

UPTON MAGNA PARISH COUNCIL

FINDINGS OF 2026 SURVEY REGARDING SHROPSHIRE COUNCIL LOCAL PLAN

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to summarise the responses received to the recent Parish Council flyer delivered to households in the parish.

BACKGROUND

Shropshire Council originally created a Local Plan which covered from 2016 to 2038. The aim of the plan was to decide where new homes would go across the county. The draft plan that Shropshire Council submitted was deemed "unsound" by Planning Inspectors and it was formally withdrawn in July 2025.

Shropshire Council is now writing a new plan that goes from 2025 to 2046 (with adoption in 2029) and they say that some 40,600 new dwellings (a minimum of 2,030 a year) must be planned for. Earlier in the year they asked landowners to put forward sites that can be considered for development and the Sundorne Castle Estate has submitted a large number to them.

THE FLYER

The flyer was delivered to 160 households. It sought views, concerns and aspirations on the future of housing and commercial development in the parish. It asked the basic question of whether people were for or against development, and then asked them to give reasons for their choice, based on factors such as additional housing for local and non-local families; employment; public transport; schools; healthcare; support for local services; investment in community infrastructure, increased traffic on the road network; the character of the landscape, wildlife habitat; available community facilities; agriculture; pollution (all types); conservation area; preservation of the rural nature of the parish; etc.

Responses were received from 24 *households* (13% of the 160 flyers delivered). However, the total number of *individual* responses received was 27, as three households returned a response from two separate occupants.

FINDINGS

Against

22 (81%) of those 27 responses were against development and 5 (19%) were for it. Comments **against** development were as follows (percentages in the bullet points are of the 22 who objected):

- a) Traffic, roads and highways: 100% of the 22 against development expressed worries about the vehicular impact on the parish. The following subjects were covered:

- Roads are too narrow (50%)
- Number of vehicles will increase (45%)
- Increased congestion at school times (27%)
- Farm vehicles and HGVs currently traversing the roads will be impacted (18%)
- Pedestrian safety will be compromised (14%)

Other comments included: roads, pavements, verges and signage already need improving; road from Berwick Wharf to Upton Magna needs improving; there will be problems with construction traffic and service vehicles at the time of development; there will be an increase in speeding; it is rumoured that a rail parkway will be constructed on the land close to the M54 and this will cause increased traffic.

b) Wildlife habitat and greenspace: 72% of the 22 against development expressed worries about the effects on wildlife and the land. The following subjects were covered:

- Loss of wildlife habitat (64%)
- Loss of good agricultural land (36%)
- Loss of green belt land (23%)

Other comments included: development should take place on brown belt land; landscape character will be eroded; scenery will be impacted; conflict between landowners and residents may arise as the number of people using Rights of Way increases; development in rural areas goes against Shropshire Council's "Open Countryside Settlement".

c) Infrastructure: 50% of the 22 against development expressed worries about infrastructure. The following subject was the main concern:

- There is already insufficient infrastructure (27%)

Other comments included: It would be difficult to improve the current infrastructure; infrastructure must be improved before any development takes place; there will be an impact on the sewage system.

d) School: 45% of the 22 against development expressed worries about the school. The following subject was the main concern:

- The school is already at capacity (23%)

Other comments included: Pupils are already coming from further afield so an increase in school traffic will cause more safety issues; if development goes ahead, the school should receive funding to improve facilities; there is no school car park.

e) Facilities: 41% of the 22 against development expressed worries about facilities. The following subjects were covered:

- There is a lack of general facilities (23%)
- There is no shop (18%)

Other comments included: It is already a challenge to keep the pub open; new residents are not interested in village life – they do not get involved or help with community events such as those organised by the memorial hall, church or walking group.

f) Pollution: 36% of the 22 against development expressed worries about pollution. The following subjects were covered:

- An increase in vehicles will cause air pollution (18%)
- There will be an increase in noise pollution (18%)

Other comments included: There will be an increase in light pollution which will impact on people and nocturnal wildlife; any industrial development will particularly cause an increase in pollution.

g) Public Transport: 36% of the 22 against development felt that there was little or no public transport, which will result in new residents all using vehicles, thereby adding to traffic and pollution.

h) Healthcare: 23% of the 22 against development regarded the lack of a doctor's surgery to be a problem. Access to dental care was also mentioned.

i) Conservation: 18% of the 22 against development were concerned about the impact on the existing conservation area. It was felt that the proximity of any development to the conservation area will change the look of the historic village, and may result in the loss or downgrading of conservation status and thus, protection from future uncontrolled development. It was felt that the rural character of the village will be lost by the introduction of more new builds that contrast to existing historic houses. Reference was made to the National Planning Policy Framework regarding conservation areas.

j) Flooding: 14% of the 22 against development were concerned about flooding being caused by run-off from extra roads, roofs and hardstanding.

k) Recreation: 5% of the 22 against development referred to recreation in the parish. An increase in children and young people with no access to recreational facilities could result in antisocial behaviour. 14% felt that the loss of the Memorial Hall field should be avoided.

For

5 (19%) of the total number of responses were for development in the parish, either residential and/or employment led.

There follows a summary of the comments received by those who supported development:

Any houses built should be well-designed, good quality, sustainable and should be a mix of rental and private dwellings. Social housing should also be considered. One person felt that development should be limited to 12 houses, again with a mix that includes properties that are suitable for downsizing or start-ups.

Any plans for development should be mindful of nature and biodiversity, and trees and water collection facilities should be included. All energy sources and utilisation on new developments should be non-fossil based and renewable, and one person said they would welcome the provision of a community energy network in the parish or nearby. It was commented that there were objections to de Quincey Fields at the time, but this development has added to and strengthened the community. Further development would bring “new blood” to the parish or encourage existing young people to stay in the community.

With regard to “employment led development”, it was felt that, at the present time, Shropshire Council has provided insufficient information about it. It was suggested that it could just mean solar panels at the Rea, or a number of large industrial warehouses. However, broadly speaking, employment development was looked on favourably, as long as it was well-designed (like the existing Upton Magna Business Park), and if the roads are improved to cope with increased traffic.

Finally, it was suggested that the Parish Council should consider creating a Neighbourhood Plan.