

SHROPSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

Stage 1 Hearing Statement

Representor unique Part A Ref *	A0487
Matter	Matter 2 – The Duty to Co-operate
Relevant Questions Nos.	2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 & 9

SHROPSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION
MATTER 2 – THE DUTY TO CO-OPERATE

Inspector’s issues and questions in bold type.

This Hearing Statement is made for and on behalf of the HBF, which should be read in conjunction with our representations to the pre submission Local Plan consultation dated 26 February 2021. This representation answers specific questions as set out in the Inspector’s Matters, Issues & Questions document (ID7) issued on 12 April 2022.

Issue : Whether the Council has complied with the duty to cooperate in the preparation of the Local Plan.

Questions - Overall housing provision

Q2. Who has the Council engaged with in terms of overall housing provision and what form has this taken?

The Council has engaged with neighbouring authorities and the four Black Country authorities (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton) on the strategic matter of housing.

Q4. How have these inter-relationships been considered in preparing the Local Plan in terms of identifying the Local Housing Need (LHN) and setting the Local Plan’s Housing Requirement?

The Council considers Shropshire is its own self-contained Housing Market Area (HMA). Consequently, in preparing the LHN for Shropshire, inter-relationships with other neighbouring authorities were not considered. However, in setting the housing requirement, a contribution to unmet housing needs from the Black Country is taken into consideration (see HBF answer to Q5 below).

Q5. What is the justification for the allocation of 1,500 homes to meet some of the unmet housing need from the Black Country?

As set out in the Council’s Housing Topic Paper (Document GC4i) despite Shropshire been considered its own self-contained HMA and not physically adjoining the Black Country, there is still considered to be a functional relationship based on migration patterns, commuting patterns, travel to work areas and road & rail links (para 3.134). This relationship is strongest between central and eastern Shropshire and Dudley and Wolverhampton (para 3.135).

The Shropshire Local Plan offers the potential to accommodate a proportion of the forecast unmet housing need from the Black Country (para 3.136). Past migration trends into Shropshire from the Black Country were applied to the forecast level of unmet housing need (28,239 dwellings) to identify an initial

figure of circa 1,000 dwellings as a potential contribution to unmet housing need arising in the Black Country. After further Duty to Co-operate discussions with the Black Country authorities, the Council proposed a contribution of up to 1,500 dwellings (para 3.141). This contribution is not to be met on a specific site allocation or within a specific settlement but is incorporated within the overall housing requirement and distributed in accordance with the proposed development strategy (para 3.142).

The contribution of 1,500 dwellings has been agreed within a Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) between Shropshire Council and the Association of Black Country Authorities (Document EV041).

Q6. Are there any other issues of unmet housing needs within the HMA or relating to other authorities? If so, how are these being addressed?

There are no unmet housing needs within Shropshire's own self-contained HMA or other neighbouring authorities.

Q7. Are the SoCG with neighbouring authorities and stakeholders still relevant and up to date?

The SoCG with neighbouring authorities remain relevant.

Q8. What is the position of other authorities in the HMA and elsewhere in terms of the planned level of housing in Shropshire? Have specific concerns been raised through Duty to Co-operate discussions or representations which still are unresolved?

The SoCG between Shropshire Council and the Association of Black Country Authorities (Document EV041) identifies a disagreement concerning the introduction of an early review trigger mechanism in case a level of unmet housing need remains on-going (paras 9.1 & 9.2).

Q9. In overall terms, has the Council engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis in maximising the effectiveness of the preparation of the Local Plan? What has been the outcome of cooperation and how has this addressed the issue of housing provision?

The Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with both neighbouring and the Black Country authorities on the strategic matter of housing provision during the preparation of the Shropshire Local Plan (see HBF answers to Q2, 4 – 8 above).