

Telford & Wrekin Local Plan: Examination in Public

Matter 2: Duty to Cooperate

EiP reference: K24/2a

1. This note confirms that discussions have taken place between the Council and the Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA) and sets out the Council's final position regarding the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area's (GBBCHMA) unmet housing need.
2. **Proposed modification from ABCA**
 - 2.1 ABCA proposed two modifications. The second modification (superseding an earlier one submitted on 3 February) was received on 21 February 2017.

Suggested wording for insertion at para 1.3.2.3

'The housing requirement set in this Plan is 5,555 homes (50%) above the OAN for the Plan period, in order to support Telford & Wrekin's plans for economic growth and to help deliver more affordable housing. As Telford and Wrekin is a self-contained Housing Market Area, it follows that this extra housing growth will be associated with increased net in migration compared to past trends in order to provide the necessary labour supply.

A shortfall of 37,900 dwellings has been established thus far in the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBBCHMA) through the Birmingham Development Plan. Whilst it is yet to be determined how much of this shortfall can be accommodated and delivered in the GBBCHMA, it is acknowledged that it will require a review of Green Belt boundaries. Government policy is clear that Green Belt should be safeguarded and only released through plan reviews in exceptional circumstances.

The National Planning Policy Framework requires that plans should consider unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development. As Telford and Wrekin's original role as a New Town was to accommodate needs that could not be met in the conurbation, it is entirely appropriate that it continues to fulfil this role, particularly as the principal source of net in-migration and commuting is from the GBBCHMA. The additional 5,555 houses above OAN, therefore, will make a contribution to meeting the shortfall in the GBBCHMA. This will assist Telford in providing the necessary labour supply whilst minimising the loss of Green Belt, which is consistent with national policy.

It is estimated that Telford and Wrekin's population will increase to approximately 198,000 upon implantation of the plan, this remains below its original planned capacity of 220,000. Should it be established that the remaining GBBCHMA shortfall

cannot be met within its boundaries, then it will be appropriate for the Telford and Wrekin local plan to be reviewed to test whether any additional growth can be accommodated and delivered.’

2.2 The Council has the following observations on this statement.

- ABCA and South Staffordshire confirmed at the EiP that the Council has complied with its duty to cooperate in the plan preparation.
- ABCA, Birmingham and South Staffordshire accept that Telford is a separate housing market area (HMA).
- The Council has repeatedly asked ABCA to produce a credible justification for any number they proposed regarding households or homes, an explanation of how this would work relative to calculating ABCA’s OAN and Telford & Wrekin’s, and how ABCA consider that the number of households they propose can be persuaded to come to Telford & Wrekin given that it is agreed that these are different HMAs.
- ABCA and South Staffordshire have not provided any more statistical evidence to justify their view that this Council should take some of Birmingham’s unmet housing need. ABCA are still relying on NHS data that relates to patients and not households.
- The Council maintains, as a result, that it does not have an obligation to contribute towards the unmet housing needs of the GBBCHMA in the Local Plan
- The Council assumes that the ABCA authorities and the other authorities in the HMA must now review how they will accommodate unmet need from within the HMA first, before looking elsewhere. This will mean following through on the advice that Peter Brett Associates gave them and consider, among other things, promoting urban extensions¹; encouraging new development on public transport corridors²; pursuing a dispersed growth strategy³; or supporting new towns and settlements⁴. The Council recognises that Green Belt reviews are politically sensitive but Government policy post-NPPF has directed many authorities across England to do this. ABCA are not in an unusual position.
- It is not relevant to the consideration of the current Local Plan to refer to the original New Town target population of 220,000. This is a new point in the ABCA position and a substantial departure from previous submissions. Planning for a population of 220,000 would theoretically require the Council to plan for a much higher level of housing than the already ambitious housing requirement set out in Policy HO1. Moreover, an open ended requirement for Telford & Wrekin Council to review the plan to meet the problems from Birmingham is not reasonable or justified and effectively provides the neighbouring HMA authorities with a position that does not require or incentivise them to solve their own unmet housing first before looking outside their Housing Market Area.

2.3 The Council has accepted there has been a trend of net in-migration from the Black Country and South Staffordshire to Telford & Wrekin in the past. However, these

¹ G4, paragraphs 5.40 to 5.53

² G4, paragraphs 6.1 to 6.73

³ G4, paragraph 8.21

⁴ G4, paragraph 9.2

trends have already been incorporated into future projections produced by the ONS (2012-based and updated following the release of the 2014 data⁵), which underpin the analysis of the OAN statements prepared by Peter Brett Associates on behalf of the Council.

2.4 The Council cannot accept ABCA's proposed modification.

3. What actions are there in the Birmingham Development Plan to review Birmingham's unmet housing need?

3.1 It is important to set out how the Birmingham Development Plan⁶ - which was adopted in January 2017 – seeks to plan to meet unmet housing need and to relate this to other activities in the West Midland Combined Authority.

3.2 Policy PG1 – Overall levels of growth - of the adopted Plan states that the City will work “actively with neighbouring authorities through the Duty to Cooperate to ensure appropriate provision is made elsewhere within the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area to meet the shortfall of 37,900 homes, including about 14,400 affordable dwellings, within the Plan Period”.

3.3 Policy TP48 – Monitoring and promoting the achievement of growth targets - (extract attached) identifies a number of key indicators that would trigger a review of the plan. These are mostly housing related. This requires Birmingham to maintain a five year housing land supply and to ensure that neighbouring authorities undertake Local Plan reviews to deliver housing growth to meet Birmingham's needs. This policy places no obligation on Telford & Wrekin.

3.4 After the closing of the Local Plan EiP hearings, the WMCA met on 17 February and agreed that its constituent members should conduct a review of Green Belt to address Birmingham's problems⁷. It is suggested again that ABCA authorities take up their responsibility to look to meet the GBBCHMA's unmet need from within their HMA before looking to other HMAs.

⁵ Incorporated into the updated OAN in G14

⁶https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20054/planning_strategies_and_policies/78/birmingham_development_plan

⁷ <https://westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/media/1743/adocpackpublic.pdf> - refer Agenda Item 2.

Monitoring

11.1 The City Council will measure the performance of the BDP by assessing how effective its policies are in delivering the vision and objectives.

11.2 The main mechanism for reporting on the performance of the Plan will be the Authorities' Monitoring Report. However it should be noted that not all indicators are appropriate for annual monitoring.

11.3 The indicators that will be used in monitoring the Plan are listed below. These will be monitored in line with targets set out in the policies.

11.4 In addition to these indicators the Council will also monitor the significant effects indicators set out in the Sustainability Appraisal.

Monitoring and promoting the achievement of growth targets

Introduction

11.5 The Council will monitor progress towards the achievement of key targets set out in policy PG1. Monitoring is required to ensure that the approach set out in the Plan continues to be relevant and effective. Regular monitoring will include analysis of data and trends and reviews of the evidence base. It provides the basis to trigger a review of actions, strategies and policies to reflect changing circumstances.

Policy TP48 Monitoring and promoting the achievement of growth targets

The City Council will monitor progress annually towards the achievement of the key targets for growth (housing, including affordable housing, employment, offices and retail) set out in policy PG1. In the event that the supply of land falls significantly behind that required to achieve these targets, the Council will undertake a full or partial review of the Plan in order to address the reasons for this.

Key indicators which would trigger a review are:

- A failure to provide a 5 year housing land supply in any monitoring year with the following 2 monitoring years indicating no recovery in the position.
- Housing completions fall more than 10% beneath the targets in the housing trajectory over any rolling 3 year period.
- A failure in any monitoring year to provide the minimum reservoir of best quality employment land with the following 2 monitoring years indicating no recovery in the position.
- An inadequate supply of sites for offices to meet the targets set in the Plan.
- An inadequate supply of retail sites to meet the targets set in the Plan.

The Council will also play an active role in promoting, and monitor progress in, the provision and delivery of the 37,900 homes required elsewhere in the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area to meet the shortfall in the city. This will focus on:

- The progress of neighbouring Councils in undertaking Local Plan reviews to deliver housing growth to meet Birmingham's needs.
- The progress of neighbouring Councils in delivering the housing targets set out in their plans.
- The extent to which a 5 year housing land supply is maintained in neighbouring areas.

If it becomes clear that progress is falling short of the level required, the Council will undertake a review of the reasons for this, and if this indicates that it is necessary to reassess the capacity for housing provision in Birmingham, a full or partial review of this Plan will be undertaken.

Key indicators which would trigger this are:

- Failure of a relevant Council to submit a replacement or revised Local Plan, providing an appropriate contribution towards Birmingham's housing needs, for examination within 3 years of the adoption of this Plan.
- Failure of Councils within the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area to maintain a 5 year housing land supply in any monitoring year with the following 2 monitoring years indicating no recovery in the position.

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- Housing completions within the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area fall more than 10% beneath the planned targets in housing trajectories over any rolling 3 year period.

Implementation

	Local/ National Funding	Partnerships	CPO	CIL/ Section 106	Planning Management	Other Local Plan/ SPD/Regeneration Framework
Policy TP48	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

POLICY	MONITORING INDICATORS
PG1 Overall Levels of Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Net/gross dwelling completions in the City Council area. • Net/gross dwelling completions in other Council areas that contribute to meeting the City’s housing need. • Employment land developed. • Retail floorspace completed (comparison and convenience). • Office floorspace completed. • Major waste management facilities completed. • Development pipeline information in relation to residential, employment, retail and office development. • Population and employment change.
PG2 Birmingham as an International City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major investments attracted and international events held. • Ranking in relevant monitors (e.g. European Cities Monitor).
PG3 Place-making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See indicators TP12 and TP30.
GA1-GA10 Growth Areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development completed in each area. • Development pipeline position in each area.
TP1 Reducing the City’s Carbon Footprint	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See indicators for TP3, TP4, TP5, TP13 and TP39. • Reduction in CO2 emissions from 1990 levels.
TP2 Adapting to Climate Change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See indicators for TP6, TP7 and TP8.
TP3 Sustainable Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new homes meeting zero-carbon standards. • Number of commercial developments meeting BREEAM standard excellent. • Number of existing homes adapted through Birmingham Energy Savers.
TP4 Low and Zero Carbon Energy Generation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of new homes and commercial developments connected to CHP or other forms of low or zero-carbon energy generation.