



Trefonen Rural Protection Group

The Chairman

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SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL - LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

EXAMINATION STAGE

STAGE 1 HEARINGS

31st MAY 2022

RESPONDENT A0627 STATEMENT on Inspectors' Stage 1 Matters and Issues

Matter 4 Question 1

Is the preferred approach to housing growth and the housing requirement set out in Policy SP2 of 30,800 dwellings (1,400 dwellings per annum) over the plan period of 2016 to 2038, justified, positively prepared and consistent with national policy?

From the outset of the Review the Council have pursued their 'High Growth' ambition of 15% growth above FOAHN, which they appear to have pre-determined as their preferred option, continuing with it despite it **not** being supported by majority of respondents at initial 'Issues & Strategic Options' consultation.

There has never been any evidence or justification for this other than their own 'Economic Growth Strategy 2017-2021', which they said themselves said was "highly ambitious" and relies on perceived secondary benefits of major investment projects outside the county e.g. HS2, Northern Powerhouse, Midlands Engine.

It has appeared to us throughout the Review process that the Council's case for the 'High Growth' levels of new housing has been stated as being either to:-

- a) attract workforce into the county to fill labour shortage and adjust age demographics, or conversely,
 - b) to attract employment investment for existing labour force and/or retain current residents.
- These have been used interchangeably to 'prove' the point in hand at the time.

From the initial 'Issues & Strategic Options' consultation outcome that 'High Growth' level was **not** supported by majority of respondents. Majority support was for 'Moderate Growth' 5% above FOAHN – see SC 'Analysis of the ISO Consultation Responses 14.07.2017'.

That 'Moderate Growth' would provide sufficient housing for the identified needs whilst also providing 5% additional housing to meet the Government's aim of boosting housing supply. The key is Right Homes in Right Places.

There can be no case for building excess homes where they are not required or where infrastructure, employment and sustainable travel are not available or adequate.

The 'High Growth' Target impacts on all settlements through increased 'Housing Guidelines' well in excess of identified needs.

Modifications necessary for Soundness

- a) An adjustment of the overall Housing Target to 'Moderate Growth' 5% above FOAHN.
- b) An adjustment of all settlement Housing Guidelines to reflect the lower overall Target.

END