

DOCUMENT D

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, VISUAL RESOURCES AND GREEN
INFRASTRUCTURE**

SEPTEMBER 2010 (FPCR)

**Miller Homes/ Persimmon Homes/ Southern & Regional
Developments Ltd**

Brockhill West

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER, VISUAL RESOURCES
AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE**

October 2010



CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction and Background
2.0	Landscape Context and Character
3.0	Visual Appraisal
4.0	Planning Policy Context
5.0	Masterplan and Green Infrastructure Strategy
6.0	Landscape and Visual Assessment
7.0	Conclusion

Figures

Figure	1	Site Location Plan
Figure	2	Aerial Photograph
Figure	3	Topography Plan
Figure	4	Landscape Character and Visual Analysis
Figure	5	Site Photographs
Figure	6	Landscape Features
Figure	7	Green Infrastructure Proposals

Appendices

Appendix	A	Landscape Character Assessment Extracts
Appendix	B	Landscape Planning Policy Extracts

1.0 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1 FPCR Ltd has been commissioned by Southern and Regional Developments, Miller Homes and Persimmon Homes to carry out an assessment of landscape character, visual resources and green infrastructure for land at Brockhill West, Redditch. The main objective of the study was to inform and assess the preliminary masterplan proposals prepared by RPS Planning & Development for the site in the context of current landscape planning policy, focusing on the provision of Green Infrastructure (GI) in particular.

1.2 The site lies at the north-western edge of Redditch and predominantly comprises grazed fields contained by the Batchley Brook and a number of large woodland blocks to the north. A small portion of the site adjacent to the settlement edge lies within Redditch Borough, the remainder is within Bromsgrove District. The site location is shown at Figure 1.

1.3 FPCR Ltd is a multi disciplinary environmental and design consultancy with over 50 years experience of architecture, landscape, ecology, urban design, masterplanning and environmental impact assessment. The practice is a member of the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment and is frequently called upon to provide expert evidence on landscape and visual issues at Public Inquiries and Local Development Plan Examinations.

Methodology

1.4 The assessment has been conducted in accordance with the "Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment" (GLVIA) published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment 2002, and "Landscape Character Assessment. Guidance for England and Scotland" (LCA) published by the Countryside Agency and Scottish National Heritage 2002.

1.5 The approach combines information and desktop reviews with on-site surveys and appraisals. The report provides an assessment of the principal landscape and visual issues, relating to the site and has been based on a combination of site based assessment and information review. The area has been assessed in terms of landscape character and sensitivity and visual amenity and sensitivity.

1.6 The assessment considers the potential for future development within the site and the likely resultant landscape and visual effects. As part of the assessment current published Landscape Character Assessment documents and landscape related Planning Policy applicable to the site has also been reviewed.

1.7 The desktop reviews have considered the following studies and documents:

- Countryside Agency – Character Map of England.
- A New Look at the Landscapes of Worcestershire, Worcestershire County Council, 2004
- Historic Environment Assessment (Redditch Borough Council) Supplementary Statement for HECZ148
- Biodiversity by Design: A Guide for Sustainable Communities, Town and Country Planning Association, September 2004
- Nature Nearby: Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance, Natural England, March 2010
- Start with the Park: Creating sustainable urban green spaces in areas of housing growth and renewal, CABI Space, 2005
- Green Infrastructure Guidance, Natural England, 2009
- CABI Green Space Strategies: A Good Practice Guide, 2004
- West Midlands Fit for the Future? Preparing the Region for Economic Recovery. Green Infrastructure. West Midlands Regional Observatory.
- Green Infrastructure: A prospectus for the West Midlands Region, prepared on behalf of the West Midlands Regional Assembly's Environment Partnership by TEP and Alison Millward Associates, January 2007
- Green Infrastructure for the West Midlands Region: Technical Mapping Paper, a Guide to the spatial mapping and assessment of Green Infrastructure for public and wildlife benefit. A report for West Midlands Regional Assembly by TEP, January 2007
- Restoring the Region's Wildlife: Regional Biodiversity Strategy for the West Midlands, West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership, 2005
- Growing our Future: the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework, October 2004
- West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework, Growing our Future 2008-2011 Delivery Plan
- Worcestershire Access and Recreation Strategy, Worcestershire County Council, Final Report, March 2004
- Borough of Redditch Local Plan No 3, adopted 31st May 2006

- Redditch Preferred Draft Core Strategy document, 31st October 2008 – 8th May 2009
- Bromsgrove District Local Plan, Adopted 2004
- Bromsgrove District Core Strategy Draft Document, October 2008
- Worcestershire Structure Plan , adopted June 2001 (saved Policies September 2007)

The relevant Countryside Agency and Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment landscape character information is included at Appendix A and current applicable planning policy extracts at Appendix B.

Landscape and Visual Assessment

- 1.8 All landscape and visual assessments are based upon a clearly defined purpose. This influences the scale and detail of the assessment and the types of judgements that are needed to inform decisions. The process comprises two key distinct stages:
- **Existing characteristics and sensitivity – which is concerned with identifying, classifying and describing areas of similar character and sensitivity.**
 - **Making judgements – to inform particular decisions, which may use one or a combination of approaches; depending upon the purpose of the exercise.**
- 1.9 The site based assessment involves the recording of both objective descriptions and subjective impressions of the landscape, as well as details of the existing landscape condition and the most appropriate management strategy to be adopted. The latter recognises that some areas are worthy of conservation and maintenance of existing landscape character, whereas others would benefit from some enhancement measures or a more significant restoration strategy.
- 1.10 The Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (GLVIA) states;
- "Landscape impact assessments, in common with any assessment of environmental effects, include a combination of objective and subjective judgements, and it is therefore important that a structured and consistent approach is used. It is necessary to differentiate between judgements that involve a degree of subjective opinion (as in the assessment of landscape value) from those that are normally more objective and quantifiable"*
- 1.11 The GLVIA also states;

"Landscape and visual assessments are separate, although linked, procedures. The landscape baseline, its analysis and the assessment of landscape effects all contribute to the baseline for visual assessment studies. The assessment of the potential effect on the landscape is carried out as an effect on an environmental resource, i.e. the landscape. Visual effects are assessed as one of the interrelated effects on population".

- 1.12 Landscape effects derive from changes in the physical landscape, which may give rise to changes in its character and how this is experienced. This may in turn affect the perceived value ascribed to the landscape. The description and analysis of effects on a landscape resource relies on the adoption of certain basic principles about the positive (or beneficial) and negative (or adverse) effects of change in the landscape. Due to the inherently dynamic nature of the landscape, change arising from a development may not necessarily be significant.
- 1.13 Landscape Assessments are used to aid decisions about the ability of an area to accommodate change, often through the introduction of new development but also through other land use and land cover changes including woodland planting. It is in these circumstances that judgements should be based upon an understanding of the ability of the landscape to accommodate this change without unnecessary significant effects. Creation of new landscape character may also be appropriate in some circumstances.
- 1.14 Visual effects relate to the changes that arise in the composition of available views as a result of changes to the landscape, to people's responses to the changes, and to the overall effects with respect to visual amenity. The extent to which the site is visible from the surrounding area has been broadly determined in conjunction with the level or number of receptors (properties, public footpaths, roads etc) with views to parts or all of the site area.

2.0 LANDSCAPE CONTEXT AND CHARACTER

Site Context and Land Use

2.1 The site and context are illustrated at Figure 2, the Aerial Photograph. The site is located at the north-western edge of Redditch. It is enclosed by recent residential development on higher land to the south and east and the A448 and Hewell Lane to the west. Surrounding extensive woodland areas include Foxlydiate Wood, Brockhill Wood and woodland at Cladshill and Hewell Park. These woodlands provide containment to the north and south.

2.2 The site comprises the north-east facing slopes of the Batchley Brook valley, and includes the Brook itself, which crosses the north of the site from west to east close to the northern site boundary. The Brook is a small discreet watercourse that winds through a broad swathe of fields within the valley bottom. The site is predominantly in grazing use, with a number of hedgerows and hedgerow trees that provide landscape structure. Two fields within the north-west corner of the site are in arable use.

2.3 Existing buildings on the site comprise Tack Farm and Oxstalls Farm complexes. Just to the north Paper Mill Cottages are separated from the site by mature trees and vegetation. Hewell Kennels lies to the north of Batchley Brook and Brockhill Farm complex is located on higher land further north. Hewell Grange Young Offender Institution lies within woodland further to the north-west. Hewell Park which provides the setting to the Grange is listed on the English Heritage register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Topography

2.4 The following description of the local topography should be read in conjunction with Figure 3 (Topography).

2.5 The site is located between two long ridges of land which lie in a north-west to south-east orientation. The southern ridge follows Hewell Lane past the site into the centre of Redditch. This southern ridge lies at approximately 150metres AOD adjacent to the south-western boundary of the site, with a high point at the far north-western corner of the site. Tack Farm is located upon the ridgeline at a second highpoint of 154metres AOD indicated on Figure 3.

- 2.6 From the ridgeline the gently undulating landform descends across the site in a north-easterly direction towards the Batchley Brook, which lies at around 110-115 metres AOD just to the south of the northern site boundary. A small portion of the site is located just north of Batchley Brook at around the same level as the Brook.
- 2.7 North of the Brook the heavily wooded landform rises gradually to Brockhill Farm at around 140-145metres AOD and continues to rise beyond to the northern of the two ridgelines at around 160metres AOD.
- 2.8 To the north-west Hewell Grange Young Offenders Institution is located at between 160 and 115metres AOD, enclosed by woodland, this landscape slopes north eastwards towards a central valley and landscaped lake, which feeds into the Batchley Brook.
- 2.9 The Batchley Brook Valley extends to the south into Redditch at around 105-110metres AOD. From here land rises southwards through north-west Redditch to around 155metres where residential areas and woodland meet the A448 on the ridgeline.

Published Landscape Character Documents

- 2.10 The combining facets of a landscape set one area apart from those adjacent to it and make its character unique to the people who both live in or visit the area. Landscape Character Assessment (LCA) is a process of characterising a landscape, and the consideration of effects on landscape character. Published landscape character assessments have been prepared at a National and County scale, the relevance of these documents to the Site and its landscape context is reviewed below. Relevant extracts of these documents are included at Appendix A.

Countryside Agency Character Map of England

- 2.11 The Countryside Character Initiative, led by the former Countryside Agency, mapped England into 159 separate, distinctive character areas on a regional scale. The site lies within the western most part of the 'Arden' Character Area (No.97), and this describes the very broad landscape context and character of the wide geographic area within which Redditch and the site falls.

2.12 The Arden Character Area covers an extensive area from Tamworth in the north to Stratford upon Avon in the south, and between Coventry and Birmingham. The key characteristics of the character area are;

- *Well-wooded farmland landscape with rolling landform.*
- *Ancient landscape pattern of small fields, winding lanes and dispersed, isolated hamlets.*
- *Contrasting patterns of well-hedged, irregular fields and small woodlands interspersed with larger semi regular fields on former deer parks and estates, and a geometric pattern on former commons.*
- *Numerous areas of former wood-pasture with large, old, oak trees, often associated with heathland remnants.*
- *Narrow, meandering river valleys with long river meadows.*
- *North-eastern industrial area based around former Warwickshire coalfield, with distinctive colliery settlements.*
- *North-western area dominated by urban development and associated urban edge landscapes.*

2.13 Under the heading 'The Changing Countryside' the following of relevance to the Site is described for this character area;

- *Rural character has been affected by 'suburbanisation', including inappropriate building materials and layouts for new development, ornamental planting and upgrading of minor roads.*
- *There has been agricultural intensification, particularly conversion of permanent pasture to arable, but also conversion from hay to silage. Most of the remaining pasture is more intensively managed, floristically poor and often reseeded.*
- *There has been loss and deterioration of hedges, the former particularly as a result of field amalgamation, resulting in a more fragmented landscape. Gappy hedges have been formed by excessive hedge trimming or complete abandonment of management.*
- *There is a lack of young trees to replace the present ageing tree population, especially in hedges and small clumps.*
- *There has been a general lack of woodland management in many places, leading to deterioration, coupled with conversion from oak to faster-growing, often non-native, species.*
- *There has been expansion at the edges of the smaller towns and Coventry, as well as around villages and hamlets.*

2.14 The following recommendations are made under the heading 'Shaping the Future';

- *The conservation management of woodlands, particularly ancient and semi-natural woodlands, and wood-pasture is important in this area of good tree cover.*
- *The dispersed settlement pattern is a key characteristic of much of the area. Development guidelines and village strategies, including specific design guidelines, can assist in safeguarding this pattern.*
- *The retention of hedges and hedgerow trees should be addressed, especially in the north-eastern part of the area.*
- *Planting schemes using native tree species are appropriate for screening urban edges and new residential developments.*

- *There is scope for the restoration of heathland, especially on roadside verges, and for the active management (notably bracken and scrub clearance) of existing heathlands.*

2.15 Given that the Natural England (formerly the Countryside Agency) assessment covers a wide area, the description and details contained therein only describes the very broad landscape context for the Site and Redditch, without reference to the larger settlement pattern and influence of Redditch within this character area. A finer level of landscape assessment is provided by 'The Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment' published by Worcestershire County Council.

A New Look at the Landscapes of Worcestershire, 2004

2.16 'A New Look at the Landscapes of Worcestershire' was published by Worcestershire County Council in 2004 and in conjunction with the Associated Landscape Type information sheets, provides a more detailed assessment of the landscape in the locality of the site. The assessment uses three separate tiers of information to describe the landscape of Worcestershire.

2.17 At the broadest level are Regional Character Areas, which relate to the Joint Character Area described above. The site and its surroundings lie within the 'Arden' Regional Character Area. Within the description it is explained that the name 'Arden' is derived from the word Ardu meaning 'high land' and this relates primarily to the part of the region that lies on the southern and eastern side of the Birmingham plateau. It is acknowledged that Arden was historically heavily wooded and remains one of the more wooded parts of the Midlands today. For the area around Redditch it is mentioned that "the hedges contain large numbers of oaks with much holly and gorse, and there are remnants of heathland", and "Marl pits are abundant near Redditch".

2.18 The County is also divided into Landscape Types on the basis of distinctive landscape characteristics including geology, topography, vegetation and human influences. The description for these provides a finer grain of information. The site lies wholly within the Wooded Estatelands Landscape Type. The full description of this area is provided at Appendix A, however the main points are summarised below:

2.19 The Wooded Estatelands are described as:

A large-scale, wooded agricultural landscape of isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional small estate villages. Key visual elements in this landscape are the many large, irregularly shaped ancient woodlands, often prominently situated on low crests. It is a landscape that can appear rather functional, due to its scale; it can lack intimacy and warmth.

2.20 The key characteristics of the Wooded Estatelands are:

Primary

- *Large discrete blocks of irregularly- shaped woodland*
- *Mixed farming land use*

Secondary

- *Rolling topography with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpments*
- *Semi-regular pattern of large, hedged fields*
- *Woodland of ancient character*
- *Discrete settlement clusters often in the form of small estate villages*
- *Medium distance framed views*
- *Large country houses set in parkland and ornamental grounds*

2.21 In terms of management the following recommendation is made for this Landscape Type;

The overall management strategy for the Wooded Estatelands would be one of conservation with elements of enhancement and restoration, aiming to conserve the large scale structure and wooded character of the landscape whilst seeking to restore parkland areas and enhance the overall landscape by encouraging an increase in woodland cover.

2.22 At the finest level of detail are the Landscape Description Units (LDU's), based on the framework of Landscape Character Types. The site and its surroundings are located in the Bordesley Wooded Estatelands LDU AR10, which is described as follows:

A soft rock area of mixed mudstones and sandstones, with free draining, mixed brown soils and an intermediate, undulating topography. The land use is pastoral and the tree cover comprises interlocking, or frequent, usually large, discrete blocks of ancient woodland. The settlement pattern is one of farmsteads and strings of wayside dwellings associated with a moderate to high level of dispersal and a small to medium scale field pattern.

- *relic deer park*
- *localised area of ornamental parkland with associated features, Bordesley Park, Brockhill Park*
- *red brick building style*
- *dense streamline trees, notable at Dagnell Brook*

- *localised clusters of marl pit pools*
- *localised enclosed relic common: Rowney Green*
- *regular field boundaries*

Condition (updated 2008)

- *moderate intensity mixed farming with a declining field pattern with boundaries in poor condition*
- *overall inconsistent and under-representation of woodland cover*
- *localised high impact of modern ribbon development along roads noticeable in eastern half*
- *localised high impact of urban development associated with prison complex*

Historic Environment Assessment (Redditch Borough Council) Supplementary Statement for HECZ148

- 2.23 This is based upon the evidence base provided by the Historic Environment Assessment for Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils and the Worcestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project and includes a broad review of the potential effect of development generally within Historic Environment Character Zone 148. The site lies within HECZ148e, which covers a wide area north west of Redditch. This area is described as *Historic wooded landscape setting around parkland* and is given a sensitivity rating of medium and the sensitivity assessment states;

"Development will potentially impact on historic woodlands and historic hedgerows that act as linkages, and the setting of Hewell Grange".

- 2.24 The area registered as Historic Park and Garden at Hewell Grange falls within parcel HECZ148f, this area is described as '*Historic parkland with listed buildings*' and given a sensitivity rating of high. The sensitivity assessment states;

"Development will potentially impact on the historic parkland landscape of Hewell Grange and its setting".

- 2.25 In considering development the assessment recommends informed design to ensure that the historic environment remains a fundamental and integrated part of the landscape and promotes Green Infrastructure (GI) design, stating:

"A key objective in GI design should be the development of opportunities to conserve historic environment features and landscapes, and to promote their contribution towards defining local identity and a 'sense of place'. These objectives will best be met as part of multi-functional objectives that conserve, promote and

enhance historic assets in partnership with other environmental features, such as local habitat and landscape”.

Local Landscape Character

- 2.26 A preliminary assessment of local landscape character has been carried out, using field evaluation and analysis of maps and other published data based on guidance by Natural England. Local landscape character is described below and should be read in conjunction with the Aerial Photograph (Figure 2) and the Landscape Character and Visual Analysis Plan (Figure 4). This provides a finer level of assessment than those included within the Character Map of England and the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment documents.

Batchley Brook Valley

- 2.27 The site and immediate landscape context lie within the Batchley Brook Valley which is bordered by the ridgeline to the south west and woodland to the north east. Although the valley is open in character, the site and adjacent fields are contained by the ridge and extensive woodland blocks on rising land to the north around Brockhill Wood and Cladshill. This enclosure creates a distinct compartment of land which predominantly comprises grazed fields enclosed by a good framework of hedgerows with hedgerow trees. Several fields on higher land are in arable use.
- 2.28 The Batchley Brook is a small watercourse often lined by vegetation and winds discreetly through a broad corridor of lower lying fields. A public right of way follows the valley bottom from the residential edge of Redditch to meet Hewell Lane close to the north-west corner of the site. The remainder of the site is located on gently undulating land which rises gradually to the southwest towards Hewell Lane. On Hewell Lane, Tack Farm complex is located on a highpoint close to the ridgeline at the south-western site boundary and comprises a collection of red brick buildings. Oxstalls Farm is located on lower land within the site and includes agricultural sheds. Elsewhere within this area, settlement includes Hewell Kennels, which comprise a scattered collection of buildings and sheds just north of Batchley Brook. The existing settlement edge of Redditch has an influence the southernmost and more elevated parts of this area.

- 2.29 The site and its immediate landscape context has been assessed as having a medium landscape sensitivity, although it is in agricultural use with a good landscape structure, the presence of Hewell Kennels and the adjacent urban edge influence its character. Any development proposals should seek to retain and enhance the landscape structure.

Hewell Grange

- 2.30 Hewell Grange lies at the heart of this landscape surrounded by historic parkland including a lake which is designated as a SSSI. This landscape is enclosed by woodland and not visible within the wider landscape. The Grange is currently utilised as a young offender's institution. To the north a modern purpose built prison influences the adjacent local landscape and there are residential properties within the wooded landscape. Hewell Park is listed on the English Heritage Register of Historic Parks and Gardens. The listing includes two isolated fields to the south; these are divided from Hewell Park by its peripheral woodland and separated from the adjacent Batchley Brook local landscape character area by the topography.

- 2.31 The landscape of Hewell Grange varies in sensitivity. The features which provide the landscape setting are of high landscape sensitivity. However its character is influenced and by the modern prison uses and buildings which also lie within the landscape setting. Although the area includes uses of low sensitivity overall it has been assessed as having medium landscape sensitivity largely due to its historic landscape structure. Hewell Grange and its landscape are enclosed by woodland and inward looking in character. Appropriate development proposals within adjacent local landscape character areas should not result in any discernible change to this landscape. However, a suitable landscape buffer could be provided in conjunction with development to reinforce the separation of the designated landscape.

Brockhill

- 2.32 To the north the landform is more elevated and heavily wooded and the landscape character changes significantly. The intervening woodland to the north of the site divides the site and its context from the areas to the north, which comprise extensive areas of arable farmland and large woodland blocks north of Brockhill Farm.

- 2.33 This area has been assessed as medium landscape sensitivity. It is located at a greater distance from the settlement edge influence of Redditch; however Hewell Prison has a local influence on parts of this landscape. The woodland blocks provide structure and landscape value, containing and compartmentalising the large arable fields.

Urban

- 2.34 The urban context of the site comprises modern residential development with no identified discerning built landscape features. A number of landscape features provide structure to this urban area namely Foxlydiate and Pitcher Oak Woodland to the south and a linear green corridor along the route of the Batchley Brook valley, which includes landscaped parks and a waterbody as it passes through the urban area.
- 2.35 The residential area as a whole has been assessed as low landscape sensitivity although natural landscape features (woodland and the Batchley Brook Valley) are of greater sensitivity, any development proposals should seek to extend these features.

3.0 VISUAL APPRAISAL

3.1 A visual appraisal has been undertaken for the Site. This assessment has sought to establish the visibility of the Site from surrounding receptors. The assessment was undertaken on 11th August 2010. A baseline analysis of the available views is set out below and is supported by a series of photo viewpoints (Figure 5), viewpoint locations are indicated at Figure 4. An assessment of the potential visual effects of development is considered in Section 6.0.

3.2 The following photographs have all been taken from publicly accessible viewpoints;

3.3 Viewpoints A-C: Brockhill Farm

The first three viewpoints represent the view towards the site from the limited number of receptors identified on higher land to the north around Brockhill Farm.

3.4 From a short section of the public bridleway to the east of Brockhill Farm, represented by Viewpoint A, there is a limited view above young woodland at Brockhill Wood to the most elevated land within the site below Tack Farm, which is located on a highpoint. The view is framed by Brockhill and Cladshill Woods and the ridgeline along Hewell Lane is well vegetated.

3.5 Viewpoints B and C are located on Brockhill Lane adjacent to Brockhill Farm, again the view towards the site is limited by intervening woodland at Brockhill and Cladshill woods. Tack Farm is visible on the highpoint with the more elevated land within the site visible below. The majority of the site is screened from view. Foxlydiate and Pitcher Oak Woods dominate the horizon above Redditch. From Viewpoint C residential properties at the northern edge of Redditch are discernible.

3.6 Viewpoints D-F: Hewell Lane

Boundary hedgerows along Hewell Lane prevent the majority of views into the site. The photographs are taken from breaks within the hedgerows.

3.7 Viewpoint D is taken from the point where the public footpath enters the site, in this location a near highpoint prevents views across the site, Hewell Grange to the north is screened from view by woodland on the near horizon. A roof at Tack Farm is just discernible.

- 3.8 Viewpoint E is taken from a break in the hedgerow adjacent to the lay-by just north of Tack Farm. This is located below the highpoint and presents a channelled view across the site to lower land within the Batchley Brook Valley with the existing residential edge beyond; from here Brockhill Wood rises to the horizon. To the north a wooded horizon screens Hewell Grange from view. Hewell Kennels is visible below Cladshill Wood. Roofs of Tack Farm buildings are visible on higher land to the south.
- 3.9 From a lay-by adjacent to the B4096/B4184 roundabout just north of Foxlydiate Wood Viewpoint F is slightly elevated, the view north includes fields within the site framed by Cladshill and Brockhill Woods on the horizon. Tack Farm is visible on a highpoint on the near horizon. Hewell Kennels and Brockhill Farm are more distantly visible. To the east properties within Redditch are visible along with the roof of Oxstalls Farm on lower land within the site. There are channelled views of very distant higher land to the east and north.
- 3.10 **Viewpoints G – H: Redditch residential edge**
These viewpoints are taken from the existing settlement edge. Viewpoint G represents the view from Parklands Close and looks on to grazed fields with a near horizon. Viewpoint H is from the public right of way as it exits the housing area and enters the site, the view is across a broad low lying area with the Batchley Brook identified as a tree lined course winding discretely through the valley bottom. The area is enclosed by woodland and gently rising land on the near horizon. Properties at the edge of Redditch overlook the valley. The topography and boundary vegetation generally prevents views into the site and there are a limited number of peripheral receptors with views to the site.
- 3.11 **Viewpoints I-S: Batchley Brook Valley**
These photos are taken from the public right of way that passes through the valley.
- 3.12 Viewpoint I is 360degree view from within the valley. To the east and south, properties along Appletree Lane and Dairy Lane are visible as well as those off Parklands Close. The valley is contained by gradually rising land and woodland on the near horizon.

- 3.13 Viewpoint J is taken from adjacent to a small bridge over the Batchley Brook looking north. The fields to the north of the site appear flat and low-lying contained by higher land and woodland to the north.
- 3.14 Viewpoints K and L are located at the south west corner of Brockhill Wood at a point where an informal footpath is identified on the OS Explorer mapping. From K the view south towards the site includes the tree lined course of the Brook in the foreground with properties at the edge of Redditch beyond low lying fields. Woodland on higher land contains Redditch and the site. To the west the site rises to the near horizon, Tack Farm is just visible on a highpoint between gaps in the vegetation. The view north from Viewpoint L shows a glimpse through the hedgerow boundary across an arable field to Brockhill Wood and Cladshill Wood on the near horizon.
- 3.15 From centrally within the valley Viewpoints M and N illustrate the wooded enclosure north of the site. From Viewpoint N there is a glimpse view of Paper Mill Cottages, which are well enclosed by trees which provide visual separation from the site. Hewell Kennels are visible within the valley.
- 3.16 From Viewpoints O and Q there are glimpse views through gaps in hedgerows south across grazed fields within the site. The tall, dense hedgerows create distinct field compartments. Rising land limits the view to a near horizon. From viewpoint O the roof of Tack Farm is just visible on higher land.
- 3.17 From Viewpoints P and S located just to the south of Paper Mill Cottages and on slightly more elevated land, the view north beyond Batchley Brook (just discernible as the nearest line of vegetation to the viewpoint) shows extensive areas of multicoloured sheds at Hewell Kennels with fields rising beyond to Brockhill Farm below a wooded horizon. From Viewpoint S the adjacent woodland belt that screens Paper Mill Cottages from view lies adjacent to the Viewpoint.
- 3.18 From Viewpoint R a private lane continues westwards to Tack Farm. The route of the public right of way continues diagonally across the arable field and appears unused. Trees, woodland and rising land screen Hewell Park to the north, and Hewell Lane and Tack Farm to the west.

3.19 **Viewpoint T: Redditch town**

This represents the general view from elevated locations within Redditch. Due to the orientation to the site and intervening properties the site is screened from view although Brockhill and Cladshill Woods are visible on higher land on the horizon beyond. There may be viewpoints elsewhere from private properties where parts of the site can be viewed, however this would always be in the context of existing settlement in the foreground and distant woodland on the skyline.

Summary

3.20 The photographs demonstrate that the site is well contained within a limited visual envelope. Although land within the site rises to meet the ridgeline along Hewell Lane the potential receptors remain limited due to the presence of the ridgeline and the surrounding undulating, wooded landform.

3.21 Potential residential receptors identified include the adjacent residential edge of Redditch (from where there are limited views to a small part of the site along the Batchley Brook Valley) and a small number of farmsteads including Tack Farm, Oxstalls Farm, Brockhill Farm and Hewell Kennels. Oxstalls Farm lies within the site. There are two public footpaths through the site and a short section of bridleway on higher land to the north. There are very limited views through several gaps in hedgerows along Hewell Lane and Brockhill Lane. There may be limited and more distant views from elevated land and properties within Redditch to the south; however, if visible, the site would be seen distantly and in the context of built-up urban areas within the foreground. Importantly no views were identified from Hewell Grange and its landscaped setting, both being contained by peripheral woodland.

4.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 4.1 This section identifies the current relevant planning and legislative framework in the context of the landscape and visual issues, with particular focus on Green Infrastructure and spatial planning of natural greenspace. Only those policies of greatest landscape and visual relevance to the site are listed.

National Context

- 4.2 National planning policy contains a number of relevant general policy references within the Planning Policy Statement (PPS) documents. The most relevant to landscape and visual issues are:

Planning Policy Statement 1: Delivering Sustainable Development

Planning Policy Statement 3: Housing

PPG 17: Planning for Open Space, sport and recreation

Planning Policy Statement 9: Biodiversity and Geological Conservation

Planning Policy Statement 7: Sustainable Development in Rural Areas

- 4.3 PPG17, PPS9 & PPS7 (in part) will all be replaced by the new PPS on Planning for a Natural and Healthy Environment when published (this latter document is currently out to consultation) and it includes more detail on the spatial planning role of natural greenspace and green infrastructure.

Regional Context

- 4.4 As of 6th July 2010 Central Government has revoked all Regional Spatial Strategies. However at a regional level a number of guidance documents have been published that influence and support the policies set out within the RSS. Landscape related documents comprise;

- West Midlands Fit for the Future? Preparing the Region for Economic Recovery. Green Infrastructure. West Midlands Regional Observatory.
- Green Infrastructure: A prospectus for the West Midlands Region, prepared on behalf of the West Midlands Regional Assembly's Environment Partnership by TEP and Alison Millward Associates, January 2007

- Green Infrastructure for the West Midlands Region: Technical Mapping Paper, a Guide to the spatial mapping and assessment of Green Infrastructure for public and wildlife benefit. A report for West Midlands Regional Assembly by TEP, January 2007
- Restoring the Region's Wildlife: Regional Biodiversity Strategy for the West Midlands, West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership, 2005
- Growing our Future: the West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework, October 2004
- West Midlands Regional Forestry Framework, Growing our Future 2008-2011 Delivery Plan
- Worcestershire Access and Recreation Strategy, Worcestershire County Council, Final Report, March 2004

4.5 The above documents focus on delivery of Green Infrastructure and advocate that Green Infrastructure principles should be enshrined within development planning policy. They set out guidelines to Local Authorities for developing Green Infrastructure Strategies as part of the Local Development Frameworks.

4.6 No technical Green Infrastructure studies have yet been undertaken that cover the administrative area for the site.

Local Context

4.7 Although the site adjoins Redditch, only a small part of the site lies within Redditch Borough, the remainder lies with Bromsgrove District. The following planning policy documents are therefore currently applicable (full wording of the listed policies is included at Appendix B);

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 3 Adopted 31st May 2006

4.8 The Redditch Local Plan proposals map identifies areas of 'Primarily Open Space', Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), Special Wildlife Sites and Local Nature Reserves (LNRs). Those within the context of the site are mapped on Figure 6 Existing Landscape Features. The following saved local plan policies have been identified as most relevant;

- Policy CS.8 Landscape character

- Policy B(BE).13 Qualities of Good Design
- Policy B(NE).1a Trees Woodland and Hedgerows
- Policy B(NE).3 Wildlife Corridors
- Policy B(NE).10a Sites of National Wildlife Importance
- Policy B(NE). 10b Sites of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance
- Policy R.1 Primarily open space
- Policy R.6 Protection and Provision of allotments

Redditch Preferred Draft Core Strategy Document 31st Oct 2008- 8th May 2009

4.9 Emerging landscape key related policies for Redditch Borough are as follows;

- Policy SP.3 Sustainability Principles
- Policy BE.3 Landscape Character
- Policy BE.5 Trees
- Policy H2. Primarily Open Space
- Policy SC.7 Infrastructure
- Policy BE1 Climate Change (extract)
- Policy BE2 Flood risk and water management (extract)

Bromsgrove District Local Plan, Adopted 2004

4.10 The majority of the site area lies within Bromsgrove District. The Bromsgrove Local Plan Proposals Map identifies the following landscape features and designations within the context of the site; Hewell Park Registered Park and Garden, a Landscape Protection Area and a SSSI. Applicable saved policies are as follows;

- Historic Parks and Gardens (S48)
- Designation of Landscape Protection Areas (C1)
- Submission of Landscaping Schemes (C5)
- Development Affecting SSSI's and NNR's (C9)
- Development Affecting SWS's and LNR's (C10)
- Development Affecting other Wildlife Sites (C10A)
- Wildlife Corridors (C12)
- Effect Of Infrastructure Development On The Landscape (C16)
- Retention Of Existing Trees (C17)
- Retention Of Existing Woodland (C18)
- Support For Public Rights Of Way (RAT12)

- Protection Of Natural Watercourse Systems (ES1)
- Use Of Soakaways (ES6)

Bromsgrove District Core Strategy, Draft October 2008

- 4.11 There are no specific landscape policies in the Bromsgrove District Core Strategy Draft Document from October 2008. Core Policy 5 concerns *Managing Natural Assets* and includes reference to development proposals paying due attention to the regional character and landscape type as described in the Landscape Character Assessment Interactive Map. Core Policy 6 Managing Man Made Assets refers to Registered Parks and Gardens and the wider historic landscape of the district.

Worcestershire Structure Plan, adopted June 2001

- 4.12 The Worcestershire Structure Plan covers the period 1996-2011. A number of landscape policies from the Plan have been saved;
- Landscape Character (CTC1)
 - Skylines and Hill Features (CTC2)
 - Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows (CTC5)
 - Green Open Spaces and Corridors (CTC6)

Published Guidance Documents

- 4.13 There is a number of published guidance documents setting out central government approaches to GI, biodiversity and natural greenspace, those most relevant to this study are summarised below. Many of these set out their own standards for measuring whether sufficient greenspace is available for local communities. The principles set within these guidance documents have helped guide the development of the Green Infrastructure principles for the site.

Green Infrastructure Guidance:

Green Infrastructure Guidance, Natural England (2009)

- 4.14 This guidance document is introduced as follows;
- The provision of green infrastructure in and around urban areas is now widely recognised as contributing towards creating places where people want to live and work. The concept of green infrastructure is embodied in the Government's Planning Policy Statements (PPS) 1 and 12. It is an essential component of good planning for urban and rural areas, particularly in the face of climate change... Using the*

Guidance, Natural England will drive forward green infrastructure planning and delivery.

4.15 Natural England's definition of green infrastructure;

'Green Infrastructure is a strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features. It should be designed and managed as a multifunctional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and needed to underpin sustainability. Its design and management should also respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitats and landscape types.'

Green Infrastructure includes established green spaces and new sites and should thread through and surround the built environment and connect the urban area to its wider rural hinterland. Consequently it needs to be delivered at all spatial scales from sub-regional to local neighbourhood levels, accommodating both accessible natural green spaces within local communities and often much larger sites in the urban fringe and wider countryside.'

4.16 With reference to new development;

Green infrastructure is especially relevant to the housing and economic growth agendas (particularly the Growth Areas and Growth Points) and to the regeneration of urban areas. Here green infrastructure is about development going hand-in-hand with the protection and enhancement of existing environmental assets and the creation of new ones. It's about putting the environment right at the centre of the planning process and producing a strategic and linked, multifunctional network of spaces with benefits for people and wildlife. It's also about underpinning the sustainability of a town or city, including making it resilient to the effects of climate change and enabling local authorities to meet their duty to conserve biodiversity under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006.

4.17 The document sets out how to plan for green infrastructure effectively, providing a 'good practice pointers' checklist to evaluate planning applications in relation to green infrastructure provision

The pointers are organised under a variety of themes. These are: i) landscape character, setting and management, ii) biodiversity and access to nature, iii) water management, iv) climate change adaptation, v) healthy, cohesive communities, vi) green travel, vii) green specifications, viii) standards and facilities, and ix) ensuring green infrastructure delivery.

4.18 The guidance refers to accessibility and quality standards as a guide to assist in GI planning with specific reference made to Accessible Natural Green Space Standards (ANGSt), Green Flag Awards and service standards such as NNRs and Country Parks or local standards were used (LNRs). It goes on to say

However in every case standards can only be used as a guide as there can never be a 'one size fits all' solution. This is because green infrastructure provision must also reflect local need and the specific character, opportunities and constraints presented

by individual sites, taking into account population trajectories and proximity to existing green infrastructure. It must also reflect, and not conflict with, the need for sustainable urban form (e.g. greenspaces accessible by sustainable modes of transport). Whilst it is important to plan the new green infrastructure in advance of development, it should also reflect established character (including landscape and townscape) and urban grain.

Start with the Park: Creating sustainable urban green spaces in areas of housing growth and renewal, CABE Space, 2005

- 4.19 *This guide provides a clear route for successful place-making in areas of housing growth and renewal. By planning networks of green spaces, and thinking about their design and care, we will not repeat the mistakes of the past. The inspiring examples are from areas of housing growth and low demand – examples that have lessons for areas of both sorts. The guide provides a resource that can be referred to regularly, and is a gateway to other publications offering more detailed guidance. Above all, it shows that meeting the demands of housing growth and renewal is not just about units of housing, it is about transforming neighbourhoods.*
- 4.20 The document goes on to set design guidance for well designed green spaces and summarises these with a series of watch points:
- *Be clear about function - Decision-makers should be sure about why they are creating or retaining a space, who will use it and how. They should carefully consider all the potential economic, social and environmental benefits*
 - *Reflect and enhance local identity - Parks, squares and gardens can contribute to the identity of a place, reflecting the complexity of local landscape, culture and heritage*
 - *Integrate green spaces with building design - Decision-makers need to consider carefully how buildings can help to make green spaces overlooked and well-defined. Housing areas should provide a range of good private and public spaces*
 - *Consider how each space relates to the public realm network - Parks, woodlands, river corridors and other green spaces should form part of an accessible hierarchy of linked green and civic spaces of different functions, scales and characters*
 - *Provide for choice - Green spaces should be designed to allow for choice and play, and for people to experiment with using and experiencing them in different ways*
 - *Build for longevity and flexibility - Consider how spaces might adapt to changing social, economic and environmental conditions*
 - *Consider all user groups - Public open spaces should not be dominated by any single group in such a way as to make others feel uncomfortable. This means catering for a range of needs and involving a range of users*

- *Provide a range of habitats - Public and private green spaces of all scales should be designed to work with nature to enhance and develop local biodiversity.*

Natural Greenspace Guidance

Nature Nearby: Accessible Natural Greenspace Guidance, Natural England, March 2010.

- 4.21 This provides a tool to assess levels of accessible natural greenspace available to communities. There are three underlying principles;

- a) Improving access to green spaces.*
- b) Improving naturalness of green spaces.*
- c) Improving connectivity with green spaces.*

- 4.22 Natural Greenspace is defined as *Places where human control and activities are not intensive so that a feeling of naturalness is allowed to predominate.*

- 4.23 The Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) are referred to in a number of the national and local planning policy documents including the Redditch Open Space Needs Assessment. Within these documents it is proposed that the standards assist in setting broad guidelines in GI planning.

Biodiversity by Design: A Guide for Sustainable Communities, Town and Country Planning Association, September 2004

- 4.24 *"The aim of the guide is to provide guidance on how to maximise the opportunities for biodiversity in the planning and design of sustainable communities. The guide takes the user through the design process, presenting a toolkit of best practice that can be tailored according to the scale of the development opportunity".*

- 4.25 Reference is made in the document to 'Natural Greenspace' and a Green Infrastructure network recommended standard is proposed at page 18, partly based upon ANGSt (2003).

- 4.26 The document provides guidance on masterplanning for the following benefits;

The establishment of a masterplan enables new green infrastructure to be designed to realise the social, economic and environmental benefits of biodiversity...

Regional parks, green grids and community forests enable large areas of habitat on the urban fringe to be linked together, creating a source of biodiversity for our towns and cities...

Parks provide urban residents with access to recreational green space and an experience of nature within the urban area...

Review of Local Authority Open Space Needs Assessments

- 4.27 Both Redditch and Bromsgrove have prepared Open Space Needs Assessments that will be considered as the Green Infrastructure and greenspace proposals for the site evolve. For the site context the studies conclude the following;

Redditch Borough Open Space Needs Assessment 2009

- 4.28 This includes a review of the existing open spaces within the Batchley Ward. It identifies 24 open spaces in the Batchley Ward, 20 of which have unrestricted access, and concludes that the Batchley Ward is adequately provided for, with a surplus of +0.68ha / 1000 population. Within Section 8 a table shows Specific Provision Levels and identifies a surplus provision of Amenity Open Space, Schools and School Grounds, and semi natural space against the Borough standard and an under provision of Parks, Play Areas and Sports Facilities.

Bromsgrove Open Space, Sport and Recreation Local Needs Survey (commissioned December 2007)

- 4.29 This recognises the need to create linkages for natural and semi natural green space. In Bromsgrove east – wards Tardebigge and Alvechurch, it identifies a priority for new or re-profiled provision of children's play and young people but notes that there is overprovision of other facilities within these wards. Generally throughout the district it was noted that enhancing the quality of sports pitches is probably more important than providing quantity with generally a good distribution of sports facilities across the district – although it is observed that there is an undersupply of junior and mini-soccer pitches, cricket pitches, junior rugby (although surplus of senior pitches) and theoretical oversupply of adult pitches. Deficiencies in allotment provision were also noted.
- 4.30 The report discusses priorities for open space and recreation and concludes; *In summary therefore, the main implications relating to quality, quantity and*

accessibility arising through this study for each type of open space which should be addressed through the Local Development Framework (LDF) and include:

- *protect all parks, natural areas, allotments and sports facilities through a policy in the LDF*
- *facilitate enhancement of sites in terms of biodiversity as well as a recreational resource*
- *facilitate the delivery of new play areas and facilities for young people focusing on ensuring that provision is appropriately located and targeted at the local audience – this may include rationalising and reprofiling existing sites*
- *allocate additional land for the provision of allotments particularly in Hagley, Rubery, Wythall and East Bromsgrove*
- *support the improvement of the quality of outdoor sports facilities and address deficiencies where possible*
- *promote the development of green linkages including the development of cycleways and the Public Rights of Way Network and maximise the recreational role of River corridors*
- *encourage the use of sustainable transport by linking large parks and open spaces by green corridors and public transport routes*
- *maximise contributions from developers where appropriate.*

- 4.31 The conclusions from these reports will be considered as the development proposals are detailed.

Summary

- 4.32 In summary, the applicable saved Local Plan and draft Core Strategy policies highlight several landscape and biodiversity designations applicable to the site context, namely the SSSI and Registered Park and Garden at Hewell Park, and the Landscape Protection Area to the north of the site; these are identified on Figure 6. However, no specific planning policy or landscape designation constraints specifically applicable to the site were identified.

- 4.33 National and Regional guidance on developing Green Infrastructure networks and delivering accessible natural green space have been considered and have guided the preliminary Green Infrastructure and Masterplanning proposals for the site. These guidance documents along with the local authority assessments of open

space needs will be considered as the Masterplan and Green Infrastructure proposals are developed further.

5.0 MASTERPLAN AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

- 5.1 The Masterplan and the Green Infrastructure strategy for the site have been developed together following an iterative process. The background policy and guidance has been considered as an integral part of this process. Key landscape features and environmental assets have been identified for the site and its context through site survey and desktop research. These are identified at Figure 6.
- 5.2 The preliminary Green Infrastructure proposals are set out within Figure 7 (The Proposed Green Infrastructure Plan). With development it is proposed to retain the site landscape features within a robust GI framework. The existing hedgerows, Batchley Brook and woodland landscape features would be retained and strengthened within a network of connected greenways to provide a strong 'sense of place' to the development that reflects and enhances local identity. Regard has also been given to features of ecological interest.
- 5.3 The Green Infrastructure proposals plan illustrates how existing hedgerows and trees would be retained within a network of green corridors that would define and contain the development parcels and connect the open spaces within the development. This existing framework would be supplemented with new woodland planting along the south-western boundary to enhance existing green linkages between Foxlydiate Wood and young woodland at the south-western site boundary and woodland to the south of Hewell Grange, whilst reinforcing visual containment of the site along this edge. A broad swathe of open land alongside the Batchley Brook would be retained to provide the backbone to the proposed development. This wraps around the northern edge of the site, and potentially could become a Community Park or a Nature Park to provide an alternative destination to that of Arrow Valley Park for communities within the north-western areas of Redditch.
- 5.4 Recreational linkages from the site into existing greenspace networks within Redditch have been considered and identified as part of the GI and masterplanning proposals and are illustrated at Figure 7. The retained open Batchley Brook corridor connects directly into the existing 'Primarily Open Space' network within Redditch; this would provide a link from the site through existing urban green spaces almost as far as the town centre. The proposed network of green corridors offers opportunities

to provide further recreational linkages to the adjacent settlement edge and Foxlydiate Wood, and to enhance connections to the rural network of public footpaths, including the Monarch's Way long distance trail to the south-west.

5.5 The Green Infrastructure proposals will comprise a series of connected natural greenspaces that would link a variety of public open space uses. It is an aspiration to deliver a robust Green Infrastructure with development that would reflect and enhance local character and be appropriately managed in perpetuity. The proposals would be developed in liaison with the local authorities involved to ensure that new GI proposals connect into and enhance the local open space network to meet the needs of the local community and address wider biodiversity, landscape and sustainability objectives. Identified local shortfalls in open space and play provision would be considered and on-site provision made where appropriate. Bromsgrove District Council within their open space local needs assessment identify a shortfall of junior football / rugby, cricket, allotment and play provision for the Tardebigge and Alvechurch wards in which the site lies. Redditch Borough Council similarly has identified a shortfall in parks, play areas and sports facilities within the Batchley Ward.

5.6 As the masterplan evolves, the Green Infrastructure will consider further:

- a network of recreational routes accessing the greenspace framework;
- formal and informal play and sports facilities;
- habitat creation and enhancement opportunities;
- safeguard landscape character and enhance where possible;
- consider energy and food production, allotments and orchards; and
- a sustainable urban drainage system, incorporating flood attenuation and water resource management with potential to assist in mediating flood issues downstream within Redditch.
- sustainable landscape management principles

5.7 The site is contained within a robust hedged and wooded framework. The GI proposals retain and reinforce this framework extending woodland and open space corridors from the adjacent settlement area to integrate the development well with the landscape. The GI will provide a high quality setting to the development, which to maximise the landscape and visual benefits for the new community would be designed to front onto and integrate with the greenspaces.

6.0 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL ASSESSMENT

6.1 This section provides an analysis of the desktop landscape character publications and planning policy context alongside the site based assessment findings in order to consider the appropriateness of the site for redevelopment in landscape and visual terms.

6.2 The site and its immediate context are well contained by the landform and surrounding extensive woodland cover. The site comprises predominantly grazed fields located between Redditch residential settlement edge and the A448. Within this landscape adjacent to Redditch settlement edge there are only a few scattered farmsteads and a kennels within the site context. Hewell Grange and elevated farmland to the north are separated from the site context by extensive connected areas of woodland.

Landscape

6.3 The background landscape character publications describe the site context as having a rolling topography and as well wooded, with woodland often of an ancient character and prominently located. Fields are described as well hedged with a number of large oak trees. The landscape includes narrow meandering river valleys with long river meadows, an abundance of marl pits, country estates and areas dominated by urban development and associated urban edge landscape.

6.4 The documents recommend conservation management of woodlands, retention of hedges and trees and implementation of planting schemes using native species to screen urban edges and new developments. The sensitivity of the landscape to development is not defined within the landscape character assessment publications, however the Historic Environment Assessment gives the landscape in which this site is located a sensitivity rating of medium.

6.5 In terms of local landscape character, the site and a small number of adjacent fields are contained by peripheral woodland and landform and form a landscape compartment. This area is influenced by the adjacent Redditch settlement edge and by the Hewell Kennels just north of the site. It has however been assessed as medium landscape sensitivity due to its intact landscape structure of hedgerows, trees and the Batchley Brook. The landform and surrounding woodland separates

this compartment from more elevated land and Hewell Grange to the north, also assessed as medium landscape sensitivity. Although the adjacent settlement area of Redditch comprises modern housing with no discernible built landscape features, the settlement is located within a framework of woodland and connected open spaces and any development proposals should seek to extend and enhance this character.

6.6 The undulating, heavily wooded landscape context of the site naturally contains the site and separates the local landscape into distinct parcels. As a result, the effects of development on the wider landscape would be low and importantly no notable effects on the setting of the Hewell Grange have been identified.

6.7 The Masterplan and Green Infrastructure proposals demonstrate how existing landscape features within the site (the Batchley Brook and hedgerow network) and the surrounding woodland would be retained and enhanced with development to bring wider GI connections and benefits to the local landscape.

Visual

6.8 In visual terms the photographs demonstrate that the site is visually well contained with only a small visual envelope; this is as a result of the surrounding topography and woodland cover. The site itself is undulating and rises gradually to the south west where it meets the ridgeline. Development proposals should seek to ensure that new development is located below the ridgeline; a woodland belt located upon the ridgeline would strengthen the woodland connections along this ridgeline and be in keeping with local landscape character.

6.9 Only a limited number of potential receptors have been identified. These include residential areas adjacent to the site and potentially on rising land within the north-west of Redditch, although away from the site boundary views towards the site are likely to be restricted by intervening landform, woodland and properties. Within the site landscape context receptors identified are limited to Tack Farm, Oxtalls Farm, Hewell Kennels, Brockhill Farm, two public rights of way through the site, a short section of bridleway adjacent to Brockhill Farm and glimpse views through gaps within hedgerows from peripheral roads of limited parts of the site. From the majority of receptors only parts of the site are visible due to the local variations in topography

and vegetation cover, although Tack Farm, positioned on a local highpoint adjacent to the site may have panoramic views.

- 6.10 Importantly no potential view was identified from Hewell Grange or Park, which is contained by woodland. The two arable fields to the south of Hewell Park fall within the English Heritage Register of Parks and Gardens listed area. These fields are located north of a highpoint which divides them visually from the site.
- 6.11 The assessment demonstrates that with a well considered masterplan, development of the site would have only a limited visual impact on the few receptors identified. From the majority of receptors views would be limited to small parts of the development and restricted by intervening vegetation, landform and / or buildings.

Planning Policy

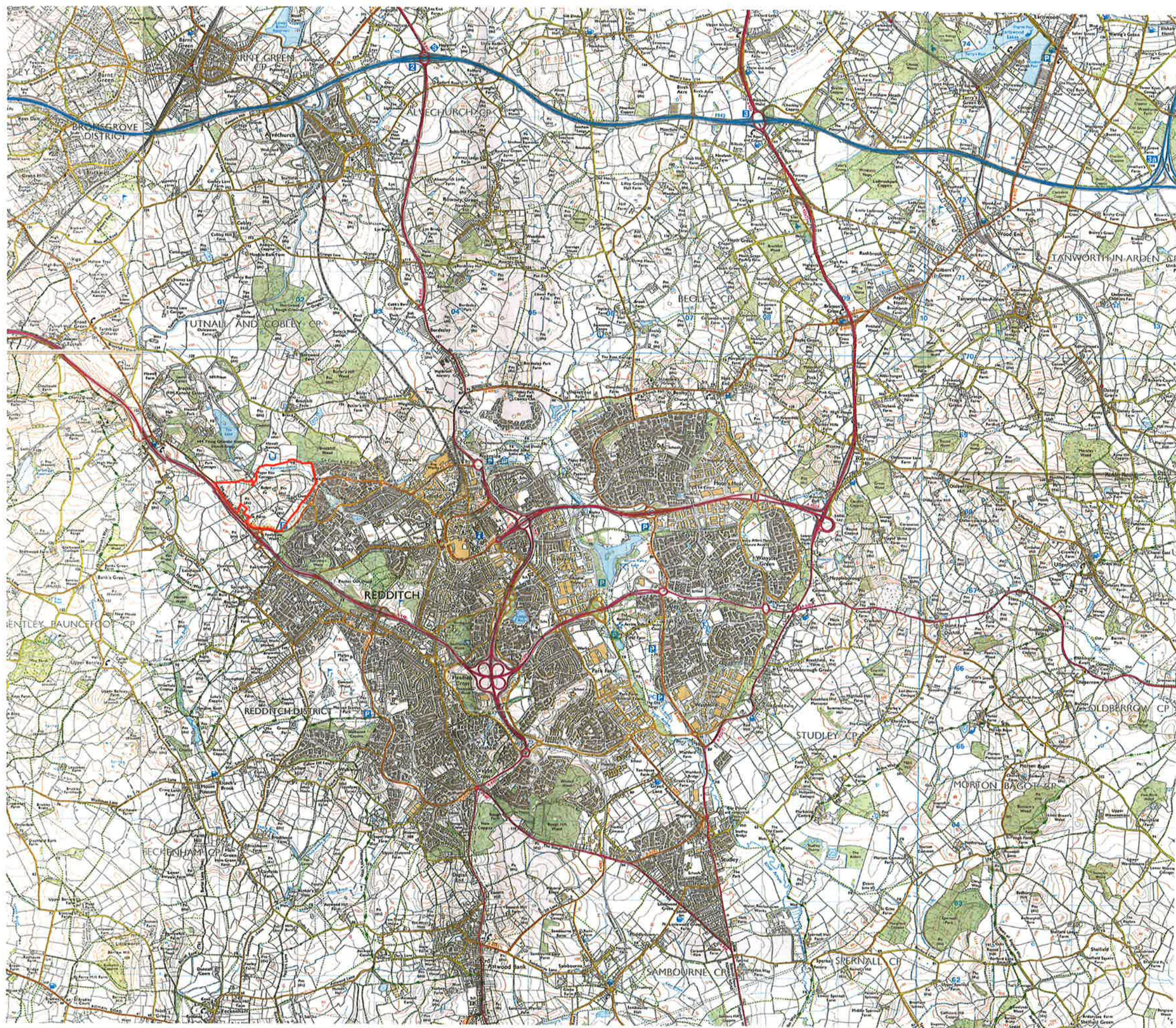
- 6.12 The Bromsgrove and Redditch Local Plans identified a few landscape and biodiversity designations for the local context of the site, including a SSSI that covers the lake at Hewell Grange, Hewell Grange Registered Park and Garden, a number of local wildlife designations covering woodlands within Redditch to the south and an Area of Landscape Value to the north of the site. There were no designations directly applicable to the site. The landscape and visual assessment demonstrates that the site is well contained and with implementation of a well considered masterplan development of the site should not result in any landscape or visual effects on any of these designations.
- 6.13 The guidance provided within the Green Infrastructure and accessible natural greenspace guidance documents is gradually becoming enshrined within local planning policy. The report demonstrates how the GI and masterplanning proposals for the site have taken into account and applied current guidance and policies on landscape character and environmental sustainability with the view to delivery of a robust and sustainably manageable greenspace framework.

7.0 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The landscape and visual assessment demonstrates that the preliminary Concept Masterplan Options and Green Infrastructure proposals would result in limited landscape and visual effects. Importantly development of the site would not have any notable adverse effects on Hewell Grange Registered Park and Garden.
- 7.2 The local topographical variations and woodland cover provide an excellent level of containment for the site. This, combined with the existing landscape features of the site (the hedgerow network and Batchley Brook), provides opportunities to extend and enhance existing Green Infrastructure. The Green Infrastructure proposals set out at Figure 7 illustrate the guiding principles for the development, providing the framework to deliver landscape enhancement, recreational and biodiversity benefits both for new and existing communities by enhancing links to the countryside and meeting government healthy living, biodiversity and GI objectives. The retention and enhancement of the landscape features within the proposed Green Infrastructure will help to define the local identity for the development proposals and create a distinct 'sense of place'
- 7.3 The report demonstrates how the GI and masterplanning proposals for the site have taken into account and applied current guidance and policies on landscape character and environmental sustainability with the view to delivery of a robust and sustainably manageable greenspace framework in conjunction with development. As the proposals evolve, it is intended that they will be developed in liaison with Bromsgrove and Redditch local planning authorities to ensure that new GI proposals connect into and enhance the local open space network to meet the needs of the local community and address wider biodiversity, landscape and sustainability objectives.
- 7.4 This assessment has looked at the Brockhill West area principally as a whole, without attaching particular weight to the administrative boundary. The revocation of the RSS framework which was addressing cross-boundary issues at Redditch, may lead to less co-ordination of expansion of the town. In landscape terms, it is concluded that development on the land in Redditch Borough can proceed within the analysis that has been undertaken of the wider area, recognising that the boundary is formed by clearly defined natural features on the ground. Development edge landscaping in

this location would reinforce these natural features and also form a part of the wider Green Infrastructure proposals for the site as a whole.

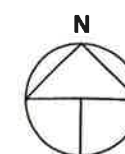
FIGURES



KEY



Site Boundary



Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

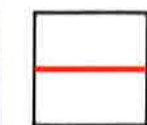
SITE LOCATION

Figure 1

Scale 1:50,000 @ A3 October 2010



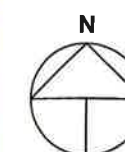
KEY



Site Boundary



Borough Boundary



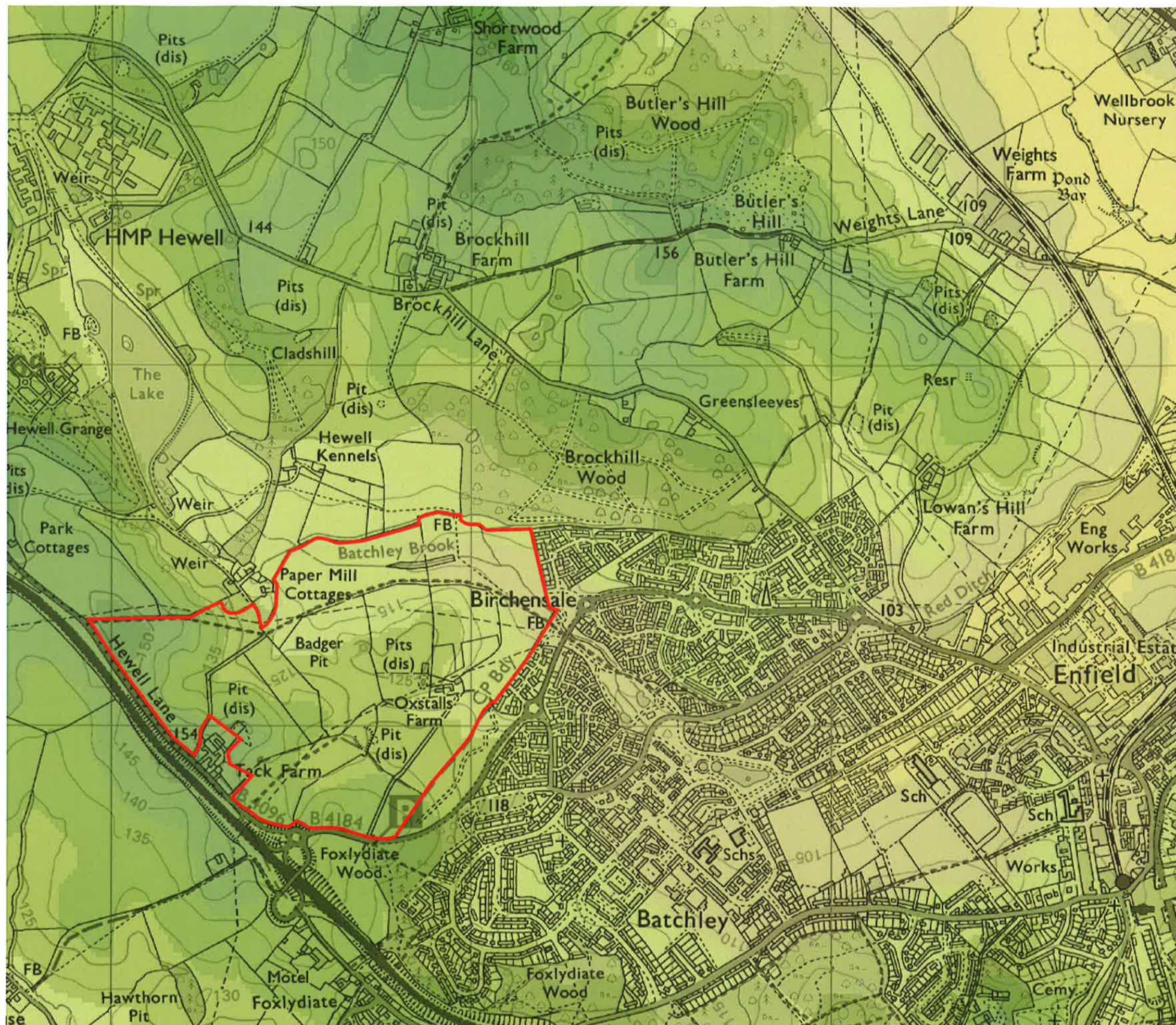
Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

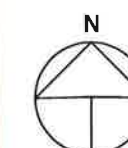
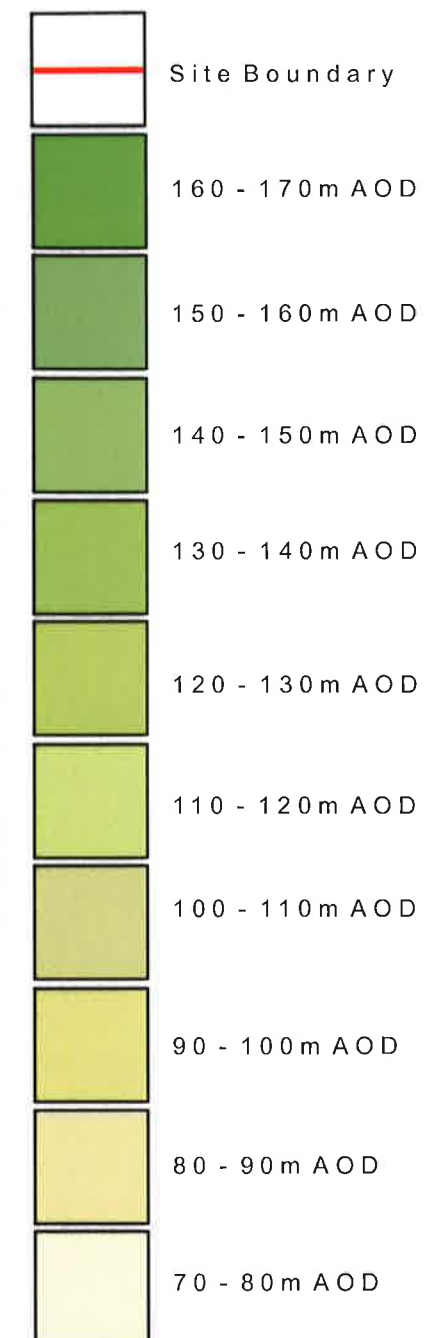
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH

Figure 2

NTS @ A3 October 2010



KEY



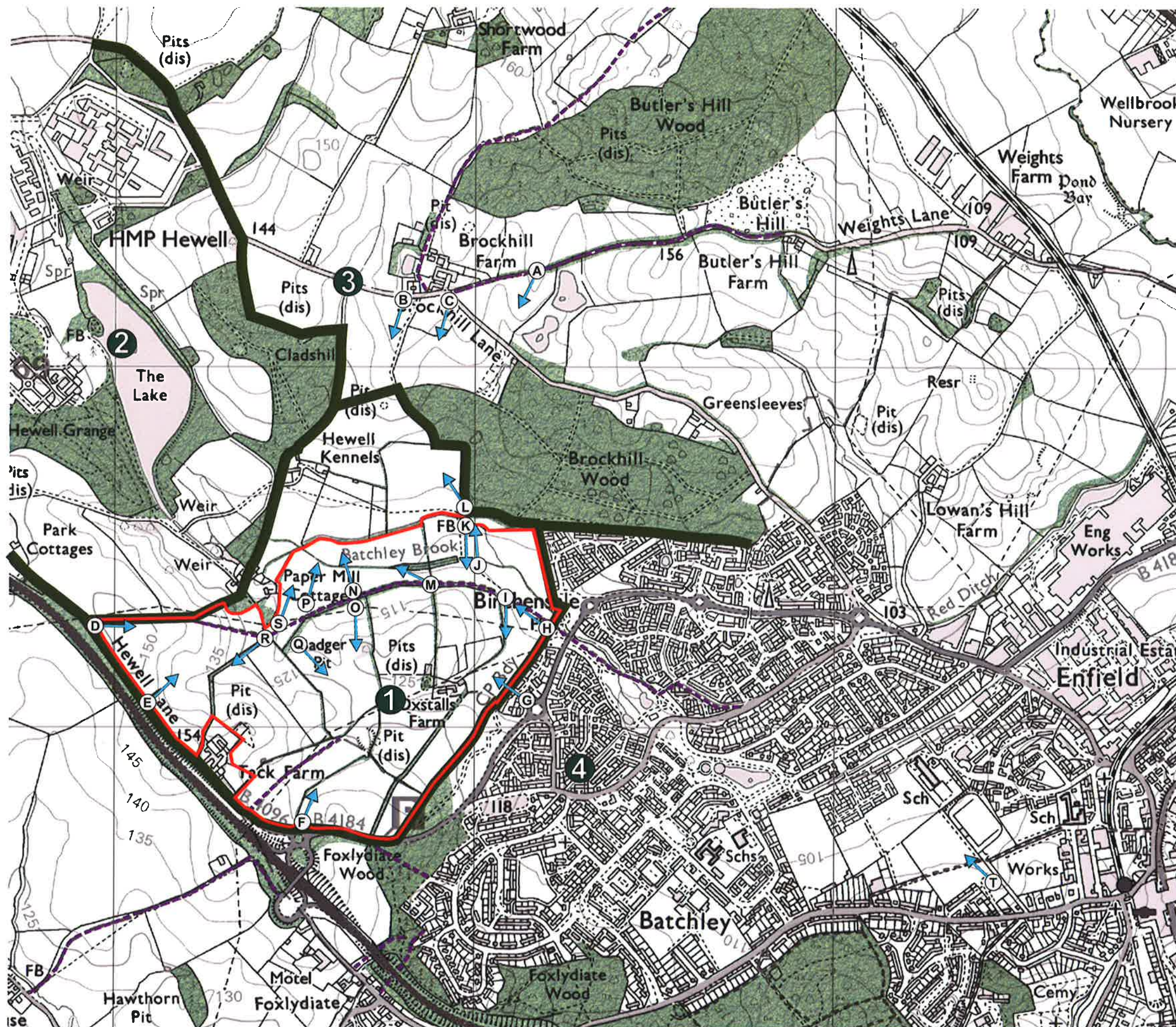
Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West


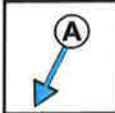
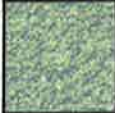
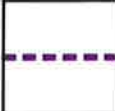
TOPOGRAPHY PLAN

Figure 3

NTS @ A3 October 2010

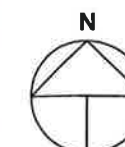


KEY

-  Site Boundary
-  Photo Viewpoints
-  Visual significant trees and woodland
-  Public Rights of Way

Local Landscape Character Areas

- 1** Batchley Brook Valley
- 2** Hewell Grange
- 3** Brockhill
- 4** Urban Context



Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

LANDSCAPE CHARACTER & VISUAL ANALYSIS

Figure 4

NTS @ A3 October 2010



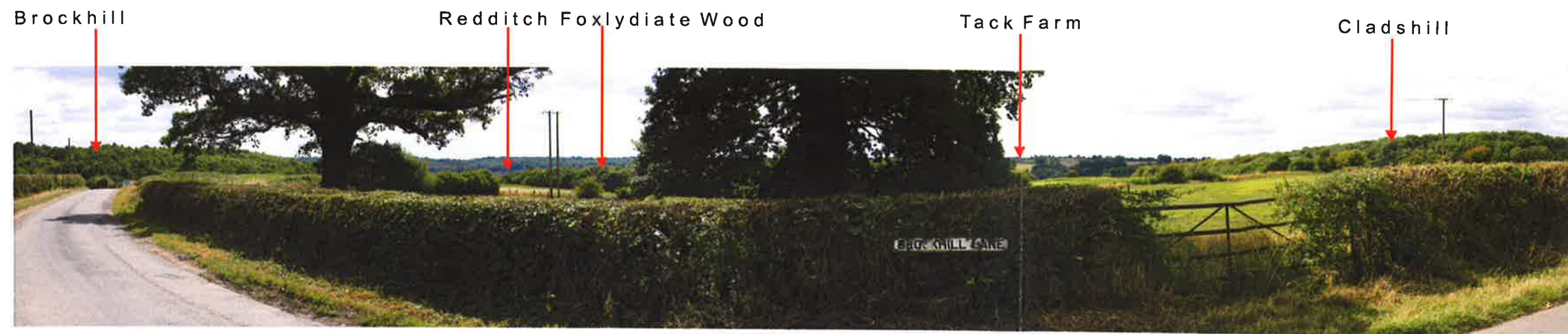
Site Photo A - View south west from the bridleway adjacent to Brockhill Farm



Site Photo B - View south from Brockhill Lane
Pitcher Oak and Foxlydiate Woods



Site Photo B Cont'd



Site Photo C - View south west from Brockhill Lane



Site Photo D - View east from Hewell Lane, public right of way



Site Photo D Cont'd

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS C&D

Figure 5

October 2010

Woodland at southern edge of Hewell Park

Hewell Kennels



Site Photo E - View east from Hewell Lane (layby)

Brockhill Wood

Redditch

Tack Farm



Site Photo E Cont'd

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

SITE PHOTOGRAPH E

Figure 5

October 2010



Site Photo F - View north from B4184 layby (close to junction with B4096/A448)



Site Photo F Cont'd

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

SITE PHOTOGRAPH F

Figure 5

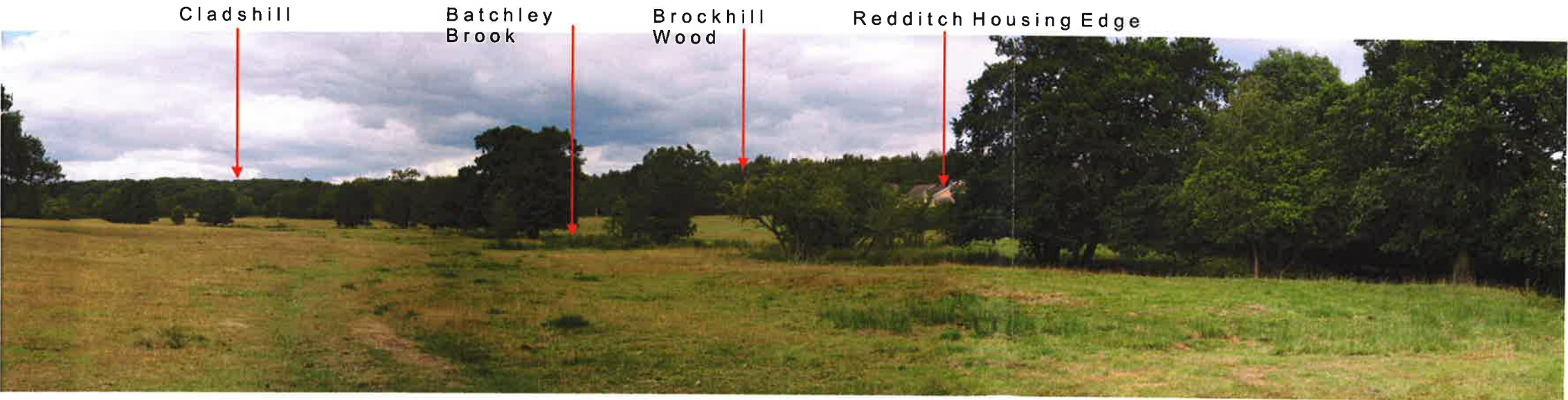
October 2010



Site Photo G - View north west from Parklands Close



Site Photo H - View north west from public right of way at housing edge



Site Photo H Cont'd

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes
Brockhill West

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS G&H

Figure 5

October 2010



Site Photo I - View south from Batchley Brook



Site Photo I Cont'd

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

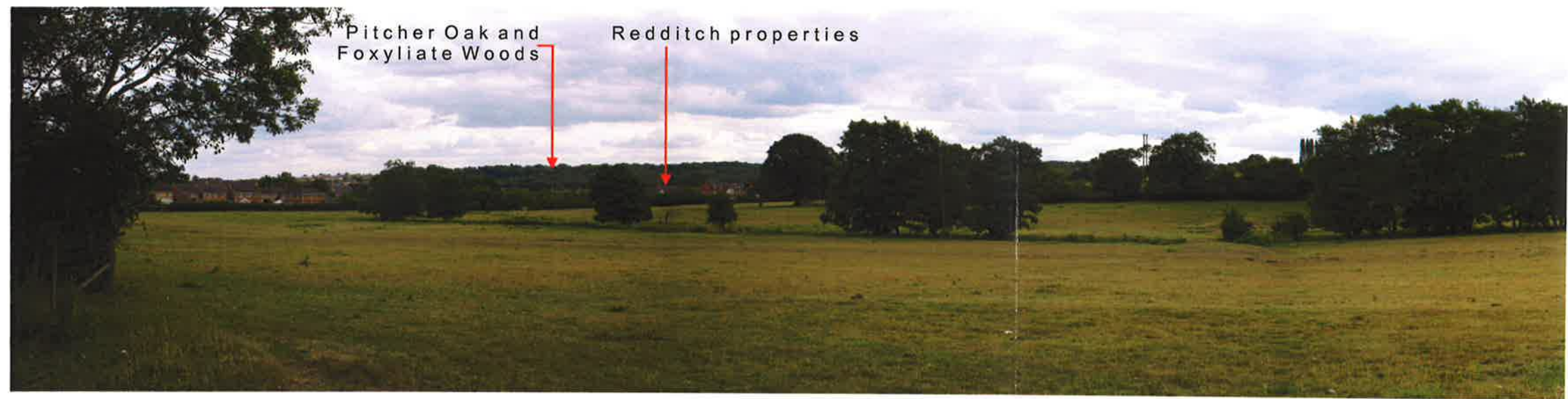
SITE PHOTOGRAPH I

Figure 5

October 2010



Site Photo J - View north from Batchley Brook



Site Photo K - View south from the edge of Brockhill



Site Photo K Cont'd

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes
Brockhill West

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS J&K

Figure 5

October 2010

Cladshill

Brockhill Wood



Site Photo L - View north from the edge of Brockhill Wood

Cladshill

Batchley Brook



Site Photo M - View west from public right of way

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

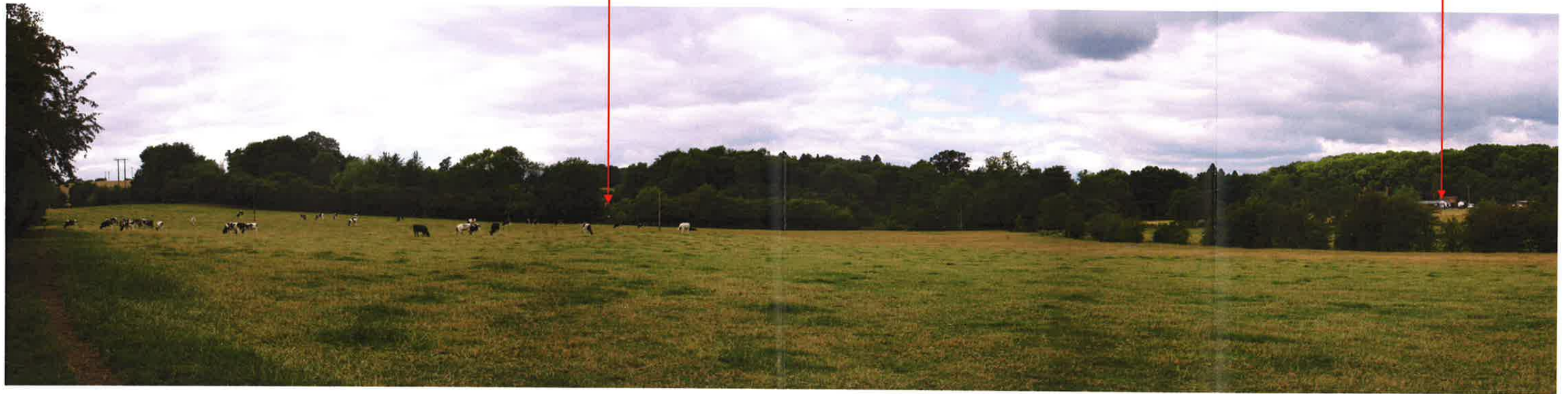
SITE PHOTOGRAPHS L&M

Figure 5

October 2010

Paper Mill Cottages

Hewell Kennels



Site Photo N - View north from public right of way

Batchley Brook

Brockhill Wood



Site Photo N Cont'd

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

SITE PHOTOGRAPH N

Figure 5

October 2010



Site Photo O - View south from public right of way (gap in hedge)



Site Photo P - View north from public right of way

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

SITE PHOTOGRAPHS O&P

Figure 5

October 2010



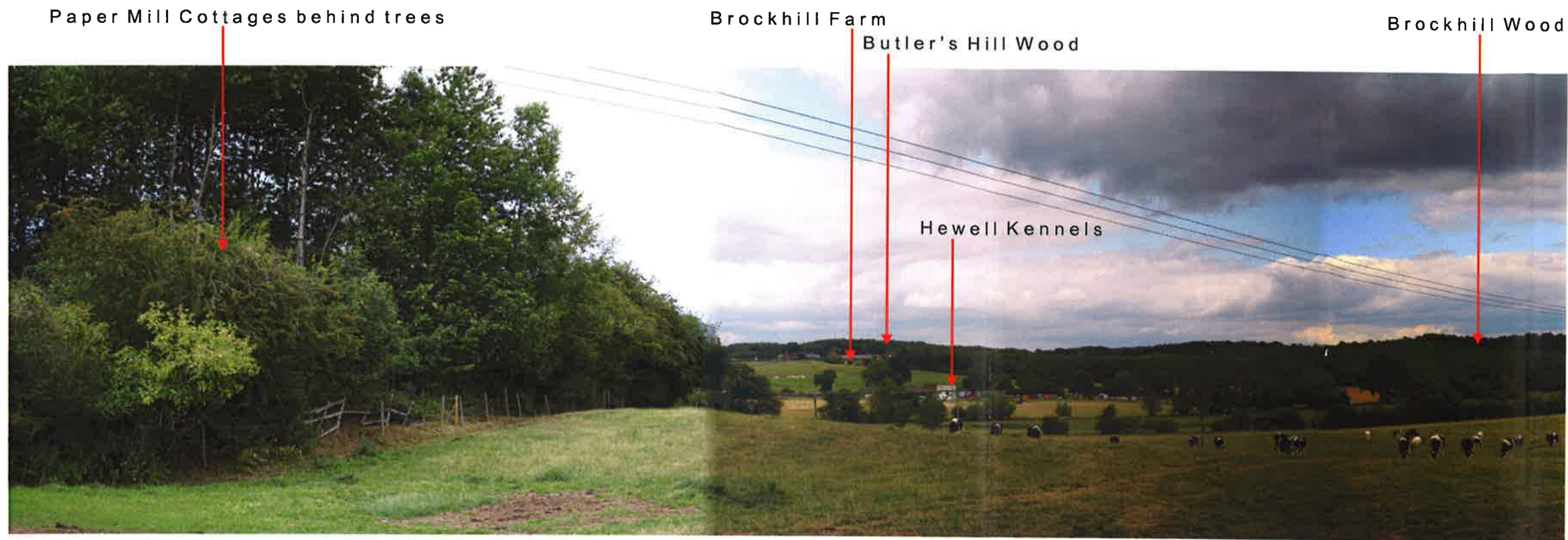
Site Photo Q - View south east from Field south of Paper Mill Cottages



Site Photo R - View south west from public right of way



Site Photo R Cont'd



Site Photo S - View north east from public right of way



Site Photo S Cont'd

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West

SITE PHOTOGRAPH S

Figure 5

October 2010



Photo Viewpoint T - View north from Terry's Playing Fields, Redditch

Southern & Regional Developments,
Miller Homes & Persimmon Homes

Brockhill West




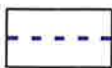









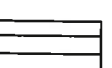

SITE PHOTOGRAPH T

Figure 5

October 2010

Ordnance Survey material is used with the permission of
The Controller of HMSO, Crown copyright 100 018896.
Ordnance Survey map supplied by & licensed to RPS
(HMSO: Crown Copyright Licence No: 100039993)



-  Site Boundary
-  Borough Boundary (Redditch / Bromsgrove)
-  Existing Public Right of Way
-  Existing concessionary path
-  Existing Trees (indicative only)
-  Existing Hedgerows (indicative only)
-  Existing woodland
-  Hewell Grange Registered Historic Park & Garden
-  Existing ponds / water courses
-  EA Indicative Area at Risk from Flooding
-  Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
-  Redditch 'Primarily Open Space' (Local Plan saved policy R.1)
-  Local Nature Reserve (Redditch Local Plan saved policy B(NE).10b)
-  Special Wildlife Site (Redditch Local Plan saved Policy B(NE).10b)
-  Landscape Protection Area (Bromsgrove District Local Plan Policy C1)

- Miller Homes / Persimmon Homes /
Southern & Regional Developments Ltd
Brockhill West

1110,0000@43
23.09.2010
4452-P-02 A



[marketing planning](#)
[architecture and interior design](#)
[landscape design](#)
[urban design](#)
[ecology](#)
[architecture](#)
[arboriculture](#)

PFCR Environmental and Design Ltd
 Lockington Hall
 Lockington
 Derby DE74 2RH

E: 01509.877272
 E: 01509.874565
 E: mail@pfcrc.co.uk
 W: www.pfcrc.co.uk

APPENDIX A

Arden



Key Characteristics

- Well-wooded farmland landscape with rolling landform.
- Ancient landscape pattern of small fields, winding lanes and dispersed, isolated hamlets.
- Contrasting patterns of well-hedged, irregular fields and small woodlands interspersed with larger semi-regular fields on former deer parks and estates, and a geometric pattern on former commons.
- Numerous areas of former wood-pasture with large, old, oak trees, often associated with heathland remnants.
- Narrow, meandering river valleys with long river meadows.
- North-eastern industrial area based around former Warwickshire coalfield, with distinctive colliery settlements.
- North-western area dominated by urban development and associated urban edge landscapes.

Landscape Character

Arden comprises farmland and former wood-pasture lying to the south of Cannock Chase and Cank Wood. Traditionally regarded as the land lying between the river Tame and the river Avon in Warwickshire, the Arden landscape also extends into north Worcestershire to abut the Severn and Avon Vales. To the north and north-east it presents a steep escarpment to the open landscape of the Mease/Sence Lowlands. The eastern part abuts and surrounds Coventry, beyond which lies the similarly well-wooded farmland and remnant heathlands of Dunsmore and the more open farmland of the Feldon, with the Cotswold scarp beyond. To the south lies the prosperous agricultural, horticultural and orchard lands of the Avon valley. Within the overall character, there is wide variation which ranges from the enclosed river valleys, through the undulating wooded landscape and small hedged fields of the main plateau, to the remains of the coal industry in the north-

east. Surviving features include sprawling settlements of urban fringe character with red-brick terraced housing, spoil heaps and small pockets of rather run-down pasture and arable farmland.



ANNE SMITH-WARWICKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Well hedged, small scale irregular fields and small woodlands characterise the ancient Arden landscape and contribute to the sense of unity.

There are few dramatic physical features but the Arden countryside has a strong sense of unity. Brick and timber are common building materials throughout the area and the many hamlets and farmsteads are a happy fit to their surroundings. The characteristic placename elements of *end* and *green* indicate their origin on and around former commons. This is Shakespeare's 'Forest of Arden', historically a region of woodlands and heaths, which today remains one of the more wooded parts of the region. There are many mature hedgerow oaks, numerous patches of ancient woodland and parks containing remnants of wood-pasture. The association with former common and heathland also imparts a strong unity, reflected by the widespread occurrence of heathland vegetation and roadside bracken. The larger commons have been enclosed within a rectilinear pattern of larger fields, straight roads and hedges, but there are still smaller commons as well as extensive areas of farmland, characterised by small, irregular fields, dense, thick hedges, winding lanes and trackways.

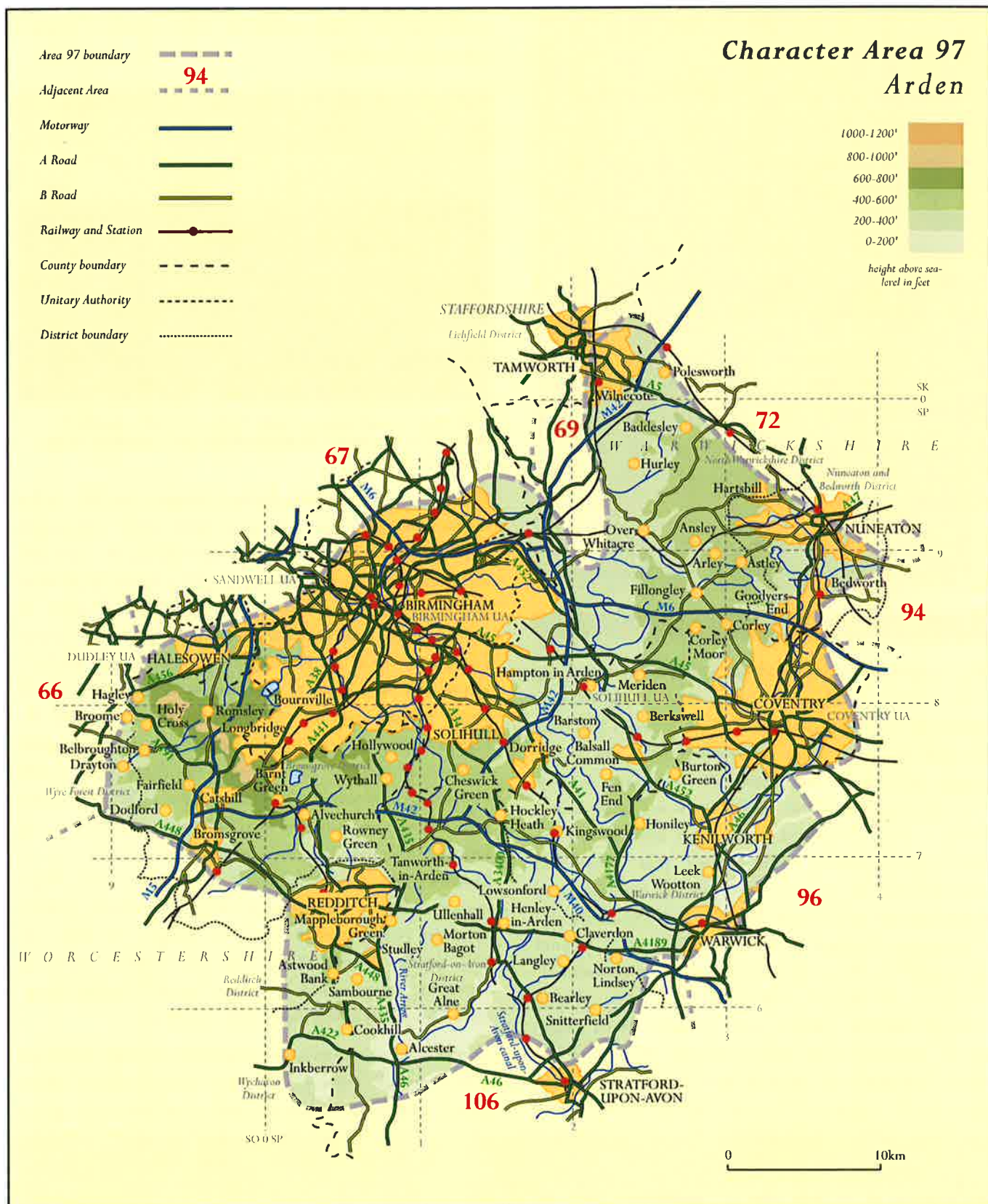
At the core of the area is a small-scale intricate landscape of low, rounded hills, steep scarps and small incised valleys which, with the abundant tree and woodland cover, give a



strong sense of enclosure with views often being severely restricted. Narrow, frequently sunken, lanes link scattered farms and hamlets built of brick and timber. An ancient landscape is apparent in the moated sites, older buildings, small parks, fragments of heathland and wet pasture and, perhaps above all, in the broad, spreading oaks of hedges, commons and pasture woodlands. To the north-west, around the southern edge of Birmingham, there is a change to a landscape of parliamentary enclosure with regular,

rectilinear fields, long straight roads and gently rolling pasture which is often horse grazed. Unlike the rural core, post-war residential development at places like Hockley Heath and Earlswood has had a considerable influence on the landscape.

In contrast to the enclosed character of much of the area, Arden also contains bands of wooded estate lands on the more gently rolling landforms with large hill-top woodlands and arable fields. Hedges and hedgerow trees have much



less significance than elsewhere and nucleated villages are the typical settlement. Some have now grown as commuter settlements. Deer parks were once common in the area and there is still an ancient wooded appearance to these sites. A more distinctly parkland character is found particularly between Wroxall and Stoneleigh and in the lower Blythe valley. The land here is generally flat emphasising the importance of the woodland and parkland trees. The woods themselves vary from ancient to geometric 20th century plantations. Some parklands such as Arbury Berkswell remain largely intact while at places like Packington and Stoneleigh there are the remains of older deer parks.

Threading through all of these landscapes, the river valleys are more fertile and enclosed. They are typically rather narrow and meandering, with long river meadows on the floodplain, riverside pollards, alders and blocks of scrub as well as the remains of mills, pools and leets. Arable farmland extends into the more fertile southern river valleys and elsewhere.

To the north-east the landscape is primarily industrial and residential and the legacy of mining activities is strong. There are modern housing estates and small industrial units which, in many cases, form part of the urban fringe of the larger industrial towns and cities to the east. Golf courses, playing fields and, around Hartshill, quarrying are conspicuous. Nevertheless the area contains a significant proportion of varied and often-steeply sloping farmland and woodland. Much of the latter has developed on old colliery spoil sites and is of nature-conservation value. Mining subsidence at Alvecote has produced a complex series of wetlands.

Birmingham has a clearly-defined concentric pattern of development. Much of the landscape is dominated by 19th and 20th century housing, the former in characteristic red brick. Canals, parks, golf courses and the river corridor form the main open spaces, with a substantial parkland area around the University at Edgbaston and some low-density garden suburbs like Bournville. Enclosed within the urban area are fragments of older landscapes like Castle Bromwich Park.

Physical Influences

The northern and central parts of the area lie across the eastern part of the Birmingham plateau, which comprises two uplifted blocks of older Palaeozoic strata, the South Staffordshire Coalfield and the Warwickshire Coalfields. These are separated by an area of Triassic rocks, the Knowle Basin, which is mostly covered by glacial drift. The central area (Knowle Basin) is lower lying than the adjacent Palaeozoic area and is largely underlain by Mercia Mudstones and covered by glacial sands, gravels or till. This gives rise to a gently rolling landform, cut by the river Blythe and its tributaries. Alluvium and river terrace deposits have been extensively worked for aggregates along many of the river valleys.



ROB COUSINS/COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY

Narrow alluvial flood plains with boundaries marked by prominent sinuous hedgelines. These river meadows, often with riverside trees, create a strong sense of place and a feeling of naturalness.

The eastern area is a dissected plateau consisting of uplifted Carboniferous and older Palaeozoic and 'Precambrian' rocks, rising to 180 m AOD near Corley. Most of the plateau is occupied by Upper Carboniferous red mudstone and sandstone, fringed to the north and east by the Coal Measures of the Warwickshire Coalfield. Cambrian and Precambrian rocks form narrow outcrops along the north-eastern edge of the plateau, where they are faulted against Triassic strata to present a steep scarp towards the Mease/Sence Lowlands. The Carboniferous rocks are cut off sharply to the west by a boundary fault which produces a pronounced edge to the plateau adjacent to the Tame and Blythe valleys. The plateau slopes away gradually to the valleys of the Avon and Sowe rivers, where the interfluvies are mostly covered by river terrace deposits and glacial drift.

The southern part of the area is underlain by Mercia Mudstones, with outcrops of Arden Sandstone forming prominent escarpments. Glacial features occur to the south-east and south-west, the latter including the Ridgeway, a flat-topped glacial ridge running along the Warwickshire/Worcestershire county boundary.

Light, sandy soils predominate in the north. Heavier clay soils and loams occur extensively in central and southern Arden. The poorer sandy soils are acidic and, when cleared of woodland, often became leached, giving rise to heathland vegetation. On the heavier soils, woodland clearances were usually succeeded by the development of pasture grasslands and wood-pasture. Marshy lands occur on the more fertile alluvial clays and loams of the river valleys. The area is drained to the south by the rivers Arrow, Alne and Avon, and to the north by the rivers Tame/Blythe and Anker. The river Tame joins with the river Rea to create a wide, shallow valley to the east of Birmingham.



The large-scale rolling topography of the wooded estate landscapes is characterised by prominent hilltop woods. Dispersed red brick and timber farmsteads fit well into these more prosperous agricultural landscapes towards the south of the area.

Historical and Cultural Influences

Extensive woodland cover probably remained over the area into the Anglo-Saxon period, perhaps as late as the 11th century, with subsequent clearance and enclosure for arable and stock. Many manorial deer parks were established in the 12th and 14th centuries and emparkment continued into the 15th century, the remnants of which accounts for much of the ancient wood-pasture landscape seen today.

Early woodland clearances were farmed as small hedged enclosures or 'closes', which created a characteristic pattern of small, irregular fields. Open field agriculture was only practised to any significant extent in the Blythe valley, the lower Arrow and Alne valleys and the areas around Bearley and Norton Lindsey. Piecemeal enclosure began early in the south, with most fields being already enclosed before the 18th century. In the Blythe Valley enclosure was not completed until the 19th century.

Many of the commons were wooded until relatively recently, often being managed as wood-pasture comprising scattered trees and shrubs over grazed grassland or heathland. Other commons on poorer, more acidic soils were more extensively heathland, many of these having been cleared of woodland at an early date. The large commons did not disappear until the latter stages of enclosure in the early 19th century by which time there

was little of the formerly extensive woodland cover of the Arden left.

Coal exploitation, influenced by the location of canals, began in earnest in the 19th century. Mining villages sprang up in the north-eastern part of the area and soon attracted coal-powered industries. Cokeing and smelting industries developed and, later, power stations which, with associated road networks and railways, produced an area of 'industrial Arden' between Tamworth and Nuneaton. The 19th and 20th century expansion of Coventry has had a strong influence on the surrounding landscape.

Birmingham developed in a fairly compact way from its original medieval centre and small-scale medieval industries. A ring of encircling suburbs began after the arrival of the railways and this pattern of concentric development continued through the 20th century. The result is a rich variety of suburban types from the model village of Bournville to tower blocks.

Arden's association with Shakespeare is well known, and the Elizabethan connection has been emphasised by Sir Walter Scott's novel *Kenilworth*. In a more recent period, at the western edge of the area, Hagley and Leasowes at Halesowen are historic parks which have formed a focus for writers and designers, eg William Shenstone at Leasowes and James Thompson at Hagley. North Arden features

strongly in George Eliot's novels. Tolkein's home at Hall Green is reflected in the fantasy landscape of his books.

Buildings and Settlement

The open field agriculture in the river valleys and elsewhere was associated with nucleated villages but, elsewhere, the pattern of settlement is scattered and dispersed. The commons attracted settlement by landless labourers which formed the basis for many of the Arden hamlets and the isolated wayside cottages with long, narrow gardens. The dispersed settlement pattern is reflected in a maze of narrow, twisted and often sunken lanes which serve outlying farms and hamlets.



ROB COLEMAN/COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY

The rolling topography of north-west Arden is dominated by urban development and associated urban edge landscapes.

The rise of wealthy yeoman farmers in the late Middle Ages, saw the construction of many substantial brick and timber farmhouses, often sited on earlier moated settlements. Brick and timber remains the material of most older buildings.

The pit villages associated with the coal mining area are more recent and quite distinct. Such villages contain much early 20th century terraced housing, often situated on hill tops. Some of the villages were newly constructed to house colliery workers. There is often rather dispersed and incoherent 20th century development around these villages and more substantially around Coventry and the smaller towns.

In the Birmingham area, particularly centrally, attractive terracotta colour bricks are present in the 19th century buildings that have survived post-war re-development. A few timber framed buildings such as the Old Gown in the city centre have also survived.

Around Birmingham the concentric settlement pattern is dominated by 20th century residential development in a wide variety of styles, enclosing parks and open land, especially along the river corridor. On the eastern edge, the motorways, airport buildings and the NEC dominate the landscape.

Land Cover

Away from the urban areas, the main land uses are pasture grassland and rough grazing, particularly on the thinner and more acidic soils, together with some remaining heathland on poorer soils in central and northern areas. Heathland is now much diminished in extent. Much of what remains has been encroached by bracken, gorse and scrub. Arable was formerly largely confined to distinct areas, noticeably the wider parts of the river valleys and the estatelands, but is now increasing considerably in extent. Woodland is quite frequent throughout the area. On the lighter sandy soils towards the north, oak and birch are the most common trees. The heavier clay soils in the central and southern areas originally supported lime-dominated woodland but this has now been largely converted to oak and ash.

Early woodland clearance in much of the Arden gave rise to small, irregular fields with thickly-hedged boundaries. Later enclosure of the deer parks produced larger, semi-regular fields divided by straight hedges, as did 19th century enclosure of the open agriculture of the Blythe valley. Late enclosure of the large commons produced small to medium rectilinear fields surrounded by the irregularly sinuous boundary of the original common, particularly significant examples being at both Sambourne and Shrewley. The latter extends nearly ten miles from Rowington to Balsall Common. In the south rolling landform and gradual enclosure produced medium-sized fields.

The Changing Countryside

- Rural character has been affected by 'suburbanisation', including inappropriate building materials and layouts for new development, ornamental planting and upgrading of minor roads.
- There has been agricultural intensification, particularly conversion of permanent pasture to arable, but also conversion from hay to silage. Most of the remaining pasture is more intensively managed, floristically poor and often reseeded.
- There has been loss and deterioration of hedges, the former particularly as a result of field amalgamation, resulting in a more fragmented landscape. Gappy hedges have been formed by excessive hedge trimming or complete abandonment of management.
- There is a lack of young trees to replace the present ageing tree population, especially in hedges and small clumps.
- There has been a general lack of woodland management in many places, leading to deterioration, coupled with conversion from oak to faster-growing, often non-native, species.

- There has been expansion at the edges of the smaller towns and Coventry, as well as around villages and hamlets.
- Recently completed new roads such as the M42 have considerable impact on the landscape and other highway schemes are under consideration.
- Change in agriculture, as well as past management practices, have resulted in straightened river courses and a loss of wetland habitats.

Shaping the Future

- The conservation management of woodlands, particularly ancient and semi-natural woodlands, and wood-pasture is important in this area of good tree cover.
- The dispersed settlement pattern is a key characteristic of much of the area. Development guidelines and village strategies, including specific design guidelines, can assist in safeguarding this pattern.
- The retention of hedges and hedgerow trees should be addressed, especially in the north-eastern part of the area.
- Planting schemes using native tree species are appropriate for screening urban edges and new residential developments.
- There is scope for the restoration of heathland, especially on roadside verges, and for the active management (notably bracken and scrub clearance) of existing heathlands.
- The restoration of mineral extraction sites is an opportunity to absorb these areas back to the character of the surrounding landscape and to create habitats of wildlife interest.
- There is scope for the restoration and appropriate management of riverside wetland and the conservation of the natural river course and the distinctive floodplain hedge and tree pattern.

Selected References

Hains, B A and Horton, A (1969), *British Regional Geology: Central England*, Third Edition, (HMSO for Institute of Geological Science; London).

Millward, R & Robinson A (1971), *The West Midlands*, Macmillan, London.

Warwickshire County Council (1993), *Warwickshire Landscape Guidelines*: Arden.

Glossary

AOD: Above Ordnance Datum



ROB COUSINS/COUNTRYSIDE AGENCY

Based around the former Warwickshire coalfield, the north eastern industrial landscape can be quite rural in character, with pockets of farmland often surrounded by urban development.

Landscapes of Worcestershire

Landscape Type Information Sheet

Wooded Estatelands

Landscape Type Description

A large-scale, wooded agricultural landscape of isolated brick farmsteads, clusters of wayside dwellings and occasional small estate villages. Key visual elements in this landscape are the many large, irregularly shaped ancient woodlands, often prominently situated on low crests. It is a landscape that can appear rather functional, due to its scale; it can lack intimacy and warmth.



Key Characteristics

Primary

- Large discrete blocks of irregularly-shaped woodland
- Mixed farming land use

Secondary

- Rolling topography with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpments
- Semi-regular pattern of large, hedged fields
- Woodland of ancient character
- Discrete settlement clusters often in the form of small estate villages
- Medium distance framed views
- Large country houses set in parkland and ornamental grounds



This is a large scale landscape of farmed land and woodland. It relies heavily upon its woodland component as the critical element in defining its character. The size, shape and composition of the woodlands are all important, the woodlands being very large, of ancient semi-natural character and of irregular, or semi-regular outline. The hedgerow pattern is also important in defining the scale, and providing the structure to the landscape. This is a landscape where farmed land is the dominant land use, with woodland comprising about 30-40% of the land cover. Parkland and ornamental grounds associated with large estates can be a noticeable feature in these landscapes, providing significant focal points of tree cover. Estate villages can also sometimes be associated with these areas, and invariably possess a strong character as a result of their style, layout and detailing.

Landscape Type Information Sheet

Wooded Estatelands

The large woodland blocks tend to be discrete units but rely on the presence of hedgerows to achieve a sense of visual cohesion within the landscape. Hedgerow loss and deterioration is evident, particularly in areas where intensive arable farming is dominant, resulting in isolation of the woodlands. Some dilution of the ancient character of the woodlands has taken place, largely through coniferisation, and although the visual effects are less than in landscapes of more pronounced topography, it is desirable to restore the mixed broadleaf character. The extent of many of the parklands has been severely reduced, with former parkland trees now standing amidst arable cropping. This is a simple landscape which could easily lose its integrity and become muddled and confusing if the range of features associated with it were to be increased, particularly if small scale elements were introduced into it.

There is a need to conserve and restore the hedgerow fabric, although in a landscape of this large scale, this could be focused on the primary hedgerow pattern of ownership, parish and roadside boundary hedges. In addition to conserving and restoring the mixed broadleaf composition of, the existing woodlands, these landscapes have considerable potential for the planting of new large scale woodlands. New woodland planting would strengthen and enhance the character of many of these landscapes. Many of the component features of the parklands are now overmature or in a relic state and initiatives to facilitate parkland restoration should be promoted widely in these areas. Opportunities should be particularly sought to reunite the original scale and conceptual framework of parkland areas, by encouraging the conversion of arable land back to permanent pasture.

The overall management strategy for the Wooded Estatelands would be one of conservation with elements of enhancement and restoration, aiming to conserve the large scale structure and wooded character of the landscape whilst seeking to restore parkland areas and enhance the overall landscape by encouraging an increase in woodland cover.

Landscape Guidelines

- conserve all ancient woodland sites and restock with locally occurring native species
- promote new large scale woodland planting
- new woodland planting should be of native broadleaved species, favouring oak as the dominant species and relate to the scale and spatial pattern of the Landscape Type
- conserve and restore the hedgerow pattern, with particular attention given to primary hedgerows
- seek to ensure hedgerow linkage to all woodland blocks, for visual cohesion and wildlife benefit
- conserve and restore parkland
- conserve the integrity of estate villages

For more information visit our website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/lca or contact the Worcestershire County Council Environmental Policy Team on 01905 766038

Historic Environment Assessment
for
Redditch Borough Council:
Supplementary Historic Environment
Statement for the Subdivided
HECZ 148

Adam Mindykowski

19th July 2010

© Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,
Worcestershire County Council



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Historic Environment and Archaeology Service,
Worcestershire County Council,
Woodbury,
University of Worcester,
Henwick Grove,
Worcester WR2 6AJ

Report 1754
(supplement)

Historic Environment Assessment for Redditch Borough Council: Supplementary Historic Environment Statement for the Subdivided HECZ 148

Historic environment assessment and setting

The evidence base underpinning this statement is comprised of three sources:

- The Historic Environment Assessment for Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils (provides broad landscape setting and assessments of survival, potential and sensitivity).
- Worcestershire Historic Landscape Characterisation Project (provides detailed historic landscape assessment).
- Worcestershire Historic Environment Record (provides details and locations of known historic environment sites and features).

Site specific background

Criteria used to assess the historic environment in this document (taken from the District HEA reports)

- **Survival** – based on current records, land-use and the impact of existing development
- **Potential** – an assessment of the likelihood for the presence of additional historic environment features
- **Documentation** – record of previous research and related sources
- **Diversity** – assesses the range of multi-period, or multi-evidence type features (structural, below/above ground, landscape) and landscape attributes
- **Group value** – identifies where there is a strong coherence by period or evidence type
- **Amenity value** – identifies historic environment attributes within the zone with potential to be conserved and promoted as part of Green Infrastructure or amenity provision.
- **Sensitivity to change** – identifies sensitivity to change based on the impact of medium to large-scale development

HEA statement for HECZ 148

Summary: A gently undulating wooded landscape over mixed mudstones and sandstones, with free draining, mixed brown soils.

Historic Landscape: The ancient saltway, the probable Roman road and the prehistoric ridge way add significant time depth to the road network. The settlement pattern is one of farmsteads and strings of wayside dwellings associated with a moderate to high level of dispersal. This is a complex landscape of piecemeal and Parliamentary enclosure with some later field amalgamation and reorganisation. Land use is pastoral and the tree cover comprises interlocking, or frequent, usually large, discrete blocks of ancient woodland. There are large areas of parkland, both relic and surviving.

Archaeological Character: Hewell Grange is a Registered Park and the Worcester and Birmingham Canal a Conservation Area. Alluvial deposits survive along the River Arrow floodplain. There are a large number of Listed and unlisted historic buildings, mainly associated with parkland features and the dispersed farmsteads. There are also numerous above and below ground archaeological features dating from the Bronze Age onwards.

HECZ 148: Hewell Grange, Bordesley and Alvechurch Parks

HECZ Criteria	Description	Score
Survival	Significantly intact historic landscape and surviving below and above ground archaeological features.	2
Potential	There is high potential for further above and below ground archaeology.	3
Documentation	Numerous archaeological investigations, documentary and cartographic sources, HLC	3
Diversity of historic environment assets	A wide range of above and below ground features, landscapes and buildings.	3
Group value association	A coherent landscape, although slightly degraded in places.	2
Amenity value	A good PRow network with links to the Worcester and Birmingham Canal Conservation Area.	2
Sensitivity to change	Parts of this zone are highly sensitive to change, other areas have some capacity.	2
Overall score		17

Subdivision of HECZ148

The process of subdividing HECZ148 has attempted to map key historic environment feature or landscape types that distinguish each of the sub-zones from one another. As with the parent HEA project, this remains a strategic and indicative assessment of headline historic environment character, potential and sensitivity. The subdivision has therefore taken the main historic environment constituents of HECZ148 and attempted to define them spatially within the main zone.

The resulting map of eight sub-zones provides a spatial guide outlining survival, potential and sensitivity. It is important to note that diverse historic environment characteristics will be encountered throughout each sub-zone. This is reflected in the high *diversity* score identified for HECZ148.

The headline characteristics remain general and are biased towards historic landscape and structural character. This is inevitable, given that in order to extract further detail of below ground archaeology, there is a need to carry out some form of field investigation.

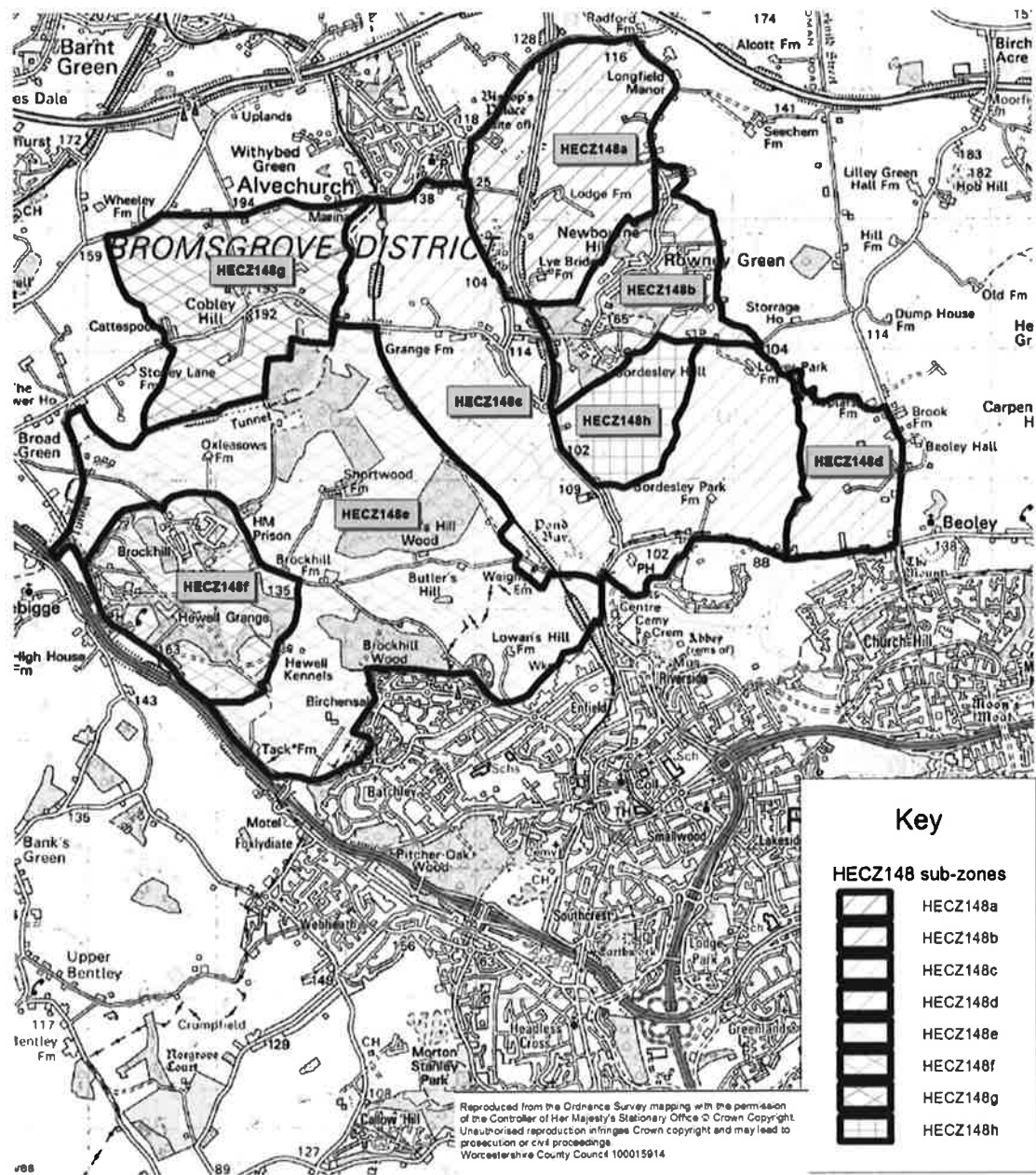
The key probabilities have been identified in the sub-zones, although to some extent they may overlap. For example, it is likely that late prehistoric and Romano-British period archaeology survives along the course of Ryknild Street, which is noted in sub-zone HECZ148d. There is, however, potential for similar archaeology in other sub-zones, such as within environmental remains sealed within alluvial deposits in HECZ148c. The table below is a break down of character and sensitivity as for the sub-zones. As with the parent HEA, this should at least provide an historic environment context for planners and developers.

Subdivided character zones (see also maps 1 and 2)

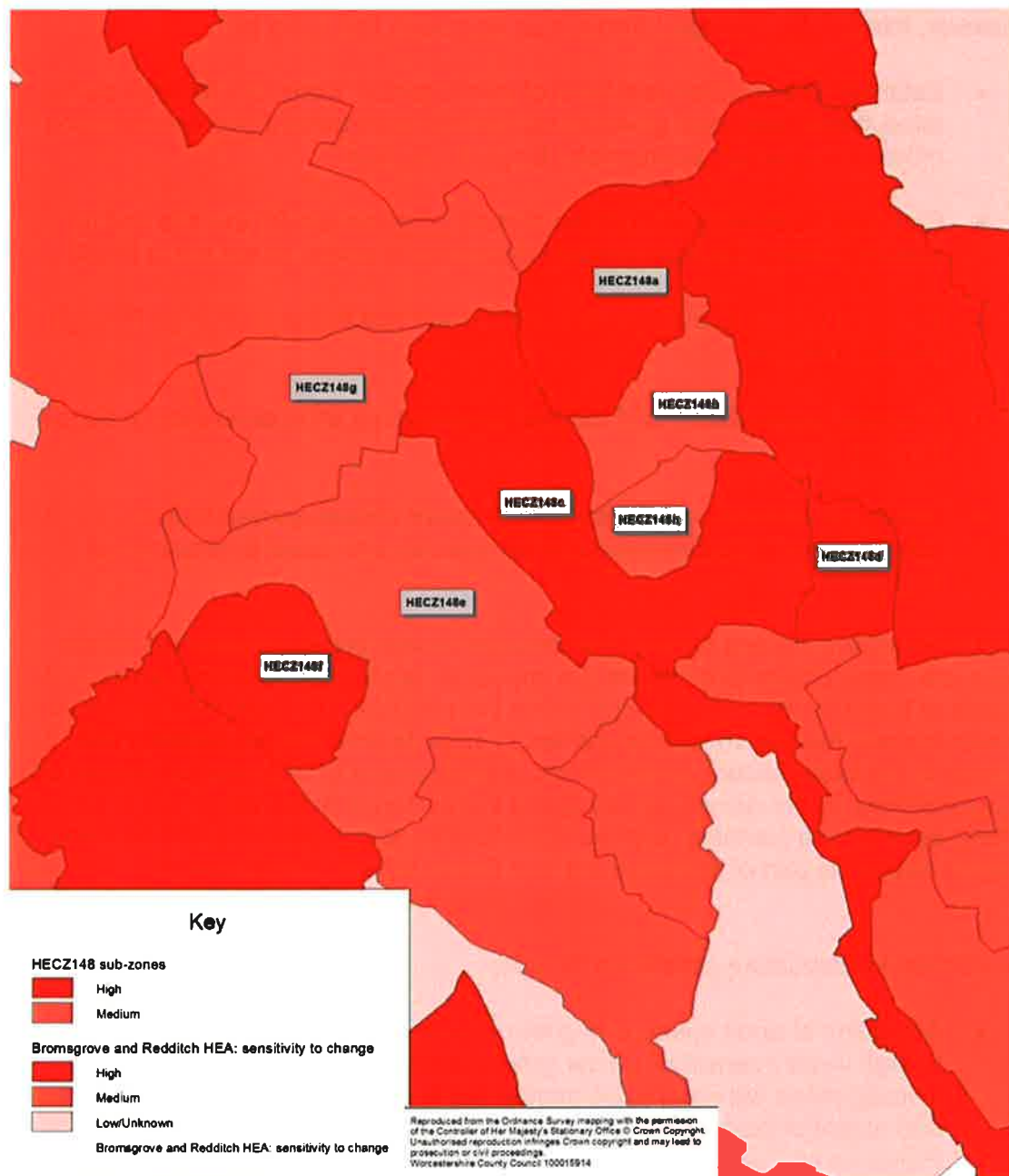
Sub-zone	Broad character statement	Sensitivity rating	Sensitivity assessment
HECZ148a	The Bishops Palace Scheduled Monument and its setting in relic parkland that occupies high ground.	High	Development will potentially impact on the setting of the SAM and affect views to and from the high ground with relic parkland character
HECZ148b	Rowney Green settlement and its wooded setting	Medium	Rowney Green is a linear settlement set on high ground in a wooded landscape of small fields. Development will potentially impact on the green setting of the settlement and also views to and from the settlement
HECZ148c	High potential for alluvial archaeology	High	Development will potentially impact on sensitive archaeological remains preserved within, and below, alluvial deposits in the Arrow Valley
HECZ148d	Intact historic field pattern and parkland	High	Development will potentially impact on the historic field

	bordered by Ryknild Street to the east		pattern and below ground archaeology associated with Ryknild Street
HECZ148e	Historic wooded landscape setting around parkland	Medium	Development will potentially impact on historic woodlands and historic hedgerows that act as linkages, and the setting of Hewell Grange
HECZ148f	Historic parkland with Listed Buildings	High	Development will potentially impact on the historic parkland landscape of Hewell Grange and its setting
HECZ148g	Intact historic field pattern	Medium	Development will potentially impact on the historic piecemeal enclosure field pattern
HECZ148h	Relic parkland on high ground	Medium	Development will potentially impact (particularly visually) on the largely open, relic parkland landscape and setting of Rowney Green that occupies high ground

Map 1: locations of the eight sub-zones identified in HECZ148



Map 2: HECZ148 sub-zone assessment of *sensitivity to change* set in context with the surrounding HEA assessment of sensitivity



Principles of development

The historic environment is a fundamental and integrated part of the landscape. There will inevitably be an impact on the historic environment from development, however, this can be managed through an approach that aims to:

- Establish the priorities and level of investigation necessary through early consultation with local government historic environment and conservation officers, and where appropriate, English Heritage
- Carry out an investigation of the historic environment (of the site and its setting) through an appropriate programme of works as set out in PPS5
- Minimise impact to the historic environment and manage change through informed design
- Promote interpretation and access to strengthen an appreciation of sense of place
- Design multi-functional Green Infrastructure objectives that deliver conservation of historic assets in partnership with other environmental objectives

Both masterplanning and Green Infrastructure design are key processes where there are opportunities to minimise the impact to, protect and promote areas and assets of historic environment value within the site. Links to Green Infrastructure assets beyond the site should be created in order to promote connectivity and access to the wider historic environment. A programme of investigation should be commissioned by the developer to expand the evidence base, which will in turn, inform detailed site planning, explore opportunities to mitigate loss and conserve historic assets as part of development and Green Infrastructure design.

Key Green Infrastructure objectives include:

- Allocation of open space and green space where this can afford protection to high value / sensitive, below ground archaeology. Detailed site investigations will need to be carried out in order to identify the locations and extent of below ground archaeology
- Provision of interpretation to promote the historic environment evolution and local context of the site
- Conservation, restoration and replanting of historic hedgerows to strengthen Historic Landscape Character will also provide links for wildlife and biodiversity enhancement.
- Creation of access and enhancement of existing Public Rights of Way network to provide links to historic environment sites and special landscapes beyond the site boundaries.

Planning Policy Statement 5 currently sets the policy framework for investigations of the historic environment. The document sets out procedures the developer should follow to commission investigations to assess all historic assets, as defined, both within the development site and its wider landscape setting. The requirements for conservation, mitigation and interpretation will be subject to the

outcomes and analysis of those investigations. The results will support detailed planning advice and any requirement for detailed conditions, which is typically a phased programme of works. A key objective in Green Infrastructure design should be the development of opportunities to conserve historic environment features and landscapes, and to promote their contribution towards defining local identity and 'sense of place'. These objectives will best be met as part of multi-functional objectives that conserve, promote and enhance historic assets in partnership with other environmental features, such as local habitat and landscape.

Sources for planning

Specialist advice:

- Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (County Historic Environment Record covering Bromsgrove and Redditch Districts)
- District Conservation Officer (Bromsgrove and Redditch)
- District and County Landscape Officers
- English Heritage

Documents:

- The Historic Environment Assessments for Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council, Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service
- Planning for Landscape, Biodiversity and the Historic Environment in the development of Green Infrastructure Strategies in Worcestershire, Technical Research Paper: Version 2, Worcestershire County Council
- Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment

Sources:

- Worcestershire Historic Environment Record
- District Listed Buildings records
- English Heritage Scheduled Monuments records

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

CURRENT APPLICABLE PLANNING POLICIES

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 3 Adopted 31st May 2006

Policy CS.8 Landscape character

Proposals for development, and associated land use change or land management, must demonstrate that they are informed by, and sympathetic to, the landscape character of the area in which they are proposed to take place. In considering development proposals, the Borough Council will take every opportunity to safeguard, restore or enhance, as appropriate, the landscape character of the area in which they are proposed. The implications of development proposals relating to the landscape will be assessed having regard to the degree to which they would:

- i. be appropriate to, and integrate with, the landscape character of the area;*
- ii. safeguard or strengthen the features and patterns that contribute to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the area with particular attention being paid to both the scale, layout, design and detailing of existing buildings and other man-made features; and to the semi-natural vegetation characteristic of that area; and*
- iii. relate to the sensitivity of the particular landscape and location to accommodate change. Development, or associated land use change or land management, which would adversely affect the landscape character of an area, will not normally be allowed.*

Policy B(BE).13 Qualities of Good Design

With regard to the need for good design, all applications for development will be assessed in accordance with the following criteria where appropriate:

- ****
ii. the development will be well connected to and integrated with the wider settlement and respond to the needs of pedestrians, cyclists, public transport and people with disabilities;
- vi. the opportunities to incorporate wildlife habitat features are taken where this is appropriate;*
- viii. the development will retain, enhance and/or create urban spaces, views, landmarks and other townscape features which make a significant contribution to the character of an area and provide the opportunity to open up such features to public view; and*

Policy B(NE).1a Trees Woodland and Hedgerows

Existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows of nature conservation, amenity or landscape value should be retained and their appropriate management encouraged. The importance of ancient semi-natural woodlands is recognised and particular emphasis should be placed on their conservation. Proposals to conserve and increase the indigenous broadleaved cover in both urban and rural areas are to be encouraged providing these do not cause damage or lead to the deterioration of existing habitats and features of biodiversity importance, are in keeping with the landscape character of the area and achieve successful integration with the landform. Proposals will be particularly encouraged where these would lead to:

- i. the establishment of native woodlands in appropriate places, that expand and link ancient semi-natural woodland remnants;*
- ii. the restoration to native woodland of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites in priority locations;*
- iii. the introduction of management proposals to conserve and enhance trees and woodlands in urban areas and on the urban fringe;*

iv. multi-purpose tree planting for nature conservation, amenity, landscape improvement, and timber production; and

v. the conservation of veteran trees.

Policy B(NE).3 Wildlife Corridors

The Borough Council will seek to protect and enhance those 'countryside features' which act as wildlife corridors, such as hedgerows and watercourses and also other biodiversity features of importance that act as 'stepping stones' from one habitat to another. Development which would be materially detrimental to the most important of these 'countryside features' will not normally be permitted. However, where it can be demonstrated that the benefits of development clearly outweigh the resultant detriment to local wildlife and to the value of that feature as a wildlife corridor, development may be permitted. In such cases, conditions and/or planning obligations will be used to minimise damage and to ensure habitat enhancement and/or creation is carried out on or close to the site wherever appropriate to maintain a corridor.

Policy B(NE).10a Sites of National Wildlife Importance

Proposals for development, or land use change, in or likely to affect, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) will be subject to the most rigorous examination. Where such development may have an adverse effect, directly or indirectly on the SSSI, it will not be allowed unless there are no reasonable alternative means of meeting that development need and the reasons for the development clearly outweigh the value of the site itself and the national policy to safeguard the intrinsic nature conservation value of the national network of such sites.

Where the site concerned is a National Nature Reserve (NNR) or a site identified under the Nature Conservation Review (NCR) or Geological Conservation Review (GCR) particular regard will be paid to the individual site's national importance. In all cases where development or land-use change is permitted:

i. any damage to the nature conservation and/or geological value of the site will be kept to a minimum; and

ii. adequate and appropriate protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation and/or geological interest will be secured, and where necessary, appropriate and adequate compensatory measures will be provided, using conditions and/or planning obligations where necessary.

Policy B(NE). 10b Sites of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance

The nature conservation value of Local Nature Reserves (LNRs), Special Wildlife Sites (SWSs), Regionally Important Geological/ Geomorphological Sites and Sites of Wildlife Importance subject to a Section 39 Agreement under the Wildlife and Countryside Act found within the Borough, ranges from that of local to national significance. Development or land-use change, likely to have an adverse effect on such sites will not be allowed unless there are no reasonable alternative means of meeting the development need and it can be clearly demonstrated that the reasons for the development or land-use change outweigh the intrinsic nature conservation and/or geological value of the site which may be affected by the development.

In all cases where development or land-use change is permitted:

i. any damage to the nature conservation and/or geological value of the site will be kept to a minimum; and

ii. adequate and appropriate protection and enhancement of the site's nature conservation and/or geological interest will be secured, and where necessary, appropriate and adequate compensatory measures will be provided, using conditions and/or planning obligations where necessary.

Policy R.1 Primarily open space

Proposals which would lead to the total or partial loss of Primarily Open Space will not normally be granted planning permission unless it can be demonstrated that the need for development outweighs the value of the land as an open area. In assessing applications for development on Primarily Open Space the following factors will be taken into account:

- i. the environmental and amenity value of the area;*
- ii. the recreational, conservation, wildlife, historical and visual and community amenity value of the site;*
- iii. the merits of retaining the land in its existing open use, and, the contribution or potential contribution the site makes to the character and appearance of the area;*
- iv. the merits of protecting the site for alternative open space uses;*
- v. the location, size and environmental quality of the site;*
- vi. the relationship of the site to other open space areas in the locality and similar uses within the wider area;*
- vii. whether the site provides a link between other open areas or a buffer between incompatible land uses;*
- viii. that it can be demonstrated that there is a surplus of open space and that alternative provision of equivalent or greater community benefit will be provided in the area at an appropriate, accessible locality; and*
- ix. the merits of the proposed development to the local area or the Borough generally.*

New areas of Primarily Open Space created by developments during the course of this Plan period will warrant the same levels of protection as the Primarily Open Space identified on the Proposals Map. Proposals for development on Primarily Open Space land that contribute to the nature and purpose of the open space may be deemed acceptable by the Council.

Policy R.6 Protection and Provision of allotments

... If the demand for allotments increases during the course of this Plan period and the Council is unable to provide residents with existing allotments, developers may be required to provide new allotments in association with new developments.

Redditch Preferred Draft Core Strategy Document 31st Oct 2008- 8th May 2009

Policy SP.3 Sustainability Principles

The need for sustainable development is integral to the Core Strategy. In order to achieve this all proposals will be expected to:

- i. seek to reduce the need to travel by private car and enable the necessary infrastructure to facilitate walking*, cycling and public transport to access homes, jobs, shops, education and other services and facilities;*
- ii. incorporate waste management processes in accordance with the waste hierarchy (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Recover, Dispose);*
- iii. demonstrate that the use of sustainable, locally sourced and recycled materials has been considered;*

- iv. *not increase the risk of flooding in the site or elsewhere, and where possible incorporate SUDS and other methods of water efficiency;*
- v. *incorporate sufficient renewable energy production facilities and principles of sustainable design and construction;*
- vi. *protect and enhance the quality of natural resources including water, air, land, habitats and biodiversity;*
- vii. *remediate contaminated land, where appropriate; and*
- viii. *protect and enhance historic and cultural heritage and community assets of the Borough.*

**This includes infrastructure for wheelchairs and any other mobility disability.*

Policy BE.3 Landscape Character

Proposals for new development or change in land use / management must demonstrate that the Borough's distinctive landscape is protected, enhanced or restored and that they are informed by, and sympathetic to, the landscape character of the area in which they are proposed to take place.

Policy BE.5 Trees

Existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows should be retained and their appropriate management encouraged. Particular emphasis should be placed on the conservation of ancient semi-natural woodlands. Proposals should:

- i. *conserve and increase the indigenous broadleaved cover in the Borough;*
- ii. *establish native woodlands in appropriate places, that expand and link ancient semi-natural woodland remnants;*
- iii. *restore native woodland of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites in priority locations;*
- iv. *involve multi-purpose tree planting for nature conservation, amenity, landscape improvement and timber production;*
- v. *conserve veteran trees; and*
- vi. *respond to the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment.*

Proposals should not cause damage or lead to the deterioration of existing habitats and features of biodiversity importance. They must achieve successful integration with landform.

Policy H2. Primarily Open Space

Primarily Open Space and associated Green Infrastructure make an important and valued contribution to the Borough of Redditch and its distinctiveness.

Primarily Open Space will therefore be protected and, where appropriate, enhanced to improve their quality, value, multi-functionality and accessibility. Opportunities will be sought to improve the network of green spaces and corridors for the benefit of people, wildlife and the character and appearance of the Borough. Proposals involving a loss or partial loss of Open Space will be assessed against the following criteria as applicable;

- i. *the environmental and amenity value of the area;*
- ii. *the merits of protecting the site for alternative open space uses;*

- iii. *the location, size and environmental quality of the site;*
- iv. *the relationship of the site to other open space areas in the locality and similar uses within the wider area;*
- v. *whether the site provides a link between other open areas or a buffer between incompatible land uses;*
- vi. *'countryside features' which act as wildlife corridors, such as hedgerows, watercourse and other biodiversity features of importance.*

New areas of Primarily Open Space created by developments during the course of this Core Strategy period will warrant the same levels of protection as the Primarily Open Space identified on the Draft Proposals Map.

Policy SC.7 Infrastructure

The delivery of the necessary infrastructure to support future development requirements is dependant on the successful delivery of development schemes. The Borough Council will only permit proposals where:

- i. it has been demonstrated that the proposal places no additional pressure on the existing infrastructure capacity;*
- ii. its impacts are minimised on the existing infrastructure required to support it; and*
- iii. appropriate investment is secured either in the form of works or financial contributions to mitigate the cumulative impact on infrastructure. Key Infrastructure requirements to deliver the objectives of the Core Strategy include, but are not limited to;*

Schools

Open space and recreation

Enhancement to Redditch railway

Bordesley Bypass

Public Transport Routes

Green Infrastructure

Affordable Housing

Landscape Character

Biodiversity including habitat creation and local environmental improvements

Town Centre, Public Realm and Public Art

The Borough Council will work with providers and developers to ensure that all new development is served by the necessary infrastructure within a suitable time. Standard charges and/or standard formulae as appropriate will be imposed for the payment of financial contributions.

Policy BE1 Climate Change (extract)

vi. all development must protect, conserve, manage and enhance natural and built heritage assets; in particular schemes involving the production of renewable energy should enhance, link and extend natural habitats so that opportunities for species migration are not precluded.

Policy BE2 Flood risk and water management (extract)

B. Water Management

The Water Cycle Strategy identifies a need for sustainable water demand management techniques in the Borough. As such, every new development will require the inclusion of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDs) and, where appropriate, will be required to dispose of the collected surface runoff on site. Developments will also be expected to incorporate greywater recycling and rainwater harvesting where practicable.

Bromsgrove District Local Plan, Adopted 2004

Historic Parks and Gardens (S48)

Planning permission or listed building consent will not be granted for development which would have an adverse effect on the character and setting of historic parks and gardens. Proposals will be assessed against their effect on:

- a) views into or out of the park or garden;*
- b) vistas or sequential views within the park or garden;*
- c) natural' elements such as tree belts, avenues, specimen trees, water features, ornamental gardens and plant species;*
- d) structures, statues and garden ornaments;*
- e) the topography of the garden;*
- f) open spaces and their relationship to enclosures.*

Designation of Landscape Protection Areas (C1)

Landscape Protection Areas are designated by the District Council and are indicated on the Proposals Map.

Submission of Landscaping Schemes (C5)

Applications for development should be accompanied by satisfactory landscaping schemes where these are judged appropriate by the District Council to complement the proposals at the time of submission of a detailed planning application.

Development Affecting SSSI's and NNR's (C9)

Development proposals which would destroy or adversely affect, directly or indirectly, a designated or proposed Site of Special Scientific Interest or National Nature Reserve will not be permitted. In the event of a designated or proposed site of international importance being identified within the District it will be subject to the extra protection and special procedures appropriate to the designation.

Development Affecting SWS's and LNR's (C10)

Development proposals which would destroy or adversely affect, directly or indirectly, a Special Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve or sites subject to an Agreement under Section 39 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that the net adverse impact of the proposal is not significant, having regard to the value of the nature conservation features which were the reason for the designation of the site.

Development Affecting other Wildlife Sites (C10A)

The District Council will seek to minimise the effects of development proposals on features of nature conservation importance in the District. This will include woodlands, ponds, lakes or streams, marshland and wetlands and unimproved grasslands

Wildlife Corridors (C12)

The District Council will protect major wildlife corridors wherever possible. Development proposals should minimise the damage to such corridors by careful layout and design retaining the existing overall structural framework of the landscape as far as possible. Adequate new landscaping to maintain existing wildlife corridors will be required. Proposals to enhance or extend corridors will be welcomed.

Effect Of Infrastructure Development On The Landscape (C16)

Schemes involving transport and related infrastructure should be planned to minimise the impact on the landscape and wildlife, in particular avoiding the fragmentation of wildlife sites and the destruction or diminution of important elements in the landscape.

Retention Of Existing Trees (C17)

Development proposals should retain existing trees wherever possible. New planting should be related in scale, size and species to the existing indigenous planting.

Retention Of Existing Woodland (C18)

The District Council will seek to retain and enhance existing woodland particularly all ancient semi-natural woodland and promote sound woodland and countryside management by other bodies. The District Council will encourage the planting of trees, favouring the use of indigenous species both in hedgerows and as new woodland areas (in suitable locations) through the appropriate agencies. It will encourage and support the use of appropriate woodlands meeting multiple objectives such as timber production, recreational use and the creation of wildlife habitats. These principles will be taken into account, when that is appropriate, in considering applications for planning permission and when formulating planning conditions which relate to matters affecting woodland, hedgerows and trees.

Support For Public Rights Of Way (RAT12)

The District Council will, in conjunction with the County Council, actively support and promote the use of public rights of way for recreational purposes through a recognised network of public paths, routes and trails. Liaison will take place with other bodies as necessary to ensure landscape, agricultural, conservation and user interests are taken into account.

Protection Of Natural Watercourse Systems (ES1)

The District Council recognises the importance of the natural watercourse system for providing essential drainage of land and will protect that function against adverse forms of development, specifically to prevent:

- (a) the loss of access to watercourses for future maintenance;*
- (b) the loss of natural flood plain, except where fully effective compensatory measures are provided as agreed with the Local Planning Authority;*
- (c) drainage from development giving rise to substantial changes in the characteristics of surface water run-off unless adequate off site works can be provided;*
- (d) the District Council will ensure that no development involving the storage of oils and chemicals shall take place unless adequate measures have been taken to prevent discharge to watercourses in the event of spillages and/or leaks.*

Use Of Soakaways (ES6)

Where new housing development is proposed and situated on an aquifer there will be a presumption in favour of discharging storm water via soakaways rather than sewers or watercourses unless it can be shown to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority that ground conditions are not suitable.

Bromsgrove District Core Strategy Draft Document, October 2008

Core Policy 5: Managing Natural Assets

The Council will require development proposals to:

- a) Demonstrate their support for geodiversity and biodiversity and where appropriate management of them.*
- b) Protect and enhance locally characteristic species as well as achieving favourable conditions, restoring or expanding locally characteristic habitats and where appropriate contribute to the wider local and regional network.*
- c) Increase the ability of biodiversity to migrate across landscapes by making the intervening land use between semi-natural habitats more biodiversity-rich rather than simply physically linking them.*
- d) Pay due attention to the regional character and landscape type as described in the online Landscape Character Assessment Interactive map.*

Core Policy 6: Managing Man Made Assets

The Council will:

- a) Only allow development proposals that preserve the listed building or scheduled monument and/or its setting.
- b) Produce a list of buildings of local importance and take full account of these where they may be affected by planning proposals.
- c) Only approve development that takes proper account of the archaeological remains that relate to the development site.
- d) Ensure that development proposals secure the preservation and/or enhancement of the character or appearance of conservation areas and their settings.
- e) Ensure development proposals preserve or enhance the historic landscape interest of registered parks and gardens and their settings.
- f) Ensure development proposals do not harm the wider historic landscape of the District.

Worcestershire Structure Plan , adopted June 2001 (saved Policies September 2007)

Landscape Character Policy CTC.1

Proposals for development, and associated land use change or land management, must demonstrate that they are informed by, and sympathetic to, the landscape character of the area in which they are proposed to take place.

In considering development proposals, the Local Planning Authority shall take every opportunity to safeguard, restore or enhance, as appropriate, the landscape character of the area in which they are proposed. The implications of development proposals relating to the landscape will be assessed having regard to the degree to which they would:

- (i) be appropriate to, and integrate with, the landscape character of the area;*
- (ii) safeguard or strengthen the features and patterns that contribute to the landscape character and local distinctiveness of the area with particular attention being paid to both the scale, layout, design and detailing of existing buildings and other manmade features; and to the seminatural vegetation characteristic of that area; and*
- (iii) relate to the sensitivity of the particular landscape, and location, and to accommodate change. Development, or associated land use change or land management, which would adversely affect the landscape character of an area will not normally be allowed.*

Skylines and Hill Features Policy CTC.2

Development proposals should, where relevant, demonstrate that they will not have an adverse effect on skylines and hill features, including prominent views of such features. Where development will have a significant adverse impact they will not normally be allowed.

Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows Policy CTC.5

Existing trees, woodlands and hedgerows of nature conservation, amenity or landscape value should be retained and their appropriate management encouraged. The importance of ancient semi-natural woodlands is recognised and particular emphasis should be placed on their conservation. Proposals to conserve and increase the indigenous broadleaved cover in both urban and rural areas are to be encouraged providing these are in keeping with the landscape character of the area and achieve successful integration with the landform. Proposals will be particularly encouraged where these would lead to:

- (i) the establishment of native woodlands in appropriate places, that expand and link ancient seminatural woodland remnants;*
- (ii) the restoration to native woodland of non-native plantations on ancient woodland sites in priority locations;*
- (iii) the introduction of management proposals to conserve and enhance trees and woodlands in urban areas and on the urban fringe;*
- iv) multi-purpose tree planting for nature conservation, amenity, landscape improvement, and timber production; and*
- (v) the conservation of veteran trees.*

Green Open Spaces and Corridors Policy CTC.6

Both within and on the periphery of settlements the creation and conservation of green open spaces and green corridors, including watercourses, appropriate to the landscape character of the area will be encouraged. Where possible these should be continuous and linked to the open countryside in order to maximise their ecological, recreational and landscape potential. Green open spaces and corridors should be identified in District Local Plans as part of Local Plan review process.

Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage Policy CTC.8

Development will not normally be allowed where:

- (i) it is within a floodplain or other area identified by the Environment Agency as being at risk of flooding;*
- (ii) it will increase the risk of flooding or cause new flooding problems either at the site or elsewhere;*
- (iii) it will jeopardise existing flood defences, flood volumes or the ability to carry out essential maintenance work. Any development in areas subject to flood risk will need to demonstrate that adequate flood protection has been incorporated and that effects elsewhere have been fully assessed. Development should, wherever possible, incorporate sustainable drainage systems to help to retain water at its source, helping to prevent flooding, recharging groundwater resources, treating water pollution and enhancing the environment.*