

MINUTES of a meeting of the LOCAL PLAN COMMITTEE held in the Stenson House, London Road, Coalville, LE67 3FN on WEDNESDAY, 18 MARCH 2026

Present: Councillor J G Simmons (Chair)

Councillors M Ball, A Barker (substitute for Councillor C A Sewell), D Bigby, P Lees, J Legrys, R L Morris, P Moulton, L Windram and M B Wyatt

In Attendance: Councillor R Sutton

Officers: Ms J Althorpe, Mr B Dooley, Mr C Elston, Mrs C Hammond, Mr T James and Ms S Lee

43 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor S Lambeth and Councillor C Sewell for whom Councillor A Barker was a substitute.

44 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

In accordance with the Code of Conduct, members declared the following interests:

All members declared that they had been lobbied without influence by Councillor R Sutton on all items on the agenda.

45 PUBLIC QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION

There were 6 questions received from the public.

Question from Mr Roy Todd

For EMP97 (land south of the Kegworth bypass), please identify, by document title, date and paragraph number, what documentary evidence, if any, was before the Committee in support of the officer recommendation that the allocation is “effective” and deliverable over the plan period with a realistic prospect of delivery under NPPF paragraph 36(c), notwithstanding Sarah Lee’s email of 14 November 2025 recording that:

“To date, we do not have confirmation from LCC Highways that acceptable access arrangements can be achieved”,
that Leicestershire County Council Highways had advised:

“Safe and suitable access unlikely to be achievable... Proposed junction 2 is outside of the red line... there are pressures at M1 J24 therefore advice should be sought from National Highways”,

and that:

“The proposed allocation is at risk if this issue cannot be resolved”,
together with the published site assessment stating that LCC Highways had “concerns about the achievability of acceptable access arrangements” and that Strategic Road Network capacity was “currently unknown”, including any documentary evidence of written agreement in principle from the highway authorities and any evidence of land control or agreements required to deliver access or junction works outside the site boundary.

Chair’s initials

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

Paragraph 4.12 of the strategic warehousing report considered by Local Plan Committee on the 19 November 2025 set out the highways-related concerns in respect of site EMP97.

Paragraph 4.13 explained that the site is being recommended for allocation ***‘subject to these highways concerns being addressed’***.

If these, or any other technical matters, cannot be addressed to the satisfaction of the Planning Policy Team, the advice to the Local Plan Committee to allocate the site may be changed.

As part of a supplementary question, it was asked when the advice may have changed. In response, the Principal Planning Policy Officer outlined the process to be undertaken for the Local Plan to be finalised and noted that the policy wording which would affect site EMP97 was to be considered by the Committee at a later date.

Question from Mr Carl Sutton

As Mr Sutton was not in attendance, his question was not asked.

Question from Mr Andrew Priestley

The Kegworth air disaster of 8th January 1989, in which 47 people lost their lives, remains one of the most serious aviation disasters in modern British history. British Midland Flight 92 came down in fields immediately south of the village of Kegworth before reaching the M1.

Given the enduring national significance of that tragedy and the profound sensitivity it carries within Kegworth, will the Committee identify the specific public document, by title and date, in which Members were informed that this context had been assessed when Site EMP97 was advanced as a 39.5 hectare strategic warehousing allocation.

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

Notwithstanding the understandable concern and sensitivity related to the Kegworth air crash, the key planning consideration in this instance is the extent of the airport Public Safety Zone.

The majority of EMP97 falls outside the Public Safety Zone.

As part of a supplementary question, it was stated by the Principal Planning Policy Officer that the key issue in relation to site EMP97 was the extent of the Public Safety Zone which provided clear information about where the development could not go, and it was confirmed that this was to be taken into account when considering the site for inclusion in the Regulation 19 version of the plan.

Question from Mr Noel Suthesh

For Site EMP97, please identify, by title, date and paragraph number, the specific published report, committee paper, recorded minute, or other recorded document, if any, in which the Council set out its site specific reasoning for not undertaking a Regulation 18 consultation before progressing EMP97 to a 39.5 hectare strategic warehousing allocation.

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

Paragraph 7.1 to 7.4 of the strategic warehousing report considered by Local Plan Committee on the 19 November 2025 explained the reasons for not undertaking Regulation 18 consultation for the proposed sites, including EMP97.

In response to a supplementary question, the Interim Planning Policy Team Manager responded that there would be opportunity for the public to shape and influence all allocations including site EMP97 through the Regulation 19 consultation process, and through examination attendance.

Question from Ms Gayle Baker

At the last Local Plan Committee meeting on 28 January 2026, you clearly explained how planning applications were decided if they are submitted before a draft Strategy Plan has been completed. You explained that you prioritise sites promoted by developers who have a track record of delivery in the district. West Whitwick Broad location is being promoted by Gladmans'. Can you tell me please what Gladman's track record of delivery is within the district?

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

Gladman is a strategic land promotion company. The company generally enter into contracts with landowners and take on the financial risk of promoting sites for development through the planning system. This includes funding outline planning applications. If they are successful in getting planning permission, they acquire the site and sell it on to a housebuilder. For example, Gladman got outline planning permission for a site at the top of Greenhill Road, Coalville, which was eventually built by Avant Homes.

As part of a supplementary question, it was asked why a change had been made to the petitions scheme in the Constitution. The Legal Advisor stated that a written response would be provided outside of the meeting.

Question from Mr Michael Elton

We are aware that a specialist underground gas survey has been commissioned because of the risks of underground gas on site C77. An assessment was carried out by Castledine Environmental, who recommended that ground gas measures are installed within new properties within the vicinity of C77. This has also led to boundary restrictions stretching close to C77 due to the risks involved. How can the site therefore be viable as a safe place to build new affordable homes?

Response from the Chair of the Local Plan Committee

Officers have liaised with the site promoter who has confirmed that the Ground Gas Assessment concluded that there are no detectable methane concentrations and whilst carbon dioxide has been detected, this is at a level considered appropriate for residential development and can be mitigated with respect to foundation and floor slab design.

As part of a supplementary question, it was asked with reference to the response how the detected carbon dioxide could be mitigated and how those measures differed from ground gas measures. It was responded that the answer had already been provided as part of the response.

46 MINUTES

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2026.

It was moved by Councillor M Ball, seconded by Councillor J Legrys and

RESOLVED THAT:

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 January 2026 be approved and signed by the Chair as an accurate record of the proceedings.

Before moving on to the next item, the Chair announced that it had been agreed to reorder the items on the agenda so that members were made aware of the Local Plan timescales earlier in the meeting: items 7, 5, 6 and 8.

47 NEW LOCAL PLAN - PROGRESS UPDATE

The Interim Planning Policy Team Manager presented the report.

Members had a discussion about the progress of the Local Plan during which several questions of clarity were addressed.

Members questioned what the consequences were if the timescales outlined in the report were not adhered to. The Head of Planning and Infrastructure replied that the consequences would have been seen as applications were made, as, when there was no up to date Local Plan previously, more applications went through. He also emphasised the importance of meeting the timescales as the Council would soon be challenged on its five-year housing land supply.

The report was noted.

48 LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – STRATEGIC DISTRIBUTION

The Principal Planning Policy Officer presented the report.

At the request of a member, it was minuted that they were not supportive of the draft Statement of Common Ground (SoCG), as it was believed it required further investigation due to the negative impact it would have had on the rural parts of the District. It was added that the Council had worked collaboratively with only two of the seven councils that border the District on the SoCG, which left many areas which the Council did not have much detail on to inform the SoCG. It was emphasised that further investigation should have been carried out before members could have made a well-informed decision.

Chair's initials

During discussion, members agreed that it was important to maintain the rural identity of the District but commented that, due to Local Government Reorganisation, it was important to get the Local Plan finalised by the end of the year. It was mentioned that, subject to the officers having the resources once the Local Plan had been submitted, the points raised by members could have been investigated.

Members were thanked for their comments which were to be considered by Council at their meeting on 12 May 2026.

49 LEICESTER & LEICESTERSHIRE AUTHORITIES STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – HOUSING DISTRIBUTION UNDER THE NEW STANDARD METHOD

The Principal Planning Policy Officer presented the report.

A discussion was had during which several questions of clarity were addressed by the planning policy officers. Members expressed concern over whether Oadby and Wigston Borough Council could have met their own housing need and what implications this would have had on this process and the Local Plan.

The Principal Planning Policy Officer responded that, in the event their housing needs were not met, Oadby and Wigston Borough Council would have to have justified their unmet need.

Members were thanked for their comments which were to be considered by Council at their meeting on 12 May 2026.

50 EAST MIDLANDS FREEPORT CONTRIBUTIONS SPD

The Interim Planning Policy Team Manager presented the report.

During discussion, members supported the collaborative working that was to take place between authorities. They also noted the complexity of the document and suggested the public would have benefitted from a basic summary so they were given a better understanding of the document prior to consultation.

Councillor J Legrys moved the recommendations on page 25 of the Additional Papers subject to the condition that the public were provided with a basic summary of the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) prior to consultation. It was seconded by Councillor R Morris and

RESOLVED THAT:

- I) A minimum four week consultation on the draft East Midlands Freeport Contributions Supplementary Planning Document (Appendix A) be agreed to be undertaken; and
- II) Authority be delegated to the Strategic Director of Place to agree any minor modifications to the final consultation draft Supplementary Planning Document prior to consultation commencing.

Councillor P Lees left the meeting at 7:01pm.

The meeting commenced at 6:00pm.

The Chair closed the meeting at 7:44pm.

Chair's signature