
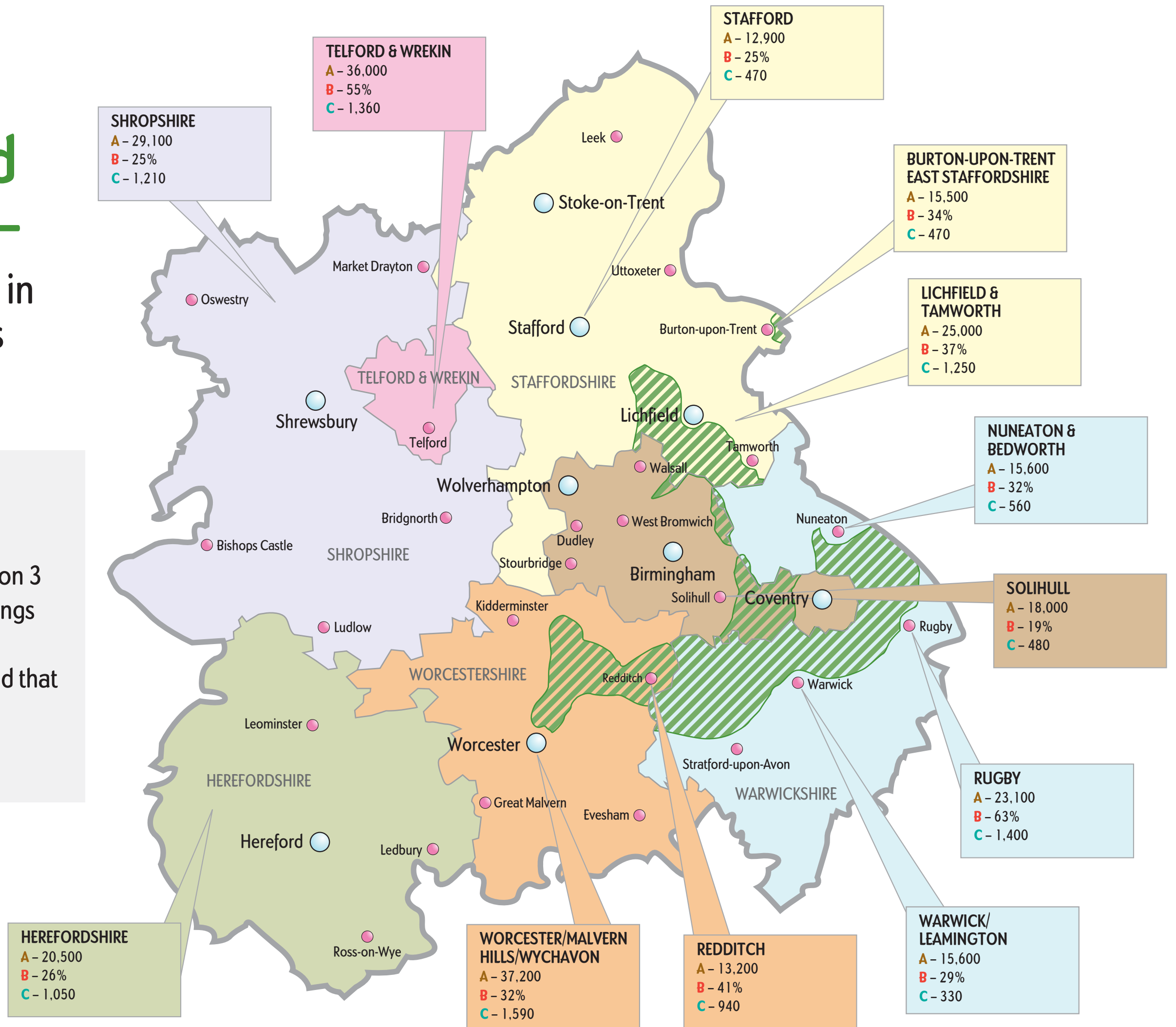


The Great Green-Field Takeaway –

Housing Hotspots in the West Midlands

KEY

- A** – Dwellings to be built, 2001-2026, under Option 3
- B** – % Net Increase in Dwellings compared with 2001
- C** – Acres of Green Field Land that could be lost
-  Green Belt at risk



The Great Green-Field Takeaway – Housing Hotspots in the West Midlands

The Government is putting pressure on the West Midlands Regional Assembly to find land to accommodate up to 575,000 dwellings in the West Midlands over 25 years - more than half as many again as are currently planned. At the moment, about 80% of new houses and flats are built on previously developed sites, mainly in cities and towns, but this would probably fall to around 60% under the new proposals.

Large areas of green field land would be gobbled up. In total we calculate that over 14,600 acres (nearly 23 square miles) of green field land would be at risk from housing development. That is not all. Housing brings with it requirements for new roads, shops, schools, health services etc, so even more open land would be lost.

The map overleaf shows the impact of the proposals on different parts of the region. For the main 'housing hot spots' in the region, the map shows –

- A** – How many dwellings would be built in total under Regional Spatial Strategy 'Option 3' between 2001 and 2026;
- B** – What percentage growth this would mean;
- C** – How much green field land could be required.

Many of these hot spots have grown rapidly in the past, expanding out into the countryside, putting pressure on the transport system and threatening historic character and / or a high quality environment. Further growth would draw more people out of the conurbations (Birmingham / Black Country, Coventry and North Staffordshire) and make it much more difficult to regenerate these urban areas.

In some areas, the new higher rate of growth would make building on green belt land unavoidable. We cannot put a figure on this, but the areas where green belt land would be most at risk are shaded green on the map.

These proposals are currently out for consultation. There is still time to fight for a level of housing growth that strikes a sensible balance between meeting future housing needs and safeguarding the environment and character of our urban and rural areas. Options 1 and 2 propose 381,000 and 491,200 dwellings respectively.

Comments should be sent to the West Midlands Regional Assembly, Regional Partnership Centre, Albert House, Quay Place, Birmingham B1 2RA (or by e-mail to wmrss@wmra.gov.uk) by 5 March 2007.

Figures for counties and unitary authorities are given below –

| | New Dwellings (1) | % Growth (2) | Green Field Loss (3) (Acres) |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Birmingham | 92,000 | 11.9 | 880 |
| Coventry | 44,000 | 29.3 | 320 |
| Black Country | 106,700 | 16.3 | 1,270 |
| Solihull | 18,000 | 19.3 | 480 |
| Shropshire | 29,100 | 24.5 | 1,210 |
| Telford and Wrekin | 36,000 | 54.9 | 1,360 |
| Staffordshire | 77,900 | 23.0 | 2,800 |
| Stoke-on-Trent | 21,000 | 6.2 | 0 |
| Warwickshire | 67,500 | 31.4 | 2,670 |
| Worcestershire | 62,300 | 27.0 | 2,620 |
| Herefordshire | 20,500 | 26.4 | 1,050 |
| TOTAL | 575,000 | 21.4 | 14,660 |

(1) New dwellings (gross) under Regional Spatial Strategy Option 3

(2) Net dwellings increase (ie excluding replacements for demolitions) as a percentage of occupied dwellings in 2001.

(3) Based on information on brown field land availability from the 2004 Urban Capacity Study. Projected densities for 2011-21 from the same study have been used to calculate green field land requirements for dwellings surplus to brown field capacity.

If you have any comments or questions on this information, please contact Peter Langley, Vice Chairman, CPRE West Midlands, pelangley@btinternet.com, 024-7654-0211.