

# Examination of the Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020 – 2038.

## Matter 2 – Vision & Objectives, Spatial Strategy & Location of New Development, and the Site Selection Process.

On behalf of Barratt Homes & David Wilson Homes (Yorkshire West)

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## Document Management.

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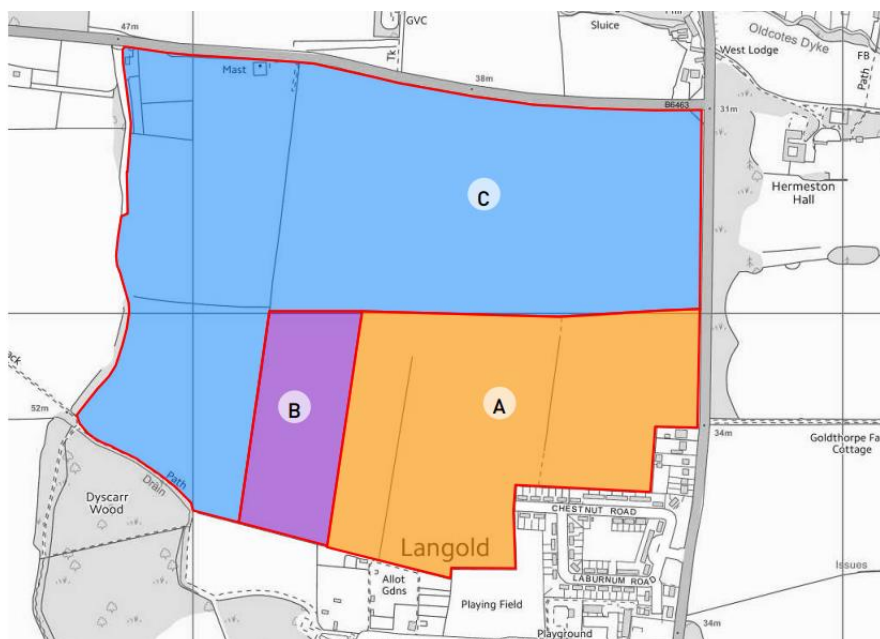
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# 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Hearing Statement has been produced by Pegasus Group on behalf of our client, Barratt Homes and David Wilson Homes. It focuses upon the Inspectors Matters, Issues and Questions which relate our previous representations.
- 1.2. Our client wishes to ensure that the Bassetlaw Local Plan 2020–2038 (BLP) is prepared in a robust manner that passes the tests of soundness contained in paragraph 35 of the 2021 NPPF, namely that the plan is:
  - Positively Prepared;
  - Justified;
  - Effective; and
  - Consistent with national policy.
- 1.3. The BLP also needs to be legally compliant and adhere to the Duty to Cooperate.
- 1.4. Our client submitted representations to the various stages of plan production including the Publication Version and its associated addendums.
- 1.5. In order to provide context and assist the Inspectors our clients have land interests at Land West of Doncaster Road / North of Langold, as identified by parcels A, B and C (figure 1). These sites are identified in the SHLAA under references LAA209 and LAA312.
- 1.6. Parcel A benefits from an outline consent for 300 dwellings (ref: 15/01605/OUT) and a reserved matters application for 300 dwellings (ref: 21/01730/RES) approved 19th May 2022. Parcels B and C would make natural extensions to the existing approvals.

*Figure 1: Site Location*





17. Whilst Parcel C is included in its entirety, our client has consistently identified they are willing to discuss potential development opportunities across smaller elements of this parcel.

## 2. Response to the Inspector's Matter 2 Issues and Questions

2.1. We welcome the opportunity to comment on the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions (MIQs) and provide the following responses to selected questions. Our client reserves the right to respond to specific issues raised by the council and other parties within the hearing session in so far as they relate to our previous representations.

**Question 2.1: Is the proposed spatial strategy and the distribution of development (as set out in policies ST1 and ST2) supported by robust and up-to-date evidence and otherwise soundly based? In particular:**

**a) Does it reflect the vision and objectives of the plan?**

2.2. The vision at paragraph 4.9 on the BLP identifies that:

*"Residential development within the Large Rural Settlements of Blyth, Carlton in Lindrick, Langold, Misterton and Tuxford will have been delivered to meet strategic and local needs."*

2.3. The BLP further notes at paragraph 5.1.54 that within the rural area;

*"...the Large Rural Settlements – Blyth, Carlton in Lindrick and Costhorpe, Langold/Hodsock, Misterton and Tuxford – are the most sustainable due to them having the largest populations, a range of employment, shops and services and having more frequent and commercially viable public transport services to nearby larger towns and cities. All also act as service centres for the surrounding rural area."*

2.4. Both statements are supported.

2.5. However, despite the importance of these settlements following the deletion of 590 dwellings at the Garden Village (BLP 2<sup>nd</sup> Addendum) none of these settlements were identified to deliver further growth over and above existing commitments and the allocation at Tuxford. Figure 8, of the BLP 2<sup>nd</sup> Addendum identified that all the additional growth required to meet the removal of the Garden Village appears to have been located in Harworth and Bircoates. Given the important role that Large Rural Settlements play within Bassetlaw this is considered unjustified.

2.6. The reason for this appears to be the arbitrary 20% growth limit on such settlements identified within Policy ST2. We expand upon this point within Question 2.4 below.

**b) To what degree is the spatial framework in Policy ST2 based on the settlement hierarchy in Policy ST1? Is the focus on strategic allocations in the larger urban settlements justified and soundly based?**

2.7. The focus on strategic allocations in the larger urban settlements is not disputed. This must, however, be balanced against delivery and the need for development in other settlements.

**c) Would the pattern of development proposed meet the needs of larger settlements in the district?**

2.8. No further comment.

**Question 2.2: What is the evidential basis for the settlement hierarchy in policy ST2? Does this accurately reflect the pattern of settlements across the district? Is this up-to-date? How does this inform the development strategy? What other factors influenced the strategy, such as physical and environmental constraints?**

- 2.9. This is considered a question for the Council to address. We reserve the right to respond to any new points raised by the Council during the hearing session.

**Question 2.3: What other spatial strategies and distributions of growth were considered during plan preparation, and why were they discounted? Where is the evidence for this? Were alternative approaches tested in the Sustainability Appraisal work?**

- 2.10. This is considered an issue for the Council to address. We reserve the right to respond to any new points raised by the Council during the hearing session.

**Question 2.4: Do policies ST1 and ST2 allow sufficient development in large rural settlements, small rural settlements and other villages to comply with para 79 of the Framework? How were the proportions of development proposed for each settlement arrived at?**

- 2.11. It is unclear how the Council arrived at a 20% growth requirement for Large Rural Settlements and a 5% growth requirement for small rural settlements. These figures appear arbitrary and provide little cognisance of the sustainability of individual settlements, constraints or opportunities presented. All settlements within each category are not homogeneous and as such a one-size-fits-all approach is not considered appropriate.
- 2.12. Policy ST2 (parts 2 and 3) effectively place a moratorium on development if cumulatively the 20% growth figure is met or surpassed through allocations and commitments. The only exception is where a proposal:

*"...has the support of the community through the preparation of a neighbourhood plan (including a review), or in the absence of a Neighbourhood Plan, through a developer-led pre-application community consultation..."*

- 2.13. Whilst the Council intends to modify this wording, as identified in the Schedule of Proposed Changes to the Published Plan (SUB-009a), the amended wording does not overcome our objection. The approach to large and small rural settlements is considered contrary to the ethos of the NPPF and the requirement to boost significantly housing supply (paragraph 60).

**Question 2.5: Are the proposed settlement development boundaries appropriately drawn? What factors were taken into account in designating these? Is the approach taken in relation to settlement boundaries in Small Rural Settlements justified and consistent with national policy?**

- 2.14. No. The development boundaries are tightly drawn and exclude commitments not yet under construction upon which the Council is reliant to deliver its housing requirement. The reason for this is unclear. The BLP, paragraph 5.1.60, identifies that land outside of development boundaries is considered countryside. The exclusion of consented commitments from development boundaries, upon which the plan is reliant, effectively places new consented development in the countryside. This is clearly inappropriate and as such is considered unjustified and not representative of a positively prepared plan.

- 2.15. It is notable that the Schedule of Proposed Modifications to the policy map does include commitments which have recently commenced construction. A good example is the site East of Doncaster Road, Langold (page 6). It is unclear why this has only been applied to sites under construction, as opposed to all commitments the Council is reliant upon. This is particularly the case in cases such as our clients who have clearly progressed the site and will soon commence development.
- 2.16. Within our Matter 7 Statement on Housing Land Supply we identify the heavy reliance of the BLP on housing commitments. Given that commitments are an intrinsic and important element of the Council's housing land supply their exclusion from development boundaries is not only unjustified but would render any development on identified commitments with a lapsed application to be contrary to several Local Plan policies, such as 'ST2: Residential Growth in Rural Bassetlaw'.
- 2.17. It is, therefore, recommended that development boundaries include all commitments upon which the BLP is reliant.

**Question 2.6: Have the sites allocated for development in the plan been appraised and selected in comparison with possible alternatives using a robust and objective process?**

- 2.18. No further comment at this stage.

**Question 2.7: Are the plans assumptions in relation to the amounts and timing of development to be delivered through neighbourhood plans and the Worksop Central Development Plan soundly based?**

- 2.19. We deal with this issue in detail within our statement to Matter 7 on Housing Land Supply.

**Question 2.8: Are policies ST1 and ST2 otherwise justified and consistent with national policy? Are there any omissions in the policies and are they sufficiently flexible?**

- 2.20. No. I refer the Inspector to our previous comments.

**Question 2.9: Do the vision and objectives of the plan adequately address matters of climate change and air quality?**

- 2.21. No comment.

**Question 2.10: Are the Council's proposed modifications to the policies necessary for soundness?**

- 2.22. No comment.



Town & Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)  
Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

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