



**National
Trust**

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10 June 2024

Edward West
Planning Policy & Strategy Manger,
Shropshire Council,
Shirehall,
Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury,
Shropshire,
SY2 6ND

Dear Eddie,

Shropshire Local Plan topic papers and the National Trust

Further to our meeting on Thursday 16th May, please find enclosed our responses to the Shropshire Local Plan topic papers in respect of our interests across the county.

Since the last consultation on the Shropshire Local Plan in 2020, the National Trust has made considerable progress on projects around the county, often working in partnership with aligned organisations with whom we share values and ambitions. We therefore are commenting on areas that we have not previously commented on and are also taking a slightly different approach towards some of the considerations.

As discussed, we are keen to ensure that new developments deliver meaningful green infrastructure that links key sites and centres of population, providing benefit for both people and nature. We particularly feel that the work we are progressing through Sandscapes and at Dudmaston Estate is relevant and ambitious, looking to work with partners to ensure that what we deliver in Shropshire delivers significant ecosystem service benefit within a framework that enhances the sense of place. Whilst Sandscapes emerges as a project, there is scope for new developments to connect into what it delivers and there may be the potential for Sandscapes (or other NT initiatives) to be identified through the main modifications of the Local Plan as a substantial part of a local green infrastructure network.

Given the emerging housing allocations and the importance of the growing network of green infrastructure, we would be keen to hear of developer's masterplan proposals and perhaps respond to (as part of the Developer Review Panel) and engage with them as appropriate.

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Patron: His Majesty The King
Chair: René Olivieri CBE
Director-General: Hilary McGrady
Midlands & East of England Regional Director : Paul Forecast
Registered office: Heelis, Kemble Drive, Swindon, Wiltshire SN2 2NA
Registered charity number 205846

Yours sincerely

Claudia Clemente-Benfield
Planning Adviser

Cont/d

Part B: Your Response

Please complete a separate **Part B form** for each response that you wish to make. One **Part A form** must be enclosed with your **Part B form(s)**.

To assist in making a response, separate **Guidance** is available on the Council's website. Responses should be returned by **5:00pm on Tuesday 11th June 2024**.

Name and Organisation:	Claudia Clemente-Benfield, National Trust
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Q1. To which document(s) does this response relate?

a. Draft policy on Housing Provision for Older People and those with Disabilities and Special Needs and its explanation.	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Updated Additional Sustainability Appraisal of the Draft Shropshire Local Plan Report.	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Updated Housing and Employment Topic Paper.	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Updated Green Belt Topic Paper.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Q2. To which paragraph(s) of the document(s) does this response relate?

Paragraph(s):	5 - Green Belt Release Proposed within the draft Shropshire Local Plan
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Q3. Do you consider the document(s) are:

- A. Legally compliant Yes: No:
- B. Sound Yes: No:

Q4. Please detail your comments on the specified document(s).

Please be as precise as possible.

The National Trust consider that the Green Belt should be ensured to deliver its purposes strongly. The Green Belt has a greater opportunity to make a contribution to public access to open space and ecosystem services in Shropshire and to form a greater part of the green infrastructure network throughout the county. Given the status of nature in the UK, which is performing poorly in areas, it is considered that there is greater benefit to the release of Green Belt whereby we may find that the contribution that the remainder of the Green Belt can make towards nature recovery can be greater. The wholesale retention of the Green Belt designation does not appear to consider the wider opportunities that nature recovery within the Green Belt and the contribution it could make towards an existing and growing green infrastructure network. We would encourage further thought to be put towards the retention of Green Belt in respect of how it can more strongly deliver benefits for both people and nature recovery.

(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

Please succinctly provide all necessary evidence and information to support your response. After this stage, further submissions may only be made if invited by the Planning Inspectors, based on the matters and issues identified for examination.

Q5. Do you consider it necessary to participate in relevant examination hearing session(s)?

Please note: This response provides an initial indication of your wish to participate in relevant hearing session(s). You may be asked to confirm your request to participate.

- No, I do not wish to/consider it necessary to participate in hearing session(s)
- Yes, I consider it is necessary/wish to participate in hearing session(s)

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Q2. To which paragraph(s) of the document(s) does this response relate?

Paragraph(s):	19 – Strategic Distribution of Planned Development
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- A. Legally compliant Yes: No:
- B. Sound Yes: No:

Q4. Please detail your comments on the specified document(s).

Please be as precise as possible.

The National Trust are supportive of the strategic distribution of planned development being underpinned by the “urban focus”. This approach presents the greatest opportunity for sustainable development with new development making use of and enhancing existing infrastructure in existing established settlements. This approach also seeks to ensure that special qualities of areas within Shropshire are respected and preserved, such as the Shropshire Hills National Landscape. We are of the view that any new development should deliver high quality, meaningful green infrastructure that has the opportunity to connect into existing and emerging wider green infrastructure networks present across the county. The allocation of Tasley Garden Village on the western edge of Bridgnorth presents the opportunity for the growth of the town alongside the opportunity to connect into the emerging National Trust Sandscapes project which seeks to better connect habitats and people to nature across this area of Shropshire. We would expect that any allocation of this land is supported by a robust green infrastructure policy which benefits both nature and people and presents the opportunities for connections to Sandscapes and the wider green infrastructure network.

(Please continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

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The Inspectors will determine the most appropriate procedure to consider comments made during this consultation.



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Q4. Please detail your comments on the specified document(s).

Please be as precise as possible.

The National Trust are supportive of the proposed Spatial Strategy on the basis that this is representative of the pattern of development throughout Shropshire. We consider that unplanned windfall development should also incorporate high quality open space which makes a contribution towards the existing and growing green infrastructure network throughout the county, regardless of the size of the development. This approach should deliver benefits for both nature and people in respect of habitat and ecosystems connectivity and public access to green space within and in the vicinity of the residential developments. The emerging National Trust Sandscapes project which seeks to better connect habitats and people to nature across South Shropshire and in the broader Bridgnorth area could be identified as part of a green infrastructure network which windfall developments would be required to positively contribute towards where their location would permit this.

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