

L&Q Estates

LAND AT DAMSON PARKWAY

SOLIHULL

VISION DOCUMENT

CONTENTS

PAGE 05	1	PAGE 06	2	PAGE 12	3
INTRODUCTION		PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT		SITE ASSESSMENT	
PAGE 34	4	PAGE 37	5	PAGE 39	6
EMERGING PROPOSALS		SITE SELECTION ASSESSMENT		SUMMARY	

NOTE: THIS DOCUMENT IS DESIGNED TO BE VIEWED AS A3 DOUBLE SIDED

L&Q Estates



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01 | INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF DEVELOPMENT

- 1.1 L&Q Estates is promoting land at Damson Parkway for housing development. The site is located to the north-east of Solihull and is approximately 55.7 hectares in size and could accommodate c. 300 dwellings (Fig 1.1).
- 1.2 This document has been prepared in response to the Solihull Local Plan Review and provides background information to demonstrate that the site is suitable for residential development including Extra Care provision. The site has previously been submitted to the Council for their consideration as part of the 'Call for Sites' consultation as well as the Draft Local Plan Consultation (Dec 2016) and the Draft Local Plan Supplementary Consultation (January 2019). This document builds on the work previously undertaken, and provides robust background information to demonstrate how the site is suitable for housing development.
- 1.3 This document brings together assessment work from a number of disciplines undertaken by the project team which comprises of a wide range of specialist consultants who are advising on the proposals. The document also sets out the design principles which have informed the proposed masterplan.

- 1.4 This document demonstrates that the site is suitable, available and achievable for residential development. This is particularly important given the need for the Borough to accommodate significantly more housing land than was previously allocated in the adopted Solihull Local Plan (2013). The Local Plan Review envisages the need to deliver 15,017 additional dwellings in the plan period. As fully detailed within Section 2 of this document, it is clear from the work that has informed the preparation of the Draft Local Plan that to achieve the housing requirement there is a need to release land from the Green Belt. Separate representations are made on behalf of L&Q Estates to the Draft Local Plan which set out that there is a need for Solihull MBC to release more land from the Green Belt than is currently proposed within the Draft Local Plan.
- 1.5 Land at Damson Parkway benefits from its close proximity to the UK Central Hub Growth Area where significant employment and jobs will be provided.
- 1.6 This Document sets out that Land off Damson Parkway, Solihull is suitable for residential development and should be considered as a housing allocation.

DOCUMENT FORMAT

- 1.7 Following this introduction, the document sets out the planning policy context for the site and its development potential. This is then followed by an assessment of the site which provides an overview of the technical studies and assessments that have been undertaken to demonstrate the suitability of the site for residential development with extra care housing. The emerging proposals for the site are then set out as shown on the Design Concept Plan. Finally, the document provides an overall assessment of the sites residential potential utilising the Council's Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).
- 1.8 This Document is sub divided into separate sections as follows:

Section 1: Introduction

Section 2: Planning Policy Context

Section 3: Site Assessment:

- The Development Site;
- Landscape and Visuals Issues;
- Movement and Access;
- Flood Risk and Drainage;
- Ecology;
- Archaeology and Cultural Heritage;
- Other Matters

Section 4: Emerging Proposals

Section 5: Site Selection Assessment

Section 6: Conclusions

L&Q ESTATES

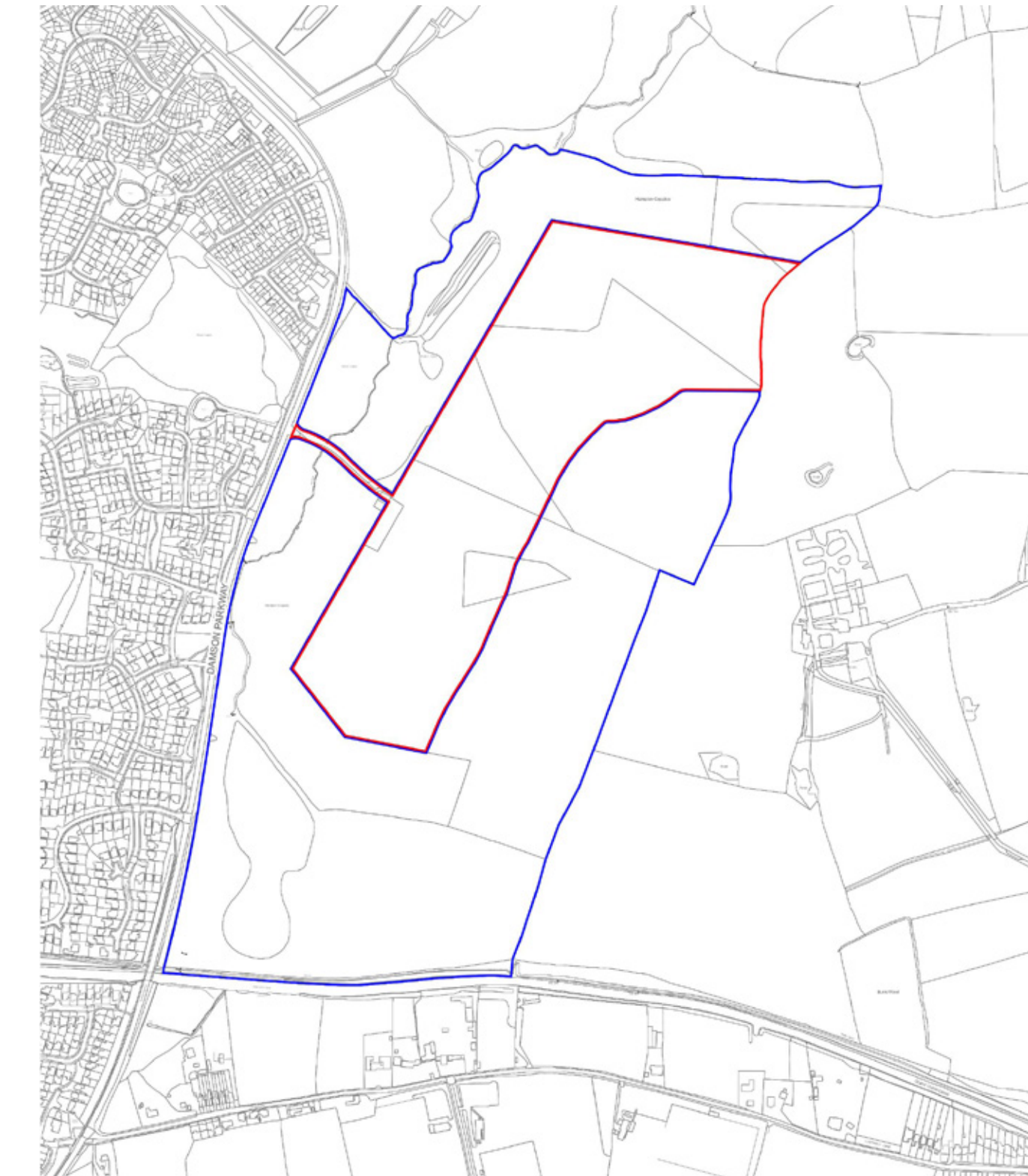
- 1.9 L&Q Estates, now part of the L&Q Group, is one of the largest strategic land companies in the UK, promoting and developing residential and mixed use schemes in all geographical areas. L&Q Estates play a unique role as master developer, taking forward and coordinating all aspects of the development process from initial site assembly through to master planning, planning promotion and Section 106 negotiations before delivering serviced land to the market place.

KEY

- LAND PROMOTED FOR DEVELOPMENT
41.8 ACRES / 16.9 HECTARES
- OTHER LAND WITHIN THE CONTROL OF L&Q
BUT NOT PROMOTED FOR BUILT DEVELOPMENT
95.8 ACRES / 38.76 HECTARES



Fig 1.1 | THE SITE | NOT TO SCALE



02 | PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 This Section summarises the adopted and emerging policy context for this site at the time of writing this document. This promotional document has been produced in response to the Draft Local Plan consultation [Draft Submission Plan October 2020]. The current adopted Development Plan for the area is the Solihull Local Plan [December 2013].

SOLIHULL LOCAL PLAN (2013)

- 2.2 The adopted Local Plan [Fig.2.1] sets out the long-term spatial vision for how Solihull's towns, villages and countryside will develop and change over the Plan period [2011-2028]. This vision will be delivered through a strategy for promoting, distributing and delivering sustainable development and growth.
- 2.3 Shortly after adoption, the Local Plan was subject to a successful legal challenge which means that the current Local Plan has no overall housing requirement for the Plan period. As a result, those parts of the Local Plan, that relate to housing numbers for the plan period, are not adopted.
- 2.4 Two other reasons have triggered the need for Solihull to undertake an early review, namely the plans for high speed rail [HS2 Interchange Station known as Arden Cross] and the impact within the Housing Market Area (HMA) relating to Birmingham's inability to meet its own housing requirement within its boundaries with the shortfall needing to be met elsewhere within the HMA. The growth aspirations of UK Central Hub Area, which includes Birmingham Airport, National Exhibition Centre (NEC), Birmingham Business Park and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), absence of adopted housing policies and housing needs across the HMA have all contributed to a situation where the Council needs to re-examine to undertake a Local Plan Review to ensure that a proper planning framework is in place that addresses these issues. This document has been prepared in response to the Council's consultation on the Local Plan Review.

- 2.5 The site is located wholly within the West Midlands Green Belt. There are two Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) located within the western portion of the site, namely Hampton Coppice LWS and Low Brook and Kingshurst Brook pLWS along the western part of the site. Hampton Coppice forms the western part of the site adjacent to Damson Parkway and is a heavily wooded belt of trees and vegetation which extends at the northern and within the southern extent of the site. The Low Brook runs through the western part of Hampton Coppice and is also a LWS. Adjacent to the southern boundary of the site, the Grand Union Canal is a pLWS. There is also an Ecosite within the south eastern part of the site land TBC on receipt of CSA report.
- 2.6 The site is located predominantly in Flood Zone, the area of lowest flood risk and as such it not considered that there is any flood risk associated with the development on the site.

Proposed Policies Map - Local Plan Review
October 2020

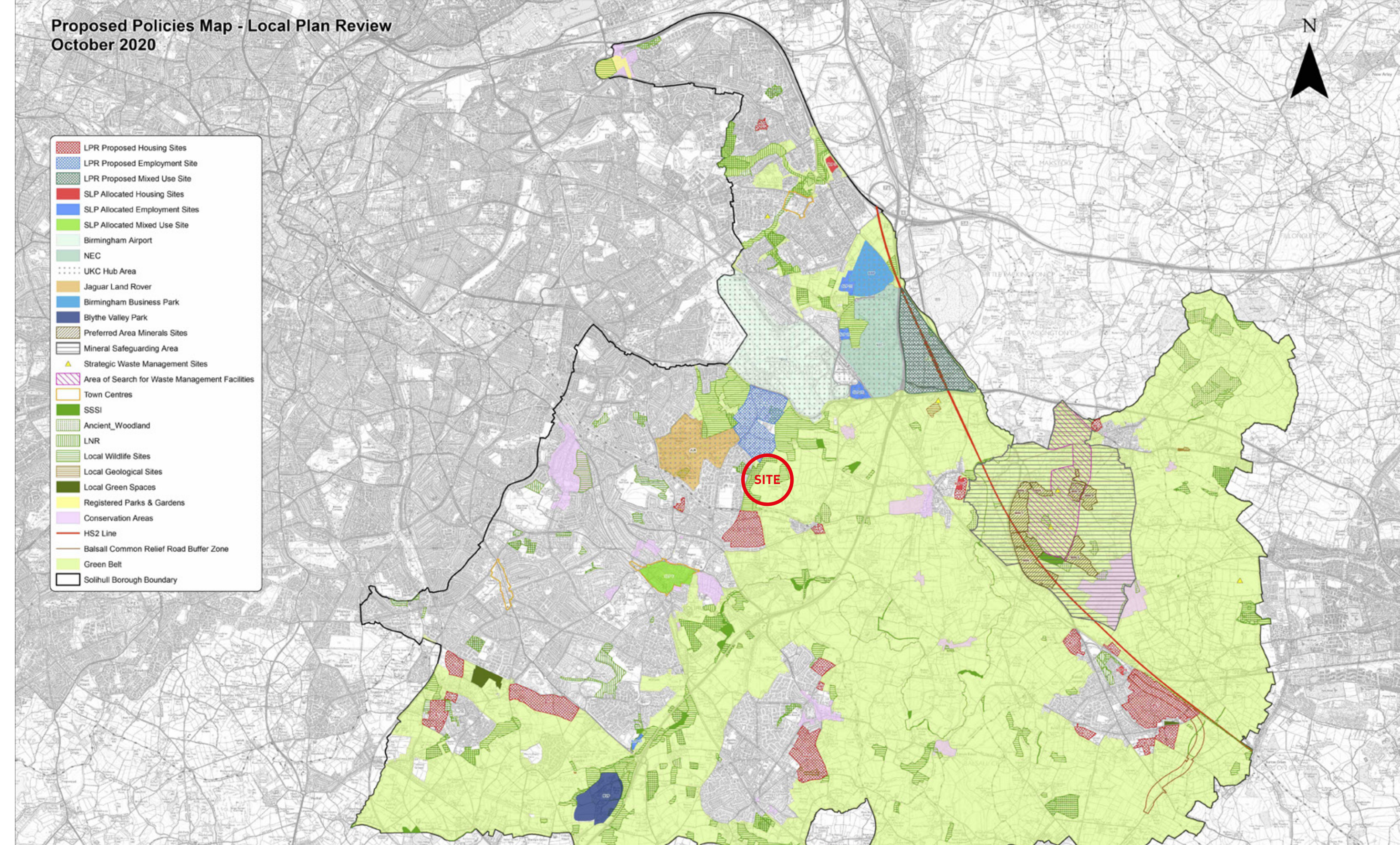


Fig 2.1. | DRAFT SOLIHULL LOCAL PLAN POLICIES MAP OCTOBER 2020 | NOT TO SCALE

EMERGING DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Draft Solihull Local Plan (2016)

- 2.7 The Draft Solihull Local Plan was originally published in November 2016, with a supplementary consultation document being published in January 2019, and the Submission Version published in October 2020. The latest iteration covers the period to 2036. The emerging Local Plan sets out the long term vision and objectives with policies that will guide development throughout the plan period.

- 2.8 These include:

Delivering Sustainable Economic Growth through:

- Developing the UK Central Hub Area (Policy P1), which embraces Birmingham Airport, the NEC, Arden Cross, Birmingham Business Park and JLR. This includes:
 - creating Arden Cross – an exemplary international station with new public realm supporting the potential for commercial and residential opportunities;
 - upgrading and refurbishing the NEC - the Council will enable a broad range of developments enhancing visitor offerings, diversifying facilities and increasing international competitiveness;
 - further development of Birmingham Airport – increasing passenger, freight, terminals and transport facilities and capacity, which allows the extended runway to be maximised. The Council will also support a broad range of ancillary and complementary facilities including hotels, administrative offices car parks and other appropriate facilities to serve the airport;
 - expansion of JLR – supporting further success in the global vehicles industry through supporting and encouraging the development of JLR within its boundary defined in the Local Plan and through the release of Green Belt land; and
 - Continuing to support and encourage the development of Birmingham Business Park, within its defined boundary to support its role as a prime employment location in Borough.
- Expanding Blythe Valley Business Park (P1A), including:
 - encouraging the delivery of a major quantity of employment floorspace;
 - upgrading existing and creating new facilities; and
 - attracting investors.

- Maintaining Strong, Competitive Town Centres, which comprises specific focus on:

- Solihull Town Centre;
- Shirley Town Centre; and
- Chelmsley Wood Town Centre.

Requiring Land for Housing (Policy P5):

- Delivering at least 15,017 additional homes between 2020 to 2036;
- Allocation for at least 5,270 net additional homes to ensure sufficient housing supply to deliver 15,017 homes in the period 2020 to 2036;
- Annual housing requirement is 938 net additional homes 2020 to 2036;
- New housing will be supported on windfall sites in accessible locations where they contribute towards meeting borough-wide housing needs and towards enhancing local character and distinctiveness.
- Housing will be provided as a mix of small and larger sites that will ensure a continuous supply of housing provision throughout the Plan period.
- New homes should comply with the nationally described space standards set out by Government.
- The appropriate density of new housing will be based on a number of factors, and measured on the developable area of a site. This will include site plots and estate roads, but exclude land for other development requirements such as open space, SuDS and strategic highway infrastructure. It will take into account the need to maximise the efficient use of land; appropriate mix of housing ; local character and distinctiveness; scale, type and location of development with regard to accessibility of services by sustainable transport modes;

Providing Homes for All through:

- Delivery of 40% affordable housing (but taking into account site circumstances) on residential sites of major development, where 10 or more homes will be provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more (Policy P4A);
- Rural Exception Sites (policy P4B);
- Providing Market Housing, 30% 1 to 2 bedroom, 50% 3 bedroom and 20% 4+ bedroom (Policy P4C);
- Encouraging self and custom housebuilding including 5% of plots on sites of 100 or more to be contributed for self and custom build (subject to individual site circumstances) (Policy P4D);
- Housing for older and disabled people including all new build housing on major development sites to be built to Category M4(2) (Accessible and Adaptable dwellings) of approved Building Regulations Document M; Volume 1, unless it is built in to M4(3); 5% of housing on major development sites to be wheelchair user dwellings to M4(3) of the Building Regulations and all developments of 300 dwellings or more to provide specialist housing or care bedspaces in accordance with the Council's most up to date statement of need on older person's accommodation (Policy P4E).

- 2.9 In order to achieve the target of delivering additional dwellings, the Council places significant focus upon the UK Central Hub, which is one of the key growth areas for the Borough, encompassing Arden Cross land including the site of the future HS2 interchange, Birmingham Airport, The NEC, Jaguar Land Rover and Birmingham Business Park. Policy UK1 – HS2 Interchange allocates 140 hectares at Arden Cross for mixed use development including the HS2 Interchange station and ancillary infrastructure, commercial, residential and associated retail, leisure and cultural uses. Policy UK2 – Land at Damson Parkway allocates circa 94 hectares for employment development to meet local employment needs, needs associated with the key economic assets in the UK Central Solihull Hub Area, and for a potential relocated Household Waste and Recycling Centre and Depot.

STRATEGIC GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

2.10 Approximately 12,000 hectares of Solihull MBC is designated as Green Belt land, accounting for approximately two thirds (67%) of the Borough's land area (**Fig 2.1**). The Green Belt within Solihull MBC forms an integral part of the West Midlands Green Belt stretching between the Birmingham Conurbation, including Solihull, and the surrounding major urban areas.

2.11 As part of the Local Plan Review, Solihull MBC commissioned a Strategic Green Belt Assessment to evaluate the extent to which the land currently designated as Green Belt within the Borough fulfils the essential characteristics and purposes of Green Belt land as set out in Paragraph 134 of the NPPF.

2.12 The basis of the Assessment was to provide a 'policy off' approach and consideration of other constraints or the development potential of any of the Green Belt land has not been included in the assessment. The Strategic Green Belt assessment has concluded that a number of refined parcels of Green Belt land in the Borough do not perform against any of the first four purposes of the Green Belt but as set out above does not make any recommendations for amendments to the Green Belt boundary or determine whether land should be removed from the Green Belt.

2.13 The site has been assessed within the Council's Green Belt Assessment as falling within Refined Parcel 15. Refined Parcel 15 scored 6 in the Assessment, this is discussed fully within Section 7 – Landscape and Visual Issues. The need for Green Belt release has been accepted by the Borough Council within the majority of the proposed allocations for residential and both employment allocations being within the designated Green Belt. It is considered that a residential proposal for Land at Damson Parkway would assist Solihull MBC in providing additional housing for the Borough in a sustainable location.

SOLIHULL STRATEGIC HOUSING AND EMPLOYMENT LAND AVAILABILITY ASSESSMENT (SHELAA)

2.14 In November 2015 Solihull Council commenced a review of the current Local Plan and launched a Call for Sites exercise alongside the Issues and Options consultation. 247 site submissions were assessed by Peter Brett Associates LLP (PBA), commissioned to undertake a Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA).

2.15 A full SHELAA of these sites was published in November 2016 and consulted upon as part of the Draft Local Plan Review. An update has since been published in draft (October 2020) which relates to new submissions or amended sites.

2.16 Land at Damson Parkway has a SHELAA reference of 195. The initial assessment of the site was based on a wider area being promoted (which has since been revised) and concluded that the site performed well against availability and achievability criteria but faced significant suitability constraints. The report outlines how the site is within or adjacent to a major urban area, that the existing road access is adequate and that the site could accommodate a yield of 950 dwellings.

2.17 The most significant suitability constraint identified in the SHELAA related to 25-50% of the site being within a Local Wildlife Site. This was the case however the emerging proposals for the site as shown on the Design Concept Plan showed development taking place to the east of the existing LWS. The assessment suitability scoring of 1 out of 5 for biodiversity had been afforded to the site based on a red line area only and did not take into consideration the likelihood that any development would need to take place outside of the LWS as the Design Concept Plan demonstrated.

2.18 A draft SHELAA (October 2020) has since been published which takes account of the revised site boundaries ('revised site 195'). This concludes that the site could accommodate around 708 homes and that it performs well against availability and achievability criteria. There are some suitability constraints: the access road needs upgrading (which is change from the earlier comment), there is a group TPO, and it is adjacent to a Local Wildlife Site, but there are no further issues identified. The Design Concept Plan shows how these matters can be accounted for as part of a well designed sustainable development.

SOLIHULL BOROUGH LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT, NOVEMBER 2016

2.19 Within the Solihull Borough Landscape Character Assessment, the site is located within Landscape Character Area (LCA)1: Solihull Fringe. LCA1 is sub divided into two areas, the site is located within sub-area 1A with the key characteristics fully detailed within the Landscape Character Assessment. Landscape and Visual Issues are fully considered within Section 3 of this Document which also sets out the landscape strategy for the site taking into account landscape character and the role of the site in the Green Belt.

SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL (SA)

2.20 An interim SA was produced in January 2017 and this has been updated in October 2020. This shows that the site is sustainably located, but provides a 'red' score for loss of agricultural land. The appraisal makes no distinction between those parts being proposed as developable areas, and those which are part of the wider context. Section 5 includes an assessment of the site against the SA criteria proposed to provide the detail required.

03 | SITE ASSESSMENT

SITE DESCRIPTION AND CONTEXT

- 3.1 L&Q Estates has an interest in some 55.7 hectares of land comprising of gradually sloping pastoral agricultural fields and a densely wooded area known as Hampton Coppice (**Fig.3.1**), which is approximately 17 hectares in extent. The site lies to the north-east of Solihull and is located within the West Midlands Green Belt.
- 3.2 The site is bounded to the west by Damson Parkway which joins with Coventry Road to the north of the site. The southern boundary of the site is marked by the Grand Union Canal, which joins the canal network in central Birmingham and flows through the village Catherine de-Barnes which is located to the east of the site. The northern and western boundaries are marked by hedgerows and trees.
- 3.3 In terms of physical site constraints, the most prominent is Hampton Coppice which forms the western part of the site adjacent to Damson Parkway. Hampton Coppice is a heavily wooded belt of trees and vegetation which form a broad 'C' shape, this extends at the northern and within the southern extent of the site and is designated as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) within which there are a number of Tree Protection Orders (TPOs). The Low Brook river runs through the western part of Hampton Coppice where the woodland is wetter flowing through the Coppice from the south and exits the site in the north, this is also designated as a LWS. Adjacent to the southern boundary of the site, the Grand Union Canal is also a pLWS. There is also an Ecosite within the south eastern part of the site land. There are also a number of mature trees located within the remainder of the site.
- 3.4 Topographically, the site gradually rises from the Grand Union Canal and Damson Parkway, with the highest point located on the eastern boundary towards Woodhouse Farm.

- 3.5 The area to the west of the site, beyond Damson Parkway, predominantly comprises of residential development. These are mainly large detached and semi-detached, two-storey properties. Also located to the west of Damson Parkway is the Jaguar Land Rover (JLR's) Solihull Motor Vehicle Works Plant. This is JLR's largest manufacturing Plant which occupies 130 hectares of land and is designated as 'Jaguar Land Rover' in the adopted Solihull Local Plan.
- 3.6 Planning permission has recently been granted at the JLR site for a Vehicle Storage facility off Damson Parkway. In December 2016 JLR submitted a planning application (ref PL/2016/03131/PPFL) for a Logistics Operations Centre incorporating Storage and Distribution (Class B8) and Offices (Class B1a). This will entail a new road layout at Damson Parkway including a roundabout and traffic controlled junction and various vehicle parking areas and ancillary works. The JLR application relates to land to the north of the existing plant extending into the Green Belt along Damson Parkway towards Coventry Road to the north.

- 3.7 To the east of the site there are open fields predominantly agricultural land with a number of active farmsteads. To the south the site is adjoined by the Grand Union Canal, a pLWS. Running parallel with the canal is an existing public footpath, which links to Damson Parkway to the west. Further to the south is Lugtrout Lane which contains residential development and the Glades Football Centre which includes a number of football pitches, clubhouse and bar facilities. To the north of the site, beyond the Elmdon Trading Estate and Coventry Road, is Birmingham Airport, the National Exhibition Centre (NEC) and to the east of the NEC and M42, land which is being allocated under Policy UK1 - HS2 Interchange for mixed use development including the HS2 Interchange station and ancillary infrastructure, commercial, residential and associated retail, leisure and cultural uses. (**Fig 3.2**) shows the site within it's wider context.

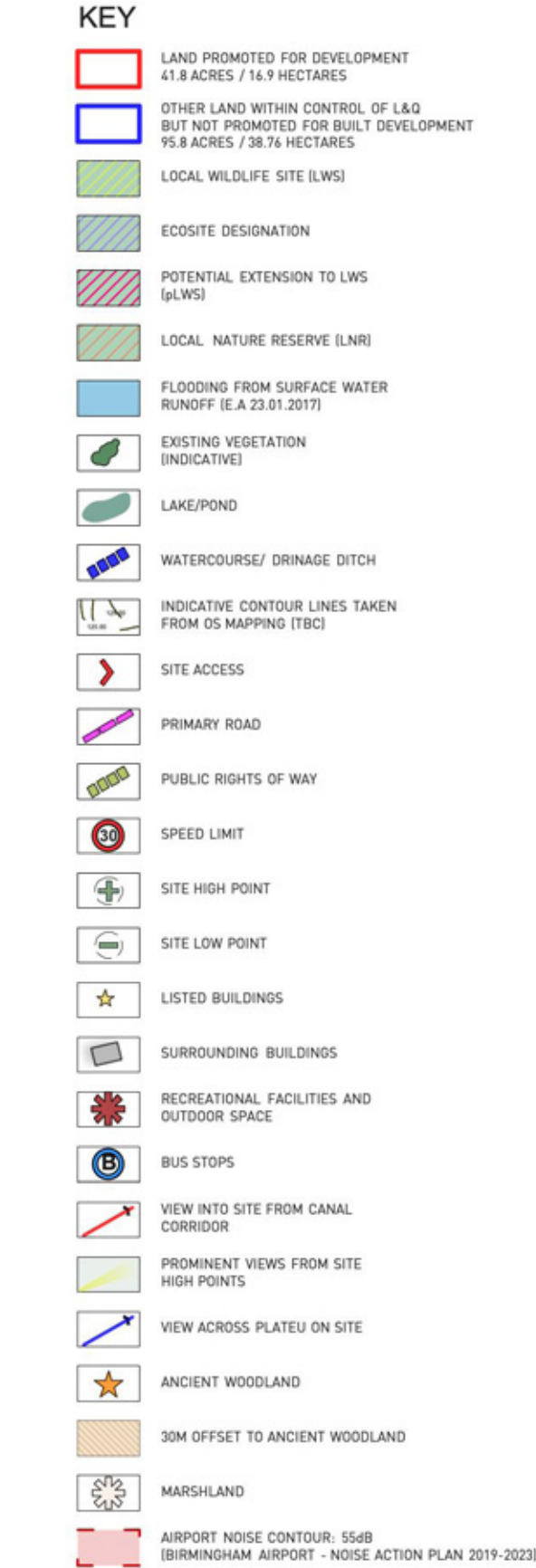
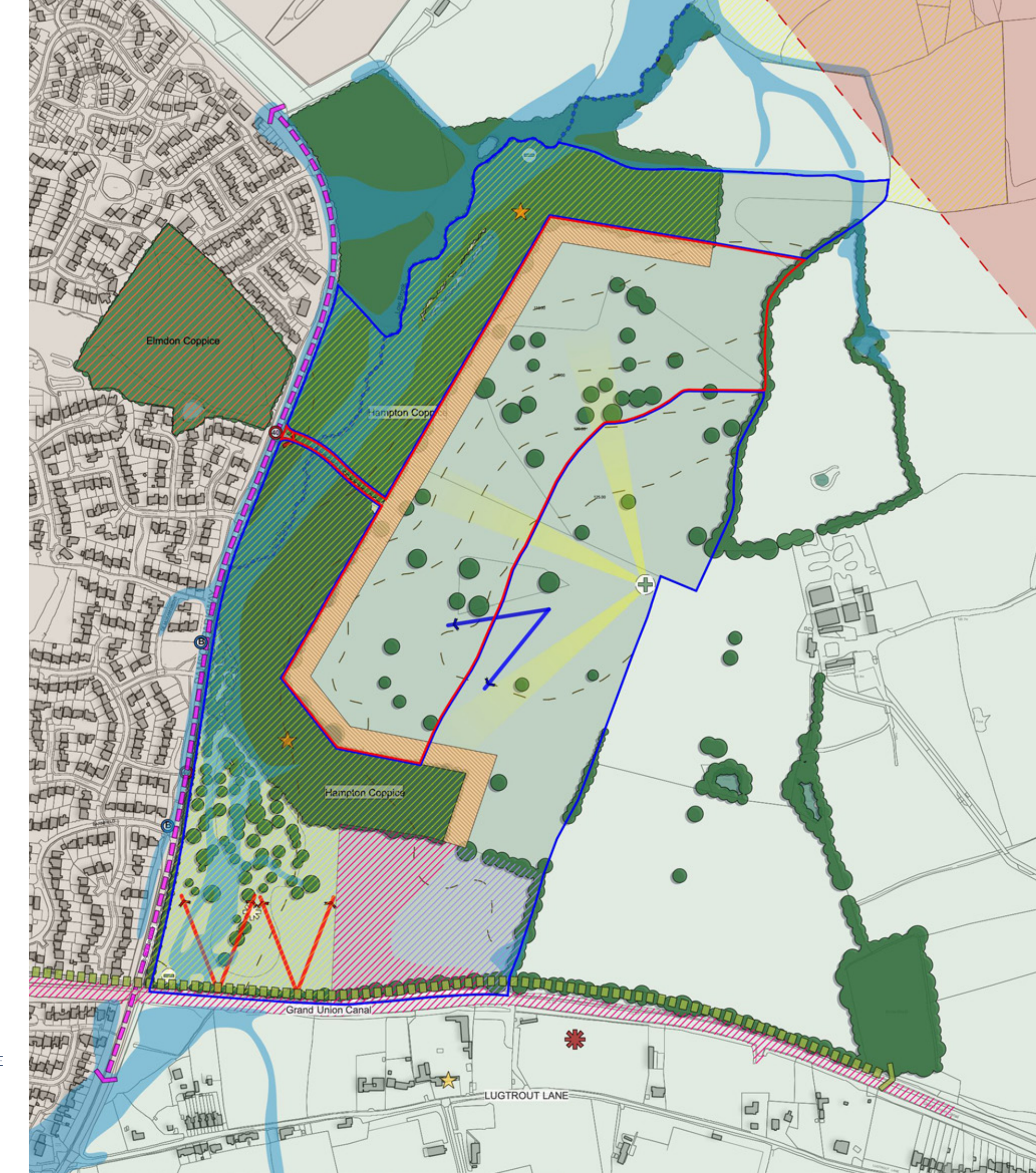


Fig 3.1 | CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS PLAN | NOT TO SCALE



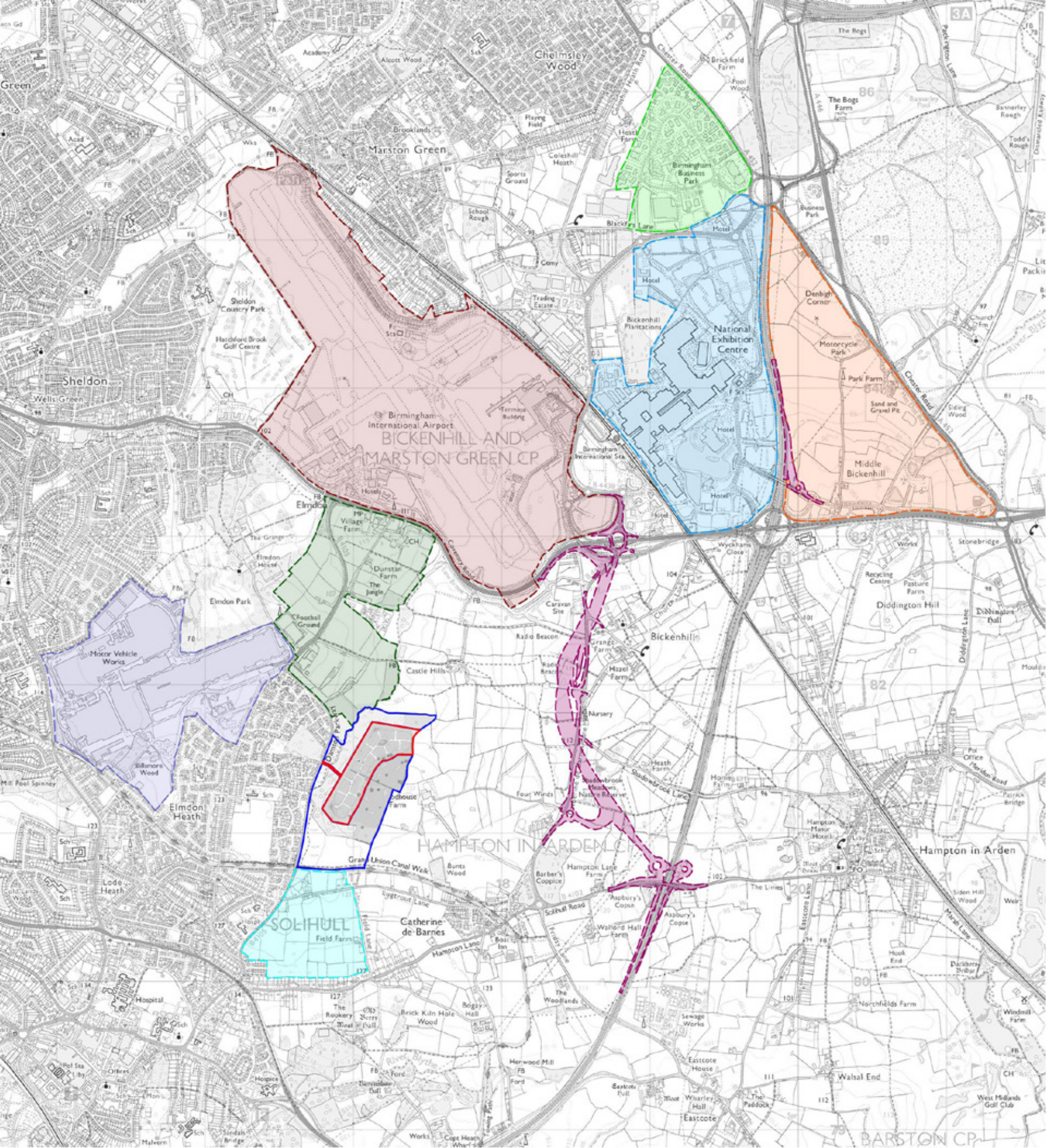


Fig 3.2 | WIDER CONTEXT PLAN | NOT TO SCALE

LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ISSUES

Policy Context

- 3.8 The Solihull Local Plan: Shaping a Sustainable Future, December 2013 sets out the long term vision, objectives and planning policies for the borough. Those policies relevant to a study of landscape and visual matters include Policy P10: Natural Environment and Policy P17: Countryside and Green Belt.
- 3.9 The Solihull Draft Local Plan (November 2016) explains its policy context in terms of 'Protecting and Enhancing the Environment' at section 9. It notes the borough has a high green and blue infrastructure (GI) as one of its greatest assets, that extends beyond the countryside to include green and blue spaces of the street scene, gardens, ponds, rivers etc. The natural environment is fundamental to Solihull's attractive urban and rural environment (para. 288).
- 3.10 Policy P10 Natural Environment is central to this, and recognises the importance of a healthy natural environment in its own right. The Council will seek to protect, enhance and restore the diverse features of its Arden landscape, and seek to create new habitat and promote local distinctiveness. The policy also seeks to conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity across the Borough, protecting habitat and species, in particular recognised areas such as SSSIs and Local Nature Reserves. Outside designated areas, developers are expected to take full account of nature conservation and geological value, and demonstrate appropriate mitigation where development is permitted.
- 3.11 Policy P11 Water management discusses the need for all new development to have regard to the actions and objectives of the relevant River Basin Management Plan, with the use of sustainable urban drainage systems in the context of all new major development.
- 3.12 Policy P14 Amenity discusses the need to ensure a good standard of amenity of all existing and future occupiers of houses, businesses and other uses. A number of criteria are relevant including:
- High quality design;
 - Visual amenity and minimising visual impact;
 - The scale, character and appearance of new infrastructure elements related to electronic communications;
 - Safeguarding important trees and hedgerows and new planting;
 - Safeguarding areas of countryside with intrinsically dark sky from the impacts of light pollution; and
 - Protect the tranquil and locally distinctive areas in the Borough by guiding new development to locations that will avoid or minimise adverse impacts.
- 3.13 Policy P14 is cross referenced with Policy P15 Securing Design Quality (Section 10: Promoting Quality of Place), which expects all proposals to contribute to, or create, high quality spaces and places that have regard to local distinctiveness. Proposals will be expected to meet a number of key principles:
- Conserve and enhance local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality (ref. scale, massing, density);
 - Future proofing the design and layout;
 - Provision for water management;
 - Proactive approach to responding to climate change and adoption of low carbon construction principles;
 - Conserve, restore and enhance biodiversity;
 - Respect and enhance landscape quality, including trees, hedgerows and other landscape features of value, and contribute to strategic green infrastructure; and
 - Create attractive, safe, active legible and uncluttered streets and public spaces.
- 3.14 Clearly there is a balance within these criteria between more 'strategic; design issues, with those at a more schematic and detailed level. All established urban design principles and guidance need to be adhered to, with the design process active at prep-application stage.
- 3.15 Policy P16 concerns heritage assets, and makes reference again to the Arden landscape, and that all development proposals likely to impact on this character and significance will be expected to demonstrate how this impact has been addressed.
- 3.16 Policy P17 Countryside and Green belt, advises that inappropriate development will not be permitted in the Solihull Green belt (see below in respect of recent Solihull Strategic Green Belt Assessment).

Landscape Context

3.17 At a national level the site is located within the National Character Area Profile 97: Arden as published by Natural England (2012).

3.18 Landscape character at a local level is defined by the Solihull Borough Landscape Character (2016). The site is located in Landscape Character Area (LCA) 1: Solihull Fringe. The key characteristics of this LCA can be summarised as follows:

- Landform gently rises forming a northward facing slope extending from Birmingham International Airport towards the small settlement of Catherine-de-Barnes in the south;
- Land use in this character area is influenced by the direct proximity of the urban edge to the open countryside;
- Within the M42 corridor and the airport area in the north, road and air traffic noise is a significant detractor to the tranquillity of the area;
- A diverse range of medium distant and short distant views are prevalent across this character area;
- Pockets of ancient woodlands are characteristic of this character area, which are also designated Local Wildlife Sites, woodland cover is a key feature of the area such that views throughout this character area are generally typified by a backdrop of wooded land.

3.19 LCA 1 is sub-divided into two sub-areas, the site is located within sub-area 1A. The key characteristics of sub-area 1A are as follows:

- Medium to large scale fields of supporting both pastoral and arable use. Field boundaries vary from hedgerows to open division with post and wire fencing;
- Strong woodland and tree cover in the area that forms the backdrop in most views;
- A number of highly managed green spaces hosting a variety of sports clubs including football, rugby and rifle shooting;
- Ribbon development along Hampton Lane and Lugtrout Lane are the main concentrations of settlement in the sub-area with other scattered developments including converted farmsteads; and
- Listed Buildings include Grade II* Ravenshaw Hall and its associated fords make the area distinct.

3.20 In relation to landscape sensitivity, the published assessment notes that this sub-area has some attractive landscape features such as Elmdon Park, various woodlands, open fields and historic buildings. Detracting elements include communication masts, fly-tipping, incongruous metal fencing, electricity pylons and general road and air traffic noise. The landscape in this area is fragmented due to the strong urban influences, road network and varying land uses. Overall, the landscape is considered to be in fair condition. According to the published assessment, the landscape character sensitivity of the sub-area is considered to be medium.

3.21 In relation to visual sensitivity, the published assessment states that the visibility in the sub-area consists of generally medium to short distance views that are wide - framed and deep, being horizontal in orientation. There are a small number of long distant views encapsulating the spire of St. Peter's Church in Bickenhill and others where the airport infrastructure is visible. The strong tree cover forms a backdrop to most mid-distant views and the vegetation along the lanes provides a tunnelled view where trees overhang the highway. Overall the published assessment considered the visual sensitivity of the sub-area to be medium.

3.22 The published character assessment states that the value of the sub-area is considered to be medium. It identifies ancient woodlands, manor houses, fords at Ravenshaw Hall and the Grand Union Canal as assets.

3.23 In terms of landscape capacity, the published assessment states that this sub-area would typically have an overall low landscape capacity to accommodate change. It states that the sub-area would be able to accommodate some areas of new development, which would need to be of an appropriate type, scale and form and in keeping with the existing character and local distinctiveness of the area.

1. VIEW FROM PUBLIC RIGHT OF WAY, NORTH OF CANAL CORRIDOR, LOOKING NORTH
2. VIEW FROM SOUTHERN BOUNDARY OF SITE, LOOKING NORTH
3. VIEW FROM GRAND UNION CANAL, LOOKING NORTH-EAST
4. VIEW FROM CENTRE OF SITE, LOOKING NORTH-EAST



Visual Context

3.24 The visual envelope is defined broadly as follows:

- from the north, by a woodland of Hampton Coppice which wraps around the site;
- from the east by the rising landform, which reaches ca. +127m AOD at Woodhouse Farm;
- from the south by mature vegetation along the canal corridor; and
- from west by the mature woodland of Hampton Coppice and vegetation along the Damson Parkway.

3.25 Views towards the site are generally limited by the mature woodland of Hampton Coppice, in combination with the rising landform of the site to the east. From Damson Parkway there are occasional views into the southern area of the site, for example from where the road passes over the Grand Union Canal. Further north views into the site are limited by Hampton Coppice. There are also views into the southern area of the site from the public right of way (footpath) that passes along its boundary with the canal corridor and from the towpath along the canal corridor itself. The topography of the northern area of the site is rising and this in combination with the woodland of Hampton Coppice means that the area of the site beyond Hampton Coppice is not visible from the canal corridor, although there are likely to be views from Lugtrout Lane, south of the canal corridor. There are no other public rights of way in the immediate vicinity of the site.

Landscape and Visual Constraints and Opportunities

3.26 Landscape and visual constraints can be used to guide the development of a proposal in a positive manner, often leading to opportunities and not just creating absolute constraints to development. The constraints are considered to be:

- the designated ancient woodland of Hampton Coppice;
- the local PROW network, including the Grand Union Canal recreational route (providing recreational opportunities for potential high sensitivity visual receptors);
- the location of the site within the Green Belt, which will have some influence on the value of the local landscape; and
- the findings of the Solihull Landscape Character Assessment that identify the LCA within which the site sits as having generally low capacity to accommodate change.

3.27 Landscape and visual opportunities can be summarised as follows:

- There are no overriding statutory landscape planning designations;
- Existing vegetation and green infrastructure throughout the site, including hedgerows, providing opportunities to enhance this through a comprehensive landscape strategy; and
- The presence of mature vegetation including the mature woodland of Hampton Coppice and hedgerows around the perimeters and across the site, in combination with the rising landform to the east, which will help to minimise the visual envelope of the site and will contribute to the capacity of the site to accommodate development; and
- The opportunity to propose development within LCA 1: Solihull Fringe - Sub-area 1A in this location which is of an appropriate type, scale and form and in keeping with the existing character and local distinctiveness of the area, as set out in the Solihull Borough Landscape Character Assessment.

Role of the Site in the Green Belt

3.28 The Solihull Strategic Green Belt Assessment - Assessment Report (July 2016) identifies a number of Broad Areas of Green Belt land. It also identifies a number of Refined Parcels, which adjoin or lie adjacent to built-up areas. The site is located within Refined Parcel RP15 'Land to the south of A45, west of Bickenhill'. The assessment scores each Refined Parcel against four purposes of the Green Belt. In relation to RP15, it sets out the following: (Fig.3.3)

3.29 Overall the combined score for parcel RP15 identifies it as a parcel or area that is "higher performing".

GREEN BELT PURPOSE	RP15 SCORE
1 - CHECK UNRESTRICTED SPRAWL OF LARGE BUILT-UP AREAS	3
2 - PREVENT NEIGHBOURING TOWNS MERGING INTO ONE ANOTHER	1
3 - ASSIST IN SAFEGUARDING THE COUNTRYSIDE FROM ENCROACHMENT	2
4 - PRESERVE THE SETTING AND SPECIAL CHARACTER OF HISTORIC TOWNS	0
TOTAL	6

Fig 3.3 | GREEN BELT REFINED PARCEL SCORES

GREEN BELT PURPOSE	CRITERIA	Summary
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.	Is ribbon or other development present? Is other development detached from the existing large built-up area?	There is limited ribbon development in the vicinity of the site, however the existing settlement edge is located along Damson Parkway, to the west. The site makes a contribution to the definition of the boundary of Solihull in this location through its mature green infrastructure boundaries which serve to contain it both physically and visually. Development of the site will not lead to unrestricted sprawl of the built up area as it will be contained within this framework and remain enclosed by existing and proposed green infrastructure.
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.	Does the area represent a 'gap' between major urban areas?	The closest settlement to the edge of Solihull in this location is Catherine-de-Barnes, which is located ca. 800 m to the south-west. Development of the site is proposed where it will be physically and visually contained by the existing and proposed landscape framework and as such is likely to have a minimal influence on the 'gap' between the edge of Solihull and Catherin-de-Barnes. The proposed development would allow the maintenance of an extensive area of agricultural land to the east which will maintain separation. Overall, development of the site will not lead to coalescence ('merging') of neighbouring settlements.
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.	Is the area characterised by countryside? Does the area adjoin areas of countryside? Is ribbon or other development present within the area?	The landscape of the site and to the north and east is generally characterised by countryside, with occasional built form. To the south and west however, is the existing settlement edge of Solihull. There is some ribbon development to the south along Lugtrout Lane. The countryside in the vicinity of the site is characterised by mature woodland (Hampton Coppice) which serves to provide visual enclosure and will contain proposed development. However, the majority of the existing vegetation will be retained, and together with a robust green infrastructure strategy, development can be located within a comprehensive landscape setting.
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.	Is the area within or adjoining a Conservation Area within a historic town? Are key landmarks or the historic core visible from within the area? Does the area contribute to the setting of the historic town?	The site lies outside of any Conservation Areas and is not located within a historic town.

Fig 3.4 | ASSESSMENT OF SITE AGAINST GREEN BELT PURPOSES

Landscape Strategy

3.30 In response to the desktop and fieldwork undertaken, an initial landscape strategy has been identified and the following landscape principles have been applied to the emerging development envelope for the area:

- The overall development envelope is defined by the visual and physical containment provided by Hampton Coppice, which wraps around the extent of development and is proposed to be retained and enhanced where appropriate. The extent of woodland will be increased, effectively extending Hampton Coppice to the north and south of the site, in reference to the sites history as a complete woodland.
- The development envelope is located away from the higher elevations of the site, including the 'plateau' to the south, this will reduce visual prominence of any new built form.
- Consideration should be given to the existing vegetation (including trees, hedgerows, hedgerow trees and woodland areas). Where possible these landscape elements should be retained and integrated into the layout of both developable areas and open space. The proposed landscape strategy utilises an existing access point through Hampton Coppice.
- The location and extent of green infrastructure and open space within the site should influence the formation and extent of the development envelope. The retained areas of vegetation (as described above) would ensure that the built form of a proposal would be contained in a robust and diverse framework of green infrastructure and open space. A strategy for retaining existing vegetation combined with proposals for extensive landscaping would result in a landscape context for future proposals which show a variety of stages of establishment and maturity. This would enhance the quality of a proposal and also help to integrate the site with the local landscape character.

- The layout of proposals for the site should incorporate substantial areas of private garden space as well as the proposed publically accessible areas of green infrastructure as these would have the capacity to hold a substantial number of street and garden trees which will, over time, contribute to a network of green infrastructure and help to integrate the character of the site with the surrounding landscape.
- All landscape mitigation which forms part of a proposal should be subject to a high quality detailed landscape scheme so as to ensure that the functions of the landscape components will be delivered; this would also reflect positively on the design quality of a proposal as a whole.
- In terms of a defensible Green Belt boundary, existing physical features, which include the existing and proposed extent of Hampton Coppice; a robust network of existing and proposed hedgerows and rising topography to the east as well as the potential for the creation of dedicated open space and Green Infrastructure (GI), could be combined to form a new Green Belt boundary.
- The introduction of a new Green Belt boundary to the east of the site using physical landscape features such as the mature hedgerow and woodland boundaries will mean both that the purposes of the green belt are maintained, and any future development will be set within a well vegetated new settlement edge which respects the topography of the site, key views across and into it, such that it is landscape and visually led.

3.31 In accordance with the NPPF, Green Belt boundaries should be defined clearly, using physical features that are readily recognised and likely to be permanent. It is considered that the southern, northern and eastern boundaries of the site, led by existing and proposed woodland cover, could form a clearly defined Green Belt boundary. The landscape and green infrastructure strategy for the site also proposes new planting which extends Hampton Coppice to provide further containment. These mitigation measure will help to establish and enhance a robust landscaped edge to the proposed development a definitive boundary to the future Green Belt.

Summary

3.32 Overall the scale and form of proposed development has been influenced by the landscape constraints and opportunities of the site and its context. Furthermore, the proposals for green infrastructure and landscaping will deliver a number of enhancements in terms of the physical landscape and the strengthening of the structure of the landscape to create a new robust, defensible Green Belt boundary to the north of the site.

MOVEMENT AND ACCESS

Access

3.33 Vehicle access to the site is proposed onto Damson Parkway via an access road through Hampton Coppice.

3.34 It is anticipated that the access junction would be in the form of a priority controlled T-junction which could include a ghost island right turn lane, so that right turning traffic does not affect journey time reliability along Damson Parkway. The form of the junction would be determined through consultation with SMBC. The access position has not yet been fixed but there is sufficient frontage available to provide a suitable junction in accordance with SMBC's highway design guidance.

3.35 As shown on the indicative site layout plans, pedestrian access to the site would be achieved via footways provided adjacent to the site access road which would connect to the existing footway infrastructure on Damson Parkway.

Connectivity

3.36 In terms of pedestrian travel, the Guidelines for Providing for Journeys on Foot document produced by the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation describes the 'maximum', 'acceptable' and 'desirable' walking distances. It suggests that in terms of commuting, walking to school and recreational journeys; walk distances up to 2,000 metres can be considered, with the 'desirable' and 'acceptable' distances being 500 and 1,000 metres respectively.

3.37 For non-commuter journeys, the guidance suggests that a walk distance of up to 1,200 metres can be considered, with the 'desirable' and 'acceptable' distances being 400 metres and 800 metres respectively.

3.38 **Fig.3.6** shows how the site relates to the local community, services and facilities in terms of walking distances. confirms that the retail parade on Yew Tree Lane is within the convenient walking distance of the site and includes a pharmacy, convenience store and butchers shop. Other available facilities within the isochrone include primary schools, Spire Parkway Hospital and public houses. The southern extent of the isochrone includes the edge of Solihull Town Centre.

3.39 A footway is provided on the western side of Damson Parkway separated from the carriageway by a verge. This footways provides access to the residential area to the west of the site and to the south towards Solihull Town Centre. Signal controlled crossing facilities are available to allow pedestrians

IHT THRESHOLD	DISTANCE (METRES)		WALK TIME (MINUTES)	
	Commuting, walking to school and recreation	Other non-commuter journeys	Commuting, walking to school and recreation	Other non-commuter journeys
Desirable	500	400	6	5
Acceptable	1,000	800	12.5	10
Maximum	2,000	1,200	25	15

Fig 3.5 | WALK JOURNEY DISTANCE AND TIME THRESHOLD

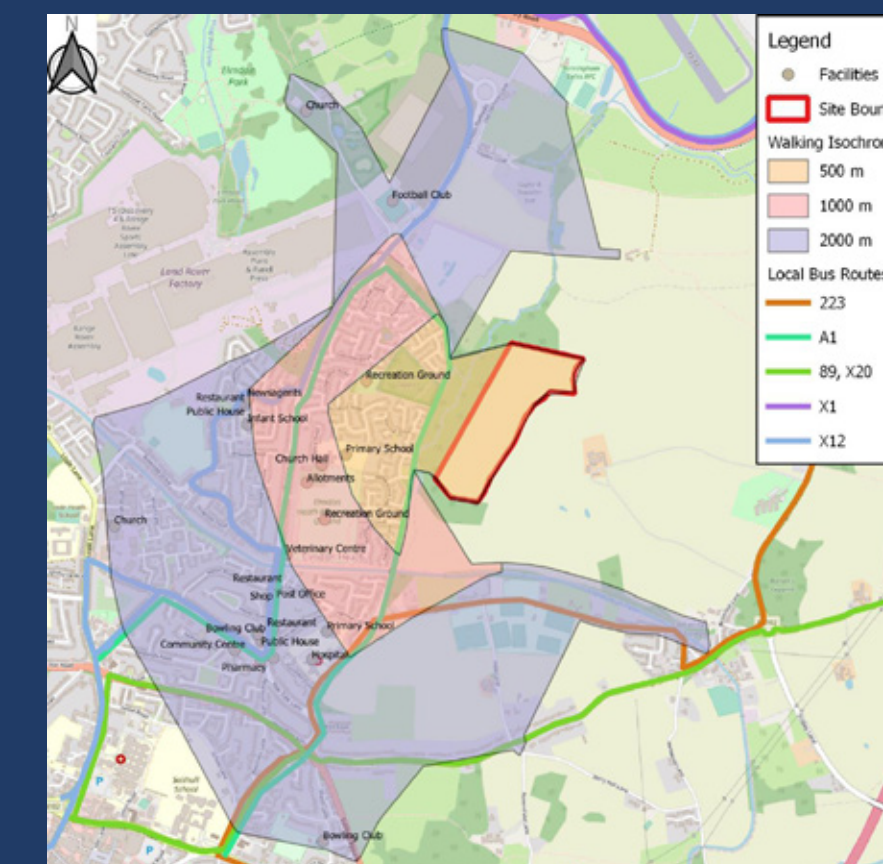


Fig 3.6 | WALKING CATCHMENT | NOT TO SCALE

to safely cross the A41 Solihull bypass. To the north footway connections are available to provide a route to JLR. A pedestrian path is also provided adjacent to the Grand Union Canal and this can be accessed from Damson Parkway.

3.40 In terms of cycling it is generally accepted that this has the potential to substitute for short car trips, particularly

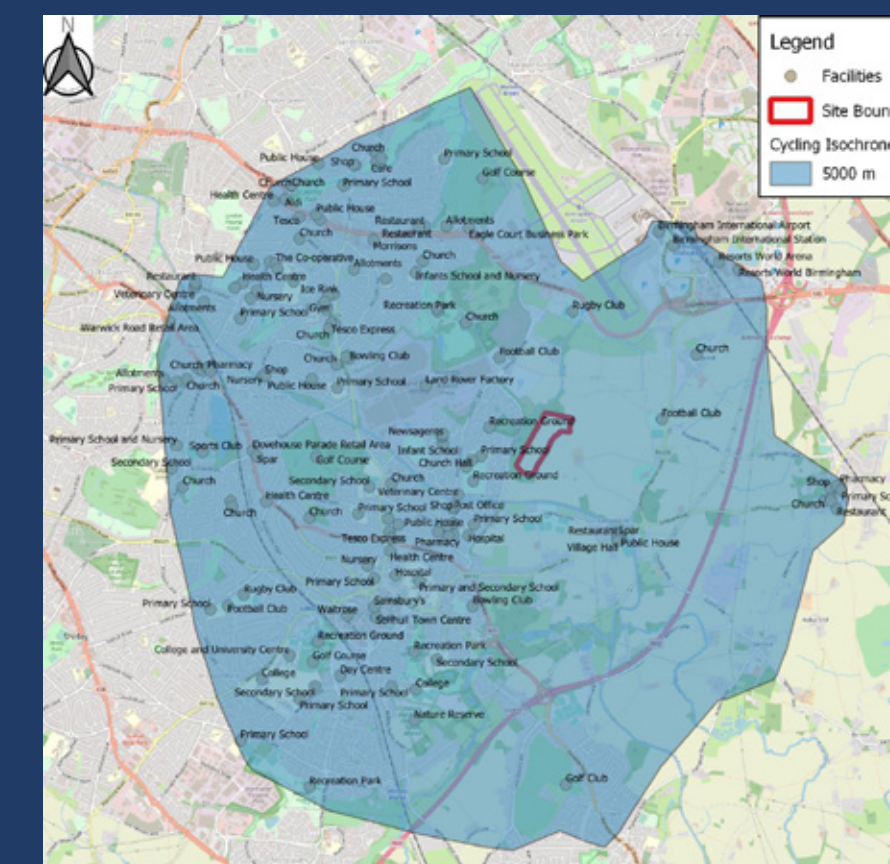


Fig 3.7 | CYCLE CATCHMENT | NOT TO SCALE

those less than 5km, and to form part of a longer journey on public transport. **Fig.3.7** presents the 5km cycling isochrone from the site. It shows that Solihull Town Centre is within convenient cycling distance of the site. The isochrone also includes key destinations of Birmingham International Airport and Railway Station and the NEC as well as locations such as Olton and Wells Green.

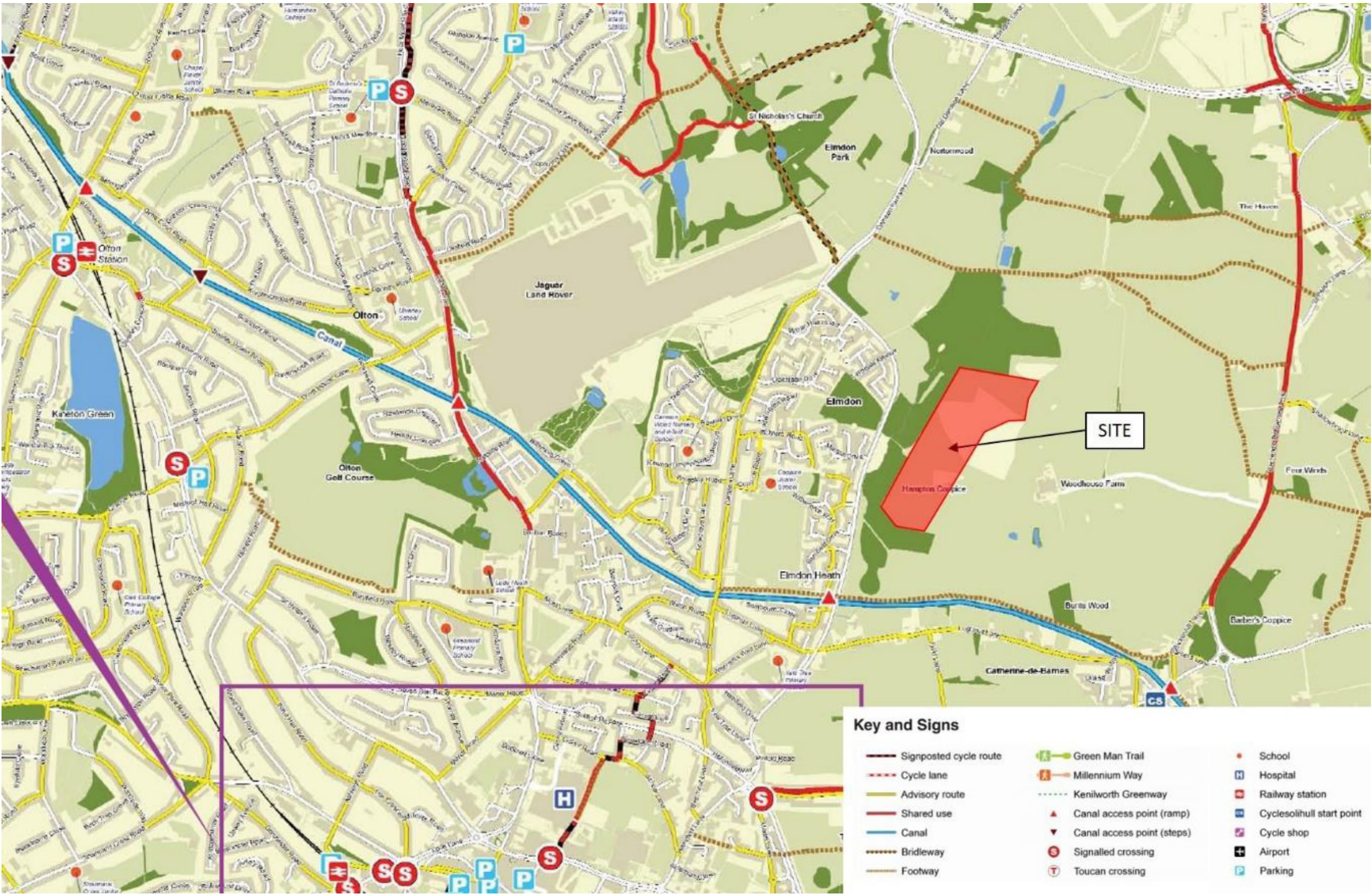


Fig 3.8 | SMBC WALKING AND CYCLING MAP EXTRACT

3.41 Fig.3.8 includes an extract from the SMBC walking and cycling map. There are no dedicated cycle facilities on Damson Parkway, however the roads through the residential areas to the west of the site are designated as being suitable for cycling. This includes Damson Lane which provides a route to the south to Solihull Town Centre. Off-road routes are also available to on Lode Lane to the west of the site and Catherine de Barnes Lane to the east. These provide routes to Sheldon, Marston Green, Birmingham International Railway station and Airport and Birmingham Business Park.

3.42 The SMBC Walking and Cycling Strategy is also being produced. The purpose of the strategy is to:

- set the overall vision for cycling and walking in Solihull
- set a clear standard for cycling and walking infrastructure
- ensure major developments consider active travel – more sustainable approach to transport
- embed cycling and walking initiatives into local policy

3.43 As part of the strategy, SMBC are producing a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). LCWIPs are a new Government approach to identify cycling and walking improvements required at a local level. The analysis within the draft LCWIP2 identifies the primary cycle corridors which make up the Solihull Cycle Network.

3.44 Fig.3.9 presents a plan extracted from the LCWIP which shows the cycle corridors. Relevant to the site is the Solihull Town Centre to UK Central Hub via Damson Parkway/Damson Lane and the A45 cycle corridor. This corridor does not include the section of Damson Parkway along the site frontage. However, the cycle corridor can be accessed through the residential area to the west of the site. Therefore, improvements to this corridor would enhance the cycle options for local residents and would further enable them to cycle to access employment and retail facilities.

3.45 The site is well served by bus routes. The nearest bus stop to the site is located on Damson Parkway on the site frontage and this stop is served by the A1 circular service. To the west the X12 service is available from Damson Lane. Additionally, further to the south of the site the 89, 223 and X20 services are available from stops on Hampton Lane.

3.46 With regard to train travel, Solihull railway station is located approximately 3.5km to the southwest of the site. Services are operated by Chiltern Railways to London Marylebone via High Wycombe and West Midlands Trains to Dorridge, extending

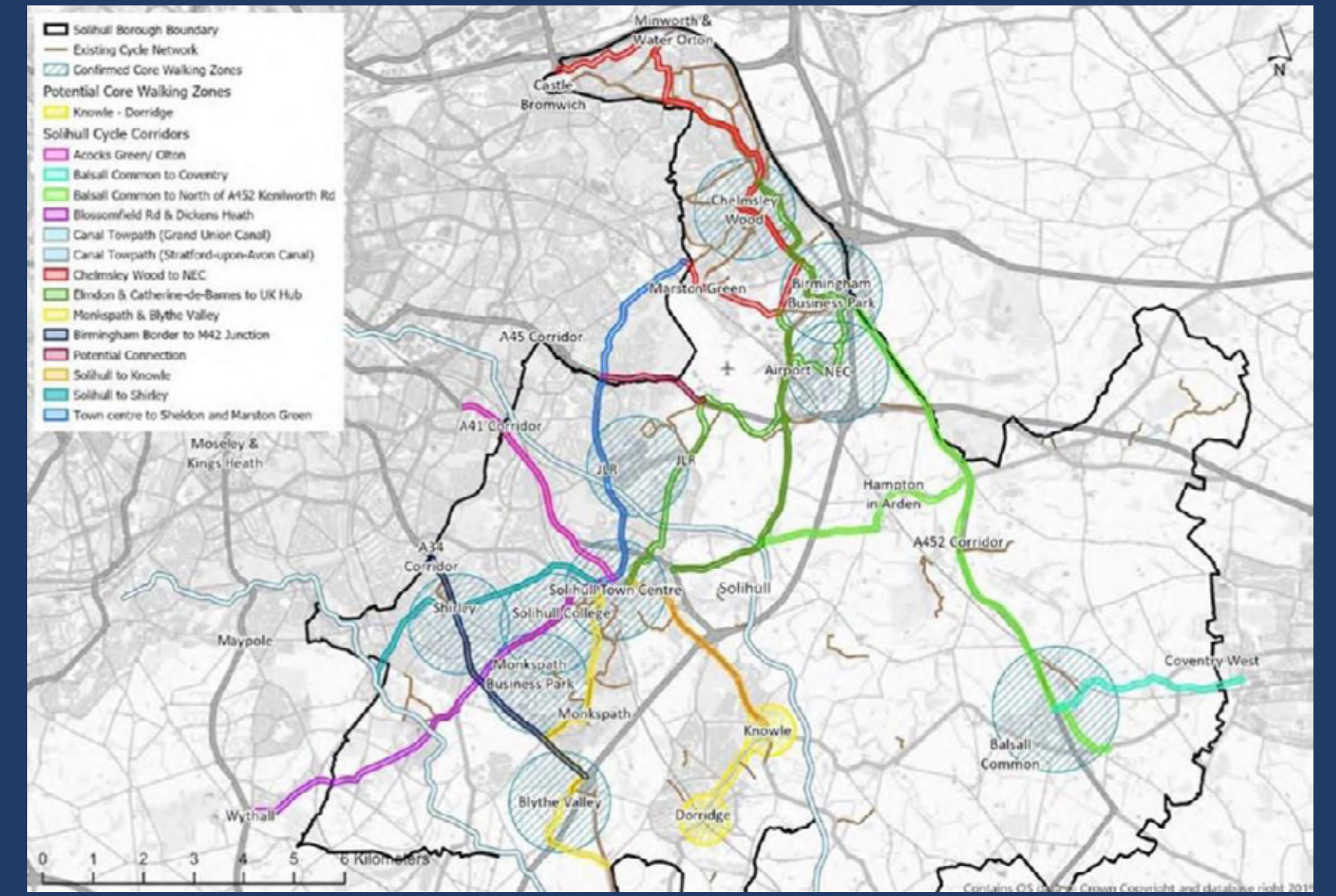


Fig 3.9 | SOLIHULL CYCLE NETWORK PLAN | NOT TO SCALE

SERVICE	ROUTES	SERVICE DETAILS
A1	Solihull Damsonwood Circular	Hourly service Monday to Saturday
X12	Birmingham to Solihull via Chelmsley Wood	20 minute frequency Monday to Sunday
89	Coventry to Balsall Common via Meriden	3 services per day Monday to Friday
X20	Coventry to Stratford via Solihull	Hourly service Monday to Saturday
223	Solihull to Lea Marston via Coleshill	Hourly service Monday to Saturday

Fig 3.10 | BUS SERVICE SUMMARY

to Leamington Spa at peak times. The majority of Chiltern Railways services terminate at Birmingham Snow Hill with extensions to Kidderminster at peak times.

3.47 The train station is likely to be a key destination for residents.

The available pedestrian and cycle routes between the site and the station provide a good opportunity for travel by these mode of transport. In addition, the A1, X12 and X20 bus services all stop at the railway station. Solihull station benefits from 30 cycle parking spaces located outside the main entrance.

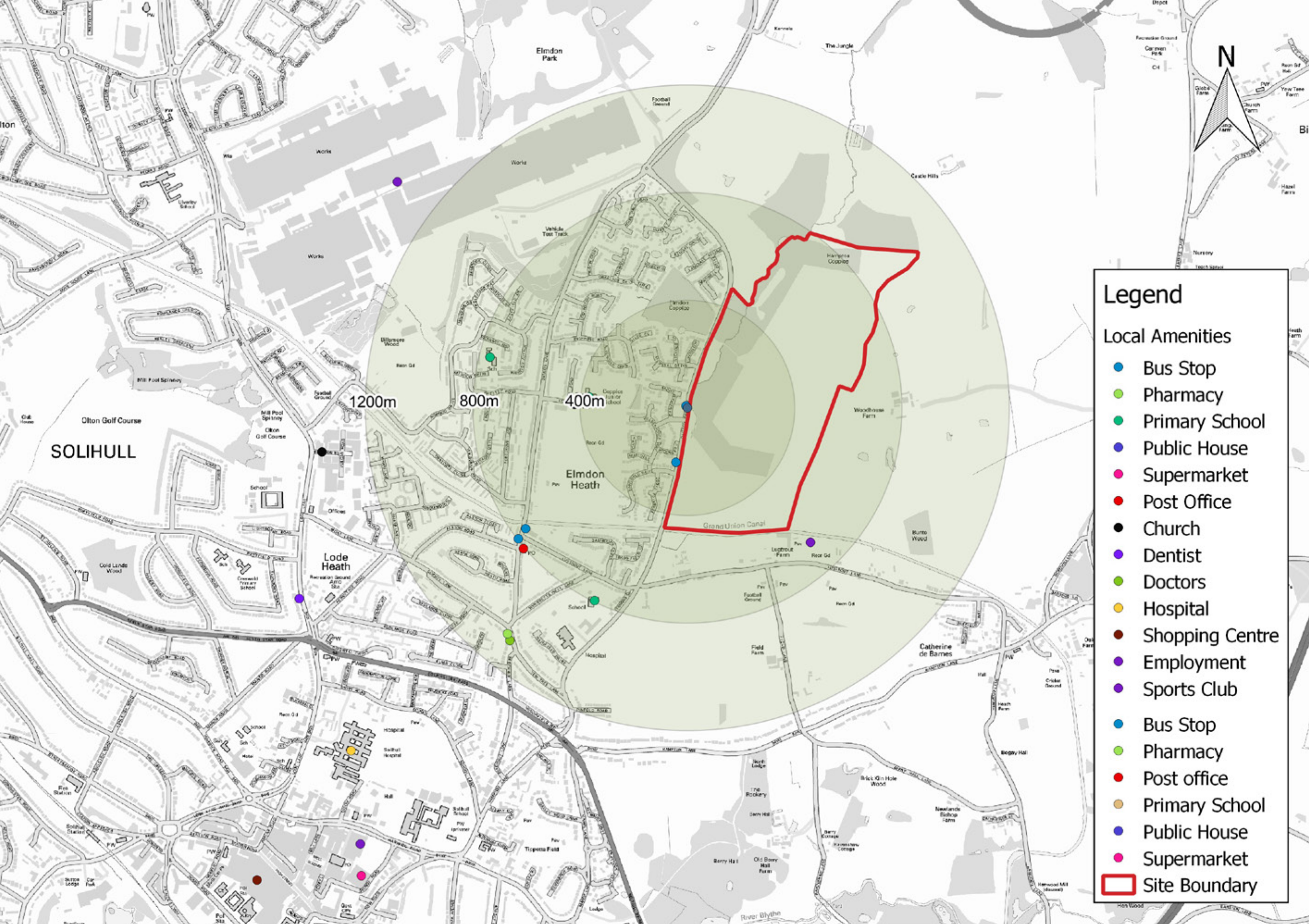


Fig 3.11 | LOCAL AMENITIES PLAN | NOT TO SCALE

Services / Amenities

- 3.48 The site is located within approximately 1100m of a local centre (Fig.3.11), which benefits from a pharmacy, supermarket and local shops. Additional services can be found in Solihull town centre, which is located approximately 2km southwest of the site, and is easily accessible by bus. The development proposals will also include provision for a local centre on site, in the immediate vicinity of residential units. Two primary schools can also be found within 800m of the site
- 3.49 The site benefits from its close proximity to the UK Central Hub Growth Area which embraces existing and proposed employment hubs, namely, Birmingham Airport, the NEC, Arden Cross (Proposed HS2 International Station and mixed use developments, Birmingham Business Park and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR).
- 3.50 The Draft Local Plan proposes to expand the existing JLR plant along Damson Parkway (Proposed Employment Allocation UK2) and the proposed Arden Cross UK Central Site will significantly increase employment and jobs in the area. Land at Damson Parkway will assist in providing homes close to jobs in the main economic growth area in the Borough.

FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

Flood Risk

- 3.51 The site is currently comprised of agricultural land and woodland. The southern part of the site is at a level of approximately 120m above sea level, with a level of 110m being recorded to the northwest of the site.
- 3.52 A natural watercourse runs northwards through the site, identified as Low Brook. Away from the proposed development Low Brook presents a low to medium risk of flooding. Downstream of the northern site boundary this risk increases to high where it converges with another watercourse and becomes classified as Main River.

Drainage

- 3.53 Severn Trent Water (STW) records for the area indicate the presence of a foul water sewer beneath Damson Parkway, providing drainage for all the developments west of Damson Parkway. The topography of the site is such that it is envisaged that discharge from the site can be dealt with by means of gravity and at this stage no pumping is envisaged.
- 3.54 STW records also indicate that a storm water sewer runs beneath Damson Parkway, which appears to discharge to the watercourse crossing the site, at a point approximately midway between the junctions of Damson Parkway / Cloudbridge Drive and Merstral Drive.
- 3.55 Low Brook appears to be the most suitable receptacle for disposing of surface water runoff from the site. On site storage, such as wetlands and swales will be developed on site.
- 3.56 A surface water drainage strategy should be developed, comprising a series of sustainable urban drainage techniques such as swales and storage basins, which drain into the watercourse towards the north western corner of the site.

ECOLOGY

- 3.57 CSA Environmental have undertaken a site visit and desktop study to identify potential ecological constraints to development, and to inform recommendations for further ecological surveys/assessments necessary to inform the promotion of the Site for future residential development.

Methods

- 3.58 An extended Phase 1 Habitat Survey of the Site was undertaken on 31 January 2017, in order to assess the on-site habitats and their potential to support notable and protected species. The survey, encompassing the Site (approximately 56ha) and immediately adjacent habitats that could be viewed, was conducted in damp weather conditions.
- 3.59 A desktop ecological review was undertaken by CSA for the Site in 2016, in order to obtain records of designated wildlife sites and protected/notable species on-site or within the local area. The Warwickshire Biological Records Centre (WBRC) and EcoRecord, the ecological database for Birmingham and the Black Country were contacted requested records with a central grid reference of SP 168 811 for an area encompassing the Site and adjacent land within c. 2km of the Site boundary for species and 1km of the Site boundary for local sites.

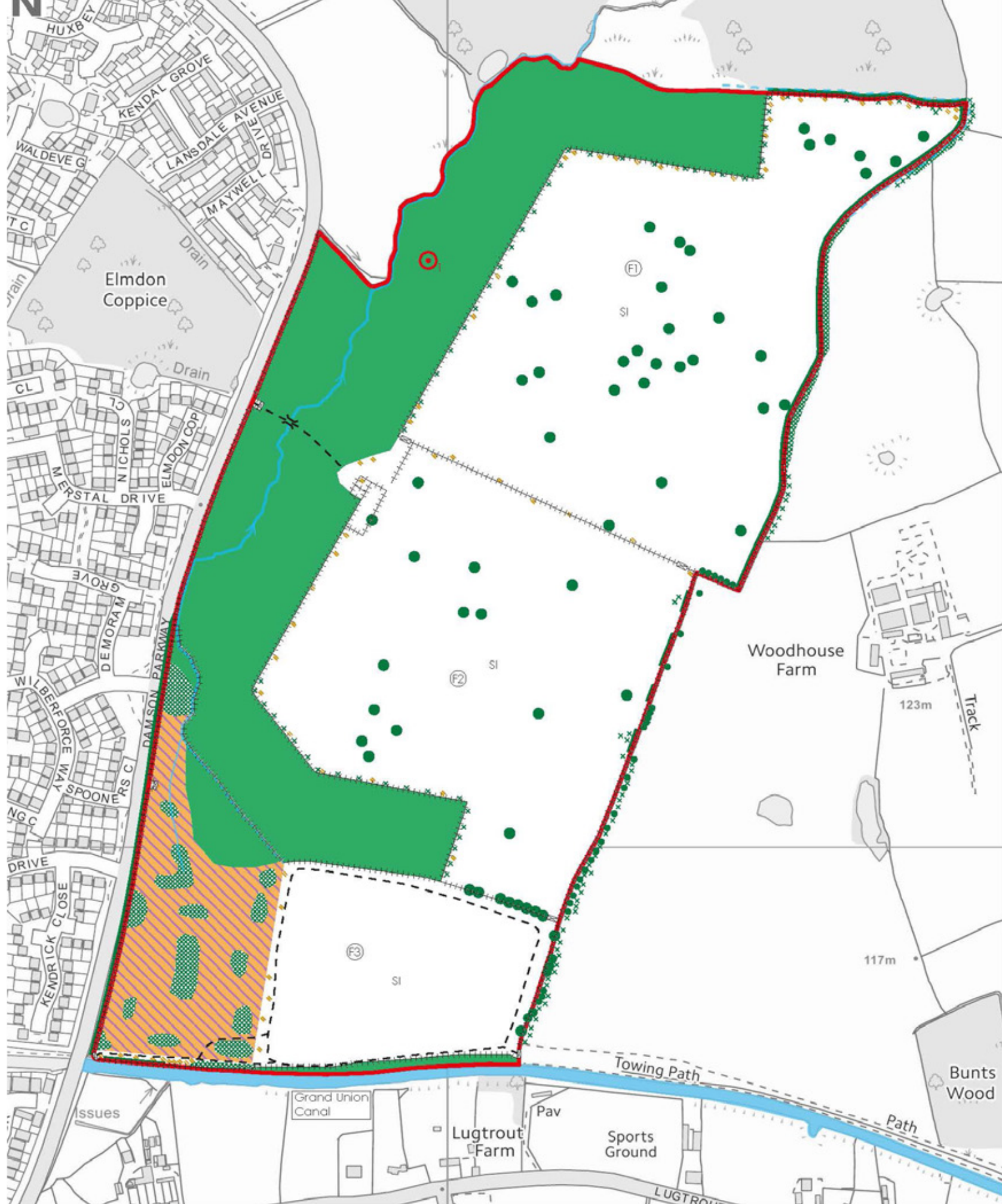


Fig 3.12 | HABITAT PLAN | NOT TO SCALE

BASELINE ECOLOGICAL CONDITIONS

Designated Sites

3.60 In summary, there are no statutory designations covering any part of the Site or internationally important designations present within 10km of the Site. Two nationally important designations and five locally important designations are present within 3km of the Site the closest of which are- Elmdon Coppice LNR (c. 20m west of the Site) and Elmdon Manor LNR (c. 345m north-west of the Site).

3.61 A total of 30 non-statutory sites are present 2km from the Site, fourteen of which 1km of the Site. Of particular significance are:

- Hampton Coppice LWS covering a large part of the west of the Site and land off-site to the west as well as being ancient semi-natural woodland;
- Low Brook and Kingshurst Brook potential LWS (pLWS) (which flows north from Hampton Coppice LWS);
- Castle Hill Farm Meadows LWS (adjacent to the east), and
- Grand Union Canal pLWS (the southern boundary of the Site).

Habitats and Flora

3.62 The Site is comprised of broadleaved woodland, grazed pasture, marshy grassland and scattered mature trees in fields and on boundaries. Please refer to the Habitats Plan (Fig 3.12) which maps these features.

Notable Flora Records

3.63 The WRBC provided extensive notable plant species, many relating to LWS's, including species which have been recorded within Hampton Coppice on-site or adjacent Elmdon Coppice.

Grassland

3.64 Grassland areas consist of grazed/topped semi-improved grassland in fields F1, F2 and the eastern section of F3. In the south-west of the Site there is an area of less managed marshy grassland with greater species diversity (part of Elmdon Heath LWS). Within the marshy grassland are numerous clumps of colonising scrub.

Broadleaved woodland

3.65 Mature broadleaved woodland occurs in the west of the Site, most of which is semi-natural ancient woodland (Hampton Coppice LWS). The woodland is dominated by alder *Alnus glutinosa* in the wetter areas, or English oak *Quercus robur* and birch *Betula sp* in the drier areas, both with holly *Ilex aquifolium* and hazel *Corylus avellana* understory.

Trees and Hedgerows

3.66 There are several hedgerows with mature trees on-site. The hedgerows within fields F1 and F3 are a tree line with scrub; the hedge along the eastern boundary of F2 is scrub/hedge with some semi mature trees; and, a wooded belt forms parts of the southern and western boundaries with the Grand Union Canal and Damson Parkway respectively. Scattered mature trees are throughout the open fields of F1 and F2.

Water courses

3.67 The Low Brook runs south to north through the marshy grassland and Hampton Coppice, with pooling and flooding present in the woodland.

Scrub and tall ruderal

3.68 Some scattered tall ruderal and scrub exists along most field peripheries and as described above within the marshy grassland.

Fauna

Bats

3.69 Numerous bat records were provided from within the search area, of more than 7 bat species; roost records associated with trees were identified for Daubenton's *Myotis daubentonii*, common Pipistrellus *pipistrellus* and soprano pipistrelle *P.pygmaeus* in woodland adjacent to the north of Hampton Coppice (c. 300-530m from the Site).

3.70 The on-site hedgerows, trees, woodland, water courses and grassland offer potential commuting and foraging for bats. Trees within the Site are likely to offer suitable roosting opportunities.

Badgers

3.71 Five badger *Meles meles* setts were provided from within the search area, the closest record c. 80m from the Site. There is potential for sett building and foraging within the on-site woodland and field/hedgerow habitats.

Dormouse

3.72 No records of dormouse *Muscardinus avellanarius* were provided from within the search area and there is potentially suitable habitat on-site within the woodland, however dormouse are generally not considered present in this area. In addition, it is unlikely that the woodland will be impacted other than along existing access routes, this species is therefore not considered to present a constraint to proposals.

Riparian and other Mammals

3.73 A record of otter *Lutra lutra* from The Grand Union Canal Water (adjacent to site) and water vole *Arvicola amphibious* (2.2km south) were provided by WRBC. It is considered that the wet habitats and watercourses on and adjacent to site could support both these species.

3.74 Brown hare *Lepus europeus* have been recorded historically in the vicinity, this species could potentially utilise F1, 2 and 3 as part of a wider habitat. Whilst existing records for hedgehog are over 1.4km, it is also possible that they are present on-site. Harvest mice are known to colonise long grass and wetland habitats, whilst there no records on site, this species is under recorded and cannot be discounted as being absent.

Birds

3.75 Numerous records of bird species were provided from within the search area (more than 33 records of 32 species from Hampton Coppice woodland and Elmdon Heath) including kingfisher *Alcedo atthis*, woodcock *Scolopax rusticola* and willow warbler *Phylloscopus trochilus* within the Site boundaries. Woodland, hedgerows, grasslands and trees provide suitable nesting and foraging opportunities for a variety of bird species.

Reptiles

3.76 No reptile records were provided from within the search area however the Site survey confirmed that habitats present may offer potential for reptiles to occur within the less managed grassland and scrub.

Amphibians

3.77 Over 100 records of amphibian species were provided from within the search area, 13 of these relate to great crested newt *Triturus cristatus* the closest recorded c. 320m from the Site in Elmdon Coppice (1985). There are no ponds on site (other than flooded areas in the woodland) but OS maps/ aerial images revealed 13 waterbodies within 500m of the Site boundary, the closest on the north side of Hampton Coppice, and the furthest is c. 475m east. Further surveys will be required to establish the status of great crested newts in the ponds within 500m the Site.

Invertebrates

3.78 Hundreds of records of notable invertebrate species have been provided from within the search area, including within Hampton Coppice/Elmdon LWS, it's probable that scoping surveys may be requested by the local authority to identify any important assemblages.

Summary of Ecological Constraints and Opportunities

Confirmed Constraints

3.79 Development at this Site will likely require avoidance, mitigation and / or compensation measures in respect to:

- Statutory Designated sites – SSSIs and LNR
 - Bickenhill Meadows SSSI and River Blythe SSSI are close (645m north east and 1.3km south) to the Site and Elmdon Coppice LNR (across Damson Parkway 20m west).
 - From the MAGIC search plans, the above SSSI "impact risk zones" cover eastern parts of the Site with slightly different criteria relating to number of units and types of proposed development. It is recommended that early discussions take place as part of the planning process with the relevant consultees to discuss potential impact posed by recreational pressure and approaches to mitigation.
- Non-Statutory Designated sites - LWS
 - Hampton Coppice LWS (Ecosite 04/18) and ancient woodland is on Site, therefore the impacts of proposals will need to be carefully considered, with suitable buffer zones and mitigation forming an integral part of the design process.

3.80 Hedgerows and Trees

- Hedges and their component mature trees are a Habitat of Principal Importance and have intrinsic ecological value. These should be retained and enhanced alongside development of the Site where practicable.
- Nesting birds
 - The nests and eggs of all wild birds are subject to legal protection. Any clearance of potential nesting habitat should be undertaken outside of the bird nesting season (March-August inclusive), or immediately following confirmation by a suitably qualified ecologist that no active nests are present.

Potential Constraints

3.81 Avoidance, mitigation and/or compensation measures may be required in respect to the following potential ecological constraints, subject to further surveys/assessment:

- Botanical Surveys
 - Several notable plants are known to be present within the woodland and marshy grassland, early discussions with the local authority should be initiated to establish survey expectations.
- Badgers
 - There is potential for this species to use the Site and a comprehensive badger survey is advised.
- Bats
 - Habitats on-site may be used by commuting and / or foraging bats.
 - Trees across the Site and within the woodland, could provide roosting opportunities. Ground based tree assessment would be required for any trees to be impacted by proposed development (any time of year).
 - Bat Activity Surveys (walked transects and automated static monitoring) are recommended to assess the level of diversity and distribution bat activity (spring, summer, autumn).
 - Where impacts to bats/features are anticipated suitable mitigation and avoidance strategies will need to be provided.
- Birds
 - Numerous notable and common bird species are known to be present on-site, breeding bird surveys are recommended (March to June).

- Otters and Water Vole
 - Both these species have been recorded in connected water courses near to the Site, hence consultation with the local planning authority is recommended to scope out the level of surveys required.
 - Impacts to potential habitats should be avoided where possible, and suitable buffers and mitigation if necessary, included in proposed designs.
- Reptiles
 - Whilst no records of reptile were included in the data search, this may be due to no data being available; suitable habitats occur on-site, hence further survey work is recommended to identify presence/ absence in key areas (April to October).
- Great crested newts
 - This species is recorded in the area and there are a number of ponds in the vicinity area and suitable terrestrial habitat on-site. Further pond scoping surveys are recommended, to assess their habitat suitability (any time of year) and consider the need for presence /absence surveys (mid-March to mid-June).
 - If present, a mitigation strategy will be needed, which is likely to require ponds to be retained and connected by green infrastructure.
- Invertebrates
 - Consultation with the local authority is recommended to explore the need and scope of survey for this group.

Conclusion

- 3.82 There are a number of ecological constraints identified at this Site, many associated with the non-statutory designated LWS's present on or adjacent to the site and the need to retain trees and hedgerows, and protect/buffer the watercourse and wooded belt, wherever possible. Semi-improved grazed grassland dominates the east of Site and is considered to be of lower ecological value.
- 3.83 Early consultation with the relevant bodies, together with detailed further survey work has been recommended for a number of species to inform development proposals and to ensure that any legal constraints are understood and appropriate mitigation developed. Opportunities will exist to create new habitats and provide other ecological enhancements alongside development.
- 3.84 Considerations will need to be made regarding Biodiversity Offsetting assessments, which is now a mandatory requirement in all Warwickshire districts, consultation with the local authority and Environment bank may be beneficial.
- 3.85 No overriding ecological constraints to development have been identified, subject to consultation, further recommended survey work, together with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures sensitive masterplan design.

ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE

- 3.86 An assessment has been made of the potential heritage constraints to the development of land at Damson Parkway for residential development with extra care housing. This has considered built and below-ground heritage issues.
- 3.87 This assessment has been informed by the following sources:
- Historic England National Heritage List for information on heritage assets comprising Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Registered Battlefields and World Heritage Sites,
 - Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council Website for information on Conservation Areas
 - Solihull Historic Environment Record (HER) (Fig.3.13)
 - Historic Ordnance Survey mapping
 - Satellite imagery
- Built Heritage**
- 3.88 There are no designated heritage assets located within or immediately adjacent to the site.
- 3.89 **239 Lugtrout Lane Grade II Listed 17th-Century Dwelling** located c. 105m to the south of the site, beyond the Grand Union Canal. The dwelling is located in a small area of residential development opposite the Glades Football Centre and adjacent to Knowle & Dorridge Cricket Club. There is no current evidence of a direct historical functional relationship between the proposed site and the listed building.
- 3.90 **Field Farmhouse Grade II Listed 17th-Century Farmhouse** located c. 550m to the south of the site. This building is an isolated farmstead but is located adjacent to the proposed housing allocation at Damson Parkway.
- 3.91 **Castle Hill Farmhouse Grade II Listed 17th-Century Farmhouse** located c. 320m to the north of the site. This building is an isolated farmstead.

- 3.92 **Malvern Hall & Brueton Avenue Conservation Area** and the associated listed buildings is located c. 1.5km south-east of the site and is separated by a large area of built development.
- 3.93 **Hampton in Arden Conservation Area** and the associated listed buildings is located c. 2.7km to the east of the site, beyond the M42 Motorway.

Archaeology

- 3.94 Consultation of the relevant resources and historic maps has not shown any recorded sites in the area suggestive of archaeological remains within the site which would constitute a constraint to development.

Historic Development and Non-Designated Heritage Assets

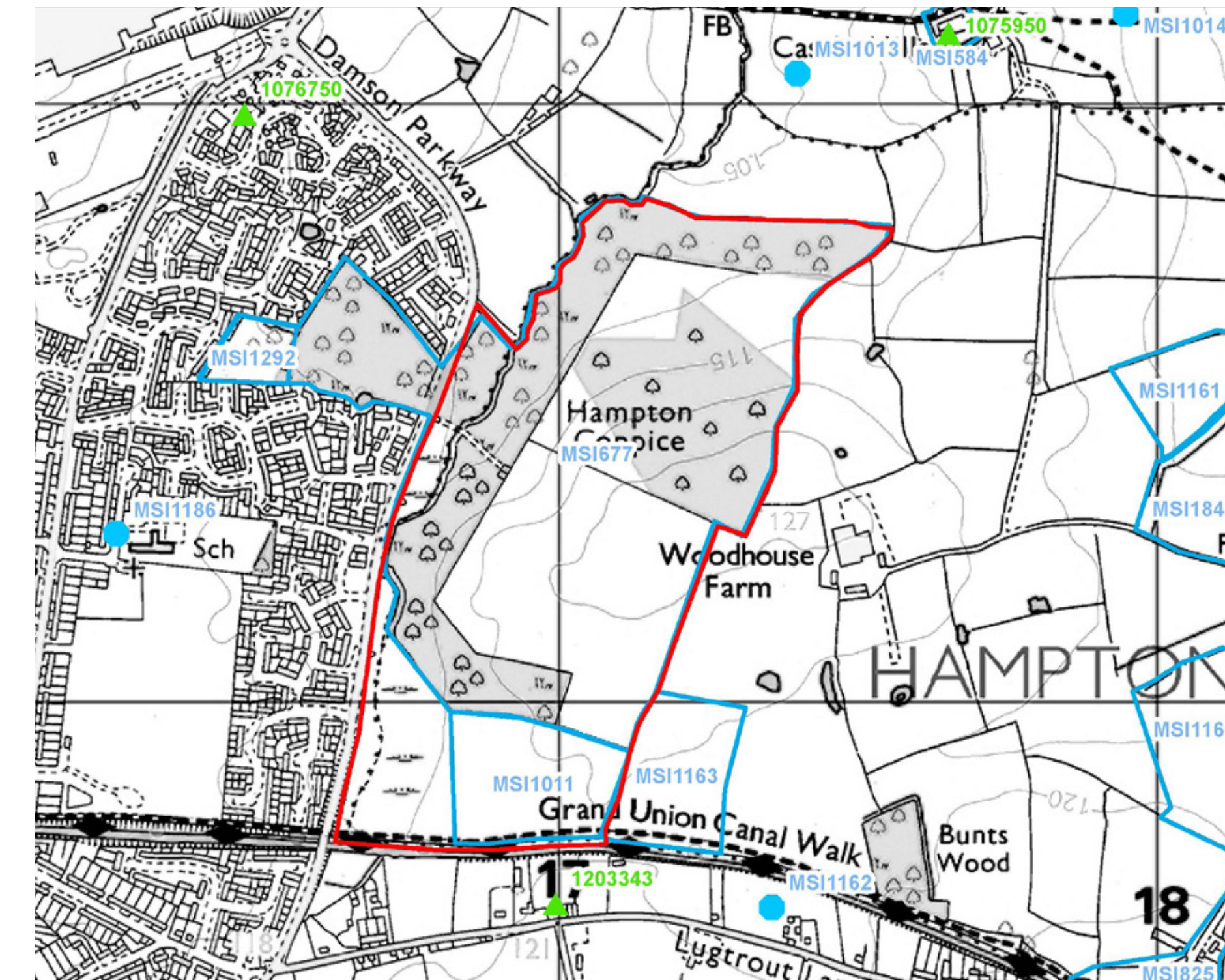
- 3.95 Wooded belt, known as Hampton Coppice, extends along the northern, and parts of the western site boundary and crosses into part of the central area of the site. This is a remnant of a larger area recorded on the HER(ref.MIS677). Historic Ordnance Survey mapping indicates that the later 19th century Hampton Coppice woodland covered the majority of the site. Part of this area was felled in the later 20th-century resulting in the current scattered layout. Hence the parkland character of the site with scattered trees is of recent origin.
- 3.96 The western part of the site includes the historic Hampton in Arden/Elmdon parish boundary which generally follows the course of the stream.
- 3.97 The Grand Union Canal forms the southern boundary of the site. The canal was constructed between 1794-1800 as the Wickwar and Birmingham Canal and was amalgamated to form the current Grand Union Canal in 1929. The canal has a towing path on its northern edge, at the southern site boundary.

Conclusions

- 3.98 Initial assessment has not identified any major heritage constraints to development. The parkland character of the site appears to be of recent (later 20th century) origin. The cropmark in the southern area of the site may be associated with below-ground archaeological remains, although this is currently unproven. No development is proposed in this area.
- 3.99 The setting of designated heritage assets should be taken into account in the formulation of any design plans. In particular, the setting of the Grade II Listed Building 239 Lugtrout Lane, located c. 105m to the south of the site, should be considered. However, current evidence does not indicate any direct historical functional relationship between the site and this Grade II Listed Building. In addition, the Listed Building is separated from the site by the Grand Union Canal, which is bounded by trees.



Fig 3.13 | LISTED BUILDINGS PLAN | NOT TO SCALE



OTHER MATTERS

Ground Contamination and Pollution

3.100 There are no known ground contamination constraints affecting the site. A geo-technical assessment will be undertaken as further work on the site progresses.

Noise

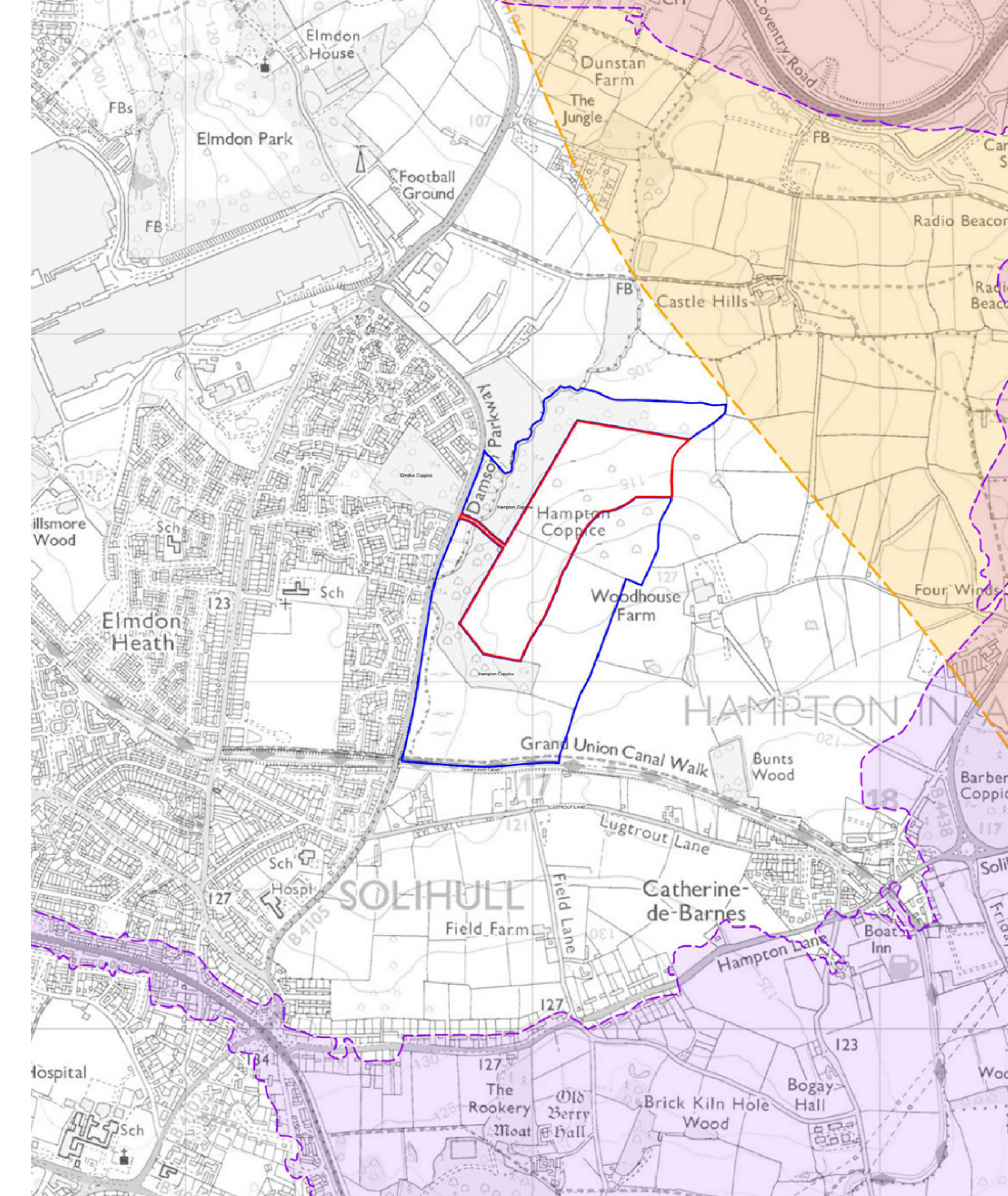
- 3.101 A Noise Survey will accompany any future planning application on the site. Road and air traffic noise is likely to be the main noise sources affecting the site, any future planning application will ensure that the relevant acoustic mitigation measures can be implemented and delivered on site to ensure that an appropriate level of amenity can be provided for the proposed residential development.
- 3.102 In terms of information which is readily available at the present time, DEFRA strategic noise maps for road and air show that only the north eastern tip of the site is impacted by the 54db contour, and therefore noise within dwellings can be easily mitigated through a host of standard measures including double glazing, screening, intelligent master planning, noise and vibration damping plasterboards and even (potentially if required) mechanical ventilation. Outdoor amenity space should be below 55 db LAeq and noise is therefore not a limiting factor for development here, and could be monitored over time. (Fig.3.14).

Utilities

- 3.103 Electricity, gas and water supplies can be provided for the proposed development, subject to extensions to the local network.
- 3.104 Initial investigations have identified that there are existing electricity, water, telecoms and gas supply infrastructure located within the vicinity of the site at Damson Parkway.
- 3.105 Severn Trent Water operate and maintain the existing public drainage networks serving the surrounding area. The sewer records for the area indicate that foul and storm water sewers originate at the residential estate off Barnsfield Drive and run north along Damson Parkway providing drainage for all developments west of Damson Parkway. It is envisaged that the proposed site could be drained via gravity utilising the existing sewer network with no need for pumping.



 Fig 3.14 | NOISE CONTOUR PLAN | NOT TO SCALE



04 | EMERGING PROPOSALS

DEVELOPMENT AND QUANTUM

- 4.1 The net developable area of the proposed residential development is approximately 9.0 hectares (22.24 acres) of the 55.7 hectares (137.6 acres). The remaining site area will comprise of public open space or will be retained as private open land (Fig.4.1).
- 4.2 Green spaces are intended to soften edges of the development site, establish and maintain key views from the sites high point ridge as identified and complement a lower density environment to the outward facing dwelling edges of the site which will also aid natural surveillance of the existing and proposed contextual landscape.
- 4.3 The inner streets and lanes will comprise of higher density development to allow the outer edges of the development will remain lower density.
- 4.4 Regard has been given to the sites edge of settlement location and local plan housing mix policy which sets out a high demand for 1,2 and 3 bedroom units with a range of tenures and sizes, accordingly an average density of 33 dph has been applied providing up to 300 units. The proposed density will allow for the creation of a sustainable residential development, including extra care housing with ancillary supporting facilities/local centre, which will respond appropriately to the local housing need.

- 4.5 The development areas have been designed to enclose the rear garden spaces with housing frontages to create a secure rear garden space, which is easily survivable by all residents. The enclosure of rear garden spaces will also aid in the prevention of any potential noise from Damson Parkway or Birmingham Airport, albeit the site lies fully outside of the noise contours for Birmingham Airport and those for the airport expansion.
- 4.6 Due to the size of the proposed development a locally equipped area of play has been identified to which will serve the entirety of the site and the surrounding pockets of existing development. There are a series of smaller informal natural play areas throughout the site, these are all linked by an extensive internal footpath network.
- 4.7 Proposed development has been offset to the north and south of the site to respond to the site low points which could potentially be utilised for the attenuation/ swale features.
- 4.8 In addition to the attenuation offset, an offset of between 30 metres has been proposed to the existing ancient woodland, this will create a loose development edge and be more in keeping to the character of a woodland environment.

ACCESS

- 4.9 Vehicular access into the development is proposed to be located off Damson Parkway which will also operate as an emergency access to the proposals. The access road will form part of a series of primary and secondary return route systems serving up to 300 dwellings.
- 4.10 The principal access point is located on the site of the existing track, approximately 90 metres from the junction of Damson Parkway and Merstal Road. The existing trackway will be widened with footways provided on both sides of the access road which will be of an appropriate width for emergency access purposes.
- 4.11 The principal route through the development is proposed to have two tree lined verges to run the full length of the circuitous route, this will act as a green link to run through the site north to south, this will in turn link the two parcels of development with the wider existing infrastructure.
- 4.12 The primary route will disperse into a series of secondary and tertiary routes, this will help to strengthen the anticipated hierarchy of streets. A series of smaller informal loop systems are proposed throughout the site to further aid vehicular movement through the site.
- 4.13 The development is designed to be pedestrian driven by allowing full movement through the site and allow full connectivity with the wider landscaped park, through the use of looped shared surface streets which feed on to a series of key pedestrian juncture points throughout the full length of development. These will then feed out through Hampton Coppice and out to the wider community and services, and the existing public right of way to the south.

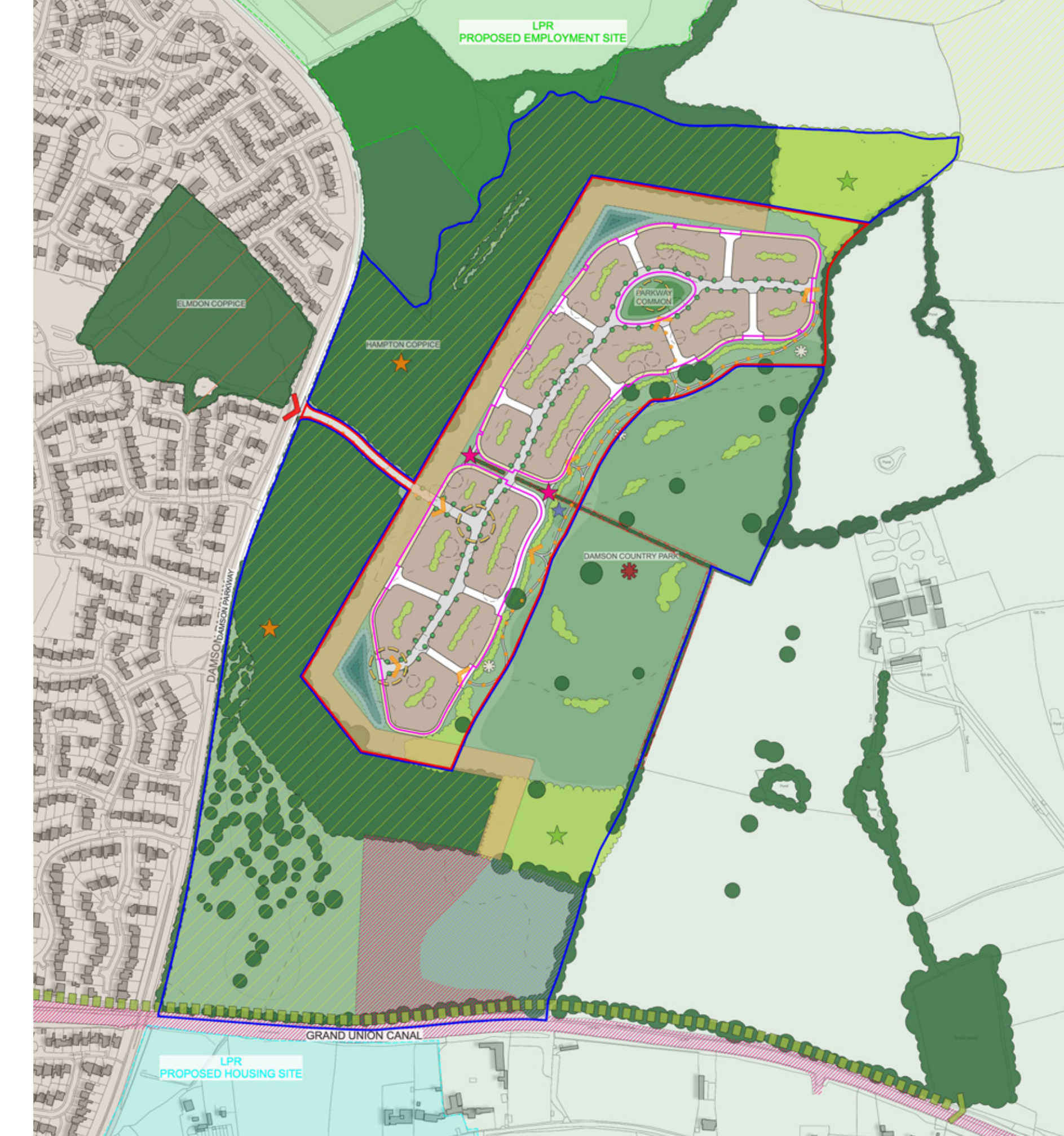


Fig 4.1 | CONCEPT DESIGN | NOT TO SCALE

05 | SITE SELECTION ASSESSMENT

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 4.14 A large proportion of the site will be retained as green infrastructure which is a key feature of the proposals. With the exception of the access road and driveway, the proposed residential development falls outside of the parts of the site that are within the designated ancient woodland, LWS, pLWS and Ecosite.
- 4.15 The southern and northern boundaries of Hampton Coppice are proposed to be enhanced with woodland planting to reinstate (in part) the previous extent of the woodland and contribute towards a robust new green belt boundary.
- 4.16 Interconnected green spaces and meandering offsets along Hampton Coppice will provide attractive soft edges and provide formal and informal walks through the site and public open space. The outer edge will be characterised by outward facing development to assist natural surveillance of green spaces.
- 4.17 The majority of the existing trees and hedgerows are proposed to be retained and enhanced where possible; new tree planting will help to compensate in the loss of vegetation required to facilitate the widening of the access and driveway in the creation of the access point off Damson Parkway.
- 4.18 Site low points will be retained and utilized for attenuation features associated with sustainable urban drainage.
- 4.19 The eastern part of the site is proposed as a Country Park which will benefit existing and future residents of the development and provide opportunities for Green Belt compensatory improvements.. No built development is proposed to the southern part of the site which falls within the existing LWS, pLWS and Ecosite. These areas will be enhanced through appropriate management which will provide an opportunity for enhancement of the existing ecological habitats.

5.1 **Fig.5** provides an assessment of Land at Damson Parkway against Solihull MBC's site selection criteria uses to assess the suitability of sites within the Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment, 2016 (SHELAA), and the Interim Sustainability Appraisal Report, January 2017 (SA), and their respective 2020 updates. It is considered that Land at Damson Parkway would have a low impact when judged against each individual criterion whilst helping to deliver much needed and sustainably located development.

SHELAA SUITABILITY CRITERION	
Access Infrastructure Constraints	Damson Parkway is a high specification road suitable for a range of road users and has additional capacity available.
Contamination Land/Landfill Site	The site does not lie within this constraint.
Ground Conditions	There is no evidence of any contamination on site.
Heritage	There are no designated heritage assets on or adjacent to the site.
BMV Agricultural Land	The Agricultural Land Classification of the site is Grade 5 agricultural land. Development of this site would not result in the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land.
High Pressure Gas Pipeline	The site does not lie within this constraint.
Flood Risk Constraints	The site is within flood zone 1
Bad Neighbour Constraints	The site has no bad neighbours.
Biodiversity	The overall site as shown outlined in blue on Fig 1.1 currently comprises agricultural fields and a densely wooded area known as Hampton Coppice which is designated as Ancient Woodland and is a Local Wildlife Site (LWS) within which there are a number of Tree Protection Orders (TPOs). There is also an Ecosite within the south-eastern part of the site and the Grand Union Canal is designated as a potential LWS. The application site as outline in red on Fig 1.1 shows that apart from the proposed access, the proposed development will be outside of the designated Local Wildlife Sites. The Design Concept Plan (Fig 4.1) pays due regard to the designations and in particular incorporates a 30m no-build buffer one around the Ancient Woodland of Hampton Coppice. The sensitive design approach as shown on the Design Concept Plan and appropriate mitigation including woodland planting provides the opportunity for ecological enhancements to come forward as part of the proposals. There are no overriding ecological constraints to the development of the site.
Suitability of Location Constraints	The site is adjacent to the built up area of Solihull.
Other Suitability Constraints	N/A

Fig 5.1 | SHELAA SUITABILITY CRITERION TABLE

SA SUITABILITY CRITERION	
SA Suitability Criterion	
SA1 Contribution to Regeneration and Economic Development	The site is located within the 60% least deprived (this is consistent with all sites assesses to the SHELAA).
SA2a Distance to Primary School	390m (Coppice Junior School)
SA2b Distance to Secondary School	1460m (Lode Heath School & Sport College)
SA3a Proximity to Bus & Train services	Within 400m of a frequent bus or train service
SA3b Proximity to Principal Road Network	Adjacent to Damson Parkway
SA4a Soils	Unknown
SA4b Minerals	Site outside of minerals safeguarding area
SA7 Flooding	Located in Flood Zone 1 (excluding access)
SA9 Enhance Ecological Sites	Overlaps or contains a LWS
SA10 Landscape Sensitivity	The site is located in a landscape with medium sensitivity to change. The site adjoins existing residential development in the Elmdon Heath area of Solihull that creates a strong Green Belt boundary. The Design Concept Plan has been landscape and visually led to wrap around Hampton Coppice and extends the woodland to the north and south of the site in reference to the sites history as a complete woodland. Consideration has been given to the existing vegetation and where possible these are to be retained and integrated into the layout. Opportunities have also been exploited to implement additional vegetation to ensure the proposed development responds to and integrates with the existing landscape context.
SA11 Enhance Green Infrastructure	The development envelope lies to the east of Hampton Coppice and a new country park is proposed to the east of the site which will provide a substantial area of large public open space as part of the proposal.
SA12 Enhance and Protect Historic Assets	The site does not contain and is not adjacent to any designated heritage assets.
SA14 Amenity	No sources of noise adjacent to the site.
SA17a Distance to Healthcare	1km (Yew Tree Medical Centre)
SA17b Access to Leisure Facilities	224m (playing fields)
SA19a Distance to Key Economic Assets	955m (Jaguar Land Rover)
SA19b Distance to Convenience Stores or Supermarket	742m (Elmdon Post Office)

06 | SUMMARY

- 6.1 L&Q Estate's emerging proposals for Land off Damson Parkway, Solihull are capable of contributing positively to meeting the housing needs of the Borough in a sustainable manner.
- 6.2 As has been set out within this document, the site benefits from its close proximity to the UK Central Hub Growth Area which embraces Birmingham Airport, the NEC, Arden Cross (Proposed HS2 International Station) Birmingham Business Park and Jaguar Land Rover (JLR), the proposals for which, will significantly increase employment and jobs in the area.
- 6.3 There will be easy access to the existing facilities within the surrounding area and the site is in close proximity public transport provision. The site is well placed in being in close proximity to existing employment development located at the Jaguar Land Rover (JLR) Plant, within 800m of the site where further employment land is proposed to be allocated for JLR to the eastern side of Damson Parkway.
- 6.4 Residential development on land at Damson Parkway will assist in providing homes close to jobs in the main economic growth area in the Borough
- 6.5 The technical information that has been provided within this Background Document sets out that there are no insurmountable physical constraints to the development of the site for residential development with Extra Care housing.
- 6.6 The scale and form of development has been landscape and visually led to wrap around Hampton Coppice, the proposals extend the woodland to the north and south of the site in reference to the sites history as a complete woodland. The proposals for green infrastructure and landscaping will deliver a number of enhancements in terms of the physical landscape and strengthening of the structure of the landscape to establish and enhance a robust landscaped edge to the proposed development and a definitive boundary to the Green Belt.
- 6.7 The development proposals will include the:
- The provision of a range of dwelling types and sizes including Extra Care residential development and affordable housing which would assist in meeting the Borough housing needs in a sustainable location on the edge of Solihull;
 - The provision of a local centre to serve the proposed development and Extra Care housing;
 - The creation of a development that responds positively to the character of the area and pays due regard to the Local Wildlife Sites and Ancient Woodland of Hampton Coppice which adjoin the development boundary. Opportunities will arise for ecological enhancements to come forward as part of the proposals;
 - The creation of a development that is well connected, readily understood and easily navigated, promoting a layout which reduces dependence on the car, and links to pedestrian and public transport networks;
 - The creation of a strong landscape and open space structure, retaining existing hedgerows and trees, offsetting development from Hampton Coppice and the Grand Union Canal to the south and providing extensive new tree planting which will integrate the development with the surrounding landscape;
 - The provision of new areas of public open space including a proposed Country Park to the east of the site in addition to a proposed play area located centrally within the site;
- 6.8 The work that has been undertaken by the project team demonstrates that Land off Damson Parkway is suitable, achievable and residential development on the site is deliverable. L&Q Estates look forward to engaging with Solihull Council to discuss the site further.

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PLANNING | DESIGN | ENVIRONMENT | ECONOMICS | HERITAGE



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