

Housing Growth Background Document January 2013

Introduction

Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council jointly consulted on cross boundary growth options in 2010. Since then changes to the planning system have meant that both Councils need to work together to find a solution to meet the growth needs of Redditch which cannot all be sustainably accommodated within the Borough. The Councils have agreed to work together to find land within Bromsgrove District, in the vicinity of Redditch Borough, to sustainably accommodate this additional housing growth.

This is a non-technical document that has been written to explain how a location has been identified by officers of both authorities to meet this cross-boundary growth. For this reason, technical information is not included but cross-referenced or results summarised in the relevant paragraphs.

This document is structured to reflect the process of site selection and the following provides a summary of what each chapter will cover:

Chapter	Summary
1. Background	To explain why cross boundary growth is necessary and how the growth requirements have been determined. This will cover the legislation, planning policies and evidence documents that are relevant to this cross boundary growth issue.
2. Strategic Objectives	To identify the Strategic Objectives which site(s) will need to contribute to.
3. Methodology	To explain how the site selection process was carried out and the sources of information.
4. Area Assessment Principles	To identify the principles that will be used in the area assessment process.
5. Broad Area Appraisal	To identify broad area(s) that are more appropriate for accommodating the development in accordance with relevant criteria.
6. Focused Area Appraisal	To focus on the broad site(s) identified in Chapter 5 and identify the most suitable sites for accommodating the outstanding growth needs in Redditch by using the area assessment principles in Chapter 4.
7. Sustainability Appraisal (SA) Summary	A summary of the main conclusions of the SA separate report and how these findings have impacted on this document
8. Scenarios for alternative growth locations	An explanation of the various options for alternative growth locations have been selected and tested
9. Delivery and Phasing	Information related to the anticipated phasing and delivery issues relating to each area.
10. Conclusions	To compare the suitability of areas and identify

	which area(s) is the preferred option for the purposes of consultation
11. Appendix I- Draft Policy	
12. Appendix II- SA Report	
13. Appendix III- Glossary	An explanation of acronyms used within the document

1. Background

This Chapter aims to explain why cross boundary growth is necessary and how the growth requirements have been determined.

Why is Cross Boundary Growth necessary?

Localism Act

The Localism Act introduced by the Coalition Government received Royal Assent on 15 November 2011. The Act devolves greater powers to Councils and neighbourhoods and gives local communities more control over housing and planning in their areas. The Act provides the mechanism to remove the regional planning tier which has prevented any further Regional Spatial Strategies being progressed. The Government has also shown a clear intention (subject to environmental assessment) to abolish each existing Regional Spatial Strategy outside London and any saved county structure plan policies. To ensure that strategic matters are being addressed after the regional planning tier has been revoked, the Act also introduced a new 'duty to co-operate' in s110. Under the new duty, all local planning authorities, county councils and bodies/ persons prescribed in the Act (and defined in detail in the Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012) are expected to co-operate and address strategic matters. Strategic matters is defined as 'sustainable development or use of land that has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas, including (in particular) sustainable development or use of land for or in connection with infrastructure that is strategic and has or would have a significant impact on at least two planning areas'.

In July 2012, the Leaders of Redditch Borough and Bromsgrove District Councils agreed to work together under the Duty to Cooperate to find land within Bromsgrove District, in the vicinity of Redditch Borough, to sustainably accommodate additional Redditch growth. Since then, officers from Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council have been working closely together through regular meetings, site visits and discussion to prepare evidence to support a preferred location .

National Planning Policy Framework

The Government replaced the raft of national planning policy guidance notes and statements on 27 March 2012 with a single document - the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). At the heart of the NPPF is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. For plan-making, this means that local planning authorities should positively seek opportunities to meet the development needs of their area and Local Plans should meet objectively assessed needs unless any adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits. The NPPF introduced a set of 12 core land-use planning principles which should

underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The principles that are particularly relevant for the cross-boundary growth work are:

1. Plans should be kept up-to-date and be based on joint working and co-operation to address larger than local issues.
2. Plans should take account of market signals, such as land prices and house affordability, and set out a clear strategy for allocating sufficient land which is suitable for development in their area, taking account of the needs of the residential and business communities;
3. Take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it;
4. Support the transition to a low carbon future in a changing climate, taking full account of flood risk;
5. Contribute to conserving and enhancing the natural environment and reducing pollution. Allocations of land for development should prefer land of lesser environmental value, where consistent with other policies in the Framework;
6. Promote mixed use developments, and encourage multiple benefits from the use of land in urban and rural areas, recognising that some open land can perform many functions;
7. Conserve heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations;
8. Actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling, and focus significant development in locations which are or can be made sustainable.

The NPPF also emphasises that public bodies have a duty to cooperate on planning issues that cross administrative bodies, particularly those which relate to the strategic priorities set out in the Local Plan¹. This, for example, includes strategic policies to deliver the homes and jobs needed in the area². The NPPF also stresses that local planning authorities should submit a 'sound' plan for examination³. One of the assessing criteria requires that the plan has to be prepared based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed development and infrastructure requirements, including unmet requirements from neighbouring authorities where it is reasonable to do so and consistent with achieving sustainable development.

How is the growth requirement determined?

Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) (February 2012)

The NPPF requires that a Local Plan is based on adequate, up-to-date and relevant evidence regarding the economic, social and environmental characteristics and prospects of the area. Although the evidence prepared for the WMRSS and the Panel Report (see below) are still material planning considerations, the evidence is already a few years old. To ensure that the housing requirements are based on up

¹ paragraph 178, NPPF.

² paragraph 156, NPPF.

³ paragraph 182, NPPF

to date and robust evidence, a Worcestershire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) was commissioned by the Worcestershire authorities in 2011 to analyse the current housing market and assess future demand and need for housing within each local authority. The Assessment presented a range of dwelling scenarios for the Worcestershire authorities to consider when setting their housing targets, which led Redditch Borough Council to commission additional work to take account of more up to date sub-national population projections and to define a target within the identified scenario range. This SHMA Annex concluded that Redditch would need to provide 5,700 dwellings (rounded) by 2028. The average annual requirement of 340 dwellings per annum was extrapolated to provide a housing requirement up to 2030, thus providing Redditch with a housing target of 6,380 dwellings up to 2030.

Regional Planning

The Government has shown a clear intention to abolish the Regional Strategies as soon as possible. Although still part of the Development Plan the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS), the Regional Strategy that is relevant to both Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council, is likely to carry limited weight in future local planning. However, the emphasis of the NPPF that local plans must be based on objectively assessed development means that the evidence produced and considered in the preparation of the WMRSS (including the independent testing of evidence at the WMRSS Phase Two Revision Examination in Public, culminating in the 'Panel Report' in September 2009) will continue to be material planning considerations. In the 'Panel Report', it was concluded that the overall housing provision of 7,000 dwellings for Redditch would broadly match local need for the period of 2006 to 2026 (paragraph 8.83). As the Panel considered that the provision within Redditch should be for at least 4,000 dwellings which includes using all of the various Areas of Development Restraint (ADR)s in Redditch (paragraph 8.82), the requirement would be for around 3,000 dwellings in neighbouring Districts (paragraph 8.83). In terms of the location of the 3,000 dwellings, although development to the north of the town would be most obviously located to serve car-borne commuters to Birmingham and the Black Country (paragraph 8.83), any development west of the A435 accessed via Redditch ADR land would have such modest capacity that it would not be significant in strategic terms (paragraph 8.83-84). Hence, the Panel concluded that the choice of locality around the boundary of Redditch should be locally determined whether at or adjacent to the Webheath/ Foxlydiate or Brockhill ADRs or in the Bordesley Park area or in some combination of these possibilities or elsewhere (paragraph 8.84).

Sub-Regional Planning

Similar to the WMRSS, the Government is intending to abolish the Worcestershire Structure Plan which is the countywide planning document. The plan period of the current saved Worcestershire Structure Plan expired in 2011. Hence it is considered that this document would have little or no weight as a material planning consideration. However, it should be noted that it did place emphasis on Redditch meeting its own needs in the period up to 2011.

Local Planning

The two Councils jointly consulted on cross boundary growth options in 2010 after the publication of the Panel Report in September 2009 for the Phase 2 Revision of

the WMRSS. Responses from stakeholders were received and meetings are continuing to discuss and resolve pertinent issues.

Since 2010, the change of Government, the intention to abolish the WMRSS and the replacement of the national planning policy guidance and statements led to the uncertainty over housing targets. With the Localism Act receiving Royal Assent and National Planning Policy Framework published, the two Councils are now in a position to progress on the matter further.

Officers of both Councils have been working together to ultimately recommend a site (or sites) of sufficient capacity to sustainably accommodate the required level of Redditch growth. Regular joint officer meetings have taken place with a joint lead, as although the identified area would be within the Bromsgrove District the growth is for Redditch's needs. It was agreed that all sites around the urban area Redditch should again be reassessed and that by a methodical process of elimination, informed by the Sustainability Appraisal, a preferred location could be identified. It was also agreed that this work should be informed by a detailed Green Belt study to identify a new defensible Green Belt boundary and that the preferred location should also be realistic in terms of delivery. In this latter respect joint meetings have also been held with Worcestershire County Council to discuss specific infrastructure issues such as education and transport. In relation to transport it was agreed to jointly commission Halcrow to carry out highways modelling work to assess the implications on the highway network of potential development in various locations.

Joint Member briefing sessions have also taken place to discuss progress and various issues. Meetings have also been held with other relevant stakeholders such as Severn Trent and English Heritage. Furthermore, it was also decided that meetings should also take place with various developers with declared interests in sites identified via the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and Core Strategy consultation processes, to ascertain deliverability of various sites; to collate robust evidence in relation to the sites in question and to aid the site selection process.

The resultant document therefore forms part of the evidence for supporting the Cross Boundary Growth consultation in February 2013.

The results of this consultation will be incorporated into the draft Local/ District Plans (previously called the Core Strategy) of both Councils. All of the issues and policies will be published and consulted on again in Publication versions of the Bromsgrove District Plan and Redditch Local Plan No.4 in late Summer/Autumn 2013.

Other Relevant Documents

Redditch Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (April 2012)

For meeting Redditch housing needs, it is reasonable to assume that Redditch should maximise the use of its urban capacity before considering meeting its housing needs cross boundary. Redditch SHLAA provides details on how sites and their capacity were identified and calculated. The 2012 update of the document concludes that the list of potential sites in Redditch can provide a total capacity of 3,250 dwellings by 2030. However, since the SHLAA was refreshed in April 2012,

the position has altered and the capacity within Redditch is closer to 3,000 dwellings. Furthermore, the SHLAA matrix of sites indicates that not all of the sites in the SHLAA are deliverable immediately. Some sites may not come forward for development until 6-10 years into the Plan, whilst some sites may not be delivered until considerably later (10+ years). Some of the larger sites (150+ dwellings) may indicate that delivery can commence within five years, but they may not be completed within this timeframe. This further compounds the land supply issue in Redditch and has repercussions for Redditch's five year housing land supply figure.

Based upon delivery trajectories of the sites capable of delivery within five years, Redditch Borough Council can only realistically expect about 1250 completions over the next five years. When analysed in the five year housing land supply document, this indicates that Redditch only has 3.4 years supply of deliverable land, which is contrary to national planning guidance. This could signal an opportunity for development to be proposed in undesirable locations, which would be difficult to defend at a planning inquiry and may be contrary to emerging local policy.

Employment Land Review (ELR) Update (November 2012)

The update of the ELR takes the estimated population projections derived in the above SHMA Annex and forecasts the future employment land demand up to 2030. It identifies that Redditch needs to identify 40 hectares of land to meet employment uses (B1, B2 and B8) up to 2030. Also required is 15 hectares of land for Worcestershire County Council in association with waste provision, making a total of 55 hectares overall requirement. The ELR identifies around 27.5 hectares of employment land within Redditch to contribute towards this target, leaving a shortfall of 27.5 hectares needing to be located in neighbouring districts in the following manner:

Bromsgrove District Council - 15.5ha at Ravensbank and Ravensbank ADR
Stratford on Avon District Council - 7.5ha at Gorcott and 4.5ha at Winyates Green Triangle.

Therefore for the purposes of this work no additional cross boundary land for employment purposes is required.

Conclusion

Redditch Borough will need to provide land to accommodate 6,380 dwellings by 2030 and its SHLAA can only identify suitable land for around 3,000 dwellings. Therefore, Redditch Borough has a shortfall of around 3,400 dwellings to meet the housing target. Furthermore, at this moment in time, Redditch Borough Council can only demonstrate 3.4 years supply of deliverable land to meet its housing needs.

Under the 'duty to co-operate' and other provisions in the NPPF local plans must be based on a strategy which seeks to meet objectively assessed and up-to-date development and infrastructure requirements. Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council have a duty to work together to determine whether there is land in Bromsgrove District that could be reasonably and sustainably allocated for meeting the unmet growth requirements of Redditch Borough. This document is

produced jointly by the two Councils to show the work that has been carried out so far to meet this duty.

2. Strategic Objectives

Both previous draft Development Plans for Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils have included a set of Strategic Objectives which build upon National Policy and local challenges. To ensure this cross boundary growth will contribute to the Strategic Objectives of both development plans, the two Councils have worked together and agreed on a set of joint Strategic Objectives which are outlined as follows:

1. To provide sufficient homes to meet the housing needs of both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
2. To provide support and encouragement for the achievement of a strong and diverse economic base for both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
3. To support and to enhance the vitality and viability and, where appropriate, the regeneration of Town Centres, District Centres, and other centres in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
4. To enhance the visitor economy and the provision of leisure and cultural facilities in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
5. To focus all new development in sustainable locations with suitable infrastructure provision including green infrastructure.
6. To minimise the loss of Green Belt and areas of high landscape quality.
7. To improve the accessibility of people in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough to employment opportunities and all other facilities and to reduce their need to travel; together with the promotion of safer and more sustainable travel patterns and integration of communities.
8. To ensure that both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough are equipped to mitigate against and adapt to the causes and impacts of climate change.
9. To safeguard and enhance the natural resources for both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough such as soil, water and air quality.
10. To minimise waste and increase recycling, including reuse of land, buildings and building materials, where possible.
11. To protect and enhance the distinctive character, quality and appearance of both the natural environment and historic environment in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
12. To improve quality of life and sense of well being and to reduce crime and fear of crime.
13. To promote high quality design of new developments and use of sustainable building materials and techniques.

3. Methodology

Following on from the background chapter, it is clear that with respect to accommodating sustainable cross-boundary growth arising from the housing and associated employment needs of Redditch, further work is required to address this issue. The objective of this chapter of the report is to provide further clarity on the methods used to assess the most suitable locations for growth around Redditch. Although this document has been written to tackle the issue of Redditch related growth during this plan period (2011-2030), it has evolved from work and evidence that has been conducted over the last five years.

Setting the Context

Firstly, a detailed understanding of the issue had to be gained in order to appreciate the task at hand. This consisted of reviewing the implications of all appropriate documents at national, regional, sub-regional and a local level, as well as joint working between officers at Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council and Worcestershire County Council. The key points from all this work are captured within the background chapter.

Site Visits

A number of site visits were needed as part of the ongoing production of this report. Tours of all the sites both within and adjacent to Redditch were conducted, especially in the early months (April/May 2011). There was also an extensive all day joint site visit involving officers from both authorities in August 2011, as well as joint visits in October and November 2011. Site visits were also undertaken for the Green Belt assessment work, which involved officers from both authorities and took place in September 2012. At the start of the process, and as part of the SHLAA work, the suitability of sites within Redditch Borough's boundaries was assessed, which confirmed the lack of available land for growth.

Strategic Objectives

Taking into account the NPPF references on the presumption in favour of sustainable development; core planning principles; and planning strategically across boundaries, including 'the duty to co-operate' - Joint Strategic Objectives were agreed to drive both this exercise and both authorities' Development Plans. The Strategic Objectives identified are consistent with both the emerging Bromsgrove District Development Plan and the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.4. The Strategic Objectives are identified in chapter 2 of this document.

Area Assessment Principles

Jointly agreed area assessment principles were developed to drive the assessment exercise and, in particular, to be used as a means of evaluating the appropriateness

of all the areas under consideration in the latter stages of the project. These area assessment principles are set out in chapter 4 of this document.

Broad Area Appraisal

This analysis process considered all the potential sites surrounding Redditch. The first stage of the White Young Green study (WYG1), published in December 2007, provided the basis for this work and identified sites around Redditch to be analysed for growth potential. All twenty of these potential sites around Redditch were re-appraised against the area assessment principles set out in the previous chapter, giving the various issues and constraints associated with each area.

The extensive work on this 'Broad Area Appraisal' led to joint recommendations on those areas which should be discounted and those areas which should be carried forward to the 'Focused Appraisal' stage and considered for more in-depth analysis. Firstly, areas that had genuine planning issues such as being a designated park or golf course were rejected from further investigation. The remainder of the areas were all appraised against the assessment principles and key strengths and weaknesses derived. Clear reasoning was provided to explain why each area was discounted or carried forward to the focused area appraisal stage.

For simplicity during the area assessments, use was made of the WYG1 site referencing system but, for ease of access for the reader, these areas are now shown on an Ordnance Survey map which has been newly produced for this project (see page 16 in Broad Area Appraisal chapter).

Focused Area Appraisal

This chapter looks in more detail at those areas that were not discounted at the broad area appraisal stage. The remaining five areas were appraised in more detail against the area assessment principles identified in Chapter 4. Site visits, desktop analysis including background evidence documents, and aerial photos were used to establish the extent of the areas.

Green Infrastructure

To assess against green infrastructure credentials, use was made of visual assessments, as well as Worcestershire County Council (WCC) data such as landscape character, landscape sensitivity, biodiversity and geodiversity. The use of Defra's MAGIC software was valuable in obtaining the required green infrastructure data. The web-based interactive map brings together information on key environmental schemes and designations in one place and allowed comparisons to be made for all the selected areas. The interactive maps also provided records on ancient woodlands, Agricultural Land Classifications, habitat inventories, and other key data sets. Other green attributes of the sites were also explored, such as statutory designations such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)s and Special Wildlife Sites (SWS)s, as well as Tree Preservation Orders (TPO)s.

Accessibility

The focussed area appraisal also took into account sustainability issues, whether it was associated with access to services and facilities or making use of existing infrastructure. Desktop studies examined the various areas proximity to schools, employment, local centres and Redditch Town Centre. In order to find these services, a number of websites with search functions were used. To find health services the NHS website was used, which detailed the nearest GP surgeries, hospitals and dentists to the area. In order to find educational establishments, the government website (<http://schoolsfinder.direct.gov.uk/>) has a dedicated search engine to find the nearest schools and colleges. Regarding public transport, a combination of 'Google Maps' and the government website (www.transportdirect.info) could be used to find the nearest public transport links. These sites had maps identifying nearby bus stops and train stations, with links to WCC information on routes, times and numbers. In order to calculate the distances to various services and facilities, an agreed midpoint within the areas were chosen and then the use of roads that would result in the shortest journey.

Vitality and Viability

Building on from the accessibility, the relationship of the area to key services was also taken in to consideration. This principle explored the impact on the vitality and viability of the area, including how it would benefit existing services and facilities, as well as the potential to increase the number of such services.

Transport

In terms of access, the relationship between the areas and main highways was taken into consideration, including access and frequency of public transport. This principle considered the impact of the development on the highway network including the need for new road infrastructure to facilitate development. In order to assess this principle, full use of work conducted by Halcrow on behalf of Worcestershire County Council (WCC) was used to identify the necessary transport related infrastructure and services needed across Redditch and Bromsgrove.

Infrastructure Capacity

Regarding relevant infrastructure, meetings were undertaken with relevant stakeholders to recognise the capabilities of areas in terms of capacity. Meetings were set up with Severn Trent, NHS Health Trust and WCC education, as well as the various service and utility providers. During these meetings the level of growth was discussed, including whether current infrastructure is capable of can accommodating growth and/or what additional infrastructure may potentially be needed to accommodate growth.

Flood Risk

Flood risk and fluvial issues were closely scrutinised with the use of both the Level 1 and Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessments (SFRA 1 & 2), in addition to the Outline Water Cycle Study (WCS). The WCS also examined the drainage issues associated with the areas and allowed analysis of wastewater collection infrastructure.

Built Environment

The focused area appraisal has examined more closely the rural and urban landscapes that are in and around the areas. It looked at how development can

integrate into these landscapes whilst enhancing the built environment and protecting historic assets. This part of the survey was conducted through the use of maps, detailing where historic assets, such as Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas were located and their relationship to the potential development sites with particular reference to English Heritage guidance on the setting of historic assets. The Council's Conservation Officer was involved and provided valuable evidence and constructive feedback. The site visit work was also a crucial element to assess this specific principle, as well as full utilisation of the Landscape Character Assessment and the Historic Environment Assessments.

Green Belt Assessment

A key component of the 'focused area appraisal' is the assessment of the Green Belt as well as the defining of appropriate boundaries for each of the potential development areas (Area Assessment Principle 6). Along with the other assessments, the Green Belt evaluations are considered to be robust and elements have been derived from an evaluation of other best practice assessments⁴.

The fundamental aim of this part of the 'focused area appraisal' is to determine which parts of the Green Belt to the north-northwest of Redditch are most critical to the purposes of the Green Belt designation as set out in NPPF (Para. 80). In assessing how the Green Belt functions operate and apply to land within the remaining five areas, it is necessary to examine whether these functions are performed by each land area, and to what degree. This is therefore a key component within the 'focused area appraisal'. Although all the areas assessed contribute in some way to the purpose of Green Belt, some areas make a lesser contribution than others. Ultimately it can be concluded that it is not essential for some areas to be kept open to fulfil Green Belt objectives in the wider area and context, having regard to meeting planned development needs.

The assessment of defensible Green Belt boundaries is particularly important because weak boundaries can be vulnerable to urban encroachment. It is essential that existing and new boundaries are durable for beyond the duration of the plan period. The area boundaries will be examined during the analysis by undertaking a desk study and site visits to determine the extent to which it can be secured and maintained in the future by 'strong' defensible boundaries.

The most rational way to determine the appropriate boundaries for each area in the first instance is to consider it from ground level through a detailed site examination. Two elements were used to assess the Green Belt and potential boundaries, both were carried out concurrently:

(i) Evaluating a boundary based on Green Belt purposes

The site surveys were undertaken on an area by area basis, looking at both the NPPF (Para. 80) purposes of Green Belt and on the objective of selecting defensible

⁴ Strategic Green Belt Review Final Report (February 2006) South West Regional Assembly
Cambridge Green Belt Study Final Report (2002) South Cambridgeshire District Council
Tamworth Local Plan Review Green Belt Appraisal (2012) Lichfield District Council
Green Belt Review Methodology Consultation Evidence Base (November 2008) Calderdale Council

boundaries for each area. From a convenient starting point each area was surveyed in a logical manner – field parcel by field parcel and boundary by boundary. The use of maps and aerial photographs was also essential to this assessment process.

Each boundary and parcel of adjacent land within the potential development area was assessed against the five purposes of Green Belt. An element of this assessment will need to consider the implications of Green Belt release on a wider area than the Green Belt parcel being assessed. This is because in some cases it is recognised that it will be difficult to determine whether or not the purpose of including that parcel within the Green Belt is justified, for example where distant views back towards Redditch urban area might be compromised.

(ii) Evaluating a boundary based on physical attributes

At the same time as determining whether an area of land fulfils a Green Belt purpose, the appropriateness of where the new Green Belt boundaries will lie has been evaluated. The most effective way to determine this is to use physical, permanent attributes on the ground.

In this context, a boundary is defined by a recognisable linear feature between two separate areas of land, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent (NPPF, Para. 85). When identifying any potential new Green Belt boundaries, strong boundaries were used wherever possible. Where this was not possible, consideration was given to the possibilities of creating a suitable strong defensible boundary in the right location.

To assess the strength of the existing or potential proposed Green Belt boundaries in more detail, the following table explains how the boundaries have been defined.

Strong Boundary	Weak Boundary
Railway line (in use)	Disused railway lines
Adopted road network	Private/ un-adopted road network
Rivers, streams, canal, other watercourse	Drainage/irrigation channels
Prominent physical features i.e. dense woodland, trees, good quality hedgerow growth	Fragmented tree coverage and sparse hedgerow growth
	Power lines

Strong boundaries are considered to be those that have an intended permanence in the long term and should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period. Weak boundaries are considered to be those that are visible but can be easily altered or destroyed. There may be instances where a weak boundary such as an un-adopted track is strengthened by the presence of other boundary features (such as adjacent hedgerow) which serve to strengthen the boundary both in terms of physical attributes and contribution to Green Belt purposes. Conclusions have been drawn on a site-by-site assessment taking into account the context of the surrounding landscape and other relevant physical features.

The analysis of each area within the 'focused area appraisal' leads to an assessment of whether the area can acceptably accommodate planned development and suitably define alternative Green Belt boundaries in each location.

It is important to note that for each area a comparison evaluation has been completed, for example each boundary has been considered in relation to other boundaries in that area to ensure the most appropriate boundaries are selected for the areas that should be within Green Belt land and potential development locations. For example a boundary may be physically strong but may compromise Green Belt purposes. Alternatively, an area may have weak boundaries but strongly fulfil a Green Belt purpose, in which case an opportunity arises to create a suitable, defensible boundary.

Conclusions

Using the various components of analysis that formed the focus appraisal, a conclusion was made detailing the main strengths and weaknesses of each area. It was then concluded whether the area was suitable as a potential growth location, highlighting the main constraints that would need to be taken into consideration if development was to occur in this location.

If deemed suitable, the area of the site with potential for development was calculated using GIS software. To provide consistent and realistic estimates areas were discounted to take account of constraints and the likely infrastructure required. Based on these assumptions it was considered that the net developable capacity of the area would be approximately 65%, therefore, this figure was used when estimating area capacities. Calculating the approximate capacity of areas is fundamental in the accuracy and reliability of designating the right amount of land to develop.

A density of 30 dwellings per hectare (dph) was used to calculate area capacities. The majority of Bromsgrove/Redditch is relatively low density and therefore at this number it is possible to provide a realistic figure with a high proportion of areas likely to exceed 30 dph. Using the figure of 30 dph ensures that housing potential is not overestimated and as a result the combined total of developable areas can be viewed as a minimum.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA)

The first task required to conduct an SA for this evidence base document was for officers from both authorities to establish a common set of SA objectives, decision making criteria, together with the overall Strategic Objectives and Site Assessment Principles (as established in sections 2 and 4 of this report). A set of monitoring indicators were also derived as part of this work. The SA process was divided into a number of key stages, which followed a logical sequence and are as follows:

- Comparison of Strategic Objectives and SA Objectives
- Comparison of Area Assessment Principles and SA Objectives
- SA analysis of 'Broad' area appraisal
- SA analysis of 'Focused' area appraisal

- SA analysis of various scenarios

At each stage of analysis, the SA outcomes from each of the areas (or combination of areas) were compared against each other to identify those that performed best. Furthermore, conflicts were identified between each objective and ways identified to improve performance against achieving the objectives. The SA will assist in the decision making process to determine which of the identified areas around Redditch will deliver the most sustainable location for future growth. All of the Sustainability Appraisal work has been combined in an extensive separate supporting paper but is summarised in chapter 7⁵.

Overall Conclusions

This draws together all the conclusions from the exercise and reaches key conclusions about the best way forward.

4. Area Assessment Principles

It was jointly agreed between the 2 authorities that a set of Area Assessment Principles should be devised against which the suitability of each area could be methodically, objectively and consistently assessed. The following set of principles have therefore been formulated. They have not been listed in any priority order and are not conclusive in their own right. In many cases they are interdependent and therefore collectively form the overall assessment of any area.

Overarching Principle:

New development should adhere to the presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14 of the NPPF) addressing economic, social and environmental aspects of sustainable development.

1. Development should be able to address green infrastructure in a comprehensive manner enabling the delivery of a high quality multi-functional green space network
2. Developments should be accessible to a wide range of services and facilities including key centres (Town Centre(s) and/or District Centres) and employment opportunities.
3. Development should enhance the vitality and viability of key centres, and improve economic prosperity.
4. Development should not occur in areas of high flood risk and should not adversely impact on fluvial or surface water flooding elsewhere.
5. Effective use of existing infrastructure should be made and new proposals should be capable of being supported by new infrastructure where appropriate
6. Development options should be considered against the five purposes of the Green Belt (paragraph 80 of NPPF) and defensible boundaries identified
7. There is a need to plan to ensure that effective and efficient use of land resources is achieved in order to minimize new land take with development enhancing the built environment, protecting historic assets and integrating successfully into surrounding urban and rural landscapes

⁵ Housing Growth Sustainability Appraisal

8. Development should mitigate the impact on the transport network through the provision of new infrastructure where needed.

5. Broad Area Appraisal Stage

Introduction

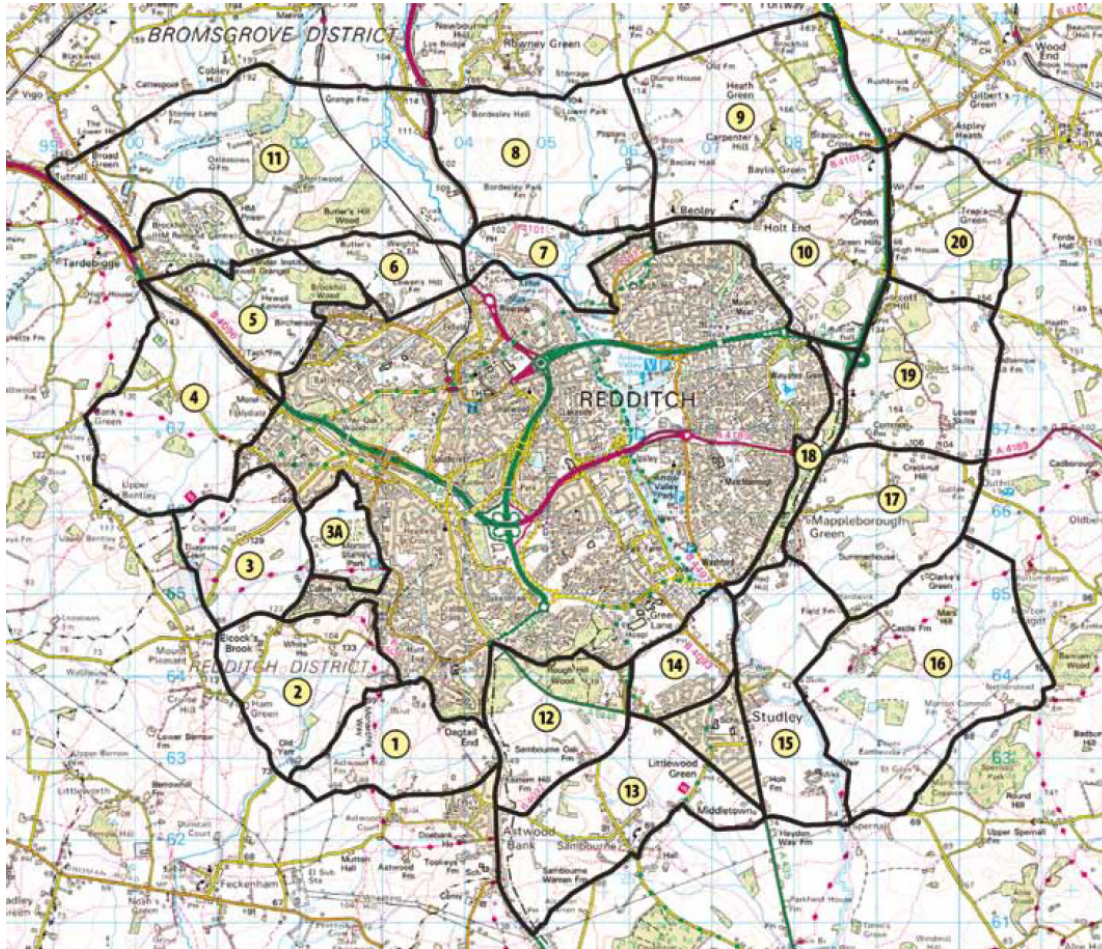
The purpose of this chapter is to appraise all realistic development options around Redditch, against the area assessment principles set out within the previous chapter. To provide clarity for the appraisal each individual area has been assessed against each area assessment principle with the key points highlighted using bullet points. Information relied upon to inform the appraisal was gathered through desk based research and site visits. All of the areas assessed are within the designated Green Belt and this therefore forms part of both the broad and focused area appraisal stages. However, it is not intended to provide the same level of detail within the broad area appraisal that can be found within the focused area appraisal chapter.

It is important to discount weaker areas at an earlier stage to allow a more detailed appraisal to be undertaken against the most probable development options. This broad area appraisal has been undertaken in two stages as set out below:

- Areas which were excluded from consideration at the outset following the consideration of genuine planning issues;
- An appraisal of each remaining area against the site development principles, recommending the areas which should be carried forward to the focused site appraisal stage.

Map 1 overleaf, shows the extent of the areas considered in this document and their relationship to the existing urban area of Redditch. The assessment areas are based on those used by White Young Green (WYG) in their first report into cross boundary growth options (document title), which was produced as part of the two Council's evidence base under the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. However, it is important to note that this current document represents an entirely independent area assessment and only makes use of the WYG map rather than the contents of its report.

It is important to note that this document will distinguish between the WYG survey work and conclusions due to the further work undertaken on these areas by officers of both authorities. Through this project there has been further detailed desk based research and additional site visits which, in certain instances, has resulted in different outcomes. For simplicity, during the area assessments, use was made of the WYG1 site referencing system but, for ease of access for the reader, these areas are now shown on an Ordnance Survey map which has been newly produced for this project (map 1).



Map 1: Map showing sites assessed around Redditch

Initially Excluded Areas

This section details which of the areas were excluded at the outset of this document and the justification for this decision.

New Settlements beyond the Green Belt

Paragraph 52 of the NPPF states that the supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through new settlements. The NPPF emphasises that local planning authorities should consider whether such opportunities provide the best way of achieving sustainable development.

In Redditch, a new settlement would need to be located in the broad area that is in the south west of the Borough in the vicinity of Feckenham because the urban area extends to the Local Authority boundary elsewhere in the Borough. Several options to accommodate around 1,000 dwellings were studied in depth by Redditch BC as part of the consultation process for the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 over 20 years ago and rejected on grounds of sustainability. Both authorities continue to believe that a new settlement would not be the most effective way of delivering sustainable development for the following reasons:

- The area is poorly located to serve the needs of Redditch;
- The development that needs to be accommodated now is three times that which was dismissed over 20 years ago. Around 3,000 dwellings would have considerable detrimental impacts on this remote rural setting;
- It is not a sustainable location and much of the development would be dependent on access by car;
- The area is lacking in infrastructure and local facilities. Connectivity to existing infrastructure would be costly in such remote locations; and
- The area is valuable as open countryside and has a policy protection to this effect.

Area 3a



Map of area 3A

This area covers Morton Stanley Park and the Redditch Golf Course. The area was excluded for the following reasons:

- The area forms an important part of Redditch's sports and recreation provision, including 'Green Flag' status at Morton Stanley Park; and
- A significant proportion of the land is affected by important ecological designations including a Local Nature Reserve (LNR) (Walkwood Coppice) and two Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) (Downsell Wood and Walkwood Coppice).

Area 7

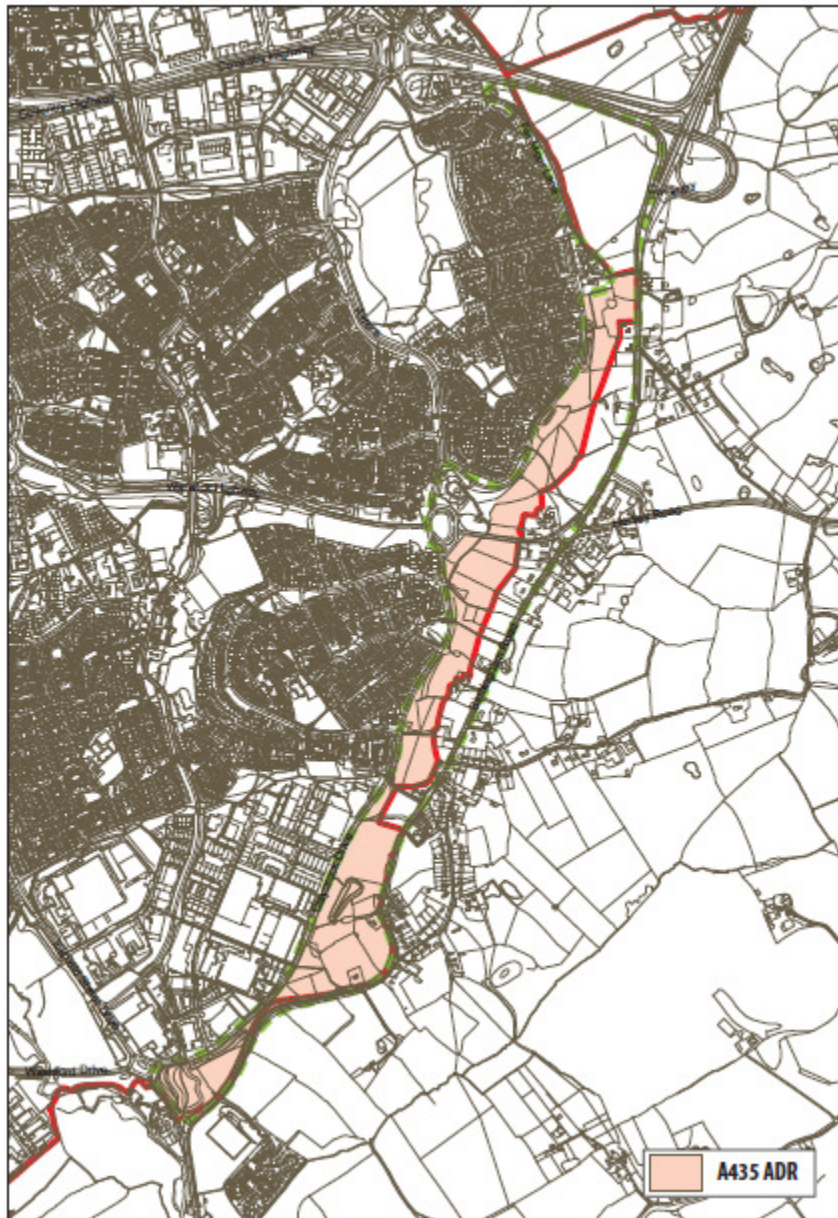


Map of area 7

This area covers Abbey Park Golf Course. The area was excluded for the following reasons:

- The area forms the northern section of the Arrow Valley Park, which runs through the Borough from its northern-most boundary through to the southern boundary of the urban area;
- The area forms an important part of Redditch's sports and recreation provision; and
- A significant proportion of the land is affected by important ecological designations including four SWSs (River Arrow, Abbey and Forge Mill Ponds, Dagnell Brook, and Papermill and Beoley Mill Ponds and Stream) and a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) (Dagnell End Meadow). The area also abuts two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) (Bordesley Abbey and Forge Mill).

Area 18



Map of area 18

This area consists of two areas of land; the A435 ADR and the Winyates Green Triangle. The ADR is designated within the Redditch Local Plan No.3 to provide a reserve of land for development beyond 2011. The principle of future development on this area was therefore tested at the public inquiry into the Local Plan. In addition, the area has been assessed within the Redditch SHLAA and Employment Land Review and is considered to be suitable, available and capable of delivering housing and employment within this plan period up to 2030. A Review of the A435 and adjoining land also concludes that development potential exists on land in the A435 corridor both within Redditch and Stratford on Avon District. The Winyates Green Triangle has been identified to form part of the emerging Eastern Gateway which will help meet the employment needs of the Borough. On this basis, no further assessment of this area is required within this document.

Broad Site Appraisal

As a result of the initial area exclusions, the following remaining areas have been appraised against the eight development principles: areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 & 20.

Clear reasoning has been provided to explain why each individual area has either been discounted or carried forward to the focused area appraisal stage.

Area 1

This parcel of land adjoins the south western edge of Redditch's urban area at Crabbs Cross and extends as far south as Astwood Bank. The A441 provides the boundary to the east, Blaze Lane and Feckenham Road provides the boundary to the west, whilst Crofts Lane, Astwood Lane and Church Road provide the southern-most boundary. Some watercourses run through the area, including Wixon Brook.



Map of Area 1

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SWS's or SSSI's highlighting that there are no significant environmental constraints.

2. Accessibility

- The area is within close proximity to Astwood Bank where a range of facilities and services are available including Astwood Bank First School, The Ridgeway GP Surgery, a selection of pubs and restaurants, and local retail, including a District Centre.

- Access to public transport is considered to be poor. Whilst there is a bus stop adjacent to this area on the A441, the 350 service between Redditch and Worcester is infrequent (every 3 hours, Mon-Sat) and the 70 service between Astwood Bank and Redditch runs every 40 minutes (Mon-Sat). In addition, the area is approximately 7km from Redditch Train Station.
- The area is a significant distance (6.8km) from Redditch Town Centre and the Kingfisher Shopping Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The area is 4.5km from Park Farm Industrial Estate and 5.2km from Washford Industrial Estate.
- There are several public footpaths that cross Area 1, and includes the Monarch's Way long distance route.

3. Vitality and Viability

- The proximity to Astwood Bank means that potentially the vitality and viability of the District Centre and other services could be improved if development occurred in this location.

4. Flood Risk

- There are small areas of flood risk associated with the Wixon Brook that flows through this area. Plack Brook is an ordinary watercourse that also runs through the area; however, this watercourse has not been modelled in terms of flooding.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- The provision of drainage facilities could be problematic as the area is west of the ridgeline, unless the gravity feed to Priestbridge STW is possible from this area.
- Many of the roads which bound the area are country lanes and are unlikely to be able to cope with significant increases in traffic flows. It is therefore likely that significant investment in road infrastructure would be required to link to the existing strategic road network, which in this location could prove problematic as access points are limited.

6. Green Belt

- Development in this area would result in coalescence between the potential extended area of Redditch and Astwood Bank.
- There would be a reduction in the Green Belt gap between the potential extended area of Redditch and Feckenham.
- Development would be prominent and represent sprawl into the countryside.
- Across this area, the topography rises from 80m in the west to 150m in the east, becoming very steep close to the Ridgeway. These steep slopes offer no visual containment to any development, which would be visually prominent from the wider Worcestershire countryside.

7. Built Environment

- There are five listed buildings and a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) (Chapel House Farm) within the area, indicating that development may have a significant impact on the historic built environment.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities.
- The A441 offers the only connection onto the strategic highway network. Traffic congestion is a particular issue at peak times, which has a knock-on effect at Crabbs Cross roundabout.

Summary

Although Area 1 offers some advantages for development in this location, such as limited environmental constraints and minimal flood risk, together with opportunities to enhance the vitality and viability of an already thriving District Centre, it is clear that these factors are greatly outweighed by the following negative impacts.

Close and easy access to Redditch Town Centre is very limited. Whilst there is a bus stop nearby, the existing bus services are infrequent meaning that there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities. However, development in any rural location would need to consider improvements to the public transport network. There is also likely to be significant Green Belt harm caused by development in this area due to coalescence of Redditch and Astwood Bank. Furthermore there would also be a significant reduction in the Green Belt gap between Redditch and Feckenham. From the wider Worcestershire countryside, development on the steep slopes to the west of the Ridgeway would be harmful due to visual prominence. The presence of a number of listed buildings and a scheduled ancient monument indicate that possible harm could be caused to the historic environment. **It is therefore considered that Area 1 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 2

This parcel of land adjoins the south western edge of Redditch's urban area, within the Parish of Feckenham, with residential development at Callow Hill and Hunt End located on the northern and eastern boundaries. Ham Green Lane and Clayfields provide the boundary to the south west whilst Blaze Lane and Feckenham Road provide the boundary to the south east. This area contains some woodland (Fox Covert) and several watercourses, including Swans Brook and Thickwithey Brook.



Map of Area 2

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains the Swans Brook SWS. Thickwithey Brook feeds into Swans Brook which flows north to south.
- The area contains the Callow Hill Ridge, which forms an important transition zone between the urban area and the open countryside.

2. Accessibility

- The area is 3.4km from the nearest First School (Harry Taylor) which is now an academy and 3.5km from the nearest GP (Crabbs Cross Surgery). The nearest local retail facilities are in Crabbs Cross District Centre which is a similar distance. There is however a parade of shops in Crabbs Cross on Crabbs Cross Lane 2.3km from the area.
- Access to public transport is considered to be poor. The nearest bus stop is 2.1km from the area (55/56 service, every 20 minutes to Redditch, Monday to Saturday) which is beyond a reasonable walking distance. In addition the area is approximately 6km from Redditch Train Station.
- The area is a significant distance (5.8km) from Redditch Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The area is 5.3km from Park Farm Industrial Estate and 6km from Washford Industrial Estate.
- The Monarch's Way footpath runs north to south towards the eastern boundary of the area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- The area is not particularly close to any District Centres and therefore is unlikely to impact on the vitality or viability of any centres.

4. Flood Risk

- There are small areas of flood risk associated with the Swans Brook that flows through the area. Thickwithey Brook is an ordinary watercourse that also runs through the area; however, this course has not been modelled in terms of flooding.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- The provision of drainage facilities could be problematic as the area is west of the ridgeline, unless the gravity feed to Priestbridge STW is possible in this area.

6. Green Belt

- There would potentially be a reduction in the Green Belt gap between Redditch and Feckenham.
- Development would be prominent and represent sprawl into the countryside.
- Across this area, the topography rises from 85m in the south west of the area to 155m in the north along the top of Callow Hill ridge. These steep slopes offer no visual containment to any development, which would be visually prominent from the wider Worcestershire countryside.

7. Built Environment

- There are 12 listed buildings within the area highlighting that development may have a significant impact on the historic built environment.

8. Highways

- Many of the roads which bound the area are country lanes and are unlikely to be able to cope with significant increases in traffic flows. It is therefore likely that significant investment in road infrastructure would be required to link to the existing strategic road network, which in this location could prove problematic as access points are limited.
- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities.

Summary

The area has some advantages associated with development such as good Green Infrastructure assets but there are numerous factors which greatly outweigh the advantages.

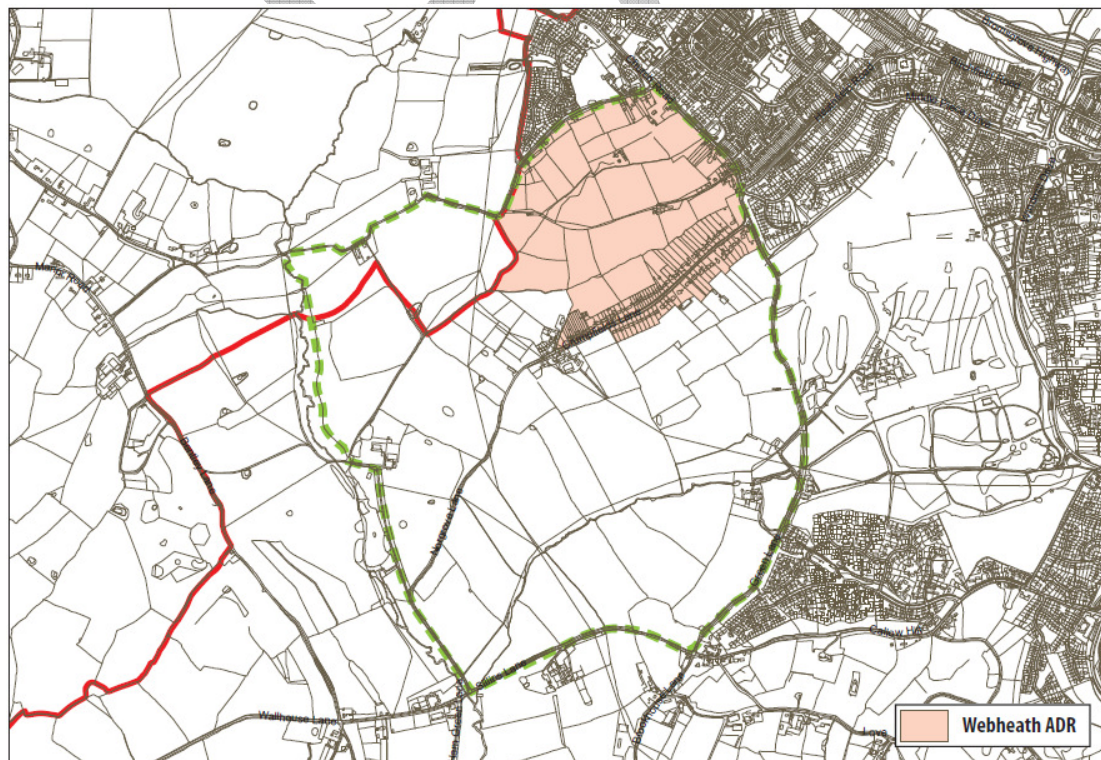
The access to good quality public transport is a major barrier to the development of the area. With the nearest bus stop over 2km from the area and a 20 minute interval between bus services, there is likely to be a reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities. There is also likely to be significant Green Belt harm caused by development in this location due to the potential for a considerable reduction in the Green Belt gap between Redditch and Feckenham.

From the wider Worcestershire countryside, development on the steep slopes of Callow Hill Ridge would be harmful due to visual prominence. The presence of a large number of listed buildings highlights the possible harm that could be caused to the historic environment. In addition there are no notable services or facilities within walking distance. **It is therefore considered that Area 2 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 3

Area 3 is located to the west of Redditch's urban area partially within the Parish of Feckenham. The area abuts Morton Stanley Park on its eastern boundary. Swans Brook provides the boundary to the west with Angel Street located to the north and Sillins Lane providing the boundary to the south. Two tributaries of the Swans Brook that are unnamed watercourses flow through the area, the first from the vicinity of Norgrove Court to the northern parts of Church Road and the second in the vicinity of the Monarchs way footpath towards the south of the area.

It is important to note that the area currently designated as the Webheath ADR is located within Area 3. The ADR is designated within the Redditch Local Plan No.3 to provide a reserve of land for housing beyond 2011. The principle of future development on the ADR was therefore tested at the public inquiry into the Local Plan. In addition, the ADR site has been assessed within the Redditch SHLAA and is considered to be suitable, available and capable of delivering housing within the plan period. On this basis no further assessment of this particular ADR parcel within the site is required in this document as it already forms part of the housing capacity identified within Redditch Borough. The assessment of Area 3 refers only to the land outside the ADR to the south and west.



1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SWS's or SSSI's highlighting that there are no significant environmental constraints, although the area is in close proximity to SWS's to the east, namely, Walkwood Coppice and Downsell Wood and Swans Brook to the west. Mill Coppice which is adjacent to Swans Brook to the east of the area was a SWS until 2009 when its quality was assessed and it was judged to be inappropriate to retain its SWS status. Wheatfield Coppice (ancient woodland) abuts the western boundary.
- Potential harm to green infrastructure linkages between Morton Stanley Park and the wider countryside.

2. Accessibility

- The area is 1.5km from Webheath First School which has academy status, and 3.3km from Millstream Surgery. There are very limited retail facilities available in Webheath approximately 1.5km from the area. A dental surgery is located on Downsell Avenue 1.6km from the area.
- Access to public transport is considered to be poor. The nearest bus stop is 1.4km from the area which is beyond a reasonable walking distance (143 service to Bromsgrove, hourly, Monday to Saturday and 52 service to Redditch, hourly, Monday to Friday). In addition the area is approximately 4km from Redditch Train Station.
- The area is approximately 4km distance from Redditch Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The area is 4.5km from the nearest Industrial Estate at Enfield.
- The area benefits from good access to Morton Stanley Park which is adjacent to the area connected through the Monarchs way footpath.
- The Monarch's way connects at the south east of the site at Church Road and follows the unnamed watercourse on a west/east axis, before heading north/south near to the north boundary of area 3.

3. Vitality and Viability

- The proximity to Webheath means that potentially the vitality and viability of the limited range of local facilities could be enhanced if development occurred but there are no nearby designated District Centres to impact upon.
- Development on the western side of Redditch will lead to traffic flows towards Bromsgrove which may help to improve the vitality and viability of both Town Centres

4. Flood Risk

- There are small areas of flood risk associated with the Swans Brook that flows through the western part of the area. Alders Brook is an ordinary water course that also runs through the area, however, this course has not been modelled in terms of flooding. The unnamed watercourse flowing through the Webheath ADR at the north of the area is a tributary of Swans Brook. This watercourse has been modelled in the Bromsgrove and Redditch Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2, and very areas within Flood Zone 3 are known to exist and it has minimal channel flow capacity.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Many of the roads are single track country lanes and are unlikely to be able to cope with significant increases in traffic flows. It is therefore likely that significant investment in road infrastructure would be required to link to the existing road network.
- The provision of drainage facilities could be problematic as the area is west of the ridgeline, unless the gravity feed to Priestbridge STW can be implemented by STWL.

6. Green Belt

- The topography of the area rises from 100m in the vicinity of the Monarch's Way and the watercourse up to 120m at the crest of the hill on Crumpfields Lane. The topography then rises along the ridge of Crumpfields Lane with those properties on the lane overlooking the valley of Area 3. Potential development extending below the ridge of Crumpfields Lane would be prominent from a wider area and would represent sprawl into the countryside.

7. Built Environment

- There are five listed buildings within the area including Norgrove Court (grade I) highlighting that development may have a significant impact on the historic built environment. In particular the setting of Norgrove Court would require careful consideration if development was to occur in the north-western parts of the area.
- The location of Morton Stanley Park to the east of area 3 (but within the urban area of Redditch) would mean that integration of the potential development back into Redditch's urban area would be difficult.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities.
- Development on the western side of Redditch will lead to traffic flows towards Bromsgrove and would cause capacity pressures on the A38 and Bromsgrove Town Centre.

Summary

In summary the access to good quality public transport is a major barrier to the development of the area. With the nearest bus stop 1.4km from the area there is likely to be a reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities. In addition there are very few local services and facilities within walking distance. There is also likely to be significant Green Belt harm due to the level of sprawl into the wider countryside and the visual prominence of large parts of the site. The presence of five listed buildings highlights the possible harm that could be caused to the historic environment. In addition there are no notable services or facilities within walking distance and the travel pattern is likely to

encourage car usage. **It is therefore considered that Area 3 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 4

Area 4 is located to the north western side of Redditch's urban area within the Parish of Bentley and Pauncefoot. The 'Bromsgrove Highway', the A448, borders the north eastern edge of the area. A number of roads bound the area including Holyoakes Lane, Copyholt Lane and Banks Green to the west, Angel Street and Pumphouse Lane to the south. Gypsy Lane and Cur Lane bisect the area NW to SE. Spring Brook and Swans Brook also run through the area. There are three named wooded areas within the area; Hennals Wood, Bartles Wood and Cocksian Covert.



Map of Area 4

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains two SWS's (Swans Brook and Callow Farm Meadow) and a further SWS (Brotherton's Wood), and a Local Wildlife Site at Banks Green is located adjacent to the boundary of the area meaning that there are some environmental constraints in this locality.
- As mentioned in the area description, there are a number of wooded areas across the area that development would need to take into consideration particularly towards the eastern side of the area. These could provide buffers for views into and out of the potential development areas. Bartles Wood and Hennals Wood are areas of ancient woodland.

2. Accessibility

- The area is 3km from Webheath First School which has academy status, and the nearest GP surgery is Millstream Surgery 3.7km away. There are very limited retail facilities available in Webheath approximately 3km from the area. Batchley District Centre is located approximately 4km from the area where a range of retail and community facilities are available.
- There are three bus services available within 1km from the area. These services (142, 143, X3) have an hourly service (Monday to Saturday) between Redditch and Bromsgrove. Whilst the X3 offers an additional two journeys on Sunday. In addition the area is approximately 4.5km from Redditch Train Station.
- The area is approximately 4.7km from Redditch Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The area is 5.5km from the nearest Industrial Estate at Enfield.
- The proximity to the A448 provides good access to both Bromsgrove and Redditch.
- Monarch's Way footpath traverses the area from the south eastern corner on a west-east axis at Cur Lane, offering a potential Green Infrastructure resource.
- A Bridleway extends from the north of the site at the A448 travelling on a north-south axis, but only as far south as Cur Lane.

3. Vitality and Viability

- The proximity to Webheath means that potentially the vitality and viability of the limited range of local facilities could be enhanced if development occurred.
- The distance and the physical constraints to access the District Centre at Batchley means that it is unlikely for there to be any affects on vitality and viability of that Centre.
- Development on the western side of Redditch will also lead to traffic flows towards Bromsgrove which may help to improve the vitality and viability of both Town Centres.

4. Flood Risk

- The area contains a number of ordinary watercourses including Swans Brook as well as Spring Brook. There are areas of flood risk associated with both of these defined watercourses. The northern extent of Spring Brook terminates at the rear of Springhouse Farm where the watercourse ends with a spring, although it is not thought that this spring would affect development delivery.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- No unreasonable infrastructure cost above what would be expected for an area of this size.
- The site is again located just south of the ridgeline which could be problematic for drainage, unless the gravity feed to Priestbridge is possible from this area.
- The obvious key infrastructure deficiency is the point of access from the highway network. A road can be established to link from the area to the A448 however it is difficult to overcome other linkages back into the Redditch urban area.

6. Green Belt

- Possible coalescence with Tardebigge dependant upon the level of growth in Area 4 however Tardebigge is not a settlement with a village envelope on the Bromsgrove Proposals Map.
- There would be a reduction in the Green Belt gap between the potential extended area of Redditch and the settlement of Finstall.
- Potential for strong Green Belt boundaries to be defined with the area containing a number of defining features.
- The topography of the area is sloping from the south at Crumpfields Lane northwards to a high point at the Bromsgrove Highway (A448) to a high of 145m so there is some good containment possible from the north, and more sensitive containment will be required around the southern sections.

7. Built Environment

- The area only contains one listed building and it is therefore considered that the impact on the historic environment is likely to be limited.
- There is some potential to connect a development in this area with the existing urban form of Redditch given its close proximity to the Webheath ward, however this would be dependant on access issues being resolved.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities.
- Development on the western side of Redditch will lead to traffic flows towards Bromsgrove and would cause capacity pressures on the A38 and Bromsgrove Town Centre.

Summary

Area 4 offers some advantages for development such as reasonable access to public transport and the strategic highway network and it is within relatively close proximity to a range of services and facilities including the Town Centre. The Green Belt harm is potentially less significant in this location in comparison to many others due to the potential to create defining long term boundaries, subject to an appropriate buffer being retained between the wider Green Belt area and Redditch. Care will need to be taken to consider the separate identity of Tardebigge. Whilst areas of flood risk and the presence of two SWS's within the area are a concern it is considered that these matters can be satisfactorily addressed through the masterplanning process. Overall it is considered that due to accessibility and relatively limited Green Belt harm **the area is worthy of further consideration within the focussed site appraisal stage.**

Area 5

Area 5 is located to the north-western side of Redditch's urban area within the Parish of Tutnall and Cobley. It is adjacent to the existing Brockhill development in the vicinity of Appletree Lane/ Dairy Lane and Lily Green Lane. It is bounded by the Bromsgrove Highway (A448) to its south-western boundary and Brockhill Lane to the north and northeast. There are two named wooded areas within the site; Cladshill and Brockhill Wood. The Batchley Brook crosses the site from east to west.



Map of area 5

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains one SWS (Brockhill Wood), one SSSI (Hewell Park Lake) and two further SWS's (Butlers Hill Wood and Pitcher Oak Woods) and a Local Nature Reserve (Foxlydiat Wood) are located adjacent to the boundary of the area meaning that there are environmental constraints in this locality.
- There are also unnamed wooded areas around Hewell Grange to the north and Brockhill Wood to the northeast.
- Brockhill Wood itself offers a good recreational Green Infrastructure asset alongside other areas of community woodlands associated with the existing Brockhill estate and the Local Nature Reserve at Foxlydiat woods.
- Hewell Grange Grade II* Registered Park and Garden located to the north/north western boundary of Area 5.

2. Accessibility

- The area is 1.6km from Batchley First School and 1.6km from Millstream GP Surgery. There are various local retail facilities and community facilities available in Batchley District Centre approximately 2.6km from the area.
- Access to public transport is considered to be good. There are a range of bus services (142, 143, X3, 50, 51 & 52) within 400m of the area. The 142, 143, X3 services have hourly buses (Monday to Saturday) between Redditch and

Bromsgrove. Whilst the X3 offers an additional two journeys on Sunday. The 50 service provides hourly buses to Redditch, Monday to Saturday whilst the 52 offers hourly services to Redditch, Monday to Friday, off peak. The 51 bus route is a service running every 5-10 minutes to Redditch, Monday to Saturday and every 20 minutes on Sunday.

- In addition the area is just over 3km from Redditch train station.
- The area is just over 3km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The area is 2.7km from the nearest Industrial Estate at Enfield.
- The area is in close proximity to the A448 which provides good access to both Bromsgrove and Redditch.
- There are two footpaths crossing the area, one to the south east of Tack farm and the other in the vicinity of the Redditch/Bromsgrove boundary leading into the Brockhill estate.

3. Vitality and Viability

- The proximity of the area to Batchley District Centre means that potentially the vitality and viability of the local facilities at Batchley District Centre could be enhanced if development occurred. However the provision and location of additional retail within new development would need to make sure that there is no negative impact given its close proximity.
- Development on the western side of Redditch will lead to traffic flows towards Bromsgrove which may help to improve the vitality and viability of both Town Centres.

4. Flood Risk

- The area contains Batchley Brook and there are areas of flood risk associated with this watercourse, which has historically caused flooding problems down stream in Batchley.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- No unreasonable infrastructure costs above what would be expected for an area of this size is anticipated, as connectivity to the strategic highway network could be relatively simple to achieve in this location.

6. Green Belt

- Some limited impact on the strategic Green Belt gap between Redditch and Birmingham.
- Potential for strong Green Belt boundaries to be defined due to topography, woodland and positioning of existing roads.
- The area is undulating with the topography falling from a high point at Hewell Lane of 145m to 110m at Batchley Brook, it rises again towards the north of the area at Brockhill Lane where there are undulating ridges at 130m-140m. The valley of the area is therefore well contained for development so long as development is not peaking at the highest points on the south-western and northern boundaries.

7. Built Environment

- Part of the area falls within Hewell Grange Conservation Area and there are 16 listed buildings associated with Hewell Grange, however only two of these are within the area being analysed. There are concerns about development affecting the setting of the Hewell Grange Grade II* Registered Park and Garden and Conservation Area. Although the rural setting exists there are some intrusions already affecting the setting of this historic asset to some extent; development in this locality could therefore have an impact on the historic environment.
- The design of the existing development at Brockhill and the topography potentially leading to the prospect of a well contained development area means that the connection to Redditch's urban form would be good in this area.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities.
- Development on the western side of Redditch will lead to traffic flows towards Bromsgrove and would cause capacity pressures on the A38 and Bromsgrove Town Centre.

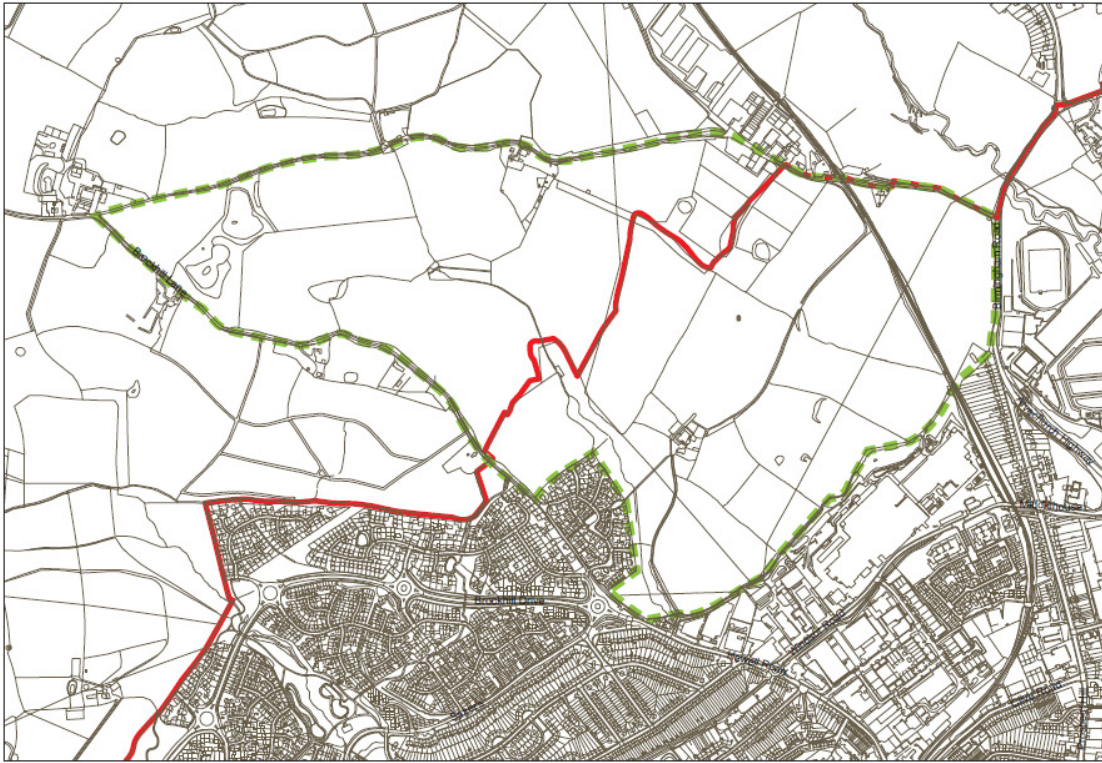
Summary

In summary the area has good access to public transport and a wide variety of services and facilities including the Town Centre and employment opportunities. There is potentially less reliance on the car from this area when compared to a number of other areas. The Green Belt harm is potentially less significant in this location in comparison to many others due to stronger visual containment and the potential to create defining long term boundaries, subject to an appropriate buffer being retained between Tardebigge and Redditch.

The most significant concern in area 5 is the impact on the historic environment in terms of the impact of development on the setting of historic assets namely Hewell Grange Conservation Area and the Grade II* Registered Historic Park and Garden. There are also concerns around areas of flood risk. It is considered that further work is required to assess whether appropriate mitigation measures can address these concerns. Therefore at this stage it is considered that **the area is worthy of further consideration within the detailed focussed site appraisal stage.**

Area 6

Area 6 is located to the north of Redditch's urban area, within the Parish of Tutnall and Cobley. The area is bounded by Weights Lane to the north and Brockhill Lane to the south west. The area's boundary extends along part of Hewell Road then cuts across the top of Enfield employment area to Birmingham Road (A441) which bounds the eastern part of the area. The Red Ditch runs through this area and Brockhill Wood and Butlers Hill Wood are in close proximity to the areas boundary.



Map of area 6

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SSSI's or SWS's although two SWS's (Butler's Hill Wood and Brockhill Wood) are located adjacent to the area. There would appear to be only limited environment constraints in this area.

2. Accessibility

- The area is 0.8km from Birchensale Middle School and 1.9km from Hollyoakes Field First School, however Batchley First School is also located only 2.2km away. Millstream Surgery is 2.2km from the area. There are retail facilities available in Batchley District Centre approximately 2km from the area.
- Access to public transport is considered to be good. The area is only 2km from Redditch train station and a range of bus services (50, 51, 52 and 145) are available within 1.2km. The 50 service offers hourly buses to Redditch, Monday to Saturday whilst the 52 services provides hourly buses to Redditch, Monday to Friday, off peak. The 51 offers a service every 5-10 minutes to Redditch, Monday to Saturday and every 20 minutes on Sunday. The 145 service offers 3 journeys to Bromsgrove, Monday to Saturday.
- The area is just 2km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail is available.
- There are good employment opportunities locally with Weights Lane Business Park adjacent to the area and Enfield Industrial Estate within 1.2km
- Proximity to the A441 provides good access to Bromsgrove and Redditch

3. Vitality and Viability

- The proximity to Batchley District Centre and Redditch Town Centre means that potentially the vitality and viability of the range of retail and community facilities could be enhanced if development occurred.

4. Flood Risk

- The Red Ditch flows through the area. There is only a very small part of the area to the south where there is a risk of flooding.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- No unreasonable infrastructure cost above what would be expected for an area of this size as connectivity to the strategic road network could be straightforward to achieve in this location.

6. Green Belt

- Only limited impact on the strategic Green Belt gap between Redditch and Birmingham.
- Potential for strong Green Belt boundaries to be defined due to the topography and location of Weights Lane and Brockhill Lane, development could be visually contained from the wider area.

7. Built Environment

- There are no statutorily protected historic assets within the area and it is therefore considered that there is unlikely to be any significant impact on the historic environment.

8. Highways

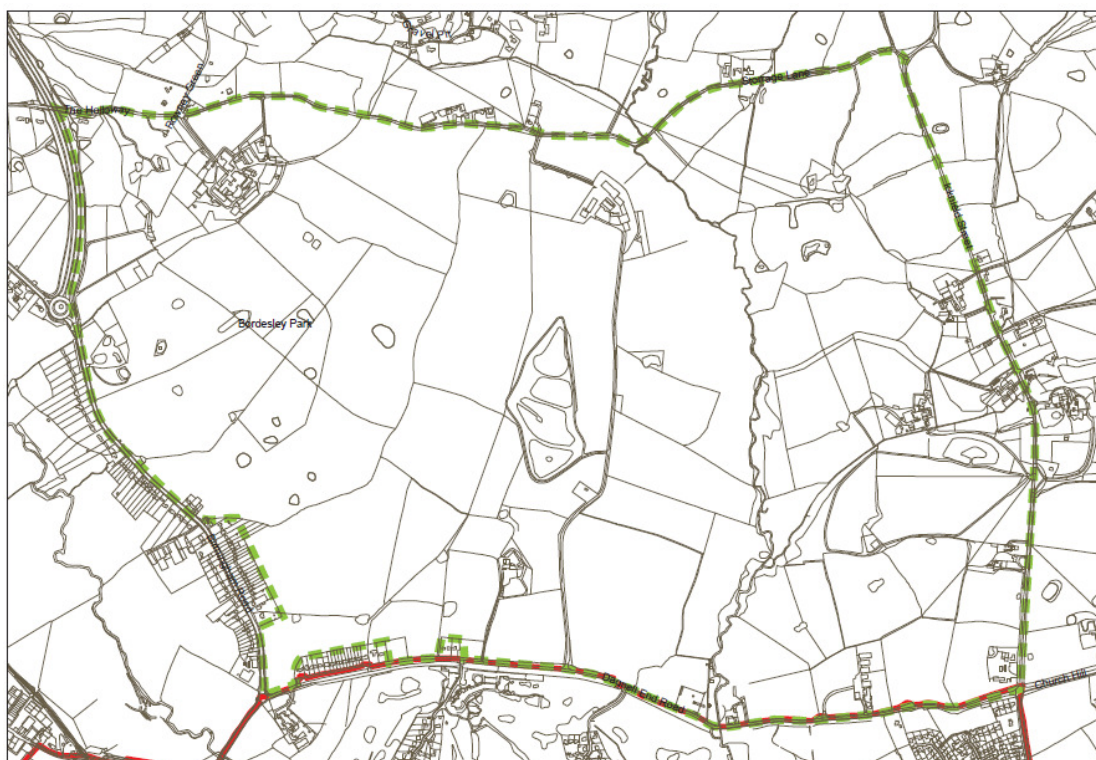
- Without significant improvements to sustainable travel modes, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities. Lying relatively close to the town centre there are opportunities to improve walking and cycling infrastructure to reduce the reliance on car based travel.

Summary

In summary the area has good access to public transport and to a wide variety of services and facilities including the Town Centre and employment opportunities. There is potentially less reliance on the car from this area when compared to a number of other areas. The Green Belt harm is potentially less significant in this location in comparison to many others due to stronger visual containment and the potential to create defining long term boundaries as well as the limited impact on the gap between Redditch and Birmingham. The area contains very few obvious constraints with no statutory environmental or historic designations and only a very small area of flood risk. Overall it is considered that due to the best accessibility and relatively limited Green Belt harm **the area is worthy of further consideration within the focussed site appraisal stage.**

Area 8

Area 8 is located to the north of Redditch's urban area within the two parishes of Alvechurch and Beoley. It is bounded by the Birmingham Road (A441) to the west, The Holloway/ Storage Lane to the north, Icknield Street to the east, and Dagnell End Road to the south. Dagnell Brook runs north to south.



Map of area 8

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains one SWS (Dagnell Brook) but is adjacent to three further SWS's (River Arrow, Abbey and Forge Mill Ponds and Papermill and Beoley Mill Ponds) and a SSSI (Dagnell End Meadow) and therefore development could have a harmful environmental impact.
- Development in this locality may harm green infrastructure networks between Arrow Valley Park and the wider countryside.

2. Accessibility

- The area is 3km from Beoley First School and 2.9km from the nearest GP surgery on Tanhouse Lane. Alvechurch local centre is approximately 4km and Church Hill Local Centre is 5.4km meaning that there are very few services and facilities within walking distance. This District Centre is undergoing regeneration and enhancement to these facilities and this is expected to significantly improve the local retail offer and the medical and primary care facility in the area.
- The nearest bus stop is available on the Birmingham Road and this is 1.7km from the centre of the area. The No.146 bus provides an hourly service

between Redditch and Birmingham whilst Nos182 and 183 offer two journeys, Monday to Friday. The Nos.517 and 519 services offer one journey, Monday to Saturday. Redditch train station is 4.3km from the area.

- The area is 5.1km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- There are good employment opportunities locally with Weights Lane Business Park 2.4km from the area and Enfield Industrial Estate within 3.8km
- Proximity to the A441 provides good access into Redditch by private car
- The area provides good access to Arrow Valley Park.

3. Vitality and Viability

- With Alvechurch and Church Hill District Centre being the nearest local retail and community facilities, development in this area could potentially have a positive impact on the vitality and viability these local facilities; however, this would only be marginal due to the distance.

4. Flood Risk

- The Dagnell Brook flows through the area as well as various tributaries to the brook. There are areas of flood risk adjacent to these watercourses.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- No unreasonable infrastructure costs have been identified above what would be expected for an area of this size unless the Bordesley By Pass is required to unlock development.
- If fully developed all required development could be contained within the single area, this could be a cost effective way of ensuring the delivery of the required infrastructure.

6. Green Belt

- Development could lead to coalescence with Rowney Green and Bordesley.
- There would be a significant reduction in the Green Belt gap to Alvechurch as well as the strategic gap with the West Midlands conurbation.
- Development is likely to be visually prominent when viewed from surrounding areas due to the topography and general openness of the area.

7. Built Environment

- There are seven listed buildings within the area meaning development could have a harmful impact on the historic environment.
- There would be a physical separation of the area from Redditch Town due to the location of the Arrow Valley Park, making it difficult to successfully integrate the area into Redditch's urban area.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, which is likely to require a new bespoke service, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities.

Summary

In summary the area is well positioned to access the Town Centre, employment opportunities and Arrow Valley Park although there would be a reliance on car based travel without significant improvements in public transport. There is potential Green Belt harm due to the prominence of the area and the impact on the settlements of Rowney Green and Alvechurch and the reduction in the strategic Green Belt with the West Midlands conurbation. Development could have a harmful impact on statutory environmental designations, protected historic assets and flood risk is also a concern. Although it is important to note that the area has the ability to deliver a significant proportion of development in this single location which could help to deliver all the required infrastructure . Whilst the area does have a number of constraints it will be important to determine whether these issues can be satisfactorily overcome through a more detailed consideration as the area does have some noteworthy strengths. **The area should therefore be considered within the focussed site appraisal stage.**

Area 9

The parcel is located to the north east of Redditch within the parish of Beoley, with the A435 providing the boundary to the east and Icknield Street to the west. Whitepits Lane provides the northern boundary to the area whilst Beoley Lane is the boundary to the south. There are some pockets of woodland at Brockhill Wood, Newlands Rough, Highpark Wood and Lion Wood. The area includes minor watercourses such as the Dagnell Brook crossing from the west of the area.



Map of area 9

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains four SWS's (Lion Wood, Carpenters Hill Wood and Prior Field Complex, Holt End Meadows and Branson's Cross Wood) and two further SWS's (Ravensbank Drive Bridle Track and Pinkgreen Wood) are located adjacent to the area. It is therefore considered that the development of the area could cause significant harm to the natural environment.

2. Accessibility

- Beoley First School is within the area on the southern boundary and 2.4km from the nearest GP surgery, which is Church Hill Medical Centre. Church Hill District Centre is 2.4km away providing reasonable access to local retail facilities and community facilities.
- The nearest bus stop is available on Church Hill which provides the southern boundary to the area. There are 4 services available (50A) hourly between Redditch and Birmingham, Monday to Saturday, (517, 519) one journey between Redditch and Solihull, Monday to Saturday and (X50) hourly to Birmingham, Monday to Saturday. Redditch train station is 6.1km from the area. The northern half of the area would not have access to public transport within a reasonable walking distance.
- The area is 5.1km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- There are good employment opportunities locally with Moons Moat and Ravensbank Industrial Estates 3.3km from the area.
- A number of footpaths cross the area particularly in the north western section of the area however there are no good quality footpaths leading to the Redditch urban area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- With Church Hill being the nearest District Centre development could potentially have a positive impact on the vitality and viability these local facilities. There could also be benefits for the limited range of services and facilities that are available in Beoley.

4. Flood Risk

- There are a number of ordinary watercourses flowing through the area but there are no known areas of flood risk.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the single track narrow lanes and also the need to gain access to the strategic highway network at the A435.

6. Green Belt

- Development could lead to coalescence with Beoley.
- Development on area 9 could greatly reduce the strategic Green Belt gap to Birmingham.
- The topography of the area varies. At the southwest of the area St Leonard's church sits atop of a mount rising to 140m from around 120-125m. The remainder of the area is fairly flat at around 125m.

7. Built Environment

- There are 11 listed buildings within the area and Beoley Conservation Area is also within the area meaning development could have a significant harmful impact on the historic environment.
- There would be a physical separation of the area from Redditch Town because of the steepness of the mount to the south of Beoley, making it difficult to successfully integrate potential development in the area into Redditch's urban form.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities

Summary

In summary the most accessible part of the area is adjacent to Beoley however this is also the most constrained part of the area. Development in this locality would mean that Beoley would merge into Redditch and cause significant harm to the setting of the conservation area and associated listed buildings. Developing the parts of the area furthest from Beoley would be unsustainable and would have implications for the strategic Green Belt gap between Redditch and Birmingham and there could also be implications for the natural environment due to the presence of SWSs. **It is therefore considered that area 9 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 10

The parcel is located to the north east of Redditch's urban area in the parish of Beoley, with the A435 providing the boundary to the east and Icknield Street to the west. Beoley Lane provides the northern most boundary to the area whilst the Coventry Highway is the boundary to the south. There are some pockets of woodland, including Cliffords Wood,

It is important to note that the area currently designated as the Ravensbank ADR is located within area 10. The ADR is designated within the Bromsgrove District Local Plan to provide a reserve of employment land to meet the needs of Redditch after that plan period. The principle of future development on this area was therefore tested at the public inquiry into the Local Plan. In addition, the area has been assessed within the Bromsgrove Council's Employment Land Review (ELR) and the area is still considered appropriate to meet the employment needs of Redditch. On this basis no further assessment of this particular parcel of the area is required within this document. The assessment of area 10 refers only to the land outside the ADR.



Map of area 10

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains two SWS's (Ravensbank Drive Bridle Track and Holt End Meadows) and a further two SWS's (Carpenters Hill Wood and Dagnell Brook) are located adjacent to the area. It is therefore considered that the development of the area could have a harmful environmental impact.

2. Accessibility

- Abbey Wood First School is 2.4km from the area and Church Hill Medical Centre is 2.7km from the area. Church Hill District Centre is 2.7km away providing reasonable access to local retail facilities and community facilities. This District Centre is undergoing regeneration and enhancement to these facilities is expected to significantly improve the local retail offer and the medical and primary care facility in the area.
- There are bus stops available adjacent to the area on both Church Hill and Ravensbank Drive where there are a total of five services (50A, 517, 519, X50 and 61) available. The 50A service provides hourly buses between Redditch and Birmingham, Monday to Saturday whilst the 517 and 519 provide one journey between Redditch and Solihull, Monday to Saturday. The X50 service provides hourly buses to Birmingham, Monday to Saturday and the 61 runs hourly to Redditch, Monday to Saturday. Redditch train station is 6.6km from the area. From the north eastern parts of the area is beyond a reasonable walking distance to access public transport.
- The area is approximately 6km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail is available.
- There a good employment opportunities locally with Ravensbank Industrial Estate within the area Moons Moat Industrial Estate adjacent.

3. Vitality and Viability

- With Church Hill being the nearest local centre development could potentially have a positive impact on the vitality and viability these local facilities. There could also be benefits for the limited range of services and facilities that are available in Beoley.

4. Flood Risk

- There are a number of ordinary watercourses flowing through the area but there are no known areas of flood risk.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the narrow lanes and also the need to gain access to the A435.

6. Green Belt

- Development could lead to coalescence with Beoley.

7. Built Environment

- There are nine listed buildings, a SAM (The Mount) and Beoley Conservation area within the area meaning development could have a significant harmful impact on the historic environment.
- It is questionable how suitable it would be to locate residential development adjacent to Moats Moon and Ravensbank Industrial Estates.

8. Highways

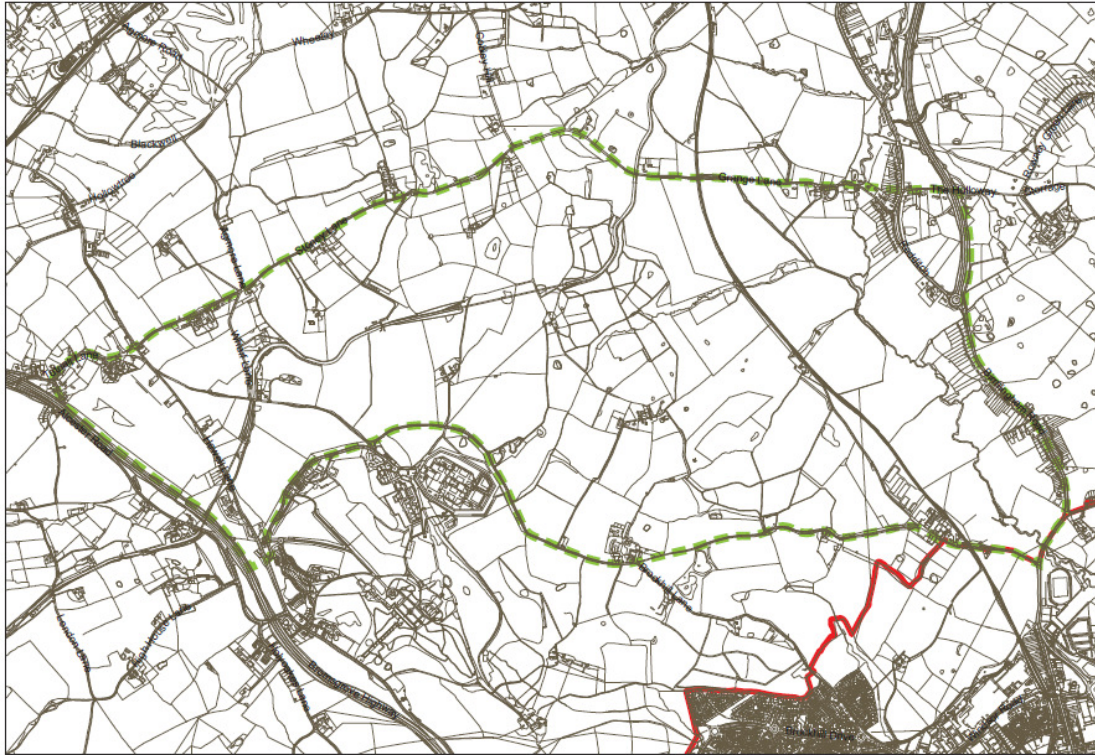
- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and some employment opportunities.

Summary

In summary the most accessible parts of the area is adjacent to Beoley and Ravensbank Drive however these are the most constrained parts of the area. Development in parts of this area would mean that Beoley would merge into Redditch and cause significant harm to the conservation area and associated listed buildings. Residential development at Ravensbank would be at odds with the industrial character of the area and would not provide an ideal setting for residential development. Whilst, developing the parts of the area furthest from these constrained areas would be unsustainable due to the distance to local facilities. **It is therefore considered that area 10 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 11

This is the largest individual area considered within the assessment and covers large swathes of land between the A448 and A441 at Bordesley and falls within the two parishes of Tutnall and Cobley and Alvechurch. The area extends as far north as Grange Lane and Stoney Lane whilst Weights Lane provides the boundary along the southern edge of the area. The River Arrow runs through the area in a north/south direction. The Worcestershire and Birmingham Canal runs through the area from the A448, along to Grange Lane. Butlers Hill Wood and Short Wood fall within the site.



Map of area 11

1. Green Infrastructure

- There would potentially be harm to the natural environment with the area containing four SWS's (River Arrow, Birmingham and Worcester Canal, Shortwood Rough Grounds and Butlers Hill Wood), areas of ancient woodland and is also adjacent to Hewell Grange Lake SSSI. These environmental assets are primarily located on the western part of the area.

2. Accessibility

- At the nearest point to Redditch the area is 1.7km from St. Stephens Church of England first school and 2.3km away from St. Stephens GP Surgery. Although from much of the area access to such facilities is considerably worse.
- There is an hourly bus service operating along the Birmingham Road through Bordesley (route 146) and an hourly service along Hewell Lane (route 143) however the majority of the area would not be within walking distance of a bus stop. The area is 3.5km from Redditch train station. Access to public transport is particularly poor from the northern and western parts of the area.

- At the nearest point to Redditch the area is within 3km of the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available. Although for much of the area those facilities are considerably further.
- There are reasonable, but limited employment opportunities locally with Weights Lane Business Park within the area and Enfield Industrial Estate 3.3km from the area.
- Proximity to the A441 and A448 provides good access to both Bromsgrove and Redditch.

3. Vitality and Viability

- The relative proximity to Batchley District Centre means that potentially the vitality and viability of local facilities could be enhanced if development occurred; however care would need to be taken not to impact on that Centre.

4. Flood Risk

- The River Arrow flows through the area. There are areas of flood risk associated with the watercourse.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- There are a number of narrow country lanes which would require significant upgrading to accommodate additional traffic flows. This could mean there may be significant infrastructure costs

6. Green Belt

- Development in the south east of the area could be well contained by existing features.
- Due to rising land levels development would be prominent on the remainder of the area and represent sprawl into the countryside.
- Large scale development is likely to cause coalescence with Tutnall and Tardebigge.
- Significant amounts of development would lead to a reduction in the Green Belt gap to both Bromsgrove and Alvechurch.

7. Built Environment

- Development of the full area would 'wrap round' Hewell Grange Conservation Area and the historic park and gardens on three sides. There are concerns that development would affect the setting of the south and south-western aspects of Hewell Grange Grade II* Registered Park and Garden so there could be similar issues with parts of area 11. Although the rural setting exists there are intrusions already affecting this historic asset; however further development in this locality is likely to have an impact on the historic environment.
- The Worcester and Birmingham Canal Conservation Area also runs through a large part of the area to the northwest. There would be issues with views out from these locations, especially the Registered Park and Garden. There are also a handful of Listed Buildings situated in the northwest of the site.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities from some parts of the site, whereas those areas closer to Redditch's urban area would not need so much investment.

Summary

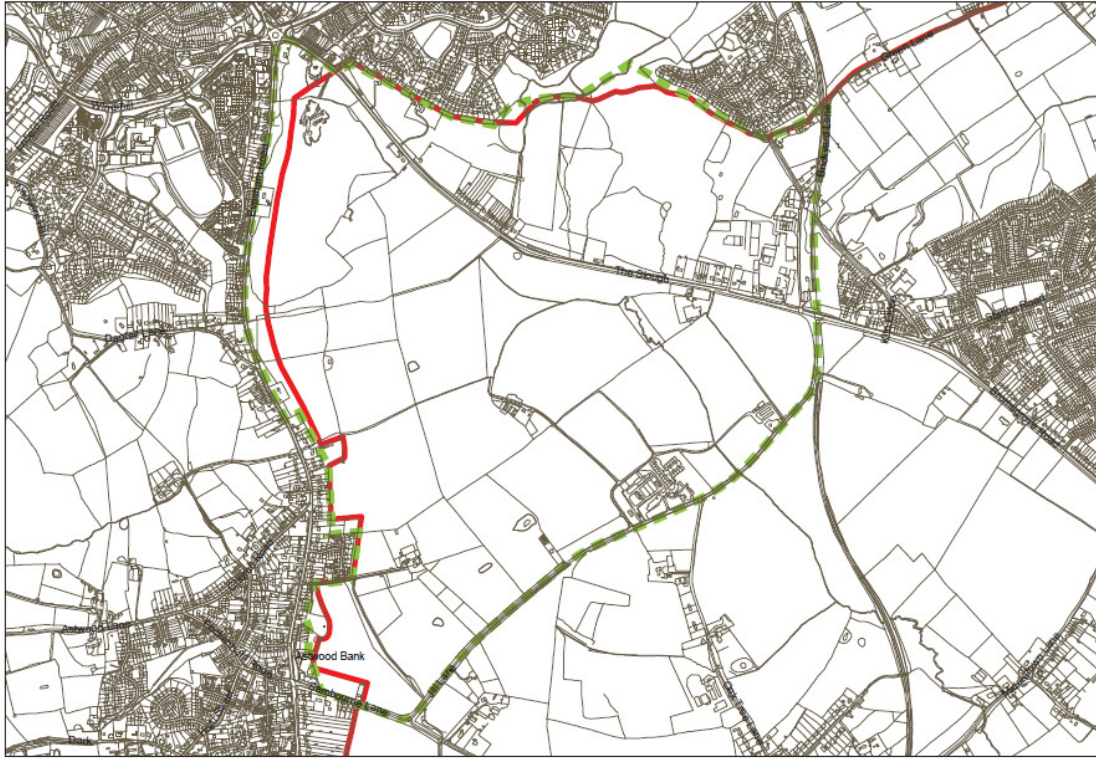
The extensive nature of the area makes the area difficult to appraise as a single entity but it is clear from an initial assessment that the land between the railway line and A441 and the parcel between Butlers Hill Wood and the railway line are worthy of further consideration within the focussed area appraisal due to this areas higher sustainability credentials and the potential for the creation of defensible Green Belt boundaries. The remainder of the area contains a significant number of environmental designations, could impact on the historic environment and would have poor access to Redditch Town Centre and many local facilities. **It is therefore considered that only the part of area 11 defined on the map below should be considered within the focussed site appraisal.**



Map of reduced area of Area 11 to be assessed within focussed appraisals

Area 12

This area is located to the south of Redditch with the northern boundary of the area located adjacent to built form of the town. The area is bound by the A441 to the west, the A448 and Green Lane to the east, the Redditch Borough boundary to the north with no physical features to define it, and Jill Lane to the south. The Cain Brook also flows along the east of the site.



Map of area 12

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains one SWS (New Coppice) and one SSSI (Rough Hill Wood and Wirehill Wood). These areas are also ancient woodland, as is The Moors. These woodlands extend to large swathes of the northern parts of this site. It is therefore considered that the development of the area could have a significant harmful impact on the natural environment.

2. Accessibility

- The nearest schools are Studley Community Infant School (2.4km) and Astwood Bank First School (3.1km). The nearest GP surgeries are also in Astwood Bank and Studley with the Ridgeway Surgery 3.5km from the area and Studley Health Centre 2.4km from the area. Local retail facilities and other community facilities are also available in both Studley and Astwood Bank District Centre.
- The nearest bus stops are available on both the A441 and A448. The most frequent service available is the 26 which passes through the area on the A448. This provides an hourly service between Redditch and Stratford, Monday to Saturday. Buses along the A441 include the 70 service every 40

minutes, Redditch to Astwood Bank, Monday to Saturday, the 158 service which is one journey to Wychbold, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, the 350 service which is every three hours to Worcester, Monday to Saturday and the R2 service which is one journey on Monday to Pershore. Redditch train station is approximately 4.8km from the area.

- The area is approximately 5km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The nearest employment opportunities locally are available at Park Farm and Washford Industrial Estates which are respectively 3.7km and 4.1km from the area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- Astwood Bank and Studley are both within close proximity to the area. Development could therefore have a positive impact on the vitality and viability of local facilities in Astwood Bank District Centre.

4. Flood Risk

- Some unnamed watercourses and the Cain Brook flow through the area but there are no identified areas of flood risk.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the narrow lanes and also the need to gain access to the strategic highway network at the A441.

6. Green Belt

- Development on the area is likely to coalesce with the settlements of Studley and Astwood Bank.
- Development is also likely to lead to a reduction in the Green Belt gap to the settlement of Sambourne.

7. Built Environment

- There are five listed buildings within the area meaning development could have an impact on the historic environment.

8. Highways

- Because of the distance to the urban area of Redditch, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities.

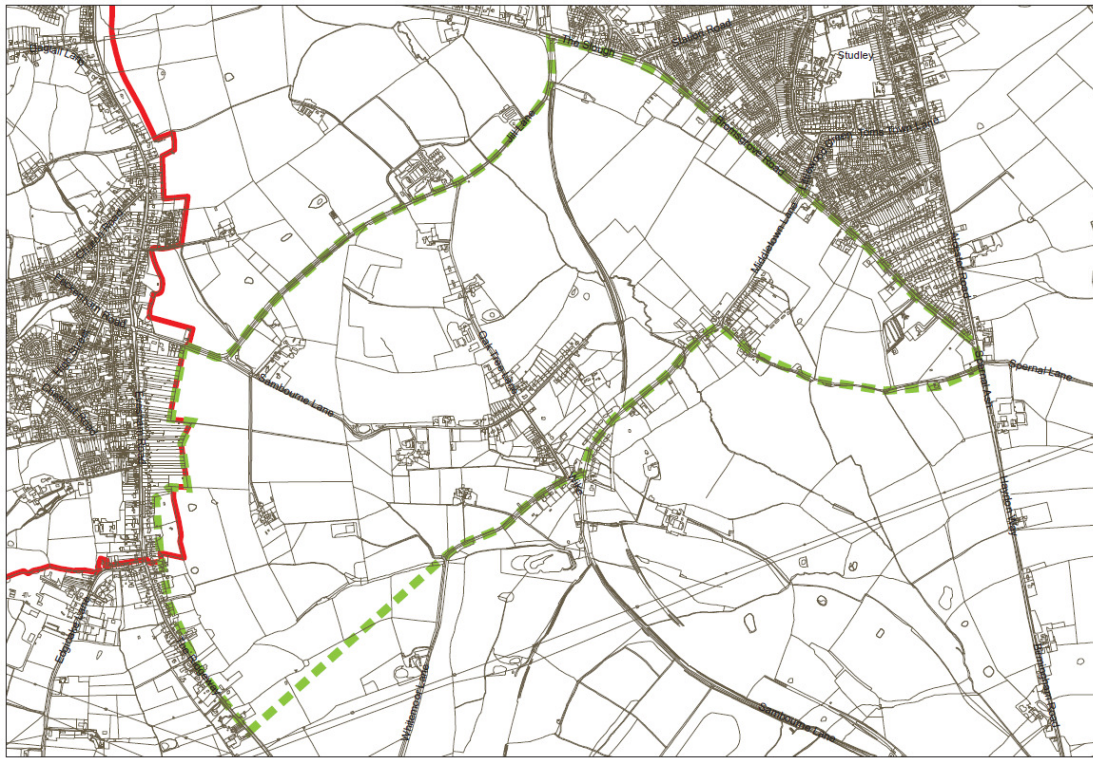
Summary

In summary the area has reasonable access to bus travel and a range of local services within Studley and Astwood Bank. However, the area is a significant distance from the Town Centre and therefore may fail to deliver economic benefits for the Town Centre. The fundamental issue with the area is the Green Belt function of the land with the potential for coalescence with Studley and Astwood Bank and the likely sprawl into the wider countryside. Development on this area is also likely to cause significant harm to the historic and natural environment due to the presence

of listed buildings, a SWS, woodlands and an adjacent SSSI. It has also been identified that development would require significant highway infrastructure. It is therefore considered that there are a number of fundamental issues which mean that **area 12 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 13

This area is located to the south of Redditch but does not directly adjoin the built form of the Redditch urban area. The area does contain the village of Astwood Bank to the west. The area is bound by the Jill Lane to the north, the A441 to the west and the A448 to the east. The boundary to the south comprises of Middletown Lane, Whitemoor Lane and hedgerows along Thundering Ditch. There are a number of watercourses including Cain Brook and also some small ponds throughout the area.



Map of area 13

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SSSI's but does contain two areas of unnamed ancient woodland. It is therefore considered that the development of the area could have a harmful environmental impact.

2. Accessibility

- The nearest schools are Studley Community Infant School (2.6km) and Astwood Bank First School (2.8km). The nearest GP surgeries are also in Astwood Bank and Studley with the Ridgeway Surgery 2.2km from the area and Studley Health Centre 2.6km from the area. Local retail facilities and

other community facilities are also available in both Studley and Astwood Bank approximately 2.5km from the area.

- The nearest bus stops are available on the A441 and A448. The most frequent service available is the 26 which provides an hourly service between Redditch and Stratford (Monday to Saturday). Redditch train station is approximately 6.8km from the area.
- The area is approximately 6.4km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The nearest employment opportunities locally are available at Park Farm and Washford Industrial Estates which are respectively 3.7km and 4km from the area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- Astwood Bank and Studley are both within close proximity to the area. Development could therefore have a positive impact on the vitality and viability of local facilities in Astwood Bank District Centre.

4. Flood Risk

- The Cain Brook flows through the area. There is some land associated with this watercourse that is at risk of flooding.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the narrow lanes and the need to improve and gain access to the A441 and A448.

6. Green Belt

- Development on the area is likely to lead to coalescence with the settlement of Studley and will lead to coalescence with Astwood Bank.
- Redditch Town would also potentially merge with the settlement of Sambourne.
- The topography of the area is characterised by low lying land to the east, which rises to the west. It rises sharply at the far western parts of the site where the ridgeway begins to overlook the wider area. The development would therefore be highly visible from the western parts of the site where Astwood Bank lies and would appear to sprawl into the wider countryside.

7. Built Environment

- There are 13 listed buildings within the area meaning development could have a significant impact on the historic environment.
- If developed in isolation the area would not be adjacent to the built form of Redditch Town and would appear as a new settlement that combines Astwood Bank, Studley and potentially Sambourne.

8. Highways

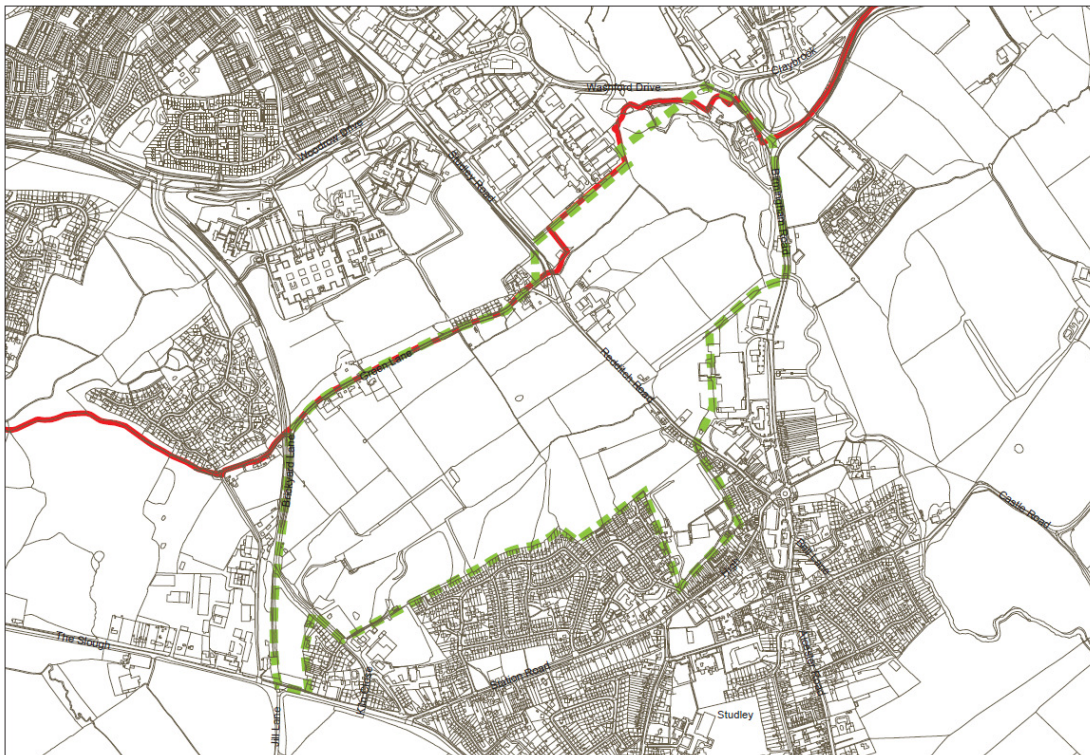
- Because of the distance to the urban area, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities.

Summary

In summary the area has reasonable access to bus travel and a range of local services within Studley and Astwood Bank. However, the area is a significant distance from the Town Centre and therefore may fail to deliver economic benefits for the Town Centre. The fundamental issue with the area is the Green Belt function of the land with the potential for the settlements of Studley, Astwood Bank and Sambourne to merge. Development on this area is also likely to cause significant harm to the historic environment and flood risk is also a concern. It has also been identified that development would require significant highway infrastructure. It is therefore considered that there are a number of fundamental issues which mean that **area 13 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 14

This area is located to the south of Redditch and would infill the land between the settlements of Redditch and Studley. The area is bound by Green Lane to the north and west, Station Road and the Slough to the south and the Birmingham Road to the east. The River Arrow passes through the north eastern corner of the site and there are a number of unnamed watercourses throughout the site.



Map of area 14

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SSSI's but the River Arrow SWS does flow through the area. It is therefore considered that the development of the area could have a harmful environmental impact.

- A public footpath runs north to south through the site. Development is likely to lead to the loss of MM Golf Centre and a number of sports pitches which provide opportunities for outdoor recreation.

2. Accessibility

- The nearest educational establishment is Studley Community Infant School which is 0.8km from the area. The area would also be reliant on Studley for health care provision with the nearest GP surgery 0.8km from the area (Studley Heath Centre). Local retail facilities and other community facilities are also available in Studley. These facilities would all be within a reasonable walking distance.
- Bus services are available on the Redditch Road that dissects the area. The 26 provides an hourly service to Stratford, Monday to Saturday, the 143 is hourly between Redditch and Studley, Monday to Saturday, the 247 is hourly to Evesham, Monday to Saturday and the 248 service is two hourly to Evesham on Sunday. Redditch train station is approximately 6.2km from the area.
- The area is approximately 6.7km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail is available.
- The nearest employment opportunities locally are available at Park Farm and Washford Industrial Estates which are respectively 1.4km and 1.7km from the area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- With many local facilities being available in Studley it is not considered that development is likely to have a noticeable impact on any District Centres in Redditch Town.

4. Flood Risk

- The River Arrow flows through the area. There is significant amount of land associated with this water course that is at risk of flooding.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the need to gain access to the A435 or back into the road network within Redditch.

6. Green Belt

- Development on the area would result in the loss of the Green Belt gap between Studley and Redditch meaning that the settlements would merge.
- The topography of the site slopes from 60m at the River Arrow in the east up to 100m at the west of the site, and continues to rise to the west of the site to Rough Hill Wood. Development would be well contained on most sides by either built form or main roads meaning that there is unlikely to be sprawl into the wider countryside unless overlooked when viewed from Rough Hill Wood to the west.

7. Built Environment

- There are two listed buildings within the area and a further listed building adjacent to the area meaning development could have an impact on the historic environment.

8. Highways

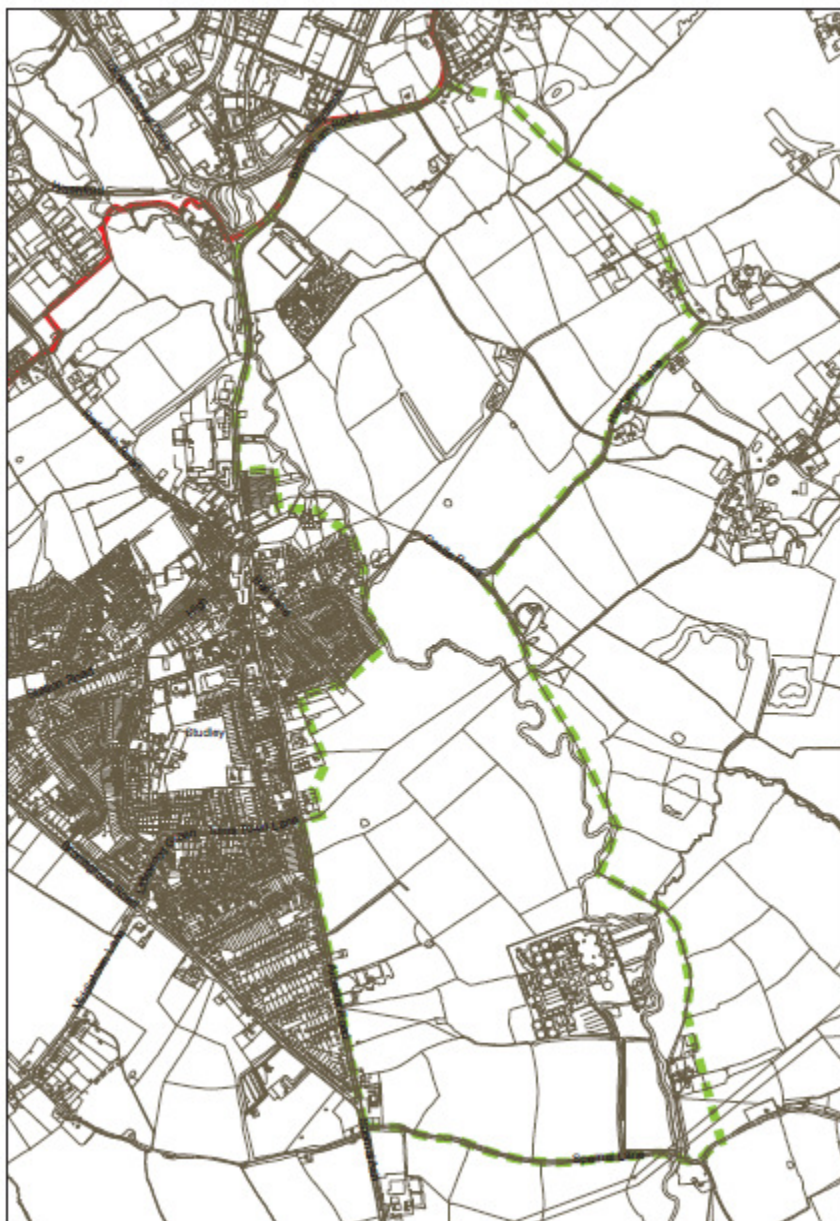
- Given the distances from Redditch based facilities, there is likely to be a reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities but better access to facilities within Studley.

Summary

In summary the area has good access to bus travel and a range of local services within Studley. However, the area is a significant distance from the Town Centre and many facilities in Redditch highlighting the reliance on Studley for infrastructure provision. Development in this location is therefore unlikely to deliver economic benefits for Redditch Town or any District Centres. Whilst the area is fairly well contained the area has the important Green Belt function of preventing the settlements of Studley and Redditch from merging. Development would lead to the loss of important sports facilities and large parts of the land are also at risk of flooding. Whilst the area performs well in relation to local facilities in Studley, this is outweighed by the significant Green Belt and environmental implications. **It is therefore considered that area 14 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 15

This area is located to the south east of Redditch but does not directly adjoin the built form of the Redditch urban area. The area does adjoin the built form of the village of Studley and includes existing development to the east of the A435. The area is bound by the A435 to the north and west and Sernal Lane to the south. Field boundaries along the national trail public footpath primarily provide the boundary treatment on eastern edge of the area. The River Arrow is a significant watercourse flowing north to south through the area.



Map of area 15

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SSSI's or any other statutory environmental designations. There is potential for species and habitats associated with the River Arrow SWS; however it is considered that with the exception of the air quality issues in this area (discussed below) the development of the area is unlikely to have a harmful environmental impact that cannot be mitigated against.

2. Accessibility

- The nearest educational establishment is Studley Community Infant School which is 1km from the area. The area would also be reliant on Studley for health care provision with the nearest GP surgery 1km from the area (Studley Heath Centre). Local retail facilities are also available in Studley.
- The nearest bus stop is 600m from the area. This on the Alcester Road in Studley where four services (26,143, 247, 248) are available. The 26 service

provides hourly buses to Stratford, Monday to Saturday whilst the 143 service is hourly between Redditch and Studley, Monday to Saturday. The 247 service is hourly to Evesham, Monday to Saturday and the 248 provides a two hourly service to Evesham on Sunday. Redditch train station is approximately 7.8km from the area. Access to bus travel is good although the area is a significant distance from the train station.

- The area is approximately 7km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The nearest employment opportunities locally are available at Park Farm and Washford Industrial Estates which are respectively 2.2km and 1.9km from the area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- With many local facilities being available in Studley it is not considered that development is likely to have a noticeable impact on any District Centres in Redditch Town but could improve the viability of services within Studley.

4. Flood Risk

- The River Arrow flows through the area. There is significant amount of land associated with this water course that is at risk of flooding.
- Sernal sewerage works is a large facility within the southern parts of the site where a significant amount of waste water is treated.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the narrow lanes and also the need to gain access to the A435 which is a single carriageway at this point. There would be consequential impacts to the adjacent air quality management area in Studley.

6. Green Belt

- Development on the area will lead to coalescence with the settlement of Studley as some of the village is within the areas boundaries.
- The topography of the site is fairly low lying in the floodplain, therefore development could lead to sprawl into the wider countryside due to the topography and a lack of obvious defining boundaries on the eastern parts of the site.

7. Built Environment

- There are 14 listed buildings and a SAM within the area meaning development could have a significant impact on the historic environment.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities

Summary

In summary the area has good access to bus travel and a range of local services within Studley. However, the area is a significant distance from the Town Centre and many facilities in Redditch highlighting the reliance on Studley for infrastructure provision. Development in this location is therefore unlikely to deliver economic benefits for Redditch Town or any District Centres. The Green Belt also has a number of important functions in the locality as it prevents the merging of settlements and sprawl into the wider countryside. Development on this area is also likely to cause significant harm to the historic environment and flood risk is also a major concern. Whilst the area has good sustainability credentials in relation to Studley, this benefit is outweighed by the range of other concerns highlighted and **therefore area 15 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 16

This area is located to the south east of Redditch but does not directly adjoin the built form of the Redditch urban area. The area is bound by Hardwick Lane to the west, Sernal Lane to the south and extends as far east as an unnamed track that is situated adjacent to Clouse Wood and Morgrove Coppice. Field boundaries primarily provide the boundary treatment on northern edge of the area.



Map of area 16

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SSSI's but contains three areas of ancient woodland (The Alders). There is a SSSI adjacent to the area, known as Bannam's Wood. A number of other wooded areas are located around the site including Mars Hill and Studley Thorns. Many large and small ponds are dispersed around the area. It is therefore considered that the development of the area could have a harmful environmental impact.

2. Accessibility

- The nearest educational establishment is Studley Community Infant School which is 3.1km from the area. The area would also be reliant on Studley for health care provision with the nearest GP surgery 3.1km from the area (Studley Heath Centre). Local retail facilities are also available in Studley.

- The nearest bus stop is 2.6km from the area. This on the Alcester Road in Studley where four services are available. The 26 service provides hourly buses to Stratford, Monday to Saturday whilst the 143 service is hourly between Redditch and Studley, Monday to Saturday. The 247 service is hourly to Evesham, Monday to Saturday and the 248 provides a two hourly service to Evesham on Sunday. Redditch train station is approximately 9km from the area. It is quite clear that access to public transport is beyond a reasonable walking distance.
- The area is approximately 8.5km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available is available.
- The nearest employment opportunities locally are available at Park Farm and Washford Industrial Estates which are respectively 4.6km and 3.9km from the area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- With many local facilities being available in Studley is not considered that development is likely to have a noticeable impact on any local centres in Redditch Town, but may be beneficial to support facilities within Studley.

4. Flood Risk

- There is a watercourse (River Arrow) adjacent to the site and another watercourse flowing through the area therefore there is a notable area of flood risk associated with the area.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the narrow lanes and also the need to gain access to the strategic highway network at the A435 which is a single carriageway at this point. There would be consequential impacts to the nearby air quality management area in Studley.

6. Green Belt

- Development on the area is likely to reduce the Green Belt gap to the settlement of Studley.
- The topography is characterised by mostly gently slopes in low lying areas to the floodplain. There is one steeper area to the north of the area at Mars Hill. Development could therefore lead to sprawl into the wider countryside due to the topography and a lack of obvious defining boundaries in the vicinity of the floodplain and to the south and east of the area.

7. Built Environment

- There are 12 listed buildings and two SAMs within the area meaning development could have a significant impact on the historic environment.
- If developed in isolation the area would not be adjacent to the built form of Redditch Town and would appear as a new settlement.

8. Highways

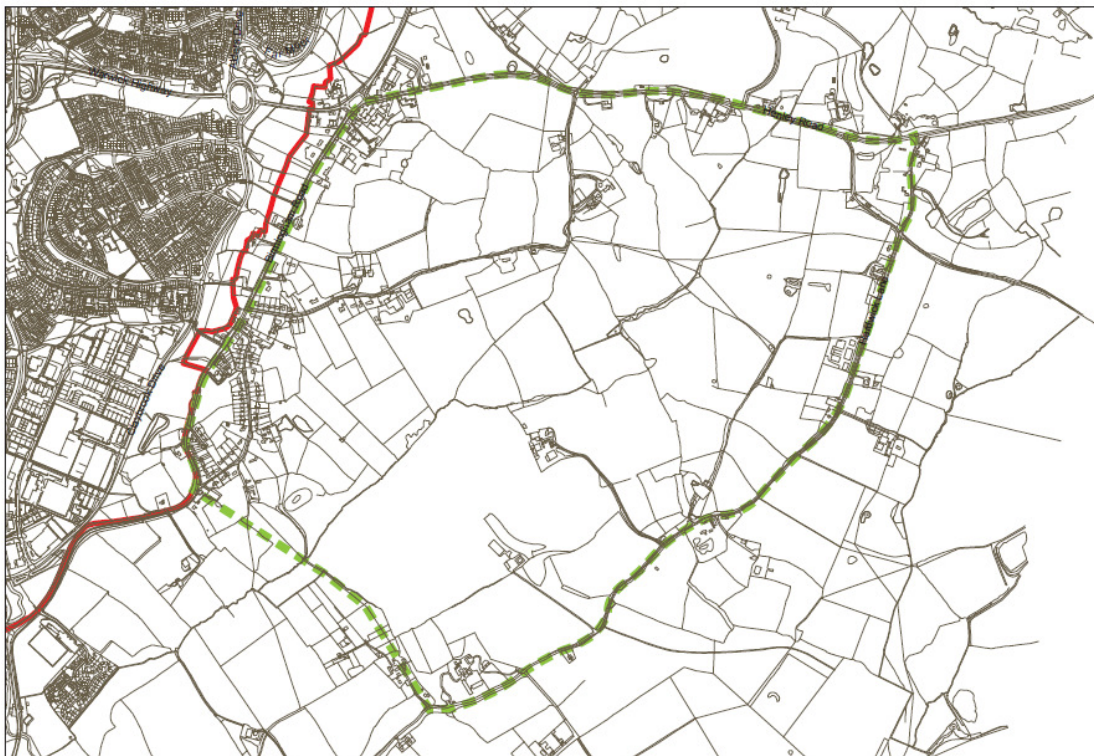
- The distance to public transport options and many services and facilities means that there is likely to be a reliance of car based travel.

Summary

In summary the area has some significant negative impacts, such as poor access to public transport, many services and facilities within Redditch, although facilities are somewhat closer at Studley, and is also a significant distance from the Town Centre. Development in this location is likely to rely on facilities available in Studley and is therefore unlikely to deliver economic benefits for Redditch Town or any District Centres. There are significant flood risk issues within this area, making large parts un-useable. It is highly likely that development in this locality would be hugely dependant on the car. The Green Belt also has a number of important functions in the locality as it prevents the merging of settlements and sprawl into the wider countryside. Development on this area in isolation would also appear as a new settlement and not integrate into Redditch and is also likely to cause significant harm to the historic environment due to the presence of a large number of listed buildings and scheduled ancient monuments. **With no obvious benefits it is clear that area 16 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 17

Area 17 is located to the east of Redditch but for the most part does not directly adjoin the built form of the Redditch urban area. The area is bound by the A435 to the west, Henley Road (A4189) to the north and extends as far east as Hardwick Lane. Field boundaries adjacent to a public footpath primarily provide the boundary treatment on southern edge of the area.



1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SSSI's but contains one area of ancient woodland (Cranhills Wood). A number of small ponds exist throughout the area which could offer important habitats or hold protected species. It is therefore considered that the development of the area could have a harmful environmental impact.

2. Accessibility

- Mappleborough Green Church of England First School is located within 1.1km of the area. Beyond this the nearest First School is Tenacres which is 2.8km from the area. Winyates Medical Centre is 3.5km from the area. Winyates and Matchborough District Centres are both 3.5km away providing access to local retail and community facilities. There are no retail facilities or a local centre within Mappleborough Green.
- The nearest bus stop is 2.1km from the area. The 61 service provide hourly buses to Redditch Town Centre. Redditch train station is approximately 9km from the area. It is quite clear that access to public transport is beyond a reasonable walking distance.
- The area is 9.2km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The nearest employment opportunities locally are available at Park Farm and Washford Industrial Estates which are respectively 3.5km and 3km from the area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- With Matchborough and Winyates being the nearest District Centres development could potentially have a positive impact on the vitality and viability these local facilities.

4. Flood Risk

- There are a number of ordinary watercourses flowing through the area but there are no known areas of flood risk.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the narrow lanes and also the need to gain access to the strategic highway network at the A435 which is a single carriageway at this point. There would be consequential impacts to the nearby air quality management area in Studley.

6. Green Belt

- Development on the area is likely to lead to the loss of the narrow Green Belt gap between Redditch and Mappleborough Green with the small settlement being engulfed by the town.
- The topography of the area is characterised by a gently sloping site generally from north to south, but with some higher land on the north eastern boundary. This could therefore contain the development from sprawl into the wider countryside.

7. Built Environment

- There are three listed buildings within the area meaning development could have an impact on the historic environment.

8. Highways

- The significant distance to public transport options and many services and facilities means that there is likely to be a reliance of car based travel.

Summary

In summary whilst the area could be contained to the east, the area has a number of negative impacts such as poor access to public transport, many services and facilities and is also a significant distance from the Town Centre. It is highly likely that development in this locality would be hugely dependant on the car. In this locality the Green Belt serves the important function of separating Matchborough Green and Redditch therefore development is likely to mean that these settlements will merge. In addition development in this locality is likely to require significant investment in highway infrastructure and therefore **with significant negative impacts it is clear that area 17 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 19

Area 19 is located to the east of Redditch but for the most part does not directly adjoin the built form of the Redditch urban area. The area is bound by the A435 to the west, Henley Road (A4189) to the south and extends as far north as Ullenhall Lane. The eastern boundary loosely follows a public footpath along field boundaries from Outhill to Oldberrow Hill. Numerous ponds and a small reservoir are located throughout the area.



Map of area 19

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SSSI's but contains two areas of ancient woodland (Grove Wood and Conduit Coppice). It is therefore considered that the development of the area could have a harmful environmental impact.

2. Accessibility

- Mappleborough Green Church of England First School is located within the area. Beyond this the nearest First School is Tenacres which is 3.6km from the area. Winyates Medical Centre is 4km from the area. Winyates District Centre is 4km away providing access to local retail and community facilities.
- The nearest bus stop is 2.7km from the area. The 61 service provides hourly buses to Redditch Town Centre. Redditch train station is approximately 9km from the area. It is quite clear that access to public transport is beyond a reasonable walking distance.
- The area is approximately 9km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The nearest employment opportunities locally are available at Moons Moat and Washford Industrial Estates which are respectively 5.2km and 4.1km from the area.

3. Vitality and Viability

- There are no District Centres within the vicinity of the area and therefore development on this area is unlikely to have a significant impact on the vitality or viability of any centres.

4. Flood Risk

- There are a number of ordinary watercourses flowing through the area which are tributaries of the River Alne, but there are no known areas of flood risk.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the narrow lanes and also the need to gain access to the strategic highway network at the A435.

6. Green Belt

- Development on the area would significantly reduce the Green Belt gap between Redditch and both Tanworth in Arden and Henley in Arden and would physically merge with parts of Mappleborough Green.
- The topography is characterised by very steep land up to Gorcott Hill in the north western corner of the area, sloping down to Mappleborough Green in the south western part of the area. Due to the topography of the area development could be particularly harmful in this Green Belt location.
- There is a lack of defining boundaries through the area, particularly to the east of the site creating the potential for sprawl in the wider countryside.

7. Built Environment

- There are nine listed buildings within the area meaning development could have a significant impact on the historic environment.
- If developed in isolation the area would not be adjacent to the built form of Redditch Town and would appear as a new settlement.

8. Highways

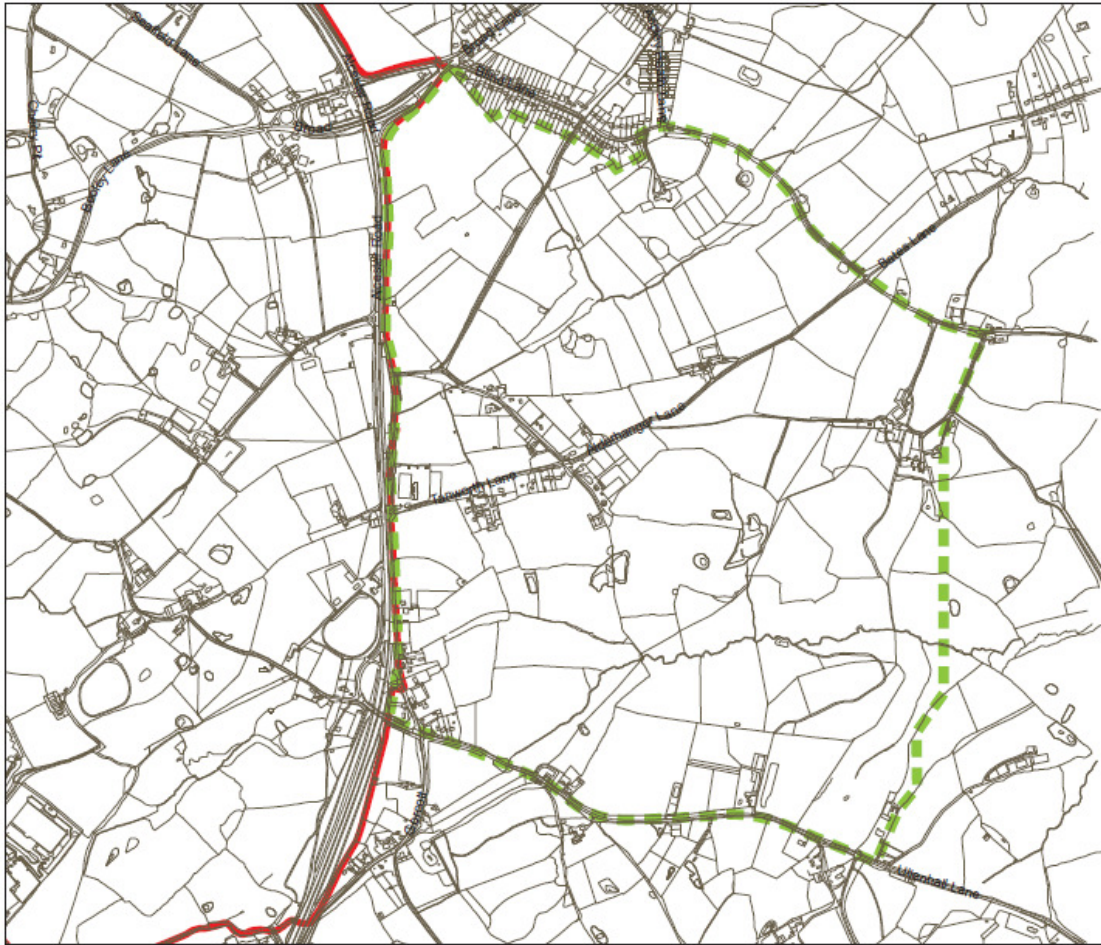
- The distance to public transport options and many services and facilities means that there is likely to be a reliance of car based travel.
- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities

Summary

In summary the area has a number of negative impacts such as poor access to public transport, many services and facilities and is also a significant distance from the Town Centre. It is highly likely that development in this locality would be hugely dependant on the car. The Green Belt also has a number of important functions as it prevents the merging of settlements and sprawl into the wider countryside. Development on this area in isolation would also appear a new settlement and not integrate into the built form of Redditch Town. **With no obvious benefits it is clear that area 19 should be discounted at this stage.**

Area 20

This area is located to the east of Redditch but for the most part does not directly adjoin the built form of the Redditch urban area. The area is bounded by the A435 to the west, Forde Hall Lane to the north east leading to an eastern boundary along field boundaries at Trap Green, Ullenhall Lane to the south and extends as far north as Broad Lane.



Map of area 20

1. Green Infrastructure

- The area contains no SSSI's but contains two areas of ancient woodland (Round Wood and Alderhanger Wood). It is therefore considered that the development of the area could have a harmful environmental impact.

2. Accessibility

- Abbey Wood First School is 6.5km from the area and Church Hill Medical Centre is 6.4km from the area. Church Hill District Centre is 6.4km away providing poor access to local retail and community facilities.
- There are bus stops available within 1.9km of the area. The 50A and X50 services provide hourly buses to Redditch Town Centre. Redditch train station is approximately 10km from the area. It is quite clear that access to public transport is beyond a reasonable walking distance.
- The area is approximately 10km from the Town Centre and the Kingfisher Centre where a wide variety of retail, business, health and leisure opportunities are available.
- The nearest employment opportunities locally are available at Ravensbank and Moons Moat Industrial Estates which are 6.7km from the area.
- There is a public footpath in the south eastern part of the site as well as a bridleway to the north of the area however accessibility to destinations is limited.

3. Vitality and Viability

- There are no District Centres within the vicinity of the area and therefore development on this area is unlikely to have a significant impact on the vitality or viability of any centres.

4. Flood Risk

- There are a number of ordinary watercourses flowing through the area but there are no known areas of flood risk.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

- Significant improvement to highway infrastructure would be required due to the nature of many of the narrow lanes and also the need to gain access to the strategic highway network at the A435.

6. Green Belt

- Development on the area would significantly reduce the Green Belt gap between Redditch and both Tanworth in Arden and Henley in Arden.
- The topography is characterised by sloping land to the south in a high and prominent location (160m-165m) and more gentle slopes to the north. Due to the topography of the area development could be particularly harmful in this Green Belt location because of its prominence.
- There are a lack of defining boundaries through the area, particularly to the east, thus creating the potential for sprawl in the wider countryside.

7. Built Environment

- There are two listed buildings within the area meaning development could have some impact on the historic environment.
- If developed in isolation the area would not be located adjacent to the built form of Redditch Town and the size of the A435 would act as a constraining physical barrier between the urban area and area 20, and it would appear as a new settlement.

8. Highways

- Without significant improvements to the public transport network, there is likely to be a heavy reliance on car based travel to access the Town Centre and employment opportunities

Summary

In summary the area has poor access to public transport, many services and facilities and is also a significant distance from the Town Centre. It is highly likely that development in this locality would be hugely dependant on the car. The Green Belt also has a number of important functions as it prevents the merging of settlements and sprawl into the wider countryside. Development on this area in isolation would also appear a new settlement and not integrate into the built form of Redditch Town. **With no obvious benefits it is clear that area 20 should be discounted at this stage.**

Conclusion

In summary, an appraisal of all the chosen areas, apart from those originally excluded (areas 3a, 7 and 18), has been carried out. Following the broad area appraisal it has been concluded that areas 1, 2, 3, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 & 20 should be discounted for a wide variety of reasons which realistically cannot be overcome. This therefore leaves areas, 4, 5, 6, 8 and part of area 11 which are given more detailed consideration through a more focused site appraisal stage in the following chapter.

6. Focussed Area Appraisals

This chapter will examine in more detail the broad areas identified in the previous chapter (ie areas, 4, 5, 6, 8 and part of area 11) which were not discounted. By using the area assessment principles (as detailed in chapter 4) and further evidence, wherever possible a defensible Green Belt boundary will be identified within each area and the most appropriate area where development could take place to accommodate the growth of Redditch.

Area 4

Area Description

Area 4 is located to the north western side of Redditch within the Parish of Bentley Paucefoot. The Bromsgrove Highway, A448, borders the north eastern edge of the area. A number of roads bound the area including Holyoakes Lane, Copyholt Lane and Banks Green to the west, Angel Street and Pumphouse Lane to the south. Gypsy Lane and Cur Lane bisect the area NW to SE. Spring Brook and Swans Brook also run through the area. There are three named wooded areas within the area; Hennals Wood, Bartles Wood and Cocksian Covert.

The area contains farming land which is mainly arable but includes some livestock; there are also wooded field boundaries and copses. There are a small number of dwellings, farmhouses and agricultural units situated throughout the area.



1. Green Infrastructure

Landscape and topography

The northern part of the area, north of Cur Lane, contains undulating countryside, with a few ridgelines (from approximately 120 to 150 metres at its highest point), perpendicular to the A448. The southern part of the area slopes downwards from Webheath to Spring Brook (from approximately 130 metres to 110 metres) before rising in height gradually to Copyholt Lane and Holyoakes Lane (up to 130-140 metres). The topography is gentler than the area to the north of Cur Lane.

Photo 4A (left): View westwards along A448 towards Bromsgrove showing undulating topography.

Photo 16 (right): View eastwards showing highest ridge in Area 4 with A448 running parallel to the left of photo.

Photo 54A (left): View towards Spring Brook with land sloping downwards.

Photo 46B (right): Land rising gradually, over larger area of land, towards Cur Lane.

Area 4 is situated within a Principled Timbered Farmlands landscape type⁶ and is located within a medium to high landscape sensitivity risk⁷. This level of risk is considered similar for the other areas subject to this focussed appraisal therefore, although a constraint, sensitive design will be required to mitigate impact to the landscape.

Whilst it is preferable for development to occur in areas of low sensitivity all of the land around the periphery of Redditch is of medium or high sensitivity and therefore the medium sensitivity of this area is not an undue constraint that weighs against the choice of this particular area.

Statutory environmental designations

The area contains no SSSI's but two Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) see figure X: Swans Brook is part of a SWS (SO95/09) with a number of other smaller watercourses which flow south and west before draining via Bow Brook into the River Avon at Defford. Though the brooks vary in quality along their length they are predominantly rich in both aquatic and emergent vegetation. In places the brooks flow through woodland or associated marshland, for the most part though, they flow through open agricultural land and form an important wildlife corridor through this part of the east Worcestershire Plain.

Callow Farm Meadow SWS (SP06/01), classified as grassland habitat, is located just to the north of Callow Farm near Upper Bentley. The area comprises three field parcels with a pond at the south-west corner. They are ridge and furrow meadows with the furrows running along a north-south alignment but there are transverse ridges running east-west across the northern end of the area.

Brotherton's Wood SWS (SO96/28), classed as Broadleaved woodland habitat, and Bentley House Pasture and Marsh SWS (SO96/36) at Banks Green, classed as grassland and marsh, lie adjacent to the western boundary of the area. Any development would be required to mitigate impact to these designated assets.

⁶ classified from the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment

⁷ The Landscape Sensitivity Map is produced by Worcestershire County Council and is re-produced in the Bromsgrove Green Infrastructure Baseline Report p23
<http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/cms/pdf/GI%20Baseline%20Report%20Compressed.pdf>.

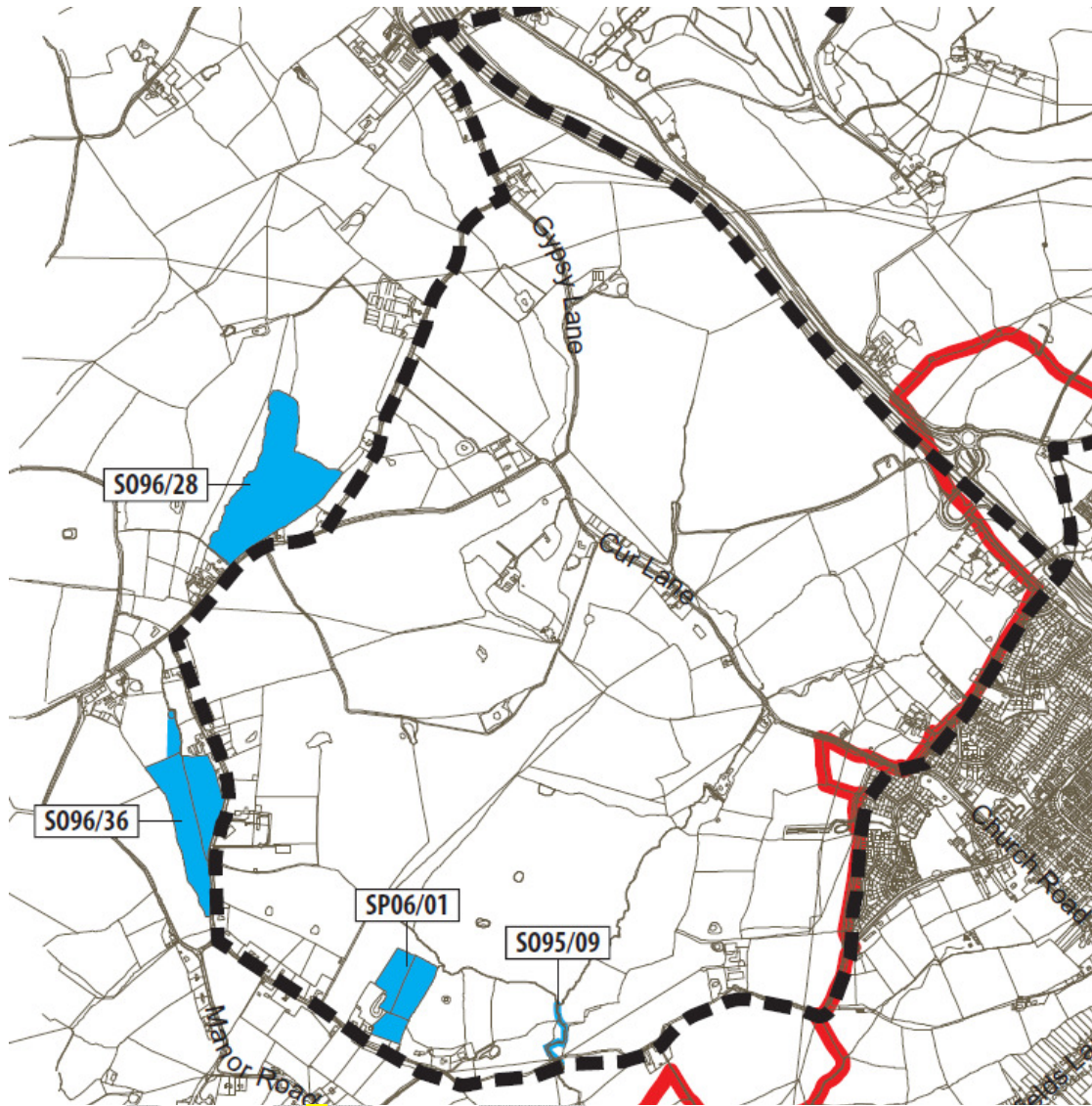


Figure X: Special Wildlife Sites relating to Area 4.

Habitats⁸

There are a number of different habitats within Area 4, in addition to the SWS's. The main habitat is "arable farmland" with several fields of "probably improved grassland" and some "possibly unimproved grassland". There is a small amount of "broadleaved woodland" and "mixed yew woodland" particularly along watercourses. It should also be noted that Foxlydiate Wood Local Nature Reserve is situated to the north east of Area 4 over the A448. The following species recorded within the area are protected and development should thus mitigate impact to these species: Bats, grass snake, great crested newts and badgers. It is considered that development of the scale required would be need to develop on some grassland habitats but should be done sensitively.

Trees and woodlands

⁸ Source: Worcestershire Habitat Inventory by Worcestershire County Council

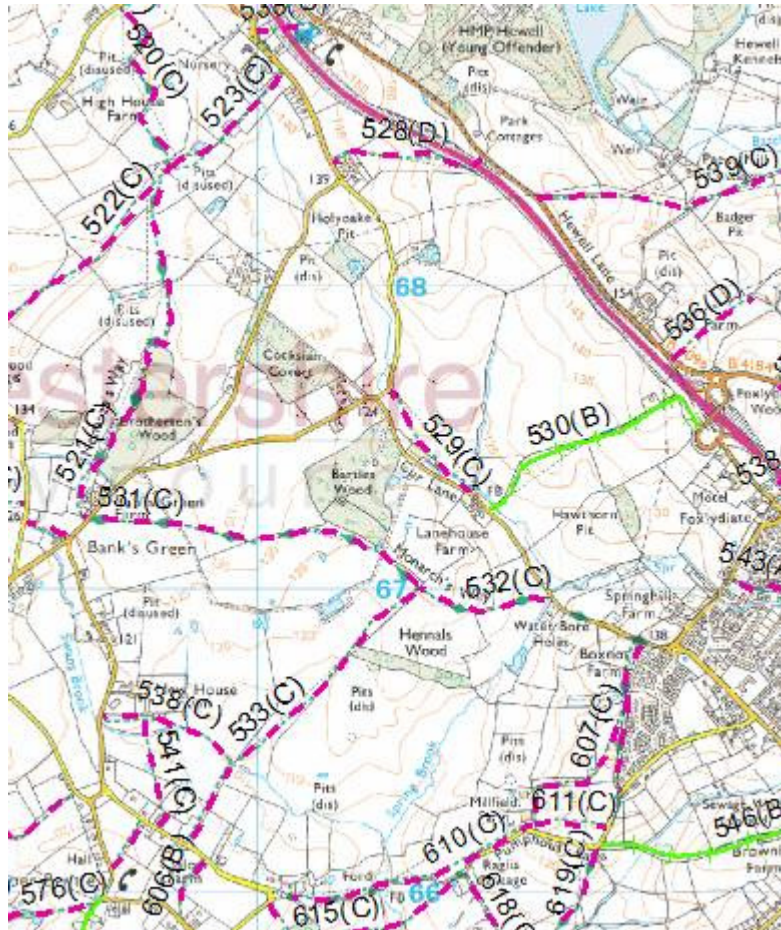
There are a number of trees, mature hedgerows and wooded areas within the area, including Bartles and Hennals Woods and Cocksian Covert which are Ancient and Semi natural woodland. These assets should be preserved and enhanced as part of the green infrastructure provision within any new development, thereby minimising the impact on natural features and biodiversity. There are very few Tree Preservation Orders recorded within the area however this does not negate there being trees worthy of protection that would serve to constrain development areas, however this is an issue that good design could overcome.

Public Rights Of Way

There are several public rights of way across the area. This includes the Monarch's Way route which is a 615 mile long distance footpath in England, which marks the escape route of King Charles II in 1651 after being defeated in the Battle of Worcester. The footpath starts in Worcester and runs northwards to Boscobel, then South to Stratford-on-Avon continuing through England before finishing at Shoreham-By-Sea. It is the route after Boscobel that the footpath crosses through the north of Worcestershire with a small section within Area 4 from Bank's Green to Cur Lane then further south (footpaths 531, 532). Most of the route has been radically changed in the intervening centuries by enclosure, the building of roads, canals and railways, mining, and urbanisation however the route remains an important historic asset.

Other footpaths include; 533 which runs from Monarch's Way across fields to Angel Street and there are a couple of short footpaths between Banks Green and Angel Street (538, 541). One footpath runs from Holyoaks Lane to the A448 and then connects to Hewell Lane (528) and another small footpath connects Gypsy Lane to Cur Lane (529). A Public Bridleway runs from Cur Lane to the A448 junction at Birchfield Road (530). Finally there are three footpaths to the south east of the area two along Pumphouse Lane (610, 611) and one crossing fields from Pumphouse Lane to Cur Lane (607).

Due to the number of footpaths, development on this area could have a negative impact on the enjoyment of rural pursuits such as use of bridleways, public footpaths and cycling. Alternatively public footpaths and bridleways could provide increased recreational opportunities, including the potential improvement of the footpath network, provided they are sensitively integrated into new development.



(From Countryside Mapping Worcs CC)

Best and Most Versatile (BMV) Land and Agricultural Land Quality

The land north of the Bridleway between Cur Lane and the A448 has a “greater than 60% likelihood” to be best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. Beyond this the remainder of the area has “between 20.1 to 60% likelihood” BMV agricultural land. As land is of a similar quality across all of the areas of focused appraisal, the loss would be equivalent in any area chosen and therefore it is considered a minor constraint to development.

2. Accessibility

Distance to and frequency of public transport

There is limited public transport but development may make services more viable. Redditch train station is approximately 4.5km away and there are 3 bus services running within 1km to the north east of the area along Birchfield Road, with two services each hour to Redditch (Buses X3 and 142/143) and an hourly service to Bromsgrove (Bus 143) and Kidderminster via Bromsgrove (Bus X3). The need to travel will only be reduced if more local facilities and services are provided as part of the development. Access to the area would need to be improved most likely with a link off the junction with the A448. There is some public transport provision nearby in Webheath and development in location will help to sustain these services by making

them more viable. Further public transport enhancements will be necessary for such a large area, however there is potential to divert the 143 Service into the area.

The area is located adjacent to the National Cycle Route 5, along Angel Street and Pumphouse Lane to the southern border of Area 4, which is part of a long distance cycle network through England and Wales which at a more local level connects Redditch to Stratford-on-Avon, Bromsgrove and Birmingham. These offer opportunities for the area to improve upon these linkages.

Distance to retail, school, GP, employment, town centre

The Town Centre, including retail at the Kingfisher Centre, is approx 4.7km away. Enfield employment area is located approximately 5.5km away. Likely junction improvements on the A448 would increase the overall accessibility of the area including access to the Town Centre and important employment locations around the town; however access to these facilities would be predominantly dependant on car or bus, without significant improvements to walking and cycling facilities.

Webheath and Our Lady of Mount Carmel first schools⁹ are located within 3km of the area. Walkwood CE and Birchensale Middle Schools¹⁰ are slightly further afield at approximately 5km and both Trinity and St Augustine's Catholic High Schools¹¹ over 6km away. North East Worcestershire College (on Peakman Street) in Redditch is situated within 4.76km and Pitcheroak College for children with special needs and learning difficulties is 3.66km away.

Doctors Surgeries are not located within walking distance of this area, the closest being approximately 3.7km at Millstream Surgery.¹² The Alexandra Hospital is 7.8km away and approximately 10 minutes drive.

Therefore, although Area 4 lies further from the Town Centre than some of the other sites it does have easy access to it by several routes and is still only approximately 5 minutes drive away. Area 4 also offers the opportunity to extend existing bus services (which would also benefit the wider area) and by the provision of facilities on site as a result of development has the potential to reduce the need to travel for certain needs. Although all of the identified nearest schools would be dependant on access by car or bus, a new first school would be a requirement for Area 4 thereby reducing this dependency.

3. Vitality and Viability

There are limited local facilities in Webheath within 2-3km of the central point in Area 4 which include a post office (2.46km away), two public houses (Foxlydiate Arms

⁹ 2.9km Tardebigge Church of England First School; 2.9km Our Lady of Mount Carmel Catholic First School Downsell Road, Webheath, Redditch, B97 5RR; 2.9km Webheath First School Academy Downsell Road, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 5RJ.

¹⁰ 5km Walkwood CE Middle School Feckenham Road, Headless Cross, Redditch, B97 5AQ; 1.5.2km Birchensale Middle School Bridley Moor Road, Redditch, B97 6HT.

¹¹ 7.1km Trinity High School & Sixth Form Centre, Redditch Easemore Road, Redditch, B98 8HB; 6.5km St Augustine's Catholic High School Stonepits Lane, Redditch, B97 5LX.

¹² 3.7km Dr S Ananthram & Partners, Millstream Surgery, Cherry Tree Walk, Redditch, B97 6PB.

with Premier Inn at 2.16km and the Rose and Crown at 2.86km), a general store (Simply Fresh at 2.86km away) and Webheath Village Hall (2.76km away). The area is also 2.26km from the New Tardebigge Pub and 2.56km from Tardebigge Court which includes a café and some independent businesses.

Development on Area 4 may make the provision of additional local facilities more viable and could improve the vitality and viability of services primarily within Webheath (between 2.1-2.8km away) but also in Tardebigge (2.2-2.5km away), Redditch Town Centre (4.86km), and to some extent Batchley District Centre (3.66km).

4. Flood Risk

Spring Brook flows southward at Pumphouse Lane and it has three tributaries, the first flowing parallel to Holyoakes Lane and Gypsy Lane, another flowing from the northern part of the area almost reaching the A448, with the third near Foxlydiat Lane. Swans Brook also flows into the area from the East and Spring Brook joins Swans Brook before flowing south.

Swans Brook, Spring Brook and an un-named watercourse run through the area. Flood zone definition is only available for Spring Brook and some areas within the area along Spring Brook fall within flood zone 2 and 3 however complete flooding data for Area 4 is not available. Sewer flooding was recorded on the area boundary near Springhill Farm, Foxlydiat Lane. It is considered that development on the flood zone 3 can be avoided and incorporated into the GI network to also protect biodiversity. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems could potentially be incorporated in any new development to manage surface water run off.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

Water:

In terms of receiving water quality Priest Bridge discharges to Bow Brook and it fails significantly on reactive phosphorus. Consideration of potential land contamination when development is proposed is important to ensure protection of human health and the wider environment and would be considered at the planning application stage. All development has the potential to impact upon water quality and increase demand for water usage. The water conservation hierarchy¹³ must be followed and measures will be expected to be in place to manage water resources efficiently.

Severn Trent Water confirmed in the Outline Water Cycle Study Update that the strategic water supply to the study area (i.e. Bromsgrove and Redditch) will support the proposed development but local distribution network is likely to require reinforcement in many cases. Although from the wastewater collection side, it is recommended that additional development sites should be located in larger catchments such as Sernal or Priestbridge, both Sernal and Priestbridge STWs have minimal or negligible spare treatment capacity. This being noted there is no land or other constraints preventing STW network expansion.

¹³ Avoid, reduce, recycle and disposal.

Area 4 is located on the edge of the Priest Bridge and Spernal STWs catchment, it could therefore potentially drain to either catchment depending on the sewer connection point. It is understood that to drain area 4 by gravity to Priest Bridge STW would be more sustainable than pumping to Spernal STW, but this option will require a capacity upgrade to the sewerage system which will be significantly more expensive and would take a longer time to complete. With the 600 houses proposed in Webheath (2010/12), Severn Trent's initial feasibility indicates that the pumped option to Spernal STW would be more favourable. However if Area 4 is proposed for development, subject to a further feasibility study, Severn Trent may consider a gravity drain more favourable and if so it would be preferable for development in Area 4 to be phased in accordance with the infrastructure upgrade. Through discussions with Severn Trent it is evident that development in this location could occur without any fundamental issues. However, the most sustainable and cost effective measure should be implemented, which may make the delivery timeframe for infrastructure delivery a lengthier process than delivering short-term solutions. It may be that short term solutions can be provided in the interim with a view to more sustainable solutions in the long term.

Schools:

Worcestershire County Council Education Department has advised that the County is experiencing an increase in the numbers of children starting school in reception classes and that Redditch is a 'hotspot'. In Redditch existing first schools are forecast to fill to capacity and would not be able to accommodate pupils generated by the cross-boundary growth.

As the cross-boundary growth will be located in areas with little or no existing infrastructure then new on-site provision will need to be made. Based on data currently available the growth would be expected to generate 96 additional pupils per year group based on our average of just under 3 per year group per dwelling¹⁴. This would equate to two new first schools being required, each with a site capable of accommodating up to 60 children per year group, to be provided alongside the phases of housing. A new middle school may also potentially be required depending on how pupil numbers expand further and if there were any catchment area changes.

Transport:

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary areas was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

It may be concluded that development in Area 4 is likely to exert the main pressure on the A448 (Bromsgrove Highway), the Slideslow roundabout and the A38 running northwards to Junction 1 of the M42. These key locations which will require further detailed study to assess the specific impact and mitigation required as a result. Although it must be noted similar impacts are felt from other development scenarios and therefore acknowledging that significant improvements will be required this

¹⁴ This figure is due to be reviewed when the appropriate data from the 2011 census is available.

impact on highways infrastructure is not seen as a barrier to development at this time.

The likely benefits of development here is that it is more likely to assist in the regeneration of both Bromsgrove and Redditch Town Centres than other locations. It is likely that it would be possible to extend existing Public Transport services in this location rather than having to provide an entirely new bespoke service as would be required elsewhere. Funding of an additional service routing or re-routing of an existing service through the area will be required in order to maximise the use of public transport from the area.

Health services ie GP's, dentists:

Before being able to determine whether any new surgeries would be required as a result of Redditch growth an assessment of the existing capacity of surgeries would first need to be undertaken. It is important to remember that the NHS is currently undergoing major structural reform and financial pressures. Furthermore the new Health and Social Care Act will create a new market in health provision and it is unclear what the consequences of this might be for health infrastructure planning.

6. Green Belt

Green Belt Gap

Checking unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

Due to the size of Area 4, strong and defensible boundaries are required to restrict the appearance of urban sprawl as certain points around the area are currently remote from the urban form of Redditch. The wooded areas (including Hennals Wood, Bartles Wood and Cocksian Covert), topography of the area and the tree lined brooks (in particular Spring Brook) provide some scope to enclose development and to minimise its impact on the surrounding Green Belt land. Although, the public roads around the perimeter of the area make for strong defensible boundaries, some, like Cur Lane, which bisects the area could be more appropriate strong boundaries within the area to check urban sprawl.

Photo 68: Looking into Area 4 from Banks Green towards Webheath with Bartles Wood to left and trees along Swans Brook to right

Preventing neighbouring towns merging

There is a concern that part of the area could merge with Tardebigge to the north and Banks Green and Upper Bentley to the west. A revised Green Belt boundary needs to be sympathetic to these settlements within the Green Belt. Aerial photos below show the potential close proximity between the settlements and the Area 4 boundary (red line).

Photo 15A (boundary 12 & 14): view of houses along Holyoakes Lane, Tardebigge including the Church spire beyond.

Aerial Photo Tardebigge to the North.

Aerial Settlement along Banks Green to the west.

Green Belt Encroachment

Safeguarding countryside from encroachment

Examined in three segments:

1. Northern segment (North of Cur Lane and Gypsy Lane).
2. Southern segment (Land South of Cur Lane - including Bartles and Hennals Woods).
3. Western segment (including Cocksian Covert).



1. Northern segment (North of Cur Lane and Gypsy Lane)

The north eastern part of Area 4 comprises of undulating countryside with two low ridges (130-145m) running perpendicular to the A448, leading up to a high ridge at approximately 150 metres (see photo 16). Beyond this ridgeline the land slopes downwards in a north westerly direction to Tardebigge. Any development to the south of the 150m ridge would be well contained. Views from Tardebigge have limited visual impact due to the ridge line. Development beyond the 150m ridge to the west should be avoided as development in this location would encroach into the countryside and risk coalescence with Tardebigge (as discussed above). It should also be noted that the area is well screened from the A448 Dual Carriageway by virtue of the earthworks created when the road was constructed.

Photo 4B (boundary 4, 5 & 6): from house on bridleway looking north, undulating countryside which increases in height to the north.

Photo 16 (boundary 10): View south to field boundary 10 which is at the top of the ridgeline. Views from this side would be well safeguarded by the ridge and nature of the topography as the land slopes further downwards to Tardebigge.

2. Southern segment (Land South of Cur Lane)

The land slopes downwards from the east of the area towards Spring Brook and the western area of the area contains ridges (115-120m). The area west of the area near Banks Green and Brothertons Wood is some distance from the existing built up area of Redditch. The topography is much gentler and covers a much larger area than the northern segment. There are several weak field boundaries within this section of Area 4 which makes it very difficult to identify a strong and defensible boundary across the area. This side of Area 4, to the west of Spring Brook, limits where a boundary can go, as there are many low lying hedgerows. The view across the area from Banks Green also shows the number of poor field boundaries that limit this part of the area to find suitable strong boundaries that would easily stop encroachment from development.

Photo 53A (boundary 54 & 60): Land sloping downwards towards Spring Brook.

Photo 69 (boundary 48 & 51): Tree line at 48 with Brothertons Wood beyond outside Area 4. Very distant from urban area of Redditch.

3. Western segment

The segment between Gypsy Lane, Holyoakes Lane and Cur Lane contains the wooded area of Cocksian Covert and a brook runs across this segment of land. Features such as the brook and wooded area could potentially contain this part of area although they bisect at angles which makes it difficult to easily connect to the other sections of Area 4. Any development on this section represents development beyond strong boundaries, in particularly at Gypsy Lane, meaning there would be an element of encroachment into the countryside. Holyoakes Lane is currently remote from the built form of Redditch being at the extremity of Area 4 and any development on this segment would represent encroachment.

Photo 19 (boundary 23 & 14): Northern tip of this area showing wooded area (left) and Holyoakes Lane boundary.

Photo 78 (boundary 23) Gypsy Lane northwards from Cur Lane.

Regeneration opportunities

There is no urban/derelict land within the area. There are, however agricultural sheds across the area which could be incorporated into future development schemes.

Photo 56 (boundary 57,59): Agricultural Sheds Pumphouse Lane

Potential Green Belt Boundary

Site overview/ comments

The area contains numerous weak field boundaries within it with fencing, fragmented hedgerows as well as some with mature trees and hedgerows. Several of the strong boundaries within the area do not easily connect to other strong boundaries making it difficult to find a clear, continuous, strong boundary across the area which would also limit the potential to check unrestricted sprawl in the Green Belt. This included; Bartles Wood, Hennals Wood, smaller wooded areas/ copses and field boundary 48 containing a dike and a strong mature tree line.

The natural watercourses presented strong boundaries bisecting the area and the topography also impacts the logical choice of boundary in terms of reducing the impact of encroachment. The outlying tarmac roads clearly presented the strongest potential boundaries, generally with strong hedgerow boundaries and occasional ditches and fencing serving to emphasise the boundary strength. The farmhouses and various buildings did not make good boundaries, and likewise the footpaths and bridleway although having thick hedgerow in places, could not be classed as strong especially as some of the footpaths did not follow a field boundary. It is also considered important to prevent the area merging with Banks Green and Tardebigge and to limit encroachment over Area 4.

Photo 35B (boundary 22): Hennals Wood provides a strong boundary from Spring Brook however it does not connect to any strong field boundaries beyond.

Photo 49A (boundary 48): Strong boundary with dike and mature tree line at boundary 48. Footpath going across field is a very weak boundary.

Photo 43B (boundary 26): Bartles Wood southern boundary. Such concentrations of trees provide strong boundaries but do not form suitable boundary across the area due to weak connecting fields.

Photo 46A (boundary 26): Bartles Wood southern boundary

7. Built Environment

Area 4 is located within Upper Bentley Historic Environment Character Zone (147) which has between high and medium sensitivity to change. Whilst it would be preferable for development to occur in medium and low sensitivity areas, historic environment that is of high sensitivity would need to be sensitively designed as large developments can have a significant impact on the historic environment.

It should be noted that Hewell Grange Conservation Area shares the boundary with Area 4 at the walled garden (see figure X) and the walled garden is also included within Hewell Grange Grade II* Registered Historic Park. Therefore any development would need to respect the setting of these historic assets. Furthermore, any development here would further exacerbate the coalescence issue with Tardebigge/Hewell as already stated.

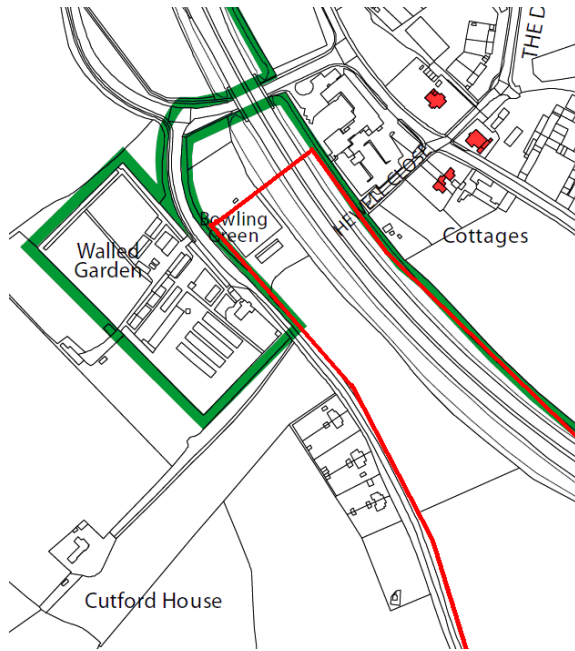


Figure X: Hewell Grange Conservation Area (left) with Area 4 boundary (red).

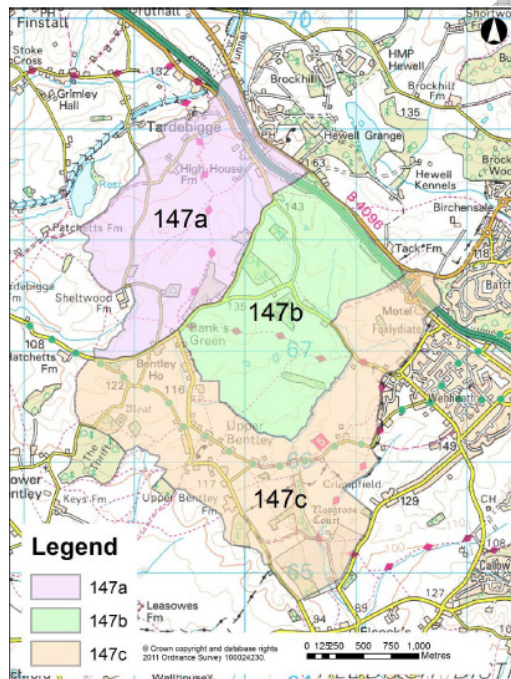


Figure X: Area 4 Historic Environment Character Zone areas (left).

Area 4 is situated within Historic Environment Character Zone (HECZ) 147¹⁵ (see figure X) and has between high and medium sensitivity to change. Within HECZ147a development could impact on below and above ground remains and affect the

¹⁵ Historic Environment Assessment for Redditch Borough Council: Supplementary Historic Environment Statement for the Subdivided HECZ 147, August 2012.

setting of the listed buildings in Tardebigge. In HECZ147b development could impact on below ground archaeological remains and in HECZ147c Development will potentially impact on sensitive archaeological remains preserved within, and below, alluvial deposits. Development will potentially impact on the relatively intact historic field patterns and hedgerows.

There are a number of designations from the Historic Environment Records (HER) particularly relating to the landscape including ridge and furrow earthworks, and saltway see figure X.¹⁶ There are also two dwellings on the HER within Area 4, near the Banks Green/ Angel Street junction, which are noted worthy of historic importance¹⁷. These designations do not present any major issues in terms of developing this area and any development should be sensitive to these designations.

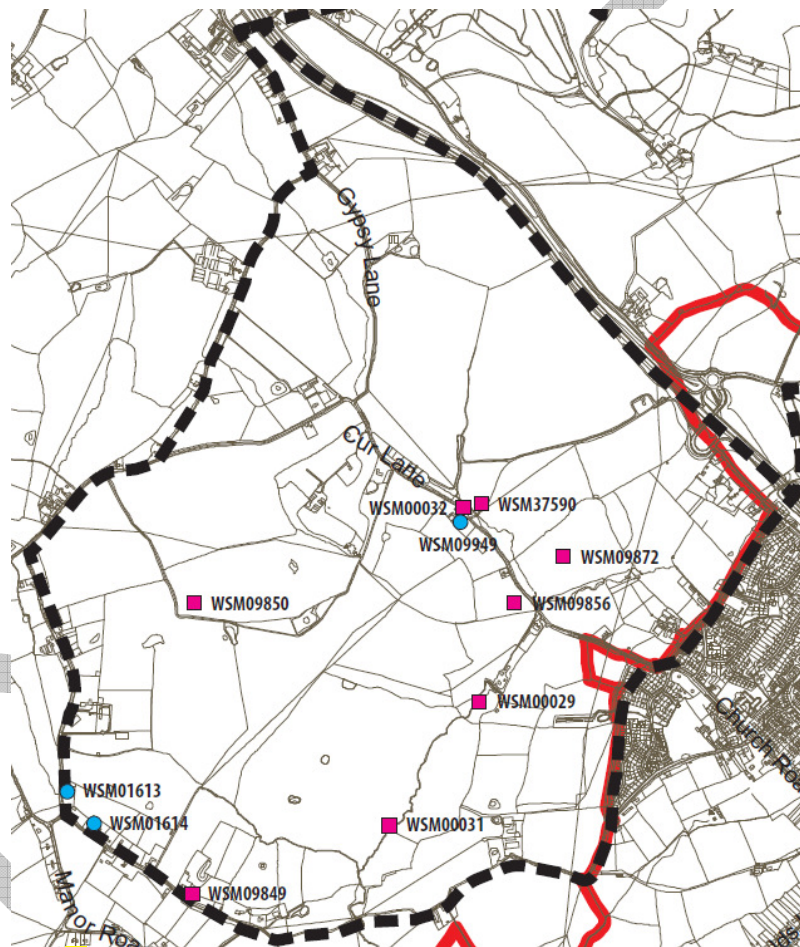


Figure X: Area 4 Historical Environmental Record designations

Lane House farmhouse¹⁸ is the only Grade II Listed building on the area which would serve as a development constraint and there are no Conservation Areas within this area. Hewell Grange Park and Garden is Grade II* Listed and is located close to the northern boundary of Area 4 and the majority of the Park is separated by the A448

¹⁶ WSM00029 Watermill/Earthwork; WSM00031 Mill Pond / Earthwork; WSM00032 Fishpond / Earthwork, WSM09849 Ridge and Furrow / Earthwork; WSM09850 Ring Ditch/ Cropmark; WSM09856 Ridge and Furrow/ Earthwork; WSM09872 Enclosure / Cropmark and WSM37590 Saltway / Cartographic Evidence.

¹⁷ WSM01613 Dwelling, Timber Framed Building and WSM01614 Dwelling.

¹⁸ WSM09949 Farmhouse, Timber Framed Building.

Bromsgrove to Redditch Highway (apart from the walled garden), its associated earthworks and significant tree coverage.

Whilst it would be preferable for development to occur in low sensitivity areas, historic environment that is of medium sensitivity would need to be carefully designed as large developments can have a significant impact on the historic environment. It is noted there is some capacity that would be resilient to change given appropriate design.

The area could connect to Redditch in terms of its built urban form. Webheath would provide a clear urban connection to Redditch. In addition the A448 provides a clear boundary and barrier to development. In terms of the rural landscape there are clear boundaries within Area 4 that could be used to contain development and restricting it from sprawling further into the Green Belt.

8. Highways

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary sites was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

It may be concluded that development in Area 4 is likely to exert the main pressure on the A448 (Bromsgrove Highway), the Slideslow roundabout and the A38 running northwards to Junction 1 of the M42. These key locations which will require further detailed study to assess the specific impact and mitigation required as a result. Although it must be noted similar impacts are felt from other development scenarios and therefore acknowledging that significant improvements will be required, this impact on highways infrastructure is not seen as a barrier to development at this time.

The likely benefits of development here is that it is more likely to assist in the regeneration of both Bromsgrove and Redditch Town Centres than other locations which may encourage commuting further afield ie to Birmingham.

It is likely that it would be possible to extend existing Public Transport services in this location rather than having to provide a entirely new bespoke service as would be required elsewhere. Funding of an additional service routing or re-routing of an existing service through the area will be required in order to maximise the use of public transport from the area.

Proposed Boundary (see map below)

The strongest boundary follows Pumphouse Lane (boundary 59) from Webheath then joins Spring Brook watercourse (boundary 60) from the ford on Pumphouse Lane which bisects the area to Cur Lane. This makes a strong boundary to Cur Lane with tree lined brook across the area (see Photo 53A).

Photo 72 (boundary 59): Pumphouse Lane

Photo 53A (boundary 60): View West with tree line across site following brook makes a strong defensible boundary.

Photo 57 (boundary 59/60): Ford at Pumphouse Lane and Spring Brook at the southernmost part of Area 4.

Photo 82B (boundary 60): Cur Lane end of Spring Brook (looking south west) with tree line extending to Pumphouse Lane. The brook forms a clearly defined strong boundary.

The boundary follows Cur Lane (boundary 27) in a north westerly direction then follows Gypsy Lane (boundary 23) north west.

Photo 26 (boundary 27): Cur Lane bisects the area and is a strong defensible boundary.

Photo 21A (boundary 23): View south showing Gypsy Lane and agricultural units off Cur Lane. Strong boundary follows Cur Lane and Gypsy Lane.

The boundary then follows a private track (boundary 18) north and east along an established hedgerow (boundary 7) to a small wooded coppice.

Photo 79 (boundary 18): Boundary from Gypsy Lane following wooded track to coppice. This is a strong boundary visually and topographically.

Photo 9B (boundary 7): Pond within coppice strengthens this natural feature in terms of a boundary.

The boundary then follows the field line north (boundary 8 & 9) then east along a final field boundary (boundary 10) to the A448 (boundary 2), which acts as a strong north eastern boundary for the area. The boundary at the northern-most segment of the area (boundary's 8, 9 and 10) is considered to be the most appropriate; the small coppice and field boundaries form part of the highest ridgeline along this part of the area and although the field boundaries are not strong and complete, the topographical aspect and potential strengthening of the field boundaries would make this a suitably strong and defensible boundary.

In addition the weak boundary at 8 (photo 10) could easily be strengthened due to its position at the top of a ridge and its ability to connect to the coppice.

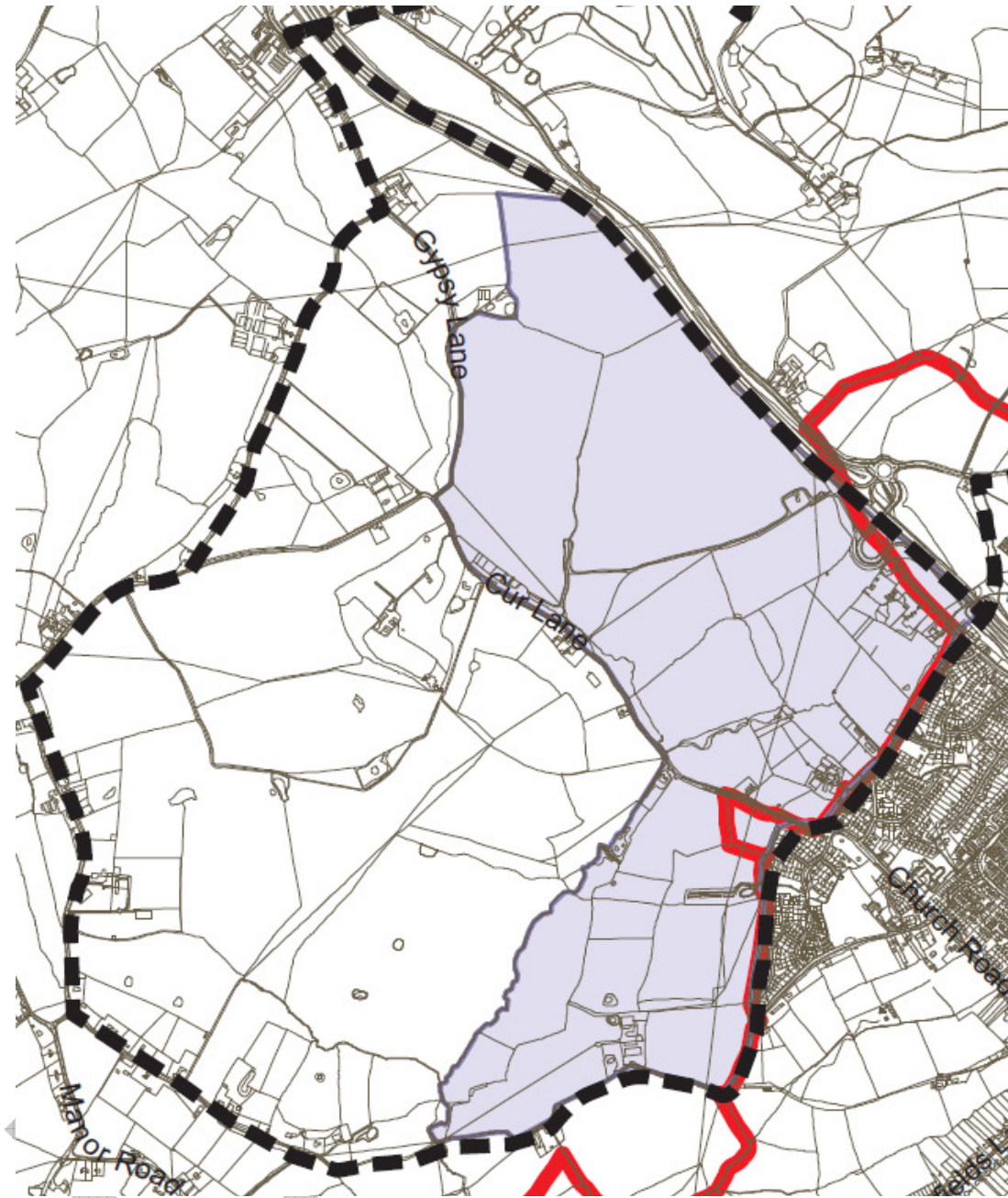
Photo 10 (boundary 8-9): looking north to area boundary 8 from coppice. Field gap for tractors at top of ridge.

Photo 16 (boundary 10): View south east to field boundary 10. Land peaks at the ridge then decreases in height further south and forms undulating countryside.

Photo 14 (boundary 10): View north with boundary 10 hedgerow visible with rising slope to highest point in area 4 at the ridge.

The boundary finally follows the A448 back towards Redditch (boundary 2). It forms a strong easternmost boundary further supported with strong tree lines.

Photo 83 (boundary 2): A448 dual carriageway towards Bromsgrove



Area 4 Proposed Developable area

Conclusion

Any development within Area 4 would need to overcome the varying area specific constraints identified in this chapter including the Special Wildlife Site's and the flood risk areas associated with Spring Brook and Swans Brook. In addition to this the Tree Preservation Orders, wooded areas, existing dwellings, listed buildings, historic park and Public Rights of Ways would need to be integrated sensitively into any development. Development on the area would result in the loss of agricultural land and principal timbered farmlands and Green Belt land would be lost.

Development could occur within the area and figure X above identifies some strong defensible boundaries along Spring Brook, Cur Lane and Gypsy Lane. As with all the options Green Belt land would be lost it although it is considered that impact to the Green Belt in terms of sprawl, encroachment and coalescence would be limited. The area does not merge with Banks Green or Tardebigge, uses strong and defensible boundaries and is a preferable location because of its topography. For the most part the area is sufficiently enclosed so, providing that the area is sensitively developed, the Green Belt impact should potentially be minimised.

Due to the distances to services and facilities in Redditch Town Centre, Webheath, Tardebigge and Batchley District Centre, potential residents within this area would be dependant on the car, and would result in unsustainable travel, unless there were substantial improvements to public transport and access to the area along with infrastructure improvements and provision of on site services and facilities including a new first/primary school. Sewerage issues would need to be investigated further.

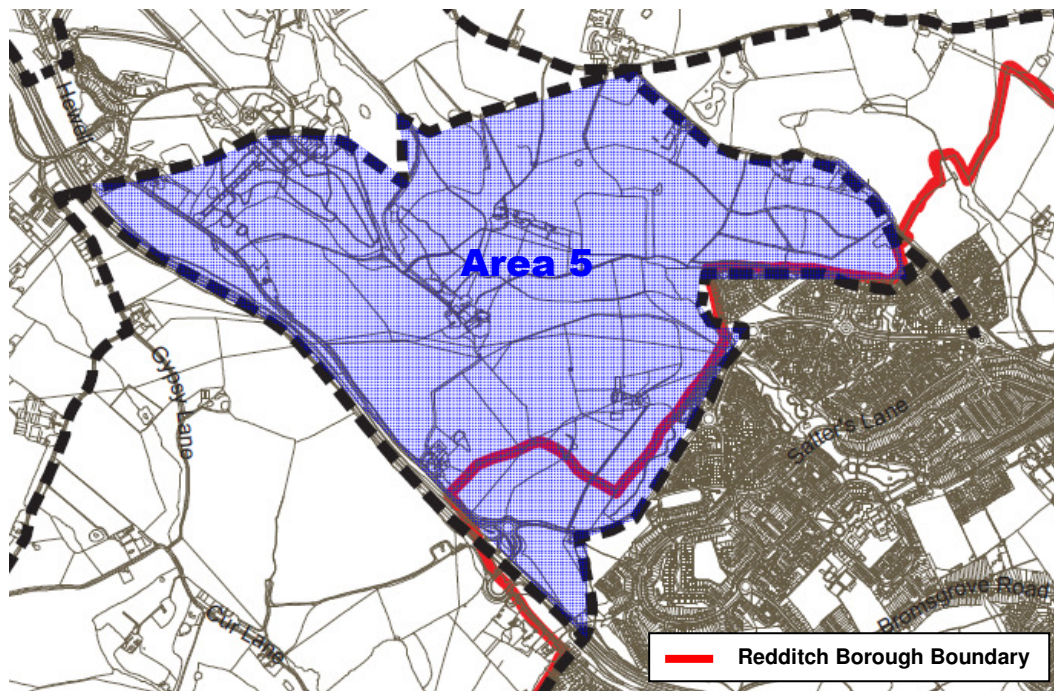
There could be wider impacts to the surrounding habitats however development on Area 4 could be connected to the existing built form of Redditch in terms of Webheath and there is potential to connect to the A448. Careful design would be required at the A448 and at the north eastern point due to steeper slopes which could be mitigated by strategic landscaping and also at the western edge due to potential for encroachment when viewed from the west.

It is considered that this area could provide some of the land required to meet Redditch's housing needs and the proposed area above is considered a suitable option for an urban extension to Redditch. The potential housing capacity for the identified developable area is considered approximately 2830 dwellings.

Area 5

Site Description

Area 5 is located to the north-western side of Redditch and is adjacent to the existing Brockhill development in the vicinity of Appletree Lane/ Dairy Lane and Lily Green Lane. It is bounded by the Bromsgrove Highway (A448) to its south-western boundary and Brockhill Lane to the north and northeast. The site undulates with a difference in ground levels of 110m rising up to 150m. The west of the site is partially covered by the Hewell Grange Conservation Area. Furthermore, the Hewell Grange Registered Park (Grade II* listed Heritage Asset) falls within this Conservation Area. The site contains large areas of dense woodland, a small number of dwellings, minor business and agricultural uses, two minor water courses (including Batchley Brook), and a service track for access to the aviation fuel pipeline, which crosses the site.



1 Green Infrastructure

- Landscape and Topography

The south-western edge of the site, along Hewell Lane, is the highest ground in the site and peaks at Tack Farm. The site then slopes downwards to Batchley Brook (from approximately 150m to 130m) before rising in height gradually to Brockhill Lane (approximately 130-140m).

Photo 4A : View towards Tack Farm from Hewell Lane, showing the slope peaks at Tack Farm.

Photo 4B : View to the northeast of Hewell Lane showing the drop in gradients towards Batchley Brook.

Photo 28B : View southwards from the field opposite to Brockhill Farm, offering views of the lower land parcels in the Batchley Brook Valley.

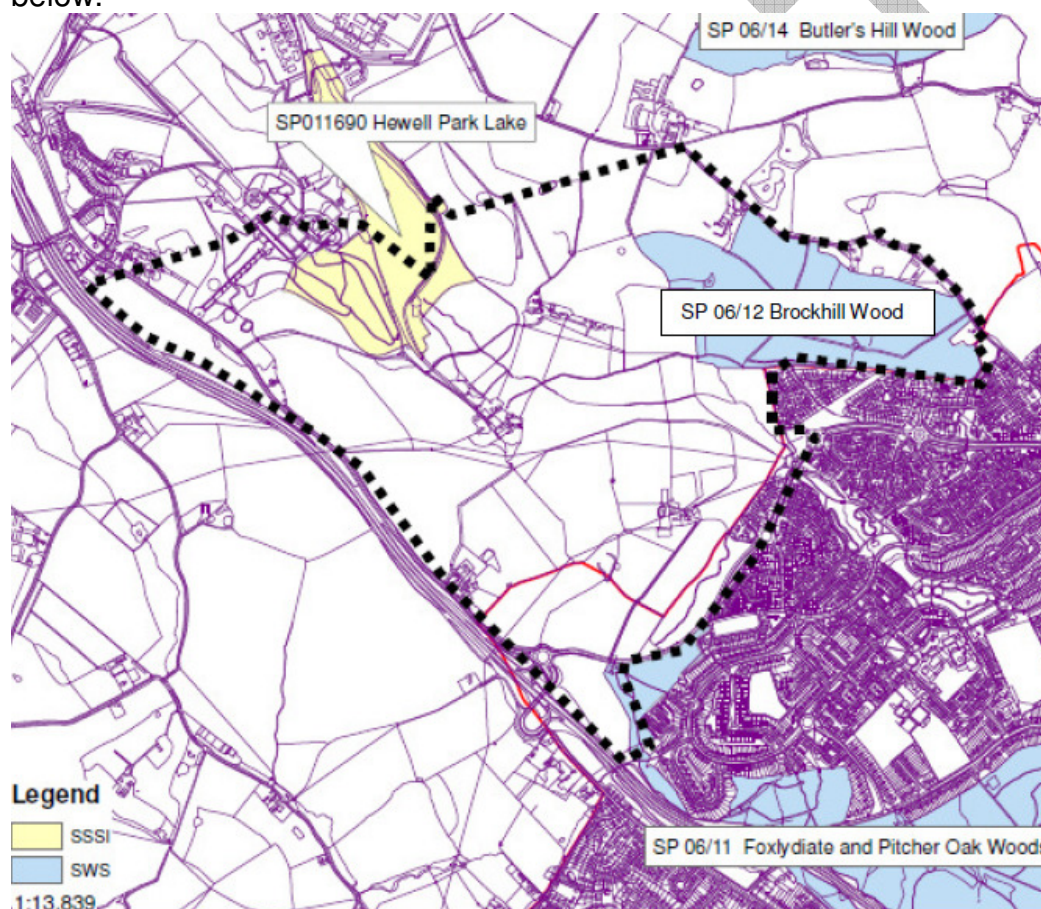
Area 5 is located within the Wooded Estate landscape type classified from the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). A key feature of this landscape is frequent large, irregularly shaped ancient woodland, with clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional small estate villages. Almost a quarter of the site is covered by woodlands. In close proximity is another woodland – Butler's Hill Wood. Part of the historic Hewell Grange estate, two farms (Tack Farm and Oxstalls Farm) and a kennel (Hewell Kennels) fall within the site. According to the 2008 landscape condition update, there is moderate intensity mixed farming and a declining field pattern with boundaries in poor condition. HMP Hewell complex situated nearby, which can be seen on footpath 539(C) towards Paper Mill Cottage, is considered to have a high impact of urban development to the landscape character of the Bordesley Wooded Estate lands. Hence, development should explore opportunities to plan within the grain of existing historic field boundaries and

hedgerow network and aim to restore and create hedgerows that complement the existing historic pattern.

The landscape of the site is of high sensitivity¹⁹, with the north-western corner falling within the medium sensitivity area. Whilst it would be preferable for development to occur in low sensitivity areas, landscape that is of high sensitivity means that developments have to be designed carefully to ensure that the effect on landscape character is minimised. Moreover, areas surrounding Redditch Borough in Bromsgrove District are all of high/ medium sensitivity, meaning that some high/medium landscape sensitivity area will regrettably need to be lost.

- Statutory environmental designations

As with all the sites being explored, the land is within the designated Green Belt and the Green Belt function of the site is explored in more detail at the Green Belt section below.



Hewell Park Lake (Ref: SP011690) SSSI, which is designated for its standing open water and canals and is in favourable condition, are located in the north-western corner of the site. The eastern corner of the site sits the broadleaved mixed and yew woodland Brockhill Wood (Ref: SP06/12) SWS. Just outside the site boundary to the north and to the south are two other broadleaved mixed and yew woodlands Butler's Hill Wood (Ref: SP06/14) SWS which falls within Area 11 and Foxlydiate and Pitcher Oak Woods (Ref: SP06/11) SWS which falls within the boundary of Redditch

¹⁹ Landscape Sensitivity Map is produced by Worcestershire County Council and is re-produced in the Bromsgrove Green Infrastructure Baseline Report Summer 2010

Borough. Shortwood Rough Ground SWS, which is also a broadleaved mixed and yew woodland, falls just outside the broad area of search.

- Habitats²⁰ and Protected Species

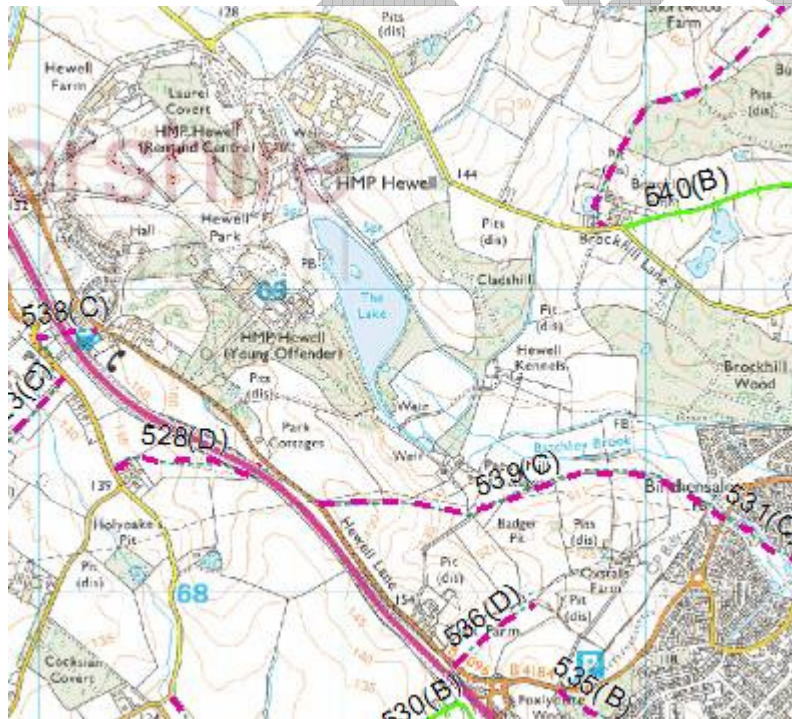
The south-eastern part of the site is possibly unimproved grassland with its biodiversity value subject to further survey. There are also several land parcels at the centre and northern part of the site that are in arable and horticultural use which could be of biodiversity value. The site is significantly under-recorded for protected species as there are few records present.

- Trees and woodlands

Area 5 and its surrounding area includes significant blocks of woodland (those highlighted under statutory designations) with connected hedges and mature trees which present an ideal opportunity to create an integrated Green Infrastructure network. These are significant woodland assets in their own rights and are further connected with some significant areas of woodland which are not designated, for example the community woodland at the south-eastern part of the site and the woodlands to the west of Brockhill Wood.

Area 5 covers part of the Hewell Grange Conservation Area. The Council must be notified for any works on trees in a Conservation Area²¹. Some trees within the Conservation Area (around Tardebigge Court / Hewell Dairy) are protected by Tree Preservation Orders, which are in the western tip of the site.

- PROW



(Source: Worcestershire County Council website)

²⁰ Source: Worcestershire Habitat Inventory by Worcestershire County Council

²¹ This applies only to trees that are more than 7.5centimetres in diameter and measured 1.5metres above the ground

There are two Public Rights of Way in the site. One (Ref: 539(C)) runs across the site from east to west, linking the site with Birchensale along Batchley Brook in the east to Area 4 (which is to the west of A448) in the west. Another footpath (Ref: 536(D)) simply provide accessibility to a field at the southern part of the site between Tack Farm and Oxstalls Farm.

Just outside the southern boundary of the site is another footpath (Ref: 535(B)) which runs across the Foxlydiate and Pitcher Oak Woods SWS and joins up with Monks Path.

- “Best and Most Versatile” (BMV) Land and Agricultural Land Quality

Apart from the east and south-eastern part of the site, which has 20.1 to 60% likelihood that the land is the BMV²², there is over 60% likelihood that the rest of the area is the BMV. The land falls primarily within grade 3²³. However, a significant proportion of the land in the District around the boundary of Redditch has 20.1% to 60% likelihood of being BMV land. As land is of a similar quality across all of the areas of focused appraisal, the loss would be equivalent in any area chosen and therefore it is considered a minor constraint to development.

2 Accessibility

- Distance to and frequency of public transport

There are several bus stops with frequent bus services near the site. From the centre of the site, the nearest bus stop is Hewell Park adjacent to Tack Farm (just under 700m) at the south-western boundary. There is an hourly bus service (143) that runs between Bromsgrove and Studley, covering areas in and around Redditch such as Redditch Town Centre, Webheath, Headless Cross and Alexandra Hospital. Other nearby bus stops are those in Batchley, along Foxlydiate Crescent and Salter’s Lane (just under 1.1km) which offer frequent bus services (every 20mins and hourly) to Redditch Town Centre (bus 50 and 51).

The nearest train station to the site is Redditch train station which offers a half-hourly service to Birmingham New Street and beyond to Sutton Coldfield and Lichfield. From the centre of the site, the train station is just over 3.2km away (from the B4184 Lily Green Lane roundabout taking Brockhill Drive and Hewell Road towards the station).

- Distance to retail, school, GP, employment, town centre

The town centre, including retail at the Kingfisher Centre is approximately 3.3km from area 5. The nearest local centre is Batchley District Centre on Batchley Road which is around 1.8km away. Enfield Industrial Estate is nearby and is approximately 2.4km away.

²² Information obtained from the Strategic Map layer obtained from Natural England at a scale of 1:250,000

²³ Information obtained from the Agricultural Land Classification GIS layer on Magic.

Batchley First School, Birchensale Middle School and Trinity High School are the nearest educational establishments, which are approximately 1.6km, 3km and 3.8km away. Other Educational establishments nearby include North East Worcestershire College (around 3.5km) and Pitcheroak School for children with special needs and learning difficulties (around 1.9km).

Millstream Surgery at Cherry Tree Walk, Batchley is the nearest GP which is approximately 1.8km from the site. The Alexandra Hospital, which currently has an A & E service, is approximately 8.2km away.

Brockhill Park is within short walking distance to the site and is approximately 550m away. A community wood (a semi-natural open space) is also within walking distance (approximately 600m).

Therefore in terms of public transport this area is relatively well served. Access to employment and the Town Centre is relatively easy and the area is well served by schools and health facilities and open space is within walking distance. Therefore overall this area has good accessibility to the majority of facilities.

3 Vitality and Viability

As mentioned above, the nearest local facilities are located at Batchley District Centre on Batchley Road. This is a purpose built shopping precinct, located within the suburban residential area, with shops located at the ground level. There are currently nine units, mainly for service and convenience purposes and there are no vacant units. There is a grocers, a butchers and a spar, as well as a betting shop, laundrette, a large pub, and two take-a-ways. Development at area 5 will further increase the usage of these facilities, thus improving the vitality of the area. The close proximity of the site to the Town Centre would also have benefits in terms of vitality and viability.

4 Flood Risk

- Watercourse details

Batchley Brook bisects the site from the west (where the Hewell Park Lake SSSI is) to the east (around Appletree Lane) which located in the lower lying land of the site. The area around the watercourse falls within flood zone 2, 3a and 3b.

There is one historic flooding record at Dairy Lane, Brockhill, which is next to the eastern boundary of the site. However, further downstream of the Batchley Brook where Batchley is, there are numerous records of historic, foul and sewer flooding. It is important to note that generally speaking, only limited historic flooding data is available for this greenfield site. Batchley Brook is one of the watercourses identified in the Level 1 SFRA that is most vulnerable to exceeding its flow capacity to an extent that properties have been affected. It is mentioned that "In particular the western upstream section of the Batchley Brook suffers from the rapid decrease in gradient as the Brook enters the urban area of Redditch. The combination of the flow already within the Brook with the urban runoff has caused this Brook to rapidly exceed its capacity on a number of occasions, although the recent construction of a number of balancing ponds has reduced the scale of the flooding." (p.24).

5 Infrastructure Capacity

Water:

All development has the potential to impact upon water quality and increase demand for water usage. The water conservation hierarchy must be followed and measures will be expected to be in place to manage water resources efficiently. Severn Trent confirmed in the updated Outline Water Cycle Study (2012) that the strategic water supply to the Bromsgrove and Redditch study area will support the proposed level of development but that the local distribution network is likely to require reinforcement in many cases. Severn Trent does not consider there are any showstoppers in terms of sewage capacity.

Area 5 was not covered in the study but the Brockhill West (Site Reference: 2010/14) which forms the southern tip of the site was assessed in the Outline WCS. In terms of wastewater collection, the Brockhill West site is located upstream of small diameter local collection sewers. Modelling indicates that local sewers are already at capacity up to 500m downstream of this site. Hence, local improvements will be required. Wastewater from the Brockhill West site will be treated by Redditch (Spernal) Sewage Treatment Work (STW). It is expected that local improvements will be required should Area 5 be developed.

The Redditch STW is identified as having minimal or negligible spare treatment capacity due to the capacity limitations with the secondary treatment process. This means Severn Trent will need to submit an application to Environment Agency to review the existing permit. Though there are no known physical constraints that would prevent additional capacity being provided to meet future development needs, permit reviews also depends on whether the receiving water can meet the Water Framework Directive.

Schools:

Worcestershire County Council Education Department has advised that the County is experiencing an increase in the numbers of children starting school in reception classes and that Redditch is a 'hotspot'. In Redditch existing first schools are forecast to fill to capacity and would not be able to accommodate pupils generated by the cross-boundary growth.

As the cross-boundary growth will be located in areas with little or no existing infrastructure then new on-site provision will need to be made. Based on data currently available the growth would be expected to generate 96 additional pupils per year group based on our average of just under 3 per year group per dwelling²⁴. This would equate to two new first schools being required, each with a site capable of accommodating up to 60 children per year group, to be provided alongside the phases of housing. A new middle school may also potentially be required depending on how pupil numbers expand further and if there were any catchment area changes.

²⁴ This figure is due to be reviewed when the appropriate data from the 2011 census is available.

Transport:

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary sites was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

It may be concluded that development in area 5 is likely to exert the main pressure on the A448 (Bromsgrove Highway), the Slideslow roundabout and the A38 running northwards to Junction 1 of the M42. These key locations which will require further detailed study to assess the specific impact and mitigation required as a result. Although it must be noted similar impacts are felt from other development scenarios and therefore acknowledging that significant improvements will be required this impact on highways infrastructure is not seen as a barrier to development at this time.

The likely benefits of development here is that it is more likely to assist in the regeneration of both Bromsgrove and Redditch Town Centres than other locations. It is likely that it would be possible to extend existing Public Transport services in this location rather than having to provide an entirely new bespoke service as would be required elsewhere.

Health services ie GP's, dentists:

Before being able to determine whether any new surgeries would be required as a result of Redditch growth an assessment of the existing capacity of surgeries would first need to be undertaken. It is important to remember that the NHS is currently undergoing major structural reform and financial pressures. Furthermore the new Health and Social Care Act will create a new market in health provision and it is unclear what the consequences of this might be for health infrastructure planning.

Green Belt

1 Green Belt Gap

Checking unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

It was difficult to assess this area against the Green Belt criterion as there was the important issue regarding the historic assets at nearby Hewell Grange that needed to be considered.

The site contains large areas of woodland, which provide visibly and physically strong boundaries to prevent the appearance of urban sprawl. Development to the south west of Brockhill Wood would be contained visually and physically by the wood (boundary 22). Photo 25B demonstrates that it would not be possible to see development in between Brockhill Wood and Foxlydiate/ Pitcher Oak Wood in the distance. Rising topography to the north of the site would also help to contain urban sprawl at lower levels within the Batchley Brook Valley.

Photo 25B – Brockhill Wood (middle distance), Foxlydiate/ Pitcher Oak Wood (far distance)

Hewell Lane (boundary 1) offers a strong boundary to the south-western edge of the site, and due to its height (150m) which is 20 meters above the rest of the site, this boundary offers strong containment potential to prevent urban sprawl. Views into this site from further afield could be contained by careful design and sympathetic use of

this prominent ridgeline. Dense planting along the highway verge between Hewell Lane and the Bromsgrove Highway also helps to screen views into Area 5.

Photo 1 – Hewell Lane (Area 5 behind hedgerow on the right)

Photo 2A shows the Hewell Lane hedgerow on the right hand side and indicates how well contained development would be from within the site.

Photo 2A – Hedgerow boundary along Hewell Lane from within Area 5

The site rises steeply from its centre in the vicinity of the Batchley Brook Valley, in both the direction of the Tack Farm buildings and to another point, slightly higher, towards Hewell Lane approximately 200m further north of these buildings. Although the latter ridge would serve as a 'bowl' to contain future development, this development would still be extremely visible in and around the other ridgeline. This ridgeline running up towards the Tack farm buildings is better located to offer both physical and visual containment from beyond the site area to the south and west. Ideally, development would be kept below this ridge line to the south to preserve existing views into the area, especially from the RPG at Hewell Grange.

Photo 4A – Tack Farm rooflines just visible from ridge along Hewell Lane. Middle distance demonstrates slope of the site

From the north of the site, at Brockhill Farm (135m), there are views right across the site to the Tack Farm buildings (140m). Any development in this location would be extremely visible. Although the location of the Batchley Brook Valley in the centre of the site (110m) could visually and physically contain development at lower levels within Area 5, it would be prone to flooding and also cause amenity harm to Hewell Grange Conservation Area, which extends into this valley.

Photo 26A – Tack Farm ridge along Hewell Lane (distance). Location of Batchley Brook Valley (middle distance)

Preventing neighbouring towns merging

The north-western extremity of Area 5 (red line) extends to the Tardebigge settlement. The Green Belt boundary review has been sympathetic to this settlement and is further constrained by consideration of other Green Belt purposes, thus offering strong protection to the setting and the character of the Tardebigge settlement.



2 Green Belt Encroachment **Safeguarding countryside from encroachment**

There is a service track running northwards to the immediate west of the Tack Farm buildings, and running downwards into the site. Photo 9A clearly shows the difference in height levels from within the area, up to the Tack Farm buildings and Hewell Lane. Although this service track offers a strong defensible boundary as it is further enhanced by thick hedgerows running along its length, the steep nature of the land further south leading up to the Tack Farm buildings would lead to development being visually intrusive. Development here would lead to countryside encroachment due to the topography, and it would be better placed further south below the ridgeline towards the Tack Farm buildings. This ridgeline would help to contain the potential visual intrusion from views into the site from further afield. Unfortunately the next logical boundary below this ridgeline is a weak one (boundary 29), however as mentioned in the methodology, conclusions have been drawn on an area-by-area assessment taking into account the context of the surrounding landscape and other relevant physical features. Although this boundary is only mature hedgerow, due to the steep topography north it would visually contain the area and strengthen the Green Belt credentials of the boundary. Therefore land north of boundary 29 would remain as Green Belt in order to reduce the likelihood of countryside encroachment.

Photo 9A – Hedgerow and tree lined boundary of service track rising up to the Tack Farm buildings and the Hewell Lane ridge in the distance

Photo 5C shows the view back towards the Tack Farm buildings and illustrates how high the land is in this location and how remote it is from a potential developable

area. This photo also shows how visible development would be on this high land, especially from the heritage assets and Hewell Grange. North of the service track (clear in Photo 9A), the land rises steeply to a height of 150m (Photo 5C) and continues towards the north-western extremity of the site at this height (Photo 6A). Due to the height of this land, a large amount of Area 5 is visible, stretching as far as Brockhill Farm in the north and the Batchley Brook Valley in the centre of the area. However, a proportion of land to the south west is not as visible and development here would not be visually intrusive. From this high point there are no views further south of the ridgeline parallel with the Tack Farm buildings and also no views beyond the large agricultural shed located adjacent Oxstalls Farm.

Photo 5C – View parallel with Hewell Lane to roofline of the Tack Farm buildings emphasising height of the ridge

When viewed from the public footpath, it is clear that any development along the 150m ridge to the southeast of the footpath and also the ridge leading up to Tack Farm would encroach into the countryside. There is no strong defensible boundary along the Public Right of Way (539C) route. The two land parcels separated by the footpath clearly have similar landscape and topographical characteristics.

Photo 5B – View along Public Right of Way at 150m ridge

There is no physical difference in the landscape either side of this footpath. Photo 6A (taken from the public footpath) shows the southern extent of the Conservation Area and illustrates that the land continues away from Redditch at the 150m level for quite some distance.

Photo 6B illustrates the undulating ridges (150m) and the slightly lower roofline of the Tack Farm buildings in the background. It is clear that development of these land parcels is remote, would encroach into the countryside and be extremely visible from the north.

Photo 6A – View north westwards from Public Right of Way

Photo 6B – View south eastwards from Public Right of Way

At the northern extremity of the site, in the vicinity of Brockhill Farm, the land parcels north of Brockhill Wood appear remote from the remainder of the site. The wood provides a strong boundary and development beyond this would encroach into the countryside. Tack Farm buildings are visible in the distance, which also emphasises that development would be visually intrusive in that location.

Photo 23A (area 6) – Tack Farm buildings in distance on ridge. Middle distance shows Brockhill and Cladhill Woods

Further progression southwards into the site from Brockhill Lane, offers views of the lower land parcels in the Batchley Brook Valley. Development in the Batchley Brook Valley location would be well connected to the southern part of Area 5 and contained by Brockhill Wood (left of the photo), however there would be issues regarding flooding, which may limit development in this flat area.

Photo 28B – View into Batchley Brook Valley

Moving slightly further north from the previous viewpoint (Photo 28B), looking southwards between Brockhill Wood and Cladshill Wood, there is a clear distinction between development containment in the Batchley Brook Valley and countryside encroachment as the land rises steeply towards the ridge in the Brockhill Farm vicinity.

Photo 26A – View south from Brockhill Lane

Between the Batchley Brook Valley and the Brockhill Farm ridge, there is a post and wire fence. Although the post and wire fence denotes a weak physical boundary (19), this location offers opportunities to reconnect the adjacent woodland areas of Brockhill Wood and Cladshill Wood to strengthen a potential Green Belt boundary. This would offer additional containment for new development and prevent encroachment into more remote areas. However, although an artificial boundary connecting the woodland areas would restrict encroachment, access to this location would be limited due to the flooding issues along the valley. This particular area is also extremely close to Hewell Grange CA and RPG, and development would have an adverse affect on its setting, especially the buildings located at Hewell Kennels.

Photo 28A – Post and wire fence boundary (19) which connects Brockhill Wood and Cladshill Wood

As the topography of the majority of Area 5 leaves a considerable amount of land open and visible from an array of viewpoints, development would affect the rural nature of the setting of the Hewell Grange CA and RPG. Building on areas of high land would not only affect these heritage assets but also exemplify countryside encroachment. In order to limit these negative attributes, development would be more appropriately located in the southeast corner of Area 5. Numerous ridgelines, particularly north of boundary 29 and along boundary 32 would sufficiently contain the site and reduce the risk of encroachment.

Preserving character and history

As mentioned previously in this Green Belt assessment, there are a number of heritage assets within and in close proximity to Area 5. To the north west of Area 5 is the Hewell Grange Conservation Area within which lies the Registered Hewell Grange Grade II* Historic Park and Garden. The character, setting and conservation status needs to be considered sensitively whilst boundaries are being considered. Although the edge of the woodland within the Conservation Area would offer a very strong physical boundary, the sensitivity of the Conservation Area, the Registered Park and the previously noted encroachment into the countryside in this vicinity, precludes defensible boundaries being identified here and serves to strengthen the decision to use boundaries further afield in respect of topography. The impact on the setting of the Grade II* listed Hewell Grange Park and Conservation Area is considered in more detail within the built environment section and the accompanying document 'Hewell Grange RPG Heritage Assessment 2012'.

In line with the NPPF, local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this assessment into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage

asset, to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. Substantial harm to or loss of designated heritage assets of the highest significance, notably scheduled monuments, protected wreck sites, battlefields, grade I and II* listed buildings, grade I and II* registered parks and gardens, and World Heritage Sites, should be wholly exceptional.

The rural setting contributes to the legibility of a historically and aesthetically important country estate, which remains remarkably intact and therefore our ability to appreciate the significance of the RPG and CA. The landscape that forms the setting of these assets should remain largely unchanged so as to not adversely impact these assets. Although only a small proportion of the CA and RPG itself fall within Area 5, due the setting being important, some parts of this area would be inappropriate to develop. Preservation of all heritage assets integrity and impact on their setting will need to be carefully considered.

Photo 5A – Background – woodland within Conservation Area. Foreground - southernmost land parcel within the Conservation Area abutting the Public Right of Way

Regeneration opportunities

Development in this location may impact on the business uses at Hewell Kennels. Furthermore, development here is more likely to support the regeneration of Bromsgrove and Redditch Town Centres than development in other areas.

3 Potential Green Belt Boundary

Site overview/ comments

The site contains numerous strong boundaries, especially along the road network, and further enhanced by several areas of dense woodland. However as previously mentioned, due to the setting of Hewell Grange CA and RPG, along with varying topography, a number of strong boundaries could not be considered.

Although a connection of strong boundaries was not possible, using the various ridgelines to screen development in relation to the heritage assets and Green Belt encroachment, other boundaries were used.

From the various site visits, photographs and the boundary assessment plan, an appropriate boundary was drawn that could contain potential development. This emphasised other factors such as historic landscape, impacts on the setting of Hewell Grange Conservation Area, Registered Park and Gardens and topography. Ridges offer strong visual containment; however, as easily identified and defensible boundaries they are weak and could be open to interpretation. Therefore, hedgerow boundaries that complimented these ridgelines were considered suitable.

Built Environment

- Impact on listed buildings, conservation areas, historic parks and non-designated historic assets

The site falls within the sub-divided HECZ148(e) and (f) which are part of the broad Hewell Grange, Bordesley and Alvechurch Parks HECZ. The zone (HECZ148) has an overall medium sensitivity to change.

Most of area 5 falls within HECZ148(e), which is characterised as historic wooded landscape setting around parkland and is of medium sensitivity to change. The western part of the site (including the Hewell Park Lake SSSI) falls within HECZ148(f), which is characterised as Historic parkland with Listed Buildings and is of high sensitivity to change.

All the historic environment assets recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER) – buildings and monuments –fall within the west (or left) hand side of the site. Most of them (including all the listed buildings) are recorded and fall within the Hewell Grange Conservation Area. Only several non-listed historic buildings and a monument²⁵ are outside the Conservation Area.

The Grade II* Hewell Grange Registered Park and Garden (RPG) lies to the immediate west of area 5 and the description is available at <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1000886>. Area 5 falls into an area which forms part of the setting of the Conservation Area (CA) and the RPG. Guidance on the setting of Heritage Assets is provided in the English Heritage (EH) document 'Setting of Heritage Assets: English Heritage Guidance (October 2011)'. EH has derived an assessment process for assessing the implications of development proposals on the setting of heritage assets. This assessment process has been followed and it reveals that development in the majority of area 5 would be harmful to the setting of the CA and the RPG and therefore development should not take place in the majority of this area (see plan and separate document Hewell Grange Registered Park and Garden Heritage Assessment 2012).

The Grade II* RPG at Hewell Grange, comprises extensive formal gardens and parkland which still contains specimen trees and veterans dating from the earliest stages of landscaping in the 17th century. The mansion, the remains of the designed landscape, the major garden features and the parkland still exist and are in a relatively good condition. The boundary of the Conservation Area is slightly larger than the RPG and comprises the immediate country estate surrounding Hewell Grange, the Grade II* mansion and a number of associated estate buildings, which were an integral part of the estate including but unlisted and include the dairy on Hewell Lane, the kennels, the gamekeepers cottage and the game larder all on the edge of the park. These buildings form an interesting group which are a tangible representation of the former workings of the Hewell Estate

The rural setting has also largely survived, adding to the legibility of the estate as a whole and its significance. The immediate surrounding land is almost all agricultural and contributes to the rural feel of the RPG and the CA, and the sense that this is a country estate. There are a small number of farms and estate cottages in the vicinity and their existence underpins the sparsely populated rural nature of the area. The Historic Environment Assessment describes the broader environment as having 'a settlement pattern of farmsteads and strings of wayside dwellings associated with a moderate to high level of dispersal'. Whilst these buildings have become more

²⁵ Records Reference: WSM3362 (buildings), WSM3070 (monuments)

numerous as the centuries have passed this is not to the extent that they have changed the nature of the rural landscape. The CA incorporates some of these buildings notably Tardebigge Court and Paper Mill Cottages. The only changes which do detract are, the two prisons to the north east and the prison officer housing to the north west.

The predominance of the natural boundaries results in the extent of the Heritage Assets being ill defined in many areas, leaving the outer reaches of Heritage Assets(HA) very much part of the rural landscape. Therefore the RPG and CA as a whole largely merge into and are integrated into the surrounding, almost totally rural landscape. This is particularly true at the southern end of the site where the remains of the 17th century parkland are almost indistinguishable at first glance from the surrounding landscape.

The topography of the site also needs to be considered. Parts of the site, notably around Tack Farm are quite high and overlook parts of the HA's and the area adjacent to the kennels, around Batchley Brook, is low and open, with distant rural views. Therefore any new development, when viewed from the HAs, in these areas has every likelihood of being prominent.

In conclusion, whilst setting is not a heritage asset, nor a heritage designation its importance lies in what it contributes to the significance of the Heritage Asset. Furthermore the setting of some heritage assets may have remained relatively unaltered over a long period and closely resemble the setting in which the asset was constructed or first used. The likelihood of this original setting surviving unchanged tends to decline with age and, where this is the case, it is likely to make an important contribution to the heritage asset's significance. The rural setting therefore contributes to the legibility of a historically and aesthetically important country estate, which remains remarkably intact, and therefore our ability to appreciate the significance of the RPG and the CA. For the reasons outlined above the landscape which forms the setting to the CA and RPG should continue to remain largely unchanged so as not to adversely impact on these valuable historic assets.

- Level of potential integration into Redditch

The site could connect to Redditch in terms of its built urban form. Batchley would provide a clear urban connection to Redditch. In addition Hewell Grange provides a clear boundary and barrier to development. In terms of the rural landscape there are boundaries within Area 5 that could be used to contain development and restricting it from sprawling further into the Green Belt.

Transport

It may be concluded that development in area 5 is likely to exert the main pressure on the A448 (Bromsgrove Highway), the Slideslow roundabout and the A38 running northwards to Junction 1 of the M42. These key locations which will require further detailed study to assess the specific impact and mitigation required as a result. Although it must be noted similar impacts are felt from other development scenarios and therefore acknowledging that significant improvements will be required this impact on highways infrastructure is not seen as a barrier to development at this time.

The likely benefits of development here is that it is more likely to assist in the regeneration of both Bromsgrove and Redditch Town Centres than other locations. It is likely that it would be possible to extend the already existing Public Transport services in this location rather than having to provide an entirely new bespoke service as would be required elsewhere.

Proposed Boundary



Area 5 Proposed Developable Boundary

A large proportion of this area would not be appropriate for development due to the surrounding historic built environment and setting of heritage assets. For consistency and taking this issue into account, further work has been done on selecting the most appropriate boundaries that could be utilised.

The strongest defensible boundary, which not only takes the Green Belt purposes into consideration, but respects the issues around topography and in particular the setting of the numerous heritage assets related to Area 5 is outlined above. It unclear at this stage whether or not development in this location will have an adverse impact on the setting of the historic assets. More information is found in the separate document 'Hewell Grange RPG Heritage Assessment 2012'. However, the strongest boundaries are along the southern boundary in the form of Brockhill Drive (Boundary 28) and then west of the round-a-bout along Hewell Lane (Boundary 1).

Relevant Photos

Although the remainder of the boundaries appear to be weak in nature, they are reinforced by the surrounding topography. Boundary 29 lies between a public footpath and the Tack Farm buildings. Both fields are located directly north of boundary 29 and rise to form a ridgeline with Tack Farm, which would contain this section, thereby limiting encroachment, as well as restricting views towards Hewell

Grange and its heritage assets. Although the land dips towards the most north-eastern point along boundary 29, the field parcel to the north also rises to the middle of the field, which also would protect views in and out of Hewell Grange CA and RPG if development were to occur.

Relevant Photos

The potential boundary then continues along boundary 30, which is also only mature hedgerow, but is also contained by the previously mentioned ridgeline. The next suitable boundary would be boundary 32 which runs north along a steep ridgeline. Development would need to be sensitive and designed not to exceed this high point, allowing the topography to protect views from Hewell Grange and reducing the likelihood of Green Belt encroachment.

Relevant Photos

Boundary 9, containing mature trees and mature hedgerow forms the northern perimeter. However there is currently no boundary extending from this area to existing development at Batchley, but it would be logical to for the perimeter at boundary 9 to continue to this area. Development in this location would still be well screened by the ridgeline running along boundary 32. Development any further north would be located on the Batchley Brook floodplain and also still visible from Hewell Grange CA and RPG due to the low-lying nature of the land in this location.

Photo 1 – Boundary 1 - Hewell Lane, looking west towards Tardebigge

Photo 32 – Boundary 1 - Hewell Lane, looking east towards Foxlydiate Junction

Photo 3 – Boundary 2 - Hewell Lane intersection with service track

Conclusion

The western section of the site is in close proximity to an hourly bus service, covering areas around Redditch (including the Town Centre) as well as Bromsgrove and Studley. The educational establishments, GP, the railway station, the Town Centre, the nearest local services at Batchley and nearest employment area in Enfield are all approximately 1.6km to 3.8km from the site, which would be car dependent for most potential residents. However, open space is available within walking distance to the site.

Development within area 5 would need to overcome the varying site specific constraints identified in this chapter, the most significant being the impact on the setting of Hewell Grange Conservation Area and the Registered Hewell Grange Grade II* Historic Park. Other constraints include the SSSI, the Special Wildlife Site, the flood risk / historic flooding areas associated with Batchley Brook. In addition, the wooded areas, existing dwellings and business, and Public Rights of Ways would need to be integrated sensitively into any development. Development on the site would also result in the loss of some Best and Most Versatile land and Green Belt land.

Taking into account the constraints from the historic environment, an area of the site which is contained by the community forest to the southeast, Brockhill Drive B4184 to the southwest, the road to Oxstalls Farm to the northwest and hedgerow to the

northeast could be considered more suitable for development, however the site is only around 4ha (potential capacity of approximately 88 dwellings) and it would not provide the required housing to meet Redditch needs. In conclusion therefore on the basis of information currently available area 5 is not considered a suitable option for an urban extension to Redditch as it potentially would not have sufficient capacity.

Area 6 Focused Appraisal

Area Description

Area 6 is located within and to the north of Redditch, partly within the Parish of Tutnall and Cobley. The area is bounded by Weights Lane to the north and Brockhill Lane to the south west. The area's boundary runs along part of Hewell Road then cuts across the top of Enfield employment area to Birmingham Road (A441) which bounds the eastern part of the area. The Redditch and Bromsgrove administrative boundary bisects this area from Weights Lane Business Park in the north to Brockhill Lane in the South West. The Redditch to Birmingham railway line bisects the eastern side of the area. The Redditch Borough boundary runs through the area, with the north and northwest of the area being part of Bromsgrove District.

The majority of the land is used for arable farming, with many fields used intensively for food production. There are two small wooded areas in the centre of the area connected by a mature tree-lined hedgerow, and there are two fishing pools in the western corner of this area. There is an existing residential area in the southern section of the area that forms part of Brockhill. In addition, certain development is already taking place in the Redditch Area of Development Restraint (ADR) and employment site IN67 to the north of the Enfield employment area.



1. Green Infrastructure

The topography varies across the area with the land rising considerably from the south (100m) to its highest point in the north (150m) at Butlers Hill Farm. The land slopes again towards the west, rising again (156m) and then sloping to a low point (135m) in the western corner of the area. There are two fishing pools on this lower land at the western extremity of the area and the land then begins to rise westwards.

Photo 1: View west towards Butler's Hill from the Birmingham Road

Photo 16B: View south from Butlers Hill towards Brockhill development

Photo 16C: Zoomed in view south from Butlers Hill towards Brockhill development

Photo 23B: View of fishing pool look east back into area 6

Area 6 is located within the Wooded Estate lands type classified from the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). A key feature of this landscape is frequent large, irregular shaped ancient woodland, with clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional small estate villages. However, area 6 has very minimal woodland present, with two small coppices in the centre, but it is in close proximity to Brockhill and Butler's Hill Woods. There are no villages in the area, only a limited number of dwellings forming part of Redditch urban area. The character of this particular area is somewhat fragmented and has also been influenced by the large industrial buildings to the southeast and existing residential development at Brockhill.

Also in accordance with the Worcestershire LCA, the landscape of the area is of high sensitivity. Whilst it would be preferable for development to occur in low sensitivity areas, landscape that is of high sensitivity means that developments have to be designed carefully to ensure that the effect on landscape character is minimised. Moreover, areas surrounding Redditch Borough in Bromsgrove District are all of high/medium sensitivity, meaning that some high/medium landscape sensitivity area will inevitably be lost.

As with all the areas being explored, the land is within the designated Green Belt and the Green Belt function of the area is explored in more detail further in the focused appraisal.

There are no SSSI's within or adjacent to the area. There are no Special Wildlife Sites (SWSs) within the area itself; however, directly to the north of the area is Butler's Hill Wood, which is a SWS (SP06/14). This SWS consists of 39.90ha of broadleaved woodland and includes the National BAP habitats of Oak, Ash and Alder Woodland. There is also a SWS (SP06/12) directly abutting the southwest of the area in the form of Brockhill Wood. This SWS consists of 28.30ha of broadleaved woodland and includes National BAP habitats of Oak and Alder woodland.

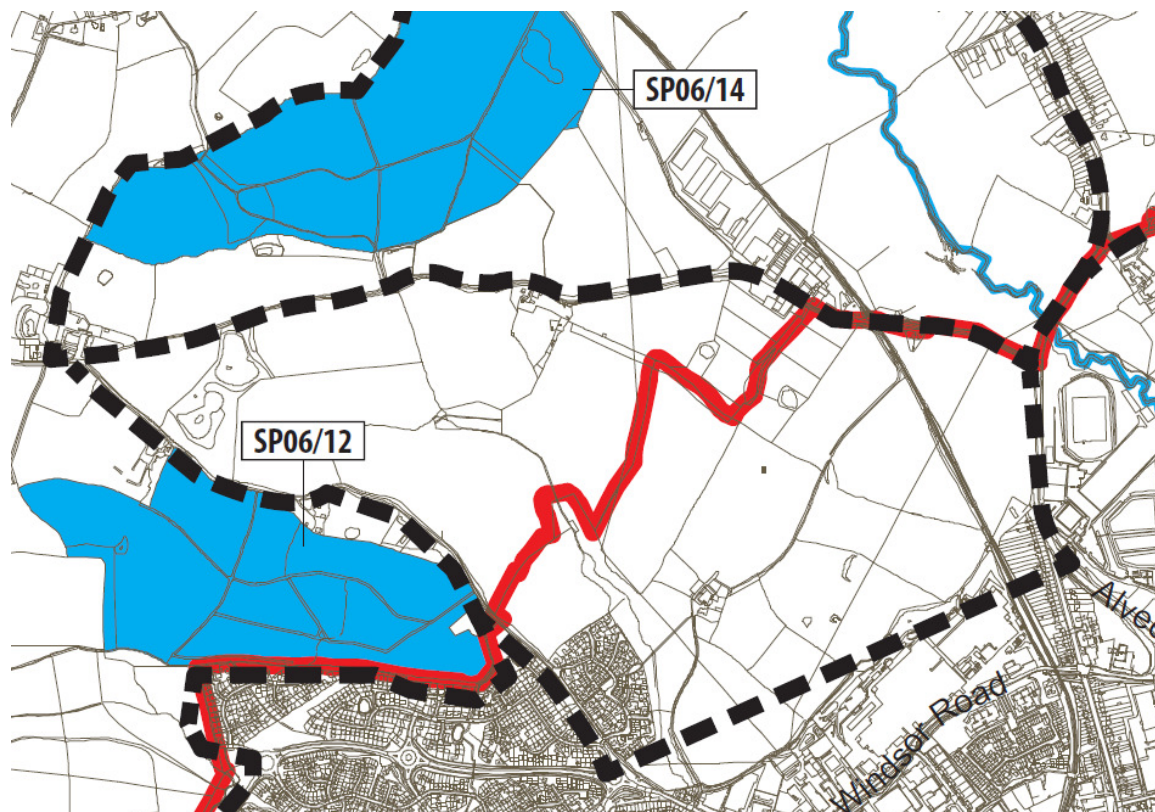


Figure X: Special Wildlife Sites relating to Area 6.

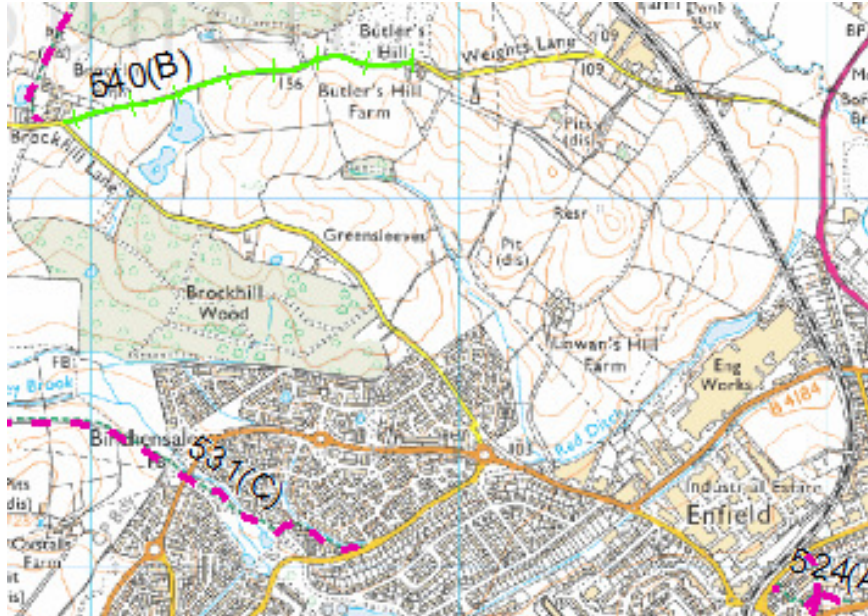
There are a variety of different habitats throughout area 6, with the main ones being a mixture of arable farmland and probably improved grassland. A small proportion of the land to the northwest is possibly unimproved grassland and there are also two very small sections of broadleaved woodland in the centre of the area. This would need to be confirmed through further survey.

As mentioned in the habitats analysis, there are two small areas of broadleaved woodland in the centre of the area. These areas are connected by a mature tree-lined hedgerow. There are number of mature trees located on the highest points in the northeast towards Weights Lane Business Park, as well as tree-lined hedgerows along the southern boundary bordering Brockhill Lane. A similar mature tree-lined hedgerow runs along the Northern boundary from where Weights Lane becomes a Bridleway. None of the trees within the area are protected by Tree Preservation Orders (TPOs), however this does not necessary indicate that there are trees not worthy of protection. Brockhill Wood is located directly south of area 6 and Butler's Hill Wood is in close proximity to the north, the latter being subject to a woodland TPO.

There are no public rights of way actually within the area, however, Weights Lane turns into a narrow track once it reaches the top of Butler's Hill. This limited vehicular access track continues until the scrap yard and from this point it becomes a bridleway (540(B)). This then continues along the northern perimeter of the area till it reaches Brockhill Lane to the west.

There is a public footpath further northwest of the area at Brockhill Farm, which runs north and provides access to further countryside. The only other public rights of way are those associated with the roads that form the perimeter of the area.

Therefore as there are no public rights of way within the area in order to ensure permeability of the site and to also potentially enhance green infrastructure linkages, it is considered desirable that in any new development wherever possible new footpaths should link up with existing ones outside the area.



Source: Worcestershire County Council, 2012

Using the Strategic Map provided by Natural England it appears all of area 6 has 20.1% to 60% likelihood of being BMV land. As land is of a similar quality across all of the areas of focused appraisal, the loss would be equivalent in any area chosen and therefore it is considered a minor constraint to development.

2. Accessibility

The southern and eastern sections of area 6 are in close proximity to bus services, although these parts of the area already fall within Redditch Borough's administrative boundary. There are no bus stops on Weights Lane or Brockhill Lane, which form the boundaries of the area that falls within Bromsgrove District. However, from the centre of the area, there are a number of services in close proximity with bus stops towards Salters Lane and Batchley Road (1.2km). The majority of these services run in and around Redditch to areas such as Webheath, Abbey Stadium, Batchley, as well as Longbridge in Birmingham. These services vary in frequency from 5 to 10 minute intervals (51), hourly (50 and 52), to three journeys per day (145). Also from the centre of the area, there are services that run along the Birmingham Road (1.9km), to the Town Centre, Birmingham, Stratford, and Solihull. These vary from hourly (146), twice a day (182), to once a day (517). Redditch's train station is 2km from the centre of the area, which offers a half-hourly service to Birmingham New Street and beyond to Sutton Coldfield and Lichfield. The limited public transport in the northern and western extremities of the area may improve as development would make services more viable. The need to travel would also be reduced if more local facilities and services were provided as part of the development.

The Town Centre, including retail at the Kingfisher Centre is approximately 2km from area 6. In terms of employment, the nearest site is Weights Lane Business Park, which is approximately 1km to the northeast and is directly opposite part of area 6. Enfield Industrial Estate is also nearby and located 1.2km to the southeast. Various opportunities for employment, shopping and leisure are therefore easily accessible from this area and potentially these trips could be made by sustainable modes.

Birchensale Middle School is the nearest educational establishment at 0.8km away. The nearest two First Schools are Batchley First School (2.2km) and Hollyoakes Field First School (1.9km). Other Educational establishments nearby include, Trinity High School (3.3km), North East Worcestershire College (2.3km) and Pitcheroak School for children with special needs and learning difficulties (2km).

There are no health related facilities within reasonable walking distance of the area; however there are some GP Surgeries a short drive away and potential development on this area could offer the opportunity to develop a new surgery. The nearest facilities include; Millstream Surgery (2.2km), Hillview Medical Centre (2.7km), St. Stephens Surgery (2.3km), The Dow Surgery (2.7km) and Elgar House (2.7km). The Alexandra Hospital, which currently has an A&E service is approximately 8km away.

Overall accessibility to services and facilities in this area are considered good with access to some potentially being possible by sustainable modes of travel. The distances to some of the facilities are within walking distance and to facilities located further afield the use of public transport may be possible. The overall range of services and facilities offered close to this area are considered good.

3. Vitality and Viability

The nearest local facilities are situated 2km to the south at Batchley. This is a purpose built shopping precinct, located within the suburban residential area, with shops located at the ground level. There are currently nine units, mainly for service and convenience purposes and there are no vacant units. There is a grocers, a butchers, a Spar and a Tesco Express, as well as a betting shop, laundrette and two take-a-ways. Development at area 6 could further increase the usage of these facilities, thus improving the vitality of the area. Furthermore the close proximity of the area to the Town Centre would also have benefits in terms of vitality and viability.

There is already an approved planning application for part of area 6 within the Redditch Borough boundary. An emerging policy within the Redditch Draft Local Plan No.4 states that the Brockhill East Strategic Site is capable of including "employment and relevant community facilities and services including, amongst other things, a local centre, a first school and a sustainable public transport network." Further development within area 6 will contribute towards making services and facilities more viable in line with this policy.

4. Flood Risk

There is one ordinary watercourse that runs throughout area 6 in the form of the Red Ditch. This watercourse runs from the centre of the area situated in Bromsgrove District southwards towards Brockhill until its confluence with Batchley Brook. The SFRA Level 2 states that no flooding is identified on the Environment Agency indicative Flood Maps for the reach of Red Ditch identified for additional modeling and assessment. There is also an unnamed watercourse adjacent to Lowans Hill Farm, which is a minor tributary of Red Ditch and no flooding is identified. There are also two fishing pools at the western extremity of the area, which could potentially offer some protection through attenuation and storage. There is also a pond to the south of the area near Windsor Road, which could also offer a similar function depending on the maintenance of the pond and outlet, to ensure that the hydraulic control is optimized.

The majority of the area falls within Flood Zone 1 with a low probability of flooding and there is no historic flooding within area 6, therefore the area would be appropriate for residential development. There is less than 1% of the area located in a high risk area further south within Redditch Borough, however, for the purposes of this study it would not restrict development in Bromsgrove District. The existing area is greenfield and therefore any runoff from the proposed development should be limited to the existing rate as a minimum requirement and preferably betterment of existing runoff volumes and rates to minimise the impact on Red Ditch. A precautionary approach should be adopted to flood risk to ensure that development does not adversely impact on any existing flood risk. A site specific flood risk assessment and drainage impact assessment would need to be carried out as part of any planning application.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

All development has the potential to impact upon water quality and increase demand for water usage. The water conservation hierarchy must be followed and measures will be expected to be in place to manage water resources efficiently. Severn Trent Water confirmed in the updated Outline Water Cycle Study (2012) that the strategic water supply to the Bromsgrove and Redditch study area will support the proposed level of development but that the local distribution network is likely to require reinforcement in many cases. In terms of waste water collection infrastructure, secondary treatment process limitation was identified in Spernal Sewerage Treatment Works (STW) in respect of development proposals for the Brockhill East Strategic Site (within Redditch Borough but fall within area 6). There is, however, no land or other constraints preventing the expansion of Spernal STW. Severn Trent does not consider there are any showstoppers in terms of sewage capacity.

The area is sufficient in scale to be developed in its own right, with the quantity of housing justifying the necessary infrastructure improvements. The land within Bromsgrove District would be linked to the development of the adjacent proposed Strategic Site, parts of which already have been granted permission, as well as having the potential to link with development at areas 5 and 11 in terms of economies of scale. With existing development being so near to area 6, there is a very good opportunity to achieve a proper integration of urban form with the adjoining area of Redditch.

Education:

Worcestershire County Council Education Department has advised that the County is experiencing an increase in the numbers of children starting school in reception classes and that Redditch is a 'hotspot'. In Redditch existing first schools are forecast to fill to capacity and would not be able to accommodate pupils generated by the cross-boundary growth.

As the cross-boundary growth will be located in areas with little or no existing infrastructure then new on-site provision will need to be made. Based on data currently available the growth would be expected to generate 96 additional pupils per year group based on our average of just under 3 per year group per dwelling²⁶. This would equate to two new first schools being required, each with a site capable of accommodating up to 60 children per year group, to be provided alongside the phases of housing. A new middle school may also potentially be required depending on how pupil numbers pan out and if there were any catchment area changes.

Transport:

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary sites was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

Development in this area is likely to disperse movement on the local and strategic highway networks more evenly than other locations, with trips being made both eastwards and westwards but with potential heavy flows on Brockhill Drive. Area 6 has the potential to facilitate pedestrian trips to Redditch Town Centre however investment in infrastructure will be required to maximise walking movements from the area.

Health services ie GP's, dentists:

Before being able to determine whether any new surgeries would be required as a result of Redditch growth an assessment of the existing capacity of surgeries would first need to be undertaken. It is important to remember that currently there is major structural reform and financial pressure in the NHS. The new Health and Social Care Act will create a new market in health provision and it is unclear what the consequences of this might be for health infrastructure planning.

6. Green Belt ***Strategic Green Belt Gap***

Checking unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

A large proportion of this area falls within the Redditch Borough boundary and some of this land is already subject to approved planning applications. The land within Bromsgrove that was assessed in area 6 rises dramatically to its northern boundary and towards the northwest.

²⁶ This figure is due to be reviewed when the appropriate data from the 2011 census is available.

Photo 32B - View from centre of area along Borough boundary looking northwest towards higher land at Butlers Hill Farm

This rise in height towards Butlers Hill Farm combined with the strong Weights Lane boundary that runs along the entire northern boundary offers strong containment and restricts urban sprawl.

*Photo 17 - Weights Lane becomes a Bridleway further west
Photo 14 – Weights Lane outside Butlers Hill Farm looking west*

Both the railway line and the A441 have the potential to restrict urban sprawl to the east and Brockhill Lane has potential to restrict it to the west.

Photo 63 - View southeast from Butlers Hill Wood towards the railway

The land that rises to the west beyond boundary 10 also could serve to contain the area.

Photo 18A – Hedgerow boundary (No.10) off Weights Lane

Preventing neighbouring towns merging

There are no major issues regarding coalescence. The area contains a recent development to the south which is part of the Brockhill estate. In addition the area contains a couple of farmsteads that would also need to be taken into consideration. Although the small ribbon development at Bordesley and the larger settlement of Alvechurch are geographically nearby, the strength of Weights Lane as a potential development boundary could reduce any likelihood of coalescence.

Photo 66B - Weights Lane can be seen in the centre acting as a buffer from Bordesley



This aerial photo shows the strength of the Weight's Lane boundary running across the north of the area, restricting the likelihood of encroachment and coalescence.

Green Belt Encroachment

Safeguarding countryside from encroachment

The area has a number of slopes and ridges considering its small size. The area contains a ridge around the northern part of the Bromsgrove and Redditch Boundary. This ridge is also covered in patches of woodland. These ridges would reduce the risk of encroachment from development further south; however development north of the ridgeline would certainly lead to encroachment.

Photo 7A – View west from Weights Lane at the northern ridge line along the Borough/District boundary

The area also rises to the west of the area beyond field boundaries 10 and 15. Development past this ridge would lead to encroachment of the countryside as this area appears remote from the remainder of the area. The ridge (156m) would visually contain any development further east in the area.

Photo 18A – Hedgerow boundary (No.10) off Weights Lane

Photo 28 – View of west beyond boundary 15 emphasising the containment potential of the ridge

The highest point of the area is 156m in the vicinity of Butlers Hill. This south-easterly ridge could act as a northern containment of the area from the wider countryside.

Photo 16C - View from the highest point (Butlers Hill Farm) looking due south across the area

Brockhill Lane could act as a strong boundary along the entire southwest of the area. Brockhill Wood is also south of this boundary, which could combine to safeguard the countryside from encroachment further west and southwest

Photo 25 – Brockhill Lane is bordered either side by mature trees

Regeneration opportunities

No major issues, however development could have a positive effect on Enfield Employment area.

7. Built Environment

All of area 6 falls within the Hewell Grange, Bordesley and Alvechurch Parks Historic Environmental Character Zone (HECZ148 (e))²⁷ which is of medium sensitivity²⁸. Whilst it would be preferable for development to occur in low sensitivity areas, historic environment that is of medium sensitivity is resilient to some change if designed properly. The amenity value²⁹ of this HECZ zone shows that the area has limited contributions towards defining local distinctiveness and sense of place from a historic environment point of view. The potential score³⁰ shows that a range of high quality assets probably survive in the zone. HECZ (e) is categorised by historic woodland landscape setting around parkland. Development on this area would be unlikely to impact on the historic woodlands but could affect the historic hedgerows that act as linkages.

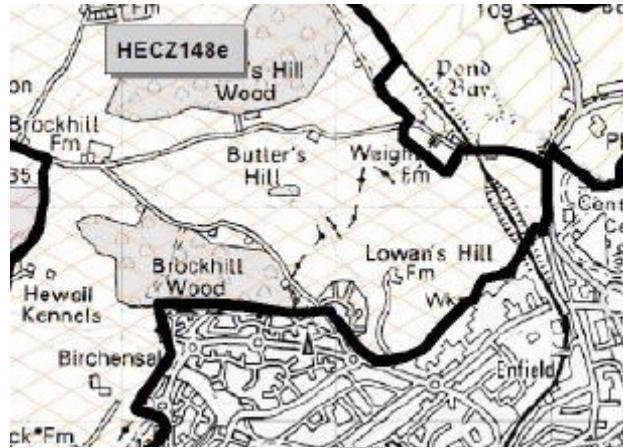
²⁷ Bromsgrove Historic Environment Assessment 2010

²⁸ Sensitivity score of the Hewell Grange, Bordesley & Alvechurch Parks HECZ is 2.

²⁹ Amenity value score of the Hewell Grange, Bordesley & Alvechurch Park HECZ is 2.

³⁰ Potential score of the Hewell Grange, Bordesley & Alvechurch Park HECZ is 3.

The historic assets of the area are very limited with no Listed Buildings, historic parks or Conservation Areas in close proximity to the area. The only asset recorded in the Historic Environment Records (HER) is an element of Ridge and Furrow earthworks (Ref: WSM09858) towards the northeast of area 6.



HECZ area

Whilst it would be preferable for development to occur in low sensitivity areas, historic environment that is of medium sensitivity would need to be carefully designed as large developments can have a significant impact on the historic environment. It is noted there is some capacity that would be resilient to change given appropriate design.

These designations do not present any major issues in terms of developing this area and any development should be sensitive to these designations.

Area 6 has the potential to integrate with the existing built form. Land to the south already contains an existing residential area and a considerable amount of this has been built within the last ten years. There could be natural progression of this residential area into the countryside. There is existing employment in the southeast, and future employment related development could integrate with the existing units. As mentioned, Weights Lane forms the boundary to the north, which could contain any potential development.

8. Highways

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary sites was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

Development in this area is likely to disperse movement on the local and strategic highway networks more evenly than other locations, with trips being made both eastwards and westwards but with potential heavy flows on Brockhill Drive. Area 6 has the potential to facilitate pedestrian trips to Redditch Town Centre however investment in infrastructure will be required to maximise walking movements from the area.

Proposed Boundary

The proposed boundary follows Brockhill Lane from Redditch up until field boundary 15, the woodland at 18, east along 8 and then north along boundary 10. It then continues along Weights Lane to the A441 which marks the eastern boundary.

The proposed boundary line includes mature tree lined fields with a coppice at the corner of boundary 18 and 8 and a wooded area to the east of boundary 8. The strongest boundaries follow the key roads, namely Weights Lane and Brockhill Lane, which bound the area. The only boundaries within the area are weak field boundaries. It is considered unsuitable for all of area 6 to be released from the Green Belt due to the north western part of the area being very isolated from the existing urban area in terms of topography and because of the impact on the countryside and openness of the Green Belt. This is exemplified by the land rising to a point in-between boundary 10 and 14.

The built up area of Redditch is not visible from the corner of Weights Lane and Brockhill Lane due to the rise in height of the land. The proposed boundary occurs at a point which is below a ridgeline and where the built up area of Redditch is clearly visible.

Brockhill Lane (Bdy 16) leads from residential areas to the northwest of Redditch and acts as a strong boundary across the southwest of the area. The majority of the road has steep sided embankments and mature trees running along either side (Photo 25), which further strengthens its potential as a Green Belt boundary.

Photo 25 - Brockhill Lane bordered on both sides by trees

Photo 27A - View southeast into Redditch, with mature trees present to the right of photo running along Brockhill Lane

Photo 29B - Another view southeast illustrating the mature nature of Brockhill Lane as a field boundary

The proposed boundary then cuts north along boundary 15. This boundary appears too weak as it is mainly post and rail fencing and thistle type planting. However, the land rises due west to form a ridge which would contain the area. This boundary is also very short in length and planting could connect the woodland at 18 with the tree-lined roadside of Brockhill Lane (16).

Photo 28 - The short boundary 15 could connect the mature woodland seen either side

As seen in photo 27D, the mature woodland at 18 would make a logical Green Belt boundary, which could then extend along boundary 8 to woodland at 19. Boundary 8 mainly consists of mature trees.

Photo 27D - Woodland at 18 and the beginning of boundary 8

Photo 69B - View north of boundary 8

As the majority of the boundaries across the area are weak field boundaries, the next logical progression from boundary 8 is north along the mature tree-lined hedgerow along boundary 10. This would then connect to Weights Lane where the bridleway begins. As previously mentioned, the land rises after boundary 10 to a high ridge line

in the middle of the field (between boundary 10 & 14). This ridgeline serves to contain the remainder of the area.

Photo 21A - View west looking at boundary 10

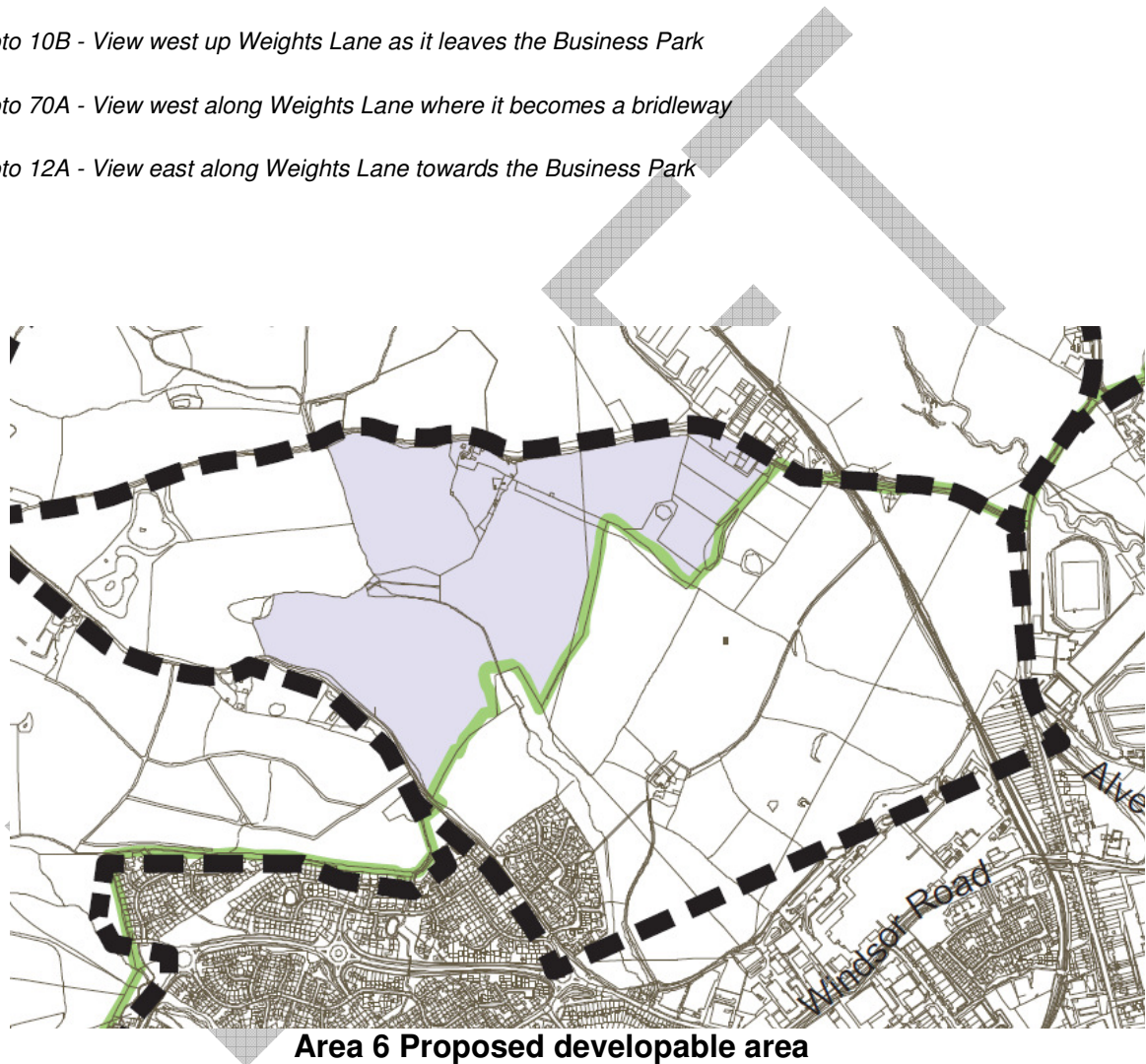
Photo 18A - View east looking at boundary 10

From boundary 10 the proposed Green Belt boundary would run along Weights Lane, from the brideway along boundary 9 to the wide road at the junction with the A441. This includes boundaries 2, 5, 6, and 9, all of which are strong and capable of restricting urban sprawl.

Photo 10B - View west up Weights Lane as it leaves the Business Park

Photo 70A - View west along Weights Lane where it becomes a brideway

Photo 12A - View east along Weights Lane towards the Business Park





Conclusion

It is clear from the focused appraisal that area 6 has the potential to accommodate some growth towards Redditch's housing and/or employment needs. A large proportion of area 6 is within Redditch Borough boundary and parts are already subject to approved planning permission for both housing and employment. Further growth in this area could potentially integrate with these proposals as well as the existing development at Brockhill.

The southern and eastern sections of area 6 are in close proximity to a number of bus services, with frequent services in and around Redditch, as well as less frequent services to Bromsgrove, Birmingham and Longbridge. Development in this area could lead to an improvement of some services and could also potentially lead to additional services. The railway station, the Town Centre and nearest local services at Batchley are all approximately 2km from the area, which would be car dependent for most potential residents. However, in line with Redditch Borough's draft policy on future development at Brockhill East, it is expected to provide numerous community facilities, which includes a local centre.

Birchensale Middle School is 800m from area 6, but all other schools are approximately 2.2km or more away. The Draft Strategic Site policy for Brockhill East also states a first school would be required, which could accommodate additional growth in this location. Although the nearest GP surgery is some 2.2km away, there could potentially be scope for a new facility as part of the new local centre.

There are two employment locations nearby area 6, with Weights Farm Business Park (1km) and Enfield Industrial Estate (1.2km), with employment opportunities being expanded as part of the Draft Brockhill East Strategic Site Policy.

Although there are numerous positive attributes to the location of area 6, there are also site specific constraints that would need to be taken into consideration and

resolved through careful design. One of the underlying features of this area is the varying topography, with the northern extremity reaching 150m at Butlers Hill and land further west reaching 156m at its highest point. Although there are topography constraints on development, appropriate design could reduce this negative impact, particularly regarding long-term views. The high points in the north, most notably along Weights Lane and the bridleway, as well as the ridgeline to the west could successfully contain potential development.

There appears to be no flooding issues recognised with area 6 and there will be minimal adverse effects on water quality and demand for water usage if mitigation measures are implemented. In terms of sewerage treatment, the works at Spernal may need expanding, but this would be the case for all areas to the north and east of Redditch.

There would be a loss of agricultural land, as well as Wooded Estate lands, which is highly sensitive. However, the majority of land around Redditch is of high agricultural quality and also a sensitive landscape. There are no SSSIs or SWSs within the area itself and although the land forms part of the Wooded Estate lands landscape character, trees and woodland coverage is minimal on the area. There are two small coppice woodlands in the centre of the area and some tree covered ridges situated in the northeast. These woodlands along with numerous tree-lined hedgerows could be integrated in to the design of development and contribute to the green infrastructure network. As there are currently no public rights of way on the area, development could potentially give people greater access to the countryside through green corridors that could successfully be designed into any scheme.

As with all the locations around Redditch, development would lead to the loss of Green Belt land. However, area 6 has numerous features that could potentially reduce the potential harm created on the Green Belt. The perimeter of the area would create strong, defensible Green Belt boundaries to contain development and restrict urban sprawl. Brockhill Lane forms the boundary to the southwest, which is bordered by mature trees either side as well as Brockhill Wood adjacent to the south. Weights Lane forms the northern boundary, which is also tree-lined, especially when it becomes a bridleway from Butler's Hill. The land rises dramatically to the north, which re-enforces the boundaries containment attribute. Land to the west also rises before descending to the fishing pools near Brockhill Farm. This ridge line could also potentially contain development and reduce the likelihood of urban sprawl. Due to the strong boundaries and containment potential of the topography it is extremely unlikely further encroachment of the countryside will lead to coalescence with neighbouring settlements.

Overall, the focused appraisal illustrates that area 6 could be considered suitable for the provision of land required to meet some of Redditch's growth needs. The potential housing capacity for the identified developable area that falls within Bromsgrove District amounts to 22.4 hectares, which could accommodate approximately 672 dwellings.

Area 8

Area Description

Area 8 is located to the north of Redditch's urban area and boundary, within the Parish of Alvechurch. It is bounded by the Birmingham Road (A441) to the west, The Holloway/ Storage Lane (C2035) to the north, Icknield Street (C2044) to the east, and Dagnell End Road (B4101) to the south. The area is bisected by Dagnell Brook which flows north to south through the area; another tributary joins the brook from Icknield Street. A private track runs parallel to the west of the brook and provides access to Lower Park Farm in the north and to Lower Park Fisheries and their associated lakes in the middle of the area.

The area contains farming land which is mainly arable but includes some that is used for livestock purposes; there are also wooded field boundaries and copses. Peck Wood is located in the North West corner of the area. Dwellings are located mainly around the perimeter of the area along small sections of the Redditch Road, Icknield Street and Dagnell End Lane. Farmhouses and agricultural units are also situated throughout the area.



1. Green Infrastructure

Parts of the area rise considerably in particular at the north west, up to 130-140 metres in places and the area with two ridges parallel to the A441 (See photo 4C and 7B). The topography is gentler in the mid and eastern parts of the area falling to 90 metres where Dagnell Brook crosses Dagnell End Road.

Photo 4C (left): View to second ridge at wooded area at Bordesley Hall with ploughed field dropping from first ridge.

Photo 7B (right): view south to Redditch showing rising ground to ridge with the A441 running parallel to the right side of the photo.

Photo 29A (left): View from Dagnell End Lane northwards showing much gentler topography.

Area 8 is primarily located in Wooded Estate lands landscape type although the north east is located within Principle Timbered Farmlands landscape type. Area 8 is located within an area that is considered to be of medium landscape sensitivity. Landscape with a character of medium sensitivity is generally able to accommodate change subject to sensitive design.

Whilst it is preferable for development to occur in areas of low sensitivity all of the land around the periphery of Redditch is of medium or high sensitivity and therefore the medium sensitivity of this area is not an undue constraint that weighs against the choice of this particular area.

In addition the scrap yard at the junction of Dagnell End Road and Icknield Street may present an added constraint. The Worcestershire County Council Waste Core Strategy advises that a 250m exclusion zone is appropriate for residential development in the vicinity of these facilities.

The area contains one Special Wildlife Site, the Dagnell Brook SWS and is adjacent to two further SWS's and a SSSI (see figure X). The Dagnell Brook SWS (SP07/15) flows through the area and provides an important wildlife habitat in this part of the district. There are records of protected species such as otter and white-clawed crayfish within the watercourse.

There are 2 SWS's located adjacent to the northern boundary of the area. The first, Peck Wood SWS (SP07/11) is a broadleaved woodland that is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna. The second, Roney Green SWS (SP07/12) is a complex area of varied geology and topography, scattered around the hilltop village of Roney Green. The area comprises a mosaic of woodlands, alder carr, unimproved acid grassland, bracken scrub, wet flushed areas and elements of a valley mire habitat. The SSSI located south of the area is Dagnell End Meadow and this is a neutral grassland. Any development here would have to be carefully planned to ensure that there is not an undue impact on these statutory designations.

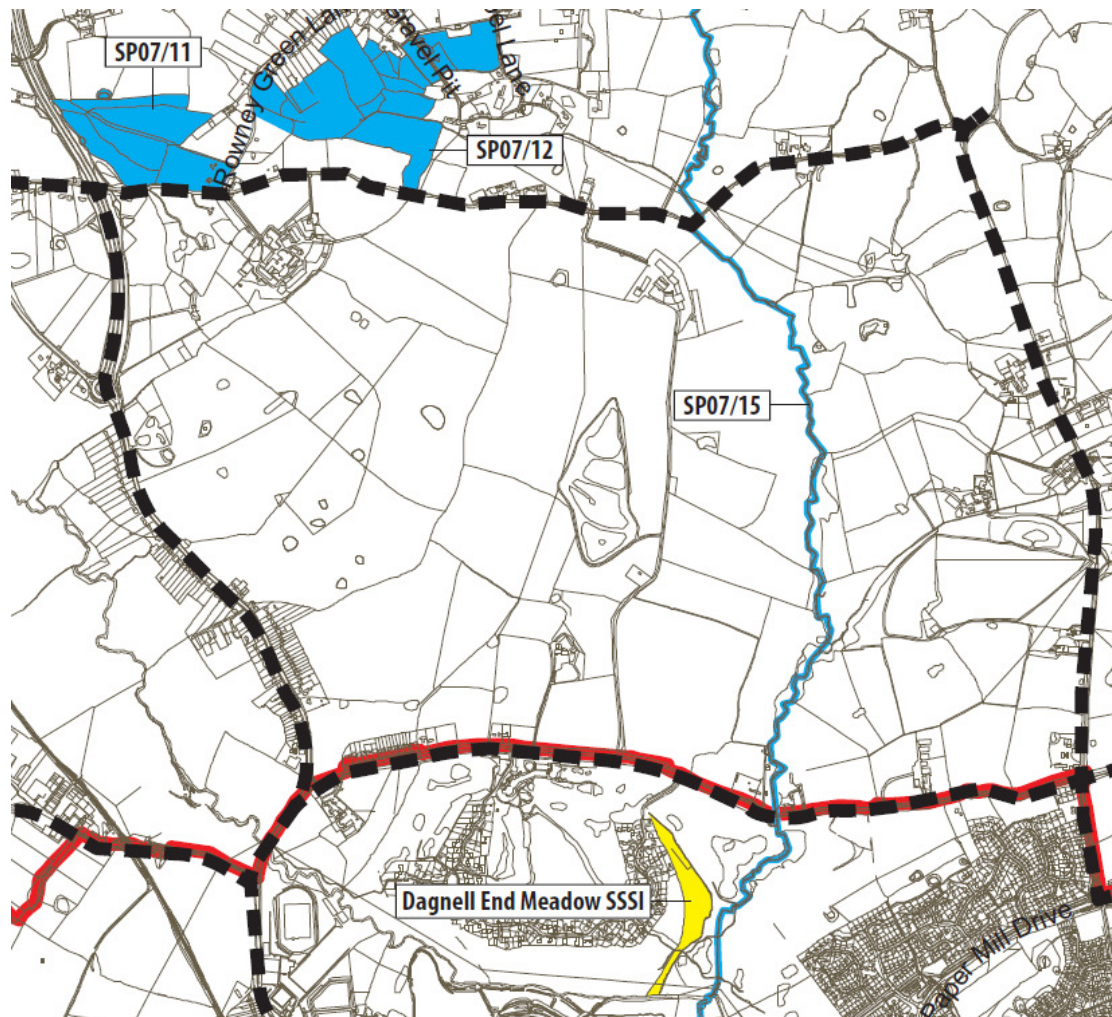


Figure X: Special Wildlife Sites relating to Area 8.

This large area also contains habitats identified within the Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan. Further information is available from the Worcestershire Habitat Inventory by Worcestershire County Council. There are 2 areas of woodland and 2 traditional orchards. Much of the land is considered grassland, much of which is probably improved although some is expected to be unimproved. It is considered that development of the scale envisaged would be required to develop on some grassland habitats but should be done sensitively. In addition the following protected species such as toads and grass snakes have been found within the area and any development would need to mitigate the impact to these species.

Across this large expanse of land, the amount of tree cover is generally quite limited with the exception of an area of woodland adjacent to Bordesley Hall and a concentration of trees adjacent to the Dagnell Brook. A small cluster of trees are covered by a TPO in the south west corner of the area adjacent to the A441. Mature hedgerows are located along a number of field boundaries which provide an important function as part of the green infrastructure network. Mature trees and important hedgerows should be retained as part of the green infrastructure network if the area is developed.

There are three public rights of way located within the area (see figure X). A footpath bisects the area from north to south (628(c)), secondly in the north east another crosses the area from Storage Lane to Icknield Street (563(c)) and finally a footpath cuts across the south east of the area from Icknield Street to Dagnell End Lane (564(c)). These footpaths would provide opportunities for potential residents to have good access to the Arrow Valley Park and local facilities in Redditch.

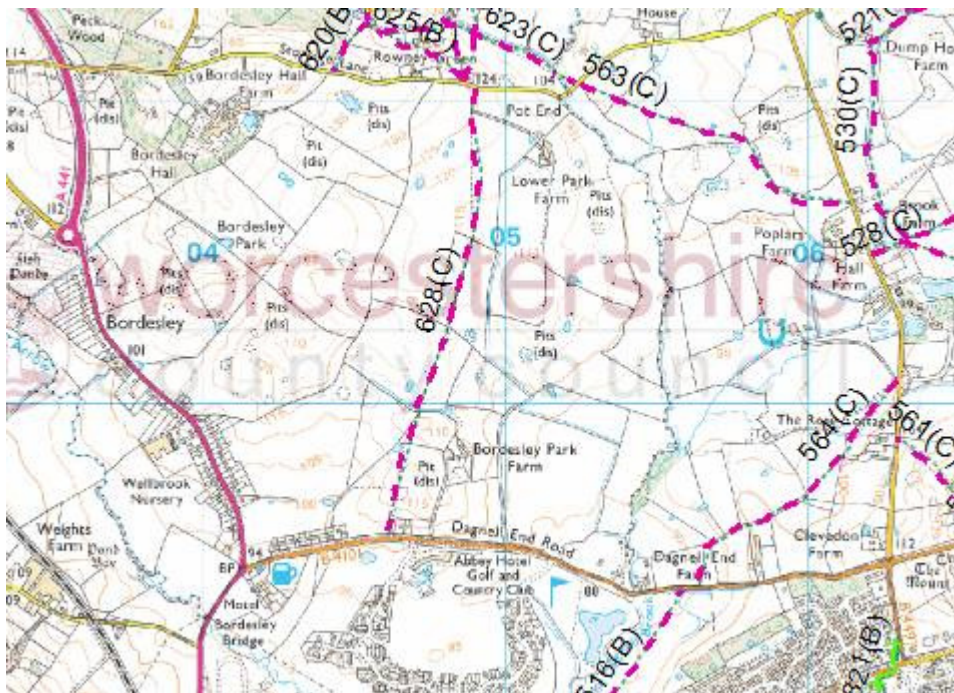


Figure X: Public rights of way within area 8 (Source: Worcestershire County Council 2012)

The majority of the land has between 20.1 to 60% likelihood being the best and most versatile agricultural land. A parcel of land in the eastern half of the area has a greater than 60% likelihood of being the best and most versatile agricultural land. As land is of a similar quality across all of the areas of focused appraisal, the loss would be equivalent in any area chosen and therefore it is considered a minor constraint to development.

2. Accessibility

There is an hourly bus service operating along the Birmingham Road through Bordesley to Redditch and to Birmingham (bus routes 146/ 182/183) with more buses at peak times. There is also a flexibus service offering one route per day (except Sundays) to and from Redditch (Bus Routes 517/519). In addition there is a bus service to Redditch and Birmingham every hour with more services in peak times (bus routes 50A and X50) which is within walking distance, approximately 0.12km to the south east of area 8 on Icknield Street. From the identified centre point within the area it is 1.7km to the nearest bus stop. For many this would be considered beyond a reasonable walking distance. The area is approximately 4.3km to Redditch and 4.9km to Alvechurch Train Stations. From either station trains are available every 30 minutes into Birmingham New Street station. With access to

public transport beyond a reasonable walking distance it is considered that development in this location would encourage travel by car.

The area is located adjacent to the Regional Cycle Route 55, which runs along the southern border of area 8 on Icknield Street, which is part of a local cycle network from Redditch to Kings Norton.

In terms of retail and services the area is approximately 4.04km from the services and facilities within Alvechurch from the central point in area 8 and approximately 5.1km to Redditch Town Centre and retail at the Kingfisher Centre. This is considered to be beyond a reasonable walking distance.

Weights Farm Business Park is located 2.4km to the west of area 8 and Enfield Industrial Estate is 3.8km to the south west of the area 8. Further employment opportunities are available at Ravensbank Industrial Estate and Moons Moat North Industrial Estate which are located 4.3km from the area. In addition Bordesley Hall, northwest of the area with a number of smaller businesses, and a scrap metal merchants in the south east are located within the area and provide very limited sustainable opportunities for travelling to work from the area.

Access to health care is poor with the nearest GP surgery approximately 2.85km³¹ away although this would be improved if a medical facility were provided on site. The Alexandra Hospital is 8.3km away and approximately 10 minutes drive. The closest school is Beoley First School in Bromsgrove District which is approximately 3km from the area³², Church Hill Middle School is approximately 3.17km away and Trinity High School is the closest High School being approximately 4km away.³³ The area is approximately 4.76km from Pitcheroak School for children with special needs and learning difficulties and 4.22km from North East Worcestershire College, Peakman Street. The area would be dependable on car usage however certain rerouting of bus routes and more regular services would improve the sustainable travel options on site although this could be costly. In addition it should be noted that Redditch train station is 4.3km from the area.

Area 8 is located 2.21km from the Abbey Stadium Sports Centre and the South Western part of area 8 is located only 1.45km away. The Abbey Hotel and Golf Club is adjacent to the area. All of these facilities allow recreational use which could encourage healthy lifestyles.

3. Vitality and Viability

³¹ 2.85km Doctors Surgery, Tanhouse Lane, Redditch, B98 9AB, 4.04km Doctors Surgery, The Square, Alvechurch, Birmingham, B48 7LA, 4.2km Doctors Surgery, Radford Road, Alvechurch, Birmingham, B48 7LD

³² First Schools: 3.07km - [Beoley First](#), Holt End, Beoley, B98 9AN; 3.17km - [Abbeywood First](#), Wood Piece Lane, Church Hill, B98 9LR; 3.5km [St Stephen's CE First](#), Mabey Avenue, B98 8HW; 4.94km - [Moon's Moat First](#), Cleeve Close, Church Hill South, B98 9HR; 5.81km - [Crown Meadow First](#), Birmingham Road, Alvechurch, B48 7TA;

³³ High Schools: 3.98km - [Trinity High School & Sixth Form Centre](#), Easemore Road, B98 8HB; 6.71km - [Arrow Vale Community High - Sports College](#), Greensward Lane, Matchborough, B98 0EN

The services and facilities within Alvechurch are approximately 4.04km from the central point in area 8. Although this is beyond reasonable walking distance it would provide access to a Co-op convenience store, two hot food takeaways, two pubs, village hall, social club, pharmacy and off licence amongst other services. In addition Rowney Green is only 2.75km away from the central point in area 8.

There are limited local facilities near the area boundary including a pub³⁴, Travelodge, Petrol station and the 4 star Abbey Hotel with spa and golf course. A Sainsbury's foodstore is also located nearby. Facilities in Church Hill District Centre are approximately 5.4km away and include "a car park, medical centre and church centre. The convenience offer comprises of a large McColls store. The comparison offer consists of chemists. Service units consist of a hair salon, fish and chip shop and a pub. There is a large YMCA building located within the centre of the shopping rank. This appears to be a vibrant and busy institution." (Town Centre and Retail Study, WYG, Sept 2008). This District Centre is currently undergoing regeneration to include additional medical facilities.

Development on area 8 may make the provision of additional local facilities more viable and could improve the vitality and viability of services within Redditch Town Centre (5.1km away) and Church Hill District Centre (5.4km away). However it should be noted that the closest facilities are within Bromsgrove District and this may work against the primary objective of providing housing for Redditch's needs as residents may use Bromsgrove District in particularly Alvechurch (4.04km away) and Rowney Green (2.75km away) for certain services.

4. Flood Risk

Dagnell Brook flows southward from Storage Lane through to Dagnell End Lane and then joins the River Arrow, south of the area in the Arrow Valley Park. A tributary joins Dagnell Brook from Icknield Street within the south eastern part of area 8. The source of Dagnell Brook is located to the southwest of Weatheroak Hill, north of the M42 and east of Alvechurch. It is classified as an ordinary watercourse for its entire length and flows almost due south, joining the River Arrow just inside the Redditch Borough boundary.

The SFRA Level 1³⁵ for Bromsgrove and Redditch states that "*there are no formal flood defence structures or reports of fluvial flooding along this [Dagnell] Brook. However there are plans to construct a nature reserve alongside the Brook which may help to alleviate the flooding further downstream, most notably where the Brook passes beneath Dagnell End Lane. Land drainage due to heavy clay and surface water discharge are the main concerns in this catchment.*"

There are also a number of ditches which contain some water throughout the area. The fishing lakes at the centre of the area should also be noted as they could potentially offer some protection through attenuation and storage. Flood zone definition is only available for Dagnell Brook and some areas within the area along Dagnell Brook fall within flood zone 2 and 3, however, complete flooding data for area 8 is not available. It is considered that development on the flood zone 3 can be

³⁴ Meadow Farm

³⁵ Completed by Royal Haskoning, January 2009

avoided and this land incorporated into the GI network to also protect biodiversity. Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems could potentially be incorporated in any new development to manage surface water run off.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

Water:

In terms of receiving water quality, Sernal Sewerage Treatment Works discharges to the River Arrow, to which Dagnell Brook is a tributary, and the river fails significantly on ammonia and reactive phosphorus levels. Consideration of potential land contamination when development is proposed is important to ensure protection of human health and the wider environment. This would need to be considered at the planning application stage. All development has the potential to impact upon water quality and increase demand for water usage. The water conservation hierarchy³⁶ must be followed and measures will be expected to be in place to manage water resources efficiently.

Severn Trent Water confirmed in the Outline Water Cycle Study Update that the strategic water supply to the study area (i.e. Bromsgrove and Redditch) will support the proposed development but the local distribution network is likely to require reinforcement in many cases. Although from the wastewater collection side, it is recommended that additional development sites should be located in larger catchments such as Sernal or Priestbridge, both Sernal and Priestbridge STWs have minimal or negligible spare treatment capacity. This being noted there is no land or other constraints preventing STW network expansion. Following further discussions with STW regarding sewerage issues, it is understood that as Area 8 is located closest to the trunk sewer upstream compared to the other areas it performs strongly in this respect.

Education:

Worcestershire County Council Education Department has advised that the County is experiencing an increase in the numbers of children starting school in reception classes and that Redditch is a 'hotspot'. In Redditch existing first schools are forecast to fill to capacity and would not be able to accommodate pupils generated by the cross-boundary growth.

As the cross-boundary growth will be located in areas with little or no existing infrastructure then new on-site provision will need to be made. Based on data currently available the growth would be expected to generate 96 additional pupils per year group based on our average of just under 3 per year group per dwelling³⁷. This would equate to two new first schools being required, each with a site capable of accommodating up to 60 children per year group, to be provided alongside the phases of housing. A new middle school may also potentially be required depending on how pupil numbers expand further and if there were any catchment area changes.

³⁶ Avoid, reduce, recycle and disposal

³⁷ This figure is due to be reviewed when the appropriate data from the 2011 census is available.

Transport:

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary sites was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

Development in this location is likely to exert the main pressure on the A441 and the A435 northwards thereby exerting greatest pressure on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) operated by the Highways Agency (HA). Development would very likely encourage commuting northwards to Birmingham where the economic benefits would manifest. It is therefore less likely to assist in the regeneration of either Redditch or Birmingham Town Centres

In terms of Public Transport provision this location is poorly served and to improve provision here a new bespoke system would be required which would very likely prove very costly. Area 8 will also require significant investment in walk and cycle infrastructure in order to provide the necessary level of accessibility to/from the area to maximise the use of sustainable modes of transport from the site.

Health services ie GP's, dentists:

Before being able to determine whether any new surgeries would be required as a result of Redditch growth an assessment of the existing capacity of surgeries would first need to be undertaken. It is important to remember that currently there is major structural reform and financial pressure in the NHS. The new Health and Social Care Act will create a new market in health provision and it is unclear what the consequences of this might be for health infrastructure planning.

6. Green Belt

Green Belt Gap

Checking unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

It was difficult to assess this area against the Green Belt criterion as the built form of Redditch is particularly sparse in this location. This is due to the prominence of the Arrow Valley Park designation, which precludes built urban form along the length of Dagnell End Road from the eastern-most part point, where Church Hill North development abuts the boundary to the western-most point at the Birmingham Road (A441) junction.

There is no logical extension to the urban form of Redditch in this location and this is a key concern for this area. Any development within area 8 would cause urban sprawl beyond the existing built up area of Redditch more than any other area in the focussed appraisal work, due to its lack of existing connectivity with the built form of Redditch.



From Storage Lane, looking south into the western parts of the area, it was clear that the west offered little in the way of strong defensible boundaries to prevent sprawl. Development in this part of the area has the potential to sprawl unrestricted, from Dagnell End Road all the way to Storage Lane, with only the presence of very weak boundaries to offer any containment.

Photo 18A - View south from Storage Lane towards Dagnell End Road

Photo 64 demonstrates the lack of strong defensible boundaries within the western parts of this area. The majority of the boundaries consist of low-lying hedgerows which would not contain development.

Photo 64 - View from Lower Park Farm track towards the western parts of the area.

Preventing neighbouring towns merging

Development towards the northern extent of area 8 could potentially lead to the coalescence with the settlements of Rowney Green and Alvechurch. There is a strong presumption against reducing the Green Belt gap northwards between Redditch and the West Midlands conurbation and enveloping these settlements. There is existing ribbon development along the A441 (Birmingham Road) which is known as Bordesley. Development within this area would merge with Bordesley.

Green Belt Encroachment

Safeguarding countryside from encroachment

The south eastern corner of the area offers the strongest containment boundaries, running from boundary 37 (Dagnell Brook), eastwards to Icknield Street. The boundary at the brook is strengthened by the strong tree line.

Photo 33A shows the extent of the tree line which runs adjacent to the Dagnell Brook. Located at the southern half of the area.

Photo 74B also shows the strong tree line alongside the Dagnell Brook.

The remainder of the southern half of the area is slightly more undulating; views from Storage Lane may be contained by higher areas which run parallel to Dagnell

End Lane across the area just south of the fishing pools. The northern parts then continue to rise with unrestricted views up towards Storage Lane, which is predominantly flat across its width. This increases the feeling of remoteness as this area cannot be seen from the Redditch urban area due to the higher areas in the foreground.

A distinct lack of strong defensible boundaries in this area makes it difficult to determine where any development would start to encroach into the countryside unless existing weak boundaries were strengthened considerably.

Photo 70B view from Lower Park Farm track towards Dagnell Brook

Photo 26B from public footpath 628 (c) towards the south western boundary

Photo 28 from public footpath 628 (c) towards western edge of area (closer to Dagnell End Road than Photo 26B)

Regeneration opportunities

Development in the south-eastern location may impact on the business uses at the scrap metal merchants. However, there may be opportunities to recycle the waste ground in the vicinity of the mound at point 49.

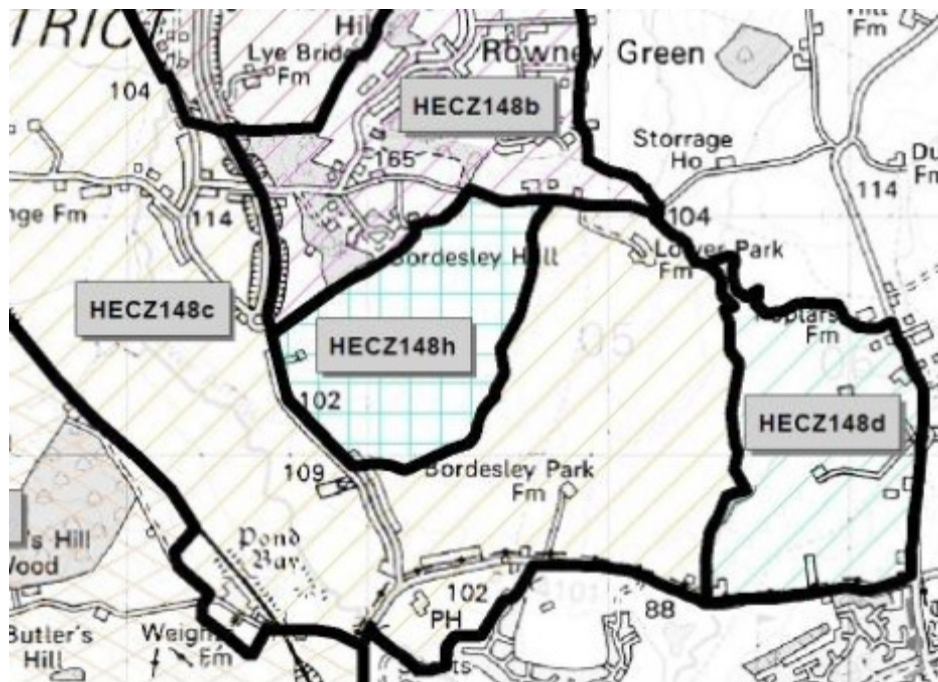
Potential Green Belt Boundary

Site overview/comments

All of the land within this area fulfils Green Belt purposes very well due to its location with respect to the existing Redditch urban form and its location between Alvechurch/Rowney Green and Redditch. This area offers little in the way of strong boundaries to enable a good potential development location to be identified and therefore the boundaries that have been selected are considered to be the most appropriate with regard to their physical attributes.

6. Built Environment

Area 8 is located within Historic Environment Character Zone (HECZ) 148c, 148h, 148b, 148d with a north eastern section of the area falling within the Holt End to Weatheroak Hill HECZ (133). The Alvechurch area has medium sensitivity to change and the Hold End area has high sensitive to change. Within HECZ 148b development will potentially impact on the green setting of Rowney Green and also views to and from it. Within HECZ 148c development may have an impact on sensitive archaeological remains preserved within, and below, alluvial deposits in the Arrow Valley, although the River Arrow doesn't flow directly through area 8 there is likely to be less of an impact. In the south east corner of area 8, HECZ 148d, development will potentially impact on the historic field pattern and below ground archaeology associated with Ryknild Street. In the north west of area 8, HECZ 148h, development will potentially impact (particularly visually) on the largely open, relic parkland landscape and setting of Rowney Green that occupies high ground. In terms of the north eastern part of the area within HECZ 133 there are a large number of undesignated above and below ground features including the Roman road, Ryknild Street.



HECZ areas

There are no conservation areas or substantial historical issues within the area although the numerous listed buildings would serve as development constraints. The area contains seven Grade II Listed Buildings. Four of which are located at Dagnell End Farm which is located on Dagnell End Road to the east of Dagnell Brook. These Grade II listed buildings include Dagnell End Farmhouse, a C18 Farmhouse with C19 additions. In addition to this the Barn immediately north west of Dagnell End Farmhouse, the Cattle Shelter immediately west of Dagnell End Farmhouse and the Cartshed Granary and Pigsties immediately north of Dagnell End Farmhouse are all Grade II Listed Buildings. Lower Park Farmhouse is located to the northern part of the area, accessed by a private track. Poplar Farmhouse is situated in the north eastern part of the area off Icknield Street and Rose Cottage is located in the south eastern part of the area off Icknield Street.

There are a number of designations from the Historic Environment Records (HER) particularly relating to the landscape including cropmarks and a settlement.³⁸ There are also dwellings on the HER within area 8 which are noted as worthy of historic importance.³⁹

³⁸ WSM00742 Enclosure, WSM09867 Ring Ditch / Cropmark, WSM09876 Occupation Site / Cropmark.

³⁹ WSM02055 Farmhouse, Timber Framed Building, WSM03344 Holloway / Earthwork, WSM09755 Earthwork, WSM09945 Farmhouse, WSM09946 House, WSM21300 Settlement, WSM30441 Cropmark, WSM30745 Farm Building, WSM31548 Farmhouse, WSM35549-WSM35550 & WSM45553 - WSM35555 Ridge and Furrow / Earthwork, WSM37594 Barn, WSM37600 Cattle shed, WSM37601 Barn, WSM37602 Bakehouse, Farmhouse, WSM37603 Cart Shed, Granary, Pigsty.

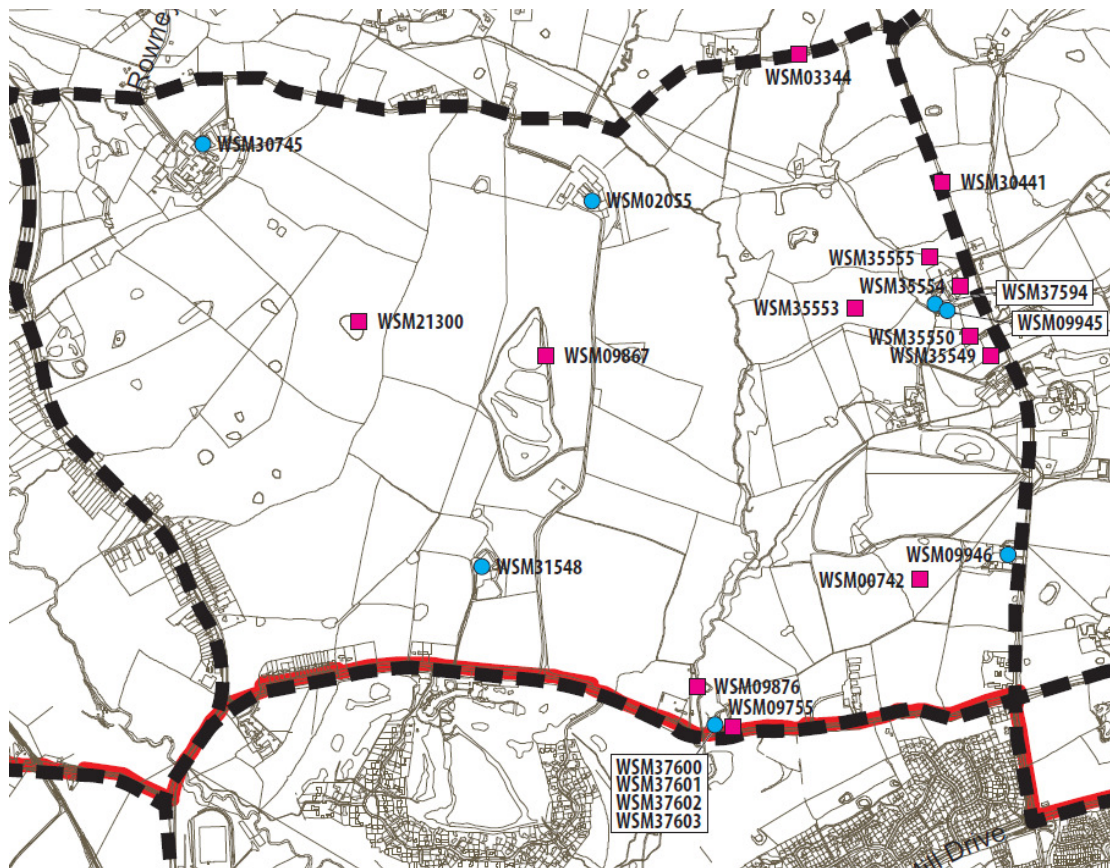


Figure X: Area 8 Historical Environmental Record designations

In addition to these on site assets it should be noted that the area is 3.38km from Beoley Conservation Area (south east corner within 1.22km) and the area is 2.34km (south east corner within 0.21km) to The Mount a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Any development should therefore be sensitive to these designations.

Whilst it would be preferable for development to occur in low sensitivity areas, historic environment that is of high or medium sensitivity would need to be carefully designed as large developments can have a significant impact on the historic environment. It is noted there is some capacity that would be resilient to change given appropriate design.

The area is poorly connected to Redditch in terms of its built urban form. The Arrow Valley Park covers a substantial part of the area to the south of Dagnell End Road. Hither Green Lane to the south of Dagnell End Road does not connect strongly with Redditch built form, as a golf course and the Arrow Valley park surrounds it. In addition the dwellings to the northern part of Paper Mill Drive connect to some extent with the south eastern corner of area 8 at Dagnell End Road. It is considered that development in area 8 would not connect well with the existing urban form of Redditch.

7. Highways

Highways modelling conclusions

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary sites was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

Development in this location is likely to exert the main pressure on the A441 and the A435 northwards thereby exerting greatest pressure on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) operated by the Highways Agency (HA). Development here would be likely to have less impact on the Bromsgrove highway network. Development here is also likely to encourage commuting northwards to Birmingham. Furthermore it is less likely to assist in the regeneration of either Redditch or Birmingham Town Centres and it is likely to encourage commuting into Birmingham where the economic benefits will manifest.

In terms of Public Transport provision this location was poorly served and to improve provision here a new bespoke system would be required which would very likely prove very costly. Area 8 will also require significant investment in walk and cycle infrastructure in order to provide the necessary level of accessibility to/from the area to maximise the use of sustainable modes of transport from the site.

Proposed Boundary (Including map showing potential site area)

The boundaries identified above within area 8 are not, in Green Belt terms, particularly strong to defend. However, development further north than the boundaries identified within area 8 has no strong physical or topographical stopping points to rely on until it reaches Storage Lane, The Holloway and the Bordesley Hall estate. This option would have serious consequences for both countryside encroachment and coalescence with nearby settlements. Therefore in Green Belt terms no development would be preferable for this area; however for consistency further work has been done on selecting the most appropriate boundaries that could be utilised.

The strongest defensible boundary, which takes the Green Belt purposes into consideration, would be to exclude this area from consideration for development in its entirety. Dagnell End Road forms a strong defensible boundary to the existing urban area. There is no urban development adjacent Dagnell End Road, therefore urban sprawl is not an issue. However, increasing urban development beyond this boundary would be fragmented from the closest development mass at Church Hill North. Development in this location would also encourage the merging of settlements, and without strong defensible boundaries this would be difficult to prevent, and may ultimately lead to potential future coalescence of settlements.

However, for the exercise of identifying additional land for growth around Redditch, and consistent analysis across the whole review, the most defensible boundary, which takes the Green Belt purposes into consideration, runs along the extent of Dagnell End Lane and northwards along Icknield Street to point (52).

Icknield Street clearly provides a strong boundary and the most eastern edge of the area.

Photo 1B shows Dagnell End Road is a clear existing defensible boundary.

Photo 75 Shows the boundary of Icknield Street

The boundary would then follow the watercourse along (43) to its intersection with Dagnell Brook (37).

Photos demonstrating this point can be seen above – photo 33A and 74B

It would be realistic and defensible in Green Belt terms, to include the southerly undulating land on the assumption that field boundaries (67, 70, 30, 32 and 4) can be strengthened. The visual intrusion into the area from development in this location would be minimal, as views are well contained from Storrage Lane by high ground and therefore development in the southern half of the area can, in the main, be visually contained.

The area then flattens from this mid-point towards Storage Lane, this land should be omitted as having development potential, as this could be considered as encroachment into the countryside due to the remoteness from the urban form.

Photo 18B demonstrates that land to the south of this area is visually well contained from Storage Lane.

The following photos demonstrate a number of the field boundaries which must be strengthened further in order to provide a fully strong and defensible boundary.

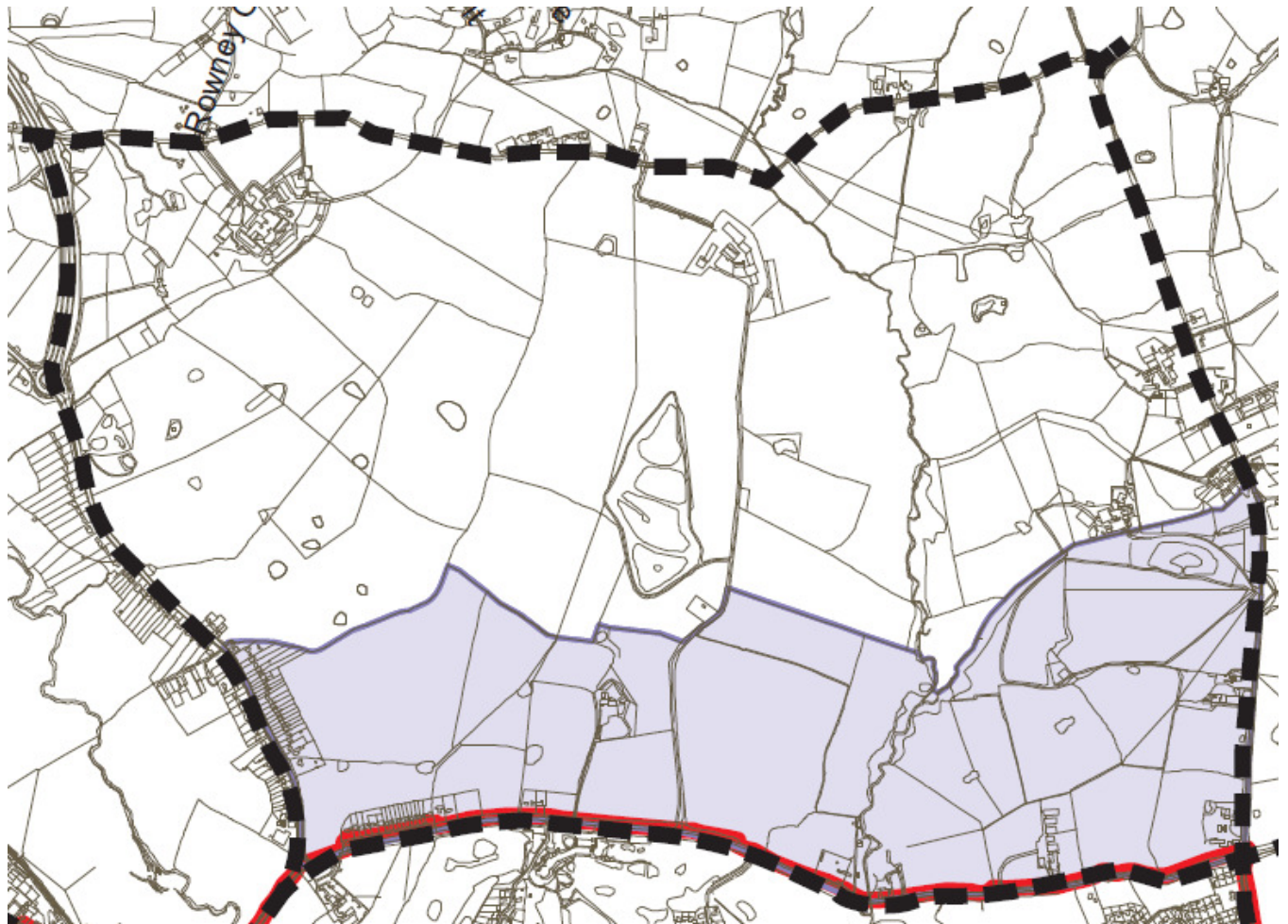
Boundary 67 can be seen in distance

Boundary 4

Boundary 32

Boundary 70 can be seen to the right hand side of the track

Photo 72 shows the strong boundary provided by the A441 (Birmingham Road). The area's western-most boundary would run along Birmingham Road (2).



Area 8 Potential Green Belt boundary

Conclusion

Any development within area 8 would need to overcome the varying site specific constraints identified in this chapter, including the Special Wildlife Site at Dagnell End Brook and the associated flood risk areas, which would limit the developable area. In addition the Tree Preservation Orders, existing dwellings, listed buildings and Public Rights of Way's would need to be sensitively integrated into any development.

It should be noted that the nearest facilities are within Bromsgrove District and this may work against the primary objective of providing sustainable development for Redditch's needs. Due to the distances to services and facilities in Redditch Town Centre and Church Hill District Centre potential residents within this area would be dependant on the car, and would result in unsustainable travel patterns, unless there were substantial improvements to public transport, linkages to the area along with infrastructure improvements and provision of on site services and facilities which could be costly.

Development on the area would result in the loss of agricultural land and wooded estatelands. In addition Green Belt would be lost. Development within area 8 would raise a number of strong concerns in terms of potential impact to the Green Belt. Development could occur within the area but there are no strong defensible

boundaries and it would have serious impact on the Green Belt which could lead to sprawl, encroachment and coalescence with other settlements.

There could be wider impacts to the surrounding habitats including the SSSI and Arrow Valley Park and there would be no significant connection to the built urban form of Redditch making development within area 8 divorced from Redditch Town and effectively severing the important green corridor that runs along the Arrow Valley into the countryside beyond. Some areas of the area like the south east part within the brook could be considered more suitable for development, however this alone would not provide the required housing to meet Redditch needs and this part of the area has an added constraint from the scrap yard and potential buffering required, therefore area 8 is not considered a suitable option for an urban extension to Redditch.

The existing boundary at Dagnell End Road is a strong and defensible boundary and there are no substantial boundaries apart from brook flowing north to south which doesn't offer any useful boundary to develop the area. It is considered that the potential impact on the purposes of the Green Belt impact in particular raises substantial concerns as to the suitability of area 8 to take housing growth to meet the needs of Redditch District. The estimated capacity for dwellings that could be accommodated on Area 8 is 2689.

Area 11

Area Description

Due to the large expanse of land covered by area 11, the area analysed for the purposes of the focused appraisal covers land mainly to the east of the Redditch to Birmingham railway line including a smaller section of land to the south of Butlers Hill Wood SWS. The River Arrow bisects this part of the area from the north to the south eastern corner with the A441 close to Weights Lane, which is the southern boundary and Grange Lane to the north. The area is in two Parishes; Tutnall and Cobley to the west of the River Arrow and Alvechurch Parish to the east.

The area contains farming land which is mainly arable but includes some that is used for livestock purposes, as well as several mature wooded areas. In addition, the houses furthest east in Bordesley form a ribbon of development along the A441 at the eastern boundary.



Area 11 focussed appraisal boundary

1. Green Infrastructure

The majority of the eastern section of area 11 is flat as it is in the River Arrow flood plain and is approximately 100 metres in height. However, there is a triangular parcel of land to the south west of the railway that rises approximately 50 metres reaching a peak of approximately 150 metres at Butler's Hill.

Photo 8A (above): View from area 8 westwards on area 11 showing River Arrow flood plain (and Weights Farm Business Park to left) with land rising at Butlers Hill Wood.

Photo 1 (left): View westwards into area 11, at the Dagnell End Lane/ A441 junction, showing the tree line along the River Arrow and steep rise in topography to Butlers Hill.

Photo 52A (right): View northwards showing relatively flat area of River Arrow floodplain.

Area 11 is primarily located in Wooded Estatelands. Area 11 is located within an area of high landscape sensitivity risk and development would need to be sensitive to minimise and mitigate impact to the landscape. In addition the land around the River Arrow is low lying and the land along Weights Lane towards Butlers Hill rises by approximately 50 metres and any development within area 11 would need to be sympathetic and potentially constrained by this landscape feature.

Area 11 contains no SSSI's, however, Hewell Park Lake SSSI is located to the southwest. Two nearby Special Wildlife Sites (SWS) could be adversely affected by any development (see figure X):

The River Arrow SWS (SP06/18) rises from an overflow at Lower Bittell Reservoir to join the River Avon at Salford Priors in Warwickshire. For much of its length it is lined with trees and shrubs and creates an important wildlife corridor through the landscape. It is particularly valuable where it flows through the centre of Redditch where both the river and its attendant valley form a significant green wedge through the town.

Butler's Hill Wood SWS (SP06/14) is broadleaved woodland situated on flat-topped hills to the north of Weights Lane. Virtually none of the area retains its original canopy trees, except around the wood's boundaries. However, this is an extensive area, with varied terrain, springs, ditches, damp grass rides and at least three different broadleaved woodland habitats present. Therefore it remains a valuable wildlife resource.

In addition two SWS are situated nearby area 11 which include SP07/06 Shortwood Rough Grounds which is broadleaved, mixed and yew Ancient and Semi Natural Woodlands and SO96/19 the Worcestershire and Birmingham Canal which has reedbed and canal habitats. These SWS's could be adversely affected by any development. Further ecological surveys would be required to examine the full extent of biodiversity in this location, however, any impact on these two SWS's would lead to a negative result.

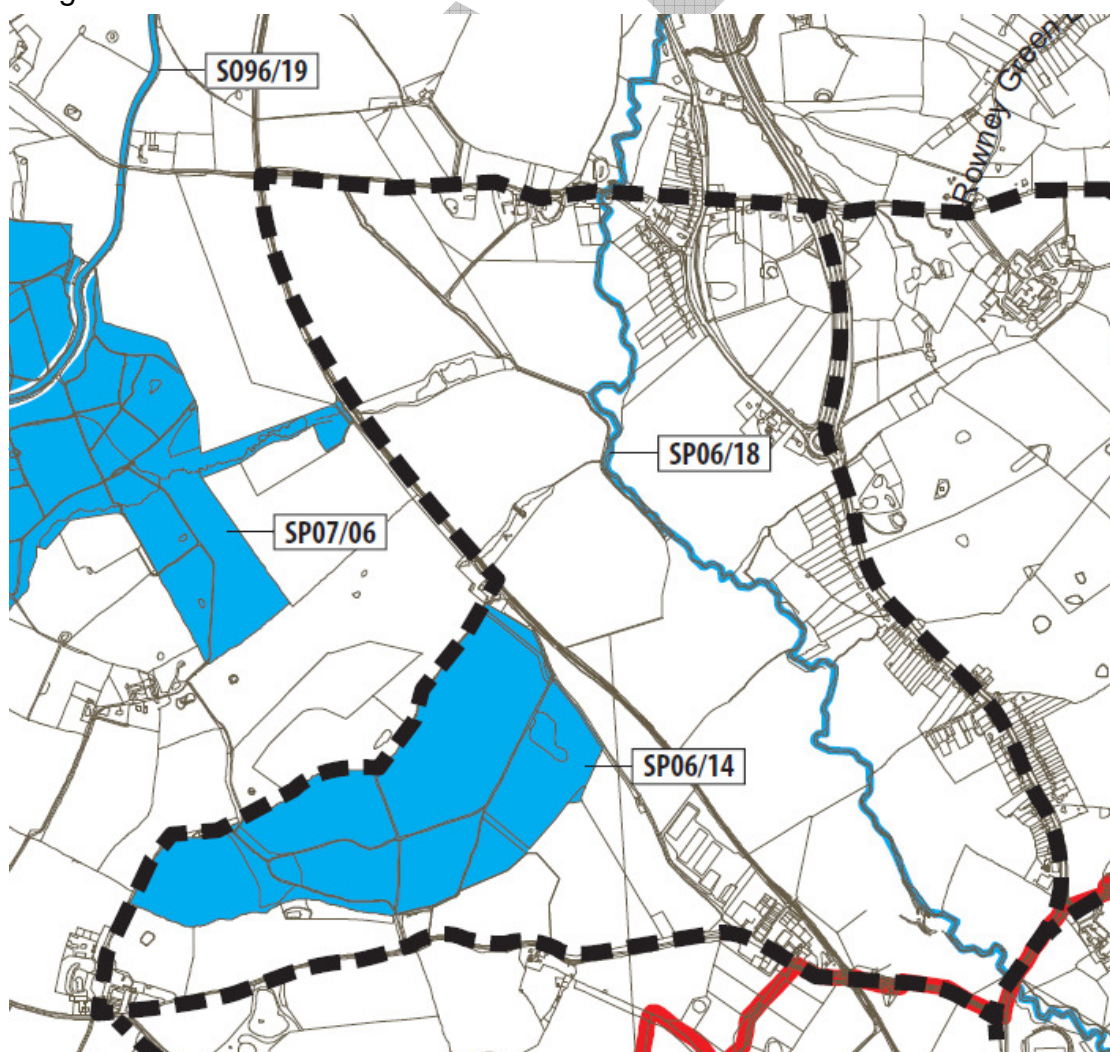


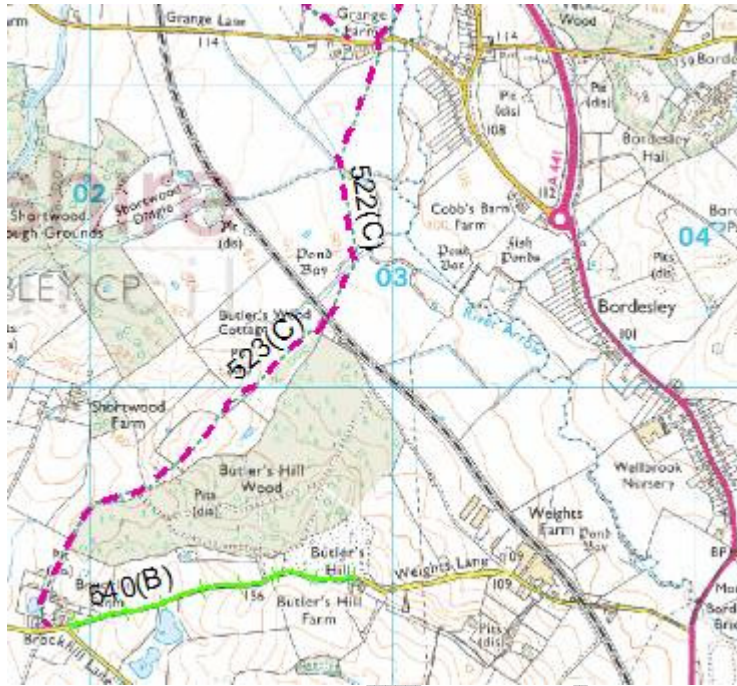
Figure X: Special Wildlife Sites relating to Area 11.

The habitats within area 11 mainly comprise “probably improved grassland” with some “possibly unimproved grassland”. There is a small amount of “broadleaved meadows” and “mixed yew woodland” in particular along the ordinary watercourses. Further information on habitats is available from the Worcestershire Habitat Inventory by Worcestershire County Council. It is considered that development of the scale envisaged would be required to develop on some grassland habitats but would need to be done sensitively. In addition impact on protected species should be mitigated by any development, this includes great crested newts. White clawed crayfish (a notable species) have also been found in the River Arrow in Redditch.

There are a number of trees, mature hedgerows and wooded areas, including Butlers Hill Wood, within the area which have protection and could be enhanced as part of the green infrastructure network provision within any new development, thereby minimising the impact on natural features and biodiversity. Butlers Hill Wood has a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) and protection under its SWS designation. Apart from that there are relatively few TPO designations within the area. This does not negate there being trees worthy of protection that could constrain development, however this is considered an issue that could be overcome by good design.

There are two public footpaths that bisect area 11 firstly from Grange Lane across fields south to the railway (522) and secondly from Brockhill Lane around the north of Butlers Hill Wood to the railway (523). Although these footpaths appear to provide a route across the area they terminate at the railway and there is no publically accessible way to get across the rail track without going north to Grange Lane or South to Weights Lane. There is also a bridleway which runs along Weights Lane until Brockhill Lane (540).

Development on this area could have a negative impact on the enjoyment of rural pursuits such as use of bridleways and public footpaths. Alternatively public footpaths and bridleways could provide increased recreational opportunities, including the potential improvement of the PROW network, provided they are sensitively integrated into new development.



(Source: Worcestershire County Council, 2012)

The land bounding the River Arrow has a greater than 60% likelihood to be best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land. Beyond this the remainder of the area has between 20.1 to 60% likelihood BMV agricultural land. As land is of a similar quality across all of the areas of focused appraisal, the loss would be equivalent in any area chosen and therefore it is considered a minor constraint to development.

2. Accessibility

There is an hourly bus service operating along the Birmingham Road through Bordesley (route 146) and an hourly service along Hewell Lane (route 143), however, the majority of the area would not be within walking distance of a bus stop. The area is approximately 3.8km to Redditch and 3.5km to Alvechurch Train Station. The railway line runs through the area north to south. With the majority of services and facilities beyond a reasonable walking distance it is considered that development in this location would encourage travel by car more than some of the other areas being appraised, unless significant improvements are made to public transport and walking and cycling measures.

The area is approximately 3.6km to the Town Centre and retail at the Kingfisher Centre and within 3km to services within the centre of Alvechurch. This is considered to be beyond a reasonable walking distance. Enfield Industrial Estate is located 3.3km to the south east of area 11 and Weights Lane Business Park located in the southern boundary of area 11 within walking distance to most of the area. In addition there are several farms within the area including Grange Farm to the north and Brockhill Farm to the South.

Access to health care is poor with the nearest GP surgery approximately 3km away in Alvechurch⁴⁰ although this would be improved by the likely need for on site provision of a medical facility. Alexandra Hospital is 7.8km away and approximately 10 minutes drive. The closest school is 2.8km from the area within Redditch.⁴¹ The area is approximately 4.16km from Pitcheroak School for children with special needs and learning difficulties and 3.46km from North East Worcestershire College (on Peakman Street). The area would be dependant on car usage however rerouting and increased provision on local bus routes would improve the sustainable travel options on site.

Area 11 is located 1.44km from the Athletics Track and Abbey Stadium Sports Centre with the south eastern part of the area within walking distance at approximately 0.48 km and 1km further east is Abbey Hotel and Golf Club. All of these facilities allow recreational use which could encourage healthy lifestyles.

3. Vitality and Viability

The services and facilities within Alvechurch are approximately 2.8km from the central point in area 8. Although this is beyond reasonable walking distance it would provide access to a Co-op convenience store, two takeaways, two pubs, village hall, social club, pharmacy and off licence amongst other services.

Development on area 11 could improve the vitality and viability of services within Redditch Town Centre (approx 3.6km) and to some extent Batchley District Centre (approx 3.6km). Emerging policy within the Redditch Draft Local Plan No.4 states that the Brockhill East Strategic Site is capable of including “employment and relevant community facilities and services including, amongst other things, a local centre, a first school and a sustainable public transport network.” Development within area 11 would make these services and facilities more viable. However, as shown by the distances from facilities in Alvechurch and within Redditch Town above, it should be noted that the closest facilities are within Bromsgrove District and this may work against the primary objective of providing housing for Redditch’s needs as residents may choose to use Bromsgrove District for services.

4. Flood Risk

The River Arrow bisects the area from north to south at the eastern side of area 11. Some of the land either side of the River Arrow is in Flood Zones 2 and 3 which serve as a constraint to development on the area and will limit any potential developable area. Flood zone definition is only available for the River Arrow. There

⁴⁰ 2.8km Doctors Surgery, The Square, Alvechurch, Birmingham, B48 7LA; 3.4km Doctors Surgery, Church Road, Redditch, B974AB, 4.9km Doctors Surgery, William Street, Redditch, B974AJ, 4.9km Doctors Surgery, Adelaide Street, Redditch, B974AL

⁴¹ 2.8km St Stephen's CE First, Mabey Avenue, B98 8HW; 3km Batchley First School Cherry Tree Walk, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 6PD; 3.44km Crown Meadow First, Birmingham Road, Alvechurch, B48 7TA; 3.6km Birchensale Middle School Bridley Moor Road, Redditch, B97 6HT; 3.9km Holyoakes Field First School Bridge Street, Redditch, Worcestershire, B97 6HH; 3.3km Trinity High School & Sixth Form Centre, Redditch Easemore Road, Redditch, B98 8HB

are also two other un-named watercourses at the southern part of the area. It is considered that development on the flood risk areas can be avoided and incorporated into the GI network to also protect biodiversity. SuDS could potentially be incorporated in any new development to manage surface water run off.

5. Infrastructure Capacity

Water:

In terms of receiving water quality, Spernal discharges to the River Arrow and the river fails significantly on ammonia and reactive phosphorus levels. Consideration of potential land contamination when development is proposed is important to ensure protection of human health and the wider environment and would need to be considered at the planning application stage.

All development has the potential to impact upon water quality and increase demand for water usage. The water conservation hierarchy⁴² must be followed and measures will be expected to be in place to manage water resources efficiently. Severn Trent Water confirmed in the Draft Outline Water Cycle Study Update that the strategic water supply to the study area (i.e. Bromsgrove and Redditch) will support the proposed development but local distribution network is likely to require reinforcement in many cases. Although from wastewater collection side, it is recommended that additional development sites should be located in larger catchments such as Spernal or Priestbridge, both Spernal and Priestbridge STWs have minimal or negligible spare treatment capacity. But there is no land or other constraints preventing the STWs expansion. Severn Trent does not consider there are any showstoppers in terms of sewage capacity.

Schools:

Worcestershire County Council Education Department has advised that the County is experiencing an increase in the numbers of children starting school in reception classes and that Redditch is a 'hotspot'. In Redditch existing first schools are forecast to fill to capacity and would not be able to accommodate pupils generated by the cross-boundary growth.

As the cross-boundary growth will be located in areas with little or no existing infrastructure then new on-site provision will need to be made. Based on data currently available the growth would be expected to generate 96 additional pupils per year group based on our average of just under 3 per year group per dwelling⁴³. This would equate to two new first schools being required, each with a site capable of accommodating up to 60 children per year group, to be provided alongside the phases of housing. A new middle school may also potentially be required depending on how pupil numbers expand further and if there were any catchment area changes.

⁴² Avoid, reduce, recycle and disposal

⁴³ This figure is due to be reviewed when the appropriate data from the 2011 census is available.

Highways:

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary sites was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

Development in this location is likely to exert the main pressure on the A441 and the A435 northwards thereby exerting greatest pressure on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) operated by the Highways Agency (HA). Development here would be likely to have less impact on the local highway network. Development here is also likely to encourage commuting northwards to Birmingham. Furthermore it is less likely to assist in the regeneration of either Redditch or Birmingham Town Centres and it is likely to encourage commuting northwards into Birmingham where the economic benefits will manifest.

In terms of Public Transport provision this location was poorly served and to improve provision here a new bespoke system would be required which would very likely prove very costly.

Health services ie GP's, dentists:

Before being able to determine whether any new surgeries would be required as a result of Redditch growth an assessment of the existing capacity of surgeries would first need to be undertaken. It is important to remember that currently there is major structural reform and financial pressure in the NHS. The new Health and Social Care Act will create a new market in health provision and it is unclear what the consequences of this might be for health infrastructure planning.

6. Green Belt

Strategic Green Belt Gap

Checking unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas

As only the eastern section is deemed a realistic possibility to development within this area, strong boundaries form a perimeter in the form of Grange Lane to the north, the A441 to the east, the railway to the west and Weights Lane to the south. The River Arrow runs parallel to both the railway and the A441, dissecting the area from north to south.

Photo 72 - The tree-lined River Arrow towards the south of the area

Photo 4 - View northwest across area from the A441. Railway in distance, River Arrow borders the right and Weights Lane to the left

The northernmost boundaries are some distance from the urban area and development on these parcels could be considered urban sprawl, although sensitive treatment of boundaries of any development could limit this impact.

Photo 40B - View south from northern extremity of the area indicating no urban landscape visible

Photo 66B - View from highest point in area 8 looking across area 11. The urban area can be seen in distance on other side of area 6.

The appearance of urban sprawl could appear to be exacerbated by the flat topography of the area, which doesn't provide any visual or physical containment opportunities.

Photo 54 - Looking north across the area from near Weights Lane, illustrating the flat nature of the area.

There is however a triangular parcel of land to the south in-between Weights Lane, Butlers Hill Wood and the railway which could prevent urban sprawl. This parcel of land rises to the west.

Photo 51B - View west beyond railway at contained triangular parcel of land

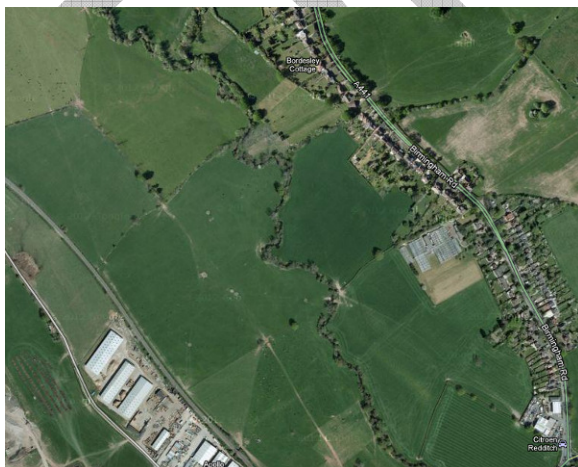
Photo 56C - View from track off Weights Lane at the parcel of land showing topography and Butler's Hill Wood

Preventing neighbouring towns merging

The area gives some concerns of coalescence especially towards the north of the area towards Alvechurch and the ribbon development of Bordesley along the A441.



The northern boundary of area 11 is close to Alvechurch and development along the Redditch Road



Ribbon development along the A441 (Bordesley) acts as the eastern boundary to the area but development east of the River Arrow could lead to coalescence

Green Belt Encroachment

Safeguarding countryside from encroachment

The eastern part of area 11 is relatively flat and low-lying compared to the surrounding areas as the land forms part of a flood plain for the River Arrow.

Photo 3 - View west from A441 illustrating the flat nature of the area. Also visible is the tree-lined River Arrow.

Photo 41A - View southeast from north of the area

Photo 49 - View from centre of area looking southeast towards the River Arrow

There are several weak boundaries crossing the area from the railway line in the west to the River Arrow further east making it difficult to identify a strong northern boundary for the area.

Photo 37A - View north from Weights lane looking in-between the railway and the River Arrow

Photo 44B - View looking south from the northern section of the area

Boundaries 7 to 10 have some potential of being connected to the River Arrow although these options are not ideal as it would lead to weak containment, countryside encroachment and coalescence issues with Alvechurch. Although boundaries 7 and 9 are strong and contain woodland, boundaries 8 and 10 that connect to the River Arrow are weak and would need substantial strengthening to create a feasible boundary.

Photo 46B - Boundary 7 contains evergreen woodland

Photo 47A - View along part of boundary 9 and the weak boundary 10 consisting of post and rail fencing

Photo 48A - View south looking at boundaries 7 to 10

Regeneration opportunities

The area contains Weights Farm Business Park and a scrap yard to the south of Butlers Hill Wood. Both have the potential for regeneration opportunities subject to contamination issues being explored.

Photo 66A - View from area 8 looking west at Weights Farm Business Park, which is situated along the railway to the south of the area

Potential Green Belt Boundary

Site overview/ comments

As mentioned above, only the eastern section of area 11 was considered worthy of examination for Green Belt review purposes due to the remote and unsustainable nature of the rest of the area. There are a number of strong boundaries in and around the area. In particular, the A441 forms a strong eastern boundary, Grange Lane a northern boundary and the railway a western boundary. There is also large woodland at Butlers Hill Wood that provides a strong defensible boundary to the west as well as Weights Lane to the south.

Photo 2C - View north along the A441 that forms the eastern boundary of the area (boundary 3)

Photo 39 - View along Grange Lane that forms the northern perimeter of the area (boundary 5)

The south western corner of the area contains Weights Farm Business Park and this area could potentially be suitable for expansion of this employment use. Land to the west of the Business Park is well contained by strong boundaries but rises considerably towards Butlers Hill Farm and can be seen from distant views on area 8. There are no boundaries across this section of the area and it appears to have been used for land fill purposes.

Photo 66A - View from area 8 looking southwest at Weights Farm Business Park and Butlers Hill in the distance
Photo 56C - View west of track in centre of the area looking at parcel land that appears to be used for landfill purposes

The large expanse of land to the east of the railway is well contained by the A441 along the easternmost edge of the area as well as by the River Arrow which runs from north to south across the middle of the area. The majority of the boundaries from east to west are weak post and rail fences used to separate grazing and agricultural fields. There are two wooded areas (boundaries 7 and 9) that provide strong boundaries further north; however, they do not run all the way along to the River Arrow. It is considered in green belt terms difficult to develop this part of area 11 due to the lack of defensible boundaries as well as the implications of encroachment and coalescence with Alvechurch and the ribbon development of Bordesley.

Photo 37A - View north across the area from Weights Lane illustrating weak boundaries from west to east
Photo 52B - Most of the fields are separated by post and rail fencing
Photo 38C - The River Arrow runs from north to south (right to left in middle of photo)

7. Built Environment

Area 11 is located within Historic Environment Character Zone (HECZ) 148c and 148e⁴⁴ (see Figure X). This area has high to medium sensitivity to change. Development would potentially impact on sensitive remains preserved within, and below, alluvial deposits in the Arrow Valley (148c), and to a lesser extent could impact on historic woodlands and historic hedgerows that act as linkages, and the setting of Hewell Grange (148e).

⁴⁴ Historic Environment Assessment for Redditch Borough Council: Supplementary Historic Environment Statement for the Subdivided HECZ 147, August 2012

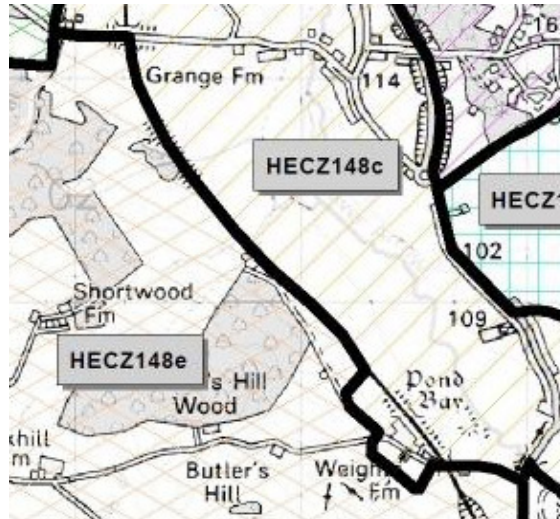


Figure X: HECZ sub areas in Area 11

High quality design would be expected on any site, however, if development at this area was to extend to the north west of the area then it could have the potential to adversely affect a number of features within the Historic Environmental Record (HER), which includes Ridge and Furrow, Fishponds and Moat earthworks⁴⁵ and Grange Lane farmhouse⁴⁶ (see figure X).

⁴⁵ WSM00735 Ridge and Furrow; WSM01766 Grange, Moat / Earthwork; WSM01767 Fishpond / Earthwork; WSM01768 Fishpond / Earthwork; WSM01778 Pond / Earthwork; WSM01780 Fishpond / Earthwork; WSM01800 Watermill / Earthwork; WSM03501 Mon; WSM05555 Deserted Settlement, Fishpond; WSM21604 Ridge and Furrow / Earthwork and WSM33332 Leat / Earthwork.

⁴⁶ WSM01799 Farmhouse, Grange Lane.

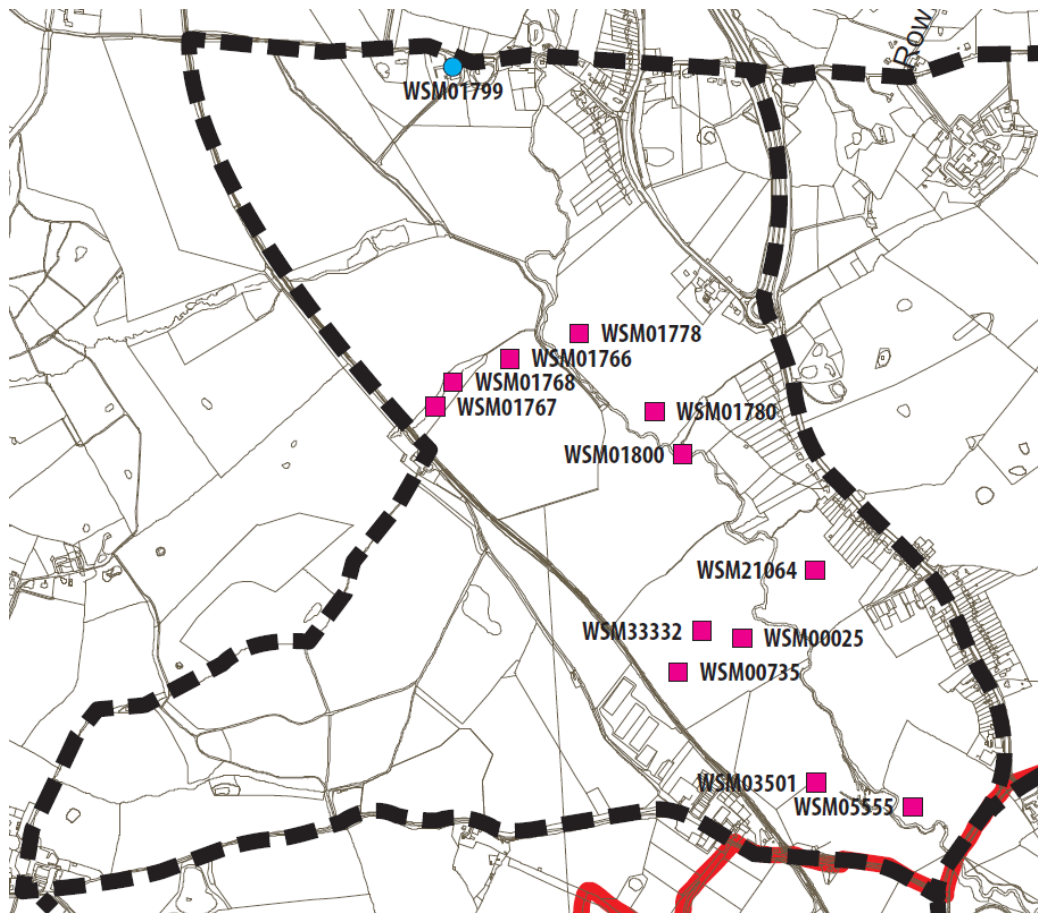


Figure X: Area 11 Historical Environmental Record designations

In addition to this the Worcestershire and Birmingham Canal and Hewell Grange Park and Gardens, although outside the area 11 focused appraisal area, are situated to the west of the area (approximately 1.57km and 1.89km respectively) although both assets are well screened by Little Shortwood and Butlers Hill Wood.

Whilst it would be preferable for development to occur in low sensitivity areas, historic environment that is of medium sensitivity would need to be carefully designed as large developments can have a significant impact on the historic environment. It is noted there is some capacity that would be resilient to change given appropriate design.

These designations do not present any major issues in terms of developing this area and any development should be sensitive to these designations.

8. Highways

Transport modelling work on various scenarios for locations of cross boundary sites was commissioned by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in November 2012 and this work was carried out by Halcrow.

Development in this location is likely to exert the main pressure on the A441 and the A435 northwards thereby exerting greatest pressure on the Strategic Road Network (SRN) operated by the Highways Agency (HA). Development here would be likely to have less impact on the local highway network. Development here is also likely to encourage commuting northwards to Birmingham. Furthermore it is less likely to

assist in the regeneration of either Redditch or Birmingham Town Centres and it is likely to encourage commuting northwards into Birmingham where the economic benefits will manifest.

In terms of Public Transport provision this location was poorly served and to improve provision here a new bespoke system would be required which would very likely prove very costly.

Proposed Boundary (Including map showing potential site area)

The proposed boundary would be considerably smaller than area 11 implies. It would run west along Weights Lane to point 16, west of the scrap yard where there is a mature tree-lined track leading to Butlers Hill Wood. This part of Weights Lane would include boundaries 5, 6 and 9 (Area 6 References).

Photo 7A - The south-western corner of the proposed boundary where Weights Lane meets the railway

Photo 9A - View of Weights Lane outside the centre of the Business Park (boundary 5 - Area 6 Reference)

Photo 12A - View east along Weights Lane towards Business Park (boundary 6 - Area 6 reference)

Photo 14 - Top of Butler's Hill, view west along Weights Lane to point where it becomes bridleway

Photo 19 - The tree-lined track west of the scrap yard (boundary 16)

It would then follow the southern boundary of Butlers Hill Wood (13) until it joins the Redditch and Birmingham railway line before finally going south to Weights Lane along this railway. These boundaries are considered to be the strongest within area 11 without compromising the Green Belt function or creating excessive urban sprawl, coalescence and encroachment.

Photo 56B - View from track in centre of area looking north at Butler's Hill Wood Wood (boundary 13)

Photo 61A - View from track in centre of the area looking west along boundary 13

Photo 61B - View of northern section of proposed boundary in between Butler's Hill Wood (boundary 13) and railway (boundary 6)

Photo 64A - View from northern section of proposed boundary looking southeast along railway (boundary 6)

It is considered that any development beyond the railway line to the east in area 11 could not be easily contained and boundary 7 or 9 halfway connecting to the River Arrow would form the best alternative. However, the connecting boundaries 8 and 10 are weak. Using these boundaries would also mean development further from Redditch and increased risk of coalescence with Alvechurch.

Photo 47A - View along part of boundary 9 and the weak boundary 10 consisting of post and rail fencing

Photo 44C - View along boundary 8 towards River Arrow

Photo 46A - View looking north at boundary 8

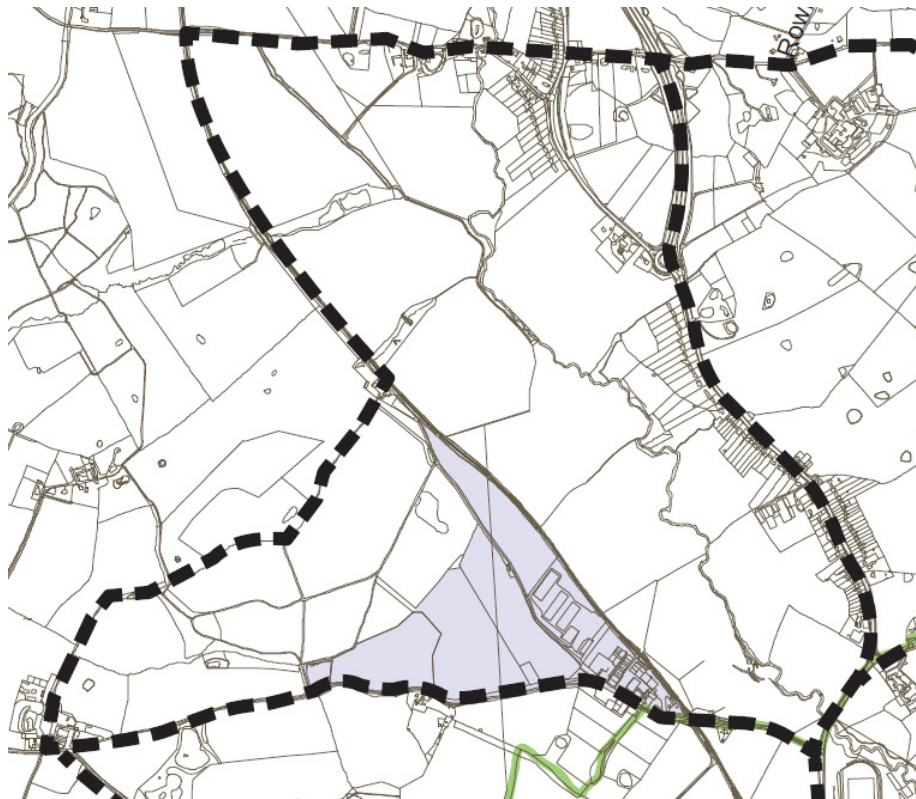


Figure X: Area 11 Potential green belt boundary

Conclusion

Any development within Area 11 would need to overcome the varying specific constraints identified in this chapter which would limit developable areas including the Special Wildlife Site's and the flood risk areas associated with the River Arrow. In addition to this the Tree Preservation Orders, wooded areas, existing dwellings, listed buildings and Public Rights of Ways would need to be integrated sensitively to any development, although this is the same for all areas.

Development within area 11 would raise a number of concerns in terms of potential impact to the Green Belt. Development could occur within the area and figure X below shows some strong defensible boundaries along Weights Lane, Butlers Hill Wood and the railway line and impact to the Green Belt would be limited in terms of sprawl, encroachment and coalescence although Green Belt land would be lost.

It should be noted that the closest facilities are within Bromsgrove District and this may work against the primary objective of providing sustainable development for Redditch's needs. Due to the distances to services and facilities in Redditch Town Centre and Batchley District Centre residents within this area would be dependant on the car, and unsustainable travel, unless there were substantial improvements to public transport, linkages to the area along with infrastructure improvements and provision of on site services and facilities.

There could be wider impacts to the surrounding habitats however development on area 11 would be dependant, to some extent, on development occurring in area 6 which connects directly to Redditch Town Centre. Area 11 alone would be less suitable for development however could be integrated should area 6 be considered

suitable for development. Careful design would be required on the south east of the area due to the steeper topography which could be mitigated by strategic landscaping.

It is considered that development within Area 11 is not suited to large scale house building due to the limited ability to constrain development and control urban sprawl in the Green Belt. Parts of the area would be more appropriate for employment land uses especially due to the existing employment uses at Weights Farm Business Park and the presence of the agricultural units and the scrap yard. The identified area is sufficiently enclosed so, providing that the area is sensitively developed, the Green Belt impact could potentially be reduced.

Due to existing employment uses on the south west of Area 11 it is considered that it has approximately 22 hectares potentially available for employment land, see figure X. However Redditch does not require any additional employment land as it can be met within Ravensbank, Ravensbank ADR, Gorcott and the Winyates Green Triangle thus it is considered unnecessary to release further Green Belt land in this location for employment purposes.

7. Sustainability Appraisal SA Summary

Context

This chapter summarises the assessment made of the sustainability impacts of all the realistic growth options around the edge of Redditch Town. The full report with all the conclusions can be found in the accompanying document 'Housing Growth Sustainability Appraisal (SA)'. The aim of the SA has been to ensure that the principles of sustainable development are fully integrated into the Redditch Growth work and the associated emerging Bromsgrove District Plan and Redditch Local Plan.

This Sustainability Appraisal work within this chapter consists of two sections:

- a) A succinct summary of the independent SA process and its conclusions
- b) A brief commentary on how this document and its associated research responded to the ongoing sustainability appraisal work

SA Summary

Both Bromsgrove DC and Redditch BC updated their SA Scoping Reports in 2012. These set the scope and context for the SA and also set an SA Framework comprising sustainability objectives, indicators and targets to assess the effects of sustainable development on emerging planning documents developed by both planning authorities. A set of monitoring indicators were also derived based on these objectives from both authorities.

The SA process has been divided into a number of key stages which follow a logical sequence and are as follows:

- 1) Comparison of Strategic Objectives against SA objectives

- 2) Comparison of Area Assessment Principles against SA objectives
- 3) SA analysis of Broad Areas
- 4) SA of Area Scenarios

Stage 1: Comparison of Strategic Objectives against SA objectives

Each Strategic Objective was assessed against each of the SA objectives and it was then possible to determine which Strategic Objective performed best in terms of sustainability. All the Strategic Objectives would have a positive outcome on development if they were met, as shown by their positive scores, but some are more sustainable than others. Against the SA objectives strategic objective 7 proved to be the most sustainable. This objective was *“to improve the accessibility of people in both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough to employment opportunities and all other facilities and to reduce their need to travel; together with the promotion of safer and more sustainable travel patterns and integration of communities”*. This scored highly due to its balanced nature and ability to address social, economic and environmental factors alike. Whereas Strategic Objective 1 *“to provide sufficient homes to meet the housing needs of both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough”* scored the lowest score (although still positive), due to its limited nature in only addressing some social issues.

Stage 2: Comparison of Area Assessment Principles against SA objectives

Each Area Assessment Principle was assessed against each of the SA objectives to determine which Strategic Objective performed best in terms of sustainability. All of the objectives achieved an overall positive score, due to the constructive nature the principles were designed to have on sustainability. The highest performing Area Assessment Principle was A1, which stated *“development should be able to address green infrastructure in a comprehensive manner enabling the delivery of a high quality multi-functional green space network”*. This was mainly due to the overwhelming impact the principle would have on sustainability objectives regarding the environment compared with other objectives, as well as some social aspects.

Stage 3: Sustainability Appraisal of Housing Growth Broad Area Options

In order to better understand the implications of the Redditch Growth options, a Sustainability Appraisal of each of the areas needed to be undertaken. For the clarity an SA has been undertaken on the following areas: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20. Areas 3a, 7 and 18 have not been assessed for the reasons set out within Chapter 5.

The outcomes from each of the assessed areas were compared against each other to identify those which perform best. This assessment assisted in the decision making process to determine which of the identified areas around Redditch would deliver the most sustainable form of development for future growth.

Guidance provided by the DCLG states that the SA should aim to improve on the effects of the existing saved plan, and to test this, options such as ‘no plan’ and ‘business as usual’ should be explored. In this case, these (in reality unlikely) scenarios have been deemed to constitute the independent progression of both the

Bromsgrove District Plan and Redditch Local Plan No. 4 without the element of cross-boundary growth with Redditch Borough thereby proposing 3,400 fewer new homes over the plan period.

There are potentially a number of social, environmental and economic consequences of this approach. It is clear that if growth needs are not met it is unlikely that the Development Plans of either authority will be found sound by an Inspector. Without up-to-date Development Plans it would create a great deal of uncertainty and potentially lead to greater pressures on affordable housing, increased prices for market housing and 'planning by appeal'. It is clear quite clear that this approach is unlikely to lead to the most sustainable form of development.

The conclusion from assessing each area against the SA objectives indicated that a number of potential development areas would have a negative impact in sustainability terms or just have a neutral effect. These areas (1, 2, 11, 9, 10, 20, 19, 17, 16 and 13) can be discounted without any further consideration. Areas 3, 10, 15, 14 and 12 achieved positive scores in sustainability terms but are not considered further within Chapter 6. This is because in most cases there is a fundamental reason that makes the sites unsuitable for further consideration which cannot be fully expressed within the SA scoring matrix. For example if Area 14 were developed it would lead to coalescence between Redditch and Studley. This is a major issue which cannot be overcome, yet can only achieve a score of -2 when assessed against objective E2 relating to Green Belt.

Areas 12, 14 and 15 performed well primarily due to the close relationship with Studley. However, it is necessary to remember that it is important for the proposed developments to have strong relationships with Redditch Town Centre and other local centres within the Borough of Redditch to ensure that economic gains are maximised. Development of this scale could greatly increase the vitality and viability of range of services and facilities in the town centre if well located. Area 3 did achieve a positive score, although modest in comparison to the best performing sites. Due to the poor access to facilities and public transport and potentially prominent nature of development within the Green Belt and potential level of sprawl it was confirmed that site 3 would not be considered further. A detailed analysis of why Areas 3, 12, 14 and 15 were not considered further is provided within Chapter 5.

The remaining Areas (4, 5, 6, 8 and the reduced area of 11) were considered to be the most sustainable in social, environmental and economic terms and were therefore considered in more detail within Chapter 6.

Stage 4: SA of Area Scenarios

In order to achieve the required housing target of 3,400 it was identified that in most instances a combination of areas would be required and therefore scenarios were tested. As the broad and focused area appraisals indicate, Areas 4, 5, 6, 8 and the reduced area 11 were considered further. With it being unlikely that a single area could deliver the required level of housing a combination of sites is required. The following combinations of areas have been tested:

- Areas 4 and 6

- Areas 4 and 5
- Reduced Areas of 4 and 11 plus Areas 5 and 6
- Areas 6 and 8

As all the most suitable areas were taken to the focused area appraisal stage, all the combined area scenarios also achieved an overall positive score against SA objectives. However, there were still varying differences in performance against each scenario. The combination of Areas 4 and 5 performed poorly in comparison to the other three scenarios, mainly due to biodiversity grounds (E1) and in relation to the historic environment (E4). Overall, the combination of Areas 4 and 6 scored slightly higher than Areas 6 and 8 due to fewer environmental constraints and the potential for greater social benefits. It is considered that the combination of Areas 6 and 8 could have a significant harmful impact on the natural landscape. Area 8 is very visible and therefore development would be visually prominent and harmful to retaining the openness of the Green Belt. Development here would also considerably reduce the gap between Redditch and Alvechurch, as well as the strategic gap with Birmingham and could have an adverse impact in terms of coalescence. Therefore, as well as achieving the highest scenario score, the combination of Areas 4 and 6 are the most suitable for development in terms of sustainability.

Comments on SA

Stage 1

There was a very good correlation between the strategic objectives, as set out in Chapter 2 of this report, with the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. The importance of strategic objective 7 in was duly noted.

Stage 2

This is the inter relationship between the Area Assessment Principles, as set out in Chapter 4 of this report and the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. This was a particularly important stage in the process given the importance attached to the Area Assessment Principles in assessing and evaluating the various potential areas for development in the latter stages of this project. It was, therefore, reassuring to see that there was a very positive correlation which allowed the final stages of the project to be carried out with confidence.

Stage 3

This is where the broad appraisal of each area, as set out in Chapter 5 of this report, was considered against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. As indicated in the summary section of this chapter, the SA supported the emphasis on the areas to the northwest of Redditch. Interestingly, however, the next highest scoring areas were those in the south and south east of Redditch, which was a different conclusion than reached in the Broad Area Appraisal stage (Chapter 5). Upon closer investigation, it was found that this was because Studley fulfilled the SA criterion on the same basis as Redditch in terms of provision of services and facilities. After due consideration, it was concluded that this standard SA approach was less sophisticated than the approach contained in the area assessment principles. The full justification of this

interpretation and the reasoning for excluding the southern and south eastern areas from further detailed appraisal work can be found within the main Housing Growth SA document. As a consequence of this reasoning, the broad appraisal results were considered to be robust and it was reasonable on that basis to proceed to the next stage in the project involving scrutinizing areas as part of the focused area appraisal and then on to the scenario testing.

Stage 4

This is where the final conclusions about the four scenarios involving different combinations of areas, as explained in the next chapter, Chapter 8, are appraised against the Sustainability Appraisal objectives. As is evident from the summary, the SA conclusions are positive but this point will be picked up again within the detailed conclusions of the Area Scenarios.

9. Scenarios for alternative growth locations

This chapter considers each scenario particularly with regard to the implications upon infrastructure such as transport infrastructure, as this has particular implications for the delivery of a site. This chapter also considers the achievable dwelling capacity that is deliverable in each area.

To recap, Redditch Borough will need to provide land to accommodate 6,380 dwellings by 2030 and its SHLAA can only identify suitable land for around 3,000 dwellings. Therefore, Redditch Borough has a shortfall of around 3,400 dwellings to meet the housing target. Furthermore, at this moment in time, Redditch Borough Council can only demonstrate 3.4 years supply of deliverable land to meet its housing needs.

There were originally considered to be 4 main alternative locations which had the capacity to deliver the required level of growth to meet the unmet future growth needs of Redditch. These 4 options were selected based on the analysis in chapter 4 (Focussed Appraisal) and wherever possible a logical grouping of sites, although it is considered this is not an absolute prerequisite provided all areas integrate well with the existing urban fabric and communities in Redditch.

The following areas were therefore identified and have been subject to separate testing, for example transport modelling and Sustainability Appraisal. According to modelling work carried out by Halcrow on behalf of the two Councils and Worcestershire County Council⁴⁷ all scenarios (apart from area 8) are likely to result in large increases in traffic flows on Brockhill Drive. There are four roundabouts located along Brockhill Drive and therefore a corridor enhancement scheme to improve capacity at all these junctions is recommended. With the inclusion of area 8 additional highway improvements would be required on the B4101 and B4497. A series of priority junctions will require improvement to cope with additional capacity and maintain safety. All scenarios show an increase in traffic flows on the A448 between Redditch and Bromsgrove and the A38 northwards.

⁴⁷ Bromsgrove and Redditch Cross- boundary Sites Assessment- Headline Results

Although these scenarios were initially thought to be the most realistic options, during this process strong evidence has come forward which severely limits the capacity of area 5 due to the significance of the setting of heritage assets. Therefore the first and second scenarios tested below were based on a greater capacity area than it is now considered to be achievable. The initial scenarios and thinking are therefore outlined below.

Scenario 1: Areas 4 and 5

Scenario 2: Areas 4 (reduced capacity), 5, 6 and 11

Scenario 3: Areas 4 and 6

Scenario 4: Areas 6 and 8

Scenario 1: Areas 4 and 5

If substantial parts of Areas 4 and 5 were utilised and constraints overcome, the overall capacity could be 3723 dwellings.

Areas 4 and 5 straddle the A448 and whilst development here is likely to have the major impact on the local highway network and in particular Bromsgrove, it is more likely to encourage the regeneration of Redditch and Bromsgrove Town centres than other areas. It may be that economies of scale can be achieved by having all of the development in effect in one location and it is certainly anticipated that the development of Area 4 could lead to wider benefits in terms of public transport and new facilities/services for the existing community at Webheath. Funding of an additional bus service routing or re-routing of an existing service through the area will be required in order to maximise the use of public transport from the area.

However, a significant constraint in this scenario was identified and as a result this capacity could be severely reduced if the challenges relating to Hewell Grange cannot be adequately mitigated against. This would render the capacity of this scenario inadequate in its ability to meet Redditch's required housing needs. Sewerage issues would also need to be investigated further.

Scenario 2: Areas 4 (reduced capacity), 5, 6 and 11

The combination of Areas 5 (majority of area), 6 and 11 together with approximately 1000 dwellings on area 4 would provide an overall capacity of 3229.

The advantages of this option would be to "spread the load" of new development across several areas, so no one area takes the complete "hit" and in planning terms it could achieve the most logical and natural expansion to Redditch in terms of urban form.

However this capacity could be severely reduced if the challenges relating to Hewell Grange cannot be adequately mitigated against rendering this scenario inadequate in its ability to meet Redditch's required housing needs. Sewerage issues would also need to be investigated further.

Scenario 3: Areas 4 and 6

If the developable areas of Areas 4 and 6 were utilised the overall capacity would be 3503.

Although these areas would not be physically linked it is considered at this stage that both areas could integrate well with the existing urban fabric of Redditch and both have valid remedial factors, for example, development of Area 4 would produce benefits for the wider area of Webheath and assist in the regeneration of each Town Centre and Area 6 could integrate well with existing and new development at Brockhill. Areas 4 and 6 also have the greatest potential for cycling to Redditch Town Centre with appropriate investment in cycling infrastructure.

However this scenario generates the greatest volume of westbound movements with associated flows on the A448 and A38 in particular the Slideslow roundabout. This scenario also generates the greater volume of trips to other destinations in the Birmingham conurbation including Halesowen, Dudley/Wolverhampton, Walsall/Sandwell, Selly oak/University, Kings Heath and Solihull. Sewerage issues would also need to be investigated further.

Scenario 4: Areas 6 and 8

If the developable areas of Areas 6 and 8 were utilised the overall capacity would be 3361.

In terms of sewerage issues Area 8 is located closest to the trunk sewer upstream compared to the other areas and therefore performs strongly in this respect.

Whilst these two areas would have sufficient capacity to meet the needs there are disadvantages. Again these areas are not adjacent. Whilst it is considered that Area 6 could integrate well with existing and new development at Brockhill, there are concerns about how well Area 8 could relate to the urban form of Redditch and integrate with it. Effectively development in this location could be viewed as a new standalone community. It is also considered that development at Area 8 could promote commuting northwards thereby not economically benefitting Redditch Town centre and reducing its sustainability credentials. Area 8 also has the least potential for cycling to Redditch Town centre and would require significant investment in walk and cycle infrastructure to provide the necessary level of accessibility. Area 8 generates the greater volume of vehicular movements within Redditch and traffic flow increases on the A441, A4189, A435, A448 and A4023. The greater number of vehicular trips to Longbridge are also generated by this scenario.

As demonstrated above each scenario has pros and cons regarding its delivery, and therefore the suitability of the scenario being selected as the preferred location for development. The following chapter will consider when each scenario could be delivered with regard to timescales and phasing, as this is also a key planning concern which factors into the final decision regarding the preferred location.

9. Delivery and Phasing

It is essential that the preferred location should also be realistic in terms of delivery. In this latter respect joint meetings have been held with Worcestershire County Council to discuss specific infrastructure issues such as education and transport. In relation to transport it was agreed to jointly commission highways modelling work to assess the implications on the highway network of potential development in various locations. Meetings have also been held with other relevant stakeholders such as Severn Trent. Furthermore, it was also decided that meetings should also take place with various developers with previously declared interests in sites identified via the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) and Core Strategy consultations processes, in order to ascertain deliverability of various sites; to collate robust evidence in relation to the sites in question and to aid the site selection process.

Area 4

The northern section of Area 4 (closest to the A448) we understand is subject to developer options. Any development here would be dependent on the provision of an access road off the junction with the A448. It is anticipated that development could be brought forward in 2 phases, with the first phase located closest to the existing built form of Redditch in the vicinity of Foxlydiate Lane and Birchfield Road. It is envisaged the first phase could comprise around 1000 dwellings and potentially also include provision for a new primary school, district centre including retail and healthcare facilities. The second phase extending further along the A448 could also provide approximately 1000 new dwellings. It is understood that development here could be brought forward in the first 5 years and that there is keen developer interest. Issues in relation to infrastructure, for example drainage, would however be a key component in delivery timescales and would require further investigation. At present it is unknown if the southern section of the site is subject to firm development interest. It is understood the land is in mixed ownership, of which part is owned by house builders.

Area 5

The majority of Area 5 has been promoted as part of the development plan making process, it is understood that most of Area 5 is in the ownership or control of housebuilders. It is estimated that the whole area has the capacity to accommodate around 1250 dwellings.

It is however likely that the setting of the Hewell Grange Conservation Area and the Grade II* Registered Park and Garden will have an impact on the overall eventual capacity of this area to accommodate growth.

Area 6

Area 6 has been promoted as part of the development plan making process, it is understood that most of Area 6 is in the ownership or control of house builders. It is envisaged any development of this site could integrate with the existing Brockhill development adjacent to the boundary in Redditch Borough and new development currently coming forward in this area within Redditch. Some of the current Area of Development Restraint (ADR) is included in the five year land supply but the next phase for the Redditch Green Belt is not included. Therefore, it is anticipated that the potential development in Bromsgrove would come forward as a future phase and not

be included in phasing in the first 5 years. The capacity of this site is estimated to be around 600 dwellings.

Area 8

Parts of area 8 have been promoted through the development plan making process. It is understood a significant element of this area is within single land ownership with various developer options.

As identified in previous consultation responses the provision of the Bordesley By pass has been cited as the main benefit of development at this location, although the level of growth envisaged would not necessitate the delivery of the By pass.

Furthermore, it is understood that the land could be provided to build the relief road and an appropriate private contribution made towards its development. However it is unlikely that developer funding for the complete scheme will be forthcoming.

Furthermore Worcestershire County Council have indicated that they do not have the necessary funding to deliver this road and has stated that its delivery must be developer lead. Therefore it is unlikely that sufficient funding can be identified for this Bypass to be delivered.

It is envisaged that if it does prove possible to deliver the infrastructure, parcels of land could be sold to numerous house builders to enable timely development.

Area 11

It is understood that area 11 is within single land ownership and could be brought forward within 5 years. However, it is considered that Area 11 is not suited to large scale house building due to the limited ability to constrain development and control urban sprawl in the Green Belt and that parts of the area would be more appropriate for employment land uses. This is due in part to the existing employment uses at Weights Farm Business Park and the presence of the agricultural units and the scrap yard.

As previously outlined Redditch has no need for further cross boundary employment land and therefore the release of Green Belt land in an adjacent District under the auspices of the Duty to Cooperate where no need has been identified would need robust justification.

10. Overall Conclusions

From the evidence contained in this document it is clear that a thorough process has been undertaken to identify the best possible solution to sustainably meet the identified growth needs of Redditch. It is unfortunate that in order to do this, current Green Belt land has to be reallocated but government policy is clear on the need to find land to meet unmet housing needs, and that green belts can be reviewed as part of the plan making process. In an area with such significant Green Belt coverage these two policies lead to the inevitable conclusion that in order to meet unmet needs, release of some Green Belt land will have to be considered. It is the Councils view that areas 4 and 6 offer the best opportunity to deliver the required level of growth.

This document explains in detail the process employed to assess each area's performance against area assessment criteria. In order to reach the recommendation on the preferred areas all the planning issues must be considered in order to reach a

conclusion. All of the areas are in the Green Belt and all of the areas have constraints and strengths. No area is perfect or ideal. The choice that has to be made therefore is on the basis of the areas which most sustainably deliver the required amount of development and associated infrastructure with the least negative impacts. It must be stressed that the proposal has been selected on the basis of information that is currently available and this may alter as a result of the consultation process or as new evidence emerges.

As can be seen from the conclusions for each particular area in the focussed appraisal stage it is apparent that some areas perform better than others when tested against the varied area assessment criteria. Clearly there are competing issues which are more difficult to resolve for some areas than for others. Some selected examples of area issues are discussed below, although it must be stressed that these alone do not demonstrate why an area has or hasn't been considered suitable.

Area 6 has the potential to integrate well into the existing urban fabric of Redditch. It has the easiest access of all the areas to the Town centre and the facilities offered there, including a range of retail services and the train/bus station providing access to the wider area. It is well served by existing bus routes and has employment close by. The impact on the highway network is more likely to lead to an even distribution throughout the strategic and local road networks. A strong defensible Green Belt boundary is attainable. There are no SSSI's or SWS's on this site and the impact on trees and woodland would be minimal. Whilst the site lies in an area of high landscape sensitivity it is considered that by avoidance of development on high slopes new housing can be contained within the topography.

The development of Area 4 has the advantage of improving facilities and services in the wider Webheath area. Whilst lying further from the Town centre than Area 6, it offers the opportunity to extend existing bus services and by the provision of facilities on site has the potential to reduce the need to travel. Whilst it does not have overall strong defensible Green Belt boundaries on all sides, the effects of sprawl, coalescence and encroachment can be mitigated more successfully than some other area options.

It was found that Areas 4 and 5 perform best in public transport terms and development here is likely to have the added benefit of contributing towards the regeneration of both Town Centres. Development here would impact on the local highway network particularly the A448, Slideslow roundabout and the A38 running northwards. The costs of mitigation works, for instance junction improvements are unknown at this time. However, this scenario must be weighed against the potential negative impact on the setting of a Grade II* Registered Historic Park and Garden and Conservation Area (in relation to area 5 only) which is challenging in mitigation terms. Furthermore, in terms of public transport it would be possible to improve/extend existing public transport services serving Areas 4 and 5 whereas Area 8 would need new bespoke public transport service, which is likely to be very costly and undesirable for bus operators to run until development is completed many years in the future.

All areas are of high landscape sensitivity apart from area 8 which has medium sensitivity. However, as area 8 is an exposed site with no natural or physical boundaries which allow for containment, this exposed location further creates difficulties with integration into the existing built form of Redditch. It is considered development here could represent more of a visual intrusion, and the creation of an unsustainable isolated community on the periphery of the town. It is also considered development at area 8 would further exacerbate the unsustainable north /south commuting patterns between Redditch and Birmingham.

There are clearly some areas which have less constraints than others for instance area 6. However, the estimated capacity of Area 6 alone (672 dwellings) is insufficient to meet the level of new development required. On balance it is considered that Area 4 would also be required. This area has an estimated capacity of 2830 dwellings which combined with Area 6 would give an overall development capacity of around 3502 dwellings which would be sufficient to meet the unmet needs of Redditch.

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Appendix III- Glossary

This glossary of terms is intended to act as a reference point for unfamiliar or technical terms included throughout Bromsgrove's District Plan and Redditch's Local plan 4. Unless stated, these are not definitive or legal descriptions.

Area of Development Restraint (ADR) - Areas of land taken out of the Green Belt in the Local Plan which have been identified as possible land for new development when required in the future

Affordable Housing - Housing, whether for rent, shared ownership or outright purchase, provided at a cost considered affordable in relation to incomes, or in relation to the price of general market housing.

Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) – The report prepared by Councils to assess the implementation of the Local Development Scheme and the extent to which the policies of the Local plan and adopted SPDs are being achieved.

Best and Most Versatile Agricultural Land⁴⁸ – The best and most versatile land is defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a. This is the land which is most flexible, productive and efficient in response to inputs and which can best deliver future crops for food and non food uses such as biomass, fibres and developers and the public if development is proposed on agricultural land or other greenfield sites that could grow crops.

Biodiversity - The whole variety of life encompassing all genetics, species and ecosystem variations, including plants and animals.

Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) - The local Worcestershire Biodiversity Action Plan identifies local priorities to determine the contribution they can make to the delivery of the national Species and Habitat Action Plan targets

Conservation Area - Conservation Areas are designated by the District/Borough Council as areas of special architectural or historic interest, the character and appearance of which the Council considers desirable to preserve or enhance.

District/Local Plan - A development plan document setting the vision, objectives, monitoring and implementation framework. All development plan documents must comply with the District/Local plan.

Development Plan Documents (DPDs) - Planning documents outlining the key development goals. They include the District/Local plan, site-specific allocations of land and Area Action Plans.

Duty to Co-operate - In line with the 2011 Localism Act, the local planning authority, county councils and/or a body, or other person, that is prescribed or of a prescribed description, must co-operate with every other person in maximising the effectiveness

⁴⁸ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35012>

with which activities are undertaken. This includes the production and preparation of development plan documents, as well as the production and preparation of other local development documents.

Employment Land Review (ELR) – Document that assesses existing employment land in the District/Borough, considers future requirements and identifies a portfolio of sites where employment development could be located.

Geodiversity - The variety of earth materials, forms and processes that constitute and shape the Earth, either the whole or a specific part of it. Relevant materials include [minerals](#), [rocks](#), [sediments](#), [fossils](#), [soils](#) and [water](#).

Green Belt – Land allocated for a District/Borough to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. Guidance on Green Belt policy is contained in Chapter 9 of the NPPF, and the Worcestershire Structure Plan identifies the broad extent of Green Belt within Bromsgrove District and the Local Plan defines detailed boundaries of Green Belt land.

Greenfield - Land (or a defined site) that has not previously been developed.

Green Flag Award Standard - National standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales.

Green Infrastructure - *“The network of green spaces and natural elements that intersperse and connect our cities, towns and villages. It is the open spaces, waterways, gardens, woodlands, green corridors, wildlife habitats. Street trees, natural heritage and open countryside. Green Infrastructure provides multiple benefits for the economy, the environment and people”*

West Midlands Green Infrastructure Prospectus

Landscape Character - Put simply, landscape character is what makes an area unique. It is defined as *“a distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements, be it natural (soil, landform) and/or human (for example settlement and development) in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse”*.

Landscape sensitivity - The degree to which the character and qualities of the landscape are affected by specific types of development and land-use change. Sensitivity depends upon the type, nature and magnitude of the proposed change as well as the characteristics of the host landscape. High sensitivity indicates landscapes are vulnerable to the change; low sensitivity that they are more able to accommodate the change and that the key characteristics of that landscape will essentially remain unaltered.

Local Development Framework (LDF) - A folder of documents, providing the framework for planning in the District and to guide planning decisions.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) – Sets time-scales for the preparation of Local Development Documents that must be agreed with the Government and reviewed annually.

Local Nature Reserve - Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it.

Listed Building - A building of special architectural or historic interest, graded I, II* or II with grade I being the highest. Listing includes the interior as well as the exterior of the building and any permanent structures (e.g. walls within its curtilage).

Major Urban Area (MUA) -The main urban area of the West Midlands Region, as identified on the RSS Spatial Strategy Diagram (see the inside back cover of West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy).

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - The NPPF was published in March 2012, replacing past Planning Policy Statements/Guidance (PPSs/PPGs), and sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. It sets out the Government's requirements for the planning system only to the extent that it is relevant, proportionate and necessary to do so. It provides a framework within which local people and their accountable councils can produce their own distinctive local and neighbourhood plans, which reflect the needs and priorities of their communities.

Planning Policy Statements/Guidance (PPGs/PPSs) - National planning policy published by the Department for Community and Local Government, all regional and local planning policy must be in general conformity with this guidance. These have since been replaced by the NPPF.

Previously Developed Land (PDL) – Land that contains permanent buildings (excluding agriculture or forestry buildings) and associated fixed-surface infrastructure. The definition covers the curtilage of the development.

Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) - A 15 to 20 year strategy prepared by the Regional Planning Body identifying the scale and distribution of new housing development, areas of regeneration, expansion or sub-regional planning and specifying priorities for the environment, transport, infrastructure, economic development, agriculture, minerals and waste treatment and disposal. The relevant RSS for both Bromsgrove and Redditch is the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (WMRSS). The 2011 Localism Act intends to abolish RSSs. However, the emphasis of the NPPF that local plans must be based on objectively assessed development means that the evidence produced and considered in the preparation of the WMRSS (including the independent testing of evidence at the WMRSS Examination in Public 'The Panel Report') will continue to be material planning considerations.

Renewable Energy - Energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment, for example from wind, water flow, tides or the sun.

Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) – Defined areas of ecological or geological importance identified to protect habitat and species diversity.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) – Relates to specifically defined areas where protection is afforded to sites of national wildlife or geological interest. Natural England is responsible for identifying and protecting these sites.

Special Wildlife Site (SWS) – Defined areas of ecological or geological importance identified to protect habitat and species diversity.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) – A document that examines the potential for flooding from all sources in the area, this includes the potential impacts from climate change. It examines the impact of new development both within and beyond the District.

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) – A document that identifies suitable and available housing sites for up to the next 15 years. The document is evidence for plan making and does not allocate land for development.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) - This document provides Local Authorities with a detailed analysis of the housing market for the past, present and future. It takes into account demographic trends to assess the need and demand required across the authorities. It uses various key indicators, including a number of models and approaches and seeks opportunities to triangulate a range of data sources wherever possible to construct scenarios of likely change. The scenarios therefore present a set of evidence based parameters to help inform policy development. The Worcestershire SHMA was published in February 2012 and analysis is presented for the whole of Worcestershire based on aggregating the individual local authorities, as well as core datasets that have been disaggregated down to a ward level to help inform local policy

Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) - Detailed policy to supplement Development Plan Document (DPD) policies and proposals. SPDs/SPGs can be thematic or site specific.

Sustainability Appraisal (SA) - Appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process to allow decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.

Sustainable Development - A widely used definition drawn up by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987: *“Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”*. The Government’s four aims, to be achieved simultaneously are:

- Social progress which recognises the needs of everyone
- Effective protection of the environment
- Prudent use of natural resources
- Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment.

Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems – SuDS are made up of one or more structures built to manage surface water runoff including for example, rainwater recycling, pervious paving, the use of green roofs, balancing ponds and soakaways.

A holistic approach should be adopted so that each element is operated collectively rather than as a series of isolated drainage devices.

SuDS management Train concept - The SuDS management train is to reduce flows and volumes of surface water as close to source as possible through four main stages: Prevention → Source Control → Site Control → Regional Control. The idea is to apply different SuDS components at each stage such that the water quality of receiving water will improve as a result.

Use Class - The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 puts uses of land and buildings into various categories. Planning permission is not needed for changes of use within the same use class.

Viability – To be capable of existing or surviving in a successful manner. The term is often used in the context of whether town centres are able to exist as viable retail centres.

Vitality – Used to describe the liveliness of an area, which may be measured by particular local features, the general environment or the quality of life for local residents. In the context of town centres, this term can be used to describe the capacity of a centre to grow or develop.

Water Conservation Hierarchy - Avoid, reduce, recycle and disposal - see *Water Conservation Handbook for Local Authorities in Australia* - <http://www.mda.asn.au/download.cfm?DownloadFile=A4BBC949-E081-51EF-A74702E9E228C3B8>

Worcestershire Structure Plan - This is the long term planning document covering the period 1996 to 2011. It establishes a strategic policy framework for development and land use planning over the county area. Although the plan was initially valid up until 2011, the Secretary of State directed that certain policies would be saved.