, flora and fauna

SEA Objective 5: Protect and enhance air quality

Appraisal Questions

- Will it improve air quality?
- Will it help to achieve the objectives of the Air Quality Management Areas?
- Will it reduce emissions of key pollutants?
- Will it promote more sustainable transport and reduce the need to travel?
- Will it contain measures which will help to reduce congestion?
- Will it facilitate the take up of low / zero emission vehicles?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Air

SEA Objective 6: Protect and enhance soils

Appraisal Questions

- Will it promote the re-use of previously development land?
- Will it avoid development on higher quality agricultural land?
- Will it ensure contaminated land is remediated where appropriate?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Soil

SEA Objective 7: Protect and enhance Water Resources

Appraisal Questions

- Will it protect and improve the water quality?
- Will the policy/option support the efficient use of water?
- Will it minimise inappropriate development in Source Protection Zones?
- Will it ensure there is sufficient waste water treatment capacity to accommodate the new development?
- Will it promote development which would avoid water pollution due to contaminated runoff from development?
- Will it ensure that there is sufficient water resource available to support new development?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Water

SEA Objective 8: Protect areas that are at risk from flooding and reduce flood risk

Appraisal Questions

- Will it limit the amount of development in areas of high flood risk and areas which may increase flood risk elsewhere, taking into account the impacts of climate change?
- Will it promote the use of SuDS and other flood resilient design?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Water
- Climatic factors

SEA Objective 9: Increase resource efficiency and reduce waste generation

Appraisal Questions

- Will it reduce the amount of waste produced?
- Will it reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill?
- Will it maximise the recovery, re-use and recycling of waste?
- Will it reduce the amount of litter on open land and highways?
- Will it encourage the prudent use of mineral resources?

- Will it safeguard Luton's material resources for future use?
- Will it lead to reduced consumption of materials and resources?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Material assets

SEA Objective 10: Protect and enhance the historic environment including heritage assets and their settings

Appraisal Questions

- Will it conserve and enhance designated and non-designated heritage assets, including their setting and the wider historic environment?
- Will it provide opportunities for improvements to the conservation, management and enhancement of Luton's heritage assets, particularly heritage at risk?
- Will it promote access to, as well as enjoyment and understanding of, the local historic environment for Luton's residents and visitors?
- Will it provide for increased access to and enjoyment of the historic environment?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage

SEA Objective 11: Reduce poverty and inequality and promote social inclusion

Appraisal Questions

- Will it integrate new neighbourhoods with existing neighbourhoods?
- Will it promote diversity?
- Will it meet the needs of specific groups including those with protected characteristics and those in more deprived areas?
- Will it promote equality in employment?
- Will it promote religious and racial understanding?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Population
- Human Health

SEA Objective 12: Reduce crime and fear of crime

Appraisal Questions

- Will it reduce levels of crime, anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime?
- Will it promote principles of good urban design to limit the potential for crime in Luton?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Population

SEA Objective 13: Improve public health and encourage healthier lifestyles

Appraisal Questions

- Will it improve people's health and reduce ill-health?
- Will it reduce the incidence of premature death?
- Will it help to address levels of obesity?
- Will it reduce incidents of environmental health breaches?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Human Health

SEA Objective 14: Provide decent, affordable and safe homes for all

Appraisal Questions

- Will it help to meet local housing need, including delivering an appropriate mix of housing and specialist housing?
- Will it improve access to affordable housing?

- Will it make housing available to people in need taking into account requirements of location, size, type and affordability?
- Will it improve the quality of housing stock?
- Will it make the homes more liveable?
- Will it reduce overcrowding?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Population
- Material assets

SEA Objective 15: Support the vitality and viability of centres

Appraisal Questions

- Will it support the vitality/viability of town and local centres?
- Will it support easy access to a range of high-quality services and facilities?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Population
- Human health
- Material assets

SEA Objective 16: Provide and encourage the use of sustainable transport, improve access and mobility

Appraisal Questions

- Will it reduce reliance on private vehicles?
- Will it promote the use of sustainable modes of transport?
- Will it encourage walking and cycling?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Climatic factors
- Air
- Human health
- Material assets

SEA Objective 17: Promote employment, learning, skills and innovation

Appraisal Questions

- Will it allow for the delivery of land and infrastructure to meet the economic needs of Luton?
- Will it provide employment opportunities for local people?

- Will it support opportunities for the expansion and diversification of businesses and economy?
- Will it offer employment opportunities to disadvantaged groups?
- Will it contribute to improving educational levels of the population of working age, including by improving access to educational facilities?

Relevant SEA Topic(s)

- Population
- Material assets

Use of the SEA Framework

5.4 The SEA will be undertaken in close collaboration with the Luton Borough Council officers responsible for drafting the new Local Plan in order to fully integrate the SEA process with the production of the plan.

5.5 Strategic policies and site allocations, including the reasonable alternative options, will be appraised against the SEA objectives in the SEA framework, with symbols being attributed to each policy or site option to indicate their likely effects on each SEA objective. Where a potential positive or negative effect is uncertain, a question mark will be added to the relevant symbol (e.g. +? or -?) and the symbol will be colour coded in line with the potential positive, negligible or negative effect (e.g. green, yellow, orange, etc.).

5.6 The likely effects of options need to be determined and their significance assessed, which inevitably requires a series of judgments to be made. The appraisal will attempt to differentiate between the most significant effects and other more minor effects through the use of the symbols. The dividing line in making a decision about the significance of an effect is often quite small. Where either (++) or (--) will be used to distinguish significant effects from more minor effects (+ or -) this will be because the effect of an option or policy on the SEA

objective in question is considered to be of such magnitude that it will have a noticeable and measurable effect taking into account other factors that may influence the achievement of that objective.

5.7 The findings of the SEA will be presented using colour coded symbols showing the likely effect of each option against each of the SEA objectives along with a concise justification for the effect identified. It may be possible to group the appraisal of strategic and development management policies by theme. The key to the SEA symbols is shown in **Table 5.1** below.

Table 5.1: SEA Framework symbols and colour coding

Symbol and colour code	Description
++	Significant positive effect likely
++/-	Mixed significant positive and minor negative effects likely
+	Minor positive effect likely
++/--	Mixed significant positive and negative effects likely
+/-	Mixed minor positive and negative effects likely
-	Minor negative effect likely
--/+	Mixed significant negative and minor positive effects likely
--	Significant negative effect likely
0	Negligible effect likely
?	Uncertain effect

5.8 In relation to the appraisal of the site options, detailed sets of site assessment criteria will be developed and will be applied during the next stage of the SEA. The criteria will relate specifically to each type of site option (i.e. residential, employment, mixed use etc.). The site assessment criteria will set

out clear parameters within which certain SEA effects would be identified, based on factors such as the distance of site options from features such as biodiversity designations, public transport links and areas of high landscape sensitivity. The criteria, where required, may be updated at future stages on the SEA to draw on the most recent evidence sources. The site assessment criteria can be applied through the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) data where appropriate.

5.9 In determining the significance of the effects of the options for potential inclusion in the new Local Plan, it will be important to bear in mind the relationship of the Local Plan with the other documents in the planning system such as the NPPF and other national policy approaches, and regulatory requirements, as these may provide additional safeguards or mitigation of potentially significant adverse effects.

Reasonable Alternatives

5.10 The SEA must appraise not only the preferred options for inclusion in the Local Plan but also ‘reasonable alternatives’ to these options. This implies that alternatives that are not reasonable do not need to be subject to appraisal. Part (b) of Regulation 12(2) notes that reasonable alternatives will take into account the objectives of the plan, as well as its geographical scope. Therefore, alternatives that do not meet the objectives of national policy, local objectives or are outside the plan area are unlikely to be reasonable.

5.11 Developing options for a plan is an iterative process, usually involving a number of consultations with the public and stakeholders. Consultation responses and the SEA can help to identify where there may be other ‘reasonable alternatives’ to the options being considered for a plan.

5.12 The SEA findings are not the only factors taken into account when determining a preferred option to take forward in a plan. Indeed, there will often be an equal number of positive or negative effects identified by the SEA for each option, such that it is not possible to rank them based on sustainability

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performance in order to select a preferred option. Factors such as public opinion, deliverability and conformity with national policy will also be taken into account. Future iterations of the SEA will describe how the appraisal of options has been taken into consideration when developing the draft Luton Local Plan.

Chapter 6

Next Steps

6.1 In order to meet the requirements of the SEA Regulations, the views of the three statutory consultees (Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England) are being sought in relation to the scope and level of detail to be included in this SEA Scoping Report.

6.2 Consultees are in particular requested to consider the following:

- Whether the scope of the SEA is appropriate as set out considering the role of the Luton Local Plan to help meet and manage Luton's needs.
- Whether there are any additional plans, policies or programmes that are relevant to the SEA that should be included.
- Whether the baseline information provided is robust and comprehensive and provides a suitable baseline for the SEA of the new Local Plan.
- Whether there are any additional key sustainability issues relevant to the new Local Plan that should be included.
- Whether the SEA framework (Chapter 5) is appropriate and includes a suitable set of SEA objectives for assessing the effects of the options included within the new Local Plan as well as reasonable alternatives.

6.3 Responses from consultees will be reviewed and appropriate amendments made to the information contained in the Scoping Report, including the baseline information, policy context and SEA framework where necessary.

6.4 As the Local Plan is drafted, it will be subject to SEA using the SEA framework presented in Chapter 5. A full SEA Report (incorporating the next stages of the SEA process) will then be produced and made available to other stakeholders and the general public for wider consultation alongside the emerging Local Plan. This will include any amendments to the Scoping work arising from the consultation with statutory bodies on this report.

LUC
May 2026

Appendix A

Review of Plans, Policies and Programmes

International Plans and Programmes of most relevance for the Local Plan

A.1 Convention on Biological Diversity 2022 [See reference 122] – COP15 Kunming-Montreal adopted the “Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework” (GBF), including four goals and 23 targets for achievement by 2030.

A.2 The Glasgow Pact (UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, 2021) - Nations adopted the Glasgow Climate Pact [See reference 123]. The package of decisions consists of a range of agreed items, including strengthened efforts to build resilience to climate change, to curb greenhouse gas emissions and to provide the necessary finance for both. Nations reaffirmed their duty to fulfil the pledge of providing \$100 billion annually from developed to developing countries. And they collectively agreed to work to reduce the gap between existing emission reduction plans and what is required to reduce emissions. They also agreed to phase down unabated coal power and inefficient subsidies for fossil fuels.

A.3 United Nations Declaration on Forests and Land Use (COP26 Declaration) (2021) [See reference 124]: international commitment to halt and reverse forest loss and land degradation by 2030 while delivering sustainable development and promoting an inclusive rural transformation.

A.4 The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) [See reference 125], adopted by all United Nations Member States, provides a shared blueprint

for peace and prosperity for people and the planet and includes 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), designed to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all.

A.5 The United Nations Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the ‘Aarhus Convention’) (1998) [See reference 126] establishes a number of rights of the public (individuals and their associations) with regard to the environment. The Parties to the Convention are required to make the necessary provisions so that public authorities (at national, regional or local level) will contribute to these rights to become effective.

A.6 The United Nations Declaration on Sustainable Development (Johannesburg Declaration) (2002) [See reference 127] sets a broad framework for international sustainable development, including building a humane, equitable and caring global society aware of the need for human dignity for all, renewable energy and energy efficiency, sustainable consumption and production and resource efficiency.

A.7 The United Nations Paris Climate Change Agreement (2015) [See reference 128] is an international agreement to keep global temperature rise this century well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

A.8 The International Convention on Wetlands (Ramsar Convention) (1976) [See reference 129] is an international agreement with the aim of conserving and managing the use of wetlands and their resources.

A.9 The European Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (Bern Convention) (1979) [See reference 130] aims to ensure conservation and protection of wild plant and animal species and their natural habitats, to increase cooperation between contracting parties, and to regulate the exploitation of those species (including migratory species).

A.10 The International Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) [See reference 131] is an international commitment to biodiversity conservation through national strategies and action plans.

A.11 The European Habitats Directive (1992) [See reference 132], together with the Birds Directive, sets the standard for nature conservation across the EU and enables all 27 Member States to work together within the same strong legislative framework in order to protect the most vulnerable species and habitat types across their entire natural range within the EU. It also established the Natura 2000 network.

A.12 The European Birds Directive (2009) [See reference 133] requires the maintenance of all species of naturally occurring birds in the wild state in the European territory at a level which corresponds in particular to ecological, scientific and cultural requirements, while taking account of economic and recreational requirements.

A.13 The United Nations Declaration on Forests (New York Declaration) (2014) [See reference 134] sets out international commitment to cut natural forest loss by 2020 and end loss by 2030.

A.14 The Valletta Treaty (1992) [See reference 135], formerly the European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Revisited), aims to protect the European archaeological heritage “as a source of European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study”.

A.15 The United Nations (UNESCO) World Heritage Convention (1972) [See reference 136] promotes co-operation among nations to protect heritage around the world that is of such outstanding universal value that its conservation is important for current and future generations.

A.16 The European Convention for the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985) [See reference 137] defines ‘architectural heritage’ and requires that the signatories maintain an inventory of it and take statutory measures to ensure its protection. Conservation policies are also required to be

integrated into planning systems and other spheres of government influence as per the text of the convention.

A.17 The European Landscape Convention (2002) [See reference 138] promotes landscape protection, management and planning. The Convention is aimed at the protection, management and planning of all landscapes and raising awareness of the value of a living landscape.

National Plans and Programmes (beyond the NPPF) of Most Relevance for the Local Plan

Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation

A.18 The Clean Power 2030 Action Plan (2024) [See reference 139] sets out a pathway to a clean power system by 2030, outlining what the Government will do to support and accelerate delivery of the new infrastructure. It seeks to address the following challenges:

- To maintain a secure and affordable energy supply in an increasingly unstable world.
- To create new industries and investments around the country.
- To protect the environment we live in from the most damaging effects of climate change.

A.19 The Carbon Budget Delivery Plan (2023) [See reference 140] explains how the government intends to meet its legally-binding climate goals, setting out a package of quantified and unquantified proposals and policies, and associated timescales and delivery risks this also includes:

- wider matters in connection with carbon budgets

Appendix A Review of Plans, Policies and Programmes

- the contribution of these proposals and policies to sustainable development
- the impact the package has on sectors of the economy

A.20 Powering up Britain (2023) [See reference 141] sets out the department's approach to energy security and net zero, and acts as an introduction to Powering Up Britain: Energy Security Plan, and Powering Up Britain: Net Zero Growth Plan.

A.21 The Environment Improvement Plan (2023) [See reference 142] for England is the first revision of the 25YEP. It builds on the 25YEP vision with a new plan setting out how they will work with landowners, communities and businesses to deliver each of our goals for improving the environment, matched with interim targets to measure progress. Taking these actions will help us restore nature, reduce environmental pollution, and increase the prosperity of our country.

A.22 The British Energy Security Strategy (2022) [See reference 143] sets out how the UK will enhance its energy security, setting out plans for future deployment of wind, new nuclear, solar and hydrogen, and for supporting the production of domestic oil and gas in the nearer term. The strategy builds on the Prime Minister's 'Ten point plan for a green industrial revolution', and the 'Net zero strategy'. Key aims and commitments include:

- New commitments to supercharge clean energy and accelerate deployment, which could see 95% of Great Britain's electricity set to be low carbon by 2030.
- Supporting over 40,000 more jobs in clean industries, totalling 480,000 jobs by 2030.
- Accelerated expansion of nuclear, wind, solar, hydrogen, oil and gas, including delivering the equivalent to one nuclear reactor a year instead of one a decade.
- Offshore wind – Aim of providing up to 50GW by 2030, of which 5GW is planned to be from floating offshore wind in deeper seas. This is aimed to

be underpinned by new planning reforms to cut the approval times for new offshore wind farms from 4 years to 1 year and an overall streamlining which will aims to reduce the time it takes for new projects to reach construction stages while improving the environment.

- Oil and gas – A licensing round for new North Sea oil and gas projects is planned to launch in Autumn, with a new taskforce providing bespoke support to new developments.
- Onshore wind – The Government plans to consult on developing partnerships with a limited number of supportive communities who wish to host new onshore wind infrastructure in return for guaranteed lower energy bills.
- Heat pump manufacturing – The Government aim to run a Heat Pump Investment Accelerator Competition in 2022 worth up to £30 million to make British heat pumps, with hopes to reduce demand for gas.

A.23 UK Climate Change Risk Assessment (2022) [See reference 144]

outlines the UK government and devolved administrations' position on the key climate change risks and opportunities that the UK faces today. The risk assessment considers sixty-one UK-wide climate risks and opportunities cutting across multiple sectors of the economy and prioritises the following eight risk areas for action in the next two years:

- risks to the viability and diversity of terrestrial and freshwater habitats and species from multiple hazards
- risks to soil health from increased flooding and drought
- risks to natural carbon stores and sequestration from multiple hazards
- risks to crops, livestock and commercial trees from multiple climate hazards
- risks to supply of food, goods and vital services due to climate-related collapse of supply chains and distribution networks
- risks to people and the economy from climate-related failure of the power system

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- risks to human health, wellbeing and productivity from increased exposure to heat in homes and other buildings
- multiple risks to the UK from climate change impacts overseas

A.24 The Environment Act 2021 [See reference 145] sets statutory targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas: air quality, biodiversity, water, and resource efficiency and waste reduction. The Environment Act will deliver:

- Long-term targets to improve air quality biodiversity, water, and waste reduction and resource efficiency.
- A target on ambient PM2.5 concentrations.
- A target to halt the decline of nature by 2030.
- Environmental Improvement Plans, including interim targets.
- A cycle of environmental monitoring and reporting.
- Environmental Principles embedded in domestic policy making.
- Office for Environmental Protection to uphold environmental law.

A.25 The Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener (2021) [See reference 146] sets out policies and proposals for decarbonising all sectors of the UK economy to meet net zero targets by 2050. It sets out strategies to keep the UK on track with carbon budgets, outlines the National Determined Contribution (NDC) and sets out the vision for a decarbonised economy in 2050. Its focus includes:

- Policies and proposals for reducing emissions across the economy in key sectors (power, fuel supply and hydrogen, industry, heat and buildings, transport, natural gas and waste).
- Policies and proposals for supporting transition across the economy through innovation, green investment, green jobs, embedding net-zero in government, local climate action, empowering people and businesses, and international leadership and collaboration.

A.26 The Industrial Decarbonisation Strategy (2021) [See reference 147]

aims to support existing industry to decarbonise and encourage the growth of new, low carbon industries to protect and create skilled jobs and businesses in the UK encouraging long-term investment in home-grown decarbonisation technology. The strategy builds in the Prime Minister's 10 Point Plan for a Green Industrial Revolution and sets out the government's vision for building a competitive, greener future for the manufacturing and construction sector and is part of the government's path to net zero by 2050. The strategy aims to reduce emissions by two-thirds in just 15 years and support up to 80,000 jobs over the next thirty years and includes measures to produce 20 terawatt hours of the UK industry's energy supply from low carbon alternatives by 2030. It also aims to introduce new rules on measuring the energy and carbon performance of the UK's largest commercial and industrial buildings, providing potential savings to businesses of around £2 billion per year in energy costs in 2030 and aiming to reduce annual carbon emissions by over 2 million tonnes - approximately 10% of their current emissions. Other key commitments within the Strategy include:

- The use of carbon pricing to drive changes in industry to focus on emissions in business and investment decisions.
- To establish a policy framework to accelerate the switch from fossil fuels to low carbon alternatives such as hydrogen, electricity, or biomass.
- New product standards, enabling manufacturers to clearly distinguish their products from high carbon competitors.
- To ensure the land planning regime is fit for building low carbon infrastructure.
- Support the skills transition so that the UK workforce benefits from the creation of new green jobs.
- An expectation that at least 3 megatons of CO₂ is captured within industry per year by 2030.
- That by 2050, there will be zero avoidable waste of materials across heavy industries.

A.27 The Heat and Buildings Strategy (2021) [See reference 148] sets out the government's plan to significantly cut carbon emissions from the UK's 30

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million homes and workplaces. This strategy aims to provide a clear direction of travel for the 2020s, set out the strategic decisions that need to be taken this decade, and demonstrate how the UK plans to meet its carbon targets and remain on track for net zero by 2050. Key aims of the strategy include:

- Reduce direct emissions from public sector buildings by 75% against a 2017 baseline by the end of carbon budget 6.
- Significantly reduce energy consumption of commercial, and industrial buildings by 2030.
- Phase out the installation of new natural gas boilers beyond 2035.
- Significantly grow the supply chain for heat pumps to 2028: from installing around 35,000 hydronic heat pumps a year to a minimum market capacity of 600,000 per year by 2028.
- Reduce the costs of installing a heat pump by at least 25-50% by 2025 and to ensure heat pumps are no more expensive to buy and run than gas boilers by 2030.
- Achieve 30-fold increase in heat pumps manufactured and sold within the UK by the end of the decade.
- Grow the market for heat pumps notably via a £450 million Boiler Upgrade Scheme to support households who want to switch with £5,000 grants.
- Improve heat pump appeal by continuing to invest in research and innovation, with the £60 million Net Zero Innovation Portfolio 'Heat Pump Ready' Programme supporting the development of innovation across the sector.
- Ensure all new buildings in England are ready for Net Zero from 2025. To enable this, new standards will be introduced through legislation to ensure new homes and buildings will be fitted with low-carbon heating and high levels of energy efficiency.
- Establish large-scale trials of hydrogen for heating, including a neighbourhood trial by 2023.
- Ensure as many fuel poor homes in England, as reasonably practicable, achieve a minimum energy efficiency rating of band C by the end of 2030.

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- Support social housing, low income and fuel poor households via boosting funding for the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund and Home Upgrade Grant, which aim to improve the energy performance of low income households' homes, support low carbon heat installations and build the green retrofitting sector to benefit all homeowners.
- Scale up low-carbon heat network deployment and to enable local areas to deploy heat network zoning- Heat Network Transformation Programme of £338 million (over 2022/23 to 2024/25).

A.28 The UK Hydrogen Strategy (2021) [See reference 149] sets out the approach to developing a substantial low carbon hydrogen sector in the UK and to meet the ambition for 5GW of low carbon hydrogen production capacity by 2030. The Strategy outlines the role of hydrogen in meeting net zero targets, the existing opportunity within the UK, a strategic framework, a roadmap for the economy, and the UK Government's commitments for a hydrogen economy. The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021).

A.29 The Energy Performance of Buildings Regulations (2021) [See reference 150] seek to improve the energy efficiency of buildings, reducing their carbon emissions and lessening the impact of climate change. The Regulations require the adoption of a standard methodology for calculating energy performance and minimum requirements for energy performance, reported through Energy Performance Certificates and Display Energy Certificates.

A.30 Waste Management Plan for England (2021) [See reference 151] sets out the measures for England to work towards a zero waste economy.

A.31 National Infrastructure Strategy: Fairer, faster greener (2020) [See reference 152] sets out plans to transform UK infrastructure in order to level up the country, strengthen the Union and achieve net zero emissions by 2050. This will be enabled by clear support for private investment and through a comprehensive set of reforms to the way infrastructure is delivered.

A.32 The Energy White Paper: Powering our net zero future (2020) [See reference 153] builds on the Prime Minister’s Ten point plan for a green industrial revolution. The white paper addresses the transformation of the UK’s energy system, promoting high-skilled jobs and clean, resilient economic growth during its transition to net-zero emissions by 2050. Key aims of the paper include:

- Supporting green jobs – The government aims to support up to 220,000 jobs in the next 10 years.
- Transforming the energy system – To transform its electricity grid for net-zero, the white paper highlights how this will involve changing the way the country heats its homes, how people travel, doubling the electricity use, and harnessing renewable energy supplies.
- Keeping bills affordable – The government aims to do this by making the energy retail market “truly competitive”. This will include offering people a method of switching to a cheaper energy tariff and testing automatically switching consumers to fairer deals to tackle “loyalty penalties”.
- Generating emission-free electricity by 2050 – The government aims to have “overwhelmingly decarbonised power” in the 2030s in order to generate emission-free electricity by 2050.
- Establishing UK Emissions Trading Scheme – The government aims to establish a UK Emissions Trading Scheme (UK ETS) from 1 January 2021 to replace the current EU ETS at the end of the Brexit Transition Period.
- Exploring new nuclear financing options – The government is continuing to explore a range of financing options for new nuclear with developers including the Regulated Asset Base (RAB) funding model.
- Further commitments to offshore wind – The white paper lays out plans to scale up its offshore wind fleet to 40 gigawatts (GW) by 2030, including 1GW of floating wind, enough to power every home in the country.
- Carbon capture and storage investments – Including £1bn worth of investments in state-of-the-art CCS in four industrial clusters by 2030. With four low-carbon clusters set up by 2030, and at least one fully net-zero cluster by 2040.

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- Kick-starting the hydrogen economy – The government plans to work with industry to aim for 5GW of production by 2030, backed up by a new £240m net-zero Hydrogen Fund for low-carbon hydrogen production.
- Investing in electric vehicle charge points – The government plans to invest £1.3bn to accelerate the rollout of charge points for electric vehicles as well as up to £1bn to support the electrification of cars.
- Supporting the lowest paid with their bills – The government aims to support those with lower incomes through a £6.7bn package of measures that could save families in old inefficient homes up to £400.
- Moving away from fossil fuel boilers – The government aims, by the mid-2030s, for all newly installed heating systems to be low-carbon or to be appliances that it is confident can be converted to a clean fuel supply.
- Supporting North Sea oil and gas transition – The white paper notes the importance of supporting the North Sea oil and gas transition for the people and communities most affected by the move away from fossil fuels. The government aims to achieve this by ensuring that the expertise of the oil and gas sector be drawn on in developing CCS and hydrogen production to provide new green jobs for the future.

A.33 Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020) [See [reference 154](#)] sets out the strategic priorities for the new Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), published in July 2021. It sets out in detail what government, business and society will need to do to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed across all modes of transport, putting us on a pathway to achieving carbon budgets and net zero emissions across every single mode of transport by 2050. This document acknowledges that while there have been recently published strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in individual transport modes, transport as a whole sector needs to go further and more quickly, therefore the TDP takes a coordinated, cross-modal approach to deliver the transport sector's contribution to both carbon budgets and net zero.

A.34 The Sixth Carbon Budget report (2020) [See [reference 155](#)] is based on an extensive programme of analysis, consultation and consideration by the Committee and its staff, building on the evidence published last year for our Net

Zero advice. Our recommended pathway requires a 78% reduction in UK territorial emissions between 1990 and 2035. In effect, bringing forward the UK's previous 80% target by nearly 15 years.

A.35 Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management: Policy Statement (2020) [See reference 156] sets out the government's long-term ambition to create a nation more resilient to future flood and coastal erosion risk, and in doing so, reduce the risk of harm to people, the environment and the economy. The Policy Statement sets out five policy areas which will drive this ambition. These are:

- Upgrading and expanding our national flood defences and infrastructure;
- Managing the flow of water more effectively;
- Harnessing the power of nature to reduce flood and coastal erosion risk and achieve multiple benefits;
- Better preparing our communities; and
- Enabling more resilient places through a catchment-based approach.

A.36 The National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2011) [See reference 157] sets out the national framework for managing the risk of flooding and coastal erosion. It sets out the roles for risk management authorities and communities to help them understand their responsibilities. The strategic aims and objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Manage the risk to people and their property;
- Facilitate decision-making and action at the appropriate level – individual, community or Local Authority, river catchment, coastal cell or national; and
- Achieve environmental, social and economic benefits, consistent with the principles of sustainable development.

A.37 The Waste (Circular Economy) (Amendment) Regulations [See reference 158] seek to prevent waste generation and to monitor and assess the implementation of measures included in waste prevention programmes. They set out requirements to justify not separating waste streams close to

source for re-use, recycling or other recovery operations, prohibit incineration and landfilling of waste unless such treatment process represent the best environmental outcome in accordance with the waste hierarchy. The Regulations set out when waste management plans and in waste prevention programmes are required. The Regulations focus on the circular economy as a means for businesses to maximise the value of waste and waste treatment.

A.38 Net Zero – The UK’s contribution to stopping global warming (Climate Change Committee, 2019) [See reference 159] responds to a request from the Governments of the UK, Wales and Scotland, asking the Committee to reassess the UK’s long-term emissions targets. Our new emissions scenarios draw on ten new research projects, three expert advisory groups, and reviews of the work of the IPCC and others. The report’s key findings are that:

- The Committee on Climate Change recommends a new emissions target for the UK: net-zero greenhouse gases by 2050.
- In Scotland, we recommend a net-zero date of 2045, reflecting Scotland’s greater relative capacity to remove emissions than the UK as a whole.
- In Wales, we recommend a 95% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050.

A.39 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 [See reference 160] and The Flood and Water Regulations 2019 [See reference 161] sets out measures to ensure that risk from all sources of flooding is managed more effectively. This includes incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings; utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding; identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere; rolling back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

A.40 The Climate Change Act 2008 [See reference 162] sets targets for UK greenhouse gas emission reductions of at least 100% by 2050, against a 1990 baseline (this was previously 80% but was updated to a net zero target in June 2019).

A.41 The National Adaptation Programme and the Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate [See reference 163] sets out visions for the following sectors:

- People and the Built Environment – “to promote the development of a healthy, equitable and resilient population, well placed to reduce the harmful health impacts of climate change...buildings and places (including built heritage) and the people who live and work in them are resilient and organisations in the built environment sector have an increased capacity to address the risks and make the most of the opportunities of a changing climate.”
- Infrastructure – “an infrastructure network that is resilient to today’s natural hazards and prepared for the future changing climate.”
- Natural Environment – “the natural environment, with diverse and healthy ecosystems, is resilient to climate change, able to accommodate change and valued for the adaptation services it provides.”
- Business and Industry – “UK businesses are resilient to extreme weather and prepared for future risks and opportunities from climate change.”
- Local Government – “Local Government plays a central role in leading and supporting local places to become more resilient to a range of future risks and to be prepared for the opportunities from a changing climate.”

A.42 Our Waste, Our Resources: A strategy for England (2018) [See reference 164] aims to increase resource productivity and eliminate avoidable waste by 2050. The Strategy sets out key targets which include: a 50% recycling rate for household waste by 2020, a 75% recycling rate for packaging by 2030, 65% recycling rate for municipal solid waste by 2035 and municipal waste to landfill 10% or less by 2035.

A.43 The Clean Growth Strategy (2017) [See reference 165] sets out the approach of the government to secure growth of the national income while cutting greenhouse gas emissions. The key policies and proposals of the Strategy sit below a number of overarching principles: acceleration of clean growth including through recommendations for private and public investment to meet carbon budgets; providing support to improve business and industry

energy efficiency; improving energy efficiency in the housing stock including through low carbon heating; accelerating the shift to low carbon transport; delivering clean, smart, flexible power; enhancing the benefits and value of our natural resources; leading in the public sector to meet emissions targets; and ensure Government leadership to drive clean growth.

A.44 The National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) (2014) [See reference 166] identifies key planning objectives, requiring planning Authorities to:

- Help deliver sustainable development through driving waste management up the waste hierarchy;
- Ensure waste management is considered alongside other spatial planning concerns;
- Provide a framework in which communities take more responsibility for their own waste;
- Help secure the recovery or disposal of waste without endangering human health and without harming the environment; and
- Ensure the design and layout of new development supports sustainable waste management.

A.45 The Waste Management Plan for England (2013) [See reference 167] sets out the measures for England to work towards a zero waste economy.

A.46 The Energy Efficiency Strategy: The Energy Efficiency Opportunity in the UK (2012) [See reference 168] aims to realise the wider energy efficiency potential that is available in the UK economy by maximising the potential of existing dwellings by implementing 21st century energy management initiatives on 19th century homes.

A.47 The Promotion of the Use of Energy from Renewables Sources Regulations (2011) [See reference 169] required the government to ensure that renewable energy comprised 15% of the UK's total energy mix by 2020. The Renewable Energy Directive has now been superseded by Directive (EU) 2018/2001 (RED II). Although the UK has now been released from the

renewable energy targets under RED II following Brexit, the UK-EU Trade and Cooperation Agreement includes a commitment to promote energy efficiency and the use of energy from renewable sources and reaffirmation of the EU's 2030 "targets" and the UK's 2030 "ambitions" for renewable energy and energy efficiency.

A.48 The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan: National Strategy for Climate and Energy (2009) [See reference 170] sets out a five-point plan to tackle climate change. The points are as follows: protecting the public from immediate risk, preparing for the future, limiting the severity of future climate change through a new international climate agreement, building a low carbon UK and supporting individuals, communities and businesses to play their part.

A.49 The UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009) [See reference 171] sets out the ways in which we will tackle climate change by reducing our CO₂ emissions through the generation of a renewable electricity, heat and transport technologies.

A.50 The Planning and Energy Act (2008) [See reference 172] enables local planning authorities to set requirements for carbon reduction and renewable energy provision. It should be noted that while the Housing Standards Review proposed to repeal some of these provisions, at the time of writing there have been no amendments to the Planning and Energy Act.

Population and Human Health

A.51 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2024) [See reference 173] sets out the Government's planning policy for traveller sites. The Government's overarching aim is to ensure fair and equal treatment for travellers, in a way that facilitates the traditional and nomadic way of life of travellers while respecting the interests of the settled community.

A.52 The Homes England Strategic Plan 2023 to 2028 (2023) [See reference 174] sets out a vision to ensure more homes are built in areas of

greatest need, to improve affordability, and make a more resilient and diverse housing market.

A.53 The Green Infrastructure Framework (2023) [See reference 175] by Natural England will help increase the amount of green cover to 40% in urban residential areas. The Green Infrastructure Framework provides a structure to analyse where greenspace in urban environments is needed most. It aims to support equitable access to greenspace across the country, with an overarching target for everyone being able to reach good quality greenspace in their local area. From parks to green roofs, and increased tree cover, the Green Infrastructure Framework will make a significant contribution to nature recovery by embedding nature into new developments. Increasing the extent and connectivity of nature-rich habitats will also help increase wildlife populations, build resilience to the impacts of climate change, and ensure our cities are habitable for the future

A.54 The White Paper Levelling Up the United Kingdom (2022) [See reference 176] sets out how the UK Government will spread opportunity more equally across the UK. It comprises 12 UK-wide missions to achieve by 2030. Missions which relate to population, health and wellbeing state that by 2030:

- The gap in Healthy Life Expectancy (HLE) between local areas where it is highest and lowest will have narrowed, and by 2035 HLE will rise by five years.
- Well-being will have improved in every area of the UK, with the gap between top performing and other areas closing.
- Homicide, serious violence, and neighbourhood crime will have fallen, focused on the worst-affected areas.
- Pride in place, such as people's satisfaction with their town centre and engagement in local culture and community, will have risen in every area of the UK, with the gap between the top performing and other areas closing.
- The number of primary school children achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and maths will have significantly increased. In England, this will mean 90% of children will achieve the expected standard, and the

percentage of children meeting the expected standard in the worst performing areas will have increased by over a third.

- Renters will have a secure path to ownership with the number of first-time buyers increasing in all areas; and the Government's ambition is for the number of non-decent rented homes to have fallen by 50%, with the biggest improvements in the lowest performing areas.

A.55 A fairer private rented sector White Paper (2022) [See reference 177]

aims to build upon the vision of the Levelling Up White Paper and reform the Private Rented Sector and improve housing quality. It outlines that everyone deserves a secure and decent home and outlines measures to improve the experience of renters in the Private Rented Sector.

A.56 The State of the Environment: Health, People and the Environment (2021) [See reference 178] focuses on the relationship between human health and people's access to and connection with a clean, high quality natural environment. It presents information on England's environment, and people's exposure to environmental pollutants, flooding and climate change in relation to human health. It highlights environmental inequalities that contribute to differences in health outcomes for people in England.

A.57 The National Design Guide (2021) [See reference 179] sets out the Government's priorities for well-designed places in the form of ten characteristics: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes and buildings, resources and lifespan.

A.58 Build Back Better: Our Plan for Health and Social Care (2021) [See reference 180] sets out the government's new plan for health and social care. It provides an overview of how this plan will tackle the elective backlog in the NHS and put the NHS on a sustainable footing. It sets out details of the plan for adult social care in England, including a cap on social care costs and how financial assistance will work for those without substantial assets. It covers wider support that the government will provide for the social care system, and how the government will improve the integration of health and social care. It

explains the government's plan to introduce a new Health and Social Care Levy.

A.59 The COVID-19 Mental Health and Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan (2021) [See reference 181] sets out the Government's plan to prevent, mitigate and respond to the mental health impacts of the pandemic during 2021 and 2022. Its main objectives are to support the general population to take action and look after their own mental wellbeing; to take action to address factors which play a crucial role in shaping mental health and wellbeing outcomes; and, to support services to meet the need for specialist support.

A.60 The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper (2020) [See reference 182] sets out the Government's actions to ensure residents in social housing are safe, listened to, live in good quality homes and have access to redress when things go wrong.

A.61 Using the planning system to promote healthy weight environments (2020), Addendum (2021) [See reference 183] provides a framework and starting point for local authorities to clearly set out in local planning guidance how best to achieve healthy weight environments based on local evidence and needs, by focusing on environments that enable healthier eating and help promote more physical activity as the default. The Addendum provides updates on the implications for planning for a healthier food environment, specifically on the hot food takeaways retail uses, and sets out recommended actions in light of changes to the Use Class Order (UCO) in England from 1 September 2020.

A.62 The Public Health England, PHE Strategy 2020-25 (2019) [See reference 184] identifies PHE's priorities upon which to focus over this five-year period to protect people and help people to live longer in good health.

A.63 The Housing White Paper 2017 (Fixing our broken housing market) [See reference 185] sets out ways to address the shortfall in affordable homes and boost housing supply. The White Paper focuses on the following:

- Planning for the right homes in the right places – Higher densities in appropriate areas, protecting the Green Belt while making more land

available for housing by maximising the contribution from brownfield and surplus public land, regenerating estates, releasing more small and medium-sized sites, allowing rural communities to grow and making it easier to build new settlements.

- Building homes faster – Improved speed of planning cases, ensuring infrastructure is provided and supporting developers to build out more quickly.
- Diversifying the Market – Backing small and medium-sized house builders, custom-build, institutional investors, new contractors, housing associations.
- Helping people now – supporting home ownership and providing affordable housing for all types of people, including the most vulnerable.

A.64 The Technical Housing Standards – Nationally Described Space

Standard (2015) [See reference 186] sets out the Government’s new nationally described space standard. The standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and sets out requirements for the Gross Internal (floor) Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy, as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home.

A.65 The Select Committee on Public Service and Demographic Change Report Ready for Ageing? (2013)

[See reference 187] warns that society is underprepared for the ageing population. The report states “longer lives can be a great benefit, but there has been a collective failure to address the implications and without urgent action this great boon could turn into a series of miserable crises”. The report highlights the under provision of specialist housing for older people and the need to plan for the housing needs of the older population as well as younger people.

A.66 Fair Society, Healthy Lives (2011)

[See reference 188] investigated health inequalities in England and the actions needed in order to tackle them. Subsequently, a supplementary report was prepared providing additional evidence relating to spatial planning and health on the basis that there is “overwhelming evidence that health and environmental inequalities are

inexorably linked and that poor environments contribute significantly to poor health and health inequalities”.

A.67 Laying the foundations: A housing strategy for England [See reference 189] aims to provide support to deliver new homes and improve social mobility.

A.68 Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England (2010) [See reference 190] sets out how the Government’s approach to public health challenges will:

- Protect the population from health threats – led by central Government, with a strong system to the frontline;
- Empower local leadership and encourage wide responsibility across society to improve everyone’s health and wellbeing and tackle the wider factors that influence it;
- Focus on key outcomes, doing what works to deliver them, with transparency of outcomes to enable accountability through a proposed new public health outcomes framework;
- Reflect the Government’s core values of freedom, fairness and responsibility by strengthening self-esteem, confidence and personal responsibility; positively promoting healthy behaviours and lifestyles; and adapting the environment to make healthy choices easier; and
- Balance the freedoms of individuals and organisations with the need to avoid harm to others, use a ‘ladder’ of interventions to determine the least intrusive approach necessary to achieve the desired effect and aim to make voluntary approaches work before resorting to regulation.

A.69 The Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 [See reference 191] apply to environmental noise, mainly from transport. The regulations require regular noise mapping and action planning for road, rail and aviation noise and noise in large urban areas. They also require Noise Action Plans based on the maps for road and rail noise and noise in large urban areas. The Action Plans identify Important Areas (areas exposed to the highest levels of noise) and suggest

ways the relevant authorities can reduce these. Major airports and those which affect large urban areas are also required to produce and publish their own Noise Action Plans separately. The Regulations do not apply to noise from domestic activities such as noise created by neighbours; at workplaces; inside means of transport; or military activities in military areas.

Biodiversity, including Flora and Fauna, Landscape and Soils

A.70 Chilterns Nature Recovery Plan (draft) [See reference 192] builds on the Chilterns Management Plan [See reference 193] and focuses on biodiversity and habitat recovery. It is to support individuals, landowners, community groups and organisations working to restore nature in the Chilterns. It underwent public consultation in June 2025 and is now awaiting amendment and finalisation.

A.71 Climate Adaptation Management Plans [See reference 194] must be produced by 2028 by Protected Landscapes authorities as required by the Third National Adaptation Programme [See reference 195]. It is to consider the impacts of climate change on the entirety of the Protected Landscape, including its nature, people and place.

A.72 Protected Landscapes Targets and Outcomes Framework (2024) establish the targets for National Parks and National Landscapes to achieve three outcomes from the Environmental Improvement Plan [See reference 196]. These include: Goal 1: Thriving plants and wildlife; Goal 7: Mitigating and adapting to climate change; and Goal 10: Enhancing beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment. It also sets out how progress towards these targets will be measured.

A.73 The Environment Improvement Plan 2023 [See reference 197] for England is the first revision of the 25YEP. It builds on the 25YEP vision with a new plan setting out how we will work with landowners, communities and

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businesses to deliver each of our goals for improving the environment, matched with interim targets to measure progress. Taking these actions will help us restore nature, reduce environmental pollution, and increase the prosperity of our country. To achieve its vision, the 25YEP set out 10 goals. We have used those 10 goals set out in the 25YEP as the basis for this document: setting out the progress made against all 10, the specific targets and commitments made in relation to each goal, and our plan to continue to deliver these targets and the overarching goals. The environmental goals are:

- Goal 1: Thriving plants and wildlife
- Goal 2: Clean air
- Goal 3: Clean and plentiful water
- Goal 4: Managing exposure to chemicals and pesticides
- Goal 5: Maximise our resources, minimise our waste
- Goal 6: Using resources from nature sustainably
- Goal 7: Mitigating and adapting to climate change
- Goal 8: Reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards
- Goal 9: Enhancing biosecurity
- Goal 10: Enhanced beauty, heritage, and engagement with the natural environment

A.74 Working with nature (2022) [See reference 198] discusses the importance of nature in providing ecosystem services and presents recent and historical trends in biodiversity. It outlines some of the main pressures affecting England's habitats, wildlife and ecosystems: land use; climate change; pollution; invasive non-native species; and hydrological change.

A.75 Establishing the Best Available Techniques for the UK (UK BAT) (2022) [See reference 199] sets out a new framework that aims to improve industrial emissions and protect the environment through the introduction of a UK BAT regime. It aims to set up a new structure of governance with a new independent body in the form of Standards Council and the Regulators Group,

consisting of government officials and expert regulators from all UK nations. It aims to also establish a new UK Air Quality Governance Group to oversee the work of the Standards Council and the delivery of the requirements under this new framework. It is anticipated that the BATC for the first four industry sectors will be published in the second half of 2023.

A.76 The Environment Act 2021 [See reference 200] sets statutory targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas: air quality, biodiversity, water, and resource efficiency and waste reduction. Biodiversity elements in the Act include:

- Strengthened biodiversity duty. Both onsite and offsite enhancements must be maintained for at least 30 years after completion of a development.
- Biodiversity net gain to ensure developments deliver at least 10% increase in biodiversity
- Local Nature Recovery Strategies to support a Nature Recovery Network.
- Duty upon Local Authorities to consult on street tree felling.
- Strengthen woodland protection enforcement measures.
- Conservation Covenants.
- Protected Site Strategies and Species Conservation Strategies to support the design and delivery of strategic approaches to deliver better outcomes for nature.
- Prohibit larger UK businesses from using commodities associated with wide-scale deforestation.
- Requires regulated businesses to establish a system of due diligence for each regulated commodity used in their supply chain, requires regulated businesses to report on their due diligence, introduces a due diligence enforcement system.

A.77 The Conservation of Habitats and Species (Amendment) (EU Exit) Regulations 2019 [See reference 201] protect biodiversity through the conservation of natural habitats and species of wild fauna and flora, including

birds. The Regulations lay down rules for the protection, management and exploitation of such habitats and species, including how adverse effects on such habitats and species should be avoided, minimised and reported.

A.78 Environmental Damage (Prevention and Remediation) Regulations 2015 [See reference 202] are wide-ranging government regulations that can potentially apply to many businesses. The regulations oblige those who create environmental damage, whether by water pollution, adversely affecting protected species or sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs), or by land pollution that causes risks to human health, to not only cease the damage, but also to implement a wide variety of remedial measures to restore affected areas.

A.79 Biodiversity offsetting in England Green Paper (2013) [See reference 203]. Biodiversity offsets are conservation activities designed to compensate for residual losses. The Green Paper sets out a framework for offsetting.

A.80 Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011) [See reference 204] guides conservation efforts in England up to 2020 by requiring a national halt to biodiversity loss, supporting healthy ecosystems and establishing ecological networks.

A.81 Defra Right of Way Circular (1/09) (2011) [See reference 205] gives advice to local authorities on recording, managing and maintaining, protecting and changing public rights of way.

A.82 The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2010 [See reference 206] is an Act of Parliament to make new provision for public access to the countryside.

A.83 Safeguarding our Soils – A Strategy for England (2009) [See reference 207] sets out how England's soils will be managed sustainably. It highlights those areas which Defra will prioritise and focus attention on tackling degradation threats, including better protection for agricultural soils; protecting and enhancing stores of soil carbon; building the resilience of soils to a

changing climate; preventing soil pollution; effective soil protection during construction and dealing with contaminated land.

A.84 England Biodiversity Strategy Climate Change Adaptation Principles (2008) [See reference 208] sets out principles to guide adaptation to climate change. The principles are take: practical action now, maintain and increase ecological resilience, accommodate change, integrate action across all sectors and develop knowledge and plan strategically. The precautionary principle underpin all of these. Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006.

A.85 The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 [See reference 209] places a duty on public bodies to conserve biodiversity.

A.86 Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) [See reference 210] was enacted primarily to implement the Birds Directive and Bern Convention in Great Britain. The Act received royal assent on 30 October 1981 and was brought into force in incremental steps. It is supplemented by the Wildlife and Countryside (Service of Notices) Act 1985, which relates to notices served under the 1981 Act. The act contains four parts and 17 schedules, which cover:

- Part 1: Wildlife (includes protection of birds, animals and plants; and measures to prevent the establishment of non-native species which may be detrimental to native wildlife).
- Part 2: Nature conservation, the countryside and National Parks (including the designation of protected areas).
- Part 3: Public rights of way.
- Part 4: Miscellaneous provisions of the act.

A.87 The National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act 1949 [See reference 211] is an Act of Parliament to make provision for National Parks and the establishment of a National Parks Commission; to confer on the Nature Conservancy and local authorities' powers for the establishment and maintenance of nature reserves; to make further provision for the recording,

creation, maintenance and improvement of public paths and for securing access to open country.

Cultural Heritage

A.88 Historic England, Corporate Plan 2022-23 [See reference 212]

contains the action plan which sets out how the aims of the corporate plan will be delivered. The plan includes priorities to demonstrate how Historic England will continue to work towards delivering the heritage sector's priorities for the historic environment.

A.89 The Heritage Statement 2017 [See reference 213] sets out how the Government will support the heritage sector and help it to protect and care for our heritage and historic environment, in order to maximise the economic and social impact of heritage and to ensure that everyone can enjoy and benefit from it.

A.90 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, Historic England Advice Note 8 (2016) [See reference 214] sets out requirements for the consideration and appraisal of effects on the historic environment as part of the Sustainability Appraisal/Strategic Environmental Assessment process.

A.91 The Government's Statement on the Historic Environment for England 2010 [See reference 215] sets out the Government's vision for the historic environment. It calls for those who have the power to shape the historic environment to recognise its value and to manage it in an intelligent manner in light of the contribution that it can make to social, economic and cultural life. Includes reference to promoting the role of the historic environment within the Government's response to climate change and the wider sustainable development agenda.

A.92 The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 [See reference 216] is an Act of Parliament that changed the laws for granting

of planning permission for building works, with a particular focus on listed buildings and conservation areas.

A.93 The Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 [See reference 217] is a law passed by the UK government to protect the archaeological heritage of England and Wales and Scotland. Under this Act, the Secretary of State has a duty to compile and maintain a schedule of ancient monuments of national importance, in order to help preserve them. It also creates criminal offences for unauthorised works to, or damage of, these monuments.

A.94 The Historic Buildings and Ancient Monuments Act 1953 [See reference 218] is an Act of Parliament that makes provision for the compilation of a register of gardens and other land (parks and gardens, and battlefields).

Air and Water

A.95 The National Framework for Water Resources 2025: Water for Growth, Nature and a Resilient Future (2025) [See reference 219] provides a strategic blueprint for managing England's long term water needs. It emphasises the twin imperatives of securing resilient water supplies to support housing, energy, food production, economic growth, and a thriving natural environment, while safeguarding ecosystems through sustainable abstraction and nature based solutions. The Framework projects significant pressures on water resources driven by climate change, population growth, and emerging industrial demands, forecasting a shortfall of up to 5 billion litres per day by 2055. It calls for integrated, multi sector planning across national, regional, and local levels, combining demand management (such as leakage reduction and efficiency improvements) with development of new infrastructure and environmental enhancements.

A.96 Plan for Water: Our Integrated Plan for Delivering Clean and Plentiful Water (2023) [See reference 220] sets out actions to transform the management of the water system, deliver cleaner water for nature and people,

and secure a plentiful water supply. The plan also sets out measures to address sources of pollution, and boost water supplies through more investment, tighter regulation, and more effective enforcement.

A.97 The Air quality strategy for England (2023) [See reference 221] sets out local authorities powers and responsibilities as well as the actions that Defra expects local authorities to take in support of the governments long-term air quality goals, including new PM2.5 targets.

A.98 Drainage and wastewater management plans: guiding principles for the water industry (2022) [See reference 222] for water and sewerage companies who must produce drainage and wastewater management plans and look at current and future capacity, pressures and risks and how they will manage these and work with other risk management authorities or drainage asset owners.

A.99 Flood Risk Management Plans 2021 – 2027 (2022) [See reference 223] set out how organisations, stakeholders and communities will work together to manage flood risk in England. These plans explain the objectives and measures required to manage flood risk at a national and local level.

A.100 National Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Strategy for England (2022) [See reference 224] sets out a vision of England ready for, and resilient to, flooding and coastal change to the year 2100.

A.101 River Basin Management Plans updated 2022 [See reference 225] describes the challenges that threaten the environment and how these challenges can be managed for England for each river basin district.

A.102 Managing Water Abstraction (2021) [See reference 226] is the overarching document for managing water resources in England and Wales and links together the abstraction licensing strategies.

A.103 The Environment Act 2021 [See reference 227] sets statutory targets for the recovery of the natural world in four priority areas: air quality, biodiversity, water, and resource efficiency and waste reduction. It also establishes the Office for Environmental Protection which will act as an impartial and objective body for the protection and improvement of the environment. The Act sets out legislation which covers:

- Resource efficiency, producer responsibility, and the management, enforcement and regulation of waste;
- Local air quality management frameworks and the recall of motor vehicles etc; and
- Plans and proposals for water resources, drainage and sewerage management, storm overflows, water quality and land drainage.

A.104 National Chalk Streams Strategy (2021) [See reference 228] was built around the “trinity of ecological health”: water quantity, water quality and habitat quality and included 30+ recommendations to Defra, the Environment Agency, Natural England, the water companies, NGOs and stakeholders.

A.105 Meeting our future water needs: a national framework for water resources (2020) [See reference 229] set the strategic direction for long term regional water resources planning. The framework is built on a shared vision to:

- leave the environment in a better state than we found it
- improve the nation’s resilience to drought and minimise interruptions to all water users

A.106 The national framework [See reference 230] marks a step change in water resources planning. The 5 regional water resources groups will produce a set of co-ordinated, cross-sector plans. These plans will:

- address the scale of challenges we face by identifying the options needed in their region to manage demand and increase supply
- realise opportunities from water resources planning by working collaboratively

A.107 The Clean Air Strategy 2019 [See reference 231] sets out the comprehensive action that is required from across all parts of Government and society to meet these goals. This will be underpinned by new England-wide powers to control major sources of air pollution, in line with the risk they pose to public health and the environment, plus new local powers to take action in areas with an air pollution problem. These will support the creation of Clean Air Zones to lower emissions from all sources of air pollution, backed up with clear enforcement mechanisms. The UK has set stringent targets to cut emissions by 2020 and 2030.

A.108 The Environment Agency's Approach for Groundwater Protection (2018) [See reference 232] contains position statements which provide information about the Environment Agency's approach to managing and protecting groundwater. They detail how the Environment Agency delivers government policy for groundwater and adopts a risk-based approach where legislation allows. Many of the approaches set out in the position statements are not statutory but may be included in, or referenced by, statutory guidance and legislation.

A.109 The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2017 [See reference 233] protect inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater, and outlines the associated river basin management process. These Regulations establish the need to prevent deterioration of waterbodies and to protect, enhance and restore waterbodies with the aim of achieving good ecological and chemical status.

A.110 The UK Plan for Tackling Roadside Nitrogen Dioxide Concentrations 2017 [See reference 234] sets out the Government's ambition and actions for delivering a better environment and cleaner air, including £1 billion investment in ultra-low emission vehicles, a £290 million National Productivity Investment Fund, a £11 million Air Quality Grant Fund and £255 million Implementation Fund to help Local Authorities to prepare Air Quality Action Plans and improve air quality, an £89 million Green Bus Fund, £1.2 billion Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and £100 million to help improve air quality on the National road network.

A.111 Drought response: our framework for England (2017) [See reference 235] tells you how drought affects England and how the Environment Agency works with government, water companies and others to manage the effects on people, business and the environment. It aims to ensure consistency in the way we co-ordinate drought management across England. It sets out:

- how drought affects different parts of England
- who is involved in managing drought and how we work together
- how we and others take action to manage drought
- how we monitor and measure the impacts of drought to advise senior management and government on the prospects and possible action
- how we report on drought and communicate with others

A.112 The Nitrate Pollution Prevention Regulations 2016 [See reference 236] provides for the designation of land as nitrate vulnerable zones and imposes annual limits on the amount of nitrogen from organic manure that may be applied or spread in a holding in a nitrate vulnerable zone. The Regulations also specify the amount of nitrogen to be spread on a crop and how, where and when to spread nitrogen fertiliser, and how it should be stored. It also establishes closed periods during which the spreading of nitrogen fertiliser is prohibited.

A.113 The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2016 [See reference 237] focus on the quality of water for drinking, washing, cooking and food preparation, and for food production. Their purpose is to protect human health from the adverse effects of any contamination of water intended for human consumption by ensuring it is wholesome and clean.

A.114 The Environmental Permitting Regulations 2016 [See reference 238] streamline the legislative system for industrial and waste installations into a single permitting structure for those activities which have the potential to cause harm to human health or the environment. They set out how to prevent or, where that is not practicable, to reduce emissions into air, water and land and to

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prevent the generation of waste, in order to achieve a high level of protection of the environment and human health.

A.115 The Air Quality Standards Regulations 2016 [See reference 239] set out limits on concentrations of outdoor air pollutants that impact public health, most notably particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5) and nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). It also sets out the procedure and requirements for the designation of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

A.116 The Water White Paper (2012) [See reference 240] sets out the Government's vision for the water sector including proposals on protecting water resources and reforming the water supply industry. It states outlines the measures that will be taken to tackle issues such as poorly performing ecosystem, and the combined impacts of climate change and population growth on stressed water resources.

A.117 The National Policy Statement for Waste Water (2012) [See reference 241] sets out Government policy for the provision of major waste water infrastructure. The policy set out in this NPS is, for the most part, intended to make existing policy and practice in consenting nationally significant waste water infrastructure clearer and more transparent.

A.118 The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 [See reference 242] and **The Flood and Water Regulations (2019) [See reference 243]** sets out measures to ensure that risk from all sources of flooding is managed more effectively. This includes incorporating greater resilience measures into the design of new buildings; utilising the environment in order to reduce flooding; identifying areas suitable for inundation and water storage to reduce the risk of flooding elsewhere; rolling back development in coastal areas to avoid damage from flooding or coastal erosion; and creating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).

A.119 Groundwater (England and Wales) Regulations 2009 [See reference 244] implement in England and Wales Community legislation on pollution of groundwater. They provide rules for the granting by the Environment Agency of

a permit under these Regulations, consent under section 91(8) of the Water Resources Act 1991 and (with exceptions) an environmental permit under the Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations. In addition, the Regulations create an offence of discharge of a hazardous substance or non-hazardous pollutant without a permit, provide for powers of enforcement of the Environment Agency and prescribe penalties for offences committed under these Regulations.

A.120 Flood Risk Regulations 2009 [See reference 245] regulations were enacted in December 2009. They outline a set of tasks, which the county council is required to follow between now and approximately 2015. The regulations also implement the 2007 EU Floods Directive. In accordance with the regulations the council has a series of new responsibilities, these are:

- The preparation of a Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment (PFRA) Report, including the identification of flood risk areas
- The preparation of Flood Hazard Maps and Flood Risk Maps
- The preparation of Flood Risk Management Plans
- Cooperating with the Environment Agency and other Lead Local Flood Authorities.

A.121 Future Water: The Government's Water Strategy for England (2008) [See reference 246] sets out how the Government wants the water sector to look by 2030, providing an outline of steps which need to be taken to get there. These steps include improving the supply of water; agreeing on important new infrastructure such as reservoirs; proposals to time limit abstraction licences; and reducing leakage. The document also states that pollution to rivers will be tackled, whilst discharge from sewers will be reduced.

A.122 The Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland (2007) [See reference 247] sets out a way forward for work and planning on air quality issues by setting out the air quality standards and objectives to be achieved. It introduces a new policy framework for tackling fine particles and identifies potential new national policy measures which modelling

indicates could give further health benefits and move closer towards meeting the Strategy's objectives. The objectives of the Strategy are to:

- Further improve air quality in the UK from today and long term; and
- Provide benefits to health quality of life and the environment.

A.123 The Environmental Noise Regulations 2006 [See reference 248]

apply to environmental noise, mainly from transport. The regulations require regular noise mapping and action planning for road, rail and aviation noise and noise in large urban areas. They also require Noise Action Plans based on the maps for road and rail noise and noise in large urban areas. The Action Plans identify Important Areas (areas exposed to the highest levels of noise) and suggest ways the relevant authorities can reduce these. Major airports and those which affect large urban areas are also required to produce and publish their own Noise Action Plans separately. The Regulations do not apply to noise from domestic activities such as noise created by neighbours; at workplaces; inside means of transport; or military activities in military areas.

A.124 The Urban Waste Water Treatment Regulations (2003) [See

reference 249] protect the environment from the adverse effects of urban waste water discharges and certain industrial sectors, notably domestic and industrial waste water. The regulations require the collection of waste water and specifies how different types of waste water should be treated, disposed and reused.

A.125 The Environmental Protection Act 1990 [See reference 250]

makes provision for the improved control of pollution to the air, water and land by regulating the management of waste and the control of emissions. Seeks to ensure that decisions pertaining to the environment are made in an integrated manner, in collaboration with appropriate authorities, non-governmental organisations and other persons.

Material Assets

A.126 UK Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy (2025) [See reference 251] sets out an integrated plan to transform economic, housing and social infrastructure over the next decade. It commits to at least £725 billion in public investment, supplemented by private financing via carefully targeted public-private partnership models and a new National Wealth Fund. The strategy introduces multiyear capital budgets (initially five-year, reviewed biennially) and establishes the National Infrastructure and Service Transformation Authority (NISTA) to unify planning, improve project delivery, assure major schemes, and coordinate a transparent Infrastructure Pipeline launched in July 2025. It aims to boost growth, align infrastructure with government missions, including housing, clean energy, public services and net zero, reduce planning delays, build institutional capacity, support supply chains and skills development, and provide stability and clarity to investors.

A.127 The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy (2025) [See reference 252] outlines a 10 year plan to boost business investment and elevate the UK's performance in eight designated growth driving sectors: advanced manufacturing; clean energy industries; creative industries; defence; digital and technologies; financial services; life sciences; and professional & business services. The strategy aims to provide long term stability and certainty to encourage both domestic and international investment, through sector plans, streamlined regulation, enhanced access to finance, including via the National Wealth Fund and British Business Bank, and by accelerating grid connections and infrastructure delivery. It includes regional and place-based initiatives, with targeted support for city regions, industrial clusters and Industrial Strategy Zones to drive inclusive growth across the UK. The strategy is also supported by a robust monitoring framework overseen by a newly established Industrial Strategy Advisory Council, and embeds vocabulary around long-termism, pro-business engagement, competition policy, skills development and innovation.

A.128 The Plan for Change (2024) [See reference 253] outlines the UK Government's framework for long-term policy delivery across five priority areas: economic growth, healthcare, public safety, opportunity, and clean energy. It

sets out specific targets within this Parliament, underpinned by aims to ensure economic stability, reform public services, and implement a more mission-focused approach to governance.

A.129 Kickstarting Economic Growth: Milestone: Raising Living Standards in Every Part of the United Kingdom (2024) [See reference 254] and **Rebuilding Britain (2024) [See reference 255]** identifies economic growth as the number one mission of the Government. The Government seeks to deliver a milestone of higher living standards through economic growth by working in partnership with businesses, ensuring every nation and region realises its full potential, driving innovation, investment and the adoption of technology to seize the opportunities of a future economy, and helping people to get a job, stay at work, and progress in their careers, with good employment opportunities across the country. Rebuilding Britain (2024) seeks to address the housing crisis by delivering new homes and the critical infrastructure that underpins economic growth. This will be achieved by reforming the planning system so that it is pro-growth and pro-infrastructure, working in partnership with local leaders, housebuilders and infrastructure developers, and increasing supply and delivery through the biggest boost to social and affordable housing in a generation.

A.130 Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024 (2024) [See reference 256] aims to drive competitiveness, increase productivity, reduce carbon emissions, and generate fairer returns across the agricultural industry. The Transition Plan introduces several new schemes to improve the environment, animal health and welfare, and farm resilience and productivity (e.g., grants will be available for sustainable farming practices, creating habitats for nature recovery and making landscape-scale changes such as establishing new woodland and other ecosystem services).

A.131 UK Invest 2035: The Modern Industrial Strategy (2024) [See reference 257] is the Government's credible, 10-year plan to deliver the certainty and stability businesses need to invest in the high growth sectors. The Strategy will focus on tackling barriers to growth, creating the right conditions for increased investment, high-quality jobs and ensuring tangible impact in communities across the UK.

A.132 The Growth Plan 2022 [See reference 258] makes growth the government's central economic mission, setting a target of reaching a 2.5% trend rate. Sustainable growth will lead to higher wages, greater opportunities and provide sustainable funding for public services. The Chancellor of the Exchequer's "growth plan" contained a raft of significant tax measures, with major changes being announced for both individuals and businesses.

A.133 Build Back Better: Our Plan for Growth (2021) [See reference 259] sets out a plan to 'build back better' tackling long-term problems to deliver growth that delivers high-quality jobs across the UK while supporting the transition to net zero. This will build on three core pillars of growth: infrastructure, skills and innovation.

A.134 The Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024 [See reference 260] aims to drive competitiveness, increase productivity, reduce carbon emissions, and generate fairer returns across the agricultural industry. The Transition Plan introduces several new schemes to improve the environment, animal health and welfare, and farm resilience and productivity (e.g., grants will be available for sustainable farming practices, creating habitats for nature recovery and making landscape-scale changes such as establishing new woodland and other ecosystem services).

A.135 The Agriculture Act 2020 [See reference 261] sets out how farmers and land managers in England will be rewarded in the future with public money for "public goods" – such as better air and water quality, thriving wildlife, soil health, or measures to reduce flooding and tackle the effects of climate change, under the Environmental Land Management Scheme. The Act will help farmers to stay competitive, increase productivity, invest in new technology and seek a fairer return from the marketplace. Agricultural Transition Plan 2021 to 2024.

A.136 UK Industrial Strategy: Building a Britain fit for the future (2018) [See reference 262] lays down a vision and foundations for a transformed economy. Areas including artificial intelligence and big data; clean growth; the future of mobility; and meeting the needs of an ageing society are identified as the four 'Grand Challenges' of the future.

A.137 The National Infrastructure Delivery Plan 2016-2021 [See reference 263] brings together the Government's plans for economic infrastructure over this five year period with those to support delivery of housing and social infrastructure.

A.138 The LEP Network Response to the Industrial Strategy Green Paper Consultation (2017) [See reference 264] seeks to ensure that all relevant local action and investment is used in a way that maximises the impact it has across the Government's strategy. Consultation responses set out how the 38 Local Enterprise Partnerships will work with Government using existing and additional resources to develop and implement a long-term Industrial Strategy.

A.139 Future of Transport: Supporting rural transport innovation (2023) [See reference 265] shows how innovative and emerging transport technologies could address some of the major challenges in rural communities. It highlights the importance of transport to everyday life rural life and provides guiding carbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge principles for the introduction of new technologies and services.

A.140 The Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy Report to Parliament (2022) [See reference 266] sets out the objectives and financial resources for cycling and walking infrastructure. It states the Government's long-term ambition is to make walking and cycling the natural choices for shorter journeys. It aims to double cycling by 2025, increase walking activity, increase the percentage of children that usually walk to school and reduce the number of cyclists killed or seriously injured on England's roads.

A.141 Decarbonising Transport: A Better, Greener Britain (2021) (Decarbonising Transport Plan (DTP)) [See reference 267] sets out the Government's commitments and the actions needed to decarbonise the entire transport system in the UK. It follows on from the Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge report published in 2020. The DTP commits the UK to phasing out the sale of new diesel and petrol heavy goods vehicles by 2040, subject to consultation, in addition to phasing out the sale of polluting cars and vans by 2035. The DPT also sets out how the government will improve public

transport and increase support for active travel, as well as creating a net zero rail network by 2050, ensuring net zero domestic aviation emissions by 2040, and a transition to green shipping.

A.142 Decarbonising Transport: Setting the Challenge (2020) [See reference 268] sets out the strategic priorities for the new Transport Decarbonisation Plan (TDP), published in July 2021. It sets out in detail what government, business and society will need to do to deliver the significant emissions reduction needed across all modes of transport, putting us on a pathway to achieving carbon budgets and net zero emissions across every single mode of transport by 2050. This document acknowledges that while there have been recently published strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in individual transport modes, transport as a whole sector needs to go further and more quickly, therefore the TDP takes a coordinated, cross-modal approach to deliver the transport sector's contribution to both carbon budgets and net zero.

A.143 The Road to Zero (2018) [See reference 269] sets out new measures towards cleaner road transport, aiming to put the UK at the forefront of the design and manufacturing of zero emission vehicles. It explains how cleaner air, a better environment, zero emission vehicles and a strong, clean economy will be achieved. One of the main aims of the document is for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040.

A.144 The Transport Investment Strategy 2017 [See reference 270] sets out four objectives that the strategy aims to achieve:

- Create a more reliable, less congested, and better connected transport network that works for the users who rely on it;
- Build a stronger, more balanced economy by enhancing productivity and responding to local growth priorities;
- Enhance our global competitiveness by making Britain a more attractive place to trade and invest; and
- Support the creation of new housing.

A.145 The Highways England Sustainable Development Strategy and Action Plan (2017) [See reference 271] is designed to communicate the company's approach and priorities for sustainable development to its key stakeholders. Highways England aims to ensure its action in the future will further reduce the impact of its activities seeking a long-term and sustainable benefit to the environment and the communities it serves. The action plan describes how Highways England will progress the aspirations of their Sustainable Development and Environment Strategies. It describes actions that will enable the company to deliver sustainable development and to help protect and improve the environment.

A.146 Door to Door: A strategy for improving sustainable transport integration (2013) [See reference 272] focuses on four core areas which need to be addressed so that people can be confident in choosing greener modes of transport. There are as follows:

- Accurate, accessible and reliable information about different transport options;
- Convenient and affordable tickets;
- Regular and straightforward connections at all stages of the journey and between different modes of transport; and
- Safe and comfortable transport facilities.

A.147 The strategy also includes details on how the Government is using behavioural change methods to reduce or remove barriers to the use of sustainable transport and working closely with stakeholders to deliver a better-connected transport system.

Sub-national Plans and Programmes of most relevance to the Local Plan

A.148 Levelling up the East of England: 2023-2030 [See reference 273]

focuses on the East of England's progress towards achieving the Government's twelve levelling up missions. Key findings from the report include the East of England:

- has increased in population size by over 8%, almost 500,000 people, between 2011 and 2021, making it the fastest growing English region
- has the highest percentage of working age people in work than any region in the UK – 79%
- has attainment in reading, writing and maths at Key Stage 2 below UK average – just 64%. Average is 65% and the Government's levelling up target is 90%
- has the highest level of owner occupation than any region in the UK – 67% – but homes are more than 9 times median incomes so are less affordable than the English average. Meanwhile 1 in 4 private rented homes are “non-decent” and currently 99,604 people are on councils' waiting lists for social housing and 14,856 are homeless including those in temporary accommodation
- has (just) above average healthy life expectancy – 65 years for both women and men – but there is a variation of up to 9 years between people living in different places: for women the biggest “gap” is between Peterborough at 59 years and Cambridgeshire at 68 years; the gap for men is also 9 years: between Central Bedfordshire at 68 years and Luton at 59 years.

A.149 Luton 2040: A Place to Thrive Economic Strategy [See reference 274] will help to secure a strong recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as reforming our economy to ensure that everyone in Luton can benefit from economic growth and opportunities in future. Plans include sustaining Economic Growth, local wealth building, skills for the future, a real living wage

town, growing the airport, a thriving town centre and transforming lives through arts, culture and heritage.

A.150 Transport East, Transport Strategy 2030-2050 [See reference 275]

sets out ambitions and priority areas for improved connections and new infrastructure. It aligns with established national, regional and local plans, and will help everyone work together to make life in the East better.

A.151 Planning School Places for Luton (2025) [See reference 276]

sets out the pupil projections for the town and considers demand at local place planning areas. This report builds on the previous 2024 published version and aims to ensure there are sufficient school places for the town's children over the next five years and work collaboratively with headteachers, governing bodies and academy trusts to balance sufficiency duties with long-term financial sustainability of schools.

A.152 Bedfordshire Natural Capital Assessment, Part 1: Mapping, valuation, and opportunities for enhancement across Bedfordshire (June 2021) [See reference 277] describes a project to produce a detailed natural capital (habitat) basemap for the whole of Bedfordshire, to model and map the physical and economic benefits (ecosystem services) that flow from the natural capital, and to identify opportunities to enhance accessible natural greenspace, biodiversity and a range of ecosystem services. It was commissioned by the three local authorities of Bedfordshire: Luton Borough Council, Bedford Borough Council and Central Bedfordshire Council, through the Bedfordshire Local Nature Partnership. This report is the first of four, and presents results for the whole of Bedfordshire, as well as providing background and methodological details.

A.153 Bedfordshire Local Nature Recovery Strategy [See reference 278]

focuses on the most important actions needed to protect nature in Bedfordshire and help meet national goals for nature recovery. It highlights the value of nature for local communities and the economy. The strategy includes opportunities for nature recovery and how to restore some of Bedfordshire's

most valuable habitats and species through a Statement of Biodiversity Priorities and a Local Habitat Map.

A.154 Bedford Borough Council, Local Transport Plan, 2011-2021 [See reference 279] sets out a plan to tackle Bedford Borough's transport problems. The vision is to create a transport system in which walking, cycling and public transport are the natural choices of travel for the majority of journeys because they are affordable, healthy, convenient and safe alternatives to the private car.

A.155 Central Bedfordshire Council Transport Strategy April 2011 to March 2026 [See reference 280] set out our transport priorities for 15 years (from 2011-2026). Since 2011 there have been several changes that have affected transport priorities for Central Bedfordshire. The vision focuses on being globally connected, delivering sustainable growth to ensure a green, prosperous and ambitious place for the benefit of all by creating an integrated transport system that is safe, sustainable and accessible.

A.156 Luton Corporate Plan 2023-2028 [See reference 281] is the council's principal plan for the next five years, setting out how they will play their part in delivering on the town's ambitious vision for Luton 2040. The vision is for Luton to be a healthy, fair and sustainable town where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty. The Council believe that this vision has the potential to truly transform Luton for the better and most of Luton's residents now feel optimistic about the future of our town.

A.157 Luton 2040 Vision [See reference 282] is for Luton to be a healthy, fair and sustainable town, where everyone can thrive and no-one has to live in poverty. Priorities include:

- Building an inclusive economy that delivers investment to support the growth of businesses, jobs and incomes.
- Improving population wellbeing and tackling health inequalities to enable everyone to have a good quality of life and reach their full potential.

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- Becoming a child friendly town, where our children grow up happy, healthy and secure, with a voice that matters and the opportunities they need to thrive.
- Tackling the climate emergency and becoming a net zero town with sustainable growth and a healthier environment.
- Supporting a strong and empowered community, built on fairness, local pride and a powerful voice for all our residents.

A.158 Active Luton Strategy 2023 to 2028 [See reference 283] looks at creating opportunities for communities to thrive. The strategy is a five-year vision to support people achieve their potential. Priorities include:

- Supporting children in Luton communities to get the best start in life
- Supporting the wellbeing of the Luton community
- Developing skills and lifelong learning
- Developing further as a great place to work
- Strengthening financial viability and sustainability
- Conducting business in an environmentally sustainable manner

A.159 Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020 to 2023 [See reference 284] aims to raise awareness of the impact, prevalence and causes of domestic abuse in all its forms, to improve outcomes for those affected by it and help them to break the cycle of domestic abuse and go on to live a life free from its effects. There are four priorities as part of the plan:

- prevention and early help
- partnership
- provision and improvement
- protection

A.160 Fairness strategy: A town built on fairness and social justice (August 2023) [See reference 285] is about Supporting a strong community,

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committed to fairness and local pride, with a powerful voice for all residents. The starting point for the strategy is

- Comply with equality and human rights laws and duties
- Recognise that we don't all have the same access to our legal rights
- A sense of belonging
- Shared Vision
- If resources are invested strategically we'll see:
 - increased social inclusion
 - active citizenship
 - system change for equity

A.161 Housing Strategy 2022 to 2027 [See reference 286] states by 2027

Luton BC should aim to ensure:

- good and improving housing services for residents, and tenants of all social landlords in the town
- an active and increasing role for our residents and tenants
- at least 425 new homes and 85 new affordable homes each year
- council led activity in the local private rental market making more homes available at lower cost
- more of the homes we most need, especially family homes
- significant reductions in the use of temporary accommodation, to under 500 households
- no rough sleeping in Luton
- improved conditions in the private rented sector through extension of licensing
- reduction of fuel poverty through additional energy efficiency measures to homes of all tenures

- full compliance with emerging building safety and fire safety requirements

A.162 Economic Growth Strategy for Luton (2025-2032) [See reference 287] sets out a plan to make Luton a regional powerhouse for investment, innovation and skills, driving growth that is inclusive and sustainable over the long term. It has key ambitions for annual growth in the local economy, new jobs across high-value sectors, new employment space, new homes including affordable housing, additional green jobs and upskilled young residents.

A.163 Luton 2020-2040- A Place To Thrive- Inclusive Economy Strategy [See reference 288] will help Luton to secure a strong recovery following the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as reforming the economy to ensure that everyone in Luton can benefit from economic growth and opportunities in future. The Inclusive Economy Board will work with everyone in the town to grow economy sustainably, by developing growth in key sectors, creating more well-paid jobs and enhancing the skills of residents to meet the needs of employers. Strategies include:

- Sustaining economic growth
- Local wealth building
- Skills for the future
- A real living wage town
- Growing the airport
- A thriving town centre
- Transforming lives through arts, culture and heritage

A.164 Luton Town Centre Masterplan Framework (2020-2040) [See reference 289]. This vision and masterplan will guide how the town centre can change over the next 20 to 30 years, to respond to the changes in how we live, socialise, shop, work and become more sustainable. The plan will be a vital part of the town's economic recovery from COVID-19 and our long-term vision for Luton 2020 to 2040.

A.165 Luton Climate Change Guide (undated) [See reference 290]. This is the Borough Council's first ever climate change guide and is aimed at raising awareness of climate change; helping people to identify their carbon footprint; helping people to reduce their carbon impact; and key facts and figures in energy conservation and carbon reduction measures.

A.166 Luton Town Centre Delivery Plan 2025-2030 [See reference 291] sets out how partners from the town centre are delivering against the Luton Town Centre Masterplan. It provides an update on progress to date and work that will be done over the near and more distant future.

A.167 Library Strategy 2020 to 2025 [See reference 292] sets out Luton's aspiration and vision for a library service that is sustainable and relevant to the residents of Luton. Whilst the council recognises that Libraries are an invaluable community service providing access to learning, information and culture for all, the landscape for libraries has changed dramatically in the last ten years. Libraries have a key role to play in enabling Luton Borough Council to deliver on its vision for Luton in 2040: a vibrant town built on fairness, where people live good lives and achieve their aspirations, everyone will be able to achieve their potential and inequality will be reduced, a town where no one lives in poverty. The vision for the library service will inspire people to read, learn and access trusted sources of information, enabling individuals to improve their economic and social wellbeing. This will be achieved through the provision of easily accessible physical and online information, welcoming community spaces, access to health and wellbeing services, and supporting skill development to utilise this information for all. Luton's library service is therefore fundamental in breaking the link between information poverty and income poverty, and in reducing social isolation towards achieving the Luton 2040 vision.

A.168 Luton Energy Strategy 2018 to 2035 [See reference 293] will focus actions on the alleviation of fuel poverty and the maximisation of incomes into the local economy. To achieve this the council will demonstrate clear leadership and will make appropriate use of innovation in the approach. The commitment is long term and will be sustained throughout the life of this Strategy. This is important as it will provide an important element of Luton's support to meeting national goals to move to a low carbon economy.

A.169 Luton's Population and Wellbeing Strategy 2023 to 2028 [See reference 294] will focus on

- Improving population wellbeing and tackling health inequalities to enable everyone to have a good quality of life and reach their full potential,
- Becoming a child friendly town, where our children grow up happy, healthy and secure, with a voice that matters and the opportunities they need to thrive,
- Supporting a strong and empowered community built on fairness, local pride and a powerful voice for all residents.

A.170 Prosperity through Procurement: a five-year strategy 2019 to 2024

[See reference 295] builds on the previous version (Luton Council Corporate Procurement Strategy 2015 to 2019) and provides increased focus on how effective procurement activities can enable wider community and organisational outcomes. The strategy is carried out on three main themes:

- the real living wage
- local recruitment, skills and developing staff
- potential employees and community health and wellbeing

A.171 Waste Management Strategy 2018 to 2028 [See reference 296] will be focused on less waste and more recycling. Key targets include:

- to recycle 50% of the possible recyclable material currently in their residual bin
- to capture or divert more than half of the green waste currently placed in their residual waste bin
- to reduce contamination of recycling streams
- to improve the quality of the recycling captured

A.172 Reducing Health Inequalities in Luton: A Marmot Town (2022) [See reference 297] has eight principles:

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1. Give every child the best start in life
2. Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives
3. Create fair employment and good work for all
4. Ensure a healthy standard of living for all
5. Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities
6. Strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention
7. Tackle discrimination, racism and their outcomes
8. Pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together

A.173 Luton Annual Report of the Director of Public Health (2024) [See reference 298] outlines what data is telling the council about the differences within Luton and what they are doing as a system to tackle health inequalities at a local level. The report explores the complexity of working at different geographic levels and updates on actions and activities happening across the Health Equity System based on the eight Marmot principles that are contributing to improving health equity.

A.174 Luton Sport and Physical Activity Strategic Delivery Plan (2024-2040) [See reference 299] assists the council's vision for Luton 2040 to ensure everyone in the town has the chance to thrive and that no-one has to live in poverty. The plan aims to help people be more physically active, making it easier for everyone to engage in physical activity, and to help reduce obesity while promoting the wider health benefits of physical activity.

A.175 Luton Local Transport Plan (LTP) 5 (Draft) [See reference 300] aims to make getting around easier, healthier and better for the environment. It includes their aims to reduce carbon emissions and create a healthier Luton by encouraging more walking, cycling and uses of buses and trains. It supports bigger goals for Luton 2040 and outlines specific policies, interventions and infrastructure to improve travel in Luton and nearby areas, making Luton a better place to live.

A.176 Local Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Plan 2023-2033 [See reference 301] identifies how the LCWIP will help achieve Local Transport plan 4 2022-2040 objectives:

- The plan identifies the key active travel infrastructure necessary to reduce car dependency.
- The plan recognises that active travel provides affordable, accessible, door-to-door journeys.
- The plan supports a place-based approach to active travel, which provides opportunities to improve green infrastructure and enhance biodiversity.
- The plan proposes cycling and walking routes to key employment centres, transport hubs, schools, colleges and universities.

A.177 Luton Parking Strategy 2024-2030 [See reference 302] accompanies Luton's Local Transport Plan and focuses on developing measures to encourage more sustainable travel to achieve Luton's target of reaching net zero carbon emissions by 2040. It sets out the context of other shorter-term strategies that have been adopted including the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, the Bus Service Improvement Plan and the EV Charging Strategy.

A.178 Electric vehicle chargepoint strategy 2022 to 2025 [See reference 303] aims to support the roll-out of public EV chargepoints that enables the transition to a zeroemission road transport system for journeys that can't otherwise be made by sustainable transport. There are five objectives:

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- Increase the number of public EV chargepoints across the council estate to meet the charging needs of residents, businesses and visitors.
- Ensure residents without off-street parking have access to a range of convenient, accessible and reliable EV chargepoints, on-street and through charging hubs.
- Support the transition of the council fleet, public transport and private hire/taxi vehicles to zero carbon fuels.
- Promote EV chargepoints solutions that improve the user experience of public charging in Luton.
- Ensure chargepoints are fairly priced and inclusively designed.

A.179 Luton Bus Service Improvement Plan 2025-2026 [See reference 304]

builds on Luton's Bus Service Improvement Plan (2021) [See reference 305] and schemes to aid: other infrastructure; safety and security; bus stops/stations/interchanges; bus priority infrastructure; improved information, marketing; simpler/more affordable fares; LTA delivery/admin costs; and bus service support/network development.

A.180

A.181 Luton Employment and Skills Strategy 2022-2027 [See reference 306] has identified four key strategic priorities:

- Skills Driving Economic Recovery and Growth
- Developing a Pipeline of Talented and Resilient People
- Tackling Long-Term Inequality and Economic Inactivity
- Creating an Adaptable, Upskilled Workforce

A.182 My climate action plan Becoming a carbon neutral borough by 2040 (2021) [See reference 307] describes the actions Luton will take to consolidate and accelerate what they are already doing, identify and analyse gaps and to initiate a borough wide debate on the scale and pace of change that is required.

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Luton made significant progress in reducing carbon emissions in the recent years by:

- reducing energy use
- improving the energy efficiency of our corporate buildings and social housing stock
- investing in renewable technologies
- promoting sustainable transport in the borough and beyond

A.183 Luton Net Zero: Climate Policy and Action Plan [See reference 308]

sets out the work Luton and others will do to aid their commitment to reduce the gas emissions from council estate and operations to net zero and lead to net zero by 2040. They are separated into residential buildings, non-residential buildings, transport and active travel, Luton airport, waste and consumer choices, biodiversity and resilience, and council governance and operational systems.

A.184 Luton Net Zero Roadmap and Progress Report [See reference 309]

outlines Luton's work and impacts under the key commitments of the Luton Net Zero Roadmap and covers policies and initiatives delivered in strategic decisions, local policies, awareness raising, pilot projects, and leadership projects which fall into the 'setting the foundation' – planning and learning stage of the roadmap.

A.185 Resilient and Adaptive Communities: Making Luton and Dunstable resilient to climate change [See reference 310]

aims to address the risk of flooding to reduce the devastation and disruption it can cause. It sets out the vision and objectives that will guide future phases of the RAC project looking ahead to 2100 and outlines the project's next steps towards defining an adaptive (flexible) approach to flood risk management.

A.186 Harnessing Momentum: Our strategy for Arts, Culture and Creative Industries in Luton 2017-2027 [See reference 311] has a vision of a town transformed by vibrant arts, culture and creativity that brightens the lives and life

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chances of everyone in Luton. The mission is to enable a diverse cultural offer that empowers people to dream and aspire, supports communities to grow strong and sustainable and develops a vibrant, inclusive creative economy that supports everyone in Luton to thrive.

A.187 Curating Luton (2021) Our Town-wide Heritage Strategy 2021 to 2031 [See reference 312] sets a clear direction for how Luton will deliver ambitious plans collectively, with partners and residents, putting heritage at the heart of their recovery. Heritage will anchor place-shaping as the council reimagine the town centre and transform communities, neighbourhoods and greenspaces.

A.188 Plaiter's' Lea: The Hat District Conservation Area Appraisal (2020) [See reference 313] helps to define the special architectural/historic interest (significance) and character of the conservation area.

A.189 Plaiters' Lea: The Hat District Conservation Area Management Plan (2020) [See reference 314] sets out the overall aims and strategy for the conservation area and regeneration and enhancement, and addresses regeneration, enhancement, protection and management of the conservation area.

A.190 Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record [See reference 315] is a key source of information for all aspects of Central Bedfordshire and Luton's historic environment. It is available for use by all and is the primary source for identifying Heritage Assets for inclusion in Heritage Statements and comprises a computer database with text and maps supported by an archive of written information.

A.191 The Luton Education Strategy for children and young people 2019 [See reference 316] identified four factors that impact on the evolution of local education provision:

- The perceived quality of LA education services and access to alternatives.

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- The strength of connections among schools, the LA and other local partners
- Past performance of the system
- Leadership of (system) change

A.192 Hertfordshire's Local Transport Plan 2018 – 2031 [See reference 317] sets out how transport can help deliver a positive future vision of Hertfordshire. As well as providing for safe and efficient travel, transport has a major input into wider policies such as economic growth, meeting housing needs, improving public health and reducing environmental damage.

Surrounding Development Plans

A.193 Central Bedfordshire adopted its Local Plan on 22nd July 2021, covering the period of 2015 through to 2035. The **Central Bedfordshire Local Plan** plans for:

- around 39,350 new homes
- a range of different homes
- 30% of homes to be lower cost options, such as affordable rent and shared ownership
- at least 24,000 new jobs, though new and expanded employment sites

A.194 The review of the adopted Local Plan was completed and on the 23 November 2023 the Council approved a high level timetable to prepare a new Local Plan. The emerging Local Plan is at the public consultation stage with adoption expected by December 2028.

A.195 The North Hertfordshire Local Plan 2011-2031 was adopted on 8 November 2022 and replaces the saved policies of the District Plan Second Review with Alterations. The new Local Plan sets out how and where new homes, jobs and infrastructure will be delivered in the district. The vision for the

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plan is to “Put people first and deliver sustainable services to enable a brighter future together”. The Plan is based on three main priorities: People First, Sustainability and a Brighter Future Together.

A.196 The Dacorum Local Plan 1991-2011 was adopted in 2004 and should be read alongside the adopted Core Strategy and Site Allocations DPD.

A.197 A New Dacorum Local Plan (to 2040) is currently in progress. It has been submitted to the Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government for public examination. A key role of the Local Plan is to establish the amount and location of new development in Dacorum over the next 16 years and to set out the approach to:

- Identifying where and when development should take place,
- Delivering a step change in housing growth,
- Supporting the local economy, employment and retail,
- Adapting to and mitigating a changing climate,
- Promoting high quality design of development,
- Conserving and enhancing the historic and natural environment, and
- Enabling the delivery of infrastructure.

A.198 St. Albans current adopted Local Plan is **The District Local Plan Review 1994** which is one of the oldest in the country and needs to be replaced. The New Local Plan is like a blueprint for future development so that inevitable change can be managed carefully and thoughtfully. The Plan can help tackle Climate Change and improve biodiversity in the borough. The New Local Plan underwent Regulation 18 consultation and Regulation 19 Pre-submission consultation and is undergoing examination with the aim for adoption in March 2026.

A.199 Listed Buildings Heritage Partnership Agreements [\[See reference 318\]](#) allows the owner of a listed building and the local planning authority to

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agree a series of works comprising alteration or extension to a listed building or part of a listed building.

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