

SOUTH WORCESTERSHIRE Development Plan

REVIEW



Preferred Options Consultation

November 2019



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Introduction

1.1 The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), also known as the local plan, was adopted in February 2016 and is unusual in that it is a major sub-regional land use plan, prepared jointly by the three South Worcestershire Councils (SWCs); Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon, working together under informal plan making arrangements. The SWDP deals with both strategic cross boundary matters, including overall housing and employment requirements, and also includes detailed policies that are used in decisions on planning applications on a day to day basis by all three councils.

1.2 Following recent changes to national legislation and the revision of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG), the SWCs have agreed to work together to roll the plan forward to cover the period 2016-2041. This means that south Worcestershire once again needs to make some very big decisions regarding where significant new housing, employment and infrastructure goes in south Worcestershire, but it may also mean rolling forward some existing policies with essentially no, or only very limited, change.

1.3 The SWCs want as many people as possible to be involved in shaping the South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR).

1.4 This Preferred Options document is the second consultation on the review of the SWDP. During its preparation the SWCs have considered a full range of evidence base documents and comments made in response to the Issues and Options consultation. The Preferred Options sets out where the SWCs think the new growth should go and the changes that are needed to the policies in order to ensure that they remain in general conformity with national planning policy and respond to the updated evidence base. Importantly, the document also considers a range of other matters, such as infrastructure, e.g. roads, schools and healthcare that is required to support the new development. A number of evidence based documents have been published alongside this document.

1.5 Those interested in researching the issues in more detail and providing comments on specific policies, may wish to refer to the adopted SWDP alongside this consultation document as well as the published evidence base, using the links provided throughout the document. However, if you wish to express views on the overall direction and approach of the SWDPR, the SWCs have produced a summary document of this consultation document, which sets out the main sites proposed for development and the main strategic policy proposals.

How to Comment

1.6 Consultation on this document will take place from Monday 4 November until 5pm on Monday 16 December 2019. We strongly encourage responses to be made on-line via the interactive consultation system, as this enables us to process responses more quickly and reduces costs, however, you can submit your comments in any of the following ways:

- On-line by following the links from our website : http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=13748
- By e-mail: contact@swdevelopmentplan.org

By post: South Worcestershire Development Plan, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, WR10 1PT.

If you have any queries relating to this consultation, please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01386 565565 or 01905 722233.

1.7 During the consultation period there will be a number of staffed exhibitions where you can discuss the Preferred Options and what they mean for you with planning officers. These are as follows:

- Bredon Village Hall - Monday 11 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)
- Tenbury Wells (Tenbury Community Centre) - Tuesday 12 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)
- Pershore (Town Hall) - Wednesday 13 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)
- Droitwich Spa (The Old Library) - Thursday 14 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)

1 Introduction

- Worcester (The Guildhall) - Saturday 16 November 2019 (10am to 4pm)
- Upton-upon-Severn (Memorial Hall) - Tuesday 19 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)
- Malvern (Lyttleton Rooms) - Wednesday 20 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)
- Norton Juxta Kempsey (Norton Village Hall) - Thursday 21 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)
- Rushwick (Village Hall) - Monday 25 November 2019 (1pm to 7pm)
- Throckmorton (Throckmorton Village Hall) - Tuesday 26 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)
- Evesham (Town Hall) - Thursday 28 November 2019 (2pm to 8pm)

1.8 Following the close of the Preferred Options consultation, all responses will be summarised and the SWCs will respond to them. A summary of the responses received will be published in autumn 2020 alongside the SWDPR Publication document.



Why are we Reviewing the SWDP?

2.1 As a result of changes to national legislation and planning policy, local plans are now considered to be potentially out of date when they are 5 years old or more. Therefore, Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) must consider whether they need to undertake a review of their plan. In order, therefore, to have a new plan in place before the adopted SWDP is 5 years old in February 2021, work commenced on the review in 2017. Additionally, there have been changes to the way that LPAs are required to calculate housing need and this generates a larger annual requirement than that currently set out within the adopted SWDP. In order to ensure that growth is directed to the most appropriate areas within south Worcestershire, continues to be plan led, and that the SWCs are in the strongest position to resist speculative planning applications, we now need to carry out a review of the SWDP. The adopted SWDP covers the period up until 2030, however the SWDPR will extend the plan period to 2041.

The Plan Review Timetable

Stage	Date
Evidence Gathering	Commencing late 2017
Issues and Options Consultation	November / December 2018
Preferred Options Consultation	November / December 2019 WE ARE HERE
Publication	October / November 2020
Submission	February 2021
Examination	April 2021
Inspector's Report	October 2021
Adoption	November 2021

The Role of the SWDPR and how it will affect you

2.2 The SWDPR will set out how much development is required across south Worcestershire up until 2041. This will cover residential (including Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation), retail and employment uses. The SWDPR will allocate the sites required, or identify the broad locations (such as neighbourhood plan areas), to deliver the identified level of development. The adopted SWDP looks forward to 2030. There are a number of sites that are allocated within the adopted SWDP that have not yet been developed and the SWCs are suggesting that the majority of these allocations should continue. However, new sites are also needed to meet the requirements for homes, employment and retail growth over the longer time frame.

2.3 The SWDPR sets out development management policies that will guide the determination of planning applications. Most SWDP policies have generally stood up to scrutiny at planning appeals. Therefore, the majority of the policies set out have not changed substantially from the adopted SWDP, however, they have been brought into line with more recent national planning policy, updated to reflect how they have been interpreted in determining planning applications and appeals and to provide clarity over their meaning where this is considered to be beneficial.

2.4 Once adopted, the SWDP will provide the basis for determining planning applications. It is important that we have an up-to-date local plan and enough land to meet our housing requirements for a rolling 5 year time frame. Not having an up-to-date local plan could result in the SWCs being vulnerable to speculative planning applications which would result in a piecemeal approach to new development and sites that do not relate to

existing settlements being developed. It is also important to continue to ensure that growth to meet Worcester's needs, which cannot be located within the city, is located in a way that maintains a functional relationship with the city.

2.5 The SWDP will ensure that new development is carefully planned. Without a review of the SWDP, the SWCs would still need to deliver the same level of development, but would have much less control over the location of the development and the community benefits secured as a result of it. If you want to have your say on the location of new development and the guidelines it must meet, you should respond to this consultation.

Duty to Cooperate/Statements of Common Ground

2.6 LPAs are required to prepare formal Statements of Common Ground (SoCG) to document co-operation with Worcestershire County Council, neighbouring LPAs and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership on strategic planning and associated infrastructure matters that have cross boundary implications. These statements are required to be publicly available and updated throughout the plan-making process. The SWCs, as part of the preparation of the SWDPR, are preparing a SoCG with the aforementioned parties in order to meet the requirements of the Duty to Cooperate (DtC). A draft of this SoCG, setting out the cross boundary planning issues and agreements reached to date, has been published alongside this Preferred Options document.

Relationship with Neighbourhood Plans

2.7 Neighbourhood plans are community led plans, prepared by a town / parish council or a neighbourhood forum (also referred to as a qualifying body) and, like the SWDP, they have development plan status. These plans are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the local plan and cannot plan for less growth than that which is set out in the local plan. Twelve neighbourhood plans have been adopted, or are in the process of being adopted, within south Worcestershire. Policies in a 'made' or adopted neighbourhood plan may become out of date if they conflict with policies in the SWDPR. In such cases, the more recent plan policy (the SWDPR) would take precedence. Communities in areas where policies in a made neighbourhood plan become out of date may decide to update their plan, or part of it. Whilst a draft neighbourhood plan is not tested against policies in the emerging SWDPR, the reasoning and evidence informing the SWDPR is likely to be relevant to its preparation. Therefore, where a neighbourhood plan is being brought forward before the reviewed SWDP is in place, the SWCs will work collaboratively with the town/parish council or neighbourhood forum to minimise any conflicts between policies in the emerging neighbourhood plan and those in the emerging SWDPR.

2.8 The NPPF now requires local plans to set out housing figures for designated neighbourhood areas (those areas preparing a neighbourhood plan). The NPPF (paragraph 65) states that the housing requirement for designated neighbourhood areas should reflect the overall strategy for the pattern and scale of development and any relevant allocations. Where those preparing Neighbourhood Plans have asked for a housing number, these have been provided by the SWCs and are based on the overall housing number, the draft spatial development strategy and takes account of existing allocations in the adopted SWDP and allocations in made or submitted neighbourhood plans. The housing numbers exclude strategic site allocations as these will be set out within the SWDPR and cannot be amended through a neighbourhood plan.

Evidence Base

2.9 The Preferred Options is supported by an extensive evidence base covering a wide range of topics. All of the evidence based documents are available on the SWDP website www.swdevelopmentplan.org

Climate Change

2.10 In accordance with Section 19 (1A) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, the SWDP includes policies designed to ensure that the development and use of land in south Worcestershire contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. Those policies include those related to the Development

Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy; Transport; Green Infrastructure; Design; Biodiversity and Geodiversity; Management of the Historic Environment; Renewable and Low Carbon Energy; Management of Flood Risk; Sustainable Drainage Systems; Water Resources; Efficiency and Treatment; Air Quality; and Green Space.

Sustainability Appraisal

2.11 A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is a statutory requirement that integrates the requirements of the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive with plan making. It makes sure that the environmental, social and economic effects of a plan and reasonable alternatives to the plan are being considered.

2.12 The NPPF (paragraph 32) states that "Local plans should be informed throughout their preparation by a sustainability appraisal that meets the relevant legal requirements. This should demonstrate how the plan has addressed relevant economic, social and environmental objectives (including opportunities for net gains). Significant adverse impacts on these objectives should be avoided and, wherever possible, alternative options that reduce or eliminate such impacts should be pursued. Where significant adverse impacts are unavoidable, suitable mitigation measures should be proposed (or, where this is not possible, compensatory measures should be considered)".

2.13 A Sustainability Appraisal Report has been published alongside the Preferred Options consultation and is also available for comment. Sustainability Appraisal is a continuous process which will inform each stage of the plan-making process.

Habitat Regulations Assessment

2.14 The Habitats Directive establishes an ecological network of European Sites (Natura 2000 Network) and requires consideration of whether or not an Appropriate Assessment (Habitat Regulations Assessment) needs to be undertaken during the preparation of a local plan. The purpose is to assess what effects, if any, the plan might have on European sites, such as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs), in view of the conservation objectives for these sites. Wetlands of international importance designated under the Ramsar Convention (Ramsar sites) are afforded the same level of protection and will therefore also be considered as part of the Habitat Regulations / Appropriate Assessment.

2.15 Bredon Hill SAC and Lyppard Grange SAC both lie within the SWDP area. Additionally, Dixton Woods SAC, Downton Gorge SAC, the River Wye SAC, the Severn Estuary SAC / SPA / Ramsar site and Walmore Common SPA / Ramsar site all lie within the zone of influence of the Plan and need to be considered as part of the Habitats' Regulations Assessment.

3 Vision and Objectives

Vision

3.1 In 2041 south Worcestershire remains a highly desirable place in which to live and work and a place where climate change is proactively addressed and measures are in place to reduce carbon emissions. The planned growth in housing and employment, supported by the work of the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, has created a robust, competitive local economy. This in turn has retained and stimulated significant inward investment and generated numerous job opportunities. Businesses have access to a locally based, highly skilled workforce, thanks to the high quality educational and training provision available in the area. The University of Worcester goes from strength to strength and helps to attract and retain the best and brightest graduates in south Worcestershire.

3.2 Residents and businesses enjoy better accessibility within and beyond the area through the implementation of major improvements to the highway network, in particular improvements to the M5 junctions, the A4440 at Worcester, the completion of Worcestershire Parkway rail station and improvements to local railway stations. A series of smaller but no less vital infrastructure improvements impact positively on the day-to-day lives of the residents of the three districts, including improvements to local roads, junctions, public transport provision, improvements to walking and cycling, drainage and water infrastructure.

3.3 Small-scale businesses have flourished in rural areas through the support offered by the SWDP policies including home-based working and farm diversification opportunities. Farm diversification has enabled farming and horticulture to continue to play an important role in the local rural economy, helping to sustain villages and support a woodland economy. This has been helped by significant improvements to electronic means of communication, including the roll-out of high-speed broadband and the promotion of live-work development.

3.4 Investment in retail and office space has enabled Worcester to compete successfully with the larger centres within and beyond the West Midlands. Worcester also provides high-class and wide-ranging leisure and service facilities. The main towns of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Malvern are vibrant, offering a range of employment, shopping and community facilities to their residents and the wider community. The towns of Pershore, Tenbury Wells and Upton-upon-Severn also continue to offer local services and remain at the heart of the area's rural economy. All the towns have benefited from public realm and local transport improvements.

3.5 South Worcestershire residents have access to a range of housing types and tenures that help to meet the needs of young families, older people and single households. High quality development has incorporated innovative, environmentally friendly solutions that have helped to reduce resource consumption, achieve sustainable communities and lessen the effects of extreme climatic impacts, particularly flooding.

3.6 Affordable and accessible housing is widely available and helps to secure and sustain local communities, services and facilities. Residents enjoy a high standard of living, featuring good health and education in an attractive, safe and secure, low-crime environment. The investment in green infrastructure has enabled better access to healthy opportunities and lifestyles for residents and visitors alike as well as helping to improve biodiversity interest through delivering biodiversity net-gain. A thriving tourism market is underpinned by a high quality natural and built environment, with its exceptional geological heritage, the highlights of which include the Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Geopark, the river valleys of the Avon, Severn and Teme, and Worcester Cathedral and the historic cores of the towns and villages. The need to protect these vital and sensitive landscapes and environments as enshrined within the SWDP forms a cornerstone of south Worcestershire's continued success as a place in which to live, work and relax.

Objectives

3.7 The objectives, which form the basis of the adopted SWDP, originate from the retracted Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). Whilst the SCS has not been updated, the objectives are still considered to be a good basis for planning for sustainable development.

Economic Success that is Shared By All

1. To facilitate development that focuses on improving the area's economic prosperity, delivering new jobs, retaining key employers and maximising high value employment opportunities through the right employment sites.
2. To work with partners, in particular the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, and the private sector to strengthen the urban and rural economies by enabling local businesses, including farms, to start, grow, adapt and diversify.
3. To promote the sub-regional role of Worcester as the major leisure, retail, tourist and university centre and support the sustainable growth of the city.
4. To prioritise the re-development, including mixed uses, of brownfield land within the urban areas in order to aid the regeneration of the city / town centres.

Stronger Communities

5. To deliver sufficient new homes needed by local communities and that will help support economic growth.
6. To provide a balanced mix of house tenures and types, including extra care provision, to satisfy the full range of housing needs and help create active / inclusive / sustainable communities and to sustain rural communities.
7. To maximise opportunities to deliver high quality affordable housing.
8. To allocate most development in locations where there is good access to local services and where transport choice is maximised.
9. To provide a basis for neighbourhood plans.

A Better Environment for Today and Tomorrow

10. To ensure that the scale and type of new development does not compromise landscape character or south Worcestershire's historic environment, heritage assets and their settings.
11. To ensure development is designed to the highest possible environmental standards in order to minimise carbon emissions resource consumption, pollution, flood risk and increase the proportion of renewable energy and to adapt to the impacts of climate change.
12. To maintain open landscape, including AONB, and to prevent the merging of settlements in both Green Belt and non-Green Belt locations.
13. To protect the Green Infrastructure Network and take every opportunity to increase its coverage and quality.
14. To protect, restore and enhance biodiversity by delivering biodiversity net gain, and to enhance geodiversity, landscape quality, water quality and protect the highest quality agricultural land.

Improving Health and Well-being

15. To reduce health inequalities, encourage healthy lifestyles and plan for and promote healthy developments and better living environments to improve the health and wellbeing of those who live in, work in, or visit south Worcestershire.

3 Vision and Objectives

16. To ensure that new development supports the delivery of healthcare provision and accessibility.
17. To promote opportunities and access to a range of skills and vocational training and levels of education for all generations.

Communities that are Safe and feel Safe

18. All new development to employ 'Secured by Design' and 'Design out Crime' principles.
19. All new development to contribute to the provision of accessible community infrastructure that increases the number of pedestrian movements in public places.



Portrait of south Worcestershire

4.1 South Worcestershire covers approximately 1,300 km² and forms the southern limit of the West Midlands region. It borders the South West and South East Regions. South Worcestershire is made up of the largely rural districts of Malvern Hills and Wychavon, along with Worcester, the largest urban area. Beyond the city are the three main towns: Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Malvern and the smaller towns of Pershore, Tenbury Wells and Upton-upon-Severn. In addition, there are over 200 villages of varying size, character and level of service provision. The total population of south Worcestershire is approximately 301,600 (2016 Mid-Year Population Estimates). South Worcestershire has an ageing population.

4.2 The landscape is of a very high quality and the countryside is distinguished by the upland areas of the Cotswolds (including Bredon Hill) and Malvern Hills AONB, as well as the river valleys of the Avon, Severn and Teme. There are approximately 5,600 listed buildings, 150 Ancient Monuments, 13 historic parks and gardens, 105 conservation areas and numerous protected trees and woodlands. In addition, the urban greenspace enhances the environmental quality of the area. All these environmental attributes mean that south Worcestershire attracts a significant number of tourists and visitors, who account for approximately 11% of local expenditure.

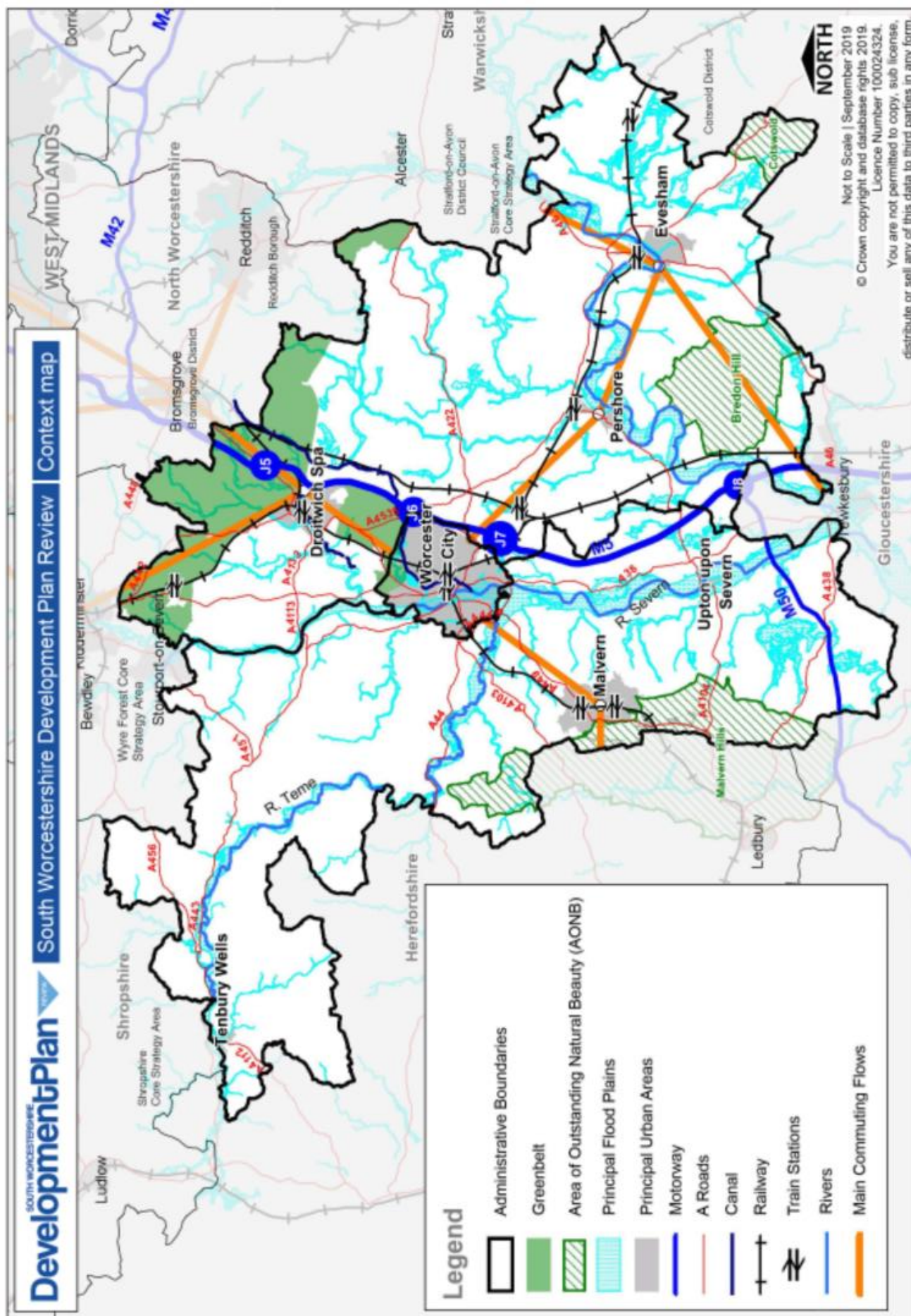
4.3 South Worcestershire is easily accessible by rail and road from the West Midlands conurbation and to a lesser extent from London; however, this is being addressed with the construction of the new Worcestershire Parkway rail station. Rural accessibility is an important issue, as reductions in public transport provision and increases in transportation costs will increase demand for flexible and accessible transport. Safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists will be needed to support rural communities and the rural economy.

4.4 Good accessibility and a high quality built and natural environment has led to the area being subject to relatively high levels of inward migration, which has kept market housing prices relatively high. Housing affordability within both the urban and rural areas is a major issue and is likely to remain so throughout the plan period.

4.5 The West Midlands Green Belt has been an effective planning tool in ensuring that the main settlements, in particular Droitwich Spa and Worcester, remain physically separate and distinctive.

4.6 South Worcestershire provides some 159,000 jobs (2016), 39% of which are in Worcester. Unemployment is lower than in the West Midlands and the last decade has seen employment growth trends higher than the regional average. Average wages are lower than those in the West Midlands and England whereas average incomes are higher, reflecting the relatively high proportion of people with investments. Commuting beyond south Worcestershire is necessary for those residents wishing to achieve higher salaries, particularly in London and the M42 corridor. Most commuting, however, generally takes place internally within south Worcestershire, with the strongest commuting flows between the towns of Malvern and Droitwich Spa and Worcester.

4.7 The context map sets out the main features of the south Worcestershire area, including transport (main routes and other infrastructure), neighbouring local planning authorities, AONB, Green Belt and the main settlements.



Introduction

5.1 This policy sets out the housing, employment and retail requirements across south Worcestershire to 2041 and explains how they have been calculated. A separate topic paper has also been produced to provide more detail on the housing numbers calculations. This can be viewed on the [SWDPR website](#).

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

Housing

5.2 Question 4 (Housing Need) asked respondents *"The NPPF states that the output of the standard methodology for calculating housing need should be seen as the minimum growth requirement for a Local Planning Authority. Is there a case for the south Worcestershire councils to plan for more new dwellings than the standard methodology suggests? If so, why? Please provide evidence to support your answer?"* There were 150 representations submitted to this question. The majority of respondents (67) thought the standard methodology was sufficient for calculating housing need and should be seen as the minimum growth requirement for the authorities. 38 respondents, largely from the development industry and agents, felt that there was a strong case for planning for more dwellings than the standard methodology suggests.

Employment

5.3 Question 5 (Supply vs Demand for Employment Land) asked respondents *"Do you think that the balance of employment land supply should be more evenly distributed across the three south Worcestershire districts? Please provide a reason for your answer. If yes, which areas, or locations, do you think could accommodate additional employment growth?"* There were 72 representations submitted to this question. 13 were in favour of a better balance of employment land supply across south Worcestershire and seven were opposed to this. There was no clear support for any particular location for additional employment land suggested by respondents.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

5.4 An additional 13,998 dwellings are proposed in the SWDPR. By proposing this number of houses within the plan period, it would be expected that this would satisfy the local housing need and make a major positive contribution the housing objective.

5.5 Impacts on SA Objectives other than housing are currently uncertain as these impacts are largely dependent on the distribution of development. According to the 2011 Census, there was an average of 2.3 people per dwelling across South Worcestershire. At 2.3 people per dwelling, the addition of 13,998 new homes would be expected to increase the population by 32,195. It is uncertain the extent to which this may result in over-capacity issues at key services such as GP surgeries and schools, as well as key transport network and employment opportunities, as this dependent on the capacity of the services and the distribution of development. Carbon emissions and waste are likely to increase as a result of an increased population.

5.6 The quantum of employment and retail development was not tested.

SWDPR 1: Employment, Housing and Retail Requirements

5.7 In order to meet the development requirements the SWCs will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 13,957 additional new dwellings, 316 ha of new employment land and 2,000 m2 of new retail floorspace as set out in the site allocations policies SWDPR 49 to SWDPR 55.

Reasoned Justification

Housing

5 Employment, Housing and Retail Requirements

5.8 The housing requirement is based on the SWDP annual average figure up until 2021, the point at which SWDP is 5 years old and could be considered to be out-of-date. Beyond 2021, the housing requirement is based on the Government's standard methodology for calculating housing need. The local housing need has been calculated for each of the SWCs and then totalled to produce a plan requirement.

5.9 The process used to calculate the housing need and net additional allocations is set out below and further information is provided in the Housing Numbers Topic Paper.

SWDP requirement 2016-2021 (5 years)	1183*5 = 5,915
Standard Methodology output (taken from SHMAA) 2021-2041 (20 years)	1257*20 = 25,140
Additional 500 dwellings – Mitton (to meet need from Cheltenham, Tewkesbury and Gloucester)	+500
Total Housing Need	31,555
Completions 1st April 2016 to 31st March 2019	-5,832
Commitments as at 31st March 2019	-6,636 (6,211) with 4.4% lapse)
Outstanding allocations still considered to be deliverable	-7,506
Net requirement	12,006
Over allocation – to build in flexibility to respond to changes in the methodology and non-delivery of allocations	+10% of additional need and outstanding allocations. 10% of 7,506 = 751 10% of 12,006 = 1,200 10% over allocation = 1,951
Net Additional Housing Target	13,957

5.10 The site allocations policies within this document make provision for sufficient dwellings to deliver this need.

5.11 Delivery will be measured on a plan area basis. The SWCs are already undertaking the Housing Delivery Test based on a single figure for the whole plan area and this approach will continue. Upon adoption of the SWDPR the SWCs will maintain and measure 5 year housing supply across the plan area.

Employment

5.12 The gross demand for employment land, as identified in the 2018 Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA), for the period 2018 to 2041 is 295 ha of which 130 ha is already committed, i.e. planning permissions plus SWDP allocations without planning permission. The proposed new employment allocations total 294 ha (including 80 ha at the strategic locations).

Retail

5.13 The net overall convenience and comparison retail floorspace capacities to 2029 are set out in the South Worcestershire Retail and Centre Study 2019. The quantum of new retail floorspace needed for this period is not surprisingly low, given the increasing market share of online businesses.

5.14 The gross requirement of 12,200 m² is unevenly spread across the seven town centres and new supply needs to reflect the need at each centre. Due to the lack of suitable and available land only one retail allocation; totaling 2,000 m² floorspace, is proposed at Barnards Green which will address Malvern's retail floorspace capacity.

Introduction

6.1 This policy sets out how the growth requirements will be distributed throughout south Worcestershire and it establishes the settlement hierarchy.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

6.2 A number of consultation questions were relevant to the development strategy. Broadly, there was support for a rail based strategy and there was concern that continuing the existing allocations would put pressure on the villages. There was strong support for increasing densities through regeneration but many respondents acknowledged that this alone would not deliver sufficient numbers. There was strong support for a large urban extension and/or new settlements and many respondents suggested Worcestershire Parkway as a suitable location for growth.

6.3 With regard to the options presented for employment locations, there was support for locating employment with housing and also where it is accessible by rail. The option to locate employment growth near to motorway junctions also received support.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

6.4 Options were tested for the overall development strategy, Options A (rail based development) and C (increasing densities through regeneration) have been identified as the best performing Options in the scoring matrix. Option A would be likely to result in more benefits to the local landscape, educational opportunities and, in particular, sustainable transport options within south Worcestershire. Option C, on the other hand, would be expected to result in benefits to local flooding issues, biodiversity assets and natural resources. Therefore, a mix of both strategies could potentially result in a greater number of sustainability benefits.

6.5 Options for accommodating housing growth were assessed. In terms of the scoring matrix, Option B (at a new settlement) is seen as the most sustainable option for allocating housing growth. This option would help to ensure new residents would have good access to educational facilities and employment opportunities as well as boost local economies. Option B would provide the SWCs with greater scope for increasing available health facilities and would help to decrease the risk of placing new residents in Flood Zones across the plan area and has therefore been identified as the best performing option.

6.6 A number of options for accommodating employment land were tested. The development of new employment sites can provide greater flexibility over the location of new floorspace, enabling them to situate the right types of jobs in the right locations, potentially based on accessibility, local need or overall sustainability. All options would help to ensure that the employment floorspace needs of the local area are met through new sites that can be accessed via the strategic road network. This strategy would be expected to require development on relatively large greenfield sites, resulting in permanent losses of natural resources, an alteration to the local landscape character and fragmentation of the local ecological network.

SWDPR 2: The Spatial Development Strategy and Associated Settlement Hierarchy

A. The Spatial Development Strategy is based upon the following principles:

- i. **Allocate sufficient land to meet the development requirements set out in SWDPR 1.**
- ii. **Support development in appropriate areas.**
- iii. **Safeguard the essential attributes of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty and ensure that, wherever possible, development enhances them.**
- iv. **Maintain the openness of the Green Belt and Significant Gaps.**

B. Windfall development proposals will be assessed against all relevant SWDPR and neighbourhood plan policies. Generally development proposals are more likely to be considered sustainable,

and therefore appropriate, if they are for land that lies within a defined development boundary and are of a scale consistent with the settlement hierarchy below:

Table 1 - South Worcestershire Settlement Hierarchy (also see Annex A)

Category	Associated Settlement	Planning Role	Specific SWDPR Policies
Urban Area (1)	Worcester	As both the largest settlement and Worcestershire's administrative centre, it provides the greatest range of services and employment opportunities.	There are a number of housing allocations and 'opportunity zones' ⁽¹⁾ that together will deliver approximately 1,558 dwellings and 23.3 ha of employment land. The city administrative boundary is also its development boundary within which the principle of windfall development is acceptable subject to other material SWDPR policies.
Urban Area (2)	Droitwich Spa Evesham Malvern Worcestershire Parkway Throckmorton Airfield	Provide a range of local services, including entertainment and employment opportunities.	Smaller scale urban extensions, allocations within defined Development Boundaries that also provide potential windfall opportunities subject to satisfying other material SWDPR policies.
Urban Area (3)	Pershore Tenbury Wells Upton-upon-Severn Rushwick	Considerably smaller than Urban Area (2) settlements but still perform a local (albeit more limited) service centre function and contain employment sites.	Small scale urban extensions and allocations within defined Development Boundaries that also provide potential windfall opportunities subject to satisfying other material SWDPR policies.

1 See SWDPR 53.

6 The Spatial Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy

Category	Associated Settlement	Planning Role	Specific SWDPR Policies
Rural Areas (1)	Category 1 - 3 villages (as informed by the Village Facilities and Rural Transport Study 2019)	Typically these are the relatively larger villages, some of which perform a local service centre function and retain a bus service.	Allocations (range 5-80 dwellings ⁽²⁾) as set out in SWDPR 54 and SWDPR 55.
Rural Areas (2)	Category 4 villages and unclassified villages	These villages have minimal local service provision and no peak hour bus services so generally an unsustainable location for facilitating growth.	No allocations, rather limited potential for small scale windfall development within defined development boundaries.

- C. The open countryside is defined as land beyond any defined Development Boundary⁽³⁾. In the open countryside development will be generally more restricted and will be limited to dwellings for rural workers (see policy SWDPR 21), employment development (see SWDPR 11), rural exception sites (see SWDPR 18), buildings for agriculture and forestry, replacement dwellings (see SWDPR 20), dwelling extensions, replacement buildings, renewable energy projects (see SWDPR 31) and development specifically permitted by other SWDPR and neighbourhood plan policies⁽⁴⁾.
- D. The West Midlands Green Belt will be safeguarded and development proposed within the Green Belt will be considered in accordance with the NPPF. Development at Hindlip Park⁽⁵⁾ will be limited to emergency and civil resilience uses provided there is no significant detrimental impact on the openness of the Green Belt.
- E. Development proposals should be of an appropriate scale and type with regard to the landscape character (see SWDPR 29), location and infrastructure capacity.
- F. The SWDPR is supportive of development proposals that are promoted through neighbourhood plans, provided they are not of a scale that would compromise SWDPR strategic policies.
- G. As required by the Duty to Co-operate⁽⁶⁾ in circumstances when it has been clearly established through the local plan process that those needs must be met through provision in the SWDPR area.

Reasoned Justification

6.7 The spatial development strategy is driven by the SWDPR Vision, the Sustainability Appraisal outputs and technical evidence. It brings together land use, development and infrastructure considerations that flow from the economic, environmental and social characteristics of the area. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) demonstrates that the proposed spatial development strategy will best deliver the SA objectives.

² The quantum allocated is informed by the availability of suitable land and the amount of housing development built and committed since the 2011 Census.

³ Where a housing allocation is not conterminous with a Development Boundary, it will remain outside it.

⁴ See, for example, policies SWDPR 8, 9, 10, 19, 22, 39, 40, 41, 46 and 47.

⁵ A policy framework for Hindlip Park will be prepared and adopted as Supplementary Planning Document.

⁶ Section 110, Localism Act 2011 relating to unmet need.

6.8 Worcester has the greatest local housing need, which is why a substantial element of housing and employment is directed towards the city and surroundings areas, in particular at Worcestershire Parkway. Beyond there, growth is directed at the towns, a new settlement at Throckmorton Airfield, an expanded settlement at Rushwick, and then Category 1, 2 and 3 villages (informed by the Village Facilities and Rural Transport Study 2019) in order to satisfy the social objectives of sustainable development.

6.9 The high quality of the countryside is highly valued. Land in the open countryside is generally less sustainable as access to local services and employment opportunities tends to be poorer and, therefore, it is appropriate that development in the open countryside is restricted to uses that are supportive of more specific SWDPR policies, e.g. SWDPR 11 Employment in Rural Areas; SWDPR 18 Rural Exception Sites; SWDPR 20 Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside; SWDPR 21 Dwellings for Rural Workers; and SWDPR 31 Renewable and Low Carbon Energy.

6.10 Maintaining the identity and integrity of individual settlements is an important issue for local communities. This is mainly achieved by the West Midlands Green Belt designation to the north and north-east of Worcester within Wychavon, as shown on the Policies Map. Green Belts serve five purposes set out in the NPPF (paragraph 134), which are: to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas; to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another; to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and to assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land. Locally, the Green Belt continues to deliver Green Belt objectives (albeit to varying degrees as indicated in the Green Belt Study) and the boundaries are considered to be strong and enduring. Where the Green Belt is particularly sensitive, e.g. between Droitwich Spa and Worcester, it will be particularly important to ensure that the land remains open, otherwise its ability to function as Green Belt would be significantly compromised.

6.11 Beyond the Green Belt there are some areas of land that need to be kept largely open to retain the identity of neighbouring developments. These are subject to the Significant Gaps policy, which will maintain a clear separation between smaller settlements and urban areas. The Significant Gaps are on land that would otherwise be subject to development pressure demonstrated by Call for Sites submissions. Acceptable development proposals in such areas may include the reuse of rural buildings, agricultural and forestry-related development, playing fields, other open land uses and minor extensions to existing dwellings.

6.12 The Major Developed Site (MDS) within the Green Belt at Hindlip Park has a lengthy planning history with respect to emergency services provision. It is a mixture of Previously Developed Land and Greenfield land and is likely to continue to be the subject of further development proposals from West Mercia Police. In order to help inform investment decisions therefore, applications for emergency services provision within the defined MDS boundary will be supported, subject to more detailed Plan policies, e.g. SWDPR 29 Landscape Character. This is consistent with the NPPF (paragraph 145).

6.13 The reuse of Previously Developed Land (PDL) is consistent with the principles of sustainable development. There is no primacy of PDL over greenfield land in the NPPF. For the plan therefore, the fact that a site is greenfield does not count against it, rather in assessing development proposals on PDL sites, the fact that they are PDL will be a plus in the consideration of the planning balance.

6.14 The implementation of SWDPR 2 is essential to achieving sustainable development and the delivery of economic prosperity across the plan area.

Introduction

7.1 This policy sets out the transport related infrastructure requirements that are necessary in order for new development to function, minimise pollution, congestion and maintain an effective highway network.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

7.2 Option 24 (Transport) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should 1: *"Promote the use of electric vehicles by requiring all new employment parking to have electric charging points"*, 2: *"Promote the use of electric vehicles by requiring all new residential development to have electric charging points for all properties"*, 3: *"Integrate walking and cycling routes to community facilities, retail outlets, education and employment opportunities in all new housing developments to an agreed standard"*, 4: *"Seek to promote the sustainable transport options set out in Local Transport Plan 4 as a priority"*, 5: *"Review HGV parking and promoted routes through south Worcestershire to minimise the impact on local communities"* and 6: *"Explore the alternative options for rural transport to offset the impact of loss of rural public transport"*.

7.3 There were 97 representations received. The most popular action was Option 3, which is requiring new residential development to ensure that occupiers can access local facilities and employment opportunities on foot or bicycle. The appetite for policy on Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points was mixed with a, perhaps unsurprising, split in opinion between the development industry and others. There is a cost to providing EV charging points but requiring the necessary high current wiring should not jeopardise development viability. The impact on the electricity supply networks needs to be considered. There were mixed responses on the Lorries in the Vale policy and, given its low usage in decision taking, it is suggested that it be subsumed within SWDP 4 Moving Around South Worcestershire, although support for that from neighbouring LPAs who have a similar policy needs to be sought in the ongoing Duty to Cooperate.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

7.4 The six options listed at Option 24 are not mutually exclusive. Each one should deliver against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives, principally health and accessibility. The greatest benefits would be secured if all six options were integrated within a revised policy.

SWDPR 3: Strategic Transport Links

Managing Travel Demand

- A. Development proposals, taking into account their location, must demonstrate that: the proposed layout and design will minimise the need to travel by car, offer genuinely sustainable travel choices, maintain and, where possible, enhance highway safety for all users, and be consistent with the delivery of the objectives in Worcestershire County Council's Worcestershire Local Transport Plan (Worcestershire LTP4).**
- B. Travel Plans will be required for all major developments proposals. These must set out measures to manage and limit single occupancy private car use in favour of incentivising cycling, walking and public transport use, as active and space-efficient modes of transport.**
- C. Development proposals should be clearly supportive of the design criteria and principles set out in Manual for Streets (Part 1 and 2), Worcestershire LTP4 and Worcestershire County Council's Streetscape Design Guide.**

Reducing the Environmental Impacts of Travel

- D. In accordance with policy SWDPR 6, development proposals will be required to provide, or contribute financially to, a package of sustainable transport infrastructure and services needed to accommodate them.
- E. All new domestic, employment and commercial development will be required to provide Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure, as set out in the Streetscape Design Guide.

Delivering Transport Infrastructure to Support Economic Prosperity

- F. The following transport schemes, as identified within Worcestershire LTP4, are the most significant for the successful implementation of the SWDPR:
 - i. Active Travel Corridor and Network Enhancements;
 - ii. Worcestershire Parkway Station - Parking Capacity and Platform Enhancements;
 - iii. Pershore Railway Station Car Park;
 - iv. Rushwick Railway Station and Car Park;
 - v. Worcester Shrub Hill Station Masterplan; and
 - vi. Worcester City Centre Masterplan.
- G. Development proposals will not be permitted if they are likely to prejudice the implementation of the transport schemes set out in clause F, the implementation of identified highway improvements or traffic management schemes, or the operation of existing or proposed public transport facilities, or any transport proposals as set out in the Worcestershire LTP4.
- H. The provision of 14,000 dwellings and 295 ha of employment land across south Worcestershire to 2041 will require the phased implementation of a significant package of essential transport investments, as set out in the latest Worcestershire Local Transport Plan.
- I. The following sites and corridors, as shown on the Policies Map, will be safeguarded from development that would prejudice sustainable transport network developments:
 - i. The Cotswold and Malvern railway line;
 - ii. The railway alignment between Droitwich Spa and Stoke Works;
 - iii. The former alignment of the Stratford to Cheltenham railway line, including the former Chord Lines at Honeybourne Junction;
 - iv. The former railway alignment between Great Malvern and Upton upon Severn;
 - v. Land around the Newlands roundabout in Malvern Link; and
 - vi. The transport infrastructure set out in the site specific policies for Rushwick, Throckmorton Airfield and Worcestershire Parkway.

Transport Assessment Strategy

- J. Transport Assessments are required for all major developments⁽⁷⁾ and must be carried out as required by the Worcestershire LTP4 and agreed by the LPA in consultation with Worcestershire County Council, as the Highway Authority, the following supporting policies and guidance:
 - i. Worcestershire Local Transport Plan;
 - ii. Worcestershire Rail Investment Strategy; and
 - iii. Worcestershire Streetscape Design Guide.

⁷ Major development is defined in the NPPF Glossary as housing development of 10 or more homes, or where the site has an area of 0.5 ha or more, and non-residential development with a net additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more, or where the site area is 1 ha or more, or as otherwise provided in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure)(England) Order 2015.

Implementation

- K. **Financial contributions from development towards transport infrastructure will be secured either through the Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedule or developer contributions, as appropriate.**

Reasoned Justification

7.5 Worcester city centre is the largest destination for vehicle trips in south Worcestershire. This is reflected in levels of traffic congestion both within and around the city. Its location is supported by wider strategic transport infrastructure and access to the national motorway network. The River Severn constrains east / west movements through south Worcestershire and is a significant contributor to congestion on the A4440 Southern Link Road, which provides one of only two vehicle crossing points within the Wider Worcester Area.

7.6 Integrated investment in transport infrastructure, services and travel choice information for all modes of transport will be required to accommodate the growth in travel demand without increasing travel times, congestion and costs, and thereby undermining economic performance. This will require an efficient rail network offering improved and frequent regional and inter-city connections, high-quality active travel (cycling and walking) routes for shorter distance journeys, particularly in urban areas, and a convenient and efficient urban passenger transport network.

7.7 Some investment in strategic and local highways may be justified, but evidence proves that provision of additional capacity simply unlocks latent demand to travel by car, bringing with it significant negative impacts in terms of worsening congestion, accessibility and environmental quality. As such, widespread investment cannot be justified as this will lead to further unsustainable traffic growth. The SWDPR aims to ensure that development brings about improvements to the transport network. The Worcestershire LTP4 and associated local transport plan policies, Infrastructure Delivery Plan and overarching strategies (including the Worcester Transport Strategy) provide the basis on which to develop and deliver this network.

7.8 The rural nature of most of south Worcestershire means that travel is highly diverse in terms of the origin and destination of trips, albeit most commuting takes place within south Worcestershire itself. Rural residents are more reliant on cars because of very limited passenger transport service provision here and, with walking and cycling being a less realistic option relative to urban areas, more demand-responsive forms of public and community-based transport, such as community buses, will be required if the needs of rural residents are to be met. The SWDPR aims to improve transport choice to enhance rural accessibility. Improved access to new technology (such as broadband) may help to reduce rural isolation without increasing travel demand.

7.9 Worcestershire has a mature economy, with well-established transport networks and connectivity between economic centres already in place. The Worcestershire LTP4 suggests that investment should be focused on enhancing the performance of existing transport networks, particularly where journey times and costs are increasing, through investment transport network capacity and reliability 'pinch points'. There are some areas in south Worcestershire where investment in transport infrastructure and services has been insufficient to deal with rising demand, particularly with respect to rail and active travel modes; unless addressed this will have an even great impact on the area's future growth and competitiveness.

Sustainable Travel

7.10 Traffic congestion is a major cost to the economy and negatively affects air quality within urban areas. A significant change in travel patterns and travel behaviour is necessary and so housing growth must be accompanied by increased investment in local services, employment opportunities and improvements to walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure, services and information systems.

7.11 There is an urgent need to adopt policies that ensure the closer integration of land use and transportation planning to help manage demand on the local transport network. This will also help reduce the impacts of new development and make full use of existing transport infrastructure and services. The SWDPR overarching

development strategy seeks to focus new development largely within the urban areas and in villages / settlements that have good access to local services, or where services can be enhanced through development (SWDPR 2), in order to minimise the need to travel.

7.12 Worcestershire County Council has developed a Streetscape Design Guide, which should be taken fully into account in major development proposals. Developers will be required to submit a technical note alongside their application to set out how these requirements have been considered.

7.13 Actively managed and adequately funded travel plans are essential as they are an integral part of the wider implementation of an area's sustainable transport strategy. Plans must be robust and enforceable to ensure that development is sustainable in terms of its transport requirements. Travel plans will be required for all major developments and should set out targets and monitoring arrangements to ensure sustainable travel patterns are maintained. All travel plans must involve the development of explicit and agreed outcomes linked to an appropriate package of measures.

Worcestershire Local Transport Plan (LTP)

7.14 This provides the policy and strategy context for major transport projects to enable Worcestershire County Council to bid for additional Government funding. It also provides the context within which developer contributions can be guided.

7.15 Detailed plans for the implementation of transport infrastructure will come forward during the lifetime of the LTP and these will be developed so that the proposals taken forward have a strong business case and thus represent value for money. The LTP Scheme Appraisal Framework will guide Worcestershire County Council's capital spending, which includes Section 106 funding and grant allocations to optimise value for money.

7.16 The current plan, Worcestershire LTP4 includes a specific section for south Worcestershire, setting out a series of proposed investments in transport infrastructure and services that will both tackle existing accessibility constraint, and more importantly, provide additional capacity to accommodate growth.

7.17 New developments are expected to contribute significantly towards the funding of essential transport schemes and strategies as set out in Worcestershire LTP4. This is essential to deliver sustainable growth and is also consistent with the aims of both plans.

Delivering Major Transport Schemes across south Worcestershire

7.18 The Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership has identified the following transport-related priorities:

- a. To deliver the largest sites and related transport infrastructure needed to secure economic growth and a low carbon economy.
- b. To deliver the right infrastructure for business - improving access from the M5 to the Malvern Hills Science Park and QinetiQ, and creating better access for our strategic businesses and their supply chains.

7.19 The Worcestershire Local Investment Plan has specified that, where resources for infrastructure are scarce, priority will be given to schemes and investment that support an area's economic prosperity. In addition to the schemes set out above, regard will also be had to transport priorities that may emerge through the plan period. This is consistent with the aims of the Worcestershire LTP. Development proposals that are likely to prejudice the implementation of identified transport infrastructure improvements or traffic management schemes will not be permitted.

7.20 The SWCs and the county council will need to continue to work in partnership with organisations such as Highways England, Network Rail, the Department for Transport and train operating companies to promote and develop schemes such as a new Rushwick Station, further improvements at Worcestershire Parkway and Pershore Station.

7.21 The provision of transport infrastructure schemes and improvements associated with development proposals will need to demonstrate that the risks associated with environmental impact have been taken into account, for example that flooding and climate change impacts have been assessed in accordance with Environmental Impact Assessment requirements. They will also need to demonstrate that they have minimised disruption to the existing strategic transport network and considered the potential impact on the area's economy and local communities. It is the SWCs and county council's aspiration, however, that the majority of strategic transport infrastructure, services and measures to improve travel choice identified in the south Worcestershire section of the LTP4 should be committed to in accordance with SWDPR 6.

Parking Policy

7.22 Traffic and parking management measures can improve significantly the efficiency of transport networks, reduce pollution associated with traffic congestion and help to improve air quality. To encourage a high throughput of shoppers and to boost economic activity, Worcestershire LTP4 places an emphasis on working with partners to ensure that parking in city and town centres is strongly biased towards short-stay use. Long-stay car parking, mainly associated with commuting, will be addressed through the provision of parking hub sites at peripheral locations, ideally co-located with railway stations.

7.23 Within the rural areas, where communities are more reliant upon the private car due to more limited transport choices, consideration will be given to a more flexible approach to the application of parking standards, based on site assessment and location. The SWCs will work with Worcestershire County Council to develop locally specific parking standards through the LTP and Supplementary Planning Documents.

Phasing and Implementation of Transport Infrastructure

7.24 The funding to deliver transport infrastructure is likely to come from a variety of sources, including developer contributions, during the plan period.

7.25 New development will be incorporated in to a co-ordinated infrastructure and service delivery programme agreed with the SWCs and Worcestershire County Council and, where relevant, to the Strategic Road Network, Highways England. A Infrastructure Delivery Plan will provide how and when transport infrastructure will be provided and set out which partners will deliver it.

7.26 Developers will be required to demonstrate that they have given appropriate consideration to the potential impacts of development on a wider and strategic transport network, including that managed by Worcestershire County Council, Highways England and Network Rail. In particular, the impact on the safe and efficient operation of Junctions 5, 6 and 7 of the M5 and the A46(T) will require detailed consideration as developments come forward during the plan period.

7.27 The phasing of major highways and sustainable transport improvement schemes will also be considered.

Introduction

8.1 This policy seeks to provide multi-functional Green Infrastructure (GI) to support sustainable development throughout the plan area. It also seeks to protect existing GI that serves local communities in terms of their health and wellbeing.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

8.2 Question 10 (Green Infrastructure) asked “*Could the policy approach be improved by including increased guidance to cover the issues set out above?*” The issues considered in the SWDPR were “*Clarify that GI is required on brownfield sites*”, “*Clarify that the target GI amount excludes private gardens*”, “*Provide greater explanation of the Environmental Character Areas Map*”, “*Identify the linkages between SWDP 5 and other SWDP policies*” and “*Emphasise the multi-functionality of GI*”. Overall there were 87 responses to Question 10 of which three responses were left blank. The overriding theme taken from these responses was that more guidance supporting GI policies would make them more effective. A high number of respondents also commented on the need to maintain and to continue to protect GI. There were a low number of comments detailing that the percentage approach to achieving GI on development sites was extremely onerous on developers. In summary the majority of respondents were of the view that the policy approach can be improved by updating the guidance to cover the highlighted issues set out above.

8.3 Option 26 (Green Infrastructure) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: “*Include GI Plans or strategies for strategic sites to ensure they link with the wider network and address the relevant GI priorities*” or to remain with the current policy approach and B: “*Maintain a percentage requirement for GI*”. In total there were 76 responses, of which two were left blank and nine did not favour either option. Of the 64 respondents that did favour an option, 36 (56%) supported the use of GI plans or strategies for strategic sites to ensure that they link to the wider GI network and address the relevant GI priorities. Secondly, 13 of 64 respondents opted to maintain a percentage requirement for GI (adopted policy), although 8 of the 13 respondents who opted for this option stated that the 40% requirement was too high. Finally, 15 of the 64 respondents opted to utilise both options to steer GI policy direction. As a general summary there were also a number of respondents concerned that there was no established percentage for GI on sites for non-residential development. Further, the Environment Agency recommended an option to focus on the need to enhance blue infrastructure (landscape elements linked to water such as pools, pond and wetland systems, artificial basins or watercourses) and stated that alongside GI it can help to interconnect a network of environmental enhancements.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

8.4 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) stated that it would be expected that both options would satisfy the requirements set out in the NPPF and have positive impacts on the climate change adaptation, biodiversity, pollution, natural resources and health objectives. Option A proposes only strategic sites are developed to enhance and add to the current GI network. This option may not address requirements for the enhancement of the GI network in and around smaller developments. The percentage requirement under Option B would help to ensure that GI is promoted throughout the plan area and is more likely to ensure the wider GI network is enhanced through the plan making process than Option A. The SA recommended an integration of the two options as this would likely result in the greatest number of environmental benefits as a single best performing option could not be identified. In summary it is considered that the two options are not mutually exclusive, and both can be taken forward and collectively contribute to the development of an updated policy.

SWDPR 4: Green Infrastructure

- A. Housing, employment and retail proposals (including mixed use schemes) are required to contribute towards the provision, maintenance, improvement and connectivity of Green Infrastructure (GI) ⁽⁸⁾ as follows (subject to financial viability) ⁽⁹⁾:**
- i. For greenfield sites exceeding 1 ha (gross) - 40% GI excluding private gardens.
 - ii. For greenfield sites of less than 1 ha but more than 0.2 ha (gross) - 20% GI excluding private gardens.
 - iii. For brownfield sites and greenfield sites of less than 0.2 ha (gross) - the proportion of GI will be determined by site characteristics and local circumstances and will be agreed with the LPA on a case by case basis.
- B. For developments which fall within section A of this policy:**
- i. The precise form and function(s) of GI will depend on the wider strategic green network, site characteristics, the local context and the Worcestershire GI Strategy's priorities. Developers should submit their proposals for GI with the local planning authority before submitting a planning application.
 - ii. Developers will be required to demonstrate how the functionality and connectivity of existing and proposed GI features will be retained, protected and enhanced through the lifetime of the development.
 - iii. Schemes will be required to accord with the relevant GI Concept Plan or GI statement approved by the Worcestershire GI Partnership in consultation with the local planning authority.
 - iv. Where no existing GI concept Plan(s) cover the area of development, developers will be required to prepare proportionate GI Concept Plans or statements in consultation with the local planning authority and in accordance with the Worcestershire GI Strategy and supporting Framework.
- C. Effective management arrangements must be clearly set out and secured. Once a planning permission has been implemented, the associated GI will be protected as Green Space (SWDPR 43).**
- D. Other than specific site allocations in the SWDP, development proposals that would have a detrimental impact on GI attributes within the areas identified as 'protect and enhance' or 'protect and restore' as identified on the Environmental Character Areas Map will not be permitted unless:**
- i. A robust, independent assessment of community and technical need shows the specific GI typology to be surplus to requirements in that location; and
 - ii. Replacement of, or investment in GI of at least equal community and technical benefit is secured and agreed with the LPA.
- E. All major ⁽¹⁰⁾ developments will be required to demonstrate compliance with the 'Building with Nature' benchmarking standard or other equivalent emerging national standards and maintain this standard throughout the lifetime of the development.**

8 Proposals will need to satisfy other SWDPR policies, e.g. SWDPR 25 Design; SWDPR 26 Biodiversity and Geodiversity; SWDPR 33 Sustainable Drainage Systems; SWDPR 34 Water Resources, Efficiency and Treatment; SWDPR 44 Provision of Green Space and Outdoor Community Uses in New Development.

9 Provision of Green Infrastructure at a lower level than that required by this policy will need to be justified by a robust viability assessment.

10 Major development is defined as residential development of 10 units or more and non-residential development additional floorspace of 1,000m² or more.

Reasoned Justification

8.5 Green Infrastructure (GI) is the planned and managed network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages. GI comprises many different elements including biodiversity, the landscape, the historic environment, the water environment and publicly accessible green spaces and informal recreation sites. Green spaces and natural elements do not exist in isolation. Considering networks in an integrated way achieves benefits that are far greater than when individual components are considered separately. There are many advantages to be gained from securing a critical mass of GI in a locality – creating a wide range of benefits that meet individual site priorities ⁽¹¹⁾.

8.6 The NPPF (paragraph 96) recognises that sustainable development requires improvements in the quality of the natural environment. GI can deliver benefits with respect to each of the economic, social and environmental dimensions to sustainable development:

- i. Helping to mitigate extreme temperatures;
- ii. Flood mitigation;
- iii. Habitat protection and creation;
- iv. Pollution reduction;
- v. Property value enhancement;
- vi. Stimulating inward investment;
- vii. Supporting health and wellbeing; and
- viii. Supporting employment growth, including tourism.

8.7 In most cases, planning for the protection, enhancement or inclusion of GI can deliver multiple benefits simultaneously. With regard to the overall quality of life, the promotion of active lifestyles and the stimulation of business investment, the availability of accessible high-quality GI is a positive and significant factor.

8.8 GI will need to be carefully planned into new developments from the outset. Successful delivery of GI will depend on the comprehensive consideration of all GI components including biodiversity, landscape, historic environment, access and recreation, flood risk management and water quality and quantity. To achieve this, any GI provision should accord with the relevant requirements of other policies, in particular those in policies SWDPR 25 Design; SWDPR 26 Biodiversity and Geodiversity; SWDPR 33 Sustainable Drainage Systems; SWDPR 34 Water Resources, Efficiency and Treatment; and SWDPR 44 Provision of Green Space and Outdoor Community Uses in New Development.

8.9 Development of both greenfield and brownfield sites will be expected to retain, protect and enhance the integrity of the GI network and its connectivity. Within brownfield developments it is expected that key GI features such as Sustainable Drainage (SuDS), green roofs, green walls and biodiversity measures will be delivered wherever possible and integrated into the wider GI network. The delivery of GI should be measured against nationally approved standards. Building with Nature is one example of such a standard providing accreditation based on a specific framework of principles that assesses the quality, functionality and long-term management of GI as well as the additional value that a scheme may bring to the economy, sense of place or health and wellbeing.

8.10 The policy supports the Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Strategy⁽¹²⁾, which is informed by the Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Framework⁽¹³⁾. Together these documents identify the most appropriate actions (protect, enhance and/or restore) deemed necessary to maximise the multi-functional benefits of GI in those areas where this is most critical. In particular development should show how the site context and development proposals complement and enhance strategic GI networks.

11 Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Partnership (2012) Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Strategy.

12 The 'Worcestershire GI Strategy', prepared by the Worcestershire GI Partnership and endorsed by the SWCs, is a non-statutory county-wide guidance document which aims to direct and drive the delivery of GI in Worcestershire and inform relevant strategies and plans of partner organisations. The Strategy is available at <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/GI>

13 The Worcestershire GI Framework consists of a number of evidence documents and guidance notes which inform the Worcestershire GI Strategy. All documents are available at the above link.

8.11 The GI Environmental Character Areas (ECA) have been developed for Worcestershire ⁽¹⁴⁾. They are a synthesis of detailed evidence bases for each of the main GI attributes, including access and movement, landscape character, historic environment, blue infrastructure and biodiversity. They set an overall strategic approach for interventions within the areas based on the quality of the existing GI:

- Protect and enhance.
- Protect and restore.
- Restore and create.

8.12 Each ECA is also complemented by evidence highlighting overarching principle and primary objectives for each of the contributing GI characteristics. ECAs inform the appropriate provision of GI, including its type and functionality.

8.13 The current ECA analysis classifies urban areas as un-surveyed due to fragmented data availability. However, this does not mean that those urban areas do not have GI value. It is anticipated that GI evidence relating to urban areas will be reviewed in a future update to the ECAs.

8.14 The 'Worcestershire GI Strategy' promotes the GI Concept Plan / GI statement approach for sites that meet the threshold in criterion A above and seeks to promote collaborative working with developers. GI Concept Plans / Statements establish principles for development that identify key GI assets and opportunities for their protection and enhancement in line with the Worcestershire GI Strategy and NPPF including the ECA priorities.

8.15 Developers will be expected to prepare their schemes in accordance with GI Concept Plans approved by the Worcestershire GI Partnership (in consultation with the LPA) where they exist. Additionally, where one does not exist, developers for sites that qualify under Part A of SWDPR 4 will be expected to prepare their own GI Concept Plans/Statement in consultation with the LPA to demonstrate how their proposals will contribute to the successful delivery of GI. The exact format of the GI Concept Plan / Statement is not prescribed and it should be proportionate to the scale of the development. Consideration should be given to the wider site context, and how GI can link to existing green corridors and strategic green network sites.

8.16 The policy also requires that effective management arrangements are put in place and it is accepted that a range of mechanisms can be employed to deliver this requirement, whether it is through a management company, a community led scheme or the adoption of the GI by another organisation. Whichever approach is used, it should allow effective engagement of residents and others contributing to the management (directly or financially) over the effectiveness of the management regime and costs and dispute resolutions, although this should not provide a mechanism to revisit the GI Concept Plan / Statement.

8.17 Whilst clear evidence of viability will be considered as a reason for reducing the GI requirements, the delivery of GI in accordance with this policy has been tested for viability as part of the plan making process, and generally it is expected to be deliverable.

¹⁴ See Chapter 4 of 'Planning for a Multifunctional Green Infrastructure Framework in Worcestershire – Green Infrastructure Framework 2' (Worcestershire County Council, Natural England and the Forestry Commission England, 2012). For individual Environmental Character Areas (ECA) profiles see www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/download/84/environmental_character_areas.

Introduction

9.1 SWDPR 5 sets out the strategic approach to protecting and enhancing heritage assets and resources in line with the NPPF and Government guidance. The policy aims to present a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment and conserving important features and resources in a way that reflects their importance.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

9.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's intention that the historic environment should retain the high level of protection and is reiterated in terms of the SWDPR. Three elements are identified in conserving and enhancing the historic environment:

- Evidence should be up-to-date to assess the significance of assets;
- A positive strategy to conserve and enjoy the historic environment, especially heritage assets more at risk;
- In terms of decision making it is necessary to assess the significance and impact of proposals upon it.

9.3 The SWDPR continues to set out a strategic overarching policy, which is augmented by a separate policy with more detailed criteria to determine planning applications. In addition the importance of the historic environment is recognised throughout the plan broadly reflecting Historic England guidance. The policy review also accords with the NPPF by affording weight to a heritage asset regardless of whether substantial harm exists.

9.4 Question 9 (The Historic Environment) asked *"Do you support the proposed approach to protecting the historic environment (policies SWDP 6 and SWDP 24)?"* Representations to the Issues and Options were mainly supportive of the existing wording with a number of amendments suggested to bring in line with the revised NPPF. A number of representations made the point that more emphasis should be given to the importance of the setting of historic assets, especially when considering applications for new development. This response tended to relate to multiple site specific representations and that SWDP 6 criteria should be applied to allocating sites in the SWDPR. Finally it was felt that stronger reference should be made to non-designated heritage assets and specifically to ancient and veteran trees. Consideration has been given to these points in the proposed amendments to the policy set out below.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - Issues and Options Summary

9.5 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 5: Historic Environment

- A. **Development proposals should conserve and enhance heritage assets, including assets of potential archaeological interest, subject to the provisions of SWDPR 28. Their contribution to the setting and character of the landscape or townscape should be protected in order to sustain the historic quality, sense of place, environmental quality and economic vibrancy of south Worcestershire.**
- B. **Development proposals will be supported where they conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets, including their setting. In particular this applies to:**
 - i. **Designated heritage assets, i.e. listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens and registered battlefields, as well as non-designated heritage assets⁽¹⁵⁾.**

15 As identified in extant local lists and heritage assets recorded in Historic Environment Records

- ii. **The historic landscape including locally distinctive settlement patterns, field systems, woodlands, ancient and veteran trees and commons and historic farmsteads and small holdings.**
 - iii. **Designed landscapes, including parkland, gardens, cemeteries, churchyards, public parks, urban open spaces and industrial, military or institutional landscapes.**
 - iv. **Archaeological remains of all periods.**
 - v. **Historic transportation networks and infrastructure including roads and track ways, canals, river navigations, railways and their associated industries.**
 - vi. **The historic core of the cathedral city of Worcester, with its complex heritage of street and plot patterns, buildings, open spaces and archaeological remains, along with their settings and views of the city.**
 - vii. **The civic, religious and market cores of south Worcestershire's city, town and village fabric with their wide variety of building styles, materials and street and plot patterns.**
- C. **Development proposals will be supported where they conserve and enhance the historic environment in order to encourage tourism, inward investment and increase the vitality and attractiveness of their location. In particular the adaptive reuse of historic assets will be supported to achieve these objectives.**

Reasoned Justification

9.6 When considering development proposals SWDPR 5 should be read in conjunction with SWDPR 28 and any relevant neighbourhood plan.

9.7 South Worcestershire's historic environment is a valuable, finite and irreplaceable resource, which is central to the character and identity of the area. It has a crucial role in supporting sustainable development through enhancing the quality of life of those currently living in and visiting the area and for generations to come, as well as delivering wider economic benefits through tourism and uplift in related development benefits. In addition to designated assets, south Worcestershire possesses a wealth of heritage assets from various periods that are locally significant for their historic, archaeological, architectural, or artistic interest and a variety of building styles and materials. The informed management of this resource, based on up to date evidence, will benefit current and future generations, with its importance being recognised in legislation and policy.

9.8 Prehistoric and Romano-British settlement and ceremonial remains are widely distributed and often extensive in the Severn, Avon and Teme valleys, which also contain important *palaeoenvironmental* deposits. These are juxtaposed with prehistoric hill forts on the higher ground of the Malvern Hills and Bredon Hill. Some earlier settlements, including the major urban centre of Worcester, continued to develop through the medieval and post-medieval periods. The medieval period saw the development of the main market towns, followed by Malvern during the 19th century. Varying influences and uses include market functions, monastic and church ownership and the later development of spas.

9.9 The villages and hamlets are mostly of medieval or earlier origin. Many of them have surviving medieval assets, such as parish churches, moats, ponds and extensive earthworks. All are set within a landscape that is characterised by diverse and important historic field systems, punctuated by ancient and semi-natural woodlands, veteran trees, commons and historic parklands. Dispersed settlements and farmsteads dominate the west of the area, with nucleated villages and clustered farmsteads characteristic of the south-east. The rivers formed important transport action networks, linking with roads and tracks, 18th and 19th century canals and latterly the railways. These are described in further detail in part two of the South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD.

9.10 Designed landscapes include parks, both private and public, e.g. Croome Park; Fort Royal Park, Worcester; Priory Park Malvern and Lido Park Droitwich Spa. The Policies Map specifically identifies specifically conservation areas, registered parks and gardens and Scheduled Monuments. Others are identified in local lists (where they are in use) and Historic Environment Records. As well as landscape interest, these heritage assets have significant architectural and archaeological interest and often contain other monuments and memorials.

9.11 Proposals for development should have regard to the locally distinctive character of south Worcestershire and appropriate weight will be given to those characteristics identified when determining proposals. Neighbourhood plans, along with conservation area appraisals provide an additional layer of statutory policy and guidance that provides the ‘fine grain’ for decision making purposes. Historic Landscape Characterisation studies ⁽¹⁶⁾ have been produced for the county. These also provide an evidence base that can be used to inform assessments of local distinctiveness and the heritage value of historic landscapes and their associated heritage assets.



16 See Worcestershire County Council website for report: http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/downloads/file/4584/hlc_report

Introduction

10.1 SWDP 7 sets out the approach to the delivery of infrastructure across south Worcestershire in line with the requirements set within the NPPF and NPPG.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

10.2 The Issues and Options asked six questions seeking views about the best ways to assess development viability and secure funds from development to pay for the essential infrastructure required to support development.

10.3 Question 13 (Site Viability) asked in what circumstances should a viability assessment be required to support a planning application? There were 65 responses to this question, 3 blank responses, 1 duplicate response and 11 responses that were not relevant to the question as they were about the need for infrastructure funding rather than about the testing of development viability.

10.4 Responses from developers either challenged the need for a policy to specify in what circumstances a viability assessment might be required or thought that a viability assessment should be required if a developer considered a viability assessment was a material consideration in the determination of an application. Responses from local residents expressed concern that setting criteria for viability assessments would allow developers to avoid paying for essential infrastructure. Some responses from local residents sought viability assessments with all applications.

10.5 Suggestions of what circumstances might require a viability assessment to support a planning application included:

- Only for developments over suggested thresholds, e.g. 500 units.
- Only where there has been a significant and relevant change since the adoption of the plan.
- Only for windfall development proposals.
- Only if applications do not comply with relevant planning policies.

10.6 Question 14 (Viability Assessments) asked what methods should be used to assess the viability of allocated sites? There were 32 responses to this question, three responding no comment, and 15 responses were about other matters, e.g. the access arrangements for a potential site allocation, and were therefore not relevant. Six responses were in favour of using site typologies to assess the viability of allocated sites. One response was in favour of only using a typology approach to viability for sites of 500 or more dwellings. Two responses did not consider that a site typology or master plan approach to viability assessments would reduce the number of applications that will require a viability assessment. Two responses were opposed to using site typologies to assess the viability of allocated sites. Three responses in favour of every site being assessed for development viability. Five responses were in favour of assessing the viability of a masterplan for the delivery of a number sites. One response was requesting that neighbourhood plan policies should be included when assessing the viability of allocated sites.

10.7 Question 15 (Site Viability Thresholds) asked should there be a site threshold above which sites require a bespoke viability assessment rather than a typology or masterplan approach? There were 29 responses to this question, one was a no comment response. Seven responses did not agree there should be a site threshold above which sites require a bespoke viability assessment. 15 responses supported there being a site threshold above which sites require a bespoke viability assessment, with suggested site thresholds ranging from 10 to 500 dwellings.

10.8 Question 16 (Interventions) asked which tools or interventions could be used to ensure enough infrastructure is provided by development? There were 18 responses to this question. Suggestions included:

- Collect evidence to justify infrastructure requirements.

- Allocate sites that can be developed with low infrastructure costs.
- No need for any tools or interventions beyond Section 106 agreements, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) and the standard Development Management process.
- Agree Infrastructure Delivery Statements for each site allocation and make the delivery of the requirements of each Infrastructure Delivery Statement a condition of granting planning permission.

10.9 Question 17 (Review Mechanisms) asked when and how should a review mechanism be included in a planning obligation? There were 23 responses to this question, with one no comment response. Responses to when a review mechanism should be included in a planning obligation ranged from only when a developer has gone into receivership to at any time a developer requests a review.

10.10 Responses to how a review mechanism could be included in a planning obligation included:

- It should only be possible to review developer contributions on development sites of 500 homes or more.
- It should only be possible to review developer contributions on phased schemes or permissions with five or more years for implementation.
- Planning obligations that include a review mechanism should include a cap on the level of contributions that might be required.

10.11 Question 18 (Funding) asked two questions: *"Do you think the right scale and form of funding is available to support the delivery of the SWDPR?"* and *"Which alternative sources of funding or delivery mechanisms should be investigated?"*. There were 30 responses to this question, 1 no comment and 3 comments not relevant to this question.

10.12 In response to "is enough funding likely to be available to support the delivery of the SWDP Review?" there were five responses all from the same planning agent that thought enough funding was likely to be available and five responses from local residents and parish councils that did not think enough funding was likely to be available.

10.13 In response to "what alternative sources of funding or delivery should be investigated?" suggestions included:

- The Department for Education forward loan plan / fund.
- Ensure all residential development can pay the CIL.
- An amalgamation of public, private sector and national funding streams.
- As set out in the existing Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- Development should deliver more funding for infrastructure and less profit for developers and landowners.
- Homes England grant funding should be included in this list.
- Central Government should fund council house building.
- Government grants for homes and infrastructure.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

10.14 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 6: Infrastructure

- A. **The LPA will work closely with its partners, in particular the Worcestershire County Council, to bring forward the appropriate and proportionate infrastructure that is required in order to deliver the plan.**
- B. **Development will be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of infrastructure needed to make it sustainable.**
- C. **Where infrastructure is needed to support new development, the infrastructure must be operational no later than the appropriate phase of development for which it is needed.**
- D. **Where appropriate, planning obligations will be required to fund infrastructure projects that are directly related to specific development, particularly with regards to affordable housing, transport, green infrastructure, education health and other social infrastructure.**
- E. **The Community Infrastructure Levy will be used to address the cumulative impacts of infrastructure in an area.**

Reasoned Justification

10.15 The South Worcestershire Infrastructure Delivery Plan (SWIDP) was last published in July 2016 to inform the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), which was itself adopted in 2016, along with the associated Delivery Schedule. This was updated subsequently to support the implementation of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) by the SWCs in 2017.

10.16 The SWIDP 2016 is now being reviewed alongside the SWDP to take into account the following changes:

- Policy changes and strategy updated at the national and local levels.
- The levels of growth proposed in the SWDP Review and the future infrastructure requirements associated with this; and
- Broad updates on the infrastructure projects delivered or progressed since the SWIDP in 2016, where available.

10.17 The revised SWIDP contains information on the infrastructure requirements to support the plan and set out the quality and capacity and shortfalls of existing infrastructure in accordance with national policy and guidance. Additional infrastructure requirements for each allocated site are set out in the site specific policies contained in this plan, where applicable.

10.18 In addition to the allocated sites, 3 strategic housing sites are proposed as part of the Preferred Options:

- A new settlement at Worcestershire Parkway.
- A new settlement centred around Throckmorton Airfield.
- Rushwick Expanded Settlement.

10.19 For these areas, site specific SWIDP will be produced that set out the key infrastructure requirements for these sites and their triggers. It is expected that the locations and funding proposals for key infrastructure such as schools, new strategic routes, health facilities, recreation and new parks and local centres will be identified. The need for strategic contributions, e.g. off-site highway infrastructure, rail network and secondary education, will also be identified.

10.20 The IDP also supports the creation of cross-boundary strategic policies.

10.21 For those allocated sites where the SWIDP does not provide detailed policy guidance on infrastructure provision, a specific assessment of infrastructure requirements will need to be made when development proposals come forward. Reference should be made to the SWIDP, which will provide assistance in identifying infrastructure requirements for these sites. The assessment of infrastructure requirements is set out in Appendix A of the SWIDP.

10.22 The SWIDP has been prepared in close consultation with infrastructure providers, in particular Worcestershire County Council. The SWCs intend to explore a range of funding mechanisms in order to finance appropriate and proportionate infrastructure.

10.23 Going forward, in accordance with the CIL Regulations, the SWCs will prepare an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) from December 2020, setting out the anticipated funding from developers contributions and the choices SWCs have made about how these contributions will be used and any identified spending priorities. The statement will also identify whether the SWDPR intends to fund the proposed infrastructure, either wholly or partly, via CIL or planning obligation. The statement will be reviewed annually to ensure plans remain deliverable.

10.24 The SWCs are aware of recent updates (September 2019) to the NPPG and CIL Regulations in relation to planning obligations and the CIL and will seek to address any further updates pertaining to the plan-making process should they be required following the conclusion of the Preferred Options document.



Introduction

11.1 Where we live and work can have an impact on health and wellbeing, and an individual's actions to improve their lifestyle or health status are likely to be influenced by their environmental and socio-economic context. Planning for and promoting healthy developments and better living environments can help contribute to the improvement of the health and wellbeing of those who live in, work in or visit south Worcestershire.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

11.2 Option 30 (Health and Well Being) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Include a new policy for health and wellbeing that also links up with other relevant policies in the SWDPR"*, B: *"Include new health and wellbeing requirements in an already established policy, or policies, such as design and open spaces policies"* or C: *"Continue to rely on the Planning for Health SPD in its current form for guidance"*.

11.3 There were 63 responses received in total that related to Health and Wellbeing. The consultation resulted in 44 responses in support of Option A for a new policy for health and wellbeing which also links up with other relevant policies in the SWDPR. A further 5 responses supported both Options A and B, with Option B being *"Include new health and wellbeing requirements in an already established policy, or policies, such as design and open space policies"*. There were 3 responses that stated Option C: *"Continue to rely on the Planning for Health SPD in its current form for guidance"* as the preferred option. There were 5 responses that were either not supportive of a health and wellbeing policy or Health Impact Assessments, and 9 responses that were not discernible in their content or were based on other health and wellbeing related themes. Comments included:

- The development of fast food outlets should be limited;
- Healthcare provision and accessibility should be further improved;
- The plan should give added emphasis to the social element of sustainable development in order to address poor social mobility;
- The policy should be linked to the transport policy when encouraging and enabling Active Travel;
- A greater provision of and improvements to cyclepaths and footways that are also suitable for the disabled and baby strollers;
- Recognition of the role that cultural facilities can play in promoting healthy communities;
- Requirements to provide for health and wellbeing would have to be evidenced, justified and show they would not impact on viability and hinder the delivery of housing development;
- Linking the policy to the preservation of 'green space' and the role it has to play on social, environmental, health and wellbeing aspects of the community; and
- An updated policy should give greater weight to Health Impact Assessments.

11.4 The overarching outcome of the consultation was the preference for the SWC to introduce a new Health and Wellbeing policy into the SWDP (Option A).

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

11.5 The Sustainability Appraisal findings stated that a health and wellbeing policy would help the SWCs plan for the future needs of the ageing population, include provisions for reducing health inequalities, help combat obesity, provide new improved hospital and health services and enhance or increase access to green infrastructure across the plan.

11.6 Under Option A, the SA stated that a new and separate policy for health and wellbeing would be likely to help to ensure the SWCs could appropriately and effectively tackle many of the current health issues in the plan area. A separate policy would lead to a greater chance of the current challenges being resolved rather than having an integrated policy as proposed under Option B.

11.7 However, the SA stated that Option C would provide the most health and wellbeing benefits to new residents and was considered overall to be the best performing of the options.

11.8 The intention is to provide a new health and wellbeing policy as part of the SWDP review to provide policy hooks that give more planning weight to health and wellbeing issues. It is not the intention that the Health and Wellbeing SPD would not be updated. The SPD can be updated at a future date should circumstances change, i.e. following the update of the SWDP. It is therefore considered that contrary to the SA, Option A is considered to be the best option for health and wellbeing issues.

SWDPR 7: Health and Wellbeing

- A. Proposals for new development must consider the impact on, and provide opportunities to improve health and wellbeing. Proposals will not have a negative impact on health and wellbeing and will contribute towards building strong, vibrant and healthy communities and help to reduce health inequalities in south Worcestershire.**
- B. Development proposals will contribute to healthier communities and support health and social wellbeing. They will need to demonstrate that they are well designed to meet the needs of current and future communities, including children and young people, those living with disabilities and the ageing population. Support will be given to proposals that provide:**
 - i. A mix of housing, such as Lifetime Homes,⁽¹⁷⁾ to meet the needs of different groups in the community;**
 - ii. Dementia-friendly design, including streetscape and public realm;**
 - iii. Accessible open spaces, including appropriately sized and equipped play areas;**
 - iv. Community facilities and greenspaces, and the retention of existing provision, to help promote community cohesion and opportunities for active lifestyles and reduce isolation;**
 - v. A permeable environment that promotes active travel, such as walking and cycling, linking to local centres, schools and community facilities, to help reduce car dependency, and to facilitate community interaction;**
 - vi. Carefully and innovatively designed buildings to minimise public exposure to air and noise pollution sources and maximise energy efficiency and the use of renewable and low-carbon energy;**
 - vii. Green Infrastructure; and**
 - viii. Access to fresh food, for example through retention and provision of allotments, community orchards, fruit trees, local markets, and useable private amenity spaces.**
- C. Health Impact Assessments (HIA) will be required for certain development proposals, to demonstrate how the above priorities (as appropriate) will be delivered and how any negative and cumulative impacts will be addressed. A HIA must be undertaken on the following:**

¹⁷ Lifetime Homes are homes designed to incorporate 16 design criteria to support the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life.

- Residential development sites of 10 dwellings or more, or residential sites with an area of 0.5 ha or more.
- Non-residential developments for new or net additional floor space of 1,000 m² or more or non-residential development on sites of 1 ha or more.
- Any other proposals considered by the local planning authority to require a HIA.

D. Additionally, in order to identify whether a proposal requires a full HIA, a HIA screening assessment must be undertaken⁽¹⁸⁾ on proposals for, or changes of use to:

- Restaurants and cafes (A3 Use Class)
- Drinking establishments (A4 Use Class)
- Hot food takeaways (A5 Use Class)
- Residential institutions (C2 Use Class)
- Non-residential institutions (D1 Use Class)
- Leisure facilities (D2 Use Class)
- Betting shops and pay-day loan shops (Sui Generis)
- Any other relevant proposals considered by the local planning authority to require a HIA Screening assessment

Reasoned Justification

11.9 The SWCs have taken forward the NPPF health and wellbeing aspirations by embedding the principle of health and wellbeing throughout the SWDP, including its key objectives.

11.10 The Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for Worcestershire and the local health needs as set out in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) have been used to inform this policy. These documents show that health inequalities exist in south Worcestershire, with differences in health and wellbeing experienced by certain population groups. People in lower socio-economic groups are more likely to experience chronic ill-health and die earlier than those in higher socio-economic groups. South Worcestershire faces a number of health and wellbeing challenges associated with an ageing population and avoidable behaviours, such as physical inactivity or poor diet. Worcester, for example, has a higher proportion of younger people in comparison to Malvern Hills and Wychavon, where there are higher proportions of people aged 65+. These differences bring particular health issues that need to be planned for. As an example, there are currently 850,000 people with dementia in the UK, with numbers set to rise to over 1 million by 2025 and 2 million by 2051.

11.11 Health inequalities are preventable. Socio-economic inequalities result in increased morbidity and decreased life expectancy. Interventions to reduce inequality and improve health in more deprived neighbourhoods have the potential to save money for health care providers across people's entire lifetimes, despite the increased associated costs of longer life expectancies.

11.12 Proposals will encourage active travel and social interaction and minimise the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour. They will provide connectivity to local centres, health facilities, schools and community buildings, reducing car dependency. This can be achieved in part through innovative public realm design which prioritises people over motor traffic, allowing for convenient, safe and attractive routes, in particular for walking and cycling, whilst aiming to reduce car dependency and the associated pollutants to improve air quality and noise levels.

11.13 Places will be designed to provide opportunities for formal and informal recreation, supporting healthy living and social cohesion that serves all sections of the community.

¹⁸ Proposals not requiring planning permission, i.e. as set out under the Town and Country Planning General Permitted Development (England) Order are exempt from this process.

11.14 The incorporation of dementia-friendly design into proposals, including safe, well-lit and walkable routes connecting green spaces and local services, with seating areas provided in strategic places, will provide more opportunities for those living with dementia, helping them to continue their everyday lives as part of the community.

11.15 Proposals for dwellings will be designed to provide for a range of home types which cater for the needs of all, including opportunities to downsize, to allow for people to stay within their community as long as possible. Lifetime Homes is a guide that recommends design criteria that can be applied to new homes to ensure that they are accessible and inclusive.

11.16 The positioning of buildings and streets within a development can contribute to air pollution reduction through effective pollution dispersion techniques. Proposals should be designed to minimise public exposure to air pollution, e.g. by locating habitable rooms away from busy roads, or directing pollutants through well-sited vents or chimney stacks. Almost all buildings emit pollution caused by combustion in their heating, cooling or through electricity usage. Proposals should look to minimise air pollution by designing buildings to maximise energy efficiency and using low-polluting systems to meet the remaining energy demands.

11.17 The inclusion of Green Infrastructure (GI) in developments can provide health benefits, such as improvements in air quality, and the provision of opportunities for physical activity and social cohesion. Where appropriate, new community uses and greenspaces will be required as an integral part of developments, and existing community facilities and green spaces will be safeguarded. Shared use of community spaces will also be encouraged to improve social cohesion. Such spaces should be located where they are accessible by all reasonable sustainable modes of transport. Any new and improved health services and facilities should be in locations where they can be easily accessed using public transport, walking and cycling.

11.18 Planning applications and HIAs for hot food takeaways, drinking establishments and night clubs must be considered against the requirements of the SWDP retail and town centres policy. Proposals that include access to fresh food, for example through the retention, enhancement or provision of allotments, community orchards, fruit trees or local markets, and useable private amenity spaces, will be encouraged

11.19 Part B of the policy sets out the circumstances in which certain developments will need to demonstrate how they have specifically addressed the health and wellbeing points under part A through a Health Impact Assessment (HIA). Undertaking a HIA will ensure that the effects of a development on both health and health inequalities are considered and addressed during the planning process. HIAs will be assessed by the SWCs and as necessary in consultation with the Worcestershire County Council Directorate of Public Health and will be a material consideration in the planning application process.

11.20 Further guidance on how health and wellbeing can be taken into account, and how HIAs can be carried out, is included in the Planning for Health in South Worcestershire SPD.

Providing the Right Land and Buildings for Jobs

Introduction

12.1 These two policies replace SWDP 8: Providing the Right Land and Buildings for Jobs. The primary purpose of these policies is to ensure that businesses, including those in the food processing sector, can find the right premises to suit their needs. These policies support the site allocation policies which meet the objectively assessed need for additional employment space over the plan period. Businesses need the right premises if they are to be sustainable, this means a wide variety of premises that are in the right place, of the right size, at the right price and with different tenure options are required across south Worcestershire.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

12.2 The Issues and Options consultation asked two questions and posed two options about the provision of employment space in south Worcestershire.

12.3 Question 5 (Employment Land) asked if employment land should be allocated in accordance with past take up which has strongly favoured sites in Wychavon or be spread more evenly across the SWCs area? There were 72 responses to this question, six were blank, 13 were in favour of a better balance of employment land supply across south Worcestershire and seven were opposed to this. There was no clear support for any particular location for additional employment land suggested by respondents.

12.4 Option 5 (Employment Growth) asked *"Where should new employment be located?"*. There were 92 responses to this option, at least four of which were blank. Many responses supported more than one of the options. There were 28 responses in favour of locating new employment alongside the housing growth; 33 responses in favour of locating new employment near motorway junctions; 12 responses in favour of locating new employment along trunk road corridors; 16 responses in favour of locating new employment alongside existing employment sites; and 37 responses in favour of locating new employment near existing or new railway stations. There was one response opposed to locating new employment near motorway junctions, two responses opposed to locating new employment along trunk road corridors; and two responses opposed to locating new employment near to existing or new railway stations. These results are some what distorted by a number of identical response submitted by a planning agent on behalf of a number of clients.

12.5 Option 16 (Employment Growth) asked if the SWDP should protect strategic employment sites from development for non employment uses or protect all employment land from redevelopment for residential uses. There were 40 responses to this option; two blank responses, and one stating no comment. Ten responses supported protecting strategic employment sites and 14 responses supported protecting all employment land. Two responses supported both options. One response was opposed to both options.

12.6 Question 7 (Types and Sites of Premises) asked; if the types of premises identified in the Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) should be the basis for allocating sites for employment; If there is any difference in needs between urban and rural locations; and if there was anything the EDNA had missed. There were 28 responses to this question, 1 blank response and 1 no comment. Only eight responses agreed that the assessment of needs in the EDNA should be used as a basis for allocating sites. Six responses agreed that there is a difference in needs between urban and rural areas and only two responses directly responded to the question 'has the EDNA missed anything?'. One responding yes and one responding no. In addition one response considered the role of Hartlebury Trading Estate should be more explicitly recognised in the EDNA. Several responses wanted planning policy that delivers more space for start up and micro businesses and several responses thought all allocations should be adjacent to the primary road network. The case for removing Hartlebury Trading Estate from the West Midlands Green Belt was also made in one response.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

12.7 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options found with regard to Option 5 (where should new employment sites be located) that Option D was the most sustainable option and that Option E was generally neutral with some positive Sustainability Appraisal benefits. Options B and C potentially have negative

consequences for four of the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and are therefore the least sustainable of the five options. The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options found with regard to Option 16 (should existing employment sites be protected from redevelopment) that a combination of both options would be the most sustainable choice. Both options are neutral with regard to all the Sustainability Appraisal objectives but Option A is best for the economic objectives.

SWDPR 8: Providing the Right Land and Buildings for Jobs

- A. Allocated sites to meet the employment land requirements as evidenced by the South Worcestershire Economic Development Needs Assessment 2019 for B1, B2 and B8 uses are identified in policies SWDPR 49 to 55 inclusive.**
- B. The development of sites allocated in this plan for employment uses for alternative residential uses will not be supported between plan reviews. Where no progress to deliver sites allocated for employment has been made before a plan review the suitability and availability of the site will be re-considered alongside all other available sites and allocated sites may be removed from the plan where there is little or no prospect of sites being delivered for the allocated employment use.**
- C. Proposals for town centre uses on allocated employment sites will only be permitted if they are related in scale and use to the primary employment focus of the site, and would have no significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of any defined centre (see policy SWDPR 10).**
- D. To ensure businesses can start up, grow, and relocate within south Worcestershire applications for non B1, B2 or B8 uses within the strategic employment sites listed below and shown on the SWDP Policies Map will not be supported unless the applicant can demonstrate that there are no alternative or more suitable locations for the proposed use and that the continued use of the premises in the current use is unviable.**
- E. In other locations planning permission for the change of use of premises of over 500m² net floorspace, which are currently or were last used for employment purposes within the B1, B2 and / or B8 use classes, will be granted only where:**
 - i. It is demonstrated that the continued use of the premises, or their redevelopment for employment use, is not viable, through the provision of:**
 - Details of comprehensive marketing of the premises / land for employment uses for at least 12 months and appropriate to the prevailing market conditions⁽¹⁹⁾; and
 - A financial appraisal that demonstrates that redevelopment for any employment-generating use is unviable and is unlikely to achieve viability within five years; and
 - ii. The proposed use would be compatible with adjacent land uses and not prejudice the amenity, lawful operation, viability or future development of other businesses.**
- F. The Strategic Employment Sites are:**
 - Warndon Business Parks
 - Blackpole East and West and Cosgrove Close
 - Worcester Six Business Park
 - Malvern Hills Science Park and QinetiQ
 - Enigma Business Park and Spring Lane
 - Tenbury Business Park
 - Vale Park

19 Further details of the marketing requirements are set out in Annex B.

- **Hartlebury Trading Estate**
- **Stonebridge Cross**
- **North Pershore / Keytec**
- **Berry Hill**
- **Hampton Lovett**
- **Stockwood Business Park**

Reasoned Justification

12.8 Delivering continued economic prosperity is an important objective of the SWDPR. This policy reflects the ambition of the partner authorities and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to deliver a robust local economy in all parts of south Worcestershire.

12.9 The south Worcestershire economy exhibits high levels of economic and entrepreneurial activity. Its diversity ranges from traditional and marginal agricultural activities to high technology research and manufacturing businesses. These include a range of services, from call centres to sophisticated logistics and business service providers. The range of business premises in south Worcestershire reflects this diversity, from basic storage facilities in converted agricultural buildings through to modern, purpose-built business parks and manufacturing facilities.

12.10 The diversity of the local economy is characterised not only by a strong focus on employment opportunities within the main urban areas, but also on a number of employment areas and small businesses, including home-work or live / work arrangements, dispersed throughout the rural areas. Home working accounts for over 11% of all employment in south Worcestershire. There is a need to continue to diversify the local economy to create a wider employment base so that south Worcestershire is less vulnerable to international and national economic changes.

12.11 The 2019 South Worcestershire Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) indicates that the supply of traditional (B1, B2 and B8 uses) employment premises is constrained and this is impacting the ability of businesses to find premises that match their needs. Assuming the past rate of take up of new employment premises continues throughout the plan period then additional site allocations totalling 163 ha will be required. Any loss of existing or allocated employment land to non B use class development will increase the need for further site allocations to ensure the south Worcestershire economy is not held back due to a shortage of suitable premises that match the needs of local and relocating businesses.

Malvern Hills

12.12 The local economy of the district has relied upon both agriculture and the defence industry, both of which have declined in recent years. Improving the economic prospects for those living in the rural north and west of the district is especially important to the achievement of sustainable development objectives underpinning this plan. Malvern will play a crucial role in the delivery of the Worcestershire Industrial Strategy objectives because of its well established science and research base, including QinetiQ and the Malvern Hills Science Park and contributions to tourism.

12.13 The EDNA revealed evidence of businesses relocating out of Malvern Hills or having difficulty finding appropriate premises due to a lack of available premises in the district. Ensuring that there are sufficient sites and premises available in Malvern Hills will therefore support continued economic prosperity in the district.

Wychavon

12.14 Agriculture, horticulture, food processing and distribution remain a very important part of the local economy of Wychavon, particularly in the Vale of Evesham. Higher value and higher skilled jobs are concentrated at the business parks at Vale Park (Evesham), Keytec (Pershore) and Stonebridge Cross (Droitwich Spa). While

Wychavon does attract some of the highest earners in Worcestershire, securing employment sites to provide high-quality jobs for local residents remains a significant challenge. Many higher paid residents work from home or commute to locations outside the area.

12.15 Wychavon's central and accessible location makes it very attractive for many UK businesses. It has attracted several larger, land-consumptive operators in recent years. In order to continue to provide this role, it is important that the district has a range of appropriately located and sized employment sites.

Worcester

12.16 Worcester is the main sub-regional centre for public and professional services, which is the main reason why the city is a net importer of commuters. Worcester has economic activity levels that are higher than the national average. Worcester residents have higher than average earnings, but Worcester salaries are lower than the national average. The contradiction implied by these facts is the result of some residents commuting long distances, principally to Birmingham, the M42 Corridor and other centres with higher-paid jobs.

12.17 Historically, Worcester was a manufacturing centre and it retains a stock of older industrial / commercial premises. Much of the previously developed land is contaminated, reflecting its engineering past. More modern commercial property is located mainly on the northern edge of the city.

12.18 The loss of both existing and allocated employment sites which cannot be replaced by new site allocations to support employment within the city is a significant problem which is limiting the growth of local economic activity.

12.19 This particularly has an adverse impact on marginal sectors that cannot afford higher rents associated with newer premises. This leads to a loss of locally significant, low-value businesses and employment opportunities suitable for semi-skilled and unskilled workers, as businesses are forced to relocate to cheaper locations outside the city. If the past rate of employment floorspace losses in the city continues this will have an impact on the sustainability of the city, with residents forced to travel further to find basic services such as car repairs and builders' merchants.

South Worcestershire

12.20 The EDNA forecasts that south Worcestershire will experience an increase in manufacturing and health and social care employment over the next twenty years.

12.21 South Worcestershire benefits from tourism, given its high-quality setting, attractive natural and built environment, historic sites and major attractions and its links with famous people and products such as Worcester Cathedral, Royal Worcester Porcelain, Worcestershire Sauce, Morgan Cars and Edward Elgar. More than 10,000 local jobs are provided by tourism-related activities in south Worcestershire. SWDPR 39 provides policy guidance on tourism-related developments.

12.22 The majority of new employment provision in the plan (land and commercial premises) is within, or adjacent to, the main urban areas, including the proposed urban extensions, in order to provide opportunities to reduce commuting distances and to ensure workplaces are accessible by a range of travel modes. At the same time, accommodating and encouraging appropriate employment development in rural areas can help reduce commuting to urban areas and assist in establishing rural sustainability.

12.23 Existing employment areas have come under sustained pressure from other uses (including housing, retail and leisure), due to their higher land values, the absence of suitable sites elsewhere and the difficulties of accommodating certain uses within residential, town centre or rural areas. The pressure to change the use of existing employment premises to higher value uses is likely to continue and intensify. The continued loss of employment land will clearly harm south Worcestershire's sustainable growth ambitions. The EDNA did not identify a significant number of commercial premises or sites that were unsuitable for continued employment use. Strategic employment sites where the change of use of premises from B1, B2 and B8 to other uses will be resisted are shown on the Policies Map. In other locations Annex F provides guidance about what the authorities expect applicants to demonstrate in terms of the marketing of commercial property before consideration will be

given to an alternative use. Premises and land will usually be required to be marketed on both a freehold and leasehold basis. The timescales and range of the marketing exercise will need to have regard to the nature and scale of the site and buildings and the prevailing economic conditions. Existing levels of development in south Worcestershire's city and town centres means that it is very difficult to replace employment sites that are redeveloped for alternative uses. The SWDPR sets out both positive policies and employment land and retail allocations to address the economic and property-related issues described above.

12.24 Business activity and its associated development follow economic cycles that are shorter than this plan period. It will be necessary, therefore, to undertake regular five yearly reviews of the evidence base used to support the planning policies that promote the economic success of the plan area; this will ensure they remain robust and appropriate in often rapidly changing economic circumstances.

12.25 Proposals for other uses on allocated employment sites that clearly demonstrate the potential for job creation will be considered on their merits, provided that they do not undermine or constrain the main purpose of the employment allocation.

SWDPR 9: Non Allocated Employment Development

- A. Proposals for additional B1b, B1c, B2 or B8 floor space, or buildings for intensive horticultural uses within south Worcestershire other than on sites specifically allocated for these uses will be considered on their planning merits. A sequential approach to site selection should be followed for speculative development to meet general employment needs. Where development is to meet a specific business need it is recognised that this may be specific to the existing business location. Applicants however will still be expected to demonstrate that there is no suitable and / or available existing or allocated site or premises within the locality of the development proposal.**
- B. All such proposals will need to be thoroughly justified taking into account the economic and social benefits that would accrue from the proposed development and the impact it would have on the character of the local area and the local community.**
- C. Employment development proposals on non allocated should clearly demonstrate:**
 - Evidence of need for business uses and jobs to be provided in the locality and of the size proposed; and
 - That the location is appropriate for the intended use /occupier of the site, taking into account:
 - i. Physical and functional relationship of the site to the adjacent settlement;
 - ii. impact on the amenity of occupiers of neighbouring and nearby properties;
 - iii. Relationship to, and impact of traffic on, the local highway network;
 - iv. Scope to assess the site conveniently and safely on foot, by cycle and the availability of public transport services;
 - v. Scope to minimise the use of non-renewable resources and energy consumption; and
 - vi. Compliance with other relevant SWDPR policies.
- D. In granting permission, the LPA will remove Permitted Development Rights which would otherwise allow conversion of the development to non-business uses. The granting of permission for business uses under the provisions of this policy, irrespective of whether the permission is implemented, will in no way establish a principle in support of other forms of development on the site.**
- E. Buildings for intensive horticultural production will be conditioned to ensure the land is returned to agricultural use when the horticultural use ceases.**

Reasoned Justification

12.26 Over and above the need to meet the demand for new employment space there is also the need to try to reduce the amount of commuting out of the study area.

12.27 Evidence suggests however that there is a shortage of available and affordable 'sub-prime' employment land, e.g. 'second-hand' premises and premises of less than 20,000 sqft (and most particularly less than 10,000 sqft). The cause of this market failure appears to be two-fold: firstly, allocated employment sites coming forward for more profitable uses, e.g. retail, care homes and residential and Government policy driving the conversion of brownfield employment sites to housing. In relative terms, the south Worcestershire economy is strong, diverse and has low rates of unemployment. Importantly, unlike many areas in the UK, employment in the manufacturing sector is forecast to grow over the planning period. Also despite south Worcestershire having higher levels of NVQ4+ qualified residents there are fewer professional jobs than in other areas. This policy is seeking to remedy these imbalances by encouraging employment development on sites otherwise not identified for development. Permitting windfall employment sites will also encourage development directly by employment providers as opposed to site promoters who tend to sell land to the highest bidder.

12.28 The intensification of food production in rural areas will be increasingly important in order to provide on-going food security to a growing population. Furthermore, more intensive food production is a more efficient use of finite rural resources and can be one response to the challenges of climate change. Intensive horticultural uses may necessitate buildings for growing in rural locations. Modern horticultural techniques such as controlled environment agriculture and vertical farming require enclosed buildings. Therefore, there may be specific requirements for buildings for horticultural purposes in rural locations, in order for the rural economy to remain up to date with modern techniques and to continue to be prosperous.



Protection and Promotion of Centres and Local Shops

Introduction

12.29 This policy replaces SWDP 9 and SWDP 10 as the two policies cover planning for town centres. The primary purpose of this policy is to ensure that south Worcestershire's city and town centres remain at the heart of local communities with a range of leisure and retail uses that meet both the everyday needs of the local population and provide an attractive destination for visitors. The traditional retail function of High Streets is changing as a result of online retailing. While this is a difficult adjustment for many retailers resulting in some store closures it is likely that retailing in some form will remain the primary activity on south Worcestershire's High Streets.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

12.30 The Issues and Options consultation asked one question and set out three options about how best to secure positive changes in south Worcestershire's town centres.

12.31 Question 8 (Retail Centres) asked *"How can the retail function of our retail centres be best maintained?"* There were 24 responses to this question two of which were blank. Common themes in responses included access by both the car and public transport should be improved, exercising controls over the use of property that is beyond the scope of planning policy, changes to taxes and parking charges, and there should be more council support for start up and expanding retail businesses.

12.32 Option 19 (Vibrant Centres) asked *"How should retail centres change to meet the needs of south Worcestershire?"* There were 51 responses to this option, two blank and one no comment. Six responses were in favour of consolidating retail outlets in fewer streets. 21 responses were in favour of allocating surplus retail units for housing development. Nine responses were in favour of bringing out of town stores back into town centres. Nine responses were in favour of converting more retail units into cafes and restaurants. A number of responses were in favour of more than one option. Two responses opposed consolidating stores in fewer streets. Two responses opposed allocating surplus retail space for housing. One response opposed bringing out of town stores back into town centres. One response opposed converting more retail space into cafes and restaurants. A number of responses suggested that more development, housing and employment, should be allocated to town centre locations. Many responses considered that better and cheaper parking would help town centres.

12.33 Option 20 (High Street) asked how should the SWDP Review plan for the future of High Street? There were 37 responses to this option two blank responses and one response stating no comment. 11 responses supported increasing the range of activities planning policy allows in town centre premises. Four responses supported tightening planning controls to prevent changes of use in the most important town centre streets. Eight responses supported limiting the number of fast food outlets in all parts of south Worcestershire. Four responses supported only defining retail boundaries in town centres. Five responses supported encouraging café culture to replace traditional retail stores. Ten responses supported identifying specific locations for public realm improvements. Suggested locations for public realm improvements were, Church Street, Malvern. Between Friar Street and Salters Centre, Droitwich Spa. Evesham Conservation Area, Barnards Green and Malvern Link, Port Street Evesham, and Broadway High Street. One response was opposed to tightening controls for change of use in the most important streets, seeking to limit the number of fast food outlets and only defining the boundaries of town centres. Two further responses were also opposed to only defining the boundaries of town centres. One response was opposed to encouraging café culture.

12.34 Option 21 (Neighbourhood Centres) asked how planning policy could promote strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages outside of the main town centres? There were 30 Responses to this option two blank responses and one response stating no comment. Six responses were in favour of protecting ground floor retail uses. Ten responses were in favour of allowing the conversion of retail units to other uses including housing. Seven responses were in favour of controlling the range of uses in neighbourhood shopping areas so that single use does not dominate a centre. Two responses were opposed to allowing the conversion of retail

units to other uses. The majority of responses just supported one or more of the three options with no additional text and some of additional comments were contradictory or suggested changes which do not require local planning policies to implement.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

12.35 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options found with regard to Option 19 (how should retail centres change to meet the needs of south Worcestershire) that Option B was best when assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and Option D was marginally the least sustainable option when assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. Overall Option A was considered to be the most sustainable option.

12.36 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options found with regard to Option 20 (how best to plan for the future of High Streets) that Options A, B, D and E were best for the employment Sustainability Appraisal objective and Option C was best for the Health and Wellbeing objective. Overall the Sustainability Appraisal found that Options A and D were the most sustainable options.

12.37 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options found with regard to Option 21 (how best to promote strong neighbourhood centres) that Option B was marginally the best option when assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and that Option C supports the Health and Wellbeing, accessibility and employment objectives. Overall Option C was considered to be the most sustainable option.

SWDPR 10: City, Town and Local Centres

- A. **New retail, leisure and tourism development that contributes to achieving a high-quality sustainable network of urban and rural settlements will be supported. Retail and other town centre development should be of a scale appropriate to its location.**
- B. **Proposals for retail or leisure facilities within the city centre and town centres will need to demonstrate that they are:**
 - i. **Contributing to a comfortable, safe, attractive and accessible environment; and**
 - ii. **Making full use of the premises, avoiding vacant floors over shops and providing a separate entrance for leisure, office or residential use of upper floors.**

The Sequential Test

- C. **Applications for retail and leisure development outside the centres listed in the table below must demonstrate that:**
 - i. **The sequential test set out in the NPPF (paragraph 86), or any subsequent amended test in national planning policy for the consideration of retail and leisure development, has been satisfied;**
 - ii. **The scale of development is appropriate to the location, is consistent with the settlement hierarchy set out in SWDPR 2 and the development would have no significant adverse impact on the vitality and viability of any centre; and**
 - iii. **Access by all travel modes and particularly bus, cycle and walking is convenient and safe, taking into account any improvements provided or secured by the development.**

Local Retail Impact Test

- D. **To maintain the vitality and viability of the identified city and town centres the following thresholds will apply for a Retail Impact Assessment for proposals (including Bulky Goods to**

unrestricted A1 uses) that are not within an existing centre or in a location allocated for new retail development:

- Worcester, development proposals over 1,000 m².
- Droitwich, Evesham and Malvern, development proposals over 750 m².
- Pershore, development proposals over 500 m².
- Tenbury Wells and Upton-upon-Severn, development proposals over 250 m².

Change of Use Applications

- E. Within the city centre and town centres' Primary Shopping Areas, as shown on the Policies Map, change of use from retail (use class A1) beyond that allowed by the General Permitted Development Order or the extension of existing non-A1 uses into adjoining A1 premises at ground floor level will not be permitted.
- F. Outside of Primary Shopping Areas and within the city centre and town centres' boundaries, as shown on the Policies Map, change of use from retail (use class A1) to non-retail uses in classes, A3, A4, A5, D1, D2 will be permitted provided:
- i. The proposed use will not result in a continuous frontage of three or more non-A1 retail units (units are defined as a shop front width of about 6 m; larger units will be assessed in terms of unit length);
 - ii. The proposed will not result in the proportion of units in a street in A3, A4 and A5 use exceeding 30%; and
 - iii. A shop window will be retained at all times.

Retail Centres

- G. The following Retail Centres are shown on the Policies Map:

Table 2 – City, Town, District and Local Centres

City and Town Centres	Worcester, Droitwich Spa, Evesham, Great Malvern, Pershore, Tenbury Wells, Upton-upon-Severn
District Centres	Barnards Green, Malvern Link, St Johns
Local Centres	Barbourne, Brindley Road, Broadway, Canada Way, Cranham Drive, Dines Green, Ronkswood, SWDP45/1 (Worcester South)

- H. Where it would result in three or more non-A1 retail units in a row within the District and Local Centres listed in Table 2 above, in order to preserve the variety and vitality of the retail opportunities, the change of use of premises from A1, A2, or A3, uses will not be permitted where it would result in less than 50% of all units within the centre being in A1 use.

The Night Time Economy

- I. New, or extensions to existing, night time economy uses (drinking establishments and night clubs) will be supported provided they:
- i. Do not result in a clustering of dead frontages during the daytime;
 - ii. Do not, on their own, or cumulatively, result in an unacceptable impact on neighbouring occupiers by reason of disturbance, traffic or safety;

- iii. Do not, on their own, or cumulatively, result in an inappropriate balance of uses; and
- iv. Will not in the view of the West Mercia Crime Risk Manager increase levels of crime and disorder.

A5 Uses

- J. To maintain the variety and vitality of retail centres and to encourage healthy communities planning applications for new takeaway food outlets will be approved providing:
 - i. They will not result in two or more takeaway food outlets adjacent to each other; and
 - ii. They will not result in four or more takeaway food outlets within 400 m of the application site.
 - iii. These requirements are in addition to, the need for, and compliance with the findings of a Health Impact Assessment.

Smaller Scale Retail Facilities

- K. The change of use of village, neighbourhood and corner shops to non-retailing uses will only be permitted if there is an alternative equivalent facility within safe walking distance or evidence is presented that the premises are no longer viable for any retail or community use.
- L. Planning permission for new village and neighbourhood shops will be granted provided they are of an appropriate scale and it can be demonstrated that they will not have a significant adverse impact on the vitality or viability of any local centre.
- M. New or expanded farm shops, garden centres or petrol filling stations will be permitted provided:
 - i. They would not have a significant adverse impact on the viability or vitality of any defined centre or other local shopping facilities;
 - ii. In the case of farm shops, the proposal would make use of redundant or under-used buildings and the range of goods to be sold is restricted to foodstuffs, plants and rural craft products produced locally;
 - iii. In the case of garden centres, the site is accessible by walking, cycling and public transport;
 - iv. The creation of new, or extensions to existing garden centres or farm shops in the open countryside will only be permitted if the proposed development is ancillary to, and on the site of, an existing horticultural business or existing farming operation.

Reasoned Justification

12.38 The Government's fundamental objective for town centres is to promote their vitality and viability. The NPPF (paragraph 85) says LPA should, amongst other things:

- i. Define a network and hierarchy of centres and promote their long-term vitality and viability.
- ii. Define town centre and primary shopping area boundaries and set clear policies outlining which uses will be permitted in these locations.
- iii. Allocate a range of suitable town centre sites to match the need for retail, leisure, commercial, office, tourism, cultural and community development for at least the first ten years of the plan period.
- iv. Where suitable town centre sites are not available allocate edge of centre or other sites well connected to town centres to meet the scale and type of development likely to be needed.

12.39 Worcester, being the most extensive retail centre and highest in the national retail hierarchy, is the logical location for major leisure, office and retail developments and other uses that attract large numbers of people. Other centres are suitable for day-to-day food and non-food shopping, small-scale leisure uses and local service and facility provision.

12.40 Measures to secure the vitality and viability of the city centre and town centres as defined on the Policies Map (Worcester, Droitwich Spa, Evesham, Great Malvern, Pershore, Tenbury Wells and Upton-upon-Severn) could be set out in Supplementary Planning Documents, neighbourhood plans and Local Development Orders as appropriate. These measures will include environmental enhancements and activities that seek to improve the visitor experience.

12.41 The South Worcestershire Retail and Centres Study 2019 prepared by WYG indicates that:

- i. There is a theoretical need for an additional 10,800 m² of additional convenience goods floor space and 36,200 m² of comparison goods floor space over the plan period (2016 to 2041). In the first ten years of the plan period however, only Malvern town centre has a need for over 1,000 square metres of additional convenience goods floor space. Worcester 6,200 m² and Malvern 1,000 m² are the only centres with a need for additional comparison goods floor space in the first ten years of the plan period.
- ii. There is a need to review and revise town centre boundaries and primary shopping frontages as well as setting out primary shopping areas in response to the retail definitions changes set out in the NPPF.
- iii. The plan should include a differentiated retail impact test to reflect the diversity of centres within south Worcestershire.

The Retail Strategy

12.42 If Worcester is to maintain its sub-regional role within the area and attract south Worcestershire residents who might otherwise travel to Birmingham, Merry Hill or Cheltenham, it must be the focus for major retail development.

12.43 Major leisure and tourist attractions should be directed to existing centres where they can be easily accessed by most people and where alternatives to car use such as public transport are readily available. This is to ensure that these facilities do not contribute to an unsustainable growth in personal car use. However, tourism is important to the rural economy. Where location in the existing centres is not appropriate, tourism related proposals should be directed to rural settlements and locations accessible by a choice of means of transport (see SWDPR 39 for specific policy guidance on tourist development).

12.44 To retain the attractiveness of south Worcestershire's centres for visitors, investors and residents it is important that development proposals respect the character and environment of these centres. This should include any special historic, architectural and archaeological interest consistent with policies SWDPR 5 and SWDPR 28.

12.45 Successful centres need a balance of uses, e.g. shops, cafes, bars, restaurants and clubs to provide leisure opportunities throughout a full day. It is important that local amenity and safety is not compromised through an excess of evening and night time uses. Ensuring this will require investment in public realm and safety improvements by promoters. The SWCs will, through the South Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership and other city / town centre stakeholders, also continue to invest in their centres.

12.46 The provision of an additional retail development at Barnard's Green, Malvern is proposed (see SWDPR 55).

12.47 Satisfying the shopping and leisure needs of south Worcestershire residents close to their home or workplace will contribute to sustainable development and growth by retaining expenditure locally. Local shops and other services must be enhanced and past trends that have eroded local facilities reversed if the SWDP's objectives of reducing the causes of climate change, minimising the need to travel and protecting the environment are to be achieved.

12.48 These key objectives will be achieved by focusing retail development on existing centres in order to strengthen and where necessary regenerate them. Wherever possible, growth should be accommodated by more efficient use of land and buildings within existing centres. This approach will help maintain the historic character of town centres and provides opportunities to minimise the consumption of non-renewable resources by reusing existing buildings and reducing the need to travel to out-of-centre retail parks.

12.49 To support the sustainable development of town and local centres, it is important that full use is made of existing buildings. Residential, office or leisure uses on upper floors above retail premises increase footfall, provide passive surveillance and encourage investment that avoids the decline in the condition of premises.



Employment in Rural Areas

Introduction

12.50 This policy replaces SWDP12 and also includes the 'Live / Work' Policy which was previously set out in SWDP 8.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

12.51 The Issues and Options consultation included Option 18 about how best could planning policy support the rural economy and Option 17 about the best policy for live / work accommodation.

12.52 Option 17 (Live / Work Units) asked about the best policy option for live / work units. There were 43 Responses to this option, two blank, and one no comment. Nine responses favoured a policy that sets out detailed requirements for live / work units, five responses favoured only allowing live / work units in specific locations, 14 responses favoured a more relaxed policy that would encourage more applications for live / work units and six responses favoured having no specific policy for live / work units. The majority of responses suggested little understanding of what live / work units are with working from home options being confused with live / work accommodation.

12.53 Option 18 (The Rural Economy) asked 'how could planning policy best support the rural economy?'. There were 46 Responses to this option; two blank, one no comment. 16 responses favoured allocating appropriate sites in rural areas to diversify the rural economy and reduce the need to travel. Nine responses favoured relaxed planning rules to encourage the expansion of existing rural employment sites and larger farm diversification projects. Nine responses supported the inclusion of a specific policy for large scale horticultural development and eight responses supported the option of expanding rural business parks. Two responses were opposed to allocating sites in rural areas for employment. Five responses were opposed to relaxing planning rules for employment sites in rural areas and one response was opposed to expanding rural business parks. Many responses saw no need for employment opportunities in the rural parts of south Worcestershire and supported commuting as the best option to provide employment for rural residents of south Worcestershire.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

12.54 The Sustainability Appraisal of the Issues and Options found with regard to Option 17 (the provision of live / work units) that there was no difference between the options in meeting the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. Option C was considered to be the most sustainable option and Option D the least sustainable.

12.55 The Sustainability Appraisal of the SWDP Review issues and options found with regard to Option 18 (how best to provide employment opportunities in rural areas) that Option C is the best option when assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives and Options B and D are the least sustainable when assessed against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. Overall however the Sustainability Appraisal could not identify the most sustainable option and that any policy should be based on the particular needs of the rural areas in south Worcestershire.

SWDPR 11: Employment in Rural Areas

- A. To help promote rural regeneration across south Worcestershire, existing employment sites in rural areas that are currently or were last used for B1, B2, B8, tourism, leisure and / or recreation-related purposes will be safeguarded for employment-generating uses during the plan period.
- B. Proposals to diversify agricultural and other land-based rural businesses for employment, tourism, leisure and recreation uses will be permitted providing:

- i. **The proposed use does not detract from or prejudice the existing agricultural undertaking or its future operation;**
- ii. **The scale of activities associated with the proposed development is appropriate to the rural character of the area; and**
- iii. **Wherever possible existing buildings are used to reduce the need for additional built development.**

C. Proposals for live / work accommodation will be permitted providing:

- i. **They are located within or adjacent to a town or Category 1, 2 or 3 village.**
- ii. **The residential and employment floor space are combined in a single building and the residential use is ancillary with floor space split at least 60% employment and no more than 40% residential.**
- iii. **The residential accommodation does not exceed 100 m².**
- iv. **The residential and work spaces have separate entrances and separate toilet and kitchen facilities.**
- v. **Where viable, affordable housing, in accordance with SWDPR 14, is included within the development.**
- vi. **All units have access to superfast broadband or equivalent infrastructure.**
- vii. **Proposals for ten or more live / work units should include the provision for a shared business services hub, i.e. meeting rooms and basic office services.**
- viii. **The proposed use does not involve the sale of goods to visiting members of the public or fall within the A3, A4, A5, B2, C1, or C2 use classes.**

D. Where planning permission is required for the residential conversion of isolated rural buildings it will only be granted where a marketing exercise has shown that employment, tourism or leisure and recreation uses are unviable.

Reasoned Justification

12.56 South Worcestershire's economy is characterised by the dispersed location of a number of employment sites and small businesses, including home-working arrangements, throughout the rural areas. Within rural areas, agriculture, horticulture, food processing and distribution remain a vitally important part of the local economy, particularly in the Vale of Evesham and in the south and north-west of Malvern Hills. An important focal point for the strategy is the further improvement of the economic prospects for those living in the rural north and west of Malvern Hills, beyond the main employment centres.

12.57 Small rural businesses are likely to require freehold property, which is difficult to deliver speculatively in advance. The provision of new rural employment sites should be considered favourably during the plan period, provided it is not harmful to the integrity of the settlement or landscape character. It is important that such developments are offered on flexible terms.

12.58 In addition, employment sites that fall vacant should be actively marketed before their conversion to an alternative use such as residential and the consequent loss of a facility / service providing important local jobs. The timescales and range of the marketing exercise will need to have regard to the nature and scale of the site and buildings and the prevailing economic conditions.

12.59 There is a need to maintain a positive approach to farm diversification activities; such development should not, however, be permitted to jeopardise future agricultural production.

12.60 The provision of live / work units can help support small and start-up businesses as well as provide sustainability benefits particularly in the more rural parts of south Worcestershire. For example, live / work units may be a suitable use for redundant rural buildings and afford opportunities for farm diversification. However, policy criteria need to be set to ensure that proposals are genuinely intended for employment purposes. The

approved development may be controlled by planning conditions or a legal obligation governing the use of the premises and other relevant matters such as the number of non-resident employees who can work at the premises. The removal of permitted development rights for change of use of all or part of the premises or for residential extensions may also be considered appropriate.

Effective Use of Land

Introduction

13.1 This policy sets out how the SWCs will ensure that the development potential of land is maximised whilst ensuring that densities are appropriate to their context. It places an emphasis on prioritising brownfield land and affords protection to the best and most versatile agricultural land.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.2 Three of the Issues and Options consultation questions were relevant to this policy.

13.3 Option 6 (Density) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Identify areas of Worcester City that can accommodate higher density development"*, B: *"Identify further areas and / or specific sites for higher density development"* or C: *"Continue with the density policy in the adopted SWDP (SWDP 13)"*. There were 108 representations submitted to this option. 43 did not express a clear preference for a particular option. 32 supported identifying areas of Worcester which could accommodate higher density development; 18 supported identifying further sites which could accommodate higher densities and 23 supported continuing with the current policy. The key issues included the need for any policy on density to be in conformity with the NPPF requirements which have changed since the current SWDP policy was adopted. Furthermore the policy needs to recognise that density needs to respond to context and this differs significantly between urban and rural areas

13.4 Option 7 (Brownfield Land) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Maximise the reuse of brownfield land by allocating all available brownfield land including land outside of Development Boundaries"*, B: *"Allocate all deliverable brownfield sites within Development Boundaries"* or C: *"Only allocate brownfield land where sites can deliver all of the essential planning policy requirements, such as affordable housing and infrastructure contribution"*. There were 128 representations submitted to this option. 46 supported allocating all brownfield land including land beyond development boundaries; 28 supported allocating all brownfield land within development boundaries and 14 supported only allocating brownfield land that could deliver the full range of essential planning policy requirements. Some responses supported more than one option or a mix of options. The key issues raised were the desire to see brownfield sites developed before greenfield sites and the need for the approach to be in conformity with the NPPF. A number of representations also suggested that brownfield sites should be assessed for biodiversity value before they are allocated or developed.

13.5 Option 8 (Best and Most versatile Agricultural Land (BMVAL)) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Continue the current approach to resist development of 2 ha or more on the BMVAL in order to minimise the amount lost to development (SWDP 13h)"* or B: *"Allow the development of BMVAL in sustainable locations"*. There were 107 representations submitted to this option. The overwhelming response was in support of Option A and keeping with the approach in SWDP13. A number of the responses sought an even stricter stance on the loss of any BMVAL citing the strategic importance and land quality of this designation. Opposing view support for Option B was predominately from the development industry. The sector sought a more flexible approach to deliver housing supply and critical of SWDP 13 not being nonconformity with the framework as the NPPF does not set a threshold.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

Density

13.6 Option C (continue with the density requirement in the current SWDP) was identified as the best performing Option as it would place a higher proportion of new residents in close proximity to essential service, including health and educational facilities, public transport options and employment opportunities.

Brownfield Land

13.7 Option B (Allocate all deliverable brownfield sites within development boundaries) was identified as the best performing Option as it encourages the development on previously developed land which would help to decrease the loss of ecological and agriculturally important land and minimise the altering sensitive landscapes.

Best and Most versatile Agricultural Land

13.8 Option A (Continue the current approach to resit development of 2 ha or more on BMVAL in order to minimise the amount of land lost to development) has been identified as the best performing option, even though it is unlikely to give rise to any positive sustainability impacts.

SWDPR 12: Effective Use of Land

- A. To deliver places that are more sustainable, development will make the most effective and sustainable use of land, focusing on:**
- i. Housing density;**
 - ii. Reusing previously developed land; and**
 - iii. Making only exceptional use of the Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (BMVAL).**

Housing Density

- B. Housing development in south Worcestershire will make the most effective and efficient use of land, with housing density designed to enhance the character and quality of the local area, deliver net environmental gain and be commensurate with a viable scheme and infrastructure capacity.**
- C. Housing density will be greater on sites with a high level of accessibility, including sites located in or close to city and town centres, or close to public transport stations.**
- D. The form and density of housing will vary across larger sites, in response to current and future accessibility and other characteristics of each part of the site. Variations in density across a site should be used to develop different character areas.**
- E. Subject to parts B, C and D above, on sites allocated for housing or for mixed use that includes housing, the following broad indications of appropriate average net densities shall apply:**
- i. On sites within the city of Worcester and allocations for more than 100 new dwellings in Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Malvern, development should achieve a minimum net density of 40 dwellings / ha.**
 - ii. On sites within Worcester city centre and the town centres of Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Malvern, development of mainly flatted units should achieve an minimum net density of 75 dwellings / ha.**
 - iii. In Pershore, Tenbury Wells, Upton-upon-Severn and the villages, and on sites of less than 100 dwellings in Droitwich Spa, Evesham and Malvern outside their identified town centres, new development should be provided at a average net density of 30 dwellings / ha.**

- iv. In allocated new settlement(s) and urban extensions, densities will be determined through masterplanning and the development management process, subject to the overriding requirement that the number of dwellings indicated in the allocation policy for each new settlement or urban extension is achieved.
- v. Where urban extensions and other large developments abut open land or sensitive locations such as conservation areas, listed buildings, areas of archaeological interest or ecological / biodiversity value, their design should reflect the sensitivity of those areas. Development densities immediately adjacent to such areas should be adjusted downwards as appropriate to ensure that impact on them is minimised, whilst maintaining the overall average density of the site.

Windfall Sites

- F. Windfall housing developments should be assessed against the density criteria (criteria B, C, D and E above) relevant to their locality and the character of the built and natural environment context, including heritage assets.

Use of Brownfield Land (Previously Developed Land)

- G. The plan includes an indicative monitoring target of 20% of housing development in the plan period to be located on Brownfield Land.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

- H. Windfall development proposals which would result in the loss of more than two hectares of BMVAL will only be approved in exceptional circumstances and will be required to demonstrate that:
 - i. The proposed development cannot be reasonably accommodated on non-BMVAL; and
 - ii. The benefits of the development significantly outweigh the loss of BMVAL.
- I. In addition, the effect of the loss of BMVAL on farm economics and management will be considered. Where development would fragment farm holdings, planning permission will be granted only where mitigation is possible, e.g. the land can be incorporated into surrounding holdings and where there is no severance of agricultural buildings from the land.

Reasoned Justification

Residential Density

13.9 In line with the NPPF, the SWCs have set out their own approach to housing density to reflect local circumstances, these include minimum densities in those areas most accessible by public transport. The emphasis is on ensuring that developable land, which is a finite resource, is used effectively and efficiently to provide maximum flexibility in meeting local housing needs. In doing so, development should not adversely affect the character and appearance of existing cities, towns and villages.

13.10 Higher densities do not necessarily mean poor design or quality, for example, some older attractive parts of towns and villages are built to high densities. They can make development more sustainable by making more efficient use of land, concentrating development and bringing people, services and facilities closer together,

thereby reducing the need to travel. Higher densities can however lead to land uses and their occupiers being in closer proximity, which could generate adverse impacts such as noise and disturbance, loss of privacy, additional traffic movements and pressure on parking spaces.

13.11 Low densities do, however, mean that more land has to be used to deliver the housing needed, putting pressure on valuable and attractive countryside. A balance has to be struck between the two, but setting absolute density targets is not likely to be the most appropriate or effective way of achieving the best quality housing in all locations. This policy sets minimum densities in the town centres and areas where accessibility by public transport is best. A more flexible approach is taken outside of these areas to reflect the variation in character and existing density across south Worcestershire.

13.12 Evidence on local housing densities underpins the policy's minimum average net density levels. High levels of accessibility afforded by sites being located close to facilities and services in city and town centres, or near to public transport interchanges and high frequency public transport routes, justify higher densities in those locations. These levels are subject to the density criteria set out in the policy, which ensure the SWDP provides flexibility and responsiveness to local circumstances, including infrastructure capacity to support the development. Site density will be measured in terms of the number of dwellings per hectare, based on the net developable area.

13.13 It is important to consider the impact of development proposals on the character of the local area as well as the impact on the quality of new housing. Planning applications will need to demonstrate how the density of the surrounding area informs the scheme design and how the development proposal enhances the area.

13.14 The provision of 'soft' development edges and open space, landscaping and buffer areas can all be appropriate in helping to preserve the setting of adjacent sensitive locations such as conservation areas, listed buildings and areas of archaeological importance or biodiversity interest.

Use of Brownfield / Previously Developed Land

13.15 Development would not be refused planning permission simply because it is not on brownfield land, but the benefits of developing Brownfield sites will be taken into consideration when determining planning applications, in the context of other policy requirements in the Plan. The SWCs will monitor take up of Brownfield land against the target stated in criteria G above. The target set out reflects the fact that brownfield land can only meet a proportion of the development requirements and there is now a limited supply of brownfield land which is available for redevelopment. In each monitoring year the percentage of dwellings delivered on brownfield land varies. In the monitoring year 2017/18 24% of completions were on brownfield land. Around 10% of new allocations within the SWDP Review are on brownfield land. In addition to the new allocations, there are a number of allocations carried forward from the adopted SWDP and an expectation that there will be an element of windfall development taking place on brownfield land. Each of the SWC hold a brownfield land register which is reviewed and updated annually. These registers promote sites which already have planning consent or an allocation for residential development and can also be used to grant permission in principle on brownfield sites. The 'Call for Sites' did not identify any sites which would be suitable for inclusion on the brownfield land register, however, the registers will be kept up-to-date and where suitable sites are viable the SWCs will use the registers to facilitate development.

13.16 Consistent with the requirements of the NPPF, the policy focuses on the effective use of land by encouraging the reuse of land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value. This is also in line with the requirements of the 2005 UK Sustainable Development Strategy, which identified planning as being at the heart of sustainable development and reflected a desire to see the development of brownfield land before using previously undeveloped sites, as well as increased housing densities on development sites.

13.17 The effective use and reuse of accessible, available and environmentally acceptable brownfield land should be encouraged, taking into account the site's current biodiversity and local amenity value. Likewise, there may be opportunities to incorporate the historic environment into regenerated sites, subject to the policies for the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets.

13.18 Since June 2010, residential gardens are no longer included in the definition of Previously Developed (Brownfield) Land. For the purposes of five year supply calculations, windfall development now excludes development on residential gardens.

13.19 To deliver 20% of housing development in the plan period located on Brownfield land, the plan:

- a. Maximises the amount of allocations on previously developed land that is available or developable;
- b. Encourages the effective use and re-use of accessible, available and environmentally acceptable brownfield land; and
- c. Includes housing development as part of wider regeneration packages for the Worcester Opportunity Zones, where this does not undermine their ability to support local economic prosperity or the vitality and viability of Worcester city centre.

13.20 The allocated Opportunity Zones in Worcester are the main sources of Brownfield land, with significant capacity to bring about regeneration and accommodate new mixed-use development, but their regeneration will not be housing-led.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land (BMVAL)

13.21 Fertile soil is a strategic asset. Strategic issues relating to Climate Change and food security strengthen the need, wherever possible, to retain agricultural and horticultural capacity. It is therefore important to protect the most productive agricultural land. In identifying land to meet development needs that cannot be met through urban capacity, the SWCs were aware of the need to protect BMVAL. This was balanced against other environmental constraints, in order to meet plan objectives and remain consistent with the NPPF. Agricultural land will be necessarily lost to development, but this policy ensures the loss can be minimised.

13.22 The NPPF (paragraph 112) requires a LPA to take into account the economic and other benefits of BMVAL and minimise its loss to development. The NPPF does not set out an amount which would constitute a significant loss of BMVAL. Worcestershire has a total area of 174,051 hectares, 17.1% of which comprises Grades 4 and 5 agricultural land and non-agricultural and urban land which is non-BMVAL; 56% is Grade 3 but the proportion that is Grade 3b land is not quantified. In that context two hectares of BMV land is considered to be an appropriate threshold to further assess proposals. Development proposals will generate benefits depending on the nature of the use and its scale. Therefore, the scale and nature of the proposed use will be factors in determining the appropriate area to investigate, e.g. settlement, parish, district, for the consideration of reasonable non-BMVAL alternatives.

13.23 The policy sets out the circumstances when development on BMVAL will be permitted. If there is a choice between sites of different grades, the lowest grade should be used. However, there may be cases where, for example, lower grade land has greater biodiversity, landscape or heritage importance and should be retained in preference to higher grade land. Moreover, some losses can be mitigated. Planning for Soils in Worcestershire (2011) identifies options to protect Worcestershire's soils. This highlights the opportunity for mineral working to be returned to agricultural use through soil restoration. There are also opportunities for improving soil quality thereby achieving an upgrade of the land's Agricultural Land Classification to mitigate for BMVAL lost elsewhere to development.

13.24 The loss of BMVAL could affect the viability of an existing farm holding and put its future agricultural use at risk. In addition, such a loss could lead to the fragmentation of a farm holding into smaller units, thereby creating a demand for more farm buildings and potentially harming the landscape and nature conservation interests.

13.25 This does not apply to sites which are allocated in the SWDPR. The impact on BMVAL has already been assessed through the allocations process and will not be re examined when planning applications are submitted.

Market Housing Mix

Introduction

13.26 Prior to the introduction of the market housing mix policy in the SWDP, the development industry often failed to provide a range of sizes of market homes. The inclusion of the policy in the SWDP has helped to address this issue and the policy should be continued in the SWDPR to ensure that residential developments include an appropriate range of sizes of market housing to help meet the housing needs of communities as identified in the Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA). Other data sources will help determine the final mix such as neighbourhood plans, housing needs surveys and developer assessments. Wychavon and Malvern Hills will support the policy with the publication of a position statement on market housing mix to be updated when required.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.27 **Option 9** (Market Housing Mix) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Continue to require a specified mix of homes to meet the needs of particular types of households"*, B: *"Not include a policy setting out the housing mix required and leave it to market forces to determine what mix of housing is delivered"*, C: *"Identify specific sites for executive homes"*, and/or D: *"Remove the restrictions on subdividing existing homes"*? There were 116 representations submitted in response to Option 9. All options received some support, but support for Option C was limited with a number specifically objecting to it. Comments received included:

- Housing mix should be driven towards affordable housing, starter homes and suitable houses for ageing population;
- Advocate target or preferred mix rather than a blanket mix;
- Housing mix should be applicable to large sites only;
- Bungalows, ground floor apartments for the elderly, 1 and 2 bed apartments in blocks up to 5 storeys high, family houses, and lower cost properties should be encouraged;
- Policy should not specify housing mix;
- Policy has caused problems with viability and delayed decisions;
- Policy should be flexible - market signals, locational factors and viability;
- SWDPR should be able to identify specific sites for any particular type of development (for elderly, affordable and executive) where local need is identified;
- Plan should include a sufficient mix of sites in different locations to provide a wide range of opportunities to address the housing needs of different groups;
- Housing mix in the South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD should be updated to ensure weight is given to 1 and 2 bed properties;
- Policy should cover all 24 / 7 businesses near to housing to protect their amenity, particularly disturbance through party walls;
- Executive homes in some locations are appropriate;
- Executive homes appropriate for small and medium sized sites.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.28 The SA indicates support for Options A and D to help ensure the local needs for housing are met and to allow the subdivision of homes to provide more homes whilst reducing the need for new builds. Option B would make the provision of an appropriate mix uncertain and unlikely to meet the needs of local communities, whilst Option C may provide a boost to the local economy but may not meet the needs of current and future residents.

SWDPR 13: Market Housing Mix

- A. **All new residential developments of five or more units, having regard to location, site size and scheme viability, should contain a mix of types and sizes of market housing. The mix will be**

informed by the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment and, where available, by other local data, for example, neighbourhood plans, parish surveys, parish plans, latest council position statement and developers' assessments.

- B. Permission for the subdivision or multiple occupation of dwellings within Development Boundaries, including changes of use to hostels and guest houses, will be granted provided that:**
- i. **It does not lead to, or increase an existing over-concentration of such uses in the local area;**
 - ii. **The proposal makes adequate provision for parking, respects residential amenity of both the scheme residents and neighbouring occupiers and includes sufficient amenity space; and**
 - iii. **In the case of hostels, the property must be detached.**

Reasoned Justification

13.29 This policy is intended to secure the provision of market housing to support mixed and balanced communities and to ensure that a range of household demand and needs to continue to be accommodated. Policy SWDPR 14 deals separately with the mix, type and tenure of affordable housing. The NPPF requires LPAs to plan for a mix of housing based on evidence and to identify the size, type, tenure and range of housing that is required. If it is not possible to secure a mix of housing types, in terms of size, scale, density, tenure and cost that reflects the overall need, some households will be forced to satisfy their housing demand and needs beyond the plan area.

13.30 As household size in south Worcestershire continues to reduce⁽²⁰⁾, the SWCs are keen to ensure that sites of 5 dwellings or more continue to offer a range of market housing including for single, couple and smaller households. Prior to the adoption of the SWDP, many developers relied on the affordable housing element to meet the needs of these smaller households and built larger more executive style market homes, which led to the needs of many households in south Worcestershire not being adequately met.

13.31 South Worcestershire's housing needs have been assessed in the 2018 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA); this reveals that whilst the age profile of the West Midlands and England are very similar, south Worcestershire has an older population profile. In 2016, 22% of the south Worcestershire is estimated to have an old age dependency (OAD) ratio of 36; the size of the population aged 65+ is equivalent to 36% of its 15 - 64 age-group population in 2016. This compares to 28% and 29% for England and West Midlands respectively.

13.32 With 16% of its 2016 population in the 65+ age range and median age of 38, Worcester has the youngest population age profile. Worcester's OAD ratio of 25% is notably lower than that estimated for Wychavon (41%) and Malvern Hills (47%). Wychavon and Malvern Hills have older population age profiles than the county, region and national average, with 24% - 27% of the population in the 65+ age groups and a median range of 48 - 50⁽²¹⁾.

13.33 The ageing population of south Worcestershire indicates a continuing need to provide accommodation to help meet the needs of this sector, and this is covered by policy SWDPR 22.

13.34 Developers' assessments of market housing demand will also be taken into account in the consideration of an appropriate market housing mix, along with specific local needs assessments where these are available.

20 Change in average household size, local authority districts in England, 2014-2039 (Extract from MHCLG Live Tables, figures for 2014 and 2019) - Malvern Hills 2.23 to 2.20, Worcester City 2.30 to 2.27 and Wychavon 2.33 to 2.31 <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-household-projections>

21 Figures from Edge Analytics Report: South Worcestershire Demographic Forecasts and Analysis (June 2018)

13 Housing

13.35 There is an ongoing demand and need for a range of different forms of accommodation, such as bedsits and hostels, to be made available for students and other people with shorter-term housing needs. Much of this type of accommodation can and should be provided within Worcester, the new settlements and the main towns close to educational establishments and appropriate support services and facilities. In many cases the conversion of existing large dwellings offers an opportunity to do this. It will be important to consider each planning application for conversion to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO) against this policy in order to protect against the significant loss of large family housing, which itself forms part of the balanced housing mix throughout south Worcestershire⁽²²⁾, and to protect the amenities of local residents.

13.36 Hostels provide accommodation at a low cost for homeless people and other people in need. They are occupied differently to dwellings and houses in multiple occupation in that the occupants generally only stay at a hostel for short periods and the level of disturbance from hostels may be higher than expected for other types of accommodation. It is therefore considered that only detached dwellings should be converted to new hostels to avoid disturbance through shared party walls.



22 For the purposes of this policy, dwellings in use classes C4, mixed C3 / C4 and HMOs in *Sui Generis* will be considered to be HMOs.

Meeting Affordable Housing Needs

Introduction

13.37 The NPPF requires assessment of the size, type and tenure of housing for different groups in the community, including for those who require affordable housing. This policy sets out the thresholds and level of affordable housing to be sought from planning applications.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.38 **Option 10** (Affordable Housing) asked respondents *"should affordable housing beyond the 10% home ownership products promoted in the NPPF prioritise affordable homes for purchase, including share ownership, or prioritise affordable homes for rent?"* There were 94 representations made to this option, with support for and objection to both options. Other issues that were raised included:

- Affordable housing tenure should be agreed at pre-application stage for individual sites and should not be prescribed in the policy;
- Policy should recognise new affordable housing tenures in the NPPF;
- Affordable housing should be provided near to where it is required, e.g. Worcestershire Royal Hospital and other public service providers where it may be difficult to employ people because of high cost of housing;
- Government should allow councils to use reserve funds / borrow money to build housing for rent including supported housing schemes for mentally ill, ex-offenders and other groups;
- Policy should refer to the most up-to-date evidence of housing need in order to meet those needs;
- Policy should take account of site viability;
- Policy should allow flexibility dependent on site circumstances;
- The current 80:20 split is out of alignment with other authorities;
- Policy should be informed by a robust viability study that takes full account of cumulative burden of all other policy requirements, including on larger strategic sites where large amounts of new infrastructure may be required and on brownfield sites where mitigation requirements may be costly;
- Could have different affordable housing requirements in different localities;
- Discussions should be held with Registered Providers as sometimes at variance with Housing Officer;
- Plan should include specific allocations for affordable housing to tackle affordable crisis;
- Lack of affordable houses in AONB is a key issue;
- Disagree within national policy not to seek affordable housing on small sites;
- SWCs should publish how many losses to affordable housing stock;
- 10% affordable homes ownership policy should form part of the overall affordable homes provision for the site.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.39 It is uncertain if Option A or B would meet the specific needs of local residents looking for affordable homes for ownership or to rent. The needs of those wanting to buy or rent would be subject to their location and allocating only one type of affordable housing would be likely to result in the needs of some residents not being

met. Further assessments on the type of affordable housing required in various locations should be used to identify the specific affordable housing need. The sustainability performance of the SA objectives other than housing will depend on development location.

SWDPR 14: Meeting Affordable Housing Needs

- A. All new residential development⁽²³⁾, including conversions, above the thresholds in SWDPR 14 B (and adjacent land, if it could reasonably form part of a larger site) will contribute to the provision of affordable housing⁽²⁴⁾.
- B. The number, size, type, tenure and distribution of affordable dwellings to be provided will be subject to negotiation, dependent on recognised local housing need, specific site and location factors and development viability and having regard to the approach set out below:
 - i. Within Designated Rural Areas:
 - On sites of between 6 and 9 dwellings, 40% of units should be affordable on site; and
 - On sites of 5 dwellings or less, a financial contribution towards local affordable housing provision should be made, based on the cost of providing the equivalent in value to 20% of the units as affordable housing on site. The sum will be payable on completion of the development.
 - ii. Elsewhere, on sites of either 10 or more dwellings or 0.5 ha or more, 40% of the units should be affordable and be provided on site.
- C. Where a robust justification exists, off-site contributions may be accepted in lieu of on-site provision.
- D. Secure arrangements will need to be put in place to ensure that the affordable housing provided in accordance with this policy will remain affordable (or that the subsidy will be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision) and, for sites outside the city or towns, available to meet the needs of local people.
- E. The final tenure mix of the affordable housing on individual sites will be subject to negotiation. Generally the preference will be for social rented, unless for example a contribution from an alternative affordable housing tenure is required to achieve scheme viability or local need has been demonstrated for a different affordable housing tenure.
- F. Exceptionally and on windfall sites only where it has been demonstrated that the proportion of affordable housing sought by SWDPR 14 B would not be viable, the maximum proportion of affordable housing will be sought that does not undermine the development's viability. Financial viability assessments conforming to an agreed methodology will be required and, where necessary, the LPA will arrange for them to be independently appraised at the expense of the applicant.
- G. Further details of the manner on how the policy will be applied will be set out in an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

Reasoned Justification

13.40 The NPPF requires LPAs to assess the need for market and affordable housing and where there is a need for affordable housing, to set out policies for meeting this need. Annex 2 of the NPPF defines affordable housing as housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and / or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

23 In this policy, residential development means development within Use Class C3, as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order, 1987, as amended.

24 The definition of what constitutes affordable housing is given in the Glossary.

- a. Affordable housing for rent;
- b. Starter homes;
- c. Discounted market sales housing; or
- d. Other affordable routes to homes ownership.

13.41 The 2018 Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) states that affordable housing need has been modelled based on the parameters set out in NPPG. The analysis indicates a shortfall of around 391 affordable dwellings each year across south Worcestershire.

13.42 Evidence in the Viability Study (2019) undertaken for the SWCs suggests that 40% affordable housing on-site provision is viable on all strategic sites, all sites of 10 units or more (or sites of 0.5 ha or more) and on all sites within a Designated Rural Areas on sites of between 6 and 9 dwellings.

13.43 The viability study also confirms the viability for seeking 70% rented and 30% intermediate tenure; this amended proportion ⁽²⁵⁾ should more readily reflect the NPPF requirement for 10% affordable homes for ownership ⁽²⁶⁾ on major development ⁽²⁷⁾ sites.

13.44 The SHMA explains that the majority of need across south Worcestershire (87.1%) is for 1 and 2 bedroom affordable homes, with 10.2% of need for 3 bedroom homes and 2.7% for homes with 4 or more bedrooms. There is some degree of variation by district as shown in Table 1.5 of the SHMA.

13.45 An Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document will be provided. It will contain further detailed advice on how the policy will be applied, including levels of off-site contributions, the circumstances that may justify an off-site contribution, local connections and the procedures to be followed when a planning application is submitted.

13.46 The policy identifies a baseline level of affordable housing provision that local communities may choose to supplement on other sites, for example as part of their involvement in the neighbourhood planning process, or through the Rural Exception Site process (see SWDPR 18).



25 The SWDP sought 80:20 split.

26 As referenced by NPPF (paragraph 64).

27 Major Development Sites - for housing, development where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 ha or more.

Providing Opportunities for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding

Introduction

13.47 The SWCs each hold a Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register ([Malvern Hills](#), [Worcester City](#) and [Wychavon](#)). Individuals can enter their details on these registers if they are interested in Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding opportunities. The registers are split into two parts; part one is for those who have lived or worked within the local authority area for at least three years, whereas anyone who is over 18 and a British citizen or a national of a European Union state or Switzerland can be on part two of the register. The SWCs are required to take the demand of the registers into account when preparing the SWDPR. Across the SWCs there are currently (as of September 2019) 126 individuals registered on part one and 78 individuals registered on part two.

13.48 The SWDP did not include a specific policy on Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding and, consequently, planning applications were considered against the same planning policies as other types of market housing. Although planning permissions have been granted, it is suggested that a separate policy on Self-Build and Custom Build is likely to best support Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding in south Worcestershire.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.49 **Option 12** (Self and Custom Build Housing) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Require developers to offer a specified proportion of larger housing allocations as Self and Custom Build plots"*, B: *"Allocate sites specifically for Self and Custom Build housing"* or C: *"Not have a specific policy but rely upon the Development Management process for Self and Custom Build homes to come forward"*. There was support for and objection to all 3 options from respondents, and some considered that neighbourhood plans have a role in bringing forward Self-Build sites. Comments received included:

- Few people wanting a Self-Build plot would want one on a housing estate;
- Should be at the discretion of developer;
- Possibility of directing Self-Build to smaller sites, those less than 1 ha;
- Could result in a significant oversupply of plots, risking the delivery of identified housing needs;
- Need flexibility as Self-Build and Custom Build housing will not be appropriate or desirable in all locations;
- Require mechanism to enable Self-Build plots not brought forward within a specified time-frame to revert back to market housing as part of the wider scheme;
- Suggest allocate small Self-Build sites of between 5 and 10 dwellings;
- Criteria based policy for Development Management;
- Recommended completion date for Self-Build homes;
- Number of Register is misleading as many will not be able to finance a scheme;
- Should be encouraged as often better quality than volume housebuilder built homes.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.50 Option A would locate plots for Self-Build housing in large developments; this could potentially restrict the choice of location for those wishing to build a home. Under Option B, plots for Self-Build housing would be allocated on a site-by-site basis which could potentially help to ensure that the appropriate mixes are in the right locations, although those wishing to Self-Build would still be somewhat restricted to certain locations. Under Option C, it would be uncertain if the requirements for Self and Custom Build homes across south Worcestershire would be met. By having no policy under Option C, there would be a lack of certainty as to the availability of land for Self-Build homes across the plan area. The sustainability performance of the SA objectives other than housing will depend on development location.

13.51 Option B would provide a greater variation of locations available for Self-Build homes and would therefore be considered to be the best performing option.

SWDPR 15: Providing Opportunities for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding

- A. **Proposals of 20 dwellings or more will be expected to provide 5% of dwelling plots for sale as serviced Self or Custom Build plots unless demand identified on the LPA Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register, or other relevant evidence, demonstrates that there is a lower level of demand for plots.**

Reasoned Justification

13.52 The Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 (as amended by the Housing and Planning Act 2016) places a duty on the SWCs to keep a register of individuals, and associations of individuals, who wish to acquire serviced plots of land to bring forward Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding projects.

13.53 The Act also places a duty on the SWCs to give suitable development permission to enough suitable serviced plots of land to meet the demand for Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding in their area. The level of demand is established by reference to the number of entries added to part one of a local authorities register during a base period.

13.54 A serviced plot of land is a plot of land that either has access to a public highway and has connections for electricity, water and waste water, or in the opinion of a relevant authority, can be provided with access to those services within the duration of a development permission granted in relation to that land. For example, a plot of land alongside an existing public highway that is an infill between existing dwellings would count as being serviced. There is no expectation that services must be physically connected to the plot at the time of granting planning permission.

13.55 Previously, planning applications for Self and Custom Build plots were considered against the same planning policies as other types of market housing. Although planning permissions have been granted, it is suggested that a policy allowing for Self and Custom Build plots on sites of more than 20 dwellings is likely to best support Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding in south Worcestershire. It is acknowledged that several people on the register do not wish to be on a larger development but are looking for single plots or plots on small developments; the threshold is 20, so many new self build homes will be located on smaller sites. However, there is no requirement for the SWCs to provide plots tailored to meet the individual needs of those registered and the provision of isolated dwellings in the open countryside would be contrary to the NPPF (paragraph 79).

Residential Space and Access Standards

Introduction

13.56 LPAs have the option to set additional technical requirements which exceed the minimum standards required by Buildings Regulations in respect of access and water, and to apply the Nationally Described Space Standard⁽²⁸⁾. Evidence will be required to demonstrate whether there is a need for additional standards in the area, and to justify setting appropriate policies in the local plan. The standards, published in 2015, are nationally set but need to be adopted by an LPA within a local plan, such as the SWDPR, to be applied locally. The publication of standards was too late for them to be included within the current SWDP.

13.57 Part of the technical housing standards introduces the Nationally Described Space Standard which sets out a minimum floor space requirement for dwellings based on the number of bedrooms and the types of dwelling. It is not a Building Regulation, but a new form of planning standard. The SWDPR offers the opportunity to consider whether the standards are appropriate for south Worcestershire.

13.58 Where justified, LPAs can choose to apply enhanced accessibility or adaptability standards to dwellings, for example to help meet the needs of older people and people who use wheelchairs. Part M of the Building Regulations sets a distinction between wheelchair accessible (a home readily useable by a wheelchair user at the point of completion) and wheelchair adaptable (a home that can be easily adapted to meet the needs of a household including wheelchair users) dwellings.

13.59 Local plan policies should clearly state what proportion of dwellings should comply with the enhanced accessibility or adaptability standards. Wheelchair accessible standards can only be applied to dwellings where the local authority is responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that dwelling.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.60 Option 13 (Access Standards) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Seek to apply enhanced accessibility or adaptability standards to new dwellings, for example to help meet the needs of older people and people who use wheelchairs. If so, what proportion of new dwellings should the standard be applied to?"* or B: *"Not seek to apply the access standard to any new dwellings"*. There was support for and objection to both options from respondents, with comments received including:

- A range of percentages suggested from 5% to 100%;
- Uncertain of percentages of new dwellings should be applied to;
- Apply to a proportion of new dwellings that are suitable for older people and those who use wheelchairs based on an assessment of future need;
- Cost of wider internal doors and light switches at a lower level is negligible;
- Policy would make it easier for people with any disabilities to find suitable accommodation;
- Suggest a minimum number of bungalows within any new development, ensuring level access throughout;
- Would help 'future-proof' homes for all;
- Any additional standards should be evidenced and justified and in accordance with national policy;
- Specialist providers already adopt these standards through their developments, the SWDPR should adopt national standards;
- Adaptation should be designed at marginal cost, but expensive items should be left to be added later if required;
- Should rely on Building Regulations;
- All new homes are built to Building Regulation Part M, Category 11 standard;
- Roads and systems also need to be included for the access to get to properties;
- Should be in accordance with the NPPF and NPPG;
- Need to take into account impact on heritage buildings;

28 Nationally Described Space Standard - <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/technical-housing-standards-nationally-described-space-standard>

- Some developers will willingly adopt Building for Life standards as a marketing tool; and
- Some developers already work with Registered Providers in creating wheelchair accessible homes and with future residents to meet their accessibility needs.

13.61 Option 14 (Residential Space Standards) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Apply the Nationally Described Space Standard to all new dwellings including conversions of existing buildings"*, B: *"Only apply Nationally Described Space Standard to new dwellings which are not created by the conversion of existing buildings"* or C: *"Not seek to impose the Nationally Described Space Standard and instead allow the market to determine the size of new dwellings"*. There was support for and objection to all three options from respondents; comments received included:

- Everyone should have space for their belongings;
- The conversion of existing buildings may not be able to meet the standard;
- Should only apply to conversion to multiple occupancy;
- Cotswold District Council's adopted Local Plan (2011-2031) applies the Nationally Described Space Standard to all new dwellings;
- The National Standard should not be imposed due to the uncertainty of the political and economic climate;
- Would require more land to be used;
- Developers should not be burdened with increased space standards which could prove onerous and impinge the viability of some schemes;
- Housebuilders and specialist providers already adopt relevant and appropriate standards in their developments;
- Should apply to all tenures, otherwise problematic;
- Discuss with local developers and ensure a rigorous viability appraisal for the practical use of the policy will help deliver more and better quality housing, without impacting on delivery of affordable housing;
- Would need to test alongside any new density standards;
- Assess impact on viability of development and only introduce where its application can be justified, evidenced and suitable in line with national policy and guidance; and
- Lack of supporting evidence base research in the market to review the impact of National Described Space Standard on the housing market, and specifically when applied through a plan led approach.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.62 With regard to Option 13, Option A is considered to be the best performing option of adopting an enhanced accessibility or adaptability standard. This option would help to ensure that new dwellings are accessible for older people or those using wheelchairs, and support a more diverse and vibrant community. However, it is uncertain the proportion of new dwellings this standard would be applied to. Under Option B, if access standards were not applied, there would not be the provision of new dwellings with the accessibility some residents may require and would limit the choice of homes for new elderly residents across the Plan area.

13.63 With regard to Option 14, the SA considers that the minimum standards as set out in Option A would be the best performing option with the optimal standard of living for new residents with greatest amount of space to the greatest number of dwellings. However, there is uncertainty as to the residential space standards that should be implemented across the Plan area. Option B is considered likely to provide a better standard of living for residents of only some new dwellings, whilst Option C introduces uncertainty of the size of new dwellings with some perhaps not in line with the Nationally Described Space Standard. As such, it is uncertain if Option C would ensure a high standard of living in all new dwellings.

SWDPR 16: Residential Access Standards

- A. **On new housing developments of 20 or more dwellings, 20% of the market dwellings should meet the requirements of Building Regulations Part M4(2) dwelling standard (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings).**

- B. **On sites of 100 or more dwellings, 1% of the dwellings on site should meet the requirements of Building Regulations Part M4(3) dwellings standard (Wheelchair Use Dwellings).**
- C. **Exceptional circumstances will apply when a proposal has Listed Building constraints or site-specific factors such as vulnerability to flooding, site topography or other special circumstances which may make a specific site less suitable for M4(2) and M4(3) compliant dwellings.**
- D. **Where step-free access is not viable, neither of the optional requirements in Part M should be applied.**

Reasoned Justification

13.64 Previously, the Lifetime Homes standard set specific requirements in relation to access and adaptability. This standard has now been augmented by the introduction of the Government's new 'Accessibility and Wheelchair Housing Standards'. Two new higher standards have been introduced into Building Regulations; Part M (Volume 1)⁽²⁹⁾, updated on 1 October 2015, includes Category 1 (M4(1)) relating to the mandatory access standards (Visitable Dwellings). While the requirements set out in Category 2, M4(2) (Accessible and Adaptable Dwellings), and M4(3) (Wheelchair User Dwellings) are optional in the Building Regulations. Within Category 3, there is a differentiation between Wheelchair Adaptable Dwellings (M4(3)(2)(a)) and Wheelchair Accessible Dwellings (M4(3)(2)(b)). Any dwellings identified as needing to meet the policy requirement for any of these standards should have regard to this section of the Building Regulations.

13.65 South Worcestershire is an area of increasingly high populations of older people, with approximately 22% of residents aged 65 or more in 2016. This is both due to older people moving into the area, for example once they retire, as well as existing residents living longer. The new housing provided needs to be capable of being used effectively as people age and their needs change. The increased physical accessibility of housing is not just relevant to older people but to younger people too, including families with young children and those with specific needs. With south Worcestershire having an increasing elderly population, according to 2014-based household projections⁽³⁰⁾, the number of households headed by someone aged 60+ is expected to increase. Adopting an enhanced accessibility or accessibility standard would enable the SWCs to plan for homes to be adaptable for the changing needs of families and single people as their mobility decreased with age.

13.66 The plan-making process must test the impact that the standards will have on the viability of development within the area. The Viability Assessment Report concluded that there would be no impact on viability of schemes from the added optional standards.

13.67 National Planning Practice Guidance⁽³¹⁾ states that there should be provision of appropriate housing for people with disabilities, including specialist and supported housing, and is crucial in ensuring their independence. The Government's position is that older persons should remain at home rather than enter Use Class C2 residential facilities, where possible. This combination of factors shows the need for homes that are adaptable for a less mobile population.

13.68 The most recent data⁽³²⁾ from English Partnerships (2011-2012) show that nearly 30% of households have at least one person with a long term illness and over 3% have one or more wheelchair user. While nationally 3.3% of households have a wheelchair user, for households living in affordable housing it is 7.1%. The rates are

29 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/540330/BR_PDF_AD_M1_2015_with_2016_amendments_V3.pdf

30 ONS 2016-based Subnational population projections.

31 NPPG Paragraph: 017 Reference ID: 2a-017-20180220.

32 DCLG Guide to Available Disability Data

- https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/416475/150323_Guide_to_disability_data_final_web_version.pdf

also higher for older households and given that the number of older person households is likely to increase over the plan period, the proportion of households needing wheelchair friendly housing in the future is also likely to be higher.

SWDPR 17: Residential Space Standards

- A. Proposals for all new residential development (to include all tenures and conversions of existing buildings) should, as a minimum, meet the requirements of the Nationally Described Space Standard as set out in Annex C.**

Reasoned Justification

13.69 This standard deals with internal space within new dwellings and is suitable for application across all tenures. It sets out requirements for Gross Internal Area of new dwellings at a defined level of occupancy as well as floor areas and dimensions for key parts of the home, notably bedrooms, storage and floor to ceiling height (see Annex C).

13.70 All new housing development (C3 dwellings), including conversions, should meet or exceed the internal space standard set out in Annex C, to improve the quality of new homes for existing and future communities in south Worcestershire. The NPPF supports the use of the Nationally Described Space Standard in local plans where the need for an internal space standard can be justified.

13.71 The Viability Assessment Report concluded that there would be no impact on viability of schemes from the added optional standards.



Rural Exception Sites

Introduction

13.72 This policy was in the SWDP but not consulted upon as part of the Issues and Options consultation as it did not require major changes. The policy has been updated, for example to recognise the different types of affordable housing now referred to in the NPPF and Reasoned Justification modified to provide guidance as to the maximum size of Rural Exception Sites.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.73 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.74 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 18: Rural Exception Sites

- A. **Affordable housing⁽³³⁾ development will be permitted on small sites beyond, but reasonably adjacent to, the Development Boundaries⁽³⁴⁾ of villages where the following is demonstrated:**
- i. **There is a proven and as yet unmet local need, having regard to the latest South Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the Sub-regional Choice-based Letting Scheme and other local data, e.g. neighbourhood plan or parish survey;**
 - ii. **No other suitable and available sites exist within the Development Boundary of the settlement; and**
 - iii. **Secure arrangements exist to ensure the housing will remain affordable and available to meet the continuing needs of local people.**
- B. **Where viability for 100% affordable housing provision cannot be achieved, an element of market housing may be included within a rural exception scheme to provide sufficient cross-subsidy to facilitate the delivery of affordable homes. In such cases, additional supporting evidence in the form of an open book development appraisal will be required to be submitted for the proposal containing inputs assessed and verified by a Chartered Surveyor.**
- C. **Further details on the manner in which the policy will be implemented will be set out in an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.**

Reasoned Justification

13.75 The NPPF allows for the provision of affordable housing through Rural Exception Sites. These are additional housing sites that can be used to meet defined affordable housing needs in rural areas where up-to-date survey evidence shows that local need exists. This enables small sites to be used specifically for affordable housing in villages that would not normally be considered because, for example, they fall outside local plan Development Boundaries.

13.76 The policy refers to small sites, but this is not defined further in the policy because it is likely to depend upon the size of the village and the identified local need for affordable housing. However, it is recognised that NPPF (Footnote 33) suggests that entry-level exception sites should not be larger than 1 ha in size or exceed 5% of the

33 The definition of what constitutes affordable housing is given in Annex 2 of the NPPF.

34 There are some villages without a Development Boundary which nonetheless may be appropriate for an exception site in accordance with SWDPR 18. In such cases, the references in this policy to the Development Boundary should be understood as meaning the main built-up area of the village.

size of the existing settlement. It is considered that this is a reasonable approach to take for calculating the maximum size of Rural Exception Sites covered by this policy. Where the evidence shows an unmet need for fewer affordable dwellings than could be accommodated on the calculated maximum size, then it is the lesser evidenced number that will be used to determine the appropriate size of the scheme.

13.77 The policy requires that secure arrangements are agreed to ensure the housing will remain affordable and available to meet the continuing needs of local people. This is an important requirement for Rural Exception Sites and proposals where this is not clearly demonstrated will be resisted.

13.78 The NPPF allows for the inclusion of some market homes to facilitate sites coming forward to provide affordable housing to meet identified local needs. This policy recognises that and enables affordable housing on Rural Exception Sites to be cross-subsidised from the sale of market homes where, without this element of market housing, the site would not come forward for affordable housing. A viability assessment will be required to demonstrate this and the number of market homes permissible should be the minimum number required to ensure the site comes forward for the affordable homes.

13.79 It should be emphasised that Rural Exception Sites must meet local needs for affordable housing. In this context 'local need' for the purposes of policy criteria Ai means the parish and adjoining parishes. In terms of occupation of the properties, 'local connections' will be defined in the Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

Meeting the Needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Introduction

13.80 The Travellers and Travelling Showpeople policy includes how many Traveller pitches are required to meet the need identified in the latest Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (2019) for the first five years and over the longer term, where pitches will be allocated, and a list of criteria against which planning applications for new pitches and plots will be assessed.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.81 Question 6 (Meeting the Needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople) asked respondents if the SWCs should consider relaxing the criteria for the allocation of sites to meet the needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople, and also asked what planning criteria should be included to assist in the determination of whether sites are suitable for pitches for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

13.82 There was both support and opposition shown for relaxing the criteria; comments received included:

- Criteria may need to be changed or relaxed in order to bring forward more sites;
- May be appropriate to relax some policies for Travelling Showpeople sites, for example because of storage of large machinery, to allow development on greenfield land outside current Development Boundaries;
- Maintain the current criteria;
- Continue to consult with all parties concerned;
- Concern about a continuing lack of five year supply;
- Likely that sites further away from the towns and Category 1, 2 and 3 villages will need to be considered;
- Category 3 villages unsuitable for any additional housing development, including for Travellers;
- For large scale urban expansions, the policy should allow for the option of an off-site contribution in lieu of provision on-site which would contribute to the acquisition of a more suitably located site within the authority's area;
- Developers should provide the sites if allocated in the SWDPR;
- Policies should be formulated to address problems of poor living conditions on existing Gypsy and Traveller sites, including their redevelopment;
- Allocated sites should be distributed evenly across south Worcestershire, and not concentrated in specific locations; and
- Policy should clearly distinguish between Travellers and Travelling Showpeople as they are different communities.

13.83 There were also a number of suggestions made for planning criteria:

- Access to / impact on supporting infrastructure such as transport and other services, e.g. schooling, health and policing;
- Visual and environmental impact;
- Criteria must not be aligned with the criteria for other residential development types, and must allow for sites beyond Development Boundaries;
- Need to be genuinely travelling;
- They must conform to housing planning rules; and
- Impact any new development will have on the settled community.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.84 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 19: Meeting the Needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Provision for Travellers

- A. The LPA will identify and update annually a five year supply of deliverable pitches for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople in order to meet the local targets set out in Tables 3a and 3b (subject to subsequent reviews of the South Worcestershire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment). The LPA will identify sites in a Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD) unless sufficient sites can be identified through SWDPR 19 C.

Table 3a: Minimum Requirements for Permanent Traveller Pitches, Travelling Showpeople Plots and Transit Pitches 2019-2023* (source: South Worcestershire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, 2019)

District	Permanent Traveller Pitches	Permanent Travelling Showpeople Plots
Malvern Hills	15	7
Worcester City	1	0
Wychavon	14	0
South Worcestershire	30	7

*2019-2023 is the period from 1 January 2019 to 31 December 2023

Table 3b: Longer-term Requirements for Permanent Traveller Pitches and Travelling Showpeople Plots 2024 – 2041 (source: South Worcestershire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment, 2019)

	2024-2028		2029-2033		2034-2041	
	Traveller Pitches	Travelling Showpeople Plots	Traveller Pitches	Travelling Showpeople Plots	Traveller Pitches	Travelling Showpeople Plots
Malvern Hills	3	1	3	1	4	1
Worcester	1	0	1	0	2	0
Wychavon	16	0	18	0	26	0
Total	20	1	22	1	32	1

- B. Sites that have unrestricted planning permission for Traveller use are safeguarded for this use and only exceptionally will planning permission for alternative development or changes of use be permitted.

Traveller Provision on Large-scale New Developments

- C. The larger strategic sites shall each include a Traveller site of up to 10 pitches, to be sited within the allocation boundaries in the locations as defined through the masterplanning stage. Generally, sites in the Significant Gaps would not be appropriate unless exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated at the masterplanning and / or planning application stage.

Proposals for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Sites

- D. Proposals for new or intensification / expansion of existing Traveller sites will only be supported where the LPA is satisfied that the applicant / occupier is a Gypsy, Traveller or Travelling Showperson as defined in the Government's Planning Policy for Traveller Sites, and that:

For new sites:

- i. The site is within a SWDPR allocation or is within, or on the edge of⁽³⁵⁾, Worcester, a town or a Category 1, 2 or 3 settlement;

For all sites:

- ii. The site is not within an international or national⁽³⁶⁾ planning designation;
- iii. The site is within Flood Zone 1 and is not vulnerable to surface water flooding;
- iv. The site does not have any significant impact on local plan designations, such as Conservation Areas and Significant Gaps, or on sites of ecological or biodiversity interests that cannot be mitigated;
- v. There is no significant visual impact on the landscape that cannot be mitigated with the use of appropriate planting;
- vi. There is no significant impact, or cumulative impact, on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring properties that cannot be mitigated, but to avoid enclosing and separating the site so much that it hampers cohesion with the neighbouring settled community;
- vii. The size of the site and the number of pitches are of an appropriate scale for the location and do not dominate the nearest settled community;
- viii. The site has, or is capable of providing, safe and convenient access to the highway network including for turning and parking, vehicles towing caravans, emergency vehicles and servicing requirements, including waste collection;
- ix. The site has, or is capable of providing, adequate on-site services for water supply, mains electricity, sanitation, foul and surface water drainage and for the screened storage and collection of refuse, including recyclable materials. Sustainable Drainage Systems should be used where feasible. Where it is not possible to connect to a public sewer provision must be made for discharge to a package treatment plant or a sealed septic tank;
- x. On private sites there are no more than 10 pitches / plots on the site for ease of management and to provide a comfortable environment for residents, where individual pitches are clearly defined without 'enclosing' them with inappropriately high, close-boarded fencing. To accommodate a travelling lifestyle, each pitch on all sites should have sufficient space for at least one touring caravan in addition to a mobile home and sufficient space to accommodate vehicle parking and an amenity area;
- xi. Proposed amenity buildings or day rooms are the minimum size necessary to provide required facilities, be sensitively sited, and use sympathetic materials; and
- xii. External lighting is kept to a minimum.
- xiii. Sites for Travelling Showpeople must also be suitable for the storage, maintenance and testing of items of mobile equipment

³⁵ On the edge is defined as within 800m travelling distance of the city, a town or Category 1, 2 or 3 Development Boundary

³⁶ Examples of international designations include Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites. Examples of national designations include Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Green Belts, Sites of Specific Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves.

- E. Any planning permission will be subject to conditions relating to the number of pitches / plots and restricting occupancy to Gypsy and Traveller or Travelling Showpeople use.**

Reasoned Justification

13.85 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (2015) states that LPAs should set pitch targets for Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople that address the likely permanent and transit site accommodation needs of Travellers in their area, working collaboratively with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities. National planning policy also states that LPAs should set out criteria to provide a basis for the allocation of sites and identify sufficient deliverable pitches to provide a five year supply when measured against locally set targets.

13.86 The South Worcestershire Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA), published in 2019, identifies the need for additional Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots in the period between 2019 and 2041 as is set out in Table 3a.

13.87 The GTAA identifies an overall shortfall of 30 permanent Traveller pitches across south Worcestershire for the first 5 years in the period to 01/01/2024; a need for a minimum of 15 pitches in Malvern Hills, 1 pitch in Worcester and 14 pitches in Wychavon.

13.88 For Travelling Showpeople, the GTAA identifies a need for 7 plots across south Worcestershire in the period to 01/01/2024, all in Malvern Hills.

13.89 The GTAA identified a number of vacant pitches, particularly in Wychavon, and opportunities for the intensification for the intensification or limited expansion of a number of existing sites in Malvern Hills and Wychavon.

13.90 It is considered that sites for Traveller communities should be provided at the largest and most sustainable urban extensions. The precise locations of these sites will be identified through a masterplanning exercise. The sites in the urban extension will help address the need for pitches in Tables 3a and 3b.

13.91 The GTAA recommends that the SWCs assess the suitability of proposals and planning applications for smaller sites as they arise against criteria-based planning policies.

13.92 In relation to transit provision, the GTAA recommends that the local authorities continue with the Worcestershire negotiated stopping policy.

13.93 The GTAA indicates a desire amongst Travellers for a mixture of Council / Registered Social Landlord (RSL) managed sites and private sites.

13.94 The GTAA also identifies the likely longer-term requirement for pitches and plots, covering the period 2024 to 2041. The longer-term requirements, based on expected household formation rates, are set out in Table 3b.

13.95 The GTAA suggests a need for up to 20 Traveller pitches between 2024 and 2028, 22 pitches during 2029 to 2033 and 32 pitches during 2034 to 2041, with most of the need arising in Wychavon.

13.96 For Travelling Showpeople, the GTAA indicates a need for an additional 3 plots in Malvern Hills between 2024 and 2041.

13.97 The availability and delivery of Traveller pitches will be kept under review. Each SWC will maintain a rolling five year supply of deliverable pitches sufficient to provide five years' worth of pitches against the targets set out in Tables 3a and 3b (subject to Reasoned Justification paragraph 11 above).

13.98 Any proposals and planning applications for Traveller and transit sites will be considered by the LPA against the criteria outlined in SWDPR 19 D.

13 Housing

13.99 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites says that new Traveller site development in the open countryside that is away from existing settlements should be very strictly limited and that any sites in rural areas should respect the scale of, and not dominate the nearest settled community.

13.100 Planning Policy for Traveller Sites highlights the importance of good access to health services and schools to ensure that children can attend school on a regular basis. Policy SWDPR 19 aims to restrict new traveller sites that are located away from the more sustainable settlements, but this restriction does not apply to the expansion or intensification of existing Traveller sites.



Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside

Introduction

13.101 This policy has only been slightly modified from the original version in the SWDP to clarify criteria Ai. that the existing dwelling should have established use rights and in criteria Aiv. to add other public gain grounds in the list of reasons for an alternative position.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.102 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.103 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 20: Replacement Dwellings in the Open Countryside

- A. The replacement of an existing dwelling in the open countryside with another single dwelling will be permitted where:**
- i. **The existing dwelling has established use rights as a dwelling and is not a caravan, mobile home or subject to a temporary planning permission.**
 - ii. **It can be demonstrated that accommodation needs cannot be met through the alteration, extension and / or refurbishment of the existing dwelling.**
 - iii. **The replacement is not disproportionately larger than the existing dwelling and will not exceed the size of the original footprint by more than 30%.**
 - iv. **The proposed dwelling is positioned on the footprint of the existing dwelling, unless there is a better position for visual, landscape, highway safety, environmental or other public gain grounds to justify an alternative location within the existing curtilage.**
 - v. **The curtilage of the replacement building is no greater than that of the existing dwelling.**
 - vi. **The proposal includes the demolition of the dwelling to be replaced.**
 - vii. **Where the existing dwelling has been provided for agricultural purposes, a condition will be attached to ensure that the replacement dwelling can only be occupied by an agricultural worker once it has been built.**

Reasoned Justification

13.104 New development in the open countryside will be very limited and will relate mainly to exceptions, e.g. for new affordable housing where there is a proven need (Rural Exception Sites). This approach is in conformity with the NPPF, which seeks to direct new housing development to sustainable locations, in areas where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. However, there is also a need to consider the specific housing requirements of those who work in rural employment, such as agricultural, horticultural and forestry (referred to in SWDPR 21) and the replacement of existing dwellings in the countryside.

13.105 Replacement dwellings can help maintain the level of the existing housing stock, where properties are in poor repair, or not appropriate for current needs in terms of their design or size. However, the replacement of existing dwellings with much larger properties can affect the character of a rural area, especially in locations where traditional dwellings are smaller.

13 Housing

13.106 Under the General Permitted Development Order, extensions and external alterations to existing dwellings represent permitted development⁽³⁷⁾ under certain circumstances (up to the physical and locational limits set out in the Order). Thus, in order to make best use of the existing housing stock, applicants will need to demonstrate why an extension, alteration or refurbishment is not considered suitable and why a replacement dwelling is required.

13.107 For the purposes of this policy the dwelling to be replaced must have established use rights as a dwelling.

13.108 Proposals for replacement dwellings will not be permitted if they would conflict with policy SWDPR 32 Management of Flood Risk.

13.109 It is considered preferable wherever possible to retain existing dwellings, in particular where their design and location make an important contribution to the character of an area. Refurbishment is also encouraged as a sustainable use of existing resources. Although there is a desire to retain small homes to allow choice in rural areas, in reality, however small the dwellings are, they often do not provide choice because of their cost to buy. The main justification for retaining small dwellings is on design grounds. Larger new properties can adversely affect the character of an area as a result of their impact on landscape setting, design and amenity. A percentage approach to any increase in size of the dwelling is considered appropriate in order to reflect the dimensions and plot size of the dwelling that is being replaced, so any increase will be proportionate.



37 Not requiring planning permission.

Dwellings for Rural Workers

Introduction

13.110 The NPPF confirms that development of isolated homes in the countryside should be avoided but allows for rural workers dwellings where there is an essential need for someone to live permanently at their place of work in the countryside.

13.111 This policy has only been slightly modified from the original version in the SWDP to add a new criteria D about the removal of occupancy condition.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.112 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.113 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 21: Dwellings for Rural Workers

- A. **Proposals for permanent agricultural, horticultural, forestry and rural enterprise-related dwellings will be permitted provided that:**
 - i. The functional and economic tests contained in Annex D are met;
 - ii. No dwelling serving or closely associated with the holding has been sold or changed from residential use, or otherwise separated from the holding within the previous five years;
 - iii. The dwelling does not exceed 150 m² of net usable floorspace, unless a larger property is robustly justified;
 - iv. Where practical for its purpose, the dwelling is located close to existing buildings / dwellings, to minimise its visual and environmental impact; and
 - v. Planning conditions are imposed to control the occupancy of the dwelling to ensure that it cannot be sold on or sublet for general accommodation unrelated to the enterprise.
- B. **For a new agricultural, horticultural, forestry or other rural enterprise, a time-limited permission may be granted for a temporary dwelling, such as a mobile home or caravan, until the economic viability of the enterprise is established. Applications for such dwellings must meet the functional and economic tests contained in Annex D.**
- C. **Temporary or seasonal accommodation requirements to serve rural enterprises will be considered on a case-by-case basis, but will need to demonstrate that:**
 - i. There is a proven business case for the accommodation;
 - ii. There is no appropriate accommodation available in nearby settlements; and
 - iii. Impacts on local services, landscape and amenity are mitigated.
- D. **Generally, occupancy conditions will be retained on rural workers' dwellings, however, occasionally circumstances may have changed such that it is acceptable to remove the condition. The occupancy condition will be removed where:**
 - i. The dwelling is now located within a Development Boundary or housing allocation; or
 - ii. Evidence proves that the long term need for the dwelling in the locality has ceased.

Reasoned Justification

13.114 Dedicated housing for rural workers is still important to support agriculture, horticulture and rural occupations such as forestry, all of which help to sustain the rural economy.

New development in the countryside is strictly controlled. This has been the case in previous development plans in south Worcestershire and is also set out in national policy.

13.115 The NPPF (paragraphs 78-79) outlines the need to locate housing in rural areas where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. It also states that local planning authorities should avoid new, isolated homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances. The objective is to protect the countryside for its intrinsic character, natural beauty and resources for all to enjoy. New dwellings for those who can show an essential need to locate for work purposes in the open countryside will need to be justified to demonstrate that the dwelling will support an existing agricultural, forestry or other rural enterprise where it is essential that accommodation is provided on site. For new enterprises, temporary consent may be given for non-permanent dwellings such as a caravan, until the economic merits of the enterprise are established. Applications for dwellings to support agricultural enterprises will need to demonstrate they meet the functional and economic tests outlined in Annex D.

13.116 Any new dwelling should be carefully sited to minimise its impact on the landscape and its surroundings and should, wherever possible, be located close to existing buildings or other dwellings.

13.117 Rural workers' dwellings shall not exceed 150 m² of net useable floorspace (excluding garaging but including associated offices such as a farm office) unless it can be demonstrated through the submission of financial information that the associated holding can support a larger dwelling (see definition of net useable floorspace in the Glossary). Housing for temporary or seasonal workers is an issue that needs to be addressed from time to time; for example, where horticultural enterprises need to employ pickers or packers at different times of the year. This type of activity is important to the rural economy. However, accommodating such workers on or near the site can be difficult in open countryside locations. A solution may be to provide temporary accommodation in the form of mobile homes or caravans, but this is not always appropriate, especially if large numbers of people need to be housed. Each case should be considered on its merits, but with a recognition that such workers can contribute to local enterprises and the local economy.

13.118 This policy aims to ensure that rural dwellings are only permitted where there is a genuine long term need, however changes either in the physical surroundings to the dwelling (as described above) or in rural business practices may result in the dwelling no longer being required by rural workers. Although it is not appropriate for the dwellings to remain permanently vacant, applications for the removal of the condition will need to be carefully assessed in order to establish whether there is a continuing need for rural workers dwellings in the locality (not just on the specific holding). In such circumstances, planning applications should be accompanied by evidence that the long term need for the dwelling has ceased and that significant attempts have been made to sell or lease the property to persons who would satisfy the 'occupancy' condition – this should include an active and continuous marketing campaign for at least 12 months at a price that reflects the occupancy tie.

Meeting the Needs of Older Residents and Residents with Special Needs

Introduction

13.119 South Worcestershire is an area of increasingly high populations of older people, with approximately 22% of residents aged 65 or over in 2016. This is both due to older people moving into the area, e.g. once they retire, as well as existing residents living longer.

13.120 There are also residents whose reduced ability to carry out day to day activities impacts on their housing needs. People whose daily activities are limited significantly more likely to be in need of residential support, such as that provided by care homes, whilst others may simply require minor adaptations to their current housing or more accessible new housing.

13.121 It is essential that these groups are catered for with a range of housing options to enable them to access new housing that meets their needs, e.g. from bungalows to more specialist forms of accommodation.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.122 **Option 11** (Providing Housing for Older Residents) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: "Allocate certain sites specifically for accommodation for the older people", B: "Require strategic sites to deliver more accommodation for older residents such as retirement apartments or a care home" and / or C: "Restrict accommodation for older residents in locations which are less accessible by public transport and have limited services and facilities?" There were 76 representations submitted to this Option, with support for and objection to all three options. Comments received included:

- Market alone will not always provide for the needs of older people;
- Different providers will have different locational requirements depending upon the nature of the accommodation to be provided;
- Avoid less accessible locations;
- SWDPR need to examine further the ability of strategic sites to accommodate retirement apartments or care homes;
- Provision of sites for older housing provision should be left to market forces, avoid imposing targets or requirements on allocated sites;
- Encourage homes suitable for the elderly in the best locations, rather than restrict it in the worst;
- Need to avoid perverse incentives where developers provide nothing for the elderly, because they are developing in a less connected location;
- Should assess impact of an ageing population on housing need to establish, e.g. if a need to plan for specific accommodation for older people;
- Older people often wish to move into towns where there are more services and facilities available;
- Some older residents will prefer to remain in their own rural communities;
- Establish how accessibility via Building Regulations can help meet the needs of older people;
- The opportunity to better blend C2 and C3 use types of accommodation as well as creating opportunities for 'self-contained' accommodation on the ground floor of two storey homes; and
- Suggest all or a proportion of new homes should meet Lifetime Homes Standards.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.123 Overall, Option A was considered the best performing option as it would help to provide greater flexibility in the locations of housing for older residents across south Worcestershire. However, integrating Options A and C would be likely to result in the most sustainability benefits.

SWDPR 22: Meeting the Needs of Older Residents and Residents with Special Needs

- A. The provision of housing suitable for the needs of older people will be required on all allocated and windfall sites of five units or more as part of the market housing mix through policy SWDPR 13 and affordable housing mix through policy SWDPR 14.**
- B. Where housing for older people or residents with special needs falling into Class C2 of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) is proposed, permission will be granted provided that:**
 - i. There is an evidenced requirement for that type of accommodation;**
 - ii. It is designed to meet the particular requirements of residents with social, physical, mental and / or health care needs;**
 - iii. The scheme has good access to public transport, healthcare, shopping and other community facilities for residents, carers and their visitors; and**
 - iv. Where a mix of Uses Classes C2 and C3 is proposed on a single site, the affordable housing requirements of policy SWDPR 14 are met in respect of the C3 element.**

Reasoned Justification

13.124 South Worcestershire is an area of increasingly high populations of older people, with approximately 22% of residents aged 65 or over in 2016. This is both due to older people moving into the area, e.g. once they retire, as well as existing residents living longer. Older people range from those recently retire to the very elderly, and from those who are active to the very frail. Similarly, people with special needs vary from those whose ability to carry out day to day activities is virtually unrestricted to those where it is severely restricted. The 2011 Census revealed that between 11% and 18.5% of the population of south Worcestershire reported daily activity limitations.

13.125 The new housing provided needs to be capable of being used effectively by these two groups. A wide range of housing is required to meet their needs, e.g. from general need for flats, bungalows, smaller homes and larger homes, some of which will be built to allow future adaptations to enable people to remain within their homes, to more specialist provision, such as extra-care housing.

13.126 Most housing sites of five units or more can incorporate homes that can help to meet the general needs of these groups. The new settlements and larger urban extensions should also be able to provide a wider range of accommodation, including more specialist C2 use. Housing needs identified for older people or for residents with special needs will be delivered primarily in Worcester, the new settlements and the towns, but also in other sustainable locations with good access to public transport, healthcare, shopping and other community facilities.

Reuse of Rural Buildings

Introduction

13.127 This policy was not part of the 'Issues and Options' consultation and has subsequently arisen from discussions with the Development Management team post consultation, with the new policy based on such, and also previous local plan policy. The absence of such policy in the adopted SWDP regarding this type of development, considering the relative paragraphs in the NPPF and such applications received for development of this nature, has led to the inclusion of this policy.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.128 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.129 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 23: Reuse of Rural Buildings

- A. **The reuse, conversion, or change of use of, redundant or underused traditional rural buildings⁽³⁸⁾ and structures of architectural importance and / or heritage significance⁽³⁹⁾ for housing, employment, commercial use, or tourism (including visitor accommodation), recreation and community uses, will be supported outside of a defined development boundary providing:**
- i. **It can be demonstrated that the building(s) is (are) of credible and recognised architectural importance and / or heritage significance;**
 - ii. **It reuses a traditional rural building of permanent and substantial construction;**
 - iii. **The building(s) is (are) capable of conversion without the need for considerable extension, significant alteration, excessive rebuilding or full reconstruction;**
 - iv. **The proposal(s) is (are) of a high quality design, takes precedent from and has regard to (in as much as possible) the original design, features and materials that contribute to the architectural character and significance of the building and its surroundings;**
 - v. **There will be no adverse effect on the historical environment, the character of the landscape and its setting, and that any impact on local biodiversity, including protected habitats and species, can be significantly mitigated;**
 - vi. **There is existing adequate access, or where a new access is created it will not have an adverse effect on the area's rural character;**
 - vii. **It is compatible with neighbouring uses and does not detract from, or conflict with existing land uses including any existing and continued agricultural operation; and**
 - viii. **That the building can be serviced by existing utilities or where the provision of new utilities are necessary, provision can be achieved without resulting in an adverse effect on the area's rural character.**
- B. **Where there is a loss of employment space, the applicant is required to demonstrate that the existing use is no longer viable and that the site has been actively marketed for employment (or tourism, leisure or recreational purposes where applicable) for a period of at least 12 months inline with the marketing exercise outlined in Annex B.**

38 Traditional - of an age and / or style, and constructed from materials and methods that are not considered to be present or part of recent history.

39 Architectural importance / heritage significance - A quality of being worthy of attention; importance. For example; a cruck framed barn; a structure of an age that denotes listing; or similarly, intricate features of construction or material use that is not standard practice. NPPF Annex 2: Glossary.

- C. When granting permission for development under this policy, the LPA will remove any permitted development rights, where appropriate, that would normally apply to the building and its curtilage for future alterations, extensions, and other development.**
- D. Where the development of a cluster of rural buildings is proposed, the development will require support from and adhere to more specific SWDP housing policies. In this instance, development of a site cannot see the construction of any new buildings to accommodate any of the planning uses that are provided within this policy unless supported by other policies.**

Reasoned Justification

13.130 The primary purpose of this policy is to maintain and protect the rural landscape and character of south Worcestershire whilst recognising the need for, and allowing the sensitive conversion of traditional rural buildings and heritage assets⁽⁴⁰⁾ into a more suitable use.

13.131 South Worcestershire contains a considerable range of rural buildings which contribute to the districts architectural and cultural heritage. These buildings were predominantly erected for agricultural purposes. Their age, character, form and quality varies, but the changing nature of the rural economy and the demands of agriculture means that many of these buildings are no longer required for their original use or suited to modern farming practices.

13.132 Rural buildings are periodically situated within the development boundaries of villages and settlements, and in these instances are required to adhere to relevant policies and planning legislation. The majority, however are situated within the open countryside of which this policy is pertinent. They may be single buildings or grouped together in farmsteads or other clusters.

13.133 Traditional agricultural buildings are important features within the rural landscape and therefore conversion to a residential, employment, commercial, tourism or leisure and recreational use may be the best option to ensure their retention and preservation.

13.134 When an application for the reuse of a rural building to an employment or commercial use is made, the criterion within this policy will require adherence in conjunction with SWDPR 9 Rural Employment Exception Sites and SWDPR 11 Employment in Rural Areas.

13.135 When an application for the re-use of a rural building to a tourism, leisure or recreational use is made, the criterion within this policy will require adherence in conjunction with the relevant tourism and leisure policies.

13.136 In accordance with the NPPF⁽⁴¹⁾, development of this nature is encouraged in certain circumstances, whereby this policy elaborates on which and defines specific criteria that is required to achieve sustainable development.

13.137 A number of rural buildings may be listed, nationally or locally, as being of special architectural or historic interest or may fall within the curtilage of a listed building and benefit from the same significance. For example, a heritage asset or architecturally significant building may be of an age signifying listing; or of a style representing a bygone architectural vernacular or period; or constructed using an archaic method; or from materials no longer prevalent; and is therefore the type of building the policy aims to protect and preserve, or provide for its continued use.

13.138 To be considered for re-use, buildings should originally have been built with four walls⁽⁴²⁾ which are substantially complete. Generally, to be of substantial construction a traditional rural building should either have masonry, brick, or be half-timbered construction with a traditional finish and have a slate, stone, tile, or thatched roof. Modern rural buildings or prefabricated structures will not be considered for reuse unless it can be

40 NPPF (2019) Annex 2: Glossary.

41 NPPF (paragraph 79).

42 Not all rural buildings are of a conventional shape, for example; *circular grain silos, icehouses, dovecotes*, but will be considered for reuse as part of this policy.

demonstrated that the building is of architectural significance. Evidence is required to demonstrate that the building is structurally sound and capable of conversion without the need for excessive rebuilding. This will usually take the form of a full structural survey.

13.139 In the interest of clarity, rebuilding means the substantial replacement of parts of the original structure; whilst extension and alteration involve changes to the original structure. The extent of which will be considered excessive will vary depending on the scale and type of building affected and extent of proposed works. Limited rebuilding is acceptable, however when a significant part of the original building has been removed, rebuilding will not usually be acceptable. To benefit historic conservation, a greater degree of rebuilding may be allowed where necessary, e.g. to maintain important characteristics of the existing building. A separate application for Listed Building Consent will be required where works are proposed to a listed building or building within the curtilage of a listed building.

13.140 The intention of the policy is to bring back into use rural buildings of notable architectural quality. Therefore, it is paramount that these qualities are demonstrated in the end product. The juxtaposition of modern design is encouraged. However, it is prevalent that the design does not detract from the original features that provide the building's architectural merit.

Extensions to Residential Curtilage

Introduction

13.141 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation and has subsequently arisen from discussions with the Development Management team post consultation, with the new policy based on such, and other authorities development plan policies. The inclusion of this new policy will guide applicants, agents and decision makers on applications for extensions to residential curtilages, i.e. gardens.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

13.142 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

13.143 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 24: Extensions to Residential Curtilage

- A. Proposals to extend residential curtilages within the rural settlements and open countryside will be supported providing:**
- i. **There is no detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the settlement or the rural area;**
 - ii. **There is no adverse affect on the privacy and amenity of neighbouring properties and their occupiers;**
 - iii. **It does not detract from, or conflict with, neighbouring land uses; and**
 - iv. **There is no detrimental impact on existing heritage, ecology, and landscape features⁽⁴³⁾.**
- B. Extensions to residential curtilages will be resisted in the Green Belt, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and where the extension would see the loss of Protected Open Space (in part or full), unless supported by other relevant policies.**
- C. When granting permission to extend a residential curtilage the LPA, where appropriate, will remove permitted development rights that would normally apply to the curtilage.**

Reasoned Justification

13.144 Planning permission is required to change the use of non-residential land to garden land. Proposals for the extension to residential curtilages can arise if adjacent land, which is not in residential use, becomes available. The change of use of land to residential can, however, appear prominent or incongruous in the locality or result in the erosion of the quality of the landscape. Significant effects on the appearance and character of the area and the landscape may arise particularly when domestic paraphernalia, e.g. sheds, play equipment, landscaping and fencing are added.

13.145 In settlements, extensions to residential curtilages can also adversely affect the traditional and historic layout and character of villages.

13.146 If the proposed extension would include a site, or part of a site, containing features of significant nature and / or conservation importance, the need to protect these features will take precedence over the need for extension to domestic curtilage and will likely result in development refusal.

⁴³ To include (but not limited to): open spaces, conservation areas, listed buildings, SSSI, wildlife areas, bio-diversity, trees or other landscape features.

13.147 Proposals for garden extensions should avoid significantly reducing substantial gaps between dwellings because these gaps are essential in order to maintain the open character of the countryside.

Design

Introduction

14.1 The NPPF (paragraph 124) continues to place great emphasis on delivering high quality design based on a process of understanding and interpreting well established design principles which set out a clear vision and expectations to provide certainty as to what will be acceptable. The policy looks further than just the design of individual buildings, but also aspects of urban design and creating new areas where people live, work and spend their time to ensure they become valued places for residents and visitors alike. The policy is now supported by the South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD adopted in 2018, and will in due course be accompanied by a further SPD that will provide an assessment of the character and local distinctiveness of south Worcestershire that together will help to inform quality design outcomes from the SWDPR.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

14.2 **Option 25** (Design Policy) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Continue with the adopted design policy (SWDP 21) which sets out a number of requirements which developments should meet"*, B: *"Require all new housing development to achieve Building for Life requirements"*, C: *"Identify strategic sites and locations and include masterplanning and design codes for them within the SWDPR"* or D: *"Identify strategic sites for which masterplans and design codes will be prepared as Supplementary Planning Documents once the Plan is adopted"*.

14.3 A total of 81 responses were provided to the options on design policy which covered continuing with the current policy wording; a requirement for Building for Life 12 on all new residential development; master planning and design codes for strategic sites; or prepare masterplans and design codes once the local plan is adopted. The NPPF requires design considerations to be an iterative process throughout the development of a scheme and this should be reflected in the revised policy. The NPPF suggests that design tools, e.g. masterplans and design codes can assist this and the Issues and Options sort views on this aspect.

14.4 Responses were mixed with some support, but mirrored by concerns that mandatory requirements to use these 'tools' would be too onerous. In the context of reviewing SWDP 21 continuing the reference to encouraging the use of design tools is more aligned to the NPPF and that the strategic site allocation policies are more appropriate to require masterplan and/or design codes.

14.5 Comments also suggested that the policy needed to refer to space standards, although in response it is felt these are more appropriately dealt with under the housing policies. It was also suggested that amendments could incorporate reference to other design policies and guidance e.g. neighbourhood plans, AONB and update references to new SPD, and county council standards etc.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

14.6 Integration of Option A and D would be considered to be the most sustainable option as it would ensure all buildings are built to the same and most efficient standards, whilst ensuring all strategic sites are required to follow more detailed masterplans.

SWDPR 25: Design

- A. **All development will be expected to be of a high design quality. It will need to integrate effectively with its surroundings, in terms of form and function, reinforce local distinctiveness and conserve, and enhance cultural and heritage assets and their settings. New and innovative designs will be encouraged and supported where they enhance the overall quality of the built environment.**
- B. **Applications should demonstrate, through a Design and Access Statement or other supporting evidence, e.g. Building for Life 12 assessment how the objectives outlined in criterion A have been addressed. They will also need to address the following matters:**

i. Siting and Layout

The siting and layout of a development should reflect the given characteristics of the site in terms of its appearance and function. Orientation should take advantage of passive heating and cooling systems, offer shade as appropriate and provide for the use of renewable energy.

ii. Relationship to Surroundings and to Other Development

Development proposals must complement the character of the area. In particular, development should respond to surrounding buildings and the distinctive features or qualities that contribute to the visual and heritage interest of the townscape, frontages, streets and landscape quality of the local area. Development should provide an acceptable level of amenity, outlook, sunlight and daylight, and should not be overbearing.

iii. The Settings of the City, Towns and Villages

Design proposals should ensure that the prominent views, vistas and skylines of Worcester city, the towns, and other settlements are maintained and safeguarded, particularly where they relate to heritage assets, existing landmark buildings, and 'gateway' sites. Development at the urban edges should respect the rural setting. The distinct identity and character of rural settlements should be safeguarded.

iv. Adaptable Design

Buildings should incorporate flexible designs, addressing access to public open spaces and enabling adaption for future needs and uses in terms of internal spaces and extensions.

v. Scale, Height, Massing and Mix

The scale, height and massing of development must be appropriate to the setting of the site and the surrounding landscape character and townscape, including existing urban grain and density. To create vitality and interest, proposals should incorporate a mix of uses where appropriate to the location.

vi. Links, Connectivity and Access

Design and layouts should integrate with existing development and street patterns, as well as maximise opportunities for active travel corridors, i.e. pedestrian and cycle routes to the surrounding area and local services and should be generally accessible for all users, including those with disabilities. Vehicular traffic from the development should be able to access the highway safely and the road network should have the capacity to accommodate the type and volume of traffic from the development.

vii. Detailed Design, Materials and Landscaping

The detailing and materials of development should be of high quality and appropriate to its context and local distinctiveness. Design should have regard to sustainable construction approaches and ensure adaptability to changes in the climate. Development should provide high quality hard and soft landscaping that is included as an integral part of developments design and include arrangements for long-term management.

viii. Appropriate Facilities

Development should incorporate parking facilities, storage for bicycles and make accommodation for waste collection facilities. Satisfactory access and provision for the parking and manoeuvring of vehicles, including waste collection vehicles should be provided.

ix. Public Realm

Public realm and open spaces should be well-designed, appropriately detailed and maintained via management agreements. They should also incorporate active frontages where appropriate. Proposals should include hard, soft and permeable surfaces, public art, street furniture, shade, lighting and signage as appropriate to the development.

x. Creating a Safe and Secure Environment

Opportunities for creating a safe and secure environment and providing surveillance should be included, principally through the layout and positioning of buildings, spaces and uses. Where appropriate, development should incorporate measures for crime reduction that are consistent with those recommended by the Secured by Design guides. Buildings and their surrounding spaces should incorporate fire, public safety, and counter terrorism measures and be designed to allow rapid access by the emergency services.

xi. Advertisements

Illuminated signage will only be permitted where lighting is unobtrusive or not considered to be harmful to the character and appearance of the site or surroundings. Consent will be granted for outdoor advertisements (including poster hoardings) provided the display will not adversely affect the amenities of the area or impact on public safety.

xii. Gull control

Proposals for new development in areas identified as having a problem with gulls will be required to consider design measures that reduce the gull population and their impact on the building and general environment.

Reasoned Justification

14.7 Design quality is critical to good planning as excellence in design can enhance the quality of people's lives, improve health and wellbeing, create a sense of place, improve the attractiveness of a location, promote social interaction and create safer places to live and work. Streets, pathways and public open spaces are the 'glue' that binds a place together, making it accessible, attractive and safe and an easy place to move around. Poor design, on the other hand, has the potential to detract from people's day-to-day lives through poor building relationships, car-dominated layouts and a sub-standard public realm, all of which add little to a sense of place and have a negative impact on land values, property prices, health and wellbeing and the environment in general.

14.8 Consequently, the policy criteria are applicable to all aspects of design, including those associated with residential and employment development, public buildings and the public realm.

14.9 Good design is also a crucial element in supporting economic prosperity. Ensuring the highest quality of design in employment and retail locations, along with enhancement through quality design of Worcester and south Worcestershire's market towns and villages, is an important factor in attracting inward investment and promoting a vibrant tourist economy. However, for some employment development proposals, notwithstanding the need for energy efficient designs, it is recognised that the aesthetics may be less important with respect to established industrial estates.

14.10 It is essential that full consideration is given to achieving sustainable development and counteracting climatic variations over the lifetime of a new building or development through the choice of location, design and materials and through addressing ecological integrity. Reducing the demand for energy and improving energy efficiency is also an important starting point for achieving sustainable design. Designs should include

energy-efficient methods of heating, lighting and ventilation and, where viable, incorporate the generation of energy from renewable or low carbon sources in accordance with SWDPR 31. Support will be given for new residential development that seeks to achieve the BRE Home Quality Mark.

14.11 Good design is also vital in protecting and enhancing the special character of south Worcestershire. The design principles set out in this policy provide a high-level design framework for new development that supports the diverse nature of good design. These are explained further in the National Design Guide (2019), the South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD, and Shopfront Design Guide SPD. They may also be complemented by neighbourhood plans, parish plans, or village design statements that can provide the 'fine grain' local design detail.

14.12 In accordance with the NPPF, it is expected that from pre-application discussions through to the submission of a final application design-related matters should be at the forefront of the considerations by all participants. This can be added by employing a range of design tools, e.g. the Building for Life 12 methodology or independent Design Review Panel to assess the scheme at pre-application and submission stages. Where development proposals are required to be accompanied by a Design and Access Statement, these should be used to explain how the principles of good design, including those set out in this policy's criteria, have been incorporated into the development. This policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant policies in the SWDPR, as well as the relevant neighbourhood plan and proposals will be expected to demonstrate that they have been informed by current available guidance⁽⁴⁴⁾ and evolving best practice.

14.13 Development proposals are not designed in isolation from their context. Although there are considerable variations in local architectural styles, buildings and urban areas across south Worcestershire can be characterised within the broad typologies to be set out in the South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD. New development should take account of the characteristics of the site, as well as the distinctiveness of the wider locality and make a positive contribution to the surrounding area. Where appropriate, particularly with respect to the strategic sites and new settlements, the use of masterplans or design codes will be appropriate, in accordance with the NPPF.

14.14 In accordance with the NPPF, a development will not be acceptable if its design is inappropriate in its context, or if it fails to take any opportunity available to improve the character and quality of an area and the way it functions. This includes ensuring that there is no unacceptable detrimental impact on the amenity of existing or new residents or occupants resulting from the new development.

14.15 It is essential that any new development connects effectively to existing areas and opportunities are taken to effectively ensure connectivity is delivered within new schemes and to adjacent established development. Regards should be had to circulation, particularly within residential development with primary and secondary roads, parking and open space standards in accordance with other policies in the plan. In certain circumstances development proposals may be referred to a local design review panel.

14.16 It is the intention to ensure that in Worcester city the historic skyline is protected and enhanced, with distant views into and from the city being preserved, especially of towers, spires, hills, ridges and waterside, including the floodplain where applicable. Gateway and entry locations to the city are also important and design proposals should have regard to enhancing these arrival points where opportunities exist.

14.17 The use of innovative and contemporary design that enhances the overall quality of the townscape, either in established core areas or as extensions to more recent development, is encouraged. Through employing the best aspects and approaches of contemporary design, it will be possible to leave a legacy of architecture and urban design for future generations to value. Contemporary design can either involve new materials and technology used in a traditional format or the use of traditional materials in a new and innovative design, or a

44 South Worcestershire Design Guide SPD, Building for Life 12: https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/Building%20for%20Life%2012_0.pdf Home Quality Mark: <https://www.homequalitymark.com/> AONB Design Guidance: http://www.malvern-hills-aonb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/MalvernBuildingDesignGuideLoRes_000.pdf <https://www.cotswolds-aonb.org.uk/our-landscape/landscape-strategy-guidelines/> Better By Design Manuel for Streets: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/341513/pdfmanforstreets.pdf Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment: http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20014/planning/1006/landscape_character_assessment South Worcestershire Historic Environment Assessment: https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/?page_id=553

14 Environmental Enhancement and Protection

combination of both. Where adventurous new designs have been tried, they can become valued local landmarks and make a positive contribution to the locality. Innovative designs can also be successful when integrated into conservation areas or as extensions to historic buildings and do not need to be confined to areas outside these designations.

14.18 Attention to detail is essential in ensuring high quality design and appearance. This should take into account the decoration of a building or structure and the texture, colour, pattern and durability of materials used. The importance of designed hard and soft landscaping, using appropriate species and incorporating arrangements for long-term management is encouraged. To improve the sustainability and local distinctiveness of new development, the use of locally sourced materials and those recovered from demolished structures on site will be encouraged where feasible and appropriate. However, it is acknowledged that there will be instances when modern construction methods and sustainable design solutions will necessitate the use of other materials. Development opportunities that seek to minimise resources, energy use and climate change impact through the design, layout and use of materials in development will be encouraged.

14.19 Appropriate facilities for users of new development should be integrated effectively into its design and layout to ensure that they can be accessed in a safe and convenient manner, whilst not detracting from the overall appearance of the development. The nature of the facilities will vary depending on the development proposed but should include:

- a. waste management and storage facilities;
- b. storage for bicycles;
- c. easy access to public transport.

14.20 The NPPF requires policies to promote public safety in locations where large numbers of people congregate. The layout and design of development in such areas, e.g. urban centres and regeneration schemes should be informed by the most up to date information available from the police and other agencies and incorporate appropriate steps and measures in any design to ensure public safety.

14.21 Advertisements on shop fronts, commercial and industrial buildings, including fascia and projecting signs and brackets, both illuminated and non-illuminated, canopies and awnings, grilles and fixing of alarm boxes, should all comply with the Shopfront Design Guide SPD.

14.22 Gulls can be considered to be a nuisance as they are noisy, create mess, scavenge bins and create litter. They can also damage property and vehicles and occasionally attack people and pets. An urban environment, particularly the city centre, with its tall buildings and ledges mimic their natural habitat by providing nesting and feeding opportunities. Although there is no statutory duty to take action against gulls, the SWCs recognise the need to try and assist residents and businesses in preventing damage and distress that hostile gull colonies cause in town centres, particularly during the nesting season.

14.23 Under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 it is illegal to capture, injure or destroy a wild bird, or interfere with its nest or eggs. However the law does enable property owners to take action against certain gull species nesting on buildings. Measures can only be taken for the purpose of preserving public health, public safety and preventing the spread of disease. Within problem areas consideration should be given to the design of new buildings, e.g. providing access to roof space in order to prevent the need for costly retrospective controls such as netting and spikes as well as ensuring waste storage areas are secure. The SWCs will prepare further guidance for those wishing to undertake development, extensions and alterations in problem areas.

Biodiversity and Geodiversity

Introduction

14.24 This policy is concerned with conserving and enhancing the natural environment in terms of biodiversity and geodiversity. The context for this policy is international, national and local designations of sites considered to have value for biodiversity; that is wildlife / fauna, and for geodiversity.

Issues and Options Consultation Summary

14.25 Option 27 (Biodiversity) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Continue to protect all designated sites from development, including maintaining a buffer zone where appropriate"*, B: *"Encourage the biodiversity enhancement of sites through development, for example, allocating sites which can deliver biodiversity enhancements"*, C: *"Seek to identify opportunities for the restoration or creation of new habitats areas in associations with planned development, as part of the wider biodiversity network"* or D: *"Require, through policy, increased long-term monitoring of biodiversity mitigation and enhancement measures on development sites"*.

14.26 There were a total of 81 responses, of which two were left blank and 23 did not respond directly to Option 27. Comments were generally positive regarding the current policy approach to SWDP 22 and there was general agreement that the current policy was compliant with the NPPF. However, there were some responses which generally criticised the policy for being worded in a way that was vulnerable to tokenism and 'developer pressure'. Overall there were 54 respondents who selected from the four options provided in Option 27. The majority of the respondents opted for more than one option. Option A was the most popular option, but comments were also supportive of measures to help protect and enhance the biodiversity of developments. With regard to option D some respondents were very supportive, however others thought it would be exceedingly onerous on occupiers/developers to carry out this option. Overall, 20 of the 54 respondents opted for all four options to be carried forward as the policy approach. Finally, Natural England submitted representations stating that following the updates to the NPPF relating to conserving and enhancing the natural environment, biodiversity net gains should be given greater consideration within the revision of the policy and that a Supplementary Planning Document could help advise applicants how to demonstrate net gains for biodiversity.

14.27 Question 11 (Geodiversity) asked *"Are there any additional geodiversity assets which should be recognised by SWDPR?"* There were 12 respondents to this question of which four comments were blank. Of the eight people who responded, four stated that they did not know of any additional geodiversity assets that should be recognised. One comment placed importance on considering geodiversity in the same way as biodiversity and continues to, through a policy approach, recognise and monitoring sites of geodiversity importance. Another respondent requested that a publically accessible mapping layer of geological sites is published to help appreciate items of geological importance.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

14.28 The Sustainability Appraisal considered it to be likely that an integration of all four options would result in the greatest benefits for biodiversity assets across the plan area as a single best performing option could not be identified. Therefore, a combination of all four options has been taken forward in updating this policy.

SWDPR 26: Biodiversity and Geodiversity

- A. **All developments are expected to deliver measureable net gains in biodiversity through the restoration, recreation and enhancement of priority habitats, ecological networks and the protection and recovery of legally protected and priority species populations. Delivery of measurable net biodiversity gains should be designed to support the delivery of the identified biodiversity network. Enhancements for wildlife within the built environment will be sought where appropriate from all scales of development. The level of biodiversity net gain required will be proportionate to the type, scale and impact of development.**

- B. Development should support the conservation, enhancement and restoration of biodiversity and geodiversity across the plan area. Proposals for development must be supported by a proportionate level of up-to-date technical assessment, demonstrating how ecological and geological features identified, on the site and in its wider context, have influenced site choice, design and layout.**
- C. When making planning decisions full consideration will be given to the importance of any affected habitats, species and features, taking account of the hierarchy of legal protection and whether the mitigation hierarchy has been followed, i.e. ensuring avoidance of harm has been given priority above minimisation, mitigation and compensation:**
- D.**
 - i. Development which is likely to compromise the integrity of a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) or other international designations or the favourable conservation status of internationally or nationally protected species or habitats will not be permitted.**
 - ii. Development likely to have an adverse effect on nationally important sites, including a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and irreplaceable features including (but not limited to) Ancient Woodland and Ancient and Veteran Trees will not be permitted, except where the public benefits of the development at that site clearly outweigh both its likely impact on the features of the site and any broader impacts on the wider ecological networks, and a suitable compensation strategy exists.**
 - iii. Development which would compromise the favourable condition, (or make it less likely that favourable condition can be reached) of a Grassland Inventory Site (GIS), a Local Wildlife Site (LWS), a Local Geological Site (LGS), an important individual tree or woodland and species or habitats of principal importance recognised in the Biodiversity Action Plan, or listed under Section 41 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, will only be permitted if the need for and the public benefits of the proposed development outweigh the loss.**
 - iv. Development should consider ecological networks that link the biodiversity areas detailed above, including areas identified for habitat restoration and creation. To ensure that connectivity for wildlife is maintained, proposals for new development must ensure that, for example, lighting is carefully designed to maintain dark habitats and corridors, and similarly that boundaries, including those between private gardens, are permeable to native wildlife (such as small mammals, reptiles and amphibians).**
 - v. Where the policy requirements of C ii, iii or iv have been met, full compensatory provision and its establishment commensurate with the ecological / geological value of the site will be required. This may be secured through a legal agreement where appropriate.**
 - vi. In the first instance compensatory provision should be through on-site mitigation, the details of which need to be agreed with the LPA. Off-site mitigation will only be acceptable as a last resort and where on-site mitigation is shown not to be possible. Where, having followed the mitigation hierarchy, there is an unavoidable requirement for off-site biodiversity compensation to offset harm, applicants will be expected to demonstrate that this will be brought forward in a timely manner at a scale and proximity to the proposed development in keeping with the harm caused.**
- E. Development must secure the management and monitoring of relevant biodiversity features, both on and off-site, for a period reasonably related to the lifetime of the development.**
- F. Where features created in relation to SWDPR 26 D can be classified as Green Space, these shall be identified on the Policies Map and thereafter protected by SWDPR 43.**

Reasoned Justification

14.29 Conserving and enhancing the natural environment is one of the NPPF core planning principles and Section 15 sets out how planning policy should achieve this. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act (2006) requires public bodies to have regard to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. Worcestershire is blessed with a rich variety of biodiversity and geodiversity assets, which are an important factor in both the

relatively high quality of life experienced by most residents and the attractiveness of the area as a business and tourist destination. Without an appropriately strong planning policy the trend of biodiversity and geodiversity losses will continue. Bringing back or re-creating lost habitats is fraught with technical difficulties and is unproven for many habitat types and so the local planning authority expects protection of important existing features to be the norm in most cases, with re-creation after habitat loss to be considered only where this is not practical. Where habitats are retained, protected, enhanced or created, the local planning authority will require information regarding long-term management so as to ensure that features (and particularly those required in mitigation for harm) can be maintained into the future. This may in some circumstances need to be secured by legal agreement. Without positive action there is real danger, particularly given the impacts of climate change, that in the long term the ecosystems themselves will begin to fail.

14.30 This policy should also be considered in conjunction with SWDPR 4 Green Infrastructure, SWDPR 25 Design, SWDPR 33 Sustainable Drainage Systems, SWDPR 34 Water Resources, Efficiency and Treatment, SWDPR 37 Land Instability and Contaminated Land, SWDPR 43 Green Space and SWDPR 44 Provision of Green Space and Outdoor Community Uses in New Development.

14.31 There is an expectation that the opportunity exists to build biodiversity net gain into any development. This could, for example, be as simple as through the provision of a bird box or bat roosting feature integrated into a new householder extension, new planting to support pollinators and/or to improve habitat connectivity or a specifically designed site-wide biodiversity mitigation and enhancement scheme restoring existing and creating new habitats, integrating sustainable drainage systems and building on ecological networks in the area. More detailed guidance will be provided through additional technical information and / or through a SPD.

14.32 The Framework has recognised it is crucial that biodiversity net gain is measurable. This requires that an appropriate level of baseline information is submitted with development proposals. MHDC and WDC feature a survey trigger list on their websites which indicates when certain protected species surveys will be asked for. Ecological reports shall follow recognised professional standards, such as guidance from the Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM).

14.33 The NPPF recognises ancient woodland and veteran trees as irreplaceable habitats and any development will need to demonstrate wholly exceptional reasons to justify public benefits.

14.34 Details of lighting schemes and boundary treatment shall be submitted with planning applications to demonstrate how dark corridors and permeability to wildlife will be achieved, as and where appropriate. More detailed guidance will be provided through additional technical information and/or through a SPD.

14.35 Statements of conformity, habitat management agreements and future monitoring will be required where appropriate to help achieve what this policy is designed for.

The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

Introduction

14.36 The proposed policy for the Malvern Hills and Cotswolds Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty has been revised to take on board the changes in Policy in the NPPF and to address the need to ensure that the design of development within the setting of an AONB does not detract from its special qualities.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

14.37 **Option 29** (AONB) asks respondents should the SWDPR A: *"Revise SWDP23 in light of the revised NPPF"* or B: *"Include a new policy regarding development within the setting of AONB"*. Most representations agreed that the policy should reflect the policy changes in the revised NPPF. Those with a developer interest did not support a policy on the setting of AONB whereas others do.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

14.38 Option A would ensure the policy is fully compliant with the NPPF. It is uncertain whether a revised policy would help conserve and enhance the special qualities of the two AONB more than the current adopted policy. The adopted Policy results in sustainability benefits for the AONB and a revised policy in the context of the NPPF would not add any significant benefits.

14.39 Under Option B, a new policy regarding the setting of AONB would be likely to help to ensure the SWCs could appropriately and effectively tackle potential issues in regards to development adversely impacting the setting of AONB. A separate policy would help to ensure any allocated development within an AONB does not discord with its setting and is appropriate in scale and design.

14.40 Both options will likely result in sustainability benefits for AONB.

SWDPR 27: The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB)

- A. **Major⁽⁴⁵⁾ development proposals within the AONB will not be permitted.**
- B. **Minor development proposals within the AONB will be supported provided that it can be demonstrated that they will conserve and enhance the special qualities of the landscape and there would be no detrimental impact on tranquillity⁽⁴⁶⁾ and natural beauty⁽⁴⁷⁾ of the local area.**
- C. **Development proposals within the AONB must demonstrate that they will conserve and enhance the special qualities of the landscape.**
- D. **Development proposals should be supportive of the latest published AONB Management Plans and associated design guidance.**

AONB Setting

- E. **Development Proposals which could have a detrimental impact on the setting of an AONB will in the first instance have to submit a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA).**

45 NPPF Footnote 55 states that "for the purposes of paragraphs 172 and 173, whether a proposal is 'major development' is a matter for the decision maker, taking into the account its nature, scale and setting, and whether it could have a significant adverse impact on the purposes of which the area has been designated or defined".

46 Landscape Institute (LI) and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (IEMA) (2013) Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment defines tranquillity as "a state of calm and quietude associated with peace, considered to be a significant asset of landscape".

47 The term "natural beauty" is defined in the Cotswolds AONB Management Plan as including "landscape, flora and fauna, geological or physiographical features and heritage, including archaeology and settlement character".

Reasoned Justification

14.41 The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty are nationally important landscapes which need to be conserved as indicated in the NPPF ⁽⁴⁸⁾

14.42 AONB are designated under the same legislation as National Parks. The Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act (2000) requires a LPA to have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of an AONB. The Act also requires the publication of AONB management plans. For the purposes of this plan, these are produced by Cotswolds Conservation Board and the Malvern Hills AONB Partnership. As these management plans aim to conserve and enhance the landscape and scenic beauty of the AONB they are entirely consistent with the Framework and therefore they will be treated as a material consideration for assessing the planning merits of development proposals.

14.43 The nature of the topography is such that even small scale development can have a significant visual impact on the principal attributes of an AONB. Although the plan includes several housing allocations at settlements within the AONB, further non-planned, i.e. 'windfall' development within the AONB, particularly on land beyond a development boundary will be rigorously assessed. Any windfall development within settlements will be rigorously assessed against the policies of the Plan and the relevant legislation. For development outwith but affecting an AONB, regard should be had to the purpose of conserving and enhancing its natural beauty.

14.44 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment demonstrates sufficient potential housing land capacity beyond the AONB, so it is considered that there is no overriding justification for large-scale unallocated development in these protected landscapes.

14.45 Land within the setting of AONB often makes an important contribution to maintaining their natural beauty. Poorly located or badly designed development can do significant harm to an AONB. This is recognised in NPPG. Long views from the Malvern Hills ridge and high points of the Cotswold AONB have been identified as being important to users. The design of development within the setting of AONB therefore requires detailed consideration which takes these potential impacts into account.



48 NPPF (paragraph 172).

Management of the Historic Environment

Introduction

14.46 This policy complements SWDPR 5, the strategic overarching policy, and provides the detailed criteria for determining planning application for new development that either directly or indirectly have a bearing on the historic environment.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

14.47 Question 9 (The Historic Environment) asked *"Do you support the proposed approach to protecting the historic environment (policies SWDP 6 and SWDP 24)?"* Responses to the Issues and Options consultation were overwhelmingly supportive of continuing with the existing policy position for determining planning applications. Several minor amendments were suggested to align the policy with the revised NPPF.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

14.48 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 28: Management of the Historic Environment

- A. Development proposals affecting all categories of heritage assets will be considered in accordance with the NPPF, relevant legislation and published national and local guidance.
- B. Proposals likely to affect the significance of a heritage asset, including the contribution made by its setting, should be accompanied by a description of its significance in sufficient detail to allow the potential impacts to be adequately assessed. Where there is potential for any heritage assets with archaeological interest to be affected, this description should be informed by available evidence, desk based assessment and, where appropriate, field evaluation to establish the significance of known or potential heritage assets.
- C. The sympathetic and creative reuse and adaptation of historic buildings will be encouraged particularly where the proposed reuse can be considered to have less than substantial harm to the historic asset. Such proposals, and other proposals for enabling development that provide a sustainable future, or look to improve the heritage assets identified as at risk, will be considered in accordance with SWDPR 28 A.
- D. Where a material change to a heritage asset has been agreed, recording and interpretation should be undertaken to document and understand the asset's archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic significance. The scope of the recording should be proportionate to the asset's significance and the impact of the development on the asset. The information and understanding gained should be made publicly available, as a minimum through the relevant Historic Environment Record and where appropriate at the asset itself through on-site interpretation.
- E. Proposals for development within or affecting the setting of conservation areas will be required to preserve or enhance their character and appearance.

Reasoned Justification

14.49 When considering development proposals Policy SWDPR 28 should be read in conjunction with Policy SWDPR 5 and any relevant neighbourhood plan.

14.50 The various elements of the historic environment contribute to making south Worcestershire a desirable place to live and work and attract tourism and economic investment to the area.

14.51 Conservation of heritage assets must reflect a sufficient understanding of their significance, including both their setting and their wider context in the landscape / townscape. It is recognised that many heritage assets, in particular archaeological remains, are currently unidentified. Appropriate information, where necessary from field evaluation, is crucial to well-informed decision-making.

14.52 Early pre-application discussions are encouraged, as this will allow the early identification of heritage issues, save time, reduce risk and improve the quality of applications. These discussions should involve the LPA, applicants, architects and agents and heritage specialists. Proposals involving new build, repair, alteration or extension of heritage assets can conserve the significance of the existing asset and its setting. This may be achieved by means of appropriate siting, massing, form, height, scale, design and use of local materials.

14.53 The sympathetic reuse, repair and adaptation of existing buildings can act as a catalyst for economic regeneration, support tourism and encourage the sustainable use of resources. Enabling development can be considered where it can be justified and where it accords with the NPPF. In all instances where this leads to less than substantial harm to the significance of a heritage asset this impact should be considered alongside the benefits of securing a viable reuse. This approach contributes towards delivering the national policy aim of achieving sustainable development. It is important that any climate change mitigation / adaptation measures do not cause harm to the fabric or significance of heritage assets.

14.54 Where opportunities for creative, contemporary and innovative architectural design arise they will be supported. The introduction of a successful new building can enhance the historic setting, or an extension add to the evolution of a building, becoming a valued addition to a locality and contributing to a sense of place.

14.55 Alongside the relevant policies in this plan, planning practice guidance and Historic England advice regard should be had to the provisions of relevant legislation, including the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.



Landscape Character

Introduction

14.56 The proposed landscape policy has been revised so that impacts on public views and visual amenity can be taken into account in assessing the planning merits of development proposals.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

14.57 **Question 12** (Landscape Character) asked “*Should SWDP 25 be revised to take into account impact on views and visual amenity?*” There were 83 responses to this question of which; three were blank and one was regarded as un-relatable to this question and has been considered in the development boundary section of this consultation statement. Therefore there are 79 comments directly related to question 12. A total of 75 comments were supportive of a revision of SWDP 25. The four comments that opposed the revision of SWDP 25 argued that the policy was already sufficient enough and could become too onerous if it was reviewed. All comments appeared to be understanding of the importance of the impact views and visual amenity has on landscape character. Finally, Natural England welcomed the proposed changes to the policy wording and stated it would encourage the submission of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments for development proposals which would impact local landscapes.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

14.58 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 29: Landscape Character

- A. Development proposals and their associated landscaping schemes must demonstrate the following:**
- i. That they take into account the latest Landscape Character Assessment⁽⁴⁹⁾ and its guidelines;**
 - ii. That they are appropriate to, and integrate with, the character of the landscape setting; and**
 - iii. That they conserve, and where appropriate, enhance the primary characteristics defined in character assessments and important features of the Land Cover Parcel, and have taken any available opportunity to enhance the landscape.**
- B. A Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)⁽⁵⁰⁾ will be required for all major development proposals and for other proposals where they are likely⁽⁵¹⁾ to have a detrimental impact upon**
- i. The landscape as a resource is its own right; and / or**
 - ii. Views and visual amenity.**
- C. The Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment should include proposals to protect and conserve key landscape features and attributes and, where appropriate, enhance landscape quality.**

⁴⁹ Worcestershire Character Landscape Assessments (2013):

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20014/planning/1006/landscape_character_assessment

⁵⁰ For non-EIA and non-major development, a standalone appraisal might be provided as outlined in section 3.2 of the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third edition, 2013), published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment.

⁵¹ This will not normally apply to development proposals within defined Development Boundaries.

Reasoned Justification

14.59 The distinctive landscape of south Worcestershire is an important factor in the relatively high quality of life experienced by most residents. The landscape contributes to much of our decision-making, e.g. where people choose to live, work and spend their leisure time. The landscape is also a distinctive heritage asset, which is reflected in a relatively buoyant tourism market within the local economy. To allow inappropriate development would compromise both the general wellbeing and the economic viability of south Worcestershire.

14.60 Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a tool for identifying the patterns and individual combinations of features (such as hedgerows, field shapes, woodland, land use, patterns of settlements and dwellings) that make each type of landscape distinct. The relevant documents and maps are available online⁽⁵²⁾. This includes the Landscape Character Assessment Supplementary Guidance published by Worcestershire County Council in 2012.

14.61 The role of Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) is to address the effects of development, both on landscape as a resource in its own right and on views and visual amenity. LVIA may be carried out as part of a broader EIA, or as a standalone assessment. For non-major development, a less formal 'appraisal' of the likely landscape and visual effects of the proposal might be acceptable. The overall principles and the core steps in the process are the same but there are specific and clearly defined procedures in Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) which LVIA must fit within.

14.62 As a part of an EIA, LVIA is normally carried out as a separate theme or topic study. Landscape and visual matters appear as either separate or combined sections of the Environmental Statement, which presents the findings of the EIA. Landscape and visual issues may also make a contribution to other parts of the EIA, such as site selection and consideration of alternatives, and screening.

14.63 A standalone LVIA, as may be required for major developments that are not EIA development, would follow the same process. With a landscape and visual 'appraisal' for non-major development the process is less formal and there is more flexibility, but the essence of the approach; specifying the nature of the proposed change or development; considering the existing landscape and its character, and the views and visual amenity in the area that may be affected; predicting the effects and considering how those might be mitigated, still applies.

14.64 Visual amenity is regarded as "the overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting or travelling through an area"⁽⁵³⁾.

14.65 SWDPR 27 sets out the overarching policy regarding development affecting the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

52 <http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/landscape-character-assessment.aspx>

53 Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (Third edition, 2013) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management & Assessment.

Electronic Communications

Introduction

15.1 Electronic communications includes all aspects of fixed and mobile telephone and broadband technology. Electronic communication is essential to the development of south Worcestershire, for both economic and social development and will increasingly provide for new ways of working and communication including autonomous technology, 5G mobile and ultra-fast broadband.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.2 Option 31 (Telecommunications) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Retain SWDP26"* or B: *"Rename the policy 'Electronic Communications' and revise it to facilitate the delivery of updated mobile and broadband technology as outlined above"*. There was an overwhelming consensus that the policy should be updated to facilitate the delivery of the most up to date technology across all new developments in south Worcestershire and to rename the policy Electronic Communications.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

15.3 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) concluded that both of the options outlined would result in improvements to electronic communications across south Worcestershire which would result in health and socio-economic benefits. Both options could also have negative impacts from an increase in telecommunications structures in the landscape, particularly in the Malvern Hills and Cotswolds AONB.

15.4 The conclusion of the SA is that although both policy options will have overarching positive impacts, Option B, the development of a new policy, will have the greater positive impact and is the best performing against the SA criteria.

SWDPR 30: Electronic Communications

- A. **All new developments that generate additional need for broadband will be expected to include provision for full fibre gigabit capable network infrastructure Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) to enable broadband services for all occupiers from first occupation and with sufficient capacity to facilitate mid-haul / back-haul for wider applications to allow for a minimum of two superfast operators.**
- B. **All new developments that generate a need for additional electronic communications, will be expected to consult with a minimum of two telecommunications providers to explore the need for other telecommunications technology including mobile (5G and future iterations), fixed wireless and WiFi. If additional technology infrastructure is required, space should be made available within the development to provide any such infrastructure.**

Reasoned Justification

15.5 The NPPF (paragraph 112) recognises the role of advanced, high quality communications infrastructure in creating sustainable economic growth as part of strategic policies. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks will also play a vital role in enhancing the provision of local community facilities and services.

15.6 Communication infrastructure includes telephone systems (both wired and mobile) and broadband. The benefits of having a modern and accessible system of telecommunications, wireless and electronic methods of communication to south Worcestershire will be significant. Increasingly the demand is for FTTP broadband using fibre optic technology as defined within the NPPF (paragraph 112).

15.7 Broadband development across the whole of Worcestershire is guided by the 2012 Worcestershire Local Broadband Plan (WLBP). The plan aims to drive economic growth across the county improving speeds for all residents and local businesses. This will maximise opportunities for private sector investment, thus reducing the need for public sector funding. These priorities are echoed in the county council's Corporate Plan for which 'Open for Business' is a priority and broadband is a key enabler. This is fully supported by the business community and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).

15.8 Some infrastructure providers have agreed to provide FTTP infrastructure to new developments of 30 dwellings or more at no cost to the developer and for a contribution of below a certain size, whilst others will provide and deliver materials at zero cost to the developer.

15.9 In some exceptional locations outside urban areas, an equivalent alternate solution may be acceptable if developers are unable to facilitate an FTTP solution. FTTP is the preferred option and the developer must provide evidence as to why an alternate solution is required. In all developments, developers must, as a minimum, make sure that competitive broadband services reach ultrafast speeds and are made available to all premises and with a choice of UK service providers.

15.10 High quality telecommunications and broadband is also recognised in Policy SWDPR 6 Infrastructure and the South Worcestershire Plan Infrastructure Delivery Plan (SWIDP)

15.11 When considering the development of telecommunications technology, the following factors should be taken into consideration:

- Operational requirements of the telecommunication networks and the limitations of the technology, including technical constraints on the location of telecommunications apparatus.
- The need for the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) Guidelines⁽⁵⁴⁾ and/or other relevant guidance in place at the time of the application for safe emissions to be met.
- The need to avoid interference with existing electrical equipment and air traffic services.
- Development should also consider the provision of in-building solutions for broadband and telecommunications technology.
- Sufficient sub-duct space should be available to allow for more than one superfast operator.

15.12 Reference should also be made to Government guidelines on the rollout of fixed and mobile networks at the local level.⁽⁵⁵⁾

15.13 The siting and appearance of the proposed apparatus and associated structures should seek to minimise the impact on the visual amenity, character, landscape or appearance of the surrounding area, particularly if it is proposed in a conservation area. All geospatial considerations can be considered through Government guidance.⁽⁵⁶⁾

15.14 If on a building, apparatus and associated structures should be sited and designed in order to seek to minimise the impact to the external appearance. When choosing a suitable location for the apparatus, ongoing access at appropriate and suitable times should be considered.

54 <https://www.icnirp.org/cms/upload/publications/ICNIRPemfgdl.pdf>

55 <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/considerations-for-the-local-planning-authority>

56 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/684420/OS_Final_report_5g-planning-geospatial-considerations.pdf

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Introduction

15.15 The purpose of the policy is to increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat in accordance with the NPPF (paragraph 151) which states that plans should:

- a. Provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development;
- b. Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources; and
- c. Identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.16 Option 35 (Energy Requirements in New Developments) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Continue to require 10% of all energy within new developments to be generated from on-site renewable energy sources"*, B: *"Adopt a higher target for on-site renewable energy generation in new development"*, C: *"Not require any renewable energy generation and instead rely on carbon reduction measures which are being delivered through changes to Building Regulations"*, D: *"Require heat mapping for large scale allocations with the SWDPR"*, E: *"Set out a carbon reduction target rather than a renewable energy target for new development"*, or F: *"Establish a south Worcestershire / district level Community Energy Fund providing developers with a route to compliance with carbon reduction targets allowing them to offset any carbon reductions they are unable to achieve on-site through payment into an energy fund"*.

15.17 There was a fairly even split in responses between those that wanted a renewable and low carbon energy target and those that wanted reliance on carbon reduction measures and/or a carbon reduction target for new development - 41 for a renewable and low carbon energy target and 47 for a carbon reduction measures and / or a carbon reduction target for new development.

15.18 The split in opinion was very marked between developers and everybody else. There were coordinated responses from the development industry that wanted reliance on carbon reduction measures which would not require the installation of any renewable or low carbon energy in new development. Nearly all other respondents who expressed a preference wanted a renewable and low carbon energy target for new development, with 32 of the 41 respondents seeking a target higher than 10%.

15.19 No respondents opposed heat mapping, but only 4 indicated it as a preference. 11 respondents (mainly parish councils) supported the principle of a Community Energy Fund but considered that further information was required on how it would operate.

15.20 Option 36 (Stand Alone Renewable Energy) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Seek to allocate specific sites for specific types of renewable energy where appropriate sites comes forward"*, B: *"Provide a policy framework to support the delivery of renewable energy projects without making specific site allocations"* or C: *"Identify broad areas where wind turbines could be acceptable"*.

15.21 Amongst those that responded, there was a strong preference (23 responses) for the SWDPR to provide a policy framework to support the delivery of renewable energy projects without making specific site allocations. 10 respondents thought the SWDPR should seek to allocate sites for specific renewable energy technologies and 6 thought the SWDPR should identify sites for wind energy development.

Preferred Options

15.22 In relation to renewable and low carbon energy requirements in new development the consultation revealed a clear split between developers that do not want to install renewable and low carbon energy and everybody else. Any policy that was based on carbon reduction measures and/or carbon reduction targets would be limited to standards set by Building Regulations as per NPPF (paragraph 150) that states *"any local*

requirements for the sustainability of buildings should reflect the Government's policy for national technical standards". A policy based on carbon reduction measures and / or carbon reduction targets would not require the installation of renewable or low carbon energy and would not increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat in accordance with NPPF (paragraph 151).

15.23 Subject to viability considerations, there is possibly a case for increasing the renewable and low carbon energy requirement in new development from 10% to 20%.

15.24 The SWDP requirement of 10% was based on common practice in many other local authorities. Also, when the SWDP was being developed, it was generally acknowledged that a 15% target could in most cases be met from a single technology, e.g. solar photo voltaic (PV), but a 15%+ requirement may require the installation of 2 technologies, which would impact on viability.

15.25 Since SWDP 27 was developed more efficient solar panels have become available. Also, no developers appear to have demonstrated that the existing 10% requirement would make their development unviable. It is considered that increasing the requirement from 10% to 20%, i.e. several extra PV panels are unlikely to make a development unviable.

15.26 To meet the requirements in NPPF (paragraph 151c) it is proposed that large scale development proposals should continue to be required to examine the potential for a decentralised energy and heat network.

15.27 In relation to stand-alone renewable and low carbon energy projects, consultation responses generally indicated support for the current SWDP approach of providing a policy framework to assess the suitability of development proposals without making specific site allocations. In any event, the SWCs do not have sufficient evidence to identify specific sites for different technologies.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

Energy Requirements in New Development

15.28 Option B (adopt a higher target for on-site renewable energy generation in new development) would be likely to result in an increase in renewable energy generation across the plan area and could be identified as the single best performing option.

Stand Alone Renewable Energy

15.29 Under Option A (seek to allocate specific sites for specific types of renewable energy where appropriate sites come forward) it would be expected that there would be an increase in renewable energy sources across the plan area.

15.30 Under Option B (seek to allocate specific sites for specific types of renewable energy where appropriate sites come forward) it is uncertain the number of stand-alone renewable energy installations that would be provided in the plan period.

15.31 Option C (identify broad areas where wind turbines could be acceptable) is not detailed enough to appraise without design or location detail.

SWDPR 31: Renewable and Low Carbon Energy

Incorporating Renewable and Low Carbon Energy into New Development

- A. To increase the supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, all new developments over 100 m² gross or one or more dwellings should incorporate the generation of energy from

renewable or low carbon sources equivalent to at least 20% of predicted energy requirements⁽⁵⁷⁾, unless it has been demonstrated that this would make the development unviable.

- B. Large scale⁽⁵⁸⁾ development proposals should examine the potential for a decentralised energy and heat network. If practical and viable, a decentralised energy and heat network should be provided as part of the development.

Stand Alone Renewable and Low Carbon Energy Schemes

- C. With the exception of wind turbines (see D below) proposals for stand-alone renewable and other low carbon energy schemes will be supported if their impacts are (or can be made) acceptable. Factors that will be taken into account when determining the suitability of different renewable and low carbon energy technologies are set out in guidance in the South Worcestershire Renewable and Low Carbon Energy SPD (July 2018).
- D. Proposals for stand-alone wind turbines will only be considered favourably if:
- i. The site is identified as suitable for wind energy development in a neighbourhood plan; and
 - ii. Following consultation, it can be demonstrated that any significant planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been fully addressed and that the proposal has the backing of the local community.

Reasoned Justification

15.32 Renewable Energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment; from the wind, the fall of water, movement of the oceans, from the sun and deep geothermal heat. Examples of renewable energy include solar power, hydro power and wind turbines. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels). Such technologies include biomass, ground source heat pumps as well as Combined Heat and Power (CHP).

15.33 Energy can also be recovered from waste management facilities such as Energy from Waste (EfW) and landfill gas. Planning applications relating to waste management facilities are 'county matters' and are determined by Worcestershire County Council.

15.34 The European Union Renewable Energy Directive (Directive 2009/28/EC) sets an overall target for 20% of the energy consumed in the European Union to come from renewable sources by 2020. This overall target is divided by country, with the UK target being 15% by 2020.

15.35 The Planning and Energy Act (2008) allows LPAs policies to impose reasonable requirements for a proportion of energy used in developments to be from renewable and low carbon sources in the locality of the development.

15.36 The NPPF recognises the key role planning plays in supporting the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy. To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, the NPPF (paragraph 151) states that plans should:

- a. Provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources that maximises the potential for suitable development, while ensuring that adverse impacts are addressed satisfactorily (including cumulative landscape and visual impacts);

⁵⁷ The predicted energy requirement is the total predicted energy usage in the building, i.e. both regulated and unregulated energy.

⁵⁸ For the purposes of this policy only, the definition of large scale development is residential developments of 100 or more dwellings or non-residential developments of more than 10,000 m².

- b. Consider identifying suitable areas for renewable and low carbon energy sources, and supporting infrastructure, where this would help secure their development; and
- c. Identify opportunities for development to draw its energy supply from decentralised, renewable or low carbon energy supply systems and for co-locating potential heat customers and suppliers.

15.37 South Worcestershire has historically been an energy importer, with virtually all its energy generated outside of Worcestershire and supplied through the national gas and electricity networks.

15.38 The Worcestershire LEP Energy Strategy (2019) indicates that there are large areas of Malvern Hills and Wychavon where over 40% of properties are off the gas grid. The lack of access to the gas network has major impacts for the heating fuels used, with increased use of other more carbon intensive fossil fuels such as oil or coal within rural homes. The Worcestershire Energy Strategy also indicates a strong correlation between fuel poverty and households off the gas grid, with fuel poverty as high as 20% in some areas off the gas grid⁽⁵⁹⁾. Renewable and low carbon energy, particularly heat pumps and biomass therefore provide an opportunity to tackle fuel poverty.

15.39 The development of renewable and low carbon energy and heat is also a key means of promoting energy security for the future, reducing vulnerability to rising fuel costs and reducing carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions in south Worcestershire.

15.40 Worcestershire County Council's technical research paper, Planning for Renewable Energy in Worcestershire (January 2009) and the West Midlands Renewable Energy Capacity Study (March 2011), provide the most detailed evidence of opportunities for the development of renewable and low carbon energy in south Worcestershire.

15.41 The West Midlands Renewable Energy Study identifies on-site micro-generation in new and existing developments as offering the largest opportunity for renewable energy generation in Worcester. On-site micro-generation also provides significant opportunities for Malvern Hills and Wychavon, particularly in proposed new developments.

15.42 To increase the supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, all new development (over 100 m² or one or more dwellings) will be required to incorporate the generation of energy from renewable or low carbon sources equivalent to at least 20% of predicted energy requirements.

15.43 For residential development, the policy applies to new development of one or more dwellings and new build extensions exceeding 100 m². Conversions, subdivisions and changes of use are excluded unless they involve increasing floorspace by over 100 m² gross. For non-residential development the policy applies to new development over 100 m² gross. Conversions, subdivisions and changes of use are excluded unless they involve increasing floorspace by over 100 m² gross.

15.44 The predicted energy requirement of a development is the total energy used in the building, i.e. both regulated and unregulated energy. Regulated Energy is covered by the Building Regulations and includes that used for space heating, hot water, lighting, and to run pumps and fans. Unregulated energy is the remaining energy and includes that used to run appliances, equipment and for cooking.

15.45 Using an energy hierarchy approach, the predicted energy requirement is reduced through energy efficiency and low energy design before meeting residual energy demand, first from renewable or low carbon sources and then from fossil fuels. Installing energy efficiency measures will mean that predicted energy requirement for a development will decrease. This, in turn, will reduce the level of renewable or low carbon energy generation necessary to meet the 20% requirement.

15.46 The 20% requirement applies to the whole development, rather than each building individually, where the development includes more than one building. The use of on-site sources, off-site sources or a combination of both, can be considered in meeting this requirement.

59 See Figure 5 of Worcestershire LEP Energy Strategy: <https://www.wlep.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/P3695-Worcestershire-Energy-Strategy-with-glossary.pdf>

15.47 To demonstrate that the renewable and low carbon energy target will be met, planning applications must be accompanied by an energy assessment.

15.48 All developments to which SWDPR 31 A applies will be expected to meet the renewable and low carbon energy targets unless it can be demonstrated that:

- a. A variety of renewable energy sources and generation methods have been assessed and costed; and
- b. Achievement of the target would make the proposal unviable (through submission of an independently assessed financial viability appraisal).

15.49 Based on existing patterns of heat demand, the West Midlands Renewable Energy Capacity Study also identified opportunities for district heating and CHP plants in Worcester, Pershore, Evesham, Droitwich Spa and Malvern.

15.50 The Seismic Study of Geothermal Potential in South Worcestershire (2017) also indicates that there is good potential to retrieve substantial deep geothermal energy in Offenham, with further potential identified in other areas including Throckmorton, Pershore, Worcester and Broadway.

15.51 Residential developments of 100+ dwellings or non-residential developments exceeding 10,000 m² are required to examine the potential for a decentralised energy and heat network.

15.52 To demonstrate that the potential for a decentralised heat network has been examined it will be necessary, as an initial stage, to prepare a heat map or other evidence, providing information on which parts of the development may be suitable for connection to a decentralised energy and heating network. As a general rule, decentralised heat networks may be appropriate if at least one of the following applies:

- Residential development density is around 50 dwellings per hectare or higher;
- Development is large scale and mixed use;
- Close to existing heat network; and / or
- Close to existing heat sources, e.g. industrial processes.

15.53 If the initial stage identifies a suitable opportunity, the next step will be to commission a feasibility study. If a decentralised energy and heating network is practical and financially viable then details of how it will be planned, installed, operated and funded need to be provided, including details of its maintenance.

15.54 If applicants consider that a decentralised energy and heat network is not financially viable, an independent viability assessment should be submitted to the local planning authority. An Energy Statement demonstrating how the 20% requirement under policy SWDPR 31A is to be met in the absence of a decentralised energy and heat network will also be required.

15.55 The retro-fitting of micro-generation technologies in existing developments will be encouraged, subject to consideration of potential impacts on local planning designations, the historic environment and the residential amenity of the local area.

15.56 Micro-generation and decentralised energy and heat supplies in new developments will provide only part of the solution to increasing the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy. Both the Planning for Renewable Energy in Worcestershire and the West Midlands Renewable Energy Capacity studies indicate opportunities for the development of stand-alone renewable and low carbon energy schemes including:

- Potential sites throughout south Worcestershire where there are sufficient average wind speeds to generate energy from wind turbines;
- Significant potential for biomass energy from existing woodland and from energy crops;
- Localised opportunities for hydroelectric power.

15.57 The NPPF (paragraph 154) states that proposed wind energy development involving one or more turbines should not be considered acceptable unless it is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a local plan or neighbourhood plan; and following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by the affected local community have been fully addressed and the proposal has their backing.

15.58 Whilst it is important that renewable and low carbon energy development is encouraged, it is also important that it is appropriately located and designed. The integration of stand-alone renewable and low carbon energy proposals into south Worcestershire's varied landscapes requires careful consideration. Statutorily protected areas, e.g. AONB in particular need to be protected from inappropriate development. The purposes of, and reasons for, such protective designations will vary considerably between sites and may not be in conflict with particular forms or scales of renewable and low carbon energy development. The key test in assessing proposals will be the extent to which they might affect the integrity of the designation.

15.59 Minimising any impacts caused by noise, odour, traffic and discharges to the air and watercourses will be important, particularly in relation to nearby residential areas and individual dwellings. Visual impacts on the landscape, impacts on heritage assets and ecology will also be relevant issues when determining the acceptability of proposals for large-scale renewable and low carbon energy proposals.

15.60 The wider benefits of renewable and low carbon energy projects will also be material considerations when assessing planning applications. These benefits include a contribution to CO² reduction, the diversification of local rural economies, the creation of new jobs and support for the regeneration of urban areas, including industrial and brownfield sites.

15.61 Community involvement in developing proposals for renewable and low carbon energy schemes is encouraged.

Management of Flood Risk

Introduction

15.62 This policy seeks to reduce the risk of flooding to people and property throughout south Worcestershire. The policy demonstrates how flood risk should be addressed and provides actions to implement in order to minimise the impact and adverse affects that may occur due to flooding.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.63 **Option 32** (Flood Risk) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Continue with the adopted policy approach (SWDP28c) of blue, red, and yellow floodplain zones and continue to prevent all development and redevelopment within the blue and red zones (those with the highest flood risk)"*, B: *"Take a more flexible approach within the red zone, allowing alterations, extensions and redevelopment of sites which are already developed providing that this provides betterment in terms of flood risk"*, C: *"Adopt a Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) and encourage collaborative working with catchment partnerships, using catchment plans, with the aim of providing benefits to the local community by reducing flood risk, clearing pollution, protecting water resources, improving bio-diversity and amenity value"* or D: *"Identify known areas associated with flooding caused by surface-water run-off and only allow development that could affect such areas if they contribute or resolve existing problems before development commences"*.

15.64 There were 66 responses in total - 2 of which were blank responses; 11 provided multiple suggestions to the options posed; a small number did not direct their answer to a particular Option; 10 did not suggest an option to proceed with - 2 of these were from the Environment Agency providing their thoughts on policy (these can be found within the document); 1 from the Local Lead Flood Authority providing their thoughts on policy (these can be found within the document); and a number accepted development may occur within areas of flood risk, but should only take place following robust flood risk assessment in line with the NPPF. Opinions have been made regarding climate change - this is something the SWCs will need to consider in their implementation of policy. 15 responses posed opposition to any development within areas of flood risk. This figure is somewhat skewed by the submission of 8 nuanced responses - 2 of these made reference to Middle Battenhall Farm. In terms of gaining results for the options suggested, there were 52 responses; of which 17 responses were in favour of Option A; 10 were in favour of Option B; 14 in favour of Option C; and 11 in favour of Option D.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

15.65 Current policy prevents any development in the red or blue floodplain zones - by continuing policy as is, residents would not be placed in locations at risk of flooding; this option would be unlikely to improve flood risk across the plan area. This would result in Option A having a minor positive impact on climate change adaption objective as it ensures the majority of new residents are situated away from land at risk of flooding.

15.66 Option B has the potential to increase the number of residents situated in the red floodplain zone - flood risk is higher in this zone due to past raising of land levels and existing development exacerbating the flood risk. Development that would decrease flood risk in the short term would be supported, with the long term aim to return the areas to open floodplain. However, it is predicted that due to climate change, the south Worcestershire-wide flood risk will be exacerbated. Therefore Option B could increase flood risk in the plan area in the long term and have a negative impact on climate change adaption.

15.67 A CaBA would improve the water environment at a local level - response to flooding issues within the plan area with a river basin catchment focus, would likely occur under this option. This approach would likely combat pollution issues to a greater extent than that of Option A and B whilst continuing to combat flood risk issues. Therefore, Option C would have a positive impact on the climate change adaption, natural resources, pollution and education objectives.

15.68 A large proportion of south Worcestershire could potentially be at risk from surface water flooding. Option D would help combat surface water flood issues in some locations whilst reducing the risk of flooding in the highest risk areas - this would ensure focus is directed to areas most at risk from surface water flooding, benefiting

new development and the surrounding areas. Additionally, it would likely reduce surface water flood risk across the plan area resulting in a positive impact on the climate change adaption, natural resources objective, and pollution objective.

15.69 Options C and D would be likely to result in the greatest benefits in combating flood risk in the plan area. Both options address different flood risk issues and should be considered in conjunction. Therefore, a single best performing option cannot be identified.

SWDPR 32: Management of Flood Risk

- A. In order to minimise the impacts of and from all forms of flood risk, including, but not limited to flooding from watercourses and surface water, the following is required:**
- i. Other than sites allocated in this plan, all development proposals must clearly demonstrate that the Sequential Test ⁽⁶⁰⁾ as set out in the latest version of the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA), has been applied. It should also take into account the impact of climate change over the lifetime of that development. The area of search for the consideration of reasonable alternatives should be discussed with the LPA and will be proportionate to the scale and type of the development being proposed. Ownership of land is not a reason in itself for a site to pass the Sequential Test.**
 - ii. If the Sequential Test has been satisfied, development proposals, other than those allocated in this plan, must also satisfy the Exception Test in all applicable situations as set out in the latest version of the SFRA.**
 - iii. After application of the Sequential Test (and Exception Test if required), a sequential approach to site design should be used to reduce risk, by placing the least vulnerable parts of the site in the highest flood risk areas.**
 - iv. Site specific Flood Risk Assessments (FRAs), informed by the latest version of the SFRA, or other relevant data (including historical), where:**
 - The development proposal is over 1 ha in size.
 - The proposal includes land in Flood Zones 2 and 3 (as defined by the most up-to-date flood risk mapping).
 - The development proposal (includes Flood Zone 1) affects land where evidence, in particular the SFRA, indicates there are records of historic flooding or other sources of flooding, e.g. due to critical drainage problems, including from ordinary watercourses ⁽⁶¹⁾ and / or a need for more detailed analysis or as indicated in the LLFAs Flood Spot Data.
 - v. Surface Water Drainage Strategies are required for all major developments; regardless of their size and the Flood Zone and catchment they are in to meet the requirements of the LLFA.**

Flood Risk Assessments

- B. All development proposals must adhere to the advice ⁽⁶²⁾ in the latest version of the SFRA and will:**

60 For residential development proposals the latest published [Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment](#) clearly shows that there is sufficient low flood risk land on which to meet the housing supply requirements for the plan period to 2041.

61 An ordinary watercourse is a watercourse which does not form part of a main river and may not hold water all the time. It includes: rivers, streams, ditches, drains, culverts, dikes, sluices, sewers and passages through which water flows (that are not classified as a main river by the [Environment Agency](#)).

62 The Environment Agency publishes flood risk assessment guidance notes for Worcestershire. Applicants should also refer to the National Planning Practice Guidance checklist for FRAs

- i. Provide level for level, volume for volume, flood plain compensation where necessary.
 - ii. Ensure no increase in flood risk or harm to third parties.
 - iii. Include appropriate allowances for climate change.
 - iv. Actively seek opportunities to reduce flood risk in the wider catchment(s), including Section 106 contributions to flood alleviation measures where necessary.
 - v. Ensure development is safe from flooding for its lifetime.
 - vi. Ensure development is appropriately flood resistant and resilient.
 - vii. Take into account all forms of flooding.
 - viii. Ensure safe access and exits are available for residential development in accordance with DEFRA guidance (Table 13.1 from FD2320 – Danger to People for Combinations of Depth and Velocity – see below). Access to 'safe refuges' or 'dry islands' are unlikely to be considered safe as this will further burden the Emergency Service in times of flood.
 - ix. Provide an assessment of residual risk.
 - x. Provide satisfactory Evacuation Management Plans, where necessary, including consultation with the Emergency Services and Emergency Planners.
 - xi. Ensure development layouts are informed by drainage strategies incorporating sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), as set out in SWDPR 33.
- C. The vulnerability of the development type to flooding should then be considered with regards to the Flood Zone information in the latest version of the SFRA:
- i. Where the site is Functional Floodplain (Flood Zone 3b) development should be resisted (including extensions and intensification of use and changes of use) and opportunities to relocate development out of the floodplain should be sought. The only development that can be permitted in Flood Zone 3b is essential infrastructure, subject to the Exception Test.
 - ii. Where the site is High Probability (Flood Zone 3a):
 - Opportunities should be sought to relocate highly vulnerable developments, such as caravans, mobile homes and park homes with permanent residential use to lower flood risk areas.
 - Caravans, mobile homes and park homes with holiday use can be permitted, subject to a site specific flood warning and evacuation plan and the application of the Exception Test.
 - Residential dwellings can be permitted, subject to the Exception Test.
 - A site specific Flood Risk Assessment must be submitted with a Planning Application for all sites in Flood Zone 3.
- D. To pass the Exception Test, developments will need to:
- i. Provide a demonstrable benefit to the wider sustainability of the area. Matters such as biodiversity, green infrastructure, historic environment, climate change adaptation, flood risk, green energy, pollution, health, transport should be considered. Applicants should detail the suitability issues the development will address and how doing so will outweigh

the flood risk concerns for the site, e.g. by facilitating wider regeneration of an area, providing community facilities, infrastructure that benefits the wider area.

- ii. Prove that the development will be safe for its lifetime taking account of the vulnerability of its users, without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will reduce flood risk overall.
- E. Developments in Flood Zone 3a that do not benefit from flood defences may be unlikely to be able to demonstrate that they can pass the Exception Test, unless a Flood Risk Assessment can demonstrate that suitable site level mitigation can be provided and that there is safe access and egress in a design flood (the 1% annual chance river flood).
- F. Where the site is Medium Probability (Flood Zone 2), most development can be permitted, subject to a site specific Flood Risk Assessment. Highly vulnerable development, such as caravans, mobile homes and park homes with permanent residential use can be permitted, subject to the Exception Test.
- G. Where the site is Low Probability (Flood Zone 1), the information in the latest SFRA should be used to assess if a development is at risk from other sources of flooding and/or if there is an increased risk of flooding in the future due to climate change. If this site is shown to be at risk, a site specific Flood Risk Assessment should accompany a planning application.

Cumulative Impact

New Settlements

- H. Any new settlement area should be accompanied by an overall Surface Water Management Masterplan and Strategy. This should cover:
- i. How the cumulative effects of potential peak rates and volumes of water from development sites would impact on peak flows, duration of flooding and timing of flood peaks on receiving watercourses. This should be used to develop and implement appropriate drainage sub catchments and specific runoff rate and volume requirements for each phase of the development.
 - ii. The risk of flooding from all sources, including for rainfall events greater than the design standard of the surface water drainage system should be taken into account to ensure there is no flood risk to new properties and that exceedance flows in extreme events are safely routed around those properties.
 - iii. The consideration of how SuDS, natural flood management techniques, green infrastructure and green-blue corridors can be designed into the development master plan to facilitate drainage flood risk management and ensure wider benefits such as biodiversity, amenity, water quality and recreation are realised.
- I. Based on the above, a Drainage Phasing Plan should be developed, based on the SuDS train method (considering firstly how water can be infiltrated / stored at a plot level, then conveyed through the site and any regional storage needs at a settlement level).
- J. The provision of drainage during the building phase shall be based on the Drainage Phasing Plan to ensure adequate drainage is provided and implemented throughout the development life.
- K. The LLFA, Environment Agency and LPA should be consulted during the development of the Surface Water Management Masterplan and Strategy.

Medium Risk Catchments

- L. In Medium Risk Catchments, development must:

- i. Incorporate SuDS and provide details of adoption, ongoing maintenance and management on all development sites. Proposals will be required to provide reasoned justification for not using SuDS techniques, where ground conditions and other key factors show them to be technically feasible. Preference will be given to systems that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure in the district where practicable.
 - ii. Seek to provide wider betterment by demonstrating in site-specific Flood Risk Assessments and Surface Water Drainage Strategies what measures can be put in place to contribute to a reduction in flood risk downstream. This may either be by provision of additional storage on site e.g. through oversized SuDS, natural flood management techniques, green infrastructure and green-blue corridors and/or by providing a Partnership Funding contribution towards any flood alleviation schemes. Consultation on the site-specific requirements should be undertaken with the LPA and the Environment Agency at the earliest opportunity.
- M. The LPA will work closely with the Environment Agency and Worcestershire County Council as LLFA to identify areas of land that should be safeguarded for the future use of natural flood management features.

High Risk Catchments

- N. For high-risk urban catchments, all new development (other than minor extensions) must:
 - i. Incorporate SuDS and provide details of adoption, ongoing maintenance and management. Proposals will be required to provide reasoned justification for not using SuDS techniques, where ground conditions and other key factors show them to be technically feasible. Preference will be given to systems that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure in the district where practicable.
 - ii. Seek to provide wider betterment by demonstrating in site specific Flood Risk Assessments and Surface Water Drainage Strategies what measures can be put in place to contribute to a reduction in flood risk downstream. This may either be by provision of additional storage on site, e.g. through oversized SuDS, natural flood management techniques, green infrastructure and green-blue corridors and/or by providing a Partnership Funding contribution towards a wider community scheme. Consultation on the site-specific requirements should be undertaken with the LPA at the earliest opportunity.
 - iii. Provide a Surface Water Drainage Strategy, regardless of development size.
- O. Worcestershire County Council, as LLFA, will review Surface Water Drainage Strategies in accordance with their local requirements for major developments. These should take into account all sources of flooding to ensure that future development is resilient to flood risk and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.
- P. The LPAs will review Surface Water Drainage Strategies for non-major developments.
- Q. The Environment Agency, in consultation with the LPA and Worcestershire County Council, will consider whether to formally designate the catchment as a Critical Drainage area. This would mean that a detailed Flood Risk Assessment would be required for all developments that are proposed, regardless of their size.

Rapid Response Catchments

- R. For rapid response catchments, new development must:
 - i. Ensure that all developments in flood risk areas have taken into account the rapid response nature of the catchments when designing safe access and escape routes, the availability of flood alerts and flood warnings and time people would have to respond and ensure no

additional burden is placed on emergency services as part of an agreed Emergency Flood Plan.

- ii. Seek to provide wider betterment by demonstrating in site specific Flood Risk Assessments and Surface Water Drainage Strategies what measures can be put in place to contribute to a reduction in flood risk downstream (and in particular by slowing the flow of water downstream). This may either be by provision of additional storage on site, e.g. through oversized SuDS, natural flood management techniques, green infrastructure and green-blue corridors and/or by providing a Partnership Funding contribution towards a wider community scheme. Consultation on the site-specific requirements should be undertaken with the LPA at the earliest opportunity.
- iii. Incorporate SuDS and provide details of adoption, ongoing maintenance and management. Proposals will be required to provide reasoned justification for not using SuDS techniques, where ground conditions and other key factors show them to be technically feasible. Preference will be given to systems that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and Green Infrastructure in the district where practicable.

Flood Risk and Caravans, Mobile Homes and Chalet Parks

- S. Caravans, mobile homes and park homes with permanent residential use should not be permitted in the Functional Floodplain or Flood Zone 3 and opportunities should be taken to relocate these developments to lower flood risk areas.
- T. Caravans, mobile homes and park homes with seasonal (holiday) use should not be permitted in the Functional Floodplain and are not likely to be permitted in Flood Zone 3, unless the developer can prove the development would pass the Exception Test, which is that it can be made safe from flooding and contributes to wider sustainability benefits. This is only likely to be the case where the proposed site is in an area benefiting from flood defences, a Flood Evacuation and Warning Plan can be put in place and where other local planning policies promote the development of holiday accommodation in that local area.
- U. Where existing caravan, mobile home and chalet parks are already located within the 'high risk' floodplain, permission will not be granted for intensification of the park through additional caravans and / or increased occupancy. Options for the relocation of the existing development to a suitable area of lower flood risk should be considered.

Protection and Enhancement of Watercourses

- V. Planning permission for development will only be granted where:
 - i. The natural watercourse profiles are not adversely affected and opportunities explored to enhance river corridors.
 - ii. A minimum 8m access strip is provided adjacent to the top of both banks of any watercourse for maintenance purposes. It should be appropriately landscaped for open space and biodiversity benefits (this width may be reduced in exceptional circumstances where agreed by the LPA). Access strips will count towards Green Infrastructure requirements for the site.
 - iii. It would not result in the loss of open water features through draining, culverting or enclosure by other means and culverts are opened up unless this would clearly compromise public safety.

To be read in conjunction with DEFRA Guidance Table 13.1 from FD2320⁽⁶³⁾ – Danger to People for Combinations of Depth and Velocity.⁽⁶⁴⁾

Reasoned Justification

15.70 Flooding and storm events in the south Worcestershire area, most notably in July 2007, have caused a significant amount of damage to property and service infrastructure. Many communities suffered psychological stress. The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs forecast a significant increase in annual damage to properties, infrastructure and higher casualties. It is therefore of paramount importance that the SWDP sets out robust policies that provide protection of floodplains from inappropriate development and which minimise the impacts of future flooding and storm events.

15.71 Most forms of development reduce the amount of rainfall that is intercepted by vegetation on the ground. Culverted watercourses have the potential to become blocked by debris during periods of heavy or sustained rainfall. They also offer little biodiversity or recreational interest relative to more natural watercourses. Even very small scale development can have detrimental implications for surface water run-off. In such cases, environmental and water quality benefits can be secured at minimal cost.

15.72 The Sequential Test should be firstly applied to all developments to ensure that development takes place in the lowest flood risk areas. The Sequential Test should take account of the information on river (fluvial) flooding and all other sources of flooding, using the information provided in the latest Strategic Flood Risk Assessment. It should also take into account the impact of climate change over the lifetime of that development.

63 FD2320 - Flood Risk Assessment Guidance for New Development.

64 http://evidence.environment-agency.gov.uk/FCERM/Libraries/FCERM_Project_Documents/FD2320_3364_TRP_pdf.sflb.ashx

Sustainable Drainage Systems

Introduction

15.73 This policy outlines the management of surface water run-off and demonstrates the requirements for implementing a Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS) scheme on all development. The policy provides a sustainable solution to help reduce and manage surface water run-off which might otherwise cause flooding and pollution. SuDS contribute to minimising flood risk, improvement of water quality and ground water recharge as well as enhance the biodiversity and amenity of sites.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.74 **Option 33** (SuDS) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Provide guidance and /or requirements on how developers should deal with the management and maintenance of SuDS components throughout their lifetime"* or B: *"Require developers to demonstrate that the three objectives of SuDS; to control the quantity and rate of run-off from a development; to improve the quality of the run-off; and to enhance the nature conservation, landscape and amenity value of site and its surroundings, will have equal standing"* or C: *"Develop a policy that requires SuDS are provided on all development proposals unless in exceptional circumstances"*.

15.75 There were 71 responses in total - 4 of which were blank; 17 provided multiple suggestions to the options posed; a number suggested that SuDS maintenance by the developer should be incorporated into policy; 4 suggested to continue with the current policy; whilst a number of responses were received from a number of developers but identical in content, offered support for Option A, whilst rejecting both Option B and C. A response was received from a developer suggesting that SuDS should contribute to on site Green Infrastructure figures (this is however being implemented; a number of responses made suggestions regarding how SuDS should be implemented by the SWCs) these varied in suggestion and can be found in the Issues and Options responses part of the document. A response was made in the wrong section whilst another made reference to obnoxious smells that may emanate from SuDS; a small number did not direct their answer to a particular option and general support for the policy has been noted throughout. Nine nuanced responses posed opposition to any development within areas of flood risk with a number making reference to Middle Battenhall Farm. In terms of gaining results for the options suggested, there were 85 responses, of which 34 were in favour of Option A; 29 were in favour of Option B; and 22 were in favour of Option C. Again, the figures are skewed in favour of Option A given the identical responses received from a number of developers.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

15.76 Option A would help to ensure that SuDS provided with new development have long-term management plans and can minimise flood risk and improve water quality for the foreseeable future. Option B would help to ensure all developments with SuDS are resulting in equal benefits for flood risk, water quality and biodiversity in each location - however, this option may not be the most efficient use of SuDS. Some locations may have greater issues with flood risk than others, and thus the SuDS should reflect issues relevant to specific sites rather than ensure the three objectives have equal standing. However, it is uncertain what quantity of new development will be required to provide SuDS under Option A or B, and therefore, how these options would effectively help tackle surface water issues across the plan area.

15.77 Option C would have the greatest positive impact on the climate change adaption, pollution, and biodiversity objectives as it would help to ensure the largest quantity of SuDS are provided across the plan area and thus help combat surface water run-off issues to a greater extent than Options A and B. Therefore, Option C is considered to be the best performing option.

SWDPR 33: Sustainable Drainage Systems

- A. To minimise flood risk, improve water quality and groundwater recharge and enhance biodiversity and amenity interest, all development proposals (as appropriate to their nature and scale) will be required to:**
- i. Demonstrate, through a Water Management Statement, that site drainage and run off will be managed in a sustainable and co-ordinated way that mimics the natural drainage network, the statement should show how the four pillars of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) are met by the scheme:**
 - to manage the quality of the run off;
 - to control the quantity and rate of run off from a development;
 - to provide an amenity benefit, to create and sustain better places for people; and
 - to provide a biodiversity benefit to create and sustain better places for nature.
 - ii. Manage surface water through SuDS and this must be considered at the earliest possible stages and designed in accordance with local and national requirements. Proposals will be required to provide reasoned justification for not using SuDS techniques, where ground conditions and other key factors show them to be technically feasible. Preference will be given to systems that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure in the wider area where practicable.**
- B. SuDS schemes should have regard to the South Worcestershire Water Management and Flooding SPD and the Worcestershire County Council Sustainable Drainage Design and Evaluation Guide.**
- C. All schemes must also take into account the most up to date climate change models and predictions for flood risk from Strategic Flood Risk Assessments, and / or the Environment Agency.**
- D. SuDS schemes must protect water quality and, wherever practicable, reduce the risk of diffuse pollution by means of treating at source and following the management train approach.**
- E. SuDS should be designed following the SuDS management train approach and preference should be taken to dealing with flows at the source using multiple features to maximise surface water treatment:**
- i. Secure the long-term maintenance of SuDS schemes. Ensuring SuDS are designed to be easy to maintain. A SuDS management plan should be used to demonstrate who will be responsible for maintenance of the features for the lifetime of the development, including details on how the maintenance will be funded and how it will be carried out.**
 - ii. As a minimum, demonstrate that for a greenfield site, the post-development surface water run off rate will not increase. Proposals on brownfield land must show that the post-development surface water run off rate has been reduced as close as reasonable practicable to the greenfield run off rate from the development for the same rainfall event. In all cases, development proposals must not increase surface water flood risk beyond the site.**
 - iii. Prior to the submission of a planning application, consult with Severn Trent Water to ensure appropriate water infrastructure is secured (surface water sewer capacity).**
 - iv. Avoid culverting of any watercourses and secure adequate maintenance access. Open up any culverted watercourses unless this will clearly compromise public safety.**

- v. **Demonstrate that the submitted landscaping scheme will preserve and wherever possible improve the ecological status of on-site watercourses and water bodies, including integration into the wider blue and green infrastructure.**
 - vi. **Demonstrate compliance with the Water Framework Directive, exploring opportunities to help meet its targets.**
- F. Lack of space, prohibitive costs, inadequate infiltration and land contamination will not be accepted as reasons for not including SuDS. Given the wide range of SuDS techniques available, there will be a sustainable drainage solution to suit all sites. Wherever possible, SuDS schemes should be at surface level to assist with monitoring and maintenance.**

To be read in conjunction with the Construction Industry Research and Information Association (CIRIA) SuDS Manual (2015), Table 7.1 of the manual ⁽⁶⁵⁾ and their guidance on the construction of SuDS Document ⁽⁶⁶⁾

Reasoned Justification

15.78 Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) highlight the benefits of providing a sustainable solution to help reduce and manage surface water run off which might otherwise cause flooding and pollution. These are physical structures built to receive surface water run-off and provide drainage solutions that mimic natural processes, (rather than piped solutions). By dealing with rain close to its source, SuDS can deal with polluted water and slow down flows across sites and into watercourses allowing settlement, filtering and infiltration, which also have ecological benefits.

15.79 Developers are required to work with the LPA, the LLFA / SWLDP, Canal and River Trust, Avon Navigation Trust and the Environment Agency to incorporate SuDS, where possible, in all new development to reduce the risk of flooding, pollution to watercourses and minimise negative impacts on biodiversity. This should be considered at the earliest stages possible and preliminary consultation with the SWCs is advised. Policy SWDPR 33 Sustainable Drainage Systems sets out the requirements for all development proposals.

15.80 SuDS can be designed to fit into most settings. The options available should be considered at the early stages of development. These should take full account of the Surface Water Management Train (SWMT), with the objective of exhausting all measures at the top of the SWMT before considering other control options.

15.81 SuDS measures seek to mimic natural drainage processes and reduce the impacts of urbanisation on downstream watercourses. These can operate at the level of individual properties (green roofs, water butts, soakaways in garden areas and porous paving of driveways); within neighbourhoods (swales, detention basins and porous paving of highways); and at the strategic level (through features such as large balancing ponds).

15.82 The basic principle with SuDS is to minimise the impacts of the development on the quantity and quality of run-off and maximise amenity and biodiversity opportunities. This three way concept is described as the SuDS triangle, discussed in further detail in 'The SuDS Manual (C753)', produced by CIRIA. The three objectives of quantity, quality and amenity / biodiversity should have equal standing and the ideal SuDS solution will achieve benefits in all three categories. This integrated approach is supported by the SWCs and should be demonstrated through the Water Management Strategy.

⁶⁵ https://www.ciria.org/Resources/Free_publications/SuDS_manual_C753.aspx

⁶⁶ <http://www.ciria.org/C768>

Water Resources, Efficiency and Treatment

Introduction

15.83 This policy seeks to adopt proactive strategies to mitigate and adapt to climate change, taking full account of flood risk, coastal change and water supply, and demand considerations. Water quality objectives are contained within the Water Framework Directive to ensure that development, both individually and cumulatively, does not have a detrimental impact on water quality by tackling diffuse pollution at source.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.84 Option 15 (Water Consumption) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Require new dwellings to meet the tighter Building Regulations optional requirement of 110 litres / person / day as per the adopted SWDP policy"* or B: *"Not implement a higher water standard than is set out within Building Regulations"*.

15.85 There were 60 responses in total - 3 of which were blank; one duplicated response; and 3 non-applicable responses. One of these questioned *'how the standards will be enforced'*, whilst another warned of the effects of *'social engineering the water supply'* - full response and subsequent officers response can be found within the document. A number of responses make reference to applying the tighter regulations in an effort to reduce climate change. There were 2 responses that suggested a policy of this nature is not required and to adopt the national standard. A number of nuanced responses, similar in nature (e.g. text, layout) have been submitted by planning agents on behalf of a number of clients - all of which are in favour of Option A. There were 3 responses that made reference to the use of 'grey water' and 'water harvesting' in an effort to reduce usage. In total, 20 responses were in favour of Option B, whilst 31 were in favour of Option A. 12 of the 31 suggested only implementing the tighter requirements where necessary to do so, i.e. in areas of serious water stress. Once those responses are removed, the results are approximately equal.

15.86 Option 34 (Water Quality) asked *"How should the SWDPR ensure that water quality is not compromised in new development?"* and posed the Options A: *"Require developers to demonstrate how they will prevent new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of water pollution?"* or B: *"Ensure that future development addresses the issues that currently prevent the water catchment from achieving Good Ecological Status or seek to maintain it?"* or C: *"Introduce a requirement for the opening up of culverts?"* or D: *"Introduce requirements for the inclusion of grey water recycling and rainwater harvesting methods into new development?"*.

15.87 There were 69 responses in total - 2 of which were blank responses; 15 provided multiple suggestions to the options posed; 7 responses suggested that a policy is unnecessary and can be regulated by other means; a small number did not direct their answer to a particular option / had no specific content to their response or made suggestions regarding changes to policy / options. Support has been noted throughout in various responses. There were a number of responses from a series of different developers that were identical and these generally questioned or demonstrated their particular view regarding the option. 9 nuanced responses posed opposition to any development within areas of flood risk and made reference to Middle Battenhall Farm. In terms of gaining results for the options suggested, there were 81 responses; 26 were in favour of Option A; 16 were in favour of Option B; 13 in favour of Option C and 26 in favour of Option D.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

15.88 Water Consumption In adopting Option A, new residents would be able to save water, reducing bills, energy use, environmental impact, and carbon dioxide emissions and thus have a positive impact on climate change mitigation and natural resources objectives. Under Option B, by not following stricter water consumption targets, it would be uncertain if new residents would save water. This option would have a minor positive impact on the natural resources objective.

15.89 Option A has been identified as the best performing option as it would ensure a lower volume of water is used across the plan area and would therefore help limit the use of non-renewable natural resources.

15.90 Water Quality It is uncertain if Option A would result in a significant improvement in Water Quality over the plan period, and may not see an increase of water use efficiency. Option A would be likely to have a positive impact on the pollution and waste objectives to a lesser extent than all the other options.

15.91 There are often several reasons why a water course is not achieving good ecological status - the urban and transport sector is one of these, where it is likely that careful planning of new development and infrastructure could help to enhance the ecological status of some water courses. Under Option B, an improvement of the water quality of the 604 rivers that are currently at moderate, poor or bad quality would be likely to have positive impacts for the biodiversity, human health and pollution objectives.

15.92 Option C supports national policy but can have a negative impact on biodiversity and flooding. However, Opening culverts can help reduce the risk of flooding. Blockages can lead to pollution issues and are often polluted due to miss-connected foul sewers, overflows from blocked courses and discharge from a contaminated source. Culverting is likely to lead to the loss and degradation of local landscape due to the loss of amenity green space along river banks. The removal of culverts under Option C would have a positive impact on the climate change adaption, biodiversity, landscape, health and well being, natural resources and pollution objectives.

15.93 If implemented across the Plan area, Option D could potentially result in a reduction in energy required for water treatment processes as a whole. As a side effect, the installation of water recycling systems could potentially increase the households carbon footprint due to the energy required for pumping and treatment. Therefore, it is uncertain if Option D would have an overall positive or negative impact on the climate change mitigation objective.

15.94 Although Option C would be likely to result in the greater proportion of positive impacts as seen in the scoring matrix, the four Options listed for improving water quality look at combating issues in a variety of ways. Therefore, the four options should be considered in conjunction with one another and a single best performing option has not been identified.

SWDPR 34: Water Resources, Efficiency and Treatment

- A. **All development proposals must demonstrate⁽⁶⁷⁾ that there are or will be adequate water supply and water treatment facilities in place to serve the whole development. For phased development proposals, each phase must demonstrate sufficient water supply and water treatment capacity.**
- B. **Development proposals in areas where there is no mains foul drainage provision will be required to apply the hierarchy of drainage options set out in the National Planning Practice Guidance⁽⁶⁸⁾ and evidence to the satisfaction of the relevant LPA why those at the top of the hierarchy cannot be achieved.**
- C. **For housing proposals, it must be demonstrated that the daily non-recycled⁽⁶⁹⁾ water use per person will not exceed 110 litres per person per day.**
- D. **For business / commercial proposals, it must be demonstrated that the water use meets the Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Methodology (BREEAM) 'excellent' standard.**
- E. **Proposals that would result in an unacceptable risk to the quality and / or quantity of a water body or water bodies will not be permitted.**
- F. **All development will be required to incorporate grey water recycling and rain water harvesting into their proposals.**

67 Confirmation from Severn Trent Water is required.

68 Water Supply, Wastewater and Water Quality, sub-section 2, paragraph 20.

69 Mains water supply.

Reasoned Justification

15.95 The NPPF specifically states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change, taking into account the long-term implications for the water environment including water supply.

15.96 Local authorities have a general responsibility not to compromise the achievement of UK compliance with the Water Framework Directive (WFD)⁽⁷⁰⁾ (Directive 2000/60/EC). More specifically, the SWDP has to take into account the relevant Catchment Management Plans, which in itself is a requirement of the WFD as is for water bodies to meet 'good ecological status'. The Localism Act 2011 enables the UK Government to require local authorities to pay if their inaction results in a failure to meet WFD requirements. The Localism Act 2011 also requires local planning authorities to co-operate on strategic cross-boundary matters, for example the provision of water supply infrastructure, water quality, water supply and enhancement of the natural environment. Consequently, there is a need for developers to engage positively with Severn Trent Water (STW) to ensure that all the necessary infrastructure (including that identified in the most up-to-date Water Cycle Study) is secured, so as to ensure that there is no deterioration in the quality or quantity of water of the receiving water body(ies) and to avoid delays in the delivery of development.

15.97 The 2006 Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act imposes a duty on LPA to have regard to conserving biodiversity in carrying out all of their functions. The NPPF (paragraph 170) requires planning policies to enhance the natural and local environment by minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity.

15.98 There are many areas that are served by small, localised waste water treatment works and non-mains drainage systems such as cesspools and septic tanks. These, if poorly designed or maintained, have the potential to cause significant detrimental impacts on the water environment and consequently to biodiversity and human health.

15.99 The most up to date South Worcestershire Water Cycle Study looks at the level of planned growth and the ability of the infrastructure (i.e. water supply and waste water treatment) to accommodate it without adversely affecting the natural water cycle. It identifies an overall shortage in future water supplies that necessitates the delivery of minimum water efficiency targets in advance of the Government's proposals.

15.100 The effective management of water is considered critical in the pursuit of sustainable development and communities. It reduces the impact flooding can have on the community, maintains water quality and quantity and helps to enhance local amenity/property value and biodiversity through the provision of Green Infrastructure. Effective water management also reduces the movement of water and sewage, thereby reducing energy requirements. Development proposals incorporating grey water recycling and rain water harvesting will therefore be required unless demonstrably evidenced that this cannot be reasonably achieved and opportunities for the retrofitting of water efficiency measures will be encouraged.

15.101 In implementing this policy, the SWCs will liaise and work with the EA, STW, the South Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership and the Lead Local Flood Authority.

70 [Introduction to Water Framework Directive; Details of Water Framework Directive in England](#)

Physical Constraints on Development

Introduction

15.102 Physical constraints on development include a number of different factors which impact on human health and safety and the condition of allocated or neighbouring sites and their uses, in line with the NPPF (Paragraphs 178-183). The policies aim to ensure that development proposals do not have an adverse impact on either existing or future land uses and the community. This had previously been considered through a single policy in the adopted SWDP. However, the Issues and Options consultation proposed development of new policies with each policies addressing a specific issue.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.103 **Option 37** (Physical Constraints on Development) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Introduce three new policies on; Amenity (noise, odour and light pollution), Contaminated land and land instability, and Air Quality Management"* or B: *"Retain the existing approach of covering all issues relating to physical constraints on development in one policy"*. The majority of the responses favoured developing new policies to cover these matters individually, primarily because of the complexity of these issues and the importance which is placed on these matters within south Worcestershire and in the NPPF, and to address the two counter concerns that policies should be proportional to the size of the development and must not stray into matters which are covered by other non planning regulatory regimes.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

15.104 The Sustainability Appraisal considered the two options of whether to continue with the current single policy approach of the adopted SWDP or whether to develop three new policies to address the specific issues individually.

15.105 The SA concluded that the development of three individual policies would facilitate a more detailed policy approach which would provide greater clarity with regard on the individual policy areas. The continued use of a single policy would create greater uncertainty because it would have less detail and provide less guidance for developers. The SA determines that the development of three different policies is the best performing option when measured against its criteria.

SWDPR 35: Amenity

- A. **Development will be required to provide a high standard of amenity for existing and future users of the development itself and preserve the amenity of those living, working or visiting the area.**
- B. **Development which would result in unacceptably adverse impacts on amenity, including during the construction phase of any development, on neighbouring uses, in terms of both individual and cumulative impacts will not be supported.**
- C. **Development proposals must be designed to avoid any unacceptably adverse impact on residents from the agents of nuisance, which are considered to be noise, light, odour and effluvia.**

Reasoned Justification

15.106 Developers must consider the impact on the amenity of existing residents or proposed new residents, businesses and visitors. Amenity and nuisance may include; noise, light, smoke, effluvia etc. that have the potential to have a negative impact on human health and the environment. Development proposals must be designed to avoid, throughout their lifetime, any unacceptably adverse impacts.

15.107 New development must be environmentally sustainable and appropriate for its location taking into account the likely effects (including cumulative effects) on health and the natural environment, as well as the potential impacts of the site to the existing environment or community.

Noise

15.108 Development proposals that are likely to emit significant noise and vibration during their construction or operation will be required to submit a Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment. This may include development proposals for warehousing, leisure centres, general industry particularly operations which involve plant, waste management operations, energy generation and / or unsocial hours of operation.

Lighting

15.109 Lighting should be restricted to the safe minimum required for the development. For public roads and footways lighting should always meet the local highway authority required standards. Lighting assessments will be required including details of any proposed mitigation to reduce the impact on neighbouring land uses and any sensitive environmental receptors where an adverse impact is identified. Where appropriate, in the Malvern Hills AONB and Cotswolds AONB, reference should be made to additional guidance on external lighting and dark skies.

Odour and effluvia

15.110 Development types likely to generate malodours and emissions such as dust, fumes, smoke, heat, radiation, gases or other forms of pollution must demonstrate that these will not have an unacceptably adverse impact on amenity.

15.111 An impact assessment will be required to be submitted for all relevant proposals including details of deliverable mitigation proposals.

Air Quality

Introduction

15.112 The adopted SWDP does not have a policy that specifically deals with Air Quality and does not set out the baseline for specific justification requirements. The inclusion of an air quality management policy will help to boost requirements that seek planning gain through the management of air quality and cumulatively reducing the impacts upon health, landscape and biodiversity. A specific air quality management policy will also provide the opportunity to apply greater importance when considering Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and sustainability appraisals.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.113 **Option 37** (Physical Constraints on Development) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: "Introduce three new policies on; Amenity (noise, odour and light pollution), Contaminated land and land instability, and Air Quality Management" or B: "Retain the existing approach of covering all issues relating to physical constraints on development in one policy". The majority of respondents favoured an approach to introduce three new policies in line with Option A. (Introduce three new policies on; Amenity (noise, odour and light pollution, Contaminated land and land instability, and Air Quality Management) for reasons detailed above.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

15.114 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 36: Air Quality

1. **For all of the following types of proposal, Air Quality Assessments of the likely impact on air quality must be submitted with any application:**
 - i. **New transport infrastructure for road, rail, air or water based transport;**
 - ii. **Housing developments of 80 dwellings or more;**
 - iii. **Industrial, commercial or leisure uses with 100 or more car parking spaces;**
 - iv. **Intensive units for poultry⁽⁷¹⁾;**
 - v. **Biomass boilers⁽⁷²⁾;**
 - vi. **Airports and airfields;**
 - vii. **Energy generation from fossil fuels; and**
 - viii. **Large vehicle depots such as bus stations, lorry parks, park and ride sites or businesses expected to receive a large number of vehicle movements.**
2. **Additionally for applications within an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) adjacent to an existing AQMA or areas at risk of becoming an AQMA⁽⁷³⁾. Air Quality Assessments must be submitted for the following types of application:**
 - i. **Residential development of 10 or more dwellings;**
 - ii. **Educational establishments including pre-school and nurseries;**
 - iii. **Hospitals or other healthcare facilities;**
 - iv. **Biomass Boilers⁽⁷⁴⁾; and**

71 housing in excess of 400,000 birds (if mechanically ventilated) or 200,000 birds (if naturally ventilated) or 100,000 birds (turkey unit) or where a residential or other sensitive building is within 100m of the poultry unit.

72 with a burn rate of 45.4kg/hour or where the cumulative effects of multiple boilers on the site equates to the same.

73 A full list of AQMAs and sites at risk of becoming AQMAs can be found at Worcestershire Regulatory Services website at: www.worcsreservices.gov.uk

74 with a burn rate of 45.4kg/hour or where the cumulative effects of multiple boilers on the site equates to the same.

v. **Employment proposals.**

3. **Where an Air Quality Assessment individually or cumulatively indicates exposure to pollutant concentrations at or above the relevant national air quality objectives, adequate and satisfactory mitigation measures which are capable of implementation must be secured and implemented as part of the proposals.**

Reasoned Justification

15.115 New developers can have an adverse influence on air quality. In Worcestershire there are a number of Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) where the annual mean level of nitrogen dioxide exceeds the national objective, representing a risk to human health.

15.116 Environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure must be identified, assessed and taken into account, including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects and for net environmental gains.

15.117 Planning policies should sustain and contribute towards compliance with relevant limit values or national objectives for pollutants, taking into account the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones, and the cumulative impacts from individual sites in local areas. Planning decisions should ensure that any new development in Air Quality Management Areas and Clean Air Zones is consistent with the local air quality action plan.

15.118 Air quality assessments are required for types of applications listed. Where relevant because the impact arises from traffic generation, the air quality assessment must be based on local highways authority approved transport assessments and include an assessment of the current standard of air quality, the impact of the development and proposals to reduce, manage or mitigate air quality to acceptable levels.

15.119 It is expected that supporting information will be prepared and obtained in accordance with appropriate Legislation, National Guidance, Standards or best practice. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Technical Guidance provides advice and information to applicants, landowners and developers to ensure information submitted in support of planning applications is suitable and appropriate.

Land Stability and Contaminated Land

Introduction

15.120 The adopted SWDP does not have a specific policy which solely considers land stability and contaminated land. Instead this is considered as part of Policy 31 Pollution and Land Instability. The inclusion of a separate policy will assist in providing greater clarity as to the matters to be considered as part of this policy, and how they are being addressed in south Worcestershire. The separate policy will provide the opportunity to attach greater importance to these issues when considering SEA and sustainability appraisals.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.121 **Option 37** (Physical Constraints on Development) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Introduce three new policies on; Amenity (noise, odour and light pollution), Contaminated land and land instability, and Air Quality Management"* or B: *"Retain the existing approach of covering all issues relating to physical constraints on development in one policy"*. The majority of respondents favoured an approach to introduce three new policies in line with Option A. (Introduce three new policies on; Amenity (noise, odour and light pollution, Contaminated land and land instability, and Air Quality Management) for reasons detailed above.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

15.122 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 37: Land Stability and Contaminated Land

- A. **Planning proposals for development on land which is or may be contaminated by a previous or current land use or activity must include an appropriate level of survey and proposed mitigation or treatment measures to prevent adverse impacts to current or existing users or visitors to the site and the wider public and any risk of damage to existing or proposed buildings or structures. Planning proposals for development on or adjacent to unstable or potentially unstable land must include details of remedial, mitigation or treatment measures to prevent injury to the public or current or existing users of the site and any risk of damage to existing or proposed buildings or structures.**

Reasoned Justification

15.123 Any activity which has caused chemicals, fuels or waste to be present on a site, results in the potential for contamination to be present and represent a potential risk to human health, water or the ecological environment which would require a survey to be undertaken. Current and past land uses which may result in contamination include:

- Factories;
- Gas works;
- Tanneries;
- Vehicle repairs;
- Any land which has had chemicals, fuels or waste used or stored on site;
- Infilling of land including ponds, ditches or marshy areas.

15.124 A site may also have been exposed to contaminants which migrate through the ground or in groundwater due to activities that were or are being undertaken on neighbouring sites.

15.125 The history of a site and surrounding land uses must be considered when evaluating the likely presence of significant contamination of land instability.

15.126 Where development would result in an unacceptable risk, developers must provide proposals to manage or mitigate the contamination to a minimum agreed standard.

15.127 The actual or possible presence of land contamination is a material planning consideration. The NPPF takes a precautionary approach to land contamination and before the principle of development can be determined, land contamination should be investigated to see whether it could preclude certain development due to environmental risk or cost of clean-up (remediation).

15.128 The level of information required will depend on the level of risk posed and sensitivity of the proposal but will include a desktop study of available information, site walkover observations and a risk assessment (Phase I Study) and on sites with any identified significant risk will be expected to include a site investigation findings report with a risk evaluation and validation report on any remedial work undertaken. It is expected that supporting information will be prepared and obtained in accordance with appropriate legislation, national guidance, standards or best practice. Worcestershire Regulatory Services Technical Guidance provides advice and information to applicants, landowners and developers to ensure information submitted in support of planning applications is suitable and appropriate.

15.129 Where development is proposed on or adjacent to known or suspected unstable land including near to past mining areas⁽⁷⁵⁾, developers must submit an assessment which determines the stability of the site and identifies any remedial measures before an application can be decided. Land near to past mining activities may be at risk of being unstable.

⁷⁵ applicants will need to check if their land is in the Development High Risk area as defined by the Coal Authority and, if so, submit a Coal Mining Risk Assessment to support the development. The Coal Authority has identified locations of potential instability arising from historic coal mining and these are shown on the interactive map on the Coal Authority's website <http://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/coalauthority/home.html>

Minerals

Introduction

15.130 Minerals extraction is the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council, and policies for the extraction of minerals are not considered in this plan.

15.131 However, county and district planning authorities are required by the NPPF, to work together to address the safeguarding of known minerals resources to prevent minerals resources being compromising by alternative forms of development, such as housing or employment land which could prevent the mineral resources from subsequently being worked. This is because minerals can only be worked where they are found and are a finite resource essential to the economy and infrastructure.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

15.132 The Issues and Options consultation did not ask any specific questions on minerals extraction because it is the responsibility of the Worcestershire County Council. The adopted SWDP included a policy on safeguarding which has been revised and updated below to align with the emerging Minerals Local Plan being developed by Worcestershire County Council.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

15.133 There are no specific findings in the Sustainability Appraisal with regard to minerals safeguarding.

15.134 Non-exempt development⁽⁷⁶⁾ Mineral Safeguarding Area or Mineral Construction Area, (as shown on the Policies Map) or within 250m of an existing, planned or potential minerals supporting infrastructure site⁽⁷⁷⁾ will be required to assess the scope for minerals extraction in accordance with the policies in the Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan.

SWDPR 38: Minerals

- A. **Non-exempt development⁽⁷⁸⁾ Mineral Safeguarding Area or Mineral Construction Area, (as shown on the Policies Map) or within 250m of an existing, planned or potential minerals supporting infrastructure site⁽⁷⁹⁾ will be required to assess the scope for minerals extraction in accordance with the policies in the Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan.**

Reasoned Justification

15.135 Worcestershire's locally and nationally important mineral resources, mineral sites and supporting infrastructure will be safeguarding from sterilisation by non-materials development. Minerals extraction is an important part of the south Worcestershire economy and an adequate supply of minerals is necessary to provide for new housing, other built development and infrastructure.

15.136 Minerals are a finite resource which can only be worked where they are found, and it is therefore important to make best use of them to secure their long term conservation. Development can 'sterilise' mineral resources (make them inaccessible for potential extraction) or prejudice the operation of mineral sites and

76 As defined in the Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan, Publication Version and the interactive map available at <http://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk/Website/MineralsLocalPlan/>

77 As notified by the County Planning Authority under Schedule 1; paragraph 7 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

78 As defined in the Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan, Publication Version and the interactive map available at <http://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk/Website/MineralsLocalPlan/>

79 As notified by the County Planning Authority under Schedule 1 paragraph 7 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

supporting infrastructure. This can be either directly (for example by building over land that contains mineral resources or redeveloping infrastructure sites for other uses) or indirectly (for example through the introduction of sensitive land uses in close proximity to these resources or sites).

15.137 Minerals Consultation and Minerals Safeguarding Areas are designated by the Minerals Planning Authority and cover the known deposits of locally and nationally important minerals in the county which need to be protected from sterilisation by non-minerals development where this should be avoided NPPF (paragraph 204c) and where consultation is required with the Minerals Planning Authority on development proposals that have the potential to sterilise the minerals potential of the site.

15.138 Minerals Safeguarding Areas identify the mineral resources of local and national importance which should be safeguarded from sterilisation by non-mineral development.

15.139 Minerals Consultation Areas include the Minerals Safeguarding Areas and an additional 250m around them to ensure both direct and indirect impacts are considered.

15.140 Mineral sites and supporting infrastructure includes existing, planned and potential sites for the bulk transport, handling and processing of minerals; the manufacture of concrete and concrete products; and the handling, processing and distribution of substitute, recycled and secondary aggregate material NPPF (paragraph 204 e). If development is proposed which could have an adverse impact on the operation of minerals infrastructure, or the operation or restoration of mineral sites, consultation is required with the Minerals Planning Authority on development proposals.

15.141 Worcestershire County Council is the Minerals Planning Authority for Worcestershire. It is responsible for minerals planning for the whole of Worcestershire. The Minerals Consultation area areas are set out in the emerging Minerals Local Plan for Worcestershire and the broad extent of minerals which occur in south Worcestershire are shown in the Minerals Consultation areas.

Tourist Development

Introduction

16.1 This policy looks to provide a framework for determining tourist development proposals primarily aimed at visitor attractions and associated facilities. In so doing it seeks to complement tourism strategies and policies for both the SWCs as well as a range of other organisations and businesses across the plan area.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.2 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.3 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 39: Tourist Development

A. Proposals for the expansion and development of the tourism potential of south Worcestershire (excluding visitor accommodation – see SWDPR 40) will be permitted where the following criteria are met:

- i. **The development is compatible with the physical character of the area.**
- ii. **The significance of heritage assets and their setting is conserved and, where appropriate, enhanced.**
- iii. **The public enjoyment and understanding of the historic and natural environment is promoted.**
- iv. **Where schemes are proposed on greenfield land, consideration has been given to the availability of alternative brownfield sites.**
- v. **Appropriate provision is made for access and vehicular parking facilities (including coach parks, where appropriate).**
- vi. **The site is readily and safely accessible by means of transport other than the private car.**

Reasoned Justification

16.4 South Worcestershire relies heavily on tourism and leisure, and it is an important element within the overall economy of the area. Along with Worcester, the towns and villages - with their rich history and the acknowledged high landscape quality - make south Worcestershire a key destination within the Midlands for short breaks and for overseas visitors.

16.5 Tourism, both nationally and locally, is an expanding part of the economy. At a national level, tourism expenditure in the UK is estimated to be at £85bn, employing 1.4 million people directly⁽⁸⁰⁾. During the past decade, within the county as a whole, tourism generated in the region of £522m through the presence of 11 million visitors per annum⁽⁸¹⁾.

16.6 For Worcester, the main towns and larger villages, there are important links between economic vitality and support for conservation of the built and natural environment. Tourism provides uses for historic buildings, supports greater diversity within central shopping areas and improves the viability of a range of sporting and cultural events. Within the rural context, the Framework requires local authorities to support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit rural businesses and communities.

80 DCMS (2010) [Winning: A Tourism Strategy for 2012](#)

81 Worcestershire Destination Management Plan 2012 - 2015

16.7 Visitor attractions can range from site-specific interpretation centres or museums, e.g. Hartlebury Castle to extensive theme and leisure parks and landscape-scale geoparks, e.g. the Abberley and Malvern Hills Geopark, with its popular long-distance footpath, the Geopark Way. The policy supports proposals that are compatible with the physical character of the area, reduce the need to travel by private vehicle and look to maximise the reuse of brownfield locations.



Visitor Accommodation

Introduction

16.8 This policy seeks to provide a framework for determining development proposals for new or the expansion of existing tourist accommodation, i.e. hotels, B&B, guest houses and holiday lets. In so doing it seeks to complement tourism strategies and policies for both the SWCs as well as a range of other organisations and businesses across the plan area.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.9 Option 22 (Hotel Accommodation) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Allocate a specific site for a four star hotel within Worcester city centre"*, B: *"Set out a positive development management policy for a four star hotel within Worcester city centre"*, C: *"Not make a specific allocation or include an explicit policy to attract a four star hotel to Worcester city centre"* or D: *"Seek to address other hotel accommodation needs across south Worcestershire"*.

16.10 A total of 31 representations were submitted to this option. There was limited support for not promoting a new hotel in the city with support evenly spread between allocating a site or including an enabling policy. There was also a similar level of support for improving the hotel accommodation offer across south Worcestershire. A limited number of comments were made which included the recommendation to improve existing accommodation, that it was not a priority and that a four star hotel could be included within the Worcester South strategic allocation in the SWDP.

16.11 In response, SWDPR 35 does provide a framework to support visitor accommodation across the whole plan area and it is appropriate that the policy continues to do so. In terms of delivery, there is a level of support for a new four star hotel in Worcester. However, given the absence of a specific site that is being promoted for such a purpose the preferred option is to include the enabling policy criteria and addition to the reasoned justification as set out below.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary.

16.12 The option of a pro-active Development Management policy is likely to provide greater clarity and more detailed guidance for a new hotel in Worcester, whilst allowing for an appropriate site to come forward when available.

SWDPR 40: Visitor Accommodation

- A. **Planning permission for new⁽⁸²⁾ visitor accommodation⁽⁸³⁾ within Development Boundaries will be permitted where:**
 - i. **It is of an appropriate type and scale for the location or building; and**
 - ii. **There is no adverse impact on neighbouring amenity.**
- B. **Planning permission for new⁽⁸⁴⁾ visitor accommodation outside a development boundary, will be permitted where**
 - i. **Ai and Aii of this policy are satisfied; and**
 - ii. **It forms part of a farm or other land-based rural business diversification scheme; or**

82 Includes changes of use and extensions.

83 Includes hotels, guest houses, bed and breakfast accommodation and holiday lets.

84 Includes changes of use and extensions.

- iii. **It would provide ancillary accommodation to an existing public house, restaurant, or similar establishment; or**
- iv. **It forms an extension or alteration to an established hotel or venue; or**
- v. **It reuses a redundant or underused rural building of permanent and substantial construction; or**
- vi. **It adjoins a development boundary and is physically related to visitor accommodation within the boundary.**

Reasoned Justification

16.13 Visitor accommodation can take a wide variety of forms, including hotels, bed and breakfast, guest houses, self catering, i.e. holiday lets and group accommodation such as youth hostels.

16.14 A significant proportion of visitor spend is on accommodation and therefore the retention of existing and the provision of new visitor accommodation is an essential element of supporting tourism in the south Worcestershire area. By encouraging the development of visitor accommodation in built-up areas, the environmental impact of building in the open countryside can be minimised. Sites within settlements are more appropriate as they already have access to the infrastructure, amenities and public transport links and cycling and walking infrastructure needed to support them.

16.15 Tourism in Worcester is crucial to the local economy, bringing spend into the city (£130 million in 2015) and providing employment directly and indirectly (3,000 jobs in 2015). Staying visitors are a particularly important element of the tourist economy with 180,000 over night stays in the same year. Given the importance of tourism to Worcester's economy, the need to safeguard, provide and enhance the city's visitor facilities, including the accommodation offer, is essential if Worcester is to realise its potential as a high quality and competitive visitor destination. Reflecting this and the aims of national planning policy, there is a desire to encourage and plan for high quality and sustainable forms of visitor accommodation in Worcester. The retention of existing and provision of new high quality and sustainable visitor accommodation is therefore of key importance to the city and surrounding area so as to provide a range of accommodation types.

16.16 The size and scale of new hotels should be relative to the size of the host settlement. It is recognised that the NPPF requires local authorities to support tourism in rural areas and the countryside. South Worcestershire offers numerous 'destination' hotels and visitor accommodation in villages and locations in the open countryside and the policy looks to support these businesses.

16.17 To enable tourism to enhance the local community, it is important that it does not compromise the amenity of local residents. The conversion of buildings to guest houses and hotels, especially within residential areas, can generate patterns of activity that are disruptive to neighbours. Suitable buildings may include detached or a semi-detached/terrace residential property, or a commercial building, e.g. ground floor office. Prefabricated industrial buildings would be unsuitable.

16.18 Proposals will require careful consideration of the siting, scale and design, materials and landscaping of the proposed development and must ensure that they harmonise with the local environment. Proposals within the Cotswolds and Malvern Hills AONB will be subject to additional screening to ensure that any development, either by itself or cumulatively, will not have an adverse effect on the character of the area.

16.19 Within the open countryside, making the best use of existing accommodation through reuse, extension or alteration, will help to minimise environmental impacts. Converting redundant or underused buildings which are not of a permanent and substantial construction, nor capable of conversion without major restructuring, additional building, or extension, will clearly have a greater landscape impact.

Static and Touring Caravans, Chalets and Camping Sites

Introduction

16.20 This policy seeks to provide a framework for determining development proposal for new and existing holiday accommodation for touring and static caravans, camping with moveable tents, and holiday units within a site for temporary holiday rental, e.g. camping pods or fixed position tents. In so doing it seeks to complement tourism strategies and policies for both the SWCs as well as a range of other organisations and businesses across the plan area.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.21 Option 23 (Tourist Accommodation) asked respondents whether the SWDPR should A: *"Update the tourist accommodation policy to include new forms of accommodation, such as glamping, pods and safari tents, and take a more flexible approach to allowing these uses"* or B: *"Update the definition of tourist accommodation so that new forms of accommodation are covered within the existing policy"*. A total of 36 representations were submitted to this option. The option presented were both to update SWDP 36 with reference to new forms of accommodation, e.g. clamping, pods and safari tents, but if appropriate allow a more flexible approach to allowing these uses. There was overwhelming support to update the types and definitions of tourist accommodation but were divided evenly between retaining the criteria in the adopted policy and allowing more flexibility for these type of uses. The preferred option is to update the list of the range of accommodation types but it is considered the policy as worded provides a framework to consider planning applications for this type of development in a positive manner, whilst introducing a degree of constraint to safeguard the environment and locally amenity.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.22 Updating the policy to provide a wider definition is considered the most sustainable option leading to a diversity of tourist accommodation and significant benefits to the local economy.

SWDPR 41: Static and Touring Caravans, Chalets and Camping Sites

- A. **Proposals for new sites, and proposed extensions or improvements to existing static and touring caravan, chalet (including 'log cabins'), and camping sites (including safari tents, yurts and glamping), will be permitted where:**
- i. **The site is not within Flood Zones 2 or 3;**
 - ii. **The site is visually unobtrusive and well-screened from important local view points, environmentally sensitive locations and public highways;**
 - iii. **Landscaping is provided consistent with the landscape assessment within the site and around its boundaries;**
 - iv. **The development is of a design, form and scale that is well-related to its setting and does not exceed the capacity of the area to accommodate the proposal, having regard in particular to landscape and infrastructure considerations;**
 - v. **The vehicular traffic generated by the proposal can be safely accommodated on the local highway network; and**
 - vi. **The proposal makes adequate provision for foul drainage, water supply and utilities and for sewage pump-out and waste disposal.**

Reasoned Justification

16.23 Caravanning and camping sites are popular leisure destinations and they provide flexible tourist accommodation and mobile holidays at a relatively moderate cost. They can also be of great benefit to the local economy. As most types of caravan / camping holidays are self-catering, local shops, pubs and restaurants will benefit from the additional trade such visitors generate. Large numbers of visitors can also contribute greatly to the success of local attractions and other local businesses.

16.24 Proposals are likely to minimise the impact of future uses and development on the landscape through the utilisation of careful siting and comprehensive landscaping. It is also important that there should be no adverse effect on the surrounding environment, wildlife, agricultural uses or sites of archaeological and historic interest.

16.25 Access is also an important consideration and sites must be located close to an appropriate highway. Proposals must demonstrate that the extra traffic generated does not compromise highway safety. Static sites do not need to be located near to major roads but the local road network must be able to cope with the initial delivery of caravans and the consequent traffic generated by visitors and service vehicles. Access to public transport, public footpaths and cycle routes will be considered when dealing with planning applications.

16.26 Landscaping and locational requirements will be particularly stringent for applications for caravan sites in order to prevent them from becoming obtrusive in the countryside. Particularly sensitive areas include exposed riverbanks, high or sloping land that is visually prominent or land within the Cotswolds and the Malvern Hills AONB.



Built Community Facilities

Introduction

16.27 This policy seeks, through development, to provide opportunities for social interaction and support for healthy lifestyles within new buildings or the enhancement of existing buildings, that support community, recreation and sports facilities.

Issues and Options - Consultation Summary

16.28 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.29 This topic was not considered as part of the Sustainability Appraisal. The intention is to continue with the policy, but to include an additional section that specifically relates to the provision of village halls and community buildings.

SWDPR 42: Built Community Facilities

- A. **The provision of new community facilities (examples listed below) or the enhancement of existing facilities will be permitted, particularly where the proposals have resulted from neighbourhood planning, subject to satisfying the sequential test in the NPPF where applicable. Applicants will be required to consider whether the combining or rationalisation of existing facilities would be more appropriate than the provision of a new facility.**
- B. **Any proposal that would result in the loss of a site or building currently or last used as a community facility will only be permitted if the following criteria are met:**
 - i. **An alternative community facility which meets local needs to at least the same extent is, or will be, provided in an equally or more accessible location; or**
 - ii. **It has been demonstrated that there is an excess of similar provision in the appropriate catchment area for that particular facility and the site or building is not needed for any other community facility; or**
 - iii. **In the case of commercial community facilities, it has been demonstrated that it would not be economically or operationally viable to retain the facility for community use; or**
 - iv. **In the case of non-commercial community facilities, the use is no longer operationally viable; or**
 - v. **The community facility could not be provided or operated by either the current occupier or by an alternative occupier (e.g. by a local community body, public-private partnership) and it has been marketed in accordance with Annex B (Marketing Requirements).**
 - vi. **Applicants are required to scope existing facilities in the area and consider whether it would be more appropriate to combine or rationalise existing facilities in the first instance.**
 - vii. **Applicants proposing to re-develop or convert a community facility should consult the appropriate community prior to the submission of a planning application.**

Community Buildings and Halls

- C. **All new residential development of 10 dwellings or more (or over 5 dwellings in Designated Rural Areas) is required to make a financial contribution to the off-site provision or enhancement of built community halls (including village halls). Large strategic sites may need to provide for on-site community halls, which will be detailed in site specific policies. The requirements are as follows:**

Hierarchy Category	Settlement (related wards)	Provision (per 1,000 people)
Urban Areas - City and Main Towns	Worcester City Droitwich Spa Evesham Malvern	1:5,000
Urban Areas - Other Towns and Rural Areas	Pershore Tenbury Wells Upton-upon-Severn Category 1, 2, 3 villages and below	1:1,500

D. Community facilities comprise specific buildings (and associated land) for a range of uses including:

- **Health facilities.**
- **Emergency services i.e. ambulance, police, fire.**
- **Educational establishments such as school and colleges.**
- **Community centres and village halls.**
- **Leisure and cultural facilities.**
- **Public houses.**
- **Places of worship.**
- **Libraries.**
- **Built sports facilities.**
- **Cinemas and theatres.**
- **Formal sports pitches / courts relating to the built form, e.g. changing rooms, pavilions, toilets.**

Reasoned Justification

16.30 This policy is consistent with the NPPF that seeks to promote opportunities for social interaction and enable and support healthy lifestyles, through the provision of community, recreation and sports facilities. Additionally, the South Worcestershire Community Buildings and Halls Report 2019 sets out the need for new community buildings and halls, or the enhancement of existing facilities to serve the population.

16.31 The policy allows for changes under the Localism Act 2011. This permits the listing of Community Assets, the Community Right to Challenge (in delivering public services) and the encouragement of communities to run their own facilities, or plan for the local area through neighbourhood planning. This allows for the consideration of a wider range of community services when appropriate, acknowledging that the importance of particular facilities will vary between communities. It is essential that the community is involved in considering the merits of any new facility and the sustainability of alternative uses.

16.32 The SWCs wish to protect valuable community facilities and services that play an important role in the social infrastructure of south Worcestershire and help to secure sustainable communities. These mainly local facilities are particularly important in helping to maintain a high quality of life for local residents, some of whom have limited access to facilities further afield. Under certain circumstances it may be more appropriate to look at combining or rationalising built facilities in a locality rather than replicating them through a new proposal. In situations where a facility may be redundant a robust assessment should have taken place, as appropriate.

16.33 In particular, community buildings and halls play an important role in both urban and rural areas in providing places where people can meet and take part in educational, cultural and sporting activities. The policy gives a standard for larger development which is required to make a financial contribution to a new community hall, or the enhancement and maintenance of an existing hall. More details of the contributions required will be outlined in a supplementary planning document.

16.34 In the case of any proposals that would result in the loss of a community facility, a satisfactory assessment should be undertaken (using recognised national methodology, e.g. Sport England), that proves there is an excess of similar provision in the appropriate catchment area for that particular facility and the site or building is not needed for any other community service / use.

16.35 When applying these tests to specific proposals, the LPA will have full regard to the particular characteristics, needs, service priorities and objectives of the service or organisation concerned. The implications of maintaining and running new facilities will also be an important consideration.

16.36 For urban areas, proposed facilities should ideally be located within development boundaries. Within rural areas, proposals should be located within, or adjoining the settlement. If the proposal is for large scale community facilities, it must meet the requirements of SWDPR 10 in reflecting the sequential approach to the location of land uses that attract large numbers of people; such sites should, in the first instance, be sought within the development boundary of the urban areas.

Green Space

Introduction

16.37 This policy seeks to protect and enhance designated Green Spaces, which are part of the wider green infrastructure provision in south Worcestershire. It is also relevant to the provision of new green infrastructure through development proposals, and when implemented are subject to this policy. The policy is set in the context of SWDPR 4, the overarching Green Infrastructure policy.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.38 Option 28 (Green Space) asked “Should the SWDPR continue to protect all currently designated green space?” and “Should the SWDPR review all designated green spaces and consider whether any are surplus, poor quality green space that could be released for development?”. There were 89 respondents to this option, of which three were left blank and six were unrelated to the options detailed above. Those unrelated comments were a range of site specific comments, extensive detailing on the importance of significant gaps to the characteristics of villages, and comments detailing the need to realign policy with the updated NPPF. There were a total of 58 respondents out of 89 who opted for Option A in isolation. All comments relating to Option A showed some appreciation of the importance of green space but some respondents felt that it would be a waste of resources to commission a review of all designated green space. A total of 20 respondents supported Option B in isolation with a general theme that the ‘poor quality’ criteria for reviewing green space would need to be clearly defined and considered. The Canal and River Trust submitted representations stating that they do not support the official designation of their land or water as local green space and would resist any such designation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.39 The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) considered Option A would be likely to be the best performing Option, with minor positive impacts on the biodiversity, landscape and health objectives.

16.40 Option B was considered to have minor negative impacts for the biodiversity and health objectives. However, a review of green spaces would only consider the removal of green space (from the SWDP Policies Map) if for example it was deemed to be surplus to requirements and/or not performing a green space function. SWDP policies require newly formed green space, i.e. through provision on new developments to be added to the green space network. A neutral or positive net gain could therefore be achieved.

16.41 Therefore, while Option A was considered by the SA to be the best performing option, it was considered that there was merit in also considering Option B as part of the overall evidence base gathering process to help inform any revisions to the policy.

SWDPR 43: Green Space

- A. **Green Space, as identified on the Policies Map⁽⁸⁵⁾, includes a range of private⁽⁸⁶⁾ and public open spaces and associated community facilities.**
- B. **Development of Green Space will not be permitted unless the following exceptional circumstances are demonstrated:**
 - i. **The proposal is for a community / recreational use that does not compromise the essential quality and character of the Green Space; or**

⁸⁵ The policy applies to new Green Spaces secured through planning permissions which will be included on the Interactive Policies Map.

⁸⁶ The Green Space designation does not prejudice a householder's permitted development rights.

- ii. **A robust, independent assessment of community and technical need (using recognised national methodology where appropriate) clearly demonstrates that the Green Space is surplus to requirements in that location; or**
 - iii. **Alternative or replacement Green Space of at least equivalent community and technical benefit has been secured in a suitable location⁽⁸⁷⁾.**
- C. This policy should be read in conjunction with policies SWDPR 4, 26, 33, 34 and 44 as any new applicable Green Infrastructure secured under these policies will be designated and protected as Green Space once implemented.**

Reasoned Justification

16.42 Green Spaces are an important part of the Green Infrastructure (GI) which makes up the network of open and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages to the open countryside. Well-designed, attractive and functional open space is an essential component for a high quality of life. It contributes positively to biodiversity, health and the character of an area and can help mitigate the impacts of extreme temperatures and flash flooding. It can also stimulate business investment in an area through environmental protection and enhancement.

16.43 The NPPF (paragraphs 91; 96 and 97) emphasises the benefits of recreational open space in terms of its contribution to creating sustainable patterns of urban and rural development, its role in maintaining strong and vibrant communities and the associated promotion of health and wellbeing. Green Space for recreation and sport can also deliver a number of other GI objectives, often simultaneously.

16.44 There is a wide range of types of open space across south Worcestershire; for example, playing fields, recreation grounds, allotments, cemeteries, parks, amenity green space and natural green space. They are all part of and contribute to the GI within and outwith settlements. Other open spaces have high ecological or landscape value and are protected elsewhere in the plan, e.g. SWDPR 26 Biodiversity and Geodiversity and SWDPR 27 The Cotswolds and Malvern Hills AONB.

16.45 SWDPR 43 aims to protect open spaces identified on the Policies Map, together with numerous incidental open spaces too small to include but that nonetheless contribute to the quality and character of their areas. These small local spaces are often valued and used heavily by local communities and are therefore worthy of policy protection. Whilst most open spaces are publicly accessible, some are in private ownership, although nonetheless perform valuable functions such as contributing to biodiversity, the character of the area and providing a sense of openness and space.

16.46 The SWCs published an updated Open Space Assessment in 2019. The assessment considers the quantity, quality and accessibility of a range of open space typologies across south Worcestershire. All of the typologies mapped in the assessment are covered by this policy. This report, along with other local evidence will be considered when assessing development proposals that could have an impact on Green Space.

16.47 Policy SWDPR 4 Green Infrastructure is an overarching strategic policy that seeks to provide for new GI in development and to protect existing green infrastructure. It sets the context for this policy. The wider GI network and its accessibility and connectivity is an important consideration in assessing the role of any Green Space within its wider context and its value to the community and wildlife.

⁸⁷ A suitable location will be dependent on the need for, and the type of facility being proposed.

Provision of Green Space and Outdoor Community Uses in New Development

Introduction

16.48 This policy is to ensure that new development contributes to the provision of open space and recreational facilities in order to support objectives of delivering healthy communities, with opportunities to take part in physical activities and social interaction.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.49 There were no specific questions or options related to the development of this policy proposal in the Issues and Options consultation; please refer to Green Space (Option 28).

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.50 This topic was not specifically considered as part of the Sustainability Appraisal. The intention is to continue with the policy, but to update the provision standards based on the Open Space Assessment 2019 Evidence Base update.

SWDPR 44: Provision of Green Space and Outdoor Community Uses in New Development

- A. Residential development proposals of 10 dwellings or more should make provision for Green Space and outdoor community uses as set out in Table 4, together with secure arrangements for its long-term management and on-going maintenance.
- B. The total amount of Green Space / outdoor community uses will be within the overall quantum of Green infrastructure required by SWDPR 4. In addition to Table 4 the precise amount, and form of these uses will be informed by local evidence, e.g. neighbourhood plans, parish and town plans, village design statements. Enhancing accessibility to open spaces, e.g. through improvements to the Rights of Way network is also strongly encouraged.

Table 4 Open Space Quantity and Accessibility Standards of Provision

Typology	Open Space Quantity Standards (ha/1,000 population)	Access Standards
Allotments	0.3	720 metres or 15 minutes walk time
Amenity Green Space (sites > 0.15ha)	0.7	600 metres or 12-13 minutes walk time
Parks and Recreation Grounds (public and private) ⁽⁸⁸⁾	1.7	600 metres or 12-13 minutes walk time
Play Space (Children)	0.05	600 metres or

88 Includes an allowance for Playing Pitch Provision.

Table 4 Open Space Quantity and Accessibility Standards of Provision

Typology	Open Space Quantity Standards (ha/1,000 population)	Access Standards
		12-13 minutes walk time
Play Space (Youth)	0.05	720 metres or 15 minutes walk time
Natural Green Space	1.0	920 metres or 20 minutes walk time
Total provision	3.80 ha/1,000 population	

- C. In cases where it would be impractical or inappropriate to deliver all the open space typologies on site, developer contributions towards off-site provision will be sought and secured through legal agreement. For large scale proposals most typologies must be delivered on-site and relate to any site specific policy requirements where relevant. In all cases the developer will be required to secure the long-term maintenance / management arrangements for all Green Space / outdoor community uses on and off-site.
- D. On-site provision of Green Space should have regard to the accessibility standards set out in Table 4 in terms of safe walking distance to the dwellings proposed.

Reasoned Justification

16.51 The NPPF advocates supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities and this includes the provision of open spaces. Open space is important for sport and recreation purposes, for visual amenity and good mental health and wellbeing, and for its wildlife value.

16.52 It is considered that the provision of new functional open space, and the retention or enhancement of existing open space is necessary in order to achieve active, healthy and integrated communities. The type and size of any residential proposal will also be a factor in determining the make-up of the various open space typologies. Quantitative over provision in any single typology does not negate the need to provide for the other typologies, or for quality improvements.

16.53 The South Worcestershire Open Space Assessment (2019) identifies standards for new open space provision required in the plan area, both in terms of the quantity of open space, by different typologies and its accessibility to the population it will serve, based on an analysis of current facilities. It also refers to quality standards that should be taken in to account. Where the required open space provision is challenged, a satisfactory assessment should be undertaken using recognised evidence, e.g. the Open Space Assessment 2019, that proves there is excess provision of a particular typology, and there is suitable access to alternative provision that is of an acceptable quality.

16.54 The South Worcestershire Playing Pitch Strategy (2015) also informs the need for specific play pitch facilities, either for the necessary level of developer contributions to be made towards new provision, or upgrading existing provision, in order to meet new demand created through new residential development. There will be a requirement on some sites to provide on-site pitches as identified in various site specific allocation policies. The Parks and Recreation Grounds (public and private) typology includes an allowance for playing pitch provision.

16.55 A Supplementary Planning Document will be produced to explain the policy requirements for on-site or off-site provision in more detail.



Waterfronts

Introduction

16.56 This policy sets out criteria against which proposals for waterside development can be assessed relating to the waterfront of Worcester and main towns on the rivers and canals of south Worcestershire. The policy supports the redevelopment and regeneration of waterfront locations, urban design improvements to the public realm and encouraging public access and enjoyment of the waterside.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.57 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.58 There were no SA options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 45: Waterfronts

- A. The waterfront locations at Droitwich Spa, Evesham, Pershore, Tenbury Wells, Upton-upon-Severn and Worcester will be protected and enhanced by:**
- i. Ensuring new development establishes a positive relationship with the waterway and takes full advantage of its location, addressing the waterways as a frontage, opening up views and improving public access.**
 - ii. Supporting mixed use development proposals, particularly those that enable the public to enjoy the waterside in buildings fronting the waterway, and the provision of public spaces or squares.**
 - iii. Protecting and improving access points to the waterway, including paths, towpaths, cycle routes and facilities for launching boats.**

Reasoned Justification

16.59 The valleys of the River Severn, Avon, Teme and their tributaries contribute significantly to the natural character of south Worcestershire, whilst the canal networks are a legacy of the county's industrial heritage. The waterways provide for recreational, tourism and commercial activities for the benefit of the community and local economy. In turn, opportunities will arise both to enhance the quality of the river frontages within the urban areas and, on a wider scale, to improve access along south Worcestershire's waterways.

16.60 Waterways also provide an important role in providing and enhancing wildlife habitats and Green Infrastructure, as well as offering opportunities for their protection through the adoption of appropriate management strategies. Conversely, inappropriate waterfront-based development can harm the natural environment.

16.61 In the wider context of supporting approaches to sustainable development, waterway use needs to be flexible enough to allow for possible future opportunities to utilise the local or national network for transportation, energy generation or other purposes, including water conservation and providing a supply for irrigation purposes.

16.62 The aim of this policy is to ensure development proposals are appropriate in their use and design and establish a relationship with the waterway. Mixed use developments are more likely to increase the vitality of waterside locations and facilitate better access to centres.

16.63 In developing schemes, regard should be had to the Worcester City Centre Masterplan and other guidance given by the LPA for river / canal frontages, e.g. in Wychavon the Evesham Riverside Framework, or the Droitwich Canals Supplementary Planning Guidance.



Marinas and Moorings

Introduction

16.64 This policy sets out criteria to support marinas, boatyards and leisure moorings and ensure access to the waterway on the rivers and canals of south Worcestershire.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.65 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.66 There were no Sustainability Appraisal options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 46: Marinas and Moorings

- A. Proposals for marinas, boatyards and leisure moorings, including new-build structures or extensions will be permitted where:**
- i. They have regard to all potential users of the waterway and do not result in conflicting uses or unacceptable environmental consequences.**
 - ii. They do not interfere with the navigation with the waterway or, in cases of emergency, prevent safe access or egress onto the waterway.**
 - iii. They are located within or adjoining a development boundary, or, in the case of moorings, at a location where there are existing authorised uses for moorings and boating facilities.**
 - iv. They make provision for public access on foot and bicycle.**
 - v. The provision of access, servicing and car parking would not adversely affect amenity, particularly that of a waterway.**
 - vi. In the case of leisure moorings, they are for short-stay and subject to an assessment of the number and capacity of existing provision, impact on landscape and provision for safe access.**
 - vii. The site has adequate land-based utility infrastructure and support facilities.**
- B. Proposals for new commercial moorings and wharfs for vessels engaged in transporting cargo, or providing services for tourists and day visitors will be permitted provided that they meet criteria A i, ii, v and vii above.**

Reasoned Justification

16.67 A marina is an area that generally contains a large number of moorings together with supporting facilities such as boat sales, repair facilities, chandlery, club house, car parking, water, fuel and sewage disposal points. Within or adjoining an existing built-up area a well-designed marina can be a positive asset. They may also offer a full range of boat storage and shore facilities for the boat user and provide a focus for waterway traffic. These would normally include sewage, waste, water, secure storage and sanitary facilities. Other types of business may also operate from either a moored boat, e.g. cafes, restaurants and visitor based attractions, or provide boat hire services / cruises for tourists and day visitors bring economic benefits to the locality.

16.68 Such development can have an urban appearance and may generate significant road traffic movements; as such they are generally considered inappropriate in smaller settlements and the open countryside. However, it may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances to support the development of larger or more permanent marina facilities outside urban areas.

16.69 Moorings cumulatively can have a negative impact on the landscape and visual amenity of the waterway. Whilst most development of permanent moorings will be restricted to basins, marinas and urban locations or sites with an established use for function, where existing land-based facilities are located in a smaller settlements or the open countryside, e.g. a waterside public house, it may be appropriate in exceptional circumstances to support the development of new moorings in the context of this policy.

16.70 In particular the policy looks to support and maintain the transfer of cargo via the waterway as a sustainable means of transport and reducing road haulage trips. This is particularly relevant to the River Severn that still maintains a degree of commercial river traffic but would apply to other waterways in south Worcestershire where applicable.

16.71 It is also important to ensure that safe access or egress from the waterway to the bank can be maintained in cases of emergency. Therefore, 'breaks' in pontoons / moorings should be included to ensure anyone in the water can sight the bank or be rescued. Off-waterway moorings in basins and 'cuts' may have less visual impact and would aid the flow of waterway traffic and the visual appearance of the bank or towpath.

16.72 Recreational leisure boat users require short stay or overnight moorings where the only facilities necessary are mooring posts and preferably public footpath access. This is distinct from permanent residential moorings that are covered by the criteria in SWDPR 47.

16.73 Proposals and applications should have regard to the relevant strategies, guidance and policies relating to marinas and moorings published by the appropriate navigation authority, i.e. Canal and River Trust, Avon Navigation Trust and of the views of the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.

Residential Moorings

Introduction

16.74 This policy sets out criteria for assessing proposals for residential moorings and ensure that appropriate level of services and facilities are provided or future residents.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.75 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.76 There were no Sustainability Appraisal options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 47: Residential Moorings

- A. Where there is scope for residential moorings as part of a marina or basin, or on waterways in urban locations or settlements, planning permission will be granted where:**
- i. They do not conflict with the navigation authority or the Environment Agency's operational requirements.**
 - ii. Necessary site services, such as water supply, electricity and arrangements for the removal of domestic waste, are provided.**
 - iii. There is appropriate permissive access and parking.**
 - iv. There will be no significant adverse effect on the amenity and conservation interest of the waterway, e.g. on tow pathways.**
 - v. They do not result in a proliferation of residential moorings and waterside facilities in a particular location.**
 - vi. There is safe access from any vessel or from the waterway to dry land in cases of emergency.**

Reasoned Justification

16.77 Residential moorings are part of the overall housing stock. Although the opportunities are limited, there are a number of positive benefits that include a more inexpensive housing option, the opportunity for sustainable living and increased footfall and surveillance that in turn increases safety for other users.

16.78 The acceptability of proposals for such moorings will depend on site circumstances and whether they comply with other policies in the SWDPR, in particular the criteria set out in SWDPR 46. Some boats have on-board services and facilities, e.g. waste pump-out, water and therefore it may not always be necessary to provide these at every new mooring site.

16.79 New moorings should provide an acceptable means of safely existing the vessel to dry land in the event of an on-board emergency or flooding. Likewise it is important that access from the waterway to the bank can be maintained at all times. Therefore 'breaks' in pontoons / moorings should be included to ensure anyone in the water can sight the bank or be rescued.

16.80 Any proposals or applications should also have regard to the relevant strategies, guidance and policies relating to moorings published by the appropriate navigation authority, i.e. Canal and River Trust, Avon Navigation Trust and the views of the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England.



Equestrian Development

Introduction

16.81 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation and has subsequently arisen from discussions with the Development Management team post consultation, with the new policy based on such, and other authorities development plan policies. The absence of such policy in the adopted SWDP regarding this type of development, considering such applications received for development of this nature, has led to the inclusion of this policy.

Consultation - Issues and Options Summary

16.82 This policy was not part of the Issues and Options consultation.

Sustainability Appraisal - Issues and Options Summary

16.83 There were no Sustainability Appraisal options considered for this policy.

SWDPR 48: Equestrian Development

- A. Proposals for Equestrian Development ⁽⁸⁹⁾ will be permitted in rural locations whereby:**
- i. It is of an appropriate size and scale, relative to its intended use, and be compatible with the surrounding landscape and uses;
 - ii. It prioritises (where possible) the reuse of existing buildings and, in the case of construction of a new facility or buildings, is well integrated into the existing built form (where present) and its surroundings;
 - iii. It is appropriate in terms of siting, design, scale layout, external materials and appearance;
 - iv. It does not adversely impact upon the character, appearance or ecology of the landscape and / or any environmental, nature, planning, or landscape designation ⁽⁹⁰⁾; and
 - v. It can be provide with safe access and does not have an unacceptable impact on local roads;
 - vi. It does not have a detrimental effect on the amenity of neighbouring properties and wider local area by reason of noise, smell, over looking, or other general disturbance; and
 - vii. For commercial equestrian developments, proposals maximise the opportunities to make the location more sustainable.
- B. In all cases, applicants will be expected to demonstrate the adequate provision of land to allow for the proper care of horses, including stabling, grazing and exercise, in accordance with the Equine Industry Welfare Guidelines ⁽⁹¹⁾.**

Reasoned Justification

16.84 Planning permission is required for all new development associated with the keeping of horses, including stables, field shelters, farm diversification to equine activities, and commercial equestrian activities. Whilst it is recognised that the keeping and riding of horses are popular countryside pursuits, development involving horses can have a negative effect on the appearance of the countryside, e.g. causing issues of over development and over grazing where land has been divided up into smaller parcels and higher levels of traffic generation.

89 To include domestic and commercial equine uses which comprise (but are not limited to) stables, riding schools, arenas, stud farms, racing or livery stables, and maneges.

90 These include but are not limited to: Green Belt, AONB, significant gaps, conservation areas, special areas of conservation, and SSSI

91 Refer to <http://www.newc.co.uk/law/equine-code-of-practice/?LMCL=EDKENr>

16.85 The development of commercial equine uses in rural areas such as riding schools and arenas, stud farms, racing or livery stables will be carefully scrutinised to assess their impact, individually and cumulatively, on the purposes and visual amenity of the countryside (especially in the Green Belt and landscape designated areas) and on the local highway network including bridle ways. Proposals should demonstrate how the potential for any opportunities to make the location more sustainable have been maximized, e.g. by improving scope for access on foot, by cycling or by public transport.

New and Expanded Settlements

Worcestershire Parkway

17.1 Worcestershire Parkway will be the main focus of strategic development for the plan period to 2041. The broad area, as identified on the Policies Map, extends to approximately 1,130 hectares and is bounded by the M5, A44, the Cotswold and Malvern Line, the north east - south west main railway lines and Stoulton to the east. The deliverable capacity for the plan period is approximately 5,000 dwellings and 50 ha of employment land. The boundary of the allocation contains sufficient land to deliver far more development beyond 2041.

SWDPR 49: Worcestershire Parkway

A. Land uses (Policy map to be prepared for the pre-submission SWDPR):

- i. **Residential - 5,000 dwellings (variable densities and location to be agreed through a masterplan SPD).**
- ii. **Employment - 50 ha. Most of this will be located south of the B4084 near to Junction 7 of the M5 (to be confirmed through a masterplan SPD).**
- iii. **Retail - A town centre with 2-3 local centres (to be confirmed through a masterplan SPD).**
- iv. **Office / Commerical / Leisure (buildings); likely to be focused on the town centre.**
- v. **Education; one secondary school and three primary schools.**
- vi. **Green Infrastructure - A minimum of 40% Green Infrastructure.**
- vii. **Energy Generation - Solar Power and storage sufficient to power at least a quantum of development proposed.**
- viii. **Flood Risk - betterment with respect to the total surface water runoff.**

Transport Infrastructure

B. Whilst the most important element, Worcestershire Parkway Station, is already being delivered, further investment is necessary in order for the new settlement to function effectively and minimise impacts on surrounding road junctions, in particular Junction 7 of the M5. There is the need for:

- i. **Additional platform and further dualling of the Cotswolds and Malvern Line between Worcestershire Parkway and Worcester Shrub Hill Station in order to deliver a 20 minute interval rail service.**
- ii. **Dedicated cycle way provision, avoiding M5 Junction 7.**
- iii. **A new link road linking the B4084 with the A44.**

Other Infrastructure

C. An exhaustive list of infrastructure requirements cannot be confirmed yet, rather this will be set out in the pre-submission document. For now, the following are likely to be required :

- i. **Emergency Services Department, e.g. a police post, fire station.**
- ii. **Health Infrastructure, e.g. doctors surgery.**
- iii. **Education- For the 5,000 dwellings a secondary school and three primary schools**
- iv. **Community Facilities; over and above a leisure centre there is likely to be a need for social facilities such as a town hall and youth centre.**
- v. **In addition to a leisure centre, the new town will require various formal sports facilities, e.g. football, rugby and hockey pitches.**

Land at Throckmorton Airfield

17.2 This is for a proposed new settlement, to include Throckmorton itself, whose centre will be at the airfield. It is considered that approximately 2,000 dwellings and 20 ha of employment land can be delivered by the end of the plan period. It is anticipated that development will not commence until 2030 by which time the critical transport infrastructure, i.e. a new link to the A44 and a 500 space car park at Pershore Railway Station will have been provided. In order to ensure that this new settlement is relatively self contained, the proposed size is 6,000 dwellings which would generate the need for a new secondary school and three primary schools. It is proposed to prepare a Throckmorton Airfield Development Plan Document, which will set out in detail the development boundary, the quantum of development, the range of land uses and all of the necessary infrastructure needed alongside an evidence base which will need to demonstrate development viability and deliverability.

SWDPR 50: Land at Throckmorton Airfield

A. Land uses:

- i. **2,000 dwellings (with a further 4,000 beyond 2041).**
- ii. **20 ha of employment land (with a further 40 ha beyond 2041).**
- iii. **Local centre comprising retail, office , medical and community uses (expanding to a town centre beyond 2041).**
- iv. **Education; secondary school and two primary schools (possible adding a second secondary school and 2-3 more primary schools beyond 2041).**
- v. **At least 40% Green Infrastructure and sufficient solar power capacity to power the whole development**

Rushwick Expanded Settlement

17.3 This is for a proposed expanded settlement at Rushwick. It is considered that 1,000 dwellings and 10 ha of employment land can be delivered by the end of the plan period. It is anticipated that the development would not begin until after 2030 by which time the critical transport infrastructure, i.e. a new railway station and 500 space car park would be secured. It is proposed to prepare a Development Plan Document for Rushwick which will set out in detail the development boundary, the quantum of development, the mix of land uses and all of the necessary infrastructure needed alongside an evidence base which will need to demonstrate development viability and deliverability.

SWDPR 51: Rushwick Expanded Settlement

A. Land uses:

- i. **1,000 dwellings.**
- ii. **10 ha of employment land.**
- iii. **New primary school (1 form entry plus existing 2 form entry).**
- iv. **New railway station and 500 car parking spaces.**
- v. **Local Centre to include retail and community uses.**

vi. **40% Green Infrastructure.**

Directions for Growth Outside the City Administrative Boundary: Existing Urban Extensions to be Reallocated

17.4 Within the areas identified on the Policies Map, three sustainable, well-designed urban extensions are proposed for reallocation from the 2016 SWDP. These sites will come forward in accordance with the requirements below.

SWDPR 52: Directions for Growth Outside the City Administrative Boundary: Existing Urban Extensions to be Reallocated

- A. **Broomhall Community and Norton Barracks Community (Worcester South Urban Extension) - SWDP45/1 (247.1 hectares⁽⁹²⁾):**
- i. **Delivery of approximately 20 ha of employment land and around 2,600 dwellings. The rate of delivery will be dependent upon the phased implementation of the Worcester Transport Strategy and in particular the dualling of relevant sections of the A4440 Southern Link Road.**
 - ii. **The dwellings will be of mixed size and type in accordance with the requirements of policy SWDPR 13, and up to 40% will be affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of policy SWDPR 14.**
 - iii. **The diagram for SWDP 45/1 below shows the broad distribution of land uses and of various policy requirements, which include a centrally located local centre incorporating:**
 - **a range of community facilities and services including a two-form entry primary school, community building, emergency services infrastructure, children's centre and youth facilities;**
 - **local convenience store and comparison retailing; and**
 - **mixed uses comprising modest scale business development (B1 only) and A2 uses, plus A3, A4 and A5 use class business development of a scale appropriate to serving the local community.**
 - iv. **The local centre should include no more than 2,500 m² net of retail floorspace and no single convenience store should exceed 2,000 m² net.**
 - v. **There will be no built development in the parts of the site liable to flooding, as defined in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and / or a site specific Flood Risk Assessment.**
 - vi. **New and enhanced sports and social facilities at Norton Barracks.**
 - vii. **Subject to viii and ix below, in the Significant Gap to the south of Norton Barracks, between Norton Road and the M5, only uses that maintain the openness of the land will be permitted.**

92 This is the gross and it includes land within the Development Boundary for the rural settlement of Norton Barracks / Brockhill Village (27.5 ha) which is not subject to SWDP45/1

- viii. No more than 85 of these 2,600 dwellings will be permitted east of Norton Road. Up to 40 of these will be in the Significant Gap, to provide surveillance of the proposed community, sports and recreation facilities.
- ix. Provision of a site for Travellers for up to 10 pitches within the Urban Extension⁽⁹³⁾.
- x. Contributions to infrastructure, in accordance with SWDPR 6, including education, sporting and recreational facilities, and emergency services infrastructure.
- xi. Measures, including proportionate contributions directly related to the development, to support and safeguard the implementation of relevant schemes set out in the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4, including the adopted Worcester Transport Strategy, such as: improvements to the A4440 (including phased dualling), the A38 and associated highways, public transport, cycle and walking infrastructure and services which shall include at least two grade-separated pedestrian / cycle crossings; improved accessibility by non-car modes to Worcester city centre, including a potential parking hub close to the A4440, to be agreed in consultation with Worcestershire County Council.
- xii. Safeguarding land on the southern side of the A4440 for the dualling of the road and the provision of the pedestrian and cycle bridges needed to provide sustainable transport links between the development and Worcester city walk and cycle networks.
- xiii. A road network hierarchy and legible road layout within and adjoining the urban extension supporting the functions of the new neighbourhood, including traffic calming measures to safeguard the amenity of the Norton Barracks community.
- xiv. Footpath and cycle networks within the development including safe links to Worcester city, the local centre and the Norton Barracks.
- xv. The provision of Green Space, including:
 - Play facilities, formal playing pitches and informal recreational facilities such as allotments.
 - A Green Space buffer to the west of Norton Road separating the Broomhall and Norton Barracks communities, of a scale that maintains their individual identities.
 - A Green Space buffer along the whole southern boundary immediately to the north of Broomhall Lane, providing a framework for the built development consistent with local landscape character.
 - A Green Space buffer to the north of Norton Barracks, between Norton Road and the railway line, designed to overcome visual and noise impacts of business development to the north by separating new and existing uses.
 - Green Space adjacent to the A4440 (after allowing for dualling and other improvements), to provide a framework for the built development, mitigate noise and flood risk and maintain the individual identities of Broomhall and St Peter the Great to the north.
- xvi. Measures for the protection and enhancement of the significance of Middle Broomhall Farm and other listed buildings and their settings.

93 See also SWDPR 19 Meeting the Needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

B. Temple Laugherne (Worcester West Urban Extension) - SWDP45/2 (138.8 ha) ⁽⁹⁴⁾:

- i. Delivery of approximately 5ha of employment land.
- ii. Delivery of around 2,150 dwellings. The rate of delivery will be dependent upon the phased implementation of the Worcester Transport Strategy and, in particular, the dualling of relevant sections of the A4440 Southern Link Road. The disposition of proposed uses within the allocation boundary will need to ensure the comprehensive development of the allocation as a whole and provide an integrated and cohesive urban design facilitating movements within the site and to / from the city.
- iii. The dwellings will be of mixed size and type in accordance with the requirements of policy SWDPR 13, and up to 40% will be affordable housing in accordance with the requirements of policy SWDPR 14.
- iv. The diagram for SWDP45/2 below shows the broad distribution of land uses and of various policy requirements for the major part of the site.
- v. Local convenience and comparison retailing within a Neighbourhood Centre; the Neighbourhood Centre should include not more than 1,500 m² of net retail floorspace and no single convenience should exceed 1,000 m² net.
- vi. A range of community facilities and services, including a two-form entry primary school and community hall.
- vii. Provision of a site for Travellers of up to 10 pitches within the urban extension⁽⁹⁵⁾.
- viii. There will be no built development in the parts of the site liable to flooding, as defined in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and / or a site specific Flood Risk Assessment.
- ix. The development of Green Space, including:
 - A network of open sources, including play facilities, sporting and informal recreational facilities such as allotments.
 - Measures which will deliver both Green Infrastructure and water management objectives.
- x. Measures to maintain separation of the urban extension from Crown East and Lower Broadheath.
- xi. Contributions to infrastructure, in accordance with SWDPR 6, including education, sporting and recreational facilities, and emergency services infrastructure.
- xii. Measures, including proportionate contributions directly related to the development, to support and safeguard the implementation of relevant schemes set out in the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4, including the adopted Worcester Transport Strategy, which includes

94 The foul drainage from the development is expected to connect to the mains system and be treated at Worcester Bromwich Road sewage treatment works. The 2014 South Worcestershire Water Cycle Study (WCS) Addendum Report has identified that there is limited spare capacity at these works and there could be constraints in the receiving sewerage network. Developers should consider these issues early in the planning process in consultation with Severn Trent Water and have particular regard to the WCS and policies SWDPR 6 and SWDPR 34.

95 See also SWDPR 19 Meeting the Needs of Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

the phased dualling of the A4440 Southern Link Road; the delivery of a road within the site between the A44 and the Martley Road; and improved accessibility by non-car modes to Worcester city centre.

- xiii. Measures for the protection and enhancement of the Earl's Court Scheduled Monument, listed buildings and their settings.

C. Worcester Technology Park (South Phase) - SWDP45/6 (20.32 ha):

- i. Delivery of a sustainable, well-designed technology park of approximately 16 ha (Worcester Technology Park South Phase) for research and development and manufacturing related to environmental and new technologies or associated businesses, to be integrated with the land to the north that already has permission for business uses.
- ii. Off-site highway works and financial contributions, in accordance with SWDPR 6, necessary to support access to the site.
- iii. Landscaping that contributes to the provision of Green Space and the setting of existing and altered public routes through the site.
- iv. Measures to support and safeguard the implementation of relevant schemes set out in the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 4, including the adopted Worcester Transport Strategy, and to provide adequate accessibility by non-car modes to Worcester city centre and key residential and transport (interchange) destinations, facilities and services across Worcester city as a whole.

Reasoned Justification

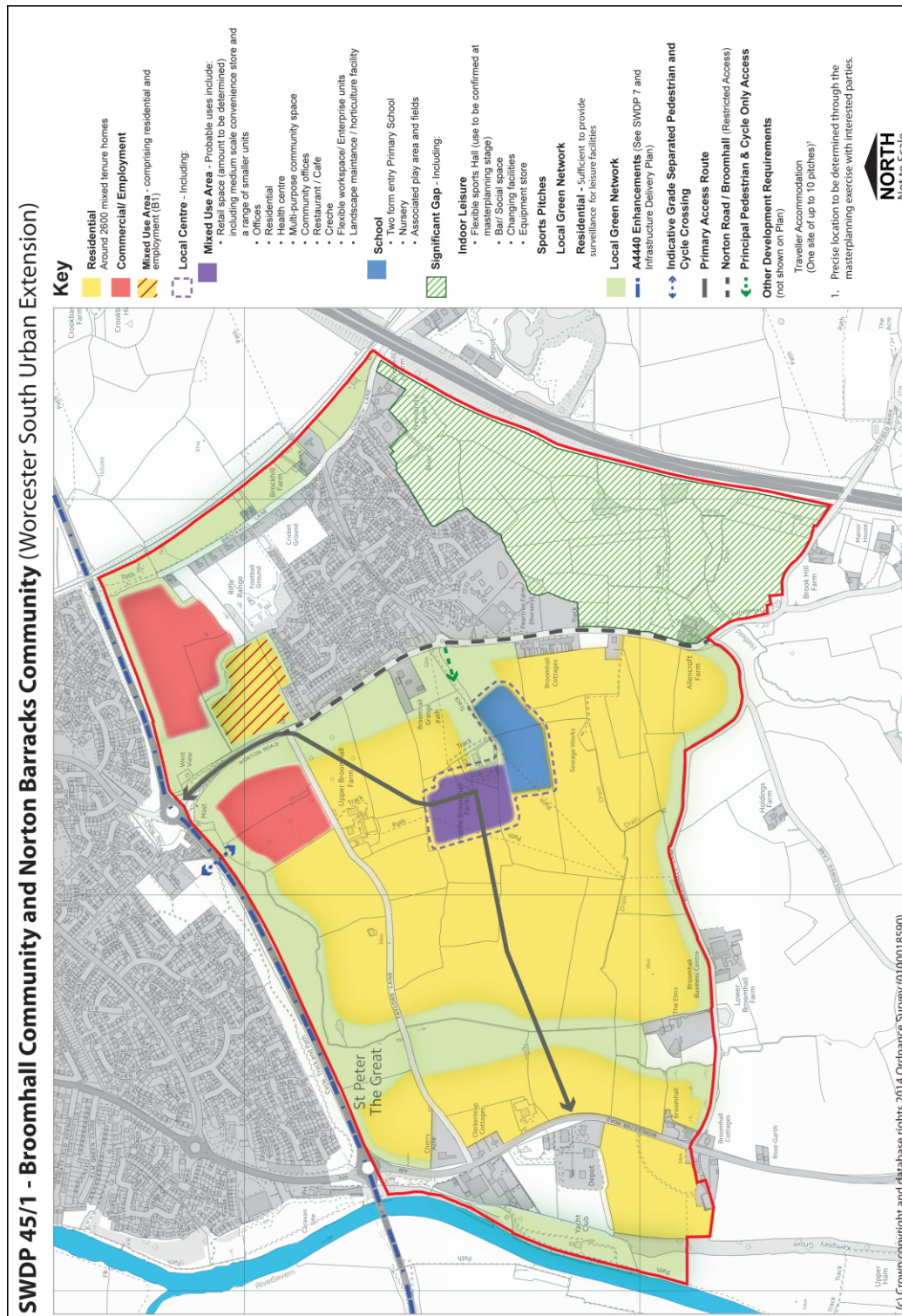


Figure 2 - SWDP45/1

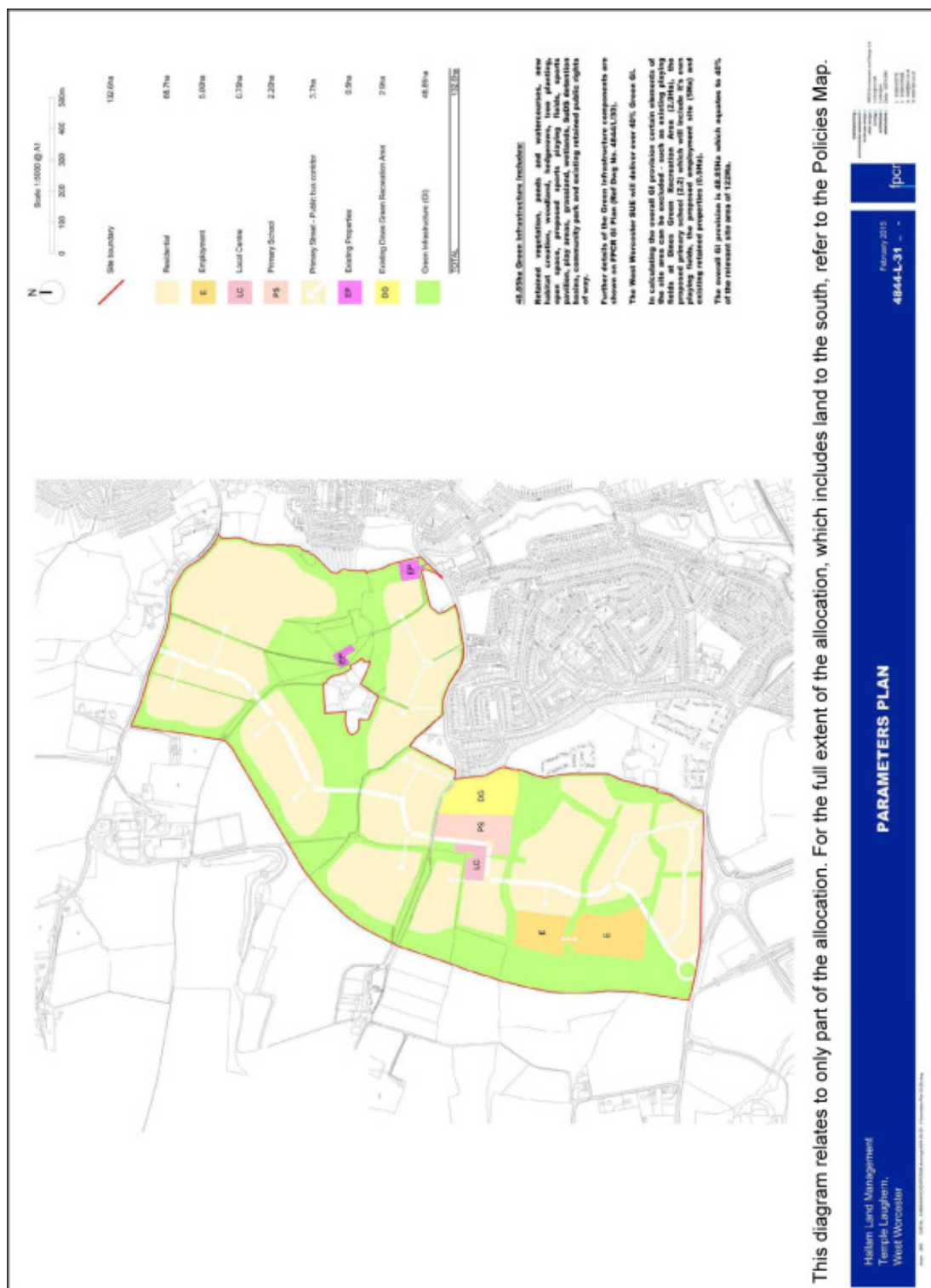


Figure 3 - SWDP45/2

Broomhall Community and Norton Barracks Community (Worcester South Urban Extension) - SWDP45/1

17.5 In assessing the development to the south, there are some important objectives that need to be fulfilled and these would be an integral part of a comprehensive masterplan. These objectives carry equal weight:

- a. To create an environment that will be attractive to business investment, including high technology, manufacturing and knowledge-based services.
- b. To create a sustainable, balanced mix of uses and a distinctive new community at Broomhall, which is self-sufficient in meeting its local needs.

- c. To create Green Space at a scale and layout that retain the individual identities of the new Broomhall development and the existing Norton Barracks settlement, allow for direct access to local services for pedestrians and cyclists, do not allow vehicular journeys, except where crossed by the Norton Road / local centre / A38 link, and function as a biodiversity corridor and recreational space.
- d. To ensure that the most important views of the Malvern Hills from the east of the site are not impeded by the new development.
- e. Ensure appropriate measures to retain and enhance the significance of Middle Broomhall Farm listed building and its setting, as well as safeguarding its continued use by its sympathetic inclusion within the community hub as detailed in the masterplan.
- f. To ensure that appropriate measures are employed to avoid or mitigate water course and surface water flooding and water quality concerns. The existing watercourses will need to be retained in open areas of Green Space and linked to appropriate SuDS techniques.
- g. To enable appropriate improvements to the A4440 (Crookbarrow Way, Broomhall Way and Teme Way) together with associated junction improvements, which will include the provision of at least two grade-separated pedestrian / cycle crossings (east and west).
- h. To reduce car dependency by enabling efficient public transport, walking and cycling movements within the development, whilst providing two-way opportunities for access to services within the existing city as well as out to the countryside.
- i. To provide emergency services infrastructure serving the local community.

17.6 The plan has extended the Significant Gap to the west of the M5 motorway so that land to the east and south-east of Norton Barracks is now subject to SWDPR 2. In addition, land between Kempsey and the southern limit of the urban extension remains as Significant Gap. Care will be needed in the treatment of the edges of the development area. In order to help minimise the impact on the Norton Barracks community, the Worcester South extension must include well-designed green buffer areas and set out a clear road hierarchy, with the road beyond any commercial development being traffic-calmed particularly in the vicinity of Norton Barracks. The road network within the urban extension will need to provide a route through to the neighbourhood centre from Norton Road roundabout and the A38.

Temple Laugherne (Worcester West Urban Extension) - SWDP45/2

17.7 The development to the west of Worcester would relate closely to the existing city, but certain important objectives would need to be achieved. These are:

- a. Provision for modern high technology and knowledge-based services, including links to the University of Worcester and the opportunity to provide business start-up units
- b. Create a sustainable, balanced mix of uses that will be an extension to the existing city area.
- c. Maintain a Significant Gap that provides physical and visual separation between the development and the surrounding villages of Crown East and Lower Broadheath so that their unique characters and the setting of the city are both protected.
- d. Ensure that the existing views across the area of the skyline of the city are not adversely impacted by the new development.
- e. Reduce car dependency by enabling efficient public transport, walking and cycling within the development, whilst providing two-way opportunities for access to services within the existing city as well as to the countryside.
- f. Create a cohesive place that relates to the existing city while recognising the importance of the landscape setting in providing an attractive living environment for a wide range of household types. Managing the transition between urban and rural will be essential in enabling the countryside to flow naturally into the development area from north and west.
- g. Ensure there is safe and attractive access connecting the urban extension and Dines Green, to ensure enhanced connectivity between existing and new settlements. Two points of vehicular access are needed to serve the site. One of these will need to have direct access to the primary road network west of the city linking to the A4440. The second will need to link to the city road network such that impacts on traffic flows further into the city can be managed.

17.8 It will be important to ensure there is a smooth transition from the open countryside into the urban area, so the green corridors must be sufficiently wide to allow the countryside to flow into the area. Where possible, development will be defined by natural physical boundaries, but in certain places (particularly the western boundary) it will be guided by landscape and topographical evidence.

17.9 The protection of the Earl's Court Scheduled Monument and listed buildings and their settings is consistent with SWDPR 5 and 28 and the NPPF (paragraph 20).

Worcester Technology Park (South Phase) - SWDP45/6

17.10 Although provision has been made for local employment opportunities within the city and the urban extensions, there is evidence to support a 70ha (gross) sub-regional employment site providing opportunities for existing manufacturing companies in the area to consolidate and expand by relocating to this site. The land is located immediately south-east of Junction 6 of the M5, a key gateway to the city. It lies within Wychavon District, but as the site abuts the city boundary it will provide serviced employment land to meet the growth of Worcester.

17.11 The North Phase of the Technology Park development (previously referred to as Phase 1) is counted as a commitment for SWDP 3 purposes. Within the North Phase, development will occupy up to 140,000 m² on 27 ha (net) next to J6 and could potentially provide for new headquarters, manufacturing, distribution and research and development facilities.

17.12 SWDP45/6 is the South Phase on the remainder of Worcester Technology Park, providing space for a cluster of other commercial companies, potentially involved in environmental and other high-technology sectors. Within the gross site allocation delineated on the Policies Map, about 16 ha (net) is identified for SWDPR 1 purposes.

17.13 The completed development will be designed and landscaped to appear as a single Technology Park and will include public open space, primary highway improvements and an ecological corridor. Two points of access will be provided. The current permission includes access to the Technology Park directly on to Crowle Lane at a point between Crowle Lane / Pershore Lane roundabout and Trotshill Lane. This route provides access to Warndon Villages and the city centre via the Trotshill motorway bridge. Development proposals will be tested through the Worcester Transport Models and the developer will fund any mitigation works, along with improvements to public transport, walking and cycling links.

17.14 Worcester Technology Park is identified as a priority employment project within the Game Changer Programme and has the full support of the local councils, as well as the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, all of whom have invested in the site.

SWDPR 53: Worcester City Allocations

- A. Within Worcester City, the following new sites, as shown on the Policies Map, are proposed for uses identified in Tables 5, 7 and 9. Unimplemented sites in the adopted SWDP that are proposed for reallocation are shown in Tables 6, 8 and 10. Once the revised SWDP has been adopted, allocations should be developed in accordance with the criteria identified in respect of each site and all general policy requirements, including any necessary developer contributions. Sites proposed for deallocation from the SWDP are shown in Table 11.

Housing Sites

Table 5: New Proposed Housing Allocations

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Indicative No. of Dwellings	Site Area (ha)	SHELAA Ref
SWDP NEW 1	Land at the rear (west) of Liverpool Road, Worcester	6	0.18	CFS1078
SWDP NEW 2	Land to the rear of 14-20 Barbourne Road, Worcester	5	0.16	CFS0954
SWDP NEW 3	Land off Oak View Way, Bromyard Road, Worcester ⁽⁹⁶⁾	105	4.40	CFS0477
SWDP NEW 4	Checketts Lane Industrial Estate, Checketts Lane, Worcester	39	0.98	CFS0036
SWDP NEW 5	Shrub Hill Retail Park, Tallow Hill, Worcester (parcel west of Worcester & Birmingham Canal) ⁽⁹⁷⁾	60	0.81	CFS0356
SWDP NEW 6	Land at John Comyn Drive, Worcester (part of former Park and Ride site) ⁽⁹⁸⁾	60	0.80	CFS1086
SWDP NEW 7	Land at Darwin Avenue, Worcester ⁽⁹⁹⁾	43	1.82	CFS0043
SWDP NEW 8	Land formerly associated with Tolladine Golf Course, Worcester ⁽¹⁰⁰⁾	15	0.78	CFS0287sc
	Total	333		

96 Site previously formed part of SWDP 43/18.

97 Site has potential to be incorporated into SWDP 44/4.

98 Site is proposed for C2 / C3 Extra Care Housing.

99 Part new allocation, part re-allocation of SWDP 43/1.

100 Part new allocation, part re-allocation of SWDP 43m.

Table 6: SWDP Housing Reallocations⁽¹⁰¹⁾

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Indicative No. of Dwellings	Site Area (ha)	SHELAA / SWDP / Planning Ref
SWDP REALLOCATE 1	Ribble Close and Gas Holder Site	40	1.20	SWDP 43/3
SWDP REALLOCATE 2	Old Northwick Farm	52	2.59	SWDP 43/4 P16E0451
SWDP REALLOCATE 3	Sansome Walk Swimming Pool	33	0.80	SWDP 43/7
SWDP REALLOCATE 4	Old Brewery Service Station, Barbourne Road	12	0.14	SWDP 43/9
SWDP REALLOCATE 5	Malvern Gate, Bromwich Road	45	1.16	SWDP 43/c (CFS0809)
SWDP REALLOCATE 6	County Council Offices, Sherwood Lane	15	0.50	SWDP 43/f
SWDP REALLOCATE 7	County Council Offices, Bilford Road	15	0.67	SWDP 43/g
SWDP REALLOCATE 8	Laugherne Garage, Bransford Road	10	0.44	SWDP 43/h
SWDP REALLOCATE 9	Land at Earl's Court Farm	13	0.32	SWDP 43/n
SWDP REALLOCATE 10	Land adjacent to the Masonic Hall ⁽¹⁰²⁾	30	0.96	SWDP 43/21

101 Planning status correct up to 7 October 2019.

102 Mixed Use C3 housing and C2 accommodation.

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Indicative No. of Dwellings	Site Area (ha)	SHELAA / SWDP / Planning Ref
SWDP REALLOCATE 11	Zig Zag site, St John's	12	0.05	SWDP 43/q P16K0302
SWDP REALLOCATE 12	Royal Worcester Porcelain - Gap Site	10	0.15	SWDP 43/u
SWDP REALLOCATE 13	Land at Hopton Street	25	1.59	SWDP 43/e P18K0195
SWDP REALLOCATE 14	Rose Avenue	21	0.18	SWDP 43/s P18H0280
SWDP REALLOCATE 15	Land off Bromyard Terrace	18	0.15	SWDP 43/k P18K0217 P15K0271
Total		351		

Mixed Use Sites

Table 7: New Proposed Mixed Use Allocations

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Indicative No. of Dwellings	Employment Land (ha)	Site Area (ha)	SHELAA Ref
SWDP NEW 9	Land at Navigation Road, Diglis, Worcester ⁽¹⁰³⁾	495	3	14.25	CFS0933 CFS1076
Total		495			

Table 8: SWDP Mixed Use Reallocations⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Uses	Indicative No. of Dwellings	Employment Land (ha)	Site Area (ha)
SWDP 43/aa	Lowesmoor Wharf	Commercial and Residential	100	0	1.14

¹⁰³ At least 30% of the site area to include flood mitigation measures, Green Infrastructure and landscaping.

¹⁰⁴ Planning status correct up to 7th October 2019.

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Uses	Indicative No. of Dwellings	Employment Land (ha)	Site Area (ha)
SWDP 43/29	Chequers Lane/Henwick Road	University-related development (Use Classes D1 and D2)			0.99
SWDP 44/2	Fire Station/Crowngate/Angel Place/The Butts	Retail-Led Development			2.85
SWDP 44/3	Trinity House / Cornmarket / Lowesmoor	Retail-Led Development			2.11
SWDP 44/4	Shrub Hill Opportunity Zone (105)	Opportunity Zone	750 (including student accommodation and extra care units)	Mixed Use and Commercial Development	19.72
SWDP 44/5	Blockhouse/Carden Street Opportunity Zone	Opportunity Zone	To include approximately 120 dwellings		3.9
SWDP 44/6	Cathedral Quarter and Sidbury: Cultural Facilities (106)	Opportunity Zone	Cultural Facilities		1.91
SWDP 44/7	Riverside	Opportunity Area			n/a
SWDP 44/8	St Clement's Gate	Opportunity Area	Learning Quarter		n/a

B. Redevelopment proposals for the Opportunity Zones (SWDP 44/4, SWDP 44/5 and SWDP 44/6) will be supported providing they:

- Incorporate a range and variety of land uses to create a truly mixed-use development.**
- Make a contribution to achieving the SWDP objective for new B1 office space in Worcester.**
- Will not result in residential development being the predominant use across the Opportunity Zone as a whole.**
- Offer genuine, sustainable travel choices.**
- Do not result in retail or leisure dominating the other land uses within the zone.**
- Enhance views over the historic city centre.**
- Secure the refurbishment and future of listed buildings and structures within the zone.**
- Encourage existing businesses to remain or alternatively provide suitable relocation opportunities.**

C. Proposals for single uses in an Opportunity Zone will be evaluated for their contribution and effect on the overall mix of uses in the area.

105 Planning Application Ref: P12G0199.

106 The area described in the Masterplan takes in a larger footprint than this allocation area.

Employment Sites**Table 9: New Proposed Employment Land Allocations**

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Employment Land (ha)	Site Area (ha)	SHELAA Ref
SWDP NEW 10	Land at Blackpole Road, Worcester ⁽¹⁰⁷⁾	7.5	13.56	CFS0587

Table 10: SWDP Employment Reallocations⁽¹⁰⁸⁾

Policy Ref	Site	Employment Land (ha)	Site Area (ha)	SWDP/ Planning Ref
SWDP REALLOCATE 16	Land south of Warndon Wood (B1; phased post 2019)	5	6.95	SWDP 43/23 P17P0247: 21,072 sqm (B1a, B2 or B8 use)
SWDP REALLOCATE 17	Worcester Woods Business Park, Newtown Road ⁽¹⁰⁹⁾	8.3	11.37	SWDP 43/15 (CFS0703)
SWDP REALLOCATE 18	Land at Nunnery Way ⁽¹¹⁰⁾	2.5	8.26	SWDP 43/20 19/00056/FUL

107 At least 40% of the site area to include flood mitigation measures, Green Infrastructure and landscaping.

108 Planning status correct up to 7th October 2019.

109 2.7ha of the original 11ha allocation has been implemented.

110 Phase 1 complete, reserved matters application for Phase 2 approved (2.5 ha remaining).

Deallocations**Table 11: Sites proposed for deallocation from the SWDP**

Preferred Options Ref	Site	No. of Dwellings in SWDP	Employment Land in SWDP (ha)	Site Area (ha)	Reason for deallocation from the SWDP
DEALLOCATE 1 (SWDP 43/1)	Land south of Leopard Hill	100 ⁽¹¹¹⁾	0	3.29	Part of the site is under construction (P18Q0226 - 61 dwellings) and the rest of the site has been re-allocated under SWDP NEW 7.
DEALLOCATE 2 (SWDP 43/18)	University Park	100 ⁽¹¹²⁾	11	15.18	The care home and medical centre elements of the site have been completed but the University of Worcester are no longer developing the site as a campus. Part of the site is now being redeveloped for 175 dwellings (P18C0175). The remaining land has been re-allocated under SWDP NEW 3.
DEALLOCATE 3 (SWDP 43/r)	The Bridge Inn, Lowesmoor Terrace	9	0	0.10	The site remains in use as a Public House. Planning permission (P14D0589) has expired. The prospect of the site being delivered is currently low. There is potential to incorporate the site into the Lowesmoor Wharf allocation area (SWDP 43/aa).
DEALLOCATE 4 (SWDP43/t)	Commandery Coach Depot, Tolladine Road	7	0	0.07	There is no alternative site to move the depot to at the current time.
DEALLOCATE 5 (SWDP 43w)	23-24 Foregate Street	10	0	0.10	Planning permission expired – site is considered unlikely to come forward.

111 61 under construction, 39 (of a total new allocation of 43) to be reallocated under SWDP NEW 7.

112 Recorded as under construction as part of planning application P18C0175.

Preferred Options Ref	Site	No. of Dwellings in SWDP	Employment Land in SWDP (ha)	Site Area (ha)	Reason for deallocation from the SWDP
DEALLOCATE 6 (SWDP 43/a)	73-77 Bromwich Road	11	0	0.14	Planning permission expired – site is considered unlikely to come forward.
DEALLOCATE 7 (SWDP 43/19)	Bridgewater House, Blackpole Road	115 ⁽¹¹³⁾	0	3.22	Bridgewater House conversion has been delivered with 85 units completed. It is unlikely that the remaining 30 units will come forward. The remaining part of the site is currently in employment use.
DEALLOCATE 8 (SWDP 43m)	Land formerly associated with Tolladine Golf Course, Worcester	9 ⁽¹¹⁴⁾	0	0.62	Site to be reallocated and extended with the 'Fairway' land parcel of CFS0287sc under SWDP NEW 8.

Reasoned Justification

18.1 The city of Worcester is the county centre for Worcestershire and is an important retail, employment, leisure, education and housing centre for the sub-region that includes south Worcestershire. Worcester is an important growth area capable of acting as a focus for future growth in the south Worcestershire area. However, the tightly-drawn administrative boundary of the city means that there is a limit to the level of growth that can be accommodated within the administrative area.

18.2 Evidence gathered through the Retail and Centres Study, the Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA), the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) and Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA), together with the results of plan-making consultation to date, show support for Worcester maintaining and enhancing its role at the top of the settlement hierarchy, as the county town and city centre and as a centre of wider sub-regional importance.

18.3 The intention for Worcester over the plan period is to enable it to support sustained investment in economic development, aligned with successful advances in sustainable travel, leading to a thriving city and a vibrant and diverse centre with a strong retail and leisure offer. This builds on:

- An approach that generates a high-skill, high value-added, knowledge-based economy.
- Recognition of the importance of learning through its Further and Higher Education provision.
- The role of The University of Worcester in making a transformational contribution to the positive development of the cultural, social and economic life of the city of Worcester and the wider region.
- A prestige tourist destination, offering a range of experiences to shoppers, day trippers, holiday-makers and business visitors.
- A reputation for a historic and well-managed city centre.
- An integrated and high quality transport infrastructure.

113 85 dwellings completed.

114 To be reallocated as part of new allocation SWDP NEW 8.

18 Worcester City Allocations

- g. A key role in delivering housing growth in south Worcestershire in a sustainable and environmentally sensitive way.
- h. The provision of a range of services, facilities and employment opportunities that meet sub-regional needs and support the economic growth of south Worcestershire as a whole.

18.4 As such the city remains a preferred location for any nationally or regionally significant developments in south Worcestershire. It is at the geographical centre of the Development Strategy for south Worcestershire and its prosperity will be reflected across the area. However, it is also recognised that the delivery of key infrastructure (see SWDPR 56 Implementation and SWDPR 57 Monitoring) is vital if the overall strategy is to be achieved.

18.5 The approach taken for development within the city boundary of Worcester has been to identify site allocations in the tables above in the following categories: new sites for housing, employment land and mixed use developments; sites proposed for reallocation (including retail-led development sites, opportunity zones and areas); and sites proposed for deallocation from the SWDP. The sites proposed for deallocation from the plan are those sites in the 2016 SWDP where either the realistic prospect of the site being delivered has been significantly reduced, or the site has been reallocated as part of a newly proposed allocation site. The proposed total net deallocations from the 2016 SWDP for Worcester City is 67 dwellings.

18.6 SWDPR 53 identifies sites to meet growth requirements inside the city boundary. Evidence demonstrates that the city can accommodate approximately 3,746 dwellings within the administrative boundary through a combination of newly proposed allocation sites (828), the reallocation of existing SWDP sites (730) and other sites (including further SWDP allocations) with planning permission (2,188). The proposed and existing allocation sites take account of evidence relating to the green belt, the network of Green Spaces, heritage and conservation considerations, existing employment sites and the need for sports, health, education and other community facilities, all essential components in creating a sustainable balanced city.

18.7 An assessment of all non-strategic sites can be found as part of the evidence base for the Preferred Options through the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).

18.8 23.3 ha (gross) of employment land (including land for office development opportunities) has been identified for new and reallocated sites within Worcester city. Further outstanding allocations beyond the administrative boundary at the Worcester West and Worcester South urban extensions and Worcester Six Business Park (Phase Two) would increase employment land availability to 64.3 ha (gross). SWDPR 2 identifies Worcester as an administrative centre. A significant proportion of new office development in Worcester will be 'in-centre' consistent with the Framework policy on offices as a town centre use and with SWDPR 8, which directs major office development in the first instance to Worcester city centre.

18.9 The ability of the city centre and edge-of-centre sites to accommodate office growth is constrained by heritage assets, the dual carriageway on City Walls Road, the River Severn, the single river crossing and the city's sub-regional retail role. Government changes to permitted development rights, which allow the change of use of offices to residential, may also lead to the loss of some offices. SWDPR 53 therefore allocates 'Opportunity Zones' to provide further opportunity for mixed use development including offices where they cannot be accommodated in the designated city centre.

18.10 Land at Blackpole Road (SWDP NEW 10) is located in Worcester's Green Belt but is adjacent to an established industrial estate. The Green Belt study has identified the extent of the harm on the site as 'limited to moderate', reflecting the open character of the land but its potential for visual and physical enclosure. Development on the site is restricted by flooding from Barbourne Brook in the north and would need to consider conservation and mitigation measures, particularly in the southern part of the site alongside the Worcester and Birmingham Canal.

Worcester City Centre and the Masterplan

18.11 The city centre forms a vital element of the SWDP, as its economic performance is intrinsically linked with the wider success of the city and south Worcestershire. Worcester City Council published an updated city centre Masterplan in 2019, which provides a framework for development, regeneration and investment up to 2040. The updated Vision for the city is one that is prosperous, accessible, diverse and inclusive, with great opportunities for work, leisure, sport and tourism - alongside a quality of life that is attractive to all.

18.12 The Vision is also of a city that is recognised as a growing cosmopolitan cathedral and university city with unrivalled heritage. The city's riverside will become a national and international destination. City restaurants, bars and shops will include a fabulous mix of mainstream, independent and designer traders, embracing the artisan and quirky. Worcester will remain a safe city with a strong base of creativity and innovation and growing reputation for sporting excellence for people of all abilities.

18.13 Worcester's precious environment will be maintained through sensitive management of local and citywide activities, including the use of sustainable energy whenever possible. Worcester City Council will work to eradicate poverty and strive to support everyone to get involved in the city's future.

18.14 The Masterplan identifies four character areas or 'quarters' that form the structuring elements of the Masterplan ('Riverside', 'City Heart', 'Canalside' and 'Shrub Hill'). It then identifies locations where development and intervention could occur to bring about regeneration and other improvements and includes ideas about design, land use, transport and access and the public realm. An illustrative plan accompanies the city centre Vision and Masterplan, showing those locations where development and intervention can occur. The SWDP provides a mechanism that enables these ideas to take shape. For planning purposes the city centre is defined as per the Policies Map. The City Centre Masterplan however has considered a larger area of central Worcester and how this area functions to inform plan-making and planning decisions.

18.15 For the purposes of SWDPR 10, the Primary Shopping Area for Worcester is as shown on the Policies Map for planning policy purposes. The Primary Shopping Area is at the heart of the wider city centre and the additional area covered by the Masterplan.

18.16 The evidence and consultation outcomes support directing major retail development to the central shopping area. The strategic significance of the city centre and its retail position in relation to south Worcestershire and beyond is recognised. However, leisure, office, education and cultural uses are key to its long-term success and this is recognised in the City Centre Masterplan.

Retail-led Development Allocations

Angel Place / CrownGate / The Butts / Fire Station (SWDP 44/2)

18.17 The redevelopment of this area would provide an opportunity for the addition of significant amounts of retail floor space and to increase the range of goods available from retail outlets within the city centre. Furthermore, the site offers an opportunity to provide a mix of uses, making the best use of land by incorporating residential, office or leisure uses on floors above or below the primary retail frontage.

18.18 Redevelopment of the area would provide the opportunity to enhance the role of Angel Place as a market and public square, improve pedestrian linkages throughout the city centre and enhance connectivity of the area with the rest of the city centre, the riverside, The Foregate and the University. A public realm refurbishment scheme was implemented in 2014 and a new market format and operator have rejuvenated the street market in this location. CrownGate shopping centre has had significant improvements carried out to its facade during 2019.

18.19 Consistent with policies SWDPR 5, SWDPR 25 and SWDP 28, the redevelopment provides the opportunities to sustain and enhance the setting, appearance and skyline of the Historic City Conservation Area and improve access to and interpretation of historic and archaeological features.

Trinity House / Cornmarket / Lowesmoor (SWDP 44/3)

18.20 Cornmarket is seen as an area of opportunity that has the potential to create an impressive gateway development that will attract people to the city centre and improve connectivity on the important east-west access between the city centre, St Martin's Quarter and the Shrub Hill area. A public realm improvement scheme was completed in the summer of 2015.

18.21 Redevelopment of the area should secure the future of, and improve the setting of, heritage assets such as the City Wall and St Martin's Gate. The removal of unsightly structures and buildings would have a positive impact on the character and setting of the Historic City Conservation Area and improve the setting of listed buildings.

18.22 Lowesmoor Trading Estate is the site of the former vinegar works with a number of 18th and 19th century buildings, but which has lost a great deal of its urban form. The area, also the site of the medieval market, has the potential for expanded retail opportunity and other uses and increased public space to coincide with expansion of the Cathedral Square shopping precinct and St Martin's Gate developments.

Opportunity Zones

18.23 Further detail on appropriate uses for opportunity zones and other specific sites will be provided through masterplans, concept statements and site appraisals.

Shrub Hill (SWDP 44/4)

18.24 This area encompasses Shrub Hill Station, Cromwell Street, Pheasant Street, Tolladine Road and Shrub Hill Road west of the railway, Tolladine Road, Sherriff Street and Newtown Road east of the railway. The proximity to Shrub Hill Station and the city centre, which are both within walking and cycling distance, make this a highly sustainable location for a wide range of land uses.

18.25 Significant amounts of new or refurbished commercial office space and housing could be developed; city centre developments that are too large for sequentially preferable sites could be accommodated here, thus exploiting the opportunity provided by the canalside location and its proximity to the railway station. A mixed-use development focused around a new canal basin would create a new neighbourhood in the city.

18.26 It is estimated that, although not residential led, an element of housing development will be included that could deliver approximately 750 dwellings. Development that would be less car-dominated (including clustered student flats and extra-care accommodation) is appropriate, provided that housing does not become the dominant land use. Smaller-scale neighbourhood leisure and retail outlets, such as local convenience stores and A3, A4 and A5 uses serving the local community, are appropriate subject to impact and design considerations.

18.27 The redevelopment should conserve and enhance the significance of heritage assets, putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation. There is an opportunity to provide a sustainable future for listed buildings and to remove structures and buildings that have a negative impact on views into and out of the area as well as preserving existing views of listed or other landmark buildings.

18.28 The existing businesses within the Opportunity Zone should not be lost as they are important elements of the economy of the city. All redevelopment proposals should afford the opportunity for existing business to remain or relocate to suitable alternative premises.

18.29 The redevelopment of Cromwell Street could provide a mix of uses, providing an opportunity to connect Lowesmoor, the canal and the station together. Between Rainbow Hill and Tolladine Road is an area of low-density uses, which is an important gateway into the city from the railway line.

18.30 Redevelopment should improve access to Shrub Hill station by all modes and provide a high-quality public transport interchange, while reconnecting the two sides of the railway corridor. Pedestrian connectivity between Shrub Hill Station, the canal, Lowesmoor and St Martin's Quarter can be greatly improved to contribute towards the creation of an identifiable and cohesive regeneration zone. Improvements to the public realm in front of Shrub Hill station will create an attractive first impression of the city to visitors arriving by train.

Blockhouse / Carden Street (SWDP 44/5)

18.31 This area has a lot of potential to be linked back into the city centre and provides an opportunity to create a network of intimate shared surface streets, which can provide access to a mix of good quality city centre housing (approximately 120 dwellings), smaller business premises and live / work opportunities, as well as commercial office space for creative industries and improvements to the public realm.

18.32 Development on the site could improve pedestrian access between the city centre and Fort Royal, and help transform City Walls Road into an attractive gateway to the city.

18.33 The removal of unattractive buildings and structures would enhance the skyline and have a positive impact on the Canal Conservation Area and other heritage assets.

Cathedral Quarter and Sidbury (SWDP 44/6)

18.34 The opportunity exists to create a high quality gateway to Worcester city centre at Sidbury and improve pedestrian links between College Street, the canal, the Diglis / Waterside developments and the city centre.

18.35 There is potential for the development of a cultural quarter on the former Royal Worcester Porcelain site, the redevelopment of King Street car park and the provision of live / work opportunities.

18.36 Development should include the removal of buildings that have a negative impact upon the Sidbury and Canal Conservation Areas, securing the future of listed buildings and buildings of local significance and safeguarding views into and out of the area.

18.37 An area designed to encourage creative industries to cluster together around the Royal Worcester Porcelain museum would be beneficial and would create vital jobs for the city.

18.38 Diglis Basin could facilitate new mixed uses along the canal, and the Cathedral Quarter in which the predominant collection of high-value heritage assets are placed could be enhanced, through public realm work, to facilitate an important visitor hub and connecting node to both regenerated areas to the south and wider tourist assets.

Other Opportunity Areas

Riverside (SWDP 44/7)

18.39 The River Severn is at the heart of Worcester, but the riverside is an underused asset for the city and could potentially represent a significant benefit to the city's economy.

18.40 Significant improvements are already being made to the riverside, but opportunities could be taken for locating a hotel in the area and encouraging the growth and establishment of creative industries, as well as enhancing the riverside space at Quay Head with increased recreational amenities including an amphitheatre for outdoor performances alongside new public space. An improved public realm, increased riverside activity and the creation of flexible civic space could help foster better links between the city and the riverside.

18.41 The riverside plays an important role for pedestrians in linking the north and south of the city, especially between Diglis Basin and the Racecourse. The area is also important as a link between the west of the city (St John's) and the wider area. Improved east-west links will need to be created to increase connectivity throughout

the city and to better link places such as the University, The Hive, the Cathedral, South Quay and the city centre. The 2019 Masterplan highlights the potential for a new walking/cycling bridge between Kepax and Gheluvelt Park to help facilitate east-west links and overall greater connectivity across the river.

St Clement's Gate (SWDP 44/8)

18.42 St Clement's Gate provides the key interface between the city and the university. Recent regeneration projects in the area include the development of the Hive and local history centre, providing a key shared community resource linking the city and the university. It has also seen the expansion of university campuses onto the site of the historic royal infirmary and housing development at The Butts. This area could become a learning quarter with associated pedestrian and cycle links addressing major urban features such as the railway viaduct - site of the proposed low line walkway and the Arches project (a cultural and creative hub for the city) that would connect Foregate Street with the riverside. The area could provide a high-quality northern edge to the city centre. |

SWDPR 54: Wychavon Allocations

- A. Within the Wychavon District the following new sites, as shown on the Policies Map, are proposed for uses identified in Tables 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 21. Unimplemented sites in the adopted SWDP that are proposed for reallocation are shown in Tables 20 and 22. Once the revised SWDP has been adopted, allocations should be developed in accordance with the criteria identified in respect of each site and all general policy requirements, including any necessary developer contributions. Sites proposed for deallocation from the SWDP are shown in Table 23.

Housing / Mixed Use Sites

Table 12: New Proposed Housing / Mixed Use Allocations - Droitwich Spa

Preferred Options Reference	Site	Land Use	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 11	Hill Top Farm, Newland Lane	Residential	9	0.37	CFS0107
SWDP NEW 12	Land off Tagwell Road	Residential	112	4.65	CFS0370
SWDP NEW 13	Land at Mayflower Road	Residential	9	0.39	CFS0733
SWDP NEW 14	Land north / south of Union Lane	Mixed	600	2.92	CFS0855a CFS0855b
		TOTAL	730		

Table 13: New Proposed Housing / Mixed Use Allocations - Evesham

Preferred Options Reference	Site	Land Use	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 15	Lingfield Road	Residential	61	8.07	CFS0367
SWDP NEW 16	Land at Common Road	Residential	7	0.3	CFS0308
SWDP NEW 17	Land south of Pershore Road at Hampton	Residential	50	3.19	CFS1056
SWDP NEW 18	No. 72 High Street	Mixed	25	0.58	CFS0709
SWDP NEW 19	Riverside Shopping Centre	Mixed	70	1.45	CFS0991
		TOTAL	213		

Table 14: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Pershore

Preferred Options Reference	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 20	Land off Wyre Road	72	4	CFS0691sc
SWDP NEW 21	Land off Wyre Road North	28	1.58	CFS0101
SWDP NEW 22	Land adjacent to Conningsby Drive	75	4.19	CFS0807
SWDP NEW 23	Land at Pershore off Holloway	19	1.07	CFS0641
SWDP NEW 24	Land adjacent to Abbeyvale, Holloway	18	1.02	CFS0808
SWDP NEW 115	Land north of Defford Road	450	26.27	CFS0350sc
	TOTAL	662		

Table 15: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Category 1 Settlements

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 25	Badsey	Land rear of Bretforton Road	32	1.75	CFS0347
SWDP NEW 26	Badsey	Land at Brewers Lane	27	1.49	CFS0844sc
SWDP NEW 27	Broadway	Land off Leamington Road	62	3.45	CFS1064
SWDP NEW 28	Drakes Broughton	Land to the south of Walcot Lane	12	0.72	CFS0027
SWDP NEW 29	Fernhill Heath	Land west of Dilmore Lane	40	2.22	CFS0689
SWDP NEW 30	Hartlebury	Land off Southall Drive	52	2.91	CFS0420
SWDP NEW 31	Hartlebury	Land off Inn Lane, Roselands	7	0.31	CFS0371
SWDP NEW 32	Inkberrow	Land to the rear of Withyfields, Withybed Lane	23	1.29	CFS0108
SWDP NEW 33	Inkberrow	Land off Withybed Lane	57	3.18	CFS0817
SWDP NEW 34	Offenham	Land immediately adjacent to southern side of Boat Lane	10	0.41	CFS0355

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 35	Offenham	Land south of Three Cocks Lane	32	1.8	CFS0632
SWDP NEW 36	Offenham	Land off Laurels Road	37	2.03	CFS0690
SWDP NEW 37	Ombersley	Land off Sandys Road	28	1.53	CFS0223
SWDP NEW 38	Upton Snodsbury	Land off A422	14	0.57	CFS0193
SWDP NEW 39	Upton Snodsbury	Land to the rear of Cutts Pool	24	1.36	CFS0266
SWDP NEW 40	Upton Snodsbury	Double Gates Farm, Pershore Road	18	1	CFS0401sc
SWDP NEW 41	Wychbold	Land at Chequers Lane	24	1.34	CFS0486
SWDP NEW 42	Wychbold	Land at School Road	5	0.18	CFS0720
		TOTAL	505		

Table 16: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Category 2 Settlements

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 43	Bretforton	Land off Honeybourne Road	8	0.35	CFS0510
SWDP NEW 44	Bretforton	Land west of Honeybourne Road (rear of Victoria Terrace)	37	2.05	CFS0485
SWDP NEW 45	Church Lench	Land off Low Road	19	1.04	CFS0716
SWDP NEW 46	Cleeve Prior	Land north east of Main Street	5	0.17	CFS0380
SWDP NEW 47	Crophorne	Land off Field Barn Lane	23	0.96	CFS0360
SWDP NEW 48	Crophorne	Land at the Daves, Middle Lane	13	0.56	CFS0568a
SWDP NEW 49	Crowle (and Crowle Green)	Land off Church Road	40	4.22	CFS0019

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 50	Defford	Land adjacent to Defford Motors, Upton Road	8	0.36	CFS0560
SWDP NEW 51	Defford	Land off Upton Road, Defford Motors	8	0.27	CFS0948
SWDP NEW 52	Himbleton	Land adjacent to and west of Galton Arms	10	0.45	CFS0866sc
SWDP NEW 53	Lower Moor	Blacksmiths Lane	32	1.8	CFS0769
SWDP NEW 54	Pinvin	Land west of Upton Snodsbury Road	23	1.27	CFS0605
SWDP NEW 55	South Littleton	Long Hyde Road	11	0.46	CFS0461
SWDP NEW 56	Tibberton	Court End Farm	18	0.73	CFS0529
SWDP NEW 57	Tibberton	Speed-the-Plough, Plough Road	26	1.45	CFS0630sc
		TOTAL	281		

Table 17: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Category 3 Settlements

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 58	Flyford Flavell	Meadowcroft, Bishampton Road	12	0.51	CFS0584
SWDP NEW 59	North & Middle Littleton	Top Croft, Cleeve Road	17	0.71	CFS0028
SWDP NEW 60	North & Middle Littleton	Land at junction of Cleeve Road and School Lane	17	0.7	CFS0055
SWDP NEW 61	North & Middle Littleton	Land at Church Lane	10	0.71	CFS0194a sc
SWDP NEW 62	Sedgeberrow	Land off Winchcombe Road (Plot B)	29	1.62	CFS0066
		TOTAL	85		

Table 18: New Proposed Wychavon Housing Allocations immediately adjacent to Worcester City

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Indicative No. of Dwellings	Site Area (ha)	CFS/Planning Ref
SWDP NEW EDGE 1	Land at Gwillams Farm (Northern Field) Bevere	74	3.09	CFS1020 CFS0439 ⁽¹¹⁵⁾
SWDP NEW EDGE 2	Land off Northwick Road, Bevere	27	1.14	CFS0252
	TOTAL	101		

Table 19: New Proposed Wychavon Housing Allocations immediately adjacent to Tewkesbury

Preferred Options Ref	Site	Indicative No. of Dwellings	Site Area (ha)	CFS/Planning Ref
SWDP NEW EDGE 3	Land at Mitton	1,000	74.01	Gloucester Cheltenham and Tewkesbury Joint Core Strategy (2017) Duty to Cooperate Commitment (comprises 500 of the 1,000 dwellings).
	TOTAL	1,000		

Table 20: SWDP Housing / Mixed Use Reallocations

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 19	Pershore	Garage, High Street	20 (to include retail)	0.47	SWDP 46/1
SWDP REALLOCATE 20	Pershore	Garage Court, Abbots Road	13	0.25	SWDP 46/4
SWDP REALLOCATE 21	Pershore	Land adjacent Conningsby Drive	19	0.93	SWDP 46/5 1701634/FUL

115 Land associated with CFS0439 will only be suitable for allocation where brought forward in conjunction with CFS1020.

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 22	Droitwich Spa	Boxing Club, Kidderminster Road	10	0.11	SWDP 48/2
SWDP REALLOCATE 23	Droitwich Spa	Oakham Place	6	0.16	SWDP 48/3
SWDP REALLOCATE 24	Droitwich Spa	Acre Lane	20	0.38	SWDP 48/4
SWDP REALLOCATE 25	Droitwich Spa	Willow Court, Westwood Road	10	0.17	SWDP 48/5
SWDP REALLOCATE 26	Droitwich Spa	Canal Basin (Netherwich)	80 (to include retail and leisure)	1.1	SWDP 48/6
SWDP REALLOCATE 27	Evesham	Employment site, top of Kings Road	100	3.8	SWDP 50/2
SWDP REALLOCATE 28	Evesham	Land off Davies Road (former leisure centre)	36	1.21	SWDP 50/4
SWDP REALLOCATE 29	Evesham	Land at Offenham Road East	15	1.88	SWDP 50/5
SWDP REALLOCATE 30	Evesham	Land behind Lichfield Avenue	14	1.04	SWDP 50/6 1701501/FUL
SWDP REALLOCATE 31	Evesham	Land off Abbey Road	200	19.78	SWDP 50/7
SWDP REALLOCATE 32	Broadway	Land adjacent Station Road	100	10.99	SWDP 59/19
SWDP REALLOCATE 33	Offenham	Laurels Avenue	19	0.95	SWDP 59/24
SWDP REALLOCATE 34	Ombersley	The Racks	30	1.24	SWDP 59/25 1800795/RM

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 35	Ombersley	Land north of Woodhall Lane	25	2.03	SWDP 59/26
SWDP REALLOCATE 36	Ashton under Hill	Station Road	6	1.13	SWDP 60/9
SWDP REALLOCATE 37	Ashton under Hill	Elmley Road	14	0.69	SWDP 60/10 180115RM
SWDP REALLOCATE 38	Eckington	Land off Roman Meadow, Pershore Road	25	0.94	SWDP 60/15
SWDP REALLOCATE 39	Overbury	Site adjacent Nine Acres	8	0.54	SWDP 60/20
SWDP REALLOCATE 40	Sedgeberrow	Land off Main Street	20	0.79	SWDP 60/24 1801514FUL
SWDP REALLOCATE 41	Upton Snodsbury	Garage site off A422 and land to the rear	16	1.12	SWDP 60/28
SWDP REALLOCATE 42	Conderton	Land at Conderton Close	6	0.58	SWDP 61/3
SWDP REALLOCATE 43	Kemerton	Land at Park Farm, Jobs Lane	9	0.34	SWDP 61/10
TOTAL			786		

Employment Sites

Table 21: New Proposed Employment Land Allocations

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 63	Droitwich Spa	Former Pipes Support site, Salwarpe Road	1.55	CFS0498
SWDP NEW 64	Evesham	Land off Saw Mills Walk / Briar Close	0.87	CFS0680

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 65	Evesham	Land off Evesham Road north of the Twyford roundabout	3.6	CFS0099
SWDP NEW 66	Evesham	Parcel A - Land adjacent to Broadway Road, Wickhamford	6.34	CFS0142
SWDP NEW 67	Evesham	Parcel B - Land adjacent to Broadway Road, Wickhamford	1.77	CFS0143
SWDP NEW 68	Evesham	Land south of Vale Park	5.3	CFS0891
SWDP NEW 69	Pershore	Pershore College	1	CFS0417a
SWDP NEW 70	Pershore	Pershore College	2.9	CFS0417b
SWDP NEW 71	Pershore (Wyre Piddle)	South of Keytec East Business Park	0.97	CFS0102
SWDP NEW 72	Pershore (Wyre Piddle)	Keytec East Business Park	0.73	CFS0103
SWDP NEW 73	Broadway	Land at Kennel Lane / High Street (for public car park and B1 uses)	1.24	CFS0472sc
SWDP NEW 74	Drakes Broughton	Adjacent to Drakes Broughton Business Park, Worcester Road	2.31	CFS0559
SWDP NEW 75	Drakes Broughton	Land at Mill Lane, Drakes Broughton	0.85	CFS0742
SWDP NEW 76	Drakes Broughton	Land south of Mill Lane Nursery	0.55	CFS0743
SWDP NEW 77	Hartlebury	Hartlebury Trading Estate, Crown Lane	1.57	CFS0061a
SWDP NEW 78	Hartlebury	Hartlebury Trading Estate, Crown Lane	0.17	CFS0061b
SWDP NEW 79	Hartlebury	Hartlebury Trading Estate, Crown Lane	0.31	CFS0061c
SWDP NEW 80	Hartlebury	Hartlebury Trading Estate, Crown Lane	0.65	CFS0061d
SWDP NEW 81	Hartlebury	Hartlebury Trading Estate, Crown Lane	1.34	CFS0061e
SWDP NEW 82	Hartlebury	Hartlebury Trading Estate, Crown Lane	6.24	CFS0061f

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 83	Honeybourne	Two Shires Park, Weston Road	31.27	CFS0925
SWDP NEW 84	Upton Snodsbury	Snodsbury Farmhouse, Bow Wood Lane	1.71	CFS0775
SWDP NEW 85	Tibberton	Eatons Farm, Church Lane	30.1	CFS0400
SWDP NEW 86	Hampton Lovett	Land at Hampton Lovett (west of A442)	10.67	CFS0501
SWDP NEW 87	Hampton Lovett	Land at Hampton Lovett (east of A442)	11.13	CFS0502
SWDP NEW 88	Strensham	Land adjacent Strensham Court Wood, Twynning Road	14.76	CFS0880
		TOTAL	139.9	

Table 22: SWDP Employment Reallocations

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 44	Droitwich Spa	Stonebridge Cross Business Park	10	SWDP 49/3
SWDP REALLOCATE 45	Evesham	Vale Industrial Park	34	SWDP 51/3
		TOTAL	44	

Deallocations**Table 23: Sites proposed for deallocation from the SWDP**

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figures	Site Area (ha)	Reasons for De-allocation
DEALLOCATE 9 (SWDP 48/1)	Droitwich Spa	Land off Vines Lane	100	3.10	Site has planning permission for employment use.
		TOTAL	100		

SWDPR 55: Malvern Hills Allocations

- A. Within the Malvern Hills District, the following new sites, as shown on the Policies Map, are proposed for uses identified in Tables 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31 and 33. Unimplemented sites in the adopted SWDP that are proposed for reallocation are shown in Tables 29, 30 and 32. Once the revised SWDP has been adopted, allocations should be developed in accordance with the criteria identified in respect of each site and all general policy requirements, including any necessary developer contributions.

Housing / Mixed Use Sites**Table 24: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Malvern**

Preferred Options Reference	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 89	Land south of Madresfield Road	180	9.95	CFS0407sc
SWDP NEW 90	Land at Cales Farm	400	23	CFS0482 ⁽¹¹⁶⁾
SWDP NEW 91	Land at 186 Madresfield Road	18	0.75	CFS0518
SWDP NEW 92	Land on the south side of Guarlford Road	180	9.84	CFS0905sc
	TOTAL	778		

Table 25: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Tenbury Wells

Preferred Options Reference	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 93	Land east and west of Terrills Lane and south of Tenbury Wells Business Park	61	3.41	CFS0362sc
	TOTAL	61		

Table 26: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Category 1 Settlements

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 94	Clifton-upon-Teme	Hope Lane	36	1.99	CFS0042sc
SWDP NEW 95	Great Witley	Land off Stourport Road and the B4197 (Site 1)	44	2.45	CFS0911sc

116 To include excess of 40% GI following Master Plan principles.

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 96	Hallow	Land lying to south of Tinkers Coppice Farm, Main Road, Plot 1	49	2.7	CFS0343sc
SWDP NEW 97	Lower Broadheath	Glen Rise, 32 Hallow Lane	12	0.52	CFS0045
SWDP NEW 98	Martley	Land south of playing field	71	3.93	CFS0120
SWDP NEW 99	Welland	Lawn Farm (Phase 3), Drake Street	36	2.02	CFS0336
TOTAL			266		

Table 27: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Category 2 Settlements

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 100	Abberley Common	Land east of Clows Top Road	18	1	CFS0601sc
SWDP NEW 101	Powick (including Colletts Green)	Land south of Old Malvern Road	20	1.5	CFS0511
SWDP NEW 102	Powick (including Colletts Green)	Land at Manor Farm	15	0.68	CFS0519
SWDP NEW 103	Tunnel Hill (partly to meet the needs of Upton-upon-Severn)	Land at Milestone	50	2.96	CFS0167
TOTAL			85		

Table 28: New Proposed Housing Allocations - Category 3 Settlements

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 104	Leigh Sinton	Land off A4103 ⁽¹¹⁷⁾	52	8.64	CFS0009
		TOTAL	52		

Table 29: SWDP Housing Reallocations

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 46	Malvern	Former BMX track, Mayfield Road	59	1.95	SWDP 52/2
SWDP REALLOCATE 47	Malvern	Portland House, Church Street	15	0.22	SWDP 52/5
SWDP REALLOCATE 48	Malvern	Former Railway Sidings, Peachfield Road	20	0.66	SWDP 52m
SWDP REALLOCATE 49	Malvern	Victoria Road Car Park	21	0.28	SWDP 52s
SWDP REALLOCATE 50	Malvern	Broadlands Drive	33	1.83	SWDP 52y 17/00649/RM
SWDP REALLOCATE 51	Malvern	Barracks Store, Court Road	28	0.81	SWDP 52*
SWDP REALLOCATE 52	Tenbury Wells	Land at the Haven, Oldwood Road	40	1.98	SWDP 57/2
SWDP REALLOCATE 53	Tenbury Wells	Land at Mistletoe Row	44	3.74	SWDP 57a
SWDP REALLOCATE 54	Tenbury Wells	Land south of the Oaklands	35	1.92	SWDP 57c

117 To include a community sports facility.

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 55	Upton-upon-Severn	Land off A4104, north east of Upton Marina	70	2.78	SWDP 58c
SWDP REALLOCATE 56	Abberley Common	Land at the Orchard	6	0.85	SWDP 59/1
SWDP REALLOCATE 57	Abberley Common	Land at Walshes Farm	15	1.43	SWDP 59a
SWDP REALLOCATE 58	Abberley Common	Land west of Apostle Oak Cottage	25	1.6	SWDP 59/2 14/01122/OUT
SWDP REALLOCATE 59	Clifton-upon-Teme	Land at Hope Lane	30	1.32	SWDP 59/3
SWDP REALLOCATE 60	Hallow	Land south of Greenhill Lane	30	1.67	SWDP 59zzi
SWDP REALLOCATE 61	Hanley Swan	Land between the school and Westmere	16	0.69	SWDP 59/6 17/00382/OUT
SWDP REALLOCATE 62	Lower Broadheath	Strand Cottages, Peachley Lane	6	0.62	SWDP 59/11
SWDP REALLOCATE 63	Lower Broadheath	Land adjacent to Henwick Mill House, Martley Road	42	1.54	SWDP 59*
SWDP REALLOCATE 64	Welland	Land adjacent to the former Pheasant Inn	14	0.68	SWDP 59/13 16/01203/OUT
SWDP REALLOCATE 65	Bayton	Land adjoining Severne Green	5	0.15	SWDP 60/1
SWDP REALLOCATE 66	Callow End	Land at Wheatfield Court	15	0.95	SWDP 60/3
SWDP REALLOCATE 67	Clows Top	Land adjacent to Highbrae	17	0.86	SWDP 60/4

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 68	Powick and Colletts Green	Former allotments, Winsmore	49	1.57	SWDP 60/5 16/00737/FUL
SWDP REALLOCATE 69	Rushwick	Land off Bransford Road	96	5.38	SWDP 60t 17/01193/FUL
		TOTAL	731		

Table 30: SWDP Mixed Use Reallocations

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Indicative Housing Figure / Employment land (ha)	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 70	Malvern	Malvern Technology Centre (QineticQ)	300 / 4.5	15.4	SWDP 53
SWDP REALLOCATE 71	Malvern	Development at north east Malvern	800 / 10	58.64	SWDP 56
		TOTAL	1100 / 14.5		

Employment Sites

Table 31: New Proposed Employment Land Allocations

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 105	Malvern	Park Farm, Blackmore Park Road	14.05 ⁽¹¹⁸⁾	CFS0117
SWDP NEW 106	Malvern	Land adjacent to Blackmore Park	24.1 ⁽¹¹⁹⁾	CFS0652
SWDP NEW 107	Malvern	Land off B4208 between Hill View Area and Willow End Business Park	6.5	CFS0082

118 Gross area including 7.7ha of Green Infrastructure

119 Gross area including 14.5ha Green Infrastructure

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Site Area (ha)	CFS / Planning Ref.
SWDP NEW 108	Malvern	Land off B4208 between disused railway track and Willow End Business Park	2.1	CFS0084
SWDP NEW 109	Malvern	Land at Mayfield Road	9.72	CFS1097a
SWDP NEW 110	Malvern	Land at Mayfield Road	11.25	CFS1097b
SWDP NEW 111	Kempsey	Land to the west of Worcester Road, Open Barn Farm	8.45	CFS1019
SWDP NEW 112	Holly Green	Land at Bluebell	6.64	CFS0487
SWDP NEW 113	Holly Green	Land to the north of Digaway	1.88	CFS0696
		TOTAL	84.69	

Table 32: SWDP Employment Reallocations

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Site Area (ha)	SWDP / Planning Ref.
SWDP REALLOCATE 72	Malvern	Blackmore Park	5.4	SWDP 54
		TOTAL	5.4	

Retail Allocations

Table 33: New Proposed Retail Allocations

Preferred Options Reference	Settlement	Site	Site Area (ha)
SWDP NEW 114	Malvern	Land at Barnard's Green	0.59
		TOTAL	0.59

Introduction

21.1 This policy sets out how the SWDPR will be implemented and monitored.

SWDPR 56: Implementation

- A. Planning obligations will be required to fund infrastructure projects that are directly related to specific development, particularly with regards to affordable housing, transport, green infrastructure, education health and other social infrastructure.**
- B. The Community Infrastructure Levy will be used to address the cumulative impacts of infrastructure in an area.**
- C. Progress on the delivery of the SWDPR will be monitored annually and a partial or whole plan review will commence if the plan is significantly failing to meet its objectives, or if the policy context requires a review.**

Reasoned Justification

21.2 This policy focuses on the successful delivery of new development in the period until 2041, in line with the vision and objectives of the SWDPR and coordinated with strategic infrastructure provision.

21.3 The successful implementation of the local plan will depend on the actions and contributions of a wide range of organisations and bodies including the private, public and third sectors. Notwithstanding, the SWCs have limited resources, they will have an important role to play in such areas as planning applications, infrastructure and economic development, lobbying for resources, transport, education and co-ordination. It will require effective working with service providers, agencies and the development industry to deliver.

21.4 The SWCs considers that any one of the following circumstances would require a review of the plan to commence or sustainable alternative / additional sites to be brought forward, as appropriate:

- a. A failure of policies SWDPR 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 when assessed against the plan objectives and in particular a failure to deliver the amount of development required by policy SWDPR 1.
- b. Evidence established through another LPA local plan process that its unmet strategic requirements can only be accommodated within south Worcestershire.
- c. Changes in national planning policy or Ministerial Statements that mean one or more of the plan's policies can no longer be effectively applied.
- d. Evidence in the Authorities' Monitoring Report that one or more Plan policies are not achieving the plan's objectives or are working contrary to the effective planning of the south Worcestershire area.

Delivery and Funding

21.5 The SWCs and the county council have progressed an Infrastructure Delivery Plan, which has focused on identifying planned or required physical, green and social infrastructure at a detailed level.

21.6 The SWCs will engage actively and closely with the private sector and the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, to deliver the objectives of the SWDPR and translate these objectives into positive outcomes for the whole community. This engagement will be achieved through strategic planning performance agreements, or other appropriate arrangements incorporating regular meetings with landowners / developers, infrastructure and service providers and other key stakeholders. Close partnership working will enable the coordinated phasing and delivery of development, associated infrastructure and funding (including developer contributions) to come forward.

21.7 Developers and their agents will be encouraged to enter into pre-application discussions with the LPA as well as undertaking early community engagement to ensure that their proposals are supportive of the SWDP and the requirements set out in each SWCs Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) are fulfilled.

21.8 The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was implemented by the SWCs in June (Malvern Hills and Wychavon) and September (Worcester City) 2017. CIL is a locally set charge that local authorities can place on new development in their area. Development of the CIL Charging Schedule has had regard to development viability and has, as a mandatory charge on all development (with some exceptions), been set at a level that does not undermine development viability. Clearly this is a challenge, particularly in the current economic climate, and the CIL guidance (as revised) requires local authorities to strike an appropriate balance between additional investment to support development and the potential effect on the viability of developments.

21.9 A revised Infrastructure Delivery Plan will identify physical, social and green infrastructure including those requirements that are cross-boundary, and whilst each individual district is the charging authority for the CIL, the pooling of such resources is likely to be necessary in order to effectively deliver cross-boundary infrastructure. Infrastructure such as the Southern Link Road improvements, will require continuing collaboration between the SWCs and the county council in order to ensure a planned approach to the delivery of that infrastructure.

21.10 The economic conditions underpinning development viability will change over the plan period and CIL will be reviewed at regular intervals throughout the plan period in order to look at the impact upon development viability.

21.11 Planning obligations through Section 106 agreements will continue to provide funding to mitigate negative development impacts that are directly related to specific development such as highways, recreational facilities, education, health or affordable housing. CIL will be used to address the cumulative impacts of infrastructure in an area.

21.12 Other sources of public funding to support the delivery of the SWDP objectives will be sought.

Governance

Background

21.13 Plan preparation and review will continue to be overseen by the elected members of the South Worcestershire Joint Advisory Panel which is supported by an Officer Steering Group made up of senior planning officers from each SWC and Worcestershire County Council.

Delivery Bodies

21.14 There are private and public sector bodies who have a role to play in the delivery of the SWDPR including: The Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership, The Worcestershire Partnership, Worcestershire Local Nature Partnership and Landowners and Developers.

Working with the Community

21.15 Each of the partner authorities is committed to involving the public in the preparation of policies and guidance and in determining planning applications. The SCI for the SWCs set out this approach in more detail.

21.16 Moreover, there are opportunities for local communities to produce their own neighbourhood plans that set out a vision and objectives for their areas. Neighbourhood plans are required to be in general conformity with the strategic policies in the local plan.

Development Viability

21.17 An overall viability assessment has been undertaken for south Worcestershire to firstly assess the impact of the plan's policies on development viability and then to examine the cumulative impact of the policy requirements. The assessment methodology is consistent with national guidance and best practice.

21.18 The question that needs to be answered in any viability testing relates to the impact on viability of the policies being put forward, given likely land values, and whether the developer will still be in a position to make a reasonable profit.

21.19 Viability testing on sites has been based on a calculation of the Gross Development Value (GDV) or combined value of the complete development, less the costs of creating the asset, including a profit margin to give a Residual Value (RV) for the development. The Residual Value can be defined as the top limit of what a bidder could offer for a site whilst still making a satisfactory profit margin. Residual Value can therefore be compared with an Existing or Alternative Use Value (EUV or AUV) as follows:

- a. A viable development would be defined as a site where the Residual Value exceeds the Viability Threshold (the existing use value plus uplift).
- b. Where the Residual Value is greater than EUV but less than the viability threshold, the site would be considered as marginal.
- c. Where the Residual Value is less than the EUV the site would be considered unviable.

21.20 The viability work undertaken for the SWDPR has included stakeholder engagement with developers and planning consultants.

21.21 The main conclusion of the South Worcestershire Viability Study (2019) is that the proposed policies of the SWDPR and the CIL do not put the implementation of the plan at serious risk. Consideration does, however, need to be given to ensuring that the policies within the SWDPR are flexible enough to reduce the risk of unviable development.

21.22 The SWCs are aware of recent updates (September 2019) to the NPPG and CIL Regulations in relation to planning obligations and the CIL and will seek to address any further updates pertaining to the plan-making process (and how this may affect viability assessment to date) should they be required following the conclusion of the Preferred Options document.

SWDPR 57: Monitoring Framework

Why do we need to monitor?

22.1 Monitoring and reviewing are an important part of local plan making as otherwise the effectiveness of policies and the need to review them cannot be determined.

22.2 Monitoring provides crucial feedback into the process of policy-making and review and helps to address questions such as:

- a. Are policies achieving their objectives and delivering sustainable development?
- b. Have policies had unintended consequences?
- c. Is the planning context and the evidence base behind the policies still relevant?
- d. Are targets being achieved?
- e. Should different indicators be used?

How will the South Worcestershire Development Plan be monitored?

22.3 The South Worcestershire Authorities Monitoring Report (SWAMR) will be produced annually by the SWCs. The SWAMR will assess the extent to which policies set out in the SWDPR are proving effective and whether targets are being met. Monitoring will assess progress in delivering the Vision and Objectives through the implementation of policies. The SWAMR will also report on the Traveller and Travelling Showpeople DPD, SPDs and neighbourhood planning updates.

22.4 The SWAMR will also include updated housing trajectories, which will set out the net additional dwellings completed to date and the estimated future completions for the remainder of the SWDPR period. This will be supplemented by and more detailed Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessments (SHELAA).

22.5 In addition to the SWAMR, the SWCs will prepare an annual Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) from December 2020, setting out the anticipated funding from developers contributions and the choices local authorities have made about how these contributions will be used and any identified spending priorities. The statement will also identify whether the SWDPR intends to fund the proposed infrastructure, either wholly or partly, via the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) or planning obligation.

22.6 To achieve the plan targets and milestones the SWCs will:

- a. Approve planning applications that are consistent with the policies set out in the plan.
- b. Work in partnership with a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations to co-ordinate investment and ensure the successful implementation and delivery of the vision, objectives and policies.

Active Travel: Walking and cycling as opposed to motorised transport for the purpose of making every day journeys.

Affordable housing: Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and/or is for essential local workers); and which complies with one or more of the following definitions:

- a. Affordable housing for rent: meets all of the following conditions: (a) the rent is set in accordance with the Government's rent policy for Social Rent or Affordable Rent, or is at least 20% below local market rents (including service charges where applicable); (b) the landlord is a registered provider, except where it is included as part of a Build to Rent scheme (in which case the landlord need not be a registered provider); and (c) it includes provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. For Build to Rent schemes affordable housing for rent is expected to be the normal form of affordable housing provision (and, in this context, is known as Affordable Private Rent).
- b. Starter homes: is as specified in Sections 2 and 3 of the Housing and Planning Act 2016 and any secondary legislation made under these sections. The definition of a starter home should reflect the meaning set out in statute and any such secondary legislation at the time of plan-preparation or decision-making. Where secondary legislation has the effect of limiting a household's eligibility to purchase a starter home to those with a particular maximum level of household income, those restrictions should be used.
- c. Discounted market sales housing: is that sold at a discount of at least 20% below local market value. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Provisions should be in place to ensure housing remains at a discount for future eligible households.
- d. Other affordable routes to home ownership: is housing provided for sale that provides a route to ownership for those who could not achieve home ownership through the market. It includes shared ownership, relevant equity loans, other low cost homes for sale (at a price equivalent to at least 20% below local market value) and rent to buy (which includes a period of intermediate rent). Where public grant funding is provided, there should be provisions for the homes to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households, or for any receipts to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision, or refunded to Government or the relevant authority specified in the funding agreement.

Allocation: Land that has been identified for a specific use in the current development plan.

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA): If a local authority identifies any locations within its boundaries where the Air Quality Objectives are not likely to be achieved, it must declare the area as an Air Quality Management Area. The area may encompass just one or two streets, or it could be much larger. The local authority is subsequently required to put together a plan to improve air quality in that area - a Local Air Quality Action Plan.

Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB): A nationally designated area under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 in respect of which relevant authorities "shall have regard to the purpose of conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area".

Biodiversity: The variety of different types of plant and animal life in a particular region.

Biodiversity Action Plan: The Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) is the county council's response to the national biodiversity planning process. The Worcestershire BAP was produced in 1999 and consists of a series of Species and Habitat Action Plans, setting out current status, targets for protection and enhancement to be carried out by each partner organisation. This document takes the objectives of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan and translates them into a Worcestershire context, with targets and actions for each important habitat and species.

Brownfield: (see also **Previously Developed Land**). In the sequential approach towards identifying sites suitable for development, this is considered to be preferable to greenfield land for new building. Planning policies and decisions should encourage the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed, provided that it is not of high environmental value. This is land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Building for Life 12: A measurement of the design quality of new development initiated by the former Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment and now supported by the Design Council.

Building with Nature: A framework of quality standards, an assessment and accreditation service, and national awards recognising the design and delivery of high quality green infrastructure.

Chartered Institute of Ecology and Environmental Management (CIEEM): Promotes the highest standards of environmental and ecological practice for the benefit of nature and society.

City, Town, District and Local Centres: These locations are where there is likely to be a high proportion of retail uses which may include food, drinks, clothing and household goods. They will also provide opportunities for a diversity of uses such as restaurants, cinemas and businesses. Local Centres will provide a range of lower order shops and services to meet the needs of nearby residents and businesses.

Climate Change: A significant and lasting change in the statistical distribution of weather patterns over periods ranging from decades to millions of years. It may be a change in average weather conditions or in the distribution of weather around the average conditions, i.e. more or fewer extreme weather events. Climate change is caused by factors that include oceanic processes (such as oceanic circulation), variations in solar radiation received by the earth, plate tectonics and volcanic eruptions and human-induced alterations of the natural world.

Commitments: Development proposals that already have planning permission or are allocated in adopted development plans.

Community Facilities: Buildings, services and land uses intended to meet the health and wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): This is a charge that local authorities in England and Wales are empowered, but not required, to charge on most types of new development in their area. CIL charges are based on simple formulae that relate the size of the charge to the size and character of the development paying for it. This allows local authorities to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area. It can be used to fund a wide range of infrastructure, e.g. transport schemes, schools that are needed to support the development of the local area.

Conservation Area: An area of special architectural or historical interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance. It is statutory recognition of the value of a group of buildings and their surroundings and of the need to protect not just individual buildings, but the character of the area as a whole.

Custom Housebuilding: Custom housebuilding typically involves individuals or groups of individuals commissioning the construction of a new home or homes from a builder, contractor or package company. In a modest number of cases, people will engage in physically building a house for themselves or will work with sub-contractors to do so. This latter form of development is also known as 'self build'.

Design Codes: These are normally an illustrated set of rules for the design of a new development to accompany a masterplan, for example, setting out design principles, a range of style options and a limited palette of materials. These are normally informal in status but can be produced as formal Supplementary Planning Documents for

sites that have already been allocated. They differ from Design Guidance, which tends not to be site specific. Unless otherwise stated, references to Design Codes in the SWDP are intended to be of the informal type. See also **Masterplans**.

Development Management: Development Management (Development Control) is the element of the UK system of Town and Country Planning through which local government regulates land use and new building. It deals with the assessment of planning applications and their determination, the discharge of associated conditions and appeals arising out of the refusal of consent.

Development Plan: A statutory document, which sets out the local authority's policies and proposals for the development and use of land in their area. The SWDP forms a key part of the development plan and guides and informs day-to-day decisions as to whether or not planning permission should be granted, under the system known as development management. The development plan also includes minerals and waste plans prepared by the county council and any adopted neighbourhood plans. Legislation requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Development Plan Documents (DPD): A document which is part of the development plan and forms part or the whole of a local plan.

Employment Land: Land that is used to provide for office, commercial, industrial, research and development and warehousing development that generates or safeguards job-related activities.

Environmental Character Area (ECA): Green Infrastructure ECAs have been developed for Worcestershire. They set an overall strategic approach for interventions within the areas based on the quality of GI. Each ECA is complemented by evidence highlighting overarching principle and primary objectives for each of the contributing GI characteristics.

Examination in Public: An examination undertaken by an independent inspector into representations on a development plan document, including its legal compliance and overall 'soundness'.

Green Belt: The NPPF (paragraph 134) indicates that the fundamental aim of green belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of green belts are their openness and their permanence. The Green Belt serves five purposes:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns;
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

There is a general presumption against inappropriate development, which is defined as development that is harmful to the green belt. The government attaches substantial weight to the need to avoid harm to the green belt. More specifically, the NPPF indicates that most forms of development are inappropriate. There are some named exceptions to this that will be permitted as long as they meet certain criteria, such as maintaining the openness of the area and not conflicting with the purposes of including land in the green belt.

Greenfield: Land that has not been developed previously. Applies to most sites outside built-up areas and land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments.

Green Infrastructure (GI): A network of multi-functional green space, urban and rural, which is capable of delivering a wide range of environmental and quality of life benefits for local communities.

Green Space: Green Space is the collective term used to describe all public open space, such as parks, public gardens, cemeteries, allotments, water bodies, playing fields, children's play areas, woodlands, nature reserves, allotment gardens, linear and other open space, as well as open spaces which do not necessarily have a right of access, e.g. school playing fields. Some private gardens, particularly in Worcester, are also defined as Green Space where they perform a Local Green Network function.

Geodiversity: Geodiversity is an understanding of the variety of rocks, minerals, fossils, soils, landforms and natural processes that make up the physical environment, landscape, fuels and raw materials that society operates within and uses.

Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA): A study that assesses the accommodation needs of Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.

Health Impact Assessment (HIA): A tool used to predict the health implications of a planning proposal on a population. It ensures that the effects of development on both health and health inequalities are considered and addressed during the planning process.

Heat Mapping: A heat map is a spatial plan of existing and planned buildings which shows potential heat demand and the potential location of decentralised energy and heat generating equipment.

Heritage Asset: A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. Heritage asset includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Historic England: The Government's statutory adviser on the historic environment, championing historic places and helping people to understand, value and care for them. Officially known as the Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England, Historic England is an executive non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

Household Projections: Produced by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and linked to the latest Office for National Statistics Sub-National Population Projections. The projections are trend-based and indicate the number of additional households that would form if recent demographic trends continue.

Infrastructure: The network of essential physical services that most buildings or activities are connected to. It includes not only physical services in an area, e.g. gas, electricity and water provision, telephones, sewerage and networks of roads, public transport routes, footpaths and such, but also community facilities and green infrastructure. New or improved infrastructure will generally need to be provided where significant levels of new development are proposed.

Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP): This is a document that offers evidence to support the SWDPR. It sets out the amount and type of infrastructure needed to deliver the level of development proposed in the SWDPR. It analyses physical infrastructure (such as transport and utilities), social infrastructure (such as schools and community facilities) and a complete range of green infrastructure. These are described on a geographical basis, which makes it easier for the reader to understand where infrastructure is planned; this is analysed in more detail in an Appendix. The IDP also considers issues around the funding of infrastructure and suggests a way forward in meeting such requirements. The IDP has been produced in close consultation with the county council and the various infrastructure providers. It is a 'live' document and will be updated on a regular basis.

Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS): A report (from December 2020) relating to the previous financial year on the Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106 planning obligations and details of the infrastructure projects or types of infrastructure that the SWC intends to fund wholly or partly by the levy.

Inward Migration: The movement of people into south Worcestershire.

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - This is defined as those impacts that “result from changes to the landscape or visual amenity caused by the proposed development in conjunction with other developments (associated with or separate to it), or actions that occurred in the past, present or are likely to occur in the foreseeable future”. From Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment; Third edition, 2013, Landscape Institute.

Lifetime Homes: The Lifetimes Homes are homes designed to incorporate 16 design criteria to support the changing needs of individuals and families at different stages of life.

Listed Building: A building or structure of special national architectural or historic interest; it is protected by law from unauthorised alterations or demolition. In addition, when determining applications for any development that might affect a listed building, it is relevant to consider the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. Structures within the curtilage will normally be included within the listing.

Live / work unit: A purpose-designed single unit enabling the occupiers to live and work within the same building.

The Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership: 'Worcestershire Works' was formed in 2011 and replaces the function of the former Regional Development Agency, Advantage West Midlands. See **Local Enterprise Partnership**.

Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP): Partnerships between local authorities and businesses, formed in 2011, to help determine local economic priorities, enable business and civic leaders to come together to drive sustainable local economic growth and assist in creating the conditions for private sector job growth in their communities. They are also a key vehicle in delivering Government objectives for economic growth and decentralisation, whilst also providing a means for local authorities to work together with business in order to quicken the economic recovery. They carry out some of the functions previously carried out by the Regional Development Agencies, which were abolished in March 2012.

Local Plan: An individual or collection of development plan documents forming the statutory development plan prepared by an individual local planning authority.

Local Transport Plan (LTP): The LTP is a five year strategy for the development of local, integrated transport, supported by a programme of transport improvements. The LTP also forms a bid to Government for funding of the improvements. It is the main source of capital funding for the programme. The LTP sets out a series of targets to allow each authority to monitor the effect of their strategy. LTP4 was adopted by Worcestershire County Council in November 2017 and covers the period 2018-2030.

Masterplan: A comprehensive layout and / or design framework for a large scale, often mixed use development or redevelopment. It can be informal in status, either developer or public sector-led and prepared in order to assist the process of design or the understanding of development proposals and how they will be delivered. It can also be more formal in status, against which planning applications will be determined, in which case they would need to be adopted as part of an Area Action Plan DPD, Neighbourhood Plan or if already allocated in the development plan, through a Supplementary Planning Document. Unless otherwise stated, references to masterplans in the SWDP are intended to be of the informal type. See also **Design Codes**.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF):

The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these should be applied. It provides a framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development can be produced. The latest version was published in February 2019.

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG):

Additional web-based planning guidance covering a range of land use planning topics.

Natural Environment Research Council (NERC):

A British Research Council that supports research, training and knowledge transfer activities in the environmental sciences.

Neighbourhood Plan or Neighbourhood Development Plan: These were introduced by the Localism Act 2011 and can be prepared by a parish or town council or neighbourhood forum to establish general planning policies or allocate land for development in a particular neighbourhood. Subject to conformity with the strategic policies in the local plan, an independent examination and support in a community referendum, neighbourhood plans will become part of the development plan.

Older People: People over retirement age, including the active, newly-retired through to the very frail elderly, whose housing needs can encompass accessible, adaptable general needs housing for those looking to downsize from family housing and the full range of retirement and specialised housing for those with support or care needs.

Open Space Assessment: An assessment of needs and deficiencies in open spaces across south Worcestershire in order to establish local provision standards and create an evidence base to inform the SWDPR.

Pitches (for Travellers and Travelling Showpeople): A 'pitch' means a pitch on a 'gypsy and traveller' site and 'plot' means a pitch on a 'travelling showpeople' site (also sometimes called a 'yard'). The terminology differentiates between residential pitches for 'gypsies and travellers' and mixed-use plots for 'travelling showpeople', which may / will need to incorporate space or to be split to allow for the storage of equipment.

Planning Obligations: Legally enforceable agreements between a planning authority and a developer, or undertakings offered unilaterally by a developer, which ensure that necessary mitigating works related to development are undertaken; these are sometimes called Section 106 Agreements (s.106 Agreements).

Previously Developed Land (PDL): Land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage should be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure. This excludes: land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures; land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time.

Primary Shopping Area: Defined area where retail development is concentrated (generally comprising the primary and those secondary frontages which are adjoining and closely related to the primary shopping frontage).

Public Realm: The space between and within buildings and developments that are publicly accessible, including streets, squares, parks and open spaces.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy: Renewable and low carbon energy includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and also from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).

Rural Exception Site: Rural exception sites should be small, solely for affordable housing and on land within or adjoining existing small rural communities, which would not otherwise be released for general market housing because it is otherwise subject to policies of restraint (e.g. in the countryside or where policies maintaining the openness of the landscape are in place). The affordable housing provided on such sites should meet local needs in perpetuity and count towards the overall level of housing provision. The rural exception site policy applies to both allocated or windfall sites.

Scheduled Monument: A nationally important archaeological site or historic building, given legal protection against unauthorised change. The protection is offered under the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979.

Section 38 Agreement: A legal agreement between a developer and a Highway Authority to ensure that work carried out on the highway by the developer reaches adoptable standards (maintainable at public expense).

Section 106 Agreement: A legal agreement between developers and a local planning authority made in accordance with Section 106 (s.106) of the 1991 Planning Act, usually to secure benefits for local residents without which a planning application would be refused (see also **Planning Obligations**).

Section 278 Agreement: A legal agreement allowing developers to make alterations to the Public Highway.

Sequential Approach: A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before others. For example, brownfield sites are identified for development before greenfield or undeveloped sites and town centre retail sites are preferred to out-of-centre sites. In terms of employment, a sequential approach would favour an employment use development over a mixed use one and mixed use over non-employment uses.

Settlement Hierarchy: In the SWDP, settlements are categorised as part of a hierarchy based on the services and facilities available to that settlement. The hierarchy is:

- Main towns - Worcester, Droitwich Spa, Malvern etc.
- Category 1 - towns and villages with a good range of services and facilities, as well as some access to public transport.
- Category 2 - villages that have a more limited level of services.
- Category 3 - locations where only limited development to address local housing need is acceptable.
- Other settlements - these have few facilities and services and are felt to be unsustainable locations for any growth and development in the SWDP.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI): A formal conservation designation. Usually, it describes an area that is of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora it contains - or even important geological or physiological features that may lie in its boundaries.

Social Rented: This is housing available to rent at below market levels. Lower rents are possible because the Government subsidises local authorities and registered social landlords in order to meet local affordable housing needs.

Stakeholders: Groups, individuals or organisations who may be affected by, or have a key interest in, a development proposal or planning policy. They may often be experts in their field or represent the views of many people.

Stand Alone Renewable Energy: Stand alone renewable and low carbon energy projects are typically those which are not attached to individual buildings for the purposes of meeting a proportion of that buildings heat or power. Examples of stand alone technologies include larger scale wind turbines, biomass, solar farms, anaerobic digestion, combined heat and power and hydro-electricity plant which diverts all or a substantial proportion of its heat and/ or power directly into the national grid or a large scale heat network. In contrast, building integrated technologies may include technologies such as solar PV, solar hot water, ground and air source heat pumps which are attached to the fabric of a building and which typically divert some or all of the energy or heat generated into a single building.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA): A SFRA is a high-level assessment of flood risk carried out by or for planning authorities to meet the needs of national legislation with the purpose of assisting local authorities to deliver sustainable development. The SFRA has informed the various allocations and sets the context / parameters for more detailed Flood Risk Assessments associated with planning applications.

Strategic Highway Network: Refers to the pattern of motorways and trunk roads.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA): The purpose of this study is to analyse data and trends relating to local housing markets and issues of affordability of housing within south Worcestershire.

Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessments (SHELAA): These are a key component of the evidence base required to support the delivery of sufficient land to meet the community's need for more homes and employment. These assessments are required by national planning policy as set out in the NPPF.

Strategic Sites: These sites are considered to be vital to the delivery of the SWDP objectives. They are allocated for housing, employment and infrastructure development and represent significant opportunities for sustainable growth. They are primarily located in the urban extensions and the employment allocations.

Supplementary Planning Document (SPD): SPDs are Local Development Documents that explain how policies in Development Plan Documents will be implemented. They do not form part of the SWDP and cannot allocate land, but are material considerations when determining planning applications.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA): The European Directive 2001/42/EC on “the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment” is known as the Strategic Environmental Assessment or SEA Directive. The directive applies to any land use plans and modifications that began to be prepared after 21 July 2004. It also applies to any land use plans that have not been adopted or submitted to a legislative procedure leading to adoption by 21 July 2006. The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government has published guidance on how to undertake a SEA of land use plans and how the methodology may be expanded to incorporate sustainability appraisal.

Sustainability Appraisal: The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires Local Development Documents to be prepared with a view to contributing to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainability appraisal is a systematic appraisal process. The purpose of sustainability appraisal is to appraise the social, environmental and economic effects of the strategies and policies in a Local Development Document from the outset of the preparation process. This will ensure that decisions are made that agree with sustainable development requirements.

Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS): A long-term strategy for the future economic, social and environmental wellbeing of an area. The statutory requirement for a local authority to prepare a SCS was repealed in 2014.

Sustainable Development: In broad terms, this means development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The Government has set out five guiding principles for sustainable development in its 2005 strategy ‘Securing the future - UK Government strategy for sustainable development’. The five guiding principles, to be achieved simultaneously, are:

- Living within environmental limits.
- Ensuring a strong, healthy and just society.
- Achieving a sustainable economy.
- Promoting good governance.
- Using sound science responsibly.

The NPPF sets out a definition of sustainable development and identifies how it is to be identified and delivered (Framework paragraphs 7 – 14). In 2018 the Government set out further direction on achieving sustainable development in 'A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment'.

Sustainable Drainage System (SuDS): Efficient drainage system that seeks to minimise wastage of water, including the use of appropriate groundcover to enable maximum penetration of clean water run-off into the ground, promote the filtration and evaporation of water as close to the source as possible and break down pollutants and, where appropriate, recycle grey water within the development. Designed to minimise the impact of development on the natural water environment, they are an alternative to drainage through pipes directly to a water course and help enhance water quality and biodiversity, maintain groundwater levels and reduce the risk of flooding.

Town Centre: Area defined on the SWDPR Policies Map, including the primary shopping area and areas predominantly occupied by main town centre uses, within or adjacent to the primary shopping area. References to town centres or centres apply to city centres, town centres, district centres and local centres. Neighbourhood centres are also centres which include town centre uses but they are not considered to be town centres. Unless they are identified as centres in local plans, existing out-of-centre developments, comprising or including main town centre uses, do not constitute town centres.

Travellers (and Gypsies): National planning policy in Planning Policy for Traveller Sites (DCLG, August 2015) defines gypsies and travellers as “persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such”. In determining whether persons are ‘gypsies and travellers’ for the purposes of planning policy, Planning Policy for Traveller Sites states that “consideration should be given to the following issues amongst other relevant matters – a) whether they previously led a nomadic habit of life, b) the reasons for ceasing their nomadic habit of life, c) whether there is an intention of living a nomadic habit of life in the future, and if so, how soon and in what circumstances”. For the purposes of SWDPR19, ‘travellers’ means ‘gypsies and travellers’.

Travelling Showpeople: National planning policy defines travelling showpeople as “members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who, on the grounds of their own or their family’s or dependants’ more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age, have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers”.

Village Facilities and Rural Transport Survey: An assessment of the facilities and public transport services that is available in each of south Worcestershire’s rural settlements.

Vision: The vision describes how south Worcestershire will have developed by 2041. The vision places emphasis on sound economic prosperity, housing delivery and the provision of infrastructure. The implementation of the SWDP objectives and policies will help achieve the vision.

Water Framework Directive (WFD): The Water Framework Directive is a piece of European legislation that promotes a positive approach to water management. The Directive helps to protect and enhance the quality of surface freshwater (including lakes, streams and rivers), ground waters, groundwater - dependent ecosystems, estuaries and coastal waters out to one mile from low water.

Windfall: Windfall sites are those that have not been specifically identified through the SWDP process. They comprise previously developed sites that have unexpectedly become available and that may (in some cases) be suitable for certain forms of redevelopment.

Waste Core Strategy: Worcestershire County Council guide to the approach to planning for waste management facilities in the county until 2027.

Worcestershire Minerals Local Plan: This guides mineral development in the county to particular locations and sets criteria against which applications for the extraction of minerals and related developments can be assessed. A draft plan is being prepared by the county council to plan for mineral extraction to 2035. This will be adopted in 2020.

Worcestershire Green Infrastructure Strategy: A non-statutory county-wide guidance document which aims to direct and drive the delivery of Green Infrastructure in Worcestershire and inform relevant strategies and plans of partner organisations.

Worcestershire Partnership: The Worcestershire Partnership brings together local government, public services such as health, learning providers, police and probation, voluntary and community organisations and local businesses within Worcestershire.

World Health Organisation Air Quality Standards: These are the concentrations of pollutants in the atmosphere that can broadly be taken to signify a certain level of environmental quality. They are based on an assessment of the effects of each pollutant on human health, including the effects on certain sensitive sub-groups.

Village Facilities and Rural Transport Survey: An assessment of the facilities and public transport services that is available in each of south Worcestershire's rural settlements.

Rural Hierarchy of Settlements (SWDPR 2)

The results of the 2019 Village Facilities and Rural Transport Study enable the various settlements surveyed to be ranked as follows:

Category 1

Settlements in this category have at least four key services and score at least 16 points in the Village Facilities Survey. In addition they have access to all daytime journey types (A, B, C, D, E, F, and G).

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
Callow End	Badsey
Clifton upon Teme	Bredon
Great Witley	Broadway
Hallow	Drakes Broughton
Hanley Swan	Fernhill Heath
Kempsey	Hartlebury
Lower Broadheath	Harvington
Martley	Honeybourne
Suckley	Inkberrow
Welland	Offenham
	Omersley
	Upton Snodsbury
	Wychbold

Category 2

Settlements in this category have at least two key services and have access to at least a daily bus services for employment and shopping purposes (A and B journey types).

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
Abberley Common	Ashton Under Hill
Alfrick	Beckford
Astley	Bretforton
Bayton	Church Lench
Broadwas	Cleeve Prior
Clows Top	Crophorne
Holt Heath	Crowle and Crowle Green

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
Powick (inc Colletts Green)	Defford
Tunnel Hill	Eckington
	Elmley Castle
	Himbleton
	Lower Moor
	Overbury
	Pinvin
	South Littleton
	Tibberton
	Whittington

Category 3

Settlements in this category have at least one key service (other than a parish / village hall) and have access within the settlement to at least a daily bus service to a 'designated town', or three of the daytime journey types.

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
Bransford	Bishampton
Grimley	Cutnall Green
Knightwick	Flyford Flavell
Leigh Sinton	Hanbury
Lindridge	Littleworth
Mamble	North and Middle Littleton
Rushwick	Norton Juxta Kempsey
Shrawley	Pebworth
	Sedgeberrow
	Stoke Prior

Category 4

Settlements in this category either have access to some secondary facilities / services but limited or no bus service provision or have low or medium level of public transport provision but low services / facility provision.

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
Abberley Village	Abberton

Annex A: Rural Hierarchy of Settlements (SWDPR 2)

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
Alfrick Pound	Abbots Morton
Berrow	Aldington
Broadheath	Aston Somerville
Bushley with Bushley Green	Bevere
Clifton	Birlingham
Corse Lawn	Blackminster
Dunley	Bredons Hardwick
Eardiston	Bredon's Norton
Earls Croome	Broad Marston
Eastham	Broughton Hackett
Guarlford	Charlton
Hanley Castle	Childswickham
Hanley Childe	Conderton
Kerswell Green	Cookhill
Knighton	Crossway Green
Leigh	Dunhamstead
Little Witley	Elmbridge
Longdon	Fladbury
Madresfield	Grafton Flyford
Menithwood	Great / Little Comberton
Newland	Hampton Lovett
Newnham Bridge	Hindlip
Pendock	Hinton on the Green
Pensax	Kemerton
Ripple	Kington and Dormston
Ryall and Holly Green	Kinsham
Severn Stoke	Martin Husingtree
Shelsley Beauchamp	Northampton
Sinton Green	Norton and Lenchwick

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
Smith End Green	Oldfield
Stanford on Teme	Peopleton
Stockton on Teme	Rous Lench
Stoke Bliss	Sale Green
Stonehall	Stock and Bradley
Upper Rochford	Stoulton and Hawbridge
Upper Welland	Strensham
Wichenford	Summerfield
	Throckmorton
	Upton Warren
	Wadborough
	Westmancote (and Lower Westmancote)
	White Ladies Aston and Sneachill
	Wick
	Wickhamford
	Wyre Piddle

Villages considered to be within the Open Countryside

All other villages that have no key services and limited or no bus service provision.

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
Baughton	Atch Lench
Birts Street	Hadzor
Brockamin	Hatfield
Castlemorton	Huddington
Cotheridge	Naunton Beauchamp
Frith Common	Netherton
Frith Common	Oddingley
Gilberts End	Sychampton
Green Street	Uphampton

Annex A: Rural Hierarchy of Settlements (SWDPR 2)

Malvern Hills District	Wychavon District
High Green	
Kinnersley	
Lower Sapey	
Monkwood	
Naunton	
Rye Street	
Shoulton	
Stanford Bridge	
Uckinghall	

Marketing Requirements (SWDPR 8)

The LPA will consider the failure to let premises for their approved use as a material planning consideration, where the following considerations apply (it should be noted that there are numerous material considerations when considering change of use applications and there will be circumstances when change of use will be approved regardless of the prior marketing of the property).

1. The property has been offered for lease and, where practical, for sale with a commercial property agent for at least 12 months immediately prior to the submission of a planning application.
2. The rental and asking price are realistic when compared to other similar property in south Worcestershire.
3. A marketing report is submitted with the application. As a minimum, a marketing report should include:
 - a. An evidence - based assessment of the market for the existing and proposed uses of the property.
 - b. A copy of the agent's marketing material used to describe the property.
 - c. Details of all advertising relating to the property.
 - d. Details of all prospective occupiers or purchasers who have contacted the agent together with the reasons they did not pursue their interest in the property.

It will not be necessary to comply with these requirements on all occasions. It will be up to the decision-maker to decide if the market conditions for classes of property or the individual characteristics of the property mean that it is unlikely to be re-let for the approved use.

It is recognised that not all property can be advertised on a freehold basis; for instance, a single floor of an office block or a shop with other commercial uses on upper floors.

Nationally Described Space Standard (SWDPR 17)

The standard requires that:

- The dwelling provides at least the Gross Internal Floor Area (GIA) and built-in storage area set out in Table 1 below.
- A dwelling with two or more bedspaces has at least one double (or twin) bedroom.
- In order to provide one bedspace, a single bedroom has a floor area of at least 7.5m² and is at least 2.15m wide.
- In order to provide two bedspaces, a double (or twin) bedroom has a floor area of at least 11.5m².
- One double (or twin) bedroom is at least 2.75m wide and every other double (or twin) bedroom is at least 2.55m wide.
- Any area with a headroom of less than 1.5m is not counted within the GIA unless used solely for storage (if the area under the stairs is to be used for storage), assume a general floor area of 1m² within the GIA.
- Any other area that is solely used for storage and has a headroom of 900-1500mm (such as under eaves) is counted at 50% of its floor area, and any area lower than 900mm is not counted at all.
- A built-in wardrobe counts towards the GIA and bedroom floor area requirements, but should not reduce the effective width of the room below the minimum widths set out above. The built-in area in excess of 0.72m² in a double bedroom and 0.36m² in a single bedroom counts towards the built-in storage requirement.
- The minimum floor to ceiling height is 2.3m for at least 75% of the GIA.

Table 1: Minimum GIA and storage areas (m²)

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
1b	1p	39 (37)*			1.0
	2p	50	58		1.5
2b	3p	61	70		2.0
	4p	70	79		
3b	4p	74	84	90	2.5
	5p	86	93	99	
	6p	95	102	108	
4b	5p	90	97	103	3.0
	6p	99	106	112	
	7p	108	115	121	
	8p	117	124	130	
5b	6p	103	110	116	3.5

Number of bedrooms (b)	Number of bed spaces (persons)	1 storey dwellings	2 storey dwellings	3 storey dwellings	Built-in storage
	7p	112	119	125	
	8p	121	128	134	
6b	7p	116	123	129	4.0
	8p	125	132	138	

*Notes (added 19 May 2016)

1. Built-in storage areas are included within the overall GIA and include an allowance of 0.5m² for fixed services or equipment such as hot water cylinder, boiler or heat exchanger.
2. The GIA for one storey dwellings include enough space for one bathroom and one additional WC (or shower room) in dwellings with 5 or more bedspaces. GIA for two and three storey dwellings include enough space for one bathroom and one additional WC (or shower room). Additional sanitary facilities may be included without increasing the GIA provided that all aspects of the space standard have been met.
3. Where a 1bedroom 1person unit has a shower room instead of a bathroom, the floor area may be reduced from 39m² to 37m², as shown bracketed.
4. Furnished layouts are not required to demonstrate compliance.

Annex D: Additional Information Required to Justify Planning Permission (SWDPR 21)

Annex D: Additional Information Required to Justify Planning Permission (SWDPR 21)

Additional information required to justify planning permission (SWDPR21 tests for rural workers' dwellings / occupancy conditions)

The NPPF (paragraph 79) states that local planning authorities should avoid allowing isolated new homes in the countryside unless there are special circumstances such as: "there is an essential need for a rural worker, including those taking majority control of a farm business, to live permanently at or near their place of work in the countryside".

This "essential need" should be evidenced, to demonstrate that it is essential to the proper functioning of the enterprise for one or more workers to be readily available on site during the majority of the time.

1. Functional need for a dwelling

Evidence will be required to prove that any additional dwelling proposed for the operation of the farm / rural enterprise is necessary because.

- a. For reason of animal welfare, security of animal stock or other stock, security of buildings or machinery, or the maintenance or delivery of essential processes, a full-time worker is required to live on the unit for most of the year.
- b. No other dwellings are available within or adjacent to the site or a nearby settlement that can meet the required need.
- c. Existing residential accommodation on the unit will be expected to be retained for operation of the rural enterprise, and linked to the rural enterprise by a legal agreement.

2. Economic sustainability of the enterprise

Evidence will be required to establish the following:

- a. In the case of a proposal for a permanent dwelling, that the existing enterprise is economically viable and has clear prospects of remaining as such; or in the case of a proposal for a temporary dwelling, that the new or proposed enterprise has been planned on a sound financial basis; and
- b. That the size of the dwelling proposed is commensurate with the established functional requirement of the enterprise.

Occupancy conditions

In order to ensure that the dwellings are kept available for meeting need for as long as it exists, occupancy conditions will be placed on the dwelling. The condition will only allow occupation by someone solely, mainly, or last working in agriculture, forestry or another essential rural enterprise in the area as a whole and not just on that particular unit.

List of Significant Gaps Removed

Following an appraisal of Significant Gaps ⁽¹²⁰⁾, the following Significant Gaps ⁽¹²¹⁾ are proposed to be deleted:

- Beckford (North)
- Beckford (South)
- Crowle - Crowle Green
- Hinton-on-the-Green
- Pershore
- Pebworth
- Pinvin
- Upton Snodsbury
- Whittington (part only)
- Wyre Piddle

120 refer to the Significant Gap Appraisal document for details.

121 see the SWDPR Policies Map for details.

SOUTH WORCESTERSHIRE Development Plan

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