

EXAMINATION OF OADBY & WIGSTON LOCAL PLAN
MATTER 3 – HOUSING DELIVERY

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.

Issue 1 : Whether the Local Plan in particular Policies 11 – 15 will be effective in delivering the appropriate type of housing to meet the needs of the area?

As set out in the HBF pre submission consultation representation Policy 11 is ambiguously worded with regards to dwelling space standards. It is unclear whether or not the Council is adopting the nationally described space standards. As currently worded the Policy is open to wide interpretation creating uncertainty for applicants and providing no clear guidance for decision makers. Therefore the Policy will be difficult to effectively implement in the development management process.

Q2. Are the affordable housing requirements set out in Policy 13 justified and deliverable?

The HEDNA 2017 identified an affordable housing need of 143 dwellings per annum in the Borough. However despite this significant affordable housing need there was no further increase in the total housing requirement to help affordable housing as set out in the NPPG (ID 21-029). It is acknowledged that the Council may not be able to meet full affordable housing needs because to seek to deliver all identified affordable housing need as a proportion of market housing may result in an unrealistic and undeliverable position however it does not necessarily mean that some increased provision could not be achieved.

The Council’s Whole Plan Viability Assessment Report 2017 concluded that policy trade-off between affordable housing and infrastructure were necessary to avoid compromising the deliverability of sites. On current viability evidence the differentiated housing requirements in Oadby (30%), Wigston (20%) and South Wigston (10%) set out in Policy 13 are justified. However viability testing is highly sensitive to changes in its inputs whereby an adjustment or an error in any one assumption can have a significant impact on whether or not development is financially viable. Therefore it is appropriate that the wording subject to viability is included in Policy 13.

Q5. Will Policy 14 be effective? It states the Council “will encourage” and “consider proposals for” the provision of self build and custom

build serviced plots. Does this provide clarity to developers, local communities and other interests about what is required? Is it consistent with Policies 18, 20 and 21?

The HBF is supportive of the Council's approach to encourage self and custom build. It is noted that such encouragement has been endorsed in a number of recently published Inspector's Final Reports for East Devon Local Plan, Warwick Local Plan, Bath & North East Somerset Place-making Plan and Derbyshire Dales Local Plan.

There is an inconsistency between Policy 14 and Policies 18, 20 and 21. It is understood that the Council has acknowledged this inconsistency and has proposed modifications.

Q6. Would a requirement to include self build and custom build serviced plots on all residential developments be justified?

A requirement for self and custom build serviced plots on all residential developments would not be justified. The Council has not provided any supporting evidence to justify such a policy requirement.