

Charnwood Borough Council Local Plan 2021-37;
Councillor Deborah Taylor;
Anstey Ward;
Responses to Exam 57; Exam 56a; Exam 75; Exam 76.

Exam 57; Charnwood Local Plan Sustainability Appraisal

An SA Report Addendum has been prepared to explore options for the following issues:

- Charnwood's share of unmet housing needs arising from Leicester: Three reasonable alternatives have been identified for the delivery of an additional 78 homes per year, each of which has been appraised.
- Housing options - The Council has established three options to meet Charnwood's contribution towards Leicester City's unmet housing needs (78 dwellings per annum over the plan period). The options are introduced below.

Option 1. Site intensification – additional development would be achieved primarily by increasing capacity on a range of sites in the Submitted Local Plan.

Option 2. Additional sites – higher growth would be achieved by the allocation of additional sites in Shepshed, Loughborough, and the Leicester Urban Area.

Option 3. Cotes standalone settlement – There are continued representations in support of growth at Cotes, which is reflected in this option.

Landscape

For Option 1, the SA states to **ensure** that intensification at Anstey and Shepshed does not have significant negative effects on the landscape given their close proximity to the Charnwood Forest.

Sir David Attenborough has been quoted as saying about the Charnwood Forest 'If you are concerned with heritage – there is no more ancient one than that which still survives in Charnwood' (Dr Julie Attard).

Anstey is included in the Charnwood Forest Landscape Partnership (<https://www.nationalforest.org/about/projects/charnwood-forest>) which has received funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund



A quote from the National Forest Webpage reads:

'Charnwood Forest is a unique and important landscape. Its unexpected nature is one of its strengths. But it is also a critical weakness. Many of the people who live, work, and play in Charnwood are not aware of its value.

They drive through on the M1, walk the dog at a country park, or visit local pubs without noticing the layers of heritage around and beneath them.

If they don't know about its importance, it's hardly surprising that they are unaware of the pressure it is under from **development growth**, visitor numbers, and the loss of its heritage.'

Highlighted in that quote are about the pressures of development growth within this area, including Anstey. Anstey should be protected from over-development and therefore any growth earmarked in the Charnwood Local Plan should be removed to protect Charnwood Forest for the generations to come.

The Charnwood Forest Geopark is on the way to becoming an aspiring UNESCO Global Geopark and hopes to complete that journey within the next few years. We cannot allow anything to get in the way of preserving our internationally important geology (<https://www.charnwoodforest.org/>).

Landscape Effects of the Submitted Plan

These site allocations within Anstey will lead to a substantial loss of areas of green space and green field fringes. In some locations, such as allocated sites within current urban areas, the sensitivity is low and therefore impacts on landscape and townscape are predicted to be neutral or positive. However, in others, like Anstey, sensitivity is classed as moderate /moderate-high. This is an unacceptable risk.

Option 1 – Implications of site Intensification The majority of the sites identified for intensification involve relatively small amounts of growth and are unlikely to have a major effect regarding the landscape.

However, in several locations where intensification is greater (Shepshed / Anstey) it could make it more difficult to avoid negative effects on the landscape where the intensification could lead to decreased areas of greenspace and/or denser developments in locations that are in close proximity to the Charnwood Forest.

Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Effects of the Submitted Plan

Though there is a need for a landscape strategy for the sites at Anstey, there is no explicit mention of the need to enhance ecological connectivity and value. As such, positive effects are less certain.

Option 1 – Implications of Site Intensification

HA43 at Anstey is also identified for more substantial intensification, and this site is fairly close to Sheet Hedges Wood SSSI and is adjacent to areas of woodland.

It will be important to ensure that development retains a buffer between developed lands and the SSSI / wooded areas. Overall, the effects of intensification are likely to bring about greater potential for negative effects,

There are several site allocations identified where negative effects could occur though. In Anstey, the site allocations are adjacent to or within the respective Conservation Areas, and there is therefore a potential for the character of these

areas to be affected negatively. Any negative effects ought to be avoided, but with this current site allocation in Anstey, there is an element of uncertainty.

Site HA43 is earmarked for intensification. The effects would be dependent upon how this intensification is achieved. If growth maintains areas of separation and open green space between the settlement at Green Court and newly built-up areas, then negative effects are likely to be avoidable. Overall, there is an uncertain negative effect for this option.

Exam 56a; Charnwood Additional Housing Supply Technical Note

5.2 - The increase in the capacity of site HA43 (Land West of Anstey) reinforces the need for the master plan led approach. I have yet to see a draft of a master plan, even after being told at the Examination Hearing in February 2023 that a draft version had already been drawn up.

There are already planning applications submitted or approved for 1,483 homes within Anstey Parish area with no master plan to support the decision-making process.

Exam 75; Draft Transport Strategy

Section 5. Costs, Funding and Delivery

Cost estimate work to date has been proportionate for the development of a Local Plan. It should be noted that even since the Exam 75 document was produced, construction costs have continued to go up.

The complete mitigation package estimated costs for the Charnwood Local Plan are at least £180m and, given current market conditions, could rise over the life of the plan.

A substantial proportion of this cost estimate relates to the delivery of walking, cycling, and wheeling networks.

The SRN that will be impacted by the huge growth in Anstey is the A46/A50 area. Based on May 2022 estimates this was costed at £6.4 million with no subsequent inflation allowance. This will now be a much higher figure and without increasing the housing allocations for Anstey, this will now be unaffordable for the developers.

Leicestershire County Council (LCC) Cabinet has already set out that due to their own current financial situation, they will not be able to forward fund any infrastructure costs.

The LCC Cabinet has also just pulled out from accepting a Homes England HIF grant offer as they are unable to provide the additional funding to deliver the Melton Mowbray South Distributor Road at the current time due to spiralling costs. This financial situation will only get worse and unless the developers can fund the infrastructure needed, villages like Anstey, cannot be left in chaos by over-development and over-allocations of housing numbers, affecting roads, doctors, and current residents' health due to increased pollution in The Nook.

Private Funding

This section sets out that Charnwood Borough Council, as the Plan making authority and Local Planning Authority, will secure the delivery of measures by developers and/or financial contributions towards measures.

The County Council's proposal is to pool such contributions from developers with this funding being used for priority projects only when the money has been received. Officers have been working on the understanding that Charnwood Borough Council support the Proposed Main Modifications to the policy framework provided by the Local Plan, and that they will ultimately provide the basis for seeking to secure developer contributions.

In the meantime, however, pending the Local Plan's adoption, the County Council has sought to secure with the Borough Council an interim approach, based on the Interim Transport Contributions Strategy considered by the County Council's Cabinet in February 2023.

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=135&MIId=7073&Ver=4>

Charnwood Borough Council has not currently adopted the Interim Transport Strategy and therefore there is a real risk that communities will take the housing and not receive the infrastructure required to mitigate the development.

This cannot be allowed to happen, we cannot leave communities, like Anstey, being brought to a standstill by this ill-thought-out local plan.

Exam 76; Updated Viability Work

New schools for Anstey (needed due to such a large housing allocation) are likely to cost in the region of £12 million at current costs, but it is very likely that the costs will increase over future years, while the schools are completed.

These costs will need to be provided for by the developers. Site HA12 in Table 6.13 below is marked under Glenfield but the site sits in the Anstey Parish area, so the table is misleading in what developers this funding would need to come from.

There are also the costs for Secondary Schools that have not been identified currently for Anstey. These costs have been added to the 'Wider Charnwood' section, therefore there is no transparency in the actual costs from the developments in Anstey for secondary school places.

Another risk in this over-development of Anstey.

Table 6.13 - Local Plan School Primary School, Requirements

Policy Ref	Site Name	Location	Provision
HA1	Land South East of Syston	Syston	2 Form Entry Primary School
HA12	Land at Gynsill Lane & Anstey Lane	Glenfield	Reserve Site for 1 Form Entry Primary School*
HA15	Land South of Loughborough	Loughborough	2 Form Entry Primary School
HA32	Land at Tickow Lane South	Shepshed	3 Form Entry Primary School
HA43	Land West of Anstey	Anstey	1 Form Entry Primary School
HA48	Land off Willow Road	Barrow upon Soar	1 Form Entry Primary School
HA59	Land to the rear of Derry's Garden Centre	Cossington - to also serve Sileby	0.5 Form Entry Extension to Cossington Primary School

* Part of a wider cross boundary development including parcels of land in the City of Leicester and Blaby District. The cost of the school would be shared amongst all parts of the development

Source: CBC

Table 6.14 - Summary of Primary School Build Costs

Size of School	Number of Children	New Homes	Total Build Cost	Build Cost per Dwelling
1 FE	210	700	£ 8,994, 771	£12,778
1.5FE	315	1050	£11,727,692	£11,169
2 FE	420	1400	£14,467,918	£10,334
2.5 FE	525	1750	£16,537,518	£9,450
3 FE	620	2100	£19,362,603	£9,173

plus £7,640 per dwelling for enlargement and extensions.

Source: Leicestershire County Council, October 2022 and June 2023 (via CBC)

Section 106 for Anstey is also added in the 'Wider Charnwood' section. This gives me no indication on what funding will be provided for Anstey to improve the single over-capacity doctor's surgery, the library, or any other essential services.

This whole viability document rarely mentions Anstey and Anstey appears to be added constantly to the 'Wider Charnwood' section.

This offers me as the local elected representative, very little information as to what support Anstey will benefit from with this huge housing allocation.

To increase Anstey by a third and not have the viability investigated closely leaves me with little hope of any improvements for Anstey.

All I can take from this document is that Anstey will be overdeveloped and left with this legacy for generations to come.

Cllr Deborah Taylor
Ward Councillor for Anstey