



Sandwell Local Plan 2024-2041 - Examination

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

Wednesday 24 September 2025 starting at 9.30am

Hearing Sessions Agenda

Week 2 Day 2 Morning Session

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 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 8: Economy and Centres Policies

2. Issue 8a – Whether the plan's policies for the local economy are sound (Questions 8.1 to 8.6)

Areas for discussion:

- Policy SEC1
 - Flexibility



- Safeguarded uses
 - Heritage assets
- Policy SEC3
- Policy SEC4
 - Flexibility
 - Marketing requirements
 - Relationship to Policy SDM9
- Any main modifications necessary

3. Issue 8b – Whether the plan’s policies for Sandwell’s centres including West Bromwich are sound (Questions 8.7 to 8.11)

Areas for discussion:

- Policies Map
- Hagley Road West and Abbey Road Local Centres
- Residential uses in centres
- Heritage assets
- Any main modifications necessary

4. Close



MATTERS, ISSUES AND QUESTIONS (MIQs)

MATTER 8: Economy and Centres (Policies SEC1 – SEC6, SCE1 – SCE6, and SWB1 - SWB2)

Issue 8a – Whether the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in respect of its policies for the local economy.

Q8.1 Are the requirements of policy SEC1 justified, effective, and consistent with national policy? Including:

- a. Should the policy be more flexible in relation to potential changes of use of employment sites to residential uses, either in general or in any particular circumstances?
- b. Is it justified that criterion 3 safeguards a portfolio of sites for industrial employment uses only? Should any other employment uses be included?

Q8.2 Are the range of safeguarded uses and ancillary employment-generating uses set out in policy SEC3 justified including in relation to viability and supporting regeneration? For soundness, is it necessary for any other uses to be included and/or for greater flexibility in the policy's requirements?

Q8.3 Are the requirements of policy SEC4 justified, consistent with national policy, and will they be effective in supporting the plan's strategic objectives 2 and 8? Is the policy appropriately flexible?

Q8.4 Overall, are policies SEC2, SEC5, and SEC6 positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy?

Q8.5 For soundness, should the plan's policies on Sandwell's Economy, Sandwell's Centres, and West Bromwich specifically reference the historic environment and/or any economic and regeneration benefits associated with the presence of heritage assets?

Q8.6 In terms of this issue, are any main modifications necessary for soundness?



Issue 8b – Whether the plan is positively prepared, justified, effective and consistent with national policy in respect of its policies for Sandwell’s centres including its specific policies for West Bromwich.

- Q8.7** What evidence justifies the three tiers comprising strategic centres, town centres, and district and local centres in the hierarchy of centres set out in policy SCE1 and Table 10?
- Q8.8** Are the plan’s policies for the centres clear, justified and effective in relation to managing generally declining levels of in-person retail?
- Q8.9** Are the plan’s policies for the centres clear, justified and effective in relation to circumstances where new residential uses above or among existing centre uses would be supported?
- Q8.10** Overall, does the plan set out a positively prepared, justified and effective strategy for Sandwell’s centres that is consistent with national policy?
- Q8.11** In terms of this issue, are any main modifications necessary for soundness?