

## **Darlaston North/Bentley/Darlaston South Area Panel**

**Wednesday 16 September 2015**

### **Walsall Site Allocation Document**

Cabinet on 22 July 2015 agreed to the publication of material for three local plan documents, for consultation for 8 weeks from the start of September:

- (a) Walsall Site Allocation Document – Preferred Option
- (b) Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan – Preferred Option
- (c) Preliminary Draft Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule

The Site Allocation Document aims to identify sites to meet identified needs for new housing, industry and other land uses, and to safeguard other types of land and assets such as open space. The Document will cover the whole of the borough except the town and district centres. The Area Action Plan has similar aims but will only cover the Town Centre.

The Community Infrastructure Levy is a new way of raising funds to pay for infrastructure such as open space. It will be paid by developers of certain types of building, such as houses and retail, and will replace most payments that are currently made through Section 106 agreements.

The current consultation is about the “Preferred Option” version of the Site Allocation Document and Area Action Plan. Following this consultation, a further version called the “Publication” version will be produced. This will be submitted to be examined by a planning inspector appointed by the Secretary of State. If the examination is successful, the two documents will then be adopted by the Council. Decisions about planning applications, and other matters, will then need to be made in accordance with the documents, unless there are other material considerations.

The three documents can be viewed in full on the Council’s web site at [http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/planning\\_policy/planning\\_2026.htm](http://cms.walsall.gov.uk/index/environment/planning/planning_policy/planning_2026.htm) and copies are also available in all the local libraries. The Site Allocation Document and Area Action Plan comprise a written document and a map called the “Policies Map”. The documents are accompanied by a number of supporting documents and evidence: because of their size, it has not been possible to provide paper copies of the latter. However, extracts of the Policies Map are attached below, together with a list of the sites proposed to be allocated for housing (including traveller sites), employment and open space in the two wards.

We recognise that many residents have concerns about the proposals for traveller sites, and the report below is mainly about addressing these concerns. However, the documents cover many other important matters. The Council’s officers would encourage everyone to read these questions and complete the response forms.

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## **Why does the Council need to allocate sites**

The Council has a responsibility to ensure that sufficient land for homes, jobs, open space and other land uses is provided to meet the needs of all residents and workers in the borough. In doing this, we have to comply with national legislation and policy set by the Government. The Government, in its “Planning policy for traveller sites”<sup>1</sup>, states that local planning authorities should, in producing their Local Plan, identify and update annually, a supply of specific deliverable sites for travellers sufficient to provide 5 years’ worth of sites against their locally set targets, and identify a supply of specific, developable sites, or broad locations for growth, for years 6 to 10 and, where possible, for years 11-15.

The travelling community has been established in Walsall borough for many generations. In the 2011 Census, 300 households stated their origin to be Gypsy or Irish Traveller, although the majority of them live in “bricks and mortar” housing. The Government defines “gypsies and travellers” as “*Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family’s or dependants’ educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such.*”

## **How has the need for sites been calculated?**

The targets for general housing, employment land and traveller sites are derived from the Black Country Core Strategy, which was adopted by the four local authorities in 2011. The general housing targets were calculated from population and household projections produced by the Government. The targets for gypsies and travellers were derived from a survey of the existing community. In both cases, the calculations estimated how many new households were expected to emerge over the plan period (taking account of the numbers of children that were expected to grow up, but allowing for vacancies as a result of families moving out of the borough or older residents dying).

For general housing, the target states that 11,973 new homes are expected to be built over the period 2006-2026. As at April 2015, over 5,000 of these homes had already been completed and a further 4,000 homes had planning permission. For travellers, 39 new pitches are expected to be required in Walsall over the period 2008-2018, together with 10-12 transit pitches across the Black Country as a whole. Apart from two sites that were allowed on appeal, following the refusal of planning permission by the Council, and the refurbishment of the Council’s existing site at Willenhall Lane, no new gypsy or traveller sites have been provided in Walsall since 2008.

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[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/457420/Final\\_planning\\_and\\_travellers\\_policy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/457420/Final_planning_and_travellers_policy.pdf)

Because of changes that have occurred on some existing sites, and the requirement in Government policy to meet need for the period beyond 2018, we have recalculated our estimate of the future need for traveller sites.

### **So how many new traveller sites now need to be found?**

The requirement is measured in terms of the number of “pitches”. A “pitch” is defined as a family unit, and typically comprises space for two mobile/ trailer homes (one for the parents and one for children) which are generally kept on the site permanently, plus an amenity block, parking space, small garden/ play area and a towing caravan/ mobile home that is used when the family travel for work/ leisure purposes.

We estimate that 24 new pitches are needed by 2018 (note that this is lower than the figure in the Core Strategy), plus a further 4 pitches by 2026.

Several pitches can be grouped together on a “site”, but national guidance is that no more than 15 pitches should be together on a single site, to ensure community cohesion. Willenhall Lane has 19 pitches. The community preference is for smaller sites: several existing private sites in Walsall house just one or two families each.

The numbers given in the Site Allocation Document are our estimate of the maximum physical capacity of each potential site, subject to a cap of 15 pitches for each one.

### **Why have these sites been chosen?**

The site criteria are those in the Core Strategy. These criteria are based on the distance from services such as schools and shops, to ensure that future residents are able to access these. We have proposed additional requirements that sites should be in locations that would be suitable for general housing. This means that new sites should not lie in the Green Belt or involve, for example, the development of existing open space. We have also suggested that former factories and similar vacant land that is no longer needed for its former purpose may meet the criteria.

Many general housing sites might meet the criteria, however most are privately owned. Unless the owner was willing to release such sites, it would not be possible to consider them deliverable. The sites we have proposed lie close to centres and/or have public transport links.

The Council commissioned a survey of potential sites in 2010, but most of them were unsuitable, as they involved sites in the Green Belt or open space. We have therefore widened the search to look at vacant land that the Council is seeking to dispose of, where general housing would be a suitable use if the site was not developed as a traveller site. In the case of Darlaston MPC, an offer to buy the land has been made but the sale has not been completed.

### **How will sites be funded?**

This will depend on who develops them, in the same way as general housing sites.

No funding for new sites is currently available to the Council, in part because no sites have been allocated or have planning permission. The Homes and Communities Agency (a Government agency) has offered funding to local planning authorities in the past. Having sites allocated in the local plan could make it easier for the Council to apply for funding in the future if it wanted to.

Some local authorities have invited housing associations to own and/or manage sites. No such invitation has been made in Walsall, however it might be appropriate since the Council does not own any other housing stock.

Occupiers of a council or housing association site would become tenants and pay rent/ Council tax/ utility bills in the same way as tenants of “bricks and mortar” homes. They would also have the same security of tenure: this is how the Council’s existing site at Willenhall Lane is run.

For private sites, the developer would pay in the same way as housebuilders. There are already private sites in Walsall. Three small sites were initially built in the Green Belt without planning permission but have subsequently been allowed to remain following planning appeals. A key difficulty is that travellers who seek to acquire land for the own sites are often outbid by general housing developers: one of the reasons for the Site Allocation Document is to safeguard existing and potential new sites for the community.

## **Ground Conditions**

The Site Allocation Document is seeking to direct new development, both for general housing, traveller sites and employment, to previously developed land, to avoid the need to build on open space that is not surplus, or in the Green Belt. Many previously developed sites in Walsall are affected by former mineworkings or contamination arising from the industrial legacy of the borough that will need to be addressed as part of any development, regardless of the end use.

## **How can objections be made?**

All representations must be made in writing in order to ensure that they are properly recorded. We have provided response forms and further copies can be obtained from our web site.

The Site Allocation Document Draft Plan includes questions both about the proposed policy for traveller sites and also the other issues in the Plan. We would encourage everyone to read the Plan and answer the questions. In particular, we would welcome comments about:

Would the number of pitches proposed meet the need?

Do the proposed sites meet the criteria? If not, why not?

Are you aware of any other potential sites that we have not identified which might meet the site criteria? Do you know if the owner would be willing for these sites to be allocated?

## Appendix

### Sites Proposed for Allocation for Housing in Bentley and Darlaston North, and Darlaston South Wards

SITE NAME	REF	Housing Capacity (number of dwellings)	HOUSINGSTATUS
LAND AT BENTLEY ROAD NORTH,WALSALL,	HO176	144	FPP
LAND AT BERKLEY CLOSE AND COTTLE CLOSE, REAR OF 31-59 EDINBURGH AVENUE,BENTLEY,WALSALL	HO177	16	OPP
LAND AT CHURCHILL ROAD AND KENT ROAD TO THE REAR OF 2-14 KENT ROAD AND 201-205 CHURCHILL ROAD, BENTLEY, WALSALL	HO180	26 (or up to 15 G/T)	OPP
The Green, Darlaston (Premier Aftercare)	HO316	11	
Wilkes Avenue (Bentley Home)	HO36	37	
Bentley Road North (corner of King Charles Avenue)	HO37	19	
Wolverhampton Road West (rear of 179)	HO38	5	FPP
Poplar Avenue (east)	HO44	23 (or up to 15 G/T)	
Darlaston Multi-Purpose Centre Site	HO306	35 (or up to 15 G/T)	
WOLVERHAMPTON ROAD WEST (former Petrol Station and former Lane Arms Pub)	HO217	29	FPP
JOYNSON STREET	HO39b	5	FPP
LAND AT SERVIS UK LTD,DARLASTON ROAD,WEDNESBURY,WALSALL,WEST MIDLANDS,WS10 7SR	HO182	224	FPP
LAND (INCLUDING FACTORY COMPLEX AP (UK)) AT HEATHFIELD LANE WEST, DARLASTON	HO303	304	FPP
Festival Avenue	HO72	24	
Kendrick Place and Castle View Road, Moxley	HO23	38	
Joynson Street (site of former Kings Hill JMI School)	HO39a	17	
Festival Avenue (end of street)	HO71	10	
194 Darlaston Road, Wednesbury WS10 7TG (former Alucast)	HO302	17	
SITE OF JOHN WOOTTON HOUSE & GREAT CROFT HOUSE WESLEY ROAD DARLASTON	HO315	11	OPP
ROWLEY VIEW, MOXLEY	HO322	22	

## Sites Proposed for Allocation for Employment in Bentley and Darlaston North, and Darlaston South Wards

SITE NAME or ADDRESS	REFERENCE		
		Access 10	IN93.1
<b>Potential High Quality</b>		Acerinox/ Eurofoods	IN97
Lemforder & Atlas Works	IN100.1	adjacent to IKEA	IN107.4
Central Point	IN84	Midland Road Darlaston	IN82.2
Holland Industrial Park	IN88	Southern Way	IN120.1
Aspect 2000	IN92	Woods Bank Trading Estate	IN118.1
Cemetery Road	IN98.1		
Former Railway Tavern	IN98.2	<b>Retained Local Quality</b>	
Access 10 East	IN93.2	E.M.R.	IN94
Former Pickfords	IN91.4	Heath Road South	IN96
Bentley Mill Close	IN91.2	Station Street / Heath Road	IN99.1
Bentley Green	IN247	Willenhall Road	IN87
Longmore Avenue	IN91.1	Queen Street, Darlaston	IN85
Station Street / Heath Road	IN99.2	Heath Road North	IN95
Adjacent to Ikea, Steelmans Road	IN107.3	Central Darlaston Trading Estate	IN100.2
Former Wesson, Bull Lane	IN120.3	Bull Lane	IN121
Rickards Haulage	IN120.4	Church Street, Moxley	IN120.7
Moxley Junction	IN120.5	Darlaston Road West, Wednesbury	IN113.1
Rear of Woods Bank Trading Estate	IN118.2	101 Woden Road West	IN119
Moxley Road	IN120.6		
Former Railway Line, Woden Road West	IN117	<b>Consider for Release</b>	
Western Way, Moxley	IN120.2	Westbourne Road, Darlaston	IN101
Former Wesson Car Park, Western Way, Moxley	IN120.8	Perry Street	IN86.1
Credential, Western Way, Moxley	IN120.9	Franchise Street	IN102
		Park Lane/ Wood Street	IN239
<b>Existing High Quality</b>		Booth Street, Darlaston	IN86.2
Park Lane North	IN107.1	Jones Springs Ltd, Gladstone Street, Darlaston WS10 8BE	IN255
Universal Point	IN107.2	Alma Works, Darlaston Road, Wednesbury	IN112
Junction 10 Business Park	IN91.3	Addenbrooke Street	IN125
		Stafford Road North, Darlaston	IN124

Adjacent to former Servis  
Alfred Street/ Pinfold Street  
New Cross Street, Wednesbury  
Stafford Road South, Darlaston

IN113.2  
IN254  
IN113.3  
IN123

**New Industrial Proposals**

Casino and Cinema, Bentley Mill Way  
Millers Close, Bentley Mill Way  
Hughes Road  
Former Moxley Tip, Moxley Road

IN315  
IN317  
IN341  
IN122

## Sites Proposed for Allocation for Open Space in Bentley and Darlaston North, and Darlaston South Wards

SITE_NAME	PO_Open_Space_ID	Poplar Avenue	OS4007
Kings Hill Park	OS4015	Poplar Avenue	OS4008
Kings Hill Recreation Ground	OS4016	Bentley Leisure Pavilion	OS4009
Broadwaters Road	OS4017	Darlaston Cemetery	OS4010
Pinfold Street Primary School Playing Fields and Open Space	OS4019	Owen Park	OS4011
Queen Street	OS4020	Heath Road	OS4012
Heathfield Lane West	OS4022	Park Lane / Cook Street	OS4013
Hall Street	OS4024	Wrexham Avenue Allotments	OS4031
Pinfold St	OS4027	Victoria Road Allotments	OS4034
Moorcroft Wood	OS4028	Anson Road Play Area	OS4038
Rear of Moxley Garage	OS4043	Victoria Mews	OS4039
Walsall Canal (Rough Hay) Linear Walkway	OS4047	Whitton Street Play Area	OS4041
St Joseph's RC Primary School	OS4052	Darlaston Town Football Club	OS4054
George Rose Park	OS4023	Darlaston Linear Walkway	OS4059
Lower Bradley Playing Fields	OS4021	Black Country Route Junction Open Space	OS4060
York Crescent	OS4014	Bentley West JMI School	OS4061
Moorcroft Wood Primary Playing Field	OS4075	Bentley Railway Linear Walkway	OS4062
Grace Academy, Darlaston	OS4071	Rowlands Avenue Amenity Greenspace	OS4063
Rough Hay Primary School	OS4045	King Charles Primary School	OS4065
Bentley Youth Football Club	OS4060	Anson Road	OS4067
Bentley Recreation Ground	OS4002	Jane Lane Special School	OS4066
Bentley Cemetery	OS4003	Bentley Linear Walkway	OS9080
Western Avenue	OS4004	County Bridge Primary Playing Field	OS4072
Old Hall Pool	OS4005	Victoria Park (North)	OS4026
Poplar Avenue	OS4006	Wilkes Avenue	OS4001



**KEY**

- Town and District Centres
- Borough Boundary

**BCCS Regeneration Corridors**

- 5 Loxdale - Moxley
- 6 Wednesfield - Willenhall - Darlaston
- 7 Bloxwich - Birchills - Bescot
- 8 Hill Top
- 15 Brownhills

**Homes for Our Communities**

(a) General Housing

- Land Allocated for New Housing Development - HC1

(b) Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- Existing Traveller Sites to be Safeguarded - HC4
- Existing Showpeople Sites to be Safeguarded - HC4
- Existing Temporary or Personal Traveller Sites to be Made Permanent - HC4
- New Showpeople Sites - HC4
- New Traveller Sites and Existing Sites to Be Expanded - HC4
- New Traveller or Showpeople Sites - HC4

**Site Extents**

- Existing Traveller Sites or New Traveller or Showpeople Sites
- New Traveller Sites and Existing Sites to be Expanded
- Existing Temporary or Personal Traveller Sites to be Made Permanent
- New and Existing Showpeople Sites

**Providing for Industrial Jobs and Prosperity**

- Existing High Quality Industry - IND1
- Potential High Quality Industry - IND2
- Retained Local Quality Industry - IND3
- Local Industry Consider for Release - IND4
- New Employment Opportunities - IND5
- Employment Sites Vacant at March 2015

**Strengthening Our Local Centres**

- Local Centres - SLC1
- Local Centres Development Opportunities - SLC2

**Open Space, Leisure and Community Facilities**

- Open Space - OS1
- University of Wolverhampton Campus - UW1
- Cemetery Extension - UDP Saved Policy LC11
- Greenways (Complete, Protected) - UDP Saved Policy LC5
- Greenways (Proposed) - UDP Saved Policy LC5

**Environmental Network**

- Green Belt - GB1

**Nature Conservation**

- Special Area of Conservation (SAC) - EN1
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) - EN1
- Local Nature Reserves (LNR) - EN1
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) - EN1
- Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) - Linear - EN1
- Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) - EN1
- Ancient Woodland - EN2

**Water Environment**

- Flood Zone 2 - EN3
- Flood Zone 3 - EN3
- Source Protection Zones - UDP Saved Policy ENV40
- Canals - EN4

**Historic Environment**

- Conservation Area - EN5
- Listed Buildings
- Locally Listed Buildings
- Scheduled Monuments
- Registered Parks and Gardens
- Great Barr Hall and Estate and St Margaret's Hospital - EN7
- Highgate Brewery - EN6

**Sustainable Waste Management**

- Strategic Waste Sites - W1, W2
- Other Existing Waste Sites - W1, W2
- Potential Waste Sites - W1, W3, W4
- Potential Waste Sites - W1, W3, W4

**Sustainable Use of Minerals**

- Minerals Safeguarding Area - M1
- Mineral Infrastructure Sites - M2, M3
- Brick Works - M7, M8, M9
- Permitted Minerals Sites - M4, M6, M9
- Minerals Areas of Search - M5, M8
- Potential New Minerals Sites - M8

**Strategic Transport Network**

- Strategic Highways Network: Motorways - UDP Saved Policies T4(a), T5
- Strategic Highways Network: Major Roads - UDP Saved Policies T4(a), T5
- Strategic Rail Network - UDP Saved Policy T3
- Bradley Lane Metro Park and Ride - UDP Saved Policy T3

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# Darlaston South

Not to Scale

