

Leicester City Council – Response to Inspectors Matters, Issues & Questions for the Charnwood Local Plan Examination 2022.

Matter 8: Infrastructure and Transport

Issue 1 – The Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Does the Infrastructure Delivery Schedule (Appendix 3 of the Plan) enable a coordinated and strategy led approach to the delivery of new and improved infrastructure to support planned growth? Can the priorities, costs and funding sources for the different types of infrastructure be easily identified from the Schedule?

It is the view of Leicester City Council that as submitted, per our previous representations the delivery schedule does not specifically define how growth can be supported in Charnwood and the neighbouring areas. This is particularly related to uncertainties over funding of transport infrastructure which has significant cross boundary implications if the required infrastructure has not been delivered.

The council acknowledges that infrastructure delivery is an ‘ongoing’ process and whilst some progress has been made (as per the various SoCGs signed post submission) there are still concerns that major required infrastructure particularly around the A46 western bypass has currently no confirmed strategy for delivery, little chance of funding through developer contributions, nor is within the gift of Charnwood nor local highway authority to deliver. The council also acknowledges that dialogue is also ongoing with National Highways who would be the responsible body related to delivery however none of this infrastructure is contained in any phase of the government Road Investment Strategy (RIS) nor the RIS pipeline at this time.

Will Policy INF1 be effective in securing new and improvements in capacity to existing infrastructure to support proposed development and are any main modifications necessary for precision and effectiveness including in relation to:

d. Joint working to address cross boundary infrastructure needs and capacity.

Leicester City Council is currently working towards an ‘SoCG’ with Charnwood, Leicestershire County Council and National Highways to develop a mitigation package for the North of Leicester area which will help to address point ‘d’, however the policy needs to acknowledge the uncertainties of Government funding regimes and the ‘on going’ nature of planning and delivering infrastructure provision. Therefore, some words to that effect will be required in policy.

Issue 2 – Transport

What is the role of sustainable transport modes in supporting planned growth and has the effect of modal shift supported by Policy CC5 been taken into account in the transport modelling and studies (EB/TR/11, 12 & 13)? If so, how?

The modelling confirms that to minimise the traffic impacts of growth on the highway network will need sustainable mode transport investment as well as measures on the strategic road network, major road network and local road network. Interventions could include improvements to walking & cycling and improvements to public transport, including connections around Charnwood and into the City of

Leicester. This will need to be funded through Government and local funds, however, the recent Government announcement on Bus Service Improvement Plan Investment shows the relative uncertainties in securing necessary Government funding that authorities have to deal with.

What is the likely effect of the proposed scale and distribution of development on the strategic and local highway network and key junctions? Have the necessary improvements and/or mitigation measures to the strategic and local highway network been identified in the Plan and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, including costs and timing/phasing where necessary?

As we have mentioned above, we feel there are still issues around the costing and delivery of infrastructure within the local plan particularly around significant highways infrastructure around the A46 (Leicester Western Bypass & Hobby Horse Interchange). It cannot however be expected that this scale of infrastructure can be fully funded by the quantum of development proposed and viability conditions within the Charnwood area nor the levels projected in adjacent areas including the City. An ongoing review mechanism is therefore needed to ensure delivery of this infrastructure.

Does the transport modelling undertaken so far (EB/TR/11, 12 & 13) enable specific impacts on the highway network to be identified, for mitigation measures to be developed in response to that modelling and then required as part of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and site allocation policies? Is any further work required to establish this?

Leicester City Council are now content that the modelling work is fit for purpose for the examination stage of the plan. However further transport work will be required to further develop a mitigation package for the impacts around the North of Leicester area through transport strategies. As stated in the draft SoCG the parties agree to work together to develop and refine mitigation packages. A proportionate approach to agreeing development and delivery funding arrangements will need to be adopted by all parties once the final scale and distribution of development is confirmed not only within Charnwood but also within the City.