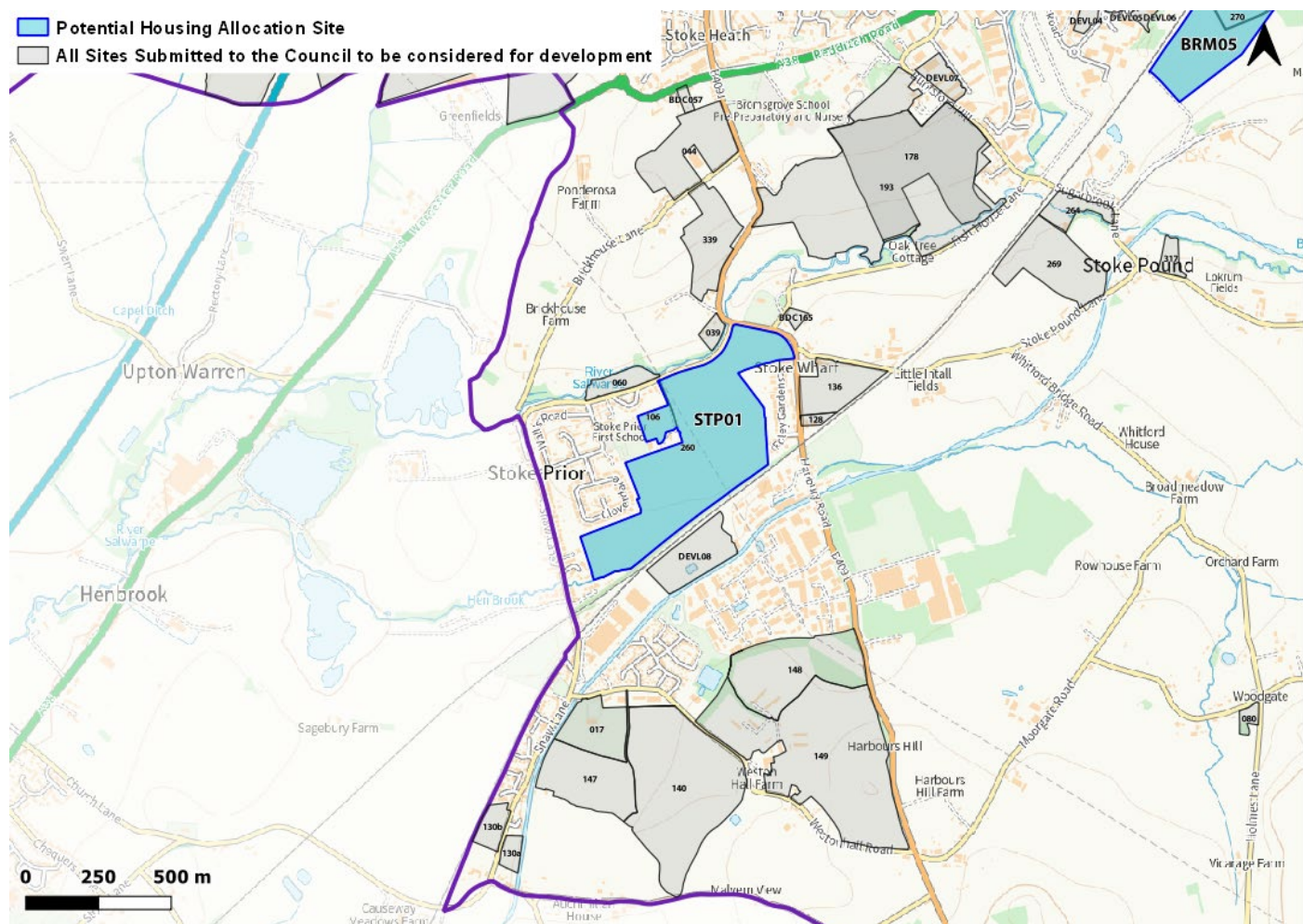


Settlement Summary: Stoke Prior



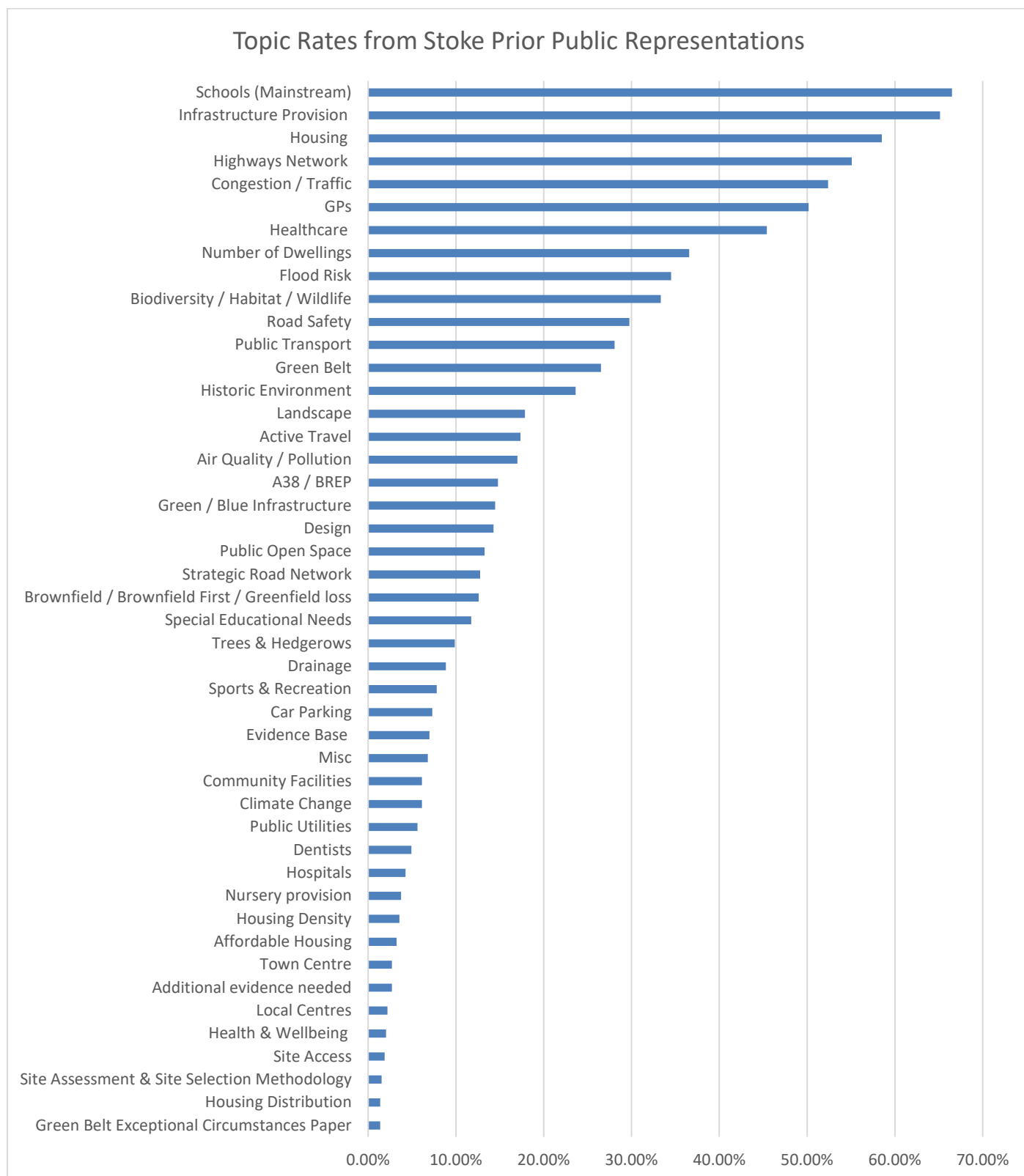
Introduction

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 Stoke Prior 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

Highways Network: Hanbury Turn (A38 junction) & diversion effects: Regular queues back towards the church; when the M5/A38 hiccup, through-traffic overwhelms the village.

Rail/canal bridges on Shaw Lane & Hanbury Road: Low headroom; poor forward visibility; frequent HGV bridge strikes and reversing manoeuvres reported; “single-file” effect causes tailbacks; several note bridge-foot flooding.

Westonhall Road / Excool: Reported as a “bottleneck” already; concern this will worsen with site traffic and future residents.

Fish House Lane / Stoke Pound Lane: Named for tight geometry and poor visibility at junctions with Hanbury Road.

Flood Risk: Known local flood points: Junction by St Michael’s Church (Shaw Lane/Hanbury Road); under the Navigation bridge; Shaw Lane low spots; Westonhall Road; Stoke Pound Lane. Some residents say the village can become “an island” during heavy rain.

Hen Brook/culverts and run-off: Multiple concerns that additional hard surfacing will accelerate run-off towards Hen Brook/Salwarpe; balancing ponds and culvert capacity are specifically raised. One respondent cites flooding on 19/10/25.

Schools (Mainstream): Stoke Prior First School: Cited as oversubscribed; physical expansion is questioned. Multiple comments provide specific counts e.g., 64 applications for 30 Reception places at Stoke Prior First School in the last year and middle/high schools cited as at or over capacity (percentages listed for local schools). These are used to question the feasibility of on-site expansion versus the need for a new school site.

GP’s: Specific GP capacity shortfall reiterated separately from general healthcare.

Road Safety: Speeding, narrow pavements, bridge approaches and school-time risks.

Public Transport: 145 bus service viability plan: Beyond “more buses”, several ask for a timetabled evening/Sunday uplift on the 145 secured by condition/obligation (some note operator fragility if school-gate parking persists), to avoid locking new residents into car dependency.

Historic Environment: Church setting & view corridors: Because St Michael’s Church (Grade I) and its Lych Gate (Grade II) sit opposite the site, residents ask for generous setbacks, seasonal view testing (leaf-off) and low-rise, low-illumination frontages with dark-sky lighting, to avoid harm to significance and night-time character. Several cite a recent nearby refusal for 78 dwellings as a cautionary precedent.

Non-designated heritage: The Stoke Farm Reformatory School association is highlighted as locally significant; requests include proportionate assessment and interpretation within the masterplan. Some advocate for Local Green Space designation of the well-used meadows/footpaths on significance, recreational and beauty grounds.

Standout / unique insights raised

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

- Two low railway bridges (Shaw Lane and Hanbury Road) repeatedly cited for: single-file working, poor forward visibility, height restrictions.
- Bridge strike evidence (FOI claim): One detailed objection cites Freedom of Information data that the Hanbury Road railway bridge has been struck 18 times in 10 years, causing ~1,047 minutes of train delays. Claim used to argue that adding site traffic without a bridge strategy is unsafe/unsound.

- Measured vehicle speeds: A resident references a Transportation Consultancy survey showing 85th percentile speeds of 38.4–38.8 mph on Hanbury Road (30 mph limit), to support crossings/traffic-calming and to evidence current non-compliance.

Members of the Public:

STP01 – Key Points

Public Utilities: Overhead pylons/wayleaves across the site flagged for design sterilisation/health perception issues.

Electric substation “prone to overload”, recurring power cuts, and Severn Trent drainage/wastewater capacity concerns are highlighted for a utilities capacity check.

Landscape: Subsidence/brine extraction risk raised repeatedly; one cites a 2025 ground collapse in the play park opposite Excool as a cautionary local example.

Biodiversity/ Habitat/Wildlife: >90% of the site lies within a SSSI Impact Risk Zone, asserting that Natural England consultation is triggered for residential schemes of ≥50–100 homes in rural locations—early ecological design/tests are essential.

A specialist survey is referenced claiming ~862 invertebrate species, 70+ bird species (including red/amber-listed), badgers, bats, otters, great crested newts, plus a traditional/veteran orchard—framed as irreplaceable habitat and part of a wildlife corridor linked to the Salwarpe and the Cadbury/Upton Warren wetland context.

Flood Risk: Several submissions list exact flood locations (Shaw Lane/Hanbury Road by St Michael’s, under the Navigation bridge, low points on Shaw Lane, Westonhall Road, Stoke Pound Lane) and one cites flooding on 19/10/25.

Car Parking: School drop-off & parking design up front: Specific asks for off-street drop-off/collection bays and staff/parent parking to remove standing traffic from Ryefields Road and the bend by Stoke Prior First School (some go further: reserve land for a new school within STP01).

Active-travel: Widened pavements on Hanbury Road, controlled crossings (near the park/school/local shops), and a legible cycle route towards A38/Bromsgrove are requested before first occupation, not as late-stage extras. A Shaw Lane speed-management feature (e.g., chicane) is suggested by name.

Examples of suggested specific infrastructure requirements

- Resolve the two low railway/canal bridge constraints (Shaw Lane & Hanbury Road) before early occupations. Measures suggested included improved approach geometry/forward visibility, height-controlled traffic management, better advance HGV signing and a robust diversion strategy for over-height vehicles.
- Upgrade the Hanbury Turn / A38 junction to handle peak-time queues and reduce village rat-running when the A38/M5 are disrupted (queue management, signal optimisation or physical layout changes).
- Tackle known local pinch-points: targeted works at Westonhall Road/Excool (localised widening/priority control) and visibility/safety upgrades at Fish House Lane and Stoke Pound Lane junctions with Hanbury Road.

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

Settlement-wide – Key Points

Parish Councils

Comments from other local community groups and parish councils are reflected in the public comments above. Parish Council comments have now been separated out for clarity.

Stoke Parish Council

Strong objection to the proposal for 500 homes at Ryefields Farm (STP01).

Scale of Development & Infrastructure

- Stoke Prior is a small village already experiencing recent growth.
- Existing development (e.g. Henbrook Gardens) failed to deliver promised community facilities and shops. Concerns that new infrastructure promised in the plan is unlikely to materialise and current infrastructure would be overwhelmed by 500 homes.

Traffic & Highway Safety

- Significant existing issues:
 - HGVs blocking roads, especially at railway bridge on Hanbury Road
 - Congestion at peak times (traffic queues back past St Michael's Church)
 - Dangerous conditions on key routes (e.g. Shaw Lane, Hanbury Road)
- Key impacts of development:
 - Additional traffic from 1,000 extra vehicles likely
 - Roads are unsuitable for increased traffic
 - Severe safety risks, particularly:
 - Around school access points (Ryefields Road)
 - Near doctor's surgery and recreation areas

Climate Change & Flooding

- Site is partly prone to flooding (e.g. Henbrook tunnel/bridge area)
- Increased development would:
 - Raise traffic emissions
 - Conflict with climate resilience objectives

Pylons & Health Concerns

- Site crossed by high-voltage pylons
- Concerns regarding potential health risks from electromagnetic fields, especially for children

Green Belt & Policy Conflict

- Entire site is Green Belt
- Draft Plan incorrectly describes Stoke Prior as non-Green Belt
- Development would undermine Green Belt purposes:
 - Preventing urban sprawl
 - Preserving countryside and village setting

Biodiversity & Environmental Impact

- Site and surrounding area are highly sensitive environmentally:
- Adjacent to:
 - SSSI wetlands (Christopher Cadbury Reserve)
 - Ancient woodland (Pipers Hill Common)
 - River Salwarpe (local wildlife site)
- Important ecological features:
 - 70+ bird species (11 endangered)
 - Bats, orchards, oak trees with rare species
 - 860+ moths and butterflies recorded
 - Insufficient weight given to biodiversity in planning and development would damage habitats and biodiversity

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

Settlement-wide – Key Points

Heritage Impact

- Nearby:
 - Grade I listed St Michael's Church (12th century)
 - Conservation area and historic landscape
 - Current open land contributes to the setting and character of the village

Landscape & Amenity

- Site is a significant open meadow and important to the village setting and views. It provides recreational walking routes and has visual and environmental value

NHS – Herefordshire and Worcestershire Integrated Care System

Core message: New housing in Bromsgrove District will significantly increase demand on healthcare services. Without developer-funded mitigation, health services will be unable to cope, making development unsustainable.

No Stoke Prior-specific comments received.

South Worcestershire Councils

SWCs request:

- Ongoing dialogue with Bromsgrove DC and Worcestershire CC.
- Consideration of transport and infrastructure impacts on South Worcestershire.
- Identification and delivery of necessary mitigation.

WCC Education

Stoke Prior: Based on consultation for 500 dwellings in Stoke Prior

- Relevant schools: Stoke Prior First, Aston Fields Middle, St John's CE Middle, South Bromsgrove High (Private Finance Initiative) (PFI).
- Pupil requirements generated by proposed development: Early Years (included in Bromsgrove settlement requirements), First = 25 Per Year Group (PYG), Middle and High = combined with requirements from other relevant settlements and detailed in the Bromsgrove settlement requirements.
- New provision required: First = 0.9 Form Entry (FE) (Expansion depending on feasibility), Middle and High = requirements considered in relation to Bromsgrove town and all its feeder schools, not extrapolated to individual village settlements.

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

STP01 – Key Points

Environment Agency

- STP01 has an active Waste Management Licence within close proximity, registered to *Total Metal Recovery Ltd* (Environmental Permit number: EA/EPR/HB3706FE).
- Implications
 - Development must consider Agents of Change principles.
 - New residential or sensitive uses must provide mitigation to avoid complaints, including protection from noise, odour, dust, vibration, litter or flies
- If mitigation is not achievable, minimum buffer distances may be required.

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

STP01 – Key Points

- Phased development poses risks because initial residents may experience impacts before mitigation for later phases is delivered.

Historic England

- Includes designated and non-designated assets.
- A specific risk is highlighted regarding the Grade I listed Church of St Michael's.
- A heritage impact assessment and setting assessment will be required.

National Grid Electricity Transmission

- NGET asks the Council to include policy wording requiring developers to:
 - Demonstrate how the NGET Design Guide and principles have been applied.
 - Develop a strategy for managing the presence of overhead lines within affected sites.
 - Ensure statutory safety clearances are maintained.
- Engage early with NGET and NESO regarding capacity and infrastructure.

Natural England

Natural England are happy with the allocation and that it does not have an impact on any protected sites/landscapes nearby.

North Worcestershire Water Management

Flood risk & water environment

- The site is within Flood Zone 1 (low fluvial flood risk).
- Hen Brook lies to the south, with areas of Flood Zones 2 & 3 present adjacent to it.
- National modelling identifies surface water flood areas across the site, linked to ponds and ditches.
- Although no flood reports exist for the site, nearby areas have known incidents; lack of records does not guarantee absence of past flooding.

SuDS & Drainage

- Must follow 2025 Defra National SuDS Standards, including:
 - Rainwater harvesting
 - Above-ground SuDS
 - Water quality treatment
- A phased development would require an overarching surface water drainage strategy.
- Soils data indicates slightly impeded drainage, meaning infiltration SuDS may not be viable.
- Ditches and ponds must be retained with appropriate undeveloped buffers.

Ecology & BNG

- Watercourses and ditches on and adjacent to the site are considered high distinctiveness.
- A river condition assessment (qualified surveyor) is required.
- The 10m riparian zone must be assessed and protected (no encroachment).
- BNG units for watercourses and ponds must be achieved on-site.
- Green corridors should be provided, specifically along Hen Brook.
- Recommendations include:
 - Enhancing water vole habitat potential
 - Managing Himalayan Balsam
- Because the site drains into the Upton Warren SSSI, significant attention to water quality is required.

Statutory Consultees and Other Stakeholders:

STP01 – Key Points

WCC Planning and Transport Planning

Archaeology:

- Potential impact to the setting of a Grade-1 listed church

Landscape:

- Proposed allocation STP01 will effectively result in the coalescence of existing development at Stoke Prior. Landscape features are degraded, and therefore it will be important to develop linkages to connect with the wider Green Infrastructure network.

Ecology:

- Southern half of the site suitable for wetland/wading bird habitat (including Curlew).
- A Habitat Regulations Assessment (HRA) will be required.
- Potential functional link to Severn Estuary SPA.
- Within Impact Risk Zone for Upton Warren SSSI; consultation with Natural England required.

Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Contaminated Land:

Site is located in close proximity to a number of sites identified as potential contaminated land concern although do not appear to fall within the site boundary. There are also multiple areas of landfill and significant unknown filled ground surrounding the site including Polymer Latex (Landfill Site), BGS_L 1&2 Sludge Beds, Stoke Prior (Landfill), Salt Works (Landfill), Shaw Lane Tip (Landfill), pond and quarry, and filled former stream channels. A cemetery / graveyard and the filled streams are located close to the northern boundary, Shaw Lane Tip (Landfill) is located close to the western boundary (c. 15M). The railway runs adjacent to the southwestern boundary with numerous potential sites of concern including the various landfill listed above, former Polymer Latex site, chemical works, asbestos manufacture, engineering works, sewage, and other industrial uses, adjacent to the railway. The site itself historically housed the wider area of Stoke Prior Reformatory, later to become a farm, various gardens and orchards. Modern mapping indicates the site to comprise agricultural fields. **Nuisance/Noise:** Railway line runs along southern boundary of site which will require an acoustic assessment of impact and mitigation but unlikely to affect development.

Air Quality:

Possible impact on Redditch Road AQMA, full air quality assessment needed to determine impacts.

Worcestershire Wildlife Trust

- Include well-considered and effective Green & Blue Infrastructure as a central requirement.
- Undergo further ecological assessment before allocation. Assess impacts on:
 - Designated assets
 - Protected species
 - Potential priority habitats
- Site may support:
 - Ground-nesting birds
 - Open country species, including hares (anecdotal records)
- Commission updated habitat surveys, which may reveal ecological constraints affecting the developable area.

Developers/Landowners

Developers/Landowners:

STP01 Site Promoters – Key Points

Harris Lamb obo Terra Strategic (Site 260)

- Overall housing requirement is too low as no uplift is made for affordability pressures, ageing population, economic growth or unmet need from GBBCHMA and Redditch.
- Council's assumptions on existing commitments for housing supply are unrealistic therefore more allocations are required. Headroom also needed in supply to allow for under delivery or delayed delivery on some sites.
- Support focusing development on sustainable settlements and edge of conurbation, however as housing requirement figure is too low then cannot finalise distribution strategy.
- Affordable housing needs are significantly understated at 92 units pa. Delivery has only been 60 units pa which worsens the backlog. Housing waiting list of c.3,000 households demonstrates the pressing need.
- Ageing population of BDC means fewer working age residents which threatens workforce supply, economic vitality and the tax base.
- Council's evidence undervalues the site's sustainability, suitability and deliverability and overstates constraints. Site can deliver social, transport and green infrastructure.
- The site should be classed as Grey Belt making it more suitable for release from Green Belt.
- Long-term growth aspirations may be unrealistic around motorway junctions but plan must still identify safeguarded land beyond the plan period.

Planning Prospects obo Mr P Ingram (Site 106)

- Standard method figure to 2043 should be treated as a minimum requirement to align with government intention to significantly boost supply of housing. Urgency in Bromsgrove due to failure to maintain 5YLS and low HDT score.
- Green Belt should be fully reviewed as previous local plan commitment by 2023 did not happen.
- Consultation showed no clear preference for any one distribution option but priority should be Bromsgrove's own settlements, especially those with strong services and facilities, public transport and local employment opportunities. Stoke Prior is identified as such a settlement.
- Employment opportunities near Stoke Prior reduces out commuting and makes housing provision more sustainable.
- Support proposed allocation of STP01 but emphasise that western parcel (site 106) could be delivered independently of the wider allocation and would have less of an impact in Green Belt, landscape and heritage terms.
- Smaller site has suitable access with limited constraints and good proximity to existing local services. It is also suitable for early delivery in the plan period.

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 Stoke Prior Site Promoters) – Key Points

RCA Regeneration obo Spitfire Homes Ltd (Site 130a and 130b)

- Council has identified Stoke Prior as a settlement capable of accommodating growth as reflected by proposed allocation north of the village.
- Bromsgrove has acute housing pressures and including smaller sites would support a balanced spatial distribution across the district.

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.