

Hearing Statement – Matters, Issues and Questions.

In Respect of Charnwood Local Plan 2021–37 Examination
Hearing Sessions 2023.

On behalf of Carbide Properties Ltd

Date: 12 January 2023 | Pegasus Ref: P19–2768

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Document Management.

Version	Date	Author	Checked/ Approved by:	Reason for revision
1		GD	JH	
2		GD		Minor changes



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1. Matter 5: Employment Development and Town Centres

Supplementary Question

1) In the light of the Inspectors' findings (Exam 55) regarding the working assumption of 23 hectares forming Leicester's unmet need for employment land, is there sufficient clarity around the location of the sites that will meet that need, and will they meet the principles in the HENA Employment Distribution Paper (Exam 46) which are:

- Good proximity to the City, preferably adjacent to the existing urban area; and
- Well connected to the City by road (A road) and ideally connected to the wider strategic network (A road/motorway network).

- 1.1. It is accepted that the Local Plan allocates a sufficient amount of land to meet the identified need as set out in the evidence.
- 1.2. However, and as reiterated in our previous hearing statement the *availability* of this land to meet the unmet need from Leicester and the need for B2/small B8 land is of significant concern. As previously stated, the allocation of employment land seems to have been derived by considering what sites have already either gained permission or have been allocated in the past without carrying out any further analysis as to whether they are in the right location to suit demand or whether they can be delivered in a timely manner to meet demand.
- 1.3. Most of the proposed allocated employment land continues to not be immediately available for development which is restricting the need of commercial operators/industries who need to relocate from Leicester or expand now.
- 1.4. We have submitted a planning application for employment land adjacent to the Charnwood Edge Business Park. This is well located to serve the unmet employment needs of Leicester as well as the employment needs for Charnwood. It is located adjacent to an existing employment site and is in good proximity to Leicester. It is well connected to the City, being located adjacent to the strategic road network of the A46 which gives direct access to Leicester and the wider area.
- 1.5. We have end users that are looking to locate in Charnwood close to Leicester City, in order to use the good pool of local labour and who are seeking strategic warehousing and logistics space now but are unable to identify a suitable allocated or committed sites to meet this demand. This is in part due to the availability of the employment land identified in the plan, which is reliant on the delivery of housing to gain access, partly due to sites not meeting end user's requirements and partly due to the proposed policy restrictions on uses within the allocations through the respective planning permission (at North of Birstall and Watermead Business Park, for example).
- 1.6. This site is suitable, available now and achievable without any technical constraints. For context, please see the layout submitted with the planning application in Appendix I



17. We, therefore, again, reiterate the need for a criteria-based policy to be included in the Plan to deal with unallocated employment sites that come forward to ensure local and immediate demand is met during the plan period. If deemed necessary, the policy could include criteria stating that windfall employment development should seek to meet an identified need or more specifically to meet the unmet need from Leicester, if required. This will ensure the plan is positively prepared and justified, meeting the tests of soundness.



Appendix 1

2398 P400J Proposed Site Plan

Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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