

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE LOCAL PLAN EXAMINATION

PHASE 2 STRATEGIC MATTERS

MATTER 9 – ALLOCATIONS & SUPPLY OF LAND FOR DEVELOPMENT REQUIREMENTS

ON BEHALF OF RICHBOROUGH ESTATES (SLP430)



Pegasus Group

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PLANNING | **DESIGN** | **ENVIRONMENT** | **ECONOMICS**

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This position statement has been prepared on behalf of Richborough Estates Ltd in response to Matter 9 (Allocations and Supply of Land for Development Requirements) of the North Warwickshire Local Plan Examination. This statement provides a response in respect of questions: 9.4; 9.5; 9.8; 9.15; and, 9.34.
- 1.2 This position statement should be read in conjunction with a separate statement submitted by Turley in respect of questions: 9.3; 9.12 (d); 9.19 (a), (b), (d), (e); and 9.24 (e) and (f).

2. SITE ALLOCATIONS OVERARCHING ISSUES

9.4 Has the comparative assessment of sites resulting in those included for allocation in the plan been undertaken in a proportionate and consistent manner? (with particular regard to the SHLAA [CD8/17] and SA for site allocations, section 2 in particular [CD3/1]).

2.1. The Sustainability Appraisal Report [CD1/3] provides a consistent assessment of allocated sites and reasonable alternatives. All sites are considered against the 20 SA Objectives. It is recognised that a number of difficulties were encountered in undertaking the appraisal, including data limitations, which may have adversely impacted the assessment of some sites. The assessment is however considered proportionate.

2.2. The SHLAA [CD8/17] does not provide a comprehensive assessment of all sites and therefore cannot be considered to have provided a consistent approach to all reasonable alternatives. For example, land West of Packington Lane was not identified and considered within the SHLAA despite representations highlighting this omission early in the plan making process. However, the SHLAA provides a consistent assessment of the identified sites and rightly recognises that it doesn't take account of all policy considerations which are beyond the scope of the SHLAA and would need to be considered through the plan making process.

9.5 Local Plan paragraph 8.4 and policy LP7 indicates that the residential density of development should be at least 30 dwellings per hectare ('dph'). The average density for site allocations, excluding H23 Austrey, based on policy LP39 appears to be around 20.5 dph. The lowest densities at allocations H7, H18 and H19 are between 12 and 14 dph. Is the plan's approach to density appropriate?

2.3 Policy LP7 as submitted does not specify whether the density requirement should be applied to the gross site boundary or whether it relates to a net developable area. In respect of strategic allocations, it must be recognised that supporting infrastructure will be required to support housing development that would result in a reduced gross density that can realistically be achieved.

- 2.4 In addition, there are a number of significant constraints included within proposed allocations; including ancient woodland, landscape, ecology and heritage considerations that would influence the density of development.
- 2.5 Certainty on the level of development can only be determined following further detailed work and further masterplanning. As previously submitted, the Local Plan provides insufficient flexibility, through the provision of no effective contingency, to ensure the housing requirement can be achieved if delivery of the proposed strategic allocations fails to realise the quantum of development assumed within the allocations or fail to deliver at the rate anticipated within the plan period.

9.8 Are the categorisations of settlements in policy LP2 appropriate with regard to the updated Settlement Sustainability Appraisal ('SSA')[CD6/3C]?

- 2.6 Despite the Settlement Sustainability Appraisal being updated, it still contains the same fundamental errors in the methodology as deployed in the 2010 appraisal.
- 2.7 The fundamental flaw relates to the linking or conjoining of a number of settlements that "read together as a single network of villages" **[CD6/3C, Appendix A]** including Polesworth and Dordon. The methodology deployed in these conjoined settlements is to simply add the individual scores together, providing a cumulative total. This approach is flawed for a number of reasons:
- Grouping settlements and providing a cumulative score simply elevates the ranking of the less sustainable standalone settlement within the grouping e.g. Dordon and Mancetter.
 - The scoring assumes that duplicate facilities, multiplies the sustainability of the conjoined settlements, which cannot be the case. For example, in respect of Public Transport, the Assessment states:

Dordon:

- *Frequent Bus Routes (48 + 65 + 766/767) 6 points*
- *Infrequent Bus Routes (Flexibus 219) 1 point*

Polesworth:

- *Frequent Bus Routes (48 + 65+ 766/767 + 785/786) 8 points*

- *Infrequent Bus Routes (Flexibus 219) 1 point*

2.8 Collectively these settlements are given a score of 16 for public transport. This cannot be right as both settlements are served by the same bus routes (with the exception of the 785/786). Therefore, the correct collective score should equate to no more than 9 points. The same general approach is taken in relation to other services and facilities too, further distorting the scoring.

2.9 This issue was discussed fully at the Matter 5 Hearing Session and it is disappointing that this hasn't been addressed in updating the Appraisal.

2.10 Despite the flawed methodology, the updated Settlement Sustainability Appraisal provides evidence that Atherstone and Coleshill represent the most sustainable settlements within the Borough. Therefore, the categorisation of Coleshill as a Category 1 Market Town in the Local Plan Submission version is justified and supported as sound.

2.11 Based on the sustainability score presented in respect of Coleshill, there is no justification for demoting Coleshill within the settlement hierarchy as proposed by MM23. This Main Modification is a retrospectively solution to try and artificially reconcile the clear disparity between the settlement hierarchy and the proposed spatial distribution of growth proposed.

(c) Proportionately, are allocations aligned with the scale and function of settlements? If not, is there compelling justification for that? NB. This question will also fall to discussions on individual sites as necessary.

2.12 No. Whilst the Settlement Hierarchy contained within Policy LP2 of the Local Plan Submission version is supported as sound, there is a fundamental mismatch between the identified Spatial Strategy and the spatial distribution of housing identified through the proposed housing allocations contained within Chapter 8 of the Local Plan **[CD1/1]**. The allocations proposed within the LP would result in the delivery of a very different Spatial Strategy; an unsound Strategy that would not be aligned to

settlement hierarchy or the Vision, with a significant proportion of development being spread around adjoining settlements and disproportionately to a number of lower tier settlements, failing to recognise the needs and opportunities available within the Market Town of Coleshill (a Category 1 Settlement) and other sustainable settlements within the Green Belt, such as Water Orton.

COLESHILL

9.15 Local Plan paragraphs 14.32 and 14.29 appear to conflict. Paragraph 14.32 states that 'Due to the Green Belt beyond the development boundary of Coleshill this [the preclusion of development outside of that boundary] will continue during this plan period.' Paragraph 14.29 states 'it is considered necessary to allocate land outside current boundaries and remove land from the Green Belt.' Which is correct?

- 2.13 Paragraph 14.29 refers to the necessity to remove land from the Green Belt and is based on original officer recommendations based on the evidence base that they had produced and draft Local Plan considered by the Local Development Framework Sub-Committee on 3rd August 2016. The draft Local Plan determined:

"15.25. Development in the Core Strategy was limited to land inside the development boundary. This was taken forward in the Draft Site Allocations Plan. Although there are a few opportunities it is considered necessary to allocate land outside of its current boundaries and remove land from the Green Belt. This will allow for some development to take place and maintain Coleshill as a Market Town."

- 2.14 In addition:

"15.30. If development continued to be solely within the 2006 development boundary there would be a low amount of development directed to the market town of Coleshill. The decision has been taken therefore to bring forward some land for development beyond the 2006 development boundary. This means that a site has been taken out of the Green Belt and allocated for housing. A further piece of land is safeguarded and is discussed further under policy LP4. This will

mean that Coleshill can continue to growth although in a limited way compared to the other Market Towns.”

- 2.15 The draft Local Plan presented to Members in 2016 included a proposed housing allocation on land promoted by Richborough Estates at Packington Lane, Coleshill for 119 dwellings. Members of the LDF Sub-committee resolved to delete this proposed allocation, a decision that was not based on any updated evidence. The contradiction between paragraphs 14.29 and 14.32 reflects the divergence between officers’ justification for the need to release land from the Green Belt to allow growth at Coleshill based on a robust evidence base and the political decision to resist Green Belt release.
- 2.16 We note that the Plan acknowledged at paragraph 15.30 that whilst recommending growth at Coleshill, to ensure it retained its role as a market town, it is growth “*in a limited way compared to the other Market Towns*”. As such the proposed allocations took account of the impact of Green Belt policy, and severely restricted growth compared to the non-Green Belt market towns in the north of the Borough. However, the need for growth was so exceptional that it outweighed the restriction of Green Belt policy based on the Council’s evidence base.

(a) Are any allocations within the Green Belt justified by exceptional circumstances (NPPF2012 paragraph 83)?

- 2.17 Officer’s drafting the Local Plan clearly considered there to be exceptional circumstances for the release of land within the Green Belt at Coleshill as demonstrated in the draft Local Plan presented to Members in August 2016. Officer’s, at paragraph 15.25 considered development was necessary to “*maintain Coleshill as a Market Town.*” Richborough Estates agree that exceptional circumstances are present for the justification of allocations for housing within the Green Belt at Coleshill. Accordingly, the exceptional circumstances that warrant the further release of Green Belt land are:
- i. It would allow for the necessary growth in Coleshill in respect to market and affordable housing to meet local housing needs and control localised affordability issues. A further update to the Tetlow King Affordable Housing Statement appended to Richborough Estates’ representations at Regulation 19 stage is attached as **Appendix 1** to this position statement. This demonstrates

the need for affordable homes has become even more acute in both Coleshill and Water Orton;

- ii. It would provide an opportunity to redress the current settlement strategy, which promotes unsustainable patterns of growth;
- iii. The only realistic means of achieving further growth in Coleshill is through the release of Green Belt land. Being that national policy directs that this should only be done through local plan reviews, the Council is, in effect, seeking to prevent any further development in Coleshill until 2033. In addition, as no safeguarded land has been identified in Coleshill, development would also be prevented well beyond 2033. This would effectively sterilise any further development at this settlement and prevent any further economic growth, meaning that Coleshill's status as Category 1 settlement will be significantly compromised; and
- iv. The retention of Green Belt would lead to unsustainable modes of transport being used, by directing growth to unsustainable locations that would unnecessarily increase trip generation and also have an adverse impact upon air quality.

9.19 Allocation H7, land to the east of Polesworth and Dordon

(f) Would the effect of the scheme on ecology, the environment, and heritage assets, including ancient woodland and local wildlife sites, be appropriate?

2.18 The Sustainability Appraisal identifies negative effects in respect of landscape and significant negative effects in respect of cultural heritage, efficient land use, pollution and waste. If it were to be concluded that the effects are appropriate, it is clear that the site contains a number of significant constraints that would influence the level of development that could be achieved in light of necessary mitigation required.

2.19 For example, in respect of cultural heritage, the SA concludes "*a Grade II listed obelisk lies in the northern extremity of the site. For the purposes of the assessment, retention cannot be presumed raising the potential of total loss of a designated asset. Even if this asset is retained within the development, its setting would be completely altered - from rural agricultural landscape to residential development.*"

2.20 In addition:

"Development on the site is also likely to result in significant setting change to Dordon Hall, Grade II Listed house. It would completely change the immediate setting of the asset, from rural agricultural land to incongruous modern development. It would also sever the visual and historical links between the hall and the village of Dordon. This could cause substantial harm."

- 2.21 The further Historic Environment Assessment **[AD1]** concludes *"overall, the effect could be significant, but avoiding development around Dordon Hall would help to reduce the impact."* The report recommends significant further survey work to inform the development of the site which provides uncertainty on the level of development that could be realistically achieved.

9.34 Allocation H21, former school redevelopment site, Water Orton (and linked policy S1)

(a) with regard to AD30, is the relocation of the primary school by consequence of HS2 a certain prospect?

- 2.22 Water Orton is affected by HS2 Phase 1 proposal that has the benefit of Royal Assent. In addition, the new primary school is currently under construction in line with the decision taken in line with officer recommendations contained within AD30.

(b) Could suitable living conditions for future occupants be achieved?

- 2.23 The HS2 proposal lies to the south of H21 and proposes an elevation section of track on a rising embankment as it travels east towards the M42/M6 Link. It is noted that during the construction phase mitigation is required to reduce noise by 10-14db as set out in the HS2 Environmental Statement.
- 2.24 The April 2015 Cabinet Report which considers the proposed relocation of Water Orton Primary School identifies an alternative mitigation option to relocating the school. The report at paragraph 2.2 states:

"The proposed alternative mitigation involves the erection of a 3 metre high timber acoustic fence along the southern boundary; planting Leylandii trees; provision of an all-weather pitch and adventure playground; brick cladding systems; and sound insulation and ventilation systems, including air conditioning."

- 2.25 This alternative mitigation proposal suggests significant noise mitigation would be required in respect of leaving the school and situ and provides confirmation that noise would represent a significant constraint to suitable living conditions for future residents of new homes on the site. Such is the impact, this may significantly impact the yield that could be achieved on the site or the viability of development altogether.
- 2.26 The Council hasn't undertaken any detailed assessment of future noise impact to justify a yield of 48 dwellings could be realistically achieved. Regardless of the deliverability of this site, we consider that additional site allocations and/or safeguarded should be identified in the sustainable Category 3 settlement of Water Orton – especially given its proximity and sustainable transport linkages to Birmingham.

APPENDIX 1

Affordable Housing Assessment - Addendum

Packington Lane, Coleshill, North Warwickshire

Affordable Housing Assessment - Addendum

Proposed Residential Development at Packington Lane, Coleshill, North
Warwickshire

Richborough Estates

March 2019

OUR REF: M17/1216-06.RPT

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Introduction

Section 1

- 1.1 This affordable housing assessment has been prepared by **Tetlow King Planning** on behalf of **Richborough Estates** in support of their promotion of the site at Packington Lane, Coleshill in North Warwickshire on which they propose the development of 159 dwellings.
- 1.2 It updates the previous Affordable Housing Assessment with updated affordability indicators, to reflect the position at March 2019.

Updated Affordability Indicators

Section 2

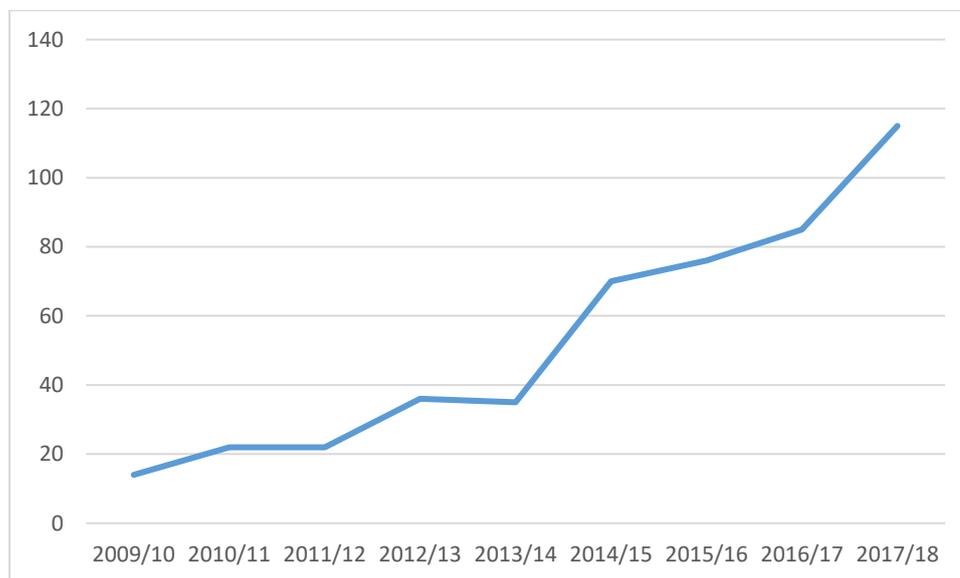
2.1 Updated information on affordability indicators is provided below where new information has become available.

Homelessness data

2.2 The most recent evidence from the Government’s Live Table demonstrated that the number of people registered as homeless and in priority need in North Warwickshire has increased from 14 households in 2009/10 (and 85 in 2016/17) to 115 households on 2017/18. This is demonstrated graphically in Figure 1, below.

2.3 The number of people homeless has increased from an already-massive 507% to an unbelievable **721%** over the period since 2019/10.

Figure 1 – Households Registered and Homeless and in Priority Need in North Warwickshire



Source MCHLG Live Table 784

Home Truths 2017/18

2.4 An updated version of the NHF’s Home Truths data has been published for 2017/18. This is attached as **Appendix 1** to this Update.

- 2.5 This evidence demonstrates that the income required for an 80% mortgage has now increased from £44,540 to £47,547. This represents an increase over the short one-year period of 6.7%.
- 2.6 Over the same period, average incomes have increased only from £25,298 to £25,927, which represents an increase of only 2.4%. The ratio of house prices to incomes has increased from 7.7 in 2016/17 to now stand at 8.0 in 2017/18. It is therefore clear that the affordability of home ownership in North Warwickshire has worsened over the period.
- 2.7 The evidence also demonstrates that mean average private sector rents have increased from £598 in 2016/17 to £637 in 2017/18. This amounts to an increase of 6.5%. This only further demonstrates the worsening affordability crisis in North Warwickshire.

Affordability Ratios

- 2.8 Updated ONS evidence is available for the ratios of house prices to workplace earnings. This demonstrates that the median ratio has increased from 6.67 to 7.12 for 2017.
- 2.9 This further demonstrates that the affordability of home ownership compared to workplace incomes has worsened over the one-year period in North Warwickshire.

Zoopla data

- 2.10 In addition, updated evidence has been accessed from Zoopla in respect of house prices.
- 2.11 In Coleshill the average house price has risen from £246,536 to £250,319. This represents an increase of 1.5% over just this short period.

Conclusion

- 2.12 The above evidence demonstrates that the Housing Crisis in North Warwickshire and Coleshill has worsened in the previous year, and that the need for affordable housing is even more acute.

Appendix 1

Home Truths 2017/18



The housing crisis in the West Midlands

The housing market in the West Midlands is characterised by a mixture of major urban areas, historic market towns and small rural communities. Despite the differences in settlement type, all areas across the region are facing their own housing challenges.

This report provides local data on the housing market in the West Midlands and highlights that:

- Not enough homes are being built to meet demand – there was a shortfall of 40,600 homes across the region between 2012 and 2016, including almost 19,000 in Birmingham alone.
- The average house price is eight times average earnings – rising to 11 times in Wychavon, and more than 10 times in Herefordshire, Malvern Hills, Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick.
- The average salary in the West Midlands is below the national average at £26,000, and with the high ratio of house prices to income, many people are priced out of home ownership. Private rents are also higher than the national average in some parts of the region.
- The West Midlands has some of the highest unemployment rates in the country, including 8.5% in Birmingham and 8.1% in Sandwell – the national average is just 4.8%.
- Homelessness and rough sleeping are significant challenges for the region: official figures for 2017 reported 295 people sleeping rough across the West Midlands, a 62% rise since 2010.

Solving the housing crisis

Housing associations are united by a single purpose – to ensure everyone can live in a good quality home that they can afford.

Last year we built 26% of new homes in England and our ambition is to deliver 120,000 homes a year by 2033. **The West Midlands region contributed nearly 11% (4,086) of the national affordable housing supply during 2016-17. Housing associations are committed to working with the West Midlands Mayor, the Combined Authority and local authorities to help the region address its housing challenges – whether that's building new affordable homes or helping to address homelessness.**

Recent changes in Government policy will help us deliver even more. An extra £2bn investment included a specific commitment to allow new homes to be built for social rent – the first time such funding has been available since 2010.

Certainty over future rents and recognition for supported and sheltered housing are steps in the right direction. The Government must now deliver the final part of the jigsaw: the long-term supply of affordable land. Only then will the right amount of homes, of the right kind, in the right places, be built to meet changing housing needs.

If you share our sense of purpose and ambition, let's work together to end the housing crisis.

Contact

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London WC1V 6NY

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info@housing.org.uk
#HomeTruths2018

Home Truths 2017/18

The housing market
in the West Midlands

West Midlands	Average (mean) house prices in 2016/17 ¹	Mean monthly private sector rents in 2016/17 ²	Mean annual earnings in 2017 ³	Ratio of house prices to incomes ⁴	Income required for 80% mortgage (80% at 3.5x) ⁵	Percent of Housing Benefit claimants in employment ⁶	Unemployment rate 2016/17 ⁷	Five-year shortfall 2012-2016 ⁸	Long-term empty homes ⁹	Second homes ¹⁰	Total housing association affordable homes 2017 ¹¹
England	£288,898	£852	£28,444	10.2	£66,034	24%	4.8%	482,905	200,145	248,747	2,672,026
West Midlands	£209,164	£623	£26,099	8.0	£47,809	19%	5.4%	40,595	21,186	11,132	275,368
Herefordshire UA	£242,033	£611	£23,213	10.4	£55,322	24%	3.6%	2,109	324	603	11,853
Stoke-on-Trent UA	£120,551	£467	£23,353	5.2	£27,555	16%	5.8%	797	1,342	468	8,269
Telford and Wrekin UA	£178,761	£571	£23,722	7.5	£40,860	22%	4.8%	n/a	456	233	13,889
Shropshire UA	£234,368	£573	£26,442	8.9	£53,570	15%	3.3%	564	1,535	1,483	14,883
Staffordshire	£202,058	£588	£26,364	7.7	£46,185	18%	4.6%	3,243	3,330	1,389	45,767
Cannock Chase	£170,207	£532	£26,437	6.4	£38,904	18%	4.3%	325	307	81	2,117
East Staffordshire	£204,041	£581	£23,858	8.6	£46,638	24%	3.9%	902	440	228	6,815
Lichfield	£261,691	£692	£33,712	7.8	£59,815	17%	2.9%	709	296	88	5,906
Newcastle-under-Lyme	£153,871	£539	£22,454	6.9	£35,170	16%	4.1%	163	411	381	10,138
South Staffordshire	£236,233	£678	£28,746	8.2	£53,996	17%	3.4%	197	343	133	6,819
Stafford	£219,036	£592	£26,593	8.2	£50,065	17%	3.6%	25	661	286	8,310
Staffordshire Moorlands	£178,881	£526	£24,102	7.4	£40,887	17%	3.1%	218	621	179	3,890
Tamworth	£188,400	£632	£25,808	7.3	£43,063	17%	3.7%	704	251	13	1,772
Warwickshire	£271,485	£735	£29,416	9.2	£62,054	22%	2.9%	3,673	2,339	1,477	18,819
North Warwickshire	£208,020	£637	£25,927	8.0	£47,547	20%	3.2%	273	238	65	1,278
Nuneaton and Bedworth	£176,284	£544	£24,664	7.1	£40,293	20%	5.3%	924	516	47	2,899
Rugby	£236,850	£708	£29,318	8.1	£54,137	22%	4.1%	958	332	171	3,012
Stratford-on-Avon	£347,991	£853	£32,386	10.7	£79,541	24%	2.7%	n/a	731	623	7,909
Warwick	£331,036	£798	£32,323	10.2	£75,665	23%	3.0%	1,655	522	571	3,721
West Midlands MC	£187,281	£628	£25,667	7.3	£42,807	18%	8.4%	33,648	10,062	3,957	126,311
Birmingham	£189,709	£685	£25,392	7.5	£43,362	16%	8.5%	18,832	4,397	1,495	49,105
Coventry	£181,443	£593	£26,010	7.0	£41,473	25%	5.0%	5,512	1,150	1,348	25,374
Dudley	£173,357	£534	£25,090	6.9	£39,624	17%	6.3%	1,184	1,005	328	5,494
Sandwell	£140,702	£553	£23,650	5.9	£32,160	18%	8.1%	5,129	1,171	10	7,775
Solihull	£294,186	£851	£35,303	8.3	£67,242	22%	5.5%	1,227	148	100	3,514
Walsall	£166,887	£541	£22,563	7.4	£38,146	19%	6.2%	1,080	959	176	28,536
Wolverhampton	£155,430	£523	£24,123	6.4	£35,527	17%	7.6%	684	1,232	500	6,513
Worcestershire	£250,144	£647	£26,463	9.5	£57,176	21%	3.5%	n/a	1,798	1,522	35,577
Bromsgrove	£299,400	£711	£30,342	9.9	£68,434	19%	3.1%	342	206	104	4,707
Malvern Hills	£287,938	£673	£27,482	10.5	£65,814	20%	3.8%	185	381	346	5,074
Redditch	£203,279	£628	£22,994	8.8	£46,464	20%	4.7%	212	127	69	2,191
Worcester	£204,549	£606	£27,737	7.4	£46,754	24%	4.2%	251	426	217	7,952
Wychavon	£287,505	£717	£25,782	11.2	£65,715	22%	3.1%	n/a	391	405	8,530
Wyre Forest	£194,125	£563	£24,575	7.9	£44,371	20%	4.1%	n/a	267	381	7,123

1. Office for National Statistics (ONS), small area statistics

2. Valuation Office Agency

3. ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

4. ONS, small area statistics and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

5. ONS, small area statistics and National Housing Federation own analysis

6. Department for Work and Pensions, Stat Xplore

7. ONS, NOMIS model based estimates

8. Town and Country Planning Association household projections; Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) table 253 and Federation own analysis

9. MHCLG, table 615

10. MHCLG, Council Tax base

11. Homes England, Statistical Data Return 2017

n/a: not available

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Updated Affordability Indicators

Section 2

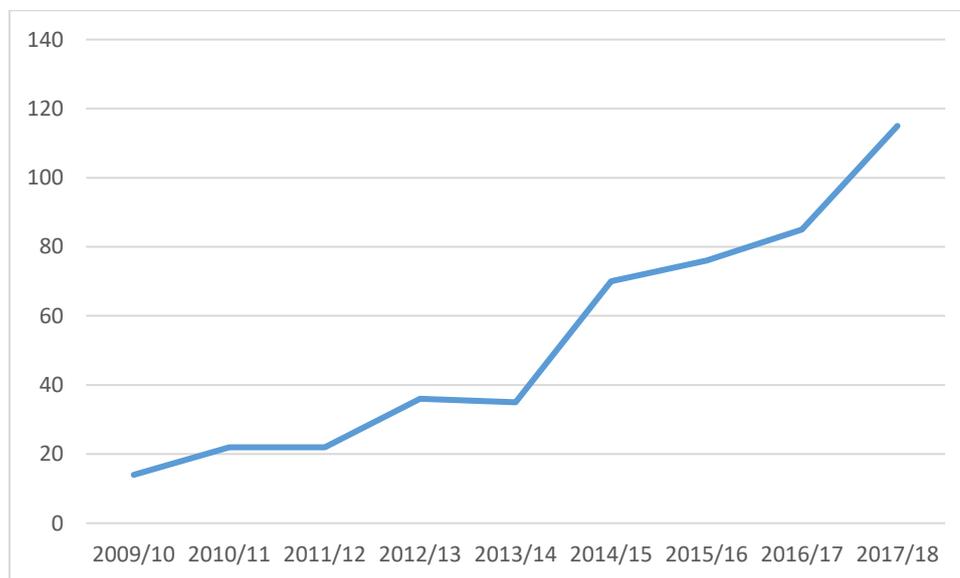
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Affordability Ratios

- 2.8 Updated ONS evidence is available for the ratios of house prices to workplace earnings. This demonstrates that the median ratio has increased from 6.67 to 7.12 for 2017.
- 2.9 This demonstrates that the affordability of home ownership compared to workplace incomes has further worsened over the one-year period in North Warwickshire.

Conclusion

- 2.10 The above evidence demonstrates that the Housing Crisis in North Warwickshire and Water Orton has worsened in the previous year, and that the need for affordable housing is even more acute.

Appendix 1

Home Truths 2017/18



The housing crisis in the West Midlands

The housing market in the West Midlands is characterised by a mixture of major urban areas, historic market towns and small rural communities. Despite the differences in settlement type, all areas across the region are facing their own housing challenges.

This report provides local data on the housing market in the West Midlands and highlights that:

- Not enough homes are being built to meet demand – there was a shortfall of 40,600 homes across the region between 2012 and 2016, including almost 19,000 in Birmingham alone.
- The average house price is eight times average earnings – rising to 11 times in Wychavon, and more than 10 times in Herefordshire, Malvern Hills, Stratford-upon-Avon and Warwick.
- The average salary in the West Midlands is below the national average at £26,000, and with the high ratio of house prices to income, many people are priced out of home ownership. Private rents are also higher than the national average in some parts of the region.
- The West Midlands has some of the highest unemployment rates in the country, including 8.5% in Birmingham and 8.1% in Sandwell – the national average is just 4.8%.
- Homelessness and rough sleeping are significant challenges for the region: official figures for 2017 reported 295 people sleeping rough across the West Midlands, a 62% rise since 2010.

Solving the housing crisis

Housing associations are united by a single purpose – to ensure everyone can live in a good quality home that they can afford.

Last year we built 26% of new homes in England and our ambition is to deliver 120,000 homes a year by 2033. **The West Midlands region contributed nearly 11% (4,086) of the national affordable housing supply during 2016-17. Housing associations are committed to working with the West Midlands Mayor, the Combined Authority and local authorities to help the region address its housing challenges – whether that's building new affordable homes or helping to address homelessness.**

Recent changes in Government policy will help us deliver even more. An extra £2bn investment included a specific commitment to allow new homes to be built for social rent – the first time such funding has been available since 2010.

Certainty over future rents and recognition for supported and sheltered housing are steps in the right direction. The Government must now deliver the final part of the jigsaw: the long-term supply of affordable land. Only then will the right amount of homes, of the right kind, in the right places, be built to meet changing housing needs.

If you share our sense of purpose and ambition, let's work together to end the housing crisis.

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Home Truths 2017/18

The housing market
in the West Midlands

West Midlands	Average (mean) house prices in 2016/17 ¹	Mean monthly private sector rents in 2016/17 ²	Mean annual earnings in 2017 ³	Ratio of house prices to incomes ⁴	Income required for 80% mortgage (80% at 3.5x) ⁵	Percent of Housing Benefit claimants in employment ⁶	Unemployment rate 2016/17 ⁷	Five-year shortfall 2012-2016 ⁸	Long-term empty homes ⁹	Second homes ¹⁰	Total housing association affordable homes 2017 ¹¹
England	£288,898	£852	£28,444	10.2	£66,034	24%	4.8%	482,905	200,145	248,747	2,672,026
West Midlands	£209,164	£623	£26,099	8.0	£47,809	19%	5.4%	40,595	21,186	11,132	275,368
Herefordshire UA	£242,033	£611	£23,213	10.4	£55,322	24%	3.6%	2,109	324	603	11,853
Stoke-on-Trent UA	£120,551	£467	£23,353	5.2	£27,555	16%	5.8%	797	1,342	468	8,269
Telford and Wrekin UA	£178,761	£571	£23,722	7.5	£40,860	22%	4.8%	n/a	456	233	13,889
Shropshire UA	£234,368	£573	£26,442	8.9	£53,570	15%	3.3%	564	1,535	1,483	14,883
Staffordshire	£202,058	£588	£26,364	7.7	£46,185	18%	4.6%	3,243	3,330	1,389	45,767
Cannock Chase	£170,207	£532	£26,437	6.4	£38,904	18%	4.3%	325	307	81	2,117
East Staffordshire	£204,041	£581	£23,858	8.6	£46,638	24%	3.9%	902	440	228	6,815
Lichfield	£261,691	£692	£33,712	7.8	£59,815	17%	2.9%	709	296	88	5,906
Newcastle-under-Lyme	£153,871	£539	£22,454	6.9	£35,170	16%	4.1%	163	411	381	10,138
South Staffordshire	£236,233	£678	£28,746	8.2	£53,996	17%	3.4%	197	343	133	6,819
Stafford	£219,036	£592	£26,593	8.2	£50,065	17%	3.6%	25	661	286	8,310
Staffordshire Moorlands	£178,881	£526	£24,102	7.4	£40,887	17%	3.1%	218	621	179	3,890
Tamworth	£188,400	£632	£25,808	7.3	£43,063	17%	3.7%	704	251	13	1,772
Warwickshire	£271,485	£735	£29,416	9.2	£62,054	22%	2.9%	3,673	2,339	1,477	18,819
North Warwickshire	£208,020	£637	£25,927	8.0	£47,547	20%	3.2%	273	238	65	1,278
Nuneaton and Bedworth	£176,284	£544	£24,664	7.1	£40,293	20%	5.3%	924	516	47	2,899
Rugby	£236,850	£708	£29,318	8.1	£54,137	22%	4.1%	958	332	171	3,012
Stratford-on-Avon	£347,991	£853	£32,386	10.7	£79,541	24%	2.7%	n/a	731	623	7,909
Warwick	£331,036	£798	£32,323	10.2	£75,665	23%	3.0%	1,655	522	571	3,721
West Midlands MC	£187,281	£628	£25,667	7.3	£42,807	18%	8.4%	33,648	10,062	3,957	126,311
Birmingham	£189,709	£685	£25,392	7.5	£43,362	16%	8.5%	18,832	4,397	1,495	49,105
Coventry	£181,443	£593	£26,010	7.0	£41,473	25%	5.0%	5,512	1,150	1,348	25,374
Dudley	£173,357	£534	£25,090	6.9	£39,624	17%	6.3%	1,184	1,005	328	5,494
Sandwell	£140,702	£553	£23,650	5.9	£32,160	18%	8.1%	5,129	1,171	10	7,775
Solihull	£294,186	£851	£35,303	8.3	£67,242	22%	5.5%	1,227	148	100	3,514
Walsall	£166,887	£541	£22,563	7.4	£38,146	19%	6.2%	1,080	959	176	28,536
Wolverhampton	£155,430	£523	£24,123	6.4	£35,527	17%	7.6%	684	1,232	500	6,513
Worcestershire	£250,144	£647	£26,463	9.5	£57,176	21%	3.5%	n/a	1,798	1,522	35,577
Bromsgrove	£299,400	£711	£30,342	9.9	£68,434	19%	3.1%	342	206	104	4,707
Malvern Hills	£287,938	£673	£27,482	10.5	£65,814	20%	3.8%	185	381	346	5,074
Redditch	£203,279	£628	£22,994	8.8	£46,464	20%	4.7%	212	127	69	2,191
Worcester	£204,549	£606	£27,737	7.4	£46,754	24%	4.2%	251	426	217	7,952
Wychavon	£287,505	£717	£25,782	11.2	£65,715	22%	3.1%	n/a	391	405	8,530
Wyre Forest	£194,125	£563	£24,575	7.9	£44,371	20%	4.1%	n/a	267	381	7,123

1. Office for National Statistics (ONS), small area statistics

2. Valuation Office Agency

3. ONS, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

4. ONS, small area statistics and Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

5. ONS, small area statistics and National Housing Federation own analysis

6. Department for Work and Pensions, Stat Xplore

7. ONS, NOMIS model based estimates

8. Town and Country Planning Association household projections; Ministry for Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) table 253 and Federation own analysis

9. MHCLG, table 615

10. MHCLG, Council Tax base

11. Homes England, Statistical Data Return 2017

n/a: not available