

**Charnwood Local Plan Core Strategy Examination
Initial Matters and Issues identified by the Inspector**

N.B. These only relate to the duty to co-operate and soundness in terms of overall provision for housing which will be considered at the initial hearing sessions. Other issues such as the distribution of development across the Borough and specific proposals for urban extensions will be dealt with in due course, if the examination progresses.

Matter 1 – The duty to co-operate

Issue

Whether the Council has complied with the duty to co-operate in the preparation of the Core Strategy.

Questions

Overall housing provision

- 1) What is the housing market area (HMA)? What are the cross boundary issues in relation to the HMA in terms of commuting and migration?
- 2) What are the issues in terms of potentially accommodating housing growth from other authorities?
- 3) What are the particular issues in relation to Leicester? What are the linkages between Charnwood and Leicester? What specific matters require co-operation?
- 4) Who has the Council engaged with in terms of overall housing provision during the preparation of the Core Strategy? When did this engagement begin, and what form has it taken? Specifically how has the Council engaged with other local authorities in the HMA?
- 5) What joint working has taken place and what has been the result of this?
- 6) Do the 2008 SHMA and the 2011 Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Requirements Study provide sufficient and up to date evidence in terms of the housing needs of the HMA? Alternatively, is there a need for further evidence i.e. the new SHMA?
- 7) As it stands, have the housing needs of the HMA been identified and has co-operation taken place to ensure that these needs are met, if so how? Has the issue of accommodating unmet needs from other authorities been addressed, if so how?
- 8) What is the role of the Council's Housing Requirements Study 2013? Does it address wider needs of the HMA, if so how? Were other authorities involved?
- 9) Have the wider needs of the HMA informed the overall level of housing provision in the Core Strategy? If so, how and on what basis in terms of evidence?
- 10) When and why was the decision to commission the new joint SHMA taken?
- 11) What evidence will this provide in terms of housing needs and when will it be available? What is the timescale for co-operation to discuss/agree the distribution of housing within the HMA? What will be the mechanism for this?
- 12) Why was the decision taken to submit the Core Strategy in advance of the joint work on a new SHMA being completed? Is this justified and what effect does this decision have on the Council's compliance with the duty to co-operate?
- 13) In overall terms has the Council engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in maximising the effectiveness of the preparation of the Core Strategy? What has been the outcome of co-operation and how has this addressed the issue of housing provision?

Continued

Other matters requiring co-operation

- 14) What are the other specific issues requiring co-operation and what do they involve e.g.
 - Broad distribution of housing development i.e. PUA/non PUA
 - Site allocations/directions for growth
 - Employment provision
 - Gypsy and Traveller needs and provision
 - Transport
 - Other infrastructure
 - Green Infrastructure/Environmental issues
- 15) Who has the Council engaged with? When did this engagement begin, has it been active and ongoing and what form has it taken?
- 16) In overall terms has the Council engaged constructively? What has been the outcome of co-operation and how has this addressed the issue?

Matter 2 – Overall provision for housing

Issue

Whether the Core Strategy has been positively prepared and whether it is justified, effective and consistent with national policy in relation to the overall provision for housing.

Questions

- 1) What is the evidence base for the provision of 17,380 houses between 2006 and 2028 (annual average 790)? What options were considered and why was this figure chosen?
- 2) How were options for housing provision assessed through the Sustainability Appraisal process? What was the outcome of the appraisal in terms of the relative merits of options? Were all reasonable options considered and appraised? Is the justification for the level of housing provision clear?
- 3) Have the full objectively assessed needs for housing in the Borough and HMA been identified? What are they? Would the level of provision proposed meet these?
- 4) How does the level of provision compare with Govt projections of household growth for Charnwood, specifically the 2008 and 2011 based household projections? Is the difference between the level of planned provision and these household projections justified? If so, why?
- 5) What are the implications of this level of housing provision in terms of population growth, migration patterns and accommodating some growth from other authorities? Specifically how much housing is intended to meet needs from Leicester? How would this compare with past trends? Is this justified?
- 6) Is the level of housing proposed the result of collaboration and co-operation with other authorities? Is it appropriate to proceed in advance of the findings of the new SHMA?
- 7) How would the proposed level of housing compare with past completion rates?
- 8) What would be the implications for economic growth and how does the level of housing compare with the target for jobs growth in the Core Strategy?
- 9) In overall terms is the level of housing planned appropriate and justified? Should the amount of housing planned be increased or decreased? If so to what level and on what basis?