

Tamworth Borough Council Opening Statement

Tamworth Borough Council is pleased to have submitted its Local Plan for examination. This Plan will replace the saved policies of the current Local Plan which was adopted in 2006.

The overarching strategy of the Plan is to create and sustain a thriving local economy and make Tamworth a more inspirational and competitive place to do business through and to create a safe environment in which local people can reach their full potential and live longer, healthier lives.

The 12 spatial priorities, policies and allocations contained within the Plan will deliver this strategy.

Delivering new housing, of the appropriate type, tenure and cost and in accessible, sustainable locations whilst focussing on areas requiring regeneration will deliver strong and vibrant neighbourhoods.

The Plan sets out to maximise development in sustainable locations. The Council is committed to maximising the amount of housing within Tamworth—for example through the release of Golf Course, but is also conscious that development must be in sustainable locations and therefore the whole objectively assessed need cannot be met within Tamworth.

Delivering a prosperous Tamworth involves planning positively for sustainable economic growth and focussing investment in the town centre and the network of defined local and neighbourhood centres.

New employment land allocated in accessible locations and the protection of existing employment areas will ensure the retention of existing jobs and attract new jobs to Tamworth.

Directing investment in existing centres and accessible employment sites will reduce the need to travel and make the most effective use of Tamworth's limited land supply.

Delivering a high quality environment will involve protecting and enhancing Tamworth's network of green and blue infrastructure to provide sufficient opportunities for recreation and biodiversity. Through positive planning and understanding of the significance of Tamworth's heritage assets, development will achieve high quality design that preserves and enhances Tamworth's historic character.

Ensuring a combination of strong retail centres, accessible housing and employment sites and the regeneration of existing developed land lays the foundation to deliver a connected, sustainable town. Making the most of existing transport links, addressing congestion and improving public transport will ensure Tamworth's centres, employment sites and housing sites are accessible by different methods of transport and reduce reliance on the private car. Improving energy performance, supporting renewable energy

generation, reducing flood risk, preventing harm from pollution and providing accessible community facilities will help to deliver sustainable development.

The Local Plan's success will depend on effective implementation of its policies. In addition to the Council's statutory planning function, implementation will require working with a range of delivery partners, including Tamworth Strategic Partnership, developers, Registered Providers (of affordable housing), Staffordshire County Council and other key partners from the private, public and voluntary sector.

The Local Plan must also show it is capable of being monitored effectively. Monitoring of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time based policies will enable the success of the Local Plan to be measured during its lifetime whilst assisting the instigation of contingency plans where it is demonstrated that policies are not achieving their stated objectives.

The Council has submitted a sound local plan based upon the four tests of soundness:

- The Plan is Positively Prepared: it is based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements
- The Plan is Justified: it is the most appropriate strategy when considered against the reasonable alternatives, based on proportionate evidence

The Plan shows how the policies and proposals help to ensure that the social, environmental, economic and resource use objectives of sustainability will be achieved.

- The Plan is Effective: it is deliverable over its period based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic priorities
- The Plan is Consistent with national policy: it enables the delivery of sustainable development

The Council considers the plan and its strategy to be soundly based and that it establishes the OAHN for Tamworth, seeks to deliver the maximum amount of housing in sustainable locations and sets out where by local authority this un met need should go

This plan shows a significant commitment from the Council to ensure; economic growth, places for people to live – in quality homes, with facilities needs and with access to open space.

The plan is aspirational, but one which the Council considers to be realistic with sufficiently flexibility to ensure the vision of the plan is achieved by 2031.

Should the inspector after considering the discussions and evidence at this examination conclude however that modifications are required to any part of the Plan to meet the soundness and legal compliance tests the Council would be pleased to consider how to comply with these.

Alex Roberts
Development Plan Manager
Tamworth Borough Council