

Introduction

11.1 Upton-upon-Severn is a small town of some 2,700 people (2009 Mid-Term Population Estimates), mainly situated on the southern bank of the River Severn between Worcester and Tewkesbury. Its one road bridge links the main part of the town to the marina, on the north bank, and to the villages of Holly Green and Ryall to the east and Tunnel Hill to the west. It is some 7 miles south east of Malvern.

11.2 There are no rail connections, the nearest mainline stations being at Ashchurch, near Tewkesbury, and Great Malvern. However, the town is within easy reach of the M50 and M5 motorways, (some 2.5 and 3.5 miles) and is thus on a main route linking Malvern and surrounding villages to the motorway system.

11.3 The main characteristics of the town are its historic core and riverside - reflecting its past importance as a riverside port, and as a market and service centre for the surrounding rural area, and a tourist destination. Travel to work data (2001 census) shows that the majority of people who live in the parishes of Upton-upon-Severn and Hanley Castle tend to work within the immediate area, in the rest of Malvern Hills District, particularly the Malvern and Welland areas, and at Ledbury. There are also strong travel to work links with Worcester, Pershore and Tewkesbury.

Reasoned Justification

11.4 The town grew up around the river and its economy is based mainly on agriculture and river-based trade. Today the town acts as a service centre and market town for the surrounding rural areas, and as a tourist centre, based on its historic character and the riverside- with a large marina located on the north bank. The town is renowned for its music and water-based festivals. There are many pubs, hotels and restaurants and a range of mainly independent retailers in High Street and Old Street. There are also a considerable number of services for its size, including a library, secondary school (at Hanley Castle) and a new health centre (at Tunnel Hill).

The Pepperpot at Upton upon Severn



11.5 The flooding problems associated with the town (almost the entire town is surrounded by the floodplain up to the boundary) have resulted in the fragmented nature of the town and its services. Flooding also provides a considerable constraint to any future development growth, particularly for housing, and thus site allocations have been considered in Tunnel Hill and Holly Green and Ryall, as the nearest settlements beyond the floodplain.

11.6 However, to support the existing population, services such as the schools, and the commercial and retail trades, it is considered that some additional housing is geographically located to meet Upton upon Severn's needs. This is particularly the case for affordable housing, to support those people who cannot afford to buy or rent properties on the open market.

11.7 No new employment allocations are put forward, but account has been taken of the future expansion of the marina, that has permission and is likely to support local employment. The flood constraints make it difficult to find other suitable sites for employment within the town.

11.1 Upton upon Severn Area Capacity

Upton-upon-Severn Urban Capacity

11.8 There are no urban capacity sites suitable for future housing development within or immediately adjacent to the town because the whole town is surrounded by the floodplain. Although Tunnel Hill, Holly Green and Ryall are Category 3 settlements, they have strong links with Upton upon Severn, and therefore is considered that it would be appropriate for them to take some local housing needs associated with the town.

11.9 Currently no site allocations are suggested for employment uses as it is considered that support for the existing commercial and retail economy, and scope for further expansion of the marina (in line with current permissions) and associated tourism will help the local jobs market. Policies SWDP 28 and SWDP 29 support the town centre retail and commercial uses.

11.1.1 SWDP 21: Upton upon Severn Allocations

Policy SWDP 21: Upton-upon-Severn and Allocations

Development at Upton-upon-Severn is likely to be limited due to floodplain, landscape and access issues. The settlements of Holly Green and Tunnel Hill will be the focus for housing and commercial development to serve the needs of these settlements and Upton-upon-Severn, in accordance with policy SWDP1. New development will help provide a mix of housing sizes and tenures to meet local housing needs, including the need for affordable housing.

The following sites are allocated on the Proposals Map to support future development for housing during the plan period.

Table 17 Upton-Upon-Severn Allocations

Policy Reference	Site	Employment/ commercial	Indicative number of Dwellings
SWDP21/1	Land at Sunny Bank Meadow, Holly Green	0	50

Commercial development at Upton Marina for boating and recreational uses associated with tourism are encouraged.

Links to the Objectives

11.10 The Preferred Option policy for Upton Upon Severn supports the following objectives:

- Economic success that is shared by all objectives 1 and 2;
- Stronger communities objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4;
- A better environment for today and tomorrow objectives 1, 2, 3 and 5;
- Improving Health and wellbeing objective 2;
- Communities that are safe and that feel safe objectives 1 and 2.

Alternative Options Considered

11.11 No new development should be allocated for housing in the vicinity of the town because of the severe flooding constraints. However, Upton-upon-Severn is one of the most sustainable settlements in Malvern Hills district, accommodating a large population with associated community, education and community services, and supporting a large marina and tourist trade. Furthermore, larger scale flood mitigation measures have recently been approved for the town and these are likely to be implemented within the next two years, helping to support the town's economy, and easing the strain on the population. The Town Council wish to see some additional housing in Upton upon Severn, to support the population, with a particular need for affordable housing. The Town Council recognises that most of any growth would have to be outside of the settlement itself, and originally suggested a search for up to 50 dwellings in Tunnel Hill, outside the Severn floodplain. Analysis of sites put forward through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has shown limited availability of appropriate sites in Tunnel Hill, but some scope in Holly Green on the north east side of the river.