

## **Decision under Delegated Powers**

### **Officer Requesting Decision**

Local Plans Team Leader

### **Officer Making the Decision**

Head of Planning and Regeneration

### **Recommendation**

That the two attached Statements of Common Ground for the delivery of strategic sites in the Draft Leicester Local Plan be agreed and signed.

### **Reason**

The purpose of preparing Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) for the largest and most significant housing allocations is to demonstrate the plan's deliverability and cooperation between neighbouring authorities. This will provide clarity for the examination process as each SoCG will be able to be referred to at the hearings. The two Statements of Common Ground for Ashton Green East and Land North of the A46 are appended to this report.

The Borough Council has been working closely with Leicester City Council in the preparation of our respective local plans because a key part of the test of soundness is that the plan should be deliverable over its period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities. Agreeing Statements of Common Ground demonstrates that the plans are committed to deliverability through joint working. The two sites are:

#### **Ashton Green East**

- a site comprising 670 homes within Leicester City Council which borders land in Charnwood of an allocated site in the Charnwood Draft Local Plan - HA14, Land off Cliffe Road, Henson Close, Birstall.

#### **Land North of A46**

- a site comprising 420 homes within Leicester City but adjacent to the boundary between the two authorities and the allocated site in the Charnwood Draft Local Plan – HA69, the Former Rectory and Land at Thurcaston.

The Borough Council made representations to Leicester City Council on the Draft Leicester Local Plan in February, 2023, including detailed comments on the strategic policies for these two sites. There is no conflict between our representations and

agreeing the overarching principles for development in the SoCG. Our agreement does not prejudice the pursuance of these detailed representations or any further discussions that we may have.

A third Statement of Common Ground for Land at Anstey Lane and Gynsill Lane was recently agreed and signed by both authorities. The site extends across the boundaries of both authorities as well as Blaby District. It is allocated as HA12 in Draft Charnwood Local Plan and a Statement for our own local purposes had already been agreed and signed as Charnwood Local Plan Examination Document EXAM63.

### **Authority for Decision**

The Heads of Service have general delegated authority within the Constitution to take such action as may in their opinion be necessary or appropriate in connection with the implementation of decisions properly authorised by the Council.

Delegated authority has been granted to the Head of Planning and Growth to take such actions which has included instances where Statements of Common Ground have been prepared for the purpose of securing agreement for the development of key allocations in the Charnwood Local Plan. This has included DD208 2021 in December 2021 when authorisation was given to agree and sign eight Statements of Common Ground relating to joint work with key partners in the preparation of the Draft Charnwood Local Plan, DD81 2022 in April 2022 when three Statements were signed and DD095 2022 in May 2022 when the Chief Executive agreed and signed a further six statements.

In this case Leicester City Council is seeking the Borough Council's agreement to bring forward allocations in their own local plan. The two Statements are appended.

### **Decision and Date**



30 August 2023

**Comments from HR**

The report has no HR implications

**Financial Implications**

There are no financial implications associated with this decision.

**Risk Management**

No specific risks have been identified with this report.

Key Decision: No

Background Papers:

1. Statement of Common Ground, Land to the North of A46, August 2023
2. Statement of Common Ground, Land to the east of Ashton Green, August 2023

## Statement of Common Ground

### Land to the north of A46

- 1.1. A site has been allocated for housing to the north of the A46 in Leicester City Council borders. This site lies adjacent to the administrative boundary of Charnwood Borough.
- 1.2. Agreement exists between the relevant Local Planning Authorities that this proposed development is in broad compliance with the spatial strategy of the adopted Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire. The site is also consistent with the new Local Plans for Leicester and Charnwood.
- 1.3. The purpose of this document is to set out the nature of the development being promoted at the site. The reason for doing so is to establish a clear basis for collaborative working between promoters and the local planning authorities, and to demonstrate deliverability.

#### 2. The Land North of A46 Site

- 2.1. The map in Appendix A shows in red the extent of the site within Leicester City Council borders, and in blue the land within the Promoter's control which falls within the administrative boundary of Charnwood Borough Council. This includes the site of the former Rectory (Site HA69).
- 2.2. The promoter and owner of the land within Leicester City Council, which pertains to this Statement of Common Ground, can be seen below.

SHELAA/Local Plan Reference	Owner	Promoter	Administrative Area
261: Land North of A46	The Leicester Diocesan Board of Finance and Leicester City Council	Parker Strategic Land	Leicester City Council

#### 3. Promotion of the Site

- 3.1. Following discussions between the promoter, owners and the Councils, the following matters have been established as common ground regarding how both sites are being promoted to the Councils.
  - 3.1.1. Both sites within Leicester City and Charnwood Borough are being promoted by a single promoter on behalf of the landowners.
  - 3.1.2. The sites are to be brought forward separately, but sites 261 and HA69 will be expected to be compatible with each other. Infrastructure, highway access, site layout, and landscaping should be considered as part of any planning applications coming forward. The relevant Councils will continue to

liaise with County Highways authorities as part of the larger masterplanning process on these sites.

3.1.3. Leicester City and Leicestershire County council education authorities met in late 2022 to discuss the need for a school on the site. The site was deemed to not require a new primary or secondary school at this stage. The councils will continue to engage with the local education authorities to assess any changing needs, and this Statement of Common Ground will be updated if it is in the future found necessary to deliver a school on the site or a need to contribute towards nearby education provision offsite. If a future need is identified this will be agreed with Leicestershire County Council, Leicester City Council and any additional developers involved in bringing the site forward.

3.1.4. There are designated heritage assets and archaeological value on and adjacent to the site. Therefore, development must ensure that any impact upon the heritage assets and landscape settings are mitigated.

3.1.5. The site will require a masterplan having regard to the housing and green infrastructure, open spaces, heritage and sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS).

3.1.6. The capacity of the site, taking into account heritage, landscape, ecological and hydrological constraints, would be approximately 420 homes (final capacity subject to technical evidence, density and relevant policies). In addition, it is anticipated that the site could accommodate complimentary uses, including a Care Home and convenience retail.

3.1.7. The Charnwood Local Plan has identified a small site adjacent to this strategic site for approximately 31 homes (Site policy HA69). This site has been subject to a planning application for 19 dwellings at the time of this Statement of Common Ground being signed.

3.1.8. For the portion that is within Leicester City Council borders The Leicester Local Plan (consultation January 2023) identifies the following trajectory for the site:

Year	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33
Homes			30	50	80	80	80	80	20		

#### 4. Review of Statement of Common Ground

4.1. This statement will be reviewed, and where necessary updated, if there is a material change in circumstances that affects any of the items identified above.

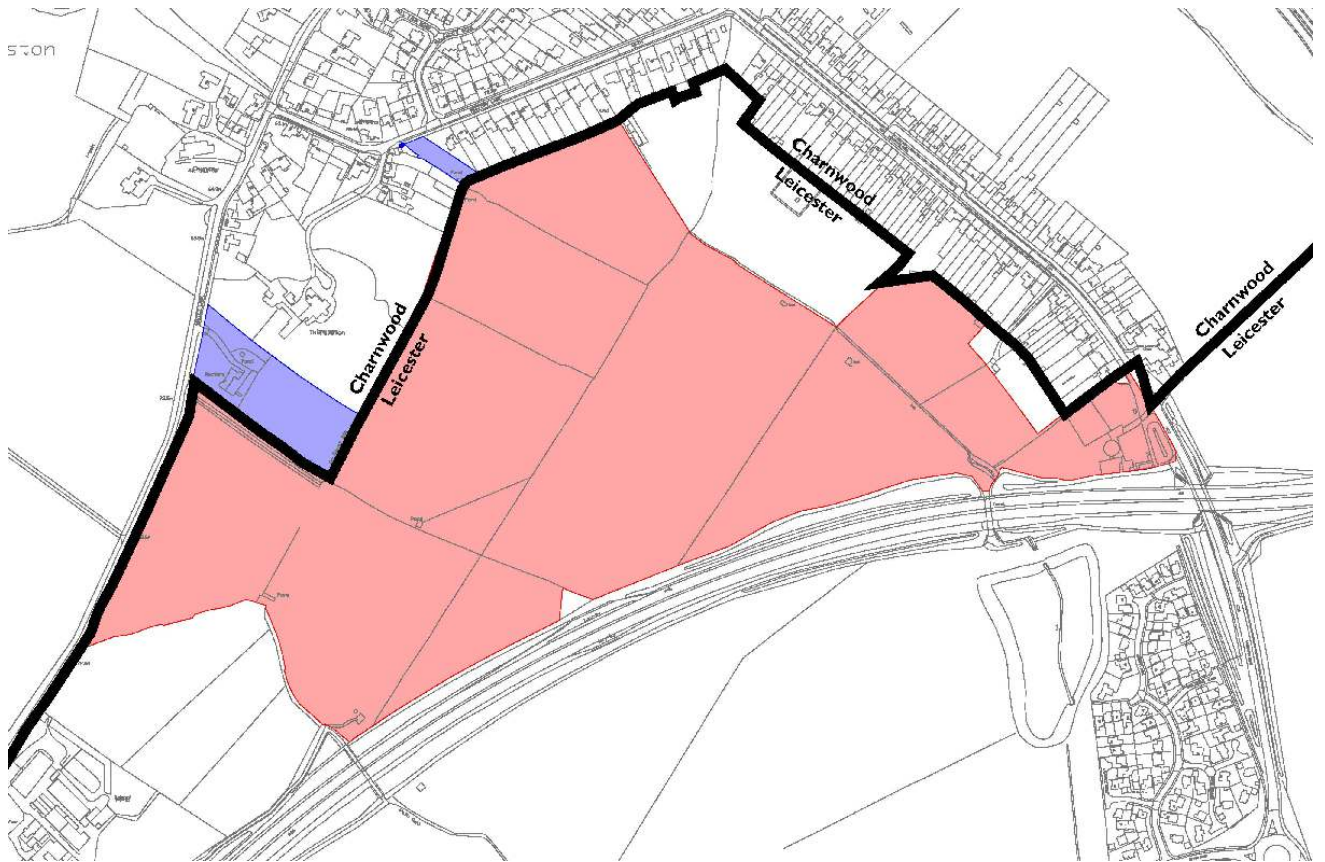
## 5. SIGNATORIES TO THE STATEMENT

Signed on behalf of: <b>Leicester City Council</b>
Name:  Position:  Date:

Signed on behalf of: <b>Charnwood Borough Council</b>
Name:  Position:  Date:

Signed on behalf of: <b>Parker Strategic Land</b>
Name:  Position:  Date:

## Appendix A



## Statement of Common Ground

### Land to the East of Ashton Green

- 1.1. A site has been allocated for housing to the east of Ashton Green Road which is an extension to the existing development at Ashton Green. This site lies within Leicester City Council and borders onto Charnwood Borough Council.
- 1.2. Agreement exists between the relevant Local Planning Authorities that this proposed development is in broad compliance with the spatial strategy of the adopted Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire. The site is also consistent with the new Local Plans for Leicester and Charnwood.
- 1.3. The purpose of this document is to set out the nature of the development being promoted. The reason for doing so is to establish a clear basis for collaborative working between promoters and the local planning authorities and to demonstrate deliverability.

### 2. The Ashton Green Site

- 2.1. The extent of the site is shown on the plan in Appendix A.
- 2.2. The Leicester Local Plan reference is as follows.

SHELAA/Local Plan Reference	Owner	Promoter	Administrative Area
Policy SL03: Strategic Site 2: Land to the east of Ashton Green (Sites 262 and 579)	Leicester City Council	Leicester City Council	Leicester City Council

### 3. Promotion of the Site

- 3.1. Leicester City Council are promoting the Ashton Green site as both promoters and landowners of the site. Further development in the area in Charnwood is being promoted by Jelson Homes.
- 3.2. Following discussions between the promoter, owner and the Councils, the following matters have been established as common ground regarding how the site is being promoted by the Councils.
  - 3.2.1. Promotion and development of the site is expected to be co-ordinated by the promoter and any additional developers who are involved with bringing the site forward, particularly in relation to infrastructure, highway access (including cycle infrastructure), site layout, and wildlife corridor (to the east of the site in Leicester, and west in Charnwood) to deliver a comprehensive development framework for the site, to be agreed with all parties.



3.2.2. The Councils, landowner and promoters will work together to ensure coordinated green infrastructure and functions of the Green Wedge where possible through design layout and mitigation.

3.2.3. The site has been deemed to require a secondary school to accommodate pupil yields from the development. The city council allocation includes a safeguarded location for a secondary school. This has been agreed with the relevant education authorities and the promoter.

3.2.4. All land and build costs associated with delivering the school would be apportioned between all the relevant sites that the school would serve, including those that do not form part of the site, unless they are contributing to alternative, agreed school provision. Arrangements for the timing and funding of the new secondary school will be set out in a separate delivery strategy document to be prepared in collaboration with Leicestershire and Leicester City Local Education Authorities.

3.2.5. The capacity of the site, taking into account landscape, ecological and hydrological constraints, would be approximately 670 homes. This comprises of around 670 homes in Leicester City. An addition of around 35 homes is being further developed adjacent to this site within Charnwood. The site will also provide a secondary school which should accommodate approximately 1200 students. The site within Leicester City is promoted to provide 2.4ha of employment land for industrial uses and an extension of existing employment land along Ashton Green Road.

3.2.6. For the portion that is within Leicester City Council borders, the Leicester Local Plan (consultation January 2023) identifies the following trajectory of the site:

Year	22/23	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32	32/33
Homes						150	150	150	150	70	

#### 4. Review of Statement of Common Ground

4.1. This statement will be reviewed, and where necessary updated, if there is a material change in circumstances that affects any of the items identified above.

## 5. SIGNATORIES TO THE STATEMENT

Signed on behalf of: <b>Leicester City Council</b>
Name: Position: Date:

Signed on behalf of: <b>Charnwood Borough Council</b>
Name: Position: Date:

