

## ***District Strategy***

8.1 The policies contained within this section provide a framework to which all other policies in the Plan must adhere. The planning emphasis for the District will remain one of restraint to development in the Green Belt, whilst accommodating necessary new development to meet economic and social needs. The Strategy does not preclude new development that contributes positively to the environment and respects these and other policies in the Plan.

### **Green Belt Designation**

**DS1 The designation of a Green Belt in accordance with County Structure Plan Policy is confirmed and the boundaries are shown on the Proposals Map.**

8.2 The relevance of the Green Belt to Bromsgrove District is threefold:

- \* to prevent the further growth of the West Midlands conurbation into the countryside;
- \* to limit the expansion of built-up areas in the Green Belt area in order that neighbouring towns and villages will not merge with one another;
- \* to safeguard the open countryside having regard for the interests of agriculture and for the informal recreation needs of people who wish to visit the countryside.

8.3 The District Council fully supports the importance and function of the Green Belt and the Secretary of State's view that the future growth of Bromsgrove town should preserve the particularly narrow and vulnerable Green Belt gaps to the north and south of the town.

8.4 Green Belt boundaries in Bromsgrove District have previously been confirmed in adopted local plans for Belbroughton, Wythall and Hagley/Clent; the remainder of the District has relied upon boundaries originally proposed in the County Development Plan for Worcestershire (1957) and confirmed generally in Structure Plans since 1975. Where the Green Belt boundary has been redefined in this Local Plan to allow minor alterations to boundaries or to accommodate land for future development needs, firm and definable physical features have been followed wherever possible. Changes to the established Green Belt have only been proposed where there exists special circumstances providing an overriding justification for so doing. Appendix 2 lists the amendments to the Green Belt boundaries and the reasons in support of the proposed changes.

8.5 In order to comply with policy GB2A of the County Structure Plan, the District Council considered whether those settlements currently in the Green Belt, in particular the larger villages such as Alvechurch and Belbroughton, should be removed. The District Council endorsed the views of the 1996 Local Plan Inspector that the village of Alvechurch could be removed from the Green Belt without detriment to it. The Inspector however accepted the Council's position that both Belbroughton and Romsley should not be removed from the Green Belt as they were less sustainable locations since they are not located on transport corridors.

### **Green Belt Development Criteria**

**DS2 Permission for development in the Green Belt will not be given, except in very special circumstances, for the construction of new buildings or for the change of use of existing buildings unless one of the following instances applies:**

- a) development is for the purposes of agriculture and forestry;
- b) proposals are for essential facilities for outdoor sport and outdoor recreation (see Policy RAT2);

- c) development is for cemeteries, and for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it;
- d) development is for housing in accordance with the special circumstances set out in policy S9;
- e) proposals are for the re-use of rural buildings, in accordance with policy C27;
- f) proposals are for the limited extension, alteration or replacement of existing dwellings (subject to the provisions of Policy S11 and S12);
- g) proposals are for the sub-division of an existing dwelling in accordance with Policy S13;
- h) proposals are for the change of use of a dwelling to a commercial use (subject to the provisions of Policy S13A).

Proposals for development should be environmentally and ecologically acceptable and should not damage the visual amenities of the Green Belt.

8.6 There is a general presumption against development in the Green Belt. Only in very special circumstances will permission be given in Green Belt locations. Proposals will also be required to comply with other relevant policies contained in this Plan.

8.7 PPG2 indicates that the construction of new buildings for other uses of land which preserve the openness of the Green Belt and which do not conflict with the purposes of including land in it may be appropriate. The Council will expect any applicant to fully demonstrate that a proposal fulfils these criteria before accepting any new building.

#### Main Locations For Growth

- DS3** The majority of growth during the Plan period will be centred on the urban area of Bromsgrove. This area has the majority of the population and is well served by existing public transport networks including the railway station.

8.8 Bromsgrove is the main urban area in the District. It is the focus of the area's transport system being at a key point in the motorway system; it has main line railway connections and is well served by public transport links to the conurbation. The town has the majority of shopping, social and recreational facilities.

8.9 The District Council believes the town's role and function during the Plan period should be reinforced. This aim promotes the concept of 'sustainability' through the practical benefit of matching the greatest proportion of the District's population to the location with most facilities.

8.10 Consequently Bromsgrove town will receive the majority of development during the current Plan period to meet both residential and employment land needs as expressed in the County Structure Plan.

#### Other Locations for Growth

- DS4** For other settlements excluded from the Green Belt (Alvechurch, Barnt Green, Blackwell, Cofton Hackett, Grimes Hill, Hagley, Majors Green, Rubery, Stoke Prior, Walkers Heath and Wythall) any proposals for development will need to be in accord with the policies of this Plan.

## ***Housing***

9.1 The District Strategy identifies the broad distinction to be made between settlements and the priority for growth attached to each. This section indicates the general policies to be pursued by the District Council in covering the various communities in the District.

### **Structure Plan Requirements**

- S1 Sufficient land will be allocated to accommodate the strategic housing requirement of the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan to enable the construction and completion of about 6,200 dwellings between 1st April 1986 and 31st March 2001. The majority of this land will be located in, or adjacent to, Bromsgrove town.**

9.2 The Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan (1990) requires that "about 6,200" dwellings are provided in Bromsgrove District between 1986 and 2001. The majority of sites will be found at Bromsgrove town, taking into consideration environmental and social considerations, the need to maximise use of public transport and decrease long journeys. For the purposes of this policy "in, or adjacent to, Bromsgrove town" applies to the core area of Bromsgrove town plus the urban areas of Lickey End, Catshill and Marlbrook. Some development, albeit on a more limited scale, may take place in other parts of the District but will normally be restricted to settlements identified in policies DS3 and DS4.

### **Housing Site Allocations**

- S2 The housing sites (HAG1 and BROM1) shown on the Proposals Map are the remaining allocations at the end of the Plan period.**

9.3 Sufficient land was allocated in this Plan and supplemented by windfall schemes to meet the demand for new housing in the District during the Plan period (1986 to 2001). Two allocations remain to be completed and are shown on the Proposals Map and listed in Appendix 4.

9.4 The overall housing land position for the District at the end of the Plan period (April 2001) is given in Appendix 5. This shows the number of completions which took place and the number of units under construction or outstanding at the end of the Plan period.

### **Windfall Policy**

- S3 The District Council will allow for a "windfall" element in determining housing land availability.**

9.5 In the absence of adopted local plans for parts of the District including Bromsgrove town a large number of dwellings have received planning permissions which can be classified as 'windfalls' (i.e. sites gaining a permission for housing purposes but not specifically allocated for that purpose in a formal plan). These are likely to continue to constitute a significant element of housing land supply.

9.6 The District Council adopted a completions-based method in assessing the likely supply from small windfall sites. This is set out in Appendix 6. Small windfall sites are defined by the Council as sites of up to 9 dwellings.

9.7 The District Council has also made a separate allowance for medium windfalls, based on extrapolating past planning permissions. The methodology is set out in Appendix 6. Medium windfalls sites are defined as providing between 10 and 25 dwellings or with a site area of up to 1 hectare. An average of 50 completions per annum from medium windfalls occurred over the lifetime of the Plan.

### **Monitoring Of Housing Sites**

- S4 The District Council will monitor the release of sites for housing purposes to enable the maintenance of a 5 year supply of housing land and to ensure that there is a relatively even supply of land for any given period of time.**

9.8 The District Council was required to provide about 6,200 dwellings for the 15 year period 1986 - 2001. This equated to an annual average rate of 413 units. Between 1st April 1986 and 31st March 2001 (the Plan period), 6,366 dwellings were built at an annual average of 424 units.

#### Special Needs Housing

- S6 In considering proposals for the provision of new dwellings or the conversion or redevelopment of existing stock, the District Council will take account of the changing housing needs of the population, particularly the trend towards smaller households and for the special needs of particular groups.**

9.9 Consideration will be given to the needs of particular groups within the District such as the very elderly, children, single parents, people with a mental handicap or physical disability. In acknowledging the particular housing requirements of such special groups, the District Council will encourage housebuilders, landowners and voluntary organisations to assist in meeting some of the identified housing requirements of those special needs groups. Some areas are particularly appropriate close to shops and public transport although an over-concentration must be avoided.

#### New Dwellings Outside The Green Belt

- S7 Proposals involving development of new dwellings outside the Green Belt will be considered favourably providing that they meet the following criteria:**
- a) the proposal does not lead to development at a density inappropriate for the site;
  - b) *(intentionally blank)*
  - c) the form and layout of the development is appropriate to the area;
  - d) the proposal minimises the loss of mature hedges, trees and landscaping;
  - e) the proposal does not adversely affect the existing amenities of adjoining occupiers;
  - f) the proposal does not involve a loss of open space, allotments or other amenity areas which it is desirable to maintain;
  - g) the development can be appropriately serviced;
  - h) the proposal would not have unacceptable traffic implications or perpetuate a traffic hazard;
  - i) it conforms with other relevant policies of the Plan.

9.10 Areas are identified on the Proposals Map where Green Belt policies do not apply. Within these areas it is reasonable to expect that proposals for residential development will be submitted even though they are not specifically identified in the Local Plan. Whilst the majority of new housing will be provided on identified sites, the development of other sites, where such proposals are sound, will assist in housing supply as 'windfall' dwellings. Examples of possible schemes could, for instance, be the infilling of a undeveloped plot in an otherwise built-up frontage or cover proposals for a compact, cohesive group of dwellings suitable for the location in question and capable of meeting the specified criteria. Other relevant policies include S8 and S19.

**Plot Sub-Division**

- S8 The District Council will not permit proposals for plot sub-division or housing on backland sites where such development would be detrimental to the character, traditional pattern or amenity of the location.**

9.11 Homes with large back gardens are a common feature in Bromsgrove's suburban and village areas. In certain instances and localities it may be acceptable to develop back gardens for new housing which is in keeping with the character and quality of the local environment. Such development will require careful planning. The District Council will pay careful attention to the established density of development in any particular area and will not favour proposals which introduce densities which are inconsistent with the character of the surrounding development; where dwelling to garden plot ratios are out of keeping with the area; where developments are proposed which would lead to the unacceptable loss of trees and hedges; or where such changes would lead to or threaten a substantial change to the character or amenity of an area.

9.12 In some locations the open character of development makes a positive contribution to the overall environment and backland development will not normally be permitted.

**New Dwellings In the Green Belt**

- S9 Proposals for new residential development in the Green Belt will only be considered where they accord with relevant Structure Plan policies and comply with Local Plan policy DS2 or otherwise fall within the following categories:**
- a) where a dwelling is required for forestry or agricultural purposes (see policies C21, C22 and C23);
  - b) where a dwelling results from the re-use of a rural building (see Policy C27);
  - c) it is limited affordable housing for local communities in accordance with Policy S16;
  - d) it is limited infill within the present boundary of the settlements where a 'village envelope' has been defined (see Appendix 3).
  - e) where it concerns a replacement dwelling in accordance with Policy S12;
  - f) where it concerns the sub-division of an existing dwelling in accordance with Policy S13.

9.13 In general planning policy has prevented housing development in open areas of the countryside and restricted it elsewhere in the Green Belt. Nevertheless, there has been an insidious intrusion of dwellings in some traditional semi-rural parts of the Green Belt which threatens to undermine the character of these areas. The District Council seeks, by this policy, to confirm its intention to safeguard all Green Belt areas from continuing pressure for piecemeal residential development and to confine acceptable uses to a minimum allowing only for certain specialised uses, limited infill, replacement dwellings and the sub-division of existing dwellings in acceptable locations.

9.14 Bromsgrove is both a Green Belt and Urban Fringe Authority. As such the low-cost (affordable) housing policy applicable in Green Belt areas can apply. The Council has already introduced a number of schemes in urban centres across the District which have provided this type of housing. This may well help to off-set some of the need which might otherwise exist in rural areas. It is not anticipated therefore that many low-cost schemes in the Green Belt are likely to be forthcoming but the Council will consider any scheme on its merits. Proposals will, in particular, need to indicate how they comply with sub-section c) of policy S9.

9.15 The term 'settlement' as defined in the above policy does not include dispersed villages and groups of housing in open countryside where infilling could adversely affect the open character of that environment. In those settlements where 'infill' development may be acceptable, the 'infilling' of a gap by one or two dwellings will normally follow the existing building line and development in depth will not be acceptable.

9.16 It should be noted that even where a potential gap or site does exist it does not imply that a planning permission will be given. It may be desirable, because of the contribution of the site to the landscape, a conservation area, the built environment or its amenity value, to maintain such a gap as an essential feature of the street scene.

#### **Extensions To Dwellings Outside The Green Belt**

- S10 In general an application for an extension to a dwelling in a location not in the Green Belt will be considered favourably if it is in accordance with the following principles:**
- a) extensions to dwellings should normally be of matching design in materials and detailing and should be built in a style similar to that of the original building which should always remain as the dominant feature of the resulting compound building;
  - b) where applications are received which would result in an 'extension' becoming over-dominant and lead to significant changes in the basic character, floor plan and/or cubic content of the original building, other considerations will apply and the proposal will be treated as if it were a completely new dwelling rather than an extension;
  - c) where it is proposed to add an extension to a building which has a pitched roof, and the extension will be of a similar height to the original building, then the extension should, in most circumstances, have a similar roof pitch. Flat roof extensions will not normally be permitted;
  - d) the proposed extension should not adversely affect the existing amenities of adjoining occupiers.

9.17 Extensions outside the Green Belt will normally be favourably considered. Those which are over and above permitted development rights will be judged against the guidelines produced by the District Council (see Policy Guidance Note 1 - Residential Design Guide). In general extensions should be in scale with, and well related to, the original building and should not have a detrimental affect on the street scene or locality.

#### **Extensions To Dwellings In The Green Belt**

- S11 Within the Green Belt, limited extension of an existing dwelling will be permitted, subject to:-**
- a) the extension not resulting in a disproportionate addition over and above the size of the original dwelling;
  - b) the works respecting the scale and character of the existing dwelling;
  - c) no material harm to the amenity of nearby occupiers.

9.18 Where extensions are proposed to existing dwellings in Green Belt locations the District Council will seek to ensure that any works are appropriate to the form of the original building and would not be likely to lead to the creation of separate dwelling units. Further guidance on this policy is provided in the Council's supplementary planning guidance 'Extensions to dwellings in the Green Belt'.

**Replacement Of Dwellings In The Green Belt**

- S12** Within the Green Belt a replacement dwelling will be considered on the site of an existing building providing the proposal is for a replacement of a similar scale and character to the original building. A replacement may not be acceptable where:
- a) it significantly enlarges the original dwelling by increasing the volume and/or floor area;
  - b) it has a demonstrable and adverse impact on the character and purpose of the Green Belt;
  - c) it has unacceptable traffic implications or where it perpetuates a traffic hazard;
  - d) the original structure was not constructed as a permanent static dwelling.

9.19 Green Belt policies nationally as reflected in PPG2 (Green Belts) are designed to protect vulnerable areas of the countryside from pressures for development. Proposals for new buildings other than for a restricted range of uses (see policy DS2) will not be allowed. Whilst proposals for extensions, alterations or the replacement of dwellings may be acceptable in the Green Belt the District Council will consider such proposals carefully against the criteria mentioned above. Where a replacement is intended applicants will always be advised to ensure that a planning consent for rebuilding can be obtained before demolishing a property.

9.20 Major factors to consider will be whether any such proposal would constitute demonstrable harm to character and interests of the Green Belt and whether the scale and character of the existing dwelling is generally reflected in the proposed changes. Account will also be taken of the applicants 'permitted development rights' and ability to extend existing properties under other policies, e.g. S11.

9.21 Outline consents to rebuild will not normally be considered. Applicants will be required to submit details together with any other relevant information in order to demonstrate that a proposal is acceptable.

**Sub-Division Of Dwellings In The Green Belt**

- S13** Proposals in the Green Belt for the sub-division of an existing dwelling into two or more dwellings will be considered against the following criteria:
- a) any sub-division of use must not have a materially greater impact than the existing dwelling on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it;
  - b) extensions to any sub-divided dwelling and associated land surrounding the dwelling will be strictly controlled where this would conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it;
  - c) additional free-standing buildings will not be permitted;
  - d) the work respects the scale and character of the existing dwellings;
  - e) the proposals do not have unacceptable traffic implications and/or create or perpetuate a traffic hazard;
  - f) no material harm is caused to the amenity of nearby occupiers.

The Council will consider withdrawing permitted development rights in the interest of safeguarding the openness of the Green Belt.

9.22 Where the sub-division of existing dwelling units is proposed in the Green Belt, the Council will seek to ensure that any works are appropriate to the form of the original building.

#### Changes Of Use Of Dwellings In The Green Belt

- S13A Applications for a change of use in the Green Belt from an existing dwelling unit to an alternative use will only be permitted subject to the following criteria:**
- a) any change of use must not have a materially greater impact than the existing dwelling on the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it;
  - b) extensions to any re-used dwelling and associated land surrounding the dwelling will be strictly controlled, where this would conflict with the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it;
  - c) the dwelling is of permanent and substantial construction and is capable of conversion without major works or complete reconstruction; the Council may request a structural survey to demonstrate this;
  - d) the form, bulk and general design of the conversion scheme is in keeping with its surroundings and respects local building styles and materials;
  - e) traffic generated by the development can be accommodated and parking facilities should exist or could be provided, without detriment to highway safety or the visual amenities of the Green Belt;
  - f) the provision of necessary services does not adversely affect the environmental character or visual amenities of the Green Belt;
  - g) the change of use does not lead to a number of dispersed land uses that would be detrimental to the function and vitality of nearby settlements;
  - h) no material harm is caused to the amenity of nearby residents.

9.23 There are a number of large country houses which remain in the District though their continued occupation as single household accommodation is declining. In the majority of cases most properties of this type lie within the Green Belt where there is a presumption against change. The District Council will consider sympathetically appropriate proposals leading to the retention of these buildings

9.24 PPG2 notes that with suitable safeguards, the re-use of buildings should not prejudice the openness of Green Belts. The District Council will therefore consider the re-use of dwellings where this is practical and appropriate.

#### Range Of Housing Types And Tenures

- S14 The District Council, in partnership with other agencies, will endeavour to increase the range of housing types available in the District. Proposals leading to the provision of affordable housing will be welcomed where these provide housing for rent, sale or for shared ownership. The majority of units will be provided in existing urban areas whilst the provision of affordable housing to meet local needs may also be forthcoming in appropriate rural settlements.**

#### Affordable Housing In Urban Areas



- S15** On major housing sites allocated for development in policy S2, or on any major site which comes forward, the District Council will negotiate with developers to achieve a mix of housing types and to ensure that a proportion of affordable housing is provided. This includes subsidised housing for rent or shared equity ownership or low cost market housing, available to people who generally cannot compete on the open market in the District.

Where affordable housing is to be provided:

- a) those eligible for rented, shared equity or low-cost housing will have to justify their need, whether they are existing residents in need of separate accommodation, providers of important services, those with long standing links or those with employment opportunities who cannot remain in the District because of a lack of affordable housing;
- b) satisfactory arrangements should be made to ensure, that:
  - i) occupancy of affordable housing will be restricted to those in housing need;
  - ii) affordable dwellings will always be available for occupation at a tenure appropriate to and at a price which is and which will remain affordable by persons on low incomes;
  - iii) affordable housing will be available to all initial and subsequent occupiers on the same terms as mentioned in (ii) subject to statutory provisions;
  - iv) occupancy criteria will be controlled by planning conditions or a planning obligation where a registered social landlord is not involved;
- c) the site should conform with all environmental and control policies in both the Local Plan and the County Structure Plan;
- d) there may on occasions, be a possibility that the Council will seek a contribution, financial or otherwise, towards the provision of affordable housing on a different site within its area.

9.25 Major sites referred to in the policy relate to sites that have a threshold size of 25 or more dwellings [1 ha. or more]. In settlements of 3000 or fewer inhabitants, the threshold is 15 dwellings or more [0.5ha or more]. The Council will seek affordable housing provision in accordance with these thresholds.

9.26 The Council intends to produce supplementary planning guidance (SPG) concerning affordable housing. This SPG will look at affordable housing needs together with appropriate thresholds from development sites and in accordance with Circular 6/98, should these thresholds be lower than at present, full justification will be provided.

9.27 The District Council will require a "cascade" approach to be adopted for occupancy of affordable dwellings. In the first instance residents in housing need in the same or adjacent parishes/wards will be eligible for consideration. If the affordable housing remains unallocated after a certain time, the occupancy criteria will widen in geographical area to include neighbouring parishes/wards in order to ensure that a suitable occupant is found.

9.28 Where a registered social landlord is involved, sufficient controls over future occupancy are secured. Where other private companies build affordable houses the District Council will require a planning obligation or it may impose conditions to control occupancy to ensure an adequate supply of suitable occupants. Where affordable units are to be transferred by the developer to a registered social landlord, the

District Council may ask the developer to execute planning obligations or conditions might reasonably be imposed in order to deliver the objectives of the local plan policy as follows:

- a) specify that a proportion of general market housing cannot be occupied until the affordable element is built and transferred to a registered housing association or allocated in accordance with occupancy criteria as set out in the local plan;
- b) ensure the affordable housing should only be used for the purposes of providing association accommodation to meet the objectives of a registered social landlord;
- c) ensure that if funding is not forthcoming by a certain date, then a specified alternative arrangement can be used, such as low cost market housing which would still provide some affordable housing on site.

9.29 Where no social landlord is involved, but the developer/land owner is to provide affordable units, it may be appropriate for the District Council to ask the applicant to execute planning obligations or it may impose conditions to:

- a) specify that a proportion of general market housing cannot be occupied until the affordable element is built and allocated in accordance with occupancy criteria as set out in the local plan, by condition or other planning obligation;
- b) ensure occupancy criteria, preferably with some form of cascade approach to ensure an adequate supply of suitable occupants, with reference to the appropriate Plan policy.

9.30 Financial or other contributions to affordable housing on a different site in the District may be acceptable in some circumstances. This could be in the form of new houses on another site or an equivalent parcel of free land or the provision of existing, satisfactory dwellings acquired on the open market and brought into the ownership and management of a registered social landlord. Wherever possible direct provision on-site should be made in accordance with the policies of the Local Plan. Where off-site provision is accepted, the scale of the overall requirement for affordable housing will not be reduced but planning obligations might reasonably be imposed to:

- a) allow the developer to make the contribution towards the costs of affordable housing on a different site only on the signing of contracts to provide the affordable housing element; or
- b) include a covenant to the effect that a sum or sums paid by the developer to the District Council for the purpose of meeting or contributing towards the costs of affordable housing on a different site shall be repaid to the developer on or by a specified date if such sums have not been used for that purpose.

#### **Affordable Housing In The Green Belt**

**S16** Proposals for affordable housing in rural areas to meet local needs may be granted as an exception to normal restrictions operating as a result of Green Belt constraints. Such affordable housing includes subsidised housing for rent, shared equity ownership or low cost market housing. Proposals will need to comply with the provisions of Policy S9. Schemes will be considered on their merits having regard to the following criteria:

- a) the site is within or adjoining the boundary of the settlement and the proposal is small scale and suitable for the location;
- b) any application on unallocated land must be accompanied by a local needs survey which shows conclusively that there is a genuine local need for the type, mix and scale of the proposed dwellings;
- c) the site should conform with all environmental and control policies in both the Local Plan and the County Structure Plan;

- d) **the proposal must include arrangements to ensure that the benefits of affordable housing are retained for future occupiers; and**
- e) **the proposal does not involve "cross-subsidy".**

9.31 The Council's interpretation of affordable housing is stated in the supporting paragraphs to Policy S15.

9.32 On rural exception sites it is necessary to ensure that adequate occupancy controls are in place to reserve the affordable housing for local needs in perpetuity and this may involve the use of conditions or planning obligations. A cascade approach will be required whereby residents in housing need in the same or adjacent parishes will be eligible for consideration. If the affordable housing remains unallocated after a certain time, the occupancy criteria will widen in geographical area to include neighbouring parishes in order to ensure that occupants will always be found for any accommodation, thereby safeguarding an adequate stream of revenue for those managing the development whilst ensuring that people in local housing need take priority.

9.33 Under this approach the eligibility criteria will initially be restricted to local residents within the parish who qualify as one or more of the following:

- a) those with social or employment ties but without a dwelling of their own;
- b) people with local employment opportunities but who are deterred by the difficulty of finding and affording suitable accommodation;
- c) those who provide important local services and need to live near the community;
- d) other existing residents who wish to remain in the locality but who otherwise cannot afford to do so.

9.34 On rural exception sites the District Council will ask a registered social landlord to implement planning obligations or it may impose conditions to ensure that the affordable housing remains in perpetuity and is occupied by households in need of affordable housing in the local plan area. Where no registered social landlord is involved, the District Council will ask the applicant to implement planning obligations or alternatively the Council will impose conditions to provide occupancy criteria to ensure an adequate supply of suitable occupants, whilst ensuring that people in local housing need take priority.

9.35 Rural exception sites cannot be set against housing requirements and sites for this purpose will not be formally allocated in the Local Plan. However when the Plan is rolled forward such housing can be taken account of in the calculation of housing need which remains to be met. The Council will make full use of its own sites to satisfy demand where these are in suitable locations and where the need has been adequately justified by a rigorous local housing needs survey.

9.36 The scale and location of exception site schemes will be examined carefully. Proposals which are of a high standard of design and layout and relate sympathetically to their natural and built surroundings are more likely to be acceptable. Schemes involving any element of cross-subsidy i.e. allowing for more expensive houses for sale, will not be considered.

#### **Caravan And Mobile Home Sites**

- S17 Residential caravan sites and mobile homes will only be considered in locations where permanent residential uses would be appropriate. Sites in the Green Belt will not be acceptable, except in cases which fall within Policies C25 and C26.**

9.37 Whilst the accommodation provided in units on these sites may be argued as representing 'low-cost dwellings the District Council sees its responsibility to protecting the fundamental integrity of the Green Belt as one of overriding importance. Uses of this nature rarely prove to be temporary and must be seen as representing an unacceptable intrusion into the countryside.

**Gypsies**

- S18** The District Council will have regard to the needs of gypsies' residing in or resorting to the area and in consultation with the County Council will review site provision as necessary. Where an application for private gypsy site provision is forthcoming the applicant will need to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the District Council:
- a) that evidence of need exists for the provision of a site/extension to an existing site and whether this is a seasonal or permanent use;
  - b) that the location of the site is appropriate to the needs of potential users particularly where it is of a transitory nature;
  - c) that the location can be adequately serviced;
  - d) that the site is acceptable with regard to other relevant planning policies e.g. Green Belt;
  - e) that the site would be so located and designed so as to minimise potential disturbance to residents/other land uses in the vicinity of the site.

9.38 The District Council has an existing gypsy site at Houndsfield Lane, Wythall. The District Council will monitor the suitability of the current level of provision made and the need for additional plots. Where need can be demonstrated additional plots would be provided at this location prior to the establishment of a further site. Adequate justification will need to be established prior to the granting of a permission for further sites.

**Incompatible Land Uses**

- S19** In areas where residential uses predominate the District Council will not allow employment or other land uses which would adversely affect residential amenity whether through noise, smell, safety, traffic or health reasons. The availability of residential land will also be a factor taken into account (see also policy E6).

9.39 Problems frequently arise where incompatible land uses exist on adjacent sites. The District Council will seek to reduce this problem by encouraging the relocation of uses to more appropriate premises where this is possible. Future proposals for uses incompatible with the predominant land use will be resisted. Land use zones are defined on the Proposals Map.