

Sean Roberts

From: Programme Officer
Subject: FW: The Plan for Stafford Borough - Settlement Boundaries (N2.11)

Re: Homework item N2.11 - Settlement Boundaries

We note that the Council have identified 4 possible options to deal with concerns relating to settlement boundaries. The Council have confirmed their preference for Option 1 which delays the establishment of a boundary until work commences on the Site Allocations DPD.

None of the options put forward suggest the Council are prepared to consider drawing a new boundary so that it could be considered along with any other main modifications to the Plan. In our view this approach would be more sound and we would urge the Council to consider this at this juncture.

The Plan itself clearly underlines the importance of settlement boundaries in delivering the “*necessary scale and distribution of housing and employment development set out in Spatial Principles SP2, SP3, SP4 and SP5*” (para. 6.62 The Plan for Stafford). To delay identifying boundaries would severely undermine the effectiveness of these policies for an indefinite period of time while the Council prepare their Site Allocations DPD.

We have previously raised concerns regarding the absence of properly drawn settlement boundaries in representations to the Council. The boundaries set by saved policy HOU2 were only ever intended to control housing development. Given the Council’s current policy ambitions, the 1998 boundaries simply would not have performed an effective mechanism for supporting the sustainable settlement hierarchy.

In light of the above we would strongly recommend that the Council establish new settlement boundaries as a main medication to this Local Plan rather than delay until work commences on the Site Allocations DPD.

Kind regards,

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