



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

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Tuesday 23 September 2025 starting at 9.30am

### **Hearing Sessions Agenda**

Week 2 Day 1

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 (SA/ED59) 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 for lunch and will include a mid-morning break. Afternoon hearing sessions will usually finish by 5pm, with a mid-afternoon break.

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

### **Matter 7: Housing Policies**

### **2. Issue 7 – Whether the plan's policies for delivering housing growth are sound (Questions 7.1 to 7.10)**

Areas for discussion:

- Policy SH01
  - Table 5 and sources of supply
  - The approach to site allocations



- Discounting
  - Windfall
  - Criterion 4
  - Infrastructure
- Policy SH02
  - Flexibility
  - Infrastructure
- Policy SH03
  - Density standards
  - 4+ bed homes
- Policy SH04
  - Flexibility
  - Value zones
  - Unviable developments
  - First Homes
- Policy SH05
  - Relationship to Building Regulations
  - 5% plot requirement
- Policy SH06
  - Effectiveness
  - Relationship to policy SH07
- Policy SH07
  - HMO concentration
  - Permitted development rights
- Policy SH09
  - Effectiveness
  - Equalities
  - Windfall and criteria-based approach
- Policy SH010
  - Housing for older people
- Any necessary main modifications

### **3. Close**

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

### **MATTER 7: Housing (Policies SHO1 – SHO10)**

#### **Issue 7 – Whether the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in its approach to delivering sustainable housing growth.**

Note: The overall housing requirement number set out in policy SHO1 (which reflects the requirement set out in policy SDS1), and the housing trajectory and housing land supply, are dealt with under other Matters. The following questions relate to the other aspects of policy SHO1.

**Q7.1** Is policy SHO1 justified, effective, positively prepared, and consistent with national policy? Including:

- a) In broad terms, will the policy and sources of supply set out in Table 5 be reasonably likely to deliver the plan's requirement for at least 10,434 net new homes over the plan period?
- b) Is it appropriate for site allocations, including for any identified strategic sites, to be set out in Appendix B? For soundness, would it be necessary for any of the site allocations be set out in site-specific policies instead? And, if so, for which allocation(s)?
- c) Are the date ranges in criterion 2 and Table 5 intended for phasing the delivery of planned housing growth, or another reason? What evidence justifies the approach?
- d) What evidence supports the 5%, 10%, and 15% discount rates for non-implementation applied in Table 5 and are those levels of discount appropriate and justified for the associated type of housing supply?
- e) Is the policy's approach to and degree of reliance upon additional housing supply from windfall sites justified and consistent with national policy? Will it be effective, including when considered together with policy SHO2?
- f) Is criterion 4 justified and will it be effective? How does it relate to other policies in the plan?
- g) Should the policy include reference to required contributions for infrastructure to support development?

**Q7.2** Are the requirements of policy SHO2 justified, positively prepared and consistent with national policy? Including:

- a) Are the requirements clear? Are they too restrictive?



- b) Will they be effective, including when taken together with policy SHO1?
- c) For soundness, is it necessary for the policy to set out a more supportive and flexible approach to windfall housing development?
- d) Is it justified that criterion 2b relates to Council-owned land?
- e) Should the policy include reference to required contributions for infrastructure to support development?

**Q7.3** Is policy SHO3 justified and consistent with national policy in its approach to housing density, type and accessibility? Including:

- a) Are the requirements generally achievable and broadly viable in the Sandwell context? Are they justified?
- b) For soundness, should the Table 6 requirements in SHO3 be expressed as indicative targets, rather than minimum requirements?

**Q7.4** Are the requirements of Policy SHO4 justified and consistent with national policy? Including:

- a) Does the policy incorporate suitable flexibility for dealing with circumstances of unviable development?

**Q7.5** Is policy SHO5 justified and consistent with national policy in its approach to national accessibility standards and custom and self build housing? Including:

- a) Are the requirements generally achievable and viable in the Sandwell context?
- b) Is the 5% requirement for self or custom build plots in criterion 2 appropriate?
- c) On what basis is the six months sales/marketing period set out in criterion 4 justified? Will it be effective?

**Q7.6** Is policy SHO6 justified and consistent with national policy in its approach to protecting family housing?

**Q7.7** Are policies SHO7 and SHO8 justified, effective, and consistent with national policy?

**Q7.8** Is policy SHO9 clear, justified and positively prepared? Will it be effective in delivering the accommodation needed for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople over the plan period? Including:

- a) For soundness, should the policy set out the identified needs for additional pitches and/or plots over the plan period (the level of needs was considered under an earlier Matter)?
- b) Are all the policy's criteria justified with regard to the Public Sector Equality Duty? Are any of them adequately covered by other policies in the plan?



**Q7.9** Is policy SH10 justified and consistent with national policy in its approach to housing for people with specific needs? Including:

- a) Should the policy expressly include housing for older people?
- b) Does the policy provide appropriate support for proposals for housing for people with specific needs?

**Q7.10** In terms of this issue, are any main modifications necessary for soundness?