

Harborough District Local Plan – Inspection Matters, Issues and Questions

The following challenge and proposed improvement/mitigation to the plan are primarily with regard to the impact on Broughton Astley,

Matters 2

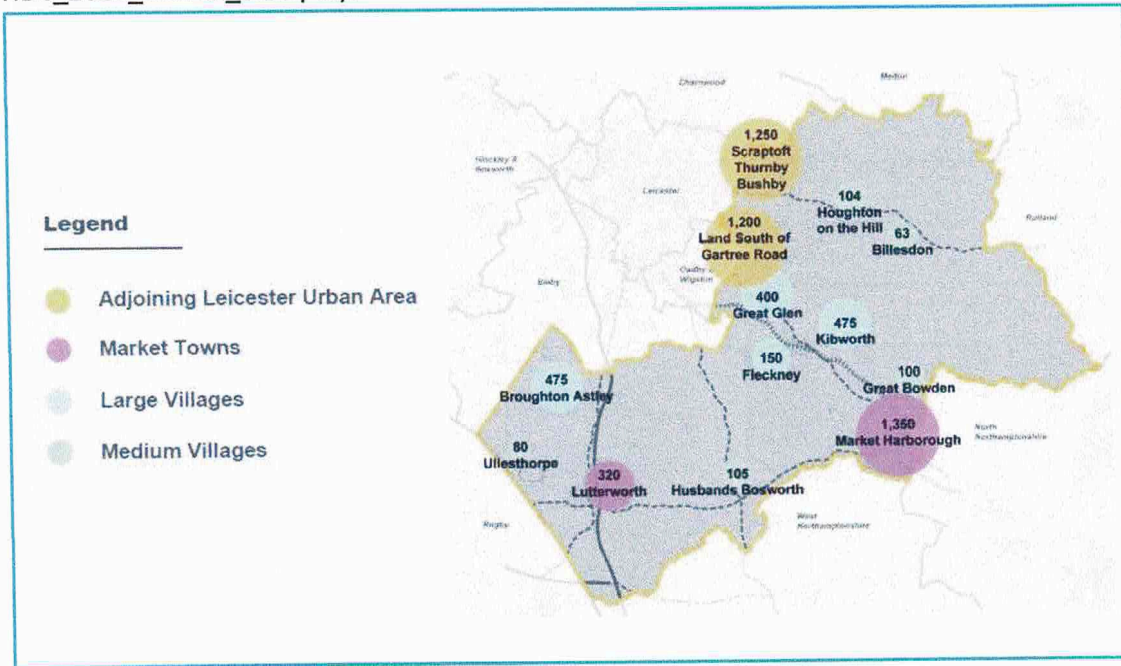
Matter 2: Local Plan Vision, District Portrait and Development Objectives

1. Plan paragraph 1.10 confirms that the District includes a number of made Neighbourhood Plans. What are these and what would be their relationship to this Plan?

Broughton Astley is justifiably proud of having one of the earliest and most successful Neighbourhood Plans in the UK.

The new Local Plan fails to adequately recognise the existing “made” Broughton Astley Neighbourhood plan in terms of housing allocation. The existing plan required a total of 283 new dwellings during the life of that plan (net of completions at the time the plan was adopted). It has successfully delivered over 500 houses on two major sites and two smaller sites plus windfalls and in-fills.

The Parish Council has tried to work collaboratively with HDC, to ensure that Neighbourhood Plan fully aligns with the District Plan. However, it could be considered that the District Council did not follow due process and did not work collaboratively with the Parish Council who were reviewing the Neighbourhood Plan. They repeatedly ignored the input from BAPC on sites. The HDC public consultation was extremely limited, one part of a day for a population of over 10,000 people, using boards which did not show any site details for residents to comment on. (Ref document



I would suggest the HDC consultation was perfunctory at best and did not fulfil what a reasonable person would judge a consultation to contain.

BAPC had started the task of reviewing their NP but were repeatedly advised to delay completing it as it would “not align” with the Local Plan. This indicates a pre-disposition in terms of site allocation. The Parish Council had already taken sounding about potential sites and strongly urged HDC not to make Frolesworth road a single preferred site based on the grounds of flooding, traffic impact at the Bulls Head cross road, and overall traffic flow through the village amongst other things. This divergence of this view was supported by the extensive public consultation carried out by BAPC.

When confronted with this clear difference of opinion on the future development of Broughton Astley, HDC proposed a Memorandum of Understanding which they explained would give BAPC an opportunity to present the results of the public consultation and their proposal for a modification to the LP to allocate the four sites they proposed instead of Frolesworth Road. Despite agreeing in principle, this MoU failed to be progressed by HDC and communications from HDC ceased in April 2026 despite repeated attempts by BAPC to get a response. It came to light after the August inspection of the LP that the existing of the draft MoU was not presented to the Inspectors. I believe this is a material consideration which should have been revealed to the Inspectors

The net result of these delays is that BAPC were forced to include in the NP, (which will go to referendum on the 26th of November 2026), only one of the preferred sites and the HDC preferred Frolesworth site. The situation is now that two of the other preferred sites have had their planning applications approved meaning that 120 of the 475 allocation is already in place. If the two other preferred sites (Wytham Villa & Cottage Lane) were included in the LP rather than the Frolesworth road site then 508 new dwellings would be delivered.

It should be noted that delivery of the four sites will be faster than one large site, avoid the traffic issues in the centre of the village, not cost over £1m in questionable traffic light installations, nor create an enhanced hazard to children walking to school

As it stands now Broughton Astley will suffer a minimum of 670 houses, a more probable quantity of 708 new homes and a potential of 1038 which will far outstrip the supporting infrastructure.

Proposed Modification to the Local Plan

The proposed improvement to the LP is for the site allocation for Broughton Astley to be modified in line with the properly conducted public consultation and follow the NNPF guidance regarding preferring smaller sites over large sites for speed of delivery. Where the inspectors to make such a recommendation then the BAPC would immediately be revised and the sites added to bring it in =to full alignment.