



# GEDLING ECONOMIC GROWTH FRAMEWORK

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Focus Consultants 2010 LLP, Focus House, Millennium Way West, Phoenix Business Park, Nottingham NG8 6AS T.0115 976 5050

## Contact Information

Client: Gedling Borough Council  
 Civic Centre  
 Arnot Hill Park  
 Arnold  
 Nottingham  
 NG5 6LU

Client Lead: Nathan Wall, Assistant Director for Economic Growth & Regeneration

Tel: 07815675988

Email: [nathan.wall@gedling.gov.uk](mailto:nathan.wall@gedling.gov.uk)

Prepared By: Focus Consultants 2010 LLP  
 Focus House  
 Millennium Way West  
 Phoenix Business Park  
 Nottingham  
 NG8 6AS

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Focus Contact Details: Heather Frecklington, Partner  
[Heather.frecklington@focus-consultants.com](mailto:Heather.frecklington@focus-consultants.com)

Signature:

*H. L. Frecklington*

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## 1.0 Introduction

This Economic Growth Framework and Plan for Gedling 2026-2030 sets out an ambitious strategy to accelerate Gedling's local economy, through collaboration with private, public and third sector partners. It outlines a shared vision for economic growth, informed through extensive consultation, analysis of the local economy and strategic goals of Gedling Borough Council and stakeholders, and identifies actions required to achieve it.

The Economic Growth Framework is closely aligned with the inclusive growth objectives of the East Midlands County Combined Authority (EMCCA), recognising the opportunity for greater impact through collaboration.

The Framework will help guide the work of Gedling Borough Council's Economic Growth and Regeneration Team, working in collaboration with colleagues in the Council and other stakeholders.

It is intended to be a working document that demonstrates how interventions fit together and develop the economy of the borough.

The Economic Growth Framework has been developed within the context of Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) which represents the most significant structural change to local government in more than 50 years. Future reorganisation will clearly impact on the delivery of activities set out in this Framework, but it also provides a basis to help inform the strategic economic policy of a new unitary council encompassing the current borough of Gedling.

## 2.0 Gedling Borough

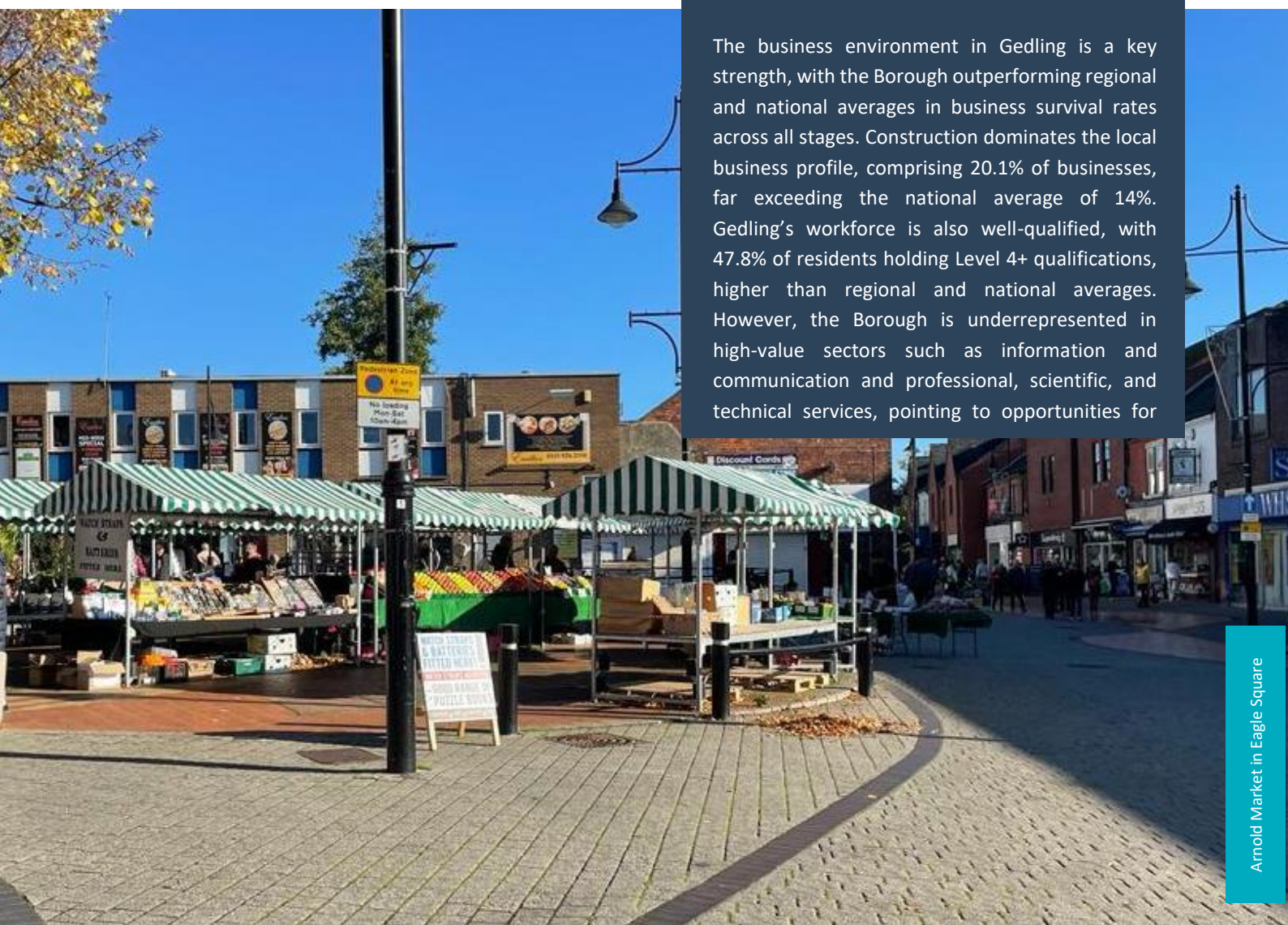
Gedling, located on the north-eastern edge of Nottingham City, is a predominantly rural district and home to approximately 118,000 residents. The population of Gedling is projected to increase to over 130,000 people by 2040 and has a housing target of 639 new homes per year. The borough currently has a slightly higher than average older population and lower than average working age population.

Much of Gedling's population is split across the urban areas of Arnold, Carlton, Netherfield and Gedling, all in close proximity to Nottingham City and therefore much of the population look towards Nottingham for their services. Gedling also has significant rural populations in villages including Burton Joyce, Calverton, Lambley, Ravenshead and Woodborough.

The area does not sit on major transport routes although the Colwick Loop Road and the A60 are major routes into Nottingham. In 2022, Colliery Way (formerly known as Gedling Access Route) was completed. Linking the A612 with Mapperley Plains, the route has helped to improve journey times into and out of the city, reduce congestion through Gedling village and opened up land for new homes and businesses.

Colwick Industrial Estate is Gedling's largest employment area. Some of the outlying villages also have significant areas of employment, such as at Calverton and Newstead. The Top Wighay Farm site in the north-east of the borough, close to the border with Ashfield District is a key development site in meeting the Borough's housing and employment requirement. Retail vacancy rates in Gedling, averaging 9.6%, are below regional and national figures, though some areas, such as Arnold (14%) and Calverton (11%), show rising trends.

The business environment in Gedling is a key strength, with the Borough outperforming regional and national averages in business survival rates across all stages. Construction dominates the local business profile, comprising 20.1% of businesses, far exceeding the national average of 14%. Gedling's workforce is also well-qualified, with 47.8% of residents holding Level 4+ qualifications, higher than regional and national averages. However, the Borough is underrepresented in high-value sectors such as information and communication and professional, scientific, and technical services, pointing to opportunities for



Arnold Market in Eagle Square



Gedling's job density (defined as the number of jobs in an area divided by the resident population aged 16-64) of 0.54 is significantly lower than the regional (0.80) and national (0.88) figures, indicating a gap in available jobs relative to the working-age population. The borough experiences higher than average economic activity rates and lower than average unemployment. Unemployment from July 2023 – June 2024 in Gedling was 4.0%, slightly below the East Midlands at 4.3% and the national average of 4.4% for the same period.

However, unemployment appears to be increasing. In November 2024, the number of people in Gedling claiming Job Seekers Allowance (JSA) was 2,295. This is an increase from 2,015 in November 2022, and 2,045 from November 2023 (13.9% increase). There are also areas within the borough where unemployment levels are significantly above the national average - wards with the highest levels of unemployment are Netherfield, Daybrook, Bestwood St Albans and Cavendish.

Gedling generally has good skills levels with a lower than average number of people with no qualifications and higher than average number with Level 4+ qualifications. However, there are areas within the borough, Netherfield and Daybrook for example, where the percentage of residents with no qualifications is higher than average. In some wards including Cavendish, Netherfield and Calverton, there is a significantly lower than average percentage of the population with higher level (Level 4+) qualifications.

### 3.0 Informing the Framework

#### A range of activity has informed the development of the Economic Growth Framework including:

- Analysis of the strategic goals of Gedling Borough Council and stakeholders at a local, regional and national level.
- Economic data analysis.
- One to one consultation sessions with over 50 individual Council or stakeholder representatives.
- Group consultation sessions with over 10 different stakeholder groups.
- Online public consultation, completed by 71 people.
- Prioritisation workshop with representatives of Gedling Borough Council.

This activity has informed the establishment of the themes and objectives of this strategy.

#### Some of the key points arising from this activity include:

- There is a need to reskill and upskill residents to meet the current and future needs of Gedling businesses.
- Good transport links into Nottingham are seen as a strength but public transport limitations restrict access to learning and employment opportunities, particularly in rural areas.
- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) including community and social enterprises form the backbone of the local economy but face barriers to growth.
- There is a need for an increase in active travel links.
- A co-ordinated approach to infrastructure investment is needed to support housing growth.
- Priority infrastructure improvements include transport and community and leisure facilities to provide sustainable communities.
- Gedling's parks, nature reserves, and country parks are significant assets that should be leveraged for eco-tourism and community well-being.
- Gedling lacks a strong standalone identity as a visitor destination but has potential due to its rich heritage, green spaces, and proximity to Nottingham.

- There is a lot of heritage related activity taking place but there are opportunities for better awareness through promotion.
- Heritage assets are underutilised and lack investment compared to other areas, limiting their impact on tourism and community identity.
- The quality of local small businesses and independent retailers is seen as a strength.
- Town centre decline is a concern. High streets must transition from traditional retail hubs to experience and service-oriented spaces and increased residential uses.
- Ensuring the survival of local high street businesses and creating vibrant town and local centres is a priority.

A more detailed analysis of the findings of the consultation work can be found at Appendix A and is reflected throughout the Economic Growth Framework.



## 4.0 Vision and Themes

The Economic Growth Framework centres around an overarching vision ***to drive prosperity, inclusive and sustainable growth underpinned by a diverse, thriving and celebrated sense of place and heritage with well-connected communities - a place where people want to live, work and visit.***

Underpinning the vision is the recognition that coordination with neighbouring areas and participation in regional initiatives will be critical to achieving this.

Collaboration on cross-border initiatives will strengthen the region as a whole and in turn the borough of Gedling.

**To deliver this vision, three priority themes for the Economic Growth Framework have been identified:**

- Place
- Investment and Growth
- Business and Skills.

**Underpinning these themes are eight objectives:**

Theme	Place	Investment and Growth	Business and Skills
<b>Objectives</b>	Sensitively and sustainably develop Gedling's Visitor Economy.	Facilitate sustainable housing and infrastructure including community infrastructure as a key driver of growth in the borough	Support local start-ups and SMEs including social and community businesses and ensure they have the opportunity to grow in Gedling.
	Ensure Gedling is a great place to live, work and visit.	Attract new investment and business to the borough.	Ensure residents have the skills needed by local businesses and develop collaborations with local training providers to improve access for Gedling residents.
	Support town, village and local centres to thrive with inclusive, sustainable uses.	Deliver net zero ambitions.	

## 5.0 Purpose of the Document - A Golden Thread

Across the work of Government there are a number of key principles that have been adopted to ensure that activities meet national and regional outcomes. Meeting these outcomes will assist in securing external funding to deliver elements of this Framework. However, there are also a range of activities that have a more local impact and should also be delivered. This Framework seeks to do both – be informed by and aligned with national and regional objectives whilst also responding to local issues. The analysis below shows how the EGF aligns with:

- The Gedling Legacy Plan
- The East Midlands County Combined Authority Inclusive Growth Objectives
- The UK Government’s Growth Mission

However, there are many other local and regional strategies and policies which have informed this Framework. This analysis can be found in Appendix B.

## 5.1 The Gedling Legacy Plan

The themes and objectives of the Economic Growth Framework align with The Gedling’s Legacy Gedling Plan for 2026-2028. The Plan sets out the Council’s vision and intent at a time of opportunity and transition for local government. Our mission to serve people and improve lives remains at the heart of everything we do.

We are committed to leaving a positive legacy of stable public services and improved infrastructure and we will do this under four key priority themes:

- Ensuring healthier, safer, connected communities
- Shaping places to be proud of
- Providing responsive, reliable and value for money services

Ensuring a safe transition to a new authority

This Economic Growth Framework sits below this. It is particularly aligned with the Shaping places to be proud of priority

## 5.2 The East Midlands County Combined Authority Inclusive Growth Objectives

The themes and objectives of the Economic Growth Framework align with The Strategic Framework of the East Midlands Combined County Authority.

The Framework identified ten inclusive growth priorities for the Combined Authority, of which the Gedling Economic Growth Framework is closely aligned to seven as shown below.

## GEDLING EGF PRIORITIES

EMCCA INCLUSIVE GROWTH OBJECTIVES



Grow our economy faster, through targeted long-term investment, so that it is resilient enough to withstand future challenges

- Sensitively and sustainably develop Gedling's Visitor Economy.
- Ensure Gedling is a great place to live, work and visit.
- Support town, village, and local centres to thrive with inclusive, sustainable uses.
- Attract new investment and business to the borough.
- Showcasing the heritage and the diversity the borough has to offer as a place to live and visit.
- Sensitively and sustainably develop Gedling's visitor economy.



Match skills to economic need to increase productivity and wellbeing

- Ensure residents have the skills needed by local businesses and develop collaborations with local training providers to improve access for Gedling residents.




Support businesses to create more and higher paid sustainable jobs so that our citizens are able to access the jobs they want within the area

- Support local start-ups and SMEs including social and community businesses and ensure they have the opportunity to grow in Gedling.



Reduce inequality and promote social mobility to allow people to achieve their potential

- Ensure residents have the skills needed by local businesses and develop collaborations with local training providers to improve access for Gedling residents.



Support enhanced green spaces to welcome nature back into our communities

- Ensure Gedling is a great place to live, work and visit.



Create a net-zero economy with a resilient energy supply

- Deliver net zero ambitions.









Create modern and robust infrastructure that releases the private sector to deliver new homes and businesses

- Facilitate sustainable housing and infrastructure including community infrastructure as a key driver of growth in the borough.

## 5.3 The UK Government Growth Mission

At a national level, the EGF has been informed by and is aligned with the Policy Priorities of the UK Government's Growth Mission as published in the Autumn Budget 2024.

ECONOMIC GROWTH FRAMEWORK OBJECTIVES		
GROWTH MISSION POLICY PRIORITIES	 <p>Higher public and private investment, improved infrastructure like transport, and planning reform.</p>	<p><b>Investment, Infrastructure and Planning</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attracting new investment and business to the borough.</li> <li>• Facilitating sustainable housing and infrastructure including community infrastructure as a key driver of growth in the borough.</li> </ul>
	 <p>Regional growth through investment, devolution and reform, and support for house building</p>	<p><b>Place</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sensitively and sustainably develop Gedling's Visitor Economy.</li> <li>• Gedling is a great place to live, work and visit.</li> <li>• Supporting town, villages, parishes and local centres to thrive with inclusive, sustainable uses.</li> </ul>
	 <p>More people in good jobs, improved employment prospects, skills, and productivity</p>	<p><b>People</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensuring residents have the skills needed by local businesses and develop collaborations with local training providers to improve access for Gedling residents.</li> </ul>
	 <p>An Industrial Strategy and a Trade Strategy to bolster growth-driving sectors and free, open trade</p>	<p><b>Industrial Strategy and Trade</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting local start-ups and SMEs including social and community businesses and ensure they have the opportunity to grow in Gedling.</li> </ul>
	 <p>Support for scientific breakthroughs, R&amp;D, and the diffusion of technologies, including AI.</p>	<p><b>Innovation</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supporting local start-ups and SMEs including social and community businesses and ensure they have the opportunity to grow in Gedling.</li> </ul>
	 <p>Net Zero delivered in a way that supports growth and captures economic opportunities</p>	<p><b>Net Zero</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deliver net zero ambitions.</li> </ul>

## 6.0 The Economic Growth Framework

### 6.1 Theme: Place

This theme focuses on the experience of living in, working in and visiting Gedling.

#### **Objective 1: Sensitively and sustainably develop Gedling's Visitor Economy**

Stakeholder consultation identified that there is a strong ambition and opportunity to grow Gedling's visitor economy to support growth across the Borough. This ambition is driven by key areas of potential including the borough's rich heritage, green spaces, independent retail, town and village centres and proximity to Nottingham.

It is recognised that more can be done to promote Gedling as a visitor destination, celebrating and showcasing the borough's assets to support economic growth. In 2023, Gedling attracted 3 million visitors of which 92% were day visitors. This was less than 8% of the total visitors to Nottinghamshire in 2023. The economic value of tourism to Gedling in 2023 was £186m, again less than 8% of the total economic value of tourism in the county.

Gedling lacks a strong standalone identity as a visitor destination but there is an opportunity to develop identities around different themes that will draw people to the borough, capitalising on assets, such as Gedling Country Park, Bestwood Country Park, Papplewick Pumping Station and Newstead Abbey to name a few.

There has been little coordinated promotion or development of the visitor economy in Gedling previously and the first step has been the development of a Visitor Economy Destination Management Plan for Gedling which provides a shared statement of intent to manage Gedling as a visitor destination, as part of a broader Nottinghamshire visitor offer.

In recognising the early stage of development of the visitor economy, a long-term view is necessary that manages growth in a sustainable way and that is considerate to local communities in locations that have not necessarily been promoted as visitor destinations previously.

**Opportunities for developing the visitor economy are set out in detail in the Visitor Destination Plan but include:**

- Marketing the borough as an eco-tourism destination by investing in trails, country parks and environmentally friendly visitor facilities.
- Developing attractions such as a heritage centre at Gedling Country Park, immersive experiences around industrial heritage, cultural facilities and eco-tourism initiatives.
- Utilising leisure investments such as the proposed Carlton Leisure and Community Wellbeing Centre to attract visitors and signpost users to other local amenities, encouraging additional spend in the borough.
- Helping to address the lack of visitor amenities such as accommodation, dining, and entertainment options through promoting the area for investment in these areas.
- Development of full day or half day visitor itineraries around key attractions which encourage longer dwell times for visitors and encourage spend in local hospitality businesses.
- Strengthen partnerships with regional tourism bodies and attractions to integrate Gedling into wider visitor campaigns.
- Support the diversification of town centres as vibrant, mixed-use destinations attractive to residents and visitors along with a strong day to evening economy.
- Recognise, build capacity and support the role of the voluntary and community sector in managing assets and delivering activities that contribute to the visitor economy.

## **Objective 2: Ensure Gedling is a great place to live, work and visit**

The Borough of Gedling is growing rapidly.

In February 2025, Gedling Borough Council announced it had decided to withdraw from the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan to focus on its own Local Plan that would deliver more homes across the area. The decision follows recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), which introduced new housing targets. The new Gedling Local Development Plan will address the borough's housing and development needs, meeting the new target of 638 new homes per year which will support economic growth.

Creating conditions in which people want to live in, work in and visit Gedling will stimulate economic growth. This means ensuring Gedling is a safe, clean, attractive, accessible, inclusive place to live visit and work.

Consultation has identified that Gedling is generally considered to offer a good quality of life and a good quality living environment, but with pockets of disadvantage. To maintain and create places where people want to live, work and visit whilst delivering the required housing growth will require investment in community, cultural and leisure infrastructure, green spaces as well as access to local centres and employment opportunities. The role of the community and voluntary sector in creating communities where people feel welcome, safe, respected, and included is recognised and requires continued support as the borough grows.

Gedling's parks, nature reserves, and country parks are significant assets that can be further utilised to enhance the desirability of Gedling as a place to live, work, play and invest. There are opportunities to better promote Gedling's green spaces and natural landscapes, and underutilised assets such as Netherfield Lagoons as well as opportunities for further investment in green infrastructure, including enhanced trails, walking and cycling infrastructure, and visitor facilities. Any proposals to increase the use of green spaces needs to consider community safety and maintenance and management requirements.

From an economic growth perspective, it will be vital to maximise the opportunities for income generation within the spaces owned by Gedling Borough Council, considering opportunities for local businesses to operate from these spaces without impacting on the quality of the open space as well as promoting opportunities for visitors to increase their dwell time in the Borough by visiting local retail and hospitality businesses.

Heritage and culture also have an important role in building social capital and supporting the economic growth of the borough. The consultation identified that the borough is considered to have some good cultural and leisure provision including some of the borough's leisure centres and Bonington Theatre. There is a lot of heritage related activity taking place within Gedling and key heritage assets including Newstead Abbey, Papplewick Pumping Station and Bestwood Winding Engine as well as important industrial heritage stories around mining and textiles. However, heritage assets are underutilised and lack investment compared to other areas, limiting their impact on tourism and community identity.

### **Proposed actions under this theme include:**

- Awareness raising of the borough's heritage assets and activities.
- Investment in heritage assets and opportunities such as testing the feasibility of a new Heritage Centre, potentially at Gedling Country Park.
- Coordinated approach to connect heritage sites through trails, digital storytelling, and interactive visitor experiences.
- Supporting community-led heritage projects with initiatives like heritage volunteering, education, and intergenerational engagement being key areas discussed.
- Investment in the community and voluntary sector as the foundation for much of the heritage and leisure activity delivered in Gedling and its role in supporting community cohesion.
- Investment in leisure facilities, including the proposed Carlton Active Centre, the redevelopment of Arnold Leisure Centre and theatre, subject to funding opportunities.
- Enhancement and development of new cultural spaces.
- Integration of green space planning with sustainable housing developments to enhance quality of life.
- Expanding tree planting and environmental conservation efforts to reinforce Gedling's green credentials.

- Interventions to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime within communities and in parks and open spaces.
- Interventions to maximise the economic impact and value of parks and open spaces.
- Further investment in green infrastructure with associated management and maintenance investment plans.

**Objective 3: Support town and local centres to thrive with inclusive, sustainable uses**

Gedling’s town and local centres are an integral part of local communities - a critical part of the local infrastructure and key to economic growth as locations for businesses and employment as well as attracting visitors. The changing role of town centres is well recognised - needing to find a new purpose away from a traditional retail focus and rebalancing of the functions they serve including employment, commercial, leisure, community, housing, healthcare and educational uses.

Gedling has a number of town and local centres including Arnold, Burton Joyce, Calverton, Carlton Hill, Carlton Square, Gedling Village, Mapperley Plains, Netherfield and Ravenshead. Overall, Gedling’s retail vacancy rate (9.6%) is below national (14.4%) and there is generally a good selection of independent retailers. However, over the last five years, within Arnold, Netherfield and Carlton, vacancy rates have climbed and there are notable gaps left by vacant shops.

Arnold Town Centre is the main Local Centre within Gedling, utilised by residents from across the Borough. Despite its function as the main local centre, Arnold Town Centre has seen steady decline. Gedling Borough Council launched a consultation exercise in 2024 to support a strategic vision for Arnold Town Centre “Ambition Arnold” which is intended to provide a framework for the regeneration and long-term viability and sustainability of the Town.

The Ambition Arnold project would seek to improve the leisure and cultural opportunities available within the town centre to draw footfall and add vibrancy to the town.

Public realm improvement works (including soft landscaping) and connectivity between green spaces, as well as improvements to shop frontages would look to increase visitor duration within the town and expand upon the retail provision presently on offer.

In November 2025, Gedling Borough Council and the Greater Carlton Neighbourhood Board unveiled a landmark 10-year, £20 million Regeneration Plan for Greater Carlton - the most ambitious, community-led transformation programme the area has seen in a generation. The plan, developed with residents, local businesses, community groups and strategic organisations across Nottinghamshire, sits within the Government’s wider Pride in Place programme. It sets out a clear roadmap to improve opportunity, strengthen community pride, and deliver long-term change for more than 53,000 residents. By 2036, the plan aims to have delivered a measurable shift in the confidence, opportunity and wellbeing of Greater Carlton. Residents can expect improvements in pride in place, youth opportunity, health outcomes, community cohesion, safety, local economic resilience and environmental sustainability.

Gedling Borough Council and partners recognise the need to plan for and actively manage the borough’s town centres around the evolving needs of residents, businesses and visitors. This will require investment to help transition Gedling’s town centres from traditional retail hubs to experience and service-oriented spaces and increased residential use, maximising the number of events and experiences that attract people to the area and working with partners to promote a clean and safe environment in the borough’s town centres.

**Proposed actions under this theme include:**

- Implementation of the Ambition Arnold Masterplan and the Greater Carlton Pride in Place Regeneration Plan.
- Business support programme for retail and high street businesses.
- Tackling perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour, by reviewing lighting in town centres, and by tackling ‘voids’/dark spaces.
- Hosting pop up shops, regular events and cultural activities to increase footfall and community engagement in town centres.
- Public realm improvements, pedestrianisation, better integration of green spaces and enhanced sense of arrival to enhance town centre appeal and make the area more attractive.
- Effective delivery of the proposals out in the Greater Carlton Pride in Place, Regeneration Plan.

**6.2 Theme: Investment and Growth**

This theme focuses on growing the economy through housing growth, new business investment and putting in place the infrastructure needed to facilitate this.

#### **Objective 4: Facilitate sustainable housing and infrastructure including community infrastructure as a key driver of growth in the borough**

To achieve sustainable economic growth, Gedling must have the necessary infrastructure in place to support business expansion and population growth. As set out under objective 2, there will continue to be significant housing growth in Gedling which will drive economic growth but will require corresponding infrastructure investment including transport infrastructure to make sure that the Borough remains well connected and attractive for residents, businesses and visitors alike.

Gedling has been successful in exceeding its annual housing targets over a number of years and further housing allocations will need to be identified and brought forward as part of the new Gedling Local Development Plan as well as the infrastructure needed to support this including additional employment allocations. This will be challenging as the borough is very constrained due to the green belt and therefore infrastructure investment to support housing and employment growth needs strategic intervention. Where allocated sites have not been brought forward for development, it will be important to understand how Gedling Borough Council can work with partners to address viability and funding issues associated with infrastructure requirements to unlock sites.

Strategic investments in infrastructure and connectivity not only helps increase the attractiveness of the borough for investment but enhances the ability of its residents to access employment and learning opportunities at key locations both inside and outside of the borough.

Delivery of infrastructure to support new developments is critical but can often be challenging. Housing growth will generate Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payments, which can support the delivery of infrastructure.

As part of its adoption of CIL, Gedling Borough Council is required to publish a list of strategic infrastructure projects that would be funded through CIL Receipts. This has been updated and Carlton

Active has been identified as the priority for expenditure of CIL receipts.

Having large rural areas within the borough creates additional challenges for infrastructure particularly public transport. This is reflected in data as over 50% of people who live in Gedling use a car or van to get to work, this is compared to 6.8% who use public transport. Whilst relatively well connected to Nottingham city, connectivity within the borough, particularly to and from rural areas is much more restricted. Similarly East-West links between other districts and boroughs are weaker which limits access to employment and learning opportunities for Gedling residents.

To support economic growth, it is important to consider the connectivity between key employment sites in the borough and centres of population. Appendix C shows some analysis undertaken in relation to the accessibility of key employment sites or allocated employment sites. This shows that the least accessible site is Top Wighay Farm, a key strategic site for future growth, with much of the borough over an hour or hour and a half travelling distance by public transport and over an hour's cycling time.

Other key employment sites such as Colwick Industrial Estate, Gedling Colliery and Teal Close are generally more accessible with much of the borough's population within a 30-minute public transport or 30-minute cycle journey.

Gedling Borough Council will work with Nottinghamshire County Council and EMCCA to consider opportunities to enhance bus services including on demand services, with a particular focus on access to key employment and education sites. The Council will also work with Nottingham City Council and EMCCA on proposals to extend the Tram network into Gedling, including the potential extension to Top Wighay Farm.

A lower-than-average number of people in Gedling (7%) travel to work on foot or by bicycle and the Council are keen to encourage active travel, particularly along key employment corridors to facilitate growth. There are opportunities to improve

active travel options in the borough between key existing and new settlements, employment sites and attractions, whilst recognising that the topography can make this challenging in certain parts of the borough. Nottingham City Council and Nottinghamshire County Council, in partnership with Derby City Council and Derbyshire County Council are working to develop the D2N2 Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) which will identify priorities for enhancing the walking and cycling networks. Within Gedling Borough, the improvement of Active Travel Links to access Gedling Country Park has been identified as a route with high potential to increase walking and cycling.

#### **Proposed actions under this theme include:**

- Work with partners to identify opportunities to address viability and funding issues to unlock sites for housing and employment growth or accelerate delivery.
- Utilise CIL and other potential funding sources to ensure infrastructure investment supports housing and employment growth in a coordinated manner.
- Undertake research to better understand how communities look to and use different town and local centres to ensure proposals to improve connectivity are effective and efficient.
- Work with Nottinghamshire County Council and EMCCA to consider opportunities to enhance bus services including on demand services, with a particular focus on access to key employment and education sites including those outside of the borough.
- Work with Nottingham City Council and EMCCA on proposals to extend the Tram network into Gedling, including the potential extension to Top Wighay Farm.
- Enhancement of active travel opportunities including active travel links to Gedling Country Park and opportunities for walking and cycling routes on the Netherfield, Former Gedling Mineral Line.

#### **Objective 5: Attract new investment and business to the borough**

In order to drive employment and in turn economic growth, Gedling has the opportunity to better position itself for increased business investment - as an ideal

location for businesses seeking proximity to Nottingham City while benefiting from a lower cost base. However, to date there has been a lack of coordinated inward investment activity in the borough and, an inward investment strategy is required to ensure the appropriate infrastructure, support and promotion activities are put in place.

EMCCA will play a key role in the delivery of inward investment in the region and in January 2025 EMCCA agreed to allocate Investment funding of £850,000 to Nottinghamshire County Council to deliver promotion of the visitor economy and Inward Investment across Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Therefore, Gedling Borough Council will work in close collaboration with the County Council on the development of an Inward Investment strategy for Gedling and to ensure there is an understanding of the opportunity that Gedling presents as part of a County inward investment offer and that resources are aligned to achieve this.

To facilitate investment, there needs to be a supply of both employment sites and employment space. Top Wighay Farm in the far north-east of the borough is Gedling's main allocated employment site for office floorspace whilst for manufacturing and warehousing, the supply includes Top Wighay Farm, Gedling Colliery and Colwick Industrial Estate.

Additional employment land will be allocated through the Gedling Local Development Plan and Gedling Borough Council will work with partners to help address any barriers to bringing sites forward for development, for example through seeking external funding to support viability. Raising the profile of the borough through the development and implementation of an inward investment strategy will also help support the viability of future development opportunities.

Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) including community and social enterprises form the backbone of the local economy in Gedling.

Therefore, in parallel with opening up larger employment sites, the Council will play an active role in facilitating an increased supply of business workspace suitable to the local economy.

In late 2022, Gedling Borough Council opened, the AMP - a development of the former market place situated at the heart of Arnold Town Centre.

It includes seven, fully let affordable retail units on the ground floor specifically created for enterprising start-ups looking to move onto the high street.

The first floor is over 3500 sq. ft of workspace for small businesses, overlooking the new contemporary public square. Building on the success of the AMP, there is an opportunity to provide additional modern workspace in the borough and providing this in town centres where possible will help maximise accessibility as well as supporting diversification and footfall in town centres.

It was highlighted in the consultation that Gedling lacks sufficient high grade office space to attract professional services companies, high value industries or larger employers. The Innes England Market Insite 2024 Report highlighted strong demand for this type of space in Nottingham which could highlight a potential opportunity for Gedling to build on this demand. It is also considered that there is an opportunity to develop further industrial units to support demand for this type of space, building on the success of units developed by Gedling Borough Council at Hillcrest Business Park, Calverton for example.

A feasibility study on the likely demand for high grade office space and additional industrial units should be undertaken to inform potential interventions as well informing the inward investment strategy.

**Proposed actions under this theme include:**

- Development of an Inward Investment Strategy for Gedling in collaboration with Nottinghamshire County Council and EMCCA.
- As part of the Inward Investment Strategy, consider opportunities and value propositions for fostering business clusters in tech, green energy, and creative industries to drive higher-value job creation.
- Undertake a feasibility study on the likely demand for high grade office space and additional industrial units to inform potential interventions.
- Facilitate a broad supply of employment land and business accommodation across the borough.

**Objective 6: Deliver net zero ambitions**

In November 2019, Gedling Borough Council declared a climate emergency and made a pledge to achieve

net-zero carbon emissions by 2030 in relation to its own operations. But the Council recognises its wider role in contributing to the UK's net zero target and the Gedling Local Development Plan will seek a higher standard of sustainability for future development. Gedling Borough Council's Economic Growth and Regeneration Team will embed sustainability into its regeneration projects and support partners and stakeholders to do the same.

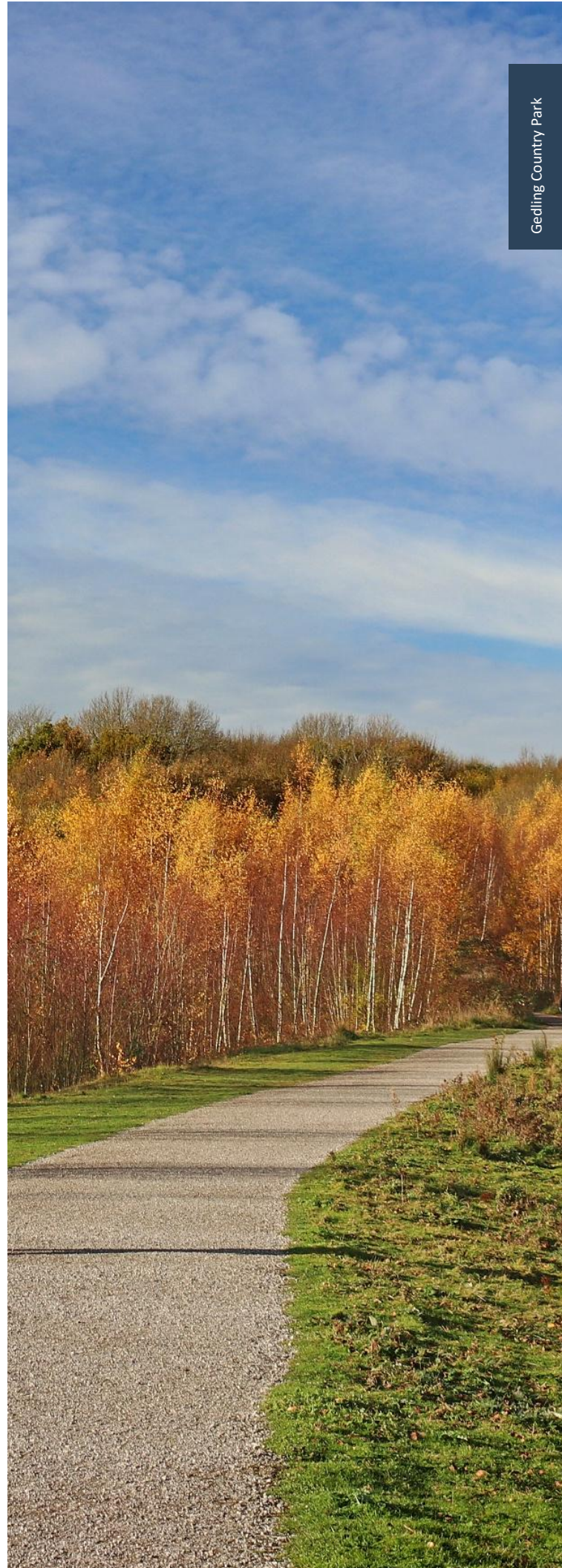
The Council will also work with businesses in the borough to help them change/adapt to upcoming statutory/legislative requirements around trade waste and recycling and to adopt net zero policies through incentives and business support programmes. There is also an opportunity to support businesses for whom net zero opens new markets for technologies and services, providing a welcoming, supportive and cost effective environment with a good supply of highly skilled residents, from which to operate. This is a key target sector for Nottingham City Council and there is an opportunity to work jointly on creating the conditions for investment and growth.

As already highlighted, Gedling has high quality parks and open spaces and there is a desire to further enhance the borough's blue and green infrastructure and improve active travel routes.

The Council will work with partners to further these aspirations and position Gedling's green credentials as part of its heritage and visitor economy offer as well as a supporting community wellbeing.

**Proposed actions under this theme include:**

- Pursue opportunities to improve Blue-Green Infrastructure across the borough.
- Enhancement of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure including for example along the northern bank of the River Trent within Gedling, the Calverton Mineral Line and Gedling Colliery and Mapperley Plains as well as improvement of Active Travel Links to access Gedling Country Park.
- Enhance sustainability standards into Gedling Borough Council's procurement procedures such as a requirement for all suppliers to hold an environmental accreditation that is externally audited (e.g. ISO14001, Carbon Charter).
- Promote businesses that integrate solar panels, sustainable heating systems, and green supply chains.
- Provide dedicated business support for businesses working in the low carbon sector and to support businesses to adopt net-zero policies through incentives and support programmes including specific programmes for high street businesses.
- Enhance eco-tourism by investing in trails, country parks, and environmentally friendly visitor facilities.





### 6.3 Theme: Business and Skills

This theme focuses on economic growth through supporting local businesses to start up and grow and ensuring local people have the skills needed by Gedling businesses now and in the future.

#### **Objective 7: Support local start-ups and SMEs including social and community businesses and ensure they have the opportunity to grow in Gedling**

Under Objective 6 there is a commitment to provide the type of spaces that businesses currently located in, setting up in or moving into Gedling need. Alongside this, Gedling Borough Council is committed to ensuring businesses also have access to appropriate business support infrastructure to help them flourish and grow.

This includes the many social and community businesses in the borough who support many of the other objectives within this Framework and retail businesses who are also key to the success of a number of objectives.

It is important that the nature of this infrastructure is guided by businesses themselves, and the needs will be diverse depending on, for example the size, sector and stage of business. As such, Gedling Borough Council will work with a range of partners to provide a strong business support environment.

Under the UK Shared Prosperity Fund Programme 2022-2026<sup>1</sup>, Gedling Borough Council has been able to offer a free and confidential service to businesses that are looking to start-up, expand or locate to the Gedling Borough area.

<sup>1</sup> UKSPF has three pillars – Communities and Place, Supporting Local Business and People and Skills.

A Small Business Advisor programme has been delivered by East Midlands Chamber and the Gedling Accelerator project helped businesses in Gedling to reduce their energy costs and become more sustainable. The programme has also funded retail business advisors, workshops, and supported the Gedling Business Support Network.

The UKSPF Programme has been extended for a further year into 2025/26 with £25.17m allocated to EMCCA. EMCCA is also allocating an additional £4m from its own investment fund, providing a total of £30m investment for the region. £11.7m of funding has been allocated to Gedling and the Council will look to utilise some of this funding to continue and build on the business support infrastructure put in place to date and to complement EMCCA's regional wide business support programmes which will include a regional start up service, business education workshop programme, supporting export capabilities and high-growth support programme. Importantly, in light of future funding reforms, Gedling Borough Council will work with partners to continue to provide a supportive environment for businesses for the long term.

**Proposed actions under this theme include:**

- Extend and build on the business support provision put in place in Gedling through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/26.
- Work with EMCCA and partners to ensure region wide provision is promoted to, accessible and tailored to the needs of Gedling businesses.
- Working with EMCCA and partners to shape the future business support landscape beyond the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to ensure it meets the needs of Gedling businesses.
- Review opportunities to support retail and high street businesses to contribute to objective 3.
- Support our businesses to contribute to Gedling's net zero ambitions through the provision of advice and support and, where available, funding.
- Explore collaboration opportunities between Nottingham Universities and local employers to boost RD&I activity in Gedling.

**Objective 8: Ensure residents have the skills needed by local businesses and develop collaborations with local training providers to improve access for Gedling residents**

Gedling generally has good skills levels with lower than average number of people with no qualifications and higher than average number with Level 4+ qualifications. This is also reflected in higher-than-average economic activity rates in the borough. However, there are areas within the borough, - Netherfield and Daybrook for example - where levels of unemployment and the percentage of residents with no qualifications is higher than average and the Council wants to ensure all residents have the opportunity to contribute to and benefit from economic growth. In addition, the needs of local employers including those in the public sector are changing so it's important to provide opportunities to upskill and reskill to meet these needs.

Having a workforce with the right skills for local businesses makes an area attractive for investment and supports business growth. However, developing skills is also about raising employment participation and equipping Gedling residents with the skills to access meaningful and fulfilling employment opportunities. There is clear evidence that good work improves health and wellbeing across people's lives and protects against social exclusion. By focusing on collaboration with local providers, targeted investments, and leveraging local strengths, Gedling Borough Council and partners will aim to create a sustainable pathway for retaining and attracting skills while supporting SMEs to drive economic growth. This will not only to help drive economic growth but also to help Gedling residents to benefit from that growth and participate in activity that sustains it.

It is challenging to develop skills for future demand without knowing what these are and without a critical mass of demand, courses become unviable. Aligning with Objective 7, Gedling Borough Council will engage with local businesses to ensure the skills needs are better understood so the Council can work with partners to consider how these can be addressed. This will include targeting existing employees through reskilling and upskilling opportunities, young people still in education and training as well as those residents currently out of work.

The Gedling Employment and Skills Group has been running for a number of years and consists of many key partners, providers and stakeholders working collaboratively on employment and skills initiatives across the borough and wider.

The Council have also been working with Broxtowe and Rushcliffe Borough Councils to explore the opportunity to establish a South Nottinghamshire Employment and Skills Providers Forum as well as an Employment and Skills Board. This already exists in north Nottinghamshire, creating a coherent voice on skills priorities and challenges. The success of such a structure will be reliant on the support and engagement of businesses and providers but will help to better understand and resolve skills mismatches at a local level and enable a more coherent offer and ask for South Nottinghamshire.

The Adult Skills Fund has been fully devolved to EMCCA from August 2025. With the transfer of funding to EMCCA comes the opportunity for regional partners to shape adult education provision in a way that best suits the needs of their residents and the local economy. Gedling Borough Council, in collaboration with Rushcliffe and Broxtowe will work with EMCCA and local training providers to ensure the needs of Gedling residents and businesses are represented.

There is no further or higher education provider located in Gedling currently. Whilst providers such as Nottingham College and Nottingham Universities and Vision West Notts College, including Nottingham Trent University's Campus in Mansfield are located close to Gedling, accessibility from much of the borough is challenging. Analysis of travel times to Nottingham College and Vision West Notts College shows that much of the borough is over 40 minutes away by public transport from Nottingham College and nearly an hour from West Notts College (please see Appendix D for details).

Gedling Borough Council will strengthen links between local colleges, universities, and businesses, considering accessibility and delivery of targeted programmes within the borough.

The Gedling Borough Council Social Value Policy 2025–2027 sets out the Council's approach to maximising social value, supporting the delivery of its key priorities for communities, place, and the local economy.

The policy sets out five key themes and invites bidders through the procurement process to contribute to their delivery by demonstrating how they will achieve positive social value outcomes. These themes have been developed to generate tangible benefits for residents across the borough and are as follows:

- Enable healthier, safer, and more connected communities
- Develop skills to support growth and employment opportunities
- Increase digital inclusion and enablement
- Create cleaner, greener spaces and respond to the climate emergency

**Proposed actions under this theme include:**

- Collaborate with local training providers such as Nottingham College and Vision West Notts College to strengthen links with Gedling businesses and deliver co-funded, targeted interventions and apprenticeships within the borough.
- Consider the viability of establishing local learning hubs with delivery of training offered in partnership with local providers.
- Work with the Planning Department at Gedling Borough Council to consider opportunities to tailor an approach around the use of Section 106 to enable the Council to invest in employment and skills opportunities.
- Consider opportunities to improve transport links between settlements in Gedling and local training providers.
- Continue to deliver the Gedling Employability Programme which Gedling Borough Council runs collaboratively with the EMCCA Careers Hub. This programme works with the six secondary schools in the borough, enabling them to deliver careers activity and prepare students for the world of work
- Work with partners to develop the targeted support and advice required to help residents access training and employment.
- Work with EMCCA and local training providers to ensure the needs of Gedling residents and businesses are represented in the distribution of Adults Skills Fund.
- Continue and build on the work of the Gedling Employment and Skills Group.
- To maximise the potential of social value opportunities in line with the Gedling Borough Council Social Value Policy 2025–2027.

## 7.0 Working Collaboratively

Underpinning the vision and objectives of this Economic Growth Framework is the recognition that coordination with neighbouring areas and participation in regional initiatives will be critical to achieving this. The creation of the East Midlands Mayoral Combined County Authority offers new opportunities to accelerate growth in Gedling. EMCCA can help empower the region to secure greater investment to advance the critical infrastructure projects that will contribute to Gedling's economic growth. Collaboration with neighbouring authorities and EMCCA on cross-border initiatives such as transport and infrastructure, visitor economy and inward investment will strengthen the region as a whole and in turn the borough of Gedling.

In addition, the devolution of the Adult Skills Fund and the potential to work more closely with Rushcliffe and Broxtowe Borough Council through the proposed South Nottinghamshire Employment and Skills Board will facilitate a more targeted local approach and coherent skills offer.

Some of the aspirations within the Economic Growth Framework are also focused on localised impact and will require close collaboration with public, private and voluntary sector partners.



Arnold High Street

## 7.1 Implementation Plan

### 7.1.1 Implementation Plan

Each of the actions identified under the objectives of the Economic Growth Framework are set out below in the Implementation Plan. The Implementation Plan provides a roadmap for delivery of the Economic Growth Framework but is not exhaustive as the Framework is intended to be a working document that provides the opportunity for new actions to be identified, where they align with the objectives of the Framework. Each action is indicatively identified as either short, medium or long term based on the following:

Key	Priority
	Short-term (1 to 2 years)
	Medium-term (3-4 years)
	Long-term (4 years +)

Objective 1: Sensitively and sustainably develop Gedling's Visitor Economy	Priority
Strengthen partnerships with regional tourism bodies and attractions to integrate Gedling into wider visitor campaigns.	
Recognise, build capacity and support the role of the voluntary and community sector in managing assets and delivering activities that contribute to the visitor economy.	
Marketing the borough as an eco-tourism destination by investing in trails, country parks and environmentally friendly visitor facilities.	
Utilising leisure investments such as the proposed Carlton Active Centre to attract visitors and signpost users to other local amenities, encouraging additional spend in the borough.	
Development of full day or half day visitor itineraries around key attractions which encourage longer dwell times for visitors and encourage spend in local hospitality businesses.	
Support the diversification of town centres as vibrant, mixed-use destinations attractive to residents and visitors along with a strong day to evening economy.	

Objective 1: Sensitively and sustainably develop Gedling's Visitor Economy	Priority
Developing attractions such as a heritage centre at Gedling Country Park, immersive experiences around industrial heritage, cultural facilities and eco-tourism initiatives.	
Helping to address the lack of visitor amenities such as accommodation, dining, and entertainment options through promoting the area for investment in these areas.	

Objective 2: Ensure Gedling is a great place to live, work and visit	Priority
Investment in the community and voluntary sector as the foundation for much of the leisure activity delivered in Gedling and its role in supporting community cohesion.	
Coordinated approach to connect heritage sites through trails, digital storytelling, and interactive visitor experiences.	
Investment in leisure other facilities, including Arnold Leisure Centre and theatre.	
Integration of green space planning with sustainable housing developments to enhance quality of life.	
Expanding tree planting and environmental conservation efforts to reinforce Gedling's green credentials.	
Interventions to reduce anti-social behaviour and fear of crime within communities and in parks and open spaces.	
Interventions to maximise the economic impact and value of parks and open spaces.	
Further investment in green infrastructure with associated management and maintenance investment plans.	
Enhancement and development of new cultural spaces.	

<b>Objective 3: Support town and local centres to thrive with inclusive, sustainable uses</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Business support programme for retail and high street businesses.	
Hosting pop up shops, regular events and cultural activities to increase footfall and community engagement in town centres.	
Undertake research to better understand how communities look to and use different town and local centres to ensure proposals to improve connectivity are effective and efficient.	
Implementation of the Ambition Arnold Masterplan.	
Implementation of the and Greater Carlton Pride in Place Regeneration Plan.	
Tackling perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour, by reviewing lighting in town centres, and by tackling 'voids'/dark spaces.	
Public realm improvements, pedestrianisation, better integration of green spaces and enhanced sense of arrival to enhance town centre appeal and make the area more attractive.	

<b>Objective 4: Facilitate sustainable housing and infrastructure including community infrastructure as a key driver of growth in the borough</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Progress proposals for Leapool Roundabout Park and Ride as funding allows.	

<b>Objective 5: Attract new investment and business to the borough</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Development of an Inward Investment Strategy for Gedling in collaboration with Nottinghamshire County Council and EMCCA.	
As part of the Inward Investment Strategy, consider opportunities and value propositions for fostering business clusters in tech, green energy, and creative industries to drive higher-value job creation.	
Undertake a feasibility study on the likely demand for high grade office space and additional industrial units to inform potential interventions.	
Facilitate a broad supply of employment land and business accommodation across the borough.	

<b>Objective 4: Facilitate sustainable housing and infrastructure including community infrastructure as a key driver of growth in the borough</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Work with partners to identify opportunities to address viability and funding issues to unlock sites for housing and employment growth or accelerate delivery.	
Utilise CIL and other potential funding sources to ensure infrastructure investment supports housing and employment growth in a coordinated manner.	
Enhancement of active travel opportunities including active travel links to Gedling Country Park and opportunities for walking and cycling routes on the Netherfield, Former Gedling Mineral Line.	
Work with Nottingham City Council and EMCCA on proposals to extend the Tram network into Gedling, including the potential extension to Top Wighay Farm.	

<b>Objective 6: Deliver net zero ambitions</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Enhance sustainability standards into Gedling Borough Council's procurement procedures such as a requirement for all suppliers to hold an environmental accreditation that is externally audited (e.g. ISO14001, Carbon Charter).	
Promote businesses that integrate solar panels, sustainable heating systems, and green supply chains.	
Provide dedicated business support for businesses working in the low carbon sector and to support businesses to adopt net-zero policies through incentives and support programmes including specific programmes for high street businesses.	
Enhance eco-tourism by investing in trails, country parks, and environmentally friendly visitor facilities.	
Pursue opportunities to improve Blue-Green Infrastructure across the borough.	

<b>Objective 7: Support local start-ups and SMEs including social and community businesses and ensure they have the opportunity to grow in Gedling</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Extend and build on the business support provision put in place in Gedling through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund 2025/26.	
Work with EMCCA and partners to ensure region wide provision is promoted to, accessible and tailored to the needs of Gedling businesses.	
Working with EMCCA and partners to shape the future business support landscape beyond the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to ensure it meets the needs of Gedling businesses.	
Review opportunities to support retail and high street businesses to contribute to objective 3.	
Support our businesses to contribute to Gedling's net zero ambitions through the provision of advice and support and, where available, funding.	
Enhancement of pedestrian and cycle infrastructure including for example along the northern bank of the River Trent within Gedling, the Calverton Mineral Line and Gedling Colliery and Mapperley Plains as well as improvement of Active Travel Links to access Gedling Country Park.	

<b>Objective 8: Ensure residents have the skills needed by local businesses and develop collaborations with local training providers to improve access for Gedling residents</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Continue to deliver the Gedling Employability Programme which Gedling Borough Council runs collaboratively with the EMCCA Careers Hub. This programme works with the six secondary schools in the borough, enabling them to deliver careers activity and prepare students for the world of work	
Work with partners to develop the targeted support and advice required to help residents access training and employment.	
Work with EMCCA and local training providers to ensure the needs of Gedling residents and businesses are represented in the distribution of Adult Skills Fund.	
Continue and build on the work of the Gedling Employment and Skills Group.	
Consider the viability of establishing local learning hubs with delivery of training offered in partnership with local providers.	
Consider opportunities to improve transport links between settlements in Gedling and local training providers.	
To maximise the potential of social value opportunities in line with the Gedling Borough Council Social Value Policy 2025–2027.	

<b>Objective 8: Ensure residents have the skills needed by local businesses and develop collaborations with local training providers to improve access for Gedling residents</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Collaborate with local training providers such as Nottingham College and Vision West Notts College to strengthen links with Gedling businesses and deliver co-funded, targeted interventions and apprenticeship within the borough.	
Work with the Planning Department at Gedling Borough Council to consider opportunities to tailor an approach around the use of Section 106 to enable the Council to invest in employment and skills opportunities.	



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## Appendix A

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### Consultation Key Findings



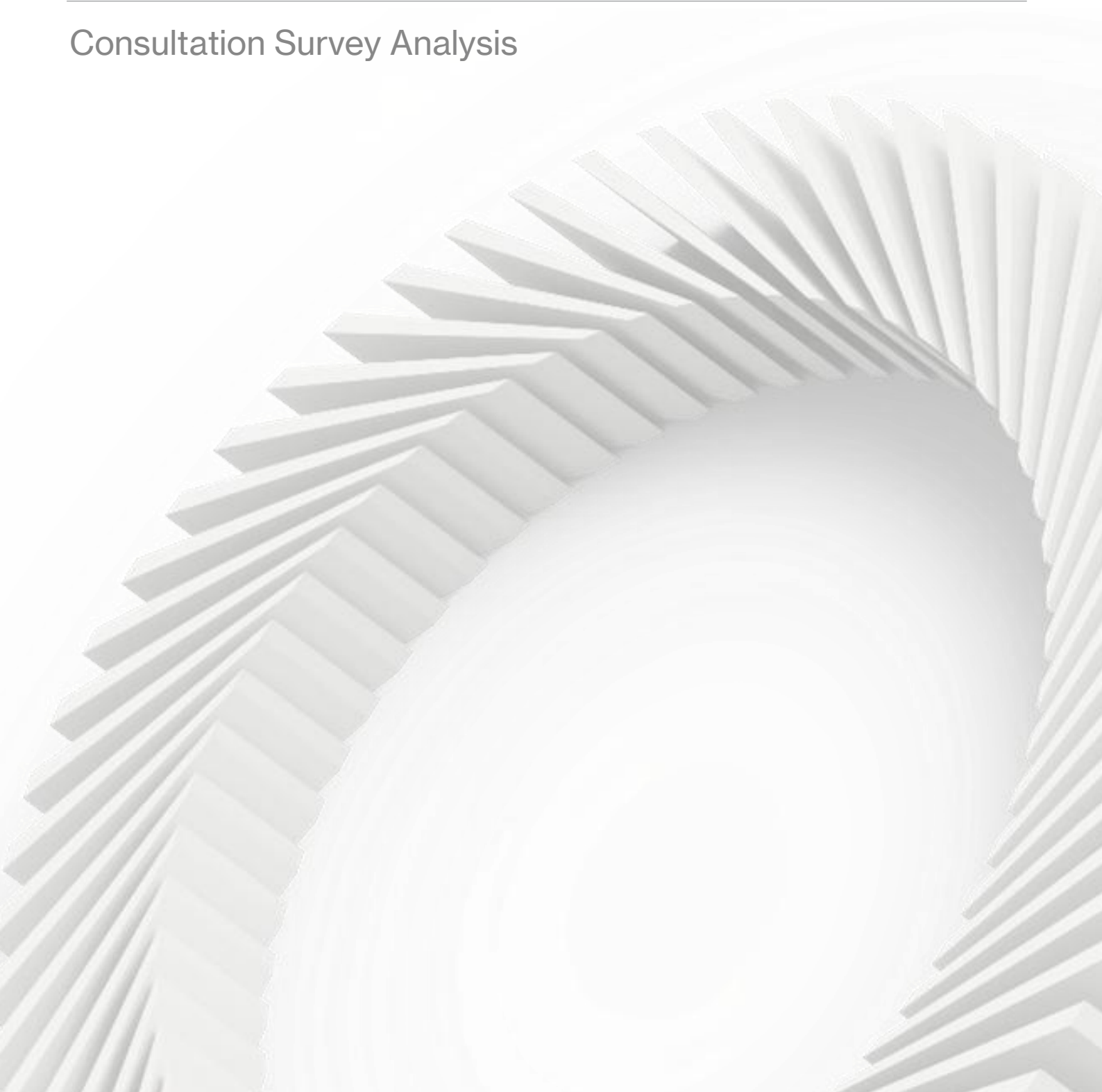


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## Appendix B

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### Consultation Survey Analysis





## Appendix C

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### Strategic Context Analysis



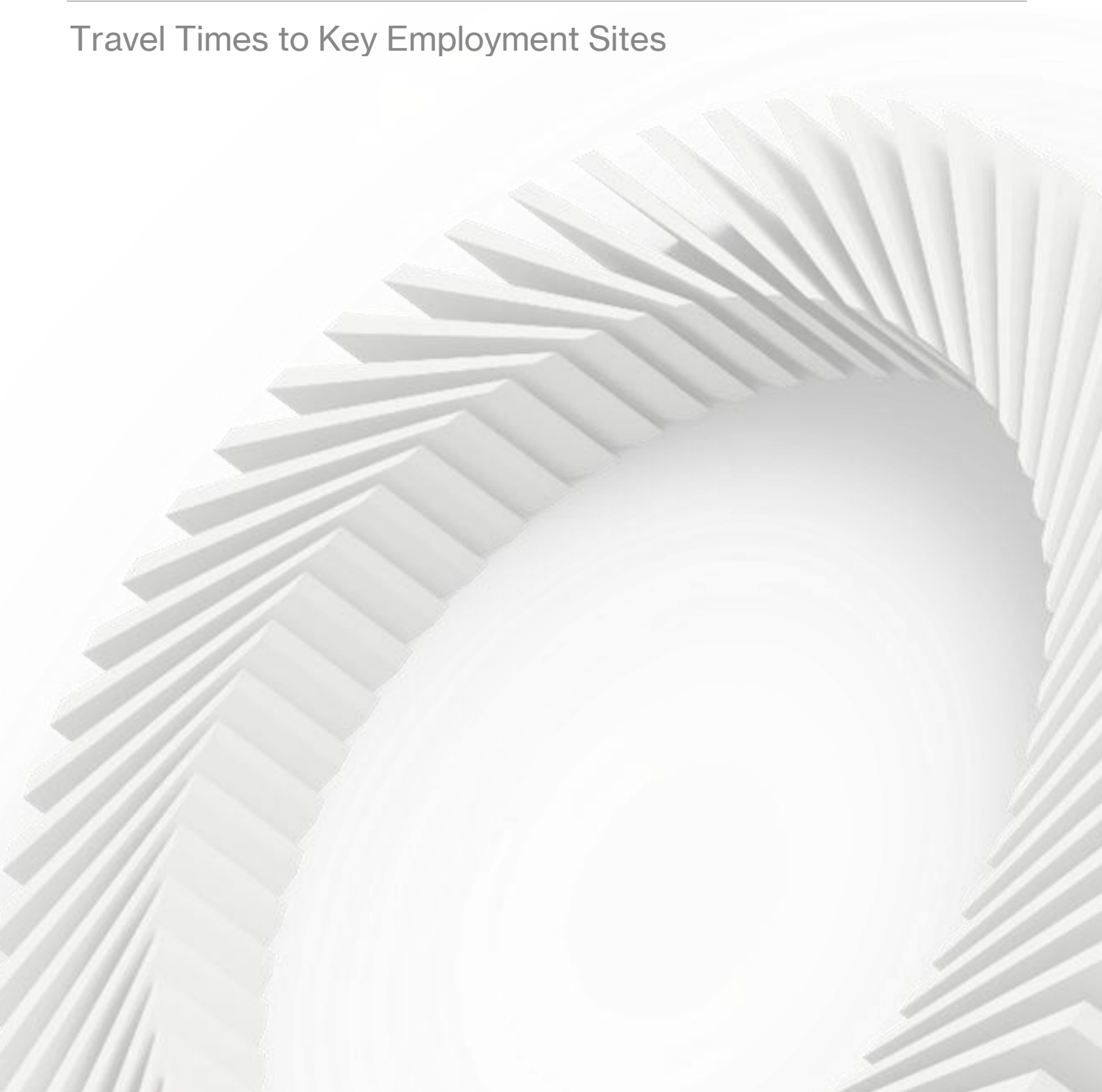


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## Appendix D

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### Travel Times to Key Employment Sites





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## Appendix E

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### Travel Times to Nottingham College and Vision West Notts College