

Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020 - 2040

Issues and Options Consultation Non-Technical Summary February & March 2020

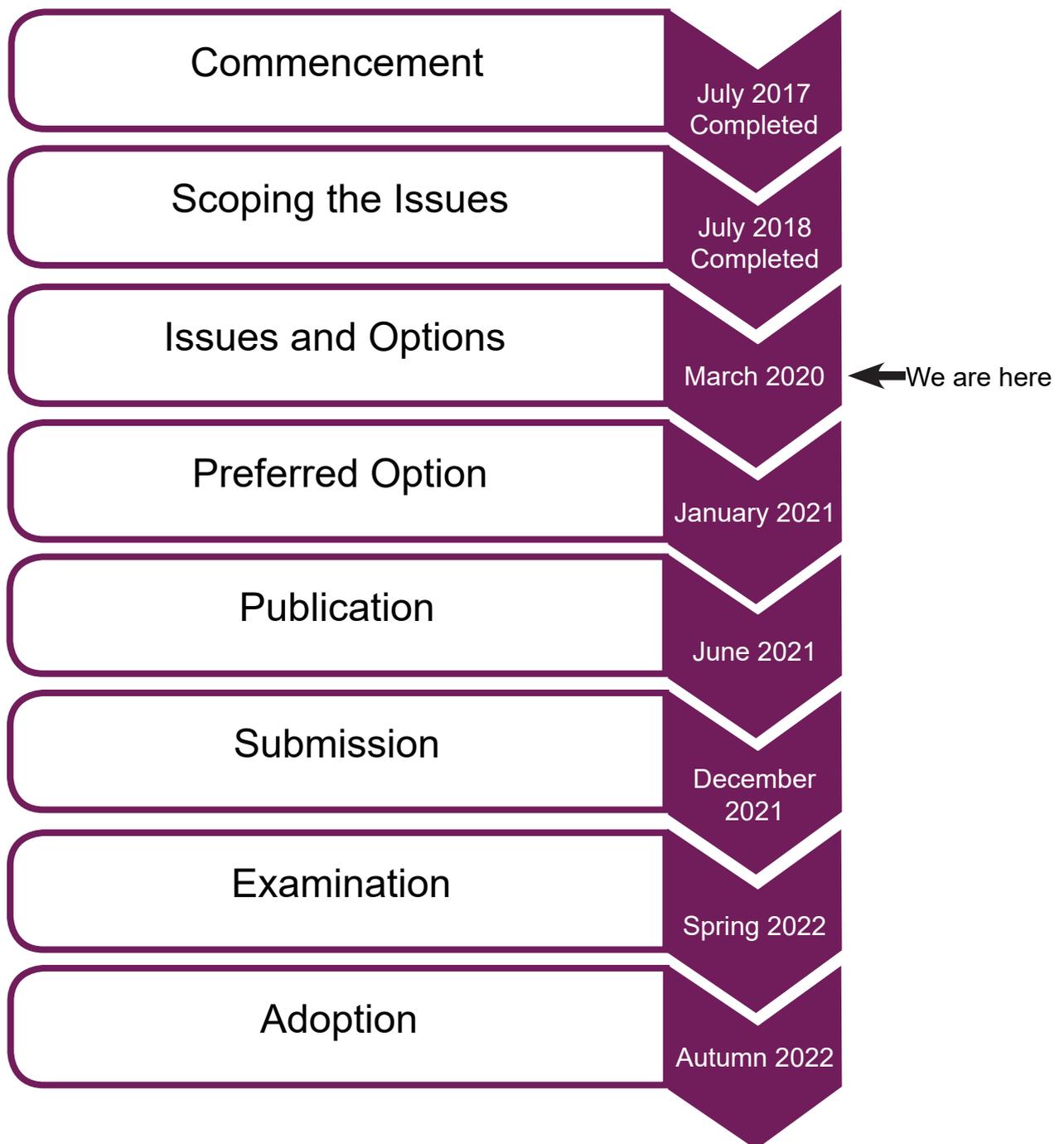


1. What is the new Local Plan?

- 1.1 The new Local Plan will set out where new development could take place in the future. It will also contain policies that the Council will use to decide planning applications. The plan will cover the years 2020 to 2040.
- 1.2 Planning law requires us to review our Local Plan every five years. National planning policies have recently changed, and the new plan will take account of those changes.

2. What is the Issues and Options consultation?

- 2.1 We are seeking your views on the planning issues the Borough faces, including where new homes, jobs and other facilities should be located. This consultation is one of the steps towards putting in place the Council's New Local Plan. The process is shown below:





3. How do I take part?

3.1 The consultation runs until **12.00 noon on Tuesday 31 March 2020**.

3.2 We strongly encourage you to respond using the pro-forma available on the council's website by clicking on the following link:

<https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/forward-planning-consultations>

You can send your responses by email to:

forwardplanningconsultations@staffordbc.gov.uk

3.3 Or by post to:

Forward Planning, Stafford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Riverside, Stafford, ST16 3AQ

3.4 Please come along to one of our drop-in events:

Date	Time	Venue
Monday 24 February 2020	4 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Jubilee Room, Eccleshall Community Centre
Wednesday 26 February 2020	4 p.m. - 7 p.m.	Hixon Memorial Hall
Saturday 29 February 2020	12 noon - 4 p.m.	Stafford Central Library
Tuesday 3 March 2020	4 p.m. - 8 p.m.	Westbridge Room, Christchurch, Stone

4. How many new homes do we need?

4.1 We have developed seven different scenarios for how many homes we need between 2020 and 2040. We have rejected two of these scenarios because they indicate a housing need below the minimum figure required by Government policy. The remaining scenarios are set out in the table below:

Scenario	Description	Total new homes 2020-2040	New homes each year
A) Standard method	Housing need calculated using the Government's standard method	8,160	408
D) Cambridge Econometrics baseline	Models the number of homes needed to accommodate the future workforce based on an employment growth projection	8,467 (9,518)	435 (489)

Scenario	Description	Total new homes 2020-2040	New homes each year
E) Jobs growth policy on	Models the number of homes needed to accommodate the future workforce, taking into account additional employment growth due to potential major new projects including Stafford Station Gateway and a possible new garden community	12,942 (14,215)	647 (711)
F) Past trends jobs growth	Models the number of homes needed to accommodate the future workforce if jobs growth continues at the same rate as between 2000 and 2018 in the Borough	13,668 (14,527)	683 (746)
G) Jobs growth 50% boost	Models the number of homes needed to accommodate the future workforce based on an employment growth projection (Scenario D) but with a 50% uplift in the number of future jobs	10,798 (11,939)	540 (597)

4.2 The numbers in brackets for scenarios D) to G) reflect an adjustment to account for younger people forming new households at a higher rate than recent trends. The numbers not in brackets assume trends-based rates of household formation.

4.3 To illustrate the scale of these potential scenarios, in 2011 there were approximately 7,400 homes in Stone.

5. How many homes are already planned?

5.1 We have already planned around 6,000 new homes. These are unbuilt homes with planning permission or land identified for housebuilding in our current Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031.

5.2 We need to decide whether or not to discount these homes from the future housing provision over the years 2020-2040.

6. Where should the new homes be located?

6.1 At this stage we have identified six broad options for where new homes could be built:

Growth Option 1: Stafford and Stone only focussed development.
Growth Option 2: Stafford, Stone and Key Service Village focussed development (business as usual – reflecting the approach in the current Plan for Stafford Borough).
Growth Option 3: Disperse development across the new settlement hierarchy.
Growth Option 4: Focus all new development at one or more new garden communities only.
Growth Option 5: Disperse development across the new settlement hierarchy and also at one or more new garden communities / major urban extensions.
Growth Option 6: Allocate development to settlements linked by existing transport corridors. This option also potentially employs one or more garden communities / major urban extensions.

6.2 At this stage, we think options 3, 5 and 6 best align with national planning policies.

7. What is the new settlement hierarchy?

7.1 In 2018, we asked residents and businesses what the settlement hierarchy should look like. We are proposing:

Tier	Settlement Category	Description
1	Stafford	Largest urban area in the Borough with a regionally significant service centre role providing employment, retail and other facilities, and a key role in driving growth. Stafford also includes Baswich, Berkswich, Doxey, and Walton-on-the-Hill.
2	Stone	The second largest town in the Borough, providing employment, retail and other facilities for a wider area
3	North Staffordshire Urban Areas	These areas are located in the north of the Borough and include Clayton; Meir Heath / Rough Close; and Blythe Bridge.
4	Large Settlements	Eccleshall; Gnosall; Great Haywood; Hixon; Little Haywood and Colwich
5	Medium Settlements	Brocton A34; Church Eaton; Derrington; Great Bridgeford; Haughton; Hilderstone; Hyde Lea; Weston; Woodseaves.
6	Small Settlements	Adbaston; Aston-by-Stone; Bradley; Cold Meece; Cotes Heath; Creswell; Croxton; Hopton; Milwich; Moreton; Norbury; Norton Bridge; Ranton; Sandon; Salt; Seighford.

8. What about Green Belt settlements?

8.1 The settlement hierarchy does not include Green Belt settlements. The planning status of Green Belt settlements is set out in the table below:

Green Belt status	Settlements	Redevelopment/Development implications
<p><i>Surrounded by Green Belt beyond the built up area</i> Situated within Green Belt but development is permissible inside the settlement based on national policy.</p>	Barlaston; Fulford;	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New development within the settlement boundary meaning infill development, redevelopment etc. is permissible subject to other constraints (e.g. Conservation Area). • Extension of the settlement boundary to permit more development would require a revision to the Green Belt boundary
<p><i>Green Belt designation covers the built up area as well as surrounding land</i></p>	Barlaston Park; Meaford; Oulton; Stallington; Trentham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The entire settlement is subject to the Green Belt restrictions. • Only permissible development / redevelopment as detailed by National policy. • To remove “washed over” status or the introduction of a settlement boundary would require a review of the Green Belt
<p><i>Bordered by Green Belt</i> Where part of the settlement boundary is formed by Green Belt</p>	Brocton A34; Cotes Heath; Hilderstone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The direction of possible expansion of the settlement is limited by the presence of Green Belt

9. What are garden communities?

9.1 The Government defines a garden community as a purpose built new settlement, or major extension to an existing town with:

- a clear identity and attractive environment, including green space;
- a mix of homes, including affordable and self-build;
- job opportunities;
- transport infrastructure, including roads, buses and cycle route; and
- schools, community and health centres.

10. What are the options for a new garden community in Stafford Borough?

10.1 We have identified the following areas where a new garden community / major urban extensions could be built:

i. Land north and east of Gnosall. This area of land could accommodate up to 3,500 new homes and supporting employment.
ii. Land between Gnosall and Haughton north of the A518 between Stafford and Newport. This area of land could accommodate up to 3,250 new homes and supporting employment.
iii. Seighford, a largely agricultural site with an airfield and established employment land either side of the B5405 to the west of Stafford town. This area of land could accommodate up to 5,250 new homes and supporting employment.
iv. Land to the north of Redhill Business Park and to the west of the A34 near to M6 Jn 14 Stafford North. A large tract of land that could accommodate up to 5,000 new homes and supporting employment land.
v. Meecebrook, focussed around Cold Meece south of Swynnerton. This has the potential for up to 11,500 new homes and supporting employment land.
vi. Hixon. An ex-WW2 airfield located to the east of the Borough. Much of the site is currently unused and is partly developed as an industrial park. The site on the edge of Hixon could be expanded to accommodate up to 2,750 new dwellings and supporting employment land.
vii. Land East of Weston. There are a number of environmental constraints in this area but there is potential to bring forward up to 2,000 new homes and supporting employment land.

11. How much employment land do we need?

11.1 Our economic development needs assessment identifies different options for how much employment land we might need:

Scenario	Description	New jobs 2020-2040	Land requirement in hectares
1) CE Baseline	Cambridge Econometrics (CE) economic forecast	5,929	69.07
2) CE Regeneration	Models the effect of jobs growth at Stafford Station Gateway and a potential garden community	12,473	108.82
3) CE 50% Boost	CE economic forecast + 50% jobs growth	8,900	78.56
4) Past trends jobs growth	Past trends jobs growth 2000-2018	13,126	94.18

Scenario	Description	New jobs 2020-2040	Land requirement in hectares
5) Local Housing Need setting out level of jobs growth	Labour supply arising from the Government's approved methodology for the determination of housing need	5,588	67.98
6) Past take up rates	Past take up rates of employment land	N/A	181.32

11.2 In comparison:

- during 2018-2019, 64,400 Borough residents were employed,
- the new employment area on the Weston Road east of Stafford is approximately 20 hectares, whilst a football pitch is approximately 0.71 hectares.

11.3 The evidence suggests that 25% of the new employment land should be for offices, and the rest should be industrial and warehousing.

12. Where could new workplaces be built?

12.1 Under the current Plan for Stafford Borough 2011-2031, 56% of new employment land is in Stafford, 12% in Stone and 32% in the rest of the borough.

12.2 The 32% of employment land planned in the rest of the borough is mainly at the recognised industrial estates at:

- Hixon
- Hixon Airfield, Hixon
- Ladfordfields Seighford
- Moorfields, Cotes Heath
- Pasturefields, Hixon
- Raleigh Hall, Eccleshall



12.3 We are seeking opinions on where new workplaces should be built. One option is to locate some of the new workplaces we need at a garden community / major urban extension.

13. What other topics does the issues and options consultation cover?

13.1 The new Local Plan is an opportunity to update the policies we use to decide planning applications. The issues and options paper includes the following topics:

- Options for responding to climate change
- The amount of new floor space for shops, cafes and restaurants that is needed
- Housing density and the mix of housing sizes
- Internal space standards for housing
- Affordable housing, self and custom build housing, and specialist housing including accessible housing and wheelchair housing
- The natural environment, including trees
- Landscape character and the historic environment
- Design
- Local Green Space, play space and sports facilities
- Air quality, waste and recycling
- Health and wellbeing
- Sustainable transport and parking, including lorry parking

13.2 You can find out more about these issues by reading the full Issues and Options consultation document.

14. When will I have a chance to comment on development sites?

14.1 Later in 2020, there will be an opportunity to comment on development site options that could meet the Borough's needs for new homes and jobs.

15. How do I find out more?

15.1 The full Issues and Options consultation document, together with the response form and supporting evidence reports, is on the Council's website by clicking on the links below:

<https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/forward-planning-consultations>

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