

South Worcestershire Site Allocations and Policies Plan – Evidence Gathering.

Report on Consultation Events and Summary of Responses: September 2009 – May 2010.

Introduction

This report describes the details of events and summarises the findings from the initial Site Allocations and Policies DPD consultation, which included information on the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)¹ sites and potential policy areas held between September 2009 and April 2010. The meetings took place in Worcester, the main towns and villages across South Worcestershire for the Site Allocations and Policies Plan (SAP). The consultations were non- statutory.

The report sets out the details of the events and numbers attending, along with a summary of responses and comments for possible sites in the main urban areas and relating to your specific Parish.

Since the close of the consultation period at the beginning of May 2010, and the General Election shortly afterwards, the Coalition Government has made a number of ministerial announcements that have led to procedural and structural changes to the statutory planning system. Principle amongst these has been the revocation of the Regional Spatial Strategy. However, it remains a statutory requirement for local authorities to prepare a Core Strategy and Site Allocations Plan for its area and the three partner authorities continue to work together on this process. In terms of South Worcestershire the decision has been taken to combine the two separate plans and incorporate them within a single document entitled 'The South Worcestershire Development Plan' (SWDP).

This report provides background evidence, in terms of the extent of this initial public consultation and records the views of local communities within the South Worcestershire plan area. As such it will inform the drafting of the SWDP and form part of the evidence base at the Examination in Public (or public inquiry) into the SWDP later in 2012 in accordance with the approved consultation strategy and Statement of Community Involvement.

Background to the Consultation

Changes to the planning regulations in 2008, by the government, led to the removal of the statutory requirement to consult on the initial phase of preparing the development plan document (PPS12). However, there remained the opportunity to raise the profile the SHLAA sites and seek

¹ The SHLAA is a technical background study of potential sites for housing. It is not a plan but provides a database of possible sites for development, assessment of development potential and deliverability to inform later possible housing site allocations.

initial views on what types of policies should be included to guide development in the future.

Technically this should be seen as information gathering rather than consultation (on the basis there were no draft proposals or policies upon which to comment) with the series of events generated a significant amount of interest from the communities within the locality. Undoubtedly the responses have generated a wealth of information and led to successfully raising the awareness of the process. This will have a beneficial effect on the next stages of the plan preparation.

The format included an opportunity for people to review and ask questions about the content of the SHLAA sites and to reflect on the possible generic policies that may be required to direct development control decision making in the future. Planning officers were on hand to discuss both, and inevitably although not part of this process, officers were questioned on progress with the South Worcestershire Joint Core Strategy (the forerunner to the South Worcestershire Development Plan).

The feedback has been via a questionnaire or written representations and people provided more information on the SHLAA sites. It was possible for representations to be made on-line via the consultation portal on the SWJCS website. Other sites came forward from landowners and developers as part of the process (to appear in a fourth edition to be published in January 2011). There was also opportunity to comment on a range of issues and alternative options relating to the development control policies. These were recorded, either within the questionnaire or via 'PostIt' notes under each possible policy heading:

- Protection and provision of green space
- Standards for open space and recreation
- Protecting buildings of local interest
- Protection and promotion of shopping areas
- A vibrant tourist centre
- Protection and promotion of land for jobs
- Marinas, moorings and boating facilities
- Education, health, sports and leisure
- Creation of a vibrant town centre
- Land for Gypsies and Travellers
- Local infrastructure
- Settlement development boundaries

This information will inform, along with other technical background evidence, the content of the South Worcestershire Development Plan preferred options document that will be published for a formal consultation period in the autumn of 2011.

How to read this document

The first section provides an overview of the dates, venues and numbers attending each meeting along with a brief summary of the key findings for the SHLAA sites in the main urban areas within South Worcestershire.

The second section provides a précis of all the comments received on sites identified in the SHLAA within Evesham and Worcester City, as well as other sites that did not come forward via the SHLAA process. In addition comments relating to each of the potential policy areas are recorded along with any issues or concerns raised by respondents for each location.

Additional relevant summary extracts relating to other South Worcestershire towns or villages can be provided on request.

First Section

Worcester Site Allocations and Policies DPD event

The consultation exhibitions took place on (with number of attendees):

- Tuesday 13 Oct - 117
- Wednesday 14 Oct - 18 (incl. 7 students and lecturer from Tech.)
- Thursday 15 Oct - 153
- Saturday 17 Oct - 255

In total, 543 members of the public attended across the 4 days. 767 paper and 78 online questionnaires were received.

The main issues raised for/against development of each site consulted were:

- WO01 Land at Tolladine

Main reasons **against** were concern over loss green network, impact on biodiversity, overloaded infrastructure, and on views/skyline of Worcester. Main reason **for** were logical infill site.

- WO02 Land at Warndon Woods

Main reasons **against** developing were the green network; area being an M5 protection corridor, impact on biodiversity and lack of existing infrastructure.

Reasons **for** were the sites proximity to existing services; being a sustainable location for mixed employment and a logical infill site.

- WO04 Gregory's Bank

Reasons **against** included site currently being in use, poor access, impact on the environment.

The area being brownfield land and near an established residential area were main reasons **for** development.

- WO06 Land at Shrub Hill Industrial Estate

Reasons **for** were the site being suitable for employment, being near the city centre/station and the area needing upgrading. The site not being suitable for housing was the main reason **against** development.

- WO08 Middle Battenhall Farm

The majority of responses were **against** development, citing green network, impact on infrastructure, landscape and views, the effect on biodiversity, flooding and the Scheduled Ancient Monument setting and concern over restricted access.

- WO10 Land at Nunnery Way

Main reasons **against** were the green network/green space, M5 protection corridor and concern over local road safety. Reasons **for** were good access to the site and for employment being a suitable use.

- WO13 Land between Ombersley Road and Droitwich Road

The majority of responses were **against** stating issues of Greenbelt, traffic congestion, and impact on the historic environment. The existing schools being at capacity and the farmland being Grade II were others.

- WO18 Former Ronkswood Hospital

The site was considered favourable **for** development. Housing was considered the most popular use, as it is brownfield and close to an existing community. This site is considered to have good access also be suitable for employment.

- WO22 Former Fruit and Veg Market–bought by the University.

- WO42 Gas Holder Site

The site being brownfield and suitable for housing were popular reasons **for** the site to be developed.

- WO58 Goodman Bayliss Works

Reasons **for** development were the site being a suitable infill and being a brownfield site.

Reasons **against** were Worcester's overloaded existing infrastructure.

- WO66 Land to the north of Worcester/Birmingham Canal & east of Blackpole Trading Estate.

The main reasons **against** were Greenbelt, flooding and constrained access. Good existing infrastructure though was a main reason **for** development.

- WO68 Old Northwick Farm

Issues of flooding/floodplain, existing poor access, the potential increase in traffic, loss of agricultural land and green network were cited as some main reasons **against** development.

- WO77 Upper Battenhall Farm

Main reasons **against** development were green network, impact on landscape and views of the area, biodiversity and infrastructure.

- WO72 Land adjacent to Worcestershire Royal Hospital

Main reasons **for** development were the site being logical infill and being suitable for hospital expansion. Reasons **against** development were green network and overloaded infrastructure.

Wychavon Site Allocations and Policies DPD events

The consultation exhibitions took place on (with number of attendees):

Towns

Droitwich Spa – 31.10.2009 (216)

Evesham – 11.11.2009 (91)

Pershore – 16.11.2009 (99)

Droitwich Spa – 18.11.2009 (68)

Pershore – 21.11.2009 (130)

Evesham – 12.12.2009 (17)

Villages

Drakes Broughton - 21.1.2010 (102)

Broadway – 30.1.2010 (55)

Fernhill Heath – 13.2.2010 (152)

Harvington – 15.2.2010 (78)

Bretforton – 16.2.2010 (120)

South Littleton – 19.2.2010 (80)

Hartlebury – 25.2.2010 (97)

Bredon – 5.3.2010 (400+)

Inkberrow – 20.3.2010 (200)

Beckford – 23.3.2010 (210)

Wychbold – 27.3.2010 (53)

Badsey – 7.4.2010 (150)

In total 2318 members of the public attended across the 18 events.

Main issues with sites – Towns

Droitwich

32-18 Landrover Garage – Logical site, brownfield and close to town
DW3 Land east of Salwarpe Road between canal and river – Flooding concerns

DW1 Land east of George Bayliss Road - Logical site in built up area

DW2 Vines Lane - Logical site in built up area

32-5 (rear of Newland Road) – Would form a logical extension to a strategic site. Too much development to the south of Droitwich.

Evesham

37-U34 Garages between Cheltenham Road & Fountain Court – Good access

37-A11 Bewdley Court & carpark, Bewdley Street – Would lead to a loss in car parking.

37-012 Land off Eastwick Drive – Would be more suitable for housing as current use is noisy.

37-U17 Bewdley Street – Convenient for town centre but access would be difficult.

Pershore

71-18 Land off Three Springs Road & rear of Conningsby Drive; 71-24 Land at 62 Three Springs Road & adjoining land – More suitable for residential than current use (meat and fish packing) which is disruptive to nearby residents.

71-31 Land east of Defford Road - The site should be retained for possible expansion of the Cemetery or for allotments as an interim measure.

71-17 Land at Allesborough Hill, north of Holloway – Concerns about the landscape impact (close to the ridge of Allesborough Hill).

Specific Issues – Wychavon Villages

Drakes Broughton – Concerns about more expansion given extensive growth in 1960s. Some development may be needed to keep shops viable.

Broadway – Need to ensure tourist environment is not ruined by new development. More car parking needed with new development.

Harvington – Crest Hill important rural approach to village. Development may help keep rural facilities viable.

Hartlebury – Concern about the need for improved transport facilities (current train service is limited).

Bredon – Concern about traffic and growth near Tewkesbury/Northway.

Badsey – Recent development and current commitments are likely to increase the size of the village significantly, concern about further development.

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Malvern Hills SAP DPD Consultation – Towns and Villages Events

Consultation Exhibition venues and attendances

Venue	Dates	Attendees
Upton-upon-Severn	Friday 23rd to Saturday 24th October 2009	203
Malvern	Friday 6th to Saturday 7th November 2009	139
Tenbury Wells	Friday 27th to Saturday 28th November 2009	98
Abberley	Thursday 9 th March	119
Callow End	Friday 26 th March	151
Kempsey	Monday 18 th January	205
Martley	Friday 19 th March	75
Hanley Swan	Monday 25 th January	100
Hallow	Thursday 4 th February	173
Leigh and Bransford	Tuesday March 2nd	67
Lower Broadheath	Thursday 11 th march and Saturday 13 th March	129
Total towns/villages		1459

Concerning the towns there were 206 Questionnaires/correspondence, with 19 submitted online. In total there were 258 site specific objections/supporting responses concerning 38 sites.

Sites with more than 5 responses (in descending order of total responses per site)

MHMT19- Land at Hanley Road

The major objection to this site was the visual impact on the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. There were also concerns about Access. Support for the site focussed on the fact that infrastructure was already present.

MHHG01- Holly Green

The objections to this site centred on potential flooding and sewerage issues. Support for the site was based on the easy road access, and the proximity to a small industrial estate.

MHMT17- Land off Welland, Road Upper Welland

Respondents objected to this site on the grounds of access problems and the steep topography of the site. Supporters pointed out that the small site extended the existing developed area.

MHHG02- Land East of Ryall Lawn

It was pointed out by objectors that the site was in close proximity to an Oil Pipeline and that there were flooding issues. Support for the site

identified its layout between two housing estates as being suitable for development.

MHTW01- Land opposite Morning Side

The overriding concern for objectors was flooding on the site and the possible increase in flooding down-slope of the site. Support was varied, mostly based on the site's proximity to the school and existing development.

MHMT01- South West Woodend Farm Upper Welland

Objections pointed to the impact on the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Support detailed its small size as being important.

MHTW08- Land off Oldwood Road

Flooding was the major objection to this site, the major support being the proximity to the school.

MHMT26- Former Coal Yard St Andrews Road

There was no consistent major objection to this site, with comments varying from a general objection to any new development in Malvern, to specific concerns about congestion and impact on the AONB. Support pointed out that development would improve the site, and that it was close to existing development.

MHMT07- BMX Track off Mayfield Road

Objections were varied to this site, with no common theme. Major support was for a small extension to the existing developed area.

MHTH01- Greenfields Farm Hyde Lane

Restrictive access was the major objection to this site, alongside drainage problems. Support was for its part brownfield status.

MHTW06- Field to rear of Wheeler Orchard

Drainage was the major objection to the site, along with the general loss of open countryside. Support focussed on it's proximity to existing settlement and the school.

Remaining Sites where responses were received (in descending order of total responses):

Site Ref	Major reasons for Objections
MHMT43	Access Issues
MHTH04	Open Countryside
MHHG03	Access Issues
MHMT02	
MHMT08	Flooding
MHTH05	Open Countryside
MHMT16	Loss of Open Space
MHMT41	Affect on Landscape Character
MHTH03	Tunnel Hill barrier to development should be

	maintained
MHLB16	
MHMT03	Access
MHMT09	Flooding
MHMT12	
MHMT22	
MHMT37	
MHMT38	
MHMT42	Access Issues
MHMT47	
MHMT50	Infrastructure Constraints
MHMT51	Varied
MHMT67	
MHTH02	
MHTW03	
MHUP01	Varied
MHUP02	Varied
MHUP03	Varied
MHWD02	

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Section 2 - Appendix

Notes on Reading this Section

The appendix is divided into two sections covering the consultation process for:

1. Worcester City
2. Malvern Hills DC
3. Wychavon DC

Each section is divided into two summaries, the first part relates to the sites and the second potential policy areas.

Site Analysis:

This provides a summary of Part 2 of the questionnaire. The code for each site is taken from the Strategic Housing Land Availability (SHLAA) Assessment and should be read in conjunction with a copy of the SHLAA which is available to view on the website www.swdevelopmentplan.org

Policy Analysis:

The code in the summary relates to the number of each question in Part 3 of the questionnaire. The heading for each is given below:

- 7a Protection and provision of green space
- 7b Standards for open space and recreation
- 7c Protecting buildings of local interest
- 7d Protection and promotion of shops and facilities
- 7e A vibrant tourist economy
- 7f Protection and promotion of rural employment sites
- 7g Marinas, moorings and boating facilities
- 7h Education, health, sports and leisure
- 7i Settlement Boundaries
- 7j Land for Gypsies and Travellers
- 7k Local Infrastructure
- 7m Other issues