

Charnwood Local Plan Examination Hearing Sessions 2023.

Matters, Issues and Questions

Statement on Behalf of Redrow Homes, Davidsons
Developments and the Helen Jean Cope Charity (Ref
PSLP/598)

Matter 1 – Duty to Cooperate and Other Legal Requirements

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Matter 1: Duty to Cooperate and Other Legal Requirements

Issue 1 – Whether the Council has complied with the Duty to Cooperate in the preparation of the Plan

Question 1.10 Will Policy DS2 be effective in its submitted form and are any main modifications necessary to improve its clarity in relation to timescales and its effectiveness? Should the policy include a reference to strategic warehousing and distribution needs?

- 1.1. We previously responded to this question in our original response to Matter 1. Following the consideration of issues of unmet needs for Leicester in the recent Matter 10 session, circumstances have changed, and it is necessary to consider the need for amendments to Policy DS2.
- 1.2. The Leicester Local Plan Regulation 19 Submission Version is due to be published for consultation early in 2023. Whilst the plan sets out a figure of 18,700 dwellings for unmet needs, the assumptions underpinning this figure need to be tested as part of the Examination process. It is therefore important that the Charnwood Plan includes a mechanism to allow for a review of the plan if, as a result of the Leicester City Plan Examination, the scale of unmet need increases. As part of our submission to Matter 10 we presented a suggested wording to Policy DS2 and this is included below for completeness. This sets a 6-month trigger from the adoption of the Leicester City Plan for the Borough Council to publish a paper reviewing the need for a review of the plan that could trigger a full or partial review if the Leicester City Plan concludes the level of unmet need is higher than currently identified.

Policy DS2: Leicester and Leicestershire Unmet Needs

Within 6 months of the adoption of the Leicester City Local Plan, the Council will publish a review of this local plan. Should a full or partial update be triggered by the review, the Council will commence the update (defined as being publication of an invitation to make representations in accordance with Regulation 18 of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) within 12 months of the publication of the review. Once the update has commenced the Council will submit the Plan Update to the Planning Inspectorate for Examination within a further 24 months of the date of commencement of the update.

- 1.3. This will ensure that Local Plans adopted ahead of the Leicester City Local Plan will be required to consider the implications of the final unmet need figure in their plan.

Issue 3 – Whether the Plan has been prepared in compliance with other legal requirements

Supplementary Questions

- 1. Are any adjustments to the Plan period (2021–2037) necessary to accord with the NPPF paragraph 22 which states that strategic policies should look ahead for a minimum 15–year period from adoption, having regard to the delays in the Examination process?**
- 1.4. 2. Is an update to the latest Local Development Scheme (Exam 34) necessary to provide an updated timescale for Plan adoption?**
- 1.5. The issue of the plan period was raised in our original Matters submissions. With the delays to the Examination process resulting from the need to consider the issue of Leicester unmet needs, it is now obvious that the plan period needs to be extended by the very least one year to cover, as a minimum a plan period 2021–2038. The current Local Development Scheme looked at adoption of the Local Plan in August/September 2023, some 6 months after examination sessions in Summer 2022. On this basis, following reconvened hearing sessions in February 2023, adoption is now unlikely until August/September 2023 at the very earliest.
- 1.6. This would mean the plan would have only 13 ½ years left up to 2037. An extension to 2038 would mean the plan would still be short of the advised minimum 15–year period. There is therefore now a very strong case for the plan period to be extended to 2039 so as to ensure that it sets out a planning strategy for a minimum period of 15 years.
- 1.7. It is important that the Local Development Scheme is immediately updated to provide clear guidance for all interested parties on the timescales for the progression of the plan to adoption.

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