

PLANNING AND COMPULSORY PURCHASE ACT
2004

The Town and Country Planning (Local
Development) (England) Regulations 2004

Submission Core Strategy
Development Plan Document

Topic Paper 4 of Stafford Borough Council
Employment Land Supply (TP004)

Date: 10/03/2006

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 *The key objective for planning policies in the Core Strategy Development Plan Document is to deliver the strategic approach for spatial planning across the Borough Council area. The Core Strategy Development Plan Document will be the principal planning document in the Stafford Borough Local Development Framework and will form part of the new Development Plan for Stafford Borough alongside the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands (RSS). The Core Strategy will aim to cover the same time period as the Regional Spatial Strategy.¹*
- 1.2 *The purpose of this Topic Paper on Employment Land Supply is to prepare for the independent Examination into the Submission Core Strategy Development Plan Document in accordance with Section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004. This Topic Paper presents the Council's case for employment land supply regarding the Submission Core Strategy Development Plan Document.*
- 1.3 *In particular this Topic Paper sets out the background information and context regarding the requirement for employment and industrial land provision through the Core Strategy Development Plan Document, the framework within which the employment figures have been derived (including reference to national and regional planning policies) and an explanation of the employment requirements for Stafford Borough.*

¹ 2001 - 2021

2.0 Employment Policy

National

- 2.1 Government advice relating to employment and industrial land is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 4: Industrial and Commercial Development and Small Firms (PPG4) (November 1992). One of the Government's key aims is to encourage economic development in a way that is compatible with environmental objectives. PPG4 provides guidance on locational criteria for new employment development which seeks to:
- encourage new development in locations which minimise the length and number of trips, especially by motor vehicle;
 - encourage new development in locations that can be served by more energy efficient modes of transport: and
 - discourage new development where it would be likely to add unacceptably to congestion.
- 2.2 Planning Policy Guidance Note 13:Transport (March 2001) sets out the objective of promoting accessibility through development comprising jobs, shopping, leisure and services which offer a realistic choice of access by public transport, walking and cycling. Local authorities should give particular emphasis to accessibility in identifying preferred areas and sites to ensure they offer realistic, safe and easy access by a range of transport modes and not exclusively by car (para19).

Regional

- 2.3 In June 2004 Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11) was adopted, now revised to be the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) following commencement of Part 1 of the Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
- 2.4 The RSS has been prepared, based upon the principles of sustainable development, to address the decentralisation of population and investment from the Major Urban Areas and the need the need to create balanced and stable communities across the Region. Further details regarding the approach for employment land provision and policy is contained in the 'Prosperity for All' chapter of the RSS.

The partial review of the RSS has commenced and it is anticipated that it will not be completed until 2008.

Strategic

- 2.5 In February 2002 the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan 1996-2011 was adopted setting out the employment provision for the County at about 1,245 hectares (gross) of employment land between 1996-2011, with respective figures given for each constituent District within the County.
- 2.6 Policy E1 of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan concerning the Stafford Borough area is detailed below:

Employment Land Provision and Distribution

E1 Provision will be made for about 1,245 hectares (gross) of employment land in the industrial, office, warehousing and distribution sectors (Class B uses) between 1996 and 2011. This will be allocated throughout the County as follows:-

Stafford

150 hectares

Local

- 2.7 The Stafford Borough Local Development Framework, which will replace the adopted Stafford Borough Local Plan 2001, covers the time period between 2001 and 2021 in line with the Regional Spatial Strategy. Core Policy 9 of the Submission Core Strategy Development Plan Document makes provision for an annual average rate of 10 hectares for employment land provision to be made available in Stafford Borough for the industrial, office, warehousing and distribution sectors (Class B Uses). This annual average rate would ensure delivery of Policy E1 of the Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan to 2011 and beyond until 2021.

3.0 Monitoring Employment Development

- 3.1 Each year Staffordshire County Council prepares the “Staffordshire Employment Land Availability Survey” which includes industrial land allocated for B1, B2 & B8 use classes and land available for other employment uses (excluding retailing), monitoring the quantity of employment land available across the County, the floorspace and site areas, take-up on greenfield and brownfield land, the planning status of the sites involved (i.e. whether they are completed, under construction or yet to be developed) and the rate at which they are expected to be developed.

Completions

- 3.2 As stated in paragraph 2.6, the adopted Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan provides for the development of 150 hectares of employment land in Stafford Borough between 1996-2011. Between 1996-2005, 45.13 ha or 30% of that amount had been implemented which was consistent with the rate of provision across the county as a whole which was that 30% of the whole allocation had been taken up (within 60% of the time period).
- 3.3 If the whole of the Structure Plan allocation for Stafford Borough is to be fully taken up by 2011, then the completion rate will need to increase to a residual annual average of 17.47 hectares per annum for the remaining six years as against the 5.01 hectares per annum rate experienced between 1996-2005.
- 3.4 In that the period of the Local Development Framework runs from 2001-2021, it is relevant to consider the completion rates that have been experienced since 2001:

Table 1: Annual rate of employment (new) land completions 2001 - 2005

Year	Hectares of Employment Land completed
2001 - 2002	1.90
2002 - 2003	9.94
2003 - 2004	3.47
2004 - 2005	3.82
Total	19.13
Annual average rate of employment completions 2001 - 2005	4.78

- 3.5 This shows that the average development rate between 2001 - 2005 was 4.78 hectares (ha) per annum which equates to a 5% reduction in the rate of provision when compared to the rate of implementation between 1996 - 2005.

Commitments

- 3.6 As at March 2005 the employment land supply in the Borough was **118.72** hectares which comprised of the following:

New Land	75.51 ha.
Redevelopment Land (i.e. land formerly in employment use)	43.21 ha.
Total Land Supply	118.72 ha.

“New” Land

Under Construction	4.63 ha.	(6%)
Readily Available	62.63 ha.	(83%)
Within 5 years	1.39 ha.	(2%)
Beyond 5 years	<u>6.86</u> ha.	(9%)
	<u>75.51</u> ha.	

In terms of “planning status”, the above figure comprised:

Land with full planning permission	46.65 ha.	(62%)
Land with outline planning permission	5.85 ha.	(8%)
Other identified land	<u>23.01</u> ha.	(30%)
	<u>75.51</u> ha.	

In terms of “use class”, the above figure comprised:

‘B1’	9.77 ha.	(13%)
‘B2’	8.19 ha.	(11%)
‘B8’	27.90 ha.	(37%)
‘B1/B2’	0.08 ha.	(-)
‘B1/B2’/B8’	<u>29.57</u> ha.	(39%)
	<u>75.51</u>	

“Redevelopment” Land

Readily available	0.21 ha.	(0.5%)
Within 5 years	<u>43.00</u> ha.	(99.5%)
	<u>43.21</u> ha.	

In terms of “planning status”, the above figure comprised:

Land with full planning permission	0.21 ha.	(0.5%)
Land subject to 106 Agreement	<u>43.00</u> ha.	(99.5%)
	<u>43.21</u> ha.	

- 3.7 This means therefore that 0.5% of this supply had the benefit of planning permission, in contrast to the remaining 43 hectares of land (which is wholly within one site) that had the benefit of an 'in-principle' approval (the Section 106 of which had not been completed as at March 2005) - this site is the subject of a mixed use B1/B2/B8 proposal, constitutes the largest such proposal of all the Staffordshire Districts as at March 2005 and comprises 30.5% of the redevelopment land supply for mixed B1/B2/B8 uses throughout Staffordshire at that same time.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1 As against the Structure Plan requirement figure of 150 hectares of employment land from 1996 up to 2011, the following situation was applicable as at March 2005:

Land take between 1996-2005	45.13 ha.	
“New” land with planning permission	75.51 ha.	
“Redevelopment” land	43.21 ha.	
Total	163.85 ha.	
Amount of “over” provision	<u>13.85</u> ha.	(163.85 – 150)

- 4.2 Based on the average annual policy figure of 10 ha. of employment land between 1996 – 2011 as provided for by the Structure Plan, the 67.26 ha of land that was identified as being ‘immediately available’ as at March 2005 would be sufficient to provide 6.7 years supply of employment land.
- 4.3 The employment land requirement for Stafford Borough until 2011 (as set out in the Structure Plan) is currently the only guidance figure relating to (part of) the plan period of the Local Development Framework, since the RSS does not – currently - provide employment land figures at district level.
- 4.4 The annual average provision rate of 10 hectares per annum throughout the plan period of the Local Development Framework, as set out in Core Policy 9 of the submitted Core Strategy represents a continuation of the rate as provided for in the approved Staffordshire and Stoke on Trent Structure Plan.