



20th August 2018

Dear Sir/Madam

**South Worcestershire Development Plan Review
Development Boundary Review - Proposed Methodology Consultation
Monday 20th August to 5pm Monday 8th October 2018**

What are we doing?

The South Worcestershire Councils (SWCs) i.e. Malvern Hills District Council, Worcester City Council and Wychavon District Council, are progressing a review of the South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP).

The South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) Issues and Options consultation, scheduled for November-December 2018, will seek views on whether a Development Boundary Review is necessary and appropriate. Work on the Development Boundary Review process as part of the SWDPR is subject to support in the Issues and Options Consultation. At this stage, the SWCs are consulting on the proposed methodology for the Development Boundary Review, including the assessment of existing Development Boundaries and identification of new Development Boundaries.

The consultation on the proposed methodology predates consideration of the need for a Development Boundary Review in the SWDPR Issues and Options consultation. This is to allow for work to be undertaken in time for the proposed changes to be considered as part of the SWDPR Preferred Options consultation, scheduled for November-December 2019. Should the SWDPR Issues and Options consultation conclude that a Development Boundary Review is not necessary and/or appropriate, work will not progress on this matter.

Why are we doing this?

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) at Paragraph 68 supports the promotion of a good mix of housing sites, including through the support of windfall housing developments, and affords “great weight to the benefits of using suitable sites within existing settlements for homes”.

NPPF Paragraph 77 continues “in rural areas, planning policies and decisions should be responsive to local circumstances and support housing developments that reflect local needs”. Paragraph 78 adds “to promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality of rural communities. Planning policies should identify opportunities for villages to grow and thrive, especially where this will support local services”. Paragraph 79 seeks to avoid the development of isolated homes in the open countryside.

The SWDP echoes these principles, supporting the provision of sufficient and appropriate housing to meet local needs as well as the safeguarding and enhancement of the open countryside (SWDP2 A). SWDP2 B supports infill

development within the defined Development Boundaries of the City, towns and villages subject to satisfaction with other relevant SWDP policies. SWDP2 C defines the open countryside as land beyond the defined Development Boundaries and seeks to restrict development in the open countryside.

The Development Boundaries for the towns and villages in Malvern Hills and Wychavon; of which there are 36 and 96 respectively, were first defined in the respective 1998 Local Plans and have only been amended since to include minor revisions and conterminous SWDP housing and employment allocations. Worcester City's Development Boundary is defined as its administrative boundary and the outer site boundaries of the Worcester Urban Extensions (SWDP45 excluding SWDP45/6 Worcester Technology Park).

Given the length of time since the last review of the Development Boundaries and the scale of development on the ground since, a review is deemed necessary. In addition, there are a number of higher category villages (defined as Category 1, 2 and 3 villages in the SWDP Development Strategy) which do not have a Development Boundary and it therefore may be appropriate in these instances for one to be drawn. The above measures will allow relevant policies to be applied appropriately and consistently.

How can I comment on the proposed methodology?

Responses should be made using the Comments Form and returned no later than 5pm on Monday 8 October 2018:

- by post to South Worcestershire Development Plan Team, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, WR10 1PT; or
- by email to contact@swdevelopmentplan.org

Should you require any further information, please contact Reiss Sadler, Planning Officer (Policy) who is leading on the Development Boundary Review:

- by telephone on 01386 565 430;
- by email to reiss.sadler@wychavon.gov.uk; or
- by post to Reiss Sadler, Civic Centre, Queen Elizabeth Drive, Pershore, WR10 1PT

Yours faithfully,



Fred Davies,
Planning Policy Manager
Malvern Hills and Wychavon District Council