



Solihull MBC Local Plan Publication Stage Representation Form

Ref:

(For official use only)

Name of the Local Plan to which this representation relates:

Solihull Local Plan – Draft Submission

Please return to psp@solihull.gov.uk or Policy and Engagement, Solihull MBC, Solihull, B91 3QB BY Monday 14th December 23:59

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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="Mr"/>
First Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Gary"/>
Last Name	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Stephens"/>
Job Title (where relevant)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Partner"/>
Organisation (where relevant)	<input type="text" value="Rainier Developments Limited (Stratford Road Hockley Heath)"/>	<input type="text" value="Marrons Planning"/>
Address Line 1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Bridgeway House"/>
Line 2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="Bridgeway"/>
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 6YX"/>
Telephone Number	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text" value="REDACTED"/>

E-mail Address

(where relevant)

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 :

4.(1) Legally compliant	Yes	<input type="text" value="X"/>	No	<input type="text"/>
4.(2) Sound	Yes	<input type="text"/>	No	<input type="text" value="X"/>
4 (3) Complies with the Duty to co-operate	Yes	<input type="text" value="X"/>	No	<input type="text"/>

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.

See attached paper

(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.

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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 respond to the Inspector's questions, elaborate on the points raised, and respond to any further information the Council submits.

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.*

9. Signature:

Gary Stephens

Date:

14/12/2020

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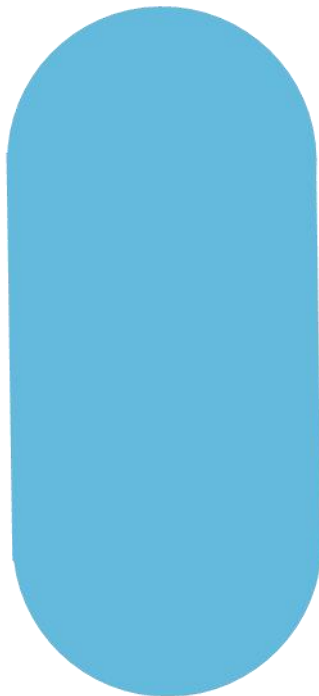
14/12/2020

Representations – Stratford Road, Hockley Heath (Site 417)

Solihull Local Plan - Draft Submission Plan

Rainier Developments Limited

December 2020





1. The following representations are made in response to the Solihull Local Plan – Draft Submission Plan (October 2020) on behalf of Rainier Developments Limited in respect of their land interests at land west of Stratford Road, Hockley Heath (Site 417). These should be read alongside the completed Representation Form.

Paragraph 523 (Sustainability Appraisal)

Question 5

2. There is not a specific section within the Plan which refers to the Sustainability Appraisal (SA), therefore this objection is made in relation to Paragraph 523 of the Plan as this is the first reference to the SA in the Plan.
3. The SA has not fairly considered reasonable alternatives in respect of levels of housing growth. In fact, the level of growth was pre-determined prior to undertaking the SA this year, and has therefore not been informed by the SA in accordance with the Framework¹.
4. Option 2 (15,000 dwellings) is the Plan's preferred approach in light of the SA, and yet higher levels of growth perform equally as well. In fact, the only tangible difference between Option 3 (16,000 dwellings) and Option 2 is that Option 3 has a negative effect in relation to resource efficiency (resulting from greater generation of waste) whereas Option 2 is regarded as neutral². An additional 1,000 homes represents a percentage increase of less than 1% in the number of homes within the Borough, and whilst they will generate greater levels of waste, it will not be material. The SA is actually inconsistent on this point as it has considered the additional 1,000 homes delivered by Option 3 to not have a material difference to the positive effects on housing, social inclusion, regeneration and employment. In any event, the negative effect on resource efficiency is not significant adverse, and therefore the SA demonstrates that a higher level of housing growth than 15,000 dwellings can be accommodated sustainably.

¹ Paragraph 32 of the Framework

² Table 5.4 of the SA



5. Looking further, Option 4 (19,000 dwellings) is a sizeable jump from Option 3 without any explanation in the SA as to why it was selected over lesser options. The additional positive effects of Option 4 on housing, social inclusion, regeneration, and employment are noted. However, it also notes greater negative effects in relation to flooding and climate change, and the natural environment. Those greater negative effects appear to relate to the choice of locations that were put forward by the Council to assess this level of housing growth, e.g. significant growth (3,000 additional dwellings) at either Balsall Common or land south of the A45. Only considering two spatial options for this higher level of growth clearly has the potential to skew the conclusions of the SA. Further, the two spatial options were selected from the GBHMA Strategic Growth Study, and therefore had not even been taken from the Council's own SHELAA evidence as to land that was suitable for development. Greater negative effects say for example on flooding or green infrastructure would have been avoided had alternative options been considered.
6. It is acknowledged that the SA has to be manageable, and cannot consider endless alternatives and permutations. However, given the importance of testing higher levels of housing growth in light of the scale of unmet need arising from the neighbouring authority, the SA should have undertaken a finer grain analysis of options at levels of growth above 16,000 dwellings utilising its own evidence base of available and suitable sites.
7. The SA does therefore not provide a sound evidence base for not pursuing higher levels of housing growth in order to meet the housing requirement.
8. In relation to the specific assessment of Site 417 (AECOM59a West of Stratford Road, Hockley Heath), there are a number of effects identified that can easily be mitigated and avoided as identified below. It is worth noting that the SA has indicated a number of significant negative effects for some of the proposed allocations (not least UK Central), but that on-site mitigation has been taken into consideration in the selection of the allocations.
9. In relation to ecology (SA9), it states the site overlaps or contains a local wildlife site (LWS) and / or records of priority species and habitats. Site not of the scale to avoid sensitive habitats or to deliver strategic improvements to ecological networks and so



development would likely lead to loss. This therefore is recorded as a negative effect. However, the site is not a LWS and is predominantly poor semi-improved grassland of low intrinsic ecological value. Moreover, the limited habitats on site are of only local value present and could easily be avoided³. Therefore, SA9 should be neutral with the potential for positive effects.

10. In relation to landscape (SA10), it states the landscape has medium-high sensitivity to change. This therefore is recorded as a negative effect. However, a more finer grain analysis found within Appendix One shows the site has a reduced landscape sensitivity due to well-established urbanising influences. Therefore, SA10 should be neutral.
11. In relation to green infrastructure (SA11), the development has the capability to be within 400m of public open space well in excess of 2ha taking into account the proposed open space within the site⁴. Further, the site is within walking distance of the canal towpath network, which provides access to an extensive area of green infrastructure⁵, and therefore SA11 should be neutral with the potential for positive effects.
12. In relation to amenity, the location of the site adjacent to the A3400 is considered to affect amenity in relation to vehicular noise and therefore a negative effect. The site has the capability of accommodating a suitable buffer from the A3400 such that noise from vehicles would not affect its amenity, and this effect can easily be mitigated.
13. In relation to health (SA17), the site has the capability to accommodate a GP surgery and therefore there would be a significant positive effect. This would also have significant benefit for the village as a whole, in addition to the proposed land for a two form entry primary school.
14. On the basis of the above, there are no significant adverse effects that would mean the site should not be allocated. Moreover, the site has the capability of addressing some of the negative effects identified in relation to access to open space, and health.

³ As evidenced within the Representations in respect of landscape, ecological and heritage circumstances at Appendix 1.

⁴ As illustrated on the Concept Masterplan appended to these representations.

⁵ As acknowledged in paragraph 656 of the Plan



Question 6

15. The SA should be updated to re-consider higher levels of housing growth using a more refined approach.
16. The Site 417 (AECOM59a West of Stratford Road, Hockley Heath) should be amended to reflect the updated position.



Paragraphs 63 to 69 (Spatial Strategy/Site Selection)

Question 5

17. There is not a policy within the Plan that contains the Spatial Strategy, and so representations are made against paragraphs 63 to 69 of the Plan. The Plan should contain strategic policies which set out the overall strategy for development⁶, and therefore the Plan is not sound on this basis.
18. The Spatial Strategy as defined in paragraph 63 confirms that Options A to D are the 'starting point'. The Strategy then refers to other Options (E to G), which can only therefore be described as 'secondary' to A to D. Option F refers to 'limited expansion of rural villages/settlements. Limited is not defined within the Strategy, however a number of sites are selected under Option F which cater for levels of growth from around 100 to well in excess of 1,000 homes in the case of Balsall Common. Limited can therefore be fairly broadly defined.
19. Paragraph 65 then adds confusion by introducing three further criteria which inform the location of growth but don't relate in any way to Options A to G. It is unclear which takes precedence (A to G or Paragraph 65).
20. Notwithstanding the above, in relation to the first criteria, reference is made to a highly accessible settlement. This is not defined within the Plan or within the evidence base, and therefore is ambiguous. The second criteria covers less accessible settlements (again not defined), but in the footnote includes the phrase 'This includes Balsall Common and Knowle/Dorridge/Bentley Heath'. Again, it is ambiguous and not clear which settlements this refers to beyond those listed. Similarly, the third criteria applies to less accessible settlements that have a limited range of services (including a primary school). Again, no definition within the Plan or the evidence base as to what settlements fall within this category (other than those listed in the footnote).
21. The absence of a clear Spatial Strategy and indeed settlement hierarchy therefore makes it impossible to understand how the scale and pattern of development is to be delivered within the Plan. Furthermore, within the evidence base, the Site Selection

⁶ Paragraph 20 of the Framework



Topic Paper includes an entirely new set of hierarchy criteria⁷, which has been used to inform the site selection.

22. It is noted that Hockley Heath is listed in the footnote under the third criteria in paragraph 65. Hockley Heath certainly contains a range of facilities for everyday needs, and includes a primary school. The one key service lacking in the village is a doctors surgery as noted in the Plan⁸. However, there are no proposals within the Plan to address the lack of this facility which is a missed opportunity to create a more sustainable pattern of development. In fact, in proposing an allocation of only 90 dwellings and nothing else, the existing problem is only compounded by increasing the population in the settlement.
23. Based on the Spatial Strategy as drafted, a proportionate addition is supported by the Plan. Again, proportionate is not defined within the Plan. Hockley Heath has a population in excess of 2,000 with circa 800 households, and yet only one allocation is proposed for 90 dwellings and overall only 141 dwellings are expected to be delivered in the Plan period⁹. An increase in the size of the settlement by circa 15% is a relatively small proportionate increase, and it is noted that the proposed increase in the size of Hockley Heath is significantly less than other settlements of similar size (such as Cheswick Green which is proposed to accommodate 1,000 dwellings).
24. The Spatial Strategy would therefore appear to support a much higher level of growth in Hockley Heath than has been allocated in the sites selected.
25. The rationale for disproportionately constraining growth at Hockley Heath is set out in the Site Assessment for Site 417 (land west of Stratford Road). It refers to its limited range of services, and yet the Site has the potential to facilitate the delivery of a doctors surgery which is the only key service noted as lacking within the settlement.
26. Accessibility is considered in the Assessment to be lower than other settlements but that does not mean it is not sustainable, noting there are a number of frequent bus services operating through the village connecting direct to Solihull, Shirley, Dorridge,

⁷ Paragraph 43 of the Topic Paper

⁸ Paragraph 655 of the Plan

⁹ Paragraph 234 of the Plan



Stratford upon Avon, Birmingham and Coventry. Services which could be enhanced with limited growth.

27. Finally, the Assessment considers there to be restricted opportunities owing to the Borough boundary. However, there are opportunities as evident by Site 417, and the fact options may be limited is not a reason not to locate proportionate growth in a sustainable settlement.
28. It is considered therefore that selecting one site of 90 dwellings in Hockley Heath does not reflect the Spatial Strategy, unnecessarily constrains growth in a sustainable location, and misses an opportunity to enhance the sustainability of the settlement through the delivery of key services in the form of land for a doctors surgery and new two form entry primary school on Site 417.
29. The site selection has not therefore fairly considered Site 417. It is in an accessible location to village services¹⁰ and regular bus services to numerous destinations. It is also a lower performing site in Green Belt terms, and is therefore a Priority 5 site. There are no sound reasons given within the Site Assessment for not selecting the site as an allocation.
30. The site is well related to the settlement, and a defensible Green Belt boundary can be created through the provision of public open space and landscaping along the northern and western edge which would have permanence as shown on the concept masterplan at Appendix Two. Further, there would be no material loss in the gap between the village and Blythe Valley Park (some 3km away). In landscape terms, the site has a reduced landscape sensitivity due to well-established urbanising influences and mature landscape features. The site is barely perceptible from the wider setting, and development provides an opportunity to enhance and augment the landscape features across the site and along its boundaries (as evidenced within Appendix One).
31. The benefits and enhancements to the sustainability of the settlement in the form of a land for a doctors surgery, sports pitches, and a new two form entry primary school

¹⁰ As illustrated on the Connectivity Plan at Appendix 3



have also not informed the site selection process. The site should therefore be an allocation listed in Paragraph 69.

Question 6

- 32. The Spatial Strategy should be set out as a strategic policy in the Plan.
- 33. The Spatial Strategy should be more clear as to the scale and pattern of development that is intended to be delivered, and how this has informed site selection.
- 34. The Site Selection should include an allocation of land west of Stratford Road, Hockley Heath.



Policy P17 – Green Belt Policy

Question 5

35. Policy P17 makes no reference to safeguarding land within the Green Belt. Indeed, there is no reference to any consideration being given to safeguarding land. It is considered necessary for the Plan to safeguard land in order to meet longer-term development needs. Exceptional circumstances exist in that:
- a. the local authority is significantly constrained by Green Belt with opportunities outside it very limited;
 - b. unmet needs within the Housing Market Area already exist (see representations under the housing requirement and the Council propose to deal with them through the next review of the Plan); and,
 - c. there are no neighbouring Councils who have expressed a willingness to take any unmet needs arising from Solihull thereby meaning the next review of the Plan will need to release land from the Green Belt.
36. This Plan should therefore be safeguarding land in order to ensure there is a degree of permanence to the boundaries proposed within this Plan.

Question 6

37. The Plan should be amended to include safeguarded land to accommodate longer-term development needs.



Policy P5 – Provision of Land for Housing

Question 5

Housing Requirement

38. The housing requirement is not sound as it is not positively prepared, justified, effective or consistent with national policy for the following reasons.

Local Housing Need

39. The minimum Local Housing Need (LHN) has been calculated using the standard method which is well established and is not disputed. However, the Council will need to be mindful of any changes arising from the Government's stated intention to change the method for calculating LHN prior to submission of the Plan.

Plan Period

40. It is highly unlikely that the Local Plan will be adopted in 2021, thereby providing a plan period of 15 years post adoption as recommended by the Framework. On the basis that it is already December 2020 and the Plan has not been submitted, it is more likely to be adopted in 2022, and therefore the housing requirement and the Plan should be extended to 2037.

Employment uplift

41. LHN is afforded an employment uplift of nine dwellings per annum to take account of the substantial job growth at UK Central of around 13,000 net additional jobs. This is a figure which could increase as plans crystallise, and it is noted that the Council's Viability Study (2020) predicts up to 77,500 jobs by 2040. The Plan justifies the small increase based on the distinct jump between economic based housing needs and the number of jobs the minimum standard method can accommodate.



42. The Plan also justifies the small uplift from LHN on the assumption that only 25% of the jobs will be filled by people residing in Solihull, with the remainder in commuting from neighbouring areas. Travel to work data from the 2011 census is used to justify this, despite it being acknowledged in the HEDNA that patterns have likely changed since 2011.
43. Taking this approach will ‘bake-in’ inward commuting reflecting an historic pattern of movement rather than shaping growth to be more sustainable by locating homes close to where work is. This can only serve to increase traffic levels given the main mode of transport using census data in 2011 is the private car. In light of the Council’s recognition of the gravity of the climate change emergency, it is not sound to Plan on the basis of accepting such high levels of inward commuting.
44. As a consequence for the housing requirement, the Plan as proposed creates an unmet housing need that has no clarity about how it will be addressed, as the HEDNA states:
- 6.43 The UK Central scenario (Growth C), which is the recommended growth scenario, results in a housing need 9 dwellings per annum above the Standard Method, under the commuting assumptions set out above. There is, however, an unmet need 379 dwellings per annum required to fulfil the 75% of in-commuting jobs associated with UK Central.*
45. This unmet need amounts to over 6,000 dwellings over the Plan period. It is stated that some of this may already be accommodated within other Plan’s housing requirements (HEDNA Para 6.35), but there is no evidence to support that assumption.
46. The Plan also appears to suggest in paragraph 2.29 that its contribution to unmet needs from Birmingham should be taken into account as contributing to the UK Central employment uplift. However, the unmet housing needs arising from Birmingham had no regard to the level of job growth at UK Central and its implications on their housing needs.
47. The housing requirement should therefore be increased to take account of the employment uplift, particularly in the absence of any evidence that neighbouring areas are intending to accommodate higher housing numbers as a consequence.



Affordability uplift

48. The housing requirement should also be increased to take account of affordability within the Borough, consistent with national guidance (paragraph 2a-024-20190220) which states:

An increase in the total housing figures included in the plan may need to be considered where it could help deliver the required number of affordable homes.

49. The identified affordable housing need is 578 homes per annum (HEDNA para 35). However, the Council has reached the conclusion that the maximum amount that can be viably sought is 40% on any given scheme. Even if it was assumed that all of the LHN (807dpa) could contribute 40% affordable housing it would amount to only 322 affordable homes per annum. This top line is substantially less than the evidence suggests, and in reality 322 per annum is unlikely given the sources of supply, despite the Housing Topic paper (Paragraph 73) noting other methods for maximising affordable housing provision.
50. The Housing Topic paper notes at footnote 10 that this reduced to 224dpa if households already in accommodation are excluded, however the HEDNA is clear that the figure is theoretical and should not be seen to minimise the acute housing need in the borough.
51. The housing requirement should therefore be increased to reflect the levels of affordability.

Unmet Needs

52. The Plan does not fully address unmet housing needs and the housing requirement should be increased accordingly. Paragraph 227 of the Plan advises that Birmingham has unmet needs (37,900 homes), and paragraph 228 advises that the Plan is proposing a contribution of 2,105 homes towards unmet needs. However, there is no evidence that this level of contribution is agreed with Birmingham or



- other neighbouring authorities¹¹, or that the unmet needs that remain are to be addressed elsewhere¹².
53. Further, there is no evidence as to why the contribution is only 2,105 homes. Solihull has a strong functional relationship with the City, with good transport connections, and in population terms is much larger than other neighbouring areas (such as North Warwickshire) which have agreed to take a greater share of the unmet need.
54. In addition to Birmingham's needs, it is also noted the Black County Authorities estimate unmet housing needs of 29,260 homes and up to 570ha of employment land to 2038, and have written to the Council notifying them. The Council has suggested their unmet needs can be dealt with as part of the next review of the Local Plan¹³. However, that is not evidence of effective joint working, but rather deferring its consideration which is evidence of an unsound Plan in being contrary to paragraph 35 c) of the Framework.
55. It is unacceptable to propose before the Plan has even been submitted to the Inspectorate that a review will be necessary to properly address housing and employment needs. That amounts to 'poor planning', and is not evidence of a positively prepared Plan which, as a minimum, seeks to meet the needs of the area. The opportunity exists now to make this Plan sound before it is submitted to the Inspectorate, and the Council should properly address this issue.
56. In any event, were an early review of the Local Plan to be undertaken addressing unmet needs it will inevitably require the release of Green Belt land. This Plan demonstrates exceptional circumstances exist to require the removal of land from the Green Belt as a consequence of the level of need, the lack of sufficient alternatives outside of the Green Belt, and the absence of willing neighbouring Councils prepared to accommodate some of the need. Those exceptional circumstances are very likely to still exist when the Council comes to undertake its review as urban capacity is limited, and nearby Councils are similarly constrained.

¹¹ Page 21 of the Summary of Representations to the Supplementary Consultation

¹² The GBBC Housing Needs and Housing Land Supply Position Statement (August 2020) confirms unmet needs from Birmingham still exist of 2,597 homes taking into account the contribution from Solihull.

¹³ Paragraph 154 of the Overall Approach Topic Paper



57. The Council have therefore failed to demonstrate the proposed Green Belt boundaries within this Plan will not need to be altered at the end of the Plan period¹⁴, and therefore consideration must be given in this Plan to safeguarding land. If not, there is no permanence to the Green Belt boundaries proposed within this Plan and they will not endure beyond the Plan period contrary to the Framework¹⁵.

Housing Requirement

58. The Plan is proposing a housing requirement that equates to the supply that it considers is capable of being delivered over the Plan period. However, the Sustainability Appraisal of the Plan does not provide any evidence as to why higher levels of housing growth could not be accommodated without causing significant adverse effects.

59. There is therefore no flexibility within the supply to ensure that the housing requirement is met. An oversupply above the housing requirement is typical for all Plans to some degree, and a 10% buffer is advised for Solihull since the Plan is reliant upon sites with long gestation periods. and its portfolio of allocations relies upon larger strategic sites. In order for the Plan to be positively prepared, the housing requirement should be expressed as a minimum.

Supply over the Plan Period

60. There are a number of objections to how the Council has calculated supply over the plan period as set out below.

UK Central

61. The plan assumes 2,740 units will be delivered at UK Central by 2036. This is a substantial amount of growth for a site that is unlikely to see any completions for

¹⁴ Paragraph 139 e) of the Framework

¹⁵ Paragraph 136 of the Framework



- several years post plan adoption¹⁶. The UK Central Hub Growth and Infrastructure Plan suggests 2028. However, it is difficult to envisage that substantial residential completions will take place on the UK Central site until such time as the HS2 railway line is constructed and operational.
62. The Transport Secretary said in a written statement to parliament in September 2019 that it could be between 2028-31 before trains run on the route. Even if completions could be achieved from 2028 this would assume an annual total of 340 completions to achieve the delivery projected in the plan period which is far beyond what might be realistically be achieved. Without sight of a realistic housing trajectory, there is no evidence to support this level of delivery and therefore it is not justified. Since this is a strategic site, it is appropriate for the anticipated rate of development to be included within the Plan in accordance with the Framework.
63. In addition, there are substantial infrastructure requirements in addition to HS2, such as public transport and active travel bridges across the WCML, which has an estimated cost of £40m and with no timescales confirmed for delivery. It is also noted the Council are still working with Highways England to assess the impact of development on their highway network¹⁷. The absence of any agreement undermines the extent to which the assumptions within the Plan on delivery can be relied upon.
64. This evidence is important in being able to demonstrate the Plan is deliverable and sustainable, and that improvements to infrastructure required as a result of development have been robustly assessed, costed in order to demonstrate viability, and capable of being delivered in a way which does not hinder the proposed delivery of housing and employment. The absence of this evidence means the Plan is not justified.

¹⁶ The UK Central Hub Growth and Infrastructure Plan suggests 2028.

¹⁷ Page 23 of the Draft Infrastructure Delivery Plan



Allocated Sites

65. The absence of any evidence in relation to housing trajectories for the proposed allocated sites means that the figure of 5,270 homes to be delivered by 2036 is not justified.
66. Also, of note, the allocation for Solihull Town Centre (Site 8) in the adopted Local Plan expected 350 units to come forward in the first phase of the Plan period. This has not transpired. The new Local Plan now estimates 861 units but none coming forward in the first 5 years, and no evidence to support its delivery¹⁸.

Windfalls

67. The estimated level of windfalls at 2,800 homes completed over 14 years is not justified.
68. Firstly, whilst it is stated that windfalls are not included for the first 3 years (to avoid double counting with extant planning permissions) only 2 years have been discounted.
69. Secondly, the annual average level of windfall is substantial for an authority significantly constrained by Green Belt. The SHELAA notes that of the known sites, 96% are in the Green Belt. Very few of these are likely to be suitable for windfall planning applications given Green Belt policy, but in any event these are a separate source of supply in the Plan.
70. Reliance is placed on historic trends, but there is no certainty that past sources of supply are likely to continue. Given the absence of a Local Plan meeting housing needs in Solihull for some time, there is a degree of inevitability that there has been a high level of windfalls historically. Relying upon past trend averages is not sufficient for a forward projection to be made. As the Framework states, the evidence should be so compelling that it is a source of supply that can be relied upon for delivering the housing requirement.

¹⁸ SHELAA – Site number 5015.01



71. The SHELAA notes that 20% of the windfall allowance is for sites under 1ha. Therefore, 80% is for over 1ha – which should be covered by sites assessed in the SHELAA. Indeed the SHELAA is so comprehensive that very small sites have also been assessed. Therefore, the windfalls allowance is double counting with other sources of supply in the Plan. Indeed, the source of housing supply includes sites identified in the land availability assessment, brownfield register, and town centre sites. This amounts to over 1,350 dwellings, much of which would have previously been counted as a windfall. It is also unclear in whether projecting forward using historic trends the Council has removed garden land from its supply.

Existing Sites

72. In the SHELAA, there are also Existing Sites and Communal Dwellings where it appears there may be calculation errors, including:
- a. Examples of demolition of existing dwellings where it is rightly noted the net is 0 but this is not reflected in the deliverable supply column which remains 1 (or greater).
 - b. 2102.06 where the net should be zero since it is a change of use.

Five Year Supply on Adoption

73. The Plan will not provide for a five year housing land supply upon adoption. As noted elsewhere, three years' worth of windfalls are included within the supply rather than two (an estimate which is high, and overlaps with other sources of supply). There is also 350 homes on allocated sites without the benefit of planning permission, without clear evidence that housing completions will begin within five years. Discounting by these two sources alone (ie.550 units) puts the supply under five years.
74. The Plan assumes that 1,170 homes will be delivered on allocated sites within the first five years but there is no evidence to support this. The table at Paragraph 226 of allocated sites only breaks down sites into phases of the Plan. There should be a year by year completions trajectory for the whole of the plan period for all sources of supply, and the SHELAA 2020 only does this in part. Without this, the Plan is not



justified. For all sites, there needs to be clear evidence that housing completions will begin within 5 years.

Question 6

75. The housing requirement should be amended to take account of the likely realistic date of adoption; a more sustainable balance between the jobs uplift and commuting patterns; unmet housing needs; and an affordability uplift. The housing requirement should also be expressed as a minimum figure. The exact figure will need to be informed by further assessment by the Council.
76. The housing supply should be justified with evidence, and assumptions in relation to windfalls should be reviewed and amended. The housing supply should contain a buffer of 10% over the housing requirement to ensure delivery and that housing needs can be met should some sources of supply slip.
77. There is an insufficient portfolio of sites, in particular small sites, that can deliver quickly ensuring a five year housing land supply is achieved upon adoption. National planning guidance advises where a stepped trajectory is used local authorities could identify a priority of sites that could come forward earlier in the plan period in order to ensure housing needs are met. This emphasises the imperative to release further small sites within Solihull that can deliver quickly.
78. Policy P5 and the table of allocated sites should be amended to include land west of Stratford Road, Hockley Heath. The site:
 - a. is deliverable, available and achievable¹⁹;
 - b. is low performing in Green Belt terms when assessed within the Green Belt Assessment;
 - c. has a low impact in landscape terms due to its enclosed nature²⁰;
 - d. is within walking and cycling distance of services and facilities including a regular bus service to Solihull, Shirley, Dorridge, Stratford upon Avon,

¹⁹ Site 417 – Category 1 in the SHELAA Update

²⁰ As evidenced within the Representations in respect of landscape, ecological and heritage circumstances at Appendix 1.



Birmingham and Coventry, and is therefore a sustainable location for residential development.

79. Further, the Sustainability Appraisal finds no significant adverse effects from development of the site.