

## NORTH WARWICKSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

### POSITION STATEMENT OF NORTH WARWICKSHIRE LABOUR GROUP

#### MATTER 8

- 1.1 On Issue 8.1, the Group has two fundamental concerns. Firstly the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (CD04) identifies substantial infrastructure requirements, particularly in relation to transport, but gives no clarity as to how these will be funded. Secondly the strategy requires a major increase in housing delivery within the Borough, compared to past rates (see para 1.2), but provides no analysis as to whether this is deliverable in market terms. The Group assumes that further evidence on this will be set out in the updated Viability Assessment, which has yet to be published. We request the opportunity to make additional comments once this document is available.
- 1.2 On Issue 8.2 the Group would draw attention to table 4 of the Council's note 3 (NWBC6). This shows that net annual dwelling completions in North Warwickshire have rarely exceeded 200 in the period since 1996/7. NWBC10, which is a table showing expected housing delivery over the plan period, indicates that to meet the proposed housing requirement, annual completions will need to rise from around 250 in the current year to over 600 in 2023/4. Completions will then need to remain at over 500 for the remainder of the plan period. This is plainly very challenging in the light of what has been achieved in the past. For this reason, we would agree with what we understand to be the conclusion of para 9.67 of the Strategic Growth Study (CD8/23) that it is unrealistic to think that an even higher level could be achieved.
- 1.3 The Group has no comments on Issues 8.3 and 8.4
- 1.4 It is not possible to comment on Issue 8.5 until the updated Viability Assessment is published.
- 1.5 In relation to Issue 8.6, in its representations on the Submission Plan the Group emphasised the importance of ensuring that housing growth is accompanied by improvements in local infrastructure. This is particularly important given the limited existing local provision in some communities (notably Polesworth/Dordon) which are to experience significant growth. This is as important for social infrastructure (such as open space, schools, primary health care and leisure facilities) as it is for "hard" infrastructure such as roads and water supply. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan lists many infrastructure requirements, but in many cases no costings are provided and where costings do exist there is often no clarity as to how these costs will be met. We understand that the IDP has to some extent to be a strategic document, and it would be unrealistic to expect that every detail of future infrastructure needs would be fully costed and programmed at this stage. However we do feel that the lack of precision even over major critical items of infrastructure, such as the highway improvements to the A5, is a serious weakness. Our fear is that unless this is

addressed, ultimately 'softer' infrastructure, such as affordable housing provision, will be sacrificed in order to fund highway improvements. In our view this would be unacceptable.

1.6 The Group has no comments on Issue 8.7.