



# Local Plan Review

## Issues & Options

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### Key Facts

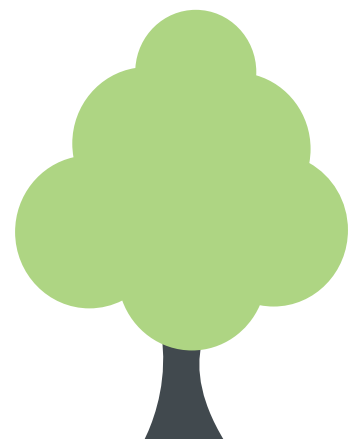
- **This is the first stage of public consultation on the new Local Plan.**
- **We are consulting on many options for the future of South Staffordshire, including the amount and location of new homes and extra employment land.**
- **There is an 8 week period of public consultation – we need your views**

#### What is a Local Plan?

Every local planning authority has to produce a Local Plan which sets out the planning framework for their area. It contains the amount of housing and employment growth being planned for in the next few years and where that growth will be located. It also contains policies which will be used to decide planning applications. The policies cover many topics from Green Belt, housing, employment, and open space to design, historic buildings and environmental issues. The Local Plan is just that, local to the area it covers, so the policies in our Local Plan will be tailored to South Staffordshire.

#### **The Site Allocations (SAD) has only just been agreed, why do we need to review the Plan?**

All Councils have to review their Local Plans at least every 5 years to take on board updated information, particularly about the amount of homes needed. We committed to begin this review as part of the SAD and we hope to have the new Plan in place in 2022.





## What are Issues and Options?

We are looking at all the planning issues facing us and setting out possible options. The options are based on a number of things including what we know about the need for new homes and employment land, concerns about infrastructure, protection of the Green Belt and our landscape and what we need to do to meet our legal duties to help other councils with housing and employment land shortfalls. At this stage we need to explore a range of options so that we can get feedback from our residents, statutory bodies and other organisations before we decide on a preferred approach.

## Is 'no development' an option?

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 this growth ourselves, we will lose significant control over where it might go.

## Why do we have to help other Councils out?

All councils have to meet a legal test known as Duty to Cooperate. This means we have to engage 'constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis' with our neighbouring authorities over matters which cut across administrative boundaries. The matters include meeting unmet housing and employment needs or Gypsy and Traveller pitches. South Staffordshire already relies on Wolverhampton and other Black Country councils for shopping, hospitals, higher education and some leisure facilities. We have to at least have looked at ways in which we can help.

## Many of these options are for land 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 sites. We will look at all non-Green Belt options, but depending on the locations and the scale of growth we choose, it may be that some land will have to be taken out of the Green Belt. If this is the case, we will have to set out the very special reasons why this is needed.





## What do I do now - why is my view important?

We want your views on the levels and locations for growth in South Staffordshire up to 2037 and on the planning issues we face. We are also consulting with all the necessary statutory bodies and 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](http://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 known?

Please take time to look at the Local Plan Issues and Options document and let us have your views. We have also prepared a shortened version, concentrating on the key issues and written in more readable style. You can also comment on the accompanying documents such as our Sustainability Appraisal. 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 because 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.**

**The consultation runs for 8 weeks from Monday 8 October until 5pm on Friday 30 November 2018.**

## What happens next?

We will take on board all the comments received to the consultation and prepare a preferred approach. We will have additional information from any specialist studies, such as Green Belt and Landscape and we can weigh up the best way forward. Once we have considered all the responses we will publish what is known as a Preferred Options version of the Local Plan. This will contain the options we have selected and the reasons why we have done so. There will be a further period of public consultation on the preferred approach.





## Contact us

All the information on the Local plan review and the supporting documents are available on line at **[www.sstaffs.gov.uk/localplanreview](http://www.sstaffs.gov.uk/localplanreview)**. You can make comments by completing a response form, emailing us, or sending a letter. The documents and forms are also available at the Council Offices in Codsall, local libraries and parish council offices.

If you need help in completing a form, would like to be added to our database for automatic updates, or have any questions please email **[localplanreview@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:localplanreview@sstaffs.gov.uk)** or telephone **01902 696000**.

## 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](http://www.rtpi.org.uk/planning-aid) or [www.planningportal.gov.uk](http://www.planningportal.gov.uk)**



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