

# **South Worcestershire Development Plan**

## **Proposed Modifications to Housing Allocations in South Worcestershire**

### **Site Assessment Forms (Additional New Sites and Amended Sites Only)**

#### **Summary Report**

**September 2014**

**Malvern Hills District Council**

**Worcester City Council**

**Wychavon District Council**

This report is intended to explain the approach taken by the three South Worcestershire Councils when considering sites for Proposed Modifications to Housing Allocations in the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP), in order to meet the uplift in the housing requirement in South Worcestershire, following the outcome of Stage 1 of the SWDP hearings in March 2014.

The sites in this summary report are those that are newly proposed housing allocations, or amendments to existing proposed sites. It does not include any sites that have not been selected (these will follow in a separate report), nor does it include any existing sites that have previously been proposed as housing allocations within the SWDP (unless where amendments have occurred). For assessments of previously considered sites (including those taken forward as proposed SWDP sites), and further information regarding the methodology used, please see the 'Non-Strategic Housing Allocations Background Paper' (December 2012).

The intention is that this report provides a summary of the rationale for the criteria and the evidence used to assess and determine the newly proposed / amended sites that have been considered and are now put forward as proposed modification allocations in the SWDP.

### **Selection Criteria Process for Proposed Housing Allocations**

In order to propose an increased housing supply for proposed modifications to meet the SWDP housing requirement, the South Worcestershire Councils have considered potential sites from a variety of sources. Sites considered include newly proposed allocations, as well as the intensification of existing proposed submission allocations. Furthermore, additional supply (separate from the site assessment work) has also been gleaned from completions from 2012 to 2014 and commitments at 2014, including sites subject to recent planning appeal decisions.

The sources of potential sites are as follows:

- a) Extension and / or intensification of existing SWDP allocation sites;
- b) Omission sites put forward by developers, but not currently allocated in the SWDP;
- c) Current planning housing applications and paid pre-application advice sites (including sites approved, but subject to completion of S106 agreements);
- d) Planning permissions on sites post submission of the SWDP, including those allowed on appeal;
- e) Sites submitted to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) for evaluation since its last publication (December 2012);
- f) Other sites identified recently by the three South Worcestershire Councils, including surplus public sector sites, vacant and derelict land and buildings and local authority property; and

g) Sites submitted under the 'Call for Sites' carried out after the Stage 1 Examination (March / April 2014).

The initial starting point for the site submissions process is to collate sites as part of the SHLAA database. The SHLAA database provides an initial first sieve of sites based on the SHLAA methodology (whether sites are available, suitable, achievable and deliverable), but does not in itself allocate any sites. For further information regarding the methodology please see the 2012 SHLAA report It is intended that a 2014 edition will be forthcoming.

In summary, the SHLAA methodology splits the assessment of sites into 'Level 1' and 'Level 2' criteria. Firstly, if a site is not 'ruled out' at the SHLAA Level 1 stage (i.e. there are major physical constraints, for example over 50% of the site area is affected by Flood Zone 3 or 2), a further assessment of the site is undertaken at the Level 2 stage (a further set of criteria that could identify constraints and determine a site to be 'ruled out', e.g. on location). Sites identified in the SHLAA with constraints at the Level 1 stage will generally not be taken forward for any further assessment. However, Level 2 sites may merit further consideration and site research. The detailed methodology as regards the SHLAA is published in the SHLAA reports on the [South Worcestershire Development Plan](#) website.

For the purposes of the site assessments for the proposed main modifications to the SWDP, if a site is 'ruled out' in the SHLAA at the level 2 stage, this has not necessarily precluded the site from further assessments being carried out if it is considered that the site has certain merits that warrant further consideration. Further consideration may be given to matters such as the potential for mediation of flooding issues, the significance of environmental constraints and the sustainability of sites in relation to key services, amongst other criteria. In terms of sites that are proposed as 'IN', i.e. selected as a proposed housing allocation for the SWDP modifications (this report), there should not be any criteria that rules out a site at the Level 1 SHLAA stage.

### **Proposed Modifications to Housing Allocations Site Assessments Criteria**

The site assessments (following the initial SHLAA assessment) were undertaken by South Worcestershire Council planning officers by utilising the methodology and criteria of the Non-Strategic Housing Allocations Background Paper' (December 2012), with additional external assessments provided by the following organisations:

- Environment Agency;
- Severn Trent Water;
- County Highways;
- County Historic Environment & Archaeology Service;
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Contaminated Land);
- Valuation Office (Market Demand and Viability); and
- District Landscape Comments.

Housing allocations need to be based on robust evidence and subject to a transparent process. A broad range of planning criteria has been employed to inform the selection process. Some criteria are considered 'major'. Potential sites failing a major criteria are not considered appropriate to allocate, as they have a fundamental problem associated with them, e.g. not deliverable; significant infrastructure deficiencies; or not supportive of the SWDP' strategy. The criteria used is as follows:

### **Major Criteria**

All elements below have to be satisfied if a site is to be allocated as a proposed housing site in the SWDP:

- Within or immediately adjacent to categories 1, 2 or 3 of the Village Facilities and Rural Transport Study<sup>1</sup> or within the development boundaries at Droitwich Spa, Evesham, Malvern, Pershore or Worcester.
- The site can be delivered i.e. the landowner(s) have clearly indicated that the site is available and can be developed within the plan period, (e.g. through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment).
- The site is not within Flood Zones 3a or 3b<sup>2</sup>
- The site is further than 450 metres from a hazardous pipeline or compressor station.<sup>3</sup>
- The site can accommodate a safe access onto the public highway.<sup>4</sup>
- The site can be adequately serviced with respect to sewerage and water supply.<sup>5</sup>
- Development would not compromise an internationally or nationally designated site of ecological importance.<sup>6</sup>
- The site is not in the Green Belt.
- The adjacent/surrounding land uses are compatible with residential amenity.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Village Facilities and Rural Transport Study ranked villages according to the number of facilities/services provided locally. These include schools (First, Primary), shops, public houses and public transport.

<sup>2</sup> As set out in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

<sup>3</sup> Confirmation from the Health and Safety Executive

<sup>4</sup> Confirmation from Worcestershire County Council, as the Highway Authority

<sup>5</sup> Confirmation from Severn Trent

<sup>6</sup> Confirmation from Natural England/Worcestershire Wildlife Trust/Worcestershire County Council

## Other Criteria

- There is no adverse impact on the Green Infrastructure Network.
- There is not significant net loss of protected open space.<sup>7</sup>
- There is no detrimental impact on a Conservation Area.
- There is no detrimental impact on a Listed Building.
- There is no detrimental impact on a Scheduled Ancient Monument.
- There is no detrimental impact on a Special Wildlife Site/Local Nature Reserve/Regionally Important Geological Site or any other locally designated wildlife/landscape site.
- There is no detrimental impact on Trees subject to a Tree Preservation Order.
- There is no detrimental impact on a Strategic Gap
- There is no detrimental impact on an Ancient Woodland
- There is no detrimental impact on an Ancient Hedgerow
- The site has not been subject to surface water flooding event, as identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and there is no viable engineering solution to overcome it.<sup>8</sup>
- There is no loss of best or most versatile Agricultural Land.
- Is not contaminated nor likely to be detrimentally affected by contaminated land.<sup>9</sup>
- Is reasonably accessible, normally within 400 metres, of a commercial bus or train service.
- Is reasonably accessible, normally within 800 metres, to local services.
- Would assist in delivering/supporting identified community infrastructure needs e.g. Parish/Neighbourhood Plan.
- Consideration will also be given to the relative proportionate growth of settlements and any elements that could materially affect the character of a settlement.

---

<sup>7</sup> Unless this is more than offset by the provision of new public open space within the same parish

<sup>8</sup> Confirmation from Land Drainage Engineer

<sup>9</sup> Confirmation from the Contaminated Land Officer

The assessments of the sites that have been selected as proposed allocations to the SWDP Modifications for the three South Worcestershire Councils follow on the next pages.

Further information regarding the latest information on the South Worcestershire Development Plan and further evidence base documents can be found at the following location: <http://www.swdevelopmentplan.org>.