

RADFORD LANE

CASTLECROFT

VISION DOCUMENT
DECEMBER 2021

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Date: 13.12.2021 / Status: Final / Rev: C
Author: DW / Checked by: LH



**BARTON
WILLMORE**

THE VISION

“Radford Lane, Castlecroft is an exciting new urban extension on the western edge of Castlecroft with the potential to bring forward the delivery of approximately 600-655 new homes, a new primary school and generous new public open space and green infrastructure (over 17 hectares), providing accessibility for residents to local recreation and outdoor space to promote health, wellbeing and sustainability and creating new, robust boundaries to the Green Belt.”



The development will provide high quality new homes for the local area as well as a new 2 form-entry primary school serving both the new and existing residential communities.



The development will be responsive to its location creating a new transitional edge to Castlecroft and the Green Belt, enhanced with new and existing planting where appropriate as part of landscape buffers along the boundaries of the development. The development will seek to retain and enhance the existing key landscape features of value within the site.



The development will create a substantial area of new public open space, incorporating existing blue-green infrastructure on the site and allowing the proposed community to have better access to nature and open space, benefiting health and well being whilst giving character to the development.



The development is sustainably located with a range of services and facilities within walking and cycling distance, supported by provision of a new primary school and new pedestrian/cycle infrastructure as part of the development.



The proposal will have environmental sustainability at its heart, planned from the outset to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain, delivering environmental and ecological benefits as part of the development.

INTRODUCTION

This Vision Document has been prepared by Barton Willmore on behalf of Redrow Homes who are promoting a site at Radford Lane, Castlecroft for residential development.

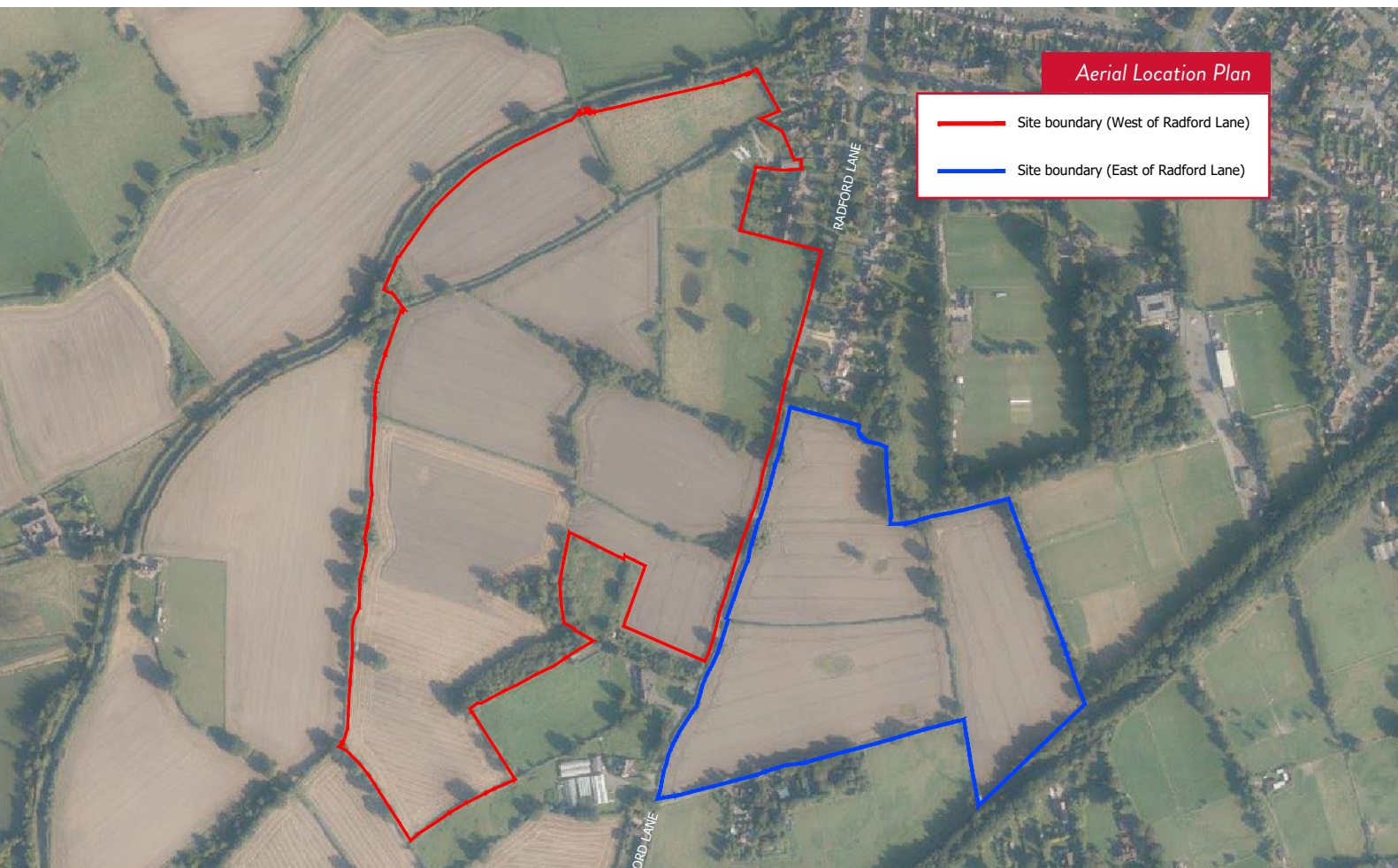
The purpose of this document is to support the promotion of the site to accommodate residential development and associated public open space. The key aims and objectives of the document are to:

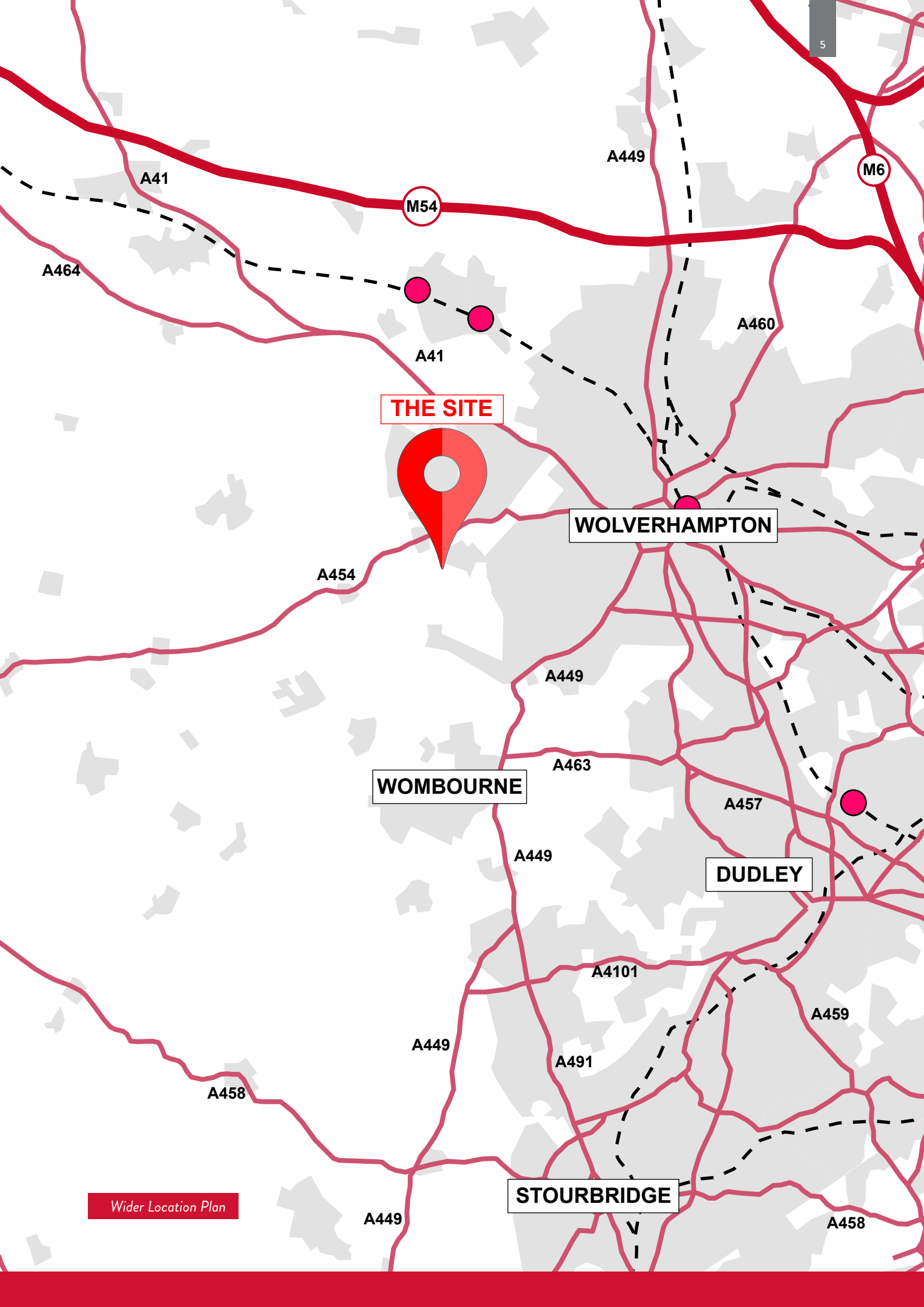
- Present a vision and design framework to guide and shape the proposals
- Review the site in the context of current Planning Policy
- Present an initial understanding of the site and the local context

- Present the emerging concept masterplan, supported by an explanation of the key design principles that have informed it.

The site is divided into two parcels located either side of (and accessed from) Radford Lane on the western edge of Castlecroft. The site measures approximately 37.81ha with the parcel west of Radford Lane measuring 26.42ha and the parcel east of Radford Lane measuring 11.39ha. The site is currently in agricultural use.

The site is being promoted as a whole. There are a variety of benefits in the delivery of both parcels including providing a significant amount of housing to help address South Staffordshire and the conurbations housing target, and to facilitate a comprehensive masterplanning exercise. However, the two parcels are also capable of coming forward independently of one another as separate sites.





THE SITE

WOLVERHAMPTON

WOMBOURNE

DUDLEY

STOURBRIDGE

PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

South Staffordshire Council are currently in the process of preparing a new replacement Local Plan that, once adopted, will put in place policies and land allocations to guide development for the period 2018 to 2038. Whilst previous versions of the South Staffordshire Local Plan have made provisions for a relatively limited amount of development, the emerging replacement Local Plan will introduce a step change in housing delivery.

The current Development Plan for South Staffordshire comprises the South Staffordshire Core Strategy (2012) and the Site Allocations Document (2018). The Core Strategy, and subsequently the Site Allocations Document, were prepared to be in general conformity with the now revoked West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). As a consequence, the housing requirement included within the adopted Local Plan was deliberately suppressed in order to assist the regeneration of the conurbation in accordance with the approach of the RSS at that time.

The emerging replacement Local Plan is being prepared in an entirely different policy context. The emerging replacement South Staffordshire Plan will need to make provisions for a sufficient amount of housing to meet the requirements of South Staffordshire's growing population. In addition, South Staffordshire will have a clear role in delivering housing to help meet the unmet housing needs of the conurbation. These unmet needs are significant, with the adopted Birmingham Development Plan (2017) advising that Birmingham City Council is relying on 37,900 dwellings being delivered in other Local Authority areas within the wider Housing Market Area to address the housing shortfall arising from the City. The Black Country Plan Preferred Options Consultation Document advises that the Black Country Authorities are relying on 28,239 dwellings being delivered in other Local Authority areas within the Housing Market Area to meet their shortfall. As such, the current extent of the housing shortfall referred to in the adopted Birmingham Development Plan and emerging Black Country Plan is 66,139 dwellings. South Staffordshire will have a key role to play in helping to address the housing shortfall.

South Staffordshire has a boundary that immediately adjoins the Black Country Authorities of Dudley, Wolverhampton and Walsall. It has a functional relationship with the conurbation as a whole, and has historically provided development, such as the i54 and RAF Featherstone employment sites, to assist with the employment growth requirements of the Black Country given the strong functional relationship. The emerging South Staffordshire replacement Local Plan will be responsible for delivering a significant amount of new residential development to support the growth of the Black Country as well as supporting infrastructure.

The Land at Castlecroft immediately adjoins the built up edge of Wolverhampton. It's in close proximity to a variety of services and facilities within the urban area. It is a logical and sustainable location for an allocation to help meet the housing requirement of the Black Country. This Vision Document is being prepared in order to highlight the benefits associated with the allocation of the land at Castlecroft for residential development. The site provides the opportunity to deliver a high quality residential community, linking back to the existing urban area. The site is relatively free of constraints, and all known constraints can be addressed. It includes a variety of environmental features that will help deliver a high quality residential environment.



LOCAL CONTEXT

The site lies on the western edge of Castlecroft, approximately 0.5 miles west of the local centre.

The site is bounded as follows:

- **Northern Boundary:** The Staffordshire-Worcester Canal borders the site to the north west with existing residential development along much of the northern boundary and Old Wulfrunians Sports & Social Club to the north east.
- **Eastern Boundary:** The eastern edge of the eastern parcel of the site is bounded by Wolverhampton Rugby Union Football Club.
- **Southern Boundary:** To the south the site is bounded predominantly by agricultural fields with the South Staffordshire Railway Walk bounding the site to the south east.
- **Western Boundary:** The site is bounded to the west by existing agricultural fields with the Staffordshire-Worcester Canal beyond.

Facilities and Services

There are a number of facilities and services within walking distance of the site located in Castlecroft to the west. These facilities include a local centre with convenience stores, pubs, a number of primary schools, a secondary school and medical facilities.

The site is also within walking distance of a number of sports, recreational and community facilities including the Old Wulfrunians Sports and Social Club, Wolverhampton RUFC and Smestow Valley Nature Park.

There are a number of schools in the local area with the closest Primary School being Castlecroft Primary School (approximately 0.9 miles, 18 minutes walk from the site) and the closest Secondary School being Smestow Academy (approximately 0.8 miles, a 17 minute walk from the site).

Redrow have instructed Educational Facilities Management to review school capacity locally. The primary school pupils who would live on the site could be accommodated in existing primary schools, with appropriate contributions made to their upgrade. Alternatively land is reserved for the development of a primary school on the site itself. This school could accommodate not only the pupils from the proposed development, but provide capacity for pupils from the wider area with significant benefit to the local area. There is sufficient existing secondary school capacity locally to accommodate the development.

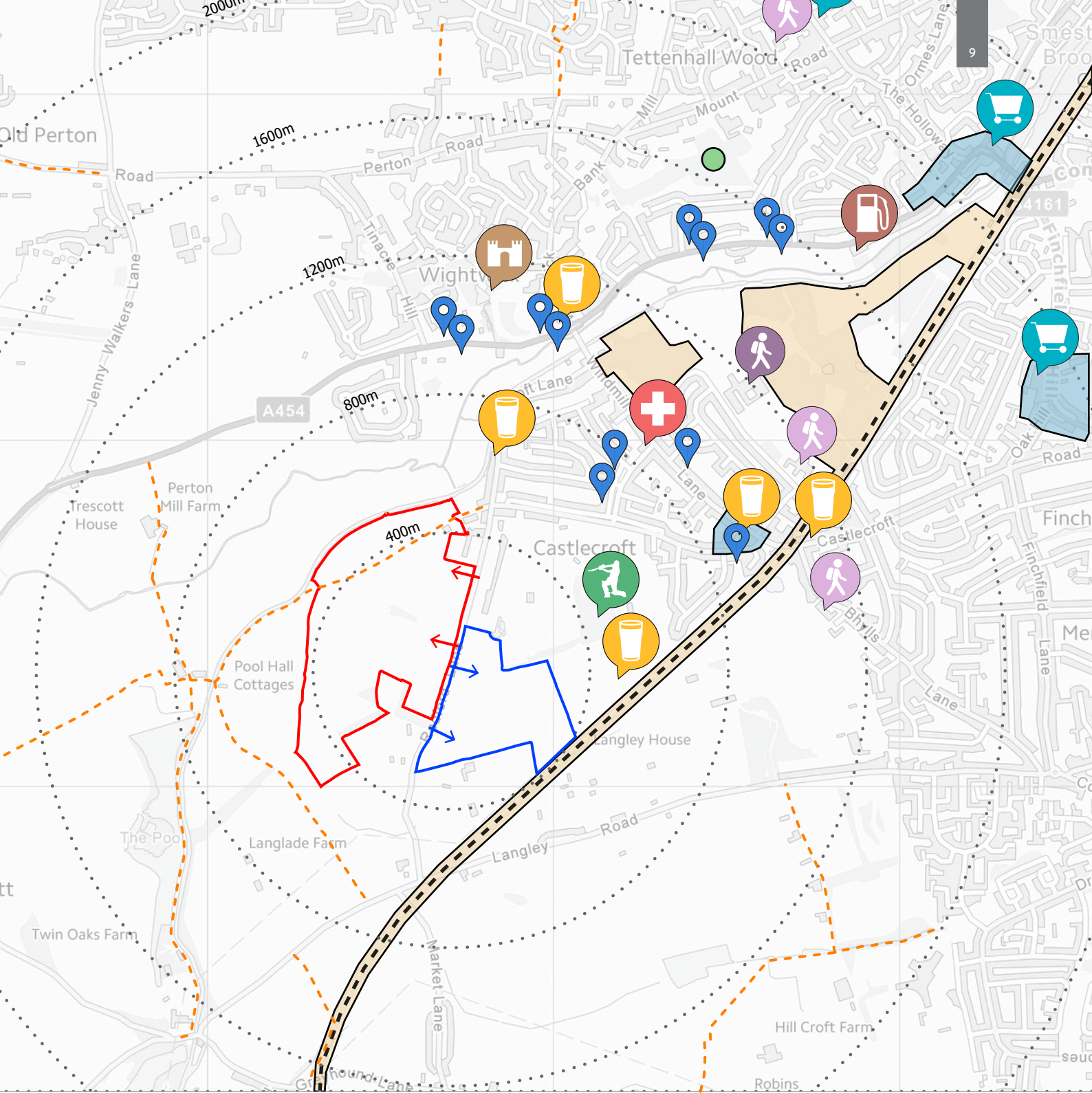
Transport


Bus - The closest bus stops to the site are located on Castlecroft Avenue approximately 0.4 miles (an 8 minute walk) from the site, serving the 3 Bus Route. The 3 Bus Route runs from Castlecroft to Fordhouses via Wolverhampton with a daytime frequency of one bus every 20 minutes.


Train - The closest train station to the site is Wolverhampton, located approximately 4 miles (a 15 minute drive or 25 minute cycle) from the site. Wolverhampton is a well connected station offering regular services to major cities including Birmingham, Liverpool, London Euston, Manchester via Stoke-on-Trent and Edinburgh via the West Coast Main Line.

Walking/Cycling - The site is located within close proximity of a number of Public Rights of Way including an existing Bridleway running across the northern part of the site which will be retained as part of any proposals and the South Staffordshire Railway Walk immediately to the south east. There is an opportunity to create new cycle and pedestrian routes within the site linking to the surrounding countryside and Public Rights of Way.

Car - The site is located on Radford Lane within a short drive of the A454 to the north and A449 to the south. The A454 is a major arterial route which links to the town of Bridgnorth to the west and the M6 via Wolverhampton to the east. The A449 links to Stourbridge and Kidderminster to the south with links via the A491 to the M5 and wider strategic road network.



 Site Boundary to west of Radford Lane

 Site Boundary to east of Radford Lane


 Local Centre


 Nature reserves


 400m Walking distances

 Public Rights of Way

 South Staffordshire railway walk

 Closest Bus Stops to Site


 Green spaces and parks

 Pubs and restaurants

 Supermarkets and food stores


 Health centres

 Sports pitches

 Petrol stations

 Secondary schools and colleges

 Primary schools

 Wightwick Manor and gardens

OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Constraints and Opportunities

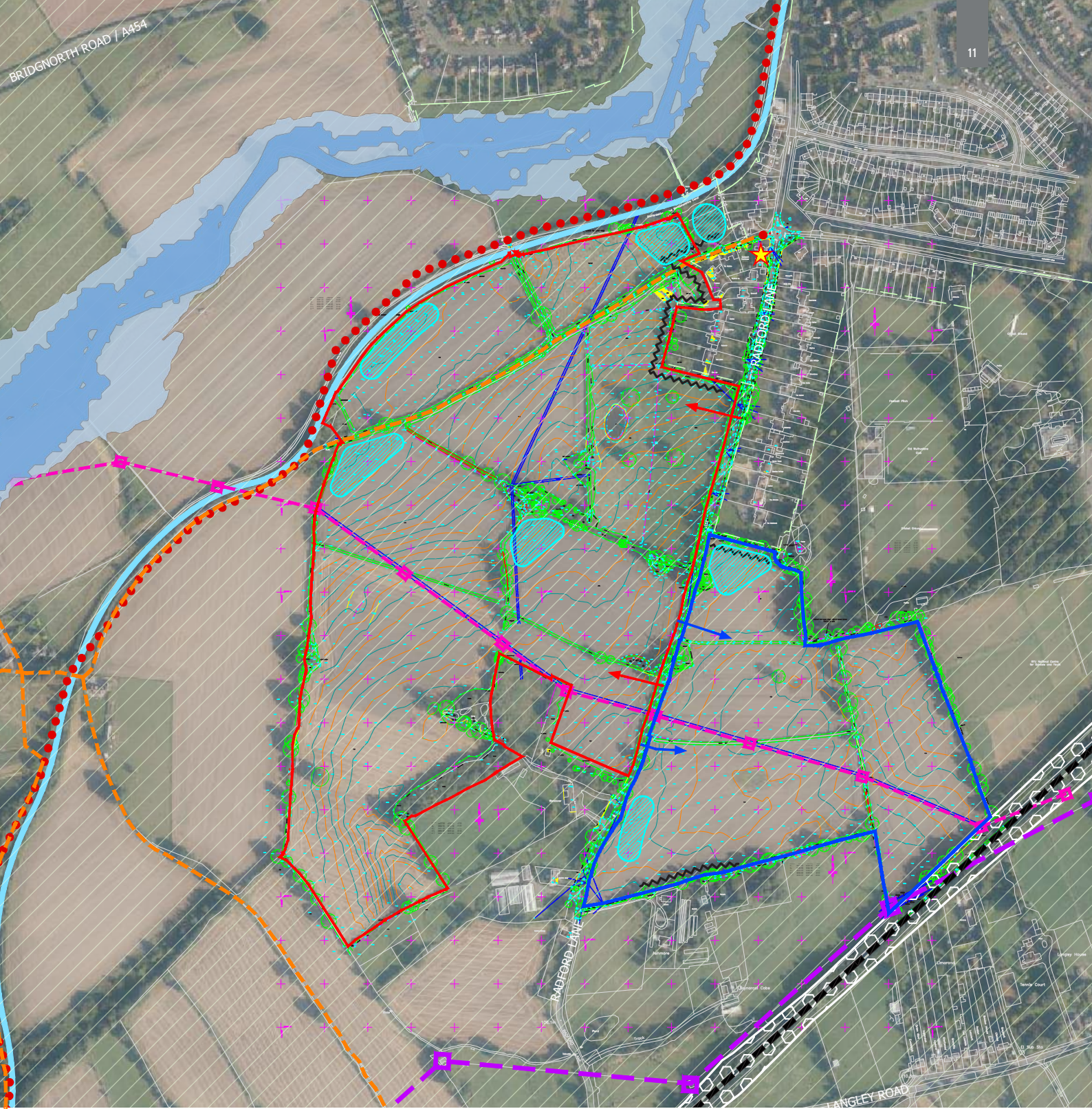
The Constraints and Opportunities Plans opposite demonstrates a number of key opportunities and constraints located on the site and in the surrounding area. These are summarised below:



















Opportunities

- There are a number of existing trees and hedgerows located on the site which will be retained wherever possible and incorporated into green corridors and new areas of public open space.
- There are a number of existing features including the Canal to the north, disused railway to the south and Radford Lane which should be used to create new defensible Green Belt boundaries. In addition existing planting along site boundaries will be retained and enhanced with new planting to reinforce new Green Belt boundaries.
- The site is located entirely within Flood Zone 1 and is therefore suitable for development.
- There is an opportunity to utilise the site topography to inform the location of new attenuation ponds as part of the Sustainable Drainage strategy.
- There is an existing bridleway crossing the site which can be connected into to enhance local connectivity as well as other existing paths along the Staffordshire-Worcester Canal to the north and South Staffordshire Railway walk to the south.

Constraints

- There are overhead lines running across the site which may need to be rerouted as part of development works.
- There are a number of adjacent properties to the north and south of the site which will need to be considered and responded to appropriately as part of any development proposals.



-  Site boundary (West of Radford Lane)
-  Proposed access' to Western site
-  Site boundary (East of Radford Lane)
-  Proposed access' to Eastern site
-  Public rights of way *
-  Cycle routes *
-  South Staffordshire railway walk (and cycle route) ^
-  Overhead lines crossing site ~
-  High voltage overhead lines ~
-  Adjacent properties to site ~
-  River Stour / Staffordshire and Worcester Canal ~
-  Listed buildings *
-  Bus stops ^
-  Proposed attenuation areas
-  Flood zone 2 (1:1,000 year risk) *
-  Flood zone 3 (1:100 year risk) *
-  Local nature reserve *
-  Green belt *

Landscape Character and Visual Amenity

The combination of landform and existing mature vegetation structure provides a degree of enclosure to the Site, alongside which the urbanising influence of the existing development within the Site and the adjacent settlement edge, result in the Site having a peri urban character. This is in contrast with the more open low lying landscape to the west. In short range views, the Proposed Development will inevitably lead to adverse effects on visual receptors, however, there is good potential to mitigate most of these effects through careful siting of development within an enhanced landscape setting. In medium to long distance views, including in views from more open landscape to the west, the Site is either well screened or seen in the context of existing settlement edge, that in part follows the local landform.

The proposals would include a comprehensive landscape strategy, this would set out key landscape opportunities, such as to retain and enhance the existing vegetation network, within which development would be located. This approach would assist in mitigating negative landscape and visual impacts and create a greater range of habitats that would enhance the ecological and biodiversity value of the Site.

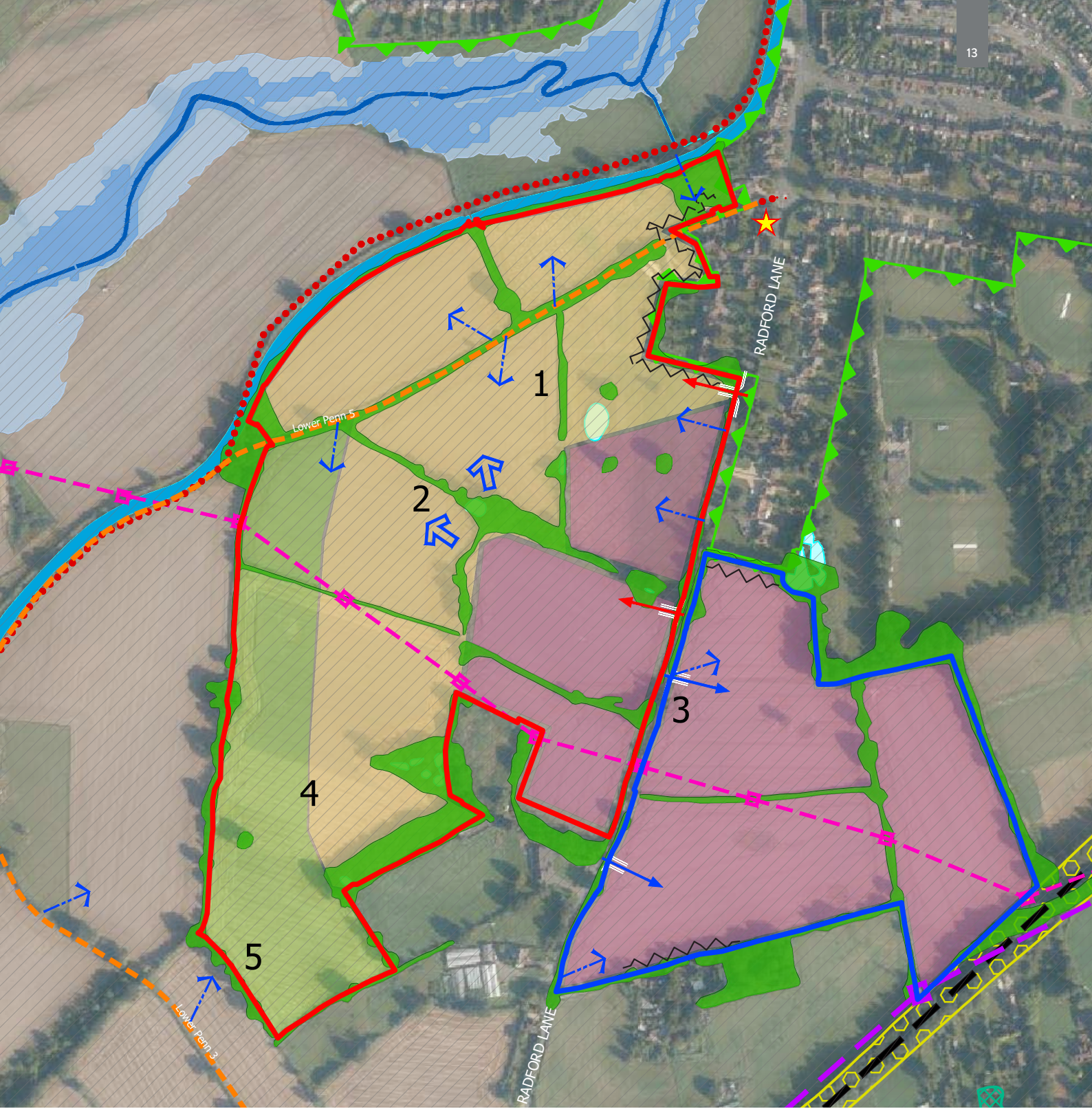
Green Belt Review

The contribution that the Site makes to the Green Belt differs between the eastern and western parcels. In terms of openness the Site currently contains some development with the majority of the Site defined by small – medium scale fields bounded by mature vegetation. This in combination with the local landform and settlement edge reduces the relationship between the Site and lower lying more open landscape to the west. A level of containment is currently provided to the western parcel by existing features to include the Staffordshire and Worcester Canal, Radford Lane and mature field boundary vegetation. The Proposed Development allows for the existing western boundary vegetation structure of the western parcel to be retained and enhanced with additional landscape planting to create a clear strong Green Belt boundary. Overall, it is therefore considered that the release of the western parcel would result in no significant impacts on the integrity of the Green Belt or the more open land to the west.

The eastern parcel has a greater degree of separation with the wider landscape with the existing settlement edge to the north and development along Radford Lane having an urbanising influence on the Site. Therefore, it is considered that the release and subsequent development of the eastern parcel would only result in only a negligible effect.

It is acknowledged that there would be a degree of harm to the Green Belt in terms of encroachment to the countryside. However, given the nature of the Site and the Proposed Development it is considered that the release of the Site as a whole would allow for the creation of a more robust and clearer Green Belt boundary, than at present, and would not result in unrestricted sprawl. Overall, the release and development of the Site would result in no significant impacts on the wider Green Belt or the more open landscape to the west.

A detailed Green Belt assessment has been undertaken within the supporting Landscape and Visual Technical Note.

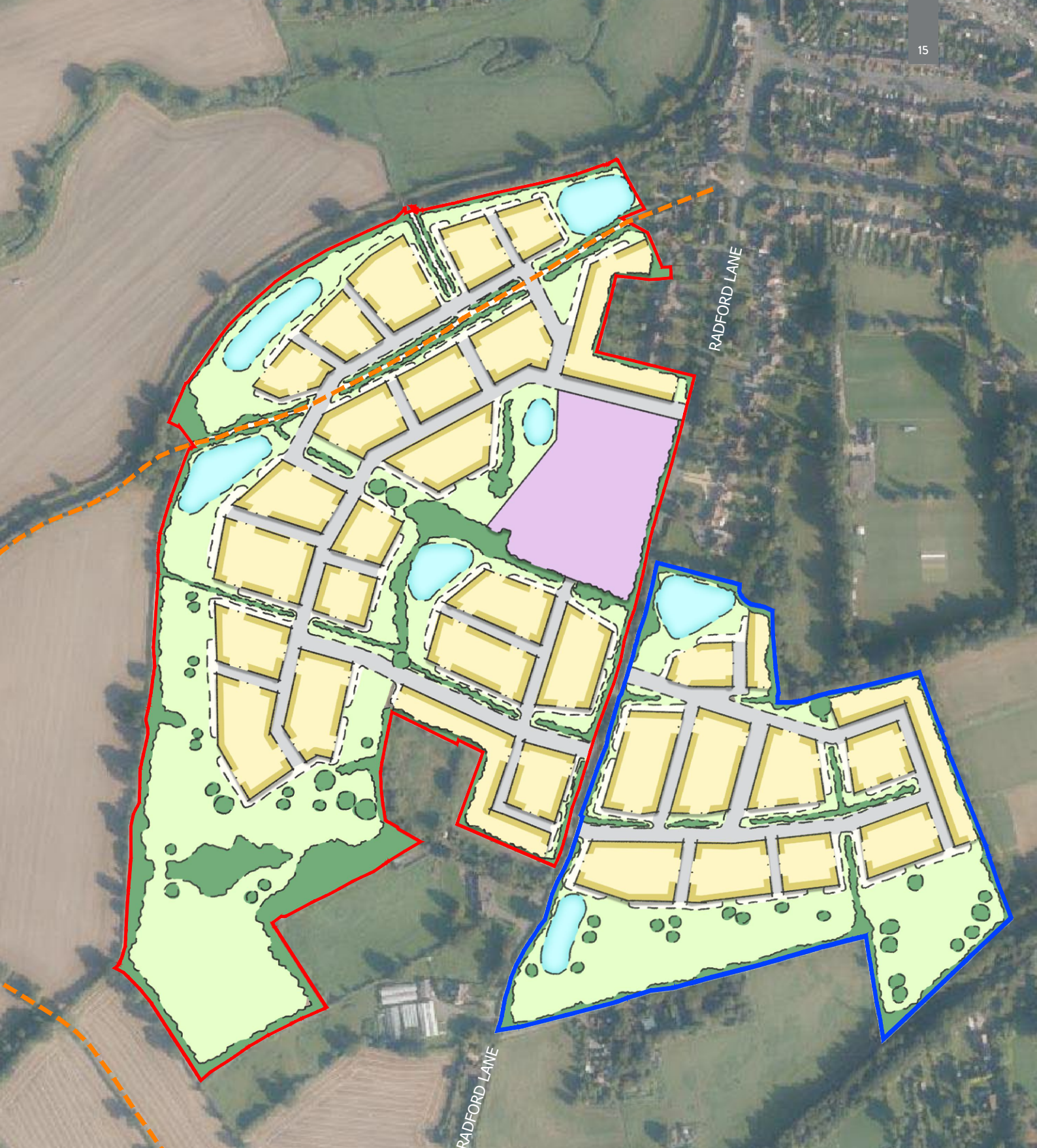


- | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|--|-------------------------------|--|------------------------------------|--|---|
| | Site Boundary (West of Radford Lane) | | Overhead lines crossing site ~ | | High voltage overhead lines ~ | | Flood zone 2 (1:1,000 year risk) * | | Flood zone 3 (1:100 year risk) * |
| | Site Boundary (East of Radford Lane) | | River Stour / Staffordshire and Worcester Canal ~/* | | Potential Views from Site | | Close Range Views | | Lower Landscape and Visual Constraint - Suitable for Medium Density Built Development |
| | Proposed access' to Western site | | Proposed access' to Eastern site | | Smestow Brook ~/* | | Adjacent properties to site ~ | | Bus Stops ^ |
| | Existing Woodlands, Copses and Tree Belts | | Public Rights of Way * | | Cycle Route * | | Listed Buildings * | | Existing Water Features |
| | South Staffordshire railway walk (and cycle route) ^ | | Green Belt * | | Local Nature Reserve * | | Local Nature Reserve * | | Local Nature Reserve * |

DESIGN PROPOSALS

The initial concept masterplan for the site is presented opposite. The masterplan has been prepared in response to the Constraints and Opportunities detailed in the previous section. A summary of the design principles and development benefits of the site are listed below:

- The proposals can deliver approximately **17.23ha of residential development**, equating to **600-655 high quality new homes** at a density of 35-38 dwellings per hectare.
- The proposed development retains existing hedgerows and planting wherever possible, as well as an existing pond on site, incorporating these into new green corridors and public open space.
- An integrated sustainable drainage strategy utilises the existing topography to create a well considered drainage solution.
- The development includes large, well overlooked areas of **new public open space** and green infrastructure of approximately **17.34ha** accounting for approximately **46% of the total site area**.
- The development will include multiple accessed from Radford Road to both the east and west parcels, connecting into a clear street hierarchy, creating a highly legible development with clearly defined loop roads through the site.
- The development will incorporate new and existing pedestrian and cycle routes across the site to enhance local connectivity and accessibility, particularly between Castlecroft, the site and the surrounding countryside and local walking routes.
- There is potential for a 2FE Primary School located just off Radford Lane to maximise accessibility for both the new and existing local community and encourage walking and cycling to school.
- The proposals incorporate the opportunity for residential development fronting on to the Staffordshire-Worcester Canal to the north, creating an attractive residential environment.
- The proposals will form a sympathetic extension to the existing settlement that will **provide robust Green Belt boundaries** and therefore would not contribute to unrestricted sprawl.



- Site boundary (West of Radford Lane)
- Site boundary (East of Radford Lane)
- Proposed development area
- Proposed school
- Proposed infrastructure
- Proposed attenuation
- Proposed public open space
- Proposed and existing landscape

SUMMARY OF KEY BENEFITS



New Homes for All

The development will provide approximately 600-655 high quality new homes for the local area of a range of types and tenures to suit local need.



Sensitive to the Local Context, Setting and Green Belt

The development will be responsive to its location creating a new transitional edge to Castlecroft and the Green Belt, enhanced with new and existing planting where appropriate as part of landscape buffers along the boundaries of the development. The development will also consider the impact of development upon the surrounding landscape and adjacent features such as the Staffordshire-Worcester Canal.



Open Space for Recreation and Wellbeing

The development will create approximately 17.34ha, 46% of the total site area, of public open space incorporating existing blue-green infrastructure on the site and allowing the proposed community to have better access to nature and open space, benefiting health and well being whilst giving character to the development.



Connectivity and Sustainability

The development is sustainably located with a range of services and facilities within walking and cycling distance, supported by provision of a new 2FE primary school and new pedestrian/cycle infrastructure as part of the development.



Enhanced Biodiversity

The proposal will have environmental sustainability at its heart, planned from the outset to deliver 10% biodiversity net gain, delivering environmental and ecological benefits as part of the development.



REDROW DELIVERY AND EXPERIENCE

Redrow are a 5 star housebuilder (HBF accredited) who are committed to delivering great places. We have delivered hundreds of developments over the past 40 years, instantly recognisable as 'Redrow places'. Our 'Redrow 8' guiding design principles, informed by a series of placemaking workshops, ensure that we create high quality, responsive places for all. Our quality starts from this early inception stage where we carefully consider our responses to the existing neighbourhood, built form and landscape context and sensitively shape appropriate proposals which will reinforce the character of the area and knit in with the local fabric.

At Redrow, we believe in building better places to live. Our passion for design, sustainability, innovation and people ensures we bring this vision to life in each and every one of our developments across the UK.

Our extensive experience helps us to understand the wants and needs of growing communities and we use this unique insight to ensure we're always improving what we do.

Our distinctive high-quality homes are woven within a fabric of community amenities and within stunning natural settings to form a whole new place for people to live – a place that people feel proud of.

We are incredibly passionate about what we do and we have an outstanding track-record in the delivery of great places and homes to meet the needs of local people. We are committed to the delivery of a high-quality development here in Castlecroft.



Images of Recent Redrow developments



REDROW SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENTS

“Redrow is committed to creating homes of enduring quality and working to minimise our environmental impacts”.

In 2018, Redrow made a number of ambitious commitments in order to drive improvements in social, environmental and economic performance. Redrow continually monitors progress against these commitments, and publishes the results publicly.

As well as committing to biodiversity enhancements and making the best use of public transport opportunities this would include:

- The provision of electric vehicle charging infrastructure
- Designing a scheme that allows for people to work from home by providing a range of houses with good size offices spaces
- Creating an attractive environment with recreational walking routes
- Delivering onsite renewable energy

Reducing carbon emissions from our homes

The percentage of homes and apartments that have been connected to on-site renewables or low carbon community energy was 32% in 2020. Redrow are installing on site micro-renewables such as photo-voltaic panels (PVs) on more residential sites throughout the country than ever before.

Reducing our own operational carbon emissions

Redrow have been disclosing their carbon emissions and reduction activities to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) annually since 2010. In the most recent submission they were awarded a B grade which reflects the progress they have made by measuring awareness, management and actions taken on climate change. In addition to reporting and disclosing environmental and sustainability performance throughout their annual report, this year Redrow have also included specific climate-related disclosures following the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures’ (TCFD) recommendations. These disclosures are structured around the TCFD’s key four thematic areas. Redrow are currently focusing on reducing diesel use from their site activities and rolling out ‘eco-cabins’ for our on-site office and welfare facilities.

Low embodied carbon

Redrow’s standard specification includes a range of innovative materials specifically selected to minimise environmental impacts including:

- Innovative interlocking concrete roofing tiles that produce 40% lower CO₂ emissions during manufacture than concrete plain tiles. The use of concrete tiles means that embodied energy is only 15 to 20 percent of what it would be if clay was used.
- Aircrete concrete blocks consisting of up to 80% recycled materials. 99% of all raw materials are sourced from UK suppliers, reducing the need for transportation, and the manufacturing sites are strategically placed geographically close to raw material suppliers and convenient for quick and effective deliveries to all parts of the country.
- Almost 100% of the paper used to manufacture plasterboards is recycled.
- Locally recycled aggregates.

Responsibly-sourced timber

Redrow have been working tirelessly for more than fifteen years to promote responsible forest management and ensure the eradication of illegal timber products from our supply chain. Redrow are proud that currently 99.9% of their timber is responsibly sourced and credibly certified. Redrow won't stop there though, they are determined to achieve their target of 100%. Redrow were the first UK homebuilder to achieve the WWF's 'Three Trees' status in 2015, in recognition of the progress they had made in this area. The retention of the 'Three Trees' status in 2019 for the third assessment period places Redrow among the top 40 companies in the country using Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified and other responsibly sourced timber and paper products. Redrow have been participants in WWF's Global Forest & Trade Network (GFTN) from 2003 until its closure by WWF in October 2018. Despite the closure of the network Redrow continue to uphold the standards set and report timber accordingly.

Water management

Redrow's homes have one of the lowest water use standards in the industry at 105 litres-per-person-per-day (lpppd), compared with a building regulation standard of 125 lpppd. This is an issue of increasing importance; a recent report from the Public Accounts Committee shows that England is likely to face significant water shortages within the next two decades as the population grows, urbanisation continues and the climate warms. Redrow also incorporate Sustainable Urban Drainage schemes on the majority of their developments to improve rainwater management and reduce flood risk.

Reducing waste

As part of their continual drive to reduce use of resources and their impacts from waste Redrow are working on a waste reduction project across the business. Redrow are also members of the HBF Waste Forum, with other leading house builders, to tackle waste and inefficiency in house building. They are also working collaboratively with the Community Wood Recycling scheme to increase the reuse of waste wood on their sites, in line with circular economy principles. Redrow measure their waste production and monitor the percentage of waste diverted from landfill. This includes construction, demolition and excavation waste; as set out within Redrow's internal waste policies and procedures. Additionally, they verify their waste data internally and externally to ensure that it is accurate.

Redrow currently recycle over 97% of their waste across the business. At Colindale Gardens, London, 16 unused buildings were demolished to make way for new homes to be built. All the materials from the demolition process were separated with c.5,000 tonnes of metal recycled and 61,000 cubic metres of concrete crushed and reused on site as aggregates.



