



Charnwood Borough Council
Local Plan Examination

**Matter 2: Vision, Objectives, Sustainable
Development and The Development Strategy**

Hearing Statement

June 2022



gladman.co.uk



Page intentionally left blank

MATTER 2: VISION, OBJECTIVES, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Issue 3 – The Development Strategy

Question 2.11: Is the distribution of development in Policy DS1 justified by the evidence and were all options for the level and distribution of growth tested through the Sustainability Appraisal? What is the justification for a greater proportion of new dwellings being delivered in the Service Centres compared with the ‘hybrid’ option tested?

- 2.1.1 The hybrid development strategy was used as the basis for the identification of proposed site allocations in the Draft Local Plan 2019 (SD/20). At this stage, 931 new dwellings¹ were proposed to be allocated at the Service Centres in addition to existing planning permissions and adopted allocations.
- 2.1.2 As a result of an increase to the Council’s local housing need from 1,082dpa to 1,111dpa, and the Council’s decision to increase supply flexibility from c.7% to c.10%, the number of new homes required to be found overall was greater (8,951 dwellings) than that set out in the hybrid development strategy (7,800 dwellings). To address this, the Council commissioned further Sustainability Appraisal work to identify the capacity of different tiers in the settlement hierarchy to accommodate the additional growth without causing significant adverse effects (SD/5 Appendix G).
- 2.1.3 In respect of Service Centres, the additional SA work identifies that the number of new homes where no significant adverse effects arise is 1,600 dwellings (SD/5 Appendix G 5.1.2). At a level of 2,100 new dwellings, the only significant negative effects are noted as being in relation to soil resources albeit this is compensated by a significant positive impact in the provision of housing (SD/5 Appendix G 5.1.4). The additional SA work clearly demonstrates that Service Centres will have similar effects across most growth options under 2,100 new dwellings (see table at 5.1 in SD/5 Appendix G).

¹ Table 4 (SD/20)

- 2.1.4 There have been regular, detailed discussion between CBC and the Local Education Authority as this Plan has progressed through the respective stages. The outcome of these discussions has highlighted the need for new school provision either in the form of new schools or extensions to existing schools to support the growth proposed. The Development Strategy & Site Selection Topic Paper (TP/2) highlights how the capacity of primary schools in the Service Centres was significant in informing the development strategy and site selection.
- 2.1.5 To enable delivery of a new 1FE primary school, the working assumption is that 700 new dwellings are required to make a primary school viable in terms of pupil numbers. The Development Strategy & Site Selection Topic Paper sets out that Anstey, Barrow and Sileby had sufficient land available in which to make a new primary school viable.
- 2.1.6 The Development Strategy & Site Selection Topic Paper describes how a higher level of growth was therefore directed to Service Centres (an increase from 931 new dwellings to 1,819 new dwellings) to enable the provision of new or expanded primary schools necessary to support growth and avoid significant development further down the settlement hierarchy. This proposed level of growth is comfortably below the point at which significant adverse impacts arise (2,100 new dwellings) and therefore it is clear that it can be accommodated without any significant negative effects.
- 2.1.7 Gladman therefore consider that a greater proportion of new dwellings being delivered in the Service Centres above that first highlighted in the hybrid strategy is evidently justified and based on proportionate evidence. The approach positively responds to the need for new education provision by enabling the delivery of 2 new primary schools and the expansion of a 3rd primary school, without giving rise to significant adverse impacts as demonstrated in the SA.
- 2.1.8 The suitability of the Service Centres including Barrow upon Soar and Sileby as locations for significant growth is set out within the Borough's settlement hierarchy and the evidence base underpinning that. The Settlement Hierarchy Assessment (EB/DS/3) quite clearly demonstrates the Service Centres provide all the essential services and facilities including good accessibility to employment and at least six of the desirable services and facilities. The six Service Centres have an overall population

of over 37,000 people which is equivalent to 20% of the overall population of the Borough. In this context, the delivery of 2,747 homes (14% of the proposed growth) across the Service Centres is considered entirely appropriate and in alignment with the Council's development strategy which seeks urban concentration and intensification supported by commensurate growth dispersed to other areas of the Borough.

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

2.1.9 Yes. It should be made clear that the housing requirement is a minimum number. Tables breaking down housing provision by settlement hierarchy should also make clear they are minimum numbers.

Question 2.17: Are the site allocations in the Service Centres of Anstey, Barrow upon Soar and Sileby (served by Cossington primary school) as proposed in Policies DS1 and DS3 justified when there is a lack of capacity in their respective primary schools? How would this be addressed?

2.1.10 Yes. As highlighted in our response to question 2.11, the development strategy in respect of the Service Centres enables the delivery of 2 new primary schools in Anstey & Barrow, and the expansion of a 3rd primary school in Cossington to serve Sileby, without generating significant negative effects. Moreover, this approach will deliver positive effects in terms of socio-economic factors and enable the Council to best take advantage of opportunities for infrastructure development.

2.1.11 As highlighted previously in this statement, 700 homes are the minimum number of new homes needed to make a primary school viable in terms of pupil numbers. This level of growth was assessed across all Service Centres however only the settlements of Barrow, Anstey and Sileby had the scale of sites available to meet this threshold.

2.1.12 To address the lack of primary school capacity in Barrow Upon Soar, the Plan proposes the expansion of the settlement by 700 new homes to enable the viable delivery of a new 1FE primary school. The SA (SD/5) clearly demonstrates that this approach will give rise to the least adverse impacts and best balance with positive

effects, when compared with expanding Sileby by a similar number of new homes. A reduced scale of growth was therefore directed to Sileby with primary education provision being made in neighbouring Cossington to provide the necessary capacity to serve these two villages.

- 2.1.13 The allocation of five sites in Barrow Upon Soar to deliver approximately 700 new homes is therefore clearly justified as it enables the Council to meet its identified housing need and at the same time facilitating new education provision without generating significant negative effects.
- 2.1.14 Focussing attention on the arrangements for delivering this new primary school, Policy DS3 includes a general requirement that developments are cohesive and integrated with other allocations set out in the Plan including in relation to the provision of new schools and other infrastructure. In this respect, the site specific policies for the Barrow upon Soar allocations set out that the developers of each site will contribute to the reasonable costs of the provision of a new 1FE primary school located at site HA49.
- 2.1.15 This topic has subsequently been the subject of detailed and collaborative discussions between the Council's Policy Team, Leicestershire County Council's (LCC) education officers and the Site Promoters to develop suitable delivery mechanisms to allow the new primary school to come forward alongside housing delivery. These conversations have formed the basis for a strategy that will see each site promoter pay a proportionate share towards the land and build cost of delivering a new 1FE primary school in the settlement, based on their pro-rata share of pupil generation. The strategy will also ensure that the commencement of development is aligned with the timely provision of new education provision.
- 2.1.16 There are some minor details of timing that will need to be discussed with the Local Education Authority, however all parties are aligned on the fundamental principles that are required to see to see the new primary school project come to fruition to support the Local Plan's strategy, and the Site Promoters agree to the proposal for land and build costs to be proportionally shared between them

- 2.1.17 As a consequence of the discussions between the site promoters, LCC and the Council, it has now been concluded that the preferred location in which to provide a new primary school site would be HA48 Willow Road, as opposed to HA49 Cotes Road. It is therefore suggested that a Main Modification is now required to amend the relevant Barrow upon Soar allocation policies to reflect this change, and to also amend the proposed allocation boundary for site HA48 Willow Road accordingly.
- 2.1.18 In respect of primary education provision in Sileby, the Plan makes provision for smaller scale development on selected additional sites in both Cossington and Sileby to enable the delivery of a 0.5FE extension of Cossington Primary School. This approach is justified as it would be unlikely to lead to any greater negative effects for the settlement overall whilst still delivering new primary school capacity.
- 2.1.19 Gladman are the promoters for allocation HA53 which is required to contribute to the reasonable costs of the provision of a 0.5 form entry extension of Cossington Primary School. Gladman have submitted an outline application for the site (P/21/0738/2) which has been granted outline planning permission subject to the finalising of the S106 agreement. Site HA59 has also received outline planning permission subject to a S106 Agreement (P/20/2393/2), including land for the 0.5 form expansion of Cossington Primary School.
- 2.1.20 Negotiations between Gladman and the Council in respect of the S106 Agreement are being advanced. In accordance with the Heads of Terms agreed at the Council's 1st December 2021 Plans Committee meeting, the agreement will include an obligation for Gladman to provide a proportionate developer contribution towards the 0.5FE expansion of Cossington Primary School to accommodate the additional primary school places anticipated to arise from the Barnards Drive site.
- 2.1.21 Given the above, Gladman support CBC's approach to its spatial strategy and the proposed distribution of development as set out in Policies DS1 and DS3 and we consider the approach sound, as it is clearly justified based on proportionate evidence as required by NPPF paragraph 35b.