

Land at Smiths lane, Browns Lane & Widney Manor Road

Bentley Heath - Solihull



Response to Solihull Local Plan Review
2015, Scope Issues and options
consultation

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1. Introduction

Introduction

This document has been prepared on behalf of UKLD (Bentley Heath) in respect of land north of Bentley Heath as shown in Figure 1 & 2. The purpose of this document is to provide a detailed response to the Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) Issues and Options Consultation document.

This submission demonstrates the opportunity to provide a combination of infrastructure and community benefits whilst delivering a reasonable amount of much needed housing. The submission is structured as follows:

- Description of the site placing it within its local context and within the urban context of Bentley Heath;
- An examination of the existing landscape of the area and landscape framework for development; and
- Initial ideas on how the site could be developed and integrated into the existing settlement to provide benefits to a thriving community well connected with the surrounding neighbourhood.

Technical studies specifically dealing with landscape, highways, arboricultural and ecology have been undertaken to inform these proposals and a summary of the findings are included in this document.

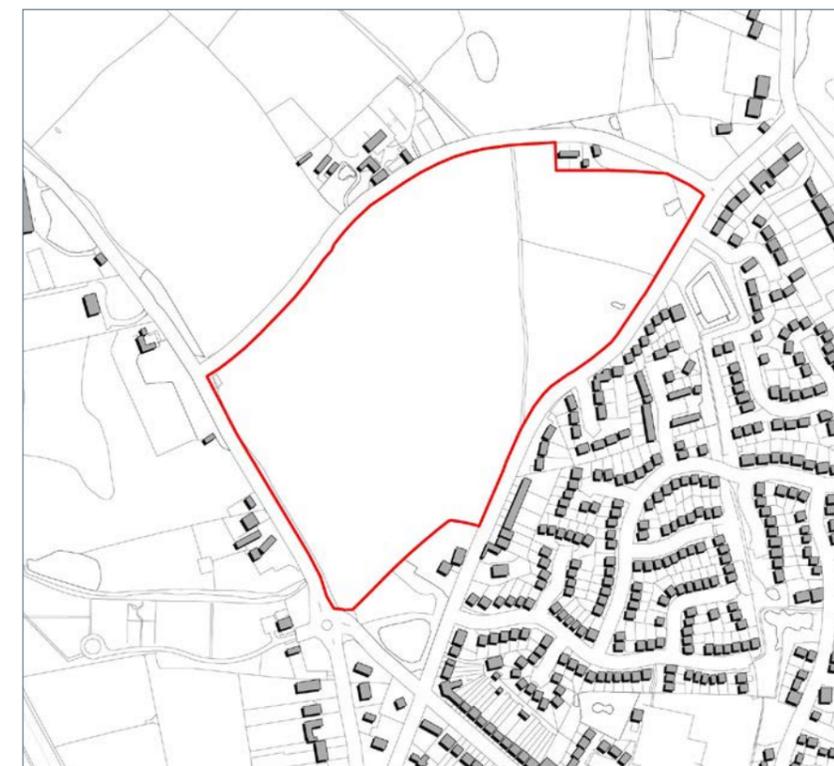
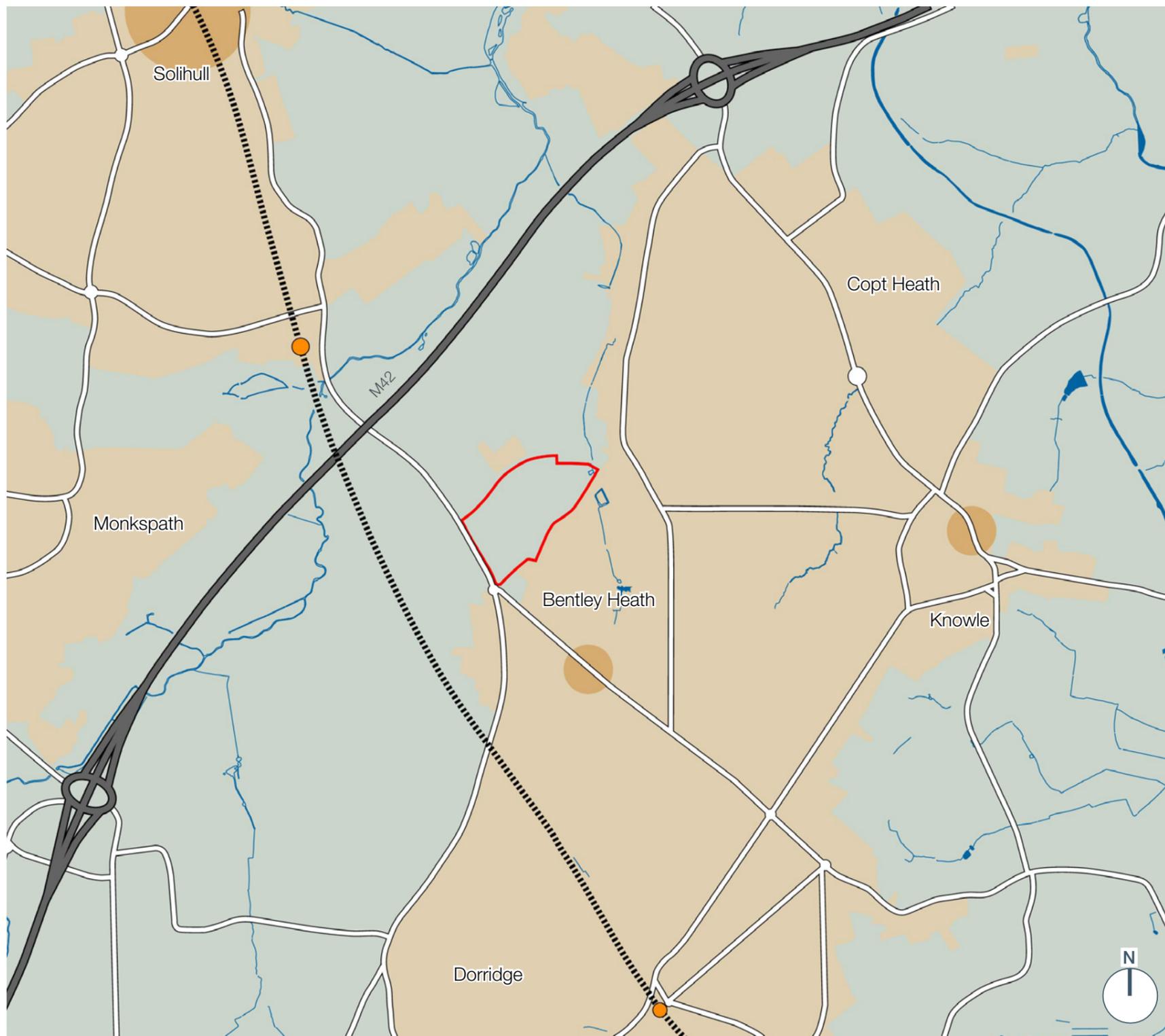


Figure 1: Site location

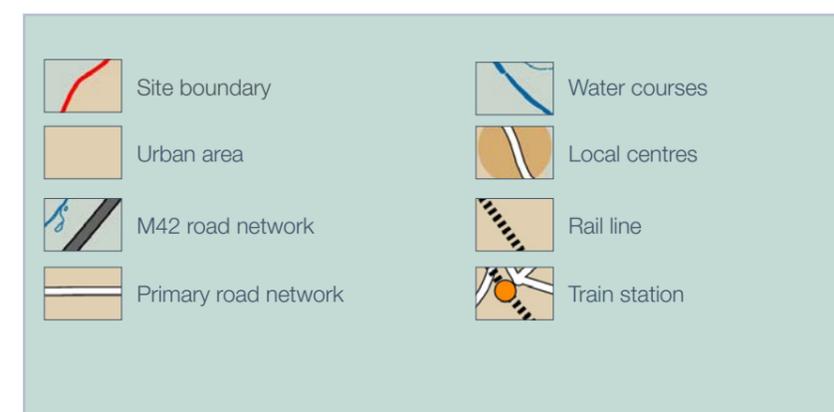


Figure 2: Site context

2. Area Analysis

Site & Context

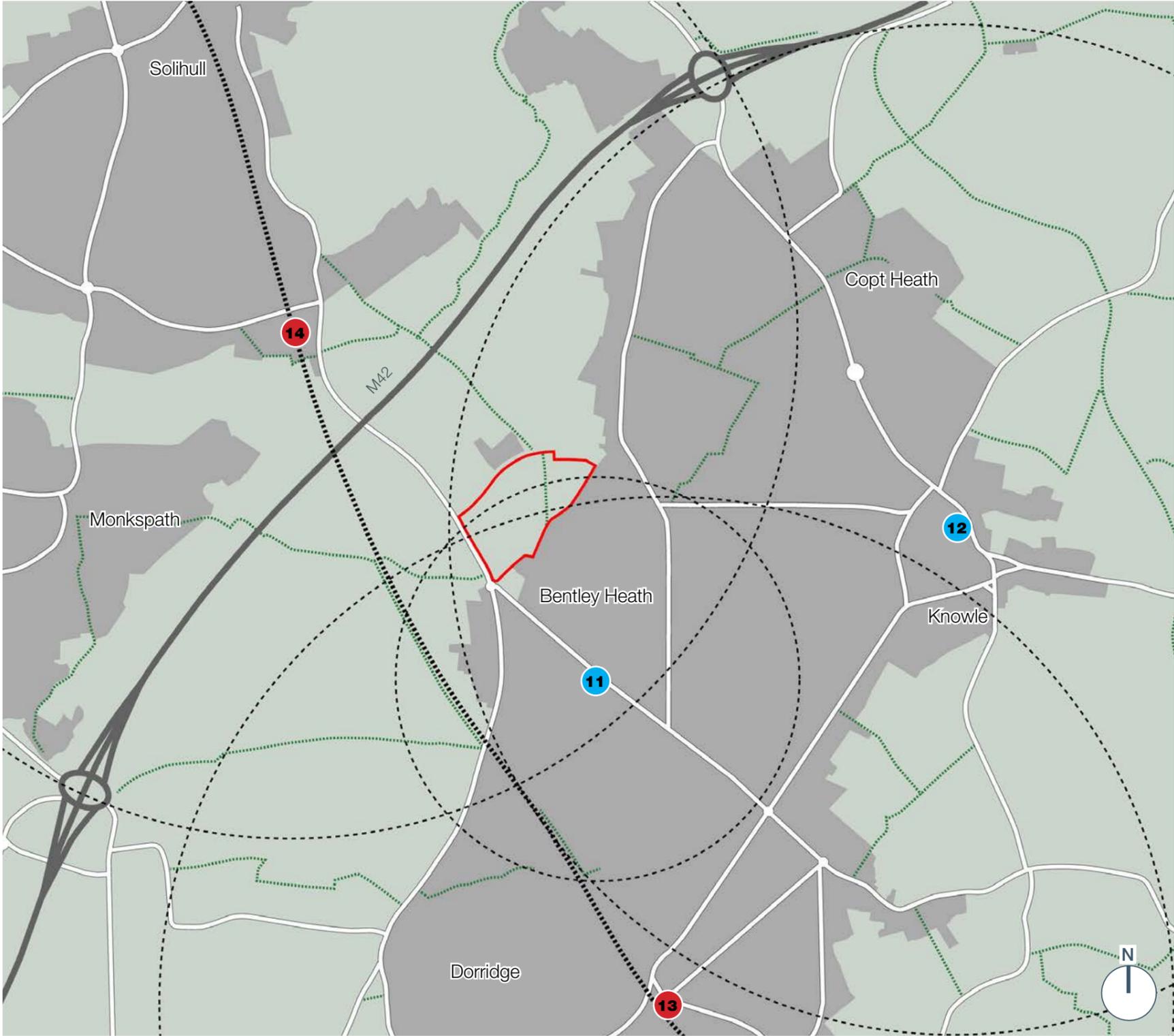
The site is located on the north-western urban fringe of Bentley Heath and measures approximately 14.8 Ha in total. It is bound by Smiths Lane, Browns Lane and Widney Manor Road and lies within the Green Belt. Smiths Lane and Browns Lane are both one way road systems. It comprises agricultural land and is relatively flat.

The M42 passes to the north of the site from east to west and is separated from the site by a significant section of Green Belt.

There is a Scheduled Ancient Monument to the east of the site which has already been surrounded by residential development on three sides.

In terms of its connectivity to public transport, the site is approximately 2.7km (1.7 miles) to the south of Widney Manor train station and 3km (1.9 miles) to the north of Dorridge train station, both accessible by bicycle. There is a bus stop in both directions on Widney Manor Road, accommodating services S2 and S20 providing connections to Dorridge, Stratford upon Avon, Cheswick Green and Solihull (See figure 6). These stops are located approximately 320m (0.2 miles) from the centre of the site, within a 5 minute walk.

Bentley Heath Primary School is located 480m (0.3m) from the site and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Centre is located approximately 650 m (0.4 miles) from the south of the site. The nearest secondary school is the Arden Academy, which is within walking and cycling distance, less than 2.5 km from the site (Figure 4).



-  Site
-  Urban area
- Local Centres
 -  Bentley Heath Local Centre
 -  Knowle Local Centre
- Transport
 -  Dorridge rail station
 -  Widney Manor rail station
 -  Primary vehicular route
 -  Bus stop
 -  Public rights of way

Figure 3 : Services and facilities

Bentley Heath - Solihull

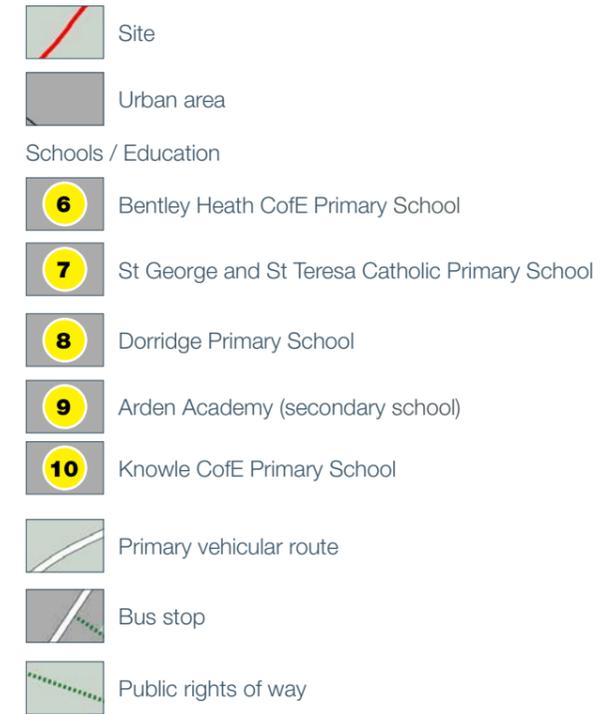
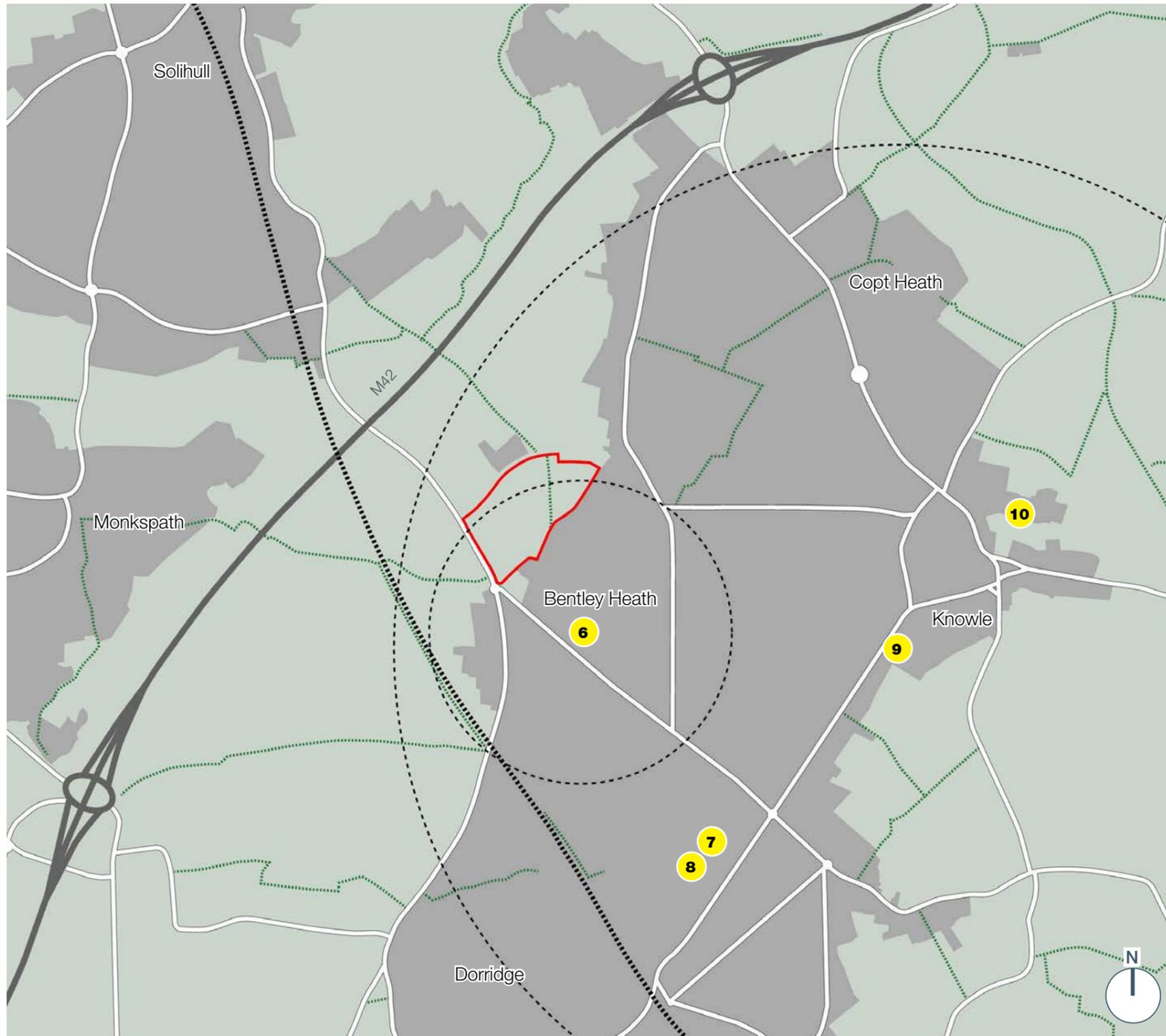


Figure 4 : Education

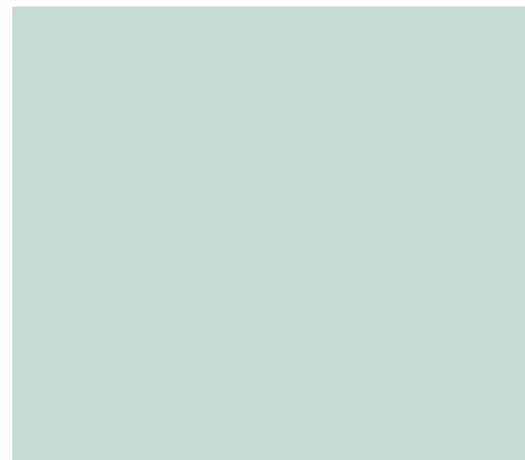


Local Services and facilities

There are a significant number of local services and facilities within easy walking distance of the site, these include:

1. Bentley Heath play area
2. Bentley Heath community centre
3. Bentley Heath local centre
4. Bentley Primary School
5. Bentley Heath nursery
6. Widney Manor Cemetery
7. Widney Services (ESSO)
8. Drum & Monkey PH

The site at Bentley Heath is in a sustainable location with a number of services and facilities in close proximity, identified in figures 3, 4 & 5.



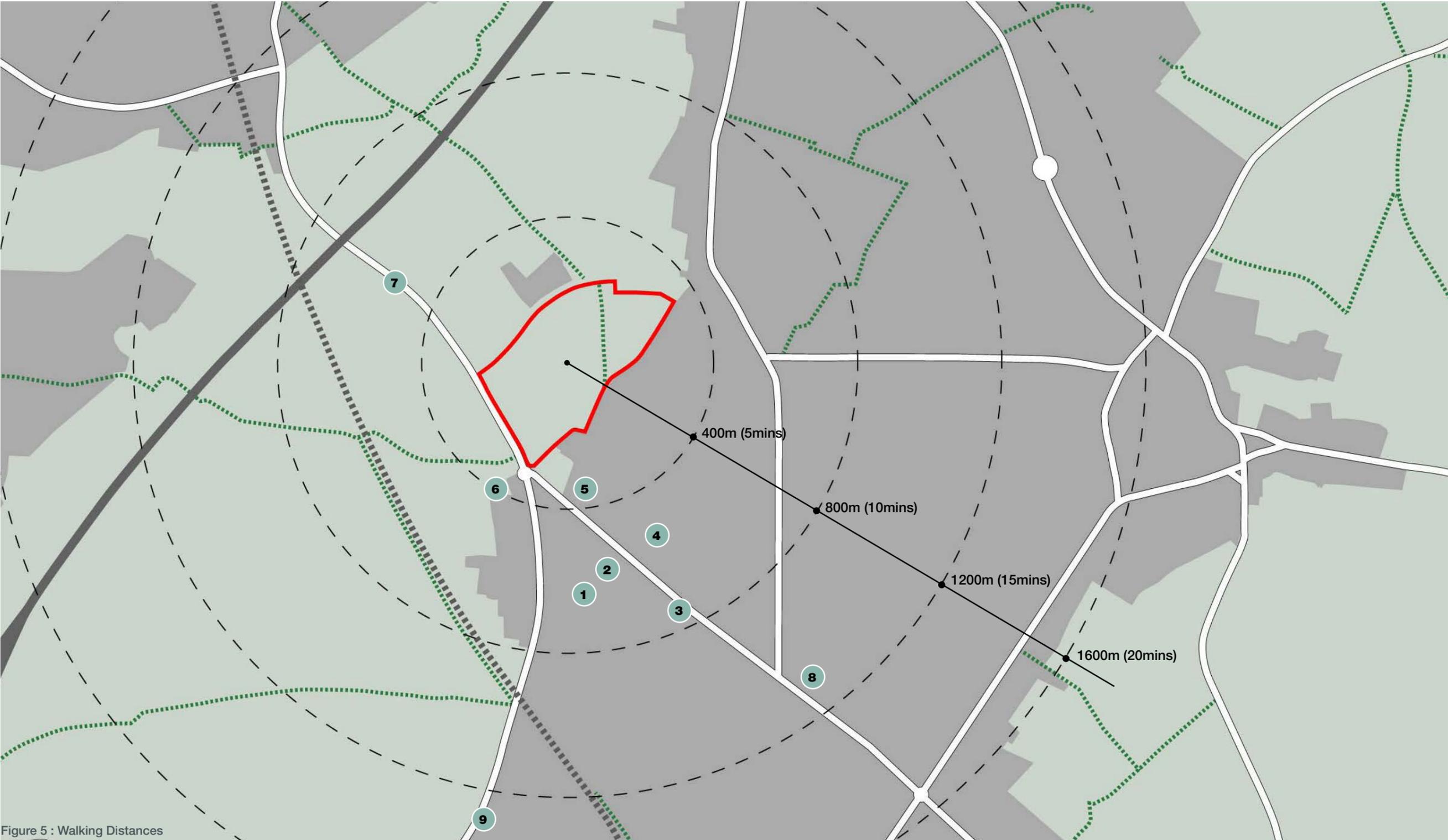


Figure 5 : Walking Distances

Ecology

A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal has been carried out, comprising a Phase 1 Habitat Survey, ecological data search and evaluation of habitats and the notable species that could be supported by the habitats identified.

The Site is not subject to any statutory or non-statutory ecological designations, however it does lie within a SSSI impact risk zone for the River Blythe SSSI. This does not preclude development of the site.

The majority of the Site comprises arable fields with species-poor hedgerows, trees, field margins and ditches around the boundary. In the east of the Site a pond is present with adjacent areas of scrub and tall ruderal vegetation. These habitats provide opportunities for nesting and foraging common bird species, roosting and foraging bats, reptiles and amphibians.

All habitats are considered to be of ecological value at the Site level only given that they are common and widespread within the locale. Field margins, hedges and ponds are identified as HoPI and LBAP priority habitats, and would be retained in development proposals, where possible.

Given the size of the Site and the location of habitats, it is considered that development of the Site could take place whilst retaining the vast majority of habitats. There is potential for minimal loss of trees, hedgerows and field margins as well as the retention of the pond. There are a number of opportunities for ecological enhancements such as new habitat creation and management of retained habitats that could be secured as part of development proposals.

Based on the information available and with the implementation of appropriate mitigation measures, where necessary, sensitive design and ecological enhancements, it is considered that there are no reasons on ecological grounds that development of the Site could not take place.



Figure 6 : Ecology Plan

Arboriculture

There are no TPOs in place within the Site boundary and the Site is not located within a Conservation Area.

The south-east section of hedgerow along Browns Lane is of landscape and habitat value, providing a strong green corridor linking the open habitat to north-east and south-west of the Site. The southwest boundary of the Site is considered to offer landscape and habitat value, and would also provide screening to any proposed development on the Site from Widney Manor Road.

A belt of trees along the western boundary (Smiths Lane) is considered to offer landscape and habitat value, and would also provide screening to any proposed development on the Site from Smiths Lane.

Cut hedgerows are present in the north-east of the Site and are considered to offer screening value to the residential properties to the north-west of Site. These features would also provide screening to any proposed development on the Site from Smiths Lane.

Groups of trees within the north-east corner are considered to be of landscape value and ecological value to the Site and the surrounding area. A public footpath / right of way follows the internal hedgerow from north to south, between Browns Lane and Smiths Lane. This hedgerow is therefore considered to be of amenity and landscape value to public users of this right of way.

Trees and hedgerows as noted above would be retained in future development proposals, where feasible, especially those forming / located adjacent to the boundary of the Site and those providing habitat and landscape value. This would maintain the landscape, screening and habitat value of these features and allow good integration of the proposed development into the existing landscape context.

The development proposals would offer the opportunity for additional tree and hedgerow planting, providing new landscape features and enhanced wildlife habitats.



Figure 7 : Arboricultural Features Plan

Landscape and Visual

Through undertaking the landscape character baseline the following points have been identified:

The overall landscape character is considered to be of medium landscape sensitivity due to the mature trees and hedgerows and enclosed nature of the site in the wider landscape and its current agricultural character.

The key sensitivities of the site include views from the public right of way that runs north / south across the site, close views from the highway network and adjacent residential properties. Long distance views are screened by existing vegetation and built form.

Residential development could be accommodated within the site, incorporating a number of measures to ensure that the development would be in keeping with the surrounding landscape character and visual context.

These measures are illustrated on the landscape opportunities/mitigation plan (Figure 8) which respond to environmental opportunities for the protection of this character type which include:

- Manage and enhance valuable woodlands, hedgerows, heathland, and distinctive field boundaries and enclose patterns.
- Create new networks of woodland, heathland and green infrastructure, linking urban areas, linking urban areas Like Birmingham and Coventry with the wider countryside to increase biodiversity, recreation and the potential for biomass and the regulation of climate.

Potential Mitigation

The areas of mitigation measures arising from the landscape and visual effects identified are to avoid/ prevent, reduce or offset any significant visual effects. They are as follows:

- Protection of mature trees on site boundaries and within the site
- Retention of existing hedgerows and reinforcing where necessary
- Setting development away from the site boundary in order for development to be screen from adjacent highway network.
- Provision of new woodland planting to create a network of improved green infrastructure and to help screen any proposals
- The provision of a green corridor along the public right of way that passes north/south through the site
- Utilising existing mature trees and woodland copse to add character to development proposals by ensuring they are an integral part of development proposals
- Provision of new open space within the site and particular on the lowest part of the site adjacent to an existing pond on the eastern boundary of the site.
- Increase biodiversity across the site by creating different habitats including new woodland, new water bodies as part of a sustainable urban drainage system that could improve the ecology of the site.

Green Belt

SMBC undertook a Green Belt Assessment in 2012 which focussed solely on North Solihull. As such the site was not assessed. SMBC will be carrying out another Green Belt Assessment as part of the Local Plan Review and this site should be assessed as part of that review.

UK Land Development has instructed an independent landscape architect to carry out a further Green Belt Assessment to understand the Green Belt implications in relation to this site. It is considered that it would be appropriate to remove this parcel from the Green Belt. The removal of this site from the Green Belt would not result in the unrestricted sprawl of Bentley Heath to other settlements as there is further Green Belt to the north of the site and the M42 provides a significant and permanent defensible boundary between the site and Solihull.

Additionally, the site is not considered to safeguard the countryside from encroachment as there is significant parcel of Green Belt between the site and the M42. The site does not preserve the special character of a historic town.



Figure 8 : Landscape Mitigation Plan



1. View from Browns Lane looking North west across the site towards Widney Manor Road and Smiths Lane.



2. View form Browns Lane looking North west across the site towards Smiths Lane

Highways

The Site is strategically located for access to the local and wider highway networks. Solihull is located approximately 2 miles to the north of the site and is accessible via Widney Manor Road. Junction 5 of the M42 is located within approximately 2 miles to the north east of the site and provides access to the A41 which links to Solihull and Birmingham in a northbound direction.

Junction 4 of the M42 is located approximately 2 miles to the south west of the site and provides access to Stratford Road which provides a link to Birmingham. In a northbound direction the M42 delivers access to the M6 linking to the M1 and in a southbound direction the M42 connects to the M40. The existing highway network can be seen on Figure 9 & 10.

Origin/destination statistics from Census data provides a useful indication as to where people are likely to travel to/from for work purposes. Census data for the local area (Solihull 28 MSOAs) has been used to calculate the most appropriate route that people would take to/from the site. Distribution reveals 60% of people would travel north along Widney Manor Road towards Solihull and Birmingham. 24% northbound along Lady Byron Lane towards junction 5 of the M42, A41 and Birmingham. The remaining 16% would travel southbound towards destinations including Warwick and Stratford-on-Avon.

Routing from the site to these destinations would likely impact upon the following junctions and further detailed analysis of these junctions would be required to support a planning application. The methodology for this work would be agreed with the respective highway authorities (Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council / Highways England) and submitted within a detailed Transport Assessment:

- Dorridge Road / Blue Lake Road junction;
- Widney Manor Road / Smiths Lane;
- Smiths Lane / Browns Lane;
- Browns Lane / Widney Road;
- Lady Byron Lane / Tilehouse Green Lane / Browns Lane;
- Widney Lane / Lovelace Avenue / Widney Manor Road;
- Widney Manor Road / Widney Road / Four Ashes Road roundabout; and
- A41/M42/A4141 roundabout.

Sustainable Movement

The site is conveniently located for access to sustainable transport. The nearest bus stops are located on Widney Manor Road and Widney Road within 400m of the site. Frequent bus services operate from these stops to destinations including Dorridge, Stratford upon Avon, Cheswick Green and Solihull.

Widney Manor Railway station is located approximately 1 mile north of the site. Widney Manor Station provides frequent services to Dorridge, Stratford-upon-Avon, Birmingham, Leamington Spa and Worcester. Rail services are operated by Chiltern Railways and London Midland. Approximate walking time to Widney Manor station would be 20 minutes. Dorridge railway station is located approximately 2 miles to

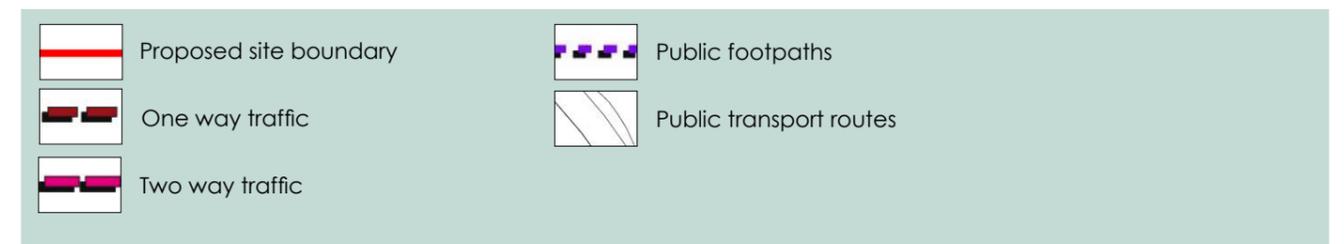
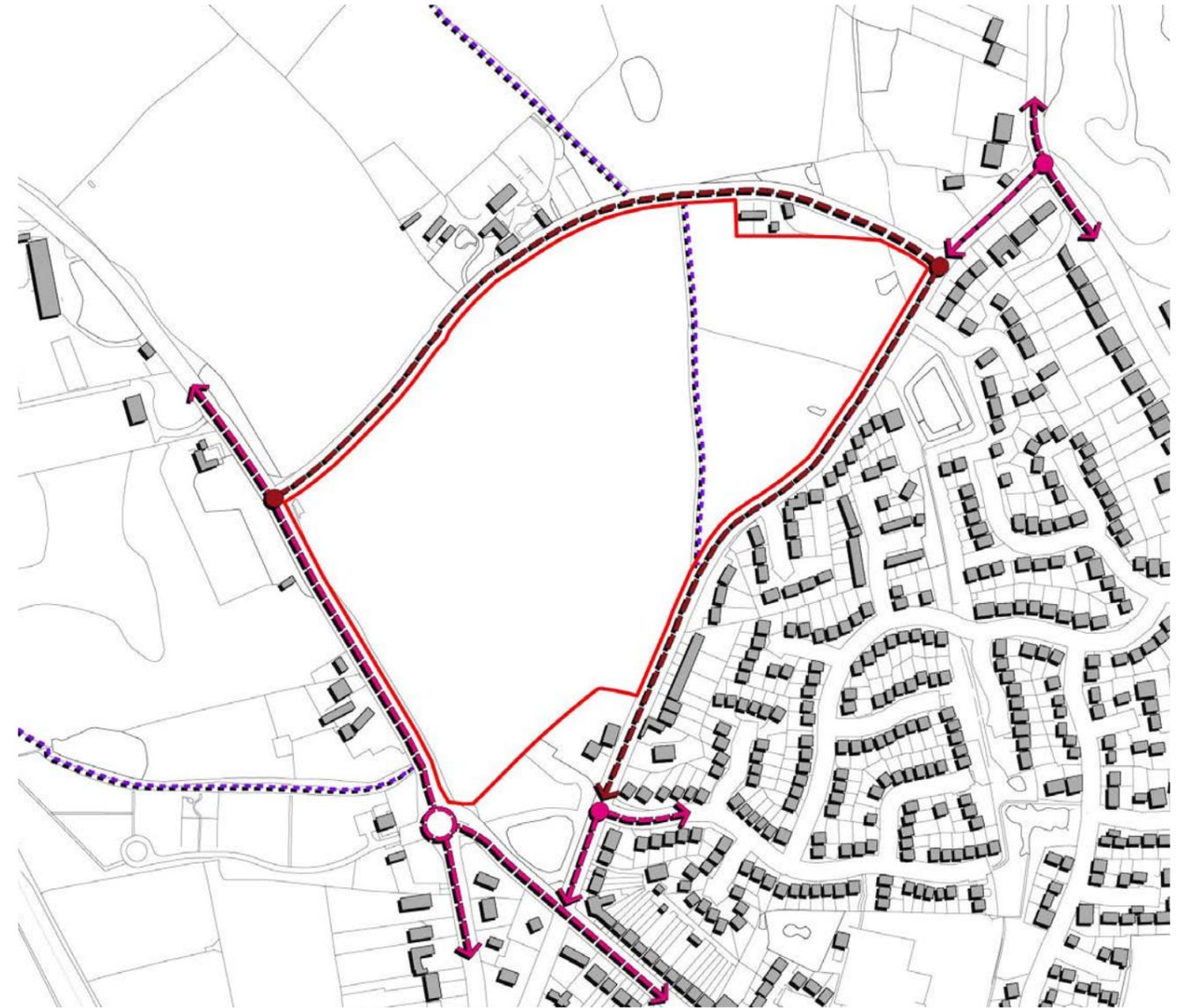
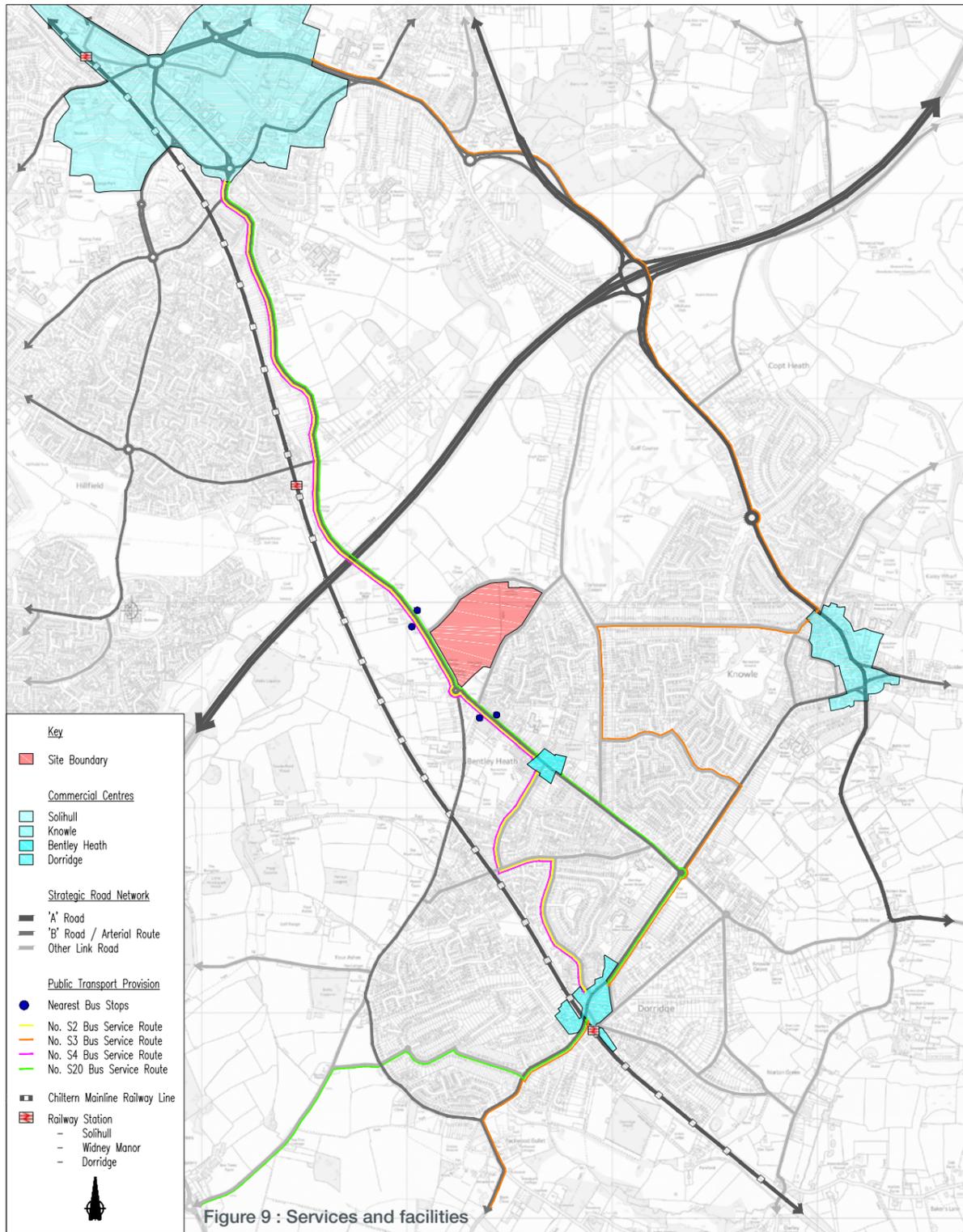
the south of the site. Dorridge provides access to the same destinations as Widney Manor, with the addition of direct services to London.

Journey times from Widney Manor Station to Solihull are approximately 5 minutes, whilst journey times to Birmingham are approximately 25 minutes. Journey times to London from Dorridge station are approximately 1 hour 40 minutes.

Existing bus and rail services provide a realistic opportunity for future residents of the site to travel to destinations further afield for employment and leisure opportunities by non-car modes. Current proposals for High Speed 2 (HS2) include the development of Birmingham Interchange a planned HS2 railway station within Solihull expected to open in 2026. The station will provide access to the London-Birmingham HS2 route. The station will be located approximately 8 miles from the sites which equates to a 20 minute journey by car. Journey time via HS2 from Birmingham Interchange to London will be 38 minutes away and Heathrow less than an hour. The future development of HS2 will further improve the connectivity of the local area.

A number of services and facilities are located within the local area they include a medical centre, community centre, food stores, schools and post office.

The location of the sites therefore offers a very realistic opportunity for future residents to travel to and from the new development by non-car modes. By doing so, the development would fully accord with the relevant planning policies which emphasis the need to located developments where there is a realistic and reasonable expectation that services and facilities may be accessed by travel modes other than the private car.



The Issue

Solihull Local Plan Review

UKLD consider that the site is in a sustainable location and could provide an appropriate scale of growth to Bentley Heath whilst providing beneficial highways and education investment

Locally we understand that primary schools are full and the existing Bentley Heath Primary School has limited capacity to expand.

There is an identified requirement for an additional 4,000 dwellings within Solihull Metropolitan Borough subject to further evidence in the form of an Objectively Assessed Housing Need (OAHN) and the publication of the Spatial Plan for Growth. The additional 4,000 dwellings, is considered to represent the minimum requirement. It is understood that this figure will increase if either the OAHN for the Borough is higher than currently projected or there is a requirement for Solihull to support Birmingham's housing shortfall.

One of the key issues to be addressed in the Solihull Local Plan Review is therefore where the new dwellings will be accommodated within the Borough, particularly given that a large proportion of the Borough is located within the Green Belt. Paragraph 1.46 of the issues and Options consultation makes reference to the Peter Brett Strategic housing needs study (2015) and proposals for 1000 dwellings north west of Bentley Heath

Birmingham Overspill

One of the most pressing planning issues which may give rise to significant Green Belt land release in Solihull Borough is the housing shortfall identified through the Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) process. The BDP Main Modifications published for consultation in August 2015 provided the following confirmation on the housing shortfall:

“Birmingham’s objectively assessed housing need for the period 2011 to 2031 is 89,000 additional homes. It is not possible to deliver all of this additional housing within the City boundary. The City Council will continue to work actively with neighbouring Councils through the Duty to Co-operate to ensure that appropriate provision is made elsewhere within the Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area to meet the shortfall of 37,900 homes.”

In parallel to the BDP process the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) commissioned Peter Brett Associates (PBA) to undertake an assessment of future housing need across the sub-regional housing market area for the period 2011 – 2031. Stage 3 of their work was published in August / September 2015 and seeks to compare the housing need against land supply currently identified and, if supply falls short of need, to explore spatial options for meeting that shortfall.

Paragraph 5.25 of the stage 3 report refers to proposals for a large urban extension (1000 Units) west of Bentley Heath

When the Spatial Plan for Growth is published by the GBSLEP it may become more apparent where the housing can be delivered and what proportion is required to be delivered in Solihull.

Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Plan

The Site is within the designated Neighbourhood Area for the Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath Neighbourhood Plan (KD&BH). The Neighbourhood Forum is preparing the K,D&BH Neighbourhood Plan and received official designation of the Neighbourhood Area on 10 October 2015. The Forum formally launched on 15 November 2015.

The Forum recognises that there are a number of options within the Solihull Local Plan Review Issues and Options consultation document which would have a significant impact on the area (A, F and G).

A public meeting was held on 13 January 2016 to discuss the growth options proposed by the Council and to consider an appropriate response to the consultation. The meeting was primarily focused on the issue of housing growth, although the need for enhanced community facilities and infrastructure was also discussed. The Forum objectively presented the 7 options set out in the SMBC Solihull Local Plan Review, emphasising the three options (A, F and G) most likely to impact on the Neighbourhood Area. Specific questions were raised regarding local infrastructure such as roads and schools, and a number of comments recognised that a large site release is necessary to obtain the financial contributions to pay for new community facilities and associated infrastructure.

The Forum referenced the sites previously submitted to the SHLAA and that the SMBC Issues and Options document identifies land for 1,000 dwellings in Bentley Heath. It was not clear where this level of housing provision could go but it was assumed by the Forum that it included the land bounded by Smith Lane, Widney Manor Road and Browns Lane..

Additionally, residents identified that there is a need for more affordable housing to support key workers such as teachers and reduce the need for teachers to travel in from further afield.

Since the public meetings the draft proposals for the UK Land Development in Bentley Heath have been shared with both SMBC and K&D & BH Neighbourhood Forum

The Opportunities and Potential Benefits

UKLD consider that the development of this site could provide an opportunity to deliver a new two-way road linking the eastern end of Browns Lane with the western end of Smith Lane. This would relieve the eastern end of Smith Lane and the western end of Browns Lane from significant traffic.

At the same time there is an opportunity to accommodate a new 3-form entry primary school. In preparing this submission we have been in contact with the School Places Team at SMBC, who confirmed the existing shortage of primary school places locally

The proposal is to support the delivery of new infrastructure and community facilities through the delivery of new dwellings. The 2.2 Ha shown for a school is simply an indication of the area 2.2 Ha would take up. If a larger site is required to support a 3 - form entry then as part of a phased land swap with the existing Bentley Heath school site we consider that a new facility could be successfully accommodated. Whilst we are still working on site constraints and the associated capacity, we consider that the whole site could yield around 250 houses.

The school could be located on the western edge of the site. The playing fields associated with the school could be positioned on the western boundary to retain a green edge to the immediate landscape on Widney Manor Road, particularly upon approach from the north into Bentley Heath.

The public footpath running north to south through the site will be retained and development sensitively designed around it to provide a set back to provide surveillance. Public open space will also provide a significant feature on the edge of the site.

The site is within easy walking distance of Widney Manor Railway station. The provision of a new two-way road with footpaths will provide easy access to pedestrians and cyclists, not only from this development but also from existing residential areas of Bentley Heath and Knowle.

Housing

To support the identified housing requirement, we anticipate that a number of strategic land releases will be required to deliver the minimum 4,000 housing requirement across the Borough. The site subject of these representations is considered to provide a significant viable and deliverable option to help meet the Borough housing needs.

We consider that these proposals address Option G of the Issues and Options document and will assist in meeting the Borough's requirement by providing land for approximately 250 homes. Part of the site forms a SHLAA site which was considered in the 2012 SHLAA which we believe to be part of the '1000 dwellings proposals north west of Bentley Heath identified in the consultation document. This site will contribute towards this identified figure and is capable of delivering the amount of development required to provide the community with much needed benefits.

This site is in a sustainable location given its proximity to local services (see figure 3,4 & 5) and is extremely well connected by public transport.

We have carried out a number of technical assessments to consider the suitability of the site. These are summarised in the following section .



Existing junction where Smiths Lane meets Browns Lane



Existing public footpath

Proposed Approach

The Constraints and opportunities, together with an analysis of the site have been used to prepare a development concept for the site.

Constraints

- Current configuration of roads around the site are narrow and one way, which raises safety concerns and impact on the existing amenity of residents
- Journey times are inefficient due to the nature of the one way system in place
- The existing junctions and highways configuration
- Green Belt with significant existing hedgerows and vegetation
- Limited school places locally

Opportunities

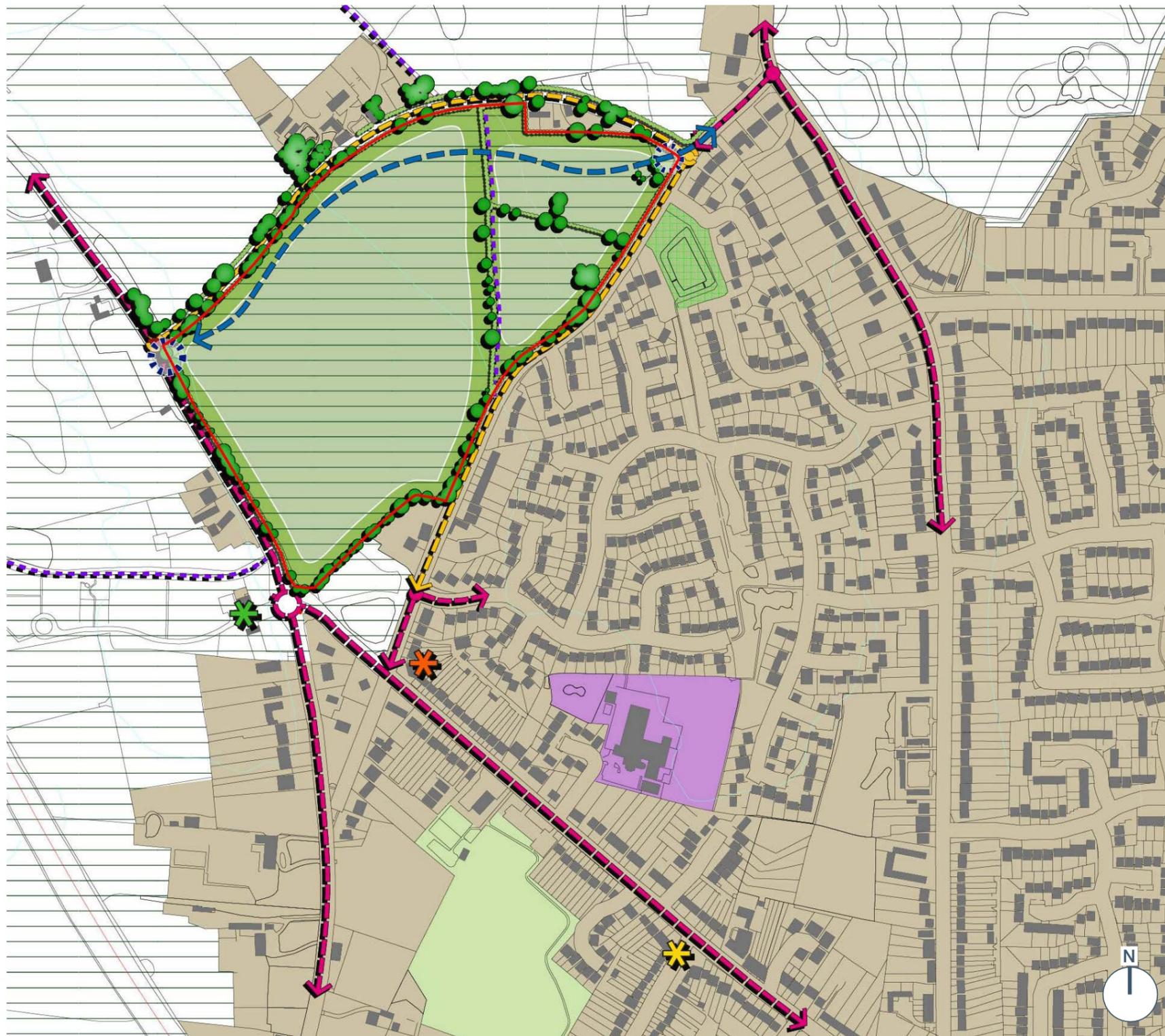
- Retain existing trees, hedgerows where possible and create new wildlife habitats and corridors;
- Opportunities for enhanced tree planting along the boundary and throughout the site;
- Provide a new large area of public open space with equipped children's play areas, which could serve both the development and local residents;
- Enhance existing footpath connections with new landscape, and create new pedestrian and cycle links;
- Opportunity to reconfigure Browns Lane and Smiths Lane to benefit local residents
- Establish a new access road between Widney Manor Road and Browns Lane
- Potential to provide a new primary school to serve the development and the existing community;
- Provide new open market and affordable housing with associated infrastructure to help meet local needs.
- Provide on-site solutions to store surface water run off produced by the development
- Ensure the setting of surrounding settlements is respected and enhanced through the design of the layout and landscape.



Smiths Lane One way traffic



Browns Lane One way traffic



-  Proposed site boundary
-  One way traffic
-  Two way traffic
-  Public footpaths
-  Existing trees
-  Existing hedgerows
-  Existing urban area
-  Potential new 2 way access road
-  Potential access points
-  Existing buildings
-  SAM
-  Existing ponds
-  Existing primary school (Bentley Heath School)
-  Open space
-  Local centre
-  Cemetery
-  Local shops
-  Green belt

Figure 11 : Constraints & Opportunities Plan

3. Development Concept

Design Criteria

Following the initial analysis work carried out the key design criteria proposed are:

- Provide a sympathetic urban extension to Bentley Heath with a Green edge
- Provide a vehicular link through the site to reduce travel times for local residents;
- Establish a permeable and legible street structure providing access to the surrounding area for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Enhance the existing public right of way across the site to create a Green corridor linking the development to the surrounding landscape
- Locate higher densities near to the main vehicular route, with densities decreasing near the rural edge;
- Create a focal point that is defined by built form
- Provide planting to enhance valuable green/ wildlife links, and act as a new physical and visual boundary
- Establish a series of green corridors across the site linking the existing on-site habitats and proposed green corridor
- Provide an easily accessible area of semi natural public open space
- Provide on-site water storage with wildlife meadow.





Landuse

The development concept could provide around 250 new residential units together with associated infrastructure, public open space with the potential for a new 3 form entry primary school.

Indicative land use budget

Description	Area (ha)	Percentage (%)
Residential (210- 250 dwellings)	7.1	48
Public open space	1.9	13
Primary school (3FE)	2.2	15
Infrastructure and planting	3.6	24
Total site area	14.8 ha	100 %

School

If a larger site is required to support a 3 FE school then as part of a phased land swap with the existing Bentley Heath school site we consider that a new facility could be successfully accommodated on the proposed development site

Open space

The indicative housing numbers shown on the development concept would provide a requirement for approximately 1.9 ha of open space in accordance with the Council's guidance. The development concept shown would provide the amount of open space required by policy as well as a further 3.6 Ha of structural planting and infrastructure.

Density

The density of the proposed development reflects the density of the surrounding urban area with an average density of 30-35 (dph). Densities will vary across the site, with generally higher densities around the access road to ensure the residents are in the closet proximity to the existing bus route / stop, and lower densities located around the development's rural edge.

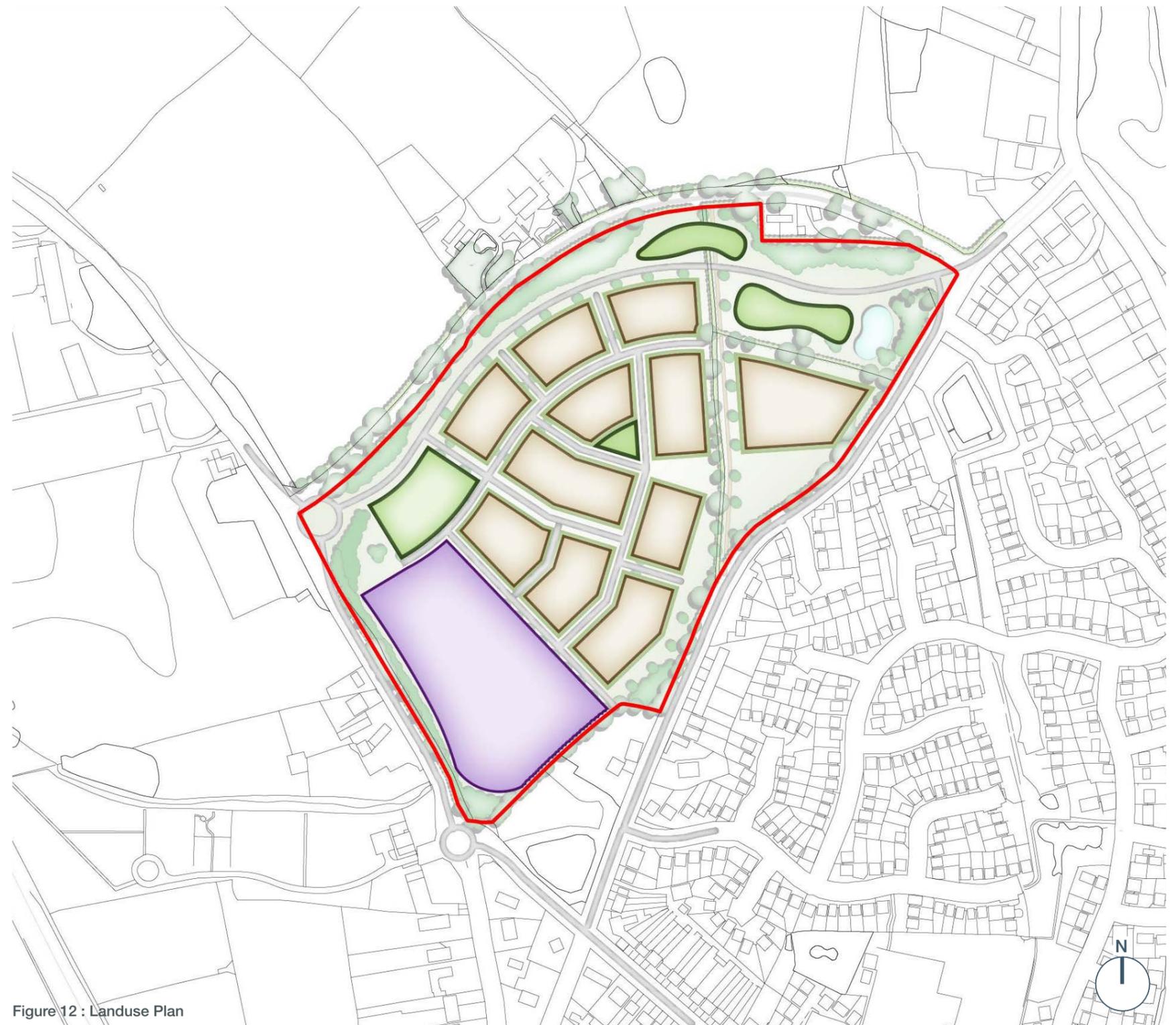


Figure 12 : Landuse Plan

Movement & Access

Movement

Within the development a hierarchy of streets will be created to provide access to the new homes. The hierarchy will be established to assist in way-finding and legibility within the site and to ensure streets have sufficient capacity for all movement. New pedestrian connections to existing neighbourhoods will also allow for safer connections to surrounding rights of way and to integrate the new development with existing desire lines.

Access

Two main points of vehicular access will be created to access the new road one from Widney Manor Road and a second off Browns Lane. This will create the opportunity to carry existing traffic around Browns Lane which is currently one way reducing congestion at peak times.

Access road

The access road provides a route through the development, with the access points becoming gateway features incorporating open space and high quality landscape.

Pedestrian & cyclists

Existing pedestrian links will be enhanced and additional routes will be provided for pedestrians and cyclists, linking into the wider movement network.

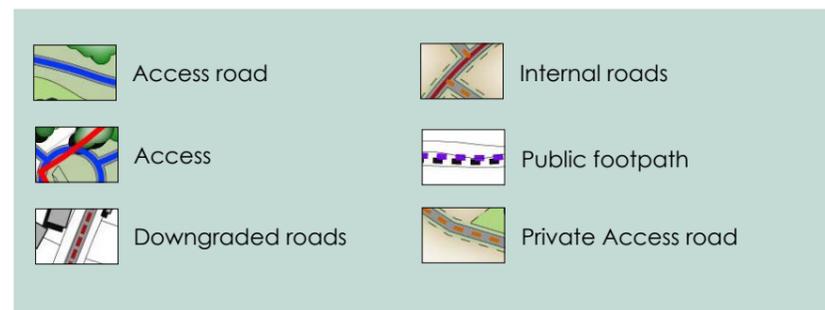


Figure 13 : Development concept plan

Proposed link road & Access

Access to the Site would be taken from a new roundabout junction located in the vicinity of the Widney Manor Road and Smiths Lane junction. As part of the internal layout a new link road would be provided through the site, running from Widney Manor Road, to the southwest and Browns Lane, to the northeast. The link road would become the primary route for the Site traffic and would also seek to alleviate congestion on the wider highway network, particularly at the Browns Lane and Widney Manor Road junction.

The location of the roundabout and alignment of the link road have been designed to allow the route to run parallel to the existing Smiths Lane route, therefore encouraging its utilisation. The combination of the link road and roundabout would increase the capacity for the benefit of local residents and the access proposals would result in the minimal loss of vegetation, therefore retaining the rural aesthetics of the area along both Smiths Lane and Browns Lane.

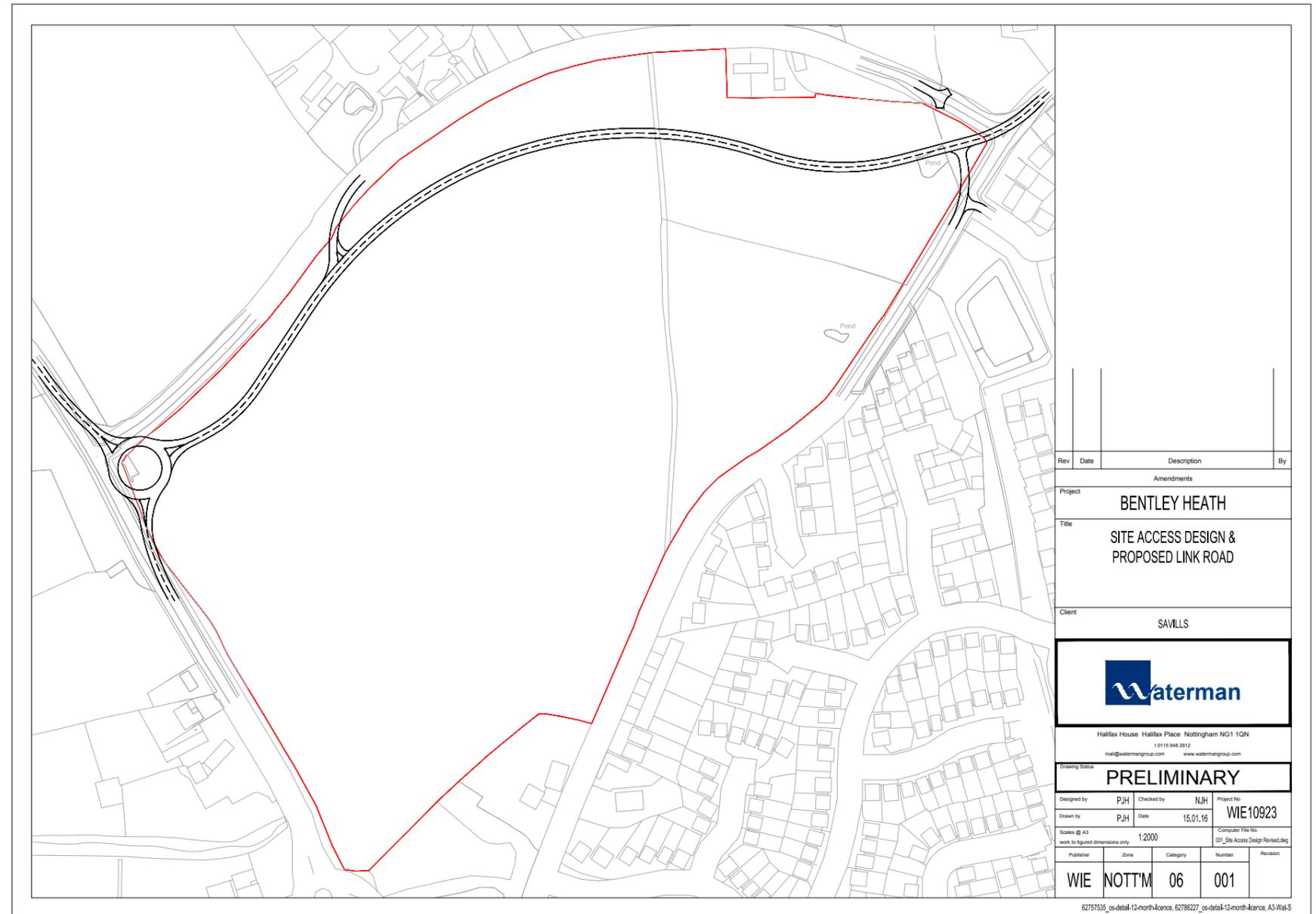


Figure 14 : Proposed road alignment

Landscape Strategy / Green Infrastructure

The new open space will be an attractive asset both for existing and proposed residents and will comprise new formal and informal open space, incorporating a range of newly created wildlife habitats ensuring that the ecological functions of the landscape are retained and protected.

A key feature of the proposed development will be the enhancement of the existing public footpath linking through to the open country side. Along with ecological enhancement, this provides a real opportunity not only for new residents, but to ensure that existing residents are able to continue to enjoy informal recreation and take advantage of the new connections and linkages to the surrounding countryside. Consideration should also be given to the use of private drives and density on the edge of the site to further create a softer edge to development. The above mitigation will reduce any impact of proposals on both views close to the site and from long distance views and help to maintain the function of the greenbelt including avoiding visual coalescence of settlements.

Open Space Corridors

Around the perimeter of the site open space corridors will also be provided. These will soften the development edge, ensure boundary hedgerows are maintained and provide active surveillance on the existing footpath. The private gardens and the enhanced areas of open space will provide substantial biodiversity enhancements across much of the site.

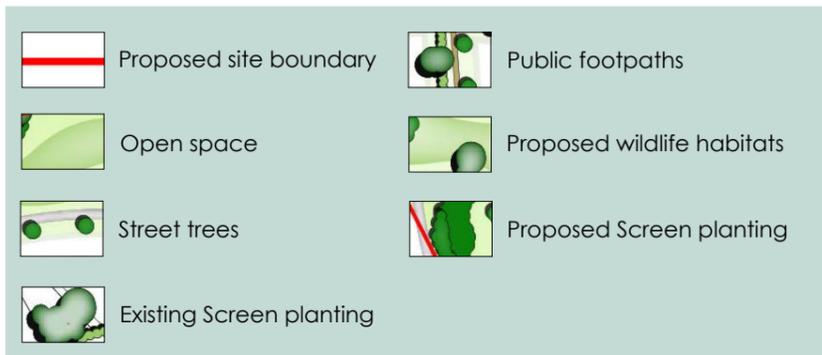


Figure 15 : Landscape Strategy

4. Conclusion

Conclusion

These representations are submitted in response to the issues and options document on behalf of UK Land Developments. The proposals would deliver a sustainable new development, as well as providing a school, public open space for the surrounding community, and enhancing the gateway to Bentley Heath.

The development site would :

- Provide additional housing in the area and increase the choice of homes and provide detached family housing in a high quality environment;
- Integrated with Bentley Heath, connecting the development to existing neighbourhoods, footpaths and cycle routes to encourage walking and cycling, particularly to key facilities such as local shops, existing healthcare facilities, employment sites and leisure amenities;
- Include the potential for new school facilities
- Promote a viable and sustainable development of approx 250 dwellings
- Provide the opportunity to create an access road through the development connecting Widney Manor Road to Browns Lane
- Create a new gateway along Widney Manor Road that will provide a green entrance into Bentley Heath
- Reinforce existing landscape features with a woodland belt and semi-natural open space
- Provide a strong landscape framework by preserving and enhancing the important aspects of the existing landscape and providing a variety of new open spaces for recreational space, in addition to creating new wildlife habitats and green corridors;
- Make a welcoming place by creating streets that overlook public spaces where people can meet and socialise;
- Provide integrated and viable transport choices where it is possible to walk, cycle and use public transport to travel, where vehicles are also accommodated
- Provide an on-site site SuDS network that controls surface water run off, utilising the existing topography, and watercourses.
- Enhance the pedestrian connections between Knowle and Bentley Heath and Widney Manor station making journeys by public transport more attractive
- Provide a sustainable urban extension to Bentley Heath in close proximity of a range of services and facilities

We consider that these proposals provide a sustainable opportunity for the county to consider in the context of growth option G significant expansion of rural villages / settlements.



- | | | | |
|---|------------------------|---|---------------------|
|  | Proposed site boundary |  | Existing hedgerows |
|  | Residential |  | Proposed trees |
|  | School |  | Roads |
|  | Open space |  | Public footpaths |
|  | Existing trees |  | On-site attenuation |



Figure 16 : Illustrative Masterplan

