

Birmingham Development Plan 2031

Green Belt Assessment

October 2013

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Methodology

3.0 Stage One – Preliminary Analysis

4.0 Stage Two – Detailed Assessment of Option Areas

5.0 Stage Three – Scoring of Shortlisted Areas

6.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

1.0 INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND

1.1 Purpose of this document

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this assessment is to develop the analysis of Birmingham's Green Belt further. The document:
- Provides the background and policy context for reviewing the Green Belt.
 - Summarises consultation comments in relation to Green Belt development made during the Options Consultation and identifies the further work that has been undertaken.
 - Sets out the methodology for assessing the Green Belt Option Areas.
 - Provides a detailed assessment of the Green Belt Option Areas.
 - Recommends a preferred option for the development of a Sustainable Urban Extension and large employment site.

1.2 Birmingham Development Plan (BDP)

- 1.2.1 This assessment has been undertaken to help inform the preparation of the Birmingham Development Plan, previously known as the Birmingham Core Strategy.
- 1.2.2 The BDP's strategy is to accommodate as much of the City's projected household growth as possible within the City's boundary and to maximise development opportunities on brownfield land within the urban area. This strategy will see the delivery of significant housing growth in locations such as Greater Icknield, the Southern Gateway and Longbridge.

1.3 National Planning Policy Framework

- 1.3.1 The BDP has been produced in accordance with the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.3.2 The NPPF sets out the Government's planning policies for England with a presumption in favour of sustainable development at the heart.
- 1.3.3 The sections particularly relevant in the context of this report are 'Building a strong, competitive economy', 'Delivering a wide choice of high quality homes' and 'Protecting Green Belt land'.
- 1.3.4 Paragraph 19 states that "significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth through the planning system" and local authorities should set out a clear strategy which positively and proactively encourages sustainable economic growth and identify strategic sites to meet anticipated needs over the plan period.

- 1.3.5 With regard to housing, local authorities are to “ensure that their plans meet the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.” Local authorities should provide for a wide choice of high quality homes, increase opportunities for homes ownership and create sustainable inclusive and mixed communities.

1.4 Previous Stages in the Preparation of the BDP

- 1.4.1 **Issues and Options Consultation 2008** - The 2008 Issues and Options consultation put forward three options for growth. Two of these confined growth to locations within the existing urban area. The third option achieved a higher level of growth through urban extensions which would have involved Green Belt development. The response to the consultation revealed opposition to the urban extension option from local residents and amenity groups, although it was supported by the house building industry.
- 1.4.2 **Draft Core Strategy Consultation 2010** - The 2010 Core Strategy Consultation Draft promoted a level of growth based on the emerging Regional Spatial Strategy Phase 2 Revision and focused on how the City could deliver 50,600 new homes and a minimum reservoir of 130 hectares of employment land through a mainly brownfield based regeneration strategy. No changes were proposed to the City’s Green Belt boundary with the exception of a small release of land at the former Yardley Sewage Works for 350 dwellings. This is a brownfield site with limited value in terms of the purposes of the Green Belt and the proposal would improve the housing offer within the Shard End area as well as providing other regeneration and community benefits. This proposal attracted very little comment. The brownfield regeneration strategy was supported by many respondents – but again house builders argued for a Green Belt review.

1.5 Why are we are considering releasing Green Belt for Development

- 1.5.1 Since the 2010 Core Strategy Consultation Draft there have been a number of changes which have meant that we have had to revisit our approach towards housing and employment land. In particular the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has been revoked, and under the NPPF, the City Council is expected to ‘meet objectively assessed needs’ for new housing and employment.
- 1.5.2 Recent projections suggest that Birmingham’s population will increase by 150,000 between 2011 and 2031 and that the number of households within the City will increase by around 80,000 over this period. The latest survey of land supply (the 2012 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment) shows that the City has capacity to accommodate about 45,000 dwellings on sites within the urban area which means that there is a significant shortfall of land to meet projected household growth. This means that it has been necessary to look at options to provide additional development opportunities for housing, including a review of the Green Belt.
- 1.5.3 In terms of employment land, a study by Warwick Economics and Development, *Employment Land Study for the Economic Zones and Key Sectors in Birmingham*, October 2012, found that there is shortage of high

quality land to meet the needs of the expanding advanced manufacturing sector in the City. The conclusions of this report are reflected in the findings of the 2012 Employment Land Review (ELR). The ELR shows that there is currently a significant shortfall in the supply of high quality 'best urban' employment land. Best urban sites, as defined in the UDP, are large high-quality sites attractive to clients with an international, national and regional choice of location. This does not preclude Green Belt land being identified for best urban employment purposes in exceptional circumstances. For example the land released at Minworth Sewage Works for best urban industrial development was formerly in the Green Belt. The safeguarding of the Washwood Heath sites for the High Speed 2 rail services maintenance depot, which was confirmed by the Secretary of State on the 9th July 2013, means that the City's largest industrial site at 54 hectares can no longer be considered as being available for industrial development. The removal of the Washwood Heath sites means that the total supply of best urban land has fallen to a record low. The ELR recommends that there is an urgent need to identify new development opportunities in the best urban market.

- 1.5.4 Both the Employment Land Review and Warwick Study highlight the limited opportunities available to identify new best urban land within the urban area and therefore support the approach of reviewing the Green Belt to provide a new employment site. In the context of these studies new opportunities in the best urban market need to be identified.
- 1.5.5 Birmingham therefore has a shortage of land within the urban area for both housing and employment development. This represents exceptional circumstances which justify a review of the Green Belt through the Birmingham Development Plan process.

1.6 The Alternatives to Releasing Green Belt for Development

- 1.6.1 Prior to considering a review of the Green Belt, alternative means of increasing housing and employment provision were explored. Indeed, a significant number of consultation comments made on the 2012 Options Consultation requested alternative options to be taken/ considered.
- 1.6.2 The strategy taken by the BDP is one that is predominantly focussed on regeneration through the development of Brownfield land. The SHLAA demonstrates that 45,000 dwellings can be accommodated within the urban area, principally on brownfield sites. Other sources of land for development have also been explored
- 1.6.3 In relation to housing, the potential for utilising open space that is of limited value, underused or no longer serves its purpose was investigated. However, open space is an important asset and integral to the creation of sustainable neighbourhoods and as the City's population grows, the demand for open space will also increase. In many parts of the City there is already a shortage of good quality open space, so opportunities to utilise open space for housing are limited.
- 1.6.4 However, there are some opportunities to utilise land currently defined as open space through selective redevelopment which could also provide the

opportunity for improvements to the quality of remaining areas of open space but these are not likely to deliver more than 2,000 to 3,000 dwellings.

- 1.6.5 The other opportunity considered was to accommodate housing on land currently in employment use. As with open space, land for employment is important in delivering the City's overall strategy, particularly to generate more jobs for both the current and future projected population. It is therefore essential that vacant employment uses which has reasonable prospects of being redeveloped for employment is retained for that purpose. Where employment redevelopment is unlikely, these sites have already been identified in the SHLAA. There is therefore little further potential to secure more land for housing from this source.
- 1.6.6 Having explored the capacity within the urban area it is clear that it will be impossible to provide sufficient new housing to meet the City's growing population and the shortfall will be in excess of 30,000 dwellings.
- 1.6.7 As with the approach to housing the City has also explored alternative opportunities for providing additional land to accommodate the need for new employment generating activity.
- 1.6.8 As explained in the paragraphs 1.5.3 - 1.5.7 above, assessments conclude that a large strategic site of at least 50 hectares should be identified within the City with the potential to accommodate economic development for a small number of major occupiers particularly in the advanced manufacturing sector.
- 1.6.9 The City has sought to identify a site of this scale on existing brownfield land within the urban area but there are no sites of this size currently or likely to become available.
- 1.6.10 The possibility of utilizing greenfield land within the urban area was also explored. Due to the size of the site needed to meet business needs and the location of much of the open space, this is not considered as a viable option.

1.7 The West Midlands Green Belt

- 1.7.1 The West Midlands Green Belt is the largest of the three green belts in the West Midlands, covering some 923 square miles. It surrounds Birmingham and Solihull, the Black Country and Coventry, and extends between 6 and 15 miles outwards from the edges of those major urban areas. The West Midlands Green Belt also contains many 'holes' for settlements of varying size, the largest being Redditch, Kidderminster and Cannock as well as smaller villages.
- 1.7.2 The West Midlands Green Belt extends outwards to the edges of a ring of towns surrounding the conurbation. In Lichfield, Tamworth, Nuneaton, Rugby, Warwick and Leamington, Stratford-upon-Avon, Alcester, Worcester and Stourport, the Green Belt reaches the edge of the town on its conurbation side but does not surround it. Redditch, Bromsgrove, Kidderminster, Cannock, Bedworth and Kenilworth are surrounded by Green Belt on all sides.
- 1.7.3 One of the most distinctive features of the West Midlands Green Belt is that

its inner boundary closely follows the outer edge of the conurbation and Coventry. When the Green Belt boundaries were drawn, very little land was left between the urban area and the Green Belt to provide for longer-term development.

1.8 Birmingham's Green Belt

- 1.8.1 Birmingham's Green Belt forms a small part of the much wider West Midlands Green Belt. The current Green Belt within Birmingham was initially put in place in 1955 and was last reviewed around 20 years ago, since then the boundaries have remained unchanged apart from the release of a small area of brownfield land, formerly part of Minworth Sewage Works, for employment development in 2005.
- 1.8.2 Most of Birmingham City's Green Belt is in the north east of the City. The Green Belt in Birmingham has helped to reduce urban sprawl and has also helped to encourage urban regeneration by limiting the amount of land available for greenfield development.

1.9 Reviewing the Green Belt

- 1.9.1 In reviewing the Green Belt boundary the City Council has paid close attention to the requirements set out in the NPPF. Paragraph 80 of the NPPF sets out the five purposes of Green Belt which are:
- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
 - To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
 - To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
 - To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 1.9.2 Paragraph 83 says that "once established, Green Belt boundaries should only be altered in exceptional circumstances, through the preparation or review of the Local Plan. At that time, authorities should consider the Green Belt boundaries having regard to their intended permanence in the long term, so that they should be capable of enduring beyond the plan period". It also provides advice on the definition of Green Belt boundaries in paragraph 85, which requires the following to be taken into account:
- Ensure consistency with the Local Plan strategy for meeting identified requirements for sustainable development.
 - Not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open.
 - Where necessary, Local Authorities identify in their plans areas of 'safeguarded land' between the urban area and the Green Belt, in order

to meet longer-term development needs stretching well beyond the plan period.

- Make clear that the safeguarded land is not allocated for development at the present time. Planning permission for the permanent development of safeguarded land should only be granted following a Local Plan review which proposes the development.
- Satisfy themselves that Green Belt boundaries will not need to be altered at the end of the development plan period.
- Define boundaries clearly, using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent.

1.10 The ‘Planning for Birmingham’s Growing Population’ Options Consultation 2012

1.10.1 The 2012 Options Consultation explored how the City can plan positively to provide new homes and jobs to meet the needs of Birmingham’s growing population. Although the strategy focuses on the regeneration of brownfield land within the built-up area, it has been acknowledged that there is a shortfall of land to accommodate future needs, and options beyond the urban area have also been explored.

1.10.2 The Options Consultation undertook a review of the Green Belt within the City’s boundary to identify potential options for both housing and employment development. A preliminary analysis of all of the City’s Green Belt was undertaken and four potential options were identified to the north and north-east of the City around Sutton Coldfield which had the potential to accommodate a large scale sustainable urban extension for housing and/or a minimum 50 hectare employment site. These areas were:

- A - Hill Wood, East of Watford Gap (Split into two areas A1 and A2)
- B - West of the M6 Toll (Split into two areas B1 and B2)
- C - West of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley (C1 entire area, C2 only southern section)
- D - East of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley

1.10.3 Public consultation on this document was undertaken between October 2012 and January 2013. A summary of responses made can be found in paragraphs 3.3.2 – 3.3.14.

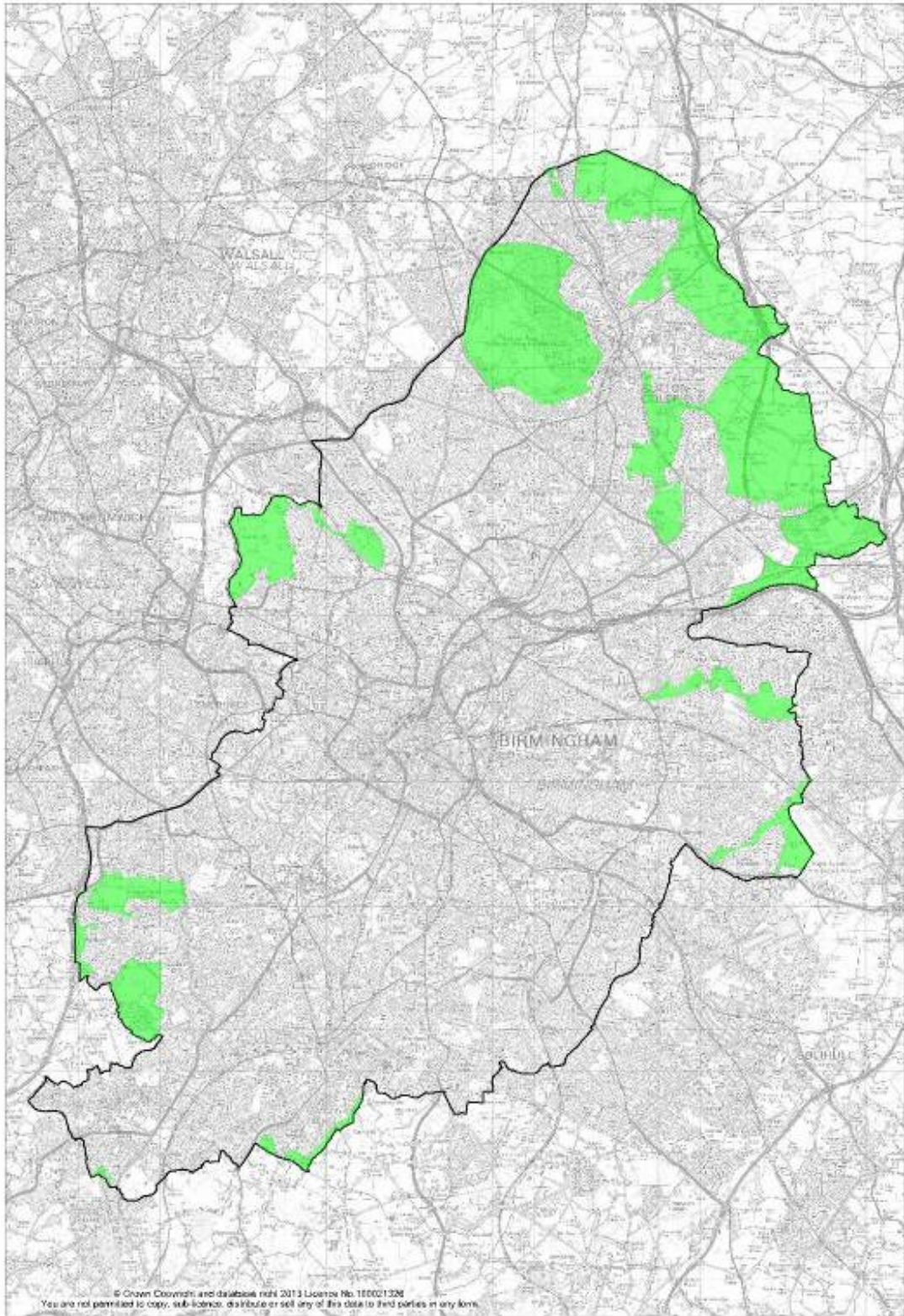
1.11 Neighbouring Authorities and the Duty to Co-operate

1.11.1 With the NPPF requiring local authorities to meet objectively assessed need for housing and employment growth and with there being a significant shortfall in the level of housing provision that can be delivered within the City’s boundary it has been necessary to investigate how and where this

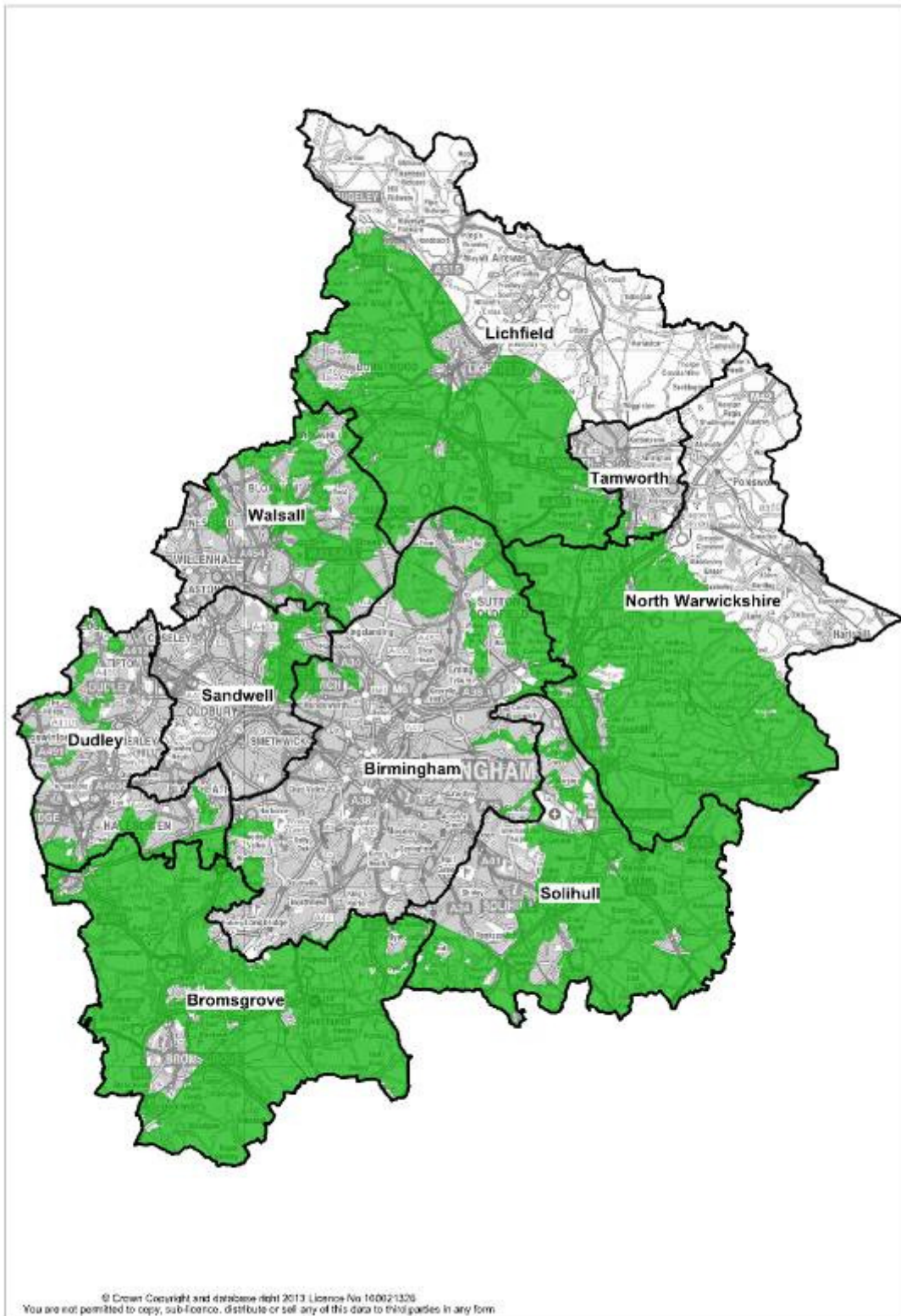
shortfall in provision can be accommodated.

- 1.11.2 The Duty to Co-operate is a requirement of the Localism Act 2011 and is designed to ensure that all of the bodies, including local authorities, involved in planning work together across boundaries on strategic issues that are of greater than local significance. The duty is particularly important and challenging for a major City like Birmingham where its influence spreads far beyond its administrative boundaries. It is also challenging to those authorities surrounding Birmingham especially in relation to the accommodation of growth that cannot be met within the City's boundary.
- 1.11.3 Birmingham City Council works collaboratively through the West Midlands Joint Committee (which brings together the seven local authorities in the West Midlands metropolitan area) and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) which covers the area administered by Birmingham City Council together with Bromsgrove District Council, Cannock Chase Council, East Staffordshire Borough Council, Lichfield District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, Tamworth Borough Council and Wyre Forest District Councils and is working with these authorities to address the housing shortfall. The City Council also works on a bi-lateral basis with all adjoining local authorities not only on the proposals and challenges faced by Birmingham but also in relation to the emerging plans in those adjoining areas.
- 1.11.4 The GBSLEP is in the process of producing a Spatial Plan for the LEP area including the joint commissioning of technical studies to inform the long-term scale and distribution of growth. One of these studies will re-assess the scale of housing shortfall and consider a range of scenarios for addressing it. Within the context of this study it is important that Birmingham and other authorities plan to meet as much of their household growth as possible within their own boundaries.

PLAN 1: CURRENT BIIRMINGHAM GREEN BELT BOUNDARY



PLAN 2: GREEN BELT IN SURROUNDING AUTHORITIES



2.0 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Overview

2.1.1 The key aim of this assessment is to review Birmingham's Green Belt in the context of the NPPF. Relevant policies at national and local level have been considered, along with a review of current practice in other authorities. This has been used to inform the methodology for this assessment, which is based on three stages:

Stage 1 – Preliminary analysis of all the City's Green Belt

Stage 2 – Detailed Assessment of the Green Belt Option Areas

Stage 3 – Comparison and Scoring of Selected Areas

2.1.2 The initial stage involved mapping of key constraints and identification of strategic Green Belt areas as well as assessing their role against the purposes of the Green Belt as set out in the NPPF. Stages two and three provide a more detailed assessment of the option areas against development requirements and in relation to landscape, ecology, archaeology and historic environment, and transport assessments.

2.2 Stage 1

2.2.1 Stage 1 updates the preliminary analysis of all of the City's Green Belt including areas of Green Belt put forward as part of the Growth Options Consultation (Areas A – D). This stage also considered the comments made during the public consultation exercise and identified further work that has since been undertaken to address some of the points raised. Key constraints were identified such as, flood risk areas and nature conservation designations. Green Belt sub areas were defined using OS maps, aerial photographs and site visits to identify significant boundaries for sub areas of broadly similar character. Strong boundaries such as roads, railways, watercourses and hedge/tree-lines were used to assist in identifying the areas. Each sub area was assessed against the five purposes of the Green Belt and consideration was given to the following factors (although at this stage, only a broad analysis of these other factors was given. Further work was commissioned following the options consultation, as set out in paragraph 4.1.2, which was used to inform stages 2 and 3):

- Archaeology and historic environment
- Biodiversity
- Landscape/ topography
- Flood risk
- Access/ infrastructure
- Mineral reserves
- Agricultural land quality
- Defensible boundary

2.2.2 Other criteria used to assess the Green Belt areas were those of development requirements/ needs. As set out in the introduction, the reason why a review of the Green Belt is taking place is because of Birmingham's growing population and the acute shortfall of land to meet housing and

employment needs.

2.2.3 A variety of approaches have been considered and the approach taken by the City Council is that of a **sustainable urban extension (SUE)** including a range of community and other supporting infrastructure. The definition of a SUE involves “the planned expansion of a city or town and can contribute to creating more sustainable patterns of development when located in the right place, with well-planned infrastructure including access to a range of facilities, and when developed at appropriate densities.” * According to research by DETR (now DCLG) and others, a community of 4,000 - 5,000 dwellings is necessary to allow numerous benefits to accrue in respect of supporting local services and amenities. **

2.2.4 The justification for this approach and other approaches considered are set out in the table below.

TABLE 1: APPROACHES CONSIDERED

Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
One large urban extension (around 5,000 homes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate size to allow for community facilities and supporting infrastructure. • Deliverable in the plan period. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to release land from the Green Belt.
Two large urban extensions (around 5,000 homes each)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would increase housing land capacity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to release more land from the Green Belt. • Additional impact on highway network. • Scale of housing provided is significantly beyond market capacity in north east Birmingham and not deliverable in the plan period (see 4.2.3 and 4.2.4 Housing Delivery). • Risk of failure to achieve critical development mass needed on each area to provide supporting facilities due to limited market capacity.

* <http://www.planningportal.gov.uk/general/glossaryandlinks/glossary/u>

** DETR, 1998, *Planning for Sustainable Development: Towards Better Practice*, London, DETR

Approach	Advantages	Disadvantages
One large urban extension (around 5,000 homes) and other smaller development/s	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate size to allow for community facilities and supporting infrastructure on large site. • Smaller site(s) potentially offers early delivery of housing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller site would be of insufficient scale to deliver supporting facilities. • Piecemeal Green Belt development. • Limited impact on overall housing delivery.
Several smaller dispersed developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impacts not concentrated on one area. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical mass needed for provision of supporting facilities such as schools may not be met for smaller development resulting in under-provision of community facilities or increased pressure on existing facilities. • Multiple Green Belt releases resulting in piecemeal development. • Risk of failure to identify sufficient sites to maximise housing delivery.

2.2.5 In regard to employment land, the requirement is simpler – a minimum 50 hectare site of ‘best quality’ employment land. The ELR shows that there is currently a significant shortfall in the supply of high quality ‘best urban’ employment land within the urban area. Best urban sites, as defined in the UDP, are large high-quality sites attractive to clients with an international, national and regional choice of location.

2.3 Stage 2

2.3.1 Stage 2 provides a detailed assessment of the Green Belt Option Areas (A-D). These areas were identified following an assessment against the five purposes of the Green Belt and the potential of the options areas to accommodate a sustainable urban extension for housing development and/or a minimum 50 hectare employment site. Stage 2 takes into consideration a number of technical studies that were commissioned following Stage 1. These cover a range of issues including landscape; archaeology and the historic environment; transportation; ecology; housing delivery and employment land. Comments from statutory consultees such as Severn Trent Water and the Environment Agency were also considered, together with other criteria such as deliverability. This stage results in a shortlist of areas that are progressed for further consideration in Stage 3 and the exclusion of others which are judged to be inappropriate for development.

2.4 Stage 3

- 2.4.1 Stage 3 scores the shortlisted option areas/ sub areas against a range of criteria and concludes by identifying a preferred option for a sustainable urban extension for housing development and a large site for employment development. The report recommends that these preferred options should be released from the Green Belt and allocated in the Pre-submission version of the Birmingham Development Plan.

3.0 STAGE ONE: PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF ALL THE CITY'S GREEN BELT

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 The methodology for the Stage 1 assessment undertaken in 2012 involved an initial assessment of the whole Green Belt area within Birmingham's administrative boundary to identify areas which:

- Could accommodate a sustainable urban extension including a range of community and other supporting infrastructure such as schools and or could accommodate an employment site of 50 or more hectares.
- Are not subject to significant environmental and physical constraints.

3.2 Summary of the Stage 1 Results

3.2.1 On the basis of the above criteria and an assessment against the five purposes of the Green Belt, the following areas were discounted:

TABLE 2: STAGE 1 GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

Area of Green Belt	Reasons for Discount
B – East of the M6 Toll Road	A small narrow area containing SLINC and Sutton Coldfield Crematorium. Segregated from the rest of Area B by the M6 Toll Road.
B – East (and partly west) of the M6 Toll Road and A38	A small site of only 49 hectares which is dominated by the M6 Toll Road and A38 running through it. Affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3 along its outer boundary and part of the Langley Sewage Works.
D – Outer section	The area has a weak defensible boundary and is clearly visible from the wider countryside as it is located on a ridgeline above the shallow basin to the south. Part of the east and southern sections are of agricultural land quality Grade 2.
E – Hill Hook	A small site of which the majority is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) which includes a large pond. The balance consists of a small area of a Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) and an area of private playing field.
F – Land west of Curdworth including part of Minworth Sewage Works	Almost two thirds of this site is a SINC. It is also largely affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3.

G – Moor Hall Golf Course	Most of this site is a SINC. The site is small and an established golf course.
H – Newhall Valley	This site is narrow, truncated and includes two Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC's) and an area of Ancient Woodland. It is also in part a Country Park. The site is also affected by areas of Flood Zones 2 and by electricity pylons and a rail freight line. It also has several statutory listed buildings, most notable is New Hall moated manor house and grounds which is statutory listed Grade 1, also New Hall Mill Grade 2*, Vesey House Grade 2*, Wincelle, Grade 2. Part of New Shipton Farm is Grade 2. Pype Hayes Hall is Grade 2. Land around Penns Hall Lake is locally listed.
I – Land west of Water Orton including part of Minworth Sewage Works	Most of this is an elongated SINC with two areas of Ancient Woodland, notable natural habitats and also in Flood Zones 2 and 3. There is also a small SLINC in the east of the site.
J – River Cole Valley	This area forms a narrow valley with the River Cole running through it and includes several SINC's and public playing fields. Large parts of the valley is affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3 with the exception of the former Yardley Sewage Works.
K – Sheldon Country Park	This site is affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3 with over half the land falling within Flood Zone 3. Hatchford Brook passes through the site. A large SINC and also wildlife corridor affect the site. The eastern part of the site comprises Hatchford Brook golf course which is affected by airport related restrictions with regard to noise and type of development permitted.
L – Land at Hawkesley	This site is long and narrow, has several statutory listed buildings, two SLINC's and a public playing field. There is no defensible boundary and the land goes beyond Birmingham's administrative boundary into the wider Green Belt.
M – Land at West Heath	This site is small and over half is occupied by a golf course and partly by private playing fields.
N – Land at Rednal, part of Lickey Hills	Most of this site is a SINC. It is also very small and includes a small part of Lickey Hills Golf Course within it.
O – Land around Bartley and Frankley Reservoirs	Bartley Reservoir forms a significant part of this site and is a SINC. There is a small SINC

	adjoining Frankley Reservoir and a third SINC in the north west of the site. The site is also crossed by two SLINCs and Merritt's Brook. There are two areas of Ancient Woodland.
P – Part of Woodgate Valley Country Park adjoining the M5	Most of this land is classified as SINC with the remainder being SLINC. There are also identified areas of priority habitats. This site is also very small.
Q – Woodgate Valley Country Park	Well over half of the land is a SINC. Nearly all of the balance is SLINC. The Bournbrook runs through the site which is a country park (Woodgate Valley) and significant areas are within Flood Zone 2 and 3. An overhead power line runs from north to south through the site.
R – Sandwell Valley	This area includes a SINC, a SLINC and part of the site is covered by Sandwell Valley Country Park. Hilltop Golf Course is located in Sandwell Valley. Flood Zones 2 and 3 also affect part of the site and Perry Hall Playing Fields covers the entire eastern part of the site.
S – Sutton Park	Sutton Park is a Site Of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It is also a registered Historic Park and Garden. A large part of the park is classed as a Scheduled Ancient Monument. There are a number of Ancient Woodlands and habitats across the site.

3.2.3 Following the preliminary assessment, the majority of Green Belt areas within the City's boundary were dismissed for release from the Green Belt for development, but four areas meeting the preliminary criteria were subject to further consideration. These areas were:

- A - Hill Wood, East of Watford Gap (Split into two areas A1 and A2)
- B - West of the M6 Toll (Split into two areas B1 and B2)
- C - West of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley (C1 entire area, C2 only southern section)
- D - East of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley

3.2.4 The details of the analysis leading to this conclusion are contained in Appendix 1 of this document.

3.3 Public Consultation Results

3.3.1 The Options Consultation was undertaken between October 2012 and January 2013. Over 1,500 comments were received mainly (but not universally) objecting to the loss of land from the Green Belt. A petition with about 2,000 resident's signatures opposing Green Belt development was also received. The following section summarises the key points that were raised by residents in relation to development within the Green Belt and the option areas.

Residents' Comments

3.3.2 The main reasons given for opposing development in the Green Belt were:

- Preference should be given to brownfield sites – plenty available.
- Loss of open space- Green Belt should be inviolable.
- Inadequate transport infrastructure.
- Inadequate school provision.
- Vacant housing should be brought back into use and vacant shops/offices/industry should be converted.
- No need for more employment land – vacant factories should be re-used.
- Adverse impact on quality of life and character of the area.
- Development should be in other areas – a new town should be considered.
- Population projections are unreliable – Government intends to reduce international migration.
- Loss of agricultural land.
- Loss of wildlife/biodiversity.
- Inadequate local services (shops/jobs etc).
- Higher density development should be promoted – apartments.
- Unfair to keep targeting Sutton Coldfield.
- Impact on archaeology.

3.3.3 The Council for the Protection of Rural England, Friends of the Earth and the Green Party made similar objections to development on the Green Belt.

3.3.4 The consultation responses included many comments which were opposed to Green Belt development. However these responses were not supported by any clear evidence either that Birmingham's objectively assessed need for additional housing and employment should be lower than suggested in the Options Consultation or that this level of objectively assessed need could be delivered without development within the Green Belt.

3.3.5 Most responses opposed development in all locations and gave no preferences between the options. Where preferences were expressed the results were:

- D1 was the most popular site for residential development, and by a significant margin for employment.
- Areas A1, C2 and B1 received some support for housing.
- There was very little support for any type of development on A2 or B2.

- 3.3.6 Comments were also made questioning why some of the smaller areas in the Green Belt had been discounted.

Other Local Authorities

- 3.3.7 The majority of Local Authorities consulted supported the principle that Birmingham should accommodate as much of its growth as possible and therefore supported Green Belt land release in Birmingham in principle. Several suggested that smaller areas of Green Belt should also be considered and Lichfield suggested that brownfield capacity should be reassessed to try and identify additional sites. Bromsgrove and Staffordshire questioned the limitation on Green Belt land releases to 5 – 10,000 dwellings. Walsall only supported Green Belt development post 2026.
- 3.3.8 Coventry questioned the housing requirement and argued that it should be much lower thereby avoiding the need for Green Belt development or for provision in adjoining areas. They also question conformity with the RSS (which has subsequently been revoked).
- 3.3.9 Lichfield, Tamworth and Staffordshire raised issues about cross-boundary infrastructure requirements (primarily transport) and about possible impact on the delivery of planned housing developments in their areas.
- 3.3.10 Walsall suggested that Green Belt employment land release should only be for large users or logistics.

Statutory Bodies

- 3.3.11 None of the responses received from statutory bodies suggested that any of the options are unacceptable:
- The Environment Agency noted that there may be a need to upgrade sewer systems, and drew attention to flood risk, water quality, aquifer and green infrastructure issues.
 - Severn Trent expressed a preference for sites D1 and C2 as these are closest to existing treatment works at Minworth. Their least favoured options were A1, A2 and B1 as these would require extensive sewer upsizing. They also noted that B1, B2 and C1 would impact on Langley Mill Treatment Works, but that this would provide an opportunity to abandon this and connect to Minworth.
 - No response was received from South Staffs Water, however previous responses indicated that there are no water supply issues.
 - Western Power highlighted existing infrastructure such as overhead lines and substations which would need to be maintained. They identified no preference in terms of sites, but suggested that there will be a requirement for expansion or reinforcement of the high voltage network to accommodate development in the Green Belt.
 - The National Grid identified the presence of an underground line in area A2.

- Natural England supported the general approach. They noted the importance of green infrastructure, wildlife pathways etc and highlighted specific features requiring protection in areas A and B. They also noted that area C includes some grade 3a agricultural land and area D includes substantial grade 3a land.
- English Heritage noted the need for heritage assets (whether designated or not) to be taken into account and to recognise the contribution made by the setting of potentially affected heritage assets.
- The Highways Agency concluded that there could be significant impact on the Strategic Road Network requiring mitigation in Birmingham, Warwickshire and Staffordshire. The detail varied between the options. However no specific locations were particularly favoured.
- Centro supported the general strategy and made no comments specific to the option locations.
- The Health and Safety Executive made no specific comments.
- The Mineral Products Association expressed a preference for either A, C or D over B. B has significant mineral resources, and if developed they would expect provision for these to be extracted before development takes place.

Landowners/ Developers

3.3.12 A number of landowners and developers made submissions, supported by technical studies in relation to access, landscape, archaeology, ecology etc. The following is a summary of the key points:

- There was support for an overall housing requirement within the 80 – 105,000 range. Most advocated a figure at the top end of this.
- Almost all argued for lower densities, in the range of 30 -35 dwellings per hectare rather than 40. As a result their capacity figures for each location are lower than those identified in the Options Consultation document.
- Most accepted that there is a limit on what the market would in practice deliver, but there were different views on what this is. The most detailed analysis concluded that it could be 9,360 to 11,700, with a possibility of reaching 15,600. There was also a view that areas B and C would serve different markets so it would be possible for development to proceed on both at the same time.
- Submissions were made in relation to the majority of areas B and C, but for only parts of Area A (mainly A1). There was some criticism of Area A as a potential site because of the high visibility of parts of it, the presence of the masts and its deliverability because of fragmented ownerships. Most of the B and C interests supported employment development on Area D.
- Ashford Estates who have land interests in North Warwickshire suggested the construction of a new link road from the A38 to junction 9 of the M42, which would enable the identification of a larger employment area extending from area D through land to the north of Curdworth to the motorway.

Comments relating to need for further work

- 3.3.13 The consultation exercise also highlighted the need for further work to be undertaken on a range of issues such as landscape quality, archaeology, ecology, etc., before a decision on the extent or the location of any Green Belt development. Further work has also been undertaken in relation to the need for supporting infrastructure (such as schools). These studies are considered in stage 2.
- 3.3.14 The consultation exercise also highlighted the need for the conclusions of the stage 1 assessment to be reconsidered. A re-evaluation of these areas has been undertaken and the outcome is set out in Appendix 1 and a summary of this is shown in Table 1 above. This confirms that none of those Green Belt areas should be released from the Green Belt for development, other than the longstanding proposal for housing on the site of part of the former Yardley Sewage Works.

4.0 STAGE TWO: ASSESSMENT OF GREEN BELT OPTION AREAS AND SHORTLISTING

4.1 Methodology

4.1.1 Stage 2 assessed the four option areas (A –D) in greater detail reflecting the range of technical assessments that were commissioned. The outcome of stage 2 was a shortlist of areas for further consideration for release from the Green Belt for development.

4.1.2 The following technical assessments were undertaken to inform the judgements and recommendations made at this stage:

- Landscape and Visual Character Assessment (Arups).
- Transport Analysis of Green Belt Options (Phil Jones Associates).
- Ecological Constraints and Opportunities within Birmingham’s Green Belt (URS).
- Housing Delivery on New Birmingham Development Areas (Peter Brett Associates and Roger Tym).
- Archaeology and Historic Environment Assessment (BCC).

4.1.3 A number of criteria have been used to assess the areas in relation to:

- Aspects affecting the value of the site in its undeveloped state, such as the site’s historic, landscape, or ecological value.
- Aspects affecting feasibility of the development, such as deliverability, transport infrastructure.
- Aspects relating to the sustainability of the location, for instance, accessibility.

4.2 Defining the Criteria for Assessment

Green Belt Function

4.2.1 The principal aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. The NPPF states that the five purposes of the Green Belt are:

- To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas.
- To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another.
- To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
- To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

4.2.2 The basis of this assessment is that all areas in the Green Belt serve a Green Belt function, but that some play a greater role or make a greater contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt than others.

Housing and Site Delivery

- 4.2.3 There are limits to the number of new homes that could be built and sold in a particular location based on developers' willingness and ability to supply new homes. Developers' 'ability' to build houses is limited (amongst other things) by their capacity to finance development. Their 'willingness' to build homes is informed by their perception of the ability of the market to absorb the new homes built.
- 4.2.4 A Housing Delivery Report was commissioned by the City Council to advice on the number of homes that the market might be willing and able to provide on development areas within Birmingham's Green Belt to the north east of Sutton Coldfield. The report advises that even with a strong economic recovery, housing output within any one of option areas A-D is not expected to exceed 372 units per year (including affordable housing) based on a maximum of 6 housing outlets per option area. Based on this level of delivery a maximum of around 5,000 homes could be built within the study area over the period to 2031. Under a weaker market scenario total output could fall to 3,135 units.
- 4.2.5 The report also concludes that releasing more than one site for development will not increase delivery to a significant degree.
- 4.2.6 Based on these conclusions, a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) in north/north east Birmingham should be able to accommodate around 5,000 homes.
- 4.2.7 The issue of site delivery also relates to:
- Promotion - the willingness of landowners to bring land forward for development.
 - Viability - the viability of the development, particularly with regard to the provision of key infrastructure.
 - Deliverability - the likelihood of sites actually progressing from designation to dwelling construction.

Archaeology and Historic Environment

- 4.2.8 The *Archaeology and Historic Environment Assessment of the Green Belt Option Areas*, October 2013, provides a judgment on the significance of known and potential heritage assets and the impact of development on them. Recommendations are also put forward in the report on the suitability or otherwise of areas for development, acceptable mitigation measures and the outcome if these recommendations are followed. The historic and archaeological features of all option areas were assessed with reference to the Historic Environment Record (HER) and conforms to the Institute of Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Advice by Historic Environment Services*, August 2012 and the *Standard and Guidance for Stewardship of the Historic Environment*, October 2008.
- 4.2.9 The recommendations in the report adopt a "traffic light" grading:
- Red ("High") – exclude from development. The impact of development on designated heritage assets and their settings cannot be satisfactorily mitigated.

- Red/amber (“High-medium”) – opportunities for enhancement of the contribution of other heritage assets and their settings to the character of the place by retention and through design solutions.
- Amber (“Medium”) – development only acceptable subject to extensive archeological excavation (including analysis and publication of results) and/ or design solutions.
- Green (“Low”) – the impact of development on heritage assets and their settings can be satisfactorily mitigated by archaeological excavation (including analysis and publication of results).

Landscape Character

- 4.2.10 The *Landscape Character Assessment*, June 2013, by Arups, takes into account the character, and landscape and visual sensitivity of each option area. It also describes opportunities for mitigation of potential impacts from development. The assessment has been informed by the guidelines set out in *Landscape Character Assessment – Guidance for England and Scotland*, 2002, by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency. The landscape character assessment makes reference to the National Character Area Assessments undertaken by Natural England and develops local, more detailed landscape character areas relevant to the area.
- 4.2.11 The assessment identifies the relative sensitivity of each character area to potential harm arising from development based on guidance prepared by Scottish Natural Heritage and the Countryside Agency, *Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity*, 2004, and *Sensitivity and Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, 2002 by the Landscape Institute.
- 4.2.12 Landscape sensitivity has been judged to be “high”, “medium” or “low” defined as follows:
- “High” – of high importance, rare within its location or limited opportunity for replacement. Good condition and/ or high tranquillity.
 - “Medium” – of medium importance, other examples exist around its location or some opportunity for replacement. Good condition and/ or high tranquillity.
 - “Low” – of low importance, abundant around its location or easily replaced. Poor condition and/ or low tranquillity.
- 4.2.13 Visual sensitivity is related but different to landscape sensitivity and is concerned with the sensitivity of the visual amenity of the area and views into and out of it. The visual sensitivity has been judged to be “high”, “medium” or “low” defined as follows:
- “High” – views across the area from residential property, parks or public rights of way. Distant views from within the area that are rare within the wider landscape. Limited opportunities to mitigate visual impact.

- “Medium” – views across the area from public property or users of recreational sites such as sports pitches. Middle distance views from within the area that have some rarity or are of specific feature(s) within the landscape. Some opportunities to mitigate visual impact.
- “Low” – limited views into the area or views from a small number of higher sensitivity receptors. Views across the area from commercial property or transport routes. Limited and short distance views that are readily obtained elsewhere within the wider area. Visual impacts could be mitigated.

Ecology

4.2.14 The *Ecological Constraints and Opportunities Report*, July 2013, prepared by URS provides an appraisal of the ecological resource currently present within the four option areas and evaluates the ecological value of each of the areas in relation to the potential for development. It also identifies the potential constraints and opportunities for enhancement of the area’s green infrastructure provision.

4.2.15 Ecological constraint plans were produced and areas were identified using a RAG (red, amber, green) system.

- “Red” areas – sections of land that should not be developed at any cost. These habitats are considered to be of higher value either owing to the type of habitat present or the likelihood that they will support a greater diversity of species and cannot be recreated or compensated for within sustainable development in the short to long term.
- “Amber” areas – sections of land that should be retained wherever possible. These habitats are considered to be of moderate value either owing to the type of habitat present or the likelihood that they will support a greater diversity of species, but are more likely to be able to be recreated or compensated for within sustainable development in the short to medium term.
- “Green” areas – sections of land that can be developed with limited constraints. These habitats are considered to be of lower value or are considered unlikely to support a good diversity of species and can often be recreated and compensated for within sustainable development in the short to medium term.

Agricultural Land Quality

4.2.17 Natural England *Technical Information Note TIN049 Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land*, December 2012, states that where significant development of agricultural land is demonstrated to be necessary, local planning authorities should seek to use areas of poorer quality land in preference to that of higher quality. The original Agricultural Land Classification system classified land into five grades (from grade 1, the best and most versatile land to grade 5, the least valuable land). National mapping shows the location of land of each grade. This confirms that the majority of the Sutton Coldfield study area is categorised as Grade 3, with a small area of Grade 2.

4.2.18 In 1976 Grade 3 was subdivided into Sub-grades 3a and 3b with the best and most versatile land being defined as Grades 1, 2 and 3a. Information on the location of grade 3a and 3b land is only available for certain areas and not for the whole of the Sutton Coldfield Study Area.

Transport

4.2.19 The *Transport Analysis of the Green Belt Option Area*, September 2013 develops a Location Option Assessment Framework which scores the “connectivity” of each option area and the “capacity” of the local transport network. The framework is a tool which gathers information from established local area models and evidence bases and translates the information into common scoring metrics. The analysis considered the areas as a whole and did not subdivide them. They have been assessed as A, B, C, and D.

Connectivity

4.2.20 For this purpose “connectivity” is measured using accessibility analysis and ability of areas to meet set journey time thresholds to a range of destinations. As well as assessing the “accessibility” of the option areas by all modes of travel, an assessment of “sustainability” has also been undertaken which assesses the accessibility of the options areas only by walking, cycling and public transport.

4.2.21 Two scores are, therefore, allocated for each option area:

- “accessibility” is the overall score of accessibility by all modes
- “sustainability” is the scoring of accessibility only by walking, cycling and public transport.

A score was given for each option area in turn as a residential site and as an employment site.

- A low percentage (0-33%) represents a remote location far from amenities with few alternatives for travel choice.
- A mid range percentage (34-67%) represents a typical suburban area with reasonable access to a range of facilities via a choice of travel modes.
- A high percentage (68-100%) represents an edge of town centre location close to multiple facilities and high quality public transport networks.

Capacity

4.2.22 The Transport Analysis defines the “capacity” of the network by the physical constraints to movement and the quality of routes. The “capacity” of the walking, cycling and highway networks has been measured. The “capacity” of public transport has been considered but not included in the Location Option Assessment Framework as it is assumed that services can be modified and are subject to constant review, and should therefore, not be a determining factor in the appraisal of the option areas.

4.2.23 The capacity score is expressed as a percentage, which is the result of an assessment of pedestrian, cycle and car/HGV routes to all destinations within the urban area.

- A low percentage (0-33%) represents a constrained network, where pedestrian and cycle routes are severed, unsafe, indirect or uncomfortable to use and where car and HGV routes are operating at capacity with major delays.
- A mid-range percentage (34-67%) represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality.
- A high percentage (68-100%) represents a location where car and HGV routes are not congested and there are very good, direct, safe and comfortable pedestrian and cycle routes.

Flood Risk

4.2.24 A floodplain is the area that would naturally be affected by flooding if a river rises above its banks. The Environment Agency produces flood maps showing the extent of these areas and these are shown in the Strategic Flood Risk Analysis. Development is largely unrestricted in Flood Zone 1, but there are restrictions on the type of development which is acceptable in Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Provision of Services

4.2.25 The provision of principal utilities services is essential to any development. These include electricity, gas, sewage and water supplies.

Mineral Reserves

4.2.26 Local authorities are required by the NPPF to identify and include policies for extraction of mineral resource of local and national importance in their area.

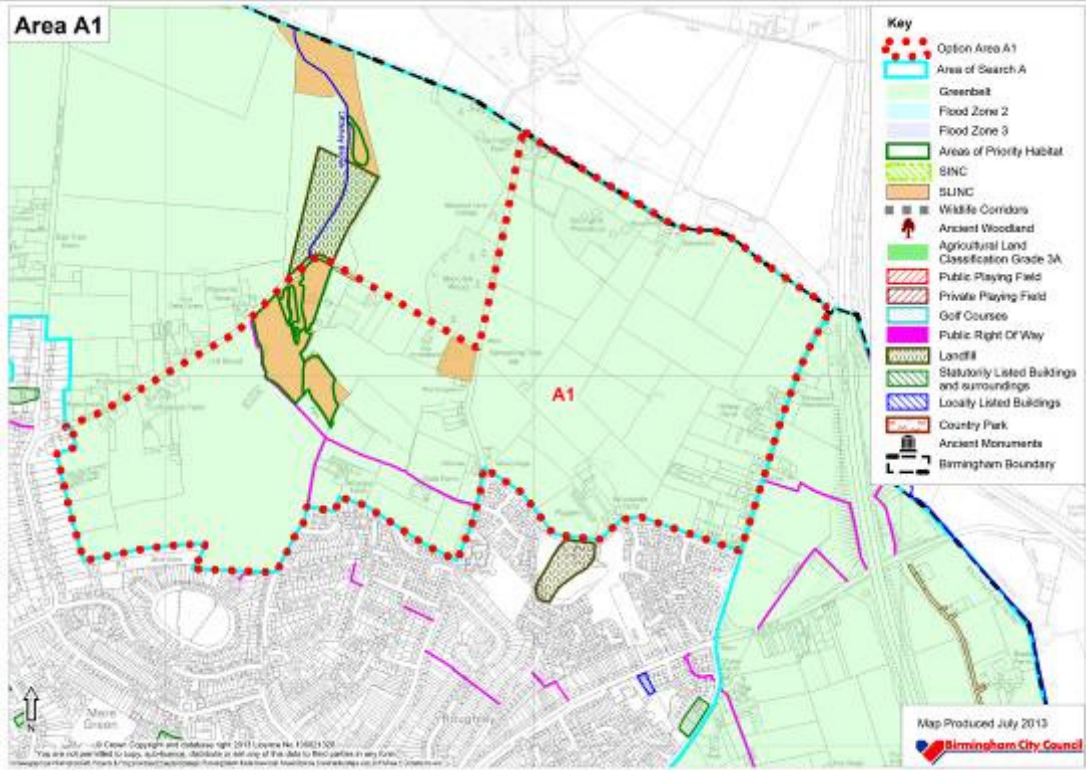
Other Considerations

4.2.26 Other considerations include the need for a range of on-site facilities such as schools, sports, shopping, open space and community facilities. The consultation exercise raised a number of issues regarding the capacity of existing schools and health facilities in Sutton Coldfield. Further consultation has been undertaken with education and health authorities to identify the scope of these.

4.3 STAGE 2: ASSESSMENT OF GREEN BELT AREA A

4.3.1 Area A has been subdivided into two options. A1 covers land bounded by Weeford Road and Hill Road, whilst A2 includes land either side of Hillwood Common Road.

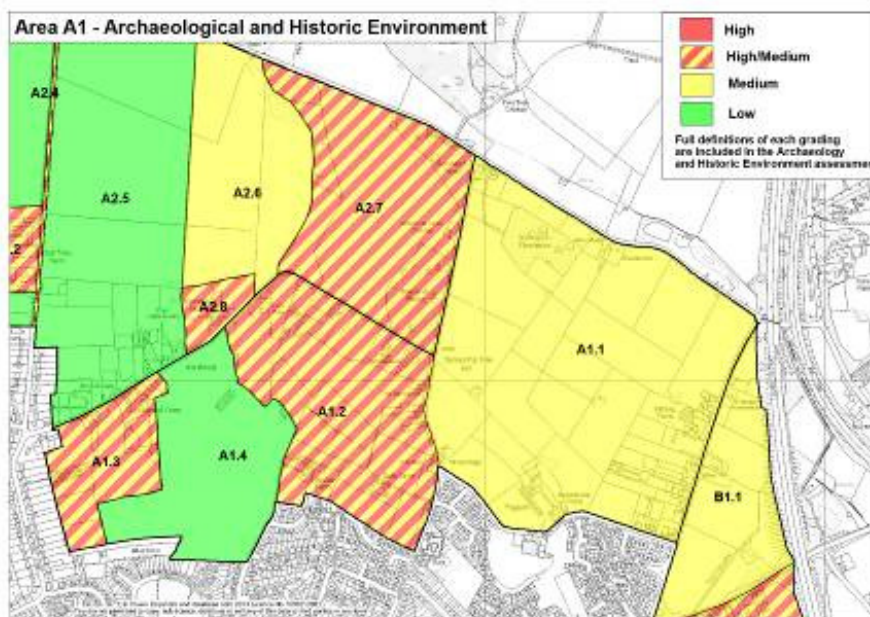
4.3.2 Option A1 – Area bounded by Weeford Road/ Hillwood Road

Description of Area	
<p>This option area lies at the north east boundary of the City and covers 134 hectares. It adjoins the City boundary with Lichfield District Council to the north and existing residential areas to the south. The land is predominantly in agricultural use. The West Midlands Green Belt extends beyond the City boundary to Tamworth and Lichfield.</p> 	
Green Belt Function	
<p>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.</p>	<p>Area A1 prevents expansion of the urban area northwards where the Green Belt adjoins the urban areas of Mere Green/ Roughley. There are some residential dwellings on Weeford Road, Worcester Lane and Hillwood Road. The northern section is more rural with fewer urbanising components.</p>
<p>To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</p>	<p>The Green Belt extends a further 6.5km to the nearest large settlement (Lichfield) and 3km to the nearest small settlement (Shenstone) so its role in preventing the merger of towns is limited.</p>

<p>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</p>	<p>While Camp Road, Hillwood Road and Weeford Road border the north, east and western peripheries of the area, these are narrow roads. There are no strong boundaries to contain development beyond the land parcel. Area A1 has a strong relationship with the wider countryside northwards by way of views and access. The area consists of a mixture of arable pasture and blocks of woodland with residential properties and farm buildings located along the main roads.</p>
<p>To preserve the setting and character of historic towns</p>	<p>The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. Consideration has been given to historic features within the option area as noted below.</p>
<p>To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land</p>	<p>The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.</p>

Archaeology and Historic Environment

Palaeoenvironmental remains in the wetland around Littlehay Brook and in the valley floor north of Hillside Farm are likely to be of regional significance, and this area may contain other archaeological remains such as burnt mounds. Hillwood Farm and other buildings on the south side of Hillwood Road are marked on the Corn Rent Map of 1824-25 and were constructed before 19th century land enclosure. Area A1 includes fields resulting from enclosure of strips in former medieval open field systems and former common land. The buildings and fields contribute to the character of the area. This contribution can be enhanced by retention and through design solutions. Extensive archaeological excavation, followed by analysis and publication of the results, will be required on and around cropmarks indicating sites of prehistoric or Roman date on Spreading Tree Hill north of Woodside Farm and near Springhill Plantation, and on land alongside Littlehay Brook.

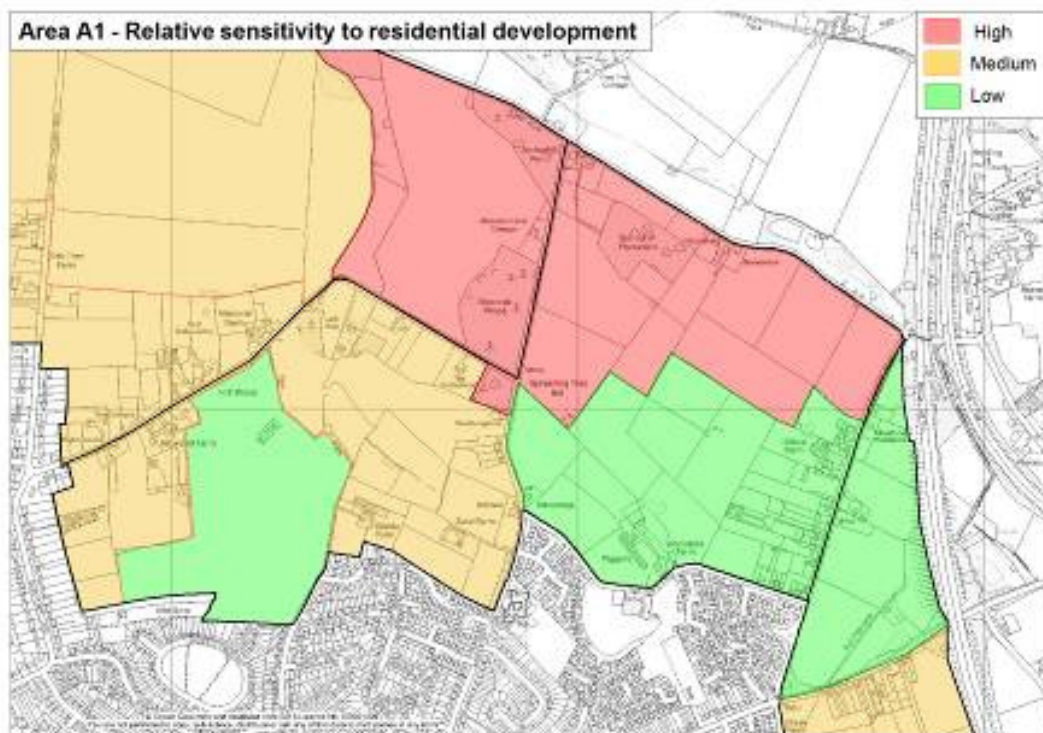


Landscape Character

Area A1 is highly varied in landscape quality. The landscape sensitivity of Hillwood Farm Ridge and Turf Pits Lane Plateau Farmland to residential development is judged to be 'low' due to the abundance of this type of landscape within the wider area and in regard to Turf Pits Lane- the lack of tranquillity due to its interior road network. The visual sensitivity of both areas is judged to be 'medium' due to views across the area from residential properties and opportunities to mitigate visual impacts.

The northern part of Area A1 forms the separate character area of Manorial Wood and Springhill Plantation Plateau Farmland. The area is distinctly rural with few urbanising components. It contains historic field boundaries and mature hedgerows. Landscape components comprise a mixture of arable, pasture, and four separate stands of mature woodland, which contribute noticeably to the local character. The landscape sensitivity of this area is judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of the landscape within the wider area, its tranquillity, condition and separation from influence along the urban edge. The visual sensitivity of this area is judged to be 'medium' due to the views to the north east.

The sensitivity of all of area A1 to employment development is judged to be 'high' due to the large scale of buildings associated with this type of development, which results in reduced flexibility to design around existing landscape components and increased visibility from surrounding areas.



Transport Connectivity

As a residential development the transport analysis shows that area A achieves an accessibility score of 45% (by all modes of transport). On sustainability (accessibility to facilities only by walking, cycling and public transport) it scored 25%. These scores represent a location that is typically suburban with reasonable access to facilities but poor choice of travel modes/ access to public transport networks.

As an employment site, accessibility is scored at 57% and sustainability at 26%. It is the furthest away from the main employment areas within Birmingham and would be subject to the longest public transport journeys to work, thus car travel may be more attractive.

Distance to Sutton Town Centre		4.05km
Nearest Centre	Mere Green	1.60km
Nearest Primary School	Little Sutton Primary School	0.48km
Nearest Secondary School	The Arthur Terry School	1.93km
Nearest Railway Station	Butlers Lane	1.88km

(all distances measured from middle of Area A1)

Transport Capacity

As a residential development, the transport analysis gives area A a total capacity score of 58%. As an employment development the capacity score is 50%. This represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area A has the potential to impact on the A5127 Birmingham Road and Whitehouse Common corridor, where there are a significant number of critical junctions.

Ecology

Area A1 supports a number of habitats that are considered to be of moderate and high ecological value together with other areas of lower ecological value (namely the arable fields). There are good habitat links through the area owing to the presence of hedgerows around the majority of the arable fields present. Overall it is considered that the area is of moderate ecological value with some areas being of high ecological value, particularly the area of Hill Wood Brook corridor and ponds providing a good link through Area A1 from north to south.

Records of protected and notable species have been received for hedgehog, common frog, house martin, yellowhammer, swallow and house sparrow. No other protected or notable species records from the period 2000 to present have been received for area A1.

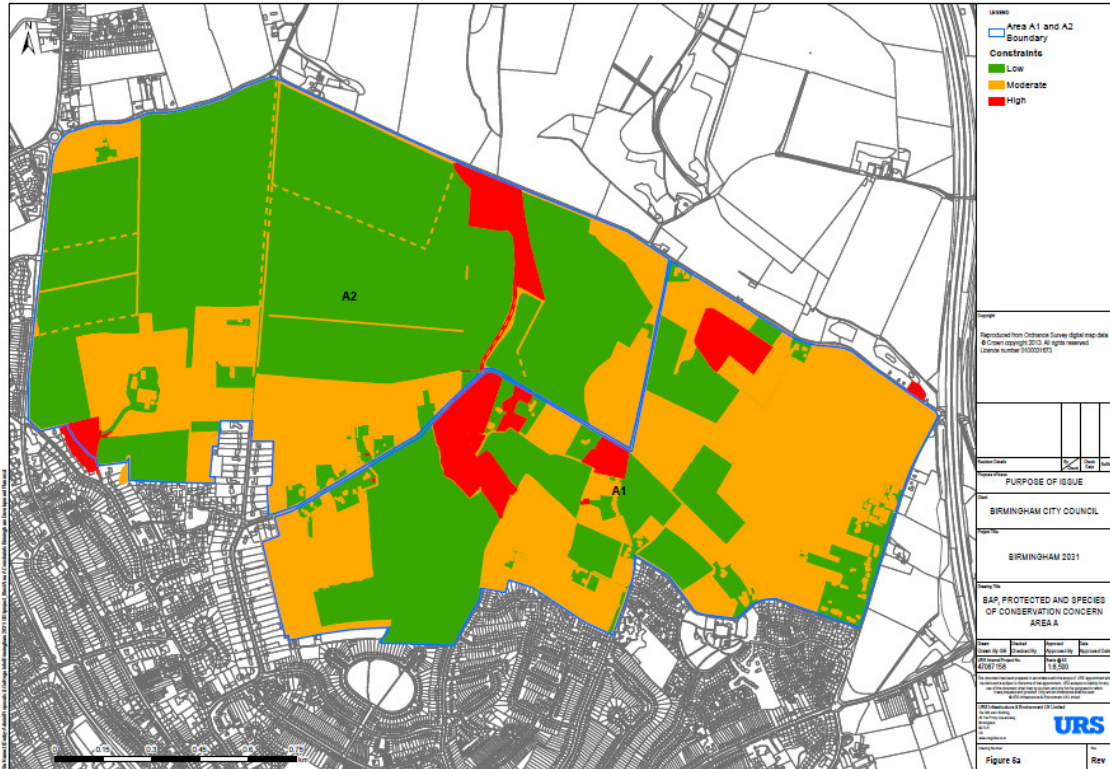
Area A1 is dominated by improved grassland and small arable fields. The central portion contains two small patches of broadleaved woodland, which together with an area of grassland habitat are designated as Hill Wood Brook SLINC/Land at Manorial Farm SLINC. Another stand of woodland in the area is designated as Land off Worcester Lane SLINC and comprises a canopy of holly, hawthorn, oak and hazel with a diverse ground flora. Other woodlands within Area A1 include an area of plantation broadleaved woodland in the north. Hedgerows are largely oak, hawthorn and hazel with oak standards. Occasionally there are standards of beech or ash. A small number of semi-improved grassland fields are present in the area, some of which are associated with the Hill Wood Brook SLINC/Land at Manorial Farm SLINC.

Although the arable fields are considered to be of lower ecological value, they may have the potential to support flocks or breeding and wintering farmland birds, potentially increasing the ecological value of these parcels of land.

Area A1 is considered to have the potential to support:

- Great Crested Newt
- Bats
- Badger
- Breeding Birds
- Wintering Birds

- Reptiles
- Otter
- Water Vole



Flood Risk

Flood Zone 1 only which means that development is largely unrestricted.

Deliverability

No significant issues identified to deliverability. There are separate land ownerships with parts of the area being actively promoted for development.

Provision of Services (power, water and drainage)

No principal utilities constraints identified.

Minerals reserves

Very small amount of sand and gravel.

Agricultural Land Quality

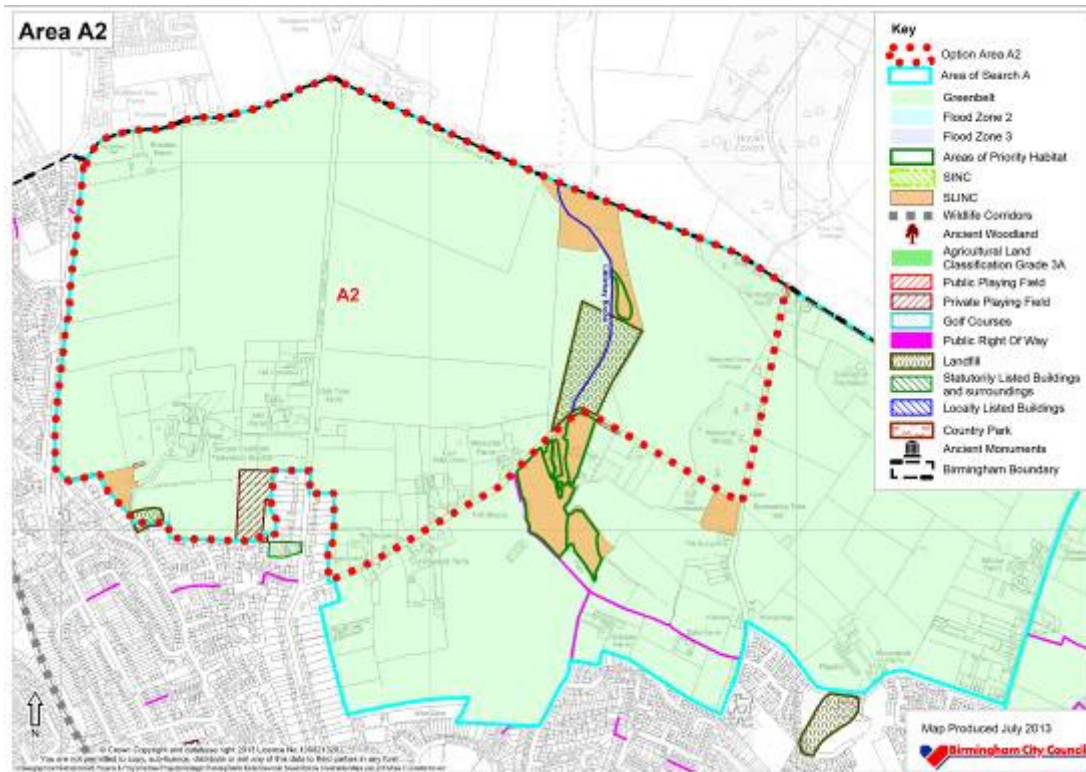
Grade 3

<p>Other considerations</p>
<p>A new secondary school, primary schools, health, shopping, open space and sports facilities will be required within a residential development.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area A1 makes a contribution towards the purposes of the Green Belt by preventing urban sprawl northwards at Mere Green/ Roughley and assists in safeguarding encroachment into the countryside. The northern section of the area is distinctly remote and rural. There are no existing strong boundaries to contain development. The area plays a limited role in separation of settlements. • Area A1 supports a number of habitats that are considered to be of moderate and high ecological value together with other areas of lower ecological value (namely the arable fields). The majority of area A1 is likely to come with constraints to development given the presence of areas of higher ecological value (SLINCs and connective habitat). • Area A represents a location that is typically suburban, with reasonable access to facilities but having poor choice of travel modes/ access to public transport networks. As an employment site it would be the furthest away from the main employment areas within Birmingham and would be subject to the longest public transport journeys to work, thus car travel may be more attractive. • In regard to transport capacity, area A represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area A has the potential to impact on the A5127 Birmingham Road and Whitehouse Common corridor, where there are a significant number of critical junctions. • The landscape sensitivity of the northern part of the area is judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of the landscape comprising woodland and hedgerows, its tranquillity and separation from urban influences. • The landscape sensitivity of the area to the west and north of the Harvest Fields residential development is considered less sensitive to development due to the presence of existing urban influences, a limited number of landscape features and the abundance of this type of landscape within the wider area. • Area A1 mainly contains undesignated heritage assets although some may merit designation, a range of archaeological remains including cropmarks, surviving structures marked on the Corn Rent Map and coherent areas of field systems. There are opportunities for enhancement of the contribution of these heritage assets and their settings to the character of the area by retention and through design solutions. Development will only be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation and design solutions to retain assets. • The environmental and landscape constraints identified above mean that this area would not be suitable to accommodate a large employment site.
<p>Recommendation</p>
<p>Exclude the northern part of area A1 from further consideration as a strategic allocation in the Birmingham Development Plan. Take forward the remainder of Area A1 to Stage 3 Assessment for consideration for residential development (See Plan 3, page 77).</p> <p>Exclude the whole area from consideration as an employment site.</p>

4.3.3 Option A2 – Area at Hill Wood, East of Watford Gap

Description of Area

This option area lies at the northernmost point of the City and covers an area of 177 hectares. It adjoins the City boundary with Lichfield District Council to the north and existing residential areas to the west and south. The land is predominantly in agricultural use. The West Midlands Green Belt extends beyond the City boundary to Tamworth and Lichfield.



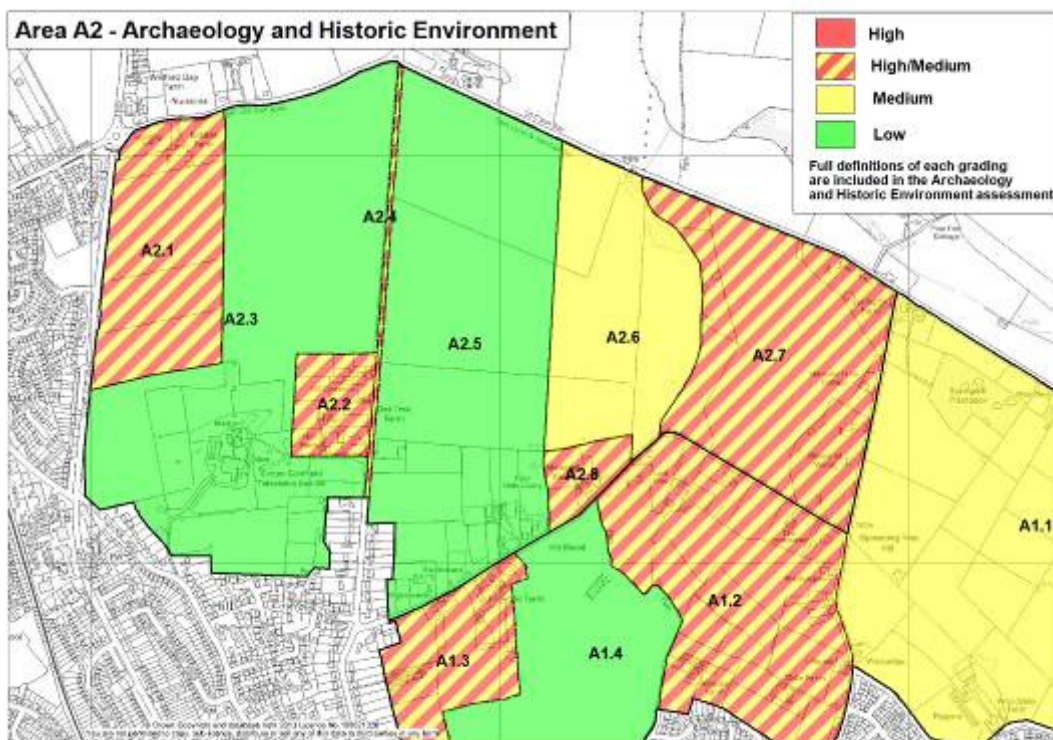
Green Belt Function

<p>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.</p>	<p>Area A2 prevents expansion of the urban area northwards where the Green Belt adjoins the urban areas of Mere Green/Roughley. There are several farm buildings located on Hillwood Road and Hillwood Common Road and the Sutton Coldfield transmitter masts which are highly visible from the surrounding area.</p>
<p>To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</p>	<p>The Green Belt extends a further 6.5km to the nearest large settlement (Lichfield) and 3km to the nearest small settlement (Shenstone) so its role in preventing merger of towns is limited.</p>
<p>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</p>	<p>Camp Road forms the boundary to the north and Hillwood Road to the east while the urban area adjoins the west and southern peripheries. There are no strong boundaries to contain development to the north. Area A2 has a strong relationship with the wider countryside by way of views and access. The area consists of a mixture of arable farmland and grazing pasture with several farm buildings located along the</p>

	main roads.
To preserve the setting and character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. Consideration has been given to historic features within the option area as noted below.
To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.

Archaeology and Historic Environment

A group of Mesolithic flints found near Manorial Wood and palaeoenvironmental remains along Littlehay Brook are likely to be of regional significance, and this area may contain other archaeological remains such as burnt mounds. Area A2 contains buildings constructed at Biddles Farm before 19th century land enclosure, with 19th century fields adjoining it. Hillwood Common Road and buildings and fields at Manorial Farm and Hill Common Farm result from 19th century land enclosure. All of these contribute to the character of the area. This contribution can be enhanced by retention and through design solutions. Extensive archaeological excavation, followed by analysis and publication of the results, will be required on land alongside Littlehay brook. Other parts of the area, including land on each side of Hillwood Common Road and south of Hillwood Common Road, contain potential heritage assets of archaeological interest. Depending on the results of archaeological evaluation, archaeological excavation will be required, followed by analysis and publication of the results.

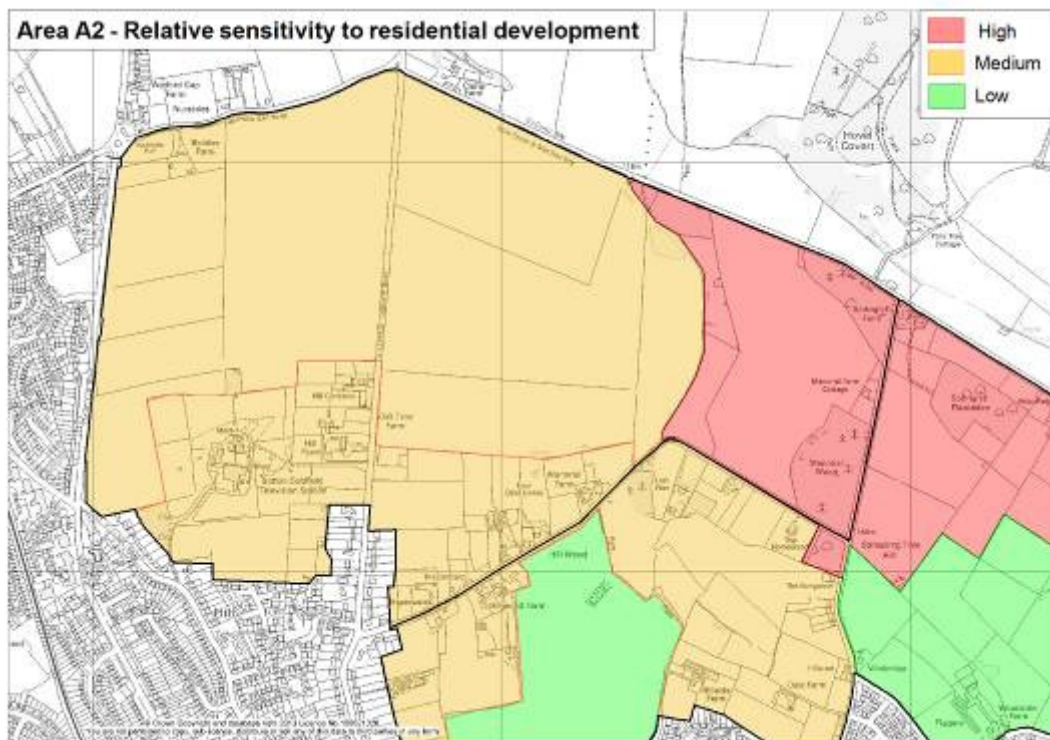


Landscape Character

The topography varies across Area A2 with a distinct change from higher ground in the south. The area's north facing aspect offers elevated distant views north west into the wider countryside. The landscape is characterised by large fields with fragmented hedgerows. The landscape sensitivity of the area is judged to be 'low' due to the presence of other examples of this character type within the wider landscape. The hedgerows are not only fragmented but in poor condition. The visual sensitivity of the area is judged to be 'high' due to the availability of distant views to the north west which is rare within the wider area.

Manorial Wood which is a separate character area forms part of Area A2. Manorial Wood has a coniferous core with a surrounding deciduous shelterbelt. The woodlands east and west of Worcester Lane are well established and well managed. The landscape sensitivity of this area is judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of the landscape within the wider area, its tranquillity, condition and separation from influence along the urban edge.

The sensitivity of area A2 to employment development is judged to be 'high' due to the large scale of buildings associated with this type of development, which results in reduced flexibility to design around existing landscape components and increased visibility from surrounding areas.



Transport Connectivity

As a residential development the transport analysis shows that area A achieves an accessibility score of 45% (by all modes of transport). The sustainability score (accessibility to facilities only by walking, cycling and public transport) is 25%. These scores represent a location that is typically suburban, with reasonable access to facilities but a poor choice of travel modes/ access to public transport networks.

As an employment site, accessibility is scored at 57% and sustainability at 26%. It is the furthest away from the main employment areas within Birmingham and would be subject to

the longest public transport journeys to work, thus car travel may be more attractive.

Distance to Sutton Town Centre		4.61km
Nearest Centre	Mere Green	1.81km
Nearest Primary School	Hill West Primary School	1.41km
Nearest Secondary School	The Arthur Terry School	1.72km
Nearest Railway Station	Blake Street	1.26km

(all distances measured from middle of Area A2)

Transport Capacity

As a residential development, the Transport Analysis gives area A a total capacity score of 58%. As an employment development the capacity score is 50%. This represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area A has the potential to impact on the A5127 Birmingham Road and Whitehouse Common corridor, where there are a significant number of critical junctions.

Ecology

Overall Area A2 supports habitats considered to be of moderate ecological value with some areas being of high ecological value, and other areas of low ecological value (namely the arable fields).

Records of protected and notable species have been received for hedgehog, common frog, house martin, yellowhammer, swallow and house sparrow. No other protected or notable species records from the period 2000 to present have been received for area A2.

Area A2 is dominated by arable fields of moderate size with some smaller areas of improved grassland on the southern edge. Hill Wood Brook SLINC and Land at Manorial Farm SLINC sit on the northern boundary of the area, and an area of broadleaved woodland links the SLINCs via Hill Wood Brook. A further SLINC exists within the very south-western corner of Area A2, namely Village Wood Road SLINC, which comprises broadleaved woodland habitat.

Hedgerows comprise largely oak, hawthorn and hazel with oak standards. Other woodlands within Area A2 include an area of broadleaved woodland in the very northeast corner of the area which comprises hawthorn, oak, ash, elder, sweet chestnut, birch, sycamore, alder and beech and an area of plantation conifer woodland.

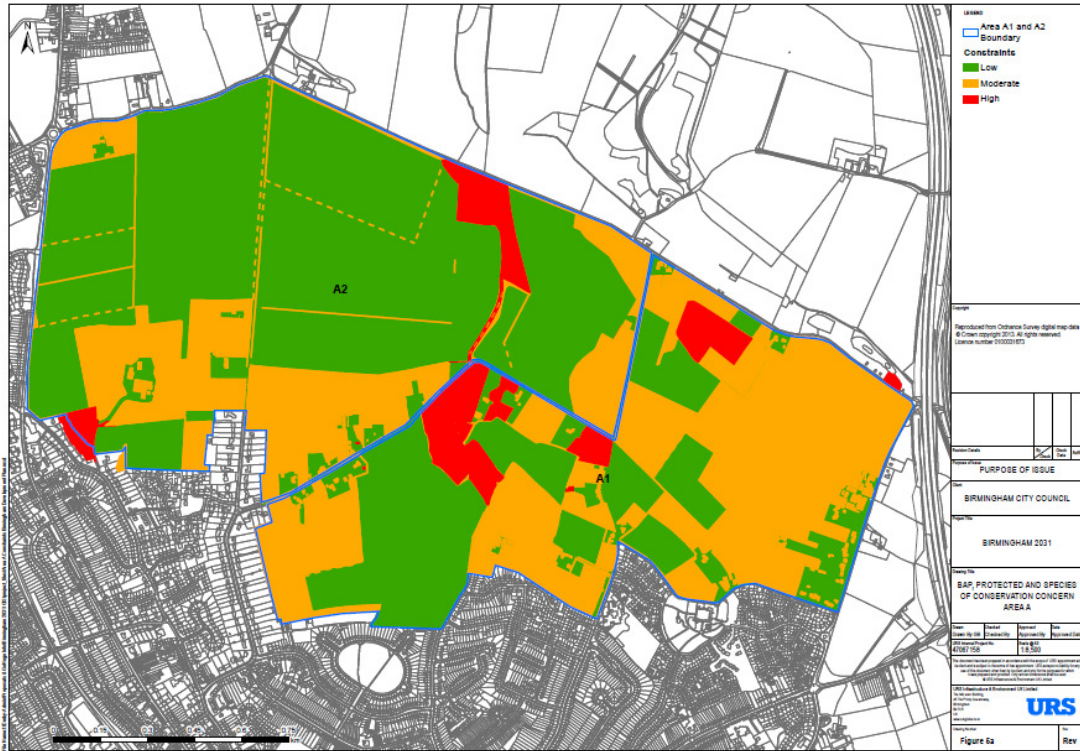
There are a small number of semi-improved grassland fields, particularly around the television mast and a stand of Japanese knotweed identified along the road leading to the mast.

Although the arable fields are considered to be of lower ecological value, they may have the potential to support flocks or breeding and wintering farmland birds, potentially increasing the ecological value of these parcels of land.

Area A2 is considered to have the potential to support:

- Great Crested Newt
- Bats
- Badger
- Breeding Birds
- Wintering Birds
- Reptiles

- Otter
- Water Vole



Flood Risk

Flood Zone 1 only which means that development is largely unrestricted, although the small watercourse of Littlehay Brook would require modelling.

Deliverability

No significant deliverability issues identified. No development interest received to date. The Sutton Coldfield Transmitting Station is located in the south western section of Area A2. It broadcasts terrestrial television signals for much of the Midlands and as such is a piece of regional infrastructure which would need to be accommodated by any development.

Provision of Services (power, water and drainage)

No principal utilities constraints identified.

Minerals reserves

Very small amount of gravel and sand.

Agricultural Land

Grade 3.

<p>Other considerations</p>
<p>A new secondary school, primary schools, health, shopping, open space and sports facilities will be required within a residential development.</p>
<p>Conclusions</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area A2 makes a significant contribution towards the purposes of the Green Belt by preventing urban sprawl northwards at Mere Green/ Roughley and assists in safeguarding encroachment into the countryside. Extensive long distance views are afforded by the area's high ground and north facing slopes, making it highly visible from the surrounding countryside. There are no existing strong boundaries to contain development to the north. The area plays a limited role in separation of settlements. • Area A represents a location that is typically suburban, with reasonable access to facilities but having poor choice of travel modes/ access to public transport networks. As an employment site it would be the furthest away from the main employment areas within Birmingham and would be subject to the longest public transport journeys to work, thus car travel may be more attractive. • In regard to transport capacity, area A represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area A has the potential to impact on the A5127 Birmingham Road and Whitehouse Common corridor, where there are a significant number of critical junctions. • The relative sensitivity of the majority of the area to development is judged to be 'medium' due to the rarity of extensive views to the north west and the prominence of the hillside, balanced against the opportunities for appropriate forms of mitigation. • Part of Area A2 contains Manorial Wood, which is a separate landscape character area and judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of its landscape components within the wider area, its tranquillity and separation from the urban edge. • Area A2 mainly contains undesignated heritage assets although some may merit designation, a range of archaeological remains, surviving structures marked on the Corn Rent Map and coherent areas of field systems. There are opportunities for enhancement of the contribution of these heritage assets and their settings to the character of the area by retention and through design solutions. Development will only be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation and design solutions to retain assets. • Area A2 supports habitats considered to be of moderate ecological value with some areas being of high ecological value, and other areas of low ecological value (namely the arable fields). Due to the dominance of arable fields in A2 the majority of area is considered to offer limited constraints to development. • A large employment site could be accommodated on Area A2, but poor access to the strategic highway network and significant impact upon landscape and visual effects excludes employment development potential.
<p>Recommendation</p>
<p>Exclude the east quadrant including Manorial Wood from further consideration as a strategic allocation in the Birmingham Development Plan. Take forward the remainder of Area A2 to Stage 3 Assessment for consideration for residential development (See Plan 3, page 77).</p> <p>Exclude the whole area from consideration as an employment site.</p>

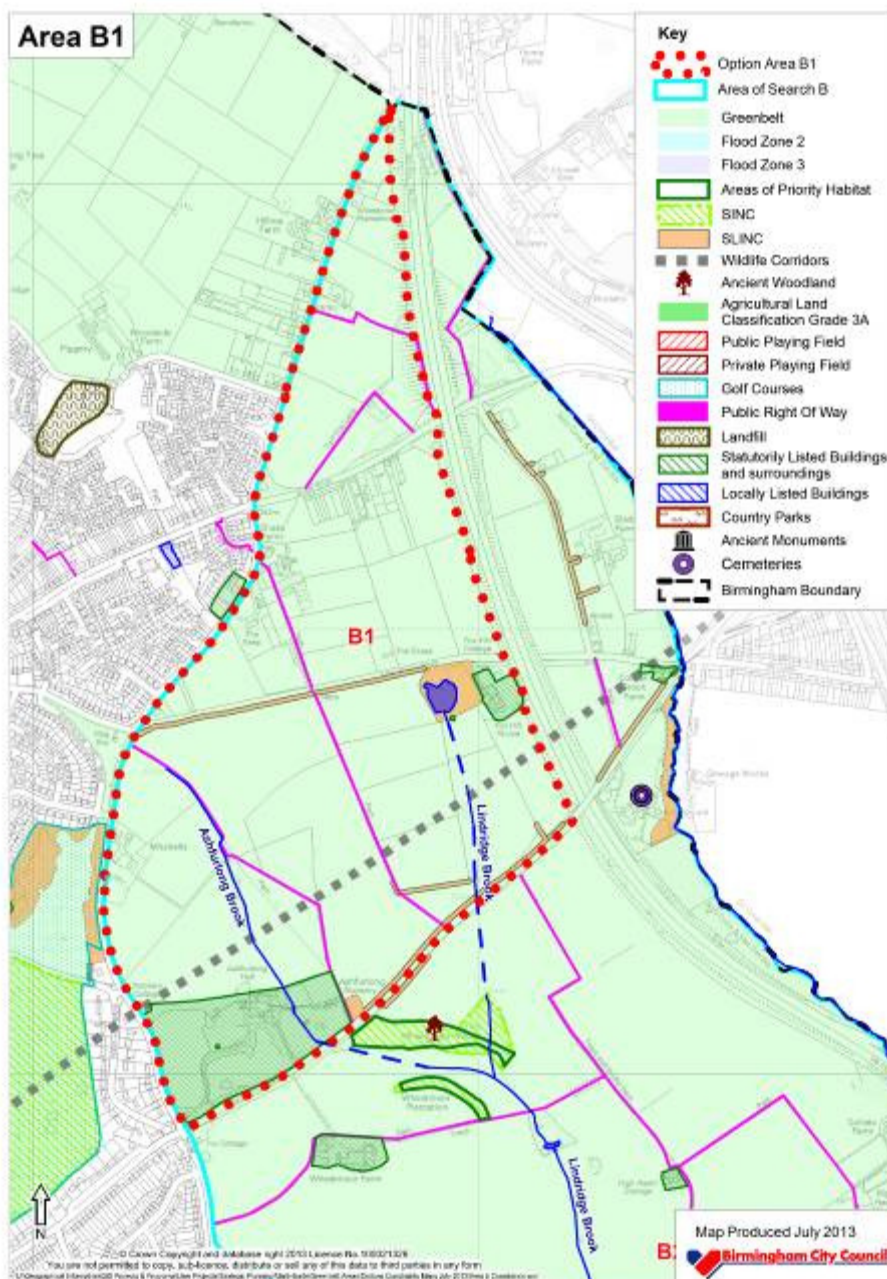
4.4 STAGE TWO ASSESSMENT OF GREEN BELT AREA B

4.4.1 Area B has been subdivided into two options. B1 forms land north of Tamworth Road and B2 covers land south of Tamworth Road.

4.4.2 Area B1 – West of the M6 Toll, North of Tamworth Road

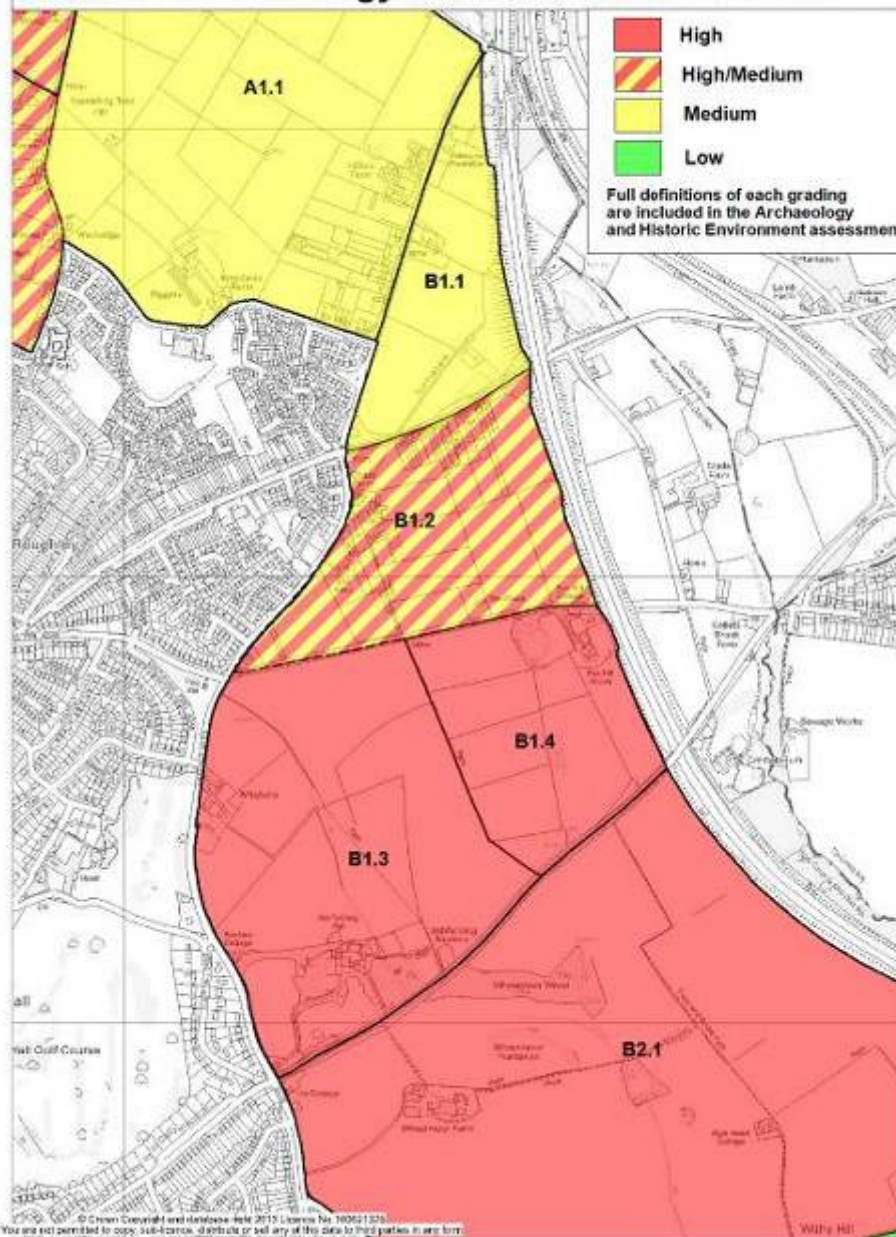
Description of Area

This option area lies to the north east of the City and covers an area of 113 hectares. It is mainly in agricultural use and adjoins the existing, predominantly residential, urban area to the west and the M6 Toll road to the east. The West Midlands Green Belt extends beyond the M6 Toll to Tamworth.



Green Belt Function	
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.	Area B1 prevents the expansion of the urban area eastwards at Roughley/ Whitehouse Common. There are a number of existing urban influences including residential properties located along Slade Road, the Chase Farm Shop and the Mitchells Crafts and Shopping Centre. The southern section of B1 consists of a more rural character with well-maintained pastoral fields and complete hedgerows.
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	The Green Belt extends 8km from the City's urban area to Tamworth (6.5km from Area B's outer boundary). 5km of Green Belt lies between Area B and the nearest small settlement (Kingsbury). Its role in preventing the merger of towns is limited.
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The M6 Toll forms a strong defensible boundary to the east. The main land uses consist of pastoral farmland, residential properties and farm buildings with isolated listed buildings situated in the area.
To preserve the setting and character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) to the urban area. Consideration has been given to historic features within the option area as noted below.
To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Archaeology and Historic Environment	
<p>The designated heritage assets at Ashfurlong Hall and Fox Hill House were designed to be seen from long distances across open land therefore their settings, which contribute to their significance and appreciation, are extensive. Development within the setting of the designated heritage assets would have an adverse impact and result in a loss of significance and appreciation. The setting of the beehive kiln at Fox Hill includes its former clay pit, and the large fields to the south of Fox Hill result from 19th century field enclosures. Ashfurlong Hall has a distinct banked enclosure to its north, a probable burnt mound, cropmarks and potentially other archaeological remains. A 19th-century former school building at Chase Farm, Chase Farm farmhouse and an intact landscape of 19th century enclosure fields to its east contribute to the character of the area. This contribution can be enhanced by retention and through design solutions. An air raid shelter and a hollow way between Weeford Road and Turf Pits Lane can be retained through design solutions. Extensive archaeological excavation, followed by analysis and publication of the results, will be required east of Weeford Road.</p>	

Area B1 - Archaeology and Historic Environment



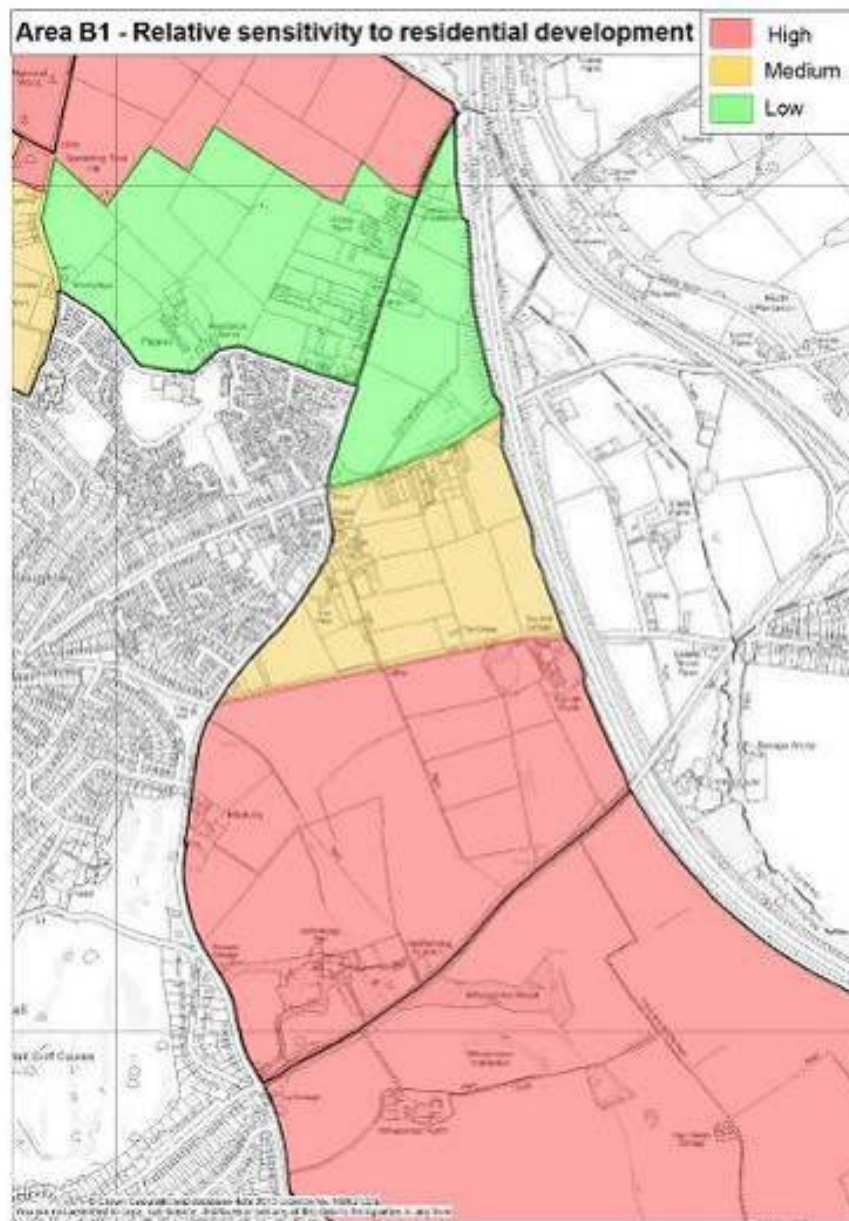
Landscape Character

Area B1 is varied in landscape sensitivity and forms three separate character areas. The landscape sensitivity of the area north of Slade Road is judged as 'low' due to the abundance of this type of landscape within the wider area and its lack of tranquillity due to its interior road network. The visual sensitivity of the area is judged to be 'medium' due to the presence of residential properties overlooking the area, limited long distance view and opportunities to mitigate visual impacts.

The landscape sensitivity of the area between Slade Road and Fox Hill is judged to be 'medium' due to the well preserved field pattern and well managed hedgerows with trees. The visual sensitivity of this area is judged to be 'medium' due to the presence of a number of visual receptors and opportunities for visual mitigation owing to the level of topography.

The landscape sensitivity of the area between Fox Hill and Tamworth Road, part of the Wheatmoor Plateau Farmland and Valleyside character area, is judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of the landscape within the wider area, its elevated tranquillity and the limited opportunity to replace a number of its components. It is physically and culturally distinct from adjacent character areas, due, in part to the combined effect of historic land use and landform. Ashfurlong Hall is enclosed by dense woodland covered by a TPO. Although there is limited hedgerow coverage, the few roads through the area are surrounded by established parts of woodland and well maintained hedgerow and hedgerow trees. The visual sensitivity of the area is also judged to be 'high' due to the presence of a range of properties overlooking the area and the openness and variety of views across the area and beyond.

The sensitivity of area B1 to employment development is judged to be 'high' due to the large scale of buildings associated with this type of development, which results in reduced flexibility to design around existing landscape components and increased visibility from surrounding areas.



Transport Connectivity

As a residential development area B achieves an accessibility score (access to facilities by all modes of travel) of 53% and a sustainability score (accessibility to facilities only by walking, cycling and public transport) of 37%. These scores represent a typical suburban location with reasonable access to a range of facilities via choice of transport modes.

As an employment site, accessibility is scored at 70% and sustainability at 26%. Overall the area is well connected, but propensity for people to travel by car is high.

Distance to Sutton Town Centre		3.24km
Nearest Centre	Mere Green	1.92km
Nearest Primary School	Moor Hall Primary School	1.03km
Nearest Secondary School	Bishops Vesey Grammar School	2.49km
Nearest Railway Station	Four Oaks	2.09km

(all distances measured from middle of Area B1)

Transport Capacity

As a residential development the Transport Analysis gives area B a total capacity score of 52% and as an employment development – a score of 43%. This represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area B is constrained by the local highway network. East-west routes are congested in peak hours. As an employment site it would rely heavily on the A446 link between Bassetts Pole and the M42 Junction 9, which is heavily congested and has a poor safety record. The A446 would have to be improved and high quality and high capacity public transport services established.

Ecology

Area B1 supports some habitats that are considered to be of moderate and low ecological value together with some habitats of relatively high ecological value. The hedgerows and woodland habitats together with the areas of semi-improved grassland and water bodies provide good habitat links through Area B1.

Records of the following protected and notable species have been received - the common toad, badger, notcule, common pipistrelle, swallow and house sparrow. No other protected or notable species records from the period 2000 to present have been received for Area B1.

The majority of area B1 is made up of small fields of improved grassland separated by hedgerows. There is a small area of broadleaved woodland to the north of Slade Road which is connected to hedgerows further north. In close proximity to the M6 Toll Road are areas of landscape planting providing a screen, which contain a variety of young trees and shrub species. Although young, these areas are likely to form broadleaved woodland habitat in time. There is a further area of broadleaved woodland to the south of Fox Hill Road, which surrounds large pools. Fox Hill Road SLINC is located to the south of Fox Hill Road and supports well-grazed horse paddocks surrounded by hedgerows. There are numerous houses and agricultural buildings and mature trees in area B1. In addition, there are several water bodies. Tamworth Road Hedges SLINC runs along the southern boundary of Area B1, adjoining Ashfurlong Hall Woodland SLINC located to the south of Ashfurlong Nursery.

A footpath runs between Weeford Road and Tamworth Road and is lined by a wet ditch and mature hedgerows and tree lines. Hedgerows located within Area B1 generally support hawthorn, elder, lime, hazel, ash and oak with ash and oak standards.

Although the arable fields are considered to be of lower ecological value, they may have the potential to support flocks or breeding and wintering farmland birds, potentially increasing the ecological value of these parcels of land.

Area B1 is considered to have the potential to support:

- Great Crested Newt
- Bats
- Badger
- Breeding Birds
- Wintering Birds
- Reptiles
- Otter
- Water Vole



Flood Risk

Mostly Flood Zone 1 which means that development is largely unrestricted, but some Flood Zone 2 and 3 is associated with Ashfurlong Brook and Lindridge Brook, the extent of which should be confirmed through modelling. Careful consideration is needed of the potential effect on Langley and Lindridge Pool as additional flows to Lindridge Brook would have an effect on these Pools.

Deliverability

No significant issues identified to deliverability. The majority of the land is under one ownership and being actively promoted for development.

Provision of Services (power, water and drainage)
No principal utilities constraints identified. Development could provide a potential strategic opportunity to abandon the existing treatment works at Langley Mill and transfer to Minworth Sewage Works.
Minerals reserves
Large areas of sand and gravel and small areas of clay and silt.
Agricultural Land Quality
Grade 3.
Other considerations
A new secondary school, primary schools, health, shopping, open space and sports facilities will be required within a residential development.
Conclusions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area B1 makes a contribution towards the purposes of the Green Belt by preventing urban sprawl eastwards at Roughley/ Whitehouse Common and assists in safeguarding encroachment into the countryside. The M6 Toll Road forms a strong defensible boundary to the east. The area plays a limited role in separation of settlements. • The environmental constraints identified above mean that this area will not be suitable to accommodate a large employment site. • Area B represents a typical suburban location with reasonable access to a range of facilities via choice of transport modes. As an employment site the area is well connected, but propensity for people to travel by car is high. • In regard to transport capacity Area B represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area B is constrained by the local highway network. East-west routes are congested in peak hours. As an employment site it would rely heavily on the A446 link between Bassetts Pole and the M42 Junction 9, which is heavily congested and has a poor safety record. The A446 would have to be improved and high quality and high capacity public transport services established. • The northern part of area B1 contains mainly undesignated heritage assets where development would only be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation and design solutions to retain heritage assets. • The southern part of Area B1 contains a number of significant archaeological and heritage assets. It is considered that the impact of development on these assets and their settings could not be satisfactorily mitigated and should be excluded from development. • The landscape sensitivity of the southern part of the Area B1 is judged to be 'high' and there would be limited opportunities to mitigate visual impacts and replace rare components of the landscape that are, in part, a combined result of historic land use and landform. • The northern part of B1 is of moderate and high ecological value because of the presence of SLINCs and connective habitat, therefore resulting in constraints to development. The southern half is of lower ecological value, with the exception of

the higher value woodland habitat in the south-west portion and the SLINC-designated hedgerow along the boundary with area B2.

- The Mineral Products Association expressed a preference for areas A, C and D over B. Area B contains significant mineral resources, and if developed, provision for the extraction of the minerals would be expected, before development takes place.

Recommendation

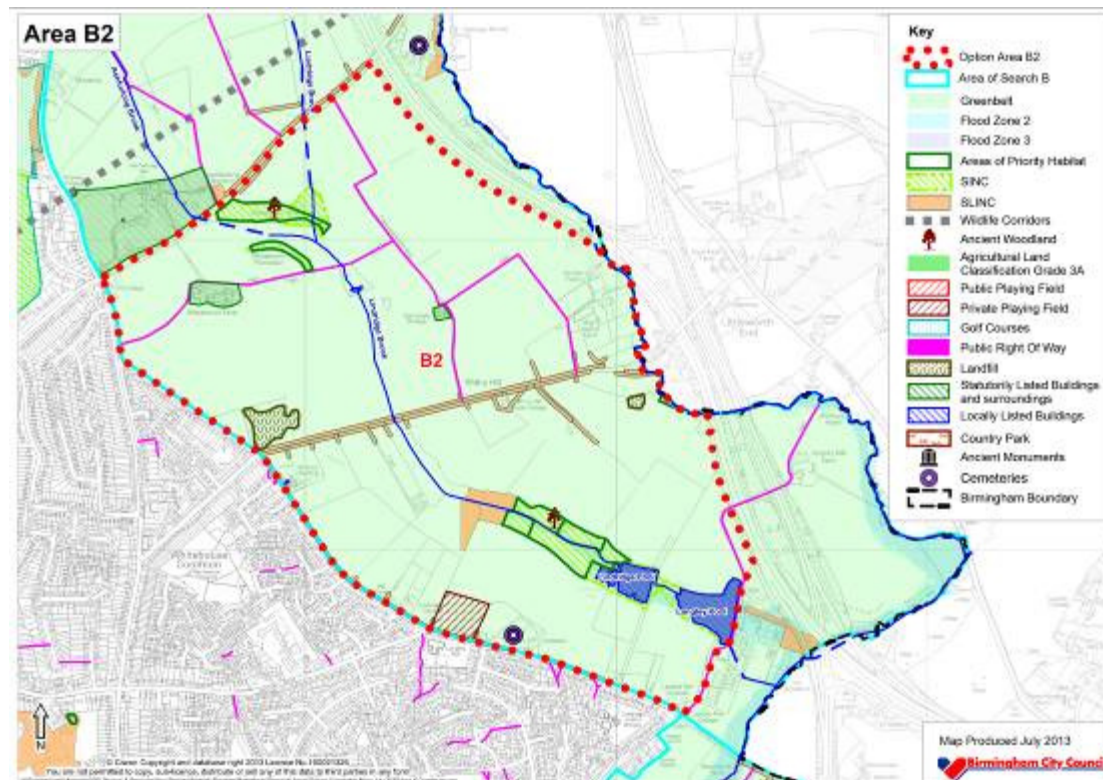
Exclude the southern part of the Area B1 (between Tamworth Road and Fox Hill Road) from further consideration as a strategic allocation in the Birmingham Development Plan. Take forward the northern section of Area B1 to Stage 3 Assessment for consideration for residential development (See Plan 3, page 77).

Exclude the whole area from consideration as a large employment site.

4.4.3 Area B2 – West of the M6 Toll, South of Tamworth Road

Description of Area

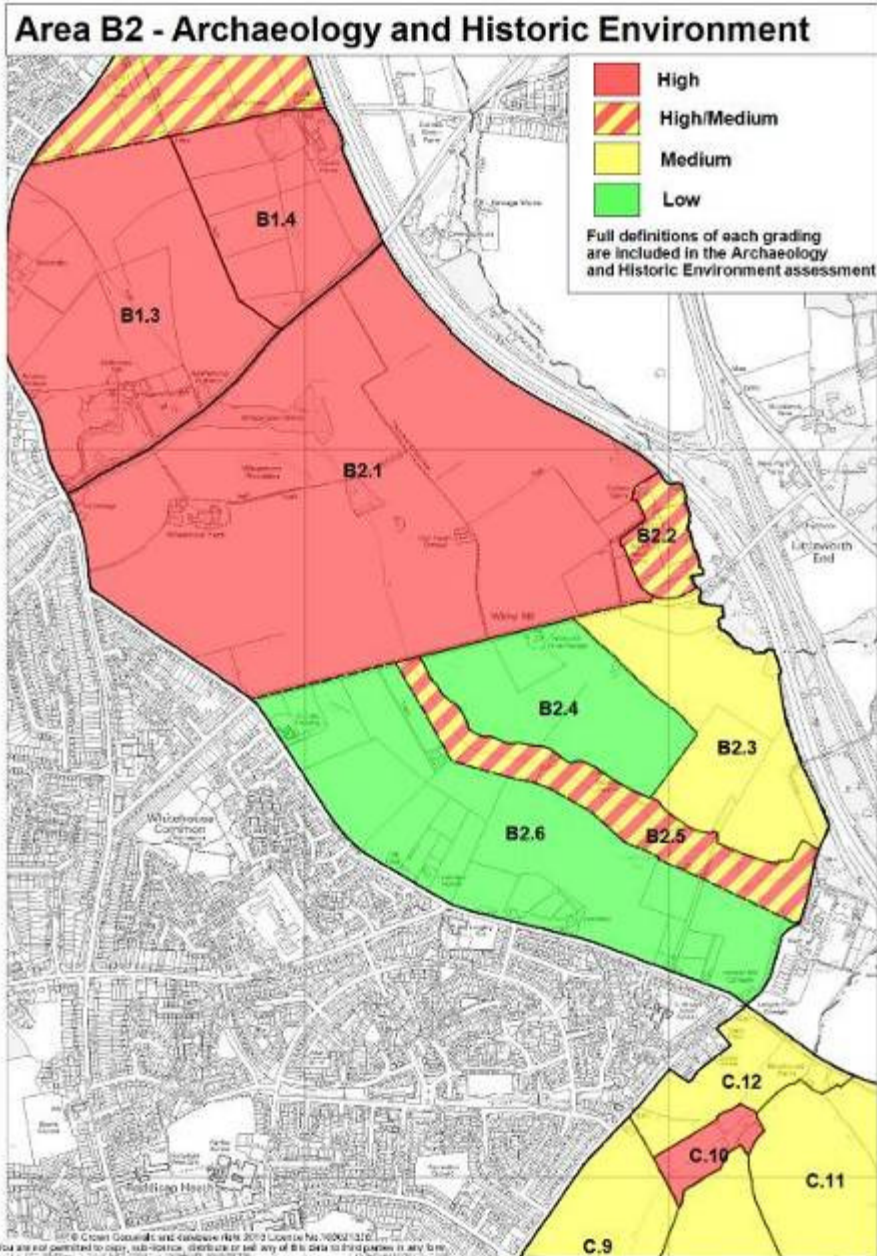
This option area lies to the north east of the City and covers an area of 230 hectares. It is mainly in agricultural use and adjoins the existing, predominantly residential, urban area to the west and the M6 Toll Road to the east. The West Midlands Green Belt extends beyond the M6 Toll to Tamworth.



Green Belt Function

<p>To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.</p>	<p>Area B2 prevents the expansion of the urban area eastwards at Roughley/ Whitehouse Common. There is a range of isolated listed buildings in B2 but the character of the area is predominantly rural.</p>
<p>To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another</p>	<p>The Green Belt extends 8km from the City's urban area to Tamworth (6.5km from Area B's outer boundary). 5km of Green Belt lies between Area B and the nearest small settlement (Kingsbury). Its role in preventing the merger of towns is limited.</p>
<p>To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment</p>	<p>The M6 Toll forms a strong defensible boundary to the east. The main land uses are arable fields with blocks of woodland, a watercourse and pools located in the southern section. Sutton Newhall Cemetery and a sports field are located in the south west of the area along Lindridge Road.</p>
<p>To preserve the setting</p>	<p>The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does</p>

and character of historic towns	not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) to the urban area. Consideration has been given to historic features within the option area as noted below.
To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Archaeology and Historic Environment	
<p>The designated heritage assets at Wheatmoor Farm, a stone castellated building which forms part of the landscape setting of Ashfurlong Hall, and Vesey Cottage (High Heath Cottage) a 16th century stone building originally constructed in open heathland, were designed to be seen from long distances across open land therefore their settings, which contribute to their significance and appreciation, are extensive. Development within the setting of the designated heritage assets would have an adverse impact and result in a loss of significance and appreciation. Palaeoenvironmental remains along Withy Hill Brook are likely to be of regional significance, and a burnt mound of Bronze Age date has been found on the Withy Brook south of Withy Hill Road. 17th-century pools on Withy Hill Brook, the buildings and field enclosures of a former squatter settlement at High Heath Farm (Swash Vale) and a former pool dam on Collets Brook contribute to the character of the area. This contribution can be enhanced by retention and through design solutions. Extensive archaeological excavation, followed by analysis and publication of the results, will be required south of Withy Hill Road, and on and around archaeological features of prehistoric and Roman remains excavated on the line of the M6 Toll motorway, which extend into area B2. Cropmarks to the north west of the excavated area may be part of these features. Land north of Lindridge Road and land south of Withy Hill Cottages, where there is also a cropmark, contain potential heritage assets of archaeological interest. Depending on the results of archaeological evaluation, archaeological excavation will be required, followed by analysis and publication of the results.</p>	

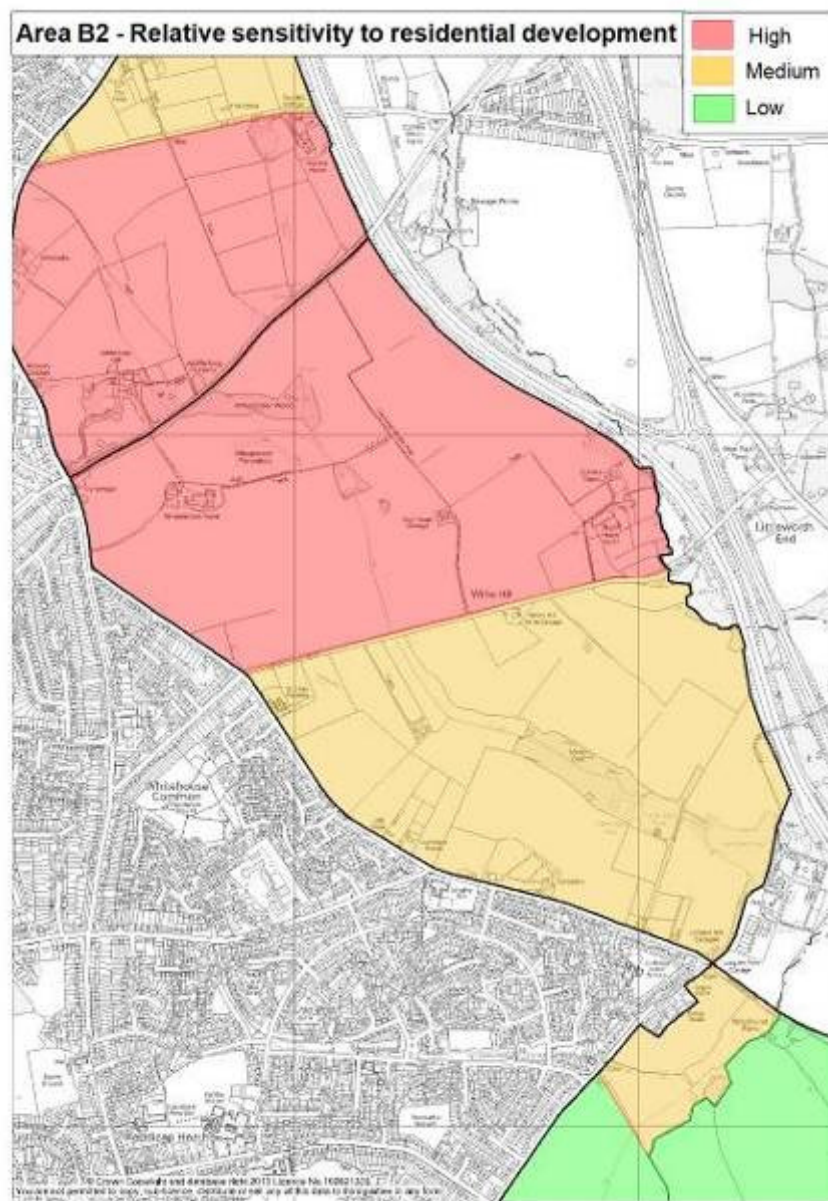


Landscape Character

Area B2 contains two character areas separated by Wither Hill Road. The northern part comprises Wheatmoor Farm Plateau Farmland and Valleyside. The most distinctive landform is the broad valley created by the Wither Brook which has gently sloping valley sides. The main land use is arable but this is interspersed with occasional stands of woodland and well maintained hedgerows and hedgerow trees. Wheatmoor Wood is a designated Ancient Woodland adjoining the SLINC. Wheatmoor Plantation forms the other main stand of woodland. There are isolated trees throughout the area indicating the existence of former field boundaries. The landscape sensitivity of the area is judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of the landscape within the wider area (as a result of heritage features, ancient woodland and isolated mature field trees), its elevated tranquillity and the limited opportunity for replacements of a number of its components. The visual sensitivity of the area is also judged to be 'high' due to the openness and variety of views across the area and beyond.

The area south of Withy Hill Road forms the separate character area of Lindridge Valley Farmland. The area is distinguished by a valley landscape with wooded valley bottom. The eastern side contains the key visible landscape components of woodland, naturalistic hedgerows, field pattern and mill ponds. The western side of the area contains more urbanised land uses with a mixture of arable fields, pasture, a cemetery and sports field along Lindridge Road. The area contains a block of ancient woodland which is a feature in the centre of the area. To the south east are two millponds – Lindridge Pool and Langley Pool, dating from the 17th Century. The landscape sensitivity of the area is judged to be 'medium' due to the rarity of the landscape type within the wider area and the limited opportunity to replace topographic and historic features. The visual sensitivity of the area is judged to be 'medium' due to a balance between the distant views from the area to the east and the limited number of views into the area from elsewhere.

The sensitivity of area B2 to employment development is judged to be 'high' due to the large scale of buildings associated with this type of development, which results in reduced flexibility to design around existing landscape components and increased visibility from surrounding areas.



Transport Connectivity

As a residential development area B achieves an accessibility score (access to facilities by all modes of travel) of 53% and a sustainability score (accessibility to facilities only by walking, cycling and public transport) of 37%. These scores represent a typical suburban location with reasonable access to a range of facilities via choice of transport modes.

As an employment site, accessibility is scored at 70% and sustainability at 26%. Overall the area is well connected, but propensity for people to travel by car is high.

Distance to Sutton Town Centre		2.84km
Nearest Centre	Mere Green	2.91km
Nearest Primary School	New Hall Primary	1.28km
Nearest Secondary School	Fairfax School	1.70km
Nearest Railway Station	Four Oaks	2.67km

(all distances measured from middle of Area B2)

Transport Capacity

As a residential development the Transport Analysis gives area B a total capacity score of 52% and as an employment development – a score of 43%. This represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area B is constrained by the local highway network. East-west routes are congested in peak hours. As an employment site it would rely heavily on the A446 link between Bassetts Pole and the M42 Junction 9, which is heavily congested and has a poor safety record. The A446 would have to be improved and high quality and high capacity public transport services established.

Ecology

Area B2 supports some habitats that are considered to be of moderate and high ecological value together with some habitats of relatively low ecological value. The areas of higher ecological value are particularly around Lindridge Pool and Lindridge Brook where there is a mosaic of habitats with good linkages between them.

Records of the following protected and notable species have been received - the common toad, badger, notcule, common pipistrelle, swallow and house sparrow. No other protected or notable species records from the period 2000 to present have been received for Area B2.

The area is largely made up of arable land dissected into moderate sized fields by hedgerows with mature trees. There are several areas of broadleaved woodland habitat. Wheatmoor Wood and Wheatmoor Plantation SINC is located to the south of Tamworth Road Hedges SLINC and accessed via a footpath from Whitehouse Common Road. To the south of this footpath is a further area of broadleaved woodland, known as Fish Pond, which supports a large water body. Additional broadleaved woodland habitat within Area B2 is located to the south of Withy Hill Road Hedge SLINC.

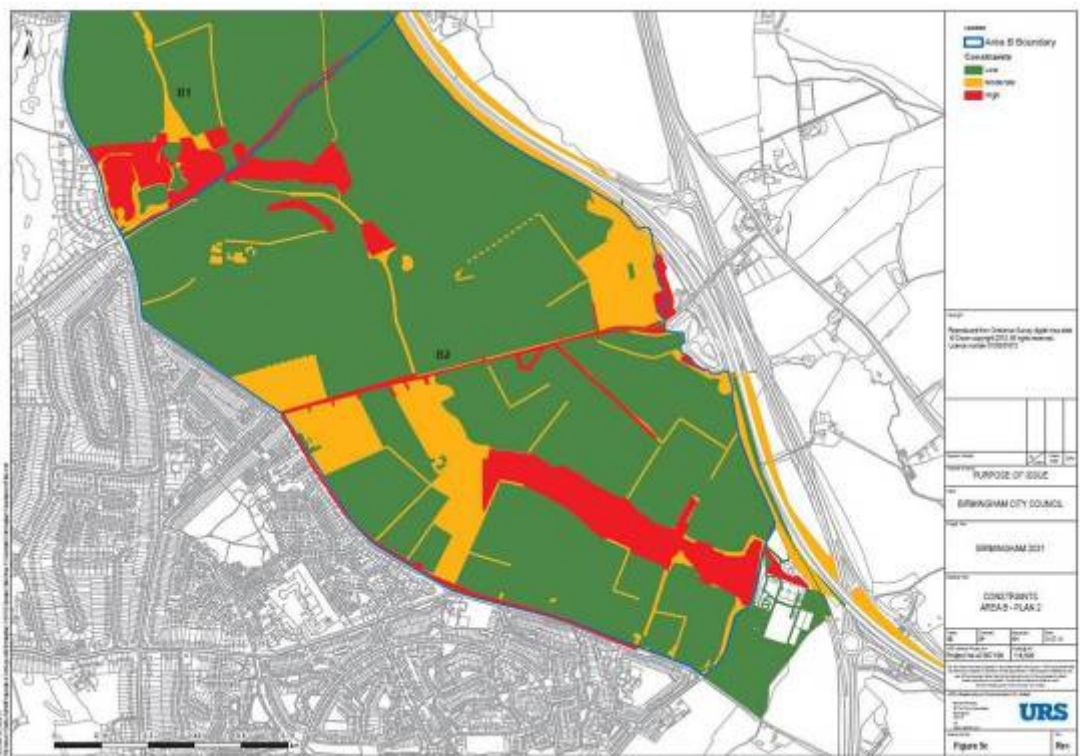
This latter area of broadleaved woodland is associated with the complex of habitats making up Lindridge Brook SINC/SLINC and Lindridge Pool SINC/SLINC. These habitats are open water in the form of a large pool fed by Langley Brook SLINC (which falls outside of area B2), and joins Langley Pool further south-east and is included within the Lindridge Pool and Langley Mill SINC boundary. Langley Pool is a fishing lake surrounded by mature trees and shrubs and adjacent to a sewage treatment works. To the north-west of Lindridge Pool, Withy Brook SLINC runs through woodland and into semi-improved grassland habitat.

Lindridge Road Hedge SLINC runs along the south western boundary of Area B2.

Although the arable fields are considered to be of lower ecological value, they may have the potential to support flocks or breeding and wintering farmland birds, potentially increasing the ecological value of these parcels of land.

Area B2 is considered to have the potential to support:

- Great Crested Newt
- Bats
- Badger
- Breeding Birds
- Wintering Birds
- Reptiles
- Otter
- Water Vole



Flood Risk

Mostly Flood Zone 1 which means that development is largely unrestricted, but some Flood Zone 2 and 3 is identified. Further modelling work would be required at Ashfurlong and Lindridge Brook. Careful consideration would need to be given of potential effects on Langley and Lindridge Pool as additional flows to Lindridge Brook may have an effect on these Pools.

Deliverability

Area B2 is affected by proposals for the future expansion of Sutton New Hall Cemetery. Development interest in majority of area is split between two main promoters.

Provision of Services (power, water and drainage)
No principal utilities constraints identified. Development could provide a potential strategic opportunity to abandon the existing treatment works at Langley Mill and transfer to Minworth Sewage Works.
Minerals reserves
Large areas of sand and gravel and small areas of clay and silt.
Agricultural Land Quality
Grade 3.
Other considerations
A new secondary school, primary schools, health, shopping, open space and sports facilities will be required within a residential development. Development would need to take into consideration the potential future expansion of Sutton Newhall Cemetery.
Conclusions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area B2 makes a contribution towards the purposes of the Green Belt by preventing urban sprawl eastwards at Roughley/ Whitehouse Common and assists in safeguarding encroachment into the countryside. The M6 Toll forms a strong defensible boundary to the east. There is already a ribbon of development along part of Lindridge Road with the presence of Sutton Newhall Cemetery, residential properties and playing fields. The area plays a limited role in separation of settlements. • Area B scores represent a typical suburban location with reasonable access to a range of facilities via choice of transport modes. As an employment site the area is well connected, but propensity for people to travel by car is high. • In regard to transport capacity Area B represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area B is constrained by the local highway network. East-west routes are congested in peak hours. As an employment site it would rely heavily on the A446 link between Bassetts Pole and the M42 Junction 9, which is heavily congested and has a poor safety record. The A446 would have to be improved and high quality and high capacity public transport services established. • The environmental and landscape constraints identified above mean that this area will not be suitable to accommodate a 50 ha employment site. • The northern part of Area B2 contains a number of significant heritage assets and their settings and archaeological features sensitive to development, the impact upon which cannot be satisfactorily mitigated. Development within the setting of the designated heritage assets would have an adverse impact and result in a loss of significance and appreciation. The southern part of the area contains features which offer opportunities for enhancement of their character and setting by retention and through design solutions. It also contains areas where the impact of development can be satisfactorily mitigated by extensive archaeological excavation. • The landscape sensitivity of the northern half of the area is judged to be 'high' and

there would be limited opportunities to mitigate visual impacts and replace rare components of the landscape including ancient woodlands and mature trees.

- The landscape sensitivity of the southern part of Area B2 is judged to be 'medium' due to the effects that development would have on landcover, potentially resulting in a loss of a number of components balanced by the opportunities to mitigate visual impacts.
- The southern section of B2 contains a central corridor of high ecological value because of the connected network of SINC and SLINC focussed around Lindridge Pools and Brook. The arable fields within Area B2 are of lower ecological value. There is also with a further area of high ecological value towards the northern boundary, because of the presence of SINC-designated woodland and other important habitats
- Area B2 is affected by proposals to extend Sutton New Hall Cemetery to 16ha.
- The Mineral Products Association expressed a preference for areas A, C and D over B. Area B contains significant mineral resources, and if developed, provision for the extraction of the minerals would be expected, before development takes place.

Recommendation

Exclude Area B2 from further consideration as a strategic allocation in the Birmingham Development Plan.

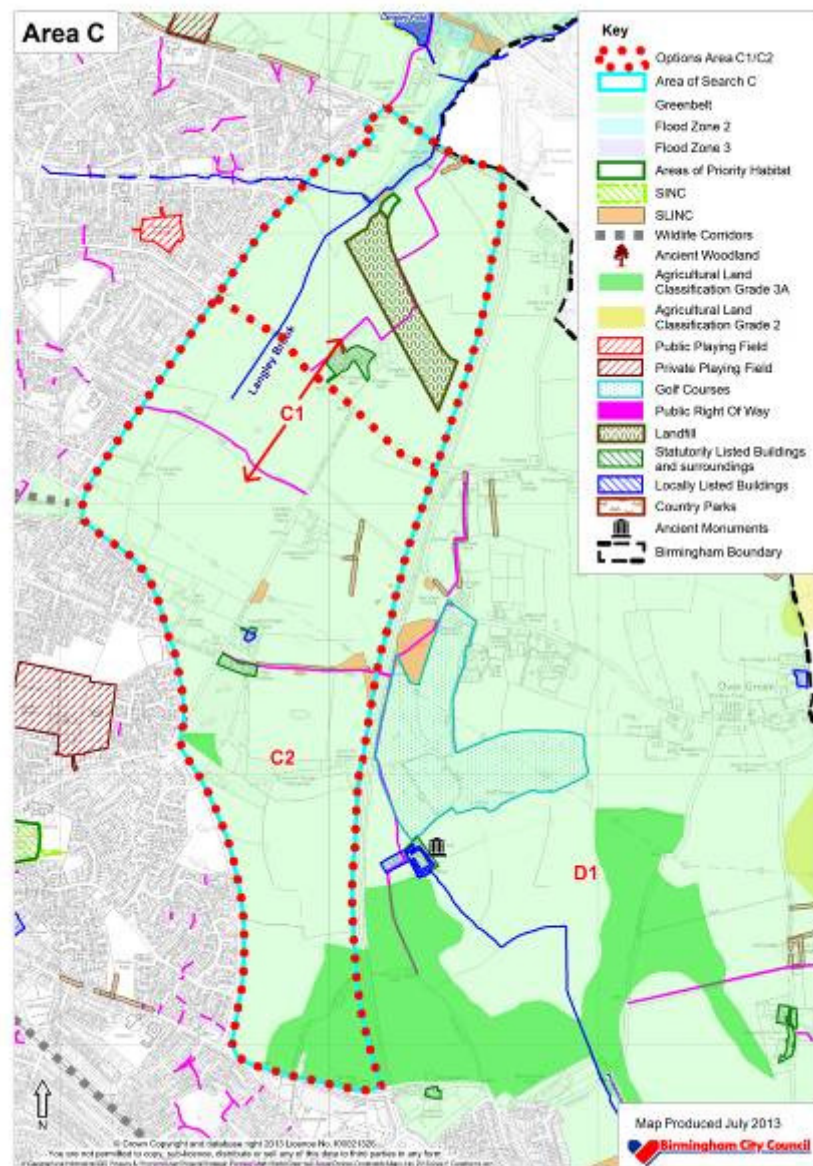
4.5 STAGE TWO ASSESSMENT OF GREEN BELT AREA C

4.5.1 The Options Consultation in 2012 presented Area C as two options – C1, which incorporated the whole of area C and C2, which only covered the southern part. The assessment below considers the whole option area and is referred to as C.

4.5.2 Area C – West of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley

Description of Area

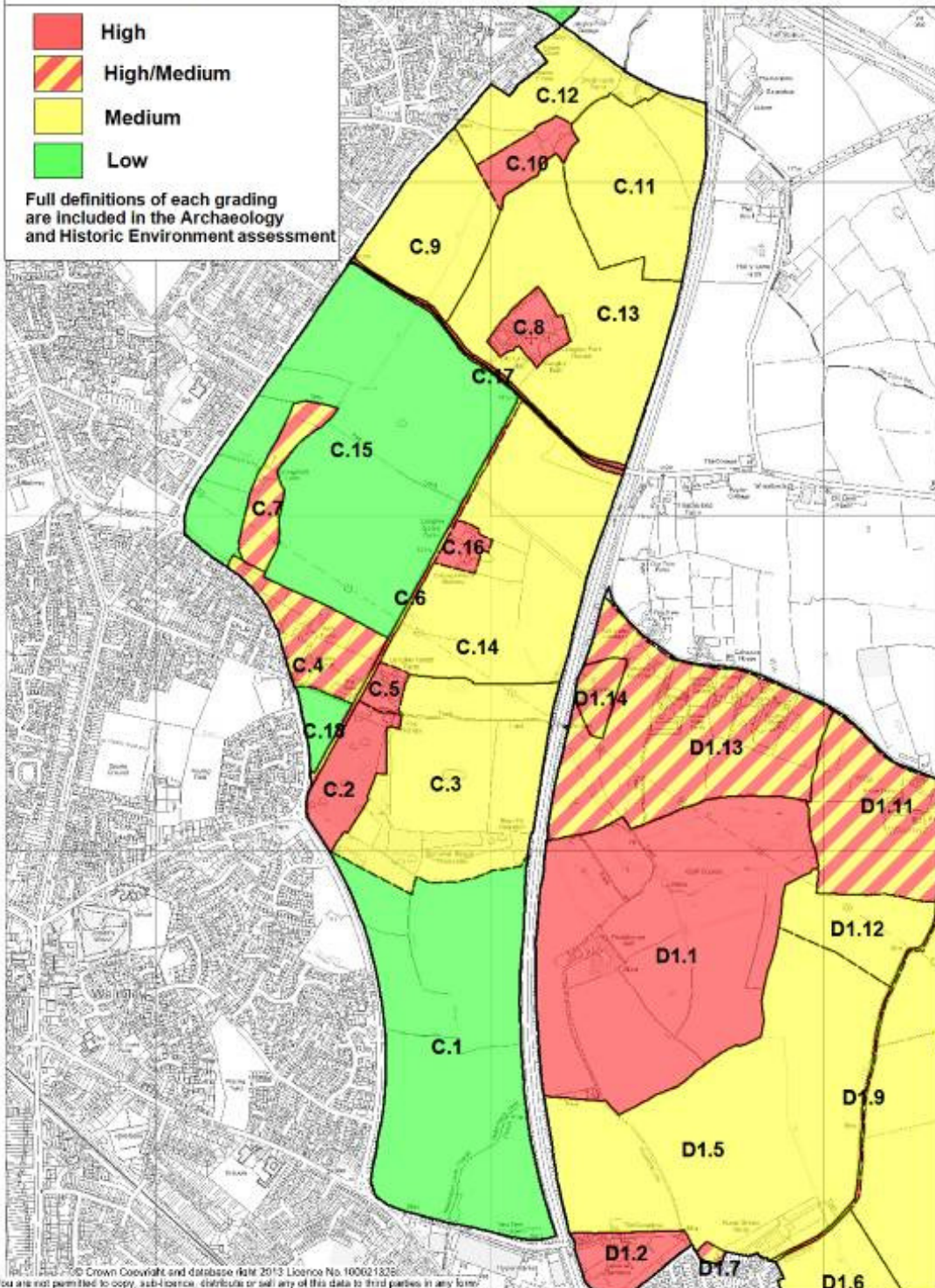
This option area lies to the north east of the City and covers an area of 274 hectares. It adjoins the existing urban area to the west and the Sutton Coldfield bypass to the east. The land is predominantly in agricultural use. The Green Belt extends beyond the bypass along the whole length of the search area into Warwickshire.



Green Belt Function	
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.	Area C prevents the expansion of the urban area eastwards from Walmley, Thimble End and Falcon Lodge. While immediately adjoining the urban area and given its size, there are few urban influences within it, aside from several farm buildings, Old Langley Hall and a Gardener's World shop located on Fox Hollies.
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	The nearest large settlements are Atherstone which is around 18km from the City's urban area, and Tamworth which is 8km to the north west. The closest small settlement is Curdworth some 2.5km beyond Area C's outer (eastern) boundary. The Green Belt extends into North Warwickshire. The role of the area in preventing merger of settlements is limited.
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Area C mainly consists of large arable fields with sparse hedgerows and Langley Brook running through the centre of the area, and some isolated blocks of woodland. The southern part of C lies in a shallow basin/valley with raised ground to the north. The A38 is situated to the east of Area C and Lindridge Road forms a defensible boundary to the north.
To preserve the setting and character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) to the urban area. Consideration has been given to historic features within the option area as noted below.
To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Archaeology and Historic Environment	
<p>This area contains three designated heritage assets and their settings which contribute to their significance and appreciation. Development within the setting of the designated heritage assets would have an adverse impact and result in a loss of significance and appreciation. The setting of Langley Hall includes the medieval moat and former fishponds adjoining it, and the dams of former fishponds or millpools on Langley Brook to its north, together with a possible water mill site. The setting of Fox Hollies and Langley Heath Farm includes parkland to the south, crucible walls to its east, and Langley Gorse. Springfield Farm and enclosure predates 19th-century land enclosure and contributes to the character of the area, together with enclosed fields of different periods and a driveway at Ash Farm. Ox Leys Road is a hollow way of medieval origin and Fox Hollies Road was built following 19th-century land enclosure. Their contribution can be enhanced by retention and through design solutions. Extensive archaeological excavation, followed by analysis and publication of the results, will be required around Langley Hall, the burnt mound and cropmark near Langley Brook and on land where prehistoric flint and Roman pottery have been found, and between Ox Leys Road and Lindridge Road and east of Fox Hollies Road. Land west of Fox Hollies Road, land east of Webster Way, and land south of Signal Hayes Road contain potential heritage assets of archaeological interest, including a cropmark south of Black Fir Plantation. Depending on the results of archaeological evaluation, archaeological excavation will be required, followed by</p>	

analysis and publication of the results.

Area C - Archaeological and Historic Environment

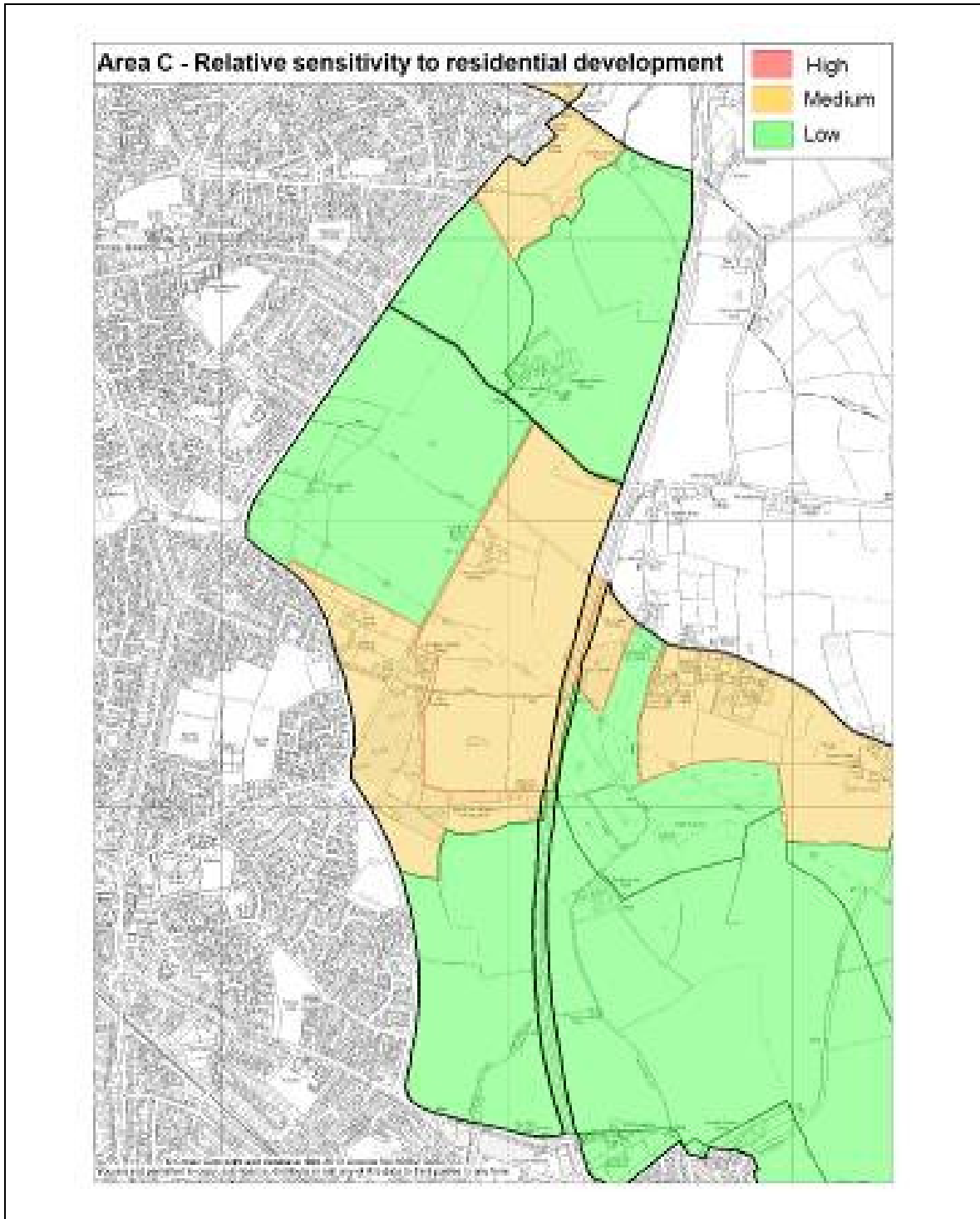


Landscape Character

Area C is characterised by predominantly large open fields with few landscape features in a low lying landform distinguished by the broad valley created by Langley Brook. The area is overlooked by residential properties located on Webster Way and Springfield Road. Hedgerows where they exist are well maintained although many have been lost due to modern agricultural practices, with only a few scattered mature hedgerows and isolated trees. Electricity pylons bisect the area detracting from the visual quality. The landscape sensitivity of the majority of Area C is judged to be 'low' due to the lack of landscape components and their abundance in other areas.

There are, however, parts of Area C where sensitivity is judged to be 'medium'. These form the separate character areas of Langley Brook Lowlands, Langley Heath Agricultural Lowlands and Fox Hollies Woodlands Ridge. Langley Brook Lowlands contains small scale pastoral fields. Langley Heath is defined from the rest of Area C to the north by a subtle ridge line following Fox Hollies Road. Gentle south facing slopes, dispersed mature hedgerow trees and isolated blocks of woodland with ponds contribute to the character of the area. Fox Hollies Woodland Ridge is situated near the western boundary of Area C and close to the urban edge of Walmley and Thimble End. The area contains individual mature trees, pasture and small blocks of plantation woodland.

The sensitivity of the majority of area C to employment development is judged to be 'high' due to the large scale of buildings associated with this type of development which would result in reduced flexibility to design around existing landscape components and increased visibility from surrounding areas. The exception to this is the southern section of area C which is predominantly bound by Peddimore Brook to the north. This area is judged to be of 'low' sensitivity to employment development due to its large scale, open character and relatively high degree of visual enclosure.



Transport Connectivity

As a residential development the transport analysis gives area C an accessibility score (all modes of travel) of 67% and a sustainability score (accessibility to facilities only by walking, cycling and public transport) of 58%. These scores are on the higher range of a location that is typically suburban but having good access to facilities via a reasonable choice of transport modes.

As an employment site it scores 75% on accessibility and 26% on sustainability. Area C has good access to the strategic highway network and is closest to Birmingham City Centre.

Distance to Sutton Town Centre		3.04km
Nearest Centre	Walmley	1.58km
Nearest Primary School	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	0.93km
Nearest Secondary School	John Willmott School	1.42km
Nearest Railway Station	Sutton Coldfield	3.27km
(all distances measured from middle of Area C)		
Transport Capacity		
<p>As a residential development the transport analysis gives area C a total capacity score of 63% and as an employment development it scored 53%. This represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area C will impact on fewer junctions but some of these are significant junctions on the A38 and Heartlands Spine Road.</p>		
Ecology		
<p>Area C supports some habitats that are considered to be of relatively low ecological value with some habitats of moderate and high ecological value. Areas of particular ecological value are the semi-improved grassland to the north of the area and Langley Brook; and the central mosaic of parkland, woodland, semi-improved grassland and water bodies around Fox Hollies Road Pond SLINC. These areas provide good links through the site north to south and east to west.</p> <p>No protected or notable species records from the period 2000 to present have been received for area C.</p> <p>Area C comprises small to moderate sized arable fields with occasional areas of semi-improved grassland and broadleaved woodland. The majority of the arable fields are bordered by hedgerows, some of which support standard trees and a number of which are considered to be species-rich hedgerows. Fox Hollies Road Pond SLINC consists of an area of open water habitat surrounded by mature oak, beech and lime along the road boundary and open habitat supporting bulrush with other marginal species present. Bulls' Lane Hedges SLINC comprises arable land and Brockhurst Farm Hedges SLINC contains hedgerow within amenity grassland.</p> <p>The hedgerows and woodland habitats together with the areas of semi-improved grassland and water bodies provide good habitat links through Area C.</p> <p>Although the arable fields are considered to be of lower ecological value, they may have the potential to support flocks or breeding and wintering farmland birds, potentially increasing the ecological value of these parcels of land.</p> <p>Area C is considered to have the potential to support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Crested Newt • Bats • Badger • Breeding Birds • Wintering Birds • Reptiles • Otter • Water Vole 		



Flood Risk

Mostly within Flood Zone 1 which means that development is largely unrestricted. There are areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 and further modelling would be required at Langley Brook.

Deliverability
No delivery issues identified. Developer interest has been expressed for almost the entire area and the land is being actively promoted by a consortium of developers.
Provision of Services (power, water and drainage)
No principal utilities constraints identified. The southern part of Area C is located close to Minworth Sewage works. Development could provide a potential strategic opportunity to abandon the existing treatment works at Langley Mill and transfer to Minworth Sewage Works.
Minerals reserves
Elements of sand and gravel but also small areas of sand and clay.
Agricultural Land
Grade 3 and 3(a).
Other considerations
A new secondary school, health, shopping, open space and sports facilities will be required within a residential development.
Conclusions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The A38 is situated to the east of Area C and Lindridge Road forms a defensible boundary to the north. • The southern part of Area C can accommodate an employment site of 40-50 ha. A site bigger than 45 ha would intrude into the better quality woodland/parkland landscapes to the north. • Area C scored on the higher range of a location that is typically suburban but having good access to facilities via a reasonable choice of transport modes. As an employment site it has good access to the strategic highway network and is closest to Birmingham City Centre. • In regard to transport capacity area C represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area C will impact on fewer junctions but some of these are significant junctions on the A38 and Heartlands Spine Road. • Parts of the area around Fox Hollies and Langley Gorse is judged to be of 'medium' landscape sensitivity to development, but the sensitivity of the majority of Area C is judged to be 'low' due to the lack of landscape components and potential development being able to be accommodated in the area without significant loss of landscape features. • Area C supports some habitats that are considered to be of relatively low ecological value and some habitats that are of moderate and high ecological value. The vast majority of C is considered to be of low ecological value offering limited constraints to development. However there are smaller areas of land that are of higher value. • The settings of the designated heritage assets are recommended for exclusion from development but do not affect large parts of the area. The western part of Area C contains features which offer opportunities for enhancement of their character and

setting by retention and through design solutions. The southern part and north west section of Area C contains potential heritage assets of archaeological interest which can be satisfactorily mitigated by archaeological excavation. The remainder mainly contains known and predicted archaeological remains and other heritage assets where development would only be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation and/ or design solutions.

Recommendation

Take forward the whole of Area C to Stage 3 Assessment for consideration for residential development (see Plan 3, page 77) and the southern section for employment development (see Plan 4, page 78).

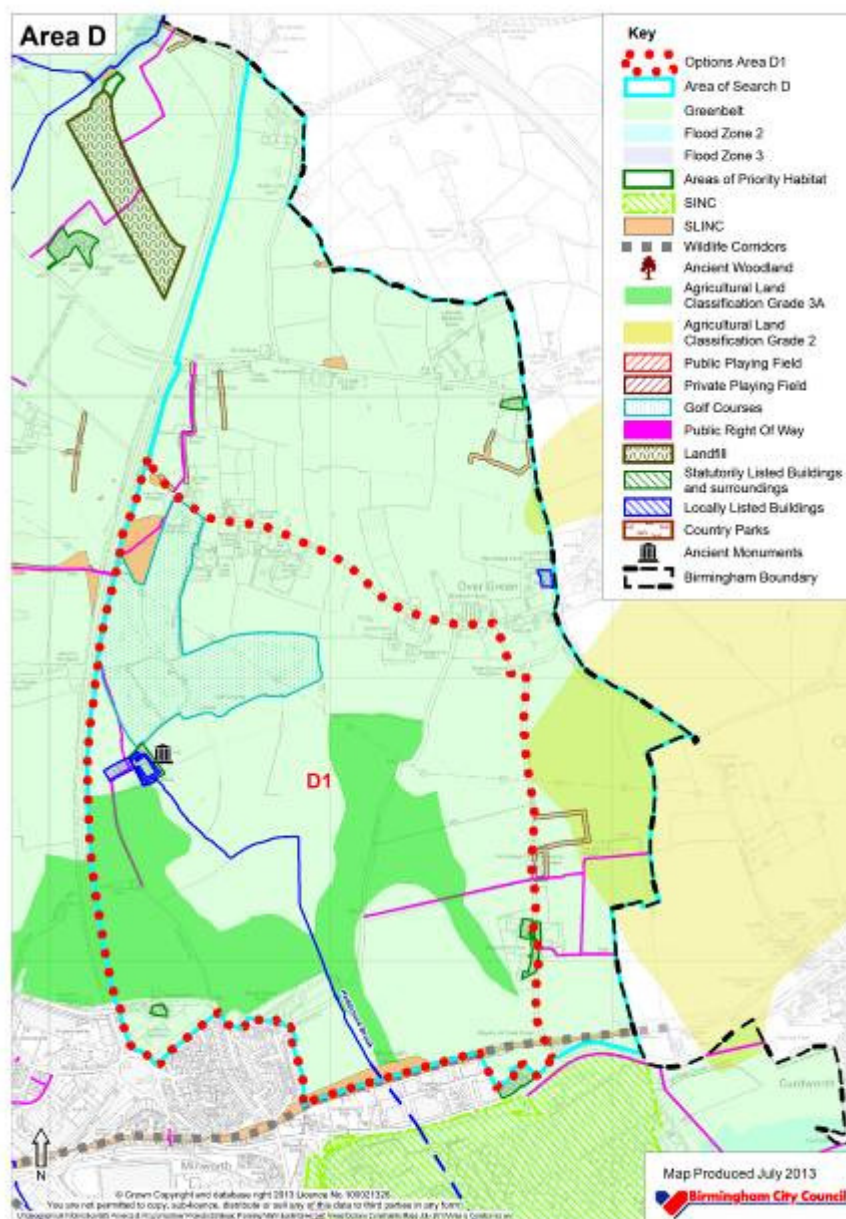
4.6 STAGE TWO ASSESSMENT OF AREA D

4.6.1 Area D – East of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley

The Options Consultation in 2012 referred to this area as D1. In this assessment it is referred to as D.

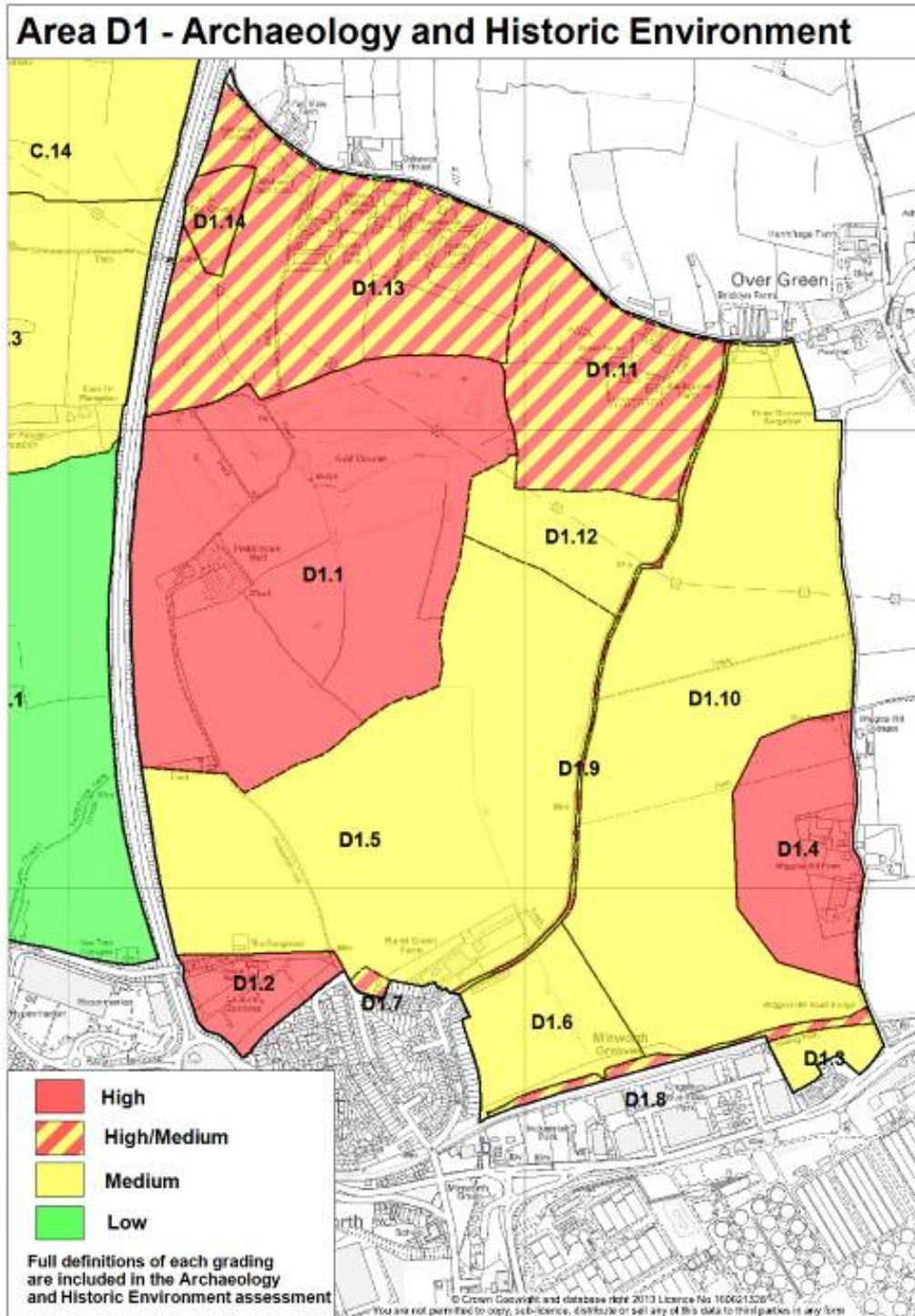
Description of Area

This option area lies to the north east of the City and covers an area of 268 hectares. It is bound by the Sutton Coldfield bypass to the west, the City boundary with North Warwickshire District Council to the east and Minworth sewage works to the south. The land use is predominantly agriculture but also includes a golf course. The Green Belt extends beyond the search area into Warwickshire.



Green Belt Function	
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.	Area D lies between the City boundary and the A38. Its western (inner) boundary is 0.5km and 1 km from the City's urban area. The area is surrounded by Green Belt other than the south west corner where it adjoins the urban area of Minworth. This area prevents the expansion of the urban area north eastwards from Minworth. It contains the small settlement of Over Green, a small number of farm buildings and some residential dwellings.
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	The closest large settlements to the City's urban area are Tamworth (8km to the north west) and Atherstone (15km to the east). The closest small settlement is Curdworth located some 0.5km beyond the boundary of the area. To the west of the A38 is Green Belt (Area C). Area D contributes to providing a wider gap between the urban area and Curdworth.
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Area D consists mainly of large arable fields, Peddimore Hall (SAM), Wishaw Golf Course and a number of farm buildings, residential and properties. It lies in a shallow basin/ valley and is bound by Wiggins Hill Road to the east and Bull's Lane to the north, which are narrow roads. The A38 is situated to the west of Area D and the urban area of Minworth adjoins the south.
To preserve the setting and character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) to the urban area. Consideration has been given to historic features within the option area as noted below.
To assist in urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Archaeology and Historic Environment	
<p>This area contains six designated heritage assets and their settings which contribute to their significance and appreciation. The medieval moated site at Peddimore Hall is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and retains its original isolated setting, in a basin visible over long distances from surrounding higher ground. Forge Farm, a 18th century building of medieval origin, is also isolated. The 17th century buildings at Wiggins Hill are on the site of a medieval and probable Roman settlement, which contributes to their significance. The archaeological remains indicated by the cropmarks west and south of Backgrove Farm are likely to be of regional significance. The Birmingham and Fazeley Canal, with its embankment and Wiggins Hill Road canal bridge, former boundaries in Fox Covert and south of Ramshurst Farm and Linda Vista Farm, ridge and furrow north of Hurst Green Road and Wishaw Lane, a medieval road, contribute to the character of the area. This contribution can be enhanced by retention and through design solutions. Extensive archaeological excavation, followed by analysis and publication of the results, will be required on land to south of Peddimore Hall that contains palaeoenvironmental data,</p>	

probable prehistoric features, including burnt mounds, and medieval field boundaries; south of Wishaw Lane where there are burnt mounds and other features; a medieval settlement near Minworth Greaves Farm; and land where prehistoric flint and Roman pottery indicates archaeological remains of this date between Wishaw Lane and Wiggins Hill Lane, and west of Wishaw Lane.



Landscape Character

Area D is the lowest lying of all the option areas with the lowest contour height of around 85 metres. The crescent of higher ground to the north and east of the area results in a basin of low lying land. Many of the historic landscape components have been eroded through time and the area is predominantly characterised by large open fields and limited vegetation coverage.

The south west quadrant of Area D comprises enclosed allotment gardens and sports pitches. There are few remnants of past field boundaries and vegetation is typically restricted to the allotment gardens. The area north of Peddimore Hall is Wishaw Golf Course. The north east quadrant comprises Wiggins Hill Farmland and is characterised by large irregular arable fields and few landscape features. There are distant views from the area towards the urban edge.

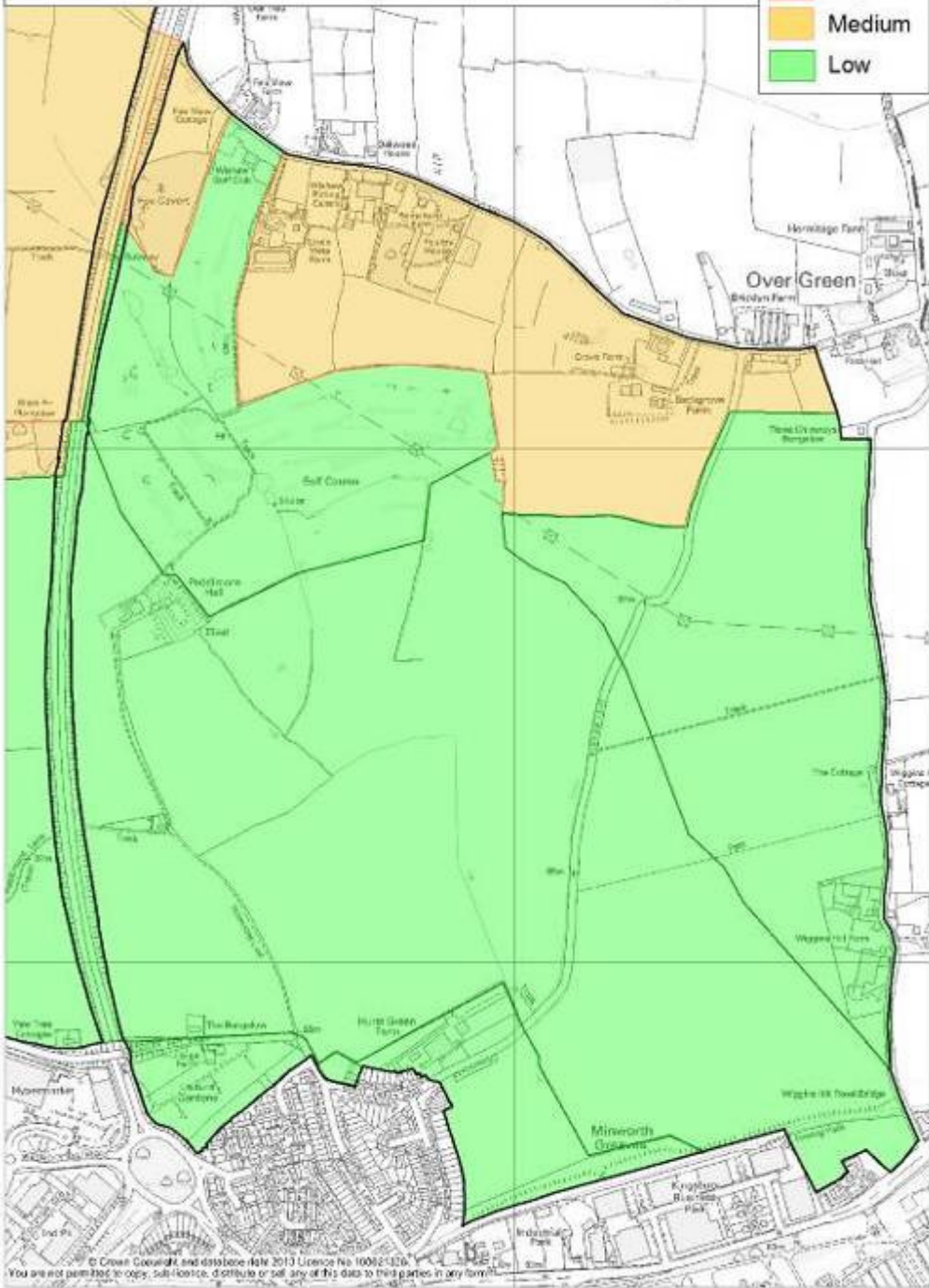
Peddimore Hall (Grade II Listed) and associated farm buildings (Grade B Locally Listed) sit in the west of the area, close to the A38. The earthwork and buried remains of the moated site, fishpond and ridge and furrow cultivation are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The landscape sensitivity of the majority of Area D is judged to be 'low' due to the lack of landscape components and poor condition of remnant hedgerows. The landscape is elevated locally around Peddimore Hall where there are a number of historic landscape features in good condition.

The periphery of Area D follows the natural ridgeline and marks the crescent of high ground to the north and east of Peddimore Basin. The north west corner of Area D comprises a small deciduous woodland and pasture. Bull's Lane Ridgeline Farmland includes small arable pasture fields and four farmsteads with southern aspects over the low lying land. The sensitivity of these pockets within Area D area is judged to be 'medium' due to its higher visibility although there are some opportunities to mitigate visual impacts.

Due to the scale of the area and the visual containment provided by surrounding topography it is judged that the relative sensitivity of this area to employment development is also 'low'. This is due to the potential to accommodate this type of development without the loss of many landscape components and the opportunities to mitigate visual impacts.

Area D1 - Relative sensitivity to residential development



Transport Connectivity

As a residential development the transport analysis gives area D an accessibility score of 52% (accessibility to facilities by all modes of travel) and sustainability score of 35% (accessibility to facilities only by walking, cycling and public transport). These scores represent a typical suburban location with reasonable access to a range of facilities via choice of transport modes.

As an employment site D scores 71% on accessibility but only 18% on sustainability as it is the least accessible by foot and most detached from the urban area. D however, has good access to the strategic highway network.

Distance to Sutton Town Centre		4.53km
Nearest Centre	Walmley	2.26km
Nearest Primary School	Minworth J&I School	1.41km
Nearest Secondary School	Castle Vale School	2.49km
Nearest Railway Station	Water Orton	2.87km

(all distances measured from middle of Area A1)

Transport Capacity

As a residential development the transport analysis gives area D a total capacity score of 63% and as an employment development it scored 50%. This represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area D is less constrained by the highway network and will impact on fewer junctions, however some of these are significant junctions on the A38 and Heartlands Spine Road. With proximity to the M42 at junction 9, it offers a good opportunity as an employment site, although efforts will be required to ensure that travel by public transport and cycling connections are attractive.

Ecology

Area D supports some habitats that are considered to be of relatively low ecological value with some habitats of moderate and high ecological value. These are particularly focussed around the canal along the southern boundary of the area as well as the Wishaw Golf Course, which connects the woodland habitat of Fox Covert SLINC.

One record of protected and notable species has been received- Kestrel. No other protected or notable species records from the period 2000 to present have been received.

Area D comprises moderate to large sized arable fields, some of which have good field margins supporting a variety of weed species. The majority of the arable fields are bordered by hedgerows, most of which support standard trees, which in the most part are mature oak.

The broadleaved woodland adjacent to Wishaw Golf Course is designated as Fox Covert SLINC which includes bluebells, wild garlic and dog's mercury among other species. Bull's Lane Pool SLINC is located in the north western corner of the area. The Birmingham and Fazeley Canal SLINC borders the southern boundary and is lined with continuous hedgerow and mature trees.

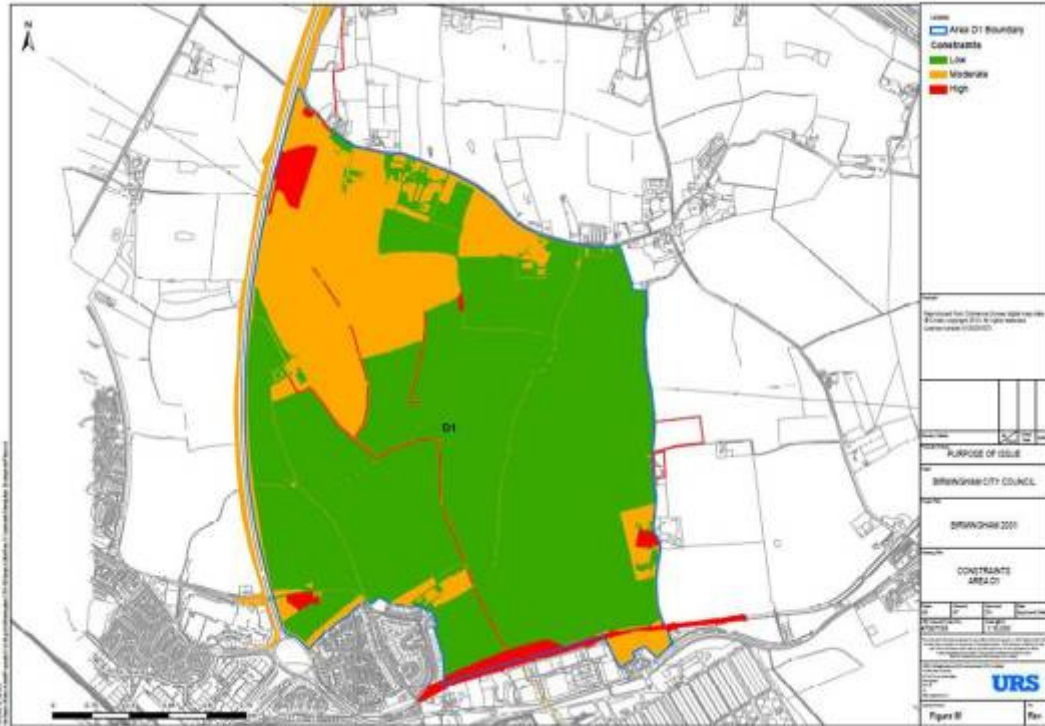
Peddimore Brook, running north-south through area D is of higher ecological value as it provides a habitat link between the higher quality habitats in the north-west and the high value SLINC designated canal corridor on the southern boundary.

The hedgerows and woodland habitats together with the areas of amenity grassland and water bodies provide good habitat links through Area D. The golf course provides a mosaic of habitats due to the changes in management regime across the course and the presence of open water, trees and amenity and rough grassland.

Area D is considered to have the potential to support:

- Great Crested Newt
- Bats

- Badger
- Breeding Birds
- Wintering Birds
- Reptiles
- Otter
- Water Vole



Flood Risk

Flood Zone 1 which means that development is largely unrestricted but further modelling would be required at Peddimore Brook.

Deliverability

No significant delivery issues identified. The majority of the area is under the ownership of Birmingham City Council.

Provision of Services (power, water and drainage)

No principal utilities constraints identified.

Minerals reserves

Small areas of sand, gravel, clay, silt and diamiction.

Agricultural Land
Grade 3 and 3 (a).
Other considerations
A new secondary school, primary schools, health, shopping, open space and sports facilities will be required within a residential development.
Conclusions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The area lies in a shallow basin/ valley forming a ridgeline of higher ground to the north and east. Wiggins Hill Road lies on the eastern boundary and Bull's Lane on the northern boundary. The A38 is situated to the west of Area D and the urban area of Minworth adjoins the south. • Area D can accommodate a large employment site. • Area D represents a typical suburban location with reasonable access to a range of facilities via choice of transport modes. It is the least accessible by foot and most detached from the urban area, but has good access to the strategic highway network. • In regard to transport capacity, area D represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area D is less constrained by the highway network and will impact on fewer junctions, however some of these are significant junctions on the A38 and Heartlands Spine Road. With proximity to the M42 at junction 9, it offers a good opportunity as an employment site, although efforts will be required to ensure that travel by public transport and cycling connections are attractive. • Parts of Area D contain significant archaeological and heritage assets, namely Peddimore Hall and Wiggins Hill Farm and their settings and land around the farmsteads near Bull's Lane. It is recommended that these are excluded from development as the impact of development on these designated heritage assets and their settings cannot be satisfactorily mitigated. Surrounding development will need to be designed to respect the broader setting. The remainder of area D contains known and predicted archaeological remains and other heritage assets where development may be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation and/ or design solutions. • The landscape and visual sensitivity of the majority of Area D is judged to be 'low' because of the relative lack of existing landscape features that would be affected by development, particularly within the lower lying basin in the south and west of the area and the potential to successfully mitigate visual impacts. • Area D supports some habitats that are considered to be of relatively low ecological value with some habitats of moderate and high ecological value. These are particularly focussed around the canal along the southern boundary of the area as well as the Wishaw Golf Course, which connects the woodland habitat of Fox Covert SLINC. Overall, most of area D is considered to be of relatively low ecological value and therefore offers no major constraints to development. • Due to the scale of the area and the visual containment provided by surrounding topography it is judged that the relative sensitivity of this area to employment development is 'low'. This is due to the potential to accommodate this type of development without the loss of many landscape components and the opportunities to mitigate visual impacts.

Recommendation

Take forward part of Area D (excluding the north west quadrant containing the Peddimore Hall and its setting) to Stage 3 Assessment for consideration for residential and employment development (See Plan 3, page 77 and Plan 4, page 78).

4.7 Areas not taken forward to Stage 3

4.7.1 The table below shows the areas that make a contribution towards Green Belt purposes and have significant constraints to development and will not be considered further for development. Table 3 summarises the main reasons why they have been discounted.

TABLE 3: AREAS NOT TAKEN FORWARD TO STAGE 3

Area	Main reasons for discounting
Northern part of area A1	The northern part of Area A1 comprises Manorial Wood and Springhill Plantation Plateau Farmland. The area is distinctly rural with few urbanising components. It contains historic field boundaries and mature hedgerows and four separate stands of mature woodland, which contribute noticeably to the local character. The landscape sensitivity of this area is judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of the landscape within the wider area, its tranquillity, condition and separation from influence along the urban edge. The northern part of Area A1 also supports a number of habitats that are considered to be of moderate and high ecological value. There are no strong boundaries to contain development beyond the land parcel. Area A1 has a strong relationship with the wider countryside northwards by way of views and access.
Eastern quadrant of area A2	This forms part of the same character area of Manorial Wood and Springhill Plantation Plateau and Farmland. The area is distinctly rural with few urbanising components. It contains historic field boundaries and mature hedgerows and four separate stands of mature woodland, which contribute noticeably to the local character. The landscape sensitivity of this area is judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of the landscape within the wider area, its tranquillity, condition and separation from influence along the urban edge. There are no strong boundaries to contain development northwards. It has a strong relationship with the wider countryside northwards by way of views and access.
Southern part of area B1	The southern part of the area B1 contains significant heritage features including Ashfurlong Hall (Grade II* Listed) and Fox Hill House (Grade II Listed) and Beehive Kiln (Grade II Listed) which are visible at long range from the south and west. The landscape sensitivity of this area is judged to be "high" due to the rarity of the landscape within the wider area, its elevated tranquillity and the limited opportunity to replace a number of its components. It is physically and culturally distinct from adjacent character areas, due, in part to the combined effect of historic land use and landform. Ashfurlong Hall is enclosed by dense woodland covered by a TPO. The few roads through the area are surrounded by established parts of woodland and well maintained hedgerow and hedgerow trees. The visual sensitivity of the area is also judged to be 'high' due to the openness and variety of views across the area and beyond. Ashfurlong Hall SLINC is considered to be of high ecological value.
Area B2	The northern part of B2 contains significant heritage assets. Wheatmoor Farm (Grade II listed), a stone castellated building,

	<p>forming part of the landscape setting of Ashfurlong Hall (Grade II* listed) and Vesey Cottage (Grade II listed), a 16th century stone building, one of a small group of buildings of this type in the Sutton Coldfield area. Development within the setting of the designated heritage assets would have an adverse impact and result in a loss of significance and appreciation. The landscape sensitivity of the northern part of the area is judged to be 'high' due to the rarity of the landscape within the wider area (as a result of heritage features, ancient woodland and isolated mature field trees), its elevated tranquillity and the limited opportunity for replacements of a number of its components. The visual sensitivity of the area is also judged to be 'high' due to the openness and variety of views across the area and beyond. The southern section of B2 contains a central corridor of high ecological value because of the connected network of SINC and SLINC focussed around Lindridge Pools and Brook. There is also a further area of high ecological value towards the northern boundary, because of the presence of SINC-designated woodland and other important habitats. The landscape and visual sensitivity of the area is judged to be 'medium'. The area is also affected by proposals for the future expansion of Sutton New Hall Cemetery. Although parts of the site could in theory be developed, the constraints identified would lead to a fragmented development and limited capacity. The site would not achieve the principles of a sustainable urban extension.</p>
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4.8 Stage 2 Conclusions

4.8.1 The following areas have been selected for further consideration primarily based on their low to moderate sensitivity to development in regard to ecology, landscape, archaeology and the historic environment. The Transport Analysis shows that all of the option areas are accessible to some degree, with some performing better than others. In regard to transport capacity there is not much to differentiate between the areas as none are served by an unconstrained transport network and considerable improvements will need to be made regardless of which area is developed. As far as is known, there are no major delivery issues that have been identified on any of the option areas.

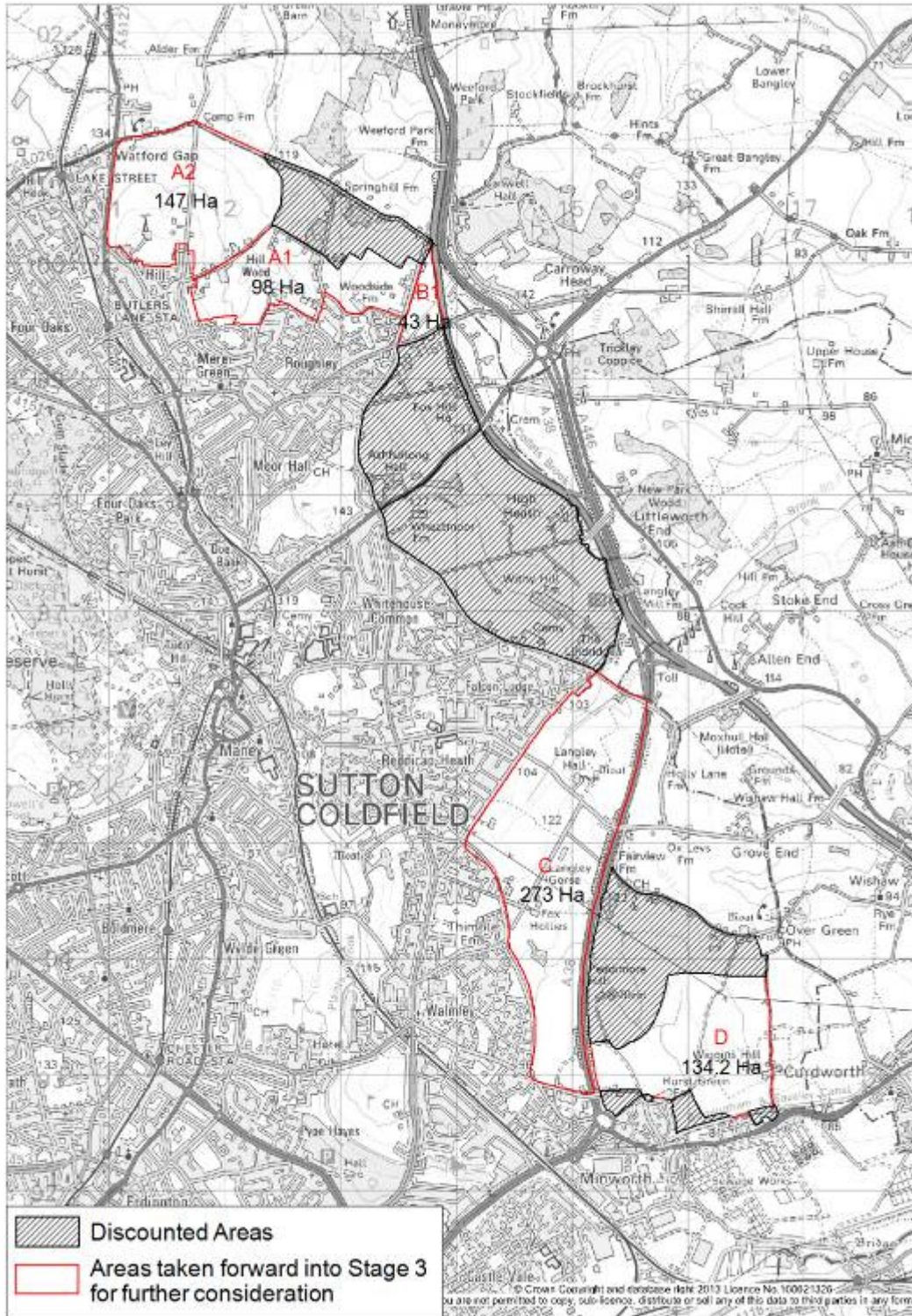
Shortlisted Areas

4.8.2 Further consideration has been given to the following areas for development as a sustainable urban extension (see Plan 3, page 77):

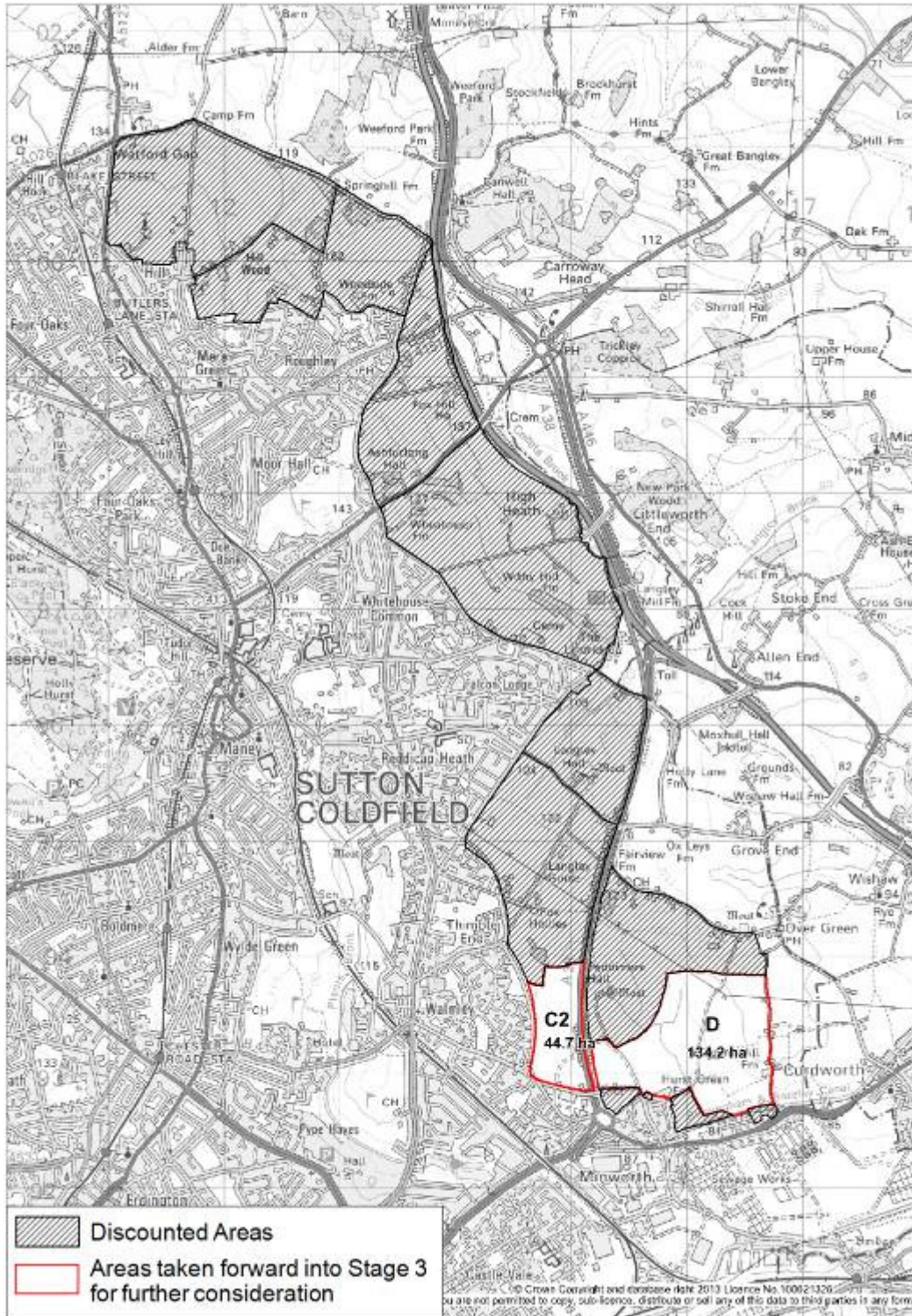
- Part of area A1 and part of area B1 (combined). These two areas have been combined because by themselves they cannot accommodate a SUE, and they adjoin each other.
- Area A2 (excluding the eastern quadrant containing Manorial Wood)
- Area C
- Part of Area D (excluding Peddimore Hall and its setting)

4.8.3 Further consideration has been given to part of area C and part of area D for development as a large employment site (see Plan 4, page 78).

PLAN 3: SHORTLIST OF AREAS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE URBAN EXTENSION



PLAN 4: SHORTLIST OF AREAS FOR FURTHER CONSIDERATION FOR A LARGE EMPLOYMENT SITE



5.0 STAGE THREE: SCORING AND COMPARISON OF POTENTIAL OPTION AREAS AND SELECTION OF PREFERRED OPTIONS

5.1 Methodology

- 5.1.1 The potential option areas were assessed against a set of selected criteria and scored according to their performance against key indicators and the extent to which identified impacts/ issues can be mitigated. A comparison of the shortlisted areas was made, resulting in a final recommendation on the preferred option for a sustainable urban extension and an employment site.
- 5.1.3 The scoring used below in Table 5 gives more weight to the function of the Green Belt criteria as it is considered that it would be more difficult to mitigate the impacts of the development upon this.
- 5.1.4 Out of the five purposes of the Green Belt, the following apply equally to all the option areas and have, therefore, not been scored:
- To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns.
 - To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.
- 5.1.5 Green Belt function has been assessed against:

TABLE 4: GREEN BELT FUNCTION

Purpose	Indicator
To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas.	The area's role in preventing urban sprawl and ribbon development. The extent to which existing development affects the openness of the area.
To prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another	The width of the strategic open gap between urban areas.
To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The presence of clear strong boundaries to contain development and prevent encroachment in the long term. The presence of existing urban influences and built development.

5.2 Assessment Criteria Scoring

TABLE 5: ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Criteria	Key Indicator	Scoring
Purpose of the Green Belt	Sprawl	1 – significant contribution to Green Belt purpose 2 – contribution to Green Belt purpose 3 – limited contribution to Green Belt purpose
	Merger	1 – significant contribution to Green Belt purpose 2 – contribution to Green Belt purpose 3 – limited contribution to Green Belt purpose
	Encroachment	1 – significant contribution to Green Belt purpose 2 – contribution to Green Belt purpose 3 – limited contribution to Green Belt purpose
Deliverability	Issues affecting deliverability including promotion and viability	1 – significant issues that will be difficult to resolve 2 – moderate issues that can be resolved 3 – few issues that can be easily resolved
Archaeology and Historic Environment	Level of impact and potential for mitigation	1 – exclude from development. The impact of development on designated heritage assets and their settings cannot be satisfactorily mitigated. 2 – development only acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation (including analysis and publication of results) and design solutions that retain and enhance the contribution of heritage assets to the character of the area. 3 – the impact of development on heritage assets and their settings can be satisfactorily mitigated by archaeological excavation (including analysis and publication of results).
Landscape and Visual effects	Level of impact and potential for mitigation	1 – development would result in significant landscape and visual effects that may not be able to be satisfactorily mitigated 2 – there may be significant landscape or visual effects but some mitigation could be provided through landscape provision, visual screening or micro-siting of development blocks 3 – unlikely to be any significant landscape or visual effects (other than change of landscape character) and mitigation measure could be provided to receptors or landscape features
Ecology	Level of impact and potential for mitigation	1 – high value habitats that cannot be recreated or compensated for within sustainable development in the short to long term. 2 – moderate value habitats, but are more likely to be able to be recreated or compensated for within sustainable development in the short to medium term.

		3 – low value habitats that can often be recreated and compensated for within sustainable development in the short to medium term.
Agricultural Land	Quality of agricultural land	1 – Grade 3a and above 2 – Grade 3 – 3a 3 – Grade 3 or below
Transport Connectivity	A measure of accessibility upon which is added the limits within which people are prepared to travel	1 - A low percentage (0-33%) represents a remote location far from amenities with few alternatives for travel choice. 2 - A mid range percentage (34-67%) represents a typical suburban area with reasonable access to a range of facilities via a choice of travel modes. 3 - A high percentage (68-100%) represents an edge of town centre location close to multiple facilities and high quality public transport networks.
Transport Capacity	Capacity of the transport network (walking, cycling, bus, rail and road) to accommodate development	1 - A low percentage (0-33%) represents a constrained network, where pedestrian and cycle routes are severed, unsafe, indirect or uncomfortable to use and where car and HGV routes are operating at capacity with major delays. 2 - A mid-range percentage (34-67%) represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. 3 - A high percentage (68-100%) represents a location where car and HGV routes are not congested and there are very good, direct, safe and comfortable pedestrian and cycle routes.
*Residential Site Capacity	Capacity of site (ha)	1 – less than 4,000 dwellings 2 – 4,000-5,000 dwellings 3 – 5,000+ dwellings
**Employment Site Capacity	Size of site (ha)	1 – 40 to 50ha 2 – 50 to 60ha 3 – 60 ha+

* Only used to assess residential development.

** Only used to assess employment development.

5.3 Scoring

5.3.1 The scoring reflects the technical work that was undertaken by independent consultants and have been checked by them. This relates to the following criteria:

- Archaeology and Historic Environment
- Landscape and Visual Effects
- Ecology

- Transport Connectivity
- Transport Capacity

5.3.2 The function of the Green Belt was scored on the basis of the NPPF, the technical assessments undertaken and current practice in other local authorities.

5.3.3 Deliverability was scored on the basis of identified delivery issues and level of known promotion of sites for development.

5.3.4 Agricultural land quality was scored on the basis of the grading given by Natural England in its Agricultural Land Classification system.

5.3.5 Residential site capacity was scored on the basis of the number of dwellings that could be accommodated (including supporting community facilities) on each of the option areas. Employment site capacity was scored on the basis of the ability of the option area to accommodate a 50ha or more employment site.

5.4 Shortlisted Areas for Residential Development

- Part of area A1 and part of Area B1 (combined)
- Area A2
- Area C
- Part of Area D

5.5 Scoring of Selected Areas for Residential Development

5.5.1 Part of Area A1 and part of Area B1 combined - Weeford Road/ Hillwood Road and area west of the M6 Toll, north of Tamworth Road

Criteria	Performance against Key Indicator	Score
Purpose of the Green Belt	<i>Sprawl</i> - prevents expansion of the urban area northwards at Mere Green/ Roughley and eastwards at Roughley/ Whitehouse Common. There are a number of existing urban influences including residential and commercial properties in areas A1 and B1 along the main roads. There are several farm buildings located on Hillwood Road and Hillwood Common Road and the Sutton Coldfield transmitter masts which are highly visible from the surrounding area.	2/3
	<i>Merger</i> – plays a limited role in preventing merger of settlements.	3/3
	<i>Encroachment</i> - no strong existing boundaries north of area A1 and therefore potential encroachment into Green Belt northwards. The eastern section of area A1 is very visible from the surrounding area and the M6 Toll Road. To the east the M6 Toll Road forms a strong defensible boundary.	1/3
Deliverability	Parts of area A1 and B1 are being actively promoted by developers. The site is considered deliverable over the plan period and there are no identified issues to deliverability.	2/3
Archaeology & Historic Environment	Areas A1 and B1 contain mainly undesignated heritage assets including archaeological remains and historic buildings and features. Development will only be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation. There are opportunities for enhancement of these assets by retention and design solutions that enhance the contribution of heritage assets to the character of the area.	2/3
Landscape & Visual Effects	The landscape and visual sensitivity of areas A1 and B1 is judged to be 'low' and 'moderate' due to the presence of existing urban influences, the limited number of landscape features and the abundance of this type of landscape within the wider area. There are opportunities for appropriate forms of mitigation, for example through planting to screen views and enhancement of wildlife movement corridors to increase biodiversity.	2/3
Ecology	A1 and B1 supports habitats of predominantly moderate	2/3

	ecological value with some areas of higher ecological value.	
Agricultural Land Quality	Area A1 and B1 comprises agricultural land of Grade 3 quality (Good-moderate). *Based on pre-1976 data.	2/3
Transport Connectivity	A1 and B1 represent a location that is typically suburban, with reasonable access to facilities but having poor choice of travel modes/ access to public transport networks. As an employment site it would be the furthest away from the main employment areas within Birmingham and would be subject to the longest public transport journeys to work, thus car travel may be more attractive.	1/3
Transport Capacity	A1 and B1 represent a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Development would have the potential to impact on the A5127 Birmingham Road and Whitehouse Common corridor, where there are a significant number of critical junctions.	2/3
Residential Site Capacity	The site could potentially accommodate around 3,500 dwellings.	1/3
Total Score		20/33 (60.6%)

5.5.2 Area A2 – Hill Wood, East of Watford Gap

Criteria	Performance against Key Indicator	Score
Purpose of the Green Belt	<i>Sprawl</i> - prevents expansion of the urban area northwards at Mere Green/ Roughley. There are several farm buildings located on Hillwood Road and Hillwood Common Road and the Sutton Coldfield transmitter masts which are highly visible from the surrounding area.	2/3
	<i>Merger</i> – plays a limited role in preventing merger of settlements.	3/3
	<i>Encroachment</i> - there are no strong boundaries to contain development north beyond the land parcel. Area A2 has a strong relationship with the wider countryside by way of views and access.	1/3

Deliverability	There is no known developer interest in any part of area A2. There are no significant physical constraints to development.	2/3
Archaeology & Historic Environment	Area A2 mainly contains undesignated heritage assets although some may merit designation, a range of archaeological remains, surviving structures marked on the Corn Rent Map and coherent areas of field systems. There are opportunities for enhancement of the contribution of these heritage assets and their settings to the character of the area by retention and through design solutions. Development will only be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation and design solutions to retain assets.	2/3
Landscape & Visual Effects	The landscape sensitivity of the area is judged to be 'low' but visual sensitivity is judged to be 'high' due to the long distance views afforded by the area's elevated position and north facing slopes. There are limited opportunities for visual mitigation of views from the surrounding countryside.	2/3
Ecology	The majority of area A2 is considered to have low ecological value, although there are two small areas of SLINC and parts on the fringe of the area of moderate ecological value.	2/3
Agricultural Land Quality	Area A2 comprises agricultural land of Grade 3 quality (Good-moderate). *Based on pre-1976 data.	2/3
Transport Connectivity	A2 represents a location that is typically suburban, with reasonable access to facilities but having poor choice of travel modes/ access to public transport networks. As an employment site it would be the furthest away from the main employment areas within Birmingham and would be subject to the longest public transport journeys to work, thus car travel may be more attractive.	1/3
Transport Capacity	A2 represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Development would have the potential to impact on the A5127 Birmingham Road and Whitehouse Common corridor, where there are a significant number of critical junctions.	2/3
Residential Site Capacity	The site could potentially accommodate around 3,000 dwellings.	1/3
Total Score		20/33 (60.6%)

5.5.3 Area C – West of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley

Criteria	Performance against Key Indicator	Score
Purpose of the Green Belt	<i>Sprawl</i> - prevents the expansion of the urban area eastwards from Walmley, Thimble End and Falcon Lodge. While immediately adjoining the urban area and given its size, there are few urban influences within it.	2/3
	<i>Merger</i> – plays a limited role in preventing merger of settlements.	3/3
	<i>Encroachment</i> - the A38 forms a boundary to the east and the low-lying landform and character of the area means that development on a large scale can be visually contained.	3/3
Deliverability	The whole of area C is being actively promoted by developers. There are no identified issues to delivery.	3/3
Archaeology & Historic Environment	The settings of Langley Hall and Fox Hollies are recommended for exclusion from development. The area mainly contains heritage assets where the impact of development can be satisfactorily mitigated by archaeological excavation. The area also contains features which offer opportunities for enhancement of their character and setting by retention and/ or design solutions.	2/3
Landscape & Visual Effects	The landscape and visual sensitivity of the majority of Area C is judged to be of 'low' due to limited landscape components and contained views so that any potential development could be accommodated in the area whilst conserving the more significant landscape features.	3/3
Ecology	Area C supports some habitats that are considered to be of 'low' ecological value and some habitats that are of 'moderate' and 'high' ecological value. The vast majority of C is considered to be of 'low' ecological value offering limited constraints to development. However the south western part and north western part are considered to be of higher value.	2/3
Agricultural Land Quality	The majority of C comprises agricultural land of Grade 3 quality (Good-moderate). *Based on pre-1976 data. There are very small parts which are Grade 3a.	2/3
Transport Connectivity	Area C scored on the higher range of a location that is typically suburban but having good access to facilities via a reasonable choice of transport modes. As an	3/3

	employment site it has good access to the strategic highway network and is closest to Birmingham City Centre.	
Transport Capacity	Area C represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area C will impact on fewer junctions but some of these are significant junctions on the A38 and Heartlands Spine Road.	2/3
Residential Site Capacity	The site could potentially accommodate around 6,000 dwellings.	3/3
Total Score		28/33 (84.8%)

5.5.4 Area D – East of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley

Criteria	Performance against Key Indicator	Score
Purpose of the Green Belt	<i>Sprawl</i> - prevents the expansion of the urban area north eastwards from Minworth. It contains the small settlement of Over Green. Aside from a small number of farm buildings and some residential dwellings it remains largely open.	2/3
	<i>Merger</i> – plays a role in preventing merger of urban area with Curdworth.	2/3
	<i>Encroachment</i> - the A38 forms a boundary to the west and the landform and character of the area is such that development on a large scale can be visually contained in the low lying basin that exists. However, there are weak defensible boundaries to the north and east and risk of encroachment on the countryside. There are, however, opportunities to mitigate visual impacts.	2/3
Deliverability	The majority of area D is under one ownership. The area is considered deliverable over the plan period and there are no identified issues to deliverability.	3/3
Archaeology & Historic Environment	Part of Area D contains Wiggins Hill Farm and Forge Farm and their settings which are recommended for exclusion from development as the impact of development on these designated heritage assets and their settings cannot be satisfactorily mitigated. The	2/3

	<p>remainder of area D contains known and predicted archaeological remains and other heritage assets where development will only be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation and design solutions to enhance the contribution of the heritage assets to the character of the area.</p> <p>(Peddimore Hall and its setting were excluded from development in Stage 2).</p>	
Landscape & Visual Effects	The sensitivity of the majority of Area D is judged to be 'low' due to the potential ability to develop large parts of the area without significant loss of landscape features and the opportunity to successfully mitigate impacts within the basin landform.	3/3
Ecology	The majority of area D is considered to have 'low' ecological value, with some small areas of higher value mainly focussed along the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal.	3/3
Agricultural Land Quality	Area D comprises Grade 3 and 3 (a) land.	2/3
Transport Connectivity	Area D represents a typical suburban location with reasonable access to a range of facilities via choice of transport modes. It is the least accessible by foot and most detached from the urban area, but has good access to the strategic highway network.	2/3
Transport Capacity	Area D represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area D is less constrained by the highway network and will impact on fewer junctions, however some of these are significant junctions on the A38 and Heartlands Spine Road. With proximity to the M42 at junction 9, it offers a good opportunity as an employment site, although efforts will be required to ensure that travel by public transport and cycling connections are attractive.	2/3
Residential Site Capacity	The site could potentially accommodate around 3,000 dwellings.	1/3
Total Score		24/33 (72.76%)

5.4 Shortlisted Areas for Employment Development

- Southern part of Area C
- Part of Area D

5.5 Scoring of Selected Areas for Employment Development

5.5.1 Southern part of Area C – West of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley

Criteria	Performance against Key Indicator	Score
Purpose of the Green Belt	<i>Sprawl</i> - prevents the expansion of the urban area eastwards from Walmley, Thimble End and Falcon Lodge. While immediately adjoining the urban area and given its size, there are few urban influences within it.	2/3
	<i>Merger</i> – plays a limited role in preventing merger of settlements.	3/3
	<i>Encroachment</i> - the A38 is situated to the east of Area C and Lindridge Road forms a defensible boundary to the north. The south of Area C lies in a low lying basin which can visually contained development.	3/3
Deliverability	No known interest expressed for employment development. No identified physical constraints to development.	2/3
Archaeology & Historic Environment	The impact on heritage assets and their settings can be satisfactorily mitigated by archaeological excavation and/or design solutions.	3/3
Landscape & Visual Effects	The part of Area C identified is judged to have 'low' sensitivity to employment development due to the lack of landscape components and any potential development being able to be accommodated in the area without significant loss of landscape features.	3/3
Ecology	The southern part of area C is considered to have 'low' ecological value, aside from some very small sections of the area which have moderate-high ecological value.	3/3
Agricultural Land Quality	The majority of C comprises agricultural land of Grade 3 quality (Good-moderate). *Based on pre-1976 data. There are very small parts which are Grade 3a.	2/3
Transport Connectivity	Area C scored on the higher range of a location that is typically suburban but having good access to facilities via	2/3

	a reasonable choice of transport modes. As an employment site it has good access to the strategic highway network and is closest to Birmingham City Centre.	
Transport Capacity	Area C represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area C will impact on fewer junctions but some of these are significant junctions on the A38 and Heartlands Spine Road.	2/3
Employment site capacity	44 ha.	1/3
Total Score		26/33 (78.8%)

5.5.2 Area D – East of the Sutton Coldfield Bypass, Walmley

Criteria	Performance against Key Indicator	Score
Purpose of the Green Belt	<i>Sprawl</i> - prevents the expansion of the urban area north eastwards from Minworth. It contains the small settlement of Over Green. Aside from a small number of farm buildings and some residential dwellings it remains largely open.	2/3
	<i>Merger</i> – plays a role in preventing merger of urban area with Curdworth.	2/3
	<i>Encroachment</i> - the A38 adjoins Area D to the west. There are weak defensible boundaries to the north and east and risk of encroachment into the countryside. However the land lies in a shallow basin and the character of the area is such that development on a large scale can be visually contained within it through appropriate mitigation.	2/3
Deliverability	The majority of area D is under one ownership. The area is considered deliverable over the plan period and there are no identified issues to deliverability.	3/3
Archaeology & Historic Environment	Part of Area D contains Wiggins Hill Farm and Forge Farm and their settings which are recommended for exclusion from development as the impact of development on these designated heritage assets and their settings	2/3

	cannot be satisfactorily mitigated. The remainder of area D contains known and predicted archaeological remains and other heritage assets where development will only be acceptable subject to extensive archaeological excavation and design solutions which enhance the contribution of heritage assets to the character of the area. (Peddimore Hall and its setting were excluded from development in Stage 2).	
Landscape & Visual Effects	The sensitivity of majority of Area D is judged to be 'low' due to the potential ability to develop large parts of the area without losing individual components of the landscape character and the opportunity to successfully mitigate effects from visual impacts.	3/3
Ecology	The majority of area D is considered to have 'low' ecological value, with some small areas of higher value mainly focussed along the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal.	3/3
Agricultural Land Quality	Area D comprises Grade 3 and 3 (a) land.	2/3
Transport Connectivity	Area D represents a typical suburban location with reasonable access to a range of facilities via choice of transport modes. It is the least accessible by foot and most detached from the urban area, but has good access to the strategic highway network.	2/3
Transport Capacity	Area D represents a typical suburban area in Birmingham, where car and HGV routes are congested mainly in the peak periods, and pedestrian and cycle routes are available but only of average quality. Area D is less constrained by the highway network and will impact on fewer junctions, however some of these are significant junctions on the A38 and Heartlands Spine Road. With proximity to the M42 at junction 9, it offers a good opportunity as an employment site, although efforts will be required to ensure that travel by public transport and cycling connections are attractive.	2/3
Employment site capacity	80ha (taking into account provision for a substantial landscape buffer to the north and north east of the area to form a strong defensible Green Belt boundary and exclusion of development on the ridgeline).	3/3
Total Score		26/33 (78.8%)

5.6 Comparison of Potential Option Areas

5.6.1 The tables below provide a summary of the results of the assessment.

5.7 Comparison of Areas for a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE)

TABLE 6: COMPARISON OF AREAS FOR A SUE

Criteria	Part of A1 and B1 combined	A2	C	D	Out of a total
Function Green Belt	6	6	8	6	9
Deliverability	2	2	3	3	3
Archaeology & Historic Environment	2	2	2	2	3
Landscape & Visual	2	2	3	3	3
Ecology	2	2	2	3	3
Agricultural Land Quality	2	2	2	2	3
Transport Connectivity	1	1	3	2	3
Transport Capacity	2	2	2	2	3
Residential Site Capacity	1	1	3	1	3
Total Score	20	20	28	24	33
Total Score %	60.6	60.6	84.8	72.7	100

5.7.1 Area C is clearly the best location for a large residential development. It scores best in terms of protecting the role of the Green Belt and results in relatively low impacts on ecology, archaeology and historic environment, landscape and visual amenity. In regard to transport connectivity, it is the most sustainable and accessible of all the options. It is also the best suited to deliver the principles of a sustainable urban extension in regard to site capacity.

5.7.2 A combination of A2 with A1 and B1 was considered, however other than increasing residential site capacity, which would result in an overall score of 22 (66.7%), this would make no impact on the overall conclusion of this assessment.

5.8 Comparison of Sites for Employment

5.8.1 There is not much to differentiate between areas C and D for employment, however Area D is closer to the strategic motorway network and has the ability to accommodate a large scale employment development. Like area C, employment development on area D would have minimal landscape impact and the impact on the Green Belt can be mitigated by utilising the natural topography of the site. Area C is notably smaller in size to area D, therefore limiting capacity of development. With the evidence suggesting that area C is by far the best option for residential development, out-performing area D on a range of criteria, it would follow that area D would be the most appropriate location for employment.

TABLE 7: COMPARISON OF AREAS FOR A LARGE EMPLOYMENT DEVELOPMENT

Criteria	Part of C	D	Out of a total
Function of Green Belt	8	6	9
Deliverability	2	3	3
Archaeology & Historic Environment	3	2	3
Landscape & Visual	3	3	3
Ecology	3	3	3
Agricultural Land Quality	2	2	3
Transport Connectivity	2	2	3
Transport Capacity	2	2	3
Employment Site Capacity	1	3	3
Total Score	26	26	33
Total Score %	78.8	78.8	100

6.0 FINAL CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

- 6.1.1 This assessment has reviewed all of the Green Belt within the City's administrative boundary as part of the Birmingham Development Plan (BDP) process. One of the key issues the BDP has to address is the acute shortage of land within the urban area for both housing and employment development, which represents exceptional circumstances for alterations to the Green Belt boundary.
- 6.1.2 Stage 1 assessed the role of all Green Belt areas against the five purposes of the Green Belt as set out in NPPF and identified the key constraints to development. As a result the majority of Birmingham's Green Belt was discounted from being considered for release from the Green Belt. It was considered that these areas (in both Table 1 and Appendix 1) contribute towards Green Belt purposes and should be retained as Green Belt in the long term. Areas A – D were subject to further detailed assessment.
- 6.1.3 Following detailed analysis of areas A – D, which was informed by a range of technical studies, it was considered that areas A, B and part of D contain constraints to development and make a greater contribution to the purposes of the Green Belt. It is recommended that these areas are retained as Green Belt in the long term.
- 6.1.4 For the reasons set out below, Area C is recommended for a Sustainable Urban Extension and part of Area D is recommended as an employment site. The proposed amendment to the Green Belt boundary is shown on Plan 7.

6.2 Reasons for Selection of Area C for Residential Development

- Area C is the most sustainable and accessible of all the option areas in terms of its proximity to existing local facilities.
- It has fewer higher highway constraints than areas A and B and will impact on fewer junctions.
- The landscape sensitivity of the majority of the area is judged to be low due to the relatively open character and lack of significant landscape features. The landform and character of the area is such that development on a large scale can be visually contained in the low-lying basin that exists in the south of the area. Development can be accommodated in the area whilst protecting existing landscape features and through opportunities for landscape mitigation and enhancement.
- The majority of area C is considered to have low ecological value, with some areas of higher value including SLINCS and other higher quality habitats, which would impose ecological constraints to development. However, opportunities exist to design around these and secure adequate mitigation and compensation as part of the development process.
- There are a number of known archaeological and heritage assets in the area and any impact on these and their settings can be satisfactorily mitigated by archaeological excavation and/ or design solutions.

- The whole of area C is being actively promoted by developers so deliverability is anticipated to be achievable in the plan period.

6.3 Mitigation of impacts on Area C

Landscape and Visual

- 6.3.1 Whilst most of area C has few landscape and visual constraints, mitigation of any impacts will be required to help promote enhancement of the area, for example enhancement of field boundaries, increased public accessibility, and enhancement of available views. Existing features that make a significant contribution to landscape value, such as the woodland south of Fox Hollies, should be retained, enhanced and integrated into the development.
- 6.3.2 It is recommended that any development that is proposed for Area C includes the provision of further Public Rights of Way that can be planned to link with those that already exist within the area. In limited locations along the eastern edge of the area where slopes face out towards open countryside, suitable measures will be required to mitigate visual impacts.

Ecology

- 6.3.3 The vast majority of Area C supports habitats of lower value offering limited constraints to development (subject to any protected species constraints that may be found). However, land to the south of Fox Hollies and in the north-western part of Area C is considered to be of higher value.
- 6.3.4 There is the potential for a substantial green corridor to link to New Hall Valley Country Park, which will remain in the Green Belt.
- 6.3.5 It is recommended that additional habitats, including woodland, semi-improved grassland and hedgerows, are created as part of any development to increase the biodiversity value of the area as well as to assist in meeting targets set out within the Biodiversity Action Plan for Birmingham and the Black Country and Nature Improvement Area priorities.
- 6.3.6 Where arable fields are retained or reinstated, it is recommended that landowners enter agri-environment schemes and are encouraged to include provision for habitat creation. Gaps in hedgerows should be planted up, especially where this would re-instate old field boundaries; new hedgerows should seek to re-instate old field boundaries where appropriate.
- 6.3.7 Developments should look to provide at least a 15m buffer from designated sites/existing habitats, particularly semi-natural broadleaved woodland and watercourses.

Archaeology and Historic Environment

- 6.3.8 Design of the development will need to protect and enhance known archaeological features and the character and setting of heritage assets in the area. Archaeological excavations will be required in advance of development, followed by analysis of results, including environmental analysis and radiocarbon dating, and publication of reports.

Improved Transport Infrastructure

- 6.3.9 Development of site C will require a significant uplift in transport infrastructure to both facilitate site access and also provide necessary connectivity with key services, facilities and employment destinations. A network of integrated pedestrian and cycle routes will be required throughout the site, with key linkages considered to Sutton Coldfield, and more local connections to Birmingham City Centre and other local centres.
- 6.3.10 In terms of public transport, new and improved bus connections will need to be investigated to directly link the site directly with Sutton Coldfield Town Centre, Birmingham City Centre and other key employment destinations. In addition, the enhancement of rail services could significantly improve accessibility to North Birmingham, including longer term projects such as new commuter stations at Castle Vale the Fort, Walmley and Sutton Coldfield.
- 6.3.11 An uplift in highway capacity will also be required, with a new link from the A38, along with upgrades to corridors connecting the site with Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham City Centre and the adjoining area. In addition, impacts and potential improvements to the Strategic Road Network (SRN) will need to be fully investigated in partnership with the Highways Agency.

Sustainable Transport Strategy

- 6.3.12 The creation of neighbourhoods that are well connected by public transport and give priority to pedestrians and cyclists is key to achieving sustainable development. New development should not cause unreasonable levels of congestion and will be designed to minimise car dependency. A transport strategy which aims to reduce the number and length of private motorised journeys, promote sustainable modes of travel, promote economic regeneration and improve accessibility for all should be developed.

Open Space

- 6.3.13 An Open Space Strategy should be produced as part of any development masterplan. Good quality, accessible green space will be an important feature of residential development, providing opportunities for sports, informal recreation, cycling and walking. It will aim to maximise landscape value, conservation of heritage and ecological assets and sustainable drainage. It is recommended that allotments are provided for residents.
- 6.3.14 City-wide standards for open space and playing fields are identified in the UDP 2005 and the emerging BDP. All residents should have access within 400 metres to an area of publically accessible open space. Similarly, there should be a children's play area within 400 metres of all residents. As a basic guide to the supply of open space the aim will be to provide a minimum target of 2 hectares of open space and 1.2 public and include linkages with the of public or private playing fields per 1,000 population at the Constituency level.
- 6.3.15 Local public open spaces will be complemented by larger green corridors that provide links through the development and beyond to Newhall Country Park and the wider countryside. They will incorporate and enhance existing woodland, wetland and other landscape features, heritage assets and wildlife habitats. The corridor will be accessible to the public and include linkages

with the North Birmingham Cycle initiative.

Environmental Sustainability

- 6.3.16 Action to mitigate and adapt to climate change is a key objective of the emerging BDP. The City Council is committed to a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions produced in the City by 2026. Actions to help achieve this target will include requiring new developments to reduce CO₂ emissions and promoting sustainable transport systems and building to high standards of sustainable design and construction. Development should fully explore the potential to utilise lower carbon forms of energy production such as Combined Heat and Power (CHP).

Design and Place making

- 6.3.17 Development layout, buildings and open spaces will be designed to the highest possible standards. The new neighbourhood will have a strong sense of place and distinctive character with building layout and design informed by the local topography, landscape and heritage assets complemented by appropriate use of innovation in design. It will be a safe place where carefully considered site layouts and well designed buildings and open spaces promote positive social interaction and natural surveillance and minimise the potential for crime and anti-social behaviour. Local people will play a meaningful role in shaping development and managing the new neighbourhood, contributing to a sense of community.

Provision of Community Facilities (including education, local centre, sports)

- 6.3.18 A successful Sustainable Urban Extension will require a range of supporting facilities as an integral part of the development. Existing schools in the area are reaching capacity and the case for new schools has been demonstrated and reinforced following the consultation exercise. Two new primary schools and a new secondary school will be required.
- 6.3.19 Additional health care facilities, local shops and services will also need to be provided.
- 6.3.20 There will also be a need for sports facilities and sporting activities. Part of the sporting needs of the new community may be addressed through shared use of new school facilities.

Flood Risk

- 6.3.21 The majority of the site is not within Flood Zones 2 or 3 excluding a small area to the north. Further modelling is required for Langley Brook.

6.4 Reasons for Selection of Area D for Employment

6.4.1 The reasons for selecting part of area D as the employment site are:

- The area is large enough to accommodate a 50ha plus development site
- The landform and character of the area is such that development on a large scale can be visually contained in the low-lying basin that characterises the vast majority of the area.
- The landscape and visual sensitivity of the majority of the area is judged to be low due to the lack of landscape components and potential development being able to be accommodated in the area without significant loss of landscape features and opportunities for replacement/mitigation.
- The vast majority of the area has low ecological value offering limited constraints to development.
- Impacts on known archaeological and heritage assets in the area and their settings can be satisfactorily mitigated by archaeological excavation and/ or design solutions.
- With its proximity to the M42 at junction 9, area D offers a good opportunity as an employment site. However, the enhancement of sustainable transport modes will be required as accessibility is currently poor. The combined effect of Area D with a sustainable urban extension on Area C may help to improve accessibility generally in the area.

6.5 Mitigation of impacts on Area D

Landscape and Visual

6.5.1 Whilst area D has few landscape and visual constraints, landscape enhancement and mitigation of any adverse impacts will be required. This is likely to include significant tree and hedgerow planting within and around the site, integrated with measures for ecological enhancement, improved walking and cycling and sustainable drainage. A landscape strategy should be an integral part of any development proposals.

Ecology

6.5.2 Most of Area D is considered to be of relatively low value and therefore would be unlikely to offer major constraints to development (subject to any protected species constraints that may be found). Peddimore Brook links higher value ecological areas located to the north-west and the southern boundary of the area.

6.5.3 It is recommended that public access is provided along the Peddimore Brook and that two Public Footpaths through the ploughed fields be reinstated.

6.5.4 Existing hedgerows should be maintained and allowed to expand in width and height wherever practicable and that former hedgerows are reinstated, particularly either side of Wiggins Hill Road.

6.5.5 Peddimore Brook should be managed to enhance its value for wildlife. New development should create linked new habitats including broadleaved

woodland and arable field margins managed for wildlife.

- 6.5.6 Developments should look to provide at least a 15m buffer from designated sites/existing habitats, particularly semi-natural broadleaved woodland and watercourses.

Archaeology and Historic Environment

- 6.5.7 Design of the development will need to protect and enhance known archaeological features and the character and setting of heritage assets in the area. In particular the setting of Peddimore Hall and the SAM surrounding the Hall, whilst not being in the development area itself, has long distance views towards it which will require mitigation by design. Archaeological excavations will be required in advance of development, followed by analysis of results, including environmental analysis and radiocarbon dating, and publication of reports.

Improved Transport Infrastructure

- 6.5.7 Development of area D will require a significant uplift in transport infrastructure to both facilitate site access and also provide necessary connectivity with key services, facilities and residential locations. A network of integrated pedestrian and cycle routes will be required throughout the site, with key linkages considered to area C, Water Orton, Castle Bromwich, the Birmingham and Fazeley Canal and the New Hall Valley route.
- 6.5.8 In terms of public transport, new and improved bus connections will need to be investigated to directly link the site with Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham City and the major residential areas of East Birmingham and North Solihull. Further consideration could also be given to 'business link' type services linking the site and other major employers in the area to the above residential areas. In addition, the enhancement of rail services in the area should be investigated, with particular consideration given to new railway stations at Castle Vale and the Fort, while the reinstatement of passenger services on the Sutton Coldfield line should be fully evaluated. Access improvements to the station at Water Orton and the possibility of new stations on the Tamworth line should also be investigated.
- 6.5.9 Increased highway capacity will also be required, with a new link from the A38 to be considered, along with upgrades to corridors connecting the site with Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham City Centre and the adjoining area. In addition, impacts and potential improvements to the Strategic Road Network (SRN) will need to be fully investigated in partnership with the Highways Agency and adjoining highway authorities.

Sustainable Transport

- 6.5.10 A transport strategy which aims to reduce the number and length of private motorised journeys, promote sustainable modes of travel, promote economic regeneration and improve accessibility for all should be developed. Techniques for influencing people's travel behaviour towards more sustainable options, including walking and cycling will be employed. These can include workplace, community and residential schemes as well as personalised travel planning.

Sustainability

- 6.5.11 Action to mitigate and adapt to climate change is a key objective of the emerging BDP. The City Council is committed to a 60% reduction in carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions produced in the City by 2026. Actions to help achieve this target will include requiring new developments to reduce CO₂ emissions and promoting sustainable transport systems. Ensuring that new buildings meet high standards of sustainable design and construction will help reduce the City's carbon footprint. Development should fully explore the potential to utilise lower carbon forms of energy production such as Combined Heat and Power (CHP).

Design and Place making

- 6.5.12 Good quality design will be essential to the success of the employment site and the well-being of employees. Development should deliver an attractive place to visit and work based on a coherent layout of good quality buildings and open spaces.
- 6.5.13 A development design guide and landscape strategy should be produced to ensure development of a consistently high standard that integrates with the surrounding area.
- 6.5.14 Minworth Playing Fields and allotments will be excluded from development.

Defensible Boundary

- 6.5.15 The boundary to the north and east will require substantial reinforcement and buffering to set to establish a defensible Green Belt boundary. Development should not encroach on the ridge that is present along the north and east peripheries.

Flood Risk

- 6.5.16 No Flood Zone 2 or 3 identified, but further modelling is required at Peddimore Brook.

6.6 Cross relationship of Area C and D

Sustainable Transport

- 6.6.1 Whilst new and improved transport infrastructure will need to be investigated to support areas C and D specifically, connectivity between the two sites will be highly important in the delivery of a sustainable development. Such connectivity will enable good access between areas of housing and employment and reduce the need for motorised trips to enter and leave both the development and the wider area. To achieve this it is recognised that strong walking, cycling and public transport links will need to be provided, including safe and direct access across the A38 so as to not fundamentally sever the developments.

- 6.6.2 In addition to access between the sites, transport provision in the wider area will need to be considered in terms of providing improved connectivity. In this context key infrastructure elements may comprise a public transport interchange in Sutton Coldfield, bus priority corridors, local highway improvements, new walking and cycling routes and a wider review of rail access. Capacity and connectivity offered by the strategic road network managed by the Highways Agency and local networks managed by adjoining authorities will also need to be investigated, where appropriate using strategic transport modelling tools.

Economy and Jobs

- 6.6.3 One of the potential advantages of developing employment and housing in close proximity to each other is the potential for job opportunities to be provided on the “doorstep” of new housing, thus enhancing the sustainability of the community. While it is recognised that not all people living in the area would work in the area, the opportunity would exist from the employment and other supporting uses that would be located in the area, as well as opportunities for business and education/ learning links to be made.

Green Infrastructure

- 6.6.4 The principles of the Council’s Green Living Spaces Plan (September 2013) will be applied to the new sustainable neighbourhood and employment site, where good quality, well connected green spaces will be integral to the planned development. Key trees, woodland, wetland and other existing green assets will be protected and enhanced and form the basis for a network of connected green spaces that will permeate the development and link to New Hall Country Park and the wider countryside.
- 6.6.4 Maintaining and enhancing the green infrastructure network between Areas C and D will be important, to promote connectivity between and through the two sites, and into the wider countryside beyond. This will be of benefit to the local environment, community and wildlife. Existing green infrastructure assets, particularly watercourses, landscape features such as hedgerows and tree lines, and other higher value habitats, should be recognised as key elements of the green infrastructure network. Opportunities should be sought to enhance and extend these assets, for example, where this will contribute to strengthening off-site linkages between the two areas.
- 6.6.5 The green spaces will provide multiple benefits for residents that include playing fields, informal recreation, allotments, cycling and walking routes. They will increase biodiversity, enhance the landscape, incorporate sustainable drainage, contribute to the area’s sense of place and help to make healthy places to live and work. Other elements of green infrastructure, such as green roofs, will be considered where possible. Future management of all green assets will be built into development proposals to ensure that they continue to have long-term value.

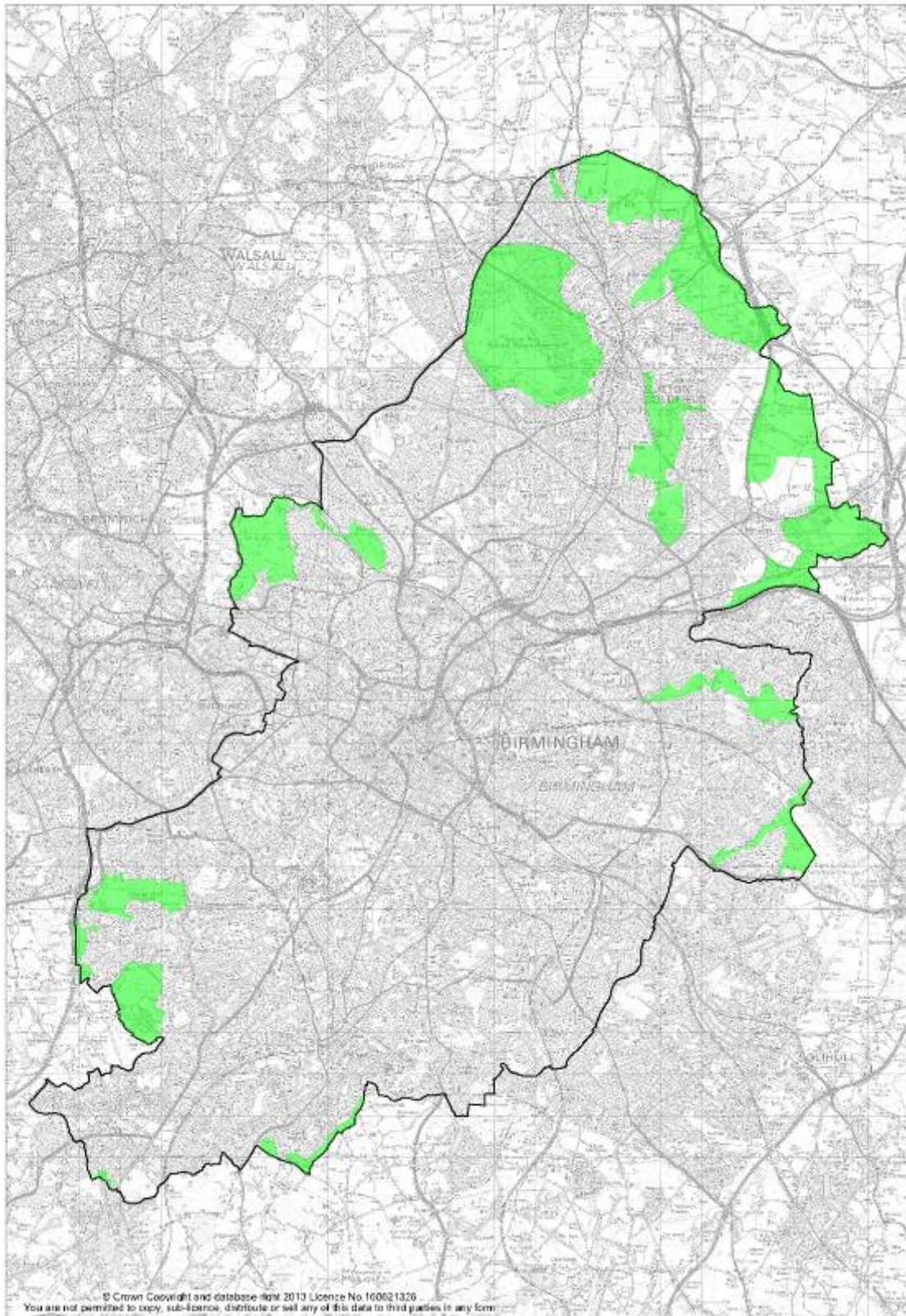
Masterplanning

- 6.6.6 Masterplans will be produced in order to set out the vision for the new neighbourhood and employment area, to establish the form that development will take and to coordinate its delivery and future management. The plans will

be informed by the input and needs of local people and the intrinsic qualities of the area, together with the principles of good urban design and sustainable neighbourhoods, with the ultimate aim to create high quality, sustainable places in which to live and work.

- 6.6.7 The comprehensive masterplanning process will guide all aspects of the development, including its overall character, the layout and form of buildings and open spaces, transport requirements, types and mix of land uses, housing and community facilities and environmental sustainability. It will also consider development viability, how and when it will be delivered and mechanisms for long-term neighbourhood management.
- 6.6.8 The sustainable urban extension and employment site masterplanning principles will be set out in a Supplementary Planning Document, which will cover both sites in order to ensure that the opportunities to benefit from the proximity of the two sites are maximised.

PLAN 5: PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BIRMINGHAM GREEN BELT



APPENDIX ONE: ANALYSIS OF GREEN BELT OPTIONS B-S PLANS

Area B – East of the M6 Toll

Introduction

This area of search lies to the north east of the City and east of the M6 Toll. The area comprises a narrow strip of open land of 55 hectares. It is opposite to the area of search B1 and B2 which is evaluated in the Green Belt Assessment. The West Midlands Green Belt extends from this area beyond the M6 Toll Road to Lichfield and North Warwickshire. The area contains a small number of SLINCs and a listed building and Sutton Coldfield Crematorium.

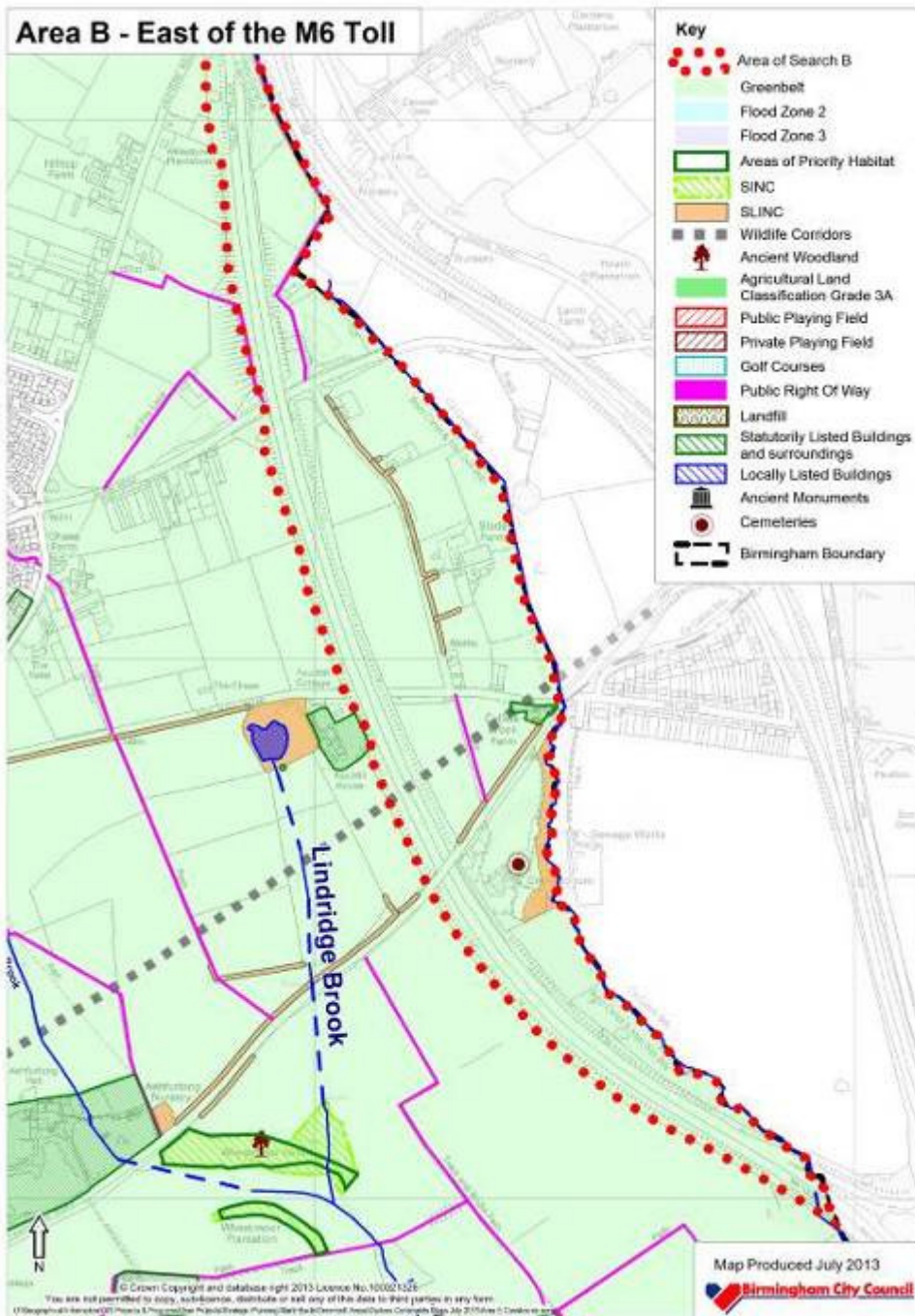
Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area helps to prevent the urban area spreading into the Green Belt of Lichfield and North Warwickshire. It is clearly segregated from the Green Belt west of the M6 Toll Road which forms a strong defensible boundary. Any development on east side of the M6 Toll would be detached from Birmingham's urban area and create unrestricted sprawl.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The Green Belt extends over 6.5 km to the nearest large settlement (Tamworth) and 5km to the nearest small settlement (Kingsbury).
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This area is long and narrow for much of its length and has a weak defensible boundary with the wider Green Belt. The majority of the outer boundary is made up of fields and open countryside.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns. There is a building of historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Archaeology/Ancient Monuments	Collets Brook Farm Grade II listed building.
Biodiversity	This area contains three Sites of Local Interest for Nature Conservation (SLINC) which are elongated, as they consist of hedges and

	corridors.
Value to Local Community	Sutton Coldfield Crematorium

Conclusion

This location is not suitable for development because it prevents the expansion of the urban area eastwards into Lichfield and North Warwickshire. Development would intrude into the wider Green Belt as it has a weak defensible boundary. Development in this area would be detached from the urban area and would create unrestricted sprawl.



Area B – East (and partly West) of the M6 Toll & A38

Introduction

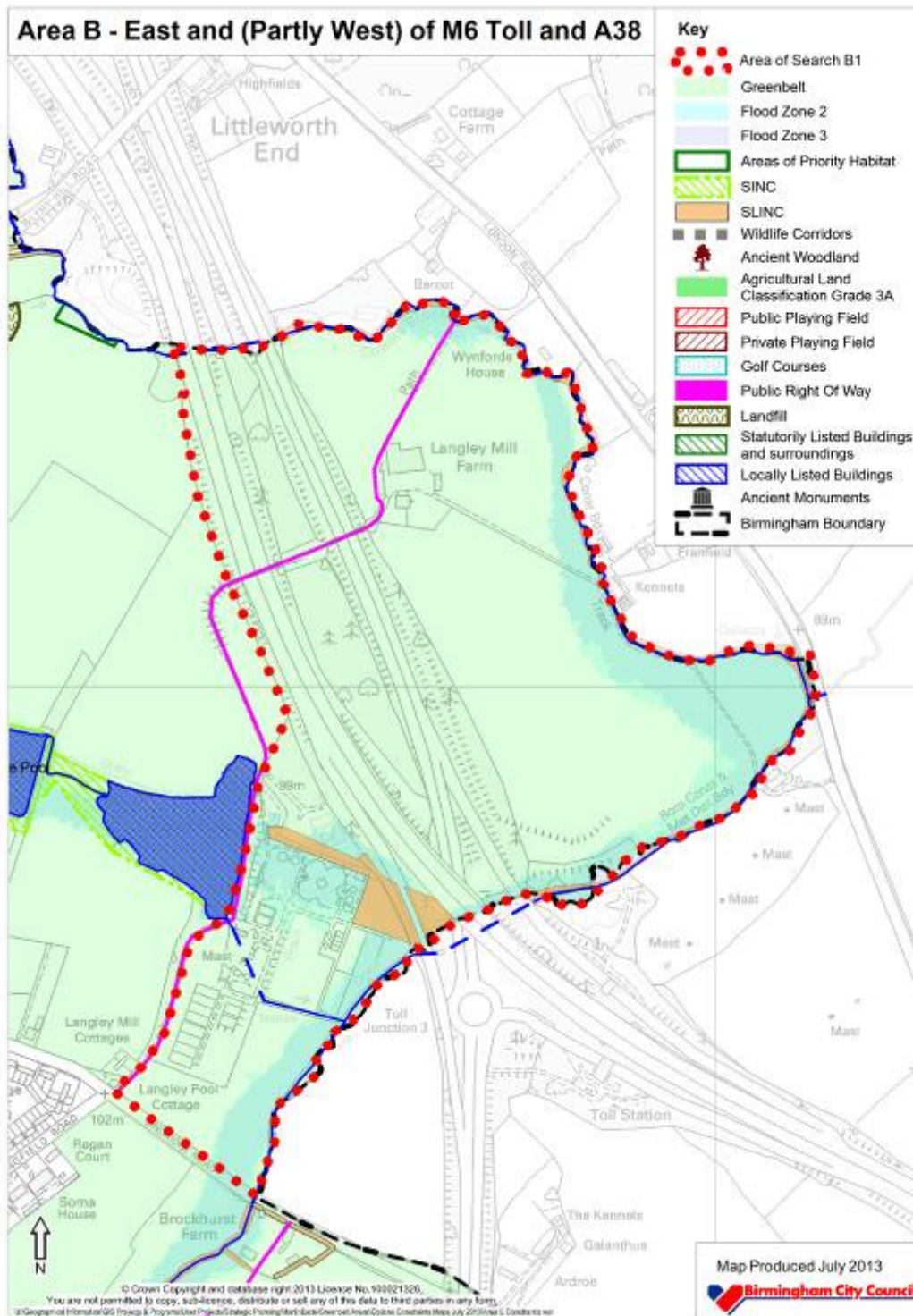
This area lies to the north east of the City and covers an area of 49 hectares. It adjoins the area of search B2 which is evaluated in the Green Belt Assessment. The West Midlands Green Belt extends from this area beyond the M6 Toll Road and A38 to North Warwickshire. The area contains a SLINC and areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3. The area is bisected by the M6 Toll Road and A38.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	The area helps to prevent the urban area spreading into the Green Belt of North Warwickshire. It is clearly separated from the Green Belt west and south of the M6 Toll and A38. Any development on the east side of the M6 Toll Road and the A38 would be detached from the urban area and create unrestricted sprawl.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The Green Belt extends over 8.9km to the nearest large settlement (Tamworth) and nearly 6km to the nearest small settlement (Kingsbury).
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The M6 Toll Road and A38 run through a large part of the area. The southern edge of the areas contains part of the operational Langley Sewage Works. The area has a weak defensible boundary with the wider Green Belt in North Warwickshire. The majority of the outer boundary is made up of fields and open countryside.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	A SLINC
Flood risk	Affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3 along the outer boundary and part of the Langley Sewage Works.

Conclusion

The area is not suitable for development because it prevents the expansion of the urban area eastwards into North Warwickshire. Development would intrude into the wider Green Belt as the site has a weak defensible boundary and would create unrestricted sprawl. Part of the site falls within Flood Zone 2 and 3 and the area to the west of the M6 Toll Road and A38 contains an operational sewage works.



Area D: Outer Section

Introduction

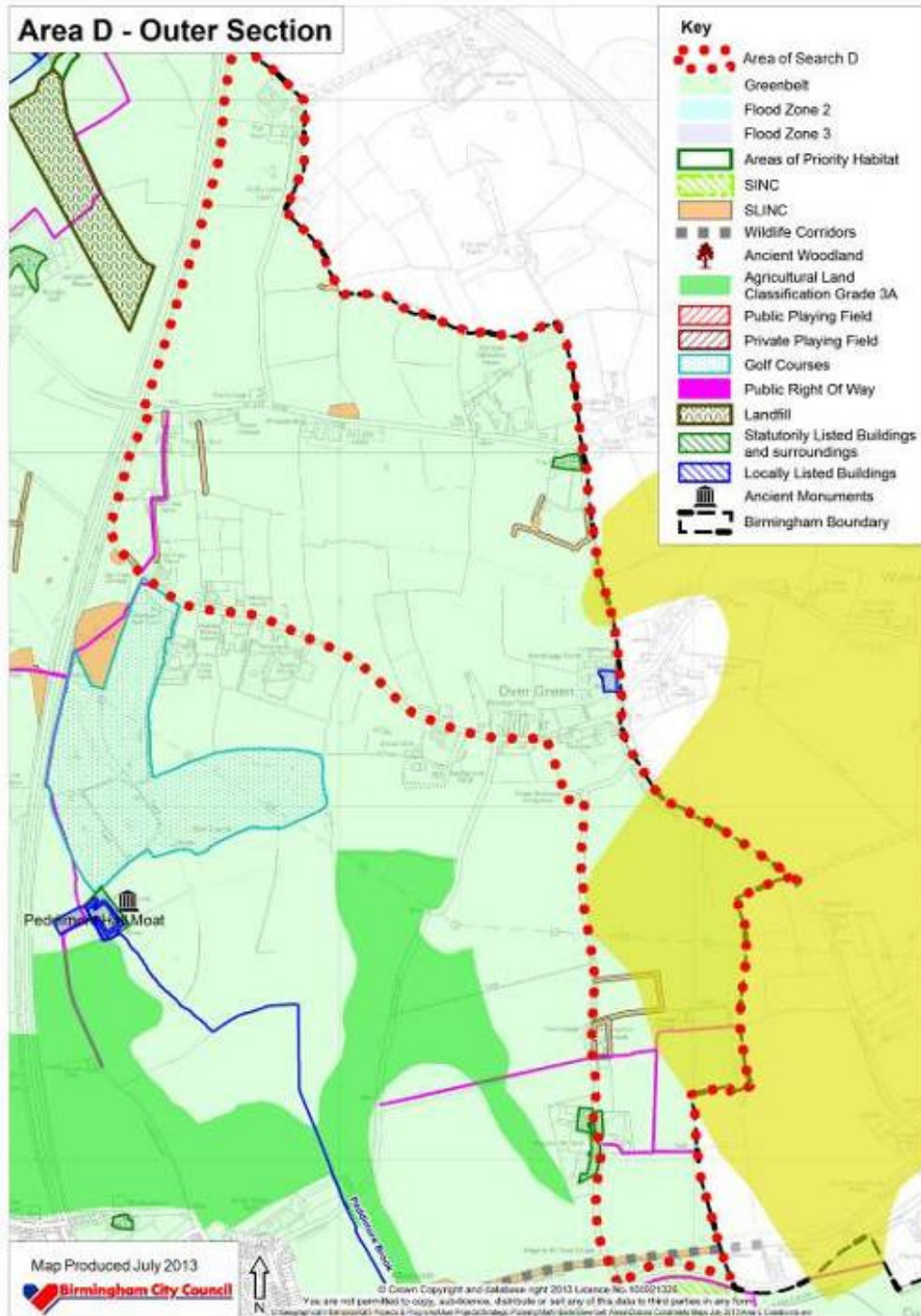
This area lies to the north east of the City and covers an area of 205 hectares. It adjoins the area of search D1 which is evaluated in the Green Belt Assessment. The West Midlands Green Belt extends from this area through to North Warwickshire. The area contains a number of SLINCs and two listed buildings.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area helps to prevent the urban area spreading into the Green Belt of North Warwickshire. It is clearly visible from the wider Green Belt, the northern boundary being a ridge line above the shallow basin to the south. Any development would be detached from Birmingham's urban area and create unrestricted sprawl.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The closest large settlements to the City's urban area are Tamworth (8 km to the north west) and Atherstone (15km to the east). The closest smallest settlement is Curdworth 0.5km away. The hamlet of Over Green lies within the area.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The area has a weak defensible boundary with the wider Green Belt in North Warwickshire. The majority of the outer boundary is made up of fields and visible open countryside.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns. There are two features of historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	This area contains a number of SLINCs.
Agricultural Land Quality	Part of the east and southern area is agricultural land quality Grade 2
Archaeology/Ancient Monuments	The Grove is Grade II* Listed and Hermitage Farm is locally listed.

Conclusion

The area is not suitable for development because it prevents the expansion of the urban area eastwards into North Warwickshire. Development would intrude into the wider Green Belt as it has a weak defensible boundary and is clearly visible to the wider countryside. Development in this area would create unrestricted sprawl.



Area E – Hill Hook

Introduction

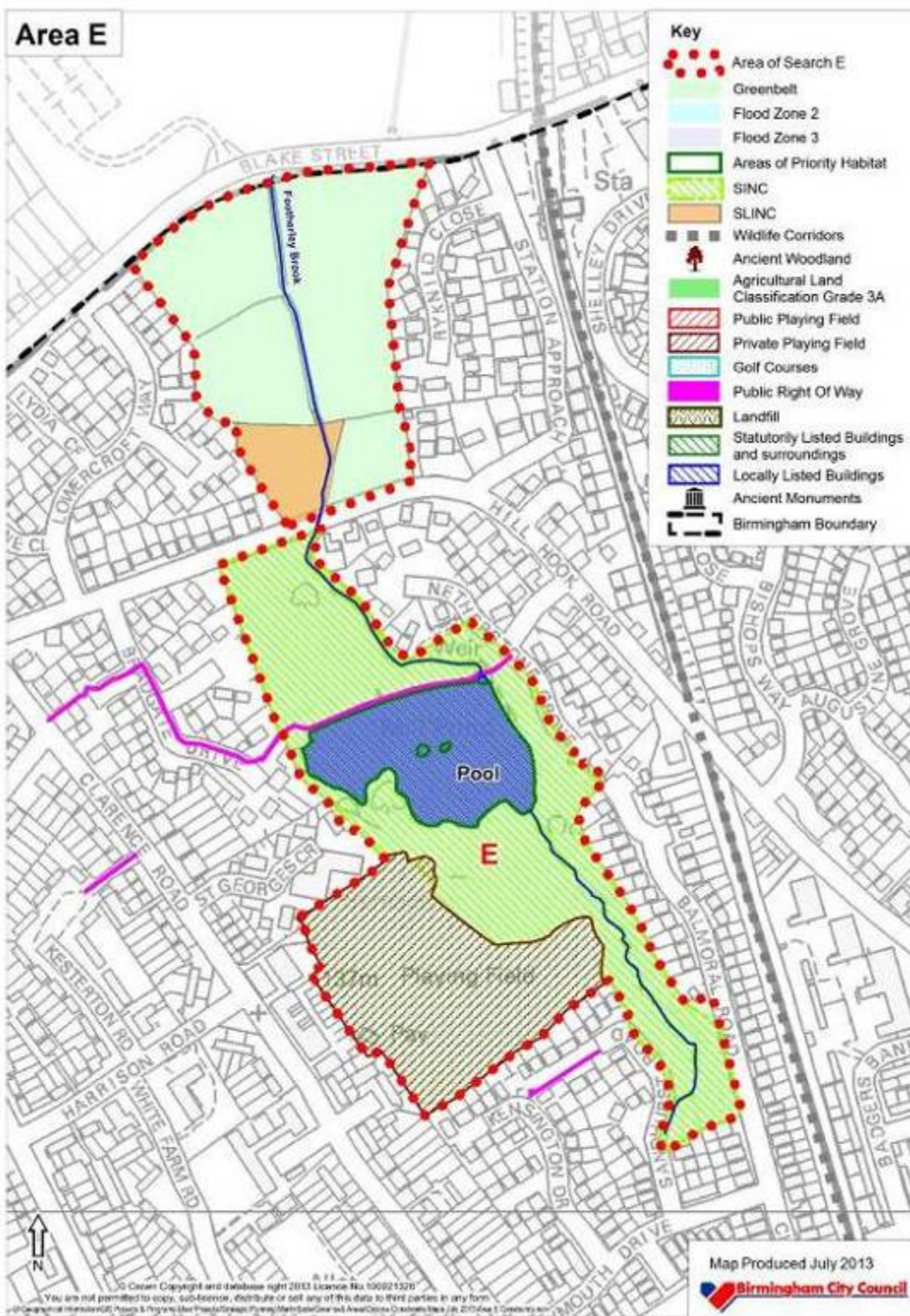
This area of search lies to the North of the City and comprises a narrow strip of open land with an area of 12 hectares. It adjoins the City boundary with Lichfield District Council. Predominant land uses within the area of search are of high value for Nature Conservation purposes (including a SINC and a SLINC) and recreation.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Area E offers little support in terms of the prevention of the expansion of the urban area northwards, due to the size and shape of this site.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The Green Belt extends over 6.5 km to the nearest large settlement (Lichfield) and 3 km to the nearest small settlement (Shenstone).
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Most of the Green Belt in Area E is surrounded by the urban area contained within Birmingham. The area has inherent value as open land as it is mostly made up of a SINC and SLINC.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. Area E is surrounded by the mature and attractive residential area of Four Oaks.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	This area contains a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC) which includes a large pond, and a Site of Local Interest for Nature Conservation corridor (SLINC). These cover the majority of the area.
Value to the local community	Area of Private playing field.

Conclusion

The location is not suitable for development because of its nature conservation value and recreational value.



Area F – Land West of Curdworth including part of Minworth Sewage Works

Introduction

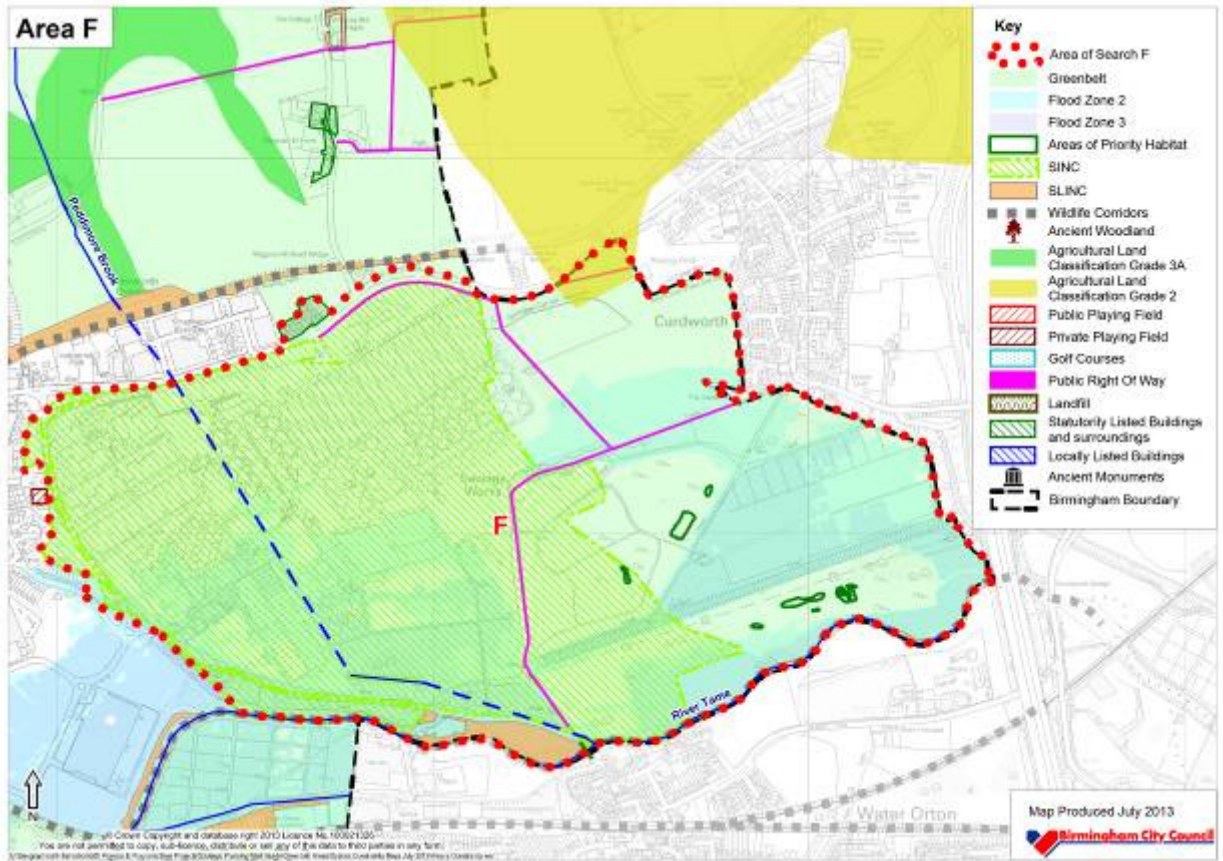
This area of search lies at the north of Water Orton and east of the City and covers an area of 228 hectares. It adjoins the city boundary with North Warwickshire and the settlements of Curdworth to the North and Water Orton to the South. The eastern end abuts the M6 Toll. The land is predominantly of importance for Nature Conservation and is largely covered by a SINC and an area of SLINC.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Area F prevents the expansion of the urban area between Minworth and Curdworth and Water Orton which are very close to the boundary of F.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	Development of this area would merge the conurbation with Curdworth and Water Orton which are close by.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Much of this area is brownfield land with no inherent value as countryside, but almost two thirds of the area is a SINC.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	Much of the area is a SINC and the area also has a SLINC.
Flood Risk	Flood Zone 2 and 3 identified, which covers most of the area.

Conclusion

The area is not considered suitable for development because it would lead to the coalescence of Curdworth and Water Orton with the conurbation, because of its nature conservation value and because much of it falls within Flood Zones 2 and 3.



Area G – Moor Hall Golf Course

Introduction

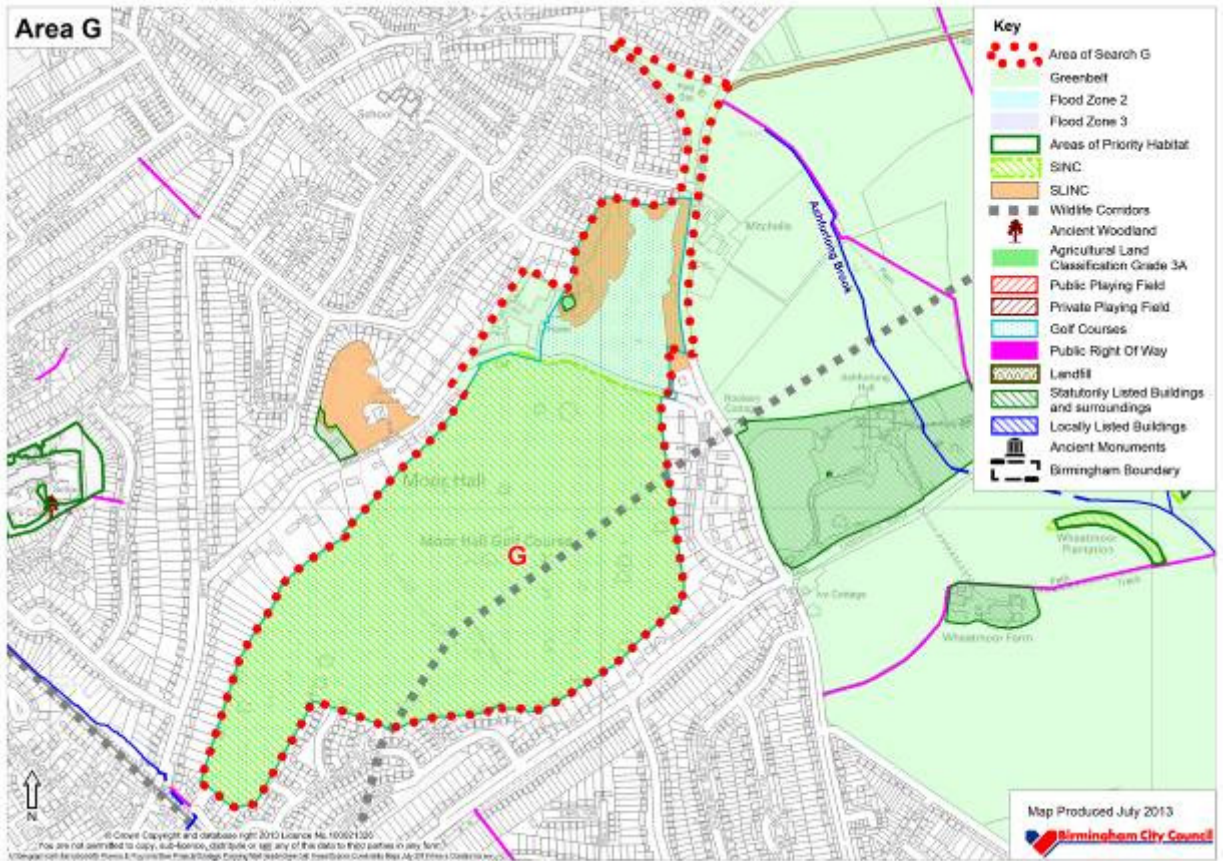
This area of search lies to the north of the City in Sutton Coldfield and covers an area of 48 hectares. The area is mainly used as an established golf course Moor Hall Golf course and is also a large SINC, and a small SLINC. The area is predominantly surrounded by established mature residential areas except the northern tip which abuts Green Belt Option area B.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Area G offers little support in terms of the prevention of the expansion of the urban area due to the small size of this area and because it is almost surrounded by the built up urban area.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	This area of Green Belt does not function to protect neighbouring towns from merging; however it does provide an important open area between mature suburbs.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This small area is covered in its entirety by a well established golf course and a SINC.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	Almost the entire area is a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and a small SLINC.
Value to the local community	The area is a well established golf course.

Conclusion

This area is not suitable for development as it provides an important open area between mature suburbs, because of its nature conservation value and the area is a well established golf course.



Area H – Newhall Valley

Introduction

This area of search lies to the north east of the City and covers an area of 281 hectares. It is surrounded by existing residential areas. The land is the historic setting for New Hall Manor House (Grade I Listed building) along with several other historic features listed below, and also includes SINC's and SLINC's, ancient woodland and part of Newhall Valley Country Park.

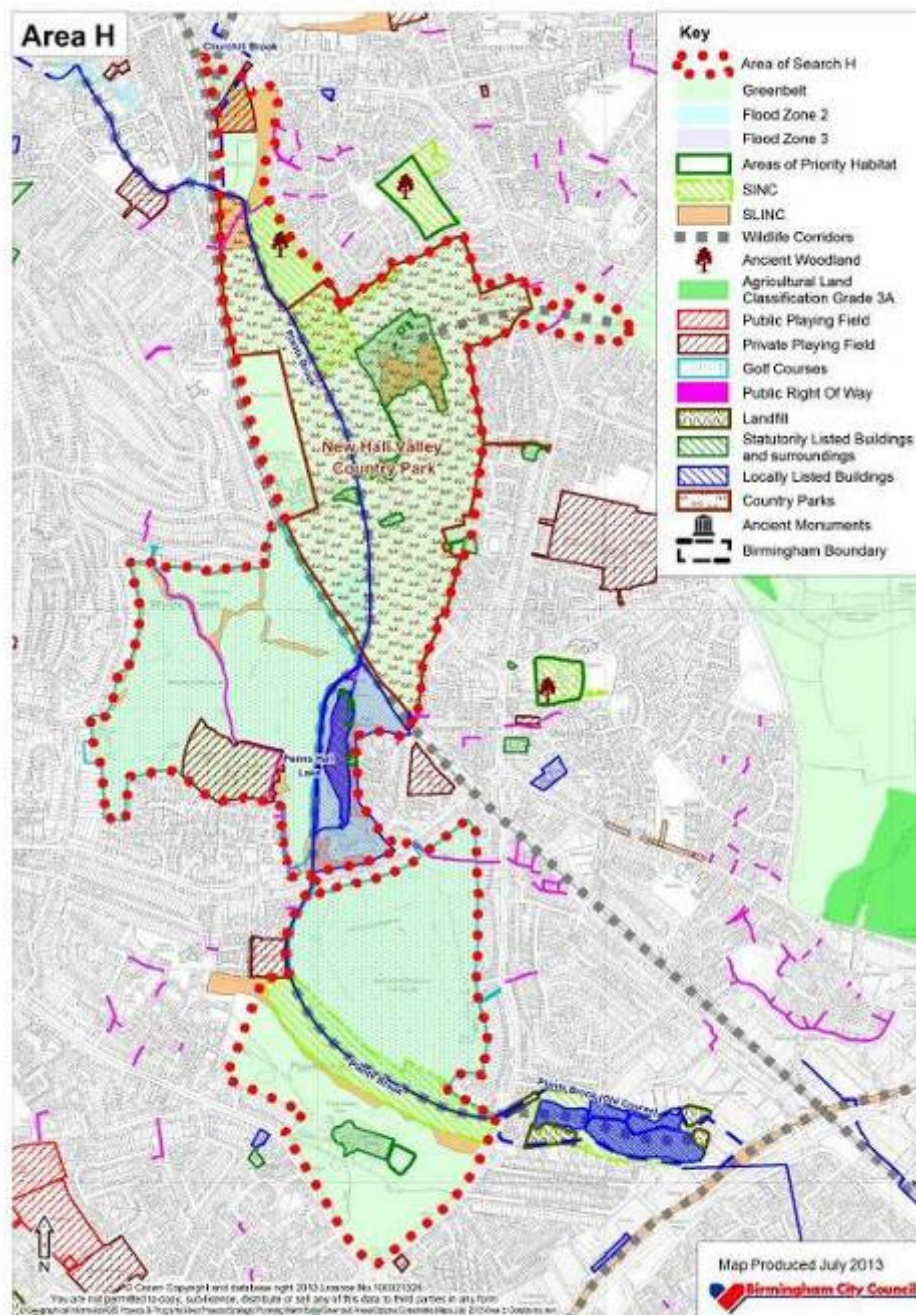
Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Area H offers little support in terms of the prevention of the expansion of the urban area because it is almost surrounded by the built up urban area.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	While this area does not prevent neighbouring towns from merging, it prevents areas that are distinctly different in Sutton Coldfield from merging with one another these being Wylde Green to the south and Walmley to the east.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	There are a number of important landscape features in this area, two SINC's and an area of Ancient Woodland. Part of the area is a Country Park.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. However this area is important for the historic features listed below and its historic setting and landscape.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Archaeology / Ancient Monuments	There are several statutorily listed buildings, the most notable being New Hall moated manor house and grounds which is Grade I Listed, New Hall Mill(Grade II*) Vesey House (Grade II*), Wincelle (Grade II), part of New Shipton Farm (Grade II), and Pype Hayes Hall (Grade II). Penns Hall lake is locally listed.
Biodiversity	Two SINC and several areas of land designated as SLINC. There is also an area

	of Ancient Woodland.
Flood Risk	Flood Zone 2 identified in some areas.
Value to the local community	Pype Hayes Golf Course, New Hall Valley Country Park

Conclusion

This location is not suitable for development because it prevents neighbouring areas from merging, and contains important historic features, nature conservation value and recreational value and is affected in part by Flood Zone 2.



Area I – Land west of Water Orton including part of Minworth Sewage Works

Introduction

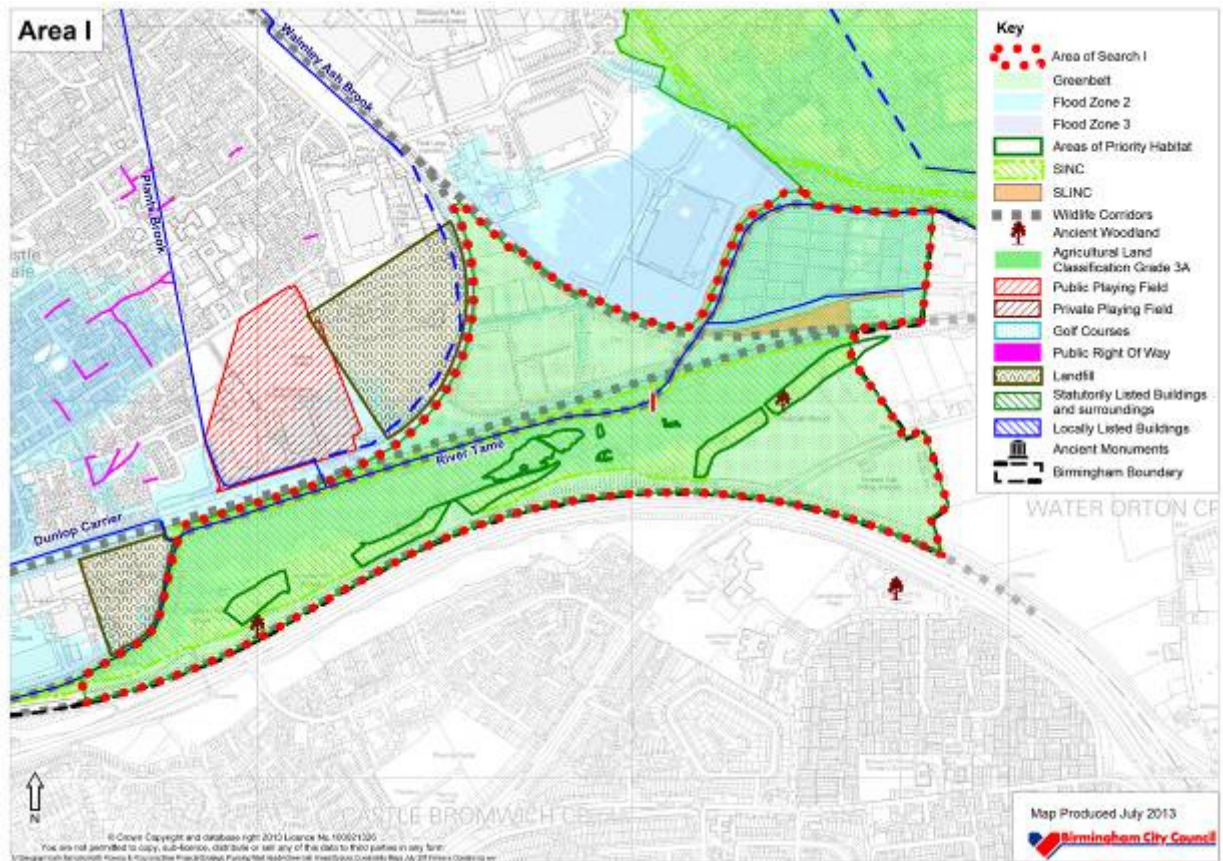
This area of search lies to the east of the City and covers an area of 110 hectares. The search area is bounded by the (A452) known as the Collector Road and M6 to the south, Castle Vale and Minworth to the North. The land is predominantly covered by a SINC and a small SLINC with two areas of Ancient Woodland. It is also affected by Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	Area I helps to prevent the urban area from spreading east into the Green Belt in North Warwickshire and to the nearby settlement of Water Orton.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	This area acts as a barrier between Castle Vale and Castle Bromwich and prevents neighbouring areas from merging into one another. It also prevents coalescence with neighbouring Water Orton which is 0.7km from area I.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The area has inherent value resulting from the presence of the SINC with two areas of Ancient Woodland and a number of priority habitat areas.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Consideration	
Archaeology / Ancient Monuments	Two Ancient woodlands present.
Biodiversity	The area includes an elongated SINC and smaller SLINC, with two areas of Ancient Woodland, and a number of priority habitats.
Flood Risk	Flood zone 2 and 3 identified, affecting a significant part of the site.

Conclusion

The location is not suitable for development because it prevents neighbouring areas from merging and coalescence with neighbouring Water Orton. It also has high nature conservation value and a significant area identified as Flood Zone 2 and 3.



Area J – River Cole Valley

Introduction

This area of search lies to the east of the City and covers an area of 147 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham and on its eastern boundary adjacent to Solihull. This area of Green Belt contains the River Cole, a SINC and several SLINCs.

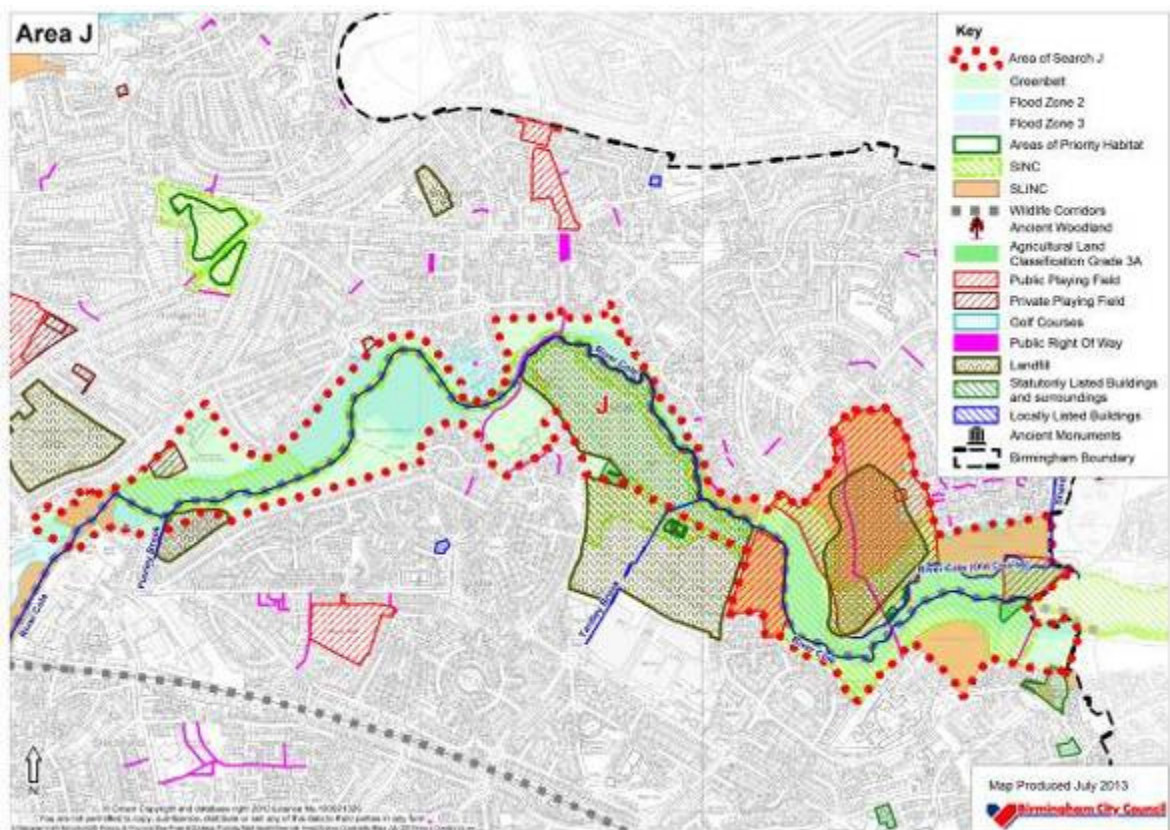
Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area of Green belt has limited function in preventing sprawl as this is a 'green wedge' that is surrounded by the built up areas.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	While this area does not prevent neighbouring towns from merging it does prevent neighbouring areas from merging with one another these being - Shard End and Kitts Green, and outside of the City boundary, the urban areas of Solihull notably Kingshurst.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Most of area J assists in the protection of the River Cole which runs through the Green Belt. Areas along the length of River have been identified as SINC and there are also small areas of SLINC. However, the area also includes a significant brownfield site (the former Yardley Sewage Works) which has no landscape or countryside value.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are a few features of historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Consideration	
Archaeology / Ancient Monuments	Poachers Pocket Public House, Babb's Millhouse and Cottage are Grade II Listed Buildings.
Biodiversity	An elongated SINC runs along the River Cole and several SLINC and wildlife corridors cover the length of the River.

Flood Risk	Much of the area is Flood Zone 2 and 3.
Value to the local community	There are three areas of public playing fields – Norman Chamberlain Playing Fields and Leaford Playing Field. – and the Kingfisher Country Park
Landfill	There are large areas of landfill.

Conclusion

The majority of the area is not suitable for development because of its nature conservation and recreational value and areas of flood risk. However these constraints do not apply to the brownfield former Yardley Sewage Works site.



Area K – Sheldon Country Park

Introduction

This area of search lies to the east of the City and covers an area of 119 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham and at the City boundary is adjacent to Birmingham Airport and neighbouring urban areas within Solihull. This area of Green Belt contains Sheldon Country Park and a large SLINC.

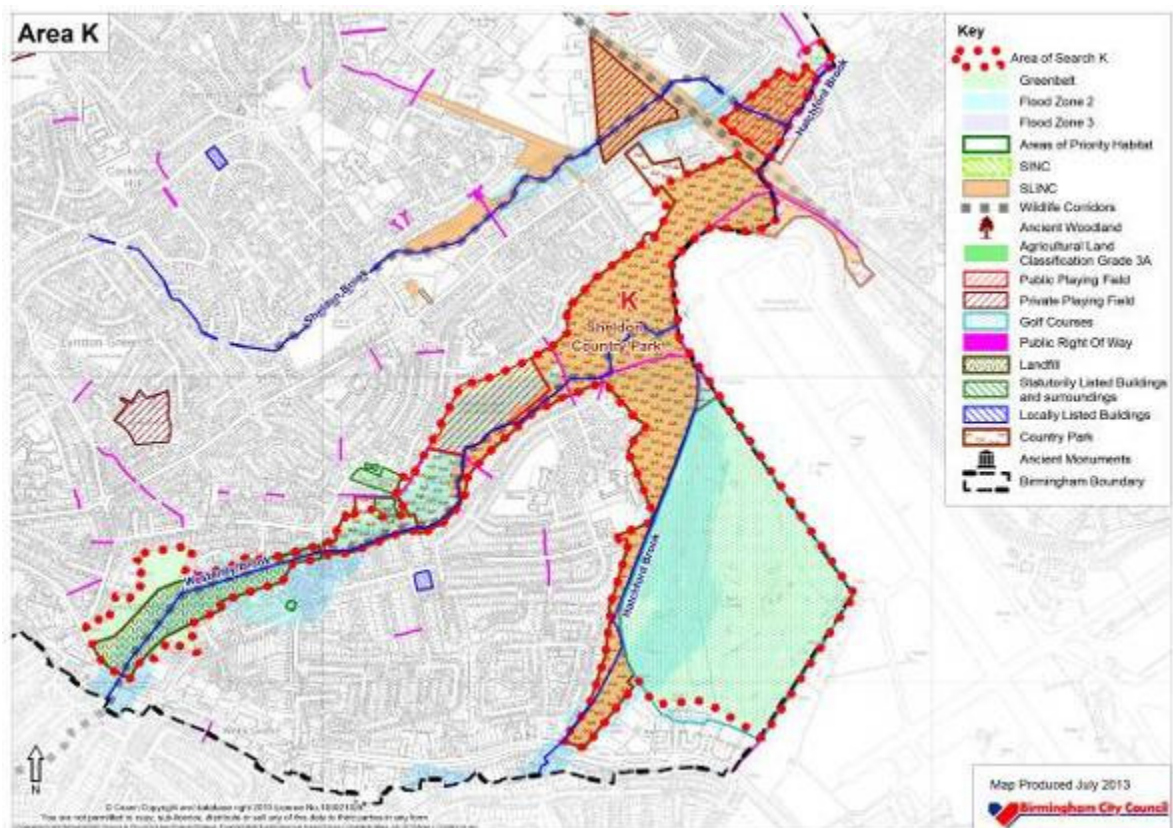
Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area of Green belt has limited function in preventing sprawl as this is a 'green wedge' that is surrounded by the built up area and the Airport.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	While this area does not prevent neighbouring towns from merging it does prevent areas that are distinctly different from merging with one another - these being Garratts Green to the north and Sheldon to the south.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	The area contains Sheldon Country Park, Hatchford Brook and a large SLINC and wildlife corridor.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	There is a large SLINC, wildlife corridor and Hatchford Brook
Flood Risk	Flood Zone 2 and 3 identified. About half the site falls within Flood Zone 3.
Value to the local community	There are three areas of public playing fields –King George V Memorial Field and Bell Lane Recreation Ground. The area also includes Hatchford Brook Golf Course and Sheldon Country Park.
Landfill	There are areas of landfill within Area K.
Other	There are noise impacts as a result of the

proximity of the airport, and limitations on acceptable uses because much of the area lies beneath the flight path.

Conclusion

The majority of this area is not suitable for development because of its importance in providing separation between distinct communities, its nature conservation and recreational value, areas of Flood Zone 2 and a significant area of Flood Zone 3.



Area L – Land at Hawkesley

Introduction

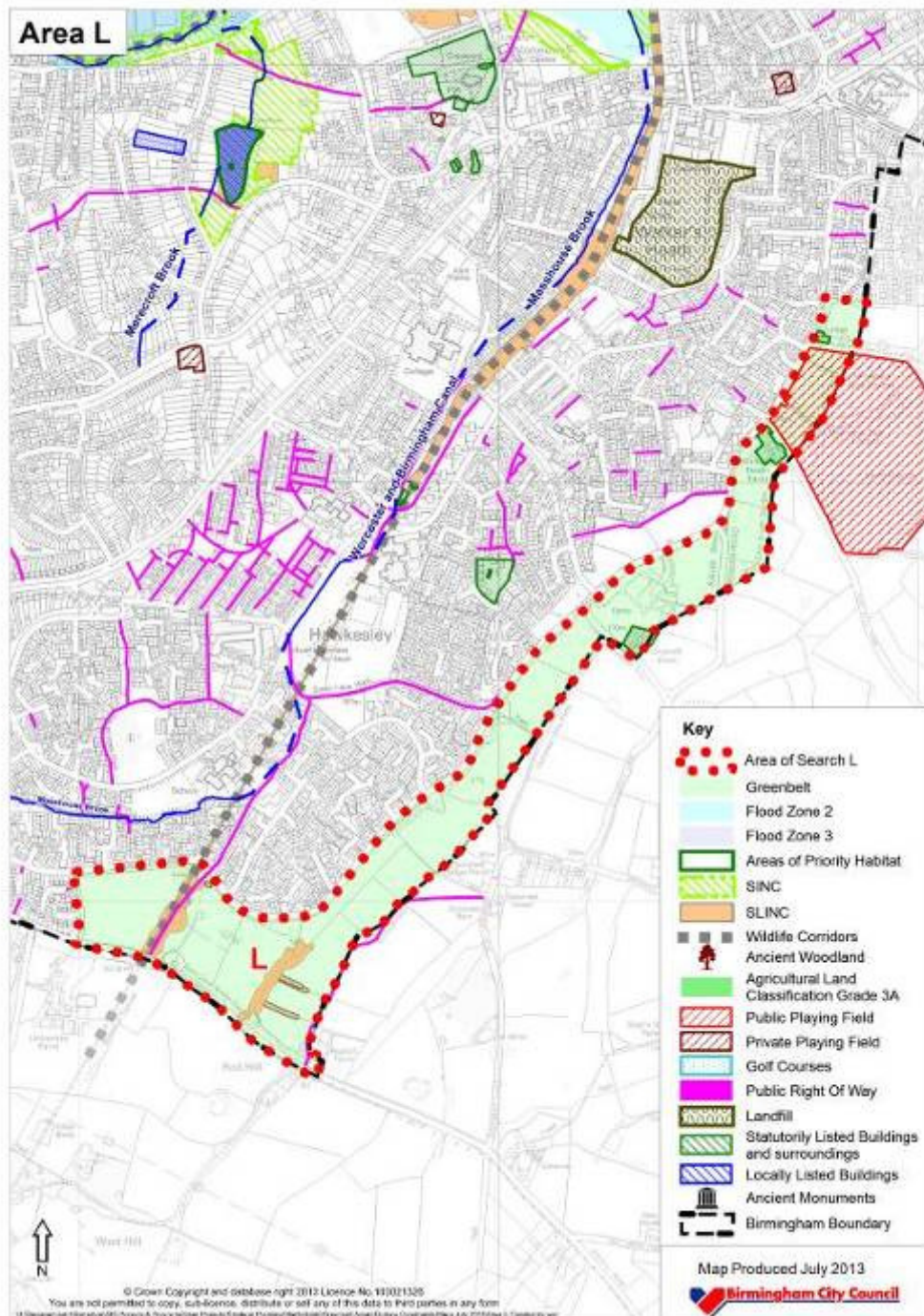
This area of search lies to the south of the City and covers an area of 41 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham to the north. The City boundary lies to the south and adjoins Green Belt in Bromsgrove. The area contains a number of listed buildings, areas of small SLINC and a playing field.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area of Green Belt prevents the expansion of the urban area southwards into adjacent areas of Bromsgrove.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The Green Belt extends over 7 km to the nearest large settlement of Redditch and 2.4 km to small settlement of Hollywood.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This area is long and narrow and has a weak defensible boundary with the wider green belt in Bromsgrove as for most of its length the boundary is made up of fields. This area is very visible for most of its length from the wider Green Belt.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. . There are a few features of historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Criteria	
Archaeology / Ancient Monuments	Walkers Heath Farmhouse, Lilycroft Farmhouse with attached coach house stabling and Barn and Moundsley Lodge are Grade II Listed.
Biodiversity	Washill Tunnel is an elongated SLINC and the area also has two small areas of SLINC.
Value to the local community	Walkers Heath Playing Fields occupies a large part of this area

Conclusion

The location is not suitable for development because it prevents the expansion of the urban area southwards into the adjacent areas of Bromsgrove. Development would intrude into the wider Green Belt as it has a weak defensible boundary and is visible for most of its length from the wider surrounding Green Belt.



Area M- Land at West Heath

Introduction

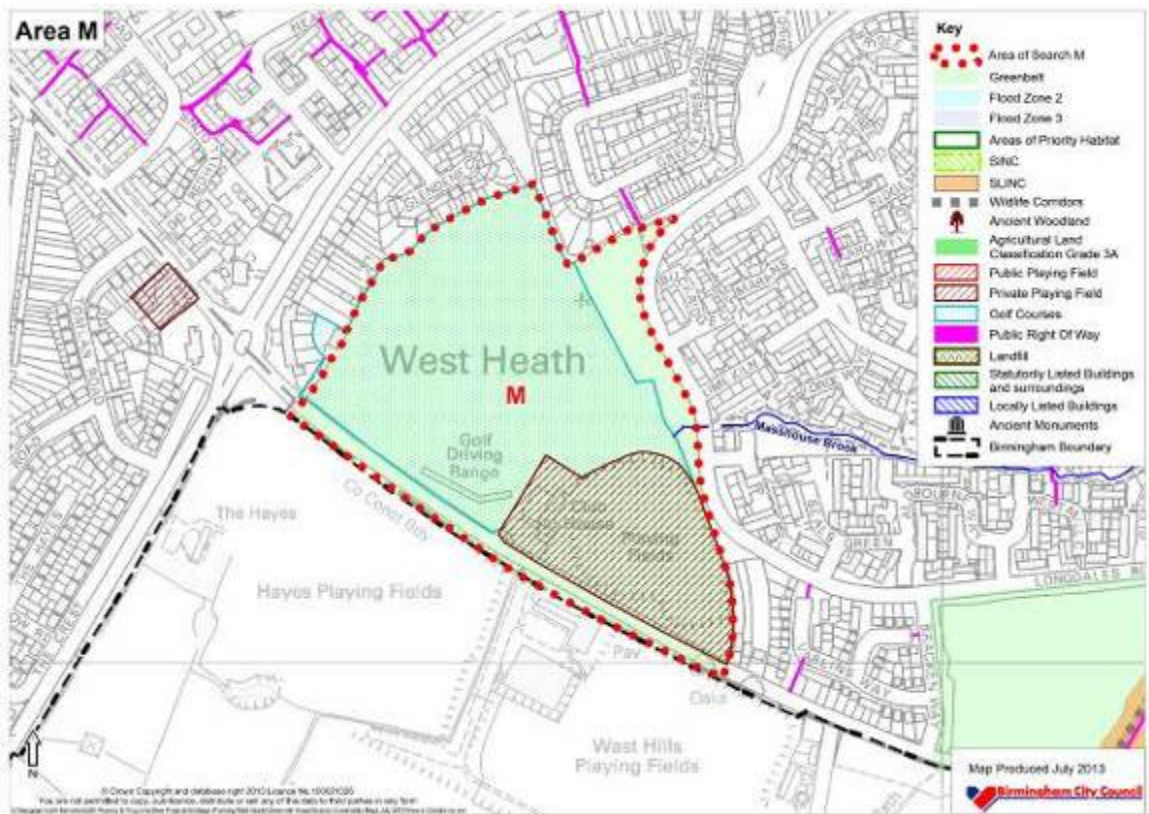
This area of search lies to the south of the City and covers an area of 13 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham to the north. The City boundary to the south and adjoins Green Belt in Bromsgrove. It also contains private playing fields and a golf course.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area of Green Belt prevents the expansion of the urban area southwards into areas of Bromsgrove.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The Green Belt extends over 8.5 km to the nearest large settlement of Bromsgrove and 3.8 km to small settlement of Alvechurch.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This area forms part of the wider area of open countryside which extends southwards into Bromsgrove District and is very visible from the wider Green Belt.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Value to the local community	This area includes the Washhills Private Playing Field and Washhills Golf Course.

Conclusion

This area is not suitable for development as it prevents the expansion of the urban area southwards into the adjacent areas of Bromsgrove. Development would intrude into the wider Green Belt as it has a weak defensible boundary and is visible for most of its length from wider surrounding Green Belt. Also this area is not suitable due to its recreational value.



Area N – Land at Rednal; Part of Lickey Hills

Introduction

This area of search lies to the south of the City and covers an area of 7 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham to the north. The City boundary lies to the south and adjoins Green Belt in Bromsgrove. A SINC, covers most of the area, and it forms part of the Lickey Hills Country Park and Lickey Hills Golf Course.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This small area of Green Belt helps to protect the expansion of the urban area southwards into the Lickey Hills Country Park.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The Green Belt extends over 4.9 km to the nearest large settlement of Bromsgrove and 3.9 km to small settlement of Alvechurch.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This area is very small and has a weak defensible boundary with the wider green belt area in Bromsgrove. Much of it is a SINC and forms part of the Lickey Hills Country Park.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	The majority of area is a SINC, and there are several areas of priority habitats.
Value to the local community	The area contains parts of the Lickey Hills Golf Course and Lickey Hills Country Park.

Conclusion

The location is not suitable for development because it prevents the expansion of the urban area southwards into the Lickey Hills Country Park. Development would intrude into the wider Green Belt as it has a weak defensible boundary and is visible for most of its length from the wider surrounding Green Belt. Also it is not suitable for development because of its nature conservation value and recreational value.



Area O – Land around Bartley and Frankley Reservoirs

Introduction

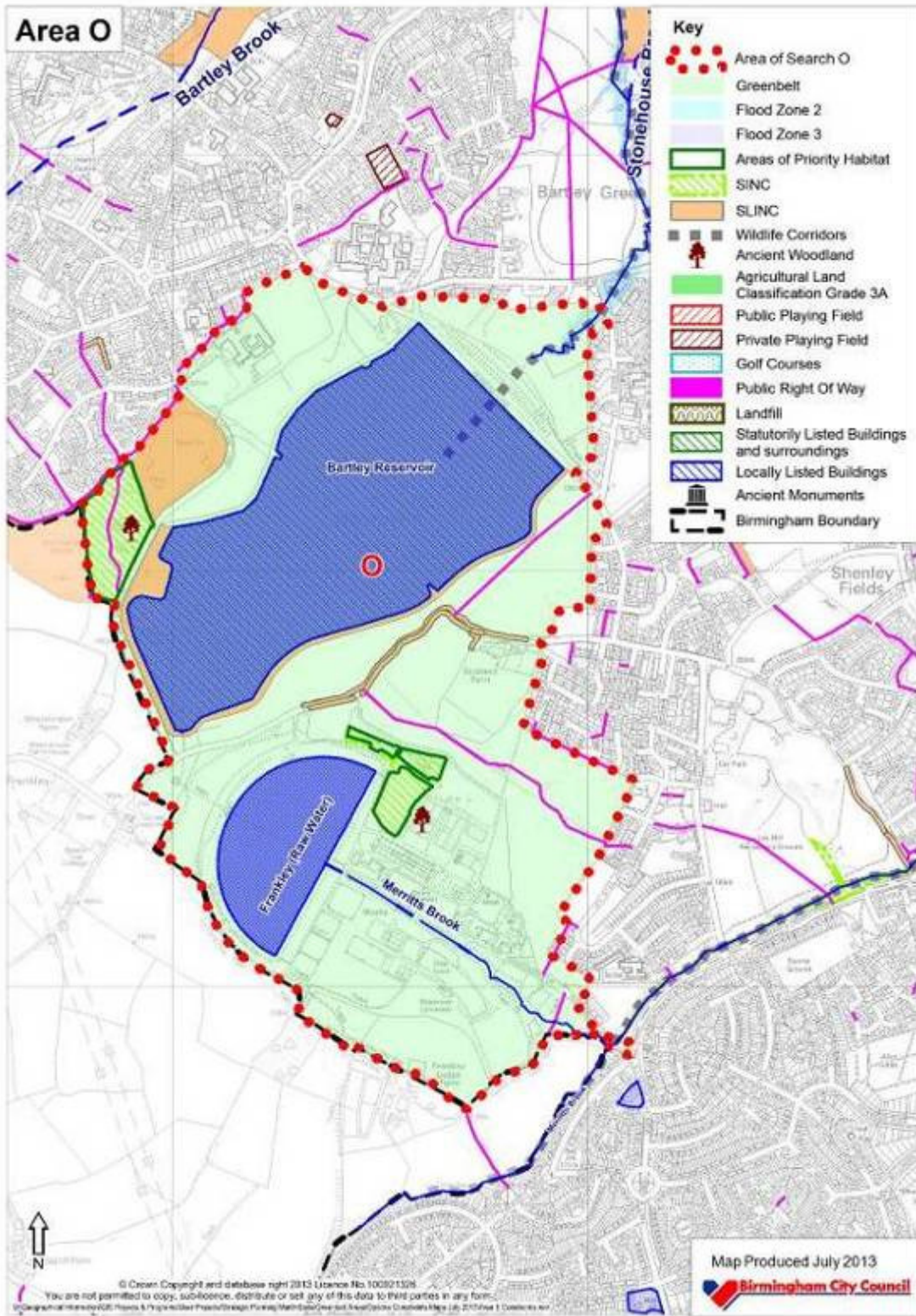
This area of search lies to the south west of the City and covers an area of 181 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham. The City boundary lies to the south west and beyond that lies Green Belt in Bromsgrove. Bartley Reservoir forms a significant part of this area and is a SINC. The area also includes Frankley Reservoir and adjoining SINC, three SLINCs and Merritt's Brook. There are also two areas of Ancient Woodland.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area of Green Belt has some value in helping to prevent the expansion of the urban area southwest into Bromsgrove.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The Green Belt extends over 8.3km to the largest settlement of Bromsgrove and over 3.3km to the smallest settlement of Romsley.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Much of this area is operational land with little countryside value but it does include two SINC, two areas of SLINC, Merritts Brook and two ancient woodlands.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Archaeology / Ancient Monuments	There are two ancient woodlands
Biodiversity	The area contains a large SINC, two smaller SINC and three SLINCs and Merritts Brook

Conclusion

This area is not suitable for development because it prevents the expansion of the urban area southwards into Bromsgrove. The majority of this area is operational land and an area of nature conservation value.



Area P– Part of Woodgate Valley Country Park adjoining the M5

Introduction

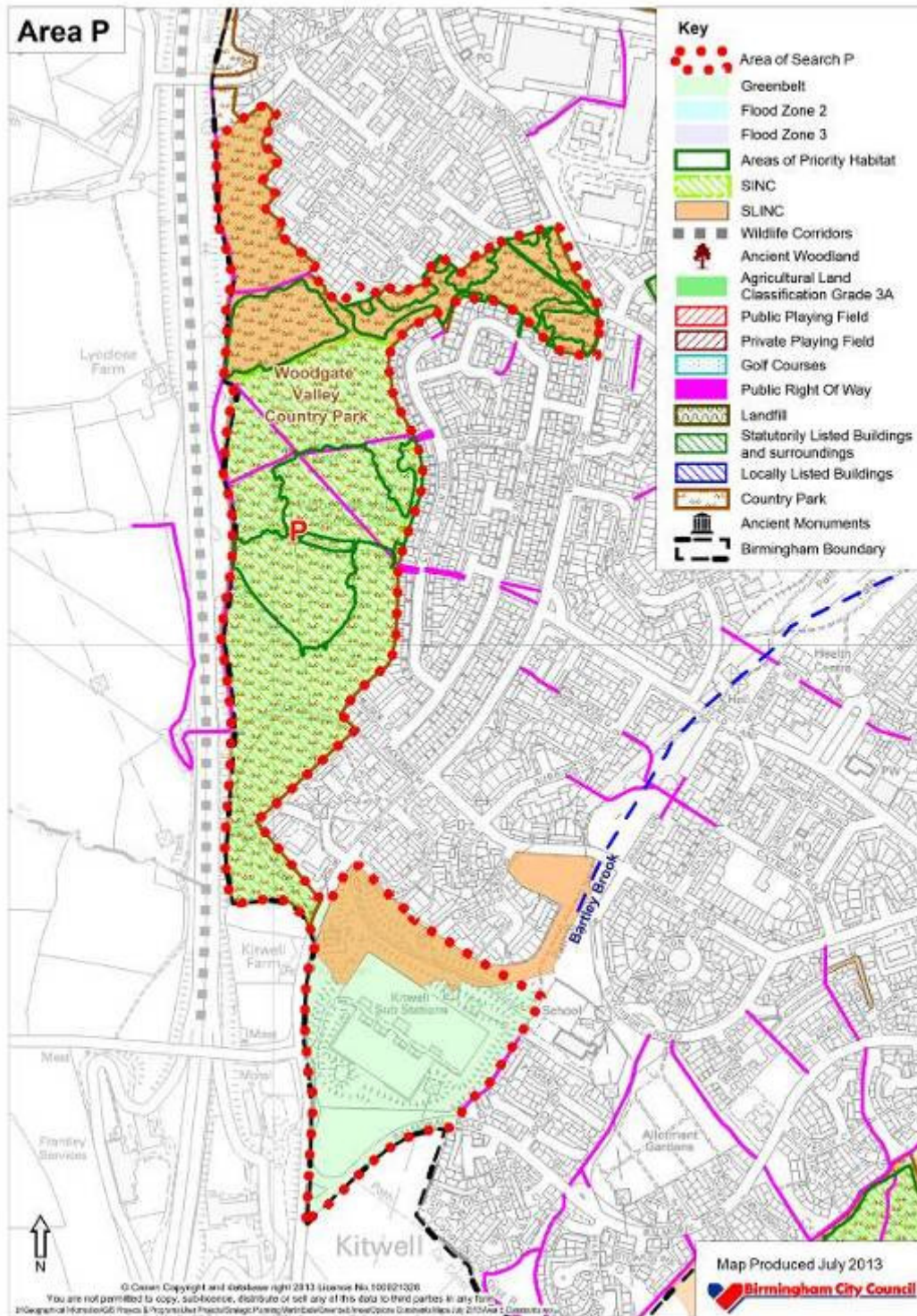
This area of search lies to the south of the City and covers an area of 31 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham to the east. The City boundary lies to the west along with the M5 motorway and beyond that lies the Green Belt in Dudley. This area is largely a SINC with the remainder made of two SLINCs.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This small area of Green Belt has only limited value in preventing the expansion of the urban area westwards into Dudley because of the strong barrier formed by the M5 motorway.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	The Green Belt extends over 8.9 km to the nearest large settlement of and Bromsgrove and 2.7 km to smallest settlement of Romsley.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	There would be limited impact because this small area of Green Belt has a strong defensible boundary to the west being the M5. However, most of this area is classified as a SINC and SLINC and there are a number of priority habitats.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	The area contains a Large SINC, and two SLINCs and a number of priority habitats which cover most of the area.
Value to the local community	The area contains a small part of Woodgate Valley Country Park.
Other	Noise and environmental impacts from the proximity of the M5 would limit development potential.

Conclusion

The location is not suitable for development because of its nature conservation value and recreational value. Noise and environmental impacts from the proximity of the M5 would also limit development potential.



Area Q – Woodgate Valley Country Park

Introduction

This area of search lies into the south/west of the City and covers an area of 158 hectares. The search area is completely surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham. The City boundary (formed by the M5) to the west and beyond that the urban area of Dudley, this area has a large SINC and several SLINCs with Woodgate Valley Country Park, Flood Zones 2 and 3 and the Bournbrook running through it.

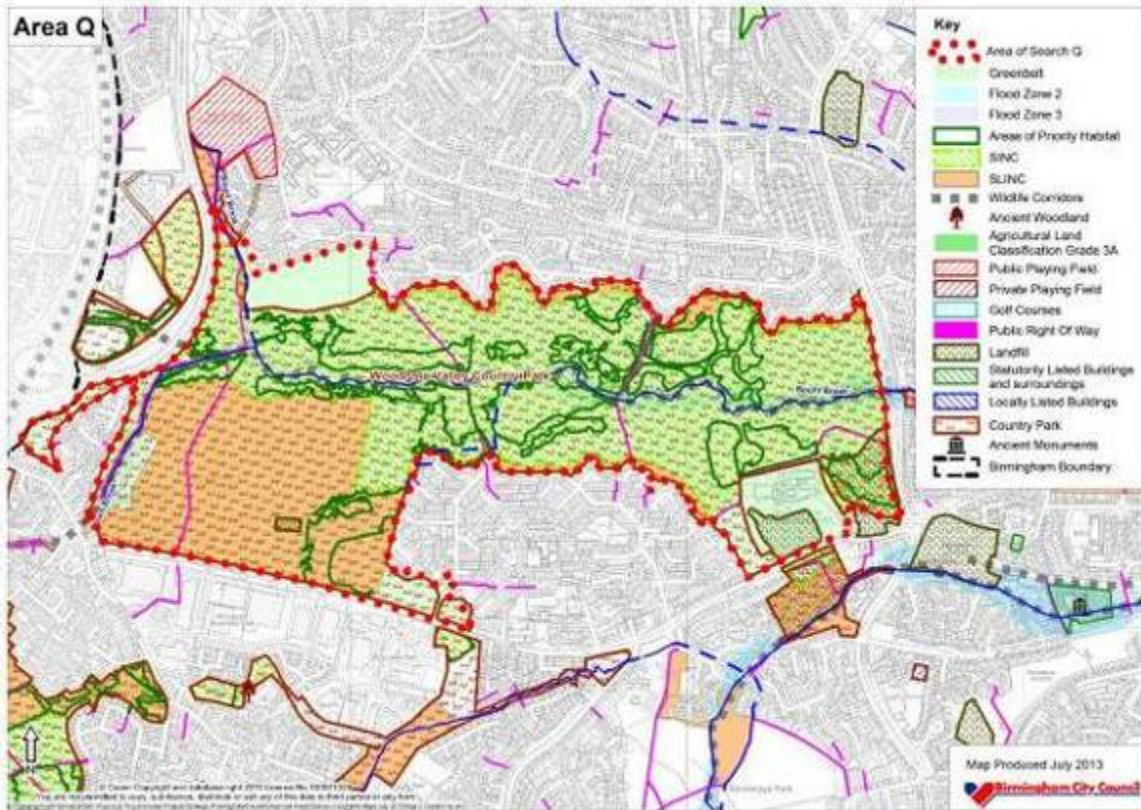
Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area of Green belt has limited function in preventing sprawl as this is a 'green wedge' that is surrounded by the built up areas.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	While this area does not prevent neighbouring towns from merging it does prevent distinctive areas within Birmingham from merging, these being the areas of Quinton to the north and Bartley Green to the South. The biggest largest urban area outside the city boundary is Dudley which is over 8.5 km away, and Halesowen being 2.3 km away.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This is an important area of countryside nearly all of which is covered by a SINC and SLINC, and is designated as a Country Park. Bournbrook runs through the area.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are no features of particular historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Biodiversity	The area contains a large SINC, small SLINCs, a Country Park and the Bournbrook.
Flood risk	Much of the area lies within Flood Zones 2 and 3.
Value to the local community	The area contains Woodgate Valley Country

	Park.
Landfill	There are two small areas of landfill.

Conclusion

The area is not suitable for development as it prevents distinctive areas of Birmingham from merging, and because of its nature conservation value and its recreational value. It is also largely covered by Flood Zone 2 and 3.



Area R– Sandwell Valley

Introduction

This area of search lies to the west of the City and covers an area of 327 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham to the east. The City boundary lies to the north and west and beyond that the Green Belt area of Sandwell. This area has a large SINC and several SLINCs including an elongated SLINC which follows the length of the River Tame. It also forms part of the Sandwell Valley Country Park and includes two golf courses a playing field.

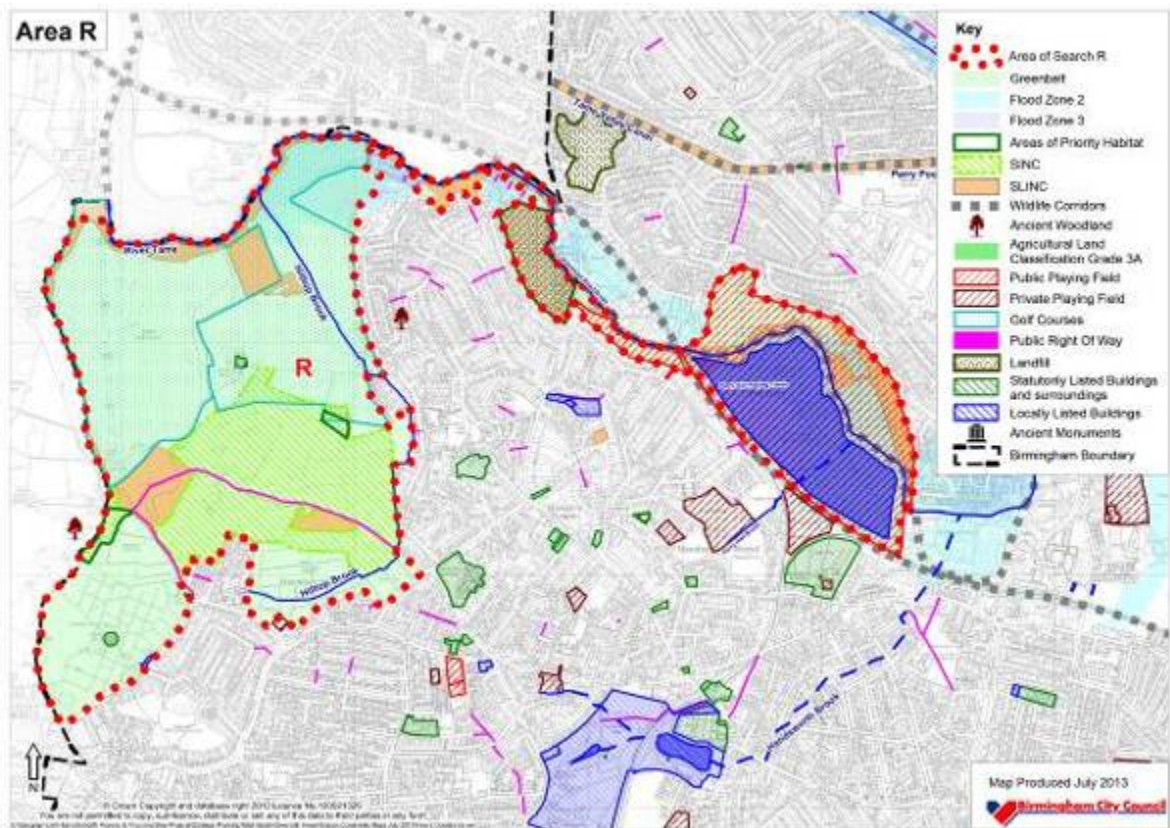
Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area of Green belt has limited function in preventing sprawl as this is a 'green wedge' extending into the built up areas. However it does help to protect the expansion of the urban area southwards into Sandwell.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	While this area does not prevent neighbouring towns from merging it does play an important role in maintaining the distinctiveness of communities within the conurbation, in particular West Bromwich and the Handsworth Wood area of Birmingham
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This is an area of attractive countryside which includes a large SINC and a SLINC and is partly covered by Sandwell Valley Country Park.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. There are a few features of historic interest in this location.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	The City's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Archaeology / Ancient Monuments	The Mortuary Chapel at Handsworth Cemetery is a Grade I Listed building and the Barn at Park Farm is Grade II Listed.
Floodrisk	Areas of Flood Zone 2 and 3 have been identified.
Biodiversity	The area contains a large SINC, several

	SLINCs and a number of priority habitats.
Value to the local community	The area contains Handsworth Golf Course, Hilltop Golf Course, Perry Hall Public Playing Fields and Handsworth Cemetery.
Landfill	There are some areas of landfill.

Conclusion

This area is not suitable for development because of its importance in providing separation between distinct communities, its nature conservation value and recreational value.



Area S- Sutton Park

Introduction

This area of search lies to the north/west of the City and covers an area of 927 hectares. The search area is surrounded by residential areas of Birmingham to the east, north and south. The City boundary lies to the west and beyond that the urban area of Walsall. This area is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and also a registered Historic Park and Garden. A large part of the park is classed as a Scheduled Ancient Monument and there are a number of ancient woodlands and habitats.

Assessment

Function of the Green Belt	Performance against the Criteria
1. To check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas	This area of Green belt has limited function in preventing sprawl as it is a 'green oasis' within the built up area.
2. To prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another	While this area does not prevent neighbouring towns from merging it does play an important role in maintaining the distinctiveness of communities within the conurbation, in particular Kingstanding, Four Oaks and other parts of Sutton Coldfield.
3. To assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	This area comprises a unique, distinctive and highly valuable landscape, the importance of which is reflected in the national designations listed above. It has many functions including sports, recreation, nature conservation, etc.
4. To preserve the setting and special character of historic towns	The function and nature of the Green Belt in Birmingham does not directly relate to the preservation of historic towns as all areas identified adjoin (in part in some instances) the urban area. However this area is important registered Historic Park and Garden and Scheduled Ancient Monument.
5. To assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.	TheC's Green Belt encourages urban regeneration by restricting the amount of greenfield land available for development.
Other Considerations	
Archaeology / Ancient Monuments	The area is a Registered Historic Park and Garden, a large part is a Scheduled Ancient Monument and it contains Ancient Woodlands and Park House which is Grade II Listed.
Biodiversity	Much of the site is an SSSI. It also contains

	a number of SLINCs and priority habitat areas.
Value to Local Community	The parkland is publically accessible and is an important recreational resource. The area also contains the Stonehouse Road Sports and Social Club, Wyndley Leisure Centre and Monmouth Drive Public Playing fields, Sutton Coldfield Golf Course and Boldmere Golf Course.
Landfill	There is a very small area of landfill.

Conclusion

This area is unique and highly valuable landscape with designation as a SSSI, and registered as a Historic Park and Garden. It is also important in providing separation between distinct communities. It also has high nature conservation value and has high recreational value.

