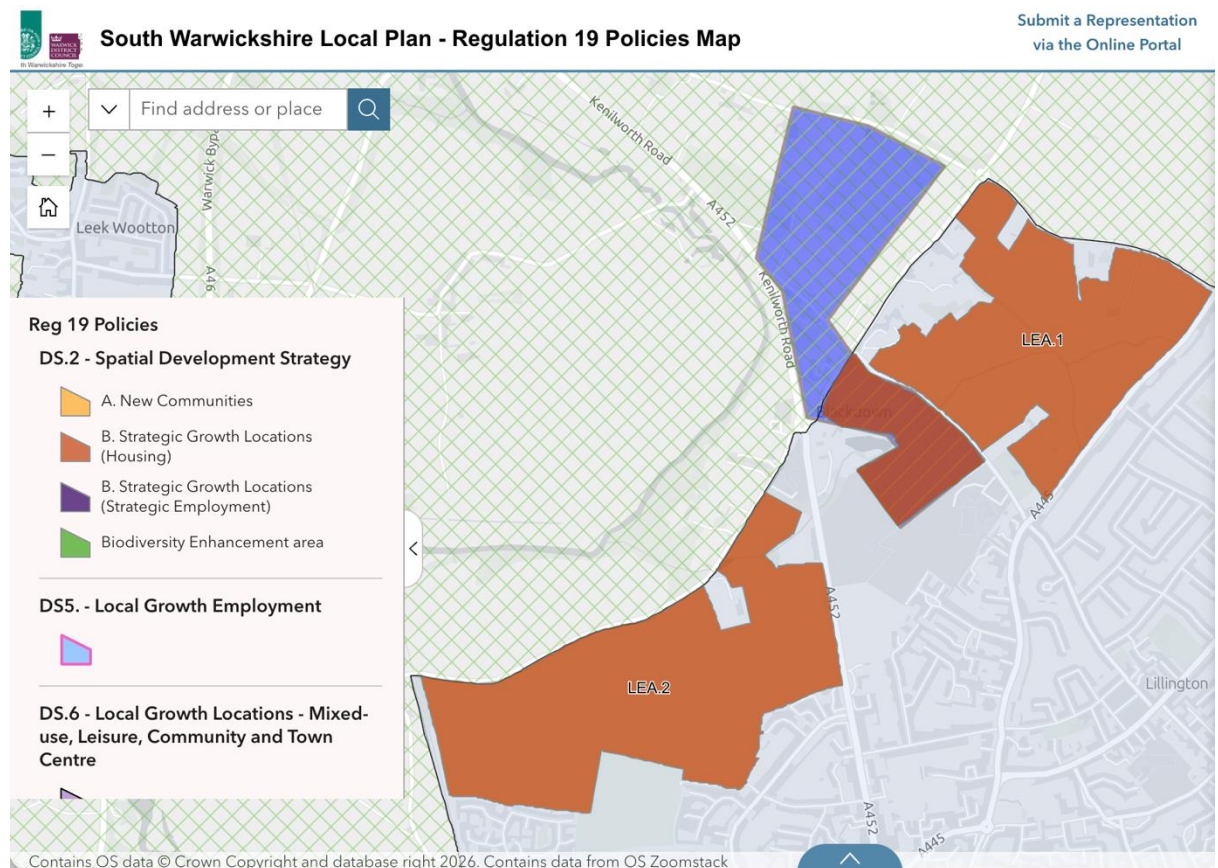


Old Milverton & Blackdown Joint Parish Council have commissioned a detailed site assessment report concerning the proposed Strategic Site Allocation SG06 in the emerging South Warwickshire Local Plan (SWLP). The full report will be published shortly.

For information, SG06 has now been subdivided in the Regulation-19 Local Plan consultation into 2 sites LEA1 and LEA 2. You will also see on the interactive map an additional allocation between LEA1 and LEA2 for a park and ride.

An extract from the SWLP interactive local plan map is shown below for illustrative purposes.



Our independent site assessment report evaluates the proposed strategic site allocation SG06 (LEA1 and LEA2) in terms of planning rationale, policy context, evidence base, green belt considerations, site-specific assessments, and concludes with recommendations for further review. The report demonstrates how the evidence base underpinning the proposed allocation is incomplete and the true and full extent of any impact has not been fully assessed. There are fundamental issues that have not been addressed, as it stands this is not a sound or justified allocation. Some of the key issues are listed below.

Evidence Base

The report reviews key evidence documents underpinning the proposed allocation:

- The South Warwickshire Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HELAA, November 2024) identifies SG06 in two site references: RefID 526 (Green Belt land around Old Milverton, rated red) covering SG06 West and part of SG06 East, and RefID 531 (Land North of Leamington Spa, rated green) covering a small part of SG06 East. Notably, most of SG06 East remains unassessed in the HELAA, indicating incomplete evidence for the allocation.
- The Heritage and Settlement Sensitivity Assessment (September 2022) highlights significant heritage assets within, adjoining or adjacent the SG06 area, including Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, Registered Parks and Gardens such as Guy's Cliffe, and the historic hamlet of Old Milverton. The allocation could result in loss or harm to these heritage assets.
- The Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) maps reveal that SG06 contains 'Areas of Particular Importance for Biodiversity' (APIB) and areas identified as 'potentially important for biodiversity enhancement'. Parts of the site lie within the Dunsmore Nature Improvement Area and are suitable for natural flood management bund creation, indicating ecological and environmental significance.
- The Sub-Regional Green Infrastructure Strategy (August 2024) recommends retaining landscape features such as hedgerows, meadows, and watercourses, emphasizing the importance of the rural urban fringe landscape character near SG06, which could be harmed by development, especially in SG06 West.

Green Belt Review

The document details the Green Belt context:

- The wider West Midlands Green Belt is vulnerable near Leamington Spa, with SG06's release potentially weakening its function and increasing urban sprawl risks, especially given proximity to settlements like Leek Wootton and Kenilworth.
- The South Warwickshire Local Plan's interactive map shows cumulative Green Belt erosion due to SG02, SG04, and SG06 allocations.
- Previous Green Belt assessments (2015-2016) identified strong natural and man-made defensible boundaries, but the latest LPA Green Belt Review by ARUP (September 2024) presents an inconsistent assessment of SG06

parcels, conflicting with earlier findings and the independent LUC assessment.

- The Parish Council have commissioned an independent Green Belt Assessment (April 2026), by LUC. This assessment divides SG06 into six parcels (OMB1-OMB6) and finds that the site strongly contributes to key Green Belt purposes, notably preventing urban sprawl and safeguarding countryside from encroachment. This assessment suggests that the SG06 allocation would significantly impact Green Belt functions.
- Taking account of the latest Green Belt Assessment (April 2026) it demonstrates that SG06 does not constitute Grey Belt, as it fails to meet the definition, by virtue that it scores strongly on relevant Green Belt purpose.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land

- Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land is considered to be grades 1,2 or 3a. A significant proportion of the proposed SG06 site is classified as grade 2 Best and Most Versatile (BMV) agricultural land. This is productive farmland.
- Without a sequential test there is no justification to remove actively farmed land that contributes to food production for housing.

Overview

This concludes that the proposed SG06 allocation requires a thorough review due to incomplete evidence and significant constraints including Green Belt function, heritage assets, agricultural land quality, biodiversity, flood risk, and landscape character.

The absence of a sequential assessment to justify loss of BMV land and the strong Green Belt contribution evidenced by the independent LUC assessment suggest that SG06 is currently an unsound allocation. Therefore, the report emphasizes the need for sustainable development in appropriate locations and further rigorous site evaluation before proceeding.