

Telford & Wrekin Council is reviewing its Local Plan, the document that sets out where development takes place and contains policies for assessing planning applications. This first stage of the review is seeking your views on issues facing the Borough. The consultation also sets out options for future employment and housing growth levels, including updates and additions to planning policies.

The Council is reviewing the Local Plan because planning law requires us to do this every five years. There have also been changes to national policy and local priorities that need to be reflected in our Local Plan.

At this stage of the review, the Council is not consulting on individual sites to meet future growth. This will follow at the next stage, once the Council has consulted on different growth options. There is also an opportunity for landowners and stakeholders to submit sites which could be considered for a range of uses. The Council will assess these sites and consult on a draft Local Plan including proposed employment and housing sites and policies next year.

Consultation on the Issues & Options closes on Friday 8 January 2021. You are encouraged to visit the Council's website to view the consultation at: <https://www.telford.gov.uk/localplanreview> The Council has also prepared a series of supporting documents to explain and inform the consultation.

We encourage you to read the document which contains a series of consultation questions on key issues; you can respond by registering on our consultation portal. If you have difficulty with accessing the documents or wish to speak with us about the consultation then please email [localplan@telford.gov.uk](mailto:localplan@telford.gov.uk) or call us on 01952 384241.

The Issues & Options consultation is grouped by the following topics:

### **Strategic Priorities (Chapter 5 in Issues & Options document)**

The Issues & Options sets out six strategic priorities that are golden threads through the Local Plan. The policies will be reviewed to maximise the contribution they can make towards achieving these priorities, which include:

1. Tackling climate change and achieving carbon neutrality
2. Protection and enhancement of green and natural environment
3. Maximising inward investment and employment opportunities
4. Securing better homes for all
5. Delivering regeneration, renewal and stronger communities
6. Improving health, wellbeing and tackling health inequalities

### **Employment growth (Chapter 6 in Issues & Options document)**

The Council is consulting on two options for future employment land growth between 2020 and 2040. It is important that employment land is identified to provide opportunities to create local jobs and attract inward investment into the Borough. The two employment growth options are:

- An economic growth scenario which is informed by forecasting data and discussions with local stakeholders including Council officers and business representatives. This would result

in a land requirement of 167 hectares (or 77 hectares of additional land when existing supply is taken into account)

- A past trends scenario based on recent delivery of employment land in the Borough. This would result in a land requirement of 189 hectares (or 99 hectares of additional land when existing supply is taken into account).

The consultation asks which of the two employment growth options you think the Council should take forward. If you have a different figure, please submit this with your reasons for us to consider.

Further details on the employment growth evidence is provided in the Economic & Housing Development Needs Assessment which is available on the Local Plan website.

### **Housing growth (Chapter 6 in Issues & Options document)**

We are consulting on three options for housing growth between 2020 and 2040. Each option is based on local evidence set out in the Economic & Housing Development Needs Assessment which is available on the Local Plans website. The three housing growth options are:

- **Meeting economic growth:** This scenario uses economic forecast data to estimate likely population growth and models the number of homes needed. This would require 403 new homes each year (8,065 new homes between 2020 and 2040) taking existing supply into account, to meet a total of 16,960 homes.
- **Meeting economic ambitions and population trends:** This scenario is based on population projections and provides housing to meet the economic growth forecast with additional scope for economic activity linked with recovery. This would require 519 new homes each year (10,385 new homes between 2020 and 2040) taking existing supply into account, to meet a total of 19,280 homes.
- **Housing-led growth:** This scenario is based on delivering a number of homes each year at a rate similar to recent performance in the Borough, supported by the population growth required to deliver these rates. This would require 705 new homes each year (14,105 new homes between 2020 and 2040) taking existing supply into account, to meet a total of 23,000 homes.

The Council has included existing housing supply on sites with planning permission that have not yet been built, which totals around 9,000 homes in each of the three scenarios.

The consultation asks which of the three housing growth options you think the Council should take forward. If you have a different figure, please submit this with your reasons for us to consider.

### **Distribution of growth (Chapter 7 in Issues & Options document)**

The current Local Plan distributes growth by Telford, Newport and the rural area by population. We have identified four options for the future distribution of growth between these areas. The consultation asks which of the four distribution options you think the Council should take forward. If you have a different option for distributing growth across the Borough, please submit this with your reasons for us to consider.

Option	Telford	Newport	Rural area
<b>Maintain current strategy</b> - This option would be consistent with the current Local Plan strategy with Telford as the focus for additional growth.	86%	8%	6%
<b>Rural growth</b> - This option would see an increase in growth in the rural area. There would be proportionately less growth in Telford and growth levels in Newport would be maintained.	78%	8%	14%
<b>Newport growth</b> - This option would see some additional growth in Newport. There would be proportionately less growth in Telford and growth levels in the rural area would be maintained.	78%	14%	8%
<b>Rural and Newport growth</b> - This option would see a quarter of growth outside of Telford with a balanced approach of housing growth between the rural area and Newport.	75%	12.5%	12.5%

In each of the options it is recognised that Telford remains the focus for growth and if this cannot all be met in the town the Council may need to consider growth of the town beyond the current boundary. Growth in Newport would be directed within the existing built up area; however, options on the edge of the town boundary may also need to be considered.

The current Local Plan directs rural growth to sites with existing permission and the five key villages of Edgmond, High Ercall, Lilleshall, Tibberton and Waters Upton. The Council will consider a range of options including allocating sites, identifying brownfield land opportunities, and identifying further key villages where development may be appropriate. Neighbourhood Development Plans could also allocate housing sites in villages.

### **Review of development management policies (Chapter 8 in Issues & Options document)**

The current Local Plan includes development management policies that are used to determine planning applications. The Local Plan review provides an opportunity to update policies and include new ones where evidence supports this. The Issues & Options consultation proposes the following:

#### Economy

- Review existing employment sites and consider how the supply of sites can be best protected to allow new and expanding businesses in the Borough.
- Set out criteria for new employment site allocations including acceptable uses.
- Strengthen policy to help diversify the rural economy for a broader range of uses.
- Review retail policies to recognise the changing role of town and district centres across the Borough and encourage new uses to support footfall in centres.

#### Housing

- Policy proposals to seek a range of house types, sizes and tenures including minimum space standards and energy efficiency targets.
- Review and update policies which seek affordable housing to meet local needs on new developments across the Borough.
- Identify a supply of housing sites to meet needs, this could include new sites on the edge of Telford.
- Review policy options to deliver specialist and supported housing needs.

- Review the approach for new housing development in the rural area and consider how growth should be delivered across villages.
- Consider new policies that support housing renewal in the Borough and opportunities to bring forward sites for self-build housing.

#### Natural Environment

- Amend biodiversity and geodiversity policies to reflect local and national policy changes including the requirement for Biodiversity Net Gain on all developments and the Council's proposal for strategic great crested newt mitigation on a district level.
- Set out in policy the Council's ambition for a forest community that protects, manages and enhances the Borough's greenspaces and contributing to action to address climate change and declines in biodiversity.
- Review and update policies that support an appropriate provision of public open space across the Borough, including triggers for new open space and expectations for the management and maintenance of open space.

#### Community

- Review the list of community facilities that are given policy protection and consider extending the definition.

#### Connections

- Strengthen the policy approach to support sustainable transport options (bus, cycle, train and walking) across the Borough. This includes on-site provision for new developments.
- Recognise the contribution of highways policies towards tackling climate change and urban greening. For example, references to provision of street trees on schemes and electric vehicle charging points to support innovations in car travel.
- Review and update the approach to car parking standards on new developments.
- Consider the policy implications of 5G infrastructure on developments and strengthen policy to support digital connectivity of new developments.

#### Built Environment

- Review and strengthen policy recognising the contribution of good design towards climate neutrality including renewable energy, urban greening and connectivity to green spaces.
- Propose a new policy to ensure adequate amenity space is provided in the design of new homes and buildings.
- Review heritage policies including the control of development in the Ironbridge Gorge World Heritage Site.

#### Environmental Resources

- Strengthen the policy support for renewable energy development.
- Consider the details of a policy approach for water efficiency standards in new buildings, which could include adopting higher standards.