



## **Sandwell Local Plan 2024-2041 - Examination**

Inspector  
Mrs Catherine Jack

Programme Officer  
Ms Louise St John Howe  
[louise@poservices.co.uk](mailto:louise@poservices.co.uk)  
07789 486419

Examination website  
[Examination Overview](#) | [Sandwell Local Plan Examination](#) | [Sandwell Council](#)

---

Thursday 17 July 2025 starting at 9.30am and continuing at 2.00pm

### **Hearing Sessions Agenda**

Week 1 Day 3

Please Note:

- All participants are encouraged to familiarise themselves with the hearing statements (and any relevant evidence) produced by the Council and other parties in respect of the matters to be discussed at this session. These are available on the examination website.
- The relevant Matters, Issues and Questions for this session are attached to this agenda for ease of reference. The discussion will typically follow the MIQs in order, focused on points upon which the Inspector requires further information or clarification. Some questions will require little discussion, and others may require significant discussion. The Inspector is also likely to have additional associated questions relating to the plan's soundness and/or legal compliance.
- Morning hearing sessions will typically finish no later than 1pm and will include a mid-morning break. Afternoon hearing sessions will finish by 5pm, with a mid-afternoon break.

### **1. Inspector's Opening and Introductions**

#### **Matter 3: The Spatial Strategy (Policy SDS1) and other Framework Policies (SDS2 – SDS8)**

### **2. Issue 3a – Spatial Distribution and Policy SDS1 (Questions 3.1 and 3.2)**

Areas for discussion:

- Evidence
- Balanced Green Growth



- Density and making effective use of land
- Unmet needs
- Other matters

### **3. Issue 3b – Overall deliverability of the strategy (Questions 3.3 to 3.5)**

Areas for discussion:

- Development viability in Sandwell

### **4. Issue 3c – Other Framework Policies SDS2 to SDS8 (Questions 3.6 to 3.10)**

Areas for discussion:

- SDS2
  - Heritage assets
  - General approach to viability
- SDS3
  - Effectiveness of approach to Regeneration Areas
- SDS4
  - Effectiveness of approach outside Regeneration Areas
- SDS5
  - Biodiversity and blue/green infrastructure
  - General approach to viability
- SDS6
  - Cultural and religious buildings
- SDS7
  - Approach to Green Belt and consistency with national policy
- SDS8
  - Biodiversity and blue/green infrastructure

### **5. Close**



## **MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS (MIQs)**

### **MATTER 3: The Spatial Strategy (Policy SDS1) and other Framework Policies (SDS2 – SDS8)**

**Issue 3a – Whether the strategy for the spatial distribution of new development (Policy SDS1) is based on robust evidence and is justified, positively prepared, effective and consistent with national policy.**

**Q3.1** Is the plan’s spatial strategy as set out in chapter 2 and policy SDS1 based on robust evidence and justified in terms of the amount, type, and spatial distribution of development? Including:

- a) Is the “Balanced Green Growth” approach justified in light of reasonable alternative options and when considering plan’s shortfalls against the identified needs for housing and employment development? Including:
  - i. Have identified constraints, such as green belt, heritage assets, major infrastructure and biodiversity, been appropriately considered in this context and in light of robust and up to date evidence?
- b) Does the spatial strategy make effective use of land including previously developed land and underutilised land?
- c) Does the spatial strategy optimise the density of development?
- d) Has the spatial strategy been appropriately informed by robust and up to date strategic assessment of flood risk in the borough?
- e) Is the policy sufficiently clear how unmet development needs will be addressed?
- f) Is the policy consistent with the plan-making expectations of NPPF paragraph 11?
- g) Are the other requirements of the policy soundly based?

**Q3.2** In terms of this issue, are any main modifications necessary for soundness?

**Issue 3b – Whether the plan’s overall growth strategy is deliverable including in terms of viability.**

**Q3.3** In broad terms, is the plan’s scale and distribution of housing for the settled and travelling communities and scale and distribution of employment growth financially viable, including with regard to normal development costs and mitigation, and all relevant policy costs including affordable housing, habitats sites mitigation, infrastructure contributions, and design requirements?



**Q3.4** Is it reasonably likely that at least 10% of the plan's housing requirement will be delivered on sites no larger than one hectare?

**Q3.5** In terms of this issue, are any main modifications necessary for soundness?

**Issue 3c – Whether the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective, and consistent with national policy in relation to its other Framework Policies (Policies SDS2 – SDS8).**

**Q3.6** Are the requirements of policy SDS2 justified, effective and consistent with national policy? Including in relation to:

- a) the approach to heritage assets
- b) development viability, in broad terms.

**Q3.7** Are the requirements of policies SDS3 and SDS4 justified and consistent with national policy? Including:

- a) Will SDS3 be effective in supporting delivery of new development, including at least 584ha of new employment development and a minimum of 2,134 new homes in the identified Regeneration Areas?
- b) Are the requirements of SDS3 compatible with the plan's chapter 8 policies for the borough's economy?
- c) Will SDS4 be effective in supporting delivery of 474 new homes in the towns and local communities outside West Bromwich and the identified Regeneration Areas?

**Q3.8** Are the requirements of policies SDS5, SDS6, and SDS8 justified and consistent with national policy? Including:

- a) Do SDS5 and SDS8 appropriately cover biodiversity and blue/green infrastructure? Is it clear which types of green and blue infrastructure would be covered by SDS8?
- b) Does SDS6 appropriately cover the protection and/or loss of valuable cultural and religious buildings?

**Q3.9** Are the requirements of Policy SDS7 justified and are they consistent with national policy for protecting Green Belt land? Are all the requirements necessary?

**Q3.10** In terms of this issue, are any main modifications necessary for soundness?