

Inspectors Housden and Baugh- Jones  
c/o Ian Kemp

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Date: 12 April 2024

Dear Inspector Housden and Inspector Baugh- Jones

### **Charnwood Local Plan Examination**

Thank you for your letter dated 22nd March 2024 in which you highlight the key matters that arose out of the February hearing sessions in relation to the Plan's soundness, and that will need to be addressed through Main Modifications to the Plan.

I am writing in response to these key matters to provide an update following the hearing sessions. I will provide a response to your key points as they appear in your letter.

#### **1. Change in Definition of Gypsies and Travellers in Annex 1 of the Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (December 2023)**

The Council confirm that the evidence to support the Local Plan the Leicester City and Leicestershire Gypsy, Traveller, and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation Assessment 2017 (EB/HSG/4), doesn't identify any additional needs for permanent pitches for Gypsies and Travellers or plots for Travelling Showpeople in the Borough of Charnwood for the period up to 2037. This finding is not affected by the redefinition of Gypsies and Travellers in the update to the Guidance on Planning for Traveller Sites (December 2023) to include all of those travelling backgrounds because no need had been identified. It is proposed to make a Main Modification to Paragraph 4.84 of the Plan to confirm this position.

#### **2. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Addendum (57a)**

A note identifying the sites that the SA assessed under Option 2 is enclosed as part of this letter and the Council confirms that the contents of this note will need to be incorporated into the SA of the Main Modifications.

3. Requirements in Policy H2, that an appropriate number of affordable homes should meet the M4(3) standard.

The Council agree to a Main Modification to remove the requirement within Policy H2, that an appropriate number of affordable homes should meet M4(3) standard and proposed modifications will be included within the schedule.

4. Updated Housing Land Supply Information

The Council are currently updating EXAM 58 and the suite of supporting documents to reflect completions and commitments as at the 31.3.24. The updates to these examination documents will be submitted to the examination in late April/ early May 2024.

5. Securing Developer Contributions

With regard to the approach to securing developer contributions, the Council's preferred approach is secure this through a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the following reasons:

The document will build upon and provide more detailed guidance on the application of Local Plan policies INF1 and INF2. That is ordinarily the function of an SPD, not a Development Plan Document (DPD) (which would normally embody a new suite of policies and proposals).

The preparation of both the Transport Contributions Strategy and the Planning Obligations SPD will incorporate the evidence base that has been tested through the examination, the preparation of a separate DPD would require its own evidence base.

There is an urgency to completing the policy framework for securing contributions to infrastructure, given that two thirds of the local plan allocations either have the benefit of planning permission or a submitted planning application, it is therefore important that contributions can be sought as soon as possible within the plan period. This is better served by the more streamlined process for the preparation of an SPD.

It would be easier to keep an SPD up to date, and that is the experience of other SPDs which have been prepared for a similar purpose. The preparation of SPD is a tried and tested approach and has been demonstrated that it works.

From a development management perspective, an SPD will carry just as much weight as a DPD, not least because it will be easier to keep up to date as costs change.

Finally, it should be noted that Leicestershire County Council are in the final stages of preparing the Transport Contributions Strategy and are due to consult on the draft document later in the spring. The Council have committed to preparing a Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document within the adopted Local Development Scheme 2024-2027. These two documents together will build upon and provide more detailed guidance regarding the application of Local Plan policies INF1 and INF2.

6. Policy INF1 Main Modification

The Council have prepared Main Modifications to INF1 these will be included within the Main Modifications schedule, acknowledging the need to agree the final wording with yourselves.

I hope that the above answers all of the points raised as part of the hearing sessions and the Council look forward to moving towards the consultation on the Main Modifications and updated housing land supply information.

Yours sincerely



Richard Bennett  
Head of Planning and Growth