

**BRIEFING NOTE FOR STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF PLACE**  
**SUBMISSION DRAFT HARBOROUGH LOCAL PLAN (REGULATION 19)**  
**30 APRIL 2025**

The Reg 19 Harborough Local Plan consultation closes next Tuesday morning and so we need to agree our response by Friday due to the bank holiday. There are two areas where we think the council needs to respond:

Housing

The proposed housing requirement for 2020 to 2036 (657 dwellings per annum) is as agreed in the Leicester and Leicestershire Statement of Common Ground. However, post 2035, Policy DS01 proposes a housing requirement of 534dpa. This is calculated using the previous version of the standard method and equates to 74% of the current local housing need of 723dpa as calculated under the revised standard method. We question whether the proposed housing requirement post 2035 is the most appropriate option, given the fact that the new standard method figure is over 25% higher and that it doesn't factor in any of Leicester's (and potentially Oadby and Wigston's) unmet need.

General needs employment

The plan proposes allocation which exceeds their requirement by about 11ha, so no objection.

Strategic Distribution

To enable HDC to meet its own Local Plan timetable, it commissioned its own study entitled Harborough Strategic B8 Needs Sensitivity Analysis, 2024. This study forms part of the evidence base for the Local Plan. The study recognises that its recommendations are interim pending the completion of the joint study. Taking into account completions and commitments and (subsequently) the refusal of the Hinckley SFRI proposal, it advises there is a residual need for 537ha (2024-41) in Leicester and Leicestershire and recommends that HDC contributes between 100-140ha to this with floorspace of about 483,000sqm. Allocations are proposed that total about 128Ha, so towards the top end of this range. However, the estimated floorspace is only 340,000 sqm. This suggests that these ha figures could mask some overall under provision.

The Harborough study recommends “that it is appropriate for Harborough to plan for between 100-140ha on an interim basis, pending the completion of the current updated L&L Strategic B8 Need & Apportionment evidence and agreement of the apportionment of this through an SOCG between the Leicester and Leicestershire authorities” (paragraph 6.30, emphasis added).

There is some prospect that the joint study may reach a different conclusion from the HDC interim work. This could mean an apportionment which is higher (or lower) than that revealed by the HDC work.

Policy IM1 includes a trigger provision for an early review, including where a SoCG proposes more strategic distribution than planned for in the local plan. Our concern is that this gives Harborough too much wriggle room because what happens if a SoCG is not subsequently agreed? To some extent this is semantics because if they don't address through the local plan it will have to be addressed through planning applications. However, we think it would

be better if it instead referred to the publication of the apportionment study that is currently being prepared. Ideally this would be agreed through SPG, but if Harborough sought to delay its publications I would suggest that we would need to do it anyway (and certainly I would not hesitate to recommend that as we need it for our plan) and so it overcomes that potential issue.