



**Lichfield**  
District Council

## **PROOF OF EVIDENCE**

**(LDC/1)**

**By**

**Patrick Daly BA (Hons), MSc, MRTPI**

**Planning Consultant (Contractor) on behalf of Lichfield District Council**

**APPEAL BY:**

**Marrons Planning on behalf of Summix BLT Developments Ltd.**

**AT:**

**Land North Of Browns Lane**

**Tamworth**

**Staffordshire**

**PLANNING INSPECTORATE REFERENCE: APP/K3415/W/24/3340089**

**LPA PLANNING APPEAL REFERENCE: 24/00004/REF**

**LPA ORIGINAL PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE: 18/00840/OUTMEI**

## Executive Summary

This Proof of Evidence can be summarised as follows:

- The Lichfield Local Plan is considered up to date in view of a healthy FYHLS and as such, paragraph 11(d) of the NPPF cannot be engaged;
- The site is not allocated for development within the Development Plan and correspondingly, do not comply with the NPPF;
- The proposals would exceed the level of acceptable development in this locality given the planning policy landscape and recent adjacent consents;
- The development would create coalescence with the village of Wigginton and lead to less than substantial harm to the setting of Wigginton Conservation Area, with no public benefits associated with the proposals would outweigh this harm (as set out in the proof of Mr S Roper-Pressdee- (Ref LDC/3).
- There is no evidence of need to support further affordable housing units in this location (as set out in the proof of Miss G Hill (Ref LDC/2);
- There exists no other material considerations that would tip the balance in favour of the development; and
- The proposed development would fail to meet the three objectives of the NPPF, being economic, social and environmental.

## Section 1: Personal Background

- 1.1 This evidence is presented by Patrick Daly, Planning Consultant (Contractor) in Development Management at Lichfield District Council, a post I have held since 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024.
- 1.2 I have a BA Honours degree in Geography and Criminology from Lancaster University and a Masters degree in Spatial Planning from the Bartlett School of Planning and Architecture at University College London. I have been a Chartered Member of the Royal Town Planning Institute since 2014.
- 1.3 During my career, I have gained considerable experience in dealing with planning applications and appeals relating to developments of various scales in urban and rural areas, on both the public and private spheres, having previously worked for the City of London Corporation and Bedford Borough Council on the public side and several planning consultancies on the private side.
- 1.4 This Proof of Evidence is provided on behalf of Lichfield District Council in relation to this appeal against refusal of an outline application for up to 210 dwellings, public open space, landscaping, sustainable urban drainage, access, and associated infrastructure. (All matters reserved except access) at Land North of Browns Lane, Tamworth, Staffordshire.
- 1.5 This evidence which I have prepared and provide for this appeal (APP/K3415/W/24/3340089) is true and is given in accordance with the guidance of my professional institution, irrespective of by whom I have been instructed. I can confirm that the opinions expressed are my true and professional opinions.
- 1.6 I first became involved with this site in May 2024 to act as Expert Witness for planning on behalf of Lichfield DC. I am familiar with the planning application that is the subject of this appeal and I visited the site and its locality on 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

## Section 2: Introduction

- 2.1 The Statement of the Case (“SOC”) of Lichfield District Council (LDC) (“the Council”) dated June 2024 sets out the background to the application/appeal, including a description of the site, its surroundings, its planning history and Planning Policy applicable to the site. A Statement of Common Ground (SOCG) was agreed between the Council and the Applicants in May 2024 which covered matters related to planning, with an addendum following in June 2024 (CD05).
- 2.2 In summary, following consideration of the application proposals, the Council refused the application on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2023. This was reflected in the decision of the Council’s Planning Committee on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023 and the report to planning committee (CD02).
- 2.3 My evidence is presented on behalf of Lichfield District Council and will address the following:
- whether the proposal would accord with the spatial strategy in the development plan, with regard to its location and the proposed quantum of housing;
  - the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, with regards to spatial and visual separation of Wigginton; and
  - whether the proposal would make adequate provision for education, healthcare, public open space, off-site highway works and travel plan monitoring.
- 2.4 This Proof of Evidence reinforces the inappropriateness of the proposals and provides an assessment of the overall planning balance. My evidence is supported by appendices to assist the Inspector’s appreciation of the case.
- 2.5 Note that Matters in Appeal A are being dealt with by Lichfield District Council and Matters in Appeal B will be dealt with by Tamworth Borough Council (TBC). This Proof of Evidence addresses matters related to planning in Appeal A. With regards to heritage and affordable housing evidence, I defer to my colleagues Mr Simon Roper-Pressdee (Ref LDC/3) and Miss Gemma Hill (Ref LDC/2) respectively.

### **Section 3: The Site, Planning History and Proposed Development**

- 3.1 A full description of the site and the surrounding context is agreed between both parties within Section 2 of the Statement of Common Ground (CD05).
- 3.2 Whilst 07/01160/OUTM was refused on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2008 and offers some historical context to the site, it is not directly related to the appeal at hand. As such, there are no historic planning applications that are considered pertinent to the determination of this application.

### **Section 4: The Proposed Development**

- 4.1 The agreed description of development is included in the statement of common ground and is set out in Section 4 of the Statement of Common Ground (CD05).

## Section 5: Planning Policy

5.1 Section 38 (6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, sets out that the determination of applications must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. At the time of the preparation of this Proof of Evidence the Development Plan for Lichfield District comprises the Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy (2015), the Lichfield Local Plan Allocations (2019) and the Wigginton and Hopwas Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2016).

5.2 The key policies set out in the Lichfield Local Plan Strategy that are most pertinent are:

- Core Policy 1: (Spatial Strategy)
- Core Policy 2: (Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development)
- Core Policy 3: (Delivering Sustainable Development)
- Core Policy 6: (Housing Delivery)
- Core Policy 14: (Our Built and Historic Environment)
- Policy BE1: (High Quality Development)
- Policy H2: (Provision of Affordable Homes)
- Policy NR5: (Natural and Historic Landscapes)
- Policy: North of Tamworth
- Policy Rural 1: (Rural Areas)

5.3 The key policies set out in the Lichfield Local Plan Allocations Document that are relevant to the reasons for refusal are:

- Policy NT1 (North of Tamworth Housing Allocations)
- Policy BE2 (Heritage Assets)

5.4 The key policies set out in the Wigginton, Hopwas and Comberford Neighbourhood Plan are:

- Policy WHC1 (Protection of the Rural Environment)
- Policy WHC3 (Historic Environment)
- Policy W1 (Coalescence between Wigginton and Tamworth)

5.5 Other material considerations

- NPPF (2023)
- The Lichfield Historic Environment SPD

- The Lichfield Sustainable Design SPD
- The Wigginton Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan (2018)
- Tamworth Borough Council local Plan
  - Vision – One Tamworth perfectly placed
  - SS1 The Spatial Strategy for Tamworth
  - HG1 Housing
  - HG4 Affordable Housing
  - HG5 Housing Mix
  - EN1 Landscape Character
  - EN6 Protecting the Historic Environment

Whilst all the above policies are relevant to the Inquiry, those most pertinent will be applied in reviewing the details of the case.

## Section 6: Statement of Case

6.1 In the CMC Summary Note (17<sup>th</sup> May 2024), the Inspector set out the matters that are of particularly relevance and should be the key issues to be considered as part of this Inquiry:

- i) whether the proposal would accord with the spatial strategy in the development plan, with regards to its location and the proposed quantum of housing;
- ii) the effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, with regards to spatial and visual separation of Wigginton;
- iii) whether the proposal would preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Wigginton Conservation Area;
- iv) the need for, and provision of affordable housing in Lichfield and Tamworth, including the mix and tenure; and
- v) whether the proposal would make adequate provision for affordable housing, education, healthcare, public open space, off-site highway works and travel plan monitoring.

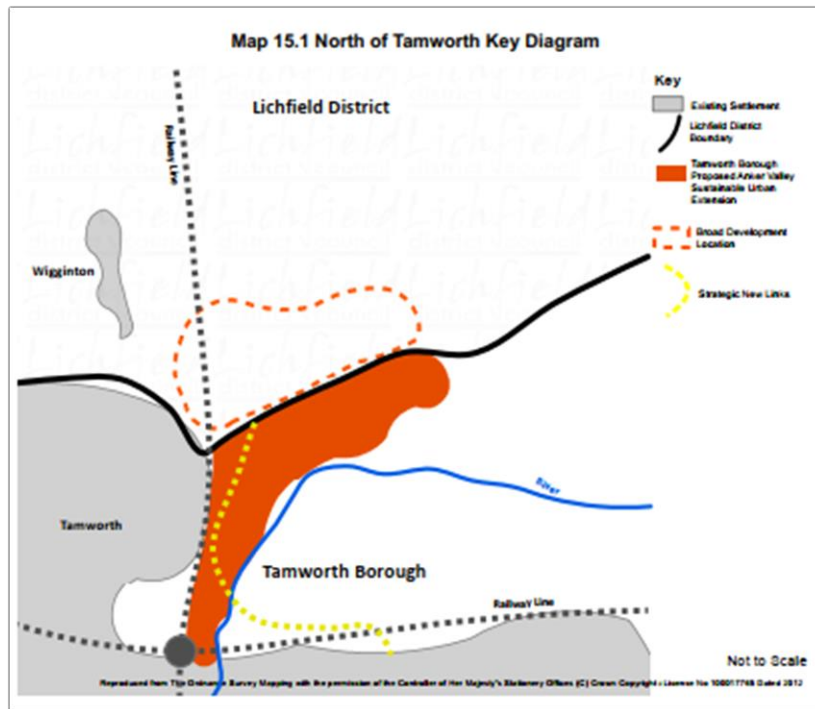
6.2 This Statement of Case will specifically address points i), ii) and v) in turn below. The remaining issues will be assessed in the respective Proofs of my aforementioned colleagues.

- i) **Whether the proposal would accord with the spatial strategy in the development plan, with regard to its location and the proposed quantum of housing**

6.3 The Lichfield Local Plan Strategy 2015 includes a specific chapter for new development in land to the North of Tamworth (CD03). Paragraph 15.1 confirms that within a Broad Development Location (BDL), around 1,000 homes will be delivered by 2029, to assist in meeting the needs of southeast Staffordshire, recognising that not all locally derived housing needs can be met within the Tamworth Borough boundary. The policy continues that with a number of criteria, including adherence to all other policies in the Local Plan and paragraph 15.7 confirms that further consideration of this location will be considered through the Local Plan Allocations Documents.

6.4 For the purposes of lucidity, Map 15.1 is provided and indicates the BDL:

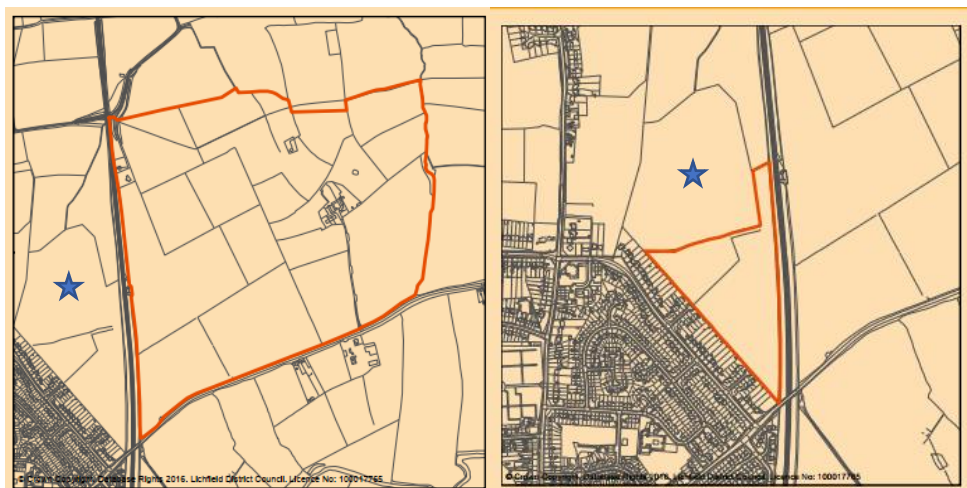




6.5 The Local Plan Allocations Document (2019) defines allocated residential sites which fall within the BDL. Policy NT1: North of Tamworth Housing Land Allocations confirms that sites NT1 (Arkall Farm) and NT2 (Land North of Browns Lane) would deliver yields of 1,165 dwellings and are very clearly defined within the adopted local plan policies maps (CD03); the appeal site falls **outside** of the area defined for housing delivery as clearly shown in the Allocations plans below.

NT1: Land at Arkall Farm, Ashby Road

NT2: Land north of Browns Lane, Tamworth



★ Denotes appeal site

6.6 For further clarity, the site is not allocated in the within the 'Made' Wigginton, Hopwas and Comberford Neighbourhood Plan.

6.7 Consent has been granted for 1,165 dwellings covering these two areas:

- NT1: Land at Arkall Farm, Ashby Road:  
*14/00516/OUTMEI - Phased development of up to 1000 homes, primary school, local centre, public open space, landscaping, new vehicular and pedestrian accesses, primary substation and associated infrastructure.*  
(This consent has been implemented and is currently under construction).
- NT2: Land north of Browns Lane, Tamworth:  
*14/00018/OUTM - Residential development comprising up to 165 dwellings (Class C3), open space, earthworks, attenuation basins, structural landscaping, car parking, and other ancillary works (All matters reserved except point of access from Manston View).*  
(This development has been completed).

6.8 Given the above, the site is not allocated for development. Furthermore, the number of units already granted permission is at the upper limit of the policy and any additional dwellings would be in conflict with this policy.

6.9 Contrary to Core Policy 3: Sustainable Development and the requirement to promote social cohesion and inclusion, further consents would lead to an overconcentration of homes with the potential to exert additional pressure on existing infrastructure. This may be more pronounced given that the homes would be 100% affordable and their collective location at the edge of both LPA boundaries could lead to social marginalisation of occupants. This, combined with a substantial lack of demand on the housing list in this ward area and adjacent wards, may lead to vacant dwellings for a significant period, associated issues of dereliction/dilapidation and ultimately, an unsustainable community. The approach of a 100% affordable housing scheme in a rural setting on the edge of both LPA boundaries is against NPPF paragraph 64, which expects that affordable housing contributed to creating a mixed and balanced community, there NPPG which promotes inclusivity and social interaction via tenure neutral design (003 Reference ID:53-003-20191101) and the National Design Guide whereby developments should avoid segregation or difference in developments by siting and accessibility amongst others (sections U2 and U3). Put simply, new developments should create mixed and sustainable communities where affordable housing should be indistinguishable and well-integrated into wider communities.

6.10 It now falls as to whether as a result of this site not being allocated for development whether the site is considered to lie within the rural area and is therefore subject to Policy Rural 1. This policy identifies a number of key rural settlements which are considered to have the necessary

infrastructure to be able to handle additional new residential development. Wigginton and its surroundings is not identified as a key rural settlement. Furthermore, it identifies that new rural housing site allocations could be considered acceptable via a community led plan but no such allocation currently exists. Therefore, the proposals do not accord with Rural Policy 1.

- 6.11 Policy CP6: Housing Delivery identifies the quantum of residential development proposed to be delivered within Lichfield District between 2008 and 2029 – (at least 10,030 homes). The Lichfield Five-Year Housing Land Supply (FYHLS) 2023 confirms that supply is at 9.5 years and as such, the policies contained within the plan are considered to be up to date in accordance with the NPPF. As such, there is a no justification for open market housing in this location, hence in October 2023, several years after the application was initially validated, the applicant altered the proposal to a 100% affordable housing scheme in response to the withdrawal of the draft Local Plan 2040.
- 6.12 The strategic site at Arkall Farm (14/00516/OUTMEI) permitted 1,000 dwellings, 500 of which would be to meet Tamworth's needs, whilst the site north of Browns Lane (14/00018/OUTM) delivered 165 dwellings in 2020. Similarly to Lichfield, TBC's housing land supply is considered robust at 10.5 years and it has consistently met its annual housing target.
- 6.13 It should be noted that the above schemes include 400 and 41 affordable homes respectively. Even on the continuing basis of a 60/40 split between the LPAs housing need as approved with the Arkall Farm scheme, this would lead to an additional 126 affordable homes for Tamworth and 84 for Lichfield, in an area that is already saturated with existing and forthcoming affordable housing and where there is limited need identified.
- 6.14 The policy continues, setting out five instances in remaining rural areas where housing development would be acceptable: (i) infill development, (ii) affordable housing through rural exceptions, (iii) changes of use/conversions, (iv) small scale development supported by local communities and (v) agricultural, forestry or occupational dwellings. The proposal does not accord with these criteria.
- 6.15 The policy also sets out a range of four expectations for new residential development. Whilst elements such as design and layout would form part of a reserved matters application, the scheme would fail to assist in meeting the identified housing needs of neighbouring areas. It is noted that the identified housing need of 500 homes to support Tamworth Borough is being met through existing and committed development at NT1 and NT2 above (14/00516/OUTMEI

and 14/00018/OUTM respectively). Further consents would undermine Policy CP6 and would create an unsustainable community between Tamworth and Wigginton.

- 6.16 Matters regarding location and coalescence are assessed in detail below.
- 6.17 In light of the above, the proposals would not accord with the spatial development strategy set out within the development plan, with regard to its location and the proposed quantum of housing.
- 6.18 Turning next to Policy H2 Provision of Affordable Housing, the policy states that outside of the key settlements of Lichfield and Burntwood, housing development will be supported on small rural exception sites, where affordable homes can be delivered to meet the needs of local people and where there is no other conflict with Local Plan policies and the criteria listed is met. Notwithstanding the development being classified as a major development of substantial size, where there is limited need and against other policies of the Local Plan, of the criteria, the proposals would fail to meet point three (an identified need in the parish for this scale of development) and point four (by virtue of its size and scale in relation to existing settlements, services, transport and key infrastructure) would not be considered to meet the requirements of the policy. Turning to point three in particular, which is evidenced in detail in Ms Hill's Proof of Evidence (Ref LDC/2), whilst it is acknowledged that there is a waiting list for affordable housing in LDC, when broken down into ward area, this is very much diluted in the Wigginton and Streethay Ward, where only 20 applicants have chosen this ward as their first area of preference and 21 as their second. As such, in combination with the aforementioned recent consents in the locality, there is a very real danger of complete saturation affordable housing in this area and associated issues of long-term vacancy and dereliction/dilapidation.
- 6.19 The clear and accepted conflict with H2 – which is the specific policy for the delivery of affordable homes in the rural area – as noted in to SoCG (CD05) further illustrates that this proposal is directly contrary to the spatial strategy and is a fundamentally inappropriate location for further major housing development even if that development is providing 100% affordable housing.
- ii) **The effect of the proposed development on the character and appearance of the area, with regards to spatial and visual separation of Hopwas and Wigginton;**

- 6.20 The encroachment into land between Tamworth and the village of Wigginton would conflict with policies contained within both the Local Plan Strategy and the Neighbourhood Plan.
- 6.21 Core Policy 3 of the Local Plan Strategy identifies as a key issue that development should protect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of Lichfield District and its settlements. One of those settlements is Wigginton whose character is derived from its separation with Tamworth. The proposals would represent a significant number of dwellings in the countryside gap between Tamworth and Wigginton. It would impact the setting with Wigginton, an historic village, undermining the distinctiveness of both Tamworth and Wigginton, creating coalescence between the two settlements, contrary with the requirements of Core Policy 3. The supporting text of Core Policy 3 bolsters this assessment in paragraph 5.6, emphasising the protection and enhancement of the environment and sustainable development and lifestyles in line with the NPPF.
- 6.22 Whilst detailed design matters would be dealt with at reserved matters stage (and the Council are not raising a design case), the sheer physical nature of a 210-dwelling development in this location would inevitably cause significant impact on the 'separating' character and appearance of the area and would undermine the segregation of both settlements via urbanising an area of countryside with built form, associated paraphernalia and noise and light pollution.
- 6.23 This is a concern that is even more strongly reiterated in the Neighbourhood Plan. Policy WHC1 states that the existing environs of the plan area shall be maintained to ensure that there is a clear distinction between the villages of the plan and the urban area of Tamworth and emphasises that there shall be no coalescence with Tamworth.
- 6.24 The proposals also conflict with this policy as development in this location would not maintain the existing environs identified by the Neighbourhood Plan and result in a significant incursion into the settlement gap between Wigginton and the Tamworth eroding the individuality of the two distinct areas.

v) **Whether the proposal would make adequate provision for affordable housing, education, healthcare, public open space, off-site highway works and travel plan monitoring.**

- 6.25 Detailed matters concerning Affordable housing are contained within the Proof of Evidence of Miss G Hill (Ref LDC/2). However, in overview, there is no evidence that there is an acute need of affordable housing in this locality, including both Lichfield DC and Tamworth Borough and as such, only moderate weight can be afforded in this instance, as whilst there is some benefit arising from the provision of affordable housing on the surface, potential issues of overprovision/viability and dilapidation, social marginalisation and associated impacts on local infrastructure may arise. It should be reiterated that the original scheme as submitted in 2018 was for a market housing led scheme but in October 2023, several years after the application was initially validated, the applicant altered the proposal to a 100% affordable housing scheme in response to the withdrawal of the draft Local Plan 2040.
- 6.26 Under the provisions of Policy IP1 of the Local Plan Strategy, major new developments are required to make provisions for social/ community facilities, which must be commensurate to the scale and nature of the proposals and can be by way of direct on-site provision and/ or by a contribution made for the provision of facilities elsewhere.
- 6.27 As part of the planning application process, Staffordshire County Education, Staffordshire County Highways and the Staffordshire Integrated Care Board were consulted. All three parties have no objections, subject to mitigation via the provision of appropriate infrastructure through a S106 legal agreement, specifically:
- £1,619,176.00 to deliver 65 primary school places and 23 secondary school places;
  - £136,498.00 to part contribute to the expansion of Aldergate Medical Practice, Laurel House Surgery, Hollies Medical Centre and Peel Medical Practice, where there is a shortfall in clinical rooms to serve the development proposed; and
  - £47,900 towards the improvements to A513/ Gillway Lane/ Comberford Road/ Coton Lane junction, improvements to local bus stops and a £7,000 monitoring fee for a prospective Travel Plan.
- 6.28 As the District Council do not adopt open space, the applicant would need to include the long-term maintenance requirements within a S106 legal agreement. The provision of affordable housing would also be secured via legal agreement.
- 6.29 Subject to the above, the impact of the development would be mitigated. It is our understanding that the applicant is willing to sign a S106 agreement to secure the necessary obligations.

## Section 7: Planning Balance

7.1 When talking about weight, I use the following hierarchy of terms:

- Very substantial weight;
- Substantial weight;
- Significant weight;
- Moderate weight; and
- Limited weight.

7.2 The level of housing growth proposed by this application would equate to an additional 210 units (or 18%) of growth in excess of the 1,165 dwellings which have been approved to the North of Tamworth through the Local Plan Allocations document and in accordance with Core Policy 1 and Core Policy 6. As such, the proposals are unjustified and represent a significant departure from the Local Plan Strategy (it would be directly contrary to the entire spatial strategy) and the harm should be afforded **very substantial weight** in the planning balance.

7.3 The scheme would result in coalescence between the built form of Tamworth and the village of Wigginton. Whilst extensive planting is offered by the appellant, it would not mitigate the visual impacts of such a large development that causes a considerable incursion into the open countryside. As such, this matter should be afforded **significant weight**.

7.4 There would be **moderate** less than substantial harm to the setting of Wigginton Conservation Area and it is considered that no public benefits associated with the proposals would outweigh this, as set out in the proof of Mr S Roper-Presdee (Ref LDC/3). In summary, the setting of Wigginton Conservation Area would be harmed by the proposal as, although to some degree limited, there are important views from the Conservation Area and back towards the village as set out in the Conservation Character Appraisal and the proposals would result in visual intrusion and a determinantal impact on this heritage asset as well as its wider setting.

7.5 The provision of infrastructure contributions via a S106 legal agreement would assist in mitigating the impacts of the development. However, there is no evidence that there is an acute need for affordable housing in this locality and as such, **moderate weight** should be afforded in this instance.

## A Review of the Appellant's Case

- 7.6 In response to the Appellant's Case, notwithstanding the proposals being clearly contrary to the adopted Local Plan, whilst the proposals would provide a large amount of affordable housing to meet a wider local authority need, this can only be given **moderate weight** in this instance. As is highlighted in the Proof of Evidence by Miss Hill (Ref LDC/2), which is reflected in this Proof of Evidence, this is not the apposite location for the delivery of affordable dwellings, as there is very limited demand in this rural ward area. Although it is acknowledged that there is an undersupply of affordable housing in Lichfield, the Council benefits from a very healthy housing land supply and additional affordable housing would be provided via the delivery of several forthcoming strategic sites as well as further windfall sites. It should be noted that TBC have consistently exceeded their affordable housing target of 40 per annum and LDC have had a large number of completions in recent years as documented by Miss Hill (Ref LDC/2) and as such, it is reasonable to assume that this strategy will lead to increasing delivery of affordable homes in the coming years.
- 7.7 The Appellant states that as a Platform Housing Group has been identified as the delivery vehicle for the scheme and the dwellings would be delivered rapidly to meet need, as well as boost the local economy with construction jobs, consumer spending and supply chains. However, these benefits would be demonstrably undermined by the considerable lack of identified need in the ward area as evidenced by both Local Authority's housing lists and by virtue of recent affordable housing delivery nearby and as such, should be accorded **limited weight**.
- 7.8 The Appellant claims that the loss of agricultural land in this location should be given limited weight as planting would be offered to screen the proposals but as we have explored, the loss of this field to the built form would lead to a considerable incursion into the countryside, leading to coalescence between both settlements of Tamworth and Wigginton and causing less than substantial harm to the setting of the Wigginton Conservation Area. As set out above at 7.3, we attest that together **significant weight** rather than limited should be given to this harm.
- 7.9 Whilst the proposals would deliver publicly accessible open space and with that a 20% biodiversity net gain to meet local planning policy, this benefit, for the most part, would be limited to prospective residents of the affordable housing scheme and only **limited weight** should be afforded in this instance.



7.10 As noted above in paragraph 7.4 and contrary to the Appellant's case ('very minor'), **moderate weight** should be ascribed to the impacts on the Wigginton Conservation and its setting by virtue of the less than substantial harm caused by the proposals.

7.11 Turning to NPPF paragraph 11 c), it requires decision makers to 'approve development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay'. Given the presence of healthy FYHLS for both Lichfield District and for Tamworth Borough, there is no requirement other than to determine this appeal in accordance with the development plan. There are no benefits which are so weighty as to justify departing from the development plan given the fundamental conflict this proposal has with the development plan. As the proposal clearly conflicts with policies highlighted and there are no material considerations which would indicate otherwise, the appeal should be dismissed.

## Section 8: Conclusions

- 8.1 Paragraph 12 of the NPPF confirms the statutory status of the development plan as set out at Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and section 70(2) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, as amended, which requires that the determination of applications must be made in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.
- 8.2 In summary, the Lichfield Local Plan is considered up to date in view of a healthy FYHLS. The proposals do not form part of Council's Local Plan Strategy and correspondingly, do not comply with the NPPF. Consequently, there is no other option other than to determine this application in accordance with the development plan as required by Section 38(6) of the PCPA 2004. No other material considerations can be identified in this instance.
- 8.3 The proposals must be considered against the relevant planning policies of the Lichfield District Local Plan Strategy (2015), the Lichfield Local Plan Allocations (2019) and the Wigginton and Hopwas Neighbourhood Plan (Made 2016), as set out within the Committee Report to the Lichfield District Planning Committee dated 27 November 2023. Considering these policies, I am of the opinion that there are no favourable reasons why the appeal should be allowed. In summary:
- the site is not allocated for development within the Development Plan and would exceed the level of acceptable development in this locality given aforementioned planning policy and recent consents;
  - the development by extending the northern boundary of Tamworth would create coalescence with the village of Wigginton. There would be less than substantial harm to the setting of Wigginton Conservation Area and it is considered that no public benefits associated with the proposals would outweigh this, as set out in the proof of Mr S Roper-Pressdee (Ref LDC/3); and
  - whilst S106 contributions would help mitigate the impact of the development, there is no evidence of acute need to support further affordable housing units in this location that would outweigh the harm of the proposals as supported in the proof of Miss G Hill (Ref LDC/2).
- 8.4 Given the above, the proposals are in clear conflict with the development plan and there are no material considerations to justifying departure from planning policy in this instance, as the

provision of affordable housing on which the Appellant relies on, is in limited demand in the locality. Other benefits that the Appellant tables are considered overall, to carry limited weight in this instance.

8.5 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF indicates that economic, social and environmental objectives are mutually dependent and that in order to achieve sustainable development, they should be sought jointly and simultaneously through the planning system. A brief assessment is provided below:

- It is considered that in terms of the **economic** objective, this development does not accord with the spatial development strategy set out in the Local Plan, which is considered up to date;
- The scheme would not adhere to the **social** objective, as the proposals would deliver a scheme that is unsustainable, in a policy area (North of Tamworth) that has already exceeded its housing requirement, delivering affordable housing that is not evidently required; and
- In terms of the **environmental** objective, there will be a detrimental harm on the natural and historic environment, namely the settlement gap between Wigginton and Tamworth and the Wigginton Conservation Area.

8.6 It is considered that having regard to these three strands of sustainable development, the proposal is not considered sustainable development and, the Inspector is therefore requested to dismiss this application having regard to Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.