The SAD is the second part of our Local Plan. It will identify sites at each of the main and local service villages for housing growth, and will also safeguard some land in those villages and at our four main strategic employment sites if needed. We may also allocate land for other uses such as open space or small scale employment development.

South Staffordshire’s population is growing and more people are living longer. South Staffordshire has one of the highest increasingly ageing populations in the country. We need to make sure that we have right type of houses to meet local people’s needs. This may be, for example, smaller affordable units for local families, or specialist elderly accommodation. Providing houses to meet the needs of older people will also free up larger family sized accommodation.

The simple answer is no. The Government is clear that housing growth is fundamental to revitalising the economy and the thrust of national planning guidance (NPPF) is to ‘boost significantly the supply of housing’. If we don’t plan to deliver the housing growth we have committed to in the Core Strategy ourselves, we will lose significant control over where this housing might go.
Where will the new housing go?
The main villages of Bilbrook, Brewood, Cheslyn Hay, Codsall, Great Wyrley, Kinver, Penkridge, Perton and Wombourne will all need to accommodate some new housing. The local villages of Coven, Essington, Featherstone, Pattingham, Swindon and Wheaton Aston will also have smaller scale housing development.

How many houses will be built?
This varies from village to village and has been subject to a great deal of consultation. The first part of our Local Plan, the Core Strategy, contains the minimum numbers for each village to meet our overall target to 2028. These numbers may need to be adjusted to take account of new development which has come forward in the last couple of years, or where planned development didn’t happen as we expected.

Can I make comments on the housing numbers now, as part of this consultation?
No, the minimum numbers in the Core Strategy are the starting point for this consultation. They have been developed over a number of years and been subject to a great deal of consultation and scrutiny, including by an independent Inspector. The aim of this consultation is to find the right sites at each of our villages for the planned housing growth which has already been agreed. Sites which provide community facilities to meet local needs may be considered for more than the minimum numbers.

Why are the numbers for each village different?
This is because a number of factors have been taken into account in deciding on the most appropriate level of growth. These factors include environmental sensitivity, the availability of non Green Belt land, and how much development has taken place in recent years. There is more information on this topic in our Core Strategy in the Housing Chapter [www.sstaffs.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/corestrategy)

Why are there so many sites to choose from?
We have included all sites that are potentially suitable and which meet our strategy. This means that at each village there is a genuine choice of location for new housing growth and that we consider all the options as we move towards choosing the best and least harmful sites. We know that some of the sites have a much greater capacity than is needed to meet the housing numbers for that village. As the site selection process continues, we may identify a smaller area within these larger parcels of land.

Most of these sites are in the Green Belt – isn’t Green Belt land protected from new development?
The Council is committed to the protection of the Green Belt and we know there are very difficult decisions to be made when we are looking for new housing sites. Where possible we will look at new sites within village boundaries, but we know there is very little land available. Green Belt land is the least preferable option, but in many villages there is no other option. The review or preparation of a Local Plan is the right time to look at our Green Belt boundaries and make any adjustments needed to provide much needed housing.

How much Green Belt land will be needed?
80% of South Staffordshire lies within the West Midlands Green Belt, some 32,310 hectares. Looking at the housing numbers set out in the Core Strategy and taking into account safeguarded land, even if all housing sites were to be located in the Green Belt this would amount to less than 0.35% of the total Green Belt. However, we know that some sites will fall in village development boundaries or in the open countryside, so the actual level should be lower than this.

How will you judge one Green Belt site against another?
We have commissioned consultants to review Green Belt land around the villages where housing growth is planned. The results of this study can be seen at [www.ssstaffs.gov.uk/localplans](http://www.ssstaffs.gov.uk/localplans). When we take account of all the different factors to decide which sites will go forward, we will use the study to see what impact development would have on a particular area of land. The study has not looked at individual sites, but at parcels of land that share common characteristics.
What is safeguarded land?
As well as identifying sites for new housing up to 2028, we also need to take extra land out of the Green Belt for new development after 2028. This means that the Green Belt boundaries should not need to be altered immediately and that there is more certainty where future development will be located. Although we will take the land out of the Green Belt now, it will be safeguarded until the Local Plan is reviewed in the future.

Which employment sites are affected?
We have committed to safeguarding land at our four free standing strategic employment sites for ‘modest extensions’ where necessary. The four sites are i54 South Staffordshire, ROF Featherstone, Four Ashes and Hilton Cross.

Why is my view important?
We want communities to have a say in the way their village is developed. We want your views on which sites you think are best placed to deliver the housing growth. You may also think for example that additional areas of open space, or a children’s play area would benefit the village. We know too that many villagers would like allotments and there may be scope on some sites to provide this sort of development which will benefit the whole community.

Will you consider what impact this new housing will have on issues such as roads, schools or GP surgeries?
This consultation is very wide ranging and all the necessary statutory bodies will also be consulted. You can find a list of the people we will consult with in our Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) see www.sstaffs.gov.uk/SCI. The list includes the education and highway authorities, public health bodies, electricity, water and sewerage providers, the Environment Agency, and your parish council. Your local District Councillor will also be aware of the proposals.

How can I make my views know?
Please take time to look at the SAD document which contains a number of questions, and let us have your views. Let us know what you think the positives and negatives of each site are and what your comments are. We would also like your comments on our methodology and site selection criteria. There are response forms on the website or available from your local library or parish council office. We will acknowledge receipt of your comments, but you will not receive an individual reply to the issues you raise. This is not because your views aren’t important, but that we will summarise all the responses received and this summary will be published at the next stage of consultation. Please note that this means that your views are not confidential and will be made publicly available.

Will sites that receive the most objections automatically be discounted?
No, this is not a ‘beauty contest’ between sites but an objective assessment of the planning merits of the sites. We will take account of what are known as ‘material planning considerations’ and a list of some of these can be found at the end of this FAQ sheet. A point well made by one person carries as much weight as 100 people making the same point. For example, if you wish your views to be made by one person on behalf of an action group, this will carry as much weight as 200 people from the same neighbourhood all making the points individually.

What happens next?
All the sites will be assessed to see how they perform against a number of criteria which are set out in the methodology paper see www.sstaffs.gov.uk/siteallocations. The views of the statutory bodies, our neighbouring authorities and local residents will also be taken into account in deciding which of the sites will be taken forward to the next stage of consultation. If new sites come to light during this consultation it may be necessary to carry out an additional public consultation to ensure we have considered all reasonable alternatives. Once we have narrowed the choices down, there will be a further public consultation on these preferred sites.
Contact us
All the information on sites and the supporting documents are available online at www.sstaffs.gov.uk/siteallocations. You can make comments online on our consultation page or by completing a response form. The documents and forms are also available at the Council Offices in Codsall, local libraries, leisure centres and parish council offices. The Local Plans Team will be attending a number of exhibitions in villages to explain the process and discuss the documents.

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<th>Timetable For SAD Exhibitions – All exhibitions will run from 2pm – 7pm</th>
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You are welcome to attend any of the exhibitions, not just the one being held in your village.

If you need help in completing a form or have any questions please email sadconsultation@sstaffs.gov.uk or telephone 01902 696593.

Material Planning Considerations
When judging the merits of potential development on a site, whether through the Local Plan or planning application process, only certain issues are taken into account. These include:

- National and local planning policies
- Government and Planning Inspectorate requirements
- loss of light
- landscaping
- capacity of physical infrastructure
- highway issues
- loss or effect on trees
- adverse impact on nature conservation

However we cannot take account of factors such as:

- loss of property value
- loss of views
- problems arising from the construction period of any works
- boundary disputes
- previously made objections

For more information on this subject you may find the following useful:
www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid or www.planningportal.gov.uk