

Shropshire Local Plan Review: Site reference – MIN018 Minsterley (B-A220) on behalf of Irene Redge.

Residential development for around 20 dwellings on land West of A488, Minsterley.

1. What is the background to the site allocation? How was it identified and which options were considered?

The proposed housing for Minsterley (2016-2038) is set out in draft policy S12 Development Strategy: Minsterley and Pontesbury Community Hubs.

The Council's reasoning for allocating the site notes, "the site is well placed in relation to the bus route and the cycleway to Pontesbury where the nearest secondary school and other additional services and facilities are located. It is believed that an acceptable access and an appropriate site layout can be achieved to avoid flood constraints. An FRA should inform the development scheme." (page 86 of the Site Assessments Report).

2. What is the scale and type/mix of uses proposed?

The site would accommodate a range of house types and tenure split to meet the identified needs of the area. The proposed guideline of 20 dwellings on a 1.05 hectare site equates to only 19 dwellings per hectare. This is unjustifiably low and conflicts with the following policies:

- Policy SP1: The Shropshire Test requires in section 1f that development, "Makes efficient use of land".
- Policy SP3: Climate Change requires in section 1b that carbon emissions are reduced by, "Supporting the principle of delivering higher density development on the most accessible urban sites."
- Policy SP5: High Quality Design requires in section 3k, "making efficient and effective use of land and topography."

- Policy DP1: Residential Mix sets a default housing mix of 25% 2 bed or smaller and 25% 3 bed or smaller. In combination with the proposed low housing guideline for this site, it limits the amount of residential floorspace that can be delivered, compounding the low density to an even more inefficient use of a sustainably located site.
- Paragraph 122 of the National Planning Policy Framework which requires that, "Planning policies and decisions should support development that makes efficient use of land".

A scheme that meets policies SP1, SP3, SP5 and DP1 will necessitate a higher density. We therefore suggest that the site's guideline figure is increased to 30 dwellings. This figure reflects the indicative capacity of 31 dwellings for site MIN018 on page 35 of the Council's Minsterley Site Assessments report.

The proposed density is lower than the adjoining Linden Fields development which delivered 16 dwellings on 0.51 hectares of land, equivalent to a density of 31.4 dwellings per hectare.

3. What is the basis for this and is it justified?

This site is accessible off the A488 (with appropriate speed restrictions/traffic calming measures) and relatively well located in relation to the existing built form of the village. Flood constraints and surface water management would need to be taken into account in the design of any development.

4. What is the current planning status of the site in terms of planning applications, planning permissions and completions/construction?

The land is currently used for agriculture. It is an arable field adjacent/adjoining existing residential development to the south west. There are no current planning application on the site.

5. What are the benefits that the proposed development would bring?

The development would bring housing and policy compliant affordable housing to the community as well as being policy compliant in all other respects. Allocation of this site can also benefit adjoining land and alleviate existing flood issues that originate on the A488, by helping channel surface water into the Little Minsterley Brook. The site is not part of the problem, but it can be part of the solution.

We consider that site MIN018 offers Minsterley the opportunity for:

- a crossing point of the A488 for pedestrians using the footpath/cycle link to Pontesbury;
- a site that is well located for both Minsterley's facilities and Pontesbury's additional facilities including the secondary school;
- slowing traffic entering the village by moving the 30mph speed limit extent and providing visual cues that encourage drivers to slow down on approach to the village;
- an attractive entrance to the village that helps meet local needs for a range of housing;
- a site that is relatively unobtrusive in the landscape and that will not affect the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the south of Minsterley;
- better management of surface water draining down the A488 into Little Minsterley brook.
- To reduce surface water on the A488 and alleviate downstream flood risk at Little Minsterley, provide a 1 metre wide grip in the verge of the A488 to direct water from the road directly to the ditch course that runs along the north-east boundary of site MIN018;
- Improve the existing highway drain running from the A488 through site MIN018 to Little Minsterley Brook;
- Improve drainage at Linden Fields by directing surface water flows from the Linden Fields development to the Little Minsterley Brook through channels created for this

purpose in the public open space, designed as part of the development of site MIN018.

Appropriate access arrangements will be required. The 30mph zone should be extended to reflect site extent, together with any necessary traffic calming. To improve accessibility to services and facilities a footway should be provided along the site's road frontage, to form a continuous footway link with that existing to the south west and a crossing facility provided to link to the footpath/cycleway on the opposite side of the A488.

The site will incorporate appropriate sustainable drainage, informed by a sustainable drainage strategy. Any residual surface water flood risk will be managed by excluding development from the affected areas of the site. Development will also be excluded from the elements of the site located in Flood Zones 2 and/or 3, these areas will form part of the Green Infrastructure network. Flood and water management measures must not displace water elsewhere. Design and layout should minimise noise impact from adjacent road. Mature trees on the site should be retained and the environmental network to western boundary buffered. Relevant supporting studies should be undertaken particularly ecology, tree and hedgerow surveys, flood risk and drainage with their recommendations clearly reflected in the proposed development scheme

6. What are the potential adverse impacts of developing the site? How could they be mitigated?

In landscape terms, the southern side of Minsterley is visually sensitive, with long distance rolling views of the Shropshire Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty to the south.

7. How is the site affected by flood risk? How has this been taken into account in allocating the site? How have the sequential and, if necessary, exception tests been applied?

The site is suitable for development with 94% of site MIN018 in flood zone 1 (low risk of flooding).

8. What are the infrastructure requirements/costs and are there physical or other constraints to development? How would these be addressed?

The preferred allocation MIN018 does not affect any public rights of way, making it more suitable than alternative sites around Minsterley. Indeed, MIN018 will provide new pedestrian routes along its frontage, to link with the pedestrian footway between Minsterley and Pontesbury along the A488.

9. Is the site realistically viable and deliverable?

Yes, the site is a greenfield site with some drainage constraints in places. The site is deliverable, but a higher density of development should be provided on the site to make better use of the available land.

10. What is the expected timescale and rate of development and is this realistic?

The site is immediately available and in a sustainable location in a Community Hub settlement. There are a number of developers interested in purchasing the site, but discussions remain confidential until the allocation has been secured. It is anticipated that delivery of the site would be early within the plan period.

11. Is the boundary of the site appropriate? Is there any justification for amending the boundary?

Yes

12. Are the detailed policy requirements effective, justified and consistent with national policy?

Yes

