

4 Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we need a new Local Plan?

4.1 The government requires all local councils to develop a long-term plan which sets out how and where land can be developed. We have an existing plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands but it needs updating.

Why does the existing plan need updating?

4.2 Our existing plan for the Staffordshire Moorlands does not include any allocations for housing and other types of land uses. The new Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan will include sites for development and boundaries. It will be a single document that will take a fresh look at the development needs of the district for the next 14 years to 2031.

What progress has been made on the Local Plan so far?

4.3 As well as early public engagement, we have already undertaken three public consultations on the draft plan - on site options in 2015, preferred option sites and boundaries in 2016 and preferred options in 2017. The comments received in response have been used to prepare this final draft version which is called the Submission Version Local Plan (dated February 2018).

What is the next stage?

4.4 We have now reached a key stage in the process where the Council has published its final draft of the Local Plan (the Submission Version) for comments (known as 'representations') over a statutory 6 week period. The stages are shown in the table below:

Stage	Timescale
Site Options consultation	July - Sept 2015
Preferred Options Sites and Boundaries consultation	April - June 2016
Preferred Option Local Plan	July - Sept 2017
Publication of Submission Version of Local Plan	February 2018
Six week statutory period for representations	February - April 2018
Submission to Government for examination	Anticipated June 2018
Hearing Sessions	Anticipated September 2018

Table 4.1 Local Plan Production Stages

I have already made comments on previous versions of the plan. Why do I need to make them again?

4.5 All comments received so far have been considered by the Council alongside technical evidence, national policy and guidance. Changes have been made at each stage so it is important that any comments we receive relate to the latest version of the Local Plan.

Can I make my comments to the inspector?

4.6 In order for your comments to be heard before the inspector, you must make them during the six-week statutory consultation period set out by the Council. Anyone objecting to the plan who made comments at this stage has the right to be heard by the inspector either in writing or orally by appearing at a hearing session.

What happens to my comments after the six week statutory period?

4.7 All the comments received during this period will be sent on to the inspector. This is anticipated to be in June 2018. You will then be contacted in due course about the arrangements for the hearing sessions. It is anticipated that they will begin around September 2018.