

**Harrogate Community Infrastructure Levy Examination Hearing  
Council's Opening Statement  
Wednesday 23 October 2019**

On behalf of Harrogate Borough Council I would like to welcome the Examiner, Jameson Bridgwater and those attending this public examination today. The council is grateful to the Examiner for affording it the opportunity to make a short opening statement to introduce its Community Infrastructure Levy at this critical stage in its progress towards adoption. We therefore welcome the examination in public and look forward to constructive discussions on the route to the council adopting CIL.

The introduction of CIL provides a welcome opportunity for the Council to ensure that it is providing for the future infrastructure needs of the Harrogate District. The draft local Plan which has recently been subject to examination addresses the future strategic development and infrastructure requirements of the District. The Council has identified an infrastructure funding gap which needs to be addressed in part by CIL in order to assist in the delivery of the objectives set out in the draft local Plan. The CIL Draft Charging Schedule, having regard to these objectives sets the CIL rates for certain types of development across the District.

In order to determine the CIL rates the Council appointed consultants HDH Planning to carry out the viability testing and Simon Drummond-Hay is here today acting on behalf of the council as expert witness on viability matters. Based upon the findings and recommendations set out in the CIL Viability Study, the Council has set CIL rates it considers to be a proportionate balance between the provision of infrastructure and the economic viability of development.

The council has undertaken extensive consultation on the CIL charging schedule shaping the final charge rate and zones through two separate consultations each supported with robust up to date viability evidence, namely:

- CIL Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (May 2018) o *Harrogate Local Plan Whole Plan Viability Assessment (Oct 2016) & CIL Viability Assessment (May 2018)*
- CIL Draft Charging Schedule (January 2019) o *Harrogate Local Plan Whole Plan Viability Assessment (Oct 2016) & CIL Viability Assessment (May 2018 – republished Jan 2019)*

At each stage the council has considered representations made with regard to the charging schedule, and considers that the CIL rates set represent an appropriate balance between additional investment to support development and the potential effect on the viability of developments. Furthermore the council considers its approach to date and the final draft charging schedule is generally supported given the limited number of representations and limited attendees around the table today.

The council has prepared its draft charging schedule in accordance with the statutory procedures and consultation requirements of the relevant Planning Act and CIL regulations. The council recognises that the CIL Regulations 2019 are now in place (1st September 2019), alongside the recently updated national CIL guidance. The council considers its approach entirely consistent with these regulations and guidance subject to modifications put forward in the Proposed Modifications document.

Thank you and now I would like to hand back to the Examiner Mr Bridgwater.