



Telford and Wrekin

Local Plan Review Examination

Hearing Session Statement

Matter 2:

Vision, Priorities and Development Strategy (ISSUE 1)

Representor ID: E82

Representor: Estate of David J Tringham



Representor Details

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This Matter 2 Statement has been prepared by BERRYS on behalf of the Estate of David J Tringham ('our Client') which is promoting Land at A41/A518 Roundabout, Newport (the 'site') for employment development (Call for Sites Ref: 710).
- 1.2 The site is suitable for meeting the employment needs of Newport and the wider District of Telford and Wrekin in the Plan period and should be identified as an allocation in the Telford and Wrekin Local Plan Review.
- 1.3 This Matter Statement should be read in conjunction with our representation made to the Regulation 19 consultation of April 2025 (submitted on behalf of the client by 99&9 Consulting Ltd).

2.0 Matter 2: Issue 1

Matter 6 – Development Management Policies

Issue 1: Have the vision, priorities and development strategy been positively prepared, are they justified and consistent with national policy, and can all be realistically achieved?

Question 21. *Are the vision, priorities and the development strategy justified, have they been positively prepared, and do they accord with the evidence and national policy?*

The vision and priorities of the Plan, in particular the vision statement that "inward investment to create jobs and regeneration opportunities will be achieved through new development supporting a more prosperous borough" and priority 3 "Maximising inward investment and employment opportunities" are considered to accord with national policy and are supported.

However, the statement that "the strategy for Newport will be to provide for new housing and employment growth that continues to recognise its role as a market town" fails to recognise the important and growing role that Newport plays in modernising the economy of the borough including the "gradual diversification of employment away from lower value manufacturing towards higher value agri-tech and advanced manufacturing sections" (paragraph 0.5 of the Newport Employment Land Need Study, October 2024).

The strategy therefore fails to accord with national policy contained within the National Planning Policy Framework, which states that:

- planning policies should ... pay particular regard to facilitating development to meet the needs of a modern economy, including by identifying suitable locations for uses such as laboratories, gigafactories, data centres, digital infrastructure, freight and logistics (paragraph 86c); and
- Planning policies ... should recognise and address the specific locational requirements of different sectors (paragraph 87).

The evidence base of the Plan relating to economic development is contained within two main evidence base documents, the Telford and Wrekin Economic and Housing Development Needs Assessment Part 1, 2020 (EHDNA) and the Newport Employment Land Need Study, October 2024 (Newport Study). As detailed within this representor's hearing statement for Matter 4 (Issue 1), there are issues with both the quantitative and qualitative assessment of employment land needs that indicate the need for additional land to be identified to meet the needs of Newport during the Plan period.

Issues raised with the quantitative assessment of employment land needs include, significantly, concerns over the limit scope of the EHDNA and Newport Study as they merely consider the traditional employment land uses and ignore the needs of many sectors of a modern Economy. As a consequence, the Plan's employment land allocations, Strategic Employment Area designations and economic policies seek only to accommodate and support traditional employment land uses and are restrictive of alternative employment uses.

Similarly, issues raised with the qualitative assessment of employment land needs include that it is based solely upon interviews with stakeholders and is therefore biased towards existing, larger scale, employers operating in traditional employment land uses within the Newport sub-area. It fails to pick up upon the needs of smaller scale operators and those operating in alternative sectors with no detailed assessment of scale, location and quality of sites having been undertaken to determine whether an appropriate range of sites within the sub-area has been provided.

As a consequence, there is a disconnect between the draft Plan's economic policies and proposals and its vision of achieving inward investment to create jobs and regeneration opportunities and its priority to maximise inward investment and employment opportunities. Further work should therefore be undertaken to update the economic evidence base of the Plan, and subsequent amendments made to policies and proposals as necessary, to ensure that the Plan's vision, priorities and development strategy accord with the evidence and national policy.

Question 25. Is the development strategy sufficiently clear about the respective roles of Telford, Newport and the rural area?

It is acknowledged that the development strategy for Newport recognises that the town "plays a key role in the boroughs economy" and that its "economic role has increased with the development of the Newport Innovation Park (NI Park)" (Plan paragraphs 4.8 and 4.9 respectively). However, as detailed within the response to Question 21 above, the statement contained within paragraph 11 of the Plan that "the strategy for Newport will be to provide for new housing and employment growth that continues to recognise its role as a market town" down plays the importance of Newport's growing role in modernising the economy of the borough including the "gradual diversification of employment away from lower value manufacturing towards higher value agri-tech and advanced manufacturing sections" (paragraph 0.5 of the Newport Employment Land Need Study, October 2024).

The development strategy of the Plan should be amended to place greater emphasis on the importance of, and the need to build upon, Newport's role in modernising the borough's economy.