

New Harborough Local Plan – Proposed Submission Draft Consultation

Representations of Jelson Homes

May 2025

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For and on behalf of Avison Young (UK) Limited

1. Introduction and Instructions

- 1.1 Avison Young (“AY”) is town planning adviser to Jelson Homes (“Jelson”) and is instructed to review and make representations in respect of the Draft Submission Version of the Harborough Local Plan, which the Council is consulting on between 10 March and 6 May 2025.
- 1.2 Our Representations are made having regard to the provisions of the National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024), in particular its policies for achieving sustainable development, plan-making and delivering a sufficient supply of homes. These detailed, site specific representations are to be read in conjunction with the overarching representations prepared on Jelson’s behalf by Marrons Planning, which relate to the promotion of its and Davidsons Developments Scraftoft East site.
- 1.3 If the Council wishes to discuss any aspect of these representations, it should contact Tim Evans in the first instance, either by email (tim.evans@avisonyoung.com) or telephone (07958 64975).

2. Policy DS1 – Development Strategy: Delivering Homes

- 2.1 As the representations from Marron’s stress the Plan, as currently, drafted fails to adequately meet the District’s market and affordable housing needs arising from the December 2024 update to its Local Housing Need figure and neither does it contain sufficient contingency to deal with the proportion of Leicester City’s post 2036 unmet need that may need to be accommodated within Harborough District.
- 2.2 Therefore, Jelson maintains its view the most successful strategy for delivering housing in the District over the next 15-20 years is likely to be one that promotes new housing in a wide variety of locations across the District. This will ensure that residents have the widest variety of choice in deciding where to live, that the opportunity to deliver is maximised rather than putting all the Council’s eggs in one basket and to ensure that the benefit of development, in terms of economic support for business, communities and infrastructure is realised across the District, including in sustainable locations within the rural area.
- 2.3 With the above in mind, as we highlighted in our representations to the Council’s consultation on the Issues and Options (Regulation 18) version of the draft Plan, in addition to Jelson’s land holdings at Leicester Road, Market Harborough, which the Council is proposing to allocate for housing development in the Plan, it has previously put forward for consideration two further sites, located within the Large and Medium Villages which it believes are highly suitable for allocation within the emerging Plan. Between them the sites at Cottage Lane, Broughton Astley and Leicester Lane, Great Bowden would be capable of accommodating something in the order of 275 – 350 dwellings.
- 2.4 The draft Submission Plan’s Spatial Distribution Policy (DS01) indicates that the Large Villages will be capable of accommodating around 1,500 new homes over the Plan period, while the Medium Villages are expected to be able to deliver around 450 new homes. Overall, Jelson is of the view that the proportion of growth directed to the Large and Medium Villages should be increased, for the reasons described at paragraph 2.2.
- 2.5 In regard to Broughton Astley, the Plan confirms that its housing needs will be met through the allocation of a single site on land off Frolesworth Road which has capacity to accommodate 475 homes. Great Bowden’s housing needs are expected to be met through the proposed allocation of two adjacent sites – comprising land north of Dingley Road which is said to be capable of delivering up to 15 new homes and land off Dingley Road and Nether Green which has an assumed capacity of 85 dwellings. However, we note that the corresponding policies for each site suggest that there may be as yet unresolved constraints to their development, particularly concerning flood risk, which may potentially

impact on their deliverability or capacity to accommodate the number of dwellings they are allocated for.

- 2.6 As the Council is aware, Jelson has a longstanding reputation as one of the region's leading house builders. Jelson's work in the past includes numerous projects in Harborough District including its current housing development in Broughton Astley, adjacent to its Cottage Lane site. Jelson knows the housing market in District incredibly well and is confident that there is demand for the type of homes that they build.
- 2.7 Both sites are available now and on the basis that they are controlled by Jelson, residential development would be suitable and achievable. Their allocation would in Jelson's view (i) align fully with the Plan's stated spatial distribution strategy; (ii) help the Authority to satisfy its overall housing requirement; (iii) boost the Council's 5 year housing land supply position, given they are deliverable immediately; and, (iv) provide further choice and contingency in the event that the proposed housing allocation in Broughton Astley does not come forward as quickly as expected and / or its doesn't deliver housing as the rate it is expected to; and / or, if there are technical impediments to the development of the allocated sites in Great Bowden, which prevent them from coming forward for development, or reduce their capacity to accommodate the number of homes they are allocated for.

3. Policy SA03: North of Market Harborough

- 3.1 Jelson welcomes the Council's proposed allocation of its site off Leicester Road in Market Harborough for development in the Plan and is satisfied that it has capacity to accommodate the 250 dwellings stated in the corresponding policy.
- 3.2 As mentioned above, Jelson is an experienced local housebuilder with a proven track record of delivery of sites of this type both within Harborough District and elsewhere across the County. Jelson owns the entirety of the site as well as other land surrounding it. It is confident therefore that the site is fully deliverable and that there are no technical constraints preventing such.
- 3.3 However, it wishes to take this opportunity to flag with the Council some potential concerns it has with the way in which the second part of the corresponding policy is currently drafted and how the Council seemingly envisages the development of the wider site coming forward.
- 3.4 In Jelson's view the Policy SA03 needs to be amended to recognise that its site (MH1) is visually, and for the most part functionally, independent of the remainder of the allocated land (MH2 and MH3). It will be independently accessed from Leicester Road and is therefore not reliant upon other parts of the

wider allocation for access. In fact, the intervening canal provides an almost complete visual and movement barrier between the Jelson site and the remainder of the allocation save an existing small pedestrian footbridge controlled by Canal & Rivers Trust. It is therefore severable from the remainder of the allocated land. With this in mind, Jelson is of the view that the Policy needs to be drafted in such a way that it will specially allow and enable Jelson to move forward with the delivery of its site ahead of the remainder of the site, to secure its early delivery.

- 3.5 Moreover and more importantly, for the reasons described above, it is not necessary for Jelson's land to be jointly masterplanned in order for it to be considered acceptable in planning terms. There is nothing that knits it to the land to north, other than a pedestrian link, via the canal footbridge. That link would be retained, routes along the canal towpath enhanced if required and suitable connections to it provided to it as part of the future development of Jelson's site anyway. The promoters of the land to the north could do the same. So far as we can tell all of the other criteria contained within Part 3 of Policy SA03 could be addressed / satisfied through a standalone application for planning permission for the development of Jelson's site. This being the case, then there ought not be any requirement for Jelson to be party to a joint masterplanning exercise for the wider site and be exposed to the cost and potential delays this would bring for its ability to deliver its proposals for its own site quickly. Jelson is fully prepared to demonstrate through any application how the site would link and relate to the wider allocation, but as described above the opportunities for this are extremely limited.
- 3.6 In regard to criteria (h) Jelson will prepare a Transport Assessment for its own site and is confident that this will conclude that it will confirm that the proposal is capable of being delivered without giving rise to any adverse impacts for the safety and operation of the local road network. If any joint modelling of the sites is required, Jelson would be prepared to pay a proportionate contribution towards the cost of undertaking it.

Other Matters

- 3.7 Criteria 2(c) of Policy SA03 provides that the masterplan for the site must make provision for a new secondary school. Jelson is keen to understand whether Leicestershire County Council in its role as the Local Education Authority has undertaken the necessary analysis to confirm that this development would need to deliver a new secondary school or if it is simply a working assumption as things stand? Clearly the Jelson site is not a suitable location for the school given the segregation of the site from the remaining land and this being the case the need to accommodate a school within a wider masterplan ought not delay the progression of the Jelson site. Jelson is of course prepared to make proportionate contributions to the provision of school places and other infrastructure that will benefit both its site and the wider allocation.

- 3.8 In a similar vein, Criteria 2(d) of the Policy suggests that the masterplanning of the site will need to factor in the provision of a replacement showground. Jelson would welcome clarity on whether a new showground is a community requirement or a commercial decision?

4. MH1 – Land East of Leicester Road and South of the Grand Union Canal.

- 4.1 Insofar as the provisions of Policy MH1 are concerned, Jelson fully supports and is committed to the delivery of the MH1 site and is confident that the site could be delivered in full relatively quickly. However, as currently drafted the policy threatens to add significant delay to delivery by unnecessarily entwining element of its development with the wider proposed allocation. We would therefore seek amendments to the policy providing flexibility to enable site MH1 to be delivered early, whilst continuing to recognise the contribution it might need to make to wider infrastructure needs in the area.

Avison Young

May 2025

