Settlement Hierarchy Report (Draft)

1.0 Background and Purpose

1.1 The purpose of the Settlement Hierarchy is to demonstrate a robust and justifiable approach to the classifications of village and rural settlements to support the policies and proposals of the emerging Local Plan. The settlement hierarchy developed and discussed in this report is concerned with villages, hamlets and rural settlements.

1.4 This is a technical report which sets out the relative sustainability of the settlements within the district and approach to apportioning growth. It should be noted that this is also a draft report and further work is progressing on various issues including a partial green belt review, landscape and habitat assessments and further analysis of site options.

1.5 An overview of the Settlement Hierarchy Model and process is detailed in Figure 1.

(SEE INSERT)

2.0 Policy Context and Key Principles

2.1 The Warwick District Local Plan (1996-2011) refers to the Limited Growth Villages - Barford, Bishop's Tachbrook, Hampton Magna, Lapworth (Kingswood) and Radford Semele - as locations for residential development on previously developed land within the boundaries of the proposals map to meet a specific local need as identified by the community in an appraisal or assessment (RAP1 Directing New Housing). Housing development opportunities outside these Limited Growth Villages is very limited.

2.2 At the time of drafting the current Local Plan, all the villages named in Policy RAP1 were determined by reference to Policy RA.3 of the Structure Plan. Meaning that all the villages have within a reasonable walking distance:

- A shop/ general stores selling food and day-to-day household goods;
- A primary / junior school;
- A post office;
- A community building, e.g. public house, church, social club or village hall, and
- An hourly daytime bus/train service to a major town.

It is recognised that services and facilities in the villages can change and that this may affect the list of settlements in the policy.

2.2   In the Local Plan Preferred Options May 2012, the Council proposed that a limited amount of development is directed to those settlements with a good range of services and public transport to the towns. This was split into:

- Category 1 villages (Barford, Bishop's Tachbrook, Hampton Magna, Lapworth and Radford Semele), which all have the benefit of a school, shop and village or community hall.
- Category 2 villages (Cubbington, Hatton, Leek Wootton, Norton Lindsey, Rowington, Shrewley and Burton Green), which have fewer services but a limited amount of development may help support existing services and encourage new services.
- Category 3 villages (Ashow, Baddersley Clinton, Baginton, Bubbenhall, Eathorpe, Hampton on the Hill, Offchurch and Stoneleigh), in which development may be suitable on previously developed land within the built up area of the villages, subject to the need to protect the character and scale of the village.

2.3   It was recognised from the consultation feedback on the Preferred Options Document that the Council should undertake more detailed work to clarify specific locations for housing (for example, there was confusion over what was meant by 'Hatton', 'Rowington' and 'Shrewley') and provide a more detailed analysis of services and facilities to support the classification of various groups - Cubbington for example would appear to have a very good range of services / facilities but was only classified as a Category 2 village. Concerns was also raised that some villages where 'missed off' the category lists. A number consultation points on the Preferred Options Document is summarised in Appendix 1.

2.3   The Warwick approach to developing a new settlement hierarchy has involved considering the feedback from the Preferred Options stage and moving forward with an identified set of principles or philosophies to under-pin the model. These are namely:

- The need to conduct a comprehensive approach to analysing settlements in terms of services and facilities, which widens focus beyond the current listed groupings of villages and uses an equally applied scoring model for each location.

- The model involves assessing services and facilities within a settlement and these are positively weighted on the recognition that development may be supported in areas with direct access to a wide range of services and facilities, thus minimising the need to travel.

- Where services and facilities are not available within villages an assessment is made to support development in settlements with better and quicker public transport connections and less travel distance to services and facilities.

- In general larger settlements with higher populations, these areas may be better equipped to accommodate housing growth with an established range of services and facilities.

- While the range of services and facilities are very important considerations in helping determine ability of settlements to accommodate growth the distribution of development also needs to be informed by strategic policy and physical constraints; the availability of potential sites; the broad role and function of settlements and the ambition and forward strategy of settlements (or more precisely Parish Councils).

- That a hybrid approach is taken to the apportionment of housing growth which starts with a forecasted baseline growth level (focused upon a percentage increase in current dwellings) and then considers how constraints and opportunities impact on these growth levels.

- Growth in rural areas and villages should be proportional in scale to growth forecast for the district as a whole.

- It is recognised that any settlement hierarchy model will have limitations and essentially captures a particular moment in time. It would however, be useful for the settlement hierarchy modelling to be updated in line with the Annual Monitoring Report.

3.0 Model Development and Feedback

3.1 The model has been developed following a review nationally of various settlement hierarchy models. These are detailed in Appendix 2 to this report. Each model is an outcome of its particular geography and concerns, but it was a useful starting point to gather information about indicators and weightings attached to various criteria. Appendix 2 also contains reviewed examination papers covering settlement hierarchy modelling and location approaches.

3.2 Following an initial scoring of settlements based upon a selected set of indicators, the draft services, facilities and accessibility model was subject to feedback by the Council Policy Review Panel and various parish councils, including a session with Lapworth PC who added further comments about the scoring. The outcome for the model has been:

- A need to ensure that Primary Schools are suitably weighted in the model;
- Consideration of a differentiated scoring for post offices to include 'at risk' services at a lower scoring level;

- A revised downwards scoring allocation applied to Places of Worship;
- A revised downwards scoring for Public Houses, and
- A revised downwards scoring for Recreational Open Spaces.

Slight alterations were also made to population groupings to improve sensitivity; and minor changes to nursery scoring and some aspects of bus and rail frequency scoring to rebalance some aspects of the model. Appendix 3 details the scoring changes across the model.

3.3 Feedback from the Council's Policy Review Panel also indicated a need to ensure that the model was tested for sensitivity by revising weightings and scorings and whether this would lead to any significant changes in total village scores and groupings. Some sensitivity work was undertaken looking at the Blaby District Settlement Hierarchy Model, which did not lead to any significant changes in village groupings. This sensitivity work is illustrated in Appendix 4.

3.4 The main outcome of the review and sensitivity work has been slight revisions to the smaller village groupings and a revision down of lower scoring marginally listed villages such as Barford and Bubbenhall to lower categories. These revisions also reflect feedback from the relevant Parish Councils.

4.0 Considering Settlements – Services, Facilities and Accessibility

4.1 All forms of settlement hierarchy models have built in biases in terms of key indicators, degrees of weighting and approach to scoring. In terms of the key ideas underlying the Warwick model, there has been a clear focus upon scoring settlements higher which are generally larger in scale, contain a good mix of services and facilities and have reasonable accessibility by public transport to larger conurbations for employment and other services.

4.2 When broken down further, this section is concerned with three main elements:

- The size of the settlement, in terms of usual resident population;
- The availability of services and facilities within settlements, and
- The accessibility of services, facilities and employment opportunities from settlements.

Population of Settlements

4.3 The population of the settlement was perceived to be an important indicator of the size of the settlement and potential range of services and facilities. There is also the perception that larger settlements may be better equipped with established services and facilities to accommodate housing growth,

although it is recognised that housing growth can add significant pressures to services and facilities in some locations.

4.4   Mapping the population of villages and often very small settlements has required a degree of innovation in linking statistical datasets to settlement envelopes. Census Output Area (OA) data (these have been specifically created for statistical purposes as an objective and automated method which delivers areas with populations quite tightly distributed around a population of 125 households) have been used try to establish a best fit between settlement and available comparative data. The OAs are mapped in Appendix 5 as part of the settlement profiles.

4.5   The finalised graded weighting for the population element of the model is detailed below in Table 4.1 with an associated allocation of points.

Table 4.1 Population Groupings and Points Allocation

Settlement Population	Points Allocation
0-100	0
101-500	3
501-1000	5
1001-1500	7
1501-2000	10
2001+	12

Availability of Services and Facilities

4.6   The availability of services and facilities within settlements has been divided into broadly retail, community facilities, healthcare and education provision indicators. In more detail these are:

- Post offices
- Village shops
- Libraries
- Places of worship
- Village halls (or spaces used for community activities)
- Recreational open spaces
- Public houses
- Doctors
- Early years nurseries
- Primary schools

St an early stage in the work, the service and facility review initially included pharmacies, dentists and opticians, but these are located within towns and cities rather than at the village level within Warwick District.

4.7   Not all services and facilities have been scored equally and this reflects their weighted importance. Table 4.2 below provides additional information about the indicators and applied scoring.

Table 4.2 Indicators and Points Allocation

Theme	Indicator	Indicator Breakdown	Points Allocation
Retail	Post Office	Part-time within settlement / mobile service or at risk	3
Retail	Post Office	Full-time within settlement	5
Retail	Village Shop	Part-time convenience store within settlement	3
Retail	Village Shop	Full-time convenience store within settlement	5
Retail	Village Shop	Convenience store plus other shops / commercial services	6
Community Facilities	Library	Mobile service within settlement	2
Community Facilities	Place of Worship	Within settlement	3
Community Facilities	Village Hall or space used for community activities	Within settlement	5
Community Facilities	Recreational Open Space	Within or adjacent to settlement	3
Community Facilities	Public House	One public house within settlement	3
Community Facilities	Public House	More than one public house within settlement	5

Health Care	Doctor	Regular Outreach Service	2
Health Care	Doctor	Practice within settlement	5
Education Provision	Early Years Nursery	Within or close proximity to settlement	3
Education Provision	Primary School	Within settlement but physically constrained	5
Education Provision	Primary School	Within settlement but not physically constrained	6

4.8   While weighting points attaches some degree of importance to the facilities and services detail in Table 4.2, it is worth noting that many facilities play multiple and varied roles in village life. Take the example of a public house, this can act as a place to meet for local groups and societies, a place to buy some milk and a paper for others and a simple food and drink establishment for many. Similarly, village halls, shops, post offices and churches often have an impact and function beyond their initial role.

Accessibility of Settlements

4.9   A similar weighted approach has been applied to the themes and indicators connected with the accessibility of places to services, facilities and major places of employment. In summary the areas covered in this part of the model are:

- Frequency of bus services
- Frequency of rail services
- Distance to a local shop
- Distance to a primary school
- Distance to a main town or large settlement
- Travel time by bus to a main town or large settlement

For the purposes of this study if a railway station was within a 15 minutes walk or less than 1 mile, it was included as a feature of the settlement.

4.10   As with services and facilities within the settlements not all the accessibility indicators are scored equally and reflect a weighted importance and are also scored on a graduated basis. This is detailed in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Accessibility Indicators and Points Allocation

Indicator	Indicator Breakdown	Points Allocation
Bus Service	No Service	0
Bus Service	Non Daily Service	1
Bus Service	Daily Service - greater than hourly	2
Bus Service	Daily Service - hourly	3
Bus Service	Daily Service - 30 mins of less	4
Rail Service	No Service	0
Rail Service	Less than every 5 hours	1
Rail Service	Every 1-5 hours	2
Rail Service	Hourly	3
Rail Service	Half Hourly or Less	4
Local Shop	Village shop or convenience store within 5 miles	1
Local Shop	Village shop or convenience store within 1-3 miles	2
Local Shop	Village shop or convenience store within 1 mile	3
Education	Primary school within 5 miles	1
Education	Primary school within 1-3 miles	2
Education	Primary school within 1 mile	3
Distance to Main Towns / Large Settlements	Within 5 – 10 miles	1
Distance to Main Towns / Large Settlements	Within 2 – 5 miles	2
Distance to Main Towns / Large Settlements	Within 2 miles	3
Access to Main Towns on Public Transport (bus)	Within 1 hour	1
Access to Main Towns on Public Transport (bus)	Within 30 minutes	2

Access to Main Towns on Public Transport (bus)	Within 15 minutes	3

4.11 Various sources of information were used to inform the scoring, including www.traveline.org and www.warwickshire.gov.uk/publictransport for bus information and www.thetrainline.com for rail information. The distance between areas was assessed using two accessible postcode locations and www.theaa.com/route-planner. Detailed information on data-collection is contained in the village profiles in Appendix 5.

4.12 Table 4.4 below provides summary information on the total scores for each settlement analysed as part of the work and also their potential settlement groupings or classifications. The first group of villages with the highest scores have been named 'Primary Service Villages' and all these villages have a primary school, village hall or building used for community events and generally good access to other services. The second highest scoring group of villages have been named 'Secondary Service Villages' and all have either a good range of services / facilities or good accessibility to services / facilities. However some of these settlements may be on a smaller scale than some villages, or are lacking some village facilities. Appendix 5 on village profiles provides a full set of detailed assessment data on each settlement.

Table 4.4 Total Settlement Scores and Classifications

Settlement	Total Score	Village Classification
Hampton Magna	57	Primary Service Village
Cubbington	56	Primary Service Village
Radford Semele	53	Primary Service Village
Kingswood (Lapworth)	53	Primary Service Village
Bishop's Tachbrook	50	Primary Service Village
Barford	48	Secondary Service Village
Baginton	43	Secondary Service Village
Burton Green	40	Secondary Service Village
Leek Wootton	38	Secondary Service Village
Hatton Park	37	Secondary Service Village
Bubbenhall	35	Small and Feeder Villages
Norton Lindsey	32	Small and Feeder Villages
Weston under Wetherley	29	Small and Feeder Villages
Offchurch	28	Small and Feeder Villages
Lowsonford	27	Small and Feeder Villages
Hampton on the Hill	26	Small and Feeder Villages
Shrewley Common	26	Small and Feeder Villages
Sherbourne	25	Small and Feeder Villages
Stoneleigh	25	Small and Feeder Villages

Hatton Green	24	Small and Feeder Villages
Hunningham	21	Small and Feeder Villages
Wasperton	21	Small and Feeder Villages
Old Milverton	20	Small and Feeder Villages
Baddesley Clinton	18	Small and Feeder Villages
Eathorpe	19	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Ashow	16	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Blackdown	16	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Rowington Green	15	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Little Shrewley	14	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Hatton Station	14	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Rowington	13	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Beausale	11	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Pinley Green	11	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Turners Green	10	Very Small Villages and Hamlets
Hill Wootton	9	Very Small Villages and Hamlets

4.13   There are a wide range of settlements which have been classified within either small and feeder villages or very small villages and hamlets. On the whole the small and feeder villages have a limited range of services and may provide a supportive role to larger villages in terms of supporting facilities and services.   The lowest grouping essentially consists of very small conurbations or developments with minimal services / facilities.

4.14   There will no doubt be a degree of debate about the exact groupings of settlements, where you draw the line between different groups, or indeed whether a more general listing is appropriate for the local plan. For settlements at the top or bottom of the groupings a fairly cautious approach has been taken to classification based upon primarily parish council feedback, over such issues as school capacity (in the case of Barford) and public transport (in the case of Bubbenhall). Although supportive of some growth, Lapworth PC has also indicated concerns over concentrating growth within Kingswood and a number of other locations are also being explored across the parish as part of detailed work on site assessments. It is also worth noting that Eathorpe punches above its weight for services / facilities (village hall / public house etc), but is essentially a very small settlement.

5.0   Considering Growth – Constraints, Opportunities and Apportionment

5.1   The range or accessibility of services and facilities are important considerations in the determining the ability of settlements to accommodate further housing growth. However, the distribution of development also needs to be informed by:

- Strategic policy and physical constraints;

- The availability of potential sites;
- The broad role and function of settlements, and
- The ambition and forward strategy of settlements (or more precisely Parish Councils).

Constraints

5.2   It is evident from the work to-date that Warwick District contains a wide variety of settlements ranging from larger villages on the edge of Leamington and Warwick, to villages providing a valuable role in servicing large rural catchments through to clusters of small villages and hamlets supporting a dispersed and often limited range of community facilities and services. It is also evident that the settlements are situated in varied landscape areas and all but 5 identified settlements are located within the green belt. Moreover, some settlements may face significant strategic development pressures (HSII for example), which may impact on their future growth and options. Additionally it is clear that some primary schools have limited growth potential while others would benefit from higher local pupil numbers.

5.3   It is intended to update and extend the village profiles in Appendix 5 to fully consider the constraints facing each settlement. This work will be informed by an on-going detailed assessment of green belt areas, habitat and ecology and landscape character / impact. In addition further work will be undertaken with the County Council on education, infrastructure issues and other constraints.

Potential Sites

5.4   There is a high level of potential development sites connected with the Primary and Secondary Service Villages. At the last count, about 40+ sites totalling over 77 hectare (gross), have been identified for further review and assessment leading to the possible identification of potential village housing options. These sites have not been included in this report, but will undergo a full site evaluation assessment covering:

- Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment criteria (suitability, availability and achievability / deliverability);
- Parish Council feedback;
- Sustainability Appraisal scoring;
- Greenbelt and Green Field assessment;
- Landscape character assessment;
- Habitat and ecology assessment;
- Loss of employment land assessment;
- Site layout, infrastructure and other constraints, and
- Planning and policy history.

The key challenge is identifying the most appropriate sites that minimise environmental impact; help contribute towards the overall built quality of the settlement and deliver development of an appropriate scale to the village concerned.

<u>Role and Function of Settlements</u>

5.5 The majority of the settlements identified in the Primary and Secondary Service Villages are located near or on the edge of town and urban areas. Many are convenient for commuting to employment within Warwickshire and beyond. Other villages provide a good location for those looking to relocate to take advantage of village services and rural surrounds. Table 5.1, broadly outlines the location and broad function of the settlement with regard to Mosaic citizen grouping data. This data has been used to inform policy making in the public sector, in which it is recognised that different groups of citizens require different types of services, delivered in different ways. Appendix 6 includes Mosaic data for Lower Super Output Areas in Warwick District.

Table 5.1 Location, Role and Function

Settlement	Location	Mosiac Top Groupings	Role / Function / Character
Hampton Magna	Warwick Urban Fringe	Couples with young children in comfortable modern housing / Successful professional living in suburban or semi –rural homes / Residents of small and mid-sized towns with strong local roots / Wealthy people living in the most sought after neighbourhoods.	Commuting location with retirement areas.
Cubbington	Leamington Urban Fringe	Residents of small and mid-sized towns with strong local roots / Middle income families living in moderate suburban semis / Active elderly people living in pleasant retirement locations.	Edge of urban working and commuting location with mixed estates.
Radford Semele	Leamington Urban Fringe	Middle income families living in moderate suburban semis / Residents of small and mid-sized towns with strong local roots / Couples and young singles	Commuting location with mixed estates.

		in small modern starter homes.	
Bishop's Tachbrook	South of Leamington	Middle income families living in living in moderate suburban semis / Residents of small and mid-sized towns with strong local roots / Residents with sufficient incomes in right-to-buy social housing.	Commuting location with mixed estates.
Kingswood (Lapworth)	North West District	Successful professionals living in suburban or semi-rural homes / Wealthy people living in the most sought after neighbourhoods / Residents of isolated rural communities.	Historic core with commuting and retirement areas.
Barford	South of Warwick	Successful professionals living in suburban or semi-rural homes / Wealthy people living in the most sought after neighbourhoods / Couples with young children in the comfortable modern housing.	Historic core with commuting and retirement areas.
Baginton	Coventry Urban Fringe	Successful professionals living in suburban or semi-rural homes / Residents of small and mid-sized towns with strong local roots.	Edge of urban with mixed estates.
Burton Green	Coventry Urban Fringe	Primarily successful professionals living in suburban or semi-rural homes.	Edge of urban commuting and retirement areas.
Hatton Park	Warwick Urban Fringe	Couples with young children in comfortable modern housing / Successful professional living in suburban or semi –rural homes / Residents of small and mid-sized towns with strong local roots / Wealthy people living in the most sought after neighbourhoods.	Commuting location with family and couple housing.
Leek Wootton	Kenilworth Urban Fringe	Successful professionals living in suburban or semi-rural homes / Wealthy	Historic core with commuting and retirement areas

		people living in the most sought after neighbourhoods / Residents of isolated rural communities.	

Ambition and Forward Strategy

5.6 The settlements and parishes in the top two village groupings vary considerably with regard to their ambition and future directions with regard to place-making and accommodating housing growth. Neighbourhood Plans are at various stages of application and development and cover the following parishes:

- Bishop's Tachbrook
- Lapworth
- Burton Green
- Ashow and Stoneleigh

The parish council's covering Barford and Leek Wootton have also expressed a strong interest in undertaking Neighbourhood Plans. The remaining parishes have either expressed limited or no interest in housing growth or only a very limited quantity. Regardless of ambition and future strategies all parish councils have expressed a need to ensure that services and facilities are not overstretched and any future development should be appropriate to the scale of the settlements, minimising impact where possible.

5.7 It is also worth noting that a number of Parish Councils (Shrewley and Rowington for example) have expressed concerns that concentrating growth on the most sustainable locations, scored using a fairly static model, does not take into consideration the needs of areas which are looking to improve their position and range of local services / facilities, but currently score low on the adopted model. The drive, ambition and forward strategy of all parishes needs to be considered in the round.

Apportionment of Growth

5.8 The apportionment of growth will be revised in light of on-going work on green belt assessment; habitat and landscape impact; individual site assessments and neighbourhood planning processes. It provides an initial scale or spectrum of housing growth. Detailed analysis and the development of further discursive content may move the model away from a 'points allocation' and weighting model to a fuller move evaluative approach.

5.9 The main elements of the current apportionment model include:

- The application of baseline growth rates based upon a percentage increase in current household levels – a rate of 20% for Primary Service Villages and 15% for Secondary Service Villages. This means that the growth levels start by being tracked to the existing size of the settlement in a proportional manner.

- An assessment is then made of key factors which may impact on the ability of the settlement to accommodate growth including the sustainability of services (particularly the ability of primary schools to accommodate an increase in pupil numbers); role and character of the settlements; headline assessment of the suitability of sites and environmental impact and finally the overall settlement vision. This exercise allows us to increase or reduce dwelling numbers depending upon the overall assessment of factors impacting upon the ability of the settlement to accommodate growth.

- The initial percentage baseline growth rates are broadly in-keeping with forecast for the district as a whole across the plan period.

Appendix 7 contains a summary of the core elements of the approach to apportionment.