



Charnwood Local Plan Examination – Matter 6

Issue 4 – Housing Allocations

On behalf of William Davis Ltd – Land to r/o Snells Nook Lane (PSLP Representations Ref. PSLP/564)

SITE HA48

Question 6.16a: Is the proposed scale of housing development justified, having regard to constraints and the provision of necessary infrastructure?

The Local Plan suggests that Site HA18 should accommodate 120 dwellings.

Since WDL's representations and associated Vision Document for the site were submitted, a further comprehensive assessment of the site's capacity has been undertaken to inform the preparation of a full planning application. That included a detailed review of all technical and environmental site surveys and refinement of the development proposals, followed by a formal design review by Design: Midlands Review Panel and formal pre-application consultation with CBC, stakeholders, and members of the public.

The detailed review and preparation of a full planning application for development has reinforced the findings of the site surveys and assessments as summarised in the Vision Document that supported WDL's Regulation 18 representations. These included an access design strategy, Transport Assessment, Ecological Assessment, Heritage Assessment and Flood Risk Assessment, which were also considered in conjunction with the formal pre-application consultation. Furthermore, the detailed design proposals for the site have been directly informed by these and consultation feedback that are now encompassed within a full planning application that has been submitted and is currently awaiting validation by CBC.

The full planning application confirms a site capacity of 128 dwellings, taking into account all site constraints and infrastructure requirements; proposing a dedicated site access, sustainable drainage, suitable development offset from Burleigh Wood, biodiversity net gain, and 30% affordable housing provision. The response to question 6.16c below provides further detail on the assessment findings relevant to the specific site constraints listed.

The detailed site capacity assessment indicates that Policy DS3 should be amended to reflect the ability of the site to provide 128 dwellings, or reference inserted to 'approximately' 120 dwellings to allow sufficient flexibility.

Question 6.16b: Is the allocation consistent with the development strategy in Policy DS1 and where relevant, does it take account of a made Neighbourhood Plan?

The allocation of site HA18 is wholly consistent with the development strategy, given the site's location adjacent to Loughborough Urban Area, being the second largest settlement in Leicestershire. Indeed, the site's development is consistent with the neighbouring residential context and the proposed layout demonstrates that for the longer term delivery of the Loughborough Science & Enterprise Park (LSEP). The relationship to the LSEP is considered further in relation to the site specific questions below.

There is no Neighbourhood Plan for the area.

Question 6.16c: What is the likely impact of the proposed development on the following factors:

- **Settlement separation and identity and landscape character;**

The Pre-Submission Stage Sustainability Appraisal (May 2021) (PSSA) reiterates the findings of earlier SA's and the supporting evidence base, indicating the effect on landscape would be neutral.

A Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment has been prepared, which supported the pre-application consultation and full planning application. This confirms the site is relatively well contained visually and is integrated with the existing development to the south.

Considerable thought has been given in the detailed design process as to how housing and green infrastructure can be arranged in order to integrate the development with the built form, whilst maximising the green infrastructure network.

- **Biodiversity, green infrastructure including public rights of way and agricultural land quality;**
The PSSA found that the likely effect on biodiversity would be neutral, with access to green space as minor positive.

Refinement of the green infrastructure layout and design, including the relationship of development to Burleigh Wood has been completed and forms part of the full planning application. The supporting a biodiversity impact assessment reflects the detailed landscape proposals and demonstrates that a significant net gain in excess of 10% can be provided in conjunction with development.

The site would not impact on any existing public rights of way, but will provide new connections to the existing right of way along the southern boundary of the site, as well as providing pedestrian route improvements along Snells Nook Lane. A footpath route can also be accommodated within the site to provide a potential link to the proposed LSEP development to the north of the site.

- **Heritage assets;**

The Vision Document that supported earlier representations included a summary of the Heritage Assessment (HA) undertaken in relation to the site. That HA confirmed there are no heritage assets within the site itself, but a number of listed buildings are located within the surrounding area, including Burleigh Farmhouse as referenced in the policy. As such built development within the site will alter the wider landscape within which these designated assets are situated. Nevertheless, each of the designated assets was assessed as being screened by topography, vegetation or buildings and there are no historical associations with the study site that contribute to their understanding or appreciation. Any future development of the site will have no impact on their setting and so no harm to their significance.

A geophysical survey has been carried out and included as part of the full planning application. The assessment has shown that there are no heritage constraints to the deliverability of development within the site and any archaeological interest can be safeguarded by an appropriately worded planning condition.

- **The strategic and local highway network and other infrastructure inc. health facilities, education and open space;**

The PSSA highlights minor positive effects in relation to transport, greenspace, healthcare and leisure facilities, and neutral effects in relation to proximity to key routes and primary school. Minor negative impacts are noted in relation to access to secondary school.

A Transport Assessment (TA) has been prepared to support WDL's planning application and that concludes that the proposed junction on Snells Nook Lane will provide a new safe and suitable access to the development for vehicles, cycles and pedestrians. It also highlights the provision of a new footway along Snells Nook Lane to form a link between the new site access and the existing footway to the south of the site and the public right of way along the southern site boundary. A footpath route would be provided within the site to provide a potential link to the proposed LSEP development to the north of the site.

The nearest bus stops to the site are located on Nanpantan Road, approximately 350m to the south of the site. The stops are served by a single bus service between Loughborough and Ashby de la Zouch. The additional patronage demand for bus services associated with the proposed development would assist in strengthening the commercial viability of the existing service. Improvements will likely be provided to the two closest bus stops to the proposed development (Nanpantan Road), including provision of raised bus boarder kerbs and improved timetable display cases. Funding for these improvements would be secured through an appropriate S106 obligation.

The TA also concludes that the proposed development of the site will not have an unacceptable impact on the safety or capacity of the local highway network.

- **Air and water quality, noise pollution, land stability and flood risk.**

The site is not located in or adjacent to an Air Quality Management Area and no concerns have been raised in relation to water quality, as acknowledged in the Sustainability Appraisal (October 2019); neither are therefore considered a constraint to the site's development.

An assessment of traffic-related noise has been carried out in conjunction with the full planning application, which confirms that appropriate mitigation can be provided to the limited number of dwellings affected immediately adjacent to Snells Nook Lane, including the use of acoustic boundary fencing to rear gardens and window glazing.

The site is wholly located in Flood Zone 1 and is at low probability of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy has been prepared and submitted alongside the full planning application. The strategy proposes appropriate mitigation to accommodate the required level of run-off plus a 40% allowance for climate change and demonstrates that the drainage strategy embedded in the development layout is deliverable and will not increase flooding adjacent to or downstream of the site for the lifetime of the development.

In light of the above, it is clear that the site is a suitable location and is not subject to any insurmountable constraints. Therefore, the proposed allocation of site HA18 is entirely justified and sound.

Question 6.16d: Are the development requirements clear and deliverable and are any further safeguards or mitigation measures necessary to achieve an acceptable form of development? Are any main modifications necessary for soundness?

The development requirements for the site have been fully tested through the preparation of the submitted full planning application, informed by pre-application feedback from the Design Review Panel and CBC's Planning and Urban Design Officers. The associated Landscape & Visual Impact Assessment confirmed that the site is visually contained

Reference to the requirement for safeguarding access to the LSEP should be amended.

Otherwise (and taking account of the suite of development management policies in the Local Plan) no other safeguards or mitigation measures are necessary.

Question 6.16e: Has any planning permission been granted for residential development and if so, what are the details?

Planning permission has not been granted for the site's development. However, as referred to above, a full planning application has been submitted to CBC (Planning Portal Ref: PP-11231156). That application demonstrates the site's suitability, deliverability and capacity to accommodate 128 dwellings, plus associated open space and infrastructure, including a new junction access off Snells Nook Lane.

HA18 – Land to r/o Snells Nook Lane

Is the requirement for access to the Loughborough Science and Enterprise Park to be safeguarded as part of any layout, justified?

CBC's desire to ensure that development of this site does not compromise the future delivery of the LSEP is supported and ensuring future vehicular and pedestrian connectivity has been considered as part of the full planning application; with development offset from the northern boundary and the main route through the site allowing for future expansion if needed. However, the need and deliverability of such an access route is not yet known and subject to further masterplanning of the LSEP site as confirmed through pre-application consultation with Loughborough University. To avoid this becoming a fixed constraint and enable alternative solutions to delivery requirements of the policy, it is proposed that the diagram is removed and the policy wording amended to state that development of the site should "not prejudice suitable and safe access to the LSEP".

Is the diagram in paragraph 2.89 justified and does it accurately reflect the site requirements?

The policy diagram is not visually representative of the findings of the site assessments and does not support the development requirements. In particular, the 'Safeguarded Access to LSEP' is repeated within the key; the linear route conflicting with requirement to maintain an appropriate buffer with Burleigh Wood and the hatching across the entire northern section of the site unclear in its purpose.

Are any additional requirements necessary in relation to flood risk?

As noted above, the site is wholly located in Flood Zone 1 and is at low probability of flooding. A Flood Risk Assessment & Drainage Strategy has been prepared and submitted alongside the full planning application. The strategy proposes appropriate mitigation within the inclusion of attenuation ponds to accommodate the required level of run off plus a 40% allowance for climate change and demonstrates that the drainage strategy embedded in the development layout is deliverable and will not increase flooding adjacent to or downstream of the site for the lifetime of the development.