

WYG Planning & Design

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Study Into The Future Growth Implications of Redditch Second Stage Report

January 2009



Main Report

creative minds safe hands





A Study Commissioned by:

The West Midlands Regional Assembly



Worcestershire County Council



Redditch Borough Council



Bromsgrove District Council



Stratford-on-Avon District Council



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Contents

1 Introduction	1
2 Urban Capacity	5
3 Land Requirements	8
4 Constraints on Development	13
5 Site Analysis	21
Area 1: Webheath	23
Area 2: Brockhill	25
Area 3: The South West Redditch Greenbelt	29
Area 4: The Eastern Fringe	30
Area 5: The Southern Gap	34
Area 6: Winyates Triangle	35
Area 7: Beoley	37
Area 8: Bordesley Park	40
Area 9: Foxlydiate Woods	51
Area 10: Ravensbank ADR	58
6 Development Strategy	60
7 Recommendation	63
Appendix 1 - Open Space Review	
Appendix 2 - Open Space Review: Ecology Report	
Appendix 3 - Sustainability Matrix	



1 INTRODUCTION

The Stage I Study

- 1.01 White Young Green Planning (WYG) were jointly appointed by The West Midlands Regional Assembly, Worcestershire County Council, Redditch Borough Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Stratford on Avon District Council in May 2007 to assess the implications for Redditch of achieving each of three growth scenarios then being considered by the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Stage Two Revision. A report entitled '*Joint Study Into The Future Growth Implications of Redditch Town to 2026*' was published in December 2007 and referred to here as the 'Stage I Report'.
- 1.02 Having assessed the quantity of land required the report concluded that there was insufficient existing urban capacity to meet any of the options and that some extensions to the existing urban area would be necessary. The report then undertook a SWOT analysis of the broad alternative locations for this growth.
- 1.03 The Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 designated three Areas of Development Restraint (ADRs) which it recognised may be needed to accommodate future growth. These sites are excluded from the Green Belt but their allocation for development is reserved for consideration by future revisions to the Development Plan (the LDF). These areas could be regarded as being sequentially preferable to other areas of open countryside that have either been considered for development (either as part of previous reviews of the Local Plan or through Section 79 Inquiry) and ruled out, or have never been considered at all.
- 1.04 The identified urban capacity plus the development of the ADRs and Winyates Triangle (an area of White Land within Stratford-on-Avon's administrative area) would be sufficient to meet Option 1 (4,300 dwellings) but further urban extensions which would inevitably involve land designated as Green Belt would be required to cater for either Option 2 or 3 (8,200 and 13,200 dwellings respectively). Much of this land would fall within the neighbouring authorities of Bromsgrove and/or Stratford-on-Avon Districts.



- 1.05 Although these assessments allowed Redditch's levels of green space to be maintained in any expansion area and would facilitate the incorporation of major landscape and ecological features, the extent of urban extension required to meet Option 2 and more particularly Option 3 would be perceived as a major incursion in to surrounding countryside.
- 1.06 The report noted that constraints imposed by the highway infrastructure are generally less to the north than to the south and west and foul drainage is less constrained to the east of the River Arrow and to the south of the town. Expansion northwards including the development of the Brockhill ADR would be relatively close to the town centre and significant savings on vehicle mileage in comparison with the more peripheral locations could be achieved particularly if improved public transportation links are incorporated into any masterplan for the area. For these reasons the report concluded that development to the north of the town would be more likely to result in a more sustainable pattern of development.
- 1.07 Subsequent to the publication of the draft Report the West Midlands Regional Assembly in January 2008 published a Preferred Option for the RSS Stage 2 revision which:
- Revised the start date from 2001 to 2006
 - Allowed for adjustments, including the possibility of compensating additions, to the Green Belt to allow for the most sustainable form of development.
 - Replaced the former designation of Sub-Regional Foci with Settlements of Significant Development which also includes Redditch thereby removing limitations to Redditch's growth imposed by the existing RSS's regional hierarchy.
- 1.08 Due to these changes an addendum was added to the report which noted that if these RSS revisions are accepted by the Secretary of State then it would be open to the three authorities to consider the most appropriate distribution for necessary growth outside the urban area based on the principles of sustainable forms of development as part of the preparation of their Local Development Frameworks. Within that context, one



potential scenario is that most, if not all, of the growth could be accommodated on land currently designated as Green Belt with other land, including that currently designated as ADR, being added to the Green Belt in compensation.

- 1.09 The Regional Assembly has agreed that as part of the RSS Preferred Option, the level of growth at Redditch for the revised plan period of 2006-2026 should be 6,600 dwellings, some of which would need to be provided on land within the administrative areas of Bromsgrove and/or Stratford-upon-Avon District Councils.
- 1.10 The report calculated that about 150 hectares of Green Belt could be required in the adjacent authorities to accommodate housing growth, together with related employment and community land uses.

The Stage II Study

- 1.11 Following publication of the Preferred Strategy Government Office west Midlands (GOWM) commissioned Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners to undertake a study to provide the Panel undertaking the Examination in Public with further options that could deliver higher housing numbers.
- 1.12 The study was published on 7th October 2008 and, whilst it does not recommend allocating any additional growth to Redditch Borough, it suggests that 2,500 units from Bromsgrove's additional growth could be associated with the town. This Stage II study will therefore consider two growth options based on 6,600 and 9,100 dwellings.
- 1.13 The study will review the findings of the 2007 study and consider in more detail how best to distribute the required growth scenarios to Redditch's existing urban area including land within Bromsgrove and Stratford on Avon District Council areas.
- 1.14 This study builds upon the Addendum to the Stage I Study and is an objective appraisal of the most appropriate way of accommodating the growth options not constrained by the administrative boundaries of the local authorities or policy designations of Green Belt or Areas of Development Restraint (ADR). For these reasons the report's findings differ to those of the prevailing Local Plans, the emerging LDF core strategies and the



2006 Masterplan for North West Redditch which considered the development of the Brockhill ADR and proposals for the redevelopment of the Abbey Stadium.

- 1.15 This study will review what existing capacity exists within the Redditch urban area to accommodate new development, consider the advantages and disadvantages of alternative growth patterns and identify potential sites to meet the growth requirements.
- 1.16 Redditch Borough Council (RBC) are undertaking a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which will evaluate the sources of residential capacity. As part of this study we have carried out a partial review of RBC Open Needs Assessment which has identified some potential surplus open space which has been fed in to the SHLAA. The preliminary findings of the SHLAA have been taken into account in this study.
- 1.17 RBC are also carrying out an assessment of employment land. The findings of this study are not available and we will therefore use the employment land requirements for Redditch from the Preferred Option of the RSS and calculations of existing employment land capacity.
- 1.18 The study considers what land requirements will be required as sustainable urban extensions (SUEs) to meet the two growth scenarios taking into account these identified capacities and making allowances to provide open space, education and community services such as local shops and community facilities.
- 1.19 We have also considered the likely form and character of these urban extensions. Redditch has a unique urban form stemming from its design as a New Town. It is characterised by large areas of banded tree planting and landscaping associated with the principal distributor roads which shield and separate the individual districts and neighbourhoods.
- 1.20 This raises the issue as to whether these urban extensions should continue this form and character or should higher densities be adopted to minimise the extent of these incursions into the surrounding countryside. There is clearly a balance that must be



struck and the study is based on achieving a minimum density of 35 dwellings per hectare.

1.21 This equates to 22.75 dwellings per gross developable area which allows for open space, and principal distributor roads. This is higher than the density of 30 dph adopted by RBC's SHLAA but should enable sufficient flexibility in the design and layout of the expansion areas to maintain the established characteristics of Redditch. By incorporating land that is less suitable for development, such as that at risk of flooding, for amenity use the extent of these incursions into the surrounding countryside will be minimised.

1.22 In considering the issue of sustainability we have had regard to the following factors:

- Proximity to town centre
- Proximity to employment opportunities
- Proximity to transportation corridors and routes
- Quality of landscape
- Visibility of development
- Relationship with existing urban form
- Cost and availability of infrastructure
- Opportunity to develop critical mass to support local services

1.23 These factors are reflected in the Sustainability Matrix contained in Appendix 3 and in the individual site assessments in Section 5.



2 URBAN CAPACITY

2.01 A Review of Existing Residential Land Capacity

2.02 Redditch Borough Council are undertaking a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) which has calculated capacity from the following sources:

Total dwellings at a density of 30 dph	1121
Total dwellings in windfall allowance	432
Total dwellings identified through SHLAA	1553
Completions 06 to 08	690
Sub Total	2243

2.03 We are of the opinion that 30 dph used in the local authority's SHLAA is not sufficiently ambitious and does not reflect densities that have been achieved by actual site assessments and developments. We have therefore increased the assessment to 35 dph which equates to an additional capacity of 187 dwellings.

Additional dwellings @ 35 DPH	187
Total	2430
RSS Target	3300
Shortfall	870

2.04 The Stage I report contained an assessment of urban capacity which amounted to 736 from surveyed capacity, and 805 from trend based capacity (from Table 3) and 1050 from the Webheath and Brockhill ADRs. Therefore the capacity from undeveloped assets has reduced from 2591 to 2003 largely through the deletion of Webheath which accounts for 600 dwellings. In addition the RSS requires an additional 3,300 dwellings to meet the 'needs' of Redditch to be provided within Bromsgrove and/or Stratford-on-Avon District Council areas.



A Review of Open Space

- 2.05 Redditch is a planned new town that incorporates good levels of open space including Arrow Valley Park which is regarded as a regional facility. There are large areas of landscaping to the principal roads leading to a perception of high levels of green space.
- 2.06 The Council commissioned Scott Wilson to undertake a Review of Open Space in 2005. The report concluded that the present levels of Open Space which amount to 7.48 hectares per 1000 population should be maintained. This standard of provision was incorporated into the land requirement calculations contained in the Stage I report.
- 2.07 As there is insufficient urban capacity available to accommodate any of the growth scenarios extensions to the urban area are inevitable. In order to minimise the extent of these incursions into the surrounding countryside a partial review of the Scott Wilson report was undertaken to ensure that there was no underutilised green space that should more properly be assessed to see if additional capacity for housing could be identified.
- 2.08 A review of two typologies; 'Amenity Open Space' and 'Semi-Natural Open Space' was undertaken. Six sites were identified and included for assessment as part of the SHLAA by the Borough Council. Capacity for an additional 147 dwellings was identified. The full assessment is included in this report as Appendix 1.



3 LAND REQUIREMENTS

Residential

3.01 Our assessment of the quantities of land required to meet the levels of growth over and above existing urban capacity are based on achieving a net density of 35 dwellings per hectare. As this development will be provided on large sites we have allowed 35% of the land to be used for open space, estate roads and primary schools. This equates to 22.75 dwellings per hectare gross. This figure is within the range first advanced by 'Tapping the Potential' in 1999 and this approach has not been subject to contrary advice since.

3.02 We have revised the potential residential capacity from the SHLAA. This is outlined in paragraph 2.01 above. Allowing for an existing urban capacity of 2,430 dwellings the net requirements to meet the two growth scenarios are 4,170 and 6,670 dwellings. Therefore at a gross density of 22.75 dph the land requirements will be 183 ha and 293 ha.

Employment

3.03 The RSS preferred option says that 51 ha of employment land will be required of which 24 ha will be provided within Bromsgrove and/or Stratford-on-Avon and therefore 27 ha will be in Redditch.



3.04 According to Redditch Borough Council's 'Employment Commitments in Redditch Borough' total commitments in April 2008 amounted to:

Allocated Sites in LP3	5.55 ha
Post LP3 adoption	12.84 ha
Ravensbank	4.67 ha
Completions 2006-08	7.65 ha
Total	30.71 ha

3.05 Therefore to meet an increase of 6600 dwellings an additional 20.3 ha of employment land will need to be identified. In the absence of a more accurate assessment of the employment land required to support the higher growth option of 9,100 dwellings we have made pro rata increase in employment land amounting to 39.6 ha.

Open Space

3.06 The gross residential density figure of 22.75 dwellings per hectare allows for a proportion of developable land to be utilised for parks and playing fields and no separate allowance has been made.

Other Uses

3.07 Allowance has been made for sufficient land to provide for a High School and two Middle Schools amounting to 14 hectares which would service both growth options. This is based on the assumption that growth is largely concentrated as a single urban extension. First Schools are included within the 35% discount referred to in paragraph 3.01 above.



3.08 An allowance has also been made for a District Centre providing convenience retailing and local services together with community uses such as church facilities should be allowed for at 0.8 ha hectare per 1,000 dwellings. Again, this assumes that most of growth is concentrated in a single location.

	RSS PREFERRED OPTION	NLP GROWTH OPTION
Growth Option (dwellings)	6,600	9,100
Urban Capacity	2,430	2,430
Net Requirement	4,170	6,670
Residential Area (@22.75 dph)	183.3 HA	293.2 HA
Employment (Net)	20.3 HA	39.6 HA
Education	14 HA	14 HA
Retail & Community (0.8ha/1000 dwellings)	3.3 HA	5.3 HA
TOTAL	220.9 HA	352.1 HA

3.09 The tables on the following pages compares the land requirements assessed by the Stage I study with those now being proposed. There are a number of reasons for the variations between the studies:

- The amount of identified urban capacity which has decreased from 4,173 to 2,430.
- The Stage I study maintained the existing open space standard of 7.43 ha per 1000 population. This study has used a more commonly accepted standard of discounting net density.
- The Stage I study used a basic formula to calculate employment land requirements. This study is based on the Revised RSS figure which we



have increased pro rata for the higher growth option which generates a higher figure. This matter will be further refined by the RBC Employment Study which is being undertaken which may result in modifications to the figures used.

- We have used higher estimates for other uses to accommodate secondary schools within the expansion area. Whilst these schools may not be required in the early phases of development, one of the principles of a sustainable urban extension is the provision of services and facilities on a local basis and we are of the opinion that sufficient land capacity should be allowed on this basis.

For these reasons the figures contained in this report should be regarded as more robust than the more strategic assessments in the Stage I report.

Stage I Study

	RSS Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Dwellings	4,300	8,200	13,200
Net Residential Land (ha)*	5.73	181.46	406.81
Employment (ha)	8.2	15.62	25.14
Other uses	1.79	3.4	13,84
Total	17.82	200.48	445.43

* Allowing for existing urban capacity. Residential and Open Space figures from 2007 Report amalgamated for comparison purposes.



Stage II Study

	Preferred Option	+ Growth
Dwellings	6,600	9,100
Net Residential Land (ha)	183.3	293.2
Employment (ha)	20.3	39.6
Other uses	17.3	19.3
Total	220.9	352.1

3.10 All of these options with the exception of the RSS Option 1 in the Stage I study require significant extensions to the urban area.



4 CONSTRAINTS ON DEVELOPMENT

4.01 In this section we consider factors that will influence the choice of location including prevailing policy issues and the provision of infrastructure.

Policy Issues

The Areas of Development Restraint

4.02 The review of the RSS has opened the door to alterations to the Green Belt Boundary in order to accommodate necessary growth in the most sustainable form. Therefore this report will evaluate the ADRs alongside other potential urban extensions which are currently Green Belt and the eventual selection made on which option best meets objectives such as sustainable development. This may alter the balance of land to be found within and beyond the boundaries of the Borough Council.

The Green Belt

4.03 Any alterations to the established Green Belt are likely to be controversial and will require careful consideration and justification. Before contemplating any variation to the existing boundaries and whether the modification to boundaries in one direction would be inherently more harmful than another it is necessary to consider the original objectives of Green Belts.

4.04 Planning Policy Guidance 2: Green Belts (PPG2) states the purposes of Green Belts to be:

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



- 4.05 A common objective of many planning policies and recent development plans seek to prevent the unnecessary sprawl of urban development by giving priority to the redevelopment of brownfield sites and other sites within the urban area before looking at extensions and in so doing this assists in safeguarding the countryside. Redditch is not a historic town and does not have significant areas of brownfield land. Therefore the principal aim of the Redditch Green Belt is to prevent neighbouring towns coalescing, to prevent unnecessary sprawl and to safeguard the countryside.

Landscape

- 4.06 Landscape quality and character will impose constraints on any strategy for developing outside the existing urban area of Redditch. The Bromsgrove Local Plan designates Landscape Protection Areas and Areas of Great Landscape Value and the Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan designates Special Landscape Areas. These are qualitative designations and should carry significant weight when assessing the relative merits of potential areas of development.
- 4.07 Worcestershire County Council published a document and on-line assessment tool entitled "Planning for Landscape in Worcestershire: Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment: Process, Products and its Role in the Planning System" in June 2008.
- 4.08 The areas around Redditch fall into two main landscape types. These are the "Wooded Estatelands" and the "Principal Timbered Farmlands". The Wooded Estatelands type covers land to the north of the town, from Bromsgrove Highway in the west to Icknield Street in the east, including the Brockhill and Bordesley areas. It also covers land to the south of the town including the land between Redditch and Studley and as far west as the A441. The general description of this landscape type is:

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



4.09 The "Principal Timbered Farmlands" type is to be found to the west and south west of Redditch including land to the west of the Bromsgrove Highway and the Webheath area and also land to the east and north east of the town, including the Mappleborough Green area and the area around Beoley. The general description of this landscape type says:

"This is a complex, in places intimate landscape of irregularly shaped woodlands, winding lanes and frequent wayside dwellings and farmsteads. It is a landscape of great interest and exception, yet also one of balance. The Principal Timbered Farmlands are characterised by a mosaic of agricultural land cleared directly from woodland, on a piecemeal basis, together with land enclosed from former localised areas of open fields, resulting in the dispersed pattern of farmsteads and wayside cottages and lack of strong settlement nuclei."

4.10 Other smaller areas include "Riverside Meadows" - a narrow strip of land along the Arrow Valley to the south of the town, and "Principal Wooded Hills" – the hillside to the northeast of the Ravensbank employment area.

4.11 Interrogation of the mapping system (available at <http://gis.worcestershire.gov.uk/website/lca/viewer.htm>) provides more localised information on key features such as woodlands and tree belts, ponds and streams. The land take we have assumed for the alternative growth options allow for key features to be preserved and these should be taken account of at the detailed masterplanning stage.

4.12 Allowance can be made for major landscape features in calculating gross development areas and detailed site masterplanning would take account of more localised features such as valuable hedgerows and specimen trees. The analysis interprets the attributes of the landscapes in a descriptive and non judgmental way and does not attempt to provide a comparative assessment of the relative importance or merits of each landscape type. As a result the analysis does not preclude development per se nor does it assist in evaluation of the relative qualities of the areas.



Transport

- 4.13 The Summary of Key Issues affecting Redditch from the Worcestershire Local Transport Plan 2006 – 2011 states:

Redditch, located in the north of the county, has relatively few problems relating to traffic congestion or air quality, which is in large part due to the highway network within the town being developed as part of the New Town expansion from the 1960's. However, accessibility can be a problem in some areas of the town, despite a reasonable bus network, and there are significant community safety concerns regarding use of the footpath and subways network. There is a proposal for a major commercial leisure development at Abbey Stadium, to the north of the town, which has significant transport implications. This was the subject of a Public Inquiry in November 2005, and if planning approval is granted it is likely to be built during the LTP2 period. This development would have a major impact on travel patterns within Redditch, as detailed below. A Bus Quality Partnership has been established within the town, and this has successfully secured funding for investment in public transport facilities within the town. Rail access to the town is via a single-track line from Barnt Green. Whilst a reasonable service is provided from Redditch to Birmingham as part of the Cross-city line, interchange with rail services to other parts of the County are poor. The main concern over traffic congestion relates to the highway network in the south-eastern area of Redditch, and the confirmation that the A435 (T) Studley Bypass will not go ahead means that alternative solutions to such congestion will need to be identified.

- 4.14 Whilst the Abbey Stadium proposals referred to did not receive planning permission paragraph 4.8.2 of the plan gives a clear indication of the highway requirements for a major development to the north-west of the centre.



4.15 If the proposal ultimately secures planning approval, it is programmed for construction during the LTP2 period. The Transportation Assessment for the development identified the impact of the additional travel demand upon the local highway network, and following discussions with the County Council and the Highways Agency the following transport strategy was agreed:

- Construction of the A441 Bordesley Bypass along with associated junction improvements on the A441 at the Riverside Roundabout in Redditch, and at the M42 Junction 2.
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive site Travel Plan, including improvements to the local walking and cycling networks to provide direct access between the site and surrounding residential areas, the town centre (including bus and rail stations), and the National Cycle Network. Bus services including a shuttle bus between the site and the town centre would also be provided.
- Introduction of traffic management measures on the Bypassed section of the existing A441 through Bordesley village, to deter through traffic, improve conditions for pedestrians and cyclists, and to improve facilities for bus passengers. If the development goes ahead, this package would be primarily funded by a partnership of Redditch Borough Council and the developer. Although the A441 Bordesley Bypass is a recognised new road proposal within the Worcestershire County Structure Plan, it is not a scheme of regional significance and under current traffic conditions is not considered a priority for the County Council. However, the County Council has agreed to make a contribution of up to £1 million towards the construction costs of the Bypass to ensure that the road is built to a dual carriageway standard as this is considered the most appropriate and safest standard of road for the forecast traffic flows.



- 4.16 A considerable amount of information was collected during the preparation of the 2007 WYG Report. In addition consultants Mott MacDonald have carried out a strategic assessment for the Regional Assembly.

Rail

- 4.17 The aim of the RSS is to meet local and sub-regional economic and social needs in the most sustainable way without attracting investment or migration from the MUAs (Para 3.11 of RSS Phase Two – Preferred Option, December 2007). One of the main principles of sustainable development is to reduce the need to travel particularly by car. It will therefore be necessary to balance new housing and population growth with employment opportunities. Conversely the conurbation will continue to rely on towns such as Redditch to provide some of its labour requirements and some level of out commuting is inevitable. It is therefore important to provide, where possible, a realistic alternative to the private car for journeys to work.

- 4.18 Redditch is the terminal station on the line from Birmingham New Street. The capacity is limited to half-hourly services because it is a single track from Barnt Green to Redditch. There are proposals to develop a second platform at Redditch station which will enable capacity to be increased to a 20 minute service.

Services Infrastructure

- 4.19 A considerable amount of information and analysis was collected and carried out in the preparation of the 2007 Report. The conclusion was that with the exception of foul drainage that services could be provided without abnormal expenditure to all areas around Redditch.
- 4.20 Royal Haskoning have been jointly commissioned by Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council to carry out a Water Cycle Strategy and a draft report was published in September 2008. The report considers water and drainage infrastructure requirements to meet the RSS Stage Two Revision Preferred Option based on the development of existing urban capacity and the Brockhill, Webheath and A435 ADRs.



4.21 With regards to the supply of potable water paragraph 6.4.1 of the report says:

Consultation with STW identifies that, with the improvements to water supply listed in Section 6.3.3, water supply should not be a problem in Bromsgrove and Redditch as there is sufficient headroom in the system. They also stated that it is unlikely that the timing of development will prove a restriction on water supply and that the size and duration of the deficits would be substantially reduced through water efficiency measures and design in both new and existing development, point 5 in Section 6.3.3. However, it is a concern that the system is already shown as being in deficit within this area of the WRZ and is reliant upon the improvements mentioned in such a short time scale. In addition, STW did indicate that if development targets were increased dramatically beyond those stated in the Draft WMRSS, shortfalls of water supply may become much more problematic, although it was the location of the higher development predictions that were most limiting.

Section 6.3.3 refers to planned improvements to the supply infrastructure throughout the Sever Trent region

4.22 The study area is served by two sewage treatment works. Their catchments are divided by a ridge of higher ground running from northeast to southwest through Redditch. Land to the north of this ridge drains to the Spernal sewage treatment works catchment area, whereas the area to the south of the ridge drains to the Priest Bridge sewage treatment works. Sewage from parts of the Priest Bridge is pumped over this ridge to the Spernal STW.

4.23 There are two main foul sewers systems through Redditch and both are operating at capacity which is exceeded during storms. The problem is especially critical between Batchley and Ipsley Church Lane.

4.24 There is no capacity within the sewage system of Redditch Borough for any surface water flow and it will be necessary for any development to incorporate suitable SUDS systems to attenuate and balance any surface water runoff. Because of geological conditions open storage is preferable where practical.



4.25 Since the publication of the Stage I report the government has announced that a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) may be introduced on future developments. This is intended to secure contributions to a wide range of both social and physical infrastructure investments that would be required to support the growth of towns. The provision of Infrastructure Plans which will deal with the implementation of proposals will be part of the LDF process. Given the scale of developments proposed we have no reason to believe that the provision of infrastructure to the preferred locations would be abnormal such as to affect the viability of proposals.



5 SITE ANALYSIS

5.01 The Stage I report undertook a SWOT analysis of land around Redditch and concluded that if there was a need to identify land outside the boundaries of Redditch that sites to the north off the A441 and north west off the A448 provided the greatest opportunities in terms of accessibility to the town centre and that the servicing of sites to the west of the River Arrow were disadvantaged due to foul sewerage capacity issues.

5.02 We have reviewed the following locations for growth which are indicated on the map on the following page:

Sites within Redditch Borough

1. Webheath
2. Brockhill
3. South West Redditch Greenbelt

Sites within Redditch Borough and Stratford-on-Avon Districts

4. The Eastern Fringe
5. The Southern Gap

Site within Stratford-on-Avon District

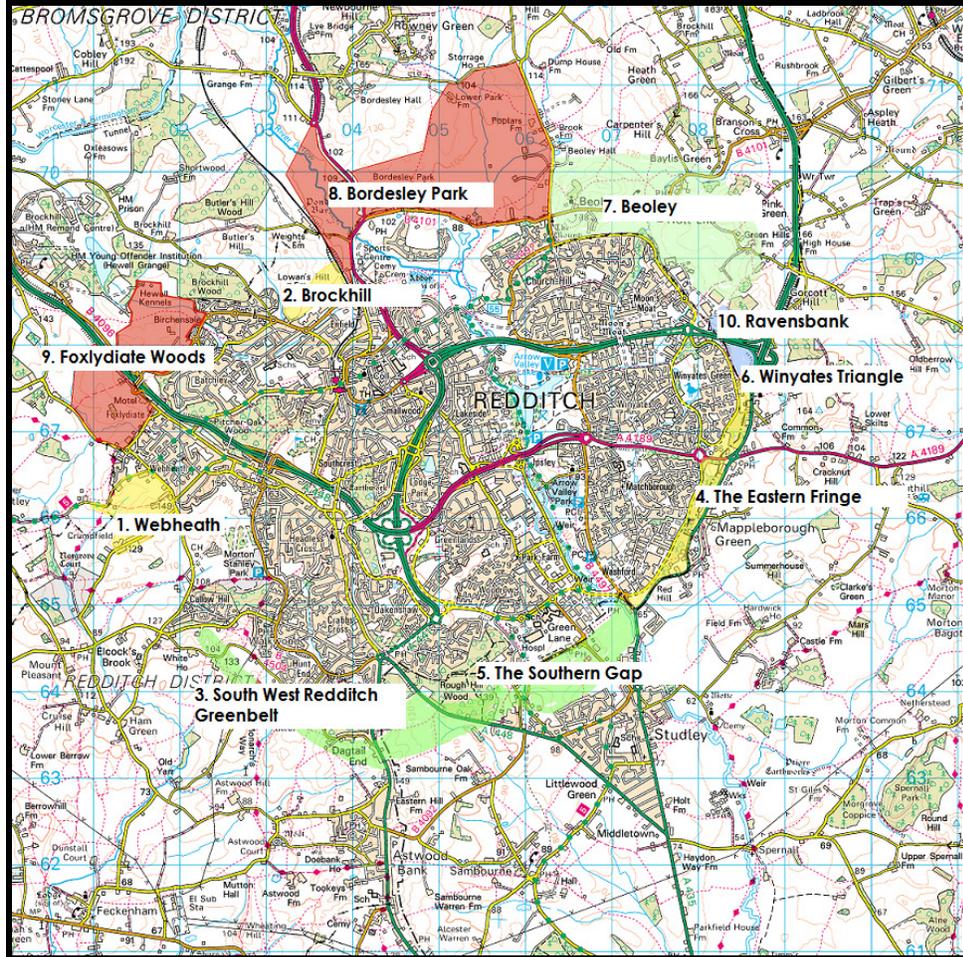
6. Winyates Triangle

Sites within Bromsgrove District

7. Beoley
8. Bordesley Park
9. Foxlydiate Woods
10. Ravensbank



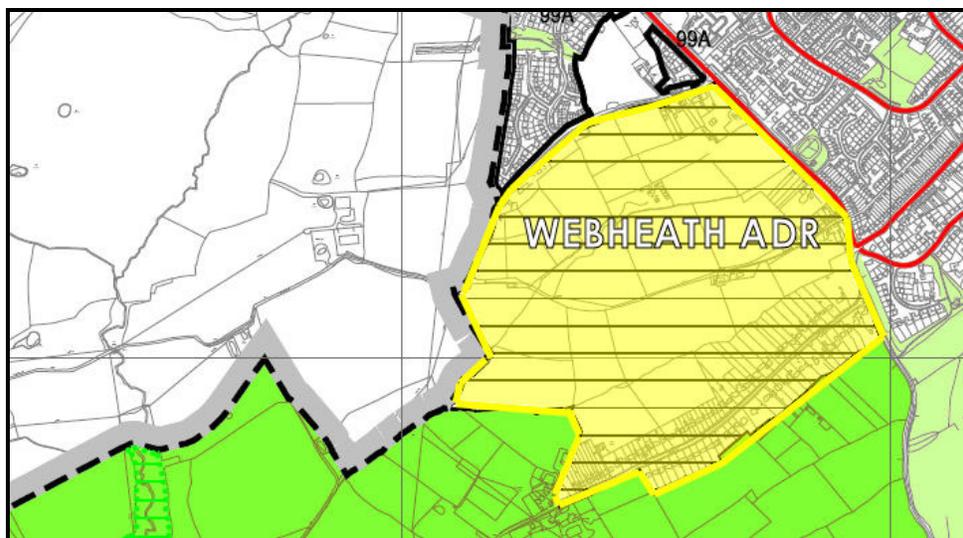
Plan 1: Possible Alternative Growth Locations



Area 1: Webheath

- 5.03 Webheath is allocated in the Redditch Local Plan as an Area of Development Restraint (ADR). It has therefore been identified as an area of possible future development and is excluded from the designated Green Belt. The following plan is an extract from the Redditch Local Plan showing the Webheath ADR coloured yellow.

Plan 2: The Webheath ADR

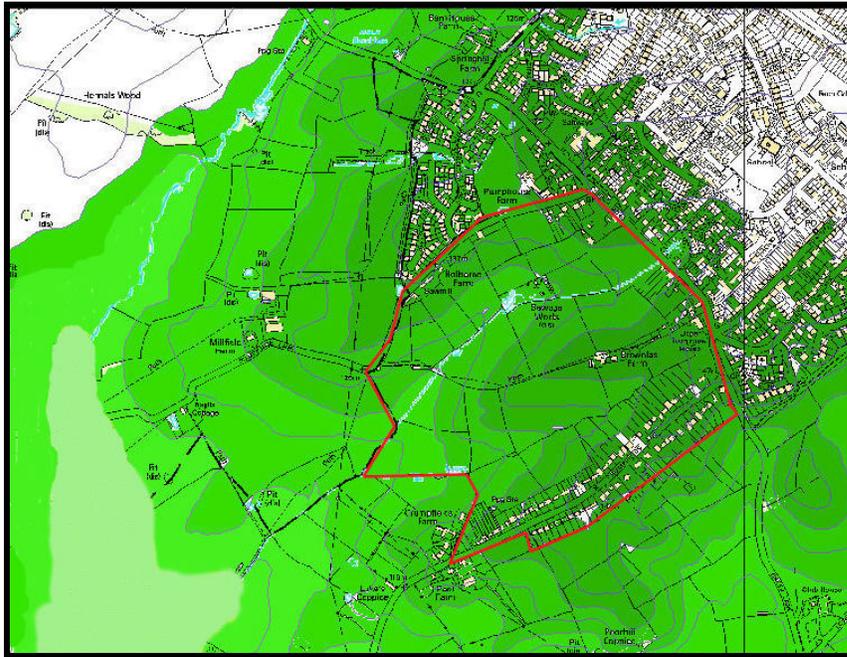


- 5.04 This is an undulating area of land of, in our opinion, high landscape value containing pasture land with mature hedgerows and trees of individual quality. The landform of the site integrates the site in to the open countryside to the west with twin valleys running south-west to north-east. Any development would in our view be intrusive and poorly related to the existing developed areas. This is shown on the plan over page.
- 5.05 The non developed part of the ADR amounts to 33.9 ha which at 22.75 dph could accommodate 771 dwellings although in practice the site's topography is likely to reduce this number. However the road network in the area is poor and this limits the development capacity of Webheath to 600 dwellings.
- 5.06 It is understood that 150 dwellings have already been constructed in the area reducing the outstanding capacity to 450 dwellings. Accessibility to public transport, the town



centre and main employment sites is poor. For these reasons we are of the opinion that the Webheath ADR should not be developed and would more properly be treated as an extension to the neighbouring Green Belt.

Plan 3: Webheath Topography



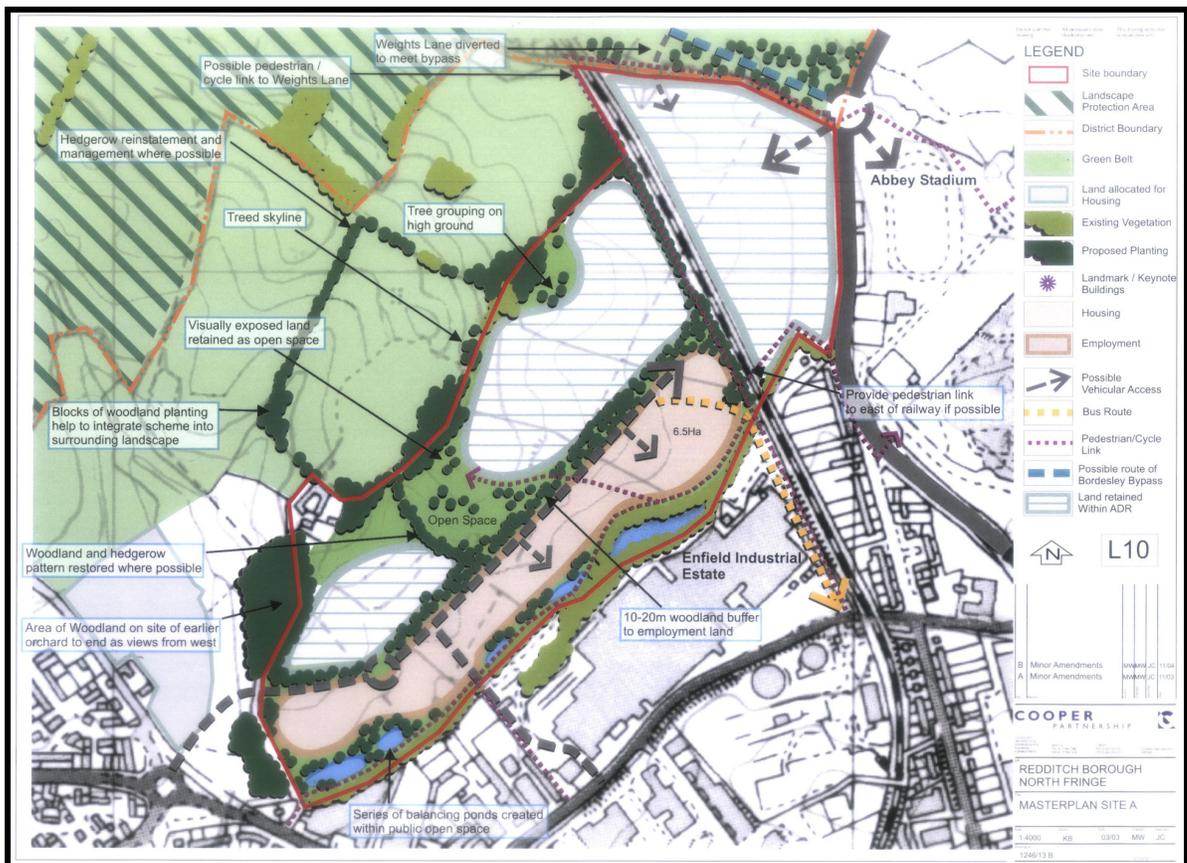
Advantages	Disadvantages
Established ADR	Distant from the town centre
Not Green Belt	Poor communications
	Not well linked to cycleways and footpath systems
	Distant from employment sites
	Difficult foul drainage
	Principal Timbered Farmlands landscape of good condition. Highly visually sensitive. Development here would be visually intrusive



Area 2: Brockhill

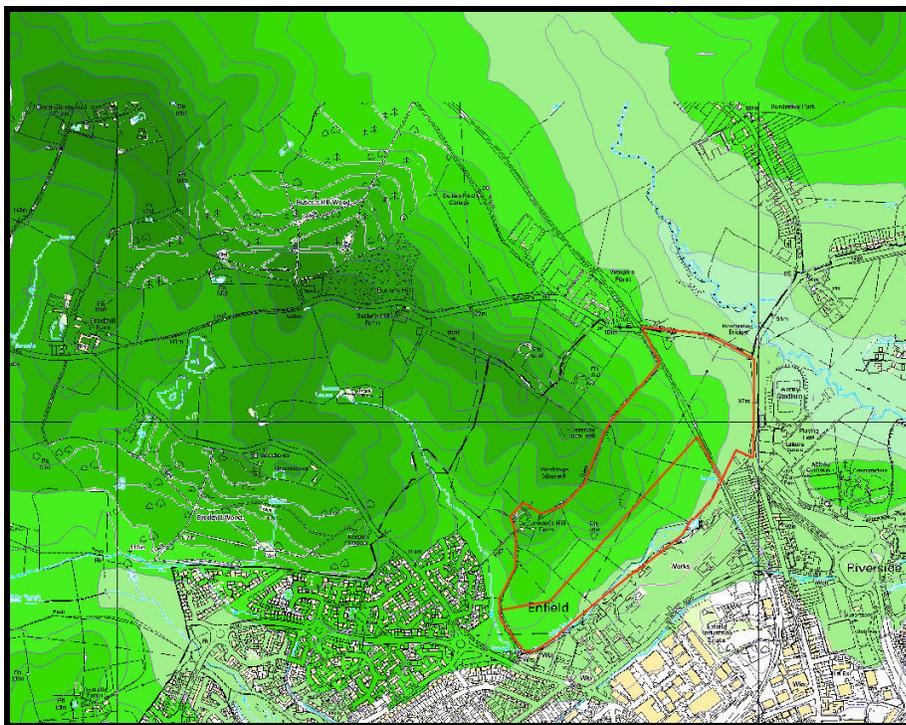
- 5.07 As with Webheath, Brockhill is allocated as an ADR in the Redditch Local Plan and as such is not included within the designated Green Belt. The housing capacity of the Brockhill ADR has been assessed by the Borough Council at 450 dwellings.
- 5.08 The site was considered by the North West Redditch Masterplan in 2006 which is reproduced beneath.

Plan 4: North West Redditch Masterplan



- 5.09 The plan show two areas of development to the west of the railway line with access from the roundabout with the B4184 at Brockhill Drive to the west and through the existing employment area to the south connecting to Windsor Road. We calculate that these two areas have a combined area of 8.8 ha which at 35 dph would provide for 308 dwellings. Land to the south of this new road is to be used for employment purposes with a landscaper buffer 10 -20m deep to the north of the road.
- 5.10 The following plan shows a prominent ridge running into the site from north-west to south-east. The site's topography may reduce the c particularly as it would be necessary to take into account the distant views of the site from the surrounding area.

Plan 5: Brockhill Topography



- 5.11 This plan also shows that the landform is very much a continuation of the landscape character of the land to the north within Bromsgrove District. This land is designated within the Bromsgrove Local Plan as being of High Landscape Value. Were is not for the administrative boundary and the needs for Redditch to identify development land



within its own boundaries we are of the opinion that this designation would have been extended to most if not all of the site to the west of the railway line.

- 5.12 Much of the site is within 1 mile of the town centre. The masterplan shows a separate bus route running to the west of the railway line along with pedestrian and cycle links through the buffer strip and linking through the industrial estate to Windsor Road. The development of the site would benefit by the construction of a link between Brockhill Drive and the A441 but the railway is a major impediment to the provision of such a route.
- 5.13 Whilst the quality of the pedestrian and cycleway links through industrial estates and via Windsor Road may be unattractive the proximity of the site to the town centre must be regarded as being relatively sustainable. However we are of the opinion that the difficulties of developing this land together with the potential effects of developing on these prominent slopes in an area of landscape value outweigh the benefits of a location near to the town centre and for this reason we do not believe that this area of land should be considered for development in the first instance. The exception to this is that part of the ADR lying to the east of the railway line amounting to 5.8 ha which forms part of the Bordesley valley which we consider as part of Area 8: Bordesley Park.



Advantages	Disadvantages
Established ADR	Quality of linkages to town centre sub optimal
Not Green Belt	Prominent ridge
Close to town centre	A Highly sensitive Wooded Estate land landscape. Highly visually sensitive. Development here would be visually intrusive.
Close to employment sites	Relationship with employment sites (amenity)
	To west of River Arrow – more difficult drainage.
	Capacity limited to 308 dwellings.



Area 3: The South West Redditch Greenbelt

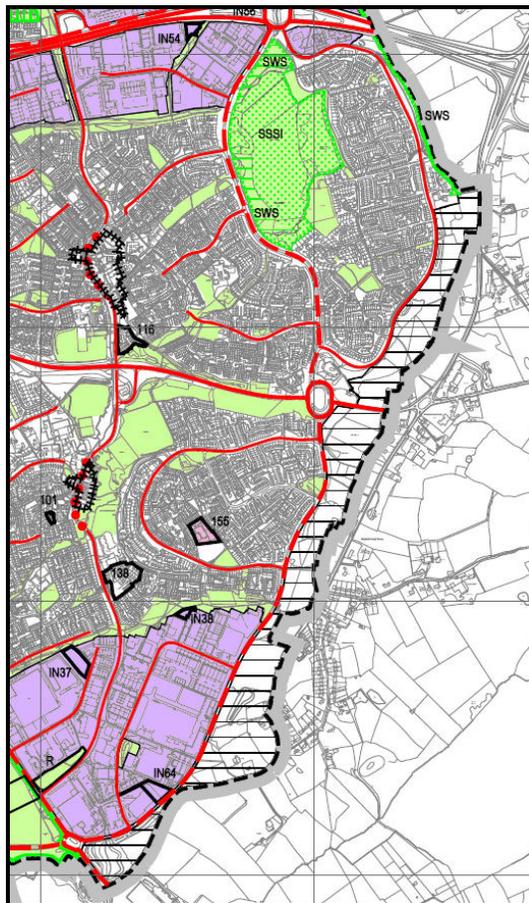
5.14 The rural area to the south west of Redditch is within the designated Green Belt. Communications from the area to the town centre and main employment areas is poor. This area falls within the Priest Bridge Sewage Treatment Works drainage area where there is no spare capacity. Therefore sewage would need to be pumped to the east towards the Spennall Sewage Treatment Works. The area was regarded as not being a sustainable location for development by the Stage I report and there is no reason to review this assessment.

Advantages	Disadvantages
	Green Belt
	Poor communications
	Distance to town centre
	Distance to employment and other facilities
	No foul drainage capacity
	West of The Ridgeway, the landscape is Principal Timbered Farmlands of high sensitivity, although the area of Upper Huntend Farm is in poorer condition

Area 4: The Eastern Fringe

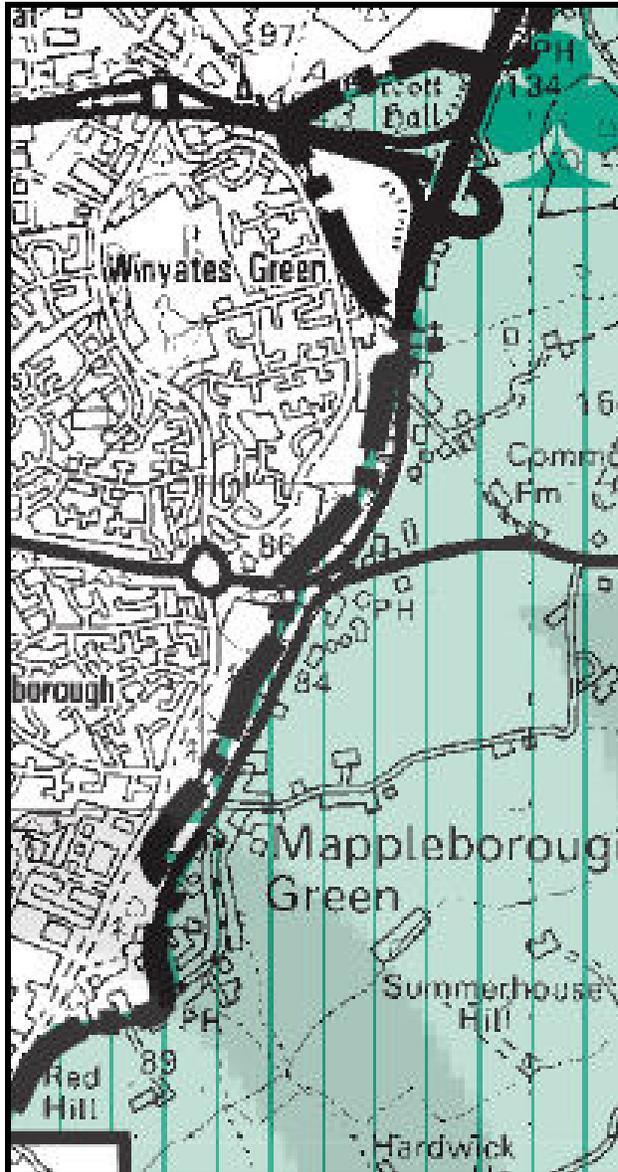
5.15 This is a linear area of land that lies between the A435 and the eastern boundary of Redditch. Much of the land would have been required for a now abandoned improvement scheme to this section of the A435 and ownership of land acquired for this purpose has been transferred to English Partnerships. The administrative boundary between Redditch Borough and Stratford on Avon District runs through the site. The section within Redditch Borough is designated as an ADR and land within Stratford has been excluded from the designated Green Belt.

Plan 6: Extract from the Redditch Local Plan Proposals Map



Note: The A435 ADR is shown hatched.

Plan 7: Extract from Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan Proposals Map



Note: The vertical hatching denotes an area of high landscape value, the green colour washed area is designated as Green Belt and shows that land to the west of the A435 is excluded.



- 5.16 Due to its status as an ADR the Stage I study attributed a potential capacity of 598 dwellings to this land with an estimated area of 30 ha.
- 5.17 Any significant extension to the urban area will involve the risk of merging of settlements and this raises the issue as to when it would be deemed harmful for a settlement that was not regarded as a 'town' to be subsumed by the expansion of the primary settlement. Is it any less desirable for a village, hamlet or loose amalgamation of development to be coalesced?
- 5.18 Mappleborough Green is a loose knit settlement along the A435. The bulk of the village lies along Pratts Lane to the east of the main road. Development to the west of the A435 is limited to occasional properties. The village is separated from Redditch by a well treed strip of land which is in the most part between 120 and 150 metres in depth.
- 5.19 At the time that the Stage I report was written the Green Belt boundaries were not open to review. On this basis the ADRs were regarded as being sequentially preferable to land within the Green Belt. Consequently the whole of the land between the A435 and the existing boundary of development in Redditch was regarded as having development potential for 898 dwellings including the Winyates Green triangle.
- 5.20 The Preferred Option for the RSS Stage 2 Revision has allowed for adjustments to the Green Belt to ensure sustainable forms of development to take place and this opens the opportunity to reconsider the future of this land and the relationship between Mappleborough Green and Redditch. Clearly in the interests of good planning this area should be regarded as a single entity irrespective of the split in administrative responsibility between Redditch Borough and Stratford-on-Avon District Councils.
- 5.21 Mappleborough Green is 4.8 miles from the town centre via the Coventry Highway and routes for pedestrians and cyclists are poor. Sites could be served by bus services along Claybrook Drive and the area is close to the employment sites to the east of Redditch including those off Claybrook Drive and at Ravensbank. Access to local services is comparatively poor.



5.22 In our view it is inevitable that even if significant areas of woodland were retained and access were to be provided from Claybrook Drive the degree of separation between Mappleborough Green and Redditch would be eroded. The A435 skirts Redditch and it is not a route into the town unlike the A441 and A448. The general character of its route south of the Coventry Highway junction is rural with sporadic development with views of Redditch being effectively screened to travellers.

5.23 We would sum up the relative advantages and disadvantages of developing this land as follows:

Advantages	Disadvantages
Established ADR	Erosion of the gap between Redditch and Mappleborough Green.
Not in the Green Belt	This area is identified as Principal Timbered Farmlands of medium sensitivity which would be harmed by the removal of trees – one of the key characteristics of this Landscape Type.
The land is flat and could be serviced from the west.	Not well linked to cycleways and footpath systems
Could be regarded as 'rounding off'	Would change the character of the route of the A435
Close to Employment sites at Ravensbank and Claybrook Drive	Distant from the town centre
Easily drained to Spernal STW	

5.24 In our view the disadvantages of developing this site for any significant number of dwellings outweigh the benefits. Although close to some employment opportunities the distance to the town centre and difficulties of integrating the site with cycleways and footpaths result in the site having a relatively poor sustainability profile.



Area 5: The Southern Gap

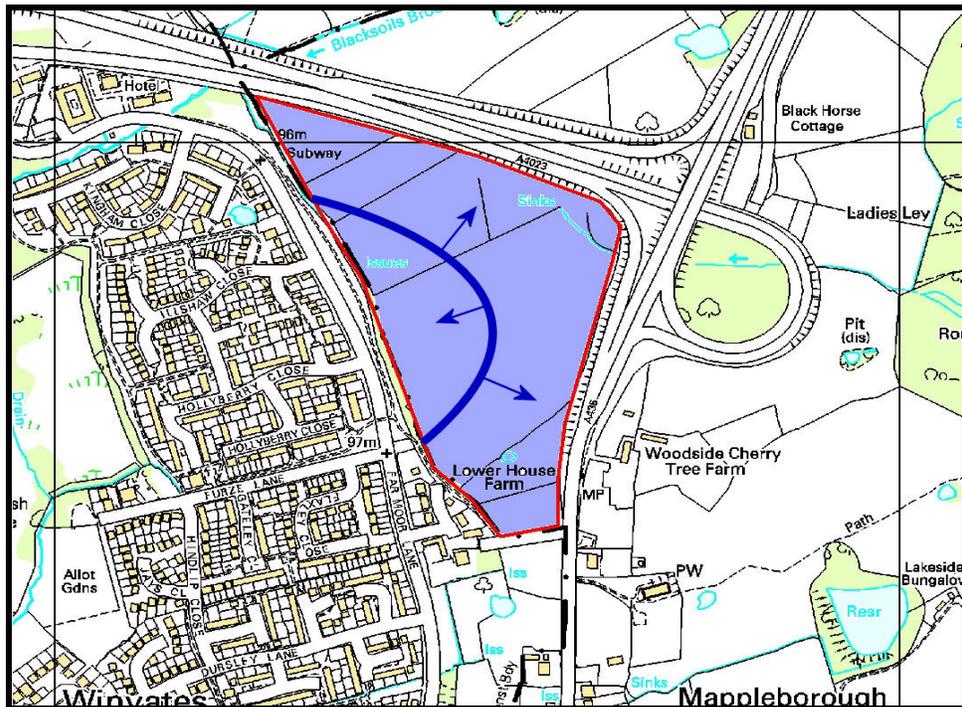
- 5.25 This belt of land running to the south of the Redditch urban area includes land within the administrative areas of both Redditch Borough and Stratford-on-Avon District and is included within their respective Local Plans as Green Belt.
- 5.26 The Stage I study concluded that accessibility to the south was poor and that the A441 and Crabbs Cross roundabout were congested. Traffic links to the north would involve journeys through the town centre or via the A435 which is also congested. Foul drainage to Spennall STW would be easier than other options.
- 5.27 The narrow section of Green Belt that maintains the separation of Studley/Astwood Bank and Redditch is both valuable and vulnerable. Even a minor incursion would have a major effect on maintaining this separation and for this reason alone we are of the opinion that any extension of Redditch’s development boundaries southwards would be harmful and we recommend that this area of Green Belt remains safeguarded.

Advantages	Disadvantages
Available foul drainage south of town	Green Belt
Local services at Astwood Bank and Studley	Distance from the town centre
	Existing points of traffic congestion
	Not well linked to cycleways and footpath systems
	Distance from employment sites
	East of The Ridgeway, the landscape is Wooded Estatelands of high sensitivity. Development here would be highly visually intrusive and would effectively destroy the separate unique character of Studley by merging it with Redditch.

Area 6: Winyates Triangle

- 5.28 The Winyates Green Triangle is an area of 'white land' within Stratford-on-Avon District Council's administrative area. The site was included in the Stage I report as being suitable for residential development and contributed an estimated capacity of 300 units to the assessment.
- 5.29 The site relates to Redditch and unlike much of the A435 ADR land to the south we feel could be developed without detriment to the surrounding area.
- 5.30 The site has elevated roads to the north and east which may be a cause a noise nuisance. Whilst Redditch appears to have an adequate stock of B2 and B8 premises on established industrial estates we perceive that there is a shortage of quality B1 accommodation and given the need to identify additional employment land we are of the opinion that this site would be more suited to B1 rather than residential development.

Plan 8: Winyates Triangle





Advantages	Disadvantages
Not Green Belt	Potential noise issue if used for residential
'White' Land	Distance from town centre
Contained by main roads and existing development	
High profile site for B1 use	
This area is of low landscape sensitivity. Development here would not be visually intrusive.	

Area 7: Beoley

- 5.31 The area to the north-east of Redditch between the B4497 and the A435 contains very attractive landscape features particularly around St Leonard’s Church to the west and the high ridge in the vicinity of Moss Lane and is shown on the Bromsgrove Local Plan as being within a Landscape Protection Area as well as the designated Green Belt. The main settlement is the almost wholly within the Beoley Conservation Area.

Plan 9: Beoley Topography



- 5.32 The area is well located to the employment sites around Moon’s Moat and Ravensbank but the town centre is less accessible. We are of the opinion that large scale development in this area would be very harmful to the countryside as a whole and the setting of Holt End in particular and for this reason we have disregarded the area from further consideration.
- 5.33 The photographs over page show the extent of the countryside between the northern edge of Church Hill and Beoley and Holt End.



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Photopoints

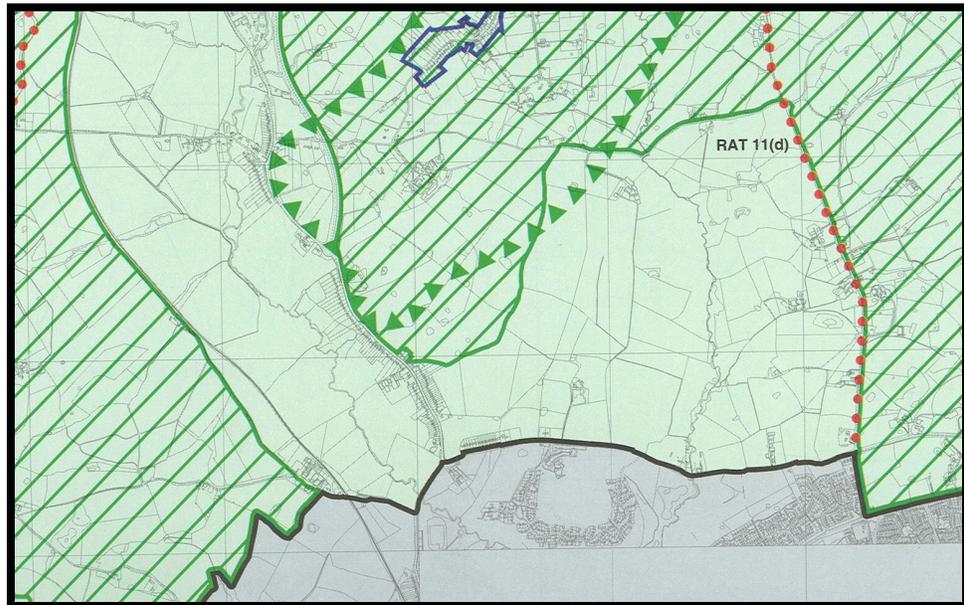


Advantages	Disadvantages
	Green Belt
	Area of High Landscape Value
	Potential affect on Conservation Area, Historic Monument and St Stephen's Church
	General topography
	Distance from town centre
	Poor local road network
	Highly sensitive Principal Timbered Farmlands landscape Highly visually sensitive. Development here would lead to the coalescence of Beoley and Redditch and destroy the distinctive character of the village.

Area 8: Bordesley Park

5.34 This is an area to the north of Redditch containing the valleys of the River Arrow to the west and the Dagnell Brook to the east and an area of open countryside framed by rising land to the north. The Bromsgrove Local Plan designates the area within the Green Belt and the extract below shows both Landscape Protection Areas and Areas of Great Landscape Value (green triangles). These designations and the area’s landform have been used to define the potential area of development.

Plan 10: Extract from the Bromsgrove Local Plan

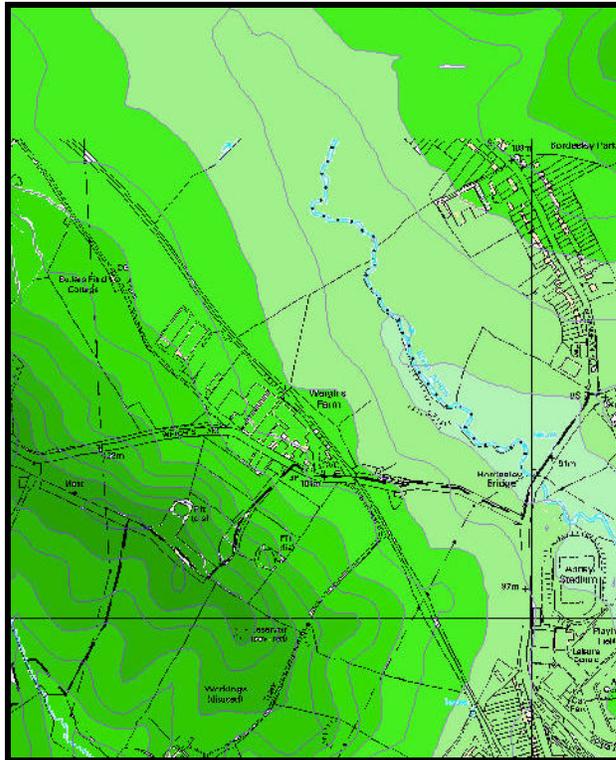


5.35 A further Landscape Protection Area is situated west of the railway line. The local plan designations are reflected in the topography with more pronounced undulating landscapes located to the north of Storage Lane and east of Icknield Street. Storage Lane is located along a natural ridgeline beyond which, views into the area are limited.

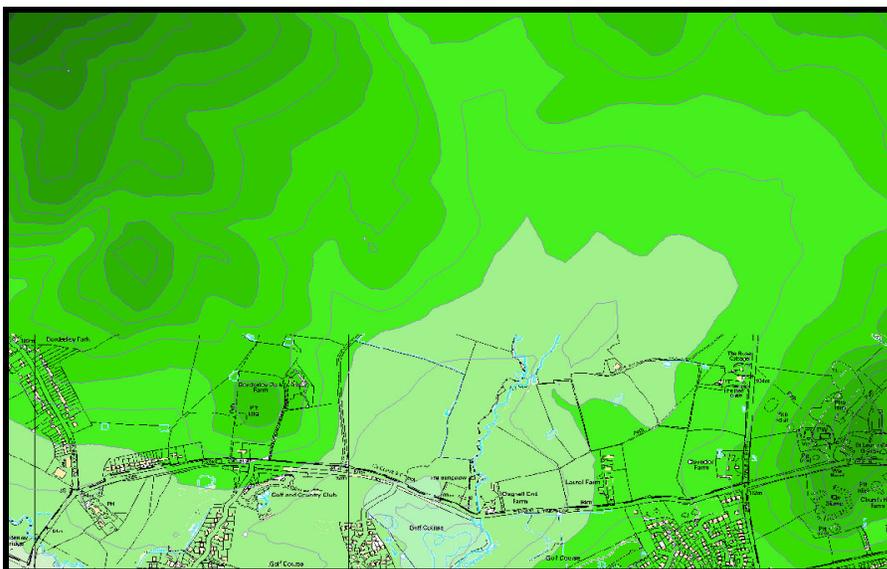
5.36 The following contour maps show the relatively flat, broad valley of the River Arrow between the railway to the west and A441 to the east and the area to the north of the golf course in the form of a bowl with initial gentle slopes to the east, north and west.



Map 11: Bordesley Valley Topography



Map 12: Bordesley Park Topography



5.37 The photographs below illustrate the key topographical features. The photo of Church Hill (Photograph 4) shows the increase in ground height up to St Leonards Church. Mature woodlands around the top of the hill obscure views of the church from this camera location.



4

5.38 Photograph 5 is from Storage Lane's highest point. The site is most visible from this camera location although views further to the north are not available as the land height drops below this natural ridge. The photo clearly shows the top plateau with the lower plateau obscured by a further ridge to the centre of the photo.

5.39 Photograph 6 illustrates the change in land levels when viewed from the A441 dual carriageway. Much of the area is not visible to travellers along the A441 as it passes the site. This camera location also illustrates the higher land levels of the Brockhill ADR. Development from this perspective would be seen as development along a ridgeline, although views would be against Redditch urban area as a backdrop.



Photographs: Bordesley Park



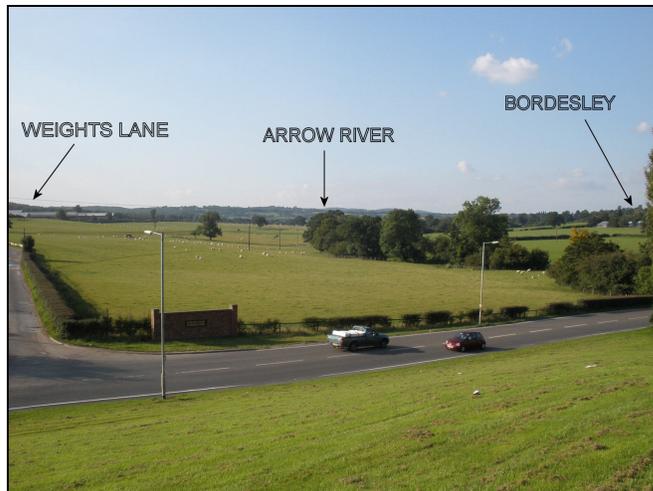
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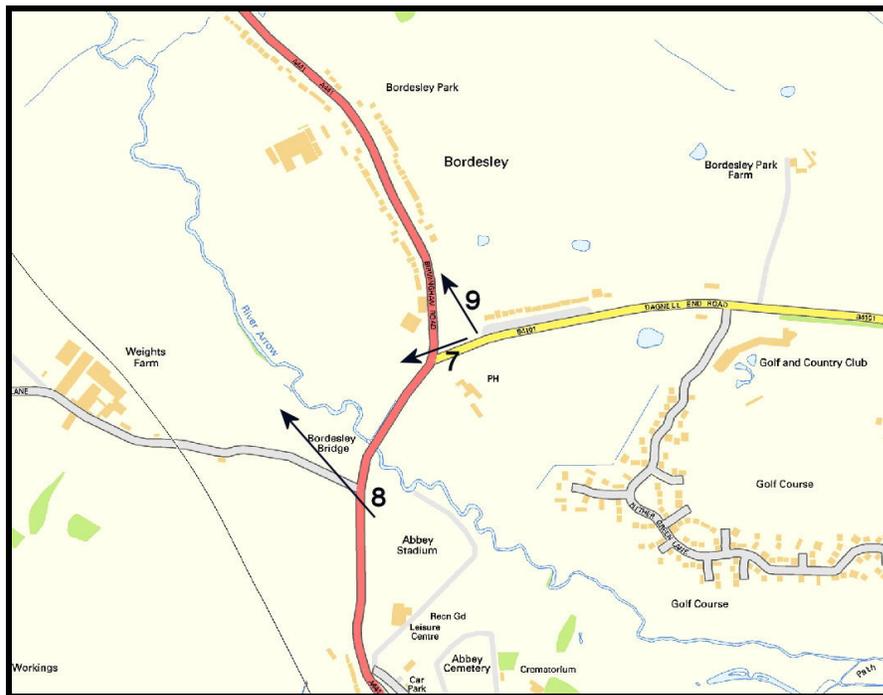
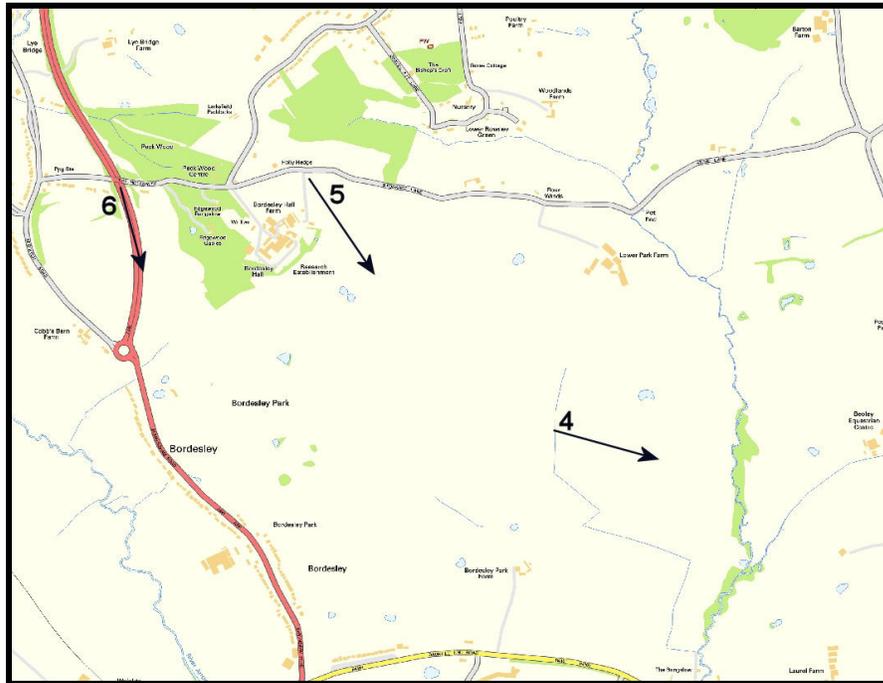
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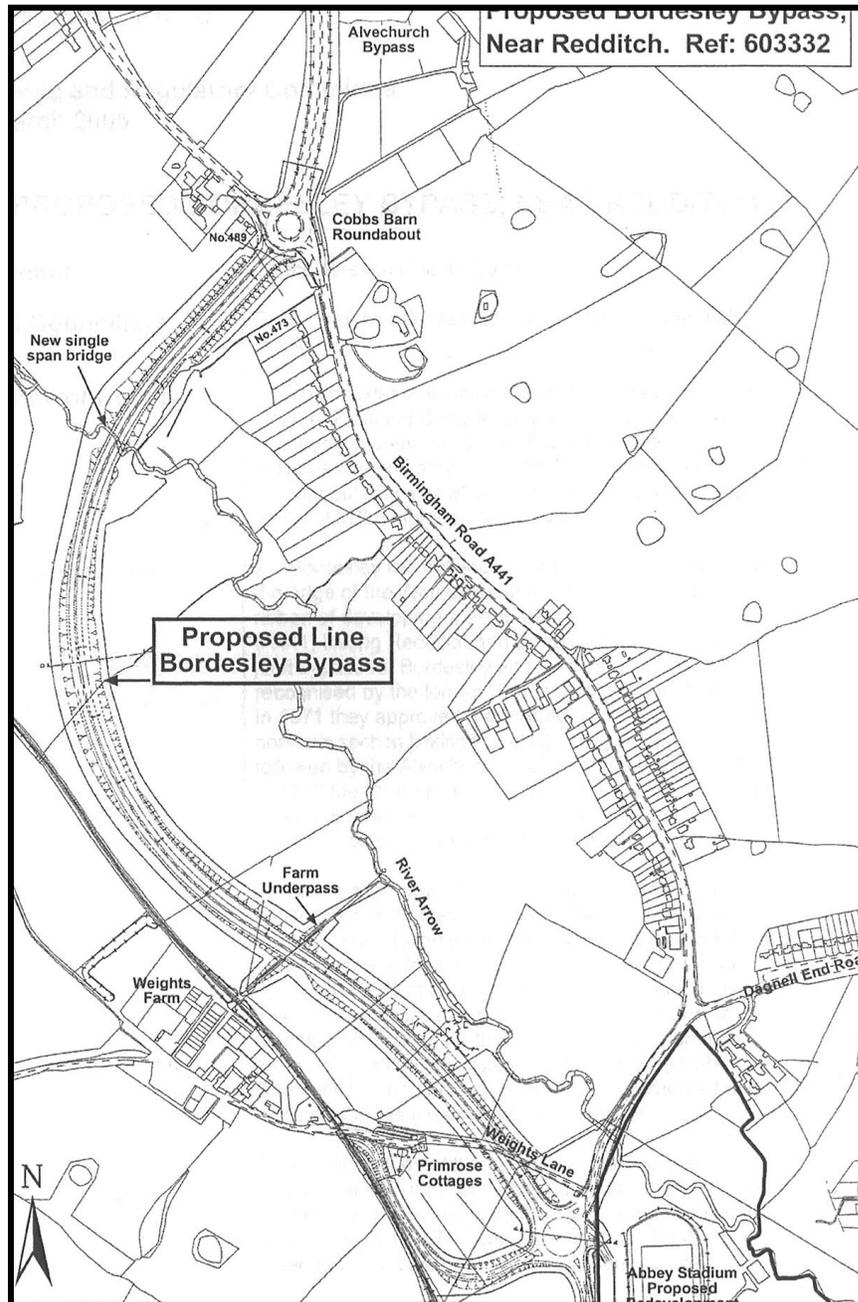




- 5.40 To the east of the A441 the land is relatively flat with the River Arrow running through the centre of the site. The railway line to the east provides a man made boundary beyond which the land height rises significantly.
- 5.41 Bordesley village is a ribbon of development primarily to the eastern side of the A441. In our view Bordesley differs from Mappleborough Green and Beoley in its size and form with no defined village centre. Bordesley is currently dominated by the main A441 which as part of any significant development proposals for urban expansion would be replaced by the Bordesley Bypass in this location, the proposed line of which is shown on the plan below.
- 5.42 Whilst the existing settlement of Bordesley would be at risk of being merged in to this expansion of Redditch, the green belt between Redditch and larger settlements further north such as Alvechurch is considerably wider than exists to the south and east and is therefore more able to accommodate expansion. This is assisted by the area's topography that would largely contain the development.



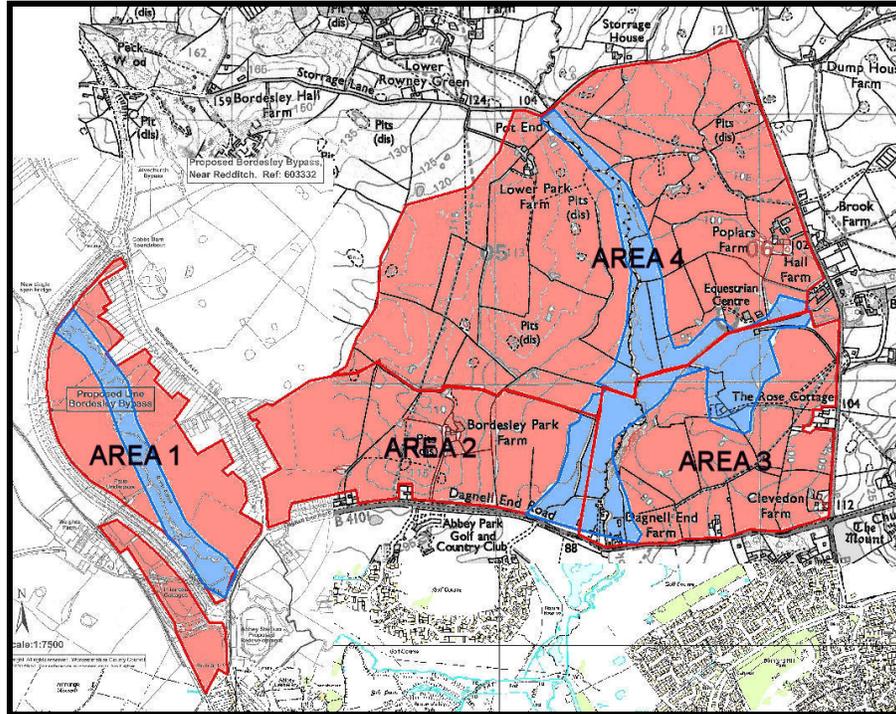
Plan 13: Line of Bordesley Bypass



5.43 Taking into account all of the above observations it is considered that the most appropriate development boundary would be as shown below.



Plan 14: Bordesley Park Potential Development Areas



- 5.44 There is a significant area of flood risk at the lowest point in the site where the natural watercourse runs north to south (shown blue outline on map above). Foul drainage will need to either connect through existing systems to the west or through a new sewer link through Arrow Valley to connect to the main sewer system to the south of Ipsley Church Lane in order to avoid the overloaded system through Redditch town centre.

- 5.45 The major constraint remains access and traffic impact with a development site of this size. Dagnell End Lane does not offer pedestrian access and narrows past the Hither Green Lane second access point. Significant improvements to this road would be required and an assessment completed of the traffic impact along the B4101 through Beoley and along Icknield Street to the north.



- 5.46 Evidence suggests that during peak hours the Dagnell End Lane and A441 junction is approaching capacity and as noted in paragraph 4.14 any significant development to the north west of Redditch is likely to trigger a need for the Bordesley Bypass link. The timing of this work would have to be evaluated by a detailed traffic impact assessment as part of any subsequent masterplanning process. The bypass would have beneficial effects in removing existing through traffic from Bordesley village as well as improving communications between Redditch and the north.
- 5.47 The impact on the environment and in particular any visual effects of development on the Area of Great Landscape value which surrounds the site to the north and east would also need to be taken in to account by a future masterplan.
- 5.48 The majority of the area is within 2 miles of the town centre (it is approximately 1.15 miles from the town centre to the junction of the A441 and Dagnell End Road). The site is relatively flat and is of sufficient size to enable footways, cyclepaths and bus routes to be planned incorporated and linked through to Arrow Valley Park and Abbey Stadium site or via Birmingham Road to the town centre.



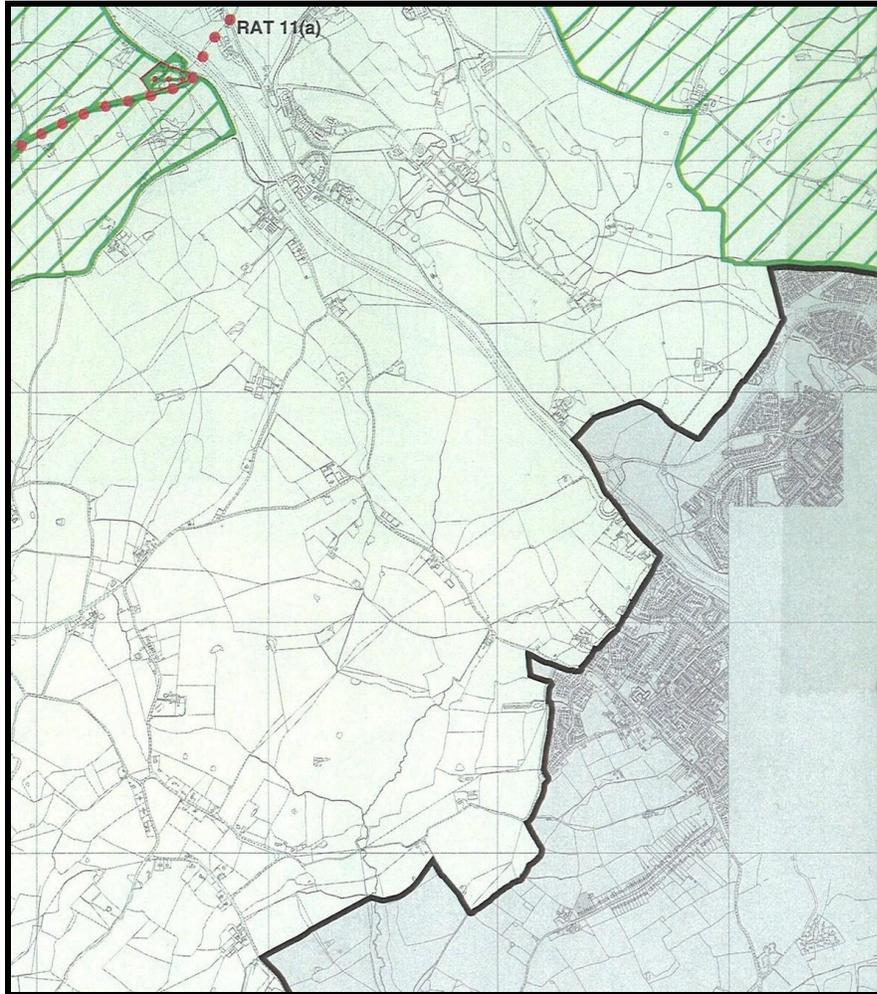
Advantages	Disadvantages
Outside Landscape Protection Area and Area of Great Landscape Value	Green Belt
Provides Bordesley Bypass	Will require Bordesley Bypass
Mainly flat	Traffic management required to east
Big enough to accommodate Sustainable Urban Extension with good level of local facilities	Could bring about the coalescence of Bordesley with Redditch
Mainly to east of River Arrow – easier drainage.	Areas 2, 3 and 4 are of high visual sensitivity where development would be visually intrusive.
Good linkages to town centre can be created. Good links north	
All 4 areas are Wooded Estatelands of medium landscape sensitivity Area 1 is of low or medium visual sensitivity, the preference would be to direct development into this area	



Area 9: Foxlydiate Woods

- 5.49 We have identified and coloured red on Plan 17 an area of land which we consider to have possible development potential. The site could be accessed from an upgrading to the existing grade separated junction with the Bromsgrove Highway.
- 5.50 Although designated as Green Belt we are of the opinion that its development would not significantly reduce the gap between Redditch and Bromsgrove. The site is also reasonably well screened particularly from the Bromsgrove Highway and would not read as a major extension of the urban area into the surrounding countryside. As with the Webheath ADR sewage will need to be pumped to the Spennall STW.
- 5.51 Although a peripheral location Redditch town centre is only approximately two miles away and the site could be well served by public transport. There is also the potential to form an access to Church Road which could help to ease congestion in the Webheath area.
- 5.52 Whilst this site is within Bromsgrove District Council's administrative area we feel that the site has much to commend it when compared to the Webheath ADR.
- 5.53 The existing Brockhill estate has been developed over the last 15 years and is the largest residential urban expansion in Redditch to be completed over the last plan period. The estate extends as far as the Redditch authority boundary with provision in the road layout for a possible further extension into the Green Belt land to the west.

Plan 15: Extract From Bromsgrove Local Plan, Foxlydiate Woods

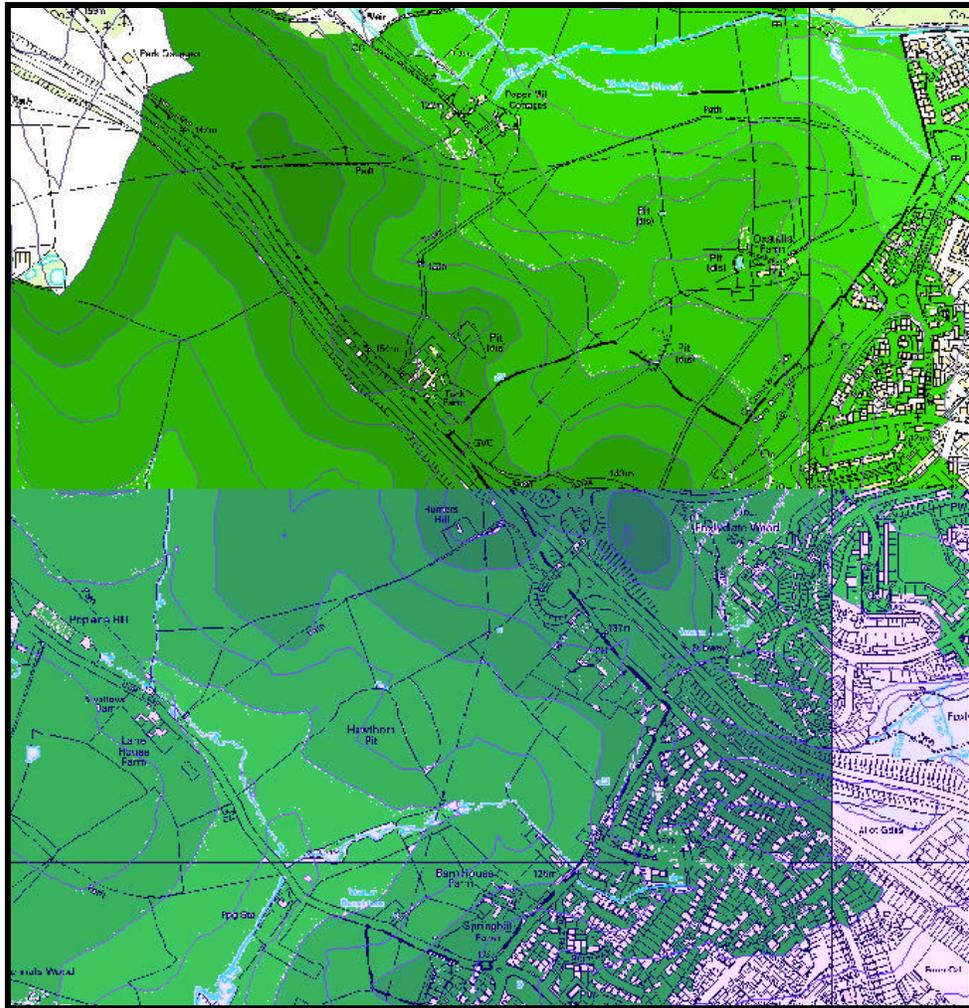


- 5.54 To the south of the Bromsgrove Highway is a further area of open countryside. The area is well screened from the main dual carriageway by virtue of earthworks created when the road was built. Foxlydiate Lane which runs along the current settlement boundary has mature tree screening running its entire length which obscures views into the site.
- 5.55 The dual carriageway runs along the highest part of the site and is cut into the hillside. It runs through this section of road obscuring views of the countryside beyond. The land undulates and drops away to the north with the most severe gradients located close to



the main highway. There areas adjacent to Brockhill and south of the main interchange are relatively flat.

Plan 16: Foxlydiate Woods Topography

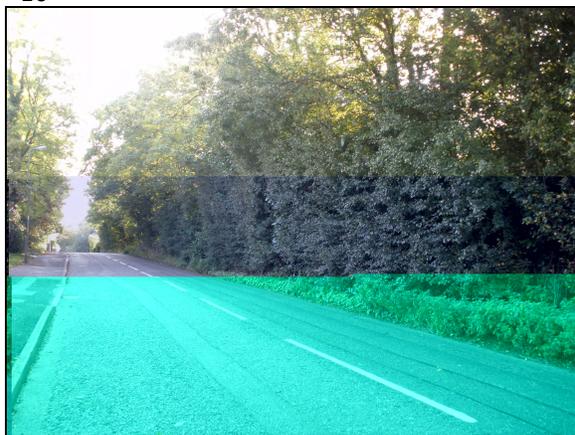




Photographs: Foxlydiate Woods Area



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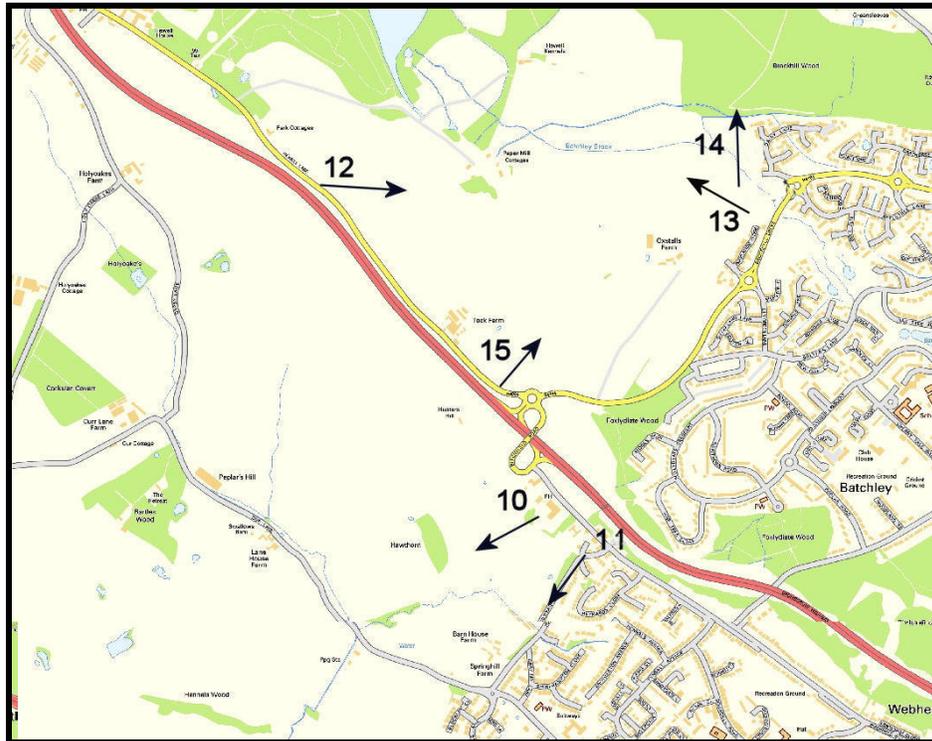
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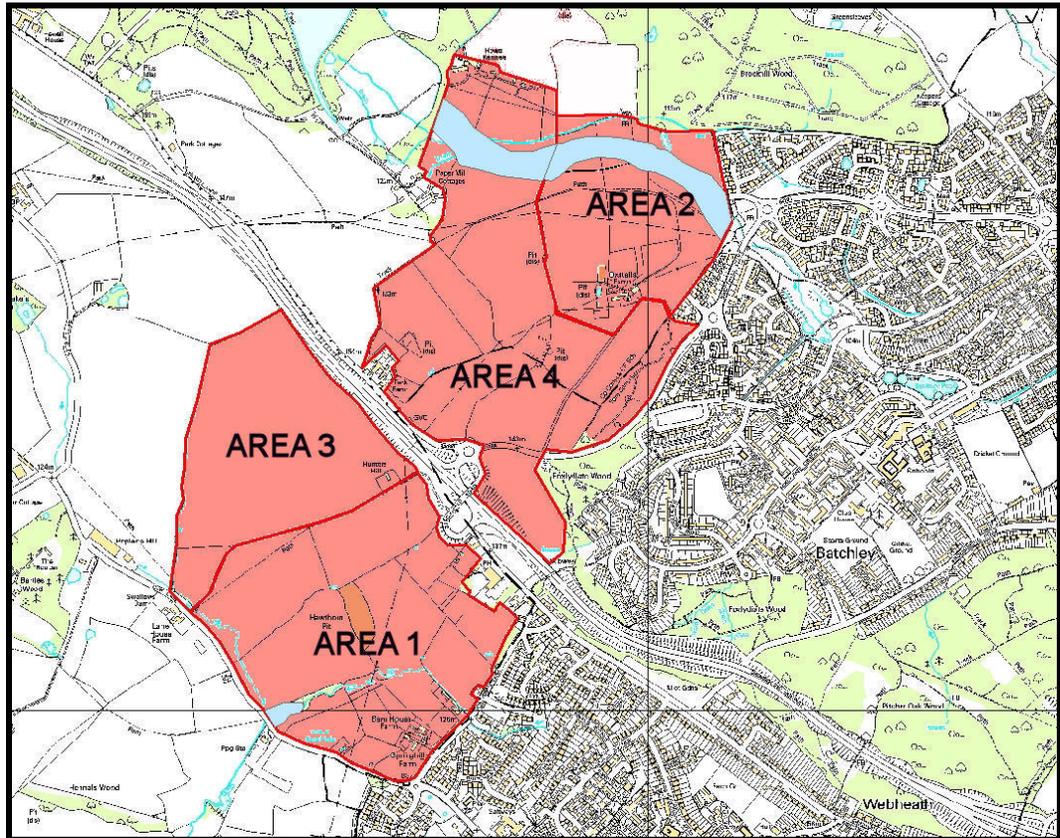
Photopoints



- 5.56 Photograph 10 shows the area to the south of the Bromsgrove Highway. The site is in agricultural use with a small area of mature woodland located toward its centre. The site is well screened with mature trees along Foxlydiate Lane (Photograph 11) and the Bromsgrove Highway to the north. This part of the site is undulating with gradual slopes falling to the east.
- 5.57 There are only limited views from publicly accessible areas onto the northern part of the site from the south and the west. Photograph 12 shows distant views into the site from Hewell Lane. The site is viewed against a backdrop of the current Brockhill estate as the land drops towards the town.
- 5.58 Photographs 13 and 14 show a view of the northern part of the site adjacent to the current Brockhill estate. The brook to the centre of the picture marks the location of the flood risk area. Brockhill Wood provides a backdrop to the site from this perspective.

- 5.59 Photograph 15 is the view north located near to the main Bromsgrove Highway junction. The natural contours of the land screen the lower part of the site and the current Brockhill estate when viewed from this location.
- 5.60 Taking into consideration the landscape constraints at this location the plan below shows the potential strategic urban expansion for the Foxlydiat Woods Area. The sites are generally within 1.7 miles of the town centre via either Bromsgrove Road or Salters Lane/Brockhill Drive.

Plan 17: Foxlydiat Woods Potential Development Areas





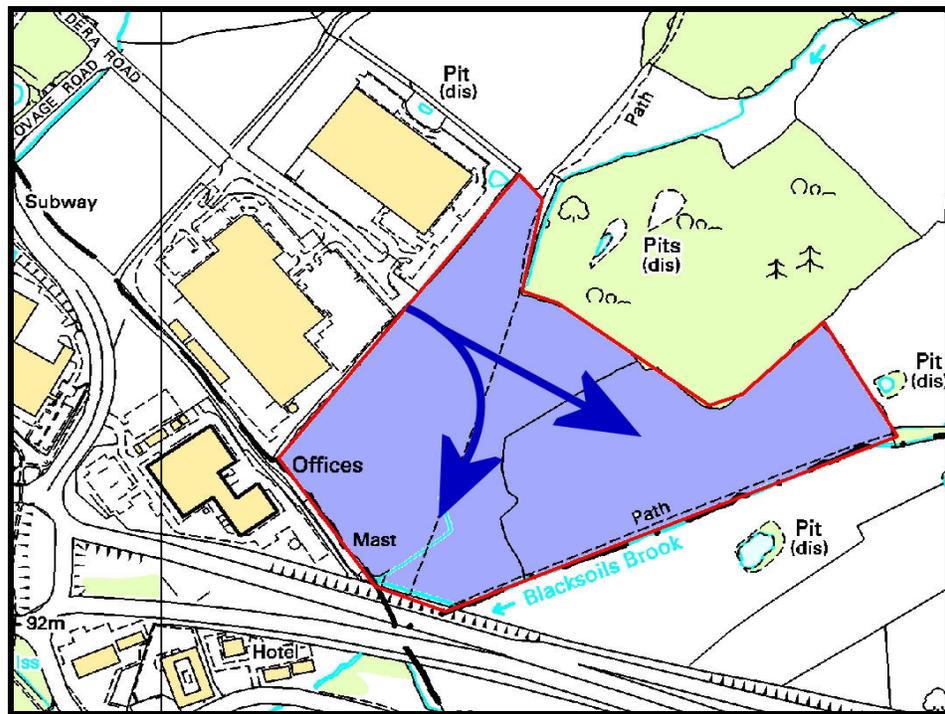
Advantages	Disadvantages
Good access via Bromsgrove Highway	Green Belt
Outside Landscape Protection Area	Not close to employment
Ridgeline site but not prominent	To west of River Arrow, drainage more difficult
Natural extension to urban form	Poor access to the north
South of Bromsgrove Highway, in areas 1 and 3, the landscape is highly sensitive principal Settled Farmlands of moderate visual sensitivity where development would not be so unacceptable.	North of Bromsgrove Highway, areas 2 and 4 are landscapes of highly sensitive Wooded Estatelands and generally highly visually sensitive where development would be intrusive



Area 10: Ravensbank ADR

5.61 The Bromsgrove Local Plan makes provision for a 10 hectare extension to the established Ravensbank Business Park as an ADR. Ravensbank consists in the main of large scale sheds for industrial and distribution uses. We recommend retaining this allocation In order to meet employment needs over the plan period for B2 and B8 uses.

Plan 18: Ravensbank ADR



Advantages	Disadvantages
Extension to existing employment site (for B2/B8 uses)	Excellent hedgerows should be retained
Not Green Belt	
Principal Timbered Farmlands of medium sensitivity and low visual sensitivity.	
Good communications	



6 DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

- 6.01 The table on Page 12 shows that the RSS preferred Option would require 220.9 ha of additional land to be allocated and the NLP growth option 352.1 ha. Both would amount to considerable extensions to the urban area involving significant alterations to the Green Belt. The RSS Preferred Option allows for the adjustment of boundaries, where exceptional circumstances can be demonstrated to allow for the most sustainable form of development to deliver the specific housing proposals referred to within the sub-regional implications of the strategy.
- 6.02 All of the options considered are greenfield sites and many are currently designated as Green Belt. Whilst the ADRs are not designated as Green Belt their character and quality of the environment is consistent in quality and function to surrounding land which is designated Green Belt. The selected Development Strategy should be that where the benefits of sustainable forms of development are maximised and where impacts are least harmful.
- 6.03 We conclude that the South Western Green Belt, the Southern Gap and Beoley areas have no identifiable capacity that could be realistically brought forward. The options for accommodating the growth options within the remaining sites that have been evaluated are limited. The following table summarises the estimated capacities of the sites.

Bordesley Park	6809
Foxlydiate Woods	3196
Brockhill ADR	308
Webheath ADR	450
A435 ADR	598
ADR Total	1356

6.04 We have identified four alternative options to meet the RSS preferred Option and one appropriate development solution to meet the higher NLP growth option. As well as being subject to a development considerations set out in section 5 of this report, the options below have all been evaluated against sustainability criteria used for large and strategic sites in the LDF Core strategy SA framework. This sustainability matrix is in Appendix 3.

- Option 1 would be to develop Bordesley Park to meet the current RSS preferred growth option requiring the development of 4,170 houses at the site.
- Option 2 would be to develop Bordesley Park to meet the NLP growth option target of 9,100 dwellings. Only Bordesley Park has sufficient capacity to accommodate the NLP growth option requirement of 6,670 dwellings in addition to existing urban capacity.
- Option 3 would require the development of all 3 ADR's and 2,814 dwellings at Foxlydiate to meet the RSS preferred option of 4,170 dwellings in addition to existing urban capacity.
- Option 4 would require the development of the entire Foxlydiate SUE, Webheath ADR and the A435 ADR. This would provide enough housing land to meet the RSS preferred option of 4,170 dwellings.
- Option 5 would require development of the entire Foxlydiate SUE, Brockhill West ADR and A435 ADR to meet the RSS preferred option of 4,170 dwellings.

6.05 It is our view that concentration of growth as a Sustainable Urban Extension will ensure that a critical mass capable of supporting a range of local services, the provision of public transport and the promotion of non-car use can be achieved and will therefore best meet the sustainability criteria set out in paragraph 1.22.



6.06 For reasons detailed in this report we believe development at Bordesley Park is preferable to Foxlydiate Woods which at 3,196 dwellings does not have sufficient capacity on its own to accommodate either growth option. Bordesley Park benefits from better linkages to the town centre and to the north and the fact that the landscape at Bordesley Park contains the development. Bordesley Park should also provide easier connectivity to foul drainage to as it lies to the east of the River Arrow. Whilst development at Bordesley Park will require investment in the Bordesley bypass and improvements to the A441 south into Redditch these improvements will also have wider benefits to Redditch as a whole.

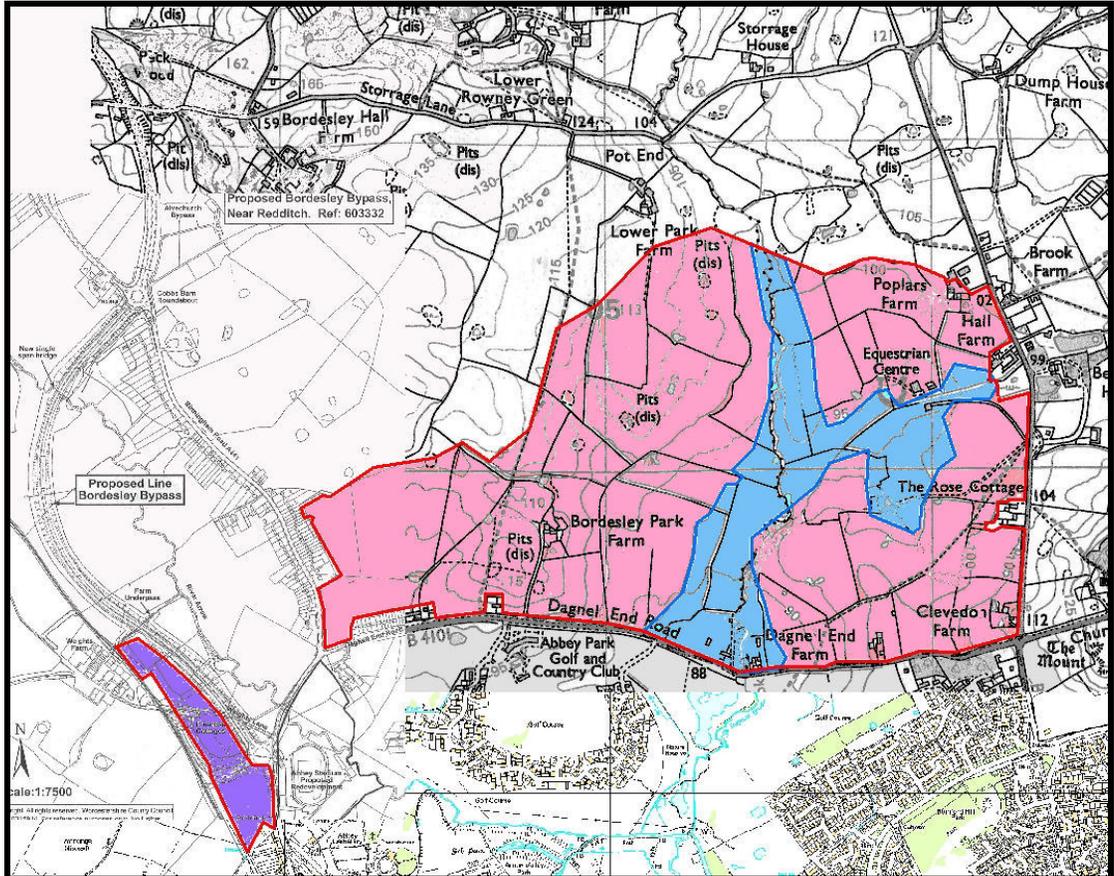


7 RECOMMENDATION

- 7.01 Whilst all the options for urban extensions are to a greater or lesser degree harmful we consider that a concentration of development at Bordesley Park demonstrates the greatest opportunity to accommodate either development option within manageable impacts.
- 7.02 The site is within the designated Green Belt but we are of the opinion that this section is less vulnerable than the Green Belt that separates Redditch from Astwood Bank or Studley and the topography of the area assists in containing the development and minimising the impacts on the surrounding countryside which would be the case at Webheath, Brockhill or Foxlydiate Woods.
- 7.03 We are of the view that it is important that development is concentrated in a single development to maximise the potential for the provision of local services including high quality public transportation and well designed routes for pedestrians and cyclists and in so doing minimising the need for journeys by car.
- 7.04 The following plans show the suggested development boundaries to facilitate the RSS Preferred Option and the growth option contained in the Nathaniel Lichfield report. These boundaries may need to be refined at the detailed masterplanning stage. Both options include employment land between the line of the propose Bordesley Bypass and the railway line and shown coloured purple on Plans 19 and 20.
- 7.05 The recommended site boundary (Plan 19) required to meet the RSS Preferred Option does not include the land between Bordesley and the bypass. The development area is 200.6 ha (excluding the 8 ha employment site) of which 36.9 ha is land at risk of flooding.

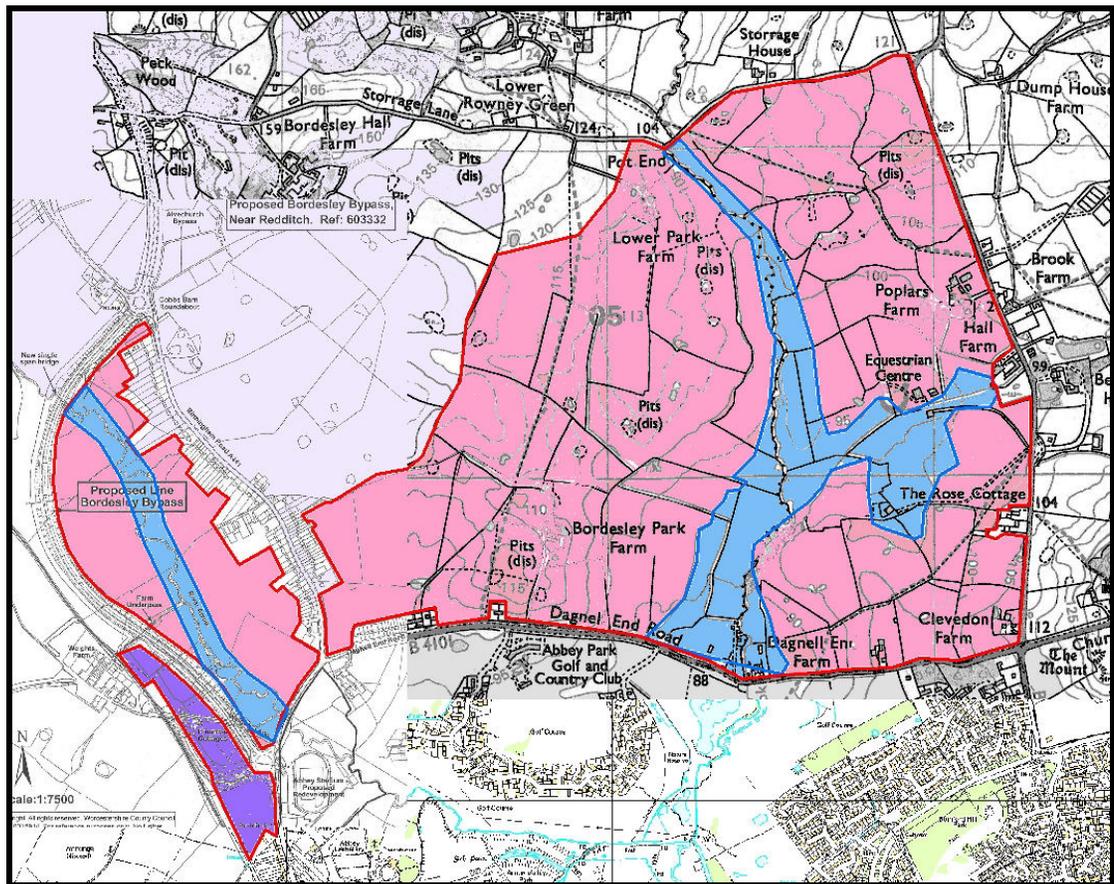


Plan 19 Bordesley Park: RSS Preferred Option



- 7.06 Plan 20 shows that in order to accommodate the high growth option suggested by NLP it would be necessary to include the land to the east of the by-pass and extend Bordesley Park development northwards to Storage Lane. The land required is 316 ha of which 49.4 ha is at risk of flooding.

Plan 20 Bordesley Park: The NLP Growth Option



- 7.07 We have identified areas of employment land at Bordesley (8 ha), Winyates Triangle (11.7 ha) and Ravensbank (10 ha). This is in excess of the 20.3 ha required to meet the requirement of the RSS Preferred Option but insufficient to meet our estimate of 39.6 ha to meet the growth option. However this higher figure is based on a pro rata increase on the RSS figure and this requirement should be reviewed in the light of the outcome of the RBC Employment Land Study.



- 7.08 Neither Winyates Triangle nor Ravensbank are in the Green Belt and 5.8 ha of the Bordesley Employment site is part of the Brockhill ADR. The three areas will also meet different needs with Ravensbank being suited to B2 and B8 uses whilst Bordesley and Winyates Triangle are gateway B1 sites serving the west and east of the town respectively.
- 7.09 In our view the Webheath ADR is not suitable for development due to the poor linkages with the town centre and employment areas, the quality and character of the landscape, the restricted highways network and difficulties in providing foul drainage.
- 7.10 We are also of the opinion that the A435 ADR and non-Green Belt land within Stratford-on-Avon District are peripheral to Redditch and could not be considered as sustainable locations for development. Any major development in this area would have significant impacts on the character and appearance of this Eastern Fringe and bring about the merging of Redditch and Mappleborough Green which we regard as being harmful.
- 7.11 Whilst the Brockhill ADR west of the railway could be regarded as a sustainable location given its proximity to the town centre the site is compromised due to its topography and relationship to the adjoining countryside. The site also has a limited capacity of 308 dwellings based on the North West Redditch masterplan. There is capacity at Bordesley Park to accommodate either growth option and if our recommendation were to be adopted there would be no need to consider additional urban expansion sites within the plan period up to 2026 at the earliest.
- 7.12 For these reasons we recommend that these three sites currently designated as ADRs within the Redditch Local Plan along with that area of land between the A435 ADR and the A435 in Stratford-on-Avon District are added to the Green Belt. The areas are detailed below.



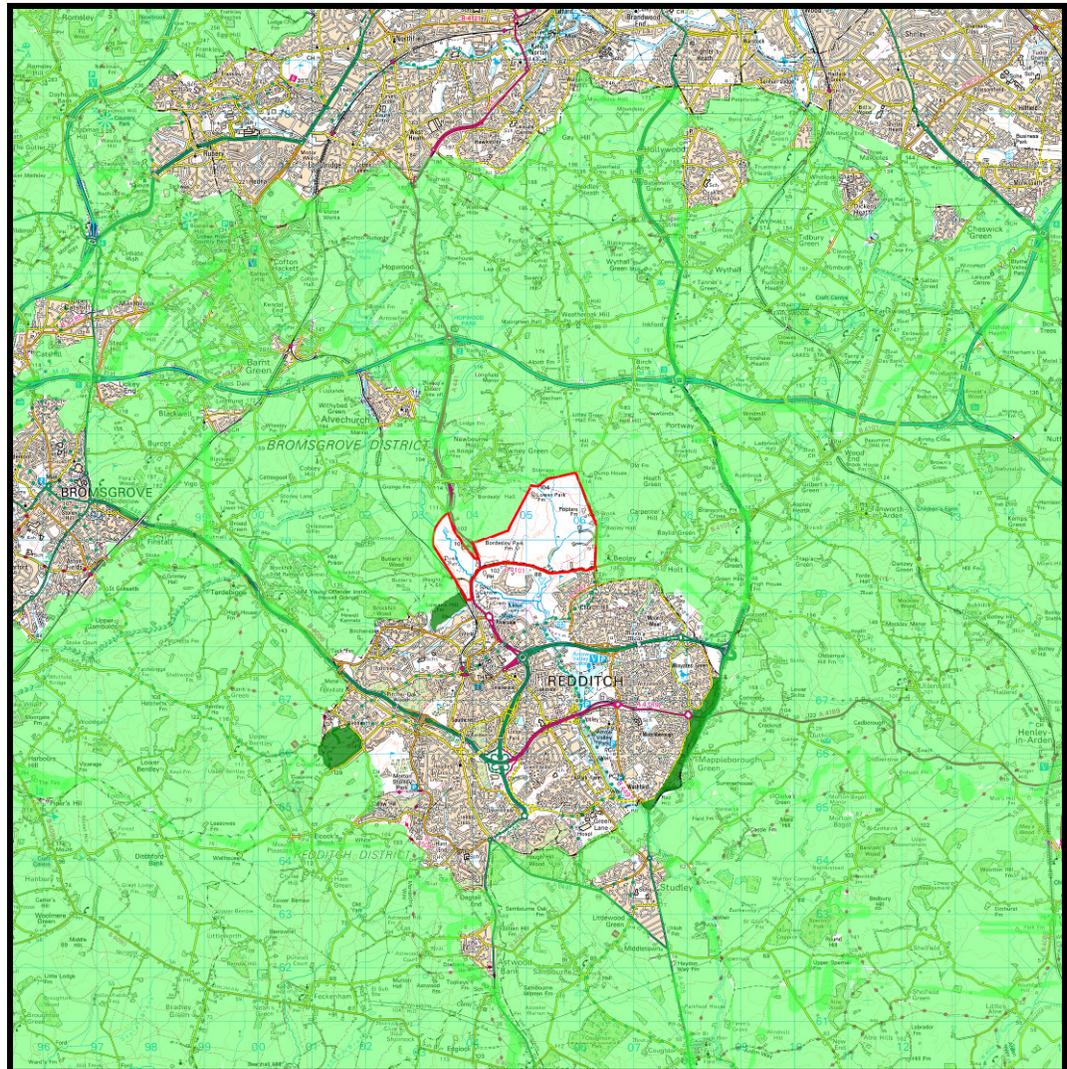
Brockhill ADR (west of the railway)	17.5 ha
Webheath ADR	47.3 ha
A435 ADR	32.4 ha
Land to west of A435 in Stratford-on-Avon	14.8 ha
Total	112 ha

- 7.13 In our opinion the addition of these sites would strengthen the Green Belt around Redditch and, in particular, the safeguarding of the slopes at Brockhill and maintaining the screen between the A435 and Redditch will be highly beneficial in restricting the appearance of urban sprawl.
- 7.14 These additions would in part compensate for the loss of Green Belt at Bordesley Park which would amount to 202.8 ha for the RSS Preferred Option and 318.2 ha for the NLP Growth strategy (in both cases including 2.2 ha of employment land not included within the Brockhill ADR).
- 7.15 Both the RSS Preferred Option, which results in 4,170 dwellings being constructed outside the existing urban area, and the NLP Growth Option which would require 6,670 dwellings involves an inevitable major incursion into the countryside requiring a significant alteration to the Green Belt. In our opinion, this recommended strategy safeguards environmentally valuable assets whilst minimising the extent and effects of the incursion.
- 7.16 The following map shows the Green Belt around Redditch with the worst case scenario, the NLP growth option, edged red and the ADRs coloured Green. Whilst this demonstrates that this would amount to a major incursion in to the Green Belt, the gap between Redditch and Birmingham is substantial and able to accommodate this level of development without threat of coalescence. The map also shows that the gap between Redditch and Bromsgrove would be less able to accommodate this level of growth and



that the gap between Redditch and Astwood Bank and Studley would be lost if development was concentrated to the south.

7.17 **Plan 21: The Green Belt Around Redditch**



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