

The Civil Parish of Hampton-in-Arden Neighbourhood Plan

Ten Year Vision

Date Made: xxxx 2025

Submission Draft

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is challenging to come forward with acceptable development proposals for the civil parish of Hampton-in-Arden, as the area sits within designated Green Belt in the strategically significant Meriden Gap. Unless *very special circumstances* exist, development is generally confined to the tightly drawn Inset Areas around the settlements of Hampton-in-Arden and Catherine de Barnes; in addition, a large part of the Hampton-in-Arden Inset Area is also a Conservation Area where additional constraints apply.

This Neighbourhood Plan has been developed to help developers, architects, builders, businesses, and householders in understanding the policies of the Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council, and the community it represents, in terms of what sort of development is likely to find support.

This plan replaces an earlier Plan adopted in 2017, which was based on consultations which commenced in 2015. This update incorporates the views of the community within the revised 2019 parish boundary, which now includes the whole of Catherine de Barnes.

For this update a new round of opinion surveys was launched in 2020. Like those of 2015, these surveys covered economic development, housing, travel, the environment, development within the Green Belt, heritage and community facilities such as shops, sports, and digital communications.

As required under planning legislation, this Plan:

- meets the requirements of the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** as issued in December 2024 and updated on 7 February 2025, and the associated **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)**, and
- is in general conformity with the strategic policies in **Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's Local Plan** (made in 2013); however, it also reflects actual and potential developments in the years since.

The Plan has been prepared by a working group of local parish councillors and representatives of community organisations. The maps and plans used are as up to date as was possible at the time of submission of the plan for approval.

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SECTION 1 - INTRODUCTION

Background

1.1 The civil parish of Hampton-in-Arden was created in 1894. Part of its border ran along the Grand Union Canal which resulted in most of the settlement of Catherine de Barnes falling outside the parish boundary. This was resolved in 2019 when, following extensive consultations and a referendum, the parish was reconfigured into two wards, Hampton-in-Arden, and Catherine de Barnes, with the whole of Catherine de Barnes joining the parish. The current parish boundary as created in 2019, and the boundaries of the two wards, are shown in the figure following.

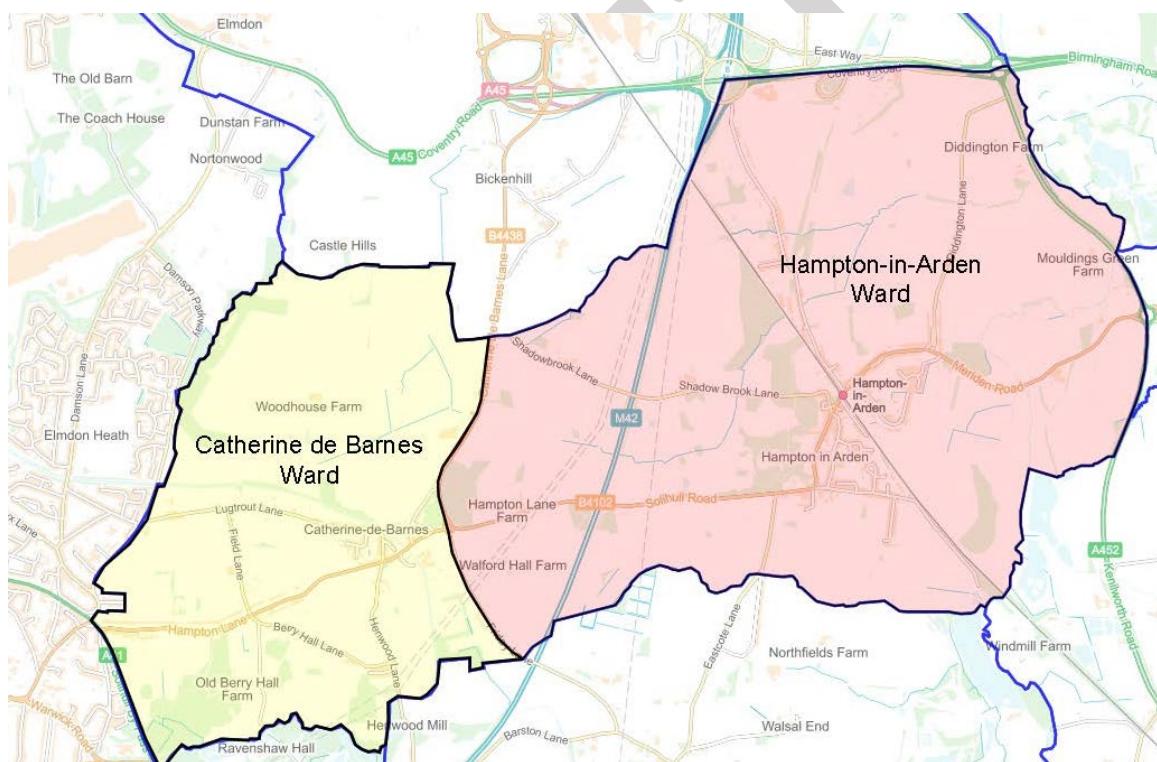


Figure 1 - Civil Parish and Neighbourhood Plan Area showing Ward boundaries.

1.2 The boundary change, and the subsequent identification of potential new development sites within the Green Belt since its publication, were the main drivers for updating the original Neighbourhood Plan adopted in 2017. The Neighbourhood Plan Area was re-aligned with the revised Civil Parish boundary in 2019.

1.3 Hampton-in-Arden Parish sits within the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) area and has boundaries with the unparished part of SMBC as well as the civil parishes of Bickenhill & Marston Green, Great Packington, Meriden, Berkswell and Barston as shown in the figure following.

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Figure 2 - Parish Location

1.4 For this updated Neighbourhood Plan, a new round of opinion surveys was launched in 2020. The previous surveys, conducted in 2015, received a 40% response from residents and 25% from businesses and community organisations. The surveys conducted in 2020 received a lower response, with a 23% response from residents and a 6% response from businesses.

1.5 The conclusions drawn from the 2020 surveys did not differ widely from those expressed in the 2015 surveys. In both there was an emphasis that new development should be in keeping with local character, heritage, scale, and setting. These views did not materially change following the subsequent consultations on the draft Neighbourhood Plan.

1.6 A draft version of this Neighbourhood Plan was put out for consultation in February 2023. Following a significant number of responses from both residents and statutory consultees the plan was further amended and updated.

1.7 As required under planning legislation, this Plan meets the requirements of the **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** and the associated **Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)** which states that it must have regard for national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State and contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. It also conforms with the strategic policies set out in the **SMBC Local Plan 2013**.

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Vision Statement

1.8 Our Vision Statement for the period of the Plan is set out below:

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council will aim to protect the strong local identity and distinctiveness of the parish, maintaining and enhancing its historic character, distinctiveness, and rural setting, whilst ensuring that the community benefits from quality sustainable improvements that will help to at least maintain, and ideally improve, the parish as a safe, thriving, and sustainable place to live and work.

SECTION 2 – PLANNING CONSTRAINTS

2.1 In our survey 84% of respondents said they placed great value on protection of the Green Belt landscape and 80% highly valued the protection of the parish's historic and natural features. Where new developments were under consideration, 88% suggested that designs should respect the scale of the settlements and 80% wanted to see designs which maximised the use of green space and gardens.

2.2 The parish derives its special character from its rural setting in the Arden Landscape and its historic roots. The rural nature of the Parish is clearly visible in the 2024 aerial view shown below.

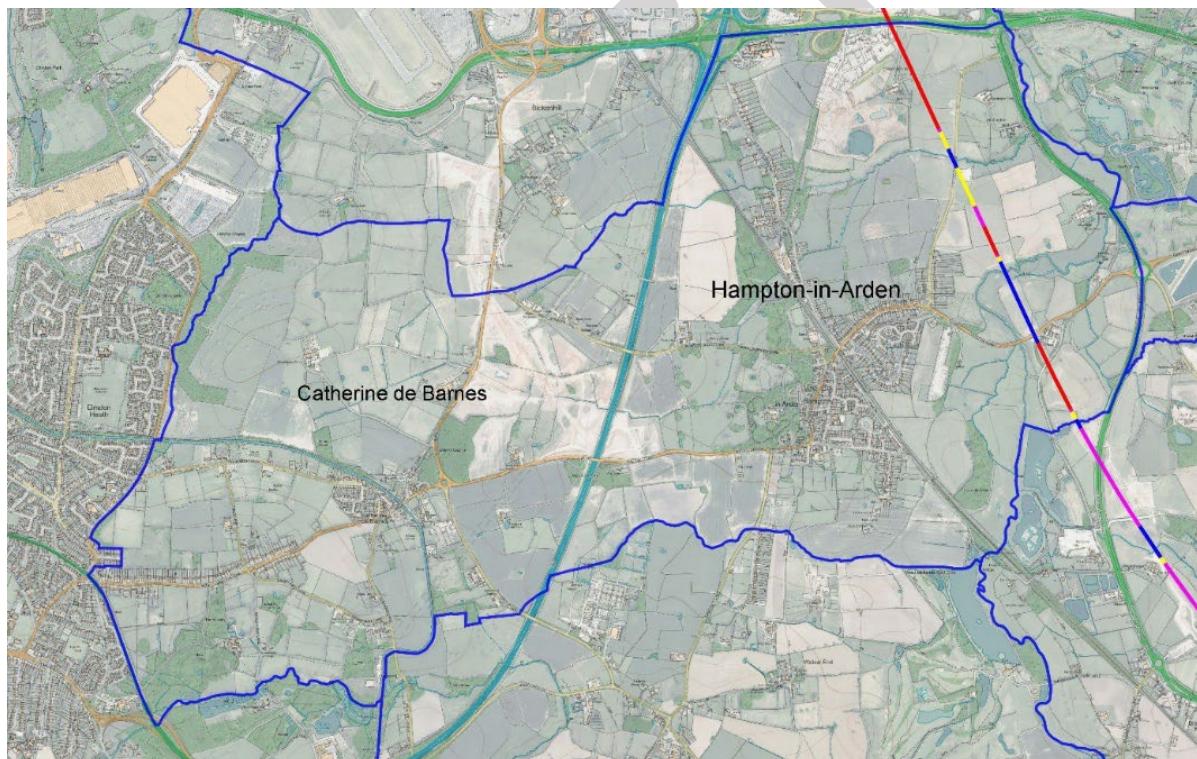


Figure 3 - Aerial view of Parish showing greenness (also showing route of HS2)

2.3 Our consultations have identified the following highly valued parish features:

- **Green Belt** - The developed parts of the villages of Hampton-In-Arden and Catherine de Barnes are treated as **Inset Areas** within the strategically important area of Green Belt known as the Meriden Gap. Development is generally not permitted within the Green Belt unless **very special circumstances** exist. There was a strong desire to defend this Green Belt.
- **Valued views** – Within the parish there are popular views identified in the survey as 'special.' There was a desire to ensure that these are cherished and protected by

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retaining their rural/pastoral outlook and setting, free from development or change of use.

- **Tree cover** - The landscape of the parish is dominated by trees, characteristic of its setting within the historic Forest of Arden landscape. There are some areas of historic woodland, a surviving ancient common in Catherine de Barnes, areas of Victorian mature planting associated with the Manor and Spinney, and more recent tree cover created on George Fenthams Trust property, including an Arboretum. Trees planted in large gardens and open public spaces complete the overall aspect of the tree dominated landscape.
- **Biodiversity** – There are numerous sites where wildlife flourishes. The Spinney and the Common are in the custodianship of the Parish Council and are managed as local amenities. Further areas of woodland and wildflower meadow are managed by the Fenthams Trust. The River Blythe, which is designated a *Site of Special Scientific Interest*, and its water meadows form a natural flood plain and wildfowl habitat. A nature reserve adjacent to the River Blythe is managed by the Packington Estate, and another to the north of the parish is managed by the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.
- **Local Heritage** – Parts of the parish, particularly in the old village centre of Hampton-in-Arden where the additional protection of the Conservation Area applies, contain numerous examples of heritage assets. These include the parish church itself, its churchyard, its historic manor houses, and old school buildings. There are three Scheduled Monuments, the Packhorse Bridge, the moated site at the Moat House and the ancient stone cross in the churchyard. Several homes, farmsteads and cottages in both settlements are also of historical value. Valued Listed buildings in the parish include Diddington Hall, Bogay Hall, Walford Hall and Old Berry Hall.
- **Separateness** – Much of the character of the two main settlements derives from the fact that they are separated from Solihull's urban sprawl and transport infrastructure by sizeable tracts of Green Belt open space. Retaining this character requires an approach which minimises the erosion of these separation gaps, specifically, the open space:
 - between Catherine de Barnes and Solihull
 - between Catherine de Barnes and Hampton
 - surrounding the settlement of Hampton-in-Arden.

2.4 Since the adoption of the 2013 Local Plan a new development has been proposed between Damson Parkway, the Grand Union Canal, Field Lane and Hampton Lane which would represent both a substantial narrowing of the Green Belt between urban Solihull and the village of Catherine de Barnes, and a significant development of the Hampton in Arden Parish. The impact of this development, as well as other proposed residential, commercial and infrastructure developments around Catherine de Barnes, is shown in the figure following.

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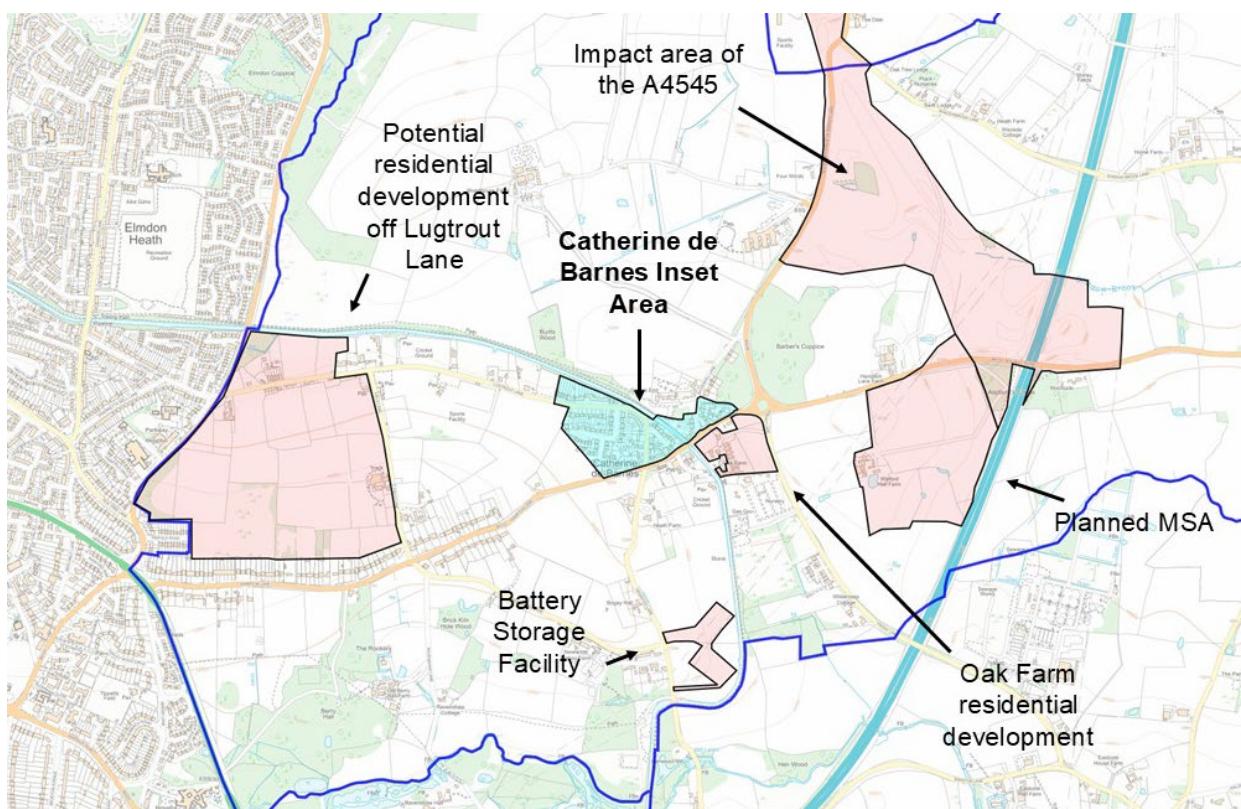


Figure 4- Planned Green Belt impacts around Catherine de Barnes as of 2024

2.5 Development proposals within the parish must take account of several additional Statutory Protections which include Listed Status, Conservation Area Protection and Green Belt Protection. In addition, a significant part of the parish lies within the Blythe flood plain and development is limited by flood risk implications.

Listed Status

2.6 Several buildings within the parish have been given Listed Status¹. Some, but not all, are within the Conservation Area, and some are within the Green Belt. For modifications to these buildings, there is a further level of planning approval required to ensure preservation of their architectural value and heritage status.

2.7 As a rule of thumb, any modifications to listed properties should preserve the original appearance and character as much as possible, although change may be acceptable where there is an appropriate balance of public benefit. The Parish Council will always look closely at planning applications involving changes to Listed Buildings, including their neighbouring buildings, building lines, street scene, and views.

2.8 SMBC has awarded 'Locally Listed Status' to a further number of buildings. These additional buildings are itemised in SMBC's *Local List of Heritage Assets*. Whilst not carrying the

¹ Listed Status is awarded by the appropriate Secretary of State, currently the Secretary of State for Digital, Cultural, Media & Sport, and overseen by Historic England. A full list of listed buildings can be found on the Historic England website.

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full legal protection of Listed Status, we expect any proposals affecting these properties to conserve them to a degree appropriate to their significance.

Conservation Area

2.9 In 1968 the central part of the Hampton-in-Arden village was designated a Conservation Area; this assessment was updated in 2015. A plan of the Conservation Area is shown in the figure following.

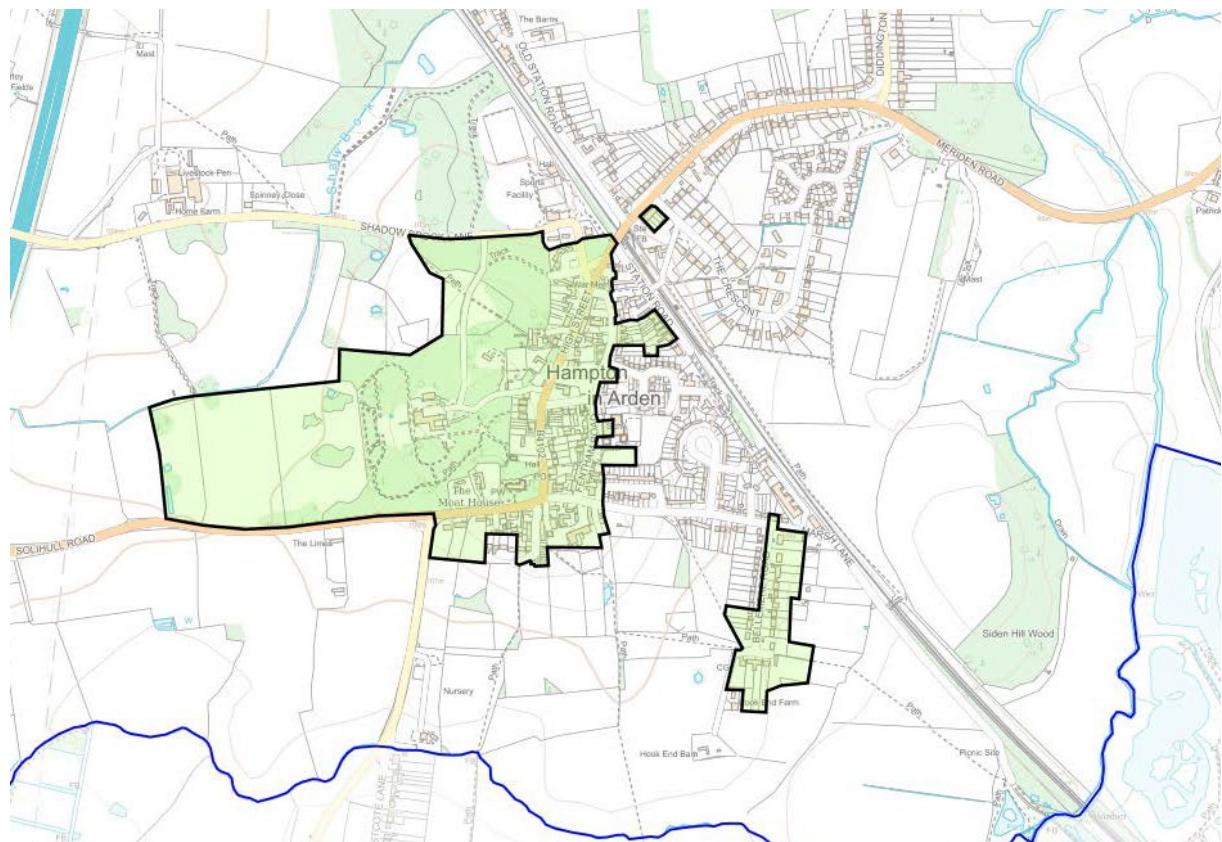


Figure 5 - Hampton-in-Arden Conservation Area

Green Belt

2.10 The Green Belt covers the greater part of the parish, and new development within it requires *very special circumstances*. When considering any planning application, the local planning authority has a statutory duty to ensure that substantial weight is given to any harm to the Green Belt. *Very special circumstances* will not exist unless the potential harm to the Green Belt is clearly outweighed by other considerations. Certain types of development are permitted within Green Belt land, details of which are set out in the NPPF.

2.11 The extent of Green Belt in and around the parish as configured in April 2025 is shown in the figure following.

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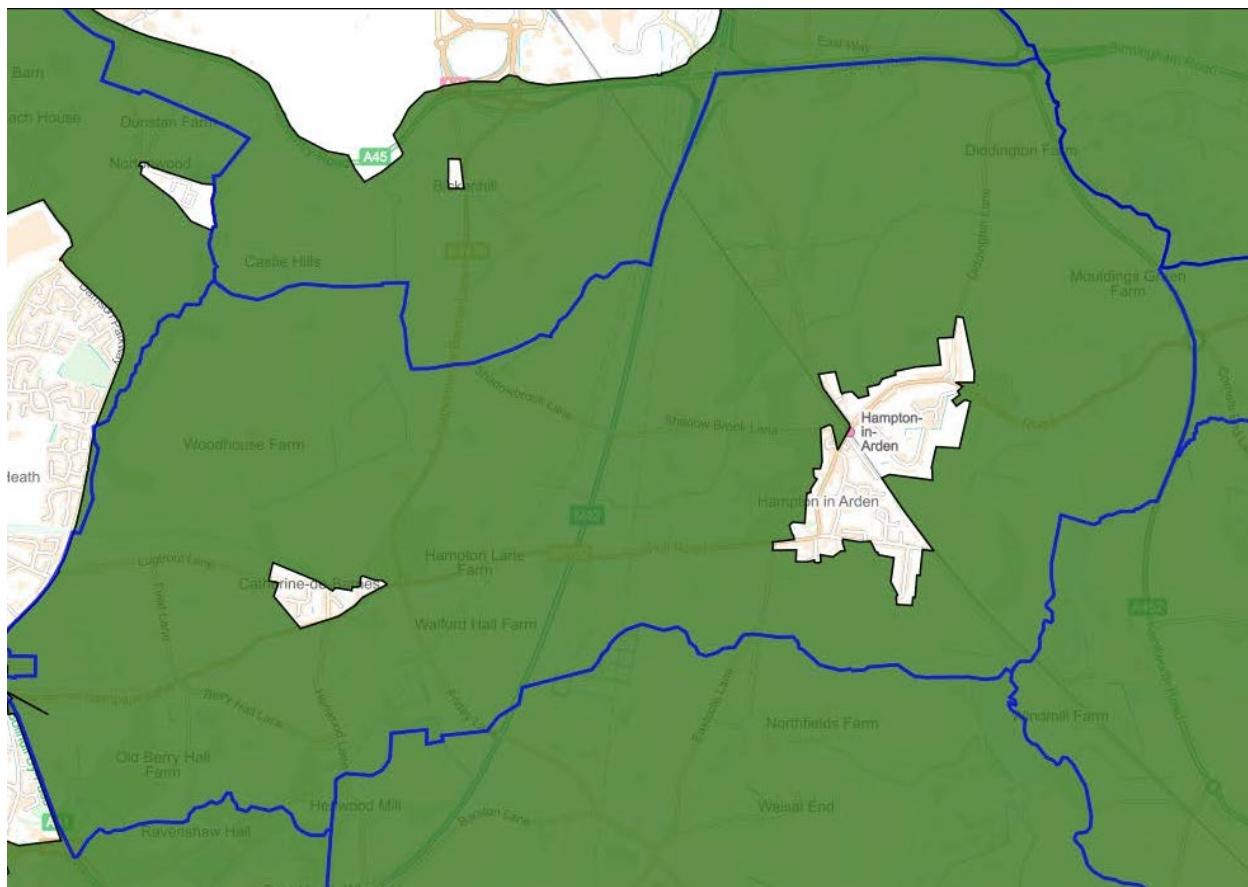


Figure 6 - Green Belt coverage in the parish (coloured Green) as of April 2025

2.12 The December 2024 update of the NPPF introduced the concept of **Grey Belt** to create additional space for development. Grey Belt is defined as previously developed land (e.g. brownfield land) or any other parcels of land within the Green Belt that do not strongly contribute to the following purposes of the Green Belt:

- Preventing the unchecked sprawl of large urban areas
- Avoiding the merging of neighbouring towns into one another
- Preserving the setting and unique character of historic towns.

2.13 This is intended to allow underused or low-value Green Belt land to be repurposed for development. However, the NPPF exempts Green Belt land from designation as Grey Belt where it is subject to stringent protections such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage assets, flood-prone areas, and landscapes of national importance like National Parks, Local Green Spaces, and Heritage Coasts.

2.14 The last comprehensive reviews of the quality of Green Belt in the Borough by SMBC were the **Strategic Green Belt Assessment** of July 2016 and the related **Landscape Character Assessment** of December 2016. The Strategic Green Belt assessment examined both **Broad Areas** across the borough and more specific **Refined Parcels** and assessed how each performed against the three criteria specified in the 2024 NPPF. The assessment scored the performance of each area and parcel between 0-4 as follows:

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- 0 = Does not conform
- 1 = Low conformity
- 2 = Moderate conformity
- 3 = High conformity

2.15 The development of the sites already envisaged by SMBC since the publication of the Local Plan would represent a significant loss of Green Belt and this, combined with the impact of other residential and civil infrastructure developments, makes the importance of preserving the remaining gap between suburban Solihull and Catherine de Barnes, and the open area surrounding Hampton-in-Arden, even more critical. In viewing any proposals to reclassify Green Belt to Grey Belt we will take note of the assessments in both 2016 reports and strongly resist any redesignation of land parcels which were judged to at least provide moderate or high conformity to the objectives of the Green Belt.

2.16 Even agricultural development needs to be managed with sensitivity. New agricultural buildings are likely to be acceptable within the Green Belt, but we will seek to ensure they are carefully sited and designed to ensure that the character and appearance of the area is maintained and are in sympathy with views of the site from the surrounding area. Wherever possible the topography of the land or screen planting should be used to reduce the prominence of a building in the landscape, and materials and colour schemes should be chosen carefully. All development in the Green Belt should be appropriately landscaped to ensure it does not adversely impact biodiversity and general rural character.

Inset Areas

2.17 Inset Areas are enclaves within the Green Belt where development is permitted under current planning regulations. Within the parish are two Inset Areas, one based on the settlement of Hampton-in-Arden, the other on the settlement of Catherine de Barnes. The Hampton-in-Arden Conservation Area sits within the Hampton-in-Arden Inset Area. Outside the two Inset Areas, everything in the parish is currently Green Belt.

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2.18 Plans of the current Hampton-in-Arden and Catherine de Barnes Inset Areas are shown following.



Figure 7 - Hampton-in-Arden Inset Area

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Figure 8 - Catherine de Barnes Inset Area

2.19 All new developments within the Inset Areas need to respect the existing settlement pattern and retain the character of the settlements. They should **enhance** the street scene and minimise any adverse effects on existing properties.

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Flood Risk

2.20 The main risk of flooding in the parish is along the route of the River Blythe and its tributaries, including the Shadowbrook. These areas, based on Environment Agency maps, are shown in the figure following.

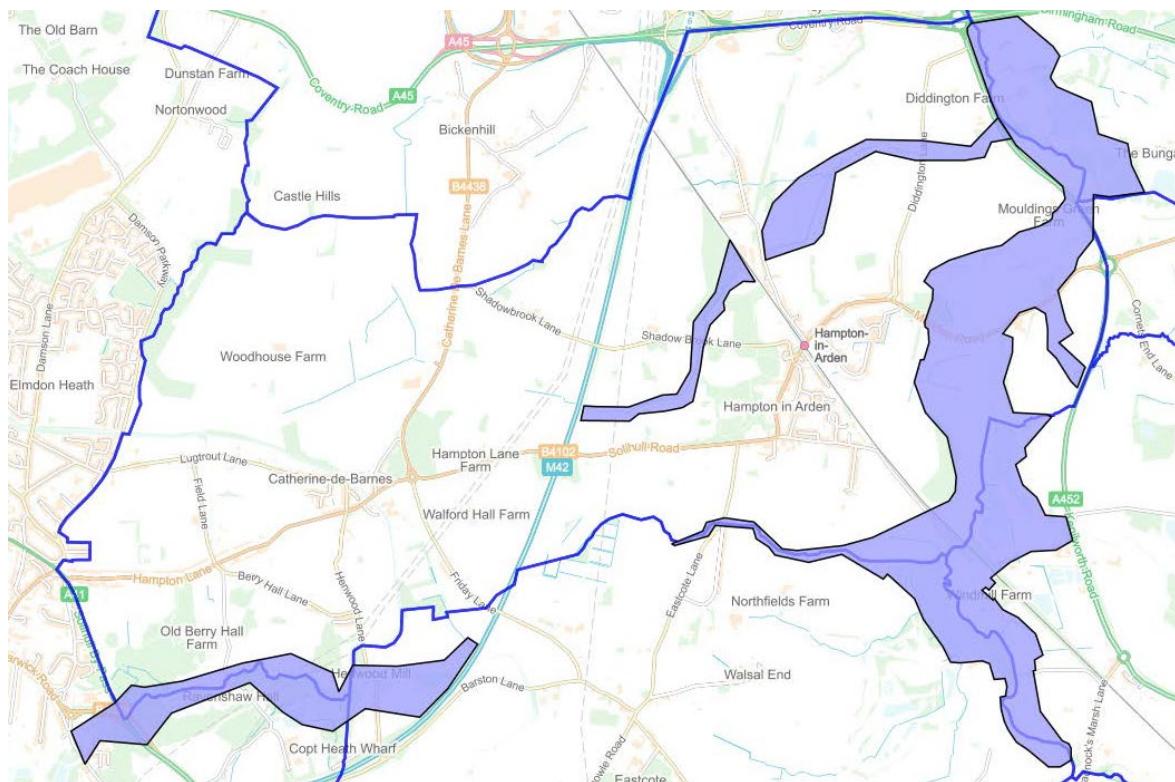


Figure 9 - Parish Flood Risk Areas

2.21 New developments should avoid these areas and should, where necessary, contribute to flood alleviation and the effective management of wastewater, both of which are critical to the pursuit of sustainable communities, help maintain water quality and enhance local amenity and biodiversity.

SECTION 3 - POLICIES

3.1 The policies set out in this section align with the six policy areas identified in the SMBC Local Plan. Each section includes a brief Parish Profile and a summary of the community feedback we have obtained. Against each we have set out Parish Policies to act as requirements for builders and developers.

3A – SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Parish Profile

3.2 Local employment areas lie primarily outside the Parish boundaries in the conurbations of Solihull, Birmingham, and Coventry or further afield. Major economic development is occurring around the fringes of the parish, in terms of the UK Central Solihull Hub Area including Arden Cross, Jaguar Land Rover, Birmingham Airport, the NEC, and Resorts World. The M42 and main West Coast railway line both cut through the parish, and further civil engineering projects are having a major impact on its rural character, primarily HS2, the A4545, and the approved Motorway Service Area (MSA) on Solihull Road. SMBC has not, at this time, earmarked any additional land within the parish for new economic development, and we support that approach.

Results of HiA Neighbourhood Plan Residents and Business Surveys 2020

3.3 Respondents to our survey were strongly against any Green Belt being used for new economic development. Three quarters of respondents thought farms should not be allowed to diversify into quasi-industrial activities, particularly activities involving increased HGV traffic and storage, noise, pollution, recycling, and manufacturing. A majority felt that we should only actively seek to encourage employment in the agricultural, recreation and leisure sectors. Most respondents thought it important to maintain our village shops as shops and resist any change of use to residential. Home working was seen as something to support, and hence facilitating improved broadband quality and a better mobile telephone signal was considered essential.

3.4 The Parish Council has developed policies based on the results of these surveys, which are in line with SMBC's *P3 - Provision of Land for General Business & Premises*.

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council Policy 1 – Sustainable Economic Development

Given the significant scale of the economic development around the edges of the parish, we do not propose to allocate further land development for

employment purposes. This is in line with SMBC's Local Plan which does not earmark any land within the parish for this purpose.

B1 – Employment

Our preference is that any business development should be on Brownfield sites; however, we may support the reasonable expansion of established businesses into the Green Belt where this will make a significant contribution to the local economy or employment, especially those that create employment in the agricultural, recreation and leisure industries, so long as any additional impacts on the transport infrastructure and rural character of the parish are mitigated. We will also support the creation of small-scale business accommodation on brownfield sites provided it can be demonstrated that the impact on any neighbouring residences, the environment and visual amenity has been considered and is acceptable. We will not be supportive of any conversion of agricultural land to industrial, waste management, storage or manufacturing use or any activity involving significantly increased traffic, noise, emissions, or pollution impacts. We will be guided by NPPF requirements on what constitutes appropriate commercial development in the Green Belt.

B2 – Protection of local businesses.

We will seek to minimise the loss of existing viable local shops and business facilities and will be reluctant to support any change of use, such as conversion of premises to residential use, without full consideration of all the alternative options.

B3 – Working from home.

We will support the improvement of facilities which increase opportunities for working from home, subject to ensuring that these are not to the detriment of neighbours through inappropriate parking, noise or other disturbance or impact.

B4 – Digital communications

We will support efforts to roll out better quality broadband and mobile telecommunications coverage across the parish so long as the physical impact

of any new installations is consistent with our other planning policies set out in this plan.

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3B – HOUSING PROVISION

Parish Profile

3.5 Based on the survey returns, most Hampton residents are owner occupiers who either own outright (59%) or pay a mortgage (34%). This is also true of Catherine de Barnes residents (comparable percentages 67% and 28%). A majority live in detached properties (Hampton 53%, Catherine de Barnes 67%), the greatest proportion of which have four bedrooms (Hampton 33%, Catherine de Barnes 32%), and two occupants (Hampton 43%, Catherine de Barnes 54%). Gas central heating is the predominant heating type (Hampton 94%, Catherine de Barnes 88%). Most residents live within the two Inset Areas of Hampton-in-Arden and Catherine de Barnes.

3.6 Since the adoption of the 2013 SMBC Local Plan three potential locations for future housing development within the parish have been identified. These are located:

- **Off Lugtrout Lane** between Damson Parkway, the canal, Field Lane, and Hampton Lane in Catherine de Barnes.
- **South of Meriden Road**, adjacent to the site allocated in the 2013 Local Plan.
- The **Oak Farm** site in Catherine de Barnes.

3.7 The development of the site off Lugtrout Lane would more than double the population of the Catherine de Barnes Ward and significantly affect its character. There would need to be detailed consultation about how services, traffic flows, and infrastructure will be able to cope.

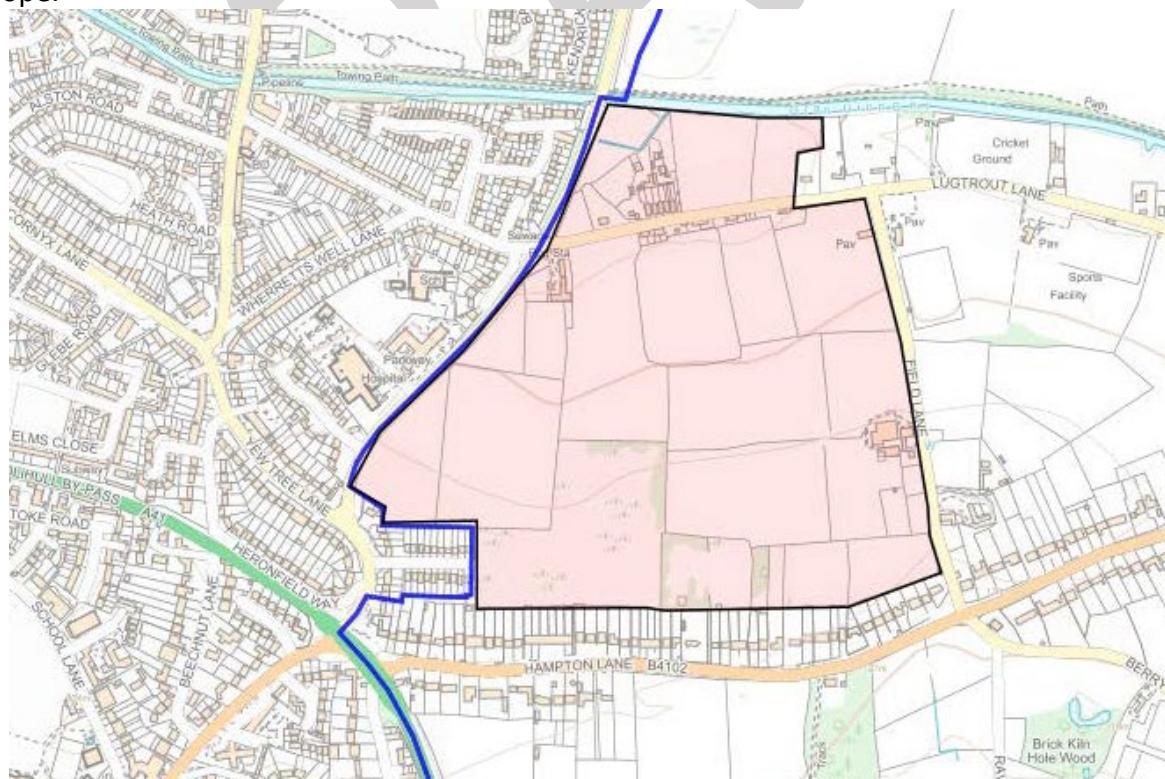


Figure 10 - Location of potential site off Lugtrout Lane

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3.8 The location of the potential site off Meriden Road is shown in the figure following.

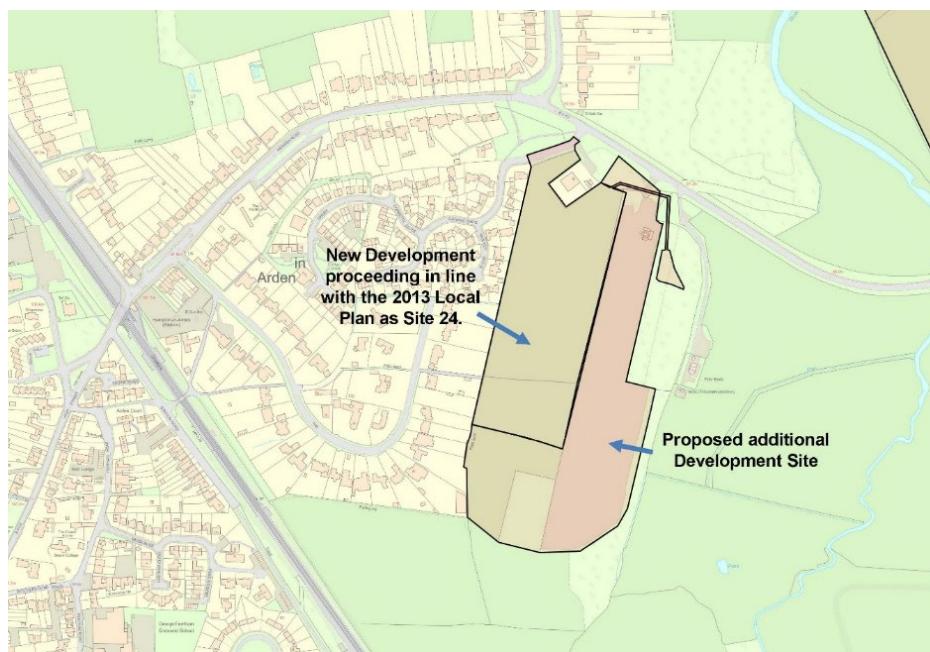


Figure 11 - Location of potential site south of Meriden Road

3.9 The location of the Oak Farm site is shown in the figure following. Approval to the building of eighty-five houses on this development within the Greenbelt, due to **very special circumstances**, was given by the SMBC Planning Committee in 2024.



Figure 12 - Location of the Oak Farm development.

Results of HiA Neighbourhood Plan Residents and Business Surveys 2020

3.10 Most people surveyed said they had no plans to move in the next five years (Hampton 67%, Catherine de Barnes 63%), but the greater number of those who were thinking of moving said they were doing so to downsize. Their biggest problem was finding something suitable within the parish. Most respondents in this category were looking to stay within the parish. Most were looking for owner occupied properties, and did not see themselves as being eligible for, or interested in, affordable housing.

3.11 Less than 25% of households believed that any household members would be looking to move out in the next five years. These were typically younger family members seeking independence. The majority of these would prefer semi-detached accommodation but felt they could only afford a flat or terraced property. Most expected they would need to leave the parish as affordable suitable properties were not available. Only a small proportion expressed any interest in seeking affordable housing themselves (20% in Hampton, 17% in Catherine de Barnes).

3.12 The greatest housing need registered by the local community was that any new housing should be in the middle and lower price ranges as the priority was for starter homes for young people or downsizing opportunities for those living in 5/6-bedroom properties, once families had left home.

3.13 A majority said they felt any new housing developments in the parish should include provision of affordable housing (82% Hampton, 77% Catherine de Barnes), within mixed developments. There was a strong preference for smaller developments of fewer than twenty-five dwellings (Hampton 77%, Catherine de Barnes 76%).

3.14 There was a very strongly expressed view that no new housing should be permitted in the Green Belt or flood plain, and that any new building should be on brownfield or previously developed sites. Most comments from respondents emphasised the importance of protecting both the Green Belt and the rural character and heritage of the parish; they also urged that no new development should be considered without fully ensuring that infrastructure services and roads were up to the demand.

3.15 The Parish Council has developed policies based on the results of our surveys, which are in line with the following SMBC's Local Plan policies:

- *P4 – Meeting Housing Needs*
- *P5 - Provision of Land for Housing*
- *P6 - Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers*

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council Policy 2 – Housing Provision

We will be as supportive of new residential building within the Inset Areas but will not support housing development in the Green Belt unless it is compliant with the relevant provisions of the NPPF. In viewing any proposals to reclassify Green Belt to Grey Belt we will take strong cognisance of the assessments in SMBC's 2016 reports and strongly resist any redesignation of land parcels which were judged to at least provide moderate or high conformity to the objectives of the Green Belt.

We will maintain pressure upon developers and the Council to ensure that all developments address the impact they will impose upon local provision of utilities, amenities, infrastructure, and services, and identify mitigation measures. Of special concern is that fact that the George Fenthams Endowed School is close to capacity and cannot manage a higher level of intake occasioned by population growth.

We will press strongly for comprehensive proposals to ensure that developments are provided with suitable vehicle and pedestrian access which will mitigate safety and amenity impacts. We will resist ribbon development in the Green Belt on both sides of Hampton Lane and Lugtrout Lane.

We will seek to ensure the incorporation of *Secured By Design* and the *National Design Guide* principles into building proposals.

H1 – Scope and Infrastructure for new developments

Where acceptable residential building development is proposed within the Inset Areas, or where *very special circumstances* for development in Green Belt have been demonstrated, we will seek to ensure that sites have good access to local services, facilities and public transport, and good footpath connectivity and are in line with SMBC's policies on Affordable Housing and Design Standards and Accessibility and Ease of Access.

H2 – New housing types and designs

We will support new housing provision that preserves and enhances the character of the parish and will favour a range of housing types and styles. We will welcome the creation of more bungalows and starter homes and resist the creation of significant numbers of larger dwellings, such as those with five or

more bedrooms, on developments of more than ten houses We will support designs consistent with the principles and recommendations of *Secured By Design* and the *National Design Guide*. New development should complement and integrate into the existing environment and not creating the feel of a stand-alone, isolated community.

H3 - Amenity standards in new developments

We will be supportive of acceptable developments which:

- Are highly sustainable, with the highest standards of energy efficiency with the aim of achieving as near to net zero carbon as is possible at the time.
- Have adequate refuse and re-cycling provision which should ideally not be visible from the public sphere, avoiding the permanent positioning of bins at the front of properties.
- Have provision for the latest broadband services facilities.
- Incorporate lighting schemes which reflect the local character of the area and be restricted to that necessary for public safety to minimise light pollution into the countryside. (see *Secured By Design* and *National Design Guide*)
- Have an EV charging provision in line with latest regulations.

H4 - Flood Risk

We will expect developers to provide thorough risk assessments of the impact of proposals on surface and groundwater systems and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures where necessary, especially developments within the River Blythe flood plain. Information accompanying planning applications should demonstrate how any flood mitigation measures will be satisfactorily integrated into the design and layout of the development. We will support proposals which expedite the improvement and upgrade the existing drainage network.

H5 – Conversions and extensions

We recognise that extending existing properties is often a more sustainable solution than building new and will be supportive of conversions and extensions of residential dwellings which account for any locally distinctive character. We would expect the proportions of the extension to be in keeping with the scale, appearance and character of the existing dwelling and its surroundings and subservient to the main building and will assess applications

to modify or alter existing properties against the principles of SMBC's *House Extension Guidelines (Supplementary Planning Document)* dated February 2010.

H6 – Back-garden development

Residential backland developments have a role to play in delivering housing targets. However, they also have the potential to create significant adverse impacts in the communities where they are located. The Parish Council will support such developments so long as they align with the guidance set out in SMBC's *Residential Backland Development - Supplementary Planning Document* adopted in 2021.

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3C – SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL

Parish Profile

3.16 The parish is well served by rail links between Birmingham and London, and benefits from easy access to Birmingham International Airport, although this proximity leads to other problems concerning congestion and air, noise, and traffic pollution. The main bus routes between Coventry and Solihull run through the parish. The service is hourly and ceases in the early evening and on Sundays.

3.17 The parish is poorly served with safe cycling and pedestrian routes. The two main settlements of Hampton-in-Arden and Catherine de Barnes have no linking safe route for pedestrians, and no useable cycle lanes, although there is an effective cycle and pedestrian route from Catherine de Barnes to the Clock Roundabout area. In addition, the route between Hampton-in-Arden and Knowle through Eastcote mostly lacks a safe pedestrian route.

3.18 The pavements through the historic centre of Hampton-in-Arden are especially narrow, making them hazardous for pedestrians.

Results of HiA Neighbourhood Plan Residents and Business Surveys 2020

3.19 Over 50% of respondents said their top priorities were improved road safety and better footpaths and pavements. 70% said that better pedestrian and cycling access was a strong priority. The second most frequent topic on which we received comments in the survey related to support for applying traffic calming measures in the two villages.

3.20 The Parish Council has developed policies based on the results of our surveys, which are in line with the following SMBC's Local Plan policies:

- *P7 - Accessibility and Ease of Access*
- *P8 - Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion*

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council Policy 3 – Sustainable Travel

Our approach will be to focus on providing greater safety for pedestrians and cyclists and securing improved provision of public transport. We will keep under constant review the effectiveness of traffic calming measures in the parish and seek improvements where necessary. New and improved pedestrian and cycling routes, traffic calming schemes, and parking provision should be designed in accordance with relevant *Secured By Design* principles.

T1 – Safe cycling and pedestrian routes

We will support new proposals which seek to link the development to attractive walking and cycling opportunities, subject to any adverse impact on

heritage assets and will support the provision of suitably way-marked routes to enable easy pedestrian and cycle access to key destinations. We are especially keen to see improved routes across the parish between Catherine de Barnes and Meriden, and from Hampton to Knowle. Where new developments would make an additional impact on local footpaths and cycle routes, we will support measures to bring them to a standard commensurate with the higher level of usage.

T2 – Sustainable Public Transport Options

All new developments should offer easy and sustainable access to pedestrian walking routes and public transport. We will not be supportive of developments which fail to conform to the guidelines set out in SMBC Policy 7 *Accessibility and Ease of Access*.

T3 – Parking

We will be supportive of new developments which demonstrate adequate parking arrangements, and which will not exacerbate current parking problems within the parish or rely on on-street parking. Developments should at least meet the requirements set out in SMBC's *Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans*. We will support street layouts which minimise reliance on on-street parking.

T4 – Traffic Management

We will be supportive of new developments which consider and mitigate their impact on traffic flows though the parish and incorporate appropriate traffic calming, road safety, and any other traffic/pedestrian safety measures, such as roundabouts, one-way systems and gateways that improve vehicle and pedestrian safety.

3D – PROTECTION OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Parish Profile

3.21 The parish derives much of its special character from its rural setting and its trees and open green spaces. The parish contains significant woodland areas, and even the settled areas are dominated by trees (including broadleaved species such as oak, ash and sycamore). The churchyard displays mature lime, hornbeam, ash, and sycamore, while the Hampton village green supports conifer species, lime trees, and a horse chestnut. Trees planted in large gardens and open public spaces complete the overall aspect of the tree dominated landscape.

3.22 The River Blythe meanders through a wide floodplain and forms a large part of the eastern parish boundary. Prolonged rain can result in flooding over a wide area (particularly at Patrick Bridge) and lead to torrential flow under the Packhorse, Patrick Farm, and Kenilworth Road bridges. The River Blythe and its associated water meadows are designated as an SSSI, a site of national importance for nature conservation and a wildlife migration corridor. There is also a site for nature conservation located off Shadowbrook Road, managed by the Warwickshire Wildlife Trust.

3.23 The results of the Consultation Survey show that the community very much wants to preserve the existing landscape and biodiversity of the parish and maintain the rural environment of the Green Belt.

3.24 The Parish Council has identified several areas as important Green Spaces that are open and accessible to the public and require protection. These are:

- The Spinney
- The Recreation Ground
- The George Fenthams Arboretum
- The wildflower meadow and wildlife pond
- The Catherine de Barnes Common
- The Hampton Village Green
- Peel Close green.
- The school playing fields.
- The allotments
- The parish churchyard

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Neighbourhood Plan

3.25 These locations in Hampton are shown in the plan following.

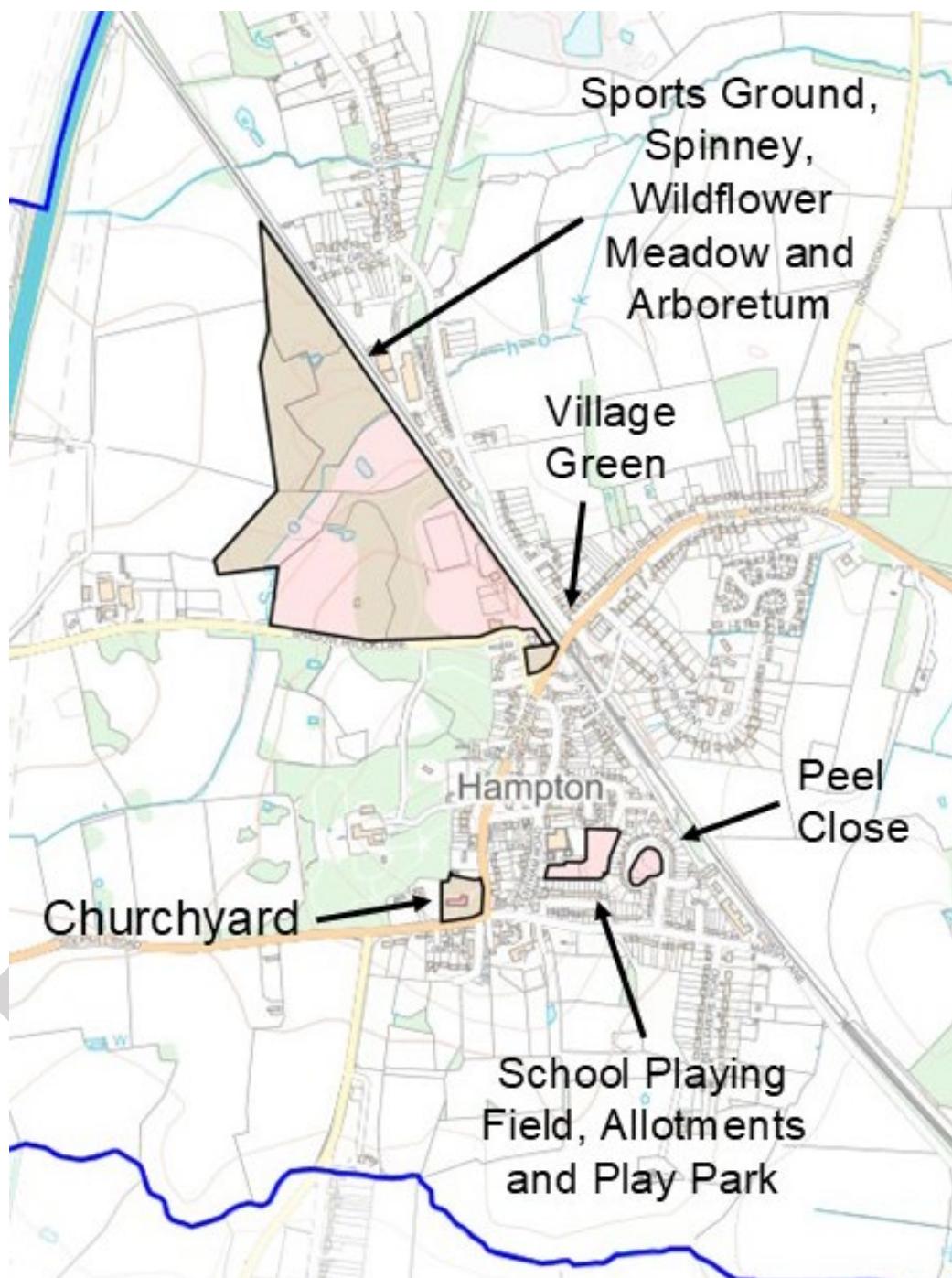


Figure 13 - Public Open Green Spaces in Hampton

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Neighbourhood Plan

3.26 The location of the Common in Catherine de Barnes is shown in the plan following.

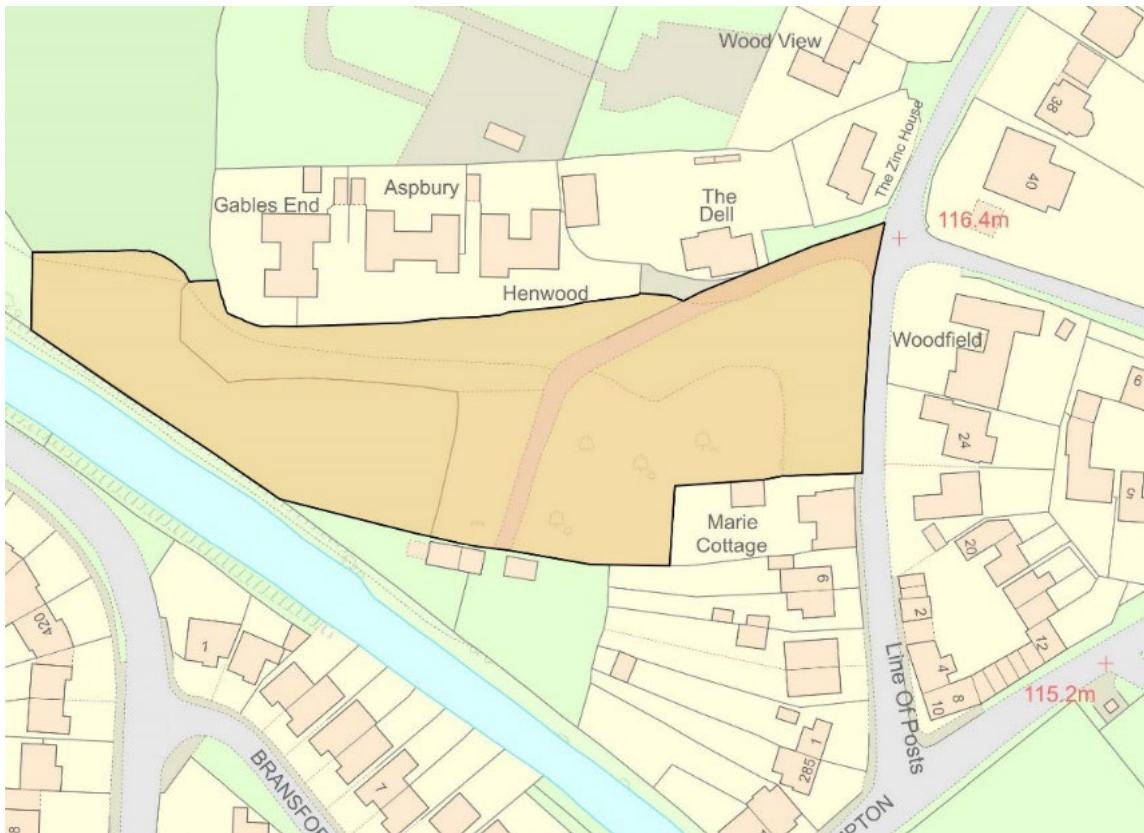


Figure 14 - The Common, Catherine de Barnes.

3.27 The Parish Council recognises that the existing green infrastructure network needs to be conserved and enhanced, and places considerable value on the protection and, where possible, enhancement of biodiversity.

Results of HiA Neighbourhood Plan Residents and Business Surveys 2020

3.28 All respondents attached great importance to the protection of the rural and natural environment and strongly registered their view that any development should be in keeping with this local character and setting. They asked that we should only support developments that maintained the vital role of green space and gardens. As a priority the protection of landscape came top equally with protection of historic & natural features, both securing a 79% score among those who responded.

3.29 For Hampton respondents the areas of the green environment they attached most importance to were:

- All the Green Belt
- The views from the Fenthall Hall and George Fenthall School
- The area of the Woodlands/Spinney/Arboretum
- The Sports Club and Playing Fields

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Neighbourhood Plan

3.30 For Catherine de Barnes respondents the equivalent priorities were:

- Catherine de Barnes Common
- The Green Belt, and in particular:
 - The impact of the envisaged development site on Lugtrout Lane
 - The Green Belt looking South from Hampton Lane

3.31 The most frequently expressed opinions were that:

- We should protect the Green Belt.
- We should encourage greater energy efficiency.
- We should preserve the parish character, and
- We should do more about seeking to reduce aircraft noise.

3.32 A significant number of respondents urged that the Parish Council should oppose all further development.

3.33 The Parish Council has developed policies based on the results of our surveys, which are in line with the following SMBC's Local Plan policies:

- *P9 - Climate Change*
- *P10 - Natural Environment*
- *P11 - Water Management*
- *P12 - Resource Management*
- *P13 - Minerals*
- *P14 – Amenity*

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council Policy 4 – Protection of the Environment

We will support SMBC in mitigating the effects of climate change and protecting the natural environment. We will be vigilant of any extension of recycling activities into the Green Belt and into closer proximity to Old Station Road. We highly value the mature trees within the parish and will seek to protect them, especially those within the Conservation Area and those with Tree Preservation Orders, whilst accepting that appropriate professional tree surgery activity will sometimes be required to maintain health and safety.

E1 – Trees & green habitat

We will seek to ensure that new developments include landscaping schemes, which, wherever possible, retain existing mature and established trees, provide for additional planting to enhance, soften and screen the development, utilise tree species that reflect the existing pattern of tree cover

in the parish, and include new semi-mature trees to aid the early maturity of the landscaping.

We expect that all proposed applications for development should be accompanied by clear and understandable planting, retention and replanting schemes, both in plan format and elevation images, so ensure these sensitive issues can be considered and understood by the community.

Where trees and hedgerows will be harmed by proposed development, we will seek to ensure that replacement planting of equal or superior quality will be required to achieve the necessary biodiversity net gain. We will be protective of long-established woodlands. We will press for mixed planting of whips and more mature specimens.

E2 – Biodiversity

We will only support developments which have a viable plan to protect and where possible enhance existing habitats and the established biodiversity. We will oppose applications for new development which cause harmful effects on any ecological features present (unless they offer convincing mitigation and compensation measures), or threaten sites designated for their nature conservation value, habitats, green infrastructure, and protected species.

We will expect that any new development proposals will maintain and enhance existing ecological corridors and landscape features (such as the River Blythe SSSI, other watercourses, hedgerows, and tree lines) and press that new development should consider incorporating appropriate new features or habitats for wildlife within the site design. We will look for appropriate safeguarding of Protected Sites and SSSIs in any new development and expect any development to result in a net biodiversity gain. We will be particularly protective of long-established woodlands.

E3 –Climate Change

We will be supportive of developments that are highly sustainable, include energy efficiency measures, and aim for net zero carbon. We will support the use of Heat Pumps so long as their siting is unobtrusive in terms of impact on skyline and street frontage.

E4 – Renewable Energy and Energy Security Schemes

We will support well-designed small-scale energy installations utilising technologies such as solar farms, biomass heating, battery storage, and wind turbines. Our strong preference is that they should be on Brownfield sites or previously developed land. We will carefully study the impact on views, public amenity, structural loading, vibration, noise, height, and proximity to residents, trees and other buildings and structures. We are particularly anxious that no Grade 1 or Grade 2 agricultural land² should be lost to energy installations.

We will ensure that promoters are aware that *very special circumstances* will need to be robustly demonstrated for any Green Belt proposals, including what alternative solutions or sites, including brownfield land, have been considered, and why the proposed site is the most appropriate. We will expect any local community benefits to be clearly identified.

E5 – Light & Noise pollution

We will only support lighting schemes in new developments which reflect the local character of the area and where necessary for public safety and crime prevention (as recommended in *Secured By Design*). We expect that lighting pollution into the countryside will be avoided. Lighting poles should, where appropriate, be architecturally sympathetic with those on adjacent developments. We will support developments which address and mitigate noise pollution impacts from aviation, rail, and highway infrastructure.

² As defined and described in the 2016 SMBC *Landscape Character Assessment*.

3E – QUALITY OF PLACE

Parish Profile

3.34 There has been a settlement at Hampton-in-Arden since Saxon times. Its church and manor are recorded in the Domesday Book in 1086. The village derives its special character from its rural setting within the Forest of Arden and its historic roots, central to which is its parish church and its collection of historical buildings and scheduled monuments.

3.35 The central part of Hampton-in-Arden was designated as a Conservation Area by Warwickshire County Council in November 1969 to preserve its historic core. In 2015, SMBC completed a review and expanded its boundaries to include other notable parts of the village. The Conservation Area is highly regarded by respondents and is thought crucial to defining the character of the parish.

3.36 In the Conservation Area much of the historic development, whether residential or commercial, has been small scale, compact and unpretentious. Many of the old houses front the main street, which is narrow by today's standards with narrow pavements. A number of these buildings are important, both historically and architecturally. The core of the building stock is Victorian or Edwardian, although there are several much older properties, with some more modern ones interspersed. The older buildings, mostly those dating to before 1945, are typically built with red brick with gabled, rather than hipped, roofs. Any new development needs to reflect the scale, density, outlook, and style of these properties so that acceptable change that suits its context is achieved.

3.37 Full planning permission is needed for certain types of development in conservation areas which elsewhere would be classified as 'permitted development'. These include:

- House extensions if they add more than 10% or 50 cubic metres (whichever is the greater) to the volume of the original property.
- The erection or alteration of an out-building which is larger than 10 cubic metres, such as a garden shed or garage, in the curtilage of a property.
- The cladding of any part of the exterior of a property with stone, artificial stone, timber, plastic, or tiles.
- Any alterations to the roof of a property resulting in a material alteration to its shape, for example dormer windows.
- Any work such as the felling and lopping of trees (regardless of whether a Tree Preservation Order applies).
- The display of any illuminated and some non-illuminated signs.
- The erection of most satellite dishes, radio masts, solar panels, and equipment cabins.

3.38 In assessing such applications within the Conservation Area, the Parish Council will seek to ensure that the proposal:

- Is in line with the character, architecture, distinctiveness and setting of the area.
- Respects building lines, street scene vista, and visual aspects of the area.

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- Sits well in relationship to other properties, respecting local scale and proportion.
- Respects or enhances the skyline and protects views.
- Uses good quality and building materials appropriate to the setting.
- Retains historic chimney stacks and pots dating to before 1945 wherever possible or replaces to match the originals.
- Ensures window and door replacement, as far as possible, match the original, or is appropriate in design and materials to the age and style of the building.
- Ancillary buildings such as garages, car ports, garden buildings, and shelters respect the character and appearance of the building they serve and the surrounding area.
- Original boundary walls and railings have been retained or replicated wherever possible.
- Locates small scale renewable energy technologies sensitively to respect the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- Retains or sensitively replicates, where possible, original shopfronts, or elements of them, which date from before 1945.

3.39 Catherine de Barnes grew up from a small settlement in the manor of Longdon, which later merged with the manor of Ulverley to form Solihull. It remained lightly populated until the construction of the Grand Union Canal. Valued Listed buildings in Catherine de Barnes include Bogay Hall and Old Berry Hall. The modern settlement is centred on the village hall, shops, and public house.

3.40 The Parish Council recognises the importance of the historic environment to the parish's local character and distinctiveness and seeks to see these assets protected for future generations. When considering future building development, architects and developers should ensure that their plans are in harmony with the local context, protect local character and, where the local character has been eroded, designs should seek to visually improve the area.

Results of HiA Neighbourhood Plan Residents and Business Surveys 2020

3.41 Every single respondent to the surveys agreed that any development within the parish needed to be in keeping with local character, heritage, and setting. Their top three considerations were that:

- Design should respect the scale of the settlements (88% respondents agreed).
- Green Space and gardens needed to be protected (80% agreed).
- High levels of energy conservation should be incorporated (69% agreed).

3.42 The three strongest priorities to emerge were:

- Protection of the rural landscape.
- Protection of the historic features and character.
- Better pedestrian and cycling access.

3.43 The most received comments related to the importance of:

- Protecting the Green Belt and defending the Meriden Gap.

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- Applying traffic calming restrictions in the two villages.
- Preserving local character.

3.44 Respondents strongly advocated that particular attention be given to the preservation and enhancement of the fabric and significance of all heritage assets in proportion to their contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Especially singled out were:

- The parish church and churchyard
- High Street Shops
- Hampton Manor
- Fenthams Hall
- Catherine de Barnes Village Hall (which contains the village war memorial font)
- The Public Houses
- The Hampton War Memorial & Village Green
- The Original George Fenthams School House

3.45 At many points within the village of Hampton-in-Arden there are **views** of the surrounding patchwork farmland typical of the Arden Landscape. These views were identified and incorporated into the 2017 Neighbourhood Plan and the 2020 survey once again reaffirmed that the community want to see these views, and their footpaths, trees, and biodiversity, protected. The two views which were valued the most highly were:

- The view looking south towards Barston & Eastcote from Fenthams Hall
- The view looking east from Fenthams Road, near to George Fenthams Endowed School.

3.46 These views make an important contribution to the landscape quality and context of the parish and are shown in the figure following.

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Neighbourhood Plan

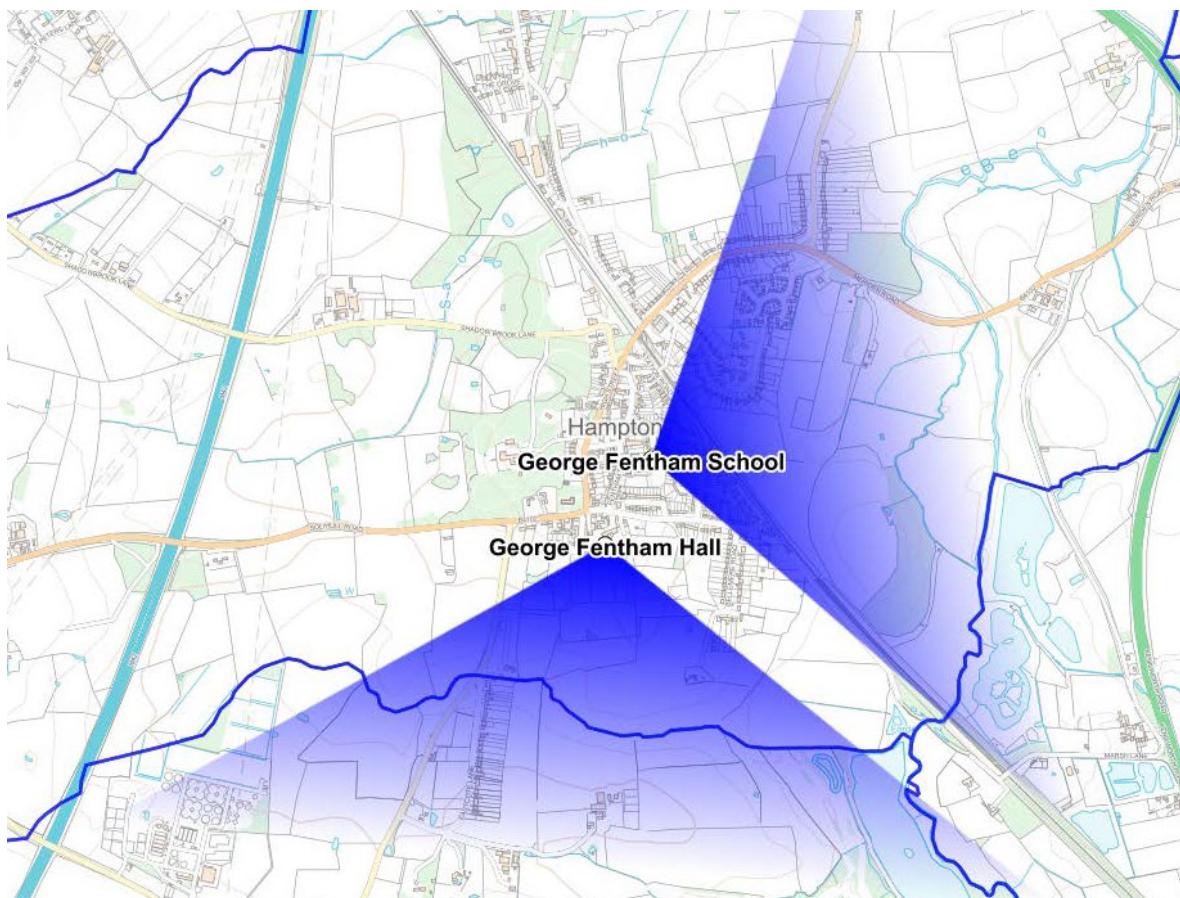


Figure 15 - Valued Views

3.47 The Parish Council has developed policies based on the results of our surveys, which are in line with the following SMBC's Local Plan policies:

- *P15 - Securing Design Quality*
- *P16 - Conservation of Heritage Assets & Local Distinctiveness*
- *P17 - Countryside and Green Belt*

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council Policy 5 – Quality of Place

We are very conscious that most of the parish lies in the Green Belt and will reflect the strongly held views of respondents that this must be protected against inappropriate development. Unless permitted as appropriate development within the NPPF, we will not support any building on Green Belt unless *very special circumstances* apply. We will seek to ensure that development is confined where possible to existing brownfield or previously developed land.

We recognise that the December 2024 update of the NPPF introduced the concept of Grey Belt to create additional space for development.

Grey Belt was defined as previously developed land (e.g. brownfield land) or any other parcels of land within the Green Belt that do not strongly contribute to the following purposes of the Green Belt:

- Preventing the unchecked sprawl of large urban areas
- Avoiding the merging of neighbouring towns into one another
- Preserving the setting and unique character of historic towns.

In viewing any proposals to reclassify Green Belt to Grey Belt we will take note of the assessments in SMBC's 2016 reports and strongly resist any redesignation of land parcels which were judged to at least provide moderate or high conformity to the objectives of the Green Belt.

The village heritage and historic character of the settlements of Hampton-in-Arden and Catherine de Barnes needs to be conserved, and this needs to be reflected in the style and design of new developments and extensions.

We believe that much of the character of the rural settlements of Hampton-in-Arden and Catherine de Barnes derives from the distinctness and separation they enjoy from Solihull sub-urban sprawl. We will be vigilant in seeking to ensure that the Meriden Gap is not further eroded and that development in the Conservation Area conserves or enhances its local character.

Q1 – Heritage assets

We support the principles set out in the NPPF, Historic England guidance, and SMBC's own policies and will review all planning applications thoroughly to assist SMBC in ensuring compliance with these policies, paying particular attention to the protection of sites within the Conservation Area and development involving specific buildings, heritage assets and natural features identified for special protection in this Neighbourhood Plan. This focus will recognise the need to conserve more than appearance and amenity, capturing, for example, internal building fabric of historic value not evident externally.

We will only support proposals to modify or change the use of a Listed building or structure where it can be demonstrated that the development will contribute to its conservation whilst preserving or enhancing its architectural or historic interest. We will only support the demolition or partial demolition of heritage assets above or below ground where it can be demonstrated that the harm is necessary to achieve substantial public benefits that would

demonstrably outweigh any unavoidable loss of the heritage asset's significance.

We note and support the NPPF requirement that harm to, or loss of, the significance of a designated heritage asset through alteration or destruction, or from development within its setting, should require clear and convincing justification, and should only be permitted for exceptional reasons.

Q2 – Design standards

We will be supportive of developments which are in accordance with both SMBC's declared policies on design standards and those set out in this Neighbourhood Plan. We will expect Design and Access Statements to demonstrate how the locally distinctive character of the area will be accounted for. Proposals should relate to the adjacent and nearby local character in massing, scale, and use of landscaping, particularly in the Conservation Area, and should use materials which are sympathetic in type and colour to the local street scene. Housing density should be in keeping with nearby and adjacent existing development.

We will be supportive of acceptable development which is consistent with the design objectives set out in *Building for Healthy Life* or its equivalent. We strongly support the objectives set out in the NPPF regarding sustainable development, including the requirements for beautiful, safe, and well-designed places. All development design and associated construction should be sympathetic to the neighbouring street scene. Development which presents a hard urban visual street scene will not be supported. New developments should avoid long straight street layouts, minimise cul-de-sacs, have adequate pedestrian and cycle provision and tree planting. Proposals for new development should incorporate the recommendations in *Secured By Design* and the *National Design Code*.

Q3 – Valued views

We will not support developments which threaten to damage the recognised valued views set out in this plan, or their footpaths, trees, and biodiversity, highlighted in our 2013 and 2020 consultations, specifically the view looking south towards Barston and Eastcote from Fenthams Hall and the view looking east from Fenthams Road, near to George Fenthams Endowed School. We will

expect development proposals affecting these open vistas/views to consider, address and minimise their impact satisfactorily.

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3F – COMMUNITY SERVICES

Parish Profile

3.48 The parish's community facilities include a preschool, nursery and primary school, open spaces for recreation, play areas and sports facilities, a GP surgery, a library, community meeting venues, and allotments. Some of these, such as the primary school, are close to capacity. Developments will need to take account of the capacity of local services to handle them.

Results of HiA Neighbourhood Plan Residents and Business Surveys 2020

3.49 The community topics which our respondents placed the greatest priority on, in order of the support registered, were as follows:

Hampton-in-Arden	% Support
Road Safety Improvements	68%
Broadband Improvement	59%
Footpaths/Rights of Way	55%
Public Transport	44%
Local Shops	38%
Library	34%
Facilities for Older People	33%
Facilities for the Disabled	30%
Facilities for Youth	29%
Allotments	29%

Catherine de Barnes	% Support
Road Safety Improvements	62%
Broadband Improvement	62%
Footpaths/Rights of Way	59%
Public Transport	49%
Local Shops	41%
Medical Facilities	37%
Facilities for Youth	34%
Facilities for Older People	30%
Facilities for the Disabled	28%

3.50 The Parish Council has developed policies based on the results of our surveys, and in line with the following SMBC's Local Plan policies:

- *P18 - Health and Well Being*
- *P19 - Range and Quality of Local Services*
- *P20 - Provision for Open Space, Children's Play, Sport, Recreation and Leisure*
- *P21 – Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Provision*

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Council Policy 6 – Community Services

We will continue to work closely and constructively with other representative bodies within the parish including the George Fenthams Trust, the Hampton-in-Arden Society, the Catherine de Barnes Residents Association, the Sports Club, the Parochial Parish Church Committee, and the Catherine de Barnes Village Hall Trust to help with the retention and improvement of key local community facilities.

L1 – Community services

We will support proposals that ensure the retention and improvement of key local community facilities. Any redevelopment of these facilities for an alternative purpose will only be supported if it is replaced by an equivalent or better provision in an equally suitable and accessible location or where it is evidenced that the facility is no longer viable.

L2 – Appropriate infrastructure

We will support appropriate new development that has recognised its impact on the available infrastructure and services within the parish, especially schooling, health and transport, and has made provision for appropriate mitigation or improvement measures to support and enhance the ability of that infrastructure to cope with higher levels of usage.

SECTION 4 – GLOSSARY

A4545	The recently constructed M42 Relief Road between Solihull Road and the Clock roundabout.
Biodiversity net gain	Under the Environment Act 2021, all planning permissions granted in England, with a few exemptions, have to deliver minimum 10% biodiversity net gain from November 2023. BNG will be measured using Defra's biodiversity metric and habitats will need to be secured for at least 30 years.
EV	Electric Vehicles
HS2	High Speed Rail Phase 2 (London to Midlands)
MSA	Motorway Service Area
NEC	National Exhibition Centre
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework issued by HM Government as updated in December 2024
Solihull Local Plan	Solihull MBC Local Plan as made in 2013
SMBC	Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council
SSSIs	Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Referenced Documents

- Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government - ***National Planning Policy Framework*** updated December 2024
- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ministry-of-housing-communities-local-government> Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government - ***National Design Guide*** updated January 2021.
- Building for Healthy Life 2015*** – The industry standard for the design of new housing developments. The third edition of the guide was published in January 2015 by Nottingham Trent University on behalf of the Building for Life partnership.
- Secured By Design*** – The official police security initiative that works to improve the security of buildings and their immediate surroundings to provide safe places to live, work, shop, and visit.
- SMBC ***Local Plan*** made in 2013.
- SMBC ***Countryside Strategy 2010 to 2020***.
- SMBC ***Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans*** dated 2006.
- SMBC ***Residential Backland Development - Supplementary Planning Document*** adopted in 2021.
- SMBC ***House Extension Guidelines (Supplementary Planning Document)*** February 2010.
- SMBC ***Local List of Heritage Assets***, revised 11 April 2024
- SMBC ***Strategic Green Belt Assessment*** July 2016.

Hampton-in-Arden Parish Neighbourhood Plan

- SMBC **Landscape Character Assessment** December 2016.
- The Countryside Commission's **Warwickshire Landscape (Arden) Guidelines** 1993

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