

1. Background

- 1.1. This hearing statement has been prepared on behalf of Redrow Homes East Midlands (“Redrow Homes”).
- 1.2. Redrow Homes are working in partnership with owners of the land off Ratcliffe Road, Sileby, which is not identified for development in the submitted version of in the Charnwood Local Plan.

2. Issue 3 - The Development Strategy

- 2.1. Please refer to answers to earlier MIQs from April 2022 which are still relevant to this issue.
- 2.2. Supplementary questions (answered together)

Q. (also 1.8) Does the development strategy set out in Policy DS1 represent a robust and appropriate approach for the distribution of housing, employment and other development in the longer term, having regard to the Inspectors’ initial findings (Exam 55) in relation to Charnwood’s apportionment of Leicester’s unmet need for housing and employment land?

And

Q. Is any further SA testing of the options for the level and distribution of growth necessary having regard to the Inspectors’ initial findings (Exam 55) in relation to Charnwood’s apportionment of Leicester’s unmet need for housing and employment land?

- 2.3. Policy DS1 is based upon the work carried out by Aecom in the Sustainability Appraisal in May 2021. This looked at three scenarios for housing numbers, the highest of these being 15,700. It was largely agreed by most parties in earlier hearings that this represented a scenario which was not substantially different from the 17,776 dwellings proposed under the draft local plan.
- 2.4. However, with the initial findings of the Inspectors that an additional 1,170 dwellings be added to this total and the delays to the examination requiring that at least an additional year be added to the plan period to 2038 resulting in a further 1,189 dwellings be added to the total (as discussed in detail in our Matter 1 statement). This gives a new housing requirement of 20,213 – which now significantly departs from the highest figure assessed in the evidence which led directly to the strategy proposed under policy DS1. Were adoption to not be made until 2024 then the figures would be an even greater departure (21,402 base and 24,612 with the buffer applied) from those previously assessed at the evidence gathering stage.
- 2.5. It seems hard to conclude therefore that additional SA work is not required in order to test these new higher housing target which have become apparent through the work carried out since May 2021 in the published report.

- 2.6. It is noted that the Council's intended approach to dealing with the increased housing requirement is not known at the time of writing, other than an understanding that it intends to increase capacity on existing allocations. As per our Matter 1 statement we consider that the Council needs to allocate new sites as well as increasing capacity on existing sites where this is deemed appropriate. We reserve the right to comment further at the Hearings when the Council has confirmed how it is to meet the new housing target.
- 2.7. Notwithstanding the above, any new higher growth scenario should look at increasing the number of new dwellings being delivered at the Service Centres, as these represent some of the most sustainable locations for growth in the district, after the largest settlement of Loughborough and neighbouring Shepshed which are rightly amongst the most sustainable locations identified. An emphasis should be given to increasing allocations at the Service Centres which are most sustainable for development and those which are close to Leicester with good existing connections. Sileby with its existing train station and proximity to Leicester is notable given the increase is due to the requirement to meet the City's unmet need.