

# STAFFORDSHIRE MOORLANDS LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

## Agenda

Session 2 – 13.30 Tuesday 9 October 2018

### Matter 2

#### Strategy and Strategic Policies

The matter considers whether the strategy for the distribution of development is justified and whether strategic policies are positively prepared, effective and consistent with national policy. Specific sites will be discussed during Week 2 of the hearings.

#### Issues:

##### 1. The spatial distribution of development

*1.1 Is the strategy for the distribution of development justified (Policy SS3)?*

The Council refers to the Core Strategy (CS), Development Capacity Studies, Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Sustainability Appraisal (SA) in supporting the distribution.

Supplementary Question – *Is the quantum of development proposed within Leek, Biddulph and Cheadle deliverable taking into account past performance?*

*1.2 Are the changes from the distribution in the CS for Cheadle and the Rural Areas justified?*

The Council notes development constraints, including the Green Belt, and the availability of suitable sites as key factors in underpinning the change.

*1.3 Should more growth be targeted to the rural areas, particularly the larger villages, to enhance and maintain their vitality and viability and increase the supply of affordable housing?*

The Council notes the ability of villages to deliver housing through windfalls and rural exception sites.

*1.4 Does the housing allocation at Blythe Bridge (300 dwellings) distort the strategy and the approach to the rural area by proposing a large proportion of dwellings in one place which will primarily serve the needs of the Stoke-on-Trent conurbation (65% of the dwellings to be allocated in the rural area)? Would an alternative approach of distributing allocations over a number of smaller villages be more sustainable?*

The Council notes the availability of services in Blythe Bridge, including the railway station, the existing permission on part of the allocation and that other villages are not as sustainable.

Supplementary Question – *In view of its location should Blythe Vale be considered as a separate category of development serving the Stoke HMA?*

*1.5 Is the level of growth at Biddulph (20%) reflective of its role as a one of the main*

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*towns in the District?*

The Council suggest that the level of growth is reflective of Biddulph's role whilst recognising the Green Belt constraint.

*1.6 Should the Plan be more prescriptive in providing housing requirements for each settlement?*

The Council notes that the LP sets out a housing requirement for the 3 towns and the rural areas and that more detail is provided for those parishes designated as neighbourhood plan areas. More prescriptive requirements for the villages are not a requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework).

## **2. Settlement hierarchy**

*2.1 Is the settlement hierarchy within Policy SS2 and the position of villages within the hierarchy (Policies SS8 and SS9) justified?*

The Council notes that the hierarchy is consistent with the CS and is explained in the Policy Topic Paper.

Supplementary Questions – *Do all the settlements referred to within Policy SS9 comprise 'smaller villages' or would some be better included as part of the countryside and subject to Policy SS10?*

*Are there other 'settlements' which should be categorised as 'smaller villages'?*

*2.2 Should Leekbrook be treated as part of Leek or as a Larger Village within the Settlement Hierarchy rather than as a Smaller Village taking into account the character and accessibility of the settlement?*

The Council notes that Leekbrook is not materially different to when it was identified in the CS as a Smaller Village and that industrial development is often peripheral to towns.

Supplementary Question – *Is it logical to retain Leekbrook as a smaller village taking into account the employment allocations and its relatively sustainable location?*

## **3. Settlement Boundaries and the Countryside**

*3.1 Is the approach to settlement boundaries for the larger and smaller villages justified (Policy SS2) particularly the removal of boundaries for the smaller villages?*

The Council refers to the justification set out in the Policy Topic Paper.

Supplementary Question – *Should the settlement boundaries for the larger villages be drawn less tightly to increase the scope for infill opportunities?*

*3.2 Will the removal of settlement boundaries for the smaller villages lead to uncertainty and unsustainable patterns of development?*

The Council considers that development will be managed appropriately by the criteria based approach (Policy H1 in particular). It is noted that the 1998 LP only defined boundaries for 11 of the smaller villages.

*3.3 Are the policies relating to development within and adjoining settlements justified and consistent with national policy (Policies SS2, SS8, SS9 and H1)?*

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The Council believe that they are and provide a clear indication of how a decision maker should react to a development proposal.

*3.4 Do the policies provide sufficient scope for brownfield development within and close to villages?*

The Council point to the provisions of Policies H1 and SS10.

*3.5. Is the approach to 'limited infill' justified and consistent with national policy, particularly in relation to the larger and smaller villages?*

The Council draws comparisons with Green Belt infill policies in the Framework (para 89). The approach will support more flexibility in developing in villages.

Supplementary Question – *Should the criteria be more flexible as in the examples of the Cornwall and High Peak Local Plans?*

*3.6 Will the reliance on windfalls in villages through Policies SS2, SS8, SS9 and H1 undermine the ability of development to provide affordable housing and contribute to infrastructure?*

The Council point out that the LP does not put a ceiling on the number of units that can be permitted.

*3.7 Is Policy SS10 too restrictive in only providing for development which has an essential need to be located in the countryside?*

The Council suggests that the policy allows more than just development with an essential need e.g. rural diversification and conversions.

## **4. Strategic Policies SS1 and SS1a**

*4.1 Are the development principles within Policy SS1 justified and consistent with national policy?*

The Council point out that the policy reflects the similar policy in the CS (SS1) which was found sound.

*4.2 Is Policy SS1a necessary in that it largely repeats national policy contained within paragraph 14 of the Framework?*

The Council is prepared to remove the policy through an MM, if considered appropriate.

## **5. Green Belt.**

*5.1 Have exceptional circumstances been demonstrated to justify the alteration to Green Belt boundaries? This question is targeted at the in principle approach to the release of Green Belt land within in LP. Specific sites will be dealt with under Matter 8.*

The Council considers that development requirements cannot be met without green belt release. The alternatives would not be satisfactory. Even as it is a reduced number of homes are planned in the Green Belt (rural areas and Biddulph) compared to earlier iterations of the LP.

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*5.2 How should the LP be modified to demonstrate exceptional circumstances, assuming that such circumstances have been justified?*

The Council refer to MM4 which sets out the high level 'exceptional circumstances'.

*5.3 Should more land be released from the Green Belt to provide areas of 'safeguarded land' to meet longer-term development needs?*

The Council do not consider this necessary given the need to keep development options open.

Supplementary Question – *How will the long term development needs of Biddulph and Cheadle be met?*

*5.4 Do exceptional circumstances exist to release more Green Belt land around some of the larger villages such as Biddulph Moor, Blythe Bridge, Brown Edge, Cheddleton, Endon and Werrington?*

The Council considers that the LP makes sufficient provision without such release.

Supplementary Question – *Are additional Green Belt releases needed to provide sufficient market and affordable housing in the rural settlements?*

*5.5 Are policies SS2, SS8 and SS9 consistent with national Green Belt policy?*

MM2 proposes changes to Policy SS2 whereas Policies SS8 and SS9 cross reference with Policy H1 which refers to national policy.

*5.6 Is it clear which Smaller Villages are to be 'washed over' by Green Belt and which are to be excluded from the Green Belt by retention of a settlement boundary and is the distinction between these villages justified?*

The Council states that no further villages are to be washed over compared to the 1998 proposals map taking into account the Green Belt review (SD 22.4).

Note – *Clarification is still required in relation to smaller villages excluded from the Green Belt. The Maps in Appendix 5 indicate that village boundaries are to be removed.*

## **Main Evidence Base**

SD 6 – SA

SD 8 – Infrastructure Delivery Plan Reports

SD.13.5 – Policy and Strategy Topic Paper

SD 21 – Development Capacity Studies

SD.22.4, 22.6 and 22.7 – Green Belt Review Studies

EL1.001b - Council response to Inspector's Preliminary questions

EL3.001a - Schedule of Main Modifications

## **Participants**

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC)

EL2.047

Peter Cowie LPS54

EL2.004

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Councillor Chris Woods LPS3	
Madelaine Lovatt LPS291	
Knights for Harlequin Development LPS526	EL2.002
Advance Planning for Seabridge Development Ltd - LPS384	EL2.003
Lynne Brunt LPS513	EL2.059
Damian EmeryS LPS117	EL2.062
Denis Hurst LPS117	EL2.060
Diana Gardner LPS137	EL2.061
Walsingham Planning for Mr Weaver LPS181	EL2.032
Thomas Bode for Mrs Thalia Bode LPS42	EL2.036
Emery Planning for Wainhomes (North West) Ltd LPS551	EL2.031
Emery Planning for Mr and Mrs Webb LPS318	EL2.007
Ken Wainman Associates Ltd for Mr and Mrs Gibbins LPS101	EL2.010
Ken Wainman Associates Ltd LPS102	EL2.006
Turley for St Modwen Homes (LPS131)	EL2.005
David Nixon LPS174	EL2.011
Rachel Finney LPS490	EL2.009
Ken Wainman Associates Ltd for Mr N Mountford LPS50	EL2.008
Issue 1 Fradley Estates LPS505	EL2.037a
Fradley Estates LPS505	EL2.037b
Issue 3 Fradley Estates LP512	EL2.012
Fradley Estates LPS512	EL2.012a
Kingsley Parish Council LPS250	EL2.038a
Kingsley Parish Council LPS250	EL2.038b
Kingsley Parish Council LPS250	EL2.038c
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013a
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013b
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013c
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013d
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013e
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013f
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013g
Rob Duncan LPS519	EL2.013h
Harris Lamb for Muller Property Group LPS542	EL2.063
Paul Housiaux LPS453	EL2.064
CBRE Ltd for Ollerton Estates LLP LPS271	EL2.065
WW Planning LPS323	EL2.034
WW Planning LPS323	EL2.035
WW planning LPS309	EL2.033
WW Planning LPS331	EL2.021

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Mr J Steele LPS140	
Dean Lewis Estates LPS278	
Richard Goodall LPS534	
Mr William Henry Stanley + Mike Seddon LPS68	
Paul Windmill for Mrs Susan Kneill-Boxley LPS459	EL2.075
David Walters LPS48	EL2.071
Paul Dean LPS119	EL2.076
Cheadle Unite LPS429	EL2.030

## **Statements**

Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC)

Peter Cowie LPS54

Councillor Chris Woods LPS3

Madelaine Lovatt LPS291

Knights for Harlequin Development LPS526

Advance Planning for Seabridge Development Ltd - LPS384

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Denis Hurst LPS117

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Walsingham Planning for Mr Weaver LPS181

Mrs Thalia Bode LPS42

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Ken Wainman Associates Ltd for Mr and Mrs Gibbins LPS101

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Turley for St Modwen Homes (LPS131)

David Nixon LPS174

Rachel Finney LPS490

Ken Wainman Associates Ltd for Mr N Mountford LPS50

Issue 1 Fradley Estates LPS505

Fradley Estates LPS505

Issue 3 Fradley Estates LP512

Fradley Estates LPS512

Kingsley Parish Council LPS250

Kingsley Parish Council LPS250

Kingsley Parish Council LPS250

Rob Duncan LPS519

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Paul Windmill for Mrs Susan Kneill-Boxley LPS459  
David Walters LPS48  
Paul Dean LPS119  
Cheadle Unite LPS429