

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan 2025-2041

Basic Conditions Statement

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 A draft Neighbourhood Development Plan must meet a set of basic conditions before it can be put to a referendum and be made. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended).
- 1.2 This Statement has been prepared for Droitwich Spa Town Council to demonstrate that the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Development Plan 2025-2041 ('Neighbourhood Plan') meets legal requirements and the prescribed basic conditions.
- 1.3 The Statement confirms that:
- The legal requirements and certain basic conditions have been met (section 2).
 - Having regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State, it is appropriate to make the Neighbourhood Plan (section 3).
 - The making of the Neighbourhood Plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development (section 4).
 - The Neighbourhood Plan does not breach and is otherwise compatible with assimilated EU obligations, and that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (section 5).

2. LEGAL REQUIREMENTS AND BASIC CONDITIONS

- 2.1 The Neighbourhood Plan relates to the area that was designated by Wychavon District Council as a Neighbourhood Area on 11 January 2017. It relates only to this Area. No other Neighbourhood Plan has or is being made for the Area.
- 2.2 Droitwich Spa Town Council is a qualifying body.
- 2.3 The Neighbourhood Plan specifies the period for which it is to have effect, 2025-2041.
- 2.4 The Neighbourhood Plan sets out policies in relation to the use or development of land in the Neighbourhood Area, and which have been prepared in accordance with the statutory provisions. In particular it includes:
- Policies designed to achieve objectives that relate to the particular characteristics or circumstances of the Neighbourhood Area and to specific sites.
 - Requirements with respect to design that relate to development throughout the Neighbourhood Area and at specific sites, which the qualifying body considers should be met for planning permission for the development to be granted.
- 2.5 So far as the qualifying body considers appropriate having regard to the subject matter of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Plan is designed to secure that the development and use of land in the Neighbourhood Area contributes to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change. Climate change mitigation and adaption is addressed with the Neighbourhood Plan's Vision, objectives, and policies. The Neighbourhood Plan's policies on design, biodiversity, housing development and walking and cycling will contribute to climate change mitigation and adaption. Policy SPA1 on design seeks the retention of natural site features such as trees, hedgerows and ponds, and the provision of new tree planting and other landscaping. Policy SPA5 on biodiversity seeks the protection, conservation and enhancement of natural habitats. Policy SPA9 on housing development promotes energy and water conservation, the generation of renewable energy and other sustainability measures. Policy SPA16 promotes walking and cycling over other means of travel.
- 2.6 So far as the qualifying body considers appropriate having regard to the subject matter of the Neighbourhood Plan, the Plan takes account of the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy. Biodiversity is encompassed within the Neighbourhood Plan's Vision and objectives. Policy SPA5 deals with biodiversity and supports the delivery of the Strategy. Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity identified by the Strategy in the Neighbourhood Area include parts of Lido Park/St. Peter's Fields, Droitwich Community Woods, Briar Hill Coppice, the corridors of the River Salwarpe and the Droitwich Canals, and Vines Park. Policy SPA5 recognises the importance of these areas for biodiversity and the policy's provisions will contribute to the Strategy's priorities and practical actions for nature recovery ('Potential Measures'). These include increasing

the extent, connectedness and quality of wildlife habitats within the built environment (Potential Measure 38) and enhancing community green spaces for wildlife (Potential Measure 39, see below). In addition, many of the areas proposed for designation as Local Green Space by policy SPA6 are Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity; the Neighbourhood Plan recognises their importance for wildlife (Plan Table 1 refers) and this will support their recovery and enhancement as appropriate. Finally, policy SPA1 on design seeks the retention of natural features of biodiversity value and the provision of new tree planting and other landscaping and open space which provides for wildlife; this will contribute to priorities on native trees and to Potential Measure 38.

- 2.7 The Neighbourhood Plan does not include provision about development that is excluded development, such as mineral and waste matters, nationally significant infrastructure projects or other prescribed development under section 61K of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. It is not inconsistent with or (in substance) repeat any national development management policy.
- 2.8 The making of the Neighbourhood Plan will not have the effect of preventing development from taking place which is proposed in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of the area) and if it took place would provide housing. The South Worcestershire Development Plan Review (SWDPR) allocates four sites for development which includes housing in the Neighbourhood Area. Two of these have planning permission (land off Tagwell Road and land at Keepers Cottage, Newlands Lane). The Neighbourhood Plan includes site-specific policies for the other two sites (land at Union Lane, policy SPA11, and Netherwich Canal Basin, policy SPA14) which are designed to positively support the delivery of these SWDPR allocations. None of the Neighbourhood Plan's policies will prevent the development of any SWDPR allocations.
- 2.9 No requirements have been imposed in relation to the making of the Neighbourhood Plan by or under Part 6 of the Levelling-up and Regeneration Act 2023 (environmental outcomes reports).
- 2.10 The making of the Neighbourhood Plan will not result in the development plan for the area of the authority proposing that less housing is provided by means of development taking place in that area than if the neighbourhood plan were not to be made. The SWDPR does not identify any housing requirement for the Neighbourhood Area, on the basis that the overall housing target for South Worcestershire is to be met through the SWDPR itself. As explained above this includes four allocations including housing in the Neighbourhood Area. In addition to these site allocations, the Neighbourhood Plan sets out that dwellings are also expected to arise through windfall housing completions which could include possible opportunities for housing to be provided on appropriate town centre sites (see Plan para. 6.1). The Neighbourhood Plan does not include any policies which could prevent or unduly restrict the delivery of housing.
- 2.11 The remaining basic conditions are addressed in sections 3, 4 and 5 of this Statement.

3. REGARD TO NATIONAL POLICIES AND ADVICE

- 3.1 The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared with appropriate regard to the guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹ and Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).² The Neighbourhood Plan will help achieve national planning policies at the parish level. The regard had to national policies is set out in detail on a policy-by-policy basis in Table 1.
- 3.2 NPPF paragraph 13 sets out requirements for how communities should engage in neighbourhood planning. In accordance with this national policy, the Neighbourhood Plan supports the delivery of strategic policies set out in the SWDPR, including its policies for housing and economic development, and seeks to shape and direct development that is outside these strategic policies.
- 3.3 In accord with NPPF paragraph 16, the Neighbourhood Plan:
- Has been prepared with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development, as explained in section 4 of this Statement.
 - Has been prepared positively through community engagement as explained in the Consultation Statement.
 - Has been shaped by early, proportionate and effective engagement with the community, local organisations, businesses, development interests, infrastructure providers and operators, and statutory consultees, as explained in the Consultation Statement.
 - Contains policies that are clearly written and unambiguous.
 - Is accessible via the Town Council website.
 - Serves a clear purpose in the context of the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area, complementing rather than duplicating existing national and SWDPR policies as explained in this section.
- 3.4 The NPPF sets out more specific guidance on neighbourhood plans as follows:
- NPPF paragraph 30: the Town Council have used neighbourhood planning powers to develop a local vision for the Neighbourhood Area and to influence local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan.
 - NPPF paragraph 30: the Neighbourhood Plan does not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies of the SWDPR or undermine those policies. Footnote 17 states that neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in any development plan that covers their area. The Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies

¹ December 2024.

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

of the SWDPR. In their response to the draft Neighbourhood Plan in July 2025, Wychavon District Council officers indicate that they are content that the Neighbourhood Plan content aligns with the identified strategic policies in the SWDP and the relevant policies in the submitted SWDPR. Table 2 sets out how the Neighbourhood Plan's policies align with relevant policies in the SWDPR. These are identified as strategic or non-strategic based on the guidance provided for this purpose by the South Worcestershire Councils.

- NPPF paragraph 32: the preparation and review of all policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focussed tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned. The Neighbourhood Plan has been informed by a wide range of existing evidence sources, supplemented by a community questionnaire survey and commissioned work on design and housing need. The resultant 'evidence base' is referred to throughout the Neighbourhood Plan as required and is listed at Appendix A of the Neighbourhood Plan.

3.5 PPG indicates that a policy should be clear and unambiguous to enable a decision maker to apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. The guidance further advises that policies should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence, reflecting and responding to both the planning context and the unique characteristics of the area for which it has been prepared.³ There is no 'tick box' list of evidence required, but proportionate, robust evidence should support the choices made and the approach taken. The evidence should be drawn upon to explain succinctly the intention and rationale of the policies.⁴ In accordance with this guidance, the Neighbourhood Plan's policies have been carefully crafted to be clear and unambiguous and are based on appropriate and proportionate evidence.

³ PPG Paragraph: 041 Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.

⁴ PPG Paragraph: 040 Reference ID: 41-040-20160211.

Table 1: National policies by Neighbourhood Plan policy

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
Policy SPA1: Design Development proposals should maintain and enhance the local distinctiveness of the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area and achieve a high quality of design by: 1. having regard to the Droitwich Spa Design Guidance and Codes and other relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). A Design and Access Statement or similar should be provided to show how the Droitwich Spa Design Guidance and Codes and SPDs have been addressed and positively influenced the proposed design solution; and 2. respecting the character of the locality and street scene as to layout, density, height, massing, architectural detailing, building to building distances, boundary treatment, landscaping, and materials; and 3. retaining natural site features of amenity and biodiversity value, such as trees, ponds, and hedgerows, as far as possible; and 4. providing new tree planting and other landscaping and open space which is in keeping with local townscape character and provides for wildlife, with a preference for native deciduous species; and 5. being capable of being safely accessed from the local road network without undue impacts on the character of the locality and be provided with sufficient off-road vehicle parking; and 6. avoiding creating unacceptable impacts on neighbourhood amenity including from noise, volume and nature of traffic generated, dust or odour. Modern design approaches will be welcomed where they make a positive contribution to the character of the area and contribute to local distinctiveness.	Policy SPA1 has regard to NPPF chapter 12 which sees good design as a key aspect of sustainable development (para. 131), and to the components of good design as set out in para. 135. These include good architecture, layout, and appropriate and effective landscaping. In accord with NPPF paras. 133 and 134, the Droitwich Spa Design Guidance and Codes have been prepared to provide maximum clarity about design expectations at an early stage. In line with NPPF para.198, the policy aims to prevent development from contributing to unacceptable levels of pollution including from noise.
Policy SPA2: Historic environment Development proposals should protect, conserve and where possible enhance the historic environment of the Neighbourhood Area and its contribution to local character and distinctiveness. This particularly applies to the historic core of Droitwich Spa and its evolved and connected heritage of street and plot pattern, buildings, open spaces, trees, Canal and other water features, archaeological remains, associated views and setting. In considering the impact of proposed development on heritage assets, appropriate account will be taken of their significance (including any contribution made by their	Policy SPA2 has had regard to national policy in NPPF chapter 16 which deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It requires heritage assets to be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance in line with NPPF para. 202, and distinguishes between designated and non-designated heritage assets in accord with the national approach.

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
setting) by: 1. giving great weight to conserving designated heritage assets (listed buildings, scheduled monuments and the Droitwich Spa, Droitwich Canal, and Droitwich Link Canal Conservation Areas); and 2. for non-designated heritage assets including other archaeological sites and buildings of local interest, balancing the scale of any harm or loss against their significance; and 3. recognising the desirability of putting heritage assets to viable uses consistent with their conservation, particularly where this contributes to the regeneration of the town centre and to tourism; and 4. requiring development proposals to be accompanied by Heritage Impact Assessments where the significance of heritage assets may be affected. Where proposals may affect archaeological interests, an appropriate desk-based assessment and where necessary a field evaluation should be provided. These should be made available to enable them to be considered during determination of the relevant planning application.	
Policy SPA3: Droitwich Spa Conservation Area Development proposals within the Droitwich Spa Conservation Area or affecting its setting should preserve or enhance its character or appearance, having regard to the significance and special interest of the Conservation Area as set out in the Appraisal and Management Plan. Proposals will be supported provided that they: 1. serve to preserve or positively enhance the Conservation Area by virtue of their use, character, and design; and 2. respect the historic plan form including street pattern, plot boundaries and building to plot characteristics, recognising the variations that occur in these factors within the Conservation Area; and 3. avoid any demolition of a building or structure if its loss would be harmful to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area; and 4. ensure that any extensions and service buildings are subsidiary to the main property, are not unduly prominent in the street scene, and use sympathetic materials to the main property; and 5. reflect the size, height, scale, proportions, and detailing of the existing and surrounding historic built form; and 6. use materials and vernacular techniques to reflect the historic context; and	Policy SPA3 has regard to national policy in NPPF chapter 16 which deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
7. retain the important boundary features, significant views, landmark and focal features, prominent open spaces, significant trees and tree groups, and significant water features identified in the Appraisal and Management Plan; and 8. specify street furniture and materials for surface and boundary treatments which do not detract from the historic environment; and 9. ensure that proposed shopfronts and signage respect the historic character of the host building in their siting, size, materials, and design, and having regard to the Shopfront Design Guide.	
Policy SPA4: Droitwich Canals Conservation Areas Development proposals within the Droitwich Canals Conservation Areas or their setting should preserve or enhance their character or appearance, having regard to the significance and special interest of the Conservation Areas including as set out in the Conservation Management Plan. Proposals will be supported provided that they: 1. serve to preserve or positively enhance the Conservation Areas by virtue of their use, character, design, car parking arrangements and signage; and 2. avoid any demolition or removal of a building or structure particularly including original Canal features if its loss would be harmful to the character of the Conservation Area; and 3. where repair work is proposed, use matching traditional materials and vernacular techniques wherever possible; and 4. specify matching traditional materials or native species for any new boundary treatments such as walls, railings, fencing or hedging; and 5. ensure any adaptations to built heritage features, or to the towpath to facilitate access by all users, do not degrade their character, appearance, significance, or setting.	Policy SPA4 has regard to national policy in NPPF chapter 16 which deals with conserving and enhancing the historic environment.
Policy SPA5: Biodiversity The protection, conservation, and enhancement of the biodiversity of the Neighbourhood Area, including its Local Wildlife Sites, Priority Habitat Inventory sites, woodland, trees (particularly ancient and veteran trees), hedgerows, grassland, watercourses, and water features will be supported in order to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment and support the delivery of the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy.	Policy SPA5 has regard to national policy in NPPF chapter 15 which deals with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. The policy provides for the protection and enhancement of a range of sites of biodiversity value (NPPF para. 187 a)) and identifies ways in which net gains for biodiversity may be

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
Development proposals in the Neighbourhood Area likely to have an adverse effect on the neighbouring Westwood Great Pool Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or the Oakley Pool SSSI, either on their own or in combination with other developments, will not be supported unless the benefits of the development in the location proposed outweigh both the likely impacts on the features of the Site that make it of special scientific interest and on the national network of SSSI's. In securing measurable net gains for biodiversity, development proposals should: 1. retain, conserve, and enhance existing site features which are of importance to biodiversity, including woodland, trees, hedgerows, water courses and water features; and 2. where new landscaping is proposed, ensure this serves to maintain and enhance biodiversity. New planting should favour native species, and arrangements for the future maintenance of the landscaping scheme should at least maintain its biodiversity value; and 3. take every opportunity to maintain, restore, and enhance the contribution of sites and habitats to the coherence and connectivity of ecological networks in the Neighbourhood Area including the River Salwarpe and Droitwich Canals and Urban Biodiversity Corridors, supporting the delivery of Potential Measure 38 in the Worcestershire Local Nature Recovery Strategy; and 4. make provision for wildlife including for cavity-nesting birds and bats.	achieved in the local context (NPPF para. 192 b)).
Policy SPA6: Local Green Spaces The following areas of land as shown on Plan 5 are designated as Local Green Space: • LGS1: Lido Park/St. Peter's Fields. • LGS2: Vines Park. • LGS3: King Georges Field. • LGS4: Briar Hill. • LGS5: Droitwich Community Woods. • LGS6: Spring Meadow. • LGS7: Copcut Park. • LGS8: Addyes Way. • LGS9: Steynors Avenue. Development will be managed in a manner consistent with that applicable to designated	Policy SPA6 provides for the designation of Local Green Spaces in accord with the provisions of NPPF paras. 106-108. Table 1 in the Neighbourhood Plan explains how each Local Green Space meets the criteria set by NPPF para. 107 for such designation. All the Local Green Spaces are capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
Green Belt.	
Policy SPA7: Key views Where a development proposal within the Neighbourhood Area would have a significant visual impact on the key views (KV) listed below, in Table 2 and on Plan 6, a Townscape/Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment or similar study should be provided to demonstrate that the levels of effects are acceptable, and that the scheme has been sited and designed sensitively and appropriately reflecting, respecting, and where possible, enhancing its townscape and landscape context: • KV1: view from Dodderhill Church grounds towards Vines Park/the town centre. • KV2: view from Netherwich Canal Basin/Vines Park towards Dodderhill church. • KV3: view from Vines Park towards Netherwich Canal Basin. • KV4: view from Vines Park towards Hanbury. • KV5: view from High Street (west) towards Worcester Road. • KV6: view from High Street/Worcester Road junction along High Street. • KV7: view from Victoria Square War Memorial towards The Raven Hotel, Library, and St. Richards House. • KV8: view from St. Richards House towards Wychbold radio masts. • KV9: view from Lido Park towards the bandstand and Herriot's Pool. • KV10: view from by St. Peters Church across Lido Park. • KV11: view from Cockshute Hill/Mayflower Road junction towards the town centre. • KV12: view from Spring Meadow towards Yew Tree Hill Water Tower. • KV13: view from Yew Tree Hill Water Tower by Dove Crescent towards Spring Meadow. • KV14: view from Rebekah Gardens open space towards the town centre. • KV15: view from by Celvestune Way across Copcut Park. • KV16: view from Leisure Centre towards King George V playing fields.	Policy SPA7 seeks to protect key views in the Neighbourhood Area which reference different phases of the town's development, including of townscape, the historic environment, and formal and informal open spaces. In doing so the policy helps to ensure that development will be sympathetic to local character and history, which includes the built environment and its landscape setting (NPPF para. 135 c)).
Policy SPA8: Housing mix Development proposals for new housing of five or more units must demonstrate that they provide market dwellings of a type and size that positively contribute to meeting the latest assessment of housing needs. There is a particular requirement in the Neighbourhood	Policy SPA8 requires new housing to be of a type and size to help meet local needs. The policy has regard to NPPF paras. 61 and 63, which emphasise the importance of addressing

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
Area for: • Dwellings with 2 and 3 bedrooms. • Housing designed to meet the needs of older people including retirement housing and bungalows. On any given scheme the proposed mix should take into account the design, character and density of the surrounding built environment, any other site- or building-specific factors, and viability considerations. Where affordable homes are proposed, an indicative 65% should be provided as affordable housing for rent (social rent and/or affordable rent); 25% as First Homes, and 10% as shared ownership properties. On any given scheme the affordable housing tenure mix should also take into account viability, local need, site- and/or building-specific factors, and location. Where a site includes a mix of affordable and market housing, the affordable units should be distributed across the site and be designed to be indistinguishable from the open market units. Proposals that seek to concentrate different types and tenures of homes in separate groups on a site will not be supported.	the needs of groups with specific housing requirements, including older people, in planning policy.
Policy SPA9: Housing development Development proposals for new housing will be supported provided they: 1. make appropriate provision for infrastructure which is necessary and reasonably related to the development; and 2. provide for energy and water conservation and the generation of renewable energy. All new housing should aim to achieve the highest standards of energy conservation, being ideally carbon neutral whilst as a minimum complying with Building Regulations; and 3. incorporate other sustainability measures to include dwelling orientation and design, construction methods and materials, drainage, and provision for waste recycling, cycle storage, communications and broadband technologies, and electric vehicle charging points; and 4. avoid unacceptable impacts on the amenity of the occupiers of neighbouring dwellings including from loss of privacy, overlooking, and reduction of outlook or daylight; and 5. have safe, direct, and attractive connections by foot and cycle to community facilities and public transport as far as practicable; and 6. are located and designed to avoid adverse impacts on the amenity of the future	Policy SPA9 requires development to have regard to the provision of infrastructure at a local level (NPPF para. 29). The policy encourages designs which achieve a high level of sustainability (NPPF para. 139 b)), the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions (NPPF para. 164 b)), and sustainable transport modes (NPPF para. 109). The policy also protects amenity (NPPF para. 135 f)) and the integration of new development with existing uses (NPPF para. 200).

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
occupants from the operation of existing uses, including business and community uses, where such impacts could lead to unreasonable restrictions being placed on them; and 7. make appropriate provision for private gardens or in the case of flatted accommodation for access to outdoor amenity space in the form of balconies and/or communal open space.	
Policy SPA10: Householder development Proposals for alterations and extensions to existing dwellings or for ancillary development within residential curtilages will be supported where they are in accord with policy SPA9 and: 1. the existing dwelling remains as the dominant element of built form on the curtilage, to which the proposed development is subordinate; and 2. the proposal respects and complements the existing dwelling in massing, height, materials, and detailing; and 3. there are no unacceptable impacts on the amenity of neighbouring properties; and 4. trees and other natural features are retained as far as possible; and 5. the proposal does not lead to an unacceptable loss of on-site parking or of useable private amenity space.	Policy SPA10 seeks to ensure that householder development contributes to well-designed places (NPPF para. 131), including that it functions well, adds to the overall quality of the area, and is sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment (NPPF para. 135).
Policy SPA11: Land north/south of Union Lane Development proposals for land at Union Lane which meet the following requirements and are in accordance with other development plan policies will be supported: 1. provide a high quality and sustainable design, taking account of the Droitwich Spa Design Guidance and Codes, including the site-specific principles provided for the site, and policy SPA1; and 2. provide high quality public realm approaching the Canalside and a public square in the western corner of land south of Union Lane; and 3. include proposals to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists between the railway station, the town centre, and Vines Park/canal towpath, linking to adjacent development sites; and 4. conserve or enhance the site's contribution to the significance of nearby designated heritage assets as part of their setting, and assess the site's potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest; and	Policy SPA11 requires high quality, sustainable design in the development of this SWDPR-allocated site, in accord with NPPF para. 131, to be informed by the Droitwich Spa Design Codes and Guidance (NPPF paras. 133 and 134). The policy supports sustainable transport modes (NPPF para. 109), the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets including archaeology (NPPF para. 202), and biodiversity enhancement (NPPF para. 187 a)). The policy also provides for adequate site investigation in respect of contamination (NPPF para. 196) and protects amenity (NPPF para. 135 f)).

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
5. enhance the value of the site for biodiversity, taking account of the Droitwich Canal Local Wildlife Site to the north and any opportunity to extend or consolidate wildlife corridors; and 6. in respect of the potential for land contamination, demonstrate that the site is or can be made suitable for the proposed use, providing appropriate site investigation information and proposals for mitigation and remediation as may be required; and 7. incorporate suitable measures to ensure no undue adverse impact on the amenity of future residents of the development from noise, light or other factors arising from railway operations or adjoining uses.	
Policy SPA12: New or expanded community facilities Development proposals for new or expanded community facilities including those providing health, educational, sport and leisure services, and services for children, younger and older people will be supported provided that: 1. the facilities are accessible by a choice of transport modes including walking and cycling and include adequate off-road vehicle and cycle parking on the site, with appropriate provision for those with restricted mobility; and 2. there will be no significant harmful impacts on residential amenity; and 3. their siting, scale, and design respects the character of the surrounding area, including any historic and natural assets. Proposals for community facilities enabling the delivery of new or expanded health services and provision for children, younger and older people will be particularly encouraged. Developer contributions via Section 106, Community Infrastructure Levy and/or other mechanisms will be sought to enable new or expanded provision of community services to ensure that new development fully mitigates the additional demands on service provision arising.	Policy SPA12 plans positively for the provision of community facilities in line with NPPF para. 98 a) to help enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments.
Policy SPA13: Town centre vitality The consideration of development proposals for main town centre and residential uses in the town centre will have regard to the extent to which they would deliver any of the following measures contributing to vitality: 1. Public realm improvements promoting an accessible, attractive, and safe environment	Policy SPA13 aims to support the vitality of Droitwich Spa town centre in accord with NPPF para. 90. It takes a positive approach to the growth, management and adaption of the town centre in a way which allows a suitable mix of

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
including at High Street, Friar Street and St. Andrews Street. 2. Improvements to safety and accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists to and from the town centre and via links to the railway station, Vines Park, Lido Park, and residential areas. 3. A wider range of activities, including evening, night-time, and community events, where these enhance vitality without unduly impacting on amenity. 4. The bringing into use of vacant upper floors for main town centre uses and residential purposes including enabling measures. 5. Securing the beneficial use of heritage assets consistent with their conservation. 6. The desirability of re-instating a Brine Baths to encourage tourism, increase vitality and sustain character and sense of place, particularly where this involves or enables the adaptive reuse of historic assets. Development proposals for the following will be supported in principle: • The development of suitable sites identified in the Droitwich Spa Town Centre Investment Prospectus for main town centre uses and/or residential. • The viable restoration and re-development of The Raven Hotel for main town centre uses, including leisure and tourism, and residential in a manner consistent with the conservation and enhancement of the historic fabric.	uses (including housing) and reflects its distinctive character. This includes recognising the role that heritage assets can play in contributing to a sense of place (NPPF para. 203 g)) and of culture and tourism as main town centre uses.
Policy SPA14: Netherwich Canal Basin Proposals for the mixed-use development of the Netherwich Canal Basin which meet the following requirements and are in accordance with other development plan policies will be supported: 1. provide a high quality and sustainable design, taking account of the Droitwich Spa Design Guidance and Codes, including the site-specific principles provided for the site, along with policy SPA1. Views into the site from Vines Park and the Basin moorings should be taken into account; and 2. incorporate proposals to improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists between the town centre, Vines Park/Canal towpath, and railway station, including by linking to adjacent development sites; and 3. provide high quality public realm to the Canalside; and 4. make provision for community, heritage, and tourism uses including Canal-related facilities where this can be achieved without detriment to the delivery of the Local Plan	Policy SPA14 requires high quality, sustainable design in the development of this SWDPR-allocated site, in accord with NPPF para. 131, to be informed by the Droitwich Spa Design Codes and Guidance (NPPF paras. 133 and 134). The policy supports sustainable transport modes (NPPF para. 109), the conservation and enhancement of the significance of heritage assets including archaeology (NPPF para. 202), and biodiversity enhancement (NPPF para. 187 a)). The policy also provides for adequate site investigation in respect of contamination (NPPF para. 196) and protects amenity (NPPF para. 135 f)).

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
allocation for the site including viability; and 5. conserve or enhance the site's contribution to the significance of designated heritage assets including as part of their setting, and assess the site's potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest; and 6. enhance the value of the site for biodiversity, taking account of the Droitwich Canal Local Wildlife Site to the north and any opportunity to extend or consolidate wildlife corridors along the Canal and towpaths; and 7. in respect of the potential for land contamination, demonstrate that the site is or can be made suitable for the proposed use, providing appropriate site investigation information and proposals for mitigation and remediation as may be required; and 8. incorporate suitable measures to ensure no undue adverse impact on the amenity of future residents from noise, light or other factors arising from transport corridors or adjoining uses. The amenity of users of moored boats should also be considered.	
Policy SPA15: Economic development Proposals for employment development which are of an appropriate scale and design in terms of their context will be supported provided they: 1. minimise traffic generation and demonstrate that the traffic generated can be safely accommodated on local roads without undue operational, safety or environmental consequences; and 2. take all opportunities to promote safe, direct, and attractive access to and from the proposed site by public transport (rail and bus), walking and cycling; and 3. do not create unacceptable adverse impacts on the amenity of neighbouring residents, including through noise or air pollution, light levels, working hours, and increases in traffic. The following are encouraged: • The re-use of existing buildings or previously developed land. • Proposals for a business centre offering flexible workspace options for local enterprises. • Tourism-focussed and other businesses which serve to interpret, curate, and promote the town's heritage and historic environment including its history of brine extraction and salt production, Canals, historic buildings, and role as a spa resort.	Policy SPA15 supports employment development in accord with NPPF para. 86 b) by setting criteria for investment. In doing so it supports opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use (NPPF 109 e)) and protects amenity (NPPF para. 135 f)). The policy also encourages tourism-focussed and other businesses which are linked to the town's heritage and historic environment, thereby supporting town centre vitality in line with NPPF chapter 7, development which is sympathetic to local character and history (NPPF para. 135 c)), and the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment (NPPF chapter 16).

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	Regard to national policies
Policy SPA16: Walking and cycling (active travel) Development proposals should give pedestrian and cycle movements priority over other means of travel. Wherever possible and opportunities arise, the potential for access on foot or cycle from residential areas to/from Droitwich Spa railway station, other public transport, schools, health, other community facilities and the town centre should be maximised by providing safe, direct, and attractive connections and associated facilities such as sheltered and secure cycle parking. Development proposed to implement the following Local Transport Schemes or elements thereof will be supported in principle and subject to detailed design proposals: • Droitwich Package, Active Travel Network Investment Programme. • Droitwich Rail Station Improvement Scheme. • Worcester to Droitwich Spa Active Travel Corridor. Development proposals should not give rise to unacceptable impacts on the utility and enjoyment of public rights of way. The needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility should also be taken into account.	Policy SPA16 promotes walking and cycling in accord with NPPF para. 109 e) and para. 111 d). The policy also addresses the needs of people with disabilities and reduced mobility (NPPF para. 117 b)).

Table 2: General conformity of Neighbourhood Plan policies with strategic policies

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	General conformity with SWDPR policy
Policy SPA1: Design	Policy SPA1 is in general conformity with strategic policies SWDPR 05 <i>Design and Sustainable Construction</i> and SWDPR 28 <i>Design</i> . It adds local detail as set out in the Droitwich Spa Design Guidance and Codes and by reflecting issues of concern as expressed in replies to the community survey.
Policy SPA2: Historic environment	Policy SPA2 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 09 <i>Historic Environment</i> and aligns with non-strategic policy SWDPR 33 <i>Management of the Historic Environment</i> . It adds local detail by identifying heritage assets in the Neighbourhood Area.
Policy SPA3: Droitwich Spa Conservation Area	Policy SPA3 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 09 <i>Historic Environment</i> and aligns with non-strategic policy SWDPR 33 <i>Management of the Historic Environment</i> . It adds local detail by setting criteria for the consideration of development proposals affecting the Conservation Area.
Policy SPA4: Droitwich Canals Conservation Areas	Policy SPA4 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 09 <i>Historic Environment</i> and aligns with non-strategic policy SWDPR 33 <i>Management of the Historic Environment</i> . It adds local detail by setting criteria for the consideration of development proposals affecting the Conservation Areas.
Policy SPA5: Biodiversity	Policy SPA5 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 29 <i>Biodiversity and Geodiversity</i> . It adds local detail by identifying sites and features of biodiversity interest in the Neighbourhood Area.
Policy SPA6: Local Green Spaces	Policy SPA6 aligns with non-strategic policy SWDPR 48 <i>Open Space</i> . It adds local detail by identifying areas for designation as Local Green Space which are of particular importance to the community.
Policy SPA7: Key views	Policy SPA7 aligns with non-strategic policy SWDPR 34 <i>Landscape Character</i> , to which it adds local detail by identifying key views of the Neighbourhood Area.
Policy SPA8: Housing mix	Policy SPA8 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 17 <i>Housing Mix and Standards</i> . It adds local detail on the size and type of housing that is required to meet needs in the Neighbourhood Area.
Policy SPA9: Housing development	Policy SPA9 is in general conformity with strategic policies SWDPR 05 <i>Design and Sustainable Construction</i> , SWDPR 10 <i>Infrastructure</i> and SWDPR 28 <i>Design</i> . It adds local detail by reflecting issues of concern as expressed

Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan policy	General conformity with SWDPR policy
	in replies to the community survey.
Policy SPA10: Householder development	Policy SPA10 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 28 <i>Design</i> . It adds local detail by setting criteria specific to householder development, informed by replies to the community survey.
Policy SPA11: Land north/south of Union Lane	Policy SPA11 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 64 <i>Land at Union Lane, Droitwich Spa</i> . It adds local detail to support the development of the allocated site including the site-specific provisions of the Droitwich Spa Design Guidance and Codes.
Policy SPA12: New or expanded community facilities	Policy SPA12 aligns with non-strategic policies SWDPR 47 <i>Built Community Facilities</i> and SWDPR 48 <i>Open Space</i> . It adds local detail by setting criteria for development and encouraging specific forms of provision.
Policy SPA13: Town centre vitality	Policy SPA13 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 13 <i>Promotion of Town, District and Local Centres</i> . It adds local detail in terms of how development proposals may contribute to the vitality of the town centre and in referencing site opportunities, informed by the Droitwich Spa Town Centre Investment Prospectus.
Policy SPA14: Netherwich Canal Basin	Policy SPA14 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 71 <i>Wychavon Allocations</i> . It adds local detail to support the development of the allocated site including the site-specific provisions of the Droitwich Spa Design Guidance and Codes.
Policy SPA15: Economic development	Policy SPA15 is in general conformity with strategic policy SWDPR 14 <i>Non-allocated Employment Development</i> , adding local detail by setting criteria for employment proposals in the Neighbourhood Area and encouraging specific forms of development.
Policy SPA16: Walking and cycling (active travel)	Policy SPA16 is in general conformity with SWDPR 06 <i>Transport</i> , to which it adds local detail in terms of journey attractors and destinations in the town and specific Local Transport Schemes.

4. ACHIEVEMENT OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 This section explains how the making of the Neighbourhood Plan will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The NPPF explains (para. 8) that achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways, so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the objectives:
- **an economic objective** – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;
 - **a social objective** – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and
 - **an environmental objective** – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.
- 4.2 The objectives should be delivered through the preparation and implementation of plans and the application of the policies in the Framework; they are not criteria against which every decision can or should be judged. Planning policies and decisions should play an active role in guiding development towards sustainable solutions, but in doing so should take local circumstances into account, to reflect the character, needs and opportunities of each area.
- 4.3 Table 3 sets out how the Neighbourhood Plan will help achieve sustainable development, in terms of contributing to each of the three national objectives.
- 4.4 The Neighbourhood Plan will also contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by virtue of its general conformity with the strategic policies of the SWDPR, as set out in section 3. The SWDPR sets out a development strategy and settlement hierarchy to achieve the sustainable development of South Worcestershire based on economic, social and environmental roles. These echo the three objectives defined in the NPPF. The Neighbourhood Plan will deliver sustainable development by virtue of setting out a balanced set of policies which address each of the strategic roles.

Table 3: Sustainable development

Sustainable development objective	How the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan contributes
Economic	The Vision includes that by 2041 Droitwich Spa will be a place where a range of local employment opportunities are available including for manufacturing, retail, leisure and tourism, building on the spa town heritage wherever possible. The regenerated town centre will be home to a range of uses and services, including a re-instated Brine Baths. Relevant objectives are to ensure that new employment development is well-designed and accessible, with provision for business start-up and growth including home working and manufacturing and for tourism-related development linked to the town's heritage, and to help support and regenerate the town centre, providing guidance for the development of key sites and encouraging a range of town centre uses including retail, leisure, and housing. Neighbourhood Plan policies directly address the economic objective by: • Providing planning criteria for the design of new development, giving guidance to those bringing proposals forward and for decision makers (policies SPA1 and SPA9). • Taking a positive approach to the growth, management and adaption of the town centre, by encouraging development proposals for main town centre and residential uses to deliver measures contributing to vitality (policy SPA13) and supporting nearby SWDPR allocations (SPA11 and SPA14). • Supporting proposals for employment development when planning requirements are met and encouraging specific forms of such development (policy SPA15). Other Neighbourhood Plan policies support the economic objective indirectly. Policies addressing the social objective help to maintain and promote a thriving community and thus demand for goods and services. Policies addressing the environmental objective serve to protect, conserve and enhance the natural and historic environments, providing a stable basis for economic activity and town centre regeneration including tourism. As well as its planning policies, the Neighbourhood Plan sets out Community Actions which the Town Council will undertake to contribute to the economic objective, including working with Worcestershire County Council and others on aspects of local highways and transport provision and supporting improvements to the town centre public realm and to communications and broadband infrastructure.

Sustainable development objective	How the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan contributes
Social	The Vision includes that by 2041 Droitwich Spa will be a place where new housing is of a size and type to help meet community needs and requirements, where a wide range of indoor and outdoor community facilities are available to meet the social, recreational and cultural needs of all ages, and where there is a distinctive spa town sense of place. Relevant objectives are to ensure new housing meets community requirements; to support new or expanded community facilities to enable and promote new provision particularly for health care services and those designed to meet the needs of children, young people, and older people; and to ensure new development achieves a high quality of design and maintains and enhances local character and distinctiveness. Neighbourhood Plan policies directly address the social objective by: • Requiring new housing to contribute to meeting housing needs (policy SPA8). • Providing planning criteria for new or expanded community facilities (policy SPA12). • Maintaining local distinctiveness and fostering community identity by setting design expectations (Policy SPA1), supporting town centre vitality including improvements to safety and accessibility (policy SPA13), and promoting walking and cycling (policy SPA16). Other Neighbourhood Plan policies support the social objective indirectly. Policies addressing the economic objective enable local employment opportunities. Policies addressing the environmental objective serve to protect the Neighbourhood Area's natural and historic environments which contribute to the sense of place and community identity. As well as its planning policies, the Neighbourhood Plan sets out Community Actions which the Town Council will undertake to contribute to the social objective, including on highway and transport matters, community facilities, health and age-specific community services, communications and broadband, and community information.

Sustainable development objective	How the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan contributes
Environmental	The Vision includes that by 2041 Droitwich Spa will be a place where a re-instated Brine Baths and regenerated Canal-side contribute as part of a protected and enhanced historic environment to the distinctive spa town character, and where well-designed new development respects that character and the wider environment by protecting biodiversity, key views and Local Green Space, and by mitigating and adapting to climate change. Relevant objectives are to ensure new development achieves a high quality of design and maintains and enhances local character and distinctiveness; to conserve and enhance the historic environment, recognising the desirability of sustaining the significance of heritage assets, their contribution to sense of place, and the wider benefits that flow from their conservation; to protect the natural environment in terms of its biodiversity, key views, and Local Green Spaces, and by mitigating and adapting to climate change and supporting the move to a low carbon economy; and to ensure that new housing development is energy and resource-efficient and otherwise sustainable. Neighbourhood Plan policies directly address the environmental objective by: • Requiring a high quality of design in new development (policy SPA1). • Providing criteria for development affecting the historic environment (policy SPA2), including the town's Conservation Areas (policies SPA3 and SPA4). • Protecting, conserving and enhancing biodiversity (policy SPA5). • Designating and protecting Local Green Spaces (policy SPA6). • Protecting key views (policy SPA7). • Incorporating sustainability concerns in the design of new housing (policy SPA9) • Ensuring that amenity concerns are taken into account in new development including in policies SPA9 and SPA10. Other Neighbourhood Plan policies support the environmental objective indirectly. Policies addressing the social objective help to promote the health, social and cultural well-being of the community by making use of the local environment in varying ways. Policies addressing the economic objective support the continued availability of goods and services locally, reducing the need to travel. As well as its planning policies, the Neighbourhood Plan sets out Community Actions which the Town Council will undertake to contribute to the environmental objective. These include Actions on public transport, walking and cycling, electric vehicle charging points, and non-designated heritage assets.

5. ASSIMILATED OBLIGATIONS

5.1 The Neighbourhood Plan is compatible with assimilated European Union obligations as detailed in Table 4 and as transposed into UK law.

Table 4: Assimilated obligations

Assimilated Obligation	Compatibility of the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan
Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Directive Habitats Directive	Wychavon District Council provided a Screening Opinion report in March 2025 to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and/or a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) were required for the Neighbourhood Plan. The draft Neighbourhood Plan had been provided to the District Council for the purposes of the assessment, and Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency were consulted in accordance with the regulations. The Screening Opinion report concludes that: <i>“...the draft Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan will not require a full Strategic Environmental Assessment to be undertaken. This is because the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the SWDPR and does not deviate from the proposed land allocations for development made in the SWDPR. The Neighbourhood Plan is not proposing any housing allocations to meet the community need.</i> <i>The HRA screening exercise featured in Section 3 concludes that the draft Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan does not require a full Habitats Regulation Assessment Appropriate Assessment to be undertaken. There are no internationally designated wildlife sites within the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Area, with only the Lyppard Grange SAC falling within a 20km radius. The impact on this site and others because of the land allocations contained within the SWDP [the South Worcestershire Development Plan, replaced by the SWDPR on the latter’s adoption in March 2026] has been assessed in the SWDP HRA AA, and as the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan is considered to be in general conformity with the SWDPR and does not deviate from the land allocations for development made in the SWDPR, the recommendation is made that a full AA is not required.</i> <i>Both of the above-mentioned recommendations were subject to consultation with the statutory environmental bodies (i.e., the Environment Agency, Historic England and Natural England); the five-week consultation period ran from 25 November 2024 until midnight on 6 January 2025. All three consultation responses are attached to this report, however in short, all three statutory environmental bodies agreed that neither a full SEA nor HRA AA</i>

Assimilated Obligation	Compatibility of the Droitwich Spa Neighbourhood Plan
	<i>are required.”.</i> Following this opinion, regulation 14 consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan was held between 9 June 2025 and 22 July 2025. No material changes have arisen from the consultation in respect of the above Screening Opinions. The requirements of the SEA and Habitats Directives are considered to have been met.
Water Framework Directive	The SWDPR addresses the achievement of the Water Framework Directive in South Worcestershire, including by SWDPR 39 <i>Sustainable Drainage Systems</i> and SWDPR 40 <i>Water Resources, Efficiency and Wastewater Treatment</i>. The Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared within the context of these policies.
Human Rights	The Neighbourhood Plan is fully compatible with the European Convention on Human Rights, transposed into UK law by the Human Rights Act 1998. It has been prepared within the existing framework of statute, national planning policy and guidance, and South Worcestershire strategic and other planning policies. In accordance with established process, its preparation has included consultation with the local community and it is subject to independent examination. The policies within the Neighbourhood Plan are considered to comply with the requirements of EU obligations in relation to Human Rights.