

South Warwickshire

21st June 2021

Dear Ms. Bozdoganli,

South Warwickshire Local Plan Scoping and Call for Sites Consultation

Redditch Borough Council (RBC) welcomes the opportunity to comment on your email dated 10 May 2021 and looks forward to being able to engage constructively with the South Warwickshire Local Plan in the best interests of positive plan-making as a Duty to Co-operate partner.

At this early stage in the plan-making process, this represents an informal officer response only and has not been considered by Members. This will be done in due course and a sent to you retrospectively.

Your email specifically requested a response as a duty-to co-operate consultee in relation to any strategic cross boundary issues that need to be addressed and/or delivered through the South Warwickshire Local Plan, therefore the separate SWLP DTC form accompanies this letter as requested.

In addition to this we have some general comments in relation to the Scoping and Call for Sites Document, specifically Chapter 6. Options for Growth.

Chapter 6. Options for Growth

The majority of the options (all except options A and D) include growth of some form either along the A435 (Studley, Alcester and further south) to the south of Redditch, or to the East/South-eastern edge of Redditch, Option F in particular shows a large area of growth at Mappleborough Green. Any of these options for growth could have a potential to significantly impact on Redditch, through new residents using existing services and facilitates in the Borough, as well as traffic implications through travelling along the A435 north to the M42 Junction 3 and beyond. We would request to be included in any transport work which considers the implications of development adjacent to Redditch in particular along the A435 at Mappleborough Green or adjacent to Studley and would stress this evidence should consider the implications on the Redditch road network. In addition, Worcestershire County Council would also need to be included in this work, given their role as the Highways Authority for Redditch.

Regarding Option B (Main Bus Corridors) whilst this is an understandable option, bus routes and provision are at the mercy of funding and private enterprise and subject to change at any given time.

Following a growth option heavily leaning towards main bus corridors solely would not be advisable due to these fluctuating circumstances. However, it is acknowledged that increasing population in these areas may increase the chances of sustainable bus provision in these areas in the future, but it is felt the option in isolation may not be the most appropriate growth strategy.

Option C (Main Road Corridors) and G (Dispersed) has the potential impact of reducing the gap between Studley and Redditch, it is noted that Page 65 of the Consultation Document states *“One principle we would seek to continue to apply would be to retain the separate character and identity of existing settlements.”* RBC supports this statement and would suggest it could feature as a Principle in the ‘Preliminary assessment of Growth Option Sustainability Appraisal’ document or any equivalent document going forward to ensure it is carried through when assessing the appropriateness of growth options.

Regarding Option F (Main Urban Areas), due to the nature of the existing development along the A435 and at Mappleborough Green there may be limited development potential within Stratford District to the west of the A435, therefore the majority of the development potential may be to the east of the A435. If development is considered to the east of the A435 services and facilities in Redditch are not necessarily easily accessible to these areas without enhancements for access across or onto the A435. This would need further investigation.

It also brings into question whether this option may unacceptably increase the pressure on some services in Redditch from cross boundary development. This would require further consideration if it is felt a credible option for further exploration.

Option G (Dispersed) highlights the opportunity that may exist for limited infill in existing settlements. RBC would need to see specific opportunities regarding the availability of limited infill at sites adjacent to Redditch before commenting further on this option.

I trust the above comments offer a helpful contribution at this stage. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Kind regards

Ruth Bamford
Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services