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# **Berkswell NDP**

**Planning Policy Assessment**

**And**

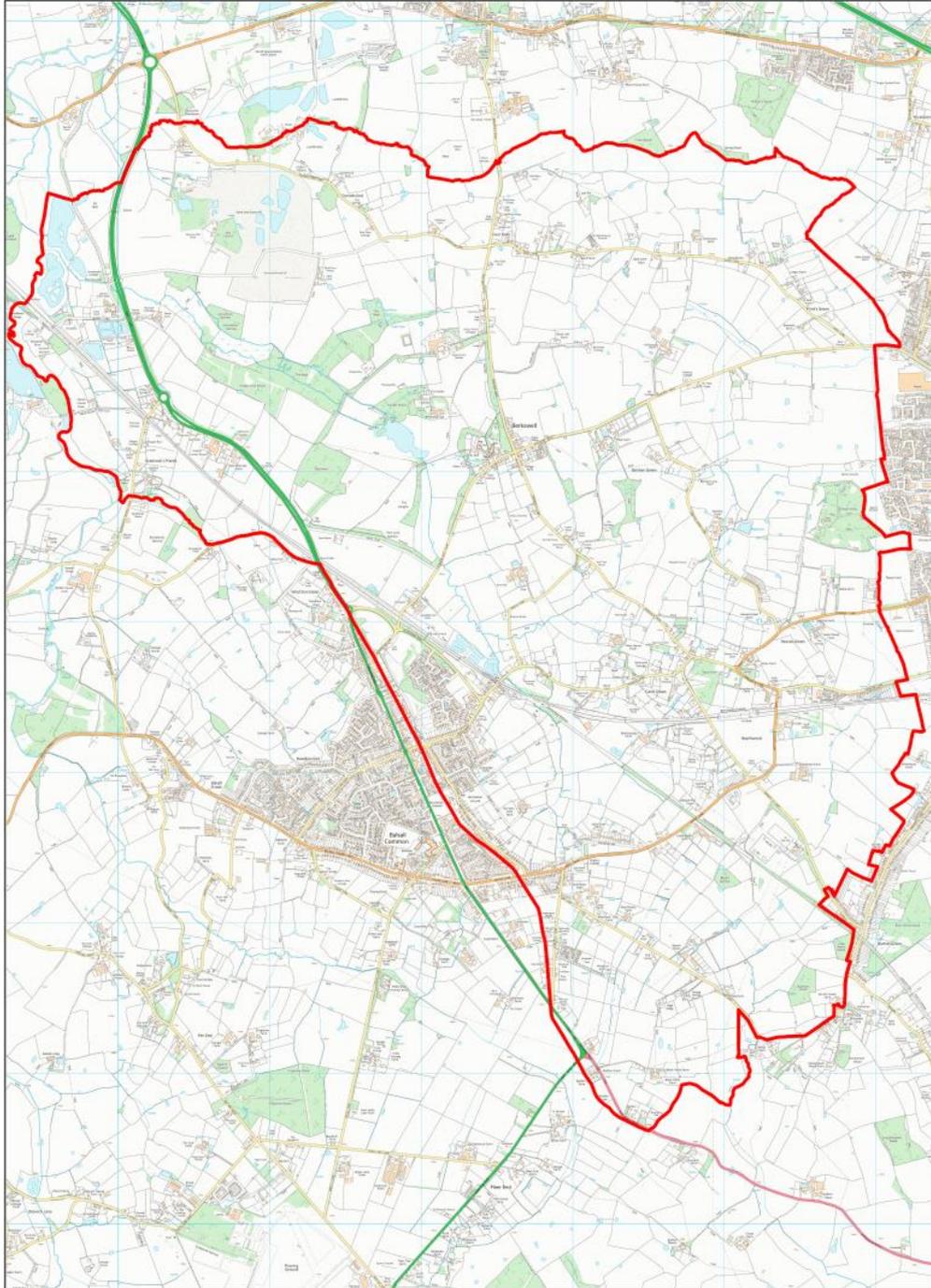
**Review of Evidence Base**

**V1 September 2017**

**Kirkwells**

**The Planning People**

**Map of Berkswell Parish**



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## **Document Overview**

- The Parish of Berkswell lies within the local authority area of Solihull, west of the City of Coventry. The Parish largely comprises the small village of Berkswell and a number of smaller scattered farms and settlements in the open countryside.
- The Parish boundary also extends into the eastern edge of the built-up area of Balsall Common, but overall the Parish is largely rural in character.
- The neighbourhood development plan area covers 2342.58 hectares and the population of the Parish was recorded as 3,139 in the 2011 Census.
- There is a railway station within the Parish on the edge of Balsall Common and the A452 in the west of the Parish provides access to the national motorway network (M6, M42). The proposed line of HS2 also cuts through the parish north west / south east.
- The key policy documents which are relevant to the area are:
  - National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)
  - Solihull Local Plan 2013
  - Solihull Local Plan Review 2016
- The Parish is located within the green belt but the Local Plan Review includes two significant areas proposed for new housing which are largely within the Parish, adjoining neighbouring Balsall Common. These sites would require a change in the boundary of the green belt to be released.
- Berkswell falls within Natural England's National Character Area 97: Arden.
- There is a Conservation Area in Berkswell village and 60 Listed Buildings across the Parish including Grade I Church of St John the Baptist, Grade II\* Berkswell Windmill, Lavender Hall Farmhouse and the Barn at Barratts Lane, and a packhorse bridge which is scheduled.
- Berkswell lies within the Rural Area in Solihull's adopted Community Infrastructure Charging Schedule.

## **1.0 Introduction**

Neighbourhood Plans are required to sit within the framework of national, regional and local planning policies, and to be in general conformity with those policies.

This document summarises the national, regional and local planning policies that will have to be taken in to account during the preparation of the proposed Berkswell Neighbourhood Plan. It will form an important background document to the Neighbourhood Plan and should be used as a key point of reference for members of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

The Planning Policy Assessment has been prepared as a “live” working document and will continue to be reviewed and updated throughout the preparation of the Berkswell Neighbourhood Plan.

## 2.0 National Planning Policy

### 2.1 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)<sup>1</sup>

Para 6: The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

Para 7: There are three dimensions to sustainable development: economic, social and environmental. These dimensions give rise to the need for the planning system to perform a number of roles:

- **an economic role** – contributing to building a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth and innovation; and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure;
- **a social role** – supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by creating a high quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community’s needs and support its health, social and cultural well-being; and
- **an environmental role** – contributing to protecting and enhancing our natural, built and historic environment; and, as part of this, helping to improve biodiversity, use natural resources prudently, minimise waste and pollution, and mitigate and adapt to climate change including moving to a low carbon economy.

Para 11. Planning law requires that applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

Para 15: All plans should be based upon and reflect the presumption in favour of sustainable development, with clear policies that will guide how the presumption should be applied locally.

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<sup>1</sup>

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf)

Para 16: The application of the presumption will have implications for how communities engage in neighbourhood planning. Critically, it will mean that neighbourhoods should:

- develop plans that support the strategic development needs set out in Local Plans, including policies for housing and economic development;
- plan positively to support local development, shaping and directing development in their area that is outside the strategic elements of the Local Plan; and
- identify opportunities to use Neighbourhood Development Orders to enable developments that are consistent with their neighbourhood plan to proceed.

### **Delivering Sustainable Development**

There are a number of elements to delivering sustainable development. These are outlined below with any specific references NPPF makes to neighbourhood plans.

#### ***1. Building a strong, competitive economy.***

Para 19: Planning should operate to encourage and not act as an impediment to sustainable growth.

Para 21: Planning policies should recognise and seek to address potential barriers to investment, including a poor environment or any lack of infrastructure, services or housing.

Para 22. Planning policies should avoid long term protection of sites allocated for employment use where there is no reasonable prospect of a site being used for that purpose.

#### ***2. Ensuring the vitality of town centres***

#### ***3. Supporting a prosperous rural economy***

Para 28: To promote a strong rural economy, local and neighbourhood plans should:

- support the sustainable growth and expansion of all types of businesses and enterprise in rural areas, both through conversion of existing buildings and well designed new buildings;
- Promote the development and diversification of agricultural and other land-based rural businesses;
- Support sustainable rural tourism and leisure developments that benefit businesses in rural areas, communities and visitors, and which respect the character of the countryside;
- Promote the retention and development of local services and community facilities in villages, such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship

#### ***4. Promoting sustainable transport***

Para 29: Transport policies have an important role to play in facilitating sustainable development but also in contributing to wider sustainability and health objectives.

Para 30: Encouragement should be given to solutions which support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and reduce congestion.

#### ***5. Supporting high quality communications infrastructure***

Para 42: Advanced, high quality communications infrastructure is essential for sustainable economic growth. The development of high speed broadband technology and other communications networks plays a vital role in enhancing provision of local community facilities and services.

#### ***6. Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes***

Para 49: Housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development. Relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

Para 54: In rural areas, exercising the duty to co-operate with neighbouring authorities, local planning authorities should be responsive to local circumstances and plan housing development to reflect local needs, particularly for affordable housing, including through rural exception sites, where appropriate. Local planning authorities should in particular consider whether allowing some market housing

would facilitate the provision of significant additional affordable housing to meet local needs.

Para 55: To promote sustainable development in rural areas, housing should be located where it will enhance or maintain the vitality or rural communities. For example, where there are groups of smaller settlements, development in one village may support services in a village nearby.

### **7. Requiring Good Design**

Para 56: The Government attached great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.

Para 57: It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design of all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.

Para 58: Local and neighbourhood plans should develop robust and comprehensive policies that set out the quality of development that will be expected for the area. Such policies should be based on stated objectives for the future of the area and an understanding and evaluation of its defining characteristics.

Para 59: Design policies should avoid unnecessary prescription or detail and should concentrate on guiding the overall scale, density, massing, height, landscape, layout materials and access of new development in relation to neighbouring buildings and the local area more generally.

Para 60: Planning policies should not attempt to impose architectural styles or particular tastes and they should not stifle innovation, originality or initiative through unsubstantiated requirements to conform to certain development forms and styles. It is however, proper to seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness.

### **8. Promoting healthy communities**

Para 69: Planning policies should aim to achieve places which promote:

- Opportunities for meetings between members and the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages
- Safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion

- Safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space which encourage the active and continual use of public areas.

Para 70: Planning policies should:

- Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments;
- Guard against unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community's ability to meet its day to day needs;
- Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community; and
- Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.

Para 71: Local planning authorities should take a positive collaborative approach to enable development to be brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order, including working with communities to identify and resolve key issues before applications are submitted.

Para 73: Access to high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation can make an important contribution to the health and wellbeing of communities.

Para 75: Planning policies should protect and enhance public rights of way and access.

Para 76: Local communities through local and neighbourhood plans should be able to identify for special protection green areas of particular importance to them. By designating land as Local Green Space local communities will be able to rule out new development other than in very special circumstances. Identifying land as Local Green Space should therefore be consistent with the local planning of sustainable development and complement investment in sufficient homes, jobs and other essential services. Local Green Spaces should only be designated when a plan is prepared or reviewed, and be capable of enduring beyond the end of the plan period.

Para 77: The Local Green Space designation will not be appropriate for most green areas or open space. The designation should only be used:

- where the green space is in reasonably close proximity to the community it serves

- where the green space is demonstrably special to a local community and holds a particular local significance
- where the green area is local in character and is not an extensive tract of land

Para 78: Local policy for managing development within a Local Green Space should be consistent with policy for Green Belts.

### **9. Protecting Green Belt land**

Para 79: The Government attaches great importance to Green Belts. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence.

Para 80. Green Belt serves five purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

Para 83. Local planning authorities with Green Belts in their area should establish Green Belt boundaries in their Local Plans which set the framework for Green Belt and settlement policy. Once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan.

Para 88. When considering any planning application, local planning authorities should 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 by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, is clearly outweighed by other considerations.

Para 89. A local planning authority should regard the construction of new buildings as inappropriate in Green Belt. Exceptions to this are:

- buildings for agriculture and forestry;
- provision of appropriate facilities for outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and for cemeteries, as long as it preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it;
- the extension or alteration of a building provided that it does not result in disproportionate additions over and above the size of the original building;
- the replacement of a building, provided the new building is in the same

use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;

- limited infilling in villages, and limited affordable housing for local community needs under policies set out in the Local Plan; or
- limited infilling or the partial or complete redevelopment of previously developed sites (brownfield land), whether redundant or in continuing use (excluding temporary buildings), which would not have a greater impact on the openness of the Green Belt and the purpose of including land within it than the existing development.

Para 90. Certain other forms of development are also not inappropriate in Green Belt provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt and do not conflict with the purposes of including land in Green Belt. These are:

- mineral extraction;
- engineering operations;
- local transport infrastructure which can demonstrate a requirement for a Green Belt location;
- the re-use of buildings provided that the buildings are of permanent and substantial construction; and
- development brought forward under a Community Right to Build Order.

#### ***10. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change***

Para 99: new development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure.

Para 100: Inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, but where development is necessary, making it safe without increasing flood risk elsewhere.

#### ***11. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment***

Para 109: The planning system should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

- protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils
- recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services
- minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the Government's commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity

Para 111: Planning policies should encourage the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed (brownfield land), provided that it is not of high environmental value.

Para 115: Great weight should be given to conserving landscape and scenic beauty in National parks, the Broads and AONBs, which have the highest status in relation to landscape and scenic beauty.

### **12. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment**

Para 132: When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be.

### **13. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals**

#### **Plan-making**

##### **Neighbourhood plans**

Para 183: Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and deliver the sustainable development they need. Parishes and neighbourhood forums can use neighbourhood planning to:

- set planning policies through neighbourhood plans to determine decisions on planning applications; and
- grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.

Para 184. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community. The ambition of the neighbourhood should be aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area. Neighbourhood plans must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan. To facilitate this, local planning authorities should set out clearly their strategic policies for the area and ensure that an up-to-date Local Plan is in place as quickly as possible. Neighbourhood plans should reflect these policies and neighbourhoods should plan positively to support them. Neighbourhood plans and orders should not promote less development than set out in the Local Plan or undermine its strategic policies.

Para 185. Outside these strategic elements, neighbourhood plans will be able to shape and direct sustainable development in their area. Once a neighbourhood plan has demonstrated its general conformity with the strategic policies of the Local Plan and is brought into force, the policies it contains take precedence over existing non-strategic policies in the Local Plan for that neighbourhood, where they are in conflict. Local planning authorities should avoid duplicating planning processes for non-strategic policies where a neighbourhood plan is in preparation.”

## 2.2 National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)<sup>2</sup>

National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG)<sup>3</sup> is a web-based resource which brings together planning guidance on various topics into one place. It was launched in March 2014 and coincided with the cancelling of the majority of Government Circulars which had previously given guidance on many aspects of planning. It is important to note that the guidance is exactly that, guidance, and should not be seen as representing Government policy. To view the NPPG please visit the dedicated website.

### *Contents*

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7. Submitting a neighbourhood plan or Order to a local planning authority
8. The independent examination
9. The neighbourhood planning referendum
10. A summary of the key stages in neighbourhood planning
11. The basic conditions that a draft neighbourhood plan or Order must meet if it is to proceed to referendum
12. Updating a neighbourhood plan

### *What is neighbourhood planning?*

Neighbourhood planning gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their

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<sup>2</sup> <http://planningguidance.planningportal.gov.uk/blog/guidance/neighbourhood-planning/what-is-neighbourhood-planning/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

local area. They are able to choose where they want new homes, shops and offices to be built, have their say on what those new buildings should look like and what infrastructure should be provided, and grant planning permission for the new buildings they want to see go ahead. Neighbourhood planning provides a powerful set of tools for local people to ensure that they get the right types of development for their community where the ambition of the neighbourhood is aligned with the strategic needs and priorities of the wider local area.

Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 41-001-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

*What can communities use neighbourhood planning for?*

Local communities can choose to:

- set planning policies through a neighbourhood plan that is used in determining planning applications.
- grant planning permission through Neighbourhood Development Orders and Community Right to Build Orders for specific development which complies with the order.

Neighbourhood planning is not a legal requirement but a right which communities in England can choose to use. Communities may decide that they could achieve the outcomes they want to see through other planning routes, such as incorporating their proposals for the neighbourhood into the Local Plan, or through other planning mechanisms such as Local Development Orders and supplementary planning documents or through pre-application consultation on development proposals. Communities and local planning authorities should discuss the different choices communities have to achieving their ambitions for their neighbourhood.

Paragraph: 002 Reference ID: 41-002-20140306

Revision date: 06 03 2014

Note also:

*Para 004* - A neighbourhood plan should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development. A neighbourhood plan must address the development and use of land. This is because if successful at examination and referendum the neighbourhood plan will become part of the statutory development plan once it has been made (brought into legal force) by the planning authority. Applications for planning permission

must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

*Para 009* - A draft neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force if it is to meet the basic condition. A draft Neighbourhood Plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging Local Plan although the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.

Where a neighbourhood plan is brought forward before an up-to-date Local Plan is in place, the qualifying body and the local planning authority should discuss and aim to agree the relationship between policies in:

- the emerging neighbourhood plan
- the emerging Local Plan
- the adopted development plan

with appropriate regard to national policy and guidance.

*Para 065* - only a draft neighbourhood Plan or Order that meets each of a set of basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be made. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The basic conditions are:

- a. having regard to national policies and advice;
- b. having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest;
- c. having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any Conservation Area;
- d. the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- e. the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
- f. the making of neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations

- g. prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

*Para 004* - A neighbourhood plan should support the strategic development needs set out in the Local Plan and plan positively to support local development. A neighbourhood plan must address the development and use of land. This is because if successful at examination and referendum the neighbourhood plan will become part of the statutory development plan once it has been made (brought into legal force) by the planning authority. Applications for planning permission must be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

*Para 009* - A draft neighbourhood plan must be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan in force if it is to meet the basic condition. A draft Neighbourhood Plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging Local Plan although the reasoning and evidence informing the Local Plan process may be relevant to the consideration of the basic conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested.

Where a neighbourhood plan is brought forward before an up-to-date Local Plan is in place, the qualifying body and the local planning authority should discuss and aim to agree the relationship between policies in:

- the emerging neighbourhood plan
- the emerging Local Plan
- the adopted development plan

with appropriate regard to national policy and guidance.

*Para 065* - only a draft neighbourhood Plan or Order that meets each of a set of basic conditions can be put to a referendum and be made. The basic conditions are set out in paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as applied to neighbourhood plans by section 38A of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. The basic conditions are:

- h. having regard to national policies and advice;

- i. having special regard to the desirability of preserving any listed building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest;
- j. having special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of any Conservation Area;
- k. the making of the neighbourhood plan contributes to the achievement of sustainable development;
- l. the making of the neighbourhood plan is in general conformity with the strategic policies contained in the development plan for the area of the authority (or any part of that area).
- m. the making of neighbourhood plan does not breach, and is otherwise compatible with, EU obligations
- n. prescribed conditions are met in relation to the Order (or plan) and prescribed matters have been complied with in connection with the proposal for the neighbourhood plan.

## 2.3 Ministerial Statements

From time to time, ministers give statements on planning policy which have the effect of introducing changes to established policy. The following statements are relevant to neighbourhood planning:

### **Written Statement: Support for Small Scale Developers, Custom and Self-Builders, 28 November 2014<sup>4</sup>**

This introduced a number of changes to the National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) with regard to Section 106 planning obligations, including the introduction of a threshold beneath which affordable housing contributions should not be sought.

The Ministerial statement indicated that:

- (a) For sites of 10 units or less and which have a maximum combined gross floor space of 1,000 square metres, affordable housing and tariff style contributions should not be sought.
- (b) In designated rural areas (under Section 157 of the Housing Act 1985), authorities may choose to implement a lower threshold of five units or less, beneath which affordable housing and tariff style contributions should not be sought.
- (c) Affordable housing and tariff style contributions should not be sought in relation to residential annexes and extensions.
- (d) A financial credit, equivalent to the existing gross floor space of any vacant buildings brought back into any lawful use or demolished for re-development, should be deducted from the calculation of any affordable housing contributions sought from relevant development schemes.

However, this Statement was successfully challenged in the High Court in August 2015 with the High Court concluding that the approach is incompatible with the

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons-vote-office/November%202014/28%20Nov%202014/2.%20DCLG-SupportForSmallScaleDevelopersCustomAndSelf-Builders.pdf>

Town and Country Planning Act 1990 and the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

**On 11 May 2016, the Court of Appeal overturned this High Court judgement which means that the 2014 Ministerial Statement is now reinstated**

**Written Statement to Parliament: Planning Update, 25 March 2015<sup>5</sup>**

Local planning authorities and qualifying bodies preparing neighbourhood plans should not set in their emerging Local Plans, neighbourhood plans, or supplementary planning documents, any additional local technical standards or requirements relating to the construction, internal layout or performance of new dwellings. This includes any policy requiring any level of the Code for Sustainable Homes to be achieved by new development; the government has now withdrawn the code,

The optional new national technical standards should only be required through any new Local Plan policies if they address a clearly evidenced need, and where their impact on viability has been considered, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework and Planning Guidance. Neighbourhood plans should not be used to apply the new national technical standards.

**Written Statement to Parliament: Wind Energy, 18 June 2015<sup>6</sup>**

This statement indicated that, when determining planning applications for wind energy development involving one or more wind turbines, local planning authorities should only grant planning permission if:

- the development site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy development in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan; and
- following consultation, it can be demonstrated that the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore the proposal has their backing.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/planning-update-march-2015>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201516/cmhansrd/cm150618/wmstext/150618m0001.htm>

In applying these new considerations, suitable areas for wind energy development will need to have been allocated clearly in a Local or Neighbourhood Plan. Maps showing the wind resource as favourable to wind turbines, or similar, will not be sufficient.

**Written Statement to Parliament: Neighbourhood Planning (HCWS346) – 12<sup>th</sup> December 2016<sup>7</sup>**

Neighbourhood planning was introduced by the Localism Act 2011, and is an important part of the Government's manifesto commitment to let local people have more say on local planning. With over 230 neighbourhood plans in force and many more in preparation, they are already a well-established part of the English planning system. Recent analysis suggests that giving people more control over development in their area is helping to boost housing supply – those plans in force that plan for a housing number have on average planned for approximately 10% more homes than the number for that area set out by the relevant local planning authority.

The Government confirms that where a planning application conflicts with a neighbourhood plan that has been brought into force, planning permission should not normally be granted. However, communities who have been proactive and worked hard to bring forward neighbourhood plans are often frustrated that their plan is being undermined because their local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year land supply of deliverable housing sites.

This is because Paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that if the local planning authority cannot demonstrate a five-year supply of deliverable housing sites relevant policies for the supply of housing should not be considered up-to-date, and housing applications should be considered in the context of the presumption in favour of sustainable development.

As more communities take up the opportunity to shape their area we need to make sure planning policy is suitable for a system with growing neighbourhood plan coverage. Building on proposals to further strengthen neighbourhood planning through the Neighbourhood Planning Bill, I am today making clear that where communities plan for housing in their area in a neighbourhood plan, those plans should not be deemed to be out-of-date unless there is a significant lack of land supply for housing in the wider local authority area. We are also offering those communities who brought forward their plans in advance of this statement time to review their plans.

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<sup>7</sup> <https://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2016-12-12/HCWS346/>

This means that relevant policies for the supply of housing in a neighbourhood plan, that is part of the development plan, should not be deemed to be 'out-of-date' under paragraph 49 of the National Planning Policy Framework where all of the following circumstances arise at the time the decision is made:

- this written ministerial statement is less than 2 years old, or the neighbourhood plan has been part of the development plan for 2 years or less;
- the neighbourhood plan allocates sites for housing; and the local planning authority can demonstrate a three-year supply of deliverable housing sites.

This statement applies to decisions made on planning applications and appeals from today. This statement should be read in conjunction with the National Planning Policy Framework and is a material consideration in relevant planning decisions.

My Department will be bringing forward a White Paper on Housing in due course. Following consultation, we anticipate the policy for neighbourhood planning set out in this statement will be revised to reflect policy brought forward to ensure new neighbourhood plans meet their fair share of local housing need and housing is being delivered across the wider local authority area. It is, however, right to take action now to protect communities who have worked hard to produce their neighbourhood plan and find the housing supply policies are deemed to be out-of-date through no fault of their own.

## 3.0 Solihull Planning Policy

### 3.1 Solihull Local Plan 2013<sup>8</sup>

The Solihull Local Plan sets out how and where Solihull will develop in the future. It outlines challenges facing Solihull and how they will be addressed, the vision for the future of Solihull, the strategy for achieving the vision, and policies and proposals to enable the Borough to grow and develop into the place we would like it to be. Sites for development are also identified. The Plan has been informed by extensive involvement with a wide range of stakeholders and the community.

The Solihull Local Plan was adopted by the Council on 3rd December 2013.

The Local Plan replaces the saved policies of the Solihull Unitary Development Plan and is now the Council's statutory development plan and the starting point in planning decisions.

Following a legal challenge, appeal and High Court judgement, the Council endorsed a [Policy Position Statement](#). This clarifies how the Council will calculate its five year housing land supply requirement and reiterates the fact that Policy P5 of the Local Plan enables sites allocated in future phases to be brought forward if the housing land supply falls below the requirements in the NPPF to maintain a five year supply of deliverable housing sites.

The Council is positively engaged in the Greater Birmingham & Solihull and Black Country LEP Housing Needs Study and the Greater Birmingham & Solihull LEP Spatial Plan for Recovery and Growth as a means which will establish an NPPF compliant housing requirement for the Borough.

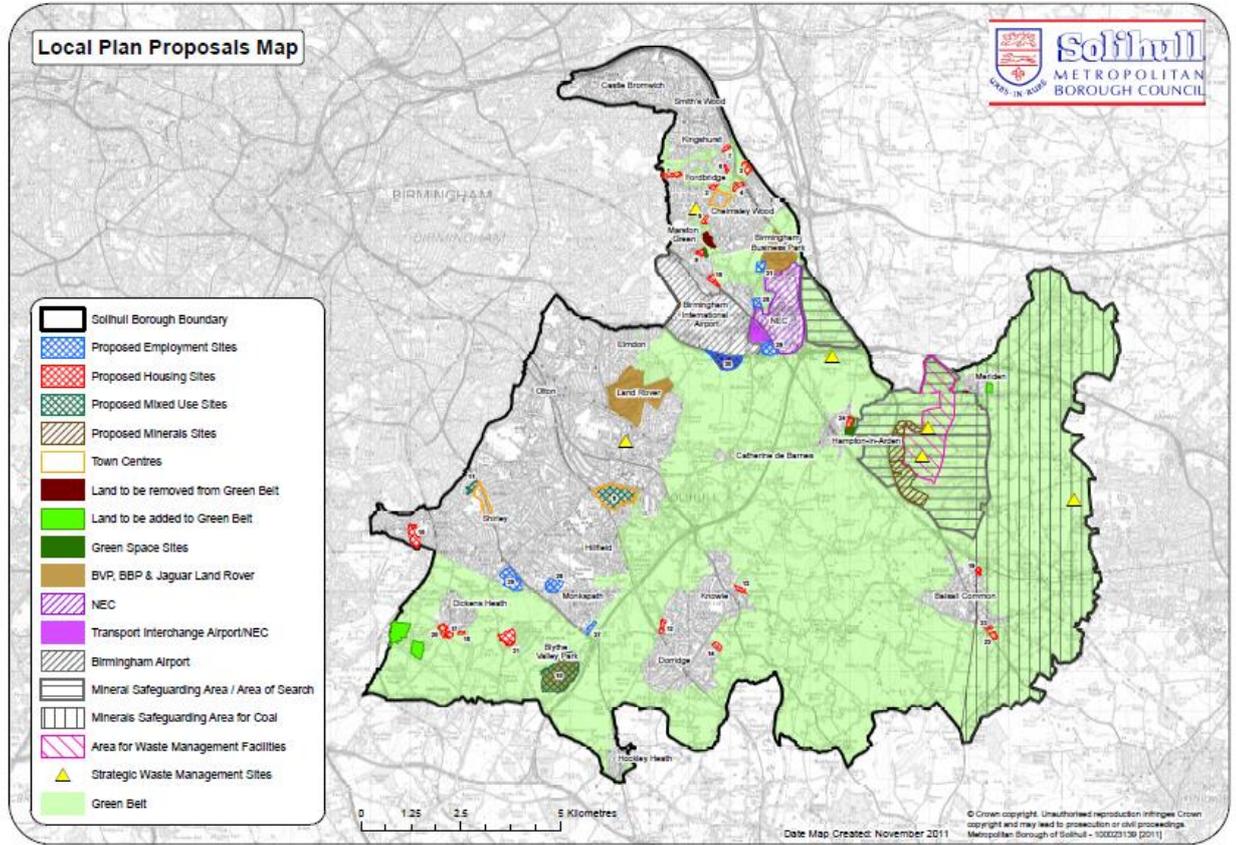
The following policies are of relevance to the Berkswell Neighbourhood Plan:

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<sup>8</sup>

<http://www.solihull.gov.uk/Resident/Planning/appealsenforcement/planmaking/ldf/localplan>

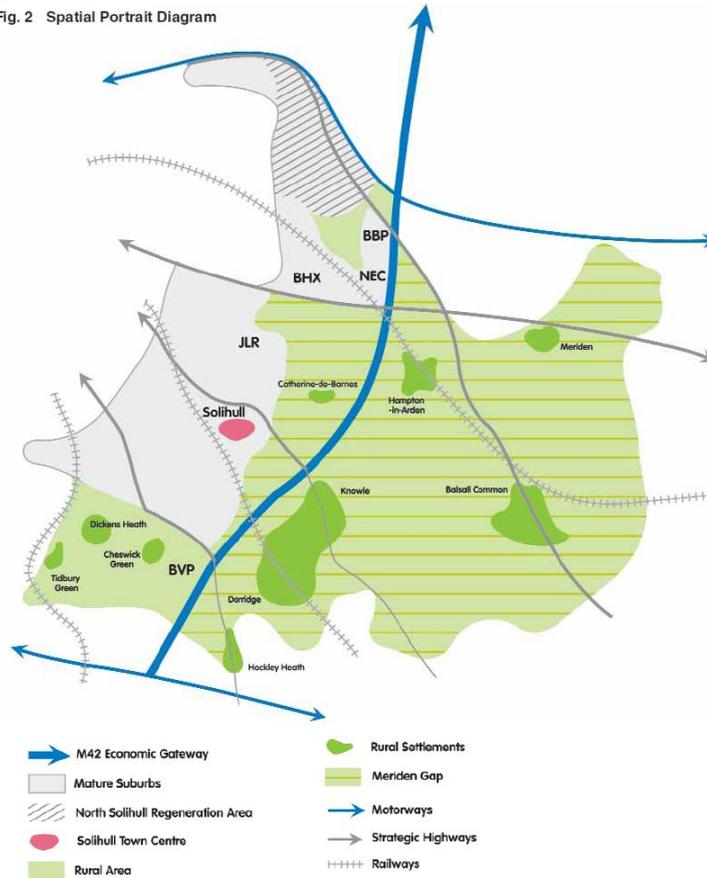
Local Plan Proposals Map



## Spatial Portrait Diagram

### 2. Spatial Portrait

Fig. 2 Spatial Portrait Diagram



## 2.8 Rural Area

2.8.1 The Rural Area generally has a high quality built and natural environment, characterised by its Arden landscape setting, attractive countryside, important green corridors such as its canals and rivers and its rich biodiversity. The predominant land use is agriculture, which contrasts with the urban character of the remainder of the Borough and most of the Rural Area is protected by Green Belt. There is a wide variety of villages within the area, from the larger settlements of Knowle, Dorridge and Balsall Common, which have expanded significantly in recent times, to the smaller, historic villages of Hampton-in-Arden, **Berkswell**, Meriden and Barston hamlets and farmsteads which have grown more organically, and the modern, critically acclaimed new village of Dickens Heath.

2.8.2 Generally communities within the Rural Area are affluent and occupy attractive residential environments. The level of car ownership is higher than the Borough and national average at 1.58 cars per dwelling. However, there is some rural deprivation, predominantly in Bickenhill ward. The Rural Area generally suffers from poor public transport connectivity. Schools perform well within the area but there is a severe shortage of affordable housing and an increasingly ageing population, above the national average, which could create service delivery difficulties. The rural communities are mainly commuter settlements and there is a continued threat of loss of key services and facilities.

2.8.3 .... Much of the rural employment is focused in the agricultural sector, however, there are some examples of successful farm diversification.

2.8.4 The following sub-areas are characterised by:

....

- **Balsall Common, Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Chadwick End**

..... Berkswell railway station ... provides access to London and Birmingham via the West Coast main line.

The remainder of the sub-area is distinctly rural with a series of remote historic villages, hamlets, scattered farmsteads and cottages. The historic settlements of **Berkswell**, Barston and Temple Balsall are of medieval or earlier origin and Walsal End has houses dating from the 17th Century. All are protected by Conservation Area designation. This part of the Rural Area is characterised by the River Blythe, the wider Arden landscape and distinctive fieldscapes and is a popular area for recreational walking, being home to part of the Heart of England Way and a network of footpaths.

#### **4. Vision**

4.1.11 The network of strong and vibrant communities across the Rural Area will have been sustained with a range of local facilities and services that are readily accessible on foot and by bicycle and that are appropriate to the scale and hierarchy of the settlement. An increased range of affordable housing will have been provided within each community.

The Borough will have continued to protect the Green Belt with adjustments in exceptional circumstances to provide for the Borough's local housing needs. The distinctive historic and natural environment of the Rural Area will have been protected and enhanced. The Borough will have continued to support the farm-based rural economy and encouraged sustainable management of the countryside. Appropriate waste management facilities will have been developed and the necessary amount of sand and gravel extracted to facilitate development.

4.1.12 In the following sub-areas, this will mean that:

- **Balsall Common, Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Chadwick End**

.... The local distinctiveness of the area, characterised by its open countryside setting, sense of remoteness, distinctive fieldscapes, woodland and assets such as the River Blythe, Grand Union Canal and the network of scattered historic hamlets and farmsteads will have been protected and enhanced and the sustainable management of the countryside achieved..... The special character of Temple Balsall, **Berkswell**, Walsal End and Barston will have been safeguarded by the Conservation Area designations.

## **5.5 Area spatial strategies**

### **5.5.5 Rural Area**

*Contributing to economic growth by:*

- Supporting appropriate farm-based diversification to provide jobs and enable sustainable management of the countryside
- Facilitating the expansion or redevelopment of businesses, providing that they contribute to local employment needs and subject to Green Belt policy
- Supporting appropriate waste management activities, such as open composting and other activities appropriate to a rural area, providing the impact on surrounding uses is acceptable
- Exploiting the opportunities of brownfield or unsightly land to provide new local housing or employment.

## **7. Sustainable Economic Growth**

### **Policy P3 – Provision of Land for General Business and Premises**

Sustainable economic growth is important to Solihull's success as an attractive place to live, work and invest. It will enable increased prosperity, opportunity, well being and quality of life and will potentially provide a better quality of life for individuals and communities experiencing high unemployment.

....

**(b)** The Council will encourage the retention of small and medium sized enterprises, and the creation of new ones, both in urban and rural areas as a key economic driver and to help facilitate growth in a broad variety of locations, including North Solihull as a priority, subject to the following criteria:

- i. Form, use and scale are appropriate to the character of the particular location.

- ii. There is no significant harm to the local environment, including landscape quality and character.
- iii. Proposals for home-working are compatible with the character of the local environment and are consistent with the amenity policies of the Local Plan.
- iv. The land or premises are not in the Green Belt or are compliant with Green Belt policy.
- v. In the case of development in rural areas, it is consistent with the Council's countryside policies and does not undermine the quality and character of the natural environment.

## **8. Providing Homes for All**

### **POLICY P4 – Meeting Housing Needs**

The Council will require developers of allocated and unidentified sites to make a contribution to affordable housing on residential sites of 0.2 hectares or more, or housing developments of 3 or more (net) homes to meet the housing needs of the Borough.

Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented or intermediate – tenure housing which is available at below market price or rent and which is affordable to households whose needs are not met by the market.

The Borough definition of 'affordable' is set out in an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will be updated periodically to reflect changes in local incomes and house prices.

Contributions will be expected to be made in the form of 40% affordable dwelling units on each development site, but will take into account:

- i. Site size;
- ii. Accessibility to local services and facilities and access to public transport;
- iii. The economics of provision, including particular costs that may threaten the viability of the site;
- iv. Whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site;
- v. The need to secure a range of house types and sizes in the locality in helping to achieve socially balanced and mixed communities; and

vi. The need to achieve a successful housing development.

Where on site provision is not feasible or viable there will be a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing that would not otherwise be provided, elsewhere within the Borough.

This policy applies to all qualifying sites across the Borough and includes Gypsy and Traveller sites.

In addition to requiring a proportion of the homes to be 'affordable' the Council will identify the tenure, mix and type of the homes and any requirements for homes to be designed to meet specific needs such as those of older or disabled people.

The mechanisms and criteria for delivery of Policy 4 are set out in an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

#### **b) Rural Exceptions**

The provision of affordable housing developments on green belt land to meet the local needs of households in that Parish or neighbourhood will be supported in circumstances where,

- i. The development proposal is consistent with the Village, Parish or Neighbourhood Plan; or
- ii. There is evidence that people with a local connection to the Parish area have a housing need that cannot be met through affordable housing provision on an allocated housing site and the proposed development is supported by the Parish Council or Neighbourhood Group.

#### **c) Market Housing**

Where the Council issues a development brief for a site this will include details of the likely profile of household types requiring market housing, e.g. multi-person, including families and children (x%), single persons (y%) and couples (z%), as identified by the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment. In assessing the housing mix of allocated and unidentified sites, the Council will, in negotiations, have regard to:

- i. Site size;
- ii. The existing mix of market housing and local housing demand in the area as guided by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment;
- iii. Accessibility to local services and facilities and access to public transport;

- iv. The economics of provision, including particular costs that may threaten the viability of the site;
- v. The need to secure a range of house types and sizes in the locality in helping to achieve socially balanced and mixed communities; and
- vi. The need to achieve a successful housing development.

The Council considers permanent residential moorings to be low cost market housing and will require a proportion of all new moorings to be permanent residential and not solely provision for touring, leisure and holiday moorings.

#### **POLICY P5 – Provision of Land for Housing**

...

New housing will be supported on unidentified sites in accessible locations where they contribute towards meeting identified borough-wide housing needs and towards enhancing local character and distinctiveness. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, new housing will not be permitted in locations where accessibility to employment, centres and a range of services and facilities is poor.

The density of new housing will make the most efficient use of land whilst providing an appropriate mix and maintaining character and local distinctiveness. Higher densities will be more appropriate in the most accessible locations.

### **9. Improving Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel**

#### **POLICY P7 Accessibility and Ease of Access**

a) All new development should be focused in the most accessible locations and seek to enhance existing accessibility levels and promote ease of access.

Development will be expected to meet the following accessibility criteria, unless justified by local circumstances.

i. Proposed housing development should be:

- Within an 800m walk distance of a primary school, doctor's surgery and food shop offering a range of fresh food; and
- Within a 400m walk distance of a bus stop served by a commercial high frequency bus service (daytime frequency of 15 minutes or better) providing access to local and regional employment and retail centres; and/or

- Within an 800m walk distance of a rail station providing high frequency services (3 or more per hour during peak periods) to local and regional employment and retail centres.

- ii. Proposed offices, retail and leisure development should be located in town centres, or

other established locations including Birmingham Business Park, Blythe Valley Business

Park, Birmingham Airport and NEC, as defined in Policies P1, P2 and P19. Here and elsewhere they should be within a 400m walk distance of a bus stop served by a commercially run high frequency bus service;

- iii. Proposed education, health and other public service facilities should be located where

they are easily accessible on foot, by bicycle and bus by the local community they serve;

- iv. Proposals for change of use are likely to be resisted if they reduce accessibility to levels below those listed in this policy.

Investment in improvements to local public transport provision, cycling and/or walking measures will be sought in association with development proposals which do not meet the accessibility criteria set out by this policy.

Residential development proposals for fewer than 3 dwellings in urban areas west of M42 and within rural settlements will be exempt from the criteria set out above. Investment in improvements to local public transport provision, cycling and/or walking measures will continue to be sought in association with such proposals where considered necessary.

- b)** Access to development from the core walking, cycling, public transport and road networks will be expected to be:

- i. Safe, attractive, overlooked and direct on foot, by bicycle and from public transport;

- ii. Safe for those vehicles which need to access the development;

- iii. And assessed in accordance with Policy P15 'Securing Design Quality' in the Local Plan.

### **POLICY P8 Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion**

a) All development proposals should have regard to transport efficiency and highway safety:

- i. Development will not be permitted which results in a significant increase in delay to vehicles, pedestrians or cyclists or a reduction in safety for any users of the highway or other transport network;
- ii. Travel demands associated with development should be managed to minimise detrimental impact to the efficiency of the highway network;
- iii. Ensure new development reduces the need to travel e.g. by promoting linked trips and encouraging mixed use development where appropriate;
- iv. Provision for parking and servicing will be required in accordance with a Supplementary Planning Document on managing travel demands associated with development;
- v. The Council will support proposals for strategic public transport schemes such as rapid transit, local rail schemes as identified in LTP3 and local Park and Ride at appropriate railway stations subject to other policies in the Local Plan;
- vi. Off-site parking provision proposed in association with economically important sites will be supported, subject to other policies in the Local Plan, where sustainable transport links between those sites and the parking provision are of a good quality, direct and attractive to use.

b) The use of sustainable modes of transport, i.e. walking, cycling and public transport, shall be promoted and encouraged in all developments by:

- i. Ensuring the design and management of the development enables and encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport;
- ii. Ensuring transport planning measures are implemented to help and encourage people accessing the development to use sustainable transport modes;
- iii. Ensuring the routes to the site from nearby services and local public transport stops are good quality, direct and attractive to use for all users.

## **10 Protecting and Enhancing our Environment**

### **POLICY P10 Natural Environment**

The Council recognises the importance of a healthy natural environment in its own right, and for the economic and social benefits it provides to the Borough. The full value and benefits of the natural environment will be taken into account in considering all development proposals, including the contribution to the green economy and the health of residents, and the potential for reducing the impacts of climate change. Joint working with neighbouring authorities will be supported, recognising the need for a landscape scale approach to the natural environment and conservation of biodiversity.

The Council will seek to protect, enhance and restore the diverse landscape features of the Borough and to create new woodlands and other characteristic habitats, so as to halt and where possible reverse the degrading of the Arden landscape and promote local distinctiveness. Development should take full account of national and local guidance on protecting and restoring the landscape and the areas in need of enhancement, including guidance relating to the countryside. Developers will be expected to incorporate measures to protect, enhance and restore the landscape, unless it is demonstrated that it is not feasible, disproportionate or unnecessary.

The Council will seek to conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity, to create new native woodlands and other habitats and to protect, restore and enhance ancient woodland and green infrastructure assets across the Borough. Protection of ancient woodland, designated sites and priority habitats shall include the establishment of buffers to any new development. Development should be informed by the latest information on habitats and species, and take full account of national and local guidance on conserving biodiversity, opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and for improving and restoring the Borough's green infrastructure. When appropriate, development should seek to enhance accessibility to the natural environment, especially for disabled people.

The Council will protect areas of national and local importance for biodiversity and geodiversity, adverse affect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest, whether directly or indirectly, will be subject to special scrutiny and will be permitted only if the reasons for the development clearly

outweigh the nature conservation value of the site and the national policy to safeguard such sites. Where development may have an adverse affect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest, developers will be expected to incorporate measures to enhance the condition of the site, unless it is demonstrated that it is not feasible.

Development likely to have an adverse affect on a Local Nature Reserve or a Local Wildlife or Geological Site will be permitted only if the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation or geological value of the site and its contribution to wider biodiversity objectives. Where development

would have an adverse effect on a site of local value, developers will be expected to incorporate measures to enhance the site or to restore the links between sites in accordance with the Green Infrastructure study, unless it is demonstrated that it is not feasible.

Outside designated sites, developers will be expected to take full account of the nature conservation or geological value, and the existence of any habitats or species included in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, or sites in the Local Geological Action Plan. Developers will be required to undertake a full ecological survey and to deliver a net gain or enhancement to biodiversity, unless it is demonstrated that it is not appropriate or feasible. In considering the need for green space improvements associated with new development, developers should have regard for the standards and priorities in the Green Spaces Strategy in relation to accessible natural green space.

Where development is likely to have significant harmful effects on the natural environment, as a result of the development itself, or the cumulative impact of developments, developers must demonstrate that all possible alternatives that would result in less harm have been considered.

Where development is permitted, appropriate mitigation of the impacts and compensation where relevant will be required to deliver a net gain in biodiversity, habitat creation, landscape character and local distinctiveness. Enhancements should be undertaken either on the site, or in its vicinity, but where it is demonstrated that this is not possible, offsetting in alternative strategic locations within the biodiversity or green infrastructure network, to deliver biodiversity or other objectives may be considered. Where appropriate, developers should demonstrate compliance with this policy through an ecological statement or by relevant information in the West Midlands Sustainability Checklist.

#### **POLICY P11 Water Management**

All new development should have regard to the actions and objectives of appropriate River Basin Management Plans in striving to protect and improve the quality of water bodies in and adjacent to the Borough, including the Rivers Blythe and Cole and their tributaries. Developers shall undertake thorough risk assessments of the impact of proposals on surface and groundwater systems and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures where necessary. The Council will expect developers to demonstrate that all proposed development will be served by appropriate sewerage infrastructure and that there is sufficient sewage treatment capacity to ensure that there is no deterioration of water quality, or that the delivery of any development will not be delayed by the need for additional water treatment provision.

The Council recognises the need for water efficiency in all new development. Developers shall demonstrate the highest possible standards of water efficiency through the use of water efficient fittings and appliances, and where appropriate, recycling of potable, grey water and rainwater in order to minimise consumption.

All new development shall incorporate sustainable drainage systems, unless it is shown to be impractical to do so. Developers shall ensure that adequate space is made for water within the design layout of all new developments to support the full use of sustainable drainage systems, and shall demonstrate that improvements to the water environment will be maximised through consideration of a range of techniques. Wherever possible, sustainable drainage systems will be expected to contribute towards wider sustainability considerations, including amenity, recreation, conservation of biodiversity and landscape character, as well as flood alleviation and water quality control.

Developers shall explore opportunities to contribute towards the objectives of relevant Catchment Flood Management Plans. Wherever possible, development should promote the reduction of flood risk by seeking to reinstate the natural floodplain, the de-culverting of watercourses and the limiting of surface water runoff to green field rates via the use of sustainable drainage techniques. On all development sites larger than 1 hectare, surface water discharge rates shall be limited to the equivalent site specific Greenfield run off rate. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that the layout and design of a development takes account of the surface water flows in extreme events so as to avoid flooding of properties, both within and outside the site. Applications for new development where there is a flood risk issue should be accompanied by a site flood risk assessment. Developers are encouraged to secure reduction of flood risk by the provision or enhancement of green infrastructure, wherever possible.

Existing flood defence infrastructure will be protected and development that would compromise the flood defence function will be permitted only if it is demonstrated through a flood risk assessment that the risk both within and outside the site, and to sites further downstream is not increased.

New development will not normally be permitted within areas at risk of flooding. Where it is clearly demonstrated that there are no other viable sites at lower risk of flooding, consideration will be given to development in such locations, providing that it is designed to be safe from the effects of flooding and will minimise flood risk on the site and reduce risks elsewhere.

#### **POLICY P14 Amenity**

The Council will seek to protect and enhance the amenity of existing and potential occupiers of houses, businesses and other uses in considering proposals for new development, and will:

- i.** Permit development only if it respects the amenity of existing and proposed occupiers and would be a good neighbour;
- ii.** Consider the visual and other amenities of potential occupiers and users of new developments close to overhead power lines and substations. Developers will be expected to locate and design new developments so as to minimise the visual and other amenity impacts;
- iii.** Support the development of electronic communications networks including telecommunications and high speed broadband. The Council will have regard to the needs of telecommunications operators, any technical constraints on location of telecommunications apparatus, the potential for sharing sites, the impact of development on its surroundings, the sensitivity of the environment and the design and external appearance of telecommunications apparatus. Development in or adjacent to sensitive locations will be permitted only if there is no other technically suitable location that both meets operational requirements and causes less environmental harm and any mast is at a distance of at least twice its height from the nearest residential properties;
- iv.** Safeguard important trees, hedgerows and woodlands, encourage new and replacement tree and hedgerow planting and identify areas that may be suitable for the creation of new woodlands. Priority will be given to locations that enhance or restore the green infrastructure network and to the planting of species characteristic of the Arden Warwickshire landscape;
- v.** Encourage better air quality in and around the Borough through the adoption of low emission zone initiatives such as those involving the use of electric vehicles for freight and public transport. Development that would contribute to air pollution, either directly or indirectly will be permitted only if it would not hinder or significantly harm the achievement of air quality objectives or any relevant Air Quality Management Plan, and it incorporates appropriate attenuation, mitigation or compensatory measures;
- vi.** Require proposals for development on land known or suspected to be contaminated to include appropriate information to enable the potential implications to be assessed and to incorporate any necessary remediation;
- vii.** Seek to minimise the adverse impact of noise. Development likely to create significant noise will be permitted only if it is located away from noise sensitive uses or it incorporates measures to ensure adequate protection against noise. Noise sensitive development will be permitted only if it is located away from existing sources of significant noise, or if no suitable alternatives exist, the development incorporates measures to reduce noise intrusion to an acceptable level;

**viii.** Protect the amenity of residential and shopping areas, community facilities and open space from bad neighbour uses. Development that would be significantly harmful because of smell, noise or atmospheric pollution will not be permitted, whilst development that would be potentially harmful to such areas will be expected to incorporate appropriate attenuation, mitigation or compensatory measures. In locations close to existing bad neighbour uses, the Council will not permit new residential or other sensitive development, unless the effects can be satisfactorily mitigated as part of the development;

**ix.** Protect those parts of the countryside in the Borough that retain a dark sky from the impacts of light pollution. Development involving external lighting outside established settlements will be permitted only where significant lighting already exists, or the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the impact of the lighting on the countryside. Any lighting scheme should be the minimum required for the purposes of the development and should avoid light spillage and harmful effects on biodiversity; and

**x.** Protect the tranquil and locally distinctive areas in the Borough by guiding new development, particularly those that will create significant noise, either directly or through associated transport, to locations that will avoid or minimise adverse impacts.

## **11. Promoting Quality of Place**

### **POLICY P15 Securing Design Quality**

All development proposals will be expected to achieve good quality, inclusive and sustainable

design, which meets the following key principles:

**i.** Conserves and enhances local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality and ensures that the scale, massing, density, layout, materials and landscape of the development respect the surrounding natural, built and historic environment;

**ii.** Ensures that new development achieves the highest possible standard of environmental performance through sustainable design and construction and the location and layout of the development in accordance with the guidance provided in Policy P9 – Climate Change;

**iii.** Secures the sustainable long-term use of new development through flexible, robust and future-proofed design e.g. high-speed digital connectivity;

**iv.** Makes appropriate space for water within the development, using sustainable drainage (SuDS) principles, to minimise and adapt to the risk of flooding. Further guidance is provided in Policy P11 – Water Management;

v. Conserves and enhances biodiversity, landscape quality and considers the impact on and opportunities for green infrastructure at the earliest opportunity in the design process. Further guidance is provided in Policy P10 – Natural Environment;

vi. Integrates the natural environment within the development through the provision of gardens, quality open space and/or improved access to, enhancement or extension of the green infrastructure network. Further guidance is provided in Policy P20 – Provision for Open Space, Children’s Play, Sport, Recreation and Leisure;

vii. Creates attractive, safe, active, legible and uncluttered streets and public spaces which are accessible, easily maintained and encourage walking and cycling and reduce crime and the fear of crime.

Development proposals will also be expected to contribute to or create a sense of place. Such measures may include; reflecting heritage assets and their setting in the design process, integrating landscape into the development, promoting diversity through a mix of uses within the site, or the incorporation of public art.

All residential development proposals should be built to the Lifetime Homes standard and demonstrate how they meet Building for Life 12, or its equivalent. However, the Council will take into account the economics of provision, including particular costs that may threaten the viability of the site. All residential development will be expected to adhere to the guidance set out in the New Housing in Context Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) until this has been updated and the Council will prepare Supplementary Planning Documents to provide necessary additional guidance.

Applicants should adhere to the urban design principles set out in established current design guidance, including at present; Urban Design Compendium 1 and 2 (2007), By Design (2000 and 2001), Manual for Streets 1 (2007) and 2 (2010), Car Parking: What Works Where (2006), Building for Life and Secured by Design principles, or their equivalents.

Development at key economic assets within the M42 Economic Gateway; the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham Airport, Birmingham Business Park and Blythe Valley Park, will be expected to be of the highest quality to reflect their strategic importance.

#### **POLICY P16 Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness**

The Council recognises the importance of the historic environment to the Borough's local character and distinctiveness, its cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits and the effect this has on civic pride.

The Council considers the following characteristics make a significant contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the Borough and where applicable, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how these characteristics have been conserved:

- i. The historic core of Solihull Town Centre and its adjacent parks;
- ii. The historical development and variety of architectural styles within the Mature Suburbs and the larger established rural settlements of Meriden, Hampton-in-Arden, Balsall Common, Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath, Hockley Heath, Cheswick Green and Tidbury Green;
- iii. The Arden landscape, historic villages, hamlets, farmsteads, country and lesser houses and the distinct medieval core of historic rural settlements including **Berkswell**, Barston, Temple Balsall, Meriden Hill, Walsal End, Hampton-in-Arden, Bickenhill and Knowle; **iv.** Parks, gardens and landscape including common, woodland, heathland and distinctive fieldscapes as defined in the Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation; and
- v. The canal and railway network, including disused railway lines and the working stations at Solihull, Olton, Dorridge and Shirley, together with associated structures.

Development will be expected to preserve or enhance heritage assets as appropriate to their significance, conserve local character and distinctiveness and create or sustain a sense of place. In Solihull, heritage assets include; Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and also non-designated assets; buildings, monuments, archaeological sites, places, areas or landscapes positively identified in Solihull's Historic Environment Record as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, such as those identified on the Local List.

All applications and consents that affect the historic environment will be expected to have considered and used the evidence in the Solihull Historic Environment Record to inform the design of the proposal. This should be explained in the accompanying Design and Access Statement or, for significant proposals, in a Heritage Statement.

Proposals seeking to modify heritage assets for the mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of climate change will be expected to be sympathetic and conserve the special interest and significance of the heritage asset or its setting.

### **POLICY P17 Countryside and Green Belt**

The Council will safeguard the “best and most versatile” agricultural land in the Borough and encourage the use of the remaining land for farming. Development affecting the “best and most versatile” land will be permitted only if there is an overriding need for the development or new use, and there is insufficient lower grade land available, or available lower grade land has an environmental significance that outweighs the agricultural considerations, or the use of lower grade land would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations. Development involving farm-based diversification will normally be permitted in order to support farm enterprises and the management of land, providing it is in an appropriate location, of a scale appropriate to its location, and does not harm the Green Belt, conservation or enhancement policies.

The Council will not permit inappropriate development in the Green Belt, except in very special circumstances. In addition to the national policy, the following provisions shall apply to development in the Borough’s Green Belt:

- Development involving the replacement, extension or alteration of buildings in the Green Belt will not be permitted if it will harm the need to retain smaller more affordable housing or the purposes of including land within the Green Belt.
- Limited infilling will not be considered to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt settlements, providing this would not have an adverse effect on the character of the settlements. Limited infilling shall be interpreted as the filling of a small gap within an otherwise built-up frontage with not more than two dwellings.
- The reasonable expansion of established businesses into the Green Belt will be allowed where the proposal would make a significant contribution to the local economy or employment, providing that appropriate mitigation can be secured.
- Where the re-use of buildings or land is proposed, the new use, and any associated use of land surrounding the building, should not conflict with, nor have a materially greater impact on, the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, and the form, bulk and general design of the buildings shall be in keeping with their surroundings.
- Where waste management operations involving inappropriate development are proposed in the Green Belt, the contribution of new capacity towards the treatment gap identified in the Borough may amount to very special circumstances, providing the development accords with the waste management policy of this Plan.

The small settlements of Hampton-in-Arden, Hockley Heath, Meriden and Catherine de Barnes are inset in the Green Belt and are not therefore subject to

Green Belt policy. Nevertheless, the Council, in considering applications for development in these settlements, will take into account the importance of their rural setting and of their attributes, such as historic buildings, open space, density of development, landscape and townscape that contribute towards their special character. Immediately beyond the inset boundary, strict Green Belt policies will apply.

## **12. Supporting Local Communities**

The potential for achieving positive health outcomes will be taken into account when considering all development proposals. Where any adverse health impacts are identified, the development will be expected to demonstrate how these will be addressed or mitigated.

The Council will expect new development proposals to promote, support and enhance physical and mental health and well being. Support will be given to proposals which:

- i.** Provide opportunities for formal and informal physical activity, exercise opportunities, recreation and play;
- ii.** Contribute to a high quality, attractive and safe public realm in accordance with Policy P15 Securing Design Quality, to encourage social interaction and facilitate movement on foot and by cycle;
- iii.** Contribute to the development of a high quality, safe and convenient walking and cycling network;
- iv.** Improve the quality and quantity of the green infrastructure network in the Borough, particularly in the North Solihull Regeneration Area and in areas where green infrastructure is identified as lacking. The protection and enhancement of physical access, including public rights of way to open space and green infrastructure will also be supported;
- v.** Deliver new and improved health services and facilities in areas where they can be accessed by sustainable transport modes. Facilities for primary medical care should be identified and planned for;
- vi.** Increase access to healthy food by sustainable transport modes and provide opportunities for growing local produce. The Council will resist the loss of areas which currently enable local produce to be grown;
- vii.** Provide additional homes which are designed to meet the needs of older people and those with disabilities, and housing which enables older people to downsize from larger homes; and
- viii.** Improve the energy efficiency of housing.

New residential development will be expected to be built to the Lifetime Homes standard in accordance with Policy P15 Securing Design Quality, to ensure that homes are adaptable and enable people to live independently for longer. All developments should maximise internal insulation and opportunities for solar gain and wherever possible, developments should also seek to incorporate private amenity space.

Development proposals should incorporate planting, trees, open spaces and soft surfaces wherever possible in order to secure a variety of spaces for residents, visitors or employees to use and observe.

The loss of community and social infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- It can no longer continue for commercial or operational reasons;
- There are identified benefits of the use being discontinued;
- Adequate alternative provision can be made in a manner which meets the needs of the community affected.

The Council will resist development proposals for hot food takeaways in areas where there is already a high concentration of such uses.

#### **POLICY P19 – Range and Quality of Local Services**

##### **b) Parades and Local Shops**

Local retail parades and local shops providing for day to day needs, including those serving villages, will be sustained. Proposals for change of use or new development will be granted planning permission where this role would not be prejudiced.

All new development will need to be sensitive to local character and enhance the public realm.

#### **POLICY P20 Provision for Open Space, Children’s Play, Sport, Recreation and Leisure**

##### **a) Existing public open space, sports and recreational facilities:**

The Council recognises the importance and multi-functional benefits of public open space,

sports and recreational facilities within the Borough and will support the enhancement of

existing facilities and open space. Loss of existing facilities through development will not be

permitted where they are of value by to the local community for recreation, visual amenity,

nature conservation or make an important contribution to the quality of the environment or

network of green infrastructure, unless:

- i. it can be demonstrated that the open space or buildings are clearly surplus to requirements; or
- ii. the need or benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss.

In such circumstances, the Council will require appropriate compensatory measures for the loss.

Enhancement of open space or buildings shall be in accordance with Policy P15 – Securing

Design Quality and Policy P10 – Natural Environment.

The Council supports the principle of designating land as Local Green Space. Where

designation would be appropriate, necessary and where the open space meets the criteria

outlined in national guidance, the Council will support designation of Local Green Spaces in

neighbourhood plans.

**b) Provision of new public open space, sports and recreational facilities:**

The Council will require provision for and maintenance of appropriate open space, sports and recreational facilities as an integral part of new development. This should address identified shortfalls in local provision, outlined in adopted Council strategies and provide for the resultant increase in population from the development. Provision should accord with the local standards and priorities for action outlined in the adopted Green Spaces Strategy (2006) and future revisions, the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy. Where the minimum standard for children’s play and youth facilities is already met, developments will be expected to give more generous provision.

To ensure a high quality living environment for the occupiers of all new residential development, including supported housing schemes for the elderly and those with disabilities, provision should be made for informal amenity space, in accordance with Policy P15 – Securing Design Quality. Proposals for family housing will be

expected to provide opportunities for safe children's play in accordance with the Design for Play and the Free Play Network's 10 Design Principles.

To promote healthy lifestyles in the workplace, major commercial development proposals, (over 1ha or 1,000 sq.m) will also be required to provide new open space and/or contribute to enhancement of the green infrastructure network, in accordance with Policy P15 – Securing Design Quality and Policy P10 – Natural Environment.

c) Provision of new indoor sports and leisure facilities:

The Council will support proposals for new or improved sports and leisure facilities providing that the development:

- i. Addresses any shortfall in provision outlined in the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy or the adopted Green Spaces Strategy (2006);
- ii. Reflects the 'town centre first' principle outlined in national guidance and is of a scale and size appropriate to the hierarchy of Town Centres as defined in Policies P1 – Support Economic Success, P2 – Maintain Strong Competitive Town Centres, and P19 – Range and Quality of Local Services;
- iii. Is situated within an accessible location as defined in Policy 7 – Accessibility, where the development is easily accessible to the local community and is well served, or is capable of being well served, by public transport, walking and cycling; and
- iv. Accords with other Green Belt and Amenity policies in the Plan.

Subject to the above criteria, the Council will support proposals for shared sports facilities at educational centres, where the facility also serves the local area.

d) Waterways:

The Council will support proposals that encourage greater recreational and leisure use and enhancement of the river and canal network providing that the development safeguards the historic and natural environment and purposes of the Green Belt, in accordance with Policies P10 – Natural Environment, P16 – Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness and P17 – Countryside and Green Belt.

### **3.2 Solihull Local Plan Review<sup>9</sup>**

The current local plan, the 'Solihull Local Plan', was adopted in December 2013 and covers the period 2011 to 2028. Since the Local Plan was adopted, a legal challenge has resulted in the overall housing requirement being deleted and remitted back to the Council for reconsideration.

The examination of the Birmingham Development Plan has made clear that the City Council is unable to meet its own housing need within its boundaries, and that the shortfall will have to be met elsewhere within the Housing Market Area (HMA) (or other nearby areas) such as Solihull. The adopted Solihull Local Plan acknowledges that when work on housing needs identifies a need for further provision in the Borough, a review will be brought forward to address this

In addition, the government's plans for high speed rail are currently passing through Parliament and have reached an advanced stage. The first station outside of London is to be built in Solihull on land next to the M42 and opposite the NEC. Works are scheduled to start in 2017 and construction should be complete by 2026. The Interchange station will be constructed on land that it is currently within the Green Belt.

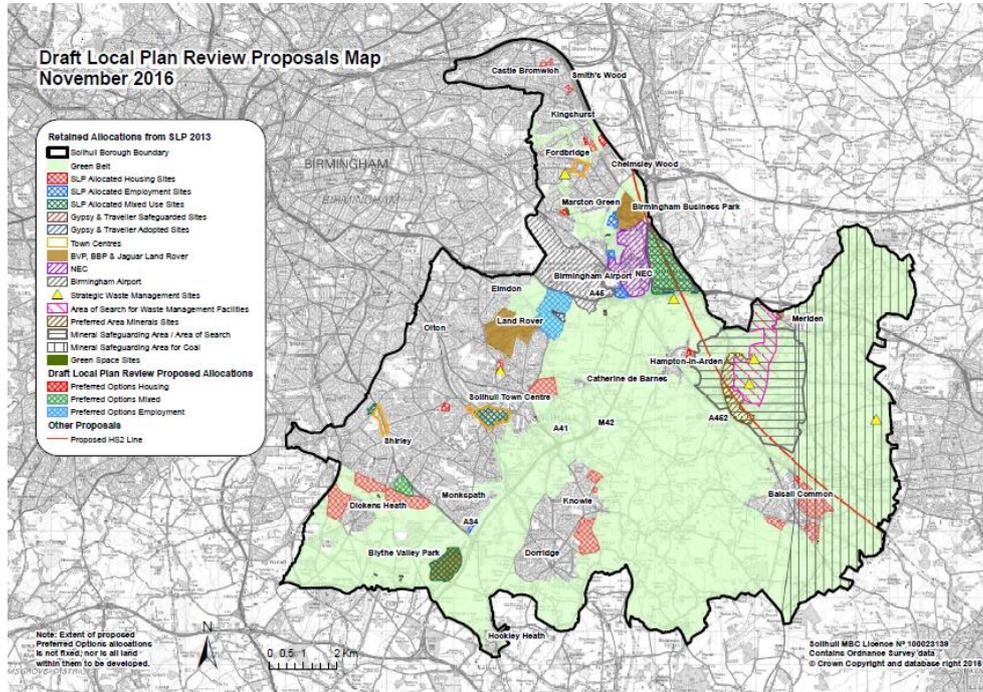
To ensure that a proper planning framework is in place that addresses these issues, the Council is undertaking a Local Plan Review (LPR).

Following approval of the [Draft Local Plan Review](#) document at [Full Cabinet](#) on 10 November 2016, the consultation took place from Monday 5 December 2016 until Friday 17 February 2017.

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<sup>9</sup> <http://www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr>

Local Plan Review Proposals Map



Historical Development

24. The development of Solihull was highly influenced by the arrival of the railway stations and the 20th Century expansion of Birmingham south-eastwards. The area now known as Solihull Borough was predominantly rural with small historic towns and villages of medieval origin or earlier at Solihull, Meriden, **Berkswell**, Barston, Hampton-in-Arden, Knowle and Bickenhill until the end of the 19th Century, when Birmingham began to expand into rural Olton, with houses overlooking Olton Mere. Shirley originally developed from a scattered heathland settlement serving the road from Birmingham to Winchester via Oxford. Development of the Grand Union and Stratford-Upon-Avon canals and the railways also occurred during the Georgian and early Victorian periods, respectively.

25. The Rural Area once formed part of a huge area of wood pasture and ancient farm lands known as Arden and evidence of previous woodland, commons and heaths are often shown in local place names. There were also a number of manor houses and halls associated with large parks situated within the Rural Area, for example, parkland associated with **Berkswell Hall** was once part of a medieval deer park. Much of the woodland has now been cleared and the landscape character is predominantly agricultural, characterised by a variety of fieldscapes from older, irregular piecemeal enclosure to larger planned enclosure and very large post-war fields.

## **The Borough Now**

54. The Rural Area generally has a high quality built and natural environment, characterised by its Arden landscape setting, attractive countryside, important green corridors such as its canals and rivers and its rich biodiversity. The predominant land use is agriculture, which contrasts with the urban character of the remainder of the Borough and most of the Rural Area is protected by Green Belt. There is a wide variety of villages within the area, from the larger settlements of Knowle, Dorridge and Balsall Common, which have expanded significantly in recent times, to the smaller, historic villages of Hampton-in-Arden, **Berkswell**, Meriden and Barston hamlets and farmsteads which have grown more organically, and the modern, critically acclaimed new village of Dickens Heath.

55. Generally communities within the Rural Area are affluent and occupy attractive residential environments. The level of car ownership is higher than the Borough and national average at 1.62 cars per household. However, some local rural deprivation is evident in those neighbourhoods where social housing predominates. The Rural Area generally suffers from poor public transport connectivity. Schools perform well within the area but there is a severe shortage of affordable housing and an increasingly ageing population, above the national average, which could create service delivery difficulties. The rural communities are mainly commuter settlements and there is a continued threat of loss of key services and facilities.

56. The Rural Area is also important for sand and gravel aggregates at Berkswell and Meriden quarries. The area also has significant coal reserves. There are waste facilities in the Rural Area but much of the amount of waste arising in the Borough is managed outside of Solihull. Much of the rural employment is focused in the agricultural sector; however, there are some examples of successful farm diversification.

## **Borough Vision in Detail**

### **Rural Area**

83. The network of strong and vibrant communities across the Rural Area will have been sustained with a range of local facilities and services that are readily accessible on foot and by bicycle and that are appropriate to the scale and hierarchy of the settlement. An increased range of affordable housing will have been provided within each community, commensurate with the size of the settlement and its needs. The Borough will have continued to protect the best of the Green Belt, whilst sustainable extensions to those settlements that are highly accessible or have a wide range of services, and adjustments elsewhere in exceptional circumstances, will provide for the Borough's housing needs. The distinctive historic and natural environment of the Rural Area will have been

protected and enhanced. The Borough will have continued to support the farm-based rural economy and encouraged sustainable management of the countryside. Appropriate waste management facilities will have been developed and sufficient sand and gravel extracted to facilitate development. The Rural Area has a number of distinct places that need to be recognised as explained in the following paragraphs.

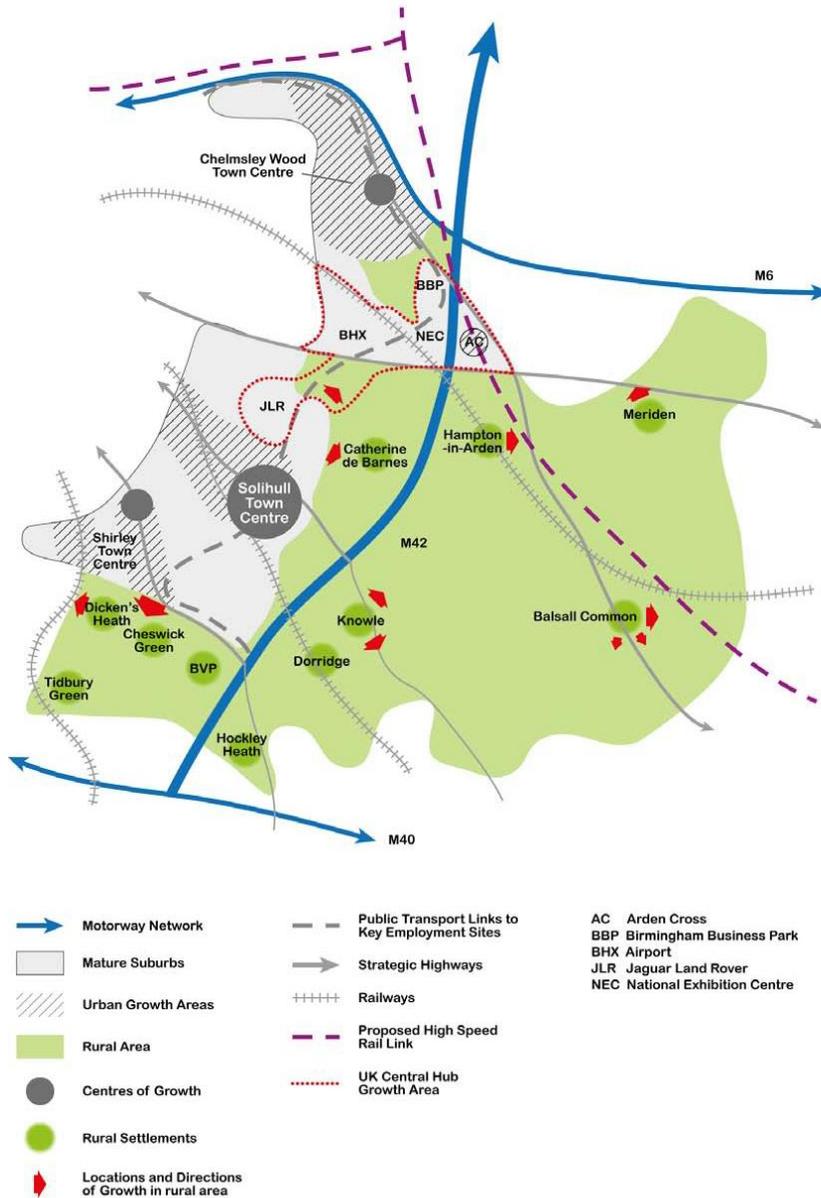
**Balsall Common, Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Chadwick End**

86. A mix of market and affordable housing will have been provided through significant new development on the edge of Balsall Common to contribute towards meeting the Borough's housing need, and the centre of the village will have continued to thrive and cater for the needs of the local community. An alternative route will have been provided to relieve through traffic using the Kenilworth Road in the settlement. Schools will have continued to thrive and grow to serve the local area. The local distinctiveness of the area, characterised by its open countryside setting, sense of remoteness, distinctive fieldscapes, woodland and assets such as the River Blythe, Grand Union Canal and the network of scattered historic hamlets and farmsteads will have been protected and enhanced and the sustainable management of the countryside achieved. The historic almshouses, church, school and home farm of Temple Balsall will continue to be the heart of the hamlet. The special character of Temple Balsall, Berkswell, Walsal End and Barston will have been safeguarded by Conservation Area designation, with limited infilling only within the settlement of Chadwick End.

**Spatial Strategy**

A number of appropriate growth are identified as locations where growth should be focussed and land released from the Green Belt in para 108 and the spatial strategy key diagram. These include 2 proposed locations to the south and east of Balsall Common partially within the Parish of Berkswell.

**Spatial Strategy Key Diagram**



**6. Sustainable Economic Growth**

**Policy P3 Provision of Land for General Business and Premises**

The Council will encourage the retention of small and medium sized enterprises, and the creation of new ones, both in urban and rural areas as a key economic

driver and to help facilitate growth in a broad variety of locations, including North Solihull as a priority, subject to the following criteria:

- Form, use and scale are appropriate to the character of the particular location.
- There is no significant harm to the local environment, including landscape quality and character.
- Proposals for home-working are compatible with the character of the local environment and are consistent with the amenity policies of the Local Plan.
- The land or premises are not in the Green Belt or are compliant with Green Belt policy.
- In the case of development in rural areas, it is consistent with the Council's countryside policies and does not undermine the quality and character of the natural environment.

## **7. Providing Homes for All**

### **Policy P4 Meeting Housing Needs**

#### **A Affordable Housing**

The Council will require developers of allocated and unidentified sites to make a contribution to affordable housing on residential sites of 11 units or more, or which have a maximum combined gross floor space of more than 1,000sqm to meet the housing needs of the Borough. Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented, intermediate tenure and Starter Homes, which is available at below market price or rent and which is affordable to households whose needs are not met by the market.

The Borough definition of 'affordable' is set out in a Meeting Housing Needs Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will be updated periodically to reflect changes in local incomes and house prices.

Contributions will be expected to be made in the form of 50% affordable dwelling units on each development site, but will take into account:

- Site size;
- Accessibility to local services and facilities and access to public transport; ☐ The economics of provision, including particular costs that may threaten the viability of the site;
- Whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site;

- The need to secure a range of house types and sizes in the locality in helping to achieve socially balanced and mixed communities; and
- The need to achieve a successful housing development.

Where on-site provision is not feasible or viable there will be a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing that would not otherwise be provided, elsewhere within the Borough.

The extent of affordable housing that should be provided in relation to developments that either re-use existing buildings or include the demolition of existing buildings will be assessed according to the 'vacant building credit'. The approach to calculating the vacant building credit is set out in the Meeting Housing Needs Supplementary Planning Document. This policy applies to all qualifying sites across the Borough and includes Gypsy and Traveller sites.

The policy applies to all development in the 'C3' use class . The policy will also apply to 'C2' development that provides individual self-contained units that can be counted as part of the Borough's overall housing numbers. In addition to requiring a proportion of the homes to be 'affordable', the Council will identify the tenure, mix and type of the homes and any requirements for homes to be designed to meet specific needs such as those of older or disabled people.

### **B Rural Exceptions**

The provision of affordable housing developments on green belt land to meet the local needs of households in that Parish or neighbourhood will be supported in circumstances where:

- The development proposal is consistent with the Village, Parish or Neighbourhood Plan; or
- There is evidence that people with a local connection to the Parish area have a housing need that cannot be met through affordable housing provision on an allocated housing site and the proposed development is supported by the Parish Council or Neighbourhood Forum.

### **C Market Housing**

Where the Council issues a development brief for a site this will include details of the likely profile of household types requiring market housing, e.g. multi-person, including families and children (x%), single persons (y%) and couples (z%), as identified by the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment. In assessing the housing mix of allocated and unidentified sites, the Council will, in negotiations, have regard to:

- Site size;

- The existing mix of market housing and local housing demand in the area as guided by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment;
- Accessibility to local services and facilities and access to public transport;
- The economics of provision, including particular costs that may threaten the viability of the site;
- The need to secure a range of house types and sizes in the locality in helping to achieve socially balanced and mixed communities; and
- The need to achieve a successful housing development.

#### **D Self and Custom Housebuilding**

Option 1 The Council will allocate a site(s) to provide for the requirements of Solihull's Self and Custom Housebuilding Register as required by the Housing and Planning Act.

Or

Option 2 The Council will require developers of allocated sites to make a contribution to Self and Custom Build Housing on residential sites of 100 units or more. Contributions will be expected to be made in the form of 5% of open market dwellings in the form of Self and Custom Build Plots on each development site, but will take into account:

- Site size;
- Accessibility to local services and facilities and access to public transport;
- The economics of provision, including particular costs that may threaten the viability of the site;
- Whether the provision of self and custom build plots would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site;
- The need to secure a range of house types and sizes in the locality in helping to achieve socially balanced and mixed communities; and
- The need to achieve a successful and functional housing development.

The Council expects these plots to be offered for sale with outline planning permission, services to the boundary and access to the highway for period of 12 months to those Registered on Solihull's Self and Custom Build Housing Register. The value of the plots will be subject to an independent valuation by a Registered Surveyor. The mechanisms and criteria for delivery of Policy P4 will be set out in the Meeting Housing Needs Supplementary Planning Document.

**Policy P5 Provision of Land for Housing**

The Council will allocate sufficient land for at least 6,522 net additional homes to ensure sufficient housing land supply to deliver 15,029 additional homes in the period 2014-2033. The allocations will be part of the overall housing land supply detailed in the table below.

The annual housing land provision target is 791 net additional homes per year (2014-2033). A trajectory showing how this target will be delivered from all sources of housing land supply is shown below. It will be subject to annual review through the AMR. New housing will be supported on unidentified sites in accessible locations where they contribute towards meeting borough-wide housing needs and towards enhancing local character and distinctiveness. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, new housing will not be permitted in locations where accessibility to employment, centres and a range of services and facilities is poor.

The density of new housing will make the most efficient use of land whilst providing an appropriate mix and maintaining character and local distinctiveness. Higher densities will be more appropriate in the most accessible locations.

The submission version of the plan will include a phasing designation for each of the allocations. Sites will not be released for development before they reach their specified phase, unless existing housing land supply falls below national planning policy deliverable housing land supply requirements.

**Summary Table of Allocated Sites**

223. Appendix C contains a detailed schedule of the new allocated housing sites, the following table is provided as a summary.

Area <sup>28</sup>	Ref.	Site Name	Green Belt	Site Area (ha)	Indicative Capacity
Balsall Common	1	Barratt’s Farm	Yes	57	800
	2	Frog Lane	Yes	6	150
	3	Windmill Lane/Kenilworth Road	Yes	11	200

**Note - the site at Barratt’s Farm (1) and the Site at Windmill Lane / Kenilworth Road (3) are partially within Berkswell Parish.**

224. These sites are indicated on a series of maps in the appendices. At this stage it should be noted that the boundaries of the sites are **not** fixed and further work

will be undertaken on the options to be taken forward and included in the submission version of the plan<sup>30</sup>. This further work will be undertaken in conjunction with the site promoters/land owners and local communities (including Parish Councils and Neighbourhood Planning Forums) and will include:

- A clear objective/aim for what is intended to be achieved in the overall development.
- That key site constraints have been identified (both those that are fixed (i.e. to be accommodated within the scheme (e.g. important open spaces)) and those that need to be overcome or mitigated).
- That all the different land uses/proposals and their scale that the site is to accommodate (including dwelling capacity) have been identified (this will include key green infrastructure/open space (including, where relevant, areas of biodiversity value that are to be retained) either within the site or adjacent to it).
- Key access and movement routes to and through the site.
- The infrastructure that is required to make that development an attractive and sustainable location has been identified.
- A clear phasing and delivery programme (and this may demonstrate the need for critical infrastructure to be in place before occupation of certain phases).
- Establishing a clear and logical boundary to identify precisely the land to be released from the Green Belt (for those allocations which require land to be removed from the Green Belt). This does not mean that all of the site will be developed as it is necessary to ensure a clear, logical and defensible boundary to the Green Belt is formed.

225. The outcome from the above will be a concept masterplan for each of the allocations that will be incorporated into the submission version of the local plan. This will not only help to illustrate the form the development will take, but also to demonstrate its delivery.

## **8. Improving Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel**

### **Policy P7 Accessibility and Ease of Access**

All new development should be focussed in the most accessible locations and seek to enhance existing accessibility levels and promote ease of access. The Council will expect development proposals to fulfil the following:

- demonstrate how access to the site will be achieved in a sustainable manner by a range and choice of transport modes.

- for residential development over 100 dwellings, provide access to a bus service offering at least a 30 minute daytime, evening and weekend frequency within 400m of the site;
- for all other development, provide access to a bus service offering at least a 30 minute daytime frequency within 400m of the site;
- provide on-site transport infrastructure that promotes ease of access and enhances accessibility levels;
- provide, contribute to and/or enhance off-site transport infrastructure schemes where appropriate and viable;
- are consistent with, and contribute to, the implementation of the 'Solihull Connected' strategy;
- for offices, retail and leisure development, are directed to locations in town centres, or other established locations including Birmingham Business Park, Blythe Valley Business Park, Birmingham Airport and NEC, as defined in Policies P1, P2 and P19; Access to all development will be required to demonstrate that:
  - it is safe, attractive and suitable for all people by all modes.
  - opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up.

assessed in accordance with Policy P8 'Managing Travel Demand and Reducing Congestion' and Policy P15 'Securing Design Quality' in the Local Plan.

**Policy P8 Managing Travel Demand and Reducing Congestion**

The Council will support development proposals which:

- are located in accordance with the spatial strategy in seeking to reduce the need to travel and that essential travel can be met by forms of sustainable transport in addition to the private car;
- promote linked trips by encouraging mixed use development where appropriate;
- do not result in the reduction of safety for users of the highway or other transport network;
- takes an evidence-based approach to demonstrate appropriate car parking provision, taking account of location, trip rates and, where relevant, travel plan targets and forecast levels of car ownership;

The Council is unlikely to support developments:

- where the impacts of increased delay to vehicles, pedestrians or cyclists, taking account of the residual cumulative transport effects of development, are severe.
- where they will result in a reduction in safety for any users of the highway or other transport network.

The Council will support proposals for local Park and Ride at appropriate railway stations subject to other policies in the Local Plan. Off-site parking provision proposed in association with economically important sites will be supported, subject to other policies in the Local Plan, where sustainable transport links between those sites and the parking provision are of a good quality, direct and attractive to use. The Council will require Transport Assessments and/or Travel Plans to accompany planning applications that include proposals which may generate significant traffic volumes or otherwise likely to have a significant impact on the highway network.

## **9. Protecting and Enhancing Our Environment**

### **Policy P9 Mitigating and Adapting to Climate Change**

Proposals for development will be required to demonstrate that, dependent on their scale, use and location, measures are included that mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Full details of the proposed measures should be incorporated into the proposal. At a strategic level, measures to reduce carbon emissions and transition to a low carbon economy will include:

- Locate development where it minimises the need to travel and encourages sustainable forms of transport such as cycling, walking, public transport.
- Design development to reduce carbon emissions and make efficient use of natural resources.
- Promote district, low carbon and renewable energy schemes.
- Expect major developments, particularly in Solihull Town Centre and the UKC Hub Area, to connect to or contribute towards existing or planned district energy and/or heat networks. At a site level, the Council will promote an 'energy hierarchy' in seeking to reduce carbon dioxide emissions as follows:
  - Reduce energy demand through energy efficiency measures.
  - Supply energy efficiently and give priority to decentralised and/or district energy supply.
  - Provide energy from renewable or low carbon sources.
  - Promote connections for electric vehicles. In order that development proposals are adaptive to climate change, measures will include:

- Flood prevention and mitigation measures, including (SUDS) and water efficiency measures as set out in Policy P11.
- Layout and design that minimises the need for energy for heating and cooling.
- Integrated green infrastructure, such as SUDs, green spaces and corridors, retaining and planting trees, green roofs & walls, landscaping and rain gardens.

**Community energy** The Council will support the establishment of Renewable Energy Service Companies and community-led initiatives to reduce energy use and exploit renewable energy sources within the Borough.

### **Policy P10 Natural Environment**

The Council recognises the importance of a healthy natural environment in its own right, and for the economic and social benefits it provides to the Borough. The full value and benefits of the natural environment will be taken into account in considering all development proposals, including the contribution to the green economy and the health of residents, and the potential for reducing the impacts of climate change. Joint working with neighbouring authorities and partners will be supported, recognising the need for a landscape scale approach to the natural environment and conservation of biodiversity.

### **Arden Landscape**

The Council will seek to protect, enhance and restore the diverse landscape features of the Borough and to create characteristic habitats such as new woodlands, copses, hedgerows and standard trees, species-rich grassland and wood pasture. To halt and where possible reverse the degrading of the Arden landscape and promote local distinctiveness. Development should take full account of national and local guidance on protecting and restoring the landscape and the areas in need of enhancement, including guidance relating to the countryside. Developers will be expected to incorporate measures to protect, enhance and restore the landscape, unless it is demonstrated that it is not feasible, disproportionate or unnecessary.

### **Biodiversity and Geodiversity**

The Council will seek to conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity across the Borough. Protection of designated sites, ancient woodland, and priority habitats shall include the establishment of buffers to any new development so that they connect with existing and created green infrastructure assets. Development should be informed by the latest information on habitats and species, and take full account of national and local guidance on conserving biodiversity, opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and for improving and restoring the Borough's green infrastructure (especially

fragmentation of habitats). When appropriate, development should seek to enhance accessibility to the natural environment, especially for disabled people.

### **Habitat and species protection and enhancement**

The Council will protect areas of national and local importance for biodiversity and geodiversity, where it is reasonable, proportionate and feasible to do so.

#### **Sites of Special Scientific Interest:**

Development likely to have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest, whether directly or indirectly, will be subject to special scrutiny and will be permitted only if the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site and the national policy to safeguard such sites. Where development may have an adverse effect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest, developers will be expected to incorporate measures to enhance the condition of the site.

#### **Local Nature Reserve, Local Wildlife Site or Geological Site:**

Development likely to have an adverse effect on a Local Nature Reserve will be permitted only if the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation or geological value of the site and its contribution to wider biodiversity objectives. Where development would have an adverse effect on a site of local value, developers will be expected to incorporate measures to enhance the site or to restore the links between sites to improve connectivity in the ecosystem network based on local evidence.

#### **Outside Designated Sites:**

Developers will be expected to take full account of the nature conservation or geological value, and the existence of any habitats or species included in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, national S.41 list, or sites in the Local Geological Action Plan as well as the Wildlife and Countryside Act and EU Directives. Developers will be required to undertake a full ecological survey and to deliver a net gain or enhancement to biodiversity, unless it is demonstrated that it is not appropriate or feasible. In considering the need for green space improvements associated with new development, developers should have regard for the standards and priorities in the Green Spaces Strategy in relation to accessible natural green space.

#### **Mitigation hierarchy**

Where development is likely to have significant harmful effects on the natural environment, as a result of the development itself, or the cumulative impact of developments, developers must demonstrate that all possible alternatives that would result in less harm have been considered. Where development is permitted, appropriate mitigation of the impacts and compensation where

relevant will be required to deliver a net gain in biodiversity, habitat creation, landscape character and local distinctiveness. Enhancements should be undertaken either on the site, or in its vicinity, but where it is demonstrated that this is not possible, offsetting, as a last resort, in alternative strategic locations within the biodiversity or green infrastructure network, to deliver biodiversity or other objectives may be considered.

## **Policy P11 Water Management**

### **Water Quality**

All new development should have regard to the actions and objectives of the relevant River Basin Management Plan in striving to protect and improve the quality of water bodies in and adjacent to the Borough, including the Rivers Blythe and Cole and their tributaries. Developers shall undertake thorough risk assessments of the impact of proposals on surface and groundwater systems and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures where necessary. The Council will require developers to demonstrate that all proposed development will be served by appropriate sewerage infrastructure and that there is sufficient sewage treatment capacity to ensure that there is no deterioration of water quality, or that the delivery of any development will not be delayed by the need for additional water treatment provision. Drainage systems shall deploy surface features within the development site for water quality purposes, unless these are demonstrated to be unviable.

### **Water Efficiency and Disposal**

Disposal of surface water must comply with the following hierarchy:

- Recycling/reuse;
- Discharge into the ground by infiltration;
- Discharge to a surface water body or watercourse;
- Discharge to a surface water sewer, highway drain, or another drainage system;
- Discharge to a combined sewer.

### **Recycling/reuse**

The Council recognises the need for water efficiency in all new development. Developers must demonstrate the highest possible standards of water efficiency through the recycling of potable, grey water and rainwater, and the use of water

efficient fittings and appliances, in order to minimise consumption to a rate of 110 litres per person per day. Infiltration Development within areas identified as being at risk from groundwater flooding must be subject to full and careful investigation before infiltration measures are proposed, in order to minimise flood risk on the site and reduce risks elsewhere. The use of infiltration systems in areas deemed to be at risk from groundwater flooding must be agreed with the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority. Discharge to watercourse Where a developer proposes that a site discharges to a watercourse, appropriate modelling and supporting calculations must be provided to ensure sufficient receiving capacity exists. The Environment Agency must be consulted if a proposal relates to a Main River.

#### **Discharge to sewer**

Where discharge to a public sewer is proposed discharge rates must be agreed with the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, and confirmation obtained from the relevant infrastructure owner.

#### **Sustainable Drainage Systems**

All major development must include the use of sustainable drainage systems, in order to contribute towards wider sustainability considerations, including amenity, recreation, conservation of biodiversity and landscape character, as well as flood alleviation and water quality control. Minor development is expected to include the use of sustainable drainage systems unless demonstrated to be inappropriate to do so. Developers are encouraged to secure reduction of flood risk by the provision or enhancement of green infrastructure. Sustainable drainage systems must be considered for all developments at an early stage, with developers allowing for the allocation of sufficient land to accommodate an appropriate train of adequate sustainable drainage systems features that are technically appropriate for the environment in which they are to be placed. All features must be located outside of the 1 in 100 year plus climate change flood extent.

#### **Water Quantity**

On all greenfield development sites, surface water discharge rates to any drain, sewer or surface water body shall be limited to the equivalent site specific greenfield run off rate. For brownfield or previously developed sites, surface water discharge rates to any drain, sewer or surface water body shall be as close as reasonably practicable to the greenfield runoff rate from the development, taking account of the capacity of any existing drainage system, but must not exceed the rate of discharge from the development prior to redevelopment.

Where it is proposed to discharge runoff at rates greater than greenfield rates, developers will be required to demonstrate why it is not feasible to achieve

greenfield rates and to secure agreement from the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority.

In all cases, the greenfield runoff rate shall be agreed with the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, the Environment Agency, Severn Trent Water and the Canal and River Trust, as appropriate. The greenfield runoff rate should take into account the 1 in 1 year, 1 in 30 year and 1 in 100 year rainfall events, including climate change allowances.

### **Flood Risk Reduction**

Developers shall explore opportunities to contribute towards the objectives of relevant Catchment Flood Management Plans and Flood Risk Management Plans. Development must promote the reduction of flood risk by seeking to reinstate the natural floodplain, and the de-culverting and improvement of on-site watercourses. Development should be set back from any watercourse, whether culverted or not, in agreement with the Council as Lead Local Flood Authority, so as to provide an easement for maintenance purposes.

New development will not normally be permitted within areas at risk of flooding. Where it is clearly demonstrated that there are no other viable sites at lower risk of flooding, consideration will be given to development in such locations, providing that it is designed to be safe from the effects of flooding and will minimise flood risk on the site and reduce risks elsewhere. Applications for new development where there is a flood risk issue must be accompanied by a site specific flood risk assessment.

Developers must demonstrate that the layout and design of a development, including the finished floor levels, and the drainage system take account of both fluvial and surface water flows in extreme events so as to avoid flooding of properties, both within and outside the site.

All developments should not detrimentally impact upon existing and planned flood risk management schemes including ensuring land identified for flood storage is safeguarded. Developers are required to contribute towards the cost of planned flood risk management schemes through Section 106 or Community Infrastructure Levy charging schedules. All new developments that benefit from existing flood risk management schemes should contribute towards their on-going maintenance.

### **Policy P14 Amenity**

The Council will seek a good standard of amenity for all existing and future occupiers of houses, businesses and other uses in considering proposals for new development, extensions and changes of use and will:

- Permit development only if secures high quality design (see Policy P15);
- Consider the visual and other amenities of potential occupiers and users of new developments close to overhead power lines and substations. Developers will be expected to locate and design new developments so as to minimise the visual and other amenity impacts;
- Support the development of electronic communications networks including telecommunications and high speed broadband, whilst also seeking to keep the numbers of radio and telecommunications installations to a minimum consistent with the efficient operation of the network.

The Council will have regard to the needs of telecommunications operators, any technical constraints on location of telecommunications apparatus, the potential for sharing sites and other existing tall buildings and structures, the impact of development on its surroundings, the sensitivity of the environment and the design and external appearance of telecommunications apparatus. In considering proposals for new sites or equipment, developers will be expected to demonstrate that there are no other technically suitable locations or design solutions that meet operational requirements and cause less environmental harm;

- Safeguard important trees, hedgerows and woodlands, and will require new and replacement tree and hedgerow planting; and, where appropriate, new woodlands;
- Ensure development that would contribute to air pollution, either directly or indirectly does not have a significant adverse impact on local air quality resulting in unacceptable effects on human health, local amenity and the natural environment, and that it incorporates appropriate attenuation, mitigation or compensatory measures where necessary;
- Require proposals for development on land known or suspected to be contaminated to include appropriate information to enable the potential implications to be assessed and to incorporate any necessary remediation;
- Require design features and operational measures to minimise and contain noise from developments and protect existing residential development from background noise. Where development adjoins other buildings or structures, developers will be required to demonstrate that as far as reasonably practicable, developments will be designed and operated to prevent the transmission of audible noise or perception of vibration through the fabric of the building or structure to adjoining properties;

- Protect the amenity of residential and shopping areas, community facilities and open space from bad neighbour uses. Development that would be significantly harmful because of smell, noise or atmospheric pollution will not be permitted, whilst development that would be potentially harmful to such areas will be expected to incorporate appropriate attenuation, mitigation or compensatory measures. In locations close to existing bad neighbour uses, the Council will not permit new residential or other sensitive development, unless the effects can be satisfactorily mitigated as part of the development;
- Safeguard those parts of the countryside in the Borough that retain an intrinsically dark sky from the impacts of light pollution; and
- Protect the tranquil and locally distinctive areas in the Borough by guiding new development to locations that will avoid or minimise adverse impacts.

## **10. Promoting Quality of Place**

### **Policy P15 Securing Design Quality**

All development proposals will be expected to contribute to, or create, high quality places and spaces which have regard to local distinctiveness to achieve high quality, inclusive and sustainable design. Proposals will be expected to meet the following key principles:

- Conserves and enhances local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality and ensures that the scale, massing, density, layout, territory (including space between buildings), materials and landscape of the development respect the surrounding natural, built and historic environment;
- Secures the sustainable long-term use of new development through flexible, robust and future-proofed design and layout;
- Makes appropriate provision for water management within development, and provides innovative design solutions for all development;
- Be proactive in responding to climate change and adopts sustainable and low carbon construction principles in terms of their design, layout and density, meeting the requirements of Approved Document M of the Building Regulations, or subsequent equivalent;
- Conserves, restores or enhances biodiversity;
- Respects and enhances landscape quality, including trees, hedgerows and other landscape features of value, and contributes to strategic green infrastructure;
- Creates attractive, safe, active, legible and uncluttered streets and public spaces which are accessible, inter-connected and easily maintained, and encourages

walking and cycling and reduces crime and the fear of crime through the adoption of Secured by Design principles in all developments. All residential development proposals shall demonstrate how they meet Building for Life 10, or its equivalent. All developments should comply with the urban design principles set out in established current design guidance, including at present; Urban Design Compendium 1 and 2 (2007), By Design (2000 and 2001), Manual for Streets 1 (2007) and 2 (2010), Car Parking: What Works Where (2006), Building for Life 10 and Secured by Design principles, or their equivalents, and the adopted SPG New Housing in Context.

Applicants are encouraged to engage in pre-application discussions at an early stage in the design process and will be required to demonstrate that they have followed the robust Assessment-Involvement-Evaluation-Design process outlined in the national guidance on Design and Access Statements. Major development proposals are required to demonstrate how the local community has been consulted and engaged in the design process, in accordance with the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement. Significant development proposals will also be encouraged to engage with and be reviewed through the Regional Design Review process (MADE).

#### **Policy P16 Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness**

The Council recognises the importance of the historic environment to the Borough's local character and distinctiveness, and to civic pride, and the cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits that its conservation brings. Heritage assets are an irreplaceable resource that should be conserved as appropriate to their significance, sustained and enhanced, and put to viable use consistent with their conservation. The Council considers that the following characteristics make a significant contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the Borough:

- The historic core of Solihull Town Centre and its adjacent parks;
- The historical development and variety of architectural styles within the Mature Suburbs and the larger established rural settlements of Meriden, Hampton-in-Arden, Balsall Common, Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath Hockley Heath, Cheswick Green and Tidbury Green;
- The Arden landscape, historic villages, hamlets, farmsteads, country and lesser houses and the distinct medieval core of historic rural settlements including Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Meriden Hill, Walsal End, Hampton-in-Arden, Bickenhill and Knowle;
- Parks, gardens and landscape including common, woodland, heathland and distinctive fieldscapes as defined in the Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation; and

- The canal and railway network, including disused railway lines and the working stations at Solihull, Olton, Dorridge and Shirley, together with associated structures.

Development proposals that impact upon this character and significance will be expected to demonstrate how this impact has been assessed and minimised, using a recognised process of assessment, involvement, evaluation and design. Development will be expected to conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, conserve local character and distinctiveness, create or sustain a sense of place and seek and take opportunities to enhance the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place. In Solihull, heritage assets include; Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and also non-designated assets. The latter include buildings, monuments, archaeological sites, places, areas or landscapes positively identified in Solihull's Historic Environment Record, or during development management work as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, such as those identified on the Local List of Heritage Assets. The historic landscape includes ancient woodlands, hedgerows and field boundaries, and archaeological features such as earthworks.

All applications that affect the historic environment will be expected to have considered and used, as a minimum the evidence in the Solihull Historic Environment Record to inform the design of the proposal. Heritage assets should be assessed using further sources and appropriate expertise where necessary. This should be explained in the accompanying Design and Access Statement or, for significant proposals, in a Heritage Statement.

Proposals seeking to modify heritage assets for the mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of climate change will be expected to be sympathetic and conserve the special interest and significance of the heritage asset or its setting.

### **Policy P17 Countryside and Green Belt**

The Council will safeguard the “best and most versatile” agricultural land in the Borough unless there is an overriding need for development that outweighs the loss, and will seek to protect the character of the countryside. Inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Solihull Green Belt, unless very special circumstances have been demonstrated in accordance with the NPPF. Paragraphs 89 and 90 of the NPPF set out forms of development that are not regarded as inappropriate. In interpreting these paragraphs the following provisions will apply:

- Limited in-filling or redevelopment may take place in the following settlements without constituting an inappropriate development:
  - o Chadwick End

o Cheswick Green

o Millison's Wood

o Tidbury Green

- Limited infilling in villages shall be interpreted as the filling of a small gap within an otherwise built up frontage with not more than two dwellings.
- Disproportionate additions shall be interpreted as additions that are more than 40% of the original floorspace of the building.
- Where the re-use of buildings or land is proposed, the new use, and any associated use of land surrounding the building, should not conflict with, nor have a materially greater impact on, the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, and the form, bulk and general design of the buildings shall be in keeping with their surroundings. In considering proposals for inappropriate development in the Green Belt, the following factors may be taken into account as very special circumstances:
  - The reasonable expansion of established businesses into the Green Belt will be allowed where the proposal would make a significant contribution to the local economy or employment, providing that appropriate mitigation can be secured.
  - Changes of use to accommodate outdoor sport and recreation uses provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt.
  - Changes of use to accommodate natural burial grounds provided they preserve the openness of the Green Belt.

Development within or conspicuous from the Green Belt must not harm the visual amenity of the Green Belt by reason of siting, materials or design.

## **11 Health and Supporting Local Communities**

### **Policy P18 Health and Wellbeing**

The Council will, with its partners, create an environment, which supports positive health outcomes and reduces inequality. New development proposals will be expected to promote, support and enhance physical and mental health and wellbeing. Healthy lifestyles will be enabled by:

- Facilitating opportunities for formal and informal physical activity, exercise opportunities, recreation and play through access to well maintained open spaces;
- Contributing to and creating a high quality, inclusive and attractive environment which minimise and mitigate against potential harm from risks such as pollution

and obesogenic environments, and promoting health and well-being & opportunities for social interaction;

- Increasing opportunities for walking, cycling and encouraging more sustainable travel choices.
- Improving the quality and access to the strategic and local green infrastructure network in the Borough, particularly in the North Solihull Regeneration Area and in areas where accessible green spaces and infrastructure is identified as lacking.
- Supporting the retention and protection of facilities which promote healthy lifestyles such as open space, including public rights of way to open space, playing pitches and allotments;
- Supporting safe and inclusive design that discourage crime and anti-social behaviour, and encourage social cohesion.
- Delivering new and improved health services and facilities in areas accessed by sustainable transport modes (facilities for primary medical care should be identified and planned for);
- Supporting initiatives which enable or improve access to healthy food. For example, provide opportunities for growing local produce and encouraging people to make healthy food choices;
- Encouraging initiatives to promote the energy efficiency of housing;
- Seeking to retain and enhance, where appropriate, green spaces and incorporate planting, trees, open spaces and soft surfaces wherever possible in order to secure a variety of spaces for residents, visitors or employees to use and observe and;
- Resisting proposals for hot food takeaways being located in areas that could lead to an undue influence on poor diet choices.

### **Health Impact Assessments**

Formal consideration of health impacts through the use of Health Impact Assessments will provide opportunity to maximise positive impacts of the proposed development and minimise potential adverse impacts. For significant developments, such as large scale housing sites and significant commercial developments, a Health Impact Assessment should be submitted. The Council will develop an HIA tool to assist developers to assess the impacts of a proposal and recommend measures to address negative impacts and maximise benefits. The tool will include measures to assist scoping a more comprehensive assessment for the particularly significant and complex proposals and will be based upon a

principle of proportionality to the nature and scale of development being proposed.

### **Policy P19 Range and Quality of Local Services**

#### **New Convenience Shops**

New convenience shops within existing communities or as part of new development will be encouraged provided they are of an appropriate scale and enhance the public realm.

#### **Other Community and Social Infrastructure**

Proposals which result in the loss of community and social infrastructure, without appropriate alternative provision, will not be supported, unless it has been demonstrated that there is no reasonable prospect of the use being retained.

### **Policy P20 Provision for Open Space, Childrens Play, Sport, Recreation and Leisure**

#### **A Existing public open space, children’s play, sports and recreational facilities:**

The Council will support proposals which will contribute towards the enhancement of existing recreational facilities; children’s play and open space. Existing facilities that are of value to the local community for recreation, visual amenity, nature conservation or that make an important contribution to the quality of the environment or network of green infrastructure will be protected, unless:

- it can be evidenced clearly that the open space or facilities are surplus to requirements and are no longer required to meet local need
- the proposed development provides equivalent or better replacement open space, sport, or recreation facilities in size, quality and accessibility within an accessible location for existing and potential new users; or
- the development results in a substantial community benefit that clearly outweighs the harm resulting from the loss of the existing open space/facilities. Where existing provision is not being protected then the Council will require appropriate compensatory measures. Enhancement of open space or buildings shall be in accordance with Policy P15 – Securing Design Quality and Policy P10 – Natural Environment.

The Council supports the principle of designating land as Local Green Space, including designation within Neighbourhood Plans. Where designation would be appropriate, necessary and where the open space meets the criteria outlined in national guidance.

**B Provision of new public open space, children’s play, sports and recreational facilities:**

The Council will seek to secure well-designed new and improved open space and their maintenance as an integral part of new residential (including care homes), commercial (over 1ha or 1,000 sqm) or mixed use development.

New housing developments will be required to provide or contribute towards new open spaces or the improvement of existing provision in the area, unless financial unviability is clearly demonstrated. In areas where an existing local open space provision shortfall is identified, new or improved provision to accommodate the needs of the new and existing population should accord with the local standards and priorities for action outlined in the adopted Green Spaces Strategy (reviewed 2014) and future revisions, the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy and Green Infrastructure Study. Where the minimum standard for children’s play and youth facilities is already met, developments will be expected to provide additional enhancements as a result of development.

To ensure a high quality living environment for all new residential development, including supported housing schemes [for the elderly and those with disabilities], provision should be made for on-site amenity space that is well designed and in accordance with Policy P15 – Securing Design Quality. Proposals for family housing will be expected to provide opportunities for safe children’s play in accordance with the Design for Play and the Free Play Network’s 10 Design Principles.

**C Provision of new indoor sports and leisure facilities**

The Council will support proposals for new or improved sports and leisure facilities providing that the development:

- Addresses any shortfall in provision outlined in relevant Council strategies and policies (e.g. the Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy or the adopted Green Spaces Strategy (reviewed 2014));
- Reflects the ‘town centre first’ principle outlined in national guidance and is of a scale and size appropriate to the hierarchy of Town Centres as defined in Policies P1 – Support Economic Success, P2 – Maintain Strong Competitive Town Centres, and P19 – Range and Quality of Local Services;
- Is situated within an accessible location as defined in Policy P7 – Accessibility, where the development is easily accessible to the local community and is well served, or is capable of being well served, by public transport, walking and cycling; and

- Accords with Policies P14 & P17. Subject to the above criteria, the Council will support proposals for shared sports facilities at educational centres, where the facility also serves the local area.

**D Waterways**

The Council will support proposals that encourage greater recreational and leisure use and enhancement of the river and canal network providing that the development safeguards the historic and natural environment and purposes of the Green Belt, in accordance with Policies P10 – Natural Environment, P16 – Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness and P17 – Countryside and Green Belt.

**The Schedule of Allocated Housing Sites and Site Plans are provided in Appendix C:**

C. Schedule of Allocated Housing Sites											
LPR Ref (SHELAA Refs <sup>41</sup> )	Site Name	Area	Green Belt	Site Area (ha)	Site Capacity <sup>42</sup>	Delivery years			Site constraints	Reasons and Conditions	Likely Infrastructure Requirements
						1-5	6-10	11-15			
1 (1002 – inc. 33 & 102; and 1016 – inc. 30, 196 & 236) <sup>43</sup>	Barratt's Farm	Balsall Common	Yes	57	800	✓	✓	✓	Includes existing park. Listed buildings to edge of site. Area of search for coal.	Scores better in accessibility terms than western edge of Balsall Common due to proximity to railway station and access to main town centre services.  Cumulative Green Belt score of 5, compared to 7 along north-western edge.  Need to respect historic setting of listed buildings.  Excludes area of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in SHELAA Ref. 33.  Coal is deep underground resource that is unlikely to be affected by surface development in this location.	Integrate highway access with Station Road. Highway capacity improvements at Station Road and junction with A452. Improvement to passenger waiting facilities at Berkswell Station. Requires multiple points of vehicular access. Potential for bypass line. Pedestrian and cycling connectivity enhancements towards Balsall Common centre and Berkswell train station. Bus service improvements. Provision of, or contribution to, existing play area/parks and open space. Integration of green infrastructure connectivity with wider countryside and LWS to south of Waste Lane. Increased primary and secondary school

<sup>41</sup> SHELAA reference numbers have been included where they are wholly or partly within the area indicated for allocation. Scores are based on the draft technical assessment and are not definitive. S= Suitability, Av= Availability, Ac= Achievability scores. 1 = deliverable; 2 = developable and 3 = not currently developable within first 10 years of plan period.

<sup>42</sup> Rounded to the nearest 50.

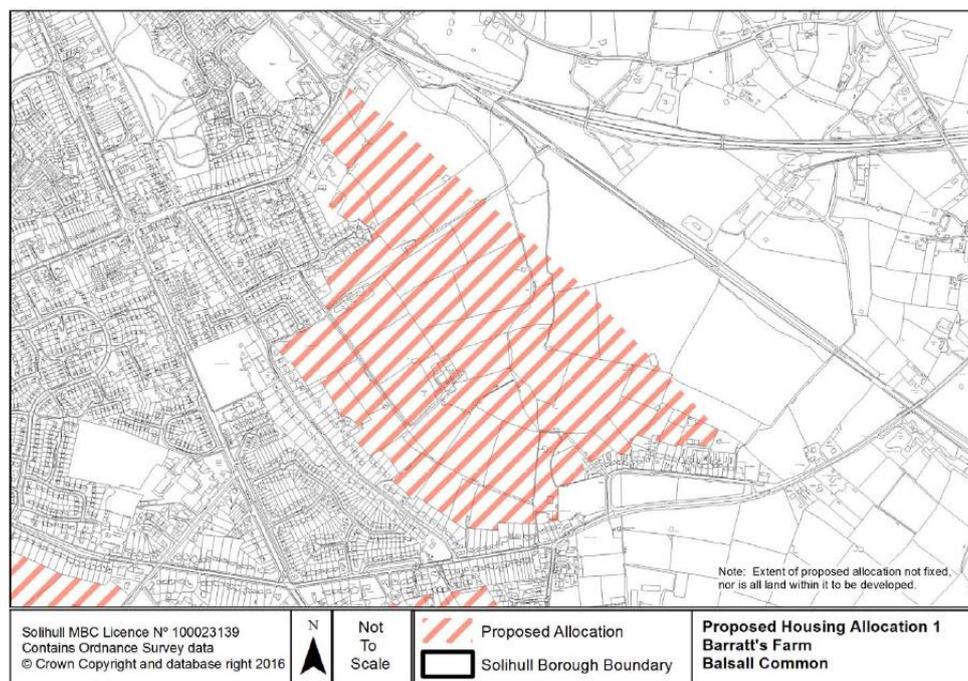
<sup>43</sup> SHELAA 1002: S=2, Av=1, Ac=1.  
SHELAA 1016: S=1, Av=1, Ac=2.

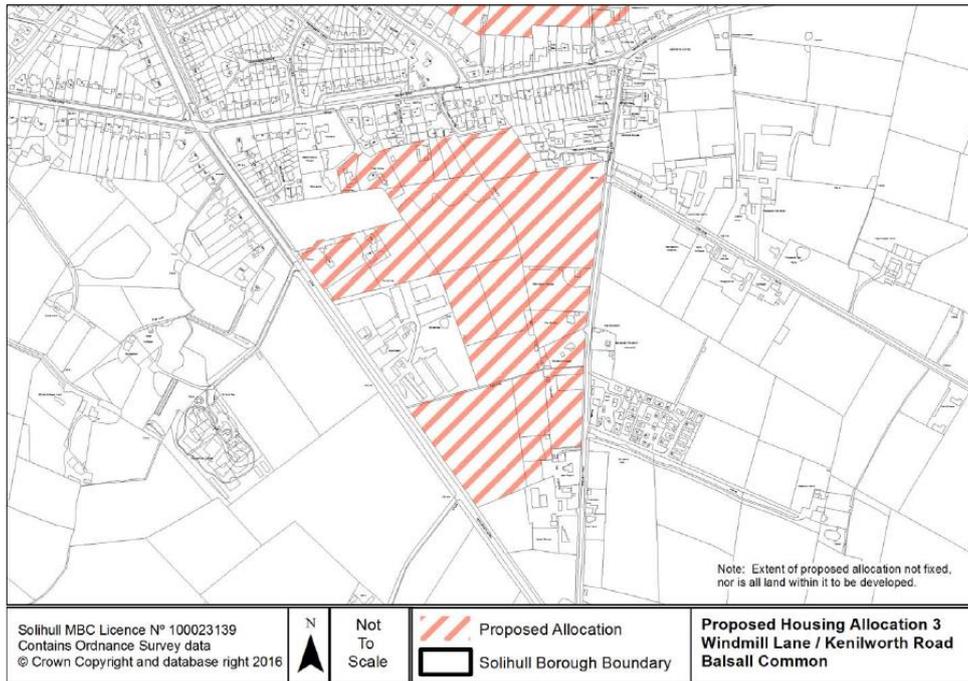
LPR Ref (SHELAA Refs <sup>41</sup> )	Site Name	Area	Green Belt	Site Area (ha)	Site Capacity <sup>42</sup>	Delivery years			Site constraints	Reasons and Conditions	Likely Infrastructure Requirements
						1-5	6-10	11-15			
											provision or new school. SUDs. Local healthcare facilities. 50% affordable housing.

LPR Ref (SHELAA Refs <sup>41</sup> )	Site Name	Area	Green Belt	Site Area (ha)	Site Capacity <sup>42</sup>	Delivery years			Site constraints	Reasons and Conditions	Likely Infrastructure Requirements
						1-5	6-10	11-15			
3 (47, 138) <sup>43</sup>	Windmill Lane/ Kenilworth Road	Balsall Common	Yes	11	200	✓			Area of search for coal.  Listed building to east of site, 'The Windmill'.	Cumulative Green Belt score of 4.  Generally accessible for bus services and primary school, but lower for fresh food and GPs.  Coal is deep underground resource that is unlikely to be affected by surface development in this location.	Highway, access and capacity improvements on Kenilworth Road, A452.  Pedestrian and cycling connectivity enhancements towards Balsall Common.  Bus service improvements and primary school and village centre.  Possible secondary access on Windmill Lane.  Provision of, or contribution to, existing play area/parks and open space.  Integration of green infrastructure connectivity with wider countryside.  Increased primary and secondary school provision.  SUDs.  Local healthcare facilities.  50% affordable housing.

440. The plans that follow show the approximate extent of the intended allocation, but at this stage it should be noted that the boundaries are not fixed and further work will be undertaken on the options to be taken forward and included in the submission version of the plan.

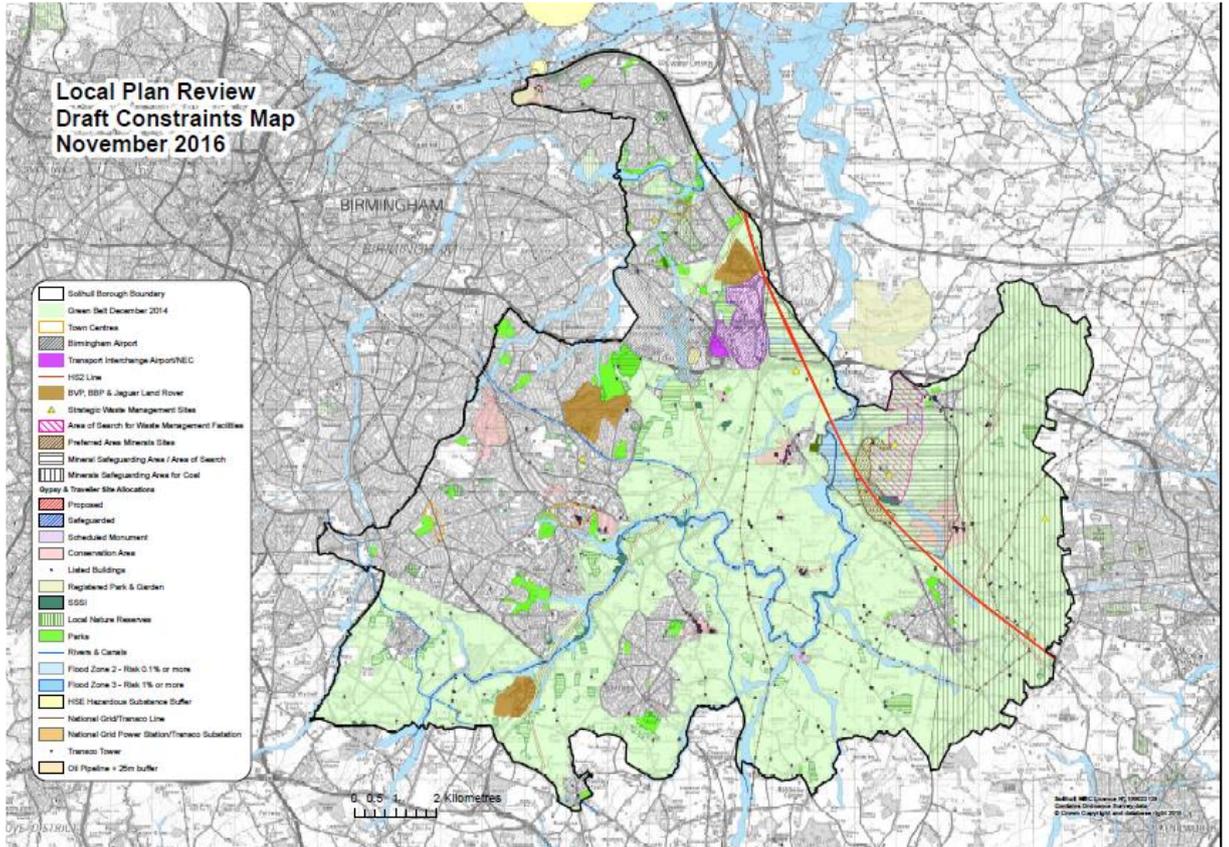
441. Nor does the inclusion of a particular parcel of land within the allocated area mean that it is to be developed. In some instances the plans represent the area of land to be removed from the Green Belt, and to create logical defensible boundaries will mean that some existing buildings/uses that are not intended to be redeveloped will be removed from the Green Belt.





## 4.0 Local Plan Evidence Base<sup>10</sup>

### Local Plan Constraints Map



<sup>10</sup> <http://www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr/evidence>

## 4.1 Housing

### Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future Solihull Local Plan Review Draft Local Plan: Topic Papers December 2016

#### 16. Housing Need by mix, type & tenure

Link to OAN

202. The PBA SHMA 2016 Part 2 findings identify that of the 14,268 dwellings, 3,831 need to be affordable (26.9%) and these should be of the tenures of shared ownership and rented (both social and affordable) to meet the identified need for affordable housing taking into account the borough’s circumstances.

203. The conclusions of the SHMA is that this proportion of new housing as affordable is achievable in Solihull and can be met within the OAN identified by the PBA SHMA study 2016 and no adjustment is required to this figure. The Council agrees with this conclusion.

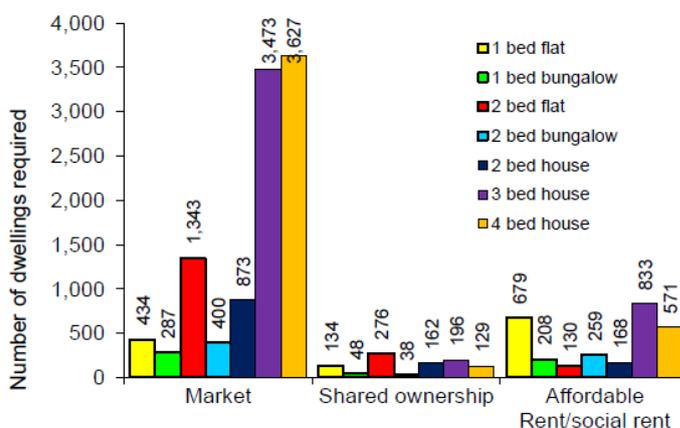
#### Breaking down the Borough's housing needs (PBA SHMA Part 2 findings)

204. The SHMA Part 2 breaks down the boroughs housing need by bedroom size, type of dwelling and tenure.

205. This highlights that of the 3,831 affordable dwellings for Solihull, 2,848 should be rented and 983 shared ownership dwellings.

206. The boroughs housing need by bedroom size, type of dwelling and tenure is shown in Figure 6.1 in the SHMA part 2 and is the requirement for all new housing between 2014 and 2033. This table is replicated below.

This table is replicated below.



### **Specialist accommodation**

233. Solihull has an ageing population and this is associated with higher levels of disability and health problems. There is an increasing need to provide more accommodation for local older people and in particular for the very frail elderly. The number of people aged 65 and over in Solihull is projected to increase from 43,000 to 58,000 by 2033 and the number of people aged over 85 from 6,000 to 12,000.

234. There is a need for more affordable homes which are suitable for local older people and those with disabilities. There is also market demand for specialist and supported housing and homes which can provide opportunities for local households to 'downsize', thereby releasing family housing

### **Rural Exception Sites**

250. Policy 4(b) responds to the identified need in some parish areas of providing affordable housing for people with a local connection to the parish or neighbourhood area and the importance of development in helping to sustain local community services.

251. The policy supports the provision of affordable housing where there is evidence of need that cannot be met through affordable housing provision on an allocated housing site. The provision of affordable housing developments to meet the needs of people with a local connection to the Parish or neighbourhood will be supported on green belt land. The policy will ensure that the most suitable site in the village is used as outlined in the Parish or Neighbourhood Plan. All sites will be assessed for their accessibility to services and facilities, the impact of development on the Green Belt and environmental considerations.

## **Solihull Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment 2016 Volume A: Main Report**

### **Executive Summary**

The Council is currently preparing a Review of the Local Plan and requires a SHELAA to ensure that there is sufficient land for housing and economic development in the Borough to cover the plan period 2014 to 2033. The SHELAA covers the entire area within the administrative boundary of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, and has been undertaken in full compliance with the National Planning Policy Framework of March 2012 and the Planning Practice Guidance of March 2014.

## **Summary of Findings**

### **Housing**

.... It is important to emphasise that 150 of the 167 sites assessed in the SHELAA for housing are either wholly or predominantly contained within the currently designated Green Belt. If theoretical supply from units within the Green Belt is removed from the assessment, only 1,090 units could be delivered from land which is currently not within the Green Belt. On the basis of our assessment, it will therefore be necessary to release some Green Belt land to meet the Borough's housing requirements. The release of Green Belt land is beyond the scope of a SHELAA however and will need to be considered through the plan preparation process.

### **Solihull Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment 2016 Volume B: Appendices**

Sets out site assessment criteria and site overview.

## **4.2 Natural Environment**

### **Green Belt**

#### **Solihull Strategic Green Belt Assessment Assessment Report JULY 2016**

##### **01 Introduction**

This Assessment:

- Assesses the extent to which land designated as Green Belt in Solihull performs against the purposes of Green Belt as set out in Paragraph 80 of the NPPF; and
- Will form the basis for more detailed assessment of Green Belt land within Solihull.

##### **04 Assessment Findings**

Broad Area 4 forms the eastern portion of the borough at its boundary with Coventry to the east and North Warwickshire Borough Council to the north. The area covers a large part of the strategic Meriden Gap between the major urban areas of Birmingham and Solihull to the west and Coventry to the east. The Broad Area also contains the Berkswell Conservation Area. The Area performs highly against all 4 purposes and makes an equal contribution to the preservation of the Meriden strategic gap and the setting and character of Berkswell Conservation Area. There are clear views from within the Broad Area of Saint John the Baptist Parish Church, Church of England Primary School, the Bear Inn, The Malt House and Village Farm.

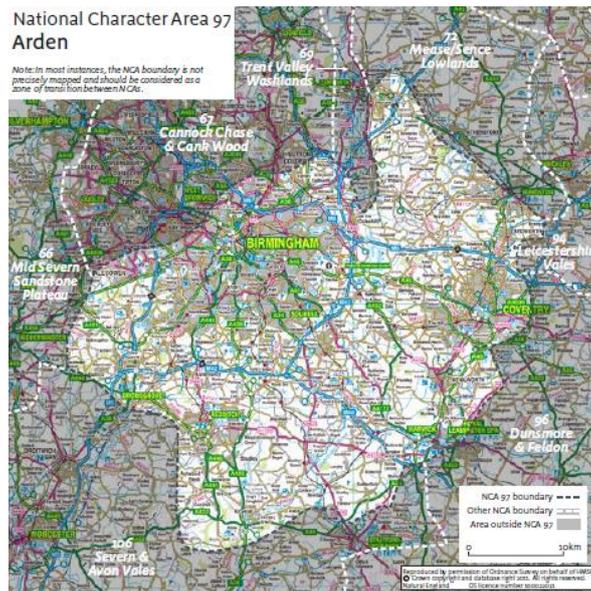


Broad Area 4

## Landscape

### Natural England National Character Areas<sup>11</sup>

Natural England has produced profiles for England's 159 National Character Areas (NCAs). These are areas that share similar landscape characteristics, and which follow natural lines in the landscape rather than administrative boundaries, making them a good decision-making framework for the natural environment. Berkswell lies within NCA 97. Arden.



## Summary

Arden comprises farmland and former wood-pasture lying to the south and east of Birmingham, including part of the West Midlands conurbation. Traditionally regarded as the land lying between the River Tame and the River Avon in Warwickshire, the Arden landscape also extends into north Worcestershire to abut the Severn and Avon Vales. To the north and northeast it drops down to the open landscape of the Mease/Sence Lowlands. The eastern part of the NCA abuts and surrounds Coventry, with the fringes of Warwick and Stratford-upon-Avon to the south.

This NCA has higher ground to the west, the Clent and Lickey Hills and to the east, the Nuneaton ridge. The landscape of the lower lying central area is gently rolling with small fragmented semi-natural and ancient woodlands. Mature oaks set in hedgerows, distinctive field boundaries, historic parklands and narrow river corridors are key features, all on the doorstep of a heavily urbanised area.

<sup>11</sup> <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4743624?category=587130>

Land use throughout the area is mainly, residential, agricultural and industrial including coal mining, which is still active in the north-east of the NCA. Numerous transport corridors; road, rail, air and canal run through the area. There is likely to be increased development and greater pressure upon the existing infrastructure, particularly around Birmingham, Coventry and the main towns. This pressure could lead to the creation of new green infrastructure linking the urban areas out into the more rural areas.

This NCA is among the most geologically diverse. This has had a strong impact on the landscape's character and development and is further reflected in the range of locally and nationally important geological assets across the NCA. There are also many local biodiversity assets and strong cultural links with William Shakespeare and his 'Forest of Arden'.

**Solihull Borough Landscape Character Assessment  
for  
Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council 2016**

The LCA has identified ten broad landscape character areas within the Borough and within three of these broad Landscape Character Areas, sub-areas are also defined. Each area and sub-area is then finalised with judgements about landscape character sensitivity, visual sensitivity and the overall general capacity to accept development and change.

5. Borough Wide Landscape Guidelines

**Residential Development:**

5.7. The Solihull Local Plan (2013) and Local Plan Review (2016) sets out the policies and proposals to enable the Borough to grow and develop.

5.8. There is considerable demand for housing in the Borough resulting in development pressure for new residential areas. The area has strong economic assets, strategic transport infrastructure and a high quality environment making the Borough a desirable place in which to live, work and invest. As a result, there is continued development pressure on in the Borough particularly within the M42 Corridor, the Solihull urban fringes, villages in rural areas and the Green Belt.

5.9. In rural areas mature oak trees add a distinct quality to the landscape character of the area where they often form tree-lined streets in the mature suburb areas. Large front gardens also contribute to the leafy and Arcadian nature of some of these areas.

5.10. Building styles are a contributing factor to the landscape character and local distinctiveness between areas with varied styles that often impact positively on overall character. In contrast, modern buildings in rural villages and open countryside can sometimes appear incongruous.

*Guidelines*

- Housing location, design and layout should respect local character.
- New development should conserve and enhance local character in terms of its distinctiveness and streetscape quality to ensure the scale, massing, density, layout, materials and landscape of development respects the surrounding natural, built and historic environment.
- Development should aim to retain existing landscape features which help define the character of areas, such as hedgerows, hedgerow trees, parkland trees and field patterns.
- It is beneficial for landscape works for new development sites to be considered in the early stages of design, to help integrate the development with its setting.
- Buildings should be well sited in relation to other features including tree cover and landform.
- New development should integrate the natural environment through the provision of gardens, quality open space and green infrastructure.
- Villages and settlement in the Borough have a distinct identity as a result of their historic origins and setting.
- It is important to maintain the identity of existing settlement and to avoid breaching the well-defined settlement edges.
- Careful selection of building materials utilising different textures and colour can add interest and break up the mass of larger buildings.
- Where new buildings are required they should be located in association with existing farmsteads and settlement across the area and located so as not to require new access arrangements.

**Lighting:**

5.11. Inappropriate lighting in the countryside can impact considerably on landscape character and experience of the landscape. Lighting in the countryside can be disruptive to residents and ecology. The NPPG includes guidance on light pollution and notes that artificial light has the potential to become what is termed 'light pollution' or 'obtrusive light' and not all modern lighting is suitable in all locations.

### **Guidelines**

- Lighting for new developments should be assessed and considered where appropriate particularly when submitting landscape proposals in support of planning applications.
- Areas of the countryside in the Borough that retain a dark sky from the impacts of light pollution should be protected.
- Limiting the hours lighting is used, the use of down lights and minimising output should be considered as part of the landscape scheme.
- Lighting schemes should be designed to the safe minimum requirements for the purposes of the development.
- Care should be taken when designing lighting schemes to ensure that appropriate products are chosen and that their location to reduce spill light and glare has been fully considered.

### **Forestry and Woodland:**

5.20. Historically, the Solihull countryside formed part of a huge area (Arden) of wood pasture, from the thirteenth century this comprised the deliberate preservation of woodland in Arden for cropping. It is also known that pollarding was used to prevent animals grazing the land.

The Domesday Book indicates that 19% of Warwickshire was covered by woodland and that it was predominantly found in areas to the north of the county. Much of the woodland has now been cleared and the landscape character is predominantly agricultural across the Borough.

5.21. Today there are many mature hedgerow oaks, patches of ancient woodland and parks containing the remnants of wood pasture. The woodlands themselves range from 20th century plantations to species-rich ancient woodlands.

Some of the woodlands contain important populations of lichens and fungi. Oak and ash wood with bracken, bramble and dog's mercury are also particularly distinctive.

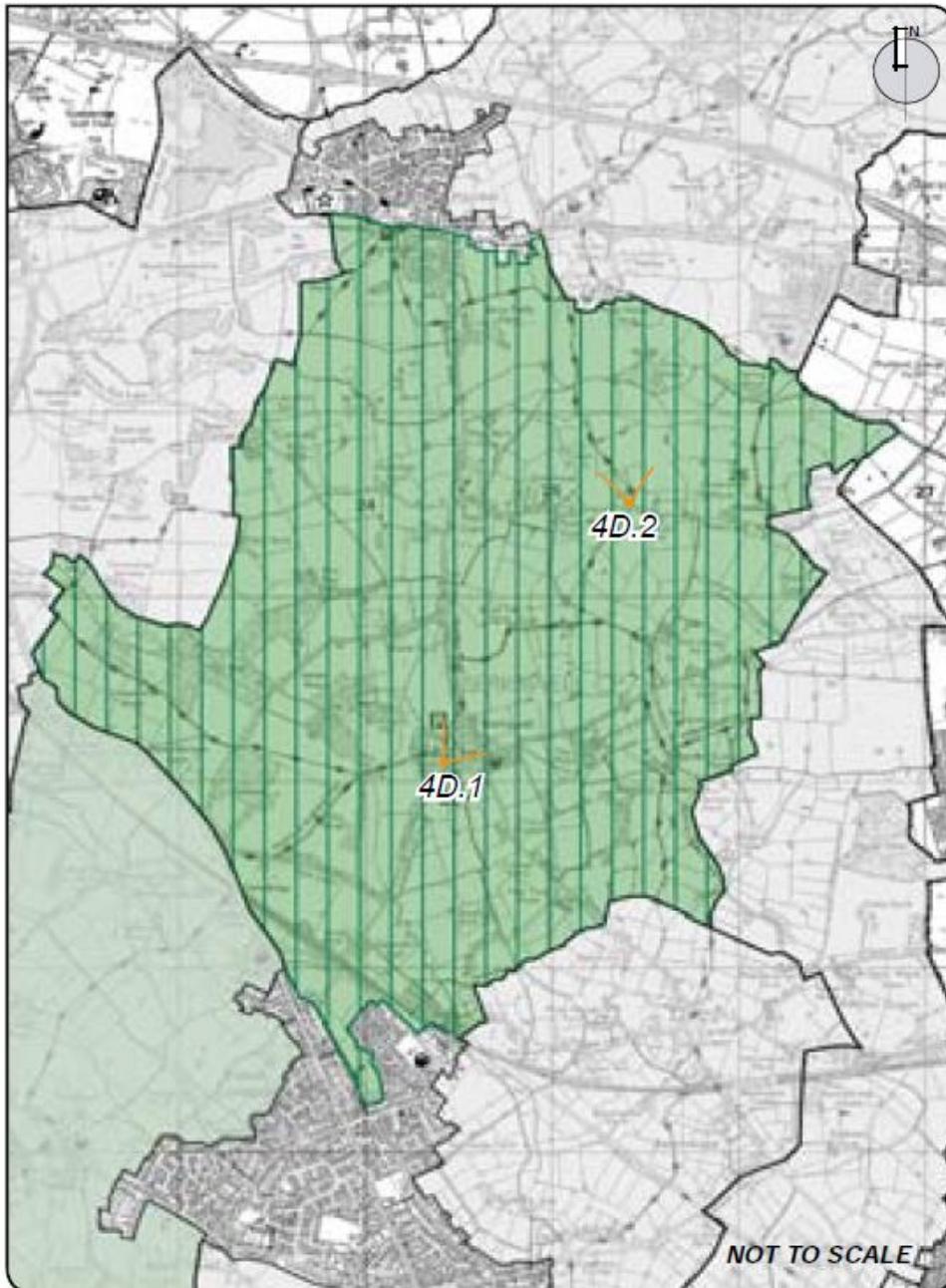
### **Guidelines**

- Individual oaks, veteran trees and ancient woodland should be preserved.
- New woodland planting should be compliant in design with the pattern and scale of the surrounding landscape.
- Broadleaved planting should be encouraged within new plantations and favour oak as the primary tree species.

- The removal of hedgerows, including those along footpaths, bridleways and woodland edges should be avoided and the management of hedgerows should be promoted.

**Berkswell falls within Landscape Character Areas 4 Rural Centre, Sub Area 4D, 5 Balsall Common Eastern Fringe and 6 Eastern Fringe**

**Sub Area 4D**



**Description:**

This sub-area is situated in the north-eastern extent of LCA 4: Rural Centre. It extends to Meriden in the north and the A452 forms the southern boundary. The area supports a rolling landscape comprising pastoral and arable fields, deciduous woodland and conifer plantations. The settlement of Berkswell lies at the heart of the area and is designated the Berkswell Conservation Area. The western extent of the sub-area is safeguarded as an area for mineral extraction and the eastern extent as an area of search for coal which may impact negatively on the landscape character of the sub-area in the long term.

There is a well-established network of roads generally running in an east-west direction with Berkswell Road providing the spinal north-south connectivity across the area. The Birmingham to Coventry railway line also passes across the southern extent and the presence of an intricate network of public footpaths and bridleways including the Heart of England Way, Coventry Way and Millennium Way (long distance trails) ensures that the sub-area is accessible and has good recreational value. Lavender Hall Fishery located within the south-eastern extent provides additional recreational amenity within the area.

**Key Characteristics:**

- Small to medium sized fields, boarded by field ditches and hedgerows, supporting pastoral and arable use, generally with a well wooded background.
- Strong hedgerow structure of varying condition, many with mature hedgerow trees.
- Oak and ash are the two dominant species in the sub-area. Poplar shelterbelts are also present adding to the wooded character of the area.
- The approach to Berkswell from the east is well treed and Berkswell Conservation Area is well preserved. The newer buildings within the historical core of the settlement are well integrated into their landscape setting.
- Red brick buildings and render are typical of the vernacular in the sub-area. Large ornamental gates are present particularly along Back Lane and seem incongruous with the rural landscape character. Farm house conversion to residential use is also evident.
- The lanes tend to be narrow and winding with high hedgerows such as Baulk Lane and a number of roads are lined with mature trees and grass verges. The presence of bracken within the hedges banks along Back Lane are also a key characteristic.

**Overall Landscape Sensitivity:**

***Landscape Character Sensitivity:***

- The Landscape Character Sensitivity of the sub-area is considered to be *High*.
- The sub-area has clear legibility with a broad road network and consistent field pattern. This is an attractive landscape with distinct landscape features including the historical settlement of Berkswell, the rolling landform and strong hedgerow structure. The landscape is intact and although this area has a complex road network this does not conflict with the field pattern. The landscape varies in condition from good to fair. There are a few detractors including electricity pylons to the north, construction noise and presence of HGVs to the west being in close proximity to the employment/commercial areas within the adjoining LCA 8.

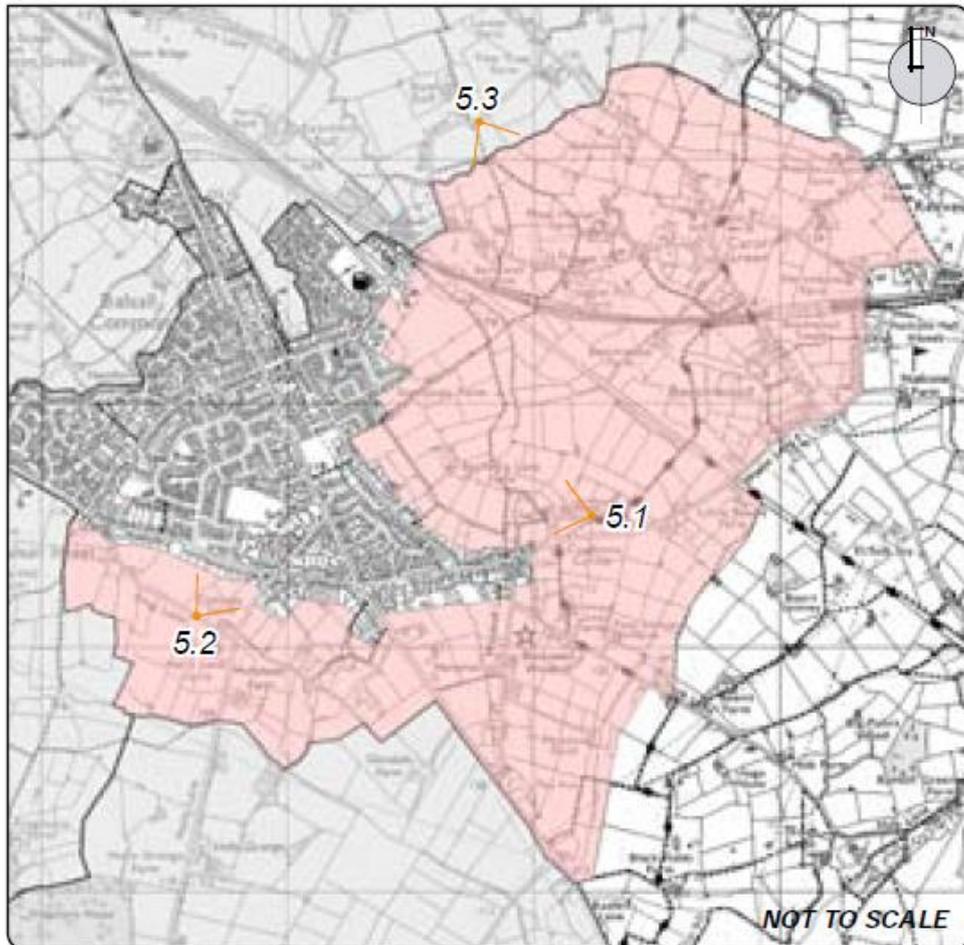
***Visual Sensitivity:***

- The Visual Sensitivity of the sub-area is considered to be *Medium*.
- The visibility in the sub-area consists of generally medium to short distance views that are medium level, wide and contained, deep and shallow, and horizontal and upward in orientation.

**Landscape Value:**

- The value of the sub-area is considered to be *Medium*.
- The sub-area is an attractive rural landscape with a large Conservation Area at the heart, which lends distinctive characteristic to the wider landscape. The area is well used and is accessible via a network of public footpaths and the presence of three long distance trails adds overall value.

## 5 Balsall Common Eastern Fringe



### Description:

This area is generally flat extending to areas of undulating landscape towards the northern extent of the LCA. The area is located to the west of Balsall Common and spans just under 4.5km<sup>2</sup>.

Being in close proximity to Balsall Common the area therefore is heavily influenced by the settlement bringing in strong elements of suburbia. This is particularly noticeable around Catchems Corner and Carol Green introducing manicured lanes, close mown grass verges, footways and overhead cables. The strong influence of Balsall Common on the rural character of the area has led to the loss of the definitive edge between the urban area and countryside beyond.

Strong tree cover along streets and isolated trees within field boundaries as part of hedgerows create a strong 'sense of place' that adds to the distinctiveness of

the area. Even in areas of built development where the rural aspect has been denuded, the tree structure has been retained and remains a dominant influence.

The landform along with the strong hedgerow structure creates short-distance views that are contained within the LCA. The area is easily accessible via a network of roads, footpaths and long distance trails including the Millennium Walk, Coventry Way and Kenilworth Greenway cycle path, which form key recreational routes through the area. The railway line running east to west to Coventry also passes across the character area.

***Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife:***

- Land managed for arable use with smaller grassland fields around settlements.
- Small sized fields with a distinct field pattern bound by a strong hedgerow structure and some ditches. The fields are historic, most likely post-medieval enclosed fields that may have medieval origins.
- Woodland cover is generally absent and tree cover is largely limited to the hedgerows and streets with occasional scattered individual trees within the fields.
- Oaks and Ash are the two dominating species in the area lending an Arcadian character to the streetscape and includes two veteran trees located in the area south of the urban edge at Balsall Common.
- Presence of ridge and furrow within fields on Old Waste Lane add to the diversity of the landscape.
- Little Beanit Farm Meadows is a Local Wildlife Site.

***Settlement, built environment and communications:***

- There are small settlements comprising the cluster of dwellings at Carol Green and linear development at Catchems Corner, which are the main areas of settlement outside of Balsall Common.
- A number of farms scattered across the LCA have been subjected to conversions to residential use.
- There are a number of listed buildings scattered across the LCA, however most are concentrated around Carol Green including the Moat House, a Grade II listed building.
- Although not listed, there are several cottages of note located at Catchems Corner and the Berkswell Windmill is an iconic feature in the LCA.
- Communications masts and electricity pylons are visible vertical elements with overhead cables crisscrossing the landscape near to the settlements.

- Several roads run through the area connecting Balsall Common to Coventry in the east and Meriden in the north.
- A number of public footpaths and bridleways including long distance trails of the Millennium Way and Coventry Way traverse the area mostly running in a north-south direction providing connections between the roads.
- The area adjoining the eastern extent of Balsall Common, is criss-crossed with public footpaths. Being in close proximity to the built edge, the area is well used for recreation and is an important access point to the countryside.
- The disused railway line connecting Balsall Common to the University of Warwick functions as an active recreation cycle path known locally as Kenilworth Greenway which continues outside of the LCA to join up with National Cycle Network 523.

**Guidelines:**

***Aim: To protect the landscape pattern characteristic of the area.***

- Retain the Arcadian character, preserve openness between dwellings and resist further development.
- Retain and enhance the characteristic tree cover of oak within the area.
- Adhere to the requirements of the Solihull Woodland Strategy.
- Encourage appropriate management to retain strong hedgerow structure and the planting of individual trees along field boundaries. Tree planting in the vicinity of Balsall Common is important to its setting and approaches.
- Resist loss of field boundaries to retain irregular and historic field pattern to south of the area. Discourage amalgamation of fields and promote awareness of the Hedgerow Regulations. Develop a hedgerow register for the character area
- Conserve pastoral character and identify opportunities for conversion of arable land back to grazing land.
- Conserve the diversity of old permanent pastures. Reseeding or ploughing must be avoided and tree/woodland planting is inappropriate in these areas.
- Promote the proactive management of existing trees and planting of new trees to fit with landscape pattern in particular trees at the settlement edge.
- Encourage diversification of Local Wildlife Sites and habitat conservation areas through appropriate landscape and ecology management plans. Opportunities to improve existing habitats and create new ones should be sought.

**Overall Landscape Sensitivity:**

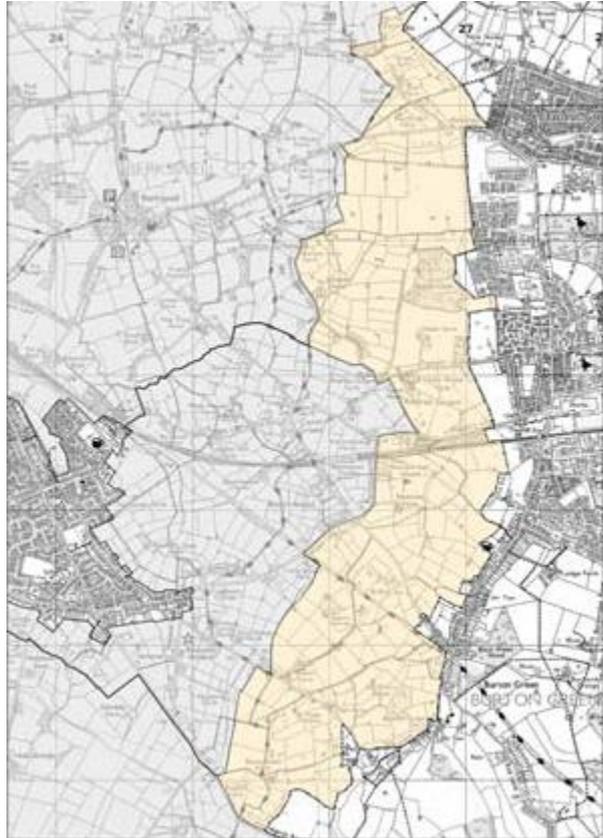
***Landscape Character Sensitivity:***

- The Landscape Character Sensitivity of this LCA is considered to be *Medium*.
- This is a landscape with a strong ‘sense of place’, defining landscape features and a characteristic field pattern. The Arcadian character with the oak trees is also a key feature of the area. The suburban influences and the roads within a rural setting creates a slightly unbalanced landscape, although the key elements are in a good condition. The historic field pattern around settlements is an important feature along with the associated tree structure, which contributes to the setting of these settlements in the wider landscape. There are some detracting features within the landscape including pylons and communication masts.

***Visual Sensitivity:***

- The Visual Sensitivity of this LCA is considered to be *Medium*.
- The general visibility in this LCA consists of short distance views that are contained, shallow and generally in a horizontal orientation. The oak trees bordering the lanes and roads are a key visual feature in the area. Prevention of coalescence is important particularly where the urban edge has a strong relationship with existing built form.

## 6 Eastern Fringe



### Description:

This undulating area lies at the easternmost extent of the Borough where it adjoins the city of Coventry. The LCA spans just over 5.5km<sup>2</sup>.

Although close to the urban edge, this character area retains a strong sense of rural identity that provides a countryside buffer between Balsall Common and Coventry. The LCA provides an attractive gateway to the countryside from the urban edge,

which contains long distance trails, recreational cycle paths and a good footpath and bridleway network.

Fields are larger and more regular to the north of the area in contrast to the medium to small scale and irregular field pattern in the southern extent of the LCA. Fields are mostly bound by hedgerows of various condition, the southern area having a stronger hedgerow structure with oak and ash present within them. Hedgerows along roadsides are generally high trimmed with tall overhanging trees.

Small copses and the landform break down views across the area. Views of the urban edge towards Coventry are noticeable in certain locations but are generally medium distance.

Settlement is sparse and farmstead diversification is noticeable throughout the area. Linear settlements have developed along some arterial roads specifically at Duggins Lane and Benton Green Lane. The Berkswell substation within the central extent of the character area is a partial detractor and electricity pylons and overhead cables are a constant feature within the landscape.

***Land use, fields, boundaries, trees and wildlife:***

- Mixed land use is dominant across the area with arable fields interspersed by deciduous woodland and coniferous plantations. This also includes vegetation on the golf course within the grounds of the Nailcote Hall Hotel.
- Medium to large sized fields with a distinct regular rectilinear pattern are a common feature to the north of Rough Close in contrast to the more irregular field pattern to the south of the LCA. Most of the fields are generally bound by hedgerows.
- Woodland cover is largely formed of plantation blocks and deciduous woodland that are scattered across the area. Rough Close in the north, is the largest of these which also includes a camping site.
- Strong tree cover prevails within this area including hedgerows, street trees and the occasional standalone trees within fields.
- The area includes three Local Wildlife Sites at Beanit Green Lane, Big Pools and Little Pools Woodland and Beanit Farm Hedge.

***Settlement, built environment and communications:***

- Areas of main settlement are barely noticeable within this character area. The LCA largely comprises converted farms and smaller ribbon development particularly along Duggins Lane and Benton Green Lane due to the close proximity of Coventry's western edge.
- There are three listed buildings in this LCA. Nailcote Hall is a Grade II listed late 16th century timber frame and red brick house, now a hotel and golf course.
- The Electrical sub-station is a prominent feature within the central extent of the area.
- Electricity pylons, telegraph poles and wires are the main vertical elements in the area. Other vertical elements include the water tower near Duggins Lane.

- The Birmingham to Coventry railway line and numerous arterial roads from Coventry to Solihull cross this LCA, however connectivity within the area remains poor as most of these roads runs east to west with limited connections north to south. The roads closely follow landscape pattern and are not at odds with the landscape.
- There are a number of footpaths and bridleways traversing the area, however most run east to west in contrast to the southern area where the routes criss-cross the landscape. Coventry Way and Millennium Way are two long distance trails that cross the area.
- Kenilworth Greenway, a cyclepath on the disused old railway line is a key recreational route across the area.

**Sensitivities and Pressures:**

- Neglect of woodland management would decrease the longterm sustainability of tree cover in this characteristically wooded area.
- Views of business parks and their associated facilities detract from the positive rural attributes of this area.
- Possible increased pressure for access to open countryside from the edge of Coventry and Balsall Common may impact upon the rural character of the area.
- Decline in frequency of hedgerow trees due to neglect and lack of replacement.
- The southern half of the area plays an important role in separating Balsall Common from Coventry and is sensitive to development which would result in coalescence.
- Pressure for new housing in the attractive countryside due to easy access to Coventry, increasing pressure on the arterial roads. Limited capacity of the area to accept development without impact upon character.
- Potential of farmstead sprawl with new large modern buildings that detract from the area.
- This area is a mineral safeguarded area for coal, which could have considerable impact upon landscape character.

**Guidelines:**

***Aim: To protect the landscape pattern characteristic of the area.***

- Encourage appropriate management to enhance hedgerow structure and the planting of individual trees along field boundaries particularly in and around Broad Lane. Tree planting, in the form of copses and clumps, in the vicinity of Coventry is

important to mitigate large scale uses including sports and industrial facilities and to preserve the setting and rural aspect of the area.

- Resist loss of field boundaries to retain irregular field pattern to south and regular field pattern to the north of the area. Discourage amalgamation of fields and promote awareness of the Hedgerow Regulations. Refer to Habitat Biodiversity Audit for further detail.
- Promote proactive management of existing woodland in accordance with the Solihull Woodland Strategy.
- Encourage diversification of Local Wildlife Sites and other habitat conservation areas through appropriate management practices. Opportunities to improve existing habitats and create new ones should be sought.
- Identify appropriate access points to the countryside and ensure that new facilities, signs and paths are low-key and respect landscape character.
- Where new buildings are required they should be located in association with existing farmsteads and settlement across the area and located so as not to require new access arrangements.
- To promote understanding of the heritage features in the area and their contribution to landscape character.
- Resist any development that would risk the character of the wooded boundaries to the fields and their landscape value.

#### *LCA 6 - Eastern Fringe*

***Aim: To integrate the edge of Coventry and other large scale development in the landscape and reduce its visual impact.***

- Structure planting in and amongst any new development must be considered to break up the mass of building in the rural landscape with species of an appropriate scale.
- Consideration must be given to the space between buildings for robust structure planting opportunities to ensure the overall site is unified with its landscape setting.
- All new development proposals for large scale buildings require a landscape scheme as an integral part of a planning application to ensure the impact on landscape character is fully mitigated. Design at the urban edge requires high quality design and the use of appropriate materials, which are appropriate to local character and which maintain and enhance the distinctiveness of the area.

- New development should avoid large scale encroachment to respect the setting of Coventry and preserve the rural countryside within the area.

***Aim: To manage access for recreation at the urban edge:***

- Promote the enhancement of the footpath network and its contribution to landscape character and appreciation.
- Explore opportunities to improve public enjoyment of the area, through access agreements following appropriate routes, that would cause minimal disturbance.

**Overall Landscape Sensitivity:**

***Landscape Character Sensitivity:***

- The Landscape Character Sensitivity of this LCA is considered to be **High**.
- This is an attractive landscape with a strong 'sense of place', distinct landscape features including strong tree cover, characteristic field pattern, no main settlements, tranquil nature and general rural character. Overall the landscape is well- balanced and unified with elements in very good condition. There are a few detracting features including the electricity pylons and electricity sub-station.

***Visual Sensitivity:***

- The Visual Sensitivity of this LCA is considered to be **Medium**.
- The general visibility in this LCA consists of medium distance views that are generally low level, fragmented and shallow with a horizontal orientation. Small copses and landform break down views across the area and strong tree cover forms the backdrop in many views across the area. Views of main settlements are not noticeable, however there is a strong relationship with Coventry's western edge in some places in contrast to the weaker areas where intervisibility is poor. Prevention of coalescence is important in this character area.

## **4.3 Health and Wellbeing**

### **Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016–2019**

#### **Solihull Health and Wellbeing Board**

##### **Our vision and approach to Health and Wellbeing**

The Health and Wellbeing Board aims to improve the health and wellbeing of the population of Solihull from pre-birth to end of life, to reduce inequalities and improve the quality of health, education and social care services.

##### **Priority 4: Healthy and sustainable places and communities**

###### **1. Maximise opportunities to address the social determinants of health through greater integration of the planning, transport, housing, environmental and health systems**

A healthy community is one which supports healthy behaviours and enhances peoples' physical and mental health. Where we live is the biggest single determinant of our health. Health, wellbeing and health inequalities (and associated behavioural risk factors) are largely determined by living conditions and wider social, economic and environmental factors (see the health map on page 6). Many conditions such as obesity, heart disease, stress and mental health have been linked to the environments in which people live and work, and contact with the natural environment enhances both physical and mental health. There is also growing appreciation of how the impacts of climate change and extreme weather events will disproportionately affect the most vulnerable members of society. Our health and behaviours cannot therefore be viewed in isolation, and the way in which we plan and design places can impact both positively and negatively on health and wellbeing.

###### **2. Improve provision, quality and capacity of those who deliver community initiatives that support health/environmental objectives**

Being part of a strong community has a significant impact on a person's health. Studies show that social networks and social participation appears to act as a protective factor against dementia and that having good social networks are associated with reduced morbidity and mortality. It is recognised that the empowerment of people and communities is central to tackling the causes of ill-health, and that community capital needs to be built at a local level to ensure that policies are drawn on and owned by those most affected and are shaped by their experiences. Development of community capacity will vary, dependent on the needs of local people, and the community assets in an area. In order to provide services that are community-led, commissioners of services need to work with

communities to determine their needs and work together with communities to co-produce services accordingly.

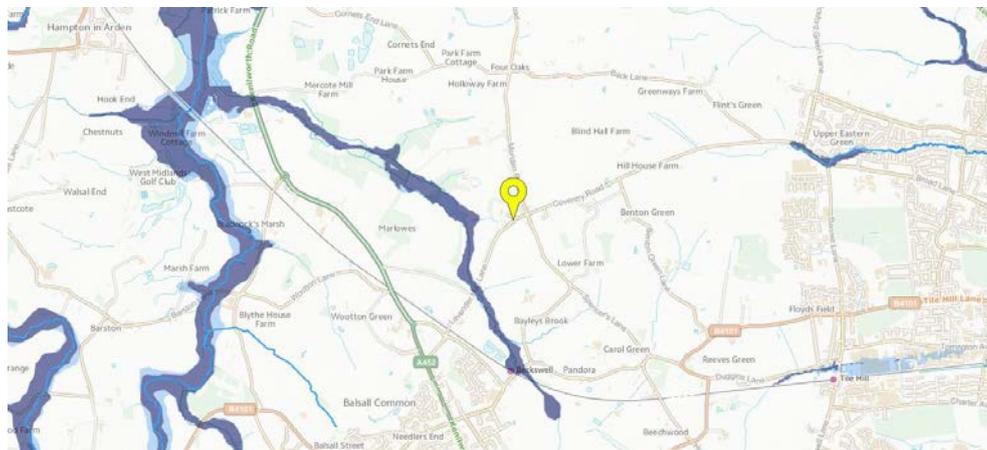
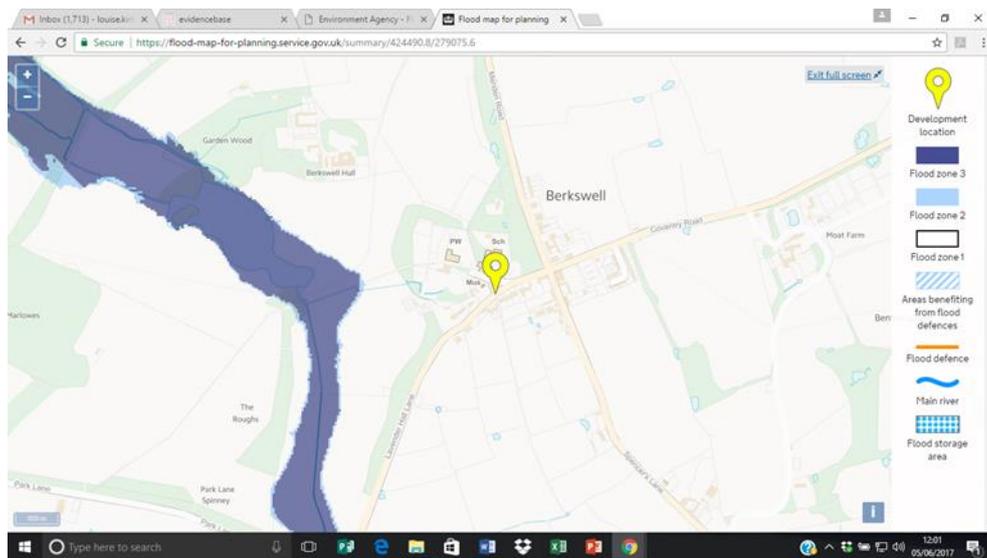
**What do we need to do in Solihull?**

Includes:

- Improve access to quantity and quality of open and green spaces available across the social gradient, to improve both physical and mental health.
- Utilise opportunities through Solihull Connected to increase the numbers of people walking and cycling for everyday journeys.
- Ensure major new developments consider opportunities to reduce the gap in inequalities across the borough.
- Further develop planning which encourages increased activity and healthier lifestyles.
- Integrate active travel planning into new building and regeneration. • Work across housing and health to ensure access to stable affordable housing in sustainable neighbourhoods.
- Minimise the impacts of climate change, particularly on vulnerable groups in society.
- Improve the energy efficiency of housing and reduce the number of households in fuel poverty.
- Maintain and improve the quality of social and private homes, and neighbourhoods.

## 4.4 Flooding

### Environment Agency Flood Maps for Planning <sup>12</sup>



<sup>12</sup> <https://flood-map-for-planning.service.gov.uk/>



## 4.5 Green Infrastructure

### **Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Green Infrastructure Strategy, 2013<sup>13</sup>**

The Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Green Infrastructure Strategy aims to create a diverse and well-managed Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Green Infrastructure network that underpins the quality of life for communities.

This will be the result of a well connected, accessible and biodiversity resilient landscape, supporting economic growth, social health and climate change adaptation.

The purpose of this Strategy is to provide evidence for the preparation of plans, policies and strategies relating to Green Infrastructure (GI) at a sub-regional level. It is to be available for adopting as a strategic mechanism to deliver GI enhancements across the partner authorities to meet national, sub-regional and local GI needs. However, it can be applied at a local, parish and field level through partnership and landowner assistance.

The Strategy details how Landscape, Biodiversity and Accessibility to the countryside GI assets have been identified and recommendations for their protection and enhancement. These GI assets are important to strategic spatial planning and Neighbourhood Planning policies and subsequent development proposals. However, as importantly, the Strategy is to help landowners integrate biodiversity, accessibility and landscape into their businesses.

#### **Executive Summary**

‘Green Infrastructure is a network of multifunctional greenspace, both new and existing, both rural and urban, which supports the natural and ecological processes and is integral to the health and quality of life of sustainable communities’.

#### **Biodiversity**

##### **Solihull**

Solihull district is also fairly urbanised, but has a greater proportion of rural habitats than Coventry. Arable, amenity grassland and improved grassland are the dominant habitats, followed by semi-natural neutral grassland. The district also has a relatively large area of broad-leaved woodland for its size, which correlates with its position within the Arden Landscape Character Area.

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<sup>13</sup> <http://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/greeninfrastructure>

### **Accessibility**

- See Solihull and Metropolitan Borough Council Walking Strategy and Cycling Strategy

## **PART B – ASSESSMENTS and RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Recommendation 3** Green Infrastructure provision and development should strengthen landscape character, reflecting locally distinctive natural and cultural landscape patterns, and integrating with natural processes and systems and land-use change, contributing to their long-term protection, conservation and enhanced management.

Proposals should be informed by the guidance contained in the Warwickshire Landscapes Guidelines, Connectivity/Opportunity Mapping and complementary landscape character assessments produced by local authorities. Targeted enhancement should include urban fringe landscapes and growth areas, strategic transport corridors and agricultural landscapes:

### **Strategic Enhancement: Countryside In and Around Towns**

The landscape quality of the urban fringe countryside is a key influence on how the overall characters of the Warwickshire landscapes are perceived and enjoyed. Rural urban fringe landscapes close to the main towns are widely recognised as highly important to people’s experiences and quality of life. Opportunities should be sought to reinforce and enhance landscape character, by creating new and maintaining existing Green Infrastructure, linking urban areas with the wider countryside. For example, this could include establishing new community woodlands and wildflower meadows. New development on the edges of settlements has the potential to be visually intrusive, particularly in the early years before landscape mitigation schemes mature. In responding to the planned expansion of settlements, particular attention will need to be given to the manner in which new developments can be sensitively accommodated into the rural-urban fringe landscape in terms of their siting, materials and design, including scale, layout and landscape mitigation.

### **Strategic Enhancement: Transport Corridors**

The strategic transport routes are a primary means by which many people see and experience Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull, including visitors, tourists and investors. These routes include motorways and major road corridors, as well as the railway network. Opportunities exist to enhance these corridors in order to improve the overall visual experience, strengthening landscape character and a

sense of place. Such enhancements may include the ecological management of roadside verges for wild flowers and wildlife habitats, the extension of roadside verge tree and shrub planting, clearing litter, reducing unnecessary clutter and limiting standardised treatments during highway improvement schemes. Landscape enhancement can help contain the impact of transport corridors and conserve landscape features. Mitigation and enhancement of these transport corridors, to strengthen landscape character, should be a priority in the future planning of strategic Green Infrastructure.

### **Strategic Enhancement: Working Agricultural Landscapes**

While not mapped for any specific area, it is recognised that the quality and appearance of the working agricultural landscape is crucial as a framework for more specific environmental enhancement. Conservation and enhancement of traditional features of the farmed landscape is a common theme within the Warwickshire Landscapes Guidelines, particularly for landscapes assessed as being in poor condition and where intensive farming practices dominate.

Due to the intensification of agricultural practices, coupled with the loss of many hedgerows, and field trees through Dutch elm disease, the landscape has become much more open and fragmented over the past 30-40 years. Opportunities exist to enhance the landscape, restore connectivity and so enrich the visual experience of the countryside through the Environmental Stewardship and other agri-environmental grant schemes - for example, by restoring hedgerows and field patterns, reintroducing hedgerow trees and establishing new copses, woodlands and wildflower meadows on farmland. In addition, opportunities exist to create richer green lanes through a mixture of tree and hedge planting beside rights of way, in order to 'break up' views across large areas of open farmland. These types of enhancements would help create a richer and more varied complex of views and vistas across the area. The use of Connectivity and Opportunity Mapping will be critical to this process.

### **Biodiversity**

#### **Neighbourhood Areas**

The inclusion of biodiversity in Neighbourhood and Parish plans will help in creating and enhancing local GI Assets that could build into the sub-regional objectives.

#### **Green Infrastructure Map for Berkswell Parish<sup>14</sup>**

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<sup>14</sup> <http://maps.warwickshire.gov.uk/greeninfrastructure/>



## 4.6 Built Environment

### Conservation Area

#### **Berkswell Conservation Area Character Appraisal and Management Proposals 2011<sup>15</sup>**

##### **1. INTRODUCTION**

###### **The Berkswell Conservation Area**

1.1 Berkswell is a small village in an attractive rural setting between Coventry and Solihull. It was first designated as a conservation area in November 1968. This was a particularly early recognition of its historical and environmental qualities as the Civic Amenities Act, which introduced the concept of conservation areas, was enacted only the previous year.

1.2 The conservation area includes all the buildings along the four limbs of Berkswell's crossroads plan with the exception of the later housing of Pound close. In the north west quadrant, it also includes the village green and almshouses on Church Lane, the extensive grounds of Well House and of the Church of St John the Baptist.

1.3 Although a small village, Berkswell has some 23 listed buildings including all those fronting Church Lane.

###### **Summary of key characteristics and recommendations**

1.4 Key characteristics arising from the Character Appraisal include:

- A well defined historic village core
- An evolved history that provides a diverse range of building types
- A nationally important Norman church
- A high proportion of nationally listed buildings
- An important series of buildings created by the legacy of the Berkswell Estate
- A strong sense of enclosure provided by bands of trees
- A consistent townscape of continuous frontages on Church Lane
- A low density of buildings elsewhere making gardens an important element
- Evidence of the rural economy in farm buildings and estate houses

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.solihull.gov.uk/Portals/0/Planning/BerksCAApp.pdf>

- A significant landscape context of historic field patterns and designed parkland
- Important views over open countryside and parkland
- Consistent two-storey height with pitched roofs
- Consistent use of building materials – timber and brick with clay tiled roofs and occasional survival of thatch
- Important focus of the parish church and of the Malthouse at the main crossroads
- Winding rural character of Lavender Hall Lane contrasting with the straight line of Meriden Road and Spencer’s Lane
- Important open spaces at the churchyard and the Village Green
- Historic connection with sporting figures; Maude Watson and Bob Wyatt

**Recommendations:**

**Public realm:**

- Every opportunity should be taken to improve public spaces and enhance the qualities of the conservation area
- Enhance tree cover through the planting of new trees
- Establish a protocol to ensure that works in the highway do not detract from the quality of the conservation area
- All proposals for maintenance or improvement of the public realm should take account of guidance provided by English Heritage in its publication ‘*Streets for All – West Midlands*’
- Design of recreational facilities should seek to reflect the character of existing landscape features

**Protecting Berkswell:**

- Adopt the detailed advice provided by the Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines: Arden, to guide new development and management practices to maintain and enhance regional character and local distinctiveness
- Conserve and enhance the irregular pattern of species rich ancient hedgerows
- Conserve strengthen primary hedgelines and manage these more positively as landscape features
- Every opportunity should be taken to conserve and enhance the natural features in the area – trees, spaces, footpaths and watercourses – through direct action, grant assistance or

management agreements.

The Spatial Analysis considers Layout and street pattern, Open spaces, trees and landscape, Landmarks, focal points and views, Boundaries and Public realm.

The buildings of the conservation area are described in terms of the building styles, materials and colours.

Listed buildings are noted and there are 2 suggestions for consideration for Solihull's the Local List:

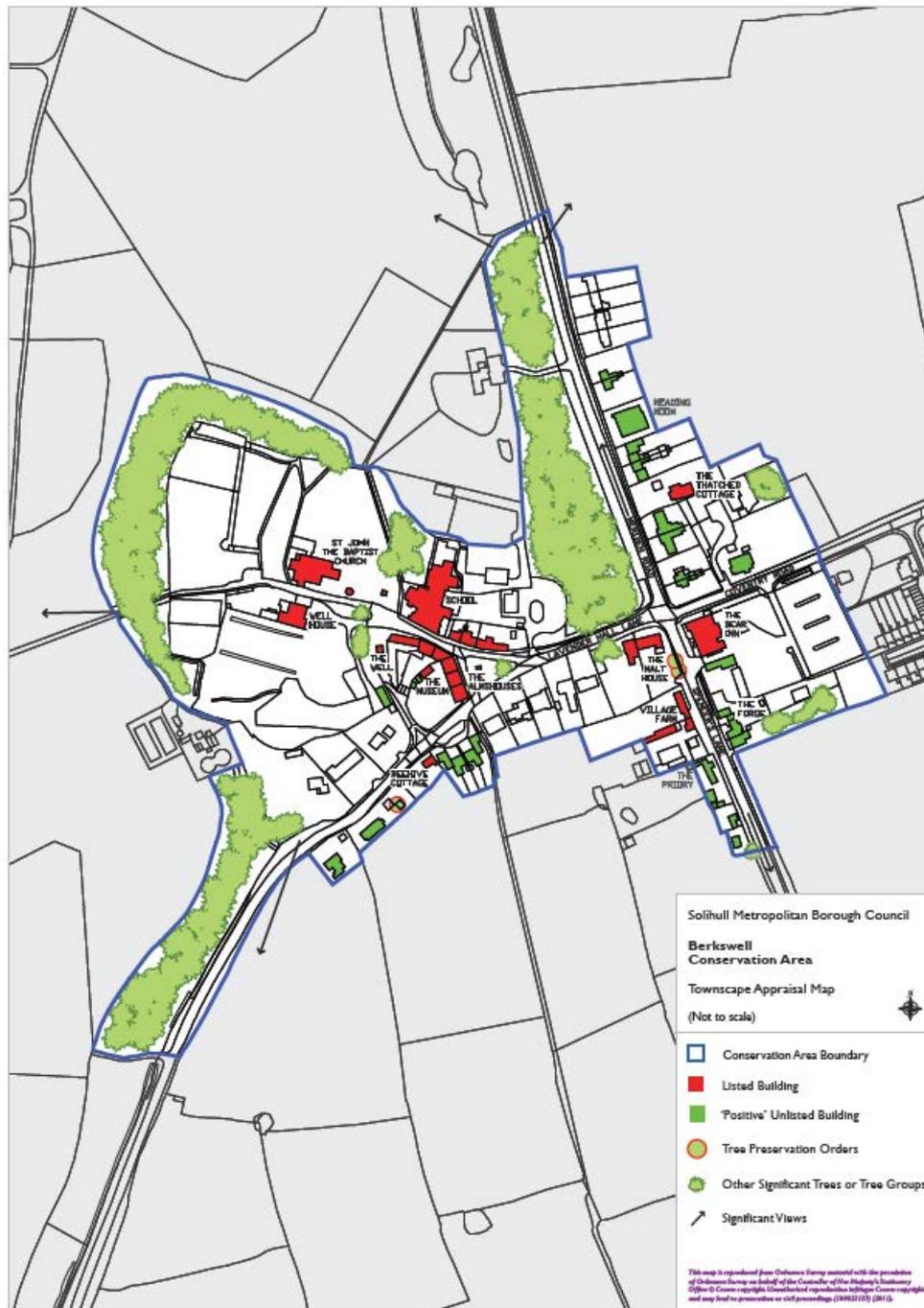
- The Reading Room
- The Forge including the former Smithy.

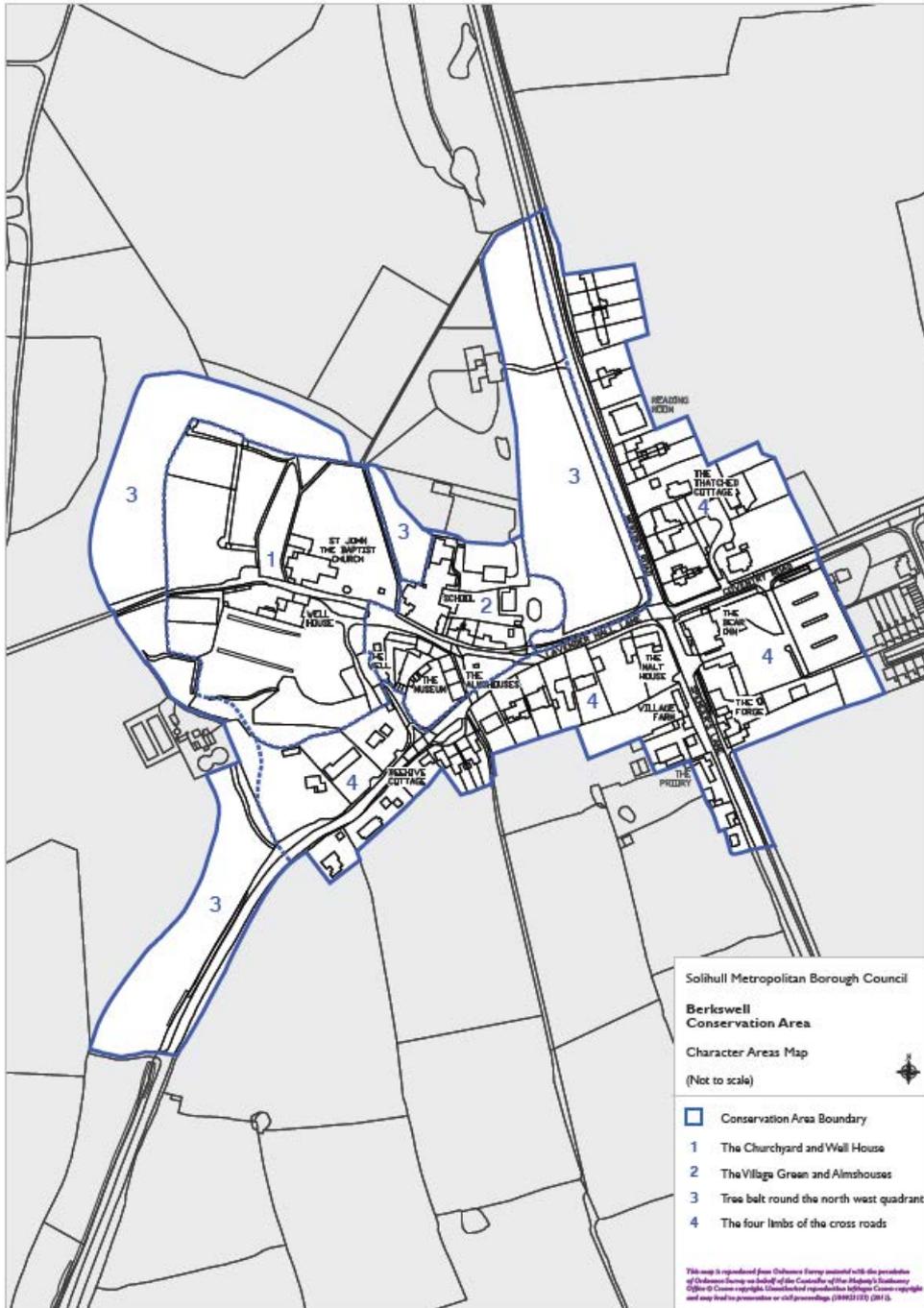
## **6. CHARACTER AREAS**

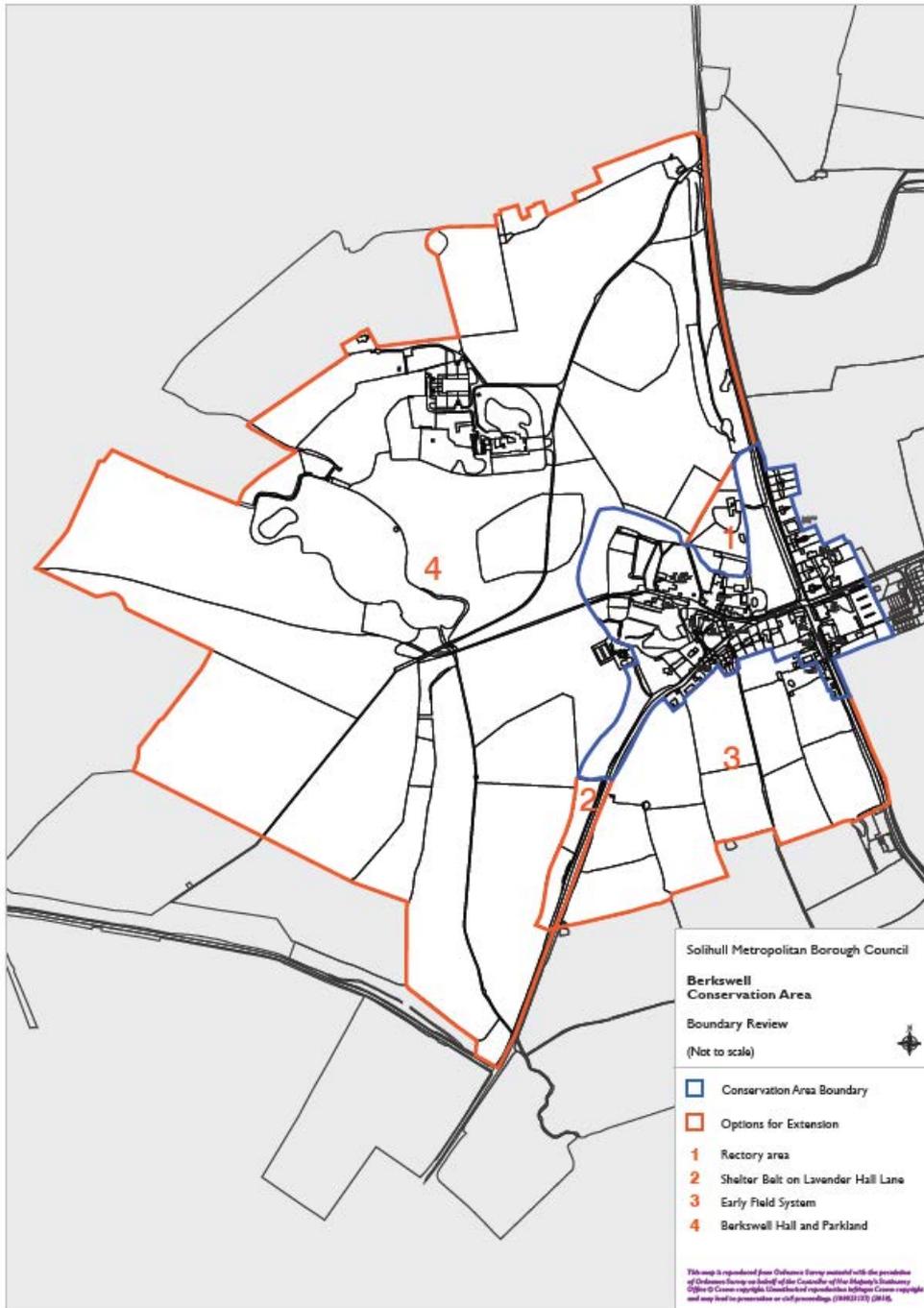
6.1 The Berkswell Conservation Area has four distinct components that can be considered as areas of different character:

- The churchyard and Well House
- The Village Green and almshouses
- The tree belt round the north west quadrant
- The four limbs of the cross roads

Maps







### **Listed Buildings**<sup>16</sup>

There are 60 listed buildings and scheduled monuments in Berkswell Parish. These are:

#### **BARRATTS LANE FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARRATTS LANE FARMHOUSE, BARRATTS LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

#### **RAM HALL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II\*

Location: RAM HALL, BAULK LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

#### **BARN AT MOAT HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARN AT MOAT HOUSE, TRUGGIST LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

#### **BERKSWELL WINDMILL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II\*

Location: BERKSWELL WINDMILL, WINDMILL LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

#### **THE MALT HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: THE MALT HOUSE, SPENCERS LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

#### **THE GARDEN HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: THE GARDEN HOUSE, LAVENDER HALL LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

#### **BARN AT LAVENDER HALL FARM**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARN AT LAVENDER HALL FARM, LAVENDER HALL LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

#### **FOUR OAKS FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

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<sup>16</sup> <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/>

Grade: II

Location: FOUR OAKS FARMHOUSE, MERIDEN ROAD, Berkswell, Solihull

**WEST'S COTTAGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: WEST'S COTTAGE, NAILCOTE LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BARN AT IMAGE HOUSE FARM**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARN AT IMAGE HOUSE FARM, HOB LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**HORNBROOK FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: HORNBROOK FARMHOUSE, CORNETS END LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**VILLAGE POUND**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: VILLAGE POUND, COVENTRY ROAD, Berkswell, Solihull

**HOUSE ADJOINING VILLAGE STORES ON WEST**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: HOUSE ADJOINING VILLAGE STORES ON WEST, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**VILLAGE SCHOOL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: VILLAGE SCHOOL, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**THE THATCHED COTTAGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: THE THATCHED COTTAGE, BERKSWELL ROAD, Berkswell, Solihull

**COTTAGE ADJOINING VILLAGE STORES ON EAST**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: COTTAGE ADJOINING VILLAGE STORES ON EAST, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**CHURCHYARD CROSS**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: CHURCHYARD CROSS, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**STOCKS**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: STOCKS, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BANBURY COTTAGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BANBURY COTTAGE, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**SPRING COTTAGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: SPRING COTTAGE, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**THE COTTAGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: THE COTTAGE, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**HOLLOWAY FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: HOLLOWAY FARMHOUSE, CORNETS END LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**HOLLY HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: HOLLY HOUSE, SPENCERS LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**IMAGE HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: IMAGE HOUSE, HOB LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**MERCOTE MILL FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: MERCOTE MILL FARMHOUSE, KENILWORTH ROAD, Berkswell, Solihull

**BEEHIVE COTTAGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BEEHIVE COTTAGE, LAVENDER HALL LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**LAVENDER HALL FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II\*

Location: LAVENDER HALL FARMHOUSE, LAVENDER HALL LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**MEADOW HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: MEADOW HOUSE, MEADOW HOUSE LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**THE BEAR INN**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: THE BEAR INN, SPENCERS LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**VILLAGE FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: VILLAGE FARMHOUSE, SPENCERS LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BERKSWELL GRANGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BERKSWELL GRANGE, TRUGGIST LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BERKSWELL HALL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II\*

Location: BERKSWELL HALL, Berkswell, Solihull

**BARN AT BARRATTS LANE FARM**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARN AT BARRATTS LANE FARM, BARRATTS LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BLIND HALL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BLIND HALL, BLIND LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**HILL HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: HILL HOUSE, BROAD LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**POST OFFICE  
VILLAGE STORES**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: POST OFFICE, CHURCH LANE, VILLAGE STORES, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: I

Location: CHURCH OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**85, MEETING HOUSE LANE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: 85, MEETING HOUSE LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BARN AT NUMBER 85**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARN AT NUMBER 85, MEETING HOUSE LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**OUTBUILDING APPROXIMATELY 5 METRES EAST OF NUMBER 83 (NOT INCLUDED)**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: OUTBUILDING APPROXIMATELY 5 METRES EAST OF NUMBER 83 (NOT INCLUDED), MEETING HOUSE LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**ROCK FARM**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: ROCK FARM, BACK LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**CRABMILL FARMHOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: CRABMILL FARMHOUSE, WASTE LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**POOL ORCHARD**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: POOL ORCHARD, BARRATTS LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BARN AT RAM HALL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARN AT RAM HALL, BAULK LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**MAGPIE COTTAGE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: MAGPIE COTTAGE, BRADNOCKS MARSH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**HOUSE NEXT TO VILLAGE SCHOOL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: HOUSE NEXT TO VILLAGE SCHOOL, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**WELL HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: WELL HOUSE, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**ALMSHOUSES**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: ALMSHOUSES, 1-10, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**SPRING CROFT**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: SPRING CROFT, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BERKS WELL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BERKS WELL, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BARN AT HORN BROOK FARM**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARN AT HORN BROOK FARM, CORNETS END LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**NAILCOTE HALL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: NAILCOTE HALL, NAILCOTE LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**MOAT HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: MOAT HOUSE, TRUGGIST LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**BARN AT BLIND HALL**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: BARN AT BLIND HALL, BLIND LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**THE BRICKMAKERS ARMS PUBLIC HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: THE BRICKMAKERS ARMS PUBLIC HOUSE, STATION ROAD, Berkswell, Solihull

**CANTERBURY HOUSE**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: CANTERBURY HOUSE, SPENCERS LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: K6 TELEPHONE KIOSK, SPENCER'S LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**WAR MEMORIAL IN THE GROUNDS OF THE CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST**

Heritage Category: Listing

Grade: II

Location: WAR MEMORIAL IN THE GROUNDS OF THE CHURCH OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST, CHURCH LANE, Berkswell, Solihull

**Packhorse bridge**

Heritage Category: Scheduling

Grade:

Location: Berkswell, Solihull

**Churchyard cross in St John the Baptist's churchyard**

Heritage Category: Scheduling

Grade:

Location: Berkswell, Solihull

## 5.0 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

In April 2010 new regulations were introduced that allows local authorities to set up a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).

CIL is a tariff charged on development, at a locally set rate, to fund infrastructure needs arising from new development in the Borough. This can include transport schemes; flood defences; schools; health & social care facilities; parks & green spaces; cultural & sports facilities.

The CIL charging rates are included within a Charging Schedule, and can vary with type of development, location within the Borough, and size of the development. The rates are based on [viability testing](#), and an [identified need for infrastructure](#). For each new liable development, CIL is calculated according to the floorspace of the development and the rates within an adopted Charging Schedule.

If a parish has a made NDP then the Parish Council is entitled to 25% of CIL. Without a NDP Parish Council's are entitled to 15% of CIL generated.

### Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule (April 2016)

Following the Examination and approval at Full Council, the Council commenced charging CIL on **Monday 4 July 2016**.

#### CIL CHARGING SCHEDULE RATES

This schedule has been issued, approved and published in accordance with Part 11 of the Planning Act 2008 and the Community Infrastructure Regulations 2010 (as amended).

**Charging authority:** Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

**Date of approval:** 12<sup>th</sup> April 2016

**Date charging schedule takes effect:** 4<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

The CIL rates expressed in pounds per m<sup>2</sup> are as follows:

#### Residential (C3)

<i>North Solihull</i>	<i>Mature Suburbs</i>	<i>Rural Area</i>	<i>Blythe Valley Park</i>
Nil	£75	£150	Nil

**Retail (A1)**

Type	North Solihull	Mature Suburbs (excluding Solihull and Shirley Town Centres)	Solihull and Shirley Town Centres	Rural Area
Supermarkets/convenience stores ≥ 550m <sup>2</sup>	Nil	£300	£300	£300
Convenience stores < 550m <sup>2</sup>	Nil	£150	£150	£150
Other retail formats	Nil	£50	£25	£50

**Financial & Professional Services (A2)**

North Solihull	All other areas
Nil	£25

**Restaurants & Cafes (A3), Drinking Establishments (A4) & Hot Food Takeaways (A5)**

North Solihull	All other areas
Nil	£100

**Hotels (C1)**

North Solihull	All other areas
Nil	£25

**Residential Institutions (C2) (excluding hospitals & training centres)**

North Solihull	Blythe Valley Park	All other areas
Nil	Nil	£25

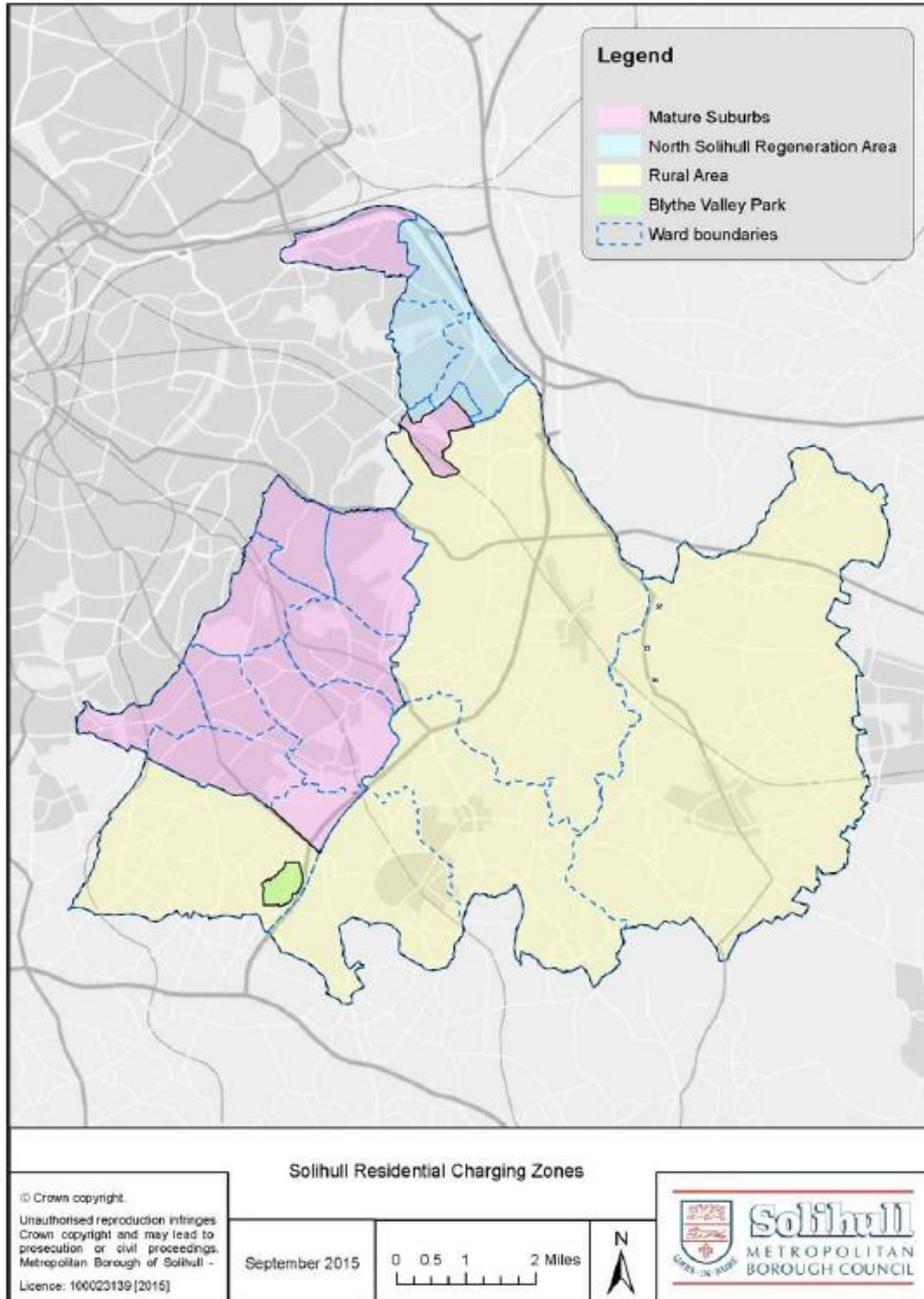
**Car Dealerships (sui generis)**

North Solihull	All other areas
Nil	£75

**All other uses**

North Solihull	All other areas
Nil	Nil

CIL Charging Zones



## 6.0 Supplementary Planning Documents

### Supplementary Planning Documents & Guidance

The role of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) and Guidance (SPGs) is to provide additional detail and guidance to [Local Plan policies](#). They help applicants make a successful planning application and support [Development Management](#) in the decision-making process. Although these documents are non-statutory, they are subject to consultation and are a material consideration when making planning decisions. The following SPDs and SPGs have been adopted in Solihull:

- [Meeting Housing Needs \(inc. Affordable Housing\) SPD \(2014\)](#)
- [House Extension Guidelines SPD \(2010\)](#)
- [Vehicle Parking Standards and Travel Plans SPD \(2006\)](#)
- [North Solihull Strategic Framework \(2005\)](#)
- [North Solihull Strategic Framework Addendum \(2009\)](#)
- [New Housing in Context SPG \(2003\)](#)
- [The Historic Environment SPG \(2001\)](#)
- [Rural Buildings Conversion SPG \(2001\)](#)
- [Hot Food Take-Away Shops SPG \(1995\)](#)
- [Shop Fronts and Signs SPG \(1995\)](#)
- [Housing Development Guidelines SPG \(1994\)](#)

## **7.0 Conclusion**

Neighbourhood Plans are required to sit within the framework of national, regional and local planning policies, and to be in general conformity with those policies. The information provided in this document sets out the planning policy context, within which the Solihull Neighbourhood Plan should be prepared.

It is important to note that the document is a “live” document in that it will require regular reviewing and updating to ensure that it takes account of changes to emerging plans as they move forward towards adoption, and that it reflects other planning policy documents as and when they are published.

The planning policy background will therefore be reviewed before consultation on the Draft Plan, and at the point of submission of the final version to Solihull MBC.

For more information on the contents of this document contact:

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