

SOLIHULL LOCAL PLAN REVIEW CONSULTATION 2020.

REPRESENTATIONS FROM Martin Trentham. APPENDIX A.

OLDWAY DRIVE AREA (removal of washed-over status):

WASHED OVER GREEN BELT

The SMBC approach (from the 2019 Supplementary Consultation document):-

“A number of settlements in the Borough have ‘washed over’ Green Belt, which is in contrast to the typically larger settlements that are ‘inset’. Within inset settlements Green Belt policies do not apply to development proposals, whereas the policies do apply to those settlements that are washed over. The current status of washed over settlements in the Borough dates back to the 1997 Unitary Development Plan which was prepared under Planning Policy Guidance note 2 (PPG2 Green Belts) the principal relevant Government policy at the time. This had more of a focus on establishing which settlements in the Green Belt should be considered appropriate for infilling and which should not. Whereas the NPPF now has an approach that allows limited infilling in all villages.

Given the potential change in circumstances to have occurred since then, and the scale of Green Belt release being promoted through this plan, it is appropriate that this status is reviewed now to (a) ensure that logical and consistent Green Belt boundaries are provided; particularly in respect of changes now proposed or to reflect the nature of changes that have occurred in the locality, and (b) to allow the potential of any appropriate development opportunities within such settlements to come forward. In the main this will be through windfall developments, which may otherwise have been restricted to infill developments. However it is noted that some call-for-sites submissions have been made in some areas contained in washed over Green Belt and if the washed over status is removed then these sites could form part of the land supply.

The advice in the NPPF is now that: “If it is necessary to restrict development in a village primarily because of the important contribution which the open character of the village makes to the openness of the Green Belt, the village should be included in the Green Belt. If, however, the character of the village needs to be protected for other reasons, other means should be used, such as conservation area or normal development management policies, and the village should be excluded from the Green Belt.”

The following washed over settlements/areas have been identified for potential removal from the Green Belt as they do not have an open character that makes a contribution to the openness of the Green Belt. This does not mean that they do not have a rural character or other positive character attributes.”

The listed areas:-

Cheswick Green; Millison’s Wood; Tidbury Green; Whitlock’s End; Widney Manor Road.

This approach is welcomed giving, as it does, an opportunity to revise some parts of the Green Belt boundary to make it more logical, up to date, likely to be permanent, and where at all possible to follow firm physical features, such as roads, rail lines, motorways, etc.

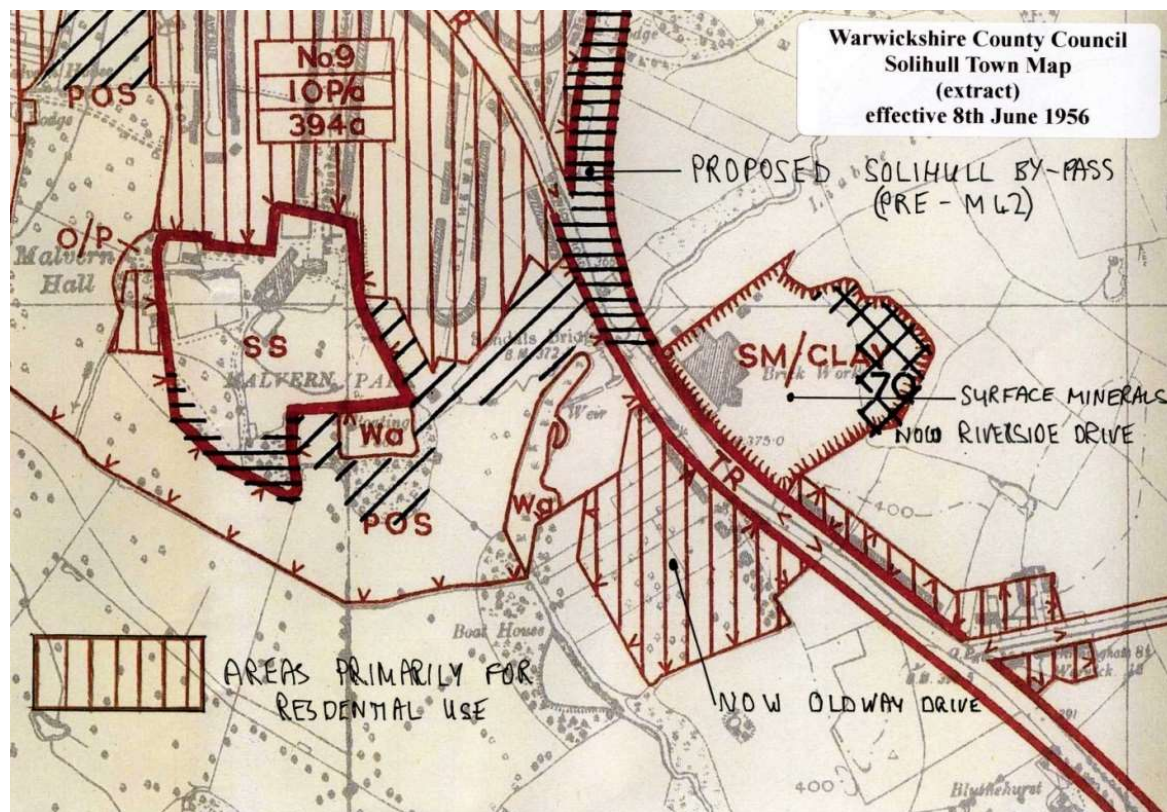
It would be entirely consistent with SMBC's approach to include in the list the area which, for the purpose of identification, and shown on the main plan on page five, is referred to as the 'OLDWAY DRIVE AREA' of concentrated residential development comprising Riverside Drive, Oldway Drive, Poolmeadow Close, Gentleshaw Lane, and Warwick Road.

The OLDWAY DRIVE AREA

In all this contains c200 dwellings, and they do not contribute in any way to the openness of the Green Belt. However this block also contains a substantial area of protected woodland (SSSI, LWS & TPO) surrounding Riverside Drive flats. The NPPF, as quoted above, recognises that for such areas to be protected, Green Belt status is not necessary, as local authorities have available to them other means of protection.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

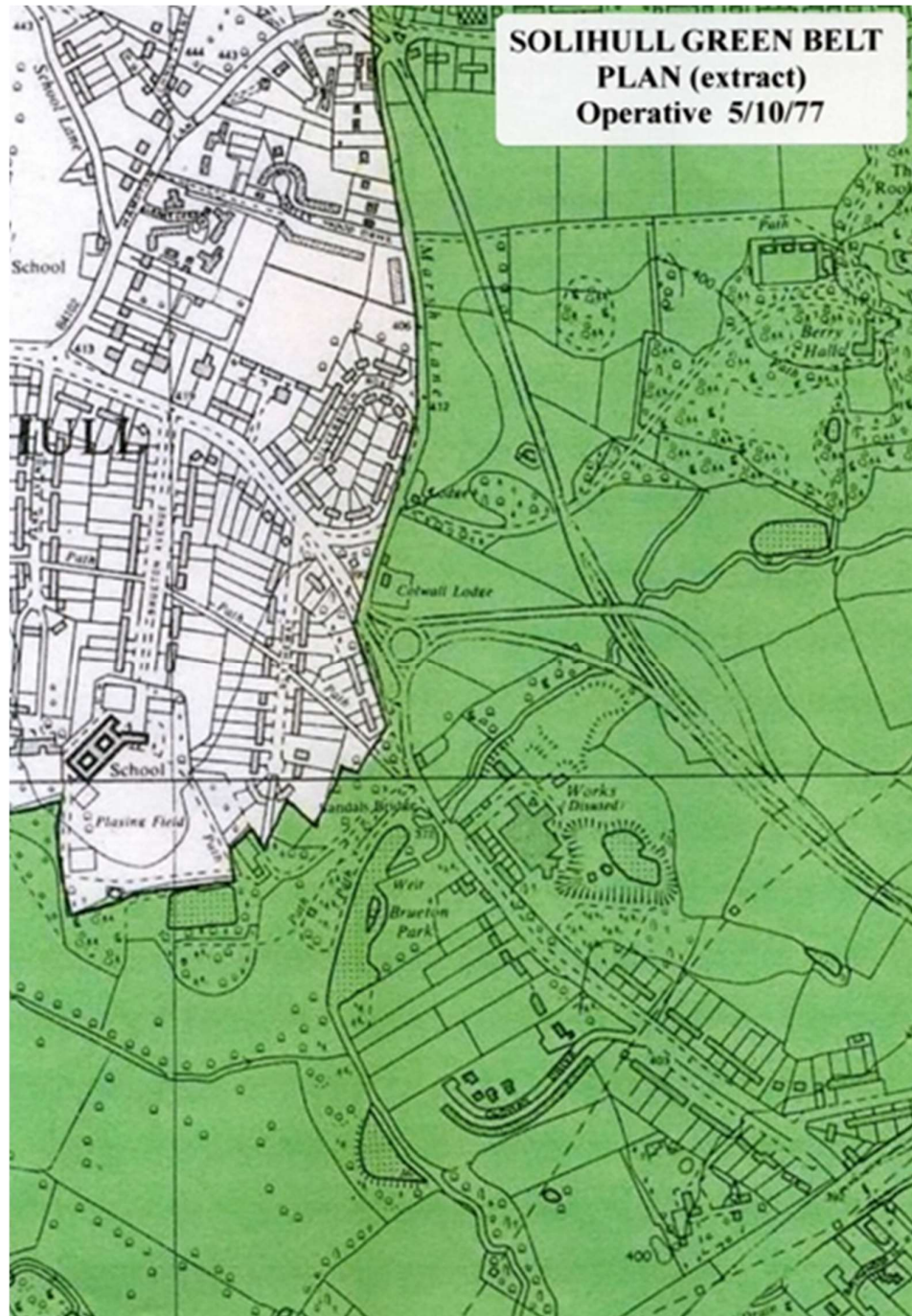
In 1956 Warwickshire County Council administered Solihull, and they produced a County Development Plan. It can be seen from the extract below that what was to become Oldway Drive was already zoned for residential development.



The Solihull Brickworks area was still zoned for surface minerals, and the original route identified for the proposed Solihull By-pass – an obvious choice for the Green Belt boundary

on the first Green Belt plan which appeared in 1960, but which for various reasons was not fully adopted until 5th October 1977, although retaining the 1960 boundaries.

The extract from the 1977 plan below shows the beginnings of Oldway Drive, plus new development along the south west side of Warwick Road, and Pool Meadow House, which was not shown in 1956. It also notes that the brickworks had become disused. From that time onwards, and despite Green Belt status, development continued apace, with a change of use for the brickworks brown field site to accommodate the 88 dwellings in Riverside Drive, and with the completion of Oldway Drive and further infilling there and around Pool Meadow House, which continues.



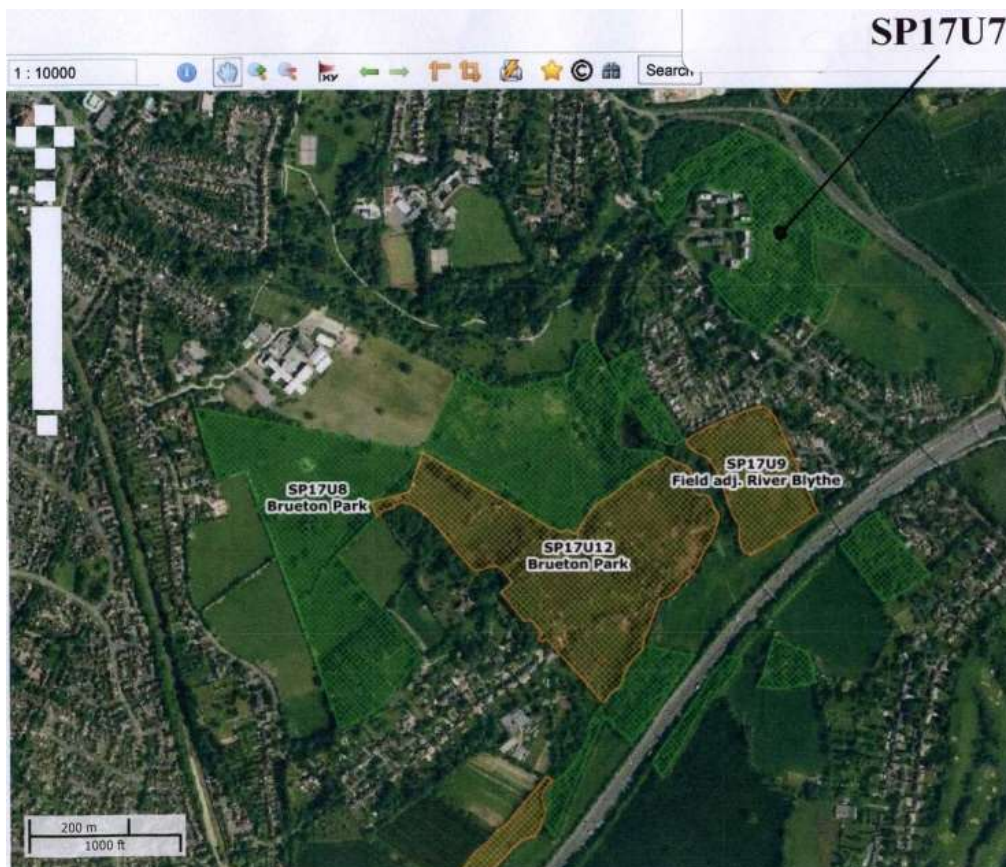
Thus today we have a concentrated area of development which has grown since and despite the advent of the Solihull Green Belt from c50 dwellings in 1960 to c200, comparable in size and density with Millisons Wood, which SMBC has itself put forward for removal of washed-over status.

Other significant factors which affect the openness of the Oldway Drive Area have been the removal from the Green Belt of, to the immediate north, the Marsh Lane housing site in the mid-1990s and more recently still the Marie Curie hospital site. The choice of the By-pass as the new GB boundary is of course consistent with the 1956 proposal and Green Belt policy. These factors have caused a substantially changed locational context, against which to view the Oldway Drive Area.

The Oldway Drive Area and environs are substantially different from what they were when the original Green Belt boundary was drawn up in 1960. The developed area covered has grown to such an extent and density that, together with the need for a fresh batch of Green Belt sites required to be released for development in this Review, an objective review of its washed-over status is both timely and appropriate.

DEFENSIBLE BOUNDARIES

In accordance with Green Belt policy of using firm physical features, Oldway Drive Area eastern and southern boundaries are obviously the By-pass and M42. The western boundary commences on Warwick Road at the entrance to Brueton Park then skirting all of the built development down to M42. This boundary is reinforced not only by Brueton Park, but by the River Blythe, and Local Wildlife Sites which cover most of the remaining area of RP32.



MAIN PLAN

