

PLAN FOR STAFFORD BOROUGH

PUBLICITY & CONSULTATION **INFORMATION**

January & February 2013 –

The Plan for Stafford Borough: Publication

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PHILOSOPHY DEPARTMENT

PHILOSOPHY 101

LECTURE NOTES

BY [Name]

Contact Alex Yendole
Telephone 01785 619000
Fax 01785 619473
E-Mail ayendole@staffordbc.gov.uk
Our Ref RAY/FP/766.0
Your Ref
Date 11 January 2013

Dear

**THE PLAN FOR STAFFORD BOROUGH - PUBLICATION
PRE-SUBMISSION DOCUMENTS**

The purpose of this letter and the enclosed documentation is to invite representations on the Plan for Stafford Borough – Publication and the associated Revised Sustainability Appraisal Report. The Plan for Stafford Borough is a crucial part of the new Local Plan for Stafford Borough to which all subsequent planning applications must conform. The Revised Sustainability Appraisal Report assesses the Plan for Stafford Borough in terms of sustainable development principles.

This statutory consultation stage provides a key opportunity to provide representations on the Plan for Stafford Borough before the Submission document is prepared for the Examination process. Further information and Policies Maps are available at Stafford Borough Council's Ground Floor reception desk, can be viewed on the Borough Council's website at www.staffordbc.gov.uk/publication or by contacting the Forward Planning section on 01785 619000.

If you wish to comment please complete the on-line representation form, which can also be downloaded and printed off, ensuring receipt by the Borough Council before **12 noon on Thursday 28 February 2013**. This deadline is the end of the statutory period for consultation in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Any late representations cannot be accepted after this deadline. The 'Statement of Representations Procedure' and the 'Statement of Fact Availability for Inspection' as required by Regulation 19 are set out with this letter.

The representations to the Plan for Stafford Borough - Publication will be reported back to Council Members and a summary will be published and made available on the Borough Council's website in due course. The Council will then prepare the Plan for Stafford Borough for submission to the Secretary of State in Spring 2013.

Planning & Regeneration Services

Statement of Representation Procedure

(a) **Title of Document**

The Plan for Stafford Borough Development Plan Document - Publication

(b) **Subject Matter**

The Plan for Stafford Borough sets out the vision, key objectives, the development strategy, strategic development locations and policies for the future development of the Stafford Borough area.

(c) **Period of Representation**

Wednesday 16 January 2013 until 12 noon on Thursday 28 February 2013

(d) **Address for Representations**

Head of Planning & Regeneration Services
Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Riverside
STAFFORD
ST16 3AQ

(e) **Notification of Examination and Adoption**

Please indicate in your response if you wish to be notified of either or both of the following:

- (i) that the Plan for Stafford Borough DPD has been submitted to the Secretary of State for independent Examination;
- (ii) that the Plan for Stafford Borough DPD has been adopted.

Any such notification will be sent to the address on your representation unless you indicate otherwise.

We look forward to receiving your representations in due course.

Yours sincerely



Alex Yendole

Forward Planning Section

Planning & Regeneration Services

Librarians of all libraries and mobile libraries in
Stafford Borough

Contact	Mr Alex Yendole
Direct Dial	01785 619536
Fax	01785 619473
Our Ref	RAY/766.0
Your Ref	
Date	11 January 2013

Dear Colleague,

THE PLAN FOR STAFFORD BOROUGH – PUBLICATION

The Borough Council is in the process of preparing a new Local Plan that will replace the Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001 as the Statutory Development Plan for the Borough. We have greatly appreciated your previous assistance in making a series of documents available to the public.

Please find enclosed a document 'The Plan for Stafford Borough – Publication'. We will be consulting on this document during January and February 2013. This statutory consultation stage provides a key opportunity to provide representations to the Plan for Stafford Borough before the Submission document is produced for the Examination process

We would be grateful if you could now make the documents available to the public, preferably by adding it to the documents that we provided previously in a white ring binder titled 'Delivering the Plan for Stafford Borough' to which you may previously have added the 'The Plan for Stafford Borough: Draft Publication' document which we supplied in September 2011.

If you don't still have the white file or the previous documents please don't worry, the document with this letter can 'stand alone' and doesn't rely on the earlier documents.

We are aware that occasionally in the past the documents may have 'gone missing' or been stolen (we suffer from the same problem). If this happens and the document goes missing from your library please call us and we will send further copies.

The document, all previous documents, the evidence base and other related information can be accessed on-line via <http://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/forwardplanning> and we suggest that this is the site which is most helpful to customers. We have found that most users are now using the web to read the documents and this may reduce demand from library customers for paper copies.

Currently most users can (and do) make their comments on-line on any aspect of the document. Web-users can also read what other people have written on the same subject using our consultation system. You might want to encourage your customers to do the same, using library Internet facilities, as this can yield more useful information than the paper document alone. However representation forms can also be downloaded and printed off. The deadline for providing responses to the Borough Council is **12 noon on Thursday 28 February 2013**. This deadline is the end of the statutory period for consultation in accordance with Regulation 19 of the Town & Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Any late representations cannot be accepted after this deadline.

The representations to the Plan for Stafford Borough - Publication will be reported back to Council Members and a summary will be published and made available on the Borough Council's website in due course. The Council will then prepare the Plan for Stafford Borough for submission to the Secretary of State in Spring 2013.

If you or any of your customers have any problems or queries regarding the new Plan, either now or in the future, please do not hesitate to contact myself or any other member of the Forward Planning Team at the address and telephone number above - or by e-mail to forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk.

Thank you very much for your continued assistance.

Yours faithfully



Alex Yendole
Planning Policy Manager

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004
The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England)
Regulations 2012 (Regulation 19)
Statement of Fact Available for Inspection
Proposed Submission document of
the Plan for Stafford Borough – Publication .

Stafford Borough Council has prepared the Plan for Stafford Borough Development Plan Document (DPD) as part of the new Local Plan for the whole of the Borough. The Plan for Stafford Borough DPD sets out the vision, spatial objectives, development strategy, strategic development locations and policies to guide future development across the Stafford Borough area. When the Plan for Stafford Borough DPD is adopted it will be a Local Development Document as part of the new Local Plan.

Copies of the Plan for Stafford Borough can be inspected and are available free of charge at Ground Floor Reception, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, during normal office hours Monday – Thursday 08.30 – 17.00, Friday 08.30 – 16.30. Reference copies have been supplied to Public Libraries within Stafford Borough. The document, representation forms and guidance notes may also be viewed and downloaded via the Council's website at the following web-address: www.staffordbc.gov.uk/publication

To help in the making of representations, guidance notes and forms are available from the address quoted below. All representations should be sent in electronically or in writing, preferably using the published forms, to the Head of Planning and Regeneration, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ or to forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk

Only those representations which are received at the address specified above within the six week period ending at 12 noon on Thursday the 28th February 2013 will be taken into consideration when preparing the Plan for Stafford Borough DPD – Submission document.

Statement of Representation Procedure

(a) Title of Document

The Plan for Stafford Borough Development Plan Document - Publication

(b) Subject Matter

The Plan for Stafford Borough sets out the vision, key objectives, the development strategy, strategic development locations and policies for the future development of the Stafford Borough area.

(c) Period of Representation

Wednesday 16 January 2013 until 12 noon on Thursday 28 February 2013

(d) Address for Representations

Head of Planning & Regeneration Services
Stafford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Riverside
STAFFORD
ST16 3AQ

(e) Notification of Examination and Adoption

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- (ii) that the Plan for Stafford Borough DPD has been adopted.

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Public Notices

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT 2004

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Statement of Fact Available for Inspection

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the Plan for Stafford Borough – Publication

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ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 - SECTION 14(1)(A)

THE M6 MOTORWAY (JUNCTION 13)

(TEMPORARY RESTRICTION AND PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) ORDER 2013

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Secretary of State for Transport intends to make an Order on the M6 Motorway, in the County of Staffordshire, to allow safety improvement work to be carried out.

The effect of the Order will be to –

- (a) Impose a 50 miles per hour speed restriction on –
 - (i) the northbound carriageway of the M6 from a point 160 metres north of the centreline of the River Penk underbridge to a point 500 metres north of the centreline of the Wolverhampton to Stafford railway underbridge south of Stafford; and
 - (ii) the slip road leading to the northbound carriageway of the M6 at Junction 13; and at different times
- (b) close the slip road described in (a) (ii) above.

Work will be carried out overnight between 20.00 hours and 08.00 hours and is expected to start on Monday 11 February 2013 and last for approximately seven weeks. The Order will come into force on 4 February 2013.

Vehicles being used for police, fire brigade or ambulance purposes will be exempt from the speed restriction and closure. Vehicles being used for Special Forces purposes will be exempt from the speed restriction and vehicles being used in connection with the works or by a Traffic Officer will be exempt from the closure. A diversion route during the slip road closure via M6 Junction 12 will be well signed.

For further enquiries please contact Matthew Taylor on 0121 687 2550.

Mike Lloyd, A Higher Executive Officer in the Highways Agency

NOTICE OF APPLICATION FOR PLANNING PERMISSION

Publication 11 January 2013

Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995

NOTICE UNDER ARTICLE 8



STAFFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL has been working with partner organisations to prepare a new Local Plan, known as The Plan for Stafford Borough, to guide development for the next 20 years. The Council has now agreed the Publication version of the new Local Plan. Prior to the Submission of the Local Plan for Examination there is one final opportunity to make representations.

The consultation will run from Wednesday 16 January 2013 until 12 noon on Thursday 28 February 2013. This is a statutory deadline and no representations received after that time can be accepted.

At this stage of the process, we are gathering representations on the 'soundness' of The Plan for Stafford Borough. Under national rules, your comments need to be based on the following criteria.

- **Has the Plan been POSITIVELY PREPARED?** i.e. the plan is based on a strategy that provides for the development and infrastructure needs
- **Is the Plan JUSTIFIED?** i.e. founded on robust evidence and is the most appropriate strategy against all reasonable alternatives?
- **Is the Plan EFFECTIVE?** i.e. deliverable/ flexible/ able to be monitored?
- **Is the Plan CONSISTENT?** i.e. in line with National Planning Policy?
- **Is it LEGALLY COMPLIANT?** i.e. in line with national planning law?

If you wish to comment please use the On-Line consultation portal or the Representation Form (attached Word document) and refer to the Guidance Notes. More detail is set out on the Statement of Representations Procedure

- [Online consultation portal](#)
- [Representations Form \(word doc\)](#)
- [Guidance Notes \(pdf 69.7 KB\)](#)

After this statutory consultation period, the Plan for Stafford Borough and its supporting documents (set out below), will be submitted to the Secretary of State. Following the Submission of the Local Plan, an Examination in Public (EiP) will be held by an independent Planning Inspector to assess the 'Soundness of the Plan'. Subsequently the Inspector will produce a report containing recommendations to be incorporated into the document before adoption.

Supporting documents to accompany the Publication (proposed submission) documents are listed below, with relevant links:

- [The Plan for Stafford Borough – Publication \(Pre-Submission\) January & February 2013](#)
- [Policies Maps \(online\) for The Plan for Stafford Borough – Publication \(Pre-Submission\)](#)

- Revised Sustainability Appraisal Report (incorporating Strategic Environmental Assessment) of The Plan for Stafford Borough
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of The Plan for Stafford Borough relating to Cannock Chase SAC
- Habitats Regulations Assessment of The Plan for Stafford Borough

For general information on Local Plans please go to the Government's online Planning Portal.



Use Will's Sig for Email
Press Release No 4647

14 January 2013

Final stages for future plan

A plan for how the future of Stafford Borough will be shaped over the next 20 years has reached its final stages.

Residents and businesses have been commenting on the new plan for the Borough as part of a number of consultations over the last four years. The Local Plan has already been approved at a meeting of the full council.

The plan identifies areas set aside for development in the future - including thousands of extra homes and sites for new businesses. Nearly 5,000 comments have been received and around 3,000 people have attended a series of roadshows in towns and villages as part of the fact gathering exercise.

In brief, the plan allows for:

- 500 homes to be built **every year** through to 2031 - with more than 70% for Stafford
- Local communities to identify new sites for development
- Identifies eight hectares of new employment land **per year**

The initial proposals were first put in to the public arena in 2008 with double page spreads in Borough newspapers as well as many minutes of airtime on local radio, literature in local libraries and at the Civic Centre, Stafford. It helped form a database which now has 2,500 members of the public and organisations who have been contacted for forthcoming consultations about the plan.

But before the plan goes before a Government planning inspector the Council must now consult on technical issues within the document. This includes whether the plan is based on sound evidence, and whether it meets housing and employment land needs for the borough in the years to come.

And later this year, the Government-appointed Inspector will hold public meetings to look at what the Council is proposing - and, if it is passed, the plan will guide all new development until 2031.

Councillor Frances Beatty, cabinet member for Planning and Regeneration, said:
"This plan is extremely important because it allows us to shape the future growth of

Stafford Borough. For example it allows us to say what type of development can take place, and where.

"I am grateful for all those residents, organisations, parish councils and others who have provided comments to some, or all, of the seven consultations that have taken place since 2008. We have staged roadshows in our towns, as well as many villages during that time, as part of those consultations, which has given us valuable feedback to the plan at various stages of its development."

She added: "We now have to ensure the document has a sound evidence base before it goes before the inspector."

The consultation begins on Wednesday (16 January) and will run for six weeks and all comments must be received by 12 noon on Thursday 28 February. For more information go to www.staffordbc.gov.uk/publication, email forwardplans@staffordbc.gov.uk or call the Forward Planning team on 01785 619000.

Ends

NOTE TO EDITORS:

For more details, please contact:
Will Conaghan
Press & Public Relations Officer
Stafford Borough Council
Tel: 01785 619230
wjconaghan@staffordbc.gov.uk



**The Plan for Stafford Borough
Pre-Submission Consultation**

Ref:

Representations Form

**(For official
use only)**

Please return completed forms to:

- Head of Planning & Regeneration, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ
- or by email to forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk
- or by fax to: 01785 619473

Responses must be received by 12 noon on Thursday 28th February 2013

This form has two parts:

Part A: Personal Details

Part B: Your representations.

- Please complete Part B of this form for each representation you wish to make. You do not need to complete Part A more than once, but please ensure you state your name or organisation as applicable at the top of each Part B form you submit.
- Please refer to the attached guidance notes on making representations so that they address issues of legal compliance and / or soundness.
- Please note that when representations are submitted only Part B of the form will be published. Contact details on Part A will not be published.

Part A

I. Personal Details*

*If an agent is appointed please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.

2. Agent's Details (if applicable)

Title	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
First Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Last Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Job Title (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Organisation (if applicable)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address Line 4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Postcode	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
E-mail address	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Name or Organisation	
----------------------	--

3. What part of The Plan for Stafford Borough (including the Policies Maps document) does your comment relate to?

e.g. Policy Reference, Paragraph, Map title	
---	--

If your comment does not relate to a specific part of the document, or it relates to a different document, for example the Sustainability Appraisal, please make this clear in your response.

4. Do you consider that the Plan for Stafford Borough is:

a. **Legally compliant*?**
Yes No

b. **Sound*?**
Yes No

To check a box when completing this form electronically, double click on it and select 'checked' under default value.

*Please refer to the attached note for guidance on legal requirements and soundness.

If you have entered **No** to Q4.b. please continue to Q5. In all other circumstances please go to Q6.

5. Do you consider The Plan for Stafford Borough is unsound because it is not:

- a. Positively Prepared
- b. Justified
- c. Effective
- d. Consistent with national policy

6. Please give details of why you consider The Plan for Stafford Borough is not legally compliant, or is unsound. Please be as precise as possible. If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of The Plan for Stafford Borough, please also use this box to set out your comments.

(attach separate sheets as necessary)

7. Please set out what change(s) you consider necessary to make The Plan for Stafford Borough legally compliant or sound, having regard to the test you have identified at question 5. You will need to say why this change will make the document legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

(attach separate sheets as necessary)

Please note your representation should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support / justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on the original representation.

After this stage, further submissions will only be at the request of the Planning Inspector, based on the matter and issues he / she identifies for examination

8. If your representation is seeking a change, do you consider it necessary to participate at the Examination in Public?

- a. Yes I wish to participate at the Examination in Public
- b. No I do not wish to participate at the Examination in Public

9. If you wish to participate at the Examination in Public, please outline why you consider this to be necessary

(attach separate sheets as necessary)

Please note the Planning Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate at the Examination in Public

Please ensure you have printed your name or organisation at the top of this form

Representation Form Guidance Notes



Representations made within the consultation period will be considered alongside The Plan for Stafford Borough: Submission as part of an examination by an independent planning inspector. The purpose of the examination is to establish whether the plan has been prepared in accordance with **legal requirements**, and whether it is **sound**.

Representations should therefore focus on legal compliance and soundness.

If you wish to make a comment seeking to change The Plan for Stafford Borough you should make clear in what way you consider it is not legally compliant or sound. You should try to support your comment by providing evidence and supporting information showing why it should be changed. It will be helpful if you also say precisely how you think it should be changed.

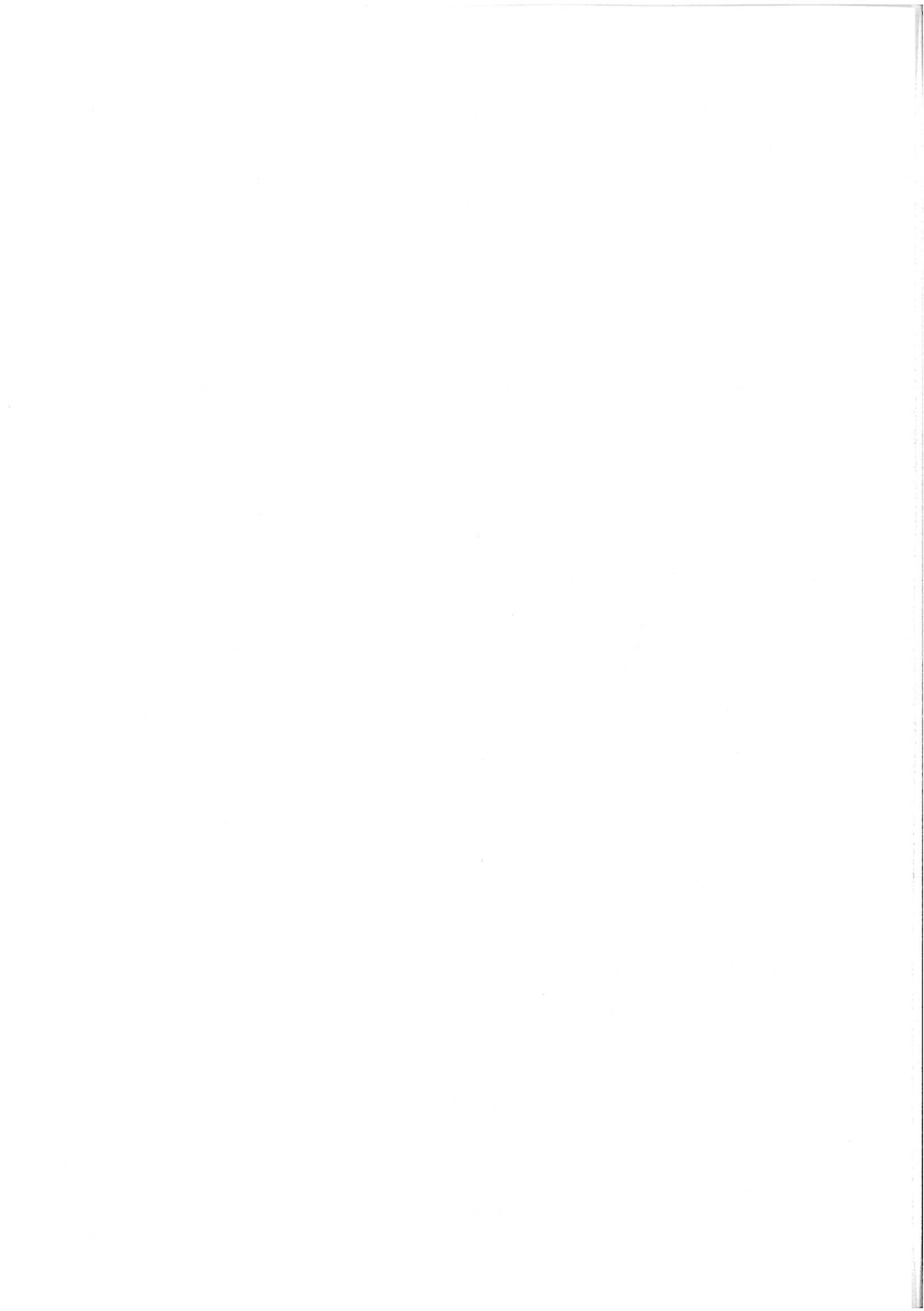
For the plan to be **legally compliant** it must:

- be prepared in accordance with:
 - the Council's Local Development Scheme (a timetable for plan preparation);
 - the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (which includes the Council's policy for community engagement on The Plan for Stafford Borough) and
 - relevant Acts and Regulations; in particular the Town and County Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012;
- have been subject to sustainability appraisal;
- have regard to:
 - national policies, advice and guidance issued by the Secretary of State; and
 - the Stafford Borough Sustainable Community Strategy and Stafford Borough Community Action Plan;
- be in general conformity with the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands;
- meet legal requirements under the Duty to Co-operate (introduced via the Localism Act 2011).

Soundness is explained in the National Planning Policy Framework. For a plan to be sound it must be:

- **Positively prepared** - the plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements;
- **Justified** – the plan should be the most appropriate strategy based on a robust and credible evidence base;
- **Effective** – the plan should be deliverable over its period;
- **Consistent with national policy** – the plan should enable the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework.

Where there are groups who share a common view on how they wish to see The Plan for Stafford Borough changed, it would be very helpful for that group to send a single comment rather than for a large number of individuals to send in separate comments which repeat the same points. In such cases the group should indicate how many people it is representing and how the representation has been authorised.



Guidance Notes

Introduction

These guidance notes have been produced to assist anyone who wishes to make a formal representation on the Plan for Stafford Borough – Publication (pre-submission) Development Plan Document (DPD), which is subject to a period of representation from Wednesday 16th January 2013 to 12 noon on Thursday 28th February 2013.

The DPD is published in order for representations to be made prior to submission to the Planning Inspectorate. The representations will be considered alongside the submitted DPD, which will be examined by a Planning Inspector during 2013.

The purpose of the examination is to consider whether the DPD complies with legal requirements and is 'sound'.

- 1) If you are seeking to make representations on the way in which the Local Planning Authority (LPA) has prepared the published DPD it is likely that your comments or objections will relate to a matter of legal compliance.
- 2) If it is the actual content on which you wish to comment or object it is likely your representations will relate to whether the DPD is justified, effective or consistent with national policy.

Your representation will need to be submitted **in writing** (either electronically or on paper) and received by Stafford Borough Council's Head of Planning & Regeneration Services **by 12 noon on Thursday 28th February 2013**. We will not be able to accept comments that are received after the deadline.

It is **strongly recommended** that you use the consultation portal and / or Representation Form provided by the Council to make your representation to ensure that it relates to the issues of legal compliance or soundness.

Representations can be submitted via the Stafford Borough online consultation portal at www.staffordbc-consult.objective.co.uk/portal. This system allows you to view and comment on specific sections of the document. Alternatively, you can download the Representations Form from the Council's website at: www.staffordbc.gov.uk/publication. Paper copies are also available from Stafford Borough Council's Civic Centre and local libraries within the Borough.

Completed Representation Forms can be

- E-mailed to: forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk
- Sent to the Head of Planning & Regeneration Services, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ

We encourage you to use online facilities via the consultation portal if available

Please note that all respondents must complete their personal details, as it is not possible for representations to be considered anonymously. Respondents should also note that representations are not confidential and that they will be published on the Council's website and copies will be placed at appropriate venues across the Borough for public inspection.

Legal Compliance

The Inspector will first check that the Local Plan meets the legal requirements under Section 20(5)(a) of the 2004 Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act before moving on to test for soundness. You should consider the following before making representation on legal compliance:

- The Local Plan should be within the current Local Development Scheme (LDS) and the key stages should have been followed. The LDS is effectively a programme of work prepared by the Council, setting out the documents it proposes to produce over a set period. It sets out the key stages in the production of any documents the Council propose to bring forward for independent examination. The LDS is available on the Council's website and at the Civic Centre main offices.
- The process of community involvement for the Local Plan should be in general accordance with the Council's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI). The SCI is a document that sets out the Council's strategy for involving the community in the preparation of the Local Plan.
- The Local Plan should comply with the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. On publication, the Council must publish the documents prescribed in the Regulations, and make them available at their principal offices and on their website. The Council must also place local advertisements and notify the DPD bodies (as set out in the Regulations) and any persons who have requested to be notified.
- The Council is required to publish a Sustainability Appraisal Report when they publish a Development Plan Document. This should identify the process by which the Sustainability Appraisal has been carried out, and the baseline information used to inform the process and the outcomes of that process. Sustainability Appraisal is a tool for appraising policies to ensure they reflect social, environmental, and economic factors.
- The Local Plan should have regard to national policy and conform generally to the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). The RSS sets out the region's policies in relation to the development and use of land and forms part of the development plan for the Council. The Government has announced its intention to revoke the West Midland Regional Spatial Strategy, but at the time of writing it remains part of the development plan
- The Council must fulfil the Duty to Co-operate in preparing the plan as required by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 and Regulation 4 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. Its purpose is to ensure that Local Plans consider issues that cross the boundaries of an individual local authority, and to consider issues that are of concern to agencies who have a wider geographical responsibility.
- The Local Plan must have regard to the Community Action Plan for the Borough. The Community Action Plan is prepared by the Stafford Borough Strategic Partnership that is representative of a range of interests in the Local Planning Authority area. The Community Action Plan is subject to consultation but not to an independent examination.

Soundness

The Inspector has to be satisfied that the Local Plan is sound. For a DPD to be compliant with the Tests for Soundness it must be positively planned, justified, effective and consistent with national policy to be compliant. To be sound the Local Plan should be:

1). Positively Prepared

The plan should be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.

2). Justified

This means that the DPD should be founded on a robust and credible evidence base involving:

- (a) evidence of participation of the local community and others having an interest in the area; and
- (b) research / fact finding: the choices made in the plan are backed up by facts.

The Local Plan should also provide the most appropriate strategy when considered against reasonable alternatives. These alternatives should be realistic and subject to sustainability appraisal. The Local Plan should show how the policies and proposals help to ensure that the social, environmental, economic and resource use objectives of sustainability will be achieved.

3) Effective

This means the Local Plan should be deliverable, embracing:

- sound infrastructure delivery planning;
- having no regulatory or national planning barriers to delivery;
- delivery partners who are signed up to it; and
- coherence with the strategies of neighbouring authorities.

The plan should be flexible to deal with changing circumstances, which may involve minor changes to respond to the outcome of the monitoring process or more significant changes to respond to problems such as lack of funding for major infrastructure proposals. Although it is important that policies are flexible, the DPD should make clear that major changes may require a formal review including public consultation.

Any implementation targets and delivery measures that are included in the Plan for Stafford Borough must be reported through the Annual Monitoring Report. This report must be produced each year by all local authorities and will show whether the DPD needs amendment.

4) Consistent with national policy

The DPD should be consistent with national policy as set out in the National Planning Policy Framework. Where there is a departure, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) must provide clear and convincing reasoning to justify its approach. Conversely, you may feel the LPA should include a policy or policies which would depart from national or regional policy to some degree in order to meet a clearly identified and fully justified local need, but they have not done so. In this instance it will be important for you to say in your representations what the

local circumstances are that justify a different policy approach to that in national or regional policy and support your assertion with evidence.

If you think the content of a DPD is not sound because it does not include a policy where it should do, you should go through the following steps before making representations:

- 1). Is the issue with which you are concerned already covered specifically by any national planning policy. If so it does not need to be included.
- 2). Is what you are concerned with covered by any other policies in the DPD on which you are seeking to make representations in the Local Plan.
- 3). If the policy is not covered elsewhere, in what way is the DPD unsound without the policy?
- 4). If the DPD is unsound without the policy, what should the policy say?

General advice

Representations are only valid if your name and address are supplied. Agents should please state the full name or organisation of who they are representing.

If you wish to make a representation seeking a change to a DPD or part of a DPD you should make clear in what way the DPD or part of the DPD is not sound having regard to the legal compliance check and three tests set out above.

You should try to support your representation by evidence showing why the DPD should be changed. It will be helpful if you also say precisely how you think the DPD should be changed. Representations should cover succinctly all the information, evidence and supporting information necessary to support / justify the representation and the suggested change, as there will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further submissions based on the original representation made at publication. After this stage, further submissions will be only at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he / she identifies for examination.

Where there are groups who share a common view on how they wish to see a DPD changed, it would be very helpful for that group to send a single representation which represents the view, rather than for a large number of individuals to send in separate representations which repeat the same points. In such cases the group should indicate how many people it is representing and how the representation has been authorised.

Further Assistance

Should you require any further information or assistance, please contact the Forward Planning team on 01785 619 000 or email forwardplanning@staffordbc.gov.uk.