

Matter 10: Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Employment Land Needs

10.1 What is the up to date position with the signing of the SoCG (Exam 43) by the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities (including the County Council)? Are there any implications for Plan preparation by the authorities and if so, what are they?

I am concerned that it is premature for Charnwood Borough Council (CBC) to be including this additional housing in their draft plan.

The SoCG has not been through the governance of all the respective councils, and this is unlikely to happen before the end of 2022. Therefore, there are many opportunities for changes in the housing numbers CBC are requested to take from Leicester City's unmet need.

For example, Hinckley and Bosworth District Council proposed number of houses to take from Leicester City's unmet need is 187. They are currently agreeing to take 102 houses, so there are an additional 85 further houses to accommodate across the whole of Leicestershire.

So far only Leicester City, Blaby District Council and Charnwood Borough Council have signed the SoCG.

Not only does the SoCG need to go through the governance process of all the local authorities, but it also needs to be tested through the local plan process for each local authority. Again, this may bring forward changes to the SoCG and differences in housing numbers for each local authority.

CBC Cabinet Report, 9th June 2022, Item 7, point 17 states:

“That the HENA also identifies an employment land requirement for the Borough of 7.5ha for Offices including Research and Development, and 26.4ha for Industrial & Distribution (excluding strategic warehousing) totalling 33.9ha.

In comparison the new Local Plan identifies a total supply of 81.8ha of employment land giving a surplus of 47.9ha to 2037.

The HENA Employment Distribution Paper draws on evidence from the HENA study as well as that provided in Local Plans, supporting evidence and other planning commitments. It concludes that Charnwood is best able to suitably meet Leicester's unmet employment need of 23 ha to 2036.

This reflects the existing over-supply of employment land compared to the Borough's own needs.

Combined with the availability of '**employment sites and land which is close to the City**' and can contribute to delivering employment land which can service the needs of Leicester-based companies to 2036.”

I am very concerned as to the planned locations of '**employment sites and land which is close to the City**'. Anstey is close to the city but is a rural village and does

not have the infrastructure or space to accommodate any of this employment land and this area should be avoided. CBC should not be taking all the unmet employment land from Leicester City if the impact on the rural villages is the destruction of their character and communities. Rural villages like Anstey should not become urban sprawl and should retain their precious identities.

Issue 2 – The Scale of the Unmet Need for Housing

10.9 If the scale of the unmet need of 18,700 dwellings changes because of the Leicester Local Plan Examination, how would this be addressed by the respective Leicester and Leicestershire local authorities under the Duty to Cooperate? What would the implications be for plan making in other authorities in the Housing Market Area?

If CBC act now and the housing numbers change because of the Leicester City Local Plan Examination, there would need to be another review of CBC Local Plan. This could be to accommodate more or less houses. If there are more houses to accommodate, where will these houses be put? As stated in my previous submission, all houses in the draft local plan for Anstey should be removed. Anstey has taken more than its fair share of housing over the last 10 years with over 660 new houses being built and is now at breaking point.

Issue 3 – Apportionment of the Unmet Housing Need

10.11 Are the following factors set out in the Housing Distribution Paper a robust and logical basis for the apportionment of the unmet need of 18,700 dwellings to 2036:

- *the functional relationships between the respective Leicestershire authorities and Leicester City based on migration and commuting patterns;*

I have not seen evidence that the commuting patterns from Anstey are mainly into Leicester City. Anstey is separated by the A46 from the city, and I would need to understand where people commute to and from Anstey.

- *balancing the provision of jobs and homes;*

There are low unemployment rates for Charnwood and especially in Anstey. There is no evidence to suggest that more housing is needed in Anstey, and there are no jobs for any new residents. This therefore means that any new residents will have to travel out of the village for work.

In March 2022 there were 2,900 unemployed people in Charnwood, 2.7% of the total population. This unemployment is in the large urban centres and Loughborough and not in rural villages like Anstey.

- *deliverability, based on potential supply, the rate of housing growth and adjustments to support a sustainable and deliverable distribution of development.*

Any development in Anstey is not sustainable as any further development will now be on the edges of the village. As the village has grown over the last 10 years, so has the distance to all the local essential services, that are right in the centre of the

village. This makes Anstey unsustainable and pushes any new residents to use private cars to access the very basic services a community requires.

Any unmet housing need from Leicester City should be placed in and around the large urban centres and not in a rural village like Anstey.

Are there any other relevant factors which should be taken into consideration?

All housing planned for Anstey should be removed from the draft local plan and no unmet housing need from Leicester City should be allocated to Anstey.

There is a site at 'Land at Cotes (Prestwold Estate), Cotes (Ref:PSH123)' identified in Charnwood SHELAA Site Assessment 2020 that is 129ha in size and can accommodate 1,500 dwellings. In my view, this site should be used to accommodate the identified unmet need from Leicester City currently allocated to CBC and the site includes enough flexibility if the unmet need numbers change.

National Highways has now responded to the five current live planning applications submitted to CBC for Anstey, totalling 920 houses. They have requested a stop to any decision for three months due to the major increases on demand to the Strategic Road Network from these developments. Also noted was the traffic to and from the proposed new primary school that hasn't been included in the traffic counts. This provides me with the evidence that there is great concern nationally and locally that Anstey cannot meet the housing allocated in the draft local plan currently and certainly cannot take any of Leicester City's unmet housing need.

All the points made above, regarding the capacity for Anstey to take any housing in the draft local plan and any unmet need from Leicester City are based on the evidence at *Figure 1* below, all taken from Appendix A: Detailed Appraisal Tables: Housing Options; Leicester and Leicestershire SOCG: SA Report.

10.13 Have land supply, capacity and constraints issues been assessed in the apportionment of the unmet need? If not, how will these matters be addressed?

This has been answered with the site identified at Cotes that can accommodate the unmet housing need from Leicester City.

Figure 1

APPENDIX A: DETAILED APPRAISAL TABLES: HOUSING OPTIONS

Leicester and Leicestershire SOCG: SA Report

Appraisal findings: Biodiversity

Growth scenario A - 15,900 dwellings (Current unmet housing needs)

Option A1 In Charnwood, this scale of growth should be able to avoid sites around Cropston and **Anstey** that are in proximity to SSSIs in the south west of the borough.

For Option A4, this scale of growth would require a large amount of land in the Charnwood NLA area to be allocated including sites around Cropston and **Anstey** that are in closer proximity to SSSIs in the south west of the borough. These site

allocations have potential to have negative effects on the SSSIs which are likely to be long-term from disturbances to ecological connectivity and from human impact such as through increased recreational use and domestic animals.

Growth scenario B – 20,000 dwellings (25% uplift on current unmet housing needs)

Option B4 The focus on the NLA would likely put significant pressure on more sensitive sites in Blaby, as well as affecting connectivity. In Charnwood, the picture would be similar, with effects on assets close to **Anstey** likely to be more prominent, as well as potential connectivity effects on urban edge sites.

Growth Scenario C (50% of current unmet housing needs - 7950 dwellings)

Option C4 could involve sites along the NLA in Charnwood, Blaby, Harborough, and Hinckley totalling 7950 dwellings. In Charnwood, this scale of growth should be able to avoid sites around Cropston and **Anstey** that are in proximity to SSSIs in the south west of the borough.

Leicester and Leicestershire SOCG: SA Report

Appraisal findings: Health and Wellbeing

Growth scenario A - 15,900 dwellings (Local Housing Need)

For Option A4, In Charnwood, higher growth in this area would increase demand for car trips, especially in and around **Anstey**, Thurmaston and Thurmaston where growth is already planned, which has potential for negative effects on health due to air quality and amenity issues.

Leicester and Leicestershire SOCG: SA Report

Appraisal findings: Landscape and Land

Growth scenario A - 15,900 dwellings (Current unmet housing needs)

For Option A4, In Hinckley, this level of growth will require the utilisation of almost all site options. This will result in the substantial loss of Grade 3 agricultural land. This could also cause significant harm to landscape character through increased coalescence between **Anstey** and Groby and Ratby and Groby.

Growth scenario B - 20,000 dwellings (25% uplift on current unmet housing needs)

For Option B4, in Charnwood, this higher scale of growth would result in the significant loss of Grade 3 agricultural land. The effects on landscape character are also likely to be very prominent, as it would be necessary to encroach upon site options that do not relate to existing built-up areas or contain important landscape features and thus are of higher sensitivity to change. Additional growth along the A46 near Thurmaston and Anstey would further the coalescence of the villages with Leicester city. At this scale of growth, such effects would be more difficult to avoid and are significant.

Leicester and Leicestershire SOCG: SA Report

Appraisal findings: Cultural Heritage

Growth scenario A - 15,900 dwellings (Current unmet housing needs)

Option A1 In Charnwood, it should be possible to avoid site options that are most sensitive (such as near the Scheduled Monument and in and around Thurcaston and **Anstey**).

Cllr Deborah Taylor
Ward Councillor for Anstey