

Examination of the Leicester Local Plan 2020 to 2036

Matter 2 - Vision and Strategy

Tuesday 08 October 2024

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Client

De Montfort University

Our reference

01127

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1. Introduction

- 1.1 This Statement has been prepared on behalf of De Montfort University ('DMU'), who have land interests within Leicester.
- 1.2 This Statement builds on the representations that DMU submitted to the Leicester Local Plan – Publication Draft 2020 - 2036 (Regulation 19 Consultation), in February 2023.
- 1.3 This Statement addresses **Matter 2 'Vision and Strategy'** which is due to be heard on Tuesday 08 October (Week 2).
- 1.4 The Statement is set out as a response to the Inspector's Matters, Issues and Questions for the Examination (MIQs).

2. Matter 2 - Vision and Strategy

Issue 2: Is the Plan's overall vision and strategy positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in enabling the delivery of sustainable development?

- 2.1 The acknowledgement of DMU as a significant provider of higher education in the city is welcomed (at paragraph 2.4), however, the plan is using out of date figures which may not give a true reflection of how many students are currently enrolled at De Montfort University (DMU).
- 2.2 The statistics referred to cannot be considered 'justified' given they're not referring to the most recent evidence and it is recommended this element of the Plan is updated to reflect the academic year of 2023 – 2024, which is 25,160 students.

Policy SL06 – Beaumont Park

73. What is the evidence to show that the proposed allocation of Beaumont Park for employment uses and a Gypsy and Traveller transit site in Policy SL06 is justified, effective and consistent with national policy, with particular regard to:

a). The loss of open space within Beaumont Park – Is this surplus to requirements or would it be replaced by alternative or better provision of open space?

b). The accessibility of the site by sustainable modes of transport?

c). The effects of the proposed uses on:

- ***ecology and biodiversity?***
- ***the safety and operation of the highway network?***
- ***air quality?***
- ***the amenity of the surrounding land uses?***

- 2.3 Beaumont Park is home to DMU Football, Rugby, Lacrosse and American Football; and it has recently seen £5million worth of investment. The venue accommodates FA standard grass and artificial pitches, as well as a recently extended and refurbished clubhouse. The site provides DMU sports teams' access for training and matches, and it is also used to support local football and community engagement projects.
- 2.4 As an adjacent landowner, DMU would expect to have been consulted on the proposed site allocation at Beaumont Park for employment uses and a Gypsy and Traveller site; or there is an expectation for the proposed allocation to at least consider the amenity of and the impact upon the surrounding existing land uses.
- 2.5 There is no reference to the surrounding existing land uses within the Council's Site Allocations document (specific to this allocation). As such, it is recommended that the consideration of the amenity of surrounding land uses is included as a requirement

within the second to last bullet point (in respect of matters that future development will need to address).

2.6 For example, this bullet point should state: *“In addition to the general planning requirements, development will need to address **compatibility with surrounding land uses, the amenity of neighbouring users, ecology, trees, land contamination, design quality and sports provision**”* [with our suggested additional wording shown in **bold**].

2.7 At present, the Policy cannot be considered to be positively prepared as it has not been informed by agreements with relevant stakeholders. It is submitted that DMU should be considered a relevant stakeholder given their strong and positive presence within the district, and particularly given this strategic allocation may impact upon how their adjacent sports hub site operates.

74. Is the site at Beaumont Park suitable for the provision of transit accommodation for Gypsy and Traveller families, taking account of the following:

a). The alleged history of contamination on the site?

b). Its proximity to existing Gypsy and Traveller accommodation sites at Greengate Nook and Red Hill?

c). Noise and air quality issues arising from the adjacent highway network and motorsport events at the Beaumont Park Stadium?

d). The compatibility of a residential use with the existing and proposed employment uses?

2.8 As alluded to in response to Question 73; the current wording of Policy SL06 needs to be updated to ensure that any future use of Beaumont Park for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation suitably considers existing neighbouring land uses, including the existing and proposed employment uses which includes DMU’s land.

75. Is Policy SL06 clear, unambiguous and effective in respect of the location and distribution of the proposed employment uses and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation within the site and how the remainder of 19.72 ha of land would be used?

2.1 No. As an adjoining landowner to the proposed site allocation, based on the current drafting of Policy SL06, DMU are unaware of how the proposed employment uses and Gypsy and Traveller accommodation would be distributed across the site.

2.2 Specifically, the addition of 12-caravan spaces to be provided within the site allocation has emerged since the 2020 draft Plan, and DMU would like to understand which part of the site the provision for this is being proposed.

2.3 In order to support this site allocation, DMU require further information in respect of the indicative site layout and access etc, to inform their decision about whether the proposed strategic allocation would have any detrimental impact on DMU’s adjacent sports hub at Beaumont Park.

- 2.4 At present, the Policy cannot be considered to be 'positively prepared' as it has not been informed by agreements with relevant stakeholders. As set out in response to Question 73, DMU should be considered a relevant stakeholder given their strong and positive presence within the district, and particularly given this strategic allocation may impact upon how their adjacent sports hub site operates.

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