

From: [REDACTED]
To: [External Email for Local Plans](#)
Subject: Response to Final Draft S Staffs Local Plan
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Final draft South Staffordshire Local Plan (Publication Plan/ Reg 19 consultation)

Dear Sirs

This plan is not sound in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework Chapter 35 for the following reasons:

Whilst the plan points to the need for sustainable development in the area, the strategy is not justified as it fails to take into account reasonable alternatives, and is based less on evidence than on figures conjured up for political convenience: It is impossible to judge if it is consistent with National Planning Policy since, in the light of recent statements by Michael Gove, there seems to be no general agreement or consistent national advice. There does not seem to have been adequate engagement with all members of the community. It is only recently, thanks to the efforts of some local residents, that the complexities and potential consequences of this plan have become apparent to us. Many of us were not consulted in any way regarding local issues that would affect our region and the process seems to be that we are commenting at a late stage on a fait accompli. It is also noted that surrounding county councils have made efforts to consult on a wider scale and as a result have made substantial amendments to their proposals.

The proposals refer specifically to sites in Wombourne and Lower Penn, that have special significance for us. These ancient villages cannot absorb such developments without serious consequences, especially as there are no proposals to develop basic services in parallel. However, I am totally opposed on ethical grounds to all proposals to build houses (and industrial plants such as Battery Energy Storage Systems) on any green belt land. The laws, rules and regulations pertaining to this were developed with the specific aim of protecting green belt land, to safeguard the environment for future generations.

Furthermore we are now only too aware that the future of our planet is not guaranteed if we choose to ignore this. Consequently attempts to override such regulations for short-term gain, whether it be for vague housing targets, misguided arguments about energy storage, undefined 'special considerations', or for putting profit as a priority, should all be opposed.

I do not accept that it is impossible to plan for increased housing and energy usage without using greenbelt land. There are other sites and town centres that suffer from years of neglect and in this highly developed country, there should be no reason to prevent our experts exploiting these sites using existing technologies. I ask that the submission of this plan be delayed until reasonable alternatives can be found that avoid the need to override regulations that prevent development on greenbelt land.

Yours faithfully

Dr Norman Edward Gough

Tel [REDACTED] Email [REDACTED]