

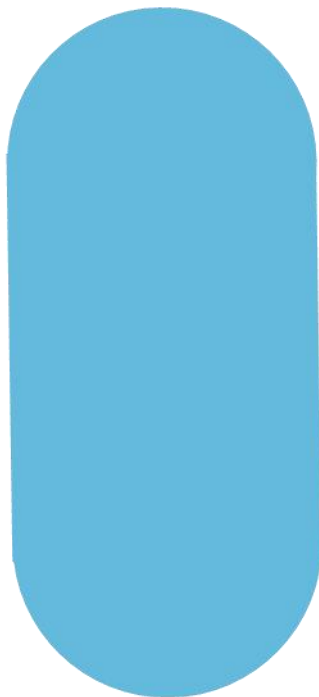
Harborough Local Plan Examination

Matter 6 – Spatial Strategy and Countryside Protection

Hearing Statement

David Wilson Homes

Respondent ID: 6254





This Hearing Statement is submitted on behalf of David Wilson Homes (DWH; respondent ID 6254) in respect of their interest at Smeeton Road, Kibworth. Representations relating to this site were submitted on behalf of DWH to the Proposed Submission Local Plan. Cross references to those representations are set out below, with the relevant ReplID (sourced from Appendix 11 of the Council's Consultation Statement).

Matter 6: Spatial Strategy and countryside protection

6.1 Is the spatial strategy as set out in Policies SS1 and H1 and their supporting text soundly based? Is the settlement hierarchy soundly based?

1. The settlement hierarchy is based upon the availability of services, facilities, shops, employment opportunities and public transport provision. It is considered that this is justified and therefore soundly based. As set out in previous representations made on behalf of DWH, the identification of Kibworth as a Rural Centre in Policy SS1 (the focus of rural development) is supported (ReplID 6266/6267).
2. Part 7 of Policy SS1 effectively recognises that Kibworth (along with Fleckney and Great Glen) are the most sustainable of the rural settlements. However, the Proposed Submission Local Plan does not allow for the possibility of additional development at Kibworth and in response to DWH's previous representations, the Council stated that *"including existing commitments, Kibworth already has sufficient housing land to meet its proportionate share of housing needs after provision of the SDAs. There is no need for further housing development"* (ReplID 6267).
3. The Council also proposed to expand the supporting text for policy H1 at paragraph 5.1.17 as follows: *"In relation to Broughton Astley, the Kibworths, Husbands Bosworth, Ullesthorpe, Great Bowden, and North Kilworth, the residual housing requirement is zero due to the high level of recent completions and ongoing housing commitments."*
4. DWH agrees with the Inspector, who at document IC1 (question 11) commented that *"once existing commitments are built out, this approach would appear to impose severe restraint over the whole plan period."*
5. DWH do not consider the Council's approach with regards to future development at Kibworth sound for the following reasons:
 - i. Kibworth is one of the most sustainable settlements in the Rural Area and therefore can help meet the Council's housing requirement on suitable, available and achievable sites, particularly if other sites in the trajectory do not come forward in the manner and at the time envisaged;
 - ii. The Council has yet to confirm if it can meet Leicester's unmet need, and, as set out by DWH in respect of Matter 2, Kibworth is a suitable location outside of the Leicester PUA to meet this unmet need;
 - iii. As shown in the Council's latest housing land supply assessment, the vast majority of committed dwellings in Kibworth are expected to be delivered in the next five years (2018-2023). The Council's proposed approach would thus restrict the levels of market and affordable



housing that could be delivered in Kibworth in the latter stages of the plan period.

6. The Council's proposed text at 5.1.17 should not be incorporated into the Plan, and the approach to further development in Kibworth should be reviewed, if not now (i.e. if the Inspector considers the Plan to be sound in this regard), then certainly when further information on Leicester's unmet need and the amount to be apportioned to Harborough is known.

6.4 - Is policy GD2 a sound approach to allowing additional development in sustainable locations (having regard to any modifications the Council propose to make to the policy as indicated in IC3 in their response to IC2 Q13)?

7. In previous representations, DWH did not support GD2 on the basis that it did not appear to allow for additional development to be delivered in Kibworth. This was on the basis that part a) of the policy sought to prevent proposals which, cumulatively, significantly exceeded the targets set out in Policy H1.
8. The Inspector has commented that the wording of part a) of the policy could restrict acceptable development in one settlement because of development that has occurred elsewhere, even if that settlement was distant and unrelated. In IC3, the Council proposes to apply individual settlement targets in order to provide great clarity. DWH would not support this modification (as it did not support the original policy) if there is no requirement stated for Kibworth, as this would prevent further sustainable development being delivered which is considered to be unsound.
9. It is the Council's position (response to Q11 in IC3) that Policy GD2 would allow housing development to come forward in sustainable settlements with a residual requirement of zero where proposals meet the relevant criteria. This is not considered to be the case with the current wording.
10. The Council's proposals to replace the housing figures in Policy H1 with 'the total settlement-level housing delivery 2011 to 2031' is a more flexible approach and would enable further housing development in all rural settlements on appropriate, sustainable sites, including Kibworth.
11. However, DWH's concerns about the soundness of the Plan are not completely mitigated by the above suggested approach. The Plan, including Policy GD2, does not include sufficient flexibility to meet Leicester's unmet housing need in appropriate locations. Kibworth is a sustainable settlement, with good connections to Leicester, and would be a suitable settlement outside of the Leicester PUA to meet Leicester's unmet need.
12. The requirement for 'GD2 development' to not significantly exceed the housing figures for the settlement (the revised figure for Kibworth would be 901 dwellings rather than 0 and the 'rule of thumb' in the supporting text is a 10% increase) is not considered to be a sound approach with regards to Kibworth which could accommodate higher levels of development to serve a proportion of Leicester's unmet need in a highly sustainable location.



6.5 Are the range of policies GD3 to GD7 governing rural development and the protection of landscape and the countryside sound (having regard to any modifications the Council propose to make to the policy as indicated in IC3 in their response to IC2 Qs 12, 13 and 14)

13. DWH previously made representations in respect of Policy GD6 (Area of Separation). No modifications are proposed by the Council and the Policy is not subject to any specific questions from the Inspector. Therefore DWH's original comments stand.

Word Count: 1,064