

Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council **Planning**



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Housing Growth Development Study

Executive
Summary



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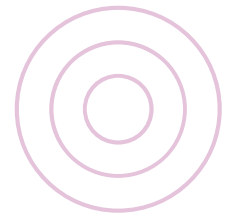
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This document provides a brief summary of the full Housing Growth Development Study which, together with the Sustainability Appraisal forms a substantial part of the evidence base to support this consultation. For full details of the evidence please refer to the Councils website: www.bromsgroveandredditchplanning.co.uk

In March 2012 the Government published the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which is a guidebook for how the Government wishes to see planning decisions taken in the future. The NPPF stresses the need to 'significantly boost housing supply' and the need to 'meet the full and objectively assessed housing needs'. It is the policies in the NPPF which mean that it is not possible for Councils to ignore future housing requirements or simply say the land is in the Green Belt so therefore it can not be built on.

The Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) is the objectively assessed evidence examining the housing requirements up to 2030. This assessment shows that Redditch's housing target up to 2030 should be around 6400 dwellings. Redditch Borough only has the capacity to accommodate 3000 within its own boundaries leaving a shortfall of 3400. This document focuses on the areas where development could take place.

Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council jointly consulted on cross boundary growth options in 2010 which showed similar but less detailed options for development. Since then the two Councils have used this original work and undertaken more detailed work to find preferred locations to accommodate development.

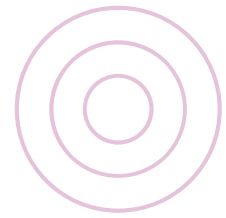
In order to make a recommendation on the most suitable location for growth the following process was adopted. Firstly, a set of overall objectives were formulated. to drive both this exercise and both authorities' Development Plans. These Strategic Objectives provide a framework and context for the work and ensures that all important issues are addressed. These 13 objectives are as follows:

1. To provide sufficient homes to meet the housing needs of both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
2. To provide support and encouragement for the achievement of a strong and diverse economic base for both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
3. To support and to enhance the vitality and viability and, where appropriate, the regeneration of Town Centres, District Centres, and other centres in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
4. To enhance the visitor economy and the provision of leisure and cultural facilities in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
5. To focus all new development in sustainable locations with suitable infrastructure provision including green infrastructure.
6. To minimise the loss of Green Belt and areas of high landscape quality.
7. To improve the accessibility of people in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough to employment opportunities and all other facilities and to reduce their need to travel; together with the promotion of safer and more sustainable travel patterns and integration of communities.
8. To ensure that both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough are equipped to mitigate against and adapt to the causes and impacts of climate change.
9. To safeguard and enhance the natural resources for both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough such as soil, water and air quality.
10. To minimise waste and increase recycling, including reuse of land, buildings and building materials, where possible.
11. To protect and enhance the distinctive character, quality and appearance of both the natural environment and historic environment in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
12. To improve quality of life and sense of well being and to reduce crime and fear of crime.
13. To promote high quality design of new developments and use of sustainable building materials and techniques.



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Next a set of jointly agreed **Area Assessment Principles** were devised against which the suitability of each area was methodically, objectively and consistently assessed. These principles are listed below. They are not listed in any priority order and are not conclusive in their own right. In many cases they are interdependent and therefore collectively form the overall assessment of any area.

Overarching Principle:

New development should adhere to the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14 of the NPPF) addressing economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

1. Development should be able to address **green infrastructure** in a comprehensive manner enabling the delivery of a high quality multi-functional green space network.
2. Developments should be **accessible** to a wide range of services and facilities including key centres (Town Centre(s) and/or District Centres) and employment opportunities.
3. Development should enhance the **vitality and viability** of key centres, and improve economic prosperity.
4. Development should not occur in areas of high **flood risk** and should not adversely impact on fluvial or surface water flooding elsewhere.
5. Effective use of existing **infrastructure** should be made and new proposals should be capable of being supported by new infrastructure where appropriate.
6. Development options should be considered against the five purposes of the **Green Belt** (paragraph 80 of NPPF) and defensible boundaries identified.
7. There is a need to plan to ensure that effective and efficient use of land resources is achieved in order to minimize new land take with development enhancing the **built environment**, protecting historic assets and integrating successfully into surrounding urban and rural landscapes.
8. Development should mitigate the impact on the **transport** network through the provision of new infrastructure where needed.

In order to commence assessing suitable locations around Redditch for growth potential it was decided that the best approach would be to initially assess broad areas. It was anticipated that after broadly assessing these areas it would be possible to eliminate certain areas at this stage before conducting a more extensive in depth assessment. This stage was termed the Broad Area Appraisal stage.

The Broad Area Appraisal stage therefore identified all the areas around Redditch by dividing the area up into approximately twenty areas shown in the map below. It was found that areas that had genuine planning issues, such as being a designated park or open space could be immediately rejected from further investigation. The areas rejected at this stage were areas 3a, 7 and 18.

Area 3a covers Morton Stanley Park and the Redditch Golf Course. The area was excluded as the area forms an important part of Redditch's sports and recreation provision and a significant proportion of the land is affected by important ecological designations.

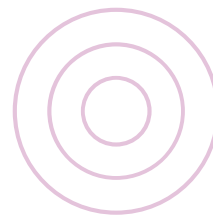
Area 7 covers Abbey Park Golf Course and forms the northern section of the Arrow Valley Park. The area was excluded because a significant proportion of the land is affected by important ecological designations and as the area also abuts two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) (Bordesley Abbey and Forge Mill).

Area 18 consists of two areas of land; the A435 ADR and the Winyates Green Triangle. Both of these areas are subject to separate appraisals and therefore to include them in this work would be duplicatory.

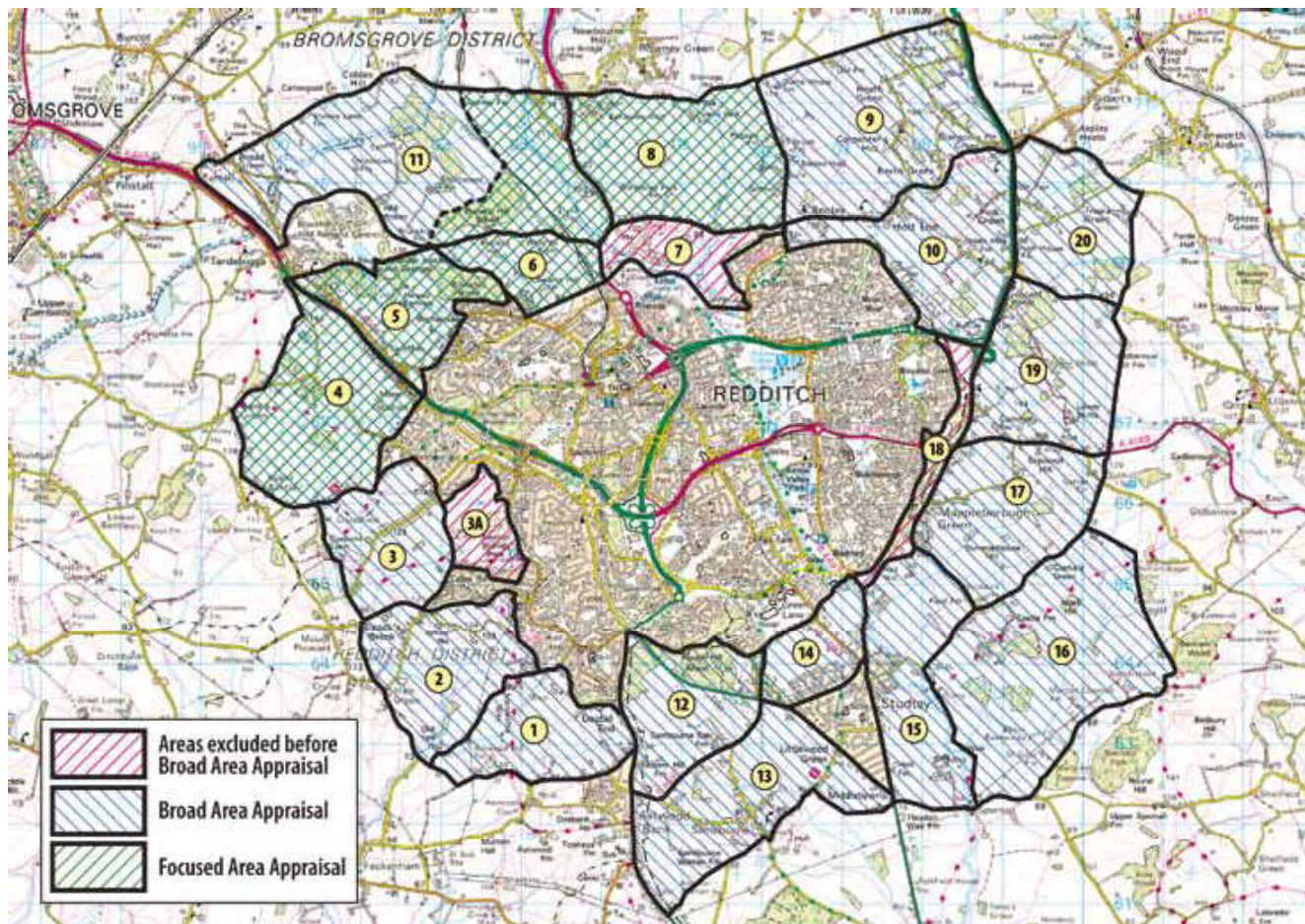
The remaining potential areas around Redditch were then appraised against the area assessment principles set out in the previous chapter, highlighting the various issues and constraints associated with each area. The extensive work on this 'Broad Area Appraisal' led to joint recommendations on those areas which should be discounted and those areas which should be carried forward to the 'Focused Area Appraisal' stage and considered for more in-depth analysis.

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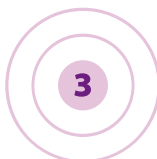
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It was concluded that areas 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, part of 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20 should be discounted for a wide variety of reasons which realistically could not be overcome. These reasons include potential Green Belt harm; harm to the historic environment and the locations being unsustainable in terms of access to Redditch Town Centre and public transport facilities. Also some areas are affected by flood risk and environmental designations. Clear reasoning is provided to explain why each area was discounted or carried forward to the focused area appraisal stage. Areas 4, 5, 6, 8 and part of area 11 were carried forward to the focused area appraisal stage.

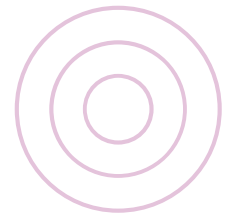
The **Focused Area Appraisal** stage examined in more detail the 'shortlisted' Areas (4, 5, 6, 8 and part of Area 11) again using standardised criteria.

To assess against **green infrastructure** credentials, use was made of visual assessments, as well as Worcestershire County Council (WCC) data such as landscape character, landscape sensitivity, biodiversity and geodiversity. The use of Defra's MAGIC software was valuable in obtaining the required green infrastructure data. The web-based interactive map brings together information on key be made for all the selected areas. The interactive maps also provided records on ancient woodlands, Agricultural Land Classifications, habitat inventories, and other key data sets. Other green attributes of the areas were also explored, such as statutory designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and Special Wildlife Sites (SWSs), as well as Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs).



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To assess the **accessibility** of each area sustainability issues were taken into account, whether it was associated with access to services and facilities or making use of existing infrastructure. Desktop studies examined the various areas proximity to schools, employment, local centres and Redditch Town Centre. In order to find these services, a number of websites with search functions were used. To find health services the NHS website was used, which detailed the nearest GP surgeries, hospitals and dentists to the area. In order to find educational establishments, the government website was used. Regarding public transport, the internet including the government website was used to find the nearest public transport links.

In relation to **vitality and viability** the relationship of the area to key services was taken in to consideration. This principle explored the impact on the vitality and viability of the area, including how it would benefit existing services and facilities, as well as the potential to increase the number of such services.

In relation to **flood risk** and fluvial issues these were closely scrutinised with the use of both the Level 1 and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA 1 & 2), in addition to the Outline Water Cycle Study (WCS). The WCS also examined the drainage issues associated with the areas and allowed analysis of wastewater collection.

Regarding relevant **infrastructure**, meetings were undertaken with relevant stakeholders including Severn Trent and WCC education, as well as the various service and utility providers, in order to ascertain the capabilities of areas in terms of capacity.

A key component of the 'focused area appraisal' is the assessment of the **Green Belt** as well as the defining of appropriate boundaries for each of the potential development areas (Area Assessment Principle 6). This includes an assessment of how the Green Belt functions within the remaining five areas.

Although all of the areas assessed contribute in some way to the purposes of the Green Belt, some areas make a lesser contribution than others.

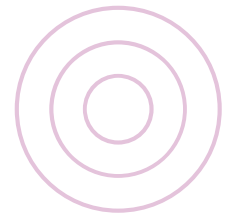
Ultimately it can be concluded that it is not essential for some areas to be kept open to fulfil Green Belt objectives in the wider area and context, having regard to meeting planned development needs. The assessment of defensible Green Belt boundaries is also particularly important because weak boundaries can be vulnerable to urban encroachment and it is therefore essential that existing and new boundaries are durable for beyond the duration of the plan period.

In relation to the **built environment** the appraisal examined more closely the rural and urban landscapes that are in and around the areas. It looked at how development can integrate into these landscapes whilst enhancing the built environment and protecting historic assets. This part of the survey was conducted through the use of maps, detailing where historic assets, such as Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas were located and their relationship to the potential development areas with particular reference to English Heritage guidance on the setting of historic assets. Full utilisation of the Landscape Character Assessment and the Historic Environment Assessments was also made.

In terms of **transport**, the relationship between the areas and main highways was taken into consideration, including access and frequency of public transport. This principle considered the impact of the development on the highway network including the need for new road infrastructure to facilitate development. In order to assess this principle, full use of commissioned modelling work was used to identify the necessary transport related infrastructure and services needed across Redditch and Bromsgrove. The following provides a summary of the strengths and weaknesses of each area identified during this stage:

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Area 4

The wider Area 4 is located to the north western side of Redditch's urban area within the Parish of Bentley Pauncefoot. The 'Bromsgrove Highway', the A448, borders the north eastern edge of the area. A number of roads bound the area including Holyoakes Lane, Copyholt Lane and Banks Green to the west, Angel Street and Pumphouse Lane to the south. Gypsy Lane and Cur Lane bisect the area NW to SE. Spring Brook and Swans Brook also run through the area. There are three named wooded areas within the area; Hennals Wood, Bartles Wood and Cocksian Covert. The focussed area assessment stage highlights various strengths and weaknesses of each area which are outlined below:

Strengths

- Effects of sprawl, encroachment and coalescence are limited
- Could integrate well with existing built form of Redditch
- Potential to connect to A448
- Improvements to access and facilities could provide benefits to wider Webheath area
- More likely to enhance Redditch and Bromsgrove Town centres
- Existing Public transport network could be improved/extended (cheaper than having to provide new bespoke network of services)

Weaknesses

- Special Wildlife Site (SWS)
- Flood risk
- Tree Preservation Order's (TPOs)
- Wooded areas
- Loss of Green Belt land
- Loss of Agricultural land
- Medium to high landscape sensitivity (principal timbered farmlands)
- Distance to services/facilities
- Negative impact on A448, Slideslow roundabout, A38 up to Junction1 of M42

Area 5

The wider Area 5 is located to the north-western side of Redditch's urban area within the Parish of Tutnall and Cobley. It is adjacent to the existing Brockhill development in the vicinity of Appletree Lane/ Dairy Lane and Lily Green Lane. It is bounded by the Bromsgrove Highway (A448) to its south-western boundary and Brockhill Lane to the north and north-east. There are two named wooded areas within the site; Cladshill and Brockhill Wood. The Batchley Brook crosses the site from east to west. The focussed area assessment stage highlights various strengths and weaknesses of each area which are outlined below:

Strengths

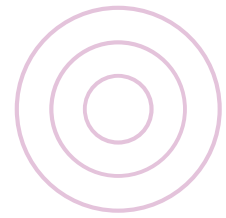
- More likely to enhance Redditch and Bromsgrove Town centres
- Potential for successful integration with Redditch at Brockhill
- Potential for highway access to A448
- Open space within walking distance
- Western sector in close proximity to bus services
- Bus service capable of being improved/extended rather than costly alternative of having to provide a new bespoke system to service area

Weaknesses

- Potential negative impact on setting of Registered Grade II* Historic Park and Garden
- Increased traffic flows on A448, Slideslow roundabout, A38 up to junction1 with M42
- Education, employment, Town Centre and Batchley not within walking distance
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- SWS
- Flood risk
- Wooded areas
- Existing dwellings
- Public Right Of Way (PROW)
- Loss of agricultural land
- Loss of Green Belt land
- High Landscape sensitivity

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Area 6

The wider Area 6 is located to the north of Redditch's urban area, within the Parish of Tutnall and Copley. The area is bounded by Weights Lane to the north and Brockhill Lane to the south west. The area's boundary extends along part of Hewell Road then cuts across the top of Enfield employment area to Birmingham Road (A441) which bounds the eastern part of the area. The Red Ditch runs through this area and Brockhill Wood and Butlers Hill Wood are in close proximity to the area's boundary. The focussed area assessment stage highlights various strengths and weaknesses of each area which are outlined below:

Strengths

- Could integrate well with existing and proposed built form of Brockhill
- Existing public transport services
- Proximity to town centre, employment and railway station
- Limited flooding issues
- Tree and woodland cover minimal.
- Strong defensible Green Belt boundary possible
- Evenly spread impact on highway network
- Minimum adverse effects on water quality and demand
- No SSSI's or SWS's

Weaknesses

- Varying topography would require careful design
- Loss of wooded estatelands (highly sensitive)
- Loss of agricultural land
- Loss of Green Belt land
- High landscape sensitivity

Area 8

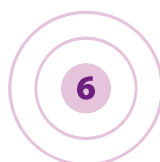
The wider Area 8 is located to the north of Redditch's urban area within the two parishes of Alvechurch and Beoley. It is bounded by the Birmingham Road (A441) to the west, The Holloway/ Storage Lane to the north, Icknield Street to the east, and Dagnell End Road to the south. Dagnell Brook runs north to south. The focussed area assessment stage highlights various strengths and weaknesses of each area which are outlined below:

Strengths

- Potential contribution to Bordesley By Pass (but funding gap still likely)
- Simpler/cheaper solution to sewerage issues likely

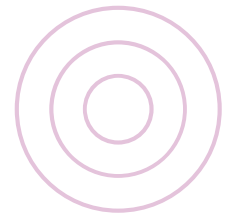
Weaknesses

- Flood risk issues
- Listed buildings and potential impact on setting
- Lack of physical connection to Redditch
- Impact on strategic GB gap between Redditch and West Midlands Conurbation
- Distance to existing services/ facilities
- No strong defensible GB boundary can be identified
- Sprawl/ encroachment/ coalescence GB issues
- Likely to require new, costly, bespoke Public Transport services
- SWS Dagnell End Brook
- TPOs
- Loss of agricultural land
- Loss of Green Belt land



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Area 11

This (reduced) area covers land mainly to the east of the Redditch to Birmingham railway line, including a smaller section of land to the south of Butlers Hill Wood SWS. The River Arrow bisects this part of the area from the north to the south eastern corner with the A441 close to Weights Lane, which is the southern boundary and Grange Lane to the north. The area is in two Parishes; Tutnall and Cobley to the west of the River Arrow and Alvechurch Parish to the east.

The area contains farm land which is mainly arable but includes some that is used for livestock purposes, as well as several mature wooded areas. In addition, the houses furthest east in Bordesley form a ribbon of development along the A441 at the eastern boundary. The focussed area assessment stage highlights various strengths and weaknesses of each area which are outlined below:

Strengths

- Area more appropriate for employment purposes (BUT no justification, Redditch does not require additional employment land, could be seen as a weakness)

Weaknesses

- Lack of physical connection to Redditch
- Limited ability to contain urban sprawl
- Area unsuited to large scale housing development
- Flood risk issues
- Impact on strategic GB gap
- Distance to existing services/ facilities
- Poor access to PT and reliance on use of private car
- SWS
- TPOs/ wooded areas/existing dwellings
- Loss of agricultural land
- Loss of Green Belt land
- High Landscape sensitivity

From the conclusions reached in the Focused Area Appraisal stage various **scenarios for alternative growth locations** were then identified and tested. This enabled the scenarios to be further refined.

Information related to the anticipated phasing and delivery issues relating to each area is considered to be a vital component of this work firstly, because Redditch cannot currently demonstrate a five year land supply and secondly because Development Plans produced must demonstrate that they are capable of being delivered. The Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is integral to assessment work.

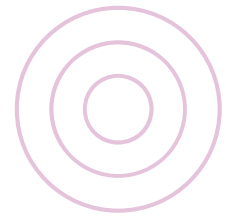
A preferred location is recommended based on the findings of all the assessment work carried out. It is acknowledged that all of the areas considered are in the Green Belt, all of the areas have constraints and strengths and that no area is perfect or ideal. The recommendation that has to be made therefore is on the basis of the area (s) which most sustainably deliver the required amount of development and associated infrastructure with the least negative impacts. *It must be stressed that the proposal has been selected on the basis of information that is currently available and this may alter as a result of the consultation process or as new evidence emerges.*

It is apparent that some areas perform better than others when tested against the varied area assessment criteria and that there are competing issues which are more difficult to resolve in some areas than in others. The two areas recommended therefore represent a compromise and their qualities are briefly summarised as follows:

The development of Area 4 has the capability of improving facilities and services in the wider Webheath area. Whilst lying further from the Town centre than Area 6, it offers the opportunity to extend existing bus services and by the provision of facilities on site has the potential to reduce the need to travel. Whilst it does not have overall strong defensible Green Belt boundaries on all sides, the effects of sprawl, coalescence and encroachment can be mitigated more successfully than some other area options.

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It does however have sewerage issues which may potentially be overcome with appropriate phasing. Also from transport modelling work it was concluded that development in Area 4 is likely to exert the main pressure on the A448 (Bromsgrove Highway), the Slideslow roundabout and the A38 running northwards to Junction 1 of the M42. These key locations which will require further detailed study to assess the specific impact and mitigation required as a result.

In conclusion, a preferred location is recommended for the purposes of consultation based on the findings of the assessment work carried out. It is the Council's view that Areas 4 (Site 1) and 6 (Site 2), as shown below, offer the best opportunity to deliver the required level of growth.

A draft policy relating specifically to the preferred option has been drafted and is subject to consultation. The final version of this policy will be incorporated into the next version of both authorities' Development Plans Publication versions due late summer/ early autumn 2013.

Housing Growth draft policy

The mixed use urban extension is proposed across two sites shown as 1 and 2 on the plan, and will consist of a minimum of 3400 dwellings and comprehensive provision of associated new infrastructure to meet housing requirements up to 2030. These developments will create a balanced community that fully integrates into the existing residential areas of Redditch addressing the social, economic and environmental elements of sustainable development, whilst being sympathetic to the surrounding rural areas of Bromsgrove.

1 will include a minimum of 2800 dwellings, a first school and a Local Centre alongside associated community infrastructure.

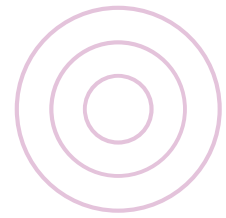
2 will contain a minimum of 600 dwellings which will integrate with the Strategic Site at Brockhill East, as shown in the Redditch Local Plan No.4.

It is a requirement that:

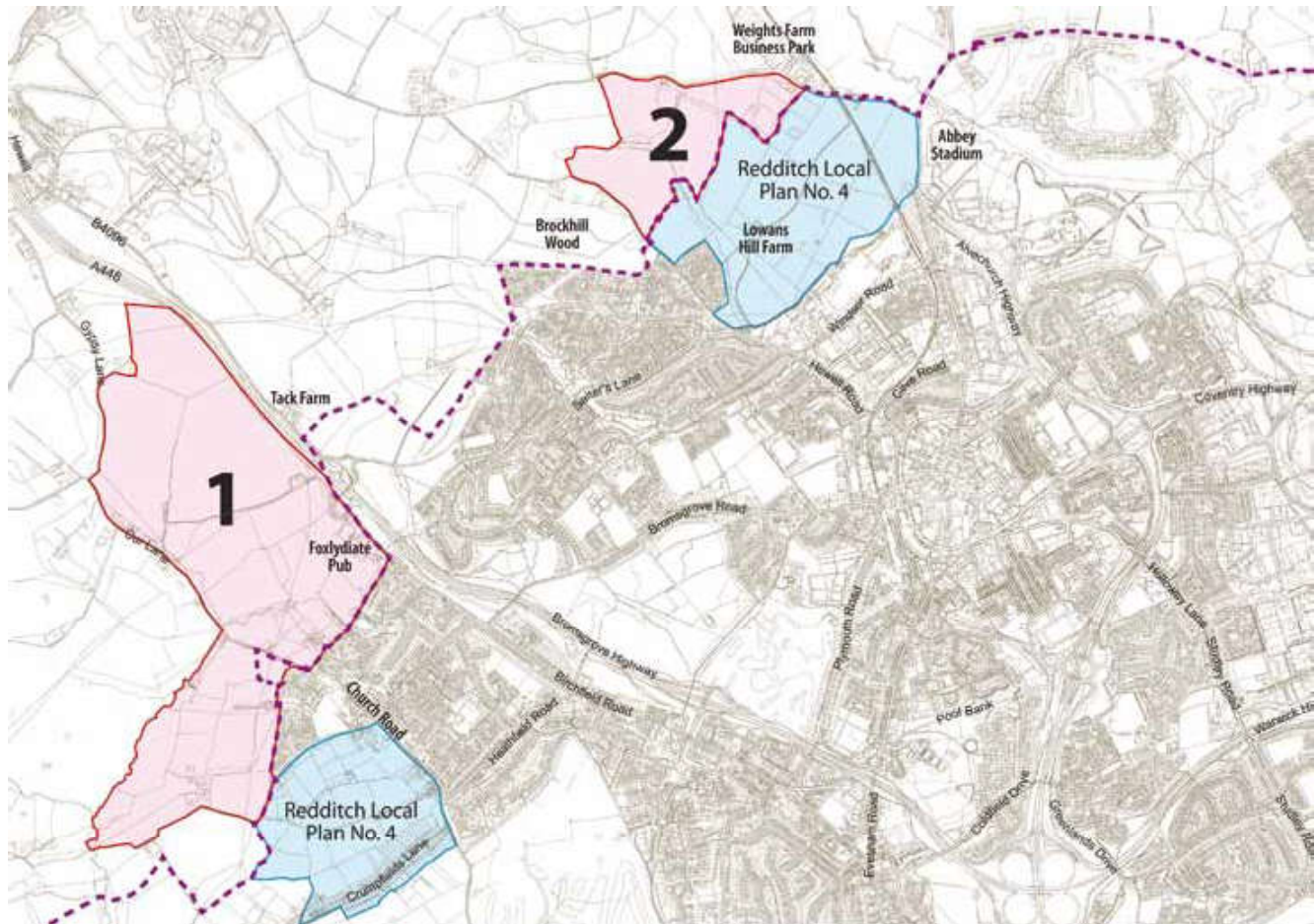
- The residential development will reflect the local requirements as detailed in the most up-to-date Housing Market Assessment and comprise of up to 40% affordable housing with a flexible mix of house types and tenures.
- An overall Transport Assessment is produced taking into account the cumulative and wide ranging effects of development on transport infrastructure including new and improved access arrangements to both 1 and 2.
- Significant improvements in passenger transport will be required resulting in integrated and regular bus services connecting both sites to key local facilities. In particular, services should be routed through both 1 and 2 which make full use of new and existing walking and cycling routes, such as Sustrans Route No. 5 and Monarch's Way in 1.
- The sites will have an overall Strategy and Management Plan for Green Infrastructure which maximises opportunities for biodiversity and recreation, whilst protecting existing biodiversity habitats and landscape geodiversity. Green Corridors should be created around Spring Brook in 1 and Red Ditch in 2.
- Flood risk from the Spring Brook on 1 and the Red Ditch on 2 should be managed through measures that work with natural process to improve the local water environment. Surface water runoff must be managed to prevent flooding on and around the sites through the use of SuDs. Development will also need to ensure that sufficient capacity of the sewerage systems for both wastewater collection and treatment is provided.
- All development must be of a high quality design and locally distinctive to its surrounding rural and urban character, contribute to the area's identity and create a coherent sense of place. There should be a continuous network of streets and spaces, including public open space creating a permeable layout with well defined streets.

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Sites 1 and 2 Potential locations of housing growth

Consultation

The consultation runs for 6 weeks from 1st April to 15th May 2013.

The consultation poses specific questions in relation to this work (although views on any aspect of this matter are also welcomed) as follows:

1) Do you agree with the chosen areas for the new development?

It may be that you have information relating to the chosen area which you think is relevant and you don't think we have addressed. If you do we would be very grateful to receive this additional information as this may aid us in choosing a site.

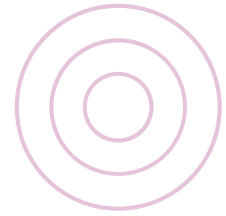
2) Do you agree with the Policy produced to deliver these developments?

The Policy produced is a draft of the one we plan to include in the next version of our Development Plans. Do you think we have covered all the relevant issues? Do you disagree with any of the policy wording and if so, why?



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3) If you don't agree with the areas or the Policy what alternatives can you suggest?

It may be that you can offer us alternative policy wording or you may consider a different area would be more suitable than the ones we have identified. If so please tell us, giving us as much information as you can. These alternatives will then be given full consideration based on material planning considerations.

Next steps

Following this consultation both Councils will carefully consider all of the responses received and may make amendments to their Plans if appropriate. Amendments to different aspects of the Plans may also take place if new evidence is found. The Councils will also jointly respond to the main issues raised. Then the Publication versions of both Councils Development Plans will be consulted on in the late summer /early Autumn of 2013, for Bromsgrove this will be the Bromsgrove District Plan and for Redditch, The Redditch Local Plan Number 4. These Plans will then be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate at the end of 2013/early 2014 with anticipated adoption in 2014.

For further information

More information is available on the Councils' websites:

www.bromsgroveandredditchplanning.co.uk

where you will be able to complete an online response to the consultation

or alternatively you may wish to email:

consultplanning@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk



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Planning and Regeneration, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove B60 1AA

Redditch Borough Council

Development Plans, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, Worcestershire B98 8AH