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Section I

INTRODUCTION

I. INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

- 1.1 This document has been prepared to review and assess the suitability of land at Sunny Bank Meadow, Ryall Road, Holly Green for residential redevelopment. It has been prepared on behalf of the landowners and will form the basis of further discussion with Officers at Malvern Hills District Council. The document will also be made available to members of the Malvern Hills SWDP Working Group and Ryall Parish Council. We hope to meet as many of those interested parties over the next few weeks to discuss the site's potential for residential and, how its redevelopment can make a contribution to the District's housing needs as well as respond to the needs of the local communities within Holly Green and neighbouring Ryall.

INFORMATION WITHIN THIS DOCUMENT

- 1.2 Allocating land for new development is notoriously sensitive. Generally speaking, people and communities don't like change; they will be anxious about change and this is a natural and understandable reaction. The type of concerns which are frequently raised are, how will development affect my privacy or the value of my property? Other responses are concerned about the wider impacts of development such as, will it spoil the appearance of our community, will the development fit in our village, can the local roads and infrastructure cope with the additional development, will there be enough classroom places at local schools to accommodate the children who will live in the new homes?
- 1.3 This document will examine many of these potential concerns. It will give more information about the site and the type of development which could be built on the land. This will allow the decision takers within Malvern Hills District Council to reach a judgement on whether the site should be confirmed as housing land within the South Worcestershire Development Plan.
- 1.4 The document illustrates how part of the land ownership could be master planned to create an attractive residential development which will help to contribute towards the area's housing needs. It will hopefully allow those who read the document to visualise how a development might look. It explains the level of services which are available to serve

the needs of the new households and how it can help to address any shortfalls in the level of service provision. It reviews how development will impact upon short and long distance views and the importance of the site within its landscape setting. These are all important points and we hope that the document will provide informative responses to the main issues raised.

THE PROJECT TEAM

- 1.5 The document has been prepared by, and under the direction of, the Holly Green project team. That team comprises the following three principal consultants:

John Williams, Managing Director of PlanIT Planning and Development Ltd.

- 1.6 John has over 30 years planning consultancy experience and significant expertise in bringing forward land for residential development. He has worked for private landowners, developers, local authorities and local communities on different residential proposals across England and Wales. His practice works with local communities to encourage them to connect with landowners and developers to ensure that new proposals address local concerns. The challenge for all concerned is to expose the potential problems and issues associated with new development and to address those issues in a way which makes their impact acceptable.

Kenny Brown, Managing Director of Townscape Solutions Ltd.

- 1.7 Kenny has over 15 years experience in urban design in the public and private sectors. He is a qualified Urban Designer and Town Planner and is a member of the RTPI National Urban Design Network Steering Group. Kenny has produced numerous masterplans for a wide range of development projects nationwide. He has also delivered key policy documents such as the Birmingham City Design Guide 'Places for All' and the residential design guide 'Places for Living' as well as contributing to national design policy.

Nathaniel Healy, Director, Red Kite Network Ltd

- 1.8 Nathaniel holds an MSc in Landscape Management and has over 17 years experience of landscape and ecological strategy, management, assessment and design in the voluntary, private and public sectors. During his career

Nathaniel has worked with over 30 local authorities to provide landscape support and consultancy as well as providing landscape assessment and design advice to housing developers such as St Modwen and clients such as RSPB, National Trust and Tarmac. A former CABI Space Enabler, Nathaniel brings creativity to all projects and is able to draw on an extensive knowledge of environmental issues to help realise commercial opportunities with sustainable outcomes.



Figure 1: The site from the air (Not to Scale, Source: Google Maps)

Section 2

SITE APPRAISAL

LOCATION

- 2.1 Sunny Bank Meadow, Holly Green is located east of the River Severn around a kilometre from Upton-Upon-Severn via the A4104. The proposed development land sits to the east of Ryall Road, directly opposite the entrance into The Beeches at the northern end of the village (see fig. 2, opposite).

OWNERSHIP

- 2.2 It is today owned by the grandchildren of AP Taylor, who grew up in Sansterre House on Ryall Road. Bought before the war by his father, Arthur Ernest Taylor, the house was sold in the 1960s. The land was left to AP Taylor, an only child, who had three children and subsequently bequeathed it to his grandchildren in the form of a trust. On the death of Arthur's widow in 2008, the trust was dissolved and Arthur's eight grandchildren have now inherited the land.
- 2.3 The grandchildren have established a committee with one representative of each of the three families to manage the land and all issues connected with the inheritance. They have also reached agreement to promote the site for a mixed tenure residential-led development through the emerging SWDP.

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

- 2.4 The land ownership extends to some 3.31 hectares (8.17 acres) and the land which should be considered for residential development is part of that total ownership. The subject site measures 1.14 hectares (2.81 acres) and has a frontage onto Ryall Road. The extent and main features of the land are illustrated on Figure 3, page 8.
- 2.5 The land is currently undeveloped comprised of agricultural land. The western edge is defined by Ryall Road. To the north and south housing adjoins the boundary and to the east lie open fields. The photos within Section 4 of this document illustrate various views of the site both internal and external.

SITE LOCATION



Figure 2: Site Location, Scale- 1:15000 at A3, (OS Copyright)

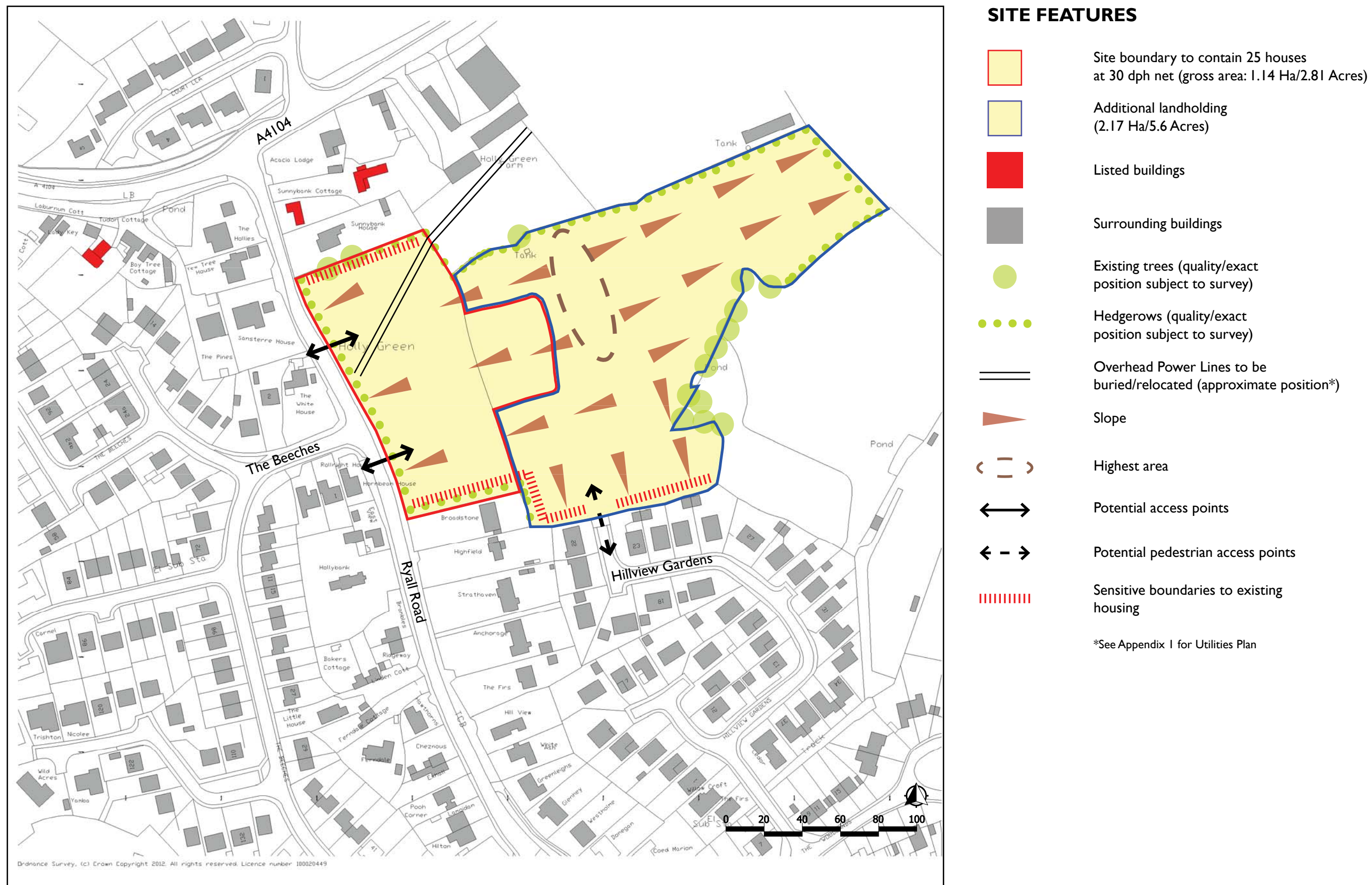


Figure 3: Site Features, Scale-1:2000 at A3, (OS Copyright)

1903 MAP

- 2.6 The site varies in level, however slopes are fairly gentle and there should not be any significant constraints resulting from the topography. There are few trees on the site with the main vegetation taking the form of boundary hedgerows. These will be retained where possible in any potential development. Figure 3 summarises some of the key issues affecting the site and a summary analysis of the technical issues is set out in Section 5.

HISTORY

- 2.7 Figures 4 & 5, contrast the historical evolution of the site and surroundings from 1903 to the present day. The new development will continue the evolution of the settlement with the site forming a natural consolidation of development.

LANDSCAPE AND GREENSPACE

- 2.8 As stated the site is undeveloped. There is little in the way of landscaping within the site although some boundaries are edged with hedgerows and a number of trees which will be retained where possible. There is also the opportunity to strengthen and improve the existing vegetation with new planting. The landscape & visual appraisal in Section 4 examines landscape issues in more detail. Section 6 also sets out a basic landscape strategy resulting from the appraisal.

BUILT FORM

- 2.9 There are no buildings on the site itself apart from a water tank. Housing does however surround the site on the north, west and southern boundaries. These vary from modern post war 1 and 2 storey detached properties with little distinctive character to much older historic properties including three listed buildings to the north. Sections 5 and 6 examine the built context in more detail.

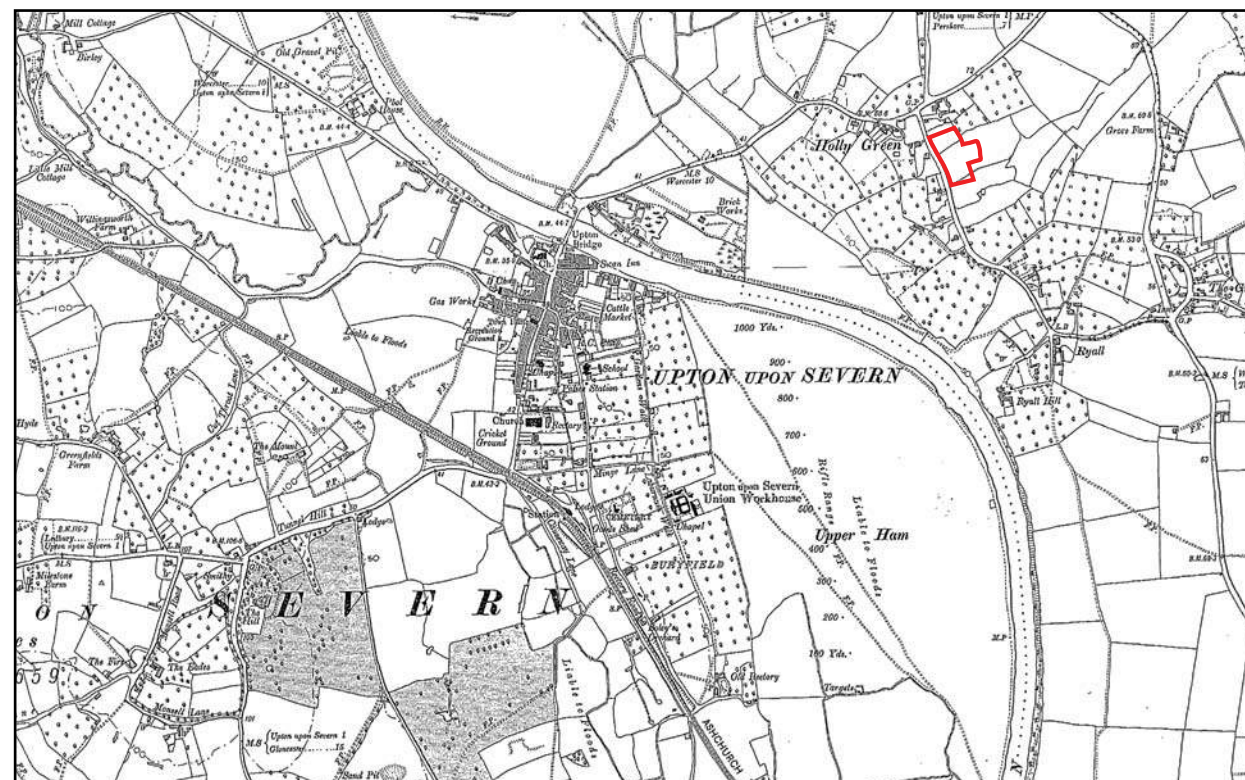


Figure 4: 1903 Map showing the site and the wider context including the three main settlements of Holly Green/Ryall, Upton-upon-Severn and Tunnel Hill. Very little development is present close to the site at this time. (OS Copyright)

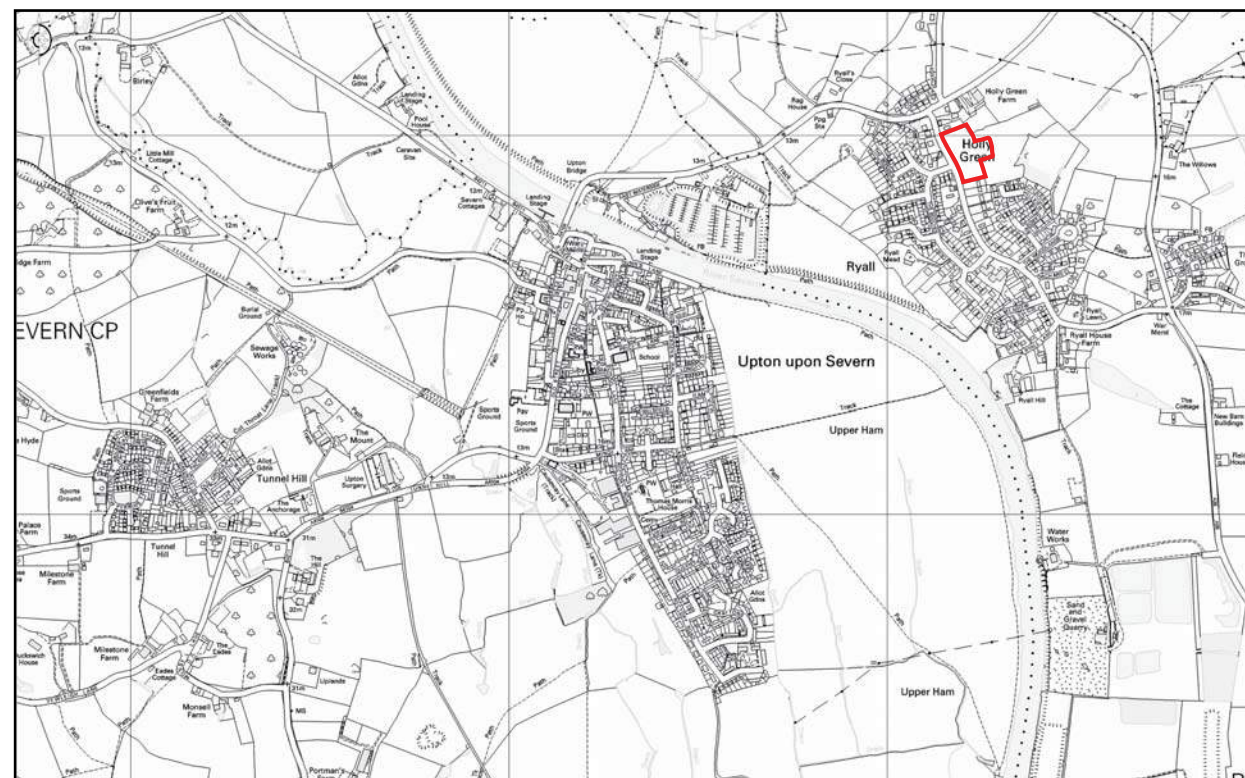
2012 MAP

Figure 5: Present day map showing the growth of the three settlements including the extent of development which now surrounds the site on three sides. (OS Copyright)

Section 3

PLANNING CONTEXT

PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This section examines the planning issues raised by the proposals including policy and housing need issues. Malvern Hills, Worcester City and Wychavon Councils are preparing a joint South Worcestershire Development Plan (SWDP) to replace their existing Local Plans. The SWDP considers the long term vision and objectives for South Worcestershire up to the year 2030, and it is being prepared during a time of significant change within the planning system.
- 3.2 The SWDP is also being prepared in the light of the recent National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which replaced all previous national Planning Policy Statements and Guidance, and must be taken into account in the preparation of local and neighbourhood plans.
- 3.3 At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. We believe that Sunny Bank Meadow in Holly Green is a sustainable choice of site for new housing as explained below.

WHY SHOULD HOLLY GREEN BE CONSIDERED FOR HOUSING?

- 3.4 The South Worcestershire demographic Report 2011 forecasts that some 21,600 new households will be required over the period to 2030. These figures are based on evidence from the Department of Communities and Local Government. The Councils of Malvern, Wychavon and Worcester City have completed a review of how best to accommodate the level of new housing and a development strategy is emerging through the South Worcestershire Development Plan. In broad terms, that strategy requires Malvern Hills District Council to identify land for some 4,000 dwellings. The draft Plan seeks to direct the new housing development to sites following the sequence of a settlement hierarchy. In the case of Malvern District, this means that the majority of new housing will be on sites within or adjacent to Malvern which is the main town in the district.

- 3.5 Accepting that not all of the housing requirement should be concentrated in one settlement however, the draft SWDP then recommends that sites are selected from the towns of Upton-Upon-Severn and Tenbury Wells, followed by villages which are categorised as 1 to 4 villages; 1 represents those villages which have a range of local services; 4 are those communities where local services are limited. Where sites are identified, new development should be commensurate to the scale and type of development which already exists in those communities.
- 3.6 In the case of Sunny Bank Meadow, it is acknowledged that Holly Green is referred to by the draft SWDP as a lower order settlement (Category 3) within the hierarchy referred to above. However, there are strong planning reasons to argue that some development within Holly Green is appropriate in planning terms. The overriding reason has been recognised through the draft SWDP. That is, Holly Green is geographically closely linked to Upton-Upon-Severn which is a main town within the District. Opportunities for new development within Upton are however heavily constrained by landscape, access and floodplain issues. The Council are therefore correct to look at those settlements which adjoin Upton to decide whether there are opportunities to build new homes which will be a short distance from the town's services and facilities.
- 3.7 As stated in paragraph 2.1, Holly Green is only around a kilometre in distance from Upton and is linked by a footpath alongside the A4014 and from the southern end of the settlement, along the river side to Upton Bridge via The Marina. Given the lack of suitable sites elsewhere this is the most sustainable option available.

PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.8 The site has been considered for redevelopment in the past. A planning application (ref 96/1057), was refused in 1996. This application was for four single-storey houses with garages, and nine two-storey houses with garages, situated off the Ryall Road – a proportion of these were proposed

3. PLANNING CONTEXT

as social housing, and a playing field was offered to the community. The application was refused on the grounds of non-conformity with the development policy for the area at that time. The decision was not appealed. The policy hurdle would no longer apply should the preferred option SWDP be confirmed. In today's terms it could also be argued that the previous development did not make an efficient use of the land. Any development today would balance efficiency with local character.

- 3.9 The Preferred Options SWDP was published in September 2011 and this document proposed to allocate 5 acres of the whole site for 50 new homes (draft policy SWDP 21/1). At a Full Council meeting on the 3rd July 2012, Malvern Hills DC proposed to reduce the size of the allocation from 50 to 25 units; those policy changes will be the subject of further comment and consultation in the months of August and September 2012.

MEETING THE NEED FOR HOUSING

- 3.10 Government projections indicate that the population is growing, and with demand further compounded by falling average household size, the result is a well documented mismatch between the supply and demand for housing. The NPPF therefore encourages local authorities to "boost significantly the supply of housing" by ensuring their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing over the plan period.

THE HOLLY GREEN OPPORTUNITY

- 3.11 The land at Sunny Bank Meadow could make a significant contribution towards meeting the needs for housing within the district in the most sustainable location available that is not subject to flooding constraints.
- 3.12 Public access to the land at Sunny Bank Meadow is currently restricted since it is in private ownership. A sensitive and limited area of development would deliver not only much needed housing but also potentially a new play area and open space contribution which is currently lacking in the

area. Development would be confined to those areas with acknowledged potential to accommodate new housing and would be entirely appropriate in character terms given that three sides of the site are surrounded by housing at the moment.

- 3.13 On this basis the opportunity exists to achieve a sensitive infill development for housing and open space on land that is already identified through the SHLAA as being suitable for housing development (see Figure 6 from the SHLAA indicating that the site is considered suitable for development.) It also has many advantages over other suggested sites such as its proximity to Upton, the avoidance of coalescence and lack of any flood risk issues. Furthermore the amenity space would be transferred into a community use. The open space proposed would also be in excess of the planning requirement. Sections 5 and 6 explain the proposals in more detail.

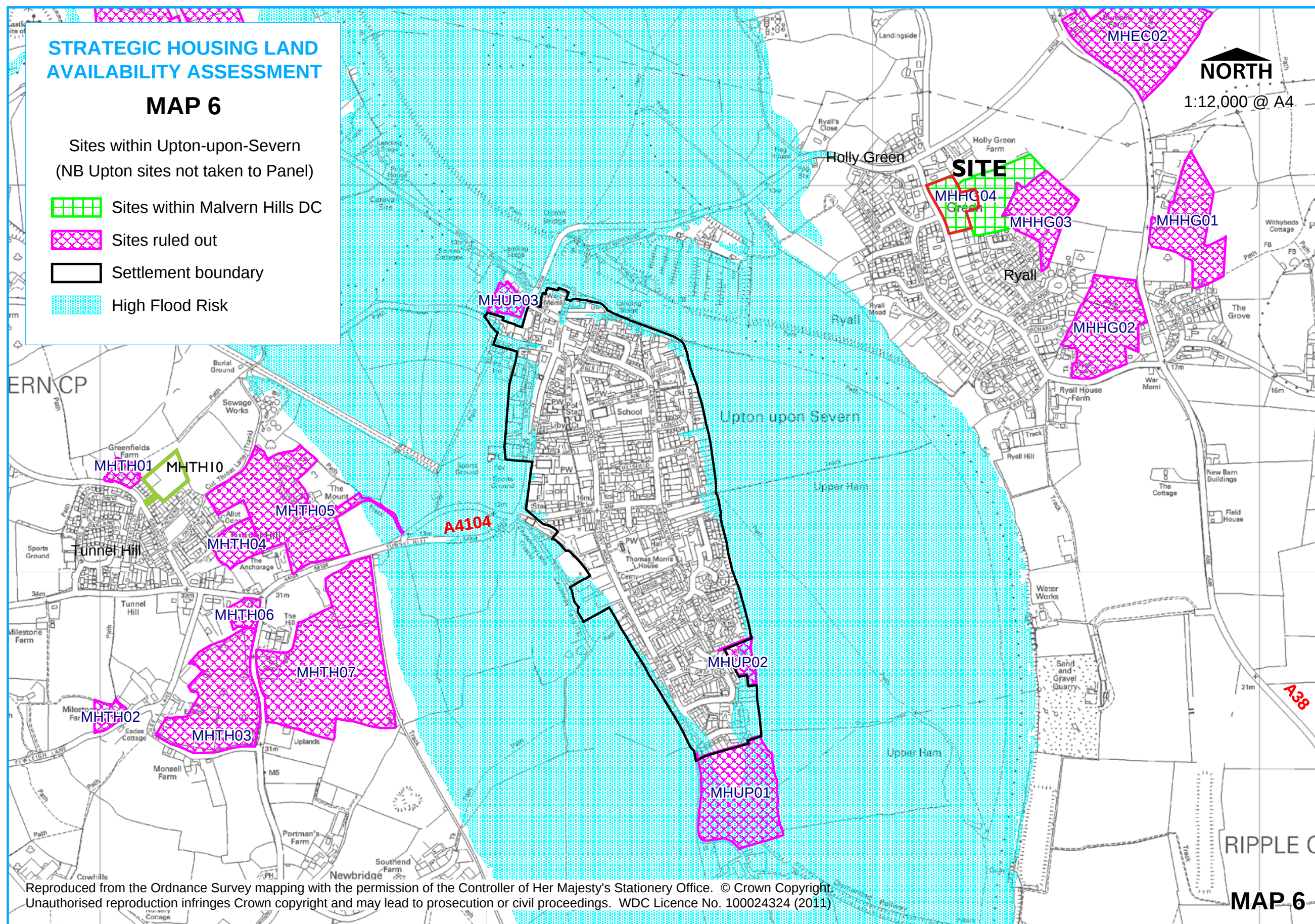


Figure 6: Map extract from the SHLAA indicating that the site is considered suitable for development, Not to Scale, (OS Copyright)

Section 4

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL APPRAISAL

4. LANDSCAPE & VISUAL APPRAISAL

LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVES

- 4.1 This section addresses landscape and visual matters. Details within this section provide supporting and background information to inform overall design strategies in relation to the proposed development.
- 4.2 The main objectives of the Landscape and Visual Appraisal are to:
- Consider local landscape character typologies;
 - Understand the local landscape context of the proposed development;
 - Determine any likely effects of the development on views from publicly accessible areas;
 - Provide recommendations in relation to landscape/visual matters as part of the design and layout of the proposed development.
- 4.3 The information contained within this section is not intended to form the basis of a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, which may normally be part of an Environment Statement for a particular development. Details are however provided to give background and context so that informed decisions can be made.

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

- 4.4 Landscape Character is defined as the distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape. It is these patterns that give each locality its 'sense of place', making one landscape different from another. Landscape character does not necessarily distinguish between good or bad landscapes or subjective responses such as scenic beauty. It does however deal with a way of thinking about the individual elements of the landscape such as the geology, topography, settlement and vegetation cover that collectively define individual landscape types. Landscapes do of course evolve over time as a result of natural and cultural process. However, the character of an area needs to be considered from the outset of any development to

ensure any intervention (positive or negative) is appropriate in the context of a particular character type.

- 4.5 Within England landscape character is defined at both a national and local scale. These definitions can be used and interpreted to understand specific issues relating to the overall landscape typology. At a national level, The English landscape is divided in National Character Areas, which are defined by Natural England. Within Worcestershire these character areas have been refined and extended to reflect individual units of the landscape.

NATIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER- SEVERN AND AVON VALES

- 4.6 The proposed development site is located within the National Landscape Character 106: Severn and Avon Vales. This character area encompasses the lower valleys of the River Severn and Avon, and is flanked by the Forest of Dean and the Malvern Hills to the west and the Costwolds to the east. The character area is a diverse, gently undulating landscape. The area is predominantly cultivated with the remaining land consisting of 3% wooded and 9% urban cover. Key characteristics of the Severn and Avon Vales include:
- Diverse range of flat and gently undulating landscapes united by broad river valley character;
 - Riverside landscapes with little woodland, often very open;
 - Variety of land uses from small pasture fields and commons in the west to intensive agriculture in the east.
 - Distinct and contrasting vales of Evesham, Berkeley, Gloucester, Leadon and Avon;
 - Many ancient market towns and large villages along the rivers;
 - Nucleated villages with timber frame and brick buildings;

- Prominent views of hills- such as the Costwolds, Bredon and the Malverns- at the edge of the character area.

LOCAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER- SETTLED FARMLANDS ON RIVER TERRACES

- 4.7 The proposed development site is located in the local character type: Settled Farmlands On River Terraces. This is a medium scale settled agricultural landscape where horticulture and cropping is the dominant land use, which reflects the highly fertile free draining soils. The settlement pattern is represented by scattered farms and clusters of wayside dwellings, linked to a matrix of winding lanes. Fields are bounded by hedgerows, with tree cover largely concentrated in groups associated with dwellings. Key characteristics include:

Primary

- Cropping/horticultural land use;
- Land use of medium scale;
- Gently rolling lowland topography;
- Sandy brown soils.

Secondary

- Hedgerow boundaries to fields;
- Dispersed settlement pattern of farmsteads and clusters of wayside dwellings;
- Tree groups associated with settlement.

LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY

- 4.8 The character and individual elements of a particular landscape can be sensitive to any change. In relation to the development proposals and the prevailing character typologies, the landscape could potentially be sensitive to change in relation to the following issues:

- Inappropriate scale/massing of development which are prominent in the landscape and detract from the nucleated villages and dispersed settlement character;
- Loss of hedgerows or field boundaries and traditional enclosure patterns;
- Fragmentation of cultivated/cropping land use;
- Increases in tree cover through mass planting proposals;
- Reduction in tree/vegetation cover through hedgerow removal.

SUNNY BANK LANDSCAPE CONTEXT

- 4.9 Sunny Bank is located in the settlement of Holly Green adjacent to Holly Green Farm. The proposed development site is situated within an arable field contiguous with the farm buildings and a residential area associated with Ryall Road.
- 4.10 The site is currently formed by an improved grassland and has been intensively farmed for both tillage and livestock. The grassland consists of a number of common grasses such as Italian rye grass (*Lolium multiflorum*) together with red clover (*Trifolium pratense*), yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) and common sorrel (*Rumex acetosa*).
- 4.11 The south western boundary is formed by a relatively intact and maintained hedgerow approximately 1.2m in height. Dominant species within the hedgerow include hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*).
- 4.12 Locally there are sporadic native and non native trees associated with residential gardens and there is a large mature oak (*Quercus robur*) within the field to the north east of the site boundary.
- 4.13 The local land form is elevated and forms a gently undulating ridge situated on a terrace above the River Severn rising to circa 20 AOD.
- 4.10 As part of the appraisal of landscape issues, a number of key

view points from publicly access areas were considered. This included Public Rights of Way, footpaths and potential views from residential housing. In addition some internal view points are also shown illustrating the land form, boundaries and site vegetation.

- 4.11 The following provide a general narrative of selected views to the proposed site from locations where full or partial views may be seen as well as internal views from within the site.

View 1

- 4.12 View from junction of Public Right of Way and A38 looking north west towards proposed development site. Views to the site are obscured by characteristic orchards and sparse tree cover.

View 2

- 4.13 View from public footway on A38 directly east of the proposed development. Views from road are open in nature. Characteristic tree cover associated with the residential area of Hillview Gardens can be seen along the ridgeline horizon. This, together with farm buildings, obscures potential views to the proposed development.

View 3

- 4.14 View from junction of A38 and A4104 looking south west towards proposed development site. Crest and breakpoint of ridge terrace feature can be seen together with the ridgeline of farm buildings of Holly Green Farm.

View 4

- 4.15 View from footway of A4104 looking south towards development site. The gable ends and roof line of Holly Green Farm can be seen to the right of the frame. The water tank related to the proposed development site can also be observed in the centre of the frame.

View 5

- 4.16 View looking south east from Ryall Road close to 'Sunnybank House' showing the slope up from the road and the existing boundary hedgerow to be retained for the

most part.

View 6

- 4.17 View looking east from Ryall Road from the southern end of the road frontage close to 'Broadstone'.

View 7

- 4.18 View looking north from the end of Hillview Gardens where it adjoins the site. There is potential for a pedestrian link to the site and proposed play area from this location.

View 8

- 4.19 View east from the high ground on the site. The hedgerow defining the boundary can be seen in this view

View 9

- 4.20 View west along the northern boundary showing the hedgerow, and one of the few existing trees within the site itself.

View 10

- 4.21 View to the western boundary with Ryall Road, and northern boundary with Sunnybank House and Holly Green Farm to the other side of the intermittent hedge, tree and shrub planting on the boundary. Mature trees can also be seen within the gardens of the houses alongside Ryall Road.

View 11

- 4.22 Panoramic view south to the boundary with Hillview Gardens and 'Broadstone'. Boundary hedgerows to the houses are sparse in this view however to the left of the photo tree a thick hedgerow and trees can be seen located outside the site.

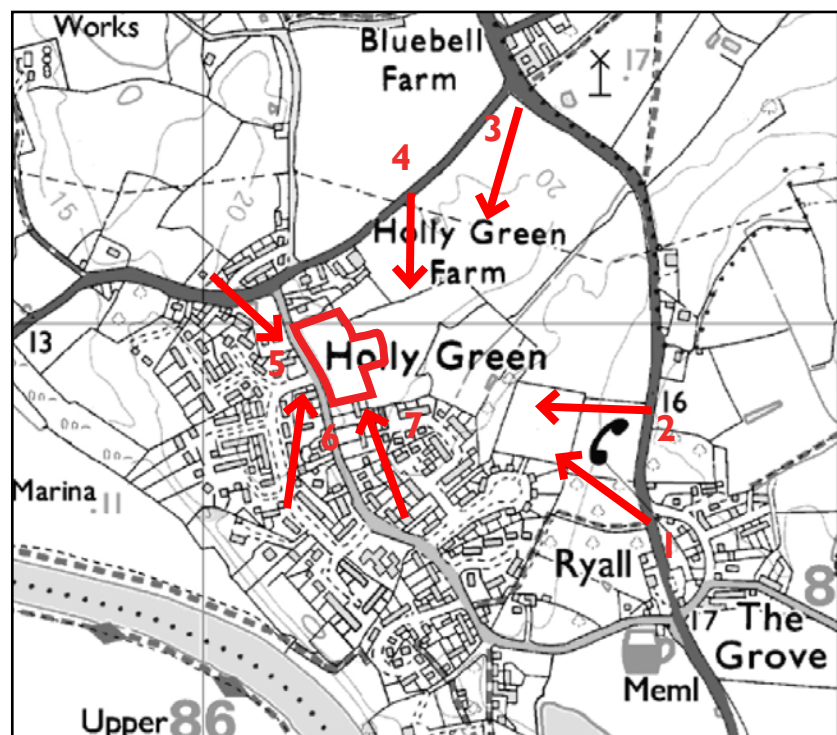


Figure 7a: Location of external views (not to scale)



View 1: View from junction of Public Right of Way and A38 looking north west towards the proposed development site



View 2: View from public footway on A38 directly east of the proposed development



View 3: View from junction of A38 and A4104 looking south west towards proposed development site.



View 4: View from footway of A4104 looking south towards development site



View 5: Panoramic view looking south east along the frontage to Ryall Road



View 6: Panoramic view looking east along the frontage to Ryall Road



View 7: Panoramic view looking north from Hillview Gardens

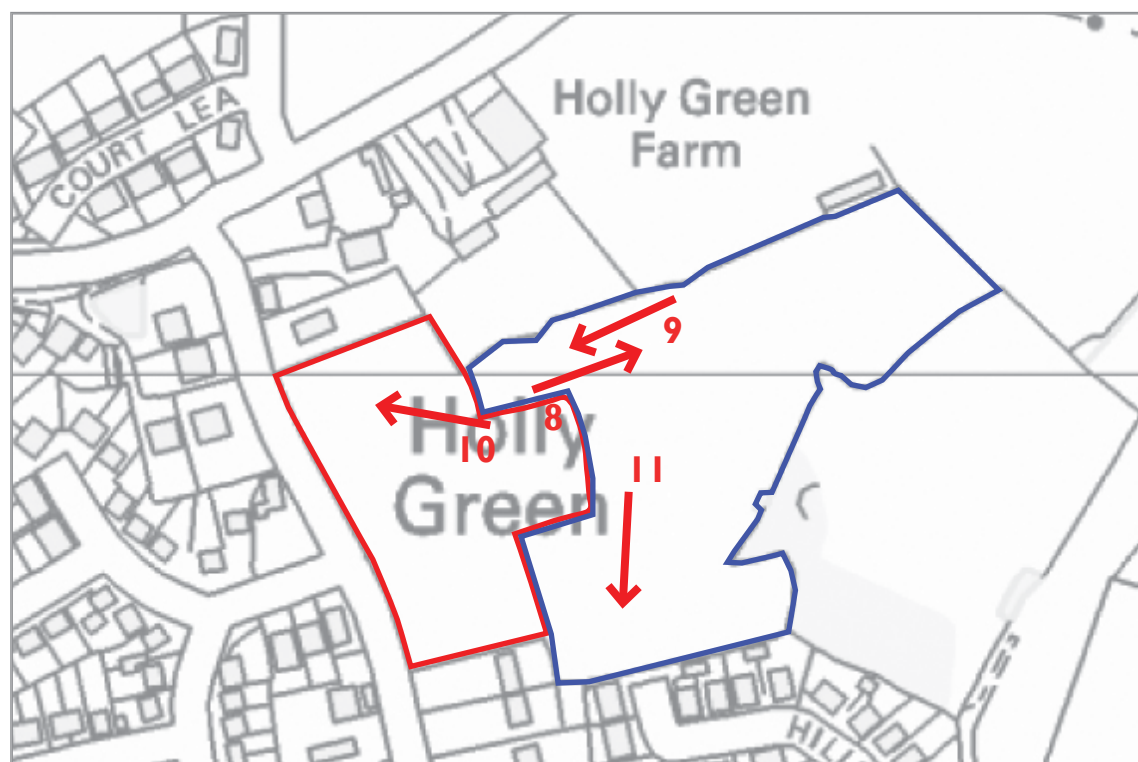


Figure 7b: Location of internal views (not to scale)



View 9: View west along the northern boundary showing the hedgerow, and one of the few existing trees within the site itself.



View 8: View east from the high ground on the site. The hedgerow defining the boundary can be seen in this view



View 10: View to the western boundary with Ryall Road, and northern boundary with Sunnysbank House and Holly Green Farm to the other side of the intermittent hedge, tree and shrub planting on the boundary. Mature trees can also be seen within the gardens of the houses alongside Ryall Road.

LANDSCAPE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.23 The proposed residential development at Sunny Bank is located within a defined landscape character area associated with the farmland terraces of the River Severn. The area is typical of the prescribed character and displays many elements that are representative of this landscape typology. In particular this relates to the predominantly agricultural land use, small nucleated residential areas, ancient field patterns, hedgerows and tree cover predominantly associated with residential housing, with more limited cover within open countryside.
- 4.24 The landscape character is sensitive to change and any inappropriate development can potentially have a detrimental impact on the local setting of the area. The preliminary appraisal has identified a terrace landform with a ridge to the east of the proposed development site. This together with vegetation cover, farm buildings and existing residential areas provides screening from publicly accessible

areas such as Public Rights of Way. In conclusion, following the initial appraisal, it is considered that with appropriate design proposals and attention to detail, the development can be assimilated within the landscape without adverse impacts on setting and visual amenity.

- 4.25 It is recommended that as part of the design process the following aspects are considered:
- The ridgeline of any development is in keeping with existing landforms;
 - Hedgerows and field patterns are reinforced and kept intact wherever possible;
 - Housing arrangement is contemporary with existing residential provision and does not overtly extend beyond current boundaries;
 - Tree planting is focused and retained within gardens with more limited planting as part of any public open space provision;

- Any planting or landscaping reflects native species in particularly orchard varieties associated with Worcestershire.



View 11: Panoramic view south to the boundary with Hillview Gardens and 'Broadstone'. Boundary hedgerows to the houses are sparse in this view however to the left of the photo tree a thick hedgerow and trees can be seen

Section 5

TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

TECHNICAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 5.1 So far general site features, planning and landscape issues have been examined. This analysis informs a fundamental question namely: is the land at Sunny Bank Meadow a suitable housing site and, if so, how much housing would be appropriate? The planning and landscape analysis did not unearth any major constraints and in this section we have tried to answer this question by reviewing and analysing a number of technical considerations, which include:

- Scale of housing;
- Mix of housing
- Schools and services;
- Utility services;
- Access and connectivity to Upton (bus service and footpath connections)
- Landscape and open space;
- Ecology;
- Flood Risk;
- Noise;
- Built form and character

- 5.2 The Project team will be spending time with the key stakeholders and the decision makers to understand the points which are of concern to the local community. Some feedback has been provided through the last consultation stage of the SWDP. These are summarised within this section of the document.

SCALE OF HOUSING

- 5.3 The landowners are disappointed that the Council wishes to reduce the size of the allocation from 50 to 25 plots. In our assessment a scheme of 50 plots would be appropriate and would be an opportunity to explore whether additional community benefits could be delivered, assisted

by developer funding. However, we can demonstrate that a scheme of 25 units is wholly acceptable in planning terms and the next section of this document explains a design concept for that proposal.

- 5.4 A scheme of 25 plots equates to an increase of only around 7.5% to the existing housing stock in Holly Green and Ryall. Furthermore the development land required would account for an increase of only around 3.5% in the built area of Holly Green and Ryall. With 50 dwellings it would still only increase the housing stock by 15% and increase the built area by just 6.5%. In our assessment, therefore the settlements could comfortably integrate more than 25 new homes.
- 5.5 The reason that Holly Green and Ryall are combined for these figures, is that they have long since coalesced together and apart from the presence of a road sign, the boundary between the two is no longer distinguishable. The site does not provide any form of buffer between the two settlements. The development of the identified land is a sensible consolidation of development within an urban area rather than an isolated pocket of development like some of the other SHLAA sites that have been ruled out.

MIX OF HOUSING

- 5.6 A scheme of 25 units on the site will incorporate a mix of house types and tenures. The site measures 1.14 hectares (2.81 acres) which nets down to a figure of 0.84 hectares (2.32 acres) after allowing for the area of public open space. The proposals therefore equate to a density of 30 dwellings per hectare. This is consistent with the target density figures which Malvern Hills are advocating on sites for less than 100 dwellings (ref: new SWDP policy on housing density).
- 5.7 The proposals will incorporate an element of market and affordable homes in accordance with Council policies. The precise mix of affordable housing (by type, size and tenure) will be agreed with the Council as part of the planning application process.

5. TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

- 5.8 The Worcestershire Councils have commissioned a joint study of the housing market (The Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, February 2012). Amongst its findings is clear evidence that there is a need to build some 1,300 affordable homes each year for the next five years across the County. Furthermore, Malvern District has one of the lowest proportion of rented houses (13% of its housing stock) within the County and there is likely to be increased demand for smaller properties based upon the projected increase in couple and single person households. This includes accommodation for the elderly because the population which is older than the working age is forecast to constitute 39% of the Malvern district population in 2030.

- 5.9 We would expect the new development at Sunny Bank Meadow to incorporate a mix of houses to reflect the trends which we have described above.

SCHOOLS & SERVICES

- 5.10 With regard to demands on services such as school capacity we have discussed this particular point with the County Education Authority and have been advised that the two catchment schools are Upton Upon Severn Primary and Hanley Castle High. Both schools presently have capacity to educate the number of children which would be generated by the new development.

UTILITY SERVICES

- 5.11 Subject to further investigation, there are likely to be few constraints with regard to utility easements. Apart from town gas which is not present in the area, electricity and telephone connections are readily available. Appendix 1 illustrates a utilities plan which identifies the presence of nearby electricity and telephone supplies. There are also overhead power lines crossing the site within the northern section but these are only 11 kv and therefore can be buried/diverted without any significant constraints. Overall the availability and alignment of utilities will not constrain the development.

ACCESS & CONNECTIVITY

- 5.12 The proposed site has a long frontage and forward visibility along this section of Ryall Road will meet the required technical standards for access. Our concept drawing has illustrated 2 points of access onto Ryall Road which will be discussed further with the County Highway Authority. Those discussions will review traffic speeds and the capacity of Ryall Road but our initial assessment concludes that an acceptable design solution can be identified for the new road junctions.
- 5.13 With regard to traffic impact, 25 houses should only result in a marginal increase in the volume of traffic. The layout does not propose any new through vehicular routes, therefore there will be no impact on the wider highway network or any potential for 'rat running'.
- 5.14 In terms of wider connectivity, figure 8 overleaf shows the site in relation to Holly Green/Ryall and Upton-Upon-Severn. Bus numbers 362 and 364 pass through the settlement past the site connecting to Great Malvern, Upton and Worcester.
- 5.15 It is possible to walk and cycle to Upton which is within a 15 minute walk and a few minutes by bike. The plan also illustrates a separate pedestrian route which can be used and the Marina has promised a cycle path for part of the route.

LANDSCAPE & OPEN SPACE

- 5.16 The landscape and visual assessment in Section 4 set out the main issues in terms of landscape character which found there were no significant constraints.
- 5.17 With regard to open space, we understand that the lack of play space for children within the village is a local concern. We propose to address this point by providing a play space as part of the planned development. This is illustrated and explained in more detail within the next section.

ECOLOGY

- 5.18 An ecological study has not been carried out as yet. If accepted as a development site this would be undertaken within the appropriate seasons. In general however there is little in the way of cover or habitat on the site and the land has been subject to intensive agricultural use. It is therefore likely that the ecological value of the site will increase following development with suitable mitigation and planting to support wildlife.

FLOOD RISK AND WATER

- 5.19 The site is not within a flood zone and unlike many of the other sites that have been considered in the area, there should not be any flooding constraints in principle. Surface run off from the development should be acceptable as the scale of the development and amount of hard standing will be limited. The green buffer area to the front of the site will also slow any surface water run off. Further details on surface and foul water strategies are being investigated, and a strategy would be provided as part of any planning application, however no major issues are anticipated.

NOISE

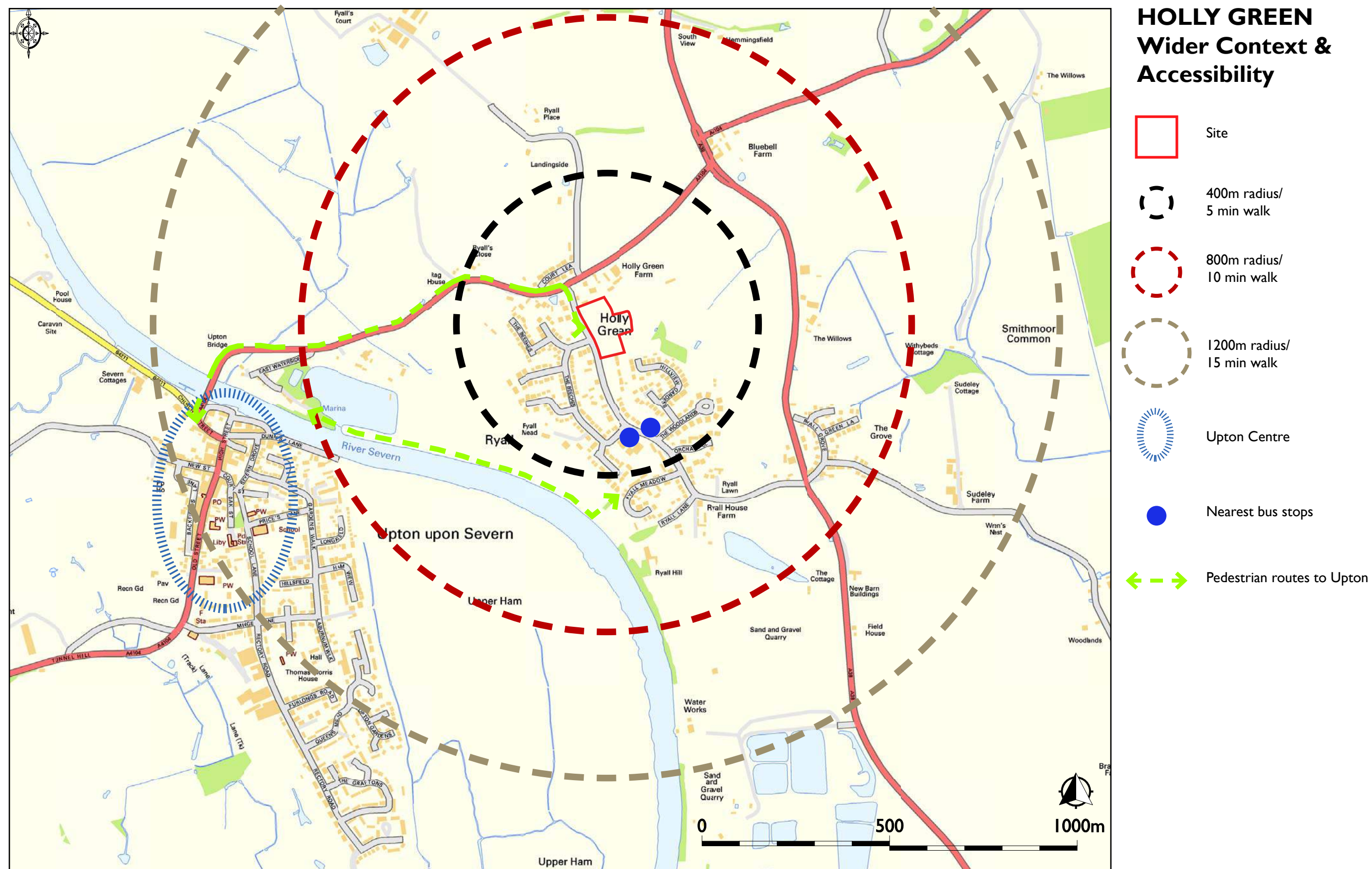
- 5.20 The A410 to the north which connects to Upton, is the only significant noise source and it is over 70m away from the closest part of the site with intervening housing to deaden any sound. Ryall Road in front of the site is not a significant noise source. Noise should not be a constraint to development.

BUILT FORM & CHARACTER

- 5.21 As pointed out in paragraph 2.9, apart from a water tank there are no buildings on the site itself. In terms of the immediate surrounding townscape, the built form is comprised of largely post war detached and semi-detached

houses which are pleasant if unremarkable in terms of distinctiveness. There are also some older properties with a more distinctive character including three listed buildings north of the site (see Fig. 3, p. 8).

- 5.22 In terms of details, the post war housing close to the site is generally fairly simple with relatively plain flat fronted elevations and a simple gable roof form. Adjacent to the north is a 1930s house with interesting details influenced by Arts and Crafts including an arched chimney and bow window. Older properties; pre 20th and pre 19th century housing found nearby, display vernacular detailing such as dormers, casement windows and timber framing.
- 5.23 Local housing examples are illustrated on page 26. A mix of approaches could justifiably be applied to the site.
- 5.24 With regard to building heights, most nearby examples are 1.5-2 storeys supplemented with bungalows within the post war housing areas. There are also a few 3 storey properties including a listed building on the A4104 frontage.
- 5.25 Overall built form is not likely to be a constraint subject to a suitable design response in terms of layout and appearance.



LOCAL CHARACTER REFERENCES



Photo 1: This 2-3 storey grouping on the A4104 frontage is mainly white rendered but also includes a red brick listed building.



Photo 2: Another listed building just north of the site. Use of a half hipped roof, plain tiles and white render.



Photo 3: A pair of Victorian red brick semis on the A4104 frontage. Simple lines with use of bay windows, vertical proportions and gable roof with tile covering.



Photo 4: Classical style house with hipped roof and white render



Photo 5: 1930s villa adjacent to the site to the north. Bow window, brick/render combination and distinctive arched chimney



Photo 6: Modern post war housing, not locally distinctive but with clean simple lines and a well landscaped setting

Section 6

THE SPATIAL VISION

THE OVERALL VISION

- 6.1 This section considers how a proposed scheme can respond to the issues which have been referred to in the preceding sections and illustrates and explains a proposed design solution. The overall vision is one where the development complements Holly Green in terms of built form and landscaping. Much of the land ownership will still remain undeveloped (over 70%) leaving significant areas of open land both formal and informal in character.

APPROPRIATE USES

- 6.2 The main uses proposed are housing and open space. Housing is compatible with the largely residential context and will cater for a range of local housing needs including affordable housing. The open space in the form of a new play area will provide a facility not just for the site but also for the wider community fulfilling a local need and make public, land that is currently private.

AMOUNT

- 6.3 The site area measures 1.14 hectares (2.81 acres). The amount of units proposed is 25 houses with 0.3 ha (0.49 acres) of open space which includes amenity space, a children's play area (400 sqm) and linear open space to the frontage. The density is therefore 22 dwellings per hectare overall in gross terms and 30 dwellings per hectare net of the open space. This density allows for an efficient use of the site, balanced with site constraints and the aim for a looser grain to allow for a well landscaped setting complementing the landscape.
- 6.4 The amount of open space required for the housing in policy terms is 1.6 sqm per dwelling of equipped play space for the Upton area (from MHDC Open Space Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), August 2008). This equates to 40 sqm overall. In total there is 0.3 Ha of open space proposed including a 400 sqm play space which far exceeds the requirements. The provision of the play area meets a local need and ensures that most of Holly Green and Ryall are within 5 minutes walk of the play area.

ACCESS

- 6.5 The main access points proposed have been determined in part by the initial transport assessment to allow for the amount of dwellings proposed as well as suitable and convenient locations.
- 6.6 The site is well situated for access to public transport and local facilities. Bus stops are within 5 min walk of the site and Upton town centre with its range of facilities is within 15 minutes walk or a short car or bus ride away.
- 6.7 The majority of parking is proposed to be in curtilage, supplemented by frontage parking broken up by landscaping. The street design allows for incidental on street parking, which, combined with building and landscape enclosure and short streets which are not through roads, will ensure low vehicle speeds and also avoid any potential for 'rat running'.
- 6.8 The topography is such that there will be no barriers to movement in terms of difficult level changes although there will be gently sloping terrain up from Ryall Road, which responds to the character of the site. The houses will however have level thresholds. Car parking will be conveniently located for access to the units and in line with local authority requirements.

SCALE

- 6.9 In terms of scale there are only a few examples of development above two storeys in the area. Given the lower density, low scale nature of surrounding development, buildings are proposed to be two storeys in the main. Over time the largely two storey development combined with existing and proposed landscaping will ensure a sensitive integration of the development into the landscape. Longer views to the site will still be focused on the landscape.
- 6.10 The housing proposed is therefore generally 2 storeys in line with the context and market conditions. In terms of scale parameters, the dimensions (W x D x H to ridge) of the houses should correspond to:
- 2 Storey: 4.5-12m x 5-11.5m x 8-9.5m
- If 2.5 storey units are used:

6. THE SPATIAL VISION

- 2.5 Storey: 4.5-12m x 5-11.5m x 9-11m

The width and depth will vary in relation to whether the dwelling is narrow or wide frontage. Both types can be found locally.

LAYOUT

- 6.11 The indicative layout has evolved from taking account of site characteristics, and local character. As well as addressing the issue of impact on the landscape, the aim is to provide a well connected and easily understood layout in line with good practice including 'By Design' and 'Manual for Streets' as well the requirements within local policy.
- 6.12 In general the layout is fairly formal and linear in line with local examples. Streets generally link up ensuring a permeable walkable layout with easy links to the play area including a pedestrian link from Hillview Gardens. Buildings are set back to allow space in front as a buffer to Ryall Road and accommodate a small change in level along the site frontage. The building line aligns to the north although pushes forward to the south to improve enclosure. The existing line then pushes forward again to match the proposals further south at 'Hill View'.
- 6.13 The linear area of open space on the frontage can also be planted with suitable native species to soften the development and maintain the green character of Ryall Road.
- 6.14 The amenity of existing houses has also been considered and a suitable separation distance has been maintained with opportunities for screening if required.

DESIGNING OUT CRIME

- 6.15 In terms of safety and security, the layout ensures all public areas are overlooked by frontages and parking is to be visible and/or within secure curtilages. This accords with good practice in the national guidance 'Safer Places'.
- 6.16 Areas of blank wall have also been minimised where it is suggested that corners are turned by way of special corner turning units which are double fronted with

windows to both returns. Local examples can be used as precedents.

6.17 Other features include:

- Generally a perimeter block form with public fronts and private backs;
- Active frontages throughout with buildings facing on to public areas;
- Use of defensible planting and defensible space in front of properties;
- Where there are pedestrian only links these are well overlooked;
- All public open space is well surveilled from the proposed properties;
- Account has been taken of existing boundaries which will be protected from public access by the new housing.

LANDSCAPING AND GREEN SPACE

6.18 The plan is at an early stage of development therefore a detailed landscaping scheme has not been prepared so far. The Masterplan shows indicative landscaping illustrating the main principles.

6.19 The proposal for the site will include landscape enhancements. This will include planting within the confines of the proposed gardens of residential properties, the wider street scene and the public open space. Building on the analysis in Section 4, the landscape strategy will be to create a continuation of the local landscape character. This will include:

- Strengthening of field boundaries using native hedgerow planting.
- Creation of wildflower areas and habitat corridors to promote local biodiversity.
- Creation of a small orchard within the public open space using local provenance apples, pears and

damsons.

- Establishment of small clusters of native trees within the overall scheme to reflect local character and complement the built form.
- Establishment of specimen trees in residential gardens, together with formal shrub planting and lawns.
- A well overlooked play area providing convenient access to all residents including the wider existing community.
- Tree and shrub planting will be carried out with a suitable species in liaison with the Council.
- Low walls, railings and hedges will define front boundaries. Hedges are particularly appropriate to the site and existing hedges will be incorporated where possible.
- Use of verges and hedge planting alongside the carriageway also echoes the existing character.
- Surface materials will include the use of asphalt, block paving and concrete paving slabs with details reserved.

DESIGN & APPEARANCE

6.20 As with landscaping, the design and appearance of the scheme is at an early stage, however some basic principles can be outlined. As suggested in Section 5, the intention is to take some reference from the best examples of housing found locally. Design precedents found locally that could inform the design are set out on page 26.

6.21 Local traditional architecture can be used as a reference with a traditional or modern interpretation acceptable as long as it is of sufficient quality with a close attention to detail. Quality design is the key, although the detailed appearance will be worked up later in consultation with the planning authority.

6.22 Features found locally that references could be made to, include:

- Prevalent use of detached and semi-detached units in a landscaped setting;
- Some use of bay windows and gables;
- Use of brick and render facing materials;
- Hipped and gable roofs with tile covering.

6.23 The illustrative Masterplan can be seen on the next page, illustrating the evolving design approach.

SUSTAINABILITY

6.24 Positive sustainability benefits will be provided including:

- Accessible location and permeable layout allowing easy pedestrian and cycle movement as an alternative to car use;
- Efficient use of land that balances density with character;
- Retention of existing trees and hedgerows where possible;
- Sustainable Homes Code minimum Level 3.

NEXT STEPS

6.25 This document, together with the illustrative masterplan, offers a sensitive and considered approach to the development of land at Sunny Bank Meadow delivering 25 mixed tenure new homes and public open space.

6.26 It demonstrates how this site could make a valuable contribution towards meeting the need for housing in the area within a compact urban form without the flooding constraints of other local sites.

6.27 The development will also secure a generous amount of public open space including an equipped children's play area.

6.28 Accordingly, this site should be allocated for residential development within the emerging SWDP.



Figure 9: The Illustrative Masterplan, Scale-1:2000 at A3 (OS Copyright)

ILLUSTRATIVE MASTERPLAN

- Site boundary to contain 25 houses at 30 dph net (gross area: 1.14 ha/2.81 acres, net area: 0.84 ha/2.07 acres)
- Additional landholding (2.17 Ha/5.6 Acres)
- POS inc 400 sqm play area (0.3 Ha/0.74 Acres)
- Listed buildings
- Surrounding buildings
- Access points
- Potential pedestrian routes

RATIONALE

Use: Housing and open space in line with local context.

Amount: 25 Houses on 0.84 ha + 0.1Ha incidental open space/linear planting strip and additional 0.2 Ha POS including 400 sqm children's play area. This accords with the draft housing allocation

Layout: The layout responds to the adjacent linear form. Buildings are set back to allow space in front as a buffer and accommodate the slope. The arrangement also ensures minimal impact on amenity. The building line aligns to the north although pushes forward to the south to improve enclosure. The existing line then pushes forward again to match it further south at 'Hill View'.

Scale: 2 storeys in line with the context.

Appearance: Responds to the best local examples.

Landscaping/Open Space:

Best existing trees and hedgerows retained and supplemented with new native tree planting and hedges. The aim is for a green landscaped character relating positively to the adjoining countryside and green character of Ryall Road.

CONTACT DETAILS

6.28 For further information regarding the land at Sunny Bank Meadows in Holly Green please contact:

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Appendix I

UTILITIES PLAN



Figure 10: Utilities Plan (Not to scale, OS Copyright)