



# Local Plan Examination: Response to Matter 1b

<b>DATE:</b>	01 May 2025	<b>CONFIDENTIALITY:</b>	Public
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Written Statement responding to Matters, Issues and Questions		
<b>PROJECT:</b>	Newcastle Under Lyme Local Plan Examination	<b>AUTHOR:</b>	WSP on behalf of Harworth Group PLC and Graham Ward Farms Limited

## RESPONSE TO MATTER 1B

### Introduction

This response is submitted by WSP on behalf of Harworth Group PLC (“Harworth”) and Graham Ward Farms Limited (taken together, “our clients”) in relation to Matter 1b Question 1.12.

For context, Harworth are the owners and developers of Chatterley Park, part of the existing employment land supply, which has an existing consent for commercial uses and is actively being developed (hence not subject to any allocation in the submission version of the Local Plan, with saved Local Plan Policy E2 to be deleted). Our clients are the joint promoters of ‘Land off Talke Roundabout / A500’, which was previously assessed in the Local Plan preparation under ref: TK30 and considered a potential strategic allocation for development. This is an “omission site” and we recognise the Inspector will not, at this stage, be considering the merits of sites for development not included in the Plan.

This should be read in conjunction with our original representations to the Plan including the cover letter from WSP dated 4 October 2024 and “Developer Representation: Housing and Economic Growth Evidence” (October 2024).

### Response to Question 1.12

*“Is the Plan period (2020 – 2040) justified, effective and consistent with national policy which requires strategic policies to look at least 15 years ahead from adoption? Should the requirements/timescales for review of the Plan be set out in policy?”*

Our clients maintain that the Plan period (2020 – 2040) is not justified, effective or consistent with national policy which requires strategic policies to look at least 15 years ahead from adoption.

The Plan period can only be sound if adopted before the end of 2025. The last scheduled Council meeting in 2025, whereby this could be resolved to be adopted, is on 19 November, less than seven months away, and less than five months from the end of the scheduled hearings. This can likely only be achieved if no shortcomings are identified in the submission version, and even then, may not be possible. Our clients consider that, aside from the Plan period, the Local Plan is not sound in its current form; We consider that changes are required to the Local Plan as submitted in order to ensure that it does meet the tests of soundness. This would mean that adoption before the end of 2025 is not possible and the Plan period, therefore, needs to be extended.

The 15 year period is a minimum, and therefore it would be appropriate to pursue a longer period up to 2045, not only to account for potential delays to the Local Plan examination and adoption process, but in order to plan for positive growth. Further detail is provided in paragraph 4.2.1 of the “Developer Representation: Housing and Economic Growth Evidence” (October 2024).

The requirements and timescales for the review of the Plan should be set out in the Local Plan in line with the NPPF and relevant regulations.