

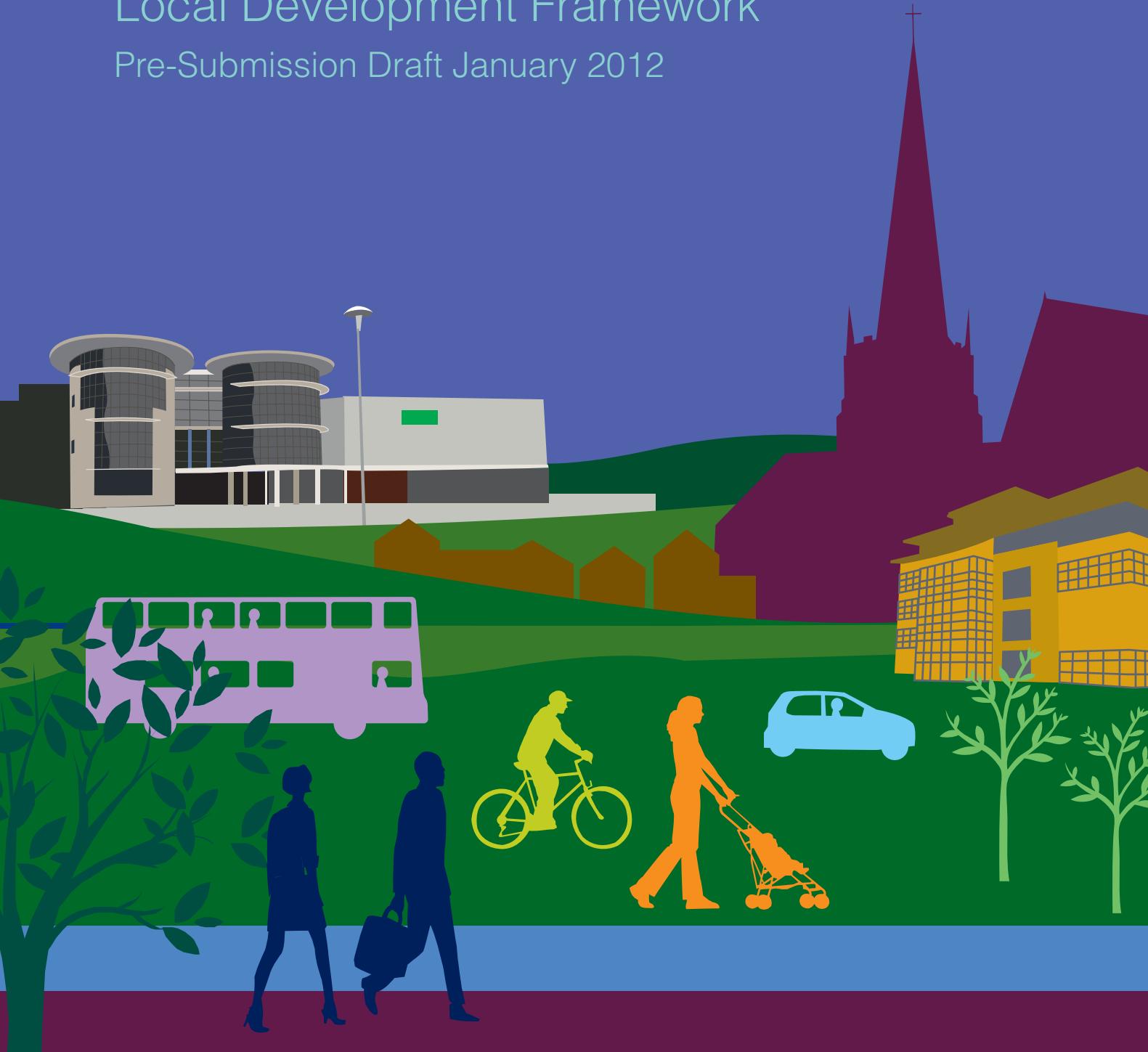


# Solihull Draft Local Plan

## Shaping a Sustainable Future

Local Development Framework

Pre-Submission Draft January 2012



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### Pre-Submission Draft January 2012

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 What the Plan is for

1.1.1 The Council has a statutory duty to prepare, monitor and review a development plan for the Borough. The purpose of the Plan is to set out the long-term spatial vision for how its towns, villages and countryside will develop and change over the Plan period to 2028, and how this vision will be delivered through a strategy for promoting, distributing and delivering sustainable development and growth.

1.1.2 The Plan started life as the Local Development Framework (LDF) Core Strategy prepared under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and set within the context of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and its emphasis on urban renaissance. The Core Strategy was firmly focused on meeting local needs and aspirations through local engagement, but with strategic perspective and responsibility. The Plan has been developed in the light of the changing political and legislative landscape of regional and local planning, including the Localism Act 2011 and the Duty to Co-operate.

1.1.3 The Plan strategy promotes economic and job growth in the Borough and provides for new housing to meet the Borough's needs, as well as land for other activities including retail, sport and leisure. The strategy aims to conserve and improve the character and quality of the environment, an important component of the Borough's attractiveness to investment and success.

1.1.4 The Plan reflects national and local targets for reducing carbon emissions and contributes to the Council's agenda of improving the quality of life and health of the residents of Solihull set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy for Solihull. It will be the starting point for the development of Neighbourhood Plans by local communities and for decisions on all new development proposals.

1.1.5 The Plan will replace the saved policies from the current development plan, the Solihull Unitary Development Plan, 2006.

## 1.2 Content

1.2.1 The Plan includes:

- A **spatial portrait** of the Borough, the place Solihull is today and where it has come from (section 2)
- The **challenges** facing Solihull that the Plan can help to address and the **objectives** for addressing these challenges (Section 3)
- A **vision** of how the Borough will develop as a place to meet the needs of its local residents, businesses and visitors now and in the future (section 4)
- A **strategy** to direct growth in sustainable locations and identify areas of significant change (section 5)
- **Policy themes** (section 6)
- **Core policies** to deliver the spatial strategy (sections 7 - 12)
- **A monitoring and implementation framework** for delivering the Plan (section 13)
- **Proposed development sites** for new employment, housing and other uses (Appendix A)

## **1.3 How the Plan was developed**

### **1.3.1 The Plan is founded on:**

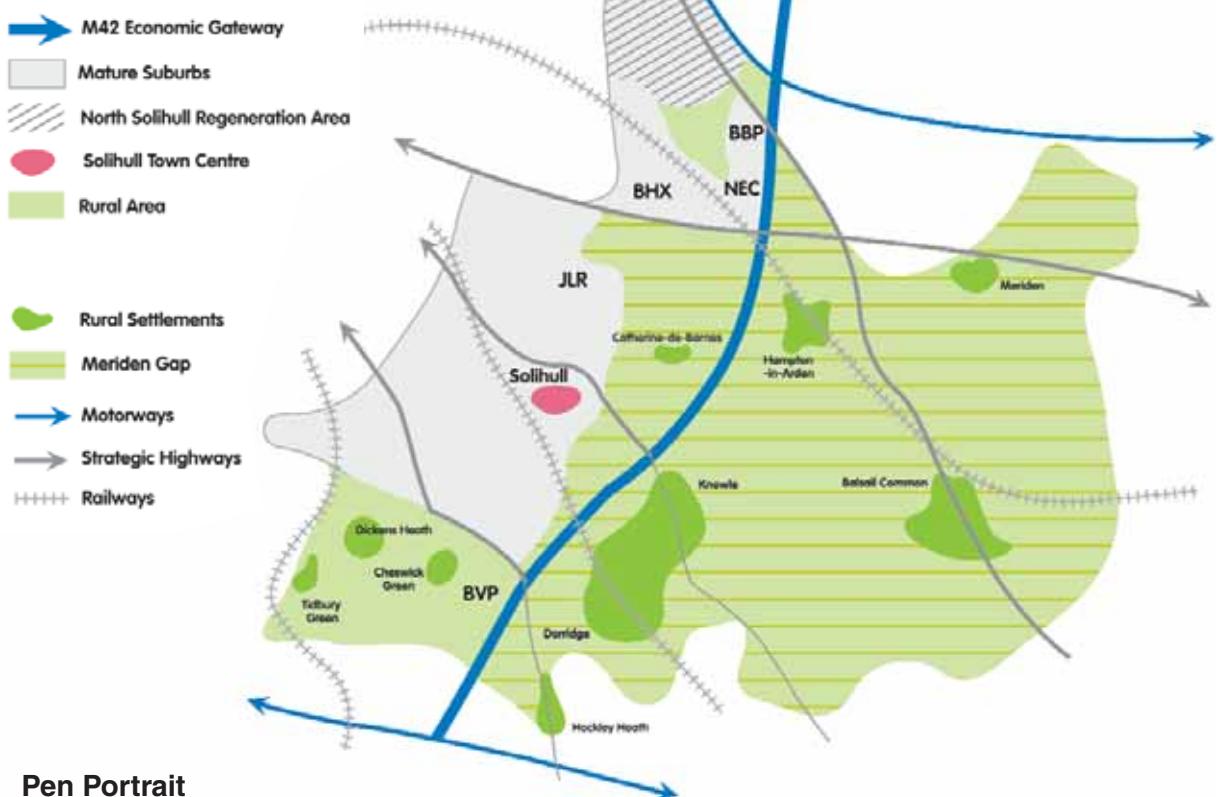
- National and local planning policies, including:
  - The National Planning Policy Framework
  - National imperative of economic growth and sustainable development
  - The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy
  - Joint Metropolitan commitment to urban renaissance
  - Local growth ambitions
  - Other relevant plans, policies and strategies that relate to the Borough or the wider area
- Evidence from a number of studies about the Borough, including
  - Employment Land Study
  - Solihull Town Centre Study
  - Retail Capacity Study
  - Strategic Housing Market Area and Land Availability Assessments
  - Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
  - Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
  - Settlement Studies
  - Characterisation Study
  - Green Spaces Strategy
  - Annual Monitoring Reports
- Recommendations from appraisals and assessments:
  - Sustainability Appraisal of the objectives, strategy, policies and sites which highlighted potential conflicts or areas where the plan could be improved, and ensures that the Plan accords with the principles of sustainable development.
  - Habitat Regulations Assessment of the impact of the strategy and policies on the network of sites of European importance for nature conservation, specifically four Special Areas for Conservation at Cannock Extension Canal, Cannock Chase, Bredon Hill and the Peak District Dales.
  - Fair Treatment Assessment of the impact of policies on specific groups, as a result of race, gender, disability, age or religion
- Involvement of key stakeholders and local communities, including consultation on:
  - Challenges and Choices
  - The Core Strategy Issues and Options paper - 2008
  - Emerging Core Strategy - 2010
  - Draft Local Plan - 2012

## **1.4 Publication of the Draft Local Plan**

- 1.4.1 The Plan sets out the challenges, objectives, vision, strategy and policies that the Council considers will deliver the sustainable growth that the Borough needs to ensure a prosperous future.
- 1.4.2 Representations in support of or opposed to the Draft Local Plan can be made in writing to the Council. Representation should be received by 5pm on the 5th March 2012 using either the Draft Local Plan response form or e-mailing comments to [sustainabledevelopment@solihull.gov.uk](mailto:sustainabledevelopment@solihull.gov.uk). To find out more about the Draft Local Plan you can visit the Council's web page at [www.solihull.gov.uk/ldf](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/ldf) or speak to an officer on 0121 704 6394.

## 2. Spatial Portrait

Fig. 1 Spatial Portrait Diagram



### 2.1 Pen Portrait

Fig. 2 Table of Statistics

|   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| Area of Borough                           | 17,828 (ha)              |
| Area of Green Belt                        | 67%                      |
| Population                                | 206,100                  |
| Households                                | 86,747                   |
| Average car ownership (2001)              | 1.28 (cars per dwelling) |
| Unemployment claimant rate (2011)         | 3.80%                    |
| Average lower quartile house price (2011) | £155,000                 |

### 2.2 Overview of the Borough

#### 2.2.1

Solihull Metropolitan Borough is located on the southern edge of the West Midlands Conurbation, between Birmingham and the Black Country in the west and Coventry to the east. It is bound to the north by the rural area of North Warwickshire and to the south, by rural Bromsgrove, Stratford and Warwick. Solihull is at the heart of the national rail and motorway network with direct rail services to London, Birmingham and the north along the West Coast main line and Chiltern line and has excellent access to other regions in the UK through the M42, which links the Borough to the M6 at the northern boundary of the Borough and the M40 to the south. This strategic transport infrastructure, together with Birmingham Airport, has ensured the Borough is the principal gateway to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership area and the wider West Midlands region.

#### 2.2.2

The Borough is home to several major economic assets located within the M42 Economic Gateway; Birmingham Airport, the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks, Jaguar Land Rover and Solihull Town Centre. In contrast to the Borough's strategic economic role and nationally and regionally important transport

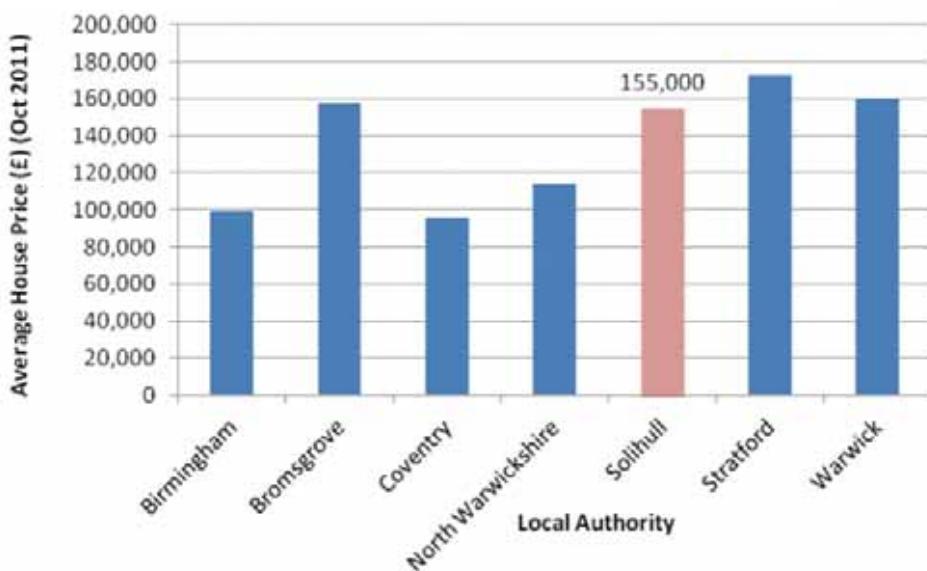
infrastructure, the majority (approximately two thirds) of the Borough is countryside and designated Green Belt, which provides a vital strategic gap between Birmingham, Solihull and Coventry, known as the Meriden Gap. This area is predominantly rural, characterised by a series of settlements, historic villages, hamlets, scattered farmsteads and dwellings set within attractive countryside.

2.2.3 Solihull Metropolitan Borough is renowned for its key economic assets, strategic transport infrastructure, high quality environment, aspirational housing and excellent schools, which are integral to its economic success and have ensured that Solihull is a desirable place in which to live, work and invest. This is reflected in its relatively high house prices. The nature of Solihull is best described by its 'Urbs in Rure' motto, meaning 'Town in the Country' and is characterised by its popular Mature Suburbs, rural villages and attractive countryside.

2.2.4 Given the Borough's reputation as an aspirational place to live, house prices in the popular residential areas of the Mature Suburbs and Rural Area are significantly higher than both the West Midlands and national averages. Consequently, many first time buyers in the Borough are unable to access the housing market and there are limited opportunities for those households wishing to downsize. There is an acute shortage of affordable housing across the Borough for those people on average and lower incomes and a lack of suitable housing for older people and those with a need for housing which is suitable for people with disabilities.

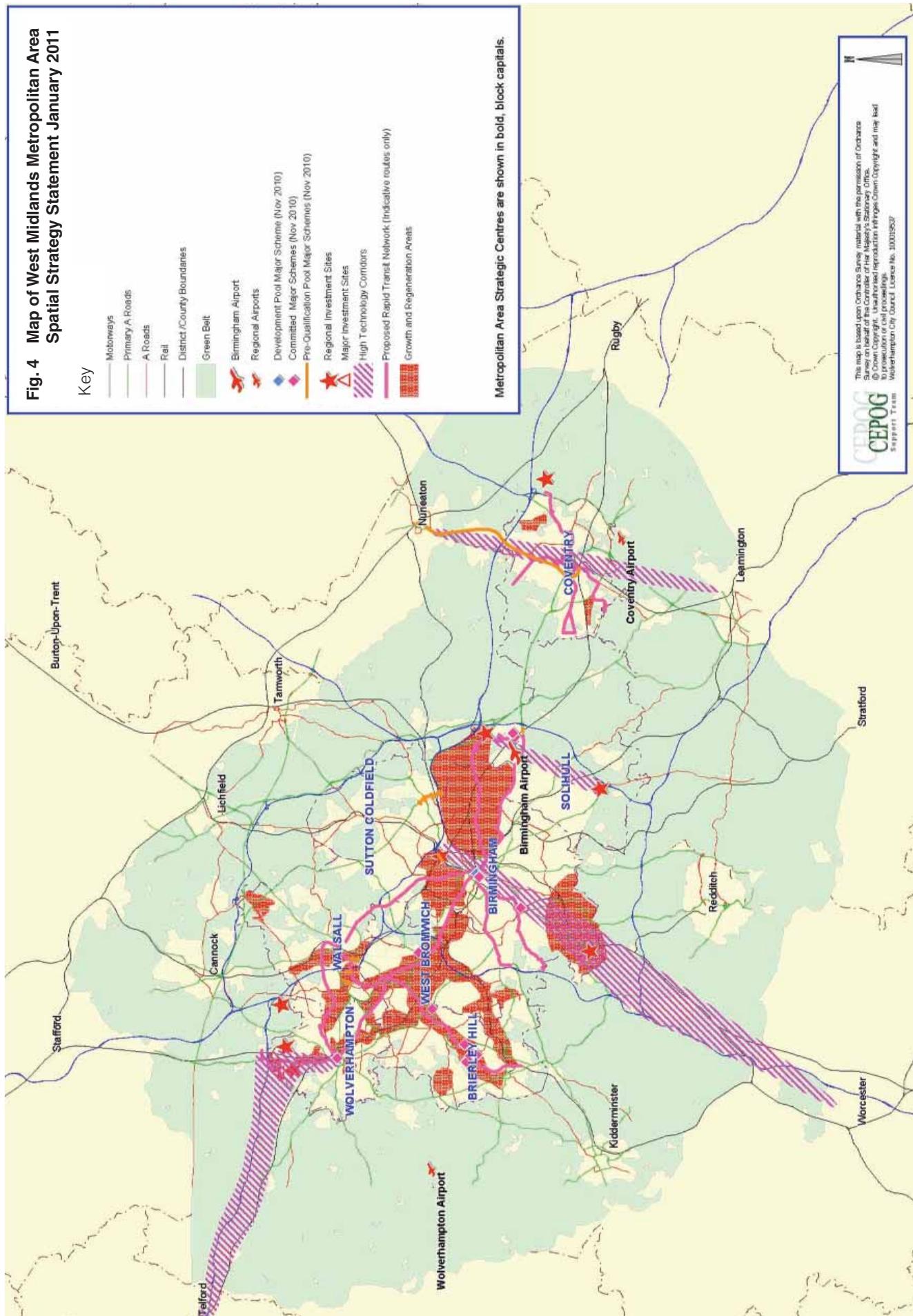
2.2.5 The Borough is not without its problems and North Solihull is the subject of one of the largest regeneration programmes in England. The overall level of affluence of Solihull masks inequality within the Borough; significant levels of deprivation, poor health, high levels of crime, fear of crime, worklessness and poor access to employment is evident, predominantly in the north of the Borough. There are also pockets of deprivation and dereliction in Elmdon, Lyndon, Olton and Shirley.

**Fig. 3 Average Lower Quartile House Prices**



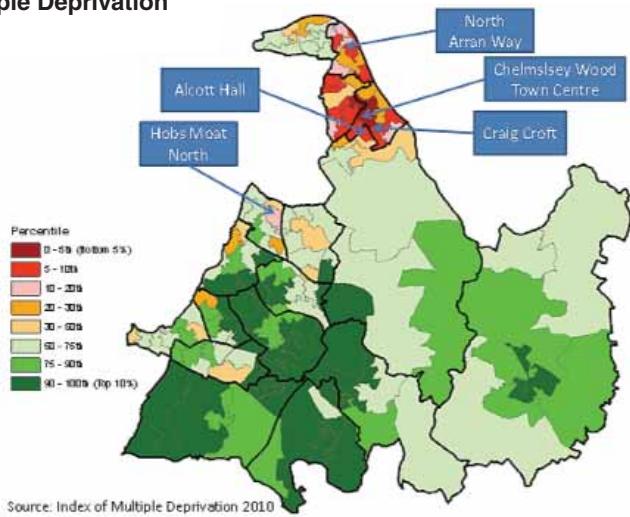
2.2.6 Whilst the Mature Suburbs of Solihull and the M42 Economic Gateway have excellent transport connectivity, much of the Rural Area suffers from relatively low levels of connectivity and accessibility, particularly by public transport.

**Fig. 4 Map of West Midlands Metropolitan Area Spatial Strategy Statement January 2011**



2.2.7 As a result of the Borough's economic success, level of affluence, attractive residential areas and accessibility via strategic transport networks, there is continued development pressure on the Green Belt and the Mature Suburbs. These factors, in combination with the relatively high levels of car ownership throughout much of the Borough, have resulted in high levels of greenhouse gas emissions, predominantly associated with congestion along the M42, into Solihull Town Centre and on key routes into Birmingham.

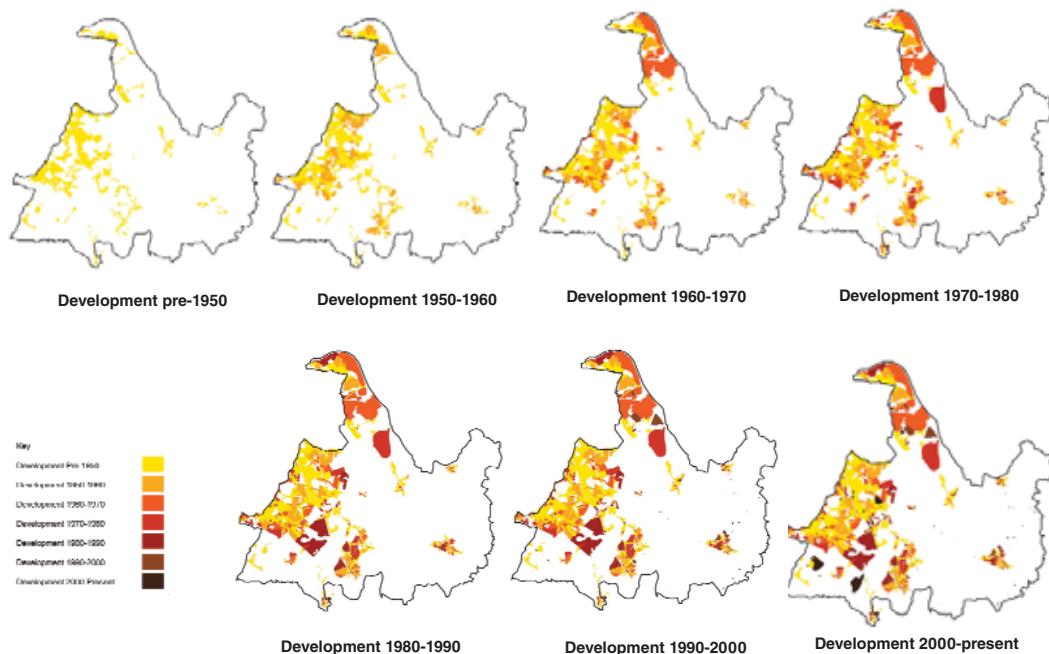
**Fig. 5 Map of Index of Multiple Deprivation**



### 2.3 Historical Development

2.3.1 The development of Solihull was highly influenced by the arrival of the railway stations and the 20th Century expansion of Birmingham south-eastwards. The area now known as Solihull Borough was predominantly rural with small historic towns and villages of medieval origin or earlier at Solihull, Meriden, Berkswell, Barston, Hampton-in-Arden, Knowle and Bickenhill until the end of the 19th Century, when Birmingham began to expand into rural Olton, with houses overlooking Olton Mere. Shirley originally developed from a scattered heathland settlement serving the road from Birmingham to Winchester via Oxford. Development of the Grand Union and Stratford-Upon-Avon canals and the railways also occurred during the Georgian and early Victorian periods, respectively.

**Fig. 6 Historical Development of Solihull**



2.3.2 The Rural Area once formed part of a huge area of wood pasture and ancient farm lands known as Arden and evidence of previous woodland, commons and heaths are often shown in local place names. There were also a number of manor houses and halls associated with large parks situated within the Rural Area, for example, parkland associated with Berkswell Hall was once part of a medieval deer park. Much of the woodland has now been cleared and the landscape character is predominantly agricultural, characterised by a variety of fieldscapes from older, irregular piecemeal enclosure to larger planned enclosure and very large post war fields.

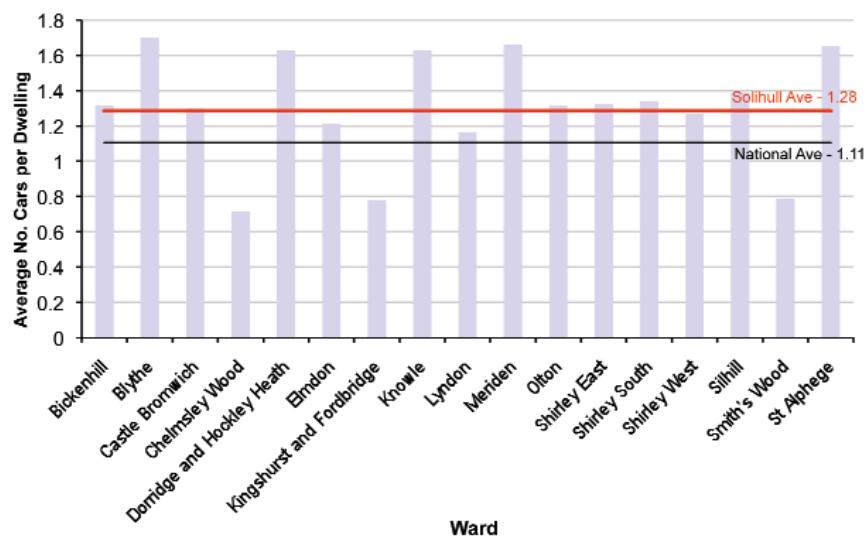
2.3.3 Large settlement expansion from Birmingham into Solihull occurred between 1900 and 1955, particularly during the inter-war period. This resulted in the development of huge semi-detached housing estates at Lyndon, Olton, Elmdon and Shirley stretching towards Solihull and, to a lesser degree, at Castle Bromwich. Detached housing development was more predominant around Solihull. Small settlement expansion also occurred in the Rural Area at Hampton-in-Arden, Marston Green, Hockley Heath, Meriden and on part of Balsall Common. During the inter-war period, large industrial areas relating to the automotive industry developed, such as the Land Rover Motor works, and the early example of a research and development campus at Shirley, latterly owned by TRW. Birmingham Airport was also developed at this time, opening in 1939 as a municipal airport.

2.3.4 After 1945, there was a huge wave of predominantly terraced and multi-storey residential development in the north-west part of the Borough from Castle Bromwich southwards. Residential development at Kingshurst was followed in the 1960's by overspill development from Birmingham into Smiths Wood and Chelmsley Wood. At the same time, Dorridge was 'created' by the expansion of Knowle south and westwards and development around Dorridge railway station. Development at Shirley, Olton, Lyndon and Elmdon towards Solihull continued and by 1955, Solihull had become joined to Birmingham.

2.3.5 Since the mid 20th Century, most residential development has occurred at Monkspath and Hillfield, Balsall Common, Cheswick Green, Meriden and Knowle and Dorridge, and most recently, since the late 1990s, at Dickens Heath. Most large scale commercial development has occurred at the National Exhibition Centre in the 1970s, Birmingham Business Park since the late 1980s, Blythe Valley Park since the late 1990s, and the more recent Touchwood Shopping Centre in Solihull Town Centre.

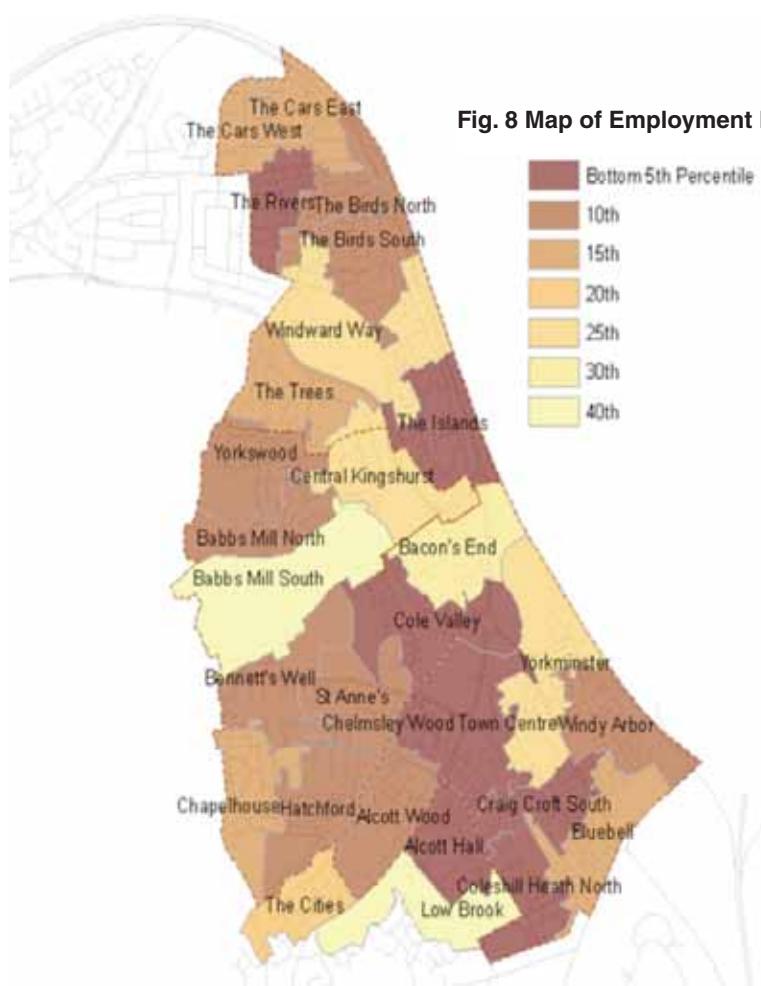
## 2.4 North Solihull Regeneration Area

Fig. 7 Average Car Ownership per Dwelling (by Ward)



2.4.1 The Regeneration Area has a strong sense of community, a younger population than the rest of the Borough and a higher proportion of single person and lone parent households than the Borough average. Car ownership is the lowest in the Borough and is significantly lower than the national average. There are frequent bus services to Birmingham but, despite the area's advantageous location adjacent to the Birmingham conurbation and strategic transport network, the area has poor connectivity with, and

Fig. 8 Map of Employment Deprivation in NSRZ



long journey times to, south Solihull. Generally, educational attainment is low within the area and, together with relatively few jobs within the Regeneration Area and poor access to jobs beyond, this has led to high levels of unemployment, worklessness and lower incomes than the Borough average. Poor health is a particular issue within North Solihull and this is highlighted by a lower life expectancy than the rest of the Borough. The North Solihull Regeneration Area includes areas that are amongst the 10% most deprived in England.

2.4.2 The area has a distinctive urban form characterised by its 1960s 'Radburn' open plan housing estates arranged around parking courtyards, small green spaces and precinct shopping areas. Pedestrian and car access is often separated so that dual carriageways, subways and footpaths are common. A consequence of this is poorly overlooked amenity areas and pedestrian routes, which exacerbate anti-social behaviour and fear of crime, and a resultant poor quality environment. However, the area has several significant environmental assets including the River Cole and its wider landscaped setting, woodlands, nature reserves and parks, which provide opportunities for enhancement.

2.4.3 The regeneration programme commenced in 2005 and has since delivered approximately 1,000 new houses such as the award winning Burtons Farm Park, vibrant new schools and colleges, improved green space and play facilities. A new supermarket and improvements to Chelmsley Wood Town Centre have been delivered and development has commenced at the new North Aran Way Village Centre.

## 2.5 **Mature Suburbs**



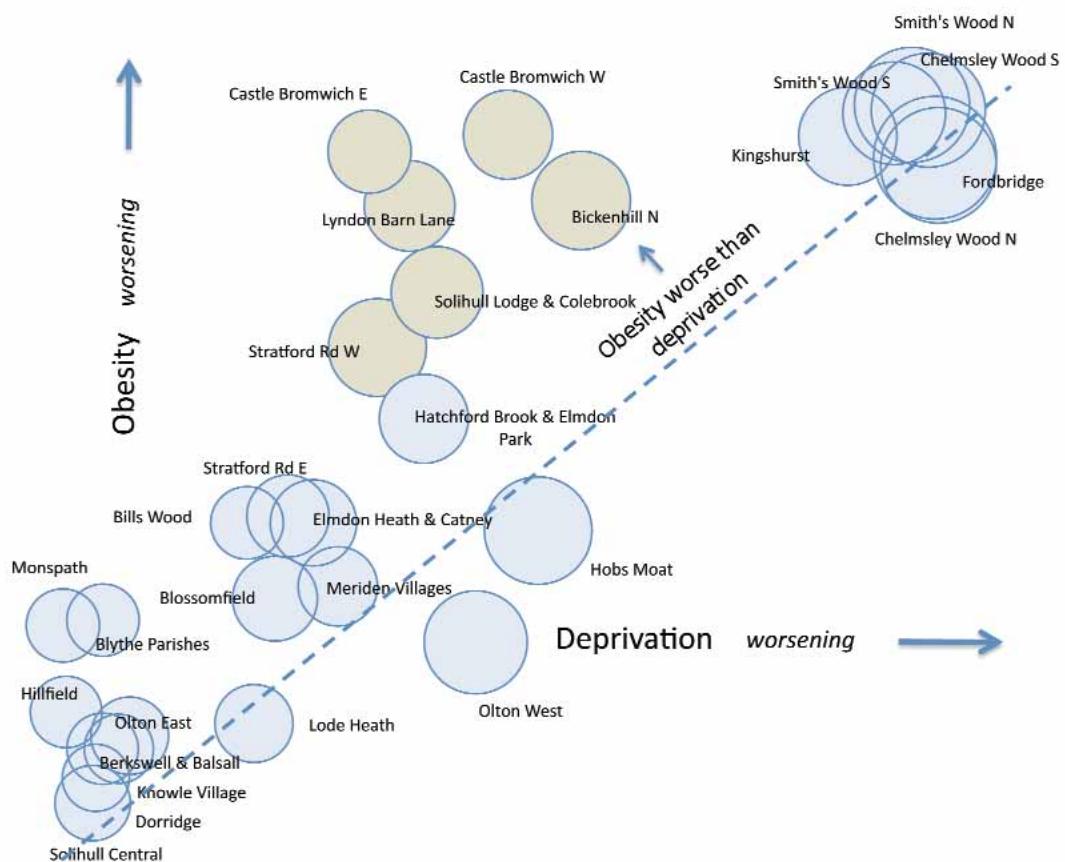
2.5.1 The area contains the popular residential suburbs of Castle Bromwich, Marston Green, Olton, Elmdon, Lyndon, Solihull, Shirley, Monkspath and Hillfield. These areas benefit from good schools, strong local centres and are relatively affluent. The more historic

parts of the Mature Suburbs are found in Castle Bromwich, Olton, Solihull and Shirley. These mature areas are characterised by Victorian and Edwardian development, the canal and railway network, a tighter urban grain, extensive gardens and parks. More modern housing estates are characterised by an open plan, cul-de-sac layout with on-plot parking and a predominance of detached and semi-detached properties. Given the popularity of residential areas within the Mature Suburbs, house prices are high and there is a severe lack of affordable housing for first time buyers and those wishing to downsize. At Castle Bromwich, the Grade I Listed Castle Bromwich Hall with church, service buildings, pleasure gardens and remaining castle mound to the north, form a rich group of heritage assets within the Conservation Area.

2.5.2 The Mature Suburbs are home to a variety of employment opportunities from Jaguar Land Rover and TRW to businesses located in the Solihull and Fore Business Parks, in local centres and industrial estates. The area benefits from lower unemployment than the Borough average. The area contains the strategic transport infrastructure of the A34 Stratford Road and the A41 Warwick and Road; principal routes into Birmingham, and two railway lines, with stations at Shirley, Olton, Solihull, Widney Manor and Marston Green. Excellent connectivity to strategic road networks has resulted in traffic congestion at key destinations such as Solihull and Shirley Town Centres and this has had a negative effect on the public realm and the shopping environment at Shirley Town Centre.

2.5.3 However, in contrast to the overall relative affluence of the Mature Suburbs, there are pockets of deprivation and “rundown” areas in parts of Shirley, Elmdon, Olton and Lyndon. Whilst health is generally good across the area, levels of obesity are rising and the population is increasingly ageing, which has implications for the type and tenure of housing required and a greater need for specialist housing and health care.

**Fig. 9 Graph of Obesity and Deprivation**



## **2.6 Solihull Town Centre**

### **2.6.1**

Solihull Town Centre is a strong, vibrant and regionally important Centre containing a wide variety of shops, businesses and civic services. It is enriched by its attractive historic core of St. Alphege church, the square and the High Street. To the north and south, the more modern retail developments of the 1960s precinct style Mell Square and the early 21st Century Touchwood development broaden the Centre's offer. Whilst the Centre continues to thrive, accessibility to and from the train and bus interchange is poor, traffic congestion affects key routes to the Centre and there is insufficient diversity of offer in the evenings. Parts of the Town Centre are looking dated and key gateways into Solihull and linkages to the surrounding parks could be improved.

### **2.7**

## **M42 Economic Gateway**



### **2.7.1**

The M42 Economic Gateway is a major economic growth driver in the Local Enterprise Partnership area and is home to key strategic assets and employers including Birmingham Airport, the National Exhibition Centre, Jaguar Land Rover, Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks as well as more local assets such as Whale Tankers and Solihull Business Park. It is estimated that realising the full potential of the Gateway could create over 36,000 additional jobs by 2026 and add £5.9bn to the West Midlands economy. Expansion of Birmingham Airport and proposals for a High Speed rail link could add to the existing strategic transport infrastructure of the M42, A45 and West Coast main line. The area's economic success has put pressure on the M42 motorway junctions, although this has been alleviated recently by the Active Traffic Management system. Despite its excellent connectivity to the strategic transport network, the area suffers from poor bus access and infrequent services to adjacent areas. Much of the Gateway is situated within the Green Belt and its attractive rural setting is a key draw for investors and employees.

### **2.8**

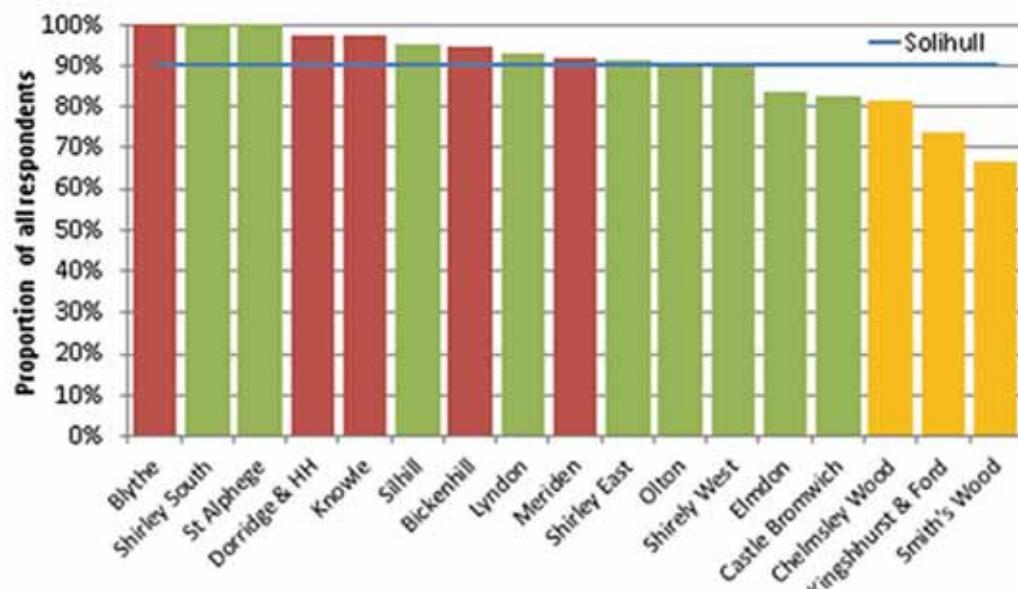
## **Rural Area**

### **2.8.1**

The Rural Area generally has a high quality built and natural environment, characterised by its Arden landscape setting, attractive countryside, important green corridors such as its canals and rivers and its rich biodiversity. The predominant land use is agriculture, which contrasts with the urban character of the remainder of the Borough and most of the Rural Area is protected by Green Belt. There is a wide variety of villages within the area, from the larger settlements of Knowle, Dorridge and Balsall Common which have

expanded significantly in recent times to the smaller, historic villages of Hampton-in-Arden, Berkswell, Meriden and Barston, hamlets and farmsteads which have grown more organically and the modern, critically acclaimed new village of Dickens Heath.

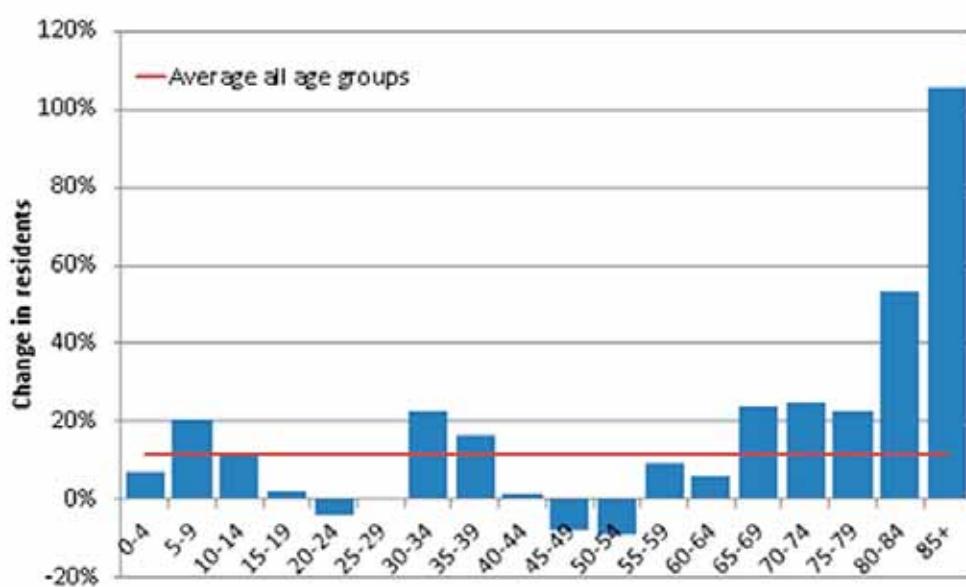
**Fig. 10 Graph of Satisfaction of Place to Live**



Source: Place Survey 2011

2.8.2 Generally communities within the Rural Area are affluent and occupy attractive residential environments. The level of car ownership is higher than the Borough and national average at 1.58 cars per dwelling. However, there is some rural deprivation, predominantly in Bickenhill ward. The Rural Area generally suffers from poor public transport connectivity. Schools perform well within the area but there is a severe shortage of affordable housing and an increasingly ageing population, above the national average, which could create service delivery difficulties. The rural communities are mainly commuter settlements and there is a continued threat of loss of key services and facilities.

**Fig. 11 Graph of Projected Change in Solihull Population by Age Group 2010 - 2030**



Source: ONS Population Projections

2.8.3 The Rural Area is also important for sand and gravel aggregates at Berkswell and Meriden quarries. The area also has significant coal reserves. There are waste facilities in the Rural Area but much of the amount of waste arising in the Borough is managed outside of Solihull. Much of the rural employment is focused in the agricultural sector, however, there are some examples of successful farm diversification.

2.8.4 The following sub-areas are characterised by:

- **Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath, Hockley Heath**

The historic medieval core of Knowle is centred on the High Street and the church of St John the Baptist, St Lawrence and St Anne, at the junction of two historic routes, and is protected by Conservation Area designation. Similarly development from the later Victorian and Edwardian periods around and near to Dorridge railway station benefit from Conservation Area status. The area experienced significant post-war development and there is no obvious settlement boundary between Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath. Dorridge suffers from a dated shopping centre and there is no obvious centre to Bentley Heath.

Hockley Heath is separated from Knowle and Dorridge and has a sense of remoteness. The village is largely inter and post-war ribbon development along the A34 Stratford Road but has the characteristics of a semi-rural village. The Stratford-Upon-Avon canal provides a linear heritage asset with a village wharf. The area is affluent, has a high quality residential environment and good, popular schools.

- **Catherine-de-Barnes, Hampton-in-Arden and Meriden**

These three small villages are located at key intervals along the B4102 Hampton Road and are separated by attractive countryside. Both Hampton-in-Arden and Meriden have historic medieval cores which are protected by Conservation Area designation and have grown organically over time. Hampton Conservation Area is centred on the main high street, Hampton Manor and the church of St. Mary and St. Bartholomew. At Meriden there are two; one focused on the green at the heart of the village and another around St. Lawrence's church at Meriden Hill, which has spectacular views over the surrounding countryside. Catherine-de-Barnes, on the other hand, is a smaller village with a more modern feel and which benefits from a canalside setting. The sub-area is generally affluent with some deprivation experienced in Meriden, which has a distinct rural feel to it and strong links to the surrounding farmland and quarries.

- **Balsall Common, Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Chadwick End**

Balsall Common is a large post-war suburban commuter village bisected by A452 Kenilworth Road. The settlement is characterised by popular, low density residential areas with an open plan,



Temple Balsall

cul-de-sac style layout and good schools. The village has a thriving local centre astride the A452 with a good range of shops, facilities and services, although there are some opportunities to improve the Centre. Berkswell railway station to the north-east of the village provides access to London and Birmingham via the West Coast main line.

The remainder of the sub-area is distinctly rural with a series of remote historic villages, hamlets, scattered farmsteads and cottages. The historic settlements of Berkswell, Barston and Temple Balsall are of medieval or earlier origin and Walsall End has houses dating from the 17th Century. All are protected by Conservation Area designation. This part of the Rural Area is characterised by the River Blythe, the wider Arden landscape and distinctive fieldscapes and is a popular area for recreational walking, being home to part of the Heart of England Way and a network of footpaths. Chadwick End has some 19th Century cottages, a public house and village hall with a community post office.

#### • **Dickens Heath, Tidbury Green, Cheswick Green, Blythe Valley Park**

This area consists of distinct villages set within and separated by attractive countryside and Green Belt, which gives each village a sense of remoteness. Tidbury Green comprises predominantly inter-war linear development along key roads and Cheswick Green consists almost entirely of post-war development characterised by cul-de-sac, open plan layouts. The modern, multi-award winning village of Dickens Heath was 'created' in the late 1990s and, guided by an architect-led masterplan. It has since undergone rapid expansion with a variety of architectural styles of development and a Village Centre. Whilst housing densities are higher around the Village Centre, the area has an attractive, mature woodland and canalside setting, with a few early cottages adding sporadic visual interest. There is a railway station close to Dickens Heath at Whitlock's End. Blythe Valley Park comprises a modern campus style commercial development within an attractive parkland setting. There are several award winning signature buildings providing a contemporary and sustainable working environment. As a whole, the sub-area suffers from poor public transport provision with limited bus services between settlements, which perpetuates travel by private car.



### 3. Challenges and Objectives

3.1.1 Solihull has a strong reputation for its high quality built and natural environment, economic success and prosperity, excellent transport links, as well as being a desirable place to live. However, engagement with local communities and stakeholders, responses to the Issues and Options paper 'Challenges and Choices' as well as the 'Emerging Core Strategy', together with other evidence, some of which is referenced in the Spatial Portraits, highlights that there are significant problems and challenges facing the Borough.

3.1.2 Twelve key challenges facing the Borough are summarised below, together with objectives for how each challenge can be addressed.

#### **CHALLENGE A – Reducing Inequalities in the Borough**

##### **North Solihull Regeneration Area**

- i. Significant levels of deprivation with high levels of crime, fear of crime and worklessness.
- ii. Poor public transport links with the south of the Borough, employment areas and poor access by walking and cycling to local services and facilities and economic assets.
- iii. Inadequate supply of business premises, particularly space for small and medium size enterprises.
- iv. Skills / qualifications gap and low educational attainment.
- v. Poor quality urban environment (including main retail centre), green space and public realm, lack of variety of tenures, lack of market and affordable housing.
- vi. Poor health, significantly lower life expectancy with the gap between the best and the worst wards in the Borough widening.

##### **Other areas of the Borough**

- vii. Pockets of deprivation in the Mature Suburbs and Rural Area: low incomes, unemployment and poor health in parts of Bickenhill, Elmdon, Lyndon, Olton and Shirley.
- viii. Problems of access to housing and local services, particularly in some rural areas.
- ix. Increasing obesity Borough wide, of particular concern amongst children.
- x. Pockets of anti-social behaviour around the Borough.

#### **OBJECTIVE**

- a) Close the gap of inequality between the most and least affluent wards in Solihull, particularly reducing the inequalities that exist between North Solihull Regeneration Area and the rest of the Borough.

## CHALLENGE B – Addressing Affordable Housing Needs across the Borough

- i. A shortage of affordable housing, particularly for rent, in all areas of the Borough but especially the Mature Suburbs and the Rural Areas of the Borough.
- ii. A need to widen the housing offer in the North Solihull Regeneration Area to meet the aspirations of local households.
- iii. A need for a range of affordable housing for older people and for people with learning, physical and sensory disabilities and mental health needs.

### OBJECTIVE

- a) Accommodate additional development to help meet the Borough's local housing need, whilst ensuring high quality places across the Borough through continuing to improve the quality of the environment in the North Solihull Regeneration Area and the mature suburbs and, conserving the qualities of the mature suburbs and rural settlements that make those places attractive areas to live.
- b) Maximise the provision of affordable housing of the right size, type and tenure and in the right location to help meet the Borough's local housing need.
- c) Address constraints in supply including the inability to deliver affordable housing in recent years through windfall development by reducing site thresholds.
- d) Widen the range of options for older people and those with disabilities through provision of accommodation which is designed to meet these diverse needs.

## CHALLENGE C - Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for people who live, work and invest in Solihull

Accommodating additional development to meet the Borough's needs, whilst:

- i. continuing to improve the quality of the environment in the North Solihull Regeneration Area and in areas of deprivation in the Mature Suburbs;
- ii. conserving the qualities of the Mature Suburbs, rural settlements and characteristics of the wider rural area that make those places attractive areas to live;
- iii. ensuring there is sufficient amenity space and opportunities for secure children's play; and
- iv. ensuring that residential and other amenities are protected.

### OBJECTIVE

- a) Ensure high quality design and development which integrates with its surroundings and creates safer, inclusive, adaptable and sustainable places which make a positive contribution to the Borough's sense of place, attractiveness and to people's quality of life.
- b) Conserve and enhance the qualities of the built, natural and historic environment that contribute to character and local distinctiveness and the attractiveness of the mature residential suburbs and the rural area.

- c) Ensure development does not have an adverse impact on residential and other amenities, and where that impact is unavoidable, to incorporate satisfactory mitigation.
- d) Widen the range of options for older people and those with disabilities through provision of accommodation which is designed to meet these diverse needs.

## CHALLENGE D – Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

### Key Economic Assets

- i. Maintaining Solihull's important regional and sub-regional role.
- ii. Meeting aspirations of key businesses to enable them to maintain competitiveness (Birmingham Airport, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham Business Park, Blythe Valley Park, Jaguar Land Rover) whilst contributing to sustainable development.
- iii. Retaining a high skilled workforce.
- iv. Impact of congestion on motorways, the strategic highway network and rail from additional growth/housing.
- v. Impact of pressure for development on the quality of the environment.
- vi. Need to provide opportunities around workplaces for healthy and active lifestyles.
- vii. Need for high speed digital connectivity to enhance competitiveness.

### Solihull Town Centre

- i. Pressure for redevelopment and expansion.
- ii. Impact of congestion.
- iii. Maintaining the attractiveness of the Town Centre's historic core and parkland setting.

### Shirley Town Centre

- i. Pressure from out of centre retail development.
- ii. Poor quality shopping environment.
- iii. Impact of high level of through traffic and congestion.

### Chelmsley Wood Town Centre

- i. Dated in appearance and in need of environmental improvements.
- ii. Broader diversity of uses needed to improve attraction to shoppers.
- iii. Maintain its local importance.

### OBJECTIVE

- a) Support the continued success of key economic assets such as Birmingham Airport, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks and Jaguar Land Rover whilst maintaining the quality of the environment and managing congestion.
- b) Support the continued success of Solihull Town Centre whilst maintaining the quality of its environment and managing congestion.

c) Encourage investment into Shirley and Chelmsley Wood Town Centres to improve competitiveness and the shopping environment.

### **CHALLENGE E - Protecting Key Gaps Between Urban Areas and Settlements**

i. Maintaining the Green Belt and the Borough's attractive rural setting that helps to attract investment, in the context of the significant pressures on agriculture and for development to meet regeneration needs in and adjacent to North Solihull and the housing requirements for Solihull including local needs.

#### **OBJECTIVE**

a) Maintain the Green Belt in Solihull, to prevent unrestricted expansion of the major urban area, to safeguard the key gaps between settlements such as the Meriden Gap and the countryside, and to contribute to urban regeneration in North Solihull.

b) Ensure that the countryside is managed so as to deliver a range of benefits including the growing of food and energy products, create an attractive rural setting and improved public access and recreational opportunities.

### **CHALLENGE F – Climate Change**

i. Higher than average greenhouse gas emissions.

ii. Low potential for wind and biomass.

iii. Need for decentralised energy and heating networks around Solihull Town Centre, North Solihull Regeneration Area, The Mature Suburbs and key economic assets.

iv. High level of emissions from transport.

v. Risk to health of older people and those in fuel poverty in poorly insulated homes.

vi. Risk of increased surface water flooding in urban areas.

vii. Urban heating.

viii. Retrofitting of existing buildings.

ix. Impact on biodiversity conservation and landscape character.

#### **OBJECTIVE**

a) Reduce the Borough's greenhouse gas emissions, so as to contribute to the national target for reduction, through a range of measures such as the location and design of development, provision of renewable and low carbon energy schemes, and promoting opportunities for low carbon travel.

b) Promote decentralised energy and heating networks within the Mature Suburbs and North Solihull Regeneration Area, and the generation of energy from on-site renewable sources.

c) Encourage the use of public transport by ensuring that new development is located in areas of high accessibility or potential high accessibility.

d) Support the Affordable Warmth programme to ensure high standard of home insulation for older people and others at risk.

- e) Ensure that new development does not increase, and where possible reduces risks such as flooding and urban heating.
- f) Ensure new development, and where possible existing communities have resilience to the effects of future climate change.
- g) Promote the use and beneficial effects of trees and green infrastructure in new developments.
- h) Encourage the mitigation and adaptation of existing buildings to climate change.
- i) Recognise the implications for biodiversity and landscape.

### **CHALLENGE G – An Imbalance in the Housing Offer Across the Borough and a Shortage of Gypsy and Traveller Sites**

- i. A shortage of smaller and family-sized homes, particularly affordable housing, which prevents many households from satisfying their housing needs, across the Borough but particularly in the Mature Suburbs and the Rural Area.
- ii. A shortage of market housing, particularly larger, higher value family accommodation in the North Solihull Regeneration Area which means that households which are able to move to higher value homes have a restricted local choice.
- iii. A shortage of well designed, affordable homes for older people which encourages both under occupation of larger homes and people moving into care accommodation.
- iv. A shortage of affordable homes which are suitable for people with physical and learning disabilities and other needs.
- v. A shortage of authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites in Solihull to meet identified needs and the need to maintain an appropriate level of supply.

### **OBJECTIVE**

- a) To provide an adequate amount and variety of homes which are affordable by local people including homes for rent, for purchase and intermediate tenure.
- b) To provide an adequate amount and variety of homes to meet the increasing demand from older people and those with disabilities, and other needs.
- c) To increase the number of authorised pitches for Gypsies and Travellers in the Borough in the most appropriate locations, to reduce the number of unauthorised developments and encampments and enable Gypsies and Travellers to access the services and facilities to meet their needs, whilst respecting the interests of the settled community.

## CHALLENGE H – Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

- i. Difficulties of access to services, facilities and employment leading to social exclusion, in the North Solihull Regeneration Area and for young and elderly in rural areas.
- ii. High car use in the Mature Suburbs and often this is the only form of available transport in rural parts of the Borough.
- iii. Congestion at peak times between junctions 3 and 7 of M42 and arterial roads into the main centres.
- iv. Poor pedestrian and cycle connectivity between communities and retail and employment centres.
- v. Physical, behavioural and perceptual barriers to more sustainable forms of transport such as walking, cycling and bus.
- vi. Poor north-south sustainable transport links.
- vii. Demand for rail travel often exceeds capacity at peak times and car parking provision at some railway stations is full before 9am.

### OBJECTIVE

- a) Improve accessibility and ease of movement for all users to services, facilities, jobs and green infrastructure.
- b) Reduce the need to travel.
- c) Manage transport demand and reduce car reliance.
- d) Enable and increase the modal share of all forms of sustainable transport.
- e) De-couple economic growth and increase in car use.

## CHALLENGE I – Providing Sufficient Waste Management Facilities and Providing for Sand and Gravel Aggregates

- i. Providing sufficient waste management facilities to meet an equivalent tonnage to the waste arising in the Borough and to address a predicted gap between waste arising and capacity of waste management facilities in the Borough.
- ii. Providing for sand and gravel production to meet national and regional targets as apportioned to the West Midlands County sub-region, in the context of limited resources elsewhere in the sub-region.

### OBJECTIVE

- a) To promote the management of waste arising in the Borough further up the waste hierarchy and its treatment as a resource to be used wherever possible.
- b) To address the capacity gap between waste arising and the capacity of facilities by taking advantage of opportunities to provide facilities for recycled materials, organic and residual waste.
- c) To provide for a total of 7.5 million tonnes of primary sand and gravel resources from sources within Solihull for the Plan period to 2028, including the maintenance of a minimum 7 year landbank, whilst ensuring that provision is made to encourage the use of secondary and recycled aggregates, that sand and gravel resources are safeguarded from possible sterilisation by non-mineral development, and that environmental, restoration and aftercare criteria are met.

## **CHALLENGE J – Improving Health and Well-being**

- i. Significant health inequalities in the Borough.
- ii. Incidence of unhealthy lifestyles and behaviours, particularly in young people and the need to improve the physical and mental health and well being of those who visit, work and live in Solihull.

### **OBJECTIVE**

- a) Create healthier, safer neighbourhoods.
- b) Enable people to pursue an active lifestyle and make healthier choices.
- c) Meet local housing and employment needs whilst facilitating the provision of appropriate health care services.
- d) Ensure that development does not have an adverse impact on physical and mental health and well being.

## **CHALLENGE K – Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets**

- i. Environmental and economic consequences of the decline in biodiversity across the Borough, including sites of national importance such as the River Blythe, loss of sites of local importance, and fragmentation of habitats.
- ii. Degrading of the historic Arden landscape character in parts of the Borough.

### **OBJECTIVE**

Promote an ecosystem approach to biodiversity conservation aimed at :

- a) Halting and reversing decline and loss by conserving and enhancing biodiversity.
- b) Contributing to sub-regional initiatives to improve the natural environment.
- c) Reviewing and updating biodiversity information and the network of local wildlife and geological sites.
- d) Addressing gaps in the strategic wildlife network.
- e) Promote a landscape scale approach to protecting and restoring the landscape of the Borough and its characteristic features.

## **CHALLENGE L – Water Quality and Flood Risk**

- i. Poor or moderate quality of the Borough's main water bodies, the Rivers Blythe and Cole and their tributaries, and increasing risk of flooding associated with new development.

### **OBJECTIVE**

- a) To contribute towards improving the quality of the water environment by ensuring that the Plan's policies and land allocations help to protect and improve the quality of the main water bodies in the Borough.
- b) To minimise the risk of flooding by avoiding development in high risk areas wherever possible, reducing flows to rivers during periods of high intensity rainfall, and ensuring that new development is designed so as to minimise surface water flooding risks.

## 4. Vision

### 4.1 Borough Overview

**By 2028, Solihull will have built on its distinct reputation as an attractive and aspirational place to live, learn, work and play, with strong links to Birmingham and the wider Local Enterprise Partnership area, to the major urban area of Coventry and rural Warwickshire.**

- 4.1.1 It will be a Borough that continues to be economically successful and a driver for sustainable growth within the West Midlands; where the potential for managed growth within the M42 Economic Gateway is unlocked and the ambitions for the economic assets contained within it are fully realised, without undermining the qualities that make the Borough attractive to people and investment. Essential infrastructure will be delivered to facilitate and underpin sustainable economic growth and the Borough will be a more accessible and integrated place where walking, cycling and public transport are more attractive and convenient alternatives to travel than by car.
- 4.1.2 Solihull will be a fairer and more equal Borough where all existing and future generations live healthier lifestyles, make healthier choices and have equal opportunities to a better range of high quality and affordable housing, education, jobs and an attractive, safe environment. We will have responded to and reduced the Borough's local housing need through the provision of a greater range and type of affordable and market housing and Solihull's Gypsy and Traveller community will have been provided for. All local communities will have greater involvement in shaping their areas and neighbourhoods, helping to sustain the longevity of rural settlements through the Neighbourhood Plan process.
- 4.1.3 The Borough will continue to be 'Urbs in Rure', realising its ambitions for sustainable economic growth without compromising the quality of its environment, protecting the Green Belt and retaining the strategic Meriden Gap between the Birmingham Conurbation and Coventry. The Borough's high quality Mature Suburbs, distinctive rural settlements, villages and wider Rural Area, its historic and natural environment and green infrastructure network will be protected and enhanced. The quality of the housing, public



realm and greenspace will have been improved in the North Solihull Regeneration Area and in “rundown” areas within the Mature Suburbs and Rural Area.

4.1.4 Solihull will have reduced the amount of waste produced in the Borough through increased recycling and re-use, reduced the gap between the amount of waste arising and the capacity of its facilities and continued to provide an adequate supply of sand and gravel to help meet local development needs. In tackling climate change, the Borough will have significantly reduced its carbon emissions, realised its potential to deliver renewable and low carbon energy schemes and created development which has minimised and is resilient to the future impacts of climate change.

4.1.5 In the following areas, this will mean that:

#### **North Solihull Regeneration Area**

4.1.6 The North Solihull regeneration programme will have made a real difference to people's lives where there will be an increased choice in the housing stock through widening the housing mix, size, type and tenure and improved quality, improved opportunities and access to employment, a more highly skilled workforce and a better range of jobs. Local communities will have become healthier, safer and mixed with easier access to thriving community hubs and village centres, enhanced greenspace and public realm. The River Cole valley and its setting will have been protected and enhanced. Chelmsley Wood Town Centre will have become a vibrant centre with a better range and quality of retail, leisure and community facilities.

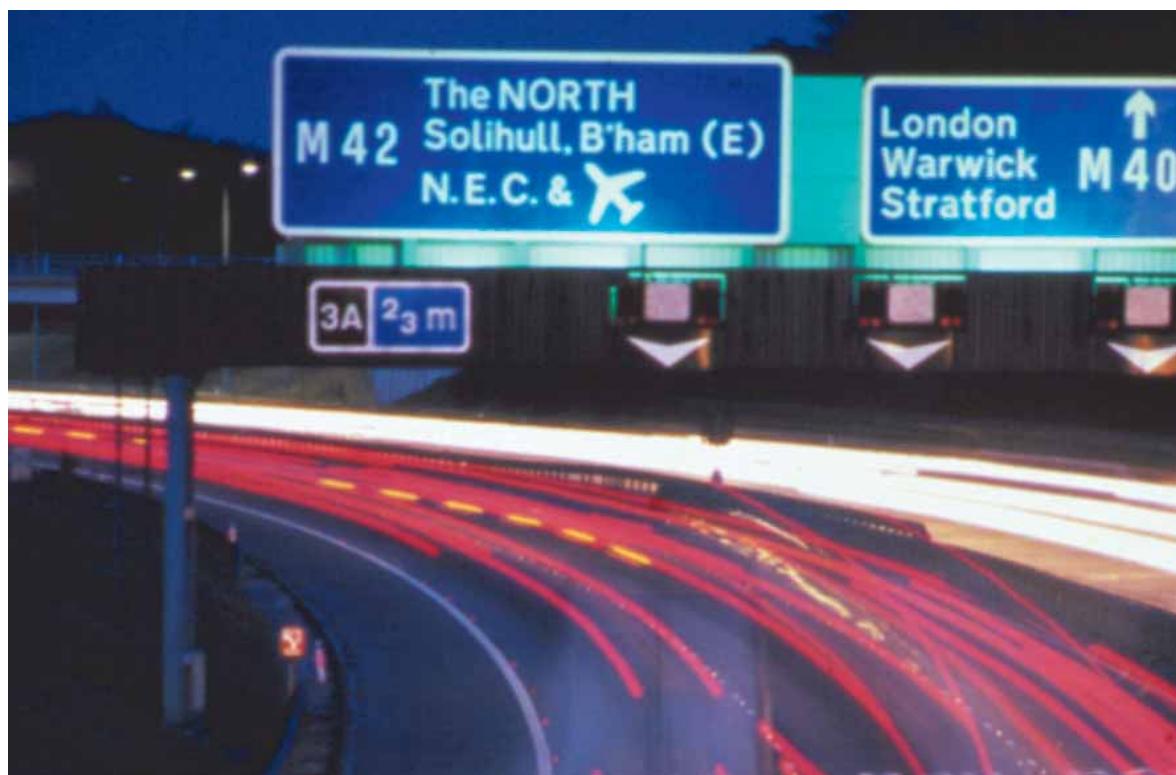
#### **Mature Suburbs**

4.1.7 Additional sustainable development will have been accommodated and a better range and mix of affordable housing provided without damaging the distinctive qualities of the residential suburbs of Castle Bromwich, Marston Green, Olton, Elmdon, Lyndon, Solihull, Hillfield, Monkspath and Shirley. Pockets of deprivation and dereliction within the Mature Suburbs will have been regenerated and the ambitions for and improvements to Shirley Town Centre will have been realised. Higher density development will have been delivered along key public transport corridors. The Mature Suburbs will have retained its leafy suburban character and its network of high quality open spaces. Congestion throughout the Mature Suburbs will be better managed and car dependency reduced through improved opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport.

#### **Solihull Town Centre**

4.1.8 The Town Centre will have been strengthened as a strong, vibrant, accessible and strategically important centre and will continue to be the location of choice for both major and independent retailers and businesses. It will have become a mixed and sustainable community, providing for town centre living and a vibrant evening economy, and also catering for the shopping, employment, cultural and leisure needs of people in and beyond the Borough. The Town Centre's historic medieval core will have been protected and enhanced, together with its historic buildings, structures, spaces and views. Linkages to the surrounding attractive parks and the train station and key gateways into the Town Centre will have been improved. The potential for reducing carbon emissions through renewable and low carbon energy schemes within the Town Centre will have been realised and opportunities for travel by public transport, walking and cycling maximised.

## M42 Economic Gateway



4.1.9 The potential and ambitions for the M42 Economic Gateway as a catalyst for a globally competitive knowledge based economy and driver for sustainable economic growth and employment will have been realised, without compromising the quality of its attractive countryside setting. Investment in infrastructure critical to the delivery of the plan will have been provided to underpin sustainable development within the corridor. Birmingham Business Park will have diversified its employment offer and have stronger links to the North Solihull Regeneration Area and Blythe Valley Park will have become a mixed and sustainable community with exemplar development and supporting facilities.

4.1.10 The N.E.C. will have diversified its offer in leisure and visitor facilities and remained a nationally important centre for exhibitions and major events. The proposed runway extension at Birmingham Airport will have been delivered, facilitating the Airport's ambitions for new routes to America, India and the Far East and JLR will have continued to be an internationally acclaimed company manufacturing high quality vehicles.

**Rural Area**

4.1.11 The network of strong and vibrant communities across the Rural Area will have been sustained with a range of local facilities and services that are readily accessible on foot and by bicycle and that are appropriate to the scale and hierarchy of the settlement. An increased range of affordable housing will have been provided within each community. The Borough will have continued to protect the Green Belt with adjustments in exceptional circumstances to provide for the Borough's local housing needs. The distinctive historic and natural environment of the Rural Area will have been protected and enhanced. The Borough will have continued to support the farm-based rural economy and encouraged sustainable management of the countryside. Appropriate waste management facilities will have been developed and the necessary amount of sand and gravel extracted to facilitate development.

4.1.12 In the following sub-areas, this will mean that:

- **Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath, Hockley Heath**

New development in the Village Centres of Knowle and Dorridge will have ensured that the centres remain strong, vibrant and provide a variety of services and facilities for the local population. The historic core of Knowle will have been protected and enhanced and the local character and distinctiveness of the four settlements conserved, particularly, the Victorian and Edwardian development around and including Dorridge train station and the semi-rural village character of Hockley Heath. A mix of market and affordable housing will have been provided in Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath and in Hockley Heath, affordable housing will have been provided to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local housing needs. Schools will have continued to thrive and serve the local area.

- **Catherine-de-Barnes, Hampton-in-Arden and Meriden**

Affordable housing to meet local village needs will have been provided in Meriden. A mix of market and affordable housing will have been provided in Hampton-in-Arden to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local housing needs and to secure the reclamation of the ammunition depot. Local facilities and services will have been focused in Village Centres so that they are sustained and continue to cater for the needs of the local population. Whilst accommodating some development, the distinctive historic character of the settlements will have been conserved, particularly the Conservation Areas of Bickenhill, Hampton-in-Arden, Meriden Green and Meriden Hill and the separation of the villages within the Arden landscape. The area will have continued to extract sand and gravel and manage waste with facilities assimilated into the countryside.

- **Balsall Common, Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Chadwick End**

A mix of market and affordable housing will have been provided in Balsall Common to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local housing need and the Centre of the village will have continued to thrive and cater for the needs of the local community. The local distinctiveness of the area, characterised by its open countryside setting, sense of remoteness, distinctive landscapes, woodland and assets such as the River Blythe, Grand Union Canal and the network of scattered historic hamlets and farmsteads will have been protected and enhanced and the sustainable management of the countryside achieved. The historic almshouses, church, school and home farm of Temple Balsall will continue to be the heart of the hamlet. The special character of Temple Balsall, Berkswell, Walsall End and Barston will have been safeguarded by the Conservation Area designations.

- **Dickens Heath, Tidbury Green, Cheswick Green, Blythe Valley Park**

The area will have provided new market and affordable housing within Dickens Heath, Cheswick Green, and Blythe Valley Park to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local housing need, whilst retaining its intrinsic character of four distinctive villages separated by open countryside. Blythe Valley Park will have become a mixed and sustainable community and aspirational place to live, work and play, amplified by its exemplar standard of design and construction and distinctive sense of place. Improvements to local facilities, services and public transport will have been realised, encouraging more sustainable travel patterns and improved connectivity to surrounding communities.

## 5. The Spatial Strategy for Solihull

### 5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Solihull has an enviable record of promoting and delivering growth in a way which enhances the Borough whilst at the same time not undermining the characteristics that make it special and attractive to investment. The Strategy maintains this approach and sets out how change and growth will be promoted and delivered in a positive, careful, sensitive and effective manner, so achieving the sustainable development that the Borough will need to meet the challenges and take the opportunities of the future.

5.1.2 The Strategy seeks to develop the potential of each part of the Borough to contribute to the growth agenda through a place making approach aimed at enhancing Solihull as a place where people aspire to live, learn, work and play, whilst recognising and protecting character and local distinctiveness. This includes realising the potential of the M42 Economic Gateway and Solihull Town Centre to drive growth and recognising the needs and growth potential of North Solihull. Opportunities for development to meet the Borough's local needs will be balanced with the importance of protecting the Mature Suburbs and the open countryside within the Solihull Green Belt.

### 5.2 Strategic context

#### Emphasis on economic growth



5.2.1 The Government's Local Growth White Paper published in October 2010 set the framework for economic growth, including new homes to meet needs, more jobs, extra investment and a better local environment. The White Paper emphasised the importance of local enterprise partnerships in creating the conditions for growth, and recognised the critical role of local authorities in supporting the local economy. The Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership is developing a strategy of creating an enterprise culture by encouraging business start-up and growth, and accelerating infrastructure investment, including that along the M42 corridor encompassing Destination NEC and Blythe Valley Park.

- 5.2.2 The Government expects the planning system to actively encourage growth, giving local people the opportunity to shape communities, whilst providing sufficient housing to meet demand and local need and supporting economic activity. This approach was re-emphasised in the Government's Plan for Growth and budget announcement in March 2011, which aimed to ensure that the planning system does everything possible to support economic growth and sustainable development.
- 5.2.3 The draft National Planning Policy Framework set out the presumption in favour of sustainable development and the need for sustainable economic growth, on which local plans are to be based. The Council is responding to this new agenda by developing a strategy for sustainable economic growth reflecting the local needs and priorities for Solihull.

### **Commitment to urban renaissance**

- 5.2.4 The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy responded to the threat posed by the decentralisation of people and investment from the region's major urban areas with a fundamental change of direction based on developing the major urban areas to meet their economic and social needs. The seven councils within the West Midlands Metropolitan Area remain committed to the long term urban renaissance strategy developed through the Regional Spatial Strategy.
- 5.2.5 The position statement on strategic spatial planning in the Metropolitan Area agreed in January 2011 includes the commitment to urban renaissance and joint working. In Solihull, the strategy focuses growth on North Solihull, including adjustments to the Green Belt to facilitate local regeneration and growth ambitions, with additional development in the urban area of Solihull and its town centres. The key economic assets are to be sustained to drive growth in the regional economy. The Green Belt in the Meriden Gap will be maintained, to protect the character and quality of the local environment and contribute to urban renaissance.

### **Local growth ambitions**

- 5.2.6 The sustainable growth strategy for Solihull recognises the significant potential for growth based on the key economic assets within the M42 Economic Gateway. It is also based on meeting the regeneration needs of North Solihull by enabling growth in and close to the Regeneration Area, whilst providing for economic needs elsewhere in the Borough.
- 5.2.7 The housing growth proposed is founded on the Borough's needs, including the regeneration of North Solihull, housing need and the shortage of affordable housing, as well as the Borough's household projections and the capacity of various parts of the Borough to accommodate development. It takes account of the potential of key locations, such as the town centres to deliver mixed use development, including new housing, as well as any constraints on development.
- 5.2.8 This agenda of strategic responsibility allied with local sensitivity has shaped the development of the Local Plan, along with further discussions with key stakeholders at conferences in July and November 2011.

## **5.3 How the Spatial Strategy Developed Challenges and Choices**

- 5.3.1 In 2008, the key spatial planning issues affecting Solihull were identified in consultation with stakeholders. These issues included the priorities from the Sustainable Community Strategy for Solihull, with its emphasis on healthier, safer, stronger and more prosperous communities. Options for addressing these issues were developed, leading to the publication of Challenges and Choices in December 2008 and consultation with stakeholders and the wider community.

5.3.2 Challenges and Choices set out three development options which could deliver increasing levels of development:

- Consolidation – 7,600 - 10,000 additional dwellings
- Corridors – 10,000 - 12,000 additional dwellings
- Clusters – 12,000 - 14,000 additional dwellings.

5.3.3 Taking account of the responses to Challenges and Choices and the sustainability appraisal, the Consolidation option and its associated level of development was favoured, with variations that incorporated elements of the other options. This approach to local spatial planning policy was developed through joint working with other local authorities and stakeholders, and supported by the findings in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision Report of Panel in 2009.

### **Emerging Core Strategy**

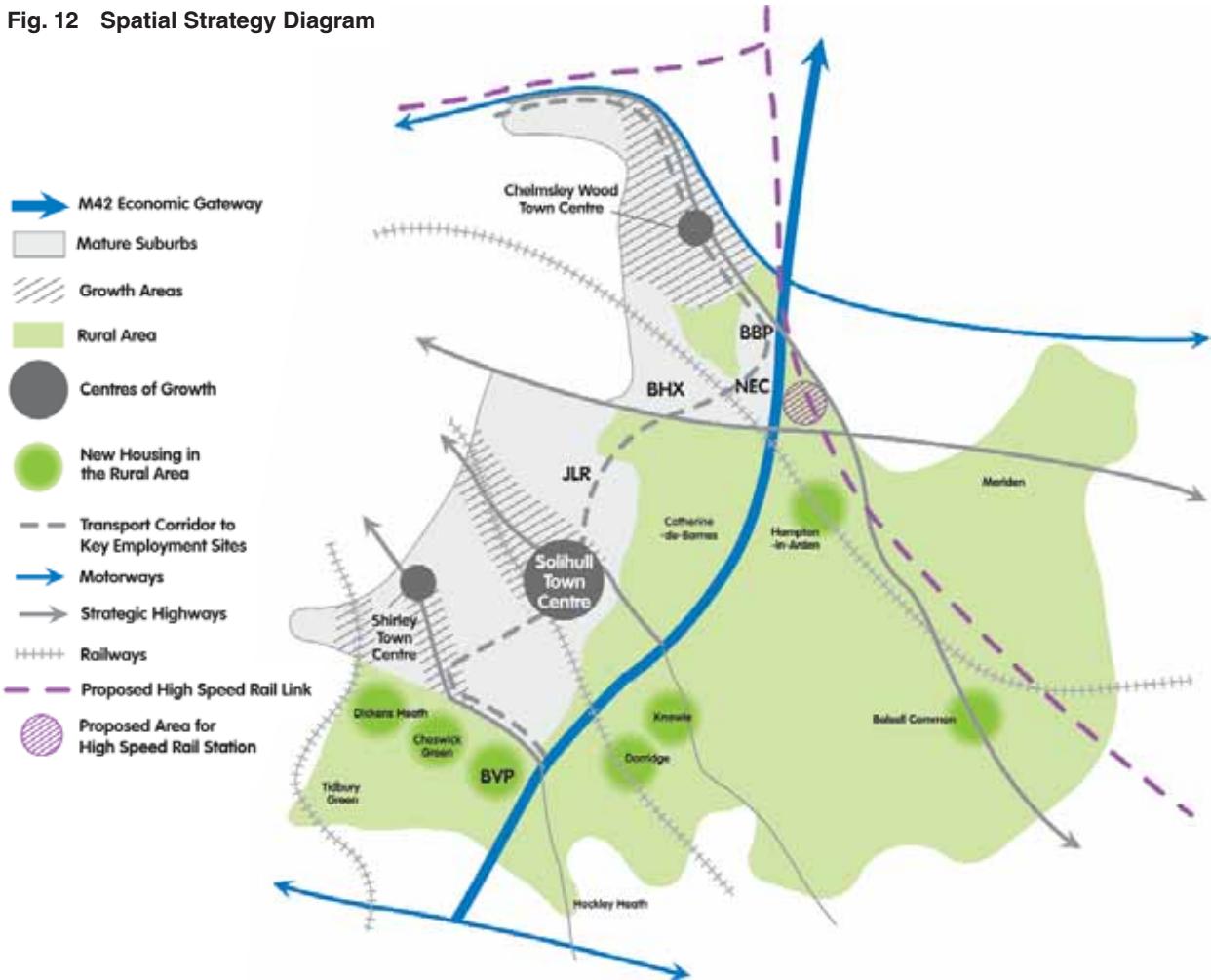
5.3.4 In 2010, the Council developed its preferred spatial strategy, focusing on housing growth and new employment opportunities in or near the North Solihull Regeneration Area, within the Mature Suburbs and its town centres and other areas of greatest accessibility, utilising safeguarded land in appropriate locations and providing for local village needs elsewhere. The Emerging Core Strategy for Solihull was published in September 2010, followed by consultation with stakeholders and the wider community.

5.3.5 Responses to the Emerging Core Strategy supported many elements of the emerging spatial strategy, whilst expressing concerns about over reliance on the North Solihull Regeneration Area and Solihull Town Centre for new housing provision, the level of employment and housing land proposed, and the balance between development and protection and enhancement of the character and quality of the Borough.

5.3.6 The sustainability appraisal demonstrated that the spatial strategy could be seen to be helping to deliver a number of the core strategy objectives. However, the appraisal indicated that the spatial strategy could do more to address the inequality gap, to maximise affordable housing, and to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote decentralised energy and heating. Its recommendations included a greater focus on business start-ups in North Solihull, improved accessibility to the NEC and Birmingham Business Park from the Regeneration Area, maximising local benefit from the employment sites in the south of the Borough, a better mix of housing in the Regeneration Area to meet local needs, and the need to compensate for the loss of green space with high quality green infrastructure provision.

## 5.4 Spatial Strategy for Solihull

Fig. 12 Spatial Strategy Diagram



The spatial strategy sets out the overall approach to delivering sustainable growth and outlines the broad strategic direction that will be followed for managing change and development whilst ensuring the essential character and distinctiveness of the Borough is maintained.

The Strategy seeks to address the key challenges facing Solihull and ensures that future development meets the needs of its residents and businesses and visitors and is consistent with the vision for the Borough and locally distinctive areas, the strategic objectives and the policies to deliver the strategy.

The key elements of the strategy are as follows:

**Realising the potential of the M42 Economic Gateway for job and wealth creation, by facilitating the plans and aspirations of the Borough's key economic assets, whilst addressing any infrastructure or environmental concerns**

5.4.1 Birmingham Airport, the NEC, Jaguar Land Rover, Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks and Solihull Town Centre offer significant potential for economic growth and job creation. Their plans and aspirations and any associated infrastructure needs have helped to frame this strategy and the more detailed policy development which will follow to facilitate their growth, whilst ensuring that any environmental concerns are avoided, minimised or mitigated, with appropriate compensation if necessary. The key economic assets are identified on the spatial strategy diagram.

***Promoting the sustainable growth of Solihull Town Centre, and the other town centres in the Borough***

5.4.2 Solihull Town Centre has a key strategic role in providing for the shopping, employment, cultural and leisure needs of people in and beyond the Borough. As a key public transport hub, it offers one of the most accessible locations in the Borough, encouraging multiple use trips. It has significant potential for encouraging mixed use developments and for developing decentralised energy and heating networks. Chelmsley Wood Town Centre will be encouraged to grow and play an important role in the regeneration of North Solihull. Shirley Town Centre will be regenerated through new development which will consolidate the town centre at the heart of the local community.

***Helping to address the economic, social and environmental inequalities within the Borough, notably between North Solihull and the rest of the Borough, but also within parts of the Mature Suburbs and some rural settlements***

5.4.3 This strategy aims to provide new employment opportunities within or near to the North Solihull Regeneration Area, and to improve accessibility to major employers. It will help to address health inequalities by protecting and enhancing green infrastructure in those areas where it can encourage healthy lifestyles. Ensuring high quality design will help to reduce the opportunities for crime and provide safer environments.

***Prioritising employment and housing opportunities in or near to the North Solihull Regeneration Area, facilitating accessibility to the Airport, NEC and Birmingham Business Park from North Solihull, enabling the expansion of businesses and new start-ups, and providing a more balanced mix of housing to meet growth aspirations and the Borough's local needs***

5.4.4 North Solihull Regeneration is one of the Council's top five major projects and is being led by the North Solihull Partnership. Providing new job opportunities in and close to North Solihull, and making major employment sites more accessible from the Regeneration Area are key objectives. The North Solihull Partnership aims to deliver housing growth, increase the proportion of market and intermediate tenure housing and replace poor quality housing with new quality affordable housing, both to meet the Borough's local needs and to sustain better public transport, schools, shops and other services.

***Ensuring that development meets economic needs and protects and enhances environmental character and quality, recognising the key economic and social benefits that the environment provides and its important role in contributing to health, well being and quality of life in the Borough***

5.4.5 Solihull lives up to its motto 'Urbs in Rure' reflecting its high quality urban areas, green spaces and countryside. To deliver sustainable development, growth will need to protect and enhance this environment, as well as meet economic and social needs. It is widely recognised that the Borough's environment plays an important role in attracting and retaining investment, and that a decline in environmental character and quality will adversely affect economic growth.

***Focusing on housing needs in addressing the Government's ambition for increased house building, by maximising the opportunities for affordable and supported and specialist housing, recognising the role of housing and construction in economic growth, and meeting the identified needs for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation in the Borough***

5.4.6 New housing will address the Borough's local housing needs by providing for the needs of families and children, young persons and first time buyers, the growth in single person households, and in the need for affordable extra care accommodation for the ageing population. A significant element of new developments will provide for affordable housing. In the Rural Area, rural exception sites for 100% affordable housing to meet the needs of people with a local connection to the Parish or neighbourhood will be identified. These will be additional to allocated sites in the rural area and will contribute to the Borough's local housing needs. Provision for new housing will be used to help to deliver growth, both through providing jobs in the construction industry and by providing high quality residential accommodation for key workers. Meeting needs will also include provision for the identified needs of gypsies and travellers locally.



***Focusing employment and housing growth in accessible locations and corridors, taking account of needs and opportunities, including the potential to reuse or recycle land allocated for alternative uses***

5.4.7 In addition to the priority for regeneration needs in North Solihull, development will be focused primarily in the Mature Suburbs, especially within Solihull and Shirley town centres and along key public transport corridors, whilst protecting character and local distinctiveness. Small and medium sized enterprises will be promoted in urban and rural areas to contribute towards economic growth. Opportunities for the recycling of land used or allocated for alternative purposes will be identified. Safeguarded land will be brought forward where development would be beneficial in delivering this strategy and meeting the Borough's local housing needs. Provision will be made for development to meet the Borough's local housing needs for market and affordable housing on suitable sites in the settlements of Balsall Common, Cheswick Green, Dickens Heath, Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath and Hampton-in-Arden as well as at Blythe Valley Park, and to meet local village needs for affordable and supported and specialist housing within the smaller villages. The site allocations and key corridors are identified on the spatial strategy diagram and the proposals map.

***Exploiting the role of transport in promoting and managing growth, whilst ensuring opportunities to access key destinations by a choice of transport modes, and that new development does not exacerbate congestion***

5.4.8 Major transport initiatives, such as expansion of Birmingham Airport will play a key role in future growth in the Borough, and will be supported providing the transport and environmental impacts are acceptable. Ensuring that major employment sites and local services and facilities can be readily accessed from existing and new housing areas, by a choice of transport modes, will contribute to the success of businesses, whilst

managing demands for travel and influencing travel behaviour will help to manage and reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions. The line of the proposed High Speed 2 rail link is shown on the spatial strategy diagram for illustrative purposes only; it will be safeguarded where necessary through national legislation. Any implications for the Green Belt would be considered through the preparation of an Area Action Plan.

***Enabling a low carbon future, by promoting the Borough as a location for green business, ensuring that new development minimises greenhouse gas emissions, and embracing initiatives aimed at improving energy efficiency and affordable warmth in existing buildings, whilst contributing to resilience against the adverse effects of climate change***

5.4.9 The green business agenda offers opportunities for growth and job creation whilst contributing to a low carbon future. Greenhouse gas emissions will be minimised taking account of both the direct emissions from the development and indirect emissions resulting from the anticipated travel patterns of occupiers. New development will incorporate the highest possible standards of design and construction and take full advantage of opportunities for renewable and low carbon energy solutions, including decentralised energy generation. The Council will support initiatives, such as Green Deal, that will help to improve the existing stock of buildings in the Borough, and minimise emissions and the social consequences of inadequate heating and insulation. All new development will be sited and designed so as to minimise the adverse effects of climate change.

***Protecting the Green Belt in the Borough, whilst making provision for the Borough's local needs, regeneration and growth***

5.4.10 National Green Belt policy applies to the Green Belt in the Borough, which is identified on the spatial strategy diagram. Locally, protection will be given to the key gaps between settlements in the Borough, such as the Meriden Gap. Adjustments to Green Belt boundaries have been made where essential to deliver regeneration in North Solihull and elsewhere to meet the Borough's local housing needs. Safeguarded land that is no longer considered suitable for development or would not help to deliver this strategy will be returned to the Green Belt. The particular needs of businesses located within or immediately adjacent to the Green Belt, including the specific growth aspirations associated with future investment of Jaguar Land Rover and other important employers, will be given weight when considering proposals for expansion. The role of farmers and landowners in managing the countryside will be supported through protection for agricultural land and a positive approach to farm-based diversification appropriate to a rural area.

***Protecting, conserving, enhancing and restoring the Borough's environmental assets and green infrastructure for their contribution to health and well-being, environmental quality and climate change mitigation and adaptation, and ensuring that development protects and improves the quality of the water environment through the timely provision of foul water infrastructure and the use of sustainable drainage techniques***

5.4.11 Natural resources are essential for economic growth and this natural capital needs to be maintained and enhanced to ensure future prosperity. Environmental assets, such as the high quality landscape and heritage assets help to make the Borough an attractive place to live and invest, contribute to physical and mental health and well-being, and provide local character and distinctiveness. Enhancing and restoring green and blue infrastructure will also contribute to national and local targets to improve water quality and conserve biodiversity.

***Supporting a sub-regional approach to reducing and managing waste with neighbouring authorities, with provision in the Borough for a range of facilities for the reuse, recycling and recovery of value from waste and if necessary for the disposal of residual waste***

5.4.12 New and expanded facilities will be supported on the strategic waste management sites identified on the spatial strategy diagram. Appropriate new facilities will be supported on industrial sites in the Mature Suburbs and North Solihull Regeneration Area, co-located with aggregate production within the area of search identified on the spatial strategy diagram, or in the Rural Area where appropriate and where a positive contribution to wider sustainability objectives is demonstrated.

***Enabling the extraction of minerals from workings in the Borough to meet local and strategic needs, whilst promoting the use of alternative materials***

5.4.13 Production of sand and gravel aggregates will be consolidated at existing workings, or within the areas of search identified on the proposals map, with extraction allowed elsewhere, where essential to meet local or sub-regional targets.

## **5.5 Area spatial strategies**

***The spatial strategy and directions of change for Solihull by 2028 are expressed further in the five distinct areas of the Borough identified below which follows the theme of the spatial portrait of Solihull – (section 2).***



### **5.5.1 North Solihull Regeneration Area**

*Making jobs more accessible for people within the Regeneration Area by:*

- Encouraging initiatives, such as collaboration between schools, higher and further education institutions and major employers, to enable a higher skilled workforce able to access jobs locally and within Birmingham
- Working with partners to deliver high quality, integrated public transport, walking and cycling networks to provide viable, safe, attractive and convenient alternatives to car travel and improve opportunities to access employment
- Encouraging major employers, such as Birmingham Airport, the NEC and Birmingham Business Park to target employment opportunities to North Solihull Regeneration Area, for example, by providing for apprenticeships

- Expanding Birmingham Business Park to encourage its continued attractiveness and success and improve access to jobs
- Encouraging business start-up and growth by providing for new employment, including small and medium sized enterprises in local centres.

*Providing for new housing within the Regeneration Area to meet growth aspirations and local needs by:*

- Focusing housing growth on key sites and corridors where development can encourage mixed and sustainable communities, with Green Belt adjustments to secure the full potential and local growth ambitions of regeneration, including tackling deprivation, worklessness, inequality and health issues
- Enabling a higher quality residential environment with quality housing providing choice in type, tenure and value
- Providing for more shared ownership and owner occupied family housing and houses which are suitable for people with learning and physical disabilities and other needs.
- Increasing provision of affordable extra care and supported housing

*Providing for community needs within the Regeneration Area by:*

- Improving and expanding Chelmsley Wood Town Centre, including improved links to the residential areas of North Solihull
- Creating new community hubs with shops, community facilities, employment areas, education, training and healthcare facilities
- Re-providing all primary schools and placing the new schools at the heart of their communities
- Encouraging low carbon and decentralised energy and heating networks and installations in viable locations, such as Chelmsley Wood Town Centre, the community hubs and schools
- Supporting appropriate waste management activities, such as recycling facilities within buildings on industrial sites
- Providing better transport links within and between areas and improving access to a range of facilities within 800 metres walking distance of residential areas (i.e. walkable neighbourhoods)

*Providing for a better, healthier and safer environment within the Regeneration Area by:*

- Protecting and enhancing the character and quality of the landscape, particularly the River Cole valley
- Improving or replacing poorly managed, low value, unsafe open space with enhanced green infrastructure which meets the needs of local people
- Providing secure play facilities to encourage more healthy lifestyles amongst children
- Ensuring that new housing avoids areas at risk of flooding, or where no other sites at lower risk are available, that the development is safe from the effects of flooding and does not increase risks elsewhere.

### 5.5.2 Mature Suburbs

Contributing to economic growth by:

- Enabling good quality, attractive business sites which provide a diversity of employment opportunities
- Working with partners to deliver high quality, integrated public transport, walking and cycling networks to provide viable, safe, attractive and convenient alternatives to car travel and improve opportunities to access employment
- Protecting the environmental quality and attractiveness of the mature suburbs, including garden areas where these contribute to character
- Protecting and enhancing the character and local distinctiveness of different areas

*Providing for new housing to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local needs by:*

- Increasing the provision of smaller houses and affordable housing, including affordable extra care and supported housing, and housing which is suitable for people with learning and physical disabilities and other needs, in the most accessible locations
- Focusing new high quality housing development particularly in Solihull and Shirley Town Centres, Solihull Lodge and Marston Green, and along high frequency public transport corridors
- Bringing forward affordable housing early in the plan period, in appropriate locations
- Utilising opportunities for recycling land from alternative uses for housing and bringing forward safeguarded land in sustainable locations where development will contribute towards meeting the Borough's local housing needs



*Providing for community needs by:*

- Enabling a range and quality of local services to meet the needs of communities
- Improving Shirley Town Centre, including a new foodstore, more modern retail units, affordable housing and better links to Shirley Park
- Supporting appropriate waste management activities, such as recycling facilities within buildings on industrial sites

- Supporting improvements to rail services along the Stratford Line and facilitating improvements at Shirley and Whitlocks End stations, thereby helping reduce congestion on local roads
- Ensuring that the role of the A34 Stratford Road and A41 Warwick Road as key transport corridors is balanced with the need to provide attractive places for people to live, work and shop

*Providing for a better, healthier and safer environment by:*

- Enhancing the network of parks and open spaces with links to town centres, local centres and the countryside
- Providing secure play facilities to encourage more healthy lifestyles amongst children
- Working with partners to deliver high quality, integrated public transport, walking and cycling networks to provide viable, safe, attractive and convenient alternatives to car travel
- Ensuring that new housing avoids areas at risk of flooding, or where no other sites at lower risk are available, that the development is safe from the effects of flooding and does not increase risks elsewhere.

### **5.5.3 Solihull Town Centre**

*Contributing to economic growth by:*

- Focusing strategically important employment, shopping, cultural and leisure activities within the Town Centre
- Facilitating improvements to and protecting future redevelopment opportunities of Mell Square
- Pursuing opportunities for new development for a range of uses at Station Road, Homer Road triangle and Touchwood Extension
- Phasing development to manage the impacts on existing retailers and other business occupiers, to ensure the timely provision of required supporting infrastructure and maintain a balance of vitality and activity across the Town Centre
- Encouraging a vibrant evening economy catering for everyone

*Providing for new housing to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local needs by:*

- Promoting opportunities to incorporate housing within new development in and around the Town Centre

*Providing for community needs by:*

- Promoting high quality digital connectivity to meet the future needs of businesses and residents
- Integrating opportunities for decentralised energy and heating networks into master planning and promoting the development of networks
- Supporting appropriate waste management activities, such as facilities for recycling and for combined heat and power
- Improving connections between the railway station and bus interchange and the Town Centre

*Providing for a better, healthier and safer environment by:*

- Enhancing the historic core of the Town Centre and its parkland setting
- Improving the quality, legibility and connectivity of public spaces to encourage movement to and throughout the town centre and increase footfall
- Reinforcing the High Street as a principal pedestrian route with links to both the rail station and adjacent parks
- Increasing the proportion of visitors accessing the Town Centre by walking, cycling and public transport thereby helping to reduce congestion
- Improving the gateways into the Town Centre.

#### **5.5.4 M42 Economic Gateway**

*Contributing to economic growth by:*

- Expanding Birmingham Business Park to encourage its continued attractiveness and success and improve access to jobs
- Diversifying the range of uses at Blythe Valley Business Park to facilitate employment development and create a more sustainable place
- Facilitating development within the Airport boundary to maximise the economic benefits and support the runway extension
- Enabling the diversification of use of the NEC to ensure its continued success and better linkage to economic activity across the Borough
- Supporting and encouraging a broad range of development at Jaguar Land Rover to facilitate its function as a major vehicle manufacturer and providing opportunities for the location of supply chain businesses within the Borough
- Recognising and facilitating the potential of other businesses within the Corridor to contribute to economic growth and employment
- Ensuring that economic and job growth of the key economic assets contributes to regeneration of North Solihull



*Providing for new housing to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local needs by:*

- Enabling provision of high quality housing to meet the needs of key economic assets, including provision for new housing at Blythe Valley Park

*Providing for a better, healthier and safer environment by:*

- Protecting and enhancing the character and quality of the environment that helps to attract investment to the Borough
- Protecting the Green Belt, but enabling development to meet the identified plans and needs of the economic assets
- Promoting the highest viable standards of energy efficiency and decentralised or on-site low carbon and renewable energy solutions in new housing on mixed use developments, with encouragement for development to exemplar standard where possible
- Working with transport providers and businesses to increase the proportion of employees and visitors accessing key destinations by public transport, walking and cycling
- Realising the potential for decentralised energy and heating networks and management of waste via facilities such as combined heat and power.

#### **5.5.5 Rural Area**

*Contributing to economic growth by:*

- Supporting appropriate farm-based diversification to provide jobs and enable sustainable management of the countryside
- Facilitating the expansion or redevelopment of businesses, providing that they contribute to local employment needs and subject to Green Belt policy
- Supporting appropriate waste management activities, such as open composting and other activities appropriate to a rural area, providing the impact on surrounding uses is acceptable
- Promoting the use and supporting the production of alternative materials for aggregates, and providing for primary aggregate production in preferred areas and areas of search, as shown on the proposals map
- Exploiting the opportunities of brownfield or unsightly land to provide new local housing or employment

*Providing for new housing to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local needs by:*

- Focusing new market housing on the needs of newly forming and downsizing households in Balsall Common, Cheswick Green, Dickens Heath, Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath and Hampton-in-Arden
- Providing for affordable housing, including affordable extra care and supported housing for the ageing population and those with disabilities, to meet identified needs in Hockley Heath and Meriden, and on rural exceptions sites where justified elsewhere

*Providing for community needs by:*

- Facilitating the early expansion of Arden school in Knowle to enable it to meet its future catchment numbers
- Ensuring a good range of local services within settlements to meet local needs

- Protecting key community facilities, such as shops, post offices, pubs, libraries and meeting places from conversion to residential use, or where the use is not viable, by seeking innovative solutions to service provision

*Providing for a better, healthier and safer environment by:*

- Protecting the Green Belt, but enabling development to contribute towards meeting the Borough's local housing needs and identified local village housing needs
- Retaining the distinct character of settlements within an open countryside setting
- Protecting and enhancing the Arden landscape character
- Providing for appropriate recreation opportunities in the urban fringe and the wider countryside.

## 6. Policy Themes

### **Sustainable Economic Growth (Challenges A, B, C, D, F, H)**

- P1 - Support Economic Success
- P2 - Maintain Strong Competitive Town Centres
- P3 - Provision of Land for General Business & Premises

### **Providing Homes for All – (Challenges A, B, G)**

- P4 – Meeting Housing Needs
- P5 - Provision of Land for Housing
- P6 - Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers

### **Improving Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel (Challenges A, D, F, H, J)**

- P7 - Accessibility and Ease of Access
- P8 - Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion

### **Protecting and Enhancing our Environment (Challenges A, B, C, D, E, F, H, I, J, K, L)**

- P9 - Climate Change
- P10 - Natural Environment
- P11 - Water Management
- P12 - Resource Management
- P13 - Minerals
- P14 - Amenity

### **Promoting Quality of Place (Challenges A, C, D, E, F, H, I, J, K, L)**

- P15 - Securing Design Quality
- P16 - Conservation of Heritage Assets & Local Distinctiveness
- P17 - Green Belt and Countryside

### **Supporting Local Communities (Challenges A, C, D, E, F, G, H, J, K, L)**

- P18 - Health and Well Being
- P19 - Range and Quality of Local Services
- P20 - Provision for Open Space, Children's Play, Sport & Recreation and Leisure

## 7. Sustainable Economic Growth



## 7. Sustainable Economic Growth

### 7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. This is about positive growth, making economic, environmental and social progress for current and future generations. In its economic context the aim of planning is to build a strong, responsive, competitive economy by ensuring sufficient land of the right type and in the right places is available to allow growth and innovation and by identifying and coordinating development requirements, including the provision of infrastructure.

7.1.2 Solihull has the most productive economy in the Midlands. It is an international gateway, as the location for Birmingham Airport and the adjacent NEC, and has other regionally important assets: Jaguar Land Rover, Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks and Solihull Town Centre. The presence of these key assets combined with Solihull's central location on the national motorway and rail networks and the quality of its environment, have been key to its success in attracting investment, particularly in high value-added sectors that include automotive manufacturing, ICT, business and professional services, creative industries and construction.

7.1.3 These key assets are estimated to contribute around 100,000 jobs and £5 billion to the regional economy. This could be increased significantly via a managed plan for growth in the 'M42 Economic Gateway' area where they are located (between Junctions 4 and 6 of the M42), which also encompasses the proposed High Speed 2 railway station.

7.1.4 Sustainable economic growth in Solihull is an important driver of economic recovery and employment in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership area and West Midlands. Achieving further sustainable economic growth in Solihull will depend on the continued competitiveness of its key economic assets and safeguarding and enhancing the Borough's attractiveness as a place to live, study, visit and invest. Economic success can help to ensure that residents of the Borough's disadvantaged neighbourhoods can access good quality employment and quality of life assets.

### National Exhibition Centre

7.1.5 The continued success of the NEC is important to the local and regional economy and is the UK's largest exhibitions centre. The role of the NEC has evolved from its early exhibition centre beginnings to become a major events, tourism and leisure venue, serving both business and leisure markets and contributing significantly to Solihull's and the region's visitor economy. The NEC has ambitious aspirations to enhance visitor facilities and diversify its offer to ensure its continued competitiveness in a mature UK exhibitions market and an increasingly competitive international events market. These aspirations are significant in safeguarding the NEC's contribution to the regional and local economy, offering an opportunity to create substantial new employment opportunities and to increase the area's attractiveness to investment.

### Birmingham Airport

7.1.6 Birmingham Airport is the principal international gateway into the Region and has a major role in the national airports infrastructure. It is a key economic growth driver, particularly regarding the knowledge economy, high value-added sectors and overseas inward investment and international trade. The development of new routes to the Far East, America, India and China enabled by the planned main runway extension, will enhance the Airport's capacity to contribute to local and regional economic growth.

## Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks



7.1.7 Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks have successfully attracted new investment to Solihull and the Region in accordance with their original role of helping to modernise and diversify the region's economy by attracting knowledge based employment and combating decline in the region's manufacturing base. Birmingham Business Park is well placed near North Solihull and the NEC to encourage new growth and investment linked to North Solihull regeneration. Blythe Valley Business Park is competitive with the south-east and M4 corridor and is capable of developing new facilities to promote and support innovation and entrepreneurship.

7.1.8 These two high quality, managed business parks have a key role in Solihull's success in attracting business investment in high value added sectors including ICT, business and professional services, creative industries, construction and engineering. It is important that these high quality sites continue to attract knowledge economy investment to Solihull and the region, thereby underpinning economic recovery and growth. This includes further realising the potential of Blythe Valley Business Park as a location for innovation uses and new enterprise. There is also potential for Birmingham Business Park to play a greater role in linking investment and employment opportunities to the North Solihull regeneration area.

7.1.9 To reinvigorate these sites, the range of acceptable uses on them needs to be broadened in response to changed market conditions. There is growing competition from town and city locations as occupiers realise the benefits to employees of access to a range of facilities and to public transport. Better facilities will be needed if they are to continue to secure appropriate investment.

### **Jaguar Land Rover (JLR)**

7.1.10 Jaguar Land Rover is one of the West Midlands', and UK's, most important businesses and a key driver of economic recovery, as an advanced manufacturing firm developing leading technologies including in low emissions vehicles. The Lode Lane plant in Solihull currently provides about 5,000 jobs and is expected to increase its workforce by 25%, demonstrating the company's commitment to Solihull. It is critical that JLR is able to continue to secure and develop its activities in the Borough.

### **Town Centres**

7.1.11 Solihull Town Centre is strategically important in the West Midlands and the principal focus of community, civic and business activity in the Borough. It is of crucial importance to the economic and social well-being of Solihull and to the achievement of a sustainable pattern of development.

7.1.12 Solihull has two smaller town centres that are important to their broad local catchment areas. Shirley Town Centre, located astride the A34 in the south of the borough and Chelmsley Wood Town Centre as the main centre for North Solihull. Both offer the prospect of further sustainable economic growth through modernisation, new floorspace and public realm improvements.

### **General Business Sites**

7.1.13 The Borough is also home to a number of business sites of more local significance of varying age and quality. These are important for local employment opportunities to provide a broad range of business accommodation in terms of type and size and a number of them have land that remains to be developed, such as TRW, Solihull Business Park, Fore and Trinity Park. Other older sites, such as Cranmore Industrial Estate, Boulton Road, and Elmdon Trading Estate, provide some further opportunities through redevelopment of older premises.

## **Policy P1 – Support Economic Success**

**Solihull's key economic assets and growth drivers are located near the M42 in the area between junctions 4 to 6 that forms the M42 Economic Gateway. This area supports more than 100,000 jobs and has strong potential for further sustainable growth that can create employment and contribute to regeneration.**

### **a) National Exhibition Centre and Birmingham Airport**

The Council will support the continued development of the NEC and Birmingham Airport within their boundaries as defined in this Local Plan to enable them to meet their future aspirations.

#### **National Exhibition Centre (NEC)**

The NEC is a key economic driver of the local and regional economy and, located adjacent Birmingham Airport, is at the Region's international gateway. The role of the NEC is as a major exhibitions, events, tourism and leisure venue, serving business and leisure markets. The NEC aims to encourage visitors to stay longer on site through enhanced attractions, provide a stronger sense of arrival, strengthen its brand and be attractive to all ages and cultures. To enable the NEC to meet its future aspirations and to drive economic and employment growth, the Council will enable a broad range of developments to enhance visitor offer, diversify facilities and increase international competitiveness.

Development the Council will support and encourage will include that needed for operational purposes such as new or refurbished exhibition halls, transport facilities and other development needed to enable the NEC to enhance its international competitiveness.

The Council will also support a broad range of ancillary and complementary facilities needed to enhance visitor experience and support operational needs. These will include hotels, administrative offices, warehouses, catering, meeting space, appropriate leisure and other supporting development, provided it is justified in terms of scale, its support for the NEC as a whole and is appropriately located within the NEC.

#### **Birmingham Airport**

Birmingham Airport is the principal international gateway into the region and an important part of the national airports infrastructure. It is vitally important in the local and regional economy, attracting investment and supporting business growth and international trade in key sectors.

The Council will support and encourage further development including the extension to the main runway south of the A45, in accordance with the approved planning application, and development needed for operational purposes such as passenger and freight facilities, terminals, transport facilities and other development that supports operational needs.

The Council will also support a broad range of ancillary and complementary facilities

including hotels, administrative offices car parks and other appropriate facilities needed to serve the needs of air travellers using the Airport. Proposals should be justified in terms of scale and in terms of supporting the Airport function and are appropriately located within the Airport so as not to detract from Airport function.

**b) Birmingham Business Park**

The Council will support and encourage the development of Birmingham Business Park within its boundary defined in this Local Plan to support its role as a prime employment location and enhance its important role as a high quality, managed business park.

Development that will be supported and encouraged at Birmingham Business Park is as follows:

Business development for uses falling in the Business Use Classes (B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order). The Council will expect development to progress in a well planned way and that will maintain the attractiveness of the business park to investors and that will protect and enhance the environment including the natural environment.

The Council will support a broad range of supporting ancillary or complementary uses needed to enhance the attraction of the business park to occupiers. These could include hotels, health and fitness, leisure, childcare facilities and local facilities falling within use classes A1 to A5 (of the Use Classes Order) of a scale that does not compete with existing or planned facilities outside of Birmingham Business Park.

The Council will support the expansion of Birmingham Business Park to the south-west as indicated on the Proposals Map. The Council will expect the land to be developed as an integrated part of the business park and in a way which facilitates access by public transport.

**c) Blythe Valley Business Park**

The Council will support and encourage the development of Blythe Valley Business Park within its boundary defined in this Local Plan to support its role as a prime employment location and enhance its important role as a high quality, managed business park.

Development that will be supported and encouraged is as follows:

Business development for uses falling in the Business Use Classes (B1, B2 and B8 of the Use Classes Order). The Council will expect development to progress in a well planned way and that will maintain the attractiveness of the Business Park to investors and that will protect and enhance the environment including the natural environment.

The Council will also support a broad range of supporting ancillary or complementary uses needed to enhance the attraction of the business park to occupiers. These could include hotels, health and fitness, leisure, childcare facilities and local facilities falling within use classes A1 to A5 (of the Use Classes Order) of a scale that does not compete with existing or planned facilities outside the business park.

At Blythe Valley Business Park the Council will support and encourage the delivery of a major quantity of employment floorspace by improving the attractiveness of the park to investors through an improved range of amenities, supported by well planned residential development that will create an overall sense of place and a more sustainable location.

The Council will expect new facilities, including the residential element of Blythe Valley Park, to be developed within the context of a masterplan to demonstrate how integration would be achieved between existing and planned facilities and with the network of villages that lie nearby.

**d) Jaguar land Rover (JLR)**

JLR is important to the national, regional and local economy and is a major employer. JLR remains committed to the Lode Lane plant in Solihull and has the opportunity to develop

advanced manufacturing, the low carbon economy and technology that will stimulate new skills and new opportunities.

The Council will support and encourage the development of Jaguar Land Rover within its boundary defined in this Local Plan. This will include a broad range of development needed to maintain or enhance the function of Jaguar Land Rover as a major manufacturer of vehicles. The reasonable expansion of the site into the Green Belt will be given positive consideration where economic need can be demonstrated and appropriate mitigation can be secured.

**The Council considers that the above key economic assets represent an important opportunity to improve access to employment. It is also important that economic growth does not harm the quality of the environment.**

The Council will expect development proposals that generate significant numbers of jobs to demonstrate measures to improve access to employment from parts of the Borough where unemployment persists, in particular North Solihull or where economic opportunity can be taken, for example, Solihull Town Centre. This could, for example, include public transport improvements and practical support for partnership working arrangements that will enable residents to take advantage of training arising from developments.

Applicants for development are expected to have regard to other relevant policies of the Local Plan, including those referring to design, climate change, access and amenity.

## **7.2 Justification**

7.2.1 The National Exhibition Centre and Birmingham Airport are the Region's international gateway. Located north of the A45 Coventry Road, both are important to wealth creation and are important sources of employment both locally and within the Region. It is important that the aspirations of both are supported in order to enable them to realise their potential for sustainable economic growth and to maximise their potential to generate jobs.

**Birmingham Airport**

7.2.2 The Airport Master Plan (2007) forecasts that passenger related air transport movement will grow substantially to 2030 (2010 throughput 11.5m passengers/year, 2030 throughput 27.2m passengers /year). Forecasts for Airport activity and its continuing development indicate a strong market for new investment including investment in an extension to the main runway, additional airfield capacity, additional terminal capacity, supporting airside and landside facilities, improvements to surface access and development of the Elmdon Terminal Site.

7.2.3 Strong growth is forecast in short-haul international and budget sectors. The addition of long-haul destinations is also forecast to contribute to growth in activity by satisfying currently constrained demand for these destinations and retaining passengers who might otherwise use other airports. Charter and domestic sectors are relatively mature and not forecast to grow as much as other sectors. The runway extension south of the existing line of the A45 is therefore important to future growth plans in enabling development of the long-haul sector that will enable route development, create new business and investment opportunities that will support the Region's economy and drive new growth sectors, markets and technologies, particularly in new markets such as India. Planning permission has been granted for this important proposal.

7.2.4 In order to enable the Airport to meet its aspirations a variety of operational development will be required and ancillary and complementary developments to serve the needs of travelling passengers. Appropriate types of development are described in Policy 1.

7.2.5 "The Future of Air Transport" White Paper suggested a second runway may be needed to serve the airport. Whilst the White paper suggested that the new runway could be needed as early as 2016, it left it for the Airport operator to determine when the project would be commercially viable. Subsequent work by the Airport into passenger forecasts and existing runway capacity indicated that a second runway would not be needed until after 2030 and this position is reflected in the current Airport Master Plan. The Council does not therefore consider that the major expansion of the Airport is a matter for the Local Plan at the present time.

7.2.6 Adjacent the Airport and the NEC is the rail interchange site that serves Birmingham International Station. Part of the 16 ha site is used for interchange parking and the remainder for Airport and NEC parking. A small area has been used for commercial office development. The site can potentially alleviate pressures for more distant off-site parking for the Airport or NEC or could be used for uses supporting the operational needs of these 3 users. The Council consider that the site should be protected for its important transport interchange purpose but ancillary or complementary facilities for Interchange, Airport or NEC purposes should be allowed provided they are justified and do not prejudice the use of the site for commuter parking serving the railway station. Development of any land within the site that can be clearly demonstrated as surplus to any of these requirements will be allowed provided that it does not conflict with other policies of this local plan or policies of the National Planning Policy Framework.

### **National Exhibition Centre**



7.2.7 The role of the National Exhibition Centre has evolved since opening in 1976. The NEC is now acknowledged as a venue for major exhibitions, events, tourism and leisure and an important driver of the visitor economy. In order for the NEC to remain competitive in a market where key competitors are international it will need to respond to changing markets and expectation and provide an improved offer. The NEC aspires to maintain its competitive position in the market for hosting major events but also intends to widen its product offer to encompass a wide range of major leisure and entertainment uses. The NEC aims to fulfil its ambitions by:

- Maximising commercial opportunities of current footfall through enhanced activities to increase dwell time at the NEC site.
- Creating new footfall by introducing new facilities as an attractor to the NEC.

- Providing a more compelling sense of arrival to the Region.
- Increasing reputation and brand of NEC and the Region through partnerships
- Providing a site that has appeal across ages, cultures and social types.

7.2.8 This will require new investment to refurbish or replace halls, create new floorspace and meet new challenges in meeting visitor expectations and on site experiences including improved visitor management, upgraded choice in its food offer and greater opportunities for relaxation and entertainment.

7.2.9 There is therefore a need for flexibility to enable a broad range of development that will support both operational needs but also a need for ancillary and complementary supporting facilities together with provision for sustainable transport and links to employment opportunities.

### **Birmingham Business Park and Blythe Valley Business Park**

7.2.10 Birmingham Business Park and Blythe Valley Business Park came into being as Regional Investment Sites, attractive, managed business sites that have helped to diversify the economy by attracting inward investment and meet the needs of important businesses that might otherwise leave the West Midlands. They both support significant numbers of jobs (estimated at 7,400 in 2009) and have strong potential to create more. Originally developed for business development in the B1 use class, they have proved attractive as office locations. Policy and markets have now moved on, the National Planning Policy Framework supports offices as a town centre use and this now reflects the direction of market choice.

7.2.11 Both Business Parks have seen a slowing of demand for B1 business development over the past few years. In market terms both sites compete on a local basis with employment sites elsewhere in the borough as well as with other regional sites. Both sites have successfully attracted clusters of knowledge based businesses and have helped to modernise and diversify the region's economy. However, there is growing competition from town centre locations that offer a broad range of facilities that are on hand for employees and ease of access by public transport. The sites need to be reinvigorated if they are to be able to proactively attract business development. To achieve this, a broader range of business development is needed on these managed sites together with supporting facilities that are capable of contributing to an attractive working environment.

### **Birmingham Business Park**

7.2.12 Birmingham Business Park potentially has strong links to the North Solihull Regeneration Area where unemployment is persistently high. Whilst the business park is in predominantly B1 office use and B1 use should continue to be enabled because it embraces a variety of uses that could help diversification, other business class uses should also be enabled that could generate employment and support the success of the business park by securing good quality employment opportunities, including local employment opportunities.

7.2.13 Most of the remaining area of the Business Park is committed to development through detailed planning consents and the park is unable to offer much space should a major occupier require accommodation. To supplement the land offer of the Business Park and potentially accelerate the delivery of new employment opportunities and enable stronger links to North Solihull, especially by public transport, a 5 hectare site at the south west corner of the Business Park is allocated for development with a buffer zone of green space between the Business Park and the residential development along Coleshill Heath Road and Blackfirs Lane. This buffer together with that existing to the north west of the Business Park to be positively managed and enhanced. This would facilitate public transport access to the site from North Solihull via a new bus link into the Business Park from Blackfirs Lane that would also link to the National Exhibition Centre.

## **Blythe Valley Business Park**

7.2.14 Blythe Valley Business Park did not begin to be developed until the late 1990s and has a different character to Birmingham Business Park in terms of its architecture and in terms of occupiers. It has attracted large buildings for corporate occupiers though more recently has catered for smaller scale uses whilst retaining its commitment to distinctive high quality design.

7.2.15 The Business Park has a substantial area of land remaining to be developed. The Business Park has aspirations to increase vitality and provide a greater sense of place by broadening the business use offer and enabling a range of supporting facilities that will help to make the business park attractive to investors and occupiers and making the Business Park more sustainable. A substantial residential element (up to 500 dwellings) would help to reinvigorate the park by helping to support a broader range of on-site facilities, supporting the vitality of the park and accelerating job delivery. It would also provide the opportunity to develop a real sense of place and improved public transport facilities to villages in the Hockley Heath area, better links to the main urban area of Solihull and improved pedestrian and cycle links. Through the efficient use of land the Council will expect a substantial quantity of employment development to be brought forward (about 1.75 million sq.ft., 162,575 sq.m. floorspace overall) within the business park.

## **Jaguar Land Rover (JLR)**

7.2.16 Jaguar Land Rover, a long established business in Solihull, is a major manufacturing success. The Lode Lane plant is estimated to provide circa 5,000 jobs and to support many more across the Region. Ownership of the company has changed a number of times in recent years but the company has enjoyed continued success and recent sustained sales growth. Renewed investment by current owners Tata has attracted new investment and growth in the broader manufacturing sector and the supply chain, including the potential to create a supplier park.

7.2.17 The Council will continue to support the further development and modernisation of the vehicles plant in order to enable its continued success in the competitive global vehicles market. Land Rover is constrained in terms of its ability to expand by its location within the main urban area. To reflect this and having regard to the vital importance of Jaguar Land Rover to the region's economy and to job creation, Policy 1 enables positive consideration to its reasonable expansion into the green belt subject to demonstration of economic needs and appropriate mitigation measures.

7.2.18 This principle is also reflected in Policy P17 that enables the reasonable expansion of established businesses into the green belt where the proposal would make a significant contribution to the local economy or employment, including for example, Whale Tankers at Ravenshaw Lane that has aspirations to further develop its site.

## **7.3 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

### **SOLIHULL TOWN CENTRE**

Solihull Town Centre will be developed and sustained as a place of quality and distinction. It will provide the civic heart of the Borough and the principal focus of commercial activity and public transport. It will be shaped and managed to ensure continued economic growth and success. The extent of Solihull Town Centre is defined on the proposals map.

The character and quality of the town will be protected and enhanced through the promotion and careful control of new development which is sensitive to its context but adds a new dimension to visual interest, activity and economic success.

**The Town Centre Strategy Map establishes:**

- i. The extent of the town centre to focus commercial activity, facilitate effective and efficient patterns of movement and public transport and to provide a clear identity.
- ii. A public realm framework as a focus for pedestrian movement and activity. New building will be required to front onto this network and focus their public activity to that frontage
- iii. A pattern of retail frontages to ensure the effective, efficient, convenient vital and successful functioning of the town as a shopping centre
- iv. Opportunity Sites for new development at Touchwood, Mell Square West, Lode Lane and Herbert Road/Station Road: and indicative opportunities elsewhere including Mell Square East, Lode Lane and Homer Road.

**In total, new development in the town centre will provide:**

- v. Up to an additional 34,000 sq.m. of comparison retail floorspace by 2021: and a further 23,000 sq.m. 2021 to 2026
- vi. Up to an additional 35,000 sq.m. of new office floorspace
- vii. Residential development, both on freestanding sites and as part of mixed use development or refurbishment schemes, will be encouraged in & around the town centre. Larger scale sites additional to the Opportunity Sites listed above will include:
  - Monkspath Hall Road
  - Station Approach

The development at Monkspath Hall Road shall be designed to allow for the relocation of Solihull Railway Station though such a proposal is not being put forward at this time.

The timing of new development will pay due regard to the need to ensure a balance of activity throughout the town centre during the whole of the plan period. A particular concern will be to ensure the continued success of both sides of High Street without either side becoming overly dominant in terms of floor space or activity.

The timing of development will also need to pay due regard to the need to ensure the effective provision of public transport, walking and cycling routes and to avoid unacceptable levels of traffic congestion within, or on routes to and from, the town centre.

All new development will be expected to make a reasonable and proportionate contribution to the cost of providing and maintaining necessary town centre infrastructure, especially for walking and cycling access, public transport, the public realm and on key highway links & junctions within & serving the town centre.

The provision of private parking within the town centre will be accepted for housing development and where there is clear operational need.

The provision of additional public parking will only be accepted where it can be shown that there is insufficient public parking already available to serve the development proposed.

## **SHIRLEY TOWN CENTRE**

Shirley Town Centre will be developed and sustained as a focus of commercial activity & services for the local community. It will be shaped and managed to secure its regeneration and economic success.

The extent of Shirley Town Centre is defined on the proposals map. The boundary focuses commercial activity south of the junction between Stratford Road and Haslucks Green Road and in a new development west of Stratford Road which creates a new heart to the Centre and better links into Shirley Park.

Retail activity will be focused within the town centre boundary and will be required to front onto Stratford Road or the new public realm between Stratford Road and the Park. No substantial retail development will be granted planning permission elsewhere in Shirley.

The former Powergen Site on the Stratford Road North of Haslucks Green Road will be developed in a manner which effectively connects to and complements the town centre that is a mix of residential, office, hotel, leisure or community uses but shall not include any substantial retail floorspace.

All new development should be sensitive to local character and enhance the public realm.

## **CHELMSLEY WOOD TOWN CENTRE**

Chelmsley Wood Town Centre will be developed and sustained as a focus of commercial activity, services and public transport. It will be shaped and managed to secure its regeneration and economic growth and to provide a focus for the local community and an identity of which it can be proud.

The extent of the Town Centre is defined on the Proposals Map and retail activity will be focused within it.

New development on the edge of the Town Centre will be encouraged to assist regeneration of both the Town Centre and the wider area of North Solihull. It will also be encouraged to better link the Town Centre and its interlink to Meriden Park and Cole Valley and enhance the public realm in and around the centre.

### **7.4 Justification - Solihull Town Centre**



- 7.4.1 The draft National Planning Policy Framework promotes the vitality and viability of town centres as important locations for sustainable economic growth and in creating sustainable patterns of development that enables ease of access by a variety of transport modes, particularly public transport. It also recognises the important role that residential development has in supporting the vitality of centres.
- 7.4.2 Solihull Town Centre is a key strategic Centre in the West Midlands and the principal centre for Solihull and a main focus for the community.
- 7.4.3 In order to strengthen the role of the centre and enhance its appearance, it is important to make appropriate planned provision for development needs over the period of the

Local Plan, building on opportunities to improve access, the public realm and the range and quality of services that it offers so that it will be sustained as a place of quality and distinction.

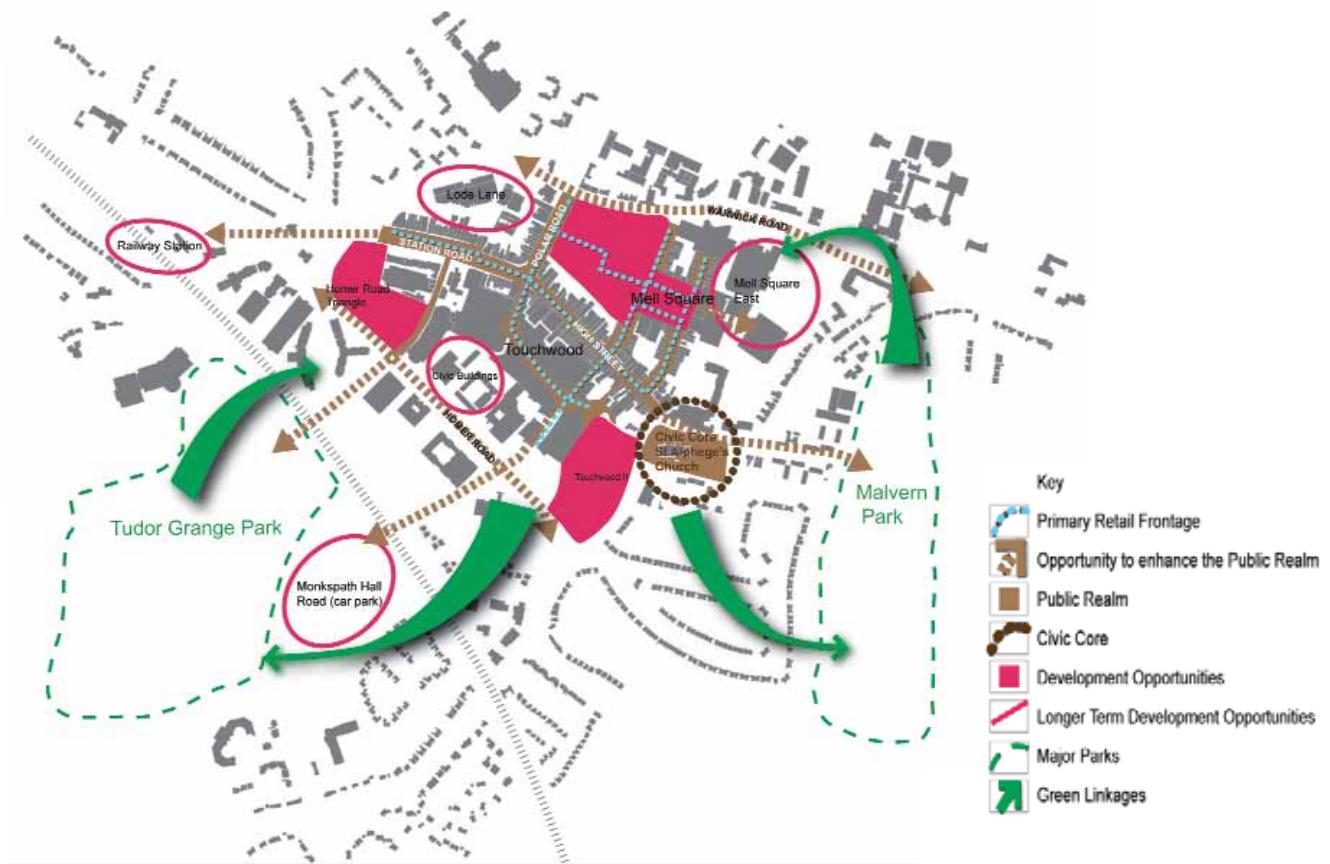
- 7.4.4 The centre is contained within clearly defined boundaries, the Chiltern railway and Prince's Way to the south-west, Blossomfield Road, Lode Lane to the north-west, Warwick Road to the north, New Road and Churchill Road to the east. The town centre boundary is defined on the Proposal. Near the centre, to the west, is Solihull railway station and to the south and east Tudor Grange and Malvern Parks respectively. The High street is an important principal pedestrian route through the centre providing pedestrian links to the modern Touchwood shopping mall on the south side and to the older Mell Square precinct to the North. It also links the Poplar Road bus interchange area in the direction of the railway station with St Alphege Church and the attractive historic core along the High Street.
- 7.4.5 The Town Centre is an appropriate location for a broad range of town centre uses including retail, leisure and entertainment facilities, appropriate sport and recreation uses, offices, arts, culture and tourism and residential. It is important that opportunities for development improve the centre, adding to vitality and vibrancy, whilst retaining or enhancing important characteristics.
- 7.4.6 High quality urban design will therefore be expected to ensure that development will protect the character of the Centre's historic heritage, improve public realm and improve pedestrian movement around the centre, for example, to improve links to the Centre's parks and provide improved articulation between Touchwood and nearby open spaces and improve the pedestrian link between Mell Square and the Warwick Road Morrison's store which has poor public realm. Design principles that developers will be expected to follow are identified in the policy.
- 7.4.7 The timing of development will maintain a balance of activity throughout the centre over the Plan period and to ensure continued success either side of the High Street and to fit with provision of new infrastructure, including public transport improvements and traffic management measures. The area to the south of the High Street has been the focus of activity in more recent times, with the development of Touchwood, but parts of the Centre are becoming outdated in appearance and would benefit from new development to modernise it and increase its attraction. This would not however preclude the extension of Touchwood as an early development that could enhance public realm and attractiveness to shoppers.
- 7.4.8 The Town Centre Spatial Strategy Diagram indicates a number of opportunity sites where development has the potential to come forward within the period of the local plan. The sites represent the opportunity to improve the attractiveness of the Centre as a place of quality and distinction reflecting strong urban design principles. The evidence base to the Local Plan confirms that in broad terms these sites, together with other small scale developments could support the level of residential development indicated in Section 8.5 in mixed and stand alone developments, and that there would be capacity for the level of retail and office development indicated (DTZ Solihull Retail, Leisure and Offices Study – November 2011 - 57,000 sq.m. of comparison retail floorspace and 30-35,000 sq.m. of offices).
- 7.4.9 The Town Centre Spatial Strategy Diagram shows important linkages to key destinations, open spaces, public realm, the main retail frontages that define the primary retail area which will be the focus for activity that maximises the centres vibrancy and attraction, and links to the opportunity sites.

7.4.10 Primary retail frontages where retailing activity will be expected to be the main street level use are as follows:

- High Street Nos 1-161 and 12-134
- Poplar Way, Mill Lane and Drury Lane 10-58 and 5-45
- Warwick Road No 700
- Mell Square and Touchwood.

7.4.11 A diverse evening economy can help shape the attraction of the Town Centre as a place that is vibrant and inclusive. The Council will encourage, through the development management process, a broad age spectrum of residents into the centre to enjoy a wide variety of leisure and entertainment facilities.

**Fig. 13 Solihull Town Centre Spatial Strategy Diagram**



### Opportunity Sites

#### a) Touchwood

##### 1. Appropriate land uses:

- retail
- offices
- residential
- civic accommodation

##### 2. Design principles:

- Development should comprise a seamless extension to the existing Touchwood shopping centre, and should link into the structure of the existing urban form through a network of new streets and spaces linked to the High Street with active ground floor uses;

- ii. The positioning of new pedestrian linkages to the High Street should be carefully selected to avoid the loss or adverse impact on listed buildings or adverse impacts on the character of the Conservation Area. Any demolitions to the High Street frontages should maximise the visual link across High Street to Drury Lane from the site in order to stimulate activity at the eastern end of High Street and Drury Lane;
- iii. Development will be required to preserve and enhance the special historic and architectural character of the Solihull Conservation Area and complement the existing Town Centre environment via appropriate scale, height, massing, roofscapes, layout, landscaping, public realm treatments, and choice of building materials;
- iv. Development should reinforce the identity of this part of the Town Centre, have a strong visual and spatial relationship with St. Alphege's Church and respect its setting;
- v. Development should take advantage of the sloping nature of the site to provide an interesting, attractive and exciting architectural form sensitive to its context;
- vi. Development should improve connectivity between the Town Centre and residential areas to the south and east, and respect the residential amenity of properties fronting Church Hill Road;
- vii. Development should be capable of being implemented in phases.

**b) Homer Road Triangle**

**1. Appropriate land uses:**

- retail
- offices
- residential
- hotel
- civic accommodation

**2. Design Principles:**

- i. Development will be required to preserve and enhance the special historic and architectural character of the Solihull Conservation Area and complement the existing Town Centre environment via appropriate scale, height, massing, and sense of enclosure, roofscapes, layout, landscaping, public realm treatments, and choice of building materials;
- ii. The movement framework for the proposal should maximise pedestrian linkages to the High Street, Tudor Grange Park and the train station;
- iii. Any development should complement the existing range of shops rather than compete directly with the Town Centre;
- iv. Development will be required to have active ground floor uses along Homer Road, Station Road and Herbert Road to maximise natural surveillance and vitality along these routes;
- v. A public realm strategy will be required to support the development which enhances the pedestrian experience along the neighbouring routes and raises the quality of this part of the Town Centre;
- vi. Development should take advantage of its 'corner' plots and maximise the frontages to the public realm both in use and architecturally;
- vii. Development should be capable of being implemented in phases.

### c) Mell Square

#### 1. Appropriate land uses:

- retail
- offices
- residential
- civic accommodation

#### 2. Design Principles:

- i. Development should comprise a seamless extension to the High Street/Poplar Road and should link into the structure of the existing urban form through a network of new streets and spaces linked to Warwick Road, Poplar Road and Mill Lane;
- ii. Development will be required to preserve and enhance the special historic and architectural character of the Solihull Conservation Area and complement the existing Town Centre environment via appropriate scale, height, massing, and sense of enclosure, roofscapes, layout, landscaping, public realm treatments, and choice of building materials;
- iii. The movement framework for the proposal should maximise pedestrian linkages and views to Warwick Road and Poplar Road by direct, attractive and active routes;
- iv. Development should open up opportunities to improve pedestrian linkages to Mell Square East;
- v. Development should complement and enhance the existing uses in the Town Centre;
- vi. Development will be required to have active ground floor uses along new links, Warwick Road and Poplar Road to maximise natural surveillance and vitality along these routes;
- vii. A public realm strategy will be required to support the development which enhances the pedestrian experience along the neighbouring routes and raises the quality of this part of the Town Centre;
- viii. Development should reinforce the identity of this part of the Town Centre, have a strong visual and spatial relationship with the High Street;
- ix. Development should improve connectivity between the Town Centre and residential areas to the north;
- x. Development should be capable of being implemented in phases.

## 7.5 Justification - Shirley Town Centre and Chelmsley Wood Town Centre

7.5.1 Shirley Town Centre is the Borough's second largest shopping centre and an important centre for commercial activity and services to a broad local catchment. The Centre faces competition from nearby out of centre retailing in the A34 corridor and from increased offer in Solihull Town Centre. It is a long, linear centre arranged either side of the A34, with a number of foodstores anchoring mini-clusters. It has a variety of convenience and comparison goods retailers and continues to maintain its vitality and viability. The Centre lacks a substantial retail core that will help to provide a 'heart' for the Centre that could strengthen its competitive position. To remedy this weakness the Council has granted planning permission to 'Parkgate' a mixed use scheme anchored by a food based superstore, a variety of comparison retail units designed to meet modern retailer requirements and residential accommodation. The scheme will also improve links to Shirley Park as an important local amenity that could improve the attractiveness of the

Centre to shoppers. The Solihull retail, leisure and offices study shows capacity for the scheme at anticipated time of opening and thereafter some limited capacity for further comparison retailing.

7.5.2 Near to the Town Centre on the corner of Haslucks Green Road and Stratford road is the former PowerGen offices site. The site has been vacant for well over a decade but the development of Parkgate could stimulate interest in its development. The Council's published development brief for the site encourages complementary mixed use development that can include residential, commercial and leisure uses. Substantial retail development will be resisted because it could take trade out of the Centre and would be more appropriately located within the Centre.

7.5.3 Chelmsley Wood Town Centre is the main centre for North Solihull and is an important centre of commercial activity and services and for its public transport accessibility. The main part is a purpose built precinct that opened in 1971 to serve the Birmingham overspill estates that are now part of North Solihull. The performance of the Centre deteriorated between 1998 and 2006 but then improved following increased investment in and management of the Centre. The Centre is anchored by a recently constructed food based superstore that is part of other improvements that have included a new library, housing/social services offices, bus interchange and public realm improvements. Further limited comparison retail development is also proposed. The Solihull retail, leisure and offices study shows sufficient retail floorspace capacity to support an ongoing programme of modernisation and extension of the Centre to secure its regeneration and provide an attractive focus for the local community. New development can bring opportunities to strengthen the role of the Centre in serving the community by improving links to North Solihull and to nearby open spaces.

## 7.6 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge B - Addressing Affordable Housing Needs across the Borough

Challenge C - Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for people who live, work and invest in Solihull

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth.

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

### Policy P3 – Provision of Land for General Business and Premises

Sustainable economic growth is important to Solihull's success as an attractive place to live, work and invest. It will enable increased prosperity, opportunity, well being and quality of life and will potentially provide a better quality of life for individuals and communities experiencing high unemployment.

To encourage sustainable economic growth and provide a broad range of employment opportunities the Council will plan for a continuing supply of employment land. Table 1 below, identifies the strategic sites that comprise the Council's supply of main employment land for this purpose, adopting a plan monitor and manage approach to avoid over allocating land that may lead to unnecessary loss of Green Belt.

The Council will support the allocated sites for purposes set out in the Table – Fig. 14. Small-scale supporting facilities may be allowed where needed to specifically enhance or complement

business use in the particular business locality and is compatible with sustainable development principles.

**(a)** To ensure that an adequate supply of land remains available for employment purposes, sites will be protected for their allocated purposes. Non-allocated employment sites will also be protected for employment use (Classes B1, B2, B8 and, where appropriate, waste management). Alternative uses may be allowed where the following criteria are met:

- i. The site is relatively isolated from other business premises or is out of place in the context of other neighbouring uses, such as residential; or
- ii. It is clearly demonstrated that there is no longer a need to retain the site/premises for their intended business class purpose; or
- iii. In the case of vacant premises, there is no longer a reasonable prospect of attracting business development in market terms;
- iv. The alternative use will support sustainable development principles and will directly support employment locally;
- v. There is no conflict with other policies of the Local Plan or National Planning Policy.

**(b)** The Council will encourage the retention of small and medium sized enterprises, and the creation of new ones, both in urban and rural areas as a key economic driver and to help facilitate growth in a broad variety of locations, including North Solihull as a priority, subject to the following criteria:

- i. Form, use and scale are appropriate to the character of the particular location;
- ii. There is no significant harm to the local environment, including landscape quality and character;
- iii. Proposals for home-working are compatible with the character of the local environment and are consistent with the amenity policies of the Local Plan;
- iv. The land or premises are not in the Green Belt or are compliant with Green Belt policy;
- v. In the case of development in rural areas, it is consistent with the Council's countryside policies and does not undermine the quality and character of the natural environment;

The Council will expect development proposals on business sites to include the necessary infrastructure to accommodate high capacity digital communication.

In order to encourage sustainable access to business developments and reduce the need to travel, applicants for planning permission for business use will be expected to demonstrate the anticipated level of employment that will be generated and how this will be of benefit to meet local employment needs.

Employment development will not be allowed where it sterilises natural resources or key sites needed to secure sustainable development, particularly in regard to provision for distributed heat and energy networks.

## **7.7 Justification**

7.7.1 Policy 3 seeks to provide employment land that will enable a broad range of sustainable economic development. In terms of general employment land supply outside Solihull Town Centre, the evidence base supports maintaining a minimum 15ha (5-year) continuous supply of available land. In order to avoid unnecessary release of land for this purpose, which could lead to loss of Green Belt land, it suggests that about an equivalent 5 year amount of land is identified for top-up purposes and that the general location for further land should be identified in the event plan monitor manage reveals a need.

7.7.2 Fig. 14 , below, shows allocated provision for about 38ha of land of which 26ha is readily available. Allocated provision comprises land remaining to be developed on existing employment sites. The only new allocation is adjacent Birmingham Business Park. The evidence base supports the approach of using existing allocations but recommends broadening the range of employment uses where possible so that there is less reliance on the B1 use class. This is supported by market trends that show a preference for town centres as office locations.

7.7.3 In addition to the allocated employment sites, Solihull has a number of employment sites where opportunities to recycle employment land may come forward. For example, substantial recycling of land has already occurred in older premises at Cranmore Industrial Estate (Monkspath) to create new offices and modern industrial/warehouse units and similar opportunities may come forward within Elmdon Trading Estate (near the Airport) where land is still vacant.

**Fig. 14 - Table of Allocated General Business Sites**

| Site  | Site No. | Available Allocated Land Area (ha) | Readily Available Allocated Land Area (ha) | Preferred Use Class Purpose |
|---|----------|------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
| TRW<br>Stratford Road,<br>Shirley                 | 25       | 18.5                               | 18.5                                       | B1, B2, B8                  |
| Solihull Business Park, Highlands Road, Monkspath | 26       | 7.0                                | 6.0  | B1, B2, B8                  |
| Fore, Stratford Road, Adj. M42                    | 27       | 2.0                                | 0.5  | B1                          |
| Chep/Higginson, Bickenhill Lane, Bickenhill       | 28       | 4.0                                | 0.0  | B1, B2, B8                  |
| Land North of Clock Interchange                   | 29       | 2.0                                | 1.0  | B1                          |
| Coventry Road                                     | 29       | 2.0                                | 1.0  | B1                          |
| Land adjacent Birmingham Business Park            | 31       | 5.0                                | 0.0  | B1, B2, B8                  |
| Total   |          | 38.5                               | 26.0                                       |                             |

7.7.4 Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks, together with the extension at Birmingham Business Park (but excluding land to be used for housing at Blythe Valley Business Park) have about 33 hectares remaining to be developed. This should be sufficient land for the plan period. The evidence base suggests average annual take up 2001-2009 has been about 1.6ha on these sites collectively. However, this may increase as a result of enabling a broader range of development. Policy 1 contains further explanation of the Birmingham Business Park allocation and development relating to these two flagship business parks.

- 7.7.5 The evidence base also shows that Solihull has a substantial supply of vacant business premises. At November 2010 this was about 109,500 sq.m. equating to a land supply of about 12.6ha of offices and 13.2ha of industrial and warehouse premises based on average plot ratios (excluding Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks).
- 7.7.6 In the event that plan monitor manage reveals a need for further land release for employment purposes, the general area of search will be in locations that can be easily accessed from North Solihull where employment need is strongest.
- 7.7.7 For the purposes of the Local Plan employment uses are business class uses and appropriate waste management facilities. Planning applications for waste management facilities will be considered in the context of effects on local environment and amenity both within the employment site and its broader surroundings and the nature of waste management operation, for example, the extent that it takes place within the confines of a building, the amenity and traffic or transport affects on the road network and effects on pollution.
- 7.7.8 Development of the employment land allocations is not phased. Existing allocations already have planning consents for employment use. Therefore the only allocation that can be phased is the land adjacent Birmingham Business Park. Whilst it is a new Greenfield employment allocation, the Council would not wish to delay its prospects for providing local employment accessible from North Solihull.
- 7.7.9 Solihull does not have substantial amounts of previously developed land that would be suitable or available for employment purposes. It is therefore important to protect the limited supply of employment land and premises from alternative uses, including types of economic development that would be more appropriate in a town centre environment.
- 7.9.10 The policy sets out the particular circumstances when alternative development may be accepted. These include, for example, small isolated premises in predominantly residential surroundings that render the premises out of context and better able to support sustainable development principles in an alternative use.
- 7.7.11 Mixed business uses may be enabled on employment sites where this will help to support sustainable development principles. Business class uses should predominate. Other uses of an ancillary nature may be enabled provided they are small scale in the context of the mixed use development and justified in terms of supporting the business function of the mixed use development and do not conflict with National Planning Policy, particularly in regard to its aims of supporting sustainable economic development and growth and supporting town centres.
- 7.7.12 Small and medium sized enterprises will be encouraged in all areas of the Borough, including rural areas, North Solihull and within established business sites, through redevelopment and creation of other opportunities for the development of small business space, provided they meet the criteria in the Policy that seek to protect the environment, local amenity and the Green Belt.
- 7.7.13 Digital connectivity and high capacity communication networks are key to commercial success in the 21st Century. Solihull is committed to increasing digital capacity across the Borough to help in remaining competitive, attracting inward investment, reducing inequalities and remaining a leading centre of enterprise.

## 7.8 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth.

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

## 8. Providing homes for all



## 8. Providing Homes for All

### 8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 A well functioning housing market is essential for Solihull to meet its full potential as an area which is a good place to live and for its future economic success.

8.1.2 Good housing is essential for social, environmental and economic wellbeing. A broad range of housing of different types and sizes, of different values and tenures are required to create and maintain mixed and balanced communities.

8.1.3 Solihull provides some of the best housing in the West Midlands, with values consistently above the regional average. It is a strong attractor of households, given its location and connectivity, the strength of the local economy and local employment opportunities. These advantages are enhanced by the quality of the Borough's residential environments, and particularly strong offers on retail and education. However, there are areas of the Borough, particularly North Solihull, where there is a need to provide more attractive choices of home and community environments, to encourage economically active and independent households to stay.

8.1.4 More housing is needed because the number of households in the Borough is increasing. Population is projected to increase by around 20,000 (2011-2028); more people are staying single longer; more couples and families are separating and people are living longer and continuing to live in their own home, often alone. The number of households is projected to increase by 14,000 over the period 2006 to 2028. It is expected that by 2028 around one third of all households will be single people including those over pensionable age, people with disabilities and households splitting. Many of these households are likely to require affordable rather than market housing (National Household Projections).

8.1.5 The number of households represented by the over 75s is projected to increase by 7,000 between 2008 and 2023 to comprise 21% of all the Borough's households. This leads to market demand for specialist and supported housing together with homes which can provide opportunities for households to 'downsize', thereby releasing family housing for resale and reletting.

8.1.6 There is a Borough - wide shortage of homes which are affordable and homes which are suitable for older people and specially designed homes for people with learning and physical disabilities. This leads to a strong local Borough need for family sized affordable rented housing and intermediate tenure homes together with both smaller and lower cost market housing.

8.1.7 Affordable housing need is exceptionally high as Solihull has one of the most severe affordability problems in the West Midlands Region. The shortage of affordable housing is particularly acute in parts of the mature



suburbs and the rural area. A Strategic Housing Market Assessment which was completed in 2009 estimated that 70% of newly forming households could not afford to buy or rent at market prices.

- 8.1.8 The number of people with disabilities will continue to increase and will drive the need for specialist and supported housing to meet a range of needs. This will usually be affordable housing, particularly for rent, but some market provision will also be required.
- 8.1.9 The provision of new homes should address the needs of all types of household, including families, single people, older and disabled people. New homes should be affordable by those who are seeking a first home and those who wish to move home. There must be increased provision of affordable housing for rent and intermediate tenure to meet the growing needs of households which cannot afford market solutions. In the North Solihull regeneration area there is a limited range of homes for owner-occupation, particularly larger homes, which will meet the aspirations of local households.
- 8.1.10 The Council aims to ensure that everyone has the opportunity of access to a decent and safe home within a quality living environment, by:
  - identifying deliverable housing land supply for fifteen years from the date the Plan will be adopted and ensuring that at least a five-year supply of housing land is available for development.
  - prioritising locations for development that will best contribute to building sustainable, linked, mixed use and balanced communities.
  - ensuring the provision of an appropriate mix, type and tenure of housing on sites in a range of locations which meet the needs of Solihull's residents, particularly needs for affordable and supported housing, on a Borough wide basis.
  - Making additional site provision for Gypsies and Travellers in order to meet identified needs and meet the Council's statutory obligations toward this excluded community including affordable pitches.

## **POLICY P4 – Meeting Housing Needs**

### **a) Affordable Housing**

The Council will require developers of allocated and unidentified sites to make a contribution to affordable housing on residential sites of 0.2 hectares or more, or housing developments of 3 or more (net) homes to meet the housing needs of the Borough.

Affordable housing includes social rented, affordable rented or intermediate – tenure housing which is available at below market price or rent and which is affordable to households whose needs are not met by the market.

The Borough definition of 'affordable' is set out in an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) which will be updated periodically to reflect changes in local incomes and house prices.

Contributions will be expected to be made in the form of at least 40% affordable dwelling units on each development site, but will take into account:

- i. Site size;
- ii. Accessibility to local services and facilities and access to public transport;
- iii. The economics of provision, including particular costs that may threaten the viability of the site;
- iv. Whether the provision of affordable housing would prejudice the realisation of other planning objectives that need to be given priority in the development of the site;

- v. The need to secure a range of house types and sizes in the locality in helping to achieve socially balanced and mixed communities; and
- vi. The need to achieve a successful housing development.

Where on site provision is not feasible or viable there will be a financial contribution towards the provision of affordable housing that would not otherwise be provided, elsewhere within the Borough.

This policy applies to all qualifying sites across the Borough and includes Gypsy and Traveller sites and residential moorings.

In addition to requiring a proportion of the homes to be 'affordable' the Council will identify the tenure, mix and type of the homes and any requirements for homes to be designed to meet specific needs such as those of older or disabled people.

The mechanisms and criteria for delivery of Policy 4 are set out in an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document.

### **b) Rural Exceptions**

The provision of affordable housing developments on green belt land to meet the local needs of households in that Parish or neighbourhood will be supported in circumstances where,

- i. The development proposal is consistent with the approved Village, Parish or Neighbourhood Plan; or
- ii. There is evidence that people with a local connection to the parish area have a housing need that cannot be met through affordable housing provision on an allocated housing site and the proposed development is supported by the Parish Council or Neighbourhood Group.

### **c) Market Housing**

Where the Council issues a development brief for a site this will include details of the likely profile of household types requiring market housing, eg. multi-person, including families and children (x%), single persons (y%) and couples (z%), as identified by the latest Strategic Housing Market Assessment. In assessing the housing mix of allocated and unidentified sites, the Council will, in negotiations, have regard to:

- i. Site size;
- ii. The existing mix of market housing and local housing demand in the area as guided by the Strategic Housing Market Assessment;
- iii. Accessibility to local services and facilities and access to public transport;
- iv. The economics of provision, including particular costs that may threaten the viability of the site;
- v. The need to secure a range of house types and sizes in the locality in helping to achieve socially balanced and mixed communities; and
- vi. The need to achieve a successful housing development.

## **8.2 Justification**

### **Policy 4a - Affordable Housing**

8.2.1 Policy 4 (a) is set on a Borough - wide basis. This reflects the fact that needs cannot always be met where they arise, so use has to be made of the development opportunities that become available. Therefore any development may need to provide for needs arising in another part of the Borough. The only exception to this may be on rural 'exceptions' sites where housing may be reserved for those with a local connection.

- 8.2.2 The requirement for the provision of affordable housing is justified on the basis that Solihull has a high level of unmet housing need, as evidenced in the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). This is supported by local Borough wide data on housing need. The SHMA showed that 70% of newly forming households were unable to satisfy their needs in the market and that 1,182 'affordable' homes were required each year to reduce the backlog and provide for a proportion of newly formed households.
- 8.2.3 The SHMA also demonstrated a growing need for homes which are suitable for older people and those with disabilities (physical, sensory and learning). This is also evidenced by local Borough wide data supporting the Independent Living and Extra Care Housing Strategy.
- 8.2.4 The level of need for affordable housing is high in relation to the level of new provision over recent years. Provision of affordable homes has been limited by the proportion of development that has taken place, and will continue to take place, on small sites. The site size threshold (15 homes or 0.5 hectare) below which there is no requirement to provide affordable housing has led to many sites which could reasonably have provided affordable homes being fully developed with market housing.
- 8.2.5 If this were to continue it would reduce significantly the level of affordable housing provision secured through the planning system. Therefore Policy 4 (a) sets a threshold at which an affordable housing contribution is required, of 0.2 hectares or more or delivering 3 or more net dwelling units.
- 8.2.6 The setting of a threshold is justified on the basis that housing developments should contribute to meeting the need for affordable housing unless they are so small that it would not be feasible or reasonable to require a contribution.
- 8.2.7 This threshold does not discourage development of small sites or the replacement of individual homes at the end of their lifespan with more than one dwelling where this is appropriate to the character of the area.
- 8.2.8 The Council recognises that the requirements of Government guidance that any affordable housing policy must be achievable on any given site, therefore the policy does not require affordable housing on sites of 2 or less homes or below 0.2 hectares.
- 8.2.9 Since the adoption of Policy H4 in the Solihull UDP (February 2006), 40% affordable housing has been achieved on a number of privately led residential developments. The implementation of the policy has had due regard to the suitability of each site and its capacity to provide affordable homes. It is therefore considered appropriate to the Borough's local circumstances.
- 8.2.10 The Council recognises that provision of affordable housing will result in a cost to developers and so the implementation of this policy requires a reasonable and flexible approach, reflecting individual site characteristics. Where there are factors that could threaten the viability of developments as a result of site specific constraints or circumstances these will be considered in negotiations.
- 8.2.11 The Council is justified in adopting its of affordability because it provides clear guidance to developers on what is required. The definition will be based on Borough data on incomes and house prices, subject to monitoring and review.
- 8.2.12 The Council is justified in defining the tenure of 'affordable' homes on the basis that a spread of tenure options is required to satisfy needs and aspirations of households. Most households in housing need are only able to afford to rent below market level, so the provision of homes at social rent or affordable rent is the most important aspect of affordable housing provision.

- 8.2.13 In view of the greater cost to land value of rented provision, the ability to require a proportion of any affordable provision to be for rent is essential. The objective will be to maximise housing provision for those in most need whilst producing balanced communities and to secure a level and mix of provision which is viable and practicable to the developer.
- 8.2.14 The Council also wishes to see provision of intermediate housing for those who can afford to part-purchase a home so this requires a balanced approach to 'affordable' housing provision.
- 8.2.15 The Council is justified in requiring the provision of homes which are designed to meet specific needs of older and / or disabled people (including people with learning and / or physical or sensory disabilities) because of the outstanding need for such accommodation and the relatively high cost of provision.
- 8.2.16 Because of the age and disability of many of those who require specialist or supported housing, the required provision is most often social or affordable rent. Insofar as this is the case on any development the provision will be part of the affordable housing requirement.
- 8.2.17 It is recognised that this provision can be relatively expensive to Registered Providers so a policy requirement which secures a reasonable level of provision on suitable sites is appropriate.
- 8.2.18 The Council is justified in requiring the on-site provision of affordable housing wherever feasible in order to maximise the provision of affordable homes on sites of all values. It is recognised that the provision of affordable housing in some parts of the Borough can present challenges to developers because of high land values. These are often in parts of the Borough where affordable homes are in particularly short supply so insistence on on-site provision is justified to ensure that homes are provided in these locations.
- 8.2.19 This policy is consistent with the Government's policy that where local authorities have identified that affordable housing is required they should set policies for meeting this need on site, unless off-site provision or a financial contribution of broadly equivalent value can be robustly justified and the agreed approach contributes to the objective of creating mixed and balanced communities.

#### **Policy 4(b) – Rural Exceptions**

- 8.2.20 Policy 4(b) responds to the identified need in some parish areas of providing affordable housing for people with a local connection to the parish or neighbourhood area and the importance of development in helping to sustain local community services.
- 8.2.21 The policy supports the provision of affordable housing where there is evidence of need that cannot be met through affordable housing provision on an allocated housing site. The provision of affordable housing developments to meet the needs of people with a local connection to the Parish or neighbourhood will be supported on green belt land. The policy will ensure that the most suitable site in the village is used as outlined in the Parish or Neighbourhood Plan. All sites will be assessed for their accessibility to services and facilities, the impact of development on the Green Belt and environmental considerations.
- 8.2.22 The policy is justified by the acknowledged role that providing homes for local people in these Parishes or neighbourhoods has in supporting communities and maintaining the vitality of rural settlements through retaining population which supports local services and facilities.

8.2.23 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment has identified the following suitable rural exceptions sites:

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 1. | Meriden Caravan storage and adjoining land, Birmingham Road, Meriden |
| 2. | Land West of Stratford Road Hockley Heath                            |

#### **Policy 4(c) – Market Housing**

8.2.24 The Council is justified in requiring the mix of market housing to reflect the types of households requiring market housing to ensure that market provision reflects local Borough demand and to sustain mixed and balanced communities.

### **8.3 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge B - Addressing Affordable Housing Needs Across the Borough

Challenge G - Imbalance in the Housing offer across the Borough and the Shortage of Gypsy and Traveller Sites

## **POLICY P5 – Provision of Land for Housing**

The Council will allocate sufficient land for 4,040 net additional homes to ensure sufficient housing land supply to deliver 8,930 additional homes in the period 2011-2028. The allocations will be part of the overall housing land supply detailed in the table below (Fig. 15).

The annual housing land provision target is 525 net additional homes per year. A trajectory showing how this target will be delivered from all sources of housing land supply is included in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and will be subject to annual review.

The housing sites are phased to ensure a continuous supply of housing provision throughout the Plan period and a continuous supply of affordable housing. Sites will not be released for development before they reach their specified phase, unless existing housing land supply falls below five years and the annual monitoring process has reviewed site deliverability and indicates that the trajectory is unlikely to recover over the next five years without additional land releases.

New housing will be supported on unidentified sites in accessible locations where they contribute towards meeting identified borough-wide housing needs and towards enhancing local character and distinctiveness. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, new housing will not be permitted in locations where accessibility to employment, centres and a range of services and facilities is poor.

The density of new housing will make the most efficient use of land whilst providing an appropriate mix and maintaining character and local distinctiveness. Higher densities will be more appropriate in the most accessible locations.

Development briefs will be prepared for each site in consultation with communities and developers and will set out the Council's expectations for the development of each site. Each brief will provide criteria and principles for development. Development briefs will be a material consideration in planning applications and will inform pre-application discussions.

## 8.4 Justification

### Housing Potential

#### 8.4.1

The Council has assessed housing land supply taking a “bottom-up” approach through detailed site assessment and the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It is considered that 11,000 (net) additional homes can be delivered towards meeting projected household growth of 14,000 households (2006 – 2028). This is the level of housing provision that the Council considers can be provided without adverse impact on the Meriden Gap, without an unsustainable short-term urban extension south of Shirley and without risking any more generalised threat to Solihull’s high quality environment. This level of growth supports the West Midlands Urban Renaissance Strategy to develop urban areas in such a way that they can increasingly meet their own economic and social needs in order to counter the unsustainable movement of people and jobs facilitated by previous strategies, including the need to direct development to those parts of the West Midlands Region needing housing.

#### 8.4.2

This can be delivered through sites with planning permission, suitable deliverable sites identified within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, sites within the North Solihull Regeneration area, broad location sites proposed for allocation by this policy and unidentified sites, predominantly within South Solihull. The following table (Fig. 15) provides an overview of housing land supply:

**Fig. 15. Solihull Housing Land Supply 2006-2028**

| Source                            | Estimated Capacity |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 Housing completions (2006-2011) | 2,068              |

### Future Housing Land Supply

|   |               |
|---|---------------|
| 1 Sites with planning permission  | 1,226         |
| 3 Sites identified in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment                                  | 249           |
| 4 Sites within the North Solihull Regeneration Area   | 1,029         |
| 5 Local Plan Proposed Sites   | 4,040         |
| 6 Windfall housing land supply  | 2,550         |
| <b>Sub-total Housing Land Supply to meet the overall target of 8,930 additional dwellings (2011-2028)</b> | <b>9,094</b>  |
| <b>Total Estimated Capacity</b>   | <b>11,162</b> |

NB: The overall estimated capacity exceeds 8,930 to provide flexibility in the event of under-provision from any source of housing land supply.

#### 8.4.3

All of the above sources of housing land supply and the housing trajectory are provided within the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2012 and will be kept under review.

### Spatial Distribution of Housing - Phasing

#### 8.4.4

There is a need to phase housing sites to provide a continuous supply of new market housing and affordable housing throughout the Plan period. Without phasing, Solihull’s strong housing market characteristics could lead to the early delivery of sites with unsustainable infrastructure capacity and pressure for further growth in undesirable

locations later in the Plan period. Supply would outstrip the Borough's demand and lead to increased migration from other parts of the West Midlands contrary to the agreed West Midlands Urban Renaissance Strategy which seeks to focus growth in areas in need of regeneration and growth.

- 8.4.5 Housing sites are phased to ensure a continuous supply of housing provision throughout the Plan period and a continuous supply of affordable housing.
- 8.4.6 Opportunities for early housing delivery to meet needs on the most suitable sites have been sought.

### **Phase 1 (up to 2018)**

- 8.4.7 Sites are in locations that will best contribute to building sustainable, linked and mixed/balanced communities. There is a focus on the North Solihull Regeneration Area to support improvements and a mix of housing provision and social and community infrastructure.
- 8.4.8 Housing in Solihull Town Centre is included in this phase to take advantage of the town centre's sustainable location with excellent access to a range of services and facilities and to improve the Town Centres diversity of use, vitality and sense of place. Sites within the Town Centre will be released in Phase I, but have been included in all three phases to reflect likely build times.
- 8.4.9 Blythe Valley Park has been included to provide a sense of place and distinctiveness. Housing will support park facilities and vibrancy and help foster economic growth on the remaining land. Provision of new housing will also help improve public transport in the surrounding rural area. Housing land at Blythe Valley Park will be released in Phase I, but has been included in the first two phases to reflect likely build times.
- 8.4.10 The development of the Powergen site and adjoining land will help secure the redevelopment of a vacant previously developed site.
- 8.4.11 The early release of sites in Knowle and Bentley Heath is promoted to address existing secondary school capacity problems. Arden school is likely to be oversubscribed from the 2013 academic intake and the development of these sites will be conditional on the provision of additional classroom and communal space to meet the needs of the existing and future population.
- 8.4.12 Housing development in Marston Green is required to secure improvements to health care facilities and additional green space. The site at Chelmsley Lane/Coleshill Road has been selected for inclusion in Phase 1 because it is in the most sustainable location, closest to the village centre and is generally supported by the community.

### **Phase 2 (2018-2023)**

- 8.4.13 The focus of sites in this phase is on the main urban area of the Borough, but the most accessible sites within the rural area have also been included to ensure a continuous supply of housing land.

### **Phase 3 (2023-2028)**

- 8.4.14 The rural areas of the Borough are less accessible locations and have been phased towards the end of the Plan period.

### **Density**

- 8.4.15 Maximising housing density is necessary to secure the efficient use of scarce development land, maximising the level of housing land provision, while protecting green field and green belt land. Ensuring higher density in the most accessible locations will ensure that more housing is provided in the most sustainable locations.

## Development Briefs

8.4.16 It is established that well designed and good quality homes in well designed neighbourhoods with good schools, healthcare and transport links can be the foundation for stable and secure lives, creating balanced and sustainable communities.

**Fig. 16 – Table of Allocated Housing Sites**

**Phase 1 Sites**

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.) | Site<br>Area<br>(ha)                    | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions | Likely infrastructure requirements  |
|--|---|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|---|
| <b>North Solihull Regeneration Area</b>  |   |                               |                  |                          |   |
| 1 (187)                                  | Foxglove Crescent                       | 4.37                          | 200              | 45                       | To support the regeneration programme<br><br>Reduce severance issues & improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity between key sites and centres. Improvements to Chester Road - speed reduction, pedestrian crossing facilities. Improve bus route connectivity. Compensation for loss of green space. Incorporate green infrastructure connectivity with Babbs Mill LNR and Kingfisher Country Park. Increased provision of utilities. Consider impact on local health services.  |
| 2 (188)                                  | Conway Road                             | 1.65                          | 75               | 45                       | Reduce severance issues & improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity between key sites and centres. Improvements to Chester Road - speed reduction, pedestrian crossing facilities. Improve bus route connectivity. Flood attenuation measures. Compensation for loss of green space. Increased provision of utilities. Consider impact on local health services.  |
| 3 (184)                                  | Simon Digby Chelmsley Wood              | 4.57                          | 200              | 45                       | Reduce severance issues & improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity between key sites and centres. Improvements to Chester Road - speed reduction, pedestrian crossing facilities. Improve bus route connectivity. New access road linking site directly with Chester Road. Flood attenuation measures. Noise attenuation measures. Compensation for loss of green space with green infrastructure connectivity. Increased provision of utilities. Consider impact on local health services.  |
| 4 (185)                                  | Bishop Wilson and St. Andrews Scout Hut | 3.09                          | 140              | 45                       | Reduce severance issues & improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity between key sites and centres. Improvements to Chester Road - speed reduction, pedestrian crossing facilities. Improve bus route connectivity. Lay-out and design to facilitate movement and access within and to Craig Croft Village Centre. Flood attenuation measures. Noise attenuation measures. Increased provision of utilities. Incorporate green infrastructure connectivity with Cole Bank LNR and Kingfisher Country Park and compensate off-site. Compensation for loss of green space. Consider impact on local health services. |

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.) |  | Site<br>Area<br>(ha) | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions   | Likely infrastructure requirements  |
|--|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|--|---|
| 5 (189)                                  | Lowbrook Phase II                            | 1.72                 | 75                            | 45               | To support the regeneration programme  | <p>Reduce severance issues &amp; improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity between key sites and centres. Improvements to Chester Road - speed reduction, pedestrian crossing facilities. Improve bus route connectivity. Flood attenuation measures. Increased provision of utilities. Compensation for loss of green space. Consider impact on local health services.</p>   |
| 6 (183)                                  | Chester Road/Centurion PH and adjoining land | 1.06                 | 35                            | 45               |  | <p>Reduce severance issues &amp; improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity between key sites and centres. Improvements to Chester Road - speed reduction, pedestrian crossing facilities. Improve bus route connectivity. Flood attenuation measures. Increased provision of utilities. Compensation for loss of green space. Green space connectivity with Cole Bank LNR and Kingfisher Country Park and compensate off site. Consider impact on local health services.</p>  |
| 7 (186)                                  | Birmingham Road                              | 1.50                 | 70                            | 45               |  | <p>Reduce severance issues &amp; improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity between key sites and centres. Improvements to Chester Road - speed reduction, pedestrian crossing facilities. Improve bus route connectivity. Flood attenuation measures. Increased provision of utilities. Compensation for loss of green space. Incorporate green infrastructure connectivity with Cole Bank LNR and Kingfisher Country Park. Consider impact on local health services.</p>   |
| <b>Mature Suburbs</b>                    |  |                      |                               |                  |  |   |
| 8  | Solihull Town Centre                         | 43.40                | 300                           | Mixed use        | To support economic growth and vitality. This is an estimate of capacity within Phase 1 but opportunities for the early release of other sites will be sought. | <p>Development of a Transport Model &amp; Movement Strategy (based on a Town Centre Masterplan) required to identify infrastructure requirements. Significant highway infrastructure upgrades likely, inc. Streetsbrook Road / Blossomfield Rd and Warwick Road / Lode Lane roundabouts. Improvements to walking / cycling / PT facilities and infrastructure to and throughout the centre. Potential Park &amp; Ride facility. Extensive Workplace &amp; Residential Travel Planning required. Neighbourhood scale accessible green space. Increased provision of utilities. Contribution towards primary school capacity to address the needs of the future student population, depending on housing mix. Consider impact on local health services.</p> |

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.)           |  | Site<br>Area<br>(ha) | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions  | Likely infrastructure requirements   |
|--|--|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|--|
| 9 (122) Chelmsley Lane/<br>Coleshill Road          |  | 1.96                 | 80                            | 40               | To support provision of health care facilities, this site is closest to the village centre services and facilities and is generally supported by the community.   | New access would be required off Chelmsley Lane as well as linkages with adjacent footways and cycle paths. Local health services. Increased provision of utilities. Neighbourhood scale accessible green space. Release of the housing site is conditional on the provision of open space as shown on the proposals map. Consider impact on local health services.  |
| 10 (160 & 191) Blythe Valley Park                  |  | 6.25                 | 250                           | 40               | To support the vitality and viability of Blythe Valley Park and provide a sense of place, approximately 12.5ha of land within the business park will be developed for housing. The site is released in Phase 1, but will be delivered over the first 2 phases | Improved public transport connectivity with nearby villages (Cheswick Green, Dickens Heath, Hockley Heath, Knowle & Dorridge); potential improvements needed to verges on rural roads. Improve cycling and pedestrian links with Cheswick Green, Knowle and Stratford Road corridor. Potential for improvements to M42 Junction 4 depending on impact. Provide for sustainable access to school. Contribution towards secondary school capacity to address the needs of the existing and future student population. Increased provision of utilities. Community infrastructure for recreation and children's play. Consider impact on local health services. |
| 11 Powergen  |  | 3.84                 | 100                           | Mixed use        | To secure reuse of previously developed land.   | Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity with Stratford Road facilities. New road crossing at Haslucks Green Road may be necessary. Consider impact on local health services. Increased provision of utilities.   |
| <b>Rural Area</b>                                  |  |                      |                               |                  |   |  |
| 12 (36, 61 & 155) Four Ashes Road<br>Bentley Heath |  | 3.62                 | 150                           | 40               | To address an existing secondary school capacity problem. These sites will be expected to make a significant contribution towards school capacity to address the needs of the existing and future student population.   | Improved cycle and pedestrian links to surrounding network inc. potential link to Widney Rd via Recreation Ground. Enhanced bus stop facilities on Four Ashes Rd / Widney Rd. Neighbourhood scale accessible green space. Increased provision of utilities. Contribution towards secondary school capacity to address the needs of the existing and future student population. Consider impact on local health services.   |

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.) |                        | Site<br>Area<br>(ha) | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions  | Likely infrastructure requirements  |
|--|------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|---|
| 13 (85)                                  | Hampton Road<br>Knowle | 2.55                 | 100                           | 40               | To address an existing secondary school capacity problem. These sites will be expected to make a significant contribution towards school capacity to address the needs of the existing and future student population. | Formalise shared access with sports ground. Potential traffic calming measures & pedestrian crossing on Hampton Rd. Neighbourhood scale accessible green space.<br>Increased provision of utilities.<br>Contribution towards secondary school capacity to address the needs of the existing and future student population.<br>Consider impact on local health services.                                       |
| 14<br>(123)                              | Middlefield,<br>Knowle | 2.86                 | 115                           | 40               |   | Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity and access to public transport facilities.<br>Potential for improvements to Avenue Rd / Grove Rd roundabout.<br>Neighbourhood scale accessible green space.<br>Increased provision of utilities.<br>Contribution towards secondary school capacity to address the needs of the existing and future student population.<br>Consider impact on local health services. |

## Phase 2 Sites – for release on 1st April 2018

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.) |                         | Site<br>Area<br>(ha) | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions  | Likely infrastructure requirements |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| 10 (160<br>& 191)                        | Blythe Valley Park      | 6.25                 | 250                           | 40               | The site is released in Phase 1, but will be delivered over the first 2 phases.                                       | See above.                         |
| 8  | Solihull Town<br>Centre | 43.4                 | 350                           | Mixed<br>use     | This is an estimate of capacity within Phase 2 but opportunities for the early release of other sites will be sought. | See above.                         |

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.) |   | Site<br>Area<br>(ha) | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions | Likely infrastructure requirements   |   |
|--|---|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--|---|
| 15 (22<br>&<br>171)                      | Aqueduct Road<br>Solihull Lodge               |                      | 10.3                          | 300              | 30                       | <p>Suitable sites to contribute towards meeting housing need and to ensure a continuous supply of market and affordable housing throughout the plan period. Sites within this phase are in less strategically suitable locations than sites included in Phase 1. A lower density is assumed on these sites because development is dependent on and flood attenuation measures.</p> | <p>2 new access points required - from Aqueduct Rd, and (potentially signalised) access from High Street. Potential for modifications to Aqueduct Rd / Green Ln junction and signals at Aqueduct Rd / Peterbrook Rd junction. New footway and pedestrian crossing point along Aqueduct Rd linking to PT facilities.</p> <p>Neighbourhood scale accessible green space to create local nature reserve.</p> <p>Increased provision of utilities.</p> <p>Flood attenuation measures.</p> <p>Local community infrastructure.</p> <p>Consider impact on local health services.</p> |
| 16 (21)                                  | Moat House Farm<br>Elmdon Road                |                      | 4.02                          | 80               | 20                       |  | <p>New crossing point on Elmdon Road.</p> <p>Improved cycling and pedestrian links and bus stop facilities on Elmdon Road.</p> <p>Neighbourhood scale accessible green space.</p> <p>Increased provision of utilities.</p> <p>Flood attenuation measures.</p> <p>Incorporate green infrastructure connectivity with Cole Bank LNR and Kingfisher Country Park.</p> <p>Consider impact on local health services.</p>   |
| <b>Rural Area</b>                        |   |                      |                               |                  |                          |  |   |
| 17 (31<br>&<br>86)                       | Braggs<br>Farm/Bricklin Farm<br>Dickens Heath |                      | 1.61                          | 65               | 40                       | <p>Suitable sites to contribute towards meeting housing need and to ensure a continuous supply of market and affordable housing throughout the plan period. Sites within this phase are in less strategically suitable locations than sites included in Phase 1. The capacity of site 20 (Griffin Lane) is dependent on flood attenuation measures.</p>                            | <p>Improved pedestrian and cycle links to Whitlocks End (station). New footway along Rumbush Lane / Cleobury Lane.</p> <p>Improved public transport access to, and facilities within, the village. Speed limit extensions / changes on Rumbush Lane, Cleobury Lane &amp; Dickens Heath Rd.</p> <p>Neighbourhood scale accessible green space.</p> <p>Increased provision of utilities.</p> <p>Consider impact on local health services.</p>   |

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.) |                                 | Site<br>Area<br>(ha) | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions   | Likely infrastructure requirements   |
|--|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|--|--|
| 18 (59)                                  | Griffin Lane<br>Dickens Heath   | 1.19                 | 50                            | 40               | Suitable sites to contribute towards meeting housing need and to ensure a continuous supply of market and affordable housing throughout the plan period. Sites within this phase are in less strategically suitable locations than sites included in Phase 1. The capacity of site 20 (Griffin Lane) is dependent on flood attenuation measures. | Improved pedestrian and cycle links to Whitlocks End (station). New footway along Rumbush Lane / Cleobury Lane. Improved public transport access to, and facilities within, the village. Speed limit extensions / changes on Rumbush Lane, Cleobury Lane & Dickens Heath Rd. Neighbourhood scale accessible green space. Increased provision of utilities. Consider impact on local health services. |
| 19 (33<br>&<br>179)                      | Riddings Hill<br>Balsall Common | 1.61                 | 65                            | 40               |  | Link new access from new Health Centre off the The Croft with potential for a secondary access from Riddings Hill. New crossing point on Hallmeadow Rd. Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity and access to public transport facilities. Neighbourhood scale accessible green space. Increased provision of utilities. Consider impact on local health services.                                 |

### Phase 3 Sites – for release on 1st April 2023

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.) |                         | Site<br>Area<br>(ha) | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions                        | Likely infrastructure requirements |
|--|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| <b>Mature Suburbs</b>                    |                         |                      |                               |                  |   |                                    |
| 8  | Solihull Town<br>Centre | 43.4                 | 300                           | Mixed<br>use     | This is an estimate of capacity within Phase 3. | See above.                         |

### Phase 3 Sites – for release on 1st April 2023 (continued)

| Site<br>(SHLAA<br>Site Assessments Ref.) |   | Site<br>Area<br>(ha) | Capacity<br>Estimate<br>(net) | Density<br>(dph) | Reason and<br>conditions  | Likely infrastructure requirements   |
|--|---|----------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|---|--|
| <b>Rural Area</b>                        |   |                      |                               |                  |   |  |
| 20<br>(114)                              | Land at Cleobury<br>Lane Dickens<br>Heath         | 4.59                 | 185                           | 40               | Suitable sites to contribute towards meeting housing need and to ensure a continuous supply of market and affordable housing throughout the plan period. Sites within this phase are in less strategically suitable locations than sites included in Phase 2. Site 21 (Mount Dairy Farm, Tanworth Lane) – only half of the site will be released for development which is conditional on the provision of open space and flood attenuation measures adjacent to Mount Brook and the River Blythe. | Improved pedestrian and cycle links to Whitlocks End (station). New footway along Rumbush Lane / Cleobury Lane. Improved public transport access to, and facilities within, the village. Speed limit extensions / changes on Rumbush Lane, Cleobury Lane & Dickens Heath Rd. Consider impact on local health services. Increased provision of utilities.   |
| 21<br>(17 &<br>177)                      | Land at Mount<br>Dairy Farm<br>Tanworth Lane      | 10.98                | 200                           | 40               |   | Access off Tanworth Lane. Links required to core pedestrian & cycle networks. Potential improvements to PT services / facilities. Neighbourhood scale accessible green space. Increased provision of utilities. Flood attenuation measures. Consider impact on local health services.  |
| 22<br>(45)                               | Land fronting<br>Kenilworth Road                  | 2.67                 | 110                           | 40               |   | Access off A452 Kenilworth Rd, potential requirement for right turn lane. Localised traffic calming on Kenilworth Rd on entry to Balsall Common, speed reduction to 30mph. New footway along Kenilworth Rd towards Balsall Common village centre. New crossing point on B4101 Kelsey Ln, remote from Kenilworth Rd / Kelsey Ln signal controlled junction. Increased provision of utilities. Consider impact on local health services.                         |
| 23 (15)                                  | Land between<br>Kenilworth Road/<br>Windmill Road | 1.17                 | 45                            | 40               |   | Access off A452 Kenilworth Rd, potential requirement for right turn lane. Localised traffic calming on Kenilworth Rd on entry to Balsall Common, speed reduction to 30mph. New footway along Kenilworth Rd towards Balsall Common village centre. New crossing point on B4101 Kelsey Ln, remote from Kenilworth Rd / Kelsey Ln signal controlled junction. Increased provision of utilities. Consider impact on local health services.                         |
| 24 (80)                                  | Land off<br>Meriden Road<br>Hampton in Arden      | 2.79                 | 110                           | 40               | This site has been released in special circumstances. Development of the site will be conditional on reclaiming the ammunition depot for open space.  | New gateway feature and traffic calming east of the site on Meriden Road. Improved footway on Meriden Road linking the north of the site with the village. Minimise disturbance to wildlife and habitats and enhance on site. Neighbourhood scale accessible green space. Release of the housing site is conditional on the provision of open space as shown on the proposals map. Increased provision of utilities. Consider impact on local health services. |
| <b>Total capacity</b>                    |   | <b>4,040</b>         |                               |                  |   |  |

**Fig. 17 – Table of Solihull Town Centre Housing Sites**

| <b>Site</b>   | <b>Estimated Capacity</b> |
|---|---------------------------|
| <b>Phase 1</b>  |                           |
| Herbert Road/Station Road/Homer Road                    | 150                       |
| Monkspath Hall Road Car Park                            | 150                       |
| <b>Phase 2</b>  |                           |
| Touchwood II  | 100                       |
| Station Approach/Lode Lane including Lode Lane Car Park | 250                       |
| <b>Phase 3</b>  |                           |
| Rail/Bus Interchange Station Approach                   | 100                       |
| Mell Square East  | 100                       |
| Other small scale opportunity sites in the town centre  | 100                       |
| <b>Total Potential Capacity</b>                         | <b>950</b>                |

## **8.5 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge B - Addressing Affordable Housing Needs Across the Borough

Challenge G - Imbalance in the Housing offer across the Borough and the Shortage of Gypsy and Traveller Sites.

### **POLICY P6 Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers**

The priority will be to meet the immediate identified need for 17 residential pitches by the end of 2012 as set out in the 2008 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment. The Council will assess the suitability of existing, well established sites which do not have a permanent planning permission against the following criteria:

- i. Whether the size and scale of the site and the number of caravans stationed is appropriate to the size and density of the local settled community;
- ii. Whether any adverse visual impact can be adequately minimised;
- iii. Whether the site is in an area prone to flooding;
- iv. Whether the site has any adverse impact on landscape or local nature conservation designations, ecology and biodiversity that cannot be mitigated;
- v. Whether there is any adverse impact on privacy and residential amenity for both site residents and neighbouring land uses;
- vi. Whether the site has safe and convenient access to the highway network;
- vii. Whether local services and facilities such as schools, health facilities, fresh food and employment are accessible by walking, cycling and public transport, and whether the site is sustainable in other ways.

Subject to compliance with other policies in the plan, applications which perform well against the above criteria and which contribute to meeting any remaining identified unmet need to the end of 2012, will be considered favourably.

Sites in the Green Belt will not be permitted unless other locations have been considered and only then in “very special circumstances”.

The above criteria will also be used in the allocation of any future site (post 2012) and in the determination of any future planning applications that would contribute to meeting any identified unmet need.

Provision of pitches beyond 2012 will be determined through a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document in the light of up to date evidence.

## **8.7 Justification**

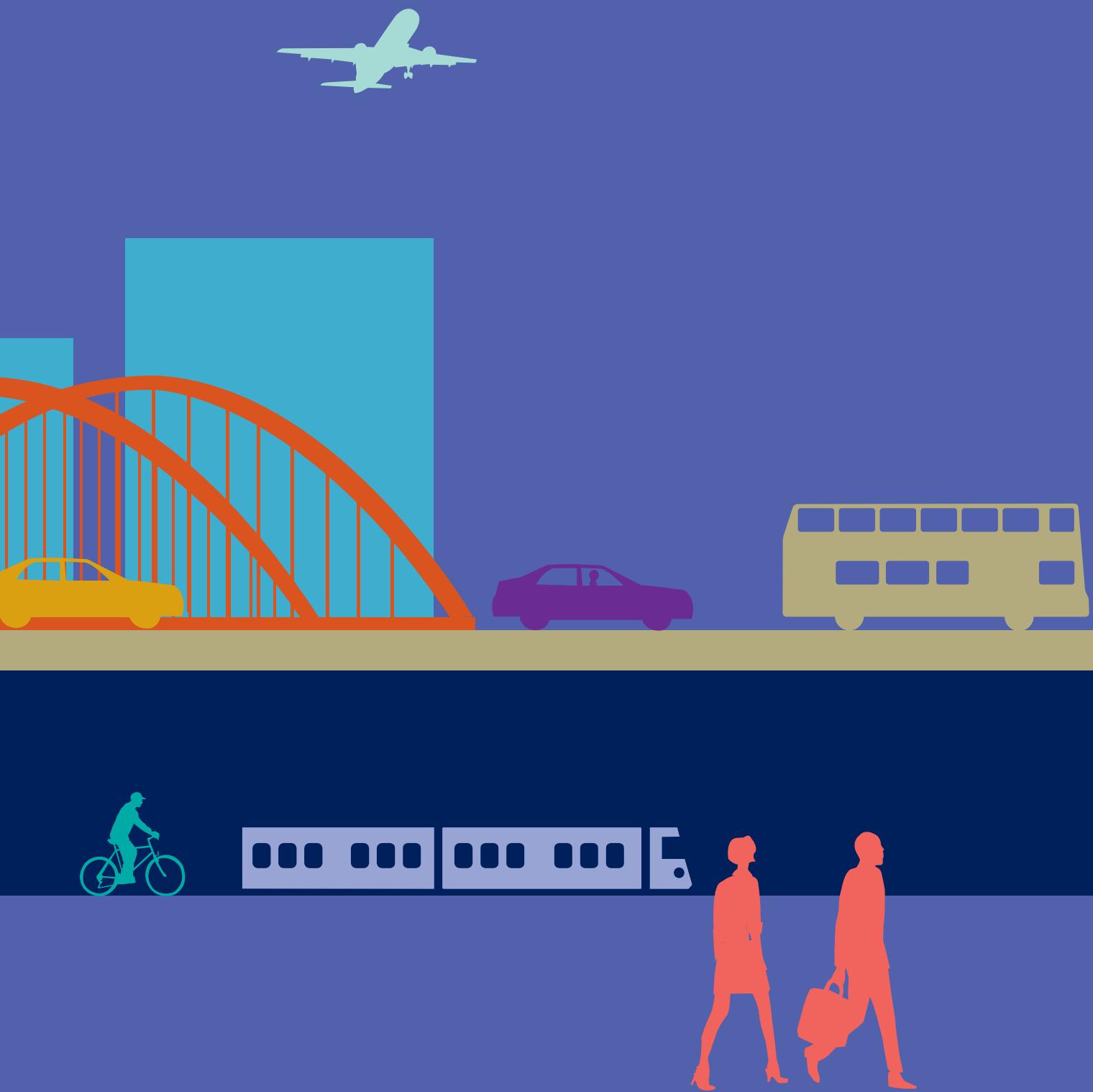
- 8.7.1 It is recognised that Gypsies and Travellers are amongst the most socially excluded groups in society and research has consistently confirmed the link between the lack of good quality sites for Gypsies and Travellers and poor health and education. The Government and the Council acknowledge that these inequalities must be addressed, but it is crucial to ensure that the planning system is not abused and that development is located in the most appropriate locations.
- 8.7.2 The Council has a duty under the Housing Act 2004 to assess the accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers and demonstrate how that need will be met.
- 8.7.3 The Government is clear that nationally the number of Gypsy and Traveller sites should be increased to address current under provision and maintain an appropriate level of supply. An up to date understanding of the likely accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers is required in order to plan positively and manage development.
- 8.7.4 The Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) identified a need for 26 additional residential pitches to be provided in the Borough to 2017. This is split into an immediate need for 17 permanent residential pitches (2007-2012) and a further 9 permanent residential pitches to accommodate family increases and possible in-migration (2012-2017). The figures are based on meeting the need for Gypsy and Traveller pitches where it arises.
- 8.7.5 At the time of writing, of the 17 pitches required between 2007 and 2012, 12 pitches have been granted planning permission, leaving a shortfall of 5 pitches. However, in order to ensure that the Council has an up to date understanding of the future accommodation needs of Gypsies and Travellers in the Borough beyond 2012, the GTAA will be updated and the allocation of future sites will be determined through a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Development Plan Document.

## **8.8 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge G - Imbalance in the Housing offer across the Borough and a Shortage of Gypsy and Traveller Sites

## 9. Improving Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel



## 9. Improving Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

### 9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Easy access to services and facilities such as jobs, education, fresh food retailers and open space by all modes and an efficient, safe and attractive street and highway network are crucial to supporting economic growth, creating cohesive communities and making Solihull a desirable place in which to live, work and invest.

9.1.2 The Spatial Portrait and Challenges identify the local transport issues in the Borough. Many of the local and strategic roads in the Borough suffer from congestion during peak hours, which detracts from its attractiveness as a place to live, work and learn. Equally, the North Solihull Regeneration Area and parts of the rural south and east have poor access to public transport and active travel modes. The long-term goal therefore is to separate economic growth from increased car use and encourage a shift to sustainable forms of travel.

9.1.3 The West Midlands Local Transport Plan recognises that we cannot build our way out of congestion and car reliance. This needs a multi-pronged approach to change travel behaviour and provide viable alternatives to the car. Furthermore, it recognises the vital role of accessibility planning in increasing opportunities for all, but especially the socially excluded, to access essential services.

9.1.4 The following transport policies in the Local Plan therefore aim to:

**Enable Economic Growth** - to ensure that the transport network does not constrain economic growth; allowing growth and the consequential increase in travel demand to be accommodated without significant increases in congestion.

**Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions** - to reduce the need to travel by guiding development to the most accessible locations, and manage travel demand by encouraging a shift to public transport and active travel modes and supporting sustainable transport initiatives in the Local Transport Plan.

**Connect Communities**, Centres and Employment - to ensure that people can access local services, key employment and retail centres and education locations on foot, by bicycle and public transport.

**Encourage Ease of Access and Movement** - to consider the whole journey when planning travel and to ensure that all travel modes are accessible and attractive to all users.

**Make Best Use of Existing Assets** - to make the most efficient use of existing transport networks limiting the need to build new roads and invest in large scale infrastructure.

### POLICY P7 Accessibility and Ease of Access

a) All new development should be focused in the most accessible locations and seek to enhance existing accessibility levels and promote ease of access. Development will be expected to meet the following accessibility criteria, unless justified by local circumstances.

i. Proposed housing development should be;

- Within an 800m walk distance of a primary school, doctor's surgery and food shop offering a range of fresh food; and
- Within a 400m walk distance of a bus stop served by a commercial high frequency bus service (daytime frequency of 15 minutes or better) providing access to local and regional employment and retail centres; and / or

- Within an 800m walk distance of a rail station providing high frequency services (3 or more per hour during peak periods) to local and regional employment and retail centres.
- ii. Proposed offices, retail and leisure development should be located in town centres, or other established locations including Birmingham Business Park, Blythe Valley Business Park, Birmingham Airport and NEC, as defined in Policies P1, P2 and P19. Here and elsewhere they should be within a 400m walk distance of a bus stop served by a commercially run high frequency bus service;
- iii. Proposed education, health and other public service facilities should be located where they are easily accessible on foot, by bicycle and bus by the local community they serve;
- iv. Proposals for change of use are likely to be resisted if they reduce accessibility to levels below those listed in this policy.

Investment in improvements to local public transport provision, cycling and / or walking measures will be sought in association with development proposals which do not meet the accessibility criteria set out by this policy.

Residential development proposals for fewer than 3 dwellings in urban areas west of M42 and within rural settlements will be exempt from the criteria set out above. Investment in improvements to local public transport provision, cycling and/or walking measures will continue to be sought in association with such proposals where considered necessary.

- b) Access to development from the core walking, cycling, public transport and road networks will be expected to be:
  - i. Safe, attractive, overlooked and direct on foot, by bicycle and from public transport;
  - ii. Safe for those vehicles which need to access the development; and
  - iii. Assessed in accordance with Policy P15 'Securing Design Quality' in the Local Plan.

## POLICY P8 Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion

- a) All development proposals should have regard to transport efficiency and highway safety:
  - i. Development will not be permitted which results in a significant increase in delay to vehicles, pedestrians or cyclists or a reduction in safety for any users of the highway or other transport network;
  - ii. Travel demands associated with development should be managed to minimise detrimental impact to the efficiency of the highway network;
  - iii. Ensure new development reduces the need to travel e.g. by promoting linked trips and encouraging mixed use development where appropriate;
  - iv. Provision for parking and servicing will be required in accordance with a Supplementary Planning Document on managing travel demands associated with development;
  - v. The Council will support proposals for local Park and Ride at appropriate railway stations subject to other policies in the Local Plan;
  - vi. Off-site parking provision proposed in association with economically important sites will be supported, subject to other policies in the Local Plan, where sustainable transport links between those sites and the parking provision are of a good quality, direct and attractive to use.

a) The use of sustainable modes of transport, i.e. walking, cycling and public transport, shall be promoted and encouraged in all developments by:

- Ensuring the design and management of the development enables and encourages the use of sustainable modes of transport;
- Ensuring transport planning measures are implemented to help and encourage people accessing the development to use sustainable transport modes;
- Ensuring the routes to the site from nearby services and local public transport stops are good quality, direct and attractive to use for all users.

## 9.2 Justification

Fig. 18 – Relationship of Local Plan Policy and Objectives with National and Local Transport Policy

| LOCAL PLAN POLICY   |   | POLICY P7 | POLICY P8 |
|---|---|-----------|-----------|
| JUSTIFICATION   | Local Transport Plan 2011-26: Solihull Local Transport Objectives   |           |           |
| Local Transport Plan 2011-26: Solihull Local Transport Objectives | Where possible, to reduce the impact of transport on residential streets  | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Promote cycling, walking, the use of public transport and car sharing to access employment, education, retail and leisure facilities  | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Improve safety for all transport and street users   | ✓         |           |
|   | Support narrowing the equality gap by improving access to employment, education and services for people living in areas such as North Solihull where life expectancy and employment are considerably lower than in the more affluent parts of Solihull  | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Improve the whole journey experience (including information availability, reliability, safety, ease of use, the quality of the walking environment, waiting and interchange) of travel by public transport, walking and cycling; ensuring that particular consideration is given to the needs of vulnerable users |           | ✓         |
|   | Better manage the movement of freight to, from and through the Borough to help attract inward investment into Solihull  |           | ✓         |
|   | Work to ensure that bus networks are as effective as possible in allowing people without access to a car to access local services and facilities  | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Tackle congestion on strategic routes within the Borough to: (a) improve journey time reliability, (b) reduce greenhouse gas and CO2 emissions, (c) help accommodate growth in travel demand to, from, across and within the Borough, (d) improve overall journey times   | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Improve access to major areas of employment, including Birmingham Airport, NEC, BBP, Blythe Valley Park, Land Rover and educational institutions, with an emphasis on sustainable modes of transport  | ✓         | ✓         |
| Local Plan Transport Objectives                                   | Improve access by all modes of transport to, and the quality of the pedestrian environment within, town and local centres   | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and congestion, and promote accessibility through planning for the location and mix of development   | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Facilitate economic growth by taking a positive approach to planning for development  | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | De-couple economic growth and increase in car use   | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Reduce the need to travel   | ✓         | ✓         |
| Draft NPPF  | Increase the modal share of sustainable transport/Maximise opportunities for walking, cycling and public transport use  | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Manage travel behaviour and transport demand/Reduce car reliance and congestion   | ✓         | ✓         |
|   | Improve accessibility and ease of access for all users to services, facilities and jobs   | ✓         |           |

Fig. 18 opposite, sets out the transport policies and objectives of the Local Plan and indicates their alignment with the transport objectives of the draft NPPF and Solihull's Local Transport Objectives, as defined in the West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2011-26.

### 9.3 Justification

#### Locating Development

9.3.1 Accessibility planning came to prominence in 2003, when the Department for Transport published a report 'Making the Connections', which highlighted the relationship between poor access to vital services and facilities and social exclusion. It identified four main ways in which poor transport links exclude people:

- Spatially (they cannot get to where they want to go)
- Temporally (they cannot get there at the appropriate time)
- Financially (it is too expensive)
- Personally (they either lack the personal, physical or mental ability to use the available forms of transport, or perceived barriers such as personal safety and poor hygiene discourage its use).



- 9.3.2 Without reliable access to services, healthy and affordable food, jobs, education, open space, medical and leisure facilities, communities can become disadvantaged and in a cycle of social exclusion. For example, 18-24 year olds in North Solihull experience high levels of unemployment, but also low car ownership, and are therefore reliant on sustainable transport modes to access jobs, education and training opportunities. The Local Plan will work to improve accessibility and ease of movement within the Regeneration Area and improve connectivity to key centres for employment and education.
- 9.3.3 The Draft National Planning Policy Framework (July 2011) states that one of the two objectives of transport policy is to “support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and congestion, and promote accessibility through planning for the location and mix of development”. Locating and promoting mixed-use development in close proximity to neighbourhoods and in centres reduces the need to travel and encourages linked trips. It also increases the viability of public transport services and good quality pedestrian and cycle routes, thereby promoting a shift to sustainable transport modes and relieving congestion.
- 9.3.4 Policy P7 provides a set of criteria which will direct residential development to locations which benefit from realistic, commercially and environmentally sustainable opportunities to access local services and jobs; and non-residential development to locations where it can be readily accessed by non-car modes. The Council is preparing a Supplementary Planning Document on Accessibility to provide additional guidance on meeting the criteria and the types and scale of investment the Council would seek should the criteria not be met.
- 9.3.5 Further to the location of development, consideration must be given to the quality of access to it by sustainable transport modes, and ease of access in, around and to that development for different users. Policy P8 expects high quality access by non-car modes to be designed into developments in order for public transport, walking or cycling to become the preferred modes of travel. Access routes that are well connected, attractive, legible and safe, as well as facilities, to encourage travel by sustainable transport modes such as provision of cycle storage will be required where they do not exist.

### **Managing Demand for Travel**

- 9.3.6 A comprehensive, effective and safe multi-modal transport network plays an important role in enabling sustained economic prosperity, delivering growth and a high quality of life. Whilst the implementation of new and improved transport links can help deliver growth, it is apparent that following periods of rapid economic growth it is in fact transport links which can constrain further growth, affect economic productivity and competitiveness, harm the environment and ultimately affect quality of life.
- 9.3.7 It is therefore crucial that new development does not create or exacerbate network congestion or safety issues which could result in costly travel delays to businesses, in terms of overly-lengthy commercial journeys and the late arrival of staff, and affect individuals' quality of life, through excessive travel delays, costs to access work in relation to distances travelled and emission of greenhouse gases.
- 9.3.8 The combined effect of the current economic climate, the drive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the push to increase physical activity and reduce obesity means that the focus of local investment in transport infrastructure is no longer towards the delivery of large scale improvements such as new roads. Investment is instead targeted either towards maximising the use of existing assets through the management of travel demands, encouraging a shift away from car use and towards public transport, walking and cycling; or towards implementing relatively smaller scale infrastructure, such as the

integrated network of cycleways that is currently being implemented in North Solihull, that enables these modes to be more widely used.

- 9.3.9 Furthermore, increased availability and uptake of public transport, walking and cycling can complement wider accessibility and social inclusion objectives, particularly in helping narrow the equality gap evident between North Solihull and the remainder of the borough. Enabling people to access their local area in a variety of ways can help to provide a sense of belonging and community cohesion as people become familiar with the area and build social networks. Worklessness levels can be reduced through increasing opportunities to travel via non-car modes to access employment; particularly important given the high levels of worklessness in the north of the borough and the poor public transport connectivity with employment centres in the south; whilst the increased levels of activity involved in travelling by non-car modes can help improve public health and raise life expectancy.
- 9.3.10 Policy P7 sets out criteria which development proposals are expected to satisfy in order to ensure that sustainable access can be achieved. It therefore provides the primary step in managing travel demands associated with development from the outset, by ensuring that realistic opportunities are available to travel by non-car modes.
- 9.3.11 Policy P8 seeks thereafter to ensure that the travel demands associated with new development are managed in a sustainable manner and that subsequent traffic generated does not create or exacerbate network congestion or safety issues. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans will be required in association with particular types and scale of development to forecast the transport impacts associated with development, ensure that detrimental impacts are adequately mitigated and secure the implementation of, or contributions towards, appropriate measures to encourage and enable travel by non-car modes. Local guidance is currently provided by the Council's Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans. In consideration of recent changes to national planning policy the Council is preparing further guidance, in the form of a Managing Demand for Travel SPD, which will update and supersede current guidance.

### **Freight**

- 9.3.12 The efficient movement of freight through the Borough is important in enabling businesses to minimise transit costs and maximise profit and thus future investment. Similarly, it is important that the transportation of freight does not detrimentally impact upon highway network conditions in terms of congestion and road safety.
- 9.3.13 The impact of freight movements generated onto the highway network must be managed and minimised by a Freight Management Strategy produced as part of the Travel Plan process.
- 9.3.14 The movement of freight by sustainable modes will be encouraged, particularly via rail and canal networks.

### **Bypass Improvement Lines**

- 9.3.15 Three longstanding bypass improvement lines, at Knowle, Hockley Heath and Balsall Common, were retained in the Council's Unitary Development Plan 2006) pending further analysis of the M42 Active Traffic Management (ATM) Scheme and an understanding of progression of potential widening of M42. The Council has reviewed, in liaison with the Highways Agency and Warwickshire County Council, the need to retain the three improvement lines within this Local Plan.
- 9.3.16 Active Traffic Management (ATM) of the M42 through the borough has proven highly successful in reducing congestion and delay to motorists whilst increasing journey time reliability; and, whilst land remains safeguarded, potential proposals to widen the M42 have progressed no further since the publishing of the UDP.

- 9.3.17 It is apparent however that the focus of transport investment has shifted significantly since initial consideration of the bypass lines. Given the impact of the current economic climate, and the drive to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, it is considered no longer appropriate to deliver large scale, costly transport improvements in the form of new roads. Transport policy is now focused more towards the management of travel demands, encouraging a shift away from car use and towards public transport, walking and cycling.
- 9.3.18 Furthermore, the principal purpose of the three bypass improvement lines would be to remove traffic from Knowle, Hockley Heath and Balsall Common centres; and it is therefore conceivable that the implementation of such bypass lines could be detrimental to the vitality and viability of the centres. In the light of the national commitment to sustainable economic growth, measures to increase footfall in centres and to manage the various different needs of a centre in a cohesive way that encourages its sense of place, would be more appropriate.
- 9.3.19 As such, the Council considers that priorities for transport investment, particularly in relation to local centres, have altered significantly since the initial safeguarding of bypass improvement lines at Knowle, Hockley Heath and Balsall Common; and therefore that the need for their retention no longer exists.

### **High Speed 2**

- 9.3.20 The Government's proposal to introduce a national High Speed rail network could play a key role in future growth in the Borough. However, it would be wrong to assume its development at this stage in the proceedings, in advance of a Bill passing through parliament.
- 9.3.21 The alignment through the Borough of the proposed High Speed 2 rail link is shown on the Spatial Strategy Diagram for illustrative purposes only. It will be safeguarded where necessary through national legislation.
- 9.3.22 Localised delivery of HS2, both in terms of mitigation of its impacts and securing of its potential benefits, will need to be carefully planned and managed. Subject to its approval by National Government, such issues will be addressed through the preparation of an Area Action Plan or other appropriate mechanism.

### **Motorway Service Areas**

- 9.3.23 The Highways Agency has indicated that it is not promoting a Motorway Service Area in Solihull, but recognises there is evidence of need. In January 2009 the Secretary of State considered MSA proposals in the Solihull part of the M42. The Secretary of State accepted that there is a need for one additional MSA serving traffic in both directions. However, none of the proposals considered at the Inquiry were found to be suitable or appropriate in terms of harm to the green belt and other matters. Having regard to the decision of the Secretary of State the Council does not consider there is justification to make specific provision in the Local Plan for this purpose.

### **Delivery**

- 9.3.24 Policies P7 and P8 will be applied throughout the Development Management process. The Council is preparing a range of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to support delivery of the policy objectives and provide guidance to developers.
- 9.3.25 An SPD on Accessibility will support the delivery of both transport policies, although primarily Policy P7. It will provide further guidance on the criteria set out in Policy P8 and demonstrate how those criteria contribute towards directing development to accessible, and long-term sustainable, locations.

9.3.26 The Accessibility SPD will include guidance on:

- Walk distances;
- Local facilities;
- High frequency bus and rail services
- Local / Regional employment centres
- Access to development and the 'Strategic Walk, Cycle and Public Transport Network'; and how development proposals should relate to it;

9.3.27 An SPD on Managing Demand for Travel will supersede the Council's current Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans SPD. It will support the delivery of both transport policies, although in particular Policy P8, by setting out guidance on how the Council would expect travel demands associated with development be managed in a sustainable manner.

9.3.28 The Managing Demand for Travel SPD will include guidance on:

- The criteria and circumstances in which Transport Assessments, Transport Statements and Travel Plans will be required in association with development;
- Local standards for parking and servicing provision associated with different types, scales and locations of development; including reference to the proportion of car parking provision that should be reserved for electric vehicles.
- The 'Strategic Walk, Cycle and Public Transport Network' and how development proposals should relate to it;
- Transport measures and initiatives to encourage sustainable travel behaviour.

9.3.29 A Street Design Guide will be included within the Design SPD produced in support of Policy P15. It will support the delivery of Policies P7 and P8 by providing guidance on the design and management of development so as to enable and encourage the use of sustainable transport modes.

9.3.30 The Street Design Guide will include guidance on:

- Quality of place and street;
- Functionality of streets for all users;
- Safety;
- Maintainability.

9.3.31 In addition to Supplementary Planning Documents, the Council has prepared an Infrastructure Delivery Plan which sets out infrastructure requirements to enable delivery of the Council's Local Plan, along with potential sources of funding. It highlights the measures to which contributions associated with development could be applicable.

#### **9.4 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policies**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

Challenge J - Improving Health and Well-being

## 10. Protecting and Enhancing our Environment



## 10 Protecting and Enhancing our Environment

### 10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 The national definition of sustainable development aims to enable people to meet their needs without compromising the quality of life of future generations, and includes protection and enhancement of the physical and natural environment, and efficient use of resources and energy. The draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) contains a revised definition which includes the need to protect and enhance the natural environment, use natural resources more prudently, and to mitigate and adapt to climate change, thereby moving to a low carbon economy.

10.1.2 Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing the nation in the future, and is reflected in the challenges and objectives in this plan. Planning can help to support the transition to a low carbon economy and to provide resilience to impacts from a changing climate. The location and design of new development in the Borough will help to minimise greenhouse gas emissions and the risk of flooding, whilst policies will encourage the use of renewable and low carbon energy.

10.1.3 The Government recognises that a healthy well-functioning natural environment is the basis for sustainable economic growth, which relies on the services provided by the natural environment. The economic and social benefits of protecting natural areas far outweigh the cost of their protection, and there are significant economic opportunities available for greener goods and services (Natural Environment White Paper). The natural environment is fundamental to Solihull's attractive urban and rural environment, which helps to attract and retain investment and people. The need to address the decline in biodiversity and fragmentation of habitats locally and to enhance and restore the Borough's green infrastructure network is recognised in the challenges and objectives, and the policies of this plan.

10.1.4 Using natural resources more sustainably will help to protect resources for the future and contribute towards economic efficiency. This is reflected in a number of the challenges and objectives in this plan, notably those relating to water resources, waste management and minerals. More efficient use of water resources in new development will help to reduce the amount of waste water requiring treatment and discharge to the Borough's watercourses, protecting water quality, and minimise the risk of flooding. Treating waste as a resource that has value and using recycled materials will help business to be more efficient as well as conserving natural resources, such as the mineral resources in the Borough. The plan addresses the challenges involved in providing for more waste management facilities and to contribute to local and sub-regional needs for sand and gravel aggregates.

10.1.5 The Government recognises the importance of protecting the amenities of existing and future occupiers of land and buildings (draft NPPF). This plan recognises that protecting amenity whilst providing for employment, housing and other growth will be a challenge and has as an objective the need to avoid, minimise or mitigate adverse impacts.



## POLICY P9 Climate Change

The Council will take full account of national and local targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and increasing the generation of energy from renewable and low carbon sources, when considering the location and design of new development. It will support the establishment of Renewable Energy Service Companies and community-led initiatives to reduce energy use and exploit renewable energy sources within the Borough. Where appropriate, improvements to the energy standards of existing buildings through national and local initiatives such as the Affordable Warmth Strategy for Solihull and the Government's Green Deal will be promoted.

Developers will be expected to follow a sequential approach to carbon reduction for all new development. Where feasible and viable, new development should incorporate decentralised energy and heating networks. Where it is demonstrated that decentralised networks are not feasible or viable, development should achieve the necessary carbon reduction through on-site measures incorporating design, energy efficiency and renewable energy generation. Where it is demonstrated that carbon reduction through on-site measures is not feasible or viable, a financial contribution toward off-site carbon reduction will be required, in the form of allowable solutions.

Proposals to develop decentralised energy and heating networks in the Borough will be encouraged and should be based on the latest available evidence. Any impacts from infrastructure, including on-site low carbon and renewable energy installations, on the surrounding natural, built and historic environment, including ground and surface water quantity and quality, or on residents or businesses will be considered, with significant weight to be given to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to be achieved. Where adverse impacts are identified, these should be minimised, or be subject to appropriate mitigation. In locations where decentralised energy and heating networks or off-gas networks exist, or have the greatest potential, such as Solihull, Shirley and Chelmsley Wood town centres, North Solihull Regeneration Area hubs, and major business parks and developments, developments of an appropriate scale, density and/or mix will be encouraged and developers will be expected to connect to or deliver decentralised networks, unless it is demonstrated that this is not feasible or viable.

Where lower cost solutions such as decentralised networks are viable, developers should aim to achieve zero carbon for all new developments in excess of 50 dwellings or 1,000 square metres, unless it is demonstrated that this is not feasible or viable. Where decentralised networks are not feasible or viable at the time of application, developers will be expected to show evidence in the design of the development to enable future adoption of decentralised networks.

In locations where decentralised networks do not exist and are shown to be unviable, or where the scale or nature of the development is unsuitable, on-site energy efficiency measures and low or zero carbon energy generation shall be provided to meet a carbon reduction equivalent to a minimum of 20% of predicted energy requirements. Developers will be expected to demonstrate the highest viable energy efficiency standards through the location and layout of developments and the use of materials and construction techniques that minimise emissions. Where viable, higher level standards of the Code for Sustainable Homes will be encouraged.

Where 'allowable solutions' are used to offset carbon emissions, the Council will give priority to the funding of projects within the Borough.

Developers should ensure resilience to the impacts of a changing climate for the anticipated lifespan of the development through consideration of a range of adaptation measures, including the location, design, materials, build and operation of developments, and the provision of green infrastructure. Further guidance will be provided to assist the delivery of sustainable design and construction in a Sustainable Design and Construction document, which will include appropriate 'allowable solutions'.

All new developments shall provide for systematic monitoring of the energy use and carbon emissions with the capability of linking into a Borough-wide monitoring system, unless it is demonstrated that such monitoring is unnecessary. All applications shall include evidence to show compliance with this policy in the form of an energy or sustainability statement and/or within the format of the West Midlands Sustainability Checklist or an agreed equivalent.

## 10.2 Justification

10.2.1 National climate change targets aim to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 34% of 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% by 2050, and to deliver 15% of energy from renewable energy sources by 2020. In recent years, carbon dioxide emissions per person in the Borough have exceeded the national/regional average, although the latest figures show a reduction to the average. Evidence shows (Camco report 2010) that Solihull is the highest consuming area in the sub-region, and that consumption is likely to increase in the absence of policies to achieve stabilisation and reduction.



10.2.2 National guidance indicates that planning should fully support the transition to a low carbon economy, should secure radical reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and support the delivery of renewable and low carbon energy.

10.2.3 The Council recognises that it has a crucial role to play in mitigating and adapting to climate change through this plan. Greenhouse gas emissions can be minimised by reducing the need to travel and ensuring that future occupiers of new developments have a choice of low carbon travel options. Wherever possible, the plan's spatial strategy promotes development in the most sustainable locations. National and local initiatives to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as the Government's Green Deal, will be supported. The Council's Home Energy Efficiency and Affordable Warmth strategy seeks to address fuel poverty in the Borough by 2016 and will help to reduce emissions.

10.2.4 The Camco report proposes an approach to new development that seeks the maximum standards of energy efficiency and low carbon or renewable energy provision where the scale of development or the opportunities for lower cost solutions, such as decentralised energy and heating networks justify them. Developers will be expected to work towards the maximum standards for appropriate developments and will be required to demonstrate why these cannot be achieved. All new development will be expected to comply with at least the minimum standard. The Council supports this approach, which has informed the development of the sequential approach set out in this policy.

- 10.2.5 New development will need to incorporate appropriate renewable energy and low carbon measures, such as decentralised energy and heating networks, if the demanding national targets for reducing emissions are to be achieved. This policy seeks to encourage the development of low carbon and renewable energy solutions appropriate to the circumstances and scale of development. The contribution that such proposals make towards the reduction of emissions will be given significant weight, although developers will be expected to minimise adverse impacts and provide appropriate mitigation where loss is unavoidable.
- 10.2.6 A mandatory minimum standard for on-site renewable or low carbon measures is proposed for developments where decentralised energy and heating networks are not feasible or viable, which will support national standards, such as the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM. Where it is viable to do so, developers will be encouraged to exceed national standards, through compliance with Level 4 of the Code for Sustainable Homes. Developers will be expected to demonstrate the highest design standards, the use of materials and construction techniques and the highest possible energy standards in seeking to minimise emissions.
- 10.2.7 Where it is demonstrated that it is not possible to meet national standards, such as the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM, or the minimum standard developers may use 'allowable solutions' to address the deficiency. The Council will prioritise the funding of renewable and low carbon schemes in the Borough, and provide supplementary guidance on appropriate 'allowable solutions'.
- 10.2.8 Developers will be expected to demonstrate that appropriate adaptation measures, from a range of options including design, materials, build and operation, and the provision of green infrastructure, have been considered and adopted, to provide resilience to the impacts of a changing climate. Guidance on minimising the consumption of water resources and addressing flood risk concerns, which are likely to increase in importance in the future, is included within Policy 11. The plan will be supplemented by guidance on Sustainable Design and Construction in a separate document, to help developers meet the policy requirements.
- 10.2.9 A key requirement is for all new developments to be supported by evidence demonstrating the highest possible energy efficiency and renewable or low carbon energy generation. Developers will be expected to make provision for the monitoring of energy use and emissions in a way that can be linked into Borough-wide monitoring. All applications shall be supported by an energy or sustainability statement and/or relevant information within an appropriate tool such as the West Midlands Sustainability Checklist, unless it is demonstrated that the proposed development will have no impact on energy use or greenhouse gas emissions.

### 10.3 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy

Challenge A - Reducing inequalities in the Borough

Challenge B - Addressing Affordable Housing Needs across the Borough

Challenge C - Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for People who Live, Work and Invest in Solihull

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Transport

Challenge I - Providing sufficient waste Management Facilities and Providing for Sand and Gravel Aggregates

Challenge J - Improving health and Well-Being

Challenge K - Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets

### POLICY P10 Natural Environment

The Council recognises the importance of a healthy natural environment in its own right, and for the economic and social benefits it provides to the Borough. The full value and benefits of the natural environment will be taken into account in considering all development proposals, including the contribution to the green economy and the health of residents, and the potential for reducing the impacts of climate change. Joint working with neighbouring authorities will be supported, recognising the need for a landscape scale approach to the natural environment and conservation of biodiversity.

The Council will seek to protect, enhance and restore the diverse landscape features of the Borough and to create new woodlands and other characteristic habitats, so as to halt and where possible reverse the degrading of the Arden landscape and promote local distinctiveness. Development should take full account of national and local guidance on protecting and restoring the landscape and the areas in need of enhancement, including guidance relating to the countryside. Developers will be expected to incorporate measures to protect, enhance and restore the landscape, unless it is demonstrated that it is not feasible, disproportionate or unnecessary.

The Council will seek to conserve, enhance and restore biodiversity and geodiversity, to create new woodlands and other habitats and to protect and enhance semi-natural ancient woodland and green infrastructure assets across the Borough. Protection of semi-natural ancient woodland, designated sites and priority habitats shall include the establishment of buffers to any new development. Development should be informed by the latest information on habitats and species, and take full account of national and local guidance on conserving biodiversity, opportunities for biodiversity enhancement and for improving and restoring the Borough's green infrastructure.

The Council will protect areas of national and local importance for biodiversity and geodiversity, where it is reasonable, proportionate and feasible to do so. Development likely to have an adverse affect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest, whether directly or indirectly, will be subject to special scrutiny and will be permitted only if the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation value of the site and the national policy to safeguard such sites. Where development may have an adverse affect on a Site of Special Scientific Interest, developers will be expected to incorporate measures to enhance the condition of the site, unless it is demonstrated that it is not feasible.

Development likely to have an adverse affect on a Local Nature Reserve or a Local Wildlife or Geological Site will be permitted only if the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the nature conservation or geological value of the site and its contribution to wider biodiversity objectives. Where development would have an adverse affect on a site of local value, developers will be expected to incorporate measures to enhance the site or to restore the links between sites in accordance with the Green Infrastructure study, unless it is demonstrated that it is not feasible.

Outside designated sites, developers will be expected to take full account of the nature conservation or geological value, and the existence of any habitats or species included in the Local Biodiversity Action Plan, or sites in the Local Geological Action Plan. Developers will be required to undertake a full ecological survey and to deliver a net gain or enhancement to biodiversity, unless it is demonstrated that it is not appropriate or feasible. In considering the need for green space improvements associated with new development, developers should have regard for the standards and priorities in the Green Spaces Strategy in relation to accessible natural green space.

Where development is likely to have significant harmful effects on the natural environment, as a result of the development itself, or the cumulative impact of developments, developers must demonstrate that all possible alternatives that would result in less harm have been considered. Where development is permitted, appropriate mitigation of the impacts and compensation where relevant will be required to deliver a net gain in biodiversity, habitat creation, landscape character and local distinctiveness. Enhancements should be undertaken either on the site, or in its vicinity, but where it is demonstrated that this is not possible, offsetting in alternative strategic locations within the biodiversity or green infrastructure network, to deliver biodiversity or other objectives may be considered. Where appropriate, developers should demonstrate compliance with this policy through an ecological statement or by relevant information in the West Midlands Sustainability Checklist.

#### **10.4 Justification**

- 10.4.1 The Natural Environment White Paper seeks to address concerns about the decline and fragmentation of the natural environment, highlighted in the Lawton Report, through the provision of more, better, bigger and joined spaces for nature. It sets out a national target to halt biodiversity loss by 2020. The Government recognises the economic benefits that are obtained from natural environment resources, or natural capital and makes clear that biodiversity loss has important adverse economic and social consequences, as well as environmental ones. The policy addresses the themes in the White Paper by confirming that the full value of the natural environment will be taken into account in considering development proposals. This should include the potential for the natural environment to improve health, contribute to the multi functional benefits of green infrastructure, and reduce the impacts of climate change, through urban cooling and the management of surface water flows.
- 10.4.2 The Borough lies within Arden landscape character area, for which guidance is provided in Natural England's National Character Area study and the Warwickshire Landscapes Guidelines for Arden. These identify the landscape types that are characteristic to the area and the need for enhancement or restoration in much of the Borough. 'Solihull's Countryside' sets out the strategy for the countryside in the Borough and defines a number of zones within which different policy objectives apply. It highlights continuing landscape change and declining distinctiveness within the Borough's countryside. Developers will be expected to take the strategy into account in locating and designing development.

10.4.3 An integrated approach to the conservation of natural ecosystems will be sought, based on the Landscapes for Living initiative, so as to contribute to targets to halt and reverse biodiversity loss, and to deliver economic and social benefits for Solihull's residents and businesses. New development should incorporate biodiversity conservation through good design. Developers will be expected to use national guidance on the provision of buffers between development and any semi-natural ancient woodland, designated site or priority biodiversity action plan habitat. Where development is within 500 metres of woodland recorded in Natural England's Ancient Woodland Inventory, the Forestry Commission will be consulted. Up to date information on biodiversity resources is provided through the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Habitat Biodiversity Audit, of which the Council is a partner, and opportunities for enhancement highlighted in the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Opportunities Map. Developers will be expected to make use of this information in seeking to protect and enhance biodiversity through development.



10.4.4 The Council recognises and will promote the need for and benefits of joint working with other local authorities to achieve landscape scale conservation. The Council is a partner in the Kingfisher Country Park project, with Birmingham and environmental agencies and groups, to protect and restore the landscape of the River Cole and Kingshurst Brook in North Solihull. The Council will support the Local Nature Partnership for Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull, the Sub Regional Green Infrastructure initiative and the proposal for a Nature Improvement Area based on the sub-regional network of Local Wildlife Sites, as a means of addressing habitat fragmentation. 'Nature Conservation in Solihull' sets out the strategic objectives for biodiversity conservation in the Borough, and developers should take these and other strategies relating to the natural environment into account.

10.4.5 The policy recognises the importance of designated areas such as the nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest, of which there are five in the Borough including the River Blythe, and locally important wildlife and geological sites and nature reserves. It also recognises that many of these important sites are in unfavourable condition, and the potential for nearby development to help deliver improvements. The policy sets out the relative importance to be attached to designated sites when considering development proposals, including the special scrutiny afforded to Sites of Special Scientific Interest, in line with national guidance. However, biodiversity conservation will not be achieved by protecting Sites of Special Scientific Interest alone. Locally important wildlife and geological sites have been designated in the Borough and protected through policies in development plans for many years, and the Council is in the process of reviewing Local Wildlife Sites through the sub-regional Wildlife Sites project.

10.4.6 Whether within or outside designated sites, integrating biodiversity through green infrastructure networks and wildlife corridors will be essential to halt and reverse the fragmentation of resources identified in the Lawton Report. Developers will be expected to take proper account of the value of sites proposed for development, to deliver a net gain in biodiversity and habitat creation wherever feasible, and to have regard for Local Biodiversity Action Plan priorities, accessible natural green space standards and priorities in the Green Spaces Strategy.

10.4.7 Where development would be harmful to the natural environment, developers will be expected to consider alternatives that would result in less harm, and to incorporate appropriate mitigation and, where relevant, compensation so as to deliver a net gain in biodiversity, landscape character and local distinctiveness. The Council is supporting a sub-regional approach to developing biodiversity offsetting, in line with the initiative in the Natural Environment White Paper. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that their proposals accord with this policy through an ecological statement or by relevant information in the West Midlands Sustainability Checklist, and with other relevant guidance.

## **10.5 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge C - Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for People who Live, Work and Invest in Solihull

Challenge E - Protecting Key Gaps Between Urban Areas and Settlements

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge J - Improving Health and Well-Being

Challenge K - Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets

Challenge L - Water Quality and Flood Risk

## **POLICY P11 Water Management**

All new development should have regard to the actions and objectives of appropriate River Basin Management Plans in striving to protect and improve the quality of water bodies in and adjacent to the Borough, including the Rivers Blythe and Cole and their tributaries. Developers shall undertake thorough risk assessments of the impact of proposals on surface and groundwater systems and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures where necessary. Developers shall engage in early discussions with water companies to ensure that appropriate sewerage infrastructure is provided in a timely manner to serve any proposed development.

The Council recognises the need for water efficiency in all new development. Developers shall demonstrate the highest possible standards of water efficiency through the use of water efficient fittings and appliances, and recycling of potable, grey water and rainwater in order to minimise consumption.

All new development shall incorporate sustainable drainage systems, unless it is demonstrated that such techniques are not technically feasible or prohibitively expensive. Developers shall ensure that adequate space is made for water within the design layout of all new developments to support the full use of sustainable drainage systems, and shall demonstrate that improvements to the water environment will be maximised through consideration of a range of techniques. Wherever possible, sustainable drainage systems will be expected to contribute towards wider sustainability considerations, including amenity, recreation, conservation of biodiversity and landscape character, as well as flood alleviation and water quality control.

Developers shall explore opportunities to contribute towards the objectives of relevant Catchment Flood Management Plans. Wherever possible, development should promote the reduction of flood risk by seeking to reinstate the natural floodplain, the de-culverting of watercourses and the limiting of surface water runoff to green field rates via the use of sustainable drainage techniques. On all development sites larger than 1 hectare, surface water discharge rates shall be limited to Greenfield rates of 5 litres per second per hectare.

Developers will be expected to demonstrate that the layout and design of a development takes account of the surface water flows in extreme events so as to avoid flooding of properties, both within and outside the site. Applications for new development where there is a flood risk issue should be accompanied by a site flood risk assessment.

Existing flood defence infrastructure will be protected and development that would compromise the flood defence function will be permitted only if it is demonstrated through a flood risk assessment that the risk both within and outside the site, and to sites further downstream is not increased.

New development will not normally be permitted within areas at risk of flooding. Where it is clearly demonstrated that there are no other viable sites at lower risk of flooding, consideration will be given to development in such locations, providing that it is designed to be safe from the effects of flooding and will minimise flood risk on the site and reduce risks elsewhere.

## 10.6 Justification

- 10.6.1 The European Water Framework Directive became part of UK law in 2003 and requires improvements to the quality of water bodies, including rivers, lakes, reservoirs, canals and aquifers. These requirements are reflected in the Environment Agency's River Basin Management Plans. The Environment Agency classifies the majority of the Rivers Blythe and Cole as being of moderate status, with Cuttle Brook of poor status. The Humber River Basin Management Plan sets out the Water Framework Directive target for the Borough and illustrates the challenge involved in meeting the target of good status by 2015. The Council recognises that well designed development in the right locations can contribute towards River Basin Management Plan objectives.
- 10.6.2 National planning guidance on water quality and flood risk requires plans to take account of infrastructure needs such as water resources, and a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of new development to avoid and/or manage flood risk.
- 10.6.3 The Council has undertaken a Water Cycle study for the Borough, in consultation with the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water. The study indicates that the level of development and the site allocations proposed in the plan are capable of being delivered without significant water and sewerage infrastructure improvements. However, the policy requires all new development to contribute to Water Framework Directive and River Basin Management Plan objectives by protecting and improving the quality of water bodies through the provision of appropriate sewerage infrastructure and sustainable drainage techniques. Developers will be expected to demonstrate that they have thoroughly assessed the impact of their proposals on surface and ground water systems, and incorporated any necessary sewerage and drainage mitigation measures.
- 10.6.4 Standards of water consumption are set out in the Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM, with technical guidance on how these can be achieved and demonstrated. The Council will expect all new development to be designed to maximise water efficiency for both potable and rain water, and promote the use of water efficient fittings and appliances, and the recycling of grey and rain water for appropriate uses. Developers will be expected to demonstrate the highest possible standards of water efficiency using appropriate technologies in all new proposals.
- 10.6.5 The Environment Agency is promoting the use of sustainable drainage techniques as a means of contributing to the requirements of the Water Framework Directive and reducing flood risk, as well as for wider benefits, such as the conservation of biodiversity, enhancement of the amenity of urban areas and to assist in adaptation to climate change. Sustainable drainage systems will be required for all new development, unless it is not technically feasible or prohibitively expensive. Developers will be expected to

design in these requirements at an early stage in the development of new proposals, and to demonstrate that the proposed solution will maximise the benefits to the water environment.

10.6.6 The Council is the Lead Local Flood Authority for Solihull and has established a Local Flood Risk Management Partnership and a Local Flood Management Implementation Board to help reduce flood risk and mitigate the impact of flooding in the Borough. A Sustainable Drainage Systems Approving Body for Solihull has been established by the Flood and Water Management Act and will be responsible for approving drainage systems for new development and redevelopment, and for adopting and maintaining approved sustainable drainage systems serving more than one property.

10.6.7 Whilst flooding has not been a major issue in the Borough in the past, there have been instances of surface water flooding, such as at Nethercote Gardens, Solihull Lodge in 2007. A Local Flood Risk Management Plan for the River Cole in this area was undertaken jointly with Birmingham City Council in 2010. As the climate changes, such instances are likely to increase, and could be exacerbated by policies encouraging the intensification of development in urban areas, or along highly accessible transport corridors.

10.6.8 The Environment Agency's Catchment Flood Management Plans provide an overview of flood risk across river catchments and recommend ways in which risks now and in the future can be managed. New development in the Borough will be expected to contribute towards the policy objectives of the Catchment Flood Management Plans. Most of the Borough lies within the Mid Staffordshire and Lower Tame policy unit within the Trent Catchment Flood Management Plan, where the objective is to take action to store water or manage runoff in locations that provide overall flood risk reduction or environmental benefits locally or elsewhere in the catchment. The western part of the Borough adjacent to Birmingham, and the eastern part adjoining Coventry lie in the Birmingham and Black Country, and the Coventry Cluster policy units in the Severn Catchment Flood Management Plan respectively. The Catchment Flood Management Plan objective in these areas is to take further action to reduce flood risk.

10.6.9 The Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Solihull has identified the main flood risk areas within the Borough and has been used alongside the Environment Agency's flood zone and surface water maps to help guide new land allocations within the plan to areas at low risk of flooding, via a PPS25 style sequential test. However, the Cole Valley represents one of the few areas in the North Solihull Regeneration Area where additional development to provide mixed and sustainable communities can be accommodated. In a small number of cases, sites at higher risk of flooding are being promoted because they contribute to wider sustainability objectives, such as North Solihull Regeneration or meeting local housing needs. In these cases, an Exception Test, facilitated through a Level 2 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment has been undertaken to ensure that the flood risk is acceptable and appropriate measures taken to minimise any risk.

10.6.10 Developers will be expected to consider the reinstatement of the natural floodplain, to incorporate the de-culverting of watercourses and to limit surface water runoff to green



field rates, wherever possible. On larger development sites, greater than 1 hectare, developers will be required to limit surface water runoff to green field rates, in order to minimise the impact of changes in rainfall patterns associated with climate change.

10.6.11 There will be a presumption against development within areas shown to be at risk of flooding, unless there are no viable sites at lower risk elsewhere. The Council may support development that is of lower vulnerability to flooding, providing that it is shown to be safe from the effects of flooding and will reduce risks of flooding elsewhere.

10.7 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy

Challenge C - Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for People who Live, Work and Invest in Solihull

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge J - Improving Health and Well-Being

Challenge K - Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets

Challenge L - Water Quality and Flood Risk

## **POLICY P12 Resource Management**

The Council will promote and control new development to prevent the production of waste within the Borough wherever possible. Where this is not feasible, waste shall be treated as a resource to be reused, recycled, or from which value will be recovered, with management to be as high up the waste hierarchy as possible. Disposal of waste shall be a last resort, to be considered only when all other options have been exhausted.

Management of waste shall seek to maximise the contribution to economic development and employment in the Borough, especially within and accessible to the North Solihull Regeneration Area. Waste operators will be expected to demonstrate that the greenhouse gas emissions from the operations involved and associated transport of waste from source to processing facility have been minimised.

The Council will seek to address the waste capacity gap in the Borough through this policy, so that an equivalent tonnage is provided within waste management facilities to that arising in the Borough by 2028, or if this is not feasible, will work towards self-sufficiency within the Coventry Solihull Warwickshire sub-region.

Wherever possible, on-site management of waste shall be preferred, unless the activities would result in unacceptable harm through impacts on the environment, transport or on neighbouring uses, or it is demonstrated that management elsewhere would have wider sustainability benefits.

Strategically important waste management sites within the Borough, where waste management activities will be supported in principle, are identified on the Proposals Map. These sites include the site of the former Arden Brickworks in Bickenhill, which contains the household waste recycling centre, and a range of other waste management operations, the materials recovery facility at Meriden Quarry, the composting facilities in Berkswell, and the Moat Lane and Chapelhouse Depot waste transfer stations in the Mature Suburbs and North Solihull Regeneration Area.

When investigating the suitability of sites for waste management operations in the Borough, the potential for consolidating or expanding waste management facilities at the former Arden Brickworks site, for the co-location of complementary waste operations at Berkswell and Meriden quarries, and for locating waste management facilities on appropriate industrial sites

within the Borough shall be considered. Where it is not possible or appropriate for new operations to be developed on-site or in these locations, developers shall consider the potential of sites within the Area of Search for waste management facilities identified on the Proposals Map.

The Council will have regard to the following criteria in considering the suitability of sites for waste management facilities:

- i. The contribution towards national and local waste management strategies, objectives and targets, including the Solihull Municipal Waste Management strategy 2010-2020
- ii. The contribution towards economic development and employment in the Borough, particularly in or accessible from the North Solihull Regeneration Area
- iii. The contribution to national and local targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, taking account of those resulting directly from the operations (Policy P9), and those from the transport of wastes from the source of arisings to the end management
- iv. The potential for on-site management associated with development and other uses
- v. The potential for the development of shared facilities for more than one waste planning authority where these would accord with this policy
- vi. The potential for the co-location of complementary activities where there are no adverse cumulative impacts
- vii. The contribution towards the restoration of former mineral workings in the Borough
- viii. The suitability of the site for the type of wastes and operations involved, including whether the activity can take place within a building or other enclosure
- ix. The impacts on transport infrastructure, including the potential for the use of alternative modes to road transport, and highway safety
- x. The compatibility of waste management activities with neighbouring uses, including the nature of the wastes, operations, hours of working and any cumulative effects where waste management activities already exist
- xi. The availability of suitable previously developed land and/or redundant buildings
- xii. The impact on the Green Belt, taking account of National Policy and Policy P17 of this plan
- xiii. The impact on the environment, including the protection of water resources and quality (Policy 11), conservation of biodiversity (Policy P10), the protection of the historic environment and built heritage (Policy P16), and on air quality from emissions and dust
- xiv. The impact on amenity and health, including visual intrusion, noise and vibration, litter, odour, vermin and bird attraction, including the impact on aerodrome safeguarding.

In considering non-waste management development proposals, the Council will take into account any adverse impact on the strategically important waste management sites and the potential of the Area of Search for waste management facilities identified in this plan. Non-waste development will be required to accommodate facilities for the storage and sorting of waste arising from the development, and developers will be expected to demonstrate satisfactory provision for waste management through a Site Waste Management Plan or similar supporting evidence.

## **10.8 Justification**

- 10.8.1 Waste is a product of inefficient processes and the Government's aim is to prevent waste, treat it as a resource, and drive waste management up the waste hierarchy to improve efficiency and reduce impacts. The waste hierarchy consists of prevention, preparing for reuse, recycling, other recovery, with disposal only as a last resort. National guidance expects communities to take more responsibility for managing their own waste, which can be equated to managing an equivalent tonnage of waste to that arising in their areas.

Waste management should be considered alongside other spatial planning concerns, including economic development, regeneration and the national imperative to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. PPS10 requires that locations and criteria for the location of waste management facilities should be identified in the Core Strategy (Local Plan).

- 10.8.2 A number of studies relating to waste management were undertaken to inform the revision of the Regional Spatial Strategy. Whilst the Regional Spatial Strategy is to be revoked, the evidence in the waste management studies will remain relevant. This indicates that there will be a significant gap between the waste arising in the Borough, and the capacity of facilities in the Borough to manage waste. The policy recognises that, whilst it will not be possible to manage all waste arising within the Borough, Solihull should aim to manage an equivalent tonnage of waste to that arising locally. If this is not feasible, the Council will work towards self-sufficiency within the Coventry Solihull Warwickshire sub-region, by seeking to develop the links that already exist through the Energy from Waste Company and the proximity of the Packington composting and landfill facility.
- 10.8.3 The first option for managing waste should be on-site where this is feasible, delivers wider sustainability objectives, and does not result in unacceptable harm to environmental assets, transport infrastructure or on neighbouring uses. If this is not possible, developers will be expected to consider the potential of the strategic waste management sites, or suitable industrial sites in the Borough for appropriate or complementary activities, taking account of evidence in the 'Suitability of the Borough's Industrial Sites for Waste Management Activities'. For operations that are complementary to mineral extraction, such as recycling of construction and demolition waste, or more appropriate in remote locations, such as open composting, an Area of Search for waste management facilities has been identified, utilising opportunities offered by former mineral workings.
- 10.8.4 The policy sets out the criteria that will be used to assess the appropriateness of waste management proposals. These include national and local strategies, objectives and targets, including the National Waste Strategy, the Review of Waste Policy in England and the Solihull Municipal Waste Management strategy 2010-2020, the contribution towards economic development and regeneration, including North Solihull Regeneration, and to national and local targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The potential for on-site management, shared facilities and co-location of complementary activities will be taken into account, along with the suitability of the location or site, the availability of previously developed land or redundant buildings, and whether the operations would take place in the open or are enclosed. The impacts of proposed waste management operations on the Green Belt, the environment, transport infrastructure including aerodrome safeguarding, highway safety, amenity and health will be considered, and any unacceptable harm will need to be minimised and/or appropriate mitigation incorporated.
- 10.8.5 Other development may compromise or restrict the potential of waste management operations on the strategic waste management sites or in the area of search for waste management facilities. In considering proposals for non-waste management development in or adjacent to these locations, the Council will take account of any adverse effect on the potential for waste management activities. Non-waste development in all areas will be expected to include appropriate facilities for the storage and sorting of waste, and developers will be expected to demonstrate satisfactory provision for waste management through a Site Waste Management Plan or similar supporting evidence.

## 10.9 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge E - Protecting Key Gaps Between Settlements

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Transport

Challenge I - Providing Sufficient Waste Management Facilities and Providing for Sand and Gravel Aggregates

## POLICY P13 Minerals

### Mineral Safeguarding Areas

Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) for important underground coal resources in the eastern part of the Borough, and for sand and gravel aggregate resources between Berkswell, Hampton and Meriden and east of the NEC and M42, including sites for important associated infrastructure and to meet potential needs are defined on the Proposals Map.

The Council will permit the search for new minerals, including coal bed methane resources, whether within or outside the Mineral Safeguarding Areas, providing that the criteria for minerals development proposals are met. Permission for exploration will not necessarily imply that a subsequent consent for mineral extraction will be forthcoming.

Within these MSAs, proposals for non-mineral development will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the development will not result in the sterilisation of mineral resources or the loss of important infrastructure or sites for potential infrastructure needs in the areas. Prior to development, developers will be expected to ensure that all safeguarded minerals that would be affected are extracted, unless it is demonstrated that the resources have no economic value, extraction is not feasible or would result in excessive costs or delays, or that there is an overriding need for the development that outweighs the need to safeguard the mineral resources.

### Alternative materials

The Council will promote the use of alternative materials, such as secondary and recycled aggregates in all new development within the Borough. Provision for alternative materials will be encouraged on sites for significant development within the Borough, where appropriate.

Permanent facilities will be encouraged within the area of search for appropriate waste management facilities defined on the Proposals Map.

### Provision for primary sand and gravel extraction

Provision for primary sand and gravel resources will be made through a mixture of specific sites, preferred areas and/or areas of search to meet the identified requirement of 7.5 million tonnes over the plan period. These will include sites already granted planning permission where not included in the current sub-regional landbank.

Preferred areas for primary sand and gravel extraction are identified at Marsh House Farm, Hornbrook Farm and west of Berkswell Quarry, which will provide around 2.5 million tonnes and are defined on the Proposals Map.

Areas of search for primary sand and gravel extraction are identified between Berkswell, Hampton and Meriden and east of the NEC and M42 to meet the shortfall in provision, and are defined on the Proposals Map. However, inclusion within an area of search does not imply that all of the mineral resources are viable or that extraction would be acceptable. Sand and gravel

extraction outside the areas of search may also be permitted, if there is evidence that insufficient mineral resources from the areas of search are likely come forward within the plan period, or that production targets will not be met.

### **Mitigation, restoration, aftercare and after use**

Proposals for mineral working or related infrastructure will be assessed against the following criteria:

- i. Contribution towards national and local strategic objectives or wider needs including national and local targets for minimising carbon emissions and using alternative materials;
- ii. Contribution towards the local and sub-regional economy and the regeneration of North Solihull;
- iii. Contribution towards local communities and character and quality of the environment;
- iv. Opportunities for the co-location of related uses and wider benefits such as the production of secondary or recycled aggregates;
- v. Impact of the proposed activities, including any associated infrastructure, on surrounding land uses and amenity, taking account of the nature of the operations, duration, hours of operation, noise, dust vibration, air pollution, visual impacts and, in respect of underground extraction, the impact of subsidence;
- vi. Impact on the local and sub-regional transport network, including the routing of lorries to and from the site and the potential for rail freight;
- vii. Impact on the environment, landscape, built heritage and archaeology, nature conservation interests, ground and surface water quantity and quality, best and most versatile farmland, agricultural businesses and aerodrome safeguarding;
- viii. Measures for mitigating any environmental, transport or other impacts or for compensation for loss or damage where appropriate, including the provision of appropriate buffers between extraction and environmental or other assets;
- ix. The potential for subsidence, migration of gases and contamination of ground water associated with underground extraction;
- x. Restoration to a safe and high quality condition with appropriate aftercare in accordance with agreed restoration and aftercare schemes and within an agreed period following the cessation of extraction; and
- xi. Reclamation to an agreed use, which should prioritise the contribution the site could make to green infrastructure, the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, including Local Biodiversity Action Plans, the enhancement and restoration of the Arden landscape, flood risk management, appropriate recreation uses and agriculture, as well as the availability of suitable infill material if appropriate.

Proposals for ancillary uses will be permitted where they are located within the extraction site, are limited to the life of the permitted reserves and minimise the impacts on environmental assets, transport infrastructure and surrounding occupiers and uses. The Council will support proposals for complementary recycling facilities, which should be as close as possible to the point of extraction or disposal.

### **10.10 Justification**

10.10.1 National Policy requires the Council to safeguard proven mineral resources from sterilisation by non-mineral development, together with existing, planned and potential infrastructure facilities. Mineral Safeguarding Areas have been defined for both underground coal and sand and gravel resources, based on work undertaken in Mineral Safeguarding in Solihull. The Mineral Safeguarding Areas include any known or anticipated sites for infrastructure including

the production of secondary and recycled materials. The policy requires the prior extraction of minerals where non-mineral development that could sterilise resources is proposed unless justified, in accordance with national guidance.

- 10.10.2 The national and local guidelines for aggregates provision in England 2005 to 2020 assume a significant contribution from alternative materials, which reduces the requirement for the production of primary aggregates. The policy promotes the use of alternative materials in construction within the Borough and provides for new and expanded facilities within a defined area of search. The co-location of primary extraction and permanent secondary facilities is likely to bring benefits in minimising transport and environmental costs. Temporary facilities for alternative materials will be encouraged on sites for significant development in the Borough.
- 10.10.3 The national and local guidelines for aggregates provision in England 2005 to 2020 provide a target production figure for primary aggregates for the West Midlands, which has been apportioned to sub-regions following advice from the regional aggregates working party. The Borough is the main source of production for the West Midlands County sub-region, with the annual requirement of a maximum of 0.5 million tonnes of sand and gravel for Solihull representing over 90% of the sub-regional apportionment figure. This reflects the relative levels of sand and gravel resources in Solihull and Walsall, the only authorities that contribute to primary sand and gravel production. The policy takes account of the provision for primary sand and gravel production within the Black Country Core Strategy.
- 10.10.4 In seeking to meet the requirement for primary sand and gravel production, the Council has identified a number of preferred areas for extraction, based on information provided by the mineral operators and following assessment through the strategic non-housing land availability assessment process. These preferred areas provide for a proportion of the total requirement only, with the remainder to be provided from within defined areas of search. Proposals for sand and gravel extraction outside these areas will be permitted where this can be justified. The policy provides for a minimum landbank of 7 years at the end of the plan period, in accordance with national guidance.



10.10.5 The policy sets out the criteria for new minerals development in the Borough, to ensure mitigation of environmental and transport impacts, in accordance with national guidance. It seeks to ensure that minerals development contributes to wider national and local objectives, such as the reduction of carbon emissions, the use of alternative materials and the regeneration of North Solihull.

10.10.6 The criteria include the protection of the amenities of surrounding occupiers and land uses, and the local and sub-regional transport network from unacceptable impacts. Working practices will be required to avoid or minimise impacts on health and the environment from extraction, processing, management and transportation of materials. Environmental and other assets of acknowledged importance, including best and most versatile agricultural land, the natural and historic environment, and water resources and quality will need to be protected, with appropriate mitigation and compensation where necessary, in accordance with the environmental policies in this plan. Any proposal adjacent to the River Blythe Site of Special Scientific Interest will be expected to maintain a minimum 30 metre buffer to the Site of Special Scientific Interest.

10.10.7 Guidance is provided on the restoration and aftercare of mineral sites once extraction has ceased and on the after use to which the land should be put, in accordance with national guidance. Reclamation schemes will be expected to prioritise the potential for contributing to green infrastructure, biodiversity objectives, including national and local biodiversity action plan targets, to policies seeking to enhance and restore the Arden landscape, and to flood risk management. Where appropriate, after uses may include agriculture and recreation uses providing these are in accordance with other national and local planning policies. The availability of materials to restore mineral sites will need to be a consideration to avoid unreasonably lengthy restoration.

## **10.11 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge E - Protecting Key Gaps Between Urban Areas and Settlements

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Transport

Challenge I - Providing Sufficient Waste Management Facilities and Providing for Sand and Gravel Aggregates

Challenge K - Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets

### **POLICY P14 Amenity**

The Council will seek to protect and enhance the amenity of existing and potential occupiers of houses, businesses and other uses in considering proposals for new development, and will:

- i. Permit development only if it respects the amenity of existing and proposed occupiers and would be a good neighbour;
- ii. Consider the visual and other amenities of potential occupiers and users of new developments close to overhead power lines and substations. Developers will be expected to locate and design new developments so as to minimise the visual and other amenity impacts;
- iii. Support the development of electronic communications networks including telecommunications and high speed broadband. The Council will have regard to the needs of telecommunications operators, any technical constraints on location of telecommunications apparatus, the potential for sharing sites, the impact of

development on its surroundings, the sensitivity of the environment and the design and external appearance of telecommunications apparatus. Development in or adjacent to sensitive locations will be permitted only if there is no other technically suitable location that both meets operational requirements and causes less environmental harm and any mast is at a distance of at least twice its height from the nearest residential properties;

- iv. Safeguard important trees, hedgerows and woodlands, encourage new and replacement tree and hedgerow planting and identify areas that may be suitable for the creation of new woodlands. Priority will be given to locations that enhance or restore the green infrastructure network and to the planting of species characteristic of the Arden Warwickshire landscape;
- v. Encourage better air quality in and around the Borough through the adoption of low emission zone initiatives such as those involving the use of electric vehicles for freight and public transport. Development that would contribute to air pollution, either directly or indirectly will be permitted only if it would not hinder or significantly harm the achievement of air quality objectives or any relevant Air Quality Management Plan, and it incorporates appropriate attenuation, mitigation or compensatory measures;
- vi. Require proposals for development on land known or suspected to be contaminated to include appropriate information to enable the potential implications to be assessed and to incorporate any necessary remediation;
- vii. Seek to minimise the adverse impact of noise. Development likely to create significant noise will be permitted only if it is located away from noise sensitive uses or it incorporates measures to ensure adequate protection against noise. Noise sensitive development will be permitted only if it is located away from existing sources of significant noise, or if no suitable alternatives exist, the development incorporates measures to reduce noise intrusion to an acceptable level;
- viii. Protect the amenity of residential and shopping areas, community facilities and open space from bad neighbour uses. Development that would be significantly harmful because of smell, noise or atmospheric pollution will not be permitted, whilst development that would be potentially harmful to such areas will be expected to incorporate appropriate attenuation, mitigation or compensatory measures. In locations close to existing bad neighbour uses, the Council will not permit new residential or other sensitive development, unless the effects can be satisfactorily mitigated as part of the development;
- ix. Protect those parts of the countryside in the Borough that retain a dark sky from the impacts of light pollution. Development involving external lighting outside established settlements will be permitted only where significant lighting already exists, or the benefits of the development clearly outweigh the impact of the lighting on the countryside. Any lighting scheme should be the minimum required for the purposes of the development and should avoid light spillage and harmful effects on biodiversity; and
- x. Protect the tranquil and locally distinctive areas in the Borough by guiding new development, particularly those that will create significant noise, either directly or through associated transport, to locations that will avoid or minimise adverse impacts.

## 10.12 Justification

10.12.1 The draft NPPF indicates that planning policies should seek to secure a good standard of amenity for existing and future occupiers of land and buildings. Developments that affect people's visual and other amenities, such as those that create noise, smell or air pollution require careful siting to minimise impacts and appropriate measures to minimise or mitigate any impacts that location does not resolve. Equally, the siting and design of sensitive uses, such as residential development needs careful consideration to ensure

that problems are not created. Significant new growth in the Borough is being promoted through this plan to meet needs for new employment, housing, retail, leisure and community facilities. The Council will seek to protect people's amenities whilst ensuring provision for essential development.

10.12.2 The policy recognises the need to consider amenity, access, good design and noise in relation to development close to electricity generation, transmission and distribution sources. Where possible, development should be located and designed so as to minimise any impacts.

10.12.3 The draft NPPF indicates that authorities should support the expansion of electronic communications networks to ensure choice and equitable access to the latest technology. The guidance for telecommunication development reflects both the strategic requirements of networks and the limitations imposed by the nature of the technology, as well as the need to protect amenity and sensitive environments. Sensitive uses include residential areas, education and health institutions, all heritage assets and their settings, features characteristic of the Arden landscape, sites of ecological and geological importance, open space and the Green Belt. In such areas telecommunications infrastructure development will be discouraged, unless there are no other locations that meet operational requirements and cause less environmental harm.



10.12.4 The policy recognises the importance of protecting and increasing trees and woodlands for amenity and other benefits, such as the enhancement or restoration of the Arden landscape, green infrastructure, conservation of biodiversity, informal recreation, and to address the impacts of climate change. Important trees, hedgerows and woodlands will include those covered by tree preservation orders, veteran trees or those with potential to be veteran trees, features characteristic of the Arden landscape or included in national or local biodiversity action plans, and trees and hedgerows covered by regulations or best practice guidance, such as the Hedgerow Regulations and the British Standard for trees and construction. Policy on conserving the landscape and biodiversity, including the protection of ancient semi-natural woodlands in the Borough, is contained in Policy P10.

- 10.12.5 The Council is a partner in the Low Emissions Towns and Cities (LET&C) Programme and will support proposals aimed at securing better air quality across the metropolitan area, such as the provision of infrastructure to encourage the use of electric vehicles for freight and public transport journeys within and beyond the Borough. Best Practice Planning Guidance will be produced to provide further guidance for local authorities and developers. Developers should have regard to air quality objectives in considering the location and design of new development.
- 10.12.6 Whilst there are likely to be few potential previously developed sites where there are contaminated land issues coming forward for redevelopment in the Borough, the policy reflects the importance of information on any contamination that may be present.
- 10.12.7 The Council recognises the existence of significant sources of noise or potential noise within the Borough, such as Birmingham Airport, major roads and railways, mineral workings and some industrial processes, and the need to protect noise sensitive uses, including housing, education and health institutions. The policy seeks to keep noisy and noise sensitive uses apart and provides for mitigation where this is not possible.
- 10.12.8 Some uses may be harmful to amenity as a result of smell, noise or atmospheric pollution, such as mineral workings, sewage treatment works, certain types of waste management activities or certain intensive agricultural uses. The Council will protect residential, shopping, heritage assets, community and recreation areas from uses that are significantly harmful, and ensure that, where permitted, such development incorporates measures to avoid or minimise any adverse impacts.
- 10.12.9 Solihull's Countryside identifies suburbanisation as a threat to the character and quality of the countryside, which includes those areas outside rural settlements that retain a dark sky. Built development is controlled through Green Belt policy, but light spillage and pollution can be a problem both from residential and business properties and from other sources and can be harmful to biodiversity. In urban areas and rural settlements, lighting is more prevalent, but there is a need to control installations such as security lighting so as to protect residential amenity. The Council will limit lighting schemes to the minimum required for the purposes of the development and outside urban areas to locations where lighting already exists to protect the character and quality of residential areas and the countryside from light pollution. The policy will not prevent essential security lighting that is well designed and installed, but will help to minimise energy use and contribute to reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- 10.12.10 Solihull's Countryside notes the loss of remoteness and a reduction in tranquillity associated with development and traffic growth and the need to maintain local distinctiveness. Whilst much of the Borough is subject to interference from road, rail or air traffic, other noisy activities, or urban influences, there remain some quiet areas. These include canal cuttings, footpaths, some conservation areas, villages and hamlets away from major roads and flight paths, and some more remote rural areas. The Council will seek to protect tranquil and locally distinctive areas by guiding development, especially that involving noisy operations or significant traffic, away from these areas.

### **10.13 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge C – Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for People who Live, Work and Invest in Solihull

Challenge E – Protecting Key Gaps Between Urban Areas and Settlements

Challenge J – Improving Health and Well-Being

Challenge K – Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets

## 11. Promoting Quality of Place



## 11. Promoting Quality of Place

### 11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 As highlighted in the Spatial Portrait, Solihull Borough is made up of five distinctive 'places' with common characteristics and within the Rural Area, a finer grain of attractive rural villages. The thrust of the Spatial Strategy is to remain an economically successful Borough through sustainable economic growth whilst sustaining its attractiveness and without undermining the qualities and defining characteristics of those places, which attract people and investment to Solihull.

11.1.2 The policies contained in this section highlight that the design of development, the conservation and enhancement of the Borough's historic environment and the protection of the Green Belt and the countryside are critical to retaining the quality of Solihull's distinctive places. Together with the other policies in the Plan, particularly, in Chapter 10 – Protecting and Enhancing our Environment and Chapter 12 – Supporting Local Communities, the application of Policies 15 – Securing Design Quality, 16 – Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness and 17 – Green Belt and Countryside, will ensure Solihull remains an attractive, locally distinctive and prosperous Borough.

11.1.3 Most of the undeveloped area of the Borough is designated as Green Belt, where national policy provides a presumption against development that is inappropriate in a rural area. The Borough's Green Belt includes the strategically important open land between the urban areas of Birmingham and Solihull and the city of Coventry, known as the Meriden Gap, and key gaps between urban areas and rural settlements. Protecting the Green Belt in Solihull will contribute to the purposes set out in the national policy. It is also vital for maintaining the attractive rural setting and environment that helps to bring investment and people to the Borough. Management of the countryside is largely dependent on agricultural businesses, which face significant pressures on incomes and changing demands for products.

11.1.4 The Green Belt in Solihull has been under constant pressure since it was first proposed in 1960. Successive development plans for Solihull have removed land from the Green Belt to meet housing and other needs. Developments of national and regional significance have also been allowed, justified by very special circumstances. This plan recognises that adjustments to the Green Belt are required in the North Solihull Regeneration Area to deliver regeneration benefits, and elsewhere to meet local housing need.

### POLICY P15 Securing Design Quality

All development proposals will be expected to achieve good quality, inclusive and sustainable design, which meets the following key principles:

- i. Conserves and enhances local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality and ensures that the scale, massing, density, layout, materials and landscape of the development respect the surrounding natural, built and historic environment;
- ii. Ensures that new development achieves the highest possible standard of environmental performance through sustainable design and construction and the location and layout of the development in accordance with the guidance provided in Policy P9 – Climate Change;
- iii. Secures the sustainable long-term use of new development through flexible, robust and future-proofed design e.g. high-speed digital connectivity;
- iv. Makes appropriate space for water within the development, using sustainable drainage (SuDS) principles, to minimise and adapt to the risk of flooding. Further guidance is provided in Policy P11 – Water Management;

- v. Conserves and enhances biodiversity, landscape quality and considers the impact on and opportunities for green infrastructure at the earliest opportunity in the design process. Further guidance is provided in Policy P10 – Natural Environment ;
- vi. Integrates the natural environment within the development through the provision of gardens, quality open space and/or improved access to, enhancement or extension of the green infrastructure network. Further guidance is provided in Policy P20 – Open Space, Sport and Recreation;
- vii. Creates attractive, safe, active, legible and uncluttered streets and public spaces which are accessible, easily maintained and encourage walking and cycling and reduce the fear of crime.

Development proposals will also be expected to contribute to or create a sense of place. Such measures may include; reflecting heritage assets and their setting in the design process, integrating landscape into the development, promoting diversity through a mix of uses within the site, or the incorporation of public art.

All residential development proposals should be built to the Lifetime Homes standard and demonstrate at least the 'Good/Silver' Building for Life (BfL) design standard. All residential development will be expected to adhere to the guidance set out in the New Housing in Context Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) until this has been updated and the Council will prepare Supplementary Planning Documents to provide necessary additional guidance.

Applicants should adhere to the urban design principles set out in established current design guidance, including at present; Urban Design Compendium 1 and 2 (2007), By Design (2000 and 2001), Manual for Streets 1 (2007) and 2 (2010), Car Parking: What Works Where (2006), Building for Life and Secured by Design principles.

Development at key economic assets within the M42 Economic Gateway; the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham Airport, Birmingham Business Park and Blythe Valley Park, will be expected to be of the highest quality to reflect their strategic importance.

Applicants are encouraged to engage with Officers early in the design process through pre-application discussions and will be required to demonstrate that they have followed the robust Assessment-Involvement-Evaluation-Design process outlined in the national guidance on Design and Access Statements. Major development proposals are required to demonstrate how the local community has been consulted and engaged in the design process. Significant development proposals will also be encouraged to engage with the regional Design Review process (MADE).

## 11.2 Justification

- 11.2.1 The Government's objective in the draft NPPF; 'to promote good design that ensures attractive, usable and durable places', highlights the importance of high quality design in planning and creating places. It also demonstrates that good design is concerned with more than just the aesthetics of a building, it is integral to the success of buildings and places, how they function and how people connect with the surrounding built, natural and historic environment. As such, Policy P15 provides a set of design principles for applicants to adhere to, concerning the scale and visual appearance of the building as well its environmental performance, impact on flood risk and the natural environment, its integration with its surroundings and neighbouring public spaces. The policy recognises that high quality sustainable materials and construction standards are also important to ensure the durability and longevity of new development.
- 11.2.2 The Borough's high quality environment is fundamental to its success as an attractive place to live, work and invest. As such, the policy strives to create development with the

highest standards of design and sustainability, across the Borough. This should be evidenced by an appropriate national standard such as the Code for Sustainable Homes, BREEAM or Building for Life. In particular, there are a cluster of strategic economic assets within the M42 Economic Gateway north of the A45; the National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham Airport and Birmingham Business Park, where development will be expected to be of the highest quality to reflect their importance. Development on or near the other strategic assets of Blythe Valley Park and Solihull Town Centre will also be expected to be designed to the highest quality standard to ensure these areas become design exemplars for the Borough and sustainable communities. If the proposal for High Speed 2 (HS2) and the associated station is realised, a master plan will be prepared to guide the development of the area.

11.2.3 However, not all parts of the Borough have a high quality environment and a key part of the strategy is to improve the environment in the North Solihull Regeneration Area and parts of the Mature Suburbs. In order to raise the design quality in North Solihull, the North Solihull Design Code will continue to be applied. Development Briefs will also be prepared to guide the design of development on all sites allocated in the Plan and where appropriate, for other significant sites. The briefs will also provide details of physical and green infrastructure to be integrated into the development, such as capacity for high-speed digital connectivity, sustainable drainage systems and potential for renewable and low carbon energy schemes.

### **11.3 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge C - Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge E - Protecting Key Gaps Between Urban Areas and Settlements

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

Challenge J - Improving Health and Well-being

Challenge K - Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets

Challenge L - Water Quality and Flood Risk

## **POLICY P16 Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness**

The Council recognises the importance of the historic environment to the Borough's local character and distinctiveness and its cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits.

The Council considers the following characteristics make a significant contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of the Borough and where applicable, development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how these characteristics have been conserved:

- i. The historic core of Solihull Town Centre and its adjacent parks;
- ii. The historical development and variety of architectural styles within the Mature Suburbs and the larger established rural settlements of Meriden, Hampton-in-Arden, Balsall Common, Knowle, Dorridge, Bentley Heath, Hockley Heath, Cheswick Green and Tidbury Green;
- iii. The Arden landscape, historic villages, hamlets, farmsteads, country and lesser houses and the distinct medieval core of historic rural settlements including Berkswell, Barston, Temple Balsall, Meriden Hill, Walsal End, Hampton-in-Arden, Bickenhill and Knowle;

- iv. Parks, gardens and landscape including common, woodland, heathland and distinctive fieldscapes as defined in the Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation; and
- v. The canal and railway network, including disused railway lines and the working stations at Solihull, Olton, Dorridge and Shirley, together with associated structures.

Development will be expected to conserve heritage assets as appropriate to their significance, preserve or enhance local character and distinctiveness and create or sustain a sense of place. In Solihull, heritage assets include; Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and also non-designated assets; buildings, monuments, archaeological sites, places, areas or landscapes positively identified in Solihull's Historic Environment Record as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, such as those identified on the Local List.

All applications and consents that affect the historic environment will be expected to have considered and used the evidence in the Solihull Historic Environment Record to inform the design of the proposal. This should be explained in the accompanying Design and Access Statement or, for significant proposals, in a Heritage Statement.

Proposals seeking to modify heritage assets for the mitigation of and adaptation to the effects of climate change will be expected to be sympathetic and conserve the special interest and significance of the heritage asset and its setting.

#### 11.4 Justification

11.4.1 The Government's objective for the historic environment and its heritage assets is clear in the draft NPPF, that it 'should be conserved and enjoyed for the quality of life they bring to this and future generations'. The Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 also places several duties on Local Planning Authorities;

- To have special regard to the desirability of preserving the building or its setting or any features of special architectural or historic interest which a Listed Building possesses, when considering the authorisation of works.
- To designate and review the designation of Conservation Areas and publish proposals for their preservation and enhancement and,
- To pay special attention to the desirability of preserving and enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

11.4.2 The Council recognises the importance of the historic environment to the Borough's local character and distinctiveness, its contribution to the five distinct 'places' of Solihull and its cultural, social, environmental and economic benefits.

In light of this and in order to achieve the Government's objective for the historic environment, Policy P16 defines the special characteristics, which the Council considers make a significant contribution to Solihull's local distinctiveness and advocates strong protection of those qualities and the Borough's wider historic environment. The policy also ensures that all development conserves heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, as defined in the evidence base for the Local Plan.



11.4.3 To conserve the heritage assets and sense of place within Solihull, all development proposals affecting heritage assets will also be expected to adhere to current established guidance. At present this includes PPS5: Planning for the Historic Environment - Planning Practice Guide and all other relevant English Heritage publications such as Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (2008).

11.4.4 A substantial body of evidence on the historic environment has been collected and informed the development of the Local Plan, its strategy for the Borough's historic environment and the selection of allocated sites for development. Key pieces of evidence such as the Warwickshire Historic Landscape Characterisation (June 2010), Warwickshire Historic Farmstead Characterisation Project (August 2010), Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines: Arden (November 1993), Solihull Characterisation Study (December 2011) and Solihull Historic Environment Record have been used to develop an understanding of Solihull's historic environment, local distinctiveness and its heritage assets; those parts of the historic environment which have a particular value or significance. Solihull's Heritage at Risk registers, Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans have also identified current threats to the Borough's historic environment and one of the purposes of Policy 16 and the delivery strategy is to focus on addressing such threats.

11.4.5 A critical piece of evidence for the Local Plan has been the Heritage Assessment of Sites Proposed for Inclusion as Core Strategy Sites (November 2010). This provides an assessment of the impact of potential development sites on the significance of heritage assets in the Borough and makes a planning recommendation for each site. The report has informed and influenced the selection of development sites for inclusion in the Local Plan.

11.5 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy

Challenge C - Sustaining Attractiveness of the Borough

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge E - Protecting Key Gaps Between Urban Areas and Settlements

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge K - Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets

### **POLICY P17 Countryside and Green Belt**

The Council will safeguard the “best and most versatile” agricultural land in the Borough and encourage the use of the remaining land for farming. Development affecting the “best and most versatile” land will be permitted only if there is an overriding need for the development or new use, and there is insufficient lower grade land available, or available lower grade land has an environmental significance that outweighs the agricultural considerations, or the use of lower grade land would be inconsistent with other sustainability considerations. Development involving farm-based diversification will normally be permitted in order to support farm enterprises and the management of land, providing it is in an appropriate location, of a scale appropriate to its location, and does not harm the Green Belt, conservation or enhancement policies.

The Council will not permit inappropriate development in the Green Belt, except in very special circumstances. In addition to the national policy, the following provisions shall apply to development in the Borough's Green Belt:

Development involving the replacement, extension or alteration of buildings in the Green Belt

will not be permitted unless it is demonstrated that it will not harm the need to retain smaller more affordable housing or the character and quality of the Green Belt.

Limited infilling will not be considered to be inappropriate development within the Green Belt settlements, providing this would not have an adverse effect on the character of the settlements. Limited infilling shall be interpreted as the filling of a small gap within an otherwise built-up frontage with not more than two dwellings.

The reasonable expansion of established businesses into the Green Belt will be allowed where the proposal would make a significant contribution to the local economy or employment, providing that appropriate mitigation can be secured.

Where the re-use of buildings or land is proposed, the new use, and any associated use of land surrounding the building, should not conflict with, nor have a materially greater impact on, the openness of the Green Belt and the purposes of including land in it, and the form, bulk and general design of the buildings shall be in keeping with their surroundings.

Where waste management operations involving inappropriate development are proposed in the Green Belt, the contribution of new capacity towards the treatment gap identified in the Borough may amount to very special circumstances, providing the development accords with the waste management policy of this Plan.

The small settlements of Hampton-in-Arden, Hockley Heath, Meriden and Catherine de Barnes are inset in the Green Belt and are not therefore subject to Green Belt policy. Nevertheless, the Council, in considering applications for development in these settlements, will take into account the importance of their rural setting and of their attributes, such as historic buildings, open space, density of development, landscape and townscape that contribute towards their special character. Immediately beyond the inset boundary, strict Green Belt policies will apply.

## **11.6 Justification**

- 11.6.1 Most of the countryside within the Borough is in use for agriculture, and farmers are largely responsible for managing the land. Farmland is generally of good to moderate quality capable of supporting a healthy mixed farming economy. About one fifth of the farmland falls within the 'best and most versatile' agricultural land category, which Solihull's Countryside Strategy 2010-2020 indicates should be protected, as an irreplaceable resource and for its contribution to the rural character of the Borough. The policy provides that development affecting "best and most versatile" farmland will be permitted only if there is an overriding need or development of lower grade land would have adverse sustainability impacts. These might include impacts on the conservation of biodiversity, protection of natural resources, landscape character and quality, conservation of heritage assets and local distinctiveness, and amenity value.
- 11.6.2 National policy promotes the development and diversification of agricultural businesses, including support for sustainable rural tourism and leisure development, so as to achieve a prosperous rural economy. Solihull's Countryside Strategy 2010-2020 promotes diversification that would help to support farm enterprises and future management of land, whilst recognising that Green Belt policy may restrict the type of development and the need to avoid greater suburbanisation of the countryside. Proposals that are small in scale, do not attract excessive numbers of visitors, and complement conservation and enhancement policies are likely to be acceptable, with restoration of Arden landscape and informal outdoor recreation highlighted in the strategy as being particularly suitable. The policy reflects these concerns, along with the need to ensure that development is in an appropriate location.
- 11.6.3 Green Belt policy is set out in the national policy and will apply across the whole of the rural area of the Borough, other than the inset areas around settlements and other major

developments. National policy makes clear that established Green Belt boundaries should be altered only in exceptional circumstances and only when a local plan is being prepared or reviewed. It also describes the circumstances when built and other development should be considered as an exception to inappropriate development.

- 11.6.4 The pressure on the Green Belt in Solihull has been intensified by the requirement for development emerging from local housing projections, the lack of vacant and derelict land in the Borough, national guidance on windfall housing and local requirements for employment land, waste management and mineral extraction. This is reflected in the significant number of sites in the Green Belt in the strategic land availability assessment for Solihull.
- 11.6.5 Adjustments to Green Belt boundaries are required in North Solihull to assist the delivery of regeneration objectives, and in a limited number of circumstances elsewhere to meet local housing needs. The North Solihull Green Belt Review assesses the contribution that the Green Belt in this area makes to the purposes of including land in the Green Belt, and the level of constraints on potential development. The findings have been used to help identify suitable sites for regeneration purposes. The extension of the runway at Birmingham Airport and the realignment of the A45 Coventry Road entail the redefinition of the Green Belt boundary to the south. A small number of minor changes have also been made to address anomalies in Green Belt boundaries across the Borough, taking into account an assessment of Green Belt submissions made during the preparation of this Plan.
- 11.6.6 The safeguarded land at Meriden and Tidbury Green was removed from the Green Belt in the UDP 1997 for possible long term housing needs. Following assessment in the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, this land is no longer considered suitable for development and is proposed to be returned to the Green Belt.
- 11.6.7 The policy is consistent with national Green Belt policy, but provides some further guidance for a limited number of exceptions to inappropriate development that are particularly relevant in Solihull. These include the need to ensure that the replacement, extension and alteration of buildings, does not harm the need to retain smaller more



affordable housing. A number of established businesses are located within or adjacent to the Green Belt in Solihull, such as Jaguar Land Rover and Whale Tankers. The reasonable expansion of such businesses into the Green Belt will be allowed where justified by a significant contribution to the local economy or employment.

- 11.6.8 Limited infilling in villages, identified as appropriate development in the Green Belt in the NPPF, will be permitted in Chadwick End, Cheswick Green and Tidbury Green. In the other Green Belt villages and hamlets in the Borough, new building, other than that required for agriculture and forestry, outdoor sport, outdoor recreation and cemeteries, or for extensions and alterations will be considered to be inappropriate development, in order to protect the Green Belt and the character and quality of the settlements. The policy provides some additional guidance to assist interpretation of limited infilling.
- 11.6.9 The re-use of permanent and substantial buildings in the Green Belt is not inappropriate development. Locally, there is considerable pressure for the conversion of agricultural barns to new uses. The policy sets out some additional criteria for re-use of buildings to ensure that the new use does not conflict with or have a materially greater impact on the Green Belt, and is in keeping with the surroundings.
- 11.6.10 Policy P12 identifies the need for additional waste management capacity in the Borough, a number of strategic waste management sites, and an area of search for new waste management facilities within the Green Belt. This policy is consistent with guidance in the draft NPPF but makes clear that the contribution towards new waste management capacity in the Borough may amount to very special circumstances, provided the development accords with the waste management policy in this plan.
- 11.6.11 The settlements of Catherine de Barnes, Hampton in Arden, Hockley Heath and Meriden are inset from the Green Belt. Whilst Green Belt policies do not apply with these settlements, the Council will take into account their rural setting and special character in considering development proposals.

## 11.7 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy

Challenge C - Sustaining Attractiveness of the Borough

Challenge E - Protecting Key Gaps Between Urban Areas and Settlements

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge I - Providing Sufficient Waste Management Facilities and Providing for Sand and Gravel Aggregates

## 12. Supporting Local Communities



## 12. Supporting Local Communities

### 12.1 Introduction

- 12.1.1 The vital role of planning in creating and supporting strong, vibrant and healthy communities is well recognised and is a key element in delivering sustainable development.
- 12.1.2 We must ensure that community needs are supported through appropriate physical and social infrastructure, as well as other facilities and services that contribute to improving people's overall quality of life and physical and mental health and well being.
- 12.1.3 Supporting local communities is a theme that cross cuts others in this Local Plan. It is crucial that people have better access to a range of employment opportunities, appropriate housing that meets their needs, access to a range of local services including places to shop and relax, places for exercise, recreation and play. The need to provide and maintain suitable health, education and community facilities as well as opportunities for social interaction is fundamental in to ensure people across the Borough enjoy a good quality of life and have equal and positive life chances.
- 12.1.4 The Council will support local communities to ensure that everyone has access to the services and opportunities that allow them to fulfil their potential and enjoy healthier, happier lives.

### POLICY P18 Health and Well Being

The potential for achieving positive health outcomes will be taken into account when considering all development proposals. Where any adverse health impacts are identified, the development will be expected to demonstrate how these will be addressed or mitigated.

The Council will expect new development proposals to promote, support and enhance physical and mental health and well being. Support will be given to proposals which:

- i. Provide opportunities for formal and informal physical activity, exercise opportunities, recreation and play;
- ii. Contribute to a high quality, attractive and safe public realm in accordance with Policy P15 SecuringDesign Quality, to encourage social interaction and facilitate movement on foot and by cycle;
- iii. Contribute to the development of a high quality, safe and convenient walking and cycling network;
- iv. Improve the quality and quantity of the green infrastructure network in the Borough, particularly in the North Solihull Regeneration Area and in areas where green infrastructure is identified as lacking. The protection and enhancement of physical access, including public rights of way to open space and green infrastructure will also be supported;
- v. Deliver new and improved health services and facilities in areas where they can be accessed by sustainable transport modes. Facilities for primary medical care should be identified and planned for;
- vi. Increase access to healthy food by sustainable transport modes and provide opportunities for growing local produce. The Council will resist the loss of areas which currently enable local produce to be grown;
- vii. Provide additional homes which are designed to meet the needs of older people and those with disabilities, and housing which enables older people to downsize from larger homes; and
- viii. Improve the energy efficiency of housing.

New residential development will be expected to be built to the Lifetime Homes standard in accordance with Policy P15 Securing Design Quality, to ensure that homes are adaptable and enable people to live independently for longer. All developments should maximise internal insulation and opportunities for solar gain and wherever possible, developments should also seek to incorporate private amenity space.

Development proposals should incorporate planting, trees, open spaces and soft surfaces wherever possible in order to secure a variety of spaces for residents, visitors or employees to use and observe.

The loss of community and social infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that:

- It can no longer continue for commercial or operational reasons;
- There are identified benefits of the use being discontinued;
- Adequate alternative provision can be made in a manner which meets the needs of the community affected.

The Council will resist development proposals for hot food takeaways in areas where there is already a high concentration of such uses.

## **12.2 Justification**

12.2.1 The Marmot Review (February 2010) highlighted that socio-economic inequalities, including the built environment, have a clear effect on the health outcomes of the population. One of the key policy objectives aimed at reducing the gap in life expectancy between people of lower and higher socio-economic backgrounds, is to “create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities”.

12.2.2 The main elements identified as having significant impacts on health are:

- Pollution: There is evidence of the adverse effects of outdoor air pollution and cardio-respiratory mortality and morbidity. Reductions in traffic to reduce air pollution, for example, is proven to improve health.
- Green / open space: It is recognised that living close to areas of green space – parks, woodland and other open spaces – can improve health, regardless of social class. Research has identified the direct benefits of green space to both physical and mental health and well being.
- Transport: It is suggested that transport is a significant challenge to public health in terms of road traffic injuries, physical inactivity, community severance and noise and air pollution. However, it also allows access to work, education, social networks and services that can improve people's opportunities.
- Food: It is recognised that dietary change can play a key role in promoting health by reducing the consumption of saturated fat. The availability of healthy food is often worse in deprived areas due to the mix of shops that tend to locate there.
- Housing: Poor housing conditions and design have significant impacts on health inequalities. Living in cold housing is a risk to health, fuel poverty contributes to winter deaths and incidences of respiratory disease, and accidents in the home are also an issue.
- Community Participation and Social Isolation: It is recognised that social participation acts as a protective factor against dementia and cognitive decline over the age of 65.

12.2.3 There are considerable health disparities between the most affluent and most deprived populations in Solihull and there is a 10 year gap in life expectancy between the 'best' and 'worst' wards, which has widened over the past decade and is predicted to increase further. Illnesses such as heart disease, stroke and cancer are the major causes of ill health, premature death and health inequality in the Borough's population. Poor diet and lack of exercise is contributing to increasing levels of obesity, with childhood obesity becoming a particular issue. Long term conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, disability and frailty are increasing and the numbers of people with dementia are growing.

12.2.4 The elderly population is projected to increase over the next decade resulting in additional pressures for health and social care, and increasing the importance of being able to stay living independently for longer. However, fuel poverty is a contributory factor to excess winter mortality amongst the elderly population.

12.2.5 Mental health issues, often associated with a poor quality environment and unemployment are prevalent in more deprived populations of the Borough, although some residents in what are perceived to be more affluent rural areas often feel a sense of isolation as they may face difficulties in accessing services due to distance and limited public transport.

12.2.6 The Council recognises the important role that spatial planning has in the creation of healthy communities. Many of the policies in the Local Plan will have an impact on health and well being and when considered together, the overall impact of any new development should have positive health outcomes.

12.2.7 The Council recognises the positive benefits that physical activity, exercise opportunities, recreation and play have on both physical and mental health, as well as child development. The policy therefore seeks to maximise opportunities to partake in formal and informal sport and recreation, both indoor and outdoor, in order to reduce social isolation and depression, and increase physical activity for people of all ages.

12.2.8 Evidence from the Solihull Joint Strategic Needs Assessment highlights that more affluent areas of the Borough tend to be less physically active through 'lifestyle activities' such as walking and carrying shopping, partly due to higher car ownership levels and car use. This policy, alongside others in the local plan, seeks to create an environment where people choose to walk and cycle for both pleasure and purpose.

12.2.9 It is recognised that poor quality neighbourhoods can have a negative effect on the health of those who live in them and the quality and design of the built environment and wider public realm has an impact on whether and how people use a place. High quality and well designed buildings and spaces which have safe, attractive and convenient access can encourage social interaction, reduce crime and fear of crime and influence travel mode, thereby having a positive effect on physical and mental health.

12.2.10 The provision of appropriate, well designed, affordable and energy efficient housing is essential in securing improvements to people's physical and mental health. In conjunction with Policy P4 'Meeting Housing Needs' and Policy P15 'Securing Design



Quality', the Council is seeking to reduce the negative impact that housing can have on physical and mental health and well being. Similarly, provision of and access to health facilities and services has a direct effect on health. It is therefore crucial to ensure that health care is available and accessible to those who need it.

12.2.11 Poor diet is a significant factor in obesity and associated poor health. The policy aims to provide opportunities to consume fresh food and seeks to manage the concentration of hot food takeaways, particularly around schools, which may increase the propensity to consume unhealthy food.

### **12.3 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge G - An Imbalance in the Housing Offer across the Borough and the Shortage of Gypsy and Traveller Sites

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Transport

Challenge J - Improving Health and Well-Being

## **POLICY P19 – Range and Quality of Local Services**

### **a) Local Centres**

Knowle, Dorridge, Castle Bromwich, Marston Green, Balsall Common

Hobs Moat, Kingshurst, Aran Way, Craig Croft, Dickens Heath, Hatchford brook, Shelly Farm, Meriden, Olton.

Solihull has a variety of local centres which need to be developed and sustained in a way which ensures their continued sustainability and economic success.

The scale and nature of new development should reflect the centre's role and function in serving local needs, the opportunity to reduce the need to travel or the need to sustain the economic viability and vitality of the centre.

Appropriate development could include retail, leisure, community and other facilities.

All new development will need to be sensitive to local character and enhance the public realm.

### **b) Parades and Local Shops**

Local retail parades and local shops providing for day to day needs, including those serving villages, will be sustained. Proposals for change of use or new development will be granted planning permission where this role would not be prejudiced.

All new development will need to be sensitive to local character and enhance the public realm.

### **12.4 Justification**

12.4.1 Solihull has a variety of local centre of varying size. Knowle is the largest and is an important focus for the rural area. It is not generally anticipated that there will be a need for significant new retail floorspace in local centres but their role in providing accessible local services needs to be sustained. The Council will enable a broad range of facilities of a suitable local scale in local centres and will expect good design that respects local character and enhances public realm. There are numerous local parades and freestanding small shops throughout the Borough. Small scale local shops and services providing for local needs on a daily basis can be particularly important in rural areas where access to larger centres may be more difficult without car access. The Council will seek to sustain valued facilities and services, particularly in rural areas where this would

reduce the ability of the community to meet day to day needs. Shops, facilities and services are encouraged to develop and modernise in a sustainable way that encourages their retention.

## **12.5 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge C - Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for People who Live, Work and Invest in Solihull

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

## **POLICY P20 Provision for Open Space, Children's Play, Sport, Recreation and Leisure**

### **a) Existing public open space, sports and recreational facilities:**

The Council recognises the importance and multi-functional benefits of public open space, sports and recreational facilities within the Borough and will support the enhancement of existing facilities and open space. Loss of existing facilities through development will not be permitted where they are of value by to the local community for recreation, visual amenity, nature conservation or make an important contribution to the quality of the environment or network of green infrastructure, unless:

- i. it can be demonstrated that the open space or buildings are clearly surplus to requirements; or
- ii. the need or benefits of the development clearly outweigh the loss.

In such circumstances, the Council will require appropriate compensatory measures for the loss.

The Council supports the principle of designating land as Local Green Space. Where designation would be appropriate, necessary and where the open space meets the criteria outlined in national guidance, the Council will support designation of Local Green Spaces in neighbourhood plans.

### **b) Provision of new public open space, sports and recreational facilities:**

The Council will require provision for and maintenance of appropriate open space, sports and recreational facilities as an integral part of new development. This should address identified shortfalls in local provision, outlined in adopted Council strategies and provide for the resultant increase in population from the development. Provision should accord with the local standards and priorities for action outlined in the adopted Green Spaces Strategy (2006) and future revisions, the forthcoming Indoor Sports Facilities Strategy and Green Infrastructure Strategy. Where the minimum standard for children's play and youth facilities is already met, developments will be expected to give more generous provision.

To ensure a high quality living environment for the occupiers of all new residential development, including supported housing schemes for the elderly and those with disabilities, provision should be made for informal amenity space, in accordance with Policy P15 – Securing Design Quality. Proposals for family housing will be expected to provide opportunities for safe children's play in accordance with the Design for Play and the Free Play Network's 10 Design Principles.

To promote healthy lifestyles in the workplace, major commercial development proposals, (over 1ha or 1,000 sq.m) will also be required to provide new open space and/or contribute to enhancement of the green infrastructure network, in accordance with Policy P15 – Securing Design Quality and Policy P10 – Natural Environment.

**c) Provision of new indoor sports and leisure facilities:**

The Council will support proposals for new or improved sports and leisure facilities providing that the development:

- i. Addresses any shortfall in provision outlined in the forthcoming Indoor Sports and Recreation Facilities Strategy or the adopted Green Spaces Strategy (2006);
- ii. Reflects the 'town centre first' principle outlined in national guidance and is of a scale and size appropriate to the hierarchy of Town Centres as defined in Policies P1 – Support Economic Success, P2 – Maintain Strong Competitive Town Centres, and P19 – Range and Quality of Local Services;
- iii. Is situated within an accessible location as defined in Policy 7 – Accessibility, where the development is easily accessible to the local community and is well served, or is capable of being well served, by public transport, walking and cycling; and
- iv. Accords with other Green Belt and Amenity policies in the Plan.

Subject to the above the criteria, the Council will support proposals for shared sports facilities at educational centres, where the facility also serves the local area.

**d) Waterways:**

The Council will support proposals that encourage greater recreational and leisure use and enhancement of the river and canal network providing that the development safeguards the historic and natural environment and purpose of the Green Belt, in accordance with Policies P10 – Natural Environment, P16 – Conservation of Heritage Assets and Local Distinctiveness and P17 – Countryside and Green Belt.

## 12.6 Justification

12.6.1 The Council recognises the multi-functional benefits of open space, sports and recreational facilities to people's quality of life, particularly in terms of health and wellbeing, the quality of the environment and biodiversity in Solihull and its ability to mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change. Protection of valued local green space is enshrined in the draft NPPF and in recent Government guidance and initiatives such as the designation of Local Green Spaces, Town and Village Greens and the Queen Elizabeth II Fields Challenge.

12.6.2 Policy P20 advocates strong protection of open space, sports and recreational facilities and where proposed development would result in the loss of a facility or area of open space, the policy requires appropriate compensation for the loss. Such compensatory measures could include re-provision or the enhancement of existing open space or facilities, in accordance with the priorities for action outlined in adopted Council strategies such as the Green Spaces Strategy (2006). The policy also supports communities designating land as Local Green Space in neighbourhood plans, where designation would be appropriate, necessary and the national criteria are met.

12.6.3 Key evidence base such as the Green Infrastructure Study (2011), Solihull Joint Strategic Needs Assessment 2009-10 and continued monitoring of the adopted Green Spaces Strategy and the value of greenspace in the North Solihull Regeneration Area has



informed the development of the Local Plan, its strategy for sport and recreation within the Borough and the selection of development sites for allocation in the Plan. A key element of the spatial strategy in the Plan is to focus development within the North Solihull Regeneration Area to facilitate regeneration of the area and improve people's quality of life. It is acknowledged that some of the allocated sites within North Solihull would result in loss of open space, however, Policy P20 requires appropriate compensation for any loss and this will be closely monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report.

- 12.6.4 The Policy also ensures that new development integrates open space, sports and recreational facilities into the design of the scheme or contributes to the Green Infrastructure network, to ensure a high quality environment for all occupiers of residential and commercial development. In particular, and to address issues with childhood obesity within the Borough, proposals for family housing will be expected to provide opportunities for safe children's play, such as gardens and enhance existing play and youth facilities. Proposals for new indoor sports and leisure facilities should address any existing shortfalls in provision and be directed to Centres and the most accessible locations within the Borough.
- 12.6.5 The Council recognises the importance of the canal network to the Borough's local distinctiveness, its value for biodiversity, adaptation to climate change, leisure and recreation and its potential for tourism. As such, Policy 20 supports proposals that encourage greater recreational use and enhancement of network. However, much of the canal network in Solihull is located within the Green Belt. National policy provides a presumption against inappropriate development which is by definition, harmful to the Green Belt, and which should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 12.6.6 British Waterways' guidance; Waterways for Tomorrow (2000) and the Policy Review of the Waterways (2005) aims to increase the provision of offline residential moorings, such as marinas, in England. Recent Government guidance also highlights that permanent residential moorings can be an innovative way of addressing housing need. Where such proposals would be located within the Green Belt, applications will be required to demonstrate that very special circumstances exist to clearly outweigh the harm by inappropriateness, and any other harm, to the Green Belt, in accordance with the National Policy and Policy 17 – Countryside and Green Belt. However, recent evidence has demonstrated that there is a national and regional surplus of provision and no local need for moorings in Solihull.

## **12.7 Challenges and Objectives Addressed by the Policy**

Challenge A - Reducing Inequalities in the Borough

Challenge C - Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for People who Live, Work and Invest in Solihull

Challenge D - Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

Challenge E - Protecting Key Gaps Between Urban Areas and Settlements

Challenge F - Climate Change

Challenge H - Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

Challenge J - Improving Health and Well-Being

Challenge K - Protecting and Enhancing our Natural Assets

Challenge L - Water Quality and Flood Risk

## 13. Delivering and Monitoring

## 13. Delivery and Monitoring

### 13.1 Introduction

13.1.1 In setting the Vision and Strategy for sustainable development in the Borough over the next fifteen years, the Local Plan is both aspirational and realistic. We therefore need to show that the proposed Strategy is deliverable and how the more detailed policies will bring about the desired objectives. We then need to monitor these policies to assess how successful they are over time, and evaluate how they may be improved in the future.

13.1.2 The purpose of this chapter is to summarise the different ways in which the Council will enable the effective delivery of the Local Plan:

- Infrastructure Delivery Plan
- Partnership working
- Planning process
- Funding sources

13.1.3 The key delivery mechanisms and list of monitoring indicators are outlined in Fig. 20 at the end of this chapter. The monitoring indicators will be reported on annually.

### 13.2 The Infrastructure Delivery Plan

13.2.1 Key to delivering development is having the appropriate infrastructure in place and provided for in a timely manner. The Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) provides a baseline of the existing infrastructure capacity and needs in the Borough and assesses, as far as is possible, the infrastructure required to support the development set out in the Local Plan. ‘Infrastructure’ in this sense is not just roads and pipes, but the physical, social and green infrastructure required to enable sustainable development. It is part of the evidence base to support the Local Plan and has informed the Site Allocations and overall Strategy. However, it is not a static document – as infrastructure priorities evolve and new information becomes available over the plan period, the IDP will be reviewed and updated.

13.2.2 The IDP will:

- Set out the existing infrastructure capacity and needs in the Borough with the lead delivery organisations and their partners;
- Assess the impact of the proposed scale and location of development in the Borough over the plan period on infrastructure, where this information is available;
- List the projects which will address existing and future infrastructure needs, where possible;
- Align the implementation of the IDP with the aims and objectives of other national, regional, local or neighbourhood strategies and plans; and
- The role of the IDP is to identify strategic issues and pressure points on infrastructure, and ways in which these can be overcome; the detailed work needs to be provided at the planning application stage, including meaningful consultation with all the relevant stakeholders.

### 13.3 Partnership Working

13.3.1 As a Unitary Authority, Solihull MBC has a pivotal role as service and infrastructure provider. Below are listed some of the Council's duties:

- Local Highways Authority
- Local Education Authority

- Local Housing Authority
- Waste and Minerals Authority
- Adult and Children's Social Care
- Lead Local Flood Authority

13.3.2 However, the responsibility for delivering the Local Plan is not solely the role of the Council. We are in regular dialogue with our various partners and take seriously our 'Duty to Co-operate' under the Localism Act.

13.3.3 We are working with statutory delivery agencies to have the most up-to-date information on infrastructure requirements and to strive for multiple benefits from development where possible. Examples are implementing the Integrated Transport Authority's (Centro) Local Transport Plan (2011-2026); the 'Local Investment Plan' (2011-2015) with the Homes and Communities Agency to provide affordable housing; flood risk assessments with the Environment Agency.

13.3.4 We will work with developers, landowners, business and community interests to secure deliverable development proposals for mutual benefit.

13.3.5 We will continue our role within the North Solihull Partnership to support the successful regeneration of the three wards of Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst & Fordbridge and Smith's Wood.

13.3.6 We will proactively work with local communities to bring forward Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders if required.

13.3.7 We will continue to liaise and collaborate with our neighbouring authorities on cross-boundary concerns and carry out joint working where appropriate. These include the authorities in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area (Birmingham, Black Country and Coventry); the Warwickshire authorities and most recently our partners in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership.

#### **13.4 Planning Process**

13.4.1 Historically, the planning process has been the domain of the local planning authority, responsible for both strategic 'plan-making' and more site-specific 'development management'. With the enactment of the Localism Act, this has been extended to local communities who will have powers to bring forward Neighbourhood Plans and Development Orders.

#### **13.5 Plan-making**

13.5.1 Residential site allocations in the Local Plan have been based on an up-to-date "Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment" (SHLAA) for the Borough, which ensures that the sites are 'deliverable' within the proposed phasing periods, i.e. suitable, available and achievable.

13.5.2 The Employment Land Review has been updated and confirms that allocated employment sites are suitable and deliverable over the plan period; whilst a developable greenfield site has been identified adjacent to Birmingham Business Park. Similarly, a Retail, Office and Leisure Study has confirmed the respective retail and office capacity within the Town Centre.

13.5.3 Supplementary Planning Documents, as referred to in the relevant policies above, will be prepared to provide additional guidance to applicants where appropriate, and not to place an unnecessary burden on development.

13.5.4 Development briefs will be prepared for the site allocations with more detailed technical work on the infrastructure requirements and the wider delivery context.

## **13.6 Development Management**

- 13.6.1 We will work closely with Development Management in both the preparation of future DPDs and SPDs, as well as giving advice on applying the principles of the Strategy and Policies contained herein. The validation criteria will be updated to reflect the new planning policies to ensure the correct information is submitted prior to commencing the application.
- 13.6.2 The role of Development Management is to actively promote and foster sustainable development, such as front-loading pre-application discussions with the relevant stakeholders. The Council will encourage developers to be pro-active in consulting with communities and seeking their views on how best to go forward with development and make use of local knowledge.

## **13.7 Neighbourhood Planning**

- 13.7.1 Neighbourhood planning is one of the key ways in which the Government has given local people more powers to shape and influence the places where they live. It will be genuinely community-led and these powers will be made clearer in secondary legislation following the Localism Act. Neighbourhood Planning is not a tool to prevent or hinder development, but will add development over and above that contained in the Local Plan. This is complemented by the provision in the Localism Act for the 'Community Right to Build', a type of neighbourhood development order which will ensure that the benefits of any development permitted through this order can be kept in the community.

## **13.8 Funding sources**

- 13.8.1 New development will be expected to meet its own physical infrastructure needs, such as on-site provision of utilities or a new road junction to access a site. Where new development puts pressure on social or green infrastructure, or creates a need, e.g. for new community facilities or open space, then provision will also have to be made for these. Where necessary and viable, these will be secured through developer contributions. It will also be expected that the cost of affordable housing will be met by development. The Community Infrastructure Levy was introduced in 2010 and legislation has already narrowed the extent to which planning obligations can be utilised to provide infrastructure.
- 13.8.2 Statutory agencies, such as the Water Company, are also responsible for meeting their statutory obligations and responding to growth.
- 13.8.3 In the current economic climate, it is recognised that there are financing constraints on developers that affect viability. It will therefore be vital to strive for efficient solutions that make the best use of existing assets and incorporate effective management regimes. However, the Local Plan is making provisions for the next fifteen years, during which the economy will change. We will therefore take a flexible and responsive approach to market conditions, whilst safeguarding the future prosperity of the Borough.
- 13.8.4 In conclusion, there will be a need for both public and private sector investment in capital infrastructure and revenue streams to support development. The Council will carry out its statutory duties and work with lead delivery partners to optimise the use of its assets and bid for public sector funding from national, regional, strategic and local grants. Furthermore, the Council will explore new funding initiatives such as tax increment financing and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

## **13.9 Monitoring**

- 13.9.1 A ministerial letter of 30 March 2011 to Chief Planning Officers that withdrew guidance on local plan monitoring and stated that central government will take a step back from monitoring the preparation and content of local plans previously carried out by the Government Office Network.

13.9.2 It is now a matter for each Council to decide what to include in their monitoring reports and ensure they are prepared in accordance with relevant UK and EU legislation.

13.9.3 The Council will continue to take a 'plan, monitor, manage' approach, to monitor the effectiveness of the strategy and policies in the Local Plan and will regularly monitor and publish reports based on the indicators in the Monitoring Framework below.

**Fig. 19 Delivery and Monitoring Framework**

| <b>THEME – SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH</b>                |   |   |
|---|---|---|
| <b>Policy</b>   | <b>Delivery</b>   | <b>Monitoring Indicator</b>   |
| <b>P1 – Support Economic Success</b>                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management Processes</li> <li>• Partnership working with key economic asset to support their strong economic position</li> <li>• Developers work with Council's Economic Development team to encourage access to jobs</li> </ul>   | <p>Quantum and Type of floorspace developed on Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks.</p>   |
|   |   | <p>Extent to which development is linked to local employment needs (measures adopted to target local needs and the quantum of employment).</p>                      |
| <b>P2 – Maintain a Strong, Competitive Town Centre</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developers will bring forward additional retail, office and leisure floorspace in the Town Centre.</li> <li>• Deliver up to an additional 34,000 sqm (gross) of comparison retail floorspace to 2021, and a further 23,000 sqm (gross) to 2026 in Solihull Town Centre</li> <li>• Provide for up to an additional 35,000 sqm (gross) of new office (B1 Use Class) floorspace to 2026 in Solihull Town</li> <li>• Documents on affordable housing guidance for applicants.</li> <li>• Affordable housing will be secured through developer contributions</li> </ul> | <p>The development of retail, office and leisure floorspace in the main Solihull town centre</p>  |
|   |   | <p>The number of dwelling units built in Solihull town centre.</p>  |
|   |   | <p>Extent of encroachment of non-retail development into primary retail frontages.</p>  |
|   |   | <p>target of at least 40%.</p>  |
|   |   | <p>Mix of market housing reflecting the likely profile of household types requiring market housing as evidenced by the latest SHMA.</p>                             |
| <b>P5 – Provision of Land for Housing</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management Process</li> <li>• Partnership working with organisations, developers and registered social landlords</li> </ul>  | <p>The delivery of 525 (net) dwellings per annum (2011-2028).</p>   |
|   |   | <p>Maintain a continuous five years housing land supply based on the delivery target of 525 (net) dwellings per annum and taking delivery to date into account.</p> |
| <b>P6 - Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management process</li> <li>• Preparation of a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations DPD to provide sufficient land to meet need.</li> </ul>  | <p>Whether immediate identified need of 17 pitches has been met by the end of 2012.</p>   |
|   |   | <p>The numbers of authorised pitches provided per annum.</p>  |
|   |   | <p>The number of unauthorised developments and encampments per annum.</p>   |

## THEME – INCREASING ACCESSIBILITY AND ENCOURAGING SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

| Policy   | Delivery   | Monitoring Indicator  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>P7 – Accessibility and Ease of Access</b>                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management process.</li> <li>• Preparation of a range of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to support delivery of the policy objectives and provide guidance to developers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Accessibility SPD</li> <li>◦ Street Design Guide</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Developer contributions will be used to secure resources for investment in specific transport measures where appropriate</li> <li>• Where appropriate the Council will work with delivery partners; including Centro, the Highways Agency and Network Rail.</li> </ul> | Percentage of qualifying residential development within accessibility parameters.   |
|  |  | Percentage of qualifying B1 office, retail, leisure developments within accessibility parameters.   |
| <b>P8 – Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management process.</li> <li>• Preparation of a range of Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) to support delivery of the policy objectives and provide guidance to developers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Managing Demand for Travel SPD</li> <li>◦ Street Design Guide</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Developer contributions will be used to secure resources appropriate</li> <li>• Where appropriate the Council will work with delivery partners; including Centro, the Highways Agency and Network Rail.</li> </ul>  | <p>Increase the proportion of trips by public transport, walking and cycling into Solihull Town Centres during the AM peak period.</p> <p>Level of compliance with parking standards.</p> <p>Percentage change in transport modal share across the Borough for bus, rail and cycle use.</p> |

## THEME – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT

| Policy                           | Delivery  | Monitoring Indicator  |
|----------------------------------|---|---|
| <b>P9 – Climate Change</b>       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management Process</li> <li>• Preparation of SPD on Sustainable Design and Construction</li> </ul>                 | Borough-wide carbon dioxide emissions per capita.   |
| <b>P10 – Natural Environment</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management Process</li> </ul>  | Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management is being achieved (DCLG Single data list 160-00) |
| <b>P11 – Water Management</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management Process</li> <li>• Partnership working with statutory delivery agency the Environment Agency</li> </ul> | Water quality status of Rivers Blythe and Cole and their tributaries.   |
|                                  |   | Planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency objections on water quality and flood risk grounds.   |
| <b>P12 – Waste Management</b>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management Process</li> </ul>  | Amount of waste arising and capacity of waste management facilities in the Borough.                               |

## THEME – PROTECTING AND ENHANCING THE ENVIRONMENT (continued)

| Policy                | Delivery   | Monitoring Indicator  |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| <b>P13 – Minerals</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development Management Process</li> </ul> | Progress on this policy will be monitored through the Regional Aggregates Working Party Annual Reports which provide data on sub-regional production and landbanks. |
| <b>P14 – Amenity</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development Management Process</li> </ul> | No indicators suggested.  |

## THEME – QUALITY OF PLACE

| Policy   | Delivery   | Monitoring Indicator  |
|--|--|---|
| <b>P15 – Securing Design Quality</b>                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Update the Development Control Validation Checklist to require applicants to demonstrate compliance with Building for Life and the Lifetime Homes standard and where appropriate, the Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM standards in the Design and Access Statement.</li> <li>Prepare Development Briefs to provide guidance on key design principles and infrastructure requirements for all sites allocated in the Local Plan and where appropriate, all other significant sites.</li> <li>Support the preparation of Village Design Statements by local communities.</li> <li>Where necessary, prepare Supplementary Planning Documents to provide additional design guidance for applicants.</li> </ul> | <p>Number/proportion of developments achieving good or very good BfL Standard.</p> <p>Number /proportion of developments achieving a higher environmental performance than the national standard at that time (Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM).</p>                                       |
| <b>P16 – Conservation Of Heritage Assets And Local Distinctiveness</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage and support the preparation of Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans by local communities.</li> <li>Prepare Supplementary Planning Documents to provide additional guidance on the conservation of the Borough's historic environment.</li> <li>Maintain, review and update the Local List of Buildings of Special Architectural or Historical Interest.</li> <li>Continue to identify and designate additional Conservation Areas and Article 4 Directions, where appropriate.</li> </ul>  | <p>Number/proportion of heritage assets at risk (Grade I, II* and II Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas).</p> <p>Number/proportion of Conservation Areas with up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans.</p> |
| <b>P17 – Countryside/Green Belt</b>                                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development Management Process</li> <li>Support preparation of Neighbourhood Plans</li> </ul>   | <p>Loss of Green Belt to development.</p> <p>Number of Neighbourhood Plans adopted.</p>   |

## THEME – SUPPORTING LOCAL COMMUNITIES

| Policy  | Delivery  | Monitoring Indicator  |
|---|---|---|
| <b>P18 – Health And Well Being</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development management process</li> <li>• Partnership working with Primary Care Trust and other health and social care providers</li> </ul>  | The number of community facilities lost to alternative development where no replacement has been provided   |
|   |   | The number of new planning permissions for hot food takeaways   |
|   |   | New and improved open space, sport, recreation and children's play facilities will be monitored by Policy 20.   |
| <b>P19 – Range And Quality Of Local Services</b><br><br><b>P20 – Provision for Open Space, Children's Play, Sport, Recreation and Leisure</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Development Management Process</li> <li>• Support preparation of Neighbourhood Plans</li> <li>• Continue to monitor the quantity and quality of greenspace in the North Solihull Regeneration Area.</li> <li>• Prepare a Green Infrastructure Strategy to highlight the priorities for enhancement of the Borough's Green Infrastructure network.</li> <li>• Continue to review and update the adopted Green Spaces Strategy.</li> <li>• Prepare an Indoor Facilities Strategy incorporating priorities for action and local standards for provision.</li> </ul> | <p>The number and type of community facilities lost to alternative development where no replacement has been provided is dealt with in Policy 18 above.</p> <p>P20 – Provision for Open Space, Children's Play, Sport, Recreation and Leisure<br/>Change in value of open space through development in the North Solihull Regeneration Area</p> <p>Proportion of eligible open space managed to Green Flag Award standards.</p> <p>Progress towards the priorities for action and proportion of zones meeting the local standards outlined in the adopted Green Spaces Strategy and forthcoming Indoor Facilities Strategy.</p> |

**North Solihull Regeneration Area**

Foxglove Crescent  
 Conway Road  
 Simon Digby Chelmsley Wood  
 Bishop Wilson and St. Andrews Scout Hut  
 Lowbrook Phase II  
 Chester Road/Centurion PH and adjoining land  
 Birmingham Road

**Phase 1 Sites – up to 2018****Mature Suburbs**

Solihull Town Centre  
 • Herbert Road/Station Road/Homer Road  
 • Monkspath Hall Road Car Park  
 Chelmsley Lane/Coleshill Road  
 Blythe Valley Park  
 Powergen

**Phase 1 Sites – up to 2018**

Blythe Valley Park  
 Solihull Town Centre  
 • Touchwood II  
 • Station Approach/Lode Lane including Lode Lane Car Park  
 Aqueduct Road Solihull Lodge  
 Moat House Farm Elmdon Road

**Phase 2 Sites – for release on 1st April 2018**

Solihull Town Centre  
 • Rail / Bus Interchange Station Approach  
 • Mell Square East  
 • Other small scale opportunity sites in the Town Centre

**Phase 3 sites – for release on 1st April 2023****Rural Area**

Four Ashes Road Bentley Heath  
 Hampton Road Knowle  
 Middlefield, Knowle

**Phase 1 Sites – up to 2018**

Braggs Farm/Bricklin Farm Dickens Heath  
 Griffin Lane Dickens Heath  
 Riddings Hill Balsall Common

**Phase 2 Sites – for release on 1st April 2018**

Land at Cleobury Lane Dickens Heath  
 Land at Mount Dairy Farm Tanworth Lane  
 Land fronting Kenilworth Road  
 Land between Kenilworth Road/Windmill Road  
 Land off Meriden Road Hampton in Arden

**Phase 3 sites – for release on 1st April 2023****Local Plan General Business Sites**

TRW Stratford Road, Shirley  
 Solihull Business Park, Highlands Road, Monkspath  
 Fore, Stratford Road, Adj. M42  
 Chep/Higginson, Bickenhill Lane, Bickenhill  
 Land North of Clock Interchange, Coventry Road  
 Land adjacent Birmingham Business Park (proposed)  
 Birmingham Airport Runway Extension

**Local Plan Proposed Mineral Sites**

Hornbrook Farm  
 Berkswell Quarry West  
 Marsh House Farm



**Proposed Housing Site 1:  
Foxglove Crescent,  
North Solihull Regeneration Area**

Proposed Housing Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Housing Site 2:  
Conway Road,  
North Solihull Regeneration Area**

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Proposed Housing Site  
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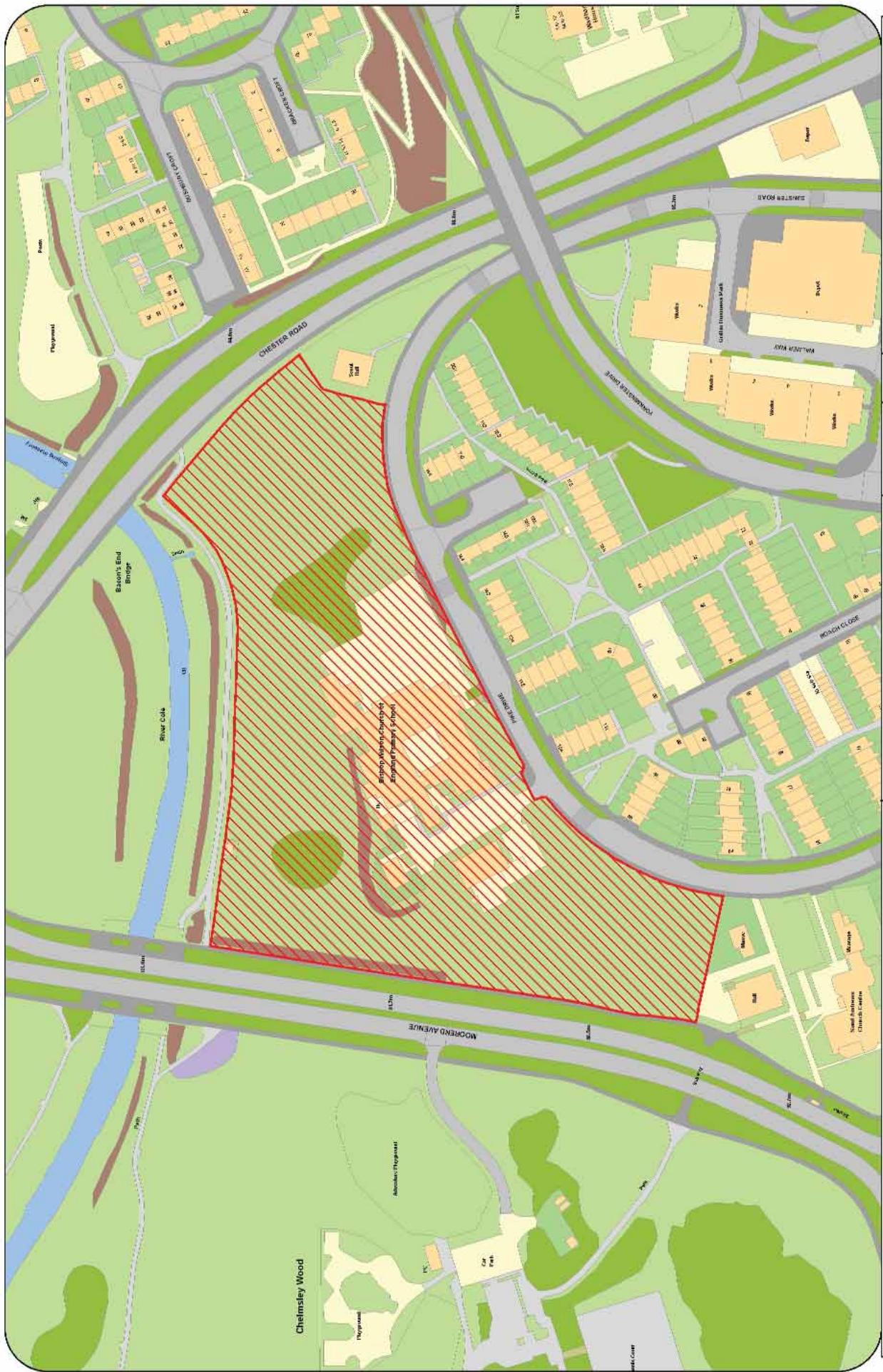


**Proposed Housing Site 3:  
Simon Digby,  
North Solihull Regeneration Area**

 Proposed Housing Site  
 Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Housing Site 4:  
Bishop Wilson and St. Andrews Scout Hut,  
North Solihull Regeneration Area**

**Proposed Housing Site**  
**Solihull Borough Boundary**

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**Proposed Housing Site 5:  
Lowbrook Phase II,  
North Solihull Regeneration Area**

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 Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Housing Site 6:  
Chester Road / Centurion PH and adjoining land,  
North Solihull Regeneration Area**

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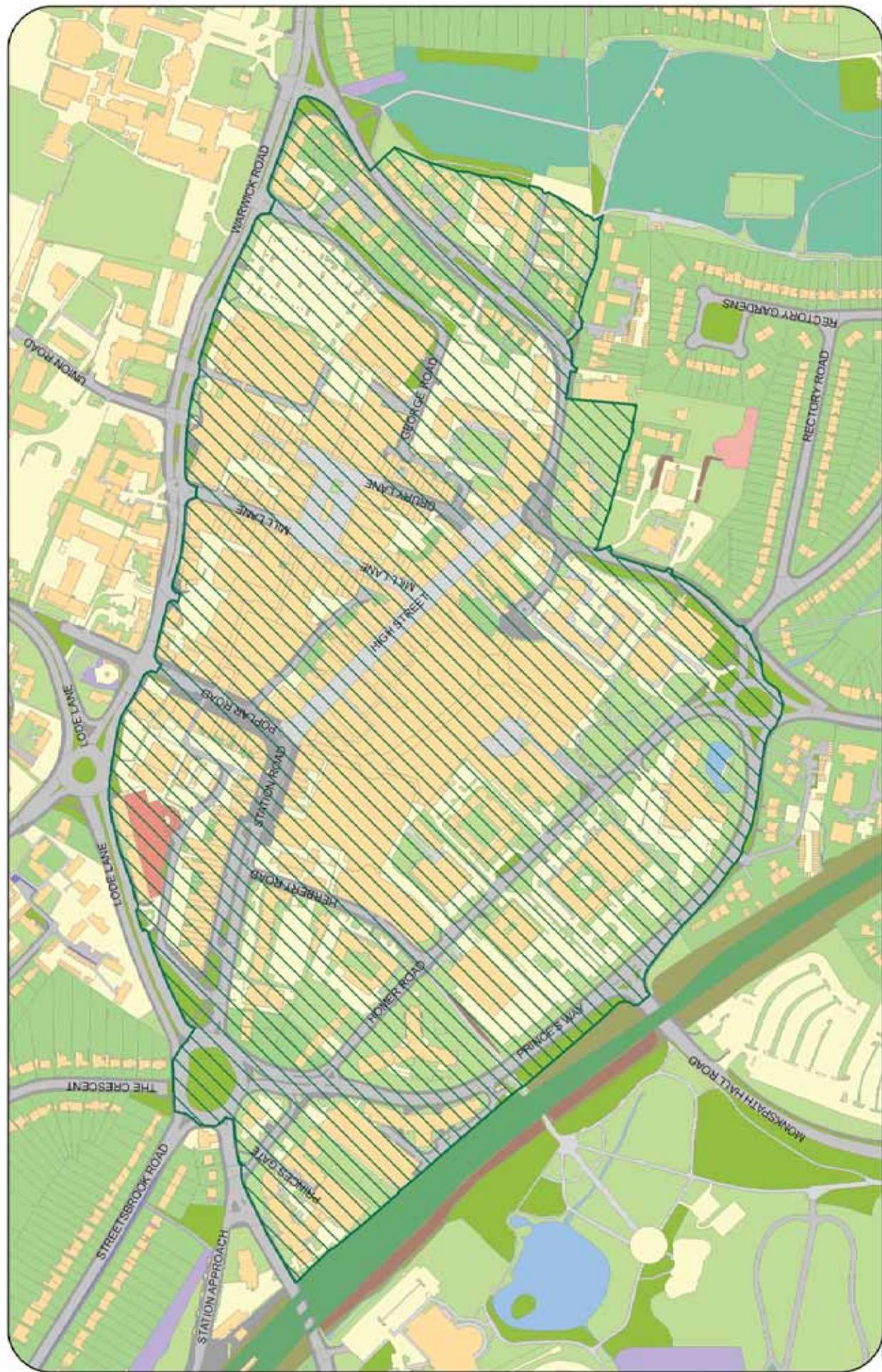


**Proposed Housing Site 7:  
Birmingham Road,  
North Solihull Regeneration Area**

Proposed Housing Site  
Solihull Borough Bound

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|  | Solihull Borough Boundary |         |

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**Proposed Mixed Use Site 8:  
Solihull Town Centre,  
Mature Suburbs**

Proposed Mixed Use Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Housing Site 9:  
Chelmsley Lane / Coleshill Road,  
Mature Suburbs**

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Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Mixed Use Site 10:  
Blythe Valley Park,  
Mature Suburbs**

Proposed Mixed Use Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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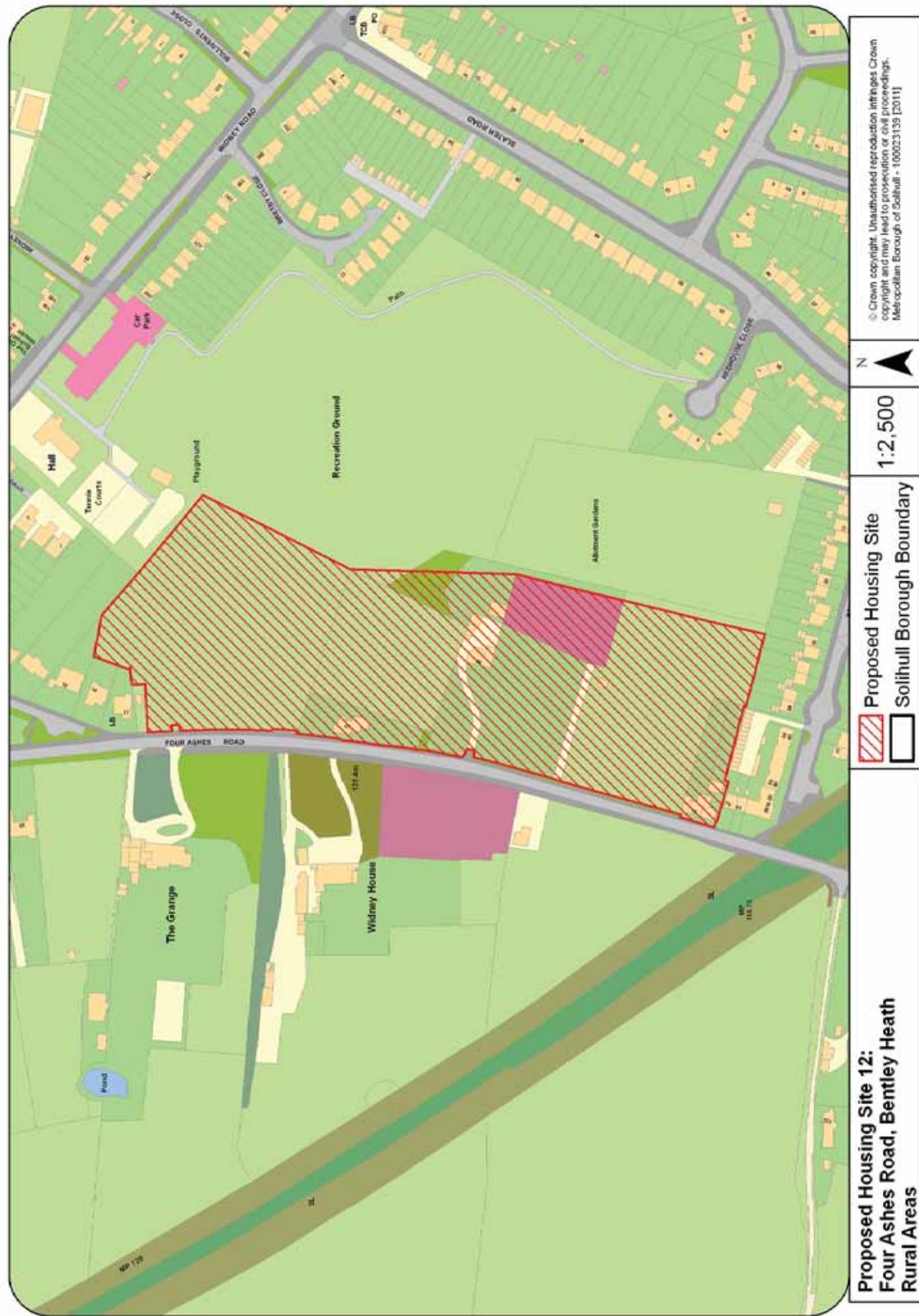


**Proposed Mixed Use Site 11:  
Powergen,  
Mature Suburbs**

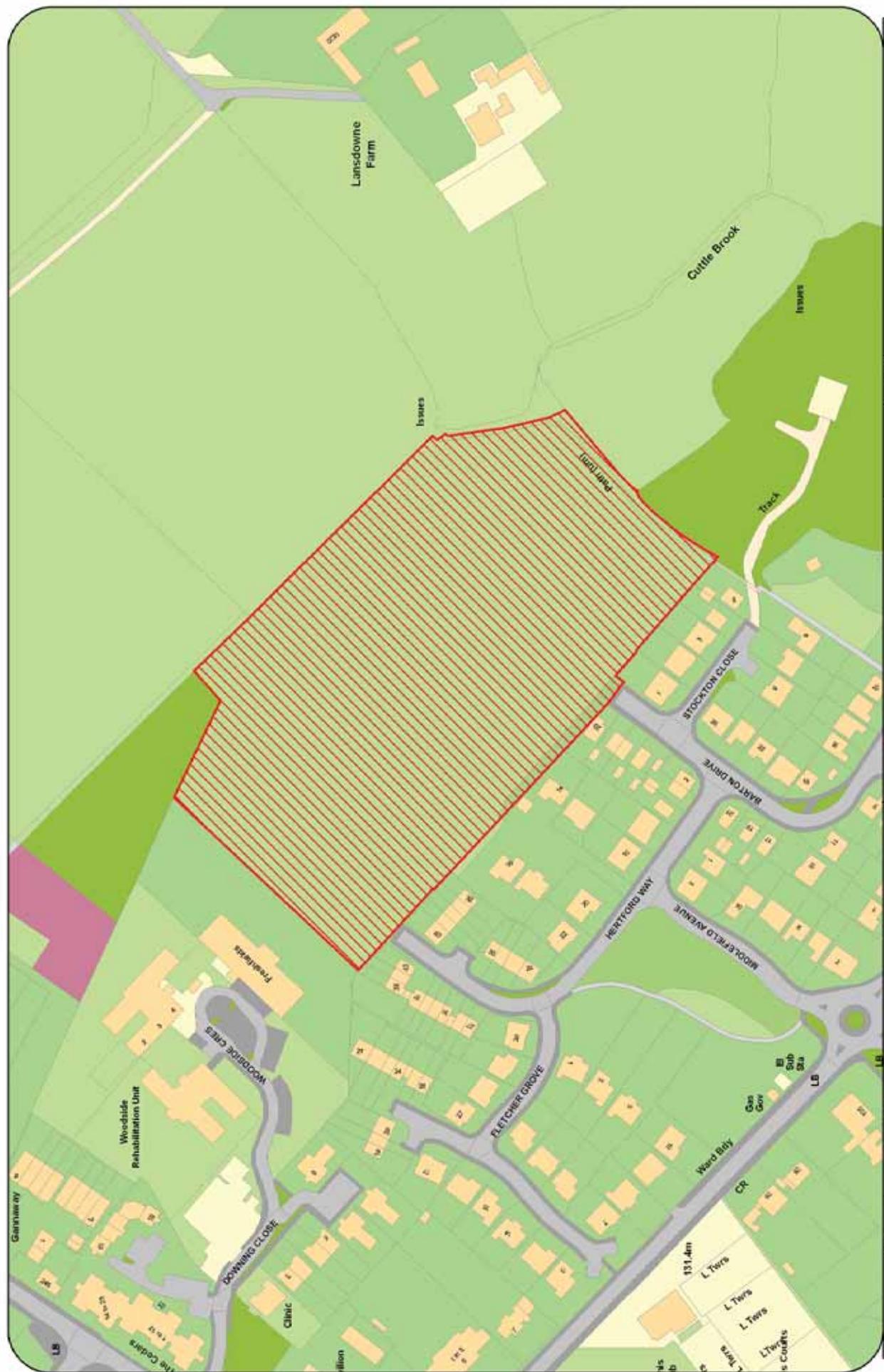
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**Solihull Borough Boundary**

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**Proposed Housing Site 14:  
Middlefield, Knowle  
Rural Areas**

**Proposed Housing Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary**

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**Proposed Housing Site 15:  
Aqueduct Road, Solihull Lodge  
Mature Suburbs**

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**Solihull Borough Boundary**

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**Proposed Housing Site 17:  
Braggs Farm / Bricklin Farm, Dickens Heath  
Rural Area**

**Proposed Housing Site**  
**Solihull Borough Boundary**

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**Proposed Housing Site 18:  
Griffin Lane, Dickens Heath  
Rural Area**

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Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Housing Site 19:  
Reddings Hill, Balsall Common  
Rural Area**

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**Proposed Housing Site 20:  
Land at Dickens Lane, Dickens Heath  
Rural Area**

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**Solihull Borough Boundary**

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**Proposed Housing Site 21:  
Land at Mount Dairy Farm, Tanworth Lane  
Rural Area**

Proposed Housing Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Housing Site 22:  
Land fronting Kenilworth Road  
Rural Area**

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**Solihull Borough Boundary**

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**Proposed Housing Site 23:  
Land between Kenilworth Road / Windmill Road  
Rural Area**

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**Solihull Borough Boundary**

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**Proposed Housing Site 24:  
Land off Meriden Road, Hampton in Arden  
Rural Area**

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|  | Proposed Housing Site     |
|  | Solihull Borough Boundary |



**Proposed Employment Site 25:  
TRW, Stratford Road, Shirley**

Proposed Employment Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Employment Site 26:  
Solihull Business Park, Highlands Road, Monkspath**

Proposed Employment Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Employment Site 27:  
Fore, A34 adjacent M42**

Proposed Employment Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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**Proposed Employment Site 28:  
Chep / Higginson, Land at Bickenhill Lane, Adjacent NEC**



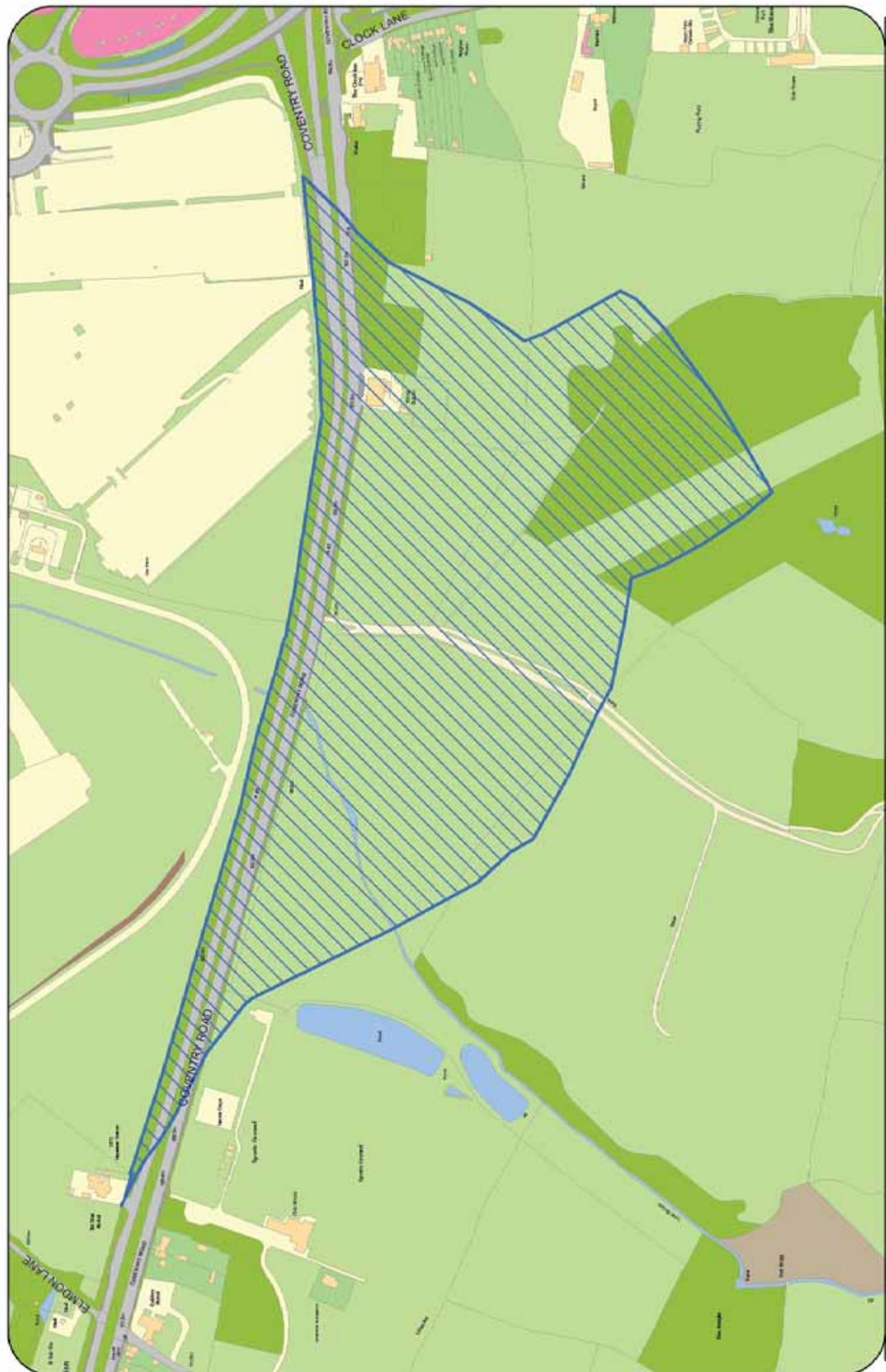
**Proposed Employment Site 29:  
Land North of Clock Interchange, Bickenhill**

Proposed Employment Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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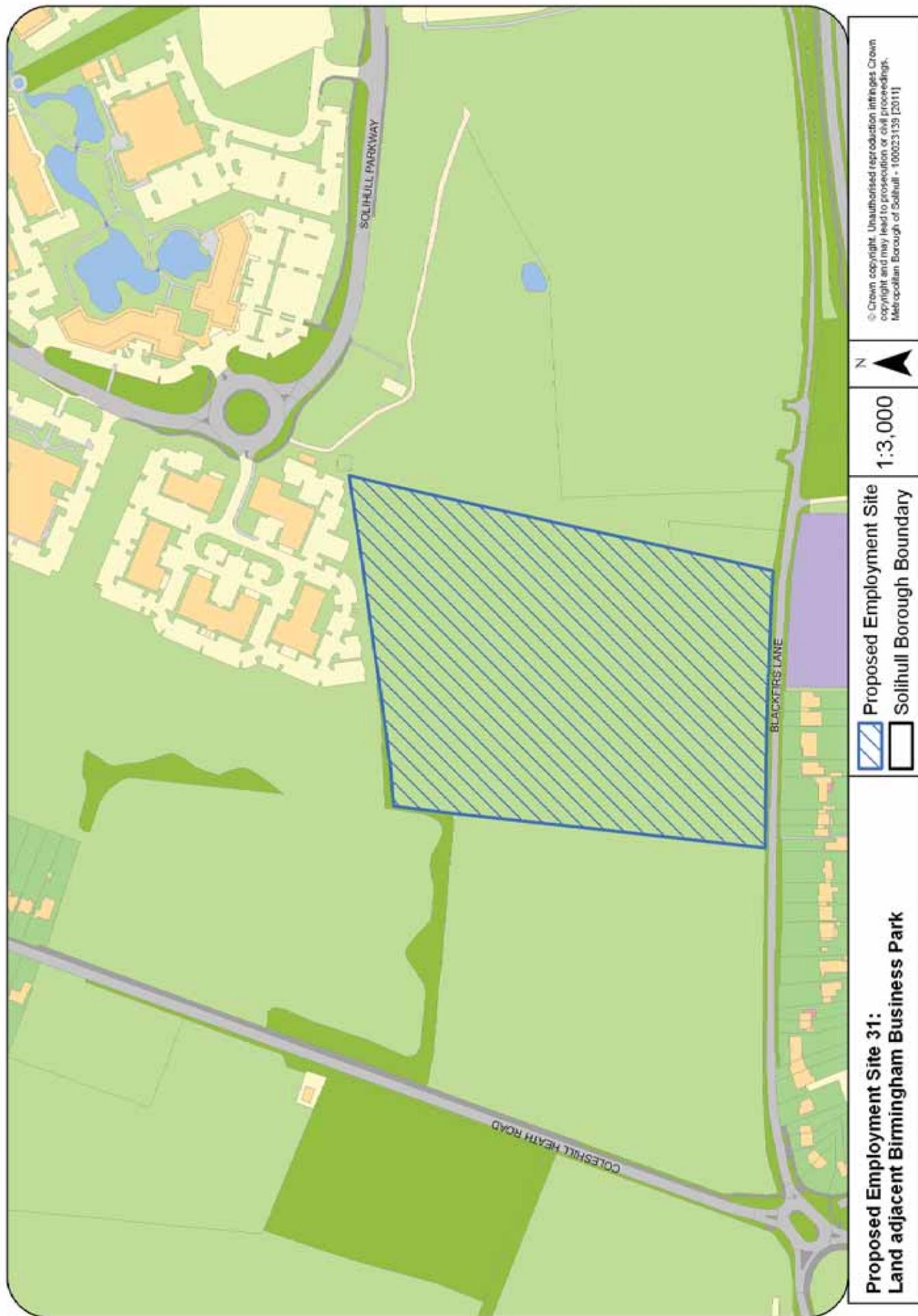
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**Proposed Employment Site 30:  
Birmingham Airport Runway Extension**

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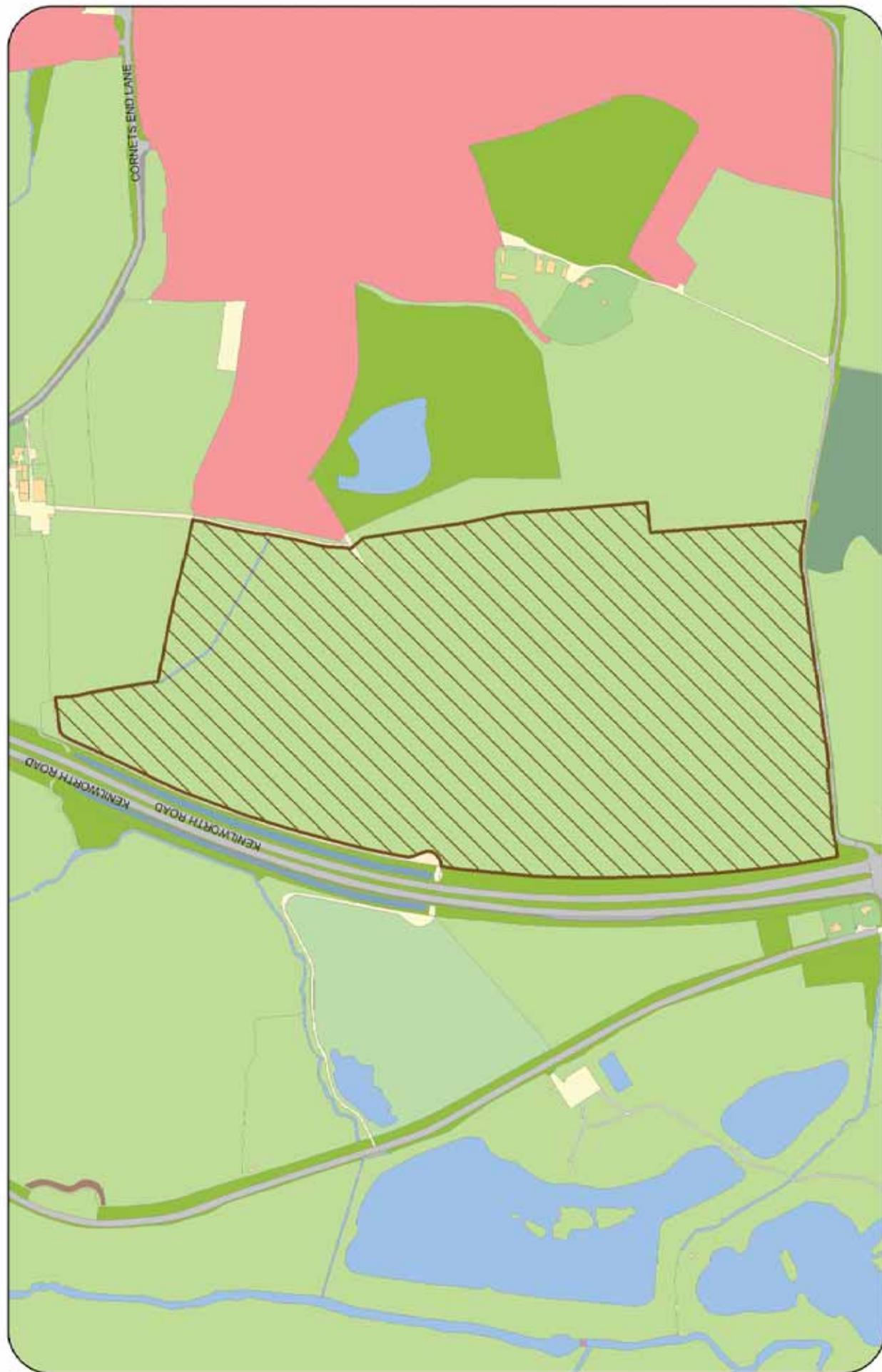




**Proposed Mineral Site 32:  
Hornbrook Farm**

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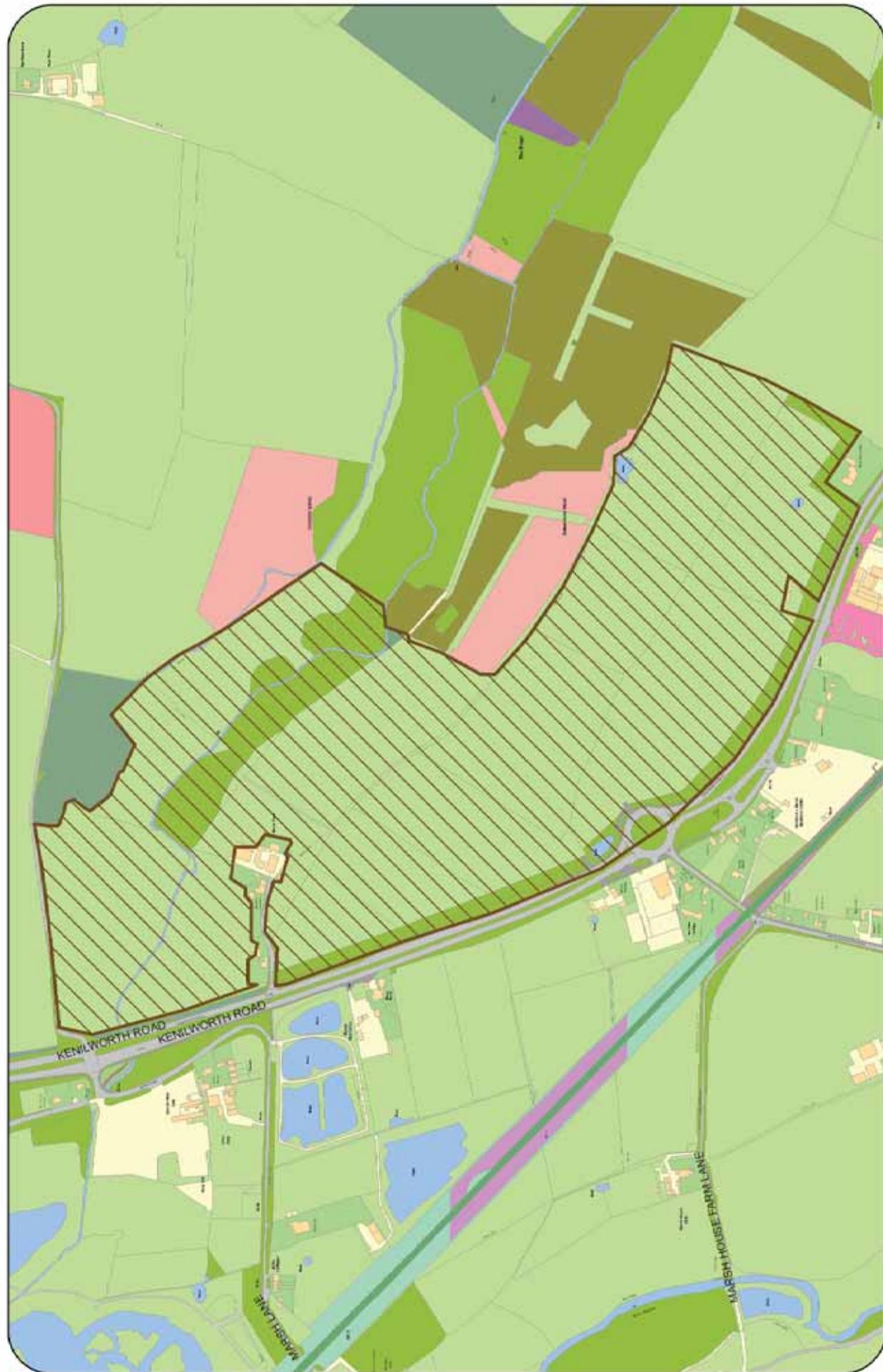
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Solihull Borough Boundary  
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Proposed Minerals Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary  
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Proposed Mineral Site 33:  
Berkswell Quarry West



**Proposed Mineral Site 34:  
Marsh House Farm**

Proposed Minerals Site  
Solihull Borough Boundary

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## Local Plan Proposals Map



**Solihull**  
METROPOLITAN  
BOROUGH COUNCIL

