

**Harborough District
Council
Local Plan
Examination**

**Hearing Statement
Matter 4**

**Rachel Bryan on behalf of Mr
Ivan Crane [6014]**

**Sworders
October 2026**



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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Hearing Statement considers **Matter 4: Creating Jobs and Diversifying the Economy**.
- 1.2 It is submitted on behalf of Mr Ivan Crane respondent reference 6014.
- 1.3 This Hearing Statement supplements the Regulation 19 representations made by Mr Ivan Crane in April 2025 and considers the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions in relation to **Issue 4: Existing Employment question 1** of the Harborough District Council Local Plan Examination.
- 1.4 I confirm I wish to rely on this written hearing statement only and do not wish to participate in the oral hearing session.

2.0 ISSUE 1: EXISTING EMPLOYMENT

- 2.1 *Does the Plan provide sufficient opportunities for the expansion of existing economic sites and premises within the designated employment areas and the flexibility to respond to changes in demand and economic circumstances where appropriate, consistent with NPPF paragraphs 85 and 86? What is the significance to the policies of the Plan of the changes to the Use Classes Order which came into effect on 1 September 2020?*
- 2.2 No. This policy makes no provision for employment development outside of existing or allocated sites and as such, is overly restrictive. There is no provision to allow expansion of existing employment sites.



- 2.3 The allocated employment sites are restricted to Business Uses (Office and Light Industry (E(g)(i)-(iii), General Industry (B2) and non-strategic Storage and Distribution (B8). There is no justification to restrict the E Class Commercial, Business and Service uses in this way. The purpose of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 as amended is to group similar uses together under distinct classes in order that establish what constitutes a material change of use. This allows movement between the different uses within this use class and the E use class is deliberately widely defined to allow this flexibility. To restrict the uses in this way is illogical as no material change of use would occur and frustrates the purpose of the Use Classes Order. Furthermore, the policy should be extended to include sui generis uses of an employment character.
- 2.4 In respect of existing employment areas not identified on the Policies Map, the policy deals with proposals for alternative uses, but does not allow for expansion of existing sites. This will have the effect of stifling growth. Whilst we appreciate the need to make the employment land allocations, these are unlikely to be appropriate to smaller and start- up businesses who look to the smaller employment sites, particularly in the rural area
- 2.5 For the policy to be sound, it should be reworded to remove the restriction on uses to only a narrow selection of E Class uses and to allow growth of existing employment sites.

3.0 SUMMARY

- 3.1 This hearing statement is submitted on behalf of Mr Ivan Crane and identifies concern regarding Policy DS02. Specifically:
- Policy DS02 fails to accord with national policy as it provides no opportunity for existing employment areas to grow.