

Full Council Questions 19 June 2023

Councillor Snartt Questions

How the administration proposed to refuse any developments outside of the existing boundaries during the current council term?

Decisions on planning applications are made within a legal framework which stipulates that decisions should be made in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Every planning application has to be treated on its own merits. Making decisions on planning proposals involves making judgments, balancing the benefits of a proposal against adverse impacts, and, depending upon the planning balance, this can lead to refusal of planning permission.

How the Labour Group would deliver their Manifesto pledge regrading a preference for brownfield sites without compromising the five-year housing land supply?

The draft Local Plan allocates both brownfield and greenfield sites for housing development to demonstrate a five-year housing supply on adoption of the plan. It is not possible to meet the districts housing needs on brownfield sites alone and to therefore demonstrate a five-year housing land supply. The Local Plan policies are supportive of future applications to make efficient use of brownfield sites and buildings.

If the council officers had capacity to deliver the Local Plan?

The Local Plan will be delivered within the existing capacity of the Council.

Councillor Baines quoted the Labour Manifesto and asked how the housing aims aligned with the Local Plan?

The draft Local Plan strategy is to intensify and extend existing urban areas to prevent new pockets of development emerging unplanned in the open countryside. There is a focus on limiting the need for greenfield development, preserving greenfield sites as much as possible, however evidence from a number of studies has shown that there are not enough sites on brownfield land to meet identified housing need. The plan will support future applications to make efficient use of brownfield land and buildings and allocates 21 brownfield sites out of 69 sites for housing development. As such the plan provides a range of development site sizes and locations. It also provides thousands of homes which are accessible to employment areas and other services and facilities.

This strategy protects the most environmentally sensitive areas and will protect nearly 279 square kilometres of open countryside, including natural open spaces between settlements and green wedges around the edge of Leicester. There are also policies in place in relation to flood risk and conserving and enhancing Biodiversity and Geodiversity to ensure that development is located in the areas of

lowest risk and ensure that biodiversity, ecological networks and geodiversity interests are protected, restored and enhanced.

To ensure that new housing developments meet the needs of the whole community, the plan seeks 30% Affordable Housing from all major housing developments with the exception of brownfield sites where 10% Affordable Housing will be sought to encourage regeneration. The plan has a clear focus on the need for a range of types and tenures of homes as well as extra care housing to support the ageing population.