



VISION DOCUMENT
LAND AT LAWNSWOOD
DECEMBER 2019





This Vision Document has been prepared on behalf of Folkes Holdings by Harris Lamb Property Consultancy.

It has been informed by work undertaken by the wider consultant team which includes:

- > **HARRIS LAMB**
Planning
- > **ONE CREATIVE ENVIRONMENTS LTD**
Landscape and Masterplanning
- > **DAVID TUCKER ASSOCIATES**
Highways and Transport
- > **BWB CONSULTING LIMITED**
Flood Risk and Drainage
- > **HARRIS LAMB**
Environmental / Ecology

The Vision Document and Masterplan contained within it is an evolving document and is subject to change as further information and supporting evidence is produced and/or comes to light. The current proposals are a first draft intended to stimulate discussion and will, therefore, evolve over time and should be read and considered in this context.

CONTENTS

P. 1	PREFACE
P. 2	SECTION 1 THE VISION
P. 3 - 4	SECTION 2 INTRODUCTION
P. 5 - 11	SECTION 3 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS
P. 12 - 39	SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT OF BASELINE CONDITIONS
P. 40 - 41	SECTION 5 CONCEPT MASTERPLAN
P. 42	SECTION 6 CONCLUSIONS

PREFACE

This Vision Document has been prepared on behalf of Folkes Holdings to support the promotion of land at Lawnswood as a residential allocation in the South Staffordshire Local Plan. It is anticipated that the site will deliver in the region of 475 dwellings along with the potential for new community facilities, recreation opportunities, and public open space, to the benefit of the wider community.

The site is located within the administrative area of South Staffordshire District Council albeit that it is located immediately adjacent to the built-up edge of Dudley MBC, which forms part of the four Black Country Councils (Dudley, Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Walsall).

This Vision Document is intended to assist the Council with its consideration of the land at Lawnswood and its suitability for removal from the Green Belt and allocation as a strategic residential site. To inform the Vision Document, an initial high-level assessment of baseline conditions at the site has been undertaken, which has identified any known constraints, but also highlighted opportunities for its future development. It confirms there are no technical or environmental constraints that would prevent the delivery of the site in principle and that the development of the site could contribute to meeting the future housing requirements of both South Staffordshire and the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (HMA) over the Plan Period.

A concept masterplan is included in the Vision Document, which sets out a number of principles to help guide the future development of the site to create a sustainable, high quality new residential development at Lawnswood.

SECTION 1 VISION

Our vision for the Land at Lawnswood is:

- › To create a truly sustainable residential development with a mix of new market and affordable homes to meet the needs of the Greater Birmingham and the Black Country HMA
- › Deliver in the region of approximately 475 dwellings, including family housing to meet a diverse range of needs
- › Create a sustainable and attractive community that people want to live in
- › Provide new affordable housing of different tenure to meet known and identified needs
- › Deliver new community facilities to meet the needs of new and existing residents alike
- › Create new accessible and usable public open space and links to existing open space
- › Implement a sustainable movement strategy where walking and cycling opportunities are integrated into the heart of the development
- › Enhance opportunities for new public transport services through and within the development

The accompanying masterplan identifies how these principal matters can be incorporated in the development; it is intended to inform future discussions and studies regarding the potential of the site.

SECTION 2 INTRODUCTION

This Vision Document has been prepared on behalf of Folkes Holdings to support the promotion of land at Lawnswood as a residential allocation in the South Staffordshire Local Plan. The area of land being promoted extends to approximately 50 hectares and is located within South Staffordshire District albeit that it is located immediately adjacent to the built-up edge of Dudley Metropolitan Borough, which forms part of the four Black Country councils (Dudley, Wolverhampton, Sandwell and Walsall). It is anticipated that the site will deliver in the region of 475 dwellings along with the potential for new community facilities, recreation opportunities, and public open space, that will benefit new and existing residents alike.

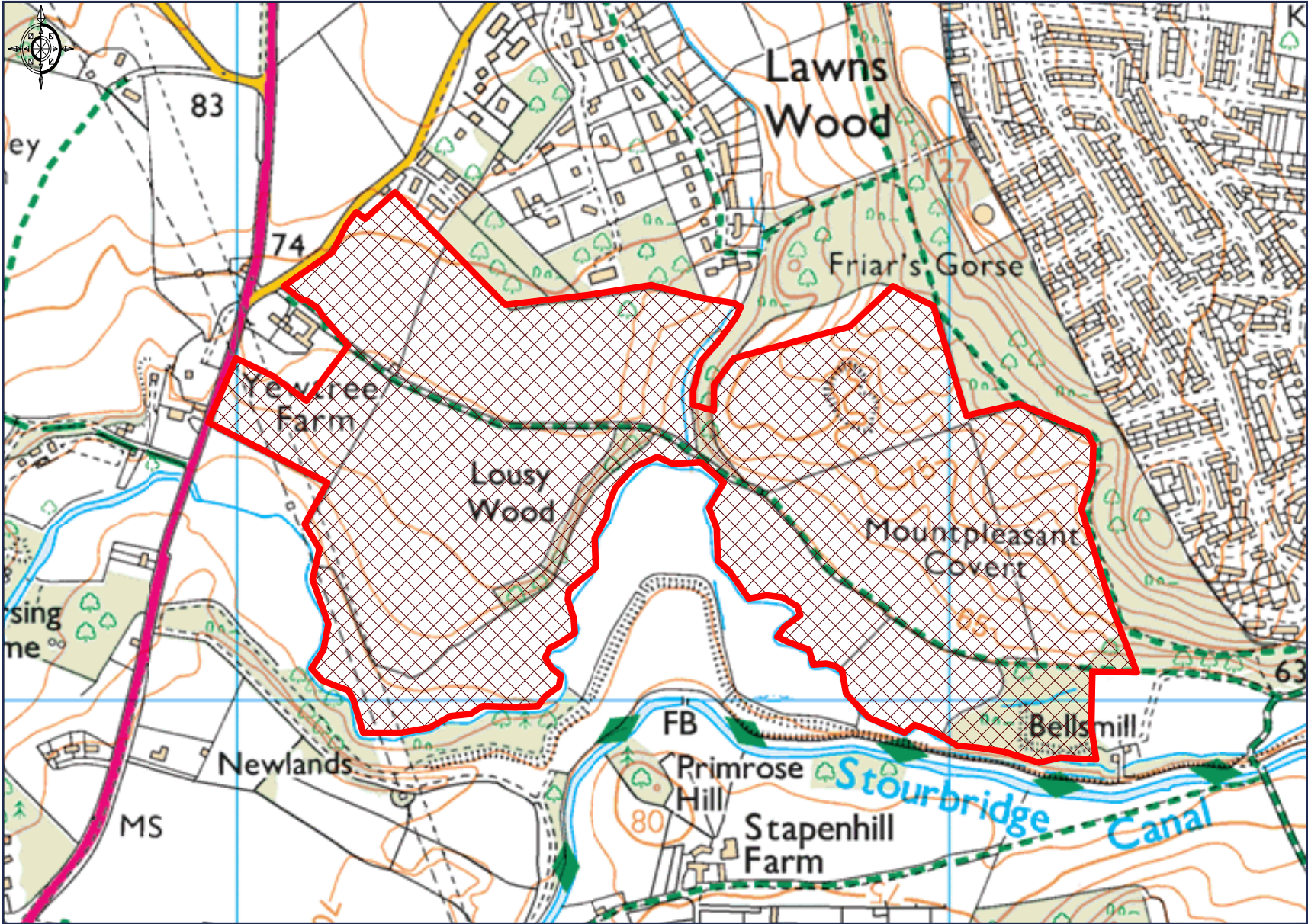
The land at Lawnswood is considered suitable to help meet the demand for new housing arising in the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (HMA). Due to the site's proximity to the built-up urban boundary of Dudley MBC, it is being promoted principally to meet the unmet needs of the Black Country and the wider Greater Birmingham HMA, however, it will be down to South Staffordshire to allocate the land for development within the South Staffordshire Local Plan that is currently being reviewed.

The Vision Document, therefore, highlights the overarching need to meet the housing needs of the Greater Birmingham and Black Country HMA as a whole, by delivering a significant sized residential development in a sustainable location on the edge of Dudley MBC. In doing so, it can help accommodate a significant proportion of the Black Country's unmet housing needs in a location that is well related to the main urban area and, therefore, well located to where the need is arising.

This Vision Document is intended to assist the Council with its consideration of the land at Lawnswood and its suitability for removal from the Green Belt and allocation as a strategic residential site. To inform the Vision Document, an initial high-level assessment of baseline conditions at the site has been undertaken, which has identified any known constraints, but also highlighted opportunities for its future development. It confirms there are no technical or environmental constraints that would prevent the delivery of the site and that the development of the site could contribute to meeting the future employment land requirements of both South Staffordshire and the Birmingham and Black Country HMA over the Plan Period.

A draft concept masterplan is included in the Vision Document, which sets out a number of principles to help guide the future development of the site to create a sustainable, high quality new residential development at Lawnswood.

PLAN 1 LOCATION PLAN



SECTION 3 SITE AND SURROUNDINGS

SITE DESCRIPTION

The site is c. 50ha in extent and is located approximately 3km to the north-west of Stourbridge town centre, on the built-up urban boundary of Dudley MBC. The site is effectively comprised of two separate parcels, of similar size and irregular shape, that are intersected by an ordinary watercourse running laterally through the centre of the site. The site is currently greenfield, comprising woodland areas, agricultural fields and open space.

The site is bound to the north by residential properties on Lawnswood Drive and Hunters Ride in addition to areas of woodland and agricultural fields. The eastern site boundary is woodland, beyond which is the settlement of Wordsley, forming the built-up urban edge of Dudley MBC. The River Stour forms the southern site boundary and the A449 bounds the site to the west.

Beyond the site boundaries, the surrounding area is predominantly agricultural and residential, but also includes sports, community and recreational facilities. (See site location plan).

The topography generally slopes towards the River Stour. Topographically the site can be split into two parcels in the east and west with the watercourse forming a central valley that runs in a southerly direction towards the River Stour, as described below.

- › Topography in the western parcel generally slopes in a southerly direction with notably steep topography in the south east of the parcel.
- › The topography within the eastern parcel is undulating, generally sloping in a south westerly direction.

The site levels range from approximately 98m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) in the east, to 54m AOD in the south east and south west.

PLAN 2 AERIAL PLAN



PLAN 3 AERIAL PLAN



SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE LOCAL PLAN

The South Staffordshire Local Plan consists of a number of statutory and non-statutory documents that together set out the planning policies and proposals to guide the development of the District. The Local Plan comprises the Core Strategy which was adopted in December 2012 and the Site Allocations Document, which was adopted in September 2018.

The Core Strategy

The Core Strategy is at the heart of the Local Plan and sets out the long-term vision, objectives and planning policies to deliver the vision and secure a sustainable future for the District. It has been informed by a number of strategies and assessments such as the Sustainable Community Strategy, Green Belt Assessment and Employment Studies.

The Core Strategy outlines that currently, 80% of South Staffordshire is designated Green Belt and the remaining area to the north is defined as Open Countryside. As such, Green Belt release is necessary to accommodate housing and employment growth. The policies within the Core Strategy seek to protect the Green Belt, but at the same time acknowledge that Green Belt release will be necessary, for instance Core Policy 1 'The Spatial Strategy for South Staffordshire' states:

'The general extent of the Green Belt and the area defined as Open Countryside will be protected and maintained for the Plan period, but some land will need to be released from the Green Belt and Open Countryside in some locations at the Main and Local Service Villages to deliver the proposed development strategy and enable the sustainable growth of these villages.'

Section 8 'Housing' of the Core Strategy contains a number of policies that are intended to help meet Strategic Objective 8:

'To ensure the delivery of a minimum of 644 decent homes for members of the community including the provision of affordable homes which match in type, tenure and size the needs of the residents of South Staffordshire and to meet the needs of an ageing population.'

Within the Housing section, 'Core Policy 6: Housing Delivery Housing Land Supply and Distribution' is of particular relevance which states:

'The Council will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of at least 3850 homes in South Staffordshire between 2006 and 2028 and ensure that a sufficient supply of deliverable/developable land is available to deliver 175 new homes each year informed by the District housing trajectory. The Council will seek to maintain a 5 year housing supply of deliverable sites plus an additional buffer of 5% moved forward from later in the plan period (or 20% where there has been a persistent under delivery of housing) and to provide 60% of housing on previously developed land (brownfield land) during the plan period.'

SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE DISTRICT PLAN REVIEW

A new Local Plan is being prepared which will replace the existing Local Plan and will set out the spatial planning strategy for the District up to 2037.

The SAD commits South Staffordshire to carrying out an early review of the Local Plan in order to respond to the increasing need for development, both within South Staffordshire, and in neighbouring authorities, such as the Black Country. Agreeing to an early review of the Local Plan was an essential requirement of the Government's Planning Inspector who examined the SAD and was largely in response to unmet housing needs in both South Staffordshire and the wider region. This means that South Staffordshire must submit a reviewed Local Plan by 2021, which is earlier than previously anticipated (because the current Local Plan runs until 2028).

South Staffordshire Council has no choice but to undertake a review of the Local Plan to review the existing planning policy documents and determine the new Local Plan for South Staffordshire, which will identify the development needed within the district up until 2037. This will include residential, retail and employment uses. The Local Plan will allocate the sites required to deliver the identified level of development needed.

Local Planning Authorities have a duty to cooperate with neighbouring authorities and other prescribed bodies on strategic matters that cross administrative boundaries. Strategic matters can include housing, employment, infrastructure and the Green Belt.

The Council has been working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities on cross boundary issues for a number of years. A clear example of this is the role employment allocations in the Site Allocations Document (SAD) play in meeting some of the Black Country employment needs.

- › The Issues and Options consultation was the first stage of the Local Plan review. The consultation ran from Monday 8 October until 5pm Friday 30 November 2018.
- › South Staffordshire are consulting on the second stage of the Local Plan which is focused on broad locations for housing growth and the infrastructure required to deliver the growth. The consultation runs for 8 weeks from Thursday 17 October until 5pm Thursday 12 December 2019.
- › Issues regarding employment growth will be consulted on in at the Preferred Options stage, which is scheduled for summer 2020.

SITE ALLOCATIONS DOCUMENT

The SAD was adopted on 11 September 2018 and provides updated policy maps and policies in addition to changes to Green Belt and village development boundaries for housing, safeguarded land and employment sites.

The SAD identified land to meet development and growth needs, established new development boundaries and removed two previous 'Major Developed Sites (MDS)' from the Green Belt in line with 'Policy SAD6: Green Belt, Open Countryside and Development Boundary Amendments'. Given 80% of South Staffordshire is Green Belt, further land will need to be released to accommodate future growth requirements, through the local plan review.

The Housing requirement

In 2018, the Government introduced a standard methodology for all local authorities to use in calculating their local housing needs. Since the 2018 Issues and Options consultation, the district's own local housing need has changed when applying this standard method. As of 1 April 2019, the Council have calculated a housing need of 254 dwellings per annum for the remainder of the plan period (i.e. from 1 April 2019 onwards). There were also 273 dwellings completed between 1 April 2018 and 31 March 2019. The Local Plan review will cover the plan period of 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2037, meaning that the plan target needs to reflect housing growth across this period. Therefore, taking the district's updated housing needs figure 2019-2037 and the completions which have already occurred in 2018, the Council have calculated the district's own housing need is now 4,845 dwellings between 2018 and 2037.

Taking together both the district's own housing needs and a contribution towards the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area, the Local Plan review has planned for a target of 8,845 dwellings between 2018 and 2037 to deliver the preferred approach set out in the 2018 Issues and Options document. Whilst we agree with the Council's acknowledgement that they will have to release Green Belt to accommodate both their own housing requirement and the unmet need of the wider HMA, we consider that they have underestimated their requirement.

Local Plan Spatial Housing Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery October 2019

The second stage of consultation for the South Staffordshire Local Plan Review is regarding Spatial Housing Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery. Its focus is on housing growth in the district, looking at broad locations for growth and the infrastructure benefits that will be delivered as a consequence.

This consultation is not site specific but looks at broad locations for growth through the different options. Some development will be at villages, but to lessen the impact on these villages, urban extensions along the western and northern edge of the Black Country have been proposed which offer the opportunity to provide self-contained development that is located close to high level services and facilities in the conurbation. The six options are as follows:

- > Scoping Option A: Rural housing growth focused on the district's larger and better-connected villages
- > Scoping Option B: Rural Housing growth dispersed across all settlements with a basic level of service provision within the district
- > Scoping Option C: Small-scale urban extensions on the fringe of neighbouring urban
- > Scoping Option D: Larger urban extensions on the fringe of neighbouring urban areas
- > Scoping Option E: New freestanding settlements away from the existing villages/urban areas
- > Scoping Option F: Introduce minimum housing densities on all housing sites and intensify development within the existing village development boundaries
- > Scoping option G: Infrastructure-led development with a garden village area of search beyond the plan period

The Council's preferred approach, is Option G which is expected to meet the districts housing requirement, as well making a contribution (under the Duty to Cooperate) to the wider unmet housing need and also take account of the impact of development on current infrastructure and what opportunities there are for new and improved infrastructure. Option G proposes that 60% of housing is focused in Tier 1 to 4 Villages (60%), with 40% of development directed towards urban extensions and rural villages. This approach will lead to Green Belt release; however, this seems inevitable in light of South Staffordshire's highly limited urban capacity. As it is located directly adjacent to the existing urban boundary, the land at Lawnswood falls within the 'Proposed Area of Search for Urban Extension' as outlined by the consultation document.

Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area Strategic Locations Study 2018

The Greater Birmingham and Black Country HMA Strategic Growth Study was commissioned by the Greater Birmingham and Black Country HMA (GBBCHMA) authorities to further consider strategic development options to meet housing need across the HMA and to identify more specific options and broad locations for addressing the housing supply shortfall. The study looked at housing need and supply, and options for increasing this, albeit it is acknowledged that it is not a SHMA. Following this, a further exercise was undertaken to identify potential areas of search to accommodate new strategic development across the HMA.

It has been established that there is a shortfall in planned provision to meet housing requirements in the GBBCHMA. The Birmingham Development Plan (BDP, adopted January 2017) quantified its shortfall as 37,900 (2011 – 31). The BDP includes a policy requiring local authorities within the GBBCHMA to work together to address the shortfall and plans which preceded it included a commitment to review once its scale was confirmed.

Subsequently, the Black Country Core Strategy Review Issues and Options document suggests there may be an emerging capacity shortfall of up to 22,000 dwellings (2016 – 36). As one of the authorities within the GBBCHMA, South Staffordshire will be required to assist in meeting the unmet housing need of neighbouring authorities, through the duty to cooperate.

Within the Study, the site falls within the Assessment parcel W6 'West of Kingswinford and Stourbridge'. This parcel is considered to perform Green Belt roles for:

- > Purpose 1 – Containing Sprawl and
- > Purpose 3 – Safeguarding the Countryside from Encroachment

Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment

The South Staffordshire Council Strategic Housing & Economic Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA) contains sites that have been suggested for housing or employment development.

The proposed development site has been identified as Site Ref: 343 as 'Land at Yew Tree Farm, off A449'. The site has been described as 'Potentially suitable but subject to policy constraints – Green Belt and Core Policy 1'.

The Site Assessment text states: The site directly adjoins the development boundary of Lawnswood. Part of the site lies within Flood Zone 3, so this has been excluded from the gross site area. A PRow crosses the site. Village edge site modelled at 32 dwellings per hectare.

SECTION 4 ASSESSMENT OF BASELINE CONDITIONS

INTRODUCTION

To assist with the promotion of the site, Folkes Holdings have instructed an initial high-level assessment of baseline conditions in order to understand if there are any potential 'in principle' constraints to the development of the site, but also to identify opportunities within which to bring forward new development. As such, a high-level assessment of existing highway conditions has been undertaken in order to inform a future access strategy for the development. In addition, landscape character and visual impact of the proposed development has been considered in order to assess the ability of the landscape to accommodate development in this location. A Flood Risk and Drainage Appraisal has been undertaken to establish the existing conditions on site and inform the developable area. Finally, an ecological walkover survey has also been undertaken in order to understand the potential of the site to accommodate any protected species and if so, the likely mitigation that may be required in order to mitigate for these.

These investigations have informed our initial thoughts on how the site could be developed, and that will be needed to be implemented in order to bring the site forward. Similarly, they have also fed into the preparation of an initial concept masterplan for the site, that seeks to identify development principles at the outset that will guide the future development of the site.

As the site is currently located in the Green Belt, we have also assessed the contribution that it makes to the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt.

GREEN BELT

The site is currently located in the Green Belt, where there is a general presumption against inappropriate development. The Core Strategy is clear that protecting the Green Belt is a high priority for the Council, together with maintaining the distinctive local character and landscape of South Staffordshire. However, the Core Strategy is also clear that Green Belt release will be necessary to meet the growth requirements of the District.

The Policy of most relevance to landscape within the adopted Core Strategy, is Policy EQ4: Protecting and Enhancing the Character and Appearance of the Landscape which states that, *'The intrinsic rural character and local distinctiveness of the South Staffordshire landscape should be maintained and where possible enhanced.'* It goes on to state that, *'Proposals should retain and strengthen the components of landscape character and local distinctiveness, with particular attention to the detailing of any proposal and its relationship with existing buildings, features and vegetation.'*

Whilst the site is not covered by any landscape designations, it does currently lie within the Green Belt. Relevant SPD documents of note include the Staffordshire Landscape Character Assessment document. The key characteristics and landscape features of the area within which the site is located as identified by the landscape character assessment are considered in the Landscape and Visual Impacts section of this Document.

South Staffordshire undertook a Green Belt Study which was published in July 2019 to consider the potential of a number of sites to be released from the Green Belt in order to meet the future development needs of the District. Within the study, the site falls within assessment parcel S75B

- > Purpose 1: Checking unrestricted sprawl – Strong contribution
- > Purpose 2: Preventing merging towns - Weak / No contribution
- > Purpose 3: Safeguarding countryside from encroachment – Strong contribution
- > Purpose 4: Preserving setting and special character of historic towns – Moderate Contribution
- > Purpose 5: To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land – All of the parcels are considered to perform equally against purpose 5. It should be noted that this should be afforded little weight as it is widely acknowledged that Green Belt land needs to be released to accommodate the districts growth requirements

Notwithstanding the assessment of the site in the Green Belt Study, we have also assessed the site's performance against the five purposes of including land in the Green Belt (as set out in paragraph 134 of the Framework 2019).

The Sites Contribution to the Green Belt and suitability for release.

A review of the site’s performance and suitability for release is summarised below in relation to the principal Green Belt objectives as set out within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (illustrated on the Opportunities and Constraints Plan).

The assessment does not include consideration of the fifth Green Belt purpose (to assist in urban regeneration through the recycling of derelict and other urban land), as all greenfield land is considered to contribute equally to this purpose, with the site making an equal contribution as the other greenfield land within the Green Belt along the western edge of the conurbation.

This section sets out how the site performs in relation to the first four Green Belt purposes as well as opportunities for release of Green Belt land including a new, permanent, defensible Green Belt boundary (as shown on Opportunities and Constraints Plan). Consideration is also given to the potential for enhancements of land removed from the Green Belt for improved access and recreation, as well as biodiversity and landscape enhancements.

Purpose	Comment
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	The site is well contained with residential development to the north and east, the river Stour to the south and the A449 to the west. Development of the site would be planned in order to meet a specific identified need. It would form an urban extension in line with the Council’s preferred option for growth.
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	Development of the site would not result in the merging of towns as it is adjacent to the built-up boundary of Dudley MBC and does not close the gap between any nearby towns beyond the existing development at Lawnswood.
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This consideration would be applicable to any site needed to accommodate the housing and employment land requirements in South Staffordshire.
To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	Development of the site would not affect the special character of a historic town.
To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	The lack of available urban capacity within South Staffordshire is well documented, with 80% of the site allocated as Green Belt, hence the need to look at locations on the urban boundary, such as the land at Lawnswood.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE RELEASE OF GREEN BELT

As considered above, the site makes a limited contribution to Green Belt purposes and the function of the Green Belt within the wider surrounding area when considered objectively. The site is contained by recognisable boundaries in the form of the residential development to the north and east, the river Stour to the south and the A449 to the west.

Although development of the site would lead to the loss of arable fields, the function of the wider Green Belt in checking unrestricted sprawl and preventing coalescence of settlements would be retained. Any loss of land to development would be limited and localised.

As set out at paragraph 139 of the 2019 NPPF, when defining Green Belt boundaries, plans should 'define boundaries clearly using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent'. The existing boundaries comprising, roads, urban form, the River Stour, vegetation, hedgerows and trees, assist with enhancing the boundaries that could comfortably accommodate permanent, defensible new Green Belt boundaries.

The proposed new Green Belt boundary is shown on the Opportunities and Constraints Plan.

In addition to requiring the release of Green belt land to be clearly defined by robust new Green Belt boundaries, the NPPF also considers at paragraph 138 that plans should, '*...set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset through compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land.*

The site offers the opportunity for enhancement of land retained in the Green Belt, as it is intended that the western site parcel will not be developed and will be retained and enhanced to the benefit of local biodiversity and residential amenity. The site also offers opportunities for enhancements through the provision of accessible open space within the proposed development.

The July 2019 update to the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides additional information on the role of the Green Belt in the planning system to supplement Section 13 of the NPPF.

It identifies three changes; firstly identifying 'what factors can be taken into account when considering the potential impact of development on the openness of the Green Belt'. It further states how '*plans might set out ways in which the impact of removing land from the Green Belt can be offset by compensatory improvements*'. It finally identifies how the '*strategic policy-making authority ensure that compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the Green Belt can be secured*'.

EASTERN CHARACTER



GENERAL LAND CHARACTER



WESTERN PARCEL CHARACTER



HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

An initial Access and Highways Appraisal was completed to examine the transport implications of developing the land at Lawnswood to provide a sustainable residential extension.

National and local transport policies seek to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes first, which would need to be addressed prior to the development of the site.

The site location abuts the County border with the Black Country (Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and Wolverhampton) and hence is well placed to address its housing requirement. In this respect there are currently direct road links into Dudley via Lawnswood and Wolverhampton via the A449. A location adjacent to these existing transport corridors presents opportunities to overcome existing constraints as well as enhancing the accessibility for existing and future residents in the locality.

The masterplan structure encourages trips on foot by providing direct, safe and attractive routes to the public rights of way that lead into the adjacent built-up area and the countryside. It is envisaged that local facilities would be provided commensurate to the requirements of the expanded community. If allocated in conjunction with adjacent sites such facilities could provide for a significant element of the day to day needs of the community internally and easily accessible by pedestrians.

The masterplan seeks to retain maximum flexibility whilst reflecting best contemporary design practices set out in Manual for Streets for permeable and legible layouts. A central loop with a wide enough carriageway (min 6.5m wide) to allow for a new bus service to penetrate the site can be provided. This will be easily accessible to all residents, with bus stops within a 5-minute walk of every home.

There would be two vehicular accesses, onto the A449 to the west and onto Lawnswood to the north, allowing the evolution of a permeable road network compliant with Manual for Streets. The existing A449-Lawnswood junction could be retained and improved or removed with traffic diverted through the site.



LAWNSWOOD WESTBOUND APPROACHING WESTERN END OF THE SITE FRONTAGE



LAWNSWOOD WESTBOUND ADJACENT TO LAWNSWOOD COTTAGE



LAWNSWOOD WESTBOUND AT EASTERN END OF THE SITE FRONTAGE

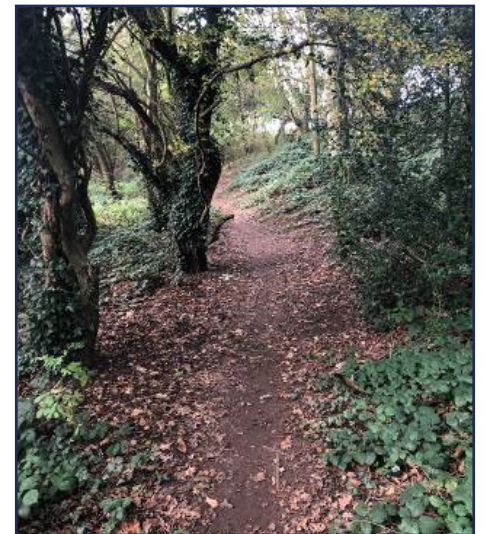
VISIBILITY TO THE LEFT OF LAWNSWOOD ONTO A449



VISIBILITY TO RIGHT OF LAWNSWOOD ONTO A449



PEDESTRIAN ROUTES THROUGH THE SITE



ECOLOGY

A Phase 1 Habitat Survey has been undertaken, which included consultation with Staffordshire Ecological Record Centre and EcoRecord for protected and notable species within 2km of the site and to identify sites statutorily designated for nature conservation within 10km of the site. Information pertaining to badgers has been removed due to the risk of persecution.

Fens Pool Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is located approximately 4 km north-east of the site, it supports a variety of terrestrial and aquatic/semi-aquatic habitats and is primarily designated for supporting a large population of great crested newts. Checkhill Bogs, a site nationally designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), is located c. 1.3km to the north-west of the site. The SSSI comprises three areas of wet woodland along the course of the Spittle Brook. No impacts to these designated sites are anticipated to arise from the proposed scheme.

Friar's Gorse (sandy fields) Site of Biological Importance (SBI) is a lowland acid grassland (which forms the majority of the eastern side of the site), Friar's Gorse Biodiversity Action Site (BAS) is a wood dominated by sweet chestnut (which is on site along the north-eastern boundary) and Lawns Wood ancient woodland (adjacent to the north of the site) will be a key considerations in the design of the scheme to ensure these features will be retained as far as possible and the scheme as a whole delivers net biodiversity in relation to these locally important sites.

The site is comprised of grassland and arable fields boarded by frequently defunct hedgerows with scattered trees. The River Stour flows along the southern site boundary. It acts as an important wildlife corridor and the scheme aims to enhance this corridor with aspirations to manage invasive non-native plant species along this section.

The site has been assessed for the likely presence of protected or notable species. In respect of amphibians, ponds identified 250m of the site are likely to be suboptimal for great-crested newts due to the presence of fish which would be confirmed through detailed surveys. The river corridor and habitats present are considered suitable for reptiles and the scheme would seek to enhance the site for reptile species, should they be present following detailed surveys.

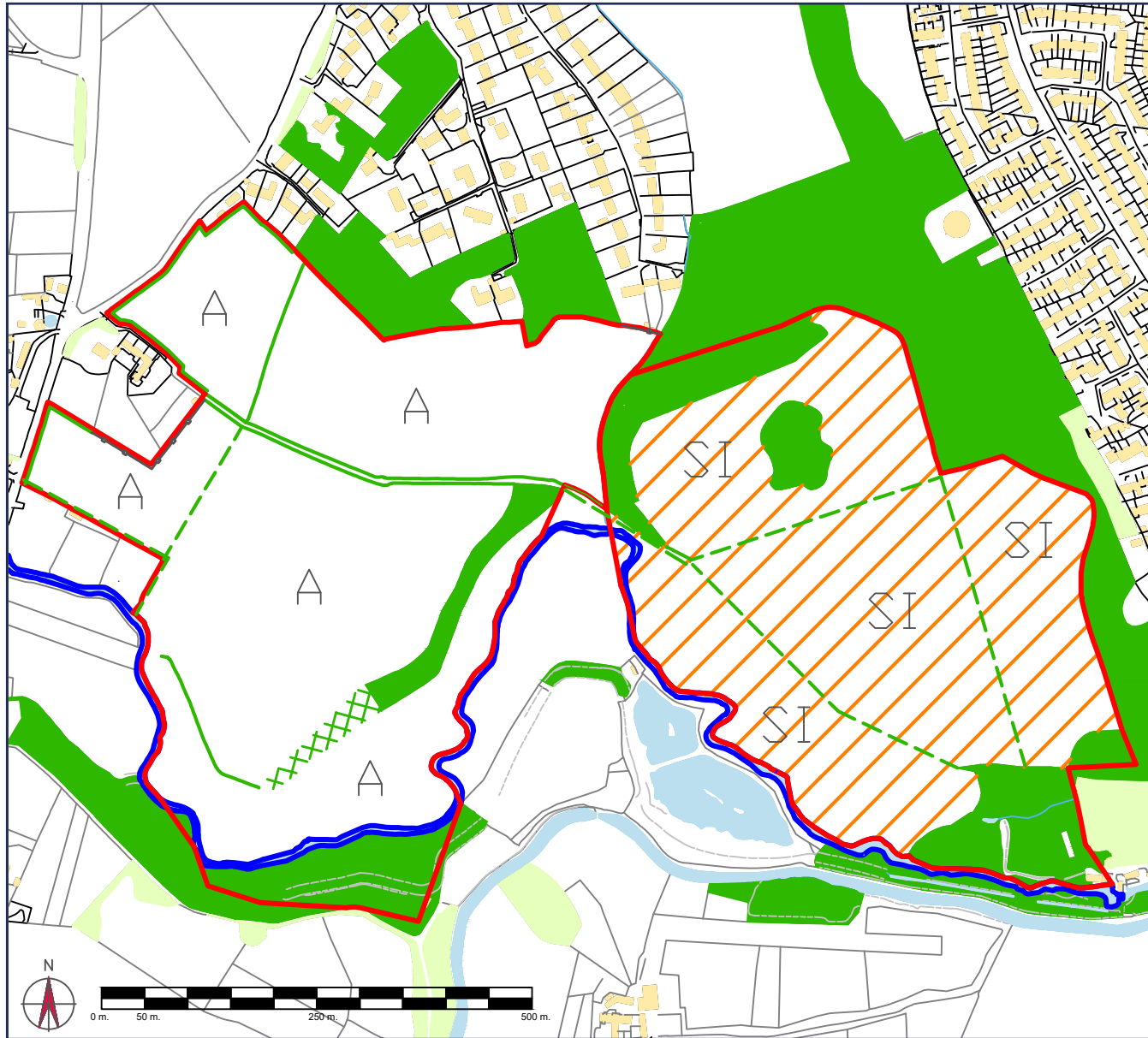
Hedgerows, the watercourse and the woodland and boundary trees provide opportunities for foraging, communing and roosting bats and nesting birds. The value of the site for bats and birds would be assessed in more detail to refine the scheme design.

The hedgerows and woodland provide suitable habitat to support a population of hazel dormouse. However, the site is located outside the species known distributional range and there are no records in the local area so it is considered that hazel dormouse is unlikely to be a receptor for a scheme.










The River Stour provides suitable habitat for otters and water voles. Further detailed surveys will be required to establish the value of the site for these receptors and refine scheme design.

A range of detailed species-specific surveys and detailed grassland survey would be needed to fully understand ecological constraints, mitigation and enhancement requirements, but key likely constraints have been identified at this early stage to support a deliverable and ecological led scheme design which would be refined as further survey information is obtained.

PLAN 5 PHASE 1 HABITAT MAP



NOTATION:

-  Application boundary
-  Arable
-  Semi-improved acidic grassland
-  Broad-leaved woodland
-  Dense scrub
-  Hedgerow intact
-  Hedgerow defunct
-  Fencing
-  Water course

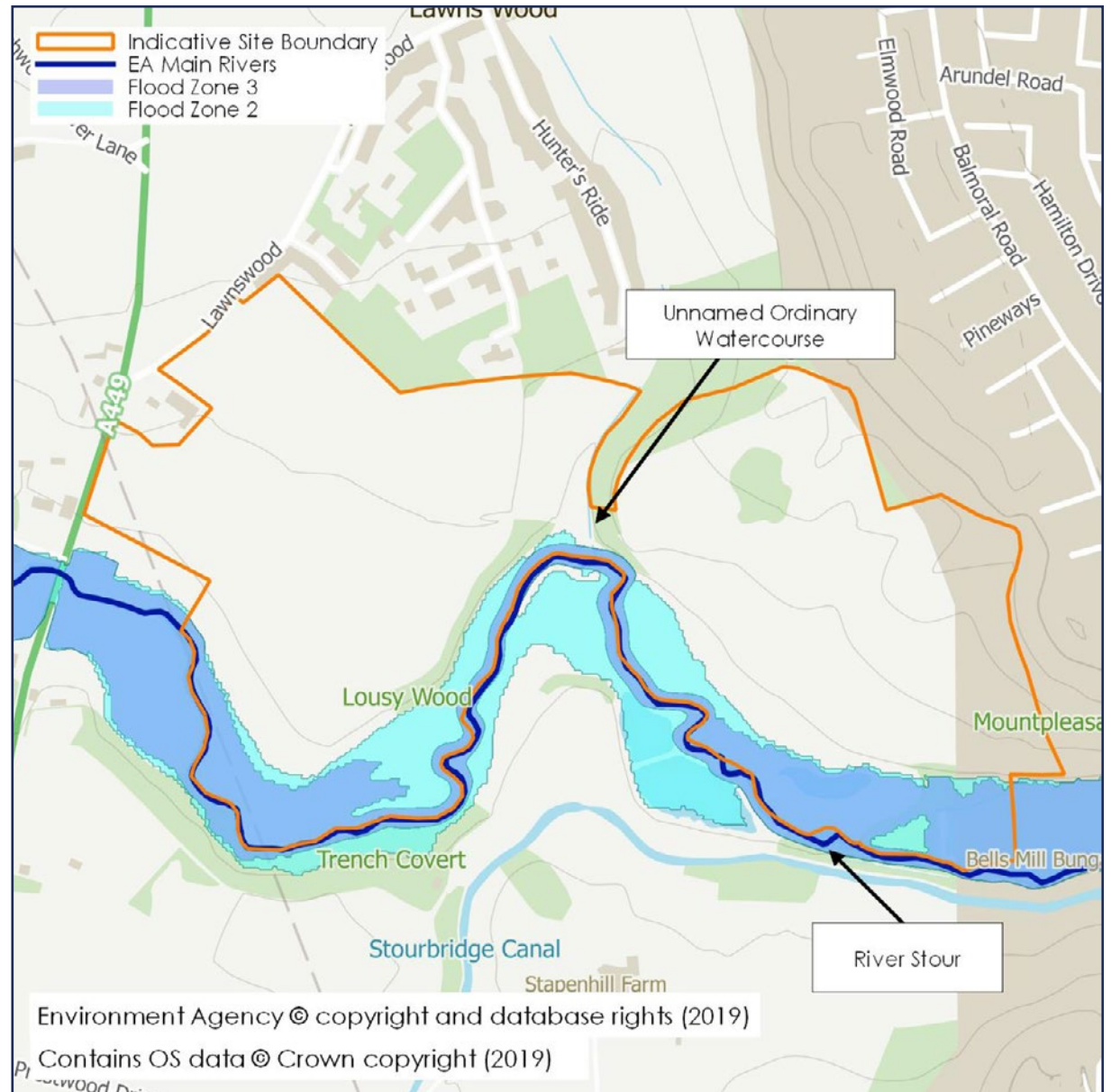
FLOOD RISK AND DRAINAGE

A Flood Risk and Drainage Technical Note (TN) was created to provide a high-level review of readily available desktop information relating to flood risk and drainage for a proposed residential development at Lawnswood.

According to the Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning, the site is located almost entirely within Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability), which is land defined as having less than a 1 in 1000 annual probability of river or sea flooding. The southern site boundary is shown to lie in Flood Zones 2 (Medium Probability) and 3 (High Probability). Flood Zone 2 is land defined as having between a 1 in 100 and 1 in 1000 annual probability of river flooding. Flood Zone 3 can be split into two categories, explained below:

- > Flood Zone 3a is defined as land having a 1 in 100 or greater annual probability of river flooding
- > Flood Zone 3b is defined as land where water has to flow or be stored in times of flood.

The nearest Environment Agency Main River is the River Stour, which flows in a westerly direction along the southern site boundary.



PLAN 6 ORDINARY WATERCOURSE

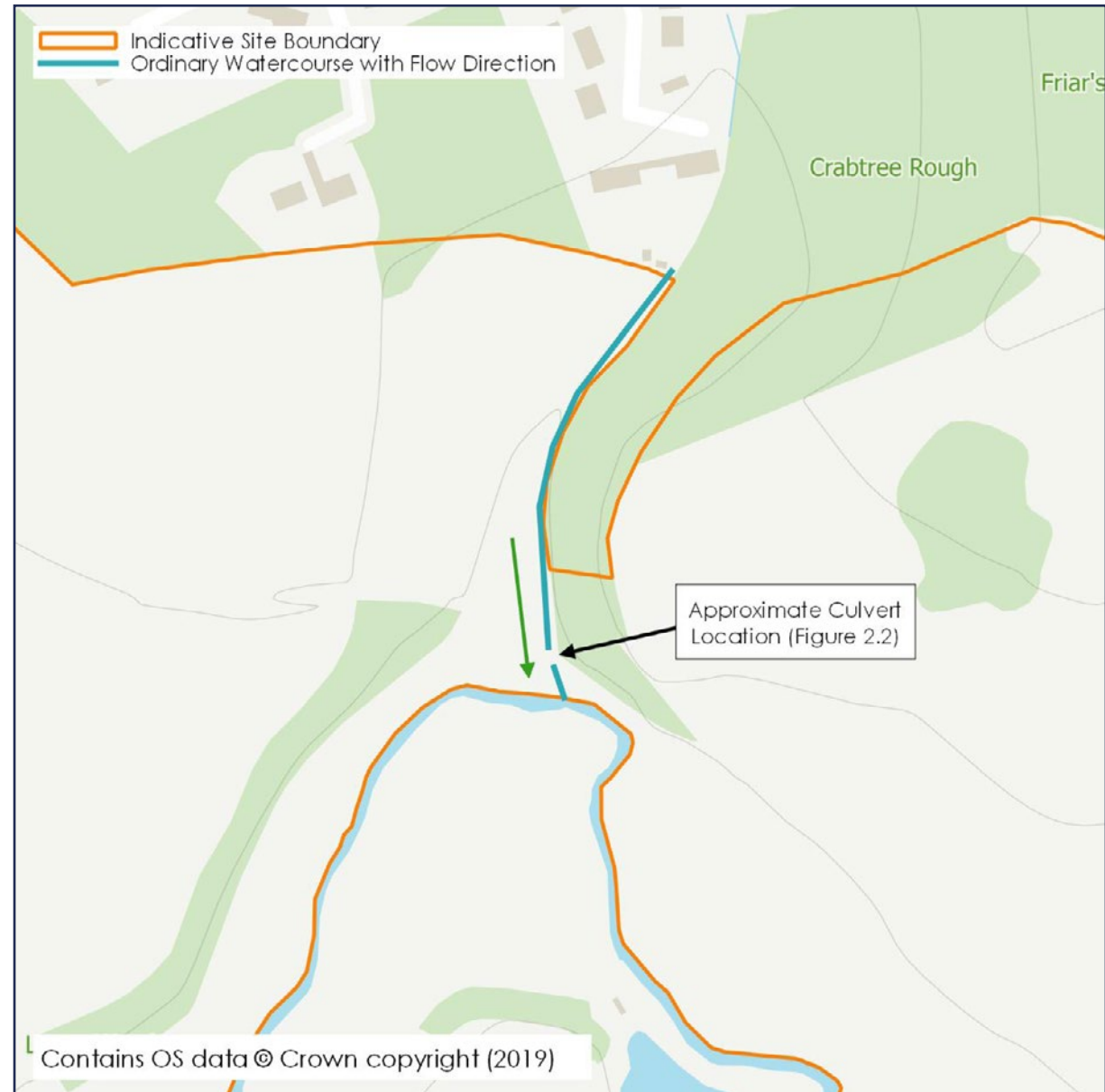
An unnamed ordinary watercourse flows through the centre of the site in a southerly direction. It was found to be culverted under a track within the site. Further investigation is needed to understand the floodplain extent of the minor watercourse and to better define the level of risk posed to the development.

The Stourbridge Canal is located to the south of the site; however, the majority of the site is elevated above the canal. The site is considered to be at low risk from canal overtopping or breaching, subject to appropriate mitigation measures where necessary.

The proposed development has also been assessed against a further range of potential flood risk sources including surface water, groundwater, reservoirs and sewers. None of these flood sources have been found to represent a potential barrier to development.

Consultation with Severn Trent Water has found a pressure combined sewer to run through the western parcel of the site, hence appropriate easements will be required.

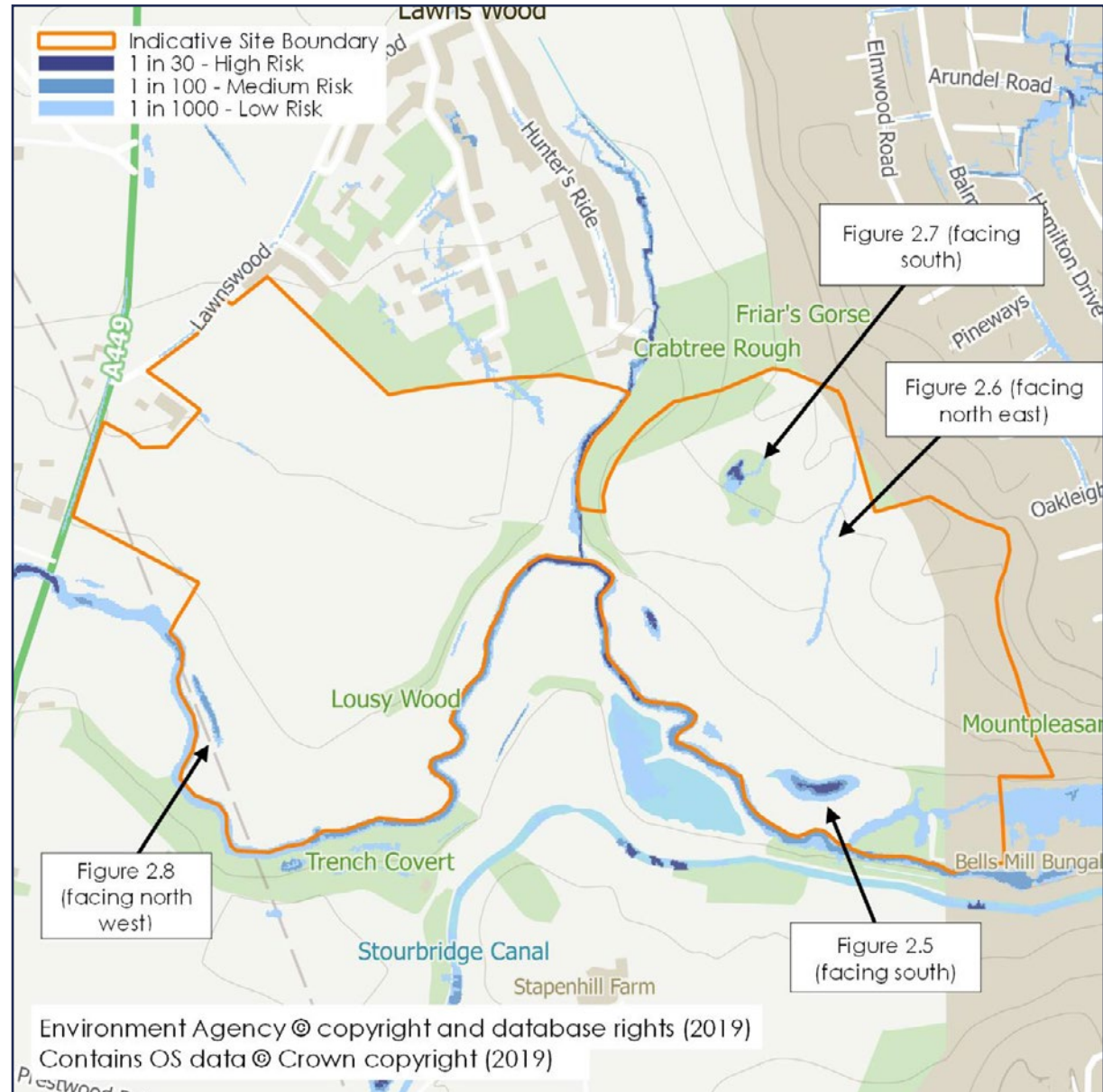
The existing site is entirely greenfield in nature, comprising woodland areas, scrub and agricultural fields. The topography of the site generally slopes towards the River Stour. Topographically, the site can be split into two parcels in the east and west with a central valley that runs in a southerly direction towards the River Stour.



PLAN 7 SURFACE WATER FLOOD RISK

An appropriate Surface Water Management Strategy which complies with the latest local and national advice will be implemented on the site to attenuate the increase in surface water runoff from development. As a first option, infiltration should be considered for the disposal of surface water due to the expected favourable ground conditions and Sandstone bedrock geology. If infiltration is not viable, the rate at which the runoff is discharged into the ordinary watercourse on site will be restricted to the equivalent greenfield runoff rate, preventing an increase in flows leaving the site and thus ensuring that the development does not have a detrimental impact upon flood risk elsewhere.

Through the application of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS), the additional surface water will be stored within the site and subjected to multiple stages of treatment to guarantee that the water quality in the wider drainage network is protected. Wherever possible, SuDS features will be above ground to enhance the aesthetic amenity of the development and provide valuable habitats for the local wildlife. The attenuation provided will be appropriately sized to include an allowance for climate change. Example SuDS features that will be incorporated into the development wherever possible include detention basins, permeable paving and swales. Some examples of the type of SuDS can be utilised on site can be seen in the images that follow.



EXAMPLES OF SUDS



LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL

A high-level landscape and visual appraisal of the site has been undertaken, which provides a review of the sites' locality and planning context and sets a summary of the constraints and opportunities. This information was then used to inform the concept masterplan.

THE SITE'S LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, TOPOGRAPHY, ECOLOGY AND VALUE

The site lies within Landscape Character Type Sandstone Estatelands. Being essentially butterfly in shape, the site forms two distinct western and eastern sections - each having differing landscape characteristics. The eastern section is very undulating with a significant 35m level change from the eastern boundary down to the River Stour on the southern boundary. The western section is relatively flat in comparison comprising large fields currently used for arable agriculture. There are localised areas of steep land in the western parcel - notably adjacent to The River Stour on the southern boundary and Crabtree Rough on the eastern boundary.

The western section (over half of the site area) is used for commercial agriculture, comprising two large fields and two smaller fields divided by hedgerows supporting some mature hedgerow trees. The northern boundary is bound by a large block of mature, mixed woodland and Lawnswood settlement containing very large, modern, detached properties. This western section has a low horizon with strong woodland cover providing containment to all its boundaries. Traffic and noise from nearby Lawnswood Road and the A449 is very apparent. Dwellings, nestling amongst mature tree cover along the A449, are also visible. Large 132kv power lines and towers cross the western corner of the site and are dominant visual detractors in the landscape. A former farmhouse (Holland House) and barn complex lie adjacent to the western boundary next to the A449. Two of the properties are listed grade II.

The eastern section comprises unmanaged grassland enclosed by dense mature woodland to its north, west and eastern boundaries. The land is very undulating and elevated. Mature woodland dominated by sweet chestnut (with some sycamore, oak, beech and birch) and bracken ground flora - forms the eastern boundary and provides a strong, wooded backdrop and separation to the Wordsley housing area/urban conurbation of the Black Country immediately behind. The folding and undulating open grassland slopes are unmanaged and support some acid grassland indicator species. The site is particularly permeable on its eastern boundary and is under a lot of public pressure with many unofficial footpaths running from the adjacent urban area through the woodland and across the grassland fields that are criss-crossed with locally worn tracks. It is popular for dog walking and fishing. This eastern section has very rural characteristics with extensive elevated views westwards.

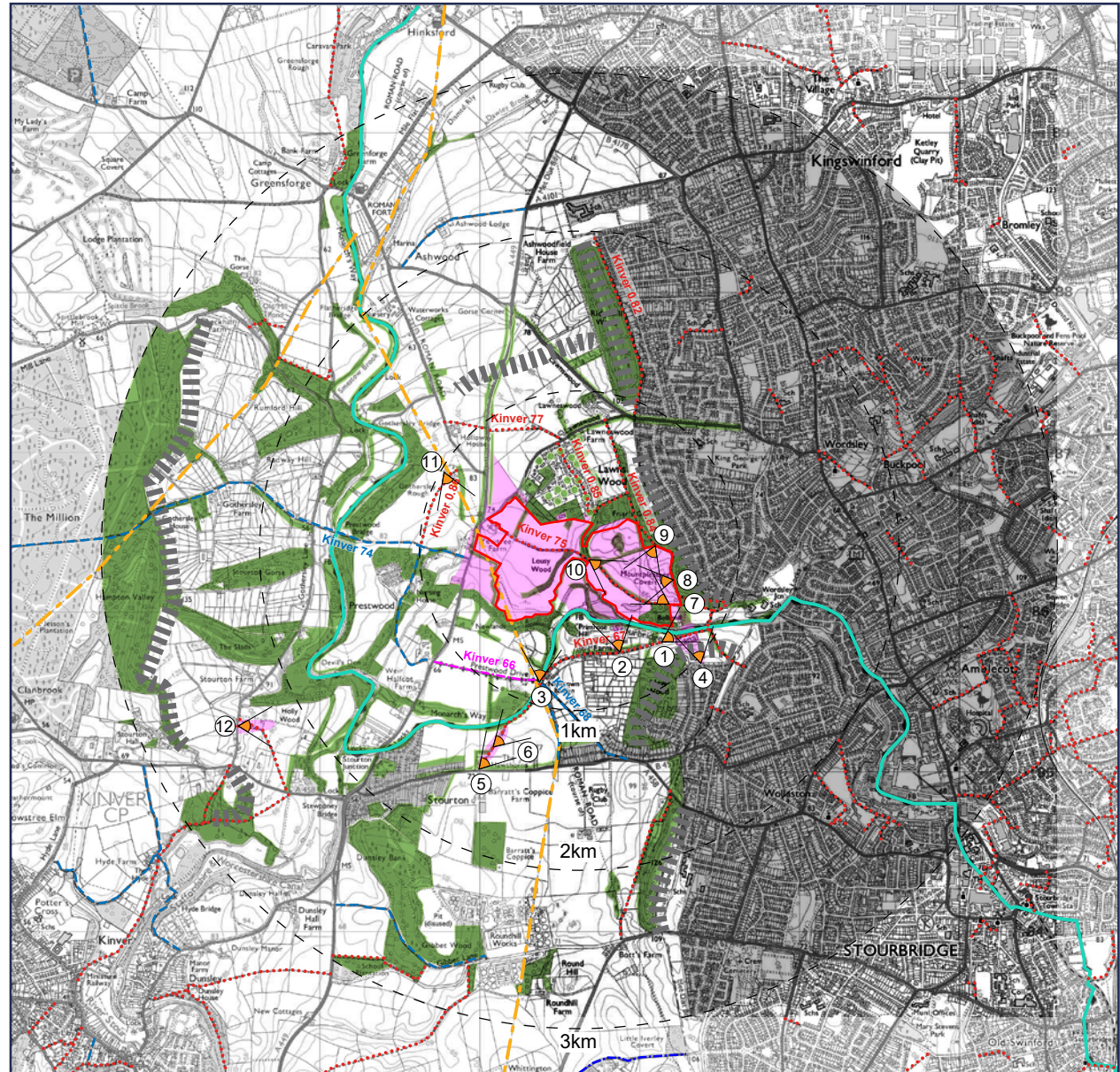
Lying immediately adjacent to the urban edge of the Black Country there are many urban fringe characteristics present to the site's surroundings, such as: a heavy prevalence of horsiculture; intensive arable farming in large open fields with a significant loss of field hedgerows; large pylon towers and lines; prevalence of poor quality storage yards, degraded condition and vandalism of the canal bridges and heavy traffic on main road networks.

See Landscape planning designations plan and nature conservation designations plans; and landscape character photos of the site and surroundings.

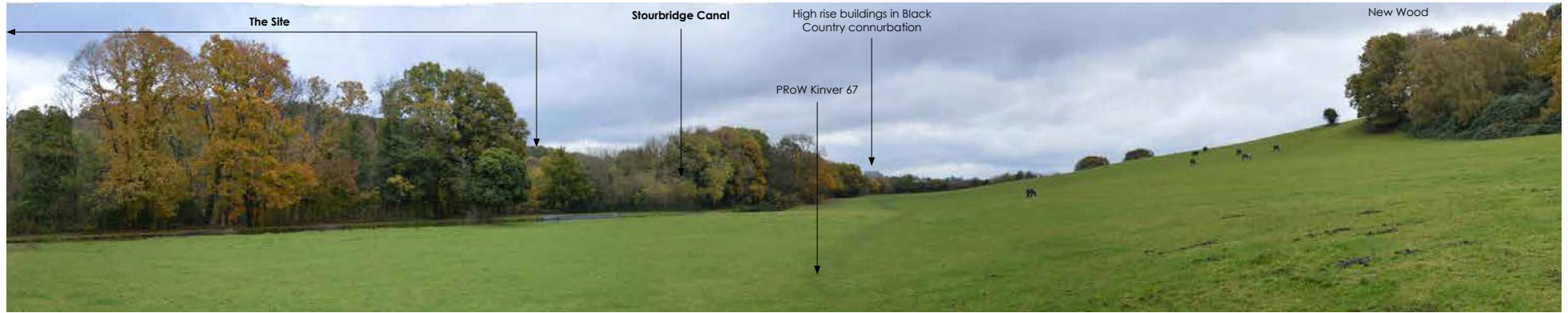
THE SITE'S VISIBILITY

Visually, the site is very well contained and views into the site from publicly accessible locations are restricted to a very small visual envelope. This is due to a combination of the effective screening benefits of existing ridgelines, undulating topography, large woodland belts and well-treed hedgerows.

Views are mainly from within or immediately adjacent, to the south west of the site. There are no views west of the site. There is very limited visibility of the western section of the site however the upper area of the eastern section of the site is visually exposed from the occasional mid and long distant view at an elevated location south of the site.



Key Visual Receptor 1



KVR 1	<p>Description of Existing View: Representative of users of footpath PRoW Kinver 67 walking in a easterly direction towards Bellsmill and Wordsley. The view comprises the open, rising horse grazing land up to New Wood - a distinctive treed skyline feature and the meandering course of Stourbridge Canal. Dense, mature tree cover (up to 18m high) along the canal provides excellent containment and screens any potential views of the site. There is a long distant direct view of high-rise buildings in the Black Country urban conurbation above the tree line.</p> <p>The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. It is representative of users of the public right of way where the viewer will have prolonged viewing opportunities with a high level of value placed on the view.</p>	<p>Distance to site: (Nearest Site Boundary) Approx. 0.1km</p>
	<p>Design considerations: Existing boundary vegetation to be retained and protected.</p> <p>Potential Visual effects: The Magnitude of Change is assessed as None. The potential level of effect is assessed as Neutral.</p>	<p>OS Datum: 68m AOD Location/ Grid Ref. SO 88111 85807 Bearing: East</p>

Key Visual Receptor 2



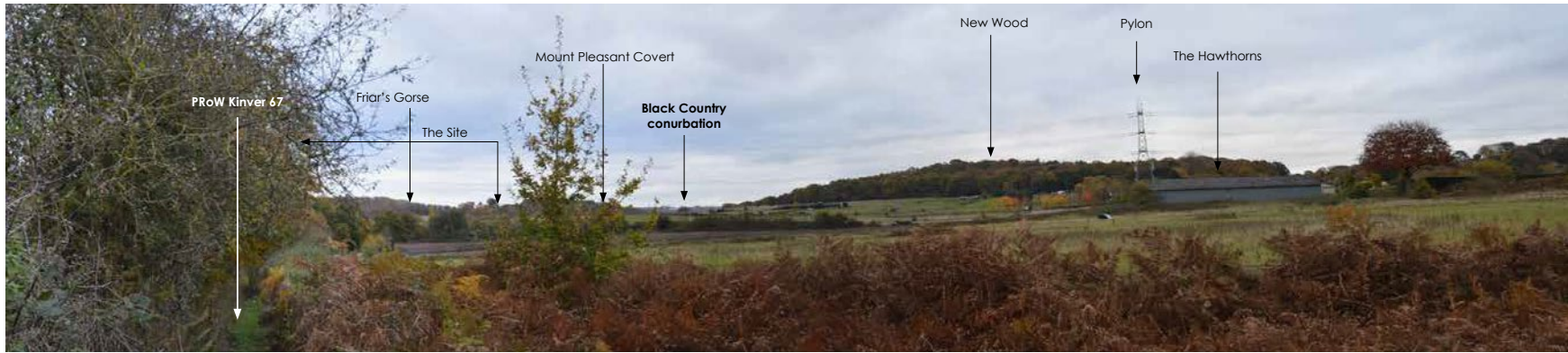
KVR 2	<p>Description of Existing View: Representative of users of footpath PRoW Kinver 67. This is a narrow footpath enclosed by a treed hedgerow to the north and fenced horse paddocks to the south (See character photo 11). The well treed hedgerow screens almost all views north towards the site with an occasional view afforded in a gap in the hedgerow.</p> <p>The framed view looks over to the Stourbridge Canal and the strong tree line that follows its course. This, together with intervening vegetation along the River Stour, screens the majority of the site from view. There is however a limited view of the upper eastern section of the site. The dense woodland of Friar's Gorse and Mount Pleasant Copse forms a heavily treed backdrop and skyline.</p> <p>The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. It is representative of users of the public right of way where the viewer will have prolonged viewing opportunities with a high level of value placed on the view.</p>	<p>Distance to site: (Nearest Site Boundary) Approx. 0.2km</p>
	<p>Design considerations: Existing boundary vegetation to be retained and protected. Defunct hedgerows to the upper eastern parcel to be reinstated. No development to this upper area - retain as public open space and protect its rural character and biodiversity.</p> <p>Potential Visual effects: With the mitigation proposed the Magnitude of Change is assessed as Negligible. The potential level of effect is assessed as Negligible.</p>	<p>OS Datum: 73m AOD Location/ Grid Ref. SO 87920 85753 Bearing: North</p>

Key Visual Receptor 4



KVR 4	<p>Description of Existing View: Representative of residents on Hyperion Rd looking due north. This is a direct and elevated view across the upper extents of the eastern section of the site. The site offers a wholly rural, naturalised view of undulating grassland and wooded ridge line, - particularly when viewed in the context of the densely urbanised extents of the Black Country conurbation adjacent.</p> <p>New Wood, with its mix of evergreen woodland in the foreground, screens views of the mid and western sections of the site.</p> <p>The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. It is representative of residents where the viewer will have prolonged viewing opportunities with a high value placed on the view</p>	<p>Distance to site: (Nearest Site Boundary)</p> <p>Approx. 0.3km</p>
	<p>Design considerations: Existing boundary vegetation to be retained and protected. Defunct hedgerow to the upper eastern parcel to be reinstated and significantly bolstered in line with the landscape character guidelines. No development to this upper area - retain as public open space and protect its rural character and biodiversity.</p> <p>Potential Visual effects: With the mitigation proposed the Magnitude of Change is assessed as Negligible. The potential level of effect is assessed as Negligible.</p>	<p>OS Datum: 95m AOD Location/ Grid Ref. SO 88341 85676 Bearing: North</p>

Key Visual Receptor 5



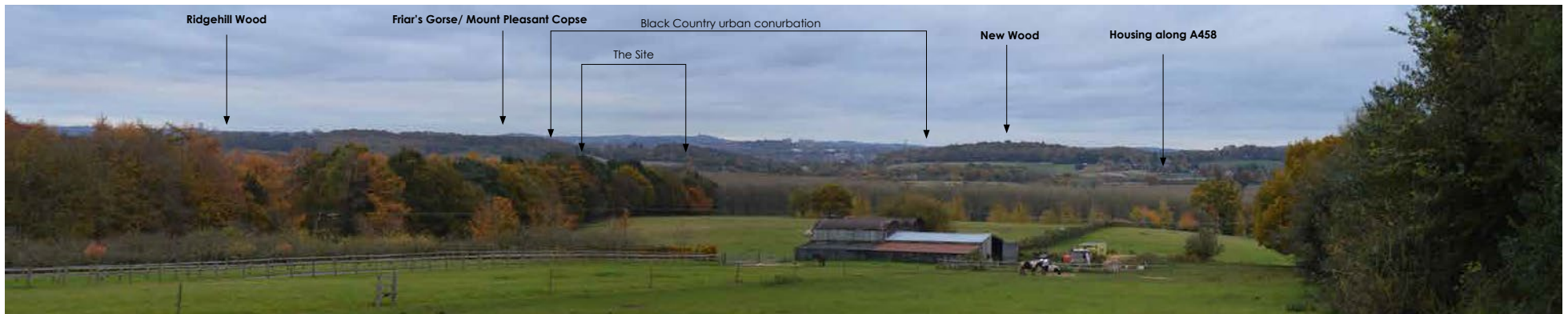
KVR 5	<p>Description of Existing View: Representative of users of footpath PRoW Kinver 67 - which leads from the busy A458 Bridgenorth Road running in a north easterly direction towards the Stourbridge Canal and River Stour. A tall hedgerow along the western side of the footpath screens further views westward of the western extents of the site. There is however, a glimpsed partial view of the upper eastern section of the site.</p> <p>The view has urban fringe elements with pylon towers and lines striding across the landscape and outbuildings/sheds associated with The Hawthorns. There are few intervening hedgerows - many having being lost to agricultural intensification. New Wood is a prominent wooded skyline feature as too is Friars Gorse and Mount Pleasant Covert which all act as effective foils to screen much of the Black Country urban conurbation. There is a distant framed view of this between the two woodlands.</p> <p>The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. It is representative of users of the public right of way where the viewer will have prolonged viewing opportunities with a high level of value placed on the view.</p>	<p>Distance to site: (Nearest Site Boundary)</p> <p>Approx. 0.9km</p>
	<p>Design considerations: Existing boundary vegetation to be retained and protected. Defunct hedgerows to the upper eastern parcel to be reinstated. No development to this upper area - retain as public open space and protect its rural character and biodiversity.</p> <p>Potential Visual effects: With the mitigation proposed the Magnitude of Change is assessed as Minor. The potential level of effect is assessed as Negligible.</p>	<p>OS Datum: 72m AOD Location/ Grid Ref. SO 87085 85153 Bearing: North east</p>

Key Visual Receptor 7



KVR 7	<p>Description of Existing View: Representative of users of the footpath PRow Kinver 75 where it enters the site from the wooded slopes near Bellsmill. Unmanaged grassland on elevated ground forms much of the foreground view with the heavily wooded backdrop of Friar's Gorse on the skyline. The central hedgerow on this upper slope is defunct with a few hedgerow trees surviving at the northern end.</p> <p>This is a very rural view with mid distance views westwards towards the wooded ridge line of Prestwood - which also supports large open fields and occasional large farm buildings. The tall pylon towers and lines are significant visual detractors as they stride through the landscape.</p> <p>The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. It is representative of users of the public right of way where the viewer will have prolonged viewing opportunities with a high level of value placed on the view.</p>	<p>Distance to site: (Nearest Site Boundary)</p> <p>Approx. 0km</p>
	<p>Design considerations: Existing woodland boundary vegetation to be retained and protected. Defunct hedgerow to be reinstated and significantly bolstered in line with the landscape character guidelines. No development to this upper area - retain as public open space and protect its rural character and biodiversity.</p> <p>Potential Visual effects: With the mitigation proposed the Magnitude of Change is assessed as Slight. The potential level of effect is assessed as Slight Adverse.</p>	<p>OS Datum: 67m AOD Location/ Grid Ref. SO 88189 86072 Bearing: West</p>

Key Visual Receptor 10



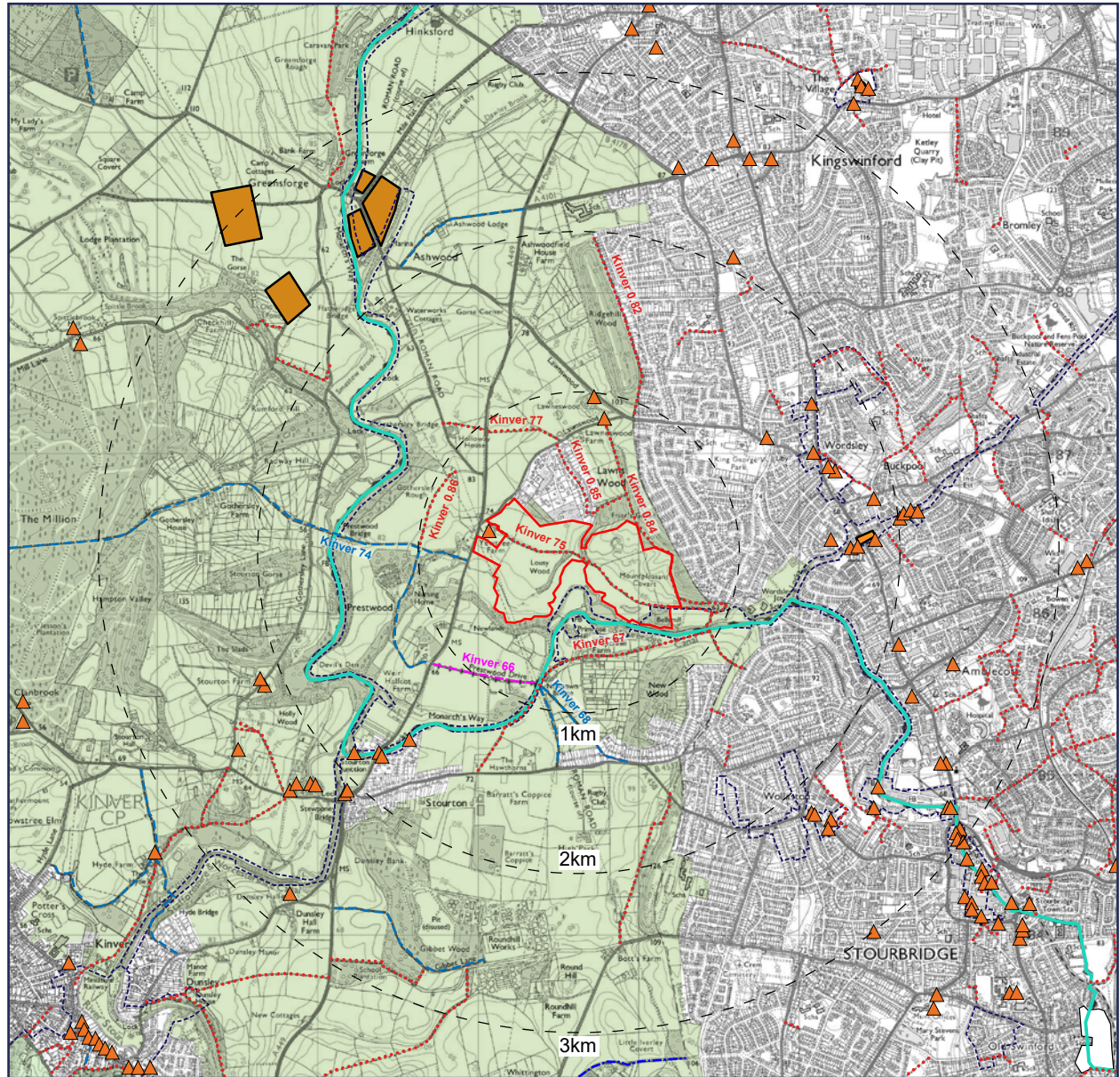
KVR 12	<p>Description of Existing View: Representative of users of footpath PRow Kinver 24 at an elevated point just off Greenforge Lane, west of Stourton - leading down to Castle Farm and Stourton Castle - a grade II listed building. There are elevated and extensive views looking eastwards towards the tower blocks and extensive urban conurbation of the Black Country in the mid-distance framed by the rolling, heavily wooded hills and large fields in the foreground. Settlement on the A458 Bridgenorth Road is clearly visible with many urban elements within the view.</p> <p>New Wood is a very prominent wooded hill as too is Friar's Copse. There is a partial view of the upper eastern section of the site with Friar's Gorse forming a wooded backdrop and the urban area of the Black Country behind.</p> <p>The sensitivity of the receptor is assessed as High. It is representative of users of a public right of way where the viewer will have a prolonged viewing opportunities with a high level of value placed on the view.</p>	<p>Distance to site: (Nearest Site Boundary)</p> <p>Approx. 2.5km</p>
	<p>Design considerations: Existing woodland boundary to be retained and protected. Defunct hedgerow to be reinstated and significantly bolstered in line with the landscape character guidelines. No development to the upper eastern area of the site. Retain as public open space/wildlife area to protect its rural characteristics.</p> <p>Potential Visual effects: The Magnitude of Change is assessed as Negligible. The potential level of effect is assessed as Negligible</p>	<p>OS Datum: 97m AOD Location/ Grid Ref. SO 85489 85295 Bearing: East</p>











CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Landscape + Ecology

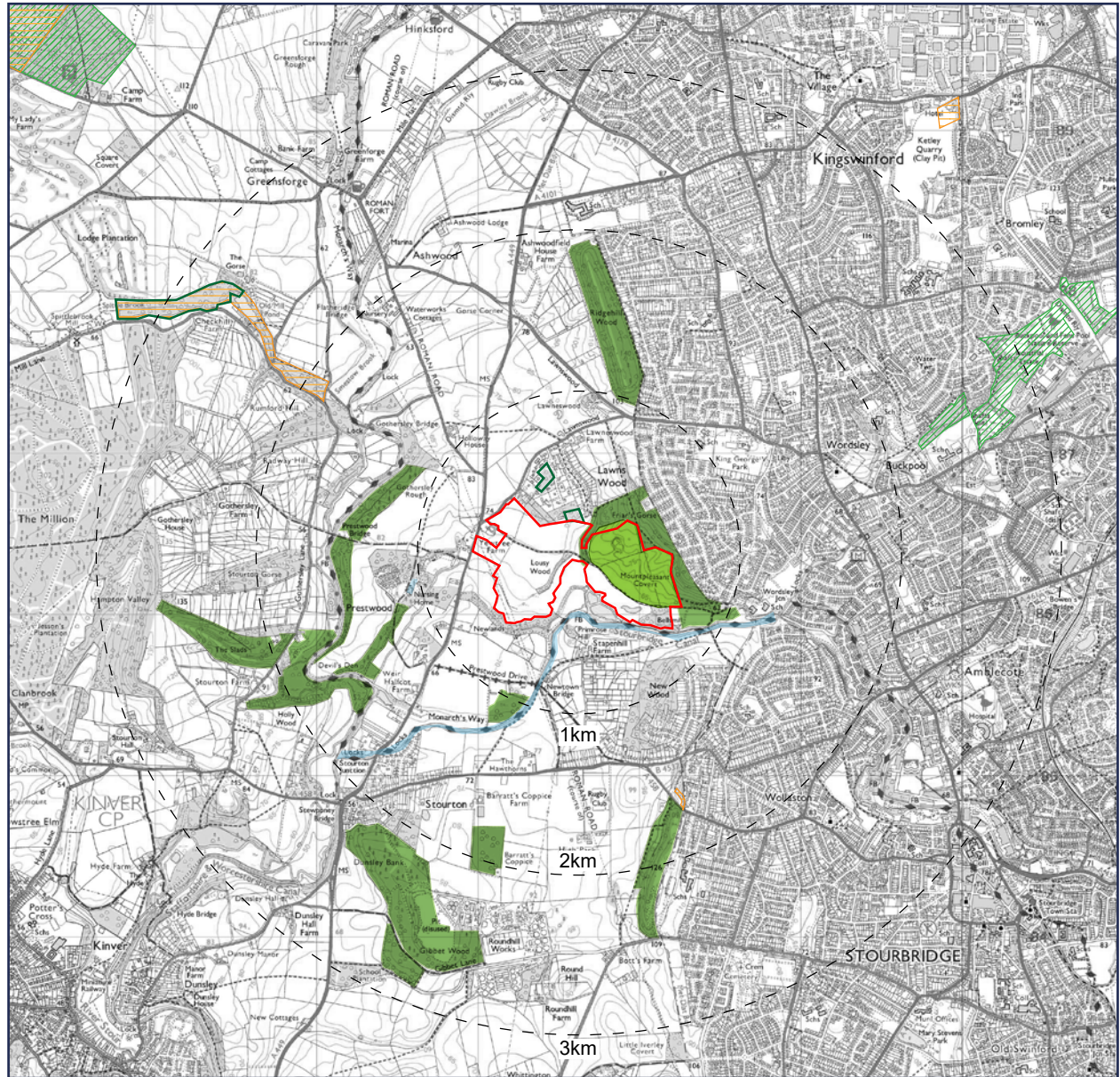
- › The grassland on the eastern slopes is identified as a Local Site of Biological Importance (SBI) - a good quality, semi-improved acid Grassland Priority Habitat.
- › The woodland bounding the eastern section of the site, Friar's Gorse, is a Site of Biological Importance (SBI). There are two small areas of Ancient Woodland north of the site - one abutting the site's northern boundary. The Stourbridge Canal south of the river is also identified as a Site of Biological Importance.
- › The setting of the two listed buildings close to the sites western boundary should be respected.
- › The site lies within Green Belt, however it has been recognised that there will need to be some Green Belt release in the district in the next plan period. We therefore propose the continuation of the approach that is underway - to secure sustainable patterns and achieve sustainable development objectives - such as walk-able neighbourhoods; maximising the use of sustainable transport; connectivity with employment, education, leisure uses and activities.
- › A public footpath runs through the centre of the site connecting up to the urban areas of Wordesley with another public footpath running along the inner edge of Friar's Gorse woodland on the north-east boundary - connecting up Lawnswood settlement.
- › There are no other landscape planning or heritage designations attached to the site.
- › The vegetation, comprising mature woodland and hedgerows (some defunct in the eastern section) is important and should be retained. There are opportunities to significantly improve the quality, quantity, character and biodiversity of these features.









PLAN 9 LANDSCAPE DESIGNATIONS



- Key:**
-  Site boundary
 -  1km Distance radii from center of site
 -  Public right of way (PRoW)
 -  Bridleway
 -  Byway open to all traffic
 -  Long Distance Walk - Monarch Way
 -  Birmingham Greenbelt - South Staffordshire District and Dudley District
 -  Scheduled Monuments
 -  Listed Buildings
 -  Conservation Area Boundaries

PLAN 10 NATURE CONSERVATION DESIGNATIONS



- Key:**
-  Site boundary
 -  Distance radii from center of site
 -  Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
 -  Ancient Woodland
 -  Local Nature Reserve
 -  Site of Biological Importance - Grassland
 -  Site of Biological Importance - Woodland
 -  Site of Biological Importance - Water course

Visibility

- › The upper area of the eastern section of the site is visually exposed when viewed from a number of viewpoints. It is recommended that this area remains as undeveloped to retain its rural characteristics and the elevated views from the eastern section of the site out to the surrounding landscape are retained.
- › Strong green infrastructure is required internally to the proposed development in the western section of the site with well-considered areas of public open space to provide general amenity and wildlife habitats. Street tree planting will be important to reinforce the leafy foil that currently exists to the boundaries and setting.

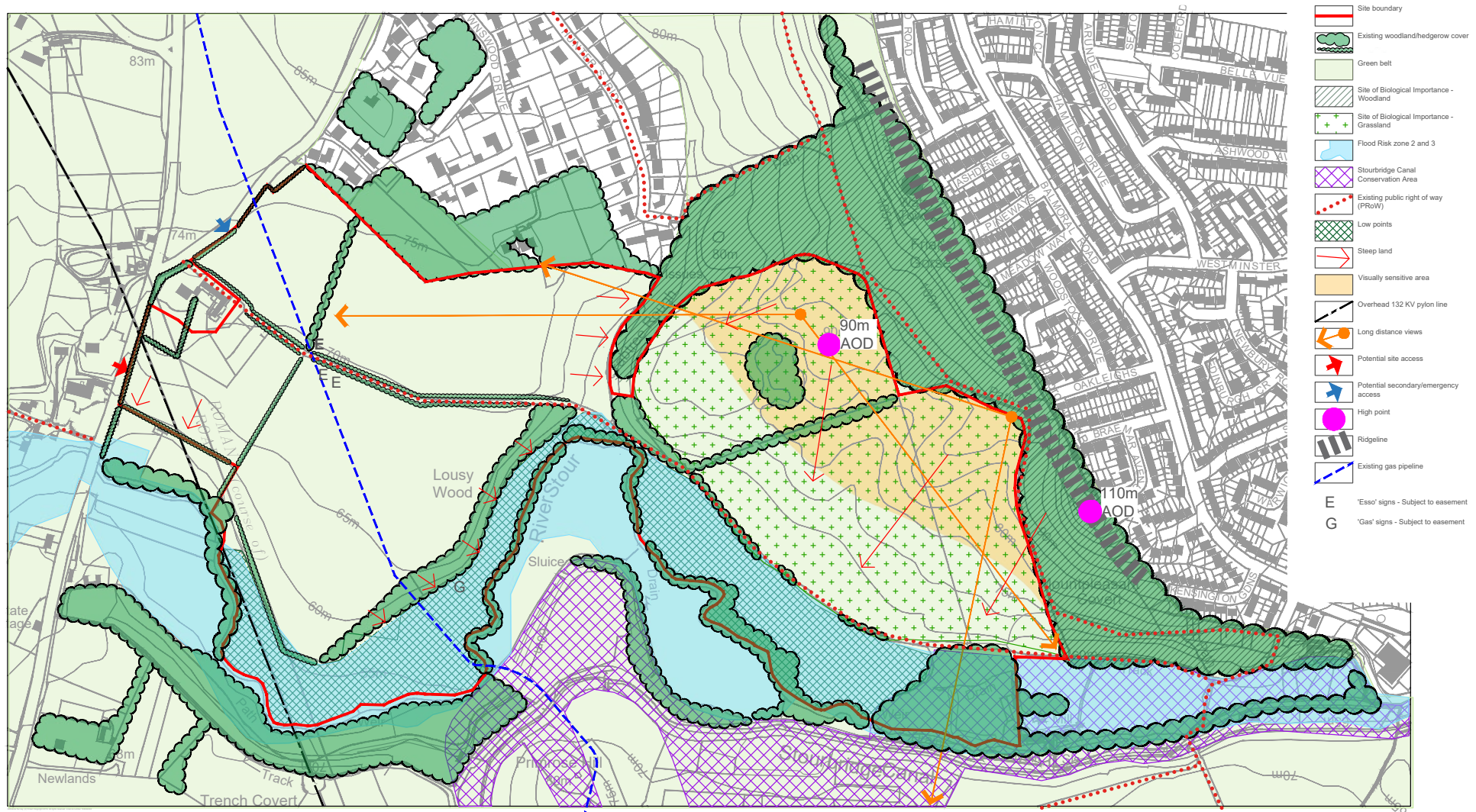
Flood Risk

- › The geology is that of Wildmoor Sandstone with freely draining soils. The majority of the site lies outside the flood zone. In the eastern section of the site south of the public footpath the land lies within flood zone 2 and 3. In the western section, the most southerly area adjacent to the River Stour lies within flood zone 2 and 3.
- › Sustainable Urban Drainage features (SuDS) will be integrated into the green infrastructure at naturally low points of the site, outside the flood zone. These will also provide enhanced, biodiverse habitats.

Services and Utilities

- › 132 KV power lines cross the very western edge of the site and the route of an existing sewer runs through the western parcel. All services/utilities will be subject to appropriate easements, to be confirmed by Western Power and Severn Trent Water.

PLAN 11 CONSTRAINTS AND OPPORTUNITIES PLAN



DESIGN APPROACH TO THE CONCEPT MASTERPLAN (SEE PLAN)

Design Best Practice

The development of the concept masterplan has been based upon design best practise and guided by the following publications:

- > Building for Life 12 (BfL12):The sign of a good place to live
- > Manual for Streets Guidance 2010 - DoT
- > Lifetime Homes
- > ‘Healthy Place making’ - The Design Council
- > Making it Home: The Power of Landscape to Create Good Housing - The Landscape Institute
- > ‘Homes for People and Wildlife’ - Wildlife Trusts
- > NPPF

Structuring Principles

The design framework is guided by three structuring and spatial design principles:

- > Landscape, Views and Drainage
- > Movement + Connections
- > Character

The concept masterplan illustrates broadly how the site could be developed for residential development - underpinned by the principles of landscape-led masterplanning and place making. It illustrates that the site could deliver around 475 new homes at a density of 35 dph, with a generous, centrally located communal open space that overlooks and incorporates the central public right of way and provides for informal recreation, wildlife, food growing and children’s play. A central focal point has been identified that, if it was felt desirable, could be worked up as a community/educational facility.

The development has been designed to be a place of character and quality, one that is safe and welcoming with a clear definition between public and private spaces and all streets and green spaces overlooked for good natural surveillance. Well-considered street tree planting is proposed, to contribute to its well-treed setting and provide enhanced visual amenity and biodiversity benefits.

The development promotes walking, exercise and healthy living and provides a sustainable footpath and cycle route to the urban area of Wordsley and its local facilities.

Generous, multi-functional green infrastructure incorporates existing hedgerows and trees into a new landscape framework to aid visual assimilation of the built form and maintain a well-screened site, enhance biodiversity and integrate sustainable drainage features and incorporate small pocket parks for local play.

Primary access is shown off the A449 with secondary access off Lawnswood Road. A clear road hierarchy and good permeability is proposed to ensure ease of movement and connectivity.

The eastern parcel of the site is to be retained as natural green space and enhanced biodiversity providing access to wildlife-rich areas for informal recreation such as dog walking and natural play.





SECTION 5

CONCEPT MASTERPLAN

A landscape-led conceptual design is provided with the vision for sustainable, high-quality and well-connected residential development integrated into its existing setting - with generous, nature-rich public open spaces for wildlife and informal recreation and enjoyment by the local community, sustainable drainage, enhanced biodiversity and high visual amenity. A place that responds to the qualities and characteristics of its landscape setting to create a desirable place to live, play and socialise.

Design principles based on 'placemaking' and 'what makes a great place to live' underpin the design approach and the concept masterplan has been guided by five key guiding principles:

- > Local character and quality
- > Green spaces for all
- > A walkable neighbourhood
- > Healthy living
- > Environmental sustainability

Development of the 50ha site could deliver a sustainable development comprising:

- > Around 475 new energy efficient homes - meeting the needs for affordable homes across a mix of housing sizes and tenures
- > Green infrastructure providing a connected network of nature-rich open spaces, footpaths and recreational uses
- > New public open spaces offering equipped play and community food growing
- > A focal point that if felt desirable, could be worked up as a community/educational facility
- > Integrated Sustainable Urban Drainage (SuDS)
- > Generous area of enhanced biodiversity and informal recreational use for new and local residents e.g. access to nature, dog walking and natural play

Our design approach has been landscape-led from the outset. A high level LVA has supported an early understanding of the landscape character and visual amenity of both the site and its context and has been an important working tool in guiding the design of the proposed development. It has comprised a desk-top study and on-site survey field work that follows the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Assessment GLVIA3 - the 'industry standard'. It has assessed the landscape baseline and visual baseline separately to determine where key potential landscape and visual effects may be experienced, the key mitigation measures required and potential effects of the development. The extent of the study area covers the site itself and its wider context within which the proposed development may influence it. This has been determined by the 'zone of visual influence' and the existing physical characteristics of the landscape. The LVA can be used as a basis for developing a full LVIA later in the process if required.

PLAN 12 MASTERPLAN



KEY

 Development Zones

 Main Access

 Access Road

 Green Infrastructure/SUDS

 Focal Point

SECTION 2 CONCLUSIONS

This Vision Document has been prepared on behalf of Folkes Holdings to support the promotion of land at Lawnswood for a new residential development providing in the region of 475 new homes in addition to public open space, landscaping, biodiversity enhancements and the potential for a new community facility on site.

The site is located within the administrative area of South Staffordshire District although physically it is better related to the built-up edge of Dudley MBC, within the Black Country, which lies immediately to the east of the site. The existing residential areas of Lawnswood and Wordsley lie to the north and east of the site.

The need for the development stems from the inability of Birmingham and the Black Country to be able to meet in full their own objectively assessed housing needs within their own administrative areas. Birmingham currently has a shortfall of 37,900 dwellings that are needed within the City, but for which land is not available to accommodate this amount of development. Likewise, the Black Country Core Strategy Review Issues and Options document suggests there may be an emerging capacity shortfall of up to 22,000 dwellings. It is our view that South Staffordshire's housing requirement is greater than that which has currently been proposed by the Council, and as such, there is an even greater necessity to release land from the Green Belt.

South Staffordshire District Council is currently reviewing its Development Plan in order to identify additional housing sites to meet its own objectively assessed housing needs, and those of the wider HMA that were not available at the time that the Plan was adopted. To facilitate the review, the Council are considering amendments to the Green Belt in the District in order to release land for housing.

The land at Lawnswood is, therefore, being promoted at this time to ostensibly contribute to meeting the unmet housing needs arising in the Greater Birmingham and Black Country HMA, albeit that the site is within South Staffordshire. The location of the site on the edge of the built-up edge of Dudley MBC makes it wholly suited to meeting the Black Country's needs by directing new housing to where it is needed.

To assist the promotion of the site, initial high-level assessments of baseline conditions have been undertaken which indicate that there are no technical, physical or environmental constraints that would prevent the development of the site. These assessments have also helped identify opportunities and constraints to guide the masterplanning of the site and to inform evolving transportation and landscaping strategies for the site.

The site will deliver a significant number of dwellings over a number of years that will make an important contribution to meeting the housing needs of the HMA. Specifically, it can help meet the need for family housing, both market and affordable. Whilst this is a significant benefit that weighs in favour of the site, a number of other benefits will also be delivered through its development including the provision of affordable family housing units, new public open space, community facilities and improved access to recreation facilities. Similarly, a development of this size and scale will deliver a number of economic benefits in terms of construction jobs and increased demand for goods, services and trades in the wider area in order to service the development.

The proposed development will, therefore, make a significant contribution to the delivery of sustainable development. Folkes Holdings remain committed to the sites ongoing promotion and welcome the opportunity to continue engaging in a meaningful manner with the respective Council's through the preparation of their Local Plans.

VISION DOCUMENT PREPARED BY

harrislamb
PROPERTY CONSULTANCY

