

## **Pre Submission Stratford upon Avon Neighbourhood Plan. Response from Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership. July 2015**

Thank you for the opportunity for the Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) to comment on the pre submission Neighbourhood Plan for Stratford upon Avon.

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) drives the opportunity for local communities to be fully engaged in a genuine plan-led system, empowering local people to shape their surroundings with a positive vision for the future of the area. CWLEP is supportive of this approach and is pleased to review and comment on the pre submission Stratford upon Avon Neighbourhood Plan from the perspective of delivering sustainable economic growth and job creation within Coventry and Warwickshire.

In reviewing Neighbourhood Plans, CWLEP focuses on the principle of presumption in favour of sustainable development. In particular, paragraph 16 of the NPPF states:

*“... it will mean that neighbourhoods should [inter alia]: develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development;”*

In this context, the following comments are made in relation to the draft Stratford upon Avon Neighbourhood Plan.

The Stratford upon Avon Neighbourhood Plan provides a clear vision and associated objectives for the future of the area. It is considered, however that the timing of release of the Neighbourhood Plan is premature in light of the current situation with the Stratford on Avon Core Strategy - Interim Inspectors Report.

The Stratford upon Avon Neighbourhood Plan acknowledges (at page 11) that it must be in accordance with the emerging Core Strategy and that changes to the Core Strategy may need to be reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan with associated further community consultation. We do not, however, concur with the view that changes to the Neighbourhood Plan “...might be limited to specific policies.”

The Stratford on Avon Core Strategy Interim Inspectors Report requires substantial further work in relation to:

- Objectively assessed need for housing – requiring the likely identification of additional housing opportunities.
- Additional work regarding the Sustainability Appraisal in relation to strategic sites.
- Review of employment land allocations.

It is our understanding that this additional work is currently being undertaken by Stratford District Council and will be subject to further community consultation prior to re-examination by the Planning Inspector. The additional work will have implications for the future role and function of the Neighbourhood Plan area.

In fulfilling its role as the primary settlement within Stratford District and a key settlement in the broader Coventry and Warwickshire sub region it is critical for the Stratford upon Avon Neighbourhood Plan is consistent with the emerging Core Strategy document. This will ensure a coordinated approach towards sustainable economic growth, job creation and housing delivery. It is not considered that this can be achieved until further work and additional community consultation has been completed in relation to the Stratford Core Strategy.

We would therefore strongly encourage the Stratford upon Avon Neighbourhood Plan Group await the outcomes of the Stratford Core Strategy process prior to continuing the development of policies to ensure consistency with the Core Strategy. CWLEP also reserves its position to provide more detailed comments regarding the policy content of the Neighbourhood Plan once the Core Strategy process has been progressed and is reflected in the Neighbourhood Plan.

**Coventry and Warwick Local Enterprise Partnership – July 2015.**