

**BDC Response - South Worcestershire Development
Plan Preferred Option**

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|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Relevant Portfolio Holder | Councillor Adam Kent |
| Portfolio Holder Consulted | Yes |
| Relevant Head of Service | Ruth Bamford |
| Wards Affected | All Wards |
| Ward Councillor Consulted | No |
| Non-Key Decision | Yes |

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) is the development plan which covers the local authorities of Worcester City, Malvern Hill and Wychavon. The Councils published the preferred option for a 6 week consultation period ending on the 16th December 2019.
- 1.2 At this stage in the process officers are content to offer qualified support for the SWDP, although as with other plans there remains unanswered questions as the evidence base supporting the plan has not been finalised. This approach in responding is consistent with other responses BDC has submitted.
- 1.3 A key point to note is that there are other opportunities available to BDC to further understand and influence the content of the SWDP. It is also important to note the commitment of BDC to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis as per the Duty to Cooperate (DtC) with the South Worcestershire Councils.

2. RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 **That cabinet endorses the officer response to the South Worcestershire Development Plan Preferred option (as attached at Appendix A)**
- 2.2 **That Cabinet recommends to Council, that the officer response to the South Worcestershire Development Plan Preferred option consultation be approved by Council as its formal response, and that it is confirmed with the South Worcestershire Councils as such.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no direct legal implications associated with this report, although it is important that the Bromsgrove District Council respond to relevant consultations from other Local planning authorities, to ensure the Councils views are fed into all stages of the plan making process. In due course as part of the Duty to Cooperate the Council will be required to agree a statement of Common Ground with the South Worcestershire Councils over the content of their plan.

Service / Operational Implications

Summary of the SWDP

- 3.3 The South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) is jointly prepared by the three South Worcestershire Councils (SWCs) – Malvern Hills; Worcester City and Wychavon. The SWCs have agreed to work together to roll the Plan forward to cover the period 2016-2041. The Preferred Options Consultation sets out where the SWCs consider new growth should be located, and the changes needed to the policies of the Adopted Plan to ensure they reflect the updated evidence base and national planning policy. The consultation document also considers what infrastructure is required to support new development.
- 3.4 The Preferred Options Document identifies a net additional housing target for South Worcestershire for 13,957 dwellings and for 295 hectares of employment land. It identifies a Spatial Development Strategy and Settlement Hierarchy (Policy SWDPR2) to direct new growth to until 2041. Section 17 identifies a number of new strategic site allocations to which the majority of new development will be directed. These include Worcester Parkway which will deliver 5,000 dwellings and 50 hectares of employment land; land at Throckmorton Airfield for 2,000 dwellings and 20 hectares of employment land and an expanded settlement at Rushwick to deliver 1,000 dwellings and 10 hectares of employment land.

Summary of the SWDP Response –

The full response can be viewed at Appendix A, in summary

- The possible need for the SWDP to consider the wider housing needs of the Birmingham HMA
- Stress the requirements of para 137 of the NPPF in relation to the demonstration of exceptional circumstances for any Green Belt releases, and the need for BDC and South Worcestershire Councils to consider this under the DtC
- The importance of the need to align housing and jobs growth.

- The need to share infrastructure / transport evidence as early in the process as possible, and the ongoing commitment to working on robust Strategic Transport Assessments across Worcestershire.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.8 There are no Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications associated with this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 The risks associated with not submitting a representation is that BDCs views will not be taken into account by the South Worcestershire Council when preparing the next version of their plan.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A – BDC response to SWDP

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

South Worcestershire Development Plan Preferred Option

<https://www.swdevelopmentplan.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/SWDPR-PO-Web-Version-Final.pdf>

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