

## **Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan – Public Examination**

### **Councils' Opening Statement**

On behalf of Broxtowe Borough Council, Nottingham City Council and Rushcliffe Borough Council, I'd like to welcome Planning Inspectors G Davies, U P Han and F Bradley, and all those attending the public examination into the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan.

My name is Zulf Darr and I am the Chief Executive of Broxtowe Borough Council. A special welcome specifically to Beeston in Broxtowe, for the first week of the examination. Broxtowe Borough holds the chair of the Joint Planning Advisory Board, which is the political steering group that has overseen the preparation of the Strategic Plan.

First I'd like to introduce Mark Thompson (Broxtowe Borough Council), Matt Gregory (Nottingham City Council) and Richard Mapletoft (Rushcliffe Borough Council). They will be the main representatives for their respective councils for the duration of the examination, calling on other officers and witnesses with particular expertise as required.

All three Councils welcome and look forward to the opportunity to debate the Greater Nottingham Strategic Plan during these hearing sessions. Through working together within a framework of strong political alignment has, we think, added considerable value to the Strategic Plan, as well as significant efficiencies and cost savings to the public purse.

Initial work on the Strategic Plan began back in December 2017, so you can see it has been a protracted process, impacted by various changes to the planning system, not least the introduction of the standard method for calculating housing need, and its various iterations.

The Strategic Plan was originally conceived as a replacement for the Aligned Core Strategies. It therefore contains only strategic policies and strategic allocations. This is because the intention was to provide the local planning policy through "Part 2 Local Plans". However, we are now at the tail end of the current planning system, and if the Strategic Plan is found sound, it will be the last Plan the authorities adopt under the legacy plan making system. Looking forward, all three Councils have now published a 'Notice of Intention to Commence' a new Local Plan, to be prepared under the new planning system, with the intention that these be adopted in Spring 2029.

This examination therefore takes place in the context of a Strategic Plan that if found sound will have a relatively short shelf life. None the less it will provide for an up to date, coherent and consistent policy basis for the area whilst new style Local Plans are prepared and the Councils undergo Local Government Review.

Turning to Greater Nottingham itself, and in particular the three Council areas, which cover the majority of the conurbation of Nottingham, the Strategic Plan looks to

harness the huge opportunities present, including our location at the heart of the region, our fantastic transport network, our vibrant City, town and local centres, economic development opportunities such as the Freeport and our exceptional quality of life. Equally, it seeks to face up to the challenges we face, such as pockets of deprivation and unemployment, the need to accommodate growth whilst protecting what is best about the area, enhancing our natural environment and ensuring that our citizens can continue to thrive.

To conclude, the three Councils believe that the Strategic Plan provides a sound and positive strategy for the area, striking an appropriate balance between these opportunities and challenges. The Councils firmly believe it is only through rigorous testing in a public arena such as this examination that all those with an interest in the Strategic Plan, be they a local resident or a promoter of a strategic site, can be confident that their views have been properly listened to and taken into account. We therefore welcome this examination.