



Charnwood Local Plan Examination

Matter 2 - Vision, Objectives, Sustainable
Development and the Development Strategy

for Hollins Strategic Land LLP (PSLP/366)



Project : 18-555
Site address : Matter 2
Client : Hollins Strategic Land LLP

Date : June 2022
Author : Stephen Harris

Important notes:

This report has been prepared for the client by Emery Planning with all reasonable skill, care and diligence.

No part of this document may be reproduced without the prior written approval of Emery Planning.

Emery Planning Partnership Limited trading as Emery Planning.

Contents:

1. Introduction	1
2. Issue 2 – Is the proposed settlement hierarchy positively prepared and justified by the evidence and are the proposed limits to development justified and soundly based?	1
3. Issue 3 – The Development Strategy	2

1. Introduction

1.1 Emery Planning is instructed to attend the Examination into the Charnwood Local Plan (2021 – 2037) on behalf of Hollins Strategic Land (hereafter referred to as 'HSL'). HSL's specific interest is the land north of Melton Road, Queniborough which is proposed for allocation (Site Ref HA65) under Policy DS3. We have not been invited to attend Matter 2 but provide an updated position with regard to the MIQs.

2. Issue 2 – Is the proposed settlement hierarchy positively prepared and justified by the evidence and are the proposed limits to development justified and soundly based?

2.3 Is the Settlement Hierarchy Assessment (EB/DS/3) based on a robust methodology and relevant criteria in relation to the availability of and access to services and facilities?

2.4 How has the Settlement Hierarchy Assessment informed the development strategy in Policy DS1?

- 2.1 Such assessments can at times be a tick box exercise at a point in time and where a settlement sits within a hierarchy can change if for example a shop closes or a bus services changes. In this case we consider the Settlement Hierarchy Assessment is an appropriate methodology given the range of factors it has assessed, and that professional judgement has also been factored into the final assessment.
- 2.2 The Charnwood Settlement Hierarchy Assessment (October 2020 update) ranks Queniborough as a fourth tier settlement due to the village benefiting from a range of services and facilities that enhance the sustainability of the village. These include but are not limited to; Food shop; Post office; Primary school; Pre-school; Village hall; Church; Pub; Sporting facilities; and bus services to neighbouring larger towns such as Thurmaston, Syston and Leicester. It therefore meets eight of the eleven services and facilities surveyed, including six within the settlement, as well as access to employment and secondary schools¹.
- 2.3 HSL support the council's recognition that Queniborough is a sustainable village and is capable of accommodating housing growth that will be needed in 'other settlements' over the plan period. This would meet the aims and objectives in the Framework, for example;

¹ Paragraph 8.10 of Charnwood Settlement Hierarchy Assessment (October 2020 update)

- Para 16: “Plans should: a) be prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development”;
- Para 79: “To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services. Where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby”.

3. Issue 3 – The Development Strategy

2.12 Does Policy DS1 set out a clear approach to the distribution of future housing and employment development across the different settlements in the hierarchy?

2.13 Should the figures in the table in Policy DS1 be expressed as minimum numbers?

- 3.1 HSL's particular interest is Queniborough. Policy DS1 then sets out the distribution of the overall requirement into the four categories with Queniborough falling within the Other Settlements criterion which is expected to deliver 5% of the requirement.
- 3.2 Our representations at Submission stage and in our statements to the Examination consider that there is a need for greater flexibility in the Plan to meet the housing requirement but also an uplift in the requirement to meet affordable housing needs and Charnwood's share of Leicester's unmet needs (1,189 dwellings) in the draft Statement of Common Ground. In addition, the provision in the policy is for **at least** 19,461 new homes (our emphasis) so that wording should equally apply for each settlement tier. It is clear that settlements such as Queniborough are capable of delivering sustainable development, therefore meeting the housing needs in the village should not be frustrated by a literal application of the percentage in the policy. In that context, we do consider that the figures presented in the table in Policy DS1 should be expressed as a minimum.