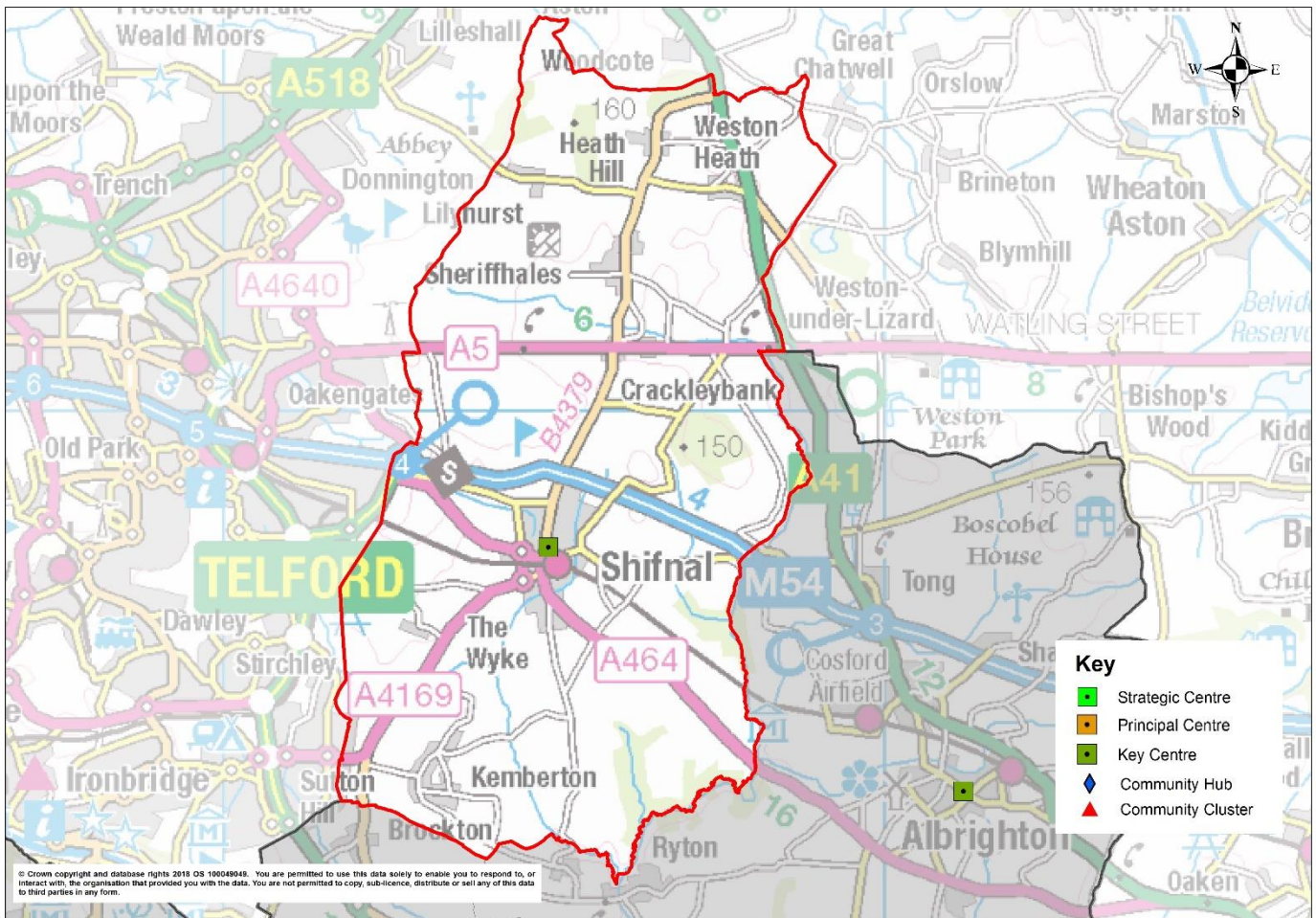


## 18. Shifnal Place Plan Area

18.1. The Shifnal Place Plan Area is located in east Shropshire and contains part of the M54 corridor which links Shrewsbury and Telford to the West Midlands conurbation. The Place Plan area is almost completely bounded by the Shropshire border abutting with Telford and Wrekin Borough (west and extending into the adjacent County of Staffordshire (north) The Place Plan area is relatively small in comparison with other areas and only comprises the town of Shifnal with a few small villages and hamlets.



Settlement Type	Settlement Name
<b>Key Centre:</b>	Shifnal
<b>Community Hubs:</b>	N/A
<b>Community Clusters:</b>	N/A

18.2. If your village is not included in the list of proposed Community Hubs or Community Clusters above, then this means that it will be ‘countryside’ for planning policy purposes, where new development is strictly controlled in accordance with national and local planning policies.

## **Key Centre: Shifnal**

- 18.3. Shifnal (2016 population 6,991) is the largest 'key centre' in Shropshire and acts as the primary service centre for both its resident population and a sizeable area of the northern Green Belt, across the east of Shropshire. Located at the junction of the A464, the A4169 and the B4379, on the rail line between Shrewsbury to Birmingham, the town is within easy commuting distance of Shrewsbury, Telford, Stafford, Wolverhampton, the Black Country and Birmingham.
- 18.4. In the context of regional policy, Shifnal was not a preferred location for development even though the role, function and accessibility of the settlement were attractive to the market. The removal of regional policy and the preparation of the Core Strategy (2011) and SAMDev Plan (2015) allowed the market demand for development in Shifnal to be expressed at least in terms of housing development. The town currently has housing commitments exceeding 1,600 dwellings and this scale and pattern of growth would lead Shifnal to function solely as a commuter settlement.
- 18.5. Employment opportunities in Shifnal are limited both in terms of the availability of land and premises for business investment and the quality of the employment being offered, with a few notable exceptions. Although the SAMDev Plan made some provision of employment land, the previous supply of employment sites in the town was significantly depleted by the resurgence of housing development. The remaining principal employment site at Shifnal Industrial Estate is still operating but affected by a number of significant issues including the size of the site, its containment within the Green Belt, the density of businesses, the effect of lower quality recycling operations, the ageing infrastructure and the complexities of managing the site. The town is therefore in need of new employment land to both replenish the supply of employment land available for investment and to rebalance employment opportunities in relation to the much higher growth in new housing and the working age population of the town.
- 18.6. Shifnal has two particular structural problems that have spatial implications for the growth of the town. Shifnal lies across the rising land in the catchment of the River Worfe fed by the Wesley Brook lying on the south-west edge of the town. The disposition of development across the catchment may affect drainage towards the Brook and so development likely to significantly increase surface water flow is better located to the south and west of the town.
- 18.7. Lying at the junction of several key road routes through east Shropshire, Shifnal accommodates two strategic junctions at 'Five Ways' to the west (A464 / A4169 / B4379) and the town centre junction of Victoria Road (A464) with Bradford Street/Broadway (B4379) and Aston Street/Stanton Road (A41 / M54 Junction 3 link). These junctions receive significant through traffic using Shifnal as a strategic navigation point and local traffic accessing different neighbourhoods in the town. Traffic volumes and pressures on the two junctions place them in need of improvement and the Shifnal Integrated Transport Scheme is expected to propose a regeneration scheme for the highway junction in the town centre.
- 18.8. The significant constraints at these junctions indicate that development generating significant traffic movements and larger vehicle access is better located to the east of the town. This spatial approach will facilitate access to

the A41/M54 Junction 3 link along Stanton Road to direct traffic away from Five Ways and the town centre junction. Future development in Shifnal should identify and address opportunities to continue to improve these junctions and to reduce traffic pressures.

- 18.9. A detailed profile of the key centre of Shifnal, providing more detailed information about the key local characteristics and issues in the town is available here: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/9691/shifnal.pdf>
- 18.10. Identified critical infrastructure priorities for Shifnal include:
- Local and strategic highway improvements considering the Shifnal Transport Model.
  - Waste water treatment and sewerage capacity.
  - Works identified in the surface water management plan for the town.
  - Reinforcement of Shifnal's primary electricity substation.
  - Additional primary school provision and assessment of secondary school provision.
  - A replacement GP surgery.
  - Provision of additional leisure, recreation and amenity facilities.
  - Further information on existing infrastructure constraints and priorities are available within the Shifnal Place Plan.
- 18.11. As the Local Plan Review progresses additional infrastructure requirements are likely to become apparent.

### ***Development Strategy***

- 18.12. Shifnal will act as a Key Centre and contribute towards the strategic growth objectives in the east of the County. It is expected that the market will continue to explore Shifnal as a preferred investment location in the M54 corridor and the demands placed on the town will subject the settlement to significant growth pressures over time.
- 18.13. These pressures create some degree of conflict in relation to two significant considerations affecting the future growth strategy for the town. The strategic location, function, size (as the largest key centre in Shropshire) and accessibility will mean that Shifnal continues to be seen as a suitable growth point with development pressures in the West Midlands continuing to be expressed along the M54 corridor. In contrast, the local view of Shifnal, is the town retains the character and 'feel' of a village and its community largely wish it to remain so. The structural problems created by such matters as the highway and drainage constraints in the town reinforce the wish to remain as a village. However, the structural problems need to be addressed and these solutions are likely to both invite and help to accommodate, significant new growth.
- 18.14. The Local Plan must seek to address these structural problems by securing a sound and responsible strategy for the growth of Shifnal. The primary concern is to secure a better balance between the currently committed scale of housing (still comprising 975 dwellings) and the current deficit in employment land (at only 2 hectares).
- 18.15. The strategy for Shifnal is therefore to provide around 1,500 dwellings and at least 16 hectares of employment development from 2016 to 2036. In the

period 2016-17, 197 dwellings were completed leaving 987 dwellings committed through planning permission, prior approval or site allocations. A further 316 dwellings need to be identified on new housing sites to achieve the housing objectives of the Local Plan Review.

- 18.16. The current upturn in housing completions in Shifnal, since the removal of regional policy, leaves no room for doubt about the delivery of this additional housing. The location and scale of this development is therefore the primary consideration for the Shifnal growth strategy.
- 18.17. Development since the adoption of the SAMDev Plan comprised a series of large, separate, development sites distributed across the town. These have opened new areas of development and extended the footprint of the settlement which has particularly affected Aston Road, Coppice Green Lane and Wolverhampton Road. The approach in the Local Plan Review is to seek new, additional allocations in and around these areas of the town. The objective is to 'place shape' these neighbourhoods by completing the pattern of local development, enclosing the urban form and creating a legible urban edge that strengthens the boundary with the Green Belt.

*Summary of residential requirements*

	Number of Dwellings
Preferred dwelling guideline 2016-2036	1,500
Dwellings completed in 2016-17*	197
Dwellings committed as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2017*	987
Remaining dwelling requirement to be identified	316
Dwellings to be allocated	180
Balance/Windfall allowance**	136

*\*Analysis of Housing Supply as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 will be provided towards the end of 2018.*

*\*\*Local Plan policies will allow flexibility for appropriate windfall, rural exception and cross-subsidy development.*

- 18.18. To deliver a level of employment growth in balance with the anticipated level of new housing, it is proposed to deliver 16 hectares of developed employment land over the revised Plan period. This aspiration is based on two key assumptions about employment development in Shropshire that employment land is developed to finished floorspace at 40% of the total land area. Secondly, commercial buildings are largely developed as single storey properties.
- 18.19. At 1st April 2017, there were only 2 hectares of land committed as a site allocation and therefore, at least 14 hectares of additional employment land would need to be identified to move towards a balanced approach to the Shifnal growth strategy. To deliver this scale of built (or net) development would generate a need to identify significant additional employment land above the 16 hectares that needs to be developed. The employment land release would then be capable of providing sufficient new employment to balance with the scale of new housing being delivered in the town. The overall provision of new employment land to achieve this outcome would be around 40 hectares of land.
- 18.20. This provision must address the structural problems affecting Shifnal (particularly highway and drainage constraints and the demand for new housing land) which serve to constrain the choice of location for employment

development. These structural issues dictate a key conclusion about the disposition of employment development that generates significant traffic movements and requires access for larger vehicles. In Shifnal, these employment land uses are better located to the east of the town.

- 18.21. These considerations and the need to realise the delivery of 16 hectares of (net) developed employment land have influenced the scale of employment land being released, the selection of the employment allocations and the decision to release all of this employment land through the current Local Plan Review.
- 18.22. The Council also recognises the important contribution the landowner and their development partners will make to the future of Shifnal, in bringing this land forward for employment development in an expeditious manner.

*Summary of employment land requirements*

	Employment Land (Ha)
Preferred employment land guideline 2016-2036	16
Additional provision to address local circumstances	24
Commitments and allocations as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2017*	2
Employment land shortfall	38
Employment land to be allocated	38
Balance/Windfall allowance**	0

\* *Analysis of Employment Supply at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2018 will be provided towards the end of 2018.*

\*\**Local Plan policies will allow flexibility for appropriate windfall development.*

- 18.23. The proposed pattern of future development sites in Shifnal recognises the existing topographical, hydrological, landscape and infrastructure constraints and opportunities in the town.
- 18.24. It is recognised that the potential for larger infill development and small infill additions to the town have largely been captured through the SAMDev Plan. Many of these sites still contribute to the committed housing supply and so, the Local Plan Review process is only required to identify a relatively small amount of new housing land.
- 18.25. There also remains around the town, some significant areas of safeguarded land, however, these form, single, separate development opportunities and reflect the current dispersed pattern of development in the town. Consequently, the remaining safeguarded sites to the east and south-east of the town do not provide opportunities to meet future development needs in a manner that individually or collectively would address the structural constraints in the town. Further, the safeguarded land along Coppice Green Lane has been brought inside the development boundary reflecting the current housing development to the north and the use of the remaining land by Shifnal Town Football Club, Idsall School and Shifnal Primary School. This change presents an opportunity for this former safeguarded land to meet additional needs in the town should acceptable proposals be brought forward for the land. Safeguarded land to the north of the town is also being considered for exceptional housing development to meet the community's current need for affordable and low cost housing.
- 18.26. The Local Plan Review does however, incorporate a strategic Green Belt Review which provides the potential for further releases of Green Belt land in

'exceptional circumstances'. The Local Plan Review therefore provides another opportunity to plan for the long term sustainable development of Shifnal through the planned release of strategically located Green Belt land.

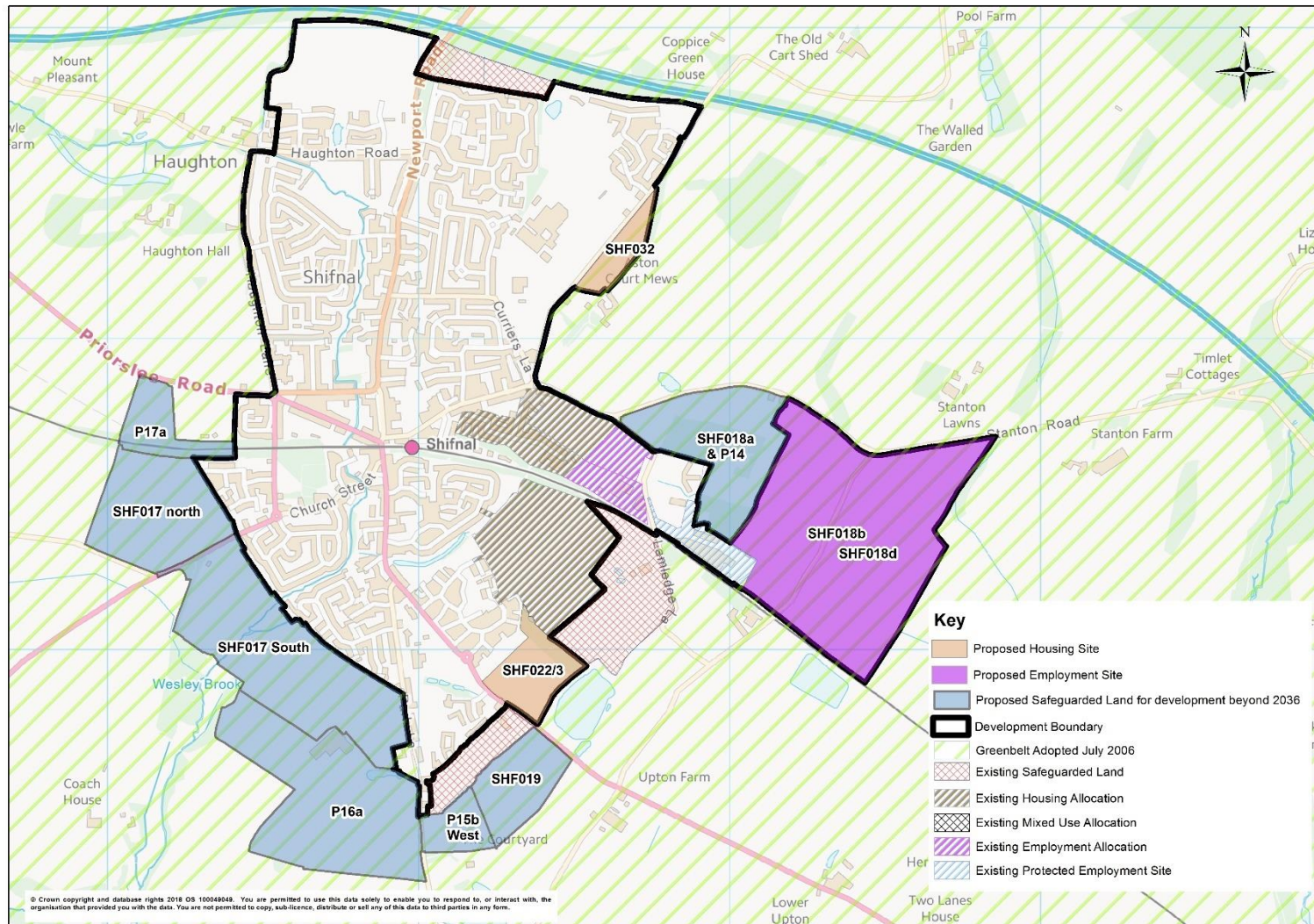
### **Green Belt Land Releases**

- 18.27. Shropshire Council considers that a number of these Green Belt sites, promoted through the Local Plan Review, may be used to provide strategic opportunities to meet the longer term development needs of Shifnal. It is considered that these strategic opportunities may be used to address the structural constraints affecting the function and operation of Shifnal and to improve its strategic physical, social and economic infrastructure.
- 18.28. To realise the potential of these promoted sites it is necessary to consider releasing some significant land parcels from the Green Belt. In the case of the employment land releases, to consider the early release of all this Green Belt land for development rather than safeguarding it for a future Local Plan.
- 18.29. These land releases respond to the strategic directions for growth based on the preferences for housing development to the south and west of the town and employment development to the east of the town. The matter of employment land releases is addressed in the preferred allocations. These land releases are recognised as causing moderate-high harm to the Green Belt, but they serve to redress the deficit of employment land in Shifnal.
- 18.30. It is considered that, there is sufficient evidence of 'exceptional circumstances' in Shifnal to justify the further release of land to the south and west of the town to deliver a strategic housing extension capable of creating a new neighbourhood community.
- 18.31. The release of safeguarded land includes Green Belt (comprising sites P17a and SHF017 north) between Shifnal and Telford, individually assessed in the Green Belt Review as causing high harm to the Green Belt, if released. These would however, support a strategic link between the A464 Priorslee Road and the A4169 Bridgnorth Road to redress a significant infrastructure constraint at Five Ways in the west of the town. The remainder of the land released is individually assessed as moderate-high harm (SHF017 south and P16a) or low harm (P15b west and SHF019). These further land releases would support a strategic link between the A4169 Bridgnorth Road and the A464 Wolverhampton Road, and with the land releases to the north, effectively create a by-pass around the town and both its principal highway junctions.
- 18.32. The significance of these land release is recognised but are considered to be justified by the contribution this proposed urban extension can make to the future growth and development of Shifnal, particularly by:
- Deliver a new strategic highway link from the A464 (south) to the A464 (west) intersecting Park Lane, the B4169 and the rail line between parcels SHF017 north and P17a, providing:
    - related highway improvements at Five Ways and Innage Road and
    - creating a one-way gyratory system via the two rail line underpasses at Innage Road and between the safeguarded land releases at P17a and SHF017 north;
  - Provide a range of housing opportunities to meet local needs;
  - Improve access to community facilities and commercial services for existing and new residents of the town;

- Result in a significant net gain in public open space within the town;
  - Significantly improve access to recreational open space and the Green Belt for existing and future residents to achieve improvements to the 'environmental quality and accessibility' of the remaining Green Belt as required by national policy.
- 18.33. Delivery of this planned growth is expected to take place after 2036, beyond the proposed period for the Local Plan Review. It is recognised however, that development pressures are likely to increase in the M54 corridor with increasing demands being placed on the West Midlands from within and beyond the region.
- 18.34. It is therefore, expected that the planning of this new neighbourhood community is likely to occur earlier than 2036 and might possibly be required as part of an earlier review of the Local Plan. The Council will consider the need to bring forward an initial masterplan for this new neighbourhood community during the current Local Plan review.
- 18.35. In Shifnal, there are no opportunities to bring forward alternative proposals of equivalent strategic effect either with or without the release of Green Belt land. Alternative development options have been carefully examined but are considered to be less appropriate due to a range of factors including more significant impacts on the Green Belt, on areas of high landscape value to the north and east of the town, the limited highway capacity of the Aston Street route through the town centre junction, the limited site capacity to deliver sufficient new housing to address likely future needs, the need for new strategic highway links through the town, the benefits of new commercial and community services and the need to create a strong urban boundary to the Green Belt to visually screen the urban development and to avoid any adverse impacts upon the openness of the Green Belt.
- 18.36. This means that alternative land releases, which otherwise would significantly increase the scale of land being safeguarded, do not compare favourably to the land release for the urban extension to the south and east of the town. The preferred land release is expected to provide sufficient economies of scale to deliver the benefits highlighted in support of this proposal.

### Proposed Development Boundary, Preferred Site Allocations and Preferred Safeguarded Land

18.37. The map below identifies the location of the preferred allocations, preferred safeguarded land and the proposed development boundary for Shifnal.





18.38. The table below provides information on each of the preferred allocations:

Site Ref:	Site Location	Site Area (Ha)	Approx. Capacity	Site Guidelines
SHF022 & part SHF023	Land north of Wolverhampton Road, Shifnal	3.5	100 dwellings	These two sites should ideally be developed together, or the two development sites should have inter-related development schemes. The two sites require a suitable joint highway access to serve both sites and inter-related drainage solutions that remediate for surface water issues on SHF023. The two sites both include the significant wooded area of Revell's Rough which must be appropriately managed within the developments but should address the physical separation of these sites from the further safeguarded land to the north. Other relevant supporting studies should be undertaken particularly transport assessments, ecology, tree and hedgerow surveys, flood risk and drainage with their recommendations clearly reflected in the proposed development scheme. Careful consideration will need to be given to the creation of an effective urban edge to the settlement and the strengthening of the Green Belt boundary adjoining site SHF023.
SHF032	Land east of Coppice Green Lane, Shifnal	2.8	80 dwellings	The development of this site will enclose the urban area of the town and help to better shape the sense of 'place' being created at Coppice Green Lane. The proposed development scheme should take full account of the setting of listed buildings in Aston Hall complex. Careful consideration will also need to be given to the creation of an effective urban edge to the settlement and the strengthening of the Green Belt boundary adjoining the site. Relevant supporting studies should be undertaken particularly transport assessments, ecology, tree and hedgerow surveys, flood risk and drainage with their recommendations clearly reflected in the proposed development scheme.
SHF018b & SHF018d	East of Shifnal Industrial Estate, Upton Lane, Shifnal	40	15 hectares of employment land	The development of these two inter-related sites should significantly change the employment offer within Shifnal. This effect should improve the offer of employment land, commercial premises, business representation and employment in the town. The development of land west of Stanton Road should also address its functional relationship with Shifnal Industrial Estate and Lamledge Lane beyond. The sites should be serviced from the A41 / M54 Junction 3 link along Stanton Road and should not direct commercial traffic into the town particularly along Aston Road and into the town centre junction. The two sites require a

Site Ref:	Site Location	Site Area (Ha)	Approx. Capacity	Site Guidelines
				highway access and improvements to Stanton Road and improvements to Upton Lane running between the two sites. The development should create a high quality, campus style employment development on the edge of the town that takes full account of the need to enclose the built form within the sensitive landscape to the east of Shifnal both within the development itself and around any essential off-site infrastructure works required to service the development. Careful consideration will also need to be given to the creation of an effective urban edge to the settlement and the strengthening of the Green Belt boundary adjoining the site.

18.39. The table below provides information on each of the preferred areas of safeguarded land:

Preferred Land Safeguarded for Future Development Beyond 2036			
Site Reference	Site Location	Site Area (ha)	Site Guidelines
SHF019	South-East	10	Land safeguarded for new housing, commercial and community services and facilities, providing a new strategic highway link from the A464 (south) to the A464 (west) intersecting Park Lane, the B4169 and the rail line between parcels SHF017 north and P71a, with related highway improvements at Five Ways and Innage Road, creating a one way gyratory system via the rail line underpasses at Innage Road and between parcels SHF017 north and P71a
P15b west	South-East	3	
P16a	South	22	
SHF017 south	South-West	36	
SHF017 north	West		
P17a	West	3	
SHF018a	East	4.5	Safeguarded for mixed commercial and employment uses.
P14	East	10	Safeguarded for employment use.

## Community Hubs

18.40. Shropshire Council has undertaken an assessment of the local services, facilities, employment and public transport links available within rural settlements, in order to identify those which are considered to function as Community Hubs. This assessment is summarised within the Hierarchy of Settlements evidence base document available via the Shropshire Council website at: <http://shropshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/local-plan/local-plan-partial-review-2016-2036/>

18.41. No Community Hubs have been identified within the Shifnal Place Plan area.

## Community Clusters

18.42. Within Community Clusters, it is proposed that a criteria based policy will manage development. A draft of this policy was provided within the previous Preferred Scale and Distribution of Development Consultation Document, available to view at: <https://shropshire.gov.uk/media/7632/preferred-options-consultation-final.pdf>