

STAGE 2 HEARING STATEMENT – TREVOR TARRAN

Matter 1

1.1 I draw attention to my previous statements pointing out the inconsistencies and legal non-compliance of the Council's sustainability process. In particular that sustainability appraisal is required to be carried out first to inform subsequent decisions on development, whereas the Council has consistently been producing development proposals and then using subsequent sustainability appraisal to justify preformed decisions. In so doing, it has failed to demonstrate that it has fairly considered alternative proposals; it has prejudged appraisals against any alternatives to ensure its predetermined option is not undermined by subsequent appraisals. It is considered, therefore, that the Council has failed to provide evidence that it considered all alternative sites during the appraisal process in an open minded way, and failed to justify why sites with a better appraisal score were overlooked.

1.2 As previously pointed out, the Shifnal employment site was allocated as a preferred site before any appraisal was carried out of the site, making comparison of appraisals against suitable alternative sites impossible. The Council did not consider reasonable alternatives at the time through the appraisal process, therefore, as the site decision had already been made outside of the appraisal process.

1.3 On the Plan period, it is noteworthy that due to delays in preparing the Plan, the Council previously used compliance with national policy to justify extending the plan period from 2036 to 2038, claiming that this was legally required to meet a 15 year plan period. It seems inconsistent, that despite further considerable delays due to the Council having to submit further evidence, the period has not again been extended to ensure it meets the 15 year criteria.

1.4 It is understood that in a to the Chief Executive of the Planning Inspectorate, Minister of State Matthew Pennycook stated the deficient plans that are unlikely to be found sound without significant additional work at examination should be sent back to allow the local authority to bring forward a new plan in partnership with their communities. Since this examination started, the Council has had to submit a huge amount of new documentation to try to justify its Plan submission, due to significant deficiencies in its original evidence base, which has led to considerable delays in the examination progressing. Surely this shows that the Plan was and is clearly deficient and in accordance with this letter, should be sent back to the Council.