

## Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy

### Focused Consultation: 2011-2031 Housing Requirement and Strategic Site Options

FEBRUARY / MARCH 2014

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The period for responses to this consultation is from **Friday 31 January to 5pm on Friday 14 March 2014**.

This consultation includes 3 questions which you are invited to answer.

If you have any queries regarding this consultation, please contact the Planning Policy Team on 01789 260334 or email [planning.policy@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@stratford-dc.gov.uk). Copies of this consultation document and the accompanying Statement of Consultation which gives full details of this consultation are available on the Council's website at [www.stratford.gov.uk/csurther2014](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/csurther2014) or from the District Council offices:

Elizabeth House,  
Church Street,  
Stratford-upon-Avon,  
Warwickshire, CV37 6HX

If you find the text difficult to read we can supply it in a format better suited to your needs, please contact Planning Policy on 01789 260334.

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# 1. Background and Purpose

Stratford-on-Avon District Council is undertaking further public consultation on its emerging Core Strategy because new technical evidence is suggesting further important changes that will affect how many and where new homes are built across the District. The purpose of this new consultation is to invite comments on the following aspects of the Core Strategy:

- changes to the timeframe of the Core Strategy (see section 2)
- the total number of new homes that need to be built (see section 3)
- a range of alternative strategic options for meeting an increased housing requirement (see sections 4 and 5)

## What is the Core Strategy?

The Core Strategy is the name of the new planning document that will replace the saved policies of the Local Plan that the Council adopted in 2006. The Core Strategy sets out what the Council believes to be the most appropriate and sustainable way for meeting the development challenges facing our District and its communities. It includes planning policies on housing, employment, the Green Belt and countryside, affordable housing, good design, historic environment, and energy and water efficiency. The Council will use the Core Strategy when deciding whether to approve planning applications for development across the District.

## How can I have my say?

This consultation comprises three questions and these are included in sections 2, 3 and 5 of this consultation document. You can respond to this consultation in the following ways:



Online via the interactive consultation document at [www.stratford.gov.uk/csurther2014](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/csurther2014)



By completing a comment form for each question and emailing it to [planning.policy@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@stratford-dc.gov.uk)



By completing a comment form for each question and posting it to: Stratford-on-Avon District Council, FREEPOST CV2468, Consultation Unit, Chief Executive's Unit, Elizabeth House, Church Street, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON CV37 6BR

Please note: comments received will be publically available to view and comments will only be accepted where they are accompanied by your name and contact details. Personal data will not be published. Anonymous comments will not be accepted. Responses received after the deadline and comments made on wider aspects of the Core Strategy not specifically related to the consultation questions may not be considered. The accompanying Statement of Consultation gives full details of this consultation and is available on the Council's website at the above address.

## Hasn't the Council consulted before?

The plan-making process is not a one-off event; rather it involves a number of stages of consultation as the Council moves from a range of options to its preferred plan. In 'honing-down' the most appropriate strategy for distributing development, communities and stakeholders across Stratford-on-Avon District have had a number of previous opportunities to have their say. Comments received from each consultation have been used to inform the content of subsequent draft documents.

The most recent public consultation was in August / September 2013 on two specific 'New Proposals' that had not been consulted on previously. These were the proposals for a new settlement at Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath and the regeneration of the 'Canal Quarter' in Stratford-upon-Avon, with associated employment sites on the edge of the town.



Find out more about the previous Core Strategy consultations at [www.stratford.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/corestrategy)



## What will happen next?

The Council will consider comments received and use them to finalise the Core Strategy for 'submission' to the Secretary of State for public examination later this year. Prior to this, there will be a further round of statutory public consultation when the submission version will be placed 'on deposit' for 6 weeks. This will be an opportunity for everyone to comment on the legal compliance and 'soundness' of the Core Strategy prior to public examination by an independent planning inspector. This will check whether the Core Strategy is 'fit for purpose', has been prepared properly and represents the most appropriate and sustainable way of meeting the development challenges facing Stratford-on-Avon District.

## Will this consultation delay getting the Core Strategy in place?

No. The Council's priority is to adopt its Core Strategy as soon as is practical and it has recently published its revised timetable (called the Local Development Scheme) for doing so. Since additional technical work is being undertaken prior to submission, it makes sense to run this further consultation concurrently. Thus, undertaking this consultation will not extend the process of preparing the Core Strategy.

### How does the Core Strategy relate to strategic planning issues?

The Core Strategy also deals with strategic cross boundary planning issues identified by liaising with nearby local authorities and a range of agencies. This process is referred to as the Duty to Co-operate. Cross boundary issues relate not just to housing and employment markets and commuting patterns, but also include environmental and landscape issues (for example, part of the District is within the Cotswolds Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty) and water resource/management issues.

### How does the Core Strategy relate to Neighbourhood Plans?

Neighbourhood Plans are an opportunity for communities to decide how and where development is provided in their area. The Core Strategy sets the strategic planning framework for neighbourhood plans which must be prepared in accordance with it. Whilst the Core Strategy plans for Stratford-on-Avon District as a whole, Neighbourhood Plans provide further detail for particular towns and parishes. It is crucial therefore, that the Core Strategy is adopted as soon as possible so that Neighbourhood Plans can then be finalised.



Find out more about neighbourhood planning at [www.stratford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/neighbourhoodplans)

### How does the Core Strategy relate to technical evidence?

The Core Strategy must also be informed by evidence such as the findings of technical work undertaken by consultants with particular expertise. Technical studies cover topics such as housing need, employment land, transport impacts and assessment of flood risk. In addition to this technical work, the Council must also undertake an analysis of the social, economic and environmental impacts of development. This is known as a sustainability appraisal. This is important as no development option will ever 'tick all of the boxes', but a sustainability appraisal helps us understand the impacts of, and trade-offs between development options and where any significant adverse effects should be mitigated.



Find out more about the technical evidence at [www.stratford.gov.uk/evidence](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/evidence)

### What is the current version of the Core Strategy?

The current version of the Core Strategy is the Intended Proposed Submission Core Strategy endorsed by the Council in July 2013. This set out the Council's emerging planning policies and development strategy for the distribution of housing and employment land. Taking account of homes already built between 2008 and 2013 it proposed the following development strategy to deliver approximately 9,500 additional homes between 2008 and 2028:



Location	No. of Homes	Strategic Housing Allocations
<b>Stratford-upon-Avon</b>	2,550	700 homes at the Canal Quarter Regeneration Zone
<b>8 Main Rural Centres</b>	1,875	300 homes north of Allimore Lane, to the west of Alcester; 200 homes west of Banbury Road, to the south of Southam; 150 homes west of Coventry Road, to the north of Southam.
<b>45 Local Service Villages</b>	1,800	
<b>Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath</b>	1,900	New Settlement of 4,800 homes (inc. 2,900 homes after 2028)
<b>Rural Area (inc. Large Rural Brownfield Sites)</b>	785	
<b>District-wide Windfall Allowance</b>	625	
	9,535	

In addition to the development strategy, the Core Strategy also sets out specific strategies for the different towns and villages across the District as well as planning policies relating to a wider range of topics.



Find out more about the Intended Proposed Submission Core Strategy at [www.stratford.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/corestrategy)



## 2. Changing the Plan Period

### Why is this necessary?

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) expects Core Strategies to run for at least 15 years from the date of adoption. As this is now expected to be 2015, the earliest end date needs to be 2030. The current proposed plan period runs from 2008 to 2028 so it is two years short. It needs to be extended to reduce the risk that the plan would not be found 'sound' at examination.

### New Plan Period

Arguably the plan period could simply be extended to cover the additional years, running from 2008 to 2030. However, it is standard practice that plans should run for 15 to 20 years. Furthermore, given that the Local Plan expired in 2011 and many data sources (e.g. population projections) are based at 2011 and run to 2031, it is more logical that the plan period be changed from 2008-2028 to 2011-2031.

### Implications

Changing the plan period has implications for the plan-making process. For example, the technical evidence needs to be updated and revised accordingly to ensure that it covers the full period which is being planned for. The main implication however, relates to the provision of housing. This issue is discussed further in section 3.



**Question 1: Should the Core Strategy cover the 20 year period 2011 to 2031?**



### **3. Increasing the Housing Requirement**

#### **Context**

A substantial amount of housing development has taken place in the District in recent decades with the overall number of dwellings increasing by 52% between 1981 and 2011. Much of this has been concentrated in the larger settlements such as Stratford-upon-Avon (increased by 58%), Wellesbourne (increased by 74%), Bidford (increased by 86%) and Shipston (increased by just over 100%). At the same time, the historic and natural environment of the District is very highly valued and contributes significantly to the identity and character of the area. There is widespread concern that additional significant growth would fundamentally and irrevocably alter the character of our existing towns and villages.

#### **Sustainable Development and the Core Strategy**

The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. Sustainable development has three roles: economic – building a strong, responsive and competitive economy; social – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities; and environmental – protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment. These roles should not be undertaken in isolation because they are mutually dependent. For example, economic growth can secure higher social and environmental standards.

Arguably, like many areas in the south of England, the biggest challenge facing Stratford-on-Avon District is the demand for housing and the resultant high house prices, with many of the younger generation unable to afford to buy a home of their own in their local community. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to set out how we should respond to the challenges and development pressures facing our District, by setting out the key land-use planning principles and policies for Stratford-on-Avon. This includes setting the number of new homes that should be built across the District, known as the housing requirement.

#### **Calculating the Housing Requirement**

In light of the abolition of regional planning and the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Third Draft Core Strategy 2012 proposed a housing requirement of 8,000 dwellings between 2008 and 2028. Based on further technical evidence, the Intended Proposed Submission Core Strategy 2013 proposed to increase this number by 1,500 to 9,500 over the same period.

However, since the technical work that underpinned the Intended Proposed Submission Core Strategy was undertaken, two further key changes have occurred. Given the importance of these changes, it is crucial that the Core Strategy takes them fully into account if it is to be found 'sound' at examination.

Firstly, more up-to-date household projections have been published (April 2013). These take on board the findings from the 2011 Census which showed that the total number of households in Stratford-on-Avon was significantly lower than had been estimated in previous projections, indicating that the previously projected (2008) household formation rates had been too high.



Secondly, the Government published national planning guidance in August 2013 setting out how it expects housing requirements to be calculated. The housing requirement must be based on an objective assessment of market and affordable housing needs that takes account of migration (people moving into the District from elsewhere) and demographic change. The new guidance requires councils to use the latest household projections published by the Department for Communities and Local Government as the starting point estimate of overall housing need. The household projections are produced by applying projected rates of household formation and size to the population projections published by the Office for National Statistics.

### **What the New Technical Evidence Says**

A joint Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) published in November 2013, has been prepared for the wider Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region. The study considers: how many homes might be needed in the future; what mix of homes might be needed; and the housing needs of specific groups.

Overall, in terms of the housing requirement, this evidence points to a need for a minimum of 9,600 additional homes (480 per year) in the District between 2011 and 2031. However, the evidence shows how this would result in some suppression of household formation and to a need to consider a higher level of provision to support economic growth in south Warwickshire. The SHMA considers that an appropriate level of provision based on the evidence would equate to between 540 and 600 homes per year. The lower end of this range is based on mid-point household formation rates between the 2008 and 2011 projections. The higher end assumes an uplift on this to support stronger growth in the workforce and to improve affordability of housing in the District. The SHMA then recommends an assessed need of 570 homes per annum to include an uplift to support economic growth and housing affordability.

An updated Review of Housing Requirements (the Review) has also been prepared for Stratford-on-Avon District by separate independent consultants. This study broadly concurs with the approach and findings of the Coventry and Warwickshire SHMA, agreeing that the mid-point figure of 540 (i.e. between 480 and 600) homes per annum is reasonable.

However, the Review does not agree that a further uplift above 540 homes per annum is necessary. This is because the figure already includes additional housing to support economic growth and housing affordability. Whilst some might argue that a higher level of housing would result in more economic growth and improved housing affordability, this is not necessarily the case. In a District such as Stratford-on-Avon, which faces a particular demand for housing for older persons, there is no direct relationship between supply and price. New jobs do not necessarily have to be filled by in-migrants, given alternative considerations such as maintaining low local unemployment, later retirement and increased activity rates (including amongst the elderly/recently retired), as well as improved skills and training.

As such, the Review recommends that the housing requirement should be based on a realistic assessment of future migration using the ten year average, whilst aiming to support the Council's economic aspirations, as set out in its Business

and Enterprise Strategy, by providing for a modest increase in the resident labour force in the District. This would meet the future housing needs of the existing population as well as cater for those in need of affordable housing.



**Find out more about the new technical evidence at [www.stratford.gov.uk/evidence](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/evidence)**

### Revised Housing Requirement

Thus, based on the new technical evidence set out above and coupled with the change to the plan period, the Council considers that an appropriate housing requirement for Stratford-on-Avon District is 540 homes per annum, meaning 10,800 additional homes between 2011 and 2031. There would be a significant risk that the Core Strategy would be found unsound at examination if the Council were to ignore this new evidence.



**Question 2: Should Stratford-on-Avon District accommodate 10,800 additional homes between 2011 and 2031?**



## 4. Strategic Options to Meet the Increased Housing Requirement

Changing both the plan period and housing requirement means we have to look again at where we would prefer the additional homes to be built across the District. This consultation is seeking views on a number of strategic options to achieve this.

### Homes Already Built or Committed

However, we don't need to consider options for all of the 10,800 homes as some have already been built since 2011 and we already know where others are expected to be built (e.g. they already have planning permission). These can therefore be deducted from the housing requirement leaving a 'to-find' figure. The following table shows what we know already.

	1	2	3	4	Total
	Built	Expected	Windfalls	Allocations	
<b>Stratford-upon-Avon</b>	290	1,525	210	700	2,725
<b>Main Rural Centres</b>	175	1,535	270	650	2,630
<b>Local Service Villages</b>	50	260	1,490		1,800
<b>Rural Area</b>	50	830	270	0	1,150
					<b>8,305</b>

Please note: for simplicity the figures have been rounded and are approximate

Column 1 shows the number of homes that have already been built from the start of the revised plan period (2011) to date. Column 2 shows the homes that are known about and expected to be built by 2031. These figures include an assumption that approximately 500 homes will be built at some of the sites that are currently being actively promoted through the planning process. It is reasonable to include such an allowance as the supply of housing is never static and not doing so would result in an over-estimation of the to-find figure. Column 3 is an allowance for 'windfalls': those homes that get permission on unidentified sites such as through change of use and conversion. In a large rural District like Stratford-on-Avon it is reasonable to assume that 'windfalls' will continue to be developed at a rate of approximately 50 per annum. This figure is based on past rates of 'windfalls' excluding those built on residential garden land. Finally, Column 4 shows the 1,350 homes that will be built on strategic allocations that the Council has previously identified and is committed to carrying forward to its submitted plan:

- Alcester – North of Allimore Lane Southern Part (ALC.1): 165 homes
- Alcester - North of Allimore Lane Northern Part (ALC.2): 135 homes
- Southam – West of Banbury Road (SOU.1): 200 homes
- Southam – West of Coventry Road (SOU.2): 150 homes
- Stratford-upon-Avon Canal Quarter Regeneration Zone (SUA.1): 700 homes

As can be seen, the 'windfalls' and allocations figures for the Local Service Villages are combined. Whilst the Council has previously endorsed a total figure of 1,800 for all of the Local Service Villages combined, because the Core Strategy is not identifying specific sites, some of the 1,490 that remain to be provided will be built as 'windfalls' whilst some will need to be built on allocations made either through Neighbourhood Plans or the Council's Site Allocations Plan, which will follow the preparation of the Core Strategy.

The Intended Proposed Submission Core Strategy also included a proposal for a total of 4,800 homes (1,900 by 2028) at Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath. This proposal formed part of the 'New Proposals Consultation' in August/September 2013. There was strong local opposition to this scheme. The consultation identified issues that led the Council to conclude that further analysis was required before it could decide whether to support the principle of allocating land at Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath for strategic development. The site at Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath has therefore not been included as an allocation in Column 4 of the above table. Further work and analysis has also resulted in changes to the original proposals. For these reasons, Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath has been included as one of the strategic options the Council is consulting on at this stage.



**Find out more about the number of homes built and expected to be built at [www.stratford.gov.uk/5yearsupply](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/5yearsupply)**

### Calculating the 'To-Find' Figure

The 'to-find' figure is the difference between the housing requirement and the number of homes that have already been built or are expected to be built. Thus to calculate the 'to-find' figure the total number of homes subject to some form of commitment (approximately 8,300) needs to be deducted from the housing requirement (10,800), leaving approximately 2,500 additional homes for the Core Strategy still to be identified.

### Alternative Options

The Council has identified five alternative options for meeting the Core Strategy 'to-find' figure of 2,500 homes. For comparison purposes the general locations involved are shown on Map 1 below. Further information on the five options is set out in Sections 4a to 4e of this document and section 5 asks which option you consider to be the most preferable to meet the Core Strategy 'to-find' figure of 2,500 homes.

The five options are:

- Option A: Further Dispersal
- Option B: Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath
- Option C: Long Marston Airfield
- Option D: Southeast Stratford-upon-Avon
- Option E: North of Southam and Stoneythorpe



Further technical work is still being undertaken on these options and the results, along with the comments from this consultation, will inform which one will be included in the Submission Core Strategy. Whilst it is acknowledged that the options presented in this consultation have varying degrees of impacts, generally and 'in the round', they are considered capable of achieving certain positive outcomes. Having a plan that is not based on a thorough analysis of robust evidence means it is unlikely to be found 'sound' or fit for purpose at examination. If this were to happen, the Council would have to go back to the drawing board and start again, meaning the District would be without a plan for some years.

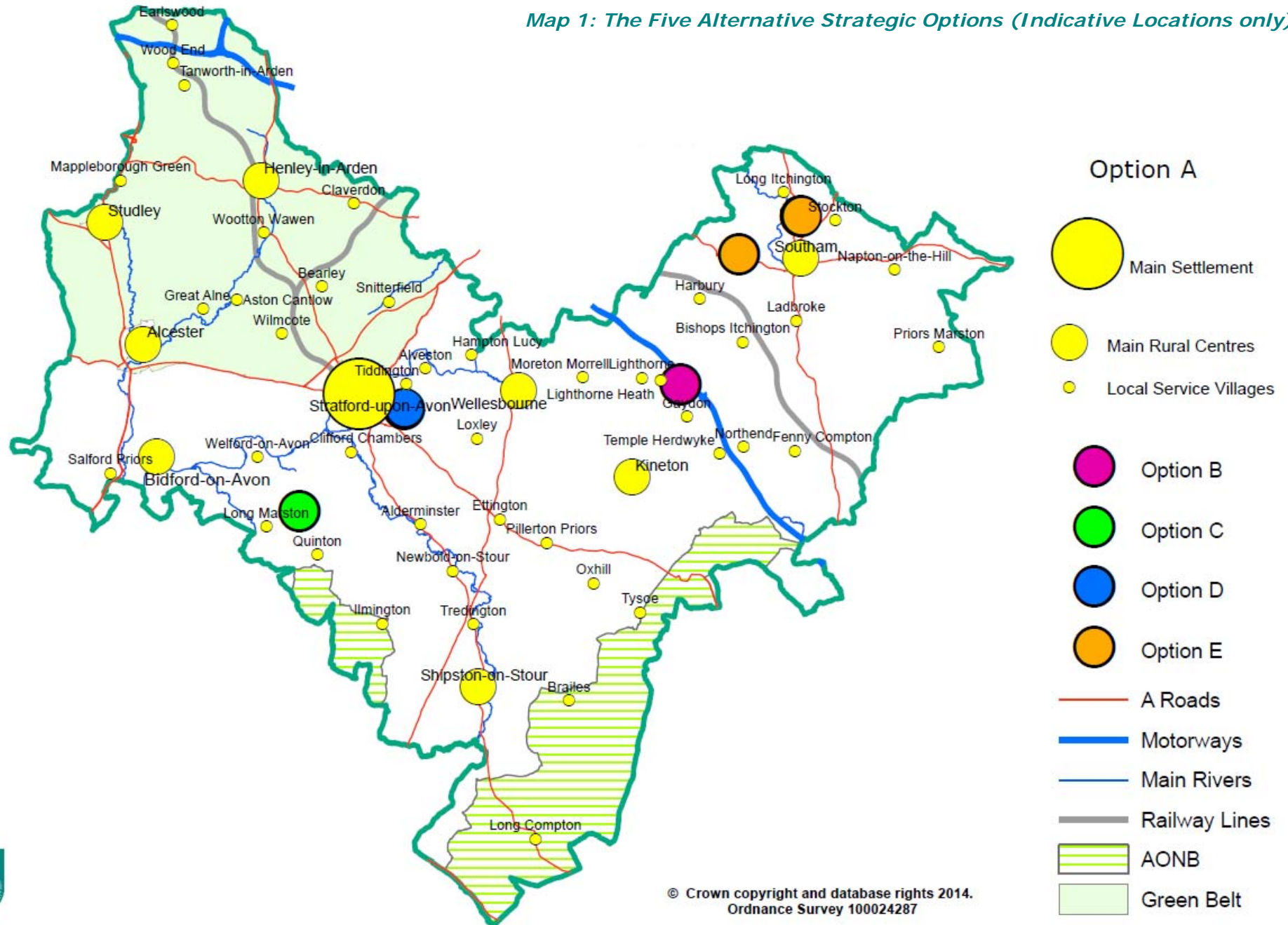
### **Dispersal versus Large-Scale Development**

One of the biggest debates during the preparation of the Core Strategy has been whether, given the rural nature of the District, it is more appropriate to disperse development or concentrate it in a small number of locations. Feedback from previous consultations has shown a preference for dispersal but with concentration being an option should the housing requirement increase significantly beyond that forming the basis of the consultation. An increase from 8,000 (as envisaged at the time of the 2012 consultation) to 10,800 homes is considered to be a significant increase. There is no right answer: rather it is about weighing up the pros and cons of each option. Previous versions of the Core Strategy have dispersed housing development across the District and it is still proposed to accommodate at least 8,000 homes in this fashion.

Dispersal tends to minimise the impacts of new development on any one settlement, allowing each to continue to grow and evolve. Such an approach can also spread the burden on local infrastructure such as schools and doctor's surgeries. However, it assumes that such infrastructure has the capacity to expand and accommodate the new development. In many cases, not only is the infrastructure at or nearing capacity, but it is not cost effective to meet additional needs over a dispersed area. There is also the danger that continual growth can change the character of existing settlements. An over-ambitious dispersed approach could negatively affect numerous historic towns and villages.

The alternative for meeting a significant increase in the housing requirement is to concentrate large-scale development in one or two locations. Whilst any development will transform the landscape of the specific area in which it is built, it can also provide for a range of new community, commercial and leisure services and facilities. At the same time it can take the pressure off other areas, helping to retain their special character and qualities. Also, because of their scale, the infrastructure necessary to serve large-scale developments can be more easily planned and delivered in a phased manner, helping to ensure the creation of a sustainable community. Concentrated large-scale development will impact on fewer locations, but the change in that location will of course be far more significant.

*Map 1: The Five Alternative Strategic Options (Indicative Locations only)*



## 4a. Option A: Further Dispersal

This option is based on an extension of the strategy of dispersal of housing development across the District. Theoretically there are numerous permutations to how development could be dispersed across Stratford-upon-Avon District. However, we must be realistic about what can be accommodated in various locations. Option A would most likely result in the additional 2,500 homes being built at the following locations (see also Map 1 above for indicative locations).

	<b>Already Committed</b>	<b>Additional</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Stratford-upon-Avon</b>	2,725	650	3,375
<b>Main Rural Centres</b>	2,630	1,000	3,630
<b>Local Service Villages</b>	1,800	350	2,150
<b>Rural Area</b>	1,150	500	1,650
	<b>8,305</b>	<b>2,500</b>	<b>10,805</b>

### Implications for Stratford-upon-Avon

Further Dispersal would necessitate building approximately an additional 650 homes at Stratford-upon-Avon town over the plan period. Given what is already committed (including 700 brownfield homes on the Canal Quarter Regeneration Zone and 800 homes at Shottery) it is considered that this scale of additional development during the plan period could in all probability only reasonably be accommodated on 'greenfield' land on the periphery of the town. It would put more traffic on a highway system that is already under strain.

### Implications for the Main Rural Centres

Whilst the individual amount of development in each of the eight Main Rural Centres would be determined through the Site Allocations Plan, as an example of the implications of Option A (based pro-rata on the number of homes in each settlement in 2011), Further Dispersal could result in the 1,000 additional homes (as shown in the table above) being distributed accordingly: approximately 175 homes in Alcester; 125 homes in Bidford-on-Avon; 75 homes in Henley-in-Arden; 50 homes in Kineton; 125 homes in Shipston-on-Stour; 150 homes in Southam; 150 homes in Studley; and 150 homes in Wellesbourne. However, it should be noted that the level of development could be significantly more in some of the Main Rural Centres if sufficient land cannot be readily identified in those that are more constrained (e.g. within the Green Belt, affected by areas of flood risk).

### Implications for the Local Service Villages

The dispersal option would also result in an increase of some 350 homes across the Local Service Villages. Reflecting the variety of settlement sizes and services

available, the Intended Proposed Submission Core Strategy identified four categories across which approximately 1,800 homes would be distributed:

- Category 1: approximately 76 to 100 homes in each
- Category 2: approximately 51 to 75 homes in each
- Category 3: approximately 26 to 50 homes in each
- Category 4: approximately 10 to 25 homes in each

The total figure of 1,800 homes was based on the assumption that housing would be delivered at each Local Service Village at approximately the mid-point of the range, although in reality some villages would deliver at the higher end whilst others would only deliver towards the lower end of the range. An increase in provision can be achieved on the basis that each village will deliver at the higher end of the range. This would mean in total that the Local Service Villages could accommodate some 2,350 homes. On that basis, there is sufficient flexibility within the Local Service Villages to deliver 2,150 homes across the plan period without needing to increase the level of development in each village above the maximum of the range previously specified. However, it should be recognised that the dispersal option is predicated on each Local Service Village delivering the higher quantum of housing.

### Implications for the Rural Area

Option A would require an additional 500 homes to be built across the rural area. It is considered inappropriate to build this quantum of homes in the rural villages and hamlets not categorised as Local Service Villages. Indeed, if they were sustainable locations for development, they would have been identified as Local Service Villages in the first place. This leaves the four Large Rural Brownfield Sites identified in the Intended Proposed Submission Core Strategy as potential locations for additional development. The four sites are: Jaguar Land Rover and Aston Martin at Gaydon; the Former Engineer Resources Depot at Long Marston; the Former Southam Cement Works, at Long Itchington (North of Southam); and the Former Harbury Cement Works at Bishop's Itchington.

Of these four sites, there is no capacity for residential development within the existing brownfield site at Gaydon occupied by Jaguar Land Rover and Aston Martin. (Please note: the proposal at Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath included at Option B is for development on greenfield land to the east of the existing Jaguar Land Rover and Aston Martin site). At both the Bishop's Itchington and Long Itchington former cement works sites, it is considered that the scale of development reasonably achievable on the brownfield land is limited, and certainly not high enough to sustain its own facilities. This is partly the reason why the Long Itchington site is being considered for a greater scale of development under Option D (see section 4e), although this would entail both brownfield and greenfield development. A planning application has recently been submitted for 200 homes on the Bishop's Itchington site, suggesting that the site promoters are seeking a more limited amount of development than previously sought. This leaves the former Engineer Resources Depot at Long Marston, just to the south of the Long Marston Airfield site (see Section 4c). There is the potential here to build 500 homes in addition to the 500 homes, 300 holiday homes, and community and leisure facilities currently planned and partly under construction.



The Council therefore considers that if the dispersal option is to include a rural brownfield site, then most realistically this will entail additional development at the Long Marston Depot. It could be argued that such a large development in the rural area is contrary to the dispersal approach. However, aside from the benefit of reusing brownfield land, if 500 homes are not built here, then they would need to be built elsewhere i.e. most probably on greenfield land around Stratford-upon-Avon, the Main Rural Centres and the Local Service Villages.

### **Sustainability Issues**

Due to the high level strategic nature of the dispersal option, it is more difficult to establish the likely sustainability performance of option A, when comparing it to the other options. This is due to the sustainability effects of the option being largely dependent on the detailed location, design, layout and type of development proposed, and the scope for additional and improved infrastructure and service provision introduced to support new growth areas in the district.

The dispersal of development across the district in this manner could put strain on the villages and rural areas due to increasing demand on local services and facilities. Furthermore, as the new housing is dispersed it is less likely that there will be sufficient new development to support additional local services, facilities and amenities. For many of the sustainability objectives, the effect of dispersal depends upon the extent to which new development will support accessibility to local services and jobs from rural areas; this depends on the degree to which new housing provision is accompanied by new facilities, amenities and employment opportunities.

However, there could potentially be positive impacts of the dispersal option because of the aim to spread development around the towns and villages of the district. The dispersal option has the potential to limit concentrated effects on individual settlements, although it is difficult to confirm there will be no adverse effects without having further site details. However focusing on dispersal is likely to help increase the supply of affordable housing in rural communities. Dispersal is also less likely to have a significant adverse effect on the historic environment, landscape setting and important sites of biodiversity as development can be sited to avoid developing in sensitive areas. Also, due to the smaller amount of housing in each area it could be easier to mitigate potential adverse effects. In addition the option is less likely to contribute significantly to issues at existing air quality hotspots as there will be smaller amounts of development at a greater variety of locations.

Dispersing the housing means that new developments are less likely to be concentrated in the areas with good access to services, amenities and public transport networks, or of sufficient size to warrant new facilities. This has the potential to increase the need to travel and encourage car-based commuting. Therefore a broad spread of development may increase car use through limiting accessibility to local and sub-regional services, facilities and amenities. So although dispersal may not add to place-specific air pollution, it may have less tangible implications for air quality over a wider area.

## 4b. Option B: Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath

### Background

The concept of a new settlement between the M40 and B4100 at Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath was consulted on in the 'New Proposals' consultation during August/September 2013. At the time, the proposal included 4,800 homes (1,900 by 2028), a District Centre and 2 Local Centres comprising a range of shops, services, community and leisure facilities, an 18 hectare business park, a learning academy/secondary school and a Country Park (on the former quarry).

Not unexpectedly, this proposal generated the vast majority of the responses to the previous New Proposals Consultation, with strong objection from those living within the immediate locality, although there was evidence of support from the wider District and those living elsewhere. Many of the concerns raised related to detailed aspects of the indicative masterplan prepared by the scheme promoters and are relevant to the specification of what is to be delivered. Notwithstanding this, at the time of the consultation in August/September 2013, the Council was aware that further detailed technical evidence was required, particularly in respect of local traffic impacts, although the two local highway authorities (Oxfordshire and Warwickshire County Councils) were both supportive of the proposals in respect of the impacts on the strategic highway network. Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) who occupy land to the west of the proposed site also expressed concerns about the proposal, citing ambitions to expand their operations onto the land then proposed as lying within the new settlement.

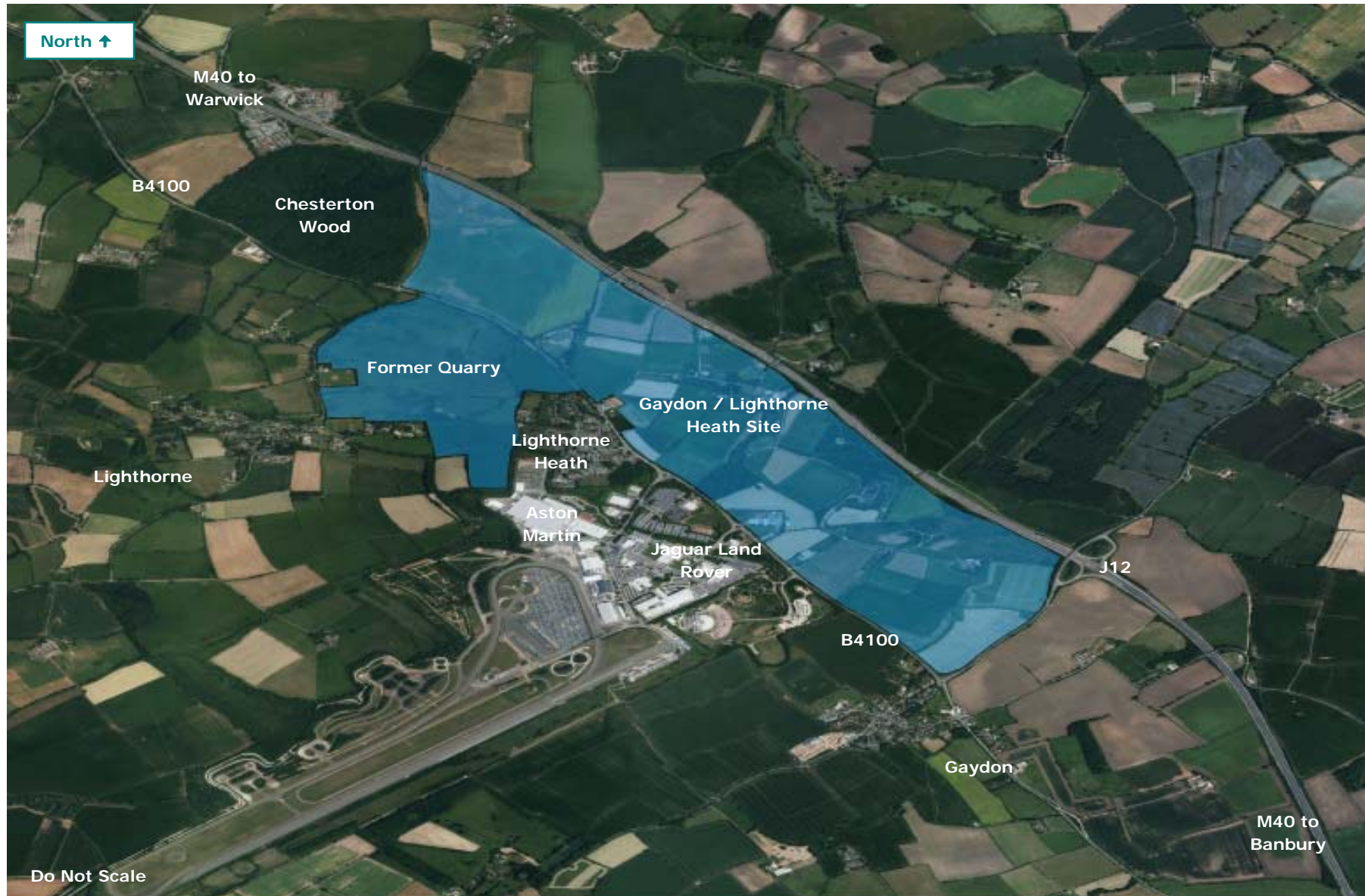
### The Proposal

As a result of changing circumstances, particularly in relation to the aspirations of Jaguar Land Rover, and taking into account certain concerns raised during the previous consultation, Option B proposes the following on 300 hectares of land as shown in Map 2:

- 3,000 homes (2,500 by 2031)
- 100 hectares of land for expansion of Jaguar Land Rover
- Main Centre comprising a range of shops, services, community and leisure facilities, plus a Local Centre
- Primary schooling provided on-site
- Secondary schooling provided off-site
- Parks, open space and community woodland
- Local nature reserve on the former quarry

It should be noted that this proposal would continue the same rate of development (i.e. approximately 200 homes per annum) as the previous proposal for a total of 4,800 homes. The apparent increase in the number of homes delivered in the plan period (i.e. 1,900 by 2028 compared to 2,500 by 2031) is because of the change in the plan period by 3 years from 2028 to 2031.

*Map 2: Option B*



The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the principle of the development. If this option were to be included, the submission Core Strategy would require a Masterplan to be agreed, informed by further public consultation with local residents, setting the detailed design and other requirements for this site.

### **Sustainability Issues**

The site is characterised by open countryside which ranges in landscape quality according to the diversity of landscape features. Parts of the landscape are lower quality, for example near junction 12 of the M40. Part of the site includes grade 3a agricultural land and development of this site would result in the loss of this resource.

Lighthorne Quarry and Chesterton Wood are both Local Wildlife Sites and part of the latter is ancient semi-natural woodland. Whilst it is outside of the development location it is an important feature that should be retained, enhanced and protected. Biodiversity levels are likely to be low in association with the larger arable fields, although hedgerows and lakes are likely to be of value to biodiversity and should be retained. The option would incorporate parks, open space and community woodland, as well as introducing a local nature reserve on the former quarry. This will add to the biodiversity value of the area in the long term.

The site is in Flood Risk Zone 1 (an area the least at risk from flooding), although to mitigate and prevent any potential for flooding the option would incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage systems. The size of the development means there will also be potential for local energy generation, including District Heating from renewable / low carbon sources.

There are a number of heritage assets within the proposed site allocation, including a small area of high to medium archaeological sensitivity immediately to the north east of Gaydon, as well as some listed buildings in the vicinity of the site. The setting of these and Lighthorne Conservation Area will be a consideration when any development is considered in more detail. The built character of Lighthorne Heath lacks distinctiveness and high quality development in this location would improve and enhance the quality of the public realm.

There is a primary school in Lighthorne Heath, which could serve part of the site, along with a need for new educational provision. There are currently no health facilities close to the site and the development would need to make provision for such facilities. The provision of a main centre (comprising of a range of shops, services, community, and leisure facilities) will improve accessibility to essential services in the longer term. These could be strengthened given the fact that the site is not within the vicinity of larger towns, therefore providing housing and employment development in this area together is likely to help provide opportunities for the local villages and wider rural area. The mixed-use nature of the site could help reduce carbon emissions associated with transport by helping to reduce the need to travel, promote walking and cycling and alternatives to the car.



This is a greenfield site in the countryside. A large influx of new residents and housing is likely to mean the surrounding roads are busier and consequently potentially more hazardous in the absence of measures to reduce the use of the car. In terms of passenger transport, there are bus stops on the B4100 along the west of the site and existing bus services could be improved and new services provided due to the size of the proposed development.

The nearby activities of Aston Martin, Jaguar Land Rover and the Heritage Museum all provide employment opportunities. Under this option, these facilities will be expanded by a further 100ha. Combined with the shops and services that would be provided on site, this option would contribute a substantial number of jobs in the local area.

## 4c. Option C: Long Marston Airfield

### Background

Long Marston Airfield is a largely greenfield site currently in use as a private airfield and for a range of other commercial activities. Various music and other events are also held here each year. Development in this location would necessitate the termination of the existing flying operations and other activities.

### The Proposal

As shown on Map 3, Option C proposes the following on 210 hectares of land:

- 3,500 homes (2,100 by 2031)
- 13 hectares of employment land
- Local Centre comprising a range of shops, services, community and leisure facilities
- Primary schooling provided on-site
- Option to provide secondary school on-site
- Open space and managed ecological areas

The Council has previously opposed large-scale development in this location as it is poorly located in relation to the West Midlands urban area and the strategic road network. The promoters of this site state that development could make provision for a bypass to be built to the south of Stratford-upon-Avon between the A3400 Shipston Road and the B439 Evesham Road. From here it could link to the strategic road network (A46) at Wildmoor, subject to construction of the development 'West of Shottery' as approved in 2012. These new roads could help relieve some of the congestion in Stratford-upon-Avon town centre by giving more direct access to the primary road network for trips originating to the south of the town.

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the principle of the development. If this option were to be included, the submission Core Strategy would require a Masterplan to be agreed, informed by further public consultation with local residents, setting the detailed design and other requirements for this site.

Because it is anticipated that the Long Marston Airfield site would deliver only 2,100 dwellings by 2031, an additional 400 homes would need to be provided

elsewhere in the District to achieve the Core Strategy 'to-find' figure of 2,500 by 2031. These could be provided on a single large site or on a range of sites across the District.

### **Sustainability Issues**

The site is located in an arable landscape and is part-greenfield and part-brownfield. There are a few small areas of woodland and watercourses located on site, but none are known to be of high biodiversity value. There are also areas of woodland in the vicinity of the site. The biodiversity of the grassland at the airfield could be valuable and almost the entire site is a proposed Local Wildlife Site. The proposal includes open space and managed ecological areas which could improve the biodiversity value of the area over the longer term.

The site is Grade 3b agricultural land. The western edge of the site has a significant chance of flooding. The risk of flooding each year is greater than 1.3% (1 in 75). The size of the development means there will be potential for local energy generation, including District Heating from renewable / low carbon sources. Wastewater capacity is at its limit in the area but it is considered that the necessary upgrades would be made in order to avoid significant environmental effects.

There is currently a primary school in both Lower Quinton and Welford-on-Avon. However there would be insufficient capacity at existing facilities to meet the demand created by 3,500 new homes and new facilities would need to be provided on-site. The proposal includes the introduction of a local centre (comprising of a range of shops, services, community and leisure facilities), a primary school and an option for a secondary school, which will improve accessibility over the wider area in the longer term. Although there is an existing doctor's surgery in Lower Quinton, this is further than 800m from the site and the proposal would need to include health facilities.

The mixed-use nature of the site could help reduce carbon emissions associated with transport by helping to reduce the need to travel, promote walking and cycling and alternatives to the car. There are bus routes running down the B4632 which borders the site to the east, and Long Marston Road which is to the west of the site. Two of the bus stops on the route are in the vicinity of the site and could be utilised by new residents. Due to the introduction of 3,500 new homes and residents, it is likely that the surrounding roads would become busier and consequently potentially more hazardous in the absence of measures to reduce the use of the car. However, a development of this scale gives the opportunity to provide improved and new bus services.

The proposal includes 13ha of employment land along with a local centre which would include shops and services, further contributing to employment opportunities for local villages and wider rural area.

*Map 3: Option C*



## 4d. Option D: Southeast Stratford-upon-Avon

### Background

The concept of an eastern relief road around Stratford-upon-Avon to relieve some of the town centre congestion and traffic using the Clopton Bridge has been debated for some time. The favoured route would connect the A422 Banbury Road in the south to the A439 Warwick Road in the east, skirting around the village of Tiddington. The construction costs of this bypass are currently estimated to be some £45million. New development to the southeast of Stratford and east of Tiddington would make a substantial contribution to the cost of this road.

### The Proposal

As shown on Map 4, Option D comprises 220 hectares of greenfield land and would form an urban extension to the southeast of Stratford-upon-Avon and the east of Tiddington. The proposal would include:

- 2,750 homes (2,500 by 2031)
- 8 hectares of employment land
- Local Centre comprising a range of shops, services, community and leisure facilities
- Primary schooling on-site
- New secondary school required but its location is to be decided
- Open space and community woodland

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the principle of the development. If this option were to be included, the submission Core Strategy would require a Masterplan to be agreed, informed by further public consultation with local residents, setting the detailed design and other requirements for this site.

### Sustainability Issues

The site is considered to have medium landscape sensitivity to development. Alveston Hill forms the skyline in views from all directions and, while acting as the backcloth to Stratford-upon-Avon, also screens it from wider view to the east. Particularly to the south of the site, the skyline, prominence and openness of this countryside make the area sensitive. To the north and west of the site, the river corridor is regarded as having high landscape value.

Arable fields dominate the open countryside with hedgerows forming field boundaries. The site does not seem to be especially high in biodiversity value and new development could increase the green infrastructure offering, with associated biodiversity benefits. There are no local wildlife sites within the area, but two are proposed just outside of the site boundary at Bridgetown and The Croft Preparatory School Plantation. There are some small areas of woodland on site and the northern part of the site contains an area of allotments, which could potentially be lost. The option proposes to introduce open space and community woodland on-site which is likely to increase the biodiversity value of the area. A Scheduled Monument lies to the west of Tiddington and there are further heritage assets nearby.



The site is in Flood Risk Zone 1 (an area the least at risk from flooding) although to mitigate and prevent any potential for flooding, the option would incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage systems. The size of the development means there will also be potential for local energy generation, including District Heating from renewable / low carbon sources. Minerals are known to be in the area. Sand and gravel deposits have been identified by the British Geological Society and are likely to form minerals allocations in the emerging Minerals Plan. Risk of sterilization is high and should be avoided by working minerals first if viable. The area includes extensive amounts of Grade 2 and 3a agricultural land, and this resource would be lost if the site was developed.

The location close to Stratford-upon-Avon means there are primary and secondary schools in the vicinity of the site. The development would need to provide additional education facilities. There is a hospital and doctors' surgeries located in the town. The large size of Stratford-upon-Avon means that there are also leisure/sports centres in the vicinity of the site. The proposal also includes the provision of a local centre (comprising of a range of shops, services, community and leisure facilities) which will help meet the needs of future residents.

The provision of a mixed-use scheme could help reduce carbon emissions associated with transport by helping to reduce the need to travel, promote walking and cycling and alternatives to the car. Stratford is congested and has a designated Air Quality Management Area to help overcome some of the adverse air quality effects associated with heavy and congested traffic in the town. A new road crossing will almost certainly help the flow of traffic but without further evidence it is difficult to evaluate if it is in the most sustainable location. Development could bring about short term negative effects on air quality. The introduction of 2,750 dwellings is likely to mean the surrounding roads are busier and consequently potentially more hazardous in the absence of measures to reduce the use of the car.

However, due to the location close to Stratford-upon-Avon there are many bus routes in the vicinity. Given the size of the proposed development there is the opportunity for the provision of improved bus services. There are also two railway stations in Stratford-upon-Avon, although these are not in the vicinity of the site.

The proposal includes 8ha of employment land and the local centre comprising shops and services will further contribute to employment opportunities in the area.

*Map 4: Option D*



## 4e. Option E: North of Southam and Stoneythorpe

### Background

Option E comprises two separate proposals in the east of the District as shown on Map 5. The first is centred on the Former Southam Cement Works between Southam and Long Itchington, whilst the second is some 1km west of Southam, south of the A425 at Stoneythorpe. It should be noted that the two proposals are entirely separate and independent and have only been combined under this option because of their relative proximity and the need to achieve development of around 2,500 homes.

### The Proposal

Given its proximity to the town, Option E would look towards Southam to provide for the majority of its community, employment, retail and secondary education needs.

The North of Southam site comprises 120 hectares of brownfield and greenfield land and would include:

- 2,000 homes (1,700 by 2031)
- Local Centre comprising a range of shops, services, community and leisure facilities
- Primary schooling provided on-site
- Secondary schooling provided off-site
- Open space and managed ecological areas

The Stoneythorpe site comprises 40 hectares of greenfield land and would include:

- 800 homes
- Community shop
- Primary schooling provided on-site
- Secondary schooling provided off-site
- Open space, managed ecological and woodland planting
- Recreation and leisure uses on adjacent landfill site

The purpose of the Core Strategy is to establish the principle of the development. If this option were to be included, the submission Core Strategy would require a Masterplan for each site to be agreed, informed by further public consultation with local residents, setting the detailed design and other requirements.

### Sustainability Issues

#### North of Southam Site

The site is considered to have areas of medium, high to medium and high landscape sensitivity, and development would have an effect on the character and appearance of the landscape. However the removal of existing buildings associated with the former cement works would also provide benefits in landscape terms.



A small proportion of the site (towards its southern edge) is designated as a Regionally Important Geological site which would be retained and protected as part of the managed ecological areas proposed. The site is important for birds, amphibians and invertebrates, and includes areas designated as a Local Wildlife Site (i.e. the Long Itchington Quarry). There would be potential for the development to include proposals for long-term management of these areas. The site contains areas of woodland, and the development would have to retain sufficient areas of woodland to ensure that people have appropriate levels of access to such biodiversity assets.

The site is in Flood Risk Zone 1 (an area the least at risk from flooding) although to mitigate and prevent any potential for flooding, the option would incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage systems. The size of the development means there will also be potential for local energy generation, including District Heating from renewable / low carbon sources. Development at this location would enable the re-use of previously developed land, but it would also entail the loss of greenfield land.

There are two Grade II listed buildings located in the northern part of the site (the Grand Union Canal Shop Lock and the Grand Union Canal Shop Lock Cottage). The nearby settlements of Long Itchington and Southam both have conservation areas, although these are unlikely to be affected by development.

Whilst there are primary schools in Long Itchington and Southam they are not within the recommended 1km walking distance from the site. The development would need to provide new educational facilities to help meet the demands of the new residents. There are no health facilities within range of the site although there are two doctors' surgeries in Southam. There is a leisure/sports centre in the town which could partially meet the needs of new residents. The provision of a range of facilities on site, e.g. shops, medical and leisure facilities, will contribute to improving the accessibility of services for residents. The provision of a mixed-use scheme could help reduce carbon emissions associated with transport by reducing the need to travel, promote walking and cycling and alternatives to the car, although the lack of employment development may restrict this somewhat.

A large influx of new residents and housing is likely to mean the surrounding roads are busier and consequently potentially more hazardous in the absence of measures to reduce the use of the car. There are bus routes on the A423 along the western boundary of the site, and the A426 to the east of the site. The bus stops in and around the village of Long Itchington would be more accessible to new residents on the site. Due to the size of the development there is an opportunity to improve accessible public transport on the route to Southam, by enhancing the existing bus services.

Combining housing development and the creation of a local centre could provide a range of employment opportunities. However, the total housing number for this option is made up of two sites and the individual sites themselves may not be able to support the required services. The proposal could include some business space, although there is no provision for a large area of employment



development. Indeed, the North of Southam site is a housing-led scheme and out-commuting associated with employment will be greater in the absence of more employment opportunities being provided.

### Stoneythorpe Site

The area directly to the east of the site (on the edge of Southam) is of medium/high landscape sensitivity, and any development that breached the high ground to the west of the town would have a significant environmental effect. There is a priority habitat located on the south/southwest edge of the site, along with a proposed Local Wildlife Site at Ufton Hill Farm Fields. There is no other biodiversity of note found on site although the introduction of managed ecological areas could improve the biodiversity value of the area over the longer term.

Part of the site, in the River Itchen valley, is considered to be at a significant risk of flooding (greater than 1.3% of flooding each year, 1 in 75). The comparatively small size of the site could mean that renewable energy provision or energy efficiency measures are not considered viable at this location. The site is not previously developed and is in the open countryside containing grade 3 agricultural land. This resource would be lost if the site were to be developed.

There are no listed buildings on site, although the lodge gates and gate piers at the entrance to Stoneythorpe Hall on the A435 opposite the site are listed. Research to date has suggested that there are no archaeological features on site.

It is likely that the scheme would be too small to support a range of services and facilities, particularly those of a higher order. The site is also not well located to existing services. There are primary schools at Southam and a secondary school, but these are beyond the 1km walking distance considered acceptable. As such, the development would need to include educational provision. There is also a doctor's surgery in the south west of Southam, which is just over 800m from the site and potentially within walking distance. The option also proposes open space, managed ecological and woodland planting, with access to recreation and leisure uses on the adjacent landfill site.

This is a comparatively small development on a relatively isolated site, which could give rise to reliance on journeys by car, contributing to greenhouse gas emissions. There is currently a bus route along the A425, with a bus stop to the north west of the site. These existing transport facilities could be enhanced to improve the sustainable transport options in the vicinity, although the size of the scheme is likely to make the provision of a high quality public transport service difficult. The proposed route of High Speed Two crosses the northern part of the site. The railway would cause some noise impact, during construction and once operational.

**Map 5: Option E**



## 5. Strategic Options Summary

Section 4 of this consultation document presents five strategic options for meeting the Core Strategy 'to-find' figure of 2,500 homes. These options are considered to be potential solutions to the challenge of accommodating additional housing in Stratford-on-Avon District to 2031.

Each of the five Options A to E has benefits and disbenefits and will impact upon their respective localities. Some impacts will be similar (for example, all of the options will increase traffic, alter rural character and impact on the road network to varying degrees), whereas other impacts will be specific to the individual locality. But the options will also bring benefits including new homes which are needed, new community facilities, as well as business opportunities. These benefits also vary between the five options. Certainly, new development provides the opportunity to mitigate impacts through the detailed planning and high quality design of any development.

In contrast to Option A which seeks to disperse development across the District, Options B, C, D and E propose large-scale development solutions. Options B and C propose meeting all of the 'to-find' figure in a single location: effectively the creation of a new settlement at Gaydon/Lighthorne Heath or Long Marston Airfield respectively (although Option C would also require 400 homes to be built elsewhere by 2031). Option D also proposes a single large-scale development but as a sustainable urban extension to the southeast of Stratford-upon-Avon town and east of the village of Tiddington. Finally, Option E proposes two new communities, effectively as 'satellites' of the town of Southam.

The question therefore, is not whether we need additional homes, but which of the five strategic options minimises the negative impacts, maximises the positive impacts and is the most appropriate for the long-term future of the District of Stratford-on-Avon and its residents, workers and visitors.

Based on the proposals for the five options A to E as set out in section 4 above, please indicate your preferred option for meeting the Core Strategy 'to-find' figure of 2,500 homes.



**Question 3: Please indicate your preference for the five strategic options A to E. Please rank the options 1 to 5, with 1 being most preferable and 5 being least preferable.**

End.



**The deadline for responding to this consultation is 5pm on  
Friday 14 March 2014**



Online via the interactive consultation document at  
[www.stratford.gov.uk/csrfurther2014](http://www.stratford.gov.uk/csrfurther2014)



By completing a comment form for each question and emailing  
it to [planning.policy@stratford-dc.gov.uk](mailto:planning.policy@stratford-dc.gov.uk)



By completing a comment form for each question and posting it  
to: Stratford-on-Avon District Council, FREEPOST CV2468,  
Consultation Unit, Chief Executive's Unit, Elizabeth House,  
Church Street, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON CV37 6BR