

<b>Title of Report</b>	<b>DRAFT CHARNWOOD LOCAL PLAN - CONSULTATION</b>	
<b>Presented by</b>	Councillor Robert Ashman Planning and Infrastructure Portfolio Holder	
<b>Background Papers</b>	<a href="#">Draft Charnwood Local Plan 2019-36 (October 2019)</a>	<b>Public Report:</b> Yes
	<a href="#">The Leicester and Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan</a>  <a href="#">National Planning Policy Framework</a>	<b>Key Decision:</b> No
<b>Financial Implications</b>	None identified	
	<b>Signed off by the Section 151 Officer:</b> Yes	
<b>Legal Implications</b>	The Council is a consultee and any comments it makes will need to be taken in to account by Charnwood Borough Council as part of the process for preparing a further iteration of the Local Plan. If necessary, the District Council's comments could be considered as part of the subsequent Local Plan Examination.	
	<b>Signed off by the Monitoring Officer:</b> Yes	
<b>Staffing and Corporate Implications</b>	None identified	
	<b>Signed off by the Head of Paid Service:</b> Yes	
<b>Purpose of Report</b>	The purpose of this report is to advise Members of comments submitted in response to consultations in respect of the Charnwood Local Plan and to seek formal approval of these.	
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p><b>THAT:</b></p> <p><b>(I) CHARNWOOD BOROUGH COUNCIL BE THANKED FOR CONSULTING THIS COUNCIL ON ITS EMERGING LOCAL PLAN; AND</b></p> <p><b>(II) THE RECOMMENDATIONS AT PARAGRAPHS 2.3, 2.10-2.11, 2.16-2.17, 2.26-2.28 AND 2.31 OF THIS REPORT BE AGREED AS THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE DRAFT CHARNWOOD LOCAL PLAN</b></p>	

## 1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Charnwood Local Plan was adopted in November 2015. The Adopted plan covers the period 2011-28.
- 1.2 Charnwood Borough Council recently issued a draft Local Plan for consultation. The consultation document can be viewed at [https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/draft\\_charnwood\\_local\\_plan\\_2019\\_36](https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/draft_charnwood_local_plan_2019_36)
- 1.3 Most of the matters raised in the consultation are matters for local consideration. The following concentrates upon those matters that are of more strategic significance.
- 1.4 The consultation closed on 16 December 2019. As this was before a meeting of this committee, officers submitted comments following discussion with the Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure and Planning but on the understanding that they were subject to their being agreed by this committee.

## 2.0 KEY MATTERS

### Plan period

- 2.1 It is proposed that the plan should cover the period 2019-2036.

### Comment

- 2.2 The current timetable envisages that the Plan will be adopted in November 2020. This is considered to be somewhat optimistic. The National Planning Policy Framework (paragraph 22) requires that the strategic policies in plans should look ahead at least 15 years from adoption. Strategic policies include those relating to the amount of development to be provided for. This might be difficult to achieve, but is something that Charnwood Borough Council will need to reflect upon.

### Recommendation

- 2.3 That the plan period 2019-36 be noted but that Charnwood Borough Council be advised that they need to consider whether a longer period may be required when having regard to the NPPF requirements.

### Future development needs

#### ***Housing***

- 2.4 In terms of future development needs, the plan identifies a Local Housing Need of 1,082 dwellings every year. This equates to a total of 18,394 dwellings to 2036. This is based on the use of the government's standard method. It is higher than the rate identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing and Economic Needs Development Assessment (HEDNA) (994 homes a year).
- 2.5 Notwithstanding this requirement, the plan proposes a total provision of 19,716 dwellings (an additional 1,322 dwellings). This is 7% more than the requirement.
- 2.6 The plan states (paragraph 4.9) that:  
*"It is anticipated that the city of Leicester will have unmet needs; however the Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire identifies how this unmet need will be*

*redistributed in Leicestershire and it does not affect the number of homes we need to plan for in Charnwood.”*

#### Comment

- 2.7 The proposed Local Housing Need is considered to be appropriate as it is based on the government’s standard method and is consistent with the NPPF.
- 2.8 The statement in the plan that the unmet need from Leicester City has been redistributed and that it does not affect Charnwood is somewhat misleading. It is assumed that this conclusion is based on Table 4 of the Strategic Growth Plan. Whilst the Strategic Growth Plan states “*Table 4 will be used as the basis for future Local Plans*”, the issue of unmet need from Leicester City and its redistribution has yet to be determined.
- 2.9 Planning for more growth than the Local Housing Need represents positive planning as required by the NPPF. Charnwood will need to satisfy themselves that this level of over provision is appropriate and that it will ensure that the needs of the borough will be met without the need to redistribute development to elsewhere within Leicester and Leicestershire. However, the proposed approach is to be welcomed.

#### Recommendations

- 2.10 That Charnwood Borough Council be advised that whilst the Local Housing Need set out in the draft plan is considered to be appropriate, it will be necessary to ensure that any later iteration is consistent with the outcome from the Statement of Common Ground which is currently being discussed by the HMA authorities.
- 2.11 That the proposed provision over and above the Local Housing Need be welcomed.

#### ***Employment***

- 2.12 The plan identifies a need for 55.9ha of employment land. Of this 11.4ha is for offices and 44.5ha for small industrial units and warehouses.

#### Comment

- 2.13 An Employment land Study (ELS) was prepared to support the plan. This took as its starting point the HEDNA. It suggested different figures for office uses from the HEDNA but a similar one for small industrial units and warehouses. The figures quoted in the plan for offices (11.4ha) is slightly less than that identified in the ELS (14ha). The reason for this is not clear and so clarification is required.
- 2.14 The figures for small industrial units and warehouses is consistent with the ELS.
- 2.15 The ELS also suggested that 10ha should be identified to accommodate larger warehouses (those over 9,000sqm). This has not been included in the plan and nor is any reason supplied as to why it has not been considered appropriate to include such provision. Again, clarification is required.

#### Recommendation

- 2.16 That clarification is required regarding the apparent discrepancy between the draft Local Plan and the Employment land Study regarding the amount of office development required.

2.17 That clarification is required as to why the plan does not make provision for 10ha of land for larger warehouses as recommended in the Employment Land Study.

### ***Development Strategy***

2.18 The preferred development strategy is for an urban concentration and intensification strategy, with some growth dispersed to other areas of the borough. It focuses housing and employment at the edge of Leicester, proposes managed growth at Loughborough, and directs some growth to Shepshed with smaller scale growth to the Service Centres and Other Settlements.

2.19 In terms of housing the proposed distribution of development is as follows:

<b>Settlement</b>	<b>Existing Planning permissions and Allocations</b>	<b>Preferred Distribution of New Homes</b>	<b>Total</b>
Leicester Urban Edge	5,489	1,567	7,056
Loughborough	4,412	1,919	6,331
Shepshed	830	2,041	2,871
Service Centres	1,559	931	2,490
Other Settlements	151	794	945
Small Villages/Hamlets	23	0	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,464</b>	<b>7,252</b>	<b>19,716</b>

2.20 In arriving at the proposed Development Strategy, the Council has considered a number of alternatives as part of the Sustainability Appraisal. The preferred approach represents a hybrid of these various alternatives.

2.21 The plan states:

*“The proposed managed growth at Loughborough reflects the spatial strategy set out in the Strategic Growth Plan for Leicester and Leicestershire and takes account of landscape, settlement identity and transport constraints.”*

and:

*“The growth directed to Shepshed reflects the evidence of landscape and transport capacity and supports the Leicestershire International Gateway set out in the Strategic Growth Plan.”*

### Comments

2.22 The reference to the Growth Plan and how it has influenced the preferred strategy is to be welcomed.

2.23 The Growth Plan covers the period to 2050, some 14 years more than the Local Plan. The Growth Plan identifies that the Leicestershire International Gateway, which covers

the northern parts of both North West Leicestershire and Charnwood Borough, is to accommodate 11,200 dwellings but it does not identify how much of this should be located in each authority. The 2,000 additional dwellings proposed on the west side of Shepshed would contribute towards this and is to be welcomed. However, it is not clear at this stage as to how deliverable this amount of development is. For example, paragraph 5.7 of the plan highlights that the proposed allocations to the west of Shepshed would have an impact upon biodiversity. It is not clear as to whether this might affect the suitability and deliverability of the sites. Charnwood Borough Council will need to satisfy themselves that it is deliverable within the plan period. If the development is not deliverable it could increase the pressure for more development in North West Leicestershire as part of the Gateway.

- 2.24 The proposed growth at Shepshed is close to the border with North West Leicestershire. The topography of the area means that most of this would not be visible from settlements in North West Leicestershire. The only exception is site HS44 which would be partly visible from the Belton-Hathern Road (B5324). It will be necessary to ensure that appropriate landscaping is included along the northern and western boundaries to minimise such impact. A transport assessment has been undertaken of the alternative strategies considered. This appears to have concentrated upon the impact on key junctions along the A512 at Shepshed. It is not clear what consideration has been given to the impact on the Belton to Hathern Road (B5324) in terms of the 2,000 dwellings proposed at Shepshed.
- 2.25 Some initial discussions have taken place with officers of Charnwood about the Gateway and its potential implications. Further discussion and potentially joint working will be required to ensure that both authorities are accommodating an appropriate amount of development and to ensure a consistent strategy across the Gateway area which also addresses any infrastructure impacts and needs.

#### Recommendation

- 2.26 That the proposed identification of 2,000 dwellings at Shepshed be noted and that no objection be raised, subject to appropriate mitigation measures being provided so as to minimise any visual impact and the impact upon the local highway network, particularly the B5324.
- 2.27 Notwithstanding the above, Charnwood Borough Council needs to ensure that adequate evidence is provided that the proposed 2,000 dwellings at Shepshed are deliverable so as to avoid increased pressure for development in North West Leicestershire.
- 2.28 That Charnwood Borough Council be advised that the district council welcomes the recognition of the Gateway in the draft plan. However, further discussions and joint working between the two authorities is required with a view to reaching an agreement regarding the distribution of development associated with the Gateway and to ensure that the impact arising from any development in the Gateway is appropriately mitigated.

#### ***Strategic Allocations***

- 2.29 Two Strategic Allocations are proposed north of Birstall and the Watermead Regeneration Corridor. These are subject to specific policies that identify a series of detailed requirements.

### Comment

- 2.30 It is not clear as to why these areas have been singled out and that such detailed requirements are not set out for other large developments proposed in the plan, including the 2,000 dwellings at Shepshed. Such requirements would provide clarity and certainty.

### Recommendation

- 2.31 That consideration be given to including detailed requirements for all large-scale developments, including the 2,000 dwellings proposed at Shepshed should this proposal be taken forward in the next iteration of the plan.

<b>Policies and other considerations, as appropriate</b>	
Council Priorities:	None
Policy Considerations:	None
Safeguarding:	No issues identified
Equalities/Diversity:	No issues identified
Customer Impact:	No issues identified
Economic and Social Impact:	No issues identified
Environment and Climate Change:	The potential impact of proposed development upon parts of the district are highlighted in the report
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Portfolio Holder for Infrastructure and Planning
Risks:	The District Council is a consultee on the draft Charnwood Local Plan. It is important that the District Council engage in the process to ensure that any concerns are raised to protect the Council's interests.
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