

Cabinet Meeting

24 February 2016

Report title	South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document – Preferred Options Consultation	
Decision designation	AMBER	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Peter Bilson City Assets	
Key decision	Yes	
In forward plan	Yes	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Nick Edwards, City Assets	
Originating service	Planning	
Accountable employee(s)	Michèle Ross	Senior Planning Officer
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Report to be/has been considered by	Strategic Executive Board	26 January 2016
	Planning for Growth Board	6 January 2016

Recommendation(s) for action or decision:

The Cabinet is recommended to:

Approve the following as the basis of the Council's response to the South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document (SAD) Preferred Options consultation:

1. To support the principle of South Staffordshire District Council progressing the Site Allocations Document as a sound platform to support the bringing forward of an appropriate supply of land for new housing and employment development to complement the regeneration of Wolverhampton and the Black Country.
2. South Staffordshire covers large areas of Green Belt land, but those parts which are of most strategic importance are located around the urban area, as they stop settlements from merging and also support urban regeneration. Therefore it is of key importance to maintain the gap between the Black Country urban area and South Staffordshire villages.

3. In the case of Perton, site 239 is an appropriate allocation for housing up to 2028 and safeguarded land up to 2038, as this site makes a low contribution to Green Belt purposes and will not reduce the gap between Wolverhampton and Perton.
4. In the case of Bilbrook, site 443 should not be allocated or safeguarded for housing, as preferable alternative sites are available (sites 213 and 211) which would place less pressure on the Wolverhampton road network.
5. In the case of Codsall, sites 406 /419 should not be allocated for housing up to 2028 and safeguarded land up to 2038, as preferable alternative sites are available (sites 446, 447, 224, 225 and 220) which make a more limited contribution to Green Belt purposes and would place less pressure on the Wolverhampton road network.
6. Opportunities should be explored to bring forward safeguarded land for delivery by 2031 to help address the identified housing shortfall in the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area.
7. For all housing sites allocated in Perton, Bilbrook and Codsall, any detailed proposals should consider the impacts on Wolverhampton in terms of highway and school place implications and the City Council should be consulted on such proposals.
8. Support the proposed western extension of the i54 employment site and the bringing forward of additional high quality employment land at Featherstone. These sites should be made available for development in the short term.
9. Employment development at Featherstone should be served by the most direct, viable access, which presents minimum disruption to the surrounding area. Access options should be properly evaluated and the Council should ensure that any new route does not have a detrimental effect on the Wolverhampton network and take responsibility for remedial actions and other mitigation measures as appropriate for the Wolverhampton area. Any new infrastructure should cater for other modes of transport (cycling / walking / public transport users) and properly connect walking and cycling routes with the surrounding infrastructure, which would include cross boundary liaison for design and delivery.
10. Support extension of the i54 employment site boundary to include the Wobaston Road site to the south of i54.

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 This report summarises the issues arising from the South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document (SAD) Preferred Options consultation and sets out the basis for a proposed City of Wolverhampton Council response for approval by Cabinet.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The South Staffordshire Core Strategy was adopted in early 2014, setting out the broad planning strategy and amount of housing and employment development required in the District up to 2028. South Staffordshire Council are now progressing a Site Allocations Document (SAD) to provide detailed policies and allocate sites for development. The Core Strategy and the SAD, when adopted, will form the adopted Local Plan for South Staffordshire and will be used to determine planning applications in the District. It is in the best interests of Wolverhampton that South Staffordshire has in place an up to date and comprehensive planning framework in order to direct new investment to the most appropriate locations and resist proposals which could have a detrimental impact on the regeneration of the City.
- 2.2 The first period of consultation on the SAD - Issues and Options - ended on 19 May 2014. Cabinet of 23 April 2014 approved the Council's response to this consultation, which was duly made, and agreed to receive further reports at the next stages of the process. Cabinet of 1 October 2014 then approved the Council's response to a supplementary "Additional Sites" consultation.
- 2.3 South Staffordshire Council are now carrying out a Preferred Options consultation, which proposes housing development on sites adjoining Perton and Bilbrook / Codsall and employment development on land adjoining i54 and Royal Ordnance Featherstone. The consultation is a key opportunity to influence the allocation of sites for development up to 2038 which may have an impact on Wolverhampton. The consultation period closed on 12 February 2016, therefore a Council consultation response has been submitted with the approval of the Cabinet Lead for City Assets and following consultation with local Councillors.

3.0 Summary of Main Issues and Proposed Consultation Response

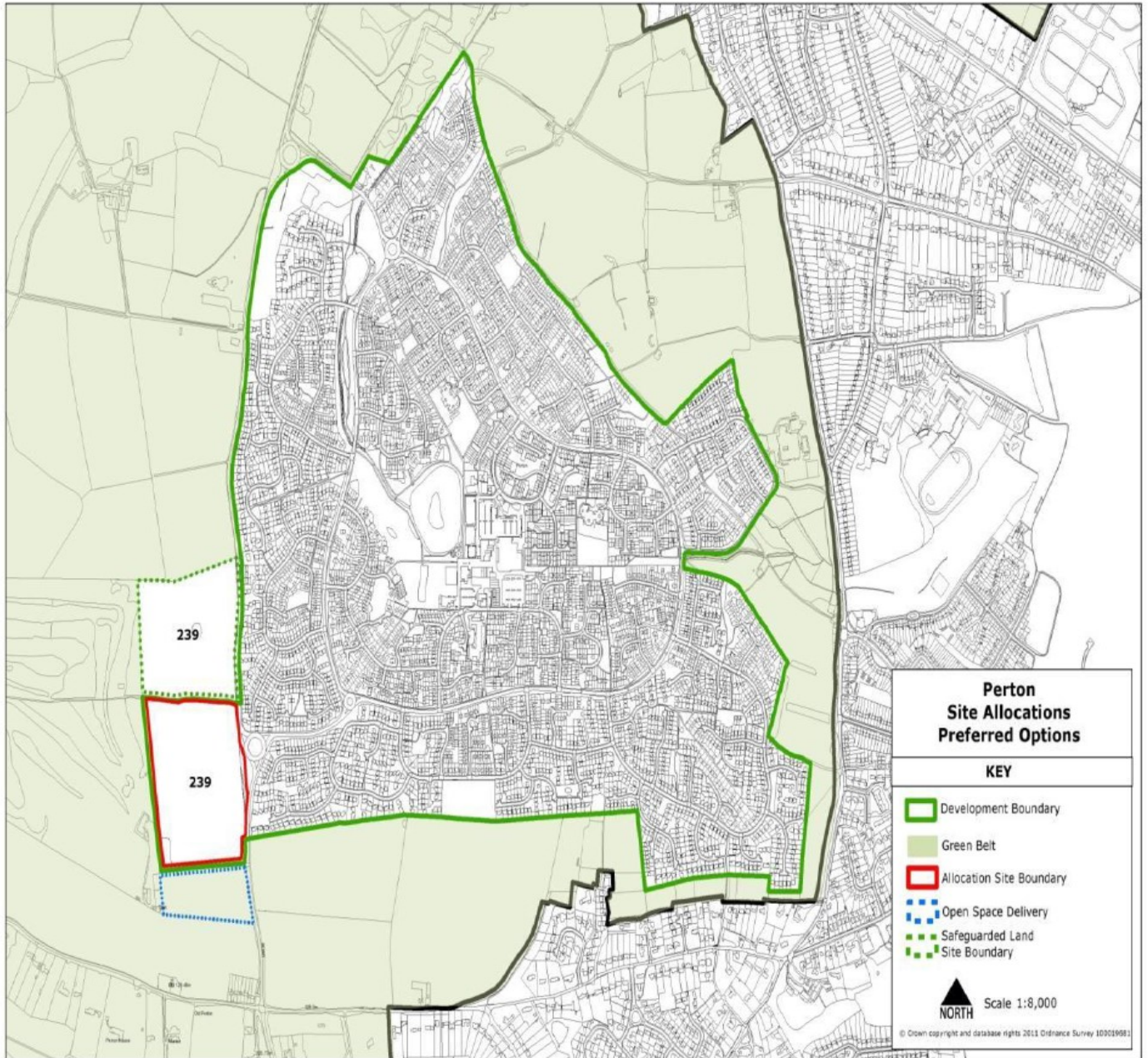
- 3.1 A summary of the main issues raised by the consultation and the basis of the proposed Council consultation response is set out below.

Housing

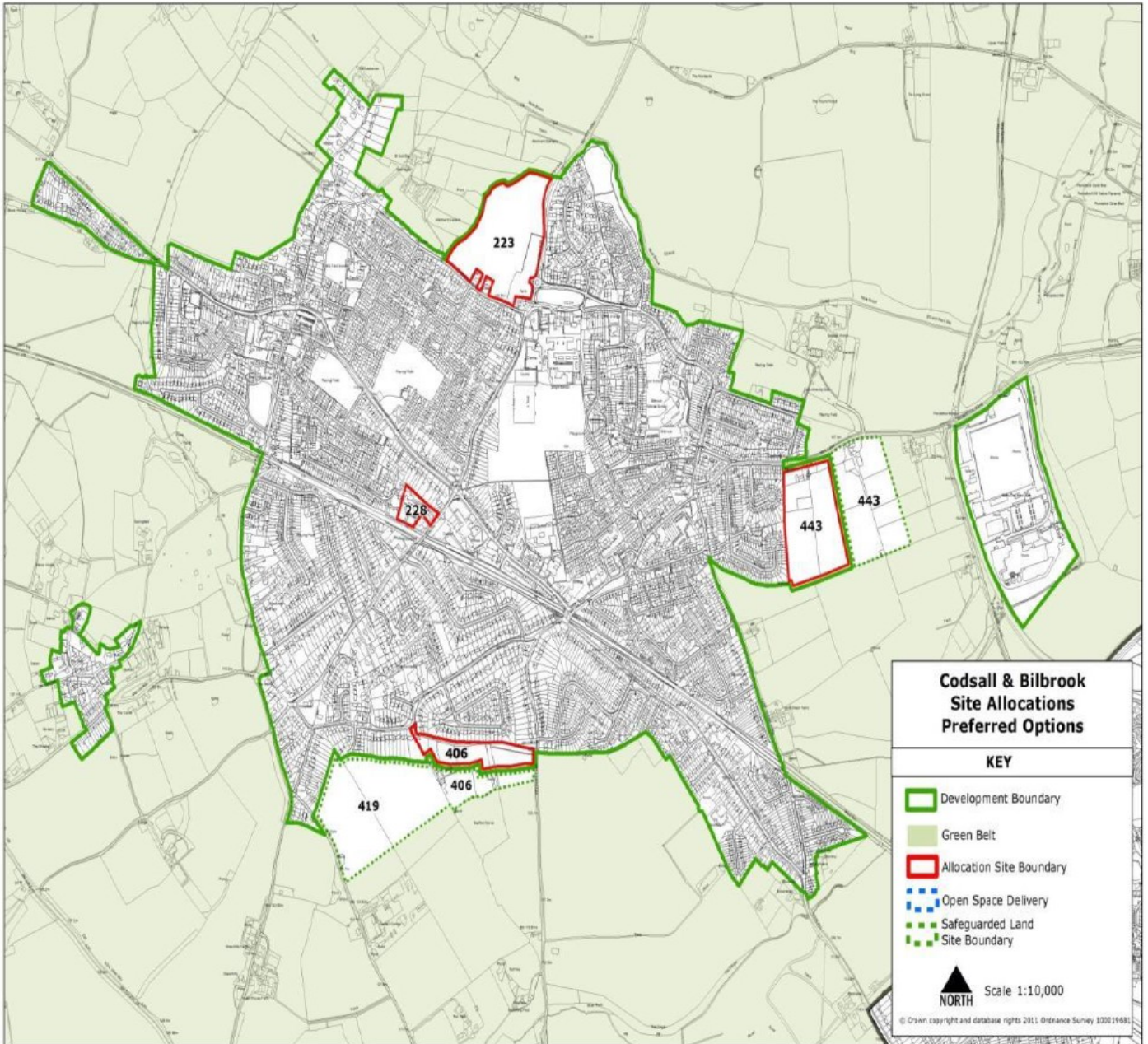
- 3.2 The adopted South Staffordshire Core Strategy sets a District wide target of 1,081 new homes up to 2028 and directs the majority of this housing to 15 settlements, with a target for each settlement. The SAD must allocate land to deliver by 2028: 163 homes around Perton; 102 homes around Bilbrook; and 221 homes around Codsall and "safeguard" land for an additional 84, 69 and 74 homes respectively during 2028-38. As there is very little land within Perton and Codsall / Bilbrook which is suitable for housing development, land needs to be taken out of the Green Belt around the edge of these settlements to

meet the targets. Views are sought on the preferred sites selected to deliver new housing, which are shown on Maps 1 and 2.

Map 1



Map 2



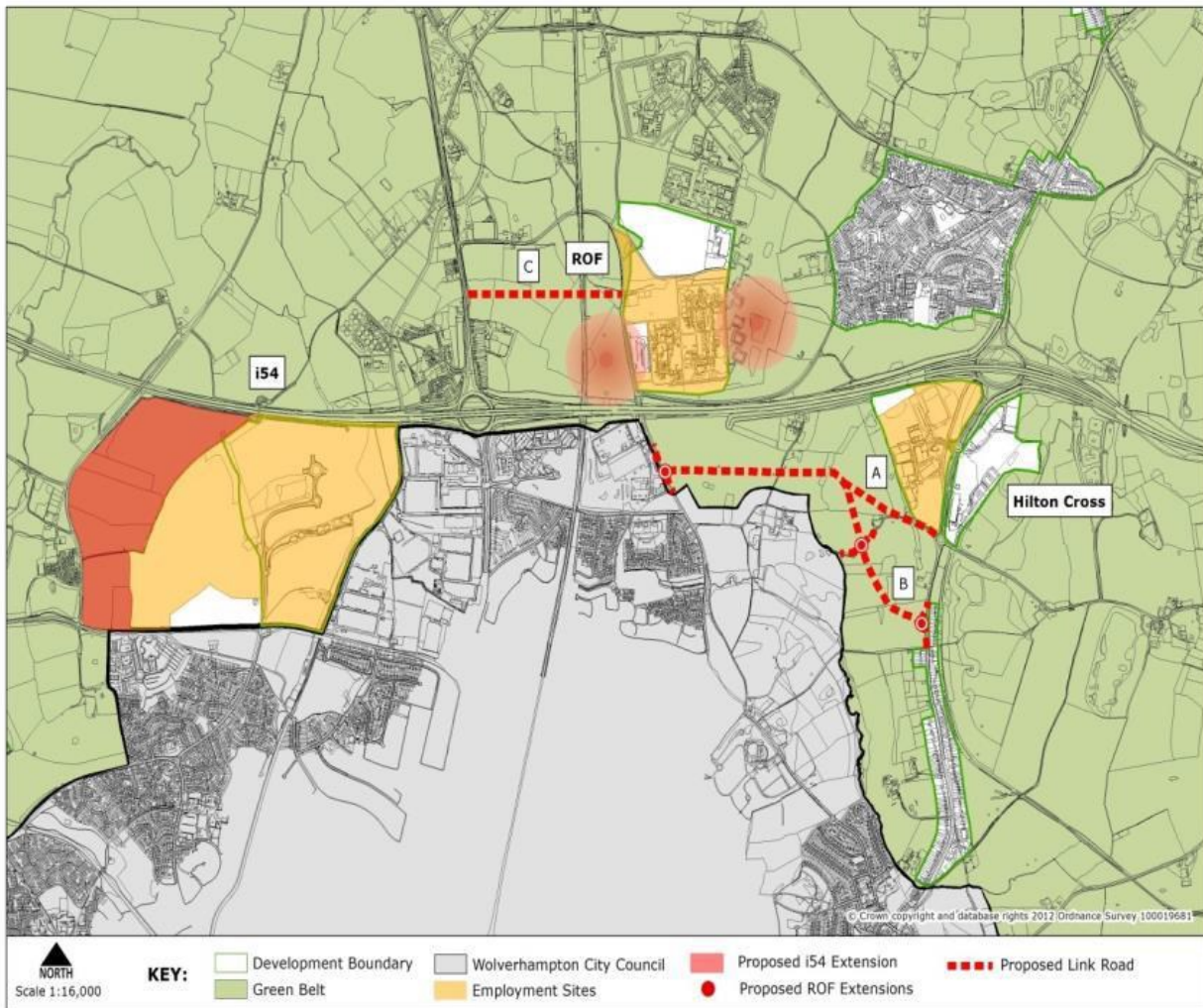
3.3 The key issue for Wolverhampton is the phasing and location of this housing, rather than its scale, and how this could affect the delivery of regeneration priorities and the setting and amenity of residential areas in the City. The proposals for new development in Codsall / Bilbrook and Perton have the greatest significance for Wolverhampton, and the Tettenhall Regis and Tettenhall Wightwick wards in particular. Tettenhall Councillors and local residents have expressed their concern about the implications of sites identified between Perton and Wolverhampton, in terms of encroachment towards Tettenhall and road access. Tettenhall and Oxley Members have been briefed on the SAD Preferred Options consultation and consulted on the proposed response.

- 3.4 There are existing local road congestion issues in Tettenhall which may be exacerbated by new housing development and changes to road systems in South Staffordshire. Work carried out to investigate the potential impact of housing development at Perton, Codsall and Bilbrook on the road network concludes that there could be an 8-11% increase to traffic flows along the A41. The Tettenhall Neighbourhood Plan (2014) therefore expects South Staffordshire Council to ensure that this development does not have a detrimental effect on the Tettenhall road network and to work with the Council to take remedial actions to avoid increased congestion on the A41 and other mitigation measures as appropriate (p.101).
- 3.5 At a strategic level, a significant housing shortfall has been projected for the period 2011-31 in the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area, which includes South Staffordshire. There is potential to introduce a policy in the SAD to bring forward safeguarded land for housing development, to help reduce this shortfall. This could increase allocations in the SAD from 1,081 to 2,881 homes. However, it is important that any potential highways and school place implications for Wolverhampton are taken into account when delivering proposed housing allocations and when considering bringing forward new allocations.
- 3.6 It is recommended that the Council's detailed response to the SAD Preferred Options consultation is based on the following principles:
- South Staffordshire covers large areas of Green Belt land, but those parts which are of most strategic importance are located around the urban area, as they stop settlements from merging and also support urban regeneration. Therefore it is of key importance to maintain the gap between the Black Country urban area and South Staffordshire villages.
 - In the case of Perton, site 239 is an appropriate allocation for housing up to 2028 and safeguarded land up to 2038, as this site makes a low contribution to Green Belt purposes and will not reduce the gap between Wolverhampton and Perton.
 - In the case of Bilbrook, site 443 should not be allocated or safeguarded for housing, as preferable alternative sites are available (sites 213 and 211) which would place less pressure on the Wolverhampton road network.
 - In the case of Codsall, sites 406 /419 should not be allocated for housing up to 2028 and safeguarded land up to 2038, as preferable alternative sites are available (sites 446, 447, 224, 225 and 220) which make a more limited contribution to Green Belt purposes and would place less pressure on the Wolverhampton road network.
 - Opportunities should be explored to bring forward safeguarded land for delivery by 2031 to help address the identified housing shortfall in the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area.
 - For all housing sites allocated in Perton, Bilbrook and Codsall, any detailed proposals should consider the impacts on Wolverhampton in terms of highway and school place implications and the City Council should be consulted on such proposals.

Employment

- 3.7 The Core Strategy supports modest extensions to the four strategic employment sites in the District (i54, Hilton Cross, ROF Featherstone and Four Ashes - all located close to north Wolverhampton), where robust evidence and reasoned justification is provided. The South Staffordshire Council and the Black Country authorities have now jointly completed two studies to provide this evidence.
- 3.8 The starting point for the studies was an acknowledged need for the provision of a competitive portfolio of readily developable employment sites to serve Wolverhampton and the Black Country. There is currently a lack of high quality sites close to the motorway network, and many sites, even where currently on the market, require extensive remediation or access improvements before being capable of development. This issue has been highlighted following the success of attracting JLR to i54, which is leading to strong enquiries from potential occupiers. At present i54 has only approximately 10 hectares available which is capable of accommodating c. 56,000 sqm of floor space and it is anticipated that this will be taken up in the next 2 to 4 years.
- 3.9 The studies conclude that there is a need for 81-87 ha of high quality employment land by 2026 and that i54 and ROF Featherstone are priority sites able to meet much of this shortfall. The Preferred Options consultation proposes a 40 ha western extension to i54 and a 22 ha extension to ROF Featherstone (shown on Map 3) to help meet this shortfall. The document contends that it is not appropriate for South Staffordshire to meet the entire shortfall as this can be addressed through future Local Plan reviews, in line with the study findings.
- 3.10 The Preferred Options consultation identifies a number of potential link roads to serve the ROF site and employees have been working with South Staffordshire Council to understand the relative strengths and weaknesses of these options. The key issues are ensuring that the access is deliverable and direct, and that there is minimum disruption to the surrounding area.

Map 3 – South Staffordshire SAD Preferred Options employment land site extensions



- 3.11 The Council's responses to the Issues and Options consultations proposed the allocation of a new employment site - 6 hectares of land to the south of i54 on Wobaston Road, which now has planning permission for employment development and is under construction. This site is the triangle of white land shown within the i54 employment site on Map 3. For accuracy, it is important that this site forms part of the i54 employment site, as it is available for development in the short term.
- 3.12 It is recommended that the Council's detailed response to the SAD Preferred Options consultation is based on the following principles:
1. Support the proposed western extension of the i54 employment site and the bringing forward of additional high quality employment land at Featherstone. These sites should be made available for development in the short term.
 2. Employment development at Featherstone should be served by the most direct, viable access, which presents minimum disruption to the surrounding area. Access options should be properly evaluated and the Council should ensure that any new route does not have a detrimental effect on the Wolverhampton network and take

responsibility for remedial actions and other mitigation measures as appropriate for the Wolverhampton area. Any new infrastructure should cater for other modes of transport (cycling / walking / public transport users) and properly connect walking and cycling routes with the surrounding infrastructure, which would include cross boundary liaison for design and delivery.

3. Support extension of i54 employment site boundary to include the Wobaston Road site to the south of i54.

4.0 Financial implications

- 4.1 There are no immediate financial implications arising from this report. Any staffing costs will be met from the approved Planning budget 2015/16.
[TK/29012016/C]

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 As a neighbouring authority, South Staffordshire Council are required to work with the Council on the preparation of their Local Plan documents, under the “duty to cooperate”. The “duty to cooperate” in relation to planning of sustainable development was enacted by Section 110 of the Localism Act 2011 inserting a new Section 33A into Part 2 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The National Planning Practice Guide states that the duty co-operate places a legal duty on local planning authorities to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of Local Plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
- 5.2 The duty to cooperate is not a duty to agree. But local planning authorities should make every effort to secure the necessary cooperation on strategic cross boundary matters before they submit their Local Plans for examination. Local planning authorities must demonstrate how they have complied with the duty at the independent examination of their Local Plans. If a local planning authority cannot demonstrate that it has complied with the duty then the Local Plan will not be able to proceed further in examination. Local planning authorities will need to satisfy themselves about whether they have complied with the duty. As part of their consideration, local planning authorities will need to bear in mind that the cooperation should produce effective and deliverable policies on strategic cross boundary matters.
[LD/02022016/F]

6.0 Equalities implications

- 6.1 A screening has been carried out for equalities implications and this concluded that a full Equality Analysis was not required for the recommendations of this report, as they do not involve a change to Council services, functions, policies or procedures.

7.0 Environmental implications

- 7.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

8.0 Human resources implications

8.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report.

9.0 Corporate landlord implications

9.1 There are no corporate landlord implications arising from this report.

10.0 Schedule of background papers

South Staffordshire Core Strategy – December 2012

Report to 25 July 2012 Cabinet: South Staffordshire Local Plan Update

Tettenhall Neighbourhood Plan - 2014

South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document (SAD) Issues and Options Consultation – March 2014

Report to 23 April 2014 Cabinet: South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document: Issues and Options Consultation

South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document (SAD) Issues and Options: Additional Sites Consultation – August 2014

Report to 1 October 2014 Cabinet: South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document (SAD) Issues and Options: Additional Sites Consultation

South Staffordshire Site Allocations Document (SAD) Preferred Options Consultation – December 2015