



**REPRESENTATIONS DRAFT LOCAL PLAN
SUPPLEMENTARY CONSULTATION**

**ON BEHALF OF
IM LAND, A SUBSIDIARY OF IM PROPERTIES PLC**

**SITE
LAND NORTH OF MAIN ROAD, MERIDEN**

Our Ref: ADM/RJB/K/8040

March 2019

Representations to Draft Solihull Local Plan Supplementary Consultation

Introduction

This representation is made on behalf of IM Land, a subsidiary of IM Properties PLC who are working with landowners to promote land north of Main Road, Meriden for new housing.

The site lies on the east side of the settlement to the north of Main Road and can deliver up to 100 houses. It is available now, offers a suitable location and is achievable without significant new infrastructure. There is a realistic prospect that housing can be delivered in the short term and within a 5 year housing land supply period.

The Site can deliver market and affordable housing to meet the needs of the Borough. Access via Main Road ensures the entire site is within 400m walking distance of a high frequency bus service offering at least 30-minute daytime, evening and weekend frequency. It can provide a network of green infrastructure through the Site providing environmental and biodiversity enhancement along with access to open space and allowing corridors for movement of wildlife. It will also secure the long-term availability of Oddfellows Allotments on Leys Lane which will be retained as community gardens for the benefit of new and existing local residents.

The representation is supported by:

- **Concept Masterplan – February 2019 (Appendix 1)**
- **Solihull Housing Need Technical Note (Appendix 2)**
- **Landscape and Visual Appraisal with Green Belt Review – February 2019 (Appendix 3)** that assess the new Concept Masterplan
- **A Vision Statement – March 2019 (Appendix 4)**
- **Supplementary Consultation Site Assessments – Site 420 (Appendix 5)**
- **Accessibility Mapping 2019 – Figure 6B and Site 420 (Appendix 6)**

Representations are made in respect of the following questions:

Local Housing Need

Question 1. Do you believe that there are exceptional circumstances that would justify the Council using an alternative approach, if so what are the exceptional circumstances and what should the alternative approach be?

Site Selection Methodology

Question 2. Do you agree with the methodology of the site selection process, if not why not and what alternative/amendment would you suggest?

Meriden

Question 30. Do you believe that Site 10 west of Meriden should be included as allocated site, if not why not? Do you have any comments on the draft concept masterplan for the site?

Green Belt

Question 37. What compensatory provision should be made for land being removed from the Green Belt? Where relevant please give examples that are specific to individual sites proposed for allocation.

Omitted Sites

Question 39. Are there any red sites omitted which you believe should be included; if so which one(s) and why?

Question 1. Do you believe that there are exceptional circumstances that would justify the Council using an alternative approach, if so what are the exceptional circumstances and what should the alternative approach be?

There are exceptional circumstances that would justify an alternative approach. These are the economic growth aspirations of the Council and resultant expected job growth.

Solihull Housing Need Technical Note prepared by Barton Willmore on behalf of IM Land (March 2019) is enclosed as **Appendix 2** of these representations. It focuses on the supply of housing proposed in the Draft Local Plan and whether this aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework (2019), the Planning Practice Guidance and the aims, objectives and policies of the Draft Local Plan.

The analysis results in two broad conclusions:

1. The Standard Methodology minimum in the Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation of 777 dpa to meet local need will need to be increased to account for economic growth aspirations and expected job growth set out in the council's own evidence base. The analysis of the report suggests this could range from **between 825 dpa and 1,127 dpa**. This may need to be based on GBSLEP aspirations;
2. Solihull has a duty to deliver a share of the unmet need from the wider HMA, which ranges from 28,000 up to 2031 and 80,000 up to 2036 on the basis of recent base documents in the public domain.

Question 2. Do you agree with the methodology of the site selection process, if not why not and what alternative/amendment would you suggest?**Summary**

The methodology is useful in assessing sites on a consistent basis.

Step 1 focuses on Green Belt. It should also focus on level of accessibility rather than leaving that to Step 2 – Refinement Criteria.

Step 2 – Refinement Criteria needs to account for other evidence in Factors in Favour with reference to SHELAA, Landscape Character Assessment and Sustainability Appraisal. It should also allow for refinement as evidence on the Landscape Character Assessment for example, relates to large parcels and not necessarily sites which may be a small part of a parcel.

Site Assessments document - It would be helpful if the order it is set out in the Site Assessments follows the same sequence as it is not currently consistent with the DLP Supplementary Consultation Site Selection Methodology.

Step 1 – Site Hierarchy Criteria Priorities – Level of accessibility

Sites are scored according to where they fall in the list of 11 criteria, but some criteria need weighting, for example ‘accessible’ as all sites are accessible in some form, but the selection should favour those that are highly accessible over those that have low accessibility.

Footnote 35 suggest that in respect of Priority 3 ‘accessible’ means on the edge of an urban area or on the edge of a settlement with facilities. It states a broad approach to accessibility is used and that a finer grain is applied at Step 2. This should be revised as the one part of the evidence base that has been updated is Accessibility Mapping January 2019 and this shows some areas of the Borough to be more accessible than others and a range of site scores from 0 to 400 with 400 being the most accessible. Accessibility is a major part of plan making in terms of planning for sustainable development and this should be recognised in the Step 1 Site Hierarchy Criteria.

Such distinction is made in respect of Priority 3 and 4 where ‘highly/moderately accessible’ is stated but this does not relate to the Accessibility Mapping of the evidence base. It should be refined and consistent.

Green Belt is weighted in this way as Priorities distinguish between lower, moderately and highly performing with the terminology and scoring drawn from the Green Belt Assessment. This is central to Step 1 as those sites with a score of 5 or less in the Green Belt Assessment are automatically rated as Yellow and therefore Potential Allocation.

It is inconsistent to rely on the evidence base for Green Belt and not Accessibility. Accessibility Scores should be added to the assessment methodology.

Step 2 – Refinement Criteria

No reference is made in Factors in Favour to how other evidence is accounted for such as SHELAA, Landscape Character Assessment or Sustainability Appraisal.

Site Assessments Document

The Site Assessments document needs to be consistent with the methodology set out in the DLP Supplementary Consultation.

Step 1 is a fixed score arising from the Site Hierarchy Criteria Priorities 1 to 10. This should be at the beginning of the Site Assessment as it is a first step that is not dependant on any other factors. All other matters such as Constraints, Evidence and Site Selection are taken account of in Step 2 refinement and should therefore follow the Step 1 score. At the monument it is set out with all other matters first, followed by Step 1, commentary and Step 2 which implies all other matters are part of Step 1.

Question 30. Do you believe that Site 10 west of Meriden should be included as an allocated site, if not why not? Do you have any comments on the draft concept masterplan for the site?

Site 10 is proposed to be allocated for 100 houses, but it is considered the site does not have the capacity to accommodate this amount of housing without significant harm to the landscape character on the approach into the settlement, through loss of vegetation and impact on its designation as a potential Local Wildlife Site.

The Council's acknowledgement that Meriden can accommodate an additional 100 houses is welcomed and other sites should be considered to provide for this housing need.

The site was previously proposed for 50 houses which we also considered to be high given the constraints such as its designation as a Potential Local Wildlife Site (pLWS Ref. SP28G4); its significant trees and water body; and its prominent location on the approach to the village.

Site 10 is located on the western approach into Meriden. It comprises grassland, scrub and broadleaf woodland in addition to an existing 2 storey block of apartments (The Firs) and a former caravan park. Maxstoke Lane forms a main transport corridor into Meriden with an exit slip road from the A45 joining near to the northern boundary of Site 10, which sits at a raised elevation, facilitating filtered views into Site 10.

An assessment of the site in landscape and visual terms is provided in our Landscape and Visual Appraisal with Green Belt Review 2019 (LVAGBR) submitted with these representations. It finds currently the site is well vegetated and forms part of the green gateway to Meriden. Solihull Borough Landscape Character Assessment LCA7: Northern Upland identifies under its landscape management guidelines that "*Tree planting in the vicinity of Meriden is also important to its setting and approaches*" thus it can be considered that the well vegetated nature of Site 10 forms an important part of the setting and approach to Meriden. Development within this parcel of land on the approach to Meriden would be uncharacteristic and loss of vegetation to facilitate development would run contrary to the guidelines highlighted in the Landscape Character Area.

Whilst it may be capable of some development, its constraints restrict its capacity. The council's Illustrative Emerging Concept Masterplan aim to protect some features as much as possible with the result that of a 3 ha site, 1 ha is Public Open Space (POS). There is however no reference to the pLWS and how this is accommodated.

To provide 100 houses on 2 ha is a density of 50 dwellings per ha, not 40 dwellings per ha as claimed. Such high density is inappropriate given the characteristics of the site.

The council's Site Assessment of DLP site 10 (sites 119 and 137) finds much the same outcome as for site 420 (North of Main Road). There are three differences that mean site 420 actually performs better. These are:

- Site 420 has 'very high' accessibility compared to Site 10 'high'
- Site 420 has no pLWS designation
- Site 420 performs better in the Sustainability Appraisal

Question 37. What compensatory provision should be made for land being removed from the Green Belt? Where relevant please give examples that are specific to individual sites proposed for allocation.

Compensatory provision could amount to many different elements with the essential quality being that it provides a benefit to compensate for the loss of open land that becomes developed. It should be provision over and above that needed for the normal development management requirements of residential development. It should be provided in the area where the loss arises. It could include on and off-site enhancements and needs an element of control to ensure delivery, such as the same ownership, public ownership or a community ownership.

In the case of land north of Main Road, Meriden compensatory provision is made by extensive new green infrastructure on the site that forms new public open space, recreation areas, play space, attenuation areas, community garden and parkland all of which provide improvements to the environmental quality and an element of public access available to the existing residents and new residents.

The proposals would support access to Green Belt land east of the site, through providing a new green corridor and local community park through the site from its connection with Leys Lane in the north and Main Road in the south. Currently there is no link from Leys Lane into the area and beyond. This new linkage together with improvements to the public right of ways that extend north-south and east-west from the site to Fillongley Road and Walsh Lane respectively should be considered as compensatory improvement to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land. Further native hedgerow and tree planting could be achieved within the wider land holding which would contribute further to enhancement. This is set out in paragraph 8.25 of the LVAGBR.

Question 39. Are there any red sites omitted which you believe should be included; if so which one(s) and why?**Summary**

Land should be allocated for up to 100 houses on land north of Main Road, Meriden (**Appendix 1**). The background to site promotion explains how the proposal has evolved.

Draft Local Plan Evidence Base – Spatial Strategy and Site Selection Topic Paper 4 – December 2016 demonstrates Meriden is a settlement that has a good level of services and is highly accessible. Spatial Strategy Growth Option F allows for the settlement to take limited expansion and we consider it is suitable and capable of accommodating a higher level of growth than the 100 houses proposed.

Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation: Site Assessments – January 2019 shows that the Site scores well and the main reason for its red site assessment score is lack of defensible Green Belt boundaries, which is capable of remedy and is addressed in this representation in:

- a revised Concept Masterplan;
- Landscape and Visual Appraisal with Green Belt Review (LVAGBR);
- A Vision Statement.

Draft Local Plan – Accessibility Mapping Methodology Report – January 2019 demonstrates the very high accessibility of the site with a maximum score for access to the key services of education, food store, GP surgery and public transport bus.

Overall, the site is highly accessible; has moderate impact on Green Belt; can provide about 6 hectares of new Green Infrastructure; is not constrained by minerals safeguarding; is visually well contained; and has the maximum SHELAA score. There are no known technical constraints. The evidence base demonstrates this is a highly sustainable location that is suitable for delivery of up to 100 houses in the plan period. It is available now, offers a suitable location and is achievable without significant new infrastructure. There is a realistic prospect that housing can be delivered in the short term.

Background to the Site Promotion

The promotion of the site has evolved as the Local Plan has progressed. Since the Draft Local Plan (DLP) consultation in February 2017 and a further submission in December 2018, the area of the site has reduced, the number of houses has reduced and the ratio of development area to Green Infrastructure has changed to greatly increase the latter. Proposals have changed again in this representation at March 2019 to provide a defensible Green Belt boundary.

The Vision – February 2017

Previously, representations in The Vision – February 2017 summarised the technical evidence which led to a concept layout for 180 houses and an area to be safeguarded for long term needs. After further assessment and in response to concerns expressed in representations, refinements were made to reduce the size of the site and remove the area of safeguarded land.

A Vision Statement – December 2018

The refined site was presented in A Vision Statement – December 2018 which included a development area of about 3 ha from a total site area of about 7 ha. It would deliver up to 100 houses with the rest of the site providing public open space, play space, drainage area and community orchard, all contributing to Green Infrastructure. No safeguarded land was proposed.

This Vision is Site 420 in the Council's Supplementary Consultation: Site Assessments January 2019. An assessment of the details is set out below, the result was rejection due to lack of defensible Green Belt boundaries. To address the council's comment on lack of defensible green belt boundaries, a further revised Concept Masterplan is submitted in these representations.

A Vision Statement – March 2019

The proposal is still for up to 100 houses in the new Vision Statement. The revised Concept Masterplan site boundary is extended to follow defensible Green Belt boundaries. This gives an increase in Green Infrastructure leading to additional environmental enhancement and accessibility.

The development proposal offers:

- 3.35 hectares of residential development for up to 100 dwellings;
- 6 hectares for public open space, recreation, local play provision and community gardens (including attenuation Areas);

Technical Evidence

In addition to the LVAGBR and technical summary in the Vision Statement, a full set of technical information to demonstrate the deliverability of the proposal is available. This includes Arboriculture Survey; Archaeological and Heritage Assessment; Ecological Appraisal; Drainage Strategy; Minerals Resource Assessment Report; Transport Report.

Draft Local Plan Evidence Base – Spatial Strategy and Site Selection Topic Paper 4 – December 2016

Meriden – Limited expansion

Meriden is a settlement that has a good level of services and facilities and is highly accessible. Growth Option F allows for the settlement to take proportionate growth and we consider it is suitable and capable of accommodating a higher level of growth than the 100 houses proposed.

The Site Assessments which are part of this consultation, has its starting point as the evidence base of the DLP. The DLP Topic Paper 4 assessed the Spatial Strategy evidence base and concluded in respect of Meriden, a high accessibility rating and moderately performing Green Belt. It is however included as a settlement suitable for a limited expansion rather than significant expansion. This has not been revisited in this consultation.

There is no explanation in DLP Topic Paper 4 as to how the rural settlements have been split into two groups (paragraph 342), described as:

- *significant expansion of highly accessible and/or a wide range of services (including a secondary school);*
- *limited expansion of settlements with a limited range of services (including a Primary School and some retail).*

With regard to which settlements are in which group, it would appear that in the first group a settlement could be highly accessible *and* have a wider range of services including a secondary school or it could be highly accessible, or it could have a wide range of services but not be accessible. Dickens Heath however in the first group, is not highly accessible and has no secondary school. The site proposed to be allocated only scores 280 in accessibility mapping so clarification is needed as to why it falls in this group. Similarly, Cheswick Green in this group has no secondary school.

By contrast, Meriden falls in the second group where accessibility is not mentioned and only a limited range of services is needed yet the accessibility study finds sites in Meriden to be highly accessible, scoring higher than Dickens Heath for example. It is inconsistent for Meriden to be in the second group.

Whilst it is acknowledged that accessibility is only one part of the evidence base along with Green Belt Assessment and constraint mapping, it is a key focus of the strategy. Meriden is highly accessible and has a good range of services.

Meriden has a lot to offer. It lies in the rural east of Solihull Borough close to the A45 Coventry Highway. At the 2011 census it had a population of 2719 and 1279 dwellings in the Parish. The settlement is largely contained within the two primary roads of Fillongley Road to the north and Main Road/Birmingham Road to the south which converge at a roundabout on the western side of the village known as The Green where a range of shops are located.

A good range of local services and facilities are available. They include:

- a primary school on Fillongley Road;
- a doctor's surgery on Main Road;
- Post Office on Main Road;
- Pharmacy on The Green;
- Convenience store on The Green;
- Food take-aways on The Green;
- Library on The Green;
- Two Churches on Main Road and Church Lane off Main Road;
- Car sales, repair and petrol station on Main Road;
- Village Hall and Scout Hut on Main Road;
- Social Club;
- Letting Agent;
- Public Houses, Hotel and restaurants;
- Business units around Meriden Hall south of Main Road;
- Meriden sports park and recreation ground west of The Green;
- Allotments on Leys Lane;
- good public transport links by high frequency express bus to Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull.
- good public transport links to Hampton in Arden Station and Birmingham International Station providing frequent access to locations further afield.

Overall, Meriden is capable of taking additional growth and has site opportunities potentially more accessible than other locations in the Borough.

There is no definition or guidance on what constitutes limited or proportionate expansion. Meriden had 1279 houses at 2011 census. Two large sites have been developed since then adding about 130 houses bringing the total to at least 1400 houses. An addition of 100 houses from DLP Site 10 is about 7% increase. If this is doubled for the addition of 200 houses, it still only amounts to 14% increase. Given the high accessibility and good level of services, this is considered to be appropriate. It should be noted that the addition of the 130 houses to the 1279 houses in 2011 census, is a 10% increase and that was accepted.

Furthermore, the Council's Site Assessment commentary makes comment to say 170 houses is not consistent with limited expansion.

Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation: Site Assessments – January 2019

Land north of Main Road Meriden is Site 420 (**Appendix 5**) as analysed below. The assessment incorrectly says 170 houses when it should be 100.

In Site Selection Step 1 the site score is 5 (Yellow) as it is greenfield in an accessible lower performing Green Belt location.

Step 2 Refinement is not explicit and concludes the site as Red. The Commentary states:

“Site is within moderately performing parcel in the Green Belt Assessment, although it would result in indefensible boundaries to the east and north. Site has a very high level of accessibility, is in an area of medium visual sensitivity with low capacity for change and is deliverable. The SA identifies 7 positive and 5 negative effects. Settlement identified as suitable for limited expansion, but the site lacks defensible green belt boundaries.”

The lack of defensible green belt boundaries is stated as the reason for a Red conclusion as all other factors are in favour. This is capable of remedy and the new Concept Masterplan addresses it with revised boundaries now using the existing hedges and watercourse.

The LVAGBR (paragraph 8.23) sets out how these accord with guidance in the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 139 (f) on defining boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent. It is proposed to strengthen the hedge line with additional planting. Hedgerows are commonly used as defensible Green Belt boundaries, and this is evident throughout the Borough where many garden boundaries are the Green Belt boundary and are formed by hedgerow. Furthermore, the Council’s strategic Green Belt Assessment 2016 makes reference on pages 5 and 6 to defining boundaries for the purposes of their assessment to include established hedgerow.

To look at each of the factors that feed into the Step 2 Refinement Criteria (DLP Supplementary Consultation paragraph 75) findings are as follows:

Factors in Favour	SMBC Assessment Site 420	Stansgate Assessment (Site 420 and other Meriden sites)
In accordance with the spatial strategy (including only proportional additions to lower settlements i.e. without a secondary school.	It accords with Growth Option F Limited Expansion as the settlement has no secondary school.	This site is highly accessible and it should be a settlement categorised for significant expansion.
Hard constraints only affect a small proportion of the site/can be mitigated.	TPO	TPO on boundary of the site can be maintained in the scheme. Most Meriden sites have TPO’s on site and identified tree and listed building constraints including DLP Site 10.
Site would not breach a strong defensible boundary to the Green Belt.	No assessment	The council’s GBA finds RP25 to be lower performing overall. This site is a small part of RP25 and our LVAGBR finds it lower performing although contributes to preventing sprawl due to lack of a strong boundary to the

		<p>east. The adjustment to the site boundary will establish a new strong defensible boundary.</p> <p>Most Meriden sites lack defensible boundaries and those to the west and south are high performing Green Belt.</p>
Any identified wider planning gain over and above what would normally be expected.	No assessment	<p>This proposal creates new Green Infrastructure amounting to about 6 ha of POS, recreation, local play provision and community garden. That is about 4 ha above what would be needed for a development of 100 houses. It enhances biodiversity, increases public access, secures the future of private allotments as community garden for all residents, provides a managed landscape strategy with new hedgerows and native woodland block planting.</p> <p>DLP Site 10 offers only 0.34 ha of open space over what is required for the houses. Gain on other sites is not known.</p>
Sites that would use or create a strong defensible boundary to define the extent of land to be removed from the Green Belt.	Lacks defensible Green Belt boundaries.	The adjustment to the site boundary in the revised Concept Masterplan will establish a new strong defensible boundary.
If finer grain accessible analysis shows the site (or the part of the site to be included) is accessible.	Very High accessibility.	<p>The site scores 400 which is the maximum score achievable and is 'very high' which exceeds all other sites in Meriden (Accessibility Mapping 2019 is Appendix 6).</p> <p>Other Meriden sites score between 250 and 350. DLP Site 10 scores 350.</p>

The only factor against Site 420 in the council's assessment is a 'very low' landscape capacity rating although the Commentary incorrectly states it to be 'low'. This assessment applies to all sites around Meriden except for Area G that is being worked for gravel extraction. It also applies to DLP Site 10.

There are other factors in favour that the Step 2 Refinement Criteria does not allow for. These are:

Other Evidence and Site Selection Criteria	SMBC Assessment Site 420	Stansgate Assessment Site 420 and other Meriden sites
SHELAA	Category 1	Category 1 which is the highest. Sites west and south are category 2 and 3. DLP Site 10 is category 2 in part due to pLWS. This affects the whole site, not part.
Landscape Character Assessment	Landscape Capacity to accommodate change – ‘very low’.	Our LVAGBR concludes the capacity to accommodate change is ‘ medium ’ based on a site-specific level and considering low-medium landscape character sensitivity, medium visual sensitivity and low landscape value as well as the scale, nature and sensitive landscape strategy associated with the Proposed Development. ‘Very low’ applies to DLP Site 10 and all sites around Meriden except Area G that is being worked for gravel extraction.
Sustainability Appraisal	AECOM 153 18 effects; 7 positives (5 significantly); 7 neutral; 4 negative.	With only 4 negative effects and no adverse, this assessment is more positive than any other Meriden site.
Site Selection Topic Paper	Meriden is suitable for limited expansion.	Meriden lacks a secondary school which puts it in the limited expansion category. Other settlements such as Dickens Heath and Cheswick Green are in the significant expansion category but also lack a secondary school. Meriden is highly accessible and should be in the significant expansion category.

Draft Local Plan – Accessibility Mapping Methodology Report – January 2019

This updates the previous assessment of 2016. It looks at distance to local facilities being Education, Food Store and GP Surgery along with access to public transport bus. Each category is scored out of 100 so the maximum score is 400.

Site 420 achieves the highest score available of 400 (**Appendix 5**). There were 426 sites assessed in the Borough and in addition to this site, only 13 others score the maximum available of 400 in a comparative assessment. This demonstrates the very high accessibility of the site.

Other sites around Meriden score from 250 to 350. DLP Site 10 scores 350 with the difference from this site being proximity to GP surgery as the surgery is located close to the access to this site but at the opposite end of the village to DLP Site 10.

The Site

The existing sustainable infrastructure and frequent bus services will serve the Site. The proposed development will not have a significant adverse impact on the operation of the surrounding highway network and is located where the need to travel could be minimised and the use of sustainable transport modes can be maximised.

In addition, the Site offers opportunities to provide enhanced green infrastructure by creating links between existing woodland, footpaths, and other nature conservation assets such as hedgerows, field trees and watercourses. Active management and strengthening of hedgerow, trees and woodland to ensure conservation, diversity and connectivity of habitat will secure long term conservation and environmental enhancement and accessibility.

The Minerals Safeguarding Area for Coal should be removed from the Site and proposed Safeguarded Land as it is no longer relevant. It has been assessed in detail in a report prepared by Wardell Armstrong in October 2016 on behalf of IM Land. The report can be made available in full if desired. It concludes that the coal resources were safeguarded to allow the continuation of coal mining at Daw Mill Colliery, located at Arley village near Nuneaton in Warwickshire. Since the publication of the Solihull Local Plan 2013 the circumstances have changed and the colliery has closed due to an underground fire in the coal seam. The coal resources cannot be viably worked as the level of investment required to bring the damaged colliery back into production, would make extraction of the coal unviable. It would also not be viable to open a new coal mine to exploit the resources, as there is an uncertain coal market in the UK, due to the government's plan to close all coal fired power stations by 2025.

The report shows that the coal is not a commercially viable mineral resource and it is not feasible to prior extract the coal. Consequently, the proposed development would not be contrary to the adopted mineral safeguarding policy.

IM Land Evidence Base

In addition to the DLP evidence base, technical work for the site is summarised in A Vision Statement. The key elements are summarised as below:

Arboriculture Survey - the majority of the trees are located in existing field boundaries and the masterplan has been designed to allow for the retention of these features.

Archaeological and Heritage Assessment - the Site does not contain any nationally important features such as world heritage sites, scheduled monuments, registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields or listed buildings, where there would be a presumption in favour of their physical preservation in situ and against development. There is an archaeological feature of local interest called a 'Lynchet' just outside of the eastern boundary and this will not be affected by proposals for the Site.

There are a number of listed buildings, and some locally listed buildings, in the vicinity of the Site, including those on Main Street and Old Road to the south, as well as those on Meriden Hill to the south-east. The historic core of Meriden Hill is also a conservation area. The buildings in Meriden

tend to have quite restricted settings which are unlikely to be harmed by development within the Site. The Church of St Laurence, some 420m away, and Meriden House, some 350m away have views over the Site although over higher land on which no development is proposed.

Ecological Appraisal - there are no statutory or local designations on the Site and there will be opportunities within the existing and newly created green spaces to retain, mitigate and provide opportunities for ecological habitat enhancement.

Drainage Strategy - the Site is Flood Zone 1 at low risk of flooding and surface water can be drained by ponds across the Site that link with the existing watercourse and will provide an ecologically sustainable drainage system.

LVAGBR March 2019 – this is a new assessment that takes the SMBC Landscape Character Assessment for LCA7 to a site-specific level allowing a finer grain assessment. It provides a background to the identified opportunities and constraints to development of the Site to explain the rationale behind the revised concept masterplan in terms of landscape character, landscape and visual qualities and the Site's function within the wider landscape context, together with the justification for the revised Green Belt boundary along its eastern boundary edge.

Paragraph 5.15 and Table 5.1 compare their finer grain landscape assessment with the council's giving full explanation. Its overall findings conclude there is a '**medium**' capacity for change, not 'very low' and are as follows:

Criteria	SMBC LCA7 Assessment	Barton Willmore Site Specific Assessment
Landscape Character Sensitivity	High	Low-Medium
Visual Sensitivity	Medium	Medium
Overall Landscape Sensitivity	High	Medium
Landscape Value	Medium	Low
landscape Capacity to Accommodate Change	Very Low	Medium

Overall, at paragraph 10.23 it concludes in terms of Landscape and Visual Appraisal, the Site comprises an area of weakened landscape on the eastern edge of Meriden surrounded on three sides by existing development. The visual envelope is generally limited to medium distance views from the south and east, from where it is viewed in the context of other development within Meriden. There is potential to mitigate in the manner set out in the report and reflected in the Concept Masterplan.

At Paragraph 8.20 is a finer grain Green Belt analysis that concludes the contribution of the site to the purposes of the Green Belt using Solihull Methodology is **score 4** which puts it at the lower end of the scale. Using Barton Willmore methodology, this assessment concluded that the Site made '**Some to a Limited**' contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. The greatest contribution was in relation to preventing sprawl due to the lack of strong defensible boundaries currently existing to the east of the Site. The Site was assessed as making no contribution to the prevention of towns merging and a limited contribution to the protection of the countryside from encroachment and the protection of the setting of historic towns.

Existing landscape features within the Site would be retained and enhanced, primarily the existing

trees and hedgerows. New hedgerows and oak trees would be established along the eastern boundaries of the Site as well as a substantial native woodland block to establish a strong new defensible Green Belt boundary.

The Site is identified as being located within the 'Meriden Gap' within the Solihull evidence base documents. This area is described as being an important area that forms the strategic separation between Birmingham and Coventry. The Site is situated 8km from the edge of Birmingham, separated by the main body of Meriden, and 4.5km from the edge of Coventry. Neither Birmingham nor Coventry is visible from the Site and development within the Site would not cause the physical or perceptual reduction in the separation of the two large settlements.

Overall, the more detailed Green Belt review finds the Site makes '**Some to Limited**' contribution to the purposes of Green Belt, reducing as mitigation measures are implemented.

Minerals Resource Assessment Report - shows that the extraction of coal is no longer commercially viable as a means of utilising existing mineral resources and is therefore not feasible. Consequently, the proposed development would not be contrary to the adopted mineral safeguarding policy.

Overall Conclusion

The overall conclusion is that Meriden can take more development. The Site performs well against the DLP evidence base. To add to this IM Lands' evidence has taken the high-level strategic assessments to a more detailed stage and demonstrates the Site is highly accessible; has 'Some to Limited' impact on Green Belt; is not constrained by minerals safeguarding; is visually well contained; the landscape has 'Medium' capacity to accommodate change; and it has the maximum SHELAA score. There are no known technical constraints and this site should be allocated.

Stansgate Planning
March 2019



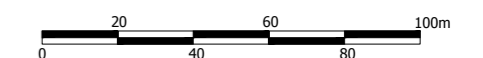
- Legend
-  Proposed Site Area
9.36 Ha / 23.12 Ac
 -  Existing Planting
 -  Proposed Planting
 -  Public Right of Way
 -  Proposed Footpath / Cycle Link and Emergency Access
 -  Areas of Proposed Development
 -  Attenuation Area

FIGURE 9

Project
 Land North of Main Road
 Meriden

Drawing Title
 Concept Masterplan on
 Aerial Base

Date	Scale	Drawn by	Check by
25.02.19	1:2,000 @ A2	A.S.	L.H.
Project No	Drawing No	Revision	
27878	BM-M-08	H	



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Appendix 2

Solihull Housing Need Technical Note

Prepared on behalf of:

IM Land

13 March 2019

Solihull Housing Need Technical Note

March 2019

Project Ref:	29413
Status:	Final
Issue/Rev:	02
Date:	13 March 2019
Prepared by:	DU
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This Technical Note has been prepared by Barton Willmore's National Development Economics Team on behalf of IM Land in response to Solihull Borough Council's (SBC) consultation on their supplementary update to the Draft Local Plan (the Draft Plan).
- 1.2 Specifically, this Technical Note focuses on the supply of housing proposed in the Draft Plan, and whether this aligns with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019), the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG, 2019), and the aims, objectives, and policies of the Draft Plan.
- 1.3 In undertaking this analysis, the Technical Note reviews recent housing and employment evidence base documents published by SBC, alongside other publicly available data.

2.0 NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

i) Introduction

- 2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was revised initially in July 2018 and again in February 2019. In respect of housing need, and how this is calculated for each local authority, the revised NPPF introduced the 'Standard Method' (SM) for calculating local housing need. This replaced the previous 'Objective Assessment of Overall Housing Need' (OAN) immediately in respect of planning applications and appeals.
- 2.2 However, in respect of the examination of Local Plans, a transition period applied for 6 months, during which time all Plans submitted to the Secretary of State for examination on or before 24 January 2019 were to be subject to the OAN method.
- 2.3 Notwithstanding the introduction of the SM however, there remains uncertainty over the method. This section of the Technical Note discusses this uncertainty and the revised Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) published to support the policies of the revised NPPF.

ii) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2019)

- 2.3 The revised NPPF replaces the 2012 NPPF and its requirement for an OAN, replacing it with the SM from the 24 July (with the exception of Local Plans submitted on or before 24 January 2019).
- 2.4 Paragraph 8 of the NPPF lists the three overarching objectives of the NPPF; **economic, social, and environmental**. The social objective states that planning will *"support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a **sufficient number** and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations."*
- 2.5 Paragraph 11 moves on to state how *"Plans and decisions should apply a **presumption** in favour of sustainable development"* and how in respect of Plan-making this means that *"plans should **positively seek** opportunities to meet the development needs of their area, and be sufficiently flexible to adapt to rapid change" and "strategic policies should, as a **minimum**, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas."*

- 2.6 Under section 3. 'Plan-making', the revised NPPF states that local authorities *"are under a duty to cooperate with each other, and with other prescribed bodies, on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries"* (paragraph 24) and in doing so *"should prepare and maintain one or more statements of common ground, documenting the cross-boundary matters being addressed and progress in cooperating to address these"* (paragraph 27).
- 2.7 When examining Plans and determining whether they are 'sound', the Planning Inspectorate will test whether the Plan is *"**positively prepared** – providing a strategy which, as a **minimum**, seeks to meet the area's objectively assessed needs; and is informed by agreements with other authorities, so that **unmet need** from neighbouring areas is accommodated where it is practical to do so and is consistent with achieving sustainable development"* (paragraph 35a).
- 2.8 The NPPF moves on to discuss 'Delivering a sufficient supply of homes' in section 5 and states how the delivery should *"support the Government's objective of **significantly boosting** the supply of homes."* Paragraph 60 moves on to state how *"To determine the **minimum** number of homes needed, strategic policies should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method in national planning guidance – unless exceptional circumstances justify an alternative approach which also reflects current and future demographic trends and market signals. In addition to the local housing need figure, **any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas** should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for. This identifies how the SM should be used to establish the **minimum** number of homes to be planned for.*
- 2.9 Section 6 of the revised NPPF refers to 'Building a strong, competitive economy' and Paragraph 80 states how *"Planning policies and decisions should help create the conditions in which businesses can invest, expand and adapt. **Significant weight** should be placed on the need to **support economic growth** and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development."* As part of this the NPPF (paragraph 81c) states how planning policies should *"seek to address potential **barriers** to investment, such as inadequate infrastructure, services or **housing**, or a poor environment."*
- 2.10 In this context, although the NPPF confirms that the SM should be used when calculating housing need, it also confirms how the SM represents **minimum** housing need. The NPPF is also clear that inadequate housing should not create a barrier to investment and that significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth.

iii) **Planning Practice Guidance – Housing and Economic Needs Assessment (PPG, 2019)**

- 2.11 The 'Housing and Economic Development Needs Assessment' (HEDNA) section of the PPG which supported the 2012 NPPF was initially replaced by the 'Housing Needs Assessment' (HNA) PPG on 13 September 2018, and updated on 20 February 2019. The HNA PPG provides more detailed guidance on the SM introduced in the revised NPPF.
- 2.12 At the outset, it is important to emphasise how the standard method calculation represents **minimum** housing need for an area. The revised HNA PPG is very clear in this respect, paragraph ID2a-002 stating that *"The standard method set out below identifies a **minimum** annual housing need figure. It **does not** produce a housing requirement."*
- 2.13 In this context paragraph ID2a-010 states *"The government is committed to ensuring that more homes are built and **supports ambitious authorities** who want to plan for growth. The standard method for assessing local housing need provides a **minimum starting point** in determining the number of homes needed in an area. It does not attempt to predict the impact that future government policies, changing economic circumstances or other factors might have on demographic behaviour. Therefore, there will be circumstances where it is appropriate to consider whether **actual housing need** is higher than the standard method indicates."*
- 2.14 Paragraph ID2a-010 moves on to consider the circumstances where housing *need* in excess of the minimum standard method *need* might be appropriate. Paragraph ID2a-010 states that *"Circumstances where this may be appropriate include, but are not limited to situations where increases in housing need are likely to exceed past trends because of:*
- *growth strategies for the area that are likely to be deliverable, for example where funding is in place to promote and facilitate additional growth (e.g. Housing Deals);*
 - *strategic infrastructure improvements that are likely to drive an increase in the homes needed locally; or*
 - *an authority agreeing to take on unmet need from neighbouring authorities, as set out in a statement of common ground;*

There may, occasionally, also be situations where previous levels of housing delivery in an area, or previous assessments of need (such as a recently-produced Strategic Housing Market Assessment) are significantly greater than the outcome from the standard method. Authorities will

need to take this into account when considering whether it is appropriate to plan for a higher level of need than the standard model suggests.

- 2.15 In summary, in the context of paragraphs ID2a-002 and ID2a-010, it is imperative to understand that the standard method calculation is simply a **minimum starting point** in determining the number of homes needed actual need has the potential to be higher in order to support the policies of the NPPF and the clear objectives of Government to 'significantly boost' housing supply and 'support economic growth'.

iv) Status of the Standard Method

- 2.16 The standard method for calculating local housing need was formally introduced by Government in the revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 24 July 2018). Although the NPPF confirmed that the standard method applied from the 24 July 2018 for the purposes of planning applications, the NPPF and the accompanying 'Housing Needs Assessment' section of the revised Planning Practice Guidance (PPG, 13 September 2018), included an important caveat as follows:

"The government is aware that lower than previously forecast population projections have an impact on the outputs associated with the method. Specifically it is noted that the revised projections are likely to result in the minimum need numbers generated by the method being subject to a significant reduction, once the relevant household projection figures are released in September 2018.

In the housing white paper the government was clear that reforms set out (which included the introduction of a standard method for assessing housing need) should lead to more homes being built. In order to ensure that the outputs associated with the method are consistent with this, we will consider adjusting the method after the household projections are released in September 2018. We will consult on the specific details of any change at that time.

It should be noted that the intention is to consider adjusting the method to ensure that the starting point in the plan-making process is consistent in aggregate with the proposals in Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation and continues to be consistent with ensuring that 300,000 homes are built per year by the mid 2020s."

- 2.17 The new household projections referred to in the above text were subsequently published on 20 September 2018 and resulted in standard method need of 212,000 dwellings per annum (dpa) nationally, compared with the previous household projections which generated 265,000 dpa when the standard method was first consulted on in September 2017. This significant drop in need

contradicted the Government's aspiration to build 300,000 dpa nationally by the mid-2020s, as set out in the 2017 Autumn Budget.

- 2.18 Government therefore confirmed that revisions to the standard method would be consulted on before the end of 2018.
- 2.19 These proposed changes were confirmed by the Minister of State for Housing, Kit Malthouse MP. In commenting on the recent 2016-based ONS SNPP and household projections he said *"There have been some really anomalous results from it - some very strong growth areas which have come out with a zero-housing need. That's just crazy."* This has led to Government considering a number of options for amending the standard method. In this context Kit Malthouse commented, *"We recognise that the whole sector, councils included, need clarity pretty quickly. We will come out as soon as we can with some sort of consultation. It would be great to get it sorted out this side of Christmas and certainly before January 24."*¹
- 2.20 These proposed changes were subsequently commented on by Steve Quartermain, Chief Planner at the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) who stated that *"We have a commitment to consult on revision of the calculations on local housing need. The secretary of state has been clear that something will be seen on that before Christmas."* Quartermain said his officials were *"looking at various options"* and the department would *"consult as soon as we can"* on revisions to the methodology. Quartermain also made clear that the revised method would still aim to meet the overall target of delivering 300,000 homes per annum by the mid-2020s laid down in the revised NPPF. *"The policy direction is clearly to maintain a higher figure than the current projections suggest and the methodology will be trying to do that."*²
- 2.21 In this context, MHCLG announced planned revisions to the SM in their ***'Technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance'*** published on 26 October 2018. This consultation paper sought views on the changes proposed in respect of the method by which the SM figure is calculated, with the consultation period running until 07 December 2018.
- 2.22 In short, the consultation paper acknowledged the inadequacy of using the 2016-based household projections for the baseline level of housing need in the SM calculation. MHCLG consider the 2016 projections inadequate for a number of reasons detailed in the paper.

¹ Interview: Kit Malthouse, housing and planning minister, Planning Resource, 04 October 2018, <https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1495046/interview-kit-malthouse-housing-planning-minister>

² More on revised standard housing need method by Christmas, says chief planner, 09 October 2018, <https://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1495543/revised-standard-housing-need-method-christmas-says-chief-planner>

- 2.23 The consultation paper therefore proposed to replace the use of the latest 2016-based Office for National Statistics (ONS) in step 1 of the standard method and replace them with the previous 2014-based MHCLG household projections. However the paper also stated how this change will be made in the *“short term”* and that *“In the longer term, to **review the formula** with a view to establishing a **new method** that meets the principles in paragraph 18 above by the time the next projections are issued.”*³
- 2.24 It is also notable how the consultation paper emphasised again how the SM is the **minimum** level of housing need that should be planned for; *“Local housing need does not represent a mandatory target – it is simply a **starting point** for planning, and local authorities may either choose to plan in excess of this or to conclude that they are not able to meet all housing need within their boundaries, for example due to constraints such as protected designations and Green Belt, or whether that need is better met elsewhere. This means there is flexibility for local authorities to manage movements in local housing need locally.”*⁴
- 2.25 The results of the above consultation have now been published (19 February 2019) and confirm that the recommendations put forward by Government will be taken forward. For the Standard Method this means that the 2016-based ONS household projections **must not be used** as the baseline for the Standard Method calculation.⁵
- 2.26 Furthermore Government confirm that the 2016-based household projections **will not** be considered to be an exceptional circumstance that justifies identifying minimum need levels lower than those identified by the standard method.⁶
- 2.27 However the Standard Method in its existing form is not expected to be adopted for longer than 18 months, with Government stating *“Over the next 18 months we will review the formula and the way it is set using National Statistics data with a view to establish a new approach that balances the need for clarity, simplicity and transparency for local communities with the Government’s aspirations for the housing market.”*⁷

³ Paragraph 19(1), page 10, Technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance, 26 October 2018

⁴ Paragraph 27(3), page 13, Technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance, 26 October 2018

⁵ Government response, page 6-7, Government response to the technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance, A summary of consultation responses and the Government’s view on the way forward, February 2019

⁶ Government response, page 7-8, Government response to the technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance, A summary of consultation responses and the Government’s view on the way forward, February 2019

⁷ Government response, page 6-7, Government response to the technical consultation on updates to national planning policy and guidance, A summary of consultation responses and the Government’s view on the way forward, February 2019

2.28 These changes were subsequently formalised in the revised 'Housing and economic needs assessment' section of the revised PPG on 20 February 2019.

v) Summary

2.29 The current national policy and guidance with respect to housing need has been summarised in this section. The key points to note are as follows:

- the revised NPPF introduces the 'standard method' for calculating local housing need;
- the standard method replaced the OAN method immediately from 24 July 2018 for applications, and for all Local Plans submitted after 24 January 2019;
- Government have reiterated that the SM represents 'minimum' housing need, and it should represent the 'starting point' for planning;
- Revised PPG confirms that 'actual housing need may be higher' than the SM minimum;
- Revised NPPF states how inadequate housing should not form a barrier to investment;
- Recent technical consultation responses confirm Government's stance that 2014-based household projections are to be used for the SM and not the 2016-based projections;
- Revised PPG confirms that the 2016-based ONS household projections cannot be used as an 'exceptional circumstance' to justify a minimum housing need figure below SM;
- The Standard Method will be revised within the next 18 months.

3.0 LOCAL PLANNING POLICY

i) Introduction

3.1 Having identified the existing national policy and supporting guidance in which housing need should be calculated, in this section we consider policy and evidence at the local level in Solihull. This incorporates a summary and review of their *'Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation'* (Draft Plan), and their recent evidence base documents. This will enable the determination of a background from which to establish whether the standard method calculation – minimum housing need – will support policies in the Draft Plan, and whether the Council's own evidence points to 'actual' housing need being higher than the standard method.

ii) Adopted Solihull District Plan (03 December 2013)

3.2 Before we consider the Draft Plan consultation document, the key policies of the adopted Plan should be summarised.

3.3 Policy P5: 'Provision of Land for Housing' of the adopted Plan targeted the provision of 11,000 dwellings between 2006 and 2028 (500 dwellings per annum). This reflected the requirement recommended by the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase II Revision Panel Report which objectively assessed housing need.⁸

3.4 However a successful High Court Challenge was subsequently made in 2014 against Policy P5 and the supporting text set out above in respect of housing numbers. The Judgment against the Council was subsequently upheld at appeal although it was confirmed that all other parts of the Plan remained adopted.

3.5 Notwithstanding the challenge in respect of housing need, the Local Plan is very clear in respect of its responsibilities in respect of economic growth. Challenge D of the Plan is entitled 'Securing Sustainable Economic Growth' and lists the following 'key economic assets' of the Borough:

- i. Maintaining Solihull's important **regional and sub-regional role**;
- ii. Meeting aspirations of key businesses to enable them to **maintain competitiveness** (Birmingham Airport, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham

⁸ Paragraph 8.4.1, page 73, Solihull Local Plan – Shaping a Sustainable Future, December 2013

Business Park, Blythe Valley Park, Jaguar Land Rover) whilst contributing to sustainable development;

- iii. Retaining a **high skilled workforce**;
- iv. Impact of congestion on motorways, the strategic highway network and rail from additional growth/housing;
- v. Impact of pressure for development on the quality of the environment;
- vi. Need to provide opportunities around workplaces for healthy and active lifestyles;
- vii. Need for high speed digital connectivity to enhance competitiveness.⁹

3.6 The 'Vision' for the Borough also states the following:

"It will be a Borough that continues to be economically successful and a driver for sustainable growth within the West Midlands; where the potential for managed growth within the M42 Economic Gateway is unlocked and the ambitions for the economic assets contained within it are fully realised."¹⁰

3.7 The Plan also identifies its place within the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Enterprise Partnership (LEP) stating how *"the Borough is the principal gateway to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership area and the wider West Midlands Region"*¹¹ and how the M42 Economic Gateway sits within the LEP area.

3.8 The Plan goes on to identify how the Borough is home to several economic assets within the M42 Gateway including Birmingham Airport, the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks, Jaguar Land Rover and Solihull Town Centre and how *"It is estimated that realising the full potential of the Gateway could create over 36,000 additional jobs by 2026 and add £5.9bn to the West Midlands economy."*¹²

iii) Solihull Local Plan Review: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation (Supplementary Consultation, January 2019)

3.9 The Supplementary Consultation identifies how there are three main reasons for an early review of the Adopted Plan identified above. These are as follows:

⁹ Key Challenge D – Securing Sustainable Economic Growth, page 20, Solihull Local Plan – Shaping a Sustainable Future, December 2013

¹⁰ Paragraph , page 20, Solihull Local Plan – Shaping a Sustainable Future, December 2013

¹¹ Paragraph 2.2.1, page 9, Solihull Local Plan – Shaping a Sustainable Future, December 2013

¹² Paragraph 2.7.1, page 14, Solihull Local Plan – Shaping a Sustainable Future, December 2013

“The first is to deal with the legal challenge to the 2013 plan; secondly to accommodate Solihull’s own housing needs, as well as helping to address the housing shortfall occurring in the wider Housing Market Area (HMA); and finally to provide a proper planning framework that recognises the arrival of HS2 in the Borough – in particular the first station outside of London which is to be constructed on land opposite the NEC.”¹³

- 3.10 Under the ‘Purpose of Consultation’ section the Supplementary Consultation states the consultation seeks to *“Provide an update on local housing need now that national planning policy has changed through the introduction of a standard methodology.”*¹⁴ However it states how the consultation is not seeking to *“Revise the contribution that the Council is making towards the HMA shortfall. This will be considered through the draft submission version of the plan.”*¹⁵
- 3.11 Notwithstanding the reference to the HMA shortfall, the ‘Duty to Cooperate’ section of the Supplementary Consultation identifies Solihull’s role in accommodating unmet need from the wider HMA. It notes how other local authorities and other interested parties identified how *“(a) there is no clear justification why 2,000 was chosen as the figure Solihull would make towards the HMA shortfall and (b) there is opportunity to make a greater contribution.”*¹⁶ It goes on to state how the potential for a revision to the 2,000 figure remains as part of the Submission Draft Plan in summer 2019.¹⁷

Housing Need

- 3.12 The Supplementary Consultation identifies how the first stage in the Draft Plan review (November 2016) concluded on there being an Objectively Assessed Need (OAN) for 13,091 dwellings, 2014-2033, in Solihull Borough. This figure equated to 689 dwellings per annum. Added to this was 1,938 dwellings to deal with the HMA shortfall, resulting in a housing requirement of 15,029 dwellings, 2014-2033.
- 3.13 Paragraphs 41 to 48 of the Supplementary Consultation discuss housing need for Solihull Borough. The consultation correctly identifies the Standard Method approach to calculating local housing need, and identifies a need of **767 dwellings per annum**. The Supplementary Consultation identifies however that this is the **minimum** local housing need figure for Solihull.

¹³ Paragraph 2, page 4, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

¹⁴ Paragraph 4, page 4, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

¹⁵ Paragraph 5, page 5, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

¹⁶ Paragraph 27, page 8, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

¹⁷ Paragraph 29, page 8, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

3.14 The Supplementary Consultation then identifies how applying the same 2,000 dwelling uplift applied in the 2016 Draft Plan would increase housing requirement to **15,039 dwellings, 2018-2035**, an annual average of **885 dwellings**.¹⁸

Economic Growth

3.15 The Supplementary Consultation builds on the potential for economic growth outlined in the Adopted Plan and the 2016 Draft Plan by outlining plans for the 'UK Central Hub', an area focussed on the main economic assets located around junction 6 of the M42. The principal elements of the Hub are listed in the consultation as follows:

- Arden Cross Land including the HS2 interchange;
- Birmingham Airport;
- The NEC;
- Jaguar Land Rover; and
- Birmingham Business Park¹⁹

3.16 In this respect the Supplementary Consultation states the following:

"It is anticipated that the UK Central Hub site will make a significant contribution towards the delivery of homes and economic development in the Borough during the plan period and beyond. The extension of High Speed rail to the West Midlands will be significant, reducing journey times to London to 38 minutes and enhancing existing connectivity provided via Birmingham airport and via the region's extensive road and motorway network. As the site of the first railway interchange station outside London The Hub is uniquely placed to capture these benefits."

"The Hub is therefore a unique site with the potential to deliver major growth on a nationally significant scale both to meet the economic growth aims of the Borough as well as the wider growth aspirations of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP and the West Midlands Combined Authority."²⁰ (Our emphasis)

3.17 The Supplementary Consultation moves on to conclude the following in this context:

¹⁸ Paragraph 48, page 12, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull's Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

¹⁹ Paragraph 323, page 58, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull's Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

²⁰ Paragraph 323, page 58, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull's Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

“It is clear that co-ordinating the development ambitions of all stakeholders and delivering a range of growth opportunities will provide multiple benefits for the Borough and wider area including:

- **The delivery of a significant amount of jobs;**
- **A greater range and choice of new homes for The Hub, Solihull and the wider Housing Market Area;**
- **New and unique forms of high quality development;**
- **The creation of healthy neighbourhoods;**
- **Joined up green infrastructure;**
- **The delivery of strategic infrastructure.”** ²¹ (Our emphasis)

3.18 It is therefore clear that housing delivery in Solihull must be of a quantum which contributes to supporting the ‘significant amount of jobs’ created by the Hub and other employment development in the Borough.

Summary

3.19 In summary, the following key points can be drawn from the Adopted Plan and the Supplementary Consultation document:

- A clear commitment to provide some of the wider HMA’s unmet need;
- Housing delivery for Solihull Borough based on the Government’s Standard Method;
- Acknowledgement that Solihull is in a unique geographical location which can support significant levels of new employment.

3.20 Having established the policy context for Solihull, the following section considers recent evidence in respect of housing need and employment growth.

²¹ Paragraph 333, page 59, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

4.0 EVIDENCE BASE REVIEW

i) Introduction

4.1 This section of our Technical Note builds on the policy context summarised in section 3, by considering the most recent evidence published by the Council in respect of housing need and employment growth. We also consider the *'Strategic Growth Study into the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area'* (SGS, February 2018) commissioned by the 14 local authorities of the Housing Market Area (HMA). However we acknowledge that the SGS is not a policy statement.

ii) Evidence of employment growth

4.2 As we have identified in the previous section of this report, Solihull Borough Council's (SBC) Supplementary Consultation identifies how significant levels of job growth will be created in the Borough over the Plan period. However no job figures are referenced. We have therefore reviewed a number of documents which provide more detail in this respect.

4.3 The 'Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy' has been produced by the Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GB&SLEP) and *"outlines how we [the LEP] are seeking to fully maximise the benefits of the largest infrastructure project in Europe."*²² The HS2 development is described by the LEP as a *"once-in-a-generation opportunity to drive economic growth and prosperity across the Midlands"*²³ and one of HS2 stations – the Interchange – is to be located in Solihull Borough between junctions 6 and 7 of the M42.

4.4 As part of the overarching strategy, the HS2 Growth Strategy reports how the two HS2 stations (Curzon in Birmingham and the Interchange in Solihull) alone will create **52,000 jobs** and £1.25 billion in GVA per year²⁴. Within this figure the Interchange at Solihull is expected to create **16,500 new jobs** and 1,900 new homes.²⁵

4.5 The Council's 'Employment Land Review' is also of relevance. This was prepared by Peter Brett Associates (PBA) in January 2017 and provides three scenarios for job growth in the Borough as follows:

²² Foreword, The Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy Accelerating the UK's engine of growth, July 2015

²³ Foreword, The Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy Accelerating the UK's engine of growth, July 2015

²⁴ Foreword, The Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy Accelerating the UK's engine of growth, July 2015

²⁵ Page 21, The Midlands HS2 Growth Strategy Accelerating the UK's engine of growth, July 2015

- **Brexit scenario** – this is based on the most recent Experian forecast, published in September 2016 and therefore after the EU membership referendum;
- **Oxford Economics (OE) scenario** – this is the baseline model prepared by OE for the UK, split out by LPA. This provides an alternative view to the Experian modelling.
- **UKC Hub scenario** - a scenario was commissioned for the SHMA which sought to take account of the UKC Hub development which is treated as a transformational investment which would be outside the baseline Experian model.²⁶

4.6 These scenarios result in forecast growth of 13,300 jobs (Brexit scenario) and 15,250 jobs (Baseline scenario) between 2014 and 2033, alongside a baseline Oxford Economics scenario (8,900 jobs 2014-2030). The impact of the HS2 interchange is also considered by PBA, and this shows how the Interchange alone would create 5,400 new jobs over the Plan period, leading to a total of 20,600 jobs.²⁷

4.7 Notwithstanding this range of growth, PBA conclude that the Brexit and Oxford Economics scenarios should be discounted²⁸, leaving the Experian baseline (15,250 jobs) and UKC Hub scenario (20,600 jobs) 2014-2033. This equates to growth of **between 800 and 1,080 jobs per annum**.

iii) **Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP)**

4.8 Employment growth should also be considered in the context of the **Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP)** and the aspirations for economic growth set out therein for the nine local authorities it covers (Birmingham, Bromsgrove, Cannock Chase, East Staffordshire, Lichfield, Redditch, Solihull, Tamworth, and Wyre Forest).

4.9 The GBSLEP's most recent Strategic Economic Plan 2016-2030 (SEP) identifies how **250,000 new private sector jobs** are aspired to be created across the nine authorities in 20 years. This equates to 12,500 jobs per annum.

4.10 The SEP reports that 42% of this target has been delivered in the first six years of the SEP plan period (104,000 jobs). This leaves 146,000 jobs to be created over the remaining 14 years (10,430 jobs per annum) in the nine constituent authorities.²⁹

²⁶ Paragraph 5.4, page 46, Solihull Employment Land Review, January 2017

²⁷ Paragraphs 5.8-5.28, pages 48-55, Solihull Employment Land Review, January 2017

²⁸ Paragraph 5.29, page 55, Solihull Employment Land Review, January 2017

²⁹ Page 19, GBSLEP Strategic Economic Plan 2016–2030

- 4.11 This will need to be considered in the context of Barton Willmore's demographic forecasting scenarios in the following section of this report, in which we will determine what proportion of the remaining forecast job growth for the GBSLEP area is created in Solihull by the Standard Method.
- 4.12 As one of nine authorities in the LEP area, the level of housing in Solihull will need to be of a level to adequately contribute to meeting the target for the LEP area. As we have already identified, the Supplementary Consultation identifies the importance of Solihull's place within the GBSLEP, identifying how the Hub is *"a unique site with the potential to deliver major growth on a nationally significant scale both to meet the economic growth aims of the Borough as well as the wider growth aspirations of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP and the West Midlands Combined Authority."*³⁰

iv) Summary

- 4.13 In summary, the Council's evidence base provides us with a relatively recent (January 2017) assessment of baseline job growth prospects for Solihull, post-Brexit referendum, alongside a scenario which takes into account the potential job growth created by the HS2 Hub Interchange. It shows annual job growth of between 800 and 1,080 jobs per annum. It is therefore imperative that the housing requirement for Solihull supports at least 800 jobs per annum, and more realistically the upper end of this range.

³⁰ Paragraph 332, page 59, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull's Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

5.0 DEMOGRAPHIC FORECASTING AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

v) Introduction

- 5.1 This section of our Technical Note follows the context set out in previous sections and provides a demographic forecasting scenario which establishes the level of job growth that would be supported by step 1 of the standard method. This is intended to provide some context for how the standard method may contribute to the economic growth aspirations set out in the Adopted Local Plan and the Supplementary Consultation.
- 5.2 We determine this through the population and housing growth determined by step 1 of the standard method calculation, i.e. the 2014-based MHCLG household projection, as recently adopted in Planning Practice Guidance (20 February 2019) in place of the more recent 2016-based ONS household projections.
- 5.3 Barton Willmore's view is that the assessment **should not** be made against the final standard method figure, because it is step 1 which provides the baseline level of population and households, to which a market signals uplift is then applied at Step 2. In other words, the market signals uplift is not applied for additional population growth but to help alleviate the build up of concealed households and the affordability issues in the Borough.
- 5.4 It is the baseline level of population growth, and the amount of jobs this supports that we are interested in determining. This baseline population may need to increase to accommodate workers, and it would be to this amended figure that the Standard Method's market signals uplift would then need to be applied.
- 5.5 However as a sensitivity we also provide a dwelling-constrained scenario based on the final Standard Method figure for the Borough.

vi) Demographic forecasting scenario and results

Baseline population growth and economic growth

- 5.6 For Solihull, the 2014-based household projection provides for growth of 629 households per annum over the 10-year period between 2019 and 2029 (the latest 10-year period is used by the standard method). We have therefore used the population growth underpinning this (the 2014-

based population projections) as a constraint to the model and determined how many jobs will be supported by this population growth.

5.7 To undertake the demographic modelling we have used the PopGroup model, managed by Edge Analytics, and widely used for forecasting of this nature by a variety of groups and organisations, including local authorities and planning consultancies.

5.8 The model requires a number of different demographic and economic assumptions, and these are listed below:

- 2014-based ONS Sub National Population Projections;
- 2016-based ONS Mortality and Fertility Rates;
- 2014-based Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) household formation rates;
- 2014-based MHCLG institutional population;
- Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) July 2018 economic activity projections;
- 2011 Census commuting ratio;
- Unemployment recorded by the Annual Population Survey (APS).

5.9 The results of this sensitivity testing are summarised in Table 5.1. We have presented the results for the 10-year period applicable to the standard method (2019 – 2029), and the 20-year period (2016 – 2036) consulted on for the Draft Plan period.

Table 5.1: 2014-based ONS SNPP forecast

	2018	2019	2029	2035	2019-2029 (per annum)	2018-2035 (per annum)
Population	214,046	215,262	228,071	235,040	12,810 (1,281)	20,995 (1,235)
Households	89,750	90,335	96,618	100,444	6,282 (628)	10,694 (629)
Economically Active Population	109,268	109,776	114,303	117,082	4,527 (453)	7,814 (460)
Jobs Supported	106,791	107,287	111,712	114,428	4,425 (443)	7,637 (449)

Source: Barton Willmore modelling

5.10 Table 5.1 shows how the 2014-based ONS SNPP would support around **450 jobs per annum** over the two periods we have assessed. This is significantly below the figures

referred to in PBA's 2017 Employment Lane Review conclusions (of between 800 and 1,080 jobs per annum).

- 5.11 We can therefore conclude that the Standard Method would fail to support job growth identified in the Council's own evidence base.
- 5.12 Notwithstanding this view we have also tested a dwelling-constrained scenario which determines how many jobs will be supported by the final Standard Method need figure for Solihull (777 dpa).

Standard Method Minimum Housing Need (777 dpa)

- 5.13 Below we set out the results of our scenario which constrains growth to the final Standard Method figure for Solihull, i.e. **777 dwellings per annum**. As PPG identifies this should be seen as the **minimum** level of housing need required. PPG also recognises how 'actual' housing need may need to be higher than the Standard Method minimum in order to meet other growth aspirations.
- 5.14 For this scenario we have applied two approaches to the household formation rates (HFRs) assumed by the demographic model. The HFRs are the rates at which each age group is expected to form an independent household headed by either a male or a female. The HFRs are published by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) with official household projections and our first scenario uses these HFRs as published by MHCLG.
- 5.15 However it is widely recognised how the HFRs are based on past trends, and how recent trends have been influenced by a period of worsening affordability. This has led to a downward trajectory of household formation in younger age groups (primarily the 25-44 age group) who are unable to purchase their own property and form an independent household. These people therefore become 'concealed' households, living with family and friends. This is a trend which has been identified by Government in the Housing White Paper, in which MHCLG comment as follows:

"As recently as the 1990s, a first-time buyer couple on a low-to-middle income saving five per cent of their wages each month would have enough for an average-sized deposit after just three years. Today it would take them 24 years. It's no surprise that home ownership among 25- to 34-year-olds has fallen from 59 per cent just over a decade ago to just 37 per cent today. Without help from the 'Bank of Mum and Dad', many young people will struggle to get on the housing ladder." ³¹

³¹ page 10, Fixing our broken housing market, MHCLG

5.16 To address this trend our second HFR scenario therefore assumes a return to the HFRs in the year 2001 for the 25-44 age group. However this is only applied where the Government's 2014-based HFR assumption in the year 2035 (the final year of the Plan period) is projected to be lower than the recorded rate in 2001. We use the year 2001 as this was the start of the period in which affordability began to worsen, and most younger people who wanted to form their own household found they were able to. In Solihull this factor only affects HFRs in the male population. Table 5.2 summarises the results of the two household formation rate sensitivity scenarios.

Table 5.2: Standard Method dwelling-led scenario (777 dpa)

	2018	2019	2029	2035	2019-2029 (per annum)	2018-2035 (per annum)
Population	214,046	215,706	232,044	240,793	16,338 (1,634)	26,748 (1,573)
Economically Active Population ¹	109,268	110,120	117,593	121,957	7,473 (747)	12,689 (746)
Economically Active Population ²	109,268	109,854	115,842	119,596	5,988 (599)	10,328 (608)
Jobs Supported ¹	106,791	107,623	114,927	119,192	7,303 (730)	12,401 (729)
Jobs Supported ²	106,791	107,363	113,215	116,884	5,852 (585)	10,093 (594)

Source: Barton Willmore modelling

¹2014-based MHCLG household formation rates

²2014-based MHCLG household formation rates (sensitivity)

5.17 This forecast establishes how growth of 777 dwellings per annum would still **fail** to support the lower end of the range established in PBA's employment land review (800 jobs per annum). The scenario would only result in supporting between **594 and 729 jobs per annum** over the Plan period, depending on which household formation sensitivity scenario is applied.

Economic Growth

5.18 We have also tested the range of job growth identified in the PBA employment land review, which we have outlined in the previous section of this report. Barton Willmore's view is that the housing growth resulting from this scenario provides the baseline growth required by Step 1 of the Standard Method. To this figure, the affordability uplift required by Step 2 of the Standard Method would need to be applied.

- 5.19 The results of the baseline growth required to support the range of jobs (800 to 1,080 jobs per annum) is summarised in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: Housing Need required to support 800 – 1,080 jobs per annum, 2018-2035

	2018	2019	2029	2035	2019-2029 (per annum)	2018-2035 (per annum)
Growth of 800 jobs per annum 2018-2035						
Population	214,046	215,652	233,185	242,925	17,533 (1,753)	28,880 (1,699)
Homes required ¹	90,785	91,543	99,759	104,813	8,216 (822)	14,028 (825)
Homes required ²	91,408	92,318	101,598	107,155	9,280 (928)	15,747 (926)
Growth of 1,080 jobs per annum 2018-2035						
Population	214,046	216,111	238,588	251,476	22,477 (2,248)	37,431 (2,202)
Homes required ¹	90,785	91,704	101,800	108,108	10,096 (1,010)	17,323 (1,019)
Homes required ²	91,408	92,482	103,709	110,572	11,227 (1,123)	19,164 (1,127)

Source: Barton Willmore modelling

¹2014-based MHCLG household formation rates

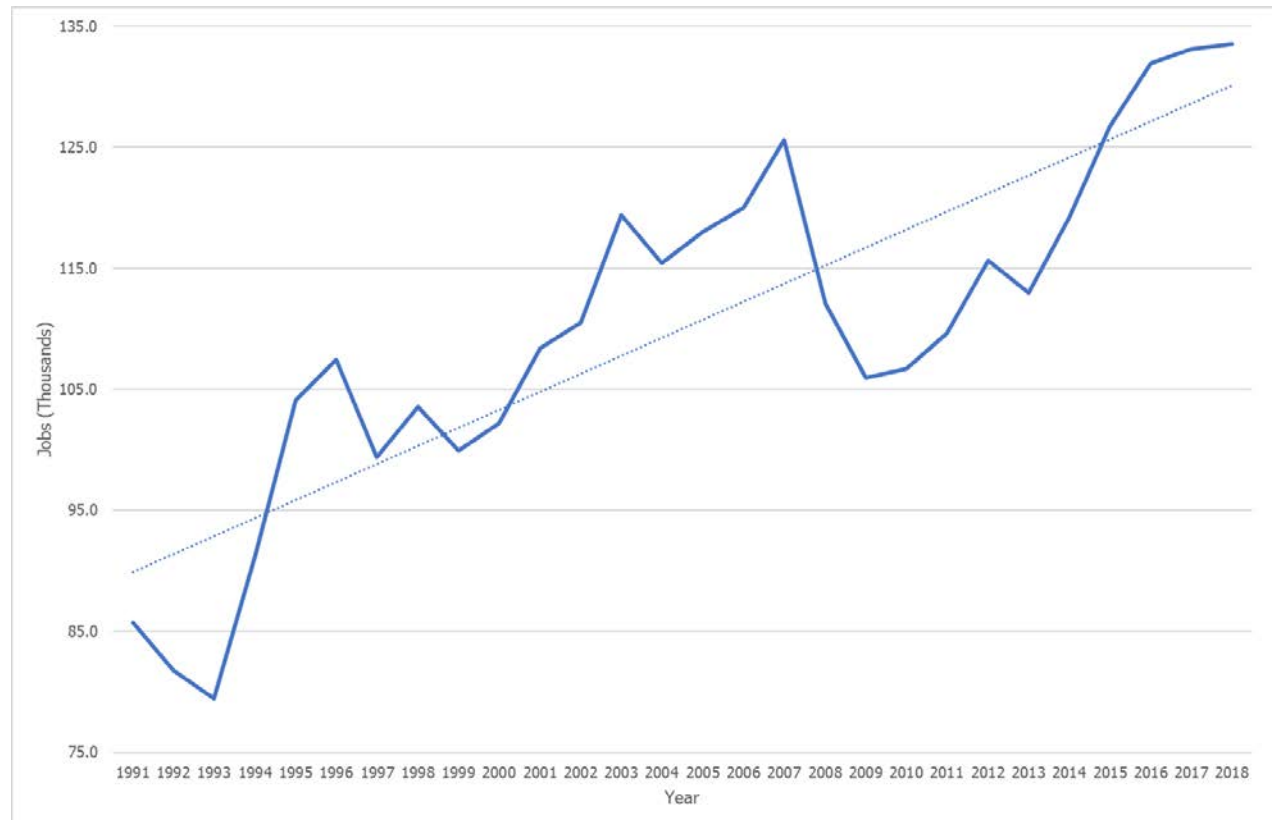
²2014-based MHCLG household formation rates (sensitivity)

- 5.20 The above tables show how need in Solihull would range between **825 and 926 dwellings per annum** over the Plan period, just to meet the *baseline* level of job growth set out in the Council's Employment Land Review.
- 5.21 In order to support the job growth created by the UK Hub, this would increase to **between 1,019 and 1,127 dwellings per annum**.
- 5.22 The affordability uplift for Solihull would also need to be added to these figures. In March 2019, this uplift equates to 24%. This would increase the lower end of the range to **between 1,023 and 1,148 dwellings per annum**, and the upper end of the range to **between 1,264 and 1,397 dwellings per annum**.

Historic job growth and housing need

- 5.23 Alongside the forecast of job growth we have tested above, consideration of historic levels of job growth should also be considered. We are able to obtain this evidence from the Oxford Economics dating back to 1991, and have therefore set out historic levels of job growth for Solihull in Figure 5.1 below:

Figure 5.1: Historic levels of employment in Solihull, 1991-2018



Source: Oxford Economics, January 2019

- 5.24 Figure 5.1 illustrates how the historic levels of job growth have fluctuated significantly in Solihull. In deciding on a reasonable calculation of past job growth to use for modelling purposes, an arbitrary period cannot be used. For example, using the most recent 10 years (2008-2018) shows that there was growth of 21,400 jobs (2,140 jobs per annum). Similarly, using the inter-censal period between 2001 and 2011 would show a much less pronounced increase (1,200 jobs). Both of these figures illustrate the need to analyse historic levels of job growth more closely.
- 5.25 Barton Willmore's approach is therefore to identify 'peaks' and 'troughs' in the number of jobs, which provides a more realistic calculation of average job growth in the past. For Solihull there

are clear peaks above the trend line (dotted line in Figure 5.1) in 1996 and 2016. Over this 20-year period there was growth of 24,500 jobs (**1,225 jobs per annum**). In contrast there are clear troughs below the trend line in 1993 and 2009; this results in growth of 26,400 jobs (**1,650 jobs per annum**).

5.26 In this context Barton Willmore consider the dwelling growth required by the scenario assuming growth of 1,080 jobs per annum 2018-2035 should be considered appropriate for future growth in Solihull.

5.27 As we have identified above this would require housing growth of **between 1,264 and 1,397 dwellings per annum** once the Standard Method's affordability uplift is applied.

vii) Summary

5.28 In summary, the key points from this section area as follows:

- The baseline level of population and household growth used by the standard method (the 2014-based ONS SNPP and MHCLG household projection) would support **449 jobs per annum** based on recent demographic and economic assumptions;
- This level of job creation is significantly lower than the baseline job growth (**800 jobs per annum**) and the level of job growth (**1,080 jobs per annum**) needed to support the UK Hub;
- Barton Willmore have tested the level of housing required to support the range of job growth published by PBA. This shows need of between **825 and 926 dwellings per annum** over the Plan period, just to meet the *baseline* level of job growth set out in the Council's Employment Land Review.
- To achieve the UK Hub scenario, **between 1,019 and 1,127 dwellings per annum** would be required;
- The UK Hub scenario is considered to be a conservative projection in the context of historic job growth, which our analysis suggests has average **at least 1,225 jobs per annum** since 1991.

6.0 GREATER BIRMINGHAM AND BLACK COUNTRY UNMET HOUSING NEED

i) Introduction

- 6.1 Solihull Borough Council is located within the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBBCHMA) and is therefore responsible for delivering any unmet need from authorities within the HMA, alongside the other 13 local authorities within the HMA. This has been identified by the Council throughout the Draft Plan and a number of options for housing growth have been put forward which would contribute to the unmet need.
- 6.2 The Supplementary Consultation does not address unmet need, stating how it does not seek to *“Revise the contribution that the Council is making towards the HMA shortfall. This will be considered through the draft submission version of the plan.”*³² However it states how there is potential for a revision to the 2,000 figure currently proposed through the Submission Draft Plan in summer 2019.³³

ii) Evidence of Unmet Need

- 6.3 The most recent study in respect of unmet housing need in the HMA is presented by the *Strategic Growth Study into the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area, February 2018* (SGS). This report was commissioned by the 14 local authorities comprising the HMA, and Solihull identify their responsibility to deliver some of the unmet need in the Supplementary Consultation.
- 6.4 Barton Willmore’s analysis does not provide an alternative assessment of unmet need, or a specific methodology for distributing need, however it is clear that Solihull accept responsibility to deliver some of the HMA’s unmet need and the SGS provides an evidence-based approach to determining the magnitude of this need.
- 6.5 Ultimately any unmet need in the HMA will lead to a housing requirement for Solihull which is higher than the minimum derived through the standard method and also an alternative higher housing figure required to support economic growth.

³² Paragraph 5, page 5, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

³³ Paragraph 29, page 8, Reviewing the Plan for Solihull’s Future: Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation, January 2019

OAN and Unmet Need

- 6.6 The most recent SGS *'Housing Need and Housing Land Supply Position Statement' (September 2018)* is the second position statement to address the issue of unmet need and is based on the Objective Assessment of Housing Need (OAN) rather than the Standard Method (SM). This stance was due in part to the examination of the revised North Warwickshire Plan which will be assessed against the OAN. However the statement confirms that the SM will be used for the next statement.
- 6.7 However in respect of the OAN, as the SGS and the position statement rightly point out, *"Comparing OANs on a like for like basis is very difficult as the methods by which they were prepared and assumptions made vary significantly. Furthermore, as they were prepared at different times the demographic and employment data used may not be comparable."*³⁴ These inconsistencies are evident in the Plan periods set out in Table 6.1 (below).
- 6.8 In this context the SGS sought to establish a consistent demographic-led OAN for the HMA over the same period (2011-2031). The SGS figure exceeds the total housing requirement for all the Plans, as set out in Table 6.1 (9,451 dpa), resulting in higher minimum need of 205,099 over 20 years (10,255 dpa).³⁵ The SGS report identifies a supply baseline of 179,829 dwellings, 2011-2031, identifying an unmet need within the HMA. However, the SGS also incorporates two economic-led scenarios as follows:
- **Economic Baseline** – this is based on a continuation of past trends but takes into account how different economic sectors are expected to perform in the future (relative to the past). It should be regarded as 'policy neutral' (recognising that historical policy and investment decisions may have influenced economic performance);
 - **Economy Plus Scenario** – a scenario modelled in the SEP for further and faster growth than predicted in the three LEP Strategic Economic Plans, which would see the West Midlands perform relatively better and make a stronger contribution to the national economy. This is an aspirational 'policy on' scenario based on a policy aspiration to improve economic performance.³⁶
- 6.9 The 'Economy Plus' scenario would require significantly higher housing need than demographic need, at 246,000 dwellings, 2011-2031. This would equate to **12,300 dpa** and, compared with

³⁴ Paragraph 2.2, page 2-3, Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBBCHMA) Housing Need and Housing Land Supply Position Statement, September 2018

³⁵ Table 29, page 90, Greater Birmingham HMA Strategic Growth Study, February 2018

³⁶ Paragraph 3.30, page 53, Greater Birmingham HMA Strategic Growth Study, February 2018

the Plan requirements set out in Table 6.1, would result in **unmet need of 56,980 dwellings over 20 years (2,849 dpa)**.

Table 6.1: GBBCHMA Unmet Needs

Local Authority	Current / Emerging Plan	Plan Period	OAN	Standard method (capped/ Uncapped*)	Plan Req.	Unmet Need (OAN)	Unmet Need (SM)	Provision for GBBCHMA Unmet Need
Birmingham	Adopted Jan 2017	2011-31	4,450	3,577 (4,976)	2,550	-38,000	-20,540 (-48,520)	
Bromsgrove	Adopted Jan 2017	2011-30	350	378	368	0	-180	
Cannock Chase	Adopted 2014	2006-28	264	276	241	-500	-770	
Solihull	Preferred Options 2019	2008-29	430	325	333	0	0	3,000-4,500
Redditch	Adopted Jan 2017	2011-30	337	172	337	0	0	
Solihull	Draft Plan Nov 16	2014-33	751	777	791	0	0	2,000
Tamworth	Adopted Feb 2016	2006-31	250	144	177	-1,825	0	
North Warwickshire	Draft Plan 2017	2011-31	175	172	454	0	0	4,410
Stratford-on-Avon	Adopted July 2016	2011-31	730	562	730	0	0	2,720
Black Country	Adopted Feb 2011	2009-26	3,554	3,720	3,150	0	0	
South Staffordshire	Adopted Dec 2012	2006-28	270	258	175	0	0	
HMA Total			11,513	10,361 (11,724)	9,451	-40,325	-21,470 (-48,730)	12,130 - 13,630

*Uncapped stated if different to capped SM

Source: Greater Birmingham HMA Strategic Growth Study/Standard Method for calculating local housing need

Proposed Standard Method

- 6.10 To provide an indication of how the SM may affect unmet need, Barton Willmore have compared the OAN in the latest position statement, and the SM (capped and uncapped). The SM figures are based on the changes confirmed by Government (20 February 2019) in revised PPG (see Table 6.1).
- 6.11 Table 6.1 shows how the minimum standard method for housing need (as currently being consulted on) would be 1,000 dpa less across the HMA than the OAN figures established individually by the local authorities. Notwithstanding this lower figure suggested by the SM, unmet need over 20 years would remain significant (over 21,000 dwellings).

- 6.12 However it is important to note how the SM figure for Birmingham City is a capped figure. This has a significant impact on need in Birmingham and the wider HMA, as the *uncapped* SM figure for the City would be 4,940 dpa, over 1,300 dpa higher than the capped figure.
- 6.13 The cap applied by the SM would result in the SM figure (3,577 dpa) being significantly lower than the baseline household projection published by MHCLG (4,494 dpa). This baseline growth is broadly comparable with the OAN established through the Birmingham City Local Plan examination (4,450 dpa).
- 6.14 Similarly, the household projection is only step 1 of the SM calculation. A further uplift is required for affordability, which results in a SM uncapped figure of 4,940 dpa. This can be considered as the 'actual' housing need, as referred to by the revised PPG (ID2a-010).
- 6.15 Taking this into context and what it would mean for unmet need across the HMA, adopting the household projection as the figure for Birmingham would lead to unmet need in comparison with unmet need against OAN (**40,325 dwellings**). However, based on the uncapped standard method figure, unmet need would be **48,730 dpa**.
- 6.16 Table 6.1 summarises the figures of the latest position statement, alongside additional SM figures referred to above.

Black Country Urban Capacity Review (May 2018)

- 6.17 The Black Country authorities are a part of the wider HMA in which Solihull is located, and as Table 6.1 illustrates, unmet need from this area is yet to be established, which will be considered through the Core Strategy Review.
- 6.18 However the '*Black Country Urban Capacity Review*' (BCUCR) is a recent document (May 2018) and provides up-to date assessment of housing need, supply, and capacity across the four local authorities. This needs to be considered in addition to the unmet need set out in the SGS, as no figure of unmet need is published for the Black Country.
- 6.19 Table 4 of the BCUCR is of relevance, as it sets out housing need established by the OAN and the SM methods. Table 4 is reproduced in our Table 6.2:

Table 6.2: Current and Potential Black Country Housing Supply against Housing Need (March 2017)

Local Authority	Net Completions 2014-2017	Current Identified Housing Supply 2017-2036	Potential Additional Housing Supply 2017-2036	Total Supply 2014-2036	OAN 2014-2036 (2017 SHMA)	OAN minus supply	SM Need 2017-2036	SM Need minus Supply 2017-2036
Dudley	2007	13200	1612	16819	12160	+4659	11419	+3393
Sandwell	2420	14665	1481	18566	31898	-13332	27208	-11062
Walsall	2160	6751	2177	11088	18519	-7431	16739	-7811
Wolverhampton	1817	10949	1138	13904	15613	-1709	13870	-1783
Black Country	8404	45565	6408	60377	78190	-17813	69236	-17263

Source: Table 4, page 35, Black Country Urban Capacity Review, May 2018

6.20 As Table 6.2 shows, unmet need in the Black Country is currently calculated at over 17,000 dwellings, whether calculated against the OAN or the Standard Method.

6.21 The BCUCR states the following: *"In summary, the Black Country **does not have sufficient land within the urban area to meet its housing and employment growth needs. NPPF requires that local authorities meet such needs and therefore new sources of supply must be explored. The Black Country Local Authorities will continue to **engage positively with neighbouring authorities through on-going duty to co-operate work and are progressing further detailed evidence to inform the review and how these identified needs could best be met.**"***³⁷

6.22 The Black Country authorities are within the same HMA as Solihull. Solihull will therefore be required to engage with the Black Country authorities in respect of this unmet need.

iii) Summary

6.23 In summary, this section has identified the extent of unmet housing need within the Greater Birmingham and Black Country HMA based on the most recently published research. Solihull Borough Council have resolved to deliver unmet need arising from the HMA, and currently suggest this will be 2,000 dwellings. However they have advised this will be revised in summer 2019.

6.24 This section of the report does not provide Barton Willmore's view on how much unmet need there is within the HMA, or where the unmet need should be apportioned. Instead it identifies the level of unmet need set out in the most recent publicly available evidence documents. Solihull, and other authorities of the HMA, will need to work with each other in order to deliver this unmet need.

³⁷ Paragraph 4.9, page 39, Black Country Urban Capacity Review, May 2018

6.25 The most recent study to cover the 14 authorities of the HMA is the February 2018 Birmingham Strategic Growth Study. The key points to note from this study in respect of need figures are as follows:

- The individual OANs determined by the HMA authorities total 11,513 dpa; plan requirements total 9,451 dpa. On this basis, unmet need would be approximately 41,000 over 20 years;
- However the SGS position statement identifies a need for a consistent approach to need rather than the individual OANs;
- Under the SGS' consistent approach, minimum demographic led need in the HMA is 10,255 dpa, 2011-2031; taking unmet need from Coventry and Warwickshire (2,880 dwellings) results in minimum need of 10,360 dpa.
- Economic growth scenarios suggest a need of 12,300 dpa, 2011-2031; with unmet need from Coventry and Warwickshire (2,880 dwellings) this increases unmet need to 12,444 dpa;
- In the context of the supply baseline established by the SGS (8,991 dpa) there is therefore unmet need of a minimum for 2011-2031 of between 28,150 dwellings (1,400 per annum) and 69,000 dwellings (3,450 dpa).

6.26 Furthermore, in the interim period between the SGS and the preparation of this report, the Black Country Urban Capacity Review (May 2018) has established unmet need across Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton of 17,000-18,000 dwellings. This is in addition to the unmet need established in the SGS.

6.27 In conclusion based on these two reports it is considered that unmet need ranges from a **minimum of 28,000 up to 2031 (as reported by the SGS) and could be as high as 80,000 up 2036** (based on additional evidence published in the Black Country Urban Capacity Review).

7.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

7.1 This Technical Report responds to the consultation of the Draft Local Plan Supplementary document, and the questions contained therein. It specifically relates to housing need in Solihull Borough and the wider GBBCHMA. The key points to note from our analysis are as follows:

- The revised NPPF introduces the Standard Method (SM) for calculating housing need, the relevant Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) has been amended (February 2019) to state that the 2014-based MHCLG projections must be used for the calculation, and not the 2016-based ONS projections. The current SM calculated housing need figure for Solihull stands at 777 dwellings per annum (dpa) as of March 2019;
- Notwithstanding this, revised Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) states the SM figure represents the **minimum** housing need, and **actual** need may be higher;
- The Supplementary Consultation document identifies the clear economic growth aspirations for the Borough, including the significant development planned for High Speed 2 and the Interchange in the Borough. Housing delivery must be of a quantum to support these aspirations;
- Alongside this, the Council need to consider the aspirations of the GBSLEP in which they are located;
- The Council's evidence base provides a relatively recent (January 2017) assessment of baseline job growth prospects for Solihull, post-Brexit referendum, alongside a scenario which takes into account the potential job growth created by the HS2 Hub Interchange;
- These scenarios show annual job growth of between 800 and 1,080 jobs per annum. It is therefore imperative that the housing requirement for Solihull supports **at least 800 jobs per annum**, and more realistically the upper end of this range.;
- Our own sensitivity testing has established how the baseline population growth used to underpin the Standard Method would only support circa **450 jobs per annum**;
- Furthermore the final Standard Method housing figure (777 dpa) would only support between 594 and 729 jobs per annum;

- To support the range of job growth identified in PBA's 2017 report (baseline job growth of 800 per annum, and job growth to support the UK Hub of 1,080 jobs per annum), housing need for the Borough alone would need to be **between 825 and 1,127 dpa**;
- There is significant unmet need from the GBBCHMA. Solihull Borough Council acknowledge their role in helping to meet this unmet need;
- The most detailed and recent evidence in respect of unmet need comes from the Greater Birmingham HMA Strategic Growth Study (SGS). In addition the Black Country Urban Capacity Report (BCUCR) provides more recent analysis of capacity and need in that area;
- These reports suggest unmet need across the two areas ranging from a minimum of 28,000 dwellings up to 2031 (based on demographic need) and up to 80,000 dwellings (based economic need and unmet need from the Black Country identified by the BCUCR) up to 2036.

7.2 In summary, the analysis in this report results in two broad conclusions:

1. The SM's minimum need for Solihull (777 dpa) will need to be increased to account for economic growth aspirations and expected job growth set out in the Council's own evidence base. The analysis in this report suggests this would range from **between 825 dpa and 1,127 dpa**.
2. In addition this would need to be higher to meet GBSLEP aspirations;
3. Additionally, Solihull has a duty to deliver a share of the unmet need from the wider HMA, which ranges from 28,000 up to 2031 to 80,000 up to 2036 on the basis of recent evidence base documents in the public domain.

Landscape and Visual Appraisal with Green Belt Review

is submitted separately in three different documents as

Part 1 of 3;
Part 2 of 3 and
Part 3 of 3



Meriden

BACKGROUND

This Vision Statement has been prepared by Barton Willmore on behalf of IM Land, a subsidiary of IM Properties PLC.

IM Land is working with landowners to promote the 9.4ha site for development within the plan period. Development of the site would bring forward:

- » the delivery of around **100 dwellings** within the plan period that can be delivered in the short term;
- » **a highly sustainable development location** within 400 metres (10 minutes walk) of existing services and high frequency bus service (x1 bus service);
- » housing delivery that is achievable without significant new infrastructure;
- » **delivery of both market and affordable housing**, to meet the needs of the Borough;
- » a network of **green infrastructure**, providing movement and access to new open space and for wildlife corridors; and
- » provide for an enhanced **community garden** on Leys Lane for the benefit of local residents.

Inspiring a sense of community pride and ownership will be embedded within the heart of the proposals, by maximising opportunities for integration with existing development in Meriden, and the provision of attractive new recreation facilities that encourage social interaction.

We will look to engage with local stakeholders as part of the promotion of the site and discuss the opportunity for accommodating local facilities, as appropriate, with the site development framework proposals.

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1 The Vision

‘an attractive, residential development of around 100 high quality, new dwellings in Meriden Village – a place to live that is set within a landscape and countryside setting with design and style of homes that reflect the qualities of the local area, located within a short walking distance of existing bus services, a new community garden, and an excellent range of existing village facilities and services’.

Development will provide the opportunity for:

- » around **100 new dwellings** - developed at an average density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph);
- » **access to a ‘high frequency’ bus service** (X1) which stops immediately south of the site along Main Road – connecting Meriden to Birmingham City Centre, Birmingham International, the NEC and Coventry City Centre;
- » an attractive **green gateway** from Main Road – framing views and vistas to the open countryside;
- » a comprehensive and **well-connected green and blue infrastructure network**;
- » a series of natural / green **open spaces and enhanced planting** to integrate the development within the mature landscape and countryside setting;
- » a series of **linked pedestrian/cycleways** with enhanced links to existing PRoW;
- » a **new formal play space** central to the development; and
- » an enhanced **community garden** at Leys Lane, accessible to the wider Meriden Village community.





2 Planning Policy Context

LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

The Development Plan

The development plan is the Solihull Local Plan adopted December 2013. The site is shown to fall within Green Belt and a Minerals Safeguarding Area for Coal.

Local Plan Review

The Solihull Local Plan is undergoing review and the latest published document in the review process is the Draft Local Plan November 2016. It covers the plan period 2014 to 2033 and proposes making allocations for 4,000 houses to meet Solihull's need and at least 2,000 houses to meet the needs of Birmingham.

To meet this need the Spatial Strategy focusses on:

- » concentration in the urban areas;
- » dispersal of development in the rural areas.

Due to the substantial housing need, there is not enough land available within the urban area, so Green Belt land needs to be released for development.

To guide development, additional criteria is suggested in the Plan that is relevant to Meriden. It states development will be focused in locations where development would be a proportionate addition adjacent to an existing settlement.

During the course of the review, changes are taking place at a national and regional level which need to be taken into account and will influence how the Local Plan Review moves on.

A new National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published February 2019 and the Review will need to include:

- » a standard methodology for calculating housing need;
- » an extended evidence base to demonstrate the need to release Green Belt;
- » where it is concluded it is necessary to release Green Belt, first consideration is to be given to land which has been previously developed and/or is well served by public transport; this means sites well served by public transport are given the same weight as previously developed land;
- » to show how the loss of Green Belt land can be offset through compensatory improvements to environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt.

At the regional level, a Strategic Growth Study has been prepared by GL Hearn on behalf of the authorities in the HMA and has recommended a level of shortfall across the region, part of which needs to be made up in Solihull Borough.

The spatial strategy of the Local Plan Review will need to take these matters into account with the result that the housing need will be increased and a revised strategy required.

Further consultation is ongoing throughout the start of 2019 on housing need and alternative/amended site proposals. Submission for Examination is therefore delayed until late 2019 as supplementary consultation is taking place.

Solihull Borough Council has concluded that Green Belt land needs to be released, with a strategy for draft allocations that places weight to sites well served by public transport, which will provide compensatory improvements to offset the loss of Green Belt.

This proposal offers:

- » a proportionate addition adjacent to an existing settlement;
- » a sustainable location that offers access to a range of services including a high frequency bus service between Coventry and Birmingham;
- » access within 400m of a high frequency bus service that is an express service between Coventry and Birmingham that runs along the A45 via Meriden;

The site falls within the Draft Local Plan accessibility criteria;

- » The proposal offsets the loss of Green Belt by providing compensatory provision of an area of new Green Infrastructure;
- » In terms of compensatory provision, the new defensible Green Belt boundary would support accessibility to Green Belt land east of the Site, through providing a green corridor and local community park together with improvements to the PRowS that extend north-south and east-west from the Site towards Fillongley Road and Walsh Lane respectively. Further native hedgerow and hedgerow tree planting could be achieved within the wider land holding between the eastern boundary of the Site and Walsh Lane, which would contribute to the enhancement of environmental quality in the Green Belt.
- » a site that will support the early delivery of houses in the Borough;

GREEN BELT REVIEW / FUNCTION

The Council acknowledge they do not have enough land in the built up areas to meet the housing need and that it will be necessary to release Green Belt land for development. The 2016 Solihull Strategic Green Belt Assessment is a high level review of how land in the Borough contributes to the purposes of Green Belt. The Site forms part of Refined Parcel 25 in the 2016 Solihull Strategic Green Belt Assessment, and this was scored at 5 out of 12 in terms of its contribution, meaning that it was comparatively low scoring within the assessment.

A more detailed assessment of the contribution that the Site makes to the purposes of the Green Belt as defined within the NPPF was undertaken by Barton Willmore. This assessment concluded that the Site made 'Some to a Limited' contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. The greatest contribution was in relation to preventing sprawl due to the lack of strong defensible boundaries currently existing to the east of the Site. The Site was assessed as making no contribution to the prevention of towns merging and a limited contribution to the protection of the countryside from encroachment and the protection of the setting of historic towns. Existing landscape features within the Site would be retained and enhanced, primarily the existing trees and hedgerows. New hedgerows and oak trees would be established along the eastern boundaries of the Site as well as a substantial native woodland block to establish a strong new defensible Green Belt boundary.

The Site is identified as being located within the 'Meriden Gap' within the Solihull evidence base documents. This area is described as being an important area that forms the strategic separation between Birmingham and Coventry. The Site is situated 8km from the edge of Birmingham, separated by the main body of Meriden, and 4.5km from the edge of Coventry. Neither Birmingham nor Coventry is visible from the Site and development within the Site would not cause the physical or perceptual reduction in the separation of the two large settlements.

Overall, the more detailed assessment finds the site performs relatively poorly in terms of its contribution to the five purposes of Green Belt.

3 Site Location & Context

SITE LOCATION

The site is located to the east of Meriden Village, Warwickshire which falls within the administrative boundary of Solihull, West Midlands.

Meriden is a large village situated between Solihull, Coventry and Birmingham, and is just 5 miles from Birmingham International Airport. Meriden is located just south of the A45, providing excellent connectivity to the wider strategic road network – A452, M6 and M42. A regular bus service also runs through the village providing connections to Coventry, and nearby railway stations at Birmingham International and Hampton in Arden. Both stations provide frequent rail services for commuters to Birmingham, Coventry and London Euston.

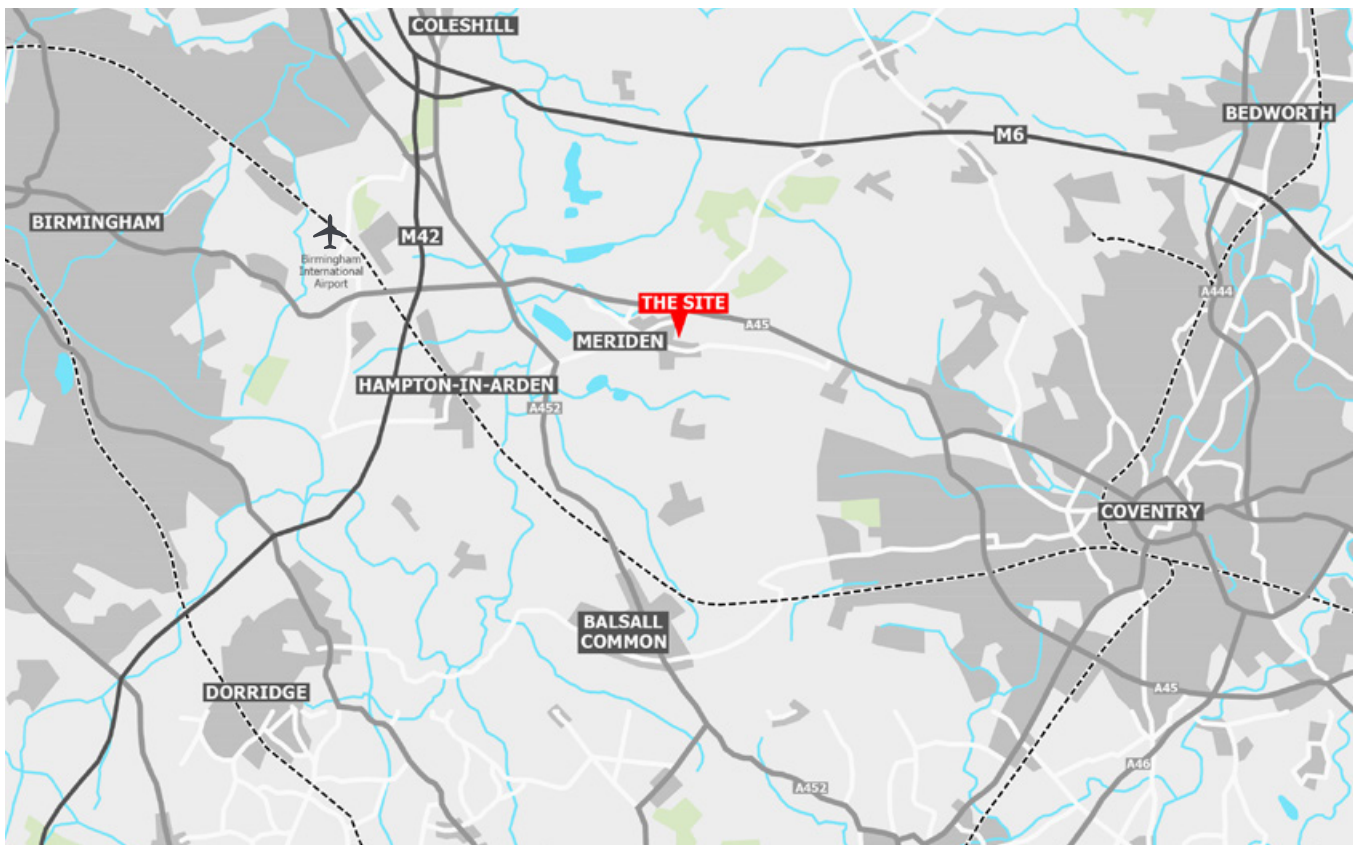
THE SITE

The site area measures **9.4 hectares**. Access is from 'Main Road', towards the eastern end of the village. The site forms an irregular shape, bounding the rear of residential development and the Manor Hotel fronting 'Main Road', housing development accessed from Leys Lane and Fillongley Road.

The majority of the site comprises irregular fields under arable cultivation, with an area of allotments and informal pasture with trees in the north-west. The remainder of the site is partially screened by vegetation along field boundaries which contains a number of established tree belts, hedgerows and individual medium-high grade trees.


A public footpath runs on a general north-south axis through the site and a ditched watercourse forms the south-eastern edge. There are also a number of ponds within and adjacent to the site.

Site Location Plan



Site Boundary Plan



 Site Boundary (9.4ha)

SITE CONTEXT

Meriden has a range of local facilities and services, located along Main Road (x1 Bus service) and in the centre of the village (Village Green).

The site itself is located within walking distance of these facilities and services, which includes a range of shops, schools, community facilities, a library, sports park, pubs, hotels and excellent public transport links.

The site is located within walking distance of a 'high frequency' Bus service and stops along Main Road - connecting to Birmingham City Centre, Birmingham International, the NEC and Coventry City Centre.

Meriden C of E Primary School and Beechwood Care Nursery, located on Fillongley Road is approximately 480 metres from the site (6 minute walk). The nearest GP surgery is located on Main Road, within 150m of the southern site boundary (approximately a 2 minute walk).

The larger retail centres at Solihull Centre and Touchwood are located approximately 8 miles to the south-west, Coventry 7 miles to the east and Birmingham 15 miles to the west.

The site also offers sustainable travel opportunities for public transport users, cyclists and pedestrians. Public Rights of Way (PRoW) M265 and M267 run through the site, connecting to the wider PRoW network, including the long-distance Millennium Way, Heart of England Way and Coventry Way recreational footpaths accessible within 1 mile of the site. A watercourse also runs along the south-east of the site.

Local shops on Meriden Village Green



Meriden Public Footpath Network



Facilities Plan



- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--|
|  Site Boundary |  Bus Stops |  Nursery |  Hotel / B+B |
|  PROW - Footpath |  Watercourse |  Pub |  Village Hall |
|  PROW - Millennium Way |  Local Shopping |  Doctor | |
|  PROW - Coventry Way / Heart of England Way |  Pharmacy |  Library | |
|  82 / 89 Bus Route |  Primary School | | |
|  X1 Bus Route | | | |
|  Existing Allotments | | | |

LANDSCAPE & VISUAL CONTEXT

A Landscape and Visual Appraisal was undertaken to assess the character and features of the local landscape and the Site, to understand the contribution that the Site makes to local landscape character, and an analysis of the views towards the Site, to understand the potential visual impact of future development.

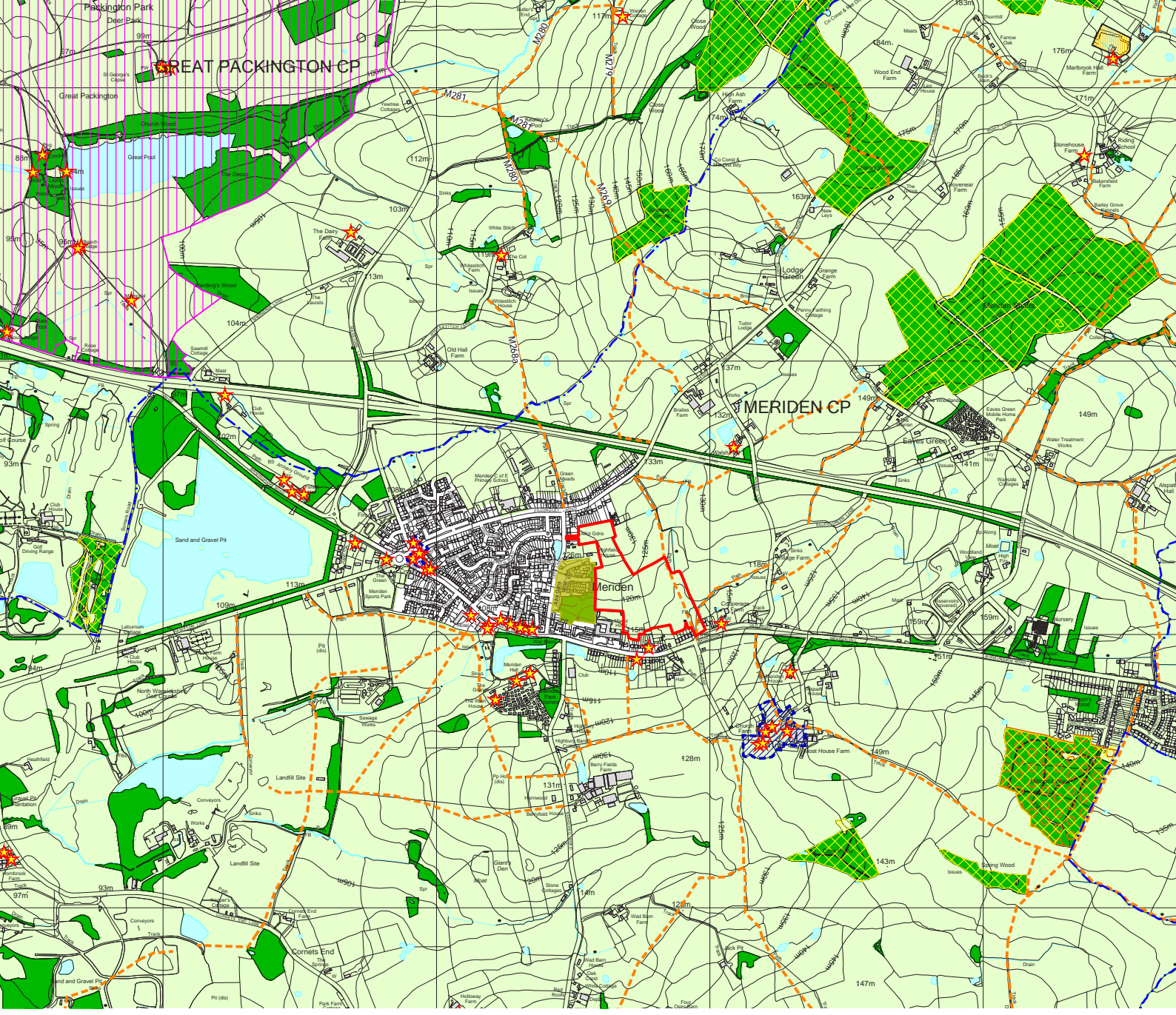
The landscape surrounding the Site is part of the Arden Landscape as assessed within the national and county published landscape character assessments. This is a well-vegetated undulating rural landscape characterised by large areas of ancient woodland, vegetated skylines and narrow lanes surrounded by high hedgerows. More locally, the landscape has been subject to field rationalisation and loss of landscape features, particularly to the east and south of Meriden, resulting in an uncharacteristically open landscape between the eastern edge of Meriden and Walsh Lane to the east of the Site.


















Views towards the Site were limited to medium distance views from the area between the Site and Walsh Lane, from the footpath south of the B4104 and from isolated locations within and around the Meriden Hill Conservation Area. Longer distance views from the east and south were curtailed by vegetation and topography. Views from the north and west, beyond immediate views into the Site boundaries from the edges of Meriden were curtailed by topography and intervening built form. In summary, the visual envelope of the Site is limited to medium distance views from the south and east, from where the Site is seen within the context of the existing built edge of Meriden.

Remnant hedgerows and mature oaks remain within the south-west of the Site and some amenity planting exists around Highfield House in the north of the Site. These native hedgerows should be reinforced and new oak trees planted to create age structure and to restore the landscape infrastructure within the Site. Further native hedgerow planting with native trees, particularly oaks, should be established along the eastern boundaries of the Site, and space allowed within the development for further specimen tree planting. This will serve to restore some of the lost landscape features and structure of the area, and will help to recreate green linkages and will serve to soften and break up the newly defined edge of Meriden. Traditional materials and typologies should be reflected within the proposed development to reinforce local character.

The Site comprises an area of weakened landscape on the eastern edge of Meriden surrounded on three sides by existing development. The visual envelope is generally limited to medium distance views from the south and east, from where it is viewed within the context of other development within Meriden. There is the potential to mitigate many of the visual effects and to reduce the impact upon the Green Belt through the establishment of a new strong defensible boundary utilising the existing hedgerow and drainage channel to the east by restoring and enhancing key landscape features, planting of a substantial native woodland block to the eastern boundary as well as creating a positive green space in terms of local community park for the scheme and wider community of Meriden.

Landscape Site Context Plan



 Site Boundary	 Conservation Area ~ ~	 Local Planning Authority Boundary
 Ancient Woodland #	 Registered Parks and Gardens ~	 SHLAA Site Assessments ##
 Existing Woodlands, Copses and Tree Belts ^	 Scheduled Monument ~	 Land to be added to Green Belt
 Existing Water Courses and Features ^	 Green Belt ^^	
 Contours/Spot Heights (Metres AOD) ^	 Sites of Special Scientific Interest #	
 Public Rights of Way */**	 Local Nature Reserve #	
 Listed Buildings ~	 HS2 Proposed Route ++	

Sources:
 ^ OS Mapping
 # Natural England GIS Data Set
 # Historic England National Monument Record GIS Data Set
 * Warwickshire County Council ProW GIS Data and Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Walking and Cycling Map
 ** OS Explorer
 + Sustrans National Cycle Network GIS Data
 ^^ Department for Communities and Local Government GIS Data
 ## Meriden - SHLAA Site Assessments, September 2012
 ++ High Speed Two (HS2) Limited GIS Data
 ~ Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Online Maps

ECOLOGY

Initial desk based and field based surveys of the site have been carried out on ecological features, which covered:

- a) site area, and
- b) its potential zone of influence.

It was concluded that that the site does not present any significant ecological impacts that could not be adequately mitigated as part of the development for the following reasons:

- » there are many local wildlife sites and potential local wildlife sites within close proximity of the site. However development in this location would not result in any impact on these existing features;
- » mature trees and hedgerows within the site can easily be integrated into the development framework proposals for the site negating the need for mitigation. There is much scope for enhancement of these features and incorporation of these features within the green infrastructure element of the site design; and
- » the site is currently subject to arable farming, which limits ecological value however there is the opportunity within existing and newly created green spaces to retain, mitigate and provide opportunities for ecological habitat enhancement.

ARBORICULTURE

The site contains a number of trees identified as 'high' or 'moderate' quality and value, prioritised for retention due to their condition, age and longevity. The majority of identified trees are located in existing field boundaries and the masterplan has been designed to respond to and retain the majority of these trees.

HERITAGE & ARCHAEOLOGY

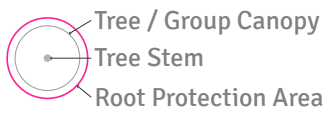
Initial desk based archaeological and heritage assessment was carried out to assess the archaeological potential of the site and the possibility for effects on heritage assets outside the site, through changes to their setting.



It was concluded that the site does not present any significant archaeological or heritage impacts that could not be adequately mitigated as part of the development, for the following reasons:

The site does not contain any nationally important features (such as world heritage sites). There are a number of listed buildings and locally listed buildings in the vicinity of the site and the historic core of 'Meriden Hill' (a conservation area). It is considered that the composition of the landscape will not change the ability of the viewer to look out over the surrounding landscape, or to appreciate the primary architectural interest of the buildings.

Such effects would therefore not represent an in principle constraint to the allocation of the site and its suitability for residential-led development. The effect on these buildings will be taken into account at an early stage in the careful design and masterplanning of development.

Tree Survey Plan



- Tree Quality & Value:
-  Category A: High
 -  Category B: Moderate

4 Constraints & Opportunities

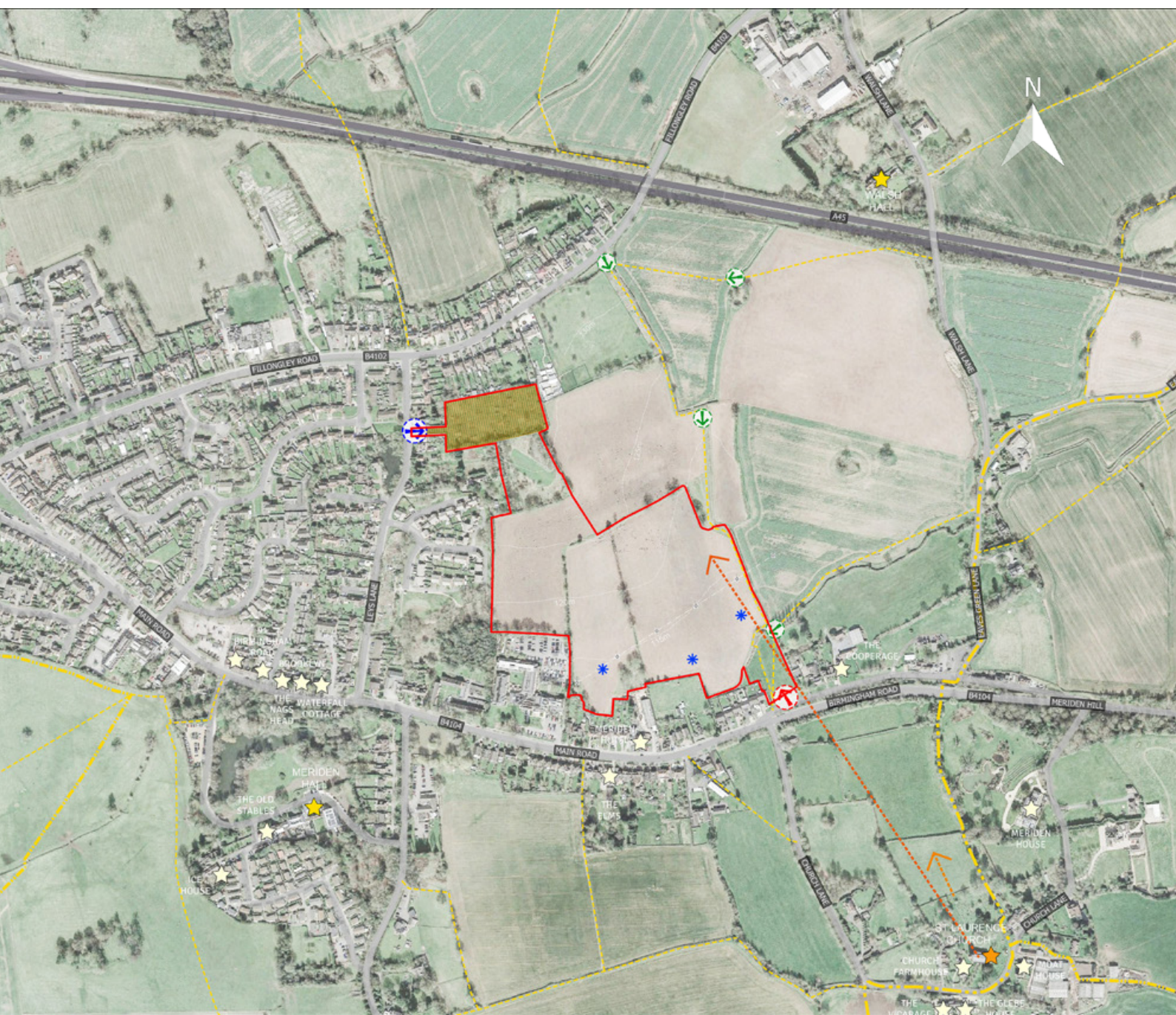
CONSTRAINTS



















- » **Green belt boundary will need to be redefined**, using a new defensible boundary;
- » There are existing homes on the southern and western boundaries which will require a sensitive design response;
- » Overhead power lines running across the southern part of the site.

OPPORTUNITIES

- » The site has **excellent links to the strategic road network, public transport facilities and services** (A435) and a number of local routes which support connectivity of the site into the wider area;
- » The site is **located within walking distance of local community facilities and amenities** which will help support integration with the wider area and encourage sustainable movement patterns;
- » There are two potential **points of access from Leys Lane and Main Road**, which could be utilised to provide vehicle and pedestrian/cycle connections;
- » The site **sits in an established network of defined strategic landscape, hedgerows and green corridors** which create positive landscape attributes in which the development can respond to;
- » There is the **potential to incorporate green infrastructure linkages and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)** resulting in biodiversity benefits;
- » A network of **public rights of way and bridleways** located on and near the site, providing important wider connections to the open countryside which will be enhanced in the development.
- » Existing landscape features within the Site would be retained and enhanced, primarily the existing trees and hedgerows.
- » New hedgerows and oak trees would be established along the eastern boundaries of the Site as well as a substantial native woodland block to establish a strong new defensible Green Belt boundary.
- » A longer-term strategy to create a green corridor along the route of the footpath and stream to the east of the Site would also be considered.
- » Development would reflect the context of Meriden in terms of scale, massing and typology.
- » Development would respond sensitively to the land that rises to the north of the Site, which creates an area of visual sensitivity and focus areas of development to the west and south-west of the Site on lower lying areas relative to the adjacent existing built form.
- » • Materials and typologies would reflect the distinctive local character, seeking to restore the character of this part of Meriden.

Constraints & Opportunities Plan



- | | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|--|---|---|
|  | Site boundary |  | PROW - Footpath |  | Site Low Point
(potential for attenuation) |
|  | Grade I Listed Building |  | PROW - Bridleway |  | Overhead Power Line |
|  | Grade II* Listed Building |  | PROW - Millenium Way | | |
|  | Grade II Listed Building |  | PROW - Coventry Way / Heart of England Way | | |
|  | Existing Allotments |  | Vehicular Access | | |
|  | Road - A45 |  | Allotment Access | | |
|  | Road - Minor |  | Countryside Links | | |
|  | Key Contours |  | Key Views within the Site | | |

5 Concept Masterplan

GUIDING DEVELOPMENT PRINCIPLES

- » Provision of **3.4 hectares of residential development**, achieving around **100 dwellings** on the site using an average density of **30 dwellings per hectare**;
- » Provision of a **connected and accessible movement network**, with the primary vehicular access from Main Road;
- » A **safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle route running through the centre of the development**, connecting local movement from Main Road through the centre to the north via Leys Lane. This will encourage local movement and access to open space, play space, community orchard and local facilities within close proximity.
- » **Retention of existing pedestrian access points to the site** linking Meriden and the existing PROW network;
- » **New pedestrian and cycle link integrated through green corridors and primary route** through the development, to respond to key desire lines and the use of existing pedestrian routes onto Main Road;
- » The **development area is concentrated on land that is within 400m** (10 minutes walking distance) **of bus stops on Main Road**;
- » Development will be **structured to ensure the creation of a permeable, legible and safe streets and spaces**, with all public areas overlooked wherever possible;
- » **Retention and enhancement of existing green capital** wherever possible to shape a **connected and multi-functional green infrastructure network** - including a Local Area of Play (LAP), recreation, ecological habitats and attenuation;
- » **New areas of open space to accommodate new community/recreation facilities** to benefit new and existing residents of Meriden, encouraging community cohesion and a sense of ownership.
- » Provision for a **community garden for** new and existing residents;
- » **Key open space gateway** to respond to key views and topography and provide a generosity of space within the site that is in keeping with the village character of Meriden;
- » Utilise existing landscape features to create a new defensible green belt boundary with retained and enhanced planting and new community park.
- » Create a key open space gateway to respond to key views and topography and provide a generosity of space within the site that is in keeping with the village character of Meriden and responds positively to the LCA management guidelines and Meriden Parish Design Statement.
- » Create safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle routes running through the centre of the development, which utilise green corridors.
- » Retain existing pedestrian access points to the site linking Meriden and the existing PROW network.
- » Development should be structured to ensure the creation of permeable, legible and safe streets and spaces.
- » Retain, reinforce and enhance existing green capital wherever possible to shape a connected and multifunctional green infrastructure network.
- » New areas of open space to accommodate new community/recreation facilities within the Site and Proposed Development.
- » The creation of a new parkland landscape within the eastern part of the Site contained and enclosed by strategic planting which will provide a long term defensible Green Belt boundary.

Concept Masterplan



Site Boundary (9.4ha)

- 1. Development Blocks
- 2. Existing Landscape
- 3. Proposed Landscape
- 4. Play Area
- 5. Attenuation Area
- 6. Public Right of Way
- 7. Walk / Cycle Route and Emergency Access
- 8. Community Garden
- 9. Community Park
- 10. New Defensible Green Belt Boundary

KEY PARAMETERS

Land Use

The concept masterplan plan for the site has been informed by the vision, site analysis and identified constraints and opportunities. The concept masterplan shows the key development principles which underpin the development of the site:

Land Use Area	Hectares
Developable Area	3.4
Public Open Space + Play Area	5.9
Drainage/SUDS	0.2
Total Site Area	9.4

Developable Area (ha)	Density (dph)	Units
3.4	30	100

Land Use Plan



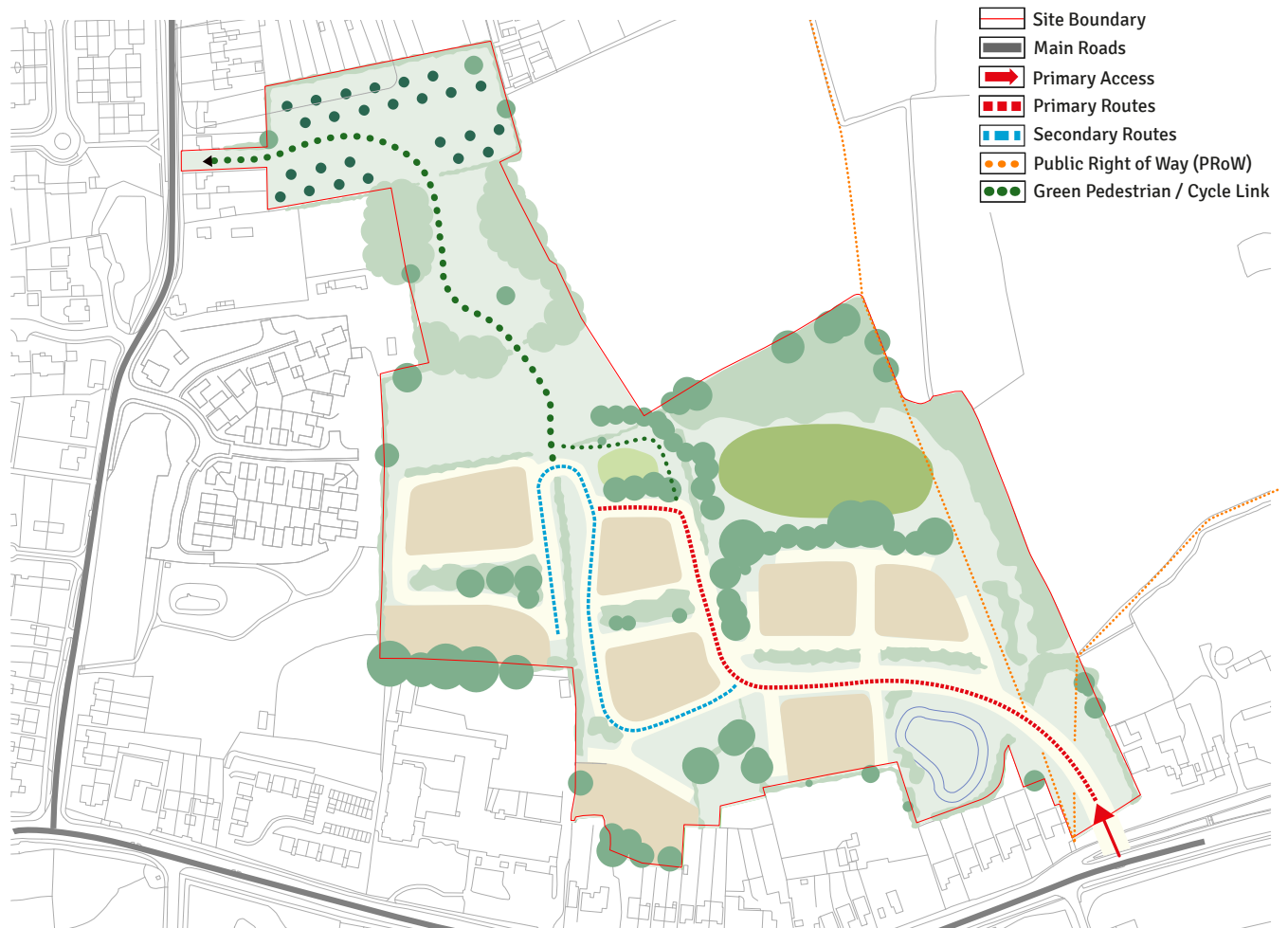
- Proposed Site Area
9.36 Ha / 23.13 Ac
- Proposed Development Area
- Potential Play Area
- Public Open Space / Landscape Planting
- Proposed SUDS

Movement & Connections

The proposed primary vehicle access to the site is from Main Road which will connect to the local street network and will connect the remainder of the development. The existing access from Leys Lane will be utilised as a pedestrian and cycle link, which will run through the site and back to the access to the south of the site on Main Road, this can also be utilised as an emergency access if required.

The movement structure is also supported by a network of internal green links, streets, spaces which will provide walkable (and cycle) routes to on and off-site facilities and services and connect to the existing public right of way. The proposed movement framework will help to provide good access to facilities and services and integration within the wider movement network.

These connections into the wider network will increase accessibility to the remaining green belt land and provide compensatory provision.



Green and Blue Infrastructure

The landscape and open space throughout the scheme shall include qualities and characteristics of the Northern Upland Landscape Character Area (LCA) and will be designed where possible to protect, enhance and restore the diverse landscape features within the site. In order to achieve this, the following green Infrastructure opportunities identified on site are to:

- » **enhance green infrastructure on site** - creating links between existing woodland, footpaths and other nature conservation assets such as hedgerows, field trees and watercourse in line with the guidelines for the LCA Northern Uplands
- » **strengthen the boundaries of the site** - with additional shrub and characteristic woodland planting, particularly along the southern and eastern boundaries to filter views. Additional planting could also be implemented along the western boundary to soften views of the recent housing development on Leys Lane
- » potential to utilise the landscape strategy to create a green entrance gateway and also green streets, including substantial planted tree belts within the streets to increase the attractiveness of the streets and filter views of the development



Density

The average density across the site will be 30 dwellings per hectare, to reflect the existing settlement pattern and the existing density of Meriden village. Density and form will be lower towards the edges of the site and where there is increased visual sensitivity to mitigate visual impact of development and provide an appropriate response to the countryside edge. Structural landscaping is also integrated within this approach and to mitigate visual impact of development.



Scale and Massing

The site has the potential to increase in scale and mass along the primary route to the south-east and centre of development.

Development edges along the north, north-east and eastern edges of the site will require sensitive treatment to reduce visual impact.



LANDSCAPE STRATEGY

The landscape strategy has been devised to ensure that development of the site takes full advantage of the site's potential present in landform, views and vistas, connectivity with the open countryside and links with the land and history of the place. The landscape strategy sets out to provide the following:

- » **retaining and enhancing existing mature tree belts, hedgerows and areas of woodland** to help inform the layout in a manner that is responsive to the local landscape pattern and countryside setting to the east (native species include Hazel, Hawthorn, Field Maple, Oak and Blackthorn);
- » **integrating existing landscaping into the open space network**, providing a **range of green open spaces**, landscape focal points and backdrops throughout the development;
- » generous **additional landscaping and buffer planting** along the site boundary to the east and throughout a series of landscaped streets and open spaces;








GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE AND GREEN BELT STRATEGY





The greatest contribution the Site makes is in terms of preventing sprawl. This is due to the lack of a strong defensible boundary to the east, resulting from field rationalisation and loss of landscape features.

The adjustment of the site boundary, to take into consideration the existing remnant hedgerow boundary to the east and reinforce this with substantial native woodland planting, would establish a new strong defensible Green Belt boundary that would be easily identifiable and also respond sympathetically to the landscape management guidelines set out in the LCA. The establishment of the native woodland planting

following the existing field boundary would also aid in lessening any residual perceived visual encroachment of the scheme. The application of this appropriate and considered mitigation measure would result in the scheme being seen as a contiguous, well-integrated element of the existing built form that extends around the Site presently, that would also positively reinforce locally characteristic landscape features.



-  Site Boundary
-  Contours/Spot Heights (Metres AOD)
-  Public Rights of Way
-  Listed Building
-  Green Belt

- Landscape and Visual Opportunities and Constraints**
-  Existing tree planting to be protected, enhanced and incorporated into integrated blue-green infrastructure
 -  Existing hedgerows and hedgerow trees to be reinforced and strengthened with additional planting
 -  Proposed Structural Green Infrastructure to soften and absorb proposed built form
 -  Proposed structural woodland and tree planting to provide defensible Green Belt boundary

-  Elevated Land
-  Local Community Park
-  Ponds and ditches to be protected, enhanced and incorporated into integrated blue-green infrastructure
-  Views towards the Site

6 Benefits Summary & Deliverability

VISION

‘an attractive, residential development of around 100 high quality new dwellings in Meriden Village – a place to live that is set within a landscape and countryside setting with design and style of homes that reflect the qualities of the local area, located within a short walking distance of a new community orchard and an excellent range of village facilities and services. It also provides the opportunity to utilise existing landscape features to create a strong defensible green belt boundary for Meriden’.

DEVELOPMENT BENEFITS SUMMARY

Creating a sustainable, well-connected green infrastructure network, which contributes to social, environmental and economic benefits within the borough is a key part of SMBC planning policy. The Proposed Development will respond to the need to deliver green infrastructure improvements through the following measures:

- » Delivery of multifunctional public open space through biodiverse open spaces, community gardens and community parkland.
- » Creation of a green gateway to Meriden with improved links to the surrounding countryside.
- » Substantial native hedgerow and canopy tree planting throughout the Site linking into existing local green infrastructure network. Existing vegetation to be enhanced and retained as part of the native planting improvements.
- » Native tree and hedgerow planting will contribute to improvements in hedgerow and deciduous woodland habitats of principal importance within the local area.
- » Incorporating SuDS features such as swales and seasonally wet meadows.

- » Green Infrastructure improvements will reflect and positively contribute to the character of Meriden and the wider Arden landscape through increased native hedgerow and woodland block planting and provide biodiversity enhancements.
- » Creation of green streets, specifically planting a range of street trees, will positively contribute to the wider green network, local sense of place and climate change mitigation.

LANDUSE BENEFIT SUMMARY

The development will provide for the following land use benefits:

- » 3.4 hectares of residential development of approximately 100 new dwellings;
- » 5.9 hectares for public open space, recreation and local play provision.

DELIVERABILITY

This promotional document sets out how our proposals for Land north of Main Road, Meriden could deliver the vision:

The development will bring real benefit to Meriden, through the provision of new recreation facilities, quality spaces in the public realm that are accessible to all and the creation of a distinctive sense of place that belongs to the village and the setting.

The vision and guiding design principles will ensure the proposals deliver sustainable linkages, form a successful relationship with Meriden and facilitate community cohesion.

The development has the potential to bring a range of direct and indirect benefits to the local area, including:



New Homes - the creation of a sustainable and high-quality residential community and the delivery of around 100 dwellings, providing market and affordable to meet local demand;



Responsive Design - a carefully considered design that responds to and maximises the opportunities posed by the existing local landscape on site. Access and views to the surrounding countryside will be maximised where appropriate;



Accessibility and Sustainability - a development layout that is designed to be well connected, accessible and walkable to key facilities and services – supported by safe, attractive routes and spaces that are overlooked by new housing;



Public Open Space and Landscaping - enhancing existing links to the strategic green network and open countryside, so that new and existing residents can benefit from improved health and well-being;



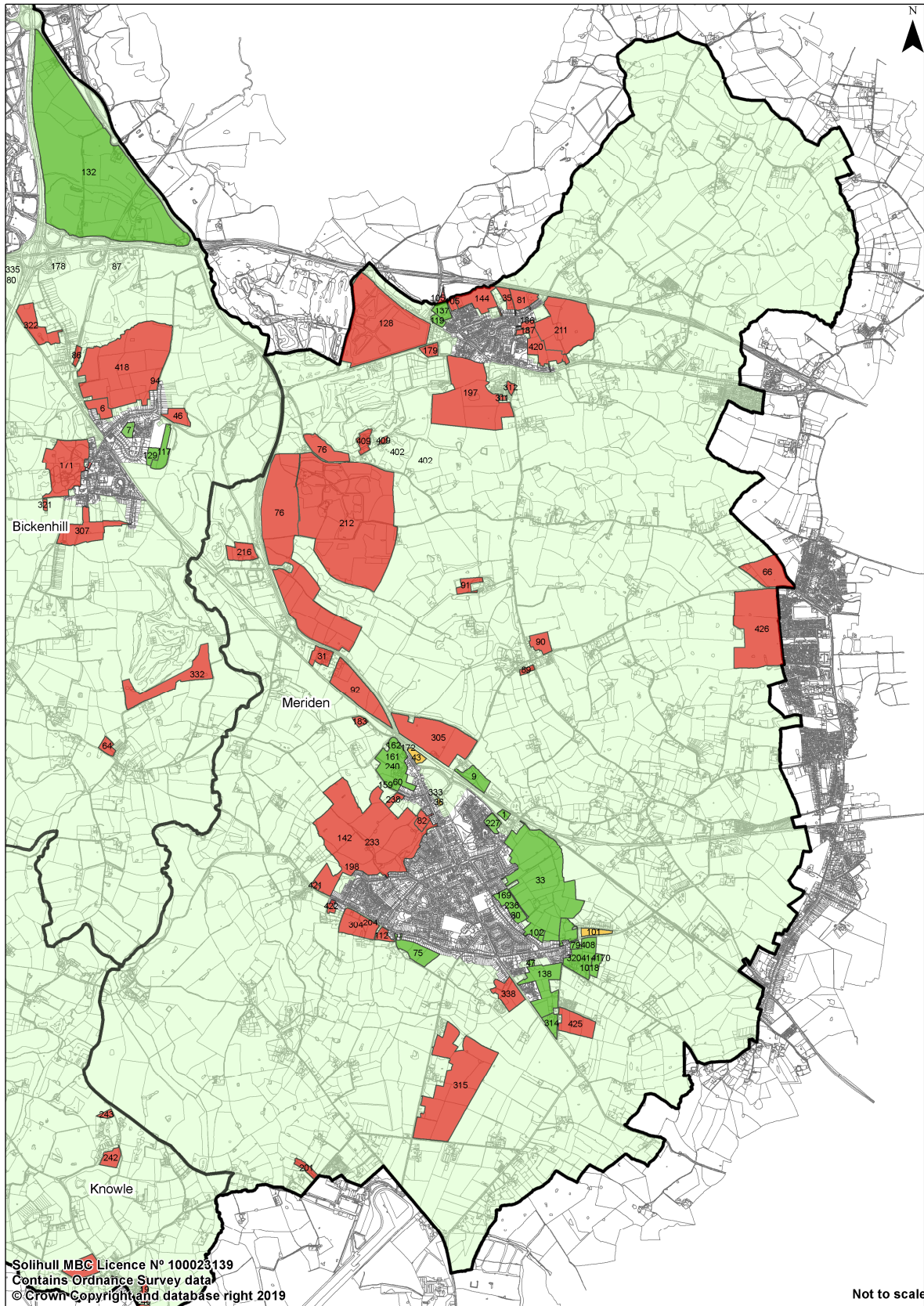
Enhanced Community Garden – located off Leys Lane, with a new pedestrian and cycle route, serving both existing and future residents;



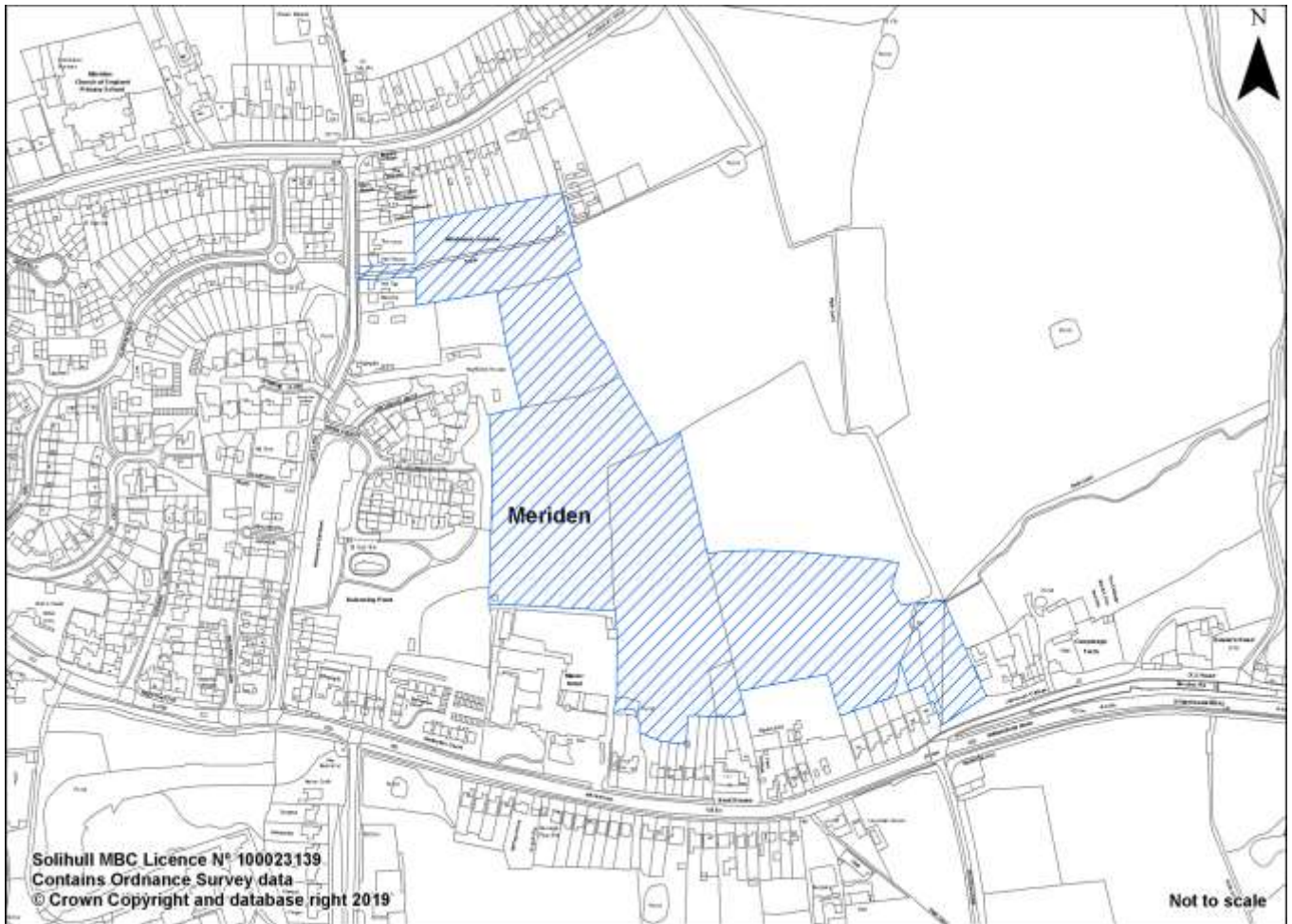
Biodiversity - proposals that can contribute to the protection and enhancement of the natural and built environment by improving biodiversity, minimising the use of natural resources and minimising waste and pollution.



10. Meriden



Site Reference	420	Site Name	Land at Meriden - IM Land
Gross Area (Ha)	7.27	Ward	Meriden
Capacity (SHELAA)	170	Parish	Meriden
Green Belt	99	Greenfield/ Brownfield	Greenfield



Constraints

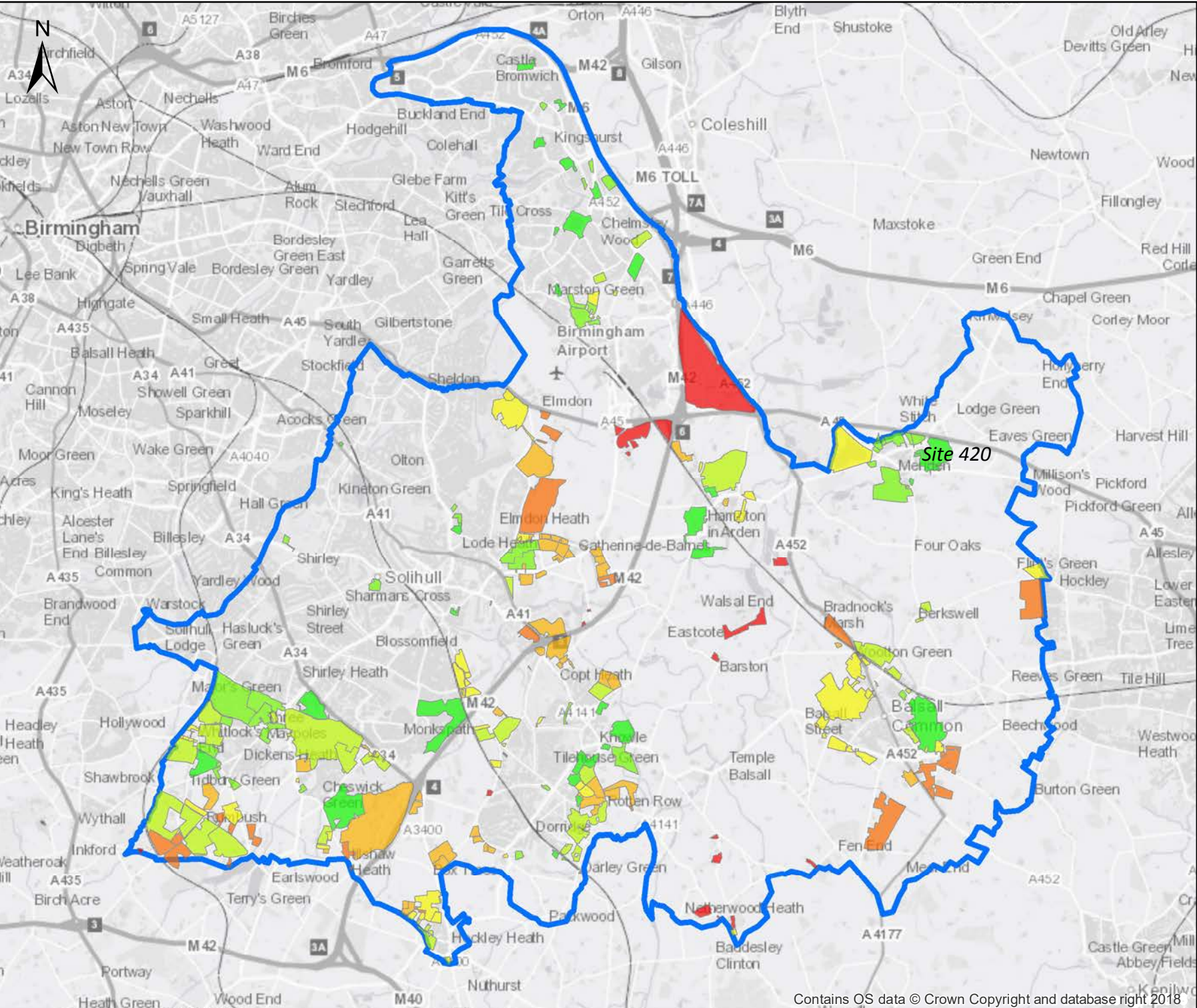
Policy Constraints	Green Belt Mineral Safeguarding Area for Coal
Hard Constraints	TPO on boundary of site
Soft constraints	Allotments Proximity to locally listed buildings PROWs M265 and M267

Evidence

SHELAA	Category 1
Accessibility Study	Primary School: Very High Food Store: Very High GP Surgery: Very High Public Transport: Very High Overall: Very High Access: Existing footway
Green Belt Assessment	Lower performing parcel (RP25) overall with a combined score of 5. *Highly performing in terms of purpose 1.
Landscape Character Assessment	Within LCA7 Landscape character sensitivity - High Visual sensitivity - Medium Landscape value - Medium Landscape capacity to accommodate change - Very Low
Sustainability Appraisal	Jan 2019 Draft AECOM 153 18 effects: 7 positive (5 significant); 7 neutral; 4 negative

Site Selection

Spatial Strategy	Growth Option F/G: Limited/Significant expansion of rural villages/settlements
Site Selection Topic Paper	Meriden village is identified as suitable for limited expansion.
Site Selection Step 1	5
Commentary	Site is within moderately performing parcel in the Green Belt Assessment, although it would result in indefensible boundaries to the east and north. Site has a very high level of accessibility, is in an area of medium visual sensitivity with low capacity for change and is deliverable. The SA identifies 7 positive and 5 negative effects. Settlement identified as suitable for limited expansion, but the site lacks defensible green belt boundaries
Site Selection Step 2	R



Legend
 Solihull Borough Boundary

Site Accessibility

Total_Score

- 60 - 100
- 101 - 150
- 151 - 200
- 201 - 250
- 251 - 300
- 301 - 350
- 351 - 400

Figure 6B:

Map showing total accessibility score for potential housing sites.



Site Reference	Site Name/Description	Accessibility to Local Facilities			Accessibility to Public Transport		Suitability of Walking and Cycling Routes	Total Score	Comments
		Primary School	Food Store	GP Surgery	Bus	Rail	Footway along site frontage		
342	Land RO 32 Creynolds Lane	80	40	35	35	20	Footway provision along site frontage	190	
344	Land off Grange Road, Dorridge	50	100	80	50	80	Footway provision along site frontage	310	
345	CFS1004 extension, Tanworth Lane	80	100	100	50	20	Footway provision along site frontage	330	
346	Land incl BVP & Adj Jct 4 M42	25	80	45	40	25	Footway provision along site frontage	190	
346	Land incl BVP & Adj Jct 4 M42	25	80	45	40	25	Footway provision along site frontage	190	
346	Land incl BVP & Adj Jct 4 M42	25	80	45	40	25	Footway provision along site frontage	190	
400	Land at Moseley Cricket Club	60	100	100	45	30	Footway provision along site frontage	305	
404	Land at Fulford Hall Road	40	60	60	30	40	Footway provision along site frontage	200	
405	Land adj, 237 Tythe Barn Lane	100	40	50	35	100	Footway provision along site frontage	290	
407	Land at Widney Manor Road	80	35	20	100	100	No footway provision along site frontage	235	
408	Land at Waste Lane	50	35	25	25	40	Footway provision along site frontage	150	
410	147 Lugtrout Lane	50	80	80	45	30	Footway provision along site frontage	255	
411	Friday Lane Nurseries	10	100	15	30	30	No footway provision along site frontage	155	
412	Red Star Sports, Lugtrout Lane	25	80	40	35	25	No footway provision along site frontage	180	
413	Land at Oak Green, Dorridge	80	60	80	45	60	No footway provision along site frontage	280	
414	Land at Hob Lane	40	35	20	25	35	No footway provision along site frontage	130	
415	Land off Wood Lane	15	60	10	25	20	No footway provision along site frontage	110	Based on housing assumption this site would have a suitable population for a corner shop facility
416	Land North of School Road	100	60	10	40	10	No footway provision along site frontage	210	
417	Land West of Stratford Road	60	80	10	100	25	No footway provision along site frontage	250	
418	Land off Old Station Road	80	60	60	25	100	No footway provision along site frontage	300	
419	60 Four Ashes Road	80	60	25	35	45	No footway provision along site frontage	210	
420	Land North of Main Road	100	100	100	100	10	No footway provision along site frontage	400	Based on housing assumption this site would have a suitable population for a Primary School, Doctors Surgery and corner shop.
421	Silver Trees Farm	35	100	15	15	35	No footway provision along site frontage	185	
422	Land at and adjoining Rose Bank, Balsall Street	50	100	20	15	35	Footway provision along site frontage	205	
423	Land at 123 Widney Manor Road	80	35	25	100	100	No footway provision along site frontage	240	
424	Land NE of Jn5 of M42	20	30	20	100	30	Footway provision along site frontage	170	
425	Land east of Windmill Lane	30	30	15	20	30	Footway provision along site frontage	105	
426	Land South of Broad Lane, Berkswell	10	60	5	60	30	Footway provision along site frontage	135	