

Charnwood Local Plan Examination in Public

William Davis Homes Ltd & Chapman Estates (Leicester) Ltd

Hearing Statement - Matter 3: Climate Change and the Natural
and Built Environment

Previous Rep Nos. 546 & 547

June 2022

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement sets out submissions made by Planning and Design Group (UK) Ltd on behalf of William Davis Homes Ltd and Chapman Estates (Leicester) Ltd. It relates to Matter 3: Climate Change and the Natural and Built Environment.
- 1.2 This Statement is submitted in response to the 'Matter, Issues and Questions' (MIQs) identified by the Inspector in May 2022 that will guide the relevant Examination in Public. They should be read in conjunction with our previous representations, including extensive supporting evidence, made throughout the Charnwood Local Plan drafting and consultation process.
- 1.3 Not every question has been answered – only those which are relevant to William Davis' and Chapman Estates (Leicester) Ltd case and previous representations.

2.0 Matter 3: Climate Change and the Natural and Built Environment

Issue 1 - Whether the policies relating to climate change and the natural and built environment, are positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy

Policy EV2 – Green Wedges

3.18 Will the policy enable Green Wedges to fulfil their function in conjunction with the Housing Allocations?

Policy EV3 – Areas of Local Separation

3.19 Will the policy be effective in maintaining Areas of Local Separation and the separate identity of settlements?

- 2.1 Policies EV2 and EV3 are identified in the plan as some of the policies that have a purpose in 'guiding development and delivering sustainable development' (para 3.230). As such, they are fundamental in shaping the plan and informing the shape, scale and location of site allocations. Further, they are fundamental in ensuring that the delivery of appropriate Green Infrastructure defined in the Framework as '*A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.*'.
- 2.2 Policy EV2 recognises the functional importance of Green Wedges and directly refers to the retention and creation of green networks between the countryside and the open spaces within urban areas, and the enhancement of public access
- 2.3 Policy EV3 is about utilising green space and networks to preserve settlement identity and maintain physical and perceptual separation. As such, both EV2 and EV3 can work hand in hand to both preserve identity and to link green space, This in turn can create an integrated network that defines existing settlements and growth and delivers good access to green with direct benefits to wildlife, sustainable commuting and leisure, and health and well being.

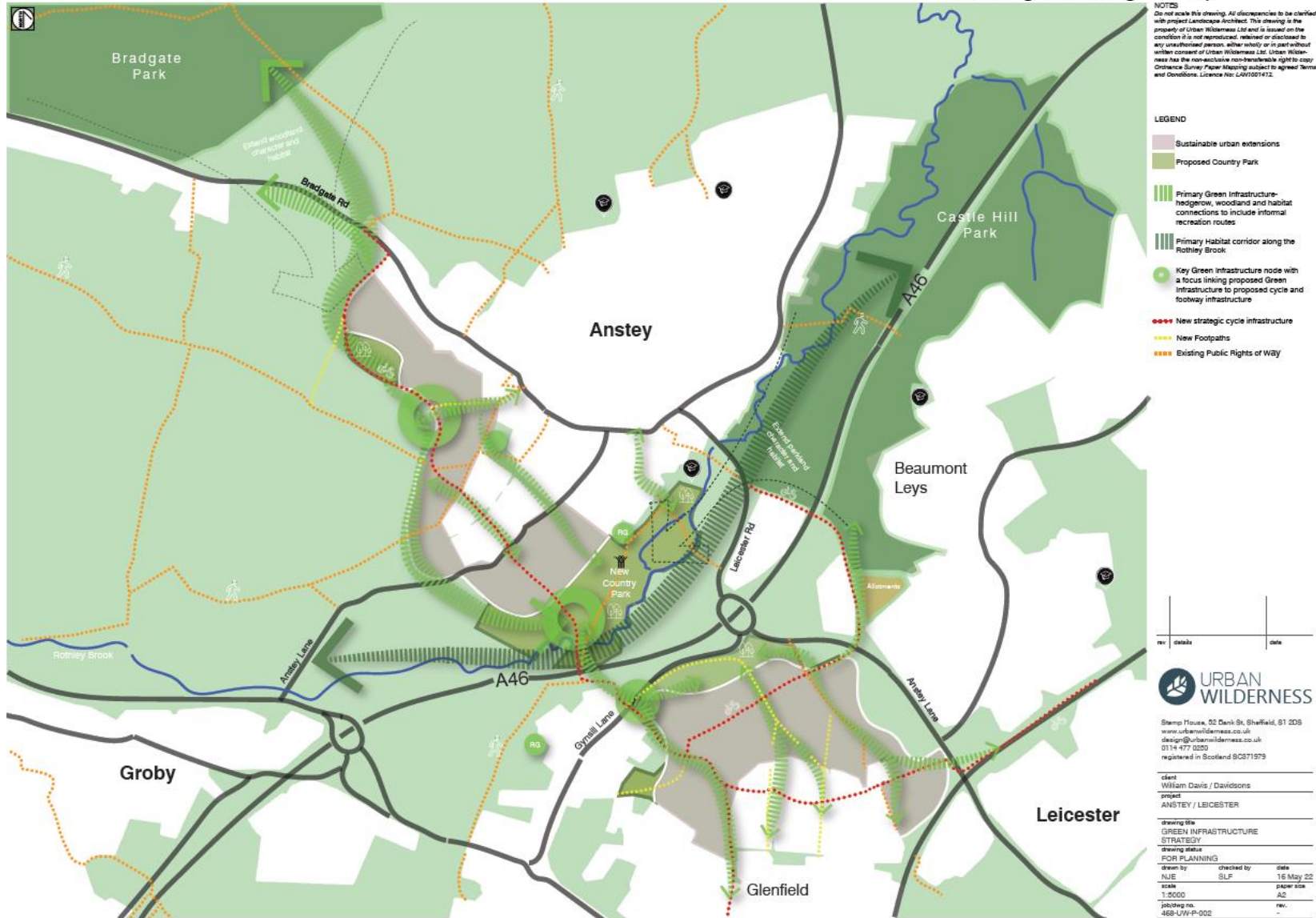
- 2.4 With reference to development proposals HA12 and HA43, William Davis Homes Ltd and Chapman Estates (Leicester) Ltd have been collaborating with the Borough Council and other landowners / promoters on a 'landscape led' approach to development proposals, based on delivering and enhancing a strategic Green network to the west of Anstey running down to the north of Leicester into the former Green Wedge. Para 175 of the Framework states that plans should *'take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries.'* Further, para 98 highlights that *'access to a network of high quality open spaces is important for the health and well-being of communities, and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change.'*
- 2.5 With these plan requirements in mind, the proposed Green Infrastructure strategy associated with the HA12 and HA43 allocations is shown on the following page. This will ensure that the allocations *'promote the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, (and) ecological networks'* as set out at para 179 of the Framework .
- 2.6 It is a fundamental part of national planning policy, that strategic green infrastructure is not the remnant green space left after development has been imposed on the landscape, but that identified strategic green infrastructure is the framework within which growth areas are delivered to achieve mutual benefits. In the case of allocations HA12 and HA43 the GI strategy has directly informed the location, scale and pattern of the development proposals, alongside the need to reflect the historic morphology. They seek to deliver cross boundary green infrastructure links and demonstrated a connective relationship that serves to support and justify the allocations. Key to the strategy is a recognition of the importance of Bradgate Park to the north and to facilitate and reinforce north south green corridors and connective linkages that will enable a strategic green network from the northern edge of Leicester right up to Bradgate Park. This will ensure that the functions of Green Wedge as set out in Policy EV2, are fulfilled in conjunction with, and in part because of, the associated housing allocations.
- 2.7 To the north, the Area of Separation acts to define the northern extent of Anstey and the Southern extent of Newtown Linford, by imposing a linked green break

between the settlement that is both physical and perceptual. Notably, the policy does not preclude development provided that it maintains the settlement identity and the sense of separation. Within the HA43 allocation and the master planning work undertaken, it is clearly possible to ensure that any physical works within the Area of Separation do not include the need for vertical built form, and can be designed to maintain an open break that is naturalised and verdant. We are clear that Policy EV3 will indeed be effective in maintaining Areas of Local Separation and the separate identity of settlements.

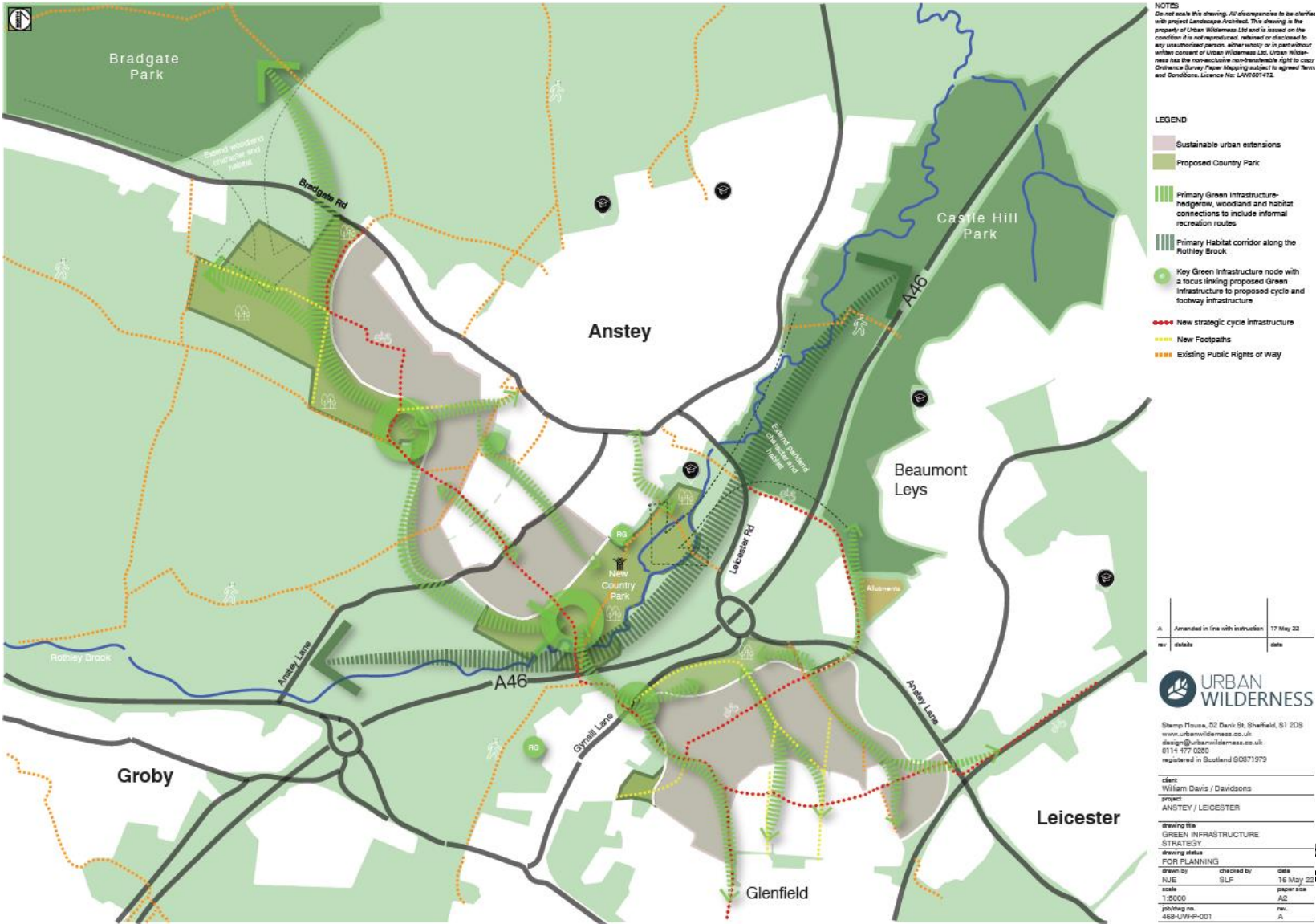
- 2.8 In an east-west direction, a primary habitat corridor is enhanced along the Rothley Brook, to maximise the opportunities for natural capital. The provision of a country park to the south of the HA43 allocation will connect to the existing parks and leisure spaces further to the north and east, delivering both habitat net gain, increased leisure connectivity and continuity across the top of Leicester.
- 2.9 The delivered Country Parks and other parkland / open spaces will then form green 'stepping stones' from Leicester towards Bradgate park, linked by strong green cycle and walking corridors.
- 2.10 Within the housing allocations themselves, green infrastructure links are delivered through the developments providing interconnected cycle routes, footpaths and wildlife corridors. Key existing elements such as the Park Pale within HA12 and existing tree lines, are retained and utilised to achieve natural internal green corridors and non-vehicular linkages, as well as having landscape benefits.
- 2.11 In this way, the Green Infrastructure strategy directly delivers on the aspirations of Policies EV2 and EV3, and responds to the requirements of Para 106 of the Framework for policies to provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling network and Para 100 which notes that Planning policies should *'protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide better facilities for users, for example by adding links to existing rights of way networks.'*
- 2.12 Overall, we consider that the approach to Green Wedge and Areas of Separation as elements of a connective green infrastructure networks, serve to frame, contain and stitch together the planned growth of Anstey so that it remains organic and delivers on national policy imperatives to support and create green, biodiverse, movement

corridors, close to where people live, enabling a connection with nature and the well being benefits that are clearly understood. In this way allocations HA43 and HA12 are effective and justified

Draft Green Infrastructure Strategy HA43 and HA12



Enhanced Green Infrastructure Strategy HA43 and HA12 HA43 extended to west with additional natural public open space to north





Planning and Design Group

20250

050

05554