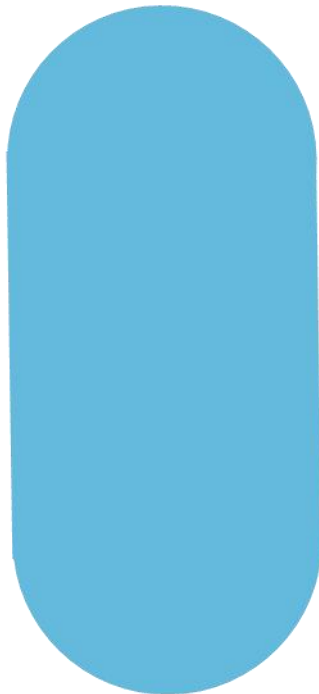


Representations

South Warwickshire Local Plan Part 1 –
Issues and Options Consultation

**BLOOR HOMES WESTERN (WEST SHOTTERY,
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON)**

March 2023





1. The following representations are made in response to the South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP) Part 1 Issues and Options Consultation (January 2023) on behalf of Bloor Homes Western (Bloor Homes), in respect of their land interest at West Shottery, Stratford-upon-Avon (the site). The site forms part of Broad Location 29, and has been identified as Site 379 on the Interactive Map.
2. A summary of these representations has also been submitted to the SWLP Online Consultation Portal, and should be read alongside the supporting documents namely:
 - a. Transport Appraisal and Strategy; and
 - b. Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment

Chapter 3 - Vision and Strategic Objectives

Q-V3.1: Vision for the Local Plan

3. Bloor Homes consider that the proposed Vision is appropriate in general terms. However, the proposed Vision makes reference to meeting unmet need from neighbouring authorities, and Bloor Homes consider it would be more appropriate to reference meeting unmet need from the wider Housing Market Areas.
4. Whilst Birmingham and the Black Country authorities are not neighbouring authorities of South Warwickshire, they do form part of the same Housing Market Area and therefore should not be excluded.

Chapter 4 - Meeting South Warwickshire's Sustainable Development Needs

Q-I1: Sustainability Appraisal

5. The following comments are made in respect of the SA for Stratford-upon-Avon. As a general point, the fact that a Broad Location may not be the best performing location does not automatically mean that within that Broad Location there are no suitable sites that should not come forward as a strategic allocation. The Councils will need to be mindful that this is only one piece of evidence at a strategic level, and the HELAA and other evidence will need to inform the selection of allocations.



6. The Site promoted by Bloor Homes forms part of Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest (Broad Location 29). In assessing the five Broad Locations (BL) identified against the SA Objectives, the SA concludes that Stratford-upon-Avon East is the least constrained in terms of environmental receptors. However, Stratford-upon-Avon East is not considered developable without significant highway infrastructure improvements, as its only highway connection to the strategic road network is via the Clopton Bridge and the town centre.
7. In the absence of any evidence to demonstrate this BL would be developable in transport terms, it is not therefore a 'reasonable alternative' for up to 2,000 homes, and therefore should not be carried forward in the SA process. If such evidence can demonstrate it is developable, the highway infrastructure essential to the delivery of this BL must form part of the SA and therefore this BL will need to be re-assessed in the next iteration.
8. It is also noted that a large part of Stratford-upon-Avon East is a golf course that has not been submitted through the call for sites. If a large proportion of the land is not available, this is not a 'reasonable alternative'.
9. The following specific comments are made in relation to the SA and Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest.
10. SA Objective 2: Flood Risk acknowledges that only very small proportions of the area coincide with Flood Zone 3, and therefore there is negligible impact. All BLs perform arguably equally, and should be assessed as such.
11. It is noted for SA Objective 4: Landscape that additional surveys are required to understand latest sensitivity qualities at each BL. This is welcomed as an updated assessment is required, particularly in respect of Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest given the ongoing development of Land west of Shottery and the Western Relief Road. These developments, along with the Employment Area (SUA.2) to the north once built, will significantly change the landscape character of the northern part of this BL (i.e. the land promoted by Bloor Homes for development which was defined as High/Medium in the previous 2011 Assessment).



12. It is worth remembering that paragraph 73. a) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires Councils to consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure when deciding the location of new development. The SA should therefore take into account the development at Land west of Shottery and SUA.2.
13. SA Objective 5: Cultural Heritage notes the potential major impact of Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest on the setting of Anne Hathaway's Cottage. This is reflected in the Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment. However, it is acknowledged that parts of the area could accommodate development, and therefore harm can be avoided if only part of the BL was proposed for development. The northern part of this BL can be developed without harm to the setting of the heritage assets.
14. SA Objective 10: Health notes that Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest is not within the sustainable target distance of a GP Surgery. However, a Health Centre is a consented element of the Land west of Shottery Development to the immediate north east of the BL, and once completed will change the assessment. The next iteration of the SA should acknowledge the proposed Health Centre in its assessment.
15. SA Objective 11: Accessibility concludes that BLs (other than Northeast) have very poor connectivity. However, Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest has good connectivity to the urban area and its facilities via active travel modes. These routes are shown within the Transport Appraisal and Strategy that is submitted with these representations.
16. With regard to SA Objective 12: Education, Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest falls within the sustainable target distance for all schools, and therefore performs equal best. Notwithstanding, it is to be noted that a new primary school also forms part of the Land west of Shottery Development to the immediate north east of the BL.
17. Further, with regard to SA Objective 13: Economy, Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest falls within the sustainable target distance for employment, and therefore performs equal best.



18. Stratford-upon-Avon Southwest performs better than has been recorded in this SA, and this should be recognised in the next iteration of the SA. Further, there are parts of the BL that do not result in any negative impacts against the Objectives.

Option S2-C: Intensification

19. Intensification is a way to optimise brownfield land and realise its effectiveness. However, Bloor Homes consider that this matter should be dealt with by the SWLP Part 2 Local Plan or Neighbourhood Plans if relevant, so that the implications of applying an intensification policy to a particular area can be assessed in terms of character and deliverability, which are key factors to consider.

20. Intensification is challenging and requires evidence around viability and deliverability before it can be considered to form part of the supply, and as such any intensification potential in the windfall allowance should be avoided.

Q-S3.1: Urban Capacity Study

21. The production of an Urban Capacity Study (UCS, October 2022) to support identification of brownfield land to help deliver the growth needs of South Warwickshire is in accordance with the NPPF¹. The following points are made in relation to how the UCS considers housing supply in the urban areas. However, it should be noted that the UCS also discusses the SWLP housing requirement and representations are made on those points under Q-H1-1 & 2.

22. In relation to housing allocations from the adopted Local Plans, Bloor Homes consider that a comprehensive review of all outstanding allocations without planning permission is required to ensure that such sites still meet the definition of developable as set out in the NPPF². In particular, evidence will be required to demonstrate why the UCS suggests the capacity of some of the allocations will increase beyond what is included within the adopted Local Plan. That review and evidence must be published prior to the next iteration of the Plan to demonstrate the capacity from the allocations can be relied upon to meet the housing need.

¹ Paragraph 119 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

² Glossary of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)



23. The UCS also includes within the supply 795 dwellings on sites which have been submitted to the SWLP Call for Sites process in the urban areas, and are considered to be potentially suitable. As no formal assessment of these submissions has taken place, their inclusion will need to be reviewed once the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA) is published. Any allowance for such sites must be deducted from the windfall allowance.
24. The UCS identifies an additional five sites on vacant land in the urban areas which have not yet been submitted to the Call for Sites process, but are considered potentially suitable for 328 dwellings. There is no certainty around the availability and deliverability of these sites to include them at this stage. Further, on assessment of these sites there are some serious concerns around their suitability in any case. The UCS also identifies two additional sites on brownfield land within the urban areas, at Talisman Square, Kenilworth (65 dwellings) and Westgate House, Warwick (39 dwellings). As above, these sites have not yet been submitted to the Call for Sites process and so there is no certainty around delivery.
25. Finally, the UCS includes an assessment of the potential windfall supply with reference to the level of windfall delivery across South Warwickshire in the period 2011/12 to 2020/21. However, it is considered that this assessment is limited as it does not detail the sources of windfall supply, nor consider how the planning policy landscape in South Warwickshire may impact future windfall delivery. Whilst a windfall allowance is likely to be acceptable in principle in the SWLP, it should be calculated on the basis of compelling evidence as required by the NPPF³.

Q-S4.1: Growth of Existing Settlements

26. Yes, growth of existing settlements in South Warwickshire is imperative to deliver the overall growth targets, and achieve the Vision and overarching principles. The need for housing, affordable and specialist housing, jobs, green infrastructure, improved facilities and infrastructure is within the towns and villages. Those needs are best met sustainably adjacent to the settlements.

³ Paragraph 71 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)



Q-S4.2: Settlement Analysis

27. The following comments are made in respect of Bloor Homes site, which is referenced as Areas 4 and 5 within the Stratford South West Area. Although, please note built development is only proposed on Area 5.
28. In respect of Connectivity, the site has been assessed as 'D'. However, no account has been taken of the Land west of Shottery mixed use development which includes 800 new homes that are currently under construction by Bloor and Bovis Homes and will be completed within the next 10 years.
29. As identified above, paragraph 73. a) of the NPPF requires Councils to consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure when deciding the location of new development. The assessment of connectivity must have regard to planned investment, which in this case relates to the Western Relief Road.
30. The Transport Strategy appended to these representations demonstrates how this site would be connected through the West Shottery development under construction and into the existing urban area.
31. It is therefore considered that active and sustainable modes of travel from Areas 4 and 5 to the town can be made into the urban area, and that connectivity is not a barrier that would prevent the area from being a strategic allocation.
32. In respect of Landforms, it is noted there are no physical constraints on Areas 4 and 5.
33. In respect of local facilities within 800m, it is noted that the report highlights the absence of Healthcare and Places to Meet for Areas 4 and 5. However, both facilities are consented within the Land west of Shottery Development to the immediate north east of the Areas. We have no reason to believe they will not be delivered and once completed will mean all facilities are within 800m. The area will then perform equal best.
34. When taking account of the evidence above, Areas 4 and 5 are suitable locations to accommodate a strategic allocation, as there are no barriers to connectivity to the
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town, no constraints, and facilities are available within 800m. Further, the proposals incorporate a significant area of green infrastructure that could form an extended Country Park west of Shottery. This area would have many benefits, including the delivering of biodiversity net gain as evidenced within the report submitted with these representations.

Q-S7.2: Refined Spatial Growth Options

35. Bloor Homes consider a mixture of options will be required to best deliver the growth needs of South Warwickshire for the reasons as set out below.
36. Firstly, the results of the high level testing of the five growth options in the supporting Sustainability Appraisal demonstrates that the options perform differently in different areas, with no one option standing out as the best performing option across all areas.
37. Secondly, it is important to remember that the assessment set out in the SA is provided at a high level, subject to several caveats, and without consideration of mitigation or deliverability. Options which score less favourably in the SA could therefore actually deliver more sustainable growth on closer examination.
38. Finally, given the significant level of growth the SWLP will need to accommodate (see response to Issues H1 and H4 below) this is unlikely to be able to be met sustainably through a single growth strategy.
39. Bloor Homes support the inclusion of Stratford-upon-Avon in each of the Options.

Chapter 5 - Delivering South Warwickshire's Economic Needs

Q-E7.1: Core Opportunity Areas

40. Bloor Homes support option E7.1a and directing employment growth to the Core Opportunity Area.

Chapter 6 - Delivering Homes that meet the needs of all our Communities

Q-H1-1 & 2: Providing the Right Number of New Homes



41. Yes, the HEDNA provides a reasonable basis for identifying future levels of housing need across South Warwickshire. However, Bloor Homes reserve its position in respect of whether this approach is reasonable for other authorities in Coventry and Warwickshire.
42. The NPPF sets out that “to determine the minimum number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the Standard Method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals”⁴. National policy is therefore supportive of the approach that South Warwickshire Councils are seeking to implement, and as such utilising the HEDNA to inform the local housing need for South Warwickshire is supported.
43. It is important, however, to remember that the local housing need is not the same as the housing requirement within the Plan.
44. The UCS suggests that the SWLP housing need equates to 30,750 dwellings, however this figure does not reflect the latest evidence within the HEDNA and needs updating. In addition, the UCS assumes a Plan period which commences in 2025, however this does not align with the base date of the HEDNA and as such a Plan period from 2022 is considered more appropriate to align with the evidence base.
45. On the basis of the above, we consider a more appropriate local housing need for the SWLP is 47,012 dwellings over a 28 year plan period.
46. In line with the NPPF⁵, it is considered that this figure represents the minimum number of homes needed, and that the Councils should consider whether it is appropriate to set a higher housing requirement in line with national guidance⁶; for example in order to address a significant affordable housing shortfall, support economic development, or address strategic infrastructure requirements which are likely to increase the number of homes needed.

⁴ Paragraph 61 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

⁵ Paragraph 61 of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)

⁶ Paragraph 010 Reference ID 2a-010-20201216 of National Guidance



47. Further consideration will also need to be given to unmet needs within the Housing Market Area in line with the Duty to Cooperate and the positively prepared test of soundness⁷, which is explored in further detail in response to Issue H4 below.
48. Bringing together comments on the UCS and Unmet Needs under Q-H4.2, Bloor Homes consider that the SWLP will need to plan for a level of housing growth as set out in the below Table in the order of at least 43,000 dwellings.

⁷ Paragraph 35 a) of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)



Table – SWLP Housing Requirement and Supply Calculation

<u>Housing Requirement</u>	
South Warwickshire Minimum Housing Need Derived from the HEDNA (1,679 x 28 Years)	47,012 dwellings
Uplift to Minimum Housing Need	TBC – further work required to determine whether an uplift is appropriate
Contribution Towards Unmet Needs of Coventry and Birmingham & Black Country	TBC – engagement with Birmingham/Black Country and Coventry required but suggest increase of at least 21,000 dwellings possible (circa 11,000 towards Coventry and at least 10,000 towards Birmingham)
Total Housing Requirement	68,000 dwellings +
<u>Housing Supply</u>	
Sites with Planning Permission at 1 st April 2022 (with 5% lapse rate applied)	14,360 dwellings
Outstanding Local Plan Allocations at 1 st April 2022	5,579 dwellings
Windfall Allowance	TBC – 4,840 dwellings assumed in line with UCS however this requires further justification / compelling evidence
Total Housing Supply	24,779 dwellings
Indicative Housing Requirement to be found by the Plan	43,000 dwellings +

Q-H4.2: Accommodating Housing Needs Arising from outside of South Warwickshire

49. It is imperative that that SWLP adequately considers accommodating unmet housing needs which are arising from outside of South Warwickshire, to ensure compliance with the Duty to Cooperate and so the SWLP can demonstrate adherence with the



positively prepared test of soundness set out in the NPPF⁸. It is recognised that national planning policy and law has the potential to change during the course of the preparation of the SWLP, including in relation to the Duty to Cooperate and replacement with an ‘alignment policy’, however there is no suggestion the requirement for local authorities to address unmet needs arising from within their Housing Market Areas will be removed.

50. We consider that there are two likely sources of unmet housing needs which require consideration in the development of the SWLP: Birmingham and Black Country and Coventry and Warwickshire.

Birmingham and Black Country

51. There are clearly significant unmet housing needs arising from the Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area which require addressing by this Plan.
52. Birmingham published a New Local Plan Issues and Options consultation document in October 2022. This identifies an overall housing need in Birmingham to 2042 (derived from the Standard Method) of some 149,286 dwellings, with total housing supply equating to just 70,871 – leaving a shortfall of some 78,415 dwellings.
53. There are significant limitations to the potential for such substantial unmet needs to be met by Birmingham’s neighbouring authorities due to lack of available land in the Black Country and significant Green Belt coverage in the Black Country and elsewhere (Bromsgrove, Solihull, North Warwickshire, and Lichfield). This was evident in the work undertaken in the now abandoned Black Country Local Plan Review, which was subject to Regulation 18 consultation in 2021 and identified a shortfall in supply across the Black Country of some 28,239 dwellings to 2039.
54. There are strong functional relationships between Birmingham and South Warwickshire, in terms of transport connections and commuting patterns, and development in South Warwickshire can contribute towards meeting unmet needs.

⁸ Paragraph 35 a) of the National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)



55. The Councils clearly need to engage with Birmingham and the Black Country authorities and others to determine an appropriate level of unmet needs to be directed to South Warwickshire. That process needs to be transparent in accordance with paragraph 27 of the NPPF, and effective in accordance with paragraph 35 c) of the NPPF. The lack of any published Statement of Common Ground showing progress made so far by the Councils is a concern that needs to be addressed before the next round of consultation. The Councils need to properly grapple with this issue, and not allow the failings of the last round of Local Plans to be repeated.
56. It is noted that the SA has tested the effects of an additional 5,000 to 10,000 dwellings to accommodate Birmingham's unmet needs, however given the numbers discussed above Bloor Homes consider 5,000 dwellings to be at the lower end of what could be expected to be accommodated in South Warwickshire. At this stage of the process and in advance of those discussions, as a working assumption for the level of unmet need to be accommodated, the figure should be an additional 10,000 dwellings.

Coventry and Warwickshire

57. Although the question does not address Coventry's unmet needs, this cannot be ignored. Coventry has by far the greatest level of housing need across Coventry and Warwickshire as set out in the HEDNA, with a housing need calculation derived from the Standard Method of some 3,188 dwellings per annum, adjusted in the HEDNA trend-based approach to 1,964 dwellings per annum. Applying the housing need calculated in the HEDNA to the proposed SWLP Plan period suggested from 2022 to 2050 equates to some 54,992 dwellings to be accommodated to meet Coventry's needs, as a minimum.
58. Coventry is highly constrained by a tightly drawn administrative boundary, with potential for brownfield redevelopment but limited opportunity for greenfield development. This was reflected in the adopted Coventry Local Plan (December 2017), where the local housing need in Coventry in the period 2011 to 2031 was calculated at 42,400. The Coventry Local Plan set a housing requirement of just 24,600 (some 60% of its local housing need), leaving a shortfall of some 17,800 dwellings to be met elsewhere.



59. It is therefore highly unlikely that Coventry will be able to meet its local housing need identified in the HEDNA of 54,992 dwellings to 2050. Even assuming that Coventry can accommodate a proportion of its local housing need consistent with that set out in the adopted Coventry Local Plan (i.e. 60%), which is itself a challenge, Coventry could only accommodate 33,000 dwellings to 2050 leaving a shortfall of some 22,000 dwellings to be met elsewhere.
60. Given South Warwickshire's functional relationship with Coventry, and as South Warwickshire makes up around half of the population of Warwickshire according to the 2021 Census data early releases⁹, an assumption that around 50% of this shortfall will be directed to South Warwickshire is considered appropriate. This equates to approximately 11,000 dwellings and should be taken into consideration at this stage of the process as a working assumption for the level of unmet need to be accommodated.

Q-H4.3: Accommodating Housing Needs Arising from outside of South Warwickshire

61. With regard to how and where best housing shortfalls should be accommodated in South Warwickshire, Bloor Homes consider that settlements with the strongest sustainable transport connections to the conurbations where unmet housing needs are arising should be prioritised. In the case of Birmingham's unmet needs, this should include Stratford-upon-Avon given its rail links.

⁹ [How the population changed where you live, Census 2021 - ONS](#)