

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?

The Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) is currently going through the different governance processes of the various authorities.

North West Leicestershire District Council agreed the SoCG at its meeting on 6 September 2022.

The Council's Local Plan is currently being reviewed. There have been a number of consultations to inform the plan, including one between January and March 2022. Amongst other matters this sought to address the issue of the likely housing requirement. To deal with the uncertainty whilst the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities prepared the SoCG, the consultation set out a range of potential housing requirements, ranging from 372 dwellings per annum (standard method) up to 730 dwellings per annum.

Following the publication of the SoCG, the Council has agreed that its housing requirement will be the 686 dwellings each year identified in the SoCG. Having the SoCG and the Council's commitment to it provides a degree of certainty from which the Local Plan review can be taken forward with some confidence (subject to any further Government policy decisions).

The Leicester City Local Plan is still some way off from Examination and ultimately its adoption. To wait until that process is completed to have absolute certainty about the level of unmet need would not be appropriate and would not accord Government's statement that it wishes to see local authorities to push ahead as quickly as possible with plan making.

Apart from providing a greater degree of certainty, the SoCG also helps to demonstrate how all of the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities are working together to address the development needs of the HMA as required under the Duty to Co-operate.