Harborough Local Plan 2020 – 2041

Main Examination Hearings November/December 2026 – Re-Opening Statement of the Harborough District Council Director of Planning: David Atkinson

10th November 2026

1. Firstly, a very warm welcome once again to all present to the Council Chamber of Harborough District Council for the first of this sequence of Public Examination Hearings on the Harborough District Local Plan 2020 – 2041.

2. A special welcome back to our three Inspectors: Ms Barrett, Ms Nurser and Mr W Cooper. I do hope your stay with us in the Harborough District continues to be enjoyable and that the sequence of main examination sessions will all run smoothly and contribute to achieving the best possible adoptable local plan for the district as soon as possible.

3. As I have previously mentioned but is worth reprising very briefly at the commencement of this sequence of hearings; it is really important for the Harborough District to have an up to date, adopted, local plan in place to guide and coordinate development for the benefit of all communities across the district. It is critical to the well-being of the district to ensure that development is delivered where it can best be integrated with existing communities and new infrastructure, and this local plan will achieve that.

4. As I briefly mentioned in my opening for the first, preliminary session of the hearings held on 12th August, there are real and significant benefits for the district and both current and future communities to be derived from the adoption of this new local plan. I feel that, as this is the start of the main sequence of local plan hearings, it is work just reiterating those significant and lasting benefits for the district. In particular the Plan will:

    (i) Significantly boost housing land supply supporting the delivery of some, 13,182, much needed new homes between 2020 and 2041. In addition to the delivery of existing housing commitments and completions, new land for a minimum of 6,422 new homes will be allocated across the district as follows:

        a. 2,450 new homes on new site allocations in, and near to, the Leicester Urban Area, including 1,200 new homes to be delivered in the plan period on new land South of Gartree Road, which is also a

Government Housing Accelerator site, together with 1,125 new homes on new land in Scraptoft, and 125 in Thurnby and Bushby.

b. A total of 1,670 new homes on newly allocated land across the market towns of the district, including 1,350 in Market Harborough and 320 in Lutterworth, both to be delivered in this plan period;

c. Some 1,500 new homes on newly allocated sites in Large Villages including 475 in Broughton Astley, 475 in Kibworth, 400 in Great Glen and 150 new homes in Fleckney.

d. Finally, a total of at least 802 new homes on new sites across the medium and smaller villages of the district.

(ii) Supports the further sustainable growth of Magna Park through the allocation of land to address the need for new floor space for Strategic Distribution. This is to be delivered in B8 units of more than 9,000sqm, thereby providing much needed jobs and commercial growth opportunities for the district and sub-region.

(iii) Facilitates the delivery of key infrastructure to support the growth of the district to 2041 and beyond, including two new secondary schools. It is worth reflecting once again that this is a rare opportunity to transform the educational landscape across the district through this once in several generations' opportunity.

(iv) Put in place updated positively framed development management policies including, importantly, the requirement seeking 40% new affordable homes on qualifying sites, enabling young people, and those with limited income across the district, to find a new place to live.

5. The council consider that the new local plan delivers a significant release of new land for development into the marketplace across the district and thereby meets the stated aims of current government policy. The Plan ensures that the increasing needs of the district continue to be met sustainably, which the council feel is an important reason for the Plan to, hopefully, be adopted as soon as possible.

6. I am sure all of the examination sessions, re-starting today, will have good and positive debate, and I look forward to a good outcome following the end of these hearings that will enable efficient progress to be made through the remainder of the plan-making process that will follow.

7. I wish our Inspectors and all participants in all the upcoming examination sessions well. On behalf of the district, I am very much looking forward to the sessions and then being able to adopt another high-quality community focused and policy-compliant local plan as soon as possible.

8. Thank you.

10th November 2026