

Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent

Joint Local Plan Preferred Options Consultation

Have your say on shaping the future of Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Last Updated - January 2018

What is the Joint Local Plan?

The Joint Local Plan is being prepared jointly by Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council. The Local Plan will set out the strategic priorities for the development of the area and development management planning policies covering matters such as housing, employment, retail, leisure, transport, infrastructure and the natural and historic environment. The Joint Local Plan will cover the local authority administrative areas of Newcastle-under-Lyme and the City of Stoke-on-Trent.

Without a plan, we have much less control over the quality and location of development. A Joint Local Plan in place we will be more able to protect our important green spaces, direct development to appropriate locations and deliver local priorities and aspirations.

Why is the Plan being prepared jointly?

The councils' have worked successfully in partnership for a number of years. The adopted Core Spatial Strategy was produced in 2009. Evidence tells us that there are clear housing and economic market linkages between Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent.

The adopted Core Spatial Strategy is now seven years old and the preparation of the new Joint Local Plan is the most effective way to provide a robust strategy to attract new investment whilst also continuing to respect the unique characteristics of the area.

What progress has been made so far on developing a Joint Local Plan?

This is the third time we have invited views on the production of the Joint Local Plan. We have previously consulted on an Issues Consultation Document during February – March 2016 and a Strategic Options Consultation document in July – August 2017. The comments received as part of those consultations have been used to inform the production of the Preferred Options Consultation Document.

Further information on the stages of plan production and a timetable can be found on the website: www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/all-services/planning/planning-policy or www.stoke.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

What was the Previous Strategic Options consultation about?

The previous consultation was the Strategic Options Consultation (July – August 2017) which set out the new vision for Newcastle-under-Lyme and Stoke-on-Trent and the aims and objectives that will help to deliver that vision. The document

considered the levels of employment and housing growth that we need to plan for until 2033.

Since then we have reviewed your comments and as a result amended our new vision, aims and objectives and set out a preferred approach to accommodating employment and housing growth within our area

What is the Preferred Options Consultation about?

The Preferred Options Consultation Document sets out the preferred options for housing and economic growth and proposed spatial development sites for housing and employment. It also presents retail and leisure evidence through a hierarchy of centres and proposals for the amendments of some town centre boundaries.

Is there a glossary to help me understand the terms used?

Yes, a glossary can be found on page 121 of the Preferred Options Consultation document.

What is a Sustainability Appraisal?

There is a requirement to produce a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) alongside the Joint Local Plan. The Sustainability Appraisal assesses the impact of the options against a range of social, environmental and economic objectives. This helps us to ensure that our future policies are sustainable, i.e. they support development that meets the needs of current generations without compromising future generations.

This document is out for consultation at the same time as the Preferred Options consultation and you may wish to comment on this document as well. This SA updates the previous one, which was prepared for the Strategic Options Consultation document. As the Joint Local Plan production processes goes forward, the SA will also be updated at each stage.

What is the 'call for sites'?

At the Preferred Options stage we have identified sites for different uses of land – Housing, Employment and Retail.. At the same time as the previous consultation exercises on the Joint Local Plan, we undertook a 'call for sites' exercise. This is where landowners and developers submit potential development sites to the councils, so that these can be assessed as part of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and, where possible, they have been taken into account as part of the identification of development sites.

The information we received as a result of the previous 'call for sites' processes has been used to inform the Preferred Options Consultation document.

The councils want to ensure that all potential sites have been taken into account and, as set out within the Preferred Options Consultation document, there is still a shortfall of housing sites across the plan area, therefore the 'call for sites' process is still open. Call for sites received as part of the Preferred Options consultation will be assessed in an updated Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, which will be published at the next stage – Draft Joint Local Plan.

For further information on the call for sites please visit the website

Newcastle-under-Lyme -<https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/all-services/planning/planning-policy/joint-local-plan/call-sites>

Stoke-on-Trent – www.stoke.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

Please ensure that any submissions are made on the call for sites response form by no later than 5pm Thursday 1 March 2018.

Have you identified a preferred level of growth?

Yes, the councils have identified that the preferred level of growth is 27,800 dwellings and 230 hectares of employment land to be accommodated across the Joint Local Plan area of Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme. Further details can be found within the Preferred Option Consultation Document.

Are you expecting jobs to be created in the local area?

The amount of jobs being proposed across the area is a minimum of 17,000 jobs up to 2033, and could be as many as 20,000 jobs with the additional employment land uplift proposed. Further details on the proposed level of jobs and employment land needed is set out in the Preferred Options Consultation document. The evidence for the amount of jobs required in the area is also contained within the Employment Land Review (2015) and in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2017. The evidence suggests new jobs need to be created within the area including creating job opportunities for young people.

How many houses does the Preferred Options Consultation document propose?

The Preferred Options Consultation document sets out the preferred approach in planning for the delivery of 27,800 homes across the plan area. The evidence for this is in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2017 (SHMA). We are consulting on this preferred approach.

Does Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme really need that amount of homes and employment land?

The evidence for the amount of housing and employment land required is set out in separate evidence base documents and technical papers which accompany the consultation. Evidence includes the Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2017 (SHMA) and Employment Land Review (2015). These are available on the councils' websites. Technical papers for housing, employment and the green belt also explain how the amount of development required has been calculated.

How have you chosen the identified sites for development in the Preferred Options Consultation document?

There has been a preference for sites within and around the urban centres and sustainable rural settlements, as these are considered the most appropriate locations for development. That is they are close to the existing centres, employment and existing supporting services. Within these areas, sites which are considered to be deliverable or developable within the plan period have been highlighted. Further details on the approach taken is set out in the housing, employment and green belt technical papers.

How have you taken account of town and city centres?

The Preferred Options Consultation document includes a revised hierarchy of centres. This was last set out in 2009 within the adopted Core Spatial Strategy and has been updated to take account of changes in the way people shop and use centres. The identification of a sustainable hierarchy of centres is an important element of planning policy as it aims to ensure that an appropriate balance of development will contribute towards enhancing the vitality and viability of all our centres and maximising access to services and employment opportunities. The preferred options document also suggests some amendments to city and town centre boundaries to ensure these are up to date and reflect developments that have taken place since the last development plan was adopted.

What is meant by the term 'retail impact threshold'?

The National Planning Policy Framework sets out that under the retail impact assessment test, local authorities should require an impact assessment if a proposed development is larger than a locally set floorspace threshold. If a planning application for out of town development fails to satisfy this test it could be refused.

Why does the Preferred Options Consultation Document set out different retail impact thresholds for different centres?

We have proposed different size thresholds for different centres so we can gather the right level of evidence and information before planning application decisions are made, and to help to protect and enhance our existing centres. The size of a centre is measured on the amount of existing retail and leisure, the type of uses that are contained within the centre and the size of the units, including any vacant units. A lower threshold means we can ensure units of a smaller size outside our centres can also be assessed to ensure they do not have an unacceptable impact on existing shops and services.

Are there any sites for retail and leisure uses?

The Preferred Options Document also contains a list of proposed mixed use sites within centres which are considered important for future town centre uses within and to help support and encourage new investment within all our town centres.

How do I comment on sites identified in the preferred options consultation document?

Representations are sought on the preferred options consultation document and supporting documentation. The consultation period will run from 1 February 2018 – 1 March 2018. Please see below how you can comment via the online consultation form, email or by post. See 'How do I have my say?'

Will these figures mean that more affordable housing is built?

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2017 includes evidence about affordable housing. The SHMA recommends an updated calculated annual need for 453 affordable homes over the next five years and 265 affordable homes per annum thereafter recognising the clearing of the existing backlog of need across the housing market assessment.

Does this mean that you will be building in the green belt?

For Stoke-on-Trent no major changes to the green belt are proposed within the Preferred Options Consultation Document. To meet the housing and employment development requirements within the plan area the preferred options consultation document does identify sites in the green belt for development within Newcastle-under-Lyme. These are considered to be required incursions in the green belt to support economic growth in the most sustainable locations close to the urban area and to support growth at Keele University. An exceptional circumstances case for

development at Keele has been set out within the preferred options consultation document and the approach taken detailed within the green belt technical paper.

The Preferred Options Document identifies a shortfall of housing, how is this going to be resolved?

The Preferred Options Consultation Document identifies there is an overall shortfall across the plan area of 1,287 dwellings. This will need to be resolved at the next stage – Draft Joint Local Plan, to ensure the plan identifies enough sites to meet the areas development requirements, before the plan is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate.

The councils options to address this include identifying further sites in Newcastle-under-Lyme Green Belt (where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated) and/or open countryside, sites in Stoke-on-Trent urban area (subject to viability considerations) and to approach neighbouring local authorities. Any solution to the housing shortfall will need to conform to the Joint Local Plan strategy and in a manner which furthers the objectives of the plan.

Do the figures take account of HS2?

The government has proposed to construct a high speed rail link from London to Manchester. At this stage, any potential growth in the wider economy arising from HS2 is not being taken into account in the Joint Local Plan because the government's consultation proposals emerged after the start date of this plan and the associated evidence base. It is recognised that HS2 will have implications for the plan area in the medium to the long-term and these will need to be properly planned for. At this stage it is known that the proposed route for Phase 2a passes through the plan area. A Hybrid Bill has been laid before Parliament, an Environmental Statement published, and areas of land to be safeguarded have been identified. At this time, it is difficult to assess the timescales or implications of HS2.

Have you taken account of Brexit?

At this point, it is impossible to say what the impact of Brexit will be as there are many factors to be considered. As the Joint Local Plan progresses, we will continue to review whether the evidence is robust to take account of any potential changes.

How is the impact of employment and housing growth upon local services and infrastructure taken into account?

Infrastructure is a key component of the local plan making process. It is important that the councils have a thorough understanding of infrastructure provision and

requirements. An infrastructure capacity assessment will be undertaken and an infrastructure delivery plan will enable provision to be considered as the plan progresses.

How does this plan relate to the neighbourhood plan my community is preparing?

A local plan provides the overall development strategy for an area and a neighbourhood plan has to generally conform. Once made, neighbourhood plans form part of the development plan and are used to inform planning decisions within that area.

Neighbourhood planning groups will be kept informed as the Joint Local Plan progresses. If a neighbourhood plan is made before the Joint Local Plan is adopted, neighbourhood planning groups will need to consider whether aspects of the plan require review.

What is the timescale for the preferred options consultation?

The councils are consulting on the preferred options between the **1 February** and the **1 March 2018**. All responses must be received by no later **5pm on Thursday 1st March 2018**.

How can I find out more information?

You can see the document and supporting information by:

- Visiting the website:

Newcastle-under-Lyme - <https://www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/all-services/planning/planning-policy/joint-local-plan>

Stoke-on-Trent – www.stoke.gov.uk/jointlocalplan

- Pop into one of the following locations and view hard copies of consultation documents:

Stoke-on-Trent

- Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH
- 1 Smithfield, Hanley, ST1 4FA
- Longton Customer Service Centre, 1 Commerce Street, Longton, ST3 1NW
- Tunstall Customer Service Centre, 142 High Street, Tunstall, ST6 5TP
- All libraries within Stoke-on-Trent

Newcastle-under-Lyme

- Guildhall Customer Service Centre, High Street, Newcastle-under-Lyme, ST5 1PW
- The Madeley Centre, New Road, Madeley, CW3 9DW
- Kidsgrove Customer Service Centre, Town Hall, Kidsgrove, ST7 4E
- All libraries within Newcastle-under-Lyme

You can also keep in touch through the councils' Facebook and Twitter sites by going to the bookmark at the foot of the any council webpage.

If you would like to be kept informed of the Joint Local Plan as it progresses then please let us know via the contact details above and we will add you to our database and keep you updated.

If I have some questions on the consultation, how can I speak to you?

You can email localplan@stoke.gov.uk or telephone 01782 742333 during normal office hours (09:00-17:00 Monday to Friday) if you have any further queries.

How do I have my say?

By completing the feedback form:

- Online at www.newcastle-staffs.gov.uk/jointlocalplan
- By completing the form by hand (IN BLOCK CAPITALS) and emailing it to localplan@stoke.gov.uk
- Completing this form by hand (in BLOCK CAPITALS) and sending it to us at: Planning Policy, Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH.

Will any comments I make be published?

Councils are required by law to make available the comments you send about the plan, including your name and postal address. Your comments may be made available for the public to read in council offices and online as part of the local plan preparation process. Your telephone number, email address, and signature will not be published. Please note that we cannot provide anonymity or accept comments marked 'private' or 'confidential'. Comments that include offensive, racist, discriminatory, threatening and other non-relevant statements will be destroyed.

What happens next?

The councils will consider each of the responses and then prepare a draft Joint Local Plan. This will be set out in a draft Joint Local Plan document which we aim to consult on in autumn 2018.