

Matter 5: Climate and Environment

Introduction

- 1.1.1. This representation should be read in conjunction with the previous Regulation 18 and 19 representations made by William Davis Homes (WDH, ref. 7585, agent ref. 7779).
- 1.1.2. WDH is an established and highly respected housing developer based in Leicestershire and have been building new homes across the Midlands for over 90 years. Their work is underpinned by strong family values and understanding. WDH have been rated as a five-star housebuilder in the Home Builders Federation annual survey for the last 11 years; 90% of customers are happy with their home and their experience with the housebuilder.
- 1.1.3. WDH have been promoting Leicester Road, Lutterworth since 2021, submitting the site for a residential allocation as part of the 'Call for Sites' process for the draft Plan. The SHELAA assessment (ref. HSG-NLP 4) positively explained that the site is considered suitable for residential development and is available with the delivery of dwellings achievable within five years.
- 1.1.4. Following this, WDH support the site's identification by Harborough District Council as a proposed allocation (draft ref. L1) to deliver 230 dwellings within Lutterworth over the next plan period (2020-2041). WDH have continued to engage since the site's identification as a draft allocation by making representations to the Regulation 18 and 19 consultations in 2024 and 2025, respectively, and engaging with HDC through the pre-application process to support this proposed allocation and discuss how development on the site can be effectively brought forward.
- 1.1.5. An application (ref. 26/00447/FUL) was submitted in March 2026 to secure full planning permission for the residential development of the site, with access from Leicester Road (A426), alongside landscaping, drainage, open space and associated works. This indicates WDH's intention for the site to deliver housing early in the plan period, as the site is available now.
- 1.1.6. Alongside contributing towards meeting the housing needs of the District at a sustainable location which is supported by existing infrastructure and improvements associated with the Lutterworth East Strategic Development Area (SDA), development on the site will deliver several benefits including the delivery of affordable and specialist housing, provision of a high-quality, safe and well-connected residential environment, biodiversity improvements on and off-site, and incorporation of sustainability measures into the design of proposed dwellings and their associated plots.
- 1.1.7. WDH have provided hearing statements to support the allocation of Leicester Road, Lutterworth (draft ref. L1) in recognition of the contribution of the site towards the identified housing needs of Harborough District and specifically Lutterworth, and provide comments on some draft policies and criteria to ensure the Plan is effective in delivering the District's identified development needs, as required for the Plan to be sound per paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023).

Issue 2: Heritage and Rural Character

Question 3: Is the provision, extent and amount of Area of Separation and Green Wedge designations referred to in Policy DS04 appropriate and consistent with national policy?

- 1.1.8. WDH recognise the continued proposal to designate Areas of Separation within the draft Plan following their use in the adopted Plan, to ensure development is focused in suitable locations in way that preserves the character of settlements.
- 1.1.9. In the case of Leicester Road, Lutterworth (ref. L1), part of which overlaps with the proposed Area of Separation between Bitteswell, Lutterworth and Magna Park, it is anticipated that development can come forward at the site in a way that continues to respect the Area of Separation while integrating it within the development; the application currently under consideration (ref. 26/00447/FUL) proposes the use of this area for open

space, drainage and biodiversity improvements, an approach which has been confirmed as suitable by HDC.

- 1.1.10. Therefore, the designation is appropriate and effective as it does not preclude development in locations identified as suitable, instead allowing proposed developments to appropriately integrate this area into the layout; draft Policy DS04 allows the intended functions of these designations to be maintained whilst enabling sustainable development to come forward. In recognising this, WDH believe the explanatory text could be amended to further clarify this and ensure draft Policy DS04 is proportionately applied, to ensure the Plan is fully effective in supporting growth in identified locations such as this.

Question 5: Is the requirement in criterion 2 of Policy DS04 for development in Areas of Separation to avoid coalescence and preserve the existing visual and physical separation between settlements compatible with the extent and delivery of the following site allocations, which partly overlap Areas of Separation in the Plan.

2b) between Bitteswell, Lutterworth and Magna Park.

Lutterworth, Site L1: Land off Leicester Road (230 homes).

- 1.1.11. As outlined in our response to question 3, WDH believe the requirements of Policy DS04 are suitably flexible in allowing development to come forward while reflecting designations such as an Area of Separation where appropriate design solutions are incorporated. In the case of Leicester Road, Lutterworth (ref. L1), land within the Area of Separation can continue to perform its intended function and preserve the character of Bitteswell through the provision of strategic landscaping, structural planting, biodiversity enhancements, sustainable drainage features and public open space. This enables development to proceed whilst maintaining visual and physical separation between settlements and avoiding harmful coalescence.