

Shaping Places

Local Plan

Summary of comments
received as part of the
Strategy & Options Consultation

10 June – 26 July 2013



Background

Telford & Wrekin Council is currently producing a new **Local Plan; Shaping Places**. As part of this process the Council consulted on its Strategy & Options document providing the community and other stakeholders with the opportunity to comment on and influence the proposed scale and location of development at an early stage of the plan-making process.

Consultation on the Strategy & Options document took place between 10th June and 26th July 2013 and formed part of the requirement by the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 to invite bodies or persons to make representations on what a Local Plan ought to contain. The consultation process was in line with the adopted Statement of Community Involvement (December 2012) (www.telford.gov.uk/planningpolicy) and in accordance with the timetable set out in the Local Development Scheme (February 2013) (www.telford.gov.uk/localdevelopmentscheme).

This document contains a summary of responses received during the period of consultation and explains how the comments will influence the Shaping Places Local Plan: Draft Plan stage.

Shaping Places Local Plan: Strategy & Options Document

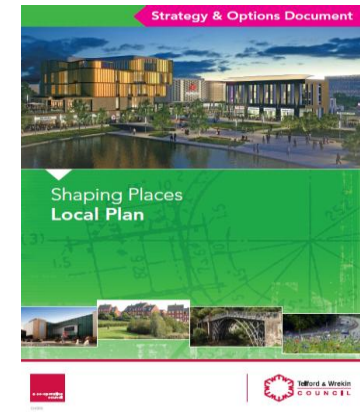
What did we consult on?

The Strategy & Options document set out options for the scale and location of development and different policy approaches to a range of topics including housing, employment, retail, green infrastructure and transport. For each subject area questions were asked about the content and options presented.

How did we consult?

In line with the Statement of Community Involvement, a range of methods were used to consult the community, ensuring events were well publicised and participation encouraged. 1652 consultees who had registered on the Local Plan database, including members of the public were consulted on the Strategy & Options document. Of these 1195 were sent letters (statutory consultees and general bodies such as voluntary organisations and business representatives). Hard copies of the Strategy & Options document and response questionnaire were made available in all 10 Telford & Wrekin libraries, including the mobile library, all of the 5 Telford & Wrekin Firstpoints and online. Officers also organised public open sessions, meetings with stakeholders and a variety of media events to advertise the consultation as widely as possible.

The Council has a Duty to Co-operate with neighbouring Local Authorities and statutory bodies under section 110 of the Localism Act 2011. These organisations were also written to during the consultation period.



Telford & Wrekin Council Planning Policy Portal Consultation

All comments were collated and viewable on a public on-line Consultation Portal. The Portal contains 1471 individual comments received through the Strategy & Options Consultation. These can be viewed at www.telford.gov.uk/shapingplaces

Open Sessions

During the consultation period five open sessions were held with Ward Members, Parish and Town Councils, and residents. A workshop event was held with the Telford & Wrekin Young People's Forum. All meetings provided an opportunity for people to consider exhibition material on the Strategy & Options document, listen to a presentation on the content of the document and talk directly to officers. The open sessions took place on the following dates:

- Telford & Wrekin Council Ward Members Open Session, Business Development Centre, Telford. 13 June 2013
- Telford & Wrekin Council Parish & Town Councils Open Session, Business Development Centre, Telford 20 June 2013
- Public Open Session, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford. 26 June 2013 Daytime
- Public Open Session, The Place, Oakengates Theatre, Telford. 26 June 2013 Evening
- Young Peoples Forum, The Salvation Army, Telford. 10 July 2013

Targeted Engagement (Stakeholder Meetings)

A number of meetings with the following stakeholders provided an opportunity for people to listen to a presentation on the content of the Strategy & Options document and ask questions of senior management and officers:

- **Town & Parish Councils**

All Town & Parish Councils were offered a round the table discussion with officers on the Plan during the consultation. Ten out of the twenty-six Town & Parish Councils accepted this invitation with several involving more than one meeting to enable as many parish members to contribute as possible. Although not all, the Parish and Town Councils that did not accept the invitation commented via the Portal and at the Parish & Town Council Open Session.

- **Business Community**

As well as businesses being contacted directly via the Local Plan consultation database, the Local Strategic Partnership and Local, Regional and Intermediary Businesses were consulted. A presentation on the Strategy & Options document was given to the housebuilding industry in May 2013 and to representatives from Shropshire Fire & Rescue, Shropshire Chamber of Commerce, West Mercia Police, Clinical Commissioning Group and Job Centre Plus at a Local Strategic Partnership meeting on 4th July 2013. On 18th June 2013 the consultation was showcased at the Council's Invest in Telford launch event at The International Centre, Telford. The event focused on promoting the borough as an area of economic growth with over 100 local, regional and intermediary businesses attending.

BBC Radio Shropshire

An interview with BBC Radio Shropshire; Eric Smith and Clare Ashford on the Morning Show took place in Lawley Square, Lawley, Telford in advance of the public open sessions. The interview was aired on Tuesday 25th June around 8am to encourage attendance at the open session events. Radio Shropshire has a listenership of 26% of Shropshire's population per week, with an average of 104,000 listeners per week between June – September 2013¹.

Press Releases

Press releases went out in advance and during the formal consultation period in local newspapers; the Shropshire Star and the Telford Journal. Press and were also publicised on Telford & Wrekin Council's website and Shropshirelive.com.

Social Media

Regular updates on the Strategy & Options consultation were made on the Council's corporate Facebook and Twitter pages.

¹ Shropshire Star Article 25 October 2013; <http://www.shropshirestar.com/news/2013/10/25/more-than-100000-radio-listeners-tuning-in-to-bbc-shropshire/>

Facebook

Facebook messages were publicised on the dates below directing the social media users to the public on-line Consultation Portal via www.telford.gov.uk/shapingplaces, statistics on the number of views were as follows;

- 11 June 2013 reaching 3.1 thousand views with 314 clicks and 17 likes/shares/comments
- 2 July 2013 reaching 4.6 thousand views with 237 clicks and 24 likes/shares/comments
- July 2013 reaching 4.2 thousand views with 105 clicks and 7 likes/shares/comments

Twitter

Tweets were publicised during the consultation period on 7 separate dates. The message directed the social media users to the public on-line Consultation Portal via www.telford.gov.uk/shapingplaces.

Website

As well as the Shaping Places dedicated webpage www.telford.gov.uk/shapingplaces, a scrolling message was continuously displayed on the front page of Telford & Wrekin Council's webpages www.telford.gov.uk to encourage people to comment on the document.

Your Voice

Your Voice is Telford & Wrekin Council's quarterly newspaper which is distributed to around 72,000 households in the borough. An article on the Shaping Places Consultation was included in the Summer Edition distributed in June 2013.

Flyers/Poster

All Telford & Wrekin Council Community Centres were provided with posters and flyers to publicise the consultation period and to signpost users to the consultation portal, public open sessions. Hard copies of the document were also available in the centres.

What responses did we receive and how are they influencing the draft plan?

Each one of the 1471 comments received is being considered as part of preparing the Draft Local Plan, along with a range of evidence studies and the findings of a sustainability appraisal.

The following provides an overview of the comments received together with an explanation of how they are being used to inform the draft plan. Given the number of comments received, it has not been possible to respond to each comment individually. This does not mean it is not being considered in the development of the Plan. If you would like a response to your comment, however, or would like to raise a concern please contact shapingplaces@telford.gov.uk.

Section of Strategy & Options	Summary of comments	How comments will inform the Draft Plan
Vision, aims and objectives	Support for vision but a need to better evidence 200,000 population projection, place more emphasis on green infrastructure (including ecological considerations), tourism & culture and 'local' as well as district centres	<p>The figure included in the Strategy & Options vision was based on population growth trends and intended to provide a broad indication rather than precise figure. The importance of evidence is acknowledged and population growth is taken into account as part of the housing target calculations referred to below.</p> <p>The vision for the draft plan will be amended to reflect the importance placed on the issues raised, most notably the emphasis on green infrastructure.</p>
Scale of growth	General support for growth but concerns raised over lack of evidence in support of this figure, how achievable/deliverable it is, potential impact on green spaces and lack of reference to the economic implications of growth.	<p>The role of development in supporting local communities and priorities for the borough will continue to be a strong message in the Draft Plan.. Since the consultation period, the Council has been considering further the scale of growth and associated housing target taking into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conformity with the NPPF and associated guidance set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)

Section of Strategy & Options	Summary of comments	How comments will inform the Draft Plan
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outcome of a review of the Council's 5-year housing supply • the need to include any shortfall in housing delivery from previous years • an allowance for 'economic' growth (e.g. increase in number of businesses and associated jobs and housing needs) • the findings of a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • housing needs associated with neighbouring authorities – a requirement under the statutory Duty to Cooperate placed on Councils • the findings of the sustainability appraisal which takes into account impacts associated with green infrastructure. <p>A revised housing target will be available for further comment during the consultation period commencing in April 2014.</p>

Section of Strategy & Options	Summary of comments	How comments will inform the Draft Plan
Distribution	<p>Broad support for Option 3 distribution (Low Rural/Medium Fringe/High Urban) followed by Option 2 (Low Rural/Low fringe/Very High Urban). Delivery of existing commitments has been challenged, highlighting the need to consider Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) sites to meet targets, including previous target shortfalls. Concern expressed from some communities potentially affected by development in the fringe, in particular, Eyton and Wappenshall. Careful consideration needed to phasing of development, ensuring that the Plan's objectives are achieved through development in urban/rural areas rather than too much development in the Fringe which is favoured by the market.</p>	<p>The Strategy & Options document recognised the need to balance development in the rural, urban and fringe areas in order to achieve the borough's priorities, provide a range and choice of sites and to meet the needs of local communities.</p> <p>Given the concerns raised regarding development in the fringe the Plan will need to continue to demonstrate an approach to growth that meets the Borough's priorities and ensures that housing is suitably located across the borough.</p> <p>Since producing the Strategy & Options document, it has been proposed to allocate specific sites in the Draft Plan. This will help determine more precisely where development will be located in the borough rather than broad locations. It is planned to consult on these site options in April-June 2014 before proceeding to preferred site allocations which will be subject to further consultation in early 2015 as part of the Draft Plan.</p>

Section of Strategy & Options	Summary of comments	How comments will inform the Draft Plan
Policy areas	<p>Specific comments were received on each of the policy areas. In general terms, support was given for a more flexible, criteria based policy approach with particular emphasis on strengthening business development opportunities in centres and villages, utilising brownfield land and providing a mix of housing which meet a range of local needs.</p>	<p>Comments on individual policy issues and options will be considered in the production of the Draft Plan policies. The Draft Plan will seek to ensure that policies provide market certainty while retaining a degree of flexibility ensuring development is deliverable throughout the Plan period. Policies will support the development of both business and educational facilities to address the existing and future need for economic growth, skills and increased job opportunities, including in the rural area.</p> <p>The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) will provide supporting evidence on the type of housing required to meet housing need borough-wide and will inform housing and affordable housing policies in the Draft Plan.</p> <p>With regard to brownfield land, the NPPF supports the effective use of land that has been previously developed provided that it is not of high</p>

Section of Strategy & Options	Summary of comments	How comments will inform the Draft Plan
		environmental value. It also supports other opportunities such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages & towns where they are shown to be sustainable

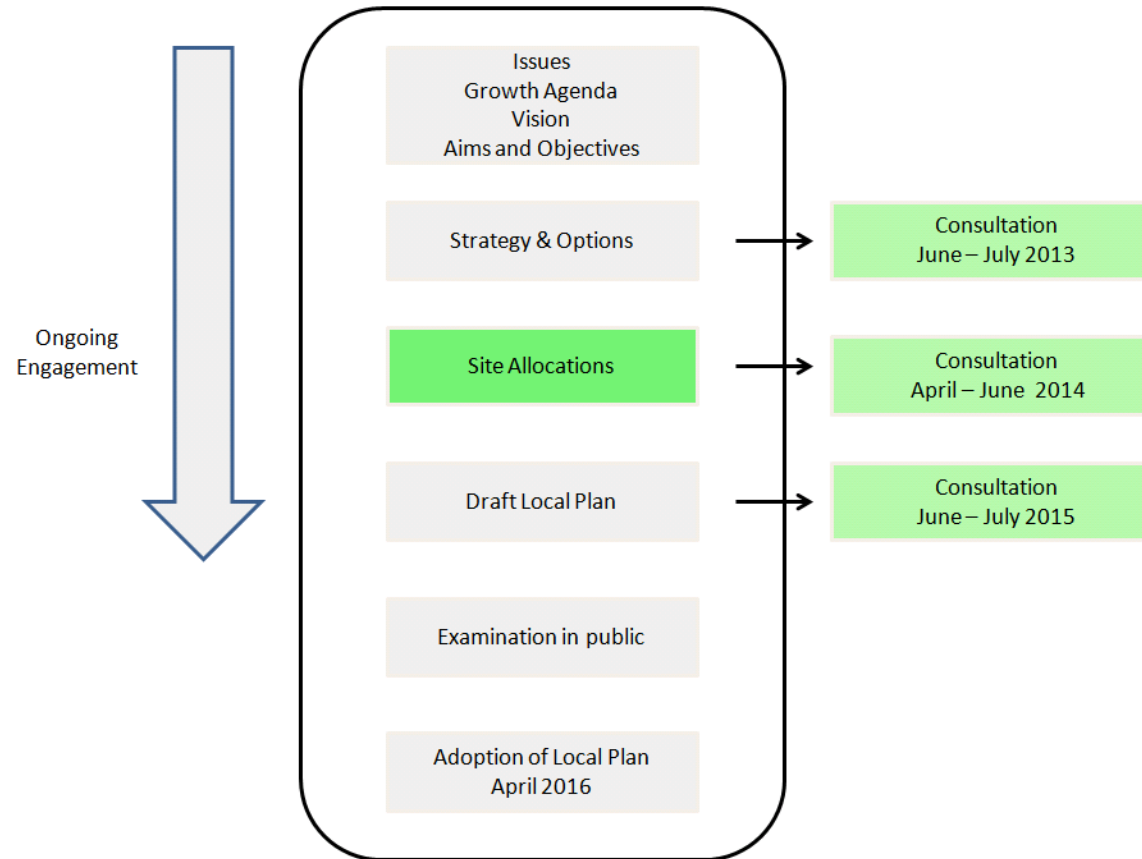
Equalities

The Council is committed to involving as many people as possible and ensuring this is representative of all the borough's communities. To help monitor this and assist with future engagement, a series of equalities questions were asked as part of the consultation. The responses submitted indicated that a broad range of people had contributed. While it was noted that the number of young people who responded was low, events such as the Young Persons Forum workshop provided some representation. Written comments were not submitted by attendees however and so while the feedback was recorded at the meeting and is being considered as part of developing the Plan, individual numbers of contributors details were not factored into the monitoring data.

Next stages of the Shaping Places Local Plan process

As detailed in the Local Development Scheme 2013 www.telford.gov.uk/localdevelopmentscheme, the following diagram sets out the next stages of the Local Plan making process:

Stages in the Shaping Places Local Plan process



Engagement in the Local Plan process is on-going and not limited to the formal consultation stages. If you want to find out more about Shaping Places, get involved or discuss a particular issue, then please contact shaping.places@telford.gov.uk Updates will also continue to be posted on the website at www.telford.gov.uk/shapingplaces