

Shropshire Council Response:

Additional Stage 1 Matters, Issues and Questions

Matter 1 – The Duty to Cooperate

Issue

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



Questions

General

Question 1. It has emerged that the Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA): Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton have decided to cease work immediately on the Joint Black Country Local Plan and instead each develop their own Local Plan to a timescale to be agreed by each authority (GC19). What implications, if any, does this have for the examination in relation to the duty to cooperate in the preparation of the Local Plan and the submitted statements of common ground (SoCG) with ABCA?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 1.1. The 'duty to cooperate' was introduced by section 33A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004) and the Localism Act (2011). It places a legal duty on Local Planning Authorities, County Councils and prescribed public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis on any genuinely strategic matters when preparing a development plan.
- 1.2. As the requirement is to cooperate during the preparation of a development plan, assessment of compliance with the duty to cooperate is undertaken at the point of submission of a development plan.
- 1.3. Shropshire Council submitted the draft Shropshire Local Plan (SD002) for examination on the 3rd September 2021. As such, the subsequent decision by the Black Country Authorities, in October 2022, to cease the production of the Joint Black Country Plan and instead each develop their own Local Plans has no implications for the consideration of the legal duty to cooperate in the context of the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 1.4. With regard to the ongoing duty to cooperate, in the context of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, this is considered only a matter of soundness. However, it is recognised that this is a legal and soundness matter for development plans currently being prepared (including those for the four Black Country Authorities). To this end, Shropshire Council continues to cooperate and engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with each of the Black County Authorities and all adjoining Local Planning Authorities.
- 1.5. With regard to the proposed contributions to unmet housing and employment needs forecast to arise within the Black Country Authorities administrative areas, Shropshire Council proposes that the 1,500 dwellings and 30ha of employment land should continue to form part of the draft Shropshire Local Plan as submitted. Therefore there is no change in position of Shropshire

Council's agreed offer of assistance as a result of the recent changes to Plan-making in the Black Country.

- 1.6. This is because whilst it is acknowledged that there is now, inevitably, greater uncertainty about the level of unmet housing and employment land needs and the timescales for the preparation of Local Plans within the Black Country administrative areas, the evidence which informed the constructive, active and ongoing duty to cooperate discussions between Shropshire Council and the Black Country Authorities and formed the basis for these proposed contributions remains relevant. It is understood that this evidence will continue to be the basis for continued work on the preparation of the individual Black Country Local Plans. Furthermore, paragraph 35(c) of the NPPF is clear that to be effective, strategic cross-boundary matters should be *"dealt with rather than deferred"*.
- 1.7. Shropshire Council has also indicated a willingness to consider, in future Local Plans, further requests for contributions towards unmet needs in the Black Country, if necessary.
- 1.8. The currently proposed contributions are to the Black Country Authorities administrative areas. It is now considered appropriate for the four Black Country Authorities to determine how best to distribute this agreed offer of assistance between their respective areas as part of their ongoing discussions on their individual Local Plans, as part of their duty to cooperate process.
- 1.9. It is important to note that during the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, Shropshire Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the Black Country Authorities. This is clearly documented within GC15-GC15I, the Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance (EV042) and the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) completed within the Black Country Authorities (EV041).
- 1.10. The Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA) was utilised as a key conduit for engaging with the Black Country Authorities, as the Black Country Authorities specifically requested that Shropshire Council engage with them in this way - and indeed this was one of the purposes behind the establishment of ABCA.
- 1.11. However, it is important to note also that the decisions made though ABCA were specifically ratified by each of the four Black Country Authorities individually. This is perhaps most evident within the SoCG between Shropshire Council and the Black Country Authorities (EV041), which has been signed-off by the leader of each of the four Black Country Authorities.

- 1.12. It should also be noted that Shropshire Council understands that ABCA will continue to be utilised as a key mechanism through which the Black Country Authorities will engage with each other in the context of the duty to cooperate during the preparation of their own Local Plans.

Question 2. Are the SoCG with neighbouring authorities and stakeholders still relevant and up to date?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 2.1. Shropshire Council considers that the Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) (documents EV028-EV040, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s) with all adjoining Local Planning Authorities and County Councils remain up to date.
- 2.2. With regard to the SoCG with the Black Country Authorities (EV041), Shropshire Council and the four Black Country Authorities are in general agreement that the conclusions reached within this SoCG remain up to date. By virtue of the timing of the signing of the SoCG (EV041) between Shropshire and ABCA on behalf of all the Black Country Authorities, it is considered this remains the authoritative statement of the most up-to-date position between the parties on the agreement on cross-boundary assistance on both housing and employment needs.
- 2.3. It is acknowledged that this SoCG could be updated to reflect recent factual changes with regard to the decision by the Black Country Authorities to cease the preparation of the Joint Black Country Local Plan and instead each develop their own Local Plan, however it is not considered that this is essential, and does not impact on the overall conclusions of the SoCG.
- 2.4. With regard to the SoCG prepared with other stakeholders (EV021-EV027 and GC4x), Shropshire Council considers that these are all currently up to date.
- 2.5. However, Shropshire Council would note that we are currently seeking further discussions with Natural England and the Environment Agency regarding the issue of the Clun Catchment, and its implications on positive plan-making. We are seeking these discussions following the receipt of correspondence from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Local Communities (DLUHC) regarding Nutrient Neutrality and the Habitats Regulations (as documented within GC16) and other relevant matters, including the preparation of further evidence

regarding nutrient neutrality in the Clun catchment (documents GC4u, GC4v, GC4w and GC4y). This also responds to the requests of the Inspectors within their response to GC16 (within the document ID22). Following the conclusion of any discussions there may be a need to update the SoCG with these stakeholders (EV025 and EV022 respectively).

- 2.6. Furthermore, Shropshire Council is also currently giving due consideration to the recent decision by Historic England to designate the Roman marching camp located on the proposed employment allocation SHR166 at Shrewsbury as a scheduled monument (as documented within the document OD003a). Once consideration of this decision has been completed by Shropshire Council, there may be a requirement for further discussions with Historic England in order to update the SoCG (EV024). However, the Council does not wish to predetermine the outcome of this process.
- 2.7. As these matters primarily relate to detailed development management policy / proposed site allocations, any implications resulting from them are considered to be relevant in the context of future Stage 2 Matters, Issues and Questions and associated Hearing Sessions. As such, Shropshire Council would reiterate that it considers that these SoCG are up to date for the purpose of the Stage 1 Matters, Issues and Questions and associated Hearing Sessions.

Overall housing provision

Question 3. Having regard to the additional evidence that has been submitted by the Council (GC15 – GC15I), has the Council maximised the effectiveness of the Local Plan by engaging constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the prescribed bodies on housing matters during the preparation of the Local Plan?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 3.1. Yes, Shropshire Council considers that it has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the prescribed bodies on strategic housing matters during the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan (SD002). Shropshire Council considers that this constructive engagement has:
 - a. Identified housing need and distribution as a relevant strategic matter for Shropshire Council to address with adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities;

- b. Confirmed with adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities that there is no unmet housing need within Shropshire Council's administrative area. This was subject to these other Local Planning Authorities confirming they could not provide land to remove the need for Green Belt land releases in Shropshire;
 - c. Confirmed with adjoining Local Planning Authorities that there is no unmet housing need within their administrative areas requiring a contribution within Shropshire Council's administrative area;
 - d. Recognised the functional relationship between Shropshire Council's administrative area and the Black Country, and as a result, identified Shropshire Council as a closely related Local Planning Authority with the Black Country Authorities. This has led to constructive, active and ongoing engagement through the duty to cooperate with the four Black Country Authorities, primarily via the Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA) as requested by the Black Country Authorities;
 - e. Recognised the issue of unmet housing need forecast to arise in the Black Country as a relevant strategic matter for Shropshire Council to consider, during the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan;
 - f. Determined and agreed with the Black Country Authorities, an appropriate contribution to the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country, for inclusion in the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
 - g. Determined and agreed with the Black Country Authorities an appropriate mechanism for delivering the contribution to help meet the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country, within the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
 - h. Documented the agreement reached by Shropshire Council with adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities in Statements of Common Ground (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s) and summarised the duty to co-operate engagement with prescribed bodies in the Compliance Statement (EV042) and captured this engagement in the Council's Matter 2 Hearing Statement.
- 3.2. Shropshire Council considers that this engagement has maximised the effectiveness of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, as set out further in response to Question 6, principally by:
- a. Proposing a realistic, effective and sustainable strategy for the level and distribution of housing development in Shropshire, consistent with the requirements of paragraphs

11(a), 11(b), 16 and 20-23 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This strategy will contribute to the achievement of the vision, objectives and wider spatial strategy for Shropshire;

- b. Presenting strategic policies for the provision of appropriate and sustainable housing to address local housing need, maintain flexibility to respond to changes to local housing need and support the achievement of other identified objectives in Shropshire, consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 11(a), 11(b), 16 and 20-23 of the NPPF;
 - c. Proposing an appropriate contribution in Shropshire towards the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country, which will be delivered in a sustainable manner through the in the draft Shropshire Local Plan, consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 11(a), 11(b), 16 and 24-27 of the NPPF.
- 3.3. As recognised within the Planning Inspector's correspondence ID17 *"All of the identified strategic cross-boundary matters and how the Council considers its Duty was addressed with the relevant bodies are summarised in its compliance statement (EV042)."*
- 3.4. This was subsequently expanded upon within the Council's Matter 2: Hearing Statement and further discussions during the relevant hearing session. Indeed, within the relevant hearing session there seemed to be general consensus in the room that the Council had effectively captured all the relevant genuinely strategic matters.
- 3.5. As documented within the Statement of Compliance (EV042), the Statements of Common Ground (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s) and in Shropshire Council's Response to Question 1 of Matter 2, the genuinely strategic matter relating to housing, is housing need and its spatial distribution. Specifically, the housing needs of Shropshire and its adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities (the Black Country Authorities), and the suitability of proposals for the distribution of development across Shropshire.
- 3.6. Shropshire Council considers that the relevant prescribed bodies on this genuinely strategic matter are adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities. For this reason, the supporting evidence in GC15-GC15I focuses on these prescribed bodies and positively responds to the request for further information on the duty to cooperate activity, in relation to strategic housing and employment matters.

- 3.7. Shropshire Council considers that GC15-GC15I provides an effective summary of the duty to cooperate activity undertaken with adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities.
- 3.8. Shropshire Council also considers that GC15-GC15I demonstrates that throughout the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, this Authority has engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities on strategic housing matters. This constructive engagement is evidenced by the effectiveness of the vision, objectives, needs and distribution of development in the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 3.9. This engagement activity proactively conveyed to adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities the proposed strategy for the level and distribution of development within the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 3.10. With regard to the adjoining Local Planning Authorities, as a result of this engagement activity it was established that there was no unmet housing need within their administrative areas requiring a contribution within Shropshire Council's administrative area.
- 3.11. With regard to the Black Country Authorities, as a result of this engagement activity, it was concluded that:
 - a. Emerging evidence prepared to inform the Black Country Local Plan Review forecast a significant unmet housing need of some 28,239 dwellings by 2039. As such, the Black Country was seeking appropriate contributions from all neighbouring and closely related Local Planning Authorities through the duty to cooperate process, via ABCA, and for these contributions to be included in emerging Local Plan Reviews for these areas;
 - b. Due to the functional relationship between Shropshire Council's administrative area and the Black Country, that it was appropriate for a contribution to the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country to be provided within Shropshire Council's administrative area.
- 3.12. Subsequently, through the duty to cooperate engagement activity, an appropriate contribution to the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country and the approach to achieving this contribution was agreed between Shropshire Council and all four of the Black Country Authorities. Specifically:
 - a. A contribution in Shropshire Council's administrative area of around 1,500 dwellings towards the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country was agreed;

- b. It was also agreed that this contribution would not be met on a specific site allocation or within a specific settlement, but rather this contribution would be incorporated within the Shropshire Local Housing Need and met in accordance with the proposed strategy for the level and distribution of development across Shropshire.
- 3.13. This engagement activity is summarised within the respective SoCG between Shropshire Council and the relevant Local Planning Authority (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s), the Statement of Compliance (EV042), the additional material in GC15-GC15I and Shropshire Council's Matter 2 Response.
- 3.14. The conclusions of this engagement in relation to the genuinely strategic matter of housing need and distribution are summarised in the respective SoCG between Shropshire Council and the relevant Local Planning Authority (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s). These SoCG present the culmination of the extensive duty to cooperate activity undertaken by Shropshire Council.
- 3.15. With specific regard to the Black Country Authorities, it is important to note that the relevant SoCG (EV041) has been signed by the leader of Shropshire Council and by the leaders of each of the four Black Country Authorities. This document was signed prior to the Submission of the draft Local Plan.
- 3.16. Shropshire Council considers it has engaged in its duty to co-operate on strategic housing matters, in a constructive, active and ongoing manner, which has maximised the effectiveness of the draft Shropshire Local Plan. This is shown in the Statement of Compliance (EV042), Statements of Common Ground (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s), Shropshire Council's Response to Matter 2, this Further Statement in response to Matter 2 and in documents GC15-GC15I which together, strongly support these conclusions.

Question 4. What has been the outcome of co-operation and how has this addressed the issue of overall housing provision?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 4.1. All the outcomes of the constructive, active and ongoing discussions with prescribed bodies regarding genuinely strategic housing matters are documented within the response to Question 3. The principal outcomes of this engagement activity that address the issue of overall housing provision are:

- a. Identifying a realistic, effective and sustainable strategy for the level and distribution of housing development in Shropshire. This strategy will contribute to the achievement of the vision, objectives and wider spatial strategy for Shropshire;
 - b. Proposing a level of development (housing requirement) which is sufficient to meet local housing need, as calculated using Government's standard housing methodology. It is also sufficient to provide flexibility to respond to any changes to local housing need, support the achievement of other identified objectives in Shropshire and incorporate an appropriate contribution to the unmet housing need forecast to arise in the Black Country;
 - c. Proposing an appropriate contribution of 1,500 dwellings towards the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country administrative areas;
 - d. Identifying an effective strategy for achieving the proposed contribution to the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country. Specifically, that the contribution would be incorporated within the Shropshire local housing need and met in accordance with the proposed strategy for the level and distribution of housing development across Shropshire, rather than proposing a specific site allocation(s) or a specific settlement(s) for this provision;
 - e. Developing effective strategic policies to support and enable the provision of appropriate and sustainable housing to achieve the proposed housing requirement (including the contribution to the unmet housing need forecast to arise within the Black Country).
- 4.2. Shropshire Council considers this duty to cooperate engagement has maximised the effectiveness of the draft Shropshire Local Plan and will deliver a sustainable outcome. The outcomes of this engagement activity are apparent within the proposals within the draft Shropshire Local Plan (SD002).
- 4.3. A key outcome and the culmination of this engagement activity is the completed Statements of Common Ground between Shropshire Council and adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities(EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s). These summarise the agreement reached with these Local Planning Authorities on the above matters.

Jobs growth and employment land provision

Question 5. Having regard to the additional evidence that has been submitted by the Council (GC15 – GC15I), has the Council maximised the effectiveness of the Local Plan by engaging constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the prescribed bodies on employment related matters during the preparation of the Local Plan?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 5.1. Yes, Shropshire Council considers that it has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the prescribed bodies on strategic employment matters, during the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan. Shropshire Council considers that this constructive engagement has:
- a. Identified employment land need and distribution as a relevant strategic matter for Shropshire Council to address with adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities;
 - b. Confirmed with adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities that there is no unmet employment land need within Shropshire Council's administrative area. This was subject to the adjoining authorities confirming they could not provide land to remove the need for Green Belt land releases in Shropshire;
 - c. Confirmed with adjoining Local Planning Authorities that there is no unmet employment land need within their administrative areas, requiring a contribution within Shropshire Council's administrative area;
 - d. Recognised the functional relationship between Shropshire Council's administrative area and the Black Country, and as a result, identified Shropshire Council as a closely related Local Planning Authority with the Black Country. This has led to constructive, active and ongoing engagement through the duty to cooperate with the four Black Country Authorities, primarily via the Association of Black Country Authorities (ABCA) as requested by the Black Country Authorities;
 - e. Recognised the strategic issue of unmet employment land need forecast to arise in the Black Country and as a relevant strategic matter for Shropshire Council to consider, during the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan;
 - f. Determined and agreed with ABCA, on behalf of the Black Country Authorities an appropriate contribution to help meet the unmet employment land need forecast to arise within the Black Country, for inclusion in the draft Shropshire Local Plan.

- g. Determined and agreed with the Black Country Authorities an appropriate mechanism for delivering the contribution to help meet the unmet employment land need forecast to arise within the Black Country, within the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
 - h. Documented the agreements reached between Shropshire Council with adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities in Statements of Common Ground (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s) and summarised the duty to co-operate engagement with prescribed bodies in the Compliance Statement (EV042) and captured this engagement in the Council's Matter 2 Hearing Statement.
- 5.2. Shropshire Council considers that this engagement has maximised the effectiveness of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, as set out further in response to Question 6, principally by:
 - a. Proposing a realistic, effective and sustainable strategy for the scale and distribution of employment development in Shropshire, consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 11(a), 11(b), 16 and 20-23 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). This strategy will contribute to achieving the vision, objectives, needs and distribution of development for Shropshire;
 - b. Presenting strategic policies for the provision of employment and commercial development which address local needs and an appropriate contribution to identified unmet needs from elsewhere in a practical manner, consistent with achieving sustainable development and the requirements of paragraphs 20-23, 26 and 35 of the NPPF;
 - c. Proposing an appropriate contribution in Shropshire towards the unmet employment land need forecast to arise within the Black Country, which will be delivered through the strategy in the draft Shropshire Local Plan, consistent with the requirements of paragraphs 11(a), 11(b), 16 and 24-27 of the NPPF;
 - d. Placing significant weight on supporting economic growth and productivity in the Local Plan strategy, through policies and proposals to provide for local business needs and wider opportunities for development. Creating the conditions for businesses to invest, expand and adapt and allowing each area to build on their strengths and address any weaknesses, in order to address the challenges of the future, in accordance with paragraph 81 of the NPPF;
 - e. Setting out a clear economic vision and strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic

growth, identifies strategic sites for local and inward investment to match this vision and strategy and, addresses potential barriers to investment including the supply of labour in Shropshire. Providing sufficient flexibility to accommodate wider needs that might arise during the Plan period, and facilitating quick responses to changing economic circumstances, in accordance with paragraph 82 of the NPPF.

- 5.3. As documented in the Statement of Compliance (EV042), the Statements of Common Ground (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s) and in Shropshire Council's Response to Question 1 of Matter 2, the genuinely strategic matters relating to employment, are the employment land need and its spatial distribution.
- 5.4. The Local Plan therefore seeks to meet the identified employment land needs of Shropshire, and an appropriate contribution for the Black Country Authorities, and to accommodate this through a sustainable spatial distribution across Shropshire.
- 5.5. Shropshire Council considers that the relevant prescribed bodies on this genuinely strategic matter are adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities. Shropshire Council considers that GC15-GC15I provides an effective summary of the duty to cooperate activity undertaken with these adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities. For this reason, the supporting evidence in GC15-GC15I focuses on these prescribed bodies and responds to the request for further information on the duty to cooperate activity, in relation to strategic housing and employment matters.
- 5.6. Shropshire Council also considers that GC15-GC15I demonstrates that throughout the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, this authority engaged constructively, actively and on an on-going basis with the adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities, to address the strategic employment matters.
- 5.7. Shropshire Council has actively engaged in this process, in firstly proposing a housing contribution in response to the ABCA letter of 12th July 2018 and secondly, by continuing this engagement especially in relation to unmet employment needs as set out in documents GC15 and GC15a.
- 5.8. In relation to specific activity with reference to the submitted material (GC15-GC15I), the ABCA letter of 12th July 2018, invited closely related authorities to assist with the unmet housing and employment land needs in the Black Country Authorities. Shropshire Council consider this is proven by the

Statement of Compliance (EV042) and the Statement of Common Ground (EV041 with EV041.01 – EV041.05)

- 5.9. Shropshire Council considered further the request of 12th July 2018, in relation to unmet employment land needs, following the ABCA consultation response of 30th September 2020, to the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan.
- 5.10. In their consultation response, ABCA wrote further “the Regulation 18 Plan does not seek to make a contribution to meeting employment land needs arising in the Black Country.” ABCA requested further “engagement with the Council through the Duty to Cooperate to explore how the Local Plan can respond to these issues.” This resulted in further constructive engagement between Shropshire Council and ABCA as set out in supporting documents GC15 and GC15a,
- 5.11. This engagement is considered to be relevant to the genuinely strategic matter of employment land need and distribution. This comprised:
- a. A contribution in Shropshire Council’s administrative area of around 30 hectares towards the unmet employment land need forecast to arise within the Black Country;
 - b. An agreement that this contribution would not be met on a specific site allocation or within a specific settlement, but rather this contribution would be incorporated within the overall employment land requirement and met in accordance with the proposed strategy for the scale and distribution of development across Shropshire;
 - c. A more effective and sustainable outcome, in which the Authorities entering into the agreement, will deliver positively prepared and justified strategies with greater degrees of effectiveness, in order to establish the soundness of their Local Plans, in accordance with all of the requirements of paragraph 35 of the NPPF.
- 5.12. The conclusions of this engagement in relation to employment land need and distribution are presented in the respective SoCG between Shropshire Council and the relevant Local Planning Authority (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s). These SoCGs represent the culmination of the extensive duty to cooperate activity undertaken by Shropshire Council.
- 5.13. With specific regard to the Black Country Authorities, it is important to note that the relevant SoCG (EV041) has been signed by the leader of Shropshire Council and the leaders of each of the four Black Country Authorities. This document was signed prior to the Submission of the draft Local Plan.

- 5.14. Shropshire Council considers, it has engaged in its duty to co-operate on strategic employment matters, in a constructive, active and ongoing manner, which in turn, has maximised the effectiveness of the draft Shropshire Local Plan. This is shown in the Statement of Compliance (EV042), Statements of Common Ground (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s), Shropshire Council's Response to Matter 2, this Further Statement in response to Matter 2 and in documents GC15-GC15I which together, strongly support these conclusions.

Question 6. What has been the outcome of co-operation and how has this addressed the issue of jobs growth and employment land provision?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 6.1. Shropshire Council has then engaged constructively (NPPF para 35) with both its adjoining authorities and 'closely related' strategic policy making authorities, particularly to determine how to contribute towards their unmet needs, in an appropriate manner, consistent with achieving sustainable development.
- 6.2. The outcomes of constructive, active and ongoing discussions with these prescribed bodies regarding genuinely strategic employment matters are documented in response to Question 5 and are addressed further in response to this question. Importantly, they are also apparent within the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 6.3. The principal outcomes of this co-operation resulted in Shropshire Council:
- a. Proposing an employment land requirement of 300 hectares sufficient to meet both the local needs of the Shropshire and to contribute towards unmet need in neighbouring Local Authority areas as shown in the Statement of Common Ground with the Association of Black Country Authorities;
 - b. Making no contribution towards employment land needs in adjoining Local Planning Authorities, as no unmet cross-boundary need was identified in these Local Planning Authority areas;
 - c. Making a contribution of 30ha towards the unmet employment land need forecast to arise within the four Black Country Authority areas;
 - d. Determining that this contribution should be incorporated within the Shropshire local employment land need and met in

accordance with the proposed strategy for the level and distribution of development across Shropshire rather than proposing a specific site allocation(s) or a specific settlement(s) for this provision;

- e. Determining that this contribution towards the Black Country Authorities unmet need, will deliver new employment opportunities within Shropshire to meet the needs of the Black Country population, without requiring migration away from their existing communities due to the functional linkages between the areas;
 - f. Providing an increase in the labour supply commuting into Shropshire to further an increase in labour from the provision of 1,500 dwellings in Shropshire to meet unmet housing need in the four Black Country Authority areas.
- 6.4. Shropshire Council considers this duty to cooperate engagement has maximised the effectiveness of the Submission draft Local Plan and will deliver more effective and sustainable outcomes. The outcomes of this engagement activity are apparent within the proposals in the draft Shropshire Local Plan (SD002).
- 6.5. A key outcome and the culmination of this engagement activity is the completed Statements of Common Ground between Shropshire Council and adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities in Statements of Common Ground (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s), which summarises the agreement reached with these Local Planning Authorities on the above matters.
- 6.6. Shropshire Council and those Authorities entering into substantive duty to co-operate agreements with the Council, will thus deliver positively prepared and justified strategies with a high degree of effectiveness and will be able to establish the soundness of their Local Plans, in accordance with paragraph 35 of the NPPF.

Minerals and waste

Question 7. What discussions have taken place with neighbouring authorities and the Aggregates Working Party regarding the use of the 3 year average sales for sand and gravel plus 20% and what level of agreement has been reached regarding use of this figure?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 7.1 The West Midlands Aggregates Working Party (WMAWP) monitors the supply of and demand for primary, secondary and recycled aggregates. In order to perform this role, the WMAWP brings together representatives from the primary and secondary aggregate producers, representatives of the recycling industry, Mineral Planning Authorities and other relevant organisations.
- 7.2 As such, the WMAWP represents an important conduit to the key bodies and organisations for mineral planning issues in the West Midlands.
- 7.3 Shropshire Council has, and continues to be, an active member of the WMAWP. Indeed, between 2014 and 2020 Shropshire Council chaired the group.
- 7.4 During the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, the WMAWP has been the main vehicle by which engagement with Mineral Planning Authorities and indeed other relevant bodies and organisations in the West Midlands regarding mineral planning, including strategic planning matters relating to minerals, have taken place.
- 7.5 The engagement that has occurred via WMAWP has been complemented by direct engagement with the Mineral Planning Authorities in the West Midlands.
- 7.6 Engagement with adjoining Mineral Planning Authorities that are not located within the West Midlands takes place primarily via discussions with the individual Mineral Planning Authority.
- 7.7 Further information on the engagement process utilised for minerals matters is provided in the Mineral Technical Background Report (EV076).
- 7.8 With regard to the calculation of mineral need, Shropshire Council does not consider that the methodology utilised is itself a genuinely strategic matter. Rather, Shropshire Council considers that the genuinely strategic matter with regard to minerals, is whether sufficient mineral resource supply has been identified to meet mineral resource needs during the proposed Plan period.
- 7.9 This position is considered to be consistent with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF),

including the requirement at paragraph 209: *“It is essential that there is a sufficient supply of minerals to provide the infrastructure, buildings, energy and goods that the country needs. Since minerals are a finite natural resource, and can only be worked where they are found, best use needs to be made of them to secure their long-term conservation.”*

- 7.10 This view is also considered to be consistent with the general approach applied by the WMAWP, which is that Minerals Planning Authorities must fulfil the requirement within the NPPF in terms of ensuring an adequate supply of minerals.
- 7.11 Through the engagement undertaken with the WMAWP and direct engagement with Mineral Planning Authorities, Shropshire Council considers that it has engaged with Mineral Planning Authorities constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis on the issue of mineral resource supply and that this engagement has maximised the effectiveness of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, with regard to the strategy for ensuring sufficient mineral resource supply, draft policies safeguarding mineral resources and draft policies managing mineral resource extraction operations and associated infrastructure.
- 7.12 Importantly, Shropshire Council considers that informed by this engagement and other processes it is able to demonstrate a strategy which will ensure sufficient mineral resource supply will be available to meet mineral resource needs during the proposed Plan period and that the availability of this mineral resource is effectively managed by the draft policies within the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 7.13 This is documented within the Mineral Technical Background Report (EV076), supplemented by more recent correspondence with the Planning Inspectors, particularly documents GC11, GC13 and GC17.
- 7.14 It is significant to note that there have been no representations received from the mineral industry during the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Consultation undertaken on the draft Shropshire Local Plan, within which concerns about mineral resource supply in Shropshire have been raised.
- 7.15 Furthermore, whilst some adjoining Mineral Planning Authorities (specifically Staffordshire and Worcestershire County Councils) did request further clarification on this matter due to some concerns they had, this has been resolved through further discussion and explanation of approach. As a result, no Mineral Planning Authorities have identified mineral resource supply as an area of outstanding disagreement within the Statements of Common Ground (within EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s) which represent the culmination of the duty to cooperate

process which has occurred throughout the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan.

- 7.16 With specific regard to the methodology utilised to calculate mineral resource need (3 year average sales of sand and gravel plus 20%, plus a 7 year landbank), whilst not considered a genuinely strategic matter, the methodology utilised has been informed by discussion that occurred within WMAWP, dating back to 2016, regarding appropriate datasets to inform forecasts of need and the use of a three or ten year rolling average. Summaries of these discussions are provided within Appendices 7.A – 7.F of this document, which represent the minutes of the WMAWP meetings.
- 7.17 For example: at the WMAWP meeting on the 13th July 2018 at Appendix 7.D in paragraph 5.9 it was noted that discussions occurred regarding *“average sales figure from previous 3 year figure should be used and compared to the ten year figure”*.
- 7.18 Furthermore, in Appendix 7.F at paragraph 5.1 it was noted that discussion occurred about *“the approach which has been used in the past is not particularly effective. The main issue is finding a way to moderate the 10-year average approach that would enable LAs to paint a more realistic picture... major growth opportunities and growth plans should be taken into consideration and forecasts adjusted accordingly”*.
- 7.19 A further example is from Appendix 7.A, paragraphs 4.25-4.27 where there was a discussion about how the 10 year average could obscure the actual average and future demand, including an observation that *“A rolling 10 year average distorts the overall picture. It can hide the actual average and hide the future demand”*.
- 7.20 There have also been numerous discussions about the pros and cons of the various data sources available to inform assessments of need. For instance, in Appendix 7.B at paragraph 2.95 there was concern about the *“use of 10 year average figures; because if 10 year sales and production falls then landbank requirements shrink meaning new sites aren’t needed. At what point do you plan for the future?”*.
- 7.21 Furthermore, it is well established within WMAWP that it can be appropriate to utilise different methodologies to assess mineral resource need – particularly when there have been periods of high demand or low demand. An example of this is the discussion evolving around HS2 in Appendix 7.G at paragraph 2.6 where it was noted that *“HS2 will act as a catalyst for wider investment in the West Midlands which will also increase demand, and this should be considered when undertaking LAA... also mentioned that Norfolk LAA uses a 20-year average as*

opposed to a ten-year average as this better reflects the economic cycle”.

- 7.22 Shropshire Council would also note that this approach is consistent with the NPPF and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) which include:
- a. Paragraph 213(a) of the NPPF states that when preparing an annual Local Aggregate Assessment to forecast future demand that this should be *“based on a rolling average of 10 years’ sales data and **other relevant local information**, and an assessment of all supply options (including marine dredged, secondary and recycled sources)”*. (emphasis added).
 - b. The NPPG on Minerals states at paragraph 064: *“Local Aggregate Assessments must also consider other relevant local information in addition to the 10 year rolling supply, which seeks to look ahead at possible future demand, rather than rely solely on past sales. Such information may include, for example, levels of planned construction and housebuilding in their area and throughout the country. **Mineral Planning Authorities should also look at average sales over the last 3 years in particular to identify the general trend of demand as part of the consideration of whether it might be appropriate to increase supply.**”* (my emphasis).
- 7.23 In determining an appropriate methodology for assessing mineral resource need in Shropshire, Shropshire Council has complied with the requirements of the NPPF and NPPG – the use of the three year sales average of sand and gravel plus 20% was directly informed by consideration of the 3 year sales average, 10 year sales average and other relevant information (as demonstrated within the Mineral Technical Background Report (EV076)).
- 7.24 Furthermore, both the 2016-17 Shropshire Local Aggregate Assessment (Appendix 7.H of this document) and the 2017-2018 Shropshire Local Aggregate Assessment (which is encompassed in the Mineral Technical Background Report (EV076)) include consideration of the three year and 10 year sales averages – with the 2017/18 Shropshire Local Aggregate Assessment specifically including the 3 year sales average plus 20% methodology.
- 7.25 The Local Aggregate Assessments are proactively informed by discussion undertaken through WMAWP and the documents are ultimately endorsed by WMAWP before completion.
- 7.26 Appendix 7.C at paragraph 6.10, Appendix 7.D at paragraph 6.2, Appendix 7.E at paragraph 7.5 and Appendix 7.F at paragraph 7.7 demonstrate that Shropshire Council gave regular updates

on the progress of their Local Aggregate Assessment and preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan at WMAWP meetings.

- 7.27 The Minerals Industry have also been very clear through their involvement within the WMAWP, that they are keen to ensure that any methodology utilised to assess mineral resource need is responsive to the local area. The approach adopted by Shropshire Council has facilitated this and has resulted in no objections being received from the industry within representations received during the Regulation 19 Consultation on the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 7.28 Appendix 7.B at paragraph 2.96 shows the types of discussion around this topic where a representative of the industry is noted discussing the fact that *“the 10 year average is going to be a problem. Housing completions are on the rise but 10 year averages are down due to the recession. Industry has to keep close eye on LAA’s. Review of plans never quite work because resources are never in place for an adequate review. A big concern when authorities continue using 10 year average, unless everyone agrees it’s a reasonable proxy. Industry becomes reluctant to move forward as we end up planning for decline by default”*.
- 7.29 With regard to the methodology utilised, it is important to note that the need resulting from this calculation exceeds that which would result from the 10 year sales average figure which is more traditionally utilised. From data extracted from Table 1 in the Mineral Technical Background Report (EV076) and Shropshire Council’s more recent correspondence reference GC13, it can be seen how the three year average and the three year average plus 20% is higher than the 10 year average.

Figure 1: Mineral Trend Data in Shropshire

Production	Sand and Gravel
2018 production	0.71 million tonnes
3-year average	0.71 million tonnes
3-year average plus 20%	0.85 million tonnes
10-year average	0.68 million tonnes

Information from Table 1, Mineral Technical Background Report (EV076) and Shropshire Council’s more recent correspondence reference GC13

- 7.30 Ultimately, if there remain concerns regarding the methodology utilised to assess need for mineral resource in Shropshire, the Council is willing to consider applying a more traditional assessment of need based on the 10 year average sales figure. However, as this alternative methodology is shown to result in a

lower level of need than the proposed methodology, it is considered that the mineral resource supply identified is sufficient to ensure that mineral resources needs are met throughout the proposed Plan period, and therefore this would not result in any necessary changes to the overall strategic approach of the draft Shropshire Local Plan on this matter.

Question 8. The Waste Technical Background report notes that the potential for further landfill capacity is very limited. Has there been any discussion with neighbouring authorities about potentially accommodating waste needing disposal after existing landfill capacity has been exhausted?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 8.1 The West Midlands Resource Technical Advisory Body (WMRTAB) brings together Waste Planning Authorities (primarily from the West Midlands), representatives of the waste management industry and other relevant bodies to collaborate on waste planning issues.
- 8.2 As such, WMRTAB represents an important conduit to the key bodies and organisations for waste planning issues in the West Midlands.
- 8.3 Shropshire Council has and continues to be an active member of WMRTAB.
- 8.4 During the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan, the WMRTAB has been the main vehicle by which engagement with Waste Planning Authorities and indeed other relevant bodies and organisations in the West Midlands regarding waste planning, including strategic waste planning matters, have taken place. This is confirmed within the WMRTAB representation on the Regulation 19 consultation on the draft Shropshire Local Plan (A0423) which includes *"WMRTAB has therefore facilitated discussion between Shropshire Council and other neighbouring waste planning authorities to assist with meeting its Duty to Cooperate on matters pertaining to the planning for waste management within Shropshire."*
- 8.5 The engagement that has occurred via WMRTAB has been complemented by direct engagement with the Waste Planning Authorities in the West Midlands.
- 8.6 Engagement with adjoining Waste Planning Authorities that are not located within the West Midlands primarily takes place via direct discussions with the individual Waste Planning Authority.

- 8.7 Further information on the engagement process utilised for waste matters is provided in the Waste Technical Background Report (EV116).
- 8.8 Due to the nature of waste management infrastructure and the need to ensure economies of scale and viability, it is not possible for all Waste Planning Authorities to contain the waste management infrastructure necessary to deal with all waste streams generated.
- 8.9 It is for this reason that there has been a long standing commitment to the principle of 'equivalent self-sufficiency' regarding waste in the West Midlands – as referenced within draft Policy SP17 of the draft Shropshire Local Plan and the Waste Technical Background Report (EV116).
- 8.10 'Equivalent self-sufficiency' is the principle that each Waste Planning Authority should provide sufficient waste management infrastructure to address an equivalent amount of waste to that which is generated within their administrative area, but it is recognised that waste management infrastructure will not necessarily directly reflect and address all the types of waste that are generated in the administrative area.
- 8.11 Through this approach, the waste generated within the region can be effectively managed across the region.
- 8.12 This principle is also very much recognised within the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) on waste (ID28), which at Paragraph 7 states under the heading *"Do the self-sufficiency and proximity principles require each waste planning authority to manage all of its own waste?"* the following *"Though this should be the aim, there is **no expectation that each local planning authority should deal solely with its own waste to meet the requirements of the self-sufficiency and proximity principles.** Nor does the proximity principle require using the absolute closest facility to the exclusion of all other considerations. There are **clearly some wastes which are produced in small quantities for which it would be uneconomic to have a facility in each local authority.** Furthermore, there **could also be significant economies of scale for local authorities working together** to assist with the development of a network of waste management facilities to enable waste to be handled effectively.*
- The ability to source waste from a range of **locations /organisations helps ensure existing capacity is used effectively and efficiently, and importantly helps maintain local flexibility to increase recycling without resulting in local overcapacity.**"* (emphasis added).

- 8.13 Within WMRTAB, there has been a long standing agreement regarding the role of 'equivalent self-sufficiency' and it is considered that the principle of 'equivalent self-sufficiency' is very much supported by the membership of WMRTAB. It has been discussed during the WMRTAB meetings, during which it has been clear that there remains agreement about the use and appropriateness of this approach. Examples of these discussions are provided within the redacted minutes of the WMRTAB meeting including Appendix 8.A of this response.
- 8.14 Within their representation in response to the Regulation 19 Consultation on the draft Shropshire Local Plan (A0423), WMRTAB include specific reference to the above extract of the NPPG. They also included a copy of the WMRTAB draft terms of reference which recognises that *"Waste arising in one WPA area will frequently be managed in another. For example, in order to achieve economies of scale, waste management facilities will often have a catchment which extends beyond the boundary of the planning area within which it is situated..."*
- 8.15 A good example of the continued commitment to the principle of 'equivalent self-sufficiency' is the fact that Shropshire Council is currently proactively contributing to the preparation of an updated Duty to Cooperate protocol, which continues to incorporate the principle of 'equivalent self-sufficiency'.
- 8.16 Shropshire Council has completed Statements of Common Ground with all adjoining Waste Planning Authorities (within EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s), which represent the culmination of the duty to cooperate process which has occurred throughout the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan. Waste infrastructure capacity has not been identified as an area of outstanding disagreement within any of these Statements of Common Ground.
- 8.17 As documented within the Waste Technical Background Report (EV116), in 2018 around 978,00 tonnes of waste were generated in Shropshire and it is forecast that this will increase to around 1,092,000 tonnes by 2038.
- 8.18 As also documented within the Waste Technical Background Report (EV116), in 2018 there were around 136 consented waste sites, of which around 70% were classified as operational. These facilities had capacity for managing almost 1,000,000 tonnes of waste (although in 2018 they only handled around 600,000 tonnes).
- 8.19 As such, it is apparent that within the Shropshire Council administrative area, the principle of 'equivalent self-sufficiency' is achieved.

- 8.20 Further consents have subsequently been granted which will increase the capacity of waste management infrastructure in Shropshire. In combination with further appropriate waste management infrastructure that will come forward during the plan period, supported by the policies in the draft Shropshire Local Plan (including SP13, SP17, DP31, DP32 and DP33), Shropshire Council considers that the principle of 'equivalent self-sufficiency' will be achieved throughout the plan period.
- 8.21 This is confirmed within the Waste Technical Background Report (EV116) which at Paragraph 9 states *"The combined capacity of existing permitted sites (see below) and the presumption supporting new sites for recycling and environmental industries (Policy MD4) exceeds that which is required to manage a quantity of waste equivalent to that generated in Shropshire. This approach effectively counterbalances net waste exports and helps to support appropriate 'cross boundary' waste flows."* [Please Note: the approach referenced in Policy MD4 of the SAMDev Plan is replicated within draft Policy SP13 of the draft Shropshire Local Plan].
- 8.22 With specific regard to landfill void capacity in Shropshire, it is acknowledged that capacity is declining. Indeed, this is specifically referenced within paragraph 14 of the Waste Technical Background Report (EV116). However, it is not possible to accurately quantify the remaining lifespan of this landfill void capacity as demand for this form of waste management infrastructure is continuously decreasing.
- 8.23 This decreased demand is driven by a number of factors principally the ever expanding (and reflecting the principles of the waste hierarchy more preferable) alternative forms of management infrastructure available; and changes to landfill taxation.
- 8.24 Indeed, draft Policy SP17 specifically recognises and supports this principle, stating at Paragraph 1 *"Encouraging proposals for additional capacity to divert waste away from landfill in a way consistent with the waste hierarchy and the principles and targets of national and local policies and strategies, including the principle of 'equivalent self-sufficiency' and an allowance for cross boundary waste flows"*. This reduction in the amount of waste directed towards landfill is referenced throughout the Waste Technical Background Report (EV116).
- 8.25 Furthermore, it should be recognised that the draft Shropshire Local Plan does have a policy which specifically addresses landfill and landraising sites – draft Policy DP33.
- 8.26 The issue of landfill void capacity has been carefully considered through WMRTAB and Shropshire Council through WMRTAB is

positively contributing to the process of ensuring that sufficient landfill void capacity remains available within the West Midlands during the plan period and beyond.

- 8.27 Specifically, Shropshire Council is currently part of a group of West Midland Waste Planning Authorities, coordinated through WMRTAB, that are currently progressing a regional landfill study to identify areas across the West Midlands that could be used for landfill in the future. Shropshire Council is fully engaged with this study which reflects the regional context of addressing landfill void capacity.
- 8.28 We would also note that there have been no representations received during the Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Consultation undertaken on the draft Shropshire Local Plan in relation to this matter.
- 8.29 Furthermore, as already noted, Shropshire Council has completed Statements of Common Ground with all adjoining Waste Planning Authorities (within EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s), which represent the culmination of the duty to cooperate process which has occurred throughout the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan. Waste infrastructure capacity and particularly landfill capacity has not been identified as an area of outstanding disagreement within any of these Statements of Common Ground.
- 8.30 Shropshire Council considers that the strategic matter with regard to waste is whether sufficient waste management infrastructure capacity exists to manage an equivalent amount of waste to that generated within its administrative area. Shropshire Council considers that recognising the nature of this infrastructure, it is sensible that this assessment is undertaken through application of the 'equivalent self-sufficiency' principle, and would note that the other representatives of WMRTAB are in agreement on this matter.
- 8.31 Shropshire Council is able to demonstrate that it is currently able to achieve 'equivalent self-sufficiency' and the draft Shropshire Local Plan includes a strategy that will ensure that this will continue to be the case throughout the plan period. Shropshire Council also understands that a similar position exists amongst the other Waste Planning Authorities within WMRTAB and other adjoining Waste Planning Authorities.
- 8.32 The regional study that is currently ongoing and with which Shropshire Council is fully engaged will support the West Midlands in ensuring that sufficient landfill void capacity remains available during the plan period and beyond.

Question 9. Having regard to the additional evidence that has been submitted by the Council (GC15 – GC15I), 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 co-operation and how has this addressed the issue of minerals and waste?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 9.1. Yes, Shropshire Council has engaged constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with regard to strategic mineral and waste matters and this engagement has maximised the effectiveness of the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 9.2. As recognised within the Planning Inspector's correspondence ID17 *"All of the identified strategic cross-boundary matters and how the Council considers its Duty was addressed with the relevant bodies are summarised in its compliance statement (EV042)."*
- 9.3. The Council's response to the Matter 2 Issues and Questions earlier in the year expands upon this and clearly documents the strategic matters relating to minerals and waste and explains the extensive engagement undertaken on these matters.
- 9.4. Therefore, in summary Shropshire Council considers that the strategic matters relating to the issues of minerals and waste are the provision of sufficient mineral resource and provision of sufficient waste management infrastructure to manage an equivalent amount of waste to that generated in Shropshire (consistent with the principle of 'equivalent self-sufficiency').
- 9.5. Within regard to documents GC15-GC15I, we would note that this information was prepared in response to a request for further information on the duty to cooperate activity, in relation to strategic housing and employment matters. It is for this reason that this material focuses on adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities. However, whilst not specifically prepared to provide further information on the duty to cooperate activity, in relation to mineral and waste matters, it does document the extensive engagement undertaken with adjoining Local Planning Authorities, many of which are also Mineral and/or Waste Planning Authorities and where this was the case, this engagement activity also involved consideration of strategic mineral and waste matters.
- 9.6. As documented within the responses to Questions 7 and 8 within this document, the main vehicle by which engagement with Mineral and Waste Planning Authorities has occurred is through

the West Midlands Aggregates Working Party (WMAWP) and West Midlands Resource Technical Advisory Body (WMRTAB) respectively.

- 9.7. This has been complemented by direct engagement with the Waste Planning Authorities in the West Midlands and direct engagement with adjoining Mineral and Waste Planning Authorities that are not located within the West Midlands (the engagement activity undertaken with the adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities that are also Mineral and/or Waste Planning Authorities are documented within GC15-GC15I).
- 9.8. Further information on the engagement process utilised for minerals matters is provided in the Mineral Technical Background Report (EV076) and for waste matters is provided in the Waste Technical Background Report (EV116). Furthermore, the Duty to Cooperate Statement of Compliance (EV042) provides a comprehensive summary of this process.
- 9.9. We would also note that Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) have been agreed with all adjoining and closely related Local Planning Authorities and the two adjoining County Councils (EV028-EV041, GC4e, GC4f, GC4r and GC4s). None of these documents identify any areas of disagreement with regard to the matters of mineral and waste.
- 9.10. The outcome of this co-operation has led to the strategic mineral and waste matters being effectively addressed. Specifically, effective strategic and detailed policies are proposed to allow appropriate mineral resources to be accessed and to support the provision of appropriate waste management infrastructure.
- 9.11. Furthermore, a sufficient supply of mineral has been identified in order to meet the calculated need – either using the methodology outlined within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (10 year average) or the locally derived methodology (3 year average plus 20% - this calculation results in a higher need than that resulting from the 10 year average).
- 9.12. In addition, sufficient waste management infrastructure is available to manage more than the equivalent amount of waste arising in Shropshire and it is considered that the policy approach within the draft Shropshire Local Plan will ensure that this continues throughout the proposed plan period – consistent with the principle of ‘equivalent self-sufficiency’.
- 9.13. Shropshire Council also continues to engage at a regional level on both mineral and waste matters.

Other strategic matters

Question 10. Having regard to the additional evidence that has been submitted by the Council (GC15 – GC15I), has the Council maximised the effectiveness of the Local Plan by engaging constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the prescribed bodies on all other strategic matters during the preparation of the Local Plan?

Shropshire Council Response:

- 10.1. Yes, Shropshire Council strongly considers that it has engaged effectively, constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with the prescribed bodies on all genuinely strategic matters during the preparation of the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 10.2. Furthermore, Shropshire Council strongly considers that the engagement undertaken has maximised the effectiveness of the draft Shropshire Local Plan.
- 10.3. As this question relates to 'other strategic matters', it specifically excludes strategic housing, employment, minerals and waste matters, which are dealt with in Questions 1-9 above.
- 10.4. As recognised within the Planning Inspector's correspondence ID17 *"All of the identified strategic cross-boundary matters and how the Council considers its Duty was addressed with the relevant bodies are summarised in its compliance statement (EVO42)."* This was subsequently expanded upon within the Council's Matter 2: Hearing Statement.
- 10.5. During the Matter 2 hearing session, Shropshire Council observed that there seemed to be general consensus that the Council had identified all of the genuinely strategic matters. Following the conclusion of this hearing session, Shropshire Council was not aware of any other outstanding genuinely strategic matters.