

## **Response to Submitted Statements – Extraordinary Council**

**18<sup>th</sup> December 2018**

### **Response to Mr Ian Robertson Statement**

The submission Local Plan has always allowed up to 700,000 sq. m at Magna Park so the amount of development that the plan would allow has not changed at present. Highways England, Leicestershire County Council and Warwickshire County Council have not raised any concerns about this amount of development during the Local Plan process, including at the hearings in October 2018, and they are aware of major developments in the pipeline on their networks as statutory consultees in the planning process.

### **Response to Magna Park is Big Enough (MPisBE) Statement**

#### **Requirements of the Inspector and Public Consultation**

It is suggested that the evidence would not meet the requirements of the Inspector. It is important to note that the Local Plan is still in the examination process which is managed by the Independent Planning Inspector. This ensures that the new evidence will be independently considered by the Inspector and that the views of the local community will be independently considered before the Local Plan can be adopted. Any suggestion that the Council should be carrying out a consultation outside of this process could jeopardise the whole plan. The Inspector is managing the process and will ensure that there is appropriate consultation and consideration of the responses before he makes any conclusions on this matter. There will be further opportunities for consultation in the new year as part of the examination process which the Inspector is managing.

#### **Use of the Savills Report**

Iceni carried out the Assessment of Need, Demand and Impact and has drawn on a range of evidence in preparing the report. In doing so, it has drawn on work undertaken as part of the Strategic Distribution Sector Studies (SDSS) for the Leicestershire authorities, which includes a Property Market Review undertaken by GL Hearn together with information in a Market Report prepared by Savills and commissioned by Gazeley. Factual data from the Savills report has been used.

The Savills report has not however been used uncritically, but has been considered against:

- The team's (Iceni) own understanding of market dynamics within the sector, informed by its previous work in Leicestershire and Coventry/ Warwickshire;
- Iceni's discussions with a range of commercial agents who are marketing space on sites within the Golden Triangle, including Burbage Realty, JLL and CBRE;
- Iceni's own research on take-up and rental trends, using other commercial data sources including EGi.

The wider analysis undertaken has been used to test and corroborate findings.

The NPPF and associated Planning Practice Guidance are clear that market signals and intelligence form important inputs in assessing employment development needs.

### **Future Projections for Leicester & Leicestershire**

The statement from MPisBE says that the projected minimum future floorspace requirement is 185,000sq.m for the whole of Leicester & Leicestershire by 2031. However, it should be noted that the forecast minimum need in the SDSS is for 1,445,000sq.m in Leicester & Leicestershire (the 185,000sq.m is just one element of the overall forecast - the growth build element - and an approach that looks at this element only will significantly under-estimate development needs). The SDSS takes into account other factors to arrive at its conclusion, including that much of the existing warehouse stock in the area does not meet the future needs of the sector and new sites are required to replace them. National Guidance requires consideration of the existing stock and the SDSS sets out a clear and justified forecasting methodology. The approach is not a novel one. It is one which informed consideration of strategic distribution as part of the West Midlands Regional Plan. It is being used to inform Transport for the North's Freight and Logistics Strategy; and planning evidence across the Liverpool City Region.

### **Reducing the amount of Floorspace to 400,000sq.m (rather than 700,000sq.m in the submitted plan)**

The Local Plan submission version allows up to 700,000sq.m at Magna Park. There is no evidential basis to depart from the 700,000sq.m in the submitted plan, as the latest evidence concludes that there is a clear need to bring forward additional strategic distribution floorspace, which would support the allocation of 700,000sq.m. Departing from this and choosing a different figure without clear evidence could jeopardise the Council's ability to get a sound plan in place.