

Bassetlaw Local Plan - Statement from Retford Civic Society October 2022

Matter 5 - The Housing requirement

Issue 5

The housing figure of 10,476 (or 582 dwellings per annum) is stated in the Plan to be the 'minimum' housing requirement for the 18 years of the Plan period. The actual provision is 12,551, equivalent to 697 dwellings per annum. It is this figure which should be considered when assessing the Plan's soundness. However, even the 582 figure is too high and not justified by the evidence.

The Civic Society has asked to see any reports or studies not already published which explain the Council's decision on housing numbers. No reports have been forthcoming. The Society's October 2021 submission looked in some detail at the relevant background documents, and in particular at the three reports by GL Hearn which deal with the scale of economic and housing growth. Hearn initially advised that 390 dwellings per annum was the appropriate scale of development. When pressed by the Council to consider the consequences of accelerated growth in the number of jobs, they made no specific recommendation for the scale of house building but set out a spectrum of possible requirements ranging from 236 to 519 dwellings per annum. Their third report concludes that, on the assumption that Apleyhead is fully developed within the Plan period, the Council should test the implications of provision in the range 562 to 591 dwellings per annum. We have seen nothing to indicate that this testing was ever carried out.

The Society has not seen any evidence from the Council to justify the minimum scale of housing growth proposed in the Plan or the even higher scale of provision actually made.