



Inspectors Housden and Baugh-Jones

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Dear Inspector Housden and Inspector Baugh-Jones

### **Charnwood Local Plan Examination – route map for resuming hearing sessions**

Thank you for recent letter to the Council, setting out the opportunities for resuming the local plan examination hearings.

Please allow me to express thanks on behalf of the Council, its appreciation for the efforts that you have taken to identify a way forward and a realistic path that the examination can follow for the hearing sessions to be resumed.

I would very briefly like to reiterate that the Council's positive approach towards seeking to accommodate and deliver future growth through the new Local Plan. A great deal of good work has been undertaken by the Council, its local authority partners around the County and the development industry to get the new Local Plan this far. Charnwood Borough is not seeking to avoid its responsibilities to plan-for and deliver new homes, jobs and infrastructure. The Council believes that accommodating the unmet needs apportioned through the HENA provides an opportunity to restore faith in the strategic planning process and secure a framework for wider plan-making across the County.

I would also like to thank the Inspectors for clarifying the possible timeline for consultation on the HENA document suite and the publication of further Inspectors' Matters, Issues and Questions. The Council welcomes the suggestion that these two stages can be run simultaneously. This is an approach that the Council would like the examination to take and is happy to work with the Inspectors to make this happen in a timely manner.

With the objective of expediting the hearing sessions, the Council requests that the consultation on the HENA document suite and Inspectors' further Matters, Issues and Questions commence before the end of July 2022. The Council agrees that this would allow for a meaningful and legally compliant consultation period that could run until the end of September 2022. Once the consultation has concluded we request that the hearings resume in their entirety during October 2022.



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The Council acknowledges that the hearings would restart with a single session, during the week commencing 24 October 2022, that focussed upon the HENA document suite and the apportionment of Leicester's unmet needs to Charnwood. The Council requests that this be followed by the resumed sessions on the remaining Matters; adjourned from the weeks commencing 11 and 18 July 2022 respectively. Whilst the reasoning for suggesting a reflective pause, following the initial session on the HENA, is understood, the Council does not consider this to be necessary or desirable. The on-going process that has considered how the Borough accommodates Leicester's unmet needs has already provided many opportunities for reflection, particularly in terms of the possible impacts upon the Local Plan's spatial strategy. The Council strongly believes that it is not in the wider public or development industry interests to unnecessarily delay plan-making any further.

To further expedite the process, the Council suggests that the technical paper setting out how Leicester's unmet needs can be accommodated through existing sources of housing land supply be published alongside the HENA document suite and the Inspectors' further Matters, Issues and Questions. This appears to be a logical way forward, as the technical paper is ready for publication; and it demonstrates how unmet need can be accommodated without effecting the spatial strategy. Publishing the technical paper simultaneously with the other documents provides participants with an opportunity to comment and should it be necessary revisit any comments they may have made in their responses to the Inspectors' original Matters, Issues and Questions. As suggested above, the proposed consultation over the Summer 2022 provides a meaningful and legally compliant period for making responses and allows for the hearings sessions to resume in full during October 2022. The Council will work with the Inspectors to make this process work.

In conclusion, the Council once again thanks the Inspectors for their positive proposals for restarting the examination hearings. The Council looks forward to the next stage of the process.

Yours sincerely