



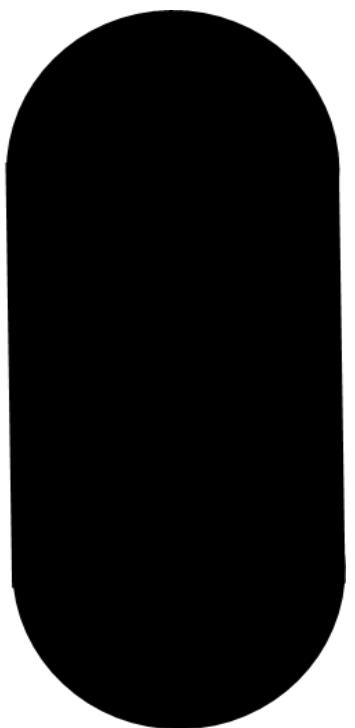
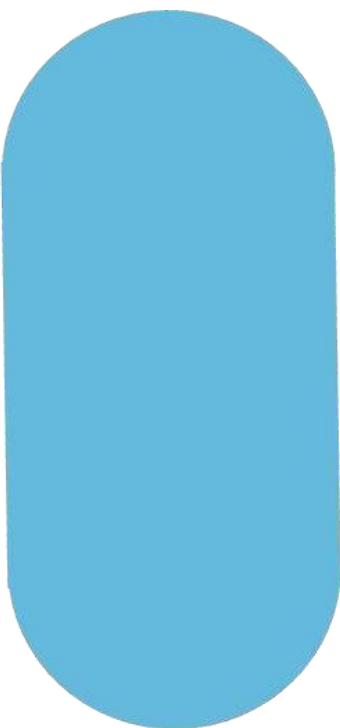
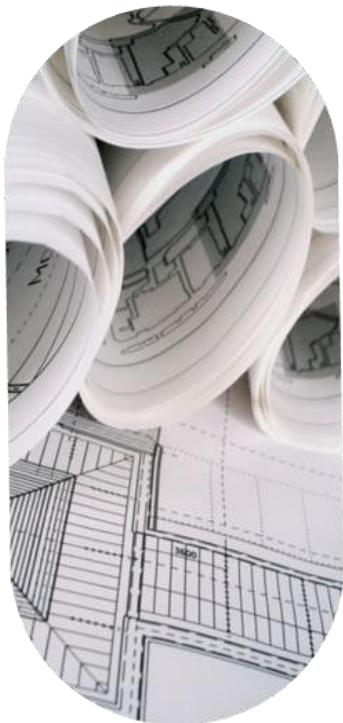
 Part of Shakespeare Martineau

Planning Statement

Land North of Hunts Lane, Desford

Peveril Homes

November 2025



Contents

1. Introduction	3
2. The Site and Surrounding Area	5
3. Planning History	7
4. The Proposed Development	8
5. The Development Plan	10
6. The National Planning Policy Framework	18
7. Assessment of Proposed Development	30
8. Affordable Housing Statement	46
9. Section 106 Agreement	47
10. Conclusion	48

1. Introduction

- 1.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared by Marrons on behalf of Peveril Homes (the Applicant) to support an outline planning application for the erection of up to 75 new dwellings at Land North of Hunts Lane, Desford (hereafter referred to as 'the Site') with all matters relating reserved except means of access.
- 1.2. The submission of this planning application follows a process of pre-application engagement with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council in July-September 2025¹ – to be discussed in detail further in this Statement. The Site, which extends to 4.90ha, can be identified on the Location Plan submitted with the application.
- 1.3. Peveril Homes has the necessary agreements in place to acquire the land from the sole landowner upon a grant of planning permission. Peveril Homes are, of course, a housebuilder and would deliver the Site themselves at the earliest opportunity. Given that Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council are currently falling short of delivering on their housing requirements, the delivery of this scheme would make a meaningful and timely contribution towards addressing this identified shortfall and help the Council meet its housing land supply obligations.
- 1.4. This Statement should be read in conjunction with the suite of technical documents and plans which have submitted with this application:
 - Application Form
 - N1426-001B Location Plan
 - N1426-005G Illustrative Masterplan
 - N1426-003 Parameters Plan
 - Topographical Survey
 - Design and Access Statement
 - GLY0225 MP01 Illustrative Landscape Masterplan
 - Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
 - Phase 1 Geo-Environmental Assessment
 - Ecological Appraisal
 - Biodiversity Net Gain Report

¹ 25-10094-PREMAJ

- Statutory Biodiversity Net Gain Metric
- Flood Risk Assessment
- PJS25-0092-DR-0005 Preliminary Drainage Strategy
- Transport Assessment
- Travel Plan
- PJS25-0092-DR-0003 Swept Path Analysis
- PJS25-0092-DR-0004 Horizontal General Arrangement
- Arboricultural Impact Assessment
- Heritage Impact Assessment
- Consultation Statement

1.5. The purpose of this Planning Statement is to demonstrate that there are no adverse impacts of the proposals that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits and that, in having regard to the material considerations and Paragraph 11(d) of the Framework, planning permission should be granted under S.38(6) of the Act².

² Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

2. The Site and Surrounding Area

2.1. Details and illustrations of the Site and its surrounds are set out in the Design and Access Statement (DAS) submitted with this planning application. A description of the Site and its surroundings has also been provided hereafter to establish the context for this Planning Statement.

Site Location

2.2. The Site is located on the north-west edge of Desford, north of Hunts Lane and Newbold Road and adjacent to Desford Cemetery. The Site is situated approximately 2km east of the village of Newbold Verdon and 11km west of the City of Leicester. The Town of Hinckley is located approximately 10km to the south.

Site Description

2.3. The parcel of land upon which the Site is located comprises an irregularly shaped and intensely managed arable field compartment defined by a combination of boundary treatments including hedgerows, trees and drainage ditches. The total area of the Site itself extends to 4.90ha, and is divided toward its northern extent by a Public Right of Way (R90/1).

Site Surroundings

2.4. The Site is immediately surrounded by a mix of residential and rural land uses. Existing housing and the main built-up area of Desford lie to the south-east. To the north, arable fields extend into the wider countryside. Desford Cemetery adjoins the Site to the west, beyond which further arable land and the settlement of Newbold Verdon are located. To the east, the Site is bordered by residential properties, private gardens and pastoral land. South of the Site, on the opposite side of Hunts Lane, are the Hunts Lane Garden Allotments. The Site is considered to sit well within the urban fabric of Desford.

2.5. In the wider context, Desford offers a comprehensive range of amenities. These include healthcare facilities such as the Desford Medical Centre and Desford Dental Care, as well as educational provision through the Desford Community Primary School and Bosworth Academy.

2.6. The village also benefits from St Martin's Church, local pubs including The Bluebell Inn and Lodge and The Lancaster Arms, a selection of convenience stores and

shops, and a variety of play parks and publicly accessible open spaces. Together, these facilities contribute to a well-served and sustainable settlement.

3. Planning History

- 3.1. The Site has not been subject to any previous planning applications.

Pre-Application Engagement

- 3.2. A request for pre-application advice was submitted to Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council on the 25th June 2025, and made valid on the 9th July 2025. The pre-application engagement included a meeting between the Applicant and HBBC on the 14th August 2025, with a formal response received on the 4th September 2025³.
- 3.3. The response confirmed that the Council would be unlikely to be able to deliver a five-year supply of land for housing. In light of this, and due to the age of the relevant housing policies within the adopted Core Strategy, the ‘tilted’ balance would therefore be triggered in accordance with Footnote 8 and Paragraph 11 of the NPPF whereby planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.
- 3.4. However, it was concluded that, based on the concept design submitted with the pre-application enquiry, the development would be unlikely to be supported by the Local Planning Authority as a result of the anticipated significant harm to the character of the surrounding area, and the intrinsic value, open character and landscape character of the designated countryside.
- 3.5. Following the pre-application response, the design of the scheme, as submitted, has evolved from the concept plans provided as part of the pre-application enquiry. The proposed development has sought to address such concerns, and has provided, amongst a wider suite of technical information, a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which evaluates how the proposed development would affect the surrounding landscape and the proposals now incorporate significant mitigation measures to soften the visual impact of the scheme, as discussed within the LVIA, DAS, and further in this Statement.

³ 25-10094-PREMAJ

4. The Proposed Development

Description of Development

4.1. The application seeks outline planning consent for the residential development of up to 75 dwellings on the Site known as Land to North of Hunts Lane, Desford. All matters are reserved except for access.

4.2. The description of development is as follows:

“Outline application for the construction of up to 75 dwellings including a minimum of 40% affordable housing with associated landscaping, open space, drainage infrastructure and associated works (all matters reserved except access from Hunts Lane)”.

4.3. The plans submitted for approval are as follows:

- N1426-001B Location Plan
- N1426-003 Parameters Plan
- 3964-ADC-HGN-XX-DR-CH-0100-S1-P03 Proposed Site Access Layout

4.4. The proposed development is described in further detail in the accompanying Design and Access Statement. However, the key elements of the proposal for the purposes of this Planning Statement are as follows:

- Up to 75 dwellings are proposed across a developable area of 2.55ha (Circa 52% of the total Site area);
- Up to 40% of new housing provision shall be delivered as policy-compliant affordable housing;
- The development will secure an appropriate mix of house types and tenures, specifics of which to be provided at detailed design stage;
- The development shall create a new means of access into the Site via a simple priority T-junction located to the north of B582 Hunts Lane;
- 2.35ha of Green & Blue Infrastructure, representing 48% of the total Site, will be delivered. This includes areas for play, public open space, new tree planting, green corridors, informal amenity spaces and an attenuation basis;

- The attenuation basin shall provide approximately 1,950m³ of storage capacity, and will deliver essential surface water attenuation while also creating new wetland habitats that enhance local biodiversity;
- A landscape buffer will be provided along the northern edge of the developable area, creating a defined green edge to the development. This planting will help to soften visual impacts while also establishing a valuable wildlife corridor;
- The development seeks to retain as many of the existing on-site trees and hedgerows as possible, with removal only where necessary to provide access, and will incorporate new and compensatory planting throughout;
- New pedestrian links will be provided to connect with the formal Public Right of Way (R90/1), enhancing overall Site connectivity;
- Visitor parking will be available in the north-western part of the site, and capable of providing additional parking space for the Desford cemetery;
- The development will deliver a minimum of +10% Biodiversity Net Gain, with +23.31% shown to be achievable through these proposals;
- Two Local Areas for Play (LAPs);
- Two view corridors are to be retained across the Site to ensure the retention of a visual connection to the landscape from Hunts Lane; and
- A suite of off-site landscaping measures which includes the planting of new hedgerows to reflect the historic field pattern of the land, contributing to habitat restoration while maintaining agricultural function.

5. The Development Plan

- 5.1. Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that a planning application is determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 5.2. The Development Plan for the purposes of this application comprises the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Core Strategy (December 2009) and Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD (July 2016), the Desford Neighbourhood Plan (May 2021), and Supplementary Planning Documents inc. The Good Design Guide (2020)

Core Strategy (December 2009)

Policy 7: Key Rural Centres

- 5.3. The Core Strategy identifies Desford as a Key Rural Centre, which are defined as those villages that have populations over 1500 people, have a primary school, local shop, post office, GP, community/leisure facilities, employment and a 6-day a week bus service (hourly).
- 5.4. Policy 7 outlines that to support the Key Rural Centres, the Council will support housing development within settlement boundaries, support development under Policy 17: Local Needs, require transport improvements in line with Policy 14, and require development to be of the highest environment standards in line with Policy 24.

Policy 8: Key Rural Centres Relating to Leicester

- 5.5. Desford is also identified by the Core Strategy to be a Key Rural Centre Relating to Leicester, defined as those settlements located on the edge of the Leicester Principal Urban Area, which due to their proximity, relate primarily to Leicester. The Core Strategy outlines that the focus for these villages is to maintain existing services, protect their individual identities, and improve connections with Leicester. Development will be limited to meeting local needs rather than supporting large-scale growth that could increase commuting.
- 5.6. In the context of Policy 8, which seeks to support local services in Desford and ensure residents have access to a suitable range of housing, the Council will allocate land

for at least 110 new homes and require developers to demonstrate an appropriate mix that meets local needs.

- 5.7. Development will also be expected to improve the quality and accessibility of green space and play provision, deliver safe cycle routes and strategic green infrastructure, support traffic management and additional parking to strengthen the village centre, and ensure that new schemes respect the character of the Desford Conservation Area through the use of locally distinctive design features.

Policy 14: Rural Areas: Transport

- 5.8. Policy 14 outlines a range of initiatives that are designed to support accessibility within rural areas. The policy states that developers will be required to contribute towards these initiatives through developer contributions and/or land where they meet the tests set out in national guidance. New development that would prejudice their implementation will not be permitted.

Policy 15: Affordable Housing

- 5.9. Policy 15 outlines the Council's affordable housing targets across the plan period, and their expectation for a proportion of affordable housing to be provided on eligible sites. In rural areas, which incorporates the Site, the starting point for a development of this scale is 40% affordable housing provision.
- 5.10. The policy states that affordable housing should comprise 75% social rented and 25% intermediate housing, with targets monitored and updated via the Affordable Housing SPD. Figures may be negotiated on a site-by-site basis based on local need, site characteristics, viability, and existing provision, and in areas of high affordable housing, commuted sums may be accepted instead of on-site provision.

Policy 16: Housing Density, Mix and Design

- 5.11. Through Policy 16, the Council requires a mix of housing types and tenure to be provided on all sites of 10 or more dwellings, taking into account household projections as a starting point, and informed by the latest Housing Market Assessment and local evidence of need.
- 5.12. Policy 16 requires all such development to meet a 'very good' rating against the Building for Life criteria, unless proved unviable to do so. Furthermore, new housing proposals are required to meet a minimum net density of 30 dwellings/ha when

adjoining Key Rural Centres, unless in exceptional circumstances where site characteristics justify a lower density.

Policy 19: Green Space and Play Provision

5.13. Policy 19 provides the standards that shall be used in relation to green space and play provision, ensuring all residents have access to sufficient, high quality, accessible green spaces and play areas. The policy states the minimum areas required per population sample for equipped children's play space, casual/informal play space, outdoors sports provision and accessible natural green space. Policy 19 also sets out the recommended distances that households should be within to access different types of green spaces.

Policy 20: Green Infrastructure

5.14. This policy outlines the strategic interventions that will be supported to assist the delivery of the plan. Under this policy, developers will be required to contribute to the delivery of these interventions through developer contributions and/or provision of land where appropriate. Development that would compromise the delivery of the Green Infrastructure Network will not be permitted.

Site Allocations and Development Management Policies (July 2016)

Policy DM1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

5.15. Policy DM1 outlines the presumption in favour of sustainable development as advocated by the NPPF whereby planning applications that comply with the Local Plan (and any relevant neighbourhood plans) will be approved without delay unless material considerations suggest otherwise. Where policies are absent or out of date, permission will generally be granted unless the adverse impacts would clearly outweigh the benefits when assessed against the NPPF, or where specific NPPF policies restrict development.

Policy DM3: Infrastructure and Delivery

5.16. DM3 outlines that developers will be expected to provide or fund any additional infrastructure, amenities, or facilities required as a result of their development. If a developer can demonstrate that site conditions or market factors affect viability, the Council will weigh reduced affordable housing or infrastructure provision against the overall planning benefits of the scheme.

Policy DM4: Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation

5.17. Policy DM4 seeks to protect the character of the countryside through safeguarding against unsustainable development. The policy proceeds to state the specific instances where development in the countryside shall be considered sustainable.

Policy DM6: Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geological Interest

5.18. Policy DM6 requires development proposals to conserve and enhance nature conservation and geological features, with major schemes delivering biodiversity gains through habitat creation and strengthened ecological networks. Important on-site features must be retained, buffered, and managed for long-term ecological value, and their loss or damage is only acceptable where no net biodiversity loss can be demonstrated and ecological network integrity is maintained. If harm cannot be avoided, mitigated, or compensated, permission will be refused.

Policy DM7: Preventing Pollution and Flooding

5.19. Policy DM7 requires development to avoid adverse impacts from pollution and flooding by demonstrating protection of water quality and ecological value, providing appropriate containment for pollutants, minimising light, noise, and vibration, remediating contaminated land, preventing deterioration of air quality or land stability, and ensuring proposals do not create or exacerbate flood risk unless suitably mitigated in line with national policy.

Policy DM10: Development and Design

5.20. Under Policy DM10, development will be supported where it can be demonstrated that:

- It does not result in significant harm to the privacy or amenity of neighbouring residents, including impacts from lighting, air quality, noise, vibration, or visual intrusion;
- Future occupiers will not experience unacceptable amenity issues arising from nearby uses;
- The proposal complements or enhances local character through appropriate scale, layout, density, massing, design, materials, and architectural detailing;
- Building materials are sympathetic to those of neighbouring properties and the wider locality;
- High-quality landscaping is incorporated where it will strengthen the design and setting;

- Energy and resource efficiency are maximised through sustainable design, layout, orientation, and construction;
- Provision for electric or low-emission vehicle charging is made where feasible;
- A suitable Sustainable Drainage Scheme is delivered, incorporating features such as swales, ponds, permeable paving, and wildlife areas where appropriate; and
- Natural surveillance is promoted and Secured by Design principles, including fire safety considerations, are embedded.

Policy DM11: Protecting and Enhancing the Historic Environment

5.21. Policy DM11 requires the protection, conservation, and enhancement of the Borough's historic environment, ensuring development does not adversely affect designated or non-designated heritage assets. Proposals that may impact a heritage asset or its setting must demonstrate an understanding of its significance, assess and minimise any harm, show that the benefits outweigh any residual impacts, and address archaeological considerations in line with Policy DM13.

Policy DM13: Preserving the Borough's Archaeology

5.22. Policy DM13 requires development proposals with potential archaeological impacts to include a suitable desk-based assessment and, where necessary, field evaluation. Where feasible and justified, significant remains must be preserved in situ through appropriate design and construction methods. If preservation is not possible, full archaeological investigation and recording must be undertaken by an approved specialist before development begins.

Policy DM17: Highways and Transportation

5.23. Policy DM17 supports development that maximises sustainable transport use by making the best use of existing public transport, providing safe and convenient walking and cycling access, and locating development to minimise travel demand. Proposals must not cause significant adverse impacts on highway safety or the transport network, and where necessary, appropriate improvements should be made. All development should follow current highway design standards set by the relevant authority.

Policy DM18: Vehicle Parking Standards

5.24. Policy DM18 requires all new development to provide an appropriate level of parking, based on site location, housing type, available transport alternatives, and good design. Developments must also include provision for disabled parking.

Desford Neighbourhood Plan (May 2021)

Policy H1: Settlement Boundary

5.25. Policy H1 identifies land outside of the defined settlement boundary as open countryside, where development will be carefully controlled in line with local and national strategic planning policies.

Policy H4: Affordable Housing

5.26. Policy H4 requires that at least 40% of all new housing developments of 10 or more units be delivered as affordable housing, including social rented, Starter Homes, or Shared Ownership, in line with local need. Affordable homes should be integrated within the development, visually indistinguishable from market housing, and provided in clusters dispersed throughout the site where a registered provider is available to take them.

Policy H5: Housing Mix

5.27. Policy H5 requires housing developments to provide a mix of dwelling types to meet local needs, including 1–3 bedroom homes, single-level and supported living units for older people, and accessible homes built to Building Regulations M2, with 10% to M3 (wheelchair) standard. Larger 4+ bedroom homes are only supported if subordinate in number and meeting a specific local need.

Policy H6: Windfall Site Development

5.28. Policy H6 supports small residential development proposals on infill and redevelopment sites, subject to proposals being well designed and meeting the relevant requirements set out in other policies in the Neighbourhood Plan and Borough-wide planning policies, and where the development meets certain criteria:

- Fills a restricted gap in existing frontage or is within the built-up area and closely surrounded by buildings;
- Is located within the Settlement Boundary;
- Respects and, where possible, enhances the distinctive character of the settlement;

- Retains and enhances important natural features such as trees, hedges, and streams;
- Maintains sufficient garden space to protect local character and the amenity of current and future occupants; and
- Avoids unacceptable loss of privacy, daylight, or causes visual intrusion or noise for neighbouring occupiers.

Policy H7: Housing Design

5.29. Policy H7 outlines the design principles that all new development proposals - including those for one or more houses - must satisfy.

Policy ENV3: Biodiversity General

5.30. In the context of Policy ENV3, development will be supported where it conserves, enhances, or integrates biodiversity into the site. Proposals that would lead to the loss of locally important biodiversity sites will not be supported unless impacts can be avoided, mitigated, or appropriately compensated. Any potential effects on protected species must be assessed through suitable surveys, with mitigation measures implemented as required.

Policy ENV6: Safeguarding Important Views

5.31. Policy ENV6 identifies an Important View⁴ across the Site. The policy advises that development that adversely affects the identified locally important and valued view will not be supported unless the proposal includes effective site-specific mitigation measures. Development shall be designed to sustain significant views that contribute to the character and appearance of the area.

Policy F2: New or Improved Community Facilities

5.32. Policy F2 outlines that proposals that improve the quality and/or range of community facilities will be supported subject to criteria.

Policy T1: Traffic Management

5.33. In the context of Policy T1, development should minimise additional traffic through villages and ensure safe, convenient access. Proposals must provide sufficient off-road parking in line with Policy H6, retain or replace existing parking, and deliver any

⁴ View 2. From footpath through very large field 214 behind cemetery and across field from corner of Hunts Lane and Newbold Road, looking NW, N and NE.

necessary improvements to site access, communal parking, or the highway network. Where appropriate, developments should also enhance or create footpaths and cycleways connecting to key village services.

Community Action T1: Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes

5.34. The maintenance, upgrading and, where appropriate, extension of the pedestrian footpath network in the Parish will be supported in order to service new developments and connect them to the existing pedestrian footpath network. It shall also encourage walking over car use for making journeys within the Parish, and provide an improved and more extensive footpath network to support exercise and leisure activities for Desford Parish residents and visitors.

Emerging Planning Policy

5.35. At the time of writing, Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council are currently carrying out a Regulation 18 consultation on their Local Plan review. The Local Development Scheme estimates a late-2027 timeframe for adoption. Given the infancy of the development of the Local Plan review, it is considered of low weight as a material consideration and not discussed further in this Statement.

5.36. Likewise, Desford Parish Council are formally reviewing their Neighbourhood Plan. Following a consultation period on their Draft Plan through October-November 2025, the Parish are to finalise the document prior to submission to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, before Independent Examination. Again, given the infancy of the development of the Neighbourhood Plan review, it is considered of low weight as a material consideration and not discussed further in the Statement.

6. The National Planning Policy Framework

- 6.1. The National Planning Policy Framework 2024 (NPPF) is a material consideration in planning decisions. It confirms the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision-making unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Paragraph 2).
- 6.2. Annex 1 of the NPPF confirms that the policies in the Framework should be taken into account in dealing with applications from the day of its publication (Paragraph 231). Due weight should be given to existing development plan policies according to their degree of consistency with the Framework (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the Framework, the greater the weight that may be given) (Paragraph 232).
- 6.3. For decision-taking this means “approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay” (Paragraph 11c). However, where there are no relevant development plan policies or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out of-date, permission should be granted unless:
 - I. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development proposed; or
 - II. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole (Paragraph 11d).
- 6.4. As set out below, paragraph 78 of the Framework states that Local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. In such instances, footnote 39 of the Framework indicates that standard method should be used as the basis for calculating local housing need.
- 6.5. The Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy was adopted in December 2009 and is therefore more than 5-years old. As such, the revised standard method should be

used to calculate the Council's 5-year housing land supply under Paragraph 78 of the Framework. As considered later in this statement, on the basis of this larger standard method requirement, the Council is unable to demonstrate a 5-year housing land supply and the presumption at Paragraph 11d) of the Framework is engaged for the purposes of decision-taking.

- 6.6. Paragraph 12 also identifies that the presumption in favour of sustainable development does not change the statutory status of the Development Plan as the starting point for decision-making. Where a planning application conflicts with an up-to-date Development Plan (including any Neighbourhood Plans that form part of the Development Plan), permission should not usually be granted. Local Planning Authorities may take decisions that depart from an up-to-date Development Plan, but only if material considerations in a particular case indicate that the plan should not be followed.
- 6.7. Accordingly, the Framework is a significant material consideration in the determination of this application. The following paragraphs in particular are considered to be of relevance

Section 2: Achieving Sustainable Development

- 6.8. Paragraph 7 of the NPPF states that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. There are three objectives to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways. Each aspect is considered below in relation to the proposed development.
- 6.9. Paragraph 10 confirms that sustainable development should be pursued in a positive way, and at the heart of the Framework is the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

The Economic Objective

- 6.10. In accordance with Section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended) LPAs must have regard to any local financial considerations when determining planning applications in so far as they are a material consideration.
- 6.11. In this respect, this project represents a significant investment in Desford and will generate economic benefits via the provision of construction jobs, indirect jobs in the

housebuilding supply chain, increased expenditure in the local area associated with the furnishing of new homes and increased footfall at local shops and businesses.

6.12. Information taken from the House Builders Federation (HBF)⁵ identifies that approximately 1.5 construction jobs per dwelling can be associated with the build of houses. On this basis, the proposal would result in the creation of circa 112 local full-time equivalent jobs associated with the construction of the development, and more in the supply chain.

The Social Objective

6.13. The scheme will deliver up to 75 dwellings, contributing to a sustainable, inclusive, and mixed community. It includes the provision of both market and affordable homes at a time of significant need and shortfall in supply locally. In the case of affordable housing, the ongoing under-provision, combined with rising demand and limited prospects for meeting that demand, is considered to amount to a housing crisis.

6.14. The proposals include areas of Green Infrastructure and public open space providing recreational opportunities for future residents and the wider community. The provision of new pedestrian links are proposed to promote active travel and enhance connectivity, while extensive landscaping, including new tree and hedgerow planting, will help to soften the development's visual impact. The public open spaces will also include Local Areas of Play (LAPs) to ensure accessible play facilities for younger children.

The Environmental Objective

6.15. The landscape proposals have been carefully designed to protect landscape character, delivering 2.35ha of Green Infrastructure. Existing features, such as hedgerows, will be retained and enhanced wherever possible, while extensive new tree planting to the north of the developable area shall help to soften visual impact and increase ecological connectivity.

6.16. Functional open spaces will be created throughout the development, offering a variety of natural green spaces that provide informal recreation, support biodiversity gains and facilitate new habitat creation.

⁵ The Labour Needs of Extra Housing Output: Can The Housebuilding Industry Cope

6.17. A SuDS feature by virtue of an attenuation basin is incorporated into the scheme which shall not only serve as an effective drainage solution, but also as a valuable new habitat and ecological resource. Recognising the growing emphasis on biodiversity enhancement in new developments, the scheme aims to deliver an overall net increase in natural habitats and ecological features across the site.

Section 4: Decision Making

6.18. Paragraph 39 outlines that local planning authorities should approach decisions on proposed development in a positive and creative way. Paragraph 40 says that early engagement has significant potential to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system for all parties.

Section 5: Delivering a Sufficient Supply of Homes

6.19. Paragraph 61 confirms the Government's objective of significantly boosting the supply of homes and Paragraph 63 confirms that this should include the size, type and tenure of housing needed for different groups in the community.

6.20. Paragraph 66 states that, where major development involves the provision of housing, planning policies and decisions should ensure that the mix of affordable housing reflects identified local needs—covering social rent, other affordable rent, and affordable home ownership tenures. Paragraph 71 highlights that mixed-tenure sites can offer a range of benefits, including the creation of diverse communities and the promotion of timely build-out rates.

6.21. Paragraph 73 recognises that small and medium sized sites are often built out relatively quickly and make an important contribution to meeting the housing requirement of an area.

6.22. Paragraph 78 says that local planning authorities should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of five years' worth of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than five years old. The supply of specific deliverable sites should in addition include a buffer of (moved forward from later in the plan period) of:

- 5% to ensure choice and competition in the market for land; or
- 20% where there has been significant under delivery of housing over the previous three years, to improve the prospect of supply;

- From 1 July 2026, for the purposes of decision-making only, 20% where a local planning authority has a housing requirement adopted in the last five years examined against a previous version of this Framework, and whose annual average housing requirement is 80% or less of the most up to date local housing need figure calculated using the standard method set out in national planning practice guidance.

Section 8: Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities

6.23. Planning policies and decisions should aim to achieve healthy, inclusive and safe places which:

- promote social interaction, including opportunities for meeting between people who might not otherwise come into contact with each other – for example through street layouts that allows easy pedestrian and cycle connections, amongst others;
- are safe and accessible, for example through the use of well-designed, clear and legible pedestrian and cycle routes, and high quality public space which encourage the active and continual use of public areas; and
- enable and support healthy lifestyles, for example through the provision of accessible green infrastructure, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling (Paragraph 96).

6.24. Paragraph 98 states that, to provide the social and recreational facilities and services the community needs, planning decisions should proactively support the provision and use of shared spaces, community facilities, and other local services. This is to enhance the sustainability of communities and their environments and to ensure an integrated approach to the location of housing, community facilities, and services.

6.25. Paragraph 103 states that access to a network of high-quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of communities, and can also deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Furthermore, Paragraph 105 confirms that planning decisions should protect and enhance public rights of way and access, including taking opportunities to provide improved facilities for users.

Section 9: Promoting Sustainable Transport

6.26. Paragraph 109 of the NPPF emphasises that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development, using a vision-led approach to create well-designed, sustainable, and attractive places. Key points include:

- Early engagement with communities on transport matters;
- Integrating transport design (movement, streets, parking) into overall site design;
- Assessing and addressing impacts on transport networks;
- Making the most of existing or planned transport infrastructure and evolving technologies;
- Promoting walking, cycling, and public transport; and
- Considering and mitigating environmental impacts of transport, with a focus on achieving net environmental gains.

6.27. Paragraph 110 of the NPPF states that the planning system should actively manage patterns of growth to promote sustainability. Significant development should be directed to locations that are, or can be made, sustainable by reducing the need to travel and providing genuine transport choices. This approach supports reduced congestion, lower emissions, improved air quality, and better public health.

6.28. Paragraph 111 outlines that planning policies should be prepared with the active involvement of LHAs, identify and protect sites and routes that could be critical in developing infrastructure to widen transport choice and realise opportunities for large scale development. Furthermore, the policy states that planning policies should provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks.

6.29. In assessing applications, it should be ensured that:

- appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes are prioritised taking into account of the vision of the site;
- safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;
- the design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance; and
- any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree through a vision led approach (Paragraph 115).

6.30. Paragraph 116 says that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network, following mitigation, would be severe taking into account all reasonable future scenarios.

6.31. Paragraph 117 states that development proposals should:

- a. Prioritise pedestrian and cycle movements within the site and to neighbouring areas, followed by facilitating access to high-quality public transport through effective layouts and supporting infrastructure;
- b. Address the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility in relation to all modes of transport;
- c. Create safe, secure, and attractive places that minimise conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles, reduce unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards;
- d. Allow for the efficient delivery of goods and provide access for service and emergency vehicle; and
- e. Enable the charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible, and convenient locations.

6.32. Paragraph 118 requires all developments that shall generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan and be supported by a vision-led transport statement or transport assessment.

Section 9: Making Effective Use of Land

6.33. Planning policies and decisions should promote an effective use of land in meeting the need for homes and other uses, while safeguarding and improving the environment and ensuring safe and healthy living conditions. (Paragraph 124).

6.34. Paragraph 125 says that decisions should encourage multiple benefits from both urban and rural land, including through mixed use schemes and taking opportunities to achieve net environmental gains – such as developments which enable new habitat creation or improve public access to the countryside. Paragraph 125 also outlined that planning decisions should recognise undeveloped land can perform many functions i.e. for wildlife, recreation and flood risk mitigation, amongst other considerations.

6.35. Paragraph 129 recognises that planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land, taking into account the identified need for different types of housing and other forms of development, the availability of land suitable for accommodating it, and the importance of securing well-designed, attractive and healthy places amongst other considerations.

6.36. Paragraph 130 states that where there is an existing or anticipated shortage of land for meeting identified housing needs, it is especially important that planning policies and decisions avoid homes being built at low densities and ensure that developments make optimal use of the potential of each site. In these circumstances:

- plans should contain policies to optimise the use of land in their area and meet as much of the identified need for housing as possible. This will be tested robustly at examination and should include the use of minimum density standards for city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport. These standards should seek a significant uplift in the average density of residential development within these areas, unless it can be shown that there are strong reasons why this would be inappropriate;
- the use of minimum density standards should also be considered for other parts of the plan area. It may be appropriate to set out a range of densities that reflect the accessibility and potential of different areas, rather than one broad density range; and
- local planning authorities should refuse applications which they consider fail to make efficient use of land, taking into account the policies in this Framework. In this context, when considering applications for housing, authorities should take a flexible approach in applying policies or guidance relating to daylight and sunlight, where they would otherwise inhibit making efficient use of a site (as long as the resulting scheme would provide acceptable living standards).

Section 12: Achieving Well Designed Places

6.37. Paragraph 131 recognises that the creation of high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.

6.38. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that developments:

- a. will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

- b. are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;
- c. are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);
- d. establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;
- e. optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and
- f. create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience (Paragraph 135).

6.39. Paragraph 136 of the NPPF highlights the important role of trees in contributing to the character and quality of urban environments, as well as in supporting climate change mitigation and adaptation. It requires that planning decisions ensure new streets are tree-lined, that opportunities to incorporate trees elsewhere within developments are fully explored, and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.

6.40. Early discussion between applicants, the LPA and local community about design of emerging schemes is important for reconciling local interests (Paragraph 137). The same paragraph states that applicants should work closely with those affected by their proposals to evolve designs that take account of the views of the community. Applications that demonstrate early, proactive and effective engagement with the community should be looked on more favourably than those that cannot.

Section 14: Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change, Flooding and Coastal Change

6.41. Paragraph 162 promotes a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for flood risk, coastal change, water supply, biodiversity and landscapes, and the risk of overheating and drought from rising temperatures. Building on this, Paragraph 163 outlines that this should be

considered in preparing and assessing planning applications, taking into account the full range of potential climate change impacts.

- 6.42. Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk (Paragraph 170).
- 6.43. Paragraph 172 provides that a sequential, risk-based approach should be applied to the location of development, considering all sources of flood risk and the impacts of climate change. This includes applying the sequential and, if necessary, exception tests, safeguarding land for flood management, using development to reduce flood risk (including through natural flood management), and, where necessary, relocating development to more sustainable locations.
- 6.44. Paragraph 175 states that the sequential test must be applied to areas currently or potentially at risk from any form of flooding, unless a site-specific flood risk assessment demonstrates that no part of the proposed development, including built structures, access routes, or land raising, would be located in an area at risk, now or in the future, from any source of flooding.
- 6.45. Paragraph 181 outlines that applications should be supported by a site-specific flood-risk assessment where the site is >1ha. Paragraph 176 also states that development in areas at risk of flooding should only be permitted where it can be demonstrated—through the sequential and, if necessary, exception tests that:
 - the most vulnerable uses are directed to the lowest-risk parts of the site (unless there are overriding reasons not to);
 - the development is designed to be flood resistant and resilient, allowing for quick recovery after a flood; and
 - sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are incorporated, unless there is clear evidence this would not be appropriate.
- 6.46. Applications which could affect drainage on or around the site should incorporate sustainable drainage systems to control flow rates and reduce volumes of runoff and which are proportionate to the nature and scale of the proposal. Sustainable drainage systems provided as part of proposals for major development should:
 - a. Take account of advice from the Lead Local Flood Authority;
 - b. Have appropriate proposed minimum operational standards;

- c. Have maintenance arrangements in place to ensure an acceptable standard of operation for the lifetimes of the development (Paragraph 182).

Section 15: Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment

6.47. Paragraph 180 states that planning decisions should follow key principles to protect biodiversity. Development aimed at conserving or enhancing biodiversity should be supported, and all proposals should look to integrate biodiversity improvements into their design, especially where they can deliver measurable net gains or enhance public access to nature.

6.48. Planning decisions should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by: protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils; recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland; minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity; preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate (Paragraph 187).

6.49. Paragraph 192 outlines that plans should protect and enhance biodiversity through promoting the conservation, restoration and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of priority species; and through identifying and pursuing opportunities for securing measurable net gains for biodiversity.

Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

6.50. In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance (Paragraph 207).

6.51. Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against the

public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use (Paragraph 215).

7. Assessment of Proposed Development

- 7.1. The application should be determined in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise (Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004).
- 7.2. The following considerations are set out below:
 - The Principle of Development
 - Layout and Scale
 - Highways and Access
 - Flood Risk and Drainage
 - Ecology
 - Landscape
 - Arboricultural
 - Heritage and Archaeology
 - Planning Balance

The Principle of Development

- 7.3. Desford is identified in the Development Plan as a Key Rural Centre, which comprise villages of populations over 1,500 and a range of amenities that meet residents' day-to-day needs, including a primary school, local shop, post office, GP, community and leisure facilities, employment opportunities, and a six-day-a-week bus service.
- 7.4. Desford is further identified as a Key Rural Centre Relating to Leicester, owing to its location on the edge of the Leicester Principal Urban Area. Desford is therefore regarded as a sustainable location suitable and able to accommodate new growth, with services and facilities capable of meeting the everyday needs of future residents.
- 7.5. The Site itself is considered to be in a sustainable location, adjoining the main built-up area of Desford and representing a natural and logical extension to the settlement. These matters are discussed in detail earlier in this Statement and within the accompanying Design and Access Statement (DAS) and should be afforded significant weight in the planning balance.
- 7.6. The NPPF (Paragraph 78) says that LPAs should identify and update annually a supply of specific deliverable sites sufficient to provide a minimum of 5-years' worth

of housing against their housing requirement set out in adopted strategic policies, or against their local housing need where the strategic policies are more than 5 years old. Paragraph 78 also requires the provision of a buffer to ensure choice and competition in the market for land.

- 7.7. The Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy was adopted in December 2009, covering a plan period up to 2026. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council is currently in the early stages of preparing an update to the Local Plan, with adoption not expected until late-2027, in line with the latest Local Development Scheme (March 2025).
- 7.8. The Core Strategy identifies a minimum housing requirement of 9,000 new homes between 2006-2026, equating to 460 dwellings per year. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2009, and is more than 5 years old. The Plan has not been reviewed in accordance with national policy, and as a result is considered out-of-date. The Council is therefore required to use the Standard Method to calculate its 5-year housing land supply (5YHLS).
- 7.9. In December 2024, the Government revised the Standard Method with Hinckley and Bosworth's annual housing need calculated at 649 dwellings per annum. In March 2025, this figure was raised to 659 dwellings per annum following an adjustment based on local housing affordability ratios. Then, in May 2025, new housing stock data was released adjusting Hinckley and Bosworth's annual housing need figure to 663 dwellings per annum.
- 7.10. This is significantly higher than the 460 dwelling per annum set out in the adopted Core Strategy. Therefore, the Council's must plan for the latest housing need figure of 663 dwellings per annum as a minimum. In the meantime, the spatial strategy for the Borough as planned for in the Core Strategy is out-of-date, as are its housing supply and control policies, since they are based on a lower housing requirement.
- 7.11. Hinckley & Bosworth have successfully exceeded the requirements of the Housing Delivery Test, and therefore a 5% is to be applied to the 5YHLS calculation.
- 7.12. Hinckley and Bosworth's latest published 5YHLS position was published in July 25 – albeit based on the lower standard housing method figure of 649 homes a year as opposed to the latest standard method figure of 663 homes a year.

7.13. The Council claim a deliverable housing supply of 2,415⁶ dwellings. Based upon their own assessment, that suggests a housing land supply of 3.89 years (at 1st April 2025). If the same supply were to be considered against the latest standard method figure of 663 homes a year, plus 5%, the housing land supply would be 3.47 years.

7.14. For decision-making purposes, the absence of a demonstrable five-year housing land supply triggers the presumption in favour of sustainable development, commonly referred to as the 'tilted balance', as set out in Paragraph 11 and Footnote 8 of the NPPF. As a result, the policies most important for determining the application are considered out-of-date and should be afforded reduced weight in the planning balance.

7.15. Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF states that where there is no 5-year supply, planning permission should be granted unless:

- The application of policies in the Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a clear reason for refusing the development; or
- The adverse impacts of granting permission would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in the Framework as a whole.

7.16. Paragraph 14 of the NPPF outlines that in situations where the presumption at Paragraph 11d applies to applications involving the provision of housing, the adverse impact of allowing development that conflicts with the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) is likely to significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, provided that:

1. the NP became part of the Development Plan five years or less before the date on which the decision is made; and
2. the neighbourhood plan contains policies and allocations to meet its identified housing requirement.

7.17. The Desford Neighbourhood Plan (DNP) was adopted in May 2021, and is therefore currently less than five years old. However, it should be noted that the DNP will become outdated for the purposes of applying Paragraph 14 in May 2026, in which instance Paragraph 14 would not be engaged.

⁶ HBBC Five year Housing Land Supply 5YHLS) Statement 1st April 2023 – 31st March 2028

7.18. Irrespective of the NP's age, and in relation to the second criterion of Paragraph 14, the Desford Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges significant uncertainties in establishing housing requirement figures for Neighbourhood Plans across the Borough. It records that a "*draft indicative and heavily caveated figure of 163 over the period 2016–2036 was provided by the Borough*" for Desford. This wording was included as a recommended modification in the Independent Examiner's Report, highlighting the lack of confidence in, and the limitations of relying on, the accuracy of this housing requirement figure.

7.19. This position was supported in a recent Appeal⁷ decision, in which the Planning Inspector stated that "*the examiner of the DNP did not consider that the figure of 163 was a requirement figure that satisfied what at the time were Paragraphs 65 and 66 of the Framework (now Paragraphs 67 and 68), and that the matter of housing requirement for the village should be left to be determined in the Local Plan.*" The Inspector went on to conclude that "*the figure of 163 in the DNP does not represent a requirement figure for Desford.*"

7.20. It is therefore clear that the housing requirement figure presented in the Desford Neighbourhood plan is not sufficient, and without an alternative clear and justified housing requirement figure, there can be no confidence that the allocation and policies provided within the DNP meet an identified housing requirement. As such, irrespective of criterion 1, criteria 2 of Paragraph 14 is not engaged.

7.21. As a consequence of this, the presumption in favour of sustainable development at Paragraph 11d remains engaged.

7.22. Overall, in respect of the principle of development, the Council's lack of housing land supply, the dated nature of the Core Strategy, and associated out-of-date policies all weigh heavily in favour of the principle of development being acceptable. This is considered further within the Planning Balance alongside the benefits of the proposal.

Layout & Scale

7.23. As a result of the application being submitted in Outline with all matters reserved except for access, the final layout, scale and design are reserved for future consideration. However, an Illustrative Masterplan has been submitted in support of

⁷ APP/K2420/W/23/3332401 – Land Adj to Lockey Farm, Hunts Lane, Desford, Leicestershire, LE9 9LJ

the application demonstrating how a detailed scheme could come forward in the future alongside a Parameters Plan.

- 7.24. The submitted Design and Access Statement (DAS) demonstrates that the scheme has been thoughtfully designed and followed a constraints-led masterplanning exercise. This process has ensured that the layout responds positively to Site characteristics, while also seeking opportunities to enhance existing on-site and off-site features where they exist. The outcome is considered a well-planned, and sustainable residential development.
- 7.25. The general design of the scheme has been informed by the Site's existing topography and its surrounding environment. The proposed attenuation basin is proposed towards the northern extent of the Site, in response to the natural slope of the land. A landscaped buffer has been incorporated to form a robust visual buffer, protect the landscape character and connect vegetation cover at the settlement edge.
- 7.26. The proposed development has the potential to deliver a balanced mix of house types, providing a broad range of residential accommodation and tenure. The DAS demonstrates an understanding of the surrounding character and local vernacular, identifying the prevailing architectural styles and materials evident within Desford. At the detailed design stage, it is anticipated that this local character can be appropriately reflected and respected through considered design, together with the use of suitable material palettes and detailing.
- 7.27. In accordance with details held within the submitted Parameters Plan, the final layout of the scheme (to be determined at Reserved Matters stage) would facilitate the delivery of dwellings that both complement and enhance the character and visual appearance of the surrounding area, consistent with planning policy.
- 7.28. With regard to the scale of the application, Policy 16 requires new housing proposals to meet a minimum net density of 30 dwellings/ha when adjoining Key Rural Centres, unless in exceptional circumstances where site characteristics justify a lower density. The development achieves a net density of 33 dwellings/ha across the developed area of the Site.

Highways & Access

7.29. To examine the highway and transport implications of the proposed development, the Applicant commissioned ADC Infrastructure to undertake a Transport Assessment (TA). The TA, along with a Travel Plan outlining measures to be implemented to encourage sustainable travel, has been submitted with the application.

7.30. The Site currently benefits from two existing agricultural access points: one from Newbold Road and another located to the rear of the Desford Cemetery car park, as shown in Figure 2 of the TA. The TA identifies that the Site benefits from good pedestrian and cycle connectivity, with schools, shops and other key amenities located within acceptable walking distances.

7.31. Accessibility is supported by strong existing pedestrian infrastructure, particularly along key desire lines to the centre of Desford via the B582 and to Desford Primary School via Lockeymead Road. The Site is also well served by the 153 bus service operated by Arriva Midlands, with bus stops located within 250m. Overall, the Assessment finds that the Site is suitably located to accommodate residential development.

7.32. To inform the TA, an Automatic Traffic Counter (ATC) was installed on Hunts Lane - just west of the proposed Site access - between 11th-17th October. The survey recorded a weekday average two-way traffic flow of 888 vehicle movements during the AM peak, and 930 movements during the PM peak. The recorded 85th percentile speeds were 38mph eastbound and 39.1mph westbound, providing an indication of typical traffic speeds on this section of Hunts Road along the Site frontage.

7.33. An analysis of the local collision record was also undertaken to identify any existing highway safety concerns that could potentially be exacerbated by the development. The review concluded that there are no trends within the recorded data that indicate an underlying highway safety issues either within the vicinity of the site or at key junctions in the study area.

7.34. New vehicular access to the development is proposed via a simple priority T-junction located to the north of B582 Hunts Lane. The design of the new access, provided on drawing 3964-ADC-HGN-XX-DR-CH-0100-S1-P03 held within the TA, has been designed in accordance with the recorded 85th percentile vehicle speeds along Hunts

Lane, and demonstrates that appropriate visibility splays of 65m in both directions can be achieved.

- 7.35. A Swept Path Assessment using an 11.2m refuse vehicle, shown on drawing 3964-ADC-HGN-XX-DR-CH-0130-S1-P02, confirms that safe access and egress to and from the Site can be achieved in both directions on Hunts Lane. The TA therefore concludes that the proposed access arrangement would be safe and suitable to serve the development.
- 7.36. To enhance accessibility, and in addition to the main site access, three further pedestrian connections are proposed, as shown on the Illustrative Masterplan, to strengthen links with the existing network. It is also proposed that two private footpath connections will be provided from the northern part of the Site to facilitate access to the existing public footpath route R90/1. Further measures to promote and facilitate travel by sustainable modes are set out within the accompanying Travel Plan.
- 7.37. The TA forecasts that the development shall generate approximately 46 two-way vehicle movements during the AM peak hour and 43 two-way movements during the PM peak hour. Following an assessment of the impact of the proposed development at two off-site junctions, in addition to the proposed site access, the TA concludes that the level of development traffic would not result in a severe impact on the operation of any of the assessed junctions.
- 7.38. Overall, the TA concludes that the development would provide opportunities for travel by sustainable modes, that safe and suitable access can be achieved for all users, and that the impact on highway safety and capacity would not be severe. As such, the development should not be prevented on highway grounds.
- 7.39. On the basis of the preceding assessment, the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant provisions of Policies DM17 and T1, and addresses the objectives of Community Action T1 of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Flood Risk and Drainage

- 7.40. To assess the flood risk of the Site, and in accordance with national requirements, a Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) has been prepared by PJS Consulting Engineers and submitted alongside this application. The drainage strategy for the development is

included within the FRA and illustrated on drawing DR-0005 – Preliminary Drainage Strategy.

- 7.41. The Topographic Survey submitted with the application shows that the Site slopes consistently northwards, from approximately 132.90m AOD along the southern boundary to around 104.00m AOD in the northeast corner. An existing ordinary watercourse, managed by the LLFA, runs west–east parallel to the Site's northern boundary.
- 7.42. The FRA confirms that the entire Site lies within Flood Zone 1, which is defined as having a low probability of flooding, with less than a 1-in-1,000 annual probability of river or sea flooding (<0.1%). However, three areas within the Site are identified as being at risk of surface water flooding.
- 7.43. Two of these are small areas arise from localised low points in the Site's topography and the accumulation of overland flows under existing conditions. The proposed on-site attenuation measures, as shall be discussed, will ensure that these areas of pluvial flood risk are significantly reduced in the post-development scenario.
- 7.44. The third area at risk lies alongside the existing watercourse that runs parallel to the northern boundary of the Site. Owing to the prevailing topography, overland flows naturally accumulate at this watercourse before being conveyed westwards to the Rothley Brook. As the proposed residential element of the development is located in the southern portion of the Site, which is at a considerably higher elevation than the watercourse, the overall assessment is that the risk of flooding from pluvial sources is therefore low. Potential flood risk from all other sources of flooding were assessed as none-to-low.
- 7.45. Given the previous, the FRA concludes that the development passes the Sequential Test. With reference to the Flood Risk Vulnerability Classification set out in Annex 3 of the NPPF, the FRA also confirms that the Exception Test is not required.
- 7.46. The FRA sets out the mitigation measures to be incorporated within the proposed development to manage and reduce flood risk to acceptable levels. These include a range of SuDS features, comprising strategically located attenuation measures. Surface water runoff from the development shall be discharged to a surface water

body along the northern boundary of the site, which represents the most suitable available discharge option in accordance with the drainage hierarchy.

- 7.47. The development proposes to restrict surface water runoff, necessitating the provision of sufficient attenuation storage. An attenuation basin is proposed at the northern end of the Site, where ground levels are lowest, allowing discharge from the Site to reach the basin by gravity without the need for pumping. The required basin volume has been calculated as 1,950m³, ensuring adequate capacity to accommodate all storm events up to and including the 1-in-100-year event with a 40% allowance for climate change.
- 7.48. It is proposed that a network of pipes and a conveyance swale will be utilised to transport surface water from the drainage system to the attenuation basin, providing an additional point of treatment and ensuring suitable flow conveyance. The FRA demonstrates that the proposed discharge rate is lower than the existing greenfield flow rate (QBAR), and therefore provision for long-term storage is not required.
- 7.49. In conclusion, the FRA states that, in compliance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework and subject to the proposed mitigation measures, the development can proceed without being subject to significant flood risk. Furthermore, the development will not increase flood risk elsewhere in the catchment and will, in fact, provide a downstream betterment through the appropriate management of surface water runoff from the Site.
- 7.50. Given the foregoing discussion, the proposed development is considered to comply with the relevant provisions of Policies DM7 and DM10.

Ecology

- 7.51. FPCR Environment & Design have been commissioned by Peveril Homes to undertake an Ecological Appraisal and BNG Assessment of the Site to identify current ecological interest and potential constraints in addition to providing mitigation and enhancement measures necessary to ensure the development delivers positive impacts on the ecological network. This followed field surveys conducted across the 7th October, 11th November, and 19th November 2025.
- 7.52. The EA identifies the locations of statutory and non-statutory sites within defined search areas of the Site, as presented in Table 3 of the report. It concludes that no

statutory and non-statutory designated site is likely to be significantly affected by the proposed development. However, the EA recommends mitigation measures to protect the integrity of the River Mease SAC, which, if fully implemented, would ensure any arising impacts are at acceptable levels.

7.53. **CONFIDENTIAL:** A disused badger sett and an active run were identified in the offsite woodland to the east of the site, which is to be retained. A badger footprint was also observed at the northern boundary of the site, but no further evidence of setts or activity was found within the site or within 30m of it. The arable fields and neutral grassland on-site provide limited suitable habitat for badger foraging or sett construction. The EA recommends that a pre-commencement badger survey is undertaken for within 30m of, and including, the Site.

7.54. A single Ash tree on-site was identified as having potential for bat roosting, although the managed arable field within the Site offers limited foraging and commuting opportunities for bats. The Ash tree is to be retained through development, and the EA concludes that no additional bat surveys are therefore required. Furthermore, the provision of new species-rich grassland, hedgerows, and trees through the development is expected to enhance overall habitat diversity and likely deliver positive effects for any local bat population.

7.55. The on-site arable land was found to provide suitable nesting habitat for farmland bird species, and therefore the EA recommends a breeding bird survey in Spring 2026 to determine the extent to which the Site is used for breeding. Proposed mitigation measures outlined in the EA should be implemented during development to avoid any disturbance to nesting birds.

7.56. During the wintering bird survey undertaken in November 2025, 13 species were recorded, nine of which were considered 'notable'. These notable species were generally common, widespread generalist species. Overall, the EA concluded that the development is not anticipated to result in any significant adverse impacts on locally present wintering birds. Mitigation and enhancement measures outlined within the EA are recommended to minimise disturbance to nesting birds.

7.57. With regard to habitats, the Site is dominated by intensively managed arable land. Additional habitats include an area of other neutral grassland, broadleaved woodland, and three native hedgerows, one of which contains trees. For Biodiversity Net Gain

(BNG) purposes, the ecological baseline of the Site was assessed at 5.76 habitat units.

- 7.58. Of the on-site habitats identified, the arable land was assessed as having no-to-negligible ecological value. The other neutral grassland, woodland, and hedgerows were considered to provide local-level ecological value. All of these habitats will be retained, except for a portion of hedgerow along the southern boundary to provide means of access.
- 7.59. The loss of this hedgerow will be adequately compensated through the development, including additional habitat creation in the off-site landscaping within the adjacent field parcel. It has been demonstrated that the implementation of the development has the potential to enhance the Site's ecological value by 14.00 habitat units, representing a 23.31% gain over the pre-development baseline value.
- 7.60. The EA concludes that the habitats and species present on and around the Site do not represent in principle constraints to the proposed development. Given the habitats present and the ecological survey results, the presence of notable species do not constitute a statutory ecological constraint, and appropriate precautionary measures have been recommended to ensure legal compliance.
- 7.61. Having regard to the preceding assessment of ecological considerations, the proposed development is considered to accord with the relevant provisions of Policies DM6 and ENV3.

Landscape

- 7.62. On behalf of the Applicant, a detailed and robust Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by landscape architects Golby+Luck. The LVIA evaluates the baseline conditions of the Site, considers the sensitivity of landscape and visual receptors, and assesses the visual effects of the proposed development on the surrounding landscape.
- 7.63. The LVIA finds that the Site does not form part of any landscape designation that would suggest an increased value or sensitivity to change. The Site, local setting and LCA D were assessed as reflecting a landscape that is considered to be of medium sensitivity.

7.64. As discussed within the assessment, the landscape strategy responds to the Site's elevated and open edge-of-settlement character, as well as the locally valued long-distance views. The development is contained to the 'upper southern plateau', with planting used to reinstate the historic field boundaries while enhancing existing vegetation and the watercourse corridor.

7.65. Nearly 50% of the Site is dedicated to Green Infrastructure, which includes hedgerows, woodland, grassland, SuDS features, and a 1.2km circular walk linking to Footpath R90/1. These measures shall ensure the development integrates into the wider landscape while retaining the views identified as of local importance in the Desford Neighbourhood Plan.

7.66. The LVIA concludes that, in landscape terms, the development would give rise to major/moderate adverse effects at the site level in the short term (Year 1), reducing to moderate adverse by Year 15 as planting matures, which is a typical level of effect for greenfield development. While the proposals would alter the immediate interface between settlement and countryside, the wider landscape context, including the open farmland to the north and the settlement's position within descending farmland, would remain largely intact.

7.67. Visually, the effects are greatest for receptors closest to the Site boundaries. Although the settlement edge will experience a more enclosed visual character, the scheme introduces new publicly accessible Green Infrastructure, including enhanced countryside access along the development boundary and into the wider field. This provides improved opportunities for experiencing the farmland setting as part of local countryside walks.

7.68. Overall, the LVIA concludes that the proposal is a well-considered, landscape-led scheme that positively responds to the Newbold & Desford Rolling Farmland character area and supports local Green Infrastructure objectives. While some localised landscape and visual change is unavoidable, the extensive mitigation strategy will, over time, integrate the development into its surroundings, maintain the legibility of the wider tributary valley landscape, preserve opportunities to experience locally valued views, and deliver significant long-term ecological and recreational benefits.

7.69. In accordance with Policy DM4, and based on the findings of the submitted Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, it is considered that the proposed development would not give rise to any significant adverse effects on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character or landscape character of the countryside.

7.70. Furthermore, the scheme would not undermine the physical or perceived separation between settlements, nor erode the openness that defines this relationship. The LVIA demonstrates that, with the proposed mitigation and landscape-led design approach, the development can be successfully integrated into its setting without conflict with the aims of Policy DM4.

Arboricultural

7.71. Golby and Luck have been instructed by the Applicants to prepare an Arboricultural Impact Assessment (AIA) to support and sit alongside this application. The associated Arboricultural Survey contained within the AIA was completed in August 2025.

7.72. A review of the Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council online mapping identified no Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs) or Conservation Area designations on or adjoining the Site.

7.73. The Assessment considered existing hedgerows and trees likely to be affected by the proposed development within the Site. The AIA assessed the mixed native hedgerow defining the southern boundary as predominantly hawthorn and holly, maintained regularly. The hedgerow was considered to make a positive contribution to both landscape and habitat and was classified as Category B. Within this hedgerow are a pair of semi-mature lime trees, both in normal condition and also identified as Category B.

7.74. The only high-quality (Category A) trees identified are located within Desford Cemetery (G004) and were assessed to impart no immediate constraints on the site.

7.75. Overall, the AIA concludes that the internal site area is largely unconstrained in regard to arboriculture, with existing trees and hedgerows predominantly located along the Site boundaries. Except for the features noted above, all trees and hedgerows were assessed as being of low or moderate quality.

7.76. The only tree removal likely to be required is T003, a Category B lime, which is to facilitate vehicular access to the highway. This represents a very limited amount of vegetation removal and is not considered to have any significant impact on trees of important arboricultural, landscape, or cultural value.

7.77. Beyond the removal of T003, potential direct impacts to tree canopies or Root Protection Areas (RPAs) were expected to be limited. Where impacts may occur, these were assessed by the AIA as minor technical design matters that can be appropriately addressed at the Reserved Matters stage.

7.78. The AIA notes that the application is accompanied by an Illustrative Landscape Masterplan, which sets out a landscape strategy for the Site, including off-site landscaping measures. The AIA concludes that collectively, these measures would robustly mitigate the limited vegetation removal required to facilitate development.

7.79. In conclusion, vegetation removal as a result of the proposed development is limited to areas required for Site access and drainage, affecting low and moderate quality scrub and hedgerow. The proposed Illustrative Masterplan was considered to demonstrate a balanced response to the Site's arboricultural constraints, and is supported by robust mitigation planting, which will secure a significant long-term increase in canopy cover.

Heritage & Archaeology

7.80. A Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) has been prepared by Marrons on behalf of the Applicant to assess the heritage considerations associated with the proposed development. The assessment meets the requirements of the NPPF and relevant local planning policy, and provides an informed understanding of any impacts arising from the development on the historic environment.

7.81. The HIA confirms that there are no designated heritage assets within the Site. It concludes that the proposed development will not result in harm to the significance of any designated or non-designated built heritage assets, including through changes to their settings.

7.82. The assessment identifies a high potential for remains of local archaeological interest associated with medieval or later agricultural activity, but considers it unlikely that the Site contains prehistoric or Roman archaeological remains. A geophysical survey has

been undertaken, and the results will be submitted following validation of the planning application. These findings will inform any need, timing, and scope of archaeological evaluation to be secured through condition if required.

7.83. Overall, the HIA demonstrates full accordance with Policy DM11. While the results of the geophysical survey are pending, the archaeological work undertaken to date is anticipated to comply with the requirements of Policy DM13.

Planning Balance

7.84. In respect of the planning balance, and as detailed throughout this Statement, the harms associated with the proposed development are considered to be limited and sufficiently mitigated through the development process. These harms primarily relate to the Site's location adjacent to the settlement boundary of Desford – *limited weight* – and landscape impacts at a localised level – *limited weight*.

7.85. As discussed, the planning policies that restrict housing development and are most relevant to the determination of housing development are considered to be out-of-date, and therefore carry only limited weight in the planning balance. Furthermore, it is considered that the limited landscape effects at the local level are clearly outweighed by the pressing need to deliver significant new housing. No other harms associated with the development have been identified that cannot be appropriately mitigated.

Social Benefits

- **Market Housing:** Delivery of market housing in the context of an acknowledged housing land supply shortfall, and with a housing mix aligned to local needs – *very significant weight*.
- **Affordable Housing:** Provision of 40% affordable housing, responding to a well-evidenced and growing local need – *substantial weight*.
- **Green Infrastructure:** Creation of new publicly accessible green spaces, play areas, and pedestrian links connecting to wider Public Right of Way network – *moderate weight*.
- **Additional Parking:** Provision of new visitor parking spaces, capable of being used by visitors to the Desford Cemetery – *limited weight*.

Economic Benefits

- **Local Economic Growth:** Job creation during the construction phase, increased local spending in shops and services, and higher Council Tax receipts – *significant weight*.

Environmental Benefits

- **Green Infrastructure:** Creation of new green spaces, connecting to wider Public Right of Way network – *moderate weight*.
- **Biodiversity Net Gain:** Delivery of significant ecological enhancements exceeding the required 10% Biodiversity Net Gain – *significant weight*.
- **Off-Site Landscaping Measures:** Securing substantial off-site landscaping measures including historic hedgerow restoration – *moderate weight*.

7.86. In conclusion, the limited adverse impacts of the development would not significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) taken as a whole. In accordance with Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, the application should therefore be approved without delay.

8. Affordable Housing Statement

- 8.1. Any Section 106 agreement will seek to secure obligations towards affordable housing, which must be addressed as part of any Reserved Matters application.
- 8.2. In accordance with Policies 15 (Core Strategy) and H4 (Desford Neighbourhood Plan) the proposal will provide a policy compliant (40%) number of affordable homes at an appropriate range of affordable housing types, sizes and tenures to help achieve sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities.
- 8.3. Whilst details will be provided at Reserved Matters stage, it is anticipated that 75% of the new affordable units would be provided as social or affordable rented properties with 25% as shared ownership.

9. Section 106 Agreement

- 9.1. The proposals likely result in some impacts upon local infrastructure as described earlier in this report. Not all impacts will be negative (for example increased footfall and revenue for local shops).
- 9.2. At this outline stage, the Applicant anticipates that they will enter into a Section 106 agreement with the Borough and County Councils, unless the matter can be dealt with by condition and assuming the following legal tests at Regulation 122 of the CIL Regulations are met:
 - a) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
 - b) directly related to the development; and
 - c) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.
- 9.3. The Applicant welcomes early discussions with the Council regarding potential planning obligations and how they satisfy the CIL tests, acknowledging the outline stage of proposals. At present, a draft heads of terms is set out below:
 - Affordable Housing
 - Education
 - Waste
 - Libraries
 - Public Open Space
 - Healthcare
 - Bus Pass Contributions
 - Travel Plan Monitoring Fees
- 9.4. This agreement is subject to any obligation being demonstrated to meet the CIL tests as required within Paragraphs 56 – 59 within the Framework and taking into consideration the viability and costs associated with the development.

10. Conclusion

- 10.1. This Planning Statement has been prepared on behalf of Peveril Homes and supports an outline planning application for the residential development of up to 75 dwellings on land known as 'Land North of Hunts Lane, Desford'.
- 10.2. The purpose of this Statement is to demonstrate that there are no adverse impacts arising from the proposal that would significantly and demonstrably outweigh its benefits. Taking into account all relevant material considerations, planning permission should therefore be granted in accordance with Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 10.3. The Site extends to 4.90ha and is considered to represent a logical extension to the settlement of Desford. The Site is greenfield land currently in agricultural use, and is located immediately adjacent to the existing settlement boundary. Desford is considered a sustainable location for new growth, benefitting from a wide range of services, facilities, and sustainable transport connections.
- 10.4. The Applicant, Peveril Homes, has undertaken pre-application engagement with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council and a two-week public consultation exercise with the local community. The scheme has evolved from initial concept through to the submitted plans, with designs that respond positively to the constraints of the Site and capitalise on opportunities to deliver benefits where they exist.
- 10.5. The Development Plan relevant to this application comprises the Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy, the Site Allocations and Development Management Policies DPD, and the Desford Neighbourhood Plan. As the Core Strategy is now more than five years old, the Council is required to use the Standard Method to calculate its five-year housing land supply. As a result, the Council can only demonstrate a 3.47-year supply.
- 10.6. In light of this, the policies most important to the determination of this application are out-of-date. Therefore, in accordance with Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF, planning permission should be granted unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits when assessed against the policies of the Framework taken as a whole.

- 10.7. The proposals would deliver up to 75 homes in a wholly sustainable location, including 40% affordable housing, significant green infrastructure and public open space, new pedestrian links, sustainable drainage infrastructure, off-site landscape measures, and additional visitor parking.
- 10.8. The Site is in single ownership, with Peveril Homes having the necessary agreements in place to acquire the land upon grant of planning permission. This ensures that the scheme is readily deliverable, free from land assembly or third-party ownership constraints, and, as a housebuilder, Peveril Homes would deliver the Site themselves at the earliest opportunity. This positions the development to make a timely and valuable contribution towards addressing Hinckley and Bosworth's housing shortfall.
- 10.9. A comprehensive suite of technical reports supports the application, demonstrating that the development responds to Site constraints and that arising impacts can be sufficiently mitigated. In landscape terms, the Site has been subject to a detailed Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA), which concludes that, while there are some localised changes to landscape character and visual receptors in the short term, the landscape strategy delivers meaningful mitigation measures. Over time, the scheme will integrate into its surroundings, preserve locally valued views, and provide long-term ecological and recreational improvements.
- 10.10. In accordance with Policy DM4, it is considered through the findings of the LVIA that the development would not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character, and landscape character of the countryside, and does not undermine the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements.
- 10.11. It is therefore respectfully requested that planning permission be granted in accordance with Paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF.



Marrons

Certified



Corporation



Think before you print