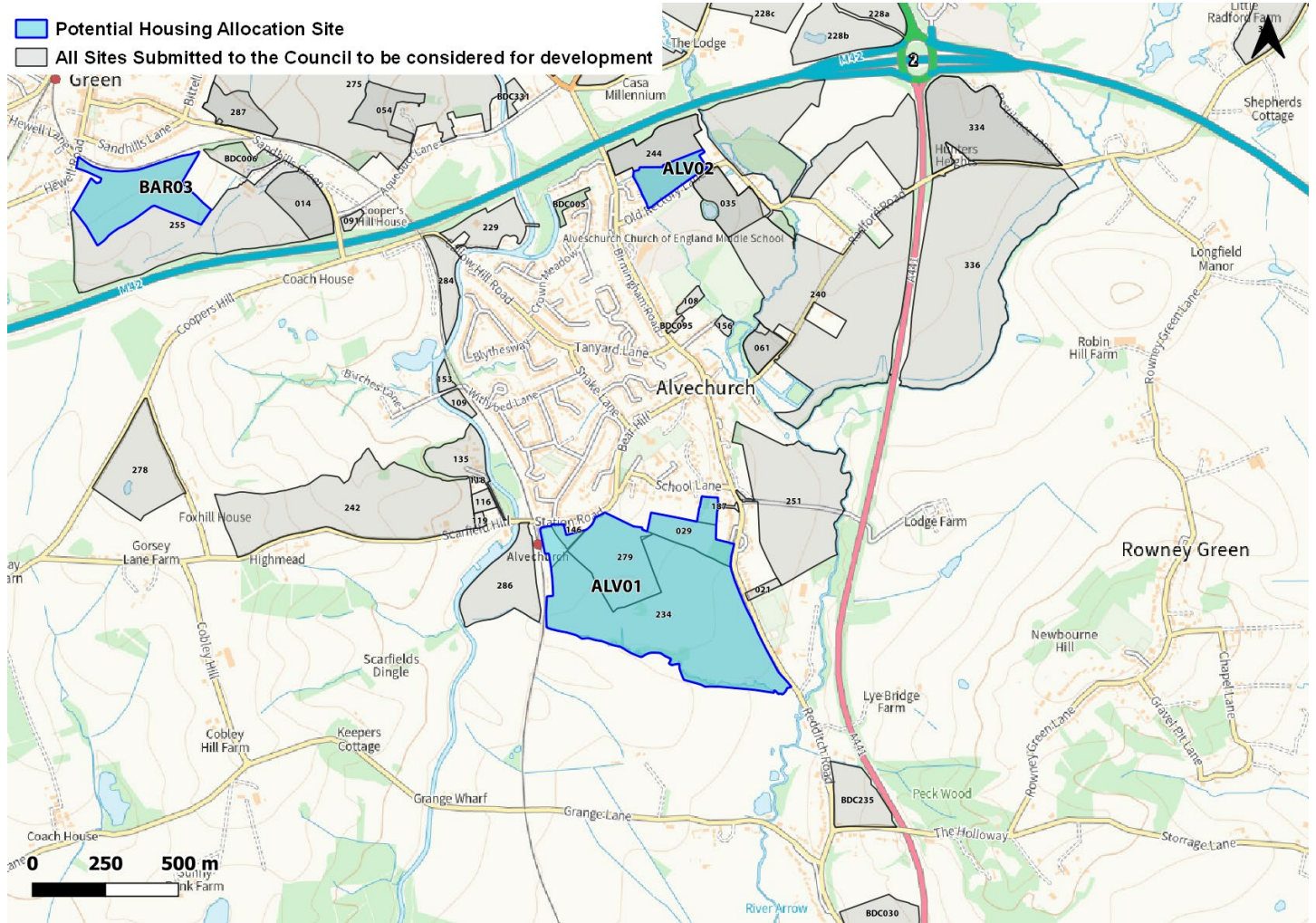


Settlement Summary: Alvechurch



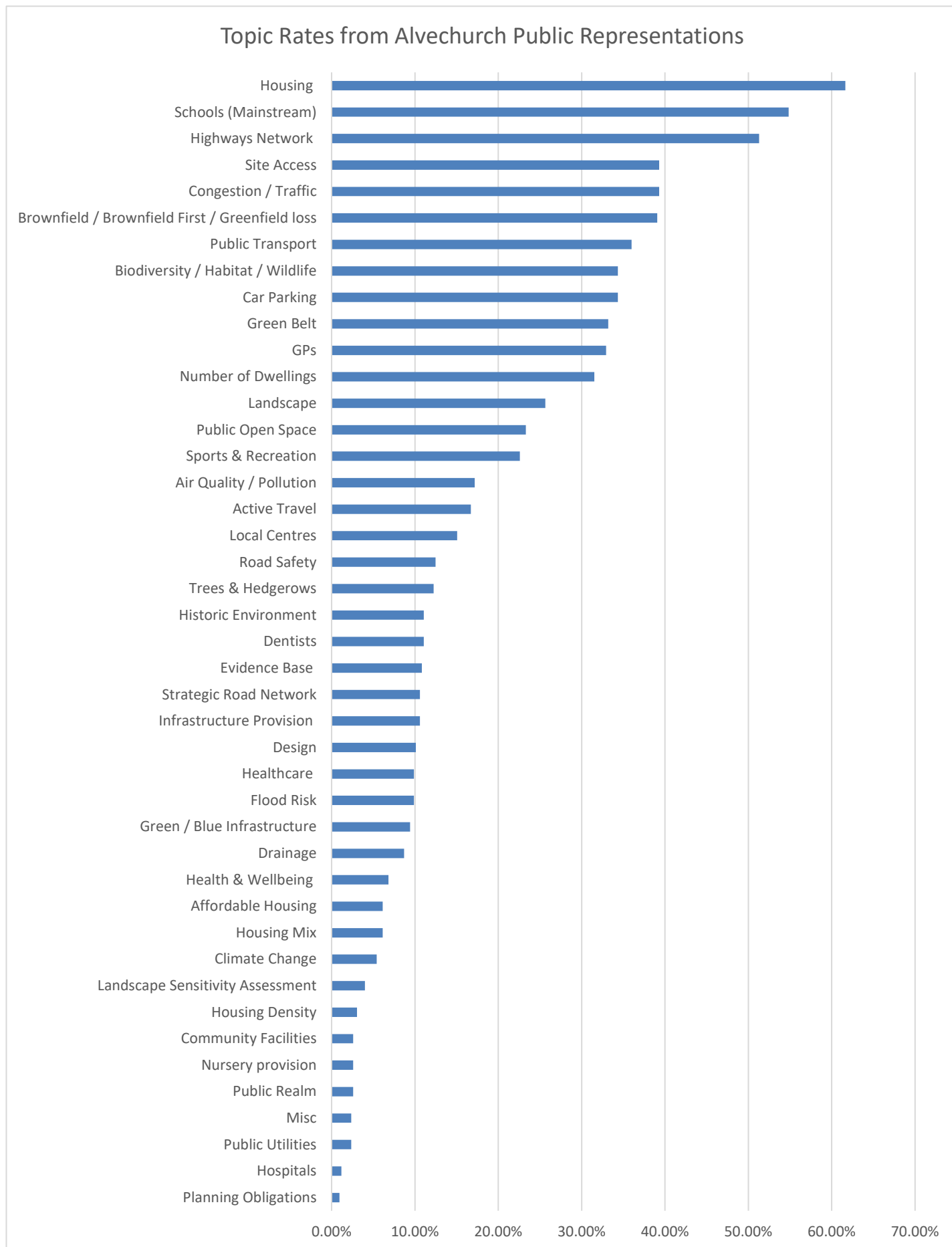
Introduction

This document summarises the responses received during the Draft Development Strategy consultation, which was undertaken between 30th June and 20th October 2025. This document covers responses on the potential site allocations (shown in blue on the above map) as well as topics raised about Alvechurch in general. For context, the map above also shows all other sites in proximity to the village which were submitted through the Call for Sites exercise (shown edged in black on the above map), which were assessed but not included for potential allocation. Comments received on these sites were used to help inform the settlement-wide summary section. This document represents a summary of all comments received. It does not present specific individual representations, or any analysis of the information received.

All summaries have been set out under the following sub-headings: 'settlement-wide' or 'site specific'. They have also been separated by type of respondent, as follows:

- Members of the Public
- Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders
- Developers/Landowners

Members of the Public



**Members of the Public:
Settlement-wide – Topics**

Housing (general): Concern about scale and proportionality (e.g., 400–500 homes seen as turning a village into a town); preference for smaller, phased growth and more local need/affordable options.

Schools (Mainstream): First & Middle Schools described as already tight for places; repeated calls for new/expanded primary, knock-on middle capacity, and secondary (North & South Bromsgrove High Schools) capacity impacts. -on middle capacity, and secondary (North & South Bromsgrove) capacity impacts.

Highways Network (general): Narrow lanes and pinch points; worry about daily flows and construction traffic through the village.

Congestion / Traffic: Regular congestion around The Square, Bear Hill and Redditch Road; fear of rat runs.

Site Access: Strong views on where sites should be accessed (e.g. Redditch Road for ALV01; avoid Old Rectory Lane for ALV02).

Brownfield / Brownfield First / Greenfield loss: Objection to Green Belt take; emphasis on brownfield/infill first.

Public Transport: Trains viewed as infrequent/unreliable at peak; buses limited or absent; requests for more services if growth proceeds.

Car Parking: Village centre parking shortages and station car park flooding repeatedly cited.

Biodiversity / Habitat / Wildlife: Concern over wildlife corridors, hedgerows, and habitat loss.

Green Belt: Perceived conflict with Green Belt purposes and the Alvechurch Parish Neighbourhood Plan preference for smaller sites.

GPs: Difficulty obtaining appointments; concerns that the current surgery operates as a Birmingham branch practice; calls for a new/expanded local surgery.

Landscape: Fears about loss of village setting and panoramic views; landscape sensitivity south of the village.

Standout / unique insights raised

These are recurring, insights (often location specific) that go beyond general topic labels:

- Station car park flooding: the car park is frequently described as forming a “lake”; people ask for resurfacing/expansion (and EV charging) if growth proceeds.
- Access design & rat runs (ALV01): requests to take site access from Redditch Road and limit/avoid Station Road, plus traffic calming or restrict School Lane to stop it being a rat run.
- Old Rectory Lane (ALV02): repeatedly flagged as too narrow, unlit and without footways, with a strong preference for access via Birmingham Road instead.
- Heritage constraints (ALV01): repeated references to ridge and furrow (esp. land parcel 279), historic hedgerows, and the setting/intervisibility with the Bishop’s Palace Scheduled Monument; calls for a robust heritage impact assessment.
- River Arrow & drainage: concern about surface water runoff (Redditch Road) and need for sitewide SuDS, potential riparian buffers and rainwater harvesting to manage clayey soils.

- Village parking pressures: loss of the agreement for the public to use the Alvechurch Inn car park and constrained Tanyard Lane capacity led to Bear Hill and side street spillover; fear this will worsen without a centre proximate parking solution.

<p>Members of the Public: ALV01 – Key Points</p>
<p>Access & Traffic: Primary vehicular access via Redditch Road; avoid adding general traffic access to Station Road; traffic calming/limit School Lane to stop rat runs. Keep growth traffic off the village core (The Square/Bear Hill), with calming and parking management if flows increase. Narrow canal/rail bridges on Station Road, and visibility/weight limits near the canal bridge (reinforcing the request to avoid Station Road as a main access).</p>
<p>Public transport: More frequent/reliable trains on the Cross-City line and restored bus connectivity; some support a transport hub near the station if it reduces village car trips. Existing railway station is not used by many local residents for commuting (residents repeatedly assert 3.6%), so incorrect to assume that locating new housing adjacent to Alvechurch Railway station will encourage commuting by train. Existing station is used by commuters from elsewhere, putting a strain on the existing railway station’s inadequate parking and facilities. Some support for a transport hub near the station if it reduces village car trips.</p>
<p>Flood risk: SuDS to manage surface water (notably along Redditch Road) with riparian protection to the River Arrow.</p>
<p>Scale: Site is disproportionate in scale relative to the existing village. Alvechurch has grown organically over time through smaller developments that are more proportionate to the available infrastructure capacity.</p>
<p>Heritage: Early heritage assessment covering ridge & furrow, historic hedgerows, and potential effects on the Bishop’s Palace Scheduled Monument setting.</p>
<p>Green/Blue infrastructure: Retain wildlife corridors and provide meaningful net gain on-site (not just off-site).</p>
<p>Parking: Upgrade and expand the station car park (address the “lake”/flooding) and add village centre parking so people aren’t pushed onto side streets.</p>

<p>Members of the Public: ALV02 – Key Points</p>
<p>Road noise: Assessment of road noise is inadequate - the site is not suitable for development.</p>
<p>Access: Do not use Old Rectory Lane (too narrow, unlit, no footways) — instead form access to/from Birmingham Road (and/or through the field to the north).</p>
<p>Education: Because the site is close to existing schools, respondents still ask for additional primary places and to avoid overspill car trips at drop off/pick up.</p>
<p>Local centre: Some support for a small convenience offer with onsite parking to limit village centre car trips. Site parking to limit village centre car trips.</p>

Examples of suggested specific infrastructure requirements

- Access strategy:
 - ALV01: Vehicular access via Redditch Road; no/limited general traffic egress to Station Road; School Lane to be access only or traffic calmed.
 - ALV02: Access from Birmingham Road; avoid Old Rectory Lane; manage interface with the school site.
- Public transport:
 - Seek Cross-City rail uplift (service reliability/frequency) and reinstate village bus services (including to Bromsgrove).
- Parking:
 - Village centre: add capacity (with Blue Badge bays) close to The Square.
 - Rail Station: resurface/expand the station car park (flood resilience) and consider EV charging.
- Education:
 - Secure primary capacity and a middle school plan (with safe pickup/parking design).
 - Address the secondary pipeline (North/South Bromsgrove High Schools) in the IDP/SoCG to avoid later shortfalls.
- Health:
 - Deliver a new or expanded GP surgery with on-site parking; explore Worcestershire ICB alignment rather than a remote branch practice model.
- Drainage & environment:
 - SuDS to 2025 standards, river corridor buffers to the River Arrow, rainwater harvesting, and confirm foul sewer capacity with Severn Trent Water.
 - Early heritage & landscape assessments for ALV01 (ridge & furrow, Bishop's Palace setting, hedgerows/trees).

The overwhelming concern is scale: people fear 400–500 homes would overwhelm schools, GP services, parking, and the highway network and fundamentally alter the village. Some advocate ≤ 200 –250 homes (spread and phased), brownfield/infill first, and infrastructure first delivery.

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders: Settlement-wide – Key Points

Natural England

Alvechurch: Having reviewed the site in question, Natural England are happy with the allocations and that it does not have an impact on any protected sites/landscapes nearby.

WCC Education

Alvechurch:

- Relevant schools: Crown Meadow First (Private Finance Initiative) (PFI), Alvechurch Middle (PFI), North or South Bromsgrove High (PFI).
- Pupil requirements generated by proposed development: Early Years = 55 Full Time Equivalent, First = 25 Per Year Group (PYG), Middle = 36 PYG (all sites), High = 28 PYG (all sites).
- New provision required: First = 0.9 Form Entry (FE) (1), Middle = 1.2 FE, would require at least 0.5FE expansion - Not viable to expand PFI, High = requirements considered in relation to Bromsgrove town and all its feeder schools, not extrapolated to individual village settlements.

WCC Planning and Transport Planning

Worcestershire Archive and Archaeology Service

We welcome BDC's decision to remove or redraw the boundaries of relevant Category 1 sites (archaeologically the most sensitive) to exclude Scheduled Monuments, and we are pleased at the removal of potential Alvechurch allocation sites in the archaeologically sensitive hinterland of the Bishops Palace Scheduled Monument.

Transport Planning and Development Management

Rail: Having recently looked at car park demand for Alvechurch, it is unlikely that an additional 500 dwellings would make the case for expanding the car park. This does, however, remain as aspiration for WCC in the longer term, and the potential for this to offer wider opportunities (such as a mobility hub) should be explored.

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

ALV01 – Key Points

CPRE

- Allocation is disproportionately large compared to the population of the village.
- Alvechurch is in decline as a retail centre.
- Road through the village is subject to rat running.
- Schools and primary health care would need considerable expansion.

Environment Agency

Presence of an unmodelled ordinary watercourse

- The Environment Agency identifies ALV01 as a site that contains an unmodelled ordinary watercourse within the site boundary.
This is important because the level of flood risk from such a watercourse is currently unknown and requires further investigation.

Historic England

Needs assessment of impacts on:

- St Laurence Church (Grade II*)
- Scheduled Monument to the east (moated site, fishponds, Bishop of Worcester's Palace earthworks)

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

ALV01 – Key Points

- Wider agrarian landscape context for setting.

North Worcestershire Water Management

1. Flood Zone & Fluvial Flood Risk

- The site is located in Flood Zone 1, meaning baseline fluvial flood risk is low.
- However, the EA's fluvial flood risk model does *not* cover the tributary of the River Arrow running along the southern boundary.
Therefore, actual flood risk may be higher than shown on standard flood mapping.

2. Surface Water Flood Risk

- National modelling identifies several surface water flow paths crossing the site.
- These are mostly linked to the tributary along the southern boundary.
- Further fluvial modelling will be needed as part of a full flood risk assessment.

3. Historic Flooding Reports

- EA holds no direct flooding reports for the parcel, but there are reports in the nearby vicinity.
Lack of records does not confirm the site has never flooded, especially as it is currently undeveloped.

4. SuDS and Drainage Requirements

- Drainage strategy must fully comply with 2025 Defra National SuDS Standards, including:
 - rainwater harvesting for non-potable use, potable use,
 - above-ground multifunctional SuDS,
 - water quality treatment measures.
- A site-wide drainage plan is required if developed in phases.
- Soils: Likely loamy and clayey with slightly impeded drainage, meaning infiltration SuDS may not be viable.
Site-specific ground investigations are required.

5. Watercourses & Required Protection

- The tributary and all watercourses, ditches and ponds must be retained.
- They must be provided with a suitable undeveloped buffer zone.

6. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Requirements

- The bordering watercourse is classed as high distinctiveness, meaning:
 - A River Condition Assessment is required, undertaken by a qualified & accredited surveyor.
 - Results must be submitted with future planning applications.
 - Riparian zone (10m from bank top) must be surveyed and not encroached upon.
- BNG gain for the watercourse and ponds is expected on site (not offset elsewhere).

7. Climate Change Adaptation

- Support for on-site BNG and climate adaptation measures is noted.
- EA encourages including blue/green infrastructure and asks the Council to clarify climate adaptation measures to ensure inclusion of future flood risk resilience.

WCC Planning and Transport Planning

Proposed allocation ALV01 is a substantial allocation that will impact historic field enclosures that are part of a wider assemblage of distinctive piecemeal field enclosures. The scale and morphology of development will need to respect this arrangement of features to ensure that permeable Green Infrastructure that links across to the canal corridor is a key part of the development.

WCC's Ecology team is supportive of development at this site. However, based on the Draft LNRS draft Local Habitat Map, we recommend incorporating the following habitats within the proposed site allocation plan:

- Riparian habitat, such as wet grassland or woodland, along the southern border (PM2)

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

ALV01 – Key Points

- Species-rich neutral grassland in the northeast corner of the site (PM29)
- A mosaic of habitats along the eastern edge of the site (PM23).

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Contaminated Land

The site contains a number of potential contaminated land concerns including an area of unknown filled ground that looks to be a filled old quarry and two other former quarry's all shown as old clay pits on the earliest available historical maps (c. 1843-1893). The site is abounded to the west by the railway and there is a sewage works shown to the east. Some areas of the site are within 250m of former landfill or other significant areas of filled ground including a portion of the northwestern corner falling within the buffer for Alvechurch Dredging's Disposal Site (Landfill) and part of the northern boundary falling within the buffer for a former filled quarry. Modern mapping indicates the site comprises agricultural fields.

Nuisance/Noise

Railway line and Alvechurch Station runs along the western boundary of site which will require an acoustic assessment of impact and mitigation, but unlikely to affect development.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

Ecological Constraints

- The site contains parcels of broadleaved woodland on or immediately adjacent to the allocation. These require buffering and protection, which may reduce the overall developable area.
- The large farmland parcels within the site may be suitable habitat for ground nesting birds, including skylark. Further analysis is required to: nesting birds
 - confirm the presence of such species,
 - determine appropriate mitigation, and
 - understand the impact on the developable area.

Water and Drainage Considerations

- Nearby watercourses require careful consideration, particularly:
 - hydrological impacts,
 - need for appropriately designed SUDS, which could also influence how much of the site can be developed.

General Requirements

- Further ecological assessment is essential before allocation, including:
 - surveys for designated species,
 - updated habitat surveys.
- Green and Blue Infrastructure must be central to the design.

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

ALV02 – Key Points

CPRE

If this is allocated, there will be little purpose in retaining the land between it and M42 as Green Belt, but it might become Safeguarded Land or be made available for employment uses.

Environment Agency

Unmodelled ordinary watercourse on the site boundary

- The Environment Agency identifies ALV02 as having an unmodelled ordinary watercourse on the boundary of the site.
This means flood risk is *unknown* and needs formal assessment.

Historic England

- Consider impacts on The Old Rectory (Grade II) and its open setting along Old Rectory Lane.

North Worcestershire Water Management

1. Flood Zone & Fluvial Flood Risk

- The site is located in Flood Zone 1, meaning it is classed as low fluvial flood risk on national mapping.
- However, the EA's flood risk model does not cover the tributary of the River Arrow, which flows along the eastern boundary of the site.
This means the true flood risk may be higher than shown on maps.

2. Surface Water Flooding

- National modelling shows some surface water flood risk along the western boundary, likely associated with the same tributary.
- Further fluvial modelling will be required to properly determine risk.

3. Historic Flooding Evidence

- No EA flood reports exist for the site itself.
- However, there are flooding reports in the nearby vicinity, and lack of site-specific reports does not confirm absence of past flooding due to its undeveloped nature. Specific- reports do not confirm absence of past flooding due to its undeveloped nature.

4. SuDS and Drainage Requirements

- The drainage strategy must be designed to meet 2025 Defra National SuDS Standards, including:
 - rainwater harvesting,
 - above-ground multifunctional SuDS,
 - water quality treatment measures
 - -quality treatment measures.
- If the site is developed in phases, an overall drainage strategy must be prepared to ensure standards are met across all phases.
- Soils: The site is likely to have loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage, meaning infiltration SuDS may not be viable and ground investigations are required.

5. Watercourse Protection

- The tributary, along with all watercourses, ponds, and ditches, must be:
 - retained, and
 - provided with a suitable undeveloped buffer.

6. Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) Requirements

- The watercourse is classed as high distinctiveness, so:
 - A River Condition Assessment is required by an accredited surveyor.
 - The assessment must be submitted with any planning application.
 - The riparian zone (10m from bank top) must be included and not encroached upon.

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

ALV02 – Key Points

- BNG units for the watercourse and ponds must be achieved on site.

7. Climate Change Adaptation

- EA supports natural infrastructure on site but encourages:
 - Blue/green infrastructure, and
 - Clearer definition of climate change adaptation measures, ensuring they include future flood risk resilience.

WCC Planning and Transport Planning

If development were to happen at this site, WCC Ecology team recommend that the development must take account of or include delivery of a substantive contribution towards the Draft LNRS's species-rich neutral grassland (opportunities for habitat delivery are considered to be 'high' throughout the site's current red-line boundary) and riparian buffer objectives (on the western edge) (PM02 and PM29).

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Contaminated Land

No sites of contaminated land concern identified within parcel which is shown to be undeveloped parcel of land (grassland) according to available historical maps. Allotment gardens are shown to the south on maps dated c. 1919/43. The site is shown to fall within a landfill buffer for Land at Perryfields/Roberts Corner (Landfill) - which was thought to have accepted inert, industrial, special and some household wastes between 1987 and 1991.

Nuisance/Noise

Site south of M42 with predicted high road traffic noise. A full acoustic assessment of these impacts will be required along with good acoustic design to enable suitable development of the edges of this site.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

Ecological Constraints

- The site includes grassland parcels that may be unimproved according to the Worcestershire Habitat Inventory.
 - If confirmed as priority habitat, the Wildlife Trust states the allocation may not be appropriate.

Water and Pollution Risks

- The allocation lies close to the River Arrow Local Wildlife Site (LWS). Therefore:
 - drainage,
 - pollution control, and
 - hydrological linksmust be fully understood and mitigated. These considerations may affect the developable area.

General Requirements

- As with ALV01, the Trust emphasises:
 - need for updated ecological surveys,
 - assessment of impacts on protected species,
 - integration of strong Green and Blue Infrastructure.

Developers/Landowners

Developers/Landowners:

ALV01 Site Promoters – Key Points

Pegasus Group obo Catesby Estates (Site 234)

- BDC should be planning for higher than LHN housing requirement due to factors such as GBBCHMA unmet need, Redditch shortfall, and historic BDC under delivery including AH (40 dpa against need of 92 dpa).
- Site 234 together with 279 (promoted by Bloor Homes and within ALV01 boundary) would form a sustainable, deliverable and policy compliant allocation.
- Bespoke local plan vision should be developed to cover the plan period and potentially beyond.
- Support a hybrid distribution strategy, originating from a mix of the original nine spatial options consulted on at issues & option stage, involving growth at Bromsgrove town as well as the district's Tier 2 settlements such as Alvechurch.
- Alvechurch is regarded as one of the more sustainable settlements in BDC's 2025 Settlement Hierarchy Review and the site benefits from proximity to railway station as well as walking/cycling links to village centre, schools and other services. Site offers an opportunity to develop a complementary mobility hub.
- Masterplan and other joint work with Bloor Homes (Site 279) will ensure a comprehensive development of approx. 400 dwellings.
- Additional car parking for train station can be provided and opportunity for country park to the west of the station (separately promoted site) which would align with this area as a 'discovery gateway' as published in the NT's Eight Hills Spatial Framework (March 2024).
- Argue that site would be considered Grey Belt and therefore sequentially preferable for release, and that existing boundaries of railway line, hedgerows and watercourse can form permanent, defensible boundaries. Also raise issue that BDC Part 2 GB Study (2022) scored parcel high harm based on Purpose C, not A or B (relevant to Grey Belt definition).
- Highlight a need for a new Green/Grey Belt study to reflect recent changes to national policy and guidance and suggest grey belt sites should be prioritised for local plan allocations.

Delta Planning obo Bloor Homes (Site 279)

- Strong support for the proposed allocation of ALV01. The site is adjacent to the settlement boundary and is in a highly sustainable location, scoring well in the BDC Settlement Hierarchy Review.
- Close proximity to Alvechurch Railway Station, improving accessibility and supporting sustainable travel.
- Bloor Homes confirms willingness to work collaboratively with Catesby Estates (adjacent Site 234) to deliver the allocation. The site has the potential to deliver around 400 homes.
- DDS misses an opportunity to include Site 286 west of the railway station, which could provide a country park to enhance green infrastructure networks and provide accessible open space for future communities. Would align with the 'discovery gateway' aspirations in the NT's 8 Hills Spatial Framework (2024).
- ALV01 provides an opportunity for additional station car parking as well as other supporting infrastructure for the train station in line with DDS para.7.17.

The summaries below are from site promoters who represent sites submitted for consideration that were not presented as preferable for allocation in the consultation document. Comments tend to challenge the housing number or raise concerns regarding the delivery of the potential site allocations in order that additional/alternative sites (their sites) be included for allocation as the plan progresses.

Developers/Landowners:

Settlement-wide (other Alvechurch Site Promoters) – Key Points

Avison Young obo Taylor Wimpey – Site 251

Various reasons why DDS underestimates BDC housing land requirement: 3,000 commitments uncertain, site capacity assumptions (in the 9k) are untested, no trajectory provided to demonstrate a 5YLS, no safeguarded land identified contrary to NPPF, no allowance for unmet need from conurbation.

Tyler Parkes obo Armadale Properties Ltd – Site 156 (plus additional land rear of 3-4 The Square)

ALV01 and ALV02 both questionable allocations based on existing constraints, particularly ALV02 based on being a linear, unnatural extension to the village. ALV01 would result in top-heavy extension to village in a southerly direction and would dramatically alter the visual approaches to Alvechurch from the south.

RCA Regeneration obo Hunter Capital – Site 284

DDS has significantly understated housing requirement due to lack of consideration of wider strategic (GBBCHMA) needs. There is also an over reliance on large allocations (ten sites proposing 300+ dwellings) which are more likely to have long lead-in times, major infrastructure requirements and greater risk of delayed delivery. Smaller, immediately deliverable sites are required.

RPS obo St Philips Land Ltd, Messrs Johnson, Wild and McIntyre – Site 229

DDS underestimates housing need, including due to unmet need from GBBCHMA, and fails to take account of an affordable housing shortfall – HEDNA (2022) is outdated and true affordable housing need likely to be much higher (172 dpa). Heavy reliance on larger sites hinders early-year delivery [*RPS obo St Philips Land Ltd, Messrs Johnson, Wild and McIntyre*].

ALV01 and ALV02 face significant constraints to delivery and concern regarding inconsistent treatment of ALV02 and Site 229 with regards to noise impact from adjacent M42. The Sustainability Appraisal must also assess individual site options and other reasonable alternatives such as higher growth scenarios.

Lichfields obo CDF100 Ltd – Site 240

DDS should address unmet needs from GBBCHMA, including suggestion of BDC requirement to meet 9% of unmet needs based on 2022 research undertaken by Lichfields. Agreed that Alvechurch is a sustainable settlement and suitable for growth. DDS evidence base should be updated to reflect higher housing need, including unmet GBBCHMA need, and new national policy in particular grey belt definition.

The Council's HEDNA identifies a severe undersupply of industrial land, particularly strategic scale B8 logistics floorspace, and recommends a need for a 25ha strategic employment site near a motorway junction. This also aligns with regional employment opportunity areas along the M42 corridor. BDC should also be contributing to unmet employment needs arising from the Black Country FEMA.

Conclusion

This document summarises the consultation responses in relation to the settlement and the potential sites for allocation (edged in blue on the above map) only. It highlights areas of concern associated with potential development allocations in and around this settlement, that have been voiced through the consultation process. Comments made relating to other submitted sites (edged in black on the above map) have been used to inform the wider settlement issues.

Further work still needs to be undertaken, which includes but not limited to:

- Continued analysis of all representations received,
- Additional evidence collection,
- Further Consideration of alternative sites for potential allocation.
- Follow up and clarification of required infrastructure provision to support future development options.