

What is the Preferred Options Document?

1.1 This is your opportunity to comment on the preferred Strategy for long term development up until 2030 within South Worcestershire. This document puts forward Preferred Options for future development with a discussion of alternatives that have been considered alongside the Sustainability Appraisal. It brings together the strategic and local policies required to guide development in a sustainable way and allocates sites for development to meet the needs of the area. Putting strategic and more local aspects of development together makes it possible for you to view the emerging Development Plan as a whole and may make it easier for you to comment on.

1.2 The purpose of this Development Plan Document is as follows:

- to provide a Vision for what South Worcestershire will be like in 2030;
- to set out a Development Strategy and planning policies, including the allocation of land for employment, housing and other land uses, and to guide infrastructure and service provision. This will help to deliver the aims of the area's Sustainable Community Strategies and promote economic prosperity across South Worcestershire.

1.3 The Preferred Options have been prepared taking into account the views of a wide section of the community including Parish Councils and local businesses, detailed examination of the local evidence base and consistency with national planning policy.

1.4 This Preferred Options Document should be read as a whole. The Reasoned Justifications are also a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

1.5 The planning system is complicated and we have tried to minimise the use of jargon, however we have also included a glossary in Appendix 3 to assist the reading of the document. All words that are defined in the glossary are underlined in the text the first time they appear.

Timetable

1.6 The overall timetable for this Development Plan along with other Local Development Documents can be found in the Local Development Scheme at www.swdevelopmentplan.org and hard copies can be viewed at our Customer Service Centres. However, the important dates are set out below for your information:

- Preferred Options Consultation (this report) – September/November 2011
- Pre- Submission (publication version) Consultation – May 2012
- Submission to Secretary of State – September 2012
- Public Examination by the Planning Inspectorate – December 2012 - January 2013
- Adoption and publication – May 2013

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How to comment

- The consultation period will be from 26th September 2011 to 18th November 2011
- Details of the dates, times and locations of the consultation events in the above period can be found at your local Customer Service Centre, Library, from our website at www.swdevelopmentplan.org or in your local paper. Please come along to find out more and to have your say.
- You can comment online at www.swdevelopmentplan.org or copies of response forms can be found at any of our Customer Service Centres.
- You can find further information on the consultation arrangements or discuss the Preferred Options through contacting us on 01905 722233 or email contact@swdevelopmentplan.org

Next Stages

1.7 Comments made to the preferred options will be taken into account in the production of the Pre-Submission document to be published in May 2012. Objections and supporting comments on that document have to focus on the Planning Inspectorate's "Tests of Soundness." Put simply representations made at the Pre-Submission publication stage will need to focus on the following tests:

- Is the plan **justified** – is it founded on a robust and credible evidence base?
- Is the plan **effective** – policies and site allocations should be deliverable within the plan period. The plan should be flexible and able to handle uncertainty. It must have clear arrangements in place for monitoring its effectiveness.
- Is the plan **consistent** with national planning policy? If not what are the distinct local circumstances to justify this?

Georgian Pershore signpost

