How to use South Staffordshire District Council Local Plans Consultation Portal
[South Staffordshire - Opus Consult (oc2.uk)](#) – link to consultation portal home page.
- A. *Setting up/managing an account and logging in.*
- B. *Viewing a document and making a representation.*

A. Setting up or managing an account and logging in.

1. The option to 'login' or to 'register' can be found in the top right-hand corner of the consultation portal home page. **You only need to register and login if you wish to make a representation; you can view documents and published representations without registering or logging in.**

2. If you have made comments previously, then you will automatically have been set up with an account using the email address provided to us at the time. If this is the case, then use the 'I cannot remember my password' link found on the 'login' page. The system will now automatically guide you through the registration process.

3. You will be asked to select topics which you would like to be contacted about. If you submit a representation, you will be notified of the Local Plan progress automatically. You can change your topic preferences (and other details) within your profile at any time by selecting the 'My account' drop-down menu in the top right-hand corner when logged in.

B. Viewing a document and making a representation.

1. Once logged in, you can view and comment on live documents open to consultation. You will also be able to view documents that have previously been consulted upon, and representations.

2. All documents have hyperlinks available at the top of the webpage (as a contents) to each section. A 'back to top' option is available in the bottom left-hand corner when navigating through the document. The online document may be formatted slightly differently than the website pdf, but content is still the same.

3. Making a representation online carries the same status as making a representation by letter or email.

4. The consultation document you want to comment on will be set up to include comment boxes in the most appropriate locations. This will be based on factors such as the most contentious parts of the document, the likely interest in each section, and where the consultation wishes to specifically seek the views of consultees.

5. To make a representation, you will need to be logged in. If you are not logged in, when you select the comment box/pen icon to make a representation the system will ask you to log in. You can submit a representation against more than one comment box; and are not limited to making one single representation. You can comment on as many, or as few, paragraphs as you wish.

6. We recommend that a maximum of 1 support representation and 1 objection representation per comment box is submitted. This means you can see all your points together in one place.

7. When you have decided to make a representation, clicking on the comment box/pen icon will guide you through the process of drafting your written submission. Do not worry about saving your work, as the system will automatically do this for you.

8. The process for submitting a rep is straightforward, and the system will prompt you through this step-by-step. It is based upon the Government's own Model Representation Form.

    i. Firstly, you will be asked whether you support, object, or simply wish to comment on to the paragraph you have selected. If you are objecting, you will be asked to consider whether you believe the document accords with the test of soundness set out in Paragraph 35 of the NPPF.
    ii. Secondly, you will have opportunity to write down your representation in a text box – this can be as detailed as you wish. Should this exceed 100 words, then the system will automatically open a second dialogue box for you to provide a short summary of your detailed representation which cannot exceed 100 words.
    iii. Thirdly you will be asked whether you wish to attach a file to your representation. This may be a supporting document to supplement your submission, or the representation in full. Please see Point 9 of this guide for further details.
    iv. Finally, you will be asked to review your representation and submit it for consideration.

9. Should you have any other supporting information that you wish to provide, the system will allow for an attachment to be submitted as part of the representation and an automatic prompt will appear when submitting a representation. Microsoft Word documents, PDFs, and JPEG images are all accepted with a maximum file size of 15 megabytes.

10. **Be aware that representations cannot be kept confidential and will be available for public scrutiny, including your name and – if applicable – organisation. However, any contact details provided will not be published.**

11. If at any point you need to leave your representation and have not finished and submitted it, then there is no need to save your progress. This is automatically done for you. Should you need to go back and complete/submit your representation, navigate to 'my account' in the top right-hand corner and you will be able to see your draft,

incomplete comments. From here they can be modified and submitted. <u>Please be aware that any attachments that may have been added to an unsubmitted representation will not have saved.</u> Therefore, before submitting, please refer back to point 9 of this guide to ensure your attachments are included.

12. Following the consultation period ending, all submitted representations are saved within the online system and can be accessed and viewed by the user. This is done by navigating to 'my account' in the top right-hand corner and selecting 'submitted'. This will list all the representations made to any consultation using the online portal.

<u>Viewing Published Representations</u>

1. To view published representations, click on the magnifying glass icon next to question posed in the consultation and a summary of all the representations will be listed. Representations made which included additional information are displayed as an attachment to the summary and are available to download.

2. Alternatively, representations submitted on behalf of an organisation can be found using the 'search representations' option at the top of the document. Here will be listed all the organisations that submitted a representation. The search 'by keyword' toolbar will also search for individual representations. However, the tool does not search by name, but rather the content of the representation itself.