

### Great Malvern Priory from Foley Terrace



#### Reasoned Justification

**8.1** Malvern's urban area is formed from the settlements of Great Malvern, Malvern Link, Barnards Green, West Malvern, and Malvern Wells. The urban area contains a population of over 33,600 (2009 Mid-Term Population Estimates).

**8.2** The key characteristic of the Malvern urban area is its dramatic setting on the slopes of the Malvern Hills. The setting and historic importance is reflected in the conservation area status of the larger part of Great Malvern. The Malvern Hills themselves are designated as an Area of Outstanding Beauty. The town is characterised by a high percentage of greenspace, which is important to the character of the town and its surroundings and as such will be protected. The town also contains large areas of common land, both within the built up area, and on its fringes, giving a green setting and opportunities for green corridors for recreation and wildlife. Beyond the urban area, Malvern is surrounded by open farm land, smaller villages and more isolated farm settlements. Thus Malvern has a role as a service centre for a wider rural area.

**8.3** Malvern is a centre of employment for a large part of the district, centred on the Enigma Business Park, the industrial estate at Spring Lane, and the high technology enterprises at the former defence establishment, now QinetiQ, and associated / similar businesses at the Malvern Hills Science Park. Its location in Malvern is an important anchor within the Worcestershire A38 High Technology Corridor.

**8.4** Great Malvern is the main "town centre" retail centre in the district, complimented by district centres at Malvern Link and Barnards Green. Other main retail facilities are at the out-of-centre retail park at Townsend Way. Malvern is served by two railway stations at Great Malvern and Malvern Link, connecting the town to Worcester and Hereford on a frequent service. The A449 links the town directly to Worcester,

some 8 miles away, with regular bus services. Road links to the M5 on the eastern side of the district, provide access to junctions 7 (Worcester) and 8 (Strensham, via the M50 junction 1). There are important functional links with Worcester, as the County town, providing opportunities for employment, further education at the University of Worcester and Worcester College of Technology and sub-regional health services.

**8.5** Great Malvern's character is based on its more recent history as a spa town and tourist centre and its role as the administrative centre for Malvern Hills District. It also contains the main local services for health, education and retail uses. There has been considerable investment in replacement health centres with three of the five G.P surgeries in new premises with capacity to accommodate planned growth and a recent larger replacement for Malvern Community Hospital. Malvern contains two main state secondary schools and South Worcestershire College of Further Education and a number of private schools.

**8.6** Malvern is an important arts and 'traditional' cultural centre but also has a range of bars and restaurants. The Malvern Theatres are recognised as being one of the country's leading regional venues, and includes a cinema. Other leisure facilities include the Malvern Splash leisure complex, tenpin bowling and various public sports facilities. Events at the Three Counties Showground have expanded beyond its original agricultural based activities and now accommodates a range of recreational and commercial activities and events making it a major attraction and facility.

**8.7** In terms of population, Malvern has a higher number of elderly people than average, and a lower natural increase in population. This brings its own challenges and could lead to increased demands on the health service and the housing stock. Housing demand, and house price growth, are both stronger in South Worcestershire than in the rest of the sub-region, which offers little prospect of any improvement in affordability. Further pressure on housing stock is generated by younger people moving away, and being replaced by established families moving into the area, better equipped to compete in the market place and outbid newly forming or expanding local households. However, further housing provision will provide the opportunity to re-balance the population structure.

**Elgar Statue, Great Malvern**



### Directions for growth outside the town boundary at Malvern

**8.8** Assessment has demonstrated that there are not sufficient urban brownfield sites to accommodate all of the required development to meet Malvern's needs. Malvern's urban capacity has been established at approximately 4.5 ha of employment land and 174 dwellings on smaller sites, with the additional potential of 250 dwellings and 4.5ha of employment land on the QinetiQ site. In order to meet the quantum of development set out in the Development Strategy, 10ha of employment land and 700 dwellings will need to be developed outside of the existing town boundary together with associated infrastructure.

#### 8.1 Malvern Urban Capacity

**8.9** A detailed site assessment has been undertaken to inform the capacity of Malvern to accommodate the level of employment and housing development in accordance with the Development Strategy. The Malvern Hills Local Plan met housing and employment allocations only on previously developed land. However, such opportunities are now limited and consequently a detailed assessment has been undertaken of other potential sites. Policy SWDP 13 sets out those sites within the urban area which will be brought forward for development. These are either existing Brownfield sites, or Greenfield sites that are not considered to be essential to maintain for public open space or other green infrastructure requirements that are not protected by the Malvern Urban Green Space Strategy.

#### Belle Vue Terrace, Great Malvern



### 8.1.1 SWDP 13: Malvern Sites

#### SWDP 13 - Malvern and Allocated Sites

As the principal urban area and main town centre in the District, Malvern will be the focus for new development within the Malvern Hills District in accordance with Policy SWDP1. New development at Malvern will enhance the economic prosperity of the town and its hinterland, particularly building on the higher technology businesses based at QinetiQ, as part of the Worcestershire A38 Technology Corridor.

Within Malvern new development will be balanced to enable new homes to be provided alongside existing and new employment opportunities.

The following sites are allocated on the Proposals Map to accommodate future development during the Plan Period. These will be delivered in accordance with the Implementation Plan.

**Table 14 Malvern sites**

Policy reference	Site	Residential
SWDP13/1	Walsh's Yard, Poolbrook Common Road	5
SWDP13/2	BMX Track off Mayfield Road	59
SWDP13/3	Land off Welland Road, Upper Welland	24
SWDP13/4	Former playing fields, Green Lane, Malvern Wells	35
SWDP13/5	Former Recreation Field- Poolbrook Close	12
SWDP13/6	Homestead, Halfkey	6
SWDP13/7	Portland House	15
SWDP13/8	Land to rear of 12 priory Road	6
SWDP13/9	Land off Mayfield road	12
SWDP13/10	Lower Howsell Road	6
SWDP13/11	Landsdowne Crescent (hospital site)	15
SWDP13/12	QinetiQ S7T, St Andrews Road	30

Policy reference	Site	Residential
SWDP13/13	Barrack Store, Court Road	30
	<b>Total</b>	<b>255</b>

**Links to the Objectives**

**8.10** The Preferred Option policy for Malvern supports the following objectives:

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

**8.2 QinetiQ**

**Reasoned Justification**

**8.11** Land at the Malvern Hills Technology Park (QinetiQ) is due to be released for further high technology related development in the future. The QinetiQ site is underutilised in part, due to out-of-date premises which are low density. It is considered that these could yield greater job density to deliver greater economic prosperity on a smaller area of land, releasing part of the current site for additional employment uses and housing. The site owners have been pursuing a master plan in order to rationalise the site.

**View of QinetiQ from the Hills**



**8.12** The site is limited to B1(b) new development uses and it is anticipated that it will accommodate “grow on” space for business coming out of the adjacent Malvern Hills Science Park, or new investment into the area from High technology businesses

that compliment the work of QinetiQ or the Science Park. It is crucial therefore that future development at the site continues to promote inward investment as the research and development focus for South Worcestershire.

**8.13** The QinetiQ site will deliver a new sustainable community within the existing built up area of Malvern. The development will deliver the following through the redevelopment of part of the existing QinetiQ employment site, based on more recent analysis of the site capacity and the suggestion that it can deliver a wider mixed use whilst still retaining its prime employment purpose:

- Approximately 250 dwellings, based on a mix of housing types.
- 4.5 ha of B1(b) employment land, (existing allocation carried forward).
- Provision of public transport and walking/cycling infrastructure.
- Public Open Space.

### Objectives

1. To provide additional employment mainly based on the high technology industry associated with the existing QinetiQ site and the nearby Malvern Hills Science Park in order to promote economic prosperity and bolster Malvern's location within the Worcestershire A38 High Technology Corridor.
2. To provide a Brownfield site that is highly sustainable, allowing the more efficient use of the existing QinetiQ site and providing a mixed use development for people to live near local services and community facilities in Barnards Green and Great Malvern Town Centre.
3. To provide for sustainable transport choices for walking and cycling to access nearby local facilities such as schools, health facilities and shops. Public transport to and from the site serves Great Malvern and Malvern Link Station as well as the surrounding urban area. A network of footpaths from the site which allows access to the existing built up part of Malvern.
4. To provide a development that is constructed to a high design and energy efficiency standard.

#### 8.2.1 SWDP 14: QinetiQ

##### **Policy SWDP 14 – Malvern QinetiQ**

The site at QinetiQ is critical in terms of anchoring high technology industry at Malvern, as part of the A38 High technology Corridor which runs through South Worcestershire.

Therefore, within the area identified on the proposals map, a sustainable mixed use development will be provided including:

- At least 4.5 hectares of B1(b) employment land (carried forward from the adopted Local Plan).
- Approximately 250 dwellings.
- Open space and recreational facilities including children's play facilities, informal open space, linking to green corridors, such as the common land to the south.
- Provision of facilities to promote improved public transport to the site and new footpath and cycle routes to link to the existing built up area.
- The development of this site will be subject to a master plan which addresses vehicular access to the site through existing residential areas, existing congestion in the vicinity of the current site entrances, segregation of employment and housing land uses; public open space and other provision on site.

### Links to the Objectives

**8.14** The Preferred Option policy for QinetiQ supports the following objectives:

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

### Malvern Hills in the Spring



## Alternative Options Considered

**8.15 Allocate for Housing Only.** The proposed allocation relating to the QinetiQ site demonstrates the need to deliver economic prosperity led regeneration on this site and to ensure that the focus remains on delivering high technology led development. Focusing on redevelopment for purely residential purposes, which would not have been consistent with the plan's central aim of delivering economic prosperity.

**8.16 Allocating for Employment only.** Similarly, the site could have been allocated solely for employment uses, however this may not represent a deliverable option due to the need to rationalise and the current economic climate.

## 8.3 Blackmore Park

### Blackmore Park

#### Reasoned Justification

**8.17** There are a number of important employment sites within Malvern, with a particular concentration on technology and research at the Malvern Hills Science Park and the Technology Park which incorporates QinetiQ. The Employment Land Review identified the need for further employment land allocation within Malvern to facilitate the area's economic prosperity and job creation throughout the plan period.

**8.18** Blackmore Park is an existing employment site, and currently has permission for expansion of employment uses. It is a Brownfield site located within 1.5 miles of Malvern Town Centre and the landowners continue to promote and improve it for employment uses. It is proposed through the South Worcestershire Development Plan that the site is extended on to land adjacent, that is part residual Brownfield land and part Greenfield land.

**8.19** Access to the site and its infrastructure has been substantially improved in recent years. Planning Permission has also been granted for 275,000 sq ft of mixed use business space and a 6,000 sq ft hi-tech workspace unit has now been completed. The permission includes a large Combined Heat & Power facility for the site and on going discussions with the landowners have confirmed that the role of the park as an exemplar for green technology would generally be supported.

**8.20** The Employment Land Review undertaken earlier this year includes the requirement for an additional 4.5 hectares of employment land at Blackmore Park. The area to the west of the current site which includes some of the existing (Brownfield) elements of Blackmore Park forms the substantial element of this additional allocation.

**8.21** It is considered that allocating further land for employment uses at this location will help to boost Malvern's employment offer through providing space for local companies with links to the agricultural sector such as environmental technologies and low carbon businesses, food and drink uses. The Site's proximity to the Three Counties Showground would particularly benefit such companies.

**8.22** The site is located near to the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and therefore landscape issues will be of particular importance. In particular the edge of any new development will be controlled, to maintain the gap between Blackmore Park and the Three Counties Showground and protect Langdale Wood to the south, an important ecological site.

### 8.3.1 SWDP 15: Blackmore Park

#### **SWDP 15 : Blackmore Park**

As shown on the Proposals Map, an additional 4.5 hectares of land at Blackmore Park will be allocated for B1, B2 & B8 employment uses. In particular, development proposals for quality workspace that promotes the use of green technology will be encouraged.

A Master Plan for the site will be developed with the landowners. This should take full account of landscape issues and maximise the existing woodland to the South.

#### **Links to Objectives**

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

#### **Alternative Options Considered**

**Allocate for housing.** A number of responses to the Preferred Options document (Sept 2008), suggested that Blackmore Park would be a good location for housing to serve Malvern. This was based on the premise that the site is well located for Malvern, and is a derelict or under-used brownfield site. However, the site is not adjacent to the Malvern settlement boundary and would not serve as an urban extension. It is also located off a minor road, and not well located for the major highway network for Malvern. Furthermore, Blackmore Park is not a derelict site and it has extant planning permission for expansion for employment uses. It is therefore considered to be more sustainable for employment expansion.

## 8.4 Three Counties Showground

### Introduction

**8.23** The Three Counties Showground is a large events venue on the outskirts of Malvern, home to the Three Counties Agricultural Society. It hosts exhibitions and leisure events throughout the year, related generally to agriculture, horticulture and equestrianism and other countryside pursuits. It is an important tourism venue for Worcestershire as a whole, and a significant contributor to the local economy. Under the Adopted Local Plan it is allocated for continuation of its role as a rural showground. It is considered that the allocation should continue, to enhance the tourism and economic role of the showground, whilst allowing careful consideration of its development in the context of its important landscape setting, within the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

### Three Counties Showground



### Reasoned Justification

**8.24** The Three Counties Showground is of great economic importance to Malvern Hills District, being a prime tourism venue within Worcestershire. It has managed to remain in operation despite other similar county venues declining, and the South Worcestershire Authorities wish to support its role. However this must be balanced with consideration for the highly visible Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty landscape in which it is situated. Malvern Hills District Council has worked closely with the Three Counties Agricultural Society in terms of working towards a master plan and vision for the site that will allow its continued success whilst having regard for its impact on the landscape, local residential amenity, infrastructure and services. It is recognised that some of the buildings / structures on the site can be improved, to the benefit of the Agricultural Society, and the visual impact of the site, in its setting at the foot of

the Malvern Hills. Opportunities for enhancement of the Green Infrastructure of the site and associated landholding will be important, and will be considered in the context of the Green infrastructure policy SWDP 5.

**8.25** The objectives for any further development on the Three Counties Showground site will be to wherever possible rationalise existing and suitable buildings and structures, reduce as far as possible the overall impact of new buildings and structures and seek to consolidate built development within the eastern boundary of the allocated site.

### 8.4.1 SWDP 16: Three Counties Showground

#### **SWDP 16: Three Counties Showground**

As shown on the Proposals Map, land is allocated at the Three Counties Showground for agriculture, horticulture, equestrianism and other countryside related uses. A master Plan for the site will be developed with the landowners. In particular account will be taken of the location of the showground within the important landscape setting of the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

The development and redevelopment of facilities and infrastructure directly related to the operation of the Three Counties Showground will be permitted where:

1. The use would not be more appropriately related in town centre locations, as outlined in Policy SWDP 28 and 29;
2. The scale, form, design and location of any buildings and infrastructure will not harm the natural beauty of the landscape; and
3. Proposals can be accommodated on the existing road structure and will include measures to increase access to the site by sustainable forms of transport such as public transport, cycling, walking and links to Park and Ride facilities.

Proposals for development beyond the area identified on the proposals map will be considered in accordance with other policies in the plan that seek to control development in the open countryside, and respect the sensitive landscape. In general any additional small scale development should demonstrate that it cannot be located within the existing allocated site.

#### **Link to objectives**

**8.26** The Preferred Option policy for the Three Counties Showground supports the following objectives:

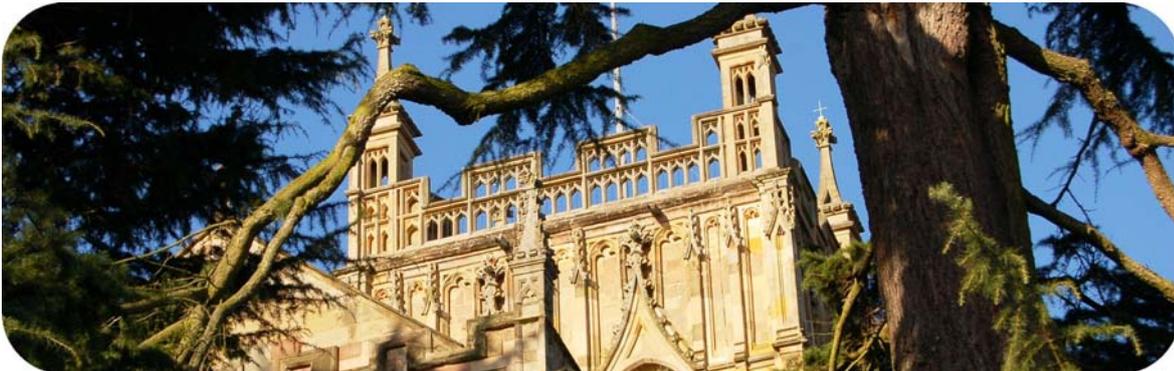
- Economic success that is shared by all objectives 1 and 2;

- Stronger communities objective 4;
- A better environment for today and tomorrow objectives 1, 2, 4 and 5;
- Improving health and well-being objectives 2 and 3;
- Communities that are safe and feel safe objectives 1 and 2.

### Alternative Options considered

**8.27** An alternative considered was not to bring forward an allocation for the Three Counties Showground, and instead rely on current planning agreements and draft masterplans for the site, and that any changes could be dealt with generally through the development management process. However, the site is important to the economy of Malvern area, and its location in terms of the sensitive landscape of the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty means there are many interests affected by its development. It was considered that allocation allowed for wider consideration of its role and development potential.

### Great Malvern Priory



## 8.5 Newland

### Development to the North East of Malvern

#### Reasoned Justification

**8.28** Development to the North East of Malvern area will form an urban extension adjoining the built up area of the town. There will be access to existing facilities and services within Malvern but there will also be specific requirements on the site itself for the following:

- Provision of approximately 10 hectares of employment land.
- Approximately 700 dwellings.
- Primary school, community centre, cemetery land and a police post.

- A network of green spaces including playing fields, children’s play facilities, allotments and green corridors.
- Enabling efficient public transport, cycling and walking with appropriate links to local shops, secondary and further education facilities and other services within Malvern as well as out to the countryside.

### **Objectives:**

1. To create a new community in the form of a highly sustainable development designed to compliment the important landscape setting of the area and enhance its location as a gateway to Malvern, allowing long distance views of the Malvern Hills for residents and passers by.
2. To incorporate 10 hectares of employment land and buildings in a location that is attractive to business interests – retaining local businesses and attracting new investment into the area. This will offer employment opportunities for local residents.
3. To provide open space including play and kickabout areas, allotments and natural grassland and woodland to create an informal environment for local people to relax in, as well as corridors for the movement of wildlife.
4. To maintain historic villages and character of Newland and Madresfield as independent communities.
5. Residents will be able to easily access education and employment opportunities, shopping and community facilities in Malvern through a choice of transport modes. They can travel further afield through the provision of regular bus services to Malvern and Worcester on the A449, or access the Park and Ride facility available from Malvern Link Station.

### **8.5.1 SWDP 17: Newland**

#### **Site Description**

**8.29** The site is approximately 51 hectares. Fields and gardens backing on to Stocks Lane form the boundary to the north and east, and the A449 just meets the site boundaries in the south east. This allows space for a large landscape buffer zone to the north and east to protect the setting of Newland village and the existing Conservation Area. To the north west the railway forms a strong, physical and visual boundary.

**8.30** To the south, the boundary is the Council Depot and recycling plant. To allow consideration of sufficient space for vehicular and cycle access to the site, direct access to the A449 here will provide the principal vehicular access to the site. Future consideration should also be given to the enhancement of this area as a key gateway into the town, through rationalisation of adjacent land uses.

**8.31** The South West boundary site to the south of the former allotment site off Lower Howsell Road itself, excluding existing properties on the road frontage, which provides a strong and visual site boundary. Consideration will be given to the inclusion of the former allotment site in the context of the larger development site.

### **POLICY SWDP 17 – Development at Newland**

Within the area of North East Malvern as identified on the Proposals Map, approximately 51 hectares of land are allocated for a sustainable, mixed use urban extension.

Development within this area will incorporate the following elements:

- 10 hectares of employment generating uses.
- 700 dwellings to be phased in accordance with the Implementation plan.
- Community infrastructure including a primary school and a community hall, a cemetery and police post.
- Measures such as a green buffer to maintain a visual and physical separation of the site from the settlement of Newland.
- Facilities to promote sustainable transport use for public transport, and facilities for safe pedestrian and cycle routes linking to local shops, employment areas, health care, education and Malvern Link Station.
- Public open space facilities including play areas, playing fields, informal open space and allotments.
- Neighbourhood shopping facilities.

A comprehensive master plan will be required for the site and will need to address the following:

- The potential to enhance the area as a gateway entrance into Malvern, by allowing access from Townsend Way roundabout along the site's boundary with the A449.

- That the layout and access arrangements associated with the proposed development should not prejudice the north of the railway line and connection to the B4503 (Leigh Sinton Road).
- The clear separation of new development from the nearby settlement of Newland.
- The impact on the adjacent Madresfield Conservation Area.
- The retention of long distance views to and from the Malvern Hills in parts of the site.

### Links to the Objectives

**8.32** The Preferred Option policy for development at Newland supports the following objectives:

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

### 8.6 Alternatives Considered

#### Alternatives Considered

**8.33** The background paper on Strategic Site Allocations outlines the reasoning behind the selection of the Preferred Option for site selection to accommodate this level of development in more detail. However, to summarise during previous consultation stages a number of broad locations for development were suggested at:

- North East Malvern in the vicinity of Newland – 1,100 dwellings and 10 hectares of employment land
- Land to the South of Townsend Way, east of Mayfield Road, for 500 dwellings and 7ha of employment land

**8.34** Alternative sites were also suggested at

- Land to the North West of the railway to the north of Malvern for up to 900 dwellings
- Land to the east of Moat Crescent, to the east of Malvern for up to 500 dwellings

**8.35 Land to the South of Townsend Way, East of Mayfield Road.** Detailed analysis relating to green infrastructure, landscape impact and public/stakeholder consultation feedback has identified that there are a number of concerns relating to landscape sensitivity; access and localised flooding issues.

**8.36 Land to the East of Moat Crescent.** The landscape is considered to be particularly sensitive, and there are no clear topographical or physical boundaries that would delineate any new urban extension adjacent to this part of the town. Therefore the visual impact on the surrounding countryside would be more prominent. In particular it is considered that it would be more difficult to accommodate employment uses here without considerable detriment to the landscape and the setting of the town.

**8.37 The site north west of the railway.** This site is wholly located within the existing Significant Gap, and there are concerns over reducing the gap with Leigh Sinton to the north. It was originally thought that this area might be accessed over the railway, and linked to the Newland area, as the capacity of the road network on this side of Malvern is limited. However, no scheme for linking the two areas has emerged, and no costings or landscape/ ecology works carried out, but it is likely to be costly to bridge the railway. Also, in landscape terms, this area is closer to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and in a more sensitive area for landscape and ecology.

**8.38 Direct more growth to the villages.** There were some suggestions emerging from the public consultation on the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy Preferred Options report (2008) that more development could be spread around the villages and that there was no need for a larger amount of development in Malvern, outside of the existing boundary. However, subsequent evaluation of sites and general capacity in the villages has shown that it would not be as sustainable, or preferable in terms of village characteristics to significantly increase development outside of the main towns and larger villages.