

A Vision for Development

December 2020



Land to the South of Hampton Lane

Solihull

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	P. 4
PLANNING POSITION	P. 8
LOCAL CONTEXT ANALYSIS	P. 10
SITE FEATURES SUMMARY	P. 18
CONCEPT MASTERPLAN	P. 20
CLIMATE EMERGENCY	P. 22
OTHER MATTERS & CONCLUSION	P. 24

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Catesby Estates plc

part of Urban&Civic

Catesby Estates plc is a specialist strategic land promotion business. Our projects are located throughout the country ranging from large urban extensions to sensitively designed residential schemes on smaller edge of settlement sites.

Recognising the individuality of every site, Catesby Estates seek to work very closely with local communities, key stakeholders and the LPA throughout the life of a development project to create the most mutually beneficial and sustainable schemes.

To provide a robust baseline on which to develop proposals for this site, Catesby Estates has commissioned a specialist team of consultants to undertake a range of environmental and technical surveys. This document seeks to bring together the outcome of the surveys and studies undertaken, and explains how the constraints and opportunities which exist can inform a vision for around 200 new homes and supporting greenspace and infrastructure at Hampton Lane, Solihull.

As detailed within this document, the proposed housing would be well related to the existing settlement and adjacent housing at Hampton Lane. By reason of the site's location, any future occupiers would have easy access on foot and cycle to existing facilities and services available within and surrounding Solihull.

This document has been produced as part of a submission to Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council to seek an allocation for development in the Local Plan. What is presented in this document is not intended to be a fully work-up scheme, but has been prepared for illustrative purposes to show how development of the site is deliverable and achievable within a highly sustainable location.

INTRODUCTION

The Site's Location

The Site is located approximately 1.5km to the east of Solihull town centre, and comprises agricultural fields amounting to around 13.69 hectares (33.83 acres).

The northern boundary of the site is defined in part by the rear property boundaries of dwellings fronting Hampton Lane, and in part by Hampton Lane highway. The eastern and southern boundary of the site is defined by The Rookery - a dense woodland area, while the western boundary is defined by the Solihull Bypass /A41 which connects to the M42 just over 1km from the site. The site has a strongly enclosed landscape character as a result of the existing landscape framework around the majority of its boundaries.

A Public Right of Way (PRoW) crosses the middle of the site on an east to west orientation. This PRoW connects existing residential areas to the west of the site with the woodland areas and on towards the River Blythe to the east of the site. A photographic summary is provided on the following pages.

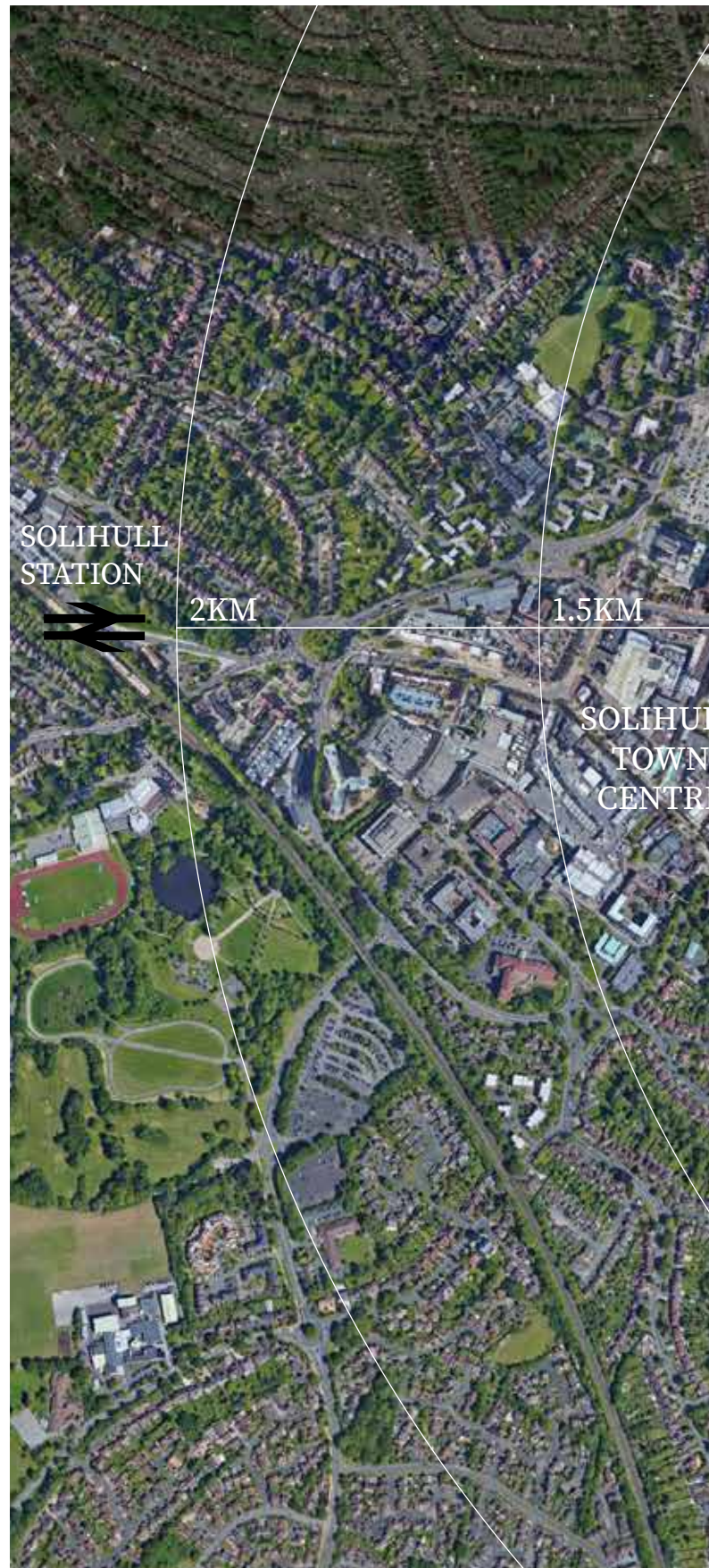


Figure 1: Site Location and Context Plan



Site Photographs

The following photographs illustrate some of the main view points and features within the site. It is not exhaustive but provides a sense of the characteristics and elements within which new development can be integrated, in particular it really demonstrates the strong sense of landscape enclosure afforded to the site by the surrounding landscape structure.



Photograph Location Plan



1 View from PROW to the northern boundary / rear boundaries of Hampton Lane properties



1 View from PROW looking east towards The Rookery



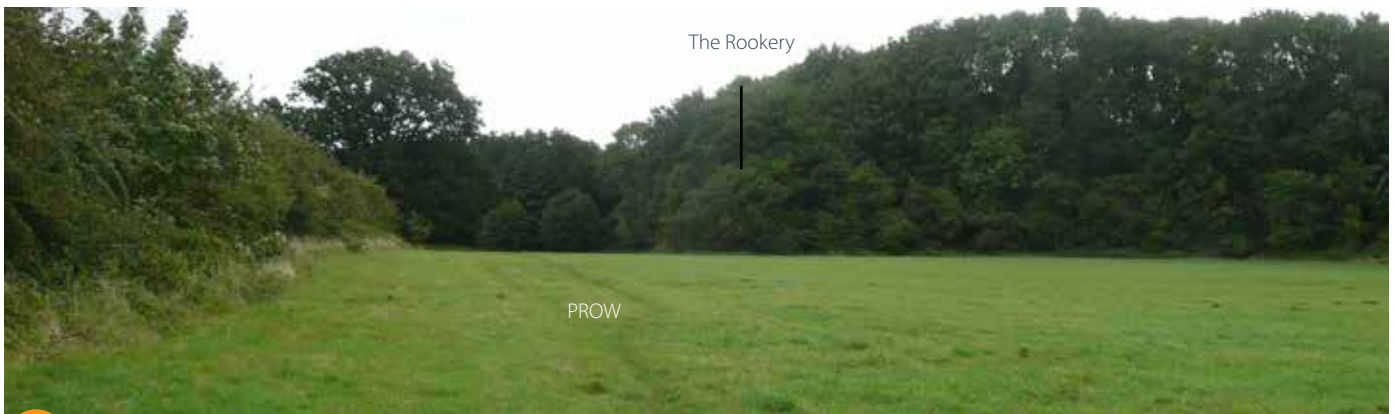
A41/ Solihull Bypass
Behind Tree Belt

1 View from PROW looking towards the southern boundary



Properties Fronting
Hampton Lane

2 View from PROW north to Hampton Lane



The Rookery

PROW

2 View from PROW east to The Rookery



2 View from PROW south



PROW

2 View from PROW west towards boundary with the A41.

PLANNING POSITION

LOCAL PLAN REVIEWED

The currently adopted Solihull Local Plan was adopted in 2013. However, following legal deficiencies in the plan, a high court order ruled that elements of the Solihull Local Plan were not legally compliant and the Local Plan required early review.

The adoption of the Birmingham Development in 2016 has also confirmed that the City Council are unable to meet its own needs within its boundaries and that the shortfall will have to be met by neighbouring authorities such as Solihull.

Solihull District Council are currently preparing the Local Plan Review to meet both its own need and a portion of Birmingham's unmet housing need. It is recognised that approximately two thirds of the borough is designated as Green Belt therefore, it will be necessary to release Green Belt land to enable the Council to meet its housing needs. That overriding need for housing constitutes exceptional circumstances sufficient to justify the allocation of land, for release from the Green Belt.

GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

The Council have undertaken a Green Belt assessment (2016), (Figure 2), which considers large parcels of land against the first four Green Belt purposes, as follows:

1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
2. To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another;
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment; and
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.

Each parcel was assigned a score between 0 and 3 for each of the above Green Belt purposes (0 – does not perform well and 3 - higher performing against the purpose).

The subject site forms a part of a much larger assessment parcel of PR31: Land between M42 and B4102 HAMPTON Lane, East of Solihull By-Pass.. It scored in the 2016 assessment as follows:

Green Belt Purpose Criteria	1	2	3	4
Parcel RP31 Score	1	1	2	0

The report concluded, based on the above scoring assessment that the larger parcel was performing weakly or not at all against the Green Belt objectives.

Notwithstanding the report's conclusion, the report made the following specific comments which recognises that considerable parts of the parcel have the following urbanising characteristics:

- The boundaries to the west and south are clearly defined by the A41 and M42 respectively and are therefore durable and ribbon development is present in the north west corner of the parcel along Hampton lane.
- Parcel RP31 is partially adjoined by the Solihull village, however it is characterised by countryside and only limited development is present. River Blythe runs through this parcel and there is substantial area of woodland.

PROPOSAL SITE - GREEN BELT PERFORMANCE

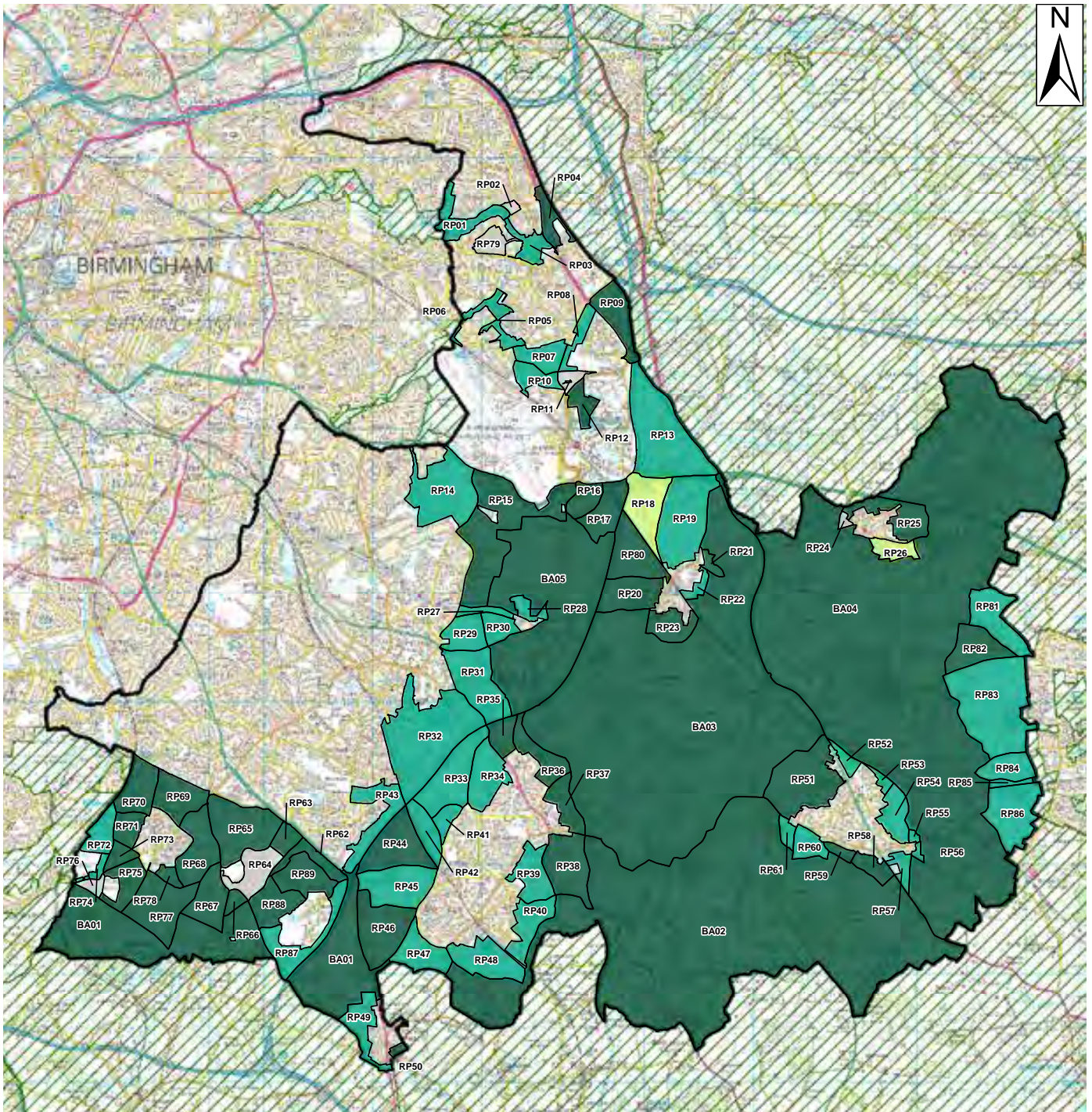
The proposed development site forms a smaller part of the overall Green Belt Assessment site ref: RP31. The boundaries of the proposal site have been refined to align with strong and defensible urban and woodland boundaries to the east and south generating a new Green Belt boundary which will protect against further urban sprawl to the east or south in the future. The area of the site also enables a comprehensive development proposal to be achieved which can support the provision of new beneficial infrastructure in the local area.

Previous submissions for site allocation have been made on a smaller part of the current site area. At the time, the Council assessed the smaller site as being inappropriate for an allocation for residential development citing that it 'would breach a firm defensible green belt boundary and provide a much weaker one'.

Furthermore, the site is considered to perform against the four Green Belt Purpose criteria as follows and would not therefore preclude the land's release from the green belt:

1. **To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas:** The land is immediately adjacent to the urban area of Solihull, with existing built development to the north and west. Existing green infrastructure to the south and east and a reinforcing of green infrastructure as a result of development would ensure that a robust Green Belt boundary could be maintained. The Solihull Green Belt Strategic Assessment (2016) identified that the site is already 'lower performing' when considered against this purpose of including land in the Green Belt.
2. **To prevent neighbouring towns from merging:** The site's location immediately adjacent to the existing built urban edge of Solihull would not result in the coalescence of Solihull with any other settlements. Development of the site would not result in any part of 'Solihull' being closer to another settlement than is existing. The Solihull Green Belt Strategic Assessment (2016) identified that the site is 'lower performing' when considered against this purpose of including land in the Green Belt with existing ribbon development

Figure 2: SMBC Green Belt Assessment Report 2016 - Appendix G Parcel Analysis



3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment: The surrounding highway network infrastructure contains the site in part and helps provide a well-defined Green Belt boundary. The Solihull Green Belt Strategic Assessment (2016) identified that the site is 'moderately performing' when considered against this purpose of including land in the Green Belt..
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns: The site does not include any listed buildings and it is not within a Conservation Area. The Solihull Green Belt Strategic Assessment (2016) identified that the site 'does not perform' when considered against this purpose of including land in the Green Belt.

SUMMARY

The development of the site would be restricted to a very well contained area closely related to the existing settlement edge. The site is already strongly characterised by urbanising features such as the ribbon development along Hampton Lane and the existing highway network. Through existing and enhanced green infrastructure the site can also be further contained in character. The wider Green Belt will not be compromised as a result of the release of this site.

The land to the south of Hampton Lane is a location that could appropriately accommodate sustainable residential development, is deliverable, developable and could deliver wider public benefits.

Local Context Analysis

The following section confirms the sustainability of the Site in relation to the existing settlement and its extensive range of available services, facilities and movement networks.

Local Facilities

Figure 3 illustrates the proximity of the Site to Solihull town centre (within 1 to 1.5km direct line distance of the main retail core). The town centre is relatively compact and offers an extensive range of retail and professional services and facilities both in and alongside the Touchwood and Mell Square centres. Immediately adjacent to the town centre is the Solihull Hospital, an acute general hospital serving the area and wider region.

Closer to the site, (within 1km) a range of healthcare, leisure, education and a local convenience shop are also available.

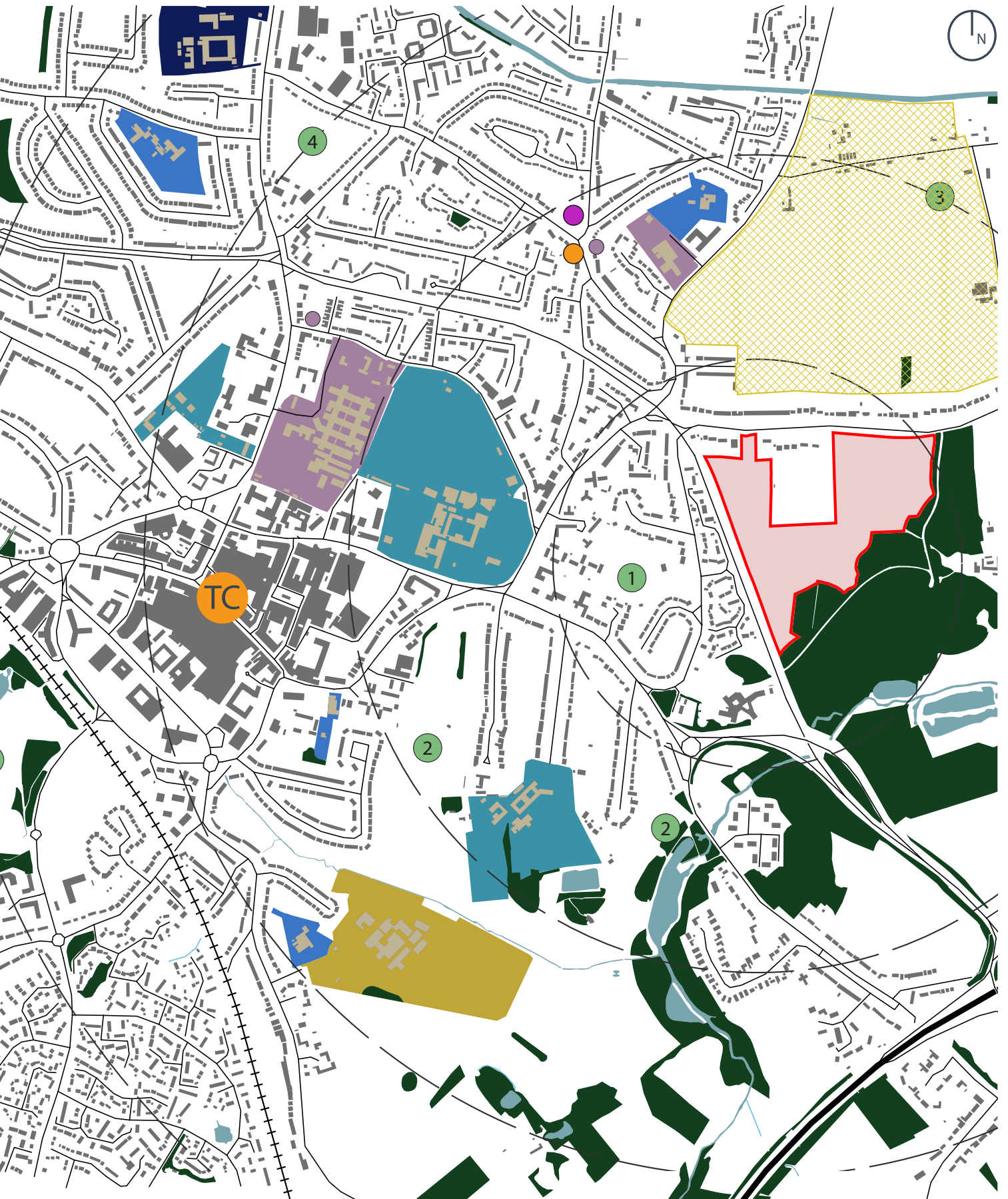
While St Martins and Solihull School are both independent schools (due to become one co-educational facility from September 2020), they are both located within 1km direct line distance of the site. Yew Tree primary school is the closest state-run school to the site and is approximately 800m direct line distance to the north.

The town also offers a range of other state-run primary and secondary schools including Lode Heath Secondary and Tudor Grange Academy establishments as well as sixth form and post 16 education centres all within or just over 2km from the Site.

The town offers a range of recreation and leisure options, with Malvern and Brueton Park being the closest public park to the Site. The Tudor Grange Leisure Centre provides a 25m swimming pool, indoor tennis and sports halls and is located adjacent to the Tudor Grange public park.



Figure 3: Local Facilities and Services Analysis



Access & Movement

Figure 4 illustrates the Site’s relationship with the existing movement network serving the immediate environs of the site.

Site Access – The site is currently accessed via a field gate from the Solihull Bypass (A41) which connects to the M42 approximately 1km to the south of the site and giving easy access to the wider highway network. The site is also bound to the north by Hampton Lane. Subject to appropriate junction designs, both roads offer potential for new accesses to serve the site.

Public Footpath Routes – The surrounding area has a network of local public rights of way (PRoW) which connect the settlement with the surrounding countryside and further afield to nearby settlements. The footpath network supports convenient walking routes to facilities in and around Solihull town centre. An existing PRoW passes through the site and is described in more detail in the Site Features Summary section on pages 18 - 19. Hampton Lane also has footpaths on either side of the road along the site’s northern boundary.

Cycle Network - Hampton Lane to the north of the site is identified as a shared use cycle route, and links to advisory routes to the east and west.

Bus Services – The Diamond bus service (no. 89) operates and stops along Hampton Road. Services are every hour Monday to Saturday running between Coventry and Solihull town centre. The X20 service also operates along Hampton Road and provides hourly services during the day between Coventry and Stratford-Upon-Avon Mondays to Saturdays. Bus Stops are located on Hampton Lane in close proximity to the junction with the A41 and accessible from existing footpaths along the site’s northern boundary.

Rail – Solihull is the nearest rail station to the Site (approximately 2km direct line distance from the Site). London Midland operates 3 trains per hour between Birmingham Snow Hill and Leamington Spa/ Stratford-upon-Avon. Chiltern Railways operate 2 trains per hour between Birmingham Moor Street and London Marylebone (1.5 – 2 hour journey time). Both bus services stop at the station.











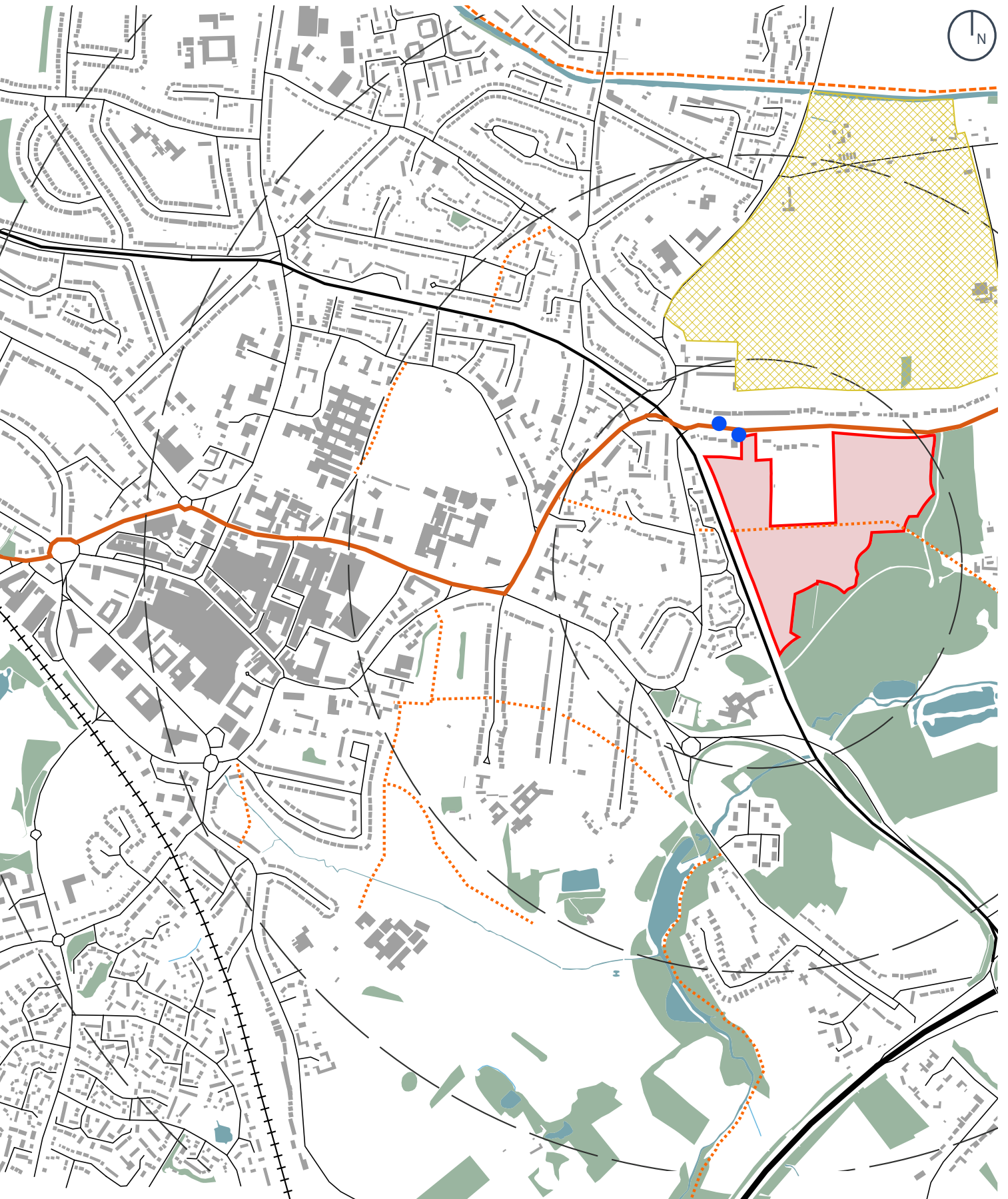
-  Site Boundary
-  Direct Line Distances at 500m, 1km, 1.5km and 2km from Site
-  Solihull Train Station
-  Nearest Bus Stops to Site
-  Diamond and X20 Bus Services
-  Public Right of Way - Footpath
-  Long Distance Walk - Grand Union Canal
-  M42 Motorway
-  A41 / Solihull Bypass
-  Draft Site Allocation S01 - (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council)



Figure 4: Local Movement Analysis



Proposed Primary Site Accesses

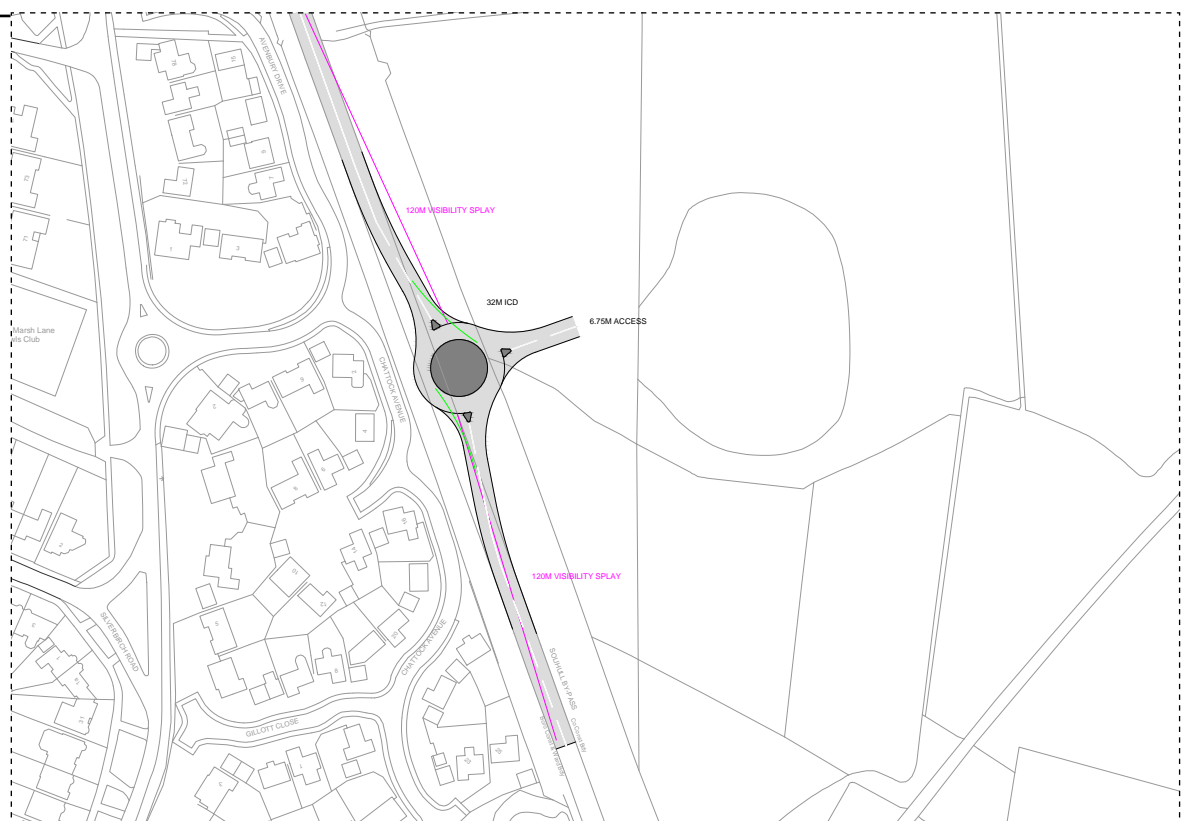
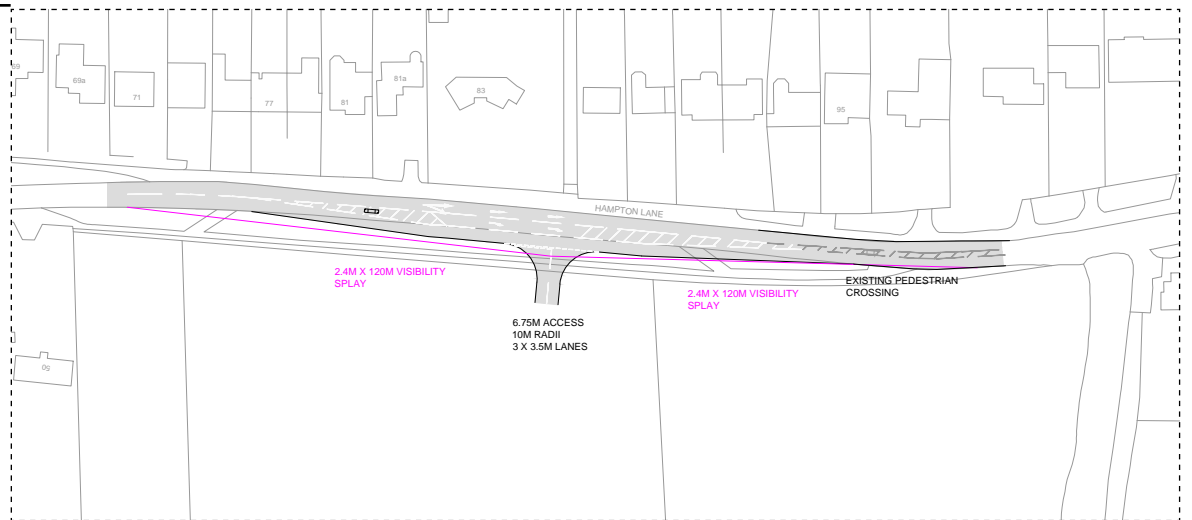
Analysis of the surrounding network and movement patterns has indicated that two new access points into the Site from Hampton Lane and the Solihull Bypass (Figure 5) plus a connecting street between the junctions would support access to new residential development as well as enhancing the patterns of movement for the wider area. In particular, this solution would benefit traffic flows through the existing Hampton Lane/ Solihull junction located to the north west of the site.

Figure 5: Proposed Site Access Locations



Pedestrian / Cycle Links

A series of pedestrian and cycle links will be desirable from the site on to Hampton Lane providing direct access to the existing bus stop and bus services as well as the existing cycle route. Opportunities to enhance the existing PRoW through provision of a crossing on the A41 will be explored.



Landscape & Ecology

The following summarises the key findings and influences arising from the landscape visual analysis work undertaken. These inform the design approach promoted for the site.

LANDSCAPE

The site is within the Solihull Fringe Character Area as identified in the Solihull Landscape Character Assessment (December 2016). The character area is described as comprising pastoral and arable fields, woodlands, residential ribbon development, commercial and employment buildings, playing fields and various sports clubs. Ribbon development along Hampton Lane is noted as one of the main concentrations of settlement in the character area.

The site is characterised by a number of agricultural fields the boundaries of which are defined by mature hedgerows and intermittent trees. The eastern most boundary of the site is characterised by 'The Rookery' woodland, a densely planted woodland edge. The western boundary of the site adjoins the Solihull Bypass, an urbanising influence. The boundary is defined by a hedgerow, scrub and trees with very occasional glimpse and filtered views from the Bypass into the site.

Due to the physical built and landscape features around the site it is considered that development within the site would:

- relate positively to the existing built form of Solihull;
- be visually well contained;
- form a new defensible settlement boundary; and
- would not result in an unacceptable adverse effects to the landscape character or visual amenity of the site and its surrounds.

ARBORICULTURE

The site is largely defined by a grid of field boundary hedgerows, scrub and hedgerow trees.

Trees containing preservation orders will be retained and the significance of all trees on site are to be determined through further detailed investigation - every effort will be made to retain and integrate existing trees and hedgerows within future open space areas throughout the development. Where they cannot be retained new tree and hedgerow planting will be incorporated within the development.

ECOLOGY

Overall, the site is considered to provide only minor opportunities for protected species. In any event, it is anticipated that any species will be safeguarded and enhanced under a sensitively designed masterplan.

Any habitats of elevated value within site, including hedgerows and semi-mature / mature trees will be retained, or where removed new areas of habitat creation will be made.

Significant opportunities for biodiversity enhancement exist following the removal of land from agricultural use. In addition, the creation and reinforcement of green infrastructure in open space area, such as hedgerows and mature trees, will give rise to significant biodiversity gains.




Site Features Summary

Following analysis of environmental and technical features of the Site the following table and plan confirm that there are no significant physical, environmental or technical constraints to developing the site for residential use. This plan underpins the development rationale and concept masterplan section of this document.

Feature	Summary
Landscape and Ecology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of landscape buffers to the site's eastern, southern and western boundaries will assist in maintaining the quality and sense of enclosure afforded by the existing landscape features. Landscape offsets and public open space to be provided along the Hampton Lane boundary to reflect the established Hampton Lane building line established to the west and to also provide a transitional landscape feel between the Rookery Woodland and the proposed development. Existing hedgerow and woodland cluster features to be retained and for new development to positively integrate these features within a new public open space network. Landscape corridors connecting the existing gardens to the wider woodland network to be explored to support landscape and ecological enhancement. Existing surface water drainage features to be retained and enhanced as an amenity and ecological feature.
Arboriculture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing tree and woodland belts to be retained wherever possible and appropriate development offsets/buffers to be provided.
Topography and Ground Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Site is generally flat with a slow fall from north to south. A localised steepening of gradient occurs within the wooded cluster on site. This appears to have been a long standing feature evident on older maps. Similarly an oval area of more dense scrub is also evident on older mapping and it is anticipated serves some drainage function for the site. The Site does not have any significant geo-technical constraints in relation to strata or contamination that would impact on the residential development of the Site.
Flood Risk and Drainage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Site falls entirely within EA Flood Zone 1 and is therefore not subject to flooding from sea or river. Some localised areas of surface water flooding are evident within the western most fields of the site. These are linked to existing field drains, and through careful design will be mitigated or attenuated elsewhere on site. Sustainable drainage features (i.e. ponds) will be located at the lowest points of the Site within open spaces and will supplement the network of drains that currently cross the site. Existing water courses/ drains and water bodies will be retained and integrated within the public open spaces. The site offers a number of outfall possibilities which will be explored in further detail as proposals are progressed.
Highways, Access and Public Rights of Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing public rights of way (PRoW) will be retained and integrated within an open space corridor. Additional circular footpaths routes will be provided linking the existing PRoWs to provide access to facilities and features in the wider locale, but to also provide easy connections to local facilities and in particular the bus stops on Hampton Lane. In particular a new footpath/ cycle link will be explored through the plot of 44 Hampton Lane. This will give direct pedestrian access from the site to the existing bus stops encouraging some modal shift. Vehicular access into the Site to be provided from new junctions on Hampton Lane and from the Solihull Bypass / A41. A road connecting the two junctions will be provided and this will enhance opportunities for local traffic to bypass the existing Hampton Lane/ A41 junction which has been identified as reaching capacity during peak hours.
Residential Amenity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either a landscape buffer or extended private rear gardens will be proposed along the boundaries of existing Hampton Lane Properties along the northern boundary of the site. This will support the retention of existing residential amenity for those Hampton Lane properties.

Figure 6: Opportunities and Constraints Summary



- | | |
|---|--|
|  Site Boundary |  Existing Public Right of Way within landscape corridor |
|  Site Access Locations |  Potential Footpath Links |
|  Existing Hedgerow Features |  Existing Bus Stops |
|  Landscape Buffer to Woodland and Existing Property Boundaries |  Existing Hampton Lane Build Line |
|  General Direction of Fall Across Land |  Existing Field Drains / Pond Features |

Concept Masterplan

Responding to the technical analysis Figure 7 illustrates one potential design approach for the development of the Site which supports balanced and appropriate growth for Solihull. The concept achieves the following principles:

ADOPTING A LANDSCAPE LED APPROACH

The site has a range of existing landscape features comprising tree groups and hedgerow field boundaries. These features can be integrated into the network of new publicly accessible formal and informal open spaces across the site, and will positively contribute to the overall sense of development character.

Within the new network existing and proposed drainage features can be integrated further enhancing the quality and character of the area.

The landscape led approach enables the formation of new ecological links and corridors within the site.

A MIX OF NEW HOMES

The Site has the capacity to accommodate around 200 new dwellings in a mix of sizes and tenures supporting and responding to the local housing needs.

Dwellings will be set within a mature landscape context and supported by the new network of public open spaces to the south.

The location of the dwellings enables easy access to the range of services and facilities within Solihull. A real benefit to the future community.

CONNECTED AND PERMEABLE

The site will retain the existing Public Right of Way (PRoW) route and locate it within a landscape corridor. New public open spaces will be served and accessed from the PRoW, giving easy access for existing local communities to new open spaces.

New leisure footpaths will be provided within the open space network and linked to the PRoW, further opening up the public open space network. Specific footpath connections will be formed from the site to Hampton Lane to facilitate public transport and cycle use.

A new spine road connection between Hampton Lane and the A41/ Solihull Bypass will be created, easing traffic pressure on existing junctions. The new dwellings will be served from the spine road and a carefully designed hierarchy of streets supporting legibility.

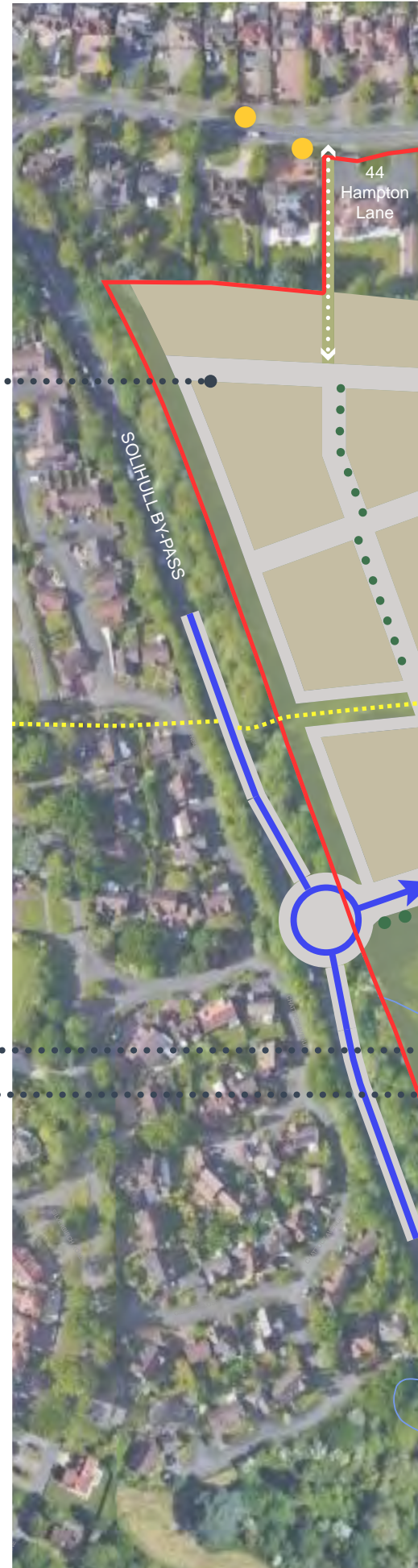


Figure 7: Concept Masterplan



- Site Boundary
- ➔ Site Access
- Primary Movement Route
- Side Streets, Lanes and Drives
- Residential Development Parcel
- Public Open Space, Landscape Buffers
- Existing Hedgerow Features
- - - Existing Public Right of Way
- - - Potential Leisure Footpath Links
- Existing Bus Stops
- Children's Play Features
- Sustainable Drainage Features
- ● ● Potential Street Tree Planting

Climate Emergency

Recognising the Council's status and policies in relation to the Climate Emergency and sustainability, our development proposals can take significant strides in moving towards net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

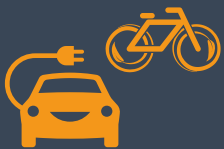
The following sustainability strategies can be implemented as part of the development approach.

31%



Reduction in Carbon Emissions

Homes will be designed in accordance with the energy hierarchy to reduce carbon emissions by 31% below the current regulations to accord with the interim building performance standards set out in the Future Homes Standard Consultation. Design features to be included on site that will support this Carbon reduction include:



Low Carbon Transport

The development can facilitate the use of low carbon transport through the provision of EV charging infrastructure and ensuring all new homes have access to secure cycle storage facilities.



Smart Adaptable Homes

Homes will be designed for future adaptation and will be able to incorporate smart energy systems to facilitate efficient energy use, battery technology and energy generation.



Climate Resilient Design

Buildings and infrastructure, such as drainage solutions, will be designed and constructed to take into account the long term impacts of climate change including changing temperatures and rainfall extremes.



Sustainable Materials

Home designs will specify the use of sustainable materials, considering the whole life cycle of materials to reduce the embodied carbon of the development.



Low Energy Infrastructure

To reduce energy use and carbon emissions the development will be designed to include low energy infrastructure where possible, such as LED street lighting and solar powered features.



Water Efficiency

Water efficiency measures such as low flow toilets, shower heads and water butts will contribute to achieving the water consumption rate of 110 litres per day in accordance with the national higher water efficiency standards.



Improving Site Biodiversity

Through the enhancement and creation of site habitats the development will provide a minimum of 10% net gain in biodiversity minimising the impact of climate change on habitats and species on site.



Reducing the Risk of Overheating

Homes will be designed using overheating assessments. These take into account rising temperatures and make design recommendations such as building and window orientation to mitigate the risk of overheating as a result of climate change



Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage

The majority of the site is located in Flood Zone 1 and the development will include Sustainable Drainage Systems to manage surface water and are designed to take into account climate change in accordance with national guidance.

Other Matters & Conclusion

The NPPF and the Government's growth agenda seek to ensure that sufficient land is available in the most appropriate locations to increase housing supply, support growth and boost home ownership.

DELIVERABILITY

To be considered deliverable, sites should meet the following tests:

- Be Available
- Be Suitable
- Be Achievable

The Site at Hampton Lane satisfies each of the NPPF criteria as follows:

Available

Catesby Estates Plc has secured legal agreements with the landowners of the Site to promote their land for residential development.

The Site is therefore within the control of Catesby Estates Plc, who are committed to the delivery of around 200 new homes in this sustainable location. If the site were allocated in the local plan, Catesby Estates Plc would seek to prepare and apply for planning permission immediately.

Suitable

The Site is suitable for housing development because it:

- Offers a suitable location enveloped by existing residential development;
- Can be developed immediately following;
- Has no identified environmental constraints that would prevent it from coming forward for residential development;
- Will deliver significant public benefit in addition to new housing including much needed affordable housing, highway improvements, and enhanced biodiversity habitats.
- Is within walking distance to local facilities, and cycling of employment opportunities.

Achievable

The concept masterplan illustrates that the site could deliver around 200 new dwellings which would make a significant contribution towards meeting the housing needs of Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council.

This Vision Document and technical assessment identifies that the Site has no restricting constraints for development.



CONCLUSION

This Vision document and associated technical assessments positively confirm that the Site is sustainably located, available and capable of delivering a residential development scheme for around 200 dwellings set within associated landscape and open space.

Alongside new housing, areas can also be reserved for community uses such as children's play areas within the extensive public open space.

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