Statement of Representations Procedure and Availability of Submission Document for Inspection - Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

Introduction

At this formal stage of consulting on our Local Plan, there are legal rules about how we run the consultation and guide you to respond. This is called the Statement of Representations Procedure and contains standard wording.

We have prepared the following Guidance Note to help explain how to provide comments on the Regulation 19 pre-submission publication of the new South Gloucestershire Local Plan document, which for ease of reference is identified as the "Local Plan" in this guidance and also to assist with completing the Local Plan Representation Form, which we advise should be read alongside the response form. The note also explains where the Plan and its supporting documents are also available to inspect.

What is the current stage of the Local Plan?

The Council has previously held Regulation 18 consultations which provided an opportunity for interested parties to comment on shaping the content of the draft Local Plan. These comments have been considered and have influenced the current Local Plan Regulation 19 Publication draft which is the focus of this consultation.

In accordance with the regulatory procedures, we now need to ask people to identify if there are any issues they want to raise against the Plan. To comply with this process, Statements of Representation must focus on issues which underpin the Examination, i.e., whether the plan is:

- legally compliant;
- sound; and
- that the duty to cooperate has been met.

This guidance is designed to be read when completing the Representation Form to ensure that responses are made in a way which means they can be received by the Inspector at Examination.

Publication period

The current consultation formally referred to as the period for submission of representations, will be held over a six-week period, **from Friday, 28 February until Friday, 11 April 2025**, providing an opportunity for any person or group to submit a representation on the Local Plan.

How can I comment?

The Inspectors will decide whether the Plan has been prepared following the correct process which the council is required to follow and whether it meets a number of tests to make it "sound"

These procedural and tests of soundness are set out in paragraph 35 of the National Planning Policy Framework December 2023 (NPPF), which is the version of the Framework that the Local Plan will be examined against. Plans are sound if they are:

- **Positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a minimum seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs, and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that unmet need from neighbouring authorities is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development;
- **Justified** – an appropriate strategy, taking into account the reasonable alternatives, and based on proportionate evidence;
- **Effective** - deliverable over the plan period and based on effective joint working on cross-boundary strategic matters that have been dealt with rather than deferred, as evidenced by the statement of common ground; and
- **Consistent with national policy** – enabling the delivery of sustainable development in accordance with the policies in the NPPF.

To make a representation seeking a modification to the plan or part of the plan, please clearly identify where the plan or part of the plan is inadequate, having regard to legal compliance, the duty to cooperate and the four requirements of soundness set out above. Please also support this with evidence explaining why the plan should be modified. It will also be very helpful if you specifically describe how the plan should be modified.

For example, if you think the content of the plan is not sound because it does not include a policy on a particular issue, you should go through the following steps before making representations:

- Is the issue with which you are concerned already covered specifically by national planning policy?
- Is the issue with which you are concerned already covered by another policy in this plan?
- If the policy is not covered elsewhere, in what way is the plan unsound without the policy?
- If the plan is unsound without the policy, what should the policy say?

Your response should cover succinctly all the information and evidence to support/justify your representation and any suggested changes.

There will not normally be a subsequent opportunity to make further representations based on submissions made at the Regulation 19 stage.

After this stage, further submissions will only be at the request of the Inspector, based on the matters and issues they identify for Examination.

Group responses

If you are part of a group with a common view on how you wish to see the plan modified, you should submit a single representation outlining the group's concerns, rather than submitting a large number of individual comments repeating the same points.

Please also make clear how many people your group is representing and how it has been authorised.

Completing the Response Form

Any comments should be made using the Regulation 19 Representation Form.

The Form is in two parts: the first Part A only needs to be completed once and Part B should be completed for each representation made and returned along with a single completed Part A.

Copies of the form are available to download at www.southglos.gov.uk/R19localplan/form.

Part A - Personal/Agent Details

Please complete all your contact details unless you are using an agent to represent you. This is used to identify who has made the comment(s), so it is important you complete this fully.

If you are using an agent, please:

a) complete the Title, Name and Organisation and

b) complete the agent's details in full.

To ensure an effective and fair examination, it is important that the Inspector and all other participants in the examination process are able to know who has made representations on the plan. South Gloucestershire Council will therefore ensure that the names of those making representations can be made available (including publication on the South Gloucestershire Council's website) and considered by the Inspector.

For internal analysis purposes, we are asking you to complete the text box 'Respondent's category', to better understand who is responding to the Plan. The categories are the following:

- Member of the public
- Statutory Body
- Developer/ Agent/ Site Promoter
- Registered Charity
- Neighbourhood Planning Group
- Business or Company
- Community Group
- Local Councillor
- Town & Parish Council or Clerk
- Utility Company or Infrastructure provider
- Other

If you are responding using the online questionnaire, the above is relevant to Question 1.

Part B- The Representations

- **Question 3:**

Please state which policy number, policy criteria or paragraph number your representation relates to. If your representation relates to the Policies Map or to some other aspect of the Local Plan, please tick the relevant box.

If you are responding using the online questionnaire, the above is relevant to Question 2.

- **Question 4:**

In relation to the part of the Local Plan identified in Question 3, please set out here whether you consider the specified section to be sound, legally compliant or complies with duty to co-operate by ticking the relevant box.

If you are responding using the online questionnaire, the above is relevant to Questions 3, 4, and 5.

- **Question 5:**

If you consider the Local Plan is unsound, not legally compliant or fails to comply with the duty to co-operate please set out why.

If you are responding using the online questionnaire, the above is relevant to Questions 3, 4, and 5.

Please Note: Representations made in relation to compliance with the duty to co-operate relate to how the council has co-operated with surrounding Local Planning Authorities, County Councils, and the prescribed bodies (as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012) on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries.

- **Question 6**

Use this section of the form to set out the modification(s) you consider necessary to make the Local Plan legally compliant and sound, in respect of any legal compliance or soundness matters you have identified at 5 above.

You will need to say why each modification will make the Local Plan legally compliant or sound. It will be helpful if you are able to put forward your suggested revised wording of any policy or text. Please be as precise as possible.

If you are responding using the online questionnaire, the above is relevant to Questions 3, 4, and 5.

- **Questions 7 and 8:**

Please state whether you wish to present your representation in person to the Planning Inspector during the Examination, if you answer yes, please explain why you consider this necessary. The Examination will involve a series of Hearing sessions chaired by the Inspector part way through the Examination period and it is here that individuals will be invited to verbally

contribute to the discussion and debate on the legal compliance and soundness of the Local Plan.

If you are responding using the online questionnaire, the above is relevant to Question 6.

It is likely that most representations will be considered using the written representations submitted at this pre-submission stage, which carry equal weight to those heard in person by the Inspector.

It is the Inspector will decide who will be invited to speak at the Hearing sessions, not the Council, and the Inspector will decide the topics to be covered in each Hearing session, based on the issues raised by the written representations at this pre-submission stage.

You can also print out and fill in the representation form and either:

- Email the form(s) to policy.consultation@southglos.gov.uk
- Post your representations to:

South Gloucestershire Council - Department for Places Strategic Planning Policy and Specialist Advice Team
PO Box 1954
Bristol
BS37 0DD

How can I get updates on progress of the Plan - request for Further Notification

Please tick the relevant boxes if you wish to be kept informed of the progress of the Local Plan.

If you are responding using the online questionnaire, the above is relevant to Question 7.

When is the deadline for commenting on the Plan?

All completed Representation Forms must be received by **Friday, 11th April 11:59pm** to ensure they will be considered.

Comments received after the 11 April will be treated as late responses. We will inform the Inspector of any late responses, and it will be for the Inspector to decide if they are to be considered.

Comments received either anonymously or not made in writing will not be accepted.

How to view the documents?

The Plan and supporting evidence base are available online
www.southglos.gov.uk/R19localplan
The consultation material can also be accessed on terminals in South Gloucestershire Libraries and One-Stop Shops (please refer to www.southglos.gov.uk/libraries for locations and opening times)."

One Stop Shop Visit us at a One Stop Shop | BETA - South Gloucestershire Council

Locations:

- Kingswood One Stop Shop: Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood BS15 9TR
- Patchway One Stop Shop: The Patchway Hub, Rodway Road, Patchway BS34 5PE
- Yate One Stop Shop: Kennedy Way, Yate BS37 4DQ (access via West Walk)

Libraries Libraries | BETA - South Gloucestershire Council

Locations:

- Bradley Stoke Library: 1 Fiddlers Wood Lane, Bradley Stoke, BS32 9BS
- Cadbury Heath Library: School Road, Barrs Court, Bristol, BS30 8EN
- Chipping Sodbury Community Library: High Street, Chipping Sodbury, BS37 6AH
- Downend Library: Buckingham Gardens, Downend, South Gloucestershire, BS16 5TW
- Emersons Green Library: Emerson Way, Emersons Green, Bristol BS16 7AP
- Filton Library: Shield Retail Park, Link Rd, Bristol, BS34 7BR
- Hanham Library: High Street, Hanham, Bristol, BS15 3EJ
- Hawkesbury Upton Community Library: Hawkesbury Upton Village Hall GL9 1AU
- Kingswood Library: Kingswood Civic Centre, High Street, Kingswood, Bristol, BS15 9TR
- Marshfield Community Library: Marshfield Community Centre, SN14 8NZ
- Patchway Library: Rodway Road, Patchway, Bristol, BS34 5PE
- Scholars Chase Library: ExtraCare Stoke Gifford Retirement Village, BS16 1YG
- Severn Beach Community Library: Severn Beach Village Hall, Ableton Lane BS35 4PP
- Staple Hill Library: Broad Street, Staple Hill, Bristol, BS16 5LS
- Stoke Gifford Community Library: St Michael's Church, Stoke Gifford BS34 8PD
- Thornbury Library: St Mary Street, Thornbury, Bristol BS35 2AA
- Winterbourne Library: Flaxpits Lane, Winterbourne, Bristol BS36 1LA
- Yate Library: Unit 44, Yate Shopping Centre, West Walk, Yate, Bristol BS37 4AX

What happens next?

Your comments will be registered and you will be allocated a reference number. Please use this in any future correspondence.

Once the consultation closes all submitted responses will be reviewed and passed to the government's planning inspectorate for consideration. The Council expects the inspectors to review this feedback towards the end of 2025 and for in-person hearings to take place next spring, where they will invite the Council, individuals, representative groups and other stakeholders to give evidence, at the Inspector's discretion. The purpose of the Inspector's review of the Local Plan and the gathering of further evidence through the hearings, will be to determine whether the Local Plan is compliant and 'sound' based on the December 2023 NPPF. The new Local Plan is being prepared in line with the transitional provisions in the new NPPF, with approach and soundness being assessed against December 2023 version.

Once the Planning Inspector is appointed you will be contacted to ask if you would like to be involved in the Examination in Public. There will be further guidance available on what you need to do in due course.

How can I get further information?

Information about Government planning policy can be found at www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance

Comments received during previous consultations have been summarised in the Engagement Report on the Evidence Base page www.southglos.gov.uk/R19localplan/EB which will be submitted to the Planning Inspector.

All comments made to the previous consultations are available to view at Local Plan Representations Portal - South Gloucestershire Online Consultations.

If you need any assistance in completing the Representation Form or further information/ advice, please contact the Planning Policy Team policy.consultation@southglos.gov.uk