

Sandwell Local Plan – Proposed Main Modifications Consultation Document (Regulation 19)

09:00 Monday 28th April to 17:00 Monday 9th June 2025

Main Modifications – Additional Regulation 19 Consultation

The Sandwell Local Plan (SLP) and accompanying information was submitted to the Secretary of State on 11 December 2024 to be examined. Following submission Sandwell Council has identified three potential main modifications to the SLP which it believes are necessary to ensure that the SLP is found sound at examination.

1. The proposed allocation of part of Rowley Regis Golf Course, Tippity Green, Rowley Regis, B66 9EJ for housing development.
2. Changes to the wording of Policy SCC4 – Embodied Carbon and Waste.
3. The removal of Hill House Farm as a potential Habitat Bank for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and its replacement with Ray Hall Pastoral Land.

The purpose of this consultation is to invite representations on the proposed main modifications under Regulation 19 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.

The proposed main modifications have been subject to a Sustainability Appraisal which is being consulted on concurrently to the proposed main modifications. You can view the Sustainability Appraisal and submit representations on the [SLP consultation website](#).

The consultation only relates to the proposed main modifications. Comments should only relate to issues of soundness and legal compliance. Comments made about other aspects of the SLP or that do not relate to soundness and legal compliance will not be considered. Information about what 'soundness' means and what the legal requirements are is available on the [SLP Frequently Asked Questions Webpage](#).

All representations received will be considered by Inspector C Jack BSc (Hons) MA MA(TP) MRTPI from the Planning Inspectorate who has been appointed by the Secretary of State to carry out the independent examination of the SLP. The decision on whether to incorporate the main modifications that have been proposed by the council is taken by the Inspector. This consultation is taking place without prejudice to the Inspector's final conclusions.

Main Modification One – Proposed allocation of Part of Rowley Regis Golf Course, Tippity Green, Rowley Regis, B66 9EJ for housing development

The proposed main modification seeks to allocate 10.3 hectares of land at Rowley Regis Golf Course for housing development. The site is capable of accommodating approximately 250 new homes.

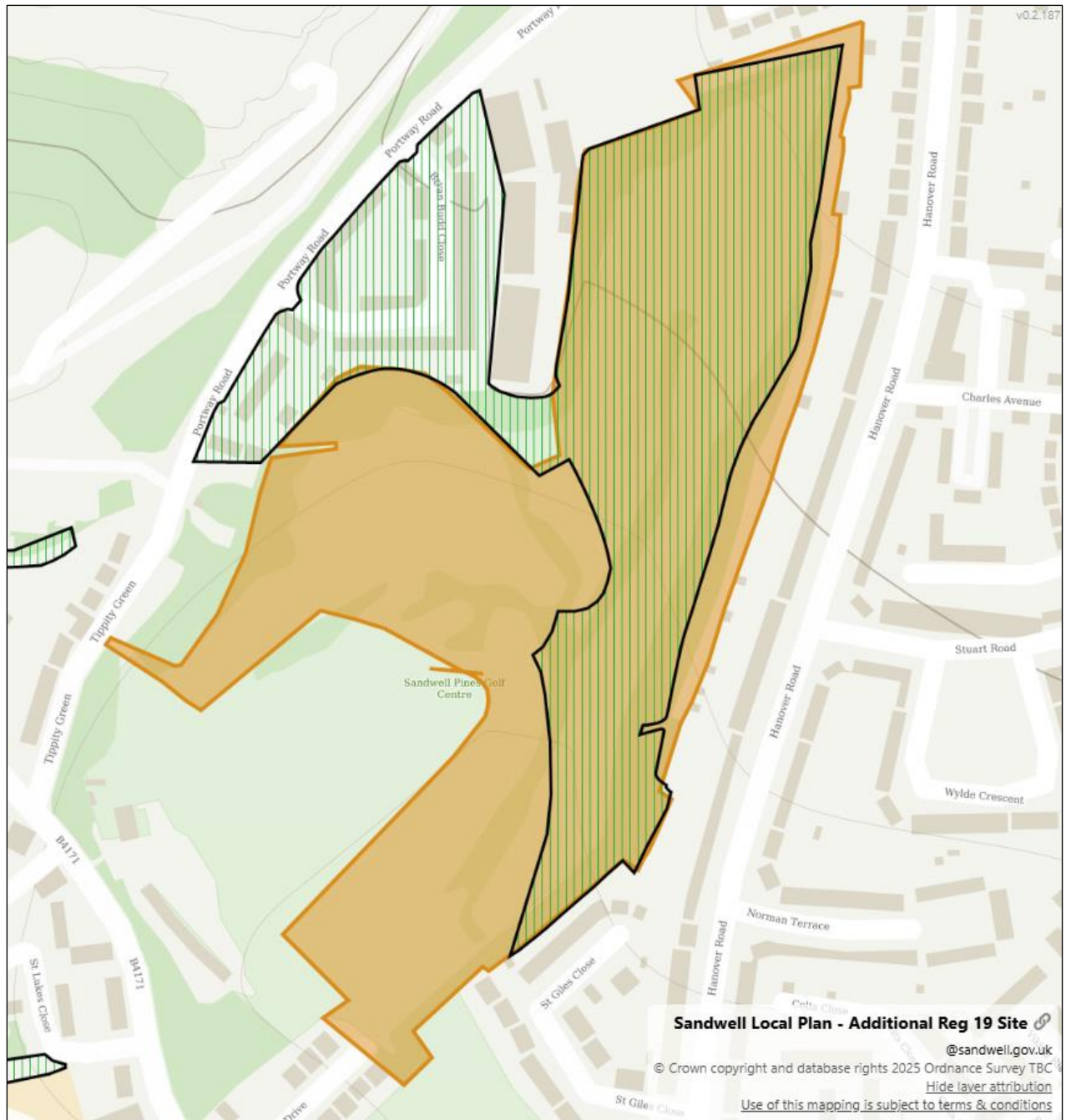
Around 6.2 hectares of land in two parcels in the north east and south west of the golf course is allocated for housing development in the existing development plan. However, the allocation was not included in the draft Regulation 18 SLP, as the landowner did not signal their intention to develop the site when the SLP was being prepared.

The site was first promoted to the SLP at Regulation 19 consultation stage. The land promoted for residential development includes the existing allocated parcel in the north east and most of the remaining 9-hole golf course. It excludes the driving range, clubhouse, car park and the existing allocated parcel of scrub and woodland in the south west adjacent to Hawes Lane.

The council's Site Assessment concludes that the promoted site is appropriate for residential use. The allocation of the site is necessary to ensure the SLP is positively prepared and is seeking to meet objectively assessed housing needs as required by paragraph 20(a) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2023).

The evidence to support the inclusion of the main modification, including a Site Assessment, is available to view and download on the [SLP website](#).

Site location plan showing the proposed residential allocation in orange and the retained Alsopp's Hill SLINC (Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation) in striped green



You can also view the location of the proposed residential allocation on the [interactive policies map](#).

APPENDIX B – Sandwell Site Allocations

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indic. Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Devel. Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
<u>SH67 (183)</u>	<u>Part of Rowley Regis Golf Course, Tippity Green, Rowley Regis B65 9EJ</u>	<u>Rowley</u>	<u>Rowley Regis</u>	<u>250</u>	<u>10.3ha B and G</u>	<u>6.25ha</u>	<u>40dph</u>	<u>2029-2031</u>	<p><u>Site assessment found the site suitable for residential development.</u></p> <p><u>Mitigation needed for SLINC SA071 Alsopp's Hill.</u></p> <p><u>Part of site historically quarried and used for landfill. This part of the site could be suitable for public open space and supporting infrastructure. Indicative net developable area reduced accordingly.</u></p>

Main Modification Two – Additional wording to Policy SCC4 – Embodied Carbon and Waste

Modifications are proposed to the wording of policy SCC4 (Embodied Carbon and Waste). The modifications refer to the BS EN 15978 standard which is a European standard that provides guidelines for assessing the environmental performance of buildings and construction work. The policy requirement to consider material re-use when demolishing buildings and structures is proposed to be amended so that it is proportionate and would not impose unnecessary burdens on small-scale developments. The modifications will ensure that the policy is justified and effective and is found sound at examination.

*Proposed main modification to Sandwell Local Plan Submission Version [proposed removed text in ~~strikethrough~~, proposed new text **underlined and bold**]*

Policy SCC4 – Embodied carbon and waste

1. Embodied carbon reporting
 - a. All large-scale major new residential **developments** (50 dwellings or more) and non-residential **developments** (5,000 m² floorspace or more) ~~developments~~ are required to complete a whole-life carbon assessment in accordance with ~~RICS Whole Life Carbon Assessment guidance~~ **with BS EN 15978 standard. The assessment should be based on the most appropriate and up-to-date guidance available that complies with the principles outlined in the BS EN 15978 standard. Guidance such as the RICS Whole Life Carbon Assessment guidance (2nd edition) may be used, among others.**
2. ...
3. ...
4. Demolition audits
 - a. All major development sites that contain existing buildings / structures must carry out a pre-redevelopment and/or pre-demolition audit, following ~~an~~ **well-established industry best practice method (e.g. BRE), for larger structures or significant demolitions.**
 - b. **For smaller-scale demolitions, such as individual walls or small outbuildings, developers are required to consider material re-use where feasible, without the need for a full audit. A simplified, proportionate approach should be taken to assess potential material recovery and reuse.**
5. ...

Main Modification Three – Removal of Hill House Farm as a potential Habitat Bank for Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) and substitution with Ray Hall Pastoral Land

Policy SNE2 (Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats) identifies six sites (known as habitat banks) as suitable for the provision of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) biodiversity units to developers who cannot secure the legally required 10% BNG on-site.

Further detailed work has identified issues with Hill House Farm acting as a habitat bank. This means that it is not available to the extent originally envisaged to provide off-site BNG units and it is no longer appropriate to identify the site as a potential habitat bank in the SLP.

Ray Hall Pastoral Land is proposed as a substitute habitat bank. Ray Hall Pastoral Land is considered to have a relatively high potential to accommodate biodiversity units in the [Sandwell Biodiversity Net Gain Strategy](#) (published September 2023 by LEPUS Consulting).

The main modification is necessary to ensure that the SLP is effective, deliverable over the plan period and is found sound at examination.

*Proposed main modification to Sandwell Local Plan Submission Version [proposed removed text in ~~strikethrough~~, proposed new text **underlined and bold**]*

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

Biodiversity Net Gain

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Location	Potential project types	Baseline units	Potential uplift units (%)
Hill House Farm <u>Ray Hall Pastoral Land</u>	<p>Large areas of 'modified grassland' within the site that could be improved to 'other neutral grassland' of good condition. The current land use may have to be adapted to accommodate these changes (arable).</p> <p>There is potential for uplift in other habitats on site. <u>Comprises an area of natural and semi-natural greenspace containing several fields of pastures divided by hedgerows with trees. Ray Hall Pastoral Land contains pockets of poor and moderate 'other neutral grassland' which is divided by woodland and scrub. The grassland and woodland habitats offer the most potential for uplift.</u></p> <p><u>NB – Ray Hall pastoral land and Hill Farm Bridge Fields will be delivered together as a single unit.</u></p>	<p>241.73 <u>87.75</u></p>	<p>+255.87 (105.85) <u>+48.05</u> <u>(54.76)</u></p>
Hill Farm Bridge Fields	Vary sward height and increase species diversity to improve the condition of the grasslands. Condition of the woodland can be improved through introduction of deadwood and management of habitat regeneration.	181.24	+65.90 (36.36)
Menzies Open Space	<p>Woodland improvement, some grassland improvement</p> <p>Areas of 'other neutral grassland' can provide uplift.</p> <p>Site contains a pond (non-priority). There is potential to create more uplift by improving the condition of the pond from poor to good.</p>	157.4	+42.28 (26.86)
Tibbington Open Space (The Cracker)	<p>Some grassland management / improvement, woodland improvement</p> <p>Relatively large areas of woodland offer strong uplift potential.</p> <p>'Other neutral grassland' habitats and the parkland habitat both provide uplift opportunities.</p>	90.57	+32.91 (36.17)
Warrens Hall Local Nature Reserve and Strategic Open Space	Woodland improvement, some grassland improvement	211.70	+26.93 (12.72)
Tividale Park	Scrub species and structural improvement, tree and woodland improvement	49.65	+10.39 (20.92)

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APPENDIX A – Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity Net Gain

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The six sites included in the SLP (Policy SNE2) are taken from the above shortlist and are detailed below:

