

Malvern Hills District Local Plan, Second Deposit Draft - Policy DS7 North Site

Policy DS7 North Site

Site H.1 North Site, Malvern as defined on the Proposals Map, is allocated for a mixed use development and will provide:

- at least 390 dwellings (phased for release);**
- 3.5 hectares of B1 employment land as defined by the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended);**
- a new local centre which includes a new community centre, community and local shopping facilities (any retail unit established will not exceed a retail floor area of 250 sq m);**
- a site for a one form entry Primary School (1 hectare) and associated public playing field;**
- the provision of up to 195 affordable housing units distributed throughout the site (based upon negotiation of up to 50% on a development of 390 dwellings);**
- appropriate formal and informal open space within the allocated site in accordance with Policy CN12;**

Residential development of the site within the Plan period will be expected to demonstrate the most efficient use of allocated land, in line with the required net density range of 30 - 50 dwellings per hectare.

A North Site Development Brief has been prepared to guide the implementation of the site and development proposals will accord with the detailed requirements of the Brief and should:

- allow for a mix of dwelling types, sizes and tenures having regard to local housing need;**
- ensure that new residential areas comply with Home Zone design criteria;**
- ensure that any Office development (Use Class B1a) will be subject to the provisions of Policy EP3 - Office Development, regarding the location and sustainability of office development;**
- provide at least two vehicular access points serve the site to maximise the segregation of employment related traffic from residential areas;**
- ensure that no more than 150 dwellings will be constructed off a single vehicular access to the site. Development involving both residential and employment development will require the provision of two main access points which are linked within the site;**
- provide for appropriate pedestrian, cycle and public transport facilities;**
- respect the high quality landscape setting of the site and integrate the development with the surrounding area;**
- protect and enhance the site boundaries with the open countryside and along the course of Whippets Brook.**
- provide a high quality environment, which reflects local distinctiveness and is of the highest design quality.**
- x) Protect and enhance the ecological value of Whippets Brook as a wildlife corridor and an important habitat for species of wildlife importance.**

Development of Site H1 North Site for more than 390 dwellings will be restricted if development would result in the Structure Plan requirement for housing being exceeded by more than 100 dwellings within the Plan period. Any capacity for additional dwellings beyond this level will only be released to meet housing requirements associated with the period post 2011.

Reasoned Justification

- 2.6.2 The North Site in Malvern is a 20.9 hectare site located approximately 2.5 km from Great Malvern town centre. Defence Estates currently own the majority of the site and they have announced that the site is now surplus to their requirements and have established a disposal programme for the site.
- 2.6.3 The site was developed during the Second World War for the Air Defence Research and Development Establishment and has subsequently been occupied by a variety of radar, telecommunications and electronic groups.
- 2.6.4 The Malvern Hills and adjacent open countryside provide an attractive and high quality setting for the site, which is clearly visible from the Malvern Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). The site is defined by existing residential development to the north, south and east and by open countryside to the west. Single storey concrete buildings currently cover a significant proportion of the site. A larger warehouse style building is located to the west of the site with four low-density buildings occupying the northern part of the site. The majority of buildings are of such poor quality or of a specialised design that their re-use or conversion is considered impractical. Large areas of under utilised land between the buildings are laid to grass. The site also includes a disused playing field located adjacent to Richards Close which has an expired planning permission for military family housing. An area of recent tree planting referred to as the REME copse lies centrally within the site.
- 2.6.5 The District Council considers the site is suitable for a mix of uses to include housing, employment, community facilities and open space. The majority of the site will be developed for housing in a mixture of tenures, dwelling types and densities. Approximately 3.5 hectares of the site has been allocated for employment uses falling within Use Class B1 (offices, research and development, high technology and light industry). As the largest single redevelopment opportunity within the Local Plan, the site is considered to be highly suited to a mixed use allocation in accordance with paragraph 50 of PPG 3: Housing.
- 2.6.6 The allocation of approximately 3.5 hectares of the site for employment uses will provide an opportunity for increased working close to home. Importantly it will also provide land needed for the internal restructuring of Malvern's employment base and provide a degree of choice with respect to opportunities for employment development and use within the Plan period.
- 2.6.7 The development of at least 390 dwellings on Site H.1 North Site within the Plan period is required to meet the WCSP requirement for housing. Proposals that achieve more than 390 dwellings will be favourably considered where they make the most efficient use of development land. However, additional development which is beyond the capacity of local infrastructure to accommodate the development or would result in the WCSP housing requirement being exceeded by more than 100 dwellings within the Plan period will be resisted.
- 2.6.8 The requirement for up to 195 affordable dwellings on Site H.1 North Site reflects the requirements of Policy CN2 that up to 50% of all sites of 15 or more dwellings in Malvern should be affordable. However, 195 dwellings should not be interpreted as a fixed requirement and in the event of the site being developed for more than 390 dwellings the affordable housing maximum requirement will be adjusted accordingly in line with Policy CN2. The actual level of affordable housing provision will be delivered through negotiation in the light of established housing needs. Any Affordable Housing Scheme for Site H.1 North Site will need to ensure the delivery of affordable housing throughout the

development period for the North Site and its integration with the development as a whole.

- 2.6.9 There are two existing vehicular access points to the site. The main access is located to the south from Sayers Avenue with a second access located to the east on Leigh Sinton Road. A public footpath borders the part of the site running along its western and part of its northern boundary.
- 2.6.10 The development site will need to be served by new road infrastructure within the site. Consideration will be given to a new road passing through the site however, any proposed road layout for the site should seek to minimise conflict between employment traffic and both existing and proposed residential areas. It should also pay close attention to the traffic safety and management issues arising from the Dyson Perrins High School and the proposed Primary School.
- 2.6.11 The existing site access at the southern end of Leigh Sinton Road should be re-aligned giving priority to traffic entering and leaving North Site. The development will require off-site highway improvements and traffic management measures including pedestrian and cycle routes and possibly new traffic signals. Regard will be given to current Highway Authority design standards with respect to road layout and design however, residential and community areas will be required to meet Home Zone standards and achieve high levels of segregation between local and extraneous traffic movements and parking.
- 2.6.12 Development proposals will need to be accompanied by a Transport Assessment and an Area Traffic Management Plan.
- 2.6.13 The Traffic Management Plan will address the road, cycle and pedestrian network within the area, which includes Leigh Sinton, Cowleigh Road and Worcester Road. The assessment of the public transport network will address a wider area and include access to retail and service facilities in addition to likely workplace destinations and transport interchanges.
- 2.6.14 The above documents will consider the proposed development as a whole. They will be required to demonstrate how existing or improved transport infrastructure can accommodate the traffic movements generated by the proposed development and identify any specific highway or traffic management measures, public transport improvements and facilities for cycling and walking required for the satisfactory implementation of the proposed development. The developer will be expected to provide each new household with comprehensive travel information including walking and cycling maps showing safe routes to key facilities, public transport routes, times and prices, in consultation with Worcestershire County Council.
- 2.6.15 A high standard of urban design will be expected to satisfactorily integrate the new development into the surrounding area and to carefully address its impact on the wider landscape, particularly the AONB. The existing boundary trees and hedgerows shall be protected and enhanced with new landscaping to soften the appearance of the new development and provide a positive relationship between the edge of new development and the surrounding countryside. The site contains a variety of mature trees and vegetation, much of which will be retained and incorporated into the overall landscaping scheme for the whole of the site.
- 2.6.16 Community uses will need to form an integral part of the development and include a community centre and small-scale local shopping facilities. Their location should also be easily accessible to existing residents from the area surrounding the site. Health facilities and services are likely to be an acceptable use within the local centre or possibly elsewhere within the allocated site. However, the scale of any health facilities and

services should not prejudice the delivery of the range of uses proposed within the local centre or the delivery of at least 390 dwellings and 3.5 hectares of employment land on the site.

- 2.6.17 The Environment Agency has stated that there are a number of drainage and pollution issues, which need to be addressed as part of the development of the site. These include the collapsed retaining walls alongside Whippets Brook, the need for a flood risk assessment, floodplain compensation measures and the maintenance of access to the watercourse. In addition they have recommended that a study be undertaken into potential pollution and contamination problems arising from the previous use of the site. Works effecting the Whippets Brook should take into account the presence of protected White Clawed Crayfish and should be informed by further survey for this rare species. It is recognised that the Whippets Brook is of at least county importance for its crayfish population and works must not have an adverse effect on this resource in accordance with Policy QL18. Indeed they should be designed to provide positive benefit for the species wherever possible.
- 2.6.18 Assessment of Public Open Space provision within the locality of North Site suggests an overall shortfall within the West Malvern and Upper Howsell Road neighbourhood areas. It is therefore important that the development provides adequate open space within the site to meet the needs generated by the development as whole.
- 2.6.19 Similarly an assessment of education capacity within the catchment areas serving North Site, undertaken by the local education authority, suggests that inadequate primary school capacity is available to meet needs generated by the development of the site. The redevelopment of North Site could increase the pupil population by at least half a form of entry (15 pupils for all year groups). At this time all the local primary schools are full and the two secondary schools have few places. In addition existing schools within the relevant catchment areas can not be readily extended or improved to cater for such needs. Due to practical and operational difficulties associated with the expansion of the existing primary schools, it is essential that North Site makes provision for sufficient land to enable the construction of a one form entry Primary School. The level of education provision to be supported by the proposed development will be identified through application of the approved countywide Education Facilities Supplementary Planning Guidance (April 2003).
- 2.6.20 A comprehensive Development Brief has been prepared by the District Council to provide a detailed guide to the proposed development and provide a basis for further local public consultation about the release of the site and matters which it would be inappropriate to include within the Local Plan. The Brief will be subject to public consultation and will be afforded appropriate weight in future decisions about the development of the North Site as Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- 2.6.21 Development at North Site will not be permitted until the necessary legal agreements have been agreed and signed. Legal agreements are likely to be required to secure the provision of appropriate infrastructure, highway arrangements, pedestrian and cycle routes, open space provision and maintenance, landscaping, affordable housing provision, educational and community facilities and the routing of demolition/construction traffic in accordance with other Local Plan policies and Supplementary Planning Guidance.