

ITEM 8 - POSITION STATEMENT – LOCAL PLAN

The Conservative Group have given notice of the following Position Statement to be presented at the meeting:

“The Conservative Group note the statement made in the Labour Manifesto:

Develop a new local plan covering the whole of Charnwood that by default refuses any development outside of existing town or village boundaries and instead setting a preference for brownfield sites to be developed first.

Accordingly, the Conservative Group believe clarity needs to be established on the following.

1. Do the Labour/Green administration support the current new local plan which is in the final stages after examination?
2. Confirm the Labour Group voted for the current new local plan when agreed to send to examination at Full Council?
3. What are the timescales to deliver a new local plan by the Labour/Green administration?
4. What effect will this new proposal have on delivering a five-year housing land supply?”

Response:

1. Yes. Without being predetermined, the Labour and Green groups both intend to support the current draft Local Plan, if it is found to be sound during the final stages of examination.
2. Yes.
3. The timescales associated with the current draft Local Plan were agreed by Cabinet in March 2023 and are set out in the Local Development Scheme. The Labour Manifesto refers to a future local plan beyond the current draft Local Plan, which if adopted runs to 2037. A timetable for this future local plan will need to be developed.
4. When the current draft Local Plan is adopted, the Council will be able to demonstrate a five-year housing supply. The Labour Manifesto statement has no implications for the five-year supply in this case. However, it should be noted that the timetable for the draft local plan is not currently within the control of the Council, as the examination process is driven by the Planning Inspectorate. The progress of the plan will therefore be dependent on all participants, including the County Council, responding to the demands of the Inspectorate quickly and without interruption. The position outlined by the County Council in its published Cabinet report for 23rd June 2023 risks slowing the progress of the Local Plan and increases the risk of unplanned development. It also puts at risk the opportunity to secure appropriate developer contributions. It should be noted that Charnwood Borough Council will continue to support the County Council in developing and implementing its transport strategies, including the Interim Transport Strategy for Charnwood, and the collection of appropriate developer contributions for transport and education infrastructure to mitigate the impacts of growth prior to the adoption of the draft local plan.