

Charnwood Local Plan Examination

Supplementary Hearing Statement on behalf of Jelson Homes

Matter 7: Housing Land Supply

January 2023

Report Title: Charnwood Local Plan Examination – Supplementary Hearing Statement – Matter 7 (Updates and SQs)

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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction

1.1 Jelson original Matter 7 Hearing Statement provided answers to the question the Inspectors posed in respect of whether the Plan will provide for sufficient housing land supply to deliver the planned growth over the Plan period and whether a deliverable five year supply of housing will be available upon adoption. We provide a further update to our original answer in response to Supplementary Question 1.

2. Issue 1 – Whether the Plan will provide for a sufficient housing land supply to deliver the planned housing growth over the Plan period and whether a deliverable five year supply of housing will be available on adoption

2.1 In order for the Local Plan to be sound it must provide a clear strategy for bringing sufficient land forward, and at a sufficient rate, to address objectively assessed needs over the plan period. Because the Council must also identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement, the Plan is also required to identify specific, deliverable sites for years one to five of the plan period and then sufficient developable sites, or broad areas of growth, for the remainder of the plan period.

2.2 The Glossary to the NPPF defines 'deliverable' sites as being available now, offering a suitable location for development now and be available within a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within 5 years. In order for a site to be considered 'developable' it should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that it will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

2.3 The Council has taken the view that, in order to guard against housing land supply related risks, it should identify specific sites to satisfy the entirety of its housing requirement. We agree that this is appropriate and necessary.

2.4 Paragraph 74 of the Framework highlights that strategic policies should include a trajectory illustrating the expected rate of development for specific sites. Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies. The Inspectors original MIQs contained a note that advised the Council that its responses to the questions posed about HLS should include an updated housing trajectory, updated completions data for the years 2021/22 and other information / evidence it has obtained from site promoters. This information has been prepared by the Council and was submitted to the Inspectors during the course of the initial Hearing Sessions. So far as we are aware, the Council's latest Local Plan Housing Trajectory is Exam document 11, which is based on completions and other data, as of 29 April 2022. It shows the anticipated timescales in which each draft Local Plan housing allocation is expected to come forward together with the estimated annual completions from each site. The Plan does not however, contain any other detailed information to support the assumptions that the Council has made in respect of the deliverability and / or developability of each site, the timescales in which they are likely to come forward for development and the rates that they will be built out at. Instead, it seems as though the Council has based its assumptions on these matters on the site specific proformas and / or Statements of Common Ground that it asked the promoters / developers of each of the allocated sites to complete in March 2022.

2.5 Jelson has undertaken a robust assessment of the Council's latest housing trajectory and the evidence underpinning it. In its view, the trajectory submitted is simply not reliable and it must therefore be updated to reflect the necessary adjustments that need to be made to it in regard to the use of the

correct annualised housing requirement and the latest planning position with each of the Plan's allocated sites.

- 2.6 This exercise has identified that there are issues with (i) some of the sites that it has identified; (ii) assumptions that have been made about the number of dwellings that certain sites are able to accommodate; and, (iii) the lead in times and delivery rates that it has assumed. For example:
- a) the Council has assumed that a significant number of sites will be capable of accommodating more dwellings than the developers / promoter / landowners have indicated that the site could accommodate in the site proformas / Statements of Common Ground that they submitted to the Council. By the same token, the Council has assumed that several sites will accommodate significantly fewer dwellings than developers / landowners / housebuilders have either made applications for planning permission for, or which the Council has granted planning permission for in the past 12-18 months. Neither the Plan nor its supporting evidence base confirms or explains why the Council has taken the decision it has to increase the potential capacity of certain sites, or why it has assumed that site would deliver fewer dwellings than it has permission for or is likely to have planning permission granted for. This needs to be confirmed and corrected.
 - b) The trajectory indicates that the Council won't be able to demonstrate a five year housing land supply at the point at which the Plan is adopted, or that it will be able to maintain a five year housing land supply throughout the Plan period. The current housing trajectory suggest that there will be a lull in supply after year 10 of the Plan period. Our concerns about this are covered in more detail in our responses to Matters 1, 2 and 4.
 - c) The Council's data on lead-in times is not accurate. It doesn't reflect the information that landowners / promoters / developers have provided in their site proformas and Statements of Common Ground for the allocated sites. Moreover, and more importantly, not does it take into account the impact that LPA staffing shortages is having for the validation and determination of applications for planning permission, completion of legal agreements, discharge of conditions etc. Similarly, it doesn't reflect the delays applicants are experiencing during the planning application determination period e when trying to resolve technical issues
 - d) A number of the sites that are proposed to be allocated are not deliverable and are not demonstrably developable either. As a consequence, there can be little confidence in their ability to make a positive contribution to housing delivery through the plan period. We address this issue in more detail in our responses to Matters 1, 2 and 4.
 - e) It isn't clear whether the Council has enough land to satisfy its housing requirement together with an appropriate buffer.

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