

	<p>Local Plan Publication Stage Representation Form</p>	<p>Ref:</p> <p>(For official use only)</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)

<p>Title <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>First Name <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Last Name <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Job Title (where relevant) <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Organisation (where relevant) <input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="Taylor Wimpey UK Limited"/></p> <p>Address Line 1 <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Line 2 <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Line 3 <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Line 4 <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Post Code <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>Telephone Number <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p>E-mail Address (where relevant) <input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p>	<p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="Miss"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="Jessica"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="Graham"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="Associate Director"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="Savills (UK) Limited"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="55 Colmore Row"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="Birmingham"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="B3 2AA"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="0121 634 8494"/></p> <p><input style="width: 90%;" type="text" value="jgraham@savills.com"/></p>
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Part B – Please use a separate sheet for each representation

Name or Organisation:

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

Paragraph Policy Policies Map

4. Do you consider the Local Plan is :

(1) Legally compliant	Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input 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 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.

We **object** to Draft Policy SA3 and consider that insufficient land has been provided to meet the excessively high housing land shortfall in the GBBCHMA and that Land at Cross Green (site references 646a and 646b) should be included as a strategic development location.

As our response to Draft Policy DS5 states, we object to the proposed spatial strategy and level of growth being planned for to meet local and wider housing market area needs.

Land at Cross Green was identified in the Preferred Options (November 2021) and Pre-Submission Publication Plan (November 2022) consultation documents (Draft Policy SA2) to deliver employment-led growth adjacent to the Black Country in order to assist in meeting the housing shortfall arising from the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area ('GBBCHMA'). The site was allocated to deliver a minimum of 1,200 homes, a community hub/village centre, access to the ROF Featherstone employment site, safeguarded land to deliver a future rail-based park and ride, a new primary/first school and a network of green and blue infrastructure.

Land at Cross Green provides a unique opportunity to create a sustainable, distinctive and attractive residential development which safeguards the potential for the longer-term delivery of a rail-based parkway station. The site is promoted for an infrastructure-led residential development, adjacent to ROF Featherstone which is a priority strategic employment site for the Council, which responds to the site's context and emerging policy requirements, to ensure a high quality, sustainable new village is created. The benefits of the Site and development opportunity it presents are discussed further in this response and in the submitted Development Vision Document (May 2024).



Exceptional Circumstances

The Green Belt Review undertaken by SSDC in 2018 identifies the Cross Green site across two parcels (sub-parcel S44A, West of Brinsford Prison North, and sub-parcel S20D, West of Featherstone Prison South). The level of harm associated with the release of the land from the Green Belt is assessed as moderate-high for parcel S44A and very high for parcel S20D.

EDP has undertaken a review of the Green Belt Review and their appraisal has been submitted with this response. EDP have concluded that the development of the site will impact on the openness of the Green Belt at a local level, however due to the large scale of the designation, this would not significantly undermine the openness of the wider coverage of the West Midlands Green Belt. We have set out below an extract from the submitted Green Belt Position Note (2024) which sets out a summary of SSDC’s findings compared to EDP’s. EDP consider that the contribution that Land at Cross Green plays to the Green Belt purposes is less than the wider parcel assessed in the Council’s evidence base.

The Site					
Appraiser:	Purpose 1: Checking the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Purpose 2: Prevent neighbouring towns from merging	Purpose 3: Assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Purpose 4: Preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Purpose 5: Assist urban regeneration, by encouraging recycling of derelict and other urban land
SSDC (S44 Land Parcel)	Strong Contribution	Moderate Contribution	Strong Contribution	Weak/No Contribution	Strong Contribution
SSDC (S20 Land Parcel)	Strong Contribution	Moderate Contribution	Strong Contribution	Weak/No Contribution	Strong Contribution
EDP (the site)	Moderate Contribution	No Contribution	Moderate Contribution	No Contribution	Strong Contribution

The Green Belt Exceptional Circumstances Topic Paper (November 2022) outlines the exceptional circumstances which justified the removal and allocation of Land at Cross Green. Paragraphs 4.9 to 4.11 stated *“There are insufficient non green belt site within close proximity to the Black Country combination to meet the spatial strategy requirements, especially taking into account the contribution of 4000 homes the plan is seeking to make towards the unmet housing needs of the GBBCHMA. Whilst the site has some areas of higher Green Belt harm and landscape sensitivity than other land on the northern edge of the Black Country, it offers a unique opportunity to align housing growth with the strategic employment sites at i54 and ROF Featherstone and can accommodate safeguarded land for a potential rail-based park and ride site. Therefore, the release of Green Belt land on the northern edge of the Black Country is required. Land at Cross Green has been demonstrated to be the most appropriate site option through the site assessment process”* [Savills Emphasis Added].

As demonstrated in our responses to Draft Policy DS4 and DS5, the infrastructure opportunities associated with the allocation of Land at Cross Green (access road to ROF Featherstone and the Brinsford park and ride) are still aspirations of the Council and are included within the 2024 evidence base, despite the draft Cross Green allocation being removed. It is therefore considered that, despite SSDC’s change in strategy, there are still exceptional circumstances which exist to justify the removal of the site from the Green Belt and allocate it for development. We therefore object to Draft Policy SA3 as there is no justification for the removal of the allocation of Land at Cross Green, nor is this approach considered effective in the context of the GBBCHMA shortfall.

Paragraph 147 of the NPPF states that when Green Belt release is required then “first consideration should be given to land which has been previously developed and/or is well-served by public transport”. This is only a ‘first consideration’ and does not mean that sites which



do not meet these criteria cannot still be considered for release. Planned strategic infrastructure could also be used to justify the release of land from the Green Belt, for example a park and ride facility or access road to serve a strategic employment site, as proposed on land at Cross Green.

Furthermore, the Council is proposing an increase in employment land provision compared to that which was proposed in the 2022 plan and therefore the unique opportunity that Land at Cross Green offers, to align housing growth with the delivery of strategic employment sites is even more relevant. We have submitted an 'Employment and Highways Context Plan' which shows the location of the Site in relation to key transport corridors and existing and proposed employment sites. The plan clearly demonstrates that the site is well located and highly accessible to proposed and existing jobs.

Proposed Development

The allocation of Land at Cross Green offers many unique benefits. As stated above, an updated Vision Document has been prepared in order to assist SSDC in demonstrating the key benefits that would be delivered if Land at Cross Green was allocated again in the plan as well as the exceptional circumstances which could be demonstrated to justify the release of the land from the Green Belt.

A significant amount of technical work has been prepared by Taylor Wimpey throughout the plan process to support the allocation of the Cross Green site and demonstrate its deliverability. The table below summarises the key technical work which has been produced and the work which has been updated in May 2024 and submitted with these representations. The technical work submitted clearly demonstrates that there is no known constraints which would impact on the delivery of the Site for housing. In light of the below, should the site be allocated then SSDC will clearly be able to demonstrate to any future Local Plan Inspector that Land at Cross Green is deliverable.

Technical Discipline	Work previously undertaken to inform the concept plan or submitted to SSDC (November 2022)	Updated work submitted with these representations (May 2024)
Design & Masterplan	Development Vision Document	Updated Development Vision Document Updated Development Framework Plan
Air Quality	Air Quality Technical Note	Updated Air Quality Technical Note
Arboriculture	Constraints Plan	Arboriculture Technical Note
Heritage	Heritage Technical Note	Updated Heritage Desk Based Assessment
Ecology	Ecological Technical Note	Updated Ecological Technical Note
Education & Healthcare		Education and Healthcare Report
Flood Risk & Drainage	Flood Risk Technical Note and Constraints Plan	Flood Risk & Drainage Technical Note, with illustrative drainage strategy
Transport	Strategic Transport Assessment	Transport plan (showing location of land at Cross Green relative to the strategic employment sites and the Black Country)
Landscape	Landscape Position Note Green Belt Position Note	Updated Landscape Position Note Updated Green Belt Position Note Green Infrastructure Strategy Plan Wider Green Infrastructure Network Plan
Noise	Noise Technical Note	Updated Noise & Vibration Technical Note
Utilities		Utilities Technical Note
Ground Conditions	Phase I and II Investigation	

Paragraph 74 of the NPPF states that the supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger-scale development, such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns, provided they are well located and



designed and supported by necessary infrastructure. Strategic policy-making authorities should identify suitable locations for such development where this can help meet identified needs in a sustainable way and in doing so, they should consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains (paragraph 74(a) of the NPPF). The removal of the Land at Cross Green allocation is not consistent with national policy, as it fails to consider the opportunities presented by planned investment in infrastructure, such as the provision of a strategic park and ride station, and the planned strategic employment site, ROF Featherstone, to the east.

We therefore **object** to Draft Policy SA3 as it is not positively prepared or justified as required by paragraph 35 of the NPPF.

Site Assessment Comparison

Land at Cross Green is assessed in the Sustainability Appraisal (2024) at Table H.2.1 (Impact matrix of all reasonable alternative site assessments pre-mitigation) and Table H.4.1 (Impact matrix of all reasonable alternative site assessments post-mitigation). The site performs better overall, specifically against the economy and employment objectives, than the proposed allocation 'Land to the East of Bilbrook' (Site Reference 519) both pre- and post-mitigation in Appendix H of the Sustainability Appraisal (2024).

Despite this, in Appendix I of the Sustainability Appraisal (2024) the justification for removing the draft Cross Green Allocation is that "the site is not consistent with the Council's preferred spatial strategy and the findings of the site assessment process do not indicate that the site performs so well as to warrant departing from the preferred strategy". However, Appendix H of the Sustainability Appraisal (2022) states in the outline reasons for selection that "the site is considered to perform better than other site options and failing to consider such areas for development may result in an unsustainable pattern of development and would run contrary to the Association of Black Country Authorities' proposed use of the Green Belt/landscape evidence as set out in the Duty to Co-operate correspondence".

As set out earlier in our response, there were previously exceptional circumstances identified to justify the removal of the site from the Green Belt and allocation. The assessment in the Sustainability Appraisal (2024) shows that the site performs comparatively well, (if not better) to proposed strategic development locations proposed in the 2024 draft plan e.g. close to strategic employment locations and highly accessible. Furthermore, the Council previously found that "**failing to consider such areas for development may result in an unsustainable pattern of development**" (Appendix H Sustainability Appraisal 2022)[Savills emphasis]. The Council has not considered all reasonable alternatives, and has not justified the removal of the allocation of Land at Cross Green and the implications of its removal on the delivery of key infrastructure. The Plan has therefore not sound as it is not justified or effective (paragraph 35 of the NPPF). The previous version of the Reg19 Plan is considered to perform better in this regard.

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 Council's evidence continues to support the proposed allocation of Land at Cross Green. We request that Land at Cross Green (site references 646a and 646b) is included as a strategic development location to deliver a minimum of 1,200 dwellings, affordable housing and a specialist elderly housing element, a community hub/village centre, a transport/movement strategy which includes access onto the A449, Brinsford Lane, New Road/Old Stafford Road and to the ROF Featherstone employment site, safeguarded land which could feasibly deliver a future rail-based park and ride and a new primary/first school.

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:

To provide oral evidence and engage in the Examination discussions on this matter.

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 \(sstaffs.gov.uk\)](#)



South Staffordshire Council

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