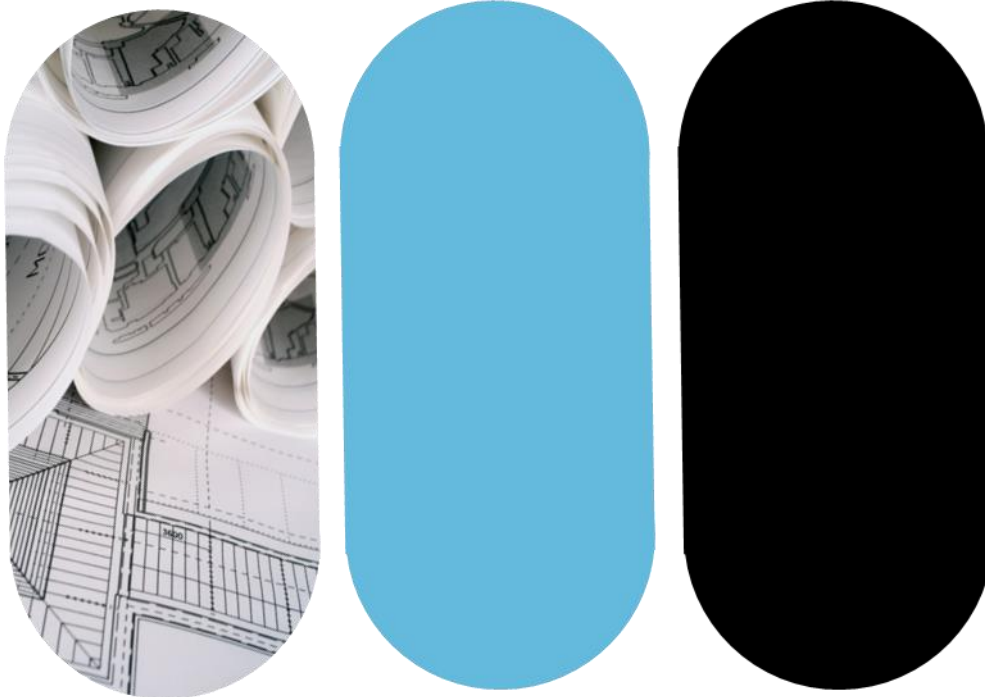


Wombourne Housing Need Technical Note

Prepared on behalf of Bloor Homes



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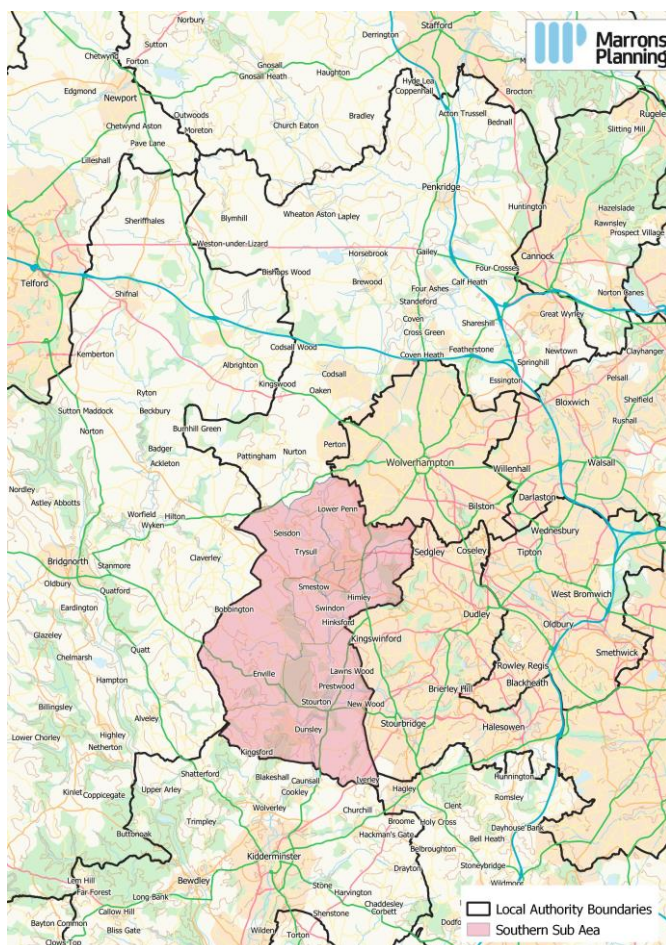
1. INTRODUCTION AND POLICY CONTEXT

- 1.1 This Technical Note has been prepared by Marrons Planning's Socio Economic Team on behalf of Bloor Homes and in support of its representations to the South Staffordshire Preferred Options Local Plan Review.
- 1.2 The purpose of the Technical Note is to determine the distribution of future housing need that is expected in Wombourne.
- 1.3 The Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) is very clear in its 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.
- 1.4 The South Staffordshire Local Plan Review – Preferred Options document identifies a housing requirement of 4,881 dwellings over the Plan period 2018 – 2038, of which it asserts that 750 units have been delivered to date. In addition, the Draft Local Plan also seeks to provide +4,000 units of unmet need from the wider Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area. The Draft Local Plan Policy DS3 therefore considers there to be a total requirement over the 20 years Plan period of 8,881 dwellings.
- 1.5 However, the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment prepared in May 2021 confirms a housing need, based upon Standard Method, for 5,068 additional dwellings over the Plan period 2018 – 2038, resulting in a total requirement (incorporating the +4,000 of unmet need) of 9,068 dwellings. There is therefore an inconsistency in the housing requirement figures presented in the Draft Local Plan, and its evidence base.
- 1.6 Within the next section of this note we focus upon the settlement of Wombourne, as well as the Southern sub-area within which it is located (as detailed in the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment May 2021 (SHMA)).

2. WOMBOURNE – LOCAL HOUSING NEED

- 2.1 The Spatial Housing Strategy 2018 – 2038 table on page 32 of the Draft Local Plan summarises the indicative minimum dwellings numbers for each settlement. Wombourne is defined as one of five Tier 2 settlements (above which there are three Tier 1 villages). Within Wombourne the table identifies a total of 808 units of housing supply, through a mix of existing permissions/ allocations, safeguarded land or new allocations. The table confirms this to account for 8% of supply across the District.
- 2.2 Wombourne falls within the Southern Sub Area and is identified in the Council’s SHMA, as shown in the map below. The Southern sub-area is described as encompassing the following wards: Wombourne North & Lower Penn, Wombourne South West, Wombourne South East, Himley and Swindon, Trysuit and Seisdon, and Kinver.

Figure 1 South Staffordshire Southern Sub Area



Source: South Staffordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, May 2021

2.3 A review of 'The Spatial Housing Strategy 2018 – 2038' table on page 32 of the Draft Local Plan as well as Appendix 4 of the Housing Site Selection Topic Paper (Tier 4 and 5 settlements) confirms that within the Southern Sub Area there is a total identified supply of 1,831 units over the Plan period .

2.4 Appendix 5 of the Council's SHMA provides an assessment of the housing need that exists within the Southern sub area over the Plan period. This is summarised in the extract below, and demonstrates a need for 2,391 additional homes within the Southern Sub Area over the Plan period. There would therefore appear to be a shortfall in supply within the

Southern Sub Area, when measured against the Council's own housing need evidence of approximately 560 units.

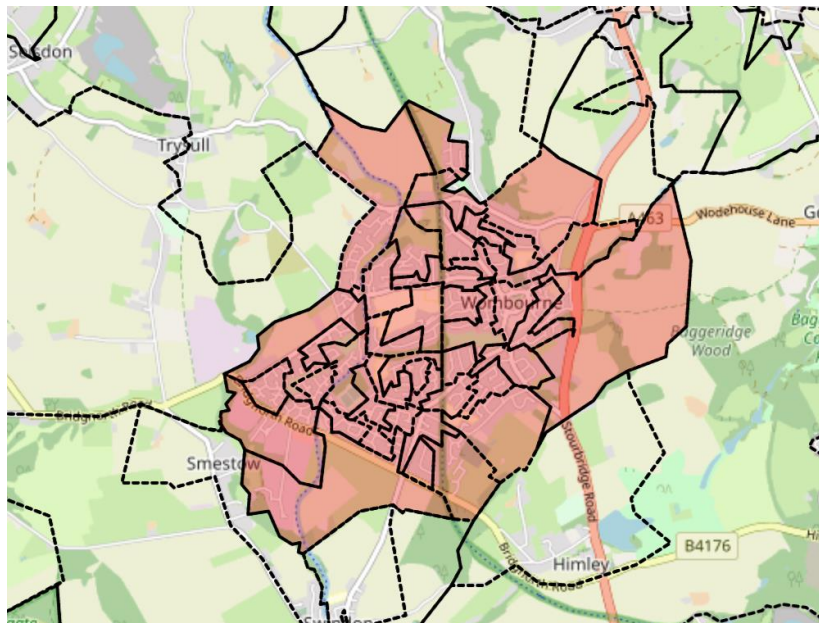
Figure 2 Southern Sub Area Housing Need

Table 5.4a Tenure of new accommodation required in the Southern sub-area over the 20 year plan period				
<i>Tenure</i>	<i>Base tenure profile (2018)</i>	<i>Tenure profile 2038</i>	<i>Change required</i>	<i>% of change required</i>
Owner-occupied	8,742	10,267	1,525	63.8%
Private rent	1,274	1,564	291	12.2%
Shared Ownership	57	232	176	7.3%
Social Rent/Affordable Rent	1,561	1,960	399	16.7%
Total	11,632	14,023	2,391	100.0%

Source: South Staffordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment, May 2021, Appendix 5

- 2.5 The level of identified need (amounting to 26% of the District wide need) for the Southern Sub Area slightly exceeds the population of the sub area relative to the population of the District (totalling approximately 24% in 2020).
- 2.6 The Council's SHMA confirms that the affordability ratio (house price / earnings) within South Staffordshire totals 7.39 – the Government benchmark (and typically mortgage upper lending ratio) being 4. Data published by the ONS at middle super output area level confirms that within the Southern Sub Area the affordability ratio is similarly high ranging between 7.26 and 8.9.
- 2.7 Wombourne is one of only two Tier 2 settlements within the Southern Sub Area, with the remaining settlements in Tier 3 or below. As such it is reasonable to assume that the identified need within the Southern Sub Area should first be met within these settlements.
- 2.8 Notwithstanding, a separate analysis of Wombourne in isolation has been undertaken, based upon the group of output areas which combine to form its built up urban area as displayed in the map below.

Figure 3 Wombourne Study area



Source: ONS

2.9 Wombourne's, approximate, population totalled 12,934 people in 2020. This equates to 11.5% of the District population totalling 112,369 people. This would suggest that Wombourne should broadly be providing for 11.5% of the District wide housing need, simply to meet its own housing needs. Based upon the identified need within the Council's SHMA (plus unmet need), totalling 9,068 dwellings, this would equate to a requirement within Wombourne of 1,043 new homes over the Plan period. Alternatively, based upon the Draft Local Plan housing requirement of 8,881, this would equate to a requirement within Wombourne of 1,021 new homes. Both figures exceed the identified housing supply for Wombourne within the Draft Local Plan (of 808 units), by at least 213 units over the Plan period.

2.10 Furthermore, an analysis of commuting patterns from South Staffordshire residents to Birmingham as well as the remainder of the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area, demonstrate that residents of Wombourne comprise 11% of district-wide commuters to Birmingham, and 12% of district-wide commuters to the whole housing market area.

This is a similar percentage to that of Wombourne's population relative to the District (as discussed above), and would suggest that Wombourne should meet c.11% of the District's agreed unmet housing need (from the Greater Birmingham Housing Market).

3. SUMMARY

- 3.1 As identified at the outset there is an inconsistency in the housing requirement (specifically relating to the standard method calculation) stated in the Draft Local Plan, when compared to its evidence base, being the Council's Strategic Housing Market Assessment. Clarity is sought over what the Council consider the housing requirement based upon Standard Method is.
- 3.2 In respect of Wombourne, it is located within the Southern Sub Area as prescribed by the Council's SHMA, within which a need of 2,391 dwellings is identified over the Plan period. By way of comparison an analysis of the planned housing supply as identified in the Draft Local Plan totals only 1,831 dwellings within the Southern Sub Area. At present, there therefore exists an unmet within the Southern sub area of approximately +560 dwellings over the Plan period. Wombourne is one of only two Tier 2 settlements in the sub area.
- 3.3 A separate analysis of Wombourne's local housing need, based on its population relative to the district (11.5%) highlights a need to provide for between +241 and 235 additional dwellings. The level of need identified for Wombourne is also supported by commuter flows to Greater Birmingham which amount to a similar percentage of the District (c. 11 – 12%) as Wombourne's population.
- 3.4 It is clear from this analysis that the Council should be planning for a greater supply of housing within the Southern Sub Area, and based upon the settlement hierarchy this should be focused on Wombourne given that it is only one of two Tier 2 settlements.
- 3.5 The consequences of not providing for a sufficient level of housing within Wombourne are likely to result in an increased pressure on the local housing market, increasing local house prices and worsening the already

high affordability ratio. Whilst this of course impacts on those looking to move to Wombourne to live, it also impacts on those currently living within Wombourne, who may be looking to purchase their first home, or upsize.