

Matter 6/107

**North West Leicestershire District Council
Local Plan Examination**

Statement on Behalf of

Mosaic Estates (respondent ref. 107)

**Day 5
(Wednesday 11th January 2017 – 10 a.m.)**

**Matter 6
Employment**



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c. Is the employment allocation by Policy Ec2 at Money Hill deliverable and sufficient to ensure that the requirement is met within the Plan period?

f. Does Policy Ec3, with minor changes M14-15, make appropriate provision for existing employment sites?

It is not clear that the employment allocation by Policy Ec2 at Money Hill is deliverable and sufficient to ensure that the requirement is met within the Plan period. As with any strategic scale mixed use allocation, delivery will take place over an extended period and it is likely that higher value uses will be advanced before employment uses in order to ensure the delivery of high cost infrastructure requirements. There remains some risk, that the employment allocation is delayed in delivery or is not appealing to the market.

Policy Ec3 effectively seeks to protect existing employment sites from alternative forms of development unless they are no longer required or suitable. It make no provision for additional employment on land which is currently in employment use but is not identified as a Primary Employment Area, or which might be suitable for employment development. There remains a policy vacuum to guide development proposals for employment opportunities on unallocated sites, or as part of wider mixed use schemes.

As with our comments in relation to Housing Matters, the plan does not recognise the Government's and the Framework's imperative of directing new development to previously developed sites.

While it was entirely correct for the Council to remove the formerly proposed restriction to employment use only, on former brick and pipework sites, the removal of any sort of policy comment on the treatment of previously developed land has left a gaping hole in local policy. There is no evidence of the Council having fully assessed the suitability of the former Brickworks site at Heather for any form of development. The Plan should assist positively the consideration and implementation of alternative use(s) of the site. As drafted, the Plan effectively 'strips away' recognition of its former use (i.e. an employment site) but does not put in place a positive policy framework for its redevelopment and reuse, leaving the site within 'open countryside'.

The continuation of the site in its present form, as a vacant former brickworks, would be detrimental to local amenity and the general appearance of the area, which would only contribute in the long term to blight and other negative consequences for the local community.

Through amendments to the Local Plan, the Council has the opportunity to maximise the beneficial and efficient reuse of the site. It is absolutely essential that the plan recognises the requirement to direct a range of development towards suitable previously development sites. In the absence of any policy direction the plan misses

the opportunity to plan positively for a range of development types, including employment uses, on previously developed land.

There is a need for an additional policy which encourages the use of previously developed sites for employment uses in suitable locations