

Black Country | **Plan**

Planning for the future of the Black Country



HOUSING



ENVIRONMENT



EMPLOYMENT



TRANSPORT

Draft Plan Consultation: Additional Housing Sites in Walsall

July - September 2022

Introduction

In the summer of 2021 the Black Country Authorities of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton consulted on a Draft Black Country Plan (the Regulation 18 Plan). This Plan identified where all new employment and housing development would be located and where investment for new infrastructure such as transport, schools and health facilities would be made.

Following a review of the consultation responses and completion of new evidence, three additional sites in Walsall are now considered potentially suitable for housing. These three sites are now subject to a formal public consultation (an additional Regulation 18 consultation) before the Black Country Plan can move to the next stage of consultation - Regulation 19. One of these sites was subject to site assessment and considered not suitable for development at Draft Black Country Plan stage – new evidence has changed the site assessment for this site. Two of the sites are new sites which were not subject to site assessment at Draft Black Country Plan stage.

Five new sites in Walsall which were submitted during the 2021 consultation have also been subject to site assessment and are considered not suitable for housing. Further information is available in an addendum to the Site Assessment report. A Sustainability Appraisal of all new sites (both potentially suitable and not suitable) has also been completed.

This document should be read in conjunction with the Draft Black Country Plan published for consultation in 2021. No decision has been taken at this stage about the sites or policies proposed in that document.

What is a Local Plan?

All Local Planning Authorities (including Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton) are required by Government to write a Local Plan that describes how the necessary development over the next 20 years or so will be handled and where it will be located.

The Local Plan is a planning document which is used to help decide planning applications. It considers the amount of land required to support future jobs, new housing and where additional retail, office and leisure development is needed. In addition, the Local Plan considers whether any additional supporting infrastructure (e.g. schools, utilities, health provision, public transport, cycle routes and highway improvements) is required.

What is the Black Country Plan?

The Black Country Plan is a joint Local Plan being prepared by the four Black Country Authorities (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton). The Plan will direct where new development will be located for the Black Country up to 2039.

It will guide key issues like:

- **New Housing** – where will it go? How many new homes are needed? What type of new homes will be required and how many affordable houses will be needed?
- **Provision for new employment** – how much employment land is needed and where should it go?
- **What supporting infrastructure and services** (e.g. transport, schools, health) will be needed and where will these be located?
- **In the face of new development** how will the natural environment be protected?

Why are we reviewing the Black Country Plan?

The Government requires Local Authorities to have Local Plans that are based on up-to-date information. If a Local Plan is not up to date it will have less weight at Planning Appeals and will mean that the local planning authorities are less able to control new development. Having an up-to-date Plan in place helps local planning authorities to turn down development proposed by landowners and developers where it considers the proposal to be inappropriate.

We need to review the Black Country Plan to ensure that we can plan for new homes and jobs in the right places. If we don't review the plan, we risk seeing unplanned development which might not be supported by the right services and facilities.

Do we have a Plan in place now?

Yes - our current Plan, called the Black Country Core Strategy, was formally adopted in 2011. This Plan provided the framework to allocate enough housing and employment land to meet the Black Country's development needs up to 2026. Sites to ensure these targets are met are allocated through other local plan documents - in Walsall these are the Walsall Site Allocation Document and Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan.

When we have finished the new Black Country Plan and it is adopted (after it has been examined by an Independent Planning Inspector and approved by Councillors) it will replace the Black Country Core Strategy and most of the Walsall Site Allocation Document.

When did we start preparing the Black Country Plan?

We started to prepare the Black Country Plan in 2017. We held a public consultation in July – September 2017 on the issues facing the Black Country and some possible solutions. Following the Issues and Options consultation we consulted on the Draft Black Country Plan (Regulation 18) for eight weeks in August – October 2021. The Draft Plan considered the responses we received to the Issues and Options consultation along with a range of other technical studies produced on planning issues.

The next stage is the production of a Regulation 19 Plan. The Regulation 19 Plan will be informed by the Regulation 18 consultation responses and any new evidence. The Regulation 19 consultation will seek representations only on the soundness and legality of the Plan preparation process, which is the main criteria considered by the Planning Inspectorate at the future examination in public, rather than the content of the Plan. For this reason, new proposed site allocations cannot be added at Regulation 19 stage and therefore an additional Regulation 18 consultation is required for the three additional sites in Walsall now considered potentially suitable for housing.

Location of the additional housing Draft Black Country Plan (Regulation 18) sites in Walsall.

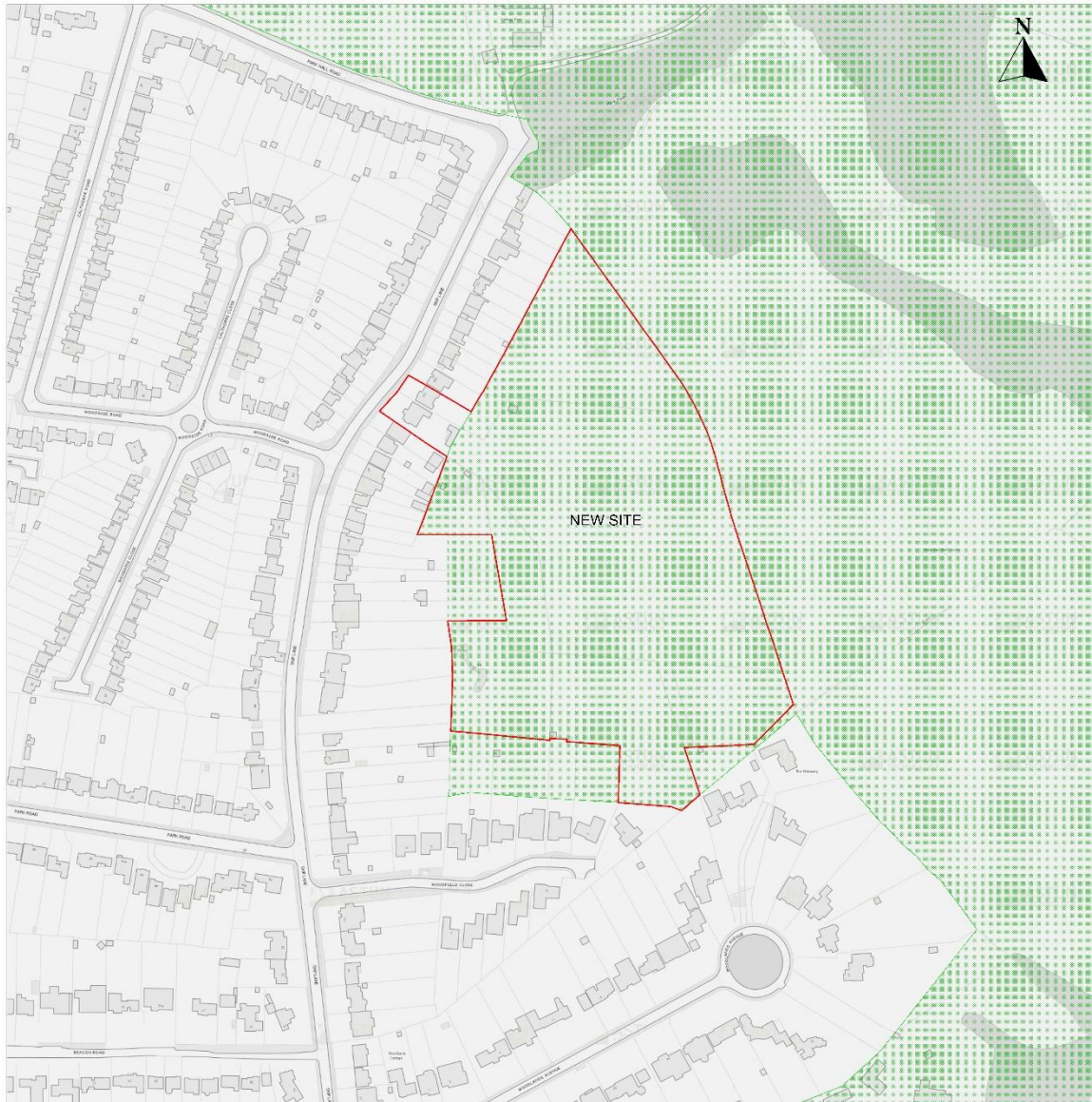
| Site Ref | Policy in Previous Local Plan (Site Allocation Document) | Site Name and Address | Indicative Housing Capacity | Gross Site area (ha) | Indicative Net Developable Area (ha) | Net Density (dwellings per hectare) |
|----------|--|--|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| WAH257 | GB1 | Land West of Chester Road North of Little Hardwick Road, Streetly | 655 | 25.98 | 18.73 | 35 |
| WAH258 | GB1, EN5 (part) | Land East of Skip Lane and North of Woodfield Close | 135 | 5.16 | 3.87 | 35 |
| WAH259 | GB1 | Pacific Nurseries, East of Chester Road | 30 | 1.15 | 0.86 | 35 |



Key

- Current Proposed Allocation (HOU1)
- New Proposed Allocation (HOU1)
- Local Authority Boundary
- Green Belt (GB1)

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
 © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
 © Crown Copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 100019529



Key

- Current Proposed Allocation (HOU1)
- New Proposed Allocation (HOU1)
- Local Authority Boundary
- Green Belt (GB1)

Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey mapping with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
 © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings.
 © Crown Copyright and database rights 2022 Ordnance Survey 100019529

WAH258 Land East of Skip Lane and North of Woodfield Close

Why are we proposing to develop in the Green Belt?

The green belt around the Black Country forms part of the West Midlands Green Belt which has been in place since 1975. Green belt is a national planning designation and national policy strictly controls which types of development can take place within it.

The Black Country councils attach great importance to the green belt. However, the green belt boundary is drawn tightly around the urban edges. To help meet our future housing and employment land needs, there is an exceptional circumstance to alter the green belt boundaries through the Black Country Plan review process, to release land for housing and employment development. It is proposed to remove 6% of the green belt area in the Black Country for development.

The Councils have undertaken an extensive review of the green belt, taking into account evidence on historical, ecological and landscape value and local character. A comprehensive site assessment process has taken place to ensure that all sites selected for removal from the green belt can deliver sustainable development and the necessary supporting infrastructure by 2039 and will not cause harm to the natural or historic character of the Black Country or breach any other planning policies. Where sites are removed from the green belt, developers will be required to pay for improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining green belt land nearby

Are we able to build all future housing and employment land in the Black Country?

No. We need to find enough land to build 76,076 homes and provide 565 ha of new employment land. The land we identified in the Draft Plan document in 2021 made provision for 47,837 homes and 354ha of employment land, allowing most of our housing and employment land needs to be met in the Black Country. However, there was a shortfall of 28,239 homes and 211 ha of employment land as we do not have enough land available to accommodate all of our development needs.

The Government requires neighbouring local authorities to work together to meet housing and employment land needs when producing Local Plans – this is called the “Duty to Cooperate”. Under the Duty to Cooperate, we are asking neighbouring authorities, such as South Staffordshire, Lichfield, Cannock Chase, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin, to provide additional housing and employment land in their areas to meet the needs of the Black Country. Currently there have been offers from neighbouring authorities of between 8,000 to 9,500 homes and 102- 173 ha of employment land to be tested through their own Local Plan reviews.

What does this mean for Walsall?

The 2021 Draft Plan (Regulation 18) consultation for Walsall proposed land to provide an additional 13,344 new homes and 164ha of employment land over the period to 2039.

As part of the additional sites consultation to be held in July – September 2022, we are proposing an additional 820 new homes over the period to 2039.

What happens next?

We want your views

You can view copies of the Draft Plan documents and a map of proposed land allocations at the following venues in Walsall:

Walsall First Stop Shop

Bloxwich Library

Darlaston Library

Willenhall Library

Lichfield Street Hub

Brownhills Library

Streetly Community Library

Mobile Library Services

Aldridge Library

In addition, copies of the documents will be available at key council buildings across the wider Black Country:

| Dudley | Sandwell | Wolverhampton |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dudley Council House, 1 Priory Road, Dudley• Dudley Council Plus, 259 Castle Street, Dudley• Brierley Hill Library• Coseley Library• Dudley Library• Dudley Wood Neighbourhood Learning Centre and Library Link• Gornal Library• Halesowen Library• Kingswinford Library• Market• Long Lane Library Halesowen | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sandwell Council House Freeth Street, Oldbury• Central Library West Bromwich• Blackheath Library• Cradley Heath Library• Great Barr Library• Great Bridge Library• Oldbury Library Sandwell Council House,• Smethwick Library• Tipton Library• Wednesbury Library• Bleakhouse Library, Oldbury• Brandhall Library, Oldbury• Glebefields Library, Tipton• Hamstead Library, Great Barr• Hill Top Library West Bromwich• Langley Library Oldbury• Oakham Library Tividale• Rounds Green Library, Oldbury | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wolverhampton Civic Centre St Peter's Square, Wolverhampton• Wolverhampton Central Library• Bilston Library• Wednesfield Library |

- Lye Library
- Netherton Library
- Quarry Bank Library (subject to this library being open)
- Sedgley Library
- Stourbridge Library
- Wordsley Library
- Stone Cross Library
Beverley Road, West Bromwich
- Thimblemill Library,
Smethwick

Have your say

Visit the website:

Complete our online response form at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p5/>

Email: blackcountryplan@dudley.gov.uk

Write to us: Black Country Plan Planning & Regeneration, 4 Ednam Road, Dudley DY1 1HL

You can also fill in a response form and leave it at the library or Walsall Council First Stop Shop Receptions.

If you need assistance to explain the documents or fill in your response form, please contact the Walsall Planning Policy Team at: planningpolicy@walsall.gov.uk or 01922 658020.

Please note that, at this stage, we are only seeking views on the three additional sites in Walsall now considered potentially suitable for housing. We have noted and analysed all consultation responses submitted in summer 2021 on the Draft Black Country Plan – these responses do not need to be submitted again.

The deadline for responses is: 5:00 pm on Monday 5th September 2022

Plan Timetable

| Stage | Date |
|--|--------------------------|
| Consultation on the Publication Plan (Regulation 19) | November - December 2022 |
| Submission of Plan to Secretary of State for Examination | March - May 2023 |
| Examination in Public | Submission – early 2024 |
| Adoption | March 2024 |