



GC 2

Julie Ruler
Local Plan Programme Officer

Shropshire Council
Shirehall
Abbey Foregate
Shrewsbury
Shropshire SY2 6ND

Date: 11th November 2021

My Ref:

Your Ref

Dear Julie,

Shropshire Council's Initial Response to Inspector's Initial Questions

Firstly, thank you for the recent correspondence outlining the Inspector's Initial Questions (ID 1) dated 3rd November 2021.

It is noted that the purpose of these initial questions is to allow the Council to provide early clarification on a number of issues with the intention that this will assist in the Inspector's understanding of the Plan and its evidence base, help in the assessment of legal compliance and soundness, and potentially narrow down the focus of the examination.

The Council welcome the opportunity to provide such clarification and will seek to provide full responses to all of the questions and issues raised. It is noted that an early response to the queries would be appreciated, and I can provide reassurance that these issues are now being looked at as a matter of priority in order to avoid any undue delay to the examination process.

It is noted a view has been sought from the Council as to a realistic timeframe for when a response in full to the questions will be received. Officers have given careful consideration to the scope of the issues raised, including the need to prepare three additional topic papers on housing, employment and Green Belt matters. We have also considered this in the context of requiring input from external organisations in a number of cases, as well as some practical issues such as the upcoming Christmas break.

It is therefore considered realistic for the Council to provide response in full by **Friday 14th January 2022**.

However, it is recognised that some of the issues raised can be dealt with more quickly than others. It is therefore proposed that the Council will respond to the initial questions in two tranches as follows:

- By Friday 17th December 2021 – Responses to all the questions not relating to the preparation of additional topic papers;
- By Friday 14th January 2021 – submission of the three additional topic papers relating to housing, employment and Green Belt matters

The proposed approach is intended to support the best use of examination time. However, clearly if the Inspectors have concerns about this proposed approach, we can of course seek to refine it.

On a related matter, and to support the Council in responding effectively, it is noted that paragraph 29 of ID1 raises questions over the Council's proposed schedule of minor modifications (SD003), specifically regarding the Council's views on whether any of these proposed minor modifications may be more appropriately placed within a future schedule of main modifications. An offer is also made in ID1 to provide additional clarification on this matter if it is considered helpful. Having given early consideration to this issue, we would welcome this additional clarification in order to inform our response.

If there is any part of this letter which the Inspectors require further clarification on please do not hesitate to let me know. A copy of this letter be placed on the examination website, on the Examination Stage Documents page, as soon as possible.

Kind regards,

Eddie West
Planning Policy and Strategy Manager
Shropshire Council