Examination of the Doncaster Local Plan

Harworth Group Plc
Conisbrough and Denaby (Site Ref 1035) (Representor Ref 05205)

Hearing Statement
in relation to
Matter 8 – Economic Development

September 2020
Introduction / Context

1. This Statement is submitted on behalf of Harworth Group Plc (‘Harworth’), specifically in relation to land in which it has an interest at Denaby Main.

2. This Statement provides Harworth’s response to the Inspector’s Matters, Issues and Questions (INSP4) for consideration during the forthcoming hearing sessions. Harworth does not intend to participate in the hearing session in relation to Matter 8 and understands that these written comments will carry the same weight as any comments made orally.

3. This Statement relates to Matter 8 regarding ‘Economic Development’ in particular, the following question which is replicated ahead of Harworth’s response.

Question 8.5

Collectively, will the employment allocations and employment policy areas be sufficient to meet anticipated development needs over the Plan period and provide enough flexibility to accommodate needs not anticipated?

Harworth Response

4. The position of Harworth in relation to the quantum and distribution of employment land in the Plan is covered in its Matter 2 and 3 Statements. The detail in these statements is directly related to this Matter 8 response.

5. It is considered that the Plan does not provide sufficient opportunities to meet the need for employment uses in the Borough. There is a lack of flexibility of sites, in particular a lack of provision of smaller employment sites to the West of the Borough to meet local need.

6. Harworth has stated its support for the strategic aim of the Plan to provide a substantial quantum of land for business (B1), general industry (B2) and storage and distribution (B8) uses. Whilst Harworth fully advocates the allocation of large scale and strategically located sites (e.g. Bradholme Farm), it is considered that the spatial distribution is inappropriately skewed towards sites at the east of the Borough which are not necessarily accessible from the Main Towns at the west of the Borough and do not serve to provide local employment opportunities or support regeneration in those locations.

7. Harworth’s position is that besides the allocation of new large-scale employment sites located on the motorway network, an allowance also needs to be made for the allocation of smaller sites for employment uses at the Main Towns, particularly to the west of the Borough. The Council’s approach is not justified when considered against reasonable alternatives and is not positively prepared insofar as it does not meet the need for local employment and regeneration in the Main Towns to the west of the Borough.

8. The provision of sufficient employment land to allow allocation in such locations is essential to achieve inclusive economic growth and to contribute to the regeneration, in accordance with the spatial strategy of the Plan.

9. Harworth considers that collectively, the employment allocations and policy areas will not be sufficient to meet anticipated development needs over the Plan period or provide enough flexibility to accommodate needs not anticipated. In particular it is not sufficient to meet employment development needs (both anticipated and with flexibility for need not anticipated) at the Main Towns to the west of the Borough.

10. Accordingly, the quantum and distribution of employment allocations needs to be changed to ensure the Plan can accommodate such needs.
11. On the basis of a strategic change being made and there being a requirement to identify additional or alternative sites that meet this need, Harworth suggests that Site 1035 be favourably considered given the positive contribution its development will make to local employment, inclusive economic growth and regeneration at the Main Town of Consibrough and Denaby.

12. For reference, Site 1035 is promoted by Harworth for employment (in part) and housing (in part) given its location adjacent to both existing employment and housing areas.