SWINFEN AND PACKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

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Our Ref: JM 09 September 2026

To: All Members of the Parish Council

Dear Councillor

You are hereby summoned to attend the Meeting of the Parish Council to be held in the **Conference Centre, HMP Swinfen on Wednesday 16 September 2026 commencing 6.00 p.m.** at which the business set out below will be transacted.

Yours sincerely

Jayne Minor

Jayne Minor (Ms) CiLCA & FiLCA
Parish Clerk

AGENDA

PUBLIC FORUM
To promote community engagement, the public now has the opportunity to attend and speak at all of the Parish Council's meetings. Please refer to the end of the agenda for details of how to participate in this meeting.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND DISPENSATION
To receive declarations of interests and consider requests for dispensations.

3. MINUTES
To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 15 July 2026 (Minute Nos. 22-36) (**ENCLOSURE**).

4. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

5. THE HIGH-SPEED RAIL PLANS
Members are requested to debate the up-to-date position relating to the High-Speed Rail Plans.

6. CIL MONIES [FOR INFORMATION PURPOSES ONLY]

CIL receipts

Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2026/27	£0.00
Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2025/26	£0.00
Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2024/25	£0.00
Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2023/24	£0.00
Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2022/23	£0.00
Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2021/22	£26,163.50
Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2020/21	£8,721.17
Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2019/20	£410.55
Total amount of CIL received in financial year 2018/19	£1,037.77
TOTAL RECEIVED	£36,332.99

CIL Spent

Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2026/27	£1,145.00
Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2025/26	£0.00
Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2024/25	£575.00
Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2023/24	£16,000.00
Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2022/23	£10,424.50
Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2021/22	£4,090.00
Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2020/21	£1,930.50
Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2019/20	£295.00
Total amount of CIL spent in financial year 2018/19	£1,037.77
TOTAL SPENT	£34,352.77

CIL Unspent

TOTAL UNSPENT	£835.22

7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REORGANISATION

The government has announced its decision on the future structure of local government across Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent.

It has confirmed that local government in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent will move to two new unitary councils.

Under the approved government plans the following councils will be created:

- A new southern unitary council which will serve Stafford, East Staffordshire, Cannock Chase, Lichfield, Tamworth and South Staffordshire.

- A new northern unitary council which will serve Newcastle-under-Lyme, Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Moorlands.

The two new councils will replace the existing county, borough and district councils and are expected to be established in April 2028, following elections to shadow councils in May 2027.

8. FINANCIAL UPDATE ON INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARED TO BUDGET

Members are asked to note the report of income and expenditure compared to budget April to September (**ENCLOSURE**).

9. LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL: NEW SETTLEMENT FEASIBIITY STUDY – JULY 2025

Members to consider Lichfield District Council's New Settlement Feasibility Study dated July 2025 (**ENCLOSURE**).

10. STAFFORDSHIRE GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT ADDENDUM – STAGE 2 SITE ASESSMENT – LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL – APRIL 2026

Members to consider the Staffordshire Green Belt Assessment Addendum – Stage 2 Site Assessment – Lichfield District Council dated April 2026 (**ENCLOSURE**).

11. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman will move:

That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (Section 2) (and as expended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

12. PARISH CLERK'S SALARY

Members are requested to approve the payment of the Parish Clerk's August and September 2026 salary (**PINK ENCLOSURE**).

13. DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Wednesday 18 November 2026
Wednesday 13 January 2027
Wednesday 17 March 2027
Wednesday 19 May 2027

All meetings will commence at 6pm

PUBLIC FORUM

15 minutes will be set aside at the beginning of this meeting for you to raise issues relevant to the remit of the meeting. You will have up to 3 minutes and can raise more than one issue. However, the Chairman has the option to extend the time allowed to you if they think it is appropriate. So that the Members at the meeting can be properly briefed in order to enable them to provide a considered response to your question, please advise the Town Clerk of the question[s] you wish to ask the Parish Council at least five working days before the meeting. The Chairman of the meeting has the right to reject any representations that he/she considers not to be appropriate for the meeting. The public forum session will usually be the first item on the agenda and normally will last up to 15 minutes. In some instances, it may not be possible at the meeting to provide an answer. Where that is the case, a written response will be sent to your stated address. While audio and video recordings of this meeting are entirely legal, as a matter of courtesy to Parish Council members who work for this Parish and this Council on a voluntary basis, we would be grateful if you would let the Clerk or the Chairman know beforehand.

MINUTES OF THE SWINFEN AND PACKINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT CONFERENCE CENTRE, HMP SWINFEN ON WEDNESDAY 15 JULY 2026 COMMENCING AT 6.00 PM

PRESENT

Councillor Barnes in the Chair
Councillors Dyott, Loescher and Perks

In attendance:

Ms J Minor, Parish Clerk

PARISH FORUM

No members of the public were present.

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Councillor Armstrong (Dispensation)
Councillor Phillips
Councillor Pope

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None declared.

24. MINUTES

RESOLVED That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Parish Council held on 13 May 2026 (Minute Nos. 1-21) as circulated, be approved as a correct record.

25. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bishops Landscapes

Following previous discussions and a site meeting with Councillor Loescher, Members discussed a quotation which had been received from Bishops Landscapes in the sum of £1,145 plus VAT (fitting bridle path gate on Jerry's Lane - £600; gate and fast set concrete, labour and machinery - £320; drainage on A51, digger and labour - £225).

RESOLVED That the quotation be approved.

Further to previous discussions, it was agreed that a quotation be obtained from Bishops Landscapes to clear the brambles around the bus stop on the A51 opposite the barracks and a quotation for straightening the mileage marks on the A51. Councillor Loescher agreed to email and provide photographs to Bishops Landscapes.

Planning application No. SCC/25/0091/VOC planning permission to not comply with (to vary) conditions 4 (cessation of working and restoration operations) and 5 (removal of all buildings, structures, plant, machinery,

stockpiles and hardstanding area) of planning permission L.19/04/805-808 MW at Hints Quarry, Watling Street, Hints, B78 3DH

Following on from numerous emails and discussions, it was agreed that the following concerns be emailed to Catherine Wooldridge, Principal Planning Officer, Planning Policy & Development Management, Staffordshire County Council:

- It is our understanding that original planning permission for restoration of the Hopwas Quarry (Charity Land) was granted in approx. 1985. It now appears as though the restoration is being carried out according to a planning permission granted in 2016. Please see attached plan. Could you confirm when the last planning permission was granted and in what ways did it deviate from the original planning permission granted in approx. 1985?

- We appreciate that may be Tarmac and Cemex are separate companies. However, the attached plan (HD/NEW/2) included with the Tarmac application in Hints (Hints Quarry - SCC/25/0091/VOC) identifies the Hopwas Quarry as being under the same control of the applicant of the Hints Quarry, i.e. Lafarge Tarmac. Could you investigate and explain please? We struggle to understand how Cemex can be responsible for the restoration of a quarry that is "under the control" of Tarmac?

- What is the long-term plan for the Hopwas quarry once restored? It seems to be being restored to some sort of "environmental area".
    - Who is it envisaged will be responsible for maintaining the site in the long term once it "restored"?
    - Who will pay for this maintenance once it is restored and how will this funding be secured?

Staffordshire County Council – Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended), Road Traffic (Temporary Restrictions) Act 1991, Temporary Prohibition of Traffic, Flats Lane & Jerry's Lane, Whittington Heath

Following on from numerous emails and discussions, and the fact that the Parish Council had not received a copy of the Order, it was agreed that an email be sent to Darryl Eyers, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Economy, Infrastructure and Skills, Staffordshire County Council informing him that Flats Lane and Jerry's Lane is not in Whittington Heath but is in fact in Packington and therefore falls within Swinfen and Packington Parish Council's boundary.

SPCA Training

Councillor Loescher informed Members that he had recently attended an on-line training session.

26. THE HIGH-SPEED RAIL PLANS

Following on from numerous emails and discussions, the next meeting will be:

Date: Wednesday 22 July 2026
Time: 11:00-12:30
Location: Balfour Beatty VINCI Cappers Lane Office, Cappers Ln, Lichfield WS14 9TU (Parking available)

HS2 Attendees:
- Paul Marshall - Head of Delivery
- Richard Callagahan - Senior Project Manager
- Victoria Roberts - Senior Engagement and Interface Lead
- Thomas Crosby - Engagement and Interface Manager

Attendees from SPPC:

- Councillor Richard Barnes
- Councillor Jonathan Loescher
- Councillor Richard Dyott

It was agreed that Councillor Loescher would email the relevant papers (our initial submission on 31 January 2026; BBV/HS2 inadequate and late response on 29 May and our comments on the BBV/HS2 response sent 17 June 2026) prior to the meeting.

27. CIL MONIES

RESOLVED That the CIL unspent to date totalling £1,980.22 be noted.

28. GRIEVANCE POLICY

RESOLVED That the Grievance Policy be approved and adopted.

29. HOMEWORKING POLICY

RESOLVED That the Homeworking Policy be approved and adopted.

30. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME – EMPLOYER PENSION DISCRETIONS POLICY

RESOLVED That the Local Government Pension Scheme – Employer Pension Discretions Policy be approved and re-adopted.

31. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION – MODEL COUNCILLOR CODE OF CONDUCT 2020

RESOLVED That the Local Government Association – Model Councillor Code of Conduct 2020 be approved and re-adopted.

32. MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS FOR LOCAL COUNCILS

RESOLVED That the Model Financial Regulations and Local Councils Scheme be approved and re-adopted.

33. FINANCIAL UPDATE ON INCOME AND EXPENDITURE COMPARED TO BUDGET

RESOLVED That the financial update on income and expenditure compared to budget April to July 2026 be approved.

34. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED That under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 (Section 2) (and as expended by Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

35. PARISH CLERK'S SALARY

RESOLVED That cheques be drawn in respect of the Parish Clerk's June 2026 [**cheque number 100799**] and July 2026 [**cheque number 100801**] salary, Staffordshire Pension Fund – June 2026 [**cheque number 100800**] and Staffordshire Pension Fund – July 2026 [**cheque number 100802**].

36. DATE AND TIME FOR NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

RESOLVED That:
Wednesday 16 September 2026
Wednesday 18 November 2026
Wednesday 13 January 2027
Wednesday 17 March 2027
Wednesday 19 May 2027

All meetings will commence at 6.00 pm.

[The Meeting closed at 6.53 pm]

Signed ……..

Dated …….

Swinfen and Packington Parish Council 2026-27

Income		
Date	**Details**	**Payment**
01.04.2026	Balance c/forward Current Account	£17,850.05
17.04.2026	Precept	£7,000.00
30.04.2026	Interest	£4.42
31.05.2026	Interest	£4.57
30.06.2026	Interest	£4.43
31.07.2026	Interest	£4.58
	Total income	£24,868.05

Expenditure (excluding VAT)		
Date	**Details**	**Amount**
02.04.2026	Staffordshire Parish Councils' Association Membership 2026/2027	£278.47
09.04.2026	MediaHeads Domain and Hosting Renewal Website	£100.00
10.04.2026	J Minor April 2026 Salary	£229.88
10.04.2026	Staffordshire Pension Fund April 2026	£76.30
10.04.2026	Stationery Stamps	£13.60
21.04.2026	HMRC (06 April 2026 to 05 July 2026)	£172.20
21.04.2026	HMRC (06 July 2026 to 05 October 2026)	£172.20
21.04.22026	Bank Charges (26 February 2026 to 30 March 2026)	£2.00
10.05.2026	J Minor May 2026 Salary	£278.47
10.05.2026	J Minor Annual Heating Allowance	£156.00
10.05.2026	Staffordshire Pension Fund May 2026	£76.30
14.05.2026	B Cooper - Internal Audit	£70.00
14.05.2026	Clear Insurance Management Limited	£735.98
21.05.2026	Bank Charges (31 March 2026 to 29 April 2026)	£7.00
10.06.2026	J Minor June 2026 Salary	£229.88
10.06.2026	Staffordshire Pension Fund June 2026	£76.30
21.06.2026	Bank Charges (30 April 2026 to 30 May 2026)	£5.00
10.07.2026	J Minor July 2026 Salary	£229.68
10.07.2026	Staffordshire Pension Fund July 2026	£76.30
21.07.2026	Bank Charges (31 May 2026 to 29 June 2026)	£2.00
22.07.2026	MediaHeads - Website	£682.50
26.07.2026	Bishops Landscapes	£1,145.00
10.08.2026	Staffordshire Pension Fund August 2026	£76.30
10.08.2026	J Minor August 2026 Salary	£229.88
21.08.2026	Bank Charges (30 June 2026 to 30 August 2026)	£3.00
10.09.2026	Staffordshire Pension Fund September 2026	£76.30
10.09.2026	J Minor September 2026 Salary	£229.88
	Total expenditure:	**£ 5,430.42**

£19,437.63

LICHFIELD DISTRICT COUNCIL: NEW SETTLEMENT FEASIBILITY STUDY

July 2025

Lichfield District Council

Hyas planning to deliver

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1 Introduction & Background

Role & Purpose of the Study

1.1 Lichfield District Council are in the process of preparing a new Local Plan for Lichfield District, which will set the planning framework for growth and development up to 2043. The Council commissioned the preparation of this 'New Settlement Delivery Study' to help inform their consideration of the role new settlements could play in delivering against housing needs. Specifically, the study considers:

- The timescales involved in bringing forward new settlements;
- The potential contribution that new settlements could make to addressing the future growth needs of the District; and
- The key issues that will influence the viability and deliverability of new settlements.

1.2 This study focuses on four specific sites proposed to the Council through the Local Plan Call for Sites process as new settlements. There are other large scale proposals that have been submitted to the Council in the form of extensions to existing urban areas that the Council are considering separately. Other proposals may emerge as the Local Plan makes progress.

1.3 In addition to this study, a wider range of evidence base gathering is ongoing and collectively this will inform the overall consideration of the role of new settlements as part of the Local Plan. It is not the purpose of this study to consider the overall planning merits of any individual new settlement proposition, albeit where such matters have an impact on deliverability and timescales, these have been considered and are commented upon within this report.

1.4 Given that it is at a relatively early stage in the overall planning process, there is a limited amount of information available on specific proposals. This is usual and more detailed proposals would evolve with associated supporting studies and evidence as potential schemes move forward through the planning process.

1.5 As such this study should be considered as a 'point in time' exercise and takes a high-level, proportionate approach, based upon the best available information. Considerable further work would be required should any specific proposals move forward as part of the Local Plan, and recommendations are given on immediate next steps as part of the conclusions of this report.

National Context

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

1.6 The NPPF sets out the Government's economic, environmental and social planning policies as well as their requirements for the Planning System.

1.7 The initial version of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012 noted (at then paragraph 52) that "The supply of new homes can sometimes be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements or extensions to existing villages and towns that follow the principles of Garden Cities". This recognition has continued through various updates of the NPPF since then.

1.8 The current NPPF (December 2024) sets out that a strategic approach by Councils as part of preparing Local Plans is needed to make sufficient provision for new homes, employment, infrastructure, community facilities whilst respecting the natural environment. Paragraph 22 notes that strategic policies should look ahead over a minimum 15 year period and where larger scale developments such as new settlements or significant extensions to existing villages and towns form part of the strategy for the area, policies should be set within a vision that looks further ahead (at least 30 years), to take into account the likely timescale for delivery.

1.9 In relation to identifying sites, Paragraph 72 states that planning policies should identify a sufficient supply and mix of sites, taking into account their availability, suitability and likely economic viability. This refers to identifying:

- specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption. To be considered deliverable, sites for housing should be available, offer a suitable location for development, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five year; and
- specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for the subsequent years 6-10 and, where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period. To be considered developable, sites should be in a suitable location for housing development with a reasonable prospect that they will be available and could be viably developed at the point envisaged.

1.10 The distinction between 'deliverable' and 'developable' is important for the larger more complex sites depending upon the extent of evidence gathered and potential lead-in times to resolving matters and moving forward into delivery.

1.11 Paragraph 77 notes that "The supply of large numbers of new homes can often be best achieved through planning for larger scale development, such as new settlements". The NPPF goes on to note that such an approach should consider the relationship of strategic proposals with infrastructure and economic growth, considering an appropriate scale to create sustainable communities, and based on realistic assessments of likely delivery rates.

1.12 Furthermore, paragraph 77 a) states that local planning authorities should consider the opportunities presented by existing or planned investment in infrastructure, the area's economic potential and the scope for net environmental gains. Paragraph 72 b) adds that a development should create self-sufficient and sustainable communities that include services and employment opportunities within the development itself, or in larger towns to which there is good access. Paragraph 72 d) adds that a realistic assessment of likely rates of delivery should be made and opportunities for rapid implementations identified, such as joint ventures or development corporations.

1.13 Footnote 38, attached to paragraph 78, acknowledges that given the long term nature of such proposals, a degree of uncertainty will be inevitable stating that: “the delivery of large scale developments may need to extend beyond an individual plan period, and the associated infrastructure requirements may not be capable of being identified fully at the outset. Anticipated rates of delivery and infrastructure requirements should, therefore, be kept under review and reflected as policies are updated”.

National Planning Practice Guidance

1.14 The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) provides further guidance on the process of identifying sites and undertaking a housing and economic land availability assessment. An assessment should identify sites and broad locations with potential for development; assess their development potential; and assess their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forward (the availability and achievability).

1.15 The PPG confirms that a site is “suitable” if it would provide an appropriate location for development when considered against relevant constraints and their potential to be mitigated, taking into account national and local policy. A site is “available” if on the best information available (confirmed by the call for sites and other relevant information from landowners/other stakeholders), there is confidence that there are no legal or ownership impediments to development. A site is considered “achievable” for development where there is a reasonable prospect that the particular type of development will be developed on the site at a particular point in time. This includes making a judgement about the economic viability of a site, and the capacity of the developer to complete and let or sell the development over a certain period.

1.16 The guidance states at Paragraph 009: that “Plan-makers will need to assess a range of different site sizes from small-scale sites to opportunities for large-scale developments such as village and town extensions and new settlements where appropriate”. Furthermore Paragraph 010 states: “It is important that plan-makers do not simply rely on sites that they have been informed about, but actively identify sites through the desktop review process that may assist in meeting the development needs of an area”.

1.17 PPG also considers the approach to new settlements in relation to ‘plan making’. This provides guidance in relation to the consideration of strategic matters, and reiterates (at paragraph 059) that when planning for new settlements “it is recognised that there may not be certainty and/or the funding secured for necessary strategic infrastructure at the time the plan is produced. In these circumstances strategic policy-making authorities will be expected to demonstrate that there is a reasonable prospect that the proposals can be developed within the timescales envisaged.”.

1.18 The guidance also notes that policy-making authorities should make a realistic assessment about the prospect of sites being developed (and associated delivery rates), and demonstrate they have engaged with infrastructure providers. Where uncertainties exist, authorities should keep matters under review and should significant issues become unresolvable, would need to consider alternative strategies via future plan reviews.

Local Context

1.19 The current development plan for Lichfield consists of the Local Plan Strategy 2008-2029 (adopted 2015) and the Local Pan Allocations 2008-2029 (adopted 2019).

1.20 This sets a housing requirement of 10,030 (average of 477dpa) which included 1000 homes to meet the needs arising from Cannock and Tamworth. The strategy for meeting this need was to focus 51% of the growth in and around the existing urban areas of Lichfield and Burntwood, 11% on the edge of Rugeley (in Cannock Chase District) and 10% on the edge of Tamworth. A further 12% of growth was at Fradley with the remaining 16% in the key rural settlements.

1.21 The Council started preparation on a replacement plan in 2018. The Council proposed a strategy within the 'Local Plan 2040' which was submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for independent examination in 2022. That Plan set a requirement for 9,727 homes, meeting Lichfield's (then assessed) Local Housing Need of 7,062 and a contribution of 2,655 homes towards unmet needs arising from the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area. The Strategy for meeting these followed the adopted plan strategy of growth in and around Lichfield and Burntwood of 59%, 6% at Rugeley, 8% at Tamworth, 29% at the key rural villages and 5% elsewhere. The Council took the decision in 2023 to withdraw that plan from examination and have since begun the process to prepare a new Local Plan.

1.22 Under the current national standard method for calculating housing need, Lichfield District's annual requirement is now 746 dwellings per annum (dpa). This is a significant increase from 249 dpa although the average net additions between 2021 and 2024 were 738. Furthermore, there may be unmet needs arising from neighbouring authorities that Lichfield will need to give consideration to.

1.23 In October 2024 the Council undertook public consultation on 'Issues and Options' for the new Local Plan to cover the period 2022 to 2043. The consultation document set out four broad spatial options to address the housing and economic needs of the District:

- Option 1: Town focused.
- Option 2: Town and key village focused.
- Option 3: Dispersed development.
- Option 4: New settlement focused.

1.24 The consultation document suggested that one or more new settlements could absorb a proportion of the development requirements to reduce the pressure on existing settlements, and set out the opportunities and challenges associated with this growth option. The option highlighted four alternative proposals had been submitted to the Council by landowners/developers through the 'call for sites' exercise and were capable of being considered as potential new settlements. These proposals are the subject of this study:

- Land at Packington Hall Farm.

- Land at Thorpe Estate, Thorpe Constantine.
- Whitemoor Garden Village.
- Land at Brookhay. This site is directly adjacent to the Whitemoor proposals and this study considers these broadly as a single new settlement proposition.

1.25 On the 8th April 2025 Lichfield Cabinet received an update report on the Local Plan including feedback on the consultation. Specifically in relation to new settlements the report noted that:

- Residents generally preferred spatial approaches including new settlement options and had a lesser preference for growth in or around existing settlements. Comments stated that approaches to 'bolt-on' growth to existing settlements put greater pressure on existing services and facilities and was not always accompanied by sufficient investment in additional infrastructure.
- There was an acknowledgment that new settlements were long term endeavours which may not deliver in the short term, and that there was likely to be a need for other types of sites and development to come forward to address overall needs from the outset.
- Many responses from the planning and development sector raised concerns over the deliverability and potential lead-in times of new settlements and stated that other smaller and less complex sites would be required particularly in the short/medium term to ensure the plan meets housing needs across the plan period.

1.26 The Council intend to undertake additional evidence gathering to lead to the preparation of a prepared strategy to be subsequently submitted to the Planning inspectorate for independent examination, anticipated for some time in late 2025/early 2026. This study forms part of that overall consideration.

2 Key Issues in Delivering New Settlements

Overview of section

2.1 Large-scale new communities are an important part of the portfolio of ways to meet housing and growth needs in England. Over the past 10-15 years there has been a resurgence in interest in bringing forward large scale new settlements and garden cities through the planning system. This has been accompanied by a renewed enthusiasm by the Government, and the planning profession more widely, for planning at a strategic scale.

2.2 This section draws from learning, research and experience related to the planning and delivery of new settlements to provide a context to opportunities, issues, challenges and the potential roles of various stakeholders that will be involved.

Why Plan for New Settlements

2.3 Well planned new communities can offer a sustainable alternative to the current, often-piecemeal approach to housing growth and provide an opportunity to create high-quality sustainable places, allowing for the highest sustainability standards, economies of scale, and better use of infrastructure. Key benefits of a new settlement, in comparison to other forms for growth include the following:

- **Ability to invest and provide for new infrastructure.** New settlements provide opportunities to capture land value uplifts for investment in new strategic infrastructure and community facilities. Detached new settlements offer the greatest scope for land value capture where the existing use value is based on agricultural land values and there is limited prospect of other value generating land uses.
- **Creating a critical mass to provide a range of uses, services, and facilities.** New settlements can provide sufficient critical mass to facilitate the inclusion of a range of supporting uses and facilities, preventing a site becoming a dormitory location. Wherever possible settlements should relate well to one or more local economic growth priorities, established and/or future growth sectors.
- **Delivering well designed, healthy and characterful new communities.** Properly planned new places can include generous landscaping, ready access to the countryside, new publicly accessible open spaces to create green characterful spaces and places designed at the human-scale supporting healthy new communities.
- **Promoting development that can promote sustainable living and help to address climate change.** New settlements can strive for zero carbon and energy-positive solutions to ensure climate crisis adaptation and mitigation is inherent in all design. The population of a new settlement can provide the critical mass to support facilities needed for low-carbon lifestyles, such as rapid public transport, low-carbon energy systems, jobs located within walking distance of homes, and a range of cultural and leisure services.

- **Providing integrated and accessible transport systems, with walking, cycling and public transport designed to be the most attractive forms of local transport.** Sustainable communities can be planned from the outset to maximise self-containment, with integrated sustainable transport networks that encourage active modes of travel.
- **Ability to mitigate and minimise negative environmental impacts.** The location, layout and construction of new settlements should minimise/avoid harm to ecosystems and provide strategic scale betterment (environmental/biodiversity net gains) whilst providing a comprehensive green infrastructure network with climate resilience built into the fabric of the natural and built environments. By considering large areas of land, negative impacts on the environment can be dealt with in a holistic way, with avoidance, mitigation and enhancement considered from the outset and integrated into the design.
- **Achieving future growth needs at a specific location and taking a long term view**. One of the key benefits of new settlements is that they can help to prevent the sprawl of existing towns and villages by providing strategic locations for sustainable new growth. Alternative approaches can (if not done well) result in 'bolt-on estates' which encourage increased car use as they are usually little more than dormitories, often without an economic or an appropriate range of supporting social infrastructure.

What is a 'New Settlement'

2.4 It is important to note that there is no fixed or formal definition as to what may be considered to entail a 'new settlement'.

2.5 Previous Government documentation relating to Garden Communities refers to proposals coming forward as purpose built new settlements, but has also acknowledged that large extensions to existing town could also be classified.

2.6 Part of the distinction relates to the creation of communities that contain a variety of uses and facilities so as not to become solely residential dormitory suburbs. This could include providing space for employment, attractive green space and public realm areas, transport infrastructure, including roads, buses and cycle routes, community infrastructure, schools, community and health centres.

2.7 An additional consideration is that a new settlement should be considered distinct from another local or adjoining place, and have its own identity and character, even if it was in close proximity to an established place or neighbourhood.

2.8 Government prospectuses have noted that 'Garden Villages' could be in a size range of circa 1,500-10,000 homes, with 'Garden Towns' being potentially over 10,000 homes.

1.1 The Town and Country Planning Association (TCPA) has undertaken considerable work and research into the planning of new settlements and has long campaigned for a new generation of Garden Cities based on modern Garden City Principles. The TCPA was born from the original Garden City movement and the creation of places such as Letchworth and Welwyn Garden Cities. The TCPA has also been exploring the unique story of the New

Towns; celebrating their opportunities and reflecting on their challenges in order to learn for the future and inform the creation of new places.

1.2 The TCPA has its own definition of what a Garden City is, its own "Garden City Principles" and has produced a series of guidance documents which includes papers on various aspects including approaches to Stewardship, Finance & Delivery and other papers such as Technical Guide on Project and Programme Management.

2.9 The TCPA indicate that a critical mass of 5,000-10,000 dwellings would be required to enable a reasonable degree of self-containment – enabling a place to include a broad range of uses, services and facilities to cater to the needs of a new local population.

2.10 A key driver often relates to being large enough to support the delivery of a secondary school. This will partly be driven by the proximity and any spare capacity of existing secondary schools across the local area, but would generally require a minimum of circa 4,000-5,000 homes. The TCPA considered that to be a sustainable community a place should provide for its children through to adulthood.

Research & analysis into build out rates

2.11 The most extensive research is undertaken by planning consultancy Lichfields and set out in the paper "Start to Finish" provides an analysis on the pace at which large-scale housing sites of 500 dwellings or more emerge through the planning system and how quickly they are built out. It identifies the factors which lead to faster or slower rates of delivery. The latest edition published in February 2025 considers delivery rates from 179 sites.

2.12 The research indicates that the average time from validation of an outline application to the delivery of the first dwelling for large sites of 2,000+ dwellings was just over 6 years. When sites start, the research indicates that for schemes of 2,000 or more dwellings the average annual completion rate throughout build-out ranges from 100 to 188 dwellings per annum, with a mean rate of circa 150. The report acknowledges that some sites can deliver quicker and greater rates, with the top five delivering peak delivery rates of between 520-620 dwellings per annum, albeit such rates are not sustained on a year by year basis. Some key factors that can enhance and contribute to high rates include:

- Greenfield sites can deliver more quickly than brownfield sites.
- Having a diversity of housing types on large sites can appeal to a wider market and achieve greater build out rates.
- Schemes with higher proportions of affordable housing (30%+) have highest rates.
- The ability for sales from multiple housebuilders and outlets drives higher rates, with each outlet potentially delivering between 50-70 units per year per outlet.

2.13 Various other studies have looked at issues of build-out rates and the operation of the market. This included the "Independent Review of build out" in 2018 undertaken by Sir Oliver Letwin (the Letwin review) set out a number of recommendations to Government to establish the right conditions to increase rates, noting that the fundamental limitation

to rates was due to the homogeneity of the types and tenures of the homes being offered.

2.14 A more recent study into the Housebuilding sector by the Competition & Markets Authority noted that an average timescale for land coming forward from the date of applying for outline planning to the start of construction was between 4.1 to 4.4 years (note this is not specifically related to sites of the scale and complexity of new settlements). The study considered wider matters related to how housebuilders operated and the consideration of potential land banking, noting that the uncertainty of the planning system was a key factor, as was the approach of housebuilders to maintain sales values was a key influence on build out rates.

Understanding the viability and the delivery of new settlements

2.15 It is important to recognise that large sites such as new settlements will have particular viability and delivery considerations and require a different consideration to smaller scale and less complicated forms of development.

2.16 New Settlements will often be located on greenfield land and require significant up front infrastructure and initial enabling/servicing works to enable development to occur. They will tend to also require a range of improvements to enhance transport connectivity such as through new roads, junctions and provision of new public transport and active travel connections. There will be a need to provide new social infrastructure such as schools early on in the delivery programme to ensure they are available from an early stage to new residents.

2.17 The requirements for early investment in infrastructure puts pressure on scheme cashflows putting greater emphasis on needing to understand how schemes can be viably delivered and funded.

2.18 The position of landowners and land draw down is key. Where expectations of uplifts are high and/or where full payments are required upfront or at an early stage to landowners this can introduce a significant early cost into a scheme viability cashflow. Alternatively, landowners willing to be patient and reasonable in terms of the timing and scale of returns will improve a scheme cashflow and the consideration of viability overall.

2.19 Landowners will need to recognise that the specific circumstances and infrastructure requirements will need to be factored into expectations of returns in line with national policy and guidance relating to consideration of land values and viability assessments.

2.20 The approach to viability will need to be considered as part of finalising the Local Plan and set out in appropriate evidence. The assessment of new settlements should carefully consider various factors to ensure there is confidence that schemes will come forward as expected. Consultants will need to consider and evaluate the following as part of such assessments:

- A credible allowance for infrastructure costs, whilst unlikely to be able to be based on detailed items and specifications, they should contain reasonable allowances based on engagement with service providers.

- Build costs to include various expectations around quality and incorporation of sustainable measures.
- Sales values potentially reflecting the quality of place envisaged and scope for premiums to be secured above sales values achieved locally to date, unless appropriate comparables exist in the local market.
- Appropriate landowner returns, considered in line with national policy and guidance and importantly acknowledging that new settlements will not be comparable to other types of development elsewhere, and that returns should reflect infrastructure and policy requirements as the rationale for their inclusion in a local plan.
- Appropriate developer returns. Allowance should be included to reflect the role of any 'master-developer' involved, likely to be on the basis of an expected 'Internal rate of Return' based upon their role in financing the delivery of the scheme as a whole. For housebuilders/plot developers this should include consideration that the schemes would be anticipated to be significantly de-risked through the activities of a 'master-developer' approach.

2.21 Care will be needed not to assess viability in an appropriate manner, otherwise there will be a risk that policy requirements may not be capable of being addressed in full or part when planning applications come forward and detailed discussions relating to S106 occur. Often, it is the level of affordable housing that becomes the 'release valve' to make schemes viable, and there are numerous examples of large scale sites where lower than policy levels of affordable housing end up being provided, or this occurs for initial phases with subsequent viability review processes needed to assess how provision from future phases. This may be particularly pertinent to land being released from the Green Belt, where the Government has set particular expectations for affordable housing as part of the 'golden rules' set out in the latest NPPF.

Government support to deliver new settlements

2.22 Historically the Government has recognised the need to play a role in the planning and delivery of new settlements. This has included initiatives such as the post war New Towns programme, and more recent activities such as the concept of 'Eco-towns', and now through the work of the Government appointed New Towns Taskforce.

2.23 In 2014, the Department for Communities and Local Government issued the "Locally-led Garden Cities" Prospectus which set out a broad support package to local areas interested in delivering new Garden Cities. Proposals needed to be ambitious in terms of scale and delivery, and set high standards for design, quality and the provision of green space. In terms of scale, the Government expected developments to contain in excess of 15,000 homes, delivered more quickly than would be typical through the existing planning system. At the same time, the Government also recognised that the larger sites often required capital funding support in particular to enable the delivery of upfront and other enabling infrastructure works. The 2014 Prospectus was aligned to the launch of a "Large Sites Infrastructure Fund" and "Local Growth Fund" which provided a blend of grants and recoverable loans for eligible schemes.

2.24 In 2016 the Government published a further prospectus – "Locally-Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities" which invited expressions of interest for additional Government support for new 'garden villages' of between 1,500 to 10,000 homes, as well as support for larger scale new garden towns and cities of more than 10,000 homes.

2.25 In 2018 a further 'Garden Communities Prospectus', was issued by MHCLG which invited bids for ambitious, locally supported, proposals for new garden communities. It sought to encourage proposals for high quality homes and green spaces.

2.26 Additional legislation has come forward such as via the Neighbourhood Planning Act (2017) and The New Towns Act 1981 (Local Authority Oversight) Regulations 2018 which introduced the legislative and regulatory backing to update the historic New Towns Act to enable Councils to bring forward locally led new towns to be designated delivered by locally established and governed Development Corporations. Further legislation and powers exist to set up alternative types of Development Corporations including those established via local Mayors or by the Secretary of State, and with roles either to deliver strategic scale new towns and/or area wide regeneration.

Support from Homes England

2.27 Homes England is the government's housing and regeneration agency. It manages a range of programmes including supporting the delivery of affordable housing, providing finance and funding support to the development industry and being responsible for the direct delivery of housing and regeneration.

2.28 In relation to new settlements, it is leading on the delivery of large scale new communities in places such as Northstowe (South Cambridgeshire) and Brookleigh (Burgess Hill, Mid Sussex).

2.29 Homes England also plays a key role in the development of garden communities across England, managing a wide programme of support and providing funding, expert advice, and general planning and delivery support. Of note in 2019 Homes England produced a "Garden Communities Toolkit", that drew together the organisation's knowledge and experience of the various projects it was involved in. The Toolkit provides information on how to plan, design and develop a new garden community and includes guidance across a number of topics including on infrastructure planning, assessing viability and exploring funding, delivery mechanism options & governance.

Approach to a new generation of New Towns

2.30 There has been renewed interest in the role New Towns may have in meeting future development needs. New Towns Taskforce was established by the Government in September 2024 to support the government to deliver the next generation of new towns. The Government states that "the primary objective of the new towns programme is to create new and expanded places and thereby boost economic growth and the supply of new homes – spreading opportunity and supporting strong communities". This followed the publication of a policy statement on the 31st July 2024 which set out the Governments vision for a new generation of new towns and the establishment of the Taskforce.

2.31 The Taskforce has been asked to make recommendations to ministers on the location and delivery of new towns in the summer of 2025. They asked for evidence and invited submissions for sites.

2.32 On the 13th February 2025 the Taskforce published an interim update. It confirmed that over 100 responses had been received about potential sites. The interim report stated that each new settlement should contain at least 10,000 new homes, but that the Taskforce is considering both standalone sites as well as expansion of existing towns and cities where "new, well planned and well-connected communities of scale could meet housing need, help unlock economic potential and reshape areas in need of revitalisation". The interim report also set out lessons learned from previous programmes and key requirements for the planning of new settlements.

Examples of New Settlements

2.33 There are many examples nationwide of new settlements coming forward at various stages in the planning and delivery process. Several examples are set out below to provide some context to issues, opportunities and implications of pursuing such an approach. Clearly every site is subject to its own unique set of issues and circumstances and therefore care is needed in considering matters specific to the situation and approach to potential new settlements in Lichfield.

Northstowe, South Cambridgeshire

2.34 Northstowe is a new settlement for up to 10,000 new dwellings currently being constructed on the former RAF Oakington base. It is located north west of Cambridge, is one of the largest new settlements in the country and is being delivered in phases by Homes England in partnership with a range of housebuilders and developers.

2.35 The principle of a new settlement at Northstowe originated from the Regional Planning Guidance for the East of England (RPG 6) which in November 2000 first identified the need for a new settlement to serve growth of the Cambridge Sub-Region.

2.36 The site was allocated in the 2003 Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Structure Plan, and has proceed via several policy stages including as part of the South Cambridgeshire District Council's Core Strategy (2007) and through a site specific plan - the Northstowe Area Action Plan (AAP) which was also adopted in July 2007. A standalone 'Development Framework Document' (DFD) was also prepared by the joint promoters and the planning authorities (South Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council). This included a Framework Masterplan to illustrate the phasing of development.

2.37 As part of the preparation and examination of Local Plans and considerations around future housing supply, the project has assumed an annual rate of completions of 250 dwellings per year. In reality completions since 2017/18 have ranged from 140 (in the first full year of delivery) through to 278 per year.

2.38 The site has proceeded into delivery via the preparation and determination of several Outline Planning Applications. Initial applications were submitted in 2005 and 2007 but

were not able to be determined due to difficulties with the delivery and funding of strategic improvements to the A14 between Cambridge and Huntingdon.

2.39 Subsequently proposals have come forward via separate outline planning applications across major phases. Phase 1 included the development of 1,500 dwellings alongside a local centre, primary school and 5 hectares of employment land. Phase 1 was granted in 2014 and the majority is now constructed. Phase 2 for another further 3,500 dwellings, 2 primary schools, a secondary school and a town centre including employment uses was submitted in 2014 and approved in January 2017. Individual plots and parts of the infrastructure are continuing to come forward, including the provision of the secondary school.

2.40 The settlement has been designed around a clear transport strategy. Improvements to the A14 have been integral to ensuring strong road connections for the settlement. The planning framework for Northstowe also calls for high quality public transport and associated infrastructure, including a dedicated local busway.

2.41 Northstowe will provide a mix of market homes from a variety of different housebuilders or through self and custom build opportunities, and affordable housing. Homes England are the 'master developer' for Northstowe Phases 2, 3a and 3b, and their involvement supports an accelerated housing delivery programme due to their frontloading and financing of infrastructure delivery that allows for serviced parcels to be brought forward by individual housebuilders

Houlton, Rugby

2.42 Houlton is a 1200-acre urban extension that will eventually comprise 6,200 new homes, three primary schools, a secondary school, a GP health centre, and 31 hectares of employment space and 299 hectares of open space. A new parkway station is also planned to serve the site and relieve pressure on the main Rugby station in the town centre.

2.43 The scheme is a joint venture between property development company Urban&Civic and Aviva Investors and will be delivered over a 20-year period.

2.44 The site was allocated in the 2011 Local Plan. Outline consent was granted in 2014 and construction began 2017/18. As of 2023/24 around 1,200 homes have been completed, alongside provision of both primary and secondary schools and local services.

2.45 The site has benefitted from significant Government Funding which has helped to fund the delivery of initial transport works including a link road into Rugby, as well as enabling the delivery of the Secondary school.

2.46 The scheme is now well advanced, with over 1,000 homes built and occupied, and the first primary and secondary schools, as well as the local centre, now open. Houlton is a much visited, exemplar scheme which demonstrates the value of early delivery of infrastructure, particularly education and green spaces, in community building and placemaking. Construction began in 2017-18 with completions in the past seven monitoring years, with the delivery rate peaking at 227 in 2022/23. A delivery rate of 200-

250 per annum on the site has been considered appropriate by the developers and Council.

Long Marston, Stratford

2.47 The Long Marston Airfield site (Proposal LMA) was identified as a suitable and sustainable location for new development in the Stratford-on-Avon District Core Strategy. The Core Strategy was adopted by the Council in July 2017 following an Examination in Public held by an Independent Planning Inspector who considered all of the evidence and arguments for and against Long Marston Airfield and concluded that the proposal and the Core Strategy as a whole was 'sound'. A subsequent Supplementary Planning Document was also prepared to co-ordinate delivery and set design parameters, and was adopted Feb 2018.

2.48 The site controlled by national housebuilder (CALA Homes) working with SDC and Homes England to deliver the project as Long Marston Airfield Garden Village. The developers had considered that delivery of housing would occur from at least 4 sales outlets, each of which could delivery 50-60 units per year. This was considered typical for a site of this size and a scheme of this nature.

2.49 The new settlement is directly related to the provision of a south-western relief road (SWRR) to Stratford-upon-Avon town. The consented development was restricted to 400 homes (i.e. Phase 1) in advance of the SWRR unless additional highway capacity available.

2.50 An outline planning application (with all matters reserved) for a phased development comprising up to 3,100 new home was submitted in 2018. CALA has submitted 2 applications – Phase 1a for 124 homes and Phase 1b for 376 homes.

2.51 The Council made a bid and was awarded £13.4 million for vital site infrastructure measures through the Housing Infrastructure Fund. This has enabled some of the initial enabling infrastructure to come forward.

2.52 To date around 300-400 homes have been built so far – with the delivery of infrastructure and the Stratford southern by-pass having a key impact on the pace and scale of delivery.

Summary of Key Issues, Challenges & Opportunities

2.53 Large-scale new communities are complex, long-term projects that require commitment from across the political, economic, corporate and planning divisions of the local authorities and often require help from Central Government and/or via Homes England that help to deliver them. Their delivery requires consideration of a multitude of issues, such as ownership and control of land, skills capacity, investment sources, infrastructure delivery, and community development and stewardship.

2.54 To include a 'new settlement' within a Local Plan It will be important to ensure there is sufficient confidence on scheme deliverability in order for sites to withstand scrutiny and be found reasonable and appropriate. This is particularly important for those sites that are larger, more strategic and which are expected to deliver a high proportion of future housing supply.

2.55 The justification for new settlements will need to be supported by a robust body of evidence to provide comfort to key stakeholders and the Planning Inspectorate that they can deliver and come forward in a sustainable manner, including that they will deliver the necessary infrastructure. Furthermore, as New Settlements are typically in more rural locations, they can sometimes attract more public opposition including through local parish councils and action groups. It will be particularly important that there is sufficient meaningful engagement with key stakeholders and the public as part of the plan-making process and when planning applications are being prepared.

2.56 The Council will in due course need to consider not only the viability of proposals, but also wider considerations of deliverability including but not limited to:

- The willingness and ability of landowners, promoters and developers to bring forward the land for development in the timescale envisaged. This will need to include a credible delivery approach – involving stakeholders with sufficient experience and track record.
- The ability to deliver all necessary infrastructure and mitigation requirements, with no defined technical 'showstoppers' in terms of the feasibility and practicality of delivery. Some degree of uncertainty over the specific funding and delivery of long term infrastructure is to be expected, as funding programmes often do not extend out over the full time scale of development proposals. The position of key infrastructure providers will be key, to ensure that none are identifying unresolvable issues.
- The timing of when development and infrastructure is to be implemented, on the basis that any items anticipated early in the process (say within 5 years) will require a greater level of confidence and credibility than items beyond the short term.
- An appreciation of a need for flexibility rather than detailed prescription in the delivery of some requirements, should this be needed.
- The existence of potential solutions and/or fall back positions should certain matters require alternative solutions over time. This could include having in principle support from key stakeholders that could provide future assistance, such as the Councils, Homes England or other relevant bodies.

2.57 As part of the process of preparing material for a Local Plan, there is usually a steady evolution of evidence on deliverability, as the various stakeholders make progress with information gathering and scheme de-risking.

2.58 The significant time taken in all cases to advance from formal recognition of a new settlement to its adoption in policy and subsequently the granting of planning permission. It is right to begin thinking about the approach to delivery at an early stage. This is needed to not only provide understanding, but also to give confidence that a scheme would be credible and deliverable.

2.59 New Settlements may also have impacts and relationships with locations beyond a Council boundary. This requires effective joint-working with adjacent local planning authorities, infrastructure providers and other stakeholders.

Key Stakeholders, Roles & Responsibilities for delivery

2.60 The delivery of new settlements will inevitably be a long process, and realistic assessments of what is involved and how various stakeholders need to work together is needed from the outset.

2.61 Generally, sites for new settlements are initially promoted and brought forward by landowners and developers. However the actual delivery of the larger propositions requires stakeholders who can take a long term approach, with the associated risk appetite, experience and access to funding. This can be difficult for the smaller traditional developers, including national and local housebuilders whose main focus in normally on developing and selling properties to minimise capital exposure and maintain steady returns and profits. As a result, new settlements tend to also require a 'master developer' who can take on responsibilities for overseeing delivery of the place as a whole, with specific responsibilities for all enabling/servicing works and strategic infrastructure delivery, and who can take a long term view in terms of funding and returns.

2.62 It is important from the outset to have a good understanding of the positions and inputs from a range of key stakeholders and as set out below:

- **Landowners.** Landowners relating to strategic greenfield sites are often asset rich but cash poor. They will generally not have the expertise or resources to undertake the work required to obtain the appropriate planning consents and move on to construction. They are likely therefore to secure agreements with another commercial party through some form of legal agreement – for example through the use of either option or promotion agreements relating to all/part of their land holdings.
- **Land promoters.** Land promoters specialise in managing the planning and land risks inherent in establishing the principle of development on a site. They may therefore secure an interest, obtain necessary consents and then sell on to housebuilders & other developers, sharing returns with landowners.
- **Master developers.** There are a number of specialist developers who take on the promotion and delivery function of the larger and most strategic sites – doing the hard graft of assembling land, testing feasibility, overcoming technical hurdles to development, securing planning consents and taking care of servicing and infrastructure. They then sell on serviced plots to housebuilders/developers.
- **Developers & Housebuilders.** Smaller developers, national and regional housebuilders are often most attracted to serviced land parcels with capacity for 100 to 250 dwellings as they provide a few years' worth of supply with minimal infrastructure or cashflow concerns. They may also decide to take on larger strategic land as the 'master developer' to provide a longer pipeline of future supply but for the larger sites they would be likely to work in partnership with or sell parcels off to other housebuilders / developers. They will enter directly into option or agreements with landowners and take on the process of obtaining the necessary consents.
- **Local Authorities.** There are a range of potential roles that the Councils could take, from relatively passive with the Council's role limited to its statutory planning function to more interventionist. Examples of potential direct Local Authority

involvement could range from some form of partnership approach whereby Councils enter into agreements with private sector partners to pool assets, funding, skills and resources and jointly deliver large-scale development in a comprehensive manner and to share both risk and reward. A Council could also take a leadership and direct delivery role, such as through the acquisition of land, and/or the establishment of some form or Delivery Vehicle with a single remit to deliver. At a local level consideration could be given to putting in place a statutory Development Corporation.

- **MHCLG & Homes England**. The Ministry of Housing & Local Government (MHCLG) will seek to secure enhanced housing delivery as part of meeting national housing ambitions. It may be able to deploy certain tools and support directly to enabling strategic sites to move forward, such as brokering ways forward with Statutory Authorities and providing access to expertise. The Secretary of State itself can establish a Development Corporation to coordinate delivery (such as Ebbsfleet development Corporation). Homes England works closely with local authorities, and collaborates with private developers, housing associations, lenders and infrastructure providers to support the supply of new housing. It provides a range of funding and investment programmes, and can intervene where necessary in the market to get more homes built, tackle market failure where it occurs and help to shape a more resilient and diverse housing market.
- **Infrastructure Providers**. A wider range of bodies and companies will be involved in the funding and provision of a range of specific types of infrastructure. They are responsible for capital programmes of investment based upon current and future growth and changes in service demand.

2.63 There are a range of potential delivery roles that the Councils could take, from relatively passive to more interventionist, and a number of reasons why the Councils may want to get more proactively involved. As a minimum and in the absence of a more proactive approach by the Councils, development would come forward by third party developers and landowners, with the Council's role limited to its statutory planning function. In theory, the financial and legal risks associated with this approach would be limited as there would be no cost to the Councils other than the revenue costs associated with continued operations associated with the statutory planning functions, leading on to the wider delivery of local services funded through national and local taxation.

2.64 This approach does, however, assume that acceptable development comes forward in accordance with local planning policy and that all requirements are met, including the delivery of all necessary infrastructure. For any large and complex sites, there will be risks that such requirements may not be fully satisfied or that landowners may be unwilling to bring forward appropriate proposals.

2.65 Current practice from around the UK shows that large-scale growth could alternatively be delivered using a broad range of proactive and interventionist mechanisms, including options where growth is fully controlled and/or directly delivered by local authorities either as a sole venture or in partnership with others through to the creation of development corporations.

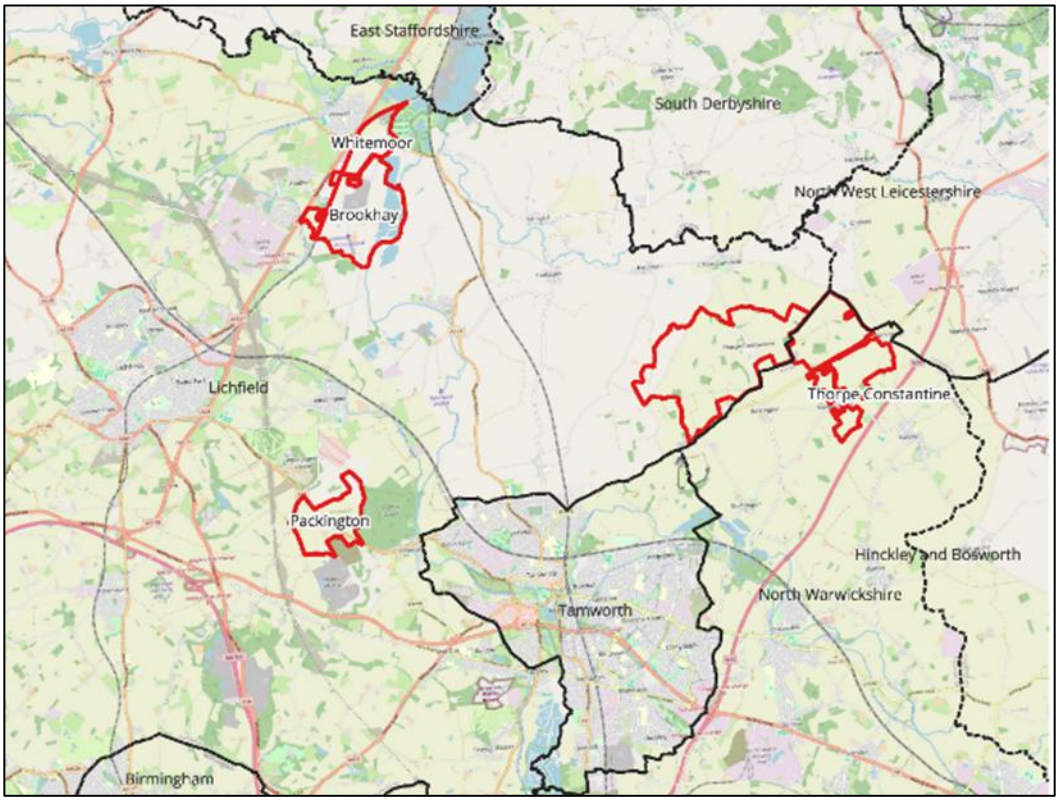
3 Overview of Proposed Sites

3.1 The sites that are subject to this study are those that have, following the call for sites process conducted in March 2024 and the Issues and Options in December 2024, been identified by Council Officers as having the potential to function as 'New Settlements'. Four specific sites have been proposed:

- **Packington Hall Farm** that could accommodate 2,500-3,000 homes.
- **Thorpe Constantine** that could accommodate a minimum of 4,500 – 6,000 homes (with scope for additional development cross boundary into North Warwickshire).
- **Whitemoor** that could accommodate 1,500-2,000 homes.
- **Brookhay** – that could accommodate approximately 5,000 homes (and is located directly adjacent to the Whitemoor proposal).

3.2 The map below illustrates the locations of the four proposed sites in the context of Lichfield District, the surrounding local authorities, strategic transport routes and key towns.

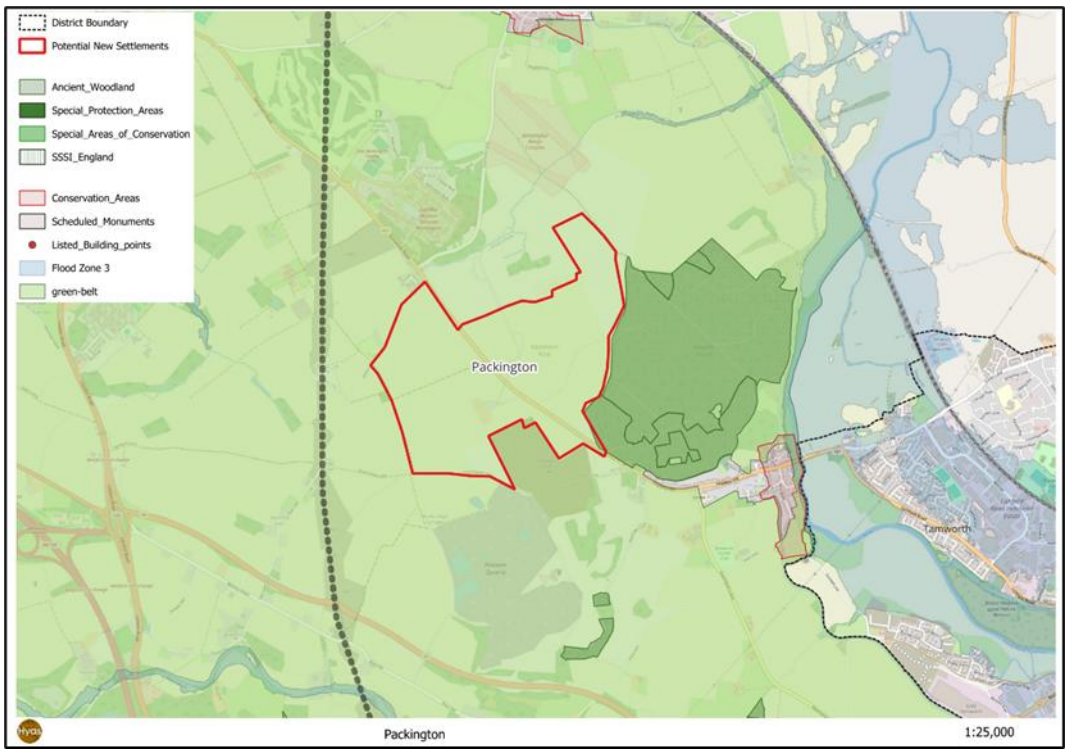
Figure 1 – Location of proposed new settlements (background mapping courtesy of Open Street Map Contributors)



Packington Hall Farm

3.3 Packington Hall Farm is situated on the A51, between Tamworth and Lichfield, to the East of Whittington Barracks and West of Hopwas Woods. It is a site of circa 175 hectares and is currently in agricultural use, with some related farm buildings and small enterprises.

Figure 2 - Packington Hall Farm Site Map (background mapping courtesy of Open Street Map Contributors)



3.4 The area of land currently being promoted is in single land ownership. Miller Developments are promoting the site on behalf of the landowners (as of May 2025) and will be responsible for evolving more detailed plans and proposals and taking these into future stages of planning and delivery. They are supported by Nexus Planning and a wider consultant team. The site had not previously been promoted prior to the Issues and Options consultation in December 2024.

3.5 Initial analysis of site capacity indicates that circa 2,500 to 3,000 homes could be accommodated including spaces for primary schools and the potential for a Secondary School should it be required. The site can also accommodate circa 5 hectares of Employment Land and 2 local centres to include retail, mobility hubs, health and community space. The site could also include space for formal sports provision, community allotments and various types of open space.

3.6 There could be opportunities for a larger site to be identified, either though the addition of land to the west up to the boundary of the HS2 corridor, or southwards to consider areas subject to quarrying to the south between the site and the A5. Such land would however be outside of the control of the lead promoters, albeit it could potentially be included subject to securing suitable agreements.

3.7 A vision document has been prepared for the site which sets out the following vision:

'Packington Fields Garden Village lies in a pivotal location, being located on the A51, broadly halfway between Lichfield and Tamworth. This offers the opportunity to utilise existing infrastructure capacity to commence development on the site and can be served by a new high quality and high frequency bus route, anchored by Lichfield to the north west and Tamworth to the south east.'

3.8 Some initial technical and supporting work has been undertaken relating to site capacity, transport, landscape, flood risk and drainage and ecology, albeit this is generally high level and all matters will require further work and investigation.

Key Site Considerations

Highways & Movement

3.9 Access for all vehicular modes would be via new access/junctions on the A51. The speed of the A51 would be expected to be reduced through the site. A high frequency bus route between Tamworth and Lichfield would need to be provided to enhance the current services (765, X65, X66) alongside improved walking and cycling links.

3.10 Some off-site highways improvements are likely to be required, subject to the findings of transport modelling and assessments, but the site is unlikely to require substantial works to the strategic highways network.

Landscape

3.11 The site is not situated within any designated landscape however landscape impacts will need to be appropriately addressed given the site is relatively isolated from built development. The intention is to include sufficient screening through landscape buffers to mitigate impacts on the wider landscape.

Heritage

3.12 Packington Hall and Malthouse (both Grade II) situated near to the northern boundary. The potential impacts would need to be mitigated by the use of landscape buffers/open space. The Hopwas Bridge is Grade II listed which will need to be considered as part of the provision of enhanced footpath/cycle links.

Ecology

3.13 Notable habitat types include on-site woodland, hedgerows, tree lines, individual trees, a other features. These would need to be accommodated within the emerging design with an appropriate approach to deliver on Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.

3.14 Hopwas Wood is a substantial area of Ancient Woodland adjacent to the site. A detailed Woodland Management Plan would be required to identify potential impacts and provide targeted measures to avoid and minimise adverse impacts.

Noise

3.15 The site is situated close to the Whittingham Barracks which is an active military training centre. The proximity to the Barracks and the associated rifle range which also utilises Hopwas Wood will require further consideration.

Overview of proposed delivery strategy

3.16 Miller Developments intend to operate as master developer and lead the overall development of the scheme including delivery of the strategic infrastructure with 'plug and play' development parcels sold off to housebuilders. As a commercial developer, they would also deliver the ancillary elements, including retail centres, GP surgeries and employment space.

3.17 Miller Developments have some experience of delivering large scale long term mixed use schemes such as the Omega project in Warrington, albeit this has an employment emphasis and the residential component is considerably lower than that proposed at Packington.

3.18 The promoters have suggested an overall build out rate for the site which indicates the potential for a substantial part of the site to be delivered within the plan period. This programme includes the following assumptions:

- Pre-application engagement and advice prior to adoption of the Local Plan
- A hybrid application containing pre-commencement information for Phase 1
- Progressing S106 negotiations in parallel with the applications consideration

Figure 3: Potential lead in time and delivery rate for Packington Hall Farm

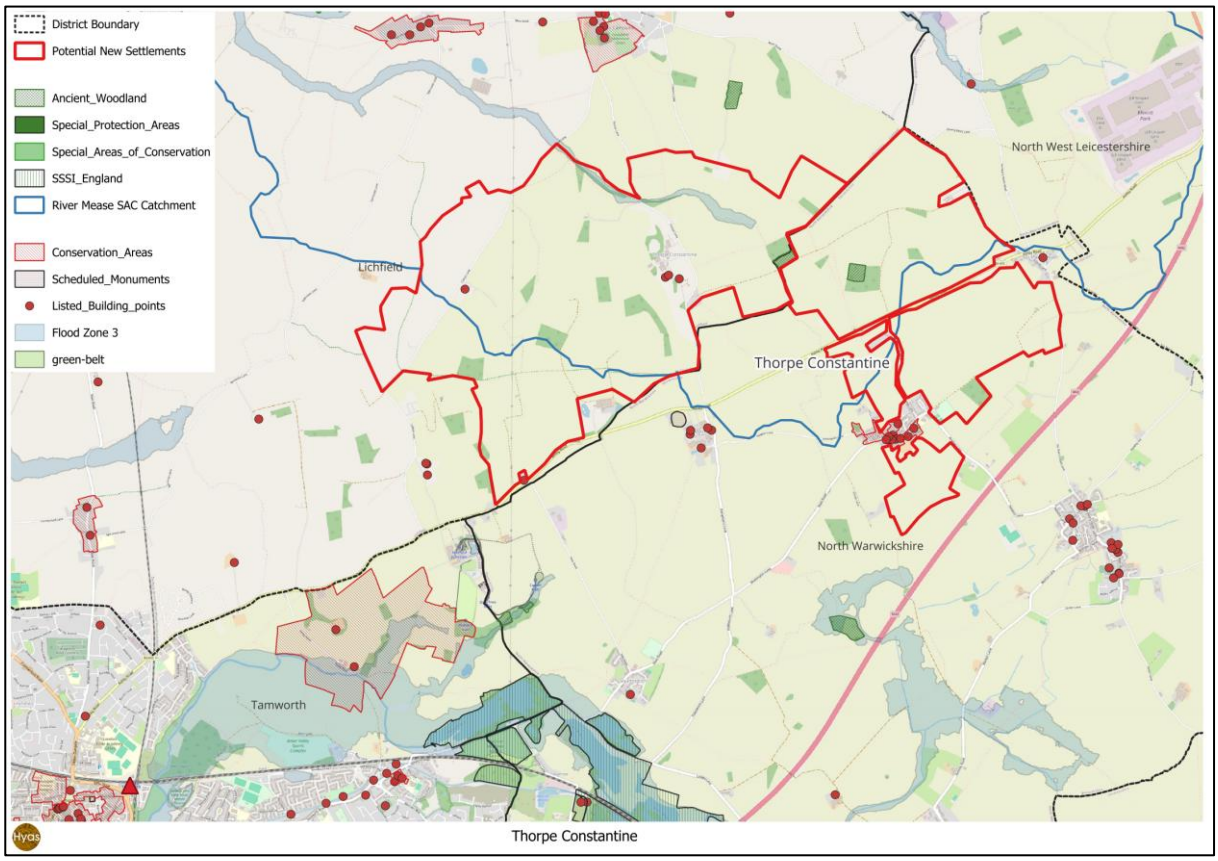
	Plan Period																		
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
Draft Plan																			
Plan Adoption																			
Hybrid App																			
Conditions																			
Commencement																			
Completions						100	100	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Cumulative Total						100	200	400	600	800	1000	1200	1400	1600	1800	2000	2200	2400	2600

Source: Hyas based upon information received from promoters.

Thorpe Constantine

3.19 Thorpe Constantine is a large rural estate of approximately 550 hectares, circa 5km to the north east of Tamworth, along the B5493/Ashby Road which leads up to the Junction 11 on the M42 at Murcia Park. The majority of the land is currently in agricultural use, with an area proposed as a solar farm. The hamlet of Thorpe Constantine itself comprises several properties including the main house, church and other buildings.

Figure 4 - Thorpe Constantine Site Map (background mapping courtesy of Open Street Map Contributors)



3.20 The site is in single land ownership by the Thorpe Estate who are supported by property and planning advisors Knight Frank, who have experience from a number of other large scale schemes across England, notably the Welborne scheme in Fareham, Hampshire. The site has previously been promoted through the call for sites and Issues and Options consultation.

3.21 The overall rural estate is large, and there is some flexibility around the extent of land that could be included as part of the proposals. Initial analysis of site capacity indicates that a minimum of 4,500-6,000 homes could be delivered alongside provision of local centres, primary schools, a secondary school and various types of open space. The promoters indicate that employment land would also be included, with employment uses also to be distributed throughout the new settlement. Land currently approved for a solar farm could in time be drawn in to the scheme, and additional land could also come forward within the North Warwickshire area. Overall the site could ultimately have capacity for a new settlement of circa 10,000 homes.

3.22 A high level vision has been developed for the site. The proposal focuses on 7 core principles of promoting Inclusivity, good design, being welcoming for all, securing high quality of life, being sustainable and including an approach to long-term stewardship. The vision can be summarised as "*The new sustainable garden community, through following the Garden City Principles, will form a walkable, polycentric, mixed-use, mixed-tenure, sustainable settlement influenced by the historic character of the area*."

3.23 Some initial technical work has been undertaken relating to site capacity, phasing and initial masterplanning, but it is recognised by the landowners and their advisors that this is generally high level and all matters will require further work and investigation.

3.24 As part of the approach the landowners have indicated their willingness to establish a 'Thorpe Charter' which would confirm their commitment to deliver on a range of key principles related to placemaking and long term stewardship.

Key Site Considerations

Highways

3.25 The site is in a relatively remote location with access to be provided from the B5493/Ashby Road. To avoid creating a car dependent settlement, significant improvements are likely to be required to enhance active travel links both within the site and to provide connections to both Tamworth and Mercia Park. Additional investment in public transport would be required to provide a regular and reliable alternative to the private car, such as through the provision of higher frequency bus services and/or dedicated rapid transit connections to neighbouring places.

3.26 Whilst measures will be needed to maximise and promote sustainable movement there will inevitably be increased trips and movement via private car. There are known issues in relation to highways capacity along the route within Tamworth and in particular in the Gungate Corridor. There will also be impacts at Junction 11 of the M42. As yet it is not clear what specific mitigation measures will be needed, their cost and if they would be deliverable.

Landscape

3.27 The site is currently in the open landscape albeit not situated within any designated landscape areas. Landscape impacts will need to be appropriately addressed given the site is relatively isolated and rural in character. The intention is to include sufficient screening through landscape buffers to mitigate impacts on the wider landscape.

3.28 There are also topographical challenges within the site which need be taken into account through the site layout and design.

Heritage

3.29 Thorpe Hall (Grade II) is situated within the site. The intention is to incorporate this into the development as part of the primary community hub but with appropriate landscaped buffers proposed to preserve its setting. The Grade I listed Clifton Campville Church is

situated to the North of the site and the Motte and Bailey Scheduled Monument at Seckington is situated to the South. There are further listed buildings situated within the vicinity of the site including some within Seckington village.

Ecology

3.30 A substantial part of the site is situated within the River Mease SAC Catchment where there are ongoing issues with nutrient neutrality. This would require mitigation including directing sewerage to treatment works outside the catchment area, and ensuring that no issues are caused due to surface water run-off or filtration.

Flood Risk

3.31 Floodzone 2 and 3 runs through the northern part of the site which is associated with a River Mease tributary.

Overview of proposed delivery strategy

3.32 As of May 2025 the landowners have not secured a developer/delivery partner. They have indicated that the process to appoint a development partner as master-developer would occur should the site is identified as a potential location for further development through the Local Plan Process. The master developer would then take on the key role as promoter of the site, working closely with the Thorpe Estate, and be responsible for the preparation of further masterplans and supporting studies. Ultimately the master developer would be responsible for delivery, providing the necessary resources, working capital and funding as required.

3.33 The promoters have suggested an overall build out rate for the site which indicates the potential for a substantial part of the site to be delivered within the plan period. This programme includes the following assumptions:

- Early technical due diligence following confirmation from the Council that the site is being considered further as a location for development in the Local Plan
- EIA Screening alongside the Regulation 19 process
- Early submission of an outline planning application ahead of the Local Plan examination

Figure 5: Potential lead in time and delivery rate for Thorpe Constantine

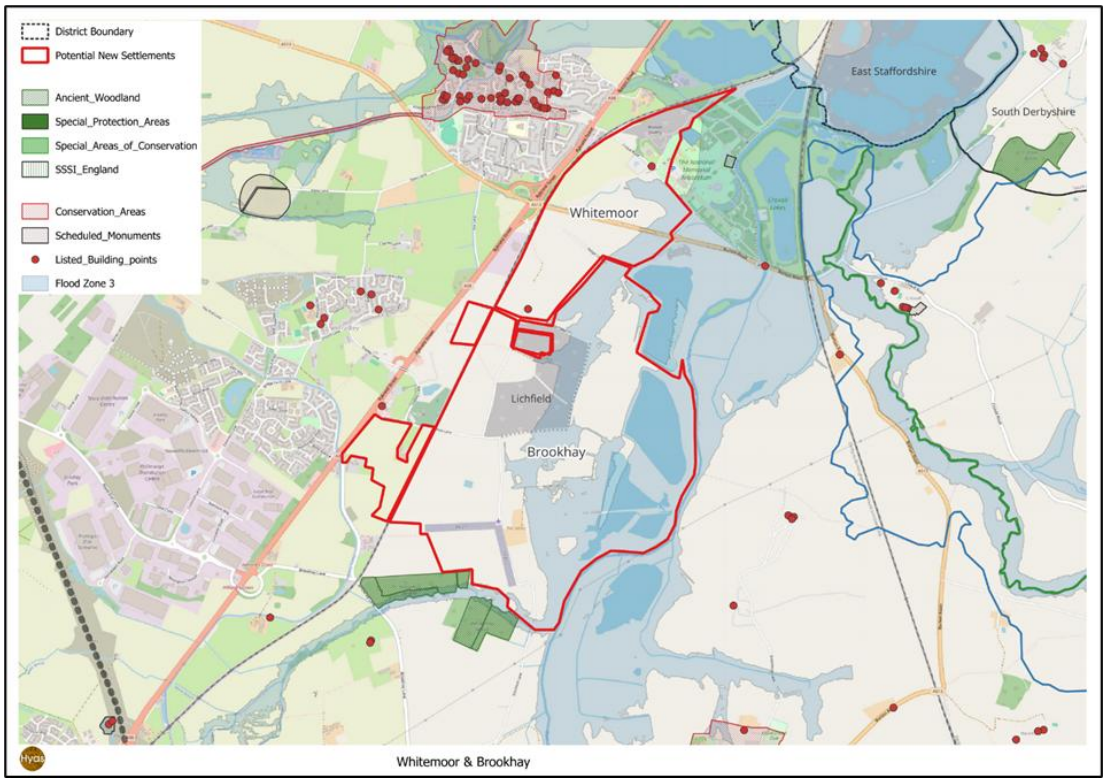
	Plan Period																		
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
Draft Plan																			
Plan Adoption																			
Outline App																			
RMA & Conditions																			
Commencement																			
Completions									100	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200	200
Cumulative									100	300	500	700	900	1100	1300	1500	1700	1900	2100

Source: Hyas based upon information supplied by promoters

Whitemoor

3.34 Whitemoor is situated east of the A38 and Alrewas, and south / west of the National Memorial Arboretum. The site straddles the A513.

Figure 6: Whitemoor Garden Village (background mapping courtesy of Open Street Map Contributors)



3.35 The site is owned and promoted by Tarmac Trading Ltd and is currently being worked for sand and gravel extraction. The site has previously been promoted through the call for sites and Issues and Options consultation.

3.36 Initial analysis of site capacity indicates that circa 1,500-2,000 homes could be accommodated including spaces for a 2 form entry primary school, a local centre and land for a rail station and park & ride facilities. The site could also include space for formal sports provision, community allotments and various types of open space.

3.37 Tarmac's vision is to deliver a sustainable new community, with placemaking at its heart, which is stand alone and not reliant on services and facilities in existing neighbouring settlements.

3.38 A key part of Tarmac's vision is the unique opportunity the site offers to unlock significant growth at the National Memorial Arboretum. This includes the potential to support a new railway station to serve both the National Memorial Arboretum and any new development.

3.39 Some initial technical and supporting work has been undertaken relating to site phasing and remediation, transport and rail station feasibility, hydrology and flood risk, ecology, utilities, noise and air quality but further extensive work will be required.

3.40 Part of the site has been previously promoted as a larger scheme, Brookhay Garden Village during the adopted Local Plan process. Since the start of this commission the promoters of this site and the Brookhay site have discussed greater collaboration.

Technical constraints and suggested mitigation

Highways

3.41 The site access would be taken from the A513, related to the existing access which currently serves the mineral extraction. The capacity of the A38 and the provision of appropriate access into the site will require further assessment and require suitable improvements. Further measures would be required to promote sustainable movement and minimise car trips including enhanced bus provision, high quality walking/cycling connections and taking forward proposals relating to the delivery of a new rail station and improvements to the rail line.

Landscape

3.42 The site has been extensively worked due to the quarry operations and is not situated within any designated landscape area. Landscape impacts will need to be appropriately addressed through more detailed design work.

Heritage

3.43 The Grade II mile post and Roddige Farmhouse is located within site and potential impacts would need to be mitigated through design. The National Memorial Arboretum is also a historic constraint as it's a national place of contemplation. Chetwynd Bridge to the east of the site on the A513 is Grade II* Listed. It is currently subject to restrictions to vehicle use. There is a live planning application to provide a new bridge and convert the heritage asset into a pedestrian and cycle bridge.

Ecology

3.44 The River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is situated 1.2km to east of the site although the site currently falls outside of the catchment. The Croxhall Lakes Nature Reserve situated immediately to the east of the site and the hedgerow along the A513 forms part of a Local Wildlife Site, further ecology survey work will inform the mitigation strategy.

3.45 The site is located within Cannock Chase SAC zone of influence with mitigation required and to be set out as part of the preparation of further studies.

Flood Risk

3.46 Floodzone 2 and 3 runs through the eastern part of the site with mitigation suggested through design and avoiding development in these parts of the site.

Site Conditions

3.47 A further constraint relates to the ongoing mineral extraction operation, with the planning permission for the current mineral extraction requiring the site to be remediated and restored to original ground levels, irrespective of its status in the emerging Local Plan. Tarmac have confirmed that the site can be remediated the site to accommodate development and have demonstrated experience and examples of this elsewhere including at the former Northfleet Cement Works Eastern Quarry which is now coming forward as Ebbsfleet Garden City.

Overview of proposed delivery strategy

3.48 Tarmac anticipate entering into partnership with a development-partner to deliver the site, and as of May 2025 are in advanced discussions with a potential partner. This is common approach and one they have taken elsewhere on comparable previous quarry sites that have subsequently been developed out for housing and mixed use development.

3.49 The remediation restoration approach will need to align with the anticipated build-out rate for the site. Tarmac have indicated that the potential area for Phase 1 has already been largely backfilled, including the area to accommodate the new car park to serve the National Memorial Arboretum. The current extraction operation is due to finish in 2 to 5 years, enabling phased delivery of development thereafter.

3.50 The intention is to submit the application to align with the Regulation 19 Local Plan, potentially summer 2026.

Figure 7: Potential lead in time and delivery rate for Whitemoor

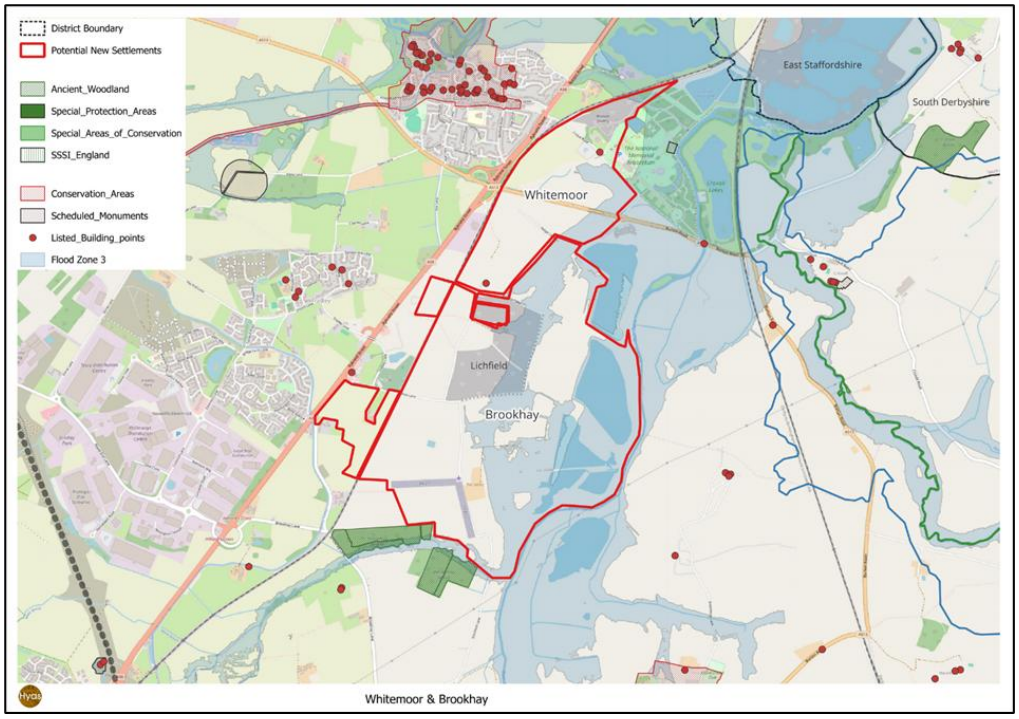
	Plan Period																		
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43
Draft Plan																			
Plan Adoption																			
Outline App																			
RMs/strategies																			
Completions						25	40	80	80	80	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150	150
Cumulative						25	65	145	225	305	455	605	755	905	1055	1205	1355	1505	1655

Source: Hyas based upon information provided by promoters

Brookhay

3.51 The Brookhay site is situated east of the A38 and Fradley, directly adjacent and to the south of the proposed Whitemoor Site.

Figure 8: Brookhay (background mapping courtesy of Open Street Map Contributors)



3.52 The site is within multiple ownerships, with the promotion largely being led by the Leavesly Group and Gilmour Family. The site has previously been promoted through the call for sites and Issues and Options consultation and promoters have engaged with officers at Lichfield District Council. The landowners have agreed to work in partnership to promote the site. No further work has been undertaken since the promotion of the site for the previous (withdrawn) Local Plan.

3.53 Initial analysis of site capacity indicates that up to 5,000 homes could be accommodated including spaces for 3 primary schools, a secondary school, local centres and land for community, leisure and health. The site would also include various types of open space including the provision of a Country Park.

3.54 A proportion of the land has been or is in the process of mineral extraction. Since the start of this commission the promoters of this site and the Whitemoor site have discussed greater collaboration.

3.55 Technical work has previously been undertaken relating to the previous promotion activity and covered matters including flood risk and drainage, transport, infrastructure capacity and contaminated land, but further extensive work will be required.

Technical constraints and suggested mitigation

Highways

3.56 It is suggested that the primary site access would be from the north on to the A513 either via an upgrade to the Whitemoor roundabout or a new access between the roundabout and the railway bridge. Additional access onto A38 is anticipated to be required and could replace both the existing Brookhay lane access and The Fine Lane Access. As with the Whitemoor site, the capacity of the A38 and related local junctions would need to be considered further and improvements required. Additional measures would also be required to promote sustainable movement as per Whitemoor.

Landscape

3.57 Parts of the site have been subject to previous quarrying activity. The site is not situated within any designated landscape areas. Landscape impacts will need to be appropriately addressed.

Heritage

3.58 The Grade II mile post and Roddige Farmhouse is located to the north of the site but it is likely that impacts can be mitigated through design. The National Memorial Arboretum is also a historic constraint as it's a national place of contemplation. Chetwynd Bridge to the east of the site on the A513 is Grade II* Listed. It is currently subject to restrictions to vehicle use. There is a live planning application to provide a new bridge and convert the heritage asset into a pedestrian and cycle bridge.

3.59 There is a scheduled ancient monument listed on site at Sittles Farm. The promoters believe this has been removed as a listing due to the quarrying activity however the designation does not appear to have been removed. In any event, its location is likely to be outside of any built development.

Ecology

3.60 The River Mease Special Area of Conservation (SAC) is situated 1.2km to east of the site although the site currently falls outside of the catchment. The Croxhall Lakes Nature Reserve situated immediately to the east of the site and the hedgerow along the A513 forms part of a Local Wildlife Site. Further ecology survey work will be required to inform the mitigation strategy. There are two areas of ancient woodland adjacent to the southern boundary of the site.

3.61 The site is located within Cannock Chase SAC zone of influence and appropriate mitigation measures will need to be set out.

Flood Risk

3.62 Given previous quarrying, an approach will be needed to suitably manage on site water. Floodzone 2 and 3 runs through the eastern part of the site with mitigation suggested through design and avoiding development in these parts of the site.

Site conditions

3.63 On land subject to previous quarrying proposals will need to consider previous and planned remediation to establish a suitable development platform.

3.64 A high pressure gas pipe infrastructure runs through the site in part. Proposals will need to work around this with suitable offset/buffering as advised by the owners of the infrastructure.

Overview of proposed delivery strategy

3.65 At present there are no developers appointed to take the scheme forward, and the previous promoter (Barratts) are not currently involved. Given the scale of the site it is likely that a master-developer will be required to take responsibility for overall delivery.

3.66 The current landowners/promoters consider that the site could come forward alongside the Whitemoor scheme potentially through a partnership approach, albeit there is no formal agreement in place.

3.67 As with Whitemoor, the remediation strategy can align with the anticipated build-out rate for the site although further clarity is needed as to phasing in relation to a comprehensive scheme and aligned with the quarrying activity.

3.68 The promoters have not identified when an application might be made.

4 Implications for the Lichfield Local Plan

4.1 In light of the overview and intended approach to each of the proposed new settlements, Lichfield District Council will need to carefully consider various aspects relevant to each site and their implications for the Local Plan.

4.2 The Council will also need to be mindful of the likely level of scrutiny that such proposals are likely to face during the examination of a local plan, and take an overall reasonable and justified approach capable of being found sound by a Planning Inspector.

4.3 As well as considering the implications on a site by site basis, this is likely to also involve consideration of the overall reliance that the Council is placing on housing delivery from new settlements as part of the overall spatial strategy. Should there be a considerable reliance, the level of scrutiny is likely to be enhanced in part due to the increased need of the proposals to be realised as planned and the more limited scope to accommodate changes should issues arise.

4.4 This section summarises matters for each proposed new settlement site.

Packington Hall Farm

Key Issues

4.5 Overall, Packington Hall Farm appears to be the least constrained new settlement proposition with more limited wider risks and uncertainties.

4.6 The site currently being promoted is in single ownership and has a master developer appointed. This would simplify the approach to planning and delivery, avoiding the need for shared delivery of infrastructure and equalisation arrangements between different landowners/developers.

4.7 One of the key issues for Packington Hall Farm relates to scale. With a capacity of circa 2,500 to 3,000 homes, this may not have the critical mass to enable the provision of a full range of services and facilities on site for it to function effectively as a standalone new settlement. This is based on feedback received through the engagement process, including regarding education. This also aligns with our understanding of the scale needed for New Settlements to generate sufficient critical mass to viably support the range of social infrastructure that is needed for them to function cohesively, including the provision of secondary education. This would result in higher trip rates off site impacting on the scope and scale of potential necessary transport improvements, and additional issues in relation to increased pressure on other local facilities and their ability to accommodate impacts.

4.8 Concerns over scale could be overcome through potentially exploring increased density in parts of the site or looking to incorporate additional land as part of a larger site area with the aim of achieving an overall quantum of at least 4,000 dwellings. This would need to ensure that the infrastructure serving the development, most notably the access points

from the A51, were capable of accommodating a larger scale of development, even if this were to come forward in latter phases.

4.9 The site will need to ensure it provides credible modal shift which includes the improvements to the existing bus service along the A51 but also provide sufficient walking and cycling links to the surrounding area, including Tamworth.

4.10 The proximity to the Wigginton Barracks will need further consideration, particularly in relation to the noise implications of the rifle range but also the operation of the Barracks itself who are known to carry out live firing exercises in Hopwas Woods.

4.11 The route of the A51 through the site potentially provides an opportunity for multiple development outlets on either side of the road which would potentially facilitate higher rates of delivery then a single phased scheme. Related to this, based on our current understanding there is relatively little significant up-front infrastructure required to facilitate initial delivery of the site.

4.12 The build out rate provided by the site promoter suggests housing delivery in 2030, with 3 outlets and an annual delivery rate of circa 200 dwellings per annum. The 3-4 year lead in time from adoption of the plan to housing delivery seems optimistic, but could be achieved if pre-application work was front loaded and twin tracked with making progress with the Local Plan. Given the on-site infrastructure to get development 'off the ground' would appear reasonably straight forward, with no identified 'show-stoppers' and significant costs, there is the possibility that the site could contribute a reasonable level of housing delivery within the plan period even when taking into account potential delays to delivery.

Thorpe Constantine

4.13 Through engagement with Staffordshire County Council and Tamworth Borough Council, highway capacity along the Gungate Corridor in Tamworth is likely to be a significant issue that will need to be better understood and resolved. Current development schemes such as the housing at Arkall Farm includes some mitigation works but it is not clear if the route can accommodate additional impacts from substantial new development such as that proposed at Thorpe Constantine. The ability of the current corridor to accommodate additional improvements may be limited and more strategic approaches may need to be considered to address strategic movement from the north into Tamworth.

4.14 The constraints on the Gungate corridor will also impact on the ability to provide enhanced routes for alternative modes, particularly public transport through a form of dedicated bus/public transit corridor as this will most likely use the same route into Tamworth.

4.15 It is our understanding that a comprehensive solution is likely to be required which will need to be supported by transport modelling and scenario testing. Such a solution may rely on wider funding streams. This has the potential to impact on delivery timescales and the cost implications are as yet undefined.

4.16 Part of the approach could be to maximise the potential of 'self containment' whereby the new settlement can address the bulk of its needs on site. Given the scale of development proposed, social and community infrastructure will be needed. It is also anticipated that additional space for employment uses should be provided. A clear understanding will be needed as to the employment and economic strategy for the site, taking into account the local and sub-regional employment market. This is likely to have impacts on the overall amount of land required and capacity of the site especially if the employment proposals include elements of distribution/warehousing similar to Murcia Park which will have lower job densities than other forms of employment.

4.17 A further important issue relates to the River Mease SAC and nutrient neutrality which has been identified through engagement with key stakeholders including Severn Trent. Wastewater will need to be treated and diverted away from the SAC because of the nutrient neutrality issue. It is understood that there is further investment taking place on wastewater treatment in the area, diverting treated wastewater away from the River Mease to the River Tame. Clarity is needed on whether there is scope to connect into that infrastructure, or if there is a suitable alternative connection into other infrastructure.

4.18 Given the potential reliance and impact on Tamworth and also the potential for land within North Warwickshire to come forward, effective cross-boundary working with both Tamworth and North Warwickshire Borough Councils will be needed. Importantly in relation to North Warwickshire any site identification within their Borough would be a matter for their Local Plan review. Currently it is understood that the focus of this will be on employment land which might limit the scope for the site to be promoted in North Warwickshire in the short term.

4.19 The potential impact on heritage assets, including Thorpe Hall (Grade II) requires further consideration. Particularly given it is centrally located within the site and is intended to form an integral part of the community infrastructure. Wider assets including the Grade I listed Clifton Campville church will also need due consideration.

4.20 Whilst recognised as a heritage constraint, the opportunity for Thorpe Hall to form a central part of the new settlements community infrastructure potentially provides an important opportunity to create a clear identity and sense of place.

4.21 The build out rate provided by the site promoter suggests housing delivery in 2033, at a rate of 200 dwellings per annum. The overall lead in time from adoption of the plan to housing delivery is not overly optimistic in general terms however whether this is achievable will largely depend on all matters referred to above. As set out earlier there are various related workstreams that need to take place which could result in delay. This might result in development pushing further back to the middle and latter parts of the plan period.

Brookhay & Whitemoor

4.22 The two sites are directly adjacent to each other and therefore considered jointly here as many of the issues and opportunities apply to both. Where matters are specific to one site, this is made clear.

4.23 For Whitemoor a key issue is its size. The maximum capacity as estimated by the promoters of around 2,000 homes is unlikely to achieve the critical mass to support the delivery of a full range of necessary supporting infrastructure thus generating the need for greater levels of movement on/off the site with implications on infrastructure requirements and impacts on the A38.

4.24 A key factor in reducing peak hour vehicle movements is the provision of education facilities. To minimise trips to secondary schools in Lichfield or Barton and Burton, a secondary school is likely to be helpful. This would require a development of between 4000 and 5000 homes to make it viable. This would suggest that the two sites are needed to come forward together as one.

4.25 A key issue for the two sites is the capacity of the A38 and the junctions at Fradley and Alrewas. National Highways have advised that the A38 in this location is currently operating close to capacity in the peak. They have significant concerns regarding additional vehicle movements on the 3 junctions at Fradley and Alrewas. These concerns in the main relate to safety issues. The junctions are not compliant with current standards. National Highways have advised that there is currently no proposed scheme for improving capacity and no schemes for the junction improvements and funding would need to be provided by developers.

4.26 The implications are that there would need to be strategic highway modelling undertaken to support any allocation or application. National Highways assumes that this could take 2 years. If mitigation schemes were paid for and brought forward as part of wider planning applications this would be quicker than relying on a National Highways sponsored scheme. It is not clear how much development could be brought forward before any scheme was required.

4.27 National Highways require trips to be minimised and make any development as sustainable as possible utilising public transport and sustainable travel options. One of the potential options is reopening the Lichfield to Burton line to passenger traffic with a new station in this location. West Midlands Trains has confirmed that there was previously a project to electrify the Cross Country service from Derby to Bristol and as part of this there was a proposal to electrify the line from Burton to Lichfield. That was cut due to funding issues and there are currently no plans to reinstate it within the next 15 years. An alternative scheme to just electrify the Lichfield to Burton part of the line is feasible but would require new platforms at Burton and Lichfield Trent Valley. Previous work has shown that it is feasible for a new station at this location close to the historic station location or south of the A513. If a Strategic Business case was put forward and accepted, the minimum timescales for delivery would be 5 to 10 years. This need not necessarily be an impediment to delivery, as it is likely that a station would be required at a certain point in time during delivery, not prior to any construction.

4.28 A further consideration would be the need to automate the signals currently controlled manually at Croxall Road, Roddige Lane and at Fine Lane and to remove the level crossings of the railway.

4.29 A further key issue is the remediation of land currently and proposed for quarrying in terms of its potential to then be used for development and the timescales for undertaking

this. Tarmac who are operating the quarrying in this location are required to restore the land to original ground levels. If the site is to be used for housing development then this requires a different approach to backfill compared to restoring for agricultural use. Tarmac estimate that at a worse case, it would take until 2037 to backfill the entire site. The site is being quarried in phases with some phases already backfilled. It is therefore considered that backfilling is unlikely to delay construction but will provide a check on future delivery rates but unlikely to be any more than a normal build out rate. What it does do is constrain the options for where development can come forward and when.

4.30 The sites are currently separated from Fradley and Alrewas by the railway line and the A38. The provision of services and facilities at a new settlement is likely to generate foot traffic. A consideration is the provision of safe pedestrian and cycling crossing facilities.

4.31 Considering Brookhay and Whitemoor together as a larger scale development increases the likelihood of delivering significant infrastructure requirements such as highway mitigation schemes and secondary schools. It also provides opportunities for a greater level of provision of services and facilities which help to reduce private car trips.

4.32 There is an opportunity to consider the construction of a new junction that would serve the combined developments as well current and future development on the Eastern side of the A38 at Fradley. This is an opportunity to address existing safety issues associated with the existing junctions.

4.33 There are opportunities to utilise existing sustainable travel options for these sites including the Burton to Lichfield bus service and green travel links to the south of the site and into Lichfield. More innovative solutions could also be considered such as dedicated bus route busway.

4.34 The restoration of the quarries provides opportunities for the creation of drainage, SUDS and wider green and blue infrastructure and address issues of on-site water management.

4.35 The build out provided by the site promoter for Whitemoor suggests that delivery could commence in 2030/31 at 25 dwellings per annum, increasing to 40 in 2031/32, then 80dpa in 2032/33 and then 150 in 2025/36. They envisage 2,000 homes being built until 2047.

4.36 The Brookhay promoters have suggested a 13 year build out based on completions 1 year after detailed consent is granted. This assumes a high output based on a maximum of 8 outlets delivering 549 units at a peak. We consider this to be overly optimistic in terms of annual completions at one location, especially if this was to run concurrently with Whitemoor.

4.37 In the absence of a planning application, or the appointment of planning advisors in the case of Brookhay, we consider that completions in 2030/31 is optimistic. Even if a planning application for both sites is twin tracked with the Local Plan, it is likely that significant additional evidence studies will be required, especially in relation to transport and the viability and deliverability of necessary highway mitigation.

5 Overall Conclusions & Next Steps

5.1 New settlements and strategic growth proposals often form part of an area's overall approach to accommodate future growth needs. Such projects do however introduce additional complexities and require additional analysis and consideration to ensure that proposed schemes can deliver on policy and infrastructure expectations and be deliverable.

5.2 Lichfield District Council are still at relatively early stage in plan making, and it is not surprising that the current proposed new settlements have limited information available to be able to thoroughly assess their impacts, requirements and overall viability. The level of detail inevitably builds up as proposals progress through the planning process, as confidence grows and risks of abortive investment are reduced over time. Indeed, the NPPF recognises that for long term proposals such as new settlements there should not be an unrealistic expectation of certainty, and a flexible approach is likely to be needed to enable more detail to evolve and issues to be clarified and addressed over time. Suitable safeguards can be included to provide sufficient lead-in time for such matters to be considered and addressed, with ultimate fall-back positions in relation to future Local Plan reviews to reconsider the potential of sites as they progress.

5.3 The lead-in time from the point of preparing planning policy through to the submission and determination of planning applications and then on to delivery on site can be long and uncertain. This can however be shortened through the establishment of positive collaborative processes between landowners/developers and a Local Planning Authority such as through the use of Planning Performance Agreements to jointly prepare further evidence and establish an appropriate approach through further masterplanning and pre-application discussions.

5.4 Processes can be undertaken in parallel with the Local Plan, to twin track additional work so that proposals can quickly move forward into future planning stages. For example, work on pre-application matters can occur in tandem with the examination process, with schemes potentially applied for prior to the adoption of a Local Plan, but capable of being determined soon after.

5.5 In relation to the sites proposed as new settlements, the following are key findings are potential approaches going forward:

5.6 In relation to **Packington Hall Farm:**

- The site appears to be the least constrained with lowest level of risk and uncertainty.
- Developers are in place and ready to make progress.
- The Council should consider the full potential extent of a potential new settlement from the outset to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is properly planned for. Prior to defining a site boundary, further consideration will be needed on scale, land take and density, with a view to enabling the delivery of a scheme of sufficient critical mass to provide a full range of services and facilities on site.
- A collaborative process between the promoters and the Council will be required to evolve an appropriate site wide masterplan and suite of background assessments and

studies capable of forming evidence for a Local Plan Examination in Public, as well as to set the basis of future planning applications.

- Based all issues being satisfactorily resolved, and with an assumed lead-in time of circa 5 years, the site could deliver circa 2,600 homes by 2043

5.7 In relation to **Whitemoor & Brookhay**:

- Tarmac are experienced in the remediation of sites and bringing forward development with the development industry.
- A new settlement appears capable of being delivered in this location, but will require specific attention to understanding implications and improvements to the local and strategic transport network in particular on the A38. This will require a programme of joint work with transport stakeholders including the County and National Highways, suitable transport modelling and assessment, and agreement that impacts can be accommodated.
- Issues related to on-site water management and SAC matters will need to be investigated with relevant bodies to ensure proposals can be acceptable.
- The Council should consider the full potential extent of a potential new settlement from the outset to ensure that the appropriate infrastructure is properly planned for. Given the 2 sites directly adjoin each other, they ought be considered as a single new settlement.
- Whitemoor on its own appears insufficient in terms of scale to provide a full range of services and facilities on site. As a smaller proposition like this may be simpler to deliver with less impact and mitigation required, but given that the adjoining land is being promoted and may well be needed over time to address future needs, a comprehensive approach should be taken now to consider the combined opportunity of Whitemoor and Brookhay together.
- The landowners/promoters of the 2 sites should be advised to evolve a joint approach, to avoid complexities around separate landownerships and the associated funding and delivery of infrastructure
- A collaborative process between the promoters and the Council will be required to evolve an appropriate site wide masterplan and suite of background assessments and studies capable of forming evidence for a Local Plan Examination in Public, as well as to set the basis of future planning applications.
- Based all issues being satisfactorily resolved, and with an assumed lead-in time of circa 5 years, the site could deliver circa 2,600 homes by 2043

5.8 In relation to **Thorpe Constantine**:

- The landowners appear well placed to take a long term view and have indicated a desire to leave a lasting positive legacy. There is no developer in place as yet to take forward the promotion of the site, and the specifics of any formal agreement are not established.
- A new settlement may be capable of being delivered in this location, but the site is in a more isolated and rural location than the others and will require suitable measures to be implemented to avoid becoming a car dependent location. New public

transport connectivity will be required and a transport strategy will be needed to set out how car movement will be minimised.

- Issues exist in relation to the capacity of roads into Tamworth (Gungate Corridor) and potentially at Junction 11 and on the M42. Transport modelling will be required to understand the level of impact and suitable mitigation measures will need to be evolved. This will require collaborative working with the County and adjoining Local Authorities, and with National Highways. The current lack of information or clarity that suitable measures can be secured and will be deliverable is a significant risk,
- A suitable approach to address the SAC will also be required, to be evolved in collaboration with adjoining Authorities and environmental stakeholders.
- The extent and scale of a new settlement and the related amount and type of development is subject to some uncertainty. This would need to be resolved before the Council can consider it is an allocation. This will require clarity on matters such as masterplanning – to ensure a suitable comprehensive scheme can come forward in this location and aligned to the land being promoted, the role and phasing of land currently coming forward as a solar farm, the approach to employment and scale/typology of employment uses on the site, and the potential inclusion of land within North Warwickshire.
- The scheme relies upon collaborative working with neighbouring authorities, in particular to consider if and when the land in North Warwickshire will form part of the proposals, as this will influence planning for suitable infrastructure and the overall approach to masterplanning of the site.
- A collaborative process between the promoters and the Council will be required to evolve an appropriate site wide masterplan and suite of background assessments and studies capable of forming evidence for a Local Plan Examination in Public, as well as to set the basis of future planning applications.
- It is considered that given the extent of unresolved matters, a greater lead in time is likely to be appropriate on this site. Based all issues being satisfactorily resolved, and with an assumed lead-in time of circa 8 years, the site could deliver circa 2,100 homes by 2043.
- If it however proves impossible to define a site allocation boundary and scale of new settlement with sufficient confidence, the Council could consider identifying the site as a 'broad location' for delivery towards the latter stages of the Local Plan period, to give sufficient time for outstanding matters to be resolved and the site allocated via a future planning process, such as through the next review of the Local Plan and/or the preparation of a Supplementary Plan (via the new approach as per the Levelling Up & Regeneration Act).

5.9 As set out in the introduction to this study, the overall planning merits of potential new settlements will need to be carefully considered by the Council alongside findings from the wider evidence base that is emerging for the Local Plan, and outcomes of further discussions with the landowners/promoters of the sites, and key external stakeholders including adjoining Local Authorities and Statutory Agencies.

Staffordshire authorities

Staffordshire Green Belt Assessment

Addendum – Stage 2 site assessment

Lichfield District Council

Reference: Final Report

| 30 April 2026

This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 313903-00

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1. Introduction

As an extension to the Staffordshire Green Belt Assessment (April 2026), Lichfield District Council (LDC) has appointed Ove Arup & Partners Ltd (Arup) to conduct a site-specific Green Belt Assessment (GBA) (typically referred to as a *Stage 2 assessment*) for one site within its authority area. The site lies within the West Midlands Green Belt and has been assessed against the purposes of the Green Belt as defined in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2024), including consideration of whether it may constitute grey belt land.

Each authority included in the wider Staffordshire GBA is at a different stage of Local Plan preparation, with LDC having decided it was an appropriate time for this site to be assessed. This assessment will help to provide the evidence to enable LDC to make robust decisions as part of the preparation of their Local Plan. It is acknowledged that this is not a full Stage 2 assessment of all the possible sites that may require consideration across the authority area. It is instead a focussed assessment of the one site highlighted by the Council as requiring assessment at this stage.

The methodology applied in respect of the Green Belt purposes and grey belt assessment follows that set out in Chapter 4 of the Staffordshire GBA. In addition, the Stage 2 methodology includes an assessment of the potential harm to the Green Belt that could arise from the release of the site from the Green Belt.

2. Methodology

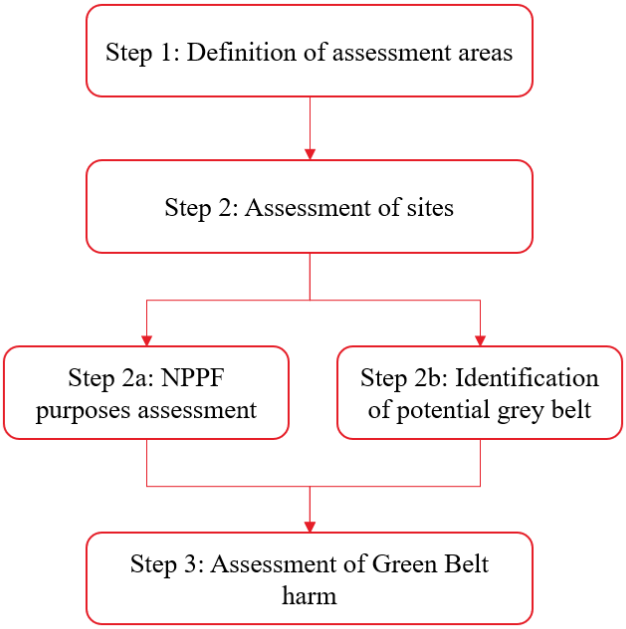
2.1 Overview

This section sets out the methodology for undertaking the Stage 2 GBA. The methodology has been developed to be consistent with the methodology used in the Staffordshire GBA (as set out in Chapter 4 of that report), providing a finer-grain assessment to feed directly into decision making on suitable amendments to the Green Belt boundary.

The aim of the assessment was to establish how the site functions and fulfils the purposes of the Green Belt. As such, the Stage 2 GBA considers the performance of the site against the NPPF purposes but also with respect to the wider Green Belt to understand the potential impact of removing it from the Green Belt.

The overall process followed to undertake the assessment is summarised in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Stage 2 GBA methodology diagram



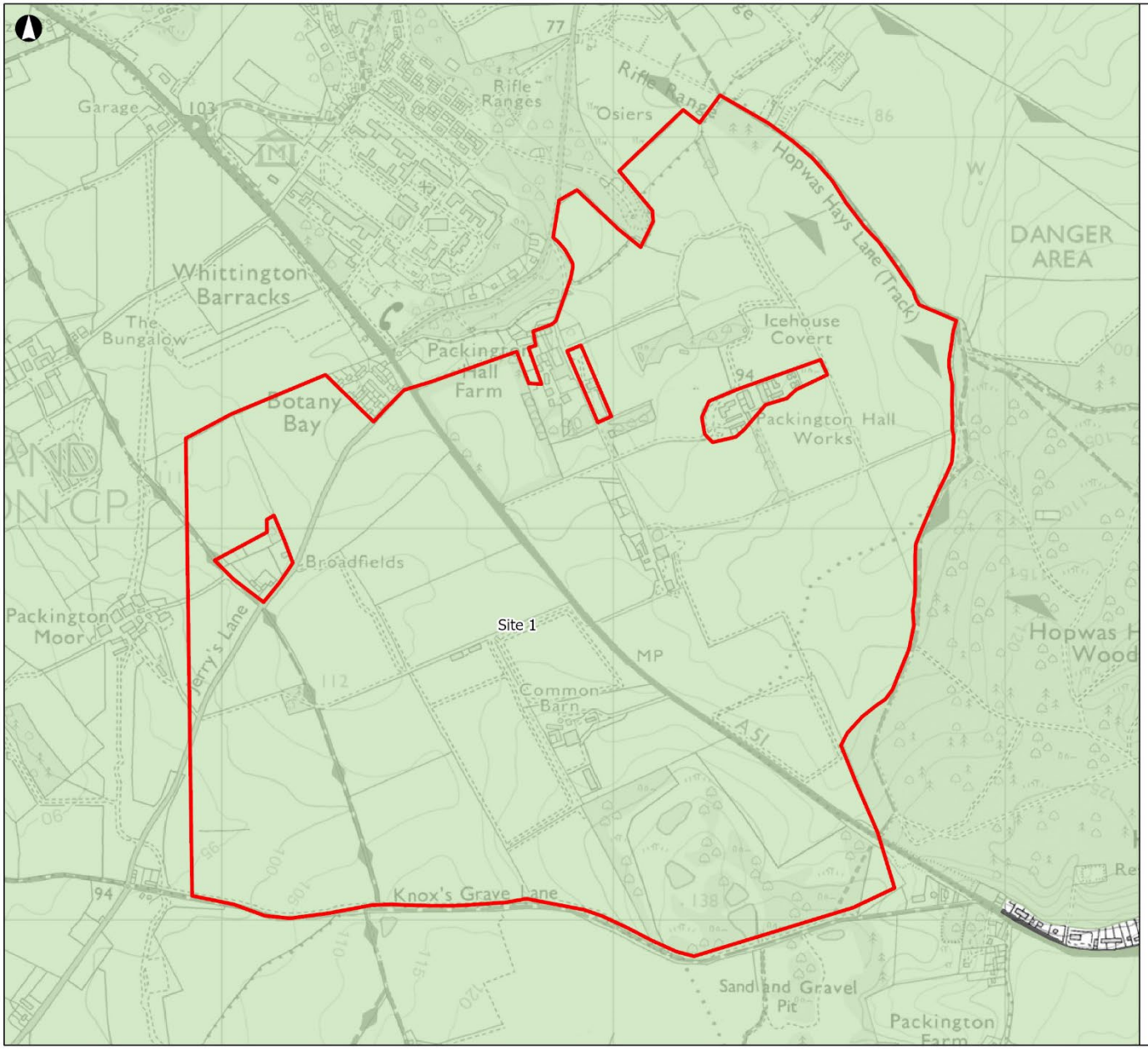
2.2 Step 1: Definition of assessment areas

The Staffordshire GBA assessed the entirety of the West Midlands Green Belt across the five Staffordshire authorities against the Green Belt purposes set out in the NPPF. Given the Stage 2 assessment provides a finer-grained level of analysis intended to inform decisions on potential Green Belt boundary changes, it was appropriate to undertake a more spatially focussed piece of work for LDC.

To ensure a proportionate approach and to inform the consideration of available locations for development, this Stage 2 work provides an assessment of site promoted to the Council through its Call for Sites processes. This approach is consistent with the requirements of paragraph 72 of the NPPF paragraph 72, which requires planning policies to identify a supply of "*specific, deliverable sites for five years following the intended date of adoption*", as well as *"specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth, for subsequent years 6-10, and where possible, for years 11-15 of the remaining plan period"*.

The site has been provided to Arup by LDC, and the boundary reflects that which was promoted through the Call for Sites processes. The site is shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Green Belt site for assessment



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West Midlands Green Belt

Site boundary

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Figure 2. Green Belt site for assessment

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Role
Planning

Suitability
Final

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2.3 Step 2a: NPPF Purpose assessment

The methodology used to undertake the assessment of the performance of the site against the NPPF Green Belt purposes is covered in Section 4.2 of the Staffordshire GBA. A pro-forma was prepared to capture the assessment of the site against each purpose of the Green Belt.

The assessment process involved a mixture of evidence from desk-based research (including contextual information and secondary data sources such as aerial photography, Bing maps and Google Streetview), supported by primary evidence obtained through a site visit.

2.4 Step 2b: Identification of potential grey belt

The identification of potential grey belt follows the same approach set out in Section 4.2.4 of the Staffordshire GBA and has been applied to the site subject to this Stage 2 assessment.

In accordance with national policy, the site was assessed against Green Belt Purposes A, B and D. Where a site makes a strong contribution to any of these purposes, it would not be considered to have grey belt potential.

Where the site does not make a strong contribution to any of these purposes, its identification as potential grey belt is considered further, including a review of the presence of relevant footnote 7 constraints (see Table 14 of the Staffordshire GBA).

2.5 Step 3: Assessment of Green Belt harm

This step considers the potential implications of releasing the site from the Green Belt (in terms of any harm to the function and integrity of the remaining Green Belt), and the resultant Green Belt boundary.

There is no recognised approach as to how this should be assessed, and the comparative review (see Section 3.5.1 and Appendix A.2 in the Staffordshire GBA) demonstrated that most authorities simply applied a brief commentary referencing Green Belt purposes. Table 1 therefore sets out the qualitative criteria which were used in the assessment:

Table 1. Qualitative assessment criteria to consider Green Belt implications

Key Question to Consider	How will this be assessed?
What is the impact on Green Belt function and purposes of removing the site from the Green Belt?	This assessment will draw on the definitions and approach set out in the Green Belt Purpose Assessment Framework (see Section 4.2.3 in the Staffordshire GBA) however it will consider *how development of the site would impact* upon the purposes instead of *how the site in its existing state contributes* to the purposes: Purpose A – would development of the site represent unrestricted sprawl? Purpose B – would development of the site result in the merging of neighbouring towns or increase the potential for merging? Purpose C – would development of the site represent an encroachment into the countryside? Purpose D – would development of the site impact upon the setting or character of a historic town? As Purpose E relates to the role of the Green Belt in encouraging urban regeneration, it will therefore not be assessed.

Key Question to Consider	How will this be assessed?
What is the impact on the function and purposes of the surrounding Green Belt of removing the site?	Consider the following: • Would the surrounding Green Belt continue to perform the same Green Belt function and purposes? (e.g. where the surrounding Green Belt becomes isolated or islanded as a result of the site being removed it would no longer perform the same Green Belt function and purposes). • Has the removal of the site increased or decreased the importance of the surrounding Green Belt to certain purposes? (e.g. where the site in question forms part of a gap between neighbouring towns, the importance of the surrounding Green Belt may be increased if that site is removed).
Are there any cumulative impacts (due to release of sites in close proximity)?	This will only be relevant if a number of sites in the same area are recommended for further consideration. The cumulative impacts should apply the same considerations as above taking all sites together.
Conclusion	A summary will be provided which will conclude on the potential Green Belt impact and whether removal of the site could harm the function or integrity of the Green Belt.
Would a new Green Belt boundary be defined using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent? [Note: this is descriptive only and does not contribute to the conclusion on Green Belt impact]	Description of the resultant Green Belt boundary. If the resultant boundary features are not recognisable and permanent, it is recommended that if the site is taken forward, the accompanying policy will need to specifically state that a recognisable and permanent new Green Belt boundary must be provided or the existing boundary requires strengthening.

3. Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment outcomes

This section summarises the outcomes of the Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment for the site assessed. Table 2 draws together the findings against each of the five Green Belt purposes using the scoring framework set out in the methodology and identifies whether the site has potential to be considered grey belt. It provides a high-level overview and should be read alongside the more detailed narrative set out in the Green Belt Assessment Form under Appendix A.

Table 2 Summary of Stage 2 Assessment Outcomes

Assessment component	Site 1
Overall contribution to Green Belt purposes	Moderate
Purpose A – checking unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas	No contribution
Purpose B – preventing the merging of neighbouring towns	Moderate
Purpose C – safeguarding the countryside from encroachment	Strong
Purpose D – preserving the setting and special character of historic towns	No contribution
Purpose E – assisting in urban regeneration	Moderate
Potential grey belt status	Yes
Harm assessment overall conclusion	Overall, the removal of the site could harm the overall function and integrity of the Green Belt.

In conclusion, the site makes a moderate overall contribution to Green Belt purposes, with a strong contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and moderate role in preventing the merging of the neighbouring towns of Lichfield City and Tamworth. On this basis, the site has the potential to be considered grey belt. However, it is considered that the removal of the site from the Green Belt could harm the overall function and integrity of the Green Belt.

4. Next steps

This Stage 2 addendum forms part of the Council's Green Belt evidence base and should be considered alongside the wider Staffordshire GBA and other relevant Local Plan evidence. It provides a site-specific assessment for one site identified by LDC as requiring further consideration at this stage of plan preparation, rather than a comprehensive review of all potential Green Belt sites within the authority area.

The assessment has considered how the site performs against the five purposes of the Green Belt, before determining whether it may be considered potential grey belt land and undertaking a Green Belt Impact Assessment in respect of the potential release of the site. Given that only one site has been assessed, the findings are intended to inform decision-making at a site-specific level and do not seek to determine overall spatial strategy or identify preferred locations for growth.

Where the Council considers taking the site forward for further consideration through the preparation of the Local Plan, it will be necessary to apply the sequential approach to Green Belt release set out in paragraph 148 of the NPPF. This requires consideration of previously developed land within the Green Belt first, followed by grey belt land, and then other Green Belt locations, while at all stages promoting sustainable patterns of development. Further work may therefore be required to consider the assessed site alongside other reasonable alternatives, including previously developed land and non-Green Belt options.

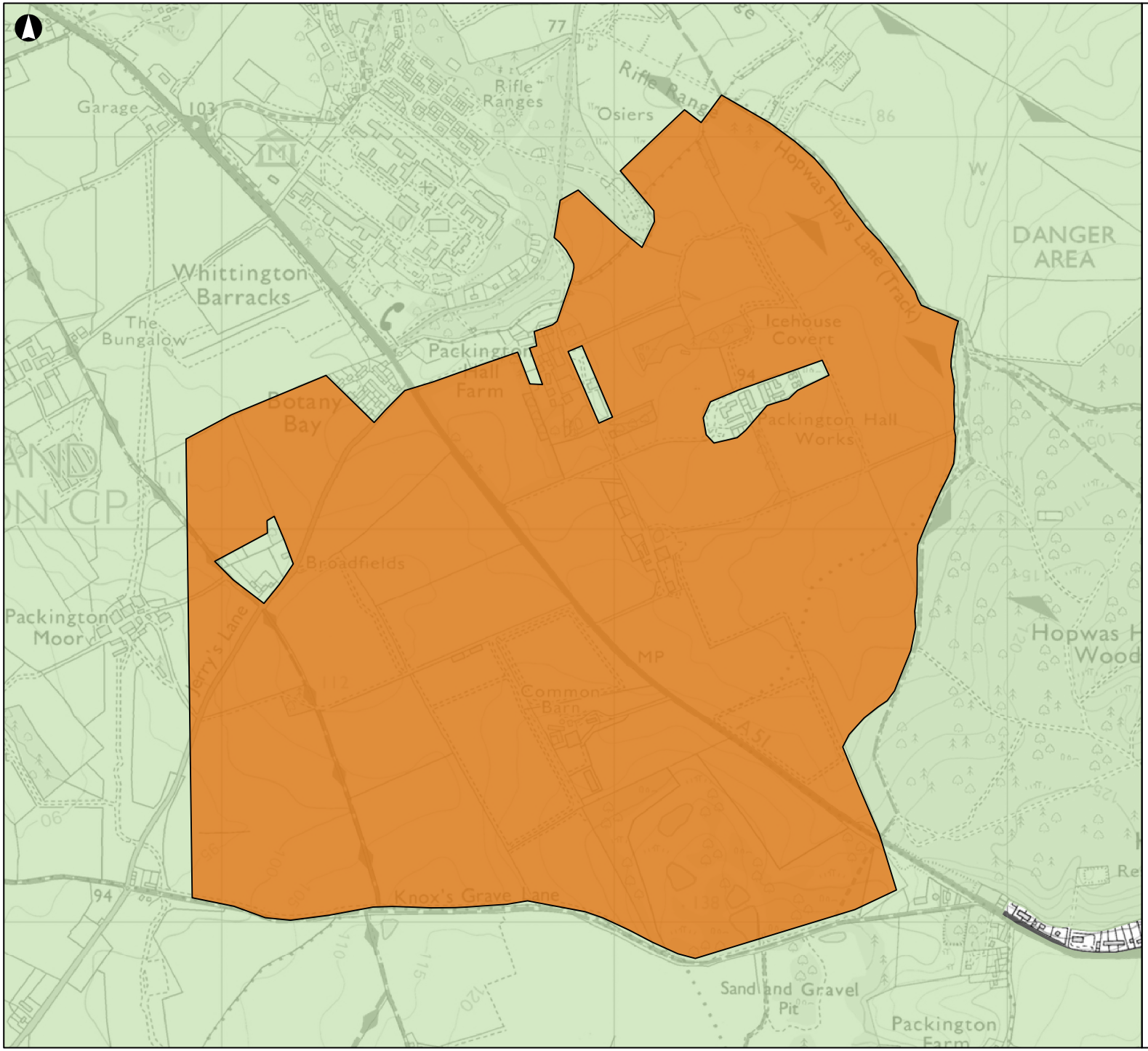
Whilst the site has been identified as being potential grey belt, the assessment does not determine whether the site should be released. It is for the Council to determine whether and how the findings of this addendum are taken forward, having regard to the Local Plan evidence base as a whole.

Where the Local Plan proposes the release of Green Belt land, the Council will need to demonstrate the existence of exceptional circumstances in accordance with paragraph 146 of the NPPF. In developing an exceptional circumstances case, it will be necessary to show that all reasonable alternatives for meeting identified development needs have been fully examined, taking account of the wider evidence base. This Stage 2 assessment provides evidence in relation to Green Belt considerations only and does not, on its own, establish an exceptional circumstances case.

For development management purposes, the outcomes of this Stage 2 assessment may be used to inform the consideration of planning proposals affecting the Green Belt. However, further scheme-specific assessment would be required to establish whether development would be not inappropriate in Green Belt terms as set out by paragraph 155 of the NPPF, and pass the 'tests' set out in the PPG, including whether the site is in a sustainable location, if there is a demonstrable unmet need for the development proposed, and whether the development of the site would not fundamentally undermine the purposes of the remaining Green Belt.

It should be noted that the site has been assessed on the assumption that the full site area could be developed and without reference to any specific development proposals. As such, conclusions regarding Green Belt contribution, potential grey belt status and Green Belt impact are necessarily high-level and may change once the nature, scale and design of any proposed development are known.

Appendix A – Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment Maps



A4

West Midlands Green Belt

Overall assessment

Moderate

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Assessment outcomes

Overall assessment

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Suitability

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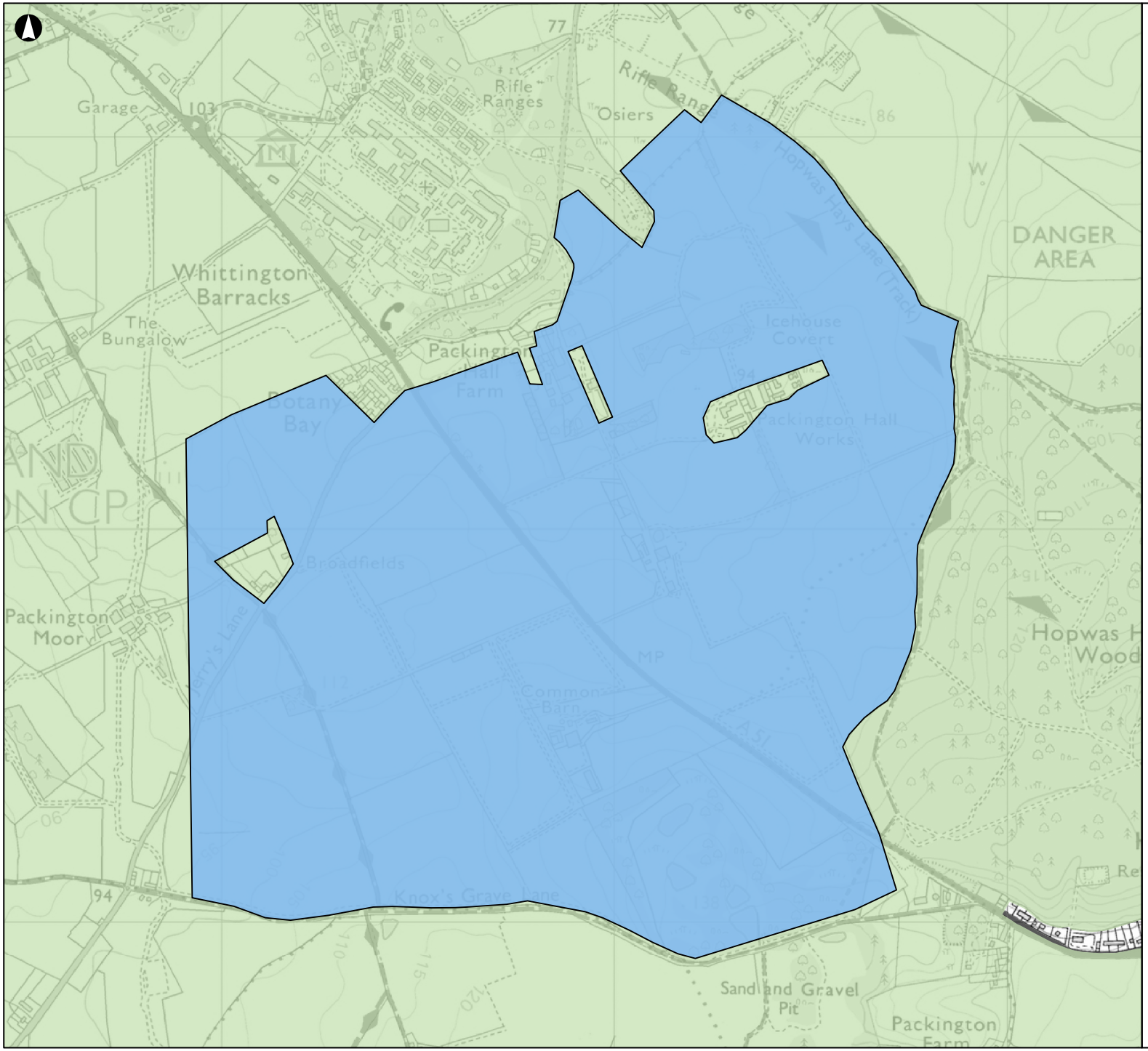

A4

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Purpose A

No contribution

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Purpose A

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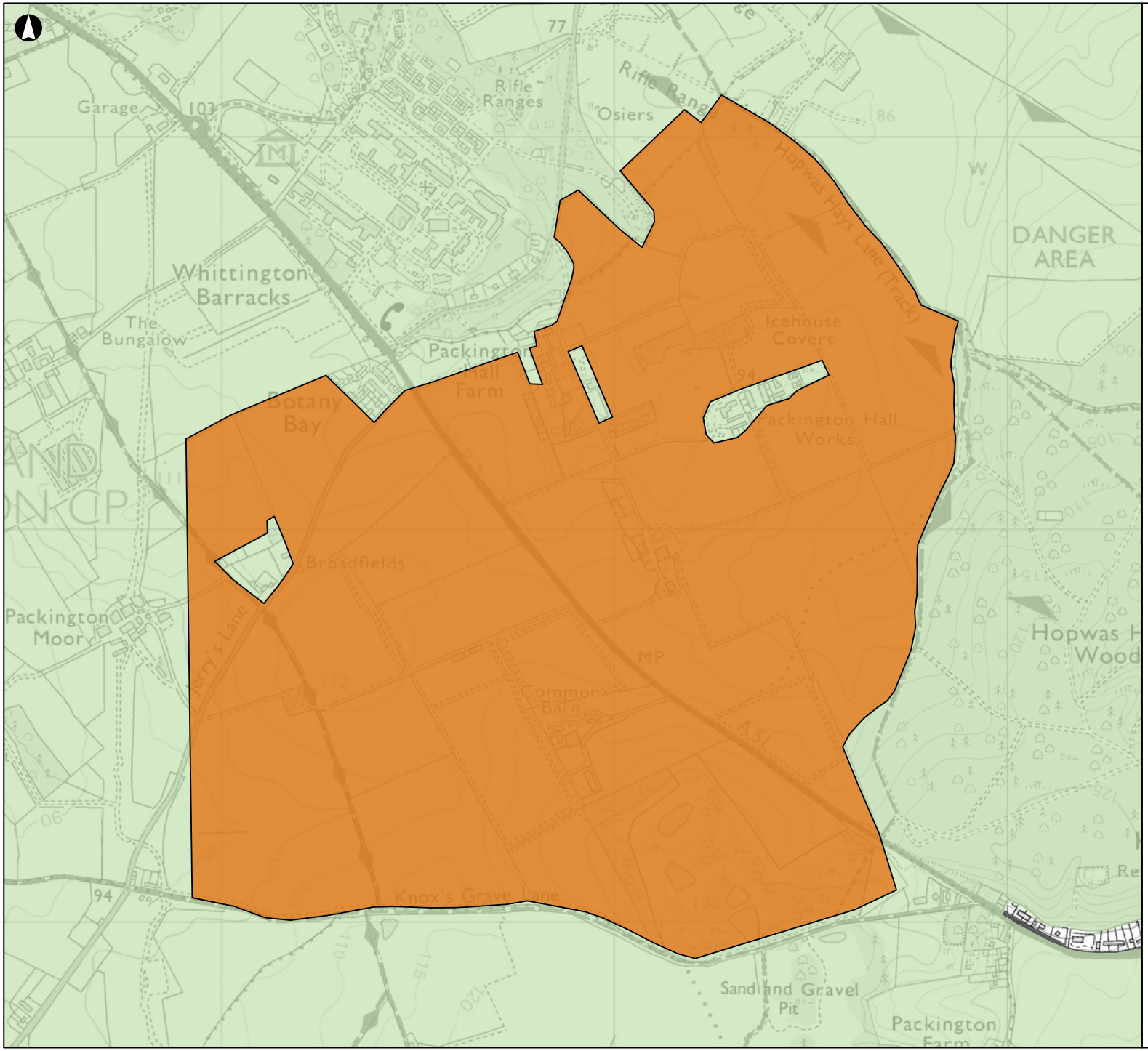

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Purpose B

Moderate

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Assessment outcomes

Purpose B

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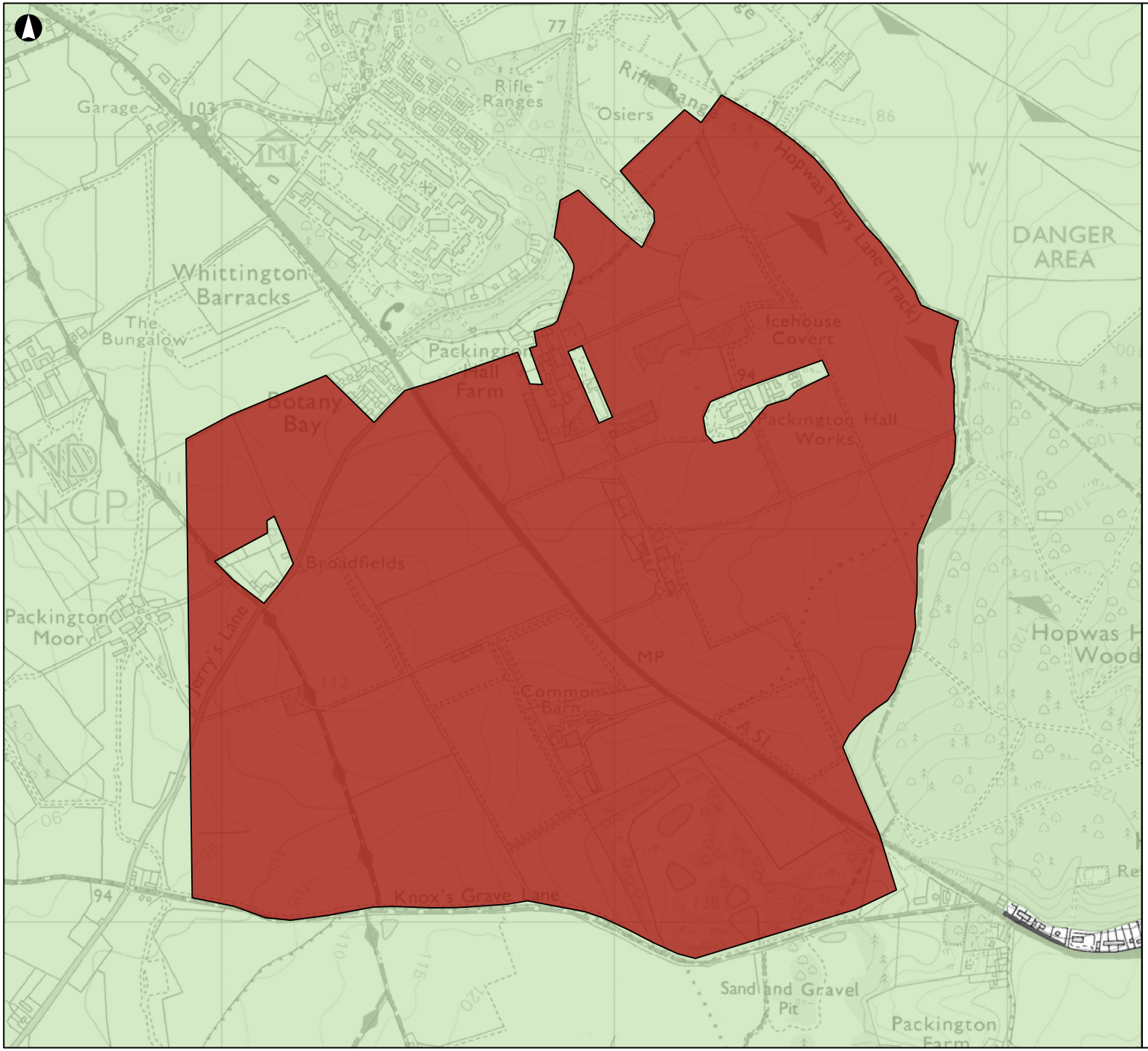

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Purpose C

Strong

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Assessment outcomes

Purpose C

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Role

Planning

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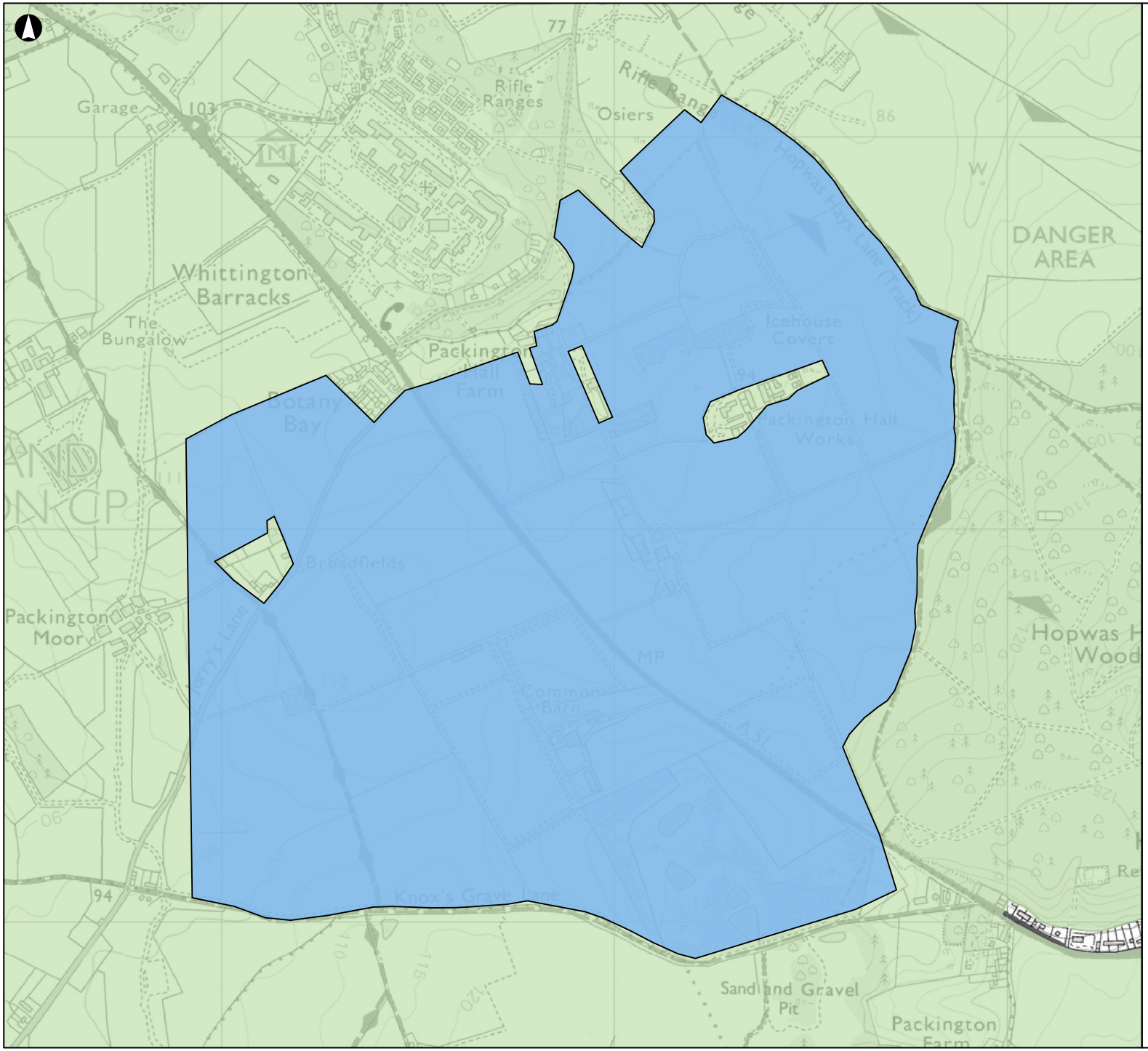

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West Midlands Green Belt

Purpose D

No contribution

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Assessment outcomes

Purpose D

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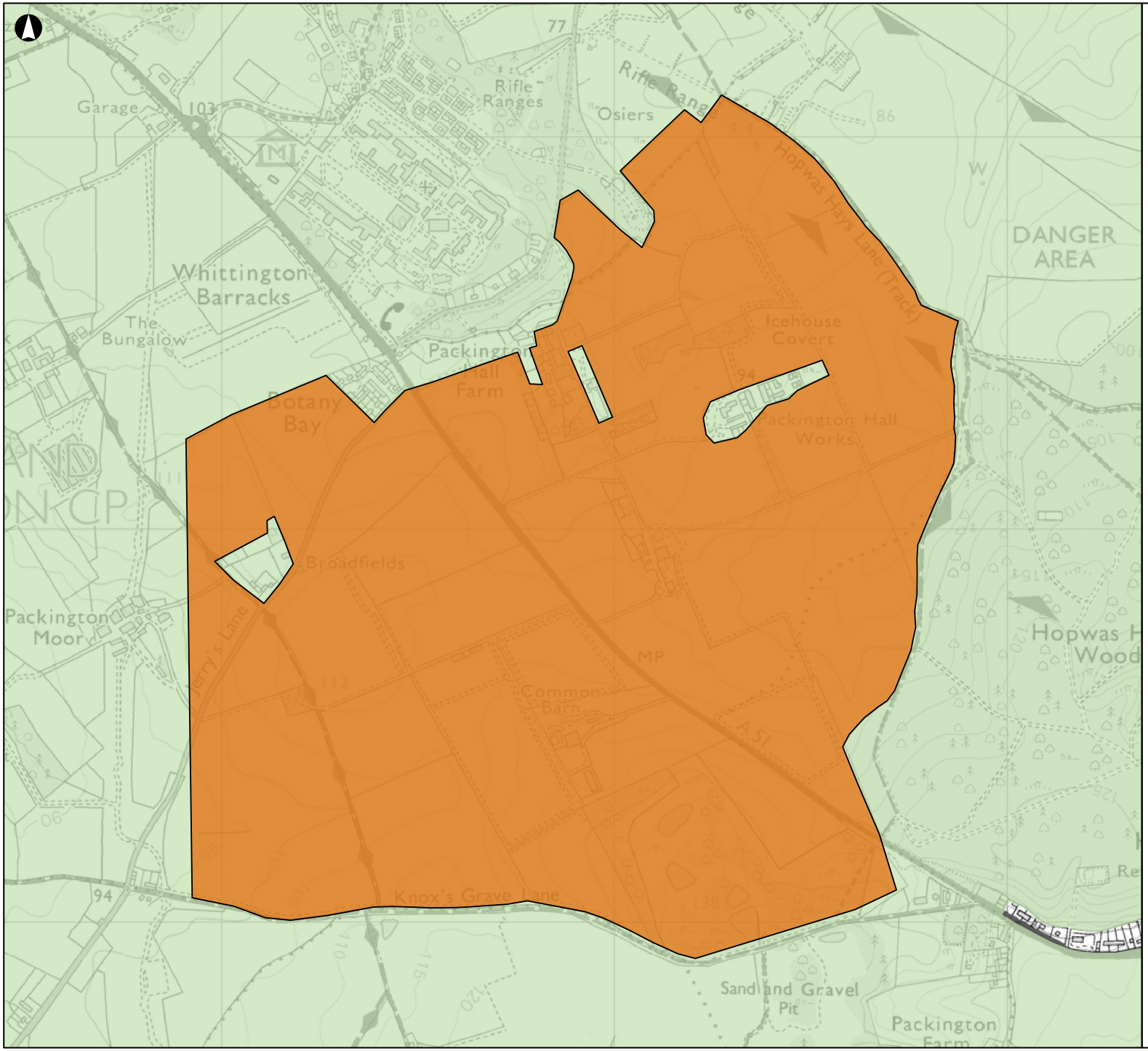

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Purpose E

Moderate

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Assessment outcomes

Purpose E

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Role

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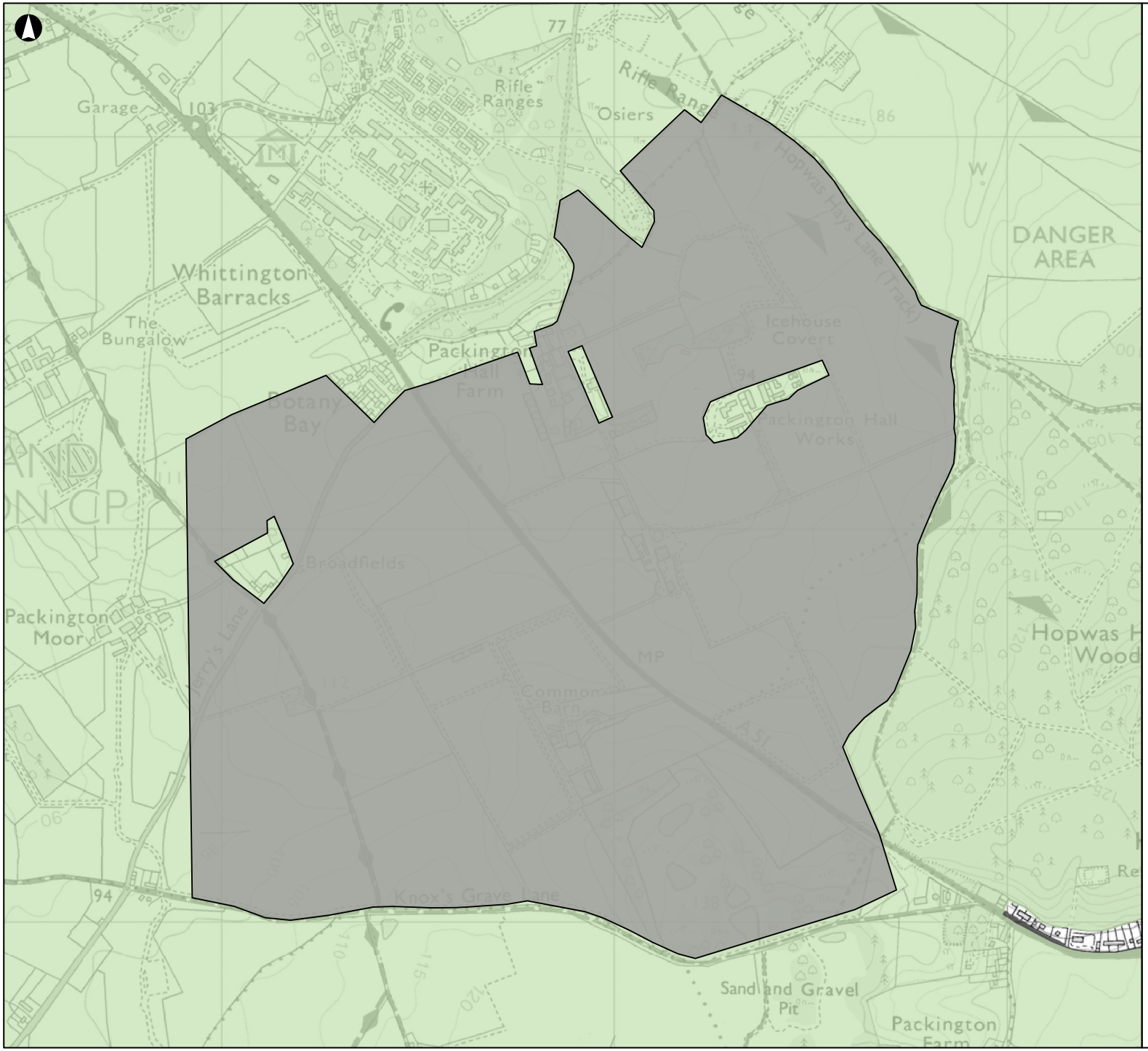

A4

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West Midlands Green Belt

Potential grey belt

Yes

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Drawing Title

Assessment outcomes

Potential grey belt

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Role

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Suitability

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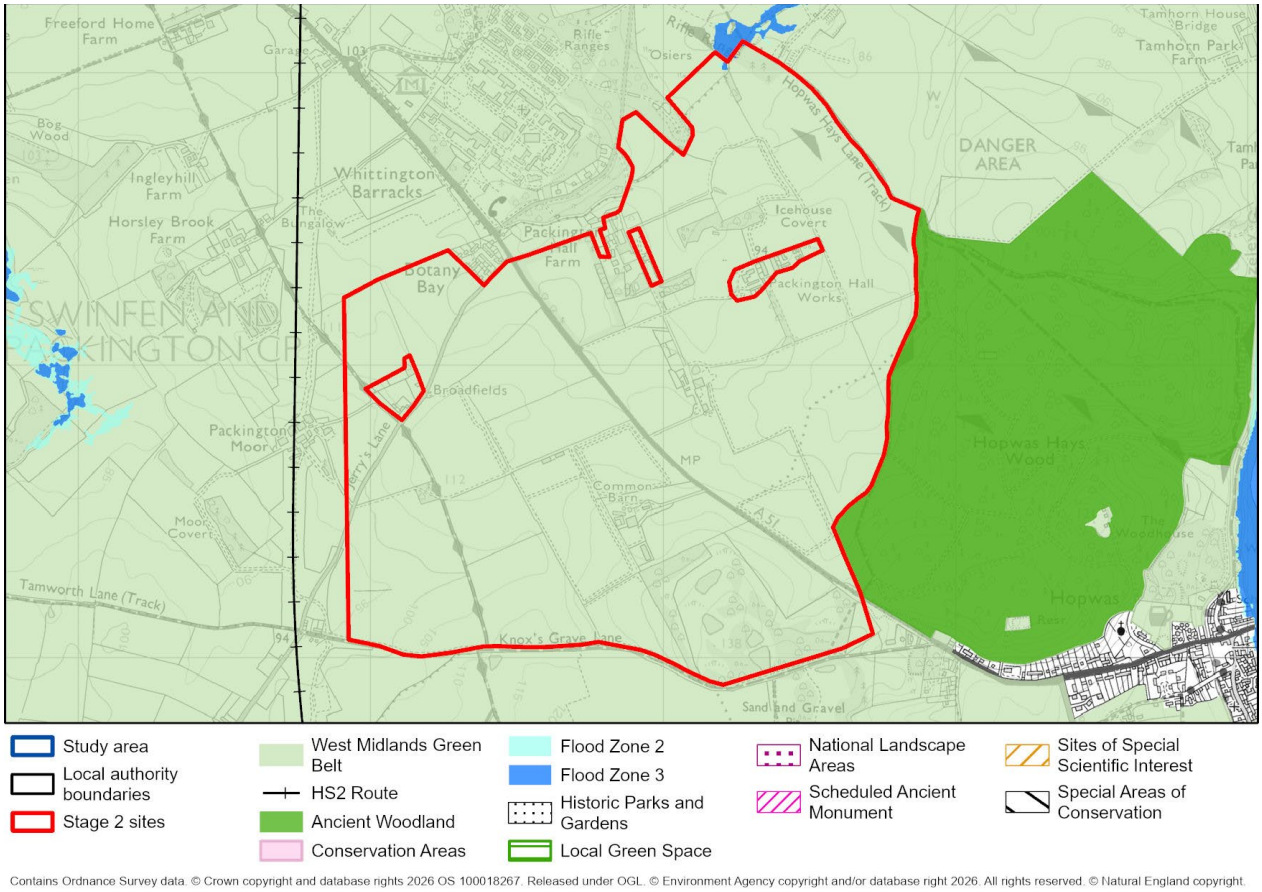
Appendix B – Stage 2 Green Belt Assessment Form

Site 1



Green Belt Purposes Assessment

Assessment criteria	Contribution outcome	Assessment
Purpose A	No	The site is not adjacent to a large built up area and therefore does not contribute to this purpose.
Purpose B	Moderate	The site is located in a gap between the neighbouring towns of Lichfield City and Tamworth. The site forms part of the gap between towns where there is scope for some development without reducing the visual or perceived separation between the towns. However, the presence of Whittington Barracks to the north (although washed over by the Green Belt) and the inset village of Hopwas to the east, could result in the sense of continuous development along the A51 when travelling between Lichfield City and Tamworth and result in an increased perception of merging if the site was developed. Although development of the site would reduce the gap between the towns, there would still be a significant size gap to the northwest of the site and the edge of Lichfield City. Overall, the site makes a moderate contribution to this purpose.
Purpose C	Strong	The site consists of open countryside and rural land uses, primarily in use as a pig farm and includes farm buildings. The site includes some semi-urban land uses including a couple of residential properties scattered throughout the site. There are further areas of development beyond but adjacent to the site boundary.

Assessment criteria	Contribution outcome	Assessment
		The site has a strong degree of openness with less than 10% built form. There are open long line views across the majority of the site, but some views are restricted by built form, vegetation and topography. North-south/east-west views across the A51 (which runs through the centre of the site) are long line, with limited restrictions from field boundary vegetation. Views into the wider Green Belt are generally largely unrestricted with vegetation lining these boundaries creating some restrictions. Hopwas Hays Wood lies to the east which restricts views in this direction and similarly for the dense tree belt that screens Whittington Barracks to the north. The forthcoming HS2 works lies beyond the western edge of the site, which does create some restrictions in this direction. In part due to the site's overall scale, the site still maintains a sense of spatial openness. The site is surrounded by open countryside along all boundaries, with the Green Belt continuing in all directions. The washed over Whittington Barracks lies to the north of the site, but this built form has no impact on the site's sense of openness due to being screened by a tree belt, and the inset village of Hopwas lies to the east, however this is not visible from within the site. Overall, the site makes a strong contribution to this purpose.
Purpose D	No	The site does not play a role in preserving the setting and special character of a historic town. Therefore, the site makes no contribution to this purpose.
Purpose E	Moderate	All Green Belt is considered to play a role in contributing to Purpose E by encouraging the re-use of urban land. The site therefore makes a moderate contribution to Purpose E.
Overall assessment	Moderate	The site makes a strong contribution to one purpose, a moderate contribution to two purposes and no contribution to two purposes. Professional judgement has been applied taking into account the overall aims and purposes of the Green Belt. As the site is not adjacent or near to a large built up area it cannot act to prevent urban sprawl. However, it makes a strong contribution to safeguarding the countryside from encroachment and a moderate contribution to preventing neighbouring towns from merging. It has therefore, been judged on balance that the site makes a moderate contribution to Green Belt purposes.
Is the site potentially considered grey belt?	Yes	The site does not make a strong contribution to Purpose A, B or D. The site contains some small areas at risk of surface water flooding; however, these are not significant given the overall size of the site. Therefore, the site can be considered potential grey belt.

Assessment of Green Belt Harm

Impact assessment considerations	Assessment
What is the impact on Green Belt function and purposes of	The site makes a moderate overall contribution to Green Belt purposes and makes a strong contribution to Purpose C.

Impact assessment considerations	Assessment
removing the site from the Green Belt?	Purpose A – The site is not adjacent or near to a large built up area and therefore cannot act to prevent urban sprawl. Purpose B – Development of the site would reduce the gap between Lichfield City and Tamworth and would represent a significant decrease in the separation of these, albeit a gap would still remain, however there may be increased potential for merging. Purpose C – Development of the site would represent a significant encroachment into the countryside given it is surrounded by the countryside, its substantial size and that the site is largely undeveloped. Purpose D - Development of the site would not have an impact upon the setting or character of a historic town given it is not adjacent to and does not provide views into or out of a defined historic town.
What is the impact on the function and purposes of the surrounding Green Belt of removing the site?	If the site is removed from the Green Belt and developed, the Green Belt to the northwest and in part east would become a more essential gap between the neighbouring towns of Lichfield and Tamworth, which is likely to impact its Green Belt function and purpose. The surrounding Green Belt to the north and south would continue to perform the same Green Belt function and purposes. Furthermore, removal of the site would result in an islanded area of Green Belt release. Releasing the site from the Green Belt would increase the contribution of the surrounding Green Belt to the Green Belt purposes.
Are there any cumulative impacts (due to release of sites in close proximity)?	There are currently no other known sites in this location under consideration which are likely to have cumulative impacts.
Conclusion	The site makes a moderate overall contribution to Green Belt purposes, and the site is considered to be potential grey belt. Development of the site would have an impact on Purpose B and Purpose C as reasons explained above. Removal of the site would result in an islanded area of Green Belt release, however of a significant scale which could support a new settlement. Furthermore, removal of the site from the Green Belt is likely to impact certain functions and purposes of the wider Green Belt. Overall, the removal of the site could harm the overall function and integrity of the Green Belt.
Would a new Green Belt boundary be defined using physical features that are readily recognisable and likely to be permanent?	The new Green Belt boundary would be defined by a dense, mature tree belt to the north and an Ancient Woodland to the east (which forms the majority of the eastern boundary), with these being defensible boundaries. The remainder of the site's existing outer boundaries to the northeast, northwest, south and west are less defensible with these primarily consisting of field boundaries/tree lines. It is noted the forthcoming HS2 line lies to the west and would be considered to be in reasonable proximity.

Impact assessment considerations	Assessment
	If the site is taken forward, it is recommended these less defensible boundaries would need to be strengthened to create a recognisable and permanent new Green Belt boundary.