

EXAMINATION OF OADBY & WIGSTON LOCAL PLAN
MATTER 1 – LEGAL REQUIREMENTS & PROCEDURAL MATTERS

Inspector's issues and questions in bold type.

This Hearing Statement is made for and on behalf of the HBF which should be read in conjunction with our representations to the pre submission Local Plan consultation dated 18th December 2017. This representation answers specific questions as set out in the Inspector's Matters, Issues & Questions document.

Key Issue : Whether the legal requirements and relevant procedures have been satisfied.

Question 6. Has the LP been prepared in accordance with the Duty to Co-operate and does it fully meet this legal requirement? What are the key outcomes from the co-operation with neighbouring authorities? In particular how is it anticipated that unmet need in the City of Leicester authority area be addressed?

To fully meet the legal requirements of the Duty to Co-operate the Council should engage on a constructive, active and on-going basis with the other Leicester & Leicestershire Housing Market Area (HMA) authorities to maximise the effectiveness of plan making. One key outcome from co-operation between the Leicester & Leicestershire HMA authorities should be the meeting in full Objectively Assessed Housing Needs (OAHN) across the HMA. To date the authorities have failed to determine where in the HMA the declared unmet housing needs from Leicester City will be met (see attached Appendix Extracts from Harborough District Council Statement of Co-operation). At the time of the pre submission consultation it was understood that the authorities would be signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in January 2018 now it is understood that a MoU will not be signed until after the publication of a Draft Local Plan for Leicester which is not anticipated until summer 2018. The consultation on the non-statutory Leicester & Leicestershire Strategic Growth Plan (ending on 5th April 2018) also states that the distribution of Leicester's unmet housing need will be agreed and set out in a MoU forming the basis on which Local Plans should be reviewed & prepared. Currently the Leicester & Leicestershire HMA authorities are procrastinating rather than resolving this key outcome from co-operation. The NPPG states that a key element of examination is ensuring that there is sufficient certainty through formal agreements that an effective strategy will be in place to deal with strategic matters such as unmet housing needs when Local Plans are adopted (ID 9-017). The reliance on Local Plan Reviews will not resolve the problem instead such an approach arguably causes uncertainty and inefficient use of resources rather than maximising effective plan making.