

	<p><b>Local Plan</b> Publication Stage Representation Form</p>	<p><b>Ref:</b></p> <p><b>(For official use only)</b></p>
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**Name of the Local Plan to which this representation relates:**

**South Staffordshire Council  
Local Plan 2023 - 2041**

**Please return to South Staffordshire Council by 12 noon Friday 31 May 2024**

This form has two parts –

Part A – Personal Details: need only be completed once.

Part B – Your representation(s). Please fill in a separate sheet for each representation you wish to make.

## Part A

### 1. Personal Details\*

*\* If an agent is appointed, please complete only the Title, Name and Organisation (if applicable) boxes below but complete the full contact details of the agent in 2.*

### 2. Agent's Details (if applicable)

Title	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Miss"/>
First Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Helen"/>
Last Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Lowe"/>
Job Title (where relevant)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Director"/>
Organisation (where relevant)	<input type="text" value="Payne Hicks Beach Trust Corporation Limited"/>	<input type="text" value="Stansgate Planning"/>
Address Line 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="4 The Courtyard"/>
Line 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Timothy's Bridge Road"/>
Line 3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Stratford-upon-Avon"/>
Line 4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Post Code	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="CV37 9NP"/>
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="01789 414097"/>
E-mail Address	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="helen@stansgate.co.uk"/>



## Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Name or Organisation: Payne Hicks Beach Trust Corporation Limited

3. To which part of the Local Plan does this representation relate?

Paragraph	5.9-5.17 & 5.21	Policy	DS4	Policies Map	
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4. Do you consider the Local Plan is :

(1) Legally compliant	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(2) Sound	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
(3) Complies with the Duty to co-operate	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Please tick as appropriate

5. Please give details of why you consider the Local Plan is not legally compliant or is unsound or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate. Please be as precise as possible.

If you wish to support the legal compliance or soundness of the Local Plan or its compliance with the duty to co-operate, please also use this box to set out your comments.

The Publication Plan fails to provide for sufficient housing delivery to meet the needs of South Staffordshire District alongside a proportionate level of housing to assist in addressing the unmet needs of the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBBCHMA). In this respect the Plan has not been positively prepared, is not effective and is not justified in its substantial change of position since the previous 2022 Publication Plan. The Plan is not therefore sound.

Paragraph 5.12 confirms that South Staffordshire form part of the West Midlands Development Needs Group where discussions are ongoing in relation to updated evidence to demonstrate housing market area shortfalls. However, there is no indication that the level of unmet housing need arising from Birmingham and the Black Country Authorities will have diminished or disappeared since the previous Strategic Growth Study of 2018.

As the previous 2022 Publication Plan proposed to include 4,000 homes to assist in meeting the substantial unmet needs of the GBBCHMA, the reduction of this down to just 640 homes in the current Publication Plan is not justified or based on appropriate or up-to-date evidence.

The current Publication Plan approach is based on the changes to the NPPF that came forward in December 2023. Paragraph 145 of the December 2023 NPPF states that *“Once established, there is no requirement for Green Belt boundaries to be reviewed or changed when plans are being prepared or updated. Authorities*



*may choose to review and alter Green Belt boundaries where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified*". The latter sentiment is the same as that of the previous versions of the NPPF, where Green Belt boundaries can be altered where there are exceptional circumstances. The only change to national policy is therefore a confirmation that there is no requirement to review Green Belt boundaries, however, this was always the case, just not explicitly stated.

Paragraph 140 of both the 2021 NPPF and the September 2023 NPPF stated that Green Belt boundaries should only be altered where exceptional circumstances are fully evidenced and justified. This test remains the same and there are not any more stringent tests to be applied now than there were in respect of the previous 2022 Publication Plan.

The current Publication Plan takes the approach that there are not exceptional circumstances that fully justify the release of Green Belt land to accommodate new development. However, as the test to justify Green Belt release and boundary reviews within the NPPF has not changed since the 2022 Publication Plan there is no national policy change that would rationalise this change of approach over that of the previous Publication Plan.

As around 80% of the South Staffordshire District falls within Green Belt, significant new development is likely to require either works within the Green Belt or a redrawing of the Green Belt boundaries. The plan-making process provides the appropriate and correct opportunity to consider development requirements for the District and to review Green Belt boundaries where necessary.

Inevitably the Green Belt within South Staffordshire District is concentrated within the southern part of the authority area in closest proximity to the Birmingham and Black Country conurbation. These areas surrounding the Black Country authorities are likely to be the most sustainable for housing growth given the proximity and connectivity to facilities and services and nearby higher order settlements. A review of Green Belt boundaries to enable housing growth around the southern part of the District would therefore represent the most sustainable approach to housing delivery. This is recognised in Paragraph 147 of the NPPF where it is stated that when reviewing Green Belt boundaries, the need and consequences of promoting sustainable development should be considered, including channelling development towards urban areas inside the Green Belt.

However, the approach of the current Publication Plan is to minimise the level of housing to be accommodated and to then concentrate this growth at non-Green Belt sites. Whilst growth avoiding use of Green Belt would be an appropriate strategy where this enables a sufficient level of housing to be delivered, the requirement for the Plan to be positively prepared and to be based on effective joint working with neighbouring authorities on strategic matters, renders this approach inappropriate and unsound in the case of South Staffordshire.

It has not been demonstrated that there is any significant reduction in the level of unmet housing need arising from the GBBCHMA and that South Staffordshire should therefore reduce its intended contribution towards meeting this unmet need. In order to assist in meeting the unmet housing needs of the HMA it is entirely appropriate, fully evidenced and justified that a review of Green Belt boundaries should be undertaken as part of the plan-making process. This should form part of this Local Plan and an assessment of Green Belt boundaries to enable the provision of an additional 3,360 new homes (over the numbers set out in the Publication Plan 2024) across the plan period must be undertaken in order for the Plan to be considered sound.



The need to provide new homes to assist with delivering some of the unmet housing needs of the GBBCHMA was considered to be appropriate exceptional circumstances under the 2022 Publication Plan to require a review of Green Belt boundaries within the South Staffordshire area. There has been no change to national policy in relation to the level of test needing to be passed to enable a Green Belt review at the plan-making stage. The only change since the 2022 Publication Plan relates to a determination to underprovide new homes for the neighbouring GBBCHMA authorities and therefore not assist in meeting their unmet need. On this basis the current Publication Plan cannot be considered to have been positively prepared, justified or effective and as such must be viewed as unsound.

(Continue on a separate sheet /expand box if necessary)

6. Please set out the modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant and sound, in respect of any legal compliance or soundness matters you have identified at 5 above. (Please note that non-compliance with the duty to co-operate is incapable of modification at examination). You will need to say why each modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

The Publication Plan needs to include a far greater allowance of new housing to assist in meeting the unmet housing needs of the GBBCHMA. There is no evidence to demonstrate that the previously proposed 4,000 new homes to assist in meeting this need are no longer required.

Assisting in meeting the significant shortfall in housing arising from the HMA and across neighbouring authorities is an exceptional circumstance sufficient to justify a review of Green Belt boundaries within the South Staffordshire area in order to allow for sustainable housing growth. A Green Belt boundary review of the most sustainable locations within close proximity to facilities, services and higher order settlements should therefore form part of the overall strategy for housing growth.

(Continue on a separate sheet /expand box if necessary)

**Please note:** In your representation you should provide succinctly all the evidence and supporting information necessary to support your representation and your suggested modification(s). You should not assume that you will have a further opportunity to make submissions.

**After this stage, further submissions may only be made if invited by the Inspector, based on the matters and issues he or she identifies for examination.**

7. If your representation is seeking a modification to the plan, do you consider it necessary to participate in examination hearing session(s)?

No, I do not wish to participate in hearing session(s)

Yes, I wish to participate in hearing session(s)

Please note that while this will provide an initial indication of your wish to participate in hearing session(s), you may be asked at a later point to confirm your request to participate.

8. If you wish to participate in the hearing session(s), please outline why you consider this to be necessary:

It is considered necessary that matters relating to the level of unmet housing needs for the GBBCHMA are examined in detail and that a proportionate approach to the allocation of such unmet need is devised for the South Staffordshire District area in order to ensure that the Duty to Co-operate is achieved and that the plan is sound.

***Please note** the Inspector will determine the most appropriate procedure to adopt to hear those who have indicated that they wish to participate in hearing session(s). You may be asked to confirm your wish to participate when the Inspector has identified the matters and issues for examination.*

**Representations cannot be kept confidential and will be available for public scrutiny, including your name and/or organisation (if applicable). However, your contact details will not be published.**

#### **Data Protection**

Your details will be added to our Local Plans Consultation database so that we can contact you as the review progresses. South Staffordshire Council will process your personal data in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR). Our Privacy Notice can be viewed at [Data Protection \(Strategic Planning\) | South Staffordshire District Council \(sstaffs.gov.uk\)](#)

Please return the form via email to [localplans@sstaffs.gov.uk](mailto:localplans@sstaffs.gov.uk) or by post to South Staffordshire Council, Community Hub, Wolverhampton Road, Codsall, South Staffordshire WV8 1PX