

Background to Mulberry Land and the site

Mulberry Land has significant experience and expertise in promoting strategic land for both residential and employment development. Within the Mulberry Group the respective Homes and Developments teams deliver around 300 homes each year and have built over 3m sq.ft of Warehousing and Logistics space over the last 18 months.

The site is 17 hectares and is in a sustainable location for employment development. It should be allocated as employment land in the Local Plan. Access can be provided into the site from the large roundabout on Syston Road, directly to the south of the site. This would provide excellent connectivity to the strategic road network.

The site is immediately to the northwest of an existing successful employment site, Charnwood Edge Business Park, which accommodates a range of commercial occupiers. Cossington is located a short distance west, with Sileby to the north providing a range of local services and facilities, including a railway station and local labour.

The location of the site is shown in the extract below:



Figure 1: Land north of Syston Road, Cossington

In terms of the wider context, the site is in very close proximity to the A46, which is identified as an important transport corridor running through the Midlands and a key location for logistics operations. It is anticipated that this site would be particularly suitable for mid-sized logistics uses given its location and market demand. The site could however also be configured to accommodate large scale logistics uses given the size, flat topography of the land and the regular shape of the site.

It is also relevant to note that the land north of Syston Road forms part of a wider opportunity for strategic growth to the southeast of Sileby, being promoted for approximately 1,300 new homes and 10 ha of employment land (Phase 1 of which was assessed in the 2020 SHELAA as site PSH493 (Land off Ratcliffe Road)). The promotion of the wider site has previously envisaged the land north of Syston Road forming Phase 2 of the wider opportunity, delivering employment land and a new southern access from the existing roundabout. However, given this land parcel is unconstrained and available for development, it is capable of coming forward immediately for development to help meet Charnwood's identified employment needs and known occupier demands.

Issue 5 – Apportionment of the Unmet Need for Employment

10.23 Are the factors (as set out) a robust and logical basis for the apportionment of the unmet need for 23ha of employment land to 2036?

We agree that the adjoining authorities including Charnwood should be considered for unmet needs in the first instance given their proximity and access to the city along with its labour force. In particular, land at Syston Road, Cossington is ideally located in close proximity to the strategically important A46 corridor, which is acknowledged to relate well in spatial terms to the City.

10.24 – Is meeting all of the unmet need for 23ha of employment land within Charnwood justified? Will it meet the need of different types of employment land in a choice of locations and promote sustainable patterns of development as requirement by para 11 of the NPPF?

We agree that 23ha of unmet need of employment land should be met within Charnwood. Unmet need from Leicester should be taken into account in the draft Local Plan, and addressed in the current Plan period rather than being deferred to a later date.

10.25 – Should some of the unmet need be apportioned to any of the other Leicestershire authorities?

We agree that the unmet need should be apportioned to Charnwood particularly given that, as set out under the Employment Distribution Paper, June 2022, sites within Harborough are considered to be further away from the Leicester urban area and less well suited to meet its needs, plus Blaby requires further sites to meet

its own need, limiting its potential to contribute towards meeting Leicester's unmet need in the short to medium term. In addition, Oadby and Wigston has a limited level of employment land provision, to meet local needs only.

10.27 – Is the apportionment of all of the unmet need for employment land to Charnwood justified by the evidence and will this be effective in meeting the employment land needs of the Functional Economic Market Area as a whole? Does this allow for flexibility and choice?

The Council's employment policies and employment land allocations should not prejudice windfall sites coming forward, in excess of the unmet need of 23ha. To do so would stifle the economic potential within the sub-region. A degree of flexibility should be applied. There remains a shortfall for specific provision for strategic warehousing and distribution needs. This should be specifically applied and allowed for through the emerging policies and allocations.