

Guide to existing housing densities in South Warwickshire



Lansdowne Crescent, Willes Road, Leamington Spa

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Introduction

This document provides a guide to the various housing densities found in South Warwickshire settlements. The ‘density’ of an area refers to how many dwellings can be found in a given area, and is measured in dwellings per hectare (dph). This document is intended to provide some context to what different housing densities look like in practice.

The density of an area plays an important role in determining the character of a place; how it looks and ‘feels’, and how it functions as a place for people to live. From the grand 4-storey terraced townhouses of Leamington Spa, to the charming rural villages, South Warwickshire’s settlements show a wide range of neighbourhood types, whose densities form a key part of their appeal. Different densities are appropriate in different locations; a well-designed development uses an appropriate density to reflect its character and function.

There are strong arguments for optimising density in appropriate, accessible locations – for example close to town centres and public transport facilities. These arguments include:

Creating walkable neighbourhoods – where people can reach most of what they need for day-to-day life within a short walk or cycle from their doorstep. Whether it’s getting to your place of work, your local shop or primary school, higher densities and mixed communities mean more people can live within easy reach of these everyday facilities. This means fewer people need to get in the car for short journeys, so reducing carbon emissions, improving health, and strengthening communities. This concept is central to the “20-minute neighbourhood”, which aims for every-day services to be accessible within a 10-minute walk or cycle each way.

Supporting local services – more customers within easy reach of our town centres and other local services will help to keep our town centres vibrant. Town centres play a really important role for local communities, and having a good range of shops and services is a reflection of the health of the local economy.

More viable public transport – higher densities mean more potential users of local bus and train services, which means regular services are more likely to remain viable.

Reducing the need for ‘greenfield’ land for development – if the homes we need to deliver can be provided at higher densities, that means less impact on the countryside, less loss of agricultural land, and less impact on biodiversity.

Energy efficiency - higher density developments can often achieve higher levels of energy efficiency by improving the viability of decentralised energy schemes.

Many of these benefits will also help, directly or indirectly, to reach our climate change ambitions.

The [National Planning Policy Framework](#) (NPPF) indicates that Local Planning Authorities should make efficient use of land, balancing density against the prevailing character and setting of an area. Where there is a shortage of housing land, minimum density standards should be used in town and city centres, and areas well served by public transport¹.

The density of an area is influenced by a number of factors, including:

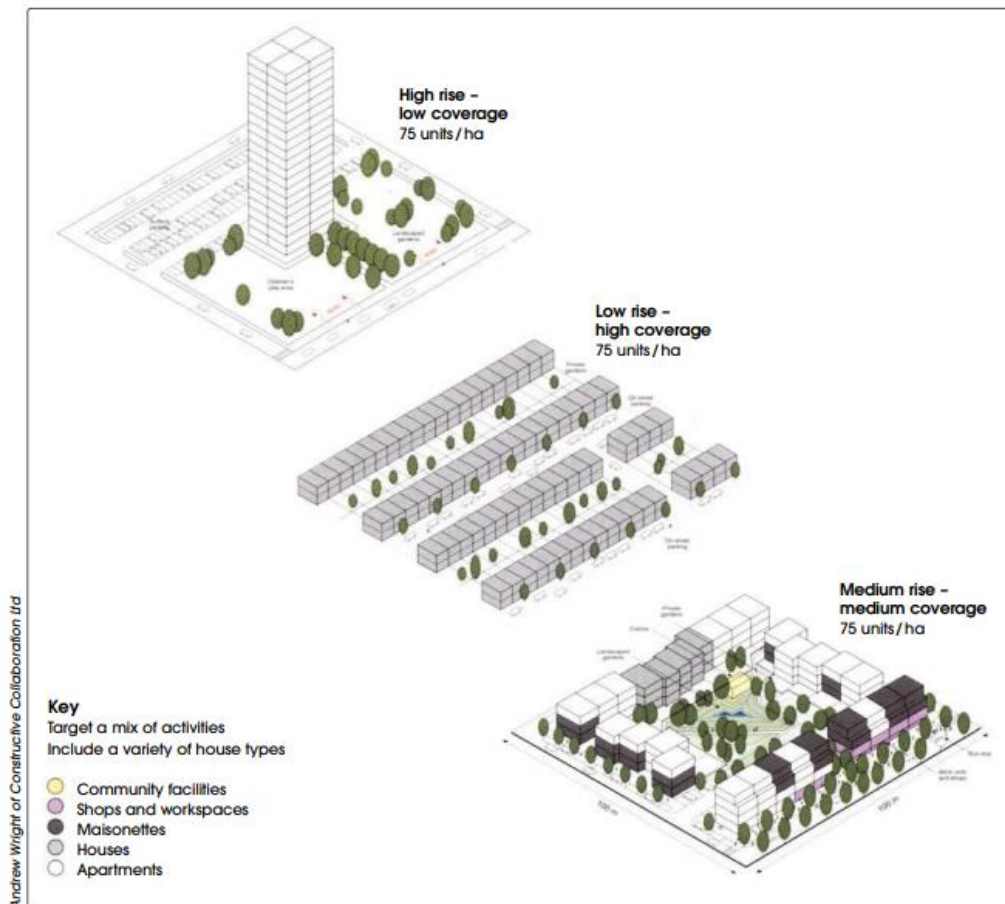
- The size of each dwelling
- The type of each dwelling, i.e. whether they are detached, semi-detached, terraces or flats
- How many storeys the buildings are
- Whether buildings have been sub-divided into flats
- The width of each plot – and hence how closely spaced each house is
- The length of each plot – how big back gardens are
- Block size – i.e. how much land within an area is given over to roads
- The width of roads, and how much space is given over to pavements, verges, street trees etc

¹ Paragraphs 124 and 125 of the National Planning Policy Framework, July 2021

- Whether parking spaces are provided “on-plot”, and if so, how many
- Whether some parts of buildings have non-residential uses – for example, ground floor retail with flats above

Not all these factors are readily apparent from the roadside, and the ‘feel’ of an area is often misleading compared to the calculated density. For example, a development of closely clustered detached homes can often feel cramped despite having relatively low density. It is often the public areas that give an area a more spacious feel – for example wider roads and incidental green space – rather than the size of each individual plot.

There is sometimes an assumption that higher densities require high-rise buildings or other urban forms which may not be appropriate for South Warwickshire. It is important to recognise that there is more than one way of achieving higher densities. The following image is taken from the [TCPA’s 20-minute neighbourhoods guide](#), and illustrates this point. The medium rise example is considered most supportive of active travel and healthy, sustainable communities.



South Warwickshire examples

This document shows a series of example areas in Warwick District and Stratford-on-Avon District, to illustrate how different densities look and feel in practice. They are presented in order of decreasing density. These areas have been chosen to illustrate a range of neighbourhood types found in South Warwickshire.

Housing density is measured in dwellings per hectare (dph). One hectare is approximately 2.5 acres. A hectare is 10,000 square metres, which equates to a square 100m long and 100m wide.

Care should be taken when comparing the densities as calculated in this document, with densities quoted from other sources. The density of an area will vary considerably depending on exactly what is measured. Our historic settlements often have varied densities in close proximity to one another, so a tightly defined area may give a different answer compared to a wider area encompassing more neighbourhood types.

Density calculations which include an area's wider infrastructure such as roads, schools, parks etc, is sometimes referred to as 'gross density'. Measurement which excludes these, encompassing only the residential plot areas, is 'net density'. Within this guide, the densities are neither strictly 'net' or 'gross', for the reasons given below.

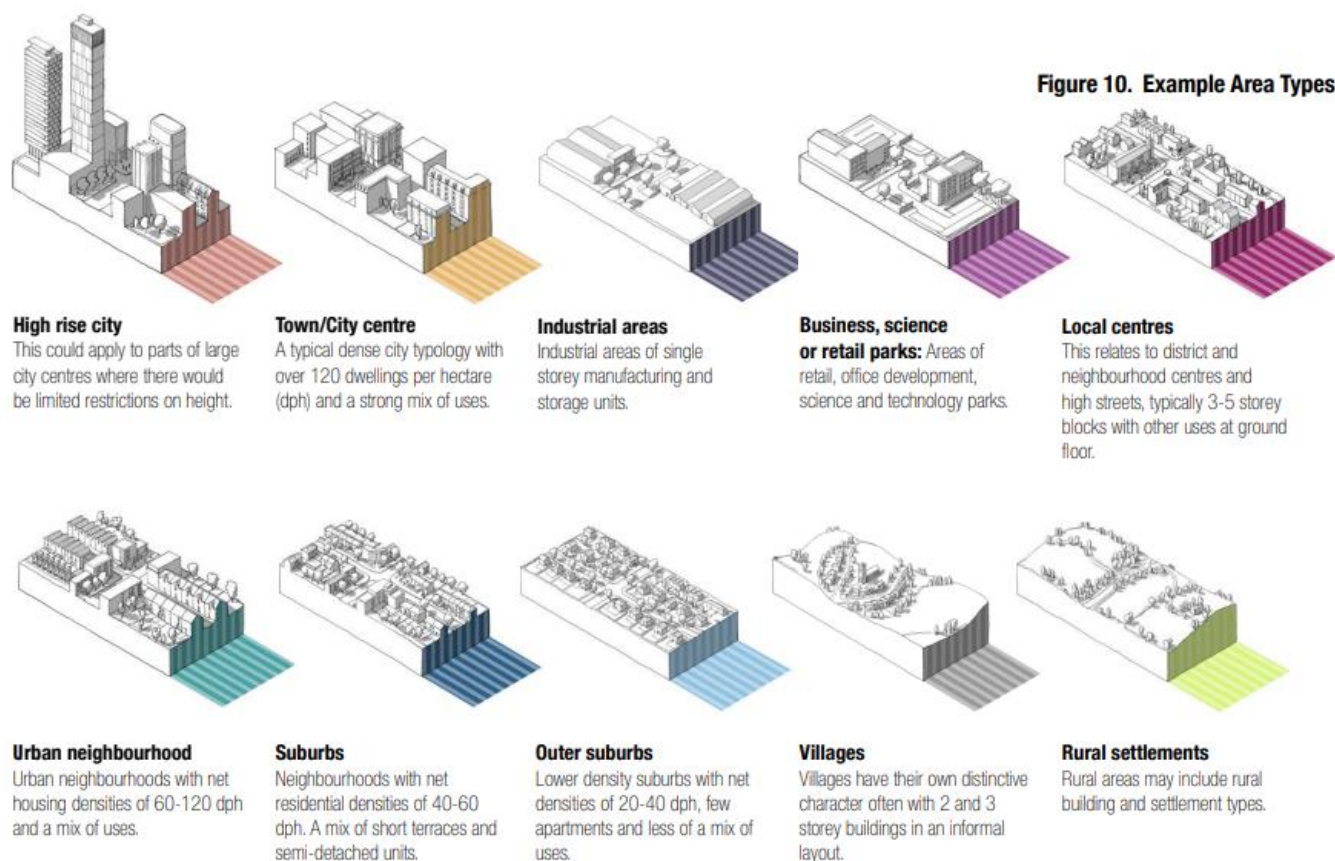
In this document, the areas chosen are bounded by roads on all sides – this is to ensure consistency and clarity in defining the boundaries. Areas are measured to the approximate mid-point of the bounding roads, to reflect the land take of roads in residential areas. This approach also helps even out differences in land used for roads depending on the size of the area chosen – i.e. whether the defined area is small with few or no internal roads, or large with many internal roads. There is one exception to this where the midpoint of a bounding canal is used. This is considered to be on a broadly similar scale to bounding roads, and is not expected to significantly affect the densities measured.

Large areas of non-residential use have been avoided, for example parks and schools. Smaller incidental green spaces have been included as they contribute to the feel of an area. Likewise, incidental non-residential uses such as shops are included where these reflect the urban character of an area. The calculations use only residential property addresses. Non-residential addresses have not been factored into the calculations of density.

Other density work

Settlement Design Analysis

The South Warwickshire Local Plan team have conducted [settlement design analysis](#) of a number of South Warwickshire's existing settlements. Part of this was an indication of the approximate densities of those settlements, based on the categories set out in the [National Model Design Code](#). These categories are also presented in this document to provide further context. Note that the settlement-wide density work was based on an officer judgement of the 'feel' of an area, while this document shows a dwellings per hectare calculation. For this reason, and for the reasons stated in the preceding section, there may be differences between quoted densities from different sources. Note also that the categories are used to reflect the density of an area, rather than its location – so for example an 'inner suburb' is not necessarily closer to the town centre than an 'outer suburb'; and many of South Warwickshire's villages include areas that fit best into categories other than 'village'.



Source: National Model Design Code

Urban Capacity Study

The South Warwickshire Local Plan team have commissioned consultants Arup to conduct an [Urban Capacity Study](#). The main aim of the study is to identify sites within urban areas in South Warwickshire that may have the potential for development. As part of this, Arup categorised South Warwickshire's urban areas into six density categories, which broadly align with those in the National Model Design Code. This was carried out in order to give an indication of the kinds of densities that would be appropriate on the identified sites. The study also uses a sample of five identified sites, to test in more detail how density might be optimised in these locations.

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Leamington Spa edge of centre blocks

Density: **113 dph** (454 residential property addresses in 4.02 hectares)

Bordered by: Warwick Street, Windsor Street, Augusta Place, Portland Place East



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Dale Street and Warwick Street looking South East; (R) Portland Street looking North West

Prevailing character:



Urban Neighbourhood

Terraced townhouses and apartment blocks fronting the pavement or with small set-backs, mainly 3-4 storeys. Dating largely from the 19th Century, with some more recent additions following a similar built form. Many of the townhouses have been sub-divided into flats. Wide roads with street trees. Predominantly on-street parking, with some blocks having private courtyard parking.

Warwick Portobello Way area

Density: **83 dph** (94 residential property addresses in 1.13 hectares)

Bordered by: Kempton Drive, Portobello Way



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Kempton Drive looking North; (R) Portobello Way looking North

Prevailing character:



Urban Neighbourhood

Apartment blocks, townhouses and terraces, ranging from 3-5 storeys. Constructed during the 21st Century. Mainly courtyard and undercroft parking, with some plots having garages. Narrow roads with buildings having small set-backs. Small gardens to the houses; apartment blocks do not have gardens.

Stratford-upon-Avon Shakespeare Street area

Density: **71 dph** (383 residential property addresses in 5.40 hectares)

Bordered by: Stratford-upon-Avon Canal, Great William Street, Guild Street, Birmingham Road



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Clopton Road looking North; (R) Shakespeare Street and Clopton Court looking North

Prevailing character:



Urban Neighbourhood

Edge of town centre area, with mixed building uses, and mixed dwelling types. Some Victorian terraces fronting onto the pavement, some apartments in converted buildings, some in purpose-built apartment blocks. Parking is mainly on-street or in private courtyards. Other non-residential uses are also present.

Leamington Spa Willes Road grand terraces

Density: **68 dph** (88 residential property addresses in 1.29 hectares)

Bordered by: Swan Street, Thomas Street, Lansdowne Circus, Willes Road, Clarendon Street



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Willes Road looking North West; (R) Clarendon Street looking North East

Prevailing character:



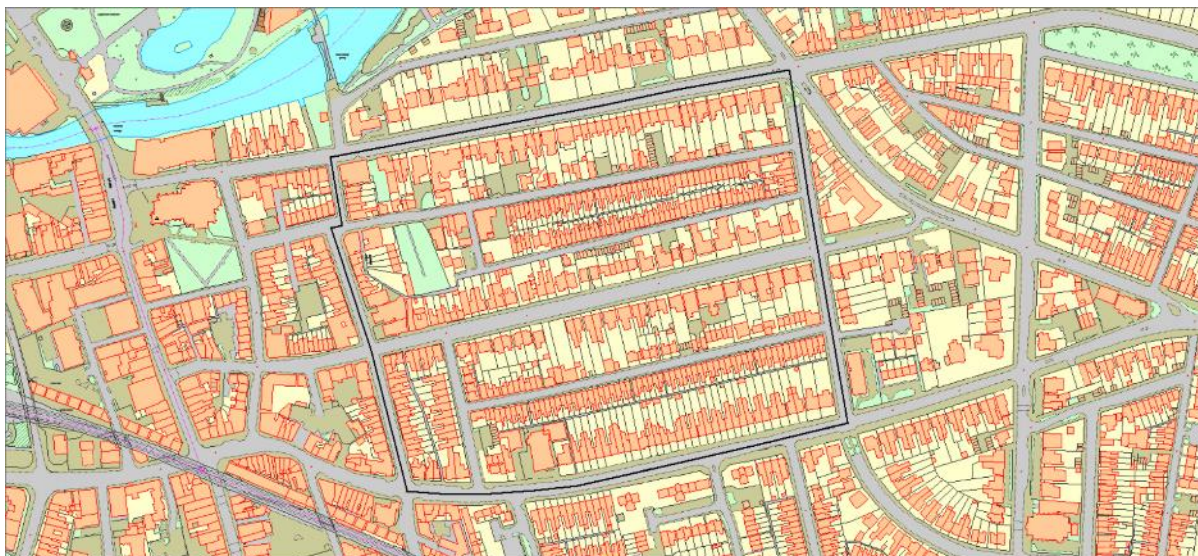
Urban Neighbourhood

Grand terraces, largely 19th Century, some set back from the main thoroughfare, fronting onto a smaller service road. Many of the terraced houses have been subdivided into flats. Generally 2-storey on Clarendon Street, and 3-4 storey plus basement on Willes road. Parking is a mixture of courtyards and garages, the service road, and on-street. Some rear yards and gardens.

Leamington Spa Old Town terraces

Density: **56 dph** (665 residential property addresses in 11.80 hectares)

Bordered by: Leam Terrace, Farley Street, Radford Road, George Street, Mill Street



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Leam Terrace looking West; (R) Plymouth Place looking West

Prevailing character:



Inner Suburb

Mixed density area. Some roads predominantly detached and semi-detached substantial houses, closely spaced with a strong building line and uniform appearance, set back slightly from the pavement. Some roads predominantly terraces fronting on the pavement. Largely constructed during the 19th Century. Mainly 2-3 storeys with occasional taller buildings. Predominantly on-street parking, with some garages on secondary streets. Garden size varies according to the house type.

Stratford-upon-Avon Old Town terraces

Density: **50 dph** (140 residential property addresses in 2.81 hectares)

Bordered by: Chestnut Walk, Bull Street, Sanctus Street, West Street, Narrow Lane, Broad Street



Illustrative photographs:



(L) West Street looking North; (R) Bull Street and Narrow Lane looking South

Prevailing character:



Inner Suburb

Predominantly terraced houses, with a small number of detached and semi-detached properties. Mainly 19th Century with a small number of 20th Century dwellings. Terraces front onto the pavement, or with small set-backs. Narrow plot widths and consequently narrow rear gardens. Relatively narrow streets with predominantly on-street parking.

Alcester St Faith's Road Area

Density: **33 dph** (261 residential property addresses in 8.00 hectares)

Bordered by: Castle Road, Beauchamp Road, Hertford Road, St Faith's Road



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Arrow Crescent looking North; (R) St Faith's Road looking North

Prevailing character:



Outer Suburb

Mid 20th Century housing. Southern area has terraced bungalows set in green space, with access to front doors from pedestrian paths, rather than fronting onto the road. Northern area is predominantly a mixture of semi-detached dwellings and short terraces, mainly 2 storeys. Fairly wide roads with buildings set back. Mixture of on-plot and on-street parking. Moderately sized rear gardens.

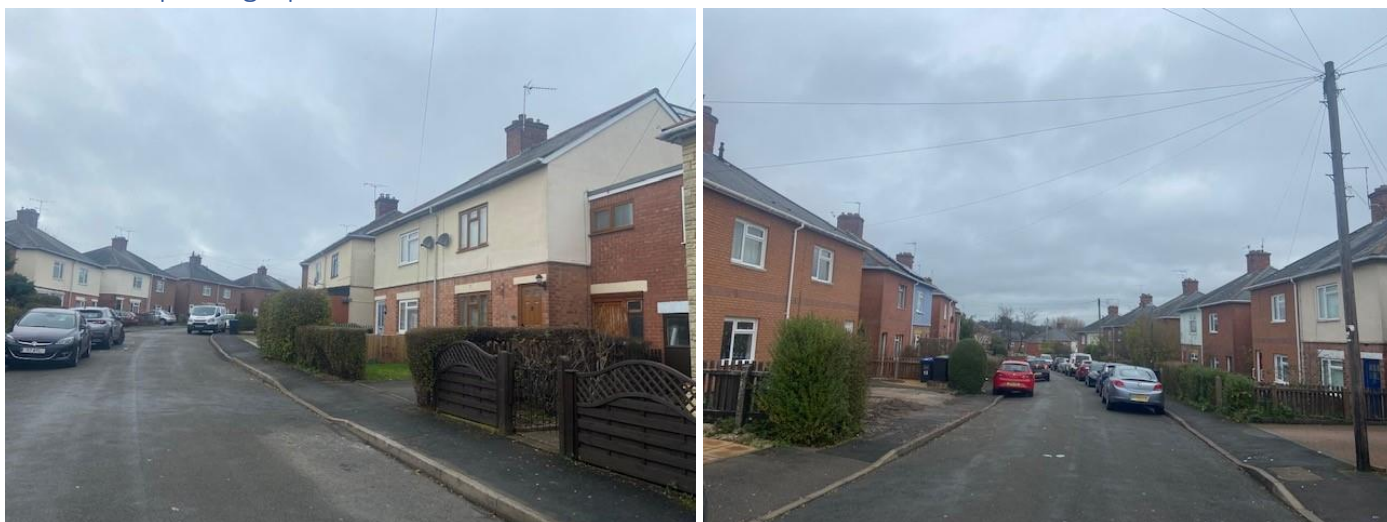
Leamington Spa Bury Road area

Density: **32 dph** (235 residential property addresses in 7.32 hectares)

Bordered by: Bury Road, Flavel Crescent, Kennan Avenue, Swadling Street, Lee Road, Westlea Road



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Kennan Avenue looking West; (R) Kennan Avenue looking East

Prevailing character:



Outer Suburb

Mid 20th Century, semi-detached and short runs of terraces, 2-storeys. Houses closely spaced, with relatively large rear gardens. Fairly narrow roads and mainly on-plot parking.

Shipston-on-Stour central streets

Density: **30 dph** (149 residential property addresses in 4.91 hectares)

Bordered by: Telegraph Street, Church Street, West Street, Darlingscote Road



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Sheep Street looking West; (R) Telegraph Street looking East

Prevailing character:



Town/City Centre

Town centre of a small market town. Buildings of variable age, including historic properties as well as examples of Georgian, Victorian and 20th Century dwellings. Mixed use area, with many non-residential uses, particularly around High Street and Market Place. Buildings are typically 2-3 storeys and terraced. Road are often narrow and plots tend to be small, reflecting the historic development of the town. Parking is a mixture of private courtyards, public car parks, and on-street.

South West Warwick

Density: **29 dph** (140 residential property addresses in 4.76 hectares)

Bordered by: Pyree Square, Price Close East, Purser Drive, Narrow Hall Meadow, Morecroft Drive



Illustrative photographs:



(L) The Furr Marsh looking West; (R) Morecroft Drive looking North East

Prevailing character:



Outer Suburb

Mixture of detached, semi-detached and terraced dwellings, with some apartments. Built in the 21st Century. 2-3 storeys. Moderate road widths, with a mixture of on-plot and courtyard parking. Relatively small rear gardens.

Leamington Spa North of centre boulevards

Density: **28 dph** (236 residential property addresses in 8.57 hectares)

Bordered by: Binswood Avenue, Lillington Road, Beauchamp Avenue, Binswood Street



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Binswood Avenue looking West; (R) Trinity Street looking East

Prevailing character:



Outer Suburb

Substantial detached houses, some sub-divided into flats, set back from broad tree-lined boulevards. Largely 19th Century with some more recent additions. Terraces and mews dwellings on Trinity Street. Mainly 2-3 storeys, with some 4-5 storey terraces on Beauchamp Avenue / Clarendon Square. Mixture of on-street and on-plot parking.

Stratford-upon-Avon Evesham Road semis

Density: **24 dph** (115 residential property addresses in 4.85 hectares)

Bordered by: Shottery Road, Evesham Road, Brookvale Road



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Evesham Road looking North West; (R) Shottery Road looking West

Prevailing character:



Outer Suburb

Predominantly semi-detached and detached houses on generous plots. Mainly early 20th Century. Roads relatively wide, with houses set back from the road with on-plot parking. Fairly large rear gardens. Most houses 2 storeys, some with attic conversions providing a third storey. One 3-storey apartment block.

Warwick Gates

Density: **23 dph** (146 residential property addresses in 6.39 hectares)

Bordered by: Jourdain Park, Lady Grey Avenue, Othello Avenue, Bollingbroke Drive, Miranda Drive, Romeo Arbour, Ophelia Drive



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Prospero Drive looking North East; (L) Ophelia Drive looking South East

Prevailing character:



Outer Suburb

Almost entirely detached dwellings, with occasional short terraces. Built during the 21st Century. On-plot parking. Moderate width roads, with some incidental roadside green space. Mainly 2-storey with some 3-storey dwellings. Moderate sized rear gardens.

Long Marston Airfield new settlement

Density: **23 dph** (85 residential plots in 3.62 hectares)

Bordered by: Still under construction, so many road names are not yet available. Various blocks in the Lancaster Way area.



Extract of site plan from planning permission 17/03258/REM, Long Marston Airfield phase 1.

Indicative streetscenes in this phase:



Extract of streetscenes from planning permission 17/03258/REM, Long Marston Airfield phase 1

Prevailing character:



Outer Suburb

New development currently under construction. The majority of the dwellings are detached, with some semi-detached or in short terraces, and a small number of apartments. 2 to 3 storeys, and on-plot parking. Reasonable garden sizes. Spine road includes wide verges and street trees.

Kenilworth Windy Arbour Area

Density: **18 dph** (107 residential property addresses in 5.94 hectares)

Bordered by: Brooke Road, Windy Arbour, Thornby Avenue, Ashfield Road



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Edenhall looking West; (R) Edenhall looking North

Prevailing character:



Outer Suburb

Detached and semi-detached dwellings, a mixture of bungalows and 2-storey houses. Mid 20th Century. Often relatively narrow roads, but with houses set back on generous plots with on-plot parking.

Stratford-upon-Avon Avenue Road area

Density: **11 dph** (74 residential property addresses in 6.54 hectares)

Bordered by: Benson Road, Welcombe Road, Rowley Crescent, Maidenhead Road



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Maidenhead Road looking South; (R) Rowley Crescent looking West

Prevailing character:



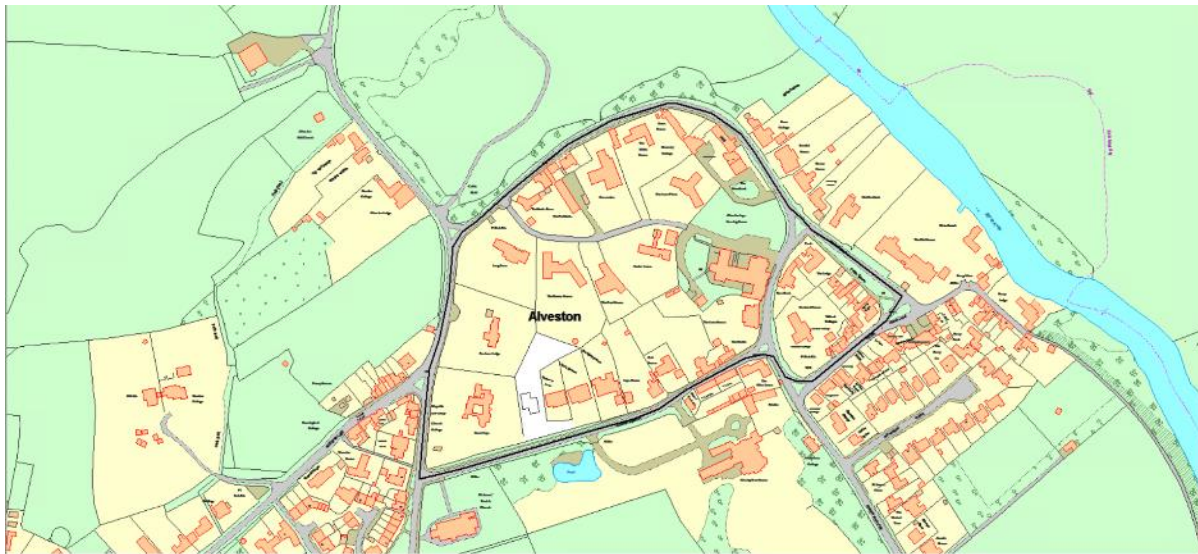
Outer Suburb

Predominantly detached dwellings with some semi-detached. Variable date, with the majority appearing to be mid 20th Century. Large plots with houses set well back from the road. On-plot parking and large gardens. Moderately wide roads with street trees. 2 and 3 storey dwellings.

Alveston village centre

Density: **6 dph** (44 residential property addresses in 7.41 hectares)

Bordered by: The Rookery, Ferry Lane, Kissing Tree Lane, Kissing Tree Way, Church Lane, Lower End



Illustrative photographs:



(L) Ferry Lane looking North East; (R) Ferry Lane looking South East

Prevailing character:



Village location, with a mixture of houses on very large plots, with some more closely clustered dwellings. Buildings of variable age, including Georgian, Victorian, 20th and 21st Century. Narrow country lanes, often with adjoining footway. Parking is predominantly on-plot, with some street parking. Houses are typically 2-3 storeys.