

Agenda

Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

Wednesday, 8 November 2023 at 6.00 pm
At Council Chamber, Sandwell Council House, Freeth Street, Oldbury,
B69 3DB

1 Apologies for Absence

2 Declarations of Interest

Members to declare any interests in matters to be discussed at the meeting.

3 Minutes

5 - 10

To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on 3 October 2023 as a correct record.

4 Additional Items of Business

To determine whether there are any additional items of business to be considered as a matter of urgency.

5 West Midlands Local Transport Plan

11 - 20

To consider and comment upon the progress on the development of the West Midlands Local Transport Plan.



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| 6 | Sandwell Local Plan - Consultation on the Draft Sandwell Local Plan | 21 - 928 |
| | To consider and comment on the Draft Sandwell Local Plan. | |
| 7 | Highway Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030 - Report of the Working Group | 929 - 972 |
| | To consider and comment upon the report of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Working Group in relation to the Highway Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030. | |
| 8 | Cabinet Forward Plan and Board Work Programme | 973 - 986 |
| | Standing item to consider the scrutiny of items on the Cabinet Forward Plan and the Board's Work Programme for 2023/24. | |

Shokat Lal
Chief Executive
Sandwell Council House
Freeth Street
Oldbury
West Midlands

Distribution
Councillor Taylor (Chair)
Councillors Owen, Akpoteni, Ashraf, Dhatt, Hemingway, A Hussain, Kordala, Rahman, J Singh and Davies

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

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Minutes of Economy Skills Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

3 October 2023 at 5.35pm
in the Council Chamber - Sandwell Council House, Oldbury

Present: Councillor Taylor (Chair);
Councillors Akpoteni, Dhatt, Owen and Rahman.

Officers: Rina Rahim (Town Fund Programme Manager), Suky Suthi-Nagra (Democratic Services Manager) and Anthony Lloyd (Democratic Services Officer).

28/23 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashraf, Chapman, Hemingway and Hussain.

29/23 Declarations of Interest

Councillor Taylor declared a personal interest in the matter referred to at Minute No. 33/23; (Europa Avenue Cycle Path and Associated Consultation - Considerations and Conclusion - Report of the Working Group), in that she was the Cabinet Member for Sustainable Transport who oversaw the scheme in 2021.

30/23 Minutes

Resolved that the minutes of the meetings held on 13 July 2023 be confirmed as a correct record.

31/23 **Additional Item of Business**

There were no urgent additional items of business to consider.

32/23 **Towns Fund Programme Update**

A Towns Fund Programme update was provided to the Board.

On 23 March 2023, Cabinet approved the Regeneration Pipeline that set out the regeneration priorities for the period 2022-2077. Within the pipeline was an investment plan which included £67.5m for the Towns Fund Programme with £25m allocated to West Bromwich, £23.5m allocated to Smethwick and £19m allocated to Rowley Regis.

West Bromwich Town Fund Update

The Towns Fund Programme for West Bromwich aimed to deliver a number of outcomes including the renovation of heritage buildings, provision of new green spaces, improved floor space and rehabilitated land, the introduction of new cycle ways, pedestrian paths, improved roads and multiple full-time and temporary jobs. The Sandwell Civil and Mechanical Engineering Centre had successfully completed on-time and budget and had opened to students in September 2023. Additionally, significant progress had been made on both the “Urban Greening” and “Digital Den” projects with the latter now being complete.

The Retail Diversification Programme, which aimed to deliver comprehensive regeneration and transformation of the West Bromwich retail submarket, had experienced slippages since the last update. Acquisition of sites had been more challenging than first assumed and the Council was pursuing the acquisition of the former Wilkos site instead of Kings Square Cinema. Internal cost reviews for the relocation of the indoor market was underway following the significant increase of the estimated costs of the project.

The Town Hall Quarter project aimed to restore and renovate the Grade II listed West Bromwich Town Hall and Central

Library buildings. Associated Bell Tower works had been completed and internal work had started to assist in the final cost plan.

Smethwick Town Fund Update

In total, there were five approved projects within Smethwick that aimed to deliver a number of objectives including employment opportunities and land development. The Midland Met Learning Campus project would deliver a major skills resource providing training from entry level up to level 7. Cost inflation pressures had impacted the project and, as a result, the Council had applied for additional match funding from West Midlands Combined Authority. The planning application for the site was expected to be determined in October 2023 and despite delays, the Council would ensure that correct processes were followed.

Significant delays had been encountered in relation to the delivery and spend of the Grove Lane regeneration project due to delays in acquiring the site that was required. A different route to acquire the site was now being sought via a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO); this would result in a slippage of over 12 months. Delays had been explained to the Department of Housing, Levelling up and Communities. Works on the Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration Scheme were also taking longer than expected but the necessary steps were being taken to adequately prepare the site.

Subject to the installation of equipment, the Ron Davies Centre Expansion project had been completed.

Rowley Regis Towns Fund Programmes

The Britannia Park Greenspace and Community Hub project aimed to develop a new low carbon community building, create new allotment plots and to significantly improve the overall quality of Britannia Park, including the reconstruction of the skate park and replacement of all play and fitness equipment in the area.

Several improvements to the park had already been completed including works to the car park, main entrance, woodland trail and the perimeter pathway and the second phase was underway. A planning application had been

submitted for the changing rooms, however costs for remedial works to the allotments had drastically increased.

An update to progress on the Canal Network Connectivity project was also highlighted to members. Works on the Old Mainline had been completed and were open to the public and additional match funding had been secured which would allow further improvements. Additionally, Phase 1 works of the Rowley Regis Connected project would take place in February 2024.

The Blackheath Bus Interchange project had been categorised as high-risk due to a petition that was raised against the scheme. Other options were being considered and a further update would be provided in due course on how the project would proceed.

Delays to the Satellite Education Hub project had been encountered due to issues with obtaining planning permission, however the application had been approved and contractors would be due to start works in February/March 2024.

Following further discussion and questions from members, the following points were made:-

- the Department for Housing, Levelling up and Communities had not provided any further funding, however a 30% change to project scope allowed the Council to make changes;
- cost-saving measures to battle inflation were always considered and, as an example, the Midland Met Learning Campus had reduced the size of the building without impacting learning space;
- if it was difficult to deliver projects on-time and budget, the department for Housing, Levelling Up and Communities could be consulted and the funds could be used elsewhere;
- members would be continuously consulted and updated on the progress of towns fund projects;
- a consultation and engagement plan would be created and shared with the Board to ensure that residents were consulted efficiently;
- local businesses would be consulted to ensure that local trades benefitted from the projects.

Concerns were also raised by members in relation to the safety of Rolfe Street Train Station in Smethwick.

Officers were thanked for their attendance and work.

At this point in the meeting, Councillor Taylor left the Chamber and Councillor Owen chaired the meeting for the matter referred to at 33/23.

33/23 **Europa Avenue Cycle Path and Associated Consultation - Considerations and Conclusion - Report of the Working Group**

Further to Minute No 24/23 (13 July 2023) of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Committee, the Board noted the findings of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Working Group in relation to the Europa Avenue Cycle Path Consultation.

Following a site visit by the working group on 4 August 2023 and an additional meeting to discuss the matter on 18 September 2023, and having considered the views of residents and the report on the consultation taken, the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board agreed that consultation undertaken on the Europa Avenue Cycle Path was conducted in accordance with Council procedures.

Resolved:

- (1) that in connection with the Europa Avenue Cycle Path Consultation, the following findings of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Working Group, in relation to whether sufficient and appropriate consultation had been carried out in line with existing council policies, practices and procedures, be approved by the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board:-
 - (a) that having listened and considered the views of local residents, the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Board:-

- (b) note that the Working Group are satisfied that consultation on the Europa Avenue cycle path, which was carried out both online and by letter drops to households, was conducted in accordance with Council processes, however, communication with residents could have been improved further;
- (c) note that in future, where simultaneous improvement works are being carried out within the vicinity by different departments, internal communication between departments should be undertaken to avoid confusion and disruption to residents;
- (d) suggest that the Council consider all platforms, including Citizenspace and neighbourhood forums, for communicating with residents, taking into consideration digital deprivation across the borough;
- (e) acknowledge that the Overview and Scrutiny function should be used to consider matters of strategic importance within the borough and not local ward issues in order to ensure value is added.

(Councillor Taylor returned to Council Chamber and resumed the Chair).

34/23 **Cabinet Forward Plan and Board Work Programme**

The Board received the Cabinet Forward Plan and Board Work Programme. Members requested that the following items from the Cabinet Forward Plan be added to the Board's work programme for the 2023-24 municipal year;

- Single Use Plastics Policy
- Endorsement of the Tackling Poverty Plan

Meeting ended at 6.22pm

Contact: democratic_services@sandwell.gov.uk

Report to the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

8 November 2023

Subject:	West Midlands Local Transport Plan
Director:	Director of Regeneration & Growth Tony McGovern
Contact Officer:	Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager, Andy Miller andy_miller@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments upon the progress and next steps of the development of the new West Midlands Local Transport Plan.

2 Reasons for Recommendations






- 2.1 The Local Transport Plan is a statutory document prepared by Transport for the West Midlands as part of the West Midlands Combined Authority in its role as Integrated Transport Authority. The Plan covers the seven West Midlands metropolitan local authorities. It therefore forms the adopted transport strategy and policies for Sandwell.
- 2.2 It is therefore important that the plan reflects the aspirations of Sandwell's Corporate Plan, its functions as Local Planning and Highway Authority and supports the boroughs economic growth.
- 2.3 A key element in the preparation of the LTP is the involvement of stakeholders, interested parties and the public. The views of the Board are an important part of this process and TfWM committed to updating the Committee with regard to progress. It is proposed that the



Committee will receive a further update once the draft Area Strategies and Implementation Plans are ready for consultation.

2.4 The final version of the Local Transport Plan will be reported to Cabinet prior to its approval by WMCA Board.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people: The LTP will help to deliver a safe and clean transport system which enables more active lifestyles, supports access to education and reduces the health impacts on children and young people</p>
	<p>People live well and age well: The Local Transport Plan contributes to creating a safe and efficient transport network, creating access to opportunity for local people and visitors, and reducing the impacts of transport on people and increasing the health benefits of sustainable active travel.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities: Successful communities need access to jobs, services and facilities to enable them to remain healthy and vibrant. The transport network is an important enabler of this.</p>
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods: Both new and existing residential developments should be of good quality design and provide good access and links to shops, services and leisure facilities in order for them to be successful. The Local Transport Plan provides the framework to help inform land use plans and to support bids for funding to ensure the transport network is improved and maintained to support this need.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy: The provision of a high quality well maintained transport network will improve journey reliability for Sandwell business who rely on it to connect to their suppliers and customers. It will help ensure that Sandwell businesses have access to the labour market and that residents can access opportunities.</p>





A connected and accessible Sandwell
The provision of a high quality walking and cycling, public transport and highway network is vital to enable Sandwell residents to access jobs, education and services both within and beyond the Borough's boundaries.

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Under the Transport Act 2000, Local Transport Authorities (LTAs) have a statutory duty to produce and review a Local Transport Plan (LTP). As a consequence of the Local Transport Act 2008 and the West Midlands Combined Authority Order 2016, WMCA is the LTA for the seven constituent metropolitan districts/boroughs.
- 4.2 The LTP must set out policies for the promotion and encouragement of safe, integrated, efficient and economic transport to, from and within the LTA area as well as proposals for the implementation of those policies. WMCA and the seven-metropolitan district/borough councils of the West Midlands must carry out their functions so as to implement these policies.
- 4.3 The LTP carries statutory weight in a range of decisions made by many public authorities as they execute their functions under their relevant statutory provisions. It is a critical document for ensuring the West Midlands public's interests with regards to transport and its impacts are considered in such decisions. The LTP must be developed collaboratively between the WMCA as LTA and the 7 local authorities and implemented in partnership with other agencies and organisations such as National Highways, Network Rail and public transport operators. Transport for West Midlands has been developing a new, fifth West Midlands LTP, which will cover the period up to around the mid 2030s.

Progress on developing the new Local Transport Plan

- 4.4 The new Local Transport Plan is being developed to help the region respond to key challenges including delivering inclusive growth and the



need to rapidly decarbonise the transport system. The development of the new Local Transport Plan has been undertaken in a number of stages:

- The **LTP Green Paper** was published and consulted on in summer 2021 to ‘start a conversation about to change’ and to help inform the approach to the new Local Transport Plan.
- Subsequently the **LTP Core Strategy** was consulted on in 2022. It sets out the overarching approach and principles for the new Local Transport Plan. These are based on a change from traditional transport policy approaches, which have tended to focus on predicting future demands and then seeking to provide the infrastructure and services to meet that demand (a ‘predict and provide’ approach). Instead, the Core Strategy focuses on a ‘decide and provide’ approach, in which the region focuses on the end state it wants to achieve (for example, safe clean public highway within which it is comfortable to walk or cycle and public transport is reliable efficient and affordable).

4.5 To address the big social, economic and environmental issues we face, the objectives in the new LTP are framed around 5 ‘Motives for Change’ where changing transport could help better support inclusive growth by providing a transport system that’s fair to everyone and minimises the impacts on the environment.



4.6 There are three primary outcomes needed in our transport system to make this happen - we need to:



- **improve accessibility (particularly for those without access to a car);**
- **reduce traffic; and**
- **electrify the transport system.**

The Core Strategy was consulted on in 2022 and finalised and approved by WMCA Board in February 2023 (2022-2023).

4.7 Earlier this year we published our draft **6 Big Moves** which set out more detailed policies and in some cases specific action to support the delivery of the LTPs aims and objectives. The Big Moves cover:

- **Behaviour Change** - This Big Move focuses on how will support behaviour change through promotion of effective policies, working with the public to understand the benefits of these policies and the consequences of not delivering. It also explores how we can deliver our plans with the public around a common understanding and consensus on local appetite for change.
- **Accessible & Inclusive Places** - This Big Move sets out how we will improve our understanding of accessibility and work with local planning authorities to improve how we use land and deliver urban growth and use technology to improve sustainable transport outcomes and accessibility.
- **Walk, Wheel, Cycle and Scoot** - This Big Move sets out how the region can support people to walk, wheel, cycle or scoot when, and where they want, safely and conveniently.
- **Public Transport and Shared Mobility** - This Big Move is about how we will develop, operate and promote public transport and shared mobility services (exclusively hired private vehicles) to support LTP outcomes.
- **Safe, Efficient & Reliable Transport** – This Big Move sets out how we will plan, deliver and operate the transport network to support LTP outcomes.



- **A Green Transport Revolution** - This Big Move deals with how we will make sure that we as make changes to the transport system to deliver behaviour change in the most effective and sustainable manner.

4.8 The consultation on the Big Moves received around 750 responses from the public and stakeholders across the region and was supplemented by deep dive engagement with the TfWM online community and focused sessions with key groups. Overall the majority of responses showed that people were supportive of the approaches being set out in the LTP Big Moves. However, a key area of feedback was that people wanted to see more detail of what will actually happen and be delivered. The next stage of work on the Area Strategies and Implementation Plan will provide this information. Following the consultation the Big Moves are being refined and finalised ahead of approval at a later date.

LTP Area Strategies and Implementation Plan (development underway)

4.9 TfWM is currently working with the local authorities to develop 4 Area Strategies (for Birmingham, the Black Country, Coventry and Solihull) which will translate the Core Strategy and the policies of the Big Moves into plans across the region. The measures in the Area Strategies and Implementation Plan are based on existing known local and regional proposals and priorities (including those currently being progressed as part of the current City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS)).

4.10 The development of the first set of Area Strategies Plans has focused on measures in two periods:

- A set of “committed” proposals for delivery in the next 0-5 years (up to 2027)
- A set of “indicative” proposals for the next 5-10 years (up to the mid 2030s)

4.11 Measures include a range of multi-modal improvements to key corridors, cycling and walking enhancements, development of future rapid transit schemes and zero emission vehicle infrastructure. The Area Strategy is being developed to be complementary to the emerging Sandwell Plan.



4.12 The proposals in the Area Strategies will be assessed to help us understand how well they perform in terms of the primary outcomes for the LTP including improving accessibility and supporting decarbonisation. The impact of the area strategies against LTP objectives will depend on the blend of investment in alternatives and management of demand, and the trade-offs we make between provision for different travellers. The assessments will help us to understand where we need to refine our strategy. In particular taking account of the geographical spread of interventions across different centres, corridors and neighbourhoods to enable development of a resilient balanced future pipeline of proposals. This will then help to develop the region's second City Regional Sustainable Transport Settlement programme.

Consultation and Engagement

4.13 A broad range of stakeholders as well as the general public have been engaged and have responded through a range of channels across the various consultations to date. Significant effort has been made throughout the LTP process to pro-actively seek input from a demographically and geographically representative range of West Midlands citizens.

4.14 This has included more traditional approaches such as online surveys but also using the TfWM market research community to enable deliberative engagement on the key issues to provide a valuable deeper understanding of people's feelings and views. In addition, local engagement has taken place with local authorities separately.

- Deliberative engagement with via the representative groups via the TfWM Marketing Research OC platform.
- Focussed events with representative bodies of private, third sector organisations and with seldom reached groups.
- Online questionnaire style consultation with general public and wider stakeholders.
- Ongoing conversation with LA partners as LTP options are developed and assessed.

4.15 An engagement strategy for the consultation on the Area Strategies and Implementation Plan will be developed in due course.



Next Steps

- 4.16 The analytical work and development of the area strategies and implementation plans is due to conclude in December. It is currently proposed that how and when to proceed with consultation and engagement on the Area Strategies will be discussed with Strategic Transport Board early in the new year.
- 4.17 Further timescales are dependent on Strategic Transport Board's views on engagement and next steps and the Mayoral election in May 2024 but it is now anticipated that the final version of the LTP will be presented to WMCA Board to consider for adoption later in 2024.

5 Implications

Resources:	The LTP is prepared by Transport for West Midlands and is resourced from its own budgets. Sandwell MBC officers from Transportation Planning and Highways are engaged in the Plan's preparation as part of the core function of these service areas. There are no direct resource implications for the Council.
Legal and Governance:	Since the publication of Local Transport Act 2008 it is a statutory requirement of Integrated Transport Authorities (ITAs) to produce a Local Transport Plan (LTP) to develop policies relating to all aspects of transport, with close collaboration with surrounding Authorities. The ITA function in the West Midlands is exercised by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).
Risk:	There are no direct risk implications resulting from the course of action recommended in this report.
Equality:	TfWM is carrying out an Integrated Sustainability Appraisal which includes an Equalities Impact Assessment as part of the preparation of the LTP.
Health and Wellbeing:	The LTP will address a wide range of issues relating to health and wellbeing including tackling climate change, poor air quality and the provision of active travel infrastructure such as cycle facilities which are recognised as supporting fitter and healthier lifestyles.
Social Value:	There are no direct social value implications arising from this report as the Plan does not directly authorise



	projects or construction of infrastructure. The social value implications of individual proposals will, where the Council is directly involved in delivery, be assessed as part of the individual approval processes for those projects.
Climate Change:	Decarbonising the transport system is a key objective of the new LTP. The LTP sets out a framework within which WMCA and local authorities can shape and influence transport and travel behaviours in order to decarbonise the transport system in an equitable way.
Corporate Parenting:	There are no specific corporate parenting implications arising from the contents of the report.

6 Appendices

N/A

7. Background Papers

[The LTP green paper](#)

[LTP Core Strategy](#)

[Big Moves Summary](#)

[More detail and information on the LTP](#)



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Report to Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

8 November 2023

Subject:	Sandwell Local Plan – Consultation on the Draft Sandwell Local Plan
Director:	Director Regeneration & Growth Tony McGovern
Contact Officer:	Andy Miller – Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager andy_miller@sandwell.gov.uk Philippa Smith – Sandwell Plan Project Manager – Planning Policy Team philippa1_smith@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board considers and comments on Draft Sandwell Local Plan (Appendix A), Draft Proposals Map (Appendix B) and supporting documentation (Appendices C,D and E).

2 Reasons for Recommendations






- 2.1 It is a statutory requirement of every Local Planning Authority to have an up-to-date Local Plan. Following the demise of the Black Country Plan in 2022, Sandwell is producing its own plan – the Sandwell Local Plan. The Government has previously expressed a desire to see full Local Plan coverage across England by December 2023, or as soon as is practical after that date. However, the Government is currently consulting on a proposed new system for producing local plans and has



indicated that the last date for submitting a revised local plan under the current system will be 30th June 2025. Officers have been working to a timetable that will enable the Sandwell Local Plan to be submitted prior to that date. The timetable for the production of the Local Plan is set out in the Sandwell Local Development Scheme which is available to view in the Planning Policy pages of the Sandwell website. The Draft Sandwell Local Plan is the next stage in the preparation of the Local Plan.

2.2 The next stage in the Local Plan’s preparation is the publication for consultation of the Draft Plan. Cabinet approved the Draft Plan for consultation on 18th October 2023. Consultation began on 6th November and will run for six weeks, ending on 18th December. The views of the Board are sought as part of this consultations.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people – the Local Plan helps to develop policies that will contribute to the delivery of facilities, services and opportunities for children and young people through the local plan process.</p>
	<p>People live well and age well - Health and wellbeing is a key theme addressed throughout the documents of the Local Plan. It will promote healthy living and create opportunities for active lifestyles and healthy transport choices including walking, cycling and outdoor recreation.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities – The Local Plan will build in effective community involvement and will be important to local communities.</p>
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods – the Local Plan will play an important part in delivering the spatial and land use aspects of the Council’s vision 2030, particularly as it relates to housing, employment, transport, environment and education goals.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy - The Local Plan will provide the regeneration framework for future investments and projects.</p>





A connected and accessible Sandwell - Sustainability is a key theme addressed throughout the documents of the Local Plan. They will help to deliver sustainable, prosperous communities, an integrated transport network and reduce the need to travel by car.

4 Context and Key Issues

Issues & Options

- 4.1 The Issues and Options consultation held in February and March 2023 was the first stage of the Local Plan process. It is a scoping exercise that seeks to involve local people, businesses, and other stakeholders in identifying what the new plan should address. It provides an initial opportunity for interested parties, the public and stakeholders to engage in the process, and to help inform the next stage of the plan.
- 4.2 The Issues and Options consultation was held between 6th February and 20th March 2023. The Council received 613 representations from 42 individuals. The main issues arising from the consultation were reported to the Cabinet on 26th July 2023.
- 4.3 The representations received during the Issues and Options consultation and the Council's response to them, will be published as part of the evidence base for the Draft Plan consultation. Since the close of the Issues and Options consultation, officers have been working to produce the Draft Sandwell Local Plan.

The Black Country Plan

- 4.4 Prior to the Sandwell Local Plan, the four Black Country boroughs worked together to produce a joint local plan – the Black Country Plan. Unfortunately, the demise of the Black Country Plan in 2022 has meant that the four Black Country Authorities are now producing individual local plans.



- 4.5 The Draft Sandwell Local Plan results from extensive work which has taken place since 2016 when the process of producing the Black Country Plan began. A significant body of technical evidence has been produced for the Black Country Plan and this has been used to inform the Sandwell Local Plan. The evidence includes Sandwell's future housing need (both the overall number of homes required but also the breakdown between tenure and dwelling size that is likely to be required), the employment land need and supply (including the suitability of existing employment premises for long term retention), and studies of town centres, waste, minerals and environmental studies including flood risk and greenbelt.
- 4.6 New evidence commissioned for the Sandwell Local Plan includes an update of the transport modelling, an Infrastructure Development Plan, a Viability and Deliverability Assessment, nature conservation assessments, a review of the Rowley Hills Strategic Open Space and an assessment of council owned sites as receptors for Biodiversity Net Gain. An update to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment will also be commissioned. Alongside this, a detailed assessment of over 120 potential sites to be allocated in the Plan has been carried out to determine which site allocations would be most appropriate for the Plan. All of this evidence will be available on the Sandwell website.

Key Elements of the Sandwell Local Plan

- 4.7 The draft Sandwell Local Plan will comprise the following elements:
- Sandwell 2041: the spatial vision, priorities and objectives
 - The Spatial Strategy
 - The Development Strategy
 - Local Plan Policies
 - The Site Allocations
 - The Policies Map
 - Sustainability Appraisal
- 4.8 Cabinet will note that the full text of the Draft Sandwell Local Plan and its appendices (appendix A), along with the Policies Map (appendix B), the



Sustainability Appraisal and its appendices (appendix C), the consultation and stakeholder engagement plan (appendix D) and the Equalities Impact Assessment (appendix E) are attached as appendices to this report. The other supporting documents can be found on the Sandwell website. <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/planning/sandwell-local-plan/2>

- 4.9 This section of the report provides a brief overview and summary of some of the key aspects of the draft Sandwell Local Plan.

Sandwell 2041: The Vision

- 4.10 The Vision for Sandwell at 2041 includes the Council being at the forefront of the climate change agenda and mitigating the impacts of climate change. This added to healthier residents, a sustainable economy and thriving town centres will put Sandwell at the forefront of urban renaissance in the West Midlands region.

The Spatial Strategy

- 4.11 The proposed Spatial Strategy aims to achieve a balance of housing and employment growth across the borough while at the same time, incorporating many elements of a green growth strategy.
- 4.12 The strategy is realistic about what we can actually achieve over the next 15 years, whilst at the same time being forward-looking and designed to deliver development that positively enhances opportunities for Sandwell residents to benefit from a greener and healthier environment. As well as being an important factor in people's health and wellbeing, a green environment is one that is more attractive to investors and future residents.

Climate Change

- 4.13 The approach to climate change within the draft Sandwell Local Plan continues to deliver the approach set out in the Black Country Plan and



will help developers and local people be clear about what they can do to help the Council address the issues. Climate Change is now very much an issue for Local Planning Authorities and it is important that the council sets out its requirements in the Sandwell Local Plan, especially where we are pursuing our own agenda, such as heat networks for West Bromwich, power from waste etc. This approach aligns with the Council's adopted Climate Change Strategy and supports other aspects of the Council's climate change agenda.

Development Strategy

4.14 The policies that make up the development strategy set out the scale and distribution of new development for the Local Plan period to 2041 and aim to achieve the following:

- the delivery of at least 11,167 net new homes and create sustainable mixed communities including a range and choice of new homes;
- the retention and protection of at least 1,206ha of employment land (of which 29ha is currently vacant).
- ensure that sufficient physical, social, and environmental infrastructure is delivered to meet identified requirements;
- increased access to green spaces and new public open spaces;
- minimise and mitigate the likely effects of climate change, recognising the multifunctional benefits that open spaces, landscaping, trees, nature conservation habitats and both green and blue infrastructure can deliver in doing so;
- resisting inappropriate development in the green belt;
- promote the use of zero- and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in all new development.
- delivering as much new development as possible on previously developed land and sites in the urban area;
- regenerating existing housing and employment areas;
- supporting and enhancing the sustainability of existing communities through the focussing of growth and regeneration into West Bromwich and other town centres and regeneration areas.



Housing and Employment Land

- 4.15 Housing need is now determined by the standard method set by the Government. This indicates that an additional 29,773 homes need to be provided across Sandwell over the period 2022-2041. Sandwell currently is only able to accommodate approximately 11,167 new dwellings during this period. This has left the council with a substantial shortfall in housing supply of approximately 18,606.
- 4.16 Employment land need has been determined through the economic forecasts in the Black Country Employment Demand and Needs Assessment (EDNA) up to 2040. Based on past completions, the mid-scenario figure of 185ha identified in the EDNA is considered achievable over the plan period. The supply of land available and suitable for employment use is just 42ha (including past completions for the period 2020 – 2022). This includes windfall supply, generated through intensification / recycling, resulting in a vacant land supply of 29ha. Any remaining shortfall will be met in the Black Council Functional Economic Market Area (the Black Country FEMA). The local authorities that form part of the Black Country FEMA have been engaging through the Duty to Cooperate to help address the shortfall across the Black Country FEMA as a whole.
- 4.17 The majority of development in the existing urban area is making use of brownfield land (i.e. previously developed land), vacant properties and surplus industrial land. This land is located in:
- West Bromwich Town Centre.
 - The core Regeneration Areas of West Bromwich and Carters Green, Dudley Port, Smethwick and Wednesbury to Tipton metro line
 - Existing Towns and Neighbourhoods Areas.
- 4.18 However, due to the constrained nature of Sandwell, in that it is an historic industrial area with many ground condition issues and is surrounded on all sides by metropolitan urban areas, the identification of new sites is difficult. This means that we are running out of land for new



housing. In addition, due to Sandwell's relatively small amount of Green Belt and its significant constraints, such as Nature Conservation protection and Flood Zone restrictions, the council will not be allocating any sites within the Green Belt.

Duty to Co-operate

4.19 In order to try to address some of the housing shortfall, Sandwell has been continuing with the Duty to Cooperate discussions with neighbouring authorities that were started as part of the Black Country Plan. Discussions with South Staffordshire, Shropshire, Lichfield and Telford and Wrekin councils yielded potential housing and employment contributions of 295 homes and an amount of employment land yet to be determined. Sandwell is continuing discussions with these authorities in order to clarify whether these offers are still available to us. Discussions are also on-going with the Black Country authorities to agree how any remaining offers are apportioned within the Black Country and despite these contributions, a substantial shortfall will remain. The final outcomes of these discussions have not yet been agreed and are subject to a number of factors, in particular the future Government announcements on the new planning system and a revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

Local Plan Policies

4.20 The Draft Local Plan includes a number of new and updated policies. The existing Black Country Plan policies, Site Allocations & Delivery Plan and Area Action Plan policies and masterplanning work have largely been carried forward into the Plan with some updating. There are a number policy changes or updates which will be addressed in the following paragraphs.

Green Belt

4.21 The policy aims to maintain a defensible boundary around the Sandwell green belt, to help promote urban renaissance, to maximise its role in



helping to mitigate climate change impacts and to support easy access to the countryside for residents. Sandwell green belt's nature conservation, landscape, heritage and agricultural value will be protected and enhanced.

Housing

Affordable Housing

4.22 In order to meet local needs, the Local Plan requires that a sufficient proportion of new homes provided over the plan period should be affordable. The draft policy states that the minimum proportion of affordable housing that should be provided, subject to viability, is 25%. In addition, 25% of the affordable homes required by the policy will be First Homes tenure, as defined in national guidance. The remaining tenures will be determined by local need.

Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO)

4.23 An HMO is defined as homes accommodating three or more unrelated households who typically share kitchens, lounges, and bathrooms. There are a significant number of HMO properties in Sandwell and it is recognised that an over-concentration of HMO properties can lead to a loss of family-sized units in an area which is the type of house in greatest need. This can pose a serious issue for maintaining a mixed sustainable housing offer across Sandwell. The proposed HMO policy introduces a 10% threshold for HMOs which means that no more than 10% of houses within a 100m radius of the planning application site can be HMOs. There is also a proposed new policy to protect family housing and prevent subdivision and conversion to small HMOs.

Housing for People with Special Needs

4.24 The draft Plan includes a new policy for Housing for People with Special Needs. The proposed policy states that any new proposals for specific forms of housing including children's homes, care homes, nursing



homes, extra care facilities are best located in areas that are close to local facilities and amenities and accessible by public transport, whilst not having a negative impact on the surrounding area.

Employment Land

- 4.25 The employment land policies aim to ensure sufficient development opportunities are provided to meet the demand for economic growth and support the diversification of Sandwell's economy. The policies aim to deliver a portfolio of sites of various sizes and quality to meet a range of business needs, both strategic and local needs.
- 4.26 The Strategic Employment Areas are characterised by excellent accessibility, high-quality environments and clusters of high technology growth sector businesses. These areas will be safeguarded for manufacturing and logistics uses within Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 and B8. The Local Employment Areas are characterised by a critical mass of industrial, warehousing and service activity with good access to local markets and employees. These areas will provide for the needs of locally based investment.

Centres and Regeneration Areas

Centres

- 4.27 The priority for Sandwell's centres is to ensure they remain focused on serving the needs of their communities, through delivering a well-balanced diversity of commercial, business and service functions. This includes retail provision and an increasing mix of leisure, office, residential and other appropriate, complementary uses that are accessible by a variety of sustainable means of transport. This will enable centres to make a key contribution to regeneration, tackling climate change, fostering healthy communities, and creating pleasant, safe public spaces to increase social interaction and cohesion. The centres have been placed into a hierarchy to ensure that any development in centres reflects the centre's scale, role, and function and



that any proposals that would undermine this strategy are resisted. A series of policies have been included within the Plan to help to achieve this aim.

Regeneration Areas

4.28 The Regeneration Areas identified on the Policies Map and the strategic centre of West Bromwich will be the focus for new development, regeneration, and public and private investment in the borough. Proposals will be subject to relevant development plan policies and the form and location of regeneration will be guided by masterplans and /or design briefs, which will be prepared by the Council in partnership with developers, promoters and other stakeholders.

4.29 Regeneration Areas have been identified in:

- West Bromwich and Carters Green
- Dudley Port
- Smethwick
- Wednesbury to Tipton Metro Corridor

4.30 A minimum of 3,414 new homes of mixed type and tenure will be delivered in these areas, plus those allocated in West Bromwich. The regeneration areas will be the principal locations for strategic employment areas and provision of high-quality employment areas.

Transport

4.31 It is acknowledged that the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath, and the resultant shift towards homeworking, has impacted on the way in which transport is used. In particular, there has been a significant impact on public transport patronage levels which may take many years to recover to pre-pandemic levels. However, high-quality public transport combined with the provision of an extensive safe and convenient active travel (walking and cycling) network remains at the heart of the West Midlands transport strategy.



4.32 Key transport priorities identified for delivery during the lifetime of the SLP currently include the following:

- M5 Improvements (Junctions 1 and 2)
- Midlands Rail Hub
- Wednesbury – Brierley Hill Metro corridor
- A34 Walsall Road Sprint Corridor
- Walsall – Stourbridge corridor tram-train extensions
- A4123 Corridor Upgrade
- A461 Black Country Corridor
- A457 / B4135 Oldbury, Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor
- A4034 Blackheath and Oldbury Corridor
- Dudley Port Integrated Transport Hub

Car Parking

4.33 The correct balance needs to be found between managing and pricing of parking to maximise the use of sustainable travel means to enter town and city centres, whilst avoiding restricting parking to the extent that consumers are dissuaded from using town centres and deterring new development. Therefore, the Plan contains a policy for parking management. The policy aims to ensure that parking is not used as a tool for competition between centres and supports parking for leisure and retail customers. The policy also sets out maximum parking standards for new developments as set out in the current guidance. Providing more convenient, secure and accessible cycle parking will be a critical part of increasing cycling in Sandwell and making it a natural first choice for journeys. Another key aim is to provide electric vehicle charging points in car parks and other public locations.

Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

4.34 The Council is committed to meeting its “Biodiversity Duty” under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) and to delivering the principles of the NPPF by proactively protecting, restoring and creating a richer and more sustainable wildlife and geology. With regard to our approach to Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) the council is



adopting a positive approach to solving the problem of a lack of opportunities for habitat improvement in Sandwell and delivering at least 10% BNG by identifying sites and (eventually) projects on our own land that can be made available where developers don't have sufficient land available to them on their sites. This will enable Sandwell to benefit from retaining BNG units in the borough.

Rowley Hills Strategic Open Space

4.35 The Council has commissioned consultants to assess the current Strategic Open Space designation of the Rowley Hills and provide a reasoned justification for its continued designation as a Strategic Open Space. The evidence suggests that the Rowley Hills remains an important area for recreation and biodiversity and the protection of the openness of the area should continue. Therefore, the Rowley Hills will remain designated as strategic open space and the policy will be updated to reflect the recent survey work and assessment.

Development Management Policies

4.36 The development management policies will remain in the plan and have been updated to reflect current circumstances and to take into account any changes in legislation. However, two policies have been included in the Plan for the first time - Hot Food Takeaways and Gambling Institutions.

Hot Food Takeaways

4.37 The Council has pledged to improve its population's health and wellbeing and to reduce health inequalities. One of the challenges the Council faces in promoting healthy eating is the unrestricted availability of foods high in fat, salt and sugar in local neighbourhoods, often associated with hot food takeaways. Therefore, controls over the prevalence of hot food takeaways (HFTs) have been set out in planning policy.



- 4.38 The policy introduces a limit for the appropriate number of HFTs in centres as follows:
- 40 units or more = no more than 7% of frontages
 - less than 40 units = no more than 12% of the frontages. This includes planning permissions and vacant units with an HFT as their lawful use.
- 4.39 The policy also introduces a limit on the clustering of HFTs as follows:
- No more than two hot food takeaway outlets should be located next to each other
 - No new hot food takeaway developments will be permitted where they are within 400 metres of a secondary school or college site.

Gambling Activities and Alternative Financial Services

- 4.40 The draft plan introduces a policy that will ensure that planning permission for a payday loan shop, pawnbroker, amusement arcade or betting shop within a retail centre will not be granted if to do so would cause an unacceptable grouping of uses that would have a negative impact on the character and vitality of the centre. Depending on the size of the centre, a threshold of between 5% and 10% will be applied to these uses, above which planning permission will not be granted. In addition, permission will not be given if two or more of these uses are located immediately adjacent to each other, or if there are fewer than two units in other uses between gambling or arcade uses.

Site Allocations

- 4.41 In order to identify as many sites as possible to meet the identified need for both housing and employment land in the borough, a rigorous site assessment process has been undertaken following the methodology as was used for the Black Country Plan. From this analysis and the subsequent sustainability appraisal, we selected the most appropriate sites for allocation for housing, employment and Gypsy and Travellers. The current list of sites is included as an appendix to the Draft Local Plan document (appendix A). An interactive version of the Policies Map will be available on the Sandwell Plan web page during the consultation.



Infrastructure Provision

4.42 Officers have engaged with colleagues in Education, Utilities, Healthcare, Adult Social Care, Sport and Recreation, Parks, Burials and Crematoria, Flood Risk and Transport. Evidence so far is indicating that there are no major infrastructure 'showstoppers' which would prevent the deliverability of the proposed sites. Further transport modelling work will be carried out to inform the next stage of the Plan process. Infrastructure provision such as open space, schools and health provision have also been factored into new policies.

Sustainability Appraisal

4.43 The Council is required to assess the environmental impacts of any plan which it produces. Accordingly, a Sustainability Appraisal Scoping report accompanied the earlier Issues and Options version of the plan. The subsequent version of the emerging Local Plan (the Draft Plan) has been accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal and a Habitat Regulations Assessment. These documents form an important part of the supporting evidence to the local plan review and help the Council to assess the possible impacts of the plan and its policies and therefore how impacts can be addressed or mitigated against. The latest version of the Sustainability Appraisal and its appendices are attached as appendix C. The final version will be available for the commencement of the public consultation on 6th November.

4.44 It is proposed to undertake a public consultation on the Draft Sandwell Local Plan for a six-week period, 6th November 2023 – 18th December 2023. The Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan is attached as appendix D.

4.45 In the meantime, officers will continue to refine the documents and make corrections where they are discovered. Any minor changes will be agreed with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and the WMCA in conjunction with the Director for Regeneration and Growth.



5 Implications

<p>Resources:</p>	<p>The resource implications of preparing the Sandwell Local plan were outlined in the Cabinet report on 16th November. There are no additional resource implications arising from the course of action recommended in this report.</p>
<p>Legal and Governance:</p>	<p>The process for the preparation of development plans is set out in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) and the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012.</p> <p>In accordance with section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, every local planning authority must prepare planning policy documents and maintain the Local Development Scheme, specifying the documents that will be local development documents; their subject matter and area; and the timetable for their preparation and revision.</p> <p>There are three consultation periods that are statutory requirements of The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012; Issues and Options consultation (Regulation 18); Preferred Options/Draft Plan consultation (Regulation 18) and Publication/Pre-submission consultation (Regulation 19).</p>
<p>Risk:</p>	<p>The Council’s corporate risk management strategy has been complied with, to identify and assess the risks associated with this decision/recommendation. The following should be noted:</p> <p>Failure to have a Local Plan that is based on sound evidence could result in the borough having</p>



	<p>insufficient land to meet the need for housing, employment and other land uses that are necessary to support the economic and environmental well-being of the area. It could also result in development taking place in inappropriate or harmful locations, leading to an inefficient use of resources, traffic congestion and other harm.</p> <p>Having an up-to-date Local Plan in place is also essential to defend the Council’s position at planning appeals. In the event of the Council not having, or working towards, an up-to-date Local Plan, there is a risk of intervention from Central Government which may compromise the ability to take decisions locally.</p>
Equality:	An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out for the Draft Sandwell Local Plan and further iterations will be completed for future stages of the plan’s production. This ensures that any impacts likely to affect local communities / groups / individuals can be taken into account when decisions are made on the content and direction of the Local Plan. The EqIA is attached as appendix E to this report.
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Health and Wellbeing is a key theme which will be addressed throughout the Local Plan. It will promote healthy living and create opportunities for active lifestyles and healthy transport choices including walking, cycling and outdoor recreation.</p> <p>Later stages of the plan will be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment.</p>
Social Value:	The Local Plan will play an important part in delivering the spatial and land use aspects of the Council’s vision 2030, particularly as it relates to housing, employment, transport, environment, and education goals.



Climate Change:	<p>The Sandwell Local Plan is a plan for the future (2041), and therefore the council is aiming to engage young people in the forming of the final Plan. The Plan aims to future proof the Borough against the impacts of climate change, leaving a legacy for young people. Policies and proposals in the Plan aim to ensure that the education requirements arising from new development will be delivered and good quality jobs are available once young people leave education, along with a choice of living accommodation that will meet their needs.</p>
Corporate Parenting:	<p>The Sandwell Local Plan is a plan for the future (2041), and therefore the council is aiming to engage young people in the forming of the final Plan. The Plan aims to future proof the Borough against the impacts of climate change, leaving a legacy for young people. Policies and proposals in the Plan aim to ensure that the education requirements arising from new development will be delivered and good quality jobs are available once young people leave education, along with a choice of living accommodation that will meet their needs.</p>

6 Appendices

- Appendix A - Draft Sandwell Local Plan and appendices
- Appendix B - Draft Policies Map
- Appendix C - Sustainability Appraisal and appendices
- Appendix D - Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement Plan
- Appendix E - Equalities Impact Assessment

7. Background Papers

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004
The Localism Act 2011



The National Planning Policy Framework (July 2021)
Report to Cabinet – 16/11/2022
Sandwell Local Development Scheme (November 2022)



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APPENDIX A – Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity Net Gain

Black Country Local Nature Recovery Opportunity Map

1. The development of a Nature Recovery Network (NRN) covering the whole of England is a major commitment in the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan (2018). The plan states that the development of the NRN will provide 500,000 hectares of additional wildlife habitat, more effectively linking existing protected sites and landscapes, as well as urban green and blue infrastructure; and that as well as helping wildlife thrive, the NRN could be designed to bring a wide range of additional benefits: greater public enjoyment; pollination; carbon capture; water quality improvements and flood management.
2. The Environment Act 2021 made Local Nature Recovery Strategies mandatory in England. Together the strategies are to cover the whole of the country, and the Secretary of State is to determine the areas within England to which individual Local Nature Recovery Strategies are to relate.

Black Country Local Nature Recovery Opportunity Map (draft April 2021)

3. A requirement of the Environment Act 2021 is a Local Habitat Map that identifies the existing distribution of different habitat types and the location of areas already important for biodiversity, overlaid by locations considered suitable for delivering the outcomes and measures identified in the Statement of Biodiversity Priorities.
4. The emerging Sandwell Local Nature Recovery Opportunity Map forms part of a Birmingham and Black Country-wide map and strategy approach which has been produced by the Wildlife Trust for Birmingham and the Black Country and the Local Environmental Records Centre (EcoRecord). This has been undertaken through analysis of local and national data sets including designated sites, Priority habitats, species distribution, land use and ecological connectivity. The map comprises a number of components that depict the areas of current high ecological value, ecological connectivity between these areas, and prioritises opportunities for investment in nature's recovery on a landscape scale.

Core Landscapes

- a. Core Landscapes are large areas of land comprised of multiple land use parcels that are ecologically coherent, often sharing similar geology, soil types, habitats, landscape character and land use history. They are frequently those areas less impacted upon by urban development and often support features more typically associated with rural landscapes. Core Landscapes typically support the highest abundance and diversity of semi-natural and Priority Habitats, and the species assemblages associated with these. They provide significant opportunity and are a priority for investment in ecological recovery (e.g. habitat restoration and creation).

Priority Network Restoration Zone

- b. Priority Network Restoration Zones are areas where investment in ecological recovery outside of Core Landscapes has been prioritised. These zones have been selected on the basis of being those areas that contain the highest density of Core Habitat and Core Expansion land use parcels which collectively link Core Landscapes (or their component parts), and their purpose is to support the creation of a coherent ecological network across the Black Country landscape. Priority Network Restoration Zones comprise the full range of landscape components (natural and built environment) and, where these exist, follow linear blue and green corridors (e.g. canals, rivers and dismantled railway lines).

Core Habitat Zone

- c. The Core Habitat Zone is comprised of the land use parcels that contain the most ecologically valuable habitats. The zone includes all parcels with an ecological value score of 4 or above (see ecological evaluation methodology); all sites with a nature conservation designation not included in the above (e.g. some Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation); and any additional areas identified in Natural England's Combined Habitat Network data set. The Core Habitat Zone is a priority for protection and restoration.

Core Expansion Zone 1

- d. Core Expansion Zone 1 comprises those land use parcels that are of lower ecological value than those in the Core Habitat Zone but, due to inherent value or location, have the most potential to contribute to a coherent ecologic network. These sites are frequently within Core Landscapes and Priority Network Restoration Zones and are a priority for investment in the restoration and creation of new habitats. Included in this zone are all areas of green space scoring 3 in the ecological evaluation; all green space scoring 1 or 2 lying within 150 metres of a Core Habitat Zone; those areas identified as habitat bottlenecks; and vegetated railway cuttings and embankments.

Core Expansion Zone 2

- e. Core Expansion Zone 2 comprises all areas of greenspace that do not meet the criteria for inclusion in Zone 1. These sites provide an opportunity for the restoration and creation of new habitats but investment in these areas is a lower priority than in Zone 1.

Urban Matrix Recovery Zone 1

- f. Urban Matrix Recovery Zone 1 comprises all features of the built environment within 150 metres of the Core Habitat Zone, and may include residential and commercial properties, gardens, road verges, street trees and minor watercourses. Due to their proximity to sites of ecological value these features have the most potential of their type to contribute to a coherent ecologic network. The protection, enhancement and creation of green infrastructure within these areas is a priority.

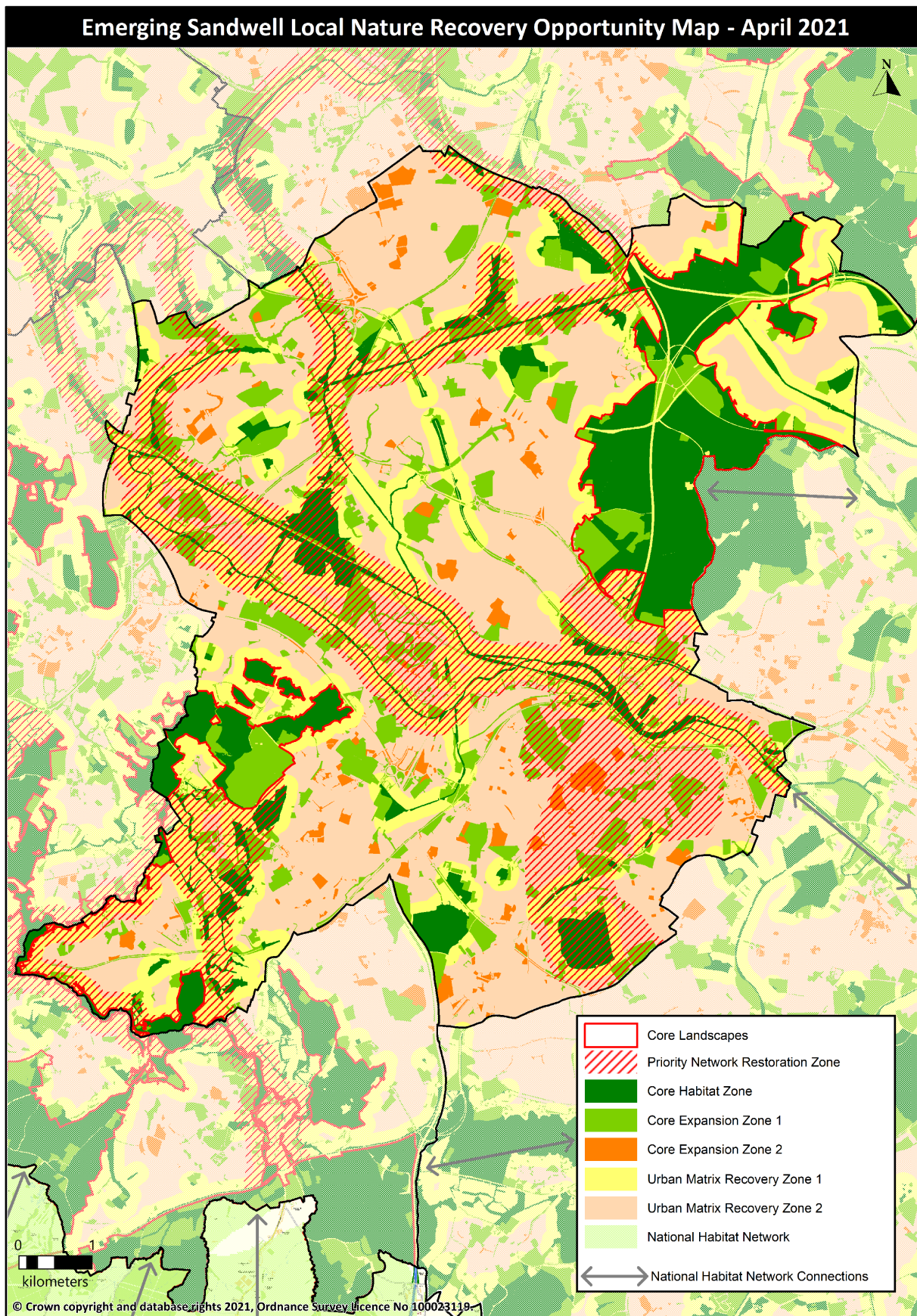
Urban Matrix Recovery Zone 2

- g. Urban Matrix Recovery Zone 2 comprises all features of the built environment outside of Zone 1. These areas provide an opportunity for the protection, enhancement and creation of green infrastructure but investment in these areas is of a lower priority than in Zone 1.

National Habitat Network

- h. Natural England's Combined Habitat Networks data set.

Figure 1 - Sandwell Nature Recovery Network map

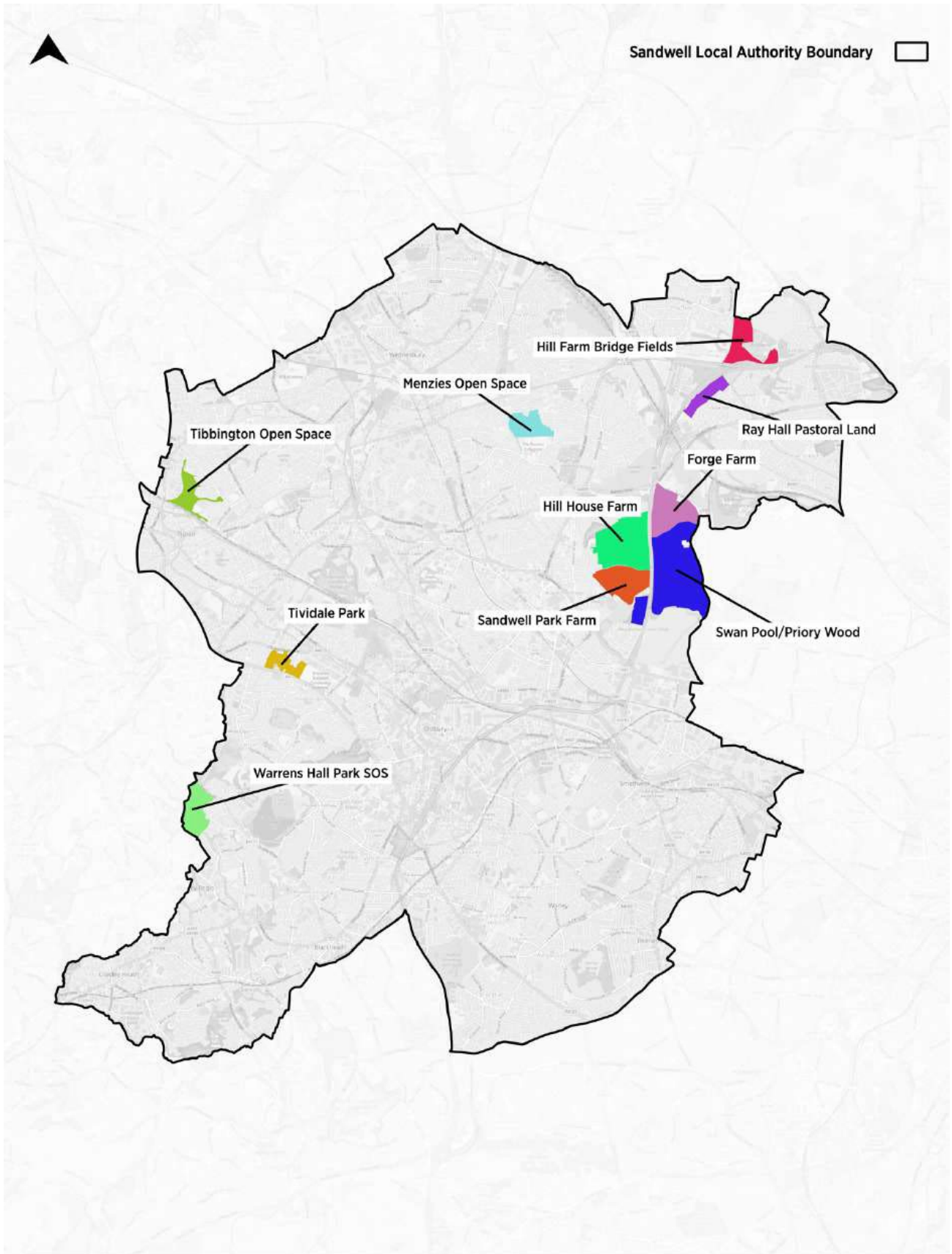


Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) – Habitat Bank sites (Policy SNE2)

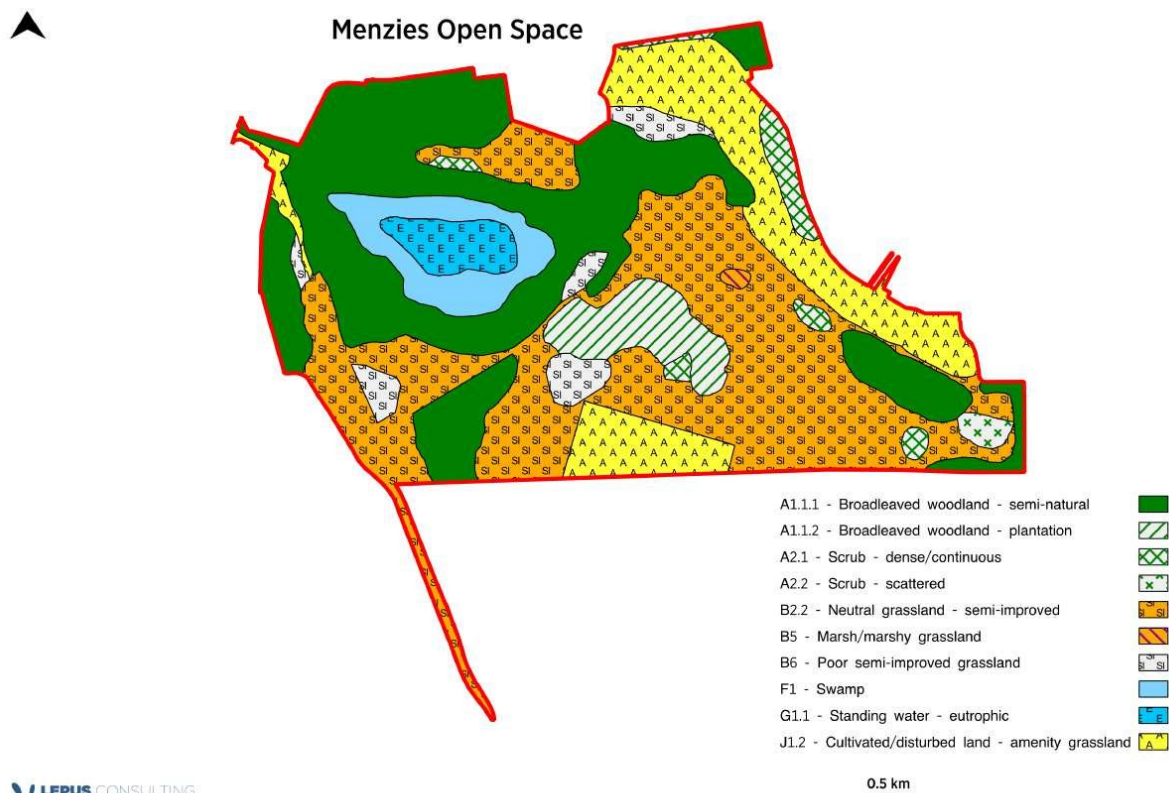
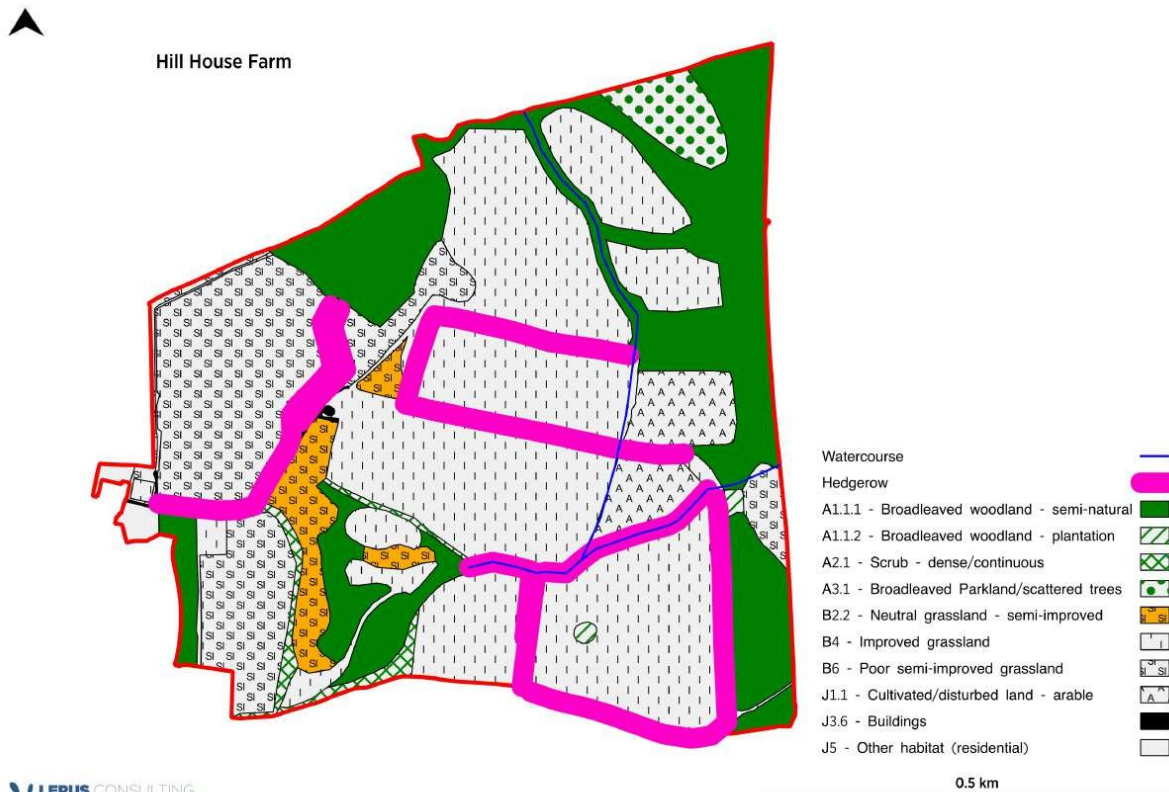
See SLP Evidence base - Sandwell Biodiversity Net Gain Study (September 2023) - for more details

5. The following are extracts from the report undertaken for Sandwell Council by Lepus Consulting on potential BNG habitat bank sites within the ownership of the Council. Six sites have been identified in the SLP, to help ensure that biodiversity net gain is retained within the borough as far as possible. Many of Sandwell's new housing and employment allocations lie within heavily urbanised locations where the opportunities for on-site BNG provision are limited.
6. The following criteria were used to establish suitable sites for consideration:
 - Sites / land wholly-owned by Sandwell Council.
 - Exclusion of certain open space typologies from consideration – allotments, cemeteries and churchyards, institutional land (schools, hospitals, sports grounds and reservoirs), outdoor sports facilities and provision for children and young people.
 - Exclusion of sites smaller than 10ha.
 - Use of the national Biodiversity Net Gain Calculator.
7. Where sites under consideration contain public amenity open space, these specific areas were also excluded from consideration for improvement, as their role as accessible open space needs to be retained.
8. The following map identifies the list of sites that were ranked by the consultants as being of high and medium value for BNG improvements and identified as potential habitat banks.

Figure 2 - Extract from report - location of high and medium value sites for BNG

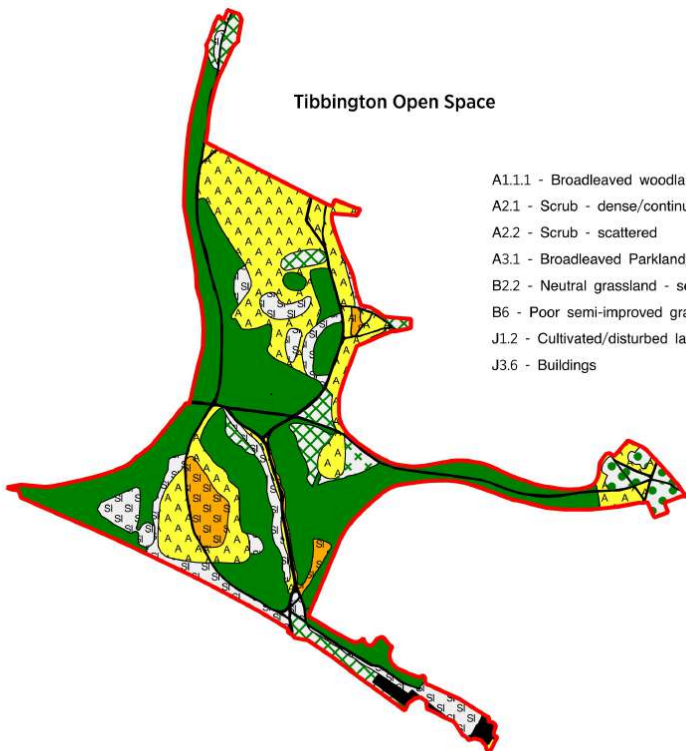


9. The six sites included in the SLP (Policy SNE2) are detailed below:





Tibbington Open Space



- A1.1.1 - Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural
- A2.1 - Scrub - dense/continuous
- A2.2 - Scrub - scattered
- A3.1 - Broadleaved Parkland/scattered trees
- B2.2 - Neutral grassland - semi-improved
- B6 - Poor semi-improved grassland
- J1.2 - Cultivated/disturbed land - amenity grassland
- J3.6 - Buildings



0.5 km



Tividale Park

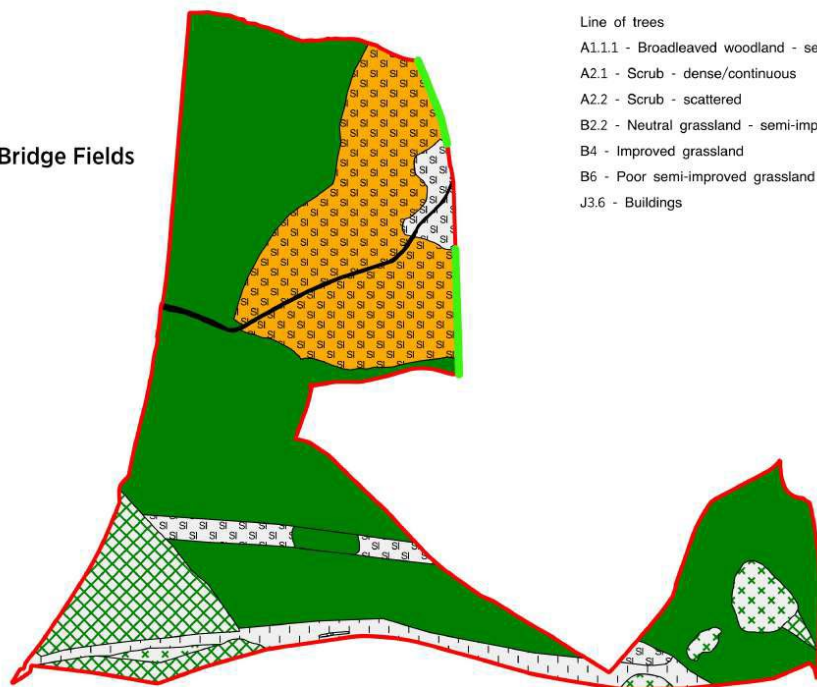


- A1.1.1 - Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural
- A2.1 - Scrub - dense/continuous
- A3.1 - Broadleaved Parkland/scattered trees
- B2.2 - Neutral grassland - semi-improved
- B6 - Poor semi-improved grassland
- J1.2 - Cultivated/disturbed land - amenity grassland
- J3.6 - Buildings



0.5 km

Hill Farm Bridge Fields



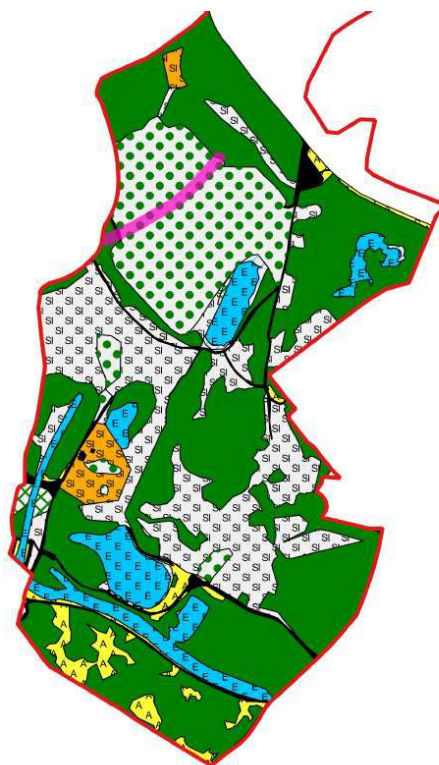
- Line of trees █
- A1.1.1 - Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural
- A2.1 - Scrub - dense/continuous
- A2.2 - Scrub - scattered
- B2.2 - Neutral grassland - semi-improved
- B4 - Improved grassland
- B6 - Poor semi-improved grassland
- J3.6 - Buildings



0.5 km



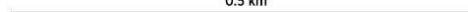
Warrens Hall Park



- Site Boundary
- Hedgerow
- A1.1.1 - Broadleaved woodland - semi-natural
- A2.1 - Scrub - dense/continuous
- A3.1 - Broadleaved Parkland/scattered trees
- B2.2 - Neutral grassland - semi-improved
- B6 - Poor semi-improved grassland
- F2.1 - Marginal and inundation - marginal vegetation
- G1.1 - Standing water - eutrophic
- J1.2 - Cultivated/disturbed land - amenity grassland
- J3.6 - Buildings



0.5 km



APPENDIX B - Sandwell Site Allocations

Introduction

1. Sandwell has many growing and productive businesses and a higher than average proportion of its businesses are small, but residents are not always able to take up opportunities related to those employment and economic activities. Local businesses will often need a highly skilled workforce to be able to grow to meet modern demands; that workforce needs training and support to help deliver and accelerate innovation. Sandwell also has a limited amount of the type of high quality land needed to enable businesses to expand and grow in the borough's industrial core.
2. Creating a clean, attractive and safe living environment in Sandwell is a key priority, as is developing a robust response to climate change in an area with a complex industrial heritage and its associated legacy of land, water and air pollution
3. Although Sandwell has many challenges, it also has a significant number of opportunities. Sandwell's Inclusive Economy Deal will be focusing on the challenges for people, place and business and the opportunities that are available to make a difference.
4. The aim is to deliver a healthier, more successful future for the people of Sandwell – working closely together with residents, businesses and other stakeholders.
5. This Plan supports the delivery of 10,686 new homes and around 20,000 new jobs to 2041, supporting the growth of the borough's population and workforce. To plan for this growth, the Council is prioritising locations that are both sustainable and deliverable in line with the Spatial Strategy set out in Policy SDS1.
6. In addition, there are seven mixed use allocations providing both housing and employment / commercial uses.

Housing Allocations

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH1 (SA 5)	Brown Lion Street	Tipton Green	Tipton	27	0.46 B	0.46	59	2027	Granted consent for 27 dwellings DC/23/67972
SH2 (SA 12)	Land adjacent to Asda, Wolverhampton Road, Oldbury	Langley	Oldbury	62	1.5 G	1.5	41	2031	Access issue will need to be overcome. Siting of houses should safeguard existing residential amenity and the asset of the watercourse.
SH3 (SA 21)	88-90 Dudley Rd West	Oldbury	Oldbury	12	0.36 B	0.36	33	2032	Site assessment found the site offers an opportunity for c12 dwellings based on a moderate density, given its location close to existing facilities. Density is lower than 40 due to shape of site.
SH4 (SA 23)	Lower High Street (Station Hotel and Dunns Site).	Cradley Heath and Old Hill	Rowley Regis	20	0.28 B	0.28	71	2033	Residential allocation would be consistent with this land use and take advantage of the sites' location close to public transport and connectivity to local services
SH5 (SA 24)	Mill Street, Great Bridge	Great Bridge	Tipton	40	0.88 B	0.88	45	2028	Applications on part of site - DC/22/67019 Land at Mill

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
									Street Tipton. Proposed 20 no. dwellings with associated parking. DC/22/67018 - 8 homes pending consent Within Wednesbury Regeneration Area
SH6 (SA 25)	Swan Lane, north of A41 West Bromwich	Greets Green and Lyng	West Bromwich	147	2.42 B	2.42	61	2027	Application - DC/22/66532: Proposed 147 dwelling houses (65 houses and 82 apartments)
SH7 (SA 26)	The Boat Gauging House and adjoining land, Factory Road, Tipton	Tipton Green	Tipton	50	0.57 B	0.57	88	2026	Application - DC/21/65872 - Proposed residential development comprising of 46 no. 1 and 2 bed apartments, and conversion of boat house to 4 no. 2 bed residential units. Within Tipton and Dudley Port Regeneration Area
SH8 SA 27)	Alma Street, Wednesbury	Friar Park	Wednesbury	23	0.52 B	0.52	44	2028	Landowner interested in bringing site forward for development for residential use.
SH9 (SA 28)	The Phoenix Collegiate, Friar Park	West Bromwich Central	West Bromwich	84	4.8 B	2.84	30	2029	Application - DC/20/63911: Proposed residential development of up to 84 No. dwellings, associated public

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
	Road, Wednesbury								open space and infrastructure. (outline application for access).
SH10 (SA 31)	Tipton Conservative and Unionist Club, 64 Union Street, Tipton	Tipton Green	Tipton	18	0.19 B	0.19	95	2026	Application - DC/19/62733: Proposed change of use to residential, to include 7 No. 1 bed properties and 7 No. 2 bed properties. Within Tipton and Dudley Port Regeneration Area
SH11 (SA 32)	Sandwell District and General Hospital, West Bromwich	West Bromwich Central	West Bromwich	121	0.82 B	0.82	148	2027	Application - DC/20/64894: Demolition of existing building and proposed mixed-use development comprising of 12 No. houses and 109 No. apartments for key workers.
SH12 (SA 33)	former Springfield and Brickhouse Neighbourhood Office and adjacent land, Dudley Road, Rowley Regis	Rowley	Rowley Regis	26	0.65 B	0.65	40	2029	Application - DC/18/61922: Proposed erection of 22 No. new dwellings and 4 No. 2-bed apartments with new access road into site.

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH13 (SA 47)	Silverthorne Lane/ Forge Lane Cradley Heath	Cradley Heath and Old Hill	Rowley Regis	81	2.41 B	1.81	45	2035	Site assessment found - <i>The location of the site presents good opportunities for new housing of mixed density</i>
SH14 (SA 48)	Langley Maltings, Western Road, Langley	Oldbury	Oldbury	71	2.72 B	2.04	35	2040	Site assessment found - <i>Residential redevelopment would be the appropriate use to continue the land use transformation in this area. Density reflects that this the site contains a Grade II listed building.</i>
SH15 (SA 49)	Macarthur Road Industrial Estate, Cradley Heath	Cradley Heath and Old Hill	Rowley Regis	13	0.3 B	0.3	43	2034	Site assessment found - <i>Residential development would be the appropriate use to continue the residential redevelopment of the former Woods Lane industrial estate.</i>
SH16 (SA 53)	Cradley Heath Factory Centre, Woods Lane, Cradley	Cradley Heath and Old Hill	Rowley Regis	196	5.57 B	4.36	45	2032	Part of site has application - DC/21/66444: Proposed demolition of existing industrial buildings and development of 34 No. dwellings.
SH17 (SA 54)	Land adj Droicon Estate,	Rowley	Rowley Regis	28	0.7 B	0.7	40	2030	Site assessment found - <i>There is an opportunity to redevelop this and the adjoining site –</i>

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
	Portway Road, Rowley Regis								<i>ideally in combination but possibly on an individual basis.</i>
SH18 (SA 55)	Friar Park (STW/SMBC Land), Wednesbury	Friar Park	Wednesbury	630	26.3 G and B	15.75	40	2032	<p>Joint Venture between Sandwell Council and WMCA. A Masterplan and remediation strategy for the land has been produced.</p> <p>Community Open Space on part of site and will need mitigating.</p> <p>Mitigation needed for SLINC (SA004).</p>
									Playing pitches on site - subject to demonstration of viability, reinstatement should be made in accordance with the PPOSS/Action Plan 2023.
SH19 (SA 57)	Land at Horseley Heath, Alexandra Road, and Lower Church Lane, Tipton	Great Bridge	Tipton	76	2.26 B	1.9	40	2039	SLINC SA028 – Alexandra Road to the north of the site. SLINC SA103:1 Dixons Branch Canal to the south of the site

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH20 (SA 58)	Elbow Street, Old Hill	Cradley Heath and Old Hill	Rowley Regis	33	0.77 B	0.77	43	2031	Land owner advised interested in developing site
SH21 (SA 59)	Dudley Road East	Oldbury	Oldbury	90	2.65 B	1.99	45	2034	Employment review and site assessment found site suitable for housing Adjacent to a SINC SA038 – Gower Branch Canal Within Tipton and Dudley Port Regeneration Area
SH22 (SA 60)	Tatbank Road, Oldbury	St Pauls	Smethwick	52	1.15 B	1.15	45	2.41	Land owner advised will continue to operate but will look at opportunities to move and redevelop
SH23 (SA 62)	28-64 High Street, West Bromwich	West Bromwich Central	West Bromwich	53	0.6 B	0.6	88	2032	Site assessment found - <i>Residential development would be the appropriate use in this sustainable location on the edge of West Bromwich Town Centre with excellent public transport links.</i>
SH24 (SA 64)	Cokeland Place / Graingers Lane, Cradley Heath	Cradley Heath and Old Hill	Rowley Regis	16	0.36 B	0.36	44	2033	Land owner interested in bringing site forward for development for residential use

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH25 (SA 65)	Bradleys Lane / High Street, Tipton	Prince's End	Tipton	189	5.6 B	4.2	45	2039	<p>Redevelopment with the cooperation of owners looking to relocate.</p> <p>Site assessment found - <i>Residential development would be suitable should the constraints of site assembly and land contamination be overcome</i></p> <p>Adjacent to Brierley Lane Open Space, which is also a SLINC SA011- Dudley to Priestfield Disused Railway</p>
SH26 (66)	Lower City Road, Oldbury	Oldbury	Oldbury	73	1.83 B	1.83	40	2036	<p>Site assessment found - <i>Subject to overcoming the constraints of land remediation and site assembly there is the opportunity to exploit the canal side location. Housing would be an appropriate use for the site and would continue the residential transformation of the area</i></p> <p>Response from some land owners looking to bring site forward.</p>

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
									Within Tipton and Dudley Port Regeneration Area
SH27 (SA 68)	Site surrounding former Post office and Telephone Exchange, Horseley Heath	Great Bridge	Tipton	52	1.16 B	1.16	45	2035	Site assessment found - There is the opportunity to provide new comprehensive redevelopment in a highly sustainable location.
SH28 (SA 69)	Friar Street, Wednesbury	Friar Park	Wednesbury	45	1.01 B	1.01	45	2039	Land owner interested in bringing site forward for residential use Adjacent to SLINC SA002 Woden Road South.
SH29 (SA 70)	Used car sales site, corner of Lower Church Lane and Horseley Heath, Tipton	Tipton Green	Tipton	23	0.56 B	0.56	41	2038	Site assessment found - <i>Housing development would be the appropriate use in the surrounding area.</i>
SH30 (SA 75)	Land to east of Black Lake, West Bromwich	Hateley Heath	West Bromwich	83	2.45 B	1.83	45	2039	Land owners want to develop for housing Site adjacent to SINC SA034 Ridgeacre Branch Canal

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH31 (SA 76)	Summerton Road, Oldbury	Oldbury	Oldbury	36	0.89 B	0.89	40	2034	Site assessment found - <i>Residential redevelopment is ongoing to the south of the canal and would be appropriate in this location.</i>
SH32 (SA 77)	Bank Street (West), Hateley Heath	Hateley Heath	West Bromwich	43	0.85 B	0.85	51	2030	Site assessment found - <i>The use of the site for residential purposes is considered suitable</i>
SH33 (SA 78)	Wellington Road, Tipton	Tipton Green	Tipton	40	0.91 B	0.91	44	2038	The redevelopment of the site for residential purposes is considered suitable within this area. The landowner is willing to relocate his business. Within Tipton and Dudley Port Regeneration Area
SH34 (SA 79)	Brandhall Golf Course	Old Warley	Oldbury	190	5.18 G	3.88	48	2032	Application - DC/23/68540: Proposed demolition of existing buildings and erection of 1 No. primary school, 190 No. dwellings, public open space, landscaping and associated works (outline application with all matters reserved) – pending decision

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH35 (SA 85)	Rattlechain site - land to north of Temple Way, Tividale	Oldbury	Oldbury	518	14.8 G and B	14.8	35	2040	Land owner in discussions to include neighbouring land. Developable area to be determined. Within Tipton and Dudley Port Regeneration Area
SH36 (SA 86)	Land between Addington Way and River Tame, Temple Way (Rattlechain)	Oldbury	Oldbury	36	0.9 G	0.9	40	2039	Awaiting discussions with neighbouring land owners. Adjacent to Community Open Space and SLINC SA041:2 Brades Hall. Within Tipton and Dudley Port Regeneration Area
SH37 (SA 87)	Edwin Richards Quarry, Portway Road, Rowley Regis	Rowley	Rowley Regis	526 in plan period; 100 in post-plan period (total site capacity 626)	52 B	15	45	2041	Application - DC/23/67924 (Reserved Matters) pending decision: Proposed residential development comprising of 276 No. dwellings, pursuant to outline planning application DC/14/57745. 0.86ha to north and 0.32ha to west of site is allocated as Strategic Open Space and cannot be built on.

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
									SLINC SA070 Hailstone Quarry lies within the site and will need to be mitigated.
SH38 (SA 90)	Brades Road, Oldbury	Oldbury	Oldbury	51	1.14 B	1.14	45	2033	Site assessment found the site suitable for residential use. Gas pipeline possibly running along line of canal could constrain the site and reduce development capacity.
SH40 (SA 94)	Langley Swimming Centre, Vicarage Road, Oldbury	Langley	Oldbury	20	0.49 B	0.49	41	2028	Site assessment found that residential is considered to be an appropriate site allocation
SH41 (SA95)	North Smethwick Canalside	Soho and Victoria	Smethwick	500	8.7 B	6.5	77	2034	Corridor Framework approved by Cabinet February 2022 and a wider Masterplan for the Rolfe Street area completed March 2023. Within Smethwick Regeneration Area
SH42 (SA 97)	Forge Tavern, Franchise Street, Wednesbury	Wednesbury North	Wednesbury	10	0.14 B	0.14	71	2031	Site assessment found that residential use would be the appropriate redevelopment on this site.

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH43 (SA 166)	Land off Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr	Newton	West Bromwich	46	1.66 G	1.15	40	2037	Site assessment found the site suitable for residential development. SLINC SA045:20 Tanhouse Avenue will need to be mitigated. Adjacent to SINC SA045 Forge Mill
SH44 (SA 167)	Wyndmill Crescent, West Bromwich	Charlemont	West Bromwich	11	0.19 B	0.19	58	2032	Site assessment found the site suitable for residential development.
SH45 (SA 165)	Site of 30-144 Mounts Road, Wednesbury	Wednesbury South	Wednesbury	45	1.07 B	1.07	42	2028	Site assessment found suitable for housing. DC/22/67797 - Proposed residential development comprising of 45 dwellings, landscaping and car parking. Pending decision.
SH46	Site of 118-152 Whitehall Road	Great Bridge	Tipton	20	0.41 B	0.41	49	2024	Application DC/18/61925 – site under construction
SH47	Site of former Stone Cross Neighbourhood Office	Charlemont with Grove Vale	West Bromwich	14	0.32 B	0.32	47	2024	Application DC/18/61923 - Proposed erection of dwellings.

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH49	St Johns Street, Carters Green	West Bromwich Central	West Bromwich	33	0.82 B	0.82	40	2031	Estimated capacity based on ongoing Masterplan work for Carters Green regeneration
SH50	Tentec, Guns Lane	West Bromwich Central	West Bromwich	126	0.6 B	0.6	210	2030	Application DC/22/67454 - Proposed new build development of 129 apartments with amenities, 69 onsite parking spaces and associated landscaping – pending decision Within Carters Green Regeneration Area
SH51	Providence Place / Bratt Street, West Bromwich	West Bromwich Central	West Bromwich	40	0.74 B	0.40	100	2037	Part of West Bromwich Masterplan Within West Bromwich Regeneration Area
SH52	Overend Street, West Bromwich	West Bromwich Central	West Bromwich	70	0.71 B	0.71	99	2041	Remaining element of Eastern Gateway Within West Bromwich Regeneration Area
SH53	Grove Lane/ Cranford Street/ London Street, Smethwick	Soho and Victoria	Smethwick	500	1.23 B	1.23	406	2036	Part of Grove Lane Masterplan; Application on part of site - DC/22/67165: Proposed erection of a residential led, mixed use building of between 7 and 14 storeys to include 392 dwellings (Use Class C3) and

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
									555sqm (GIA) commercial floorspace (flexible within Use Class E, drinking establishments (sui generis) and hot food takeaway (sui generis) Within Smethwick Regeneration Area
SH54	Cranford Street / Heath Street / Canal, Smethwick	Soho and Victoria	Smethwick	115	5.0 B	2.88	40	2030	Part of Grove Lane Masterplan Within Smethwick Regeneration Area
SH55	Cape Arm, Cranford Street	Soho and Victoria	Smethwick	170	2.13 B	2.13	80	2030	Part of Grove Lane Masterplan Within Smethwick Regeneration Area
SH56	Moilliett Street Park - Grove Lane masterplan	Soho and Victoria	Smethwick	35	0.77 B	0.77	45	2028	Part of Grove Lane Masterplan Within Smethwick Regeneration Area
SH57	Grove Street / MMUH / School - Grove Lane MP	Soho and Victoria	Smethwick	85	2.18 B	0.59	144	2029	Part of Grove Lane Masterplan Within Smethwick Regeneration Area
SH58	Abberley Street Grove Lane Master Plan	Soho and Victoria	Smethwick	140	2.48 B	2.48	56	2032	Part of Grove Lane Masterplan Within Smethwick Regeneration Area

Site Ref (Site Assess. Ref)	Site Name and Address	Ward	Town	Indicative Capacity (net homes)	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Indicative Net Developable Area (ha)	Net Density (dph)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SH59	Beever Road	Great Bridge	Tipton	18	1.01 B	1.01	18	2025	Application - DC/21/65582: Proposed 10 No. bungalows and 8 No. flats
SH60	Former Simpson Street Day Centre, 6 Simpson Street, Oldbury	Oldbury	Oldbury	10	0.05 B	0.05	200	2024	Application - DC/18/61924: Demolition of former day centre and proposed construction of 10 No. 2 bed apartments.
SH61	Thandi Coach Station, Alma Street, West Bromwich	Soho and Victoria	Smethwick	58	0.71 B	0.71	82	2027	Application - DC/17/60747: Proposed residential development of 54 No apartments and 4 No. houses – made a start on site. Within Smethwick Regeneration Area
SH62	Star and Garter, 252 Duchess Parade, West Bromwich	West Bromwich Central	West Bromwich	60	0.05 B	0.05	200	2027	Application - DC/21/65798: Proposed nine storey mixed use development comprising of 1 No. retail unit at ground floor and 60 No. apartments above Within West Bromwich Regeneration Area

Mixed Use Site Allocations

Site Ref Site Assess't Ref)	Site Name and Address	Appropriate Uses and capacities	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
SM1 (SA 91)	Chances Glass Works, Land west of Spon Lane, north of Palace Drive	Housing – 276 homes 7208 sqm workspace 779 sqm heritage centre 1 ha open space New highways access on to Spon Lane	0.64 B	118 homes – 2030 158 homes - 2040	Site assessment found employment and residential uses are appropriate and support the plans for a heritage-led regeneration programme. Grade II Listed Building Scheduled Ancient Monument Galton Valley Conservation Area
SM2 (SA 199)	Lion Farm, Oldbury	Residential – 200 units Retention of 6 sports pitches with changing facilities and car parking – 5ha Employment – 2.3ha Remainder of site would be retained as green space	2.0 G	2035	Site assessment found <i>It is considered that a mix of residential and employment uses could be accommodated on this site. Net loss of the existing sports pitches could be avoided (nb this option is strongly caveated by the ability to relocate 6 pitches to the southern part of the borough) Sufficient community open space can be provided.</i> A Masterplan will be prepared for the site.
SM3	Evans Halshaw car showroom, Carters Green	Residential – 140 units Ancillary commercial – 7 units (approx. 2,000m ² total)	0.89 B	2032	Estimated capacity based on ongoing Masterplan work for Carters Green regeneration Within Carters Green Regeneration Area
SM4	Army Reserve, Carters Green	Residential – 63 units Ancillary commercial – 4 units (approx. 1,000 m ² total)	1.17 B	2034	Estimated capacity based on ongoing Masterplan work for Carters Green regeneration Within Carters Green Regeneration Area
SM5	Cultural Quarter, West Bromwich	Residential – 52 units	1.09 B	2029	Part of West Bromwich Masterplan

Site Ref (Site Assess't Ref)	Site Name and Address	Appropriate Uses and capacities	Gross Site Area (ha) brownfield (B) or greenfield (G)	Anticipated Delivery Timescale (completion year)	Further Information
		Food and Beverage – 1,054 m ² Community / Leisure – 2,000 m ² Parking – 10 spaces			Within West Bromwich Regeneration Area
SM6	Queens Square Living, West Bromwich	Residential – 396 units Retail – 7,447 m ² Offices – 855 m ² Community / Leisure – 1,395 m ² Parking – 206 spaces	3.06 B	2041	Part of West Bromwich Masterplan Within West Bromwich Regeneration Area
SM7	West Bromwich Central	Residential – 343 units Retail – 2,302 m ² Offices – 5,032 m ² Educational – 5,060 m ² Food and Beverage – 11,840 m ² Community / Leisure – 9,862 m ² Health – 5,205 m ² Parking – 625 spaces	4.53 B	2029	Part of West Bromwich Masterplan Within West Bromwich Regeneration Area
SM8	George Street Living, West Bromwich	Residential - 327 units Community / Leisure – 1,150 m ² Parking – 79 spaces	2.36 B	2037	Part of West Bromwich Masterplan Within West Bromwich Regeneration Area

Sandwell Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations

Site Ref	Address	Gross Site Area	Net Site Area	Indicative Development Capacity	Anticipated Delivery Timescale	Further Information
SG1	Brierley Lane	0.73	0.73	10 Plots	2030-2031	Extension to caravan site - funding required

APPENDIX C - Employment

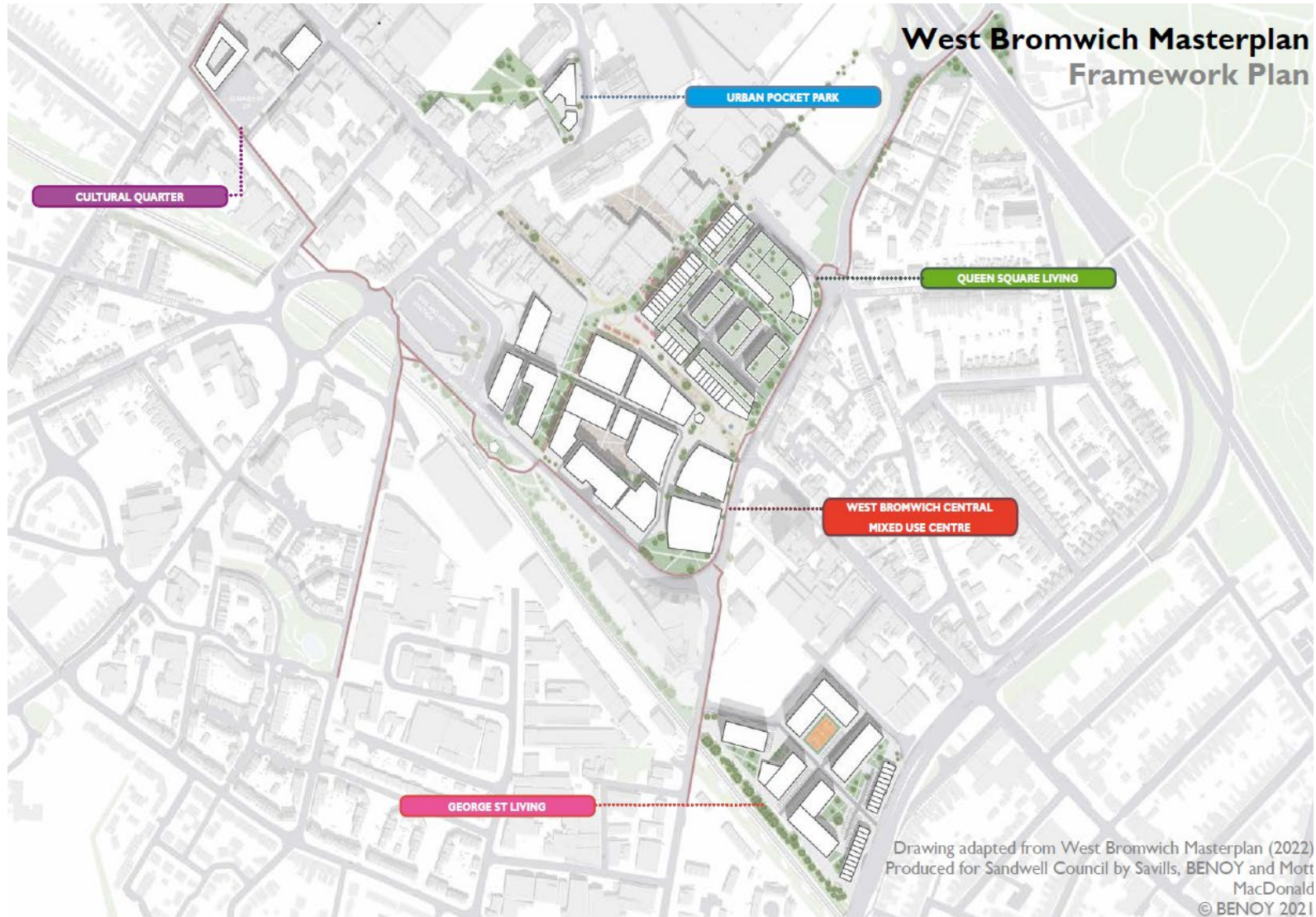
1. Under Policy SEC2, 221 hectares of employment land will be allocated as strategic employment land and will be safeguarded for manufacturing and logistics uses within Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 and B8.
2. Within Sandwell, high-quality employment land is concentrated in three main areas. Two of these are around the M5 - adjacent to Junction 1 in West Bromwich and adjacent to Junction 2 in Oldbury. The third area where there is a concentration of high quality employment land is along the Black Country New Road, from Tipton to Wednesbury.
3. Under Policy SEC3, a further 944 hectares of employment land will be allocated as local quality employment land and will be safeguarded for manufacturing and logistics uses within Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 and B8. The main concentrations of local quality employment are concentrated in Oldbury, Tipton, West Bromwich and Smethwick.
4. In addition, there are a further 12 hectares of employment land that are not being allocated; Policy SEC4 will apply to these sites.
5. In addition to the existing occupied employment it is proposed to allocate c29 hectares of vacant land for employment purposes. These proposed sites are set out below.

Employment Allocations – vacant land

Sandwell Ref	Site Assessment Ref	Site Name, Address	Site Area (Ha)
SEC1-1	SA-0030-SAN	Whitehall Road, Tipton	5.3
SEC1-2		British Gas, Land off Dudley Road, Oldbury	1.05
SEC1-3		Junction Two, Oldbury	1.12
SEC1-4		Land adj. to Asda Wolverhampton Road Oldbury	1.6
SEC1-5	SA-0026-SAN	Coneygre Business Park	7.22
SEC1-7		Site off Bilport Lane, Wednesbury	5.29
SEC1-8		Legacy 43, Ryder Street, West Bromwich	0.88
SEC1-9		Roway Lane, Oldbury	3.65
SEC1-10		Brandon Way/ Albion Road	3.07

29.18

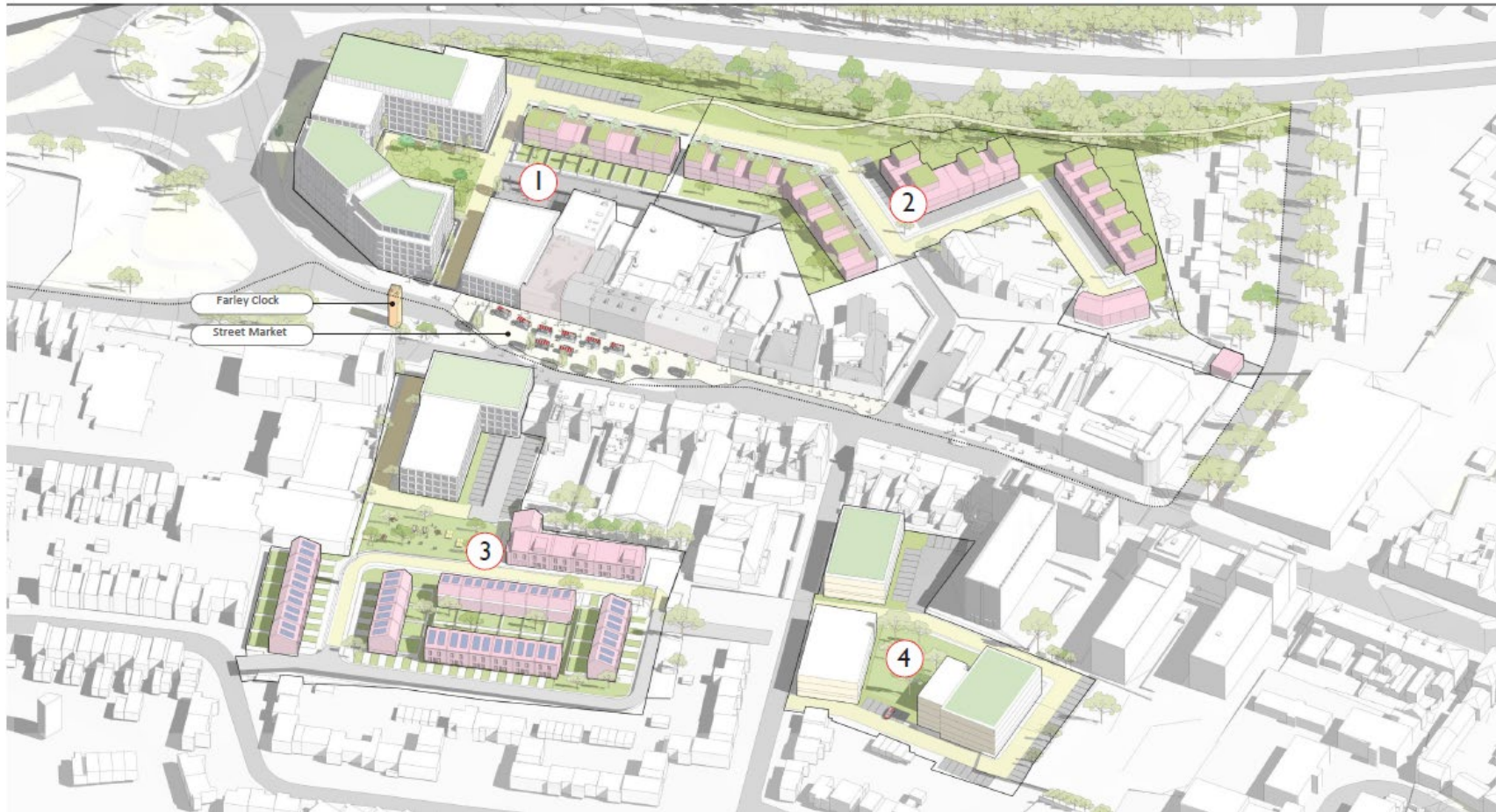
APPENDIX D – West Bromwich Masterplan and Carter’s Green Framework Plan



Carter's Green Development Framework Framework Plan

Drawing adapted from Carter's Green Development Framework (2023)
Produced for Sandwell Council by Savills, BENOY and Mott MacDonald
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- 1 Site 1 - Ex Car Showroom Site
- 2 Site 2 - John Street CP & Former Jenson Factory
- 3 Site 3 - Army Reserve Centre & Adjoining Warehouses
- 4 Site 4 - Former Tentec Site



APPENDIX E - Strategic Waste Sites

The existing strategic sites, identified on the Waste Diagram and listed in the table below, are the significant waste management facilities operating in the Black Country. They have been identified through a detailed analysis of all known licenced and exempt facilities in each authority area.

Sandwell Council will safeguard all existing strategic and other waste management facilities from inappropriate development, to maintain existing levels of waste management capacity and meet Strategic Objective 13.

Strategic Waste Sites

Site Ref	Site	Operational Capacity (tpa)
Municipal Waste Recovery – Supporting Infrastructure		
WS07	Eagle Recovery and Transfer Hub	140,000
WS08	Sandwell HWRC (Shidas Lane)	20,000
Waste Disposal Installations (1)		
WS17	Edwin Richards Landfill	250,000
		9,171,000 ¹
Significant Hazardous Waste Treatment Infrastructure		
WS19	Wednesbury Treatment Centre	40,000
Significant Metal Recycling Sites (MRSs)		
WS23	Alutrade	24,000
WS24	Cradley Metal Recycling Centre	165,000
WS25	ELG CSR Depot (Rowley Regis) ^[1]	20,000
WS26	EMR Smethwick	60,000
WS27	Sims MRS Smethwick (Rabone Lane)	200,000
WS28	Sims MRS Smethwick (Unit 60 Anne Road)	20,000
Other Significant Waste Management Infrastructure		
WS36	Arrow Recycling	22,000
WS37	Bescot LDC, Bescot Sidings	150,000

¹ Estimated Total Landfill Capacity in tonnes has been calculated from the remaining landfill capacity in cubic metres at the end of 2018, using the following formula: 0.85 tonne = 1 cubic metre, therefore tonnes = cubic metres x 0.85.

Site Ref	Site	Operational Capacity (tpa)
WS38	Biffa Tipton WTS	65,000
WS39	Bull Lane Works WTS	200,000
WS40	Edwin Richards Inert Recycling and Soil Treatment Facility	75,000
WS41	Envira Recycling	50,000
WS42	Giffords Recycling	20,000
WS43	Jayplas	70,000
WS44	Metal & Waste Recycling (Cox's Lane)	25,000
WS45	ELG CSR Depot	75,000
WS46	Trinity Street MRF	60,000
WS47	Union Road Inert Waste Recycling Facility	40,000
WS48	Wednesbury Aggregates Recycling Facility	35,000
[1] Operational in 2018 but currently (April 2020) 'mothballed.'		

Sources: Environment Agency: Waste Data Interrogator (WDI) 2007 – 2018, Operational Incinerators, 2018, Public Register, Remaining Landfill Capacity in England as at end of 2018 Version 2.

Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities

6. Several employment areas have been identified in the Black Country Waste Study (BCWS) as being most suited to the development of new waste recovery, treatment and transfer infrastructure. In Sandwell, they are the sites contained in table 26. Under Policy W3, these areas are considered least likely to give rise to land use conflicts, and in several cases, there is already co-location of existing waste facilities to which new sites would contribute.

Preferred Areas for new Waste Facilities

Site Ref	Address	Potentially Suitable Waste Use ^[1]	Area
WPSa1	Cornwall Road and Parkrose Industrial Estates, Soho	Energy from waste treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	60.1
WPSa2	Tat Bank, Langley	Energy from waste treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	53.1
WPSa3	Charles Street Enterprise Park, Queens Court Trading Estate, Swan Village	Treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	42.7

Site Ref	Address	Potentially Suitable Waste Use ^[1]	Area
WPSa4	Hill Top and Bilport Lane Industrial Estates, Wednesbury	Treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	19.9
WPSa5	Powke Lane and Waterfall Lane Trading Estates, Rowley Regis	Treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	46.1
WPSa6	Dartmouth Road	n/a	26.2

¹ As indicated in the Black Country Waste Study, *Wood* 2020

APPENDIX F - Minerals

1. The Black Country Minerals Study (BCMS, Tables 12.9 and 12.10) lists all known existing mineral sites and mineral infrastructure sites in the Black Country.
2. Existing Black Country mineral infrastructure sites include secondary / recycled aggregates production, rail-linked aggregates depots, coating plants, ready-mix (RMX) concrete batching plants, manufacture of concrete products, and dry silo mortar (DSM) plants.
3. The Council will safeguard all existing mineral infrastructure sites from inappropriate development – this being necessary to retain existing capacity, and thereby helping to make best use of and conserve its resources.
4. The locations of these mineral infrastructure sites are identified on the Policies Plan, and are listed in the following tables:

Key Mineral Infrastructure

Site Ref	Site	Location	Type
MIS1	Anytime Concrete	Gerard House, Kelvin Way, West Bromwich	Concrete batching plant
MIS2	Bescot LDC - Rail Ballast Facility	Land at Bescot Sidings, off Sandy Lane, Wednesbury	Rail-related aggregates depot/ Aggregates recycling
MIS3	Breedon Oldbury Concrete Plant	Engine Street, Oldbury	Aggregates recycling
MIS4	Breedon Oldbury Concrete Plant	Cemex House, Wolverhampton Road, Oldbury	Concrete batching plant
MIS5	Former Hanson Site (West Bromwich)	Grice Street, West Bromwich	Aggregates recycling
MIS6	Hanson Ready Mixed Concrete Plant	Roway Lane, Oldbury	Concrete batching plant
MIS7	Wednesbury Asphalt Plant	Smith Road, Wednesbury	Coating plant
MIS8	Cradley Special Brick	Corngreaves Trading Estate, Overend Road, Cradley Heath	Brickworks
MIS9	Oldfields Inert Recycling Facility	Oldfields, Off Corngreaves Road, Cradley Heath	Aggregates recycling

APPENDIX G – Site allocations - changes

Changes to existing Local Plan designations (Waste and Minerals)

Local Plan Document	Designation / Site Reference	Site Name	Description of Change	Reason for Change
BCCS (also mapped in the DBDS)	MSA (BCCS Policy MIN1)	Mineral Safeguarding Area (covers almost the whole of the Black Country)	Removed	Replaced in the draft BCP by more tightly defined MSAs in Walsall Borough

Changes to existing housing allocations

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Allocation Ref	Site Ref	Old SAD Ref	Address	Site Area (ha)	Est. Capacity	proposed use
H8.3	2929		Site on corner of New Street, Hill Top, West Bromwich	1.11	allocated as both community open space and housing	propose to delete the housing allocation and retain the community open space allocation.
H9.7	1401	801	Bell Street / Dudley Road, Tipton	0.62	20	employment
H9.6	1448	81	Station Street, Tipton	1.37	43	employment
H13.8	1461	665, 80 and 82	Waterfall Lane and 101-126 Station Rd	0.34	8	employment
HOC11	2232	263	United Steels Ltd, Upper Church Lane Tipton	1.58	73	employment
H12.8	2372	121	Rabone Lane, Smethwick	5.98	209	employment
WBPr30	2381		Bus Depot, Oak Road, West Bromwich	1.1	68	white land
WBPr31	2384		Oldbury Road	16.8	588	employment
WBPr32	2385		Brandon Way / Albion Road (North)	6.2	248	employment
WBPr33	2386		Brandon Way / Albion Road (South)	1.5	494	employment
WBPr34	2387		Brandon Way / Brandon Close	1	43	employment
WBPr38	2389		Church Lane / Gladstone Street	2.8	111	employment
H9.5	2463	150, 856	Coneygre Business Park	7.61	300	employment
H8.5	2906	15	Darlaston Road / Old Park Road, Kings Hill, Wednesbury	5.2	200	employment
H8.4	2907	34	Holloway Bank, Wednesbury	5.71	149	employment

Allocation Ref	Site Ref	Old SAD Ref	Address	Site Area (ha)	Est. Capacity	proposed use
H8.4	2911	334	Mounts Road, Wednesbury	1.1	39	employment
H8.2	2916	553	Whitehall Industrial Estate, Whitehall Road, Great Bridge	2.51	65	employment
H8.2	2917	555	Land between Whitehall Road and Walsall Canal, Great Bridge	0.75	23	employment
H8.1	2920	634	Land to north and west of Ridgacre Road	1.63	51	employment
H8.5	2921	642	Kings Hill Trading Estate, Darlaston Road, Wednesbury	3.28	86	employment
H8.5	2922	643	Old Park Trading Estate site on Old Park Road, Wednesbury	2.62	68	employment
H8.1	2923	654	Land to the south of Ridgacre Road, West Bromwich	1.11	35	employment
H8.1	2924	657	Church Lane, West Bromwich	0.75	24	employment
H8.4	2925	788	Site off Mount Road Wednesbury	0.49	17	employment
H8.4	2926	791	Corner of Bridge Street and Mounts Road, Wednesbury	3.15	110	employment
H8.4	2927	795	Site on corner of Woden Rd South and Bridge Street, Wednesbury	1.61	56	employment
H9.1	2935	966	Wellman Robey Ltd, Newfield Road, Oldbury	4.91	129	employment
H9.4	2936	1239	CBF LTD, Wade Building Services, Groveland Road, Oldbury	1.26	40	employment
H9.5	2937	151	Fisher Street / Coneygre Road, Tipton	1.7	60	employment
H9.7	2938	265	Castle Street, Tipton	1.49	47	employment
H9.5	2943	878	Coneygre Road / Burnt Tree, Tipton	1.11	35	employment
H9.1	2944	967	Birmingham Board Co Ltd, Dudley Road East, Oldbury	1	32	employment
H9.1	2945	968	Beswick Paper, Dudley Road, Oldbury	0.96	33	employment
H9.1	2949	1196	British Gas Plc, land off Dudley Road, Oldbury	1.04	33	employment

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Allocation Ref	Site Ref	Old SAD Ref	Address	Site Area (ha)	Est. Capacity	proposed use
H9.4	2950	1240	Land adjacent to Cleton Business Park, Tipton Road, Tipton	0.56	18	employment
H9.4	2951	-	Vaughan Trading Estate	19.92	349	employment
(834)	2953		Sedgley Road West, High Street, Tipton	1.12	39	employment
(145)	2955		Unit 1, Groveland Road	0.36	13	employment
(147)	2956		Upper Chapel Street / Britannia Street / 70 - 74 Dudley Road West	0.63	22	employment
(148)	2957		Dudley Road / 28 Dudley Road West	1.78	62	employment
(149)	2958		Tipton Road, Oldbury	1.76	62	employment
(247)	2960		Diamond Buses, Hallbridge Way, Oldbury	3.13	110	employment
(248)	2963		Groveland Road	1.18	41	employment
(578)	2965		Land between Great Bridge Street and William Street, Tipton	1.92	67	employment
(300)	2966		Alexandra Industrial Estate, Locarno Road / Alexandra Road, Tipton	2.2	77	employment
(911)	2967		Black Country Park, Great Bridge Street, Great Bridge	2.18	76	employment
(375) Post 2021	2969		Dudley Road West, Oldbury	0.46	16	employment
(836)	2971		Hurst Lane / Birmingham Canal / Sedgley Road, West Tipton	2.19	77	employment
(144)	2973		Burnt Tree Industrial Estate, Groveland Road	0.82	29	employment
WBPr36	2975		Swan Village Industrial Estate, West Bromwich	0.8	25	employment
H12.6	2990	200	Fitzgerald Lighting Ltd, Rood End Road	1.39	44	employment

Allocation Ref	Site Ref	Old SAD Ref	Address	Site Area (ha)	Est. Capacity	proposed use
H12.7	2994	854	Oldbury Road Industrial Estate	0.57	18	employment
H13.5	3004	259, 896	Newlyn Road	3.37	103	employment
H13.2	3010	1301	Corngreaves Road	2.8	98	employment
(789)	3013		JAS Industrial Park, Titford Lane, Oldbury	0.93	33	employment
(855)	3014		Oldbury Road, Oldbury	2.89	102	employment
(1130)	3016		230 Oldbury Road	1.48	52	employment
H13.8	3017	284	Sandwell MBC Depot and surrounds, Waterfall Lane, Cradley Heath	1.36	43	employment
3019	3019		Station Road (South), Rowley Regis	0.85	30	employment
H13.8	3020	656	Broadcott and Broadway Industrial Estates	1.49	47	employment
H13.4	3026	268	Station Street / Graingers Lane	1.3	41	employment
H13.4	3027	280	Bridge Trading Estate	0.57	19	employment
H13.5	3032	260	Oldfields	1.64	51	employment
H13.6	3034	933	Foxoak Street, Newtown Lane, Providence Street	4.82	168	employment
H13.7	3043	297	Station Road	3.21	84	employment
(724)	3140		Land at Dolton Way, between Factory Road, Bloomfield Road and railway line, Tipton.	2.62	99	employment
H13.5	3142	1302	Spinners End	0.71	25	employment
H16.2	3219	753	Bloomfield Road / Barnfield Road	0.83	26	employment

Allocation Ref	Site Ref	Old SAD Ref	Address	Site Area (ha)	Est. Capacity	proposed use
H16.3	3221	842	Bloomfield Road / Fountain Lane	1.5	53	employment
H13.6	3226	1303	Bank Street, Cradley Heath (west of Kimber Drop Forgings site)	1.3	41	employment
H9.8	3398	302	Alexandra Road / Upper Church Lane / Locarno Road, Tipton	10.43	142	employment
	5129		Portway Road, Wednesbury	10.7	375	employment
	5139		Brymill Industrial Estate, Brown Lion Street, Tipton	1.98	69	employment
	5265		Phase 9, The Parkway, site between Stafford Street, Victoria Street and Potters Lane, Wednesbury	0.94	33	employment
	5450		Barnfield Trading Estate Tipton	2.24	78	employment
	5551		Ridgacre Enterprise Park, Ridgacre Road, West Bromwich	0.8	28	employment
	5553		Rimstock Plc, Ridgacre Road, Black Lake, West Bromwich	1.05	37	employment
	5556		Vector Industrial Park, Church Lane, West Bromwich	5.2	182	employment
	5623		Brook Street Business Centre, Brook Street Community Centre, 196- 200 Bloomfield Road.	1.5	53	employment
	5641		Site between Great Western Street and Potters Lane, Wednesbury	1.14	49	employment
	5642		Land between Potters Lane and Stafford Street Wednesbury	0.85	30	employment
	5646		Site on Stafford Street, Wednesbury	1.45	51	employment
	5648		Land at Potters Lane, Wednesbury	0.74	26	employment
	5972		Former Corus Premises, Bloomfield Road, Tipton	0.56	20	employment
	5138		Nicholls Road, Tipton	3.96	139	employment

Allocation Ref	Site Ref	Old SAD Ref	Address	Site Area (ha)	Est. Capacity	proposed use
H9.5	354	91	Park Lane West (South Staffs Depot), Tipton	2.95	77	employment SEC4
H9.5	6109	80	Groveland Road, Dudley Port, Tipton	0.11	7	employment
H9.7	265	93	Old Cross Street, Tipton	0.48	14	white land
H9.5	440	89	Orchard Street, Burnt Tree, Tipton	0.28	30	white land
H12.5	585	466	Flash Road / Broadwell Road, Oldbury	0.68	5 (36)	white land
HOC18	841	431	Wilson Road / Sycamore Road Smethwick	1.07	37	white land
H13.6	1436	71	St. Anne's Road, Cradley Heath	1.13	36	white land
WBPr37	1440		John Street North	0.49	18	white land
H8.1	1443	51	Cardigan Close / Sussex Avenue	0.14	5	white land
H12.7	1446	482	Holly Lane, Smethwick	0.53	29	white land
H12.6	1698	614	Land adjacent to 88 Wellesley Road	0.26	9	white land
H12.3	1919	1032	Former Starlight Auto Sales, Wolverhampton Road	0.23	14	white land
H12.10	1997	1037	Tudor Works, 36A Windmill Lane	0.25	24	white land
HOC9	2085	1047	Brunswick Park Trading Estate, Wednesbury	0.36	42	white land
H13.9	2259	1071	Sentinel Plastics Ltd, Wrights Lane	0.17	13	white land
HOC11	2368	262	Summerhill Primary School, Central Avenue, Tipton	1.09	40	white land
H16.5	2370	303	Bradleys Lane / High Street	0.38	13	employment SEC4
H12.7	2423	210	Churchill Road, Smethwick	0.5	60	white land
H8.7	2910	269	Leabrook Road / Willingsworth Road, Tipton	0.37	13	white land
H8.2	2913	439	Sheepwash Lane / Whitehall Road, Great Bridge	0.08	3	white land

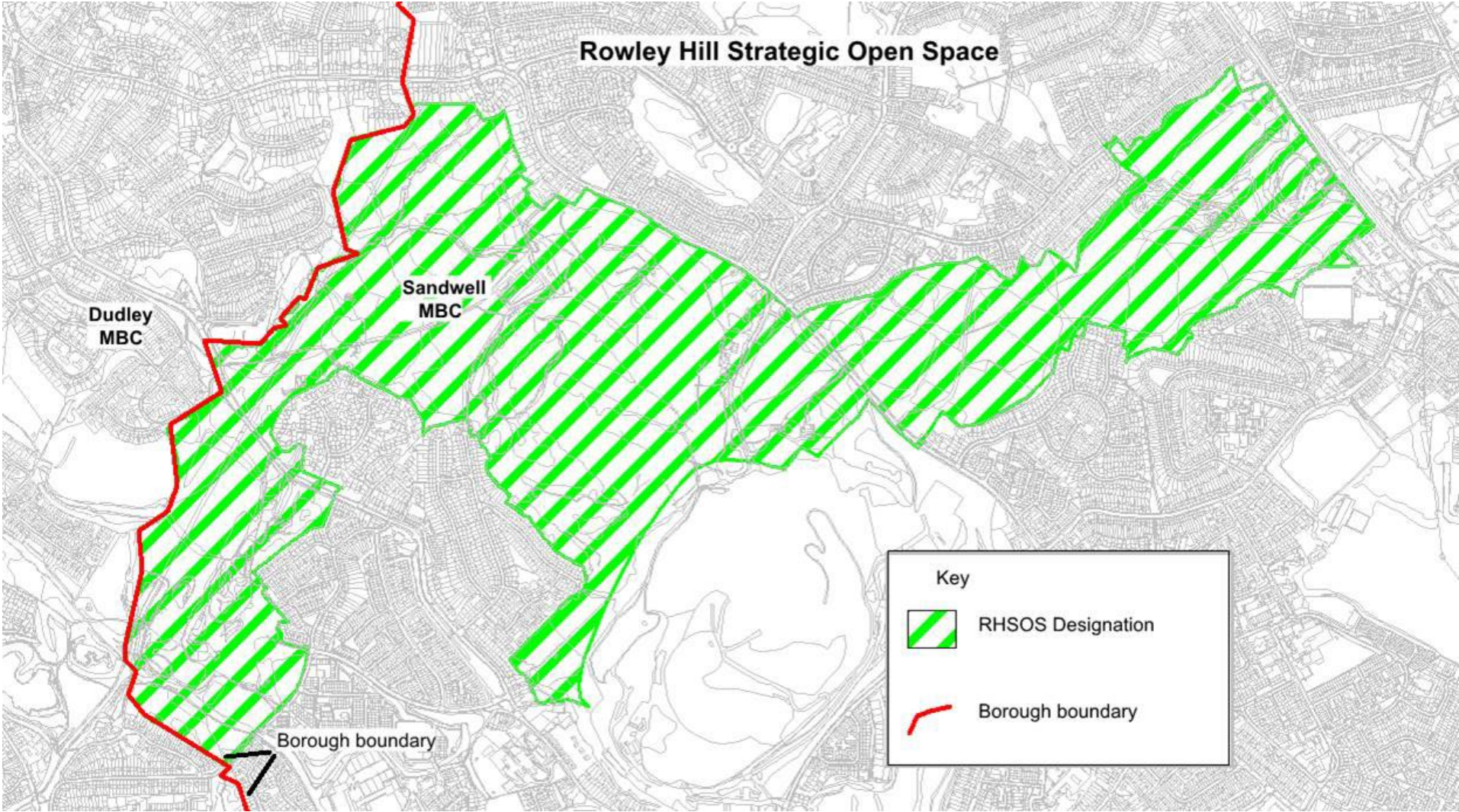
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Allocation Ref	Site Ref	Old SAD Ref	Address	Site Area (ha)	Est. Capacity	proposed use
H8.2	2915	550	Land between Tinsley Street and Whitehall Road, Tipton	0.28	10	employment
H8.1	2930	804	Pembroke Way, Hateley Heath, West Bromwich	2.3	81	white land
H8.2	2931	1120	Garage on Whitehall Road, Great Bridge, Tipton	0.14	5	white land
H8.2	2932	1121	Old Inn site, Sheepwash Lane, Great Bridge, Tipton	0.04	1	white land
H8.7	2933	45	Bannister Road, Wednesbury	2.22	76	white land
H8.8	2934	154	Site on New Road, Great Bridge inc St Lukes Centre	0.4	14	white land
H9.7	2942	779	Castle Street / High Street, Tipton	0.7	23	employment SEC4
H9.9	2947	1117	Railway Street, Horseley Heath, Tipton	0.35	12	employment SEC4
H9.9	2948	1119	Salem Street, Great Bridge, Tipton	0.32	11	white land
(765)	2952		Lower Church Lane, Tipton	0.38	13	white land
H12.4	2980	109	Clay Lane, Oldbury	0.28	12	employment SEC4
HOC13	2982	40	Tippity Green, Hawes Lane, Rowley Regis	1.13	40	white land
HOC13	2983	1135	Allsops Hill Rowley Regis	0.38	13	white land
HOC13	2984	1282	Land at Tippity Green, Rowley Regis	4.47	150	white land
H12.1	2987	5	Wolverhampton Road and Anvil Drive, Oldbury	0.31	9	white land
H12.10	2997	123	Cape Hill / Durban Road	2.97	94	white land
(205)	2999		South Road / Broomfield, Smethwick	0.27	10	white land
(1129)	3015		104-110 Oldbury Road, Smethwick	0.68	24	white land
H13.4	3029	587	Cradley Road (West)	0.99	33	white land

Allocation Ref	Site Ref	Old SAD Ref	Address	Site Area (ha)	Est. Capacity	proposed use
H13.4	3031	1124	Cradley Road (East)	0.41	12	white land
H13.11	3044	613	High Street, Blackheath	0.35	12	white land
HOC3	3048	1014	Land at Newton Road, Great Barr	0.2	16	white land
H16.5	3141	863	Batmanshill Road / Hobart Road	0.25	8	white land
	3223		Summerton Road	0.52	18	employment SEC4
H9.2	3224	310	10 - 60 Dudley Road East, Oldbury	2.00	70	employment SEC4
H13.6	3225	217	Foxoak Street / St Annes Road (Kawasaki Garage)	0.4	14	employment
H12.10	3462	122	Unett Street / Raglan Road	4.6	81	white land
	5301		Potters Lane / Great Western Street, Wednesbury	0.19	6	white land
	5381		Victoria Street / Albert Street, Wednesbury	0.19	7	white land
	5643		Site between Dudley Street and Victoria Street, Wednesbury	1.18	41	white land
	6206		West Cross Centre. Oldbury Road / Mallin Street, Smethwick	1.06	37	white land
			Zion Street, Tipton	2.43		employment SEC4
			70-74 Crankhall Lane	1.78		employment SEC4

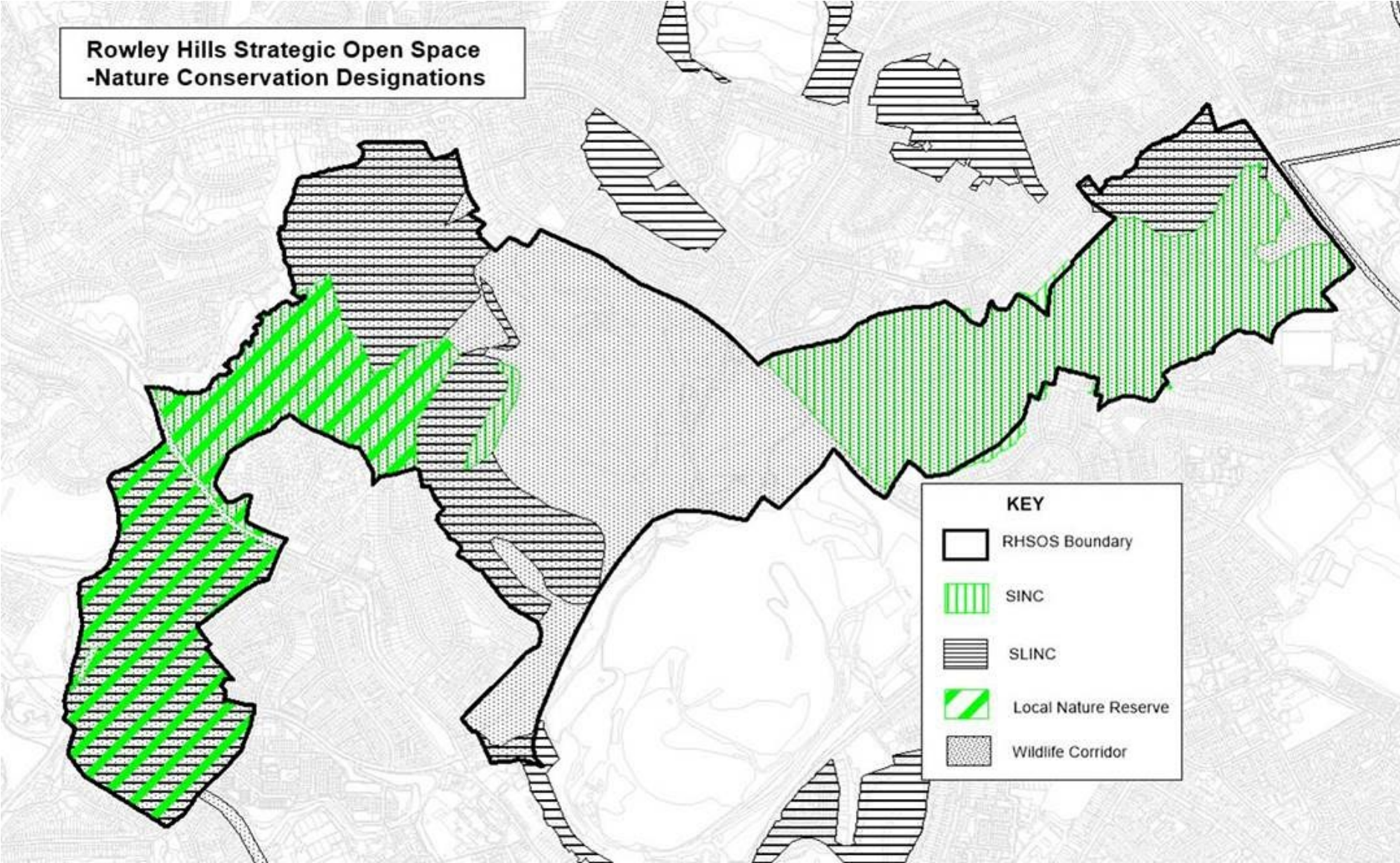
APPENDIX H – Rowley Hills

Rowley Hills – Extent of Strategic Open Space Designation



Rowley Hills – Ecological and Nature Conservation Designations

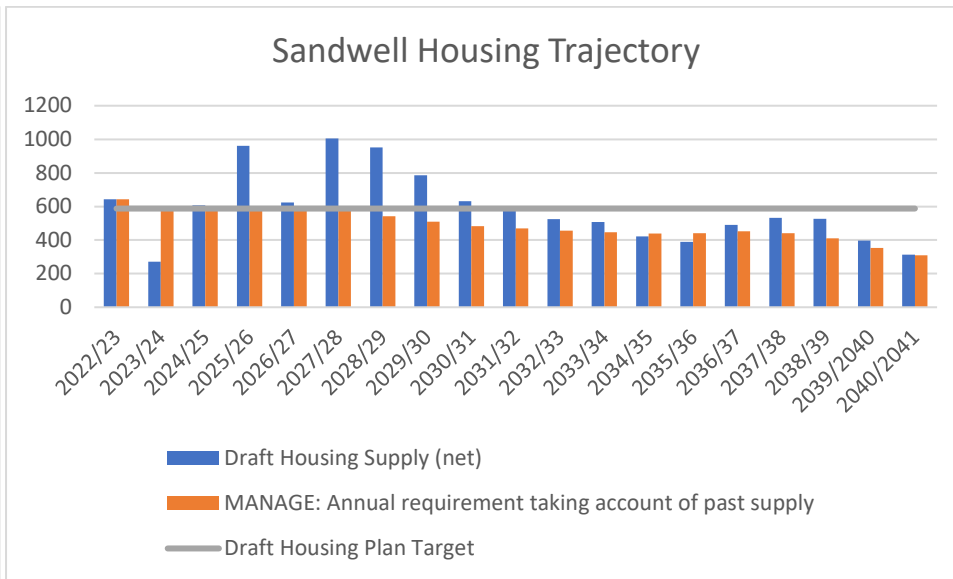
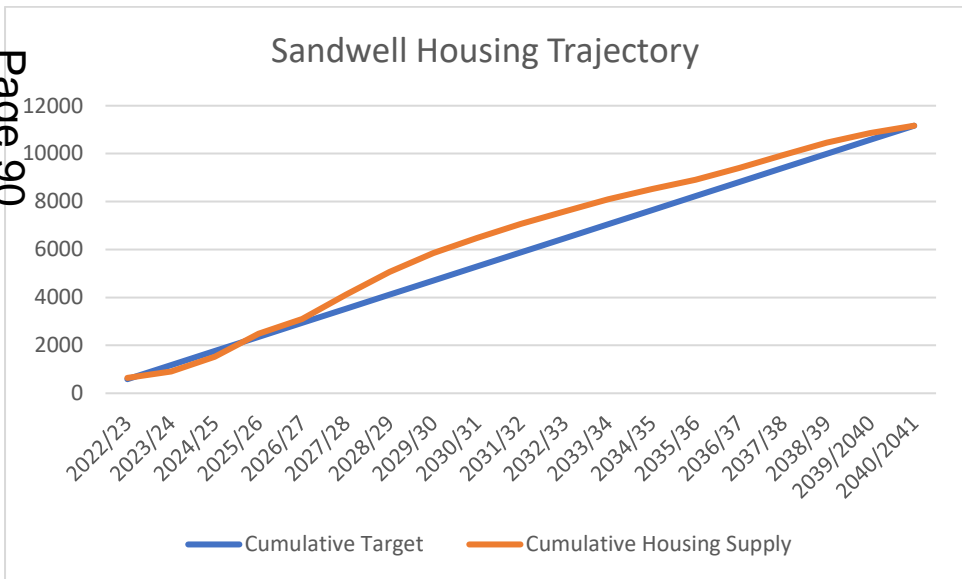
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APPENDIX I – Sandwell Local Plan Housing Trajectory

Sandwell Housing Trajectory

Year	Draft Housing Supply (net)	Draft Housing Plan Target	MANAGE: Annual requirement taking account of past supply	Cumulative Target	Cumulative Housing Supply	MONITOR: Variation from Cumulative Target	Number of years left in Plan(s)
							20
2022/23	642	587.7	642	587.7	642	-54.3	19
2023/24	272	587.7	585	1175.4	914	261.4	18
2024/25	607	587.7	603	1763.1	1521	242.1	17
2025/26	962	587.7	603	2350.8	2483	-132.2	16
2026/27	623	587.7	579	2938.5	3106	-167.5	15
2027/28	1005	587.7	576	3526.2	4111	-584.8	14
2028/29	952	587.7	543	4113.9	5063	-949.1	13
2029/30	785	587.7	509	4701.6	5848	-1146.4	12
2030/31	631	587.7	483	5289.3	6479	-1189.7	11
2031/32	587	587.7	469	5877	7066	-1189	10
2032/33	525	587.7	456	6464.7	7591	-1126.3	9
2033/34	507	587.7	447	7052.4	8098	-1045.6	8
2034/35	421	587.7	438	7640.1	8519	-878.9	7
2035/36	390	587.7	441	8227.8	8909	-681.2	6
2036/37	491	587.7	451	8815.5	9400	-584.5	5
2037/38	533	587.7	442	9403.2	9933	-529.8	4
2038/39	527	587.7	411	9990.9	10460	-469.1	3
2039/2040	397	587.7	353	10578.6	10857	-278.4	2
2040/2041	313	587.7	309	11166.3	11167	-0.7	1



APPENDIX J - Sandwell Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (extract)

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The tables below are taken from the **Sandwell Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy's Assessment Report** (October 2022). They highlight the quantitative headline findings identified for pitch and non-pitch sports included in it. For qualitative and site-specific findings, please see Part 4: Sport Specific Recommendations and Scenarios, and Part 6: Action Plan.

Pitch Sports - Quantitative headline findings

The table sets out the current and likely future capacity and demand for sports pitches:

Sport	Analysis area	Pitch type	Current supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)	Future supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)
Football (grass pitches)	Oldbury	Adult	Shortfall of 5.5	Shortfall of 6
		Youth 11v11	Spare capacity of 2	Spare capacity of 1.5
		Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 5.5	Shortfall of 5.5
		Mini 7v7	Shortfall of 1	Shortfall of 1
		Mini 5v5	Spare capacity of 1.5	Spare capacity of 1.5
Football (grass pitches)	Rowley Regis	Adult	Shortfall of 6	Shortfall of 6.5
		Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 5	Shortfall of 5.5
		Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 2.5	Shortfall of 2.5
		Mini 7v7	At capacity	At capacity
		Mini 5v5	At capacity	At capacity
Football (grass pitches)	Smethwick	Adult	Shortfall of 6.5	Shortfall of 7
		Youth 11v11	At capacity	Shortfall of 0.5
		Youth 9v9	At capacity	At capacity
		Mini 7v7	At capacity	At capacity
		Mini 5v5	At capacity	At capacity

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Sport	Analysis area	Pitch type	Current supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)	Future supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)
Football (grass pitches)	Tipton	Adult	Shortfall of 1.5	Shortfall of 1.5
		Youth 11v11	Spare capacity of 0.5	Spare capacity of 0.5
		Youth 9v9	Spare capacity of 1	Spare capacity of 1
		Mini 7v7	At capacity	At capacity
		Mini 5v5	At capacity	At capacity
Football (grass pitches)	Wednesbury	Adult	Spare capacity of 1	Spare capacity of 1
		Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 3	Shortfall of 3
		Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 0.5	Shortfall of 0.5
		Mini 7v7	At capacity	At capacity
		Mini 5v5	At capacity	At capacity
Football (grass pitches)	West Bromwich	Adult	Spare capacity of 1.5	Spare capacity of 1
		Youth 11v11	Shortfall of 4.5	Shortfall of 5
		Youth 9v9	Shortfall of 1.5	Shortfall of 1.5
		Mini 7v7	Spare capacity of 0.5	Spare capacity of 0.5
		Mini 5v5	At capacity	At capacity
3G pitches ^[2]	Oldbury	Full size	Shortfall of 2.5	Shortfall of 2.5
3G pitches	Rowley Regis	Full size	Shortfall of 0.75	Shortfall of 0.75
3G pitches	Smethwick	Full size	Shortfall of 0.75	Shortfall of 0.75
3G pitches	Tipton	Full size	At capacity	At capacity
3G pitches	Wednesbury	Full size	At capacity	At capacity
3G pitches	West Bromwich	Full size	Shortfall of 0.75	Shortfall of 0.75
Cricket	Oldbury	Saturday	At capacity	At capacity

^[2] Based on accommodating 38 teams on one full size pitch

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Sport	Analysis area	Pitch type	Current supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)	Future supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)
		Sunday	Spare capacity of 16	Spare capacity of 16
		Midweek	Spare capacity of 16	Spare capacity of 16
Cricket	Rowley Regis	Saturday	At capacity	At capacity
		Sunday	Spare capacity of 12	Spare capacity of 12
		Midweek	At capacity	At capacity
Cricket	Smethwick	Saturday	Shortfall of 5	Shortfall of 5
		Sunday	Shortfall of 5	Shortfall of 5
		Midweek	Shortfall of 5	Shortfall of 5
Cricket	Tipton	Saturday	At capacity	At capacity
		Sunday	At capacity	At capacity
		Midweek	At capacity	At capacity
Cricket	Wednesbury	Saturday	Shortfall of 6	Shortfall of 6
		Sunday	Shortfall of 6	Shortfall of 6
		Midweek	Shortfall of 6	Shortfall of 6
Cricket	West Bromwich	Saturday	Shortfall of 12	Shortfall of 12
		Sunday	Shortfall of 12	Shortfall of 12
		Midweek	Shortfall of 12	Shortfall of 12
Rugby union	Oldbury	Senior	Spare capacity of 0.5	Spare capacity of 0.5
Rugby union	Rowley Regis	Senior	At capacity	At capacity
Rugby union	Smethwick	Senior	Spare capacity of 1	Spare capacity of 1
Rugby union	Tipton	Senior	At capacity	At capacity
Rugby union	Wednesbury	Senior	Shortfall of 0.5	Shortfall of 0.5
Rugby union	West Bromwich	Senior	At capacity	At capacity

Sport	Analysis area	Pitch type	Current supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)	Future supply/ demand balance (match equivalent sessions)
Rugby league	Sandwell	Senior	No demand so no provision required	No demand so no provision required
Hockey (sand AGPs)	Sandwell	Full size, floodlit	At capacity although improvements are required at Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy.	At capacity although improvements are required at Ormiston Sandwell Community Academy.

Quantitative headline findings (non-pitch sports)

For non-pitch sports, quantitative shortfalls can be more difficult to determine, with capacity guidance differing and with less focus on formal club activity. The current picture for each sport is summarised below:

Sport	Current picture
Tennis	Current supply is sufficient for demand although quality and operational improvements are required at Old Hill Cricket & Tennis Club. In addition, there is a requirement to focus on informal activity at non-club courts and improving the recreational tennis offer (e.g., at local authority sites).
Netball	Demand is being met at George Salter Academy and Phoenix Collegiate. Focus should be placed on protecting these facilities as well as on supporting the various initiatives that are championed by England Netball. However, with the Dudley Netball League wishing to relocate back to Dudley and this been recommended in the Dudley PPOSS, a collective approach between the authorities should be sought, with this to be guided and informed by England Netball.
Bowls	Only one bowls club has a shortfall of capacity (Langley BC), whilst The George BC and Hamstead Social BC operate on the limit of the capacity threshold. Dartmouth Central BC is operating below the recommended capacity.

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Sport	Current picture
Athletics	With four 400-metre athletics tracks provided, supply is considered sufficient to meet demand. Options can be explored to re-purpose the track at Hadley Stadium as it is surplus to requirements in its current form. This could include an informal athletics facility, for which discussions regarding the provision of a trail running track on site have taken place.
Cycling	High demand for cycling is identified within Sandwell so protecting and sustaining what is provided at Sandwell Valley Country Park should be seen as key given the off-road facilities offered. Implementation of initiatives promoted by British Cycling should also be explored in order to encourage more people to get into cycling.
Golf	With five golf facilities in Sandwell and a mix of 18-hole and 9-hole courses, as well as a well-equipped driving range, supply is well placed to meet demand from all types of golfers.
Water sports	Sandwell is relatively well provided for in terms of outdoor water sports.
Other sports	For American football, no dedicated pitches are provided; there is a need for one facility to provide for Sandwell Steelers. No baseball / softball or Gaelic football demand is identified, although some isolated demand may be travelling to clubs in nearby authorities.

Recommendations for future provision

The following table outlines future considerations for both pitch and non-pitch sports across Sandwell (as identified in October 2022):

Sport	Priority recommendations
Football	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect provision. • Improve pitch quality at key sites to alleviate overplay, especially at key, poor quality and/or overplayed sites such as Britannia Park and St Michael's CE High School.

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Sport	Priority recommendations
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look to reinstate pitches at sites such as Brickhouse Farm. • Formalise community use agreements for clubs utilising unsecure sites. • Consider asset transfer of sites to clubs. • Enable use of currently unavailable sites. • Improve changing facilities where required.
3G pitches	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect provision. • Ensure all existing pitches have a sinking fund in place. • Look to provide an additional full-size pitch within the Analysis Area to alleviate current and future overplay e.g., at Britannia Park.
Cricket	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect provision. • Improve changing facilities where required.
Rugby union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action required.
Hockey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect provision. • Ensure all existing pitches have a sinking fund in place. • Explore the feasibility of providing floodlights at Ormiston Forge Academy Main Site.
Golf	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect provision. • Support Dudley Golf Club to increase membership.
Bowls	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect provision. • Preserve the green at Cradley Heath Sports and Social Club or ensure it is appropriately mitigated. • If the green is lost, ensure the club is adequately relocated.

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Sport	Priority recommendations
Tennis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect provision. • Support Old Hill TC to increase membership and improve courts at Old Hill Cricket Club. • Support the Council to improve court and ancillary facility quality at Britannia Park.
Netball	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect provision.
Cycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action required.
Athletics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action required.
Water sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action required.
Other sports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No action required.

APPENDIX K – Open space and play provision standards for development

Note: the availability, accessibility and quality of sports facilities / playing pitches will be assessed using data from the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (2022); please refer to Policy SHW5 and Appendix J, which contains an extract from the document's strategy and action plan setting out detail of current levels of pitch and field supply and demand.

1. This appendix provides guidelines on the quantity of green space required per 1,000 residents (minimum levels), the accessibility of green space (walking distance) and the broad quality requirements of all types of recreational open space. It also includes recommended dimensions for a range of formal spaces.
2. The Council will seek the provision of new unrestricted open space at a minimum ratio of **3.63 hectares per 1,000 population**. The Council will also seek to ensure that at least one hectare of Community Open Space is provided within walking distance (0.4 km) of all the Borough's residents.
3. Sandwell's minimum ratio for open space is derived in part from the Fields in Trust guidance² on open space and outdoor playing space provision, although the scope of their standard is not directly equivalent to Sandwell's definition of Community Open Space. It should be emphasised that this will be a minimum requirement.
4. Open Space is defined in the NPPF (July 2021) as:

All open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water (such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs) which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can act as a visual amenity.
5. Green space is effectively a subset of open space that includes vegetated land or water within an urban area such as parks, public gardens, playing fields, children's play areas, nature reserves, woods and other natural areas, grassed areas, cemeteries and allotments along with green corridors like paths, disused railway lines, rivers and canals.
6. As set out in more detail in Policy SHW4, for the purposes of the Sandwell Local Plan, open and green spaces are those areas used for leisure and recreation by local communities and include: -
 - parks and gardens
 - natural and semi natural green places
 - green corridors
 - amenity green space

² Fields in Trust's Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play - Beyond the Six Acre Standard (2015) - <https://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/guidance/Guidance-for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England.pdf>

- play provision for children and young people
 - allotments³
 - cemeteries
 - institutional land
 - playing fields and sports pitches (see note above)
7. The boundaries of existing open space are set out on the Policies Map and include existing open spaces that have been identified through the **Sandwell Green Space Strategy 2020 - 2030**. Any subsequent update of this document may result in the identification of other existing open spaces over the plan period. Where practicable, the Council will identify land as open space, to address current shortfalls and provide much-needed community facilities.
8. The standards shown below relate to the quantity, quality and accessibility of each type of open space. More specifically:
- Quantity standards refer to the area of open space in hectares required for every 1,000 residents, or per child for children and young people's provision, within a set area.
 - Quality standards refer to a subjective rating of the quality of existing open space expressed as a percentage based on physical characteristics, value of the space, and benefits to the wider environment. The Council's aim is to achieve quality scores within the 'Upper Quartile' range. All open space quality assessments will use data from the Green Spaces Strategy.
 - Accessibility standards refer to open spaces within a set distance away from people's homes / communities. All open space in a given category within the set distance are determined as serving those homes / communities.
9. In terms of its accessibility, open space can be unrestricted, limited or inaccessible. This is defined in the Green Spaces Strategy as follows: -
- **unrestricted** - sites have unrestricted public access although some sites may have limitations to access between dusk and dawn;
 - **limited** - sites may be publicly or privately owned but access is limited either by a physical barrier such as membership, or a psychological barrier such as the sense that a green space is private;
 - **not accessible** - sites are out of bounds to the public.

³ Allotments are covered in more detail in Policy SHW6.

10. Land could have limited or no public access but will still deliver many of the benefits of open space e.g. land for ecological habitats, green and blue infrastructure, climate change mitigation and improvements to air quality.

Open Space Hierarchy

11. The Sandwell Green Space Strategy Implementation and Business Plan⁴ also identifies a hierarchy that classifies types of green space according to its significance and thus the importance it will have when considering planning proposals that may impact on it:

Hierarchy Level	Description
Borough	Those sites whose significance should attract people from across the entire borough. Usually large sites with a range of facilities or designated importance for history or nature conservation.
Neighbourhood	Those sites which perform a function that serves a more immediate community. Unlikely to attract people from across the borough
Local	Those sites which perform a function to a small area – typically areas of amenity green space.

Development and open space provision

12. The quantum and typology of open space that may be applicable to a housing site will depend upon its intended occupants; for example, specialist housing for older people will not create demand for the typical amount and type of open space required for children and young people.
13. New open space should be designed and located so that it performs multiple functions. It should be considered as part of the wider approach to green infrastructure planning, as set out in Policy SDS7.
14. Where open space is to be provided on the same site as a development, this should be identified as part of the development's green infrastructure within the design and access statement that accompanies the planning application. Reference should be made to those green space assets and / or corridors that apply to / exist near a site, and to what measures will be taken to enhance, extend and /or link to them.

4

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/33192/green_spaces_strategy_implementation_and_business_plan_2223_%E2%80%93_2526

15. The incorporation of open space into new developments should also consider Policy SDS4, the principles set out in Secured by Design and Sport England and the Government's *Active Design* initiative (May 2023). This document contains ten main principles, one of which relates to open space:

Principle 5 — Network of multi-functional open spaces

Accessible and high quality open space should be promoted across cities, towns and villages to provide opportunities for sport and physical activity, as well as active travel connections and natural or civic space for people to congregate in and enjoy.

16. The inclusion of open space in new development is also an opportunity to have regard to features that minimise crime and perception of crime such as natural surveillance overlooking public spaces.
17. Where redevelopment of an open space is being considered, regard will be had to whether its loss would have a detrimental impact on the character and appearance of the area. Adverse impacts on habitats and ecological value are also important factors and will be taken into consideration when decisions are made. If, exceptionally, an existing open space is to be redeveloped, it must be replaced nearby to an equivalent standard or better.
18. Proposals will be assessed in accordance with the standards set out below.

Open space standards in Sandwell

19. In terms of unrestricted green space, there are 323 green spaces covering just under 1200 hectares. Overall, 13.9% of the total land area of the Borough is accessible green space. This is characterised by large expanses of semi-natural green space covering 458 hectares, with parks and gardens covering 264 hectares (as at 2020⁵). This quantum of land with unrestricted access equates to 3.63 hectares of space per 1,000 population and provides more unrestricted green space access than some other local authorities. Natural and semi-natural green space makes up nearly 40% of the supply (by area) of unrestricted green space and is important in terms of contributing to landscape character and biodiversity.
20. Sandwell's amenity green spaces cover a total area of 214 hectares, although individually these typically tend to be smaller areas than semi-natural green space or parks and gardens.
21. The distribution of open space across the borough is not even, with some areas and wards containing much larger areas of open land than others, such as Sandwell Valley and certain of the larger parks. This pattern masks a dearth of suitable and accessible space in other areas; for example, residents of West Bromwich Central Ward enjoy nearly fifteen times more green space than those in Old Warley Ward.

⁵ Sandwell Green Space Strategy 2020 - 2030

22. Given Sandwell's urban nature and the viability issues associated with providing additional facilities on sites, accessibility to high quality open space is therefore a significant consideration when proposals for new housing development are being considered. A site's proximity to existing open spaces, play areas and active and passive leisure and recreational opportunities will help to determine how much open space is required on it.
23. Where possible, new open space provision (which may also provide a basis for biodiversity net gain and sustainable drainage requirements on site as well, as part of a multi-functional green and blue infrastructure approach) will be required on development sites, especially where this will help meet local shortfalls by ward. Where this is not possible, the delivery / improvement of land adjacent to or within a suitable walking distance from new residential areas will be considered.
24. Accessibility thresholds should be measured as a distance walked rather than as a simple straight-line measurement / radius. Significant obstacles or impediments to local access, such as main roads, should be considered when assessing the accessibility of open spaces. Open spaces and play facilities should be located close to and be accessible from bus stops, pedestrian and cycle routes, to help promote sustainable travel.
25. Indicative walking distances can be determined from the broad data set out below: -
 - 250m - 2-3 minutes' walk
 - 400m - 5 minutes' walk
 - 800m - 10 minutes' walk
 - 1,200m - 15 minutes' walk
 - 1,600m - 20 minutes' walk

Quantity and Accessibility Standards Defined for Open Space Assessment⁶

Open Space Type	Quantity guideline (hectares per 1,000 residents)	Walking guideline (walking distance: metres from houses)	Quality guideline
Amenity Green Space	0.6	480m	Parks to be of Green Flag status.
Parks and Gardens	0.8	710m	Appropriately landscaped.
Natural / Semi-Natural Greenspaces	1.8	720m	Positive management. Provision of footpaths. Designed to be free of the fear of harm or crime.
Provision for Children and Young People Local Areas for Play (LAP) - aimed at very young children Locally Equipped Areas for Play (LEAP) - aimed at children who can go out to play independently Neighbourhood Equipped Areas for Play (NEAP) - aimed at older children	0.25	LAP – 100m (suggested minimum size 0.01ha) LEAP – 400m (suggested minimum size 0.04ha) NEAP - 1,000m (suggested minimum size 0.1ha)	Quality appropriate to the intended level of performance, designed to appropriate technical standards. Located where they are of most value to the community to be served. Sufficiently diverse recreational use for the whole community. Appropriately landscaped. Maintained safely and to the highest possible condition with available finance. Positively managed taking account of the need for repair and replacement over time as necessary.
Other outdoor provision (Multi Use Games Areas and skateboard parks)	0.3	700m	Provision of appropriate ancillary facilities and equipment.

⁶ Taken from Fields in Trust's *Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play - Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015) - <https://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/guidance/Guidance-for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England.pdf>

Open Space Type	Quantity guideline (hectares per 1,000 residents)	Walking guideline (walking distance: metres from houses)	Quality guideline
		(suggested minimum size 0.1ha)	Provision of footpaths. Designed to be free of the fear of harm or crime.
Allotments and Community Gardens	0.2	400m	See Policy SHW6

26. Table 2 sets out recommended benchmark guidelines for the provision of equipped / designated play space. A financial contribution (i.e. through S106 or CIL) towards improvement of an existing equipped / designated play space may be sought in lieu of on-site provision for larger scale play spaces, or where existing play space lies within the walking distance guidelines of a proposed development

Table 1 - Recommended Application of Quantity Benchmark Guidelines – Equipped / Designated Play Space⁷

Scale of Development	LAP	LEAP	NEAP	MUGA
5 - 10 dwellings	✓			
11 - 200 dwellings	✓	✓		Contribution
201 - 500 dwellings	✓	✓	Contribution	✓
501+ dwellings	✓	✓	✓	✓

⁷ Taken from Fields in Trust's *Guidance for Outdoor Sport and Play - Beyond the Six Acre Standard* (2015) - <https://www.fieldsintrust.org/Upload/file/guidance/Guidance-for-Outdoor-Sport-and-Play-England.pdf>

APPENDIX L - Transportation Policy

Sandwell Parking Standards

Purpose of this Statement

1. The purpose of this work is to ensure future developments provide sufficient parking that will not result in on-street parking congestion to the detriment of the safe and efficient operation of the public highway and the amenity of the surrounding residential community. In implementing this approach, there must be a balance so that there is not an over provision of parking that would result in the inefficient use of land or discourage sustainable travel choices. Public safety will also be at the centre of the parking consideration.
2. Tables 1 and 2 of this document set out the appropriate levels for parking for residential and non-residential developments to inform discussions between Highway Engineers and Planning Officers. However, local sustainability factors may allow for a reduction in off-street parking requirements, but this will require Transport, Accessibility and Parking assessments to be undertaken and for robust evidence to be provided that any proposed reductions would not unduly affect, or be to the detriment of, the safe and efficient operation of the surrounding highway network.
3. Regardless of whether developments achieve the required parking standards or not, the Council will not be able to support developments that may give rise to road safety issues or which may have a detrimental impact on the free flow of the highway network or be considered to potentially cause severe residential amenity issues.
4. A balance has to be struck between encouraging new development and investment, against providing adequate parking levels, potential increased traffic congestion and community amenity issues.

Transport, Accessibility & Parking Assessments (TAPA's)

5. The information provided in transport related assessments helps to clarify the impact of any development on the Highway Network. The site's impact, sustainability, accessibility and safety will be assessed using the TAPA's (see Appendix 4). Sites that benefit from closely located public transport facilities, cycle routes and other useful facilities that encourage linked trips will be assessed to have a higher degree of accessibility and sustainability.
6. This assessment may be used to help justify a reduction in the parking requirements through discussion with the Local Authority, coupled with robust evidence that any reductions in required parking standards would not have a detrimental effect on the operation and safety of the surrounding network.
7. It is noted that the extent of detail required by the TAPA's may not be known in the case of outline planning applications. As such, it is accepted that consideration will be given to the information which is available at outline application stage and **be conditioned** to ensure all the information is provided at full application stage.

Residential Parking Standards for Housing

8. The council recognises that ensuring the right amount of parking provision in the right location and off the right size is essential in the creation of new residential developments both in terms of layout and design highway safety and future amenity and access. The following standards have been derived from extensive practice, evidence gathering, benchmarking and feedback from previous schemes.
9. Developments that are considered to result in on-street parking which would create or exacerbate issues of highway safety will not be supported.

10. The council may consider reduced off street parking provision in highly sustainable locations based on local sustainability and access assessments, evidence from local surveys and census data published by the Office of National Statistics.

Visitor Parking for Residential Properties

11. On all housing schemes developers will be expected to provide additional space for visitor parking at a ratio of 1 space per 3 dwellings for developments less than 10 properties and 1 space per 4 dwellings for developments of 10 or more properties. On street visitor parking provision may be considered appropriate if the local road network design allows for on-street parking without causing any detriment to capacity or safety.

Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)

12. For houses of multiple occupancy, (HMO), 1 off street space per 2 beds will be required within the curtilage of the site. However, reductions in parking provision in agreed highly sustainable locations may be considered.

Garages

13. For garages to be considered as practical parking spaces they should have minimum internal dimensions of 2.8m x 6m. Garages used to satisfy off street parking requirements will be conditioned to be retained as such to remove development rights to convert into a habitable room.

Innovative use of design solutions

14. Car parking provision can be provided in a variety of ways. Positive consideration will be given to innovative design solutions which deliver parking requirements safely and in the context of well-designed layouts.

Table 1: Minimum Parking Standards for Residential Uses

Residential Dwellings	
1 to 2 bedrooms	1 dedicated space
3 to 4 bedrooms	2 dedicated spaces
5 to 6 bedrooms	3 dedicated spaces
7 to 8 bedrooms	4 dedicated spaces
Visitor Spaces – Development less than 10 dwellings	1 space per 3 dwellings
Visitor Spaces – Development of 10 or more dwellings	1 space per 4 dwellings

Non-Residential Parking Standards

Baseline Parking Standards

15. Baseline parking standards are set out in Table 2 below. These maximum standards can be applied to smaller developments or used as a basis to calculate a reduced maximum standard for larger developments located in accessible areas.

Table 2: Maximum Parking Standards for Non-Residential Uses

(Table 2 will be applied to the total floor area on all applications including change of use applications)

Use Class	Description	Baseline Parking Level Parking Standard per m²
Class B – Businesses that primarily serve people		
B2	General Industry (office components to be assessed as Class E use	1:50
B8	Distribution and Warehouse (office components to be assessed as Class E use	Up to 250m ² - 1:50 251m ² -1250m ² - 1:100 Over 1250m ² - 1:200
Class C – Locations where people sleep		
C1	Hotels and Guest Houses (Bar/Restaurant to be assessed as Sui Generis and Class E uses	1 space per bedroom 1 space per member of staff
C2	Residential Institutions	Residents 1 space per 4 bedrooms.
C2a	Secure Residential Institutions	Staff 1 managers space and 1 space per 3 FTE other staff
C4	Houses in multiple occupation incl. Large HMO	1 per 2 beds
Class E - Commercial, Business and Service Users		
E	Medical Facilities, Clinics, Health Centres, creches, day nurseries, day centre	1 space per member of staff 2 spaces per treatment room
E	Hospitals	1 space per member of staff 1 space per 3 visitors
E	Food Retail (other than those shops that fall under Class F2)	1:14
E	Non-Food Retail (other than those shops that fall under Class F2)	1:20
E	Offices	1:30
E	Restaurants and Cafes	1:10

Use Class	Description	Baseline Parking Level Parking Standard per m ²
E	Research and Development	1:30
E	Industrial processes that can be carried out in a residential area	1:30
E	Gymnasiums and indoor recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms or those that fall under F2	1:22
Class F1 - Learning and Non-Residential Institutions		
F1	Further Education Establishments and training centres	1 space per member of staff 1 space per 15 students
F1	Primary, Secondary and Special Schools	1 space per member of staff (FTE)
F1	Museums, public libraries, public halls, exhibition halls, law courts	1:30
F1	Places of Worship	1:5
Class F2 - Local Community Uses		
F2	Shop not more than 280m ² mostly selling essential goods, including food and at least 1km from another similar shop	1:14
F2	Indoor or outdoor swimming baths, skating rinks, and outdoor sports or recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	1:22
F2	Stadia	1 space per 15 seats (Note: coach parking should be agreed with SMBC and treated separately to car parking)
F2	Hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community	1:30
Class Sui Generis – Locations that are unique in themselves		
Sui Generis	Drinking Establishments	1:8

Use Class	Description	Baseline Parking Level Parking Standard per m ²
Sui Generis	Hot Food Takeaway	1:20
Sui Generis	Cinemas, Concert Halls and Conference Facilities	1 space per 5 seats
Sui Generis	Public Transport Interchanges, Metro Stops, Railway Stations	Discuss with SMBC
Sui Generis	Theatres, Large HMOs, Hostels, Petrol Filling Stations, Vehicle Sales, Scrap Yards, Retail Warehouse Clubs, Night Clubs, Laundrettes, Taxi/PHV Business, Amusement Arcades, Casinos, Funfairs, Waste Disposal Facilities	Discuss with SMBC

Developments in Town Centres

16. Parking requirements for developments in town centres should be assessed by baseline standards, through TAPA's to give guidance as to the potential reduction in maximum standards and impact on the Highway Network. Appropriate development in town centres coupled with sustainable travel choices creates the opportunity for linked trips and more efficient land use. Existing and proposed transport infrastructure and proposed developments within the plan period for each centre will guide the decision-making process to determine the allowable minimum parking requirements for each successive development in a town centre.
17. Parking standards will be determined on local need and circumstances. The flexibility of any potential acceptable parking reduction will depend on the distance of the development from the core of the town centre. For instance, a proposed development on the town centre boundary may be considered differently to the same development proposed in the core of the centre, taking into consideration other factors such as how much parking is currently available in the surrounding area.
18. The quantum of parking available in each town centre will be monitored and the required parking standard may vary over time for similar developments in similar locations dependent on improvements to sustainable infrastructure and modal shift evidence or saturation of existing parking infrastructure in the centres.

Minimum Parking Standards for People with Disabilities

19. Parking for people with disabilities is an important consideration. Guidance on the design and location of parking for people with disabilities can be found in the *Department of Transport (DfT) leaflet 5/95 (April 1995)*, *DfT report 'Inclusive Mobility'* and *BS8300:2009*.

Residential Developments

20. Disabled parking bays are required as a percentage of the total off-plot communal parking provision in new residential developments. For smaller developments with up to 10 off-plot communal spaces at least 1 space

should be provided as a widened bay and all other developments 5% of the parking allocation should be designed as disabled parking bays.

Non-Residential Developments

21. The minimum parking standard for non-residential developments is a percentage of the baseline maximum standard as shown in Table 3 below. Parking for disabled people should be additional to the maximum vehicle parking standards for non-residential development.
22. For smaller non-residential developments with parking up to 10 spaces, at least 1 parking bay should be designated to accommodate disabled people. For developments up to 20 spaces 1 wider space and 1 marked disabled bay should be provided.
23. Generally, for shopping, recreation and leisure facilities 6% of the total parking provision should be in the form of marked bays with 4% as widened bays. All other uses will be 5% marked and 5% widened bays.
24. Parking spaces for people with disabilities should be created within 50m of the main entrance of the destination so that a round trip of no more than 100m has to be made. Provision for pick up and set down with level access to the pavement should also be made close to the main entrance.

Table 3: Disabled Parking Space Provision

(To be applied to all applications including change of use applications for total floor area)

Use Class	Description	Marked Disabled Bay % of Max Baseline Standard	Widened Bay 3.7m x 6m % of Max Baseline Standard
Class B – Businesses that primarily serve people			
B2	General Industry (office components to be assessed as Class E use)	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5%
B8	Distribution and Warehouse (office components to be assessed as Class E use)	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5%
Class C – Locations where people sleep			
C1	Hotels and Guest Houses (Bar/Restaurant to be assessed as Sui Generis and Class E uses)	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
C2	Residential Institutions	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee plus additional spaces dependent on the need of the establishment	5%

Use Class	Description	Marked Disabled Bay % of Max Baseline Standard	Widened Bay 3.7m x 6m % of Max Baseline Standard
C2a	Secure Residential Institutions	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee plus additional spaces dependent on the need of the establishment	5%
C3	Dwellings	5% of unallocated parking provision	5% of unallocated parking provision
C4	Houses in multiple occupation incl. Large HMO	5%	5%
Class E - Commercial, Business and Service Users			
E	Medical Facilities, Clinics, Health Centres, creches, day nurseries, day centre	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee plus additional spaces dependent on the need of the establishment	4%
E	Hospitals	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee plus additional spaces dependent on the need of the establishment	4%
E	Food Retail (other than those shops that fall under Class F2)	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
E	Non-Food Retail (other than those shops that fall under Class F2)	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
E	Offices	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5%
E	Restaurants and Cafes	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5%

Use Class	Description	Marked Disabled Bay % of Max Baseline Standard	Widened Bay 3.7m x 6m % of Max Baseline Standard
E	Research and Development	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5%
E	Industrial processes that can be carried out in a residential area	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5%
E	Gymnasiums and indoor recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms or those that fall under F2	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
Class F1 - Learning and Non-Residential Institutions			
F1	Further Education Establishments and training centres	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
F1	Primary, Secondary and Special Schools	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
F1	Museums, public libraries, public halls, exhibition halls, law courts	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
F1	Places of Worship	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
Class F2 - Local Community Uses			
F2	Shop not more than 280m ² mostly selling essential goods, including food and at least 1km from another similar shop	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5%
F2	Indoor or outdoor swimming baths, skating rinks, and outdoor sports or recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5-10%
F2	Stadia	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5-10%
F2	Hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	5%

Use Class	Description	Marked Disabled Bay % of Max Baseline Standard	Widened Bay 3.7m x 6m % of Max Baseline Standard
Class Sui Generis – Locations that are unique in themselves			
Sui Generis	Drinking Establishments	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
Sui Generis	Hot Food Takeaway	Discuss with SMBC	Discuss with SMBC
Sui Generis	Cinemas, Concert Halls and Conference Facilities	6% plus 1 space for each disabled employee	4%
Sui Generis	Public Transport Interchanges, Metro Sops, Railway Stations	Discuss with SMBC	Discuss with SMBC
Sui Generis	Theatres, Large HMOs, Hostels, Petrol Filling Stations, Vehicle Sales, Scrap Yards, Retail Warehouse Clubs, Night Clubs, Laundrettes, Taxi/PHV Business, Amusement Arcades, Casinos, Funfairs, Waste Disposal Facilities	Discuss with SMBC	Discuss with SMBC

Parking for Cyclists

25. Overlooked, well lit, secure and undercover cycle parking facilities should be incorporated into any development that has the potential to attract cyclists. Cycle parking should be in positions that are convenient to encourage their use and where possible within the building.
26. The minimum standards set out in Table 4 below, will be required for development proposals in addition to the vehicle parking standards. In cases where reduced numbers off street parking can be justified as part of a development, the Council may require a significant increase in the number of cycle parking spaces to be provided above the minimum standards specified in Table 9.

Table 4: Minimum Cycle Parking Standards

Use Class	Description	Cycle Parking Standard	Cycle Storage Type and Shower Facility
Class B – Businesses that primarily serve people			

Use Class	Description	Cycle Parking Standard	Cycle Storage Type and Shower Facility
B2	General Industry (office components to be assessed as Class E use)	1 space per 300m ² for staff 1 space per 1000m ² for visitors	Long Stay
B8	Distribution and Warehouse (office components to be assessed as Class E use)	1 space per 300m ² for staff 1 space per 1000m ² for visitors	Long Stay
Class C – Locations where people sleep			
C1	Hotels and Guest Houses (Bar/Restaurant to be assessed as Sui Generis and Class E uses)	1 space per 10 bedrooms	Long Stay
C2	Residential Institutions	1 space per 10 members of staff	Long Stay
C2a	Secure Residential Institutions	1 space per 10 members of staff	Long Stay
C3	Dwelling Houses	1 bed - 1 space 2 bed - 2 spaces 3 bed - 2 spaces 4 bed - 3 spaces 5 bed - 3 spaces 6 bed - 4 spaces 7 bed - 4 spaces 8 bed - 5 spaces Visitor spaces – discuss with SMBC	Long stay for residents Short stay for visitors
C3	Dwellings (Apartments only)	1 space per 1 and 2 bed dwelling	Long stay for staff / residents Short stay for visitors

Use Class	Description	Cycle Parking Standard	Cycle Storage Type and Shower Facility
		2 spaces per 3+ bed dwelling 1 space per 5 apartments for visitors	
C4	Houses in multiple occupation incl. Large HMO	1 space per 5 bedrooms 1 space per 5 bedrooms for visitors	Long stay for residents Short stay for visitors
Class E - Commercial, Business and Service Users			
E	Medical Facilities, Clinics, Health Centres, creches, day nurseries, day centre	1 space per 300m ² for staff 1 space per 1000m ² for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
E	Hospitals	1 space per 300m ² for staff 1 space per 1000m ² for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
E	Food Retail (other than those shops that fall under Class F2)	1 space per 200m ²	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
E	Non-Food Retail (other than those shops that fall under Class F2)	1 space per 200m ²	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
E	Offices	1 space per 300m ² for staff 1 space per 1000m ² for visitors	Long Stay
E	Restaurants and Cafes	1 space per 100m ²	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
E	Research and Development	1 space per 300m ² for staff 1 space per 1000m ² for visitors	Long Stay

Use Class	Description	Cycle Parking Standard	Cycle Storage Type and Shower Facility
E	Industrial processes that can be carried out in a residential area	1 space per 300m ² for staff 1 space per 1000m ² for visitors	Long Stay
E	Gymnasiums and indoor recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms or those that fall under F2	1 space per 200m ² for staff 1 space per 10 person trips for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
Class F1 - Learning and Non-Residential Institutions			
F1	Further Education Establishments and training centres	1 space per 5 students 1 space per 5 members of staff 1 space per 150 students for visitors	Long stay for staff/students Short stay for visitors
F1	Primary, Secondary and Special Schools	1 space per 5 students 1 space per 5 members of staff 1 space per 150 students for visitors	Long stay for staff/students Short stay for visitors
F1	Museums, public libraries, public halls, exhibition halls, law courts	1 space per 200m ² for staff 1 space per 10-person trips for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
F1	Places of Worship	1 space per 200m ² for staff 1 space per 10-person trips for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
Class F2 - Local Community Uses			
F2	Shop not more than 280m ² mostly selling essential goods, including food and at least 1km from another similar shop	1 space per 100m ²	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors

Use Class	Description	Cycle Parking Standard	Cycle Storage Type and Shower Facility
F2	Indoor or outdoor swimming baths, skating rinks, and outdoor sports or recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	1 space per 200m ² for staff 1 space per 10 person trips for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
F2	Stadia	1 space per 200m ² for staff 1 space per 10 person trips for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
F2	Hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community	1 space per 200m ² for staff 1 space per 10 person trips for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
Class Sui Generis – Locations that are unique in themselves			
Sui Generis	Drinking Establishments	1 space per 100m ²	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
Sui Generis	Hot Food Takeaway	1 space per 100m ²	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
Sui Generis	Cinemas, Concert Halls and Conference Facilities	1 space per 200m ² for staff 1 space per 10-person trips for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
Sui Generis	Public Transport Interchanges, Metro Sops, Railway Stations	1 space per 200m ² for staff 1 space per 10-person trips for visitors	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors
Sui Generis	Theatres, Large HMOs, Hostels, Petrol Filling Stations, Vehicle Sales, Scrap Yards, Retail Warehouse Clubs, Night Clubs, Laundrettes, Taxi/PHV Business, Amusement Arcades, Casinos, Funfairs, Waste Disposal Facilities	Discuss with SMBC	Long stay for staff Short stay for visitors

Powered Two Wheeled Vehicles

27. Powered two wheeled vehicles can play an important part in delivering integrated and sustainable transport. They offer reduced journey times, are easier to park in areas of limited on street parking, offer cheaper travel choices relative to a car and can potentially benefit climate change by generally producing lower emissions than cars.

28. As a minimum it is proposed that developers should provide for safe, overlooked, well-lit and secure parking for powered two wheeled vehicles equal to 2% of the car parking spaces provided at retail developments and 4% of the car parking spaces at all other developments except residential.

29. For housing developments space shall be made available within the dwelling curtilage or in allocated or bays.

Table 5: Minimum Parking Standards for Powered Two Wheelers

Use Class	Description	Percentage of Baseline Standard	Threshold for at least 1 parking space and shower facility
Class B – Businesses that primarily serve people			
B2	General Industry (office components to be assessed as Class E use)	4%	100m ² or greater
B8	Distribution and Warehouse (office components to be assessed as Class E use)	4%	100m ² or greater
Class C – Locations where people sleep			
C1	Hotels and Guest Houses (Bar/Restaurant to be assessed as Sui Generis and Class E uses)	4%	When total vehicle parking provision is 20 or greater
C2	Residential Institutions	4%	When total vehicle parking provision is 20 or greater
C2a	Secure Residential Institutions	4%	When total vehicle parking provision is 20 or greater
C3	Residential Dwellings	Not required	Not required
C4	Houses in multiple occupation incl. Large HMO	Not required	Not required
Class E - Commercial, Business and Service Users			
E	Medical Facilities, Clinics, Health Centres, creches, day nurseries, day centre	4%	When total vehicle parking provision is 20 or greater
E	Hospitals	4%	When total vehicle parking provision is 20 or greater

Use Class	Description	Percentage of Baseline Standard	Threshold for at least 1 parking space and shower facility
E	Food Retail (other than those shops that fall under Class F2)	2%	200m ² or greater
E	Non-Food Retail (other than those shops that fall under Class F2)	2%	200m ² or greater
E	Offices	4%	50m ² or greater
E	Restaurants and Cafes	2%	200m ² or greater
E	Research and Development	4%	100m ² or greater
E	Industrial processes that can be carried out in a residential area	4%	100m ² or greater
E	Gymnasiums and indoor recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms or those that fall under F2	4%	200m ² or greater
Class F1 - Learning and Non-Residential Institutions			
F1	Further Education Establishments and training centres	4%	200m ² or greater
F1	Primary, Secondary and Special Schools	4%	200m ² or greater
F1	Museums, public libraries, public halls, exhibition halls, law courts	4%	200m ² or greater
F1	Places of Worship	4%	200m ² or greater
Class F2 - Local Community Uses			
F2	Shop not more than 280m ² mostly selling essential goods, including food and at least 1km from another similar shop	Not required	Not required

Use Class	Description	Percentage of Baseline Standard	Threshold for at least 1 parking space and shower facility
F2	Indoor or outdoor swimming baths, skating rinks, and outdoor sports or recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	4%	200m ² or greater
F2	Stadia	4%	200m ² or greater
F2	Hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community	4%	When total vehicle parking provision is 20 or greater
Class Sui Generis – Locations that are unique in themselves			
Sui Generis	Drinking Establishments	2%	200m ² or greater
Sui Generis	Hot Food Takeaway	2%	200m ² or greater
Sui Generis	Cinemas, Concert Halls and Conference Facilities	4%	200m ² or greater
Sui Generis	Public Transport Interchanges, Metro Sops, Railway Stations	4%	When total vehicle parking provision is 20 or greater
Sui Generis	Theatres, Large HMOs, Hostels, Petrol Filling Stations, Vehicle Sales, Scrap Yards, Retail Warehouse Clubs, Night Clubs, Laundrettes, Taxi/PHV Business, Amusement Arcades, Casinos, Funfairs, Waste Disposal Facilities	4%	When total vehicle parking provision is 20 or greater

Provision of Infrastructure to Support Electric Vehicle Technology

30. Applications for development should be designed to enable charging of plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles in safe, accessible and convenient locations

Electric Vehicle Charging Point Specification

Residential Development

31. Infrastructure to allow an external charging point shall be provided adjacent to at least 1 parking space for each private dwelling. For flatted developments and apartments where the parking may be some distance from the dwellings, 1 charging point for every 10 unallocated spaces is required, although some

Non-Residential Development

32. It will be the responsibility of the developer to provide 5% of all parking spaces in these developments to be covered with an electric charging point. Appropriate cable provision shall be in place for a further 5% to meet any future increase in demand.

Operational Parking Requirements

33. The parking requirements in Table 6 below will be applied to the total additional floor area on all applications including change of use applications.

Table 6: Operational Parking Requirements

Use Class	Description	Operational Parking Requirement	
Class C – Locations where people sleep			
C2	Residential Institutions	Space for ambulance, minibus or van. Space for one pick-up and drop off point	
C2a	Secure Residential Institutions	5% plus 1 space for each disabled employee plus additional spaces dependent on the need of the establishment	5%
C3	Dwellings	Adequate provision for refuse collecting vehicles and emergency vehicle access which should normally be separate from car parking spaces will need to be demonstrated	
Class E - Commercial, Business and Service Users			
E	Medical Facilities, Clinics, Health Centres, day centre	Space for one pick-up and drop off point	
E	Hospitals	Space shall be reserved for ambulances adjacent to the main entrance	

Use Class	Description	Operational Parking Requirement	
		Space shall be allocated for large delivery or refuse vehicles which shall be accessed in a manner which avoids conflict with access ways required by ambulances	
E	Retail	Gross floor space	Minimum load and unload
		500m ²	50m ²
		1000m ²	100m ²
		2000m ²	150m ²
		Service areas for loading and unloading must be laid out to allow lorries to enter and exit the site in forward gear	
E	Financial and Professional Services	Banks, Building Societies and other financial services used by the public – No operational parking required 50m ² for loading and unloading	
E	Restaurants and Cafes	Service areas for loading and unloading must be laid out to allow lorries to enter and exit the site in a forward motion	
E	Gymnasiums and indoor recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms or those that fall under F2	50m ² loading and unloading area	
Class F1 - Learning and Non-Residential Institutions			
F1	All Schools	Adequate space should be allocated for coaches which may be used either to bring students to school or for school trips. For large schools, an on-site traffic flow system should be provided to accommodate a larger number of vehicles	
F1	Special Schools	Space shall be allocated for mini-buses/ambulances adjacent to the main entrance of the building	

Use Class	Description	Operational Parking Requirement
F1	Secondary Schools	Where on site provision cannot be made, it must be clearly shown that on-street parking of coaches will not detrimentally affect the free flow of traffic on the highway
F1	Primary Schools and Nurseries	Pick up and drop off areas for parents' vehicles should be provided in a safe place that will not have a detrimental impact on the highway or highway safety
F1	Museums, galleries and libraries	Minimum loading and unloading 50m ²
F1	Places of Worship	Adequate spaces for wedding and funeral vehicles either within the site or on-street
Class F2 - Local Community Uses		
F2	Shop not more than 280m ² mostly selling essential goods, including food and at least 1km from another similar shop	Discuss with SMBC
F2	Indoor or outdoor swimming baths, skating rinks, and outdoor sports or recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	50m ² loading and unloading area
F2	Stadia	To be determined on a case by case basis having regards to the type of activity proposed
Class Sui Generis – Locations that are unique in themselves		
Sui Generis	Drinking Establishments	Service areas for loading and unloading must be laid out to allow lorries to enter and exit the site in a forward motion
Sui Generis	Hot Food Takeaway	Service areas for loading and unloading must be laid out to allow lorries to enter and exit the site in a forward motion
Sui Generis	Cinemas, Concert Halls and Conference Facilities	50m ² for loading and unloading area Space for 1 pick-up and drop off point
All Other Uses		Discuss with SMBC

Transport, Accessibility and Parking Assessment Form

34. National Planning Policy recommends a broad approach to assessing the transport implications of development proposals. This Transport, Accessibility and Parking Assessment (TAPA) Form should be completed in conjunction with a planning application form.

Reference 1. Transport, Accessibility and Parking Assessment Form

1. Application Details
<p>Ref Number</p> <p>Description of proposed development land use/sq. metres/number of units/proposed car parking spaces (public/private)</p> <p>Address/Location</p>
2. Transport Characteristics of Scheme
<p>Non-residential:</p>
<p>Expected number of employees visiting the site per day (if relevant)</p>
<p>Of which approximately how many are expected to arrive by:</p> <p>Car</p> <p>Car Sharing</p> <p>Bus</p> <p>Train</p> <p>Bicycle</p> <p>Walking</p> <p>Other (please specify)</p>
<p>Expected number of visitors per day visiting the development (if relevant)</p>
<p>Of which approximately how many are expected to arrive by:</p> <p>Car</p> <p>Car Sharing</p>

<p>Bus</p> <p>Train</p> <p>Bicycle</p> <p>Walking</p> <p>Other (please specify)</p>
<p>Of which approximately how many are expected to be:</p> <p>Light good vehicles</p> <p>Other good vehicles</p>
<p>Residential:</p>
<p>Expected number of residential movements per day including likely destinations (if relevant)</p>
<p>Of which approximately how many are expected to come and go by:</p> <p>Car</p> <p>Car Sharing</p> <p>Bus</p> <p>Train</p> <p>Bicycle</p> <p>Walking</p> <p>Other (please specify)</p>
<p>All Uses:</p>
<p>Identify any expected times of day and week for peak departures and arrivals</p>
<p>Identify any special transport characteristics of the development</p>

State the relationship (if any) of the development to the Local Transport Plan proposals affecting the site

Provide details of the number of parking spaces to be provided

Cars

Disabled Bays

Cycles (state if covered)

Motorbikes (state if covered)

3. Outline of any planned measures to limit transport impacts (please read attached note 1)

Describe any measures planned to influence the way employees and visitors access the site (such as encouraging walking, cycling and public transport)

Describe any measures you propose to ensure freight and delivery traffic is efficient and causes as little disruption as possible

Describe any proposed measures to alter or improve the surrounding road network

Identify any improvements proposed to enhance walking, cycling and public transport within or outside the development site.

Provide an explanation of any parking controls and parking management

Note 1. As part of the planning application the Local Planning Authority may require additional information on proposed measures to reduce the impact of traffic generated activities at the site. This may take the form of a Travel Plan or changes to the layout and design of the buildings. It may also cover proposed changes to the surrounding road network. Emphasis will be placed upon addressing the likely impact of freight movements and deliveries.

Reference 2. Accessibility

Accessibility Assessment		Accessibility Level		
		High: 30-21 Medium: 20-11 Low: 10 or less		
Access Type	Criteria	Criteria Scores	Score	Sub Score
Walking	Distance to nearest bus stop from main entrance of building (via direct, safe route)	<200m	5	
		<300m	3	
		<500m	1	
		>500m	0	
	Distance to nearest railway station from main entrance of building (via direct, safe route)	<400m	3	
		<1km	2	
>1km		0		
Cycling	Proximity to defined cycle routes	<100m	3	
		<500m	2	
		<1km	1	
		>1km	0	
Public Transport	Bus frequency of principal service from nearest bus stop during operational hours of the development	15 mins or less	5	
		30 mins or less	3	
		>30 minutes	1	
	Number of bus services serving different localities stopping within 200m of the main entrance	Localities served	5	
		4 or more	3	
		3	2	

Accessibility Assessment		Accessibility Level		
		High: 30-21 Medium: 20-11 Low: 10 or less		
Access Type	Criteria	Criteria Scores	Score	Sub Score
		2 1	1	
	Train frequency from nearest station (Mon-Sat daytime)	30 mins or less 30-59 mins Hourly or less	3 2 1	
	Drive to nearest station	Facilities on site or within 100m that reduce the need to travel: Food shop/café Newsagent Creche Other	1 1 1 1	

National Planning Policy Framework

35. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) promotes that Local Planning Authorities when setting local parking standards for residential and non-residential development should take into account:
- *The accessibility of the development;*
 - *The type, mix and use of development;*
 - *The availability of and opportunities for public transport;*
 - *Local car ownership levels; and*
 - *The need to ensure an adequate provision of spaces for charging plug-in and other ultra-low emission vehicles.*
36. However, there is no mention of minimum or maximum parking standards and the onus is firmly upon the Local Planning Authority to determine what is appropriate for their area by using local knowledge, benchmarking and best practice, taking into consideration the above criteria based on locally derived evidence.
37. NPPF states that transport issues should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals and significant development should be focused on locations which are or can be made sustainable, through limiting the need to travel and offering a genuine choice of transport modes.
38. This can help to reduce congestion and emissions and improve air quality and public health. However, opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary between urban and rural areas, and this should be taken into account in both plan-making and decision-making.
39. Maximum parking standards for residential and non-residential development should only be set where there is a clear and compelling justification that they are necessary for managing the local road network, or for optimising the density of development in city and town centres and other locations that are well served by public transport
40. In town centres, local authorities should seek to improve the quality of parking so that it is convenient, safe and secure alongside measures to promote accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.
41. In assessing development sites, it should be ensured that:
- Appropriate opportunities to promote sustainable transport modes can be – or have been – taken up, given the type of development and its location;
 - Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all users;
 - The design of streets, parking areas, other transport elements and the content of associated standards reflects current national guidance
 - Any significant impacts from the development on the transport network (in terms of capacity and congestion), or on highway safety, can be cost effectively mitigated to an acceptable degree.
42. NPPF states that development should only be prevented or refused on highways grounds if there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the road network would be **severe**. However, there is no definition or value given to what should be considered severe and relies on analysis, best practice, previous inspector rulings and local evidence to be used to instigate discussions between developers and the local authority.

43. In addition, all developments that will generate significant amounts of movement should be required to provide a travel plan, and the application should be supported by a transport statement or transport assessment so that the likely impacts of the proposal can be assessed.

APPENDIX M – Glossary

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
Active Design	-	Active Design is an approach to development that encourages and promotes sport and physical activity through the design and layout of the built environment, to support a step change towards healthier and more active lifestyles. All environments should support physical activity equitably across all ages, ethnicities, genders, and abilities, enabling everyone to be active and build long-term active habits and behaviours. This is essential for the delivery of all the principles of Active Design and is its foundational principle. It is promoted by Sport England and Public Health England.
Affordable housing	-	Housing for sale or rent, for those whose needs are not met by the market (including housing that provides a subsidised route to home ownership and / or is for essential local workers).
Area Action Plan	AAP	A type of Development Plan Document focused upon a specific location or an area subject to conservation or significant change (for example major regeneration).
Biodiversity net gain	BNG	An approach to development and land management that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than it was beforehand. The Biodiversity Gain objective requires the biodiversity value attributable to a development to exceed pre-development biodiversity value by at least 10%. Post-development biodiversity value may comprise onsite habitat, offsite biodiversity gain and biodiversity credits.
Black Country Authorities	BCA	The four local authorities of Dudley Council, Sandwell Council, Walsall Council and City of Wolverhampton Council
Black Country Core Strategy	BCCS	Shared strategic plan covering the four Black Country districts. The four Black Country authorities worked together to produce the Black Country Core Strategy, covering the period 2006 to 2026. The Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 and provides the framework for various Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans, which set out local policies and site allocations for individual authority areas
Black Country Employment Area Review	BEAR	Study produced by the Black Country authorities to assess the suitability of existing employment land across the Black Country for continued business and industrial use. The study:

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviews the stock of existing operational employment land that is already in use; • identifies the best quality Strategic Employment Areas that should be safeguarded primarily for manufacturing and logistics activity; • identifies those employment areas that have a key role in meeting more local needs, where a wider range of uses can be supported; • identifies those employment areas that have a more limited economic role and could be suitable for release for alternative uses such as housing.
Sandwell Local Plan	SLP	This is the proposed new local plan for the borough of Sandwell, which sets out a series of strategic and non-strategic local policies designed to support the delivery of housing, employment and infrastructure development, mitigate the impacts of climate change and protect the natural environment and areas of historic character.
Brownfield land or site (see also “previously developed land”)	-	Land that is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.
Climate change	-	<p>Climate change refers to long-term shifts in temperatures and weather patterns. These shifts may be natural in part, such as through variations in the solar cycle. Human activities have been the main driver of climate change since the 1800s, primarily due to the burning of fossil fuels like coal, oil and gas.</p> <p>Burning fossil fuels generates greenhouse gas emissions that act like a blanket wrapped around the Earth, trapping the sun’s heat and raising temperatures.</p> <p>Examples of greenhouse gas emissions that are causing climate change include carbon dioxide and methane. These come from using petrol or diesel for driving a car or gas for heating a building, for example. Clearing land and forests can also release carbon dioxide. Landfills for waste are a major source of methane emissions. Energy, industry, transport, buildings, agriculture and land use are among the main emitters⁸.</p>

⁸ <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/what-is-climate-change>

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
Climate change adaptation	-	Adjustments to natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic factors or their effects, including from changes in rainfall and rising temperatures, which moderate harm or exploit beneficial opportunities.
Climate change mitigation	-	Action to reduce the impact of human activity on the climate system, primarily through reducing greenhouse gas emissions.
Conservation covenant		A conservation covenant agreement is a private, voluntary agreement to conserve the natural or heritage features of the land. This can include any buildings on it too. The parts of a conservation covenant agreement that set out what a landowner and responsible body must or must not do to help conserve the land become legally binding as part of it.
Development Plan Document	DPD	<p>Development Plan Documents are prepared by local planning authorities and outline the key development goals of the local development framework. They include the core strategy and, where needed, area action plans. There will also be an adopted proposals map which illustrates the spatial extent of policies that must be prepared and maintained to accompany all DPDs.</p> <p>All DPDs must be subject to rigorous procedures of community involvement, consultation and independent examination, and adopted after receipt of the inspector's binding report. Once adopted, development control decisions must be made in accordance with them unless material considerations indicate otherwise.</p> <p>These are intended to be replaced by supplementary plans, as part of the Government's proposed changes to planning guidance and legislation, in 2023.</p>
Duty to co-operate	DtC	<p>The duty to co-operate was created by the Localism Act 2011. It places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils and public bodies in England to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis with each other to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation relating to strategic cross-boundary matters.</p> <p>This duty is intended to be replaced as part of the Government's proposed changes to planning guidance and legislation, in 2023.</p>

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
Economic Development Needs Assessment	EDNA	<p>The EDNA is a study that advises on the overall demand for employment land to 2039, with specific regard to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on overall demand and specific sectors including logistics and offices.</p> <p>The study confirms the land requirement and level of land supply over the Sandwell Local Plan period. It provides a basis for ongoing Duty to Cooperate engagement with neighbouring local authorities by confirming the gap between demand and supply.</p>
Flood risk assessment	FRA	An assessment of the likelihood of flooding in a particular area so that development needs and mitigation measures can be carefully considered.
Functional Economic Market Area	FEMA	The spatial level at which local economies and markets operate. In most cases, these will extend beyond existing administrative boundaries.
Green / blue infrastructure	-	<p>A network of multi-functional green and blue spaces and other natural features, located in both urban and rural areas, which can deliver a wide range of environmental, economic, health and wellbeing benefits for nature, climate, local and wider communities and prosperity.</p> <p>Blue infrastructure refers to water elements, like rivers, canals, ponds, wetlands, floodplains, water treatment facilities, etc.</p>
Green belt (not to be confused with the term 'greenfield')	GB	<p>A statutory planning designation for land around certain cities and large built-up areas, which aims to keep this land permanently open or largely undeveloped. The purposes of the green belt are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • check the unrestricted sprawl of large built up areas • prevent neighbouring towns from merging • safeguard the countryside from encroachment • preserve the setting and special character of historic towns • assist urban regeneration by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land <p>Green Belts are defined in a local planning authority's development plan.</p>
Greenfield land or site (not to be confused with the term 'green belt')	-	Land (or a defined site) that has not previously been developed.

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
Heritage asset	-	A building, monument, site, place, area or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).
High Speed 2	HS2	A planned high-speed rail network initially set to link London and the West Midlands with a further phase extending to cities in the North.
Historic environment	-	All aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time, including all surviving physical remains of past human activity, whether visible, buried or submerged, and landscaped and planted or managed flora.
Housing Market Area	HMA	A geographical area defined by household demand and preferences for all types of housing, reflecting the key functional linkages between places where people live and work. HMAs do not necessarily coincide with local authority administrative boundaries.
infrastructure	-	Basic services necessary for development to take place, for example, roads, electricity, sewerage, water, education and health facilities.
Irreplaceable habitat	-	Habitats that would be impossible or technically very difficult (or would take a very significant amount of time) to restore, recreate or replace once destroyed, considering their age, uniqueness, species diversity or rarity. They include ancient woodland, ancient and veteran trees, blanket bog, limestone pavement, sand dunes, salt marsh and lowland fen.
Issues and Options document / consultation	-	
Local Enterprise Partnership	LEP	A body, designated by the Secretary of State for Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, established to create or improve the conditions for economic growth in an area. The Black Country Local Enterprise Partnership has now officially closed (2023), with its operations moving to the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).
Local nature reserve	LNR	Non-statutory habitats of local significance designated by local authorities where protection and public understanding of nature conservation is encouraged.

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
Master plan / masterplan	-	A type of planning brief outlining the preferred usage of land and the overall approach to the layout of a developer. To provide detailed guidance for subsequent planning applications
Memorandum of understanding	MoU	A memorandum of understanding outlines the main points of agreement that the parties involved in a negotiation have reached. The MOU is a mutually agreed summary of the areas of agreement and expectations of all signatories (those involved in the negotiations). It is not legally binding.
Midland Metro / West Midlands Metro		West Midlands Metro (originally named Midland Metro) is a light-rail/tram system. Opened on 30 May 1999, it currently consists of a single route operating between Birmingham and Wolverhampton via Bilston, West Bromwich and Wednesbury, running on a mixture of reopened disused railway line and on-street running in urban areas. The line originally terminated at Birmingham Snow Hill station, but with extensions opened in 2015 and 2019, it now runs into Birmingham City Centre to terminate in Centenary Square. Further extensions to Edgbaston and Wolverhampton are scheduled to open during 2022.
Mineral Safeguarding Area	MSA	An area designated by minerals planning authorities, which covers known deposits of minerals that are intended to be kept safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation by non-mineral development.
National Design Guide	-	Guidance on how to recognise and deliver well-designed places, outlining and illustrating the government's priorities for them in the form of ten characteristics. These relate to: context, identity, built form, movement, nature, public spaces, uses, homes & buildings, resources and lifespan. The guide also illustrates how well-designed places can be achieved in practice using a range of good practice examples.
National Model Design Code		The National Model Design Code sets out design considerations that local planning authorities will be expected to take into account when developing local design codes and guides and when determining planning applications.
National nature reserve	NNR	Areas designated with the aim of securing protection and appropriate management of the most important areas of wildlife habitat, and to provide a resource for scientific research. All National Nature Reserves are Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
National Planning Policy Framework	NPPF	The National Planning Policy Framework sets out the UK Government's policies for planning, along with information on how said policies are expected to be applied. The NPPF is not a statutory document but local authorities are expected to take account of its contents when making decisions on planning applications or drafting new local plans.
National Planning Practice Guidance	NPPG	The PPG provides more in-depth advice and guidance on planning topics outlined in the NPPF.
National vocational qualification	NVQ	Work-based awards that are achieved through assessment and training. To achieve an NVQ, candidates must prove that they have the ability to carry out their job to the required standard. NVQs are based on National Occupational Standards that describe the 'competencies' expected in any given job role.
Nature recovery network	NRN	An expanding, increasingly connected, network of wildlife-rich habitats supporting species recovery, alongside wider benefits such as carbon capture, water quality improvements, natural flood risk management and recreation. It includes the existing network of protected sites and other wildlife rich habitats as well as and landscape or catchment scale recovery areas where there is co-ordinated action for species and habitats.
Playing field	-	The whole of a site that encompasses at least one playing pitch as defined in the Town and Country Planning (Development Management Procedure) (England) Order 2015.
Previously Developed Land (see also "brownfield land")	PDL	<p>Land which is or was occupied by a permanent structure, including the curtilage of the developed land (although it should not be assumed that the whole of the curtilage could be developed) and any associated fixed surface infrastructure.</p> <p>This excludes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land that is or has been occupied by agricultural or forestry buildings; • land that has been developed for minerals extraction or waste disposal by landfill purposes where provision for restoration has been made through development control procedures;

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens, parks, recreation grounds and allotments; • and land that was previously-developed but where the remains of the permanent structure or fixed surface structure have blended into the landscape in the process of time
Regeneration Areas		<p>Regeneration is the long-term upgrading of existing urban, industrial and commercial areas to bring about social and economic change.</p> <p>Regeneration can involve the investment of public money to encourage and direct private finance into an area. Governments often define regeneration as being a supportive measure in areas of economic and social decline where market forces have failed.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regulation 18 • Regulation 19 • Regulation 20 <p>of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) Regulations 2012</p>	-	<p>Regulation 18 requires that various bodies and stakeholders, including the public, be notified that the council is preparing a plan. It invites them to comment about what that plan ought to contain and about the policies and allocations it proposes. Comments made at this stage will be considered by the Council and used to help amend the draft plan as necessary.</p> <p>The publication of the Regulation 19 Submission Local Plan policies update is not a consultation stage. Rather it is the point at which the council publishes the updated local plan policies that it intends to adopt, having been informed by earlier consultation and engagement, and that it is seeking representations under Regulation 20 on its soundness and legal compliance. These representations will be dealt with by the Inspector directly, rather than by the council.</p>
Renewable and Low Carbon Energy	-	<p>Includes energy for heating and cooling as well as generating electricity. Renewable energy covers those energy flows that occur naturally and repeatedly in the environment – from the wind, the fall of water, the movement of the oceans, from the sun and from biomass and deep geothermal heat. Low carbon technologies are those that can help reduce emissions (compared to conventional use of fossil fuels).</p>
Sequential approach / sequential test	-	<p>A planning principle that seeks to identify, allocate or develop certain types or locations of land before others. For example, brownfield housing sites before greenfield sites, or town centre retail sites before out-of-centre sites.</p>

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
Site of Special Scientific Interest	SSSI	A site designated by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as an area of special interest by reason of any of its flora, fauna, geological or physiographical features (plants, animals and natural features relating to the Earth's structure).
Sites of importance for nature conservation	SINC	
Sites of local importance for nature conservation	SLINC	
Special Area of Conservation	SAC	Areas defined by regulation 3 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 which have been given special protection as important conservation sites.
Statement of common ground	SCG	<p>A written statement containing factual information about a proposal that is the subject of discussion between the developer / landowner and the council that the promoter reasonably considers will not be disputed by the local planning authority.</p> <p>An agreed statement of common ground is essential to ensure that the evidence considered at a hearing or an inquiry focuses on the material differences between the appellant and the local planning authority. It will provide a commonly understood basis for the developer and the local planning authority and provide context to inform the statements of case and, for an inquiry, the subsequent production of proofs of evidence.</p>
Strategic centre	-	West Bromwich
Strategic Economic Plan	SEP	A plan created by the LEP for its area setting out economic development and growth priorities as the basis for negotiation with government.
Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	SHLAA	<p>A SHLAA is a study of sites that have the potential of accommodating residential development. It identifies the site, the constraints, the likely number of dwellings and determines when the land might be developed for housing. It is a technical exercise to determine the quantity and suitability of potentially available sites. A SHLAA is not a site allocations exercise and does not mean that a site will be developed for housing.</p> <p>It includes sites that may already be under construction but have further dwellings to be delivered and those that have planning permission or a</p>

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
		resolution to grant planning permission. Also included are housing allocations in the Local Plan which do not yet have planning permission and other sites without permission that have been identified by the authority or promoted by landowners, agents or developers, and are considered suitable for development.
sui generis	-	A term given to the uses of land or buildings not falling into any of the use classes identified by the Use Classes Order, for example theatres, launderettes, car showrooms and filling stations.
Supplementary Planning Document	SPD	Documents which add further detail to the policies in the Local Plan. They can be used to provide further guidance for development on specific sites, or on issues such as design. Supplementary planning documents are capable of being a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan.
Sustainability Appraisal	SA	An appraisal of the economic, environmental and social effects of a plan from the outset of the preparation process, to allow decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.
Towns and Neighbourhoods Areas	-	
Unitary Development Plan	UDP	An old-style development plan prepared by a metropolitan district authority and some unitary local authorities. A unitary development plan contained policy like those found in both a structure plan and a local plan. These plans existed for a while after the introduction of the new development system under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 due to the transitional provisions provided for in that Act.
Use Classes Order	-	The Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (and subsequent amendments) essentially categorises different types of property and land into classes. Change between uses within the same class does not constitute development and therefore does not require planning permission. Further related legislation identifies some permitted development rights that allow the change of use from one class to another, subject to conditions, limitations and / or a prior approval process.
viability	-	An individual development can be said to be viable if, after taking account of all costs, including central and local government policy and regulatory

Word / Phrase	Acronym	Meaning
		costs and the costs and availability of development finance, the scheme provides a competitive return to the developer to ensure that development takes place and generates a land value sufficient to persuade a landowner to sell the land for the development proposed. If these conditions are not met, a scheme will not be delivered.
West Midlands Combined Authority	WMCA	The West Midlands Combined Authority was established by statutory instrument under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. It is a strategic authority with powers over transport, economic development and regeneration. The authority formally came into being on 17 June 2016.
Windfall sites	-	Sites for housing or other forms of development not specifically identified in the development plan when it was adopted.

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Consultation Information

We are consulting on the draft Sandwell Local Plan (SLP). The consultation will run between 6th November and 18th December 2023.

All consultation documents are available to view on the Sandwell website at:

<https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/planning/sandwell-local-plan>

Or you can view them by using the following QR code:



Copies of the Draft Plan and consultation documents are available in the reception areas of key Council buildings and public libraries. Details can be found on the Sandwell Local Plan website or by emailing or telephoning the numbers below.

Throughout the consultation, planning officers will be available on an appointment basis to clarify aspects of the draft plan and provide additional information as appropriate.

To make an appointment to speak to a planning officer, please use the information below:

Phone - 0121 569 4054

Email - Sandwell_LocalPlan@sandwell.gov.uk

How to respond

To give us your views, where possible please use the interactive online consultation document available on the webpage as this is the easiest way to view the Plan and make your comments to us. If this is not suitable, you can download a copy of the comments form as a Word document / PDF, to be completed and emailed or printed off and posted back to us.

Please send your comments to us in writing by **18th December 2023 at 17.00hrs.**

Any comments received after this cannot be accepted as they will not have been duly made.

We are unable to accept anonymous representations:

- We will **not** publish your personal contact details, such as your home address, telephone number or email address, but your name and comments will be available for others to see as part of the public consultation process.

- We may share responses including your personal details with the Planning Inspectorate as part of the statutory process of examination. Again, contact information will not be made public.

Please note that we will not formally acknowledge responses and will only contact you if we need further clarification. Your details will be held on our database in accord with the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998 and you will be contacted again at subsequent stages of the local plan process unless you explicitly tell us that you do not wish to be involved any further.

You can also ask to be notified specifically about the subsequent adoption of the Local Plan.

Additional Support

Please let us know if you have any accessibility issues and wherever possible we will make additional documents available to accommodate them.

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Introduction

Purpose of the document

1. The Sandwell Local Plan (SLP) contains strategic and non-strategic planning policies and land allocations intended to support the growth of Sandwell over the years to 2041. It has been prepared and approved for consultation by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, referred to in this document as the Council.
2. The draft SLP contains a Vision for Sandwell in 2041, underpinned by strategic objectives and priorities designed to deliver the Vision and its associated objectives. The planning policies will guide land use and development across the borough and set strong standards for growth and transformation.
3. Once adopted, the SLP will provide a clear and robust strategy for bringing land forward, with a strong presumption in favour of sustainable development on previously-developed land. It will provide certainty and transparency to residents, businesses and developers around how Sandwell is expecting to grow to 2041.

Why does Sandwell need a Local Plan?

4. National planning legislation requires all local authorities to develop a long-term plan that sets out how and where land can be developed over a minimum timescale of 15 years, to meet the needs of local people and businesses. The SLP, which sets out strategic and development management policies¹ for Sandwell, will provide a policy framework to:
 - a) provide certainty over the types of development that are likely to be approved;
 - b) address the issue of climate change;
 - c) protect and enhance designated areas of ecological and environmental importance;
 - d) promote and enhance health and well-being in accordance with health and well-being strategies;
 - e) facilitate the delivery of the right development to meet identified and emerging needs in sustainable locations;
 - f) help address housing needs between now and 2041;

¹ Paragraphs 20 – 21, NPPF (2021)

- g) attract new businesses and jobs and offer existing businesses the space to grow by meeting employment land needs;
- h) increase employment opportunities;
- i) support the aims of wider Black Country and West Midlands Combined Authority economic strategies;
- j) prevent uncoordinated development;
- k) ensure infrastructure, such as roads, public transport, new schools, new healthcare facilities, upgraded utilities and broadband, waste and sewage disposal, is provided at the right time to serve new homes and employment provision.

What will the Local Plan replace?

- 5. When adopted the SLP will replace the Black Country Core Strategy (adopted in 2011), the Sandwell Site Allocations and Development Plan Document (the SAD, adopted in 2012) and Area Action Plans for West Bromwich, Smethwick and Tipton.
- 6. It will also incorporate elements of former supplementary planning documents as appropriate and will include details from the West Bromwich Masterplan and Interim Planning Statement.

The Context of the Local Plan

- 7. The SLP has been prepared in the context of national and local guidance and strategies. A range of evidence has also been commissioned by the Council to justify the draft spatial strategy and draft policies within this plan, which will be available to view on the Sandwell local plan web page alongside the consultation documents.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

- 8. The NPPF sets out the Government's planning guidance for England and how it should be applied. It provides the framework within which locally-prepared plans for housing and other development will be produced.
- 9. Planning law requires that applications for planning permissions are determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The NPPF must also be taken into account when preparing the development plan and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must reflect relevant international obligations and other statutory requirements.

Duty to Co-operate

10. The Localism Act (2011) introduced a requirement on all local authorities to co-operate with neighbouring local authorities and other bodies with a regulatory or strategic interest in Local Plan issues. The duty requires ongoing, constructive and effective engagement on plan-making, which may have strategic cross-boundary implications.

Black Country Strategic Economic Plan

11. The Black Country Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) sets out the vision, objectives, strategy, and actions to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the Black Country, an area with unique assets, challenges, and opportunities. In May 2019 the West Midlands Combined Authority, in partnerships with the region's three Local Enterprise Partnerships (Black Country, Coventry and Warwickshire and Greater Birmingham and Solihull), published the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy², building on local Strategic Economic Plans.

West Midlands Combined Authority

12. The West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) seeks to deliver a vision of a more prosperous West Midlands. The Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) sets out the vision, objectives, strategy and actions needed to improve the quality of life for everyone who lives and works in the West Midlands.
13. To deliver success for the West Midlands, the West Midlands Local Industrial Strategy was agreed with government and published in May 2019. It sets out various priorities intended to help increase the productivity of the West Midlands.
14. The Sandwell Local Plan will provide a basis for public and private investment decisions in Sandwell, including for Towns Fund projects and devolved housing and land funds. Sandwell Council will continue to work with the WMCA and neighbouring authorities to ensure that investment and delivery in the Black Country continues across the plan period.

Previous consultations on the Sandwell Local Plan

15. The preparation of the draft SLP commenced in late 2022 with the production of an Issues and Options Review, on which public consultation was undertaken early in 2023. This used

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/802091/west-midlands-local-industrial-strategy-single-page.pdf

both traditional and online mechanisms to support consultation and draw responses from residents, the development industry and statutory bodies.

16. A total of 265 representations were received from stakeholders, developers and members of the public, covering various issues including the need to address climate change, protect open spaces, promote accessible and sustainable travel, deliver sufficient additional housing to meet Sandwell's needs and preserve the historic environment, ecology and canals.
17. In addition, 18 sites were identified through a Call for Sites exercise that ran at the same time as the consultation, identified by landowners and promoters / consultants. These were assessed as part of the SLP Site Assessment process.
18. Following the Issues and Options consultation the next stage of the Plan is the production of this draft version. When producing the Draft Plan, the Council considered the representations received to the Issues and Options consultation, along with a range of evidence produced to inform decision-making. Consultation on the Draft Plan (Reg18) will take place in late 2023.
19. The draft SLP is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal and Habitat Regulation Assessment. It also contains a series of appendices in an annex to this main document, which should be considered in accordance with the plan where necessary

Black Country Core Strategy

20. The Black Country encompasses the areas administered by Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council (MBC), Sandwell MBC, Walsall MBC and the City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC). The four authorities worked together to produce the Black Country Core Strategy, which was adopted in 2011. The existing Core Strategy provides the framework for various Site Allocation Documents and Area Action Plans, which themselves set out local policies and site allocations for individual authority areas.
21. The Core Strategy covers the period between 2006 and 2026. From the outset there was a clear intention to review it five years after adoption, to ensure the spatial objectives and strategy were being effectively delivered and to keep the plan up to date. This is in line with national planning guidance. The most immediate issues both Sandwell and the Black Country are facing is that both their population and economy are continuing to grow and as a result there is a need to identify additional housing and employment sites. This demand is now beyond the capacity of the existing Strategy to address.
22. The national economic situation has also changed. The existing Core Strategy was prepared as the country was emerging from the global recession of 2008, and the Black Country was

recovering from a period of economic and population decline. This was reflected in the Core Strategy in a clear emphasis on the recycling of land previously in industrial use to provide for housing and newer employment activities such as offices. However, the manufacturing and industrial markets of the Black Country remained stable and have grown in some cases, meaning that the expected surplus of vacant brownfield land available for additional housing has not occurred in practice. There is now a significant demand for additional land to meet employment needs across the area.

23. Looking to the future, the opening of HS2 and the extension to the Midland Metro are likely to have a significant impact on the wider Black Country in the medium to longer term. There have also been several changes to national policy, including a revised national planning policy framework in 2021 and associated guidance, national design guidance and changes to building regulations and environmental legislation.
24. More recently, the COVID19 pandemic in 2020 – 2022 caused a significant shift in the way the sub-region's residents work, shop and access services. There are likely to be some longer-term changes in the way communities operate that will have implications for land uses, and the SLP will seek to address those issues using robust, flexible and sensitive policies focussed on Sandwell's needs and aspirations.

Sub-regional Context

25. The Black Country forms a distinctive sub-region on the western side of the West Midlands conurbation, close to the City of Birmingham. It shares an eastern boundary with Birmingham and to the north, west and south it is bounded by districts within Staffordshire, Shropshire and Worcestershire. It is in relatively close proximity to centres such as Cannock and Bromsgrove. It has a unique and rich economic history, settlement form and topography / geology and is very much shaped by its industrial past.
26. The four local authorities within the Black Country face a similar set of social, economic, and environmental challenges and have found it effective to tackle many strategic issues on a cross-boundary basis. The authorities have worked closely together since the early 2000s to establish a clear and collective set of ambitions and directions of travel, expressed in an agreed economic and spatial strategy. Joint working has strengthened and deepened over that time – moving from establishing a 30-year Vision in 2003, to adopting a Joint Core Strategy in 2011, through to securing funding through the Black Country LEP and the West Midlands Combined Authority in 2017 to deliver priority projects.

Sandwell Spatial Portrait

27. **Background:** Sandwell is a multi-centred and highly urbanised metropolitan borough. It comprises six historic former boroughs:
- Oldbury;
 - Rowley Regis (including the town centres of Blackheath and Cradley Heath);
 - Smethwick (including the town centres of Bearwood and Cape Hill);
 - Tipton (including the town centre of Great Bridge);
 - Wednesbury;
 - West Bromwich.
28. These historic former boroughs all maintain their own distinct identities and local communities. West Bromwich is designated as Sandwell's strategic centre and is the largest town in the borough, while Sandwell Council House (the headquarters of the local authority) is situated in Oldbury, the main civic centre.
29. The Metropolitan Borough of Sandwell was formed in 1974 under the Local Government Act 1972 and is an amalgamation of the former county boroughs of Warley and West Bromwich, which in turn had been created from the previous boroughs of Oldbury, Rowley Regis, and Smethwick (Warley County Borough), and Tipton, Wednesbury and West Bromwich (West Bromwich County Borough).
30. Historically, metalworking in Sandwell dates from the Middle Ages, and coal was mined from the 13th century onwards. Sandwell's main industrial growth, based on local coal and ironstone reserves, followed the coming of the canals in the 18th century. Several ironworks were established here, including the Soho Manufactory (1761) at Smethwick, which was associated with the engineers James Watt and Matthew Boulton.
31. Sandwell is bordered by the cities of Birmingham and Wolverhampton and the metropolitan boroughs of Dudley and Walsall. Spanning the borough are the parliamentary constituencies of West Bromwich West, West Bromwich East, Warley and part of Halesowen and Rowley Regis, which crosses into the borough of Dudley.
32. The borough covers an area of 86 square kilometres. It contains 1,200 hectares of parks, playing fields and local green space and around 66km of canals.

Figure 1 - Sandwell Metropolitan Borough



33. The borough has excellent access to the wider national motorway network via two junctions of the M5 motorway (Junction 1 of the M5 in West Bromwich and Junction 2 of the M5 at Birchley Island), and two junctions of the M6 motorway (Junction 7 of the M6 at Great Barr and Junction 9 of the M6 at Wednesbury), which in turn serves the southwest, southeast and northwest regions of the UK. Sandwell also benefits from access to the national railway network via a mainline station (Sandwell and Dudley Railway Station), and the Midland Metro runs between Wednesbury and Birmingham city centre with a 15-minute journey time.
34. In recent years, Sandwell has seen the successful delivery of several prestigious and highly visible projects and developments and this transformational growth trend is continuing. Projects that have been undertaken include:

- Sandwell Aquatics Centre – the brand-new centre was built and delivered in time for the 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games and was used throughout the Games for swimming and aquatics events. Following the Games, the venue has been refurbished into a community health and wellbeing asset;
 - Birchley Island – a £25.5m scheme to improve connectivity to the adjacent M5 Junction 2 by providing a new through lane for improved motorway access, enhanced facilities for pedestrians and cyclists and widened connected roads with signal control;
 - Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills: National Foundry Training Centre - as part of the £12.7m Elite Centre for Manufacturing Skills scheme, this centre provides access to industrial facilities and a purpose-built training block of 950 sqm in Tipton;
 - Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension via Dudley – this will create a direct public transport route from Wednesbury to the Wolverhampton to Walsall rail line at the Dudley Port interchange.
35. **Demographic Trends**³: The 2021 Census estimates that Sandwell has 341,900 residents, a rise of 11.0% since 2011. This compares with a rise of 6.3% in England and Wales. The 11% rise in Sandwell since 2011 is the highest in the West Midlands Metropolitan County area, the next highest being in Coventry (8.9%).
36. In 2021, Sandwell ranked 27th for total population out of 309 local authority areas in England, moving up six places in a decade. The borough's population is predicted to grow at a faster rate than both the population of the West Midlands and the national average and is forecast to increase by 30,000 between 2016 and 2030. This area is the second-most densely populated local authority area across the West Midlands (after Birmingham)⁴.
37. Sandwell has a young and diverse population, with more than 40% of its residents under the age of 30, compared to around 30% elsewhere in the UK. Just over 40% of residents are from an ethnic minority background, making the population more diverse than the regional and UK average of 18.8% and 14% respectively.
38. The most common main languages spoken in Sandwell, other than English, are Panjabi (6.4%), Polish (1.7%), Bengali (1.0%) and Urdu (1.0%).

³ Information in this chapter taken from [Sandwell Trends](#), based on the 2021 census, unless otherwise stated.

⁴ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censusareachanges/E08000028/>

39. **Health** - the health of people in Sandwell does not on the whole compare well with England averages. Sandwell is one of the 20% most deprived districts / unitary authorities in England and around 25.5% (18,495) of its children live in low-income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is lower than the England average; 76.1 years for men and 80.7 years for women compared to 79.4 years (male) and 83.1 years (female) nationally⁵. Life expectancy inequality also exists within Sandwell itself – life expectancy is 8.6 years lower for men and 8 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of the borough compared to the least deprived areas⁶.
40. **Economy and Skills:** Sandwell has a long history of industrial activity, especially in manufacturing. Until the 1980s the Black Country, together with neighbouring Birmingham, was the powerhouse of Britain's manufacturing economy. The recessions in the early 1980s and during 2008 – 09 had significant and lasting adverse impacts on the local economy and saw the loss of a significant number of companies and a high level of unemployment, but the sub-region has recovered
41. The West Midlands was one of the hardest hit parts of the UK economy during the COVID19 pandemic⁷. Sandwell's demography and urban structure exposed it to Covid, most notably in its central corridor of older, poor-quality housing and in ethnic minority groups where infection rates were highest.
42. The impact of successive lockdowns in 2020-21 that were needed to contain the pandemic caused significant economic damage. Sandwell was already in recession when COVID hit and subsequently experienced many business failures, most visibly in high streets, and widespread rises in unemployment, particularly among young people.
43. Sandwell borough is almost the same size in population terms as Nottingham and is bigger than Newcastle, Oxford, and Milton Keynes, but those locations all have larger economies than Sandwell.

⁵ Public Health England - <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/profile/health-profiles/data#page/1/gid/1938132696/ati/402/iid/90366/age/1/sex/1/cat/-1/ctp/-1/yr/3/cid/4/tbm/1>

⁶ Public Health England - <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/e08000028.html?area-name=sandwell> (2019)

⁷ The West Midlands showed the largest negative growth in GDP in Quarter 2 2020 when compared with the same quarter a year earlier, at 24.7%; Source: ONS <https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/grossdomesticproductgdp/bulletins/gdpukregionsandcountries/apriltojune2020>

44. Sandwell has many growing and productive businesses and a higher-than-average proportion of its businesses are small, but residents are not always able to take up opportunities related to those employment and economic activities. Local businesses will often need a highly skilled workforce to be able to grow to meet modern demands; that workforce needs training and support to help deliver and accelerate innovation. Sandwell also has a limited amount of the type of high-quality land needed to enable businesses to expand and grow in the borough's industrial core.
45. **Productivity** - Sandwell's economy (Gross Value Added) was worth £6.644 billion in 2020⁸, which represents a value of £20,192 per head. While lower than both the West Midlands Metropolitan Area and the UK averages, Sandwell's productivity is higher than that of the other authorities in the Black Country.
46. **Business Population** - Sandwell has around 11,600 active business units⁹:
- 9,585 (82.6%) are micro businesses;
 - 1,970 (17.5%) are Small and Medium Enterprises; and
 - 50 (0.4%) are large units.
47. Of these businesses, only 40 are designated as 'high growth' enterprises¹⁰. There is however evidence of a considerable entrepreneurial spirit in the area, with approximately 1,775 new businesses being created and 915 shutting down annually.
48. **Economic Activity** - In Sandwell, 71% of employees work full time, with 29% working part time¹¹. The challenge in Sandwell is in maintaining positive economic growth and keeping it moving forward, particularly following the COVID19 pandemic, and ensuring growth is sustainable.
49. Two other factors that had a major underlying legacy effect on Sandwell's economy were:

⁸ Black Country Consortium Economic Intelligence Unit - <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoizGVkYjYzODMtN2Q0Ny00N2I3LWFzmtZDE2OWZhOWI4OGViliwidCI6ImNhM2RjZDRiLT RiNDUtNGUyMi1iODFhLWQ5NjMzZDVhOGM5ZS9>

⁹ NOMIS – Business Counts 2022 <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157189/printable.aspx>

¹⁰ A business with average annualised growth greater than 20% per annum over a three-year period is considered a high-growth enterprise. Growth can be measured by the number of employees or by turnover (Eurostat – OECD Manual on Business Demography Statistics).

¹¹ Census 2021

- the global financial crisis of 2007-2008, which reduced access to private sector finance;
 - a sustained period of public sector austerity beginning in 2010; this reduced both the overall ability of local government to protect vulnerable communities and reduced their capacity to spend locally on projects that helped deliver economic growth to businesses and better prospects of employment and skills to residents.
50. During the early 2020s a range of economic shocks (including the COVID19 pandemic, the UK's exit from the EU market in 2020, higher inflation and a more volatile energy and commodity market ensuing from the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022) have resulted in challenges for businesses of all sizes. Other significant changes to the economy have occurred through changes in working patterns, such as a significant rise in the number of Sandwell residents now working from home.
51. It is within the context of this period of economic instability that the SLP is being developed. In effect this means that the underlying resilience of the local economic base has been through a significant period of disruption. In terms of its approach, Sandwell Council has had to prioritise a range of measures that have helped to mitigate the impacts of the current cost of living crisis on both local communities and businesses.
52. Ensuring economic growth is sustainable remains a major priority for future development in Sandwell and the SLP delivers a key part of that process by identifying the right sites and policies to support economic growth.
53. Sandwell has a higher-than-average level of economic inactivity and unemployment.

Table 1 - Employment and Unemployment in Sandwell¹²

Economic Activity	Sandwell Numbers	Sandwell %	West Midlands Met %	Great Britain %
Economically Active	151,100	69.1	77.5	78.4
In Employment	142,000	64.7	73.6	75.5
Employees	125,100	57.3	64.9	66.0

¹² NOMIS (Employment and unemployment figures for April 2022 to March 2023)

Economic Activity	Sandwell Numbers	Sandwell %	West Midlands Met %	Great Britain %
Self Employed	16,300	7.0	8.4	9.2
Unemployed	9,100	6.0	4.8	3.6

54. Over the same period, NOMIS identified that 66,900 residents (32% of residents aged 16 - 64) were economically inactive (compared with 21.6% in Great Britain)¹³.

Economically Inactive (age 16-64)	Sandwell Nos.	% of overall workforce
Total Inactive	64,400	30.9%
Students	11,700	18.2%
Looking After Family / Home	18,600	28.9%
Long-Term Sick	20,500	31.8%

55. 6% of the working population are classed as unemployed¹⁴ (as a proportion of economically active residents), with 14.2% of households classed as 'workless'¹⁵ (where households contain at least one person aged 16 to 64 and where no-one aged 16 or over is in employment). Gross weekly incomes are below the national average, with the Sandwell median average wage for full-time workers being £549 per week compared to a national average of £642¹⁶.
56. **Qualifications and Skills:** Around a third of the Sandwell working age population are graduates. This is significantly lower than the UK average rate for the equivalent group, forming the most highly skilled band of National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4 or above. As a result, Sandwell has a smaller pool of workers able to compete for more highly skilled vacancies. 11.5% of the Sandwell working age population have no qualifications at

¹³ NOMIS - Economic inactivity (Apr 2022 – March 2023) <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157189/printable.aspx>

¹⁴ NOMIS – Employment and unemployment (April 2022 – March 2023)

¹⁵ NOMIS - Workless Households (Jan-Dec 2021)

¹⁶ NOMIS – Earnings by place of residence (2022) <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157189/printable.aspx>

all, which figure is around three quarters' higher than the UK average. This means that the Sandwell workforce are more likely than those in the rest of the UK to work in lower skilled occupations.

57. **Employment:** In terms of job numbers, the three main employment sectors in Sandwell are retail and wholesale, manufacturing and health and social care. In terms of critical or Sandwell-specific sectors, where Sandwell plays a stronger or more disproportionate role within the wider economy than the national average, the highest contributors are manufacturing (+111% greater than the national average); electricity, gas and air conditioning (+100% greater); water supply and waste management (+71% greater); transportation and storage (+59% greater); and retail and wholesale (+40% greater)¹⁷.

Table 2 - Distribution of Jobs in Sandwell

Sandwell Economic Sectors	Workers	% of workers	Compared to UK average
Wholesale, Retail & Vehicle Repair	25,000	20.2	+40%
Manufacturing	20,000	16.1	+111%
Health & Social Care	16,000	12.9	-6%
Transportation & Storage	10,000	8.1	+59%
Education	10,000	8.1	-8%
Admin & Support Services	9,000	7.3	-18%
Construction	7,000	5.6	+14%
Accommodation & Food Service	6,000	4.8	-36%
Professional, Scientific & Technical	5,000	4.0	-55%
Public Administration & Defence	3,500	2.8	-39%
Other Service Activities	3,500	2.8	+32%
Arts, Entertainment & Recreation	2,500	2.0	-13%

¹⁷ Source – ONS Business Register and Employment Survey, October 2022

Sandwell Economic Sectors	Workers	% of workers	Compared to UK average
Real Estate	2,500	2.0	+11%
Water Supply & Waste Management	1,500	1.2	+71%
Information & Communication	1,500	1.2	-73%
Finance & Insurance	1,250	1.0	-72%
Electricity, Gas & Air Conditioning	1,000	0.8	+100%

58. **Workforce and travel to work:** each day, 59,000 people come into Sandwell from neighbouring areas to work, and almost 62,000 of Sandwell's residents work outside the Borough. The job density per working age population is 0.63, compared to 0.80 in the West Midlands Metropolitan area and 0.84 in the UK.
59. **Housing:** In March 2021¹⁸, Sandwell had 130,246 household spaces. 54% of households were in owner-occupation, 27% were social rented and 19% were rented from a private landlord. The average household size in Sandwell is 2.42, which is slightly above the England and Wales average of 2.4. In terms of household composition, in 2021, 38,042 households in Sandwell are made up of only one person, which equates to just under 30% of the total.
60. **Transport:** Sandwell lies at the heart of the national Strategic Road Network. The intersection between the M5 and M5 motorways is in the north of the borough and four motorway junctions, Junctions 7 and 9 of the M6 and Junctions 1 and 2 of the M5, provide access to and from all parts of the borough. The local road network consists of 880km (547 miles) of highways, including the strategic A41, A461, A457 and A4123 routes, which link the borough's centres to each other, the wider Black Country and Birmingham.
61. There are three rail lines, serving thirteen stations, that pass through the borough;
- the Stour Valley section of the West Coast Mainline provides local services from Tipton, Oldbury and Smethwick to Birmingham and Wolverhampton as well as inter-city links to London and the north;

¹⁸ 2021 Census

- the Chase Line links Birmingham New Street to Walsall and Cannock and serves the north of Sandwell;
 - the Birmingham Snow Hill to Worcester line serves Smethwick and the southwest of the borough.
62. In addition, large parts of the borough are served by the West Midlands Metro network, which provides connections to Birmingham and Wolverhampton. An extension to Dudley Town Centre is expected to open in 2024, with a further phase to Brierley Hill expected to complete at a later date.
63. To complete the picture, there is an extensive 66km (41 mile) canal network throughout the borough.
64. The Covid19 pandemic combined with the shift to home working, particularly in the office sector, has changed the way people move around; this is true of both the times at which they make journeys and the mode by which these journeys are made.
65. Car use has returned almost to pre-pandemic levels, with 1.29bn vehicle miles being travelled on Sandwell's Roads during 2022, which is around the same as the figure for 2016 and is approaching the record peak of 1.35bn vehicle miles seen during 2019. The 2023 figures are expected to continue this upward trend¹⁹.
66. In contrast the number of public transport journeys, particularly during commuter periods, has not recovered to the same degree. Bus use in 2021/22 was at around 70% of pre-pandemic levels, whilst for metro the figure was 60% and for rail it was 50%. Whilst a recovery in journey numbers has continued, the 2022/23 figures are still expected to be significantly below pre-pandemic levels. In Sandwell, bus continues to be the most important public transport mode, accounting for approximately four out of every five such journeys made.
67. **Centres:** Sandwell's origins lie in six distinct Urban District Councils, which merged together to form a seamless and significant part of the wider West Midlands conurbation.
68. Sandwell is a heavily urbanised metropolitan area, with a Strategic Centre at West Bromwich, seven town centres, thirteen district and local centres and many small parades of shops. It is a genuinely 'polycentric' borough.

¹⁹ Dept. for Transport Road Traffic Statistics 2022

69. Sandwell has been subject to the same trends in retailing other areas have, but also suffers from significant levels of deprivation and lower incomes, which in turn has had an impact on retailing activity across the borough. The rise of 'big box' supermarkets, internet shopping, limited range discounters, out-of-centre retail parks and standalone out-of-centre supermarkets have all impacted on the vitality of its centres. The pandemic lockdown conversely provided a boost to local centres as people tended to shop more locally.
70. West Bromwich received a major boost with the delivery of the New Square development in 2013 but has fallen back in comparative terms to other centres nationally. New Square shifted the 'centre of gravity' of the retail area, with a subsequent decline in footfall and occupancy levels at parts of its periphery towards Bull Street, but also in Queens Square. West Bromwich's vacancy rate is 17.74%, compared to 13.81% nationally (as at 2022).
71. As with other urban areas, comparison shopping (i.e., for clothes, electrical goods etc.) are increasingly concentrated in the strategic centre, with other centres taking on a more services-orientated role.
72. **Built heritage and natural environment:** Despite its industrial heritage and highly urban nature, Sandwell is home to several significant areas of green and open space, a network of wildlife corridors and sites with significant ecological and environmental value and a number of historic and architecturally significant buildings and locations.
73. Sandwell is home to 204 listed buildings and nine conservation areas. There are also five designated parks and gardens (all listed at Grade II) and seven scheduled monuments²⁰. There are many pressures on built heritage assets - to modernise or demolish historic buildings, change their uses, develop within heritage conservation areas and remove landscaping. Given the irreplaceable contribution heritage assets make, the government has made it clear that it is important that heritage assets and their settings are preserved or enhanced as a reminder of the history and evolution of the area.
74. All features of the outdoor environment contribute to environmental infrastructure, including natural and semi-natural habitats, parks and other open spaces, formal and informal recreation and sports facilities, historic buildings and landscapes, the public realm of spaces and streets, rivers, canals and drainage systems.

²⁰ Data from Historic England website (June 2023)

75. Sandwell benefits from 543 green spaces, with 323 of those spaces (59%) offering unrestricted public access. This provides 3.63 hectares of open space per 1,000 population and offers more unrestricted green space access than some comparable local authorities, including Birmingham, Oldham, Hull, and Knowsley²¹. More formal green and open spaces in Sandwell include²²:
- 32 parks and gardens (including nine Green Flag parks)
 - 211 amenity green spaces (from small local spaces to larger communal green spaces)
 - 75 natural and semi-natural green spaces (including nine recognised nature reserves)
 - 22 green corridors (such as green walkways and other networks that connect areas)
 - 48 outdoor sports sites (including 15 playing pitches, 27 Multi-Use Games Areas, 33 outdoor gyms, four bowling greens and 12 BMX and skate facilities)
 - 34 allotment sites (with 1,336 plots)
 - 69 play areas (including toddler and junior play facilities).
76. Following aerial surveys completed as part of the recent Black Country iTree project²³, it is estimated that Sandwell contains around 265,000 trees, covering 18.1% of the borough. This is higher than the UK average of 16%. It is estimated that 81% of these trees are in good or excellent condition.
77. **Broadband and 5G:** Sandwell has high levels of broadband connectivity – in May 2022 84.1% of premises were gigabit capable, compared to 66.6% in the UK. 85% of premises had speeds equal to or greater than 300 Mbit/s, compared to 68% in the UK. As at December 2022, Sandwell had superfast broadband coverage of approximately 99.7% and full fibre coverage of 40.49%; this compares to the UK average for superfast broadband of 97.4% and full fibre coverage of 45.1%²⁴.

Challenges and Issues

78. The following summarises the key strategic challenges and opportunities that have arisen since the Core Strategy was adopted in 2011. These issues form the main opportunities and

²¹ Paragraph 3.3, Draft Green Spaces Strategy Implementation and Business Plan 22/23 – 25/26 – Sandwell MBC Green Spaces

²² https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200237/green_spaces_leisure_and_events/4941/green_spaces

²³ <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/8657602fefdc4e2f87c07e668aa47810>

²⁴ <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/sandwell-district,E08000028>

challenges which the Plan Strategy, objectives and suite of policies and proposals seek to address:

- a) ***Climate change and protecting and enhancing the environment*** - the Plan needs to address the challenge of mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change in ensuring sustainability principles are embedded across all areas. It will also need to create a strategy for the enhancement and protection of Sandwell's environment and make provision for new environmental infrastructure required to support sustainable growth.
- b) ***Providing good quality housing that meets the needs of a growing population*** - the Plan needs to identify sufficient land for housing to meet the needs of people who are likely to live in the area over the period of the plan.
- c) ***Supporting a resurgent economy, which provides access to employment and opportunities for investment*** - the Plan should provide for a range of employment sites capable of meeting a wide variety of investment needs.
- d) ***Supporting strong and competitive centres*** - to address the health and enhance the vitality and viability of our centres and ensure Sandwell has realistic ambitions for growth. The Plan should provide a flexible policy framework to allow centres to serve the future growth identified in Sandwell (particularly housing and employment), diversify and provide strict tests to defend against proposals that could undermine centres, such as out-of-centre developments.
- e) ***Keeping Sandwell connected*** - a balanced approach to transport investment is required that recognises the need to invest in all modes of transport but identifies a priority in increasing the proportion of people using public transport, walking and cycling.
- f) ***Providing infrastructure to support growth*** - physical and social infrastructure is required to enable and support the growth required over the plan period. New housing and economic development will put pressure on existing services and utilities but may also create opportunities to provide infrastructure solutions.
- g) ***Health and Wellbeing*** - The role of the environment in shaping the social, economic and environmental circumstances that determine health and wellbeing is increasingly recognised and understood. The SLP seeks to address this.

Draft Sandwell Local Plan - contents

79. The Plan is structured as follows:
- Section 1 sets out how the Plan has been prepared and establishes the local context, highlighting the strategic challenges Sandwell faces.
 - Section 2 provides the spatial vision, strategic objectives and priorities of the Plan that provide the basis for the policy and spatial approach.
 - Section 3 sets out the overall spatial strategy for Sandwell, containing overarching policies intended to deliver the vision and objectives of the Plan.
 - Sections 4-15 set out the detailed policies, organised by themes and reflecting the role of the Vision in delivering sustainable growth for Sandwell.
80. In addition to this, the Plan contains several appendices that address in more detail certain aspects of the Plan policies and contain information on allocated sites for both housing and employment uses. Alongside the Plan sits a focussed evidence base that contains the up-to-date information and data the Plan is based on.
81. A series of topic papers have also been produced that address certain policy areas in more detail and explain the thinking behind the approach Sandwell Council has taken to the delivery of growth and development in the borough.
82. The Council has also produced a paper on the background and choices related to the identification of the Spatial Strategy for the SLP, setting out the spatial and growth options that were considered reasonable alternatives. These were subject to sustainability appraisal and the outcome of this work resulted in the development strategy set out in Policy SDS1.

1. Sandwell 2041: Spatial Vision, Priorities and Objectives

What is driving the Vision for Sandwell?

- 1.1 The Vision reflects what Sandwell will be like in the future if the needs and aspirations of those who live, work in or visit the area are met. It also needs to be flexible, to allow the Council to respond to future challenges in a way that is right for Sandwell, its residents and its businesses.
- 1.2 The Vision has been written in the context of national, regional and local policy frameworks, including the Council's own Corporate Plan and its own vision. The Sandwell Vision 2030²⁵ is as follows:

It's where we call home and where we're proud to belong - where we choose to bring up our families, where we feel safe and cared for, enjoying good health, rewarding work, feeling connected and valued in our neighbourhoods and communities, confident in the future, and benefiting fully from a revitalised West Midlands.

- 1.3 The Sandwell Vision 2030 also sets out ten ambitions for a successful Sandwell and what success will look like, all of which will have direct or indirect relevance to the aims of the new SLP. These are included in the Vision 2030 document, available to view on the Sandwell Council website, but they are briefly set out below together with an explanation of the role the SLP will play in meeting them.

Ambition 1

Sandwell is a community where our families have high aspirations and where we pride ourselves on equality of opportunity and on our adaptability and resilience.

SLP relevance:

- promoting and supporting sustainable development that helps to meet local need / demand;
- providing for sufficient services and facilities in locations accessible to all in Sandwell's communities;
- delivering a healthy supply of land for economic growth and employment;

²⁵ <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/Vision2030>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering strong policy support to combatting climate change adaptation and mitigation; • protecting and enhancing the natural environment, nature conservation and open spaces; • delivering opportunities for biodiversity net gain, landscaping and tree planting.
Ambition 2
Sandwell is a place where we live healthy lives and live them for longer, and where those of us who are vulnerable feel respected and cared for.
<p>SLP relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting, enhancing and making accessible land for sport and leisure including active and passive recreation; • providing clear policy support for development aimed to deliver health and welfare infrastructure.
Ambition 3
Our workforce and young people are skilled and talented, geared up to respond to changing business needs and to win rewarding jobs in a growing economy
<p>SLP relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering a healthy supply of land for economic growth and employment.
Ambition 4
Our children benefit from the best start in life and a high-quality education throughout their school careers with outstanding support from their teachers and families.
<p>SLP relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing land and sites for sufficient services and facilities in locations accessible to all in Sandwell's communities including schools, colleges and opportunities for higher education.
Ambition 5
Our communities are built on mutual respect and taking care of each other, supported by all the agencies that ensure we feel safe and protected in our homes and local neighbourhoods.

<p>SLP relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting the development and improvement of attractive, safe and accessible public realm, support services and community infrastructure as part of new development and project delivery.
Ambition 6
We have excellent and affordable public transport that connects us to all local centres and to jobs in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, the airport and the wider West Midlands.
<p>SLP relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering a co-ordinated and strategic travel and transport network through Sandwell that links communities to opportunities both within and beyond its boundaries, supported by appropriate planning policies and land use designations.
Ambition 7
We now have many new homes to meet a full range of housing needs in attractive neighbourhoods and close to key transport routes.
<p>SLP relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • delivering a healthy supply of land for the delivery of zero and low carbon housing across the borough; • supporting the creation of additional affordable and sustainable communities.
Ambition 8
Our distinctive towns and neighbourhoods are successful centres of community life, leisure and entertainment where people increasingly choose to bring up their families.
<p>SLP relevance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting and supporting sustainable development that helps to meet local need / demand; • providing for sufficient services and facilities in locations accessible to all in Sandwell's communities.
Ambition 9

Sandwell has become a location of choice for industries of the future where the local economy and high performing companies continue to grow.

SLP relevance:

- delivering a healthy supply of land for economic growth and employment;
- supporting the delivery of sufficient high-quality physical / digital infrastructure;
- delivering a co-ordinated and strategic travel and transport network through Sandwell;
- providing land and sites for sufficient educational services and facilities in locations accessible to all.

Ambition 10

Sandwell now has a national reputation for getting things done, where all local partners are focused on what really matters in people's lives and communities.

SLP relevance:

- being an up-to-date local plan backed by sound evidence and robust policies that enable planning permissions to be granted swiftly and in close co-operation with applicants, developers and local communities.

Vision for Sandwell

1.4 The Sandwell Local Plan Vision is set out below:

Sandwell Local Plan Vision 2041

In 2041, Sandwell is a thriving, growing and active borough, leading the urban renaissance of the West Midlands conurbation. It is a place with a united and resilient community, a place of innovation and industry and a place with a vibrant and strong cultural heritage.

Sandwell is at the forefront of tackling climate change, in its role as a hub for climate adaptation and mitigation technologies and industries. Its new buildings are clean and green in their design, materials and operations, its old buildings are carefully adapted to deliver low and zero carbon outputs. It sets the standard in both public and private sectors for embedding climate change awareness and sensitivity in all its actions, outcomes and decisions.

Notwithstanding its urban character, Sandwell's residents enjoy access to country and town parks, open spaces, green networks, natural corridors and pocket parks. They benefit from additional landscaping schemes and increased tree cover during their everyday activities and leisure time. Sandwell's natural environment is valued for its own sake as well as for its role in creating a healthy, attractive and climate change-resistant background for people living, working, learning in and enjoying the borough.

Sandwell's historic environment is a source of pride for its communities and continues to reflect its industrial and architectural heritage, in restoration and renovation schemes and in the sensitive design of new buildings. Historic buildings in Sandwell are reused, repurposed and retrofitted to enable their retention and occupation for years to come.

Sandwell continues to deliver sustained and sustainable economic growth and investment opportunities from its highly accessible location at the heart of the country. It provides high-quality goods and services from its powerful industrial base and levels of employment, wages and economic activity are high and rising.

As part of this forward-looking economic activity, Sandwell has also continued to support investment in critical waste, energy and transport infrastructure that has resulted in a robust circular economy, where not only does less waste end up in

Sandwell Local Plan Vision 2041

landfill, but less waste is produced overall in Sandwell, more recycling takes place and cutting-edge waste-to-energy operations provide the fuel for local heating networks.

Sandwell's residents enjoy longer and healthier lives than in previous decades, thanks to the increase in accessible open spaces, the provision of services and facilities designed to promote active recreation and leisure, the improvement of and increased accessibility to healthcare infrastructure and the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices. They have access to well-performing schools, higher and further education provision at all levels and to continued opportunities for skills development and training.

There is a wide range of housing available to Sandwell residents, aiming to help meet housing needs, designed to support green living and suitable for adaptation to benefit all sections of the community. Affordable, social and local authority-provided homes are available to those who need them. New developments are located within attractively landscaped areas, with access to district and low-cost energy and heating projects, sustainable drainage designed to improve the local environment as well as provide reliable protection against flooding and run-off and all necessary services and facilities within walking and cycling distance or a short bus ride away.

Sandwell's town centres thrive by day and by night, with an expanded range of retail, leisure and socialising opportunities as well as acting as the foci for new residential developments, community activities and social enterprises. They are safe, welcoming and accessible locations during both day and night, designed to encourage positive public interactions and minimise antisocial behaviour.

Priorities and Objectives

- 1.5 To assist in the delivery of the Vision, a set of priorities have been identified, which form the basis of individual policies contained in the SLP. These priorities directly address the key strategic challenges and opportunities that have arisen since the Core Strategy was adopted in 2011 and the SAD was produced.
- 1.6 The Vision will be delivered by the achievement of the strategic objectives identified in Table 3.

Table 3 – Priorities, Strategic Objectives and Policies

Priority	Strategic Objective	Policy
Climate Change	Objective 1: Ensure new development takes a proactive approach to climate change mitigation, adaptation and carbon reduction, and that development is resilient to climate change	Policy SDS1, Policy SDS4, Policy SDS6, Policy SDS7 Policy SNE1 - Policy SNE3 Policy SCC1 - Policy SCC6 Policy SHW3 – SHW6 Policy STR5, Policy STR6, Policy STR9, Policy STR10 Policy SDM1, Policy SDM2
	Objective 2: Deliver sustainable development in locations where people can access jobs and services, delivering wider positive social and economic outcomes and protecting and enhancing local built and natural environments	Policy SDS1 - Policy SDS7 Policy SCC1 - Policy SCC6 Policy SHO1, Policy SHO3 Policy SEC1 – Policy SEC6 Policy SCE1 Policy STR1 – STR10 Policy SDM1 - Policy SDM10
Enhancing our natural environment	Objective 3: To protect and enhance Sandwell’s natural environment, natural resources, biodiversity, wildlife corridors geological resources, countryside and landscapes, whilst ensuring that residents have good access to interlinked green infrastructure	Policy SDS6, Policy SDS7 Policy SNE1 - Policy SNE6 Policy SHW4 - Policy SHW6 Policy SHO1
Enhancing our historic environment	Objective 4: To protect, sustain and enhance the quality of the historic built environment, ensuring the retention of distinctive and attractive places and beautiful buildings, including listed parks, scheduled monuments and their settings.	Policy SDS4, Policy SDS5 Policy SHE1 - Policy SHE4 Policy SCC1 Policy SHW4

Priority	Strategic Objective	Policy
	<p>Objective 5: To manage and maintain the wider historic environment across Sandwell, including parks and gardens, areas of industrial heritage value, sites of geological and archaeological interest and locally listed buildings, structures and historic assets.</p>	<p>Policy SDS4, Policy SDS5</p> <p>Policy SNE6</p> <p>Policy SHE1 - Policy SHE4</p> <p>Policy SHW4</p> <p>Policy SDM1, Policy SDM2</p>
<p>Housing that meets all our needs</p>	<p>Objective 6: Address Sandwell's identified and wide-ranging housing needs by supporting the provision of high-quality new homes, to include a wide mix of housing type and tenure, that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are capable of being adapted to meet the future needs of occupiers; • provide sufficient internal and external space; and • promote and support climate change adaptation and mitigation through good design and in the materials and techniques used in their construction. 	<p>Policy SDS1 - Policy SDS4</p> <p>Policy SNE1 - Policy SNE3</p> <p>Policy SCC1 - Policy SCC6</p> <p>Policy SHO1 - Policy SHO10</p> <p>Policy SDM1, Policy SDM2</p>
	<p>Objective 7: Ensure communities in Sandwell are safe and resilient and social cohesion is promoted and enhanced</p>	<p>Policy SDS4, Policy SDS5</p> <p>Policy SHW2</p> <p>Policy SHO4, Policy SHO5, Policy SHO7, Policy SHO8</p>
<p>Enabling a strong, stable and inclusive economy</p>	<p>Objective 8: Support regeneration, business investment and job creation to maintain and grow a prosperous and resilient local and regional economy in ways that consider environmental and climate change factors</p>	<p>Policy SDS1, Policy SDS2, Policy SDS7</p> <p>Policy SCC1 - Policy SCC6</p> <p>Policy SEC1 - Policy SEC6</p> <p>Policy STR4, Policy STR5, Policy STR6, Policy STR10</p>

Priority	Strategic Objective	Policy
		Policy SID1 - Policy SID3
	Objective 9: to enable communities to share the benefits of economic growth through securing access to new job opportunities and enhanced skills and training programmes.	Policy SDS1 Policy SHO9 Policy SEC5 Policy STR1, Policy STR5
Improving the Health and Wellbeing of residents and promoting social inclusion	Objective 10: To provide a built and natural environment that supports the making of healthier choices through provision for physical activity and recreation, active travel, encouraging social interaction and discouraging harmful behaviours.	Policy SDS6, Policy SDS7 Policy SNE6 Policy SHW1 - Policy SHW6 Policy STR5 Policy SDM6 – Policy SDM9
	Objective 11: Ensure new development and open spaces support health and wellbeing for all, reduce health inequalities and encourage active and healthy lifestyles	Policy SNE3, Policy SNE6 Policy SCC3 Policy SDS4, Policy SDS5 Policy SHW3 - Policy SHW6 Policy STR5
	Objective 12: To provide a built and natural environment that protects health and wellbeing through minimising pollution (air, noise and other forms), providing healthy homes, reducing the negative health effects of climate change and providing streets safe for active, low emission travel for all.	Policy SDS1 - Policy SDS4, Policy SDS6 - Policy SDS7 Policy SNE1 - Policy SNE6 Policy SCC1 - Policy SCC6 Policy SHW3 Policy SHO5
Good Design	Objective 13: Require new development to deliver a high standard of design reflecting local character and distinctiveness and that creates greener and safer places that people feel proud to live and work in.	Policy SDS4 Policy SCC1 - Policy SCC6 Policy SDM1

Priority	Strategic Objective	Policy
Brownfield First	Objective 14: Encourage the effective and prudent use of previously developed land, including the efficient use of land and buildings and the use of sustainable and climate-aware construction techniques within new developments, as well as providing for waste management and disposal	Policy SDS1 - Policy SDS4 Policy SCC1 - Policy SCC6 Policy SWA1 - Policy SWA5 Policy SCO1 - Policy SCO3
Enhancing the vitality of our centres	Objective 15: Support Sandwell's towns and local centres as places for economic, residential and cultural activity with good access to services, in ways that protect their heritage, character and identity	Policy SDS4, Policy SDS5 Policy SHE1 - Policy SHE3 Policy SCE1 - Policy SCE7 Town Centre Profiles Policy STR8 Policy SID1 - Policy SID3 Policy SDM1 - Policy SDM10
Promoting sustainable transport and active travel	Objective 16: To prioritise sustainable and active travel and seek to improve transport infrastructure to ensure efficient and sustainable accessibility within an integrated network	Policy SDS3 Policy SNE6 Policy STR1 - Policy STR10
Meeting our resource and infrastructure needs	Objective 17: To manage waste as a resource and minimise the amount produced and sent to landfill, including ensuring that the reliance on primary minerals during construction and development are kept to a minimum and that greater use is made of recycled or alternative building materials	Policy SWA1 - Policy SWA5
	Objective 18: Ensure development is supported by essential infrastructure and services and promotes safe movement and	Policy SDS3, Policy SDS4 Policy SNE6

Priority	Strategic Objective	Policy
	more sustainable modes of travel through promoting greener travel networks for walking, cycling and public transport	Policy STR5, Policy STR6 Policy SID1 - Policy SID3 Policy SDM10

Ensuring delivery of the Vision, priorities and strategic objectives

- 1.7 Primarily, the Vision, objectives and priorities set out above will be delivered via the application of the policies of this Plan. The monitoring section at the end of the plan identifies targets for key indicators that will need to be achieved if these policies are to be successful.

2. Spatial Strategy

Introduction

- 2.1 The Sandwell Local Plan can help achieve sustainable development by ensuring that Sandwell benefits from the right development in the right place at the right time. This development will meet the needs of people living and working in the borough, while protecting and enhancing the environment and the unique character of the area.
- 2.2 The Spatial Strategy as set out in policies and illustrated on the Policies Map provides the overarching basis for the SLP's proposals for growth and infrastructure improvements. In determining the spatial strategy for the Sandwell Local Plan, Sandwell Council balanced sometimes-conflicting elements to ensure it produced a plan that is sound, realistic and sustainable.
- 2.3 The final choice of spatial strategy for the SLP also took account of the following:
- a) known environmental and other planning constraints
 - b) evidence base;
 - c) plan vision and objectives;
 - d) consultation feedback;
 - e) ongoing engagement with key stakeholders, including adjoining local authorities;
 - f) testing of options through:
 - i. the Sustainability Appraisal (SA) process, which incorporates Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA); and
 - ii. a Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA);
 - g) consideration of land availability, viability and existing / future infrastructure capacity; and
 - h) other plans and strategies affecting Sandwell.
- 2.4 In March 2020 Sandwell Council declared a Climate Emergency. Council Members agreed that greenhouse gas emissions needed to be reduced to a level compatible with keeping global warming below 1.5C above pre-industrial levels. To achieve that, the Council committed to becoming carbon neutral in its own activities by 2030 and to seeing Sandwell become a carbon neutral borough by 2041.
- 2.5 The SLP addresses this through adopting a suite of policies designed to help Sandwell mitigate and adapt to the changing climate at a strategic level, in line with the Council's

adopted Climate Change Strategy. Climate change will also be a cross-cutting theme for the SLP, and every opportunity will be taken to address appropriate mitigation and adaptation across all topic areas.

- 2.6 There is still, despite the number of housing sites that have been identified and allocated, a shortfall in the numbers of houses that need to be built to meet identified needs. Housing need is calculated using the Government's standard method based on household growth projections.
- Sandwell needs to identify land for **29,773** homes by 2041.
 - The supply of suitable residential land based on the most recent evidence stands at **11,167** homes.
 - There is an unmet need for **18,606** homes.
 - The SLP provides for around one third of the housing need on the land that is available.
- 2.7 There is a finite supply of land readily available for development and it is very likely that there is no scope to meet Sandwell's housing need within Sandwell itself. The Duty to Co-operate means that the Council is in communication with neighbouring authorities and is actively seeking their agreement to accommodate some of Sandwell's unmet need through their own housing provision.
- 2.8 Sandwell is a borough with high levels of poor health and deprivation and a lower-than-average life expectancy. The people of Sandwell experience significant inequalities in health when compared to the rest of England. On average, they do not live for as long as people in other areas of England and spend more of their lives ill or disabled.
- 2.9 The largest influences on physical and mental health are the social determinants of health, for example, education, employment, social networks, housing, access to blue and green spaces and active modes of travel. Therefore, the SLP will look to support the right development in the right places so that these aspects can be positively impacted.
- 2.10 Health and wellbeing is a cross-cutting theme that will be addressed throughout the Local Plan. The SLP will promote healthy living and create opportunities for active lifestyles and healthy transport choices including walking, cycling and outdoor recreation. Later stages of the plan will be accompanied by a Health Impact Assessment.
- 2.11 In recent years patterns of shopping have changed radically and perhaps permanently in some cases, predominantly due to the rise in online shopping and the impacts of the COVID19 pandemic. The role of centres is increasingly moving away from their traditional primary functions. While there will clearly remain demand for in-person shopping and retail-

related activities, centres will also need to provide additional draws / opportunities (such as for leisure, education, community uses and recreation) to offset the loss in shopping-related footfall and to help retain their vitality and viability.

- 2.12 The Plan provides a flexible policy framework to allow centres to serve the future growth identified in Sandwell (particularly housing and employment) and to diversify. It also provides strict tests to defend centres against proposals that could undermine them, such as further out-of-centre developments.
- 2.13 In terms of job numbers, the three main employment sectors in Sandwell are retail and wholesale, manufacturing and health and social care. Sandwell plays a stronger or more disproportionate role within the wider economy than the national average in the areas of manufacturing, electricity, gas and air conditioning, water supply and waste management, transportation and storage and retail and wholesale.
- 2.14 Employment land need is based on economic forecasts in the EDNA up to 2041.
- Sandwell is subject to a demand for **185ha** of employment land.
 - The supply of land available and suitable for employment use is **42ha** (after completions between 2020 – 2022 are considered). This includes windfall supply, generated through intensification / recycling, and includes a vacant land supply of **29ha**.
 - Based on the amount of land required to grow the economy, there is a shortfall of around **143ha**.
 - In addition, the plan allocates **1,177ha** of occupied employment as strategic, local or other employment land.
- 2.15 Therefore, ensuring that an adequate supply of employment land is maintained throughout the plan period will be essential in enabling long term balanced growth to be sustained. The key issues to be addressed in the SLP are as follows:
- Allocate land for new development within Sandwell, to facilitate growth and diversification of the economy
 - Accommodate a variety of business needs including high technology manufacturing and logistics sectors.
 - Protect and enhance land and premises within existing employment areas where this provides for the needs of jobs and businesses.
 - Recognise that some sites will become unsuitable for continued employment uses and to facilitate their redevelopment to alternative uses.

- Enable local communities to share the benefits of economic growth.
- 2.16 New housing and economic development will put pressure on existing services and utilities but may also create opportunities to provide infrastructure solutions. The SLP will need to provide clear guidance on the provision of suitable and sufficient infrastructure to support the regeneration and growth of Sandwell. Much of this infrastructure will need to be provided before or alongside new development and will need to be subject to viability considerations to ensure it does not make the development financially undeliverable.
- 2.17 Despite its industrial heritage and highly urban nature, Sandwell is home to several significant areas of green and open space, a network of wildlife corridors and sites with significant ecological and environmental value and several historic and architecturally significant buildings and locations.
- 2.18 The key issues addressed in the SLP include:
- Nature Conservation
 - Nature Recovery Network and Biodiversity Net Gain
 - Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows
 - Historic Character and Local Distinctiveness of the Black Country
 - Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark
 - Canals
 - The protection and enhancement of designated and undesignated heritage assets
 - Rejecting poor design
- 2.19 In view of the levels of both housing and employment land needs, it is becoming apparent that Sandwell will not be able to meet them either within the borough or across the plan period in full. To try to do so would result in significant and harmful levels of overdevelopment in the urban areas and the loss of open and green spaces across the district; even then, development needs would not be fully met.
- 2.20 This degree of overdevelopment would inevitably have an adverse effect on the living environment, health and wellbeing of Sandwell's residents, alongside the exacerbation of climate change impacts and the degradation of the natural and built environment, habitats and green and blue infrastructure.
- 2.21 Sandwell has very little green belt (it falls mainly within Sandwell Valley) and very few vacant / unused open spaces; the areas of undeveloped and open land it does contain are

extremely important to the borough's environment and the health and wellbeing of its population.

- 2.22 During the preparation of the SLP, Sandwell Council identified and tested a series of options relating to the potential quanta and distribution of housing and employment growth. These were then subjected to an impartial assessment of their sustainability, which demonstrated that the social, environmental and economic implications of the options identified for the spatial strategy were interrelated and varied.
- 2.23 Given the outcomes of the assessment, the Council then considered what the most appropriate direction of growth might be for Sandwell, in relation to both opportunities and constraints and given the fact that the borough would not be able to meet its housing and employment requirements in full even if significant areas of open land were further identified and allocated for development.
- 2.24 The Council needed to strike a balance between maximising the realistic amount and capacity of development land available to it and working towards delivering the aims set out in the SLP Vision. The Vision pictures a borough that could deliver both economic and housing growth while improving the health and life chances of its residents, addressing the challenges of climate change and protecting and enhancing its natural and built environment.
- 2.25 There was little scope to identify or allocate greenfield land for new housing or employment development without adversely affecting vulnerable land uses, and to do so would also run counter to the Council's stated aims in relation to creating a healthy and active borough, maintaining and enhancing the natural and built environment and tackling the impacts of climate change. As a result, allocation of greenfield land has only been undertaken if that site was a strategic size and in a sustainable location and the loss of any open or green space could be fully mitigated, by being replaced by better quality green / blue infrastructure, open spaces and / or facilities.
- 2.26 Intended land uses have also been considered, with proposals for housing and employment taking precedence over other forms of use or activities more suited to town centres or in previously developed areas.
- 2.27 The original Black Country Core Strategy identified a number of sites in employment use as suitable for reallocation to help meet housing needs. This was undertaken on the basis that the Black Country's employment base was understood to be reducing in size as the nature of economic activity in the area changed. However, the anticipated fall-off in the level of manufacturing and industrial activity did not occur, and it became apparent during the drafting of the Black Country Plan that there was not only the need to maintain a healthy supply of employment land but also an increasing demand for additional suitable and

sizeable sites for such uses. As a result, the potential supply of brownfield sites suitable for conversion from employment to housing use has effectively been reduced, to maintain economic stability and allow for growth.

- 2.28 The Council has undertaken an assessment of the various housing and employment options available to it for meeting local needs and promoting climate change mitigation, environmental protection and the delivery of renewed and healthy communities. As a result of these considerations, it has identified a strategic approach to development that combines the delivery of a realistic and meaningful amount of growth to meet local needs with a forward-looking and innovative environmental approach to development in Sandwell. This will deliver what it is referring to as the **Balanced Green Growth** option for the delivery of development in Sandwell.
- 2.29 The balanced green growth approach will allow Sandwell to provide a significant quantum of housing and additional employment opportunities in the borough. At the same time, it promotes a bold strategy that supports the delivery of climate change adaptation and mitigation, environmental protection and enhancement, the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and the delivery of green and blue infrastructure. This in turn will support the Council's wider aims and objectives in improving the health (physical and mental), wellbeing and life chances of people in Sandwell.
- 2.30 Balanced Green Growth will provide the quantum of development identified previously using the following approach, which is also included in Policy SDS1:

Balanced Green Growth

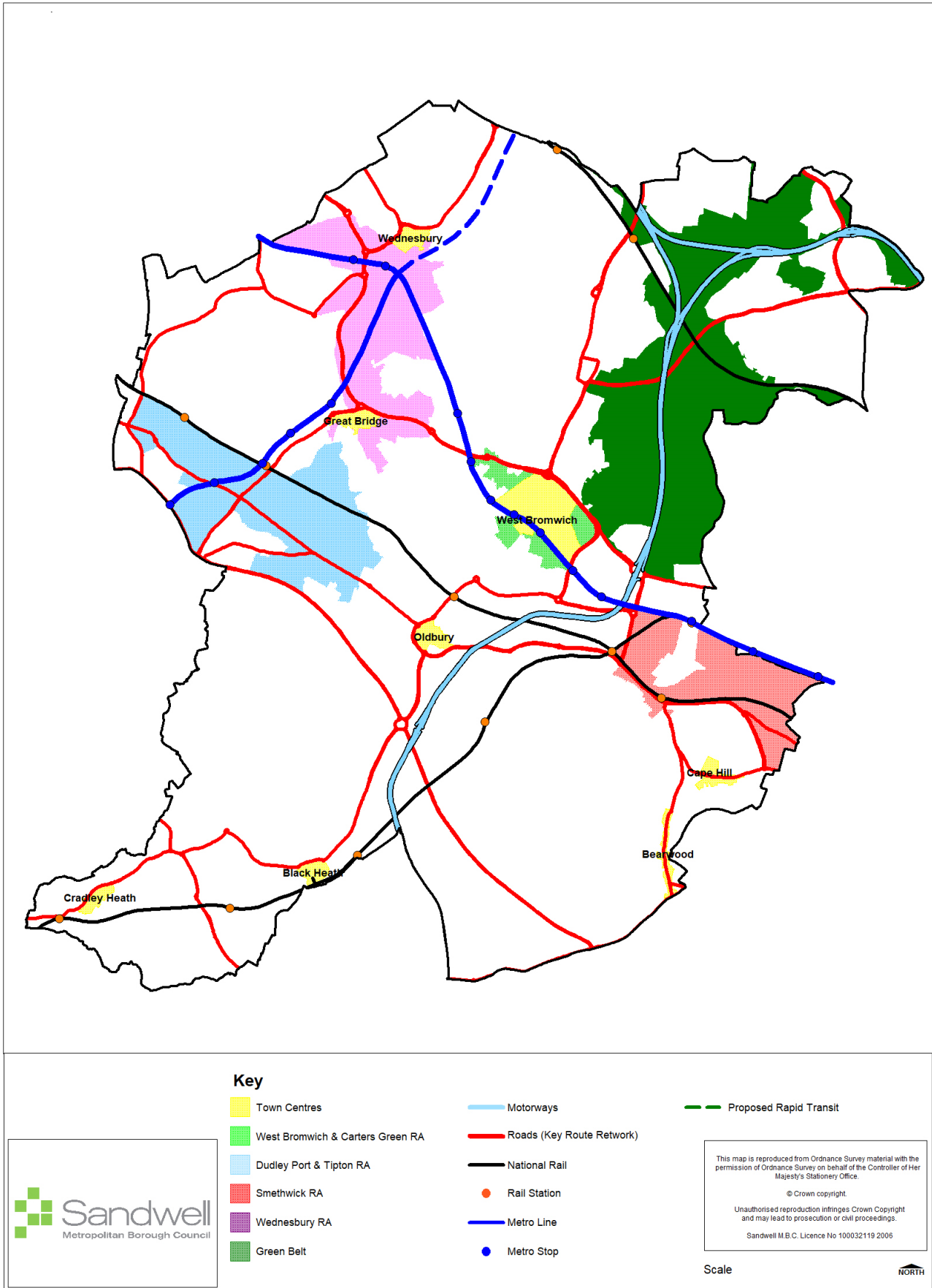
- a. maximise climate change adaptation and mitigation through the creation, protection and improvement of parks, woodland and tree planting, open spaces, landscapes and habitats across the borough;
- b. protect areas of ecological value, valuable habitats and open spaces within and beyond urban areas;
- c. conserve the historic and archaeological environment and protect areas with geological and landscape value;
- d. create new public open spaces to serve new housing developments;
- e. promote the use of zero- and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in all new development;
- f. deliver as much new development as possible on previously developed land and sites;

- g. allocate housing in locations with the highest levels of sustainable transport access to residential services (retail provision, schools, healthcare facilities, fresh food, employment etc.);
- h. regenerate existing housing and employment areas and help them deliver:
 - i. cleaner, more energy-efficient and more intensive areas of growth; and
 - ii. improvements to the environmental, climate change, accessibility and socio-economic capacity of existing residential and employment areas
- i. allocate new employment land where sustainable access and good public transport links are available;
- j. take advantage of existing and improved infrastructure capacity to maximise development on new sites.

2.31 The Balanced Green Growth approach forms the basis of the Sandwell Local Plan's Development Strategy (Policy SDS1) and informs the aims and objectives of both the strategic and local policies in the rest of the plan. This spatial strategy is considered to offer a positive, deliverable and sustainable approach to meeting development needs for the plan period. It has been informed by Sustainability Appraisal and reflects local priorities and national policy, including the NPPF.

2.32 The spatial strategy is crucial in shaping the pattern of growth that will occur over the plan period and has formed the basis for the allocation of strategic sites across Sandwell. It will also help to ensure that the planned housing and employment growth is supported by appropriate investment in the infrastructure needed to create sustainable communities.

Figure 2 - Sandwell Spatial Map



3. Development Strategy

Development Strategy

- 3.1 Policy SDS1 provides the overarching spatial strategy for Sandwell, setting out the scale and distribution of new development for the Plan period to 2041.

Policy SDS1 – Development Strategy

1. **To support the attainment of the Sandwell SLP Vision, drive sustainable and strategic economic and housing growth and meet local aspirations, Sandwell, working with local communities, partners and key stakeholders, will make sure that decisions on planning proposals:**
 - a. **deliver at least 11,167 net new homes and create sustainable mixed communities including a range and choice of new homes supported by adequate infrastructure;**
 - b. **provide at least 1,206ha of employment land (of which 29ha is currently vacant);**
 - c. **ensure that sufficient physical, social, and environmental infrastructure is delivered to meet identified requirements;**
 - d. **support improvements to the health and wellbeing of Sandwell’s communities by requiring new development to address the following:**
 - i. **increased access to green spaces;**
 - ii. **active and passive recreation;**
 - iii. **active travel;**
 - iv. **improved and accessible education and healthcare infrastructure;**
 - v. **opportunities for people to make healthier choices.**
 - e. **minimise and mitigate the likely effects of climate change, recognising the multifunctional benefits that open spaces, landscaping, trees, nature conservation habitats and both green and blue infrastructure can deliver in doing so;**
 - f. **create new public open spaces to serve new housing developments;**

Policy SDS1 – Development Strategy

- g. protect and improve parks, woodland and tree planting, open spaces, landscapes and habitats across the borough;**
 - h. protect the openness, integrity and function of Sandwell’s designated green belt by resisting inappropriate development in it;**
 - i. protect habitats and areas of ecological value;**
 - j. conserve the historic and archaeological environment and protect areas with geological and landscape value;**
 - k. promote the use of zero- and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in all new development.**
- 2. The SLP seeks to ensure this growth is sustainable by requiring the following issues are addressed in planning proposals:**
- a. delivering as much new development as possible on previously developed land and sites in the urban area;**
 - b. allocating housing in locations with the highest levels of sustainable transport access to residential services (retail provision, schools, healthcare facilities, fresh food, employment etc.);**
 - c. regenerating existing housing and employment areas and help them deliver:

 - i. cleaner, more energy-efficient and more intensive areas of growth; and**
 - ii. improving the environmental, climate change, accessibility and socio-economic capacity of existing residential and employment areas;****
 - d. allocating new employment land where sustainable access and good public transport links are available;**
 - e. taking advantage of existing and improved infrastructure capacity to maximise development on new sites;**
 - f. supporting and enhancing the sustainability of existing communities through the focussing of growth and regeneration into West Bromwich and other town centres and regeneration areas (Policy SDS2);**

Policy SDS1 – Development Strategy

g. protecting and enhancing the quality of existing towns and local areas and re-balancing the housing stock by delivering homes supported by jobs and local services.

3. Appendices B and C show how the housing and employment land ambitions for Sandwell will be met. Those development needs that cannot be accommodated within the borough will be exported to sustainable locations in neighbouring local authority areas, following consultation.

Justification

- 3.2 The economy and population of Sandwell are both growing. The Council needs to plan for economic recovery and growth and enhanced business productivity. It has also identified land for at least 11,167 new homes within the plan period. To accommodate this future growth, sites and locations that are both sustainable and deliverable have been identified for development, at a level that does not breach the environmental capacity of the area.
- 3.3 The Development Strategy is based on various considerations, including:
- a. the plan's Vision, objectives and priorities;
 - b. environmental constraints;
 - c. the availability and viability of land for development;
 - d. national planning policy.
- 3.4 The Development Strategy has been arrived at through a comprehensive assessment of a range of alternative options. The Sustainability Appraisal shows that this Option will enable Sandwell to meet most of its growth needs in a broad development and delivery focussed manner that takes full account of the environment, climate change, accessibility and social requirements. By promoting the right type and amount of development in the most sustainable locations, the Strategy therefore plays a crucial role in delivering an inclusive Sandwell that supports communities to achieve their goals.
- 3.5 The areas identified for major inward investment and funding are the primary foci for co-ordinated and sustained renewal and infrastructure development, to support the delivery of significant growth and promote wider benefits to local communities. This plan sets out deliverable development targets for each centre, based on up-to-date evidence.

- 3.6 The borough's main strategic centre, West Bromwich, is already served by an extensive transport system and therefore provides a suitable location for economic and housing growth, although improvements are required to enhance connectivity, accessibility and environmental quality.
- 3.7 Strong links will be created between the strategic town centre, the areas identified for regeneration and existing town and local centres and communities, through high-quality design, green infrastructure and transport investment, to help spread regeneration benefits, improve community cohesion and create an effective network.
- 3.8 The Council is aiming to utilise land efficiently by using previously developed and surplus land and vacant properties where possible, and maximising housing densities where appropriate, but there is still a shortage of deliverable sites to meet housing and economic growth needs.
- 3.9 Sandwell has identified and made effective and extensive use of brownfield and urban sites and has also undertaken density uplifts in relation to both existing and new allocations. Sites have been assessed in terms of their accessibility by all modes of transport. There is a need to provide for the continued managed growth of Sandwell, to enable it to provide capacity for economic prosperity while recognising and protecting the most sensitive environmental resources and ensuring that proposed development does not adversely affect certain areas unduly.
- 3.10 The overall effect of Sandwell's strategy is to direct housing growth and employment land development to the existing built-up area and onto brownfield sites wherever possible.
- 3.11 The spatial strategy also seeks to protect other green spaces within Sandwell, including parks, open spaces and land with value for nature conservation and ecology. All these areas provide valuable open areas for recreation and ecology and contribute to a network of spaces across the wider Black Country that allows access to the surrounding countryside, including for wildlife.

Duty to Co-operate

- 3.12 This Plan will look for housing and employment land needs to be met within Sandwell in the first instance. However, the capacity of the borough is finite; it is not possible to provide for all the identified housing and employment land needs within its administrative boundaries, given the circumstances around land deliverability, extant land-use constraints and the need to protect its unique natural and built heritage.

- 3.13 This Plan aims to allocate sites for 11,167 new homes in Sandwell over the period 2022-41, compared to a local housing need of 29,773 (2022 – 2041) homes; this identifies a shortfall of 18,606 homes.
- 3.14 For employment land, the EDNA establishes a need for 185ha of vacant land for new employment development, an anticipated level of allocations of 1,206ha of employment land (of which 29ha is currently vacant) and a shortfall of 143ha (accounting for additional completions identified between 2020 and 2022).
- 3.15 Current national planning policy requires this unmet housing and employment land need to be provided for across the Housing Market Area, Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) and other areas with which Sandwell has a physical or functional relationship.
- 3.16 Sandwell has worked openly and constructively with neighbouring authorities to help provide as much certainty as possible about how and where its full housing and employment land needs will be delivered. The current position is set out in the Draft Plan Statement of Consultation and will be elaborated on in more detail at Publication stage.
- 3.17 Sandwell recognises that this approach may only address a small proportion of the housing and employment shortfall, as it is beyond the legal powers of the Council to establish the limits of sustainable development in neighbouring authorities. If a shortfall remains over and above existing and anticipated contributions, Sandwell will undertake further work as appropriate to identify how the shortfall can be addressed.
- 3.18 Notwithstanding this, Sandwell is committed to ongoing engagement with its neighbours to secure the most appropriate and sustainable locations for housing and employment growth to meet local needs. In terms of housing, the engagement will extend beyond the adoption of this plan and will build on the partnership approach developed across the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area.
- 3.19 Where it is shown to be desirable, appropriate, sustainable and deliverable Sandwell will support its neighbours in bringing forward land for employment and housing that sits adjacent to existing administrative boundaries and will work in partnership to ensure infrastructure needs are met in full across administrative boundaries.

Regeneration Areas

3.20 Sandwell is committed to the regeneration of its towns and employment areas and has adopted a Regeneration Strategy²⁶ that sets out exactly how this will be achieved. The strategy contains a vision for this process, set out below:

Our vision is to create a wealthier Sandwell, regenerating our place and using the limited amount of new land available to create

- **an inviting place to live, with thriving communities and energy efficient housing in well planned neighbourhoods;**
- **high quality employment space for decent jobs;**
- **a convenient and reliable public transport and active travel network, which people prefer to private cars;**
- **exciting, busy, and green centres where people meet throughout the day, with a thriving cultural and night-time economy.**

Taken from SANDWELL REGENERATION STRATEGY March 2022-2027

3.21 Policy SDS2 sets out the strategic approach for Sandwell's economic and regenerative growth. More detailed policy guidance on the role of West Bromwich and its importance to Sandwell's economic, social and regeneration activities can be found in Chapter 10 of the SLP.

Policy SDS2 – Regeneration in Sandwell

1. **The Regeneration Areas identified on the Policies Map and the strategic centre of West Bromwich will be the focus for new development, regeneration, and public and private investment in the borough.**
2. **Proposals will be subject to relevant development plan policies and the form and location of regeneration will be guided by masterplans and /or design briefs, which will be prepared by the Council in partnership with developers, promoters and other stakeholders.**

West Bromwich

²⁶ <https://regeneratingsandwell.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Regeneration-Strategy-Updated.pdf>

Policy SDS2 – Regeneration in Sandwell

- a. **West Bromwich is a major destination for residents and visitors and will benefit from a step change in the quality of its public realm, including new green links, squares and parks.**
- b. **Residential and employment growth will be sought at a transformational level to help create a vibrant and sustainable town centre with a diverse range of uses, including commercial, educational, cultural, recreational, leisure and community facilities.**
- c. **Sustainable and active travel modes will be the default choice for accessing and moving within the town.**

Carter's Green

- d. **Carter's Green will accommodate new residential development on under-used land. The scale of growth will be complementary and subordinate to the transformation of West Bromwich.**

Dudley Port

- e. **The regeneration of Dudley Port will include employment development and the construction of new residential communities developed along Garden City principles.**
- f. **A new public transport hub will be developed around the interchange of the Midland Metro Extension and Dudley Port railway station.**

Smethwick

- g. **The historic Smethwick to Birmingham canal corridor will accommodate new green neighbourhoods on re-purposed employment land and accessible active travel routes.**
- h. **Regeneration at Grove Lane will be focussed on the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital, and will include the development of new homes, employment, and education facilities.**
- i. **Industrial land at Rolfe Street will be regenerated to create a well-designed residential community that respects the heritage of the area and its canal-side setting.**

Wednesbury to Tipton Metro Corridor

Policy SDS2 – Regeneration in Sandwell

- j. Proposals for the regeneration of industrial land along the corridor of the Midland Metro Extension will be supported, including new employment development on vacant and underdeveloped land.**
- k. Retail, residential, and mixed-use development will be encouraged in Wednesbury Town Centre, Great Bridge Town Centre and Owen Street District Centre in line with their position within the hierarchy of centres and the requirements of the relevant policies in the Centres chapter of the SLP.**

Development within Regeneration Areas

- 3. Excluding West Bromwich (Policy SWB2) the regeneration areas will provide:**
 - a. the principal locations for strategic employment areas;**
 - b. high-quality employment areas to support the long-term success of Sandwell's economy (Policy SEC2);**
 - c. the main clusters of local employment land providing for local jobs (Policies SEC3 and SEC4);**
 - d. the principal locations for new industrial and logistics development - providing at least 600ha of developable employment land to meet growth needs;**
 - e. a minimum of 2,581 new homes (discounted) of mixed type and tenure in sustainable locations well-supported by community services and local shops, set within and linked by comprehensive networks of green infrastructure with cycling and pedestrian routes;**
 - f. investment in existing, new, and improved transportation infrastructure with a focus on public transport routes and hubs, to maximise their use by residents, workers and visitors;**
 - g. strong links with surrounding communities and the wider network of centres; and**
 - h. enhanced green infrastructure, including enhancements to nature conservation sites and wildlife habitats, new and improved green spaces, and new urban greening features (Policy SDS7).**

Justification

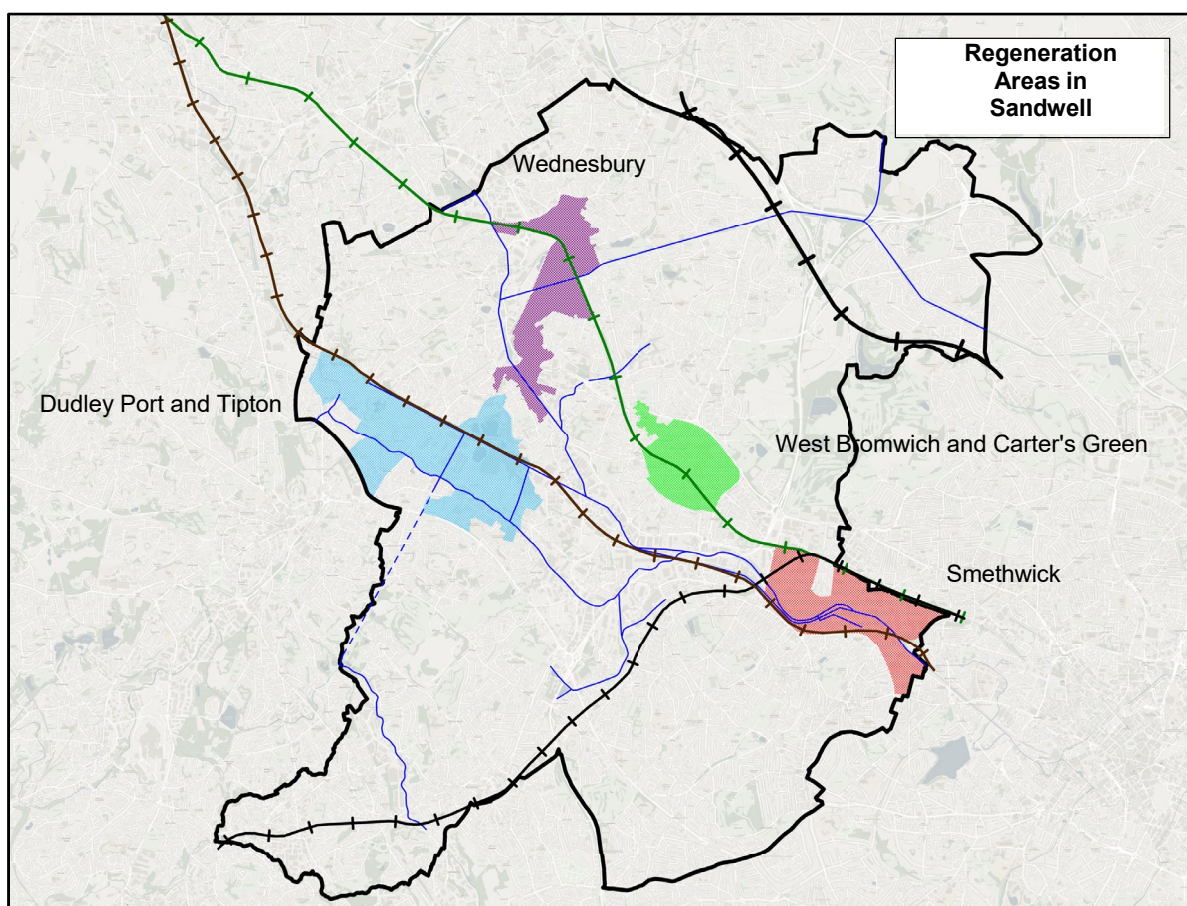
- 3.22 The re-energising and repurposing of West Bromwich is of fundamental importance to the regeneration of Sandwell and the wider Black Country. It is one of the main drivers of the Black Country's economy and supports one of the main hubs of the sub-regional transport network. It is a sustainable location and is well-placed to provide the community with easy access to comparison shopping, leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities and office-based employment.
- 3.23 Regarding the rest of Sandwell, much of the growth and proposed regeneration taking place up to 2041 will be concentrated around the transportation network (including in West Bromwich and locations within regeneration areas), providing an opportunity to enhance both sustainability and viability. Promoting the distinctive strengths and unique opportunities provided by West Bromwich will also help to encourage investment.
- 3.24 The regeneration areas broadly reflect the distribution of employment land across Sandwell and will accommodate most of its manufacturing and logistics businesses and jobs. The backbone of this network is a system of sustainable transport routes (including rail, metro, bus and for walking and cycling) and the extensive canal system. The key characteristics of the regeneration areas are as follows:
- a) they are recognised as priority locations for existing or programmed multi-agency public sector intervention;
 - b) they contain existing or programmed multi-modal transport infrastructure;
 - c) they include clusters of housing / employment development opportunities providing at least 2,581 homes (discounted, these sites are already included in the supply detailed in Policy SHO1) and 600 ha of strategic and local employment areas.
- 3.25 The regeneration areas represent an update of the network of Regeneration Corridors identified in the 2011 Core Strategy. These Regeneration Corridors served the Black Country by providing a clear focus for concerted intervention and growth. The SLP has taken the opportunity to review the Regeneration Corridors in the light of more up-to-date information on the deliverability of previously allocated development opportunities, changing infrastructure priorities and reflecting where planned investment and growth has already taken place.
- 3.26 The strategy for the regeneration areas reflects two key issues arising from the evidence base – firstly, the need to provide for economic growth through the protection and enhancement of sustainable employment land and premises; and secondly, delivering

housing growth through the release of poor quality and underused land to support the ongoing regeneration of Sandwell.

- 3.27 Achieving the right balance of jobs and housing by 2041 is a key aim of the SLP. Sandwell's annual Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), the Black Country Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) and the Black Country Employment Area Review (BEAR) all provide key evidence on demand and supply of employment land to 2041 and this work has directly informed the employment land and housing allocations in this Plan.

Regeneration Areas

Figure 3 - Regeneration Areas in Sandwell



- 3.28 The following sections set out in more detail the areas identified in the policy and should be read in conjunction with the relevant sections in the Centres chapter and Chapter 10 (West Bromwich).

WEST BROMWICH AND CARTERS GREEN

- 3.29 West Bromwich is the strategic centre of Sandwell and as such is the focus for major investment opportunities for retail, commercial, leisure and educational uses.

- 3.30 Carters Green lies to the northwest of the central core and acts very much as a separate retail centre. Apart from Lidl supermarket centrally located within Carters Green, the shops are predominantly independents providing a wide range of goods, especially European and world foods. To the rear of the main high street units lie varied uses including residential areas, places of worship and commercial operations.
- 3.31 The Carters Green Development Framework²⁷ sets out an overarching vision for the opportunities that will help in the transformational change in this area, which allows the centre to continue to operate independently of West Bromwich Town Centre, but which allows a natural link to the town, picking up the aspirations and vision from the West Bromwich Masterplan. The Development Framework identifies key priority opportunity sites that will be the subject of future funding bids, investing in the development for new residential units on currently underused sites. The Framework and individual site details focus on providing good quality new homes with new public realm, urban greening and improved linkages through the area.

DUDLEY PORT AND TIPTON

- 3.32 Dudley Port and Tipton Regeneration Area comprises a mix of both residential and employment uses, dissected by the Birmingham Canal and Rail line. The area contains several areas of greenspace, including the extensive Sheepwash Nature Reserve and Victoria Park. Access to and through the area is provided by both the canal and rail links, with Tipton and Dudley Port Railway Stations lying within the area. The canal also links this whole area with the green spaces, through to Tipton Town Centre and Dudley. In 2023 following a bid to the Levelling Up Fund, Tipton was awarded £20m capital funding from the Government to regenerate sites within the town centre.
- 3.33 Recent years have seen very little investment and development within the area. There have been very few residential sites brought forward and investment in industrial development has been limited. Owen Street District Centre, often referred to as Tipton Town Centre, has seen a steady decline in the take up of units, resulting in vacancies and underutilised sites. The funding bid aimed to address several underutilised and poor quality residential and commercial premises and, through acquisition of the freehold and construction of new residential and commercial units, help to deliver new high quality residential and commercial premises to support redevelopment of the town centre.

²⁷ See Appendix D

- 3.34 The funding is intended to be the catalyst for wider investment opportunities within this regeneration corridor. Further employment development should be directed towards Coneygre and Vaughan Trading Estate. Whilst these sites were identified for residential development in the last Local Plan, this has not occurred. Both sites have instead delivered further employment development, indicating a need for further investment in this sector. Residential development is anticipated at Rattlechain, south of Sheepwash Nature Reserve. This would see the remediation of a long-standing problematic and heavily contaminated site, with it brought back into more efficient use and being able to assist in meeting the shortfall in housing numbers. The vision for the Dudley Port area is directed by a Garden City approach and principles, working with the area's existing attributes, namely the green space, canals and linkages.
- 3.35 The construction of the Midland Metro extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill will improve accessibility, providing sustainable modes of transport and link Sandwell to Dudley for those at work or visiting for leisure or recreation. Whilst much of the investment will be focussed on Dudley once completed, there may be opportunities along the Sandwell link for investment and regeneration at a smaller scale. There is an opportunity for a link to HS2 with the construction of the Interchange at Dudley Port railway station.
- 3.36 Further opportunities exist to build upon the existing infrastructure, making the canals and greenspace a destination, linking to wider attractions such as the Dudley Canal Trust, Black Country Museum and Dudley Zoo, and joining up with Tipton High Street.

SMETHWICK

- 3.37 The Smethwick corridor encompasses a wide range of uses including residential, employment, education, health, retail and commercial. Lying to the southeast of the borough, the area has historic links to the industrial revolution with the Soho Foundry near Black Patch and contains several heritage structures, listed buildings and conservation areas throughout the corridor. Its proximity to Birmingham has resulted in close cross-boundary working with Birmingham City Council and other partners, culminating in the Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor Framework. The Framework sets out a vision and principles for bringing forward development on opportunity sites within the area, focussing on the delivery of good quality housing, linked to quality open spaces and the canal, and setting out a joined-up transport strategy that will contribute to the formation of a healthy and sustainable community.
- 3.38 The area has seen investment in recent years with new housing at Windmill Eye and Brindley 2, and the construction of the Midland Metropolitan University Hospital at Grove Lane that will serve Sandwell and West Birmingham. Funding has recently been granted from the Towns Fund to bring forward residential development at Grove Lane and Rolfe

Street; both areas have been the subject of recently approved Masterplans to help guide development. Further funding will deliver improved walking and cycling routes linking Smethwick Galton Bridge to the new hospital and further afield into Birmingham City Centre and other areas of Sandwell.

- 3.39 However, due to the extensive size of the area and its fragmented ownerships, comprehensive development has not been forthcoming overall. The Towns Fund grants will act as a catalyst to attract further funding and private sector interest for regeneration on many of the vacant and underutilised sites across the corridor. The area surrounding the hospital is earmarked for housing, providing canalside living and has easy access to public transport routes. New social infrastructure will also feature within this area, to help meet the needs of the new residents. Grove Lane and Rolfe Street will receive most of the investment for new housing.
- 3.40 Opportunities exist to invest in the historic Soho Foundry and surrounding area, creating a mixed-use facility that will attract visitors and revitalise this part of the borough. The area has also been identified as a location for waste operators, which could detract from its amenity; the challenge will be to improve the negative environmental impacts that generally accompany these operations.
- 3.41 Investment in employment should be concentrated to the north of this Regeneration Corridor, around Middlemore Lane and Popes Lane, and to the west near Dartmouth Road, with its prime links to Junction 1 of the M5. Smethwick High Street will remain as the focus for retail, commercial, cultural and health facilities.

WEDNESBURY

- 3.42 This regeneration area focuses on Wednesbury Town Centre, moving south towards the industrial area of Hill Top and encompassing the area submitted to Government as Sandwell's Levelling Up Zone. Wednesbury is a traditional market town and like many other similar places, has suffered a decline in the take-up of units in recent years. Investment has recently been secured as part of the High Streets Heritage Action Zone fund, with an injection of £3.6m to reintroduce a relocated marketplace in the centre of the town, new public realm works and shopfront improvements within the Conservation Area. However there remain several empty units and vacant sites available for redevelopment but there has been little developer interest.
- 3.43 Hill Top is identified as a focus for employment uses. Existing investment in the nearby Midland Metro extension from Wednesbury to Brierley Hill would make this area attractive for further investment due to the high demand for high quality employment land. However,

access remains problematic due to the area's existing infrastructure and would require significant funds to overcome.

- 3.44 Further south, the regeneration area encompasses land around Great Bridge town centre. Promotion of this area for mixed uses including the introduction of more residential development would inject additional vitality into the town, assist in delivering new homes to meet housing targets and repurpose underutilised land for more efficient uses.

Table 4 - Summary of regeneration projects

Regeneration Area	Project	Proposed delivery date
West Bromwich	Urban Greening	2024
	Retail Diversification Programme	2025
	West Bromwich mixed-use community	2034
Carter's Green	Carter's Green residential community	2034
Dudley Port	Dudley Port Integrated Transport Hub	2025
	Dudley Port Garden City	2034
Smethwick	Construction of Midland Metropolitan University Hospital and associated University Learning Campus	2025
	Smethwick to Birmingham Inclusive Growth Corridor	2027
	Rolfe Street Canalside Regeneration	2029
	Grove Lane Regeneration	2029
Wednesbury to Tipton Metro Corridor	Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Extension	2024
	Wednesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone	2025
	Tipton Town Centre Regeneration (Owen Street District Centre)	2026

Towns and Local Areas

- 3.45 Policy SDS3 sets out the strategic approach for Sandwell's other towns and local areas.

Policy SDS3 – Towns and Local Areas

1. **Towns and local communities outside West Bromwich and the regeneration areas identified in Figure 3 will provide:**
 - a. **503 new homes delivered through:**
 - i. **the allocation of previously identified housing sites or ones submitted as part of a Call for Sites exercise;**
 - ii. **the repurposing of a small number of brownfield employment sites and other previously developed and surplus land for new housing;**
 - iii. **small-scale residential development opportunities in highly sustainable locations;**
 - iv. **housing renewal areas;**
 - v. **estimating the capacity of vacant retail floorspace;**
 - b. **Clusters of local employment land that provide land and premises to meet localised business needs.**
 - c. **Approximately 606ha of additional employment land to meet employment needs;**
 - d. **An integrated and (where possible) continuous network of green infrastructure and walking and cycling routes, as well as a network of centres, health, leisure, sports, recreation and community facilities; and**
 - e. **Improved access and infrastructure links between regeneration projects, local areas and West Bromwich, to allow related positive outcomes to be integrated into existing and newer communities.**

Justification

- 3.46 Sandwell is made up of several towns and smaller local communities and is a highly urbanised area. It also contains various existing Local Employment Areas.
- 3.47 A key spatial priority of the SLP is to support the delivery of new housing development. A significant amount of new housing will be accommodated in existing town centres and their surrounding areas.
- 3.48 These locations are intended to be places of choice for living, supported by sustainable access to job opportunities and a range of other services and facilities to meet the day to day

needs of residents. They will provide housing choice for people, regardless of age and income, to help underpin the areas' economic competitiveness and support the working population.

- 3.49 Given that new development will generate the need for new infrastructure it is important that these uses are planned together, regardless of ownership. Sandwell Council has produced an Infrastructure Delivery Plan that sets out requirements for specific sites and wider areas.
- 3.50 In some cases, especially on larger sites or where several smaller sites are in proximity to each other, phasing plans will be required that set out the triggers for the provision of required infrastructure (including green and blue infrastructure) and legal agreements will need to be put in place to deliver that infrastructure.
- 3.51 Where appropriate, masterplans may be prepared through a collaborative process involving the landowner / developer(s) and the Council, together with other interested parties such as statutory bodies and relevant stakeholders.

Housing renewal

- 3.52 An essential requirement of any strong and stable community is for residents to have access to decent and secure homes. In the past, significant housing market renewal and regeneration programmes have taken place across Sandwell, to address poor quality housing and living environments.
- 3.53 These interventions have been successful, and there are now a limited number of areas where housing market intervention activity is likely to be targeted over the plan period.
- 3.54 Housing renewal also provides opportunities to upgrade housing stock to meet carbon reduction and climate change mitigation and adaptation requirements. This is also addressed in the climate change section of the SLP.

Placemaking – achieving well-designed places

- 3.55 The environmental and physical transformation of Sandwell is one of the fundamental principles of its regeneration agenda. Placemaking and high-quality urban design are key mechanisms through which this transformation will be achieved, and they will also help to mitigate and adapt to climate change and promote low / zero carbon growth.
- 3.56 Sandwell's ongoing transformation will be supported by the development of places and buildings providing a range of functions, tenures, facilities, and services, intended to support the needs of its diverse local communities. The design of spaces and buildings will be influenced by their context; development should enhance the unique attributes of Sandwell's

character and heritage whilst responding to locally identified community needs, changes in society and cultural diversity.

- 3.57 The Council's current Residential Design Guide identifies Sandwell as urban or suburban in nature, although some areas around Sandwell Valley and the Green Belt edges would be considered more rural in character. This means that in general, Sandwell is characterised by semi-detached and terraced housing, changing to higher density flatted development in town centres.

Policy SDS4 - Achieving Well-designed Places

- 1. Building designs will be sought that are appropriate to Sandwell and should be of a size, scale and type to integrate into their neighbourhood.**
- 2. All development will be required to demonstrate a clear understanding of the local and wider context, character, heritage and local distinctiveness of its location and show how proposals make a positive contribution to place-making and environmental improvement.**
- 3. The setting and significance of heritage assets should be conserved and enhanced where it exists and is likely to be impacted by new development (Policy SHE2).**
- 4. Development proposals should employ innovative design and sustainable technologies in their schemes to help climate change mitigation and adaptation and the Council will support schemes and projects adopting a climate-sensitive approach (Policies SCC1 – SCC6).**
- 5. To facilitate permeability and accessibility, transport proposals of a high design quality and utility will be sought. These should:**
 - a. include connections to and between transport hubs;**
 - b. promote active travel;**
 - c. ensure that transport and travel infrastructure make a positive contribution to place-making; and**
 - d. increase connectivity for all modes of travel.**
- 6. Development should contribute positively to creating high quality, active, safe and accessible places. Design approaches that will help contribute to healthier communities and reduce health inequalities should be incorporated in developments.**

Policy SDS4 - Achieving Well-designed Places

7. **To support the development of safe neighbourhoods, ensure quality of life and community cohesion are not undermined and minimise the fear of crime, the design of new development should create secure and accessible environments where opportunities for crime and disorder are reduced or designed out.**
8. **An integrated and well-connected multifunctional open space network will be pursued throughout Sandwell (linking to opportunities in the wider Black Country where possible), including through the design and layout of new developments.**
9. **A Design Code will be produced for Sandwell, reflecting local character and design preferences and providing a framework for creating high-quality places.**

Justification

- 3.58 The importance of high-quality design in creating places where people want to live, work and invest with renewed confidence is a fundamental aspect of both national and local policy. Designing high-quality places will result in environmental, economic and social benefits, including community safety, health and well-being, inclusive communities, better public services, environmental sustainability, climate resilience, greater financial value of buildings and lower levels of unemployment.
- 3.59 The aim of the SLP is to create the best conditions for economic and social growth, which will take place within a safe, attractive and accessible built and natural environment. The SLP also encourages and supports the growth of locations that encourage participation and community engagement. Successful placemaking in Sandwell will foster community stability and incorporate elements that create resilience to adverse economic and environmental impacts and will result in a place that residents can be proud of.
- 3.60 The use of efficient building design, the choice of low- and zero-carbon materials, and intelligent site layout and building orientation can all help to reduce reliance on carbon-based products, energy and non-renewable resources. The Government has published national design guidance²⁸ that states planning permission should be refused for poorly designed development, especially where it fails to reflect local policies and government guidance on

²⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide> and <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-model-design-code>

design. National guidance emphasises that good design and beautiful places should be at the centre of plan-making and decision-making.

- 3.61 Sandwell enjoys a unique heritage, reflected in its urban structure, which requires a sensitive approach to place-making and an insistence on a high quality of design for proposals that affect the historic environment. Designs should ensure that the significance of local heritage is recognised and reflected in designs and that new development retains and protects that significance to the greatest extent possible.
- 3.62 Designs and layouts that create and support a higher quality of life in Sandwell will depend on many factors; good design will play an increasingly important role in attracting private sector investment and skilled workers and the success of this will be defined by its outcomes:
- The creation of streets and spaces with their own distinct character that provide the framework for a coherent and interconnected network of places, supporting social interaction and a sense of personal wellbeing, and displaying a clear hierarchy of private, commercial and civic functions.
 - A permeable street network that encourages freedom of movement and a choice of sustainable means of transport, including support for the provision and extension of walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure.
 - A local hierarchy of centres providing a focus for essential local services and activities with easy access to residential areas.
 - Towns and centres that encourage commercial activity, promote prosperity and support the well-being of the area's inhabitants.
 - An appropriate intensity of human activity in centres and elsewhere, the creation of natural surveillance and defensible spaces, active frontages and the provision of well-located and accessible infrastructure.
 - Properly designed and well-located open spaces that help mitigate flood risk, provide space for wildlife, support biodiversity in the urban area and encourage informal recreation for local people as well as help create a high-quality living environment.
- 3.63 The importance of high-quality design and place-making is central to the ambitions of other stakeholders in the region. The West Midlands Design Charter, launched by WMCA in 2020, confirms the West Midlands as a place to drive design innovation and creativity. The Charter aims to secure high-quality design in housing, civic architecture, urban spaces, parks and transport infrastructure.

Cultural Facilities and the Visitor Economy

- 3.64 The Vision for Sandwell involves the delivery of transformational change whilst respecting and promoting the borough's culture and heritage. The protection, promotion and expansion of existing cultural facilities, visitor attractions and associated activities will ensure their role as key economic drivers stimulating and regenerating the local economy is supported and will be enhanced as often as possible.
- 3.65 As well as contributing directly to the local economy, the visitor economy promotes health and wellbeing as well as generating additional demand and growth in supporting services and facilities, which will also benefit residents and businesses.

Policy SDS5 - Cultural Facilities and the Visitor Economy

Development proposals

1. **Cultural, tourist and leisure facilities within Sandwell will, wherever possible, be protected, enhanced and expanded (where appropriate) in partnership with key delivery partners and stakeholders.**
2. **Proposals for new development or uses that contribute to the attractiveness of Sandwell as a visitor destination (including for business tourism) will be supported in principle, subject to national guidance and the policy requirements set out elsewhere in this Plan.**
3. **Proposals for new cultural, tourist or leisure facilities or uses, or extensions to existing ones, should:**
 - a. **be of a high-quality design;**
 - b. **be highly accessible and sustainable, being located within centres wherever possible;**
 - c. **not adversely impact on residential amenity or the operation of existing businesses; and**
 - d. **be designed to be flexible, adaptable, and where possible be capable of alternative or community use.**

Policy SDS5 - Cultural Facilities and the Visitor Economy

- 4. Well-designed and accessible ancillary facilities in appropriate locations will be supported. Additional facilities within centres that support the visitor economy and business tourism sectors²⁹ will be encouraged and promoted.**
- 5. An assessment should be undertaken (as part of the design of new developments likely to attract large numbers of people) to demonstrate and document how potential security and crime-related vulnerabilities have been identified, assessed and where necessary, addressed in a manner that is appropriate and proportionate.**
- 6. Development that would lead to the loss of an existing cultural / tourism facility in Sandwell will be resisted unless:**
 - a. the intention is to replace it with a facility that will provide an improved cultural or tourist offer;**
 - b. it can be demonstrated that there would be significant benefits to the local and wider community in removing the use and / or redeveloping the site; or**
 - c. An appropriate contribution is made to support and sustain an alternative local cultural, tourist or leisure facility.**

The Visitor Economy

- 7. The improvement and further development of visitor attractions will be supported where appropriate, to ensure that accessibility is maximised and to continue to raise the quality of the visitor experience throughout Sandwell. This can be achieved by:**
 - a. enhancing / extending current attractions;**
 - b. providing inclusive access, particularly within town centres;**
 - c. enhancing the visitor experience; and**
 - d. delivering necessary infrastructure.**
- 8. Links should be made to town centres and those parts of Sandwell and beyond that are well-connected by public transport, considering the needs of business as well**

²⁹ This will include the provision of hotels and other accommodation with strong links to key destinations and associated facilities.

Policy SDS5 - Cultural Facilities and the Visitor Economy

as leisure visitors, to encourage more sustainable local use of cultural and tourist attractions.

9. The canal network is also a significant visitor attraction within the Black Country, providing waterway links to Birmingham, Staffordshire, Worcestershire and beyond. Facilities adjoining and serving the canal network should be maintained and expanded to help provide a network of linked amenities and visitor hubs.
10. Physical and promotional links to visitor attractions close to Sandwell will be enhanced and encouraged, particularly in relation to Birmingham as a global city and a business economy destination.
11. Proposals for heritage-related tourism will be supported where they provide positive and sustainable opportunities for social, educational and / or economic activity; heritage assets forming part of a tourist attraction will be protected from development or new or intensified activities that would adversely impact on their significance and setting (Policy SHE2).

Cultural facilities and events

12. Libraries across Sandwell together act as one of the borough's main locations for the delivery of cultural events and activities (e.g., music, theatre, dance, poetry, literature). Their role as community venues should be maintained and supported as part of the wider cultural offer of the borough.
13. To ensure Sandwell can provide opportunities for growth in cultural activities and participation in them, the retention and protection of venues providing performance spaces, recording facilities and practice amenities will be sought. The provision of new venues and facilities in sustainable and accessible locations will also be welcomed and supported, particularly within town centres.
14. In cases where new development could potentially prejudice the successful ongoing operation of an adjacent cultural / performance venue, the *agents of change* principle will be applied³⁰.

³⁰ Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2023) states that both planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (e.g., places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Unreasonable restrictions should not be placed on existing businesses because of development permitted after they were established.

Policy SDS5 - Cultural Facilities and the Visitor Economy

- 15. The promotion and protection of attractions and events that represent and celebrate the wide cultural and ethnic diversity across Sandwell will be encouraged, including spectator sports and other activities. This will include the protection of valuable cultural and religious buildings and the promotion of cultural, religious and community festivals on a Sandwell-wide basis in a range of suitable locations.**

Justification

- 3.66 The Black Country has a unique past, having been at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution, which left a rich and varied industrial and cultural legacy as well as an extensive and historically significant canal network. The area's bygone industrial activity and its geological richness is also reflected in a distinctive natural and built topography, consisting of small villages and settlements that retain their individual characteristics. There are other areas where attractions and facilities are clustered due to their industrial heritage or cultural value.
- 3.67 In addition, the Black Country contains one of the world's few urban geoparks, identified by UNESCO as a single, unified geographical area where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are located (Policy SNE4).
- 3.68 These assets are attracting an increasing number of visitors to the sub-region and the visitor economy is a key growth sector. Business tourism is also a growing sector, particularly in terms of high-quality hotel and conferencing facilities and the proximity to Birmingham, a global business destination.
- 3.69 The range and diversity of cultural and tourist assets in the Black Country include a historic built environment, museums and art galleries, markets, music venues and theatres, which are often part of town and city centres; parks and open spaces; and high-level sporting venues.
- 3.70 In Sandwell, attractions include, but are not limited to, the following venues and locations:
- a) Sandwell Valley Country Park – this includes Sandwell Park Visitor Centre (formerly Sandwell Park Farm) and Forge Mill Farm, RSPB Sandwell Valley Reserve and wider facilities for leisure and recreation;
 - b) Sandwell Aquatics Centre;
 - c) The Hawthorns stadium – home of West Bromwich Albion FC;
 - d) Smethwick Jamia Masjid;

- e) Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Smethwick;
- f) Shri Venkateswara (Balaji) Temple of UK;
- g) Wednesbury Museum;
- h) Bromwich Hall - West Bromwich Manor House Museum;
- i) Galton Valley Pumping Station;
- j) Lightwoods House;
- k) Oak House;
- l) Bishop Asbury Cottage;
- m) Traditional street and covered markets across the borough;
- n) Sites related to the Black Country Global Geopark, e.g., the Rowley Hills.

3.71 Across the wider Black Country, attractions of significance also include:

- Black Country Living Museum;
- Dudley Castle and Zoo;
- Walsall Arboretum;
- Walsall Art Gallery and Museum;
- Wolverhampton Civic Suite and Assembly Halls;
- Wolverhampton Theatre.

3.72 The sensitive development of heritage and cultural facilities appealing to the very diverse range of local communities will also contribute to social inclusion, health and wellbeing and improvements in quality of life for all sectors of the local population. Culture is also recognised by national government as making a significant contribution to 'place making' and delivering sustainable communities.

3.73 The nature and often the scale of cultural festivals and entertainment events may mean that they will be best delivered at an open-air location. In Sandwell, such sites are likely to include (but are not limited to) key outdoor venues such as Sandwell Valley. Suitable locations for outdoor events will have appropriate levels of infrastructure, car parking and accessibility to local travel networks and use of them for events and activities should be in accordance with the other policies of this plan and wider legislation and guidance.

3.74 Public venues used for entertainments and leisure purposes will also produce waste, especially relating to food and its packaging. Entertainment and environmental

considerations are not always compatible, with a significant amount of waste being generated by festivals and large events. Consideration will be given to requiring the developers, operators and organisers of large-scale public events on open spaces Sandwell to design in systems to manage waste and litter at outdoor sites, should such systems not already be in place.

- 3.75 Canals form a significant part of the heritage of both Sandwell and the Black Country and form an integral part of both its cultural history and its attraction for tourists. Sandwell's canals also play a vital role in delivering both blue and green infrastructure throughout the borough, as they link into the canal network across Birmingham and the other Black Country authorities. They are also a potential focus for biodiversity and regeneration projects.
- 3.76 Locations in or adjacent to Sandwell include:
- Galton Valley Canal Heritage Area, Smethwick;
 - Bumble Hole and Warrens Hall Park on the Sandwell / Dudley border at Netherton / Tividale

Green Belt

- 3.77 Green Belts are identified and designated to prevent urban sprawl (including the coalescence of settlements) by keeping land permanently open. The essential characteristics of green belts are their openness and their permanence. The detailed boundaries of the West Midlands Green Belt in Sandwell are identified on the Policies Map.
- 3.78 Green belt policy aims to prevent inappropriate development within designated areas. The following policies respond to local circumstances and provide clarity and interpretation of several of the terms set out in the NPPF.
- 3.79 The protection of the green belt is a key aspect of the Vision and the overarching Strategic Priority of development in the most appropriate and sustainable locations whilst protecting the most vulnerable assets.

Policy SDS6 – Sandwell's Green Belt

1. **Sandwell Council will maintain a defensible boundary³¹ around the Sandwell green belt, to help promote urban renaissance, to maximise its role in helping to mitigate**

³¹ The boundary of the Sandwell Green Belt is shown on the Policies Map.

Policy SDS6 – Sandwell’s Green Belt

climate change impacts and to support easy access to the countryside for residents.

2. Sandwell green belt’s nature conservation, landscape, heritage and agricultural value will be protected and enhanced.
3. Opportunities will be taken to improve the value and recreational role of the green belt in Sandwell Valley:
 - a. through improving safe accessibility for all users;
 - b. by providing facilities for active and passive recreation (if this preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it³²);
 - c. by protecting tranquil areas and locations with ecological and historic value.
4. Extensions to existing buildings, the re-use of buildings³³ or limited infilling / redevelopment / replacement of them within the footprint of an existing developed site within Sandwell’s Green Belt will be considered for approval provided:
 - a. extensions are not disproportionately over and above the size of the existing building(s) as originally constructed;
 - b. for replacement buildings, the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
 - c. the scale, materials and general design of the proposed development or redevelopment are in keeping with the character of the buildings and their surroundings and avoid greater impact and harm to the openness of the Green Belt; and
 - d. it does not lead to an increase in the developed proportion of the overall site.

Justification

3.80 Sandwell attaches great importance to the ongoing protection of the Black Country Green Belt, whose boundary is drawn tightly around parts of its urban edges, and which

³² Paragraph 149c (or any subsequent update) of the NPPF (2023).

³³ Provided they are of permanent and substantial construction

encompasses some of the most sensitive and important tracts of green and open space in the borough. The largest section of Sandwell's designated green belt lies within the Sandwell Valley area, and links into Walsall's green belt to the north-east of the borough.

- 3.81 The Green Belt will be preserved from inappropriate development unless very special circumstances have been demonstrated in accordance with national planning policy and guidance. Inappropriate development is, by definition, harmful to the Green Belt and should not be approved except in very special circumstances.
- 3.82 Sandwell Council recognises that the space needs of existing uses can change and evolve over time and some activities may require additional space. To remain in their current premises and to support a thriving community and economy, facilities currently located in the green belt may need to extend or alter their current operational buildings.
- 3.83 To ensure the openness of the green belt is maintained, any extensions or alterations to buildings in it must not result in additions that are disproportionately over and above the size of the original building. For all non-residential buildings, the 'original building' is taken to be a building as it existed on 1 July 1948 or, if constructed after 1 July 1948, as it was built originally.
- 3.84 While green belt is not itself a reflection of landscape quality or value, large parts of the local green belt are also identified as being of significant historic, environmental and landscape importance; should a permission be granted, the Council will require particularly high-quality design and materials to be used in such locations, in line with Policy SDS4, Policy SDM1 and the policies in the Natural and Historic Environment section of the SLP.
- 3.85 It is the Council's view that there are no exceptional circumstances in Sandwell that would justify amending current boundaries and releasing any areas of green belt for new development. While there is an identified shortfall of land suitable for housing and economic development, this of itself does not outweigh the need to maintain the openness and permanence of the green belt within Sandwell, especially given the densely developed and urban character of most of the rest of the borough.

Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 3.86 Green and blue infrastructure are terms used to describe a multi-functional and connected network of green spaces, water and other environmental features in both urban and rural areas. It represents a collection of assets that provide multiple functions and services to people, the economy and the environment. It includes (but is not limited to) the following land types:
- a. woodland

- b. watercourses, including canals
- c. highway verges and railway embankments
- d. parks, playgrounds, allotments and other public open spaces
- e. urban trees
- f. private gardens
- g. the grounds of hospitals, schools and business parks
- h. sport pitches and recreational areas

3.87 Green infrastructure can contribute to the provision of 'ecosystem services', the direct and indirect contributions the natural environment provides for human wellbeing and quality of life. These services can be delivered in a practical sense, e.g., by providing food and water and regulating the climate, and through supporting cultural and social aspects such as the provision of green spaces that can then help reduce stress and anxiety. They include flood protection, water purification, carbon storage, land for food production, places for recreation, landscape and nature conservation.

3.88 Green infrastructure performs multiple functions, some of which include:

- a. biodiversity and geodiversity – providing habitats for wildlife
- b. access and recreation – places for sports, play, walking and cycling
- c. health and wellbeing – supporting healthy lifestyles
- d. energy – providing an energy resource using biomass, hydro-electric and wind power
- e. townscape – making towns and villages better places in which to live
- f. economic development – supporting the economy by improving the image and 'liveability' of places

3.89 In 2023 Natural England published guidance on the delivery and enhancement of green infrastructure³⁴. As a key resource for developers and local planning authorities, the framework integrates green infrastructure tools, principles, standards and design guidance. It is structured through five key standards, addressing:

- urban nature recovery;

³⁴ <https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/Home.aspx>

- an urban greening factor;
- an urban tree canopy cover standard;
- accessible greenspace standards; and
- a green infrastructure strategy.

3.90 Of these elements, Sandwell Council already addresses most of them through existing Council strategies and many of the policies proposed in this plan. Relevant plan policies include those on biodiversity net gain, the nature recovery strategy, canals, SuDs, climate change mitigation and good design, which address urban nature recovery and urban greening; the policy on trees and hedgerows; the adopted Sandwell Tree Strategy, which covers urban canopy cover; and accessible green space standards, which form part of the Council's Green Spaces Strategy and Audit.

3.91 In respect of a Green Infrastructure Strategy, this standard supports the National Planning Policy Framework's requirement that local authorities should develop strategic policies for green infrastructure. At an area-wide scale, the Green Infrastructure Standard will see local authorities develop delivery plans to support the creation and enhancement of new and existing greenspaces.

3.92 This topic is also addressed across a range of policies in the Sandwell Local Plan and is addressed in the following strategic policy.

3.93 A focussed green infrastructure strategy could also provide an overarching framework against which the Council's success in achieving many of these positive outcomes could be monitored and measured.

Policy SDS7 - Green and Blue Infrastructure in Sandwell

- 1. The Council will support a strategic approach to green and blue infrastructure by:**
 - a. working with relevant partners to prepare, adopt and implement a Green Infrastructure Strategy for the borough;**
 - b. planning, designing and managing green infrastructure in an integrated way to achieve multiple benefits;**
 - c. identifying key green infrastructure assets, their current function and their potential future contributions;**

Policy SDS7 - Green and Blue Infrastructure in Sandwell

- d. **identifying opportunities for addressing environmental and social challenges through strategic green infrastructure interventions.**
2. **Sandwell's green and blue infrastructure networks, including open spaces, green spaces, nature conservation sites, habitats, rivers, canals, other waterways, trees and green features, should be enhanced where possible (Policies SNE1 - SNE6).**
 3. **Development in Sandwell will be expected to maintain and where possible enhance the existing network of green infrastructure across the borough.**
 4. **Major developments will be required to ensure green spaces and urban greening features (including tree planting, vegetation, gardens, green roofs and green walls, sustainable drainage systems, etc.) are planned, designed and managed in an integrated way so that they deliver multiple climate change and environmental benefits over the lifetime of the development (Policies SCC1 – SCC6).**
 5. **Proposals that would result in the loss of existing green infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that mitigate or compensate for this loss and ensure that the ecosystem services of the area are retained (Policy SNE2).**
 6. **Major developments will be expected to maximise opportunities for enhancing existing green spaces and waterways by incorporating appropriate urban greening to improve the visual quality and ecological functions of the site.**

Justification

- 3.94 A green infrastructure approach to development recognises that the network of green and blue spaces, street trees, green roofs and other major assets such as natural or semi-natural drainage features must be planned, designed and managed in an integrated way. This will include considering and enhancing where possible links to green and blue networks beyond Sandwell's boundaries, in collaboration with neighbouring authorities and stakeholders.
- 3.95 Green infrastructure creates a sense of place. It is a multifunctional benefit close to where people live, work and relax. It will help to support a healthy lifestyle, can reduce health inequalities in communities and offers social benefits as well by creating a sense of social cohesion and shared space.
- 3.96 Policy SDS7 sets out a strategic green infrastructure approach and provides a framework for how this can be assessed and planned for. Further policies in the environment and climate

change sections of the SLP provide more detail on specific aspects of green infrastructure, alongside other Plan policies designed to deliver multiple outcomes.

3.97 Objectives include:

- promoting mental and physical health and wellbeing;
- adapting to the impacts of climate change and the urban heat-island effect;
- improving air and water quality;
- encouraging walking and cycling;
- supporting landscape and heritage conservation;
- learning about the environment;
- supporting food growing; and
- conserving and enhancing biodiversity and ecological resilience;

alongside the more traditional functions of green space such as for play, sport and recreation.

3.98 All development takes place within a wider environment and green infrastructure should be an integral element and not an 'add-on'. Its economic and social value should be recognised as highlighted in the Black Country i-Tree Assessment and Sandwell's Green Spaces Strategy and Trees Strategy.

3.99 It is important to ensure that green and blue infrastructure are connected and resilient, to enable them to respond to climate change in a positive way. The use of green infrastructure should be optimised, but not maximised – this ensures such spaces will not be damaged by excessive activity and thus will retain their importance as part of a wider network of spaces and places for wildlife, ecology and habitats as well as supporting the physical and mental health of Sandwell's residents.

4. Sandwell's Natural and Historic Environment

- 4.1 The Black Country enjoys a unique physical and cultural heritage thanks to its origins as a mainstay of heavy industry and driver of the Industrial Revolution. The geological complexity of the area, its topography, its settlement pattern and the existence of significant areas of green and open space within one of the most densely-developed parts of the country require a set of robust and relevant planning policies that will help to protect and enhance what gives Sandwell and the wider Black Country its unique physical, ecological and historic character and appearance.

Nature Conservation

- 4.2 The protection and improvement of Sandwell's biodiversity and geodiversity will safeguard and improve the environmental attractiveness and value of the area for residents and visitors while at the same time improving the physical and natural sustainability of communities within the conurbation in the face of climate change. This will directly contribute to delivering Strategic Objective 11, which is also associated with supporting the physical and mental wellbeing of residents.

Policy SNE1 – Nature Conservation

1. **Development will not be permitted where it would, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, have an adverse impact on the integrity of an internationally designated site, such as Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation or Fens Pools Special Area of Conservation.**
2. **Development will not be permitted where it would harm nationally (Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves) or regionally (Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) designated nature conservation sites.**
3. **Species that are legally protected, in decline, are rare within Sandwell / the Black Country or that are covered by national, regional, or local Biodiversity Action Plans will be protected when development occurs in accordance with Part I of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.**
4. **Where, exceptionally, the strategic benefits of a development clearly outweigh the importance of a local nature conservation site (Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation), species, habitat or geological feature, damage must be minimised.**

Policy SNE1 – Nature Conservation

Any remaining impacts, including any reduction in area, must be fully mitigated. A mitigation strategy must accompany relevant planning applications. Compensation will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.

- 5. The movement of wildlife within Sandwell and into / out of adjoining areas, through both linear habitats (e.g., wildlife corridors) and the wider urban matrix (e.g., stepping-stone sites) should not be impeded by development. Developers must take account of the Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy (Policy SNE2) when preparing their schemes and should plan for the maintenance and where possible enhancement of such linkages.**
- 6. Details of how improvements (appropriate to their location and scale) will contribute to the natural environment, and their ongoing management for the benefit of biodiversity and geodiversity, will be expected to accompany planning applications. Adequate information must be submitted with applications for proposals that may affect any designated site or important habitat, species, or geological feature, to ensure that the likely impacts of the proposal can be fully assessed. Where the necessary information is not made available, there will be a presumption against granting planning permission.**
- 7. Over the plan period, Sandwell will update evidence on designated nature conservation sites and Local Nature Reserves as necessary in conjunction with the Local Sites Partnership and Natural England and will amend existing designations in accordance with this evidence. Consequently, sites may receive new, or increased, protection over the Plan period.**

Justification

- 4.3 The past development and redevelopment of the Black Country has led to it being referred to as an “endless village”, which describes both the interlinked settlements and the many patches of encapsulated countryside present within it. The Black Country is home to internationally and nationally designated nature conservation sites and has the most diverse

geology, for its size, of any area on Earth³⁵. Many rare and protected species are found within its matrix of greenspace and the built environment.

- 4.4 Development in Sandwell should positively contribute to the protection, enhancement and expansion of the natural environment across the wider Black Country by:
- extending and improving the condition of habitats and nature conservation sites;
 - improving opportunities for the movement of wildlife within and beyond urban areas;
 - restoring or creating habitats / geological features that actively contribute to the implementation of Nature Recovery Networks, Biodiversity Action Plans (BAPs) and / or Geodiversity Action Plans (GAPs) at a national, regional, or local level;
 - ensuring that developments adjacent to canals and natural watercourses deliver improved and extended corridors for the movement of wildlife and people.
- 4.5 Sandwell lies at the heart of the British mainland and the Birmingham and Black Country conurbation and therefore plays an important role in helping species migrate and adapt to climate change across the urban area as their existing habitats are rendered unsuitable. It is very important to increase the ability of landscapes and their ecosystems to adapt in response to changes in the climate by increasing the range, extent, and connectivity of habitats.
- 4.6 To protect vulnerable species, the Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy will allow isolated nature conservation sites to be protected, buffered, improved and linked to others. When considering the movement of wildlife, development proposals should incorporate the recommendations from the Black Country Local Nature Recovery Network Opportunity Map and the ecological networks it identifies. Species dispersal will be aided by extending, widening, and improving the habitats of wildlife corridors. Conversely, fragmentation and weakening of wildlife sites and wildlife corridors by development will be opposed.
- 4.7 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs) are identified through the process of local site assessment. This process is overseen by the Birmingham and Black Country Local Sites Partnership, whose role is to provide expert advice to the area's local authorities and other organisations as appropriate on the selection, management, protection and review of the network of local sites throughout Birmingham and the Black Country. It is particularly important to protect and

³⁵ Comment by Black Country Geological Society – Black Country Core Strategy

enhance SINCs; an up-to-date Local Site Assessment will be required to support any proposal that could harm a SINC.

- 4.8 Development offers an opportunity to improve the local environment, and this is especially so in an urban area. The Council is committed to meeting its “Biodiversity Duty” under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (2006) and to delivering the principles of the NPPF by proactively protecting, restoring and creating a richer and more sustainable wildlife and geology. The local Biodiversity Partnership, Geodiversity Partnership, Birmingham and Black Country Local Nature Partnership and Local Sites Partnership will identify, map, and regularly review the priorities for protection and improvement throughout the Black Country, in accordance with the emerging Black Country Nature Recovery Network strategy. These will be used to inform planning decisions. The Local Environmental Records Centre hold, collate and disseminate the definitive and up-to-date register of locally designated nature conservation sites on behalf of the Black Country Authorities.
- 4.9 The Council’s most recent Green Spaces Strategy Implementation and Business Plan (2022 – 23) states that Sandwell is currently failing to meet the national ANGSt³⁶ standard for local nature reserves and has committed to meeting the standard’s requirement of at least one hectare of Local Nature Reserve per 1,000 population. This equates to around 35ha or 0.35km² for Sandwell.

Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

- 4.10 The Environment Act (2021) states that development proposals are required to provide a minimum 10% uplift in habitat quality on those sites that are being built on. This is referred to as biodiversity net gain (BNG) and it is a process that attempts to leave the environment in a more valuable condition than previously following development. This is a mandatory requirement on most development sites.
- 4.11 This process involves the use of a nationally agreed formula to help identify what negative impacts on a site’s current ecological value will arise from a proposed development, and then calculating how much new or restored habitat, and of what type(s), is required to deliver an overall net gain in biodiversity value following that development. This formula is known as

³⁶ Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard; effectively updated by the Green Infrastructure Standards for England (2023)
<https://designatedsites.naturalengland.org.uk/GreenInfrastructure/downloads/Green%20Infrastructure%20Standards%20for%20England%20Summary%20v1.1.pdf>

the Biodiversity Metric (currently version 4) and it is produced by DEFRA and Natural England³⁷. A simplified beta test version of the Biodiversity Metric has also been developed specifically for use on small development sites.

- 4.12 Mandatory biodiversity net gain will also provide an incentive for development to support the delivery of nature recovery networks³⁸, through the calculation of biodiversity units at sites identified by the strategy. These networks have been designed to help local planning authorities to focus policy and delivery on conserving and enhancing biodiversity in the most effectual and depleted parts of the local ecological system and to reflect this in land use plans for their area.
- 4.13 Nature recovery networks are designed to be relevant to local areas, but also to link up with networks in adjacent areas too, with the intention of producing a national nature recovery network in due course. This will enable nature and wildlife to be planned for and protected at a much larger scale than is possible at present.

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

Biodiversity Net Gain

1. All development proposals in Sandwell shall deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value when measured against baseline site information. Where achievable, a higher net gain may be agreed. Losses and gains will be calculated using the extant national Biodiversity Metric³⁹.
2. Where site clearance or other activities have lowered the biodiversity value of an on-site habitat after 30 January 2020, an estimate of the biodiversity units on site prior to those activities will be used as its baseline for calculating the site's initial BNG value. This estimate will be based on habitat surveys, aerial photos and / or other appropriate evidence of the condition of the site, applying the precautionary principle.
3. Biodiversity net gain must be provided in line with the following principles:

³⁷ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6049804846366720>

³⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/nature-recovery-network>

³⁹ BNG is measured using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Calculation Tool (version correct as at September 2023). Natural England have published detailed guidance on how to use the metric.

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

- a) there will be a requirement for on-site habitat provision / enhancement wherever practicable, followed by improvements to sites within the local area, and then other sites elsewhere within Sandwell;
 - b) where off-site measures are needed to meet biodiversity net gain requirements, it is expected that the off-site habitat enhancement or creation will be located as close to the development site as possible;
 - c) the maintenance and enhancement of the ability of plants and animals (including pollinating insects) to move, migrate and genetically disperse across Sandwell and the wider Black Country must be supported; and
 - d) the provision / enhancement of priority habitats identified at the national, regional, or local level, having regard to the scarcity of that habitat within Sandwell, will be expected.
4. Compensation in the form of national biodiversity credits will only be accepted as a fall-back if mitigation is not possible within the development site boundary, elsewhere in its immediate vicinity or in the wider Sandwell area.
 5. Provision of on- or off-site compensation on other sites should not replace or adversely impact on existing alternative / valuable habitats in those locations; compensatory works on them should be established via a legal agreement or under way prior to the related development being undertaken.
 6. Monitoring of BNG compensation measures will be required to ensure its successful delivery, with further compensation being required in the event of initial measures being ineffective. Ongoing management of any new or improved BNG habitats together with monitoring and reporting will need to be planned for and funded for 30 years by developers, using a conservation covenant or s106 agreement as necessary.
 7. Sandwell Council has identified the following site(s) as suitable for the provision of biodiversity units to developers unable to provide a minimum 10% net gain on their own sites (see Appendix A and evidence base):

Location	Potential project types	Baseline units	Potential uplift units (%)

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

Hill House Farm	Large areas of 'modified grassland' within the site that could be improved to 'other neutral grassland' of good condition. The current land use may have to be adapted to accommodate these changes (arable). There is potential for uplift in other habitats on site.	241.73	+255.87 (105.85)
Hill Farm Bridge Fields	Vary sward height and increase species diversity to improve the condition of the grasslands. Condition of the woodland can be improved through introduction of deadwood and management of habitat regeneration.	181.24	+65.90 (36.36)
Menzies Open Space	Woodland improvement, some grassland improvement Areas of 'other neutral grassland' can provide uplift. Site contains a pond (non-priority). There is potential to create more uplift by improving the condition of the pond from poor to good.	157.4	+42.28 (26.86)
Tibbington Open Space (The Cracker)	Some grassland management / improvement, woodland improvement Relatively large areas of woodland offer strong uplift potential. 'Other neutral grassland' habitats and the parkland habitat both provide uplift opportunities.	90.57	+32.91 (36.17)
Warrens Hall Park Strategic Open Space	Woodland improvement, some grassland improvement	211.70	+26.93 (12.72)
Tividale Park	Scrub species and structural improvement, tree and woodland improvement	49.65	+10.39 (20.92)

NOTE: Developers are not required to buy units on Council-owned sites; public and private landowners may also provide them elsewhere in Sandwell.

- 8. Exemptions to the need to provide biodiversity net gain on development sites will be as set out in the relevant legislation and national guidance.**

Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

9. All development should help deliver the Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy in line with the following principles:
 - a) take account of where in the Local Nature Recovery Network the development is located and deliver benefits appropriate to that zone, in accordance with section 3d above;
 - b) follow the mitigation hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensation, and provide for the protection, enhancement, restoration and creation of wildlife habitat and green infrastructure;
 - c) follow the principles of Making Space for Nature - recognise that spaces are needed for nature and that these should be of sufficient size and quality and must be appropriately connected to other areas of green infrastructure, to address the objectives of the local Nature Recovery Network Strategy.
10. Priority locations for habitat creation and enhancement are as shown on the Sandwell Nature Recovery Network Map (Appendix A). Development sites within the identified zones will be expected to contribute towards the creation of appropriate habitat linkages and types to support those priority areas.
11. Development should be designed to protect and enhance existing habitats and ecological networks, including wildlife corridors and stepping stones. Development should minimise any potential disturbance to species and habitats, including from site lighting.

Local opportunities for habitats and wildlife

12. All development shall secure the eradication of invasive species within site boundaries, where opportunities to do so arise.
13. All major development proposals with an eaves height or roof commencement height of 5m and above are required to provide integrated nesting bricks / boxes for swifts, house martins, house sparrows, starlings, and / or bats as appropriate, to help preserve endangered species and urban biodiversity in Sandwell.
14. All applicants, including those undertaking householder schemes and smaller-scale developments are asked to consider including additional enhancement

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

opportunities for wildlife and conservation in their proposals; the Council will consider such contributions positively when determining planning applications.

Justification

Biodiversity net gain

- 4.14 Biodiversity net gain (BNG) has been described as a measurable target for development projects where impacts on biodiversity are outweighed by a clear mitigation hierarchy approach to first avoid and then minimise impacts, including through restoration and / or compensation. Net gain is an approach to development and land management that aims to leave the natural environment in a measurably better state than beforehand (DEFRA Biodiversity Metric 4 and its subsequent iterations).
- 4.15 The Environment Act requires a minimum 10% increase in biodiversity within or near new development sites. New development should always seek to enhance rather than reduce levels of biodiversity present on a site. This will require a baseline assessment of what level of biodiversity is currently present, and an estimation of how proposed designs will add to that current level, supported by evidence that a minimum 10% net gain has been delivered.
- 4.16 Including BNG in the Local Plan will also link biodiversity to other strategic objectives and the overall place-making strategy for Sandwell, enabling a more rounded approach to the environment. On-site biodiversity improvements will also be vital to enhancing the liveability of urban areas, and improving the connection of people to nature, particularly as development densities increase.
- 4.17 Development should also contribute to wildlife and habitat connectivity in the wider area, in line with the Biodiversity Action Plan and the Black Country Nature Recovery Network Strategy.
- 4.18 The ways in which developments secure a net gain in biodiversity value will vary depending on the scale and nature of the site. On some sites, the focus will be on the retention of existing habitats. For others, this may be impracticable, and it may be necessary instead to make significant provision for new habitats either on- or off-site.
- 4.19 It can be challenging to establish new habitats. It is essential that the most important and irreplaceable habitats in Sandwell are protected, and so mitigation rather than retention will not be appropriate in some circumstances. BNG is not applied to irreplaceable habitats, such as ancient woodlands. Any mitigation and / or compensation requirements for sites identified

and protected under European law or successor legislation should be dealt with as appropriate, and separately to biodiversity net gain provision.

4.20 Under the Environment Act (2021), all planning applications granted (with few exemptions) will be required to deliver at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain, measured through the application of the most up-to-date, and relevant, Biodiversity Metric and necessitating the submission of a Biodiversity Gain Plan.

4.21 Some application types have been excluded from the requirements of the Environment Act and so the relevant regulations should be referred to once in effect to confirm this.

Exemptions to the need to provide 10% BNG are made for:

- a. development impacting habitat of an area below a *de minimis* threshold of 25m², or 5m for linear habitats such as hedgerows;
- b. householder applications;
- c. biodiversity gain sites (where habitats are being enhanced for wildlife);
- d. small-scale self-build and custom housebuilding; and
- e. temporary impacts that will be restored within two years.

Existing sealed surfaces (such as tarmac or existing buildings) are given a zero score under the BNG metric, meaning that these surfaces are effectively exempted from the percentage gain requirement.

4.22 It is important to note however that the development of brownfield or previously developed land is not exempt from the requirement to provide a minimum 10% net gain.

4.23 Biodiversity net gain plans should be agreed prior to commencement⁴⁰. Sites and areas identified to provide for biodiversity net gain requirements should be managed and monitored for at least 30 years post-provision, via s106 obligations or conservation covenants. Monitoring plans will be required as part of the grant of planning permission and should include indicators⁴¹ designed to demonstrate the amount and type of biodiversity net gain provided through development, which should be as specific as possible to help build an evidence base for future reviews of the plan.

⁴⁰ This can be after the grant of planning permission but must be before work starts on site

⁴¹ Examples of indicators include (but may not be restricted to) the total number and type of biodiversity units created, the number of developments achieving biodiversity net gains and a record of on-site and off-site contributions.

- 4.24 The identification and allocation of sites in Sandwell as BNG receptor sites is intended to recognise the dearth of opportunities for on-site provision in the most urban parts of the borough. While developers do not have to purchase units on these sites, the Council is keen to retain as much BNG value within the borough as possible and so has made these sites available and identified additional habitat creation opportunities on them to help provide net benefits in the area.
- 4.25 The allocated sites are intended to accommodate those units that cannot be provided directly on a development site rather than as a wholesale receptor for all units; e.g., if a site requires 11 BNG units and only seven can be accommodated on site, the remaining four could be delivered on a receptor site. This is intended to promote the need for BNG on or adjacent to development sites wherever possible, but also to recognise the need for a degree of flexibility in delivery, especially where land availability and site viability are issues. As these sites are included on the national register, their accessibility solely to developers operating in Sandwell cannot be guaranteed.
- 4.26 Most development generates some opportunities to help achieve an overall nature conservation benefit. It will often be possible to secure worthwhile improvements through relatively simple measures, even where there is no formal or mandatory requirement for biodiversity net gain to be delivered, such as for domestic or householder schemes and small scale or permitted development proposals.
- 4.27 All applicants can contribute to increasing opportunities for nature conservation by making design choices that allow wildlife to continue to inhabit the same area. Artificial nest boxes / bricks can be incorporated within developments relatively easily, especially on taller buildings and / or at eaves level (refurbishments, extensions and / or new build), to provide nesting and roosting opportunities for birds, including species under threat such as swifts, house martins, swallows and house sparrows, and where appropriate, bats.
- 4.28 Other examples of such measures may include:
- lighting designed and positioned to reduce light pollution and avoid disturbing wildlife
 - hedgehog gates in new boundary fences or walls
 - insect “hotels”
 - the retention of trees, hedges and other vegetation (Policy SNE3)
 - wildlife –friendly green walls and roofs on new buildings and places such as communal bin areas, bus shelters and bike stores

- the use of native, wildlife-friendly plants, trees and shrubs in planting and landscaping schemes
- the incorporation of green and blue infrastructure, such as wildlife-friendly SuDS

- 4.29 Biodiversity features of value frequently occur beyond designated wildlife and ecological sites and should be conserved, enhanced and see additional features created as part of nearby development where this can be achieved.
- 4.30 The clearance of habitat from a site prior to the submission of a planning application is imprudent. Robust local evidence is generally available to local councils to prove what types of habitat and vegetation were until recently present on a cleared site, so there will still be a requirement to provide suitable and sufficient replacements as part of the biodiversity net gain requirements.
- 4.31 This is addressed in the Environment Act (2021), which makes provision for sanctions against the clearance of sites prior to a planning application being submitted in relation to the requirement for biodiversity net gain. Under paragraph 6 of Schedule 7A of the Act, if the developer undertakes activities such as clearing the site in a way that reduces its biodiversity value, then the pre-development value to be considered is the one that existed before clearance took place.

Local Nature Recovery Network Strategies (LNRNS)

- 4.32 The Nature Recovery Network is a major commitment in the government's 25-Year Environment Plan. The government has set out in the Environment Act (2021) that a Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy (LNRNS) will be prepared locally and published for all areas of England, and that these will:
- a) agree priorities for nature's recovery;
 - b) map the most valuable existing habitat for nature using the best available data; and
 - c) map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals.
- 4.33 The LNRNS will help restore many ecosystem functions and improve the services upon which society depends, benefitting nature, people and the economy, and helping to address three of the biggest challenges society faces: biodiversity loss, climate change and human wellbeing. LNRNS will help to map the Nature Recovery Network locally and nationally, and will help to plan, prioritise and target action and investment in nature at a regional level across England.

- 4.34 LNRs will support the delivery of mandatory biodiversity net gain and provide a focus for a strengthened duty on all public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity. They underpin the Nature Recovery Network and support partnership working and the greater integration of ecological and biodiversity considerations into other areas of land management.
- 4.35 The Environment Act introduces a new duty on all public bodies to have regard to any relevant LNRs, creating an incentive for a wide range of organisations to engage with the creation of an LNRs and to take steps to support its delivery. Local authorities and other public bodies designated by the Secretary of State will also have to report on what steps they have taken, at least every five years.
- 4.36 The four Black Country Authorities jointly commissioned a Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy. This has produced opportunities mapping that future development proposals will be required to consider in demonstrating how they deliver biodiversity benefits appropriate to the zones identified.
- 4.37 The Nature Recovery Network Map for Sandwell (April 2021) is shown at Appendix A alongside a description of the components that make it up. This, together with similar strategies for the other three Black Country councils, will eventually form an integral part of a wider West Midlands LNRs that is to be produced in the future. In the meantime, it will carry weight as evidence supporting Policy SNE2.

Provision, Retention and Protection of Trees, Woodlands, And Hedgerows

- 4.38 Sandwell benefits from an estimated 265,000 trees, covering 18.1% of the borough. It is estimated that 81% of these trees are in good or excellent condition⁴². Sandwell Council will continue to support and protect a sustainable, high-quality tree population and will aim to significantly increase tree cover across its area during the Plan period.
- 4.39 A main theme of the Government's 25-Year Environment Plan is the need to plant more trees. This is to be achieved not only as part of the creation of extensive new woodlands but also in urban areas; this will be accomplished in part by encouraging businesses to offset their emissions in a cost-effective way through planting trees. The national ambition is to deliver one million new urban trees and a further 11 million new trees across the country.

⁴² Tree Strategy and Implementation Plan 2023 – 2028 - <https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s13367/Appendix%20A%20-%20Tree%20Strategy%20and%20Implementation%20Plan%202023%20-%202028.pdf>

- 4.40 It is important to encourage and support the delivery of green infrastructure and ecological networks through urban areas, especially in relation to their role in climate change mitigation and adaptation and to mitigate the health problems associated with air pollution. The provision of new trees and the protection of existing ones throughout Sandwell will be a key component of this approach.
- 4.41 The Council's aim is to increase Sandwell's canopy cover by at least 6%⁴³ over the plan period⁴⁴, based on data establishing its current levels of provision and identifying opportunities for doing so derived from the Nature Recovery Network and biodiversity net gain targets.

Policy SNE3 – Provision, Retention and Protection of Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

Retention and protection of ancient woodland and veteran or ancient trees

- 1. Development that would result in the loss of or damage to ancient woodland and / or ancient or veteran trees will not be permitted.**
- 2. Development adjacent to ancient woodland and / or groups of ancient or veteran trees will be required to provide an appropriate landscaping buffer, with a minimum depth of 15m and a preferred depth of 50m.**
- 3. Provision should be made for the protection of individual veteran or ancient trees likely to be impacted by development, by providing a buffer around such trees of a minimum of 15 times the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be 5m from the edge of the tree's canopy if that area is larger than 15 times its diameter.**

Habitat Creation

- 4. Opportunities for increasing tree cover across Sandwell through habitat creation and the enhancement of ecological networks, including connecting areas of ancient woodland, should be maximised in public and private sector development layouts and landscaping, in particular through biodiversity net gain and nature recovery network initiatives (Policy SNE2).**

⁴³ Sandwell Tree Strategy and Implementation Plan 2023 - 2028

⁴⁴ See also the Woodland Trust's Emergency Tree Plan 2020 - <https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/british-trees/how-trees-fight-climate-change/>

Policy SNE3 – Provision, Retention and Protection of Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

- 5. Replacement trees must not be planted in locations where they would impact on sites identified / designated as ecologically important, unless this has been specifically agreed with the Council.**

Shading and air quality issues

- 6. New houses and other buildings must be carefully designed and situated to prevent an incompatible degree of shade⁴⁵ being cast on them by both existing and new trees, which might generate subsequent pressure for the trees to be removed.**
- 7. The positioning of trees in relation to streets and buildings should not worsen air quality for people using and living in them. Care should be taken when choosing and positioning new street trees, and designing streets and buildings, to allow for street-level ventilation to occur and to avoid trapping pollution between ground level and tree canopies (Policy SHW3).**

Canopy cover

- 8. The planting of new, predominantly native, trees and woodlands will be sought⁴⁶ in appropriate locations, to increase the extent of canopy cover in Sandwell by around 6% by 2030, in line with the Council's Tree Strategy.**
- 9. Tree planting on new development sites should make a minimum contribution of 20% canopy cover and a recommended contribution of 30% canopy cover across the site⁴⁷, especially in areas where evidence demonstrates that current levels of canopy cover are lower than the local average.**
- 10. Development proposals should use large-canopied species where possible⁴⁸, as they provide a wider range of health, biodiversity and climate change mitigation**

⁴⁵ This will be in the context of the requirements outlined in policies elsewhere in this plan on the role of trees in mitigating climate change and providing appropriate levels of shade and cooling.

⁴⁶ Where possible and in most cases, replacement trees should be UK and Ireland sourced and grown, to help limit the spread of tree pests and diseases, while supporting regional nurseries when acquiring them.

⁴⁷ Emergency Tree Plan for the UK – The Woodland Trust 2020

⁴⁸ Taking into account the requirements of points 6 and 7 of this policy.

Policy SNE3 – Provision, Retention and Protection of Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

and adaptation benefits because of their larger surface area; they will also make a positive contribution to increasing overall canopy cover⁴⁹ within Sandwell, as set out in the Sandwell Tree Strategy.

Trees and Design

- 11. Development proposals should be designed around the need to incorporate trees already present on sites, using sensitive and well-designed site layouts to maximise their retention. Existing mature and healthy trees⁵⁰, trees that are ecologically important, and ancient / veteran trees should be retained and integrated into landscaping schemes, recognising the important contribution they make to the character and amenity⁵¹ of a development site and to local biodiversity networks.**
- 12. For every tree removed from a development site, a minimum of three replacement trees will be required to be planted, in accordance with the Council's aim to increase tree canopy cover across the district by 6% and to ensure that the minimum requirement of 10% biodiversity net gain is met and preferably exceeded.**
- 13. The species, eventual size and amenity value of replacement trees must be commensurate with the size, stature, rarity, and / or public amenity of the tree(s) to be removed. Where trees to be replaced form a group of amenity value (rather than individual specimens), replacements must also be in the form of a group commensurate with the area covered, size and species of trees and established quality of the original group. Where possible, they must be planted in a position that will mitigate the loss of visual amenity associated with the original group.**
- 14. Where planning permission has been granted that involves the removal of trees, suitable replacement trees must be provided onsite. Where sufficient suitable**

⁴⁹ The area of ground covered by trees when seen from above.

⁵⁰ Health and status as assessed in a report produced by an accredited arboriculturist

⁵¹ National planning guidance identifies trees worthy of retention on amenity grounds (through use of a TPO) as those that are visible in part or whole from a public place and / or those with individual, collective and wider impact (in terms of size, form, future potential, rarity, cultural / historic value, landscape contribution and / or contribution to a conservation area). Other factors such as value for nature conservation and climate change may also be considered.

Policy SNE3 – Provision, Retention and Protection of Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows

onsite replacements cannot be provided, off-site planting or woodland enhancement, including support for natural regeneration, in the near vicinity of the removed tree(s) must be provided, in line with the mitigation hierarchy set out in Policy SNE2.

15. Where new trees are to be planted on a development site, the species of trees and their location within the site should be informed by a site-specific survey carried out by a qualified ecologist / arboriculturalist.
16. New trees on development sites should be planted in accordance with arboricultural best practice, including the use of suitably-sized planting pits⁵², supporting stakes, root barriers, underground guying, and appropriate protective fencing during the construction phase.

Hedgerows

17. There will be a presumption against the wholesale removal of hedgerows for development purposes, especially where ecological surveys have identified them to be species-rich and where they exist on previously undeveloped land.
18. New hedgerows will be sought as part of site layouts and landscaping schemes.
19. Protection of existing hedgerows before and during development must be undertaken.

Justification

4.42 Section 15 of the NPPF (2021) identifies the importance of trees in helping to create an attractive and healthy environment. The NPPF expects local plans to identify, map and safeguard components of ecological networks and promote their conservation, restoration, and enhancement. Ancient woodlands and ancient and veteran trees are an irreplaceable aspect of both the ecological and historic landscape and the NPPF is very clear about the need to protect such resources where they occur.

⁵² To allow for an appropriate volume of soil in which to develop a viable root system and to prevent future stress that might affect the trees' long-term health and lifespan

- 4.43 Hedgerows are also a finite and vulnerable resource and their provision, retention and enhancement will be expected when new development is proposed.
- 4.44 Wildlife corridors are important in helping overcome habitat fragmentation, by ensuring that species can reach the resources they need and that their populations do not become isolated, inbred, and prone to the adverse impacts of climate change. Supporting wildlife corridors will mean:
- creating and maintaining a diverse tree population (including trees of all ages and sizes),
 - controlling invasive species,
 - promoting the reintroduction of native species in locations where they are appropriate and would have a positive impact on biodiversity,
 - retaining standing dead wood,
 - making sure that any new planting is in the right location and of the right species, and
 - recognising that woodlands are not simple monoculture habitats and will also contain glades, wet areas, understoreys, and grassland.
- 4.45 The requirement to plant trees on development sites will also help support and deliver increased biodiversity and green network opportunities on sites that at present do not contain tree cover, e.g., some sites currently in managed agricultural use where trees and hedgerows have previously been removed.
- 4.46 An example of the importance of trees in helping to manage and mitigate adverse impacts relating to air quality and climate change can be found in the report produced for the Black Country iTree project⁵³ in 2021 - 22. This identified that the tree population of Sandwell (265,000 trees) stores 361,000 tonnes of carbon (a service valued at £328m), sequestering 5,500 tonnes annually (£5m), which is equivalent to 1.6% of the borough's annual emissions. They remove 15.3 tonnes of air pollution annually, an outcome that is valued at £828,000. They also intercept 130,000m³ of surface water annually, saving an estimated £128,000 in treatment costs.

⁵³ Black Country Natural Capital Valuation, i-Tree (Treeconomics, Birmingham Tree People, Forest Research), 2022 <https://sandwell.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s13084/Appendix%20B%20-%20iTree%20Sandwell%20Report.pdf>

- 4.47 The loss of trees from urban environments has been demonstrated to have negative outcomes for human health. Social costs, such as an increase in crime, have also been associated with the loss of trees⁵⁴. There is a growing body of evidence that the presence of trees in and around urban environments provides major public health and societal benefits.
- 4.48 Trees in the urban landscape have a vital role to play in delivering ecosystem services⁵⁵, such as in:
- helping to improve residents' physical health⁵⁶
 - helping to improve residents' mental health⁵⁷
 - helping to mitigate climate change by sequestering carbon dioxide
 - providing shading and cooling benefits (including associated savings to the NHS from avoided skin cancer and heat stroke⁵⁸)
 - improving air quality and reducing atmospheric pollution
 - reducing wind speeds in winter, thereby reducing heat loss from buildings
 - reducing noise
 - improving local environments and bringing people closer to nature
 - supporting ecological networks and green infrastructure
 - maximising people's enjoyment of and benefits from their environment
 - contributing towards the aesthetic value of the urban area

Trees on development sites

- 4.49 It will be important to ensure that Sandwell's existing stock of trees and woodlands is protected, maintained, and expanded as far as possible. Developers will be expected to give

⁵⁴ Urban Trees and Human Health: A Scoping Review - Published: 18 June 2020 <https://www.mdpi.com/1660-4601/17/12/4371>

⁵⁵ A term for the benefits humans receive from natural processes occurring in ecosystems, such as providing clean drinking water and decomposition of waste. In 2004 the UN grouped services into four categories: provisioning - e.g., water supply; regulating - e.g., influence on climate; supporting - e.g., crop pollination; cultural - e.g., outdoor activities.

⁵⁶ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6416203718590464>

⁵⁷ <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/4973580642418688>

⁵⁸ Health Benefits of Street Trees - Vadims Sarajevs, The Research Agency of the Forestry Commission, 2011 https://cdn.forestresearch.gov.uk/2022/02/health_benefits_of_street_trees_29june2011-1.pdf

priority to the retention and protection of landscaping, trees and hedgerows on development sites. Trees on development sites should be physically protected during development. Care must be taken to ensure that site engineering / infrastructure works⁵⁹, the storage of plant and machinery, excavations and new foundations do not adversely impact their continued retention, in line with current arboricultural and Building Regulation requirements.

- 4.50 There will be circumstances where the ratio of replacement planting will be different to that required in the policy – especially in cases where significant / mature trees contributing to the visual and ecological amenity of an area and its character are to be removed. Where a development site cannot accommodate additional planting, replacement trees will be expected to be planted in an appropriate off-site location.
- 4.51 Tree species specified in submitted planting plans will be evaluated by either a chartered Landscape Architect or accredited arboriculturist employed by the local authority. This will ensure that a suitable variety of species and standard / size of tree is being planted and will deliver the most appropriate solution for a specific location.
- 4.52 To ensure that good tree protection measures are maintained through the construction project, Sandwell Council will support and encourage the use of arboricultural clerks of work on development sites where trees are to be managed, removed and / or planted on the site. Where the likelihood of trees being adversely affected by construction activity is significant, or there are many trees on site that are likely to be affected (e.g., on larger sites) the Council will use appropriate conditions to require this level of oversight.
- 4.53 An arboricultural survey, carried out to an appropriate standard, should be undertaken prior to removal of any trees or site groundworks and used to inform a proposal's layout at the beginning of the detailed design process. Where proposed development will impact on the character, protection, safety and / or retention of trees of importance to the environment / landscape, the use of an arboricultural clerk of works may be required and will be made subject to a condition on the relevant planning permission.
- 4.54 Other appropriate conditions will be included in planning permissions to ensure that new trees that fail on development sites are replaced within a specified period by trees of a suitable size, species, and quality.
- 4.55 There will be a requirement to:

⁵⁹ i.e., The installation of buried services, drainage systems (such as swales and storage crates for SuDS), the installation of both temporary and permanent means of access, etc.

- replace trees and woodlands that cannot be retained on development sites with a variety of suitable tree specimens (species and size);
- ensure that where individual or groups of trees are of landscape or amenity value, they are retained and that developments are designed to fit around them;
- encourage diversity in the tree population to help to counter ecological causes of tree loss, such as diseases, pests, or climate change; and
- balance the impacts of the loss of trees on climate change and flooding by identifying opportunities to plant replacements via appropriate tree and habitat enhancement and creation schemes.

Climate change and biodiversity

- 4.56 There will be a presumption against the removal of trees that contribute to public amenity and air quality management unless sound arboricultural reasons support their removal⁶⁰.
- 4.57 As part of the requirement for biodiversity net gain (Policy SNE2), developers and others will need to pursue adequate replacements for trees and woodlands lost to allocated and approved development, as well as additional trees and other habitat creation to achieve appropriate compensatory provision on sites. The main imperative will be to ensure that trees are maintained in good health on development sites in the first instance but where this is not possible, the grant of planning permission will be conditional upon the replacement and enhancement of tree cover nearby.
- 4.58 Native tree species able to withstand climate change should be used in landscaping schemes or as replacement planting, to maximise habitats for local wildlife / species and maintain and increase biodiversity. In circumstances where non-native tree species are also considered to be appropriate, a mix of native and non-native species should be provided, to help maintain a healthy and diverse tree population.
- 4.59 Housing layouts should ensure that tree shading does not adversely affect houses in winter when the sun is lower in the sky but maximises it when the sun is higher in summer. The solution will lie in part through choosing suitable species (e.g., deciduous trees) in proximity to housing and locating them at an appropriate distance from the properties.

⁶⁰ The tree is a clearly identified and immediate threat to human safety; disease is significantly impacting the tree's longevity and safety; the tree is causing clearly evidenced structural damage to property where remedial works cannot be undertaken to alleviate the problem; the tree is creating a clearly identified danger or causing significant damage to the adopted highway / footpath network.

- 4.60 The clearance of trees from a site prior to the submission of a planning application is imprudent. Robust local evidence is generally available to prove that trees were until recently present on a cleared site, so there will still be a requirement to provide suitable and sufficient replacement trees.
- 4.61 This is also addressed in the Environment Act (2021), which makes provision for sanctions against the clearance of sites prior to a planning application being submitted in relation to the requirement for biodiversity net gain. Under paragraph 6 of Schedule 7A of the Act, if the developer undertakes activities such as clearing the site that reduces its biodiversity value, then the pre-development value to be considered is the one that existed before clearance took place.

Ancient woodland and veteran trees⁶¹

- 4.62 The NPPF defines ancient woodland and veteran trees as an irreplaceable habitat. Ancient woodland is an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600 AD. It includes ancient semi-natural woodland and plantations on ancient woodland sites. An ancient or veteran tree is a tree which, because of its age, size, and condition, is of exceptional biodiversity, cultural or heritage value. Veteran trees are of exceptional value culturally, in the landscape, or for wildlife, due to their great age, size or location. The soils in which these trees sit has been identified as having a high biodiversity value, given the length of time the trees have been successfully established.
- 4.63 Individual trees can have historic and cultural value and can be linked to specific historic events or people, or they may simply have importance because of their appearance, contribution to landscape character and local landmark status. Some heritage trees may also have great botanical interest, for example as rare native trees or cultivars of historic interest.
- 4.64 Very few trees of any species can be classed as ancient or veteran. Such trees / areas are a finite resource of great biodiversity value. For this reason, the Council considers that it is essential to provide absolute protection for ancient and veteran trees and ancient woodland sites in Sandwell.

Hedgerows

- 4.65 The planting of hedgerows not only enhances opportunities for wildlife but can also significantly improve the appearance of new development. It is particularly suitable on

⁶¹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences> - national guidance on ancient woodland and veteran trees

frontages and along plot and site boundaries, both softening the appearance of the built form and supplementing the design of the overall scheme.

- 4.66 Hedgerows are integral to ecological networks, given their linear form, and will be essential elements of habitat corridors within and beyond the Black Country. Planting additional hedgerows will help to support and increase the movement of wildlife and plants through the Black Country. The planting of bare root hedgerow plants is an economical way of providing green infrastructure on sites.
- 4.67 Hedgerow retention and reinforcement will be of particular importance where hedgerows form part of an established ecological network currently enabling the passage of flora and fauna into and out of rural, suburban, and urban areas. If hedgerow removal is needed to accommodate a high-quality site layout, replacement hedgerow planting will be required.
- 4.68 Hedgerow protection on development sites and elsewhere where potentially damaging work is to be carried out will include the provision of landscape buffers where appropriate; protective fencing; and careful management of plant and materials on site to avoid damage to the hedgerow(s) and root systems.

Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark

- 4.69 The Black Country enjoys a rich geological heritage. Limestone, ironstone, fireclay, coal and other minerals provided the ingredients to make iron and paved the way for the Industrial Revolution to begin in the area.
- 4.70 The Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark was declared on Friday 10 July 2020. The Executive Board of UNESCO confirmed that the Black Country had been welcomed into the network of Global Geoparks as a place with internationally important geology, because of its cultural heritage and the extensive partnerships committed to conserving, managing and promoting it. The boundary of the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark is the same as that of the Black Country itself.
- 4.71 A UNESCO Global Geopark uses its geological heritage, in connection with all other aspects of the area's natural and cultural heritage, to enhance awareness and understanding of key issues facing society in the context of the dynamics of modern society, mitigating the effects of climate change and reducing the impact of natural disasters. By raising awareness of the importance of the area's geological heritage in history and society today, UNESCO Global Geoparks give local people a sense of pride in their region and strengthen their identification with the area. The creation of innovative local enterprises, new jobs and high-quality training

courses is stimulated as new sources of revenue are generated through sustainable geotourism, while the geological resources of the area are protected.

Policy SNE4 - Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark

- 1. Development proposals in Sandwell will not be supported where they would have significant adverse impact on Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark geosites, except:**
 - a. where suitable mitigation and / or compensation is provided to address the adverse impacts of the proposed development;**
 - or**
 - b. where any residual harm following mitigation / compensation, along with any other harm, is clearly outweighed by the benefits of the development.**
- 2. Development proposals in Sandwell should:**
 - a. wherever possible, make a positive contribution to the protection and enhancement of geodiversity within the boundaries of the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark and in relation to the geosites identified within it;**
 - b. give locally significant geological sites⁶² a level of protection commensurate with their importance;**
 - c. consider, and avoid any disruption to, the importance of the inter-connectivity of greenspace and public access between geosites within the boundary of the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark;**
 - d. ensure geological sites of importance⁶³ are clearly identified where they are within or close to development proposals;**
 - e. make it easy to access geoheritage features – including temporary exposures – for research and educational purposes; and / or**

⁶² Many of which are identified as Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs) or Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), and / or lie within areas of significant historic value, such as conservation areas, registered parks and gardens or other parts of the Black Country's historic landscape.

⁶³ Statutory designations and sites of local importance such as SINCs and SLINCs with a geological component

Policy SNE4 - Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark

f. enable access to records and samples as part of local and national geological record keeping.

3. Where necessary, conditions will be put in place on approvals for planning permission to ensure appropriate monitoring is undertaken and to make sure mitigation, compensation and offsetting is delivered effectively.

Justification

- 4.72 Paragraph 174 of the NPPF (2021) requires local authorities to protect sites of geological value, “... *in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan*”. The draft Overarching National Policy Statement for Energy (September 2021)⁶⁴ states that development should at the very least aim to avoid significant harm to geological conservation interests including through mitigation and consideration of reasonable alternatives.
- 4.73 Areas of geological interest also form a significant part of the industrial landscapes of Sandwell and the wider Black Country. They reflect the area’s history of mining and extraction and will often co-exist with, and form part of the setting of, protected / sensitive historic landscapes. In many cases they also form an intrinsic part of the green infrastructure network, contributing to landscape and ecological diversity as part of the wider natural environment.
- 4.74 As part of this strategic network of green infrastructure, geosites should be retained wherever possible and their contribution to GI recognised and considered when development is proposed that would affect the areas they form part of.
- 4.75 New development should have regard to the conservation of geological features and should take opportunities to achieve gains for conservation through the form and design of development.
- 4.76 Where development is proposed that would affect an identified geological site the approach should be to avoid adverse impact to the existing geological interest. If this is not possible, the design should seek to retain as much as possible of the geological Interest and enhance

⁶⁴ Paragraph 5.4.6

this where achievable, for example by incorporating permanent sections within the design, or creating new interest of at least equivalent value by improving access to the interest.

- 4.77 The negative impacts of development should be minimised, and any residual impacts mitigated.

UNESCO Global Geoparks

- 4.78 A UNESCO Global Geopark⁶⁵ is a single, unified geographical area where sites and landscapes of international geological significance are located. It is an area of geological significance, managed with three main objectives in mind:

- a) to protect the geological landscape and the nature within it;
- b) to educate visitors and local communities; and
- c) to promote sustainable development, including sustainable tourism.

- 4.79 All UNESCO Global Geoparks contain internationally significant geology and are managed through community-led partnerships that promote an appreciation of natural and cultural heritage while supporting the sustainable economic development of the area.

- 4.80 UNESCO Global Geopark status is not itself a statutory designation.

The Rowley Hills

- 4.81 The Rowley Hills are a range of four hills – Turner’s Hill, Bury Hill, Portway Hill and Darby’s Hill – located mostly within Sandwell (a small section lies in Dudley⁶⁶). Together they form a ridge that divides the Black Country into two parts with distinctly differing topographic features. The ridge also coincides closely with the main watershed of England, between the Rivers Severn to the west and Humber to the east. Turner’s Hill at 271m (870ft) is the highest point, visible from most parts of the Black Country and is a distinctive landscape feature that can be seen from the adjacent motorway and railways.

- 4.82 Traditionally the Hills have been the location for stone quarrying and coal mining but are now mostly used for informal recreation. The Hills have importance both for historic landscape reasons and for their value for nature conservation. Most of the Rowley Hills have either

⁶⁵ <https://www.unesco.org.uk/geoparks/>

⁶⁶ See Appendix H

SLINC (Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation) or SINC (Site of Importance for Nature Conservation) designations (Policy SNE2). There is a Local Nature Reserve located on Portway Hill⁶⁷. The Rowley Hills also form an important part of the Black Country Global Geopark designation and contain sites of geological importance and interest.

- 4.83 The extent of the identified Rowley Hills area is around 135ha (of which Turner’s Hill covers approximately 7.3ha, Portway Hill and Bury Hill together cover around 38ha and Darby’s Hill covers 4ha) and is encapsulated within the urban areas of Sandwell and Dudley.
- 4.84 Evidence suggests that there is pressure for additional development on the Rowley Hills. To date, the Council has been successful in preventing inappropriate development from occurring, which has been helped by SAD policy EOS3, formal recognition of the ecological and geological value of the area and through the adoption of the Rowley Hills District Plan. This sought to maintain and improve the area as open space for recreation and to protect the skyline from inappropriate and intrusive development.

Policy SNE5 - The Rowley Hills

1. **The strategic importance of the Rowley Hills to the character and amenity of Sandwell and the wider Black Country is derived from their prominent location, open appearance and importance for the natural environment and recreation, which will be defended from the incursion of built development or other inappropriate uses.**
2. **Development will not be permitted within the Rowley Hills Strategic Open Space that would impact on any of the following valued qualities, which include natural, cultural, perceptual and aesthetic aspects:**
 - **an open and undeveloped skyline;**
 - **expansive panoramic views into and out of the strategic open space;**
 - **wildlife habitats that support biodiversity;**
 - **ecological and geological designations;**
 - **areas of relative tranquillity;**
 - **the setting of designated heritage assets;**

⁶⁷ See Appendix H

Policy SNE5 - The Rowley Hills

- **multi-functional green infrastructure assets;**
- **highly valued open spaces for informal recreation.**

Justification

- 4.85 The Rowley Hills form a prominent and distinctive upland landscape feature on the horizon of the Black Country.
- 4.86 The Rowley Hills Strategic Open Space (RHSOS) designation was identified at the time of the West Midlands Structure Plan. The local area was subject to the Rowley Hills District Plan, adopted in 1988; it was designed to address issues considered to be of strategic significance, including minerals, waste disposal, sub-regional recreation and transportation. The importance of the open character and appearance of the Hills was also recognised, and the District Plan reiterated the need to avoid development that would adversely affect the open space and the visual amenity of the skyline.
- 4.87 Given their role as part of an open green wedge running between Sandwell and Dudley, their historic significance, their value for recreation and the environment and their importance as a source of minerals, the Rowley Hills were identified as performing a strategic role. While the Hills are no longer the source of active mineral extraction activity, their importance as open space, as sites of ecology and geodiversity value and as a significant and sensitive part of the skyline of the Black Country has not changed since the original designation was made. If anything, the importance of the Hills to the environment, visual amenity and the mitigation of climate change impacts has increased.
- 4.88 The area exists as a coherent green network of open spaces and wildlife corridors from Bumble Hole, Dudley across the top of the Rowley Hills to Wolverhampton Road, Sandwell. The RHSOS designation expresses numerous valued landscape qualities that will be protected from development:
- a. highly valued open spaces for informal recreation - the network of public rights of way provides opportunities to benefit residents' physical health and well-being and provides opportunities for contact with nature within an otherwise heavily built-up area;
 - b. the open and undeveloped skyline, which rises above the surrounding urban areas;
 - c. expansive panoramic views across the Black Country and beyond;

- d. multi-functional green infrastructure assets such as broadleaved woodlands, grasslands and soils that provide a range of ecosystem services for biodiversity, carbon storage and recreation;
- e. a range of habitats supporting biodiversity, including deciduous woodlands, good quality semi-improved grasslands, scrub, hedgerows, ponds and canals;
- f. biodiversity designations that contribute to landscape character including Warrens Hall Country Park Local Nature Reserve, three Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation, five Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (Policy SEN2) and five Potential Sites of Importance⁶⁸;
- g. rich geological and industrial history, evidenced by rock exposures and residual landscape morphology associated with former industries notably former coal mining and quarrying of Rowley Ragstone, recognised through three UNESCO Black Country Global Geopark Geosites (Policy SEN4);
- h. the setting to designated heritage assets, including three Grade II Listed Buildings, Cobb's Engine House Scheduled Monument, Windmill End Conservation Area, Warrens Hall Nature Reserve and Bury Hill Park Areas of High Historic Landscape Value (AHHLV) and an Archaeological Priority Area (APA);
- i. relative tranquillity within enclosed and wooded parts of the designation particularly in the west.

4.89 There is a Town and Country Planning (General Development Procedure) Order 1995 Direction made under Article 4(1) to which Article 5(4) applies at land off Portway Hill that has been in place since 2007. The direction removes all permitted development rights within its boundary. This was intended to protect and preserve the openness of the area by preventing any intrusive development.

4.90 The Article 4 Direction is located at the highest western extent of Portway Hill and to the east of the summit of Turner's Hill, the highest point in the Rowley Hills at 271m AOD. Development at this open and exposed location would potentially impact on the highly valued open and undeveloped skyline and the expansive panoramic views outwards across

⁶⁸ Potential Sites of Importance (PSIs) in Birmingham and the Black Country are possible ecological designation sites that have not yet been assessed against the Local Wildlife and Geological Sites selection criteria but may potentially support species of note, areas of important semi-natural habitat or valuable geological features.

the Black Country and beyond. For these reasons, the boundary of the Article 4 Direction remains appropriate and should be retained to preserve the openness of the area.

Canals in Sandwell

- 4.91 The canal network is one of the Black Country's defining historical and environmental assets and its preservation and enhancement remains a major objective. Canals play a multifunctional role, providing economic, social, environmental and infrastructure benefits. They form a valuable part of the green infrastructure and historic environment of Sandwell and have a significant role to play in promoting both mental wellbeing and physical health, allowing people opportunities for exercise and access to nature.
- 4.92 Sandwell's canal network provides a focus for future development through its ability to contribute towards the delivery of a high-quality environment and enhanced accessibility for boaters, pedestrians, cyclists, and other non-car-based modes of transport.
- 4.93 Sandwell is home to 66km of canal, including the New Main Line Canal and Old Main Line Canal, which offer many opportunities for residents and visitors.
- 4.94 As structures that made the industrial revolution possible, the canals in Sandwell offer opportunities to observe and experience key sites of historical interest such as the Galton Valley Bridge, Smethwick Pump House and the site of Smethwick Engine Arm. The canals in Sandwell have also been afforded Conservation Area status in both Tipton (Factory Locks) and Smethwick (Smethwick Summit, Galton Valley) owing to their historic significance; there are several valuable heritage buildings located adjacent to the canals and they play an important part in the industrial heritage of the Borough. They include Soho Foundry and Chances Glassworks in Smethwick and Malthouse Stables in Tipton.

Policy SNE6 – Canals

1. **Sandwell's canal network comprises the canals and their surrounding landscape corridors, designated and non-designated heritage assets, character, settings, views and interrelationships.**
2. **All development proposals likely to affect the canal network must:**

Policy SNE6 – Canals

- a. demonstrate that they will not adversely affect the structural integrity of canal infrastructure⁶⁹ to avoid increased flood risk, land instability and / or harm to the usability of the canal (including its towpath) as a green-blue infrastructure asset;
 - b. ensure that any proposals for reinstatement or reuse would not adversely impact on locations of significant environmental value where canals are not currently navigable;
 - c. protect and enhance its special historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural significance and its setting, including the potential to record, preserve and restore such features;
 - d. protect and enhance its nature conservation value including habitat creation and restoration along the waterway and its surrounding environs;
 - e. protect and enhance its visual amenity, key views and setting; and / or
 - f. protect and enhance water quality in the canal and protect water resource availability both in the canal and the wider environment.
 - g. reinstate and / or upgrade towpaths, including through the introduction of suitably designed and sized wayfinding information, and link them into high quality, wider, integrated pedestrian and cycle networks, particularly where they can provide links to transport hubs, centres and opportunities for employment.
3. Where opportunities exist, all development proposals within the canal network must:
- a. support and complement its role in providing opportunities for leisure, recreation and tourism activities;
 - b. enhance and promote opportunities for off-road walking, cycling, and boating access, including for small-scale commercial freight activities;
 - c. protect and enhance the historical, geological, and ecological value of the canal network and its associated infrastructure;

⁶⁹ Including (but not limited to) waterway walls, embankments, cuttings, locks, culverts, weirs, aqueducts, tunnels and bridges

Policy SNE6 – Canals

- d. relate positively to the adjacent waterway by promoting high quality design, including active frontages onto the canal and improving the public realm;
- e. integrate sensitively with the canal and any associated canal-side features and, where the chance to do so arises, incorporate canal features into the new development; and / or
- f. explore opportunities associated with alternative or new uses for the canals and their towpaths, such as to help mitigate the effects of climate change or support the delivery of fibre networks and communications technology (Policy SID1, Policy SCC3).

- 4. Development proposals must be supported by evidence that the above factors have been fully considered and properly incorporated into their design and layout.
- 5. Where proposed development overlays any disused canal features, the potential to record, preserve and restore such features must be fully explored unless canals have been removed in their entirety.
- 6. Development on sites that include sections of disused canals should protect the line of the canal through the detailed layout of the proposal.
- 7. Development will not be permitted that would sever the route of a disused canal or prevent the restoration of a canal link where there is a realistic possibility of restoration, wholly or in part.
- 8. Proposals must safeguard the amenity of existing residential moorings when planning consent is sought on sites adjacent to them.

Residential Canal Moorings

- 9. For residential moorings, planning consent will only be granted for proposals that include the provision of:
 - a. all necessary boating facilities;
 - b. appropriate access to cycling and walking routes; and
 - c. an adequate level of amenity for boaters, not unduly impacted upon by reason of noise, fumes or other nearby polluting activities.

Policy SNE6 – Canals

- 10. In determining a planning application for residential moorings, account will be taken of the effect that such moorings and their associated activities may have on the amenities or activities of nearby residential or other uses.**

Justification

- 4.95 The development of the Black Country's canal network had a decisive impact on the evolution of industry and settlement during the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. It was a major feat of engineering and illustrates a significant stage in human history - development of mercantile inland transport systems in Britain's industrial revolution during the pre-railway age. As such, the historic value of the canal network today should be acknowledged, protected, and enhanced. The network also plays a major part in the Black Country Geopark, as the mineral wealth of the area meant that canals were a vital link to areas within and beyond Sandwell and the wider Black Country and continue to provide this link today.
- 4.96 The canal network is a major unifying characteristic of Sandwell's historic landscape. The routes of the canals that make up the network have created landscape corridors with a distinctive character and identity based on the industries and activities that these transport routes served and supported. The network has significant value for nature conservation, tourism, health and wellbeing and recreation, and the potential to make an important contribution to economic regeneration through the provision of high-quality environments for new developments and a network of pedestrian, cycle and water transport routes. The canal network forms a valuable continuous habitat network, that links to other ecological sites. Many of them are also designated as local nature sites in part or for whole sections of the canal corridor.
- 4.97 It is also important for development in Sandwell to take account of disused canal features, both above and below ground. Only 54% of the historic canal network has survived in use to the present day; a network of tramways also served the canals. Proposals should preserve the line of the canal through the detailed layout of the development. Where appropriate, opportunities should be explored for the potential to preserve the line of the canal as part of the wider green infrastructure network. Where feasible and sustainable, proposals should consider the potential for the restoration of disused sections of canal.
- 4.98 It is acknowledged that there are aspirations to restore disused sections of the canal network. However, it is also recognised that there are very limited opportunities to reinstate such canal sections as navigable routes because of the extensive sections that have been

filled in, built over or removed making their reinstatement (and necessary original realignment) financially unviable and unachievable within the Plan period.

- 4.99 There are also disused parts of the canal network that have naturally regenerated into locations with significant ecological and biodiversity value; to re-open or intensify use on these sections of the network could have an adverse impact on sensitive habitats and species.
- 4.100 Any development proposals that come forward to restore sections of the canal network will be expected to demonstrate that the proposals are sustainable, sufficient water resources exist and that works will not adversely affect the existing canal network or the environment.
- 4.101 Residential moorings must be sensitive to the needs of the canal-side environment in conjunction with nature conservation, green belt and historic conservation policies but also, like all residential development, accord with sustainable housing principles in terms of design and access to local facilities and a range of transport choices.
- 4.102 Extant residential moorings in Sandwell include:
- a. Walsall Canal Arm, Bayley's Lane / Bankfield Road, Ocker Hill (30 spaces)
 - b. Engine Arm Branch, Rolfe Street / Rabone Lane Smethwick (15 spaces)
 - c. Titford Canal Arm, Engine Street, Oldbury (ten spaces)
 - d. Malthouse Stables, Hurst Lane, Tipton (up to six spaces)
 - e. Churchbridge, Oldbury (up to six spaces – informal)
 - f. Caggy's Boatyard, Watery Lane Tipton (up to six spaces - informal)
 - g. The leisure mooring sites currently available in Sandwell include the Canal and River Trust (CRT)⁷⁰ mooring sites, which include those at Titford Pump House, Engine Arm residential and Ocker Hill Moorings.
- 4.103 Non-CRT permanent moorings are found at the Malthouse Stables and Caggy's Boatyard; there are also two in Oldbury, on either side of Seven Stars Road.
- 4.104 Where new residential development is proposed adjacent to canals, there is a potential to increase the number of long-term and residential moorings, as new development can provide greater access to facilities and a more secure and naturally surveyed environment.

⁷⁰ <https://canalrivertrust.org.uk/about-us>

The Historic Environment

- 4.105 The Black Country has a rich and diverse historic environment, which is evident in the survival of individual heritage assets and in the local character and distinctiveness of the broader landscape. The geodiversity of the Black Country underpins much of the subsequent development of the area, the importance of which is acknowledged by the inclusion of the Black Country Geopark in the UNESCO Global Geopark Network. The exploitation of abundant natural mineral resources, particularly those of the South Staffordshire coalfield, together with the early development of the canal network, gave rise to rapid industrialisation and the distinctive settlement patterns that characterise the area.
- 4.106 Towns and villages with medieval origins survive throughout the area and remain distinct in character from the later 19th century industrial settlements, which typify the coalfield and gave rise to the description of the area as an “endless village” of communities, each boasting a particular manufacturing skill for which many were internationally renowned.
- 4.107 Beyond its industrial heartland, the character of the Black Country can be quite different and varied. The green borderland, most prominent in parts of Dudley, Walsall, and the Sandwell Valley, is a largely rural landscape containing fragile remnants of the ancient past. Undeveloped ridges of high ground punctuate the urban landscape providing important views and points of reference that define the character of the many communities. Other parts of the Black Country are characterised by attractive, well-tree'd suburbs with large houses in substantial gardens and extensive mid-20th century housing estates designed on garden city principles.
- 4.108 This diverse character is under constant threat of erosion from modern development, some small-scale and incremental and some large-scale and fundamental. As a result, some of the distinctiveness of the more historic settlements has already been lost to development of a homogenising nature. In many ways the Black Country is characterised by its ability to embrace change, but future changes will be greater and more intense than any sustained in the past. Whilst a legislative framework supported by national guidance exists to provide for the protection of statutorily designated heritage assets, the key challenge for the future is to manage change in a way that realizes the regeneration potential of the proud local heritage and distinctive character of the Black Country, including Sandwell.
- 4.109 To ensure that heritage assets make a positive contribution towards the wider economic, social and environmental regeneration of the area, it is important that they are not considered in isolation but are conserved and enhanced within their wider context. A holistic approach to the built and natural environment maximises opportunities to improve the overall

image and quality of life in the Black Country by ensuring that historic context informs planning decisions and provides opportunities to link with other environmental infrastructure initiatives.

4.110 An analysis and understanding of the local character and distinctiveness of the area has been made using historic landscape characterisation principles. Locally distinctive areas of the Black Country were defined and categorised in the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study⁷¹ (2019) as Areas of High Historic Townscape Value, Areas of High Historic Landscape Value, Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value, and Archaeology Priority Areas. This builds on the work of the original Black Country Historic Landscape Characterization work (2009), other local historic landscape characterisation studies and plans, and the Historic Environment Records.

Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

4.111 Historic England maintains a statutory list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest, known as listed buildings.

4.112 Buildings are listed so that:

- care is taken over decisions affecting its future;
- any alterations respect the character and special interest of the building;
- indiscriminate demolition is prevented;
- irreparable damage to historic buildings caused by poorly executed alterations and extensions is avoided.

4.113 There is a general presumption in favour of the preservation of listed buildings. Any substantial public benefits put forward to be balanced against substantial harm must directly relate to the development itself, must benefit the local community in the long term and must not otherwise be achievable. In addition, demolition or major alteration will not be considered without acceptable detailed plans for the site's development.

4.114 The whole of a building is listed, both the interior and the exterior, as well as objects or structures fixed to the building, or which has been in the curtilage or formed part of the land associated with the building since before 1948. This means that it is the main building, both

⁷¹ https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf

inside and out, as well as anything within the garden or associated outside area (including the boundary walls) that are listed.

- 4.115 Conservation Areas may be created where a local planning authority identifies an area of special architectural or historic interest, which deserves careful management to protect that character. In conservation areas there are some extra planning controls and considerations in place to protect the historic and architectural elements that make the place worthy of further consideration.
- 4.116 Research by the London School of Economics⁷² has found that people value living in conservation areas. This is evidenced by properties in conservation areas having higher prices and greater price appreciation, even after adjusting for location and other factors that affect prices.

Policy SHE1 – Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

- 1. The impact of development proposals on the significance of Sandwell’s heritage assets and their settings will be considered in accordance with case law, legislation, and the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 2. Development proposals will be required to conserve and enhance local character and those aspects of the historic environment together with their settings that are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, landscape or townscape quality.**
- 3. All proposals for development that may affect a heritage asset or its setting must be accompanied by an Assessment of Significance that should form part of a Design and Access Statement and / or a Heritage Impact Assessment. It should set out clearly the significance of the heritage asset, including any contribution made by its setting. The proposals should demonstrate how they respond to the significance of the asset.**
- 4. Sandwell Council will seek to conserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by exercising appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity and the use of adjacent land; and, where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features.**

⁷² <https://historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/assessment-ca-value-pdf/>

Policy SHE1 – Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

5. **Proposals for new build, alterations or extensions within Sandwell’s conservation areas must respect the local historic character and architectural styles. This will include considering building scale, grouping, materials and fenestration. Design and Access Statements should highlight the significant components of the conservation area in relation to the proposal and clearly demonstrate how these proposals conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.**
6. **Proposals for enabling development that helps secure a viable future use or improvement to a historic asset may be supported.**

Justification

- 4.117 The protection and promotion of the historic character and local distinctiveness of Sandwell’s buildings, settlements and landscapes are key elements of sustainability and transformation and help to deliver Strategic Objective 4, to protect, sustain and enhance the quality of the built and historic environment, whilst ensuring the delivery of distinctive and attractive places.
- 4.118 Local distinctiveness arises from the cumulative contribution made by various features and factors, both special and commonplace. It is the ordinary and commonplace features of Sandwell that, in fact, give it its distinctiveness and help to create a unique sense of place. This is beneficial for community identity and wellbeing as well as making places attractive to investment.
- 4.119 Policy SHE1 aims to ensure that where physical evidence of local character persists, it should be conserved. Where development is proposed, every effort should be made to ensure that Sandwell’s historic environment is fully appreciated and enhanced in terms of its townscape, landscape and individual heritage assets, and that new development makes a positive contribution to the local character and distinctiveness of Sandwell.

Development in the Historic Environment

- 4.120 The NPPF states that plans should set out a positive strategy for the conservation and enjoyment of the historic environment, including heritage assets most at risk through neglect, decay or other threats.
- 4.121 To ensure that heritage assets make a positive contribution towards the wider economic, social and environmental regeneration of Sandwell, it is important that they are not considered in isolation but are conserved and enhanced within their wider context. A holistic approach to the built and natural environment maximises opportunities to improve the overall

image and quality of life in Sandwell by ensuring that historic context informs planning decisions and provides opportunities to link with other environmental infrastructure initiatives.

Policy SHE2 – Development in the Historic Environment

- 1. New development in Sandwell that impacts on the historic environment should demonstrate that:**
 - a. all aspects of the historic character and distinctiveness of the locality, including any contribution made by their setting, and (where applicable) views into, from, or within them, have been fully assessed and used to inform proposals; and**
 - b. proposals have been prepared with full reference to the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study (October 2019), the Historic Environment Record, relevant conservation area appraisals and national and local policy.**
- 2. Development proposals that could have an impact on the historic significance⁷³ of either designated heritage assets⁷⁴ or non-designated heritage assets⁷⁵ should be supported by evidence that their historic character and distinctiveness has been fully assessed and used to inform proposals.**
- 3. Historic assets that contribute positively to the local character and distinctiveness of Sandwell’s specific townscapes should be retained and, wherever possible, enhanced and their settings respected.**
- 4. The locally specific urban grain, vernacular and other architectural and historic details that contribute to local character and distinctiveness should be used to inform the form, scale, appearance, details, and materials of new development.**
- 5. All proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce special character and conserve the locally distinctive historic aspects of Sandwell; for example:**

⁷³ NPPF Annex 2 - *Significance*: The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.

⁷⁴ NPPF 2021 Annex 2 - *Designated heritage asset*: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation

⁷⁵ NPPF 2021 Annex 2- *Heritage asset*: A building monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Policy SHE2 – Development in the Historic Environment

- a. **The surviving pre-industrial settlements of medieval origin such as Wednesbury and Oldbury;**
- b. **Areas of Victorian and Edwardian higher-density development, which survive with a high degree of integrity, including terraced housing and its associated amenities, such as residential areas within West Bromwich Conservation Area;**
- c. **Areas of extensive lower density suburban development of the early and mid-20th century, including public housing and private developments of semi-detached and detached housing;**
- d. **Public open spaces, including Victorian and Edwardian municipal parks, often created upon land retaining elements of relict industrial landscape features such as Windmill End;**
- e. **The canal network and its associated infrastructure, surviving canal-side pre-1939 buildings and structures, and archaeological evidence of the development of canal-side industries and former canal routes;**
- f. **Buildings, structures and archaeological remains of the traditional industries of Sandwell, including metal trades like chain-making and extractive industries such as quarrying on the Rowley Hills;**
- g. **The Rowley Hills (Turners Hill) and other largely undeveloped high prominences and views to and from these locations.**

Justification

- 4.122 It is important to recognise that the historic character of Sandwell is made up of various heritage assets. Individually, some of these may be more important than others, but even the lesser ones are important in contributing to the borough's overall character and quality.
- 4.123 Different elements of the historic environment need to be taken into consideration, conserved and enhanced where possible as part of any proposed development in the area. Guidance for this can be obtained through a wide range of existing resources, such as landscape character assessments, conservation area appraisals, listed building and scheduled ancient monuments information and archaeological records; but it is also usually necessary to undertake a heritage impact assessment.

4.124 The Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation (2009), along with other urban historic landscape characterisation studies, has provided a key evidence base to inform an understanding of the historic character of the Black Country. This work was built upon during the preparation of the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study (2019)⁷⁶. This was a review of the existing historic environment evidence base carried out to identify areas of significance to the historic environment, based upon the area's historic landscape and townscape, as well as its archaeological and designed landscape value.

Locally Listed Buildings

4.125 A Local List contains details of buildings, structures or features that are not included by the Government on the statutory record of listed buildings, but which the Council believes are an important part of Sandwell's heritage. Buildings and other structures included on the Local List need not be less significant in their context than designated assets; they will have important local significance.

Policy SHE3 – Locally Listed Buildings

1. **Proposals for the alteration, extension and change of use of locally listed buildings or structures should clearly demonstrate that they will positively contribute towards the architectural or historical significance of the heritage asset.**
2. **Demolition of locally listed buildings will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that no viable use can be found for the building or that the proposed development will have a substantial public benefit.**
3. **When demolition of a locally-listed building is unavoidable as part of a wider development, the Council will require an appropriate level of building recording prior to demolition taking place through the imposition of planning conditions. The approved recording shall be incorporated within the Historic Environment Record.**

Justification

4.126 Under the National Planning Policy Framework, the conservation of locally listed heritage assets and the contribution they make to the local area will be a material consideration in

⁷⁶ https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf

planning decisions that directly affect them or their setting. Demolition of a building in a conservation area will need planning permission.

- 4.127 Any works carried out to buildings on the local list should preserve or improve the building and any features of architectural or historical interest should be kept, and suitable materials used in any development affecting it.
- 4.128 In considering planning applications involving locally listed buildings or heritage assets, the council will consider the need to preserve their character or appearance. It will look to protect locally listed buildings and assets and will encourage owners and developers to work to find suitable alternative uses for them wherever possible.

Archaeology

- 4.129 Archaeological assets provide important evidence of earlier human activity within the borough. They are particularly sensitive to damage from development and understanding of their significance may change as development takes place.

Policy SHE4 - Archaeology

1. **Development should safeguard both designated and non-designated archaeological assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged archaeological significance.**
2. **In considering proposals for development, Sandwell Council will seek to ensure that designated archaeological assets are preserved in situ, avoiding loss or harm to their significance, and their settings are also conserved and enhanced, to fully understand and utilise their archaeological, recreational and educational value.**
3. **Development proposals that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on designated archaeological assets and their settings that cannot be avoided, or where the asset cannot be conserved in situ, will be resisted.**
4. **Non-designated archaeological assets must be conserved wherever possible. Where it would be unreasonable to withhold planning permission for the development of such sites, provision will be made through agreements and conditions of planning permissions for an appropriate level of archaeological evaluation and recording to be undertaken, prior to impact on or loss of the asset. Evaluations / recordings will be included within Sandwell's Historic Environment Record.**

Policy SHE4 - Archaeology

- 5. For sites with known archaeological potential, Sandwell Council may require developers to provide archaeological assessments and / or field evaluation to support their proposals. This information will be used to assess the archaeological implications of the development and to identify requirements for archaeological preservation or investigation.**

Justification

- 4.130 Sandwell's heritage assets of archaeological interest include six Scheduled Monuments. Further locations within the borough have known archaeological potential.
- 4.131 Scheduled monuments in Sandwell include the following:
- Chances Glassworks, Smethwick
 - Engine Arm Aqueduct, Warley
 - Remains of the Boulton and Watt Soho foundry and mint, Birmingham Canal, Smethwick
 - Sandwell Priory, a Benedictine monastery
 - Smeaton's Summit Bridge
 - Smethwick Engine House
- 4.132 Sandwell's archaeological heritage is a vital component of its historic environment comprising sites, buildings and structures. All archaeological remains potentially hold the key to a better understanding of the borough's past.
- 4.133 Sandwell has identified several areas of archaeological importance to date; when new development is proposed within these areas an archaeological desk-based assessment should accompany the planning application. A record of all Sandwell's known archaeological sites is kept on the Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 4.134 Desk-based assessment should include the results of the HER, information taken from the Heritage List for England, and any other relevant sources. It should examine and define the likelihood of encountering archaeological finds or features of all periods on the site during development works, and identify the need for and scope of, any further evaluation that might be necessary.

5. Climate Change

- 5.1 The impacts of flooding, overheating and other consequences of climate change will hinder the creation of vibrant, healthy and sustainable communities in Sandwell. The outcomes of climate change will also have serious impacts on vulnerable and deprived communities and those least able to respond.
- 5.2 In response to this, the Council declared a climate change emergency and adopted a climate change strategy in 2020, with the aims of reaching carbon neutrality across all Council functions by 2030 and reaching carbon neutrality borough-wide by 2041.
- 5.3 Without comprehensive action, climate change will severely limit economic growth. However, the approaches now required present a significant opportunity to deliver a decarbonised and resilient economy that supports job creation.
- 5.4 Through the Climate Change Act 2008 and as a signatory of the Paris Agreement, the UK Government has committed to:
- reduce emissions by at least 100% of 1990 levels by 2050; and
 - contribute to global emissions reductions aimed at limiting global temperature rise to well below 2°C and to pursue efforts to limit temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
- 5.5 Information from the Met Office⁷⁷ indicates that under projections looking at potential climate change over land to the 2070s, a location in the middle of England is likely to experience changes in precipitation and temperature in both summer and winter⁷⁸ equating to:

Summer rainfall change

41% drier to 9% wetter [low emissions scenario].

57% drier to 3% wetter [high emissions scenario]

Winter precipitation change

3% drier to 22% wetter [low emissions scenario].

2% drier to 33% wetter [high emissions scenario]

Summer temperature change

⁷⁷ <https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/binaries/content/assets/metofficegovuk/pdf/research/ukcp/ukcp18-infographic-headline-findings-land.pdf>

⁷⁸ All results are for the 10th - 90th percentile range for the 2060 - 2079 period relative to 1981-2000

No change to 3.3 °C warmer [low emissions scenario].

1.1°C warmer to 5.8 °C warmer [high emissions scenario]

Winter temperature change

-0.1 °C cooler to 2.4 °C warmer [low emissions scenario].

0.7 °C warmer to 4.2 °C warmer [high emissions scenario]

- 5.6 Local planning authorities are bound by the legal duty set out in Section 19 of the 2004 Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act, as amended by the 2008 Planning Act, to ensure that planning policy contributes to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. According to recent guidance issued by the Town and Country Planning Association and the Royal Town Planning Institute,

The Section 19 duty is much more powerful in decision-making than the status of the NPPF, which is guidance, not statute. Where local development plan policy which complies with the duty is challenged by objectors or a planning inspector on the grounds, for example, of viability, they must make clear how the plan would comply with the duty if the policy were to be removed.⁷⁹

- 5.7 Chapter 14 of the NPPF addresses the duty of planning in helping to contend with a changing climate and the vulnerabilities it generates in the built and natural environments. This includes planning for zero and low carbon development, requiring renewable and low carbon energy supply, reducing emissions and greenhouse gases, the mitigation of flood risks and employing appropriate policy and design solutions to address rising temperatures, ventilation, the need for additional green infrastructure and the protection of the natural environment.
- 5.8 Addressing climate change using strategic policies and requiring development to meet and sometimes exceed current standards makes economic sense both for local authorities and for homeowners and businesses potentially impacted by climate change:
- a) ensuring projects, plans and processes are resilient to climate change strengthens the ability to achieve identified objectives over the long-term, helping local authorities and other organisations achieve their wider plans and ambitions.
 - b) screening public and strategic regeneration plans for climate risks can make them more attractive to inward investors by ensuring mitigation and adaptation aspects are

⁷⁹ <https://tcpa.org.uk/resources/the-climate-crisis-a-guide-for-local-authorities-on-planning-for-climate-change/>

considered at an early stage, while ensuring buildings provide adequate heating and cooling supports workforce health and productivity;

- c) appropriate adaptation and mitigation allow assets and activities to continue performing during climate changes and will help to protect occupiers and users of buildings to continue to use them during times of environmental stress, such as flooding;
- d) pre-emptive adaptation action is generally more cost effective over time⁸⁰ than the costs incurred in responding to the outcomes of extreme weather events;
- e) through careful planning, adaptation actions can deliver multiple benefits to projects / activities, such as improving health and wellbeing, increasing property values, skills, and employment, reducing emissions, and supporting biodiversity.

5.9 The West Midlands Combined Authority declared a climate change emergency in June 2019. In July 2019, it committed to net zero carbon emissions by 2041. This means that the region will be working towards meeting these targets through the timescale of the Sandwell Local Plan.

5.10 To help Sandwell become a more efficient and resilient place, policies in the SLP will encourage development to:

- a) improve energy efficiency and move towards becoming zero carbon, in accordance with national targets and with the aims of the West Midlands Combined Authority commitment to achieve net zero carbon by 2041;
- b) help decarbonise the transport system by locating developments sustainably to reduce new trips and encouraging less energy intensive and more sustainable modes of transport (as set out in the Transport Chapter);
- c) ensure buildings and infrastructure are designed, landscaped, and made suitably accessible to help adapt to a changing climate, making efficient use of water, reducing impacts from natural hazards like flooding and heatwaves, and avoiding contributing to the urban heat island effect;
- d) create a safe and secure environment that is resilient to the impacts of climate-related emergencies;
- e) take an integrated approach to the delivery of strategic and local infrastructure by ensuring that public, private, community and voluntary sectors plan and work together.

⁸⁰ https://ec.europa.eu/clima/policies/adaptation_en

Factors which may lead to the exacerbation of climate change (through the generation of more greenhouse gases) must be avoided (e.g., pollution, habitat fragmentation, loss of biodiversity) and the natural environment's resilience to change should be protected.

Increasing efficiency and resilience

- 5.11 The Government has stated that all buildings need to be net zero carbon by 2050. Section 19 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), Section 182 of the Planning Act (2008), the Planning and Energy Act (2008), and Chapter 14 of the NPPF (2023) all empower local planning authorities to enforce policies that seek to reduce carbon emissions from new homes.
- 5.12 The NPPF (2023) states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change. As part of this, new development should be planned for in ways that can help to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, through careful consideration of matters such as its location, orientation and design. The following policies aim to ensure that future development address national energy and climate change objectives.
- 5.13 Policy SCC1 sets out how new development proposals will be required to demonstrate they are designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change through a range of design requirements

Policy SCC1 – Increasing efficiency and resilience

- 1) **Development should be designed to mitigate climate change impacts and provide adaptations that will help communities and individuals to continue to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on human health.**
- 2) **Proposals for development will need to demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change through addressing the following requirements:**
 - a. **new buildings will be located, orientated and designed to maximise opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation and to reduce exposure to wind and other elements (Policy SDS4; Policy SDM1);**
 - b. **development proposals will need to meet the needs of all sections of the community by including a range of sustainable and low carbon transport modes as alternatives to private car use (Policy STR6);**

Policy SCC1 – Increasing efficiency and resilience

- c. use of trees and other planting in landscaping schemes will be required throughout Sandwell, to provide for the shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets, mitigate against poor air quality and help connect fragmented habitats and protect and support biodiversity networks (Policy SNE3);**
- d. landscaping schemes should be designed using a mix of native tree species and plants where appropriate and should also use species that are able to adapt to changing climate conditions (Policy SNE3);**
- e. all development will need to minimise the impact of surface water runoff through the design of proposed drainage systems, including where possible grey water recycling and rainwater collection, and the use of permeable surfaces (Policy SCC4);**
- f. development should make provision for sustainable drainage infrastructure, which should be built into landscaping schemes / open space provision as appropriate (Policy SCC5);**
- g. development will be required to incorporate mitigation and resilience measures designed to reduce the risk of river, surface and other potential water flooding (Policy SCC4);**
- h. the conversion of non-domestic buildings to residential use will be expected to employ high environmental standards, incorporating improved thermal insulation, appropriate levels of natural ventilation and measures to improve water efficiency;**
- i. applications for planning permission should promote circular economy outcomes and seek to reduce whole life-cycle carbon emissions of development proposals by considering the reuse of existing resources, including the conversion of existing buildings, early in the design stage; and / or**
- j. proposals for increasing the energy efficiency and resilience to climate change of designated heritage assets will be supported only where this will not cause an unacceptable level of harm to the historic fabric, character, setting or appearance of the asset.**

Justification

- 5.14 Buildings, services, and infrastructure need to be able to cope with the impacts of climate change. Part of this will relate to ensuring that development is able to cope with more intense rainfall, the possibility of flooding, heat waves and droughts. The design of development therefore needs to address shading, insulation and ventilation, surface water runoff and storage and the use of appropriate tree planting and landscaping, to futureproof schemes against more extreme weather conditions.
- 5.15 Where possible and appropriate, the retrofitting of residential and other properties to achieve higher standards of energy and water efficiency will be encouraged and supported.
- 5.16 This policy should be read in conjunction with Policy SCC6, which covers the use of renewable and low carbon energy and energy-saving measures. It should also be read in conjunction with Policy SDM1, which promotes good design including the management of water resources, and Policies SCC4 and SCC5, which look in more detail at the provision of SuDS and the control and mitigation of flooding.
- 5.17 Policies in the SLP demonstrate that adaptation to and mitigation of climate change can be achieved across all forms of development.
- 5.18 The Planning Practice Guidance section on climate change⁸¹ identifies examples of mitigating climate change, which promote low and zero carbon technologies, sustainable modes of transport and the use of innovative design and energy production.
- 5.19 The provision of trees and other elements of green infrastructure will be essential in helping to mitigate and adapt to changing climates; their positive impacts on air quality, heat reduction and ecological networks and habitats will be vital in helping to deliver sustainable and comfortable living and working environments across Sandwell. Development will be expected to increase local tree canopy cover through habitat creation, landscaping and biodiversity net gain. This is explained in more detail in Policy SNE3.
- 5.20 Examples of adapting to climate change include:
- a) considering future climate-related risks when allocating development sites, to ensure risks are understood and accounted for over the development's lifetime;
 - b) considering flood risk in the design of developments;

⁸¹ Paragraph: 003 reference ID: 6-003-20140612

c) considering the availability of water and water infrastructure, and design to promote water efficiency and protect water quality;

d) promoting adaption in design policies, developments and works in the public realm.

5.21 The UK generates 50-60 million tonnes of non-hazardous construction and demolition waste each year⁸². The Green Construction Board published *The Routemap for Zero Avoidable Waste in Construction* in 2021 with support from Government⁸³. This recommends steps that could be taken to reduce construction and demolition waste, including giving first consideration to the retention and reuse of existing resources and buildings.

5.22 Whole life carbon emissions are the entire amount of carbon produced by buildings and infrastructure and can be divided into embodied and operational emissions. Embodied carbon refers to the carbon emissions that are released during the manufacture, transportation, construction and end of life phases of all buildings and infrastructure⁸⁴. The retention and reuse of existing resources and buildings can reduce the embodied carbon associated with a development project.

Energy Infrastructure

5.23 The NPPF (2023) states that plans should take a proactive approach to mitigating and adapting to climate change. Development should be planned for in ways that help eliminate greenhouse gas emissions, such as through consideration of its location, orientation and design.

5.24 To help increase the use and supply of renewable and low carbon energy and heat, plans should provide a positive strategy for energy from these sources. Policy SCC2 sets out how energy infrastructure will be considered, including how opportunities for decentralised energy⁸⁵ and district heating⁸⁶ will be identified.

⁸² <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-waste-data/uk-statistics-on-waste#recovery-rate-from-non-hazardous-construction-and-demolition-cd-waste>

⁸³ <https://www.constructionleadershipcouncil.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/ZAW-Interactive-Routemap-FINAL.pdf>

⁸⁴ <https://worldgbc.org/advancing-net-zero/embodied-carbon/>

⁸⁵ Energy that is generated close to where it will be used, rather than at an industrial plant and sent through the national grid, including micro-renewables, heating and cooling. It can refer to energy from waste plants, communal or district heating and cooling, as well as geothermal, biomass or solar energy. Decentralised heat or power networks can serve a single building or a whole community, even being built out across entire cities

⁸⁶ A system that distributes heat or hot water from a central source to a group of residential or commercial buildings through a network of underground pipes carrying hot water. Heat networks can be supplied by a range of sources including energy-from-waste (EfW) facilities, combined heat and power (CHP) plants and heat pumps. The advantages include cost savings, higher efficiencies and carbon emission reductions.

Policy SCC2 – Energy Infrastructure

Decentralised energy networks and district heating provision

1. Any development including ten homes or more, or non-residential floorspace of 1,000m² or more must include opportunities for decentralised energy provision within the site, unless it can be demonstrated that the development is not suitable, feasible or viable for district heat or decentralised energy networks.
2. Where there is existing decentralised energy provision available close to the site, the development will be expected to link into it, or should be designed to accommodate a subsequent connection⁸⁷ if a source has not yet become operational.
3. Where developers can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that a link to an existing or committed decentralised energy source nearby is not viable, the local authority will support the provision of alternative onsite carbon elimination measures that can be incorporated into the scheme (Policy SCC6).
4. Proposals intended to deliver decentralised networks and related infrastructure will need to prevent or minimise any adverse impacts on the historic environment by ensuring that they protect the significance of heritage assets, including their setting.

Onsite energy provision

5. Developers should engage with relevant energy companies and bodies at an early stage in the development process to establish the likely future energy and infrastructure requirements arising from large-scale development proposals including 100 homes or more, or non-residential floorspace of 10,000m² or more. Proposals for addressing energy provision on such sites should be developed and agreed between the local planning authority and developer(s) to establish the lowest lifetime carbon energy provision.

⁸⁷ Where a decentralised energy source is extant or will become operational during the construction of the development, and a proposed linkage has been agreed, suitable means of access / connection should be provided along roads / footpaths as a minimum form of infrastructure.

Policy SCC2 – Energy Infrastructure

- 6. Information to support the preferred solution(s) should identify and address:**
- a) current and future major sources of demand for heat (e.g., sites such as industrial / manufacturing sites, universities, large-scale sporting or leisure development, hospitals and social housing);**
 - b) demands for heat from existing buildings that can be connected to future phases of a heat network;**
 - c) major heat supply plant;**
 - d) possible opportunities to utilise energy from waste or waste heat from industrial processes;**
 - e) opportunities for heat networks;**
 - f) opportunities for private wire electricity supply;**
 - g) possible land for energy centres and / or energy storage;**
 - h) possible heating and cooling network routes;**
 - i) infrastructure and land requirements for electricity and gas supplies;**
 - j) feasibility of built-in renewable energy generation (Policy SCC6); and**
 - k) implementation options for delivering feasible projects, considering issues of procurement, funding and risk, and the role of the public sector.**

Heating / hot water systems

- 7. Heat sources for a district heating system should be chosen to minimise likely emissions and to make best use of any local decentralised networks, in preference to other solutions.**
- 8. Where a district heating system is provided, development proposals must provide evidence to show that NO_x emissions related to energy generation will be equivalent to or lower than those of an ultra-low NO_x⁸⁸ gas boiler.**

⁸⁸ Ultra-low NO_x boiler Standard specified in the Black Country Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document.

Justification

- 5.25 The ways in which heating and power are delivered to and used in development will need to change to meet the requirements of a zero carbon future and the intended elimination of greenhouse gas emission. The use of fossil fuels and traditional forms of energy generation will need to be phased out and replaced by zero-carbon, non-polluting and energy-efficient sources. These methods will include the use of heat networks and communal heating systems wherever possible.
- 5.26 The policy requires that the feasibility of incorporating opportunities for decentralised energy provision is considered for all applicable development proposals. If low-carbon decentralised power and heating systems do not currently exist or are still in the process of being delivered, developers should ensure that new housing and employment schemes are provided with the infrastructure to link into those networks when they become available. Information on these links should be included in a design and access or planning statement, which should also explain how access to a decentralised network can be achieved in the future if it is not currently operational or available.
- 5.27 Once a heat network is in place, heat that otherwise goes to waste can be harnessed and used; for example, waste heat from industry, from power stations or from low temperature heat sources such as from data centres. Heat can even be taken from rivers and canals that run through urban areas like Sandwell and from the warm mine-water left in old coal mines.
- 5.28 Where a link to an existing or committed decentralised energy source is not viable, the Council will support the provision of alternative on-site zero carbon measures. This may include, for example, the provision of built-in renewable energy generation for individual buildings or other forms of decentralised energy provision within the site.
- 5.29 The Government is intending to introduce Heat Network Zoning in England by 2025 and the connection of certain buildings to heat networks within these zones will become mandatory on adoption of the legislation. This zoning will provide the market with a level of certainty that the demand for heat networks will be there to support investment decisions and growth in the market.
- 5.30 Within Heat Network Zones, large public-sector buildings, large non-domestic buildings, all new-builds and residential buildings that are already heated via communal systems (such as tower blocks) would be required to connect to the heat network within a given timeframe⁸⁹.

⁸⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/heat-and-buildings-strategy>

- 5.31 Heat networks are not limited to a particular source of energy and can be delivered with a degree of flexibility to reflect local circumstances. Heat Networks can also be future-proofed for transition to other fuels. Government funding is available to support the transition to heat networks⁹⁰ and is intended to incentivise heat network market transition to low carbon heat sources via targeted financial support, which will help stimulate the increased deployment of low carbon technologies at scale.
- 5.32 In the Black Country, *Repowering the Black Country* is a programme of initiatives supporting Black Country businesses to take advantage of global clean growth opportunities and to make the transition to a net zero industrial future. The project will initially develop four zero carbon industrial hubs in the Black Country. Within the next ten years, the aim is to reduce industrial carbon emissions by around 1.3M tCO₂⁹¹.

Heating and hot water systems

- 5.33 There is a broad hierarchy of provision that should be followed when considering and providing for communal heating systems on major residential schemes and where non-residential development would be of a scale to warrant some element of on-site provision. As an illustration, an appropriate hierarchical approach might be as follows:
- a) local existing or planned heat networks;
 - b) use available local secondary heat sources (in conjunction with heat pumps, if required, and a lower temperature heating system);
 - c) generate clean heat and / or power from zero-emission sources;
 - d) use of fuel cells. If using natural gas in areas where legal air quality limits are exceeded, all development proposals must provide evidence to show that any emissions related to energy generation will be equivalent to or lower than those of an ultra-low NOx gas boiler;
 - e) use ultra-low NOx gas boilers only if more sustainable alternatives are unavailable;
 - f) ultra-low NOx gas boiler communal or district heating systems, designed to ensure that there is no significant impact on local air quality.

⁹⁰ The Green Heat Networks Fund is a three-year, £288m capital grant fund that opened to applicants in March 2022; it provides support to delivery of low carbon networks.

⁹¹ <https://idric.org/stakeholders/black-country-cluster/>

Managing Heat Risk

5.34 As part of the plan's proactive approach towards mitigating and adapting to climate change, Policy SCC3 sets out the requirements for managing heat risk within new development proposals.

Policy SCC3 – Managing Heat Risk

1. **Development proposals⁹² should minimise both internal heat gain and the impacts of urban heat islands⁹³ by using appropriate design, layout, orientation and materials.**
2. **Opportunities to benefit from the proximity of existing heat sinks such as canals and other bodies of water should be explored and incorporated into proposals where available.**
3. **Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how their potential for overheating and reliance on artificial cooling systems will be reduced, in accordance with the following cooling hierarchy:**
 - a) **minimise internal heat generation through energy-efficient design;**
 - b) **reduce the amount of heat entering a building through orientation, shading, albedo⁹⁴, fenestration, insulation and the provision of green roofs and walls (Policies SDS4 and SDM1);**
 - c) **manage heat within a building through exposed internal thermal mass⁹⁵ and high ceilings;**
 - d) **provide passive ventilation;**
 - e) **provide mechanical ventilation;**

⁹² Excluding domestic extensions.

⁹³ Caused by extensive built-up areas absorbing and retaining heat.

⁹⁴ The reflectivity of a surface. A high albedo surface reflects the sun's heat back into the atmosphere; low albedo surfaces absorb it. Pale-coloured surfaces have a high albedo and can help to minimise heat gain.

⁹⁵ 'Thermal mass' is a material's capacity to absorb, store and release heat.

Policy SCC3 – Managing Heat Risk

f) provide active cooling systems⁹⁶.

Justification

5.35 Global temperatures are rising, and this has been paralleled by changes in the weather in the UK. The Met Office published a document⁹⁷ in 2022 outlining current trends and predictions in the UK, including the following:

2.1 ... The average temperature over the most recent decade (2009-2018) has been on average 0.3°C warmer than the 1981-2010 average and 0.9°C warmer than the 1961-1990 average. All the top ten warmest years for the UK, in the series from 1884, have occurred since 2002.

5.36 The urban heat island effect⁹⁸ is caused by extensive built-up areas absorbing and retaining heat during the day and night, leading to those areas being several degrees warmer than their surroundings. With higher temperatures across the country, the likelihood of heat being trapped in this way is very likely to increase.

5.37 Retained heat can become problematic, to the point where circumstances can lead to physical discomfort and disruption, but for those with certain health conditions, the very young or the elderly, the effects can be serious. The use of green roofs and / or walls can provide some mitigation by shading roof surfaces and through the mechanism of evapotranspiration.

5.38 The concept of thermal inequity⁹⁹ will also have relevance in areas of the Black Country including Sandwell, whereby because of uneven social geographies, urban heating effects impact disproportionately on poorer / marginalised communities living in urban environments. This is exacerbated by a planning policy approach that concentrates development in urban areas, at higher densities and in taller forms. The removal of urban greening and trees to facilitate increased development densities will have further adverse effects on ambient temperatures in the vicinity.

⁹⁶ Systems using energy to provide cooling. They circulate a coolant (gas, fluid) to transfer heat from one place to another.

⁹⁷ UK Climate Projections: Headline Findings (September 2022) Version 4

⁹⁸ www.metlink.org/fieldwork-resource/urban-heat-island-introduction/

⁹⁹ [Jason Byrne et al 2016 Environ. Res. Lett. 11 095014](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.envreslett.2016.09.014)

- 5.39 Certain aspects of building design intended to increase energy efficiency and reduce heat demand, such as increased glazing and airtightness, can also exacerbate heat risk and cause uncomfortable living conditions. Design solutions can be found in the hierarchy proposed in Policy SCC3.
- 5.40 Means of minimising heat risk may include, though not be limited to, inclusion of mitigation measures such as:
- a) solar shading, for instance through landscaping or brise-soleil¹⁰⁰,
 - b) using appropriate materials in areas exposed to direct sunlight,
 - c) using landscaping and permeable surfaces to mitigate against flooding / run-off, counter poor air quality and allow for heat absorption.
- 5.41 Mechanical air conditioning will use more energy and generate significant amounts of additional greenhouse gases and thus should be avoided where possible.
- 5.42 As addressed in Policy SNE3, the use of trees in landscaping schemes can generate significant natural shading. The layout and orientation of new houses should also be considered carefully, to avoid existing or newly-planted trees creating excessive shading during cooler, darker times of the year.
- 5.43 In addition to this, the Canal and River Trust and the University of Manchester collaborated on a 2019 study that demonstrated that canals can effectively act to cool adjacent buildings in urban areas. The research showed that there is likely to be a cooling effect between 0.3°C and 1.6°C within a 100-metre-wide corridor of the canal during the hottest hours of the day (the variation in temperature was from differing orientations of the canals tested and the configuration of the surrounding buildings)¹⁰¹. Where canals and other bodies of water exist adjacent to development sites, opportunities to make use of this feature should be incorporated into designs where possible.

Flood Risk

- 5.44 In recent years floods, storms and droughts have shown how vulnerable the UK is to extremes of weather, resulting in significant economic, social, and environmental cost. Climate change also means that extreme weather events will become more frequent and have the potential to cause damage to affected communities.

¹⁰⁰ Architectural feature that reduces heat gain within a building by deflecting sunlight

¹⁰¹ <https://www.manchester.ac.uk/discover/news/canals-can-help-the-uk/#:~:text=Research%20published%20by%20The%20University,wide%20corridor%20along%20the%20waterway.>

- 5.45 The most significant sources of flood risk in Sandwell are fluvial (river) and pluvial (surface water) flooding, which pose significant risks to several areas within Sandwell's boundary. The primary fluvial flood risk lies along the River Tame and River Stour and the tributaries of these watercourses. Surface water flooding is mostly caused by intense rainfall events. There are many areas at high risk of surface water flooding in the Black Country, due to the heavily urbanised nature of the area that impedes natural infiltration and drainage.
- 5.46 Climate change projections show an increased chance of warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers, with a higher likelihood of more frequent and intense rainfall. This is likely to make severe flooding occur more often; effective flood risk management is one of the most important ways of adapting to intensive rainfall events. Ensuring that developments are planned to avoid vulnerability and manage risks with suitable adaptation measures where required will help to mitigate against related adverse impacts and disruptions.

Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

- 1. Sandwell Council will seek to minimise the probability and consequences of flooding from all sources by adopting a strong risk-based approach to site allocations and the granting of planning permission, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.**
- 2. A Sequential Test¹⁰² will:**
 - a. be applied to all developments to ensure that development takes place in areas with the lowest flood risk, in line with NPPF requirements;**
 - b. take account of the most up-to-date information available on river flooding and all other sources of flooding, making use of the information provided in the 2020 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) updated in 2021 and any future updates; and**
 - c. consider the impact of climate change over the lifetime of that development.**
- 3. Developers should apply the Sequential Test to all development sites, unless the proposal is for:**
 - a. a strategic allocation, and the test has already been carried out by the LPA; or**
 - b. a change of use (except to a more vulnerable use); or**

¹⁰² NPPF (2023), paragraph 162

Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

- c. a minor development (householder development, small non-residential extensions with a footprint of less than 250m²); or
 - d. a development in Flood Zone 1, unless there are other flooding issues in the vicinity of the development (i.e., surface water, ground water, sewer flooding). The SFRA can be used to identify where there are flooding issues from sources others than rivers.
4. Developers should provide evidence to the Council that they have considered all reasonably available alternative sites that are at a lower risk of flooding prior to determining the suitability of the chosen site for the proposed development type, in relation to all sources of flood risk on it.
5. For all developments the vulnerability of the development type to flooding should be assessed using the most up-to-date flood zone information in accordance with the NPPF, as set out below:
- a. Flood Zone 3
 - i. Where the site is in Flood Zone 3b (Functional Floodplain), all development other than essential infrastructure (subject to the Exception Test) will be refused (including extensions and intensification of use and changes of use) and opportunities to relocate development out of the floodplain should be sought;
 - ii. Where the site is in Flood Zone 3a (High Probability), new homes can only be permitted subject to the Exception Test.
 - b. Flood Zone 2
 - i. Where the site is in Flood Zone 2 (Medium Probability), most development can be permitted, subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment;
 - ii. Highly vulnerable developments, such as caravans, mobile homes and park homes with permanent residential use can be permitted, subject to the Exception Test;
 - c. Flood Zone 1
 - i. Where the site is in Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability), the information in the 2020 SFRA should be used to assess if a development is at risk from other sources

Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

of flooding and / or if there is an increased risk of flooding in the future due to climate change. If this site is shown to be at risk, a site-specific flood risk assessment should accompany a planning application.

6. To pass the Exception Test, developments will need to:
 - a. demonstrate that wider sustainability benefits to the community outweigh flood risk. Matters such as biodiversity, green infrastructure, historic environment, climate change adaptation, flood risk, green energy, pollution, health and transport should be considered;
 - b. prove that the development will be safe from flooding for its lifetime, taking account of the vulnerability of its users; and
 - c. prove that the development can be achieved without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will result in a reduced flood risk overall.
7. All new developments in the following locations should be accompanied by a flood risk assessment and surface water drainage strategy that sets out how the development will provide a betterment in flood risk terms i.e., help to reduce flood risk both on and off site:
 - a. where any part of the site is within Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3;
 - b. where the site is greater than one hectare and is within Flood Zone 1;
 - c. where the site is a minerals or waste development;
 - d. where the site is within five metres of an ordinary watercourse;
 - e. where the site is within 20m of a known flooding hotspot; or
 - f. where the site is within the 1 in 100-year flood extent based on the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Map.
8. Surface water drainage strategies are also required for all major developments. These should consider all sources of flooding to ensure that future development is resilient to flood risk and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Groundwater Source Protection Zones

9. No development will be permitted within a groundwater Source Protection Zone that would physically disturb an aquifer. A risk assessment demonstrating there would

Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

be no adverse effect on water resources will be required prior to the grant of planning permission.

Watercourses and flood mitigation

10. Developments should, where possible naturalise urban watercourses (by reinstating a natural, sinuous river channel and restoring the functional floodplain) and open up underground culverts, to provide biodiversity net gain as well as amenity improvements; reference should be made to the latest River Basin Management Plans¹⁰³.
11. Developers should set out how their mitigation designs will ensure that there is no net increase to fluvial flood risk downstream and where practicable how the development could help mitigate against downstream fluvial flood risk.
12. Development should not take place over culverted watercourses and a suitable easement should be provided from the outside edge of the culvert.
13. There should be no built development within five metres of an ordinary watercourse and within ten metres of the top of the bank of a main river. This is to enable the preservation of the watercourse corridor, wildlife habitat, flood flow conveyance and future watercourse maintenance or improvement.
14. Where there is a known or suspected culverted watercourse either on or immediately downstream of a site, where the SFRA highlights there may be a risk of flooding, developers should:
 - a. confirm the location and presence of a watercourse (or otherwise) through ground-truthing strategic datasets and undertaking an assessment of the culvert extent and condition;
 - b. confirm by survey, modelling and mapping, the flood extents of the watercourse(s), as many of the flood outlines associated with such watercourses have been carried out at a broad scale and may not take into account specific local features, such as culverts, bridges and detailed topographical survey; and

¹⁰³ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-basin-management-plans-updated-2022>

Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

- c. **design the development to accommodate the floodplain of the watercourse and mitigate against flooding to properties on the site. This should include a consideration of residual flood risk e.g., if a culvert were to block downstream.**
- 15. All developments should seek to provide wider betterment by demonstrating in site-specific flood risk assessments and surface water drainage strategies (where required) what measures can be put in place to contribute to a reduction in overall flood risk downstream. This may be by:**
- a. **provision of additional storage on site e.g., through oversized SuDS, natural flood management techniques, green infrastructure and green-blue corridors; and / or**
 - b. **by providing a partnership funding contribution towards wider community schemes (both within and beyond the Black Country, in shared catchments with Southern Staffordshire and Birmingham).**
- 16. Consultation on site-specific requirements should be undertaken with the Council, the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water (where this is a sewer flooding issue) at the earliest opportunity.**

Justification

- 5.47 The Black Country is a densely populated and, in places, steeply sloping urban area. This makes it prone to rapid surface water flooding following heavy rainfall and flooding from smaller watercourses that are tributaries of the Rivers Trent and Severn. The industrial legacy has left complex urban drainage challenges, with many watercourses that have been heavily modified and culverted in places, providing little if any biodiversity benefit and being prone to blockages. Several main rivers flow through the area; these are the watercourses used to support the general requirement of 10m easement from main rivers.
- 5.48 Watercourses within Sandwell are predominantly culverted, with two significant exceptions to this; the River Tame, which drains most of the borough, and the River Stour, located in the southwest. The borough lies in the upper reaches of these river systems, which eventually flow into the River Trent and River Severn respectively. There is an extensive canal network throughout the Sandwell area, including culverts and feeder streams.
- 5.49 Climate change will increase the likelihood of surface water and localised flooding from smaller and culverted watercourses. Alongside this the condition of many culverted

watercourses are failing as they age, and where they lack maintenance, and therefore the likelihood of blockages or failure increases. Sustainable Drainage Systems provide an opportunity to replicate natural drainage systems through new development, which will help to reduce flood risk, improve water quality, and provide wider environmental benefits. Hence an approach is needed to new development that recognises local flood risk constraints and contributes wherever possible to wider environmental and flood risk improvements.

- 5.50 The NPPF and Planning Practice Guidance requires that inappropriate development in areas at risk of flooding should be avoided by directing development away from areas at highest risk, applying the Sequential Test and if necessary, applying the Exception Test. Where development is necessary the NPPF and technical guidance recognises that there may be exceptions for certain at-risk sites where there are no suitable and reasonably available lower risk sites. In exceptional circumstances, where development is necessary in areas of risk and an alternative site at lower risk cannot be found, appropriate mitigation measures will be required to make it safe. These must not increase or displace flood risk elsewhere.

Sustainable drainage and surface water management (SuDS)

- 5.51 As a heavily urbanised and industrial borough, much of the land in Sandwell is covered in impervious surfaces (such as roads, pavements, hardstanding, and rooftops), which are water-resistant and prevent rainwater from soaking away into the ground. This has led to a high dependence on hard engineering solutions to manage rainwater run-off, storage and drainage, and has increased the risk of isolated surface water flooding.
- 5.52 Policy SCC5 sets out the requirements for new development to incorporate sustainable drainage and surface water management solutions (SuDS), to increase the amount of rainwater that is drained in sustainable ways.

Policy SCC5 - Sustainable drainage and surface water management

- 1. All new developments in Sandwell should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); development proposals should provide details of adoption, ongoing maintenance and management of SuDS.**
- 2. SuDS shall be designed in line with the Black Country Local Standards for SUDS. Preference will be given to systems that also contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure in the wider area.**
- 3. For all major developments, surface water flows must be reduced back to equivalent greenfield rates. If greenfield runoff rates are not considered to be**

Policy SCC5 - Sustainable drainage and surface water management

feasible for viability or other reasons, the developer must submit evidence demonstrating what the constraints are and how the development will accommodate runoff rates that are as close as possible to greenfield rates.

- 4. For all minor developments, a minimum reduction of 30% over pre-development runoff rates will be required. Under no circumstances will post-development runoff rates that are greater than pre-development runoff rates be permitted. Surface water run-off should be managed as close to its source as possible.**
- 5. Surface water drainage strategies are required for all major developments, regardless of their size and the flood zone and catchment they are in to meet the requirements of the Lead Local Flood Authority. These should consider all sources of flooding to ensure that future development is resilient to flood risk and does not increase flood risk elsewhere and should look to provide wider betterment.**
- 6. A hydrogeological risk assessment is required where infiltration SuDS is proposed for anything other than clean roof drainage in a Source Protection Zone 1¹⁰⁴.**

Justification

5.53 The incorporation of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) into new developments helps to manage and minimise surface water. SuDS are generally landscaped facilities such as wetlands, retention ponds, soakaways, swales and /or permeable surfaces. Their primary function is to reduce the volume and peak rates of water run-off from new development, but they should also be designed to fulfil their potential to provide new wildlife habitats and amenity spaces in new developments; they should be multifunctional.

5.54 SuDS can also improve water quality by increasing the filtration of pollutants and will thereby help to support the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. They allow the management of diffuse pollution generated in urban areas by treating water and reducing the level of pollutants that enter rivers and other watercourses therefore resulting in less wastewater requiring treatment.

¹⁰⁴ Source Protection Zones are designed to control activities close to water supplies intended for human consumption. These water sources include wells, boreholes and springs, all of which are used for public drinking. Zone 1, defined as the inner zone, is the most sensitive part of an area within a zone.

5.55 The NPPF makes it clear that:

Major developments should incorporate sustainable drainage systems unless there is clear evidence that this would be inappropriate¹⁰⁵.

5.56 Due to the legacy of contaminated land created by heavy industry and extractive activities in Sandwell, there is a risk of polluting groundwater and /or surface water if SuDs are not properly designed. The presence of contaminated land needs to be considered when planning SuDS; national guidance such as the CIRIA SuDS Manual C753 provides guidance for the use of SuDS on contaminated land.

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

5.57 It is essential for the successful delivery of the SLP that a high standard of sustainable design is secured on all new developments over the Plan period. This will reduce carbon emissions from new development, improve design quality and “liveability” and help create a high-quality environment, which in turn will maximise economic competitiveness and housing choice.

Policy SCC6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy generation

1. **Proposals involving the development of renewable or low carbon energy sources will be permitted where the proposal:**
 - a. **accords with local and national guidance;**
 - b. **would not significantly harm the natural or built environment;**
 - c. **maintains and safeguards the historic environment and heritage assets, including their setting; and / or**
 - d. **will not have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of those living or working nearby¹⁰⁶.**

Low carbon and renewable requirements for development

¹⁰⁵ NPPF (2021) paragraph 169 or later iteration

¹⁰⁶ E.g., by generating adverse visual, noise, odour, air pollution or other effects

Policy SCC6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

- 2. Small developments creating between one and nine homes or non-residential floorspace of less than 1,000m² gross (whether new build or conversion) must incorporate energy generated from renewable or low carbon sources sufficient to off-set at least 10% of the estimated residual energy demand¹⁰⁷ of the development on completion.**
- 3. Major developments creating ten or more homes or non-residential floorspace of 1,000m² gross or more (whether new build or conversion) must incorporate the generation of energy from renewable or low carbon sources sufficient to off-set at least 20% of the estimated residual energy demand of the development on completion.**
- 4. A variety of renewable and low-carbon energy sources and generation methods should be assessed and costed, including on-site and off-site sources where appropriate and the use of district heat and / or decentralised energy networks where available or proposed. An energy assessment must be submitted with the planning application to demonstrate that these requirements have been met.**
- 5. The potential for inland waterways to promote low carbon technologies is recognised; in appropriate locations adjacent to Sandwell’s canal network, proposals to heat and cool new properties using water source heat pumps will be welcomed and supported.**
- 6. The renewable energy target will only be reduced if it can be demonstrated that achievement of the target would:**
 - a) make the proposal unviable through submission of an independently assessed financial viability appraisal; or**
 - b) would not be feasible due to practical constraints.**

BREEAM Standards

¹⁰⁷ Residual energy demand means that the estimated energy demand for the operational development after allowance has been made for the full range of energy efficiency measures required under Building Regulations (at the time of construction).

Policy SCC6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

7. All new build non-residential developments, student housing and care homes of 1,000 sqm gross or more should achieve the following standards of BREEAM New Construction certification, including full credits for category Wat 01 (water efficiency):

Size	Standard	Year
1,000 - 5,000m ² gross	BREEAM Very Good	up to 2029*
	BREEAM Excellent	2029 - 2039*
>5,000m ² gross	BREEAM Excellent	

* Year refers to date planning permission is granted

8. BREEAM requirements may be varied if it can be demonstrated that achievement of the standard would make the proposal unviable, through submission of an independently assessed financial viability appraisal.

Justification

- 5.58 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act of 2004 requires local plans to include policies designed to secure the contribution of development towards the mitigation of, and adaptation to, climate change.
- 5.59 Changes to Part L of Building Regulations came into effect in June 2022, which introduced a carbon reduction improvement of c.31% for all major developments. The changes also significantly improve energy efficiency standards for new homes and further improvements under the “Future Homes Standard” are anticipated during the Plan period. However, given the urgency of the climate change crisis and the amount of development planned in Sandwell across the Plan period, it is vital that use of energy from non-renewable sources by new homes, and other types of development, is minimised as far and as early as possible, until overtaken by any further changes to Building Regulations.
- 5.60 Although there is currently limited renewable energy generation in the borough, evidence shows that there is considerable untapped capacity to produce and export renewable energy at a local level. Therefore, it is important that all new developments should make the

maximum contribution towards renewable and low carbon energy generation, where this is financially viable and feasible to implement.

- 5.61 According to the Canal and River Trust, the canals of England and Wales can provide enough latent thermal energy to support the heating and cooling needs of around 250,000 homes, using water source heat pumps. Sandwell's network of canals and the proposed development of canal-side development sites will therefore provide opportunities for developers to install water source heat pumps.
- 5.62 Assuming energy use under current Building Regulations, it is generally not practical to provide more than 20% renewable energy generation within a new development. Solar power is the most suitable technology on most sites. Solar energy generation is limited by the orientation and extent of roofs within a development, so on average 50% of roof space in a housing development can support solar panels. This typically limits renewable energy generation to 20% of average residual energy demand. The Viability and Delivery Study has demonstrated that this level of requirement will not prejudice the delivery of most major developments in the Black Country. To limit the financial burden on smaller developers, a lower requirement of 10% has been set for small developments. Where several smaller developments are taking place close together and it is considered that these form phases of a major development, the 20% requirement will be sought. Residual energy demand means that the estimated energy demand for the operational development should be calculated after allowance has been made for the full range of energy efficiency measures required under Building Regulations at the time of construction.
- 5.63 Sandwell Council will lead by example by seeking to maximise energy efficiency and incorporation of renewable and low carbon energy generation through the refurbishment and redevelopment of land and buildings in its ownership.
- 5.64 Many types of renewable and low carbon energy generation can be developed in Sandwell, including solar photovoltaics, solar thermal, air, water and ground source heat pumps and other technologies (see Policy SCC6). The Black Country Utilities Infrastructure Capacity Study¹⁰⁸ concludes that there are no parts of the Black Country that would be suitable for large-scale wind turbine development. However, there is no evidence to suggest that any other type of renewable or low carbon energy technology would be inappropriate. Therefore, any form of renewable or low carbon energy proposal will be treated on its merits in

¹⁰⁸ https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13890/20190906-46106-black-country-uic-study-final-2_redacted.pdf - paragraph 5.3.7

accordance with this policy, Policy SCC2, other relevant local plan policies and national guidance.

- 5.65 The SLP includes a range of aspirations for high quality design and climate change mitigation and adaptation, particularly those set out in Policies SDM1 and SCC1. An effective way of ensuring these aspirations are delivered in a consistent manner is by using tools for assessing and improving design quality. The Building Research Establishment (BRE) administers a range of robust national standards that can support this approach. BREEAM standards are well established and certify quality and sustainability in the built environment, including running costs, health and wellbeing and environmental impact. Minimum standards are first applied – these will include the national water efficiency and space standards for housing set out in Policy SDM2. Developers are then able to choose from a menu of other measures to reach the total credits necessary to achieve certification to the required level.
- 5.66 Application of the BREEAM New Construction standards set out in Policy SCC6 will ensure that all major developments in Sandwell meet a minimum level of quality and sustainability that is independently certified throughout the planning and construction process and, in most cases, following completion. To allow for an improvement in standards over time, the level of certification required for medium-sized developments of 1,000 - 5,000m² gross will be increased after 2028 in line with larger developments.
- 5.67 The use of other standards, such as Passivhaus and the BRE Home Quality Mark, which use third party assessment and certification to robustly verify that the quality of approved development is not materially diminished between permission and completion, will also be supported.

6. Health and Wellbeing in Sandwell

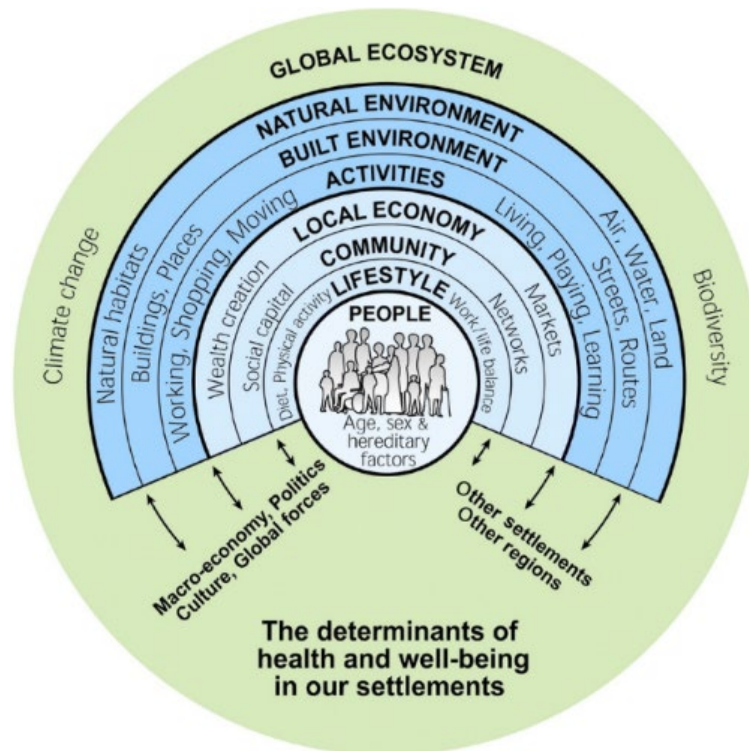
Introduction

- 6.1 The purpose of the planning system in England is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. The built and natural environments are key determinants of health and wellbeing. The NPPF states that one of the three overarching objectives of the planning system is supporting strong, vibrant, and healthy communities. The Health and Social Care Act (2012) gave local authorities new duties and responsibilities for health improvement and requires every local authority to use all levers at its disposal to improve health and wellbeing; Local Plans are one such lever.
- 6.2 Sandwell Council recognises the important contribution that planning can make to improving public health and wellbeing and this is embedded throughout this Plan. Well-designed development proposals can support strong, vibrant and healthy communities and help create healthy living environments that encourage people to adopt healthier lifestyles. In some instances, however, a proposed development may have a direct impact on people's health and in other cases, it may contribute to poor health by encouraging or making it easy for individuals to make unhealthy choices. Particular issues prevalent within Sandwell are obesity and related illnesses, diseases related to smoking, and the effects of alcohol.

Linkages between health and the built and natural environment

- 6.3 The linkages between health and the built and natural environment are long-established and the role of the environment in shaping the social, economic, and environmental circumstances that determine health is increasingly recognised and understood. Climate change will have a negative impact on health and wellbeing and actions to eliminate emissions and adapt to climate change, such as promoting active travel and improving the energy efficiency of buildings, will also benefit public health through outcomes such as reduced obesity and fuel poverty.
- 6.4 An increasing body of research indicates that the environment in which people live is linked to health across their lifetime. For example, the design of neighbourhoods can influence physical activity levels, travel patterns, social connectivity, food consumption, mental and physical health, and wellbeing outcomes. These are illustrated below in the Barton and Grant (2010) Health Map.

Figure 4 - Determinants of health and wellbeing (Barton and Grant, 2010)



Health and Wellbeing

- 6.5 Planning policies and decisions should make sufficient provision for facilities such as health infrastructure and aim to achieve healthy, inclusive, and safe places that support healthy lifestyles, especially where they address identified local health and well-being needs. Ongoing engagement between Sandwell Council and relevant organisations will help ensure that the SLP supports both these aims.
- 6.6 Sandwell's unique circumstances give rise to several challenges to health and well-being, which are reflected in its related strategies. Ensuring a healthy and safe environment that contributes to people's health and wellbeing is a key objective of the Council and its partners in the health, voluntary and other related sectors.
- 6.7 Sandwell has lower rates of both life expectancy and healthy life expectancy than the rest of England, meaning people not only die earlier but live more of their life with ill health, which has implications for their ability to be productive and for how they use the built and natural environment. According to a Local Authority Health Profile for the borough published in 2019 by Public Health England, Sandwell is one of the 20% most deprived districts / unitary

authorities in England and about 25.5% (18,495) of its child population live in low-income families¹⁰⁹.

- 6.8 Life expectancy is 8.6 years lower for men and 8.0 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Sandwell than in the least deprived areas. In Year 6, 28.3% (1,343) of children are classified as obese, worse than the average for England. The rate for alcohol-specific hospital admissions among those under 18 is 25¹¹⁰. This represents 20 admissions per year. Levels of teenage pregnancy, GCSE attainment (average attainment 8 score) and breastfeeding are worse than the England average¹¹¹. Estimated levels of excess weight in adults (aged 18+) and physically active adults (aged 19+) are worse than the England average.
- 6.9 Previously, the four Black Country Councils and their public health partners worked together on the Black Country Plan to ensure it was aligned with the plans of the area's Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP), as well as with each borough's Health and Wellbeing Strategies. The STP recognised that reducing health inequalities would help reduce financial burdens on the NHS. It also recognised that residents of the Black Country, on average, suffer from poorer health outcomes than people in the rest of England.
- 6.10 The STP identified several key drivers that play a significant role in the development of future illness in the Black Country, and which directly link to demand for health provision. These are education, employment, wealth, housing, nutrition, family life, transport and social isolation. These are all influenced by the built and natural environment. The Black Country's Health and Wellbeing Strategies identified the following as key priorities for tackling health and wellbeing:
- a) Healthy lifestyles including physical activity, healthy eating, and addressing tobacco and alcohol consumption and obesity;
 - b) Access to employment, education, and training;
 - c) Quality, affordable homes that people can afford to heat;
 - d) Mental health and wellbeing, including having social connections and feeling lonely or isolated;
 - e) Air quality and the wider environment.

¹⁰⁹ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/E08000028.html?area-name=Sandwell>

¹¹⁰ Rate per 100,000 population (PHE Local Authority Health Profile 2019; link above)

¹¹¹ <https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/static-reports/health-profiles/2019/E08000028.html?area-name=Sandwell>

- 6.11 There is therefore a need for the Sandwell Local Plan to continue to support those initiatives aimed at encouraging healthier lifestyle choices and mental wellbeing and addressing socio-economic and environmental issues that contribute to poor health and inequalities.

Health and Wellbeing

- 6.12 This policy provides the context for how health and wellbeing are influenced by planning decisions and contains links to other policies in the SLP. Sandwell Council intends to create an environment that protects and improves the physical, social and mental health and wellbeing of its residents, employees and visitors, including children, other young people and vulnerable adults, and which reduces health inequalities.

Policy SHW1– Health Impact Assessments

1. **Sandwell Council will require the following forms of development to provide an assessment of its potential impacts on the health and wellbeing of adjacent communities, residents and businesses, and to mitigate any potential negative impacts, maximise potential positive impacts and help reduce health inequalities;**
 - a. **housing developments of over 10 dwellings;**
 - b. **non-residential developments of 1,000m² or more floorspace.**
 - c. **major new waste handling / processing development;**
 - d. **any development that would have an adverse impact on locations with currently poor air quality;**
 - e. **any other development that the Council considers has the potential to impact on public health.**

Such development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it will not, in isolation or in conjunction with other planned, committed or completed development, contribute to a negative impact on the health of the borough's population.

2. **To ensure that new developments have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents the Council will require an HIA of development proposals to a level of detail appropriate to its scale and nature;**
 - a. **For developments of 100 or more dwellings, or non-residential development that extends to 5,000m² or more in area, a full Health Impact Assessment will be required;**

Policy SHW1– Health Impact Assessments

- b. For developments of between 20 to 100 dwellings or non-residential development that extends from 1,000 - 5,000m² in area, the Health Impact Assessment will take the form of an extended screening or rapid Health Impact Assessment;
 - c. For developments of 10 – 19 dwellings, or other developments that the Council considers may have a potential impact on public health, either a Design and Access Statement, Planning Statement or an extended screening or rapid Health Impact Assessment should be provided.
3. Sandwell Council will support vibrant centres and local facilities, which offer services and retail outlets that promote choice, and which enable and encourage healthy choices. This will include managing the location, concentration of and operation (including opening hours) of businesses that contain uses potentially in conflict with these aims, including:
- a. hot food takeaways (sui generis), or hybrid uses incorporating such uses (Policy SDM6);
 - b. betting shops and amusement arcades (Policy SDM8);
 - c. shisha cafes / lounges, where the balance of uses is such that the use of the premises is predominantly for shisha smoking.
4. Where the development of a new shop is acceptable in principle under other policies, planning permission will only be granted where a condition can be imposed that prevents the subsequent establishment of a stand-alone off-licence without the need to apply for planning permission where there is evidence of existing alcohol drinking establishments contributing to existing negative health and wellbeing impacts and patterns of anti-social behaviour.

Justification

- 6.13 Proposals for major development or others with the potential to have negative effects on the mental and physical health and wellbeing of communities should provide an assessment of their potential impacts through health impact assessments, as set out in the policy.
- 6.14 Such an assessment should consider, where relevant, how the proposed development demonstrates that:

- a. it is inclusive, safe, and attractive, with a strong sense of place, encourages social interaction and provides for all age groups and abilities;
- b. it is designed to enable active and healthy lives through prioritising access by inclusive, active, and environmentally sustainable forms of travel and through promoting road safety and managing the negative effects of road traffic as set out in Policies STR5, STR6 and STR9;
- c. it will provide a range of housing types and tenures that meet the needs of all sectors of the population including for older people and those with disabilities requiring varying degrees of care; extended families; low-income households; and those seeking to self-build as set out in Policies SHO3, SHO4 and SHO5;
- d. it is energy efficient and achieves affordable warmth; provide good standards of indoor air quality and ventilation; is low carbon; mitigates climate change; and is adapted to the effects of climate change as set out in Policies SCC1 – SCC6;
- e. it is designed and located to achieve acceptable impacts by developments on residential amenity and health and wellbeing arising from: noise; ground and water contamination; flood risk; vibration; and poor indoor and outdoor air quality as set out in Policies SCC4, SHW3, SCO1 – SCO3, SDM1;
- f. it will provide a range of quality employment opportunities for all skillsets and abilities along with the education and training facilities to enable residents to fulfil their potential and support initiatives to promote local employment and procurement during construction as set out in Policies SHO9 and SEC5;
- g. it will protect and include a range of social infrastructure such as social care, health, leisure, sport and recreation, retail and education facilities close to where people live, which are accessible by means of inclusive, active and environmentally sustainable forms of travel as set out in Policy SHW2, SHW4;
- h. it will protect, enhance, and provide new green and blue infrastructure, sports facilities, play and recreation opportunities to support access for all and meet identified needs as set out in Policies SDS7, SHW4 and SHW5;
- i. it will protect, enhance, and provide allotments and gardens for physical activity, mental wellbeing, recreation and for healthy locally-produced food as set out in Policy SHW6;

- j. it will provide high-quality broadband and other digital services to homes, educational facilities, employers, and social infrastructure, to support digital inclusion and the application of new technology to improved healthcare, as set out in Policy SID1.
- 6.15 Sandwell experiences significantly higher than average levels of poor health among its population. Issues include obesity and related illnesses, diseases related to smoking and the effects of alcohol. The Council and its partners are concerned about the health of children, other young people and vulnerable adults, both in terms of immediate term safeguarding and the potential long-term consequences that aspects of their lifestyles will have for their health.
- 6.16 The Council and its partners are engaged in a range of long-term actions to address these issues, as well as to encourage people to take greater responsibility for the choices they make themselves. Planning is one aspect of these actions. In some instances, a proposed development may have a direct impact on people’s health and will need to be mitigated. In other cases, it may be that the planning process can contribute to improving health by supporting individuals to make healthy choices, through encouraging a suitable range and mix of shops, outlets and activities.
- 6.17 Making it easier for people to make these healthy choices will increase the likelihood that they will do so; and this change in behaviour will improve health outcomes over time. Policy SHW1 sets out an approach to assessing development to help influence these issues.
- 6.18 Proposals for hot food takeaways will be assessed in relation to a range of policies, including Policy SDM6. Betting shops, amusement arcades and similar uses will be considered in line with Policy SDM8.
- 6.19 Shop uses currently fall within Class E - Commercial, Business and Service of the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 (as amended) and therefore any condition preventing the subsequent establishment of a stand-alone off-licence would apply to any permission within Class E or any successor use class should there be changes within the lifetime of the plan.

Healthcare Infrastructure

- 6.20 This policy sets out the requirements for the provision of health infrastructure to serve the residents of new developments in support of Policy SHW1.

Policy SHW2 – Healthcare Infrastructure	
1)	New healthcare facilities should be:

Policy SHW2 – Healthcare Infrastructure

- a. well-designed and complement and enhance neighbourhood services and amenities;
 - b. well-served by public transport infrastructure, walking and cycling facilities and directed to a town centre appropriate in role and scale to the proposed development, and its intended catchment area, in accordance with Policies SCE3 and SCE4. Proposals located outside centres must be justified in terms of relevant policies such as Policy SCE6, where applicable;
 - c. wherever possible, located to address accessibility gaps in terms of the standards set out in Policy SHO3, particularly where a significant amount of new housing is proposed; and
 - d. where possible, co-located with a mix of compatible community services on a single site.
- 2) Existing primary and secondary healthcare infrastructure and services will be protected, unless it has been demonstrated that the loss or partial loss of a facility or site arises from a wider public service transformation plan that requires investment in modern, fit for purpose infrastructure and facilities. New or improved healthcare facilities and services will be provided in accordance with requirements agreed between Sandwell Council and local health organisations.
 - 3) Proposals for major residential developments of ten units or more must be assessed against the capacity of existing healthcare facilities and / or services as set out in local development documents. Where the demand generated by the residents of the new development would have unacceptable impacts upon the capacity of these facilities, developers will be required to contribute to the provision or improvement of such services, in line with the requirements and calculation methods set out in local development documents.
 - 4) Where it is not possible to address such provision through planning conditions, a planning agreement or planning obligation may be required.

Policy SHW2 – Healthcare Infrastructure

- 5) In the first instance, infrastructure contributions will be sought to deal with relevant issues on the site or in its immediate vicinity. Where this is not possible, however, any contribution will be used to support offsite provision of healthcare infrastructure and / or related services.**
- 6) The effects of the obligations on the financial viability of development may be a relevant consideration.**

Justification

- 6.21 Meeting Sandwell’s future housing needs will have an impact on existing healthcare infrastructure and generate demand for both extended and new facilities across the Plan area, as well as impacting upon service delivery as population growth results in additional medical interventions in the population. Such facilities need to be in locations that support wider aims of supporting centres and of ensuring accessibility by a range of sustainable and inclusive forms of transport.
- 6.22 Health services in Sandwell are currently experiencing limitations on their physical and operational capacity, which inhibit their ability to respond to the area’s health needs.
- 6.23 Sandwell Council and its partners, including other healthcare infrastructure providers, have a critical role to play in delivering high-quality services and ensuring essential healthcare infrastructure amenities and facilities are maintained, improved and, where necessary, expanded¹¹². Healthcare infrastructure planning is inevitably an on-going process, and the Council will continue to work closely with these partners and the development industry to assess and meet existing and emerging healthcare infrastructure needs.
- 6.24 As Sandwell grows and changes, social and community facilities must be developed to meet the changing needs of the region’s diverse communities. This will in turn mean that new improved and expanded healthcare facilities will be required. It is proposed to support and work with the NHS and other health organisations to ensure the development of health facilities where needed in new development areas. Where appropriate, these will be included in Local Development Documents and masterplans. It is also proposed to explore the co-location of health and other community facilities such as community centres, libraries and sport and recreation facilities.

¹¹² The infrastructure strategies of these partner organisations have helped inform this policy.

- 6.25 Funding for many healthcare infrastructure projects will be delivered from mainstream NHS sources, but for some types of infrastructure, an element of this funding may also include contributions from developers. This may relate to the provision of physical infrastructure, such as premises, or social infrastructure, such as the delivery of additional services. These contributions will be secured through planning agreements or planning obligations, in line with the relevant regulations in operation at the time; these are currently the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations 2010 (as amended). For larger sites that generate the need for new physical infrastructure, delivery will initially be sought on-site or in the site's immediate vicinity. Where this is not possible, or where the contributions will be required to support additional healthcare infrastructure at existing or permissioned new facilities, such provision will be in alternative locations that are accessible to the site. Any new facilities will need to be provided at locations that meet the wider aims of the Policy of supporting centres and of ensuring accessibility by a range of sustainable and inclusive forms of transport.
- 6.26 In establishing the need for and level of any developer contribution, residential developments will be assessed against the ability of nearby primary, secondary and community healthcare provision to be delivered without being compromised by demand from additional residents. Assessment of the capacity of existing healthcare facilities to meet the demand generated by residents of new development uses an established method adopted by the Group Integrated Care System (ICS). Applicants should consult the ICS in advance of the submission of a planning application where a significant amount of housing is to be provided. For strategic sites, an application of this methodology has identified no requirement for on-site provision for new health facilities. Where there is a requirement for off-site provision this is set out in details of site allocations and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan.
- 6.27 The formula used for calculating contributions for will be as follows:

Primary Care:

- Number of projected residents per development / number of patients per consulting room = number of consulting rooms required.
- Number of consulting rooms required x build costs per consulting room = developer contribution.

Secondary Care:

- Number of projected residents per development x cost per head of population = developer contribution.

Build costs will be updated on an annual basis and the formula will be reviewed when required by changes in NHS practice or significant changes in build or operational costs

- 6.28 The Viability and Delivery Study provides evidence that greenfield sites and most brownfield sites can sustain the full range of planning obligations required. However, the Viability and Delivery Study also indicates that, depending on the extent of other planning obligations required, such contributions may not be viable on some sites. Where it can be proved that it is not viable for a housing developer to fund all its own healthcare needs, alternative funding sources will be sought.

Air Quality

- 6.29 Promoting healthy living is a key element of the Sandwell Local Plan. Reducing exposure to poor air quality will help improve the health and quality of life of the population and support the Plan's aims and objectives¹¹³. The need to address climate change and its associated impacts will include the need to tackle pollution and poor air quality, especially where it has impacts on both human and environmental health.
- 6.30 The WHO published data on the impacts of ambient and household air pollution on human health for the European High-Level Conference on Non-Communicable Diseases held in April 2019. The paper stated that more than 550,000 deaths in the WHO European region were attributable to the joint effects of household and ambient air pollution in 2016, with over 500,000 being due to ambient air pollution and more than 50,000 to household air pollution¹¹⁴.
- 6.31 According to the 2019 Clean Air Strategy published by DEFRA¹¹⁵,
- Air pollution is the top environmental risk to human health in the UK, and the fourth greatest threat to public health after cancer, heart disease and obesity. It makes us more susceptible to respiratory infections and other illnesses, and we estimate that the actions outlined in this document could cut the costs of air pollution to society by £1.7 billion every year by 2020, rising to £5.3 billion every year from 2030.*
- 6.32 Paragraph 4.1 of the same publication outlines the impacts of air quality on economic growth. Cleaner air helps to reduce the likelihood of workplace absences through ill-health;

¹¹³ https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/cat09/2006240802_Impacts_of_Net_Zero_pathways_on_future_air_quality_in_the_UK.pdf

¹¹⁴ http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/397787/Air-Pollution-and-NCDs.pdf?ua=1

¹¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019>

the strategy identifies that particulate matter; nitrogen dioxide and ozone were estimated to be responsible for total productivity losses of up to £2.7 billion in 2012. Clean air also helps to create and sustain a pleasant and attractive living and working environment, which is more likely to encourage growth and investment in an area.

- 6.33 Following adoption of the Black Country Core Strategy in 2011 further guidance and advice was provided through the adoption of the Black Country Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document in 2016. This built on work undertaken on the West Midlands Low Emissions Towns and Cities Programme, including the West Midlands Good Practice Air Quality Planning Guidance (2014). The planning guidance offered further advice on issues around ambient and indoor air quality and model conditions for use by the local planning authorities.
- 6.34 This document will need to be revised and republished following adoption of the Sandwell Local Plan, considering new national legislation, regulations and targets and regional and sub-regional developments regarding air quality.

Policy SHW3 – Air Quality

Strategic Approach

1. **The SLP will support a diverse approach to addressing the issue of poor air quality across the borough, including:**
 - a. **requiring development and other land use proposals to promote the integration of cycling, walking, public transport and electric charging points as part of their transport provision;**
 - b. **promoting and supporting (including through continued joint working with adjacent Black Country authorities and others) a modal shift from private motorised vehicles to the use of clean, fast and accessible public transport alternatives such as rail, the Metro and bus transport networks, cycling and walking;**
 - c. **including a range of measures relating to energy generation at developments as set out in the hierarchy identified in Policy SCC2 - Energy Infrastructure, such as the installation of renewables-based systems, or the use of ultra-low emission NOx boilers;**
 - d. **requiring the provision and protection of green open spaces and significant additional tree cover (Policies SDS7 and SNE3);**

Policy SHW3 – Air Quality

- e. ensuring the sustainable location of new residential and employment development to minimise commute times; and
 - f. as part of an integrated zero-emission public transport system, promoting and requiring the use of sustainable technologies, zero-emission vehicles, design and materials and providing new or extended bus services to meet demand when development of a strategic nature is planned and constructed.
2. New development must be at least air quality neutral following any required mitigation. Planning permission for new development or changes of use will be refused where data assessment indicates that development will:
- a. lead to deterioration of existing poor air quality;
 - b. create any new areas that exceed air quality objectives; or
 - c. delay compliance being achieved in areas that are currently in exceedance of legal limits unless sufficient mitigation can be achieved.

Improving air quality

- 3. Residential or other sensitive development such as schools, hospitals / health care and care facilities should be sited in areas where air quality already meets national objectives, or where compliance with those objectives can be achieved with suitable mitigation proposed as part of the development proposal and verified as being achieved before occupation of the development.
- 4. Developments that will have a moderate air quality impact, and which can be dealt with through standard mitigation measures, will not require an air quality assessment.
- 5. Whenever development is proposed in locations where air quality does not or will not meet national objectives, or where significant air quality impacts are likely to be generated onsite or elsewhere by the development itself or its subsequent use / activities, an appropriate Air Quality Assessment will be required to demonstrate that the proposed development will improve air quality to meet relevant objectives once the development is completed and occupied / operational:

Policy SHW3 – Air Quality

- a. the assessment must take into consideration the potential cumulative impact on air quality of all extant planning permissions in the locality, for both large / strategic and small schemes;
 - b. the impact of point source emissions¹¹⁶ of pollutants to air on the scheme must also be addressed;
 - c. the assessment must take into consideration the types of pollutant emissions likely to be generated by the development and its future use / associated activities that will have an impact on human health;
 - d. where assessments show that a development is likely to result in exposure to pollutant concentrations that exceed national objectives, a mitigation plan will be required to determine that the development will improve air quality, in order that it will meet air quality objectives once it is complete and occupied / operational; and
 - e. adequate and satisfactory mitigation measures that are capable of implementation, including the planting of additional and replacement trees in appropriate locations, must be identified, submitted as part of an application, and made subject to appropriate conditions before planning permission is granted.
6. Developments should not include materials or be positioned or ventilated in a way that would result in poor indoor air quality. Guidance will be provided to detail how such issues should be addressed.

Emissions from Construction Sites

7. For all types of development, the control of emissions from construction sites will be agreed with the local authority.

Justification

- 6.35 National planning guidance identifies the need for local planning authorities to address the problems created by pollution, in terms of poor air quality and its impacts on human and

¹¹⁶ Pollution that originates from one place

environmental health. Major air pollutants that impact on human health include particulate matter (PM10 and PM2.5 and fine / very fine particulates) and nitrogen oxides (NOx). These gases may also combine to create ozone, a greenhouse gas that impacts on the atmosphere.

- 6.36 The main cause of poor air quality across the Black Country is related to vehicular transport. Locations have been identified that do not comply with current national objectives and that will result in relevant exposure; there are several air quality hotspots where on-going monitoring is required. Sandwell Council is working to reduce pollutant concentrations and to minimise exposure to air quality that does not meet with national objectives. Like the other Black Country Councils, it has declared air quality management areas to try to address the issue of poor air quality and provide protection for human health.
- 6.37 It is important that development likely to have a negative impact on air quality is fully assessed and measures taken to make it acceptable, particularly in parts of the Black Country where air quality is currently, or is likely to become, a concern. Most developments will have a moderate air quality impact, which can be dealt with through standard mitigation measures, without the need for an Air Quality Assessment (AQA), as detailed in the Black Country Air Quality SPD. These standard mitigation measures are designed to deal with the cumulative impact of many moderate impact developments over time and over a wide area.
- 6.38 AQAs should be proportionate to the type and scale of development proposed, in accordance with the guidance provided by the Black Country Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document and relevant national standards for air quality. National planning policy guidance on air quality offers several examples of what might usefully be incorporated in such assessments, including baseline conditions, specific concerns, the assessment methods to be adopted, the basis for assessing impact and determining the significance of an impact and mitigation¹¹⁷.
- 6.39 For some developments a basic screening assessment of air quality is all that will be required, whereas for other developments a full AQA will need to be carried out, using advanced dispersion modelling software. An appropriate methodology informed by the Black Country Air Quality SPD should be agreed with the relevant development management team / officer on a case-by-case basis.
- 6.40 Where a potentially adverse impact on air quality is identified, mitigation measures may include:

¹¹⁷ NPPG, Paragraph: 007 Reference ID: 32-007-20140306

- a) increasing the distance between the development and the pollution source;
- b) using green infrastructure, particularly trees, to help absorb dust and other pollutants (see Policy SNE3 – care must be taken to ensure the type and location of such trees do not exacerbate air pollution by trapping it close to the street¹¹⁸);
- c) using ventilation systems to draw cleaner air into buildings;
- d) improving public transport access to all development;
- e) implementing travel plans to reduce the number of trips generated;
- f) implementing low emission strategies;
- g) controlling dust and emissions from construction, demolition and working projects.

Open Spaces and Recreation

- 6.41 The principles of national planning policy on open space, sport and recreation need to be applied in a Sandwell context to support the vision for urban renaissance and environmental transformation and to deliver opportunities for safe, attractive, functional, linked and accessible green spaces for people to exercise and play sport in and enjoy. This resource also promotes the enhancement of the natural environment to support greater biodiversity, maximises benefits for health and well-being, helps to mitigate and adapt to climate change and promotes economic regeneration.
- 6.42 All open spaces and sport and recreation facilities in Sandwell, both existing and proposed, are subject to the policies and requirements of national planning guidance as well as more detailed local policies. These policies will apply to existing sites that have an open space, sport or recreation function, regardless of whether they are shown on the Sandwell Local Plan's policies map. The National Planning Policy Framework sets out national policy for the protection of existing open space, sports and recreational buildings and land, which should be read alongside Policies SHW4 and SHW5.
- 6.43 It should be noted that Policy SHW4 relates to the strategic approach to open space and recreation, whereas Policy SHW5 relates specifically to playing fields and built sports facilities.
- 6.44 Up-to-date local need assessments (for open space, playing pitches and built sports facilities) are central to the implementation of national policy. Local standards for different types of open space and recreation facilities have been developed for Sandwell, based on

¹¹⁸ <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng70>

robust audits and needs assessments; these can be found in Appendix K. These standards will form the basis for the application of national planning guidance.

6.45 To promote healthy living, it is important that open space and sports facilities, and places that people visit every day such as shops and schools, are located and designed so that people are encouraged to walk or cycle to them from their homes. This can be achieved through:

- a) Location of key facilities in the most accessible locations;
- b) Meeting open space quantity, quality and access standards;
- c) Setting of accessibility standards for new housing developments;
- d) Co-location of key facilities and promotion of community use, such as dual use schools;
- e) On and off-site measures such as signage and cycle storage;
- f) Encouraging implementation of the Sport England Active Design policy.

Policy SHW4– Open Space and Recreation

- 1. All new housing sites providing over ten units will be expected to contribute towards the provision of unrestricted open space, in line with the standards set out in Appendix K. Where such provision on-site would make a site unviable or where there is no physical capacity to include it, the Council will in exceptional circumstances accept a commuted sum for nearby off-site provision in lieu or for the improvement of existing facilities within walking distance.**
- 2. On new housing sites of 2ha or over, Sandwell Council will seek the provision of new unrestricted open space at a minimum ratio of 3.63 hectares of space per 1,000 population. This open space will be provided on site.**
- 3. The Council will seek to ensure that at least one hectare of unrestricted open space is provided within walking distance (0.4 km) of all the Borough’s residents and proposals that help it meet this aim will be welcomed.**

Policy SHW4– Open Space and Recreation

- 4. Sandwell Council will support proposals¹¹⁹ that:**
- a. deliver against up-to-date local open space¹²⁰ and recreation standards for the borough, and address any shortfalls in provision, in terms of quantity, quality and access;**
 - b. address the ecological and environmental priorities set out in the Black Country Nature Recovery Network Strategy;**
 - c. make more efficient use of open spaces in the urban area by:**
 - i. creating more multifunctional open spaces;**
 - ii. protecting the existing open space network for recreation and biodiversity and taking opportunities to strengthen and expand it;**
 - iii. significantly expanding community use of open space and recreation facilities provided at places of education;**
 - iv. making creative use of land exchanges and disposing of surplus assets to generate resources for investment;**
 - v. increasing access to open space and recreation facilities for all, including people with disabilities and other target groups with limited access at present; and**
 - vi. where a place, site or facility has a cross-boundary catchment, identifying the most appropriate location to maximise community access and use of new facilities.**
- 5. Aspects of development proposals that would increase the overall value of the open space and recreation network in Sandwell will be supported, especially in areas of proven deficiency against adopted quantity, quality and accessibility standards.**
- 6. Proposals should maintain and / or enhance the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and help address any shortfalls in provision, when measured against**

¹¹⁹ Involving both current activities and facilities and where there are plans for new open spaces and recreation sites / uses

¹²⁰ See SLP Appendix K

Policy SHW4– Open Space and Recreation

adopted local standards. Where practicable, new open space should be provided on-site and relate well to other green infrastructure features.

7. Development that would result in the loss of land allocated as open space and used for recreation in Sandwell will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that
 - a. there is a robust and overriding matter of public interest at stake; and
 - b. a sufficient quantity of alternative open space can be provided in the vicinity, of the same or higher quality than what was lost; or
 - c. if open space of sufficient quantity and quality cannot be delivered in the immediate vicinity, a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision will be made available and compensatory gains in quality / accessibility secured on other open spaces or facilities that are of value to the local area.
8. Development proposals should focus on supporting / delivering the following functions of open space in Sandwell:
 - a. improving the image and environmental quality of the borough;
 - b. protecting and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and their settings;
 - c. enhancing visual amenity;
 - d. providing buffer zones between incompatible uses;
 - e. mitigating the effects of climate change, e.g., through flood risk betterment, installing SuDS, reducing potential urban heat island effects and providing opportunities for additional landscaping and tree planting;
 - f. preserving and enhancing environmental and habitat diversity and preventing the fragmentation of ecological networks;
 - g. extending, increasing access to and enhancing the ecological value of multifunctional green spaces and networks;
 - h. supporting outdoor sport and physical activity, including through footpath and cycle network infrastructure, and providing areas for informal recreation and children's play;

Policy SHW4– Open Space and Recreation

- i. **providing opportunities for people to grow their own food on allotments and encouraging urban horticulture.**

Justification

- 6.46 Being in green spaces boosts various aspects of thinking, including attention, memory and creativity, in people both with and without depression¹²¹, as well as producing positive improvements in physical and mental wellbeing. All features of the outdoor environment contribute to environmental infrastructure, including natural and semi-natural habitats, parks and other open spaces, formal and informal recreation and sports facilities, historic buildings and landscapes, the public realm of spaces and streets, rivers, canals and drainage systems.
- 6.47 Sandwell’s previous local plan identified a green space hierarchy in Sandwell, intended to -
“... analyse existing provision of green /open space, to identify strengths and weaknesses in the provision, and to guide decisions about improvements, new and replacement provision, and development proposals which impact on the provision.”
- 6.48 The hierarchy identified types of green space, ranging from Regional / Sub Regional Green Space, such as Sandwell Valley and Strategic Open Space such as the Rowley Hills down to local formal and informal areas of open space, such as gardens, playgrounds and landscaped public spaces. The hierarchy is set out in Appendix K.
- 6.49 The provision of high-quality open space to serve new residential developments and the improvement of existing open spaces is critical to the overall aims of urban renaissance and environmental transformation. Policy SHW4 therefore identifies the functions of open space that are of importance to Sandwell, in addition to those set out in national guidance.
- 6.50 Greenways are defined as linear features of mostly open character, including paths through green spaces, canal corridors and disused railway lines (although some of these could be brought back into rail use in the future), which act as wildlife corridors and provide attractive and safe off-road links for pedestrians and cyclists. They form an important network throughout the Black Country but in some cases are of poor quality or are severed by other

¹²¹ <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/our-work/research/nature-how-connecting-nature-benefits-our-mental-health>

infrastructure or barriers. The restoration of towpaths, bridges, public rights of way and the creation of cycle and pedestrian links to enhance the greenway network will be sought through planning conditions and obligations, transportation funding, and the support of other organisations such as the Canal and River Trust. Blue infrastructure features such as rivers and streams also provide opportunities for physical activity.

- 6.51 Open space and play standards and requirements are set out in Appendix K and will be subject to review as evidence is updated over the Plan period.
- 6.52 Some common themes regarding open space, sport and recreation have emerged through audits and needs assessments. Communities greatly value local open spaces. However, quantity and accessibility for each type of open space and facility varies considerably from area to area, and an increasing population in certain areas of Sandwell over the Plan period will further affect these imbalances. In general terms, prosperous areas have low levels of provision but of a higher quality, whereas deprived areas may have sufficient quantities of open space but of limited quality and function.

Sports and playing fields

- 6.53 Playing pitch strategies for the four Black Country authorities were updated during 2021-22 and this evidence has informed the SLP. The Sandwell strategy will be updated as appropriate during the Plan period and new priorities may therefore emerge over time.
- 6.54 The Black Country-wide Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy commissioned by the four councils has provided action plans for each of the individual authorities and this in turn has been used to identify the quantitative and qualitative situation for sports pitch and playing field provision in Sandwell.
- 6.55 Appendix J contains an extract from the current Sandwell Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy action plan identifying the quantitative situation for playing field provision as at October 2022. Where appropriate, developers will need to demonstrate that they have taken account of the findings of the Sandwell PPOSS in their schemes.

Policy SHW5 – Playing Fields and Sports Facilities

- 1. Existing playing fields and built sports facilities must be retained unless:**
 - a) an assessment has been undertaken that has clearly shown the playing fields or built sports facilities to be surplus to requirements (for existing or alternative sports provision) at the local and sub-regional level; or**

Policy SHW5 – Playing Fields and Sports Facilities

- b) the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable and accessible location; or
 - c) the development is for alternative sports provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use; or
 - d) The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and would not prejudice the use of any playing pitch or remaining areas of playing field on the site.
- 2. New build sports facilities should be:**
- a) in accordance with local needs identified in the current **Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy**, to ensure provision of appropriate facilities in a suitable location to meet that need;
 - b) well-designed, including through the provision of high-quality landscaping and public realm enhancements, and well-related to neighbourhood services and amenities; and
 - c) well-linked to public transport infrastructure and footpath and cycleway networks and directed to a centre appropriate in role and scale to the proposed development and its intended catchment area. Proposals located outside centres must be justified in terms of relevant national policy.
- 3. Where assessments demonstrate that a housing development would increase the need for playing pitches or built sports facilities to a level where significant new or improved facilities are required to meet demand, proportionate planning obligations or Community Infrastructure Levy will be used to acquire or create sufficient provision, where it is financially viable and appropriate to do so, and long-term management arrangements can be secured and funded.**
- 4. Where land is provided for a new built sports facility as part of a housing development, the financial contribution made by that development towards built sports facilities will be reduced accordingly.**

Policy SHW5 – Playing Fields and Sports Facilities

- 5. The wider community use of school playing fields, other school facilities, such as sports halls, and private facilities will be encouraged, especially in areas where public provision is deficient.**

Justification

- 6.56 Publicly accessible urban open space, play and sports facilities all have a vital role to play in helping to promote healthy lifestyles. As sports participation rates in the Black Country are below the national average, needs assessments for sports facilities will consider the need to increase sports participation and improve health as well as meet existing needs. Existing and potential cross-boundary effects will also be considered when developing proposals that would affect sports facility provision. Cross-boundary issues particularly affect facilities with large catchment areas, such as swimming pools.
- 6.57 An issue in Sandwell is the low quality of playing pitch sites, which would benefit from improved changing facilities and a shift towards more small pitches. Increasing community access to school sports facilities would also help to address shortfalls in some areas.
- 6.58 This policy recognises that, in some circumstances where there is a significant gap in provision of natural turf playing pitches or built sports facilities such as courts and swimming pools, it may be necessary for housing developments to contribute towards improvements to such facilities over and above general open space and recreation contributions. In such cases, the Sport England Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Calculator tools will be used to determine an appropriate level of contributions. The high capital and revenue costs of such facilities and the challenges of securing appropriate, long-term management and maintenance for them are recognised. Contributions will be considered alongside requirements for other infrastructure in the context of scheme viability.
- 6.59 From a quantitative perspective and as set out in the Sandwell Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy Action Plan (Appendix J), the existing position for each sport is either that demand is being met or that there is a shortfall in provision. An estimated future position (based on anticipated future housing provision in Sandwell) shows the development of new shortfalls for some pitch types and in some areas where demand is currently being met, as well as the exacerbation of existing shortfalls. There are current¹²² shortfalls of adult, youth

¹²² Sandwell Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy & Action Plan - October 2022

11v11, youth 9v9 and mini 7v7 football pitches as well as 3G pitches, cricket squares and rugby union pitches, all of which will be exacerbated when addressing future demand driven by new housing provision.

6.60 Where demand is currently being met, this does not necessarily mean that there is a surplus of provision; any spare capacity is effectively taken up in overcoming current or future shortfalls. There is a need to protect all existing outdoor sport provision until demand is met, or a requirement to replace provision in accordance with the NPPF and Sport England's Playing Fields Policy.

6.61 The Action Plan and Strategy identified that contributions from housing developments could be pooled together to improve key sites and listed those high-priority locations that would provide the most benefit from additional investment:

- Barnford Park
- Birmingham County FA Headquarters
- Britannia Park
- Cakemore Playing Field
- Charlemont Playing Fields
- Hadley Stadium
- Hydes Road Playing Fields
- Lion Farm Playing Fields
- Sandwell Academy
- Tipton Sports Academy
- Warley Rugby Club
- West Bromwich Dartmouth Cricket Club
- West Smethwick Park

6.62 However, if high priority sites in the local area of the development cannot be identified for investment, contributions should be pooled to fund the creation of new provision, particularly for cricket, in consultation with Sport England and the relevant NGB, to ensure the potential provision would be utilised and sustainable.

6.63 There are other solutions available to help meet existing shortfalls, including by better utilising current provision, such as:

- through improving quality;
- re-configuration;
- installing additional floodlighting;
- improving ancillary facilities; and
- enabling access to existing unused provision, such as at unavailable school sites.

6.64 However, there remains a shortfall of 3G pitches that can only be met through increased provision. With resources to improve the quality of grass pitches being limited, particularly at sites managed by the Council, an increase in 3G provision could also help reduce grass pitch shortfalls through the transfer of play, which in turn can reduce overplay and aid pitch quality improvements.

Allotments

6.65 The Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 placed a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments according to local demand. It also made provision for local authorities to compulsorily purchase land to provide allotments.

6.66 The National Model Design Code states that as part of open space design for large developments consideration should be given to the provision of land for allotments and community growing projects for food production, learning and community engagement.

6.67 Sandwell currently contains 34 allotment sites that in turn provide 1,336 plots; it encourages the continued use of allotments and will support the use of green space for local food growing, including community farming, gardening and orchards.

Policy SHW6 - Allotments

- 1. The provision and promotion of allotments and community gardens in Sandwell will be supported by the Council. This will be achieved by:**
 - a. retaining existing allotments and resisting their loss unless in accordance with allocations identified in this plan;**
 - b. working with partners and local communities to identify sites with potential for local food growing; and**
 - c. supporting projects that promote community gardening, farming and orchards.**
- 2. If allotments are to be redeveloped, compensatory measures will be required for the loss, either through provision of new allotments on an open space of equivalent**

Policy SHW6 - Allotments

value nearby, or through a commensurate contribution to the enhancement of existing allotment provision in the vicinity.

3. **Proposals for community agriculture will be supported where appropriate.**
4. **Development proposals that are located next to, or which may have an impact on, existing allotments will be expected to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on them by employing the agent of change principle.**

Justification

- 6.68 Allotments and community agriculture are important to local communities, and they have a unique place in Britain's heritage.
- 6.69 Allotments have nature conservation and open space value alongside their primary use for food growing. Allotment sites will be strongly protected unless it can be clearly demonstrated that their use is no longer required.
- 6.70 A study carried out in 2016¹²³ identified that allotment gardening can result in significant improvements in self-esteem and mood via reductions in tension, depression, anger and confusion. These findings are supported by previous research demonstrating the health and well-being benefits of participating in green exercise activities.
- 6.71 Further evidence¹²⁴ on the social, physical and mental benefits of allotment gardening demonstrates that:
- a. it provides various environmental benefits, including the support and regulation of ecosystem services;
 - b. it results in more sustainably produced food, promotes healthy eating and acts as an educational resource;
 - c. it improves general health, aids recovery from stress, increases life satisfaction, promotes social contact and provides opportunities for low to moderate–high intensity physical activity, all of which promote mental wellbeing;
 - d. people who grow their own food are happier than those who do not;

¹²³ <https://academic.oup.com/jpubhealth/article/38/3/e336/2239844>

¹²⁴ <https://www.nsalq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/health-and-well-being-allotments.pdf>

e. compared with an indoor exercise class, allotment gardening results in significantly lower levels of stress.

6.72 Allotment gardening might also play a key role in promoting health and wellbeing in the more vulnerable groups in society through the development of social support and cohesion.

7. Sandwell's Housing

Introduction

- 7.1 The policies in this chapter will help to create a network of cohesive, healthy and prosperous communities across Sandwell. This is a fundamental element of the Plan's Vision and objectives and will help deliver its strategic priorities. The policies will also ensure the provision of a balanced range of housing in terms of type, tenure, wheelchair accessibility and affordability, and specialist provision for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and for those who wish to undertake self-build or custom build. New housing will be of a high build quality and will be well-designed, meeting national space and water efficiency standards and delivering high levels of energy efficiency and adaptation to climate change.
- 7.2 Maximising sustainable transport access to key residential services and focusing high density increases in areas of greatest accessibility is at the heart of the Spatial Strategy, helping to deliver Strategic Objectives 6, 7 and 15. Providing a balanced network of quality education facilities is a further key part of this approach and will help to deliver economic prosperity.

Sustainable Housing Growth

- 7.3 A key role of the SLP is to set out realistic targets for the delivery of sustainable housing growth over the plan period up to 2041.

Policy SHO1 - Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth

- Sufficient land will be provided to deliver at least 11,167 net new homes over the period 2022 - 2041.**
- The key sources of housing land supply are summarised in Table 5, which also sets out the minimum housing target for each of the Plan phases: 2022 - 2027, 2027 - 2032, 2032 - 2037 and 2037 - 2041. Housing allocations are set out in Appendix B.**

Table 5 - Housing Land Supply - sources

Source of Supply	Type of Supply	2022-2027	2027-2032	2032-2037	2037-2041	Total
	Sites Under Construction	1,020	40	0	0	1,060

Policy SHO1 - Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth

Current Supply as of April 2022	Sites with Planning Permission or Prior Approval ▲	998	0	0	0	998
	Sites with Other Commitments (as set out in 2022 SHLAA) ◇	18	36	7	0	61
	Gypsy and Traveller Pitches	10	0	0	0	10
Housing Allocations	Occupied Employment Land †	0	1,131	769	334	2,234
	Other	347	1,328	704	715	3,094
	Sites with planning permission ▲	634	629	92	190	1,545
	Sites under construction	78	0	0	0	78
Total Identified Sites		3,105	3,164	1,572	1,239	9,080
Total Windfall Allowance	Small sites (<10 homes / 0.25ha)	0	671	665	532	1868
Additional Floorspace in centres	West Bromwich	0	16	0	0	16
	Town Centres	0	50	45	0	95
	District and Local Centres	0	58	50	0	108
Total additional floorspace in centres		0	124	95	0	219
Total supply		3,105	3,959	2,332	1,771	11,167

▲ Discounted by 5% ◇ Discounted by 10% † Discounted by 15%

3. **Most of the requirement will be met through sites with existing planning permission and sites allocated for housing by this Plan. Additional housing supply will also be secured on windfall sites throughout the urban area. The estimated net effect of**

Policy SHO1 - Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth

housing renewal up to 2041 will be reviewed annually and used in the calculation of housing land supply.

4. The development of sites for housing should demonstrate a comprehensive approach, making best use of available land and infrastructure and not prejudicing neighbouring uses. Incremental development of an allocated site will only be allowed where it would not prejudice the achievement of high-quality design across the wider site. Masterplans and other planning documents¹²⁵ will be produced, where appropriate, to provide detailed guidance on the development of allocations.
5. Ancillary uses appropriate for residential areas, such as health facilities, community facilities and local shops, may be acceptable where there is a gap in service provision and where they can be integrated successfully into the residential environment. Other uses will not be acceptable on these sites.
6. A minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain is required for each site in accordance with Policy SNE2.

Justification

- 7.4 The council has identified sufficient land to provide 11,167 additional homes by 2041. 97% of the supply is on brownfield land and 3% of the supply is on greenfield land. The Sandwell Policies Map illustrates the distribution of housing sites across the borough. A balanced range of sites has been provided, in terms of size, location and market attractiveness, which will help to maximise housing delivery over the Plan period. Across the borough, 10% of identified supply in the Plan and in the most recent Brownfield Register is on sites no larger than 1ha, which is in accordance with the requirement set out in the NPPF at paragraph 069.
- 7.5 The details of proposed housing allocations are provided in Appendix B and sites are shown on the Policies Map. Housing capacity has been identified in accordance with the Spatial Strategy and is based on the following information:
- a. Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessments (SHLAAs) and the Black Country Employment Area Review (BEAR);
 - b. An estimate of the likely scale of housing renewal up to 2041;

¹²⁵ E.g., design codes, development frameworks and supplementary plans

- c. An estimate of likely windfall development on small sites up to 2041;
 - d. An assessment of the capacity of West Bromwich strategic centre above existing supply, drawing on the West Bromwich Master Plan and Interim Planning Statement;
 - e. An estimate of the likely capacity of vacant floorspace in town, district and local centres;
 - f. Application of a density uplift to existing allocations likely to gain permission after 2025, in line with Policy SHO3;
 - g. An estimate of the additional 'aspirational' growth that will be delivered in the regeneration areas and on sites identified in masterplans and other supplementary guidance;
 - h. A comprehensive land review and site assessment process.
- 7.6 The housing supply from allocations on occupied employment land has been discounted by 15% to take account of the multiple delivery constraints that typically affect such sites and that are likely to reduce delivery on a minority of sites. Delivery constraints include poor ground conditions and the need for large-scale master-planning, land assembly, business relocations and residential service access improvements.
- 7.7 The supply from allocations on other land in the urban area and on small (<10 home / 0.25 ha) sites without planning permission has also been discounted by 10% to allow for non-implementation, as some of these sites are also affected by delivery constraints such as poor ground conditions.
- 7.8 The supply from sites with planning permission but not yet under construction has been discounted by 5% in accordance with historic lapse rates. These discounts are balanced rates that take account of the likely availability of external funding to address constraints, as set out in the Viability and Delivery Study.
- 7.9 Together, these discounts provide sufficient flexibility in the housing land supply to meet any unforeseen circumstances.
- 7.10 Allowances for structural change, as detailed in the Urban Capacity Review (2023), are made up of two sources - potential sites and surplus floorspace within West Bromwich Strategic Centre (drawing on the West Bromwich Master Plan and Interim Planning Statement) and for Tiers Two and Three centres (as defined in Policies SCE4 and SCE5). The structural change allowances are over and above the small windfall site allowance. The latter represents a continuation of historic rates, whereas the former represents a structural change in the factors giving rise to new housing sites which is it predicted will generate

additional supply over the Plan period. These include changes to shopping patterns, permitted development rights and work patterns arising from COVID impacts.

- 7.11 The Plan period has been divided into four phases, covering every five years from 2022. Housing targets for each phase are provided in Table 5. These are based on the housing trajectory set out in Appendix I, with further detail provided in the SHLAA. The trajectory demonstrates a steady supply of housing completions over the Plan period, justifying consistent housing targets throughout the Plan period. As set out in the NPPF (paragraph 74), the Council is seeking to confirm through the SLP the existence of a five - year housing land supply from the year of adoption (2025). For this purpose, the buffer applied to housing supply (as set out in the housing trajectory) will be 20%, in line with the most recent Housing Delivery Test results (2022).

Windfall Development

- 7.12 A robust small windfall site allowance has been included in the supply, which reflects historic completion rates for sites of less than ten homes. Windfall sites are subject to policy, sustainability, and detailed site considerations.

Policy SHO2 – Windfall developments

1. **Proposals for residential development on sites not specifically allocated for residential use (windfall developments) will be permitted where the site is previously developed land and in accordance with other local plan policies.**
2. **Proposals for residential development on unallocated greenfield land will be resisted. Such sites will only be considered where:**
 - a. **the site is not protected as community open space;**
or
 - b. **the site is Council-owned land that is deemed surplus to requirements;**
or
 - c. **the development of the site will bring an under-used piece of land back into beneficial use and will not harm the environmental, ecological or historic value of the site and the wider area, in accordance with other relevant policies in the SLP.**

Justification

7.13 In addition to the sites allocated for residential development within the Plan, it is recognised that other sites will become available for development during the Plan period as it is impossible to identify all potential redevelopment proposals that may arise within an urban area such as Sandwell. These sites are likely to include surplus public land, small non-conforming employment uses and some residential intensification sites where appropriate. However, greenfield proposals will only be considered if they meet the criteria above.

Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

7.14 It is important that the new homes delivered over the plan period:

- are provided in places with good sustainable transport access to key residential services;
- can provide a mix of types and densities that are appropriate to their location; and
- can help to meet local needs.

Policy SHO3 - Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

1. **The density and type of new housing provided on any housing site should be informed by:**
 - a. **The need for a range of types and sizes of accommodation to meet identified local needs;**
 - b. **The level of accessibility by sustainable transport to residential services, including any improvements to be secured through development, as set out in Table 6; and**
 - c. **The need to achieve high-quality design and minimise amenity impacts, considering the characteristics and mix of uses in the area where the proposal is located.**
2. **The council will aim to provide an overall mix of house types over the plan period, tailored to best meet local needs and will support development that creates mixed, sustainable and inclusive communities. Developments of ten homes or more should provide a range of house types and sizes that will meet the accommodation needs of both existing and future residents, in line with the most recently available information.**

Policy SHO3 - Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

3. All developments of ten homes or more should achieve the minimum net density set out below, except where this would prejudice historic character and local distinctiveness as defined in Policy SHE2:
- 100 dwellings per hectare where Table 6 accessibility standards for very high-density housing are met and the site is located within West Bromwich.
 - 45 dwellings per hectare where Table 6 accessibility standards for high density housing are met;
 - 40 dwellings per hectare where Table 6 accessibility standards for moderate density housing are met.
4. Table 6 provides details of the appropriate density and, where appropriate, house type mix, to be sought on each housing allocation site, in accordance with the requirements set out in this Policy. Further details of design requirements for housing developments will be set out in Sandwell's Design Codes.

Table 6 - Minimum Housing Densities and Accessibility

Density (homes per hectare net)	Very High: 100 + Only appropriate within West Bromwich	High: 45 +	Moderate: 40 +
Indicative proportion of flats	100%	>15%	0 – 15%
Indicative amount of housing suited to families	low	medium	high
Accessibility (by either walking or public transport, unless stated)			
Employment - Strategic Centre or other employment area	20 mins	20 mins	30 mins
Health – Primary Care e.g., GP Surgery or Health Centre	10 mins	10 mins	15 mins
Fresh Food - Centre or food store	N/a	10 mins	15 mins

Policy SHO3 - Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

Education - Primary School (walking distance only)	N/a	15 mins	10 mins
Education - Secondary School	N/a	25 mins	20 mins

- 5. Any development that fails to make efficient use of land, by providing a disproportionate number of large, 4+ bedroom homes when compared with evidenced local housing need, will be refused in accordance with the requirements of this policy.**
- 6. Development proposals should be consistent with other Local Plan policies.**

Justification

- 7.15 Achieving an appropriate density and house type mix is crucial both to the success of each new housing development and the overall sustainability of the Spatial Strategy. It is important that every major development, of ten homes or more, contributes to providing an appropriate house type mix and density, aligned with current local needs. Achieving the right density and mix of house types will also help to protect and improve physical, social and mental health and wellbeing, as set out in the Health and Wellbeing Chapter.
- 7.16 The accessibility of all housing developments by walking, cycling or public transport to a range of residential services is key to achieving sustainable communities. As higher density developments will accommodate more people, they should generally be delivered in those areas with good access to services, to encourage use of sustainable transport modes. The highest densities of 100 homes per hectare should be in areas with the best access to public transport and services, but also where a high proportion of flats will provide design solutions that best reflect historic character and local distinctiveness. Therefore, such densities will only be acceptable within West Bromwich Strategic Centre.
- 7.17 Conversely, lower density developments, accommodating more families, should enjoy high levels of accessibility to schools. Not all developments with good sustainable access to services will be suited to the highest densities – in some cases a lower density will be more appropriate, for example in areas of historic character, to reflect the density of adjacent uses or to meet the need for a mix of housing types.
- 7.18 Table 6 provides access standards for differing house type mixes / densities, in relation to four priority residential services: employment, health, fresh food and education. Proxies have

been selected for each service. Employment is represented by West Bromwich Strategic Centre and retained employment areas. The proxy used for fresh food is a centre, or an existing food store outside a centre that currently provides a range and choice of fresh food. The access standards have been developed based on survey evidence regarding the distance people are prepared to travel to each service by foot and public transport and are designed to help create well-connected and walkable neighbourhoods. Although open space does not form one of the priority residential services for the purposes of establishing the appropriate density and type of housing, Policy SHW4, taken together with local standards and policies, will ensure that a sufficient quantity and quality of different types of open space is available close to where people live.

- 7.19 Housing developments of ten homes or more will be expected to meet the accessibility standards set out in Table 6, which vary according to density and likely house type mix. The priority is for the service needs of future communities to be served by the existing network of centres, to ensure their future vitality and viability, and to secure future regeneration. Any on-site service provision potential required to meet accessibility standards is identified in the housing allocations. Where there is an identified gap in service provision against one or more of these standards, investment will be sought to improve either service provision or access to existing services sufficient to ensure standards are met.
- 7.20 New service provision, including for centre uses, should be located and justified in accordance with Policies SCE3 and SCE4.
- 7.21 Current accessibility to residential services by sustainable transport modes across Sandwell has been modelled. This modelling shows the high levels of accessibility achieved by the Spatial Strategy. However, there are some gaps in provision that will need to be addressed through service or access improvements. The model will be updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in service provision and public transport services. Local circumstances, such as planned changes to service provision, will be considered when assessing accessibility on a site-by-site basis.
- 7.22 The Black Country Housing Market Assessment (HMA) 2021 demonstrates that new households generated by 2039 will need the following mix of home tenures and types:

Table 7 - New housing types and tenures in Sandwell

Size of home	Owner occupied	Private rented	First Homes	Shared Ownership	Social / affordable rented
1 bedroom	15.5%	22.4%	17.6%	25.5%	25.5%
2 bedrooms	30.0%	24.7%	25.9%	30.9%	15.1%
3 bedrooms	29.3%	20.7%	35.9%	28.0%	23.6%
4+ bedroom	25.1%	32.2%	20.7%	15.7%	35.7%

It is important that housing provision reflects the needs of these new households, allowing for at least one bedroom per person

7.23 Land supply is limited, and this has an impact on the number of homes that can be delivered, therefore it is essential that any new development makes the most efficient use of the land. On sites where homes are proposed to be delivered, the Council will be looking for housing sizes that improve the choice in an area; the Council will also expect smaller family housing to be included in the overall mix of housing. Furthermore, new developments need to provide a range of typologies / mix of homes to complement the existing / surrounding housing context; a consistent run of overly-large units on a site can be at odds with neighbouring sites in terms of street or plot context. Therefore, developments that fail to make the most efficient use of land by proposing developments of 4+ bedroom homes when compared with evidenced local housing need, will be refused in accordance with the requirements of this policy and Policy SHO1.

Affordable Housing

7.24 To meet local needs, a sufficient proportion of new homes provided over the plan period should be affordable.

Policy SHO4 - Affordable Housing

1. **Developments of ten homes or more should, where financially viable, provide a range of tenures that will meet the accommodation needs of both existing and future residents, in line with the most recently available information.**
2. **All developments of ten homes or more should provide a proportion of affordable housing, where this is financially viable. Smaller sites, which could reasonably be expected to form part of a major development in the future, will also need to take this policy into account. The minimum proportion of affordable housing that should be provided, subject to viability, is 25%.**
3. **25% of the affordable homes required by this policy will be First Homes tenure, as defined in national guidance.**
4. **Beyond the tenure requirements set out in Parts 2 and 3 of this policy, the tenure and type of affordable homes sought will be determined on a site-by-site basis, based on national planning policy and best available information regarding local housing needs, site surroundings and viability considerations.**
5. **Where providing 25% affordable homes cannot be achieved, the maximum proportion of affordable housing will be required that does not undermine the development's viability (Policy SHO6).**
6. **The affordable housing created will remain affordable in perpetuity.**

Justification

- 7.25 Rising house prices and low average incomes over a long period have made market housing increasingly unaffordable for many Sandwell households. The Black Country HMA (2021) identifies a requirement for 16.9% of new homes to be made available for affordable or social rent, 7% to be shared ownership and 8.2% to be First Homes. To meet this level of need over the Plan period, 32.1% of new housing would have to be affordable. Sandwell aspires to provide this level of affordable housing, through a range of schemes delivering up to 100% affordable housing funded through grant and other financial sources and supported by developer contributions where viable.
- 7.26 Viability issues can vary significantly from site to site and are often caused by poor ground conditions, the extent of which cannot be accurately assessed until planning application stage. Therefore, to maximise delivery of affordable housing over the Plan period, it is important that affordable housing is sought on all eligible sites, that viability is assessed on a

site-by-site basis where required, and that a flexible approach is employed wherever possible to allow for changing market conditions.

- 7.27 The tenure of affordable housing to be funded by developers through planning obligations is constrained by national planning policy, as set out above. At least 25% of any affordable homes funded should be First Homes tenure – a specific kind of discounted market sale housing to be sold at 30% below current market value, to eligible persons only, at every future sale¹²⁶. National guidance allows for evidenced local variations in First Homes requirements, however there is no evidence that such variations are required in Sandwell. In addition, the NPPF (paragraph 65) requires at least 10% of all homes on major developments (of ten homes or more) to be affordable home ownership tenure. First Homes and shared ownership properties can contribute towards this requirement.
- 7.28 Beyond national requirements, the tenure and type of affordable housing required over the Plan period will vary according to local housing need and market conditions. In general, a mix of tenures will be sought on all sites of ten homes or more, to help create mixed communities across the borough. However, there may be circumstances where this goal is better achieved through the provision of 100% affordable housing development to boost affordable housing provision, or through delivery of 100% market housing development with off-site provision of the affordable housing requirement.

Delivering Wheelchair Accessible Homes and Self-build and Custom Housing

- 7.29 To meet local needs, a sufficient proportion of new homes provided over the plan period should be wheelchair accessible, and enough plots should be provided to meet local demand for self-build and custom build housing.

Policy SHO5 - Delivering Wheelchair Accessible and Self / Custom Build Housing

National Accessibility and Wheelchair Housing Standards

1. All new homes will be required to meet M4(2) (Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings) requirement in Building Regulations¹²⁷.

¹²⁶ Detailed guidance is available at: www.gov.uk/guidance/first-homes

¹²⁷ Or any subsequent national equivalent standard

Policy SHO5 - Delivering Wheelchair Accessible and Self / Custom Build Housing

2. **Developments of ten homes or more should provide a proportion of accessible and adaptable or wheelchair user housing, where this is financially viable. The minimum proportion that should be provided is:**
 - a. **an additional 15% of homes to meet the optional Building Regulations Requirement M4(3): Wheelchair User Dwellings¹²⁸.**
3. **Other than for reasons of financial viability, these requirements will only be reduced where it can be demonstrated that any of the following apply:**
 - a. **it is not practically achievable given the physical characteristics of the site; or**
 - b. **site specific factors mean that step-free access to the dwelling cannot be achieved; or**
 - c. **the homes are located on the first floor or above of a non-lift serviced multi-storey development; or**
 - d. **the amount of M4(3) housing is limited by the number of homes that can be provided where the local authority is likely to be responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that home.**

Self-Build and Custom Build Plots

4. **On developments of 100 homes or more, where there is currently a demand for self-build and custom build plots (defined as the number of entries added to the self-build and custom build register in the most recent base period for the local authority where the site is located), at least 5% of plots should be made available for self-build or custom build, or sufficient to match demand if lower.**
5. **All plots set aside for self-build or custom build housing (secured via a legal agreement or planning condition) must include:**
 - a. **legal access onto a public highway;**
 - b. **water, foul drainage, broadband connection, and electricity supply available at the plot boundary;**

¹²⁸ Or any subsequent national equivalent standard

Policy SHO5 - Delivering Wheelchair Accessible and Self / Custom Build Housing

- c. **sufficient space to build without compromising neighbouring properties and their amenity and the amenity of future occupiers; and**
 - d. **an agreed design code or plot passport for the plots.**
- 6. If a plot remains unsold after six months, after a thorough and proportionate marketing exercise that includes making details available to people on the custom and self-build register, the requirement to make the plot available for self-build or custom build will fall away.**

Justification

Wheelchair accessible and adaptable homes

- 7.30 Sandwell Council will work with partners to meet identified needs to accommodate older people, people with disabilities and those with other special needs. The Black Country HMA (2021) concludes that an additional 5,516 accessible and adaptable homes, including 656 wheelchair user homes, will be required by Sandwell households in 2039 due to disability or old age.
- 7.31 There is a need for these types of home across all tenures. This implies that a significant uplift will be required to the number of homes that meet these standards currently. Although some improvements to existing homes funded through Disabled Facilities Grants may contribute towards this uplift, the provision of new homes meeting the standards would reduce the need for adaptations to be retrofitted and make the housing stock more responsive to the evolving needs of the local population.
- 7.32 People's housing needs change as they get older, and homes designed in a way that makes them more easily accessible and adaptable allow people to stay in their own homes for longer. With public health and social care strategies placing more emphasis on supporting people in their own homes rather than moving to residential care, it is important that more adaptable and accessible homes are provided. Studies have shown that older properties are generally less accessible, and harder to adapt.
- 7.33 In line with new Building Regulations all new homes must meet the M4(2) (Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings) requirement. Accessible and adaptable homes that meet the M4(2) Building Regulations are designed and built to a standard that meets the needs of occupants with differing needs, including some older or disabled people, and are

only slightly more expensive to build than standard housing. They must also allow adaptation to meet the changing needs of occupants over time. Homes built to this standard are more flexible and readily adaptable as people's needs change, for example if they have children and require easy access for pushchairs, if they have a temporary or permanent disability or health issue, or as they gradually age and their mobility decreases.

- 7.34 Wheelchair user homes that meet the M4(3) Building Regulations are required by fewer households but attract significantly increased costs. M4(3) standards can only be applied to homes where the local authority is responsible for allocation or for nominating a person to live in that home.
- 7.35 Therefore, for major housing developments there will be a requirement for 15% of wheelchair user homes at the M4(3) standard.
- 7.36 The standards will be applied through planning conditions or section 106 agreements, which will require an agreed number of units to be constructed to the specified Building Regulations requirements.
- 7.37 Policy SHO5 allows for an element of flexibility in recognition of the practicalities of delivering these standards, given the challenges that may arise in view of the topography of some sites, where access within the gradients specified in the Building Regulations Approved Document may not be achievable. Where step-free access to dwellings cannot feasibly be achieved due to site specific factors, the optional standards will not be required for the homes affected. Where multi-storey flats or apartments are being developed without lift provision, homes on the first floor or above will not be required to meet the M4(2) or M4(3) standards. Ground floor flats in multi-storey developments will still be required to meet the optional standards. Where lifts are provided the standards will be applied in accordance with the Policy.

Self and Custom Build Housing

- 7.38 National guidance requires local authorities to permit sufficient serviced plots of land to meet the demand for self-build and custom housebuilding in their area, defined as the number of entries to the authority's self-build and custom housebuilding register in the most recent base period (12 months running from 31 October to 30 October). The current¹²⁹ demand for the base period of 31 October 2022 to 30 October 2023 is 10.

¹²⁹ As at July 2023

7.39 Therefore, where there is identified demand in the borough when an application is submitted, developers of larger sites (sites of 100 homes or more) will be expected to make available a small proportion of the development as serviced self-build and custom build plots, as defined in national guidance and legislation and that meet the criteria set out in Policy SHO5 parts 5a-d. Appropriate marketing of these plots, for example through specialist plot finding services, residential property websites and local estate agents, will be required for a period of at least six months. These plots will not form part of the affordable housing requirement for the development. Detailed guidance for the plots, for example on design, will be provided where appropriate.

Financial Viability Assessments for Housing

7.40 Viability must be considered in the delivery of sites.

Policy SHO6 - Financial Viability Assessments for Housing

1. **A planning application that complies with up-to-date policies within this plan will be assumed to be viable and should seek to provide any relevant planning contributions necessary to make it acceptable in planning terms. The onus will be on the applicant to demonstrate that the provision of planning contributions would adversely affect the financial viability of the development proposals.**
2. **Financial viability assessments conforming to national guidance will be required to be submitted and, where necessary, independently appraised by an appropriate professional appointed by the local planning authority at the cost of the applicant. Flexible arrangements will be sought through planning agreements, wherever possible, to allow for changing market conditions in future years.**
3. **Any viability assessment should be prepared on the basis that it will be made publicly available other than in exceptional circumstances, and in such circumstances an executive summary will be made publicly available.**
4. **On sites where applying the affordable housing or accessibility and wheelchair user requirements set out in Policies SHO4 and SHO5 can be demonstrated to make the development unviable, the maximum proportion of such housing will be sought that will not undermine the viability of the development, subject to achieving optimum tenure mix and securing other planning obligations necessary for the development to gain planning permission.**

Justification

7.41 Viability issues can vary significantly from site to site and are often caused by poor ground conditions, the extent of which cannot be accurately assessed until planning application stage. Therefore, to maximise delivery of affordable housing over the Plan period, it is important that affordable housing is sought on all eligible sites, that viability is assessed on a site-by-site basis where required, and that a flexible approach is employed wherever possible to allow for changing market conditions.

Protecting Family Housing

7.42 There is sufficient demand in Sandwell for family accommodation that the Council believe it is appropriate to include a policy requiring the retention of family houses except where identified circumstances apply.

Policy SHO7 - Protecting Family Housing (Use Class C3)

1. **To address the shortage of homes that are suitable and attractive to families throughout the borough, and to encourage the provision of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, there will be a presumption against the loss of dwelling houses (Use Class C3) for family occupation through either sub-division, conversion to Use Class C4¹³⁰, conversion to other non-residential uses or demolition and redevelopment, unless:**
 - a) **the property / properties is / are located within a site allocation and the corresponding development principles indicate that an alternative use or mix of housing will be more appropriate;**
 - b) **the proposed development fulfils other regeneration aspirations of the Council;**
 - c) **evidence of local housing need and demand indicates that an alternative mix of housing is appropriate;**
 - d) **alternative provision will help meet other housing priorities of the Council, such as provision for elderly persons (including bungalows); or**
 - e) **an applicant can demonstrate that the property / properties will no longer be suitable for family occupation, in which case, replacement with a new Class C3**

¹³⁰ Or subsequent / equivalent iterations

Policy SHO7 - Protecting Family Housing (Use Class C3)

dwelling house(s), suitable for family occupation will be the preferred approach, unless one of the criteria set out above can be satisfied.

Justification

- 7.43 The Black Country Housing Market Assessment (2021) demonstrates a need for homes with one bedroom (19%), two bedrooms (26%), three bedrooms (27%) and four bedrooms (27%). Sandwell's waiting list register demonstrates that more people are waiting for one- and two- (42% and 32%) bedroom homes, with three- bedroom homes seeing the third highest level of demand (17.5%).
- 7.44 Sandwell is limited in its capacity to identify areas of land for housing to meet the borough's needs, and many family homes have been lost through conversion into separate flats and Houses in Multiple Occupation. Therefore, existing family homes should be retained unless there are circumstances identified where it may not be appropriate to do so.
- 7.45 Such circumstances may arise where the property or properties form part of a site allocation within this Plan, and the accompanying development principles for that site state that an alternative use for the property has been identified; or where an alternative type of housing is more appropriate.
- 7.46 Another example would be where an alternative form of development would fulfil regeneration aspirations endorsed by the Council or where alternative provision meets other housing priorities of the Council, as set out in the Housing Strategy.
- 7.47 Where applicants feel that a property or properties are no longer suitable for family occupation, a robust justification will be required for their conversion or replacement. Factors that will be taken into consideration will include:
- a. location of the property, compatibility of neighbouring uses;
 - b. provision of private outdoor amenity space, car parking, outlook and adaptability of internal layout.

Housing in Multiple Occupation

- 7.48 Over the last few years, the issue of the number and location of Houses in Multiple Occupation¹³¹ (HMOs) in Sandwell has risen in importance. A combination of changes to

¹³¹ <https://www.gov.uk/private-renting/houses-in-multiple-occupation>

permitted development rights and the need to provide affordable accommodation for people on low incomes has led to an increase in the number of HMOs and in the numbers of related planning applications being determined by Sandwell's Planning Committee.

- 7.49 HMOs provide an additional and valuable source of lower-cost accommodation for sections of the community who cannot afford to purchase their own property or who do not qualify for other forms of social housing. They also provide for the needs of students and people commuting from elsewhere to work in Sandwell.
- 7.50 There is a perception however that HMOs lead to increases in anti-social behaviour, increased activity, parking problems, noise nuisance and more transient occupiers leading to a weakening of community coherence.

Policy SHO8 - Houses in Multiple Occupation

- 1. Proposals for the creation of a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), including the conversion of buildings or sub-division of dwellings, will only be permitted if this would not result in over 10% of the number of residential properties¹³² within a 100-metre radius of the application site, measured from the centre point of the property (referred to in this policy as the "relevant area") operating as HMOs and if the proposals would meet the additional criteria set out in this policy.**
- 2. The methodology for establishing the quantum of HMOs in a relevant area is set out in the table below:**

Table 8 - Methodology for calculating concentration of HMOs within a relevant area

Methodology / Evidence:

The Council will calculate the number of HMOs in the relevant area for each individual planning application by using the following approach:

- i. Identifying the current distribution of residential properties in the relevant area -**

For the purposes of assessing applications for HMO development, dwelling houses and HMOS that are located within blocks of flats or subdivided properties are counted as one property. Residential institutions, care homes, hostels and purpose-built student accommodation and other specialist housing types are also counted as one

¹³² See paragraph 7.57

Policy SHO8 - Houses in Multiple Occupation

property per block. This will ensure that calculations of HMO concentration are not skewed.

ii. **Calculating the number of HMOs in the relevant area -**

Current HMO numbers will be identified from the following sources:

- Properties licensed as a HMO
- Properties with C4 or Sui Generis HMO planning consent or issued with a Certificate of Lawful Development
- Council tax records – student exemptions for council tax excluding purpose-built student accommodation and private flats

iii. **Calculating the concentration of HMOs in the relevant area -**

The concentration of HMOs surrounding the application site is calculated as a percentage of the total estimated number of existing HMO units against the total number of residential properties. It is accepted that although the HMO sources listed above provide the most robust approach to identifying the numbers and locations of HMOs in an area, it will not identify all HMOs.

3. **Once the current level of HMO provision has been established in a relevant area, the following criteria will be applied to a new proposal:**

b) **the development would not:**

- i. **result in the loss of C3 family-sized dwellings in areas where there is a proven demand for such accommodation (Policy SH07);**
- ii. **result in a C3 family dwelling house being sandwiched¹³³ between two HMOs or other non-family residential uses¹³⁴;**
- iii. **lead to a continuous frontage of three or more HMOs or non-family residential uses.**

c) **the development is unlikely to be detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining or neighbouring properties by way of noise, overlooking, general disturbance, or impact on visual amenity;**

¹³³ See justification for more detailed explanation

¹³⁴ For the purposes of this policy a non-family residential use is defined as a HMO, student accommodation, residential accommodation within C1 and C2 Use and self-contained flats

Policy SHO8 - Houses in Multiple Occupation

- d) the development would not have a significant adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area, or of the historic or natural environment;
 - e) the development would not give rise to unacceptable adverse cumulative impacts on amenity, character, appearance, security, crime, anti-social behaviour or the fear of crime¹³⁵;
 - f) in areas at risk of a 1 in 100-year plus flood event, finished ground floor levels are at least 60cm above the 1 in 100-year plus flood level;
 - g) provisions for off- and on-street car and cycle parking are sufficient and appropriately incorporated and would not have an adverse impact on the surrounding area by way of increased on-street parking, impaired highway safety or impeding proper access to the area;
 - h) the site is in an area that has good access by walking and public transport to residential services, as set out in Policy SHO3; and
 - i) the development provides a satisfactory standard of living accommodation and the internal layout is shown to be suitable for the number of units proposed in terms of daylight, outlook and the juxtaposition of living rooms and bedrooms;
4. The construction or conversion of the building / dwelling intended to form the HMO should be undertaken to provide adequate personal living space and residential facilities¹³⁶, including:
- a. bedrooms of at least 7.5m² (single) and 11.5m² (double);
 - b. communal living space comprising lounge, kitchen and dining space either as distinct rooms or in an open plan format;
 - c. washing facilities;
 - d. adequate provision for the storage and disposal of refuse and recycling;

¹³⁵ It is recommended that pre-application and planning application advice is sought for HMO proposals from the West Midlands Police Design Out Crime Offices

¹³⁶ Some national planning guidance is available, covering licensing and mandatory minimum room sizes https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925269/HMOs_and_residential_property_licensing_reforms_guidance.pdf .

Policy SHO8 - Houses in Multiple Occupation

- e. **outdoor amenity space for sitting out, play and drying clothes and external storage space, including cycle storage¹³⁷.**
- 5. Where an HMO has been established in breach of the need for planning permission, retrospective consent will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.**
- 6. Proposals for the intensification or expansion of an existing HMO should comply with the criteria above, having regard to the size and character of the property.**

Justification

- 7.51 Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) are defined as homes accommodating three or more unrelated households who typically share kitchens, lounges, and bathrooms.
- 7.52 HMOs are an increasingly popular part of the housing market within many parts of the Black Country. As rooms can be rented individually, they provide additional affordable accommodation options, used primarily by students, young people, and those on lower incomes.
- 7.53 Whilst the area's stock of HMOs is contributing to meeting housing needs, increased numbers of multiple occupancy properties have the potential to create harmful impacts. Concentrations of HMOs within neighbourhoods can lead to imbalanced and unsustainable communities and harm the social mix and fabric of the area by increasing the proportion of short-term households. They can damage the residential amenity and character of surrounding areas, as the level of activity associated with a HMO is significantly greater than a typical family house, thus increasing the potential for noise and disturbance.
- 7.54 Harmful impacts associated with high numbers of HMOs can include:
- a. reduced social cohesion resulting from demographic imbalance and unsustainable communities;
 - b. reduced housing choice resulting from housing type / tenure imbalance (e.g., a shift from permanent family housing to more transient accommodation and a growth in the private sector at the expense of owner-occupation);

¹³⁷ This would normally be calculated to match the same amenity provision for an apartment block (10m² per person)

- c. reduced community engagement from residents resulting from an increase in the transient population of an area;
- d. noise and disturbance resulting from intensification of the residential use and / or the lifestyle of occupants;
- e. detriment to the visual amenity and character of the area resulting from poor or accumulative external alterations to properties and / or poor waste management;
- f. reduced community facilities resulting from a shift in the character of shops and businesses;
- g. increased anti-social behaviour and fear of crime resulting from the lifestyles of some HMO occupants, the transient nature of the accommodation and inadequately designed / maintained properties;
- h. highway safety concerns resulting from congested on-street parking.

7.55 Whilst this type of accommodation can address certain housing needs, HMOs tend to be grouped together in parts of the urban area, becoming the dominant type of housing, which can lead to social and environmental problems for local communities. Alongside this, an over-concentration of HMO properties can lead to a loss of family-sized units. This in turn can lead to a consequential increase in the overall number of units unsuited to family occupation. This can pose a serious issue for maintaining a mixed sustainable housing offer across the Black Country.

7.56 The Black Country HMA (2021) signalled that the greatest demand in the future will be for homes of three bedrooms or more. It is important, therefore, that an approach is taken to the creation of HMOs and the sub-division of existing properties that only allows those proposals that do not impact upon the overall supply of family-sized homes to be consented. In applying this policy, 'family-sized dwellings' means houses with three or more bedrooms.

7.57 In determining the concentration of HMOs surrounding the application site, it is calculated as a percentage of the total number of residential properties. HMOs should not form over 10% of the number of residential properties within a 100-metre radius. Any application that would result in a higher figure e.g., 10.04% would be refused.

7.58 Planning permission will not be granted where the introduction of a new HMO would result in an existing C3 dwelling being 'sandwiched' by any adjoining HMOs or non-family residential uses on both sides. In the context of the policy, this is defined as:

- a. Up to three single residential properties in a street located between two individual HMO properties;
- b. Individual HMO properties in any two of the following locations: adjacent, opposite or to the rear of a single residential property;
- c. A residential flat in a building where most of the other flats are proposed for use as HMOs;
- d. A residential flat within a building located between two other sub-divided buildings with at least one HMO flat in each of the other building;
- e. A residential flat located between HMOs above and below or between HMO flats on either side.

7.59 This would not apply where the properties are separated by an intersecting road or where properties have a back-to-back relationship in different streets. Planning permission would also not be granted where it would result in a continuous frontage of three or more HMOs or non-family residential uses

7.60 In situations where properties are not traditional houses situated along a street frontage, the policy can be applied flexibly depending on the individual circumstances of the proposal.

Exceptional circumstances

7.61 In some areas, the concentration of HMOs in an area may be at such a high level that the introduction of a new HMO use would be difficult to resist. In these circumstances the retention of a property as a family dwelling would have little noticeable or meaningful effect on the balance and mix of households in a community already dominated by the proportion of existing HMOs. Therefore, the conversion of remaining buildings to a HMO could not harm the character of the surrounding area any further.

Education Facilities

7.62 A variety of services are required to meet the needs of new residents, including education facilities. It is important that these facilities can be easily accessed by sustainable forms of transport and meet the variety of needs for different age groups and educational needs.

Policy SH09 – Education Facilities

1. **New nursery, school and further and higher education facilities should be:**

Policy SHO9 – Education Facilities

- a. well-designed, to the relevant local / national standards / guidance in place, and should complement and enhance neighbourhood services and amenities;
 - b. well-served by public transport infrastructure, walking, and cycling facilities, particularly in centres, and located to minimise the number and length of journeys needed in relation to the home to school travel distances; and
 - c. wherever possible, located to address accessibility gaps in terms of the standards set out in Policy SHO3, particularly where a significant amount of new housing is proposed.
2. New and improved education facilities will be secured through a range of funding measures:
 - a. Where a housing development of ten or more homes would increase the need for education facilities to the extent that new or improved facilities would be required to meet this need, planning obligations or Community Infrastructure Levy will be secured sufficient to meet the need in a timely manner, where this is financially viable.
 - b. Contributions will be secured retrospectively where forward funding of improvements is necessary to meet immediate needs.
 - c. For sites where there is likely to be a requirement for on-site provision of new schools, this is set out in Appendix B.
 3. Where land is provided for a new school as part of a housing development, the financial contribution made by that development towards education facilities will be reduced accordingly.
 4. On sites where the education facility requirement is proven not to be viable, the maximum proportion of funding will be sought that will not undermine the viability of the development, subject to securing other planning obligations necessary for the development to gain planning permission. A financial viability assessment will be required to be submitted, meeting the requirements set out in Policy SHO6.
 5. New and redeveloped education facilities should include provision for wider community use of sports and other facilities where this would be in accordance with evidence of need, secured through a suitably worded community use agreement

Policy SHO9 – Education Facilities

6. **The existing network of education facilities will be protected and proposals that seek to enhance this network will be supported. The physical enhancement and expansion of higher and further educational facilities and related business and research will be supported where it helps to realise the educational, training and research potential of Sandwell.**
7. **Proposals involving the loss, in part or the whole of an education facility will be permitted only where adequate alternative provision is available to meet the needs of the community served by the facility.**

Justification

- 7.63 Rising demand for school places in recent years, due to a combination of high birth rates, inward migration, retention levels and housing growth, has resulted in the expansion of a significant number of existing schools and an increased need for new schools across the Black Country. This investment has largely been funded by Local Education Authorities, as housing sites within the Sandwell area do not demonstrate sufficient viability to provide for their own educational needs.
- 7.64 Housing growth over the Plan period is likely to generate the need for further investment in education provision for all age groups, including nursery and further and higher education. National guidance sets out the presumption that housing developments will fund the provision of education facilities sufficient to meet their own needs, including the provision of land for the construction of new buildings where necessary. However, the Viability and Delivery Study indicates that depending on the extent of other planning obligations required, this may not be viable on some sites. Where it can be proved that it is not viable for a housing development to fund all its own education facility needs, the developer should work with the Local Education Authority to investigate available options and ensure that these needs can and will be met.
- 7.65 Improvements to existing educational settings should be explored to help address low educational attainment. It is important that any investment in educational settings is focussed to support centres, address accessibility gaps, generate maximum service improvements and secure community benefits. Increasing community use of school sports facilities would make a major contribution towards meeting open space, sport and recreation standards and improving health through increased sports participation.

- 7.66 The preferred location for major education facilities, which generate many trips, is the network of identified centres. However, there may be cases where a development is isolated from a centre or provision within a centre may not be possible. In such cases the priority, when selecting a location, should be addressing accessibility gaps in accordance with access standards set out in Policy SHO3, to maximise sustainable access to the facility.
- 7.67 Locally-based Academy Trusts, higher and further education institutions, play a major role in the Sandwell economy and have a key role in helping deliver economic and social transformation. Attracting and retaining graduates within Sandwell is also key to securing a knowledge-based economy. The Higher and Further Education sector is a major driver of economic, social, and cultural regeneration and ongoing investment in the existing network of this sector is supported. Initiatives that strengthen linkages between the sector and the wider economy will also be supported.

Accommodation for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

- 7.68 Sandwell has a small, settled community of Gypsies and Travellers, and Travelling Showpeople, and has experienced unauthorised encampments in the past. In accordance with national guidance, the SLP aims to provide sufficient, appropriately designed and integrated sites to accommodate the needs of these communities over the plan period

Policy SHO10 – Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Safeguarding Existing Supply

- Existing Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites (shown on the Policies Map) will be protected unless it can be demonstrated that they are no longer required or suitable alternative provision can be made.

Meeting Future Need

- New Gypsy and Traveller permanent pitches will be provided to meet identified need up to 2031 as set out in Table 9, in accordance with the Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2022.
- Accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople over the Plan period will be met through sites with outstanding planning permission, allocated sites and other sites granted planning permission during the Plan period

Policy SHO10 – Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

in accordance with the criteria set out below. The council will pursue funding and / or management arrangements for new sites, where necessary.

4. **Proposals for permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots will be assessed against the following criteria:**
 - a. **The site should be suitable as a place to live, particularly regarding health and safety, and the development should be designed to provide adequate levels of privacy and amenity for both occupants and neighbouring uses;**
 - b. **The site should meet moderate standards of access to residential services as set out in Policy SHO3, Table 6;**
 - c. **The site should be located and designed to facilitate integration with neighbouring communities;**
 - d. **The site should be suitable to allow for the planned number of pitches, an amenity block, a play area, access roads, parking and an area set aside for work purposes where appropriate, including, in the case of Travelling Showpeople, sufficient level space for outdoor storage and maintenance of equipment;**
 - e. **The site should be served or capable of being served by adequate on-site services for water supply, power, drainage, sewage and waste disposal (storage and collection); and**
 - f. **A minimum 10% biodiversity net gain is demonstrated in accordance with Policy SNE2.**
5. **The location, design and facilities provided on new sites will be determined in consultation with local Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and will also consider / reflect any available national guidance.**
6. **Proposals should be well designed and laid out in accordance with Secured by Design principles and as set out in Policy SDM1. It is recommended that pre-application advice is sought from the West Midlands Police Design Out Crime Officers.**

Justification

- 7.69 A Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) for the Black Country was completed in 2022, in accordance with national guidance, and identified the likely future local need for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople accommodation. It is anticipated that allocations and permissions will provide sufficient supply to meet targets up to 2031, and small windfalls within the urban area are expected to meet remaining need over the Plan period. Appendix B provides details of sites allocated in the SLP for gypsy and traveller pitches. Planning permission will also be granted for additional sites that meet the criteria set out in Policy SHO10, where appropriate.
- 7.70 Permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches, and Travelling Showpeople plots, have fixed infrastructure with all the normal residential amenities, and are used as a base to travel from. They are intended to allow Gypsies and Travellers to obtain good access to education, health, and other services. It is important that pitches and plots are well designed in line with Secured by Design principles, and it is recommended that advice is sought from West Midlands Police Design Out Crime Officers.
- 7.71 The GTAA identified that Gypsies and Travellers prefer small, family-sized sites with approximately 10 - 15 pitches but will accept larger sites if they have been carefully planned and designed in consultation with the Gypsy community. Local authorities may assist Gypsies and Travellers living on their own land without planning permission to obtain retrospective planning permission where this is deemed appropriate.

Gypsy and Traveller Permanent Pitches

- 7.72 The SLP aims to meet the needs of existing families that meet the Planning Policy for Travellers Sites 2015 (PPTS) travel for all definition (excluding those living in bricks and mortar accommodation) as identified in the GTAA, by continuing to deliver privately and publicly owned sites and pitches. The total need identified is for eight pitches up to 2031, and an additional six pitches from 2031 to 2041.
- 7.73 The evidence supports the following approach towards meeting need up to 2029:
- a. safeguard existing Gypsy and Traveller pitches;
 - b. allocate existing temporary or unauthorised sites for permanent use (subject to other planning considerations);
 - c. intensify and extend existing sites, where appropriate;
 - d. carry forward existing pitch allocations from adopted Plans;

- e. allocate new pitches on sites which have emerged since adopted Plans.

Table 9 - Supply of Gypsy and Traveller Permanent Pitches up to 2031

Type of Supply	Number
Existing Authorised Pitches	16
Regularise temporary / unauthorised sites (b)	0
Intensify and extend existing sites (c)	0
Pitch Allocations (d, e)	10
Total New Pitches	10

- 7.74 Table 9 demonstrates how this approach will deliver sufficient pitches to meet the need up to 2031 plus a buffer of two pitches (20%) - providing a five-year deliverable supply of pitches from adoption of the SLP in 2025, as required by the PPTS. The approach will also provide 71% of the total need for 14 pitches over the Plan period (2023-41).
- 7.75 It is not possible to identify and allocate further sites to meet the remaining need for four pitches up to 2041, as no deliverable site options were put forward through the Sandwell Local Plan preparation process, which included a “call for site” opportunity and an assessment of Council-owned land. Therefore, this remaining need will be met within the borough through the planning application process, with proposals considered against the criteria set out in Policy SHO10 and any other relevant Local Plan policies. This is consistent with past trends, where small windfall sites have come forward within the urban area, and these have been approved where in accordance with other planning policies.

Travelling Showpeople Plots

- 7.76 The GTAA identifies a need for 32 Travelling Showpeople plots over the Plan period. It is not possible to identify and allocate sites to meet this need, as no deliverable site options have been put forward through the Sandwell Local Plan preparation process, which included one “call for sites” opportunity. Therefore, this need will be met within the borough, through the planning application process, with proposals considered against the criteria set out in Policy SHO10 and any other relevant Local Plan policies. This is consistent with past trends, where small windfall sites have come forward within the urban area, and these have been approved where in accordance with other planning policies.

7.77 Travelling Showpeople have different accommodation requirements to those of Gypsies and Travellers, and form part of a different community. They require large plots capable of accommodating lorries and equipment, which are more suited to mixed use areas.

Housing for people with specific needs

7.78 Sandwell Council will work with partners to meet the identified needs of all sections of the community, including older people, people with disabilities and those with other special needs.

Policy SHO11 - Housing for people with specific needs

1. **Proposals for specific forms of housing including children’s homes, care homes, nursing homes, extra care facilities, or any other identified need, will be considered in relation to the following criteria:**
 - a. **compatibility with adjacent uses;**
 - b. **the suitability of the site and building;**
 - c. **the potential for undue noise and general disturbance to surrounding residents;**
 - d. **the character and quality of the resulting environment;**
 - e. **the impact on parking provision and highway safety;**
 - f. **accessibility by a choice of means of transport; and**
 - g. **proximity to facilities.**
2. **Supporting information will be required in the form of a planning statement which, as a minimum, must set out the day-to-day activities associated with the use, staffing numbers and visitor numbers. Additional information such as a transport statement or noise statement may be required depending on circumstances.**

Justification

7.79 To plan effectively for people with specific needs, the Council will develop a series of strategies to help meet these needs¹³⁸, which will be implemented over the Plan period.

¹³⁸ Sandwell Housing Strategy 2023-2028

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/33803/housing_needs_assessment_2022

7.80 However, it is also considered that accommodation for people with specific needs is best located in areas that are close to local facilities and amenities and accessible by public transport, whilst not having a negative impact on the surrounding area. Therefore, when identifying sites for these facilities, the Council will use the above criteria as well as the accessibility criteria set out in Policy SHO3.

8. Sandwell's Economy

Introduction

- 8.1 The policies in this chapter are concerned with promoting and supporting employment in manufacturing, research and development (Use Class E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii) and B2), warehousing (Use Class B8) and other uses that are appropriately located in industrial employment areas.
- 8.2 Offices (Use Class E(g)(i)) are not classed as an employment use for the purposes of these policies; they are covered by Policies SCE1 - SCE7, which relate to uses that are more appropriately located in town centres.
- 8.3 The evidence base for the employment land policies primarily consists of a two-stage Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA)¹³⁹, and the Sandwell Employment Area Review (SEAR) formerly the Black Country Employment Area Review (BEAR)¹⁴⁰. The EDNA provides an objective assessment of the employment land requirement for Sandwell to 2041, based upon an independent assessment of the area's economic development needs.
- 8.4 The key conclusions of the EDNA studies are:
- a) Sandwell forms part of the Black Country Functional Economic Area (FEMA) and is a clearly defined geographical unit. It has strong employment and labour market links to a hinterland that includes southern Staffordshire, north Worcestershire, Birmingham, and Solihull;
 - b) Sandwell has an employment land shortfall, which will be met through the Black Country FEMA¹⁴¹ and the Duty to Co-operate with those neighbouring Local Authority Areas identified as having a strong or moderate relationship with the Black Country FEMA and other areas with an evidenced functional relationship.
 - c) Sandwell has been hit hard by the COVID19 recession but is expected to recover strongly and has the capacity to deliver significant growth, given the diversity, resilience and concentration of key national sectors located in the area;

¹³⁹ Prepared by Warwick Economics & Development Limited (WECD)

¹⁴⁰ Led by the Black Country Local Planning Authorities

¹⁴¹ National Planning Practice Guidance states that economic needs should be assessed in relation to relevant Functional Economic Market Areas (FEMAs), that is, the spatial level at which local economies and markets actually operate.

- d) even pre-COVID19, recent growth was achieved against a backdrop of a weak local skills base, low business start-up rates and low GVA per head in comparison with the West Midlands and UK averages;
- e) economic development strategies including the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and Local Industrial Strategy seek to address these challenges to accelerate the growth of the local economy;
- f) Sandwell's employment land supply in 2020 was largely that inherited from the Black Country Core Strategy and the suite of Tier 2 Plans that supported it. This land supply is dominated by small sites in the urban area. The plan will allocate 1,206ha of occupied employment land for strategic, local or other employment provision;
- g) going forward, attracting high-growth knowledge-based industries in line with SEP ambitions will require the provision of more prestigious sites, high-quality space with easy access to key transport hubs and good connectivity;
- h) the Plan also needs to ensure Sandwell can accommodate a variety of business needs, including start-ups and smaller businesses. This means that a mixed portfolio of sites will need to be made available, including larger and smaller sites and spaces, and areas of both higher and lower quality;
- i) it is imperative to protect the existing supply of land to meet future needs that will arise from a high growth-driven economy;
- j) there is a significant gap between the employment land supply, inherited from the Core Strategy and subsequent Tier 2 Plans, and forecast future needs.

8.5 To address these issues, the strategy that underpins the SLP policies contains the following objectives:

- a) to facilitate the growth and diversification of the economy, the Plan allocates land for new development within Sandwell to accommodate jobs and output growth (Policy SDS1);
- b) to accommodate a variety of business needs including high technology manufacturing and logistics sectors, the Plan provides for a balanced portfolio of sites (Policy SEC1);
- c) to protect and enhance land and premises within existing employment areas where this provides for the needs of jobs and businesses (Policies SEC2, SEC3 and SEC4);
- d) to recognise that some sites will become unsuitable for continued employment uses and to facilitate their redevelopment to alternative uses including housing (Policy

SEC4). However, the number of such sites is expected to be considerably less than was envisaged by the Black Country Core Strategy adopted in 2011;

e) to enable local communities to share the benefits of economic growth (Policy SEC5).

8.6 The spatial strategy in relation to employment land is to focus new development to sites within the Regeneration Areas as set out in Policy SDS2. This will be achieved through the development of currently vacant sites allocated for development in the Plan, and the redevelopment and ‘intensification’ of existing premises. The great majority of existing employment areas which accommodate most of the Sandwell’s existing manufacturing and logistics jobs and businesses are also located within the Regeneration Area.

Providing for Economic Growth and Jobs

8.7 Policy SEC1 seeks to ensure a sufficient quantum of development opportunities are provided to meet the demand for economic growth and support the diversification of Sandwell’s economy. This Policy supports Strategic Objectives 2, 8 and 9.

Policy SEC1 – Providing for Economic Growth and Jobs

1. **The Sandwell Local Plan will provide at least 1,206ha of employment land (of which 29ha is currently vacant) within the borough¹⁴² between 2020 and 2041, to support the growth of the sub-regional economy and increase productivity. Most of this requirement will be met through sites allocated for development in this Plan as set out below.**
2. **Additional employment development will be brought forward on other sites throughout Sandwell, mainly through the redevelopment, intensification and enhancement of existing employment areas and premises.**
3. **The Plan will deliver a portfolio of sites of various sizes and quality to meet a range of business needs. This land is in addition to those sites currently occupied for employment purposes. These sites will be safeguarded for industrial employment uses¹⁴³.**
4. **Within the existing employment areas subject to Policies SEC2, SEC3 and SEC4, the Council will support, with public intervention as necessary, the regeneration and renewal of such areas, including their environmental enhancement and**

¹⁴² In Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2, and B8

¹⁴³ In Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2, and B8

Policy SEC1 – Providing for Economic Growth and Jobs

incorporation of sustainable measures to mitigate climate change impacts.

Industrial developments will need to demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change, as set out in Policy SCC1.

- 5. To enable Sandwell’s employment areas to remain competitive and fit-for-purpose in the long term, and to aid in the economic recovery and rejuvenation of the borough’s industrial economy, new and resident companies should be encouraged to adopt a circular economy approach and related infrastructure¹⁴⁴.**

Justification

- 8.8 Building a strong, responsive, and competitive economy is one of the three overarching objectives of the NPPF. This should be achieved by ensuring that sufficient land of the right type is available in the right place and at the right time to support growth, innovation, and improved productivity and by identifying and co-ordinating the provision of infrastructure.
- 8.9 To support the ongoing growth of the distribution sector and a strong resurgence in manufacturing, the EDNA recommends that this Plan should provide for a minimum of 185ha¹⁴⁵ of land for employment development for the period up to 2041, based on an average of 9.07ha per annum and allowing for the replacement of some poorer quality employment land and premises redeveloped for non-industrial uses. The employment land supply baseline figures also include completions between 2020 and 2022.
- 8.10 The Local Plan allocates 29ha of vacant employment land for development for the period between 2020 - 2041 and further employment development will come forward through the redevelopment of existing employment land and premises. Further land is provided on other sites that have planning permission for employment development.
- 8.11 143ha of the employment land need arising in Sandwell cannot be met solely within the Borough. This unmet need should be exported, as far as possible, to authorities that have a strong existing or potential functional economic relationship with Sandwell, for example in

¹⁴⁴ The circular economy is a model of production and consumption, which involves sharing, leasing, reusing, repairing, refurbishing and recycling existing materials and products as long as possible (<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/headlines/economy/20151201STO05603/circular-economy-definition-importance-and-benefits#:~:text=The%20circular%20economy%20is%20a,products%20as%20long%20as%20possible>).

¹⁴⁵ Based on work undertaken by Oxford Economics in 2023

terms of migration patterns, commuting links and / or connectivity through physical infrastructure such as rail and motorway. This work is ongoing and will be secured through the Duty to Co-operate and evidenced through Statements of Common Ground.

Strategic Employment Areas

- 8.12 Policy SEC2 provides for a sufficient stock of Strategic Employment Land suitable for a growing and diversified economy. This Policy supports Strategic Objectives 2 and 8.

Policy SEC2 – Strategic Employment Areas

1. **The Strategic Employment Areas are shown on the Policies Map. They are characterised by excellent accessibility, high-quality environments and clusters of high technology growth sector businesses. These areas will be safeguarded for manufacturing and logistics uses within Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 and B8.**
2. **Within Strategic Employment Areas, high-quality development or redevelopment of sites and premises will be required, and planning applications that prejudice or dilute the delivery of appropriate employment activity, or deter investment in such uses, will be refused.**
3. **Strategic Employment Areas will be safeguarded from redevelopment for other non-manufacturing / logistics uses.**
4. **Some ancillary employment-generating non-Class E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), and Class-B2 and B8 uses, such as childcare facilities and small-scale food and drink outlets, may also be permitted in Strategic Employment Areas, where they can be shown to strongly support, maintain or enhance the business and employment function and attractiveness of the area, and meet sequential and other national or local policy tests relating to appropriate uses as necessary.**

Justification

- 8.13 Strategic Employment Areas (SEAs) are high-quality employment areas that are considered essential to the long-term success of Sandwell's economy. They correspond to areas of the strongest occupier and market demand and are of high environmental quality with excellent links to the Strategic Highway Network and should be protected from non-employment uses that could impact upon their viability as employment locations. These areas contain, or have the potential to attract, those knowledge-based growth sector businesses whose success will be critical to the delivery of Sandwell's economic ambitions.

- 8.14 Policy SEC2 is based on the approach set out in the 2011 Core Strategy, which distinguished between Strategic High-Quality Employment Areas and Local Employment Areas. The EDNA recommended that the approach set out in the Black Country Core Strategy has served the Black Country well. Subject to some refinement, this approach has been carried forward into the SLP. Consequently, the Strategic Employment Areas identified in the SLP are the equivalent of the Strategic High-Quality Employment Areas in the former Core Strategy.
- 8.15 The characteristics and extent of the Strategic Employment Areas reflect the findings of the Sandwell Employment Area Review (SEAR). The SEAR re-examined the totality of Sandwell's employment areas against a set of criteria based on those set out in the Core Strategy and the recommendations of the EDNA.
- 8.16 The key characteristics of Strategic Employment Areas are as follows:
- a) to be highly accessible to the Strategic Highway Network, preferably well- located in relation to the motorway network, to provide good accessibility to international, national, and regional markets and supply chains;
 - b) to have good public transport accessibility;
 - c) to maintain a critical mass of active industrial and logistics sites and premises that are well suited to the needs of modern industry;
 - d) to maintain an existing (or develop a potential) high-quality environment, including suitable landscaping and greenspace and an attractive and functional built environment;
 - e) to be attractive to national and / or international investment.
- 8.17 The majority of the defined strategic employment areas satisfy all these characteristics or are considered capable of acquiring them. The SEAR has found that it is not always necessary for an area to display all these characteristics to attract high-quality development.
- 8.18 The broad extent of the strategic employment areas is shown on the Policies Map.
- 8.19 The Plan seeks to safeguard land and premises within strategic employment areas for industrial and logistics activity and supports proposals that involve the improvement and renewal of land and premises within them. This process of redevelopment, intensification and enhancement of existing Local Employment Areas will provide a significant source of land to meet future growth needs.
- 8.20 Some small-scale ancillary uses will be supported in strategic employment areas where this meets the day-to-day needs of employees of businesses within the SEA. Such uses include

food and drink or childcare facilities. They should be of a scale, nature, and location to serve the needs of the employment area, where existing facilities are inadequate and where such needs cannot be met in adjacent town centres. While Policy SEC2 considers development for uses that are not within an industrial employment use class, these will only be supported in exceptional circumstances as it is the intention to safeguard strategic employment areas from non-manufacturing / logistics uses (B Use Classes).

Local Employment Areas

8.21 To achieve the appropriate balance of employment uses and successfully underpin the local economy, it is essential to make provision for those types of industrial, logistics and commercial activities that do not need to be situated in strategic employment areas and are not appropriate for town centres or residential locations. This Policy supports Strategic Objectives 2 and 8.

Policy SEC3 – Local Employment Areas

- 1) **Local Employment Areas are shown on the Policies Map. They are characterised by a critical mass of industrial, warehousing and service activity with good access to local markets and employees.**
- 2) **These areas will provide for the needs of locally-based investment and will be safeguarded for the following uses;**
 - a) **Industry and warehousing¹⁴⁶**
 - b) **Motor trade activities, including car showrooms and vehicle repair**
 - c) **Haulage and transfer depots**
 - d) **Trade, wholesale retailing and builders' merchants**
 - e) **Scrap metal, timber and construction premises and yards**
 - f) **Waste collection, transfer and recycling uses**
- 3) **Not all areas will be suitable for all uses.**
- 4) **Some ancillary employment-generating non-Class E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii) and B uses such as childcare facilities and food and drink outlets may also be permitted in Local Employment Areas where they can:**

¹⁴⁶ Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 and B8 uses

Policy SEC3 – Local Employment Areas

- a. **be shown to strongly support, maintain or enhance the business and employment function of the area; and**
- b. **meet sequential and other national or local policy tests (particularly Policies SCE5 and SCE6) relating to appropriate uses, as necessary.**

Justification

- 8.22 Local Employment Areas (LEAs) are particularly prevalent in Sandwell and play an important role in the local economy. They offer a valuable source of mainly low-cost industrial units that are vital in providing local jobs and a balanced portfolio of sites of different sizes and quality, including for small or new businesses that do not require higher-quality or large-scale premises and land.
- 8.23 Policy SEC3 is based on the approach set out in the 2011 Black Country Core Strategy, which distinguished between Strategic High-Quality Employment Areas and Local Quality Employment Areas. The EDNA recommended that the approach set out in the Core Strategy has served the Sandwell well and, subject to some refinement, should be continued. The Local Employment Areas in the Sandwell Local Plan are the equivalent of the Local Quality Employment Areas in the Core Strategy.
- 8.24 The characteristics and extent of the Local Employment Areas reflects the findings of the SEAR. The SEAR re-examined all of Sandwell's employment areas against a set of criteria based on those in the Core Strategy and with regard to the recommendations of the EDNA.
- 8.25 The key characteristics of Local Employment Areas are as follows;
- a critical mass of active industrial and service uses and premises that are fit for purpose;
 - good access to local markets, suppliers, and employees;
 - the existing or potential use and / or the traffic generated by the use does not have an unacceptable impact on the amenity of surrounding land uses or on the highway network;
 - good public transport accessibility.
- 8.26 The broad extent of the Local Employment Areas is shown on the Employment Land Key diagram and the detailed boundaries on the Sandwell Local Plan Policies Map.

- 8.27 The SLP seeks to safeguard Local Employment Areas as locations for industrial and logistics activity and uses that share the characteristics of Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii) and B2 and B8 uses, which are typically located within industrial areas.
- 8.28 The Plan also supports proposals that involve the improvement and renewal of land and premises within them, particularly where this involves older or outdated industrial premises that are no longer fit for purpose. This process of redevelopment, intensification and enhancement of existing Local Employment Areas will help deliver a significant source of land to meet future growth needs.
- 8.29 Local Employment Areas are often vulnerable to pressure for redevelopment to other uses such as housing. However, the loss of local employment land will compromise the successful delivery of Sandwell's employment strategy. It would inhibit economic development, endanger the viability of businesses and affect the balance of jobs and workers. People working for companies in Local Employment Areas that are displaced by new forms of development would have to travel increased distances to work and the viability and sustainability of those firms would be put at risk. These areas will therefore be primarily safeguarded from non-employment uses.
- 8.30 Sites within Local Employment Areas may also be appropriate for uses that serve the needs of businesses and employees working in the area. Such uses may include small-scale food and drink provision or childcare facilities. They should be of a scale, nature, and location to serve the needs of an employment area where existing facilities are inadequate or where such needs cannot be met in adjacent town centres.

Other Employment Sites

- 8.31 The Council recognises that there are several older employment areas across Sandwell that are not of the quality of Strategic or Local Employment Areas. Sites and premises within these areas may be suitable for redevelopment for continued employment use, or for alternative uses such as housing. Policy SEC4 provides a flexible policy framework to guide development proposals in these areas. This policy supports Strategic Objectives 2 and 8.

Policy SEC4 – Other Employment Sites

- 1) In employment areas that are not designated as either Strategic Employment Areas or Local Employment Areas on the Policies Map, but which comprise land / sites that are currently in use (or if currently vacant, were last used) for employment purposes, development will be supported for:**

Policy SEC4 – Other Employment Sites

- a. **new industrial employment uses or extensions to existing industrial employment uses, or**
 - b. **housing or other non-ancillary, non-industrial employment uses.**
- 2) **Development or uses under part 1(b) will only be supported where there is robust evidence that:**
- a. **if the site is vacant, that it has been marketed for employment use for a period of at least 12 months, including by site notice and through the internet or as may be agreed by the local planning authority;**
 - b. **if the site is occupied or part-occupied, that successful engagement has been undertaken with the occupiers to secure their relocation**
 - c. **if the site forms part of a larger area occupied or last occupied for employment, that residential or any other use will not be adversely affected by the continuing operation of employment uses in the remainder of the area;**
 - d. **the site could be brought forward for housing in a comprehensive manner and would not lead to piecemeal development;**
 - e. **residential development would not adversely affect the ongoing operation of existing or proposed employment uses on the site or nearby; and**
 - f. **the site is suitable for housing or other non-ancillary non-employment uses in accordance with local or national policies relating to these uses.**

Justification

- 8.32 There are various existing employment locations in Sandwell that are not currently designated as either Strategic or Local Employment Areas. They tend to be older, less marketable employment sites close to or within residential areas, which may be in poor physical condition. They are however important to the employment land supply in Sandwell, as they provide smaller-scale and inexpensive sites and premises, suitable for use by companies who do not need, or cannot afford, larger and more modern premises.
- 8.33 Proposals for redevelopment to other uses could give rise to significant regeneration benefits in some cases on those sites that, when assessed, do not meet the thresholds for being allocated as local employment areas. Larger sites (over 0.4ha) subject to this policy are shown on the Policies Map; smaller sites and areas are not included on it.

- 8.34 Whilst Sandwell will continue to support these existing businesses, it is also necessary for the SLP to allow flexibility for them to be considered for alternative forms of appropriate development.
- 8.35 The circumstances where such redevelopment will be permitted are set out in sections 2a – f of the policy. In addressing criteria a and b, applicants will be required to submit an Economic and Market appraisal that demonstrates that the site is unsuitable for continued employment use. The sustainability of the location (including its accessibility by a choice of modes of transport) will be a matter that should be considered in this context.
- 8.36 In assessing the potential of attracting continued employment use, the Economic and Market Assessment must consider whether the costs of the necessary remediation works would make the reuse or redevelopment for employment uses unviable. The Economic and Market Assessment should also include evidence that the site is vacant (unless it can be demonstrated that occupiers are to be relocated) and has been marketed over a reasonable period and at realistic rental and capital values.

Improving Access to the Labour Market

- 8.37 Restructuring Sandwell's economy is one of the key principles of the Plan's Vision, but the provision of land and premises alone will not deliver the necessary economic transformation without new skills and training in the workforce to help it meet the challenges of changing work requirements and patterns. This policy supports Strategic Objectives 8 and 9.

Policy SEC5 – Improving Access to the Labour Market

- 1) **Planning applications for new major job-creating development will be required to demonstrate how job opportunities arising from the proposed development will be made available to the residents of Sandwell, particularly those in the most deprived areas of the borough and other priority groups.**
- 2) **Planning conditions or obligations will be negotiated with applicants and applied as appropriate to secure initiatives and /or contributions to a range of measures to benefit the local community, including the potential for working with local colleges and universities, to ensure:**
 - a) **the provision of training opportunities to assist residents in accessing employment opportunities;**

Policy SEC5 – Improving Access to the Labour Market

- b) **the provision of support to residents in applying for jobs arising from the development;**
 - c) **enhancement of the accessibility of the development to residents by a choice of means of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport (see Policy STR1);**
 - d) **child-care provision which enables residents to access employment opportunities;**
 - e) **measures to assist those with physical or mental health disabilities to access employment opportunities.**
- 3) In respect of planning applications for new employment-generating development Sandwell will negotiate with applicants on financial or other contributions, to be secured through planning obligations or the CIL Charging Schedule.**

Justification

- 8.38 The Plan plays a key role in ensuring that people who suffer from social exclusion and disadvantage can contribute fully to the regeneration of Sandwell. It is therefore important that jobs created through new developments across the borough are accessible to as many of Sandwell's residents as possible, especially those in the most deprived areas or who belong to priority groups.
- 8.39 There are several aspects to increasing the accessibility of job opportunities to residents. Firstly, it may be necessary for improvements to public transport infrastructure and services to be funded, and better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists to be provided, to ensure that residents are able to travel to and from their places of employment within reasonable timescales.
- 8.40 Support may also need to be provided to assist residents, particularly those from disadvantaged groups or areas, in applying for new jobs and to receive training that will assist them in accessing employment opportunities. Childcare provision may also help in enhancing access to employment and individuals with mental or physical health difficulties may also require additional support to enable them to access jobs.
- 8.41 There are existing support structures and facilities in place across the sub-region to help ensure that local people can access and receive appropriate training to develop the necessary skills to compete successfully for jobs.

- 8.42 To assist with this, where major new employment-creating development is proposed, the Council will negotiate with companies to devise suitable bespoke training and recruitment programmes that can benefit local people.
- 8.43 Attracting graduates to, and retaining them within, Sandwell will also be key to securing the growth of a knowledge-based economy. The higher and further education sector is a major driver of economic, social and cultural regeneration and ongoing investment in this sector is supported. The Council will also support initiatives that strengthen linkages between the education sector and the wider economy.

Relationship between Industry and Sensitive Uses

- 8.44 As Sandwell is a predominantly urban area, there are parts of the Borough where industrial sites and premises are situated adjacent to sensitive uses such as residential, which can lead to adverse effects on neighbouring uses.

Policy SEC6 – Relationship between Industry and Sensitive Uses

1. **Proposals for new industrial development that is likely to have an adverse effect¹⁴⁷ on neighbouring uses will not be permitted, unless the adverse effects can be reduced to an acceptable level, by means of a buffer¹⁴⁸ or other robust mitigation measures.**
2. **Equally, new proposals that may adversely affect, or be adversely affected by, existing industry operating in appropriate locations will not be permitted unless the adverse effects can be reduced to an acceptable level. Where this is to be achieved by means of a buffer, the new development will be required to provide and maintain the buffer.**
3. **Where existing industry operates within residential areas the Council will seek to ensure that any harmful effects are mitigated. If necessary, the Council will consider the enforcement of appropriate regulations or other means to reduce the problem.**

¹⁴⁷ E.g., excessive traffic, pollution (air, noise, fumes, water, soil), disturbance, visual amenity etc.

¹⁴⁸ An appropriate buffer may take a variety of forms such as open space, a landscaped area, a wall or other physical barrier.

Justification

- 8.45 As Sandwell is an urban borough with a thriving industrial and manufacturing based economy, there are areas within it where employment land is situated adjacent to sensitive uses. There is the potential for housing to be adversely affected by the businesses operating in these areas.
- 8.46 Equally, given pressure on older and underused industrial areas to be redeveloped for housing, the existing businesses operating in these areas should not have unreasonable restrictions placed on them because of development permitted after they were established. Where the operation of an existing business could have an adverse effect on new development (including change of use) in its vicinity, the applicant for the incoming development will be required to provide suitable mitigation measures before the development is completed.
- 8.47 This is dealt with in the NPPF¹⁴⁹ as the “*agents of change*” principle. This places the responsibility for mitigating impacts from existing noise-generating activities or uses on the proposed new noise-sensitive development; effectively, the person or business responsible for creating the conditions causing the change must also be responsible for managing the impact of it on the new / potential occupants.

¹⁴⁹ Paragraph 187 (2023)

9. Sandwell's Centres

Introduction

- 9.1 The purpose of Sandwell's centres policies is to help secure the investment, jobs and regeneration needed to create a mature, balanced and well-functioning network of centres where residents shop, work, live and spend their leisure time.
- 9.2 Concentrating development in centres that are highly accessible by a variety of sustainable means of transport contributes towards planning priorities such as health and wellbeing and addressing climate change.
- 9.3 Delivering a vital and viable network of centres will contribute significantly towards meeting the current and future service needs of Sandwell's residents, particularly through serving future housing and employment growth, as well as providing a unique opportunity to improve the quality and experience of the built environment.
- 9.4 Centres are crucial to the delivery of Strategic Objective 15.

Sandwell's Centres

- 9.5 Sandwell's centres are evolving and are subject to ongoing challenges as the focus shifts from their primary retail function to other activities such as leisure, commercial, residential, community services, health, local facilities and further education and civic uses.
- 9.6 It is a priority for Sandwell Council to maintain and enhance centres appropriate to their scale, role, and function enabling them to underpin the vital role they play in contributing to the economic growth, character and identity of the Borough.
- 9.7 West Bromwich is the strategic centre of Sandwell and provides the focus for higher-order and sub-regional retail, office, leisure, cultural and service activities. It is supported and balanced by the network of town, district and local centres, which offer complementary uses including meeting the day-to-day needs of local communities, particularly for convenience (food) shopping.
- 9.8 It is recognised that the repurposing / diversification of centres needs to be delivered, to ensure their ongoing vitality and viability and secure their future regeneration. Policy SCE1 sets out the overall priorities and strategy for Sandwell's centres. It defines the hierarchy of centres and sets out, where subject to planning control, appropriate uses, requirements and links to other relevant policies.
- 9.9 This policy establishes that the strategic approach to future growth identified in Policy SDS1, the specific levels of housing and employment growth identified in Policies SHO1 and SEC1,

and the allocations identified on the Policies Map (site allocations), should have their needs met in the first instance by the existing network of centres. It also emphasises a flexible approach to format and scale to maximise use of town centre or edge-of-centre sites.

Policy SCE1 - Sandwell's Centres

- 1. The priority for Sandwell's centres is to ensure they remain focused on serving the needs of their communities, through delivering a well-balanced diversity of commercial, business and service functions. This includes retail provision and an increasing mix of leisure, office, residential and other appropriate, complementary uses that are accessible by a variety of sustainable means of transport. This will enable centres to make a key contribution to regeneration, tackling climate change, fostering healthy communities, and creating pleasant, safe public spaces to increase social interaction and cohesion.**
- 2. Sandwell's centres comprise a hierarchy, set out in Table 10. This hierarchy will be supported and protected by ensuring that development in centres is facilitated in a manner that reflects their scale, role, and function, and resisting proposals that would undermine this strategy.**
- 3. Proposals for centre uses that are in-centre¹⁵⁰ are subject to specific policy requirements, as set out in Table 10, Policies SCE4 and SCE5, centre insets and Policies SWB1 and SWB2 (West Bromwich).**
- 4. Proposals for centre uses that are not in-centre¹⁵¹ must meet the sequential test and other relevant requirements, such as impact tests (as set out in Table 10 and Policy SCE6), as well as any specific policies in the town centre insets.**
- 5. Future growth and allocations in Sandwell, particularly housing and employment development identified in Policies SDS1, SHO1 and SEC1, should have their service needs met by, and contribute to the regeneration of, the existing network of centres.**

¹⁵⁰ Within the relevant boundaries or Primary Shopping Areas of defined centres

¹⁵¹ Not within the relevant boundaries / Primary Shopping Areas of a defined centre but are in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations

Policy SCE1 - Sandwell's Centres

- 6. A land use approach will be adopted to encourage regeneration and to meet the challenges facing Sandwell's centres, particularly as little retail capacity has been identified to support additional floorspace, through supporting:**
- a. diversifying and repurposing of centres enhanced by appropriate complementary uses, particularly residential, education, health and community uses and supporting the evening economy;**
 - b. the consolidation and reconfiguration of vacant floorspace into a mix of uses, especially the use of upper floors, and / or extensions to existing floorspace, with any new development being well-integrated with existing provision;**
 - c. enhancing the vitality, accessibility and sustainability of centres, including maximising public realm, open space, provision of suitably-located and accessible pedestrian and cycle networks, and provision of green infrastructure and vehicle charging points**

Justification

- 9.10 The challenges facing consumers, businesses and town centres continue to intensify and the scale of the post-pandemic rebound is uncertain given inflationary pressures. Households are faced with rapidly rising inflation, energy price increases, higher interest and mortgage rates and the prevailing global economic situation.
- 9.11 A 'cost of living crisis' has emerged, which will have significant adverse impacts on the least affluent households. This will spark recessionary behaviours such as weaker spending and softer confidence. Rising prices are eroding the real value of wages and reducing living standards.
- 9.12 Forecasts are for a 'flatlining' of convenience spend up to 2040, and a modest growth in comparison spend over the same period of 2.9% per annum¹⁵², significantly reduced from the long-term trend of 5.1% (Black Country Centres Study 2021).
- 9.13 These challenging economic conditions and the growth in online sales continues to have a significant and permanent impact on consumer shopping and spending behaviour. This is

¹⁵² Convenience shopping includes food, newspapers etc., while comparison shopping includes white goods, clothing, shoes etc.

seen against a backdrop of weakened demand for retail property, high vacancy levels and a significant fall in new retail-led development in centres across the UK.

- 9.14 There has been a significant move towards hybrid working. This impacts on the demand for office floorspace, resulting in increased levels of vacancies for offices in centres. There are related adverse effects for the service-led element of centres provision who rely in part on trade from office-based workers.
- 9.15 With close to one-fifth of shopping centre units standing vacant, there is an oversupply of retail space in many UK locations; the consensus is that somewhere between 20 - 40% of UK retail space may ultimately need to be redeveloped or repurposed¹⁵³.
- 9.16 Changes to permitted development rights (PDRs) and the Use Classes Order also have potentially significant implications for the planning, management and development of centres.
- 9.17 There is therefore a need to consider the repurposing of existing vacant and under-utilised commercial floorspace in Sandwell, especially in retail and office provision, with the aim of generating a wider mix of uses in town centres and making up for the loss of economic activity caused by the fall in demand in those markets.
- 9.18 Residential development will form a significant part of this new approach, which will bolster the vitality and viability of the remaining retail units. This is especially relevant in Sandwell, where there is a significant shortage of residential land. Other uses in centres such as education, health and community use will also be able to exploit their excellent sustainable transport links.
- 9.19 Uses with intergenerational provision, green space and a variety of leisure activities will play a key part in the path to recovery and in attracting footfall back to centres and high streets. Centres in the future will require curation to enable them to continue to thrive and accommodate inclusive social and spatial interaction.
- 9.20 Due to the more limited retail spending power available to centres, it is necessary to direct suitable uses to the existing network of centres as they will be well-placed to serve future development, consistent with national guidance. It is also important to protect centres from edge-of-centre development that would reduce their financial capacity beyond already constrained limits, to safeguard their vitality and viability.

¹⁵³ LSH and REVO Research (April 2022) - How Can We Deliver the Recovery & Renaissance of Our Towns, High Streets and Shopping Centres?

- 9.21 Therefore, a locally-set threshold for requiring an impact test has been identified. An impact test is needed to assess whether a proposed shop or retail outlet would have a negative impact on the vitality and viability of an existing centre; for example, where edge-of-centre or out-of-centre supermarkets are proposed. An impact test will be required for any premises at the edge of, or outside, a current town centre where the new development would be more than 280 m², or where extensions to an existing shop in that type of location is proposed, where the total development would then be over 280m².
- 9.22 Strong justification will be needed for out-of-centre or edge-of-centre provision, with most centre-type development being rearrangements of existing floorspace, redevelopment of existing sites and extensions to existing provision.

Table 10 – Sandwell’s Hierarchy of Centres

				Relevant policies to apply to locations¹⁵⁴:		
				In Centre	Edge of Centre	Out of Centre
West Bromwich Strategic Centre (tier-one)						
West Bromwich	Policy SWB1, SWB2 - West Bromwich Policies SCE1, SCE2 - Sandwell’s Centres	Policy SCE5 Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development (if floorspace uplift / unit size less than 280m ² see paragraph 9.42) Needs Sequential Test Needs Impact Tests	Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development (if floorspace uplift/ unit size less than 280m ² see paragraph 9.42) Needs Sequential Test Needs Impact Tests			
		if total floorspace more than 280 m ² see	if total floorspace more than 280m ² see			

¹⁵⁴ Where proposals are subject to the requirement for planning permission

Relevant policies to apply to locations¹⁵⁴:				
	In Centre	Edge of Centre	Out of Centre	
		paragraphs 9.20 – 9.21)	paragraphs 9.20 – 9.21)	
Town Centres (Tier-Two)				
Bearwood	Policies SCE1, SCE2 - Sandwell's Centres	Policy SCE3 - Town Centres	Policy SCE3 - Town Centres	
Blackheath				
Cape Hill		Policy SCE3 - Town Centres	Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development	Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development
Cradley Heath				
Great Bridge			(if floorspace uplift/ unit size less than 280m ² see paragraphs 9.42)	(if floorspace uplift/ unit size less than 280m ² see paragraph 9.42)
Oldbury				
Wednesbury				
District and Local Centres (Tier-Three)				
Local Centres:	Policies SCE1, SCE2 - Sandwell's Centres	Policy SCE4 - District & Local Centres	Policy SCE4 - District & Local Centres	
Brandhall				
Bristnall		Policy SCE4 - District & Local Centres	Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development	Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development
Carters Green				
Causeway Green				
Charlemont			(if floorspace uplift / unit size less than 280m ² see paragraph 9.42)	
Crankhall Lane				
Dudley Port				
Hamstead			Needs Sequential Test	
Hill Top				
Langley			Needs Impact Tests	
Lion Farm				

	Relevant policies to apply to locations ¹⁵⁴ :		
	In Centre	Edge of Centre	Out of Centre
Old Hill		(if total floorspace	
Park Lane		more than 280m ² see	
Poplar Rise		paragraphs 9.20 –	
Princes End		9.21)	
Queens Head			
Rood End			
Smethwick High			
Street (Lower)			
St. Marks Road			
Tividale			
Vicarage Road			
West Cross			
Whiteheath Gate			
Yew Tree			
District Centres:			
Owen Street			
Quinton			
Scott Arms			
Smethwick High			
Street			
Stone Cross			
Proposed local			
centres:			
Hagley Road West			
(Hollybush)			

	Relevant policies to apply to locations ¹⁵⁴ :		
	In Centre	Edge of Centre	Out of Centre
Abbey Road (Bearwood)			

Non-E Class Uses in Town Centres

9.23 Changes to the Use Classes Order and to permitted development rights will see centres fundamentally change from having a retail focus to a genuine mix of uses. This policy seeks to restrict non-E Class developments in town centres where they would have a deleterious effect.

Policy SCE2 - Non-E Class Uses in Town Centres

Primary Shopping Areas and Retail Frontages

1. **The Retail Core / Primary Shopping Areas within the centres of Sandwell are defined on the Policies Map.**
2. **To ensure that uses defined by Use Class E (commercial, business and services¹⁵⁵) remain the predominant uses within the defined retail core / primary shopping areas, new development, including that with residential use above ground floor, will be permitted where:**
 - a. **the proposal is for commercial Class E use at ground floor level (or ground floor plus higher storeys); or**
 - b. **the proposal is for other town centre uses falling outside of Class E that would support the overall vitality and viability of the centre and fall within sui generis uses, to include the following:**
 - i. **public houses, wine bars, or drinking establishments;**
 - ii. **hot food takeaways (subject to the provisions of the relevant SLP policies);**
 - iii. **live music venues.**
3. **Changes of use of ground floor premises that require planning consent in Retail Core / Primary Shopping Areas will be assessed on whether the proposed use:**

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes>

Policy SCE2 - Non-E Class Uses in Town Centres

- a. **retains an active frontage and maintains or enhances the vitality, attractiveness, and viability of the primary shopping frontage and the wider commercial area;**
- b. **is complementary to the shopping / commercial function of the area and provides a direct service to the public;**
- c. **is for a temporary period to occupy temporarily vacant units such as for occupiers testing new business concepts, a pop-up store, or for use for events which would support the vitality and viability of the town centre;**
- d. **does not result in an over-concentration of sui generis uses within one area, and contributes to an appropriate mix and diverse offer;**
- e. **does not conflict with other Sandwell Local Plan policy objectives and requirements (e.g., Policy SDM6, Policy SDM8).**

Other Shopping Areas and Retail Frontages

- 4. **In centres with no defined retail core or primary shopping area, proposals for non-‘E’ Class uses that require planning consent will be resisted where they do not contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre, or where they would undermine its primary commercial, business and services functions.**

Justification

- 9.24 The Centres Study and Addenda show that centres need to function as much more than a retail destination, providing a large range of services, facilities, employment and experiences for residents in an accessible location.
- 9.25 Changes to the NPPF, the Use Classes Order and to permitted development (PD) rights mean centres will be much more dynamic places, reacting faster than before to market forces, fulfilling different roles in the same building and potentially performing different roles / functions throughout the day.
- 9.26 Additional dwellings in the high street, supporting the economy and enabling sustainable travel, will be a positive result and will contribute towards the rejuvenation of these central areas. At the same time, control over development in the centres should recognise the need to retain active frontages where possible and the significant retail function of centres in any proposed mix of uses. Therefore, control over Non-E Class development in centres is required i.e., to prevent unacceptable clusters of Non-E Class development.

9.27 Centres in the future will require curation to enable them to continue to thrive and accommodate inclusive social and spatial interaction (Black Country Centres Study 2021 paragraph 2.48).

Town Centres (Tier-Two centres)

9.28 Sandwell's Tier-Two centres, as identified in Table 10, are Bearwood, Blackheath, Cape Hill, Cradley Heath, Great Bridge, Oldbury and Wednesbury.

9.29 They are a distinctive and valued part of Sandwell's character and will help to meet local and wider needs in the most accessible and sustainable way. This policy supports the important local function provided by Tier-Two Centres, particularly convenience retail provision, and their future diversification and regeneration of town centres.

Policy SCE3 - Town Centres (Tier-Two centres)

1. **Proposals for appropriate uses will be supported within Tier-Two Town Centres (in-centre locations defined in Policy SCE1, parts 3 and 4), particularly where they contribute to providing a diverse mix of uses, such as retail, office, leisure, residential, community, health, education and cultural facilities, and where they are of a scale that reflects the size, role and function of those centres and the catchments the centres serve.**
2. **It is a priority for Town Centres to serve the needs of development identified in the SLP, particularly for residential and employment allocations (Policy SCE1).**
3. **Convenience retail development is encouraged, and proposals to extend or refurbish existing stores where they are well-integrated with the centre will be supported.**
4. **In the assessment and determination of planning proposals, the distinctive offer, unique character, and special roles played by individual Town Centres will be recognised and will be given appropriate weight when decisions are taken on applications that may affect the characteristics of the area.**
5. **Proposals in edge-of-centre and / or out-of-centre locations (Policy SCE1 parts 3 and 4) must meet the relevant requirements set out in Policy SCE6 - such as accessibility, impact and sequential tests and flexibility.**

Justification

- 9.30 Sandwell’s network of town centres (Tier-Two centres) performs an important role. The food (convenience) shopping function will be protected and supported, especially as these uses help anchor the retail offer of the wider centres and encourage linked trips, and thereby help ensure the vitality and viability of centres.
- 9.31 The Black Country Centres Study health check identified little capacity for these centres to support additional retail floorspace. The priority is for future housing and employment growth in Sandwell to be served by the existing network of centres, providing the opportunity to support the network of Tier-Two centres (as set out in Table 10).
- 9.32 There is, therefore, a need for strategic interventions to enable centres to diversify further to ensure their future vitality and viability.
- 9.33 Projects should reflect the distinctiveness of town centres, for example the heritage focus of Wednesbury, the civic function of Oldbury, or the specialist retail role of Cape Hill. These can inform funding initiatives such as the Future High Street Fund, Levelling Up Fund, or other initiatives.
- 9.34 Edge and / or out-of-centre proposals (as defined in Policy SCE6) must meet all relevant requirements to protect centres from the impacts of any inappropriate edge or out-of-centre proposals and ensure their vitality and viability.

District and Local Centres (Tier-Three centres)

- 9.35 This policy protects and supports the large network of centres that provide day-to-day convenience shopping and local service needs.

Policy SCE4 - District and Local Centres (Tier-Three centres)

1. **Proposals for appropriate uses (paragraph 9.60) will be supported within Tier-Three centres (in-centre locations being defined in paragraph 9.60) particularly commercial, business and service uses that meet day-to-day needs and serve local communities within the catchment area of those centres**
2. **It is a priority for Tier-Three centres to serve the day-to-day shopping and service needs of development identified in the Sandwell Local Plan, particularly residential and employment allocations (Policy SCE1). Convenience retail development is encouraged and proposals to extend or refurbish existing food stores where they are well-integrated with the centre will be supported.**

Policy SCE4 - District and Local Centres (Tier-Three centres)

- 3. Proposals in edge-of-centre (directly adjoining a centre boundary) and / or out-of-centre locations must meet the relevant requirements as set out in Policies SCE1 Table 10, SCE5 and SCE6.**

Justification

- 9.36 The network of district and local centres is crucial to serving the local needs of Sandwell's communities in the most sustainable way. Existing centres are dependent on smaller supermarkets and / or convenience stores to anchor their retail offer.
- 9.37 The priority is for housing and employment allocations to be served by the existing network of centres, providing the opportunity to support the network of Tier-Three centres (Policy SCE1, Table 10). Edge-of-centre and out-of-centre proposals must meet the relevant requirements of Policy SCE6 to protect centres from the impacts of any inappropriate edge- or out-of-centre proposals and ensure their vitality and viability.
- 9.38 The Local Plan has adjusted local centre boundaries, designated new local centres, and removed local centres from the network and hierarchy. New local centres identified in this way become part of the network of Tier-Three centres in the hierarchy (SCE1, Table 8) and are subject to relevant policies.
- 9.39 A new local centre has been designated on Hagley Road West (Hollybush). Its designation corrects an anomaly. This centre includes 37 commercial units providing convenience and comparison outlets, food outlets, financial services, grooming and health services, some of which are double fronted. Until comparatively recently it had no convenience offer. This has since changed, hence its eligibility for inclusion as a centre. It is located on the boundary between Sandwell and Birmingham City Council, with further commercial units in Birmingham; functionally it is significantly larger than several existing Sandwell Tier-Three centres. It has been monitored annually for several years. The review of the Local Plan is the correct time to incorporate it into the hierarchy of centres. Another new centre, Abbey Road Local Centre, is proposed at the junction of Wigorn Road and Abbey Road, Smethwick. Its designation corrects an anomaly. This centre includes 24 commercial units providing a post office, comparison outlets, food outlets, grooming and health services, some of which are double fronted. It also has a long-standing convenience offer. Functionally, it is larger than several existing Sandwell Tier Three centres. The review of the Local Plan is the correct time to incorporate it into the Hierarchy of Centres.

- 9.40 The former Tier-Three centre located at the junction of Hagley Road and the A4123 (known as Hagley Road / Jonathans) has been removed from the Hierarchy of Centres as it no longer fulfils the function of a local centre, having lost most of its functions since it was first identified, including the key convenience aspect of its offer.

Provision of Small-Scale Local Facilities not in Centres

- 9.41 The priority is for local service needs, including those generated from the residential and employment allocations in the SLP, to be met in the existing network of centres; this will help to ensure their vitality and viability. However, some small-scale provision may be justified in certain circumstances to meet local community needs.
- 9.42 This policy relates to proposals for small-scale local facilities for units of up to 280m² (gross) of floorspace and extensions (including internal floorspace increases such as the provision of mezzanine floors) where the proposed uplift in floorspace is up to 280m² (gross).

Policy SCE5 - Provision of Small-Scale Local Facilities not in Centres

1. **Small-scale (up to 280m² gross) proposals for centre uses and complementary uses that are subject to planning control will only be permitted if all the following requirements are met:**
 - a. **The proposal does not unduly impact on the health and wellbeing of the community it is intended to serve.**
 - b. **The proposal is of an appropriate scale and nature to meet the specific day-to-day needs of a population within convenient, safe walking distance for new or improved facilities.**
 - c. **Local provision could not be better met by investment in a nearby centre.**
 - d. **Existing facilities that meet day-to-day needs will not be undermined.**
 - e. **Access to the proposal by means other than by car can be demonstrated; this will be evidenced by the proposal being within convenient, safe walking distance of the community it will serve.**
2. **Development involving the loss of a local facility, particularly a convenience shop, pharmacy, community facility or post office, will be resisted where this would result in an increase in the number of people living more than a convenient, safe walking distance from alternative provision.**

Policy SCE5 - Provision of Small-Scale Local Facilities not in Centres

3. **Where planning consents are granted, effective planning conditions and / or planning obligations will be required to support the regeneration strategy and minimise impacts (Policy SDS2).**
4. **Proposals where total floorspace exceeds 280m² (gross) will also have to meet the requirements of Policy SCE6.**

Justification

- 9.43 The existing network of centres plays a crucial role in serving the local needs of the Borough. Centres are dependent on smaller units, such as express supermarkets and convenience stores, to anchor their retail and service offer. It is therefore a priority to protect and support this approach. Local facilities are also provided in existing stand-alone locations and in small parades of shops. It is recognised that stand-alone provision can play a positive role in serving local communities, particularly where it offers social infrastructure.
- 9.44 It applies to new development, changes of use and variations of conditions, including:
- a. proposals related to petrol filling stations and drive-through facilities;
 - b. proposals for ancillary uses under Policy SEC3;
 - c. where the potential for an element of on-site provision of new local facilities is identified, or in exceptional circumstances where such proposals are brought forward through speculative planning applications, (whereby the requirements of Policy SHO2 also must be met, particularly with respect to demonstrating high levels of accessibility by sustainable modes of transport).
- 9.45 For the purposes of applying the criteria, nearby centres include those centres whose catchment areas overlap with the catchment area of the proposal, with 400m being a safe, convenient walking distance.
- 9.46 For the purposes of applying the Impact Assessment, proposals that have unit sizes under 280m² (gross) but comprise several units where the total floorspace of the proposal exceeds 280m² (gross), and / or where the proposed uplift in floorspace of unit size(s) is under 280m² but would create unit(s) over 280m² (gross), will also have to meet the requirements of Policy SCE6. Proposals whose unit size(s) are over 280m² (gross) will have to meet the requirements of Policy SCE6.

- 9.47 280m² (gross) is the locally set threshold for undertaking impact tests on retail and leisure proposals as set out in national guidance in edge and out-of-centre locations. This threshold applies to:
- new development,
 - changes of use,
 - variations of conditions,
 - extensions or increases to the floorspace of existing unit(s) (e.g., through increasing sales areas, mezzanine floors) that would create outlets with floorspace over 280m² (gross),
 - and / or proposals whose unit sizes are under 280m² but the total floorspace of the proposal is over 280m² (gross).
- 9.48 This policy can contribute to achieving priorities such as promoting the health and well-being of local communities. In making planning decisions further guidance is set out in other Plan policies, such as those relating to hot food takeaways.
- 9.49 Where planning permission is granted, effective planning conditions and /or planning obligations will be required to support the regeneration strategy and minimise impacts. Conditions should include defining as specifically as possible:
- a. the types and (sub)categories of uses that are acceptable;
 - b. the types of goods and service to be sold;
 - c. unit sizes and sales areas, including relating to mezzanine floors;
 - d. any proposed future sub-division of units; and
 - e. opening hours.

Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development

- 9.50 The Sandwell Local Plan strategy requires most new development and investment to be focussed in centres. Therefore, robust justification will be required for any edge-of or out-of-centre schemes that could otherwise undermine the strategy for the regeneration of the Borough and adversely affect the vitality of existing centres.
- 9.51 This policy applies to proposals not in a centre (in edge and / or out-of-centre locations), which have a proposed floorspace of over 280m² (gross), as set out in Policy SCE1 and Table 10.

- 9.52 The approach is intended to focus appropriate uses within the existing network of centres. Very limited existing and future capacity means that any growth not in centres can cause adverse impacts on them. This policy sets out robust requirements that will ensure that investment in centres is maximised and significant adverse impacts are prevented. The policy notes that certain existing local facilities that are not in a centre provide an important service to a local area and will wherever possible be protected.

Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development

- 1. There is a clear presumption in favour of focusing appropriate uses in centres.**

Sequential Test

- 2. All edge-of-centre and out-of-centre proposals (as defined in paragraph 9.60) for centre uses (paragraph 9.62) should meet the requirements of the sequential test set out in the latest national guidance.**
- 3. Edge and out-of-centre proposals should be assessed for accessibility by a choice of modes of transport, in particular public transport, walking and cycling, and should demonstrate that they will support both social inclusion and cohesion, and the need to sustain strategic transport links.**
- 4. Edge-of-centre proposals will need to demonstrate that they will be well-integrated with existing in-centre provision, for example through the availability of safe and well-located pedestrian access across major roads that would otherwise bisect a centre.**
- 5. When assessing sequentially preferable locations, proposals will need to demonstrate flexibility in their operational requirements, particularly in terms of their format and the types of goods being sold.**

Impact Tests

- 6. The locally-set floorspace thresholds for edge and out-of-centre retail and leisure proposals to meet the requirements of the Impact Assessment as set out in the latest national guidance is 280m² (gross) (Policy SCE1, Table 10).**
- 7. Impact tests should be proportionate to the nature and scale of proposals.**
- 8. Proposals should be informed by the latest available robust evidence.**

Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development

9. Where planning permissions are granted, effective planning conditions and / or planning obligations will be required to support the regeneration strategy and minimise adverse impacts (Policy SDS2).
10. Proposals that include unit sizes under 280m² (gross) will also have to meet the requirements of Policy SCE5.

Justification

- 9.53 The intention of Policy SCE6 is to ensure that investment is focused in centres, with the priority for the existing network of centres being to serve the Borough's needs, particularly with future growth identified in housing and employment allocations (Policy SCE1). Strong justification is therefore required for edge-of-centre and out-of-centre schemes that could otherwise undermine the strategy for the regeneration of Sandwell and instead help ensure the vitality of centres.
- 9.54 The Centres Study and its updates identifies little capacity to support additional retail floorspace, which means that proposals that lie outside centres are likely to adversely impact upon their vitality and viability. The regeneration strategy for centres is focussed on bringing vacant floorspace back into use, and a consolidated retail and leisure offer is essential to facilitate diversification, e.g., through encouraging linked trips. Centres are also dependent on units such as supermarkets and convenience stores to anchor their retail and service offer. It is therefore a priority to protect and support this approach.
- 9.55 Consequently, the impact of proposals for centre uses not located in centres are a cause for concern. There is a need for an appropriately robust policy approach to ensure all potential options to focus development in centres are thoroughly explored, and that those proposals are tested for their potential significant adverse impacts on existing centres. This is particularly the case for large-scale out-of-centre speculative retail and / or leisure proposals
- 9.56 Flexibility should be demonstrated when assessing potential in-centre locations, including in terms of specific types of goods and services and elements of the business models of proposals, such as 'drive through' facilities not necessarily needing to be outside a centre solely for vehicular access and circulation reasons.
- 9.57 It is important to ensure edge-of-centre proposals do not cause significant adverse impacts, particularly as they share catchment areas with in-centre provision. Edge-of-centre proposals

should support regeneration through being well-integrated, particularly through direct pedestrian linkages complementing and enhancing adjacent in-centre provision.

- 9.58 Impact tests should be proportionate to the nature and scale of proposals; to assist with the determination of proposals they should include as a minimum the estimated turnover and trade draw from relevant centres of the proposal.
- 9.59 Where planning permission is granted, effective planning conditions and /or planning obligations will be required to support the regeneration strategy and minimise impacts. Conditions should include defining as specifically as possible:
- a. the types and (sub)categories of uses that are acceptable;
 - b. the types of goods and service to be sold;
 - c. unit sizes and sales areas, including relating to mezzanine floors;
 - d. any proposed future sub-division of units; and
 - e. opening hours.

Definitions of in, edge and out-of-centre locations and town centre uses

- 9.60 To assist with applying relevant policies and national tests, the specific locations that are defined as being either in, edge-of or out-of-centre for various uses are defined as follows:
- a. In-centre locations for appropriate uses¹⁵⁶ are those defined in centres, such as primary shopping areas / retail core and centre boundaries and are subject to Policies SCE3 and SCE4.
 - b. Edge-of-centre locations for tier-one and tier-two centres are those locations defined by national guidance (currently within 300m of in-centre locations).
 - i. For retail purposes, this is a location that is well-connected to, and up to 300 metres from, the primary shopping area.
 - ii. For all other main town centre uses, this will be a location within 300 metres of a town centre boundary.
 - iii. For office development, this includes locations outside the centre but within 500 metres of a public transport interchange.

¹⁵⁶ "Appropriate uses" include business, commercial, service and community use

- c. Locations immediately adjoining the boundaries of tier-three centres are defined as edge-of-centre.
- d. Out-of-centre locations are those locations neither in nor on the edge of a centre.
- e. Proposals in edge and out-of-centre locations need to meet the requirements of Policy SCE6.

9.61 Main town centre uses are those uses and “sui generis” designations that should be directed to defined centres in the first instance and are subject to requirements set out in national guidance, such as:

- a. the sequential test and impact assessments;
- b. local policy (particularly Policies SCE1 - SCE6);
- c. floorspace thresholds for undertaking the impact assessments set out in national guidance;
- d. and relevant Local Plan policies (such as frontage policies).

9.62 Main town centre uses are set out in NPPF Annex 2:

- a. retail development (including warehouse clubs and factory outlet centres);
- b. leisure, entertainment and more intensive sport and recreation uses (including cinemas, restaurants, drive-through restaurants, bars and pubs, nightclubs, casinos, health and fitness centres, indoor bowling centres and bingo halls);
- c. offices; and
- d. arts, culture and tourism development (including theatres, museums, galleries and concert halls, hotels and conference facilities).

9.63 Additional uses are those uses that are highly compatible with main centre uses, such as banks, cafes and hot food takeaways.

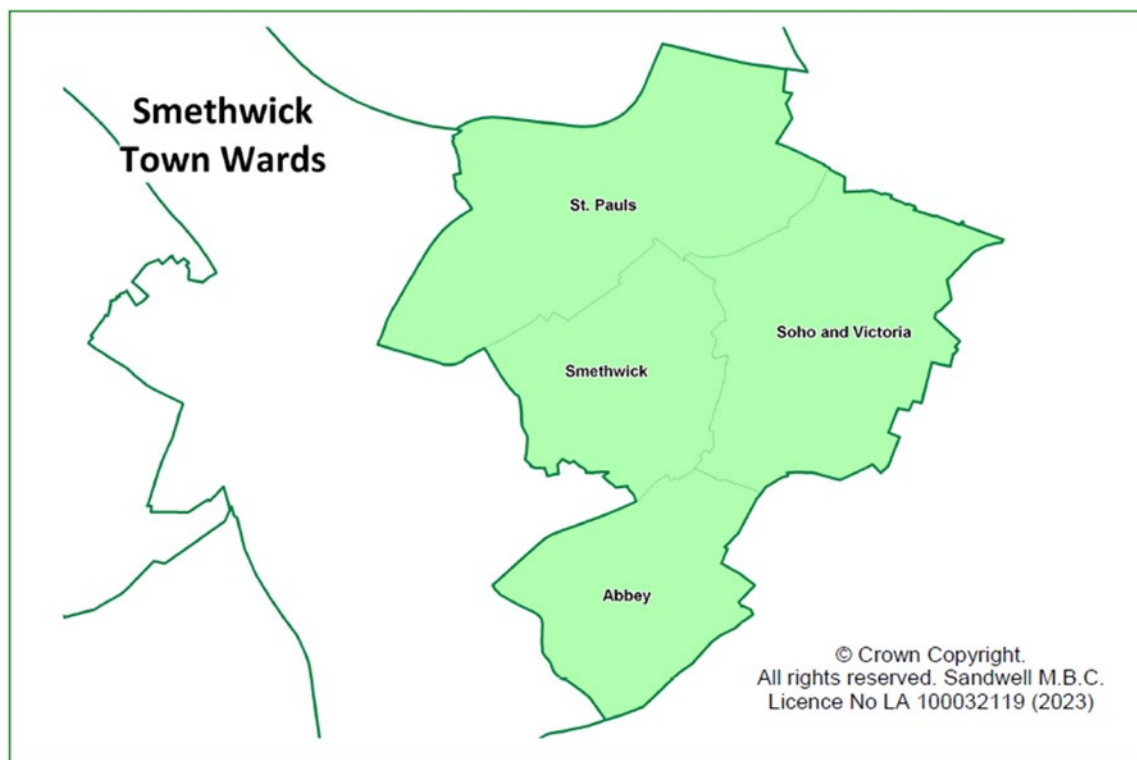
9.64 Complementary uses are those uses well-placed to be provided in centres and where proposals for such uses to serve centres will be supported, such as residential and social infrastructure, i.e., health, education and community uses.

Town Centre Profiles

- 9.65 The following section sets out a series of appraisals of the main Tier Two town centres in Sandwell. Each profile briefly identifies:
- a. the background, residential and economic demographic of the centre;
 - b. its perceived strengths and weaknesses; and
 - c. any aspirations, proposals or potential improvements.
- 9.66 Where appropriate, policies designed to address issues of local concern or importance have been included. These are to be considered alongside the other policies in the SLP that will continue to apply in all parts of Sandwell.
- 9.67 Any sites identified through the site allocation process that fall within the centre boundaries, and their likely capacities, have been identified.
- 9.68 References to **town centre health checks** in the following profiles relate to the *Black Country Centres Study 2020: Volume 2 – Health Checks*¹⁵⁷ document produced for the Black Country Plan.
- 9.69 Consultants were commissioned by Sandwell Council in 2020 to develop a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The Sandwell LCWIP (**SCWIP**) builds on work already completed at a regional level as part of the West Midlands LCWIP.
- 9.70 The SCWIP is a Sandwell-wide review of the cycle network and walking routes across Sandwell. It incorporates:
- the four strategically relevant cycling corridors put forward as part of the West Midlands LCWIP;
 - the Black Country cycling and walking vision and strategy as well as Cradley Heath railway station as a core walking zone;
 - the Cycling Supplementary Planning Document (SPD); and
 - the Sandwell Rights of Way Improvement Plan (ROWIP)
- as well as identifying gaps in the network.

¹⁵⁷ <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/18592/black-country-centres-study-2020-vol-2-healthchecks.pdf>

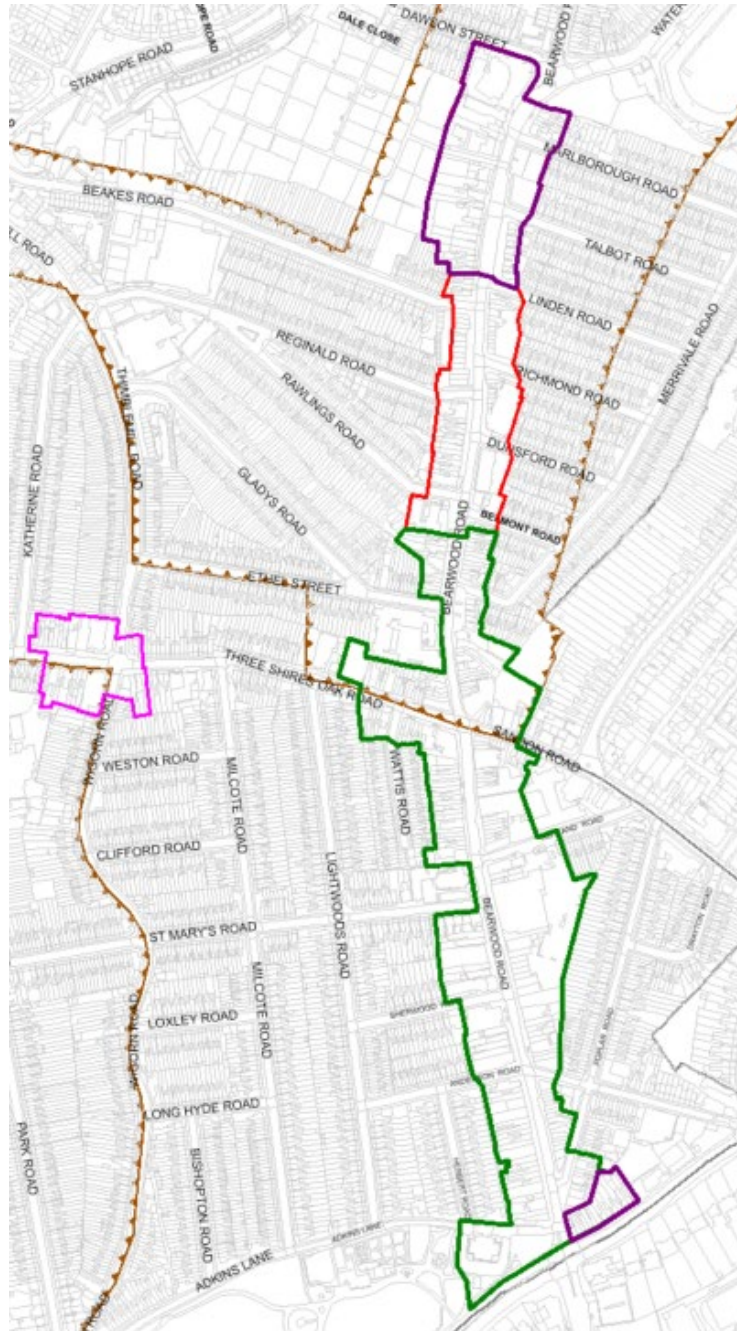
Bearwood



Background

- 9.71 The town of Bearwood lies within Abbey Ward.
- 9.72 The population of Abbey Ward, according to the 2021 Census was 12,186, a rise of 3.7% since 2011. Abbey ward has the third smallest population in the borough. Abbey ward has a smaller proportion of under-16s than average (20.2% compared with 25.1% for the town) but a larger proportion of those aged 25 - 49 (39.3% compared with 37%).
- 9.73 Abbey Ward has a high proportion of residents in full time employment (39.3%); this is the highest of all Sandwell wards.

Figure 5 - Bearwood Town Centre



Town Centre Key

- Centre Boundary
- Retail Core/Primary Shopping Area
- Area of Potential Archaeological Importance
- Proposed changes to town centre boundary
- Proposed new Centre (Abbey Road)

Boundary Changes

- 9.74 Boundary changes are suggested for the northern end of Bearwood Road, with the proposed new boundary ending at the junction of Linden Road and Bearwood Road.
- 9.75 Several reasons inform this decision. Past this point, the retail units on the eastern side of Bearwood Road are set back from the street and cause a break in the high street line that is not reformed. Additionally, the dominance of residential properties on the western side and lack of continuous commercial units in general distinctly separate this area from the rest of the Town Centre.
- 9.76 It has been suggested that the southern section of the centre should also exclude the units on Hagley Road.
- 9.77 Further suggestions are for the inclusion of the shops at the junction of Abbey Road and Wigorn Road within the centre boundary. The issue here would be the significant increase in the extent of the town centre boundary. It would also include many non-retail, residential uses at ground floor level. It is therefore proposed that the shops at Abbey Road / Wigorn Road should form a new Local Centre, due to the number of shops and facilities the units offer.

Retail and Town Centre Uses

- 9.78 Bearwood Town Centre runs along Bearwood Road (c.700m), from Waterloo Road in the north to Hagley Road in the south in a traditional linear high street form. The centre also includes sections of several smaller roads off Bearwood Road such as Three Shires Oak Road and Sandon Road.
- 9.79 Bearwood contains a retail core that begins south of Belmont Road and continues to the centre's boundary with Hagley Road.
- 9.80 Bearwood has shown a slight decline in function. It is over-represented in convenience style goods shopping and under-represented in comparison goods. Although Bearwood maintains a good level of national multiples, there has also been a reduction in the number of national multiples outlets since the Health Check study took place in 2020 in terms of service area.
- 9.81 The service industry has increased in Bearwood since 2009 and as such has improved the evening economy, with the introduction of at least six new pubs, restaurants and cafes.
- 9.82 According to 2019 data and recent trends, Bearwood has 253 total commercial units, which is 12 fewer than it had in 2009. The number of comparison goods units makes up 22% of the centre's total commercial units, 14% below the UK national average. This under-representation is also reflected in the level of comparison goods floorspace available, which

stands at 25.2% of the total commercial floorspace, compared to the national average of 32%. Since 2009, the number of comparison goods units has decreased by 21, with the floorspace decreasing by 1,365m² (a 28% decrease in the number of units).

- 9.83 Convenience goods fall slightly below the national average for number of units at 13% compared to 15%. This is contrasted by the floorspace figures which show that convenience goods are overrepresented, making up 18% of the total commercial floorspace compared to the national average of 9%. The small number of convenience goods units and large amount of floorspace is predominantly made up of Aldi, followed by Iceland, The Market, and The Co-operative, which collectively make up 52% of Bearwood's convenience goods floorspace. Aldi alone consists of 1,390m², stands in a prominent central location and acts as an anchor for the area. There has been a minimal change to the number of units and floorspace of convenience goods since 2009, with four additional units adding 141m².
- 9.84 The levels of floorspace for retail services closely align to national averages; in terms of number of units Bearwood is 13% higher at 20% compared to 7%. This shows that there is a high volume of small floorplate retail service units, typical for this type of centre. Leisure services are comparable to national averages in both number of units and floorspace. Service industry representation has increased by eight units and 955m² since 2009.
- 9.85 A vacancy rate of 10% (27 units vacant in 2019) is comparable to the national average of 9% and is 3% lower in terms of floorspace. Since 2009 the area of vacant commercial units has decreased from 3,995m² in 2009 to 3,370m² in 2019, which reflects the loss of two units.
- 9.86 The large floorplate convenience stores are located towards the centre of Bearwood Road at the shopping centre, with vacant units appearing to be focussed on the southern end of Bearwood Road. Apart from this there is generally an even distribution of commercial uses around the Town Centre.
- 9.87 Bearwood includes a reasonable number of national multiples. It also includes two leading supermarket chains and many other retail and service units. This provides the centre with a strong retail and service foundation that helps to support its role as a town centre and the high number of smaller local shops.
- 9.88 It is noted however that several multiples have left the centre, including HSBC, NatWest, Barclays and Lloyds.
- 9.89 Bearwood is currently under the limit for HFTs (Policy SDM6).

Facilities provision:

- 9.90 The centre is supported by a range of community facilities including five churches, two schools and various dental and medical services.

Accessibility

- 9.91 Due to the centre's location along a linear A-road, it benefits from a high number of bus services, with numerous stops along the length of Bearwood Road and streets such as Three Shires Oak Road and Sandon Road. These stops provide frequent services across the Black Country, including to Birmingham, Dudley, West Bromwich and Oldbury. A small bus interchange is also present on Adkins Lane at the end of Bearwood Road.
- 9.92 Eight pedestrian crossing points are present across the length of Bearwood Road, providing safe routes for pedestrians across the heavily congested road. The wide pavements feature bollards and barriers, which provide some separation between pedestrians and vehicular traffic; these are specifically focused at junctions and around the Bearwood Shopping Centre.
- 9.93 There is a high volume of traffic along Bearwood Road.

Accessibility – Provision for cyclists

- 9.94 The Active Travel Fund-funded route from Thimblemill Baths to Hadley Stadium via High Street and Beaks Road (20 mph) has just been completed. This will connect to SCWIP cycle route 5, Oldbury Town Centre to Bearwood via the Aquatic Centre. As of 2023, cycle route 5 does not have funding.
- 9.95 Cycle parking provision on Bearwood High Street is limited, with a small number of cycle stands provided outside Aldi and Argos.
- 9.96 Due to the linear nature of the High Street and pavement widths, it would be difficult to provide additional parking stands on the main road frontages.

Environmental Quality

- 9.97 The character and period style of Bearwood's buildings vary considerably and range from the late 19th Century to the present day. This creates a contrasting environment that works well in many places, such as with the blending of terracotta buildings around Bearwood Shopping Centre. However, it is less successful in other areas such as the sudden change in building height and style with the unit formerly occupied by The Co-operative (510 - 513 Bearwood Road) and its surroundings.
- 9.98 Despite it including several attractive buildings and terraces, Bearwood contains various shop frontages in poor condition, which may adversely affect its attractiveness to potential new occupiers or for new development / investments. This includes units for both local

retailing and some national multiple outlets. Dated and excessive advertisements also detract from the character and quality of the area.

- 9.99 There is a clear lack of street furniture and investment in the public realm, such as benches, planting and other landscaping schemes. Though the linear nature of the centre does limit the amount of space for such investment, there are areas that would benefit.
- 9.100 Heavy vehicular traffic has a clear and obvious negative impact on the environmental quality of the area. Though this is unavoidable given the key network function of the route, investment should be made in making the pedestrian environments as safe and appealing as possible. Areas of additional planting could increase the environmental quality of the centre and break up the visual impacts of large areas of hardstanding.
- 9.101 Although there are no opportunities within Bearwood town centre itself for BNG sites, there is a possibility within nearby and adjacent parks at Warley Woods and Lightwoods Park.

Historic Environment Allocations

- 9.102 There is no conservation area in the centre, though both the Bearwood War Memorial outside St Mary's Church, and St Gregory's Church itself are Grade II listed. Additionally, there are several attractive historic buildings in the area, including the Bear Tavern with its clock tower.

SWOT

- 9.103 The Centres Study Health checks noted the following characteristics for Bearwood:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very accessible by bus; • Strong convenience anchor with Aldi; • Several attractive buildings. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some poor-quality frontages; • Lack of street furniture and investment in public realm. • Lack of landscaping and public open space in centre
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake a parking assessment to determine if the level of parking for Bearwood is sufficient; 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued decrease of comparison goods; • Over-saturation of small scale retail services.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage refurbishment of poor shop frontages; • Street furniture, public realm improvements and urban greening should be sought where possible, to improve the character and appearance of the centre. 	
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Aspirations:

- 9.104 The repurposing of listed buildings could improve the perception of Cape Hill and it can also make use of attractive architecture to encourage improvement in the vicinity
- 9.105 Opportunities for funding to spruce up shop front improvement / townscape quality and upgrade general frontages within Bearwood could be sought as they are currently quite poor. Dated and excessive advertisements also detract from the character and quality of the area. This should also be addressed through Policy SDM5.
- 9.106 There is a clear lack of street furniture and general investment in the public realm such as benches, planting and other landscaping schemes. Though the linear nature of the centre does limit the amount of space for such investment, there are clear areas that would benefit.
- 9.107 Consideration should be given to improvements designed to mitigate issues related to road traffic, such as poor pedestrian accessibility and high levels of air pollution, which is a dominant feature of the centre.
- 9.108 Due to lack of opportunity for public spaces within Bearwood, links to Lightwoods Park should be made more obvious
- 9.109 At the southern end of the town centre, at the junction of Adkins Lane, Bearwood Road, and Hagley Road, there is an area of public space / realm that was redeveloped at some point in the last five years prior to 2023. The redeveloped area features paving and a clock; however, it is let down by having a small number of benches that are awkwardly located. Furthermore, the adjacent roads are heavily congested, noisy and subject to higher levels of pollution through vehicle fumes and emissions. This is an example of an area that could be improved to encourage use of the space. The introduction of green space, a pocket parklet and / or landscaping would be beneficial.
- 9.110 The following changes would be welcomed, to help make the centre more user-friendly:

- An increase in comparison shops would help to offer a wider range of goods and services.
- If the centre was reduced in size, an effective focal point could be created, with an attempt to try and consolidate core uses of the centre into a smaller area.

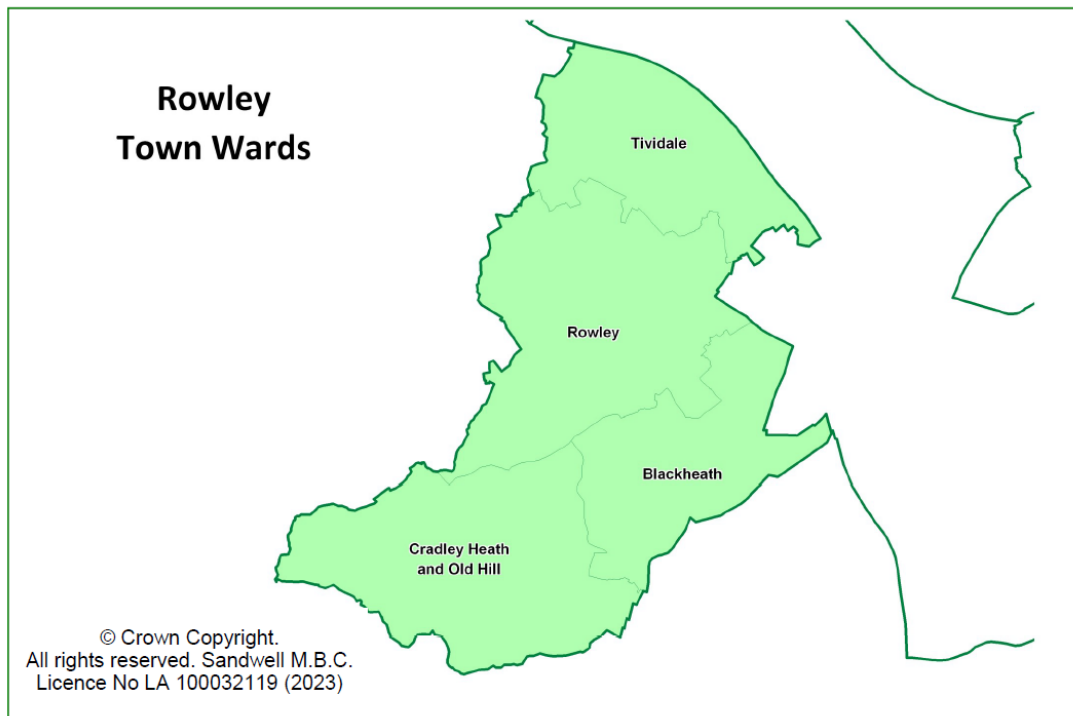
Proposals

9.111 The following locations offer opportunities for future improvements and additions to the public realm and character of the area.

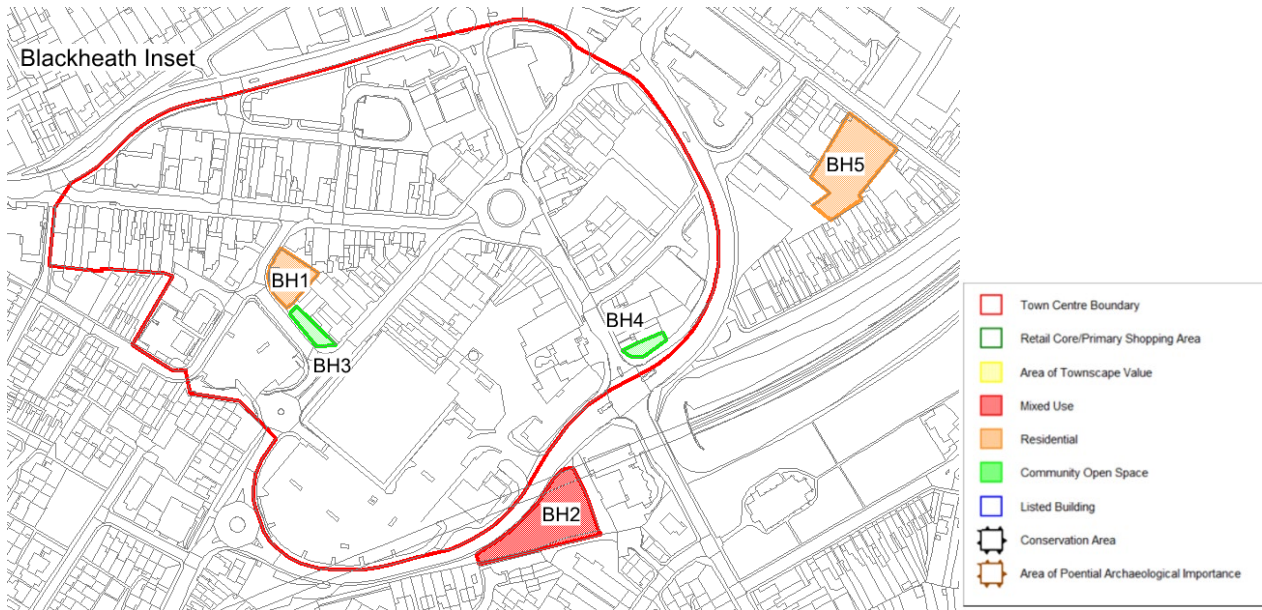
Site	Location	Indicative Land Use
BE1	Land at Bearwood Road opposite Ethel Street (between Merrivale Road and Bearwood Chapel)	The pedestrian area here is wider than elsewhere along Bearwood Road and there is an element of greenery and planting as well as two benches. Opportunities exist here to create a focal point and to make this area greener by connecting all the planted areas to form one garden area. This will include the removal of the advertisement sign as this adds to the street clutter
BE2	The junction of Bearwood Road (A4040) and Three Shires Oak Road (B4182)	At present, pedestrians must cross at the junction twice in some instances to get to their destination. A diagonal crossing at this junction could aid in permeability of the centre.
BE3	Pavements along Bearwood Road	At various points along Bearwood Road there is vegetation growing from the base of the buildings. Opportunities will be explored to remove such vegetation which will aid in improving the appearance of the centre

Site	Location	Indicative Land Use
BE4	Throughout the Town Centre core	Opportunities will be explored to introduce more cycle parking stands where space allows
BE5	Area outside of Aldi	As the pedestrian area is wider in this location, there is opportunity to add benches
BE6	Adkins Road / Hagley Road – outside Dixons Estate Agents	The large paved area here looks tired. Opportunities exist here to make the area greener and more inviting through planting and adding benches
	Changes to town centre boundary	See paragraph 9.40 and paragraphs 9.74 to 9.77

Blackheath



- 9.112 Blackheath is a town centre in the Rowley Town area of Sandwell, which comprises Tividale, Blackheath, Rowley and Cradley Heath and Old Hill wards. It is the principal town centre in Rowley Regis. Blackheath has seen a fall in population of about 2% in the latest census data over a 10-year period, compared to an increase across Sandwell of 11% over the same period.
- 9.113 22.5 % of Blackheath's residents are from ethnic minority backgrounds, compared to 48% of residents across Sandwell as a whole.
- 9.114 Latest census data shows a proportionally older age profile than Sandwell, but a younger age profile than England. Blackheath ward has the highest proportion of residents who are retired (22.5%).
- 9.115 Rowley town has the second highest proportion of residents who are economically active (59.7%) and the proportion of those who are unemployed is lower than the average for Sandwell as a whole.

Figure 6 - Blackheath Town Centre

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Retail and Town Centre Uses

9.116 Blackheath Town Centre is centred on The Market Place, where five routes to surrounding towns converge, and has a High Street extending westwards from Market Place. A by-pass was constructed in stages around the town centre during the 1980s /1990s, but due to an absence of parallel traffic restraint measures in the town centre, the central streets and Market Place remain congested with through traffic.

9.117 The town offers a good mix of retail and non-retail uses. It is anchored by a medium-sized Sainsburys foodstore, which opened in 1997, and a more recent Lidl store just beyond the eastern edge of the town centre, at Oldbury Road / Archer Way. The centre has a range of retail shops, covering national brands (Wilco, Poundland, Iceland) and local independent traders. It has a thriving indoor market off Market Place, with over 60 market stalls, which trades three days a week and is fully let. The centre is noticeably busier on market days (Monday, Friday, Saturday) than at other times and the market has a wide draw. There are a range of non-retail uses and a reasonable evening economy, with cafes, restaurants, traditional pubs and a microbar all represented. Towards the western end of High Street there is a modern purpose-built library, which functions as a busy and popular community hub and warm space in the town.

9.118 The Centres Study and its Addenda show the town is stable, with no great increase in vacancies or extra floorspace from previous studies. Blackheath appears to have weathered the pandemic and benefited from increased local demand as travelling was discouraged.

The town has relatively few vacancies and a good mix of uses. It is a vital and viable town centre.

- 9.119 The quality of the public realm, and that of shopfronts varies through the town. Retail is forecast to decline in relative terms, meaning there is likely to be an increased role for social and community functions in Blackheath, building on its improved access. The Centres Study noted a lack of appropriate street furniture such as benches and planting in the town, which would assist public and personal interactions if provided.
- 9.120 Britannia Park, although around 500 metres outside the town centre, is Blackheath's main public park. It is benefiting from Towns Fund investment. This includes the provision of new changing rooms, play facilities, skate park, parking and access improvements, with improved links to the town centre for cyclists and pedestrians provided through the complementary Rowley Connected project – a walking, cycling and wayfinding Towns Fund project.
- 9.121 The Centres Study shows that Blackheath, like other towns in Sandwell, demonstrates no capacity for additional comparison retail - and limited capacity for convenience retail - as far ahead as can be forecast. To protect the centre's vitality and viability, new out of centre and edge of centre town centre uses should be robustly tested via impact and sequential tests, with any new retail proposals being focused on the redevelopment and reconfiguration /extension of existing capacity within the centre.

Historic Environment

- 9.122 Blackheath has no listed buildings, Conservation Areas or Areas of Potential Archaeological Importance.

Primary Shopping Area

- 9.123 No Primary Shopping Area (PSA) has been identified; the current Town Centre boundary acts as an appropriate PSA.

Hot Food Takeaways

- 9.124 Blackheath has nine takeaways according to the 2022 centres survey; this is close to but still under the 7% limit under the HFT threshold.

Accessibility

- 9.125 Blackheath is sustainably located, with many existing bus services available and a railway station outside the centre. It is an important hub for local bus services to a variety of destinations, with over 35 departures on ten different routes in a typical weekday off-peak hour. Rowley Regis railway station has frequent direct trains to Birmingham city centre, Stourbridge, Kidderminster and Worcester. It is located around 500 metres east of the town

centre and the route between it and the town centre, was improved in 2021 using funding from the Government's Towns Fund initiative. Bus services will benefit from the Towns Fund-supported new bus interchange at Market Place, along with an improved public realm and pedestrian space at the heart of the town centre, again in Market Place. These works, which are currently undergoing design refinements, are scheduled to be implemented by 2025.

9.126 Rowley Regis Connected (also a Towns Fund project) will improve access for pedestrians and cyclists to bus and rail and employment nodes in Blackheath and wider Rowley Regis.

SWOT

9.127 The Centres Study Health checks noted the following characteristics for Blackheath:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good bus service links; • Good range of uses, good national multiple representation. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tired frontages of some commercial units; • Lack of continuity in paving and landscaping.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve store frontages; • Consider improving street furniture such as benches and planting schemes. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further decline in environmental quality could deter visitors.

Proposals

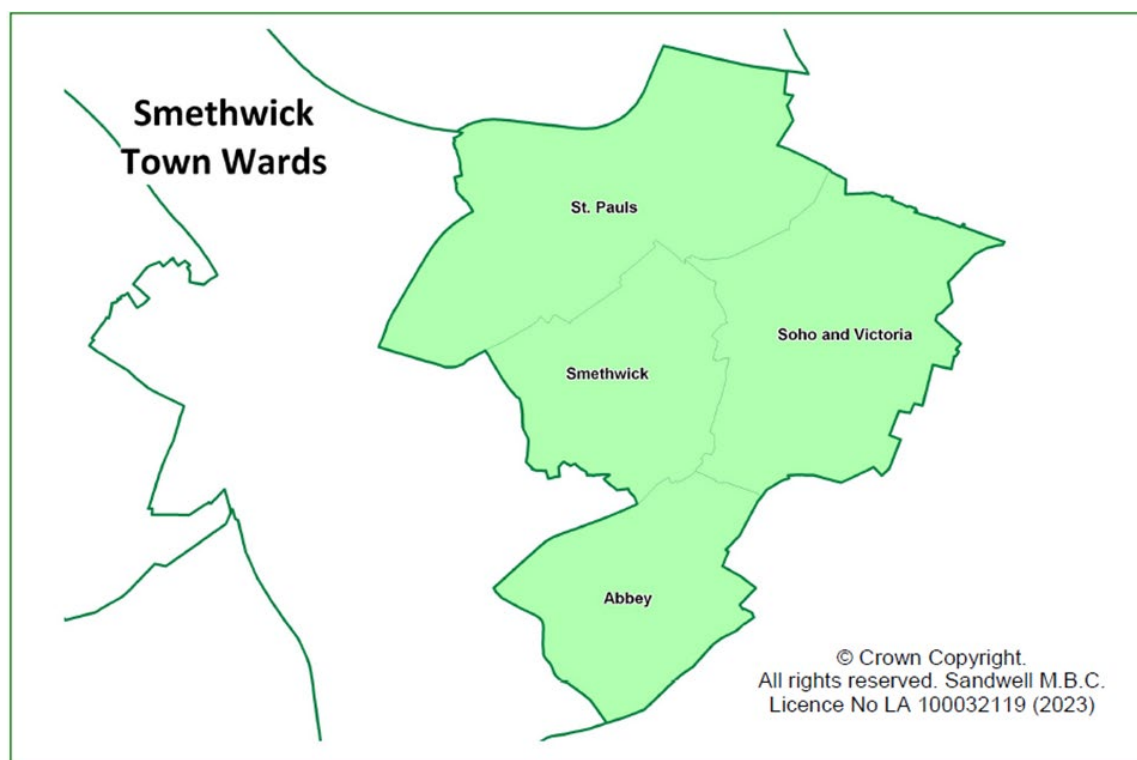
9.128 Development opportunities are limited in the centre. However, a few small sites have been identified as potential development locations and are identified in the table below, together with other possible improvements to local amenity and character.

Site	Location	Proposal
BH 1	Bassano Road	There is a long-established taxi operation in the centre at Bassano Road. Although this is an acceptable use, it comprises a portacabin within a large plot and does not make the best use of a central site. This could be better developed for residential use in this sustainable location and thus bolster the existing retail and commercial

Site	Location	Proposal
		functions of the centre. This will depend on relocating the existing business, perhaps to a vacant unit within the centre, that is adjacent to a car park.
BH2	land to the rear of St Pauls Court on Horner Way	This is a site allocated in the previous development plan. Although it has had several consents granted, the site remains undeveloped. It is suitable for a variety of Centre type uses, possibly including residential with appropriate design to take account of its location on Horner Way. This site is outside the current centre, but would be functionally within it, were it developed.
BH3	Bassano Road / Halesowen Street	This site is currently grassed with an area of dilapidated seating. The Centres Study identified a lack of outside seating in Blackheath. To aid in non-transactional interactions opportunities will be sought to expand replace and expand the seating.
BH4	Archer Way / Long Lane	This site was allocated in the previous plan. It would be suitable for a limited amount of a centre type use, with residential above. It could also function as a pocket park, as lack of seating in the town was noted by The Centres Study. These would complement seating proposed within Market Place as part of the bus interchange scheme
BH5	Vacant land between Cardale Street, Park Street and Archer Way.	This would be suitable for residential development that would support the town centre, particularly social housing

9.129 **BH3** and **BH4** are small sites left after road improvements.

Cape Hill



9.130 The town of Cape Hill lies within the ward of Soho and Victoria.

9.131 The population of Soho and Victoria Ward is 19,629 according to the 2021 census. This is an increase of 30.5% since the 2011 Census, which is the largest growth in population in Sandwell. Soho and Victoria is now the most populous ward in Sandwell.

9.132 Soho and Victoria ward has seen a particularly large population increase in younger age groups, with a 10% increase in the proportion aged under 20, and a 20% increase in the number of people aged between 20 - 64 (the largest increase of all of Sandwell wards for both age groups). There has also been a slight rise in those aged 65 and over.

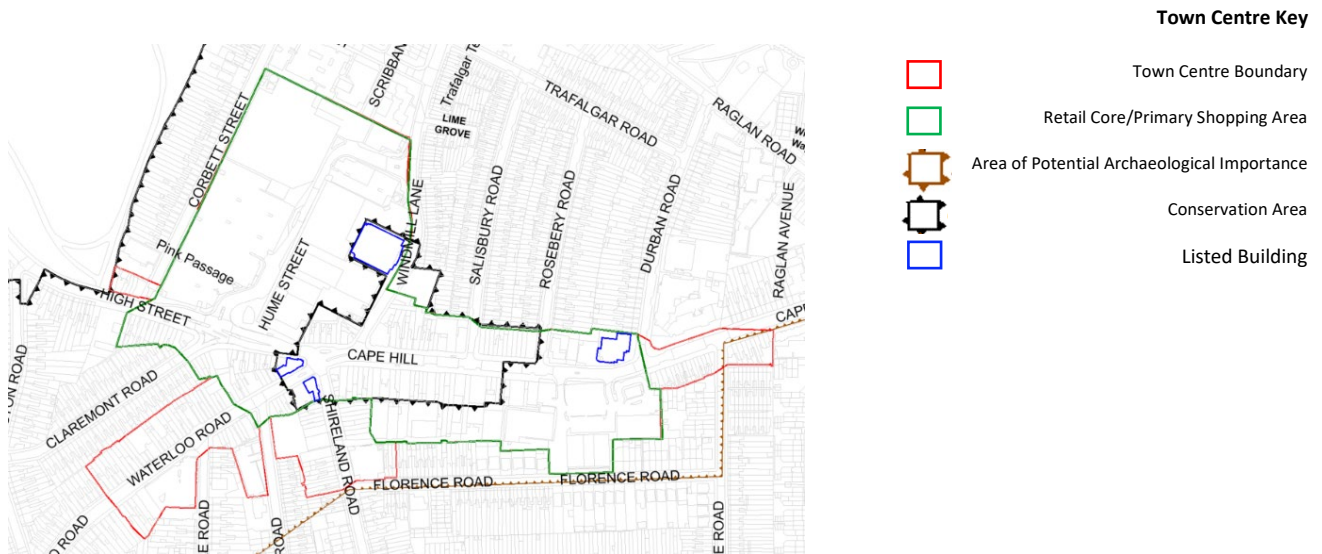
9.133 In Soho and Victoria Ward, 90.2% of residents are from groups other than White British; it has the highest proportion of people from the Pakistani, Chinese and Asian Other, Black African and Black Other groups in Sandwell¹⁵⁸.

9.134 Regarding employment levels, 48.5% of residents are economically active and in employment; this is lower than the England average. Soho and Victoria Ward has the highest rate of unemployment of all Sandwell wards (6.2% of those aged 16+)¹⁵⁹.

¹⁵⁸ Taken from Sandwell Trends, source: 2021 Census

¹⁵⁹ Source: 2021 Census (Sandwell Trends)

Figure 7 - Cape Hill Town Centre



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Retail and Town Centre Uses

- 9.135 Cape Hill is one of the main town centres within Smethwick. The Town Centre primarily consists of the Windmill Shopping Centre, Cape Hill Road, and sections of surrounding roads: Waterloo Road, High Street, Shireland Road, and Windmill Lane.
- 9.136 Cape Hill contains a retail core, which includes most of the centre. The spurs of retail activity off Waterloo Road, Shireland Road and the east side of Cape Hill from its junction at Durban Road are not included within the retail core as they lie further away from the main retail hub of the centre and have a lower footfall.
- 9.137 The Windmill Shopping Centre creates a greater draw while the rest of the centre acts more as a local centre serving a more immediate local need
- 9.138 From the 2019 Black Country Centres Study, Cape Hill demonstrated a small increase in the number of occupied commercial units within the centre. The centre tends to be busy with vehicular traffic but is not particularly busy with pedestrians, though there is a consistent amount of people throughout most of the area. The busiest area is the entrance to the Windmill Shopping Centre from Cape Hill, with many pedestrians moving between the shopping centre and eastwards down Cape Hill Road. The study also concluded that Shireland Road and Waterloo Road were equally busy.
- 9.139 Cape Hill had a total of 207 commercial units with a total floorspace of 38,455m² as at 2019 compared to 198 units and 36,585m² in 2009, suggesting a degree of overall growth in the centre in the last ten years.

- 9.140 Comparison goods units make up 28% of the centre's uses by number of units, 7% below the UK national average of 36%. When comparing floorspace, comparison goods make up 32% of the centre's total, exactly aligning with the national average. For a town centre this is a healthy position, although this sector has declined by 11 units and 2,056m² floorspace since. The presence of the Windmill Shopping Centre directly within the Town Centre has a positive impact on the floorspace of comparison goods when compared to nearby Town Centres.
- 9.141 Convenience goods account for 20% of Cape Hill's commercial units which is 5% above the national average; the floorspace of these units makes up 37% of the centre's total, which is 28% above average. This over-representation of convenience goods floorspace can mostly be attributed to the large 6,320m² Asda store, which represents 44% of all convenience floorspace in the centre. The second and third largest convenience stores include Windmills Market (1,510m²) and PAK Supermarkets (1,290m²). Convenience goods have increased in both number of units and floorspace (13 units and 2,908m²) since 2009. This shows that convenience retail plays a major role in the centre.
- 9.142 The floorspace levels of retail services, at 9%, are below the national average of 14%; however, the number of units providing retail services is higher than average at 23% compared to the national average of 7%. This shows that there is a high volume of small floorplate retail service units, which is typical for this type of centre.
- 9.143 Leisure services are under-represented in terms of both number of units and floorspace, falling 10% and 14% below the national average of 24% and 25% respectively. What leisure services there are, are heavily focused towards takeaways, which make up 65% of the sector. Financial and business services align to the national average for number of units at 7%, but fall 6% below average for floorspace at 10%, again highlighting the prevalence of small units. Collectively the service industry has increased by 21 units and 346m² since 2009, which is a positive sign.
- 9.144 Cape Hill has a below-average level of vacancies in terms of both number of units (13 vacant) and floorspace (2,986m²), which stand at 6% and 8% respectively, both 3% below the national average. This compares well to other centres in the borough, which are experiencing above average vacancy rates. It has also improved considerably since 2009, when the vacancy rate was 14%.
- 9.145 Spatially, Cape Hill contains several high-density parades of small units along its main roads, with significantly larger units at the Windmill Shopping Centre and medium-sized units at the Cape Hill Retail Centre at the eastern end of Cape Hill. There is little pattern in the

distribution of uses, though there is a higher proportion of comparison goods units towards the western end of Cape Hill Road. Several national multiples are also present, most of which are located within the Windmill Centre, with the remainder situated along Cape Hill Road and the retail centre.

9.146 Cape Hill has exceeded the threshold for HFTs (Policy SDM6).

Facilities provision

9.147 There are several community facilities, including several religious institutions, two primary schools and a health centre. Cape Hill also benefits from its proximity to a large green space at Victoria Park.

Accessibility

9.148 Due to the presence of multiple busy roads, the centre is well-connected for vehicles and is served by at least six different bus services to various destinations including Birmingham, Smethwick, and West Bromwich. These include the 80, 82, 897, 89, 54, and 54A¹⁶⁰

9.149 There are a high proportion of pedestrian crossings at The Windmill Centre and the main junction on Cape Hill Road; this contrasts with the rest of the centre in which there is a clear lack of such crossings.

9.150 A lack of crossing points negatively impacts pedestrian flows and makes it difficult to cross busy roads without heading towards The Windmill Centre.

Accessibility – Provision for cyclists

9.151 Cape Hill forms part of the A457 corridor from Oldbury to Cape Hill, which includes SCWIP cycle route (CR) 11.

9.152 Smethwick Connected is a connectivity project promoting walking and cycling improvements between Smethwick High Street and the Midland Metropolitan Hospital. This includes walking improvements within the Windmill Eye estate, although it does not affect the High Street to any great extent. Towns Fund money is being used to deliver new cycle and pedestrian facilities along the A457 in incremental phases from Smethwick Galton Bridge Station to Cape Hill. The scheme is being delivered in different phases as follows:

- Phase 1: A two-way segregated cycle way on the south side of the A457 from Galton Station to Rolfe Street junction.

¹⁶⁰ Transport for West Midlands - Sandwell-Dudley-area-map-20230625.pdf www.tfwm.org.uk

- Phase 2: A two-way segregated cycle way from Rolfe Street to Cross Street on both sides of A457. The carriageway was realigned to allow the construction of a new footway and cycleway from High Street junction to Lynton Avenue, with a link for both onto Lynton Avenue. A new traffic signal crossing was installed on the A457 adjacent to Cross Street junction. This Phase was completed in June 2023.
- Phase 3: Lynton Avenue to Metropolitan Hospital Walking Route; new and upgraded pedestrian facilities such as dropped crossing and tactile paving.
- Phase 4: A two-way segregated cycleway along the A457 from Lynton Avenue to Soho Street junction. This Phase will connect onto the end of Phase 2. This Phase is due to start in Autumn 2023, with completion expected by Spring 2024.
- Phase 5: in development as of 2023 and will be delivered by the Canal and River Trust. It includes the construction of a towpath from the canal to the path at the side of Heath Trading Park. This will then be connected to the cycle routes on Winson Street; completion is expected by November 2023

9.153 SCWIP CR11 already partially exists but it requires updating to the standards identified in the Local Transport Note 1/20 (LNT1/20). There is a £19 million budget available from The City Region Sustainable Transport Settlements (CRYSTS) funding to improve access to the hospital, which will be split between Sandwell and Birmingham and will be used to create a cycle route from the A457 to the National Cycle Network via route 5 along the Birmingham canals (NCN5), borough boundary links with Birmingham and SCWIP 11 upgrades.

9.154 There are several cycle stands provided within the Windmill Shopping centre, but these are spaced too closely together, which renders half of them effectively unusable. The current Sandwell Cycling supplementary planning guidance suggests that cycle stands should be spaced one metre apart. Every other cycle stand in the row should therefore be removed and relocated elsewhere within the vicinity.

9.155 There is a lack of provision elsewhere in the centre due to the narrow widths of the pavements.

Accessibility - Transport Proposals:

9.156 Although there are no new transport proposes for Cape Hill itself, it will be impacted by the Smethwick Connected Project, which includes walking improvements within the Windmill Eye estate.

Environmental Quality

- 9.157 Outside of the Windmill Centre the environmental quality of the area is generally poor, with most of the shop frontages in need of significant maintenance and modernisation. Despite having a lower-than-average number of vacant units (proportionally), the low quality of the occupied properties makes the area feel like it is in a state of decline, despite figures suggesting otherwise.
- 9.158 The centre is dominated by rows of two to three storey terraced properties of varying styles and appearances though generally constructed of red brick. The type and quality of paving varies across the centre; Shireland Road and Waterloo Road feature mostly red and grey bricked paving, whilst Cape Hill Road comprises a mixture of concrete and dark brick. The centre would benefit from a consistent paving scheme of higher quality.
- 9.159 Though constrained by pavement sizes and main roads, there is a lack of any significant street furniture or decorative finishes such as a planting scheme, which would help to raise the quality of the area.

Historic Environment Allocations

- 9.160 There is a conservation area within Cape Hill town centre, designated in August 2012. The conservation area comprises the heart of Cape Hill and is focused on the junction of Cape Hill with Waterloo Road and Shireland Road; it runs east along Cape Hill to the junction with Rosebery Road
- 9.161 There are four listed buildings within the centre, including the Grade II* Waterloo Hotel. Unfortunately, these listed buildings are not being utilised to their potential and their architectural quality is let down by their vacancy (they are all vacant as at July 2023), their poor physical quality and the generally poor appearance of neighbouring units, which adversely affects their setting.

SWOT

- 9.162 The Centres Study Health checks noted the following characteristics for Cape Hill:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very accessible by bus; • Strong comparison goods offer compared to nearby centres; • Windmill Centre provides a very strong anchor; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly poor-quality frontages; • Lack of street furniture and investment in public realm.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low level of vacancies. 	
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop/repurpose listed buildings to capitalise on their attractive architecture; • Encourage refurbishment of poor shop frontages; • Invest in street furniture and public realm. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of the pub or any of the restaurants, further decreasing evening generating activity; • Poor environmental quality begins to impact occupancy of units.

Aspirations

9.163 The health checks identified that there is limited evening activity due to the lack of leisure facilities around Cape Hill, including the strict definition of leisure as well as restaurants or cafes. There is just one pub and 11 restaurants, although a number of these also act as hot food takeaways.

9.164 There may also be opportunity to provide improved public and active transport links to the new aquatics centre in Smethwick from Cape Hill and other surrounding centres

9.165 Opportunities for funding to improve shop fronts and townscape quality should be investigated. Generally, frontages within Cape Hill are in a poor condition, which may adversely affect its attractiveness to potential new occupiers or for new development / investment.

9.166 There is council housing under construction (2023) to the rear of the High Street on Church Hill Street.

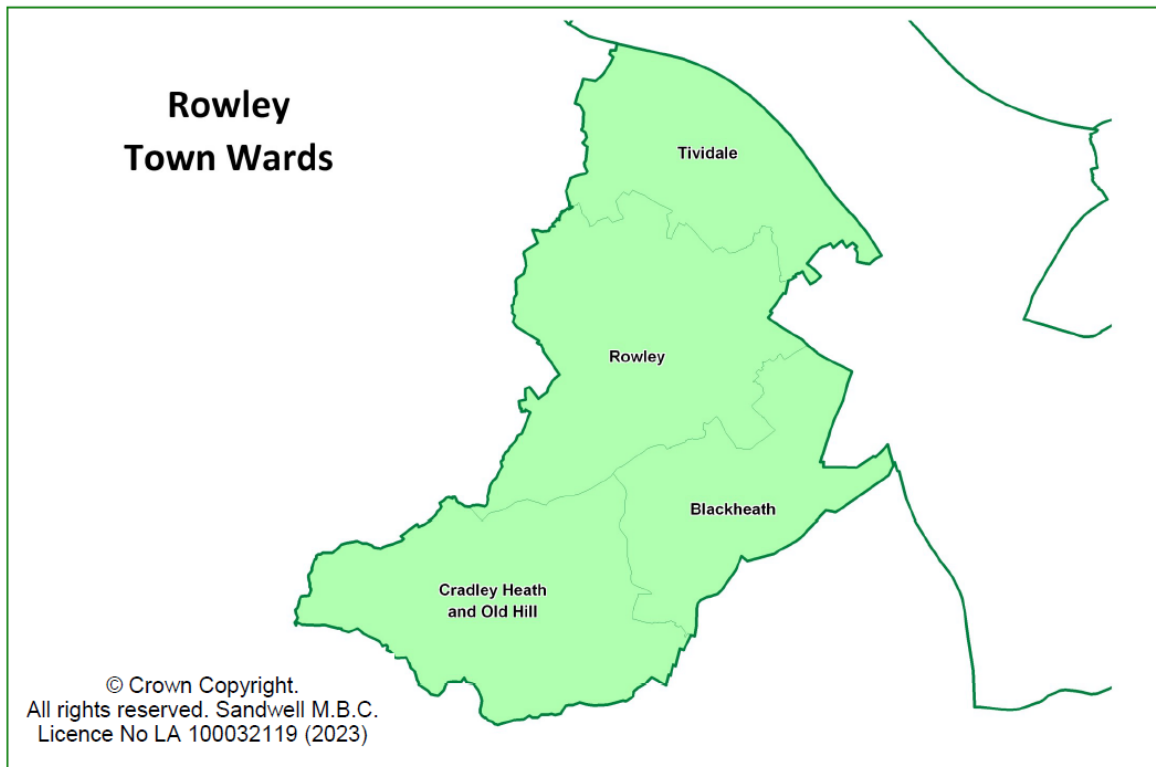
9.167 An increase in the number of banks and / or the introduction of a post office would mean that certain groups of the community are not excluded, and people can continue to have a physical facility to deal with financial cash transactions.

Proposals

9.168 The following locations offer opportunities for future improvements and additions to the public realm and character of the area.

Site	Location	Indicative Land Use
CH1	The wider area outside the Windmill centre	The environmental quality of the area is generally very poor, with most of the shop frontages in need of significant maintenance and modernisation. Opportunities will be sought to secure funding to improve the appearance of shop frontages and general environmental quality of the area
CH2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Former Lloyds Bank (Sampson Lloyd), Cape Hill • Waterloo Hotel, Shireland Road • Mecca Bingo Club, Windmill Lane • Cape House, Cape Hill / Durban Road 	There are four listed buildings within the centre, including the Grade II* Waterloo Hotel building. Unfortunately, these listed buildings are not being utilised to their potential and their architectural quality is let down by their vacancy (all vacant - 2023). Opportunities will be sought to assist developers with the upkeep of the Listed Building when planning permission is sought.
CH3	The wider area outside the Windmill centre	The type and quality of paving varies across the centre; Shireland Road and Waterloo Road feature mostly red and grey bricked paving, whilst Cape Hill Road comprises a mixture of concrete and dark brick. The centre would benefit from a consistent paving scheme of higher quality

Cradley Heath



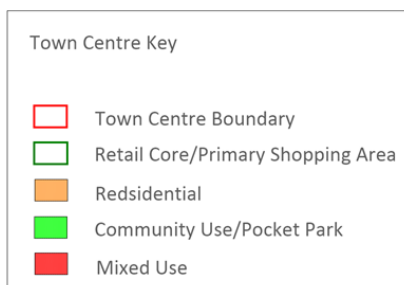
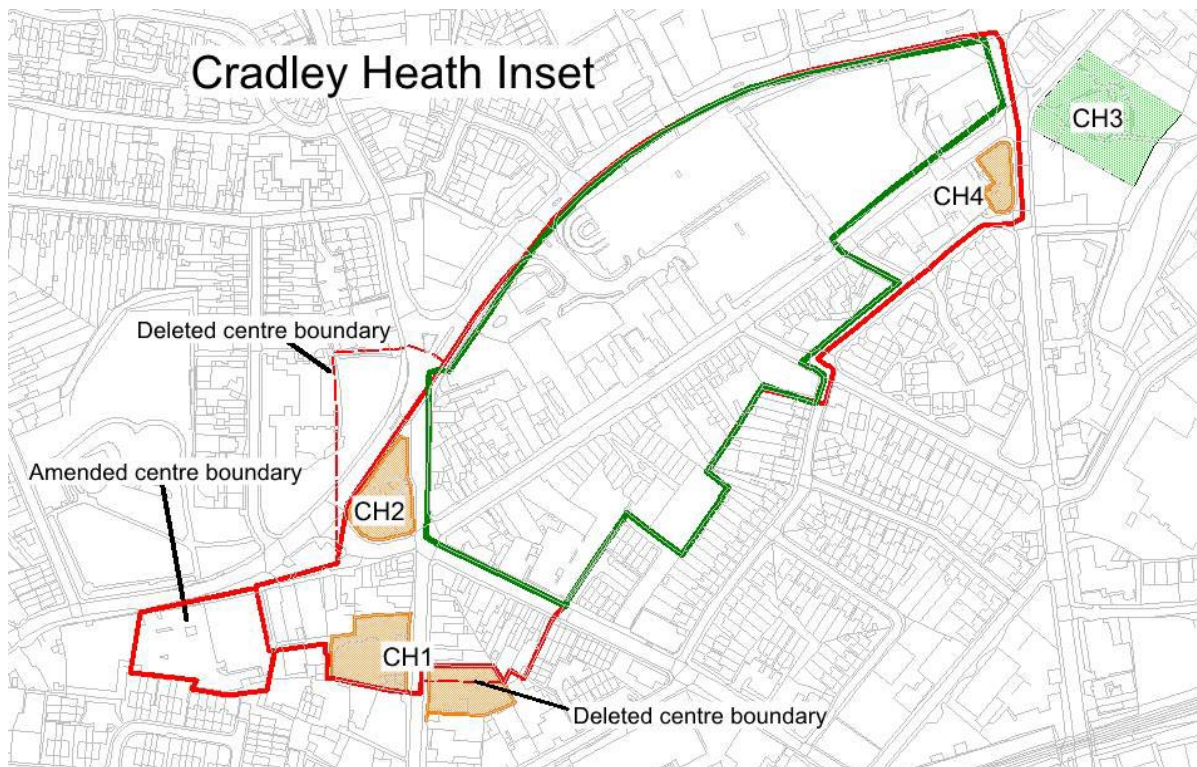
- 9.169 Cradley Heath is a linear town in the Rowley Town area, one of Sandwell's six historic centres, and lies in the southwest corner of the borough. Cradley Heath is in the Cradley Heath and Old Hill Ward.
- 9.170 It is the largest ward in Rowley with 14,961 residents, which has increased by around 10.3% since the 2011 census. This echoes changes in Sandwell as a whole, which has seen an 11% rise in population.
- 9.171 Cradley Heath and Old Hill Ward is the ninth most populous in Sandwell. It has a high prevalence of single person households (non-pensioners). At 20.7% this compares with a town average for Rowley of 16.9%.
- 9.172 Cradley Heath's population is 77.6% white British / white Other, 4.4% Mixed, 11% Asian or Asian British and 4.2% Black or Black British groups: Sandwell's population overall is 57.3% white British / white other¹⁶¹.

¹⁶¹ Sandwell Trends – <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/ethnicity-religion-country-of-birth/>

(In 2021, 57.3% (195,620) of usual residents in Sandwell identified their ethnic group within the high-level "White" category, compared with 81.7% in England & Wales.)

- 9.173 19.5% of the residents of Cradley Heath and Old Hill are retired. The proportion of residents who are long-term sick or disabled in Rowley is highest in Cradley Heath and Old Hill ward (6.1%).
- 9.174 Cradley Heath and Old Hill has a lower level of owner-occupation than the Borough average. It has the highest proportion of social and private renting and shared ownership in the town. The proportion of households renting from a private landlord or letting agency has increased from 12.5% in 2011 to 17.8% in 2021.
- 9.175 53.4% of the population Cradley Heath and Old Hill ward are economically active and the proportion of those who are unemployed is lower than the average for Sandwell as a whole (4.2% compared to 4.5%).

Figure 8 - Cradley Heath Town Centre



Retail and Town Centre Uses

- 9.176 The centre has a large 'Tesco Extra' store, which acts as an 'anchor' and generates many pedestrian and vehicle trips to the town. However, away from this immediate area, activity drops off significantly. The environment near to the superstore has good quality public realm with opportunities for visitors to sit and interact. Away from this immediate area the townscape is less welcoming, and parts of the town have poor-quality and aging shop fronts, with several shuttered and vacant units and little opportunity for public interaction.
- 9.177 In other towns the arrival of a major food retailer has complemented and boosted trade in independent stores throughout the centre. In Cradley Heath, however, this does not seem to be the case. Here, the size of the Tesco store and the pre-existing fragility of the town's traditional retail offer means that Tesco offers a one-stop retail destination that has drawn activity away from the rest of the town.
- 9.178 Vacancies have been rising in the centre, particularly in the Market Square, indicating a period of decline. This centre, like many others, needs to move away from being principally concerned with retailing and towards fostering non-transactional interactions and providing more residential opportunities on unoccupied sites and upper floors. The vacant commercial premises and sites in the town, if redeveloped for residential use, will bolster the remaining retail and commercial functions.
- 9.179 Cradley Heath, along with other towns in Sandwell and the Black Country, shows no capacity for additional comparison retail and limited convenience retail as far as can be forecast. To protect the centre's remaining vitality and viability, out-of-centre and edge-of-centre town centre uses should be robustly tested through impact and sequential tests before permission is granted, with retail development focused on redevelopment and reconfiguration / extension of existing capacity in the centre.

SWOT

- 9.180 The Centres Study identified the following characteristics for Cradley Heath:

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within walking distance from a transport interchange with rail and bus facilities • Significant levels of free parking at Tesco 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Declining uses by number of units and floorspace • Increasing vacancy floorspace

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very strong anchor with Tesco Extra. 	
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote refurbishment and modernisation of frontages • Improve street furniture and other aesthetic elements. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued decrease of all uses • Complete decline of centre.

Aspirations

- 9.181 An increase in street furniture and other decorative schemes such as planting would make the area both more attractive and more functional.
- 9.182 The centre's frontages need refurbishment and modernisation to improve their current tired and neglected appearance.
- 9.183 Rowley Regis Towns Fund includes an improved scheme called "*Rowley Connected*", aimed at promoting improvements to walking and cycling across Rowley. A committed element of this scheme involves a project to create safe cycle linkages along Cradley Heath High Street, continuing via Lower High Street and as far as Cradley Heath interchange. This work is scheduled for completion in 2024.
- 9.184 As part of the "*Rowley Connected*" scheme, there are plans under consideration to upgrade and resurface an informal footpath connecting St Luke's Church with the open space at Bearmore playing fields, and for this ultimately to be extended to provide a low-traffic route between Cradley Heath and Old Hill centres, for walkers and cyclists.
- 9.185 Rowley Regis Satellite Education Hub has funding from the Towns Fund and will provide education and training facilities for young people and adults. Although just outside the current Centre boundary, immediately beyond LIDL and opposite Mary Macarthur Gardens on Lower High Street, it will add to the vitality and viability of Cradley Heath by promoting economic growth, rectifying skills shortages and contributing to a suitably skilled workforce. It will also strengthen the formation of a nascent growth hub centred around Cradley Heath interchange.

Opportunities for improvement

- 9.186 The Centres Study Health Check noted that frontages in the centre appear dated and tired-looking. Obtaining funding to upgrade frontages, the general streetscape and street scene

improvements would all make the centre appear more welcoming, improve dwell times and reinforce the non-transactional interactions the centre needs to improve its vitality and viability and trade on its excellent connectivity.

9.187 The Centres Study suggested the southern town centre boundary be amended; that Lidl (Lower High Street) be added, the area of St Anne's Road removed due to a lack of any commercial units; and that the boundary should end at the post office on Cradley Road again due to a lack of occupied commercial units.

Proposals

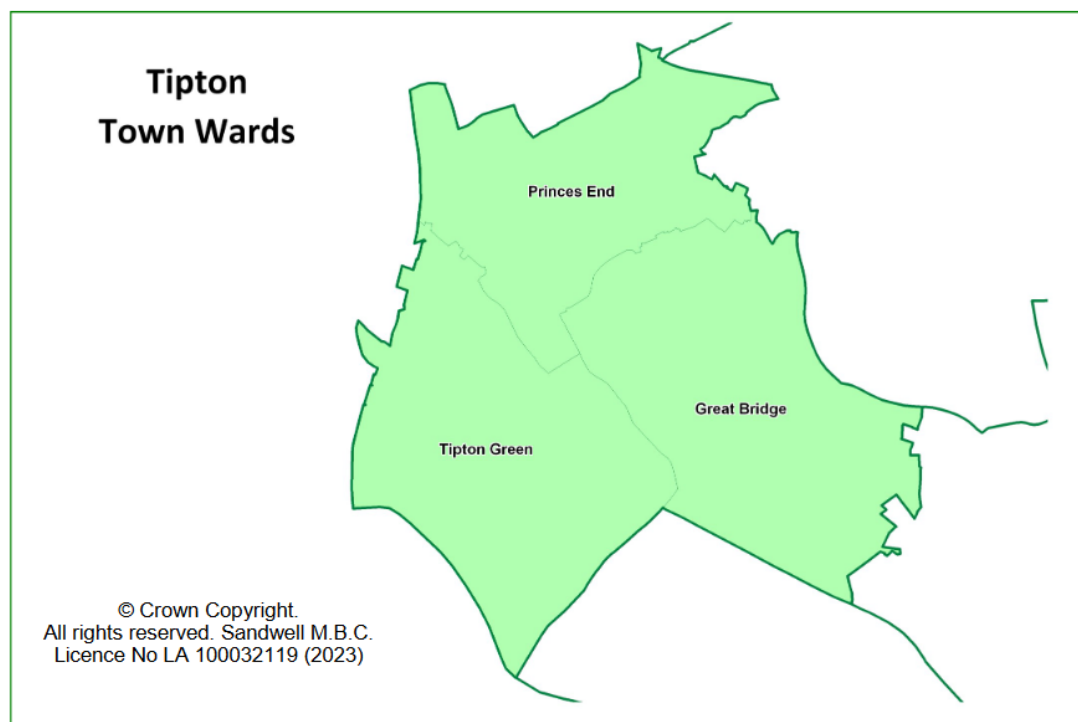
9.188 The following table identifies locations that offer opportunities for future improvements and additions to the public realm and character of the area, as well as smaller-scale development opportunities.

Site	Location	Indicative Land Use
CrH1	<p>A substantial development opportunity on the site of the former Majestic Cinema and its car park at Cradley Road.</p> <p>These sites are a high priority for development for two reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • they have lain vacant, derelict and overgrown for some time and have been the subject of numerous complaints, and contribute to an air of neglect and decline in this part of the centre; • new development will link to recent and proposed residential growth zones south west of the town centre between Chester Road and Woods Lane. <p>These sites are in the process of delivering a total of around 250 homes and will transform a former industrial area into an aspirational residential neighbourhood in a sustainable</p>	<p>This is suitable for residential development, with an indicative capacity of up to 50 dwellings, dependant on house type and design.</p> <p>A mix of uses may be possible, with limited commercial opportunities on the ground floor due to the limited capacity in the centre, and residential above as is found in adjacent sites.</p>

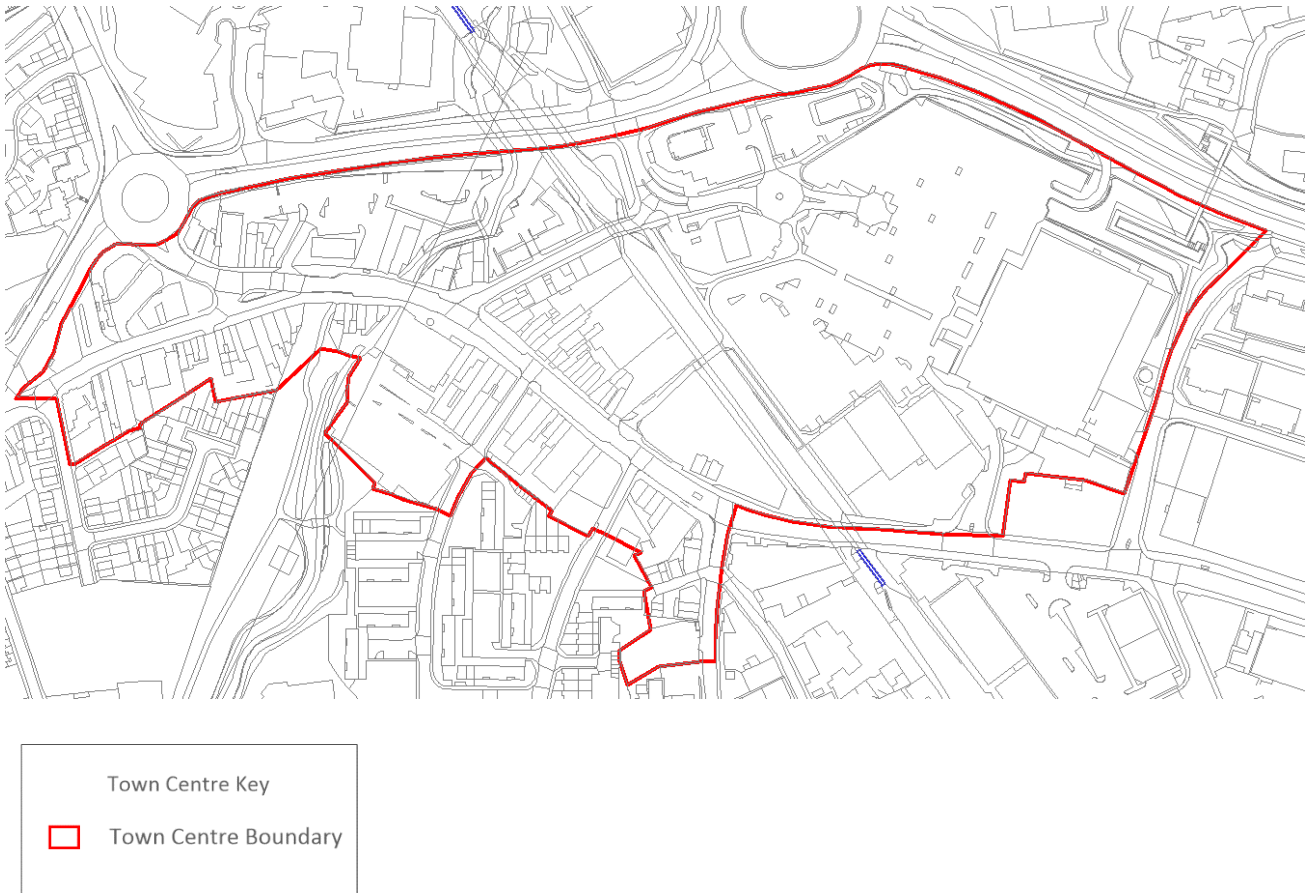
Site	Location	Indicative Land Use
	location that will help to support the viability of the town centre.	
CrH2	At the western entrance to the centre a used car lot and hand car wash operation occupy land at High Street / St Anne's Road / Lower High Street. These currently have a low-quality visual appearance and do not contribute positively to the character and amenity of the centre.	An opportunity exists to redevelop this gateway site, possibly for residential use, or to improve and maintain the visual quality of the existing uses. Funding opportunities will be sought to this end.
CrH3	St Luke's church closed in 2014 and was demolished due to rising repair costs. The site is a tranquil green location and contains mature trees in the northern part of the town. The Council will explore with the Church Commissioners how to sympathetically improve the site and maintain public access as an asset for the community.	Any proposals must respect the site's sensitive former use, as well as the status of the adjoining graveyard. The aim is to create an informal quiet area of nature and contemplation for the northern end of Cradley Heath. This will form a counterpoint to Mary MacArthur Gardens in the south of Cradley Heath. External funding mechanisms will be explored. As part of the approved Rowley Regis Towns Fund "Rowley Connected" scheme, there are plans under consideration to upgrade and resurface an informal footpath that connects St Luke's Church with the open space at Bearmore playing fields. The intention is for this ultimately be extended to provide a low-traffic route between Cradley Heath and Old Hill centres for walkers and cyclists.
CrH4	At the northern entrance to the town adjacent to No1 High Street, a site	Suitable for residential development of high quality design and materials to reflect its gateway location. Alternatively, development as a 'pocket park' would

Site	Location	Indicative Land Use
	currently set out as grass with anti-vehicle trespass mounding	<p>augment the currently very limited other opportunities in the centre for non-transactional socialising / amenity use.</p> <p>If the site is developed for commercial use, this aspect should be limited to reflect the lack of retail capacity in the centre.</p> <p>Encouragement will be given to using upper floors for residential use to bolster the centre and make best use of its sustainably-located position.</p>

Great Bridge



- 9.189 Great Bridge is the main town centre in Tipton and makes up one of its three wards. The population of Tipton in 2021 was 44,125, making up 12.9% of Sandwell's total population. Of this total, 19% of Tipton's population are from ethnic minority backgrounds.
- 9.190 The population profile of the town in terms of age structure is very similar to that of Sandwell overall. The main difference is a slightly larger proportion of residents aged under 16. Tipton also has the lowest number of people aged 65 and over of any part of Sandwell.
- 9.191 Tipton's Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index and Income Deprivation Affecting Older People Index Scores put it in the 20% most deprived areas in England for both indices.
- 9.192 Healthy life expectancy was statistically and significantly lower than the average for England in all three wards in Tipton. Healthy life expectancy for both women and men was lower than the present state pension age (66) in all three wards and when compared to the average in England; this suggests that people may not necessarily be healthy enough to work until the state pension age.

Figure 9 - Great Bridge Town Centre

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Retail and Town Centre Uses

- 9.193 The centre is currently designated as a town centre in the Sandwell Local Plan. The current boundary of the centre accurately reflects the extent of the retail area and does not require consolidation.
- 9.194 The town centre designation does include Great Bridge Retail Park. Whilst the retail park and the main centre operate independently, there appears little benefit in removing the former from the Town Centre boundary. However, better integration between the two elements is required for the retail centre to truly form part of the town centre.
- 9.195 There is no Primary Shopping Area boundary currently defined, and it is not recommended that one is needed, as the role of the centre is primarily in retail use across all areas.
- 9.196 Great Bridge currently has 86 commercial units with a total floorspace of 13,850m². 2009 data appears to include Great Bridge Retail Park as well, which is not included within the

2019 GOAD data¹⁶². As such, a comparison of the number of units and their floorspace over the past ten years is not directly available. However, the 2009 study recorded 90 units; it is likely that this comprised 86 units in the traditional centre and four in the Retail Park, meaning that the traditional centre has remained the same size. Two drive-through restaurants have been added to the retail park in the interim (these were not mentioned in the 2009 report). In 2009 there were four vacant units and there are now five vacant units. Therefore, the centre has remained generally consistent in size and stability in terms of the level of vacancies over the last ten years.

- 9.197 The various commercial uses in Great Bridge are evenly spaced through the centre with no clear patterns or grouping. The units themselves are typically small (<160m²) and are grouped in terraces, occasionally broken by larger stores, lanes, or empty areas. There are very few community uses within or near to the centre, with only a library and medical centre in evidence. There are seven main national multiples (excluding the Retail Park), which are evenly distributed around the centre (these include a Lidl store and various bookmakers).
- 9.198 Comparison goods retailers occupy 20% of the centre's units, well below the UK national average of 36%. When comparing floorspace, comparison goods make up 32% of the centre's total, which is the same as the national average. This level of comparison goods is above average when compared to nearby town centres, suggesting a stronger market presence. Convenience goods account for 15% of Great Bridge's commercial units, which aligns with the national average; however, the floorspace of these units makes up 21% of the centre's total, which is 12% above the national average. This over-representation of convenience goods can mostly be attributed to the relatively large 1,380m² Lidl store, which represents 48% of all convenience floorspace in the centre. Again, this high level of convenience floorspace is typical for such town centres, which tend to have one or several large floorplate supermarkets.
- 9.199 The floorspace levels of retail services are below the national average, at 11% compared to 14%. However, in terms of number of units, levels of retail services are higher than average at 22% compared to 7% nationally. This shows that there is a high volume of small floorplate retail service units, a trend throughout most local town centres. 11 of these 18 units are hairdressers.

¹⁶² Experian's GOAD plans show the fascia name, retail category, floor space and exact location of all retail outlets and vacant premises. Key location factors such as pedestrian zones, road crossings, bus stops and car parks are also featured.

- 9.200 Leisure services closely align with the national average, with the number of units making up 28% of the centre's total (3% above average), and the floorspace totalling 21% of the centre's total (3% below average). These levels are above average when Great Bridge is compared to other town centres and suggest a comparably healthier leisure market. However, it is worth noting that 50% of these leisure services are takeaways; this limits the evening economy-generating uses to the three restaurants in the centre.
- 9.201 In accordance with Hot Food Takeaway Policy SDM6, the threshold for Great Bridge Town Centre is 7% and as of 2023 there are seven hot food takeaways in the centre, representing 7.69% of the total number of units. Therefore, Great Bridge is over the threshold for the number of hot food takeaways in the town centre.

Facilities Provision

- 9.14 There are very few community uses within or near to the centre, with only a library and medical centre in evidence.

Accessibility

- 9.202 Although there are no new transport proposes for Great Bridge itself, the centre will benefit from the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro line.
- 9.203 The centre is dominated by road traffic, to the significant detriment of pedestrian movement. Pavements vary from being wide (i.e., outside Lidl) to narrow (around Market Place) and sometimes pedestrians must contend with cars parked on the pavement. The roads, in addition to being busy with traffic, are also relatively narrow and there is no cycle infrastructure, making the centre difficult to access for cyclists.
- 9.204 Crossing the road is only possible at signalled pedestrian crossings, which are relatively far apart (there are four within the centre). They are generally well-located; one aligns with the footbridge to the retail park, and one with the market, although the crossing to Aldi is more difficult, being a staggered and indirect one.
- 9.205 This level of inconsistency and lack of provision makes the centre particularly difficult to access for those with disabilities. The footbridge provides a direct, though unappealing, link to the retail park, though this is DDA accessible.
- 9.206 Dudley Port Rail Station is 0.6m west of the town centre and the nearby Black Country Route provides access to both the M5 and M6 motorways.

Accessibility – Provision for cyclists

- 9.207 There are several proposed SCWIP routes - CR 3, CR 14 and a West Midlands LCWIP route from Burnt Tree to West Bromwich via Great Bridge and Carters Green.

Environmental Quality

9.17 The environmental quality of the town centre is generally poor, with most of the shop frontages in need of significant maintenance and modernisation. Despite having a lower than average number of vacant units (proportionally), the low quality of the occupied properties makes the area feel like it is in a state of decline, despite figures suggesting otherwise.

SWOT

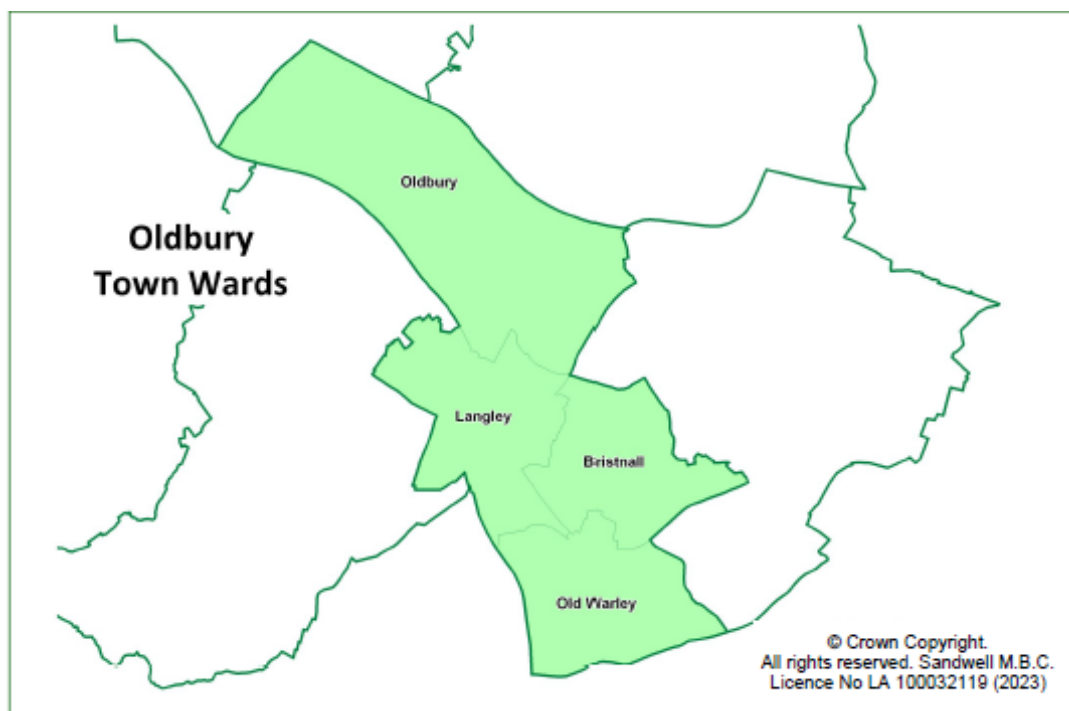
9.208 The Centres Study Health checks noted the following characteristics for Great Bridge:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low vacancy rate • Anchored by Lidl and outdoor market • Healthy diversity of uses • Ample car parking 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre is dominated by heavy through traffic • Poor public realm • Poor physical environment • Poor quality pedestrian link to the retail park • Offer is limited to cheaper goods and services (e.g., only a discount supermarket, leisure sector dominated by take-aways, markets focus on cheap goods) • General lack of community facilities
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Outdoor Market site could be physically improved • The public realm and built form could be improved throughout • A better pedestrian environment and pedestrian prioritisation would be welcomed, alongside better cycle and DDA provision • Large cleared site at eastern edge of centre – has planning permission for 48 apartments 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Great Bridge Retail Park draws trade away from the traditional centre and is reliant on private car use

Aspirations

- 9.209 The health checks identified that there is limited evening activity due to the lack of leisure facilities around Great Bridge, including the strict definition of leisure as well as restaurants.
- 9.210 Opportunities for funding to improve shop fronts and townscape quality should be investigated. Generally, frontages within Great Bridge are in a poor condition, which may adversely affect its attractiveness to potential new occupiers or for new development / investment.
- 9.211 There should also be opportunity to provide improved public and active transport, to provide more cycle lanes.

Oldbury



- 9.212 Oldbury Town is centrally located and is the administrative centre for Sandwell. It contains the wards of Bristnall, Oldbury, Langley and Old Warley. It borders Birmingham and Dudley to the south and southwest.
- 9.213 The population of Oldbury town in mid-2020 was estimated to be 53,707¹⁶³. Oldbury town has seen an increase in all age groups between 2011 and 2021, but the rise in those aged 65 and over is smaller (+2.6% and +5.3% for under 20s and 20-64s, but only 0.5% for those aged 65 and over).
- 9.214 Oldbury Ward has the largest population, with 15,607 residents.
- 9.215 41.5% of Oldbury town's population are from ethnic minorities; this is lower than the borough's average of 48% and higher than the 26% for England and Wales¹⁶⁴.
- 9.216 90% of the Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Oldbury are in the 50% most deprived LSOA in England (Sandwell - 86.0%)¹⁶⁵.

¹⁶³ Sandwell Trends - <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/oldbury/>

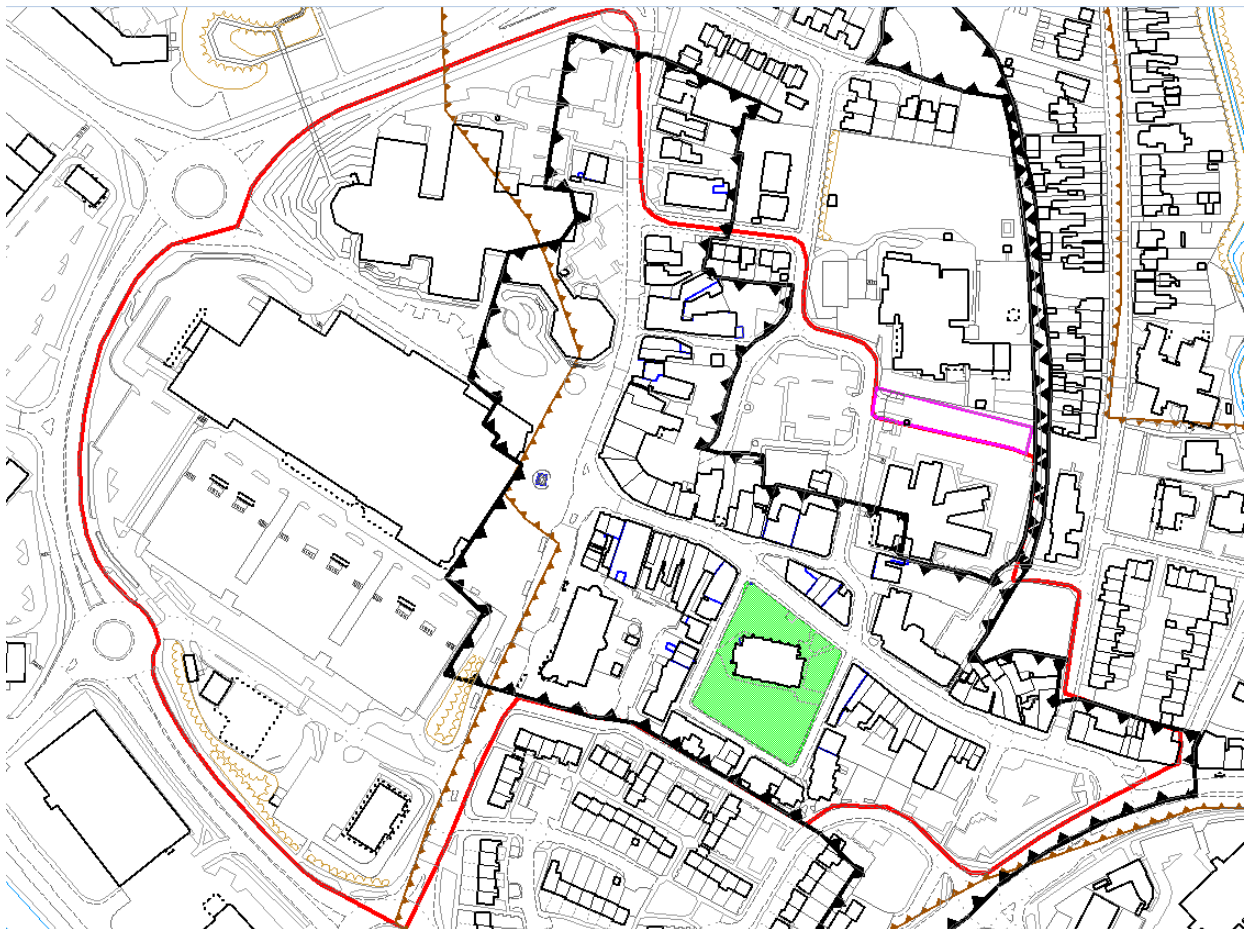
¹⁶⁴ Sandwell Trends – Census Sandwell Profile - <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2023/04/Sandwell-Census-Profile-2021.pdf>

¹⁶⁵ Sandwell Trends - <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2022/09/Oldbury-Town-Profile-September-2022.pdf>







9.217 Of the six main towns, Oldbury town has the greatest proportion of residents who are economically active (60.3%) and the second highest proportion of residents in full-time employment (34.8%).

9.218 Oldbury town has the highest level of owner-occupation of the six towns in the Borough. The proportion of households in privately rented accommodation has increased to 18.5%, which is similar to Sandwell as a whole. It has the lowest proportion of social rented housing of the six towns.

Figure 10 - Oldbury Town Centre



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Town Centre Key	
	Town Centre Boundary
	Proposed Town Centre Extension
	Community Open Space
	Area of Potential Archaeological Importance
	Conservation Area
	Listed Building

Existing Centres Boundary

- 9.219 The centre is designated as a town centre in the Black Country Core Strategy centres hierarchy and it is proposed to continue with this designation.
- 9.220 The town centre boundary is well-contained to the west by the Oldbury Ring Road. To the east the boundary follows the length of Birmingham Street to its junction on Birmingham Road. The Centres Study¹⁶⁶ identified that the boundary could be altered to include the whole health centre rather than the boundary intersecting it currently.

Primary Shopping Area

- 9.221 Oldbury Town Centre does not have an existing Primary Shopping Area (PSA) / Retail Core. Due to the nature of Oldbury as more of a service driven Town Centre, a PSA / Retail Core is not considered necessary.

Retail and Town Centre Uses

- 9.222 Oldbury is the only town centre in the Oldbury wards. It predominantly consists of the Sainsbury's supermarket / parking, the Sandwell Council offices and a variety of commercial units along Halesowen Street, Church Street and Birmingham Street.
- 9.223 Latest available information¹⁶⁷ details that the centre in total currently has 95 outlets with a combined floorspace of approximately 25,500 sqm. Since 2016 there has been an increase of eight outlets and some 2,350 sqm in terms of floorspace. The increase in floorspace is seen across all goods categories except for leisure services. The centre currently has 14 vacant outlets, compared to the nine reported in 2016.
- 9.224 The Black Country Centres Study 2020¹⁶⁸ identified that Oldbury comprised 7% comparison goods of Oldbury's number of commercial units, 8% below the national average. Whereas convenience goods comprised 47% of the centre's total commercial floorspace compared to 9% nationally. Sainsbury's represents 97% of the convenience goods floorspace, accounting for the small number of units but high volume of floorspace.
- 9.225 Financial and business services and retail services provide a more than average number of units (12% and 17% above the average respectively) but provide floorspace figures comparable to the average, suggesting a high volume of small floorplate stores. Leisure services are under-represented both in terms of number of units and their floorspace.

¹⁶⁶ Black Country Centres Study 2020, Volume 2: Healthchecks

¹⁶⁷ Experian Goad data for Oldbury (March 2022)

¹⁶⁸ Black Country Centres Study 2020, Volume 2: Healthchecks

9.226 In accordance with Policy SDM6, the HFT threshold for Oldbury town centre is 7%; in 2022 the percentage of HFT in the centre was 5.7%.

Facilities Provision

9.227 The centre is supported by a small range of community facilities including five churches, two schools, a library, health centre and Sandwell Council's main offices.

Accessibility

9.228 Oldbury Town centre is close to a major motorway junction (M5, Junction 2). It is served by Sandwell and Dudley railway station, which lies on the edge of the town centre, offering direct inter-city trains to Birmingham International Airport, London and the north-west.

9.229 Oldbury bus interchange is situated in the middle of the town and is well-connected to the wider area, with excellent links to Walsall, West Bromwich and Birmingham.

9.230 There are two core walking zones around Sandwell and Dudley and Langley Railway Stations.

Accessibility – Provision for Cyclists

9.231 Oldbury Town Centre is served by the National Cycle Network Route No.81.

9.232 Proposed SCWIP route 4 A4034, from Oldbury Town Centre to Blackheath Town Centre via Birchley Island, will see a major junction improvement. The cycle route is at preliminary design stage and will be delivered incrementally.

9.233 Another West Midlands LCWIP cycle route runs from Sandwell and Dudley Railway Station to Cradley Heath via Langley and Blackheath. This route connects to proposed SCWIP cycle route 5 from Oldbury Town Centre to Bearwood via the Sandwell Aquatic Centre

9.234 SCWIP Cycle Route 6 A457 (Air Quality Hot Spot) Oldbury Town Centre to Smethwick Galton Bridge Railway Station is currently at Strategic Outline Business Case stage; the section from Smethwick Galton Bridge to Rolfe Street Railway Station was delivered under Towns Fund (accelerated fund). Further phases to the junction of Grove Lane and Cranford Street are being delivered via Towns Fund over the next three financial years. The route will connect with West Midlands Metropolitan University Hospital and Birmingham Cycle Network

9.235 SCWIP cycle route 3 is proposed from Great Bridge Town Centre to Roebuck Lane (National Cycle Route 5) via Brandon Way, Kelvin Way and Kenrick Way

Accessibility – Transport Proposals

- 9.236 The A4123 is subject to a proposed multimodal corridor improvement project that intersects with the A4034 at Birchley Island. Phase one has been delivered, from Tipton Road to Burnt Tree junction, and Phase 2 (Burnt Tree junction to Lower City Road) is under development. This route will be delivered incrementally up to Hagley Road
- 9.237 There are bus priority measures proposed from Dudley Road, through the junction of Oldbury Ringway / Freeth Street.
- 9.238 The Birchley Island / M5 Junction 2 link project¹⁶⁹ lies at the intersection of the M5, A4123 and A4034 in Sandwell. These routes connect Birmingham, Blackheath, Dudley, Oldbury, Walsall, West Bromwich and Wolverhampton to each other as well as linking much of the southern part of the Black Country to the national motorway network.
- 9.239 Works to improve the junction and its accessibility were scheduled to start in 2023 but this has now been pushed back to 2024 / 2025. Several upgrades will be made to this junction, including the addition of a fourth lane for all traffic; extending the length of Lane 3; creating segregated cycle tracks / footways; installing controlled crossings; and road widening. These works will address ongoing issues at the junction and improve road user experience.
- 9.240 The junction improvement is a crucial part of the Black Country transport network and is of importance to both commuters and businesses.

Environmental Quality

- 9.241 Existing green space designations are supported and the valuable contribution that they make is recognised.
- 9.242 There is important established green planting and tree coverage that contributes to the setting of areas and public spaces in Oldbury. This includes areas around Sainsburys and the council offices and a variety of public spaces and they provide valuable areas for people to stop and rest.
- 9.243 Other areas on Birmingham Road could benefit from public realm and shop front improvements, which could make the centre more attractive, helping to attract new businesses to the area and reduce the number of vacant commercial units.

¹⁶⁹ <https://www.blackcountrytransport.org.uk/projects/birchley-island-a4123-phase-1.html>

Historic Environment Allocations

- 9.244 Oldbury Conservation Area was formally designated in March 1974 and reassessed in 2008. Currently the Oldbury Conservation Area centres on Church Square and Unity Place, which is the focal point of the core town centre. The area was substantially built before 1857 at a time when Oldbury was a nationally important industrial centre. This is reflected in the quality of the buildings, many of which, by virtue of their individual character and their relationship to the surrounding spaces and buildings, make a positive contribution to the quality of the environment.
- 9.245 The Town Centre features 19 Grade II and one Grade II* listed buildings, with most of them falling within the conservation area. Many of the listed buildings and others present attractive early to mid-19th Century styles that provide the centre with a distinct character.

SWOT

- 9.246 The Centres Study Health checks noted the following characteristics for Oldbury:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally high-quality environment; • Historic buildings give character to the centre. 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of comparison goods stores; • Heavily reliant on Sainsbury's as an anchor; • Poor links to the Retail Park
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create better pedestrian links to Oldbury Green Retail Park; • Encourage more comparison goods retailers; • Enhance shop frontages along Birmingham Street. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retail park continues to impact centre and reduce comparison offering; • Complete withdrawal of comparison goods and other traditional high street uses

Aspirations

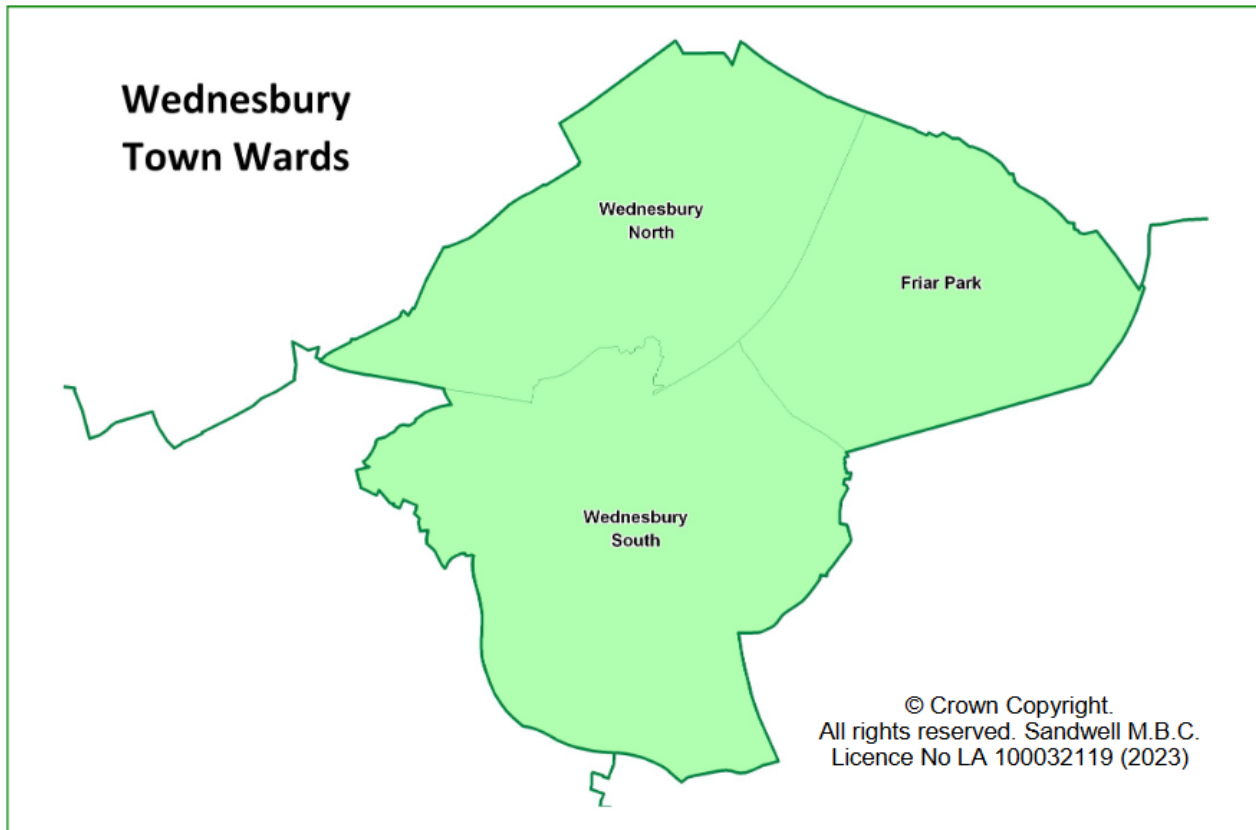
- 9.247 The large number of bus services and levels of parking make Oldbury very accessible; however, consideration should be given to better integrating the Town Centre with Oldbury Green retail park.

- 9.248 The upgrade of building stock within Oldbury Town Centre to encourage businesses to grow and create new jobs, considering the Conservation Area designation, will be supported.
- 9.249 Opportunities to provide improved public and active transport, to provide more cycle lanes should be investigated.
- 9.250 Encouraging active uses towards the eastern end of Birmingham Road would help to increase the sense of safety. Improving the environment on Birmingham Road may also help to attract businesses.
- 9.251 Residential use on the upper floors in Oldbury Town Centre is considered an appropriate use.
- 9.252 Opportunities will be sought to secure funding to improve the appearance of shop frontages and the general environmental quality of the area.
- 9.253 The Council have secured funding from UK Shared Prosperity funding to create a work business hub at Jack Judge House.

Proposals

Site	Location	Indicative Land Use
OL1	Town Centre	An amended boundary is proposed, as shown in Figure 10, to include the whole health centre on Birmingham Street.

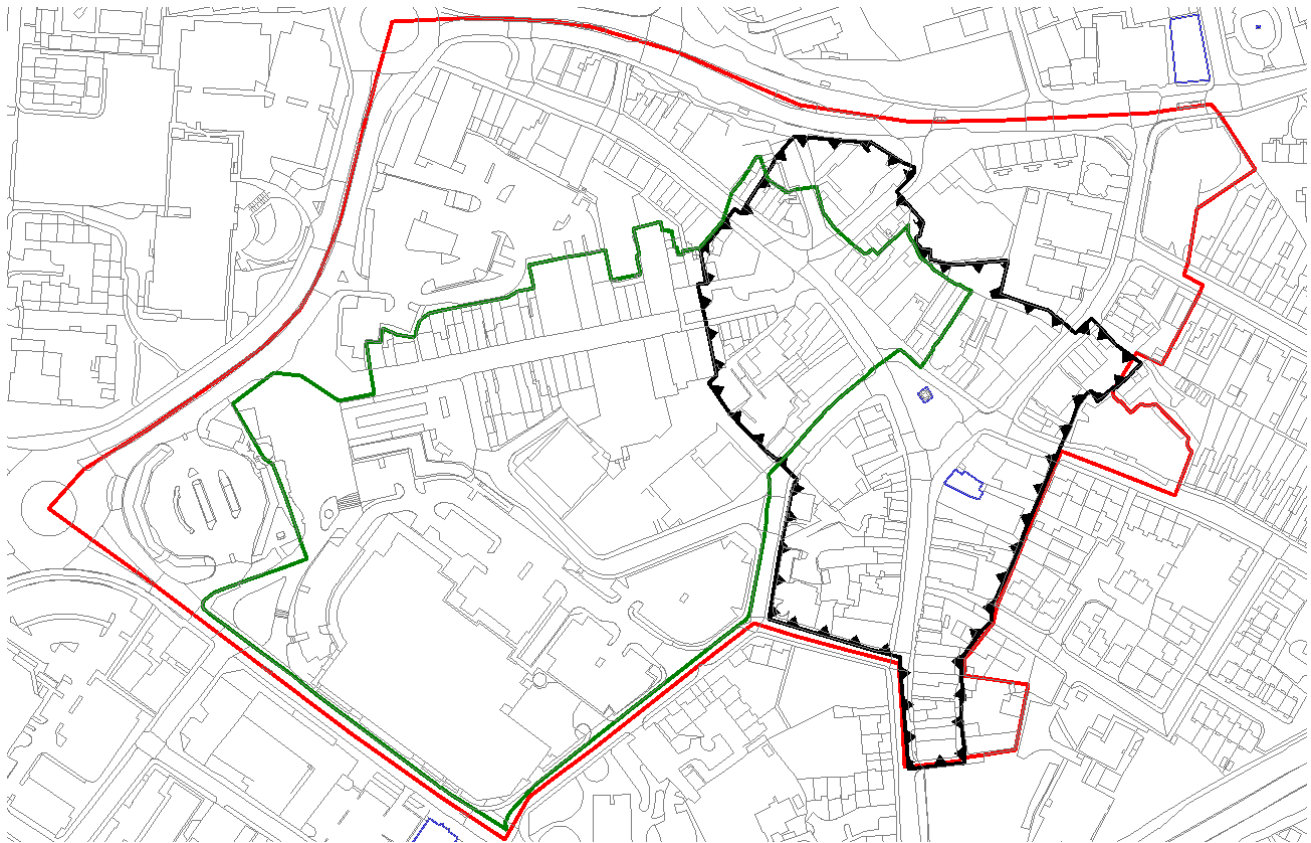
Wednesbury Town



- 9.254 Wednesbury is a market town in the West Midlands, located approximately ten miles northwest of Birmingham and six miles southeast of Wolverhampton. Wednesbury is one of the six main towns of Sandwell, and is in the north of the borough, approximately three miles north of West Bromwich. The town contains the wards of Friar Park, Wednesbury North and Wednesbury South.
- 9.255 The population of Wednesbury in mid-2020 was estimated to be 39,491 with 19,503 males (49.4%), and 19,988 females (50.6%). Wednesbury has the smallest population of the six main towns in Sandwell. 18.6% of population are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Wednesbury has a proportionally older age profile than Sandwell, but a younger age profile than England on average.
- 9.256 Overall, Wednesbury is more deprived than England and compared to the rest of Sandwell, and its deprivation score would put it in the 20% most deprived areas in England. 26% of its residents are living in income deprived households and 13% are claiming job seekers' allowance.
- 9.257 Female and male healthy life expectancy were statistically significantly lower than the average for England in all three wards in Wednesbury. Healthy life expectancy for both

females and males was lower than the present state pension age (66) for all three wards and compared to the rest of England; this indicates that people may not necessarily be healthy enough to work until the state pension age.

Figure 11 - Wednesbury Town Centre



Town Centre Key	
	Town Centre Boundary
	Retail Core / Primary Shopping Area
	Area of Potential Archaeological Importance
	Conservation Area
	Listed Building

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Retail and Town Centre Uses

9.258 Wednesbury currently (2023) has a total of 176 commercial units, with a total floorspace of 34,720m²; this compares to 183 units and 29,154m² in 2009, revealing a relatively large increase in floorspace but a small decrease in overall units in the last ten years. Comparison goods units make up 28% of the centre's units, compared to the UK national average of 36%. When comparing floorspace, comparison goods make up 25% of the centre's total, which is 7% below the national average. A small level of comparison goods is expected in

this type of centre. This sector has declined by nine units but has maintained its share of floorspace since 2009.

- 9.259 Convenience goods account for 11% of Wednesbury's commercial units, which is 4% below national average. However, the floorspace of these units makes up 32% of the centre's total, which is 23% above average. This over-representation of convenience goods can mostly be attributed to the large 7,020 sq. m. Morrisons store, which represents 64% of all convenience floorspace in the centre. Large floorplate anchor convenience stores are very typical in these types of town centre. Convenience goods outlets have decreased by four units, but floorspace has increased significantly by 5,211m² since 2009.
- 9.260 The floorspace proportion of other retail services stands at 10%, which is below the national average of 14%; however, in terms of the number of units in such uses, retail services occupy 20% compared to a national average occupancy rate of 7%. This shows that there is a high volume of small floorplate retail service units, typical for this type of town centre. These are mostly hairdressers and beauty salons.
- 9.261 Leisure services are under-represented in terms of both number of units and floorspace, falling 8% and 7% below the national average respectively. Over a third (11) of leisure services are takeaways, with only one restaurant. However, this restaurant and the five pubs / bars that are evenly distributed in the centre could help to generate an evening economy. Collectively the service industry has lost four units and 1,767m² since 2009.
- 9.262 Vacancies have increased from 18 units in 2009 to 28 in 2019, or in floorspace terms from 1,914m² in 2009 to 4,040m² in 2019. This currently represents 15% of units, which is above the national average of 9%. This level of vacancy is concerning, especially given its significant increase since 2009. In terms of floorspace though, it represents 12% which is very similar to the national average of 11%.
- 9.263 Retail, leisure and business and financial services are evenly distributed around the centre with no specific areas where these are grouped. Contrasting this, comparison and convenience goods are concentrated towards Union Street although they are also present throughout the centre. Whilst Union Street has been a focus for comparison goods, this is also experiencing a higher number of vacant units. The centre features a diverse range of community uses, including an art gallery, leisure centre, library and primary school. National multiples are well represented and include several high street banks and supermarkets.
- 9.264 Wednesbury has an attractive environment and retains its market town role and related identity. Market Place and the buildings around it provide the historic focus for this and represent a distinctive presence, with its historic triangular space and street frontages.

9.265 In accordance with Policy SDM6, the threshold for Wednesbury Town Centre is 7% and as of 2023 there are 12 hot food takeaways in the centre, representing 6% of the total number of units.

Facilities Provision

9.266 There are several community facilities, including several religious institutions within the centre. Adjacent to the town centre boundary there is Wednesbury Town Hall and Museum to the south, to the north is Wednesbury Library and to the east is Wednesbury Leisure Centre.

Accessibility

9.267 The town centre is well connected by road, with the A461 providing access to Junction 9 of the M6 Motorway and the A41 providing access to Junction 1 of the M5 Motorway.

9.268 The centre is well-served by regular bus services, with on-street stops and a large bus station at the end of Union Street. To the south of the town centre is the Wednesbury Great Western Street Metro stop. Regular services run from the stop to Birmingham and Wolverhampton; in the future, services will also run to Dudley.

9.269 The centre is easily accessible by road via Walsall Street. Parking is generally sufficient for current levels of use. Options comprise:

- High Bullen: 137 spaces
- Morrisons: 390 spaces
- Ridding Lane: 48 spaces
- Spring Head: 62 spaces

9.270 The quality of the pedestrian environment is mixed. Union Street offers an easy pedestrian experience on a traffic-free street. On other streets, pavements are relatively narrow and cluttered with highway signage. The junction at Market Place / High Bullen is dominated by highways infrastructure and is difficult for pedestrians to cross.

Accessibility – Provision for cyclists

9.271 There is an existing cycle route which links the town centre with the Tamebridge Rail station.

Accessibility - Transport Proposals:

9.272 The Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Metro Line is currently under construction.

Centre Boundary

9.273 The centre is designated as a town centre and its boundary is formed by the Walsall Road dual carriageway to the north and west. At the eastern and southern edges, it may be necessary to consider whether the boundary should be consolidated.

Primary Shopping Area / Retail Core

9.274 Wednesbury has an identified retail core, which has not changed recently.

Wednesbury Conservation Area

9.275 Wednesbury Market Place was designated as a Conservation area in 1980 because of its special architectural and historic interest; it covers an area of 3.041 hectares.

9.276 Wednesbury Market Place conservation area is of special interest for its largely late-medieval street pattern and its concentration of 18th and 19th century buildings around a triangular market place. Although it may potentially have even earlier origins, related to an earlier fortified settlement or ‘*burh*’ to the north of the town, the modern settlement developed between two key communication routes that led to important crossing points over the River Tame. These were in use from at least the 13th century onwards.

9.277 The survival of the historic layout of the town, and the retention and adaptation of the buildings and their plot structure, also has special interest for their potential to provide information about the development of the town and the form and use of the buildings over time. The relationship with the roads and the tight-knit 18th, 19th and early 20th century retail frontages document the evolution of commerce in the town. The marketplace also has historic and communal significance as a site of commercial and civic interaction for hundreds of years.

Area of Potential for Archaeological Importance

9.278 The town centre is situated in a wider Area of Potential Archaeological Importance in Wednesbury.

SWOT

9.279 The Centres Study Health checks noted the following characteristics for Wednesbury:

<p>Strengths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some strong townscape features (e.g., Market Place); • Significant historic building mix throughout the town; 	<p>Weaknesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central junction is dominated by highways and is a weak pedestrian environment;
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong market function retained; • Large Morrison's store anchors the centre; • Very accessible by public transport with bus station; • Pedestrianised street offers ease of pedestrian movement; • Good provision of community facilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union Street / outdoor market / bus station forms poor environment; • Need for a higher quality leisure sector.
<p>Opportunities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities to make more of the sense of place, e.g., at Market Square; • Surplus parking may offer development opportunities. 	<p>Threats</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growing vacancies on Union Street as comparison goods sector declines; • Centre is somewhat over-reliant on Morrison's as the only supermarket present.

Aspirations

- 9.280 The health checks identified that there is limited evening activity due to the lack of leisure facilities around Wednesbury, including the strict definition of leisure as well as restaurants.
- 9.281 There should also be opportunity to provide improved public and active transport, to provide more cycle lanes
- 9.282 Generally, frontages within Wednesbury are in a poor condition, which may adversely affect its attractiveness to potential new occupiers or for new development / investment. There is the opportunity to celebrate, respect and enhance the town's heritage. Opportunities for funding to improve shop fronts and townscape quality have been investigated and in partnership with Historic England, have identified a Heritage Action Zone¹⁷⁰ within the centre

¹⁷⁰ <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/regenerating-historic-high-streets/>

of Wednesbury. Various proposals offer opportunities for future improvements and additions to the public realm and character of the area. These are set out below.

Wednesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone¹⁷¹

9.283 As part of Sandwell Council's commitment to support struggling high streets, and to highlight the historic significance of the area, it has partnered with Historic England to deliver a c.£3.6m heritage regeneration scheme within Wednesbury itself. This will provide both funding for physical improvements to the buildings in the identified zone and opportunities for shop owners, residents, organisations and visitors to Wednesbury town to enjoy an improved and richer experience when in the centre.

9.284 The project involves three main approaches:

- Improvements to shop fronts and buildings within the town's conservation area, to help revitalise the town centre; the possible introduction of more homes through first floor conversions; and the creation of a more enjoyable experience for residents and visitors.
- Public realm improvements, including repaving footpaths and streets with high-quality materials, planting trees and replacing street furniture, to help create a safer space for pedestrians and shoppers.
- The delivery of cultural activities designed to engage the community within and around the high street.

9.285 As part of the regeneration of the historic town centre, funding is available for the renovation of shop frontages, with up to 80% of the cost being met by the scheme. Shop owners can use this non-repayable grant to replace shop fronts and signage, to reinstate the historic features of their building.

9.286 Shop front renovations will need to reflect the heritage of the town and guidance will be given to those who wish to take up the grant offer. A shop front design guide outlining the types of works that can be funded has been produced to provide this advice.

¹⁷¹ <https://historicengland.org.uk/services-skills/heritage-action-zones/wednesbury/>

10. West Bromwich

West Bromwich

- 10.1 West Bromwich, as designated on the Policies Map and shown on Figure 16, is the third largest centre in the Black Country. It is the focus for a wide range of civic, retail, cultural and leisure functions. The centre is organised around a strong linear high street form. The High Street itself runs north-west to south-east with a focus on high street retail activity along the Princess Parade / Duchess Parade section, which is enclosed by the West Bromwich Ringway. It is in a highly accessible location via a range of public transport options including rail, metro and bus services; users of the Metro can reach Birmingham city centre in 15 minutes and buses run between West Bromwich and the other towns in Sandwell on a regular basis.
- 10.2 The SLP supports the diversification, repurposing and rejuvenation of the strategic centre, with it being the focus for a well-balanced mix of residential, leisure, commercial, business and service uses. Changing shopping patterns and challenges to the high street will be addressed through increased flexibility and facilitating the consolidation of the shopping core (particularly to reduce vacancy rates), complemented by surrounding mixed uses, and supported by maximising residential provision in all locations (including the use of upper floors).
- 10.3 The West Bromwich Masterplan states the aspirations for the centre of the town as, *“A mixed use centre with central market square at its heart and comprising food and beverage and leisure blocks to the North / West, office blocks and residential to the South and education and multi-storey car park to the East of central courtyard”*.
- 10.4 The future of the centre, as with most strategic centres across the Black Country, is dependent on reducing reliance on retail to generate footfall and generating alternative uses (potentially mixed uses) that function both during the day and into the evening.

Background

- 10.5 West Bromwich is the largest town by population size and by area in the borough, giving it the lowest population density. It includes the main commercial and retail centre of Sandwell. Its housing markets include older terraced housing in the town centre, extensive council-built neighbourhoods to the north and the more affluent suburban Great Barr area. The town also has one of the most successful new residential developments in the Midlands at the Lyng –

the Urban 180 / Eastern Gateway area is an award winning¹⁷² social housing scheme. West Bromwich has the second oldest age profile in Sandwell with 16.6% of its population aged over 65. It has the second highest number of jobs at 36,400 and has experienced 6% employment growth since 2012. Its 2,430 businesses have experienced similar growth¹⁷³.

- 10.6 West Bromwich is also the strategic centre for Sandwell and as such is the focus for major investment opportunities for retail, commercial, leisure and educational uses. The town centre has excellent accessibility to the motorway network with Junction 1 M5 within 1.5km providing access to the M6. Within the town sustainable travel options are provided by a bus station, the Midland Metro providing access in 15 minutes to both Wolverhampton and Birmingham via five stops within the regeneration area boundary, and excellent pedestrian and cycle links to and through the area.
- 10.7 Traditionally the High Street was at the core of the town. However, there has been a shift towards increased activity within the New Square development, built ten years ago. With anchor stores Tesco Extra and Primark, a selection of food and beverage offers and a cinema, this became the more popular shopping and leisure destination. This led to a decline in the quality and quantity of shops in the High Street. Further relocations out of Queens Square, one of the town's key precincts, have also contributed to the overall perception of decline. Conversely, Kings Square continues to trade well.
- 10.8 Education provision in the town continues to grow. Sandwell College and Central Sixth have been resident for some years and moving into the town has resulted in some of the vibrancy, lost in previous years, being regained with the additional student footfall. Furthermore, Shireland University Technical College and the emerging Mechanical and Engineering Centre will continue to add to this offer.
- 10.9 The new Sandwell Civil and Mechanical Engineering Centre (Sandwell MEC) lies on West Bromwich's High Street and is due to be completed in 2023. It is a new technical campus for Sandwell College and will deliver opportunities in engineering, advanced manufacturing, civil engineering, construction and hybrid electric vehicles for adults and young people. The new facility will provide programmes for the unemployed as well as reskilling the workforce through Apprenticeships Standards and other technical and professional qualifications.

¹⁷² Best Social or Affordable New Housing Development - LABC Awards 2014 (Winner); Best New Affordable Housing Scheme- Housing Excellence Awards 2017 (Shortlisted)

¹⁷³ <https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/vision2030>

- 10.10 Recent years have seen a change in shopping habits. Even prior to the COVID pandemic, retail centres were struggling with increasing rents and business rates, competition from out-of-town retail complexes and an increase in online shopping with the loss of comparison retail (i.e., clothes, shoes, electrical goods) in particular to the internet. The pandemic only served to exacerbate the situation with many of the high street names switching to online shopping only, removing their presence from the High Street.
- 10.11 National permitted development rights have also changed considerably, allowing for offices to be converted to residential uses without needing planning permission. Changes in technology have allowed for more people to work from home or adopt flexible working patterns (especially during the pandemic). This has led to reduced demand for offices in centres with levels of future demand now.
- 10.12 A side effect of the above has been the adverse impact on service sectors dependent on high footfall in West Bromwich and elsewhere and supported in part by office-based workers, such as food and drink sales, convenience retailing and smaller service industries.

West Bromwich Town Centre

- 10.13 To aid regeneration of the centre and stimulate a COVID -19 recovery, a masterplan and Interim Planning Statement were produced for West Bromwich. The masterplan will act as a catalyst for on-going and new regeneration schemes – unlocking further investment and opportunities to boost the town's future economic growth and fostering, promoting and supporting strong urban design principles throughout those interventions. The interim planning statement was designed to provide updated planning advice for development following changes to national planning legislation over time. The guidance offered in the statement has now been incorporated into these policies. An extract from the Masterplan showing the main locations for new development can be found in Appendix D.
- 10.14 The Masterplan and Interim Planning Statement were approved by Cabinet in February 2022 and set out an ambitious programme of development opportunities to reinvigorate the town, helping to deliver new jobs, a more resilient centre and reinventing its function as the strategic centre.
- 10.15 To support these proposals, £25m was awarded from the national Towns Fund to progress various projects within the town including retail diversification, cultural, educational and urban greening schemes.

Policy SWB1 - West Bromwich Town Centre

- 1. The strategic priorities for West Bromwich are**
 - a. to reinvigorate the town centre;**
 - b. to unlock land to aid regeneration;**
 - c. to support good quality jobs;**
 - d. to stimulate COVID19 recovery;**
 - e. to promote the highest standards of sustainable urban design.**
- 2. This will be achieved by:**
 - a. delivering a significant number of new homes in and around the centre (Policy SWB2) to support the creation of a vibrant, active and sustainable town centre;**
 - b. creating a Metro gateway and new town square and promoting a step change in the quality of local places / the public realm;**
 - c. delivering mixed use, leisure, commercial and ancillary office growth in sustainable core locations;**
 - d. repurposing vacant premises and sites in the centre to deliver community, education and healthcare provision;**
 - e. undertaking site assembly and redevelopment to provide land suitable for new markets, education facilities and high-quality housing;**
 - f. regenerating the Town Hall Quarter to establish a fully restored cultural and evening / night-time offer in the town centre;**
 - g. creating sustainable travel networks across the centre and into surrounding locations;**
 - h. providing a green link from the Metro through the heart of the town centre to connect the town centre to Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley, including cycling and walking routes across the town centre through to Sandwell Valley;**
 - i. providing landscaping, green links, squares, parks and parklets, sustainable travel networks and additional green infrastructure throughout the centre.**
- 3. Opportunities for future development in and around West Bromwich will be supported where they help deliver the aims and objectives set out above.**

Policy SWB1 - West Bromwich Town Centre

- 4. Areas such as The Lyng may be suitable for high quality, well-designed mixed-use development and investment; should such sites become available through land assembly or allocation during the timescale of the SLP, the Council will support the production of masterplans that demonstrate how sustainable new development could be brought forward in those areas.**

Justification

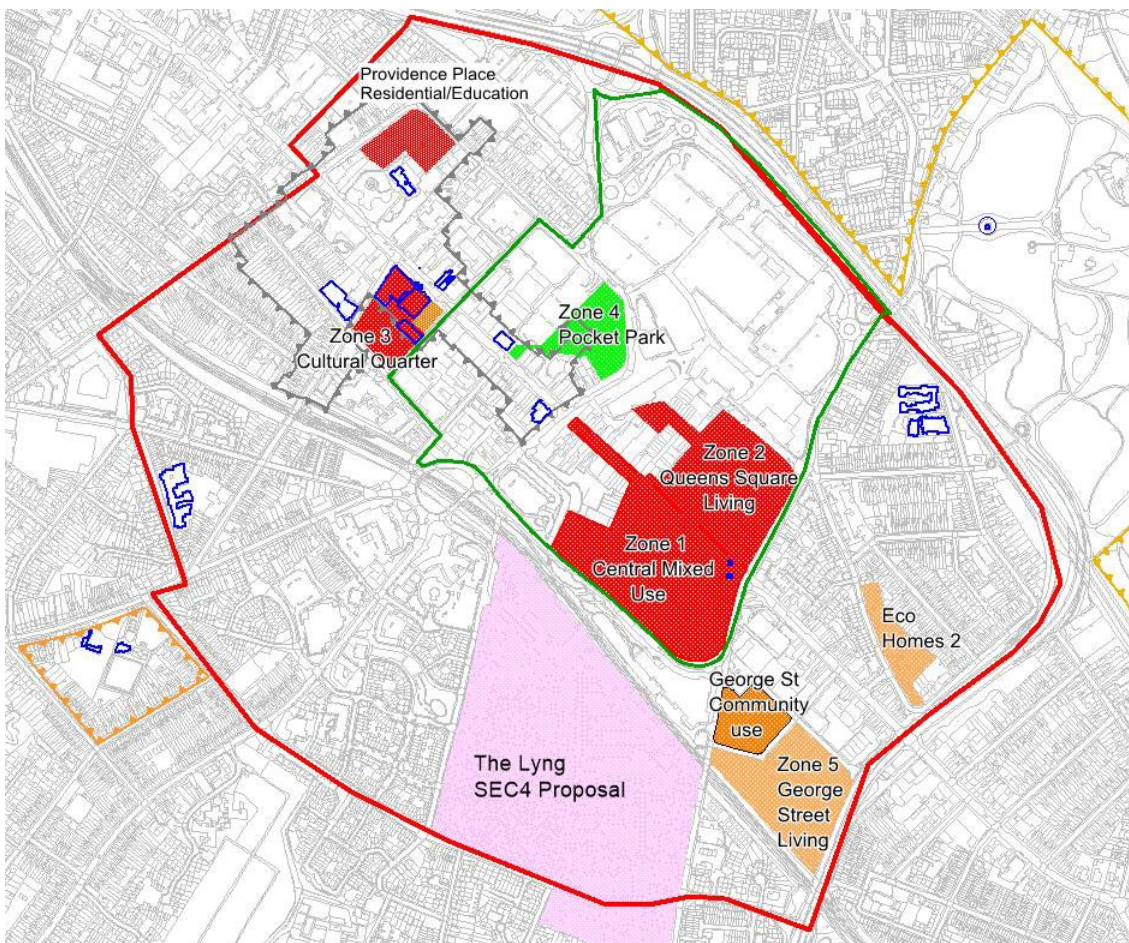
- 10.16 The transformational change proposed for West Bromwich will see the redevelopment of some existing uses and the relocation of the indoor market to a new unit providing links directly to the High Street. The main reconfiguration will involve legacy retail and vacant sites and is intended to create a mix of high-quality leisure uses encouraging people from the Metro into the centre of the town and onto New Square.
- 10.17 New homes will be introduced to increase sustainable town centre living and increase natural surveillance throughout the day and evening. Opportunities to promote more leisure and night-time uses will be available for selected sites and the town will continue to support further educational uses where there is a demand. This mix of uses will help to create a vibrant, sustainable and inclusive community that is accessible to, and providing for, all age groups.
- 10.18 A network of green spaces, new connections and improved public realm will connect the old with the new, linked to the cultural quarter near the Town Hall, through the High Street and through to Dartmouth Park. Cycle routes are to be extended east to west and north to south to further strengthen connectivity and access across the town centre and beyond.
- 10.19 The Strategic Centre benefited from an Area Action Plan (AAP) that was adopted in 2011. Until the local plan review is completed, all AAP policies remain relevant for proposals within the boundary of West Bromwich Strategic Centre.
- 10.20 The masterplan is intended to act as a catalyst for on-going and new regeneration schemes for West Bromwich – unlocking further investment and opportunities to boost the town's future economic growth. The masterplan strengthens the links between the town centre and adjoining areas such as the Cultural Quarter and Dartmouth Park / Sandwell Valley by creating strategically connected functional and active zones with playful street furniture, public art and art trails connecting spaces along the routes. The masterplan builds on the Towns Investment Plan for West Bromwich, which successfully bid for £25 million to reinvigorate the town, underpinned by strong urban design principles.

10.21 The housing capacity for West Bromwich is based on existing permissions, but also includes an estimated uplift based on more recent evidence, including the Black Country Centres study and estimated capacity identified in the West Bromwich Interim Planning Statement and Master Plan.

Delivering the Strategy

10.22 This strategy will be delivered by the allocation of sites and implementation of policies in this Plan across the administrative area to accommodate housing and employment development.

Figure 12 - West Bromwich Town Centre



West Bromwich Centre Key

Town Centre Key	
	Town Centre Boundary
	Residential
	Mixed Use
	Community Use/Pocket Park
	Area of Potential Archaeological Importance
	Conservation Area
	Listed Building

Regeneration in West Bromwich

10.23 The re-energising and repurposing of West Bromwich is of fundamental importance to the regeneration of Sandwell and the wider Black Country. It is one of the main drivers of the Black Country's economy and supports one of the main hubs of the sub-regional transport network. It is a sustainable location and is well-placed to provide the community with easy access to comparison shopping, leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities and office-based employment.

10.24 Table 1 sets out a list of projects and proposals designed to support the ongoing regeneration of West Bromwich that were identified in the Masterplan.

Table 11 - West Bromwich Masterplan Projects¹⁷⁴

Zone	Location	Indicative land use
1	<p>West Bromwich Central Mixed-Use Centre</p> <p>A new multi-purpose town centre and a square at the centre of enhanced linkages and green public realm, with an emphasis on high quality public space and surrounding amenities and encouraging interaction and entertainment. This will include a mixed-use centre with central market square, comprising food and beverage outlets and leisure uses to the north / west, office blocks and residential to the south and education and a multi-storey car park to the east of the central courtyard.</p>	<p>Retail - 4,502m²,</p> <p>Offices - 5,032 m²</p> <p>Residential – 343 homes (undiscounted)</p> <p>Education - 5,060 m²</p> <p>Food and beverage - 11,840 m²</p> <p>Community / Leisure - 9,862m²</p> <p>Health - 5,205m²</p> <p>Parking – 625 parking spaces</p>
2	<p>Queens Square Living</p> <p>A centrally-located high-density residential community set within a green park with external parking spaces, office and gym / amenities space at ground level of the northern residential block. Retail blocks with town houses above to the north and east of the square create a well-defined edge</p>	<p>Retail – 7,447m²,</p> <p>Offices - 8,55m²,</p> <p>Residential – 396 homes (undiscounted)</p> <p>Community / Leisure - 1395m²</p> <p>Car Parking – 206 parking spaces</p>

¹⁷⁴ See also Appendix D

Zone	Location	Indicative land use
	with active market streets to the High Street and Queens Street.	
3	<p>Cultural Quarter</p> <p>Main block along High Street adjacent to the Town Hall provides scope for cultural / community spaces with restaurant / food and beverage uses helping to create an active street. This is likely to be brought forward as a Social Housing residential scheme as a social housing provider has acquired this site.</p> <p>The building to the rear facing Edward Street and Lodge Road is proposed as aged living accommodation, set beside a cultural offer. It could also provide a site for a Youth Building / Hub.</p>	<p>Residential – 52 homes (undiscounted)</p> <p>Food and beverage - 1,054 m²</p> <p>Community / Leisure - 2,000 m²</p> <p>Parking – 10 parking spaces</p>
4	<p>Urban Pocket Park</p> <p>A new park / route that connects St. Michael Street, the Astle Retail centre and the High Street. Work with key stakeholders and landowners to bring forward future connections and management of spaces.</p>	<p>Food and beverage - 260m²</p> <p>Community / Leisure - 1,350m²</p> <p>Parking – 5 parking spaces</p>
5	<p>George Street Living</p> <p>A high-density residential community comprising a series of 3 - 8 storey blocks with landscaped courtyards and amenities. The site is ideally positioned close to Trinity Way Metro and accommodates on-site parking and amenities.</p>	<p>Residential – 327 homes (undiscounted)</p> <p>Community / Leisure - 1,150m²</p> <p>Parking – 79 parking spaces</p>
The Lyng	The Lyng falls under Policy SEC4 (Employment Use). This protects the area from piecemeal development that would prejudice the long-term	New Industrial or Employment uses, housing or other non-ancillary, non-

Zone	Location	Indicative land use
	planning of the area while allowing comprehensive redevelopment of the area for a variety of types of use should viability and relocation issues be resolved.	industrial employment uses (criteria apply).

10.25 In addition to those proposals identified in the Masterplan, there are several sites that also remain a priority in terms of their value to the ongoing revitalisation of the strategic centre:

Location	Indicative land use
<p>George Street</p> <p>Community use - currently laid out as a car park, this is expected to form part of an extended Temple / community facility.</p>	Gurdwara (Temple) Extension
<p>Providence Place</p> <p>This site is a possible council land disposal. It is in a comparatively tranquil, well-connected location, suitable for residential use.</p> <p>The site is adjacent to a listed building (Highfields) and lies in a Conservation Area. For these reasons the attractive treescape within the site must be preserved, which will constrain the amount of development possible on this site.</p> <p>The site is also suitable for offices, or as a potential expansion site for the existing CBSO School. Its location behind the High Street on a no through road and behind the Expressway makes it a comparatively tranquil well-connected location, also suitable for residential use.</p>	On this 0.73ha site approximately 0.4ha could be developed, providing capacity for up to 40 apartments (undiscounted).
<p>Overend Street</p> <p>Contains an active builders' merchants and is becoming an incompatible use within the wider residential-led regeneration of the area. Its relocation would free up a well-connected, accessible site suitable for next generation eco</p>	Residential - this 0.70ha site could support up to 70 dwellings (undiscounted) in a highly accessible location in the Strategic Centre.

Location	Indicative land use
homes, building on the established 'Eastern Gateway' scheme. It is considered a priority site.	

Environment and climate change

- 10.26 In line with the Council's Climate Change Strategy, a local heat network for West Bromwich is at Commercialisation stage. This is part of the strategy towards achieving carbon neutrality for Sandwell Council buildings and operations by 2030 and for the borough by 2041.
- 10.27 Other heat networks are being explored, albeit these are currently at an initial stage. General 'greening' of the centre, via landscaping and other environmental enhancements is proposed, with improved links to Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley.
- 10.28 As part of the above, the central area will have more meet-and-greet areas to foster non-transactional interactions and drive footfall, thus bolstering a reduced but viable amount of retail and other centre uses.

Sandwell Valley

- 10.29 The Council will investigate opportunities for utilising Sandwell Valley for leisure and tourism through the Cultural Strategy, whilst respecting its green belt status and the other nature conservation allocations it contains.

Development in West Bromwich

- 10.30 The Centres Study undertaken for the BCP and its addendums were informed by a Household Survey that identified changes in shopping patterns, especially the continued growth of online shopping. The health checks recognised that West Bromwich is facing several challenges – particularly in relation to relatively high vacancy rates.
- 10.31 The commercial market across all sectors, but particularly affecting the traditional High Street, has materially evolved and changed.

Policy SWB2 – Development in West Bromwich

1. It is a priority for West Bromwich to serve identified housing and employment growth aspirations (Policy SDS1, Policy SDS2). The diversification of West Bromwich to provide a re-purposed, well-balanced mix of appropriate uses will be supported, in particular:

Policy SWB2 – Development in West Bromwich

- a. Residential provision will be maximised, to increase and strengthen communities, with indicative housing capacity identified by the West Bromwich Masterplan and West Bromwich Inset, providing a minimum of 1,162 new homes in the strategic centre by 2041.
 - b. Most new homes will be built at very high densities (Policy SHO3, Table 5) and as part of mixed-use developments where suitable, with additional residential use helping to attract investment and promoting the vitality of the centre.
 - c. Complementary uses, particularly community, leisure, health and education use (Policy SDS5, Policy SDM9).
2. Large-scale proposals to serve wider catchment areas should be focussed in West Bromwich to maximise linked trips, promote the use of sustainable modes of transport and support regeneration.

Retail

3. Existing convenience and comparison retail provision will be protected and appropriate new development for these uses supported, to meet both local shopping needs and large-scale provision serving the wider catchment; this should be focused on re-purposing vacant floorspace and re-using existing sites within the centre in the first instance.

Leisure

4. Leisure uses, especially large-scale public and commercial facilities such as cinemas, hotels, and a wide range of high-quality family venues and activities, will be supported where they help to diversify the centre, encourage linked trips and enhance the evening economy and visitor experience

Office

5. Office provision will be supported, as West Bromwich is an important location for such employment. Future demand will be market-led; suitable sites are identified in the Masterplan.
6. Proposals in edge-of-centre and / or out-of-centre locations must meet the relevant requirements set out in Policy SCE6.

Sustainability

Policy SWB2 – Development in West Bromwich

- 7. West Bromwich is a highly sustainable focus for service provision; it is a priority to ensure high quality public realm and standards of design are delivered and supported through environmental policies to deliver the aims and objectives in the Masterplan.**

Accessibility

- 8. Proposals for commercial and business development that involve more than 500m² (gross) of floorspace within the primary shopping areas of the centre and well-linked edge-of-centre locations should provide a travel plan.**

Justification

- 10.32 A more pragmatic and flexible approach needs to be undertaken in addressing the future growth of West Bromwich, which does not necessarily place sole emphasis on the retail sector. Rather, this approach allows for greater emphasis on services, communal or civic uses, and incorporates qualitative enhancements to the existing provision. It also supports a mix of uses in relation to new development, including consideration for different types including the concurrent¹⁷⁵, meanwhile¹⁷⁶ and co-operative uses of units. This means it is essential to provide appropriate flexibility to enable the centre to diversify and be re-purposed to ensure its future vitality and viability is maintained and enhanced. This includes prioritising high-quality public realm including the provision of high-quality open spaces, green infrastructure, pedestrian and cycle networks and electric vehicle charging points.
- 10.33 Current evidence shows there is no capacity to support additional retail and office floorspace; it would not therefore be appropriate to include specific formal targets for different uses in policy except where indicated by the West Bromwich Masterplan.
- 10.34 Planning decisions should be informed by the latest available evidence, and the Council will seek to re-model capacity, particularly for retail, periodically in the future. The emphasis therefore is on the consolidation of core areas as opposed to expansion or identifying larger comprehensive development at in-centre or edge-of-centre sites, with any future potential for

¹⁷⁵ Concurrent uses - a building may be in several different uses concurrently or be used for different uses at different times of the day

¹⁷⁶ Meanwhile uses - a site is utilised for a duration of time before it is turned into a more permanent end state, taking advantage of a short window of opportunity

new floorspace likely to be met through infill development, reuse / reconfiguration of vacant units, change of use applications and / or extensions to existing stores,

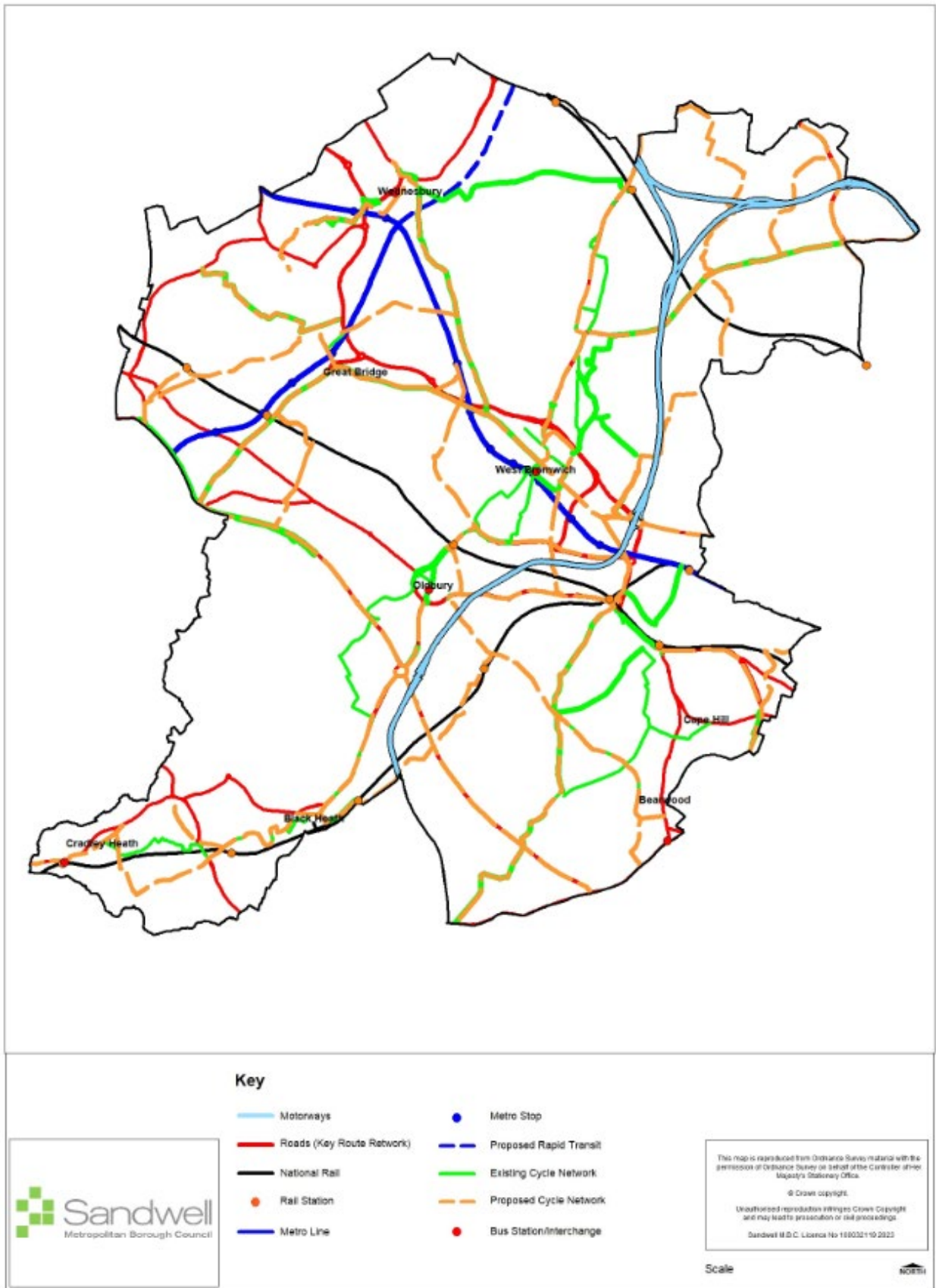
- 10.35 It is important that any new large-scale commercial and public leisure provision is focussed in West Bromwich, to encourage linked trips, enhance the evening economy and diversify the experiential nature of the centre.
- 10.36 Changing working patterns, including an increase in agile and flexible working, means that future office environments are likely to be configured differently. Future office provision is likely to be predominantly market-led. West Bromwich remains an important place of work, with office workers making a positive contribution towards ensuring vitality and viability.
- 10.37 The Masterplan and West Bromwich inset plan identify potential office sites, particularly as part of mixed-use development. This will ensure sites are available for office development when demand emerges whilst ensuring other appropriate uses can also come forward.
- 10.38 City living and residential development in centres is likely to be a growth area over the plan period and will make a positive contribution to regeneration, particularly as a part of mixed-use development and upper floor living. Residential provision should therefore be maximised to facilitate the centre as important places to live, supporting a resident population and local service provision. Planning decisions will be informed by the indicative residential locations in the Masterplan and Inset allocations; the principles of good urban design must be applied through all schemes.
- 10.39 Housing and employment allocations will be served by the existing network of centres. The fragility of centres and the challenges in ensuring their vitality and viability means it is important to have robust tests for new proposals within 300m of a relevant boundary, as set out in Policy SCE6.
- 10.40 West Bromwich is accessible by a variety of means of transport, particularly walking, cycling, the Metro and buses. Relevant in-centre and edge-of-centre development will contribute to sustainability and encourage a modal shift in transport towards public transport, cycling and walking and reduce the need to travel.
- 10.41 The strategic centre boundary is identified on the Policies Map. It is used for determining what is in and out-of-scope in terms of proposals.

11. Transport

Introduction

- 11.1 The Local Transport Authority for the West Midlands metropolitan area, including Sandwell, is the West Midlands Combined Authority through its transport arm, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM). TfWM has strategic oversight of the whole network including public transport and major highways, other than the national Strategic Road network (SRN). The region's transport strategy, along with the policies and programmes that support it, are set out in the Local Transport Plan (LTP) - Movement for Growth (2016). A review of the LTP is currently underway and where appropriate, Sandwell transport policies reflect the approach being taken through this review.
- 11.2 The delivery of an improved and integrated transport network both within Sandwell and in links to regional and national networks is fundamental to achieving the Vision and in helping to transform the borough, deliver housing growth and improve economic performance, and thus in achieving Strategic Objective 10. The development of transport networks in the West Midlands is focused on a step change in public transport provision serving and linking centres, improving sustainable transport facilities and services across the area, improving connectivity to national networks and improving the efficiency of strategic highway routes. The improvements needed to deliver the transport strategy are shown on the Transport Key Diagram (Figure 13).
- 11.3 To help address the climate change crisis, strategic and local transport policies, plans and programmes must emphasise the delivery of a modernised and sustainable transport network. Specific objectives include reducing pollution and road congestion through improvements to public transport, promoting walking and cycling networks and reducing the need to travel. National policy also focuses on the need for the transport network to support sustainable economic growth.
- 11.4 Additionally, the West Midlands LTP has a key role to play in reducing carbon emissions and the impact on the natural environment. The Sandwell Local Plan will therefore need to focus on promoting the appropriate design, location and layout of development, increasing investment in infrastructure, improving the quality, equality and accessibility of public transport, supporting walking and cycling, enhancing road safety and reducing the amount of emissions produced by transportation.

Figure 13 - Transport Key Diagram



Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network

- 11.5 It is acknowledged that the COVID19 pandemic and its aftermath, and resultant the shift towards homeworking has impacted on the way in which transport is used. In particular, there has been a significant impact on public transport patronage levels which may take many years to recover to pre-pandemic levels.
- 11.6 However, high-quality public transport combined with the provision of an extensive safe and convenient active travel (walking and cycling) network remains at the heart of the West Midlands transport strategy. The development of the transport network is focused on a step change in public transport provision serving and linking centres, improving sustainable transport facilities and services across the area, improving connectivity to national networks and improving the efficiency of strategic highway routes.
- 11.7 Additionally, transport strategy in Sandwell, and the wider West Midlands, has a key role to play in reducing carbon emissions and the impact on the natural environment. The Sandwell Local Plan will therefore need to focus on promoting the appropriate design, location and layout of development, increasing investment in infrastructure, improving the quality, equality and accessibility of public transport, supporting walking and cycling, enhancing road safety and reducing the amount of emissions produced by transportation.

Policy STR1 – Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network

- 1) **Land needed for the implementation of priority transport projects will be safeguarded to allow for their future delivery.**
- 2) **All new developments must provide adequate access for all modes of travel, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport to influence travel choices. Residential development will be expected to meet the accessibility standards set out elsewhere in this Plan.**
- 3) **Key transport corridors will be prioritised through the delivery of infrastructure to support active travel (walking, cycling), public transport improvements, traffic management (including localised junction improvements) and road safety.**
- 4) **Key transport priorities identified for delivery during the lifetime of the SLP currently include the following:**
 - a) **Motorways:**
 - M5 Improvements (Junctions 1 and 2)**

Policy STR1 – Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network

- b) Rail:**
 - Midlands Rail Hub**
- c) Rapid Transit:**
 - Wednesbury – Brierley Hill**
 - A34 Walsall Road Sprint Corridor**
 - Walsall – Stourbridge corridor tram-train extensions**
- d) Key road corridors including the following (but not limited to):**
 - A4123 Corridor Upgrade**
 - A461 Black Country Corridor**
 - A457 / B4135 Oldbury, Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor**
 - A4034 Blackheath and Oldbury Corridor**
- e) Interchanges:**
 - Dudley Port Integrated Transport Hub**

Justification

- 11.8 Good connectivity to the wider regional national transport networks and Birmingham International Airport for both passengers and freight has been identified as being necessary to support the regeneration of Sandwell. The economic growth will be supported by improved access to major global economies.
- 11.9 Movement for Growth seeks to enable all residents being able to access at least three strategic centres within 45 minutes (AM peak). It envisages this being achieved through a combination of frequent rapid transit services and high quality “turn up and go” bus services.
- 11.10 A strategic public transport “spine” comprising high quality, reliable, fast and high-capacity rapid transit between the strategic centres - Brierley Hill, Walsall, West Bromwich, Wolverhampton and Birmingham remains as a crucial element of the Black Country’s and Sandwell’s transport strategy. It is necessary to support the role of these centres as a focus for employment, shopping and leisure and increasingly, housing.
- 11.11 Currently Metro line 1 provides the required standard of link between Wolverhampton, West Bromwich and Birmingham but it is important that the public transport modes of rail, metro

and bus are better integrated to ensure that people can use them to travel where and when they need to. The combination of the Wednesbury to Brierley Hill metro extension and the proposed Dudley Port Integrated Transport Hub will add Brierley Hill (and Dudley) to the rapid transit network.

- 11.12 The Black Country Rapid Transit study of 2016 concluded that full delivery of the Public Transport Spine would best be achieved by completing the Stourbridge to Walsall corridor as a tram-based facility (subject to the adoption of Tram-Train technology) whilst the Walsall to Birmingham link should be catered for through bus rapid transit. This is the A34 SPRINT project, Phase 2 of which is currently being delivered.
- 11.13 The completion of feasibility studies into the provision of the Stourbridge to Brierley Hill and Wednesbury to Walsall rapid transit proposals will be an early requirement for taking the strategy forward, with the latter providing improved connectivity for residents in Tipton and Wednesbury in particular.
- 11.14 It is vital that new development has access to high quality public transport facilities and services from the outset as this will ensure that people travelling to and from these areas do not establish unsustainable travel patterns due to the initial absence of good public transport.
- 11.15 The Sandwell Local Plan supports the delivery of an enhanced transport network for the borough, to ensure a seamless integration of land-use and transport planning and to demonstrate the strong interdependency of future land-use decisions and adequate servicing by a variety of travel modes. The exact mode of public transport should reflect existing demand and take account of potential future economic or housing growth points to ensure an integrated approach to sustainable development and travel patterns. This is essential to support the scale of growth proposed for the core regeneration areas and strategic centres and to create an effective transportation system to support sustainable communities. This transport network will provide communities with access to employment, leisure, education and health care and will facilitate improved access to employment sites.
- 11.16 In this regard the re-opening of rail corridors such as Walsall to Aldridge, and the delivery of an upgraded Wolverhampton to Shrewsbury line and the Midland Rail Hub (developed through Midlands Connect) will support housing growth both within Sandwell and in those areas meeting housing and employment need beyond the borough's boundaries.
- 11.17 The operation of the highway network needs to be improved to support the growth and long-term viability of Sandwell's economy whilst limiting the environmental effect of transport usage. Movement for Growth sets out a strategy of making the best of the existing highway network in a coordinated way through a programme of Key Route Network (KRN) corridor-

based multi-modal improvements. Movement for Growth is currently being reviewed during 2021 with the aim of further strengthening the strategy to help achieve the West Midlands target for net zero carbon emissions by 2041.

- 11.18 New highway building within Sandwell will be mainly in support of regeneration, but some key junctions on the DfT's Major Road Network and the West Midlands Key Route Network such as important links for public transport and to the motorway network for freight will be improved by major construction schemes. Highway improvements will be expected to address the needs of all users especially pedestrians and cyclists and to cater for bus priority in line with current Government guidance.
- 11.19 Strategic Employment Areas are defined in terms of good access standards to the motorway network. As no new motorways are planned within the lifetime of this plan the M6, M5 and M54 motorways will remain vital transport links for Sandwell business and freight.
- 11.20 Buses will continue to dominate local public transport provision in Sandwell throughout the life of the plan period. 85% of all passenger miles were catered for by bus prior to the COVID19 pandemic and bus services have recovered at a faster rate than either rail or metro/ by 2026. The National Bus Strategy (2021) requires bus priority to be an integral part of all highway improvements. Therefore, work on the key highway corridors identified through the Key Route Network Action plans will play a significant role in delivering this requirement through a partnership of TfWM, Local Highway Authorities and operators. Specific local measures to help buses will be delivered in other locations where appropriate along with the upgrading of bus stations in strategic and other centres where demand resulting from the concentration of new developments requires it. Coaches have a role to play in providing affordable long-distance connectivity and access facilities to major Black Country destinations and will be encouraged.
- 11.21 While improvement of accessibility to bus services will be a priority, some people will have little choice but to make the first part of their journey by car. The success of Park and Ride in contributing to a sustainable travel pattern will depend on minimising the distance driven before transferring to public transport. Well-located Park and Ride facilities can provide a realistic alternative for many car drivers and contribute to environmental improvement by reducing congestion on radial routes into centres at peak times and by improving public transport patronage. However, new Park and Ride sites will only be developed in accordance with the adopted West Midlands Park & Ride strategy.
- 11.22 As transport projects reach the design stage there will be a need to safeguard the land needed for the implementation of schemes. Where projects are sufficiently advanced,

improvement lines will be imposed, and land will be safeguarded through the Local plan and the Policies Map.

Safeguarding the Development of the Key Route Network (KRN)

11.23 The West Midlands Key Route Network (KRN) caters for the main strategic demand flows of people and freight across the metropolitan area whilst providing connections to the national Strategic Road Network (SRN). Highway capacity will be used to effectively cater for movement by rapid transit and core bus routes, the Metropolitan Cycle Network, lorries, vans and private cars. This will involve the reallocation of road space where appropriate to provide reliable, fast, high volume public transport and an enhanced role for traffic management using new technology via the West Midlands Regional Traffic Control Centre (RTCC).

Policy STR2 – Safeguarding the Development of the Key Route Network (KRN)

- 1. Sandwell will, in conjunction with Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and other neighbouring local highway authorities, identify capital improvements and management strategies to ensure the KRN meets its strategic functions.**
- 2. Land needed for the implementation of improvements to the KRN will be safeguarded to assist in their future delivery.**
- 3. Where new development is expected to result in adverse impacts on the KRN, appropriate mitigation measures will need to be identified through transport assessments and provided through planning obligations.**
- 4. When working with neighbouring authorities, sub-national transport bodies, infrastructure providers and statutory bodies, there will be a focus on reducing the impact of private car use on the KRN and delivering a net-zero transport system.**

Justification

11.24 The West Midlands Key Route Network not only serves the main strategic demand flows of people and freight across the metropolitan area and provides connections to the national strategic road network. It also serves large local flows which use main roads and will need to provide good access for businesses reliant on road-based transport. The network will use highway capacity effectively to cater for movement by rapid transit and core bus routes, the Metropolitan Cycle Network, lorries, vans and private cars. This will involve the

reallocation of road space where appropriate to provide reliable, fast, high volume public transport and enhanced cycling facilities.

- 11.25 The Key Route Network has been defined on the basis of a Combined Authority definition agreed with the seven highway authorities, in consultation with neighbouring highway authorities. The KRN features agreed performance specifications drawn up for different types of link in the network in accordance with their role for movement (“link”), and their role as a destination in its own right e.g., a suburban / town centre high street (“place”).
- 11.26 Improvements will be performed to meet the agreed performance specification for the links and junctions involved to support road based rapid transit proposals such as SPRINT (Bus Rapid Transit) and Metro. Improvements will take into account guidance contained in the National Bus Strategy and the West Midlands Vision for Bus. Where routes also form part of the Metropolitan Cycle Network, the standards contained in Local Transport Note 1/20 will be applied.
- 11.27 Capital scheme improvements will be identified where appropriate, but it also is vital that this network is managed efficiently through the collaboration of all four authorities in their role as LHA.

Managing Transport Impacts of New Development

- 11.28 To ensure that the transport elements of the Sandwell Local Plan are deliverable, it is essential that both new developments and existing facilities identify travel and transportation impacts and proposals for mitigation. It is important that accessibility by a choice of sustainable modes of transport is maximised. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans produced by developers, employers, schools and facility operators are essential to bring about sustainable travel solutions and help deliver Strategic Objectives 2 and 16.

Policy STR3 – Managing Transport Impacts of New Development

1. **Planning permission will not be granted for any proposals that are likely to have significant transport implications, unless accompanied by mitigation schemes that demonstrate an acceptable level of accessibility and safety can be achieved using all modes of transport to, from and through the development. Mitigation schemes must in particular address access by walking, cycling, public transport and shared transport.**
2. **These proposals should be in accordance with an agreed Transport Assessment, where deemed necessary by the Local Highway Authority, and include the**

Policy STR3 – Managing Transport Impacts of New Development

implementation of measures to promote and improve such sustainable transport infrastructure and facilities through agreed Travel Plans and similar measures.

- 3. Sustainable transport modes must be made more convenient than car usage for the majority of journeys in order to promote genuine modal shift. They should be supported by the necessary management and regulatory measures if deemed necessary by the Local Highway Authority. Planning conditions and /or legal agreements may be required to ensure the implementation of agreed measures.**

Justification

- 11.29 All developments will be assessed both in terms of their impact on the transport network and the opportunities that could be available to ensure that the site is accessible by sustainable modes of transport. The supporting documentation will either take the form of a full Transport Assessment (TA) or a less detailed Transport Statement (TS) and will generally be determined by the size and scale of development or land use. This will be based on guidance from individual authorities with a TA sometimes being required instead of a TS based on reasons other than spatial thresholds; road safety concerns, existing congestion problems, air quality problems, concerns over community severance or likelihood of off-site parking being generated.
- 11.30 TfWM's guide for developers should be routinely consulted for larger developments.
- 11.31 Where a development is considered to have a potential significant effect on the Strategic Road Network, National Highways will be involved.

The Efficient Movement of Freight and Logistics

- 11.32 New freight railways and rail sidings will present an economic opportunity for Sandwell's businesses. Improved journey times on the Key Route Network will support economic prosperity and switching traffic to rail or inland waterways will relieve the highway network of traffic, thereby reducing congestion, improving air quality and the environment and reducing carbon emissions. The siting of key employment proposals will be steered towards locations with good access to the KRN to assist with reducing environmental impact, improve air quality and reduce carbon emissions. Improvements to the freight network are fundamental to achieving the Vision for sustainable communities, environmental transformation and economic prosperity and to delivering Strategic Objectives 2, 8 and 16.

Policy STR4 – The Efficient Movement of Freight and Logistics

1. **The movement of freight by sustainable modes of transport such as rail and waterways will be encouraged. Road-based freight will be encouraged to use the Key Route Network whenever practicable.**
2. **Junction improvements and routeing strategies will be focussed on those parts of the highway network evidenced as being of particular importance for freight access to employment sites and the motorway network.**
3. **Proposals that generate significant freight movements will be directed to sites with satisfactory access to the Key Route Network.**
4. **Existing and disused railway lines will be safeguarded for rail-related uses.**
5. **Sites with existing and potential access to the rail network for freight will be safeguarded for rail-related uses.**
6. **Consideration will be given to the movement of freight, goods and other courier services on Sandwell’s roads when determining location of new development.**

Justification

- 11.33 The level of motor traffic on Sandwell’s roads has increased, partly driven by the growing number of trucks, vans, mopeds, and bikes delivering groceries, parcels, and food takeaway services to online shoppers’ homes. There is a need to reduce the strain placed by e-commerce deliveries on Sandwell’s roads by, for example, identifying sites for parcel lockers, incentivise more “Click and Collect” options to reduce the volume of home delivery vehicles on the roads, catering for the use of e-cargo bikes, low emission vehicles and the use of micromobility to transport goods.
- 11.34 Within the wider Black Country, freight traffic has always been particularly important reflecting the area’s past level of manufacturing and it remains significant today with industry, distribution and logistics giving rise to much freight traffic. This is reflected in both the M5 and M6 motorways, where the proportion of heavy goods vehicles can be 30% of total traffic, and the local road network where the traffic on many main routes has an exceptionally high percentage of heavy goods vehicles.
- 11.35 Heavy Goods Vehicles account for 21% of all transport emissions with Light Duty Vehicles accounting for 13%, meaning the road freight sector contributes 34% of transport emissions, despite freight representing just 19% of all vehicle miles undertaken in the UK. Making the

most efficient use of the highway network whilst providing facilities to transfer freight from road to rail and inland waterways will play a major part in achieving the region's climate change targets.

- 11.36 The design and layout of much of the KRN in Sandwell dates from a period when goods vehicles were significantly smaller and lighter than those currently in use and this gives rise to problems of reliability and with deliveries and servicing. In many cases upgrading of these routes is neither economically viable or environmentally desirable.
- 11.37 Sandwell is a member of the West Midlands Freight Quality Partnership, as are freight operators and their national representative bodies. The Regional Freight Strategy sets a context for planning for freight within the Black Country sub-region. Removal of freight from the road to rail or canal will reduce congestion, and support investment in rail and canals.
- 11.38 The railway network serving Sandwell and the wider Black Country suffers from capacity problems during the day when there is high demand for passenger services, and this has shifted much freight traffic to night-time operation. Of the disused lines the most important is Stourbridge-Walsall-Lichfield which has been identified in the Regional Freight Strategy as being an important link for freight moving between the southwest and northeast regions. Locally, four sites have been identified as being suitable for rail connection if rail freight services are reinstated. Within the West Midlands conurbation, the Stourbridge to Lichfield link would act as a bypass for the rail network around Birmingham which has severe capacity constraints. The capacity released by the reopening of Stourbridge-Walsall-Lichfield, as well as benefiting the freight network, would allow extra passenger services to operate to and through Birmingham to the benefit of the wider West Midlands.
- 11.39 The Regional Freight Strategy notes a shortage of private sidings in the West Midlands Region. Sites with existing or potential rail access along existing and proposed freight routes particularly Stourbridge - Walsall and Walsall - Lichfield will be protected for rail related uses.
- 11.40 The Freight Strategy notes the need to address the increased importance of 'last mile' logistics and the role that transport innovation can play in this; parcel hubs, EV charging for delivery vehicles. Where appropriate, locations for infrastructure to facilitate this will be identified through site allocations and in the SLP Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

Cycling and Walking Networks

- 11.41 The development of sustainable modes of travel and encouraging people out of their cars, particularly for shorter and commuter journeys, is an important element of Strategic Objectives 1, 2, 8, 9, 10, 11, 16 and 18. Places need to be well-connected with attractive, convenient, direct and safe routes available to non-car users, thus providing real choice.

11.42 The cycle network in the West Midlands consists of three tiers;

- a. The National Cycle Network (NCN) – identified and developed by Sustrans in partnership with local authorities and shown on the Transport Key Diagram. This network provides long distance routes across the country linking major destinations.
- b. The Metropolitan Network (known as the Starley Network) – identified by WMCA in Movement for Growth and developed through the West Midlands Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (WM LCWIP). These routes link strategic locations in the West Midlands and are also shown on the Transport Key Diagram.
- c. Local Networks – These are identified through individual authorities' LCWIPs and are identified on the Transport Key Diagram (Figure 13).

11.43 The emerging Black Country Cycling Strategy will provide greater detail on those sections of the Starley network and the most important links in the local network.

Policy STR5 – Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and Walking

- 1. By working in partnership with Transport for West Midlands and neighbouring local authorities, Sandwell will ensure that it can create and maintain a comprehensive cycle network based on the four tiers of the West Midlands cycle network, including the use of common cycle infrastructure design standards such as LTN1/20 and Manual for Streets 2 or such future relevant guidance as may be appropriate.**
- 2. Creating an environment that encourages active travel requires new developments to link to existing walking and cycling networks. The links should be coherent, safe, direct, comfortable, attractive, and not impeded by other infrastructure including that provided for other forms of transport and digital / communication infrastructure.**
- 3. Where possible, existing links including the canal network should be enhanced and the networks extended to serve new developments.**
- 4. New developments should have good walking and cycling links to public transport nodes and interchanges.**
- 5. Where possible, a compact and legible urban realm with easy to reach destinations on foot and by cycle should be delivered, including appropriate signage and wayfinding.**

Policy STR5 – Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and Walking

6. **Cycle parking facilities should be provided at all new developments and should be in convenient locations with good natural surveillance, e.g., near to main front entrances for short stay visitors or under shelter for long stay visitors.**
7. **The number of cycle parking spaces required in new developments and in public realm schemes should be determined using the guidance and standards set out in Appendix L.**
8. **Sandwell Council will work with Transport for West Midlands and neighbouring local authorities on expanding the West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme and location and provision of cycle hire infrastructure will be integral when determining new development.**
9. **The design of cycle infrastructure should be in accordance with the principles and standards contained in the Department for Transport’s Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN1/20): Cycle Infrastructure Design.**
10. **Where feasible, to improve the local environment for pedestrians and cyclists, measures to manage traffic should be considered, which may include measures such as modal filters, reducing traffic speeds, road space reallocation, and implementing parking management policies.**

Justification

- 11.44 It is essential that the development of walking and cycling facilities are an integral part of the transport system both on the highway network, canal corridors, Public Rights of Way and on other paths. Comprehensive cycle and walking networks within Sandwell will enable communities to access employment, public transport interchanges, services and facilities in a sustainable way.
- 11.45 A transport network that facilitates car use and disadvantages walking and cycling can adversely affect the health and well-being of its communities. Identifying and overcoming barriers to walking and cycling during development processes will encourage a renaissance of walking and cycling within the borough and help improve the health and well-being of local communities by reducing the incidence of obesity, coronary heart disease, strokes, and diabetes.
- 11.46 Both walking and cycling are active modes of travel with clear health benefits. The implementation recognises the specific requirements of each with dedicated, segregated

cycling provision being the default objective along with a comprehensive network of walking opportunities available both on highway and off road.

- 11.47 Walking and cycling strategies are incorporated within Movement for Growth. The overarching framework is the West Midlands Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan. The four Black Country local authorities are jointly preparing a Cycling Strategy for the sub-region and each will develop their own local cycling and walking infrastructure plans during the lifetime of the SLP.
- 11.48 All new cycle facilities will be design in accordance with guidance set out in Local Transport Note 1/20 and TfWM's Cycle Design Guidance.

Influencing the Demand for Travel and Travel Choices

- 11.49 The management of the demand for road space and car parking, together with influencing travel choices, is fundamental to achieving the Vision for sustainable communities, environmental transformation and economic prosperity and to delivering Spatial Objectives 1, 2, 8, 16 and 18.

Policy STR6 – Influencing the Demand for Travel and Travel Choices

- 1) **Sandwell is committed to considering all aspects of traffic management in the centres and wider area in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004. The priorities for traffic management in Sandwell are:**
 - a. **identifying appropriate strategic park and ride sites on current public transport routes to ease traffic flows into centres;**
 - b. **working together with the rest of the region to manage region-wide traffic flows through the West Midlands Regional Traffic Control Centre and further joint working;**
 - c. **implementing demand management measures to restrain car usage and managing car parking demand, thereby encouraging behaviour change and increasing travel by sustainable modes of transport;**
 - d. **providing better accessibility to shared transport services such as demand responsive transport services and mobility hubs, reducing the need to travel long distances by car or helping people to travel by more sustainable modes of transport;**

Policy STR6 – Influencing the Demand for Travel and Travel Choices

- e. maximising access to high-speed broadband / digital infrastructure will be required to enable smarter working for those that are able to do so, thus further reducing the need to travel.**

Justification

- 11.50 The SLP Development Strategy aims at making the network of town and city centres as attractive and accessible as possible, to encourage use of the most sustainable modes of travel.
- 11.51 Other important aspects of demand management are the prioritisation of allocation of road space towards sustainable methods of travel such as walking, cycling and buses by using schemes such as traffic calming measures and full or time limited pedestrianisation so making these modes more attractive to people visiting the centres.
- 11.52 Other important elements include the promotion and marketing of sustainable transport through travel plans (Policy STR3), planning conditions / obligations and other associated sustainable mobility initiatives, including the promotion of schemes and opportunities for walking, cycling, micro-mobility (such as e-scooters), public transport and car sharing. These policies will reduce road traffic congestion and pollution, improve road safety, promote social inclusion and accessibility, therefore encouraging consumers to access the four strategic centres using sustainable transport.

Network Management

- 11.53 Sandwell Council is committed to making the best use of its budgets and advocates an asset management approach for the maintenance of its highway network, to help deliver the best long-term outcomes for local communities.

Policy STR7 – Network Management

- 1. Depending on the location of new development, the deployment of advanced and smart technologies that allow the public to plan their journeys more effectively may be appropriate, for example providing real time travel information and satellite navigation systems, Variable Message Signs (VMS) along congested parts of the network and digital sensors / cameras to monitor traffic and collect data on traffic patterns for future planning.**

- 2. All new developments that impact the existing highway network, or which result in a new asset to be adopted by the Local Highway Authority, may be subject to fees and obligations for the maintenance of the highway network as part of a relevant legal agreement**

Justification

- 11.54 Much of the highway network in Sandwell is constrained by the urban fabric resulting in narrow roads and footways. In many cases the overall highway width is such that there is limited scope to accommodate infrastructure dedicated to specific modes or groups of vehicles. Therefore, the use of advanced technology to help manage the use of road space will be vital to ensuring that maximum benefit can be derived from the asset.
- 11.55 However, where development includes the provision of new infrastructure, including dedicated infrastructure for cyclists, buses etc., there will be a need to provide for its ongoing maintenance to mitigate the impact on future highway authority budgets.

Parking Management

- 11.56 The management of car parking is fundamental to achieving the Vision for sustainable communities, environmental transformation and economic prosperity. It also has a key role in reducing the impact of vehicle trips on air quality and carbon emissions.

Policy STR8 – Parking Management

- 1. The priorities for traffic management in Sandwell include the sustainable delivery and management of parking in centres and beyond, through use of some or all the following measures as appropriate:**
- a. The management and control of parking - ensuring that it is not used as a tool for competition between centres;**
 - b. The type of parking – ensuring that where appropriate long-stay parking is removed from town centres, to support parking for leisure and retail customers and to encourage commuters to use more sustainable means and reduce peak hour traffic flows;**
 - c. Maximum parking standards – ensuring that a consistent approach to maximum parking standards is enforced in new developments as set out in the guidance and standards contained at Appendix L;**

Policy STR8 – Parking Management

- d. The location of parking – by reviewing the location of town centre car parks through the “Network Management Duty”, to ensure that the flow of traffic around town centres is as efficient as possible**
- e. Providing more convenient, secure and accessible cycle parking will be a critical part of increasing cycling in Sandwell and making it a natural first choice for journeys. Considering different users and types of cycle parking will be an essential part of this and new developments should consider this in accordance with guidance set out in Appendix L.**

Justification

- 11.57 The correct balance needs to be found between managing and pricing of parking to maximise the use of sustainable travel means to enter town and city centres, whilst avoiding restricting parking to the extent that consumers are dissuaded from using town centres and deterring new development.
- 11.58 The control and management of parking in centres will require a variety of approaches, recognising that not all publicly available car parking is in local authority control or management. The use of planning conditions to ensure that new public parking is managed appropriately will therefore be an important aspect of this policy.
- 11.59 The continued adoption of maximum parking standards for all but residential development is an important tool in managing demand for single-occupancy vehicle trips to centres and major employment destinations, leisure and other facilities.
- 11.60 Reduced levels of long-stay car parking in centres will enable more efficient use of land.
- 11.61 Where new development that includes parking controls and management to encourage alternative modes for staff and visitors has the potential to impact on adjacent residential areas, post-occupation monitoring may indicate a need for the introduction of residents parking schemes and other traffic management measures. Agreements to secure this will be sought as part of the Development Management process.
- 11.62 Additional parking enforcement may be required because of new development. Should this require additional Local Authority resources and increases the cost of enforcement for the Local Authority, the developer may be required to contribute to the increased cost of undertaking parking enforcement activities as part of any planning obligations agreement.

Planning for Low Emission Vehicles

11.63 The UK government has committed to banning the sale of petrol and diesel cars by 2030. The resultant societal shift from petrol and diesel internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles to ULEVs will require widespread support from local authorities. It is projected that there will be an additional 42,500 ULEVs within the Black Country by 2025. The Black Country ULEV strategy sets out a framework for how the authorities can support this transition

Policy STR9 – Planning for Low Emission Vehicles

- 1) **Proposals for low emission vehicles will be supported by:**
 - a. **Ensuring that new developments include adequate provision for charging infrastructure e.g., electric vehicle charging points in car parks, measures to encourage LEV use through travel plans and other initiatives.**
 - b. **Where appropriate the Council will facilitate the introduction of charging points in public locations.**
 - c. **Working with partners to explore support for alternative low emission vehicle technologies, such as hydrogen fuel cells, across a range of modes; private cars, buses and / or small passenger and fleet vehicles**

Justification

11.64 In July 2019, the West Midlands Combined Authority committed to setting a 'net zero' emissions target by 2041, with a climate action plan being approved by the WMCA board by January 2020. The WMCA Board further approved a regional ULEV strategy, in February 2020. The Black Country ULEV strategy sits under this regional document. Whilst the WMCA ULEV Strategy focusses on sharing best practice, co-ordination and possible joint delivery of a large-scale network of rapid charging 'hubs', the Black Country ULEV strategy takes a more granular approach, focussing on the specifics of each authority and offering a framework for the delivery of infrastructure on the ground.

11.65 The study found that the Black Country lags behind the rest of the country when it comes to adoption of ULEVs. This is reflected in the availability of charging infrastructure across the four authorities, with around 80% of the sub-region further than one km from the nearest publicly available charge point. However, relative to median wage, Sandwell sits on or above the trend for ULEV adoption, indicating higher uptake than might be expected given the average wage across each of the four authorities.

Transport Innovation & Digital Connectivity

- 11.66 The historic relationship between the West Midlands’ economic success and mobility goes beyond increasing travel. The West Midlands is a key UK centre of automotive manufacturing and production. It is also part of the UK’s so called “Golden Triangle”, within a four-hour drive to all major UK ports and 90% of the UK’s population. As such, Sandwell is the location of choice for some of the UK’s major industries and largest distribution centres. Freight and logistics, a key sector for Sandwell and the wider West Midlands, supports almost every other economic sector, employing thousands of people and contributing extensively to Inclusive Growth. There are also those employed in public transport services in the region, including many who work for Mobico (formerly National Express Group), a leading public transport operator with bus, coach and rail services across the world, and headquartered in the West Midlands.
- 11.67 An ever-evolving industry will represent great challenges and opportunities to industry, both in terms of products and services created here and exported, and products and services created here and used by residents of Sandwell. For example, the freight and logistics sector face a great challenge with phasing out internal combustion engines, but also with reducing vehicle miles through consolidation of deliveries and minimising the impacts of delivery vehicles in places with high pedestrian footfall. However, there are also plenty of opportunities for new industrial activity in the provision of transport products and services that better support Inclusive Growth given that significant demand for transport will remain.

Policy STR10 – Transport Innovation and Digital Connectivity

1. **Opportunities for integrating 5G connectivity within the transport network should be explored when development proposals, masterplanning and major housing and employment schemes are being promoted, to improve transport services and ensure there is 5G connectivity throughout Sandwell. This should include the provision of 5G connectivity as part of new development proposals, which will encourage more people to connect remotely, reducing the need to travel (see Policy SID1).**
2. **Sandwell will ensure the integration of ‘smart infrastructure’ where possible as part of new development proposals. In transport terms, examples of smart infrastructure include:**
 - a. **smart parking sensors, which provide live parking capacity data;**

Policy STR10 – Transport Innovation and Digital Connectivity

- b. **traffic signals that can respond to levels of congestion and prioritise sustainable transport modes; and**
 - c. **transport volume monitoring sensors, which can provide information on the use of different modes, journey time or tracking data.**
- 3. Working in partnership with Transport for West Midlands and neighbouring Local Authorities, Sandwell will facilitate Mobility as a Service¹⁷⁷ and will ensure this is integrated into any new infrastructure where applicable.**

Justification

11.68 The West Midlands currently leads on the Industrial Strategy’s ‘Future of Mobility’ grand challenge building on its existing strengths in automotive innovation (e.g., the UK Battery Industrialisation Centre), and connected supply chains in rail, automotive and aerospace as well as digital communications with the West Midlands 5G testbed. We are piloting and leading on a broad spectrum of transport innovations and technologies including micromobility (such as e-scooters), Mobility as a Service (MaaS), connected autonomous vehicles (CAV) and mobility credit trials. The region has also developed a UK first proposal for a transport regulatory ‘sandbox’ to help test and develop new solutions to our transport challenges. The West Midlands already has well-developed infrastructure and energy plans to support the shift to zero carbon. Therefore, cementing its position as a UK industry leader in mobility sectors will attract new investment, create and sustain highly skilled jobs, accelerate clustering and catalyse innovation - boosting the international competitiveness of the region.

¹⁷⁷ Digital transport service platforms that enable users to access, pay for, and get real-time information on, a range of public and private transport options.

12. Infrastructure and Delivery

Introduction

12.1 A key role of the SLP is to plan for the growth required for a sustainable and prosperous Sandwell. The Borough is planning to accommodate 11,167 new houses and provide for 1,206ha of employment land (of which 29ha is currently vacant) up to 2041. Ensuring effective delivery of this amount of development will require strong collaborative working with public, private and third sector partners, involving a robust process of infrastructure planning and delivery.

Promotion of Fibre to the Premises and 5G Networks

12.2 Planning policy can play an important role in helping to address the key digital connectivity infrastructure needs of Sandwell. The following policy sets out proposals for ensuring the provision of full fibre broadband connectivity is considered in all new major development proposals. It also sets out the approach for supporting and assessing 5G Network infrastructure proposals.

Policy SID1 - Promotion of Fibre to the Premises and 5G Networks

Fibre to the Premise

1. **Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) is essential infrastructure and is vital to the delivery of sustainable development. All major developments that provide ten or more new homes or more than 1,000m² of non-residential floorspace will be required to deliver FTTP capacity / infrastructure to all individual properties.**
2. **All eligible proposals should be supported by an FTTP Statement that details how FTTP will be provided to serve the development and confirms that FTTP will be available at first occupation.**

5G Networks

3. **Any proposals for infrastructure to support the delivery of 5G networks will be supported in principle, subject to meeting the following criteria and the requirements of other local policies and national guidance:**
 - a. **Proposals should be sensitively sited and designed to minimise impacts on the environment, amenity, and character of the surrounding area.**

Policy SID1 - Promotion of Fibre to the Premises and 5G Networks

- b. **Proposals should not have an adverse impact on areas of ecological interest or areas of landscape importance, and should protect and, where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting (Policies SNE2 and SHE2).**
 - c. **Proposals should demonstrate that proper regard has been given to location and landscaping requirements, including the potential for innovative solutions complementary to the immediate surroundings.**
 - d. **The potential to use canal towpaths to accommodate 5G or other network infrastructure and cabling should be explored, where this would not adversely affect areas of ecological or historic interest (Policy SNE6).**
- 4. Operators proposing 5G network infrastructure are strongly recommended to enter early discussions with the Council.**

Justification

- 12.3 Full fibre broadband is the future of connectivity and increases speeds from the 30MB available for superfast broadband to 1000MB (1GB). Currently, full fibre coverage is very low at 2.1% in Sandwell - compared to 11.5% across England. Full fibre provision is required to meet future demands for connectivity, as highlighted by a 50% increase in demand each year, and to enable the wider economic, health and service delivery benefits it will support.
- 12.4 At the local level, the availability, reliability and speed of broadband provision is a key consideration for house buyers and many view it to be as essential as more traditional utilities. Wider adoption will help reduce the need to travel, thereby improving highway safety and mitigating the transport impacts of new development, as reflected in the Key Route Network's '*Connecting Communities*' programme. Similarly, it is also a key concern in the public health and business sectors. However, despite the obvious benefits to developers and end-users, full fibre is not always provided in new residential and commercial properties.
- 12.5 Planning policy can play a role in helping to achieve the necessary transformation in broadband connectivity. The NPPF clearly recognises this and supports the delivery of advanced, high-quality communications infrastructure and the expansion of highspeed broadband where possible.

5G

- 12.6 Sandwell has nominated a Digital Infrastructure Champion and Co-ordinator to drive this agenda forward in the borough and are working together with other authorities as part of the WM5G Digital Forum to support the rollout of future proofed digital infrastructure.
- 12.7 Currently most properties in the Black Country are connected to superfast broadband (fibre to the cabinet and copper to the premises with speeds up to 30MB) but future provision will be full fibre (fibre to the premises with speeds up to 1GB). Fibre to the premises (FTTP) is recognised by the Government as a Next Generation Access (NGA) technology¹⁷⁸ and as a priority for investment. While superfast speeds can be achieved on current generation copper networks, it is widely accepted that NGA technologies should be prioritised.
- 12.8 The Government has committed to gigabit-capable broadband by 2025 and it is Sandwell's aspiration to support rollout of full fibre across the borough as soon as possible. As part of the WM5G work, an options appraisal case is being pulled together around full fibre. By seeking FTTP, Sandwell is aiming to provide a futureproof solution for broadband delivery. Adopting this approach will prevent the need for fibre retrofitting programmes in the future, which have significant cost implications and can cause considerable disruption through road works. In Sandwell and elsewhere in the Black Country, canal and waterway corridors (especially towpaths) can provide alternative opportunities to provide digital communications infrastructure.
- 12.9 To help deliver this aspiration, Policy SID1 requires developers to ensure FTTP is available at every new property on all major developments.
- 12.10 In exceptional cases, where FTTP is not practical, consideration will be given to:
- a. non-Next Generation Access technologies that can provide speeds in excess of 30MB per second (or the latest requirement if higher) as an alternative;
 - b. an affordable 1GB/s- capable connection being made available to all end users.
- 12.11 The intention of Policy SID1 is not to require developers to deliver FTTP solutions themselves. Instead, it focuses on the need to conduct early dialogue with telecom providers to best understand what their infrastructure specifications are and how these can be accommodated as part of the new development. The involvement of multiple telecoms providers at build stage will minimise the impact later.

¹⁷⁸ Next Generation Access Networks: '*wired access networks that consist wholly or in part of optical elements, and which are capable of delivering broadband access services with enhanced characteristics (such as higher throughput) as compared to those provided over already existing copper networks.*' Commission Recommendation 2010/572/EU of 20 September 2010 on regulated access to Next Generation Access Networks technology.

- 12.12 To facilitate this, any application for a qualifying development should be supported by an “FTTP Statement”, which provides details of:
- a. dialogue with the telecom operators;
 - b. how FTTP will be provided to serve the development;
 - c. confirms that this process will be completed upon occupation of the first property on the development;
 - d. that sufficient ducting space for future digital full fibre connectivity infrastructure is provided to all end users within that development.
- 12.13 Conditions will then be applied to any subsequent permission to ensure that FTTP will be secured as envisaged by the statement. For outline applications, the statement may be more limited on specific details relating to the imminent implementation of FTTP and provide a commitment to supply these details later, including how and when the telecom operators will be consulted.

5G Networks

- 12.14 5G is mobile internet that is as fast as fibre, with speeds up to 1GB – five to ten times faster than current home broadband connectivity. 5G benefits include huge capacity, with the ability to connect thousands of users and devices at the same time at consistently ultrafast speeds. They are ultra-reliable and secure with low latency, which will be transformational for industry. The demand for mobile data in the UK is growing rapidly, and as households and businesses become increasingly reliant on mobile connectivity, the infrastructure must be in place to ensure supply does not become a constraint on future demand.
- 12.15 The Government wants the UK to be a world leader in 5G, and for communities to benefit from investment in this new technology. The NPPF expects planning policies and decisions to support the expansion of next generation mobile technology such as 5G. The West Midlands has been selected as the UK’s first multi-city 5G test bed, paving the way for the future rollout of 5G across the UK, making the region the first in the UK ready to trial new 5G applications and services at scale.
- 12.16 To deploy 5G and improve coverage in partial “not-spots” (a place where wireless internet, especially broadband, services are not available), mobile network operators will need to strengthen existing sites to accommodate additional equipment. To extend coverage into total not-spots or to add capacity in areas of high demand, mobile network operators will also need to identify and develop new sites. Masts will need to be higher than at present to accommodate 5G, which may impact on local amenity and character in some areas.

- 12.17 Mobile Network Operators are encouraged to have early discussions with planning authorities and to communicate and consult with local communities, especially in the case of new sites. This will help to ensure that the best sites are selected for 5G infrastructure and that equipment is sympathetically designed and camouflaged where appropriate, in line with principles set out in the NPPF and relevant local planning policies.
- 12.18 Where larger developments are planned, developers can consider the incorporation of potential sites for telecoms equipment to ensure 5G coverage.

Policy SID2- Mobile Network Infrastructure

1. **To ensure that the installation of masts is in full compliance with the requirements of the radio frequency (RF) public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) applications for all prior approval and full planning applications must:**
 - a. **provide self-certification to the effect that a mobile phone base station when operational will meet the ICNRP guidelines; and**
 - b. **provide a statement for each site indicating its location, the height of the antenna, the frequency and modulation characteristics and details of power output and where a mobile phone base station is added to an external mast or site, confirmation that the cumulative exposure will not exceed the ICNRP guidelines.**
2. **Infrastructure should be located where it will have the least adverse impact on local landscapes, biodiversity and heritage assets wherever possible. Where unavoidable impacts arise in sensitive locations, they should be considered fully and avoided or mitigated accordingly.**

Justification

- 12.19 The ICNIRP guidelines are a set of radiation levels proposed by an international body. These are used as the maximum recommended levels of radiation for base stations.
- 12.20 To ensure that the proposed mobile phone base station will be within the levels set out by ICNRP, with every application, the operators must provide a certificate of compliance with these radiation levels. Without this certificate, the application will not be determined.

Policy SID3 - Digital Infrastructure / Equipment

- 1. The siting and design (including materials) of digital infrastructure / equipment, which includes (but is not limited to) telephone kiosks and digital interactive finger posts, will be carefully controlled to ensure:**
 - a. they do not detract from the visual amenities of the street scene;**
 - b. they avoid harmful impacts on public amenity or unacceptable street clutter in the public realm;**
 - c. they avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets or their settings and support local distinctiveness.**

Justification

12.21 To encourage high quality design and the protection of amenities within the borough through appropriate design of telecommunications equipment and digital infrastructure and ensure that digital infrastructure installations do not harm the significance of heritage assets when situated close to historic buildings or places.

13. Waste and Minerals

Waste - Introduction

- 13.1 Sandwell Council is the waste collection, waste disposal and waste planning authority for the borough.
- 13.2 The key objective for waste across Sandwell is to minimise its generation across all sectors and increase the re-use, recycling, and recovery rates of waste material.
- 13.3 The following policy aims are likely to be important for Sandwell going forward:
- a) the proposed introduction of a requirement to segregate certain municipal wastes for collection, which implies a need for a review and the revision of collection regimes for the Local Authority and businesses producing commercial waste;
 - b) continued focus on measures to encourage waste prevention including, in line with national policy, the introduction of produce responsibility obligations for packaging wastes and reduction of single use plastics; and
 - c) continued focus on the protection of the environment and human health and tackling waste disposal crime.

Waste Infrastructure – Future Requirements

- 13.4 This policy sets out the overall strategy and principles for waste management in Sandwell and the types of waste development that will support this. It also identifies how much new waste management capacity Sandwell is likely to need to support planned levels of housing and growth over the plan period, and to help deliver the Strategic Priority of meeting the Sandwell's resource and infrastructure needs.

Policy SWA1 – Waste Infrastructure Future Requirements

1. **Proposals for relevant, major development shall evidence how its operation will minimise waste production, as well as facilitating the re-use and recovery of waste materials including, for example, through recycling, composting and energy from waste.**
2. **Waste operators will be expected to demonstrate that the greenhouse gas emissions from the operations involved and associated transport of waste from source to processing facility have been minimised, in line with national and local targets for the transition to a net zero carbon economy.**

Policy SWA1 – Waste Infrastructure Future Requirements

- 3. Proposals for waste management facilities will be supported based upon the following principles;**
- a) managing waste through the waste hierarchy in sequential order. Sites for the disposal of waste will only be permitted where it meets a need which cannot be met by treatment higher in the waste hierarchy;**
 - b) promoting the opportunities for on-site management of waste where it arises and encouraging the co-location of waste developments that can use each other's waste materials;**
 - c) ensuring that sufficient capacity is located within Sandwell to accommodate the waste capacity requirements during the plan period and reducing the reliance on other authority areas;**
 - d) enabling the development of recycling facilities across Sandwell, including civic amenity sites, and ensuring that there is enough capacity and access for the deposit of municipal waste for re-reuse, recycling, and disposal;**
 - e) waste must be disposed of, or be recovered in, one of the nearest appropriate facilities, by means of the most appropriate methods and technologies, to ensure a high level of protection for the environment and public health;**
 - f) ensuring new waste management facilities are located and designed to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the townscape and landscape, human health and well-being, nature conservation and heritage assets and amenity;**
 - g) working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities with responsibilities for waste who import waste into, or export waste out of, Sandwell, to ensure a co-operative cross boundary approach to waste management is maintained.**

Justification

13.5 There have been significant policy changes in the management of waste over the last 20 years primarily due to the implementation of the waste hierarchy and the need to reuse and recycle waste before disposing of it. In addition, the management of waste should be considered alongside other spatial planning matters, including economic development, regeneration and the national obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The National Planning Policy for Waste requires that areas and / or sites for the location of waste

management facilities are identified in Local Plans. The Plan identifies several preferred areas for the location of new waste facilities.

- 13.6 In line with national waste planning guidance, the Plan will, where necessary, make provision for the suitable management of non-hazardous waste; Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW) and Commercial and Industrial Waste (C&I); construction, demolition and excavation waste (CD&E); hazardous waste such as asbestos or batteries, low-level radioactive waste, agricultural waste and wastewater produced from water treatment.
- 13.7 Findings in the Black Country Waste Study (BCWS) (2020) show that the waste industry has grown quickly over the past twenty years and makes a significant contribution to the national economy. The past two decades has seen growth of around 55% in employment and incomes in the sector.
- 13.8 The waste sector is of importance to Sandwell, where it makes a far more significant contribution to the economy (0.88% of total local jobs) when compared with national figures (0.55% of jobs nationally). It is expected that this sector's contribution to GVA will grow by nearly 250% by 2030. To deliver these environmental and economic benefits, the Plan will have an important role in providing the land use policy in its support.
- 13.9 Housing and employment land are projected to increase in Sandwell as the regeneration of the urban area progresses, to help meet strategic housing and employment targets. The needs of new waste infrastructure will be required to be balanced with those of housing and employment for suitable development sites. In seeking to identify development sites for waste infrastructure, priority shall be given to the safeguarding of existing and allocated sites for their continued use and the retention of the local employment areas in which they occur.
- 13.10 Waste reduction and resource efficiency improvements will have a significant influence on future waste growth. Waste per household decreased from a peak of 1,056 kilograms per household per year (kg/hh/yr) in 2002 - 03 to 983 kg/hh/yr in 2017 - 18 (a reduction of over 7.5%). This has been driven by a range of factors, including household income, increased resource efficiency (such as lightweighting¹⁷⁹) and changes in consumer behaviours. Similar factors are also thought to be driving reductions in C&I waste.
- 13.11 In addition, the transition towards a circular economy, the approach to economic development designed to benefit businesses, society and the environment, is expected to

¹⁷⁹ Lightweighting is a concept that originated in the auto industry about manufacturing vehicles that are less heavy to achieve better fuel efficiency and reduce raw material use and costs. The term has also been used to describe the process of making packaging lighter or replacing it with lighter weight alternatives.

significantly change the way waste will be managed in future. In particular, the quantities of waste reused, recycled, and composted are expected to increase substantially.

- 13.12 Transitioning towards the circular economy will involve a significant reduction in the amount of waste produced by households and businesses, because avoidable waste will be 'designed out' of products at the manufacturing stage. It will also mean a significant shift away from methods of managing unavoidable waste at the bottom of the 'waste hierarchy' (waste disposal and energy recovery) and towards those at the top of the hierarchy which can 'close the loop' (re-use and recycling).
- 13.13 As waste facilities are an essential part of the infrastructure of an area, it is not only important that they are appropriately located, but also that policy protection is applied to areas suitable for waste uses, to help achieve the objectives of moving waste up the hierarchy.
- 13.14 A different set of assumptions have been applied to the CD&E stream, based on the construction waste targets set under the Waste Framework Directive (2009/98/EC), the management of current CD&E arisings and the likely targets to be set in the future.
- 13.15 Total waste management capacity in Sandwell is driven by decreasing disposal capacity as existing landfill and other disposal sites run out of void space. The capacities include both internal and external capacity for recycling and transfer, based on exports of waste from the Black Country; the capacities of these site categories are not anticipated to increase or decrease significantly over the plan period.
- 13.16 To account for likely changes in operational capacity at the waste management sites, internal capacity is based on five-year average (mean) tonnages of 'waste received' at permitted sites and operational incinerators by site category, 2013-2017. Material legislative and collection approach changes have been minimal over this period, so a five-year average is a more reliable figure than using the longer ten-year average. It should be noted that external capacity is based on 2017 input tonnages of 'waste received' at permitted sites and operational incinerators, by site category.

Expected Changes – Waste Management

- 13.17 Under current projections, the quantity of waste Sandwell is projected to manage increases from 1.75 mt in 2021 to 2.2 mt in 2040 – 41, equating to an increase of 26% or 1.2% per annum. An ongoing emphasis on waste reduction has seen a 7.5% reduction in waste per household since 2006 - 07 and this trend could have a significant influence on future waste growth. However, there are emerging changes in the need for different types of waste management capacity.

- 13.18 The waste projections have also considered a range of waste management scenarios based on the recycling rates that may be achieved, and these are summarised in Table 12 below. The BCWS considers that Waste Management Scenario 2 (WMS2) is the most likely scenario for Sandwell.
- 13.19 WMS2 (Circular Economy) assumes that the targets for reuse and recycling of municipal waste will be achieved for household and C&I waste over the plan period (i.e., 65% of waste from these streams will be recycled by 2035). A different set of assumptions has been applied to the CD&E waste stream, based on existing CD&E waste management rates in the Black Country and potential future recycling targets suggested in the 'Circular Economy Package' proposals.

Table 12 - Black Country Waste Study – Waste Management Scenarios

Scenarios	Household Waste	C&I Waste	CD&E Waste
Waste Management Scenario 1 (WMS1): no change in recycling performance	No change in household waste recycling	No change in C&I waste recycling	No change in CD&E waste recycling ¹⁸⁰
Waste Management Scenario 2 (WMS2): meet indicative EU Circular Economy targets	65% household waste reuse, recycling and composting by 2035	65% C&I waste reuse recycling and composting by 2035	c.85% CD&E waste recycling or recovery by 2030
Waste Management Scenario 3 (WMS3): progress towards EU Circular Economy targets	60% household waste reuse, recycling and composting by 2035	55% C&I waste reuse, recycling and composting by 2035	c. 80% CD&E waste recycling or recovery by 2030

Source: BCWS, Table 4.7

¹⁸⁰ It is estimated that the recycling and recovery rate achieved for CD&E waste in the Black Country in 2017 was around 33% (see BCWS, Table 3.10). This suggests that the Black Country is currently not meeting the existing Waste Framework Directive (2009/98/EC) target to recycle or recover 70% of non-hazardous C&D waste by 2020. The likely reasons for this are identified above.

Waste Imports and Exports

- 13.20 The BCWS waste projections also considered net waste imports. Around 1.35 million tonnes of waste were received at permitted waste sites (including landfill sites) and operational incinerators in Sandwell in 2021 (BCWS Table 2.10). The total imports into Sandwell originating from the West Midlands Region was 746 tonnes, representing 68% of the total waste received.
- 13.21 More than 80% of the waste received at permitted waste facilities in Sandwell (excluding incinerators) in 2021 by tonnage originated within the former West Midlands region (BCWS Appendix J, Table J4). However, the originating authority of 29.5% of this waste is not known. 15% of the waste is recorded as originating from within the Black Country, and 15% from Birmingham.
- 13.22 Similarly, more than 80% of the waste received at permitted sites in England which was recorded as having originated in Sandwell in 2021 (by tonnage) did not travel beyond the former West Midlands region. Outside the West Midlands, the East Midlands, Southwest and East of England were the three largest importers of waste into Sandwell, importing 9% of total waste.
- 13.23 In 2021 nearly 608kt of waste originating in Sandwell were exported to permitted sites in England and Wales.

Waste Growth Projections

- 13.24 The waste projections for Sandwell are a function of waste growth projections and waste management scenarios. These have been informed by Sandwell and the Resources and Waste Strategy and incorporate differences in waste growth and recycling and recovery performance which may vary over the plan period.

'Capacity Gaps' and Need for New Waste Infrastructure 2018 – 2041

- 13.25 Housing and employment land demand are projected to increase as Sandwell's regeneration of the urban area progresses. The needs of new waste infrastructure need to be balanced with those of housing and employment for suitable development sites. The Council will look to identify development sites for waste infrastructure, with priority placed upon the safeguarding of existing and allocated sites for continued use.
- 13.26 In addition, the way waste will be managed in future is expected to change significantly as the UK transitions towards a circular economy. The quantities of waste reused, recycled and composted are expected to increase significantly.

13.27 Based on the assumption that the circular economy recycling targets identified in Table 12 above will either be met (WMS2) or partially met (WMS3), the BCWS (Table 4.9) predicts that the following additional waste management capacity will need to be delivered in the Black Country between 2021 and 2041 to maintain net self-sufficiency:

- a. re-use / recycling (non-hazardous municipal waste) – 813 kt to 4tpa
 - b. energy recovery (residual municipal waste) – 335 to 663 kt tpa
- (Source - BCWS, paragraphs 3.5.1 – 3.5.29, Table 3.9)

13.28 Most of the new capacity requirements identified in the policy are expected to be delivered by the waste industry rather than by the local authority. Delivery will therefore depend on whether new projects are financially viable and attractive to investors. This will in turn depend on demand from waste producers, the effectiveness of government initiatives to incentivise re-use and recycling of waste in preference to energy recovery and disposal to landfill, and the availability of suitable sites where the new facilities can be built (Policy W3).

Waste Sites

13.29 Policy SWA2 relates to the protection of sites identified for or currently in use as waste treatment facilities and seeks to manage the interactions between such sites and surrounding uses.

Policy SWA2 – Waste Sites

Protecting Waste Sites

1. **Sandwell will safeguard all existing strategic and other waste management facilities from inappropriate development, to maintain existing levels of waste management capacity and meet Strategic Objective 17, unless it can be demonstrated that:**
 - a) **there is no longer a need for the facility; and**
 - b) **capacity can be met elsewhere; or**
 - c) **appropriate compensatory provision is made in appropriate locations elsewhere in the Black Country; or**
 - d) **the site is required to facilitate the strategic objectives of the Sandwell.**
2. **This policy will also apply to all new waste management sites that are implemented within the lifetime of the plan.**

Policy SWA2 – Waste Sites

New development near existing waste facilities

3. **Proposals for housing and other potentially sensitive uses will not be permitted near to or adjacent to an existing waste management site where there is potential for conflict between the uses,**
 - a) **unless a temporary permission for a waste use has expired, or the waste management use has otherwise ceased, and the site or infrastructure is considered unsuitable for a subsequent waste use;**
 - b) **or redevelopment of the waste site or loss of waste infrastructure would form part of a strategy or scheme that has wider environmental, social and / or economic benefits that outweigh the retention of the site or infrastructure for the waste use and alternative provision is made for the displaced waste use;**
 - c) **or a suitable replacement site or infrastructure has otherwise been identified and permitted.**
4. **Waste Site Impact Assessments will be expected to demonstrate that at least one of the above criteria applies. Applications should also identify any ‘legacy’ issues arising from existing or former waste uses, and how these will be addressed through the design of the development and the construction process.**

Justification

Waste Sites

- 13.30 The existing pattern of waste management infrastructure is illustrated in the Black Country Waste Study, which shows the location of all known waste management facilities in Sandwell.
- 13.31 They have been identified through a detailed analysis of all known licenced and exempt facilities in each authority area and include waste treatment, waste transfer, waste to energy and landfill facilities.
- 13.32 The definition of a strategic waste management site is;
- a) all facilities that form a vital part of Sandwell’s municipal waste management infrastructure, e.g., energy from waste plants, waste transfer facilities and HWRCs, depots;

- b) all commercial waste management facilities that fulfil more than one local role, e.g., they are part of a nationwide or regional operation linked to other facilities elsewhere and take in waste from all over the Black Country and / or beyond;
- c) all commercial facilities specialising in a particular waste stream or waste management technology, of which there are no others, or very few other of the same type operating elsewhere in Sandwell;
- d) all facilities likely to make a significant contribution towards existing waste management capacity;
- e) a site with sufficient capacity to recover, treat or dispose of at least 20,000 tonnes of waste per annum;
- f) a facility forming part of the UK's network of installations for waste disposal, such as landfill sites;
- g) a hazardous waste recovery facility of sufficient size to qualify as a Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP).

Safeguarding Existing and Planned Waste Sites

- 13.33 Sandwell is expected to see significant housing and employment land growth between now and 2041. However, the need for new housing and employment development has to be balanced against the need to retain the infrastructure needed to support local households, businesses, and the construction industry. This includes the infrastructure that manages the waste they generate. Waste Planning authorities must therefore ensure that the impact of non-waste development on existing and planned waste facilities is acceptable, and *“does not prejudice the implementation of the waste hierarchy and/ or the efficient operation of such facilities”* (NPPW, para. 8).
- 13.34 The BCWS therefore recommends a safeguarding policy for existing strategic and other waste sites and preferred industrial areas, identified for the development of new waste infrastructure (BCWS, 5.6.1 – 5.6.5 and 6.2.1). However, it also recognises that the redevelopment of existing or former waste management sites with new housing, employment or other land uses is sometimes justified and the policy reflects this. For example, redevelopment is likely to be acceptable where the waste facility has already closed, or the operator is proposing to close it or relocate the operations to another site.
- 13.35 Another important material consideration will be whether the waste operations are lawful, i.e., whether they have planning permission or a lawful development certificate. For example,

if the waste operations are unauthorised and unsuitable for the location, the Council will normally consider taking enforcement action to stop them.

Potential Losses of Waste Management Capacity

13.36 When determining applications for non-waste development within a short distance or adjacent an existing waste management facility, regard will be had to any potential adverse impacts the proposed development might have on the future of the site as a location for the continuation of waste management activities. If a development is likely to have an unacceptable impact on the future of the site as a location for waste management, it will be refused.

Waste Site Impact Assessments

13.37 Taking on board the BCWS recommendations, the policy requires applications for non-waste development, which could be sensitive to the operation of a waste management site, on or near to an existing or planned waste site to include a Waste Site Impact Assessment. This should:

- a) identify the waste site potentially affected;
- b) explain the spatial relationship between the application site and the waste site;
- c) provide a brief description of the waste site, which should include:
 - i. its operational status and any proposed changes;
 - ii. the facility type;
 - iii. whether the site is a strategic waste site;
 - iv. the types of waste managed;
 - v. the waste operations permitted on the site.
- d) summarise the main effects of the waste operations
- e) identify any effects that could be harmful to the health, wellbeing, and amenity of the occupiers of the new development;
- f) consider how the occupiers of the new development could be affected;
- g) consider how the waste site could be affected by the development;
- h) demonstrate how the development complies with the policy and the measures proposed to ensure that the waste site and the proposed development can co-exist without compromising each other.

Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities

13.38 The identification and delivery of new waste management facilities will make a significant contribution towards meeting new capacity requirements set out above and will meet the aims and objectives of the Plan.

Policy SWA3 – Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities

1. **The preferred locations for waste management facilities are the Local Employment Areas shown on the Sandwell Local Plan Policies Map.**
2. **All proposals for new waste management facilities should demonstrate how they will contribute to Strategic Objective 17 and the strategic objectives of Policy SWA1, such as the contribution they will make to landfill diversion, delivery of new waste management capacity and diversification of the range of facilities currently available.**
3. **All applications for waste development will be expected to comply with the requirements in Policy SWA4.**

Justification

- 13.39 The Sandwell Local Plan is a strategic plan and therefore it focuses on safeguarding strategic waste sites. The quantity of waste Sandwell is projected to manage (included imported waste) is predicted to increase from 1.75 million tonnes (mt) in 2021 to 2.1 mt in 2040-41, equating to an increase of 23% or 1.1% per annum. The SLP will also need to give appropriate protection to other waste sites.
- 13.40 Waste facilities are an essential part of the infrastructure of an area; hence provision must be made in the Local Plan to deliver facilities and enable the objectives of moving waste up the hierarchy.
- 13.41 Certain forms of waste infrastructure are relatively specialised or of strategic scale or are in other ways particularly important in terms of the contribution they make to the overall network. However, and in combination, all facilities can contribute to delivering these objectives.
- 13.42 National Planning Policy for Waste (NPPW) requires the Waste Management Authorities to identify suitable sites and areas for waste management in Local Plan documents. Several specific locations were identified in the Black Country Waste Study 2020, where new waste management facilities could be located.

- 13.43 When deciding which areas should be allocated, waste planning authorities should assess their suitability against a range of criteria:
- a) the extent to which the site or area will support the other policies set out in the NPPW;
 - b) physical and environmental constraints on development, including existing and proposed neighbouring land uses;
 - c) the capacity of the existing and potential transport infrastructure to support the sustainable movement of waste and products arising from resource recovery, seeking when practicable and beneficial to use modes other than road transport, and;
 - d) the cumulative impact of existing and proposed waste disposal facilities on the well-being of local community, including any significant adverse impacts on environmental quality, social cohesion and inclusion or economic potential.
- 13.44 The NPPW advises that when identifying suitable sites and areas for waste, waste planning authorities should consider opportunities for on-site management of waste where it arises. This is addressed in Policy SWA1.
- 13.45 The NPPW also recommends looking at a broad range of locations for the development of new waste infrastructure, including industrial sites (particularly where there are opportunities to co-locate waste management facilities together). Priority should be given to the re-use of previously developed land, sites allocated for employment use and redundant agricultural buildings (NPPW, paragraph 4).
- 13.46 As the strategy towards sustainable waste management involves broadening the range of waste management facilities available in the Black Country it is necessary to identify a range of opportunities that can accommodate different types of operation and technology. Many waste operations are similar to industrial processes and can be accommodated in Local Employment Areas.

Identification of Preferred Sites

- 13.47 It is not proposed to allocate specific sites for waste in the Local Plan because no new sites likely to be deliverable within the plan period have been identified, apart from sites that already have planning permission (NPPF, 16, 35, Annex 2). To have sufficient confidence to allocate a site, it would need to be actively promoted for a waste management use by the Council, a landowner and / or a commercial waste operator.

Identification of Preferred Areas

- 13.48 Several employment areas have been identified in the BCWS as being most suited to the development of new waste recovery, treatment, and transfer infrastructure. These sites were

identified through a three-stage screening process followed by an assessment of employment locations and selected sites promoted through the ‘call for sites’ which fell outside of the excluded areas¹⁸¹.

13.49 Waste site options within the resulting ‘refined study area’ were then identified in consultation with the Council. These were then subjected to two further rounds of assessment:

- a) Stage 4: **Positive Local Factors** - using criteria similar to Stage 1 to identify characteristics likely to be attractive to waste operators and to encourage delivery of new waste infrastructure; and
- b) Stage 5: **Detailed Non-Spatial Assessment** – focusing on site constraints, potential land use conflicts and transport/ access constraints likely to be a potential barrier to delivery of new waste infrastructure.

13.50 The results of the assessments are presented in Appendix M of the BCWS and are summarised in Table 5.10 of the main report. These areas are considered least likely to give rise to land use conflicts, and in several cases, there is already co-location of existing waste facilities to which new sites would contribute.

Table 13 - Preferred Areas for new waste facilities in Sandwell

Site Ref	Address	Potentially Suitable Waste Use ^[1]	Area
M.4	Cornwall Road and Parkrose Industrial Estates, Soho	Energy from waste treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	60.1
M.5	Tat Bank, Langley	Energy from waste treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	53.1
M.6	Charles Street Enterprise Park, Queens Court Trading Estate, Swan Village	Treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	42.7

¹⁸¹ BCWS (2020), paragraphs 5.2.3 – 5.2.15, tables 5.1 – 5.4 and figures 5.1 – 5.3

Site Ref	Address	Potentially Suitable Waste Use ^[1]	Area
M.7	Hill Top and Bilport Lane Industrial Estates, Wednesbury	Treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	19.9
M.8	Powke Lane and Waterfall Lane Trading Estates, Rowley Regis	Treatment, in-vessel composting, anaerobic digestion, transfer, recycling	46.1
M.9	Dartmouth Road	n/a	26.2

- 13.51 While most types of waste facilities are likely to be acceptable in all Local Employment Areas, the list of facilities acceptable on Strategic Employment Areas is much shorter. They will normally be restricted to fully enclosed operations that fall within Use Classes B1 (c) or B2 and are already classified as employment uses, or *sui generis* operations that would be compatible with a Strategic Employment Area location and would not compromise existing or potential future employment uses falling within Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2 or B8.
- 13.52 Certain waste operations may be acceptable on employment land not identified as strategic or local employment areas for long-term retention in employment land use. However, given the status of these sites and the potential that they will be developed for a non-employment use, the Council is only likely to grant a temporary permission for waste development in these types of location.
- 13.53 The policy recognises that some types of waste operation involve the processing of waste in the open air and are therefore unlikely to be suitable on employment sites; for example, the disposal of inert waste onto or into land.

Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities

- 13.54 The Black Country Waste Study has been undertaken to review the existing operating capacity of waste infrastructure across the Black Country and to assess future requirements over the Plan period.
- 13.55 Steering waste management facilities towards the most suitable locations where they are likely to generate maximum benefits in terms of co-location, provide supporting infrastructure for other uses and minimise potential harmful effects on the environment and local communities, will support the strategic priorities of the Plan.

Policy SWA4 – Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities

Key Locational Considerations for All Waste Management Proposals

- 1. Proposals should demonstrate how they will contribute to Strategic Objective 17 and the strategic objectives of Policy SWA1, such as the contribution they will make towards landfill diversion, delivery of new waste management capacity and diversification of the range of facilities currently available.**
- 2. Development for new-build waste management facilities¹⁸² should be focused in local employment areas and will be required to meet the following criteria:**
 - a) evidence the need for the facility;**
 - b) all waste processes and operations must be contained, processed and managed within buildings unless there are acceptable operational reasons why these processes cannot be contained in buildings;**
 - c) proposals must accord with other relevant Plan policies in relation to the protection of the environment and public amenity, or demonstrate that other material considerations outweigh any policy conflicts;**
 - d) consideration will be given to the potential impacts of waste management proposals on:**
 - i. minimising adverse visual impacts;**
 - ii. potential detrimental effects on the environment and public health;**
 - iii. generation of odours, litter, light, dust, and other infestation;**
 - iv. noise, excessive traffic and vibration;**
 - v. risk of serious fires through combustion of accumulated wastes;**
 - vi. harm to water quality and resources and flood risk management;**
 - vii. land instability;**
 - viii. land use conflict; proposals should demonstrate compatibility with the uses already present within / adjacent to the area;**

¹⁸² Waste development covers the use of any land or buildings for the storage, treatment, processing, transfer, bulking-up, recycling, recovery, or final deposit of any substance classified as 'waste'.

Policy SWA4 – Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities

- ix. where necessary mitigation measures should be identified to reduce any adverse effects to an acceptable level.
- x. whether the proposal would provide opportunities for co-location of related uses and / or generate other benefits (for example; produce a range of waste types or streams, produce high quality aggregates or other useful raw materials, or supply heat and power or other forms of energy to adjacent uses).

Waste Applications – Supporting Information

- 3) Planning applications for waste development¹⁸³ should include a supporting statement that clearly describes the key characteristics of the development. It should also explain how the development aligns with Strategic Objective 17 and the General Principles and Preferred Methods of managing waste in Policy SWA1. In particular, the application should explain the contribution the development would make towards driving waste up the waste hierarchy, supporting the development of a more circular economy, meeting the Black Country’s additional waste capacity requirements, and broadening the range of waste facilities currently available in the plan area.
- 4) The following information should also be included in the supporting statement and / or on the planning application form:
 - a) the type of waste facility or facilities proposed;
 - b) the waste streams and types of waste to be managed;
 - c) the types of operation to be carried out on the site;
 - d) whether waste would be sourced locally, regionally or nationally;
 - e) the maximum operational throughput in tonnes per annum;
 - f) for waste disposal, the total void space to be infilled in cubic metres;
 - g) the outputs from the operations, including waste residues;

¹⁸³ This includes applications for new build waste developments, changes of use to waste developments, applications for new operational development and other material changes to existing waste sites, and ‘s73’ applications to vary a condition attached to an existing waste permission

Policy SWA4 – Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities

- h) the expected fate and destination of the outputs;**
- i) the number of associated vehicular movements;**
- j) the number of jobs created.**

Justification

- 13.56 National policy guidance requires authorities to identify suitable areas for waste management in development plan documents. When deciding which ones should be chosen, their suitability should be assessed against a range of criteria, including physical and environmental constraints, cumulative impacts, and transport effects.
- 13.57 Several broad locations suitable for the development of new waste management facilities in Sandwell have been identified in Table 13 of Policy SWA3.
- 13.58 There are a number of spatial issues common to all waste management proposals that should be addressed in all cases. The relationship of a proposal to the strategy for waste, as set out in Strategic Objective 17 and Policy SWA1, is of paramount importance and all proposals should demonstrate how they will contribute towards this. They should also address other locational issues such as proximity to the source of waste, relationships to adjoining / neighbouring uses, visual impacts and other potential effects on the surrounding area. Potentially harmful environmental / amenity impacts will be minimised where operations are contained within a building or enclosure, so facilities should always be enclosed where feasible.
- 13.59 As the strategy for sustainable waste management involves broadening the range of waste management facilities available in the area, it is necessary to identify a range of opportunities that can accommodate different types of operation and technology.
- 13.60 Many of the waste management facilities have operations that are similar to industrial processes and therefore may be located in retained employment areas. Operators seeking a location for new waste management facilities should be focusing their search on areas to be retained as employment land and should avoid those areas proposed to change to housing. The Waste Study identifies several areas across the Black Country that are considered suitable for locating new waste management facilities.
- 13.61 There are certain types of waste management facilities that require an open site (e.g., open window composting facilities) and will therefore be difficult to accommodate within the urban areas of Sandwell due to the lack of suitable sites. These types of facility are subject to strict

regulation by the Environment Agency and must be located at least 250m away from sensitive receptors.

- 13.62 The last part of the policy sets out the criteria against which new waste management proposals will be assessed.

Waste Applications – Supporting Information

- 13.63 All waste applications should be accompanied by a supporting statement which provides a general description of the development. There are a number of other issues common to all waste developments that should also be addressed in all cases. For example, the relationship of the proposal to the strategy for waste and resources as set out in Strategic Objective 17 and in the general principles and preferred methods of managing waste in Policy SWA1 is of paramount importance, and all applications should explain how the proposed development is aligned with these principles.
- 13.64 Applicants will be required to provide a certain amount of information about their proposed development on the planning application form, including information about the waste streams to be managed and the maximum annual throughput in tonnes and/ or void space in cubic metres. However, as the space available on the form is limited, a more comprehensive description of the proposed waste operations should be provided in the main supporting statement.
- 13.65 To assist applicants, the policy sets out the key pieces of information they should provide to enable the Council to understand the types of operation proposed and the potential effects of the development on the environment and on the health, wellbeing and amenity of people living or working near the site. This information should be collated together into the summary included in the supporting statement.
- 13.66 The most appropriate place to set out, describe in detail and assess such a proposal against relevant planning policies is within a Planning Statement. In addition, if the development requires an Environmental Impact Assessment (as it represents Schedule 1 or 2 development), details should be included in an Environmental Statement.

Resource Management and New Development

- 13.67 Managing material resources – including waste - in a responsible way is an important element of sustainable development and will support Strategic Objective 17 of the Plan.

Policy SWA5 – Resource Management and New Development

Waste Management in new developments

1. All new developments should;
 - a. address waste as a resource;
 - b. minimise waste as far as possible;
 - c. design sites with resource and waste management in mind;
 - d. manage unavoidable waste in a sustainable and responsible manner; and
 - e. maximise use of materials with low environmental impacts.
2. Where a proposal includes uses likely to generate significant amounts of waste, these should be managed either on-site or in as close a proximity as possible to the source of the waste.
3. Resource and waste management requirements should be reflected in the design and layout of new development schemes. Wherever possible building, engineering and landscaping projects should use alternatives to primary aggregates, such as secondary and recycled materials, renewable and locally sourced products and materials with low environmental impacts. Consideration should also be given to how waste will be managed within the development once it is in use.
4. Where redevelopment of existing buildings or structures and / or remediation of derelict land is proposed, construction, demolition and excavation wastes (CD&EW) should be managed on-site where feasible and as much material as possible should be recovered and re-used for engineering or building either on-site or elsewhere.

Justification

- 13.68 The management of material resources including waste in a responsible way is an important element of sustainable development. This policy sets out general principles on waste management and resource efficiency to be addressed by new developments, including requirements to manage large amounts of waste on site or nearby, recycle and re-use products as far as possible.
- 13.69 The waste hierarchy ranks waste management options according to what is best for the environment. It gives top priority to preventing waste arising in the first place. When waste is created, it gives priority to preparing it for re-use, then recycling, then recovery, and finally disposal (e.g., landfill).

- 13.70 Achieving zero waste growth and driving waste up the waste hierarchy are important objectives of national policy guidance and the strategy for waste management in Sandwell. Delivering on site-waste management of waste and making better use of waste generated through development are critical to the delivery of these objectives.
- 13.71 The scale of development across Sandwell presents a major opportunity to influence decisions over how resources are managed and to develop a more integrated and holistic approach towards this at a local level. This policy sets out the minimum requirements for planning applications for all developments to demonstrate how they have addressed waste and resource issues.
- 13.72 Residential developments should include adequate storage for recyclable and non-recyclable waste pending collection, including storage for recyclable wastes and access for waste collection vehicles.
- 13.73 The resources and waste management requirements of businesses will be an important consideration in development projects to improve employment areas, town, and district centres. Where feasible, regeneration schemes should include provision for on-site waste management.
- 13.74 Where organisations are generating significant amounts of a particular type of waste, which is not currently managed in Sandwell, consideration should be given towards waste being disposed of or being recovered at the nearest appropriate facility(s).
- 13.75 Opportunities for symbiosis – matching waste producers with organisations who might have a use for the waste produced - should be explored.

MINERALS

- 13.76 Local plans are expected to make sufficient provision for all forms of development, including for minerals. The policies for minerals in this section also support the overall Vision, Objectives and Priorities by ensuring that in 2041, Sandwell will:
- Use mineral resources responsibly, including maximising the use of alternatives to maintain a supply of minerals and mineral products to support the local economy and growth;
 - Ensure that other development does not needlessly prevent mineral resources from being worked in the future if it is feasible and economically viable to do so; and
 - Manage and use mineral products in ways that avoids significantly harming the environment and the health and wellbeing of local communities.

- 13.77 Planning policies for minerals should provide for the extraction of minerals of “*local and national importance*” (NPPF paragraph 210). While sand and gravel, brick clay and fireclay occur naturally in Sandwell, it does not produce any primary minerals. For minerals planning purposes, past trends and future provision is planned at the West Midlands Metropolitan Area (WMMA)¹⁸⁴ level.
- 13.78 Despite not producing any minerals itself, it is possible that in some parts of Sandwell there remain mineral resources that are effectively sterilised by their location in an urban area, hence the need for minerals policies in the SLP. As with all unitary authorities, Sandwell is also the minerals planning authority for the borough.
- 13.79 Mineral Planning Authorities are expected to maintain a landbank of at least seven years of permitted reserves of sand and gravel (NPPF paragraph 213) to ensure a steady and adequate supply of aggregates for the construction industry. This means that sites with planning permission for sand and gravel extraction need to have enough minerals left in them to sustain the expected demand over the whole of the plan period plus seven years beyond that.

Construction Aggregates - Expected Demand over the Plan Period

- 13.80 Current national policy guidance on minerals identifies past sales as an indicator of current demand for aggregate minerals (NPPF paragraph 207), but as it is not necessarily a reliable indicator of future demand, “*other relevant local information*” should also be considered when planning for future supplies.
- 13.81 Data on historic sales of aggregates within the WMMA is contained in the West Midlands Aggregates Working Party (AWP) annual monitoring reports, as informed by the annual aggregates monitoring survey. The latest information available relates to the 2021 calendar year. Sales data for the ten years from 2012 - 2021 and average (mean) sales over the ten-year period are shown in Table 14, compared to the indicative ‘apportionment’ for the WMMA and the annual requirement from the WMMA LAA 2015. Production of data for specific sites is regarded as commercially confidential, so in line with what has been agreed by the AWP, figures are provided only for total annual production in the WMMA rather than for individual Mineral Planning Authorities.

¹⁸⁴ The West Midlands Metropolitan Area (WMMA) comprises the seven unitary authorities of Birmingham, Coventry, Dudley, Sandwell, Solihull, Walsall, and Wolverhampton and for minerals planning purposes, past trends and future provision is planned at the WMMA level.

13.82 The economic recession has clearly had a significant effect on sales of sand and gravel in the WMMA and wider West Midlands region over the ten years up to 2017, which was the latest information available at the time the 2020 Black Country Minerals Study was prepared.

Table 14 - ten-year rolling average annual sand and gravel sales in the WMMA 2011 - 2021 (million tonnes)

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Annual Sales	0.401	0.46	0.49	0.5	0.53	0.58	0.48	0.36	0.26	0.39	0.51
Apportionment	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44
Deviation (+/-)	-0.15	-0.09	-0.06	-0.05	+0.09	+0.14	+0.04	-0.08	-0.18	-0.05	+0.07
10 Year Period	Total 10 Year Sales (MT)					10 Year Average (mean) Sales (MT)					
2012 – 2021	4.56					0.456					

Source: WMMA LAA 2023

13.83 Based on the last ten-year average sales figure, the WMMA would need to identify nearly 13 million tonnes of permitted sand and gravel reserves and other potential sand and gravel resources to provide a 'rolling' landbank over the Black Country Plan period. Table 16 below shows how this has been calculated.

13.84 Another indicator of current demand for construction aggregates in the WMMA is provided by the national aggregate minerals surveys, which record consumption of construction aggregates by region and sub-region. The last survey to have been carried out in 2014 found that the WMMA consumed around 1.9 million tonnes of sand and gravel and around one million tonnes of crushed rock in that year.

Table 15 - Sand and Gravel – WMMA Landbank Requirement December 2017

Sand and Gravel Landbank Requirement in West Midlands	Million tonnes
Ten-year average sales 2012 – 2021	0.46
20-year requirement to the end of the BCP Period in 2041 ¹⁸⁵ (ten-year average sales x 20 years)	9.20
Requirement for Landbank (ten-year average sales x seven years)	3.22

¹⁸⁵ Trends in annual sales and landbank supplies of construction aggregates are monitored by calendar year (1 January – 31 December) rather than by the usual monitoring years (1 April – 31 March), therefore the sand and gravel requirement for the plan period runs from the 2019 calendar year to the 2039 calendar year.

Sand and Gravel Landbank Requirement in West Midlands	Million tonnes
Total Landbank Requirement (20 years + 7 Years)	12.44

Source: WMMA LAA 2023

- 13.85 Reliable consumption figures for the pre-recession period are not available for the WMMA. However, data from the 2005 national survey indicates that Birmingham and the Black Country alone consumed at least one million tonnes of sand and gravel and at least 1.7 million tonnes of crushed rock¹⁸⁶.
- 13.86 The planned housing and employment growth in Sandwell over the plan period will increase the demand for minerals and will impact on mineral consumption. However, as established in the 2020 Black Country Minerals Study, it is difficult to quantify what the projected housing and employment growth mean in terms of the amount of minerals that needs to be planned for, specifically construction aggregates. The minerals provision in this plan will therefore be continually monitored in conjunction with continued liaison with those Minerals Planning Authorities who form the wider West Midlands region.
- 13.87 Notwithstanding the above, the requirement to maintain a 'rolling' landbank over Sandwell's Local Plan period of nearly 13 million tonnes for sand and gravel (as set out in Table 15) remains unaffected.

Sand and Gravel Supply

- 13.88 Solihull is the only authority in the sub-region with workable sand and gravel resources.
- 13.89 At the end of 2017, Solihull had nearly four million tonnes of permitted sand and gravel reserves. However, a high proportion of these reserves are expected to be sterilised by HS2, and this has already led to the closure of one site (Stonebrook Quarry). It is therefore unlikely that Solihull will be able to sustain the same rates of sand and gravel sales seen over the last ten years, at least in the short-term until new sites come forward.

Crushed Rock Supply

- 13.90 The last quarry in the Black Country to produce crushed rock (dolerite), Edwin Richards in Sandwell, closed in 2008. As detailed in the 2020 Black Country Minerals Study, there are

¹⁸⁶ CLG (2007), *Collation of the results of the 2005 Aggregate Minerals Survey for England and Wales*, Table 11. This does not include any apportionment of the sales assigned to the West Midlands only, some of which must have been consumed in Birmingham and the Black Country.

no winnable crushed rock resources remaining anywhere in the Black Country, therefore no provision is identified for this mineral.

- 13.91 Coating plants and construction projects in Sandwell are expected to continue to rely on imports of crushed rock from outside the area. The latest information available suggests that most of the crushed rock imported into the West Midlands Metropolitan Area is imported from Leicestershire, Shropshire, and Derbyshire.

Supply of Secondary and Recycled Aggregates

- 13.92 Secondary and recycled aggregate sites expected to continue in production up to the end of the plan period will be safeguarded (Policy SMI1). Due regard should also be had to the relevant Sandwell Local Plan waste policies (Policy SWA5).

Mineral Safeguarding

- 13.93 This policy sets out how mineral resources in Sandwell, and sites that are expected to be producing, processing or transporting minerals and mineral products, will be protected from other types of development that could compromise their continued operation over the plan period.

Policy SMI1 - Minerals Safeguarding

- 1. Mineral deposits that are identified as being, or may become of, economic importance will be safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation.**
- 2. Where development is proposed, encouragement will be given to the extraction of the mineral resource prior to or in conjunction with, development, where this would not have unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses. Developments over five hectares should be accompanied by supporting information (as set out in the Justification) demonstrating that mineral resources will not be needlessly sterilised.**

Secondary and Recycled Aggregates

- 3. At the end of 2017 Sandwell was estimated to be producing around 330,000 tonnes of secondary and recycled aggregates per annum at permitted production sites. As a minimum, Sandwell will aim to maintain this level of production throughout the plan period. In support of this, permitted secondary and recycled aggregate sites expected to continue in production up to 2041 will be safeguarded.**
- 4. The location of all permitted mineral infrastructure sites in Sandwell, are identified on the Policies Map and these sites are also listed below. Applications for**

Policy SMI1 - Minerals Safeguarding

development within a 150m buffer zone of these sites will need to demonstrate they will not have any unacceptable impacts on these sites that would prevent them from continuing to operate.

Justification

- 13.94 To prevent the unnecessary sterilisation of minerals resources the prior extraction of these resources is encouraged where non-mineral development is proposed (except for conversions /changes of use that do not involve any new building or excavation works).
- 13.95 Mineral sterilisation issues will only generally come into play when larger development sites are concerned, i.e., those generally above **five** hectares, and such developments should be accompanied by supporting information demonstrating that mineral resources will not be needlessly sterilised. The supporting information should include details of a prior extraction scheme or, where this is not considered feasible, evidence that:
- a) mineral resources are either not present, are of no economic value or have already been extracted as a result of a previous site reclamation scheme or other development; or
 - b) extraction of minerals is not feasible, for example due to significant overburden or because mineral extraction would lead to or exacerbate ground instability; or
 - c) prior extraction of minerals would result in abnormal costs and / or delays which would jeopardise the viability of the development; or
 - d) there is an overriding need for the development which outweighs the need to safeguard the mineral resources present; or
 - e) extraction of minerals would have unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses, the amenity of local communities or other important environmental assets.
- 13.96 Where prior extraction is proposed, conditions will be imposed on any grant of permission requiring applicants to provide details of the types and tonnages of minerals extracted once the scheme has been completed.

Mineral Processing Infrastructure in Sandwell

- 13.97 As mineral infrastructure facilities are an essential part of the total infrastructure of the area, it is not only important that they are appropriately located but also there is policy protection applied to these sites to help maintain an adequate and steady supply of minerals.

Table 16 - Key Mineral Infrastructure

Site Ref	Site	Location	Type
MIS1	Anytime Concrete	West Bromwich	Concrete batching plant
MIS2	Bescot LDC Depot	Wednesbury	Rail-related aggregates depot
MIS2	Bescot LDC Depot and Rail Ballast Facility	Bescot, Wednesbury	Aggregates recycling
MIS3	Breedon Oldbury Concrete Plant	Oldbury	Concrete batching plant
MIS4	CEMEX Concrete Batching Plant	Oldbury	Concrete batching plant
MIS5	Former Hanson Site (West Bromwich)	West Bromwich	Aggregates recycling
MIS6	Hanson Ready Mixed Concrete Plant	Oldbury	Concrete batching plant
MIS7	Wednesbury Asphalt Plant	Wednesbury	Coating plant
MIS8	Cradley Special Brick	Cradley Heath	Brickworks
MIS9	Oldfields	Cradley Heath	Aggregates recycling
MIS10	Metamix	Tipton	Concrete batching plant

Managing the Effects of Mineral Development

13.98 This policy sets out the requirements that planning applications for potential mineral working and minerals infrastructure will be expected to address. The policy identifies some general requirements that any potential mineral development proposals will need to satisfy, and then lists several additional criteria against which such proposals will be further assessed. The policy applies to both proposals at existing sites and those at new ones.

Policy SMI2 - Managing the Effects of Mineral Development

General Requirements for Minerals Developments

- 1. When working ceases, all plant and equipment should be removed, and sites should be restored as soon as possible.**
- 2. The working, processing or recycling of minerals must accord with all other policies in relation to the protection of the environment, public amenity and health, and surrounding land uses as set out in this plan or in any other adopted development plan – or otherwise demonstrate that other material considerations outweigh any policy conflict.**
- 3. Subject to other policies within the Plan, planning permission will be granted for built development within the Consideration Zones around Coneygre Mine and Blackham Mine, where the applicant is able to demonstrate that a collapse in the mine would not prejudice public safety or compromise the structural integrity of the proposed structures.**
- 4. Proposals should address the impact of transporting minerals and mineral products on the highway network and should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment if generating a significant number of vehicle movements.**

Additional Assessment Criteria for Minerals Developments

- 5. In addition to the general requirements set out above, proposals for mineral working or mineral-related infrastructure at both new and existing sites will be further assessed in terms of:**
 - a) minimising any adverse visual impacts;**
 - b) effects on natural, built, and historic (including archaeological) environments and on public health;**
 - c) generation of noise, dust, vibration, lighting, and excessive vehicle movements;**
 - d) compatibility with neighbouring uses – taking into account the nature of the operations, hours of working, the timing and duration of operations and any cumulative effects;**
 - e) harm to water quality and resources and flood risk management;**

Policy SMI2 - Managing the Effects of Mineral Development

- f) **ground conditions and land stability;**
- g) **land use conflict – proposals should demonstrate compatibility with the uses already present within the surrounding area;**
- h) **impacts on the highway, transport, and drainage network;**
- i) **where necessary, mitigation measures should be identified to reduce any adverse effects to an acceptable level.**

Justification

General Requirements for Mineral Developments

- 13.99 This policy sets out the general requirements that will apply to all proposals involving the development of mineral infrastructure and mineral working.
- 13.100 Mineral infrastructure proposals are defined as storage, handling, and processing facilities (such as depots and recycling facilities) and transportation facilities (such as rail sidings, rail heads and canal wharves). Mineral working proposals (of which there are currently none in Sandwell) include activities such as prior extraction in advance of a redevelopment scheme, extensions to existing quarries, new quarries, borrow pits, stockpiles, and exploitation of coal bed methane.
- 13.101 Mineral developments differ and early discussion with the Council is recommended to clarify the scope and detail of information that will be required. It will be important that the applicant demonstrates the proposal to be consistent with national policy guidance and the overall Spatial Strategy.

Environment and Amenity

- 13.102 Impacts need to be carefully managed, to maintain the environmental quality and amenity of neighbouring uses. For example, proposals should consider the potential:
- a) impacts on air quality arising from the transportation of material or dust and particles from excavation and processing;
 - b) impacts on important environmental assets such as sites designated for their importance for biodiversity / geodiversity, historic buildings, conservation areas, and important archaeological remains;
 - c) visual impacts on the local landscape, particularly on prominent and highly visible sites;

- d) impacts on local communities (including their health) near to mineral handling or production sites.

Cumulative Impacts

13.103 The cumulative impact on the amenity of local communities already affected by quarrying is also an important issue. One of the main sources of complaint is noise and dust from heavy goods vehicles, so haulage routes should minimise these impacts where possible. Without proper management and mitigation, a concentration of quarries and related activities may make particular areas less attractive to live in.

Transportation

13.104 There is little scope for the transportation of minerals by modes other than road in the Black Country, as the rail network does not reach the main mineral resource areas, and the canal network is generally not considered suitable for transporting minerals other than on a short-term temporary basis. Nevertheless, and in the interests of moving towards more sustainable transport, proposals should consider the potential for moving mineral products by rail or inland waterways where feasible.

14. Development Constraints and Industrial Legacy

- 14.1 Within Sandwell there are a range of areas that contain constraints that could affect development.

Hazardous Installations and Substances

- 14.2 Major accidents at sites storing hazardous substances are rare, but when they do occur the effects on people living nearby can be devastating. The planning system seeks to manage the prevention and limitation of major accidents from hazardous installations and substances through three processes.

Hazardous substances consent

- 14.3 The storage or use of hazardous substances at or above defined limits requires hazardous substances consent. Applications for hazardous substances consent should be made to the relevant hazardous substances authority. This is Sandwell Council as the local planning authority.

The plan-making process

- 14.4 Sandwell Council as local planning authority is required to have regard to the prevention of major accidents and limiting their consequences when preparing Local Plans. The Council must also consider the long-term need for appropriate distances between hazardous establishments and population or environmentally sensitive areas. The Council must also consider whether additional measures for existing establishments are required so that risks to people in the area are not increased.

The determination of planning applications

- 14.5 Sandwell Council as local planning authority is expected to seek technical advice from the Health and Safety Executive and Environment Agency on the risks presented by major accident hazards affecting people in the surrounding area and the environment when considering development proposals around hazardous installations. Those risks will be given appropriate weight and will be balanced against other relevant planning considerations when determining applications for planning permission.

Policy SCO1 - Hazardous Installations and Substances

- 1. The Council will seek the reduction or removal of the hazardous component of notified installations. Where any existing or proposed industrial development presents a significant potential hazard to the health and safety of employees, or to**

Policy SCO1 - Hazardous Installations and Substances

people living and working in the surrounding area, the Council will seek either a reduction in the risk or its elimination.

2. The Council will use its powers under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 (or any subsequent legislative powers that supersede this Act) to revoke or modify a hazardous substances consent where either the consent has not been relied upon for five years or where all potential claimants for compensation indicate that they will not seek compensation.
3. The Council will oppose the expansion of existing hazardous installations unless it can be demonstrated that consent will not:
 - a. increase the population at risk or the level of risk itself; or
 - b. adversely impact on the potential for development and / or redevelopment of adjoining land.
4. The Council will consult the Health and Safety Executive, the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies on all applications for hazardous substances consent and planning permission in the consultation zones around hazardous premises as may be notified from time to time to the Council by the Health and Safety Executive.
5. The Council will not grant either planning permission or hazardous substances consent for new development that when operational will:
 - a. result in a significant increase to the risk or consequences of a major incident; and / or
 - b. adversely impact on the potential for development / redevelopment of adjoining land.

Justification

- 14.6 The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 requires consent to be granted for the storage and use of certain toxic, explosive, inflammable, highly reactive and hazardous substances. The Planning (Hazardous Substances) Regulations 2015 sets out the hazardous substances and their controlled quantities that require consent. Nevertheless, the application of these regulations cannot guarantee that there will be no residual risk to people in the vicinity, meaning that the risk remains unavoidable despite all legally required measures being taken to prevent and mitigate the impacts of a major accident.

- 14.7 To address this, the Council will exercise a degree of control over the presence of hazardous substances through the development control system, where these products are directly associated with a proposed development. However, there are situations where hazardous substances may be introduced onto a site, or used in a different way within it, without there being any associated development requiring planning permission. The provisions fill the gap in planning control by enabling specific control to be exercised over the presence of hazardous substances whether associated development is involved or not. The Council must decide if, in the light of the residual risk and having regard to the existing and prospective uses of a site and its surroundings, the proposed presence of a hazardous substance is an appropriate land use for that site.
- 14.8 Where planning permission is required in addition, because the proposed storage or use of a hazardous substance is associated with a development proposal, two separate applications and approvals will be necessary. The Council will wish to ensure that related applications for hazardous substances consent and for planning permission are dealt with together.
- 14.9 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) must be consulted on every application for hazardous substances consent and will assess the risks arising to persons in the vicinity from the presence of a hazardous substance. But the decision on whether those risks are tolerable in the context of existing and potential uses of neighbouring land is one to be made by the local planning authority. Hence, the Act confers responsibility for determining applications for hazardous substances consent, for vetting claims for deemed consent and for enforcing the controls on the local planning authority. The HSE is responsible for notifying local planning authorities of the relevant consultation zones around sites where certain hazardous substances are present. Applicants can use the Health and Safety Executive Planning Advice web app to determine whether a proposal is within a consultation zone.
- 14.10 The types of development within the consultation zone on which HSE should be consulted include all residential development; retail, office and industrial development above a specified floor area; and any development likely to result in a material increase in the number of persons working within or visiting the notified area.
- 14.11 Sandwell Council is concerned with stabilising and reducing the population at risk from hazardous substances. Consequently, it will oppose applications which will increase the population at risk, or put at risk vulnerable groups, and will seek the reduction or removal of the hazardous component of notified installations.
- 14.12 As with planning permission, hazardous substance consent provides an entitlement that runs with the land; as a general principle, it is considered that compensation should normally be

payable when loss or damage results from a revocation or modification. However, it may be undesirable for a hazardous substances consent to continue to have effect when it has fallen into disuse, as it could restrict unnecessarily the uses to which neighbouring land can be put or continue to impose onerous requirements on those who benefit from the consent. Consequently, the Council will use its powers under Section 14 to revoke consent, when appropriate, and when compensation is not payable.

Pollution Control

14.13 Sandwell Council aims to protect existing and future residents of the borough and the environment from the effects of pollution, both existing and that originating from new development. Controlling pollution appropriately can contribute to the achievement of sustainable development by fulfilling environmental objectives to minimise pollution and social objectives to support healthy communities.

Policy SCO2 - Pollution Control

1. **Development proposals that are likely to cause or increase pollution or expose their occupants, users or adjacent residents to new or increased pollution will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that sufficient mitigation measures are available and will be used to minimise harmful impacts to a level that protects the health and amenity of people and the environment. Measures that seek to eliminate existing pollution sources or reduce existing levels of pollution will be supported.**
2. **Development proposals must not, either individually or cumulatively, contribute to or produce poor air quality, odour nuisance and / or unacceptable levels of emissions from commercial and industrial premises that could cause detriment to local amenity. Proposals should be designed to reduce the exposure of occupants and users of the development to poor air quality and mitigate the effects of all relevant pollution sources¹⁸⁷. The Council will seek to improve air quality across the borough (Policy SHW3). Proposals that include measures to improve air quality will be supported.**
3. **Development proposals that incorporate artificial lighting must have regard to the siting, design and luminance of external lighting sources, and the relationship**

¹⁸⁷ Further guidance in relation to air quality is provided by policy SHW

Policy SCO2 - Pollution Control

between light spill and the design of the scheme, to avoid adversely affecting local amenity and nature conservation¹⁸⁸. Measures should be employed to ensure external lighting is only used when required.

4. Development proposals must not give rise to noise and vibration at such levels that they are likely to adversely impact health and quality of life, both during the construction of development and following its completion.
5. Development proposals that are sensitive to noise should not be located within an area of existing high levels of noise unless it has been demonstrated that noise impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated by the design and layout of the scheme, and / or the incorporation of insulation, including acoustic glazing.
6. The 'agent of change' principle set out in the National Planning Policy Framework will be applied when determining applications for planning permission.

Justification

14.14 The NPPF requires planning policies to prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of air, water or noise pollution¹⁸⁹.

14.15 The whole of Sandwell Borough was declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in July 2005 due to likely exceedances of the Air Quality Objective for Nitrogen Dioxide of 40 micrograms per cubic metre (ug/m³)¹⁹⁰. The Borough has historically had poor air quality due to industrial emissions; however, air quality has improved due to cleaner technology and the closure of many traditional heavy industrial premises. The main concern now is traffic-related pollution, due to high traffic volume and the presence of the busy M5 and M6 motorway networks¹⁹¹.

¹⁸⁸ See also Policy SNE* - habitats

¹⁸⁹ NPPF (2021) paragraph 174, section (e)

¹⁹⁰ https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/local-authorities?la_id=222

¹⁹¹ https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200274/pollution/485/air_quality

- 14.16 National planning guidance states that odour can be a planning concern because of its effect on local amenity¹⁹². The Institute of Air Quality Management's guidance on the assessment of odour for planning (revised in 2018) explains that there must be odour exposure before an adverse effect can occur¹⁹³. Odour exposure requires the presence of all three links in the source-pathway-receptor chain¹⁹⁴. Removing a link within the chain can prevent odour exposure.
- 14.17 National planning guidance also explains that light pollution can be a source of annoyance to people, can be harmful to wildlife and can undermine enjoyment of the countryside or the night sky¹⁹⁵. It states that the planning system can ensure that external lighting arrangements are deemed appropriately from the outset. Applications for planning permission that introduce new external lighting sources may require sufficient information for the local planning authority to assess the impact of the lighting proposals. The Council may require the incorporation of lighting shields and baffles into the design of new external lighting proposals to mitigate against any negative impacts of the lighting.
- 14.18 Sandwell Council will seek to safeguard the health and quality of life of its residents by refusing applications for planning permission that would give rise to unacceptable levels of noise and vibration, both during construction and following the completion of development. The Council's validation checklist for planning applications sets out the situations in which an application for planning permission should be accompanied by a noise impact assessment. Such assessments should be carried out and reported in accordance with current authoritative guidance, British Standard and best practice by a competent person. Appropriate mitigation and / or remedial measures should be identified and secured through planning conditions and / or obligations.
- 14.19 The local planning authority will apply the 'agent of change' principle set out in the National Planning Policy Framework to ensure that new development does not place unreasonable restrictions on the functioning of existing businesses and community facilities

¹⁹² <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/air-quality--3>

¹⁹³ <http://www.iaqm.co.uk/text/guidance/odour-guidance-2014.pdf>

¹⁹⁴ The source of pollution is the activity that leads to the pollutants being released. The pathway is the part of the environment that a pollutant travels along on its journey towards the receptor. The receptor is the thing that is being harmed by the source, e.g., humans, trees, wildlife and non-living items such as a monument or building.

¹⁹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/light-pollution>

Land contamination and instability

- 14.20 Much of the land within Sandwell has been impacted by historic heavy industry, contaminating uses and the extensive mining of mineral resources using small open pits and underground pits. This has left a legacy of poor quality and unstable land, with ground conditions varying greatly over relatively small distances within the borough.
- 14.21 The presence of contamination or ground instability can affect the use of land; however, development can help address these issues and bring the land back into beneficial use.

Policy SCO3 - Land contamination and instability

1. **Planning permission will be granted for development on:**
 - a. **land that is unstable;**
 - b. **land that is contaminated or suspected of being contaminated due to its historic use or geology; or**
 - c. **land that will potentially become contaminated as a result of the development;**

subject to the submission of satisfactory information relating to ground conditions and the presence of ground gas, and full details of the assessment and remedial measures that will be used to deal with instability and contaminants.
2. **The assessment must demonstrate that:**
 - a. **there will be no significant harm, or any risk of significant harm, to the health and wellbeing of people and the environment;**
 - b. **there will be no current likelihood, or future risk, that watercourses and groundwater will become contaminated; and**
 - c. **any necessary remedial action is undertaken to safeguard users of the land or neighbouring land both during the construction of development and following occupation.**
3. **The Council will support the reclamation and remediation of derelict, despoiled, degraded and contaminated land as part of the ongoing regeneration of the borough.**

Justification

- 14.22 The NPPF requires planning policies to prevent new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, land instability¹⁹⁶. Planning policies should also enhance the environment by supporting the remediation and mitigation of despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate¹⁹⁷.
- 14.23 Most applications for planning permission will be expected to provide a desk-based study of ground conditions as a minimum requirement. Applicants should refer to the Council's validation checklist and seek advice from officers to determine the need for and scope of a desk-based study and / or intrusive site investigation. Regard should be had to the potential for migrating contaminants, and the possible presence of ground gas from historic landfill and mining sites. A land stability or slope stability risk assessment may be required where unstable ground is known or suspected¹⁹⁸.
- 14.24 Sandwell Council will consult the Coal Authority on applications for planning permission within a Development High Risk Area¹⁹⁹ unless the application is an exempt one. Applications for planning permission within a Development High Risk Area will need to be accompanied by a Coal Mining Risk Assessment, again unless the proposed development is exempted.
- 14.25 The Council will impose conditions and / or obligations on the grant of planning consent to ensure satisfactory information is provided in relation to ground conditions, and that agreed remedial action is completed prior to the occupation of development.

¹⁹⁶ NPPF (2021) paragraph 174, section (e)

¹⁹⁷ NPPF (2021) paragraph 174, section (f)

¹⁹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/land-stability>

¹⁹⁹ <https://mapapps2.bgs.ac.uk/coalauthority/home.html>

15. Development Management

- 15.1 The following section contains policies designed to provide guidance for householders, business owners and others wanting to undertake development in Sandwell.

Design Quality

- 15.2 High quality design is an essential element both in placemaking and in reflecting the distinctive character of the area and will help deliver the Strategic Objectives by setting challenging but appropriate standards. Achieving sustainable development is fundamental to the Vision for transforming Sandwell environmentally, socially and economically. Each part of the borough is distinct and successful place-making will depend on understanding and responding to their unique identities through high-quality and sensitive design proposals. Development proposals will be expected to deliver successful urban regeneration and expansion through high quality design that provides economic, social and environmental benefits.
- 15.3 Innovative modern design will also have a significant part to play in mitigating and adapting to climate change. This is achieved by ensuring that buildings and landscaping are designed to offer comfortable and attractive living environments reflecting local traditional design qualities and features, while also addressing issues around climate change in the form of the use of green energy technologies, a reduction in carbon generation and the efficient and effective use of water, planting and materials.

Policy SDM1 – Design Quality

- 1) Developments must be designed to high standards and should create a strong sense of place and reflect Sandwell’s unique character. They must address as appropriate:**
- a) the topography, townscapes and landscapes of Sandwell;**
 - b) the need to maintain strategic gaps and views, including to and from the Rowley Hills;**
 - c) the built and natural settings of development;**
 - d) the need to ensure that domestic extensions should generally be subservient and proportionate to the existing dwelling and should be in keeping with their surroundings by virtue of their scale, architecture and materials.**
 - e) the treatment of ‘gateway’ opportunities where they occur in key locations;**

Policy SDM1 – Design Quality

- f) Sandwell’s industrial and domestic architecture;
 - g) the need to ensure development has no harmful impacts on key environmental and historic assets, townscapes and locations and that wherever possible it contributes to the conservation and enhancement of environmental and historic assets and their settings;
 - h) the presence of canals in Sandwell’s urban environments and the opportunities they offer for design, accessibility, the environment and technology;
 - i) the matter of land instability where this is an issue in relation to specific development proposals.
- 2) Development proposals must demonstrate that the following have been addressed in design and access statements that reflect their Sandwell-specific context:
- a) the ten characteristics of the National Design Guide²⁰⁰, to provide a high-quality network of streets, buildings and spaces;
 - b) the principles of Manual for Streets²⁰¹, to ensure urban streets and spaces provide a high-quality public realm and an attractive, safe and permeable movement network;
 - c) use of the Building for a Healthy Life²⁰² criteria (or subsequent iterations) and Sandwell’s local housing design codes, masterplans and guidance for new housing developments, to achieve high design standards, good place-making and sustainable development;
 - d) crime prevention measures, Secured by Design and Park Mark principles and the requirements of Part Q of the Building Regulations 2010 or any successor legislation;

²⁰⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

²⁰¹ Current and future iterations - <https://www.ciht.org.uk/knowledge-resource-centre/resources/revising-manual-for-streets/>

²⁰² <https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life>

Policy SDM1 – Design Quality

- e) **the agent of change²⁰³ principle, in relation to existing uses adjacent to proposed development sites.**
- 3) Major development proposals should contribute to the greening of Sandwell by:**
- a) **including urban greening²⁰⁴ as a fundamental element of site and building design;**
 - b) **incorporating measures such as high-quality landscaping and tree planting²⁰⁵, other soft landscaping, green roofs, green walls and sustainable drainage and conserving existing green spaces and natural resources;**
 - c) **optimising the use of multi-functional green infrastructure (including water features, green roofs and planting) for urban cooling, local flood risk management and to provide access to outdoor space and shading.**
- 4) Development must not cause an adverse impact on the living environment of occupiers of existing residential properties, or unacceptable living conditions for future occupiers of new residential properties, in terms of:**
- a) **privacy and overlooking**
 - b) **access to sunlight and daylight;**
 - c) **artificial lighting;**
 - d) **vibration;**
 - e) **dust and fumes;**
 - f) **smell;**
 - g) **noise;**
 - h) **crime and safety; and / or**
 - i) **wind, where the proposals involve the development of tall buildings.**

²⁰³ Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2021) states that both planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (e.g., places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Unreasonable restrictions should not be placed on existing businesses because of development permitted after they were established.

²⁰⁴ e.g., landscaping, provision of formal / informal open space, habitat creation and improvement, tree planting, certain forms of infrastructure such as types of SuDS etc. in urban locations

²⁰⁵ Including street trees where appropriate and in accordance with other policies of the SLP

Policy SDM1 – Design Quality

- 5) To improve the quality and perception of the public realm in Sandwell, the Council will encourage the promotion of public art, subject to appropriate public consultation and in accordance with other relevant policies. Where new development changes or creates public spaces, the Council will welcome the provision of public art as part of the proposal.

Justification

- 15.4 Urban areas, settlements, towns and villages in the Black Country all possess their own distinct character. Successful place-making will depend on understanding and responding to these unique localities and supporting the delivery of high-quality design proposals that are complementary to local character and vernacular.
- 15.5 High-quality design will help to stimulate economic, social and environmental benefits, including ensuring that new homes and other buildings are designed and built to help to mitigate and minimise climate change impacts. Ensuring good design is embedded across Sandwell will help support regeneration and the delivery of an inclusive and robust economy, attracting people and businesses to both relocate to and remain in the area.
- 15.6 The Government published an updated National Design Guide in January 2021 that set out a series of aims and objectives for achieving well-designed places. The document identified the key themes of good design and goes on to set out a list of ten characteristics²⁰⁶ that drive it. Paragraph 36 of the Guide was clear that the ten characteristics reflect the Government's priorities and so provide a common overarching framework within which issues around good design should be considered:

36. *'Well-designed places have individual characteristics which work together to create its physical **Character**. The ten characteristics help to nurture and sustain a sense of **Community**. They work to positively address environmental issues affecting **Climate**. They all contribute towards the cross-cutting themes for good design set out in the National Planning Policy Framework.'*

- 15.7 The National Planning Policy Framework (2021) addresses the issue of good design throughout, including in paragraph 130, which states that permission should be refused for

²⁰⁶ Context; Identity; Built form; Movement; Nature; Public spaces; Uses; Homes and buildings; Resources; Lifespan.

development of poor design that fails to take the opportunities available for improving the character and quality of an area and the way it functions.

- 15.8 Locally, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) have published a West Midlands Design Charter²⁰⁷. The Charter was produced in collaboration with the various public bodies that make up the WMCA and was tested with developers, designers and investors from the private sector.
- 15.9 The Charter represents a regional commitment to good place-making and will be used to support applications for WMCA funding for new development (including residential, commercial and mixed use). Its key themes include:
- a) character;
 - b) connectivity and mobility;
 - c) future readiness;
 - d) health and wellbeing;
 - e) engagement;
 - f) stewardship and delivery;

which in turn encompass 12 further principles of good placemaking²⁰⁸.

- 15.10 Sandwell Council will support urban regeneration by ensuring all new developments exhibit high-quality design. A high-quality environment is also an essential prerequisite for economic competitiveness and housing choice.
- 15.11 Great opportunities exist to transform areas into high quality places for people to live, work and invest in. This will involve, in some cases, the reinforcement or reinvention of a sense of place and local identity within Sandwell and a commitment to high-quality design if it is to maximise the benefits from the opportunities offered by transformation on this scale.
- 15.12 At the same time, Sandwell has a strong tradition of housing existing immediately alongside industrial and employment uses; this aspect of its character and economy should be protected by the application of the agent of change principle, in relation to existing uses

²⁰⁷ <https://www.wmca.org.uk/media/3647/wmdesigncharter.pdf>

²⁰⁸ Regional Ambition; Local Distinctiveness; Regional Network; Modal Shift; Climate Resilience; Delivering Low Carbon Development; Technological Resilience; Building Active Communities; Promoting Wellbeing; Engagement; Stewardship; Securing Social Value.

adjacent to proposed development sites, which can be found in Paragraph 182 of the NPPF (2019).

- 15.13 This policy seeks to integrate key design principles with an approach that interprets and reflects both local distinctiveness and the overall character of Sandwell. High-quality design relates to buildings, architecture, the spaces within which buildings sit, the quality of the public realm reflected in its streets and spaces and the relationship between the development and the surrounding area.
- 15.14 To ensure that development proposals accord with policy requirements, the Design and Access Statements accompanying planning applications should follow Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment guidance.
- 15.15 The protection and enhancement of Sandwell's canal network and natural waterways will be sought to the extent possible through the design and layout of appropriately located housing and employment development and by the integration of waterways into those proposals to create attractive waterside development. This will act as a unifying characteristic with the wider Black Country's urban structure and landscape.
- 15.16 Sandwell recognises the potential of public art to enhance the design of development and the quality and amenity of local areas. Public art can be free-standing or incorporated within the overall quality and design of buildings and landscaping and can involve the engagement of local artists. The Council will welcome the inclusion of public art in schemes across Sandwell.
- 15.17 A key objective for new developments should be that they create safe and accessible environments where crime, the fear of crime and anti-social behaviour do not undermine the quality of life, health or community cohesion. Good design, layout and spatial relationships (including the use of sensitively designed and located landscaping that reduces opportunities for anti-social behaviours) can make a positive contribution towards improving community safety in an area. It is the intention of Sandwell Council to work with the police towards the reduction of crime and the fear of crime, and anti-social behaviour across Sandwell. This will be a material consideration in all planning proposals.
- 15.18 Sport England's Active Design guidance promotes public health and community activity through building an infrastructure that creates opportunities for all types of physical activity, and the Council welcomes its use in designing schemes and housing layouts.
- 15.19 The fifth principle of the West Midlands Design Charter refers to the need to address climate change through good design;

Principle 5 – Climate Resilience

Developments should incorporate climate adaptation measures that respond to the short and long-term impacts of climate change and address the environmental impact of the proposal across its lifecycle.

15.20 Climate change mitigation and adaptation measures will be addressed through the specific climate change policies in the SLP and the renewable energy and BREEAM requirement for new development, which are set out in Policies SCC1 - SCC6.

Development and Design Standards

15.21 There are three optional national technical standards for housing, which can be adopted through planning policy. Policy SDM2 adopts two of these standards for new housing in Sandwell, covering internal space standards and water efficiency.

Policy SDM2 – Development and Design Standards

Nationally Described Space Standards

1. **New residential development (including the conversion of buildings) will be required to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)²⁰⁹, except where it can be clearly evidenced that the implementation of the NDSS would cause harm to the significance of a heritage asset²¹⁰.**
2. **Where NDSS are not used, development²¹¹ should reflect National Design Guide principle H1²¹² in delivering functional, healthy and sustainable homes and buildings, particularly in relation to creating healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environments.**

Water efficiency in new dwellings

3. **New residential development (including conversions from non-residential properties) and houses in multiple occupation will be required to meet the lower water efficiency**

²⁰⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-optional-technical-standards#internal-space-standards>

²¹⁰ More specialised types of housing provision will be required to meet the relevant space standards for their typology

²¹¹ Excluding prior notification / permitted development where new dwellings are being created – NDSS will apply in all such cases

²¹² Or any succeeding guidance or legislation on design standards.

Policy SDM2 – Development and Design Standards

standard of 110 litres per person per day, as set out in Part G2 of current Building Regulations or as identified in any successor legislation.

Justification

- 15.22 The Council believes that everyone has the right to a high standard of residential accommodation, with sufficient space to meet their needs. To address this, Policy SDM2 adopts the optional national space standards covering internal floor area and dimensions for key parts of the home.
- 15.23 The standard is modest and is generally met in most new build housing across the borough; however, in a minority of cases the standard would help to achieve better living conditions. The requirement for a minimum space standard can also add to the attractiveness of a development and increase the marketability of properties.
- 15.24 The standard will apply to all tenures except where national planning guidance suggests otherwise.
- 15.25 Evidence provided by the Sandwell Viability and Delivery Study (2021) suggests that introduction of this standard is very unlikely to impact on development viability, given the relatively modest increases in room sizes.
- 15.26 Introduction of the higher water efficiency standard for all new homes is justified by evidence provided in the Water Cycle Study (2020) and more recently (July 2021) by the Secretary of State's determination that Severn Trent Water's catchment (except in their Chester zone) is now considered to be an area of serious water stress for the purposes of water resources planning. This change in water stress classification adds further weight to the tighter water efficiency limit and will be enforced through the building regulations system.

Tall Buildings and Gateway Sites

- 15.27 Tall buildings can help to accommodate new development as well as communicating ambition, energy and innovation. They make efficient use of land to deliver jobs, homes and mixed communities. Tall buildings in the right locations and of the right design have the potential to enhance the appearance and character of areas and to deliver regeneration. In all cases the design of a tall building should create a high-quality environment both for its users and for surrounding development and the public realm.

15.28 Tall buildings can also give rise to issues related to their height, massing and prominence. Design principles for high density development also apply to tall buildings, including liveability considerations for residential development.

15.29 Gateway sites in Sandwell may be marked by tall buildings but do not have to be: the important feature of gateway sites will be their overall design quality and distinctiveness, as they will act as signals of Sandwell's ambitions for growth.

Policy SDM3 – Tall Buildings and Gateway Sites

Tall buildings

- 1. The proposed heights for buildings should reflect other design and policy requirements, including the need to have regard to the existing or emerging character and context of the area.**
- 2. The height and location of tall buildings in relation to other existing and proposed buildings / structures should be clearly identified in masterplans and / or design and access statements, which should also set out a clear rationale for the development of tall buildings.**
- 3. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments will be necessary to enable the visual impact of tall buildings to be assessed from near and distant viewpoints. Accurate visual representations of the submitted scheme should be provided from key viewpoints agreed with Sandwell Council. Information on local microclimate impacts should also be submitted, as a separate assessment or as part of the Design and Access Statement.**
- 4. For development proposals that include taller buildings, applicants must submit design appraisals with alternative options to demonstrate whether similar densities can be achieved using more traditional and human- scaled typologies including terraced housing, maisonettes, and courtyard apartments.**
- 5. The planning application and its supporting information must demonstrate that:**
 - a) there is sufficient access to public transport for occupants / users of the building;**
 - b) there is access to local services and facilities, depending on the number and type of residents expected;**

Policy SDM3 – Tall Buildings and Gateway Sites

- c) the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on local character, including heritage assets;
- d) the design considers topography;
- e) the proposal will not create unacceptable adverse environmental impacts, including flood risk, creation of a wind tunnel, loss or lack of daylight / sunlight;
- f) the design is of high architectural quality; and
- g) the proposal will integrate into its surroundings at all levels, particularly at street level and skyline.

Gateway Sites

6. When assessing proposals and applications for planning permission on gateway sites²¹³ the Council will apply the following principles:
- a) Key landmark buildings, structures and features will be preserved and improved;
 - b) The topography of the area will be emphasised in the design and location of new buildings or features;
 - c) New development should be of architectural merit and use high-grade materials.
 - d) Proposals should include hard and soft landscaping, including trees, water and public art;
 - e) Where possible and appropriate, redundant street furniture, associated clutter and advertisements should be removed.

Justification

15.30 This policy does not aim to hide tall buildings but to ensure that they are located and designed to create a positive feature in the urban environment from all viewpoints.

²¹³ Sites and other development opportunities that stand at major road- or rail-linked points of access into Sandwell, or on the outskirts of West Bromwich and other main town centres.

- 15.31 In designing tall buildings, emphasis should be given to the appearance of its roof form, recognising the building's impact on the skyline, and to the relationship of the base section of the building with the surrounding environment. This last consideration is intended to ensure there is enough activity and interest at ground level to counter the potentially dominating impact of the building's greater height. It may also be appropriate to set taller elements of the building back from the street frontage.
- 15.32 Proposals for tall buildings should be accompanied by sufficient information on which to assess their impact. Tall buildings will not be permitted where the required information has not been provided.
- 15.33 Gateway sites are prominent development opportunities around the existing strategic town centre of West Bromwich and the other main town centres in Sandwell, as well as similar opportunities that occur along major transportation networks including railways and public transport interchanges. These development sites will, if managed and designed appropriately, assist in welcoming visitors to a centre and signifying its functional importance, as well as acting as signifiers of Sandwell's growth ambitions.
- 15.34 Gateways may be marked by appropriately designed tall buildings but not always; the expectation of this policy is that gateway sites would be marked by development of exceptionally high quality, which relies for its distinctiveness on design aspects other than just size and height.

Advertisements

- 15.35 As set out in The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) (England) Regulations 2007, the Council may exercise its powers in the control of advertisements in the interest of amenity and public safety. This policy sets out criteria against which an advertisement's relationship to amenity and public safety will be assessed.

Policy SDM4 - Advertisements

1. **Proposals for advertisements will not be given consent where they would have an unacceptable impact on amenity or public safety.**
2. **An advertisement will be considered to have an unacceptable impact on amenity where it would:**
 - a. **create or reinforce a negative visual impact in its immediate neighbourhood;**

Policy SDM4 - Advertisements

- b. detract from the character or setting of any feature of historic, architectural or cultural interest;
 - c. generate a negative impact on the living conditions of nearby residents by reason of its siting or illumination.
3. Advertisement proposals of all types will be considered harmful to public and road safety where they would:
- a. obscure views into an area, reducing natural surveillance;
 - b. create an unwelcoming sense of enclosure;
 - c. obscure safety cameras;
 - d. unsafely reduce natural or street lighting;
 - e. create visual distraction that would be harmful to the attention of drivers or the ready interpretation of road signs, traffic signals and / or visibility at junctions (see sections 6 – 8 below for details).

Poster Panels and Hoardings

- 4. Applications for poster panels will be considered in light of local amenity and public safety. Regard should be given to the scale of buildings and the character of the location in which they are to be sited, together with any potential impact on highway safety.
- 5. In general, advertisement hoardings will not be appropriate in wholly residential areas. Poster advertising may be appropriate in predominantly shopping and business parts of Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape Value, though care will be needed in how they are accommodated.

Illuminated and Moving Advertisements

- 6. The intensity of the illumination of an advertising unit and display should be set at a suitable level of luminance at night for its size and location and the panel must be fitted with a light sensor designed to adjust the brightness when changes in ambient light levels occur.
- 7. For moving / electronic advertising, the minimum display time for each advertisement shall be 10 seconds. There must be no moving images, animation,

Policy SDM4 - Advertisements

video or full motion images or any images that resemble road signs, traffic lights or traffic signs of any kind before, during or after the display of any advertisement

- 8. The interval between the display of each moving advertisement shall be 0.1 seconds or less and the complete display screen shall change without visual effects (including fading, swiping or other animated transition methods) between each advertisement.**

Justification

15.36 The policy aims to prevent proposals that would be harmful to local character and amenity in any part of the borough. Perception of lower levels of visual amenity in any area will not serve as a benchmark for harmful proposals including increased clutter of advertisements.

15.37 The use of digital advertisements has increased in recent years. The illumination and movement associated with such advertisements can increase their capacity to adversely impact the amenities of an area or to affect public safety. Digital and illuminated advertisements should have regard to the Institute of Lighting Professionals' guidance note PLG05 *The Brightness of Illuminated Advertisements*²¹⁴. Such advertisements should be able to ensure they will not have harmful impacts associated with their luminance through:

- a) restricted operation hours;
- b) maximum luminance levels;
- c) the provision of ambient lighting sensors;
- d) the provision of a default black screen.

15.38 In conservation areas, proposals will also be expected to demonstrate how they would conserve or enhance the character and appearance of the area, as required under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Building and Conservation Areas) Act 1990.

Design and Installation of Shop Fronts and Roller Shutters

15.39 It is considered that the quality and appearance of the Borough's Town Centres is vital to their sustainability. The quality of shop fronts plays a significant role in this and a policy is

²¹⁴ 2023 or subsequent iterations

required that ensures they are designed and delivered to a standard that makes a positive contribution to the character and appearance of their location.

Policy SDM5 - Shop Fronts and Roller Shutters

Roller Shutters

- 1. Planning permission is required for the installation of all permanent roller shutters. All applications for the installation of roller shutters will be assessed using the following criteria:**
 - a) Encouragement will be given to the integration of roller shutters as part of development proposals for new shop fronts, through the planning application process and pre-application discussion.**
 - b) The applicant must satisfy the local planning authority that the type of security shutter they are proposing is the most appropriate.**
 - c) Roller shutters should, wherever possible, not project across the pilasters of the shop front, or obscure any architectural detail. The submitted plans should indicate this.**
 - d) Roller shutter boxes should, wherever possible, be hidden within the structure of the building or behind shop fascias, so as not to affect the character and architecture of the building.**
 - e) Metal roller shutters should be perforated and be colour powder coated or painted**
 - f) Details of materials should be submitted with the planning application.**
 - g) No more than 50% of the shutters should be solid.**
 - h) Roller shutters that are totally solid will not be acceptable.**

Shop Front Design

- 2. All planning applications for the installation of shop fronts will be assessed against the following criteria:**
 - a) All shop fronts should be designed to fit in with the scale and architectural character of the building in which they are to be contained.**

Policy SDM5 - Shop Fronts and Roller Shutters

- b) All shop fronts should remain within their existing structural openings and be fully framed with fascia signs. Shop fronts and fascias must also be recessed behind pilasters.**
- c) Adjacent shop fronts should be separated by a pilaster, matching the building. However, original pilasters should be retained where they exist.**
- d) Original features, such as iron columns, ornamental brackets or carved stonework, should be preserved or restored.**
- e) Canopies should be retractable and sited below the fascia.**
- f) To ensure a high standard of shop front design, all applications for planning permission will require the submission of a detailed elevation of the proposed shop front in relation to the building within which it is to be contained, as well as adjacent shop fronts.**
- g) Retention of facades above shop fronts that are of good quality, or which have special, architectural or historic interest, should be encouraged.**
- h) Whilst the appearance of a building should not be compromised, consideration should be given to natural surveillance, safety and security when designing new shop fronts.**

Justification

- 15.40 The design of shop fronts should be of good quality and use high grade materials. In addition to this, they should be designed to reflect the character and context of an area. Care should be taken to ensure the sympathetic design of shop fronts and security measures where buildings are in sensitive areas such as conservation areas, or on listed buildings.
- 15.41 The design of new shop fronts should incorporate security measures at an early stage of the design process, to prevent the need for shutter boxes to be added on later. Their design should also pay due regard to excluding features that may hinder community safety or contribute to criminal activity. The location of window openings and the types of materials used should be to an approved design standard that will help to prevent unauthorised intrusion. Display windows should incorporate stall risers and avoid floor to ceiling designs.
- 15.42 Additional security, such as grilles and lights, should be provided to safeguard shop premises and their customers. Consideration needs to be given to the design of roller shutters.

15.43 The introduction of perforated shutters, which are illuminated from the interior, provide additional lighting of the street scene, prevent dead frontages in addition to allowing natural surveillance into the shop as well as the goods on display to be viewed. Well-designed roller shutters will prevent a solid, unwelcoming appearance especially at night when most businesses are closed. Galvanised shutters will be unacceptable as they have a detrimental effect upon the street scene, creating dead frontages and intimidating environments.

Hot Food Takeaways

15.44 Hot food takeaways are common within retail centres. They complement the retail function of a centre, contributing to its vitality and viability and ensuring a mix of day and evening uses. However, an over-concentration of hot food takeaway uses can also undermine the role and function of retail centres. It is also recognised that hot food takeaways have a greater potential than other retail uses to have a detrimental impact on residential amenity, environmental quality, and the health of the local population.

15.45 The government have set out a plan to halve childhood obesity by 2030²¹⁵ and have noted that planning authorities can restrict numbers of hot food takeaways around schools and areas where there is already an over-concentration²¹⁶.

Policy SDM6 - Hot Food Takeaways

Vitality and Viability

1. **A percentage limit for the appropriate number of hot food takeaways in centres, including hot food takeaway permissions, and vacant units with a hot food takeaway as their lawful use (strategic, town, district and local) is as follows:**
 - a. **In centres with 40 units or more – no more than 7% of frontages should be occupied by hot food takeaways.**
 - b. **In centres with less than 40 units – no more than 12% of the frontages should be occupied by hot food takeaways.**

Clustering of hot food takeaways in centres.

²¹⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-measures-announced-to-halve-childhood-obesity-by-2030>

²¹⁶

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/296248/Obesity_and_environment_March2014.pdf

Policy SDM6 - Hot Food Takeaways

2. **No more than two hot food takeaway outlets should be located next to each other. Any application for a further hot food takeaway use that would exceed this limit will not be permitted.**
3. **Where two hot food takeaways are located next to each other, they should be separated by at least two non- hot food takeaway units from any similar uses.**

Exclusion zones

4. **An exclusion zone will be implemented near to secondary schools and higher education establishments; no new hot food takeaway developments will be permitted where they are within 400 metres of a secondary school or college site (as measured in a direct line from the school entrance(s) used by pupils / students).**

Justification

15.46 The Council has pledged to improve its population's health and wellbeing and to reduce health inequalities. One of the challenges the Council faces in promoting healthy eating is the unrestricted availability of foods high in fat, salt and sugar in local neighbourhoods, often associated with hot food takeaways. Controls over the prevalence of hot food takeaways are set out in this and the following policy, which will be used within retail centres and beyond to limit the availability of such foods in specific circumstances, whilst still permitting personal choice.

15.47 The council strongly encourages hot food takeaway operators to adopt healthy eating measures. Such measures may include:

- demonstrating a commitment to reducing the levels of saturated fat, salt and sugar in the food sold in their premises, and to make smaller portions available on request;
- offering healthy alternatives on the menu;
- making small changes to the way they cook and serve food.

Obesity

- 15.48 The Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) for Sandwell identifies that the general health of people in Sandwell is improving, but not as fast as the England average²¹⁷. However, the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities has identified that the prevalence of Year 6 children being overweight is worsening, with Sandwell having the highest number within the West Midlands region, according to 2021-22 data²¹⁸.
- 15.49 Sandwell has higher levels of obesity than the national average, both amongst children and adults²¹⁹. Reducing the levels of obesity in Sandwell will be a big step towards achieving the Council's 2030 ambition of Sandwell being a *'place where we live healthy lives and live them for longer'*.
- 15.50 In 2021 - 22, 14.9% of Reception-aged children in Sandwell were obese, compared to an average of 10.1% for England. This rose to 34% of Year 6 children in Sandwell, compared to 23.4% nationally. Over-18s also fared badly, with 34.3% of all adults in Sandwell being overweight or obese, compared to 25.9% in England²²⁰.
- 15.51 Obesity contributes to the onset of many diseases and premature mortality and is the sixth most important risk factor contributing to the overall burden of disease worldwide. Moderate obesity (BMI 30-35 kg/m²) can reduce life expectancy by an average of three years, while morbid obesity (BMI 40-50 kg/m²) reduces life expectancy by eight to ten years. This eight to ten-year loss of life is equivalent to the effects of lifelong smoking²²¹.
- 15.52 Significant health problems related to obesity start to develop at primary school age and behaviours established in early life have been shown to track into adulthood²²². This hot food takeaway policy relates to schools covering the age range for secondary schools and

²¹⁷ https://www.sandwelltrends.info/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2018/06/JSNA_Obesity-May-2011.pdf ; <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/subnationalindicatorsexplorer/2022-01-06#E08000028>

²¹⁸ <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/healthy-weight>

²¹⁹ <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/wellbeing/articles/subnationalindicatorsexplorer/2022-01-06#E08000028>

²²⁰ Information in paragraph taken from Office of Health Improvement & Disparities: https://fingertips.phe.org.uk/search/obes#page/4/gid/1/pat/6/par/E12000005/ati/402/are/E08000028/iid/90323/age/201/sex/4/cat/-1/ctp/-1/yrr/1/cid/4/tbm/1/page-options/tre-do-1_tre-ao-0

²²¹ <https://www.ox.ac.uk/news/2009-03-18-moderate-obesity-takes-years-life-expectancy>

²²² Craigie, A. M., A. A. Lake, et al. (2011) *Tracking of obesity-related behaviours from childhood to adulthood: A systematic review*. *Maturitas* 70(3): 266-284

academies but not to primary schools, where children cannot leave the premises without adult supervision.

Relationship to sensitive uses

- 15.53 Research has indicated that children attending schools near fast food outlets are more likely to be obese than those whose schools are more inaccessible to such outlets; therefore, new hot food takeaway units should not be located where they would increase the exposure of school children / young adults to these opportunities²²³.
- 15.54 This approach will not be applied in local, district or strategic centres where they overlap the 400m buffer zone. In these areas percentage policies will take precedence.
- 15.55 On average, there are more fast food outlets in deprived areas than in more affluent areas, and research shows a strong correlation between hot food takeaways per 100,000 population and levels of deprivation.

Town and local centres

- 15.56 Hot food takeaways are classed as additional retail uses, as they are compatible with town centre locations. Hot food takeaways will be discouraged outside defined centres, as they often attract considerable customer numbers and are associated with issues such as litter, waste disposal, noise, odour and additional traffic movements. For these reasons, they will normally only be supported in areas where residential amenity is less likely to be an issue.
- 15.57 Limitations on hot food takeaway units exists to ensure the vitality and viability of Sandwell's centres and parades are maintained. This policy is designed to manage the over-concentrations of these types of outlets to a point where they will not affect the viability of centres to deliver services to members of the public. In doing so, this will also help to address some of the related health and social impacts associated with over-consumption of fast food.
- 15.58 It is recognised that hot food takeaway establishments provide convenience as part of a wider food offer, particularly in town centres. However, compared to other retail uses, they are more likely to have a detrimental impact on amenity and on the retail character and function of shopping centres. Such harmful impacts tend to reduce town centre viability and increase the incidence of litter, smells, anti-social behaviour, noise and general disturbance, parking and traffic problems.

²²³ Engler-Stringer, R., Ha, L., Gerrard, A. and Muhajarine, N. (2014) *The community and consumer food environment and children's diet: a systematic review*. BMC Public Health. 14 (522)

15.59 In recent years several retail units in the borough have been converted into hot food takeaway establishments. Even with the introduction of planning guidance on hot food takeaways, implemented in 2012 and amended in 2016 that imposed a limit on the number of hot food takeaway units permitted within a retail centre, there has still been a net increase of 29 hot food takeaway units within the borough between 2015 and 2022. In seven out of 38 centres in Sandwell, there has been a reduction in the number of hot food takeaway units, but only of one unit in each. Of these seven centres, all but one are already in breach of the threshold or will be in breach should another hot food takeaway receive consent²²⁴.

Vacant Hot Food Takeaway Units

15.60 Vacant lawful hot food takeaway uses will be included as part of the relevant hot food takeaway threshold calculation. The policy will reduce the possibility of an excessive number of hot food takeaways being operational in a centre and thereby exceeding the identified thresholds. It will also encourage the re-use of vacant hot food takeaway premises in the immediate area, which may in turn help prevent long-term vacancies and offer a degree of viability and vitality to the immediate area.

Clustering of Uses

15.61 The clustering of hot food takeaway outlets can create areas in centres that are effectively dominated by one use. These types of outlets are only open and active in the evening and often shuttered during the day, leading to dead frontages. By reducing the clustering of these types of outlets, the variety of different types of shop fronts in an area will increase. This in turn will therefore improve the appearance and vitality of the centre.

Management of Hot Food Takeaways

15.62 In addition to Policy SDM6, Policy SDM7 offers guidance on the requirements for the provision of hot food takeaways. Applicants wishing to provide or alter a hot food takeaway outlet should ensure they address the issues raised in the policy, which is designed to manage adverse impacts on adjacent residents and properties.

Policy SDM7 - Management of Hot Food Takeaways

Measures to protect the amenity of surrounding residential occupiers

²²⁴ Primary data collected by Sandwell MBC – annual survey

Policy SDM7 - Management of Hot Food Takeaways

- 1. No new hot food takeaways will be permitted where they are directly adjacent to residential property at ground floor level. This does not apply to first / second floor flats above or diagonally above a proposed hot food takeaway.**
- 2. Where there is an existing residential unit above a hot food takeaway, which is not connected with its operation, private residential amenity should not be prejudiced. Specific care will need to be given to odour extraction, noise insulation, private accessibility and public convenience. Appropriate mitigation measures will include control over hours of opening hours. Where appropriate provisions cannot be included then such uses will not be supported, even within designated centres.**

Local environmental issues

- 3. All hot food takeaways will require appropriate fume extraction equipment to be installed, retained and maintained to reduce / remove potential nuisance from odours. Extraction systems should be effective in dispersing odours from hot food takeaways, whilst satisfying the council's design policies, especially in areas of historic character.**

Disposal of waste products and litter

- 4. Appropriate fat traps / interceptors must be installed on sinks and drains to prevent fats from reaching the wastewater system, to avoid blockages and the subsequent flooding of property.**
- 5. Appropriate storage areas must be specified for food waste bins and packaging waste and be included in any new proposal.**
- 6. The bins to be provided must be a suitable size and should be stored in a location that will not cause a nuisance to neighbouring residential or commercial properties, including regarding odours and accessibility.**
- 7. Commercial bin stores must be contained within the site. Where this is not possible, secure storage structures should be provided, designed to prevent vermin infestation and reduce odours.**

Management of Associated Impacts

- 8. Proposals for new hot food takeaways will only be granted permission subject to stringent planning conditions, to address matters such as (but not limited to):**

Policy SDM7 - Management of Hot Food Takeaways

- a. opening hours;
- b. parking restrictions;
- c. highway safety;
- d. where it is considered necessary, the installation of or contributions towards monitoring technology such as CCTV.

In some cases, they may be limited to a personal permission and / or a temporary consent.

Justification

Environmental and residential amenity issues

15.63 Many hot food takeaways produce odours during opening times. The potential impact of odours will be taken into account by the Council when a hot food takeaway planning application is being determined. Some types of food preparation and cooking practices will produce more odours than others and therefore may require a higher specification and control to remove odour, grease and smoke particles.

Disposal of waste and litter

15.64 Where possible, bins and bin stores must be located where they will be

- shaded from hot summer sunshine;
- screened;
- emptied and cleaned regularly.

This will contribute toward preventing odours and flies. The bin stores should also be appropriately located to maintain clear and convenient access for refuse collection services and be accessible at all times to those working at the premises.

Additional local impacts

15.65 It should be noted that the fear of crime can be a material consideration in determining all planning applications.

15.66 Whilst most hot food takeaways will operate without problems, in some cases they can attract gatherings of people and can become a focus for anti-social behaviour, especially at

night, including excessive noise, vehicle movements and litter. This will be considered when a decision is being made on such planning applications.

- 15.67 Where there are concerns over nuisance and anti-social behaviour in the area in which the proposal is to be located, the applicant may be asked to contribute towards or install safety and security measures, such as CCTV systems.
- 15.68 The provision of new hot food takeaways should not create or exacerbate road safety problems such as dangerous on-street parking or vehicle movements, or increase risks associated with pedestrians crossing busy roads to reach the business.

Gambling Activities and Alternative Financial Services

- 15.69 Sandwell Council wishes to minimise any negative impacts related to licensed gambling. Operators are expected to take account of Sandwell's Gambling Objectives as set out in its Gambling Statement of Principles²²⁵ to safeguard those who participate in gambling activities.
- 15.70 A proliferation of gambling uses, payday loan shops and pawnbrokers are not considered compatible with the positive outcomes sought through town centre regeneration.

Policy SDM8 - Gambling Activities and Alternative Financial Services

- 1. Planning permission for a payday loan shop, pawnbrokers', amusement arcade or betting shop within a retail centre will not be granted if to do so would cause an unacceptable grouping of uses that would have a negative impact on the character and vitality of the centre.**
- 2. A negative impact on the character of the centre is likely to occur when the following thresholds²²⁶ are exceeded:**
 - a. Within a town centre: more than 5% of the number of ground floor units being in a gambling or arcade use.**
 - b. Within a district or local centre, or local shopping centre / parade: more than 10% of the number of ground floor units being a gambling or arcade use.**
 - c. In all locations: two or more uses immediately adjacent to each other.**

²²⁵ https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200367/licensing/4923/gambling_and_lottery_policy

²²⁶ Taken from the Knowsley Town Centre Uses SPD 2022

Policy SDM8 - Gambling Activities and Alternative Financial Services

- d. In all locations: less than two units in other uses between gambling or arcade uses.
- 3. In calculating the existing or proposed percentage of units, payday loan shops, pawnbrokers, betting shops and arcade uses will be counted together.
- 4. When applying the thresholds set out above:
 - a. only ground floor units will be counted; and
 - b. when rounding percentages, they will be rounded down.
- 5. Proposals will be considered against the potential detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses, through increased noise and disturbance. They will also be required to provide an active frontage, through a permanent shop front and window display.
- 6. In determining any planning application for all pay day loan shops, pawnbrokers, and gambling uses the Council will consider any issues concerning community safety, crime, and disorder and will, where necessary, seek advice from the police and other safety organisations.

Justification

- 15.71 This policy should be read in conjunction with the SLP's town centre policies.
- 15.72 To ensure that designated retail centres are diverse and balanced, applications for pay day loan shops, pawnbrokers and gambling uses will be assessed for their cumulative impact using the thresholds in section 2 of the policy. Planning permission will normally be refused where these thresholds are exceeded.
- 15.73 An oversupply of gambling uses displaces other potential high street activities and has the potential to impact on the vitality of retail centres within the borough. The proliferation and grouping of these uses within centres may also have social, economic and health implications for centres and surrounding communities.
- 15.74 Inactive frontages are detrimental to the character and vitality of the Borough's centres as they lack visual interest when compared to typical retail displays. It is important that the Borough's retail centres provide a vibrant and attractive proposition to customers and inactive frontages create a negative perception of these retail centres.

Community Facilities

- 15.75 The employment land policies contained in the SLP set out the types of employment uses that would be permitted in the areas / sites allocated as strategic or local employment land. These sites are safeguarded for
- a) light industrial employment uses (the research and development of products or processes or any industrial process that could be carried out in a residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area);
 - b) general industry; and
 - c) storage and warehousing.
- 15.76 Local employment sites are those areas where development is supported primarily for new or smaller-scale employment activity. In the past, local employment land in Sandwell has come under pressure from non-employment proposals, such as churches / mosques, banqueting suites and other community uses. This has caused problems in some cases as the new uses have been proposed on sites adjacent to uses occupied by general employment uses.
- 15.77 In addition, given the demand for employment land that exists in Sandwell, the Council would seek to retain as much existing employment land as possible to help meet the needs of existing and incoming employers. As a result, it will be necessary for any applicants who wish to reuse employment land and premises for alternative or non-employment uses to be able to demonstrate very clearly why the site or buildings are no longer needed for employment and what steps will be taken to minimise adverse impacts on adjacent uses.
- 15.78 Given the number of vacant units in town centres and the likelihood of vacancies in such areas increasing over time, the Council considers that most community facilities would be best located in town centres, where they will be accessible by different means of transport and where other facilities and services will be more readily available to support them.

Policy SDM9 - Community Facilities

1. **In considering proposals for new community facilities, examples of which include but are not limited to:**
 - **banqueting suites and entertainment venues;**
 - **places of worship and / or religious instruction;**

Policy SDM9 - Community Facilities

- **leisure and recreational activities;**
- **larger-scale non-employment uses e.g., nurseries, wholesale catering, animal day care;**
- **community centres;**

or the conversion or extension of existing community facilities, the following criteria will be considered:

- a. **Any proposal for a community facility or use that involves the loss of premises and sites identified as falling within either strategic or local employment areas²²⁷ will be refused.**
 - b. **Proposals for new community facilities on land or premises identified under Policy SEC4, which are either currently or formerly in employment use, will be resisted; applicants wishing to reuse such buildings or sites will need to meet the criteria set out in that policy and be able to demonstrate why the site is no longer suitable for employment use now or in the future.**
 - c. **Encouragement will be given to locating community facilities and uses on sites with main road frontages at the fringes of commercial areas, and particularly in town, district or local centres.**
 - d. **If the building(s) to be used shares a party wall with any sensitive use (particularly residential) it is unlikely that planning permission will be granted. Exceptions to this are likely to occur only when there is clear evidence submitted to the Council that the use will not adversely affect the occupiers of adjoining properties.**
- 2. Where noise from the proposed new activities is likely to affect neighbouring properties, consideration will be given to attaching conditions to any planning permission granted, which would reduce or eliminate such problems. These may include:**
- a. **installation and retention of suitable sound insulation;**
 - b. **restricting the use of parts of the building, or the type of uses proposed;**

²²⁷ Policies SEC2 and SEC3

Policy SDM9 - Community Facilities

- c. **restricting the hours of use of all or parts of the building.**
- 3. **Consideration will be given to the need for the provision of car parking in association with the development. This will include an assessment of:**
 - a. **the proximity and availability of public transport facilities;**
 - b. **whether most people walk to a place of worship or religious instruction;**
 - c. **the use of the centre for wider community purposes and for special events drawing large numbers of participants;**
 - d. **the availability of other car parking in the vicinity;**
 - e. **the adverse effects of on-street parking on adjacent occupiers, the environment of the neighbourhood, and whether it would create potential hazards to pedestrians and other road users.**
- 4. **Consideration may also be given to the granting of planning permission for a limited period where concerns relating to an application are insufficient to warrant refusal.**
- 5. **The provision of additional community facilities will be encouraged, including those serving cultural and other social needs.**

Justification

- 15.79 Having non-employment uses near heavy industry can cause problems for both sets of occupiers; the “agents of change” principle in the NPPF now requires the incoming user to ensure that their activities do not adversely impact on adjacent established uses. As an example, incoming industrial users on appropriate and allocated industrial sites adjacent to community or leisure activities would have to use additional resources to ensure their activities did not impact on places used for social events. This in turn could mean potential industrial and employment-generating uses avoiding such sites on viability grounds.
- 15.80 In some locations large-scale commercial entertainment and community activities may be appropriate, assuming the likelihood of sufficient parking being available, and events being held during evenings and weekends when areas of employment uses are likely to be less busy. However, these types of activities will generally be more properly located in town and local centres, with good accessibility by public transport; they should be subject to a robust sequential test if they are being proposed outside centres.

15.81 In addition, there are other larger-scale activities that are not classed as employment uses (although in some cases they may employ significant numbers of people), but which require large premises away from housing areas or other more sensitive uses. These might include wholesale catering, larger indoor recreational and leisure uses and dog day-care for example.

Telecommunications

15.82 The ongoing growth of digital communications means that there will remain a need for guidance on the provision of associated infrastructure.

Policy SDM10 - Telecommunications

1. In considering proposals for telecommunication development for which planning permission is required, or to which the prior approval procedure is applicable, the following criteria will apply:
 - a) The siting and external appearance of apparatus including any location or landscaping requirements have been designed to minimise the impact of such apparatus on amenity, while respecting operational efficiency.
 - b) Antennae have, so far as is practicable, been sited either to minimise the effect on, or to complement or beneficially add to the external appearance of the building on which they are installed.
 - c) Applicants must demonstrate that they have explored all possibilities for sharing masts, or for siting masts on existing buildings or structures.
 - d) The development would not impact on scheduled highway improvement works.
2. Microcell installations will be expected where agreements exist with the relevant highway authority to utilise existing street furniture, not add to the clutter of the street scene, impede pedestrian flows or contribute to highway safety issues.
3. The use of Article 4 directions removing permitted development rights for telecommunication development will be considered where there is a serious risk to amenity.

Justification

- 15.83 Since April 2022, new ground-based mobile masts up to 30 metres in height in unprotected areas, and up to 25 metres in protected areas, are considered permitted development in England.
- 15.84 A full application for planning permission is required for any telecoms infrastructure that is not covered by permitted development rights. Prior to deciding a planning application, Sandwell Council will seek views from the local community on the proposed project.
- 15.85 Some telecoms infrastructure, such as new ground-based mobile masts, is considered permitted development but requires “prior approval” from the local planning authority regarding its siting and appearance. The Council will also inform residents of this type of application.
- 15.86 All telecommunications proposals should be designed to minimise visual impact and intrusion. The decision to propose ground based or building based masts, antennae and cabins will depend on the respective impact that the proposal will have on visual amenity, local character, skyline and neighbouring uses.

Delivery, Monitoring, and Implementation

Monitoring and Review

1. Sandwell Council is committed to ensuring that robust monitoring of the implementation of the Sandwell Local Plan is carried out. The aim is to ensure that the Strategic Objectives of the SLP are delivered successfully so that the Vision of the borough for 2041 is realised.
2. Monitoring indicators for each chapter of the Plan are set out below. Performance against the indicators will show whether the policies are performing effectively and if the Council should commence an early review of the Plan.
3. Performance against the indicators will also provide the Council and interested stakeholders with important data about development and land-use change within the borough.

Development Strategy

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SDS1 – Development Strategy Policy SDS2 – Regeneration in Sandwell Policy SDS3 – Towns and Local Areas Policy SDS4 - Achieving well-designed places Policy SDS5 - Cultural Facilities and the Visitor Economy Policy SDS6 – Sandwell’s Green Belt Policy SDS7 - Green and Blue Infrastructure in Sandwell		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Delivery of housing and employment floorspace	Minimum of 11,167 houses Minimum of 1,206ha employment land	Plan period
Deliver housing and employment land within Regeneration Areas	Minimum of 3,414 houses Minimum 606ha employment land	Plan period
Deliver housing and employment land within town and local communities outside West Bromwich and the Regeneration Areas	Minimum 503 new homes Minimum 600ha of employment land	Plan period
Delivery of Sandwell Design Code	Adopt and implement a Design Code	by 2027
Retention and enhancement of cultural, tourist and leisure facilities within Sandwell	No loss of cultural, tourist or leisure facilities within the borough	Plan period
Area of green belt lost to inappropriate development	0%	Plan period
Prepare, adopt and implement a Green Infrastructure Strategy	Adopt and implement a Green Infrastructure Strategy	By 2027

Sandwell's Natural and Historic Environment

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SNE1 – Nature Conservation Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats Policy SNE3 – Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows Policy SNE4 - Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark Policy SNE5 - The Rowley Hills Policy SNE6 – Canals Policy SHE1 – Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas Policy SHE2 – Development in the Historic Environment Policy SHE3 – Locally Listed Buildings Policy SHE4 - Archaeology		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Changes in areas of biodiversity importance	No reduction in designated nature conservation sites through development (SINCs, LNRs)	Plan period
	No net reduction in designated nature conservation sites through development (SLINCs)	
The number of development sites achieving at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain	All qualifying developments with planning permission delivering 10%+ BNG on / near their sites	Plan period
Number of Biodiversity Net Gain units delivered through the development management process	No target	Plan period
Increase in tree canopy cover across Sandwell	6% increase	by 2030
Number of development sites achieving a ratio of 3:1 replacement trees on sites where felling has taken place	85% of permissioned development involving the felling of trees on site	Plan period
Area of ancient woodland / number of veteran trees lost	No areas of ancient woodland / no veteran trees lost in Sandwell	Plan period

Policies	Target	Timescale
Net loss of sites with recognised geological value to development without appropriate mitigation / recording having taken place	0%	Plan period
Number of planning applications / appeals granted permission for development within the Rowley Hills SOS that are in contravention of the policy	0	Plan period
Proportion of planning permissions granted in accordance with Historic Environment Adviser recommendations	100%	Plan period
Demolition of statutorily listed buildings	0	Plan period
Proportion of planning permissions granted in accordance with Historic Environment Advisor recommendations	100%	Plan period
Number of locally listed buildings lost without an historical record being made	0	Plan period
All requests to developers to commission further archaeological information are complied with	100%	Plan period

Climate Change

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SCC1 – Increasing efficiency and resilience Policy SCC2 – Energy Infrastructure Policy SCC3 – Managing Heat Risk Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk Policy SCC5 - Sustainable drainage and surface water management Policy SCC6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Proportion of qualifying development proposals that incorporate decentralised energy provision.	100%	Plan period
Progress towards net zero carbon dioxide emissions borough wide	Net zero	Plan period
Proportion of new housing and other development built within areas identified as being at risk of flooding	0%	Plan period
Proportion of new housing and other development built including sustainable drainage provision	100%	Plan period
Proportion of qualifying developments meeting the renewable and low carbon energy and BREEAM New Construction standards (policy SCC6)	100%	Plan period

Health and Wellbeing in Sandwell

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SHW1– Health Impact Assessments Policy SHW2 – Healthcare Infrastructure Policy SHW3 – Air Quality Policy SHW4– Open Space and Recreation Policy SHW5 – Playing Fields and Sports Facilities Policy SHW6 - Allotments		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Proportion of qualifying development proposals that provide health impact assessments.	100%	Plan period
Number of major planning applications granted permission against the advice of the Environmental Health Section's recommendations	0	Plan period
Net change in designated open space measured as hectares of accessible open space per 1,000 population	At least 3.63 ha per 1,000 population	Plan period
Net loss of playing fields / sports facilities across Sandwell	0%	Plan period
Net increase in pitch provision for football / cricket / rugby to meet shortfalls set out in policy SHW5 and related appendix	No appropriate development refused	Plan period
Net loss of allotments in Sandwell	0%	Plan period

Sandwell's Housing

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SHO1 - Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth Policy SHO2 – Windfall developments Policy SHO3 - Housing Density, Type and Accessibility Policy SHO4 - Affordable Housing Policy SHO5 - Delivering Wheelchair Accessible and Self / Custom Build Housing Policy SHO6 - Financial Viability Assessments for Housing Policy SHO7 - Protecting Family Housing (Use Class C3) Policy SHO8 - Houses in Multiple Occupation Policy SHO9 – Education Facilities Policy SHO10 – Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople Policy SHO11 - Housing for people with specific needs		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Net additional dwellings completed (including conversions)	Delivery against total supply at policy SHO1 – 588	Plan period

Policies	Target	Timescale
	dwellings per annum	
Net affordable units completed	25% on eligible sites	Plan period
Proportion of new homes permitted on brownfield land	95% of new homes permitted on brownfield land	Plan period
Net additional pitches & plots for gypsies and travellers	10 new gypsy and traveller pitches	Plan period
Developments of ten homes or more providing at least 15% homes as Building Regulations Requirement M4(3): Wheelchair User Dwellings	100%	Plan period
Number of applications for Houses in Multiple Occupation permitted that conflict with requirements of SHO8	0	Plan period
Number of school places	Increase	Plan period

Sandwell's Economy

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SEC1 – Providing for Economic Growth and Jobs Policy SEC2 – Strategic Employment Areas Policy SEC3 – Local Employment Areas Policy SEC4 – Other Employment Sites Policy SEC5 – Improving Access to the Labour Market Policy SEC6 – Relationship between Industry and Sensitive Uses		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Employment land completions on sites allocated through Policy SEC1	29ha	Plan period
Redevelopment of employment land and premises (ha) in Strategic Employment Areas to non-employment uses.	0ha	Plan period
Employment development on land outside of Strategic and Local Employment Areas (ha)	No target	Plan period
Net change in employment floorspace (sqm)	No target	Plan period
Proportion of major planning permissions making provision for targeted recruitment or training secured through s106 Agreements, planning conditions or other mechanisms.	50% (Based on SLP target)	Plan period

Sandwell's Centres

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SCE1 - Sandwell's Centres Policy SCE2 - Non-Retail Uses in Town Centres Policy SCE3 - Town Centres (tier-two centres) Policy SCE4 - District and Local Centres (tier-three centres) Policy SCE5 - Provision of Small-Scale Local Facilities not in centres Policy SCE6 - Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Number / amount of floorspace of applications for main town centres that are consented and completed	All planning permissions to meet policy requirements	Plan period
Number of retail / leisure applications for edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations submitting sequential tests	100%	Plan period
Number of retail / leisure applications for edge-of-centre and out-of-centre locations over 280m ² submitting impact test	100%	Plan period
Amount of floorspace permitted in out-of-centre locations and in conflict with SCE5 (small-scale local facilities)	0	Plan period

West Bromwich

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SWB1 - West Bromwich Town Centre Policy SWB2 – Development in West Bromwich		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
All planning permissions for development falling within Class D2 of 1000m ² and over to be located in West Bromwich	100%	Plan period
Delivery of new homes within West Bromwich	1,162 new homes (policy SWB2)	Plan period

Transport

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy STR1 – Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network Policy STR2 – Safeguarding the Development of the Key Route Network (KRN) Policy STR3 – Managing Transport Impacts of New Development Policy STR4 – The Efficient Movement of Freight & Logistics Policy STR5 – Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and Walking Policy STR6 – Influencing the Demand for Travel and Travel Choices Policy STR7 – Network Management Policy STR8– Parking Management Policy STR9 – Planning for Low Emission Vehicles Policy STR10 – Transport Innovation & Digital Connectivity		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Delivery of key transport priority projects set out at STR1	Delivery	Plan period
Average number of cyclists recorded by cycle counters within the borough	Annual increase	Plan period
Number of electric vehicle charging points	No target	Plan period

Infrastructure and Delivery

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SID1 - Promotion of Fibre to the Premises and 5G Networks Policy SID2- Mobile Network Infrastructure Policy SID3 - Digital Infrastructure / Equipment		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Full fibre broadband coverage across the borough	The same or better than national coverage	Plan period
5G coverage across the borough	The same or better than national coverage	Plan period

Waste and Minerals

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SWA1 – Waste Infrastructure Future Requirements Policy SWA2 – Waste Sites Policy SWA3 – Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities Policy SWA4 – Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities Policy SWA5 – Resource Management and New Development Policy SMI1 - Minerals Safeguarding Policy SMI2 - Managing the Effects of Mineral Development		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Waste generation from different sources	Annual decrease	Plan period
Waste management measured as % of LACW recycled / recovered per annum (DeFRA LACW Statistics)	60% of municipal waste to be recycled 65% of municipal waste to be recycled	by 2030 by 2035
Number of planning applications for housing development near to a Strategic Waste Site / % of proposals compliant with policy	100% of housing developments near to a strategic Waste Site to include effective measures to manage land use conflicts	Plan period
Total number of planning applications for waste development approved, number of applications approved within the preferred areas or other retained employment areas	100% of planning permissions for waste development (excluding landfill sites) to be in preferred areas or other retained employment areas	Plan period
Net change in waste capacity (split by management method) – significant losses in capacity / significant gains from development of new infrastructure	100% of indicative waste capacity requirements in Policy SWA3 delivered	Plan period

Development Constraints and Industrial Legacy

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SCO1 - Hazardous Installations and Substances		

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SCO2 - Pollution Control		
Policy SCO3 - Land contamination and instability		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Number of applications granted despite HSE objection relating to hazardous installations.	0	Plan period

Development Management

Policies	Target	Timescale
Policy SDM1 – Design Quality Policy SDM2 – Development and Design Standards Policy SDM3 – Tall Buildings and Gateway Sites Policy SDM4 - Advertisements Policy SDM5 - Shop Fronts and Roller Shutters Policy SDM6 - Hot Food Takeaways Policy SDM7 - Management of Hot Food Takeaways Policy SDM8 - Gambling activities and alternative financial services Policy SDM9 - Community Facilities Policy SDM10 - Telecommunications		
Monitoring Indicator	Target	Timescale
Number of external roller grilles or shutters permitted within conservation areas, on listed or locally listed buildings or affecting the appearance or setting of a Heritage Asset	0	Plan period
Centres with planning permission for Hot Food Takeaways that exceed the required threshold for their location	0	Plan period
Centres with planning permission for gambling and related activities that exceed the required threshold for their location	0	Plan period
Loss of land or premises identified as falling under Policies SEC2 and SEC3 to community or other alternative uses	0	Plan period

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Sustainability Appraisal of the Sandwell Local Plan

Regulation 18 (II): Draft Plan

October 2023



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LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

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Sustainability Appraisal of the Sandwell Local Plan

Regulation 18 (II): Draft Plan

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Front Cover: Warren's Hall Nature Reserve by Lepus Consulting

About this report & notes for readers

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This Regulation 18 (II) SA Report is based on the best available information, including that provided to Lepus by SMBC and information that is publicly available. No attempt to verify these secondary data sources has been made and they have been assumed to be accurate as published. This report was prepared between May and October 2023 and is subject to and limited by the information available during this time.

This report has been produced to evaluate the potential sustainability impacts of the Sandwell

Local Plan and meets the requirements of the SEA Regulations. It is not intended to be a substitute for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or Appropriate Assessment (AA).

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Acronyms & Abbreviations



A&E	Accident and Emergency
AAP	Area Action Plan
AHHLV	Area of High Historic Landscape Value
AHHTV	Area of High Historic Townscape Value
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
APA	Archaeological Priority Area
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BCCS	Black Country Core Strategy
BCP	Black Country Plan
BMV	Best and most versatile
CA	Conservation Area
CfS	Call for Sites
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
DLHHV	Designed Landscape of High Historic Value
DLUHC	Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
DtC	Duty to Cooperate
EDNA	Economic Development Needs Assessment
EMP	Employment
EU	European Union
FEMA	Functional Economic Market Area
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GI	Green Infrastructure
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GP	General Practitioner
GTAA	Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment
GTTS	Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople
HIA	Health Impact Assessment
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation
HMA	Housing Market Area
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
HSG	Housing
IMD	Index of Multiple Deprivation
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area
LVA	Landscape and Visual Appraisal
LVIA	Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NHS	National Health Service
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PDL	Previously Developed Land

PPP	Policies Plans and Programmes
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
RPG	Registered Park and Garden
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SINC	Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
SLINC	Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation
SLP	Sandwell Local Plan
SM	Scheduled Monument
SMBC	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPZ	Source Protection Zone
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System

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Executive Summary

About this report

- E1 Lepus Consulting is conducting an appraisal process for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) to help them prepare the Sandwell Local Plan (SLP). The appraisal process is known as Sustainability Appraisal (SA) and is prepared during a number of different stages to facilitate iteration between the Plan makers (SMBC) and the appraisal team (Lepus Consulting). The process seeks to provide high level environmental protection and the different stages of plan making are mostly accompanied by consultation with statutory bodies, other stakeholders and the public.
- E2 SA is the process of informing and influencing the preparation of a Development Plan to optimise its sustainability performance. SA considers the social, economic and environmental performance of the Local Plan.
- E3 This report is being published following consultation with the statutory consultees between February and March 2023 on the SA Scoping Report, which identified the scope and level of detail to be included in the SA process going forward, and the Regulation 18 (I) Issues and Options SA Report, which presented an assessment of the proposed SLP Vision and Objectives and made recommendations for the emerging SLP.
- E4 This Regulation 18 (II) SA Report has been prepared to assess the draft policies and options (or 'reasonable alternatives') as presented in the Draft Sandwell Local Plan 2025-2041 Regulation 18 Consultation document. This includes options for:
- Housing growth;
 - Gypsy and Traveller growth;
 - Employment growth;
 - Spatial strategy; and
 - Development sites.
- E5 The assessment of reasonable alternatives is an important requirement of the SEA Regulations.

Summary findings

- E6 Findings from the assessments are presented in a single-line matrix format. The high-level matrix is not a conclusive tool or model. Its main function is to identify at a strategic level whether or not the assessment requires a more detailed examination or whether satisfactory conclusions may be drawn from the high-level assessment without the need for further (time consuming) detailed analysis of a particular policy.
- E7 As required by the SEA Regulations, cumulative, indirect and synergistic effects are also identified and evaluated during the assessment, where relevant.

Housing Growth Options

E8 XXX

Gypsy and Traveller Growth Options

E9 XXX

Employment Growth Options

E10 XXX

Spatial Options

E11 XXX

Reasonable Alternative Sites

E12 XXX

Draft Policies

E13 XXX

Next steps

- E14 This Regulation 18 (II) SA Report is subject to consultation with statutory consultees, stakeholders and the general public alongside the Draft SLP.
- E15 This report represents the latest stage of the SA process. The SA process will take on board any comments on this report and use them to furnish the next report with greater detail and accuracy.
- E16 Once SMBC have reviewed Regulation 18 (II) consultation comments and have begun preparing the next version of the SLP (Regulation 19 stage), preparation of an Environmental Report will be, also known as a full SA report. The Environmental Report will include all of the legal requirements set out in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations.

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Sandwell Metropolitan Council (SMBC) are in the process of writing the Sandwell Local Plan (SLP). As part of this process, a Sustainability Appraisal (SA) is being undertaken that incorporates the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA). The purpose of SA/SEA is to help guide and influence the decision making process for SMBC by identifying the likely sustainability effects of reasonable alternatives and various options.
- 1.1.2 The SLP is at the plan making stage known as the 'Draft Plan' stage, and follows on from the 'Issues and Options' stage. The purpose of this SA report is to assess the sustainable development implications of proposals presented in the Draft Sandwell Local Plan 2025-2041 Regulation 18 Consultation document.
- 1.1.3 A wide range of reasonable alternatives have been identified by SMBC during the plan making process. This includes growth options, spatial options and development sites, as well as a suite of draft policies. The sustainability appraisal outputs will help SMBC to identify sustainable development options and prepare a local plan which is economically, environmentally, and socially sustainable.
- 1.1.4 A sustainability appraisal is a systematic process that must be carried out during the preparation of local plans and spatial development strategies. Its role is to promote sustainable development by assessing the extent to which the emerging plan, when judged against reasonable alternatives, will help to achieve relevant environmental, economic and social objectives.
- 1.1.5 This SA/SEA document follows on from the SA Scoping Report¹ and the Regulation 18 Issues and Options SA Report², both of which were consulted on with the statutory bodies (Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency) and the public between 6th February and 20th March 2023.

¹ Lepus Consulting (2023) Sustainability Appraisal of the Sandwell Local Plan: Scoping Report. Available at: [https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/33699/slp - issues and options sustainability appraisal - scoping report](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/33699/slp_-_issues_and_options_sustainability_appraisal_-_scoping_report) [Date accessed: 06/06/23]

² Lepus Consulting (2023) Sustainability Appraisal of the Sandwell Local Plan: Regulation 18 Issues and Options, January 2023. Available at: [https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/33698/slp - issues and options sustainability appraisal](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/33698/slp_-_issues_and_options_sustainability_appraisal) [Date accessed: 06/06/23]

1.2 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough

- 1.2.1 Sandwell is a metropolitan borough covering approximately 8,556ha, with a population of 341,900 according to the Census (2021)³. On average, Sandwell has a younger and more ethnically diverse population than the rest of the UK. Deprivation and inequalities are key issues for the local population, Sandwell is one of the most deprived local authorities in England with approximately 25.5% of children living in low-income families and life expectancy for both men and women lower than the national average.
- 1.2.2 Sandwell lies within the Black Country, which is a predominantly urban sub-region of the West Midlands. The sub-region includes the boroughs of Dudley, Sandwell, Walsall and the City of Wolverhampton. The location of Sandwell is shown in **Figure 1.1**.
- 1.2.3 The strategic centre of Sandwell is West Bromwich, with several main towns and centres including Bearwood, Blackheath, Cape Hill, Cradley Heath, Great Bridge, Oldbury and Wednesbury, alongside smaller towns and settlements. Sandwells towns are well connected through a network of strategic transport routes, with links to other regional and national centres via the M5/M6 and rail corridors.
- 1.2.4 Industry and manufacturing form a key part of Sandwell's history, which continues in the local economy today as Sandwell is an important centre in particular for retail and wholesale, manufacturing, and health and social care sectors. Sandwell also plays a role within the wider economy in terms of electricity, gas and air conditioning as well as water supply and waste management, and transportation and storage industries. The borough also supports a range of parks and open spaces including the Rowley Hills and Sandwell Valley. The Sandwell Valley forms Sandwells only area of Green Belt land.

³ Office for National Statistics (2022) How the population changed in Sandwell: Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E08000028/> [Date accessed: 02/06/2]

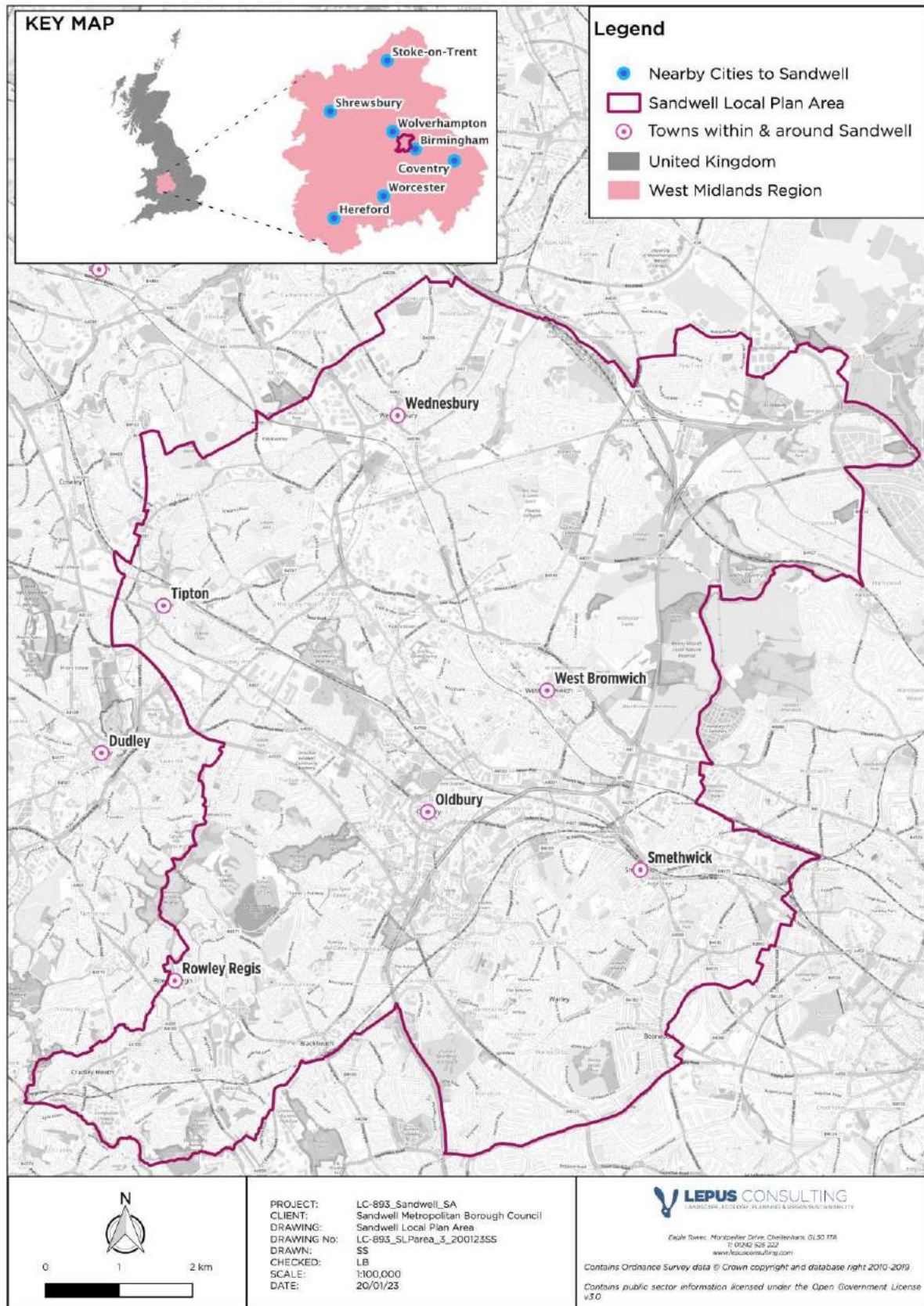


Figure 1.1: Sandwell administrative boundary

1.3 The Sandwell Local Plan

- 1.3.1 The Sandwell Local Plan (SLP) will include the overall strategy for development in Sandwell Metropolitan Borough for the plan period 2025 to 2041, including a vision for Sandwell in 2041 and underpinning strategic objectives, and an overall spatial strategy supported by site allocations and policies to guide land use and development within the borough.
- 1.3.2 The SLP is being prepared by SMBC, following the political decision to cease work on the joint Black Country Plan (BCP) in autumn 2022. The SLP will carry forward relevant information and evidence prepared as part of the Draft BCP, with specific changes in response to planning issues raised during the Draft BCP consultation and new evidence and information for the Sandwell authority area. This includes information gathered from the Issues and Options Consultation for the emerging SLP in early 2023⁴.
- 1.3.3 The BCP itself began as a review of the adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS), produced by the four Black Country Authorities of Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Walsall Council and City of Wolverhampton Council.
- 1.3.4 Once adopted, the SLP will form part of the statutory development plan for the borough covering a minimum of 15 years, replacing and updating the currently adopted BCCS⁵, Sandwell Site Allocation and Delivery Development Plan Document (SAD)⁶, and various other Area Action Plans which cover the period from 2006 to 2026.

1.4 Duty to Cooperate

- 1.4.1 The Duty to Cooperate (DtC) was created in the Localism Act 2011⁷ and amends the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Current national policy places a legal duty on local planning authorities, county councils in England and public bodies to engage constructively, actively and on an ongoing basis to maximise the effectiveness of local plan preparation in the context of strategic cross boundary matters.
- 1.4.2 For SMBC, this means that unmet housing and economic land need should be sought to be provided for across the wider Housing Market Area (HMA), Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) and other areas with which Sandwell has a physical or functional relationship.
- 1.4.3 A DtC Statement will be prepared, which will demonstrate how SMBC has fulfilled this duty through the plan-making process. It is intended to draft and agree Statements of Common Ground with relevant authorities and bodies on key DtC issues at the Publication stage.

⁴ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2023) Sandwell Local Plan: Issues and Options Consultation. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200317/planning_policy/4990/sandwell_local_plan [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

⁵ Black Country Authorities (2011) Black Country Core Strategy. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t1/p2/> [Date accessed: 06/06/23]

⁶ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2012) Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200275/planning_and_buildings/676/site_allocations_and_delivery_development_plan_document [Date accessed: 06/06/23]

⁷ Localism Act 2011. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2011/20/contents> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

1.4.4 It should be noted that emerging reforms to planning policy set out the intention to repeal the DtC and replace this with a more flexible 'alignment test'⁸. However, at the time of writing and for the purposes of this stage of the SLP, the current DtC requirement applies.

1.5 Integrated approach to SA and SEA

1.5.1 The requirements to carry out SA and SEA are distinct, although it is possible to satisfy both obligations using a single appraisal process.

1.5.2 The European Union Directive 2001/42/EC⁹ (SEA Directive) applies to a wide range of public plans and programmes on land use, energy, waste, agriculture, transport and more (see Article 3(2) of the Directive for other plan or programme types). The objective of the SEA procedure can be summarised as follows: *"the objective of this Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development"*.

1.5.3 The SEA Directive has been transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004¹⁰ (SEA Regulations). Under the requirements of the SEA Directive and SEA Regulations, specific types of plans that set the framework for the future development consent of projects must be subject to an environmental assessment. Therefore, it is a legal requirement for the Local Plan to be subject to SEA throughout its preparation.

1.5.4 SA is a UK-specific procedure used to appraise the impacts and effects of development plans in the UK. It is a legal requirement as specified by S19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004¹¹ and should be an appraisal of the economic, social and environmental sustainability of development plans. The present statutory requirement for SA lies in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012¹². SA is a systematic process for evaluating the environmental consequences of proposed plans or programmes to ensure environmental issues are fully integrated and addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making.

1.5.5 Public consultation is an important aspect of the integrated SA/SEA process.

⁸ DLUHC (2022) Policy Paper – Levelling Up and Regeneration: Further information. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/levelling-up-and-regeneration-further-information/levelling-up-and-regeneration-further-information> [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

⁹ Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA Directive). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

¹⁰ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

¹¹ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

¹² The Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2012/767/contents/made> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

1.6 Best Practice Guidance

1.6.1 Government policy recommends that both SA and SEA are undertaken under a single sustainability appraisal process, which incorporates the requirements of the SEA Regulations. This can be achieved through integrating the requirements of SEA into the SA process. The approach for carrying out an integrated SA and SEA is based on best practice guidance:

- European Commission (2004) Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the assessment of the effects of certain plan and programmes on the environment¹³.
- Office of Deputy Prime Minister (2005) A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive¹⁴.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹⁵.
- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021) Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)¹⁶.
- Royal Town Planning Institute (2018) Strategic Environmental Assessment, Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of SEA/SA for land use plans¹⁷.

1.7 Sustainability Appraisal

1.7.1 This document is a component of the SA of the SLP. It provides an assessment of the likely effects of reasonable alternatives, as per Stage B of **Figure 1.2**, according to PPG on SA¹⁸.

¹³ European Commission (2004) Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the assessment of the effects of certain plan and programmes on the environment. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/eia/pdf/030923_sea_guidance.pdf [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

¹⁴ Office of Deputy Prime Minister (2005) A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguides_ea.pdf [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

¹⁵ MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

¹⁶ DLUHC & MHCLG (2021) Planning practice guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

¹⁷ Royal Town Planning Institute (2018) Strategic Environmental Assessment, Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of SEA/SA for land use plans. Available at: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/1822/sea-sapracticeadvicefull2018c.pdf> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

¹⁸ DLUHC & MHCLG (2020) Guidance: Strategic environmental assessment and sustainability appraisal. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/strategic-environmental-assessment-and-sustainability-appraisal> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]



Figure 1.2: Sustainability appraisal process

1.8 The SA process so far

1.8.1 **Table 1.1** below presents a timeline of stages of the SLP and SA process so far. To date, this represents Stages A and B of **Figure 1.2**.

Table 1.1: The SLP and SA process to date

Date	SLP Stage	Sustainability Appraisal
January 2023	Plan making commences.	SA Scoping Report This report identifies the scope and level of detail to be included in the SA.
February–March 2023	Issues and Preferred Options (Regulation 18) Consultation In the Issues and Options document, the Council considered the ways in which future development needs could be met and asked the public and other stakeholders to comment on these key issues for the borough.	Regulation 18: Issues and Preferred Options SA Report The Regulation 18 (I) SA Report presented an assessment of the SLP Vision and Objectives as set out in the consultation document, and made recommendations for the emerging SLP.
November – December 2023	Draft Plan (Regulation 18 II) Consultation The Draft Plan document sets out the Councils’ preferred options for the overall levels of growth and spatial strategy as well as site allocations and policy areas, and seeks consultation views on these to help inform the SLP process going forward.	Regulation 18 (II) SA Report This report assesses the reasonable alternative options for housing growth, employment growth, Gypsy and Traveller growth, spatial strategy, development sites and policies identified by the Council.

1.9 Scoping Report

1.9.1 In order to identify the scope and level of detail of the information to be included in the SA process, an SA Scoping Report¹⁹ was produced in January 2023.

1.9.2 The SA Scoping Report represented Stage A of the SA process (see **Figure 1.2**), and contains information in relation to:

- Identifying other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives;
- Collecting baseline information;
- Identifying sustainability problems and key issues;
- Preparing the SA Framework; and
- Consultation arrangements on the scope of SA with the consultation bodies.

1.9.3 The Scoping Report was consulted on between 6th February and 20th March 2023 with the statutory bodies Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency as well as the general public. No specific comments were received regarding the SA Scoping Report.

¹⁹ Lepus Consulting (2022) Sustainability Appraisal of the Sandwell Local Plan: Scoping Report. Available at: [https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/33699/slp - issues and options sustainability appraisal - scoping report](https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/33699/slp_-_issues_and_options_sustainability_appraisal_-_scoping_report) [Date accessed: 06/06/23]

1.10 Regulation 18 (I) Issues and Options SA

- 1.10.1 Through the Issues and Options Consultation, the Council sought to involve local people, businesses and stakeholders in identifying what the emerging SLP should address. In addition to various questions which seek to gather views from consultees, the Issues and Options consultation document identified options for the Vision and 11 draft Objectives for the SLP.
- 1.10.2 The Regulation 18 Issues and Options SA Report set out an assessment of the draft Vision and Objectives of the emerging SLP. The SA Report also set out a range of recommendations for SMBC to consider as the SLP is developed and refined, including recommendations to improve the SLP Vision and Objectives, as well as consideration of the identification, description and evaluation of reasonable alternatives which is an important aspect of this Regulation 18 (II) SA Report.
- 1.10.3 The Issues and Options SA Report was consulted on between 6th February and 20th March 2023 with statutory consultees, stakeholders and the general public, alongside the SLP Issues and Options document, and the SA Scoping Report.
- 1.10.4 Comments received during the consultation relating to the SA have informed the preparation of this Regulation 18 (II) SA Report. **Table 1.2** summarises the responses received and how these comments have been incorporated into the SA process going forward.

Table 1.2: Consultation responses from statutory consultees on Regulation 18 (I) Issues and Options SA Report (January 2023)

Consultee	Summary of Consultation Response	Incorporation into the SA
Natural England	No specific comments received regarding the SA Scoping Report or Issues and Options Report, but general comments and recommendations have been supplied including the following: <i>"The Local Plan should be underpinned by up to date environmental evidence. This should include an assessment of existing and potential components of local ecological networks. This assessment should inform the Sustainability Appraisal, ensure that land of least environment value is chosen for development, and that the mitigation hierarchy is followed and inform opportunities for enhancement as well as development requirements for particular sites."</i>	The SA has incorporated the latest evidence available, identified through conversation with SMBC. This includes consideration of the emerging approach to Nature Recovery Networks within the borough. [add more details when assessments progressed]
Historic England	The following comments received regarding the Issues and options SA Report: <i>"3.2 we would welcome reference to the historic environment within the vision which should then help to set out a positive strategy for the historic environment. Table 3.1 we are supportive of a separate objective for cultural heritage. There is limited detail to comment on at this stage as we are awaiting to see the content of the Local Plan and the policies and allocations that the Council decides to pursue. We welcome an objective to assess cultural heritage when that detail is available. When considering relevant plans and programmes to consider within the SEA/SA process we recommend that the Council consider the documents listed in our representation above, where we have included the links for ease."</i>	The Issues and Options SA in section 4.2 included a recommendation to incorporate stronger reference to the importance of conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage and the historic environment, such as seeking opportunities for heritage-led regeneration. SMBC have since updated the Vision with stronger wording, as presented in the Draft SLP, which has

Consultee	Summary of Consultation Response	Incorporation into the SA
		been re-assessed in Appendix D.
Environment Agency	No response received.	N/A

1.11 Signposting for this report

1.11.1 This Regulation 18 Issues and Preferred Options SA Report sets out an assessment of reasonable alternatives, or 'options', set out in the Issues and Preferred Options document prepared by SMBC. These relate to options for growth and the spatial strategy, policies and development sites.

1.11.2 The appendices of this report provide essential contextual information to the main body of the report. The contents of this SA Report are listed below:

- **Chapter 1** (this chapter) sets out the purpose, context and introduction to the SLP and the accompanying SA process.
- **Chapter 2** sets out the methodology used to present and assess the findings of the SA process.
- **Chapter 3** presents the assessment of the housing growth options.
- **Chapter 4** presents the assessment of the employment growth options.
- **Chapter 5** presents the assessment of the Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople growth options.
- **Chapter 6** presents the assessment of the spatial growth options.
- **Chapter 7** summarises the SA findings in relation to the assessment of proposed SLP policies.
- **Chapter 8** summarises the SA findings in relation to the assessment of reasonable alternative development sites pre-mitigation, considers the likely mitigating impact of the draft SLP policies in regard to identified adverse impacts, and presents selection and rejection information.
- **Chapter 9** sets out the conclusions of this Regulation 18 (II) SA, and outlines the next steps.
- **Appendix A** presents the SA Framework.
- **Appendix B** presents the detailed site assessment methodology, building on the information set out in **Chapter 2**.
- **Appendix C** presents the assessment of the reasonable alternative sites.
- **Appendix D** presents the assessment of the Draft SLP policies.

2 Assessment methodology and scope of appraisal

2.1 Assessment of reasonable alternatives

2.1.1 Each of the reasonable alternatives or options appraised in this report have been assessed for their likely impacts on each SA Objective of the SA Framework. The SA Framework, which is presented in its entirety in **Appendix A**, is comprised of 14 SA Objectives. **Table 2.1** summarises the SA Objectives and their relevance to the SEA themes.

Table 2.1: Summary of SA Objectives

	SA Objectives	Relevance to SEA Regulations – Schedule 2
1	Cultural heritage: Protect, enhance and manage sites, features and areas of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage importance	Cultural heritage
2	Landscape: Protect, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the landscape and townscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place	Landscape and cultural heritage
3	Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity: Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity and geodiversity.	Biodiversity, flora and fauna
4	Climate change mitigation: Minimise Sandwell’s contribution to climate change.	Climatic factors
5	Climate change adaptation: Plan for the anticipated levels of climate change.	Climatic factors, soil, water
6	Natural resources: Protect and conserve natural resources.	Soil, water and material assets
7	Pollution: Reduce air, soil, water and noise pollution	Air, water, soil and human health
8	Waste: Reduce waste generation and disposal and achieve the sustainable management of waste.	Material assets
9	Transport and accessibility: Improve the efficiency of transport networks by increasing the proportion of travel by sustainable modes and by promoting policies which reduce the need to travel.	Climatic factors and material assets
10	Housing: Provide affordable, environmentally sound and good quality housing for all.	Population
11	Equality: Reduce poverty, crime and social deprivation and secure economic inclusion.	Population and human health
12	Health: Safeguard and improve community health, safety and wellbeing.	Population and human health
13	Economy: Develop a dynamic, diverse and knowledge-based economy that excels in innovation with higher value, lower impact activities.	Population and material assets

	SA Objectives	Relevance to SEA Regulations – Schedule 2
14	Education, skills and training: Raise educational attainment and develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness.	Population

- 2.1.2 The SA Framework is comprised of SA Objectives and decision-making criteria. Acting as yardsticks of sustainability performance, the SA Objectives are designed to represent the topics identified in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations²⁰. Including the SEA topics in the SA Objectives helps to ensure that all of the environmental criteria of the SEA Regulations are represented. Consequently, the SA Objectives reflect all subject areas to ensure that the assessment process is transparent, robust and thorough.
- 2.1.3 It is important to note that the order of SA Objectives in the SA Framework does not infer prioritisation. The SA Objectives are at a strategic level and can potentially be open-ended. In order to focus each objective, decision making criteria are presented in the SA Framework to be used during the appraisal of policies and sites.
- 2.1.4 The purpose of this document is to provide an appraisal of reasonable alternatives, also known as 'options', in line with Regulation 12 of the SEA Regulations²¹:
- 2.1.5 *"Where an environmental assessment is required by any provision of Part 2 of these Regulations, the responsible authority shall prepare, or secure the preparation of, an environmental report ... [which] shall identify, describe and evaluate the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan or programme, and reasonable alternatives taking into account the objectives and the geographical scope of the plan or programme".*
- 2.1.6 At this stage of the plan making process, SMBC have identified options for the levels of housing, Gypsy and Traveller and employment growth, broad spatial strategy options, and reasonable alternative sites.
- 2.1.7 This document also provides information in relation to the likely characteristics of effects, as per the SEA Regulations (see **Box 2.1**).

²⁰ Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations identifies the likely significant effects on the environment, including "issues such as (a) biodiversity, (b) population, (c) human health, (d) fauna, (e) flora, (f) soil, (g) water, (h) air, (i) climatic factors, (j) material assets, (k) cultural heritage including architectural and archaeological heritage, (l) landscape and (m) the interrelationship between the issues referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) to (l)."

²¹ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 25/10/22]

Box 2.1: Schedule 1 of the SEA Regulations²²

Criteria for determining the likely significance of effects (Schedule 1 of SEA Regulations)

The characteristics of plans and programmes, having regard, in particular, to:

- the degree to which the plan or programme sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources;
- the degree to which the plan or programme influences other plans and programmes including those in a hierarchy;
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development;
- environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme; and
- the relevance of the plan or programme for the implementation of Community legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection).

Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to:

- the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects;
- the cumulative nature of the effects;
- the transboundary nature of the effects;
- the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents);
- the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected);
- the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:
 - special natural characteristics or cultural heritage;
 - exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values;
 - intensive land-use; and
- the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, Community or international protection status.

2.2 Impact assessment and determination of significance

2.2.1 Significance of effect is a combination of impact sensitivity and magnitude. Impact sensitivity can be expressed in relative terms, based on the principle that the more sensitive the resource, the greater the magnitude of the change, and as compared with the do-nothing comparison, the greater will be the significance of effect.

2.3 Sensitivity

2.3.1 Sensitivity has been measured through consideration as to how the receiving environment will be impacted by a plan proposal. This includes assessment of the value and vulnerability of the receiving environment, whether or not environmental quality standards will be exceeded, and for example, if impacts will affect designated areas or landscapes.

2.3.2 A guide to the range of scales used in determining impact sensitivity is presented in **Table 2.2**. For most receptors, sensitivity increases with geographic scale.

²² The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 (SEA Regulations). Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 25/10/22]

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Table 2.2: Impact sensitivity

Scale	Typical criteria
International/national	Designations that have an international aspect or consideration of transboundary effects beyond national boundaries. This applies to effects and designations/receptors that have a national or international dimension.
Regional	This includes the regional and sub-regional scale, including county-wide level and regional areas.
Local	This is the district and neighbourhood scale.

2.4 Magnitude

2.4.1 Magnitude relates to the degree of change the receptor will experience, including the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact. Impact magnitude has been determined on the basis of the susceptibility of a receptor to the type of change that will arise, as well as the value of the affected receptor (see **Table 2.3**).

Table 2.3: Impact magnitude

Impact magnitude	Typical criteria
High	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Likely total loss of or major alteration to the receptor in question; Provision of a new receptor/feature; or The impact is permanent and frequent.
Medium	Partial loss/alteration/improvement to one or more key features; or The impact is one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequent and short-term; Frequent and reversible; Long-term (and frequent) and reversible; Long-term and occasional; or Permanent and occasional.
Low	Minor loss/alteration/improvement to one or more key features of the receptor; or The impact is one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reversible and short-term; Reversible and occasional; or Short-term and occasional.

2.5 Significant effects

2.5.1 A single value from **Table 2.4** has been allocated to each SA Objective for each reasonable alternative. Justification for the classification of the impact for each SA objective is presented in an accompanying narrative assessment text for all reasonable alternatives that have been assessed through the SA process.

2.5.2 The assessment of impacts and subsequent evaluation of significant effects is in accordance with Schedule 2 (6) of the SEA Regulations, where feasible, which states that the effects should include: "*short, medium and long-term effects, permanent and temporary effects, positive and negative effects, cumulative and synergistic effects*".

Table 2.4: Guide to scoring significant effects

Significance	Definition (not necessarily exhaustive)
Major Negative --	The size, nature and location of a development proposal would be likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permanently degrade, diminish or destroy the integrity of a quality receptor, such as a feature of international, national or regional importance; • Cause a very high-quality receptor to be permanently diminished; • Be unable to be entirely mitigated; • Be discordant with the existing setting; and/or • Contribute to a cumulative significant effect.
Minor Negative -	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The size, nature and location of development proposals would be likely to: • Not quite fit into the existing location or with existing receptor qualities; and/or • Affect undesignated yet recognised local receptors.
Negligible 0	Either no impacts are anticipated, or any impacts are anticipated to be negligible.
Uncertain +/-	It is entirely uncertain whether impacts would be positive or adverse.
Minor Positive +	The size, nature and location of a development proposal would be likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve undesignated yet recognised receptor qualities at the local scale; • Fit into, or with, the existing location and existing receptor qualities; and/or • Enable the restoration of valued characteristic features.
Major Positive ++	The size, nature and location of a development proposal would be likely to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance and redefine the location in a positive manner, making a contribution at a national or international scale; • Restore valued receptors which were degraded through previous uses; and/or • Improve one or more key elements/features/characteristics of a receptor with recognised quality such as a specific international, national or regional designation.

- 2.5.3 When selecting a single value to best represent the sustainability performance, and to understand the significance of effects of an option in terms of the relevant SA Objective, the precautionary principle²³ has been used. This is a worst-case scenario approach. If a positive effect is identified in relation to one criterion within the SA Framework (see the second column of the SA Framework in **Appendix A**) and a negative effect is identified in relation to another criterion within the same SA Objective, the overall impact has been assigned as negative for that objective. It is therefore essential to appreciate that the impacts are indicative summarily and that the accompanying assessment text provides a fuller explanation of the sustainability performance of the option or proposal being considered.
- 2.5.4 For the assessment of reasonable alternative sites, to enable further transparency and to provide the reader with contextual information that is relevant to each SA Objective, the full assessments presented in the SA report appendices have been set out per 'receptor'. The methodology used to assess reasonable alternative sites throughout the SA process, which sets out the receptors considered for each SA Objective and includes topic-specific methodologies and assumptions, is presented in **Appendix B**.
- 2.5.5 The assessment considers, on a strategic basis, the degree to which a location can accommodate change without adverse effects on valued or important receptors (identified in the baseline).
- 2.5.6 The level of effect has been categorised as minor or major. The nature of the significant effect can be either positive or negative depending on the type of development and the design and mitigation measures proposed.
- 2.5.7 Each reasonable alternative or option that has been identified in this report has been assessed for its likely significant impact against each SA Objective in the SA Framework, as per **Table 2.4**. Likely impacts are not intended to be summed.
- 2.5.8 It is important to note that the assessment scores presented in **Table 2.4** are high level indicators. The assessment narrative text should always read alongside the significance scores, and should bear in mind the limitations of assessments of a strategic nature.
- 2.6 **Limitations of predicting effects**
- 2.6.1 SA/SEA is a tool for predicting potential significant effects. Predicting effects relies on an evidence-based approach and incorporates expert judgement. It is often not possible to state with absolute certainty whether effects will occur, as many impacts are influenced by a range of factors such as the design and the success of mitigation measures.

²³ The European Commission describes the precautionary principle as follows: "If a preliminary scientific evaluation shows that there are reasonable grounds for concern that a particular activity might lead to damaging effects on the environment, or on human, animal or plant health, which would be inconsistent with protection normally afforded to these within the European Community, the Precautionary Principle is triggered".

- 2.6.2 The assessments in this report are based on the best available information, including secondary data that has been provided to Lepus by the Council and information that is publicly available. Every attempt has been made to predict effects as accurately as possible.
- 2.6.3 SA operates at a strategic level which uses available secondary data for the relevant SA Objective. All reasonable alternatives and preferred options are assessed in the same way using the same method. Sometimes, in the absence of more detailed information, forecasting the potential impacts of development can require making reasonable assumptions based on the best available data and trends. However, all options must be assessed in the same way and any introduction of site-based detail should be made clear in the SA report as the new data could potentially introduce bias and skew the findings of the assessment process.
- 2.6.4 The assessment of development proposals is limited in terms of available data resources; for example, the appraisal of the SLP is limited in its assessment of carbon emissions, and greater detail of carbon data would help to better quantify effects.

2.7 Methodology for assessment of growth options and policies

- 2.7.1 The appraisal of growth options (housing, employment and Gypsy and Traveller), spatial strategy options and policies aims to assess the likely significant effects of each proposed option / policy, based on the criteria set out in the SEA Regulations (see **Box 2.1**).
- 2.7.2 **Table 2.5** sets out a guide to how likely impacts have been determined in the assessment of options within this report.

Table 2.5: Presenting likely impacts

Likely Impact	Description	Impact Symbol
Major Positive Impact	The proposed option contributes to the achievement of the SA Objective to a significant extent.	++
Minor Positive Impact	The proposed option contributes to the achievement of the SA Objective to some extent.	+
Negligible/ Neutral Impact	The proposed option has no effect or an insignificant effect on the achievement of the SA Objective.	0
Uncertain Impact	The proposed option has an uncertain relationship with the SA Objective or insufficient information is available for an appraisal to be made.	+/-
Minor Negative Impact	The proposed option prevents the achievement of the SA Objective to some extent.	-
Major Negative Impact	The proposed option prevents the achievement of the SA Objective to a significant extent.	--

- 2.7.3 The appraisal commentary provided should be read alongside the identified impact symbols, as it is often difficult to distill the wide-ranging effects of a broad growth option into one overall impact.

3 Assessment of Housing Growth Options [to be updated]

3.1 Preface

- 3.1.1 Paragraph 61 of the NPPF states that the minimum number of homes needed in an area should be informed by a local housing need assessment, conducted using the standard method outlined in PPG²⁴, unless the local authority feel that circumstances warrant an alternative approach.
- 3.1.2 The NPPF also states that “*any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas should also be taken into account in establishing the amount of housing to be planned for*”.
- 3.1.3 As set out in the SLP Spatial Strategy Paper, and according to the government’s standard method calculation, there is a need for approximately 29,773 homes in Sandwell by 2041. There is an existing supply of 11,194 homes, based on the most recent evidence with regard to suitable residential land (this includes identified sites, small windfalls and surplus vacant floorspace in centres), resulting in an unmet need for 18,579 homes.
- 3.1.4 Sandwell faces challenges in meeting the identified housing needs owing to the finite supply of land suitable for housing. Given the scale of this unmet need, the Council will explore the potential of exporting some of Sandwell’s housing need to neighbouring authorities through the Duty to Co-operate to deliver more housing.
- 3.1.5 Five options for the quanta of housing growth have been identified by SMBC (see **Table 3.1**).

Table 3.1: Sandwell Housing Growth Options identified by SMBC

[Note to Council: the dwelling figures assessed are as agreed via email 17/05/23, the figures and assessments will need to be updated to reflect the changes as per the SLP spatial strategy document received 05/10/23]

Housing Growth Option	Dwellings per Annum	Total Dwellings 2023-2041
1. Meet proportion of local housing need based on supply and small windfalls identified in current SHLAA (2021) and seek contributions from adjacent authorities based on current offers and apportioned using travel to work data (DtC)	595	9,531
2. Meet a proportion of housing need across plan period (2023-2041) based on average annual levels of delivery for last 10 years (do nothing)	695	12,523
3. Meet entire housing need identified through Standard Method across plan period (2025-2041) based on 2021 census figures (based on increase in households of 7.2% ²⁵)	1,101	19,818
4. Meet entire housing need identified through Standard Method across plan period (2025-2041) based on 2014 household projections (using 2022 affordability ratio)	1,567	28,206

²⁴ DLUHC and MHCLG (2020) Planning Practice Guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments> [Date accessed: 22/05/23]

²⁵ 2021 Census showed number of households in Sandwell increased by 7.2% since 2011

Housing Growth Option	Dwellings per Annum	Total Dwellings 2023-2041
5. Meet housing need (Standard Method 2014 and 2022 affordability ratio) and contribute 2,000 houses to wider HMA needs	1,692	30,206

3.1.6 **Table 3.2** summarises the likely impacts of each housing growth option in relation to the 14 SA Objectives. The text within **section 3.2** sets out the accompanying assessment narrative which explains how each overall impact was identified.

3.1.7 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to predict effects accurately, the sustainability impacts have been assessed at a high level and are reliant upon the current understanding of the baseline. These assessments have been based on information provided by SMBC, as well as expert judgement.

Table 3.2: Impact matrix of the five housing growth options

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Housing Growth Option	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity, flora, fauna and	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Natural resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport and accessibility	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education, Skills and training
1	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-
2	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-
3	-	-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-
4	--	--	--	--	+/-	-	--	--	-	+	+/-	--	+	--
5	--	--	--	--	+/-	-	--	--	-	++	+/-	--	+	--

3.2 Assessment

SA Objective 1 – Cultural Heritage

3.2.1 Within Sandwell there are two Grade I, eight Grade II* and 195 Grade II Listed Buildings, seven Scheduled Monuments (SM), nine Conservation Areas (CA) and five Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG). There are also a range of historic character areas and areas of historic townscape / landscape value identified within the borough²⁶. Development in close proximity to cultural heritage features has the potential to adversely affect their significance or setting. Whilst the context and specific locations of the proposed dwellings within each of the five options are not known, there is potential for a minor negative impact on cultural heritage to arise owing to the risk of encroachment into the remaining undeveloped areas of the borough leading to alteration of historic character, and potentially affecting the setting of any cultural heritage features particularly in suburban settlements. Option 5 is likely to have the largest impact on cultural heritage as it proposes the highest number of dwellings, followed by Option 4; both of which could lead to a major negative impact on cultural heritage. Conversely, Option 1 proposes the fewest number of dwellings so may have the smallest impact.

SA Objective 2 – Landscape

3.2.2 Although the borough is highly urbanised, it also contains gently undulating hills and other pockets of undeveloped land. Green Belt land is located to the north-east of the borough and is bisected by the M5 motorway. The landscape of the borough's Green Belt is largely described as low or low-moderate sensitivity to development although open landscapes within the borough are important for maintaining separation between settlements²⁷. One area in Sandwell Valley is described as having moderate-high sensitivity. Within the urban areas, Sandwell's history and industrial legacy provides distinctive character and a sense of local identity. Existing green spaces outside of the Green Belt also provide benefits to the local character. Whilst the context and specific locations of the proposed dwellings within each of the five options are not known, it is likely a minor negative impact on the landscape would arise owing to the risk of encroachment into the remaining undeveloped areas of the borough leading to alteration of character, tranquillity and sense of place in suburban settlements. Option 5 is likely to have the largest impact on landscape as it proposes the highest number of dwellings, followed by Option 4; both of which could lead to a major negative impact on the landscape. Conversely, Option 1 proposes the fewest number of dwellings so may have the smallest impact.

²⁶ Oxford Archaeology (2019) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 22/05/23]

²⁷ LUC (2019) Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13883/black-country-lsa-front-end-report-final-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 22/05/2023]

SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Geodiversity

- 3.2.3 There are nine Local Nature Reserves (LNR) within Sandwell, forming key sections of the ecological network within the SLP area in addition to the numerous Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC). There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) or National Nature Reserves (NNR) within the borough, but both are present in neighbouring authorities close to the Sandwell Borough boundary. Areas of geological interest include Rowley Hills, Bumble Hole & Warrens Park LNR and Sandwell Valley Country Park. Over 50% of Sandwell's Green Belt land is described as having very high ecological value²⁸. Some priority habitats and small areas on ancient woodland are also present in the borough.
- 3.2.4 There is potential for all of the proposed options to have an adverse impact on biodiversity and geodiversity at the landscape scale due to the increased pressure and threats associated with increased development, such as habitat fragmentation resulting from new development areas and recreational pressures on wildlife sites, despite any biodiversity net gain provisions at the site level, owing to the large quanta of housing proposed. Options 4 and 5 are expected to have the largest impact as they propose the highest quanta of new houses and as such a major negative impact is identified, whereas under Options 1, 2 and 3 fewer houses are proposed so a minor negative impact is recorded. Option 1 may have the smallest impact overall and so could perform the best for this objective, depending on site-specific characteristics and sensitivities.

SA Objective 4 – Climate Change Mitigation

- 3.2.5 The two largest sources of CO₂ emissions in Sandwell are residential buildings and on-road transport, however, according to Sandwell Trends, in 2021 almost 30% of households within the borough did not own a car²⁹. Investments in public transport, walking and cycling provisions could help to reduce pollution and provide better access across the borough without using privately owned transportation.
- 3.2.6 All housing options propose a large quantum of new dwellings which would have the potential to increase CO₂ and other GHG emissions to some extent through construction and occupation phases. Option 1 proposes the fewest number of new dwellings and as such may have the least impact on emissions, however Options 4 and 5 propose large numbers of new dwellings and as such would have potentially the largest impact on climate change mitigation.
- 3.2.7 The potential of new development under any growth option to draw on renewable or low-carbon energy supplies is not known at this stage of assessment.

²⁸ EcoRecord (2019) An Ecological evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13896/an-ecological-evaluation-of-the-black-country-green-belt-final-report-2019-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 22/05/23]

²⁹ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2023) Sandwell Trends: Housing and Car Ownership. Available at: <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/household-characteristics/> [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

SA Objective 5 – Climate Change adaptation

- 3.2.8 Given its mostly urban setting, Sandwell is likely to suffer from the 'urban heat island' effect which may be made worse by new development in the borough. Green infrastructure (GI) and open spaces can help urban areas adapt to climate change, by providing protection from extreme weather events and helping to reduce the 'urban heat island' effect, these functions could be compromised by greater urban density and loss of GI. As the location of the proposed dwellings are not known it is difficult to determine exactly what effect new developments may have in terms of climate change adaptation, but it is something which should be considered and mitigated for in any potential developments.
- 3.2.9 Sandwell is affected by flooding along the River Tame the River Stour and by surface water flooding with all six wards having been affected by previous flooding events. The introduction of new dwellings and impermeable surfaces can exacerbate surface water flooding, but implementation of adaptive technologies can help to mitigate this. Option 1 has the smallest number of proposed dwellings and, depending on the location of the developments, may have less of an impact on potential flooding than Option 5 which has the largest number of proposed dwellings.
- 3.2.10 Overall, as the location and site context of the proposed new dwellings is not known at this time the potential impacts of the housing growth options on climate change adaptation are uncertain.

SA Objective 6 – Natural Resources

- 3.2.11 The majority of land within Sandwell is classified as ALC 'urban', although there are small pockets of 'non-agricultural' land and a small amount of Grade 3 and 4 land in the north east of the borough. Development within the urban area would not result in the loss of best and most versatile (BMV) agricultural land and may provide opportunities for re-use of previously developed land, helping to promote an efficient use of natural resources. There are no mineral safeguarding areas (MSA) present in Sandwell.
- 3.2.12 As the location of the proposed new homes are not currently known the exact impact the different options will have on natural resources within the borough cannot be fully determined, but whilst the options may have a negligible effect on MSAs it is likely the proposed developments would lead to encroachment into the remaining undeveloped areas of the borough to some extent which may have environmental value, even if not BMV land. As such, all options could lead to potential minor negative effects on natural resources.

SA Objective 7 – Pollution

- 3.2.13 Sandwell has a borough-wide AQMA, and for several years nitrogen dioxide concentrations have exceeded legal limits in seven monitoring stations³⁰. Where people live in more urban settings their potential exposure to air pollution is greater than in rural areas where there would likely be less traffic. As such increasing the number of new dwellings would likely have a negative impact on air quality as increased populations would also likely increase the number of cars on the road and would likely expose new residents to poor air quality. As Option 1 has the fewest number of proposed dwellings it may have the smallest impact in comparison to Option 5 with the most dwellings which would likely have the largest impact.
- 3.2.14 Soil and water pollution impacts will depend on the nature, scale and location of developments which are unknown. Overall, all housing options would be expected to increase pollution to some extent both through construction and occupation so a negative impact would be expected against this SA Objective. Options 1, 2 and 3 have been identified as having a minor negative impact on pollution overall, whereas Options 4 and 5 are more likely to have a major negative impact owing to the larger scale of proposed growth.

SA Objective 8 – Waste

- 3.2.15 It is expected that all options for housing growth would increase household waste production. In 2018 the per person rate for waste in Sandwell was 593kg, higher than the national average, 394kg per person³¹. Although national trends suggest that the volume of household waste produced is decreasing, the Black Country Waste Study³² indicates that additional capacity for certain types of waste management will be required, taking into account the large amount of projected growth in the area.
- 3.2.16 It can be expected that the higher the proposed housing number the higher the number of new residents, as such it would be likely that Options 4 and 5, with the highest numbers of proposed new dwellings, would increase the waste production the most with a major negative impact on this objective. Option 1 would be the best performing option as it has the fewest proposed new dwellings, although a minor negative impact would still be likely overall.

³⁰ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Climate change strategy 2020-2041. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/31151/climate_change_strategy [Date accessed: 23/05/23]

³¹ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Climate change strategy 2020-2041. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/31151/climate_change_strategy [Date accessed: 23/05/23]

³² Wood (2020) Black Country Waste Study – Review of the Evidence Base for Waste to support Preparation of the Black Country Plan Revised Final Report. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/15811/black-country-waste-study-final-report_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

SA Objective 9 – Transport and Accessibility

3.2.17 Sandwell is well served by a dense network of public transport providing links regionally and nationally. Accessible public transport links are key to sustainable development and are an important consideration when deciding the location of potential new dwellings. It is likely that new dwellings in existing urban areas would allow residents to utilise existing public transport links including buses, rail and metro, rather than relying on private cars, however it is probable there would be some increase in traffic flows and it is possible that this increase in vehicles would lead to an increase in congestion. It is expected that Options 4 and 5 would create a higher burden on the existing public transport infrastructure and road network compared to Options 1, 2 and 3, although there may be more opportunities within Options 4 and 5 to drive investment in or provide new public transport links with benefits to the local area. On balance, a minor negative impact is identified across all options on this SA Objective. Option 1 would be likely to put the least additional burden on the existing transport networks and would have the smallest number of potential extra vehicles so potentially having a smaller impact on transport and accessibility overall.

SA Objective 10 – Housing

3.2.18 Within Sandwell there is an identified need for 29,773 homes by 2041; Option 5 meets this requirement and consequently would be likely to have a major positive impact on housing provision. Options 1, 2, 3 and 4 would not deliver enough homes to meet the identified need, and as such, a minor positive impact on housing provision is identified.

3.2.19 At this scale of assessment, it is uncertain what the likely contribution of each housing growth option to meeting the different needs of the population on housing mix, provision of extra care housing, accessible housing and affordable homes would be.

SA Objective 11 – Equality

3.2.20 Deprivation is high across the SLP area, with 36 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Sandwell ranked among the 10% most deprived in England³³. Residential growth in urban areas could potentially help facilitate social inclusion by providing new residents with good access to key services and employment opportunities, however, increasing housing density in deprived areas could also lead to exacerbation of existing inequalities. As the location, site context and proximity to receptors of the proposed housing provision is unknown, there is some uncertainty regarding the potential impacts of the five housing growth options on equality.

3.2.21 However, as Options 1, 2, 3 and 4 would not deliver enough homes to meet the identified need, these four options could also put pressure on housing and rental costs, which could lead to issues with poorer quality accommodation and overcrowding, with adverse implications for health and wellbeing of the population. Overall, a minor negative impact could occur for Options 1, 2 and 3, whereas there is greater uncertainty in terms of equality for Options 4 and 5.

³³ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

SA Objective 12 – Health

- 3.2.22 Residents in Sandwell have relatively good access to health facilities with 73 healthcare centres³⁴ and Sandwell General Hospital located in the borough. The majority of the urban area has good pedestrian and public transport access to healthcare, although new residential growth would likely place pressure on the capacity of these services. Parks and green spaces are important for human health; 24% of Sandwell is made up of such green space and some of which have been awarded the Green Flag³⁵. The green space provision per person is expected to decrease as development occurs within the borough, in addition to increased pressure for existing open spaces to be used for development.
- 3.2.23 Whilst the locations of the proposed new dwellings are not known, it is likely that Option 1 would have the least impact on health services and green spaces as it proposes the fewest number of homes, although still potentially leading to a minor negative impact overall alongside Options 2 and 3. Option 5 could potentially have the largest impact, followed by Option 4, which may cause significant over-capacity issues as it proposes the most homes leading to a need to invest in increased infrastructure to support this level of growth; consequently both Options 4 and 5 could lead to a major negative impact on health.

SA Objective 13 – Economy

- 3.2.24 The options considered in this assessment focus on housing growth only. It is assumed that future housing development would not result in the loss of existing employment floorspace.
- 3.2.25 The highest density of employment locations can be found in the centre and north of the borough and along key transport routes. Housing growth within these areas, and the urban area in general, would be expected to provide residents with good sustainable access to employment opportunities and transport links. The locations of the proposed new homes are not known, however, transport modelling data³⁶ indicates that almost the entire borough lies within a 30-minute travel time via walking or public transport from employment locations. With new homes there may also be a benefit to the local economy in terms of increasing footfall and spending in the retail/commercial centres. All options could potentially lead to a minor positive impact for this objective.

³⁴ According to Black Country Accessibility Modelling (2021) data

³⁵ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Green Space Strategy 2010 – 2020. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/24989/april_2017_-_parks_and_green_spaces_strategy_document.pdf [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

³⁶ Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council, produced as part of the evidence base for the former BCP

SA Objective 14 – Education, Skills and Training

3.2.26 Within Sandwell there are 98 primary schools and 20 secondary schools³⁷. It is assumed that new residents in the SLP area will require access to primary and secondary education to help facilitate good levels of education, skills and qualifications of residents. The location of proposed new homes is not known so their impact on existing education facilities is uncertain, however, a smaller number of proposed homes may put less pressure on existing provisions, as such making Option 1 the best option. The larger scale of development proposed in Options 4 and 5 may require significant extra provision to be included alongside the residential growth to take account for the increased population. Consequently, Options 1, 2 and 3 record a minor negative impact and Options 4 and 5 a major negative impact on education, skills and training.

3.3 Conclusion

3.3.1 It is generally expected that the options proposing larger numbers of houses would be more likely to lead to adverse effects when analysed against environmental objectives, but that they would perform better against economic objectives. The converse is also expected that options with few houses would perform better against the environmental objectives compared to the economic objectives, as such it can be difficult to identify an overall best performing option.

3.3.2 For the impact of each option to be fully understood details of the size, location and nature of the developments are required, as these options focus on quanta alone and the assessments are necessarily high level with restricted diagnostic conclusions.

3.3.3 Across all of the SA Objectives it appears that generally Option 1 would have the smallest impact, and so could be described as best performing, but this option falls short of meeting the housing need and so would also be likely to have the lowest scope for delivering varied and high-quality homes to meet the needs of the population.

3.4 Selection and Rejection

3.4.1 XXX

³⁷ According to Black Country Accessibility Modelling (2021) data

4 Assessment of Employment Growth Options

4.1 Preface

4.1.1 Paragraph 81 of the NPPF states that “*significant weight should be placed on the need to support economic growth and productivity, taking into account both local business needs and wider opportunities for development*”, whilst PPG indicates that “*strategic policy-making authorities will need to prepare a robust evidence base to understand existing business needs, which will need to be kept under review to reflect local circumstances and market conditions*”³⁸.

4.1.2 Sandwell is located within the Black Country Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) which also covers the local authorities of Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton. **The Black Country Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) and Black Country Employment Area Review (BEAR) are the key pieces of evidence relating to employment land need and supply. As the employment land assessment continues to be carried out jointly across the Black Country, the apportionment of land demand / supply is still the subject of discussion between the four councils, three of whom are not at the same stage of plan preparation as Sandwell. As a result, it is currently difficult to identify a clear set of figures for Sandwell’s need and supply.**

4.1.3 Three options for the quanta of employment growth have been identified by SMBC (see **Table 4.1**).

Table 4.1: Sandwell Employment Growth Options identified by SMBC

Employment Growth Option	Employment Land (ha)
A. Rely on existing vacant employment land supply (do nothing)	29
B. Provide for highest estimate of need (EDNA)	238
C. Provide for lowest estimate of need (EDNA)	132

4.1.4 **Table 4.2** summarises the likely impacts of each employment growth option in relation to the 14 SA Objectives. The text within **section 4.2** sets out the accompanying assessment narrative which explains how each overall impact was identified.

4.1.5 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to predict effects accurately, the sustainability impacts have been assessed at a high level and are reliant upon the current understanding of the baseline. These assessments have been based on information provided by SMBC, as well as expert judgement.

³⁸ DLUHC and MHCLG (2020) Planning Practice Guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-and-economic-development-needs-assessments> [Date accessed: 23/05/23]

Table 4.2: Impact matrix of the three employment growth options

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Employment Growth Option	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity, flora, fauna and	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Natural resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport and accessibility	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education, Skills and training
A	+/-	-	-	-	-	+	-	+/-	+/-	0	-	0	+	+
B	+/-	--	--	--	-	-	-	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	-	++	+
C	+/-	--	--	--	-	-	-	+/-	+/-	0	+/-	-	++	+

4.2 Assessment

SA Objective 1 – Cultural Heritage

4.2.1 Within Sandwell there are two Grade I, eight Grade II* and 195 Grade II Listed Buildings, seven SMS, nine CAs and five RPGs. There are also a range of historic character areas and areas of historic townscape / landscape value identified within the borough³⁹. Development in close proximity to cultural heritage features has the potential to adversely affect their significance or setting. It is likely that Option A which utilises existing vacant employment land would focus any development in areas already characterised by employment uses and as such any new development may be in keeping with the existing built form and may also help to promote regeneration with benefits to areas with historic interest or architecture. However, as the site context and proximity to receptors is unknown at this time the potential impacts of the employment growth options on cultural heritage features are uncertain.

SA Objective 2 – Landscape

4.2.2 Although the borough is highly urbanised, it also contains undeveloped areas including Green Belt to the north-east of the borough. The landscape of the borough’s Green Belt is largely described as low or low-moderate sensitivity to development although open landscapes within the borough are important for maintaining separation between settlements⁴⁰. One area in Sandwell Valley is described as having moderate-high sensitivity. Within the urban areas, Sandwell’s history and industrial legacy provides distinctive character and a sense of local identity. Existing green spaces outside of the Green Belt also provide benefits to the local character.

³⁹ Oxford Archaeology (2019) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

⁴⁰ LUC (2019) Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13883/black-country-lsa-front-end-report-final-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 22/05/2023]

- 4.2.3 Whilst the specific location and context of the proposed employment sites for Options B and C are unknown, it is likely that development outside of the existing development boundaries would be required to some extent, leading to a potential negative impact on the landscape. Option A utilises existing vacant employment land so could help to focus new growth within areas already characterised by employment land uses, meaning that new development would likely be in keeping with the existing build form to a greater extent than Options B and C, although a minor negative impact on landscape cannot be ruled out without knowing further locational/contextual information. Options B and C require substantially more land and it is likely that some of this land would be outside the existing urban areas; therefore, these two options are likely to have a major negative impact on landscape.

SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Geodiversity

- 4.2.4 Within Sandwell there are nine LNRs, forming key sections of the ecological network within the SLP area in addition to the numerous SINCs and SLINCs. There are no SSSIs or NNRs within the borough, but both are present in neighbouring authorities close to the Sandwell Borough boundary. Areas of geological interest include Rowley Hills, Bumble Hole & Warrens Park LNR and Sandwell Valley Country Park. Over 50% of Sandwell's Green Belt land is described as having very high ecological value⁴¹. Some priority habitats and small areas on ancient woodland are also present in the borough.
- 4.2.5 Urban areas can support distinctive habitats, species, ecological links and GI, and there may be some loss of previously undeveloped land or brownfield land with ecological value within the urban area with these three options. However, Option A relies on utilising existing vacant employment land and as such may have less of an impact on biodiversity than Options B and C which would likely require previously undeveloped land to be utilised, to some extent. As Option A requires the smallest amount of land it is likely to have the smallest impact and so produce a minor negative impact on biodiversity; Options B and C require substantially more land so have potential to cause a greater impact on biodiversity with a major negative impact identified.
- 4.2.6 It should be noted that biodiversity net gain provisions and other policy requirements may help to reduce or offset these adverse effects to some extent and result in positive longer term effects, however at the landscape scale this level of growth could cumulatively lead to a reduction in the available space for wildlife and loss of corridors or connections between habitats.

⁴¹ EcoRecord (2019) An Ecological evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13896/an-ecological-evaluation-of-the-black-country-green-belt-final-report-2019-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 22//02/23]

SA Objective 4 – Climate Change Mitigation

- 4.2.7 It is likely that all three options would have the potential to increase carbon emissions during the construction and occupation of the employment sites. As the location of employment growth under each option is not known, the potential for employees to utilise existing public transport routes to commute to work is uncertain. Since Option A utilises existing vacant employment land which is likely to be within the urban area, this option could provide better access to existing public transport links. However, it would also be expected that there would be an increase in the use of private cars to commute, potentially increasing congestion and pollution in the area given that Census data indicates 53% of Sandwell’s residents travel to work by driving a car or van⁴². Furthermore, depending on the type of employment land, new development may lead to increased journeys by Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) with higher emissions. As Option A requires the smallest amount of employment growth and so potentially a smaller impact on climate change, a minor negative impact is identified. Option B requires the largest amount of growth, followed by Option C, both of which could potentially have a major negative impact on climate change.

SA Objective 5 – Climate Change adaptation

- 4.2.8 As the location of the employment sites for each option is not known the impacts they may have on flooding is uncertain, although Option A utilises existing vacant employment land which is likely to be situated within the existing urban area. However, with all the options it is likely there would be an increase in the urban density or area which would then increase the extent of impermeable surfaces and so potentially increase the risk of surface water flooding. It is possible to incorporate into development design GI or adaptive technologies to mitigate for this increased impermeable surfacing but at this stage these details are not known as such a minor negative impact has been recorded for the three options.

SA Objective 6 – Natural Resources

- 4.2.9 The majority of land within Sandwell is classified as ALC ‘urban’, although there are small pockets of ‘non-agricultural’ land and a small amount of Grade 3 and 4 land in the north east of the borough. BMV land would not be lost if development was focused within the urban area. There are no MSAs present in Sandwell. The location and site context of the employment sites are not known so the impacts the three options will have on natural resources are uncertain, but given the likelihood that Options B and C would require the use of previously undeveloped land a minor negative impact on natural resources is identified. Option A proposes to utilise existing vacant employment land, potentially an effective use of this vacant land, and possibly including the use of remediated contaminated land, as such a minor positive impact could be achieved against this SA Objective.

⁴² ONS (2022) Travel to work, England and Wales: Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/traveltoworkenglandandwales/census2021> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

SA Objective 7 – Pollution

- 4.2.10 Sandwell has a borough-wide AQMA, and for several years nitrogen dioxide concentrations have exceeded legal limits in seven monitoring stations across the borough⁴³. Commuting to employment sites may increase air pollution, however as the location of the sites is not known, the extent to which public transport or active travel routes could be promoted and utilised by commuters instead of private cars is uncertain. Soil and water pollution impacts will depend on the nature, scale and location of developments which are unknown at this time although Options B and C would likely result in a greater extent of previously undeveloped land being used compared to Option A. Overall, there is potential for increased pollution through the construction and occupation of development under all options to some extent, and so a minor negative impact would be expected. It is likely Option A would have the smallest impact as it proposes the smallest amount of land and would utilise existing vacant employment land. Option B would likely have the largest impact as it proposes the largest amount of land and may create the largest number of new journeys to the sites.

SA Objective 8 – Waste

- 4.2.11 It is expected that employment growth would also equate to increased waste production both in quantity and range of waste types produced. As the specific site locations and the proposed nature of the developments are unknown it is uncertain what the exact impacts on waste production would be, and whether the developments would be situated in close proximity to existing waste management infrastructure. Option A proposes the smallest amount of floorspace so could produce the smallest increase in waste compared to the other options. Option B has the largest floorspace requirement and as such could produce the most additional waste. However, without knowledge of the employment uses to be carried out at new development sites, the overall impact on waste is uncertain.

SA Objective 9 – Transport and Accessibility

- 4.2.12 Sandwell is well served by a dense network of public transport infrastructure, providing links regionally and nationally. Transport is an enabler of economic activity, and employment sites within or close to existing urban settings would potentially have better access to a range of transport options, and promotion of public transport or active travel may be more successful. Conversely, additional employment land may lead to more private cars being used for commuting potentially increasing congestion and pollution in the area. As the locations of the employment sites within the growth options and any potential associated infrastructure improvements that would be provided alongside development are not known, their exact impact on public transport capacity and congestion are uncertain. Nonetheless, it could be expected that Option A would produce fewer new journeys owing to its smaller scale of proposed growth, potentially leading to less congestion and transport issues than Options B and C.

⁴³ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Climate change strategy 2020-2041. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/31151/climate_change_strategy [Date accessed: 23/05/23]

SA Objective 10 – Housing

- 4.2.13 This assessment considers employment growth options. It is expected that housing provision would not be affected either by the loss of existing housing or compromised housing delivery from these employment growth options. Consequently, a negligible impact on housing would be expected from all three employment options.

SA Objective 11 – Equality

- 4.2.14 Deprivation is high across the SLP area, with 36 LSOAs in Sandwell ranked among the 10% most deprived in England⁴⁴. Employment growth in urban areas could potentially help facilitate social inclusion increasing accessibility to key services and employment opportunities. However, increasing the density of development in deprived areas could also lead to exacerbation of existing inequalities, and could potentially put increased pressure on existing open spaces.
- 4.2.15 As the specific site context and proximity to receptors of the proposed employment land is unknown at this stage, there is some uncertainty regarding the potential impacts of all employment growth options on equality.
- 4.2.16 Although Option A would direct growth to vacant employment land, potentially helping to promote redevelopment, this option would not meet the identified employment need in the borough and would be more likely to lead to a minor negative impact overall for this SA Objective. Options B and C would meet the identified need, depending on the estimate used, but there is more uncertainty regarding the exact impacts of these options as the location of the employment sites is unknown.

SA Objective 12 – Health

- 4.2.17 The location of employment development under each growth option is not known but it is not expected to affect the provision of healthcare facilities.
- 4.2.18 Parks and green spaces are important for human health, 24% of Sandwell is made up of green space⁴⁵. The three employment options could potentially place more pressure on these green spaces either through increased use or pressure to utilise green spaces for employment development. It would be expected that Option A would have a negligible effect on green spaces, since this option would focus growth on existing vacant employment land and would be unlikely to significantly affect green spaces. Options B and C may have a minor negative impact as although the specific locations of the developments are unknown, they have potential to adversely affect green spaces and require the use of undeveloped land.

⁴⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

⁴⁵ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Green Space Strategy 2010 – 2020. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/24989/april_2017_-_parks_and_green_spaces_strategy_document.pdf [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

SA Objective 13 – Economy

- 4.2.19 Sandwell lies within the Black Country FEMA. In Sandwell, the highest density of existing employment locations can be found in the centre and north of the borough and along key transport routes. Employment development near existing employment locations may benefit from existing infrastructure and transport links and could provide additional benefits to the area, driving economic growth. It is assumed that employment growth would provide more job options and opportunities providing benefits to the local population. Option A provides the lowest quanta of new employment land and would not meet the employment land need identified in the EDNA; as such, a minor positive impact is recorded. Options B and C would both meet the identified needs, depending on the estimate used, with potential to result in a major positive impact on the economy. Option B would provide for the highest estimate of employment land need, likely delivering a larger number and range of jobs so would be the best performing option for this SA Objective.

SA Objective 14 – Education, Skills and Training

- 4.2.20 It is expected that employment development would not impact the provision of or access to schools. There is potential for the employment development to provide opportunities to develop skills, provide training, and potentially jobs or apprenticeships to school leavers. Consequently, all three options would be likely to have a minor positive impact on education, skills and training.

4.3 Conclusion

- 4.3.1 There is uncertainty regarding the exact impacts the employment growth options would have owing to the unknown scale and nature of the developments, and the options can act differently against each of the SA Objectives meaning identifying a clear best performing option is difficult. Option B performs best against economic objectives but performs less well against environmental objectives as it requires the most land, conversely Option A performs best against environmental objectives owing to its focus on existing vacant employment land but less well against economic objectives and it does not fulfil Sandwell's identified employment need. As such, Option C appears to perform best against all the objectives collectively as it provides enough land to meet the lower estimate of need, performs well against the economic objectives and although having negative impacts against the environmental objectives would likely have less of an impact than Option B. Some of the impacts may be able to be mitigated through the design of the developments.

4.4 Selection and Rejection

- 4.4.1 XXX

5 Assessment of Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Growth Options

5.1 Preface

- 5.1.1 In accordance with the national planning policy for traveller sites⁴⁶, Gypsies and Travellers (G&T) are defined as *"Persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such"*.
- 5.1.2 Travelling Showpeople (TS) are defined as *"Members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above"*.
- 5.1.3 The Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) assessed accommodation needs for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople across Sandwell and the wider Black Country. The GTAA (2022) identified a need for 14 pitches and 32 plots in Sandwell.
- 5.1.4 Three options for Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople growth have been identified by SMBC (see **Table 5.1**).

Table 5.1: Sandwell Gypsy and Traveller growth options identified by SMBC

Gypsy and Traveller Growth Option	Outcome G&T (pitches)	Outcome TS (plots)
A. Meet a proportion of housing need across part of the plan period (2025-2030) and schedule an early review of the SLP to readdress need across later stages	8	24
B. Meet proportion of local housing need based on supply and small windfalls identified in current SHLAA (2021) and seek contributions from adjacent authorities based on current offers and apportioned using travel to work data (DtC)	10 (SHLAA)	0
C. Meet entire need	14	32

- 5.1.5 **Table 5.2** summarises the likely impacts of each Gypsy and Traveller growth option in relation to the 14 SA Objectives. The text within **section 5.2** sets out the accompanying assessment narrative which explains how each overall impact was identified.

⁴⁶ MHCLG (2015) Planning policy for traveller sites. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites> [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

5.1.6 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to predict effects accurately, the sustainability impacts have been assessed at a high level and are reliant upon the current understanding of the baseline. These assessments have been based on information provided by SMBC, as well as expert judgement.

Table 5.2: Impact matrix of the three Gypsy and Traveller growth options

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Gypsy and Traveller Growth Option	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity, flora, fauna and	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Natural resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport and accessibility	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education, Skills and training
A	+/-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	+	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
B	+/-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
C	+/-	-	-	+/-	-	-	-	-	-	++	+/-	+/-	+	+/-

5.2 Assessment

SA Objective 1 – Cultural Heritage

5.2.1 Within Sandwell there are two Grade I, eight Grade II* and 195 Grade II Listed Buildings, seven SMs, nine CAs and five RPGs. There are also a range of historic character areas and areas of historic townscape / landscape value identified within the borough⁴⁷. Development in close proximity to cultural heritage features has the potential to adversely affect their setting, although given the small overall quanta of growth proposed under the options any adverse effects are likely to be small-scale and localised. However, as the location, site context and proximity to receptors is unknown, the potential impacts of the G&T/TS growth options on cultural heritage features are uncertain.

⁴⁷ Oxford Archaeology (2019) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf
 [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

SA Objective 2 – Landscape

- 5.2.2 Although the borough is highly urbanised, it also contains undeveloped areas including Green Belt to the north-east of the borough. The landscape of the borough's Green Belt is largely described as low or low-moderate sensitivity to development although open landscapes within the borough are important for maintaining separation between settlements⁴⁸. One area in Sandwell Valley is described as having moderate-high sensitivity. Within the urban areas, Sandwell's history and industrial legacy provides distinctive character and a sense of local identity. Existing green spaces outside of the Green Belt also provide benefits to the local character.
- 5.2.3 The location and context of the proposed G&T/TS development is unknown, but it is likely that some development outside of the existing development boundaries would be necessary leading to a potential negative impact on the landscape. Adverse effects on the landscape arising from the introduction of G&T/TS development would likely be limited in scale, resulting in a change to the local character owing to the introduction of hardstanding and potentially some buildings. It is probable that Option B would have the least impact on the landscape as it proposes the fewest number of pitches/plots at this stage and so would likely be the best performing option, whereas Option C proposes the greatest number of pitches/plots so would likely have the largest impact on the landscape.

SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Geodiversity

- 5.2.4 Within Sandwell there are nine LNRs, forming key sections of the ecological network within the SLP area in addition to the numerous SINCs and SLINCs. There are no SSSIs or NNRs within the borough, but both are present in neighbouring authorities close to the Sandwell Borough boundary. Areas of geological interest include Rowley Hills, Bumble Hole & Warrens Park LNR and Sandwell Valley Country Park. Over 50% of Sandwell's Green Belt land is described as having very high ecological value⁴⁹. Some priority habitats and small areas on ancient woodland are also present in the borough.
- 5.2.5 The locations and site-specific characteristics of the development under the different options are not known. There is potential for a minor negative impact on biodiversity as it is likely that previously undeveloped land may need to be utilised, and development could be situated in proximity to biodiversity and geodiversity designations. There is potential for biodiversity enhancements and net gains to be delivered at the site level, although adverse implications related to the fragmentation of wider ecological networks could still occur. As a result, the three G&T/TS options are identified as having a potential minor negative impact on biodiversity, with Option B likely having the smallest impact and Option C the largest.

⁴⁸ LUC (2019) Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Available at:
https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13883/black-country-lsa-front-end-report-final-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 22/05/2023]

⁴⁹ EcoRecord (2019) An Ecological evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt. Available at:
<https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13896/an-ecological-evaluation-of-the-black-country-green-belt-final-report-2019-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 22/02/23]

SA Objective 4 – Climate Change Mitigation

- 5.2.6 The two largest sources of emissions in Sandwell are residential buildings and on-road transport, however it is not clear how G&T pitches and TS plots relate to these domestic emissions when compared to 'brick and mortar' dwellings. Sandwell supports a good public transport network which may help to facilitate use of sustainable travel options rather than reliance on private cars. As the location and site details are not currently known it is unclear exactly what impact the pitches/plots would have on climate change and whether any mitigation could be incorporated into the design to reduce carbon emissions; as such, the effects of the options on climate change are uncertain.

SA Objective 5 – Climate Change adaptation

- 5.2.7 As the location of the proposed pitches/plots are not known, the effect they will have on flooding is uncertain. An increase in impermeable ground can lead to increased surface water flooding but this can be mitigated by use of adaptive technologies and incorporation of SUDS, however at this stage these details are not known. Furthermore, careful consideration should be given in terms of the location of proposed G&T/TS development with respect to existing sources of flooding including Flood Zones 2 and 3, given the particular vulnerability of caravans. Without knowledge of the location of development, a minor negative impact is identified for all three options. Option B proposes the fewest number of pitches/plots and as such may have the smallest impact, Option C would likely have the largest impact as it has the most pitches/plots.

SA Objective 6 – Natural Resources

- 5.2.8 The majority of land within Sandwell is classified as ALC 'urban', although there are small pockets of 'non-agricultural' land and a small amount of Grade 3 and 4 land in the north east of the borough. BMV agricultural land would not be lost if development was within the urban area. There are no MSAs present in Sandwell. The specific location and site context of the Gypsy and Traveller pitches/plots are not known, so the exact impacts the three options will have on natural resources is uncertain. However, given the potential for pitches/plots to require the use of undeveloped land, a minor negative effect on natural resources has been recorded for the three options.

SA Objective 7 – Pollution

- 5.2.9 Sandwell has a borough-wide AQMA, and for several years nitrogen dioxide concentrations have exceeded legal limits in seven monitoring stations across the borough⁵⁰. New development within the AQMA may lead to increased pollution levels from increased travel and would potentially expose residents to poor air quality. Soil and water pollution would depend on the nature, scale and location of the developments but there is potential for increased pollution through construction and occupation of the pitches/plots, albeit to a lesser extent for G&T/TS development than housing or employment development. It is likely that Option B would have the smallest impact on pollution as it proposes the fewest number of pitches/plots so potential pollution during construction and occupation may be less than Options A and C. Option C has the potential to produce the greatest impact in terms of pollution as it proposes the largest number of pitches/plots. Overall, a minor negative impact has been recorded for the three options with regard to pollution.

SA Objective 8 – Waste

- 5.2.10 Whilst it is difficult to estimate exactly how much waste a G&T pitch or TS plot creates it is expected that an increase in the number of pitches/plots would create an increase in the amount of waste produced. As such it is likely that Option B would produce the smallest increase in waste as it has the smallest number of pitches/plots, conversely Option C with the highest number of pitches/plots would likely create the most waste. Options A, B and C have been identified as having a minor negative impact on waste as all options are likely to increase the amount of waste produced, to some extent.

SA Objective 9 – Transport and Accessibility

- 5.2.11 The locations of the proposed pitches/plots are currently not known but it is likely that they would be able to access the existing good public transport network in Sandwell. This public transport network would enable residents to access facilities and amenities within Sandwell in a sustainable manner. However, it is also likely that the introduction of new pitches/plots would increase the number of vehicles on the local road network. Option B proposes the smallest number of pitches/plots and so would likely lead to fewer residents and consequently the least added pressure to the existing public transport networks and the smallest impact on congestion, whereas Option C with the highest number of pitches/plots would likely have the largest impact on public transport infrastructure and congestion. As there is potential for all the options to increase the number of vehicles on the road network and place an additional burden on the public transport network a minor negative impact has been recorded, although these impacts will be dependent on the specific location and capacity of the local road networks.

⁵⁰ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Climate change strategy 2020-2041. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/31151/climate_change_strategy [Date accessed: 23/05/23]

SA Objective 10 – Housing

- 5.2.12 The level of growth proposed under Option A would only meet a proportion of the identified Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson accommodation need, so would have a minor positive impact on provision of housing for the community. Option B could potentially have a minor negative impact as it only meets part of the Gypsy and Traveller pitch need it does not provide any Travelling Showperson plots. Option C fulfils all identified needs of the community providing all the required pitches and plots as such would have a major positive impact on this SA Objective.

SA Objective 11 – Equality

- 5.2.13 The growth options seek to contribute towards the identified accommodation requirements for G&T/TS which would be likely to have a positive effect on meeting the accommodation needs of this ethnic group. Option C seeks to meet all identified needs and so may lead to the most benefit in this regard.
- 5.2.14 Deprivation is high across the SLP area, with 36 LSOAs in Sandwell ranked among the 10% most deprived in England⁵¹. Growth in urban areas could potentially increase social inclusion; however, it could also exacerbate existing inequalities and put increased pressure on existing services. Overall, the location of the pitches/plots are not currently known so their impact on equality is uncertain.

SA Objective 12 – Health

- 5.2.15 Residents in Sandwell generally have good access to health facilities and much of the urban area has good pedestrian and public transport access to healthcare. The location of the proposed G&T/TS development is unknown, but it is likely that the pitches/plots would have good access to healthcare facilities and be able to utilise the public transport network to access them.
- 5.2.16 Green space makes up 24% of the land use in Sandwell⁵²; as such, it is likely that any G&T/TS pitches/plots would be able to access green spaces which is important for health and wellbeing. However, it is likely that Option C would place the most pressure on existing green spaces for potential conversion to G&T/TS use as it has the greatest number of pitches/plots, Option B would likely place the least amount of pressure as it proposes fewer pitches/plots. However, as the location of the pitches/plots is unknown at this time it is uncertain exactly what impacts the three options would have on this SA Objective.

⁵¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

⁵² Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Green Space Strategy 2010 – 2020. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/24989/april_2017_-_parks_and_green_spaces_strategy_document.pdf [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

SA Objective 13 – Economy

- 5.2.17 In Sandwell, the highest density of employment locations can be found in the centre and north of the borough and along key transport routes. It is not known where the proposed pitches/plots are to be sited but it is likely that there would be good access to employment opportunities via the public transport network present across the majority of Sandwell. It is likely that all three options could lead to a minor positive impact in terms of access to employment.

SA Objective 14 – Education, Skills and Training

- 5.2.18 The location of the pitches/plots are currently unknown so the proximity to existing schools and education facilities, and as such the level of sustainable accessibility to these services, is uncertain. The Council should seek to ensure that new residents have good access to primary and secondary education for their children, as well as opportunities to develop skills in adulthood.

5.3 Conclusion

- 5.3.1 It can be difficult to determine an overall best performing option as the performance of each option depends on the SA Objective under consideration, however, it is possible to identify the best option for specific SA Objectives. It appears Option B performs the best across the most SA Objectives, this is due to Option B having the least number of proposed pitches/plots and so potentially having the smallest impact on some of the environmentally focused SA Objectives. However, a minor negative effect has been identified for Option B for the housing objective as it would only partially meet the Gypsy and Traveller need and provides no Travelling Showperson plots.

- 5.3.2 Consequently, Option A could be identified as best performing overall as it provides a proportion of both the Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showperson needs but also has potential for less adverse impacts across the other SA Objectives. Although, it should be acknowledged that since Option A proposes to “*schedule an early review of the SLP to readdress need across later stages*”, there is some uncertainty regarding the longer-term effects.

5.4 Selection and Rejection

- 5.4.1 Reflecting on the SA findings (as set out in **section 5.3**) and SMBC’s objectives for the emerging SLP, the Council consider that “*Option B remains the most realistic option however – it delivers the required five-year supply and in the absence of any local demand for additional Travelling Showpeople plots, will have least impact*”.

6 Assessment of Spatial Growth Options

6.1 Preface

6.1.1 The spatial strategy will dictate where new growth would be allocated in Sandwell for the Plan period to 2041.

6.1.2 Given Sandwell’s highly urbanised nature with very little vacant or unused open spaces, and the importance of the existing open and green spaces for environmental and human health, the Council is limited in the number of approaches it can take to accommodate growth.

6.1.3 Four Spatial Growth Options have been identified by SMBC, as set out in **Table 6.1**. These options consider how the overall number of homes and area of employment land (and other types of land use where applicable) could be strategically distributed, thus helping to meet some of the strategic aims of the emerging SLP.

Table 6.1: Sandwell Growth Options identified by SMBC

Option	Description of Spatial Growth Option
A – Balanced Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Focus most new growth within the existing residential and employment areas of Sandwell; – Continue to deliver most new development on previously developed land and sites; – Take advantage of existing and improved infrastructure capacity to maximise development on new sites – Make improvements to/allowances for the environmental, climate change, accessibility and socio-economic capacity of existing residential and employment areas; – Examine the potential for providing housing/employment development on areas of vacant and underused open spaces and undeveloped land within the urban areas; – Protect areas of designated habitat and ecological value; – Protect the historic and archaeological environment and areas with geological and landscape value.
B – Green Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Restrict new development to brownfield and previously developed sites; – Promote the use of zero- and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in all new development; – Only allocate housing in locations with the highest levels of sustainable transport access to residential services (retail provision, schools, healthcare facilities, fresh food, employment etc.); – Only allocate new employment land where sustainable access and good public transport links available; – Redevelop existing housing and employment areas to deliver cleaner, more energy-efficient and more intensive areas of growth; – Maximise climate change adaptation and mitigation through the creation, protection and improvement of parks, woodland and tree planting, open spaces, landscapes and habitats across the borough; – Protect open spaces and areas of habitat and ecological value within and beyond the urban areas; – Create additional public open spaces to serve new housing developments; – Protect the historic and archaeological environment and areas with geological and landscape value.
C – Economic Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Retain, protect and enhance all types of local employment land; – Intensify the use of existing employment areas through redevelopment and redesign of existing areas and infrastructure improvements;

Option	Description of Spatial Growth Option
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the redevelopment of retail and other commercial areas in town centres to provide additional employment sites; Allocate employment sites on derelict/vacant open space within the urban area; Identify and allocate areas with the potential to deliver larger employment sites via site assembly; Locate new housing and services, facilities and infrastructure to serve existing and proposed employment areas; Protect areas of designated habitat and ecological value; Protect the historic environment, including areas with industrial design and archaeological interest, and areas with geological and landscape value.
D – Housing Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus new growth within the existing residential and employment areas of Sandwell; Continue to deliver most new development on previously developed land and sites; Examine the potential for providing housing development on areas of vacant and underused open spaces and undeveloped land within the urban areas; Redevelop areas of existing older housing to provide higher density and energy-efficient new housing; Reallocate areas identified for employment land provision for additional housing development; Allocate new housing on urban sites around transport hubs/nodes and in towns and local centres, including the use of tall buildings in appropriate locations; Increase overall housing densities to 100 dph in centres and 45 dph outside centres and meet capacity gaps in associated residential services e.g. schools, healthcare, leisure/recreation, infrastructure; Protect areas of designated habitat and ecological value; Protect the historic and archaeological environment and areas with geological and landscape value.

6.1.4 Each option has been assessed using the SA Framework and summary findings are presented in **Table 6.2**. Full explanations and reasonings behind each score are set out for each SA Objective in **section 6.2**.

6.1.5 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to predict effects accurately, the sustainability impacts have been assessed at a high level and are reliant upon the current understanding of the baseline. These assessments have been based on information provided by SMBC, as well as expert judgement.

Table 6.2: Impact matrix of the four Spatial Growth Options

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Spatial Growth Option	Cultural heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity, flora, fauna and	Climate change mitigation	Climate change adaptation	Natural resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport and accessibility	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education, Skills and training
A	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+/-
B	-	+	++	++	++	+	+	+/-	++	+	+/-	+	+	+
C	-	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	+	+	+/-	-	++	+/-
D	-	-	+/-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	+/-	-	-	++

6.2 Assessment

SA Objective 1 – Cultural Heritage

- 6.2.1 All spatial growth options A, B, C, and D state they will “*protect the historic and archaeological environment and areas with geological and landscape value*” which could help to conserve the historic landscape character and heritage assets of the borough. The options all aim to focus the majority of new development within the existing urban area, however as most of Sandwell’s listed buildings and heritage assets are also within the urban area, without careful consideration of development layout, scale and design this could lead to alteration of their historic settings.
- 6.2.2 In particular, Option D promotes higher density development which could increase the potential for adverse effects on the historic environment. Although, the intention to “*redevelop areas of existing older housing*” under Option D could potentially improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings and promote their re-use, helping to conserve their historic identity. Options B and C also include reference to redevelopment, which could provide opportunities to enhance the historic character of these areas.
- 6.2.3 Option C includes a focus on economic growth and seeks to ensure development has regard to areas with industrial design and archaeological interest, which could potentially help to strengthen the sense of place and local identity.
- 6.2.4 There is potential for all the options to have an impact on the setting of heritage assets as they all propose development within the urban area to a greater or lesser extent, as such the all the options could have a minor negative impact with Option D having the potential for the largest impact given the higher density development proposed. Option C could be identified as best performing as it proposes to redevelop town centre areas.

SA Objective 2 – Landscape

- 6.2.5 The landscape character of the borough is described as low or low-moderate sensitivity to development with one area of moderate-high sensitivity, open landscapes within the borough are important for maintaining separation between settlements and as such their sensitivity may be increased⁵³. Green Belt land is located to the north-east of the borough, over 50% of which is described as having very high ecological value⁵⁴. All the spatial growth options aim to keep new development within the existing urban area, redeveloping land or sites, utilising vacant land or under used open spaces, which would prevent Green Belt being lost. Furthermore, all options seek to protect areas with landscape value.

⁵³ LUC (2019) Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Available at:
https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13883/black-country-lsa-front-end-report-final-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 22/05/2023]

⁵⁴ EcoRecord (2019) An Ecological evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt. Available at:
<https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13896/an-ecological-evaluation-of-the-black-country-green-belt-final-report-2019-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 22//02/23]

- 6.2.6 Option A would promote growth in existing residential and employment areas, encouraging new developments on previously developed land and examines the potential of utilising vacant or underused land or sites within the urban areas. Option B restricts new development to brownfield or previously developed sites and aims to protect open spaces and areas of ecological value and create additional public open spaces. Option C would redevelop and redesign existing areas and provide infrastructure improvements to intensify the use of existing employment areas. It would also allocate employment sites on derelict or vacant open space within the urban area.
- 6.2.7 Option D would focus growth within existing residential and employment areas of Sandwell utilising previously developed sites and examine the potential for housing development on vacant or underused open spaces or undeveloped land within the urban areas. However, the focus on increasing density including use of taller buildings under Option D could also lead to greater challenges in terms of development potentially altering views of, or from, sensitive and important landscape features. Options B, C and D propose redevelopment of existing housing or employment areas which could help to improve the townscape or revitalise degraded areas.
- 6.2.8 Whilst all the options aim to promote development within the existing urban area, Options A, C and D propose using underused open space within the urban area which may lead to a minor negative impact on the local landscape character. Option B restricts new development to brownfield sites and aims to protect open spaces and create new public open spaces. Consequently, it is likely that Option B would have a minor positive impact on the landscape and would be the best performing option.

SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Geodiversity

- 6.2.9 Within Sandwell there are nine LNRs, forming key sections of the ecological network within the SLP area in addition to the numerous SINC and SLINC. There are no SSSIs or NNRs within the borough, but both are present in neighbouring authorities close to the Sandwell Borough boundary. Areas of geological interest include Rowley Hills, Bumble Hole & Warrens Park LNR and Sandwell Valley Country Park. Over 50% of Sandwell's Green Belt land is described as having very high ecological value⁵⁵. Some priority habitats and small areas on ancient woodland are also present in the borough. New development could place increased pressure on the biodiversity assets within and surrounding the urban area through increased development and visitor-related pressures .

⁵⁵ EcoRecord (2019) An Ecological evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13896/an-ecological-evaluation-of-the-black-country-green-belt-final-report-2019-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 22//02/23]

- 6.2.10 The locations of the proposed sites within the four spatial growth options are not known so their exact impact on nearby biodiversity sites is uncertain, but the options do describe their approach to biodiversity which enables comparison. Option A aims to make improvements to or allowances for the environment in existing housing or residential sites and to protect areas with ecological and geological value and has recorded a minor positive impact on biodiversity. Option B aims to protect open spaces and areas of ecological value and create additional public open spaces within which there may be potential to increase biodiversity. Through the creation, protection and improvement of parks, woodland, open spaces and habitats, Option B would help to conserve and enhance habitats and ecological corridors within the urban area, improving resilience and adaptation to climate change.
- 6.2.11 Both Options C and D aim to protect areas of designated habitat or ecological value, but could also lead to the loss of open spaces and undeveloped land within the urban area which although would not be of significant ecological value could cumulatively reduce the amount of space and corridors available for wildlife within the urban area. Consequently, Options C and D have both recorded an uncertain impact on biodiversity overall.
- 6.2.12 All options aim to protect the environment to some extent, although Option B is likely to be the best performing with regard to biodiversity as it aims to protect existing open spaces and areas of ecological value but also intends to create new spaces and habitats which would benefit biodiversity and help with adaptation to climate change and is likely to have a major positive impact on biodiversity.

SA Objective 4 – Climate Change Mitigation

- 6.2.13 The two largest sources of emissions in Sandwell are residential buildings and on-road transport however, according to Sandwell Trends, in 2021 almost 30% of households within the borough did not own a car⁵⁶. Investments in public transport, walking and cycling provisions could help to reduce pollution and provide better access across the borough without using privately owned transportation.
- 6.2.14 Option A aims to make improvements to or allowances for climate change within existing residential and employment sites.
- 6.2.15 Option B would promote the use of zero and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in all new developments and redevelop existing housing and employment areas to deliver cleaner and more energy efficient growth. This could help to reduce embodied carbon. This option would further ensure that new development is located in areas with the best public transport access, helping to reduce reliance on private cars for travel. Through the creation of parks, woodland, open spaces and habitats across the borough, Option B would also help to increase GI coverage with carbon storage capacity and supporting other ecosystem services, maximising both climate change adaptation and mitigation.

⁵⁶ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2023) Sandwell Trends: Housing and Car Ownership. Available at: <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/household-characteristics/> [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

- 6.2.16 Option C promotes the co-location of housing with existing and proposed employment areas, which could help to reduce the need to travel to work and encourage the use of sustainable travel options. However, as this option does not include specific reference to climate change or mitigation measures the exact impact this option would have on this SA Objective would be uncertain.
- 6.2.17 Option D would aim to redevelop areas of existing older housing to provide higher density and energy efficient new housing, centred around public transport hubs. This could include retrofitting the existing building stock in the borough, further helping to reduce emissions although this may lead to the release of embodied carbon depending on the extent to which buildings could be refurbished rather than demolished and rebuilt.
- 6.2.18 Options A, and D help to promote climate change mitigation and as such have a minor positive impact. Option B is likely to be the best performing against climate change mitigation as it proposes the most modifications and technologies within new developments to help combat the effects of climate change and has been identified as producing a major positive impact on climate change mitigation.

SA Objective 5 – Climate Change adaptation

- 6.2.19 Given its mostly urban setting, Sandwell is likely to suffer from the 'urban heat island' effect which may be made worse by new development in the borough. GI and open spaces can help urban areas adapt to climate change, by providing protection from extreme weather and helping to reduce the 'urban heat island' effect. Likewise, these functions could be compromised by greater urban density and loss of GI.
- 6.2.20 Sandwell is affected by flooding along the River Tame the River Stour and by surface water flooding with all six wards having been affected by previous flooding events. The introduction of new dwellings and impermeable surfaces can exacerbate surface water flooding, but implementation of adaptive technologies can help to mitigate this.
- 6.2.21 Option A aims to make improvements to or allowances for climate change within existing residential and employment sites which would likely help adaptation to climate change. Option B would promote the use of zero and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in all new developments and redevelop existing housing and employment areas to deliver cleaner, more energy efficient and more intensive areas of growth. Through the creation of parks, woodland, open spaces and habitats across the borough, with potential to increase the extent and quality of GI, Option B also intends to maximise climate change adaptation and mitigation. A major positive impact could be achieved.

6.2.22 Option D would aim to redevelop areas of existing older housing to provide higher density and energy efficient new housing, with benefits to climate change adaptation and potentially reduced overall land-take compared to Options A and C, resulting in a lesser impact on flooding. Although, Options A and D would include development on existing open spaces and/or undeveloped land within the urban areas which could lead to an overall loss of GI both of these options have other adaptation measures, e.g. improving/redeveloping existing housing or employment sites, and as such a minor positive result in terms of climate change adaptation has been recorded for these options. As Option C option does not include specific reference to climate change or to climate change adaptation measures, the exact impact this option would have on climate change mitigation is uncertain.

6.2.23 Option B would be the best performing against climate change adaptation as it proposes the greatest focus on climate change adaptation and technologies within new developments, as well as conserving and enhancing GI, to help combat the effects of climate change.

SA Objective 6 – Natural Resources

6.2.24 The majority of land within Sandwell is classified as ALC 'urban', although there are small pockets of non-agricultural land and a small amount of Grade 3 and 4 land in the north east of the borough. There are no MSAs present in Sandwell.

6.2.25 All the Options A, B, C and D propose to keep new development within the existing urban area as such they would not be expected to impact BMV agricultural land within the borough. All options also promote the use of previously developed land. However, Options A, C and D also propose allocating underused or vacant open space or previously undeveloped land within the urban area for new development, with potential to lead to a minor negative impact on natural resources associated with the loss of soil resource which may have environmental or ecological value.

6.2.26 Option B only proposes to utilise brownfield and previously developed sites for development. As such Option B could be described as the best performing and would be likely to have an overall minor positive impact on natural resources.

SA Objective 7 – Pollution

6.2.27 Sandwell has a borough-wide AQMA, and for several years nitrogen dioxide concentrations have exceeded legal limits in seven monitoring stations across the borough⁵⁷. New development within the AQMA may lead to increased pollution levels from increased use of vehicles and would potentially expose residents to existing poor air quality. Soil and water pollution would depend on the nature, scale and location of the developments but there is potential for increased pollution through construction and occupation of the sites despite the intention within each option to "*protect areas of ... ecological value*".

⁵⁷ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Climate change strategy 2020-2041. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/31151/climate_change_strategy [Date accessed: 23/05/23]

- 6.2.28 Option A aims to make improvements to the capacity of existing residential and employment areas with regard to the environment, climate change and accessibility, which may help to reduce pollution levels by promoting public transport and implementing mitigation measures.
- 6.2.29 Option B would promote the use of zero and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in new developments to help reduce emissions during the construction and occupation phases. This option would also allocate housing and employment sites with good sustainable and public transport access which would potentially help to reduce transport-associated emissions. It also proposes to redevelop existing housing and employment sites to deliver cleaner, more energy-efficient areas of growth which would help to minimise the generation of pollution from domestic and employment sources.
- 6.2.30 Option C would locate new housing and associated services, facilities and infrastructure to serve existing and proposed employment areas, which may help to reduce the need to travel, particularly commuting by private vehicle, and so reduce potential transport-associated emissions. Option D aims to provide high density and energy-efficient housing by redeveloping areas of existing older housing. This could include retrofitting the existing building stock in the borough, further helping to reduce emissions.
- 6.2.31 Despite the provisions within Options A, C and D to minimise the generation of pollution, overall, these developments would still introduce new development within an AQMA and lead to an increase in traffic to some extent. A minor negative impact on pollution could arise. Option B provides the most initiatives to help reduce pollution both in the construction and occupation of developments and locating new developments near to sustainable transport links which may reduce commuting by private vehicle and so congestion levels and emissions within Sandwell. Therefore, Option B is likely to be the best performing option in terms of pollution and on balance could potentially have a minor positive impact on pollution overall depending on the nature and design of new developments.

SA Objective 8 – Waste

- 6.2.32 It is expected that any new development either housing or employment would create additional waste, potentially in both quantity and range of waste types produced. There is not sufficient information available to accurately predict the effect that each spatial growth option would have in terms of minimising waste generation, promoting the sustainable management of waste, or encouraging recycling and re-use of waste.
- 6.2.33 Option A would locate new development in areas where existing infrastructure has capacity or where capacity has been improved to accommodate the new development which is expected to include utilities and waste infrastructure as such Option A would likely have a minor positive impact on waste.

- 6.2.34 Option B emphasises the use of sustainable construction including building techniques and materials and would ensure all development uses previously developed and brownfield land. These principles would be likely to help minimise waste from the construction phase and promote re-use of materials where possible. As the exact use of sustainable construction methods are unknown at this time, the impact this option would have on waste is uncertain.
- 6.2.35 Option C would locate new housing and services, facilities and infrastructure to serve existing and proposed development sites. However, the focus on employment growth under Option C also means that this option could lead to a larger amount or greater range of waste types depending on the specific employment uses. This is likely to produce a minor negative impact as waste quantities may be increased.
- 6.2.36 Option D would promote higher densities of development and include the use of tall buildings. Higher densities of development could place increased demand on local waste management systems due to larger quantities and more diverse waste being generated in smaller areas, potentially leading to sanitation problems if a careful design is not implemented⁵⁸. Therefore, this option could potentially have a minor negative impact on waste.
- 6.2.37 Option A appears to be the best performing option with regard to waste as it proposes to locate development in areas with existing infrastructure capacity or where capacity has been improved to support development.

SA Objective 9 – Transport and Accessibility

- 6.2.38 Sandwell is well served by a dense network of public transport providing links regionally and nationally. Accessible public transport links are key to sustainable development and as transport is an enabler of economic activity, employment sites within or close to existing urban settings would potentially have access to a greater transport network to utilise and promotion of public transport or active travel may be more successful.
- 6.2.39 Option A proposes to take advantage of existing and improved infrastructure to enable development on sites to be maximised. Option B aims to allocate housing in areas with high levels of sustainable transport to provide residents with sustainable access to services and to allocate employment land where good public transport links are available. Option C aims to redevelop retail and other commercial areas in town centres to provide employment sites, allocate employment sites on derelict or vacant open space within the urban area and to locate housing and services close to existing and proposed employment areas. This could potentially reduce commuting times and so possibly reliance on private vehicles as the public transport network could be utilised by commuters. Option D would focus new growth within the existing residential and employment areas and around transport hubs so residents could utilise existing transport links, including public transport and active travel.

⁵⁸ London Plan Density Research: Lessons from Higher Density Development. Available at: https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/project_2_3_lessons_from_higher_density_development.pdf [Date accessed: 05/06/23]

- 6.2.40 All the options propose to site new development in locations where the existing public transport network can be utilised, with a likely minor positive impact on transport and accessibility for Options A, C and D. Of the four options, Option B is identified as the best performing to its focus on growth only where public transport links are best which would likely encourage more residents to choose more sustainable travel options and a major positive impact on transport and accessibility was identified for this option.

SA Objective 10 – Housing

- 6.2.41 Within Sandwell there has been an identified need for 29,773 homes over the period 2021-39. Whilst the spatial growth options describe housing locations they do not quantify housing numbers for each option and so the extent to which they could contribute towards meeting the housing need in the borough is unknown. At this scale of assessment, it is also uncertain what the likely contribution of each growth option to meeting the different needs of the population on housing mix, provision of extra care housing, accessible housing and affordable homes would be.
- 6.2.42 Option A proposes to focus most new growth within the existing residential and employment areas on previously developed land and utilising existing and improved infrastructure capacity to maximise developments. Option B aims to restrict development to brownfield sites, promote low carbon designs and technologies in new development and redevelop existing housing and employment areas to deliver more energy-efficient and intensive areas of growth. Option C proposes to locate new housing and services to serve existing and proposed employment areas. Option D aims to focus new growth within the existing residential and employment areas near existing transport hubs, utilising vacant and underused open spaces and undeveloped land within the urban areas. Options D would also redevelop areas of existing older housing to provide higher density and energy-efficient housing and resolve any capacity gaps in residential services.
- 6.2.43 All the options propose new housing development but focused on different areas of Sandwell, leading to a minor positive impact on housing provision. Option D is likely to be the best performing with regard to housing as it has the largest focus on housing, and by increasing density may provide for the largest amount of housing growth.

SA Objective 11 – Equality

- 6.2.44 Deprivation is high across the SLP area, with 36 LSOAs in Sandwell ranked among the 10% most deprived in England⁵⁹. Options A, B, C and D propose growth in urban areas which could potentially help facilitate social inclusion increasing accessibility to key services and employment opportunities, however, increasing housing density in deprived areas could also lead to exacerbation of existing inequalities. In particular, Option D emphasises the use of increased housing densities and taller buildings, which may lead to greater pressure on existing services and open spaces with adverse implications for quality of life, and more dense living situations may potentially lead to higher crime rates.

⁵⁹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> [Date accessed: 11/08/23]

6.2.45 Option A proposes to focus new development in existing housing and employment areas delivering most new development on previously developed land and taking advantage of existing and improved infrastructure capacity to maximise development. Option B restricts new development to brownfield sites, allocating housing and employment land in areas with good sustainable and public transport links to services including schools, jobs, healthcare and food stores. Option C proposes to intensify existing employment areas through redevelopment and redesign and locating new housing and services to serve employment sites. Option D aims to deliver new housing in previously developed and potentially underused open space and redevelop existing older houses to provide higher density housing; this could help to promote regeneration and enhance deprived areas, but also lead to challenges associated with higher density living as outlined above.

6.2.46 On balance, mixed effects could occur as a result of Options B, C and D with an uncertain impact recorded, whereas Option A is more likely to lead to a minor positive impact overall.

6.2.47 Option A is likely to be the best performing option with regard to equality, because it balances housing, employment and utilising existing and improved infrastructure.

SA Objective 12 – Health

6.2.48 Residents in Sandwell have generally good access to health facilities with 73 healthcare centres⁶⁰ and Sandwell General Hospital located in the borough, and the majority of the urban area has good pedestrian and public transport access to healthcare.

6.2.49 All the spatial growth options seek to take advantage of existing facilities by directing the majority of new development to the existing urban areas where healthcare provisions are most concentrated. Options B and D aim to locate new developments close to transport links to enable residents to access services using public transport; Option B would ensure housing is only developed in areas with the highest accessibility to healthcare, whereas Option D would focus growth around transport hubs and seek to fill healthcare capacity gaps. However, Options A, C and D all involve the potential of allocating vacant or under used open space for development, losing the potential to use these areas for open spaces and green links, and the associated benefits this could bring for human health and wellbeing. A minor negative impact is identified for these three options, although Option D would perform better than Options A and C.

6.2.50 Option B could be identified as the best performing overall as it allocates housing near transport links to residential services including healthcare and does not consider use of previously undeveloped open space within the urban areas, instead ensuring the protection of existing open spaces and creation of new open spaces for the public. A minor positive impact is identified overall for Option B.

SA Objective 13 – Economy

6.2.51 In Sandwell, the highest density of employment locations can be found in the centre and north of the borough and along key transport routes.

⁶⁰ According to Black Country Accessibility Modelling (2021) data

- 6.2.52 Option A aims to focus most new growth within the existing residential and employment areas, where sustainable transport options would be the best. Similarly, Option B proposes to locate new employment land near to good sustainable and public transport links, ensuring good sustainable access to workplaces. Both Options A and B would be likely to result in a minor positive impact on the economy.
- 6.2.53 Option C focuses on economic growth, aiming to retain, enhance and promote all types of employment land, intensify the use of employment land through redevelopment and redesign and locate new housing and services to serve employment sites. A major positive impact would be likely.
- 6.2.54 Option D aims to deliver growth in existing residential and employment areas, and reallocate areas identified as employment land for additional housing development which could compromise employment land targets and lead to a minor negative impact on the economy.
- 6.2.55 Option C is identified as the best performing with regard to the economy.

SA Objective 14 – Education, Skills and Training

- 6.2.56 The extent to which all spatial options would facilitate good access to education for new residents is almost entirely dependent on the specific location of the development, which is uncertain given the broad locations set out in the spatial growth options. Access to education, skills and training are generally best within urban centres. All the options, A, B, C and D propose the majority of growth within the existing urban areas, which would likely enable good access to education facilities.
- 6.2.57 Option B aims to only locate new residential development in areas with the highest levels of sustainable access to services, including schools, a minor positive impact is recorded for this option. Whilst Option D promotes the highest housing densities it also aims to improve capacity in associated residential services including education facilities, and focus development around sustainable transport hubs producing a major positive impact for this SA Objective. The overall effect of Options A and C on access to education is uncertain, as although they remain largely urban-focused they may lead to over-capacity issues in some locations.
- 6.2.58 Overall, Option D would likely be best performing with regard to education, skills and training owing to the provision of sustainable access to schools and addressing capacity gaps.

6.3 Conclusion

- 6.3.1 It is difficult to determine an overall best performing spatial option as the performance of each option varies depending on the SA Objective in question. Generally, options which perform better against economic needs put the most pressure on environmental or social resources and vice versa.

6.3.2 Overall, it appears Option B performs best against the largest number of SA Objectives, it reduces the impacts on the environment whilst providing residential and employment growth. However, it is not clear exactly what level of growth this option would support as the quantities of housing or employment development that could be attained under this option are not known. As such, it may be a refinement of this option provides the best option overall.

6.4 Selection and Rejection

6.4.1 Reflecting on the SA findings and SMBC's objectives for the emerging SLP, the Council consider that:

6.4.2 *"No single option would have no adverse environmental or sustainability impact; however, it is clear from the summary assessment that two options (Housing-led and Employment-led) would not support the balanced and sustainable mix of development and environmental and social benefits required to deliver transformational change in Sandwell. It is apparent that the most appropriate and deliverable strategy for housing, employment and environmental protection and improvement in Sandwell, which will also confirm our ambitions to improve the health and wellbeing of residents, would be a combination of options A and B.*

6.4.3 *This will deliver what we are referring to as the Balanced Green Growth option for the delivery of development in Sandwell. It will allow us to provide a significant quantum of housing and additional employment opportunities in the borough while at the same time promoting a bold strategy supporting the delivery of climate change adaptation and mitigation, environmental protection and enhancement, the conservation and enhancement of the historic environment and the delivery of green and blue infrastructure. This in turn will support the Council's wider aims and objectives in improving the health (physical and mental), wellbeing and life chances of people in Sandwell".*

7 Assessment of policies

7.1 Preface

7.1.1 The SLP will contain strategic and non-strategic planning policies and allocations to support the growth and regeneration of Sandwell up to 2041. The SLP Draft Plan Regulation 18 Consultation document presents a suite of draft policies for inclusion in the emerging SLP.

7.1.2 Many of the proposed SLP policies are derived from the ceased Draft BCP. A total of 63 policies were set out in the Draft BCP and were consulted on as part of the BCP process, before the decision was made to end work on the BCP in October 2022. A number of SLP policies have also been derived from the adopted Sandwell SAD.

7.1.3 SMBC have considered the extent to which each of the draft BCP policies and adopted SAD policies remain relevant and applicable to the SLP area, in light of consultation responses received during the BCP Regulation 18 consultation, and in the context of the latest national and local guidance and strategies.

7.1.4 The relevant existing policies have been updated and together with a number of new policies prepared for the SLP, this has resulted in a total of 87 policies identified and presented within the Draft SLP Regulation 18 Consultation document. The SLP also sets out a Vision for Sandwell in 2041 and a set of Objectives.

7.1.5 The sustainability performance of each draft policy has been evaluated based on the SA Framework (see **Appendix A**) and the methodology as set out in **Chapter 2**. The assessments are set out in full within **Appendix D**. This chapter summarises the results of these assessments.

7.2 Overview of Policy Assessments

7.2.1 The impact matrix for all policy assessments is presented in **Table 7.1**. These impacts should be read in conjunction with the assessment text narratives in **Appendix D**.

7.2.2 The proposed SLP policies seek to support the delivery of sustainable growth within Sandwell. The policies will help to ensure that potential adverse impacts on sustainability identified as a result of the development proposed within the SLP are avoided, mitigated or subject to compensatory measures wherever possible and that development proposals are accompanied by relevant supporting information to ensure that the impacts of development can be appropriately factored into land use decision making processes.

7.2.3 The SLP policies cover the themes of:

- Development strategy;
- Sandwell's natural and historic environment;
- Climate change;
- Health and wellbeing in Sandwell;
- Sandwell's housing;
- Sandwell's economy;
- Sandwell's Centres;

- West Bromwich;
- Transport;
- Infrastructure and delivery;
- Waste and minerals;
- Development constraints and industrial legacy; and
- Development management.

7.2.4 For the majority of policies, the assessment has identified negligible, minor positive or major positive effects. Negligible impacts are identified where the policy does not directly influence the achievement of that SA Objective, which is the case for many of the more 'thematic' policies.

7.2.5 A greater range of sustainability effects is identified for policies that have potential to introduce new development, for example, the housing and economy policies. As such, uncertain impacts have been identified for certain SA Objectives as a result of some of the policies in these sections. The range in potential impacts for these policies owes to the fact that large developments could have major negative impacts, however, policy requirements have the ability to ensure these developments create some positive impacts or reduce the potential adverse effects if designed and carried out appropriately.

7.2.6 Some policies, such as the development strategy policies, set out the broad direction for growth. As such, minor negative impacts have been identified for certain SA Objectives as a result of some policies in these sections, owing to the potential for the large amount of proposed development to lead to increases in pollution and waste, for example.

7.2.7 The full assessments, including text narrative to explain the identified impacts against each SA Objective, are set out in **Appendix D**.

7.2.8 Opportunities for enhancement may also be secured through policies in the SLP. **Where there are opportunities to improve the sustainability performance of draft policies these have been identified in SA process (see XXX).**

Table 7.1: Summary of policy assessments

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDS1	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	0	+	+	0
SDS2	+	+	+	+	0	++	+	0	+	+	+	+	++	+
SDS3	0	0	+	+/-	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0
SDS4	++	++	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
SDS5	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0
SDS6	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SDS7	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0
SNE1	0	+	++	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SNE2	0	+	++	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SNE3	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SNE4	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
SNE5	+	++	++	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SNE6	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0
SHE1	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHE2	++	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SHE3	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHE4	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SCC1	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0
SCC2	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SCC3	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCC4	0	0	+	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SCC5	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCC6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHW1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0
SHW2	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0
SHW3	0	0	+	+	0	0	++	0	+	0	0	+	+	0
SHW4	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0
SHW5	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
SHW6	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
SHO1	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
SHO2	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
SHO3	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	0
SHO4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0
SHO5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0
SHO6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+/-	0	0	0
SHO7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0
SHO8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0
SHO9	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	++
SHO10	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+	+/-	+
SHO11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
SEC1	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
SEC2	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
SEC3	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
SEC4	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
SEC5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	+
SEC6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SCE1	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+	+	+/-
SCE2	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SCE3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+
SCE4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCE5	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0
SCE6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0
SWB1	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+
SWB2	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+
STR1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	+	0	0
STR2	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
STR3	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
STR4	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0
STR5	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	+	0	0
STR6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	0
STR7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
STR8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0
STR9	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
STR10	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	0
SID1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0
SID2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SID3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWA1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWA2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWA3	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	++	+/-	0	0	0	0	0
SWA4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWA5	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0
SMI1	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SMI2	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCO1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCO2	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCO3	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDM1	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
SDM2	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SDM3	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
SDM4	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDM5	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SDM6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
SDM7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0
SDM8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/-	0
SDM9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
SDM10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

8 Assessment of reasonable alternative development sites

8.1 Preface

8.1.1 The Black Country Call for Sites request first opened in July 2017 and re-opened from 9th July – 20th August 2020⁶¹. SMBC have carried out annual SHLAAs of sites within which have the potential to accommodate new housing development.

8.1.2 SMBC have undertaken a filtering process (or 'gateway check') of all potential sites identified through the evidence base in order to determine which sites should be considered as reasonable alternatives for the purpose of the SA.

8.1.3 If the following receptors were obviously present at a site, the Council have generally rejected such sites from inclusion as a reasonable alternative to be appraised through the SA process:

- Flood Risk Zone 3
- Site of Special Scientific Interest
- Local Nature Reserve
- Special Area of Conservation
- Site of Importance for Nature Conservation
- Ancient Woodland
- Scheduled Monuments
- Registered Parks & Gardens
- Burial Grounds
- Existing residential
- Operational sites (education, leisure, utilities, places of worship, canal network, transport infrastructure)
- Open Space not surplus against current standards
- Sites <0.25 ha with no "call for site" submitted
- Local authority land with no "call for site" submitted
- HSE Inner Zone (for residential)
- Landowner has expressed unwillingness

[Note to Council: Please can you provide some information / context to explain how reasonable alternative sites have been identified? E.g. the filtering process. Para 8.1.3 current text is taken from the BCP SA but needs checking/updating.]

⁶¹ Available at <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p3/> [Date accessed: 02/06/23].

8.1.4 Identification of a site as a reasonable alternative does not imply that the site is not subject to other constraints or indeed that any receptor listed in para 8.1.3 will not in some way be potentially affected by a reasonable alternative site. Further potential constraints are assessed as part of the SA and plan making process for identified reasonable alternatives, using available evidence derived from publicly accessible data sources and information supplied by the Council.

8.1.5 SMBC have identified a total of 121 reasonable alternative sites, which are listed in **Table 8.1**. Some sites have been identified as reasonable alternatives for multiple uses, or mixed uses.

[Note to Council: We have prepared the SA using the site information provided, including site references as provided by Trisha via email 27/09/23. However, we note there may be some discrepancies between the references listed here and those listed in the appendices of the SLP itself and accompanying allocated site shapefiles provided to colleagues for the HRA. E.g. eight sites are listed as mixed use allocations in the plan which were not specified as such in the SA information, and differences in the references listed for employment sites.]

Table 8.1: Reasonable alternative development sites identified by SMBC

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
SEC3-181	Varney Business Park, Varney Avenue, West Bromwich	Employment	0.73	N/A
SEC4-1	Zion Street, Tipton	Employment	2.43	N/A
SEC3-9	Alexandra Ind Est, Locarno Rd/ Alexandra Rd, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.87	75
SEC3-99	Providence Street, Cradley Heath	Employment	6.33	N/A
SH1	Brown Lion Street	Housing	0.46	20
SEC3-113	Brandon Way (east side)	Housing/Employment	0.47	19
SEC3-46	Droicon Ind Est, Portway Road	Employment	0.87	N/A
SEC3-175	Coneygre Rd, Burnt Tree, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.02	75
SEC-36	Silverthorne Lane	Housing/Employment	1.05	100
SEC3-29	Site off Richmond St, West Bromwich	Employment	1.10	N/A
SEC3-148	Castle St, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.49	60
SH2	Land adjacent To Asda Wolverhampton Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment	1.60	62
SEC4-4	Soho Triangle	Employment	1.71	N/A
SEC3-191	Oldfield Trading Estate, Cradley Heath	Housing/Employment	1.76	70
SEC4-3	70-74 Crankhall Lane	Housing/Employment	1.78	50
SEC3-133	Brymill Industrial Estate, Brown Lion St, Tipton	Housing	1.98	56
SEC3-189	Waterfall Lane, Cradley Heath	Housing/Employment	1.78	50
SEC3-22	Hale Trading Estate, Tipton	Housing/Employment	2.73	120
SEC3-40	Newlyn Road, Cradley Heath	Housing/Employment	3.40	102
SEC1-4	Severn Trent land off Roway Lane	Employment	3.65	N/A

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
SH3	88/90 Dudley Rd West	Housing/Employment	0.36	12
SH4	Lower High Street (Station Hotel & Dunns Site)	Housing/Employment	0.28	20
SH5	Mill Street, Great Bridge	Housing	0.86	30
SH6	Swan Lane, North of A41, West Bromwich	Housing	3.77	147
SH7	The Boat Gauging House & Adjoining Land, Factory Road, Tipton	Housing/GTTS	0.57	50
SH8	Alma Street, Wednesbury	Housing	0.52	19
SH9	The Phoenix Collegiate, Friar Park Road, Wednesbury	Housing	4.80	84
29	Star and Garter, 252 Duchess Parade, West Bromwich	Housing	0.05	60
SH10	Tipton Conservative and Unionist Club, 64 Union St, Tipton	Housing	0.19	14
SH11	Sandwell District & General Hospital	Housing	0.82	121
SH12	Fmr Springfield & Brickhouse Neighbourhood Office and adjacent land Dudley Road, Rowley Regis	Housing	0.65	26
34	John Dando House, 235 Hamstead Road, Great Barr Birmingham	Housing	0.86	26
35	Intersection House, 110 Birmingham Road, West Brom	Housing/Employment	0.80	136
36	Vacant Land Off Friardale Close, School Road, Carrington Road, Wednesbury	Housing	0.76	30
38	173 Rolfe Street, Smethwick	Housing	0.40	12
40	Metro House 410-416 High Street West Bromwich	Housing	0.38	34
42	Land between St Pauls Road & Tollhouse Way	Housing	0.33	11
43	Land adjacent Compton Grange, Whiteall Road, St Annes Road, Cradley Heath	Housing	0.30	15
44	Crosswells Road, Langley	Housing	0.29	12
45	164 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich	Housing/Employment	0.22	16
46	5 Lombard Street West Bromwich	Housing	0.16	44
SH13	Silverthorne Lane/ Forge Lane Cradley Heath	Housing	1.05	74
SH14	Langley Maltings, Western Road, Langley	Housing	2.72	95
SH15	Macarthur Road Industrial Estate, Cradley Heath	Housing	0.30	10
52	Land off Overend Road, Cradley Heath Business Park	Employment	3.04	N/A

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
SH16	Cradley Heath Factory Centre, Woods Lane, Cradley Heath	Housing	5.41	160
SH17	Land adj to Droicon Estate, Portway Road, Rowley Regis	Housing/GTTS	0.70	28
SH18	STW/SMBC Land, Friar Park Road, Wednesbury	Housing/Employment	26.60	630
56	Perrott Street/ Kitchener Street, Black Patch, Smethwick	Housing	1.39	49
SH19	Land at Horseley Heath, Alexandra Road, and Lower Church Lane, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.90	60
SH20	Elbow Street, Old Hill	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.77	25
SH21	Dudley Road East/Brades Road	Housing/Employment	2.65	106
SH22	Tatbank Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment	1.15	40
SH23	28-64 High Street, West Bromwich	Housing	0.60	58
63	Site between Dudley St & Victoria St, Wednesbury	Housing/Employment	1.18	41
SH24	Cokeland Place / Graingers Lane, Cradley Heath	Housing	0.36	13
SH25	Bradleys Lane / High Street, Tipton	Housing/Employment	5.60	230
SH26	Lower City Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment	1.83	63
SH27	Site surrounding former Post office and Telephone exchange, Horseley Heath, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.16	42
SH28	Friar Street, Wednesbury	Housing/Employment	1.01	38
SH29	Used Car Sales site on corner of Lower Church Lane and Horseley Heath, Tipton	Housing/Employment	0.56	20
71	Grafton Lodge, Grafton Road, Oldbury	Housing	0.53	19
74	The Corner of Great Bridge & Richmond Street South	Employment	0.23	N/A
SH30	Land to east of Black Lake, West Bromwich	Housing/Employment	2.45	86
SH31	Summertown Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.89	32
SH32	Bank Street (West), Hateley Heath	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.85	43
SH33	Wellington Road, Tipton	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.91	31
SH34	Brandhall Golf Course	Housing	36.90	190
SH35	Rattlechain Site Land to the north of Temple Way, Tividale	Housing	14.8	518
SH36	Land between Addington Way and River Tame, Temple Way	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.90	32
SH37	Edwin Richards Quarry, Portway Road, Rowley Regis	Housing	10.10	526
SEC3-66	Soho Foundry	Employment	12.60	N/A

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
SH38	Brades Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment	1.14	54
91	Chances Glassworks	Housing/Employment	0.64	22
SH39	Land to West of Thomas Street, West Bromwich	Housing	0.28	30
SH40	Langley Swimming Centre, Vicarage Road, Oldbury	Housing	0.49	20
SH41	North Smethwick Canalside	Housing	8.77	400
SH42	Forge Put, junction Franchise Street and Beebee Ro	Housing	0.14	10
SEC1-3	Land at Birchley Island, Junction 2 of M5, Oldbury	Employment	1.00	N/A
110	Bloomfield Road Amenity Space	Housing/Employment	0.38	15
118	Constance Avenue Open Space	Housing	1.60	64
120	Darbys Hill Open Space	Housing	3.80	114
132	Lily Street Open Space	Housing	3.80	114
137	Poppy Drive Open Space	Housing	0.80	32
140	Timbertree Crescent Open Space	Housing	0.50	20
142	Wylde Crescent Open Space	Housing	0.50	20
SH43	Land of Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr	Housing	1.66	46
SH44	Wyndmill crescent, West Bromwich	Housing	0.19	11
SH45	Site Of Nos 118-152	Housing	0.41	20
SH46	Site Of Former Stone Cross Neighbourhood Office	Housing	0.32	14
SH47	Groveland, Oldbury	Housing	2.26	58
171	Evans Halshaw car showroom, Carters Green	Housing	0.89	140
SH48	St Johns St, Carters Green	Housing	0.82	33
173	Army Reserve, Carters Green	Housing	1.17	63
SH49	Tentec, Guns Lane	Housing	0.60	129
SH50	Providence Place/ Bratt St	Housing	1.32	70
176	Cultural Quarter, West Bromwich	Housing	1.09	52
177	Queens Square Living, West Bromwich	Housing	2.84	396
178	West Bromwich Central	Housing	3.84	343
SH51	Overend Street, West Bromwich	Housing	0.71	70
SH52	George Street Living	Housing	1.54	327
SH53	Grove Lane/ Cranford Street/ London Street	Housing	1.23	108
SH54	Cranford Street / Heath Street / Canal	Housing	5	115
SH55	Cape Arm Cranford Street	Housing	2.13	170
SH56	Moilliett Street Park - Grove Lane masterplan	Housing	0.77	31

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
SH57	Grove Street / MMUH / School - Grove Lane MP	Housing	2.18	85
SH58	Abberley Street Grove Lane Master Plan	Housing	2.48	140
SG1	Extension to Caravan Site, Brierley Lane, Bilston	GTTS	0.73	10
188	Land Between No.32 And George Betts School, West End Avenue, Smethwick	Housing	0.32	11
189	Hawes Lane, Rowley Regis	Housing	0.56	15
SH59	Beever Road, Great Bridge	Housing	1.01	18
191	Former Sunlight Laundry, Stanhope Road, Smethwick	Housing	0.73	33
SH61	Thandi Coach Station, Alma Street, Smethwick	Housing	0.71	58
SEC1-1	Whitehall Road, Tipton	Employment	5.29	N/A
SEC1-8	Legacy 43, Ryder Street, West Bromwich	Employment	0.88	N/A
SEC1-5	Land at Coneygre, Newcomen Drive, Tipton	Employment	6.92	N/A
SEC1-6	Land off Brandon Way, West Bromwich	Employment	3.00	N/A
SEC1-2	British Gas, Land off Dudley Road, Oldbury	Employment	1.05	N/A
SEC1-7	Site off Bilport Lane, Wednesbury	Employment	5.30	N/A
199	Lion Farm Playing Fields, Oldbury	Mixed-use (including housing, employment and open space)	20.89	200
SH60	Site of 30-144 Mounts Road, Wednesbury	Housing/Employment	1.07	22

8.2 Overview of Site Assessments (Pre-Mitigation)

- 8.2.1 **Chapter 2** sets out the methodology used to appraise reasonable alternatives and options in the SA process, and topic-specific methodologies for the assessment of reasonable alternative sites in **Appendix B** sets out how the likely impact per receptor has been identified in line with the local context and assumptions.
- 8.2.2 The assessment of the 121 reasonable alternative sites, including rationale for the recorded impacts, is presented in full in **Appendix C**.
- 8.2.3 A summary of the impact matrices for all reasonable alternative site assessments pre-mitigation is presented in **Table 8.2**. These impacts should be read in conjunction with the assessment text narratives in **Appendix C** as well as the topic specific methodologies and assumptions presented in **Appendix B**.

- 8.2.4 It should be noted that the site assessments include an overall impact symbol, summarised in **Table 2.4**, for each of the 14 SA Objectives. **Appendix C** documents likely impacts on receptors within each SA Objective, which have been included to provide the reader with contextual information that is relevant to each SA Objective. The overall impact symbol in **Table 8.2** below for each SA Objective is always represented by the lowest common denominator. It may be possible that positive or negligible receptor impacts are relevant to an SA Objective, however, if one of the receptor impacts is identified as a major negative impact, the SA Objective will be identified as major negative overall.
- 8.2.5 Each appraisal includes a SA impact matrix which provides an indication of the nature and magnitude of impacts pre-mitigation. All assessment information excludes consideration of detailed mitigation i.e. additional detail or modification to the reasonable alternative that has been introduced specifically to reduce identified environmental effects of that site. Presenting assessment findings 'pre-mitigation' facilitates transparency to the decision makers.
- 8.2.6 The appraisal of the 121 reasonable alternative sites demonstrated that all development proposals would be likely to result in a range of sustainability impacts as shown in **Table 8.2**.

Table 8.2: Summary impact matrix of all reasonable alternative sites (pre-mitigation)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Site Reference	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SEC3-181	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	0	0	++	+/-	0
SEC4-1	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	++	0	-	-	+/-	0
SEC3-9	0	+/-	-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	++	+/-	++
SEC3-99	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	0	0	++	+/-	0
SH1	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	+	-	0	++	+	0	-	0	-
SEC3-113	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	++	+/-	-
SEC3-46	0	+/-	-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	0	0	-	+/-	0
SEC3-175	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	-
SEC-36	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	-
SEC3-29	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	0	0	+	++	0
SEC3-148	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	-
SH2	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	-	++	+/-	++
SEC4-4	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	-	-	+/-	-	+	-	-	++	0
SEC3-191	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	++	+/-	++
SEC4-3	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	++	+/-	++
SEC3-133	0	+/-	-	0	-	-	-	0	++	+	-	-	--	-
SEC3-189	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	0	-	+/-	++
SEC3-22	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	-	+/-	++
SEC3-40	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	++	+/-	++
SEC1-4	0	+/-	-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	++	0	0	++	++	++
SH3	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	0
SH4	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	-
SH5	-	+/-	-	0	--	-	-	0	++	+	-	++	-	++
SH6	0	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	--	-	++	++	-	++	--	++
SH7	--	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	++	+	0	++	+/-	-
SH8	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	-
SH9	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	0	++	+	-	-	0	++
29	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+	-	0	++	+	-	++	0	++
SH10	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	-	-	0	++	+	-	++	0	++
SH11	0	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	--	-	++	++	0	++	-	++
SH12	0	+/-	-	0	+	+	-	0	-	+	0	-	0	++
34	0	+/-	-	0	-	-	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	++
35	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	-	+/-	0	++	+/-	++
36	0	+/-	+/-	0	-	-	-	0	++	+	-	++	-	++
38	-	+/-	+/-	0	+	+	-	0	++	+	-	++	0	++
40	0	+/-	+/-	0	-	+	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	++
42	-	+/-	+/-	0	-	-	-	0	++	+	0	++	0	++
43	-	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	0	++	0	-
44	0	+/-	+/-	0	-	-	-	0	++	+	0	-	0	++

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Site Reference	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
45	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	0	++	+/-	++
46	-	+/-	+/-	0	+	+	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	++
SH13	0	+/-	-	0	-	+	-	0	++	++	0	++	-	-
SH14	--	+/-	+/-	0	--	+	-	0	++	+	-	++	--	-
SH15	0	+/-	+/-	0	-	+	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	-
52	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	+	--	+/-	++	0	0	-	+/-	0
SH16	-	+/-	-	-	--	-	--	-	++	++	0	++	--	-
SH17	0	+/-	-	0	-	+	-	+/-	-	+	0	-	+/-	-
SH18	0	+/-	-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-
56	-	+/-	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	+	-	-	0	++
SH19	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	-	+/-	++
SH20	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	++
SH21	-	+/-	-	+/-	+	+	-	+/-	-	+/-	0	-	+/-	++
SH22	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	-	+/-	++
SH23	0	+/-	+/-	0	-	+	-	0	-	+	-	++	-	++
63	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	++
SH24	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	+	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	++
SH25	0	+/-	-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	-	+/-	++
SH26	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	-	+/-	++
SH27	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	++
SH28	0	+/-	-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	-
SH29	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	+	+/-	++
71	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	++
74	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	0	0	++	+/-	0
SH30	0	+/-	-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	++
SH31	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	0	-	+/-	++
SH32	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	++
SH33	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	++	+/-	++
SH34	-	+/-	-	-	+	-	--	-	++	++	0	-	0	++
SH35	-	+/-	-	-	--	-	--	-	-	++	0	-	0	-
SH36	0	+/-	-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+/-	0	-	+/-	-
SH37	-	+/-	-	-	--	-	--	-	-	++	0	-	0	++
SEC3-66	--	+/-	-	+/-	-	-	--	+/-	-	0	-	-	+/-	0
SH38	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	-	+/-	0	-	+/-	++
91	--	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	+	-	+/-	++	+/-	-	++	+/-	++
SH39	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	+	-	0	++	+	-	++	-	++
SH40	0	+/-	+/-	0	--	+	-	0	++	+	0	-	-	++
SH41	--	+/-	-	-	--	-	--	-	++	++	-	++	--	++
SH42	0	+/-	+/-	0	-	+	-	0	-	+	0	+	0	++
SEC1-3	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	++	0	-	+	++	0
110	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	+	+/-	-

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Site Reference	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
118	0	+/-	-	0	-	-	-	0	-	+	-	++	0	++
120	0	+/-	-	0	+	-	--	0	-	++	0	++	0	++
132	0	+/-	+/-	0	--	-	--	0	++	++	-	++	0	++
137	0	0	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	0	++	0	++
140	0	+/-	-	0	+	-	-	0	-	+	0	-	0	-
142	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	0	-	0	++
SH43	0	+/-	--	0	-	-	-	0	-	+	0	++	-	++
SH44	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	-	++	0	-
SH45	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	+	-	0	++	+	-	++	0	-
SH46	0	+/-	+/-	0	--	-	-	0	++	+	0	++	0	++
SH47	-	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	++
171	-	+/-	+/-	-	-	+	--	-	++	++	0	++	-	++
SH48	0	+/-	+/-	0	--	+	-	0	++	+	0	++	0	++
173	0	+/-	+/-	0	--	+	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	++
SH49	0	+/-	+/-	-	+	+	--	-	++	++	0	++	-	++
SH50	-	+/-	+/-	0	-	-	-	0	++	+	0	-	0	++
176	--	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	0	++	-	++
177	-	+/-	+/-	-	-	+	--	-	++	++	-	++	--	++
178	--	+/-	+/-	-	--	+	--	-	++	++	-	++	--	++
SH51	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	-	++	-	++
SH52	0	+/-	+/-	-	-	+	--	-	++	++	-	++	-	++
SH53	0	+/-	+/-	0	-	+	-	0	-	+	-	-	-	++
SH54	-	+/-	+/-	-	--	-	--	0	-	++	-	-	-	++
SH55	-	+/-	+/-	0	--	-	--	0	-	++	-	-	--	++
SH56	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	+	-	0	-	+	-	-	-	++
SH57	0	+/-	+/-	0	--	+	-	0	-	+	-	-	--	++
SH58	-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	--	-	-	++	-	-	--	++
SG1	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	+	0	-	0	++
188	0	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	++	+	-	++	0	++
189	-	+/-	+/-	0	+	-	-	0	-	+	0	-	0	++
SH59	0	+/-	-	0	--	-	-	0	++	+	0	-	0	++
191	0	+/-	+/-	0	-	-	-	0	++	+	-	-	0	++
SH61	0	+/-	+/-	0	--	+	-	0	-	+	-	-	-	++
SEC1-1	-	+/-	-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	++	0	-	++	+/-	0
SEC1-8	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	-	-	+/-	++	0	0	++	++	0
SEC1-5	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	++	0	0	++	++	0
SEC1-6	-	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	+	-	+/-	-	0	0	++	++	0
SEC1-2	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	-	-	-	+/-	++	0	0	++	++	0
SEC1-7	0	+/-	-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	-	0	0	-	+/-	0
199	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	--	+/-	++	+/-	0	-	++	-
SH60	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	--	-	-	+/-	++	+/-	0	++	+/-	++

8.3 Mitigation

- 8.3.1 The sustainability appraisal of 121 reasonable alternative sites against baseline sustainability information has identified a number of adverse effects associated with the SA Objectives in the SA Framework (see **Table 8.2**). The purpose of this section is to consider if and how these effects can be mitigated by applying the mitigation hierarchy.
- 8.3.2 The first stage of the mitigation hierarchy is to consider if the adverse effect can be avoided. This may be possible by withdrawing the potential site allocation.
- 8.3.3 For allocations which are likely to remain on the basis that the plan makers consider their inclusion to be necessary, mitigation measures should be explored to reduce the overall significance of effect. If it is not possible to mitigate identified adverse effects, these will remain at the end of the SA process and will be declared in the environmental report and non-technical summary.
- 8.3.4 One way to reduce adverse impacts identified against baseline receptors is to consider the potential mitigating effects of planning policies.
- 8.3.5 Aspects of the policies within the draft SLP (see **Appendix D**), would be anticipated to help ensure that potential adverse impacts on sustainability identified as a result of the development proposed within the SLP, are avoided.
- 8.3.6 **Tables 8.3 to 8.15** list the identified adverse impacts according to SA Objective that could potentially arise following development at the 121 reasonable alternative sites. The table then goes on to list which, if any, of the draft SLP policies would be likely to help avoid or mitigate these adverse impacts.

Table 8.3: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 1 – Cultural Heritage

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
<p>Alteration of character or setting of a heritage asset</p>	<p>Policy SHE1 states that <i>"development proposals will be required to conserve and enhance local character and those aspects of the historic environment together with their settings"</i>. The policy also requires development proposals that would affect a heritage asset to carry out an Assessment of Significance which would inform part of a Design and Access Statement and / or a Heritage Impact Assessment.</p> <p>Policy SHE2 states that heritage assets within the borough will be <i>"retained and, wherever possible, enhanced and their settings respected"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SHE3 ensures heritage assets are conserved and enhanced, stating that development proposals affecting locally listed buildings will only be permitted where they <i>"positively contribute towards the architectural or historic significance"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SHE4 states that <i>"development should safeguard both designated and non-designated archaeological assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged archaeological significance"</i>. The policy also requires sites with known archaeological potential to provide an archaeological assessment and / or field evaluation.</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts on the local historic environment which may occur following development proposals, including impacts on Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens and Archaeological Sensitive Areas.</p>

Table 8.4: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 2 - Landscape

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
<p>Threaten or result in the loss of locally distinctive landscape character</p>	<p>Policy SHE1 states that <i>"development proposals will be required to conserve and enhance local character"</i>.</p> <p>Policies SHE2, SHE3 and SHE4 all ensure the protection and enhancement of heritage assets within the borough, which would expect to improve the local landscape character, where heritage assets would positively contribute to local character and distinctiveness.</p> <p>Policy SDS7 provides measures to support the green and blue infrastructure within the borough, which would expect</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts on the local landscape character, ensuring that new development respects and enhances local distinctiveness.</p>

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	<p>to positively contribute to the locally distinctive landscape character.</p> <p>Policy SNE3 supports the provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows, which would also be expected to contribute towards the conservation of landscape character.</p> <p>Policy SNE5 aims to protect the Rowley Hills from inappropriate development that would lead to the loss of valued qualities that make up the local landscape character, including panoramic views.</p> <p>Policies SDM1, SDM2, SDM3 and other Development Management policies seek to ensure that new development creates a strong sense of place and help to conserve and enhance the landscape / townscape character.</p>	

Table 8.5: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
<p>Threats or pressures to international or Habitats sites (SAC)</p>	<p>Policy SNE1 states that development would not be permitted where it would <i>"have an adverse impact on the integrity of an internationally designated site, such as Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation or Fens Pools Special Area of Conservation"</i>. The policy also requires details regarding how improvements to the natural environment will be carried out, to be accompanied alongside the planning application.</p>	<p>This policy would be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts on Habitats sites and associated functionally linked land, subject to the recommendations of the emerging HRA.</p>
<p>Threats or pressures to locally designated / non-statutory biodiversity or geodiversity sites, priority habitats and species</p>	<p>Policy SNE1 seeks to protect, conserve and enhance biodiversity assets including local designations, and requires that where the benefits of development strategically outweighs the importance of a local nature conservation site, <i>"damage must be minimised"</i> and remaining impacts will be required to be fully mitigated, with the addition of a mitigation strategy also required to accompany relevant planning applications.</p>	<p>These policies would help to conserve locally designated biodiversity sites; however, they would not be expected to fully mitigate potential adverse impacts on SLINCs or priority habitats where proposed development sites coincide with these assets.</p>

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
<p>Effects on green infrastructure and ecological networks</p>	<p>Policy SDS7 ensures that green and blue infrastructure is protected and enhanced throughout the borough and states that “<i>development in Sandwell will be expected to maintain the existing network of green infrastructure across the borough</i>” and networks “<i>should be enhanced wherever possible</i>”.</p> <p>Policy SNE1 states that development proposals will need to take account of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy and “<i>should plan for the maintenance and where possible enhancement of such linkages</i>”.</p> <p>Policy SNE2 seeks to ensure that all developments deliver a minimum 10% biodiversity net gain in line with statutory requirements, and require development to “<i>be designed to protect and enhance existing habitats and ecological networks, including wildlife corridors and stepping stones</i>”.</p>	<p>These policies would be likely to enhance the connectivity between habitats and improve the resilience of ecological and GI networks to current and future pressures.</p>

Table 8.6: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 4 – Climate Change mitigation

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
<p>Increased Carbon Emissions</p>	<p>Policy SCC1 ensures that development proposals in Sandwell will include opportunities for adaption to, and the mitigation of, climate change. The policy is underpinned by other policies that collectively aim to reduce the borough’s carbon footprint, including policies SCC2, SCC3, SCC6, SDS7, SDM1, STR1 and STR9.</p> <p>Policy SDS7 and SDM1 includes measures that require development proposals to incorporate green cover and urban green features.</p> <p>Policy STR1 ensures the transport network within the borough promotes active travel and that “<i>all new developments must provide adequate access for all modes of travel, including walking, cycling and public transport</i>”, reducing the need for travel via private cars.</p>	<p>Although these policies strongly support a reduction in GHG emissions associated with development, the policies would not be expected to fully mitigate GHG emissions from development, for example, arising from the release of embodied carbon, GHG emissions from the operation of development and potential loss of carbon stores, for example in soils.</p>

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	Policy STR9 ensures the borough is able to provide for low emission vehicles through infrastructure such as vehicle charging points.	

DRAFT

Table 8.7: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 5 – Climate Change adaptation

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Fluvial flood risk	<p>Policy SCC4 sets out measures to identify and manage the risk of flooding throughout the borough and ensure that development is avoided in areas of high fluvial flood risk, in line with the NPPF. The policy also encourages development proposals to naturalise urban watercourses and open up culverts to provide multi-functional benefits, including for reinstating natural river channels.</p> <p>Various SLP policies including SDS7 would help to conserve and enhance GI coverage within the borough, with associated benefits for flood water storage and mitigation.</p>	These policies would be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts associated with development in areas at risk of fluvial flooding.
Risk of surface water flooding	<p>Policy SCC4 requires development proposals to incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and additionally carry out a Flood Risk Assessment.</p> <p>Policy SCC5 underpins Policy SCC4 in relation to SuDS, outlining design requirements and states that “<i>surface water drainage strategies are required for all major developments, regardless of their size and the flood zone and catchment they are in</i>”.</p> <p>Policies SNE1, SDS7, and SDM1 provide measures that would protect and enhance green and blue infrastructure and ecosystem services, with likely multi-functional benefits including for flood risk reduction.</p>	These policies would be expected to mitigate potential adverse impacts associated with development in areas at risk of surface water flooding.

Table 8.8: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 6 – Natural Resources

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Loss of previously undeveloped land / land with environmental value	<p>The proposed development strategy for the SLP promotes the use of brownfield land as much as possible. Policy SDS1 states that development within the borough will seek to achieve sustainable development through “<i>delivering development on brownfield sites in the urban area</i>”. Underpinning Policy SDS1 are Policies SDS2, SDS6, SC03, SDM3,</p>	<p>The policies would help to promote an efficient use of land and reduce the loss of undeveloped land and associated soil resources; however, the policies would not be expected to fully</p>

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	<p>and SH02. These policies include measures that ensure undeveloped land is protected and that previously developed land in urban areas are utilised.</p> <p>Policies SNE1, SNE4, SNE6, SHE1, SHE2, SHE3, and SHE4, include measures that protect land with ecological or environmental value.</p>	<p>mitigate these impacts and some small-scale losses of soil would remain.</p>

Table 8.9: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 7 – Pollution

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
<p>Increase in, and exposure to, air pollution (from main road or AQMA)</p>	<p>Policy SHW3 requires development proposals to carry out an appropriate Air Quality Assessment (AQA) to outline how the proposal will meet air quality objectives. Policy SHW3 addresses air quality issues across the borough and is underpinned by additional policies that ensure air quality objectives will be met including Policies SDS2, SDS4, SDS7, SNE1, SNE2, SNE3, SCC1, SCC2, SCC3, SCC6, SHW1, SHW2, SHW4, SHO3, STR1, STR6, STR9, STR10, SID1, SDM1.</p> <p>Policies SDS2, SDS4, SCC1, SHW1, SHW2, SHO3, STR1, STR2, STR6, STR9, STR10 and SID1 include measures to improve accessibility, reduce the need to travel and provide low emission alternative modes of transport.</p> <p>Policies SDS7, SNE1, SNE2, SNE3, SHW4, SDM1 support the conservation and enhancement of green cover and GI features across the borough that can facilitate ecosystem services such as carbon storage and filtration of air pollutants.</p> <p>Policies SCC2, SCC3, SCC6 include measures that support energy efficient design and infrastructure across the borough.</p>	<p>These policies will help to minimise adverse impacts associated with the exposure of site end users to poor air quality associated with main roads and AQMAs. However, these policies would not be expected to fully mitigate these adverse impacts when considering the implications of delivering the large scale of proposed development all of which will lie within the Sandwell AQMA.</p>
<p>Risk of contamination of groundwater</p>	<p>Policy SCC4 seeks to ensure that no development is permitted within a groundwater SPZ that would physically disturb an aquifer.</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to mitigate negative impacts associated with</p>

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Source Protection Zones	Policies SNE1, SNE2, SNE3, SNE7, SDM1 and SDS7 would help to increase green cover and protect biodiversity assets that would provide ecosystem services such as the filtration of water.	development on groundwater SPZs.
Risk of contamination of watercourses	<p>Policies SNE1, SNE2, SNE3, SNE7, SDM1 and SDS7 would help to increase green cover and protect biodiversity assets that would provide ecosystem services such as the filtration of water.</p> <p>Policy SNE6 requires development proposals likely to affect the canal network must <i>"protect and enhance water quality in the canal and protect water resource availability both in the canal and the wider environment"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SCC4 outlines the requirements for inclusion of SuDS within development proposals and is underpinned by SCC5 outlining design requirements, stating that <i>"surface water drainage strategies are required for all major developments, regardless of their size and the flood zone and catchment they are in"</i>. SuDS can provide benefits to water quality.</p>	These policies may help to lessen adverse impacts on water quality associated with new development, however they would not be expected to fully mitigate these effects.

Table 8.10: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 8 – Waste

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Increase in waste	<p>Policy SWA1 sets out the waste infrastructure requirements do be adhered to throughout the borough, seeking to reduce the generation of waste and associated pollution, promote re-use and recycling of waste in line with the waste hierarchy. The policy ensures the <i>"minimisation of waste production and the re-use and recovery of waste materials"</i> by providing sufficient waste facilities.</p> <p>The policy is underpinned by Policies SWA2, SWA3, SWA4, and SWA5. These policies set out measures to ensure waste facilities meet the demand of the borough in regard to capacity and are sustainable by nature/design, whilst being strategically located in suitable locations.</p>	These policies could potentially encourage recycling and appropriate waste disposal within new developments; however, this policy would not be expected to fully mitigate the increase in household waste which is predicted to occur due to the increased number of dwellings in the Plan area.

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Table 8.11: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 9 – Transport and accessibility

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Limited access to bus services	<p>Policy STR1 states that <i>"all new developments must provide adequate access for all modes of travel, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport to influence travel choices"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SDS1, STR3, STR6, SHW2, SHW3, and SDS4 include measures that would improve accessibility to bus services.</p>	<p>The policy encourages the use of Sandwell's bus network and would be expected to mitigate the restricted access to the bus services within the borough, which affects only a few sites.</p>
Limited access to the railway network	<p>Policy STR1 identifies the <i>"Midlands Rail Hub"</i> as a key transport priority. The policy states that that <i>"all new developments must provide adequate access for all modes of travel, including walking, cycling and public transport"</i>.</p> <p>Policy STR4 states that <i>"existing and disused railway lines will be safeguarded for rail-related uses"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SHW3, STR3, STR6, SDS1, SDS4 include measures to ensure sustainable transport methods are accessible and are being pursued, including the railway network.</p>	<p>The policy encourages the use of the railway network in the borough and would be expected to mitigate the restricted access to the railway network, which affects only a few sites.</p>
Limited access to local services and facilities	<p>Policy STR1 states that <i>"all new developments must provide adequate access for all modes of travel, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport to influence travel choices"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SDS1, STR3, STR5, STR6, SHW2, SHW3 and SDS4 include measures that would improve accessibility to local services and facilities.</p> <p>Sandwell's Centres policies (SCE1-SCE6) support appropriate uses within centres to meet day to day needs of residents and visitors to these areas, in accordance with the settlement hierarchy, including Policy SCE5 which supports the provision of new small-scale local facilities outside of centres.</p> <p>Policy SDM9 supports the retention of, and development of new, community facilities.</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to improve access to local services and facilities including via public transport.</p>

Table 8.12: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 11 – Equality

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Residents located in deprived areas	<p>Policies SDS4, SHO9, SHW2, SHW5, SEC5, SID1, SDM6 include measures that ensure residents have access to local services, including employment opportunities, various public transport methods, shops, educational facilities, leisure and sport facilities and public open space.</p> <p>Policy SHO9 states educational facilities should be <i>"wherever possible, located to address accessibility gaps"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SHW2 states that healthcare facilities should be <i>"located to address accessibility gaps"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SHW5 states that playing fields and sports facilities <i>"will be encouraged, especially in areas where public provision is deficient"</i>.</p>	The policies would be likely to ensure that new development provides site end users with good access to services and facilities, and that new infrastructure is provided to address inequalities.

Table 8.13: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 12 – Health

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Limited access to healthcare facilities	<p>Policy SHW2 states that new healthcare facilities should be <i>"well-designed"</i> and <i>"well-served by public transport infrastructure"</i>. Furthermore, the policy requires any development that would have unacceptable impacts upon healthcare facilities functioning to <i>"contribute to the provision or improvement of such services"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SDM9 includes measures to increase community facilities, including leisure facilities and states that <i>"the provision of additional community facilities will be encouraged, including those serving cultural and other social needs"</i>.</p> <p>Policies STR1, STR2, STR5, SDS4 provide measures that improve accessibility to healthcare and leisure facilities.</p>	These policies would help to ensure that residents across Sandwell have good sustainable access to healthcare facilities.

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Limited access to the pedestrian or cycle network	<p>Policy STR1 states that <i>"all new developments must provide adequate access for all modes of travel, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport to influence travel choices"</i>.</p> <p>Policy STR5 states that <i>"Sandwell will ensure that it can create and maintain a comprehensive cycle network based on the four tiers of the West Midlands cycle network"</i>.</p> <p>Policies SDS1, STR3, SHW2, SHW3, and SDS4 include measures that would improve accessibility to the pedestrian or cycle network.</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to mitigate adverse impacts associated with restricted access to the PRoW and cycle networks and help to encourage the uptake of these sustainable transport options.</p>
Loss of public greenspace	<p>Policy SHW5 states that <i>"the wider community use of school playing fields, other school facilities, such as sports halls, and private facilities will be encouraged, especially in areas where public provision is deficient"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SHW4 states that <i>"proposals should maintain and / or enhance the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and address any shortfalls in provision"</i>.</p> <p>Policies STR1, STR2, STR5, SDS4 provide measures that improve accessibility to public greenspace within Sandwell.</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to ensure that development proposals do not result in the net loss of public greenspace across the Plan area.</p>

Table 8.14: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 13 – Economy

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Net loss of employment floorspace	<p>Policy SDS1 states that the Council alongside local communities, partners and key stakeholders will <i>"deliver at least 1,206ha of employment land"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SEC1 outlines the area of employment land to be delivered and the use of existing employment areas, where the policy states that the <i>"the council will support, with public intervention as necessary, the regeneration and renewal of"</i> existing employment areas.</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to mitigate the potential adverse impacts associated with the loss of existing employment land across the Plan area.</p>

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
	<p>Policy SEC2 states it will <i>"ensure that uses defined by Use Class E (commercial, business and services⁶²) remain the predominant uses within the defined retail core / primary shopping areas"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SEC4 states that development will be supported for <i>"new industrial employment uses or extensions to existing industrial employment uses"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SWM9 states that <i>"any proposal for a community facility or use that involves the loss of premises and sites identified as falling within either strategic or local employment areas will be refused"</i>.</p>	
<p>Limited access to employment opportunities</p>	<p>Policies SDS1 and SEC1 include measures to retain employment areas and introduce new employment areas.</p> <p>Policy SEC2 states that Strategic Employment Areas will be characterised by <i>"excellent accessibility"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SEC3 states that Local Employment Areas are <i>"characterised by a critical mass of industrial, warehousing and service activity with good access to local markets and employees"</i>.</p> <p>Policy SEC5 states that development proposals for new major job-creating development will <i>"be made available to the residents of Sandwell, particularly those in the most deprived areas of the borough and other priority groups"</i>.</p> <p>Policies SDM1, SCE1, STR1, STR2, STR3, STR5 ensure that residents have access to employment opportunities through well-designed places and strong transport infrastructure.</p> <p>Policies SID1 and SDM10 would improve access to employment opportunities, including home working, through the provision of a strong fibre network and telecommunications infrastructure.</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to improve access to employment opportunities across the Plan area.</p>

Table 8.15: Mitigating SLP Policy for SA Objective 14 – Education, skills and training

⁶² <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes>

Identified adverse impact	Potential mitigating influence of SLP policies	Commentary: Will the policies mitigate the identified adverse effects?
Limited access to education opportunities	<p>Policy SHO9 states that nurseries, schools and higher education facilities should be "well-designed" and "well-served by public transport infrastructure".</p> <p>Policies SDM1, SCE1, STR1, STR2, STR3, STR5 ensure that residents have access to education opportunities through well-designed places and strong transport infrastructure.</p> <p>Policies SID1 and SDM10 provide additional access to educational opportunities by the provision of a strong fibre network and telecommunications.</p> <p>Policies SWB2 and SCE3 include measures that support the development of educational facilities.</p>	<p>These policies would be expected to improve access to education opportunities across the Plan area.</p>

8.4 Selection and Rejection of Sites

8.4.1 Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) on SEA states that the SA process should outline the reasons why alternatives were selected and the reasons the rejected options were not taken forward. An overview of the reasons for site selection and rejection have been provided by SMBC, as summarised in **Table 8.16**. Reasons for selection and rejection of the sites proposed at this stage in the plan making process have been informed by the detailed site assessment process undertaken by the Council.

8.4.2 **Table 8.16** is intended to provide an overview only. The decision making of the Council in relation to the sites taken forward reflects the findings of the evidence base documents prepared to support the preparation of the SLP, including the findings of the SA, and have been accompanied by detailed site assessment proformas.

Table 8.16: Outline reasons for selection / rejection of reasonable alternative sites for the SLP

[insert table when available]

9 Conclusions and next steps

9.1 Consultation on the Regulation 18 (II) SA Report

- 9.1.1 This Regulation 18 (II) SA Report is subject to consultation with statutory consultees, stakeholders and the general public alongside the Draft SLP.
- 9.1.2 This report represents the latest stage of the SA process. The SA process will take on board any comments on this report and use them to inform future SA outputs.
- 9.1.3 Once SMBC have reviewed Regulation 18 Draft Plan consultation comments and have begun preparing the next version of the SLP (Regulation 19 stage), preparation of an Environmental Report will be, also known as a full SA report. The Environmental Report will include all of the legal requirements set out in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations.

9.2 Responding to the consultation

- 9.2.1 This Regulation 18 (II) SA Report will be published by SMBC for consultation alongside the Draft SLP. Consultation findings will be used to inform subsequent stages of the SA process.
- 9.2.2 All responses on this consultation exercise should be sent to:

SLP Team

The Planning Policy Team,
Sandwell Council,
PO Box 2374,
Oldbury,
B69 3DE

Email: Sandwell_LocalPlan@sandwell.gov.uk

Habitats Regulations Assessments

Sustainability Appraisals

Strategic Environmental Assessments

Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments

Green Belt Reviews

Expert Witness

Ecological Impact Assessments

Habitat and Ecology Surveys



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Appendix A: SA Framework

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA Regulations topics	Decision making criteria: Will the option / proposal...	Indicators (this list is not exhaustive)
1	Cultural heritage: Protect, enhance and manage sites, features and areas of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage importance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage 	a) conserve features of architectural or historic interest and, where necessary, encourage their conservation and renewal? b) conserve or enhance archaeological sites/remains? c) conserve or enhance the setting of cultural heritage assets? d) improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and condition of historic assets on the Heritage at Risk register. Developments with potential to adversely affect cultural heritage designations or areas of historic value in the SLP area. Statutory and non-statutory sites in the Historic Environment Record (HER) and identified in the HLC.
2	Landscape: Protect, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the landscape and townscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape Cultural heritage 	a) safeguard and enhance the character of the landscape and local distinctiveness and identity? b) protect and enhance visual amenity, including light and noise pollution? c) reuse degraded landscapes/townscapes? d) compromise the purpose of the Green Belt e.g. will it lead to coalescence of settlements and/or urban sprawl?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tranquillity rating of area. Re-use of brownfield land and/or derelict buildings. Developments with potential to alter existing landscape or townscape character. Developments in the Green Belt which contradict with the findings of the Green Belt Study. Developments in areas identified as being of 'moderate' or 'moderate-high' sensitivity in the Landscape Sensitivity Study.
3	Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity: Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity and geodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Flora Fauna 	a) maintain and enhance features and assets of nature conservation value including biodiversity and geodiversity? b) support positive management of local sites (SLINCs and SINCs) designated for nature conservation and geodiversity value? c) contribute towards wider GI networks and promote habitat connectivity? d) deliver biodiversity net gain?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and diversity of protected species present in the area. Quality and extent of priority habitats (habitats of principle importance). Area and condition of sites designated for biological and geological interest. Provision and connectivity of GI.

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA Regulations topics	Decision making criteria: Will the option / proposal...	Indicators (this list is not exhaustive)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amount of biodiversity net gain provided in new developments measured using the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric.
4	Climate change mitigation: Minimise Sandwell's contribution to climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climatic factors 	a) help to reduce the per capita carbon footprint of Sandwell? b) encourage renewable energy generation or use of energy from renewable or low-carbon sources? c) promote sustainable construction principles? d) help to reduce reliance on private car use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carbon emissions from domestic / industrial / commercial sources. Percentage of energy in the area generated from renewable sources. Proximity to, and frequency of, public transport links. Distance to local services and amenities.
5	Climate change adaptation: Plan for the anticipated levels of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climatic factors Soil Water 	a) avoid development in areas at high risk of flooding and seek to reduce flood risk? b) increase the coverage and connectivity of GI? c) promote use of technologies and techniques to adapt to the impacts of climate change? d) ensure that new development is resilient to the effects of extreme weather events?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of properties at risk of flooding. Area of new greenspace created per capita. Area and connectivity of GI. Implementation of adaptive techniques, such as SuDS and passive heating/cooling.
6	Natural resources: Protect and conserve natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil Water Material assets 	a) utilise previously developed, degraded and under-used land? b) lead to the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land? c) lead to the loss or sterilisation of mineral resources, or affect mineral working?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-use of previously developed or brownfield land. Area of potential BMV agricultural land lost to development. Development within groundwater SPZs. Proposed Mineral Safeguarding Area(s).
7	Pollution: Reduce air, soil, water and noise pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Water Soil Human health 	a) improve air quality and avoid generating further air pollution? b) conserve soil quality or help to remediate land affected by ground contamination? c) conserve and improve water quality? d) help to reduce noise pollution and protect sensitive receptors from existing ambient noise?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of exceedances in NO₂, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} annual mean objectives within Sandwell AQMA. Development with potential to generate a significant increase in road traffic emissions or other air pollutants. Area of contaminated land remediated.

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA Regulations topics	Decision making criteria: Will the option / proposal...	Indicators (this list is not exhaustive)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to watercourses or groundwater receptors. Ecological and chemical status of waterbodies within the SLP area and downstream. Percentage change in pollution incidents.
8	Waste: Reduce waste generation and disposal and achieve the sustainable management of waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population Material assets 	a) encourage recycling, re-use and composting of waste? b) minimise and where possible eliminate generation of waste, during both construction and occupation of development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and capacity of waste management facilities. Rate of recycling and composting. Management of local authority collected waste.
9	Transport and accessibility: Improve the efficiency of transport networks by increasing the proportion of travel by sustainable modes and by promoting policies which reduce the need to travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climatic factors Population Material assets 	a) reduce the need to travel and/or reduce travel time? b) provide adequate means of access by a range of sustainable transport modes (i.e. walking, cycling, and public transport)? c) support a modal shift away from private car use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity and connectivity of walking and cycling links. Proximity to public transport links including bus services, metro and rail. Frequency of bus services. Provision or expansion of public transport and active travel infrastructure. Distance / travel times to place of work, local amenities and key services.
10	Housing: Provide affordable, environmentally sound and good quality housing for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population 	a) provide a mix of good-quality housing, including homes that are suitable for first-time buyers? b) provide housing suitable for the growing elderly population? c) provide decent, affordable, and accessible homes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varied housing mix. Percentage of dwellings delivered as affordable housing. Number of extra care homes. Provision of pitches and plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
11	Equality: Reduce poverty, crime and social deprivation and secure economic inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population Human health 	a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment? b) reduce crime and the fear of crime?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Level of qualifications e.g. number of people with NVQ2. Rates of crime.

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA Regulations topics	Decision making criteria: Will the option / proposal...	Indicators (this list is not exhaustive)
			c) create safe neighbourhoods and support community cohesion? d) advance equality of opportunity? e) help to achieve life-long learning and increase learning participation and adult education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of and access to community facilities including libraries and local centres. Provision of accessible and adaptable homes to meet the needs of the population.
12	Health: Safeguard and improve community health, safety and wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human health Population 	a) improve sustainable access for all to health, leisure and recreational facilities? b) improve and enhance Sandwell's GI network? c) improve road safety? d) consider the needs of Sandwell's growing elderly population?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel time by active travel and/or public transport to healthcare facilities and services. Provision and accessibility of open greenspace and GI. Accessibility to sports facilities e.g. football pitches, playing fields, tennis courts and leisure centres.
13	Economy: Develop a dynamic, diverse and knowledge-based economy that excels in innovation with higher value, lower impact activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population Material assets 	a) improve sustainable access to employment opportunities? b) encourage business start-ups in the SLP area? c) protect and enhance the vitality and viability of existing employment and retail areas? d) protect and create jobs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity and sustainable accessibility to employment opportunities. Number of residents working within Sandwell, and rates of unemployment. Number of new business start-ups as a result of the development. Total amount of employment land. Number of vacant units in strategic centres.
14	Education, skills and training: Raise educational attainment and develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population 	a) improve sustainable access for all to education and training opportunities? b) encourage a diversity of education and training opportunities? c) Support the provision of an appropriately skilled workforce?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to education and training, particularly primary schools and secondary schools. Provision of new education and training facilities and opportunities. Accessibility of education and training facilities by public transport. Capacity of local schools to meet demand from new development.

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B.1 Overview

B.1.1 The purpose of this appendix

- B.1.1.1 This appendix provides additional context to **Chapter 2** of the main Regulation 18 (II) SA Report regarding the methodology used to assess reasonable alternative sites within the emerging Sandwell Local Plan (SLP).
- B.1.1.2 Topic-specific methodologies have been established which reflect the differences between the SA Objectives and how different receptors should be considered in the appraisal process for reasonable alternative sites. There are also a number of assumptions and limitations noted within each of the following sections, which should be borne in mind when considering the assessment findings.
- B.1.1.3 The topic-specific methodologies set out in **Boxes B.2.1** to **B.15.3** explain how the likely impact per receptor has been identified in line with the local context and the impact symbols presented in **Table 2.4** within the main Regulation 18 (II) SA Report.
- B.1.1.4 All distances stated in site assessments are measured 'as the crow flies' from the closest point of the site/receptor in question, unless otherwise stated.
- B.1.1.5 **Appendix C** sets out the detailed appraisal of each reasonable alternative site proposed. The appraisal evaluates the likely significant effects of each reasonable alternative against the 14 SA Objectives, using the methodology as set out in this appendix.
- B.1.1.6 The level of detail that can be expressed through the SA assessments depends on the level of detail provided associated with the part of the plan in question.

B.2 SA Objective 1: Cultural heritage

B.2.1 Introduction and context

- B.2.1.1 **Boxes B.2.1 to B.2.8** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 1: Cultural heritage.
- B.2.1.2 Impacts on heritage assets will be largely determined by the specific layout and design of development proposals, as well as the nature and significance of the heritage asset. There is a risk of adverse effects occurring, some of which may be unavoidable. As such, this risk has been reflected in the assessment as a negative impact where a site is in close proximity to heritage assets.
- B.2.1.3 Adverse impacts are recorded for options which have the potential to have an adverse impact on sensitive heritage designations, including Grade I, II* and II Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments (SM), Registered Parks and Gardens (RPG), and Conservation Areas (CA).
- B.2.1.4 It is assumed that where a designated heritage asset coincides with a site proposal, the heritage asset will not be lost as a result of development (unless otherwise specified in the Local Plan). Development which could potentially be discordant with the local character or setting, for example, due to design, layout, scale or type, would be expected to adversely impact the setting of nearby heritage assets¹ that are important components of the local area. Adverse impacts on heritage assets are predominantly associated with impacts on the existing setting of the asset and the character of the local area, as well as adverse impacts on views of, or from, the asset.
- B.2.1.5 Heritage assets identified on Historic England's Heritage at Risk Register may be identified as being at risk for a number of reasons, for example, due to dilapidation of the building fabric or other sources of risk such as coastal erosion, cultivation or scrub encroachment². Where Heritage at Risk assets could potentially be impacted by the proposed development at a site, this has been stated.
- B.2.1.6 It should be noted that not all of Sandwell's historic environment resource and heritage assets are subject to statutory designations; non-designated features comprise a significant aspect of heritage, which is often experienced on a daily basis. This may include buildings and other features of historic interest which are not listed, as well as both discovered and undiscovered archaeological remains.

¹ Setting is taken to mean the surroundings in which a heritage asset may be experienced, which does not relate solely to distance from proposed developments to heritage assets. Historic England (2017) The Setting of Heritage Assets. Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (2nd Edition). Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/> [Date accessed: 27/06/23]

² Historic England (2022) Search the Heritage at Risk Register. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

B.2.1.7 It is anticipated that SMBC will require a Heritage Statement or Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment to be prepared to accompany future planning applications, where appropriate.

B.2.2 Cultural heritage receptors

Box B.2.1: SA Objective 1: Grade I Listed Buildings

Score	Likely Impact – Grade I Listed Buildings
--	Development proposal coincides with, is located adjacent to, or could significantly impact the setting of, a Grade I Listed Building.
-	Development proposal located within the wider setting of a Grade I Listed Building.
0	Development proposal is not considered likely to affect the setting or character of a Grade I Listed Building.
+	Development proposal which could potentially enhance a Grade I Listed Building or its setting.
Notes	
Grade I Listed Buildings are considered to be those of exceptional interest. Data available from Historic England ³ .	

Box B.2.2: SA Objective 1: Grade II Listed Buildings*

Score	Likely Impact - Grade II* Listed Buildings
--	Development proposal coincides with, or could significantly impact the setting of, a Grade II* Listed Building.
-	Development proposal located within the setting of a Grade II* Listed Building.
0	Development proposal not considered likely to impact a Grade II* Listed Building or its setting.
+	Development proposal which could potentially enhance a Grade II* Listed Building or its setting.
Notes	
Grade II* Listed Buildings are considered to be those of more than special interest. Data sourced from Historic England ⁴ .	

Box B.2.3: SA Objective 1: Grade II Listed Buildings

Score	Likely Impact - Grade II Listed Buildings
--	Development proposal coincides with a Grade II Listed Building.
-	Development proposal located within the setting of a Grade II Listed Building.
0	Development proposal not considered likely to impact a Grade II Listed Building or its setting.

³ Historic England (2023) Download Listing Data. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/data-downloads/> [Date accessed: 06/06/23]

⁴ Ibid

Score	Likely Impact - Grade II Listed Buildings
+	Development proposal which could potentially enhance a Grade II Listed Building or its setting.
Notes	
Grade II Listed Buildings are considered to those of special interest. Data sourced from Historic England ⁵ .	

Box B.2.4: SA Objective 1: Scheduled Monuments

Score	Likely Impact - Scheduled Monuments
--	Development proposal coincides with a SM.
-	Development proposal located within the setting of a SM.
0	Development proposal not considered to impact an SM or its setting.
+	Development proposal which could potentially enhance an SM or its setting.
Notes	
Scheduling is the selection of a sample of nationally important archaeological sites. Data sourced from Historic England ⁶ .	

Box B.2.5: SA Objective 1: Registered Parks and Gardens

Score	Likely Impact - Registered Parks and Gardens
--	Development proposal coincides with an RPG.
-	Development proposal located within the setting of an RPG.
0	Development proposal not considered likely to impact an RPG or its setting.
+	Development proposal which could potentially enhance an RPG or its setting.
Notes	
The main purpose of the Register is to celebrate designed landscapes of note and encourage appropriate protection. Data sourced from Historic England ⁷ .	

Box B.2.6: SA Objective 1: Conservation Areas

Score	Likely Impact - Conservation Areas
-	Development proposal located within a Conservation Area or considered to be located within the setting of a Conservation Area.
0	Development proposal not considered to impact a Conservation Area or its setting.

⁵ Ibid

⁶ Ibid

⁷ Ibid

Score	Likely Impact - Conservation Areas
+	Development proposals which could potentially enhance the character or setting of a Conservation Area.

Notes
Conservation Area data provided by SMBC. Information available online ⁸ .

Box B.2.7: SA Objective 1: Archaeological Priority Areas

Score	Likely Impact - Archaeological Priority Area
-	Development proposal coincides with an APA.
0	Development proposal does not coincide with an APA.
+	Development proposal which could potentially enhance an APA.

Notes
The Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) Study ⁹ aimed to create a strategic landscape-level understanding of the historic character and environment of the Black Country, including Sandwell. The study also identified a number of Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs), which are considered to contain particularly rare or well-preserved remains of high archaeological and historic interest. APA data has been provided by SMBC and is detailed within the HLC report.

Box B.2.8: SA Objective 1: Historic Landscape Characterisation

Score	Likely Impact - Historic Landscape Characterisation
-	Development proposal located within an area of high historic landscape or townscape value and/or area designed landscape of high historic value
0	Development proposal located outside of areas of high historic landscape or townscape value and designed landscapes
+	Development proposal which could potentially enhance historic character.

Notes
The Black Country HLC Study ¹⁰ aimed to create a strategic landscape-level understanding of the historic character and environment of the Black Country, including Sandwell. The study identified several Historic Environment Area Designations (HEADs) within Sandwell’s Green Belt and in the urban area. Areas of High Historic Townscape Value (AHHTVs) and Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value (DLHHVs) have also been identified within the HLC. AHHTVs are areas “ <i>where built heritage makes a significant contribution to the local character and distinctiveness</i> ” and have been identified due to their sense of place, street plan and form, streetscape, views and setting, and representation. DLHHVs are “ <i>designed landscapes</i> ”

⁸ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2021) Listed Buildings and conservation areas. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200275/planning_and_buildings/444/listed_buildings_and_conservation_areas [Date accessed: 02/06/23]

⁹ Oxford Archaeology (2019) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

¹⁰ Ibid

Notes

that make an important contribution to local historic character but do not meet the criteria for inclusion on the national Register of Parks and Gardens” and have been identified due to the date, preservation, aesthetics, and associations with people and past events.

HLC data has been provided by SMBC and is detailed within the HLC report.

B.3 SA Objective 2: Landscape

B.3.1 Introduction and context

B.3.1.1 **Box B.3.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 2: Landscape.

B.3.1.2 Impacts on landscape are often determined by the specific layout and design of development proposals, as well as the site-specific landscape circumstances, as experienced on the ground. Detailed designs for each development proposal are uncertain at this stage of the assessment. This assessment comprises a desk-based exercise which has not been verified in the field. Therefore, the nature of the potential impacts on the landscape are, to an extent, uncertain. There is a risk of negative effects occurring, some of which may be unavoidable. As such, this risk has been reflected in the assessment as a negative impact where a development proposal is located in close proximity to sensitive landscape receptors. The level of impact has been assessed based on the nature and value of, and proximity to, the landscape receptor in question.

B.3.1.3 Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) lies approximately 14km to the north of Sandwell Borough at its closest point. Given this distance, there is unlikely to be any significant adverse effects on the special qualities of the AONB arising from the proposed development sites. It is assumed that any future development would be accompanied by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) or Landscape and Visual Appraisal (LVA) if necessary to consider any potential for adverse impacts.

B.3.1.4 There is no evidence available to inform the SA assessments with regard to the landscape character or sensitivity of Sandwell’s urban areas. Information relating to the historic environment, including the Historic Landscape Characterisation and associated designations has been assessed under SA Objective 1: Cultural Heritage (see **Box B.2.8**).

B.3.2 Landscape receptors

Box B.3.1: SA Objective 2: Landscape sensitivity

Score	Likely Impact - Landscape Sensitivity Assessment
--	Development proposals located within areas of 'moderate-high' or 'high' landscape sensitivity.
-	Development proposals located within areas of 'low-moderate' or 'moderate' sensitivity.
+/-	Development proposals located outside of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment study area.
0	Development proposals located within areas of 'low' sensitivity, or those not assessed in the study.
+	Development proposals which would protect or enhance features of the landscape as identified within the study.

Notes

The appraisal of sites is informed by the Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment¹¹, which assessed the sensitivity of land outside of the urban areas of Sandwell and the other Black Country Authorities (i.e. Green Belt land) to housing and commercial development. The aim of the study was to identify the extent to which the character and quality of Green Belt land is susceptible to change as a result of future development. Parcels of land were classified ranging from 'high' to 'low' sensitivity.

As the majority of reasonable alternative development sites identified by SMBC lie outside of the Green Belt, and as such outside of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment study area, the potential effects of each site on sensitive landscapes are uncertain and would benefit from further site-specific studies to identify any local sensitive views or landscapes. Only one reasonable alternative site, 137 (Poppy Drive Open Space) lies partially within the Green Belt areas assessed in the Sensitivity Assessment.

¹¹ LUC (2019) Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Available at:
https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13883/black-country-lsa-front-end-report-final-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

B.4 SA Objective 3: Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity

B.4.1 Introduction and context

- B.4.1.1 **Boxes B.4.1 to B.4.9** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 3: Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity.
- B.4.1.2 The biodiversity objective considers adverse impacts of the proposed development at a landscape-scale. It focuses on an assessment of proposed development on a network of designated and undesignated sites, wildlife corridors and individual habitats within the Plan area.
- B.4.1.3 Where a site is coincident with, adjacent to or located in close proximity to an ecological receptor, it is assumed that negative effects associated with development will arise to some extent. These negative effects include those that occur during the construction phase and are associated with the construction process and construction vehicles (e.g. habitat loss, habitat fragmentation, habitat degradation, noise, air, water and light pollution) and those that are associated with the operation/occupation phases of development (e.g. public access associated disturbances, increases in local congestion resulting in a reduction in air quality, changes in noise levels, visual disturbance, light pollution, impacts on water levels and quality etc.).
- B.4.1.4 It is assumed that construction and occupation of previously undeveloped greenfield land would result in a net reduction in vegetation cover in the Plan area. This would also be expected to lead to greater levels of fragmentation and isolation for the wider ecological network, such as due to the loss of stepping-stones and corridors. This will restrict the ability of ecological receptors to adapt to the effects of climate change. The loss of greenfield land is considered under the Natural Resources objective (SA Objective 6) in this assessment.
- B.4.1.5 It should be noted that no detailed ecological surveys have been completed by Lepus to inform the assessments made in this report.
- B.4.1.6 Protected species survey information is not available for the sites within the Plan area. It is acknowledged that data is available from the local biological records centre. However, it is noted that this data may be under recorded in certain areas. This under recording does not imply species absence. As a consequence, consideration of this data on a site-by-site basis within this assessment would have the potential to skew results – favouring well recorded areas of the Plan area. As such impacts on protected species have not been assessed on a site-by-site basis.
- B.4.1.7 It is anticipated that the Council will require detailed ecological surveys and assessments to accompany future planning applications. Such surveys will determine on a site-by-site basis the presence of Priority Species and Priority Habitats protected under the NERC Act.
- B.4.1.8 It is assumed that mature trees and hedgerows will be retained where possible.

B.4.2 Biodiversity receptors

Box B.4.1: SA Objective 3: Habitats sites

Score	Likely Impact - Habitats site e.g. SAC, SPA or Ramsar site
--	Development proposal coincides with, or is located in close proximity to, a Habitats site. Likelihood of direct impacts.
-	Development proposal is located within a recognised ZoI or similar spatial catchment relative to the Habitats site. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.
+/-	Development located outside of a recognised ZoI where, in absence of HRA conclusions, the effect of development is uncertain.
0	Development not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on Habitats sites.
+	Development proposals which would be expected to enhance features within a Habitats site.

Notes
<p>The area within which development proposals could potentially have direct, indirect and in-combination impacts on the integrity of a Habitats site is referred to as the Zone of Influence (ZOI). This is determined through an identification of sensitive receptors at each Habitats site (its qualifying features) and pathways via which the Local Plan may have an impact. At this stage, no ZOI have been formally identified for surrounding Habitats sites, and so at this stage of the assessment process, the potential impact of each development site is uncertain. It should be noted that the impact of proposed sites on Habitats sites will be tested through the Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) process, the findings of which will be used to inform the Regulation 19 SA. The HRA will provide further detail relating to potential impacts on Habitats sites within and surrounding the Plan area.</p> <p>Data for Habitats sites is available from Natural England¹².</p>

Box B.4.2: SA Objective 3: SSSI

Score	Likely Impact - SSSI
--	Development coincides with, or is located adjacent to, an SSSI.
-	Within an IRZ which indicates proposed development should be consulted on with Natural England. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.
0	Development within an IRZ which does not indicate the proposed development need to consult with Natural England.
+	Development proposals which would enhance features of an SSSI.

Notes
<p>Natural England has developed Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) for each SSSI unit in the country. IRZs are a Geographical Information System (GIS) tool developed by Natural England which allow a rapid initial assessment of the potential risks posed by development proposals to: SSSIs, SACs, SPAs and Ramsar sites. They define zones around each site which reflect the particular sensitivities of the features for which it is notified and indicate the types of development proposal which could potentially have adverse impacts.</p> <p>Where a site falls within more than one SSSI IRZ the worst-case risk zone is reported upon in the assessment.</p>

¹² Natural England (2023) Special Areas of Conservation (England). Available at: https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/e4142658906c498fa37f0a20d3fdcf0_0 [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

Notes
Data for SSSIs and IRZs is available from Natural England ¹³ .

Box B.4.3: SA Objective 3: NNR

Score	Likely Impact - NNR
--	Development coincides with an NNR. Likelihood of direct impacts.
-	Development could potentially result in adverse impacts on an NNR. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.
0	Development not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on NNRs.
+	Development proposals which would enhance or create an NNR.

Notes
National Nature Reserves (NNRs) were established to protect some of England’s most important habitats, species and geology, and to provide ‘outdoor laboratories’ for research. Data for NNRs is available from Natural England ¹⁴ .

Box B.4.4: SA Objective 3: Ancient woodland

Score	Likely Impact - Ancient woodland
--	Development proposal coincides with a stand of ancient woodland. Likelihood of direct impacts.
-	Development proposal anticipated to result in adverse impacts on a stand of ancient woodland. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.
0	Development proposal would not be anticipated to impact ancient woodland.
+	Development proposals which would enhance ancient woodland.

Notes
Ancient woodland is defined as an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600AD and includes ‘ancient semi-natural woodland’ and ‘plantations on ancient woodland sites’, both of which have equal protection under the NPPF ¹⁵ . Data for ancient woodlands is available from Natural England ¹⁶ .

¹³ Natural England (2023) Natural England’s Impact Risk Zones for Sites of Special Scientific Interest, 25 May 2023. Available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/5ae2af0c-1363-4d40-9d1a-e5a1381449f8/ssi-impact-risk-zones> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

¹⁴ Natural England (2023) National Nature Reserves (England). Available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/726484b0-d14e-44a3-9621-29e79fc47bfc/national-nature-reserves-england> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

¹⁵ Forestry Commission and Natural England (2022) Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: protecting them from development. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

¹⁶ Natural England (2023) Ancient Woodland (England). Available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/9461f463-c363-4309-ae77-fdc7e9df7d3/ancient-woodland-england> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

Box B.4.5: SA Objective 3: LNR

Score	Likely Impact - LNR
-	Development proposal could potentially result in adverse impacts on an LNR, such as those which coincide or are located in close proximity. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.
0	Development proposal not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on an LNR.
+	Development proposals which would enhance or create an LNR.

Notes
Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are statutory designations, representing places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally, which give people special opportunities to study and learn about them or simply enjoy and have contact with nature. Data for LNRs is available from Natural England ¹⁷ .

Box B.4.6: SA Objective 3: SINC

Score	Likely Impact – Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC)
--	Development proposal coincides with a SINC. Likelihood of direct impacts.
-	Development proposal anticipated to result in adverse impacts on a SINC. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.
0	Development not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on a SINC.
+	Development proposals which would enhance or create a SINC.

Notes
Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs) are non-statutory designated sites of Birmingham and the Black Country importance ¹⁸ . They are endorsed by the Birmingham and Black Country Local Sites Partnership. Data for SINCs has been provided by SMBC. For the purposes of the SLP, SINCs operate as a hard constraint for site allocation because they are rated more highly for their value to ecology and the environment.

Box B.4.7: SA Objective 3: SLINC

Score	Likely Impact – Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC)
-	Development proposal anticipated to result in adverse impacts on a SLINC, such as those which coincide or are located in close proximity. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.
0	Development not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on a SLINC.
+	Development proposals which would enhance or create a SLINC.

¹⁷ Natural England (2023) Local Nature Reserves (England). Available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/acdf4a9e-a115-41fb-bbe9-603c819aa7f7/local-nature-reserves-england> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

¹⁸ EcoRecord (2009) Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). Available at: <http://www.ecorecord.org.uk/index.php?q=local-sites/sincs> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

Notes
<p>Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs) are non-statutory designated sites of borough importance¹⁹. They are endorsed by the Birmingham and Black Country Local Sites Partnership, and then adopted by SMBC. Data for SLINCs has been provided by SMBC.</p> <p>For the purposes of the SLP, whilst SLINCs are protected, under certain circumstances development may take place adjacent to or on them where appropriate mitigation can be realised and where the value of the development is considered to be sufficient to outweigh any damage to the habitat.</p>

Box B.4.8: SA Objective 3: Geological conservation

Score	Likely Impact - Geological Conservation
-	Development proposal anticipated to result in adverse impacts on a geological site, due to location or proximity. Likelihood of direct or indirect impacts.
0	Development proposal not anticipated to result in adverse impacts on a Geological Site.
+	Development proposal anticipated to enhance a geological site.

Notes
Data for geological sites provided by SMBC and data for underlying geological context provided by British Geological Survey.

Box B.4.9: SA Objective 3: Priority habitat

Score	Likely Impact - Priority Habitat
-	Development proposal coincides with a priority habitat.
0	Development proposal does not coincide with a priority habitat.
+	Development proposals which enhance or create a priority habitat.

Notes
For the purposes of this assessment, impacts on priority habitats have been considered in the context of Natural England’s publicly available Priority Habitat Inventory database ²⁰ . It is acknowledged this may not reflect current local site conditions in all instances.

¹⁹ EcoRecord (2009) Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs). Available at: <http://www.ecorecord.org.uk/index.php?q=local-sites/slincs> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

²⁰ Natural England (2023) Priority Habitat Inventory (England). Available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/4b6ddab7-6c0f-4407-946e-d6499f19fcde/priority-habitat-inventory-england> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

B.5 SA Objective 4: Climate change mitigation

B.5.1 Introduction and context

B.5.1.1 **Box B.5.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 4: Climate change mitigation.

B.5.1.2 The incorporation of GI within developments presents several opportunities to mitigate climate change, for example, through providing natural cooling to combat the ‘urban heat island’ effect, reducing the effects of air pollution and providing more pleasant outdoor environments to encourage active travel²¹.

B.5.1.3 However, it is likely that new development would result in an increase in local greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions due to the increase in the local population and the number of operating businesses. The increase in GHG emissions caused by new developments is often associated with impacts of the construction phase, the occupation and operation of homes and businesses, fuel consumption and increases in local road transport with associated emissions. This impact is considered to be permanent and non-reversible.

B.5.1.4 It should be noted that the appraisal of the reasonable alternatives is limited in its assessment of carbon emissions. The 1% principle as set out in **Box B.5.1** is only a coarse precautionary indicator, and greater detail of carbon data would help to better quantify effects.

B.5.2 Climate change mitigation receptors

Box B.5.1: SA Objective 4: Carbon emissions

Score	Likely Impact - Carbon Emissions
--	Residential-led development which could potentially result in an increase in CO ₂ emissions by 1% or more in comparison to current levels.
-	Residential-led development which could potentially result in an increase in CO ₂ emissions by 0.1% or more in comparison to current levels.
0	Development would be expected to result in a negligible increase in CO ₂ emissions.
+/-	Non-residential or Gypsy and Traveller development where the carbon emissions produced as a result of the proposed development is uncertain, or development sites where the proposed use is uncertain.
+	Development proposals which include energy saving or renewable energy technologies. Development proposals which would reduce reliance on private car use, encourage active travel or the use of public transport.

²¹ TCPA (2023) What is Green Infrastructure? Available at: <https://www.tcpa.org.uk/what-is-green-infrastructure/> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

Notes

The estimated CO₂ emissions for Sandwell in 2020 was 1,093.1 kilo tonnes, with per capita emissions of 3.3 tonnes, according to UK local authority CO₂ emissions data²². Sandwell has an average of 2.7 people per dwelling²³.

Based on these figures, and assuming new residents will generate CO₂ emissions in line with the current average, it has been calculated that proposals for 1,211 homes or more are expected to increase carbon emissions by 1% or more in comparison to the current estimates for Sandwell. Proposals for 121 homes or more are expected to increase carbon emissions by 0.1% or more in comparison to current estimates for Sandwell.

²² DBEIS (2022) UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005-2020. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2020> [Date accessed: 13/09/23]

²³ People per Dwelling has been calculated using the ONS mid-2021 population estimates (Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>) and dwelling stock (Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>)

B.6 SA Objective 5: Climate change adaptation

B.6.1 Introduction and context

B.6.1.1 **Boxes B.6.1 to B.6.3** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 5: Climate change adaptation.

B.6.1.2 It is assumed that development proposals will be in perpetuity, and it is therefore likely that development will be subject to the impacts of flooding at some point in the future, should it be situated on land at risk of fluvial or surface water flooding.

B.6.2 Climate change adaptation receptors

Box B.6.1: SA Objective 5: Fluvial flooding

Score	Likely Impact - Fluvial Flooding
--	Development proposals which coincide with Flood Zones 3.
-	Development proposals which coincide with Flood Zone 2.
+	Development proposals which are located wholly within Flood Zone 1.

Notes

Data for fluvial flooding has been derived from the latest available Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea)²⁴, such that:

- **Flood Zone 3:** Greater or equal to 1% chance of river flooding in any given year or greater than 0.5% chance of sea flooding in any given year;
- **Flood Zone 2:** Between 1% and 0.1% chance of river flooding in any given year or 0.5% and 0.1% chance of sea flooding in any given year; and
- **Flood Zone 1:** Less than 0.1% chance of river and sea flooding in any given year.

Box B.6.2: SA Objective 5: Surface water flooding

Score	Likely Impact - Surface Water Flooding
--	Development proposals which coincide with areas at high risk of surface water flooding.
-	Development proposals which coincide with areas at low and/or medium risk of surface water flooding.
0	Development proposals which are not located in areas determined to be at risk of surface water flooding.

²⁴ Environment Agency (2023) Flood Map for Planning (Rivers and Sea) – Flood Zone 2 and Flood Zone 3. Available at: <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/cf494c44-05cd-4060-a029-35937970c9c6/flood-map-for-planning-rivers-and-sea-flood-zone-2> and <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/bed63fc1-dd26-4685-b143-2941088923b3/flood-map-for-planning-rivers-and-sea-flood-zone-3> [Date accessed: 14/09/23]

Score	Likely Impact - Surface Water Flooding
+	Development proposals which include the integration of GI, open space, SUDS or other surface water flood risk alleviating measures

Notes
<p>The assessment is based on the Environment Agency surface water flood risk data²⁵, such that²⁶:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High risk: more than 3.3% chance of flooding each year; • Medium risk: between 1% - 3.3% chance of flooding each year; and • Low risk: between 0.1% - 1% chance of flooding each year. <p>Areas determined to be at very low risk of flooding (less than 0.1% chance) would be expected to result in a negligible impact on surface water flooding for the purposes of this assessment.</p>

Box B.6.3: SA Objective 5: Indicative flood zone

Score	Likely Impact - Indicative Flood Zone
--	Development proposals which coincide with Indicative Flood Zone 3b.
0	Development proposals which do not coincide with Indicative Flood Zone 3b.

Notes
<p>Indicative Flood Zone 3b is present in areas where flooding will potentially worsen in future due to climate change. Data for Indicative Flood Zones has been provided by SMBC, which relates to the data produced by JBA Consulting as part of the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)²⁷.</p>

²⁵ Environment Agency (2021) Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Extent: 3.3 percent annual chance, 1 percent annual chance, 0.1 percent annual chance (updated 14 May 2021). Available at: <https://www.data.gov.uk/dataset/95ea1c96-f3dd-4f92-b41f-ef21603a2802/risk-of-flooding-from-surface-water-extent-3-3-percent-annual-chance> [Date accessed: 14/09/23]

²⁶ Environment Agency (2013) Risk of flooding from surface water. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/297429/LIT_8986_eff63d.pdf [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

²⁷ JBA Consulting (2020) The Black Country Authorities Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Final Report 25th June 2020. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p4/t2p4h/> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

B.7 SA Objective 6: Natural resources

B.7.1 Introduction and context

- B.7.1.1** **Boxes B.7.1** to **B.7.2** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 6: Natural resources.
- B.7.1.2** In accordance with the core planning principles of the NPPF, development on previously developed land is recognised as an efficient use of land. Development of previously undeveloped land and greenfield sites is not considered to be an efficient use of land.
- B.7.1.3** The natural resources objective also considers potential effects on mineral resources. Minerals are a finite, non-renewable resource and as such, their conservation and safeguarding for future generations is important. There are no Mineral Safeguarding Areas or Areas of Search identified within Sandwell in the Black Country Minerals Study²⁸; as such all proposed development sites would be expected to have a negligible impact on mineral resources based on the current evidence available.

B.7.2 Natural resources receptors

Box B.7.1: SA Objective 6: Previously developed land / land with environmental value

Score	Likely Impact - Previously Developed (Brownfield) Land / Land with Environmental Value
-	Development proposals located on previously undeveloped land, or brownfield land with potential environmental value.
+	Development proposals located on previously developed or brownfield land with no environmental value.

Notes
Assessment of sites comprising previously developed land is in accordance with the definitions in the NPPF ²⁹ . Assessment of current land use and potential environmental value has been made through reference to aerial photography and the use of Google Maps. It should be noted that this may not reflect the current status of the site, and the nature of development within the site boundary is unknown, so a degree of uncertainty remains.

Box B.7.2: SA Objective 6: ALC

Score	Likely Impact - ALC
--	Development proposals which are situated on Grade 1, 2 or 3 ALC land comprising 20ha or more.
-	Development proposals which are situated on Grade 1, 2 or 3 ALC land comprising less than 20ha.

²⁸ wood (2020) Review of the Evidence Base for Minerals to support preparation of the Black Country Plan. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p4/t2p4f/> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

²⁹ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 14/09/23]

Score	Likely Impact - ALC
0	Development proposals located on previously developed land with no environmental value.
+	Development proposals which are situated on Grade 4 and 5 ALC land, or land classified as 'urban' or 'non-agricultural'.

Notes
<p>The Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) system classifies land into five categories according to versatility and suitability for growing crops. The top three grades, Grades 1, 2 and 3a, are referred to as the Best and Most Versatile (BMV) land³⁰. In the absence of site-specific surveys to identify Grades 3a and 3b, and in line with the precautionary principle, ALC Grade 3 is considered as BMV land. ALC data is available from Natural England³¹.</p> <p>A 20ha threshold has been used based on Natural England guidance³².</p>

³⁰ MAFF. October 1988. Available at Natural England.
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6257050620264448?category=5954148537204736> [Date Accessed: 20/06/23]

³¹ Natural England (2019) Agricultural Land Classification (ALC) (England). Available at: https://naturalengland-defra.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/5d2477d8d04b41d4bbc9a8742f858f4d_0?geometry=-3.131%2C52.513%2C-0.667%2C53.094 [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

³² Natural England (2009) Agricultural Land Classification: protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/35012> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

B.8 SA Objective 7: Pollution

B.8.1 Introduction and context

B.8.1.1 **Boxes B.8.1 to B.8.5** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 7: Pollution.

B.8.1.2 The assessment under this objective considers the potential for reasonable alternative sites to generate pollution associated with the construction and occupation of new development, as well as the potential to expose site end users to existing sources of pollution.

B.8.2 Pollution receptors

Box B.8.1: SA Objective 7: AQMA

Score	Likely Impact - AQMA
-	All development proposals in the Black Country are located within an AQMA.

Notes

Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs) are considered to be an area where the national air quality objective will not be met. Introducing new development within an AQMA would therefore be expected to expose new residents to poor air quality. UK AQMA data is available from Defra³³.

Box B.8.2: SA Objective 7: Main road

Score	Likely Impact - Main road
-	Development proposals located within 200m of a main road.
0	Development proposals located over 200m from a main road.
+	Development proposals which would help to reduce the number of cars used, promote the use of public transport and active travel and reduce congestion on nearby roads.

Notes

It is assumed that sites located in close proximity to main roads would expose site end users to transport associated noise and air pollution. Negative impacts on the long-term health of site end users would be anticipated where residents would be exposed to air pollution.

In line with the DMRB guidance, it is assumed that receptors would be most vulnerable to these impacts located within 200m of a main road^{34 35}. The Department for Transport (DfT) in their Transport Analysis Guidance (TAG) consider that, "beyond 200m from the link centre, the contribution of vehicle emissions to

³³ Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs (2022) UK Air Information Resource. Available at: <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/maps/> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

³⁴ Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (2019) LA 105 Air Quality. Available at: <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/search/10191621-07df-44a3-892e-c1d5c7a28d90> [Date Accessed: 20/06/23]

³⁵ Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (2019) LA 104 Environmental assessment and monitoring. Available at: <https://www.standardsforhighways.co.uk/search/0f6e0b6a-d08e-4673-8691-cab564d4a60a> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

Notes

*local pollution levels is not significant*³⁶. A 200m buffer distance from main roads (motorways and A-roads) has therefore been applied in this assessment. Road data is available from Ordnance Survey³⁷.

Box B.8.3: SA Objective 7: Water quality

Score	Likely Impact - Water quality
-	Development proposals located within 10m of a watercourse.
+/-	Development proposals located over 10m from a watercourse.
+	Development proposal includes integration of GI or the naturalisation of watercourses.

Notes

Construction activities in or near watercourses have the potential to cause pollution, impact upon the bed and banks of watercourses and impact on the quality of the water. A 10m buffer zone from a watercourse in which no works, clearance, storage or run-off should be permitted has been used as per available guidance^{38,39}. However, it should be noted that development further away than this has the potential to lead to adverse impacts such as those resulting from runoff and should be considered on a site-by-site basis; as such, sites over 10m from a watercourse are scored as 'uncertain' in this assessment.

Watercourse mapping data is available from the Ordnance Survey⁴⁰.

Box B.8.4: SA Objective 7: Groundwater SPZ

Score	Likely Impact - Groundwater SPZ
-	Development proposal coincides with a groundwater SPZ.
0	Development proposal does not coincide with a groundwater SPZ.

Notes

The vulnerability of groundwater to pollution is determined by the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soil and rocks, which control the ease with which an unprotected hazard can affect groundwater. Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) indicate the risk to groundwater supplies from potentially polluting activities and accidental releases of pollutants. As such, any site that is located within a groundwater SPZ could potentially have an adverse impact on groundwater quality. Groundwater source catchments are divided into three zones:

- Inner Zone (Zone I) – 50-day travel time from any point below the water table to the source;
- Outer Zone (Zone II) – 400-day travel time; and

³⁶ Department for Transport (2023) TAG unit A3 Environmental Impact Appraisal. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/825064/tag-unit-a3-environmental-impact-appraisal.pdf [Date accessed: 20/03/23]

³⁷ Ordnance Survey (2023) OS Open Roads. Available at: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/business-government/products/open-map-roads> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

³⁸ DAERA (2019) Advice and Information for planning approval on land which is of nature conservation value. Available at: <https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/advice-and-information-planning-approval-land-which-nature-conservation-value> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

³⁹ Wild Trout Trust. Buffer Zones. Available at: <https://www.wildtrout.org/content/buffer-zones> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

⁴⁰ Ordnance Survey (2023) OS Open Rivers. Available at: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/business-government/products/open-map-rivers> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Total Catchment (Zone III) – within which all groundwater recharge is presumed to be discharged at the source. <p>SPZ data is available from the Environment Agency⁴¹.</p>

Box B.8.5: SA Objective 7: Increase in air pollution

Score	Likely Impact - Increase in Air Pollution
--	Development proposals which could potentially result in a significant increase in air pollution.
-	Development proposals which could potentially result in a minor increase in air pollution.
0	Development would be expected to result in a negligible increase in air pollution.
+/-	The air pollution likely to be generated as a result of development proposals is uncertain. Including development sites for Gypsy and Traveller use, or development sites where the proposed use is uncertain.

Notes
<p>It is assumed that development would result in an increase in traffic and thus traffic generated air pollution. Residential sites proposed for the development of between ten and 99 dwellings would therefore be expected to have a minor negative impact on local air pollution⁴². Residential sites proposed for the development of 100 dwellings or more would be expected to have a major negative impact. Employment sites which propose the development of between 1ha and 9.9ha of employment space would be expected to have a minor negative impact and sites which propose 10ha or more would be expected to have a major negative impact.</p> <p>Where a site is proposed for the development of nine dwellings or less, or for 0.99ha of employment floorspace or less, a negligible impact on local air quality would be anticipated.</p>

⁴¹ Environment Agency (2023) Source Protection Zones. Available at: <https://data.gov.uk/dataset/09889a48-0439-4bbe-8f2a-87bba26fbbf5/source-protection-zones-merged> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

⁴² Institute of Air Quality Management (2017) Land-Use Planning & Development Control: Planning for Air Quality. Paragraph 5.8. Available at: <https://www.iaqm.co.uk/text/guidance/air-quality-planning-guidance.pdf> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

B.9 SA Objective 8: Waste

B.9.1 Introduction and context

B.9.1.1 **Box B.9.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 8: Waste.

B.9.1.2 It is expected that new development would result in an increase in the local population, and consequently an increase in household waste generation.

B.9.1.3 It should be noted that the appraisal of the reasonable alternatives is limited in its assessment against waste. The 1% principle as set out in **Box B.9.1** is only a coarse precautionary indicator, and greater detail of waste data would help to better quantify effects. The amount and type of waste produced will vary depending upon the specific site circumstances and end use and may have differing implications for the management of waste; such detail is not available to inform the assessment of reasonable alternative sites.

B.9.2 Waste receptors

Box B.9.1: SA Objective 8: Waste

Score	Likely Impact - Waste
--	Residential-led development which could potentially result in an increase in household waste generation by 1% or more in comparison to current levels.
-	Residential-led development which could potentially result in an increase in household waste generation by 0.1% or more in comparison to current levels.
0	Development would be expected to result in a negligible increase in household waste generation.
+/-	The waste generated as a result of development proposals for non-residential or Gypsy and Traveller use is uncertain, or development sites where the proposed use is uncertain.
+	Development proposals which include provision of waste and recycling storage.
++	Development proposals for waste or recycling facilities.

Notes

The estimated total household waste produced within Sandwell in 2021/2022 was 128,000 tonnes, according to UK local authority household waste data⁴³. It is assumed that new residents in Sandwell will have an annual

⁴³ Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (2022) Local Authority Collected Waste Statistics. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/env18-local-authority-collected-waste-annual-results-tables> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

Notes

waste production of 399kg per person, in line with the England average⁴⁴. Sandwell has an average of 2.7 people per dwelling⁴⁵.

Based on these figures, and assuming new residents will generate waste in line with the current average, it has been calculated that proposals for 1,180 homes or more are expected to increase household waste generation by 1% or more in comparison to the current estimates for Sandwell. Proposals for 118 homes or more are expected to increase household waste generation by 0.1% or more in comparison to current estimates for Sandwell.

⁴⁴ Department for Environment Food and rural Affairs (2021) Statistics on waste managed by local authorities in England in 2020/21. Available at:
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1040756/Statistics_on_waste_managed_by_local_authorities_in_England_in_2020_v2rev_accessible.pdf [Date Accessed: 21/06/23]

⁴⁵ People per Dwelling has been calculated using the ONS mid-2021 population estimates (Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland>) and dwelling stock (Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/live-tables-on-dwelling-stock-including-vacants>)

B.10 SA Objective 9: Transport and accessibility

B.10.1 Introduction and context

B.10.1.1 **Boxes B.10.1 to B.10.6** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 9: Transport and accessibility.

B.10.1.2 The Local Plan should seek to ensure that residents in Sandwell have access to a range of sustainable transport modes, to help facilitate a modal shift away from private car use to help tackle air quality and congestion issues and provide for more efficient travel. The Plan should also promote a reduced need to travel overall, facilitating local journeys via active travel wherever possible.

B.10.1.3 Accessibility modelling data⁴⁶ indicates the level of sustainable accessibility to local services (fresh food and centres) across Sandwell and the wider Black Country.

B.10.2 Transport and accessibility receptors

Box B.10.1: SA Objective 9: Bus stop

Score	Likely Impact – Bus Stop
-	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over 400m from a bus stop.
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located within 400m of a bus stop.

Notes

It is desirable for site end users to be situated within walking distance of a bus stop.

Bus stop data available from Transport for West Midlands⁴⁷. A target distance of 400m to a bus stop has been used in line with Barton *et al.* sustainable distances⁴⁸.

Box B.10.2: SA Objective 9: Railway or metro station

Score	Likely Impact – Railway or Metro Station
-	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over 2km from a railway or metro station.
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located within 2km of a railway or metro station.

⁴⁶ Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council – Black Country Accessibility Modelling (2021)

⁴⁷ Transport for West Midlands (2022) Transport for West Midlands Data Portal. Available at: <https://data-tfwm.opendata.arcgis.com/> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

⁴⁸ Barton, H., Grant. M. & Guise. R. (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods: For local health and global sustainability, January 2010

Notes
<p>Railway and metro station data available from Transport for West Midlands⁴⁹. The assessments have used the latest version of this dataset (2022). It is acknowledged that there are new metro stations under construction along the Wednesbury – Brierley Hill route which are not captured within this data. Any subsequent updates to the data can be incorporated into the SA assessments at a later stage.</p> <p>A target distance of 2km to a railway station has been used in line with Barton <i>et al.</i> sustainable distances⁵⁰.</p>

Box B.10.3: SA Objective 9: Pedestrian access

Score	Likely Impact – Pedestrian Access
-	Development proposals located in areas which currently have poor access to the surrounding footpath network.
+	Development proposals which are well connected to the existing footpath network and would be expected to provide safe access for pedestrians.

Notes
<p>New development sites have been assessed in terms of their access to the surrounding footpath network, allowing for safe local travel on foot. Safe access is determined to be that which is suitable for wheelchair users and pushchairs.</p> <p>Assessment of proximity to existing footpaths has been made through reference to aerial photography and the use of Google Maps⁵¹.</p>

Box B.10.4: SA Objective 9: Road access

Score	Likely Impact – Road Access
-	Development proposals located in areas which currently have poor access to the surrounding road network.
+	Development proposals which are adjacent to an existing road.

Notes
<p>Assessment of proximity to existing roads has been made through reference to aerial photography and the use of Google Maps⁵².</p>

Box B.10.5: SA Objective 9: Pedestrian access to local services

Score	Likely Impact – Pedestrian Access to Local Services
-	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 15-minute walk to local services.

⁴⁹ Transport for West Midlands (2022) Transport for West Midlands Data Portal. Available at: <https://data-tfwm.opendata.arcgis.com/> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Google Maps (2023) Available at: <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>

⁵² Ibid

Score	Likely Impact – Pedestrian Access to Local Services
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 10-minute walk but within a 15-minute walk to local services.
++	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 10-minute walk to local services.
Notes	
Data on fresh food centre locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to fresh food and centres) has been provided by SMBC.	

Box B.10.6: SA Objective 9: Public transport access to local services

Score	Likely Impact - Public Transport Access to Local Services
-	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 15-minute travel time via public transport to local services.
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 10-minute travel time but within a 15-minute travel time via public transport to local services.
++	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 10-minute travel time via public transport to local services.
Notes	
Data on fresh food centre locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to fresh food centres) has been provided by SMBC.	

B.11 SA Objective 10: Housing

B.11.1 Introduction and context

B.11.1.1 **Box B.11.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 10: Housing.

B.11.1.2 When striving for sustainable development, housing density should be considered carefully. High population densities can limit the accessibility of local key services and facilities such as hospitals, supermarkets and open spaces, including playgrounds and sports fields. High population densities also influence perceptions of safety, social interactions and community stability⁵³.

B.11.2 Housing receptors

Box B.11.1: SA Objective 10: Provision of housing

Score	Likely Impact - Provision of Housing
--	Development proposals which result in a significant net decrease in housing (of 100 dwellings or more).
-	Development proposals which result in a minor net decrease in housing (of between one and 99 dwellings).
0	Development proposals which would not impact housing provision.
+/-	It is uncertain whether the proposed development would result in a net change in housing provision. Residential-led development sites for which the net housing capacity was unknown at the time of writing, or development sites where the proposed use is uncertain but may include residential.
+	Development proposals resulting in a minor net gain in housing (of between one and 99 dwellings).
++	Development proposals resulting in a significant net gain in housing (of 100 dwellings or more).

Notes

Estimated housing capacity for each reasonable alternative site has been provided by SMBC.

At this stage of the assessment process, information is not available relating to the specific housing mix / type that would be delivered through each reasonable alternative site, including potential for development of affordable homes. It is assumed that development options will provide a good mix of housing type and tenure opportunities.

⁵³ Dempsey. N., Brown. C. and Bramley. G. (2012) The key to sustainable urban development in UK cities? The influence of density on social sustainability. Progress in Planning 77:89-141

B.12 SA Objective 11: Equality

B.12.1 Introduction and context

B.12.1.1 **Box B.12.1** sets out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 11: Equality.

B.12.1.2 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures the relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England. LSOAs are small areas designed to be of similar population, of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households. According to the IMD (2019)⁵⁴, Sandwell ranks as 12th out of 317 local authorities in England (with 1 being most deprived and 317 being least deprived). 1 in 5 of the LSOAs in Sandwell are ranked among the 10% most deprived in England⁵⁵.

B.12.2 Equality receptors

Box B.12.1: SA Objective 11: Index of Multiple Deprivation

Score	Likely Impact - Index of Multiple Deprivation
-	Development proposals within most deprived 10 percent LSOAs in England. Development proposals would result in the loss of affordable housing, community services or could potentially increase crime/the fear of crime in the area.
0	Development proposals outside most deprived 10 percent LSOAs in England. Development proposals would be expected to have no significant impact on equality.
+	Development proposals would result in the provision of affordable housing, community services or would reduce crime/the fear of crime in the area.

Notes

UK Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) available from MHCLG⁵⁶.

It should be noted that there is a degree of uncertainty in regard to the impacts of each site on deprivation and equality, which will be dependent on site-specific circumstances that are unknown at the time of writing.

An EqIA is being prepared by the Council alongside the emerging SLP.

⁵⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835115/loD2019_Statistical_Release.pdf [Date accessed: 02/05/23]

⁵⁵ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2023) Deprivation – Sandwell in a West Midlands Context. Available at: <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/deprivation-west-midlands-context/#:~:text=England%20is%20made%20up%20of,deprived%2010%25%20nationally%20in%202019.> [Date accessed: 18/07/23]

⁵⁶ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). Available at: <http://data-communities.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/indices-of-multiple-deprivation-imd-2019-1?geometry=-2.688%2C52.422%2C-1.456%2C52.714> [Date accessed: 21/06/23]

B.13 SA Objective 12: Health

B.13.1 Introduction and context

- B.13.1.1 **Boxes B.13.1 to B.13.5** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 12: Health.
- B.13.1.2 In order to facilitate healthy and active lifestyles for existing and new residents, it is expected that the Local Plan should seek to ensure that residents have access to NHS hospitals, GP surgeries, leisure facilities and a diverse range of accessible natural habitats and the surrounding PRoW network.
- B.13.1.3 Accessibility modelling data⁵⁷ indicates the level of sustainable accessibility to healthcare (GP surgeries) across Sandwell and the wider Black Country.
- B.13.1.4 It should be noted that healthcare capacity information has not been available; the assessment is based on accessibility alone.

B.13.2 Health receptors

Box B.13.1: SA Objective 12: NHS hospital

Score	Likely Impact - NHS Hospital
-	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over 5km from an NHS hospital providing an A&E service.
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over 5km from an NHS hospital providing an A&E service.

Notes

For the purposes of this assessment, accessibility to a hospital has been taken as proximity to an NHS hospital with an A&E service. Distances of sites to other NHS facilities (e.g. community hospitals and treatment centres) or private hospitals has not been taken into consideration in this assessment. NHS hospital department data available from the NHS website⁵⁸, and local hospital data provided by SMBC.

The target distance of 5km to an NHS hospital with an A&E service has been used in line with Barton *et al.* sustainable distances⁵⁹.

It should be noted that the current 'Birmingham City Hospital' will be replaced with the new 'Midland Metropolitan Hospital' in 2024⁶⁰. Given the timescales for these changes, for the purpose of the SA accessibility to the new 'Midland Metropolitan Hospital' has been considered within the site assessments, and the 'Birmingham City Hospital' has not been included within site assessments.

⁵⁷ Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council – Black Country Accessibility Modelling (2021)

⁵⁸ NHS (2023) NHS hospitals overview. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/service-search/other-services/Accident-and-emergency-services/LocationSearch/428> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

⁵⁹ Barton, H., Grant. M. & Guise. R. (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods: For local health and global sustainability, January 2010

⁶⁰ SMBC (2023) Projects: Midland Metropolitan University Hospital. Available at: https://regeneratingsandwell.co.uk/sandwell_projects/midland-metropolitan-university-hospital/ [Date accessed: 14/09/23]

Box B.13.2: SA Objective 12: Pedestrian access to GP surgery

Score	Likely Impact - Pedestrian Access to GP Surgery
-	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 15-minute walk to a healthcare location.
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 10-minute walk but within a 15-minute walk to a healthcare location.
++	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 10-minute walk to a healthcare location.

Notes
Data for healthcare locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to healthcare) has been provided by SMBC. The modelling data does not incorporate new / emerging healthcare locations such as the Wednesbury Health Centre ⁶¹ ; any subsequent updates to the data will be incorporated into the SA assessments at a later stage.

Box B.13.3: SA Objective 12: Public transport access to GP surgery

Score	Likely Impact - Public Transport Access to GP Surgery
-	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 15-minute travel time via public transport to a healthcare location.
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 10-minute travel time but within a 15-minute travel time via public transport to a healthcare location.
++	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 10-minute travel time via public transport to a healthcare location.

Notes
Data for healthcare locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to healthcare) has been provided by SMBC.

Box B.13.4: SA Objective 12: Access to / net loss of greenspace

Score	Likely Impact - Access to / Net Loss of Greenspace
-	Development proposals which coincide with greenspace. Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over 600m from greenspace.
0	Development proposals do not coincide with greenspace.
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located within 600m of a greenspace.

⁶¹ SMBC (2023) Projects: Wednesbury Health Centre and Housing. Available at: https://regeneratingsandwell.co.uk/sandwell_projects/wednesbury-health-centre-and-housing/ [Date accessed: 14/09/23]

Notes

Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and wellbeing of communities. The assessment of proximity to/net loss of greenspaces is based on Ordnance Survey Open Greenspaces⁶². It is assumed that these greenspaces are publicly accessible. The target distance of 600m to a public greenspace has been used in line with Barton *et al.* sustainable distances⁶³.

Box B.13.5: SA Objective 12: Access to PRoW / cycle routes

Score	Likely Impact - Access to PRoW / Cycle Routes
-	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located over 600m from a PRoW and cycle route.
+	Development proposals where the majority of the site is located within 600m from a PRoW and/or cycle route.

Notes

New development sites have been assessed in terms of their access to the local PRoW and cycle networks. PRoW data provided by SMBC, and strategic cycle route data is available from Transport for West Midlands⁶⁴. The target distance of 600m to a footpath or cycle path has been used in line with Barton *et al.* sustainable distances.

⁶² Ordnance Survey (2023) OS Open Greenspace. Available at: <https://www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk/business-government/products/open-map-greenspace> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

⁶³ Barton, H., Grant. M. & Guise. R. (2010) Shaping Neighbourhoods: For local health and global sustainability, January 2010

⁶⁴ Transport for West Midlands (2021) Transport for West Midlands Data Portal. Available at: <https://data-tfwm.opendata.arcgis.com/> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

B.14 SA Objective 13: Economy

B.14.1 Introduction and context

B.14.1.1 **Boxes B.14.1 to B.14.3** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 13: Economy.

B.14.1.2 Accessibility modelling data⁶⁵ indicates the level of sustainable accessibility to employment locations across Sandwell and the wider Black Country. It is assumed that the mapped employment locations would provide a range of job opportunities for residents.

B.14.2 Economy receptors

Box B.14.1: SA Objective 13: Pedestrian access to employment opportunities

Score	Likely Impact - Pedestrian Access to Employment Opportunities
-	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 30-minute walk to a key employment location.
0	Development proposals for non-residential use.
+	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 20-minute walk but within a 30-minute walk to a key employment location.
++	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 20-minute walk to a key employment location.
Notes	
Data for key employment locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to employment) has been provided by SMBC.	

Box B.14.2: SA Objective 13: Public transport access to employment opportunities

Score	Likely Impact - Public Transport Access to Employment Opportunities
-	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 30-minute travel time via public transport to a key employment location.
0	Development proposals for non-residential use.
+	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 20-minute travel time but within a 30-minute travel time via public transport to a key employment location.
++	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 20-minute travel time via public transport to a key employment location.
Notes	
Data for key employment locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to employment) has been provided by SMBC.	

⁶⁵ Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council – Black Country Accessibility Modelling (2021)

Box B.14.3: SA Objective 13: Employment floorspace

Score	Likely Impact - Employment Floorspace
--	Development proposals which result in a significant net decrease in employment floorspace.
-	Development proposals which result in a minor net decrease in employment floorspace.
0	Development proposals which would not impact employment floorspace.
+/-	It is uncertain whether the proposed development would result in a net change in employment floorspace. This includes development sites where the proposed use is uncertain but may include employment.
+	Development proposals which result in a minor net increase in employment floorspace.
++	Development proposals which result in a significant net increase in employment floorspace.
Notes	
An assessment of current land use has been made through reference to aerial photography and the use of Google Maps ⁶⁶ .	

⁶⁶ Google Maps (2023) Available at: <https://www.google.co.uk/maps>

B.15 SA Objective 14: Education, skills and training

B.15.1 Introduction and context

B.15.1.1 **Boxes B.15.1 to B.15.3** set out the specific methodology used to appraise the reasonable alternative sites against SA Objective 14: Education, skills and training.

B.15.1.2 It is assumed that new residents in the Plan area require access to primary and secondary education services to help facilitate good levels of education, skills and qualifications of residents. Accessibility modelling data⁶⁷ indicates the level of sustainable accessibility to schools across Sandwell and the wider Black Country.

B.15.1.3 It should be noted that school capacity information has not been available; the assessment is based on accessibility alone.

B.15.2 Education receptors

Box B.15.1: SA Objective 14: Pedestrian access to primary school

Score	Likely Impact - Pedestrian Access to Primary School
-	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 15-minute walk to a primary school.
0	Development proposals for non-residential use.
+	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 10-minute walk but within a 15-minute walk to a primary school.
++	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 10-minute walk to a primary school.
Notes	
Data for primary school locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to primary schools) has been provided by SMBC.	

Box B.15.2: SA Objective 14: Pedestrian access to secondary school

Score	Likely Impact - Pedestrian Access to Secondary School
-	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 25-minute walk to a secondary school.
0	Development proposals for non-residential use.
+	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 20-minute walk but within a 25-minute walk to a secondary school.

⁶⁷ Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council

Score	Likely Impact - Pedestrian Access to Secondary School
++	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 20-minute walk to a secondary school.
Notes	
Data for secondary school locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to secondary schools) has been provided by SMBC.	

Box B.15.3: SA objective 14: Public Transport Access to Secondary School

Score	Likely Impact - Public Transport Access to Secondary School
-	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 25-minute travel time via public transport to a secondary school.
0	Development proposals for non-residential use.
+	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located over a 20-minute travel time but within a 25-minute travel time via public transport to a secondary school.
++	Residential development proposals where the majority of the site is located within a 20-minute travel time via public transport to a secondary school.
Notes	
Data for secondary school locations and accessibility modelling (travel time to secondary schools) has been provided by SMBC.	

Appendix C: Reasonable Alternative Site Assessments

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C.1 Introduction

C.1.1 Overview

- C.1.1.1 A total of 121 reasonable alternative sites have been identified by SMBC during the preparation of the SLP. This includes 65 sites identified solely for residential use and 17 sites identified solely for employment use. One site is identified solely for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople (GTTS) use. One site is identified for mixed-use including residential and employment. The remaining 37 sites are identified as reasonable alternatives for multiple uses (i.e. the sites could potentially be developed for residential, employment and/or GTTS use).
- C.1.1.2 The location of the 121 reasonable alternative sites is shown in **Figure C.1.1**, and their potential uses are identified in **Table C.1.1**.
- C.1.1.3 Each of the sites appraised within this report have been assessed for likely impacts on each of the 14 SA Objectives, as outlined in the SA Framework (see Appendix A). Likely sustainability impacts have been set out in Tables C.2.1 – C.14.1 within each SA Objective chapter, in accordance with the site assessment methodology set out in Appendix B, as well as the methodology information set out in **Chapter 2** of the main SA Report.
- C.1.1.4 The receptor-only impacts, based on the red line boundary and site proposal information provided by SMBC, help to identify the potential impacts on site if there were no policy or mitigation. The potential mitigating influence of the draft SLP policies is considered within **section 8.3** of the main SA Report.
- C.1.1.5 It should be noted that whilst every effort has been made to predict effects accurately, the sustainability impacts have been assessed at a high level and are reliant upon the current understanding of the baseline. These assessments have been based on information provided by SMBC as well as expert judgement.

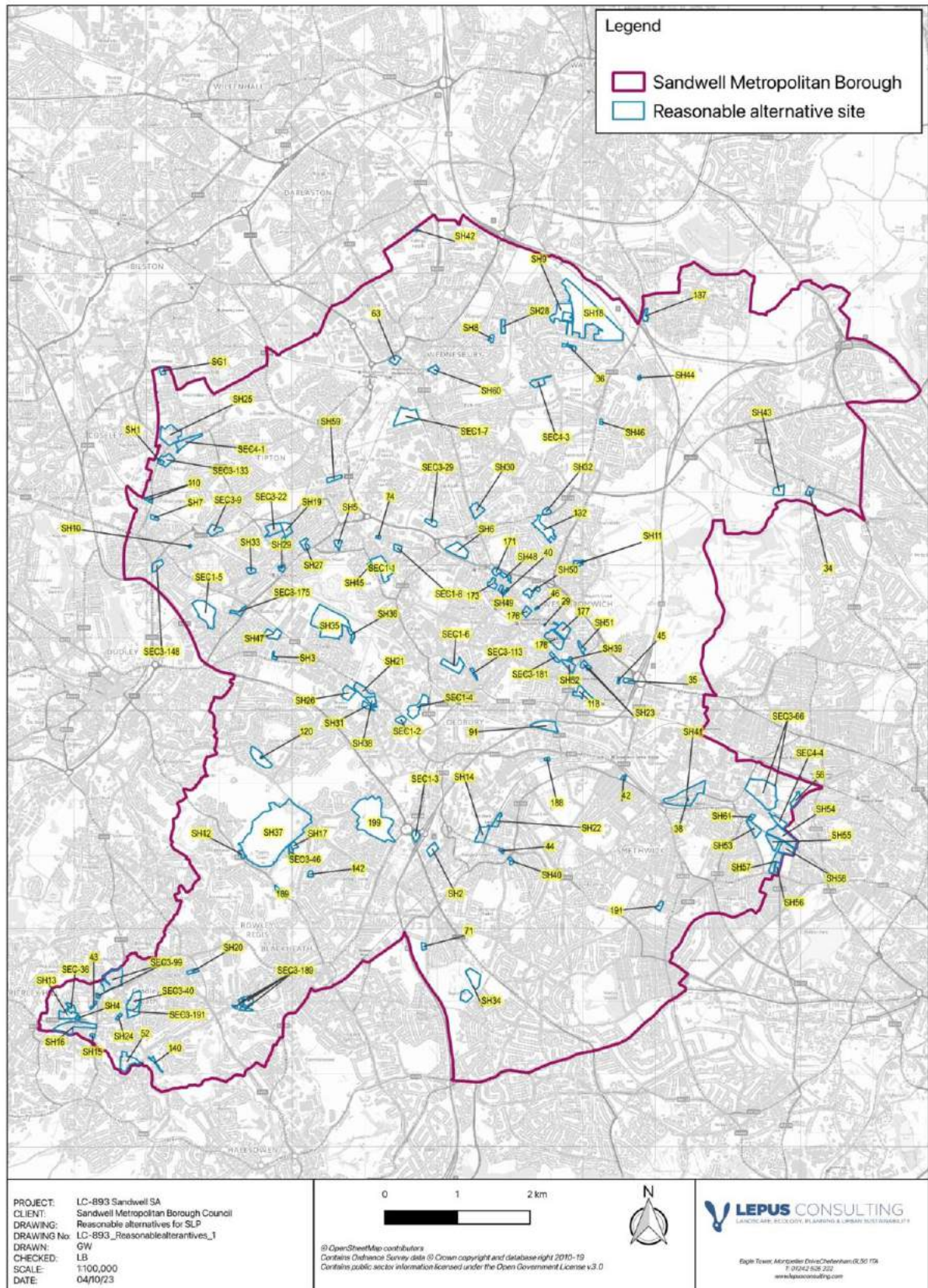


Figure C.1.1: Reasonable alternative sites identified in Sandwell

Table C.1.1: Reasonable alternative sites in Sandwell

Note to Council: We have prepared the SA using the site information provided, including site references as provided by Trisha via email 27/09/23. However, we note there may be some discrepancies between the references listed here and those listed in the appendices of the SLP itself and accompanying allocated site shapefiles provided to colleagues for the HRA. E.g. eight sites are listed as mixed use allocations in the plan which were not specified as such in the SA information, and differences in the references listed for employment sites.

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
SEC3-181	Varney Business Park, Varney Avenue, West Bromwich	Employment	0.73	N/A
SEC4-1	Zion Street, Tipton	Employment	2.43	N/A
SEC3-9	Alexandra Ind Est, Locarno Rd/ Alexandra Rd, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.87	75
SEC3-99	Providence Street, Cradley Heath	Employment	6.33	N/A
SH1	Brown Lion Street	Housing	0.46	20
SEC3-113	Brandon Way (east side)	Housing/Employment	0.47	19
SEC3-46	Droicon Ind Est, Portway Road	Employment	0.87	N/A
SEC3-175	Coneygre Rd, Burnt Tree, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.02	75
SEC-36	Silverthorne Lane	Housing/Employment	1.05	100
SEC3-29	Site off Richmond St, West Bromwich	Employment	1.10	N/A
SEC3-148	Castle St, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.49	60
SH2	Land adjacent To Asda Wolverhampton Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment	1.60	62
SEC4-4	Soho Triangle	Employment	1.71	N/A
SEC3-191	Oldfield Trading Estate, Cradley Heath	Housing/Employment	1.76	70
SEC4-3	70-74 Crankhall Lane	Housing/Employment	1.78	50
SEC3-133	Brymill Industrial Estate, Brown Lion St, Tipton	Housing	1.98	56
SEC3-189	Waterfall Lane, Cradley Heath	Housing/Employment	1.78	50
SEC3-22	Hale Trading Estate, Tipton	Housing/Employment	2.73	120
SEC3-40	Newlyn Road, Cradley Heath	Housing/Employment	3.40	102
SEC1-4	Severn Trent land off Roway Lane	Employment	3.65	N/A
SH3	88/90 Dudley Rd West	Housing/Employment	0.36	12
SH4	Lower High Street (Station Hotel & Dunns Site)	Housing/Employment	0.28	20
SH5	Mill Street, Great Bridge	Housing	0.86	30
SH6	Swan Lane, North of A41, West Bromwich	Housing	3.77	147
SH7	The Boat Gauging House & Adjoining Land, Factory Road, Tipton	Housing/GTTS	0.57	50
SH8	Alma Street, Wednesbury	Housing	0.52	19
SH9	The Phoenix Collegiate, Friar Park Road, Wednesbury	Housing	4.80	84

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
29	Star and Garter, 252 Duchess Parade, West Bromwich	Housing	0.05	60
SH10	Tipton Conservative and Unionist Club, 64 Union St, Tipton	Housing	0.19	14
SH11	Sandwell District & General Hospital	Housing	0.82	121
SH12	Fmr Springfield & Brickhouse Neighbourhood Office and adjacent land Dudley Road, Rowley Regis	Housing	0.65	26
34	John Dando House, 235 Hamstead Road, Great Barr Birmingham	Housing	0.86	26
35	Intersection House, 110 Birmingham Road, West Brom	Housing/Employment	0.80	136
36	Vacant Land Off Friardale Close, School Road, Carrington Road, Wednesbury	Housing	0.76	30
38	173 Rolfe Street, Smethwick	Housing	0.40	12
40	Metro House 410-416 High Street West Bromwich	Housing	0.38	34
42	Land between St Pauls Road & Tollhouse Way	Housing	0.33	11
43	Land adjacent Compton Grange, Whiteall Road, St Annes Road, Cradley Heath	Housing	0.30	15
44	Crosswells Road, Langley	Housing	0.29	12
45	164 Birmingham Road, West Bromwich	Housing/Employment	0.22	16
46	5 Lombard Street West Bromwich	Housing	0.16	44
SH13	Silverthorne Lane/ Forge Lane Cradley Heath	Housing	1.05	74
SH14	Langley Maltings, Western Road, Langley	Housing	2.72	95
SH15	Macarthur Road Industrial Estate, Cradley Heath	Housing	0.30	10
52	Land off Overend Road, Cradley Heath Business Park	Employment	3.04	N/A
SH16	Cradley Heath Factory Centre, Woods Lane, Cradley Heath	Housing	5.41	160
SH17	Land adj to Droicon Estate, Portway Road, Rowley Regis	Housing/GTTS	0.70	28
SH18	STW/SMBC Land, Friar Park Road, Wednesbury	Housing/Employment	26.60	630
56	Perrott Street/ Kitchener Street, Black Patch, Smethwick	Housing	1.39	49
SH19	Land at Horseley Heath, Alexandra Road, and Lower Church Lane, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.90	60
SH20	Elbow Street, Old Hill	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.77	25

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
SH21	Dudley Road East/Brades Road	Housing/Employment	2.65	106
SH22	Tatbank Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment	1.15	40
SH23	28-64 High Street, West Bromwich	Housing	0.60	58
63	Site between Dudley St & Victoria St, Wednesbury	Housing/Employment	1.18	41
SH24	Cokeland Place / Graingers Lane, Cradley Heath	Housing	0.36	13
SH25	Bradleys Lane / High Street, Tipton	Housing/Employment	5.60	230
SH26	Lower City Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment	1.83	63
SH27	Site surrounding former Post office and Telephone exchange, Horseley Heath, Tipton	Housing/Employment	1.16	42
SH28	Friar Street, Wednesbury	Housing/Employment	1.01	38
SH29	Used Car Sales site on corner of Lower Church Lane and Horseley Heath, Tipton	Housing/Employment	0.56	20
71	Grafton Lodge, Grafton Road, Oldbury	Housing	0.53	19
74	The Corner of Great Bridge & Richmond Street South	Employment	0.23	N/A
SH30	Land to east of Black Lake, West Bromwich	Housing/Employment	2.45	86
SH31	Summerton Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.89	32
SH32	Bank Street (West), Hateley Heath	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.85	43
SH33	Wellington Road, Tipton	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.91	31
SH34	Brandhall Golf Course	Housing	36.90	190
SH35	Rattlechain Site Land to the north of Temple Way, Tividale	Housing	14.8	518
SH36	Land between Addington Way and River Tame, Temple Way	Housing/Employment/GTTS	0.90	32
SH37	Edwin Richards Quarry, Portway Road, Rowley Regis	Housing	10.10	526
SEC3-66	Soho Foundry	Employment	12.60	N/A
SH38	Brades Road, Oldbury	Housing/Employment	1.14	54
91	Chances Glassworks	Housing/Employment	0.64	22
SH39	Land to West of Thomas Street, West Bromwich	Housing	0.28	30
SH40	Langley Swimming Centre, Vicarage Road, Oldbury	Housing	0.49	20
SH41	North Smethwick Canalside	Housing	8.77	400
SH42	Forge Put, junction Franchise Street and Beebee Ro	Housing	0.14	10
SEC1-3	Land at Birchley Island, Junction 2 of M5, Oldbury	Employment	1.00	N/A
110	Bloomfield Road Amenity Space	Housing/Employment	0.38	15

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
118	Constance Avenue Open Space	Housing	1.60	64
120	Darbys Hill Open Space	Housing	3.80	114
132	Lily Street Open Space	Housing	3.80	114
137	Poppy Drive Open Space	Housing	0.80	32
140	Timbertree Crescent Open Space	Housing	0.50	20
142	Wylde Crescent Open Space	Housing	0.50	20
SH43	Land of Tanhouse Avenue, Great Barr	Housing	1.66	46
SH44	Wyndmill crescent, West Bromwich	Housing	0.19	11
SH45	Site Of Nos 118-152	Housing	0.41	20
SH46	Site Of Former Stone Cross Neighbourhood Office	Housing	0.32	14
SH47	Groveland, Oldbury	Housing	2.26	58
171	Evans Halshaw car showroom, Carters Green	Housing	0.89	140
SH48	St Johns St, Carters Green	Housing	0.82	33
173	Army Reserve, Carters Green	Housing	1.17	63
SH49	Tentec, Guns Lane	Housing	0.60	129
SH50	Providence Place/ Bratt St	Housing	1.32	70
176	Cultural Quarter, West Bromwich	Housing	1.09	52
177	Queens Square Living, West Bromwich	Housing	2.84	396
178	West Bromwich Central	Housing	3.84	343
SH51	Overend Street, West Bromwich	Housing	0.71	70
SH52	George Street Living	Housing	1.54	327
SH53	Grove Lane/ Cranford Street/ London Street	Housing	1.23	108
SH54	Cranford Street / Heath Street / Canal	Housing	5	115
SH55	Cape Arm Cranford Street	Housing	2.13	170
SH56	Moilliett Street Park - Grove Lane masterplan	Housing	0.77	31
SH57	Grove Street / MMUH / School - Grove Lane MP	Housing	2.18	85
SH58	Abberley Street Grove Lane Master Plan	Housing	2.48	140
SG1	Extension to Caravan Site, Brierley Lane, Bilston	GTTS	0.73	10
188	Land Between No.32 And George Betts School, West End Avenue, Smethwick	Housing	0.32	11
189	Hawes Lane, Rowley Regis	Housing	0.56	15
SH59	Beever Road, Great Bridge	Housing	1.01	18
191	Former Sunlight Laundry, Stanhope Road, Smethwick	Housing	0.73	33
SH61	Thandi Coach Station, Alma Street, Smethwick	Housing	0.71	58

Site Reference	Site Address	Site use	Net Area (ha)	Housing Capacity (if applicable)
SEC1-1	Whitehall Road, Tipton	Employment	5.29	N/A
SEC1-8	Legacy 43, Ryder Street, West Bromwich	Employment	0.88	N/A
SEC1-5	Land at Conegre, Newcomen Drive, Tipton	Employment	6.92	N/A
SEC1-6	Land off Brandon Way, West Bromwich	Employment	3.00	N/A
SEC1-2	British Gas, Land off Dudley Road, Oldbury	Employment	1.05	N/A
SEC1-7	Site off Bilport Lane, Wednesbury	Employment	5.30	N/A
199	Lion Farm Playing Fields, Oldbury	Mixed-use (including housing, employment and open space)	20.89	200
SH60	Site of 30-144 Mounts Road, Wednesbury	Housing/Employment	1.07	22

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C.2 SA Objective 1: Cultural Heritage

C.2.1 Grade I Listed Buildings

C.2.1.1 There are two Grade I Listed Buildings in Sandwell, 'West Bromwich Manor House' and 'Galton Bridge', and several others nearby in surrounding authority areas. Although Site SEC4-3 lies in close proximity (approximately 180m) to 'West Bromwich Manor House', the previously developed nature of the site means that adverse effects on the setting of the building are considered unlikely. The proposed development at all 121 sites in Sandwell would be unlikely to significantly impact Grade I Listed Buildings, therefore a negligible impact has been identified across these sites.

C.2.2 Grade II* Listed Buildings

C.2.2.1 There are eight Grade II* Listed Buildings within Sandwell, mostly concentrated in and around the Smethwick area in the south east of the borough. Site SEC3-66 coincides with 'Soho Foundry Former Boulton and Watt Foundry Pattern Stores and Erecting Shops'. The proposed development at this site could potentially lead to a direct major negative impact on the Grade II* Listed Building.

C.2.2.2 Site SH41 is located adjacent to 'Engine Arm Aqueduct, Birmingham Canal Wolverhampton Level'. The proposed development at this site could potentially have a minor negative impact on the setting of this Listed Building.

C.2.2.3 However, both Sites SEC3-66 and SH41 contain some existing development and so it is acknowledged that there may also be opportunities to improve the historic setting of the area through regeneration of degraded industrial buildings currently on site.

C.2.2.4 The proposed development at all other sites within Sandwell would be unlikely to significantly impact any Grade II* Listed Buildings, primarily due to the sites being separated from Listed Buildings by existing built form. Therefore, a negligible impact has been identified across these sites.

C.2.3 Grade II Listed Buildings

C.2.3.1 There are many Grade II Listed Buildings throughout Sandwell, generally clustered within the built-up areas, along the canal network, and particularly within West Bromwich and Oldbury town centres. There are six sites that coincide with a Grade II Listed Building (Sites SH7, SH14, SEC3-66, 91, 176, and 178). Site SEC3-66 coincides with 'Gateway and Gates', 'Office Row', and 'Gatehouse and adjoining Office' and is adjacent to 'Towpath Bridge at Soho Foundry'. Site 91 coincides with 'Double Range of Warehouses immediately west of Hartley Bridge, Chance's glassworks', 'Warehouse between Hartley Bridge and canal bridge, chance's glassworks', and 'Two warehouses, immediately east of canal bridge, chance's glassworks', and is adjacent or close to several others. Site 176 coincides with 'Town Hall', 'Pair of K6 Telephone Kiosks outside Library and Town Hall', 'Central Public Library', and 'Law Courts'. The proposed development at these six sites could potentially result in direct major negative impacts on these Listed Buildings, without careful consideration of site layout and design.

C.2.3.2 Five sites are located adjacent to Grade II Listed Building (Sites SEC4-1, SEC4-4, SH41, 177 and SEC1-1). Furthermore, a further eight sites could potentially have an adverse impact on the setting of various Listed Buildings, due to the nature and scale of the proposed development and the proximity of Listed Buildings. For example, Site SEC4-4 is located adjacent to the Grade II Listed Building 'Towpath Bridge, Birmingham Canal Birmingham Level'. The proposed development at these 14 sites could potentially result in a minor negative impact on the setting of one or more Grade II Listed Buildings.

C.2.4 Conservation Area

C.2.4.1 Sandwell contains nine Conservation Areas (CA), the majority of which cover sections of the urban area, as well as portions of the canal network, historic open spaces and nature reserves. There are eight sites that coincide with a CA, including Sites SH10 and SH7 which lie wholly within 'Factory Locks, Tipton' CA, Sites SH50 and 176 which lie partially within 'High Street West Bromwich' CA, and Sites 38, 91, SH41, and SH54 which lie wholly or partially within 'Smethwick Galton Valley' CA. There are a further eight sites which are adjacent or in close proximity to a CA. The proposed development at these 16 sites could potentially result in a minor negative impact on the character or setting of these CAs. The remaining sites would not be expected to have a significant impact on the setting of any CA.

C.2.5 Scheduled Monument

C.2.5.1 There are eight Scheduled Monuments (SMs) within Sandwell, generally covering previously developed areas in relation to Birmingham Canal or areas with industrial history. Three sites coincide with a SM. Site SEC3-66 wholly coincides with 'remains of the Boulton and Watt Soho Foundry and mint, Birmingham Canal, Smethwick', Site 91 wholly coincides with 'Chances Glassworks', and Site SH41 coincides partially with 'Engine Arm Aqueduct' and wholly coincides with 'Smethwick Engine House'. The proposed development at these three sites could potentially have a direct adverse effect on these SMs, resulting in a major negative impact on cultural heritage. However, these sites contain some existing development so it is acknowledged that there may also be opportunities to improve the historic setting of the area and associated SMs through regeneration of degraded industrial buildings currently on site.

C.2.5.2 All other sites within Sandwell are not located in close proximity to any SMs, and as such, the proposed development at these sites would not be expected to significantly impact the setting of any of these SMs.

C.2.6 Registered Park and Garden

C.2.6.1 Five Registered Parks and Gardens (RPGs) can be found within Sandwell: 'Brunswick Park', 'Victoria Park (Tipton)', 'Dartmouth Park', 'Warley Park' and a small proportion of 'Great Barr Hall'. Site SEC1-5 is located approximately 200m from 'Victoria Park (Tipton)' RPG. Although there is some intervening built form separating Site SEC1-5 from the RPG, the site comprises a large area of undeveloped land. The proposed development at the site could potentially result in a minor negative impact on the setting of the RPG. The remaining sites are deemed unlikely to have a significant impact on the setting of any RPG

due to the previously developed nature of the sites and/or presence of intervening development.

C.2.7 Archaeological Priority Area

C.2.7.1 Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs) have been identified throughout Sandwell’s urban and undeveloped areas. Four sites coincide with APAs, including Sites 189, SH33, SH26, and SH31. A further nine sites are located adjacent to APAs. The proposed development at these 13 sites could potentially alter the setting of these APAs, and as a result have a minor negative impact on cultural heritage. The remaining sites are not located in close proximity to APAs, and therefore, would be expected to have a negligible impact on the setting of APAs.

C.2.8 Historic Landscape Characterisation

C.2.8.1 The Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) Study¹ has identified a range of Historic Environment Area Designations within the Black Country, covering a large proportion of Sandwell’s parkland and Green Belt as well as a number of features within the urban areas. Nine of the proposed sites (SEC3-99, SH7, 43, SH14, SH16, SH33, SH34, SEC3-66, and 91) coincide wholly or partially within an area of High Historic Landscape Value (HHLV) or High Historic Townscape Value (HHTV). This includes Site SH34 which coincides with ‘Brandhall Ridge and Furrow’ HHLV, which is a rare feature in Sandwell. No sites coincide with any Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value. Development within areas of HHLV/HHTV may lead to the loss of surviving archaeological features of interest and their visual or functional links to Sandwell’s past. Therefore, the proposed development at these nine sites could potentially result in a minor negative impact on the surrounding historic environment. The remaining sites do not coincide with any identified areas of high historic value, and therefore, would be expected to have a negligible impact on the local historic environment.

Table C.2.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 1 – Cultural heritage

Site Reference	Site Use	Grade I Listed Building	Grade II* Listed Building	Grade II Listed Building	Conservation Area	Scheduled Monument	Registered Park and Garden	Archaeological Priority Area	Historic Landscape
SEC3-181	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC4-1	EMP	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-99	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
SH1	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-46	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

¹ Oxford Archaeology (2019) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf
 [Date Accessed: 15/09/23]

Site Reference	Site Use	Grade I Listed Building	Grade II* Listed Building	Grade II Listed Building	Conservation Area	Scheduled Monument	Registered Park and Garden	Archaeological Priority Area	Historic Landscape
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-29	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	-	0	0	-	0
SH2	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC4-4	EMP	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-133	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-4	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH3	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
SH4	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH5	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
SH6	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH7	HSG/GTTS	0	0	--	-	0	0	-	-
SH8	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH9	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
29	HSG	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
SH10	HSG	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SH11	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH12	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
34	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
35	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
38	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
40	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
42	HSG	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
43	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
44	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
46	HSG	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SH13	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH14	HSG	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	-
SH15	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
52	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH16	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
SH17	HSG/GTTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH18	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Grade I Listed Building	Grade II* Listed Building	Grade II Listed Building	Conservation Area	Scheduled Monument	Registered Park and Garden	Archaeological Priority Area	Historic Landscape
56	HSG	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
SH19	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH21	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
SH22	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH23	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
63	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH24	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH25	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH26	HSG/EMP	0	0	-	0	0	0	-	0
SH27	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH28	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH29	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
71	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
74	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH30	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-
SH34	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
SH35	HSG	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH37	HSG	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0
SEC3-66	EMP	0	--	--	-	--	0	0	-
SH38	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
91	HSG/EMP	0	0	--	-	--	0	0	-
SH39	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH40	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH41	HSG	0	-	-	-	--	0	0	0
SH42	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-3	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
110	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
118	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
120	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
132	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
137	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
140	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
142	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH43	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH44	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH45	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Grade I Listed Building	Grade II* Listed Building	Grade II Listed Building	Conservation Area	Scheduled Monument	Registered Park and Garden	Archaeological Priority Area	Historic Landscape
SH46	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH47	HSG	0	0	-	0	0	0	-	0
171	HSG	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
SH48	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
173	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH49	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH50	HSG	0	0	-	-	0	0	0	0
176	HSG	0	0	--	-	0	0	0	0
177	HSG	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
178	HSG	0	0	--	0	0	0	0	0
SH51	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH52	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH53	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH54	HSG	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SH55	HSG	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SH56	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH57	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH58	HSG	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SG1	GTTS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
188	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
189	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
SH59	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
191	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH61	HSG	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-1	EMP	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-8	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-5	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SEC1-6	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	0
SEC1-2	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-7	EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
199	Mixed-use	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH60	HSG/EMP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

C.3 SA Objective 2: Landscape

C.3.1 Landscape Sensitivity

- C.3.1.1 The Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment² identified the extent to which the character and quality of Black Country Green Belt land is susceptible to change as a result of future development. In Sandwell, Green Belt is restricted to the north east of the borough, at Sandwell Valley. 120 reasonable alternative sites identified for the SLP lie outside of the Green Belt, and as such outside of the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment study area. Therefore, the potential effects of each site on sensitive landscapes are scored as uncertain.
- C.3.1.2 Site 137 is partially located within the Green Belt to the south of the site, within an area identified as being of 'low' landscape sensitivity. Therefore, the proposed development at this site would be expected to result in a negligible impact on sensitive landscapes.
- C.3.1.3 Information relating to the historic environment which has strong links with landscapes/townscapes in Sandwell, including the Historic Landscape Characterisation and associated designations, has been assessed under SA Objective 1 (Cultural Heritage) (see **Chapter C.2**).

Table C.3.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 2 – Landscape

Site Reference	Site Use	Landscape Sensitivity
SEC3-181	EMP	+/-
SEC4-1	EMP	+/-
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-99	EMP	+/-
SH1	HSG	+/-
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-46	EMP	+/-
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-29	EMP	+/-
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH2	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC4-4	EMP	+/-
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-133	HSG	+/-
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+/-

² LUC (2019) Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Available at:

https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13883/black-country-lsa-front-end-report-final-lr_redacted.pdf [Date Accessed: 04/08/23]

Site Reference	Site Use	Landscape Sensitivity
SEC1-4	EMP	+/-
SH3	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH4	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH5	HSG	+/-
SH6	HSG	+/-
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+/-
SH8	HSG	+/-
SH9	HSG	+/-
29	HSG	+/-
SH10	HSG	+/-
SH11	HSG	+/-
SH12	HSG	+/-
34	HSG	+/-
35	HSG/EMP	+/-
36	HSG	+/-
38	HSG	+/-
40	HSG	+/-
42	HSG	+/-
43	HSG	+/-
44	HSG	+/-
45	HSG/EMP	+/-
46	HSG	+/-
SH13	HSG	+/-
SH14	HSG	+/-
SH15	HSG	+/-
52	EMP	+/-
SH16	HSG	+/-
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+/-
SH18	HSG/EMP	+/-
56	HSG	+/-
SH19	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH21	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH22	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH23	HSG	+/-
63	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH24	HSG	+/-
SH25	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH26	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH27	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH28	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH29	HSG/EMP	+/-
71	HSG	+/-
74	EMP	+/-
SH30	HSG/EMP	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	Landscape Sensitivity
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH34	HSG	+/-
SH35	HSG	+/-
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH37	HSG	+/-
SEC3-66	EMP	+/-
SH38	HSG/EMP	+/-
91	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH39	HSG	+/-
SH40	HSG	+/-
SH41	HSG	+/-
SH42	HSG	+/-
SEC1-3	EMP	+/-
110	HSG/EMP	+/-
118	HSG	+/-
120	HSG	+/-
132	HSG	+/-
137	HSG	0
140	HSG	+/-
142	HSG	+/-
SH43	HSG	+/-
SH44	HSG	+/-
SH45	HSG	+/-
SH46	HSG	+/-
SH47	HSG	+/-
171	HSG	+/-
SH48	HSG	+/-
173	HSG	+/-
SH49	HSG	+/-
SH50	HSG	+/-
176	HSG	+/-
177	HSG	+/-
178	HSG	+/-
SH51	HSG	+/-
SH52	HSG	+/-
SH53	HSG	+/-
SH54	HSG	+/-
SH55	HSG	+/-
SH56	HSG	+/-
SH57	HSG	+/-
SH58	HSG	+/-
SG1	GTTS	+/-
188	HSG	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	Landscape Sensitivity
189	HSG	+/-
SH59	HSG	+/-
191	HSG	+/-
SH61	HSG	+/-
SEC1-1	EMP	+/-
SEC1-8	EMP	+/-
SEC1-5	EMP	+/-
SEC1-6	EMP	+/-
SEC1-2	EMP	+/-
SEC1-7	EMP	+/-
199	Mixed-use	+/-
SH60	HSG/EMP	+/-

DRAFT

C.4 SA Objective 3: Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Geodiversity

C.4.1 Habitats Sites

C.4.1.1 Habitats sites are a network of nature protection areas which include Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs). There are no Habitats sites within Sandwell, with the nearest being 'Fens Pools' SAC located approximately 3km to the west, in Dudley. No Zone of Influence has been identified for 'Fens Pools' SAC to indicate areas where development could potentially result in significant adverse effects on its designated features, and therefore, at the time of writing the impact of all proposed sites on Habitats sites is uncertain. The emerging HRA of the SLP will provide more detailed analysis of likely impacts and identification of impact pathways beyond those considered in the SA.

C.4.2 Sites of Special Scientific Interest

C.4.2.1 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within Sandwell Borough however nearby SSSIs include 'The Leasowes' and 'Doulton's Claypit' in the neighbouring borough of Dudley. All sites are located within IRZs which do not indicate the proposed use as a threat to nearby SSSIs, and as such, the proposed development at all sites would be likely to have a negligible impact on SSSIs.

C.4.3 National Nature Reserves

C.4.3.1 There are no National Nature Reserves (NNRs) within Sandwell, with 'Wren's Nest' and 'Saltwells' NNRs in Dudley being the closest to the borough, located at their closest points approximately 800m and 700m to the west of Sandwell, respectively. None of the proposed sites within Sandwell are located in close proximity to these NNRs, and therefore, the proposed development at all sites would be unlikely to have a significant impact any NNR.

C.4.4 Ancient Woodland

C.4.4.1 In Sandwell, there are some small areas of ancient woodland including 'Codsall Coppice' and 'Warley Rack Wood' in the south of the borough, and 'Dartmouth Golf Wood' and 'Chambers Wood' towards the north east. None of the proposed sites within Sandwell are located in close proximity to these areas of ancient woodland and therefore the proposed development at these sites would be unlikely to have a significant impact on any ancient woodland.

C.4.5 Local Nature Reserves

C.4.5.1 There are nine Local Nature Reserves (LNR) within Sandwell, found within both the urban areas and Green Belt, including 'Sheepwash', 'Merrion Wood' and 'Sot's Hole with Bluebell Wood' LNRs. A small proportion of the proposed housing Site SH43 coincides with 'Forge

Mill Lake' LNR. Furthermore, seven sites are located in close proximity to LNRs, including the proposed housing Site SH13 which is located 120m from 'Saltwells' LNR and 180m from 'Mousesweet Brook' LNR, separated by some intervening development but the proposed introduction of 74 homes at the site could give rise to adverse effects. Therefore, the proposed development at these eight sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on these LNRs, due to an increased risk of development related threats and pressures. On the other hand, the remaining sites would be likely to have a negligible impact on LNRs, primarily due to being separated by existing built form.

C.4.6 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation

C.4.6.1 Within Sandwell, there are 33 Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs). A small proportion of housing/employment Site SH43 coincides with 'Forge Mill, Sandwell Valley' SINC. The proposed development at the site could potentially result in direct adverse impacts or possible loss of the SINC. A major negative impact would be expected.

C.4.6.2 Site SH30 is located adjacent to 'Ridgeacre Branch Canal' SINC and Site SH21 is located adjacent to 'Gower Branch Canal' SINC. The proposed development at these two sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on these SINCs, due to an increased risk of development related threats and pressures.

C.4.6.3 None of the remaining sites coincide with or are located adjacent to SINCs, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites would be less likely to significantly impact any SINC, although it is acknowledged that adverse effects such as from recreational pressure can arise at greater distances.

C.4.7 Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation

C.4.7.1 There are 71 Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs) found throughout Sandwell, but particularly in the south west and north east of the borough. 10 sites coincide with SLINCs, including Site SH43 which coincides with 'Tanhouse Avenue, Sandwell Valley' SLINC, and Site SH34 which coincides with 'Brandhall Golf Course' SLINC. Additionally, a further 17 sites are located adjacent to SLINCs. The proposed development at these 27 sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on these SLINCs due to an increased risk of development related threats and pressures.

C.4.7.2 The remaining sites do not coincide with, or are located adjacent to, any SLINC; therefore, the proposed development at these sites would be less likely to result in a significant impact on SLINCs, although it is acknowledged that adverse effects such as from recreational pressure can arise at greater distances.

C.4.8 Geological Sites

C.4.8.1 Geological sites have been identified throughout the Plan area, which form part of the Black Country Global Geopark³. These sites include a range of notable geological features and formations, including a number of SSSIs and SINCs. Within Sandwell, there are five

³ Black Country Geopark (2023) Black Country Geopark. Available at: <https://blackcountrygeopark.dudley.gov.uk/bcg/>
[Date accessed: 15/09/23]

geological sites found in the east and south west of the borough, including 'The Rowley Hills', 'Blue Rock Quarry SINC' and 'Bumble Hole & Warren's Park LNR'. The proposed development at all sites within Sandwell would be likely to have a negligible impact on geological sites as they do not coincide with any identified areas of geological importance.

C.4.9 Priority Habitats

C.4.9.1 Some small extents of priority habitats are found throughout the Sandwell area, particularly concentrated in the Green Belt to the north east and include 'coastal and floodplain grazing marsh', 'good quality semi-improved grassland' and 'deciduous woodland'. A total of 16 sites coincide wholly or partially with priority habitats, including a large proportion of Sites 118 and 140 which coincide with 'deciduous woodland', and Site SH59 which contains large proportions of 'coastal and floodplain grazing marsh' covering the majority of the site. The proposed development at these 16 sites therefore would be likely to have a minor negative impact on these priority habitats due to the potential loss or degradation of these habitats. On the other hand, the remaining sites do not coincide with any identified priority habitat; therefore, the proposed development at these sites would be likely to have a negligible impact on the overall presence of priority habitats.

Table C.4.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 3 – Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity

Site Reference	Site Use	Habitats Sites	SSSIs and IRZs	NNRs	Ancient Woodland	LNRS	SINCS	SLINCS	Geological Sites	Priority Habitats
SEC3-181	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC4-1	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SEC3-99	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SH1	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-46	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SEC3-29	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH2	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC4-4	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-133	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-4	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
SH3	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Habitats Sites	SSSIs and IRZs	NNRs	Ancient Woodland	LNRs	SINCs	SLINCs	Geological Sites	Priority Habitats
SH4	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH5	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	-	0	0
SH6	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SH8	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH9	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
29	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH10	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH11	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH12	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
34	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
35	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
36	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
38	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
40	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
42	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
43	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
44	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
45	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
46	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH13	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SH14	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH15	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
52	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SH16	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SH18	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
56	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
SH19	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH21	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	-	0	0	0
SH22	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH23	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
63	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH24	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH25	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SH26	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH27	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH28	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
SH29	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
71	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
74	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Habitats Sites	SSSIs and IRZs	NNRs	Ancient Woodland	LNRs	SINCs	SLINCs	Geological Sites	Priority Habitats
SH30	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	-	-	0	0
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH34	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
SH35	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	-	0	-
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
SH37	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
SEC3-66	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
SH38	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
91	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH39	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH40	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH41	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
SH42	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-3	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
110	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
118	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
120	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	-	0	0
132	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
137	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
140	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	-
142	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH43	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	-	--	-	0	0
SH44	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH45	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH46	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH47	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
171	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH48	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
173	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH49	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH50	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
176	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
177	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
178	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH51	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH52	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH53	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH54	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH55	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH56	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Habitats Sites	SSSIs and IRZs	NINRs	Ancient Woodland	LNRs	SINCs	SLINCs	Geological Sites	Priority Habitats
SH57	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH58	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SG1	GTTS	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
188	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
189	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH59	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
191	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH61	HSG	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-1	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	-	0	0	0	0
SEC1-8	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-5	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-6	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-2	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SEC1-7	EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	-	0	0
199	Mixed-use	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SH60	HSG/EMP	+/-	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

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C.5 SA Objective 4: Climate Change Mitigation

C.5.1 Potential Increase in Carbon Footprint

- C.5.1.1 Residential-led development is likely to result in an increase in carbon emissions, to some extent. 51 sites proposed solely for residential use are identified as having capacity for the development of 120 dwellings or less. The proposed development at these sites would be likely to result in a negligible contribution to Sandwell’s total carbon emissions.
- C.5.1.2 15 sites proposed solely for residential use are identified as having capacity for the development of between 121 and 1,120 dwellings. The proposed development at these sites could potentially increase local carbon emissions, as a proportion of Sandwell’s total, by more than 0.1%. Therefore, a minor negative impact on Sandwell’s carbon emissions would be expected at these 14 sites.
- C.5.1.3 The carbon emissions likely to be generated as a result of non-residential development is uncertain. This would be entirely dependent on the nature and scale of the employment land proposed, which is unknown at present. The nature and design of pitches/plots which could be developed at GTTS sites is also unknown and therefore the potential increase in carbon footprint associated with Site SG1 (proposed solely for GTTS use) is also uncertain. Therefore, the 37 sites which are identified as reasonable alternatives for multiple uses (i.e. the sites could potentially be developed for residential, employment and/or GTTS use) are also recorded as uncertain for the purpose of this assessment.
- C.5.1.4 Site 199 is proposed for mixed-use development and has a housing capacity of 200 dwellings. Therefore, the proposed development at this site would expect to have a minor negative impact on Sandwell’s carbon emissions.

Table C.5.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 4 – Climate change mitigation

Site Reference	Site Use	Potential increase in carbon footprint
SEC3-181	EMP	+/-
SEC4-1	EMP	+/-
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-99	EMP	+/-
SH1	HSG	0
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-46	EMP	+/-
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-29	EMP	+/-
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH2	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC4-4	EMP	+/-
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	Potential increase in carbon footprint
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-133	HSG	0
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC1-4	EMP	+/-
SH3	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH4	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH5	HSG	0
SH6	HSG	-
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+/-
SH8	HSG	0
SH9	HSG	0
29	HSG	0
SH10	HSG	0
SH11	HSG	-
SH12	HSG	0
34	HSG	0
35	HSG/EMP	+/-
36	HSG	0
38	HSG	0
40	HSG	0
42	HSG	0
43	HSG	0
44	HSG	0
45	HSG/EMP	+/-
46	HSG	0
SH13	HSG	0
SH14	HSG	0
SH15	HSG	0
52	EMP	+/-
SH16	HSG	-
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+/-
SH18	HSG/EMP	+/-
56	HSG	0
SH19	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH21	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH22	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH23	HSG	0
63	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH24	HSG	0
SH25	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH26	HSG/EMP	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	Potential increase in carbon footprint
SH27	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH28	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH29	HSG/EMP	+/-
71	HSG	0
74	EMP	+/-
SH30	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH34	HSG	-
SH35	HSG	-
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH37	HSG	-
SEC3-66	EMP	+/-
SH38	HSG/EMP	+/-
91	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH39	HSG	0
SH40	HSG	0
SH41	HSG	-
SH42	HSG	0
SEC1-3	EMP	+/-
110	HSG/EMP	+/-
118	HSG	0
120	HSG	0
132	HSG	0
137	HSG	0
140	HSG	0
142	HSG	0
SH43	HSG	0
SH44	HSG	0
SH45	HSG	0
SH46	HSG	0
SH47	HSG	0
171	HSG	-
SH48	HSG	0
173	HSG	0
SH49	HSG	-
SH50	HSG	0
176	HSG	0
177	HSG	-
178	HSG	-
SH51	HSG	0
SH52	HSG	-
SH53	HSG	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Potential increase in carbon footprint
SH54	HSG	-
SH55	HSG	0
SH56	HSG	0
SH57	HSG	0
SH58	HSG	-
SG1	GTTS	+/-
188	HSG	0
189	HSG	0
SH59	HSG	0
191	HSG	0
SH61	HSG	0
SEC1-1	EMP	+/-
SEC1-8	EMP	+/-
SEC1-5	EMP	+/-
SEC1-6	EMP	+/-
SEC1-2	EMP	+/-
SEC1-7	EMP	+/-
199	Mixed-use	-
SH60	HSG/EMP	+/-

C.6 SA Objective 5: Climate Change Adaptation

C.6.1 Flood Zones

C.6.1.1 Flood Zones 2 and 3 occur alongside watercourses throughout the borough, such as the River Tame, with the majority of areas at risk of fluvial flooding found towards the north. The majority of sites are located wholly within Flood Zone 1 and therefore would be expected to have a minor positive impact on flooding, as the proposed development at these sites would be likely to locate site end users away from areas at risk of fluvial flooding.

C.6.1.2 However, nine sites (SH5, SH16, SH28, SH35, SH36, 132, SH59, SEC1-7, and 199) are largely located or partially located within Flood Zone 3; therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a major negative impact on flooding in the area and exacerbate existing issues of flooding in Sandwell. Additionally, Sites SH2 and 110 are located partially within Flood Zone 2, and therefore, the proposed development at these two sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on flooding.

C.6.2 Indicative Flood Zone 3b

C.6.2.1 Indicative Flood Zone 3b is present in areas where flooding will potentially worsen in the future due to climate change, areas of which are scattered throughout Sandwell generally covering areas currently within Flood Zone 3a according to the Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)⁴. Five sites (SEC3-9, SH35, SH36, 110, SH59) coincide with Indicative Flood Zone 3b. Therefore, the proposed development at these five sites could potentially have a major negative impact on flooding and may exacerbate existing issues of flooding in Sandwell.

C.6.2.2 There are no other sites within Sandwell which are located within Indicative Flood Zone 3b, and therefore, the remaining sites could potentially have a negligible impact on contributing to flooding issues in the future, although further site-specific assessments and reference to emerging data would help to provide a more accurate picture of changing flood risk due to climate change.

C.6.3 Surface Water Flood Risk

C.6.3.1 Surface Water Flood Risk (SWFR) is categorised into low (1/1000), medium (1/100) and high (1/30) in relation to the probability of surface water flooding occurring in a given area. Areas affected by surface water flooding can be found throughout Sandwell, in particular along roads, as well as within urban parkland, and associated with ponds and watercourses. 36 sites coincide with an area of high SWFR, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a major negative impact on surface

⁴ JBA Consulting (2020) The Black Country Authorities Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Final Report 25th June 2020. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p4/t2p4h/> [Date accessed: 20/06/23]

water flooding in the area, as development would be likely to locate site end users in areas at high risk of surface water flooding as well as exacerbate pluvial flood risk in surrounding locations.

C.6.3.2 Additionally, a further 52 sites coincide with areas of low and/or medium SWFR, and as such, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on surface water flooding in the area.

C.6.3.3 The remaining sites which do not coincide with any significant areas of SWFR would be expected to have a negligible impact on surface water flooding.

Table C.6.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 5 – Climate change adaptation

Site Reference	Site Use	Fluvial Flood Zones	Indicative Flood Zone 3b	Surface Water Flood Risk
SEC3-181	EMP	+	0	-
SEC4-1	EMP	+	0	--
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+	--	-
SEC3-99	EMP	+	0	-
SH1	HSG	+	0	0
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SEC3-46	EMP	+	0	--
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SEC3-29	EMP	+	0	-
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
SH2	HSG/EMP	-	0	--
SEC4-4	EMP	+	0	0
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SEC3-133	HSG	+	0	-
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
SEC1-4	EMP	+	0	--
SH3	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
SH4	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH5	HSG	--	0	--
SH6	HSG	+	0	-
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+	0	-
SH8	HSG	+	0	0
SH9	HSG	+	0	-
29	HSG	+	0	-
SH10	HSG	+	0	0
SH11	HSG	+	0	-
SH12	HSG	+	0	0
34	HSG	+	0	-
35	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
36	HSG	+	0	-

Site Reference	Site Use	Fluvial Flood Zones	Indicative Flood Zone 3b	Surface Water Flood Risk
38	HSG	+	0	0
40	HSG	+	0	-
42	HSG	+	0	-
43	HSG	+	0	0
44	HSG	+	0	-
45	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
46	HSG	+	0	0
SH13	HSG	+	0	-
SH14	HSG	+	0	--
SH15	HSG	+	0	-
52	EMP	+	0	-
SH16	HSG	--	0	-
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+	0	-
SH18	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
56	HSG	+	0	-
SH19	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	0	-
SH21	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH22	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SH23	HSG	+	0	-
63	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH24	HSG	+	0	0
SH25	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
SH26	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
SH27	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SH28	HSG/EMP	--	0	-
SH29	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
71	HSG	+	0	0
74	EMP	+	0	-
SH30	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	0	--
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	0	0
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	0	-
SH34	HSG	+	0	0
SH35	HSG	--	--	--
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	--	--	-
SH37	HSG	+	0	--
SEC3-66	EMP	+	0	-
SH38	HSG/EMP	+	0	--
91	HSG/EMP	+	0	-
SH39	HSG	+	0	0
SH40	HSG	+	0	--
SH41	HSG	+	0	--
SH42	HSG	+	0	-
SEC1-3	EMP	+	0	-

Site Reference	Site Use	Fluvial Flood Zones	Indicative Flood Zone 3b	Surface Water Flood Risk
110	HSG/EMP	-	--	0
118	HSG	+	0	-
120	HSG	+	0	0
132	HSG	--	0	--
137	HSG	+	0	0
140	HSG	+	0	0
142	HSG	+	0	0
SH43	HSG	+	0	-
SH44	HSG	+	0	0
SH45	HSG	+	0	0
SH46	HSG	+	0	--
SH47	HSG	+	0	0
171	HSG	+	0	-
SH48	HSG	+	0	--
173	HSG	+	0	--
SH49	HSG	+	0	0
SH50	HSG	+	0	-
176	HSG	+	0	0
177	HSG	+	0	-
178	HSG	+	0	--
SH51	HSG	+	0	0
SH52	HSG	+	0	-
SH53	HSG	+	0	-
SH54	HSG	+	0	--
SH55	HSG	+	0	--
SH56	HSG	+	0	0
SH57	HSG	+	0	--
SH58	HSG	+	0	-
SG1	GTTS	+	0	--
188	HSG	+	0	0
189	HSG	+	0	0
SH59	HSG	--	--	-
191	HSG	+	0	-
SH61	HSG	+	0	--
SEC1-1	EMP	+	0	--
SEC1-8	EMP	+	0	0
SEC1-5	EMP	+	0	--
SEC1-6	EMP	+	0	--
SEC1-2	EMP	+	0	-
SEC1-7	EMP	--	0	--
199	Mixed-use	--	0	--
SH60	HSG/EMP	+	0	--

C.7 SA Objective 6: Natural Resources

C.7.1 Previously Undeveloped Land / Land with Environmental Value

- C.7.1.1 Sandwell is principally built-up, although it also contains a range of large green spaces distributed throughout the borough and a small proportion of undeveloped Green Belt land in the north east.
- C.7.1.2 51 sites in Sandwell wholly comprise previously developed land which would be likely to have little or no environmental value. The proposed development at these sites would be expected to have a minor positive impact on natural resources as development would be classed as an efficient use of land.
- C.7.1.3 There are 20 sites which wholly comprise greenfield land and are likely to contain areas of environmental value such as hedgerows, trees and scrub that would expect to be lost upon development. Furthermore, 50 sites are partially previously developed / brownfield sites but also include areas of environmental value that could additionally be lost or degraded by the proposed development. The proposed development at these 70 sites would be expected to have a minor negative impact on natural resources due to the potential loss of ecologically or environmentally valuable soil resources.

C.7.2 Agricultural Land Classification

- C.7.2.1 The land within Sandwell Borough is almost entirely 'Urban' according to the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), with a small proportion of 'Non-Agricultural' and Grade 4 land in the north east. Only a very small area in the north east, within Sandwell Valley Country Park, is classed as Grade 3, which potentially represents some of the 'best and most versatile' (BMV) land within Sandwell.
- C.7.2.2 The proposed development at the 70 sites within Sandwell which wholly or partially comprise previously undeveloped land would be likely to have a minor positive impact on natural resources due to being located upon areas of less agriculturally important 'Urban' and/or 'Non-Agricultural' land, which would help to prevent the loss of BMV land across the Plan area.
- C.7.2.3 The proposed development at the 51 sites which are located wholly on previously developed land would be likely to have a negligible impact on agricultural land.

C.7.3 Mineral Safeguarding Areas / Areas of Search

- C.7.3.1 There are no Mineral Safeguarding Areas (MSAs) or Areas of Search (AOS) identified within Sandwell. All proposed sites in Sandwell would be expected to result in a negligible impact on mineral resources.

Table C.7.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 6 – Natural resources

Site Reference	Site Use	Previously Undeveloped Land / Land with Environmental Value	ALC Grade	Mineral Safeguarding Areas / Areas of Search
SEC3-181	EMP	+	0	0
SEC4-1	EMP	-	+	0
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SEC3-99	EMP	+	0	0
SH1	HSG	+	0	0
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SEC3-46	EMP	-	+	0
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SEC3-29	EMP	-	+	0
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH2	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SEC4-4	EMP	-	+	0
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SEC3-133	HSG	-	+	0
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SEC1-4	EMP	-	+	0
SH3	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH4	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SH5	HSG	-	+	0
SH6	HSG	-	+	0
SH7	HSG/GTTS	-	+	0
SH8	HSG	+	0	0
SH9	HSG	-	+	0
29	HSG	+	0	0
SH10	HSG	-	+	0
SH11	HSG	-	+	0
SH12	HSG	+	0	0
34	HSG	-	+	0
35	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
36	HSG	-	+	0
38	HSG	+	0	0
40	HSG	+	0	0
42	HSG	-	+	0
43	HSG	-	+	0
44	HSG	-	+	0
45	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
46	HSG	+	0	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Previously Undeveloped Land / Land with Environmental Value	ALC Grade	Mineral Safeguarding Areas / Areas of Search
SH13	HSG	+	0	0
SH14	HSG	+	0	0
SH15	HSG	+	0	0
52	EMP	+	0	0
SH16	HSG	-	+	0
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+	0	0
SH18	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
56	HSG	-	+	0
SH19	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	+	0
SH21	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH22	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SH23	HSG	+	0	0
63	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SH24	HSG	+	0	0
SH25	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH26	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
SH27	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH28	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH29	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
71	HSG	-	+	0
74	EMP	+	0	0
SH30	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	+	0
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	0	0
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	+	0
SH34	HSG	-	+	0
SH35	HSG	-	+	0
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	+	0
SH37	HSG	-	+	0
SEC3-66	EMP	-	+	0
SH38	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
91	HSG/EMP	+	0	0
SH39	HSG	+	0	0
SH40	HSG	+	0	0
SH41	HSG	-	+	0
SH42	HSG	+	0	0
SEC1-3	EMP	-	+	0
110	HSG/EMP	-	+	0
118	HSG	-	+	0
120	HSG	-	+	0
132	HSG	-	+	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Previously Undeveloped Land / Land with Environmental Value	ALC Grade	Mineral Safeguarding Areas / Areas of Search
137	HSG	-	+	0
140	HSG	-	+	0
142	HSG	-	+	0
SH43	HSG	-	+	0
SH44	HSG	-	+	0
SH45	HSG	+	0	0
SH46	HSG	-	+	0
SH47	HSG	-	+	0
171	HSG	+	0	0
SH48	HSG	+	0	0
173	HSG	+	0	0
SH49	HSG	+	0	0
SH50	HSG	-	+	0
176	HSG	-	+	0
177	HSG	+	0	0
178	HSG	+	0	0
SH51	HSG	-	+	0
SH52	HSG	+	0	0
SH53	HSG	+	0	0
SH54	HSG	-	+	0
SH55	HSG	-	+	0
SH56	HSG	+	0	0
SH57	HSG	+	0	0
SH58	HSG	-	+	0
SG1	GTTS	-	+	0
188	HSG	-	+	0
189	HSG	-	+	0
SH59	HSG	-	+	0
191	HSG	-	+	0
SH61	HSG	+	0	0
SEC1-1	EMP	+	0	0
SEC1-8	EMP	-	+	0
SEC1-5	EMP	-	+	0
SEC1-6	EMP	+	0	0
SEC1-2	EMP	-	+	0
SEC1-7	EMP	-	+	0
199	Mixed-use	-	+	0
SH60	HSG/EMP	-	+	0

C.8 SA Objective 7: Pollution

C.8.1 Air Quality Management Area

C.8.1.1 The entirety of Sandwell borough is classed as 'Sandwell Air Quality Management Area' (AQMA). All sites are located wholly within this AQMA, whilst several sites are also located partially within 200m of the adjacent 'Walsall AQMA', 'Birmingham AQMA' or 'Dudley AQMA'. The proposed development at all sites would be likely to locate site end users in areas of existing poor air quality and have a minor negative impact on air pollution.

C.8.2 Main Road

C.8.2.1 Many major roads pass through Sandwell, including the A34, A4041, M5, and the M6 Motorway. 59 of the sites proposed within Sandwell are located within 200m of a main road, including Site 137 which is adjacent to the M6 and Sites 35, 91, and SEC1-3 which are adjacent to the M5. Therefore, the proposed development at these 59 sites could potentially expose site end users to higher levels of transport associated air and noise pollution. Traffic using these main roads would be expected to have a minor negative impact on air quality and noise at these sites.

C.8.2.2 The proposed development at the remaining sites which are over 200m from a main road would be expected to have a negligible impact on transport associated air and noise pollution associated with main roads.

C.8.3 Watercourse

C.8.3.1 There are several watercourses within Sandwell, including the River Tame and various canals and brooks. 24 sites coincide with or are located within 10m of various watercourses. The proposed development at these sites would be likely to increase the risk of contamination of these watercourses, and therefore have a minor negative impact on water quality.

C.8.3.2 The remaining 97 sites which are located over 10m from watercourses are less likely to have a significant impact on the quality of watercourses, however, each site would need to be evaluated according to land use type, size of development and exact location. The proposed development at all sites has the potential to lead to adverse impacts such as those resulting from runoff. At this stage, the potential effects of these 97 sites on water quality are uncertain and would depend upon implementation.

C.8.4 Groundwater Source Protection Zone

C.8.4.1 Source Protection Zones (SPZs) for groundwater within Sandwell are located only within the south east of the borough. SPZs are grouped from 1 to 3 based on the level of protection that the groundwater requires. 13 sites in Sandwell are located within the total catchment (zone 3) of this SPZ. The proposed development at these sites could potentially increase the risk of groundwater contamination within the SPZ and have a minor negative impact on the quality or status of groundwater resources.

C.8.4.2 The remaining sites in Sandwell do not coincide with the catchment of any SPZ; therefore, the proposed development at these 108 sites would be expected to have a negligible impact on quality or status of groundwater.

C.8.5 Potential Increase in Air Pollution

C.8.5.1 18 sites proposed solely for residential use are identified as having capacity for the development of 100 or more dwellings and Site SEC3-66 is proposed solely for non-residential use and comprises more than 1ha. The proposed development at these 19 sites could potentially result in a significant increase in local air pollution; therefore, a major negative impact would be expected.

C.8.5.2 47 sites proposed solely for residential use are identified as having capacity for the development of between ten and 99 dwellings, and 12 sites are proposed solely for non-residential end use and comprise between one and 10ha. Therefore, the proposed development at these 59 sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on air pollution in the local area.

C.8.5.3 Four proposed employment sites SEC3-181, SEC3-46, 74, and SEC1-8 comprise less than 1ha and would be expected to have a negligible impact on local air pollution.

C.8.5.4 37 sites are identified as reasonable alternatives for multiple uses (i.e. the sites could potentially be developed for residential, employment and/or GTTS use) and therefore at the time of writing the potential increase air pollution as a result of construction and occupation is uncertain. However, a negative impact would be expected to a certain degree.

C.8.5.5 The nature and design of pitches/plots which could be developed at GTTS sites is unknown at present. Therefore, potential increases in air pollution as a result of the construction and occupation of Site 187 (proposed solely for GTTS use) are uncertain.

C.8.5.6 Site 199 is proposed for mixed-use development and has a housing capacity of 200 dwellings. Therefore, the proposed development at this site would expect to have a major negative impact on air pollution.

Table C.8.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 7 – Pollution

Site Reference	Site Use	AQMA	Main Road	Watercourse	Groundwater SPZ	Potential Increase in Air Pollution
SEC3-181	EMP	-	0	+/-	0	0
SEC4-1	EMP	-	-	+/-	0	-
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SEC3-99	EMP	-	-	+/-	0	-
SH1	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SEC3-46	EMP	-	0	+/-	0	0
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	-	-	-	0	+/-
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	AQMA	Main Road	Watercourse	Groundwater SPZ	Potential Increase in Air Pollution
SEC3-29	EMP	-	-	+/-	0	-
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	-	-	-	0	+/-
SH2	HSG/EMP	-	-	-	0	+/-
SEC4-4	EMP	-	0	+/-	-	-
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SEC3-133	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	-	0	-	0	+/-
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SEC1-4	EMP	-	-	+/-	0	-
SH3	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SH4	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SH5	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
SH6	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	--
SH7	HSG/GTTS	-	-	-	0	+/-
SH8	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH9	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
29	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH10	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH11	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	--
SH12	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
34	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
35	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
36	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
38	HSG	-	-	+/-	-	-
40	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
42	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
43	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
44	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
45	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
46	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH13	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
SH14	HSG	-	0	-	0	-
SH15	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
52	EMP	-	0	-	0	--
SH16	HSG	-	-	-	0	--
SH17	HSG/GTTS	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SH18	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
56	HSG	-	0	+/-	-	-
SH19	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SH21	HSG/EMP	-	-	-	0	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	AQMA	Main Road	Watercourse	Groundwater SPZ	Potential Increase in Air Pollution
SH22	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SH23	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
63	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SH24	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH25	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SH26	HSG/EMP	-	-	-	0	+/-
SH27	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SH28	HSG/EMP	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SH29	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
71	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
74	EMP	-	-	+/-	0	0
SH30	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
SH34	HSG	-	-	-	0	--
SH35	HSG	-	0	-	0	--
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	0	-	0	+/-
SH37	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	--
SEC3-66	EMP	-	0	-	-	--
SH38	HSG/EMP	-	-	-	0	+/-
91	HSG/EMP	-	-	-	0	+/-
SH39	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
SH40	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH41	HSG	-	-	-	-	--
SH42	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SEC1-3	EMP	-	-	+/-	0	-
110	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-
118	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
120	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	--
132	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	--
137	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
140	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
142	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH43	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH44	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH45	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH46	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
SH47	HSG	-	-	-	0	-
171	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	--
SH48	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
173	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
SH49	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	--

Site Reference	Site Use	AQMA	Main Road	Watercourse	Groundwater SPZ	Potential Increase in Air Pollution
SH50	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
176	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
177	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	--
178	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	--
SH51	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	-
SH52	HSG	-	-	+/-	0	--
SH53	HSG	-	-	+/-	-	-
SH54	HSG	-	0	-	-	--
SH55	HSG	-	-	+/-	-	--
SH56	HSG	-	0	+/-	-	-
SH57	HSG	-	0	+/-	-	-
SH58	HSG	-	0	+/-	-	--
SG1	GTTS	-	0	+/-	0	+/-
188	HSG	-	-	-	0	-
189	HSG	-	0	+/-	0	-
SH59	HSG	-	-	-	0	-
191	HSG	-	-	-	-	-
SH61	HSG	-	-	+/-	-	-
SEC1-1	EMP	-	0	-	0	-
SEC1-8	EMP	-	0	+/-	0	0
SEC1-5	EMP	-	0	+/-	0	-
SEC1-6	EMP	-	0	-	0	-
SEC1-2	EMP	-	-	+/-	0	-
SEC1-7	EMP	-	0	+/-	0	-
199	Mixed-use	-	0	+/-	0	--
SH60	HSG/EMP	-	-	+/-	0	+/-

C.9 SA Objective 8: Waste

C.9.1 Potential Increase in Household Waste Generation

- C.9.1.1 Residential-led development is likely to result in an increase in household waste generation, to some extent.
- C.9.1.2 52 sites proposed solely for residential development are identified as having capacity for the development of 130 dwellings or less. The proposed development at these sites would be expected to have a negligible impact on household waste generation in comparison to current levels.
- C.9.1.3 13 sites proposed solely for residential development are identified as having capacity for the development of between 131 and 1,313 dwellings. The proposed development at these sites would be expected to increase household waste generation by more than 0.1% in comparison to current levels. Therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially result in a minor negative impact on household waste generation.
- C.9.1.4 Site 199 is proposed for mixed-use development and has a housing capacity of 200 dwellings. Therefore, the site would expect to have a minor negative impact on household waste generation.
- C.9.1.5 The waste likely to be generated as a result of non-residential development is uncertain and therefore the impact of the proposed development at 15 employment sites is uncertain. Furthermore, the nature and design of pitches/plots which could be developed at the GTTS site 187 is unknown at present. Therefore, potential increases in household waste generation as a result of the construction and occupation of this site is also uncertain.
- C.9.1.6 37 sites are identified as reasonable alternatives for multiple uses (i.e. the sites could potentially be developed for residential, employment and/or GTTS use). The waste likely to be generated from the proposed development at these sites is therefore uncertain.

Table C.9.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 8 – Waste

Site Reference	Site Use	Potential Increase in Household Waste Generation
SEC3-181	EMP	+/-
SEC4-1	EMP	+/-
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-99	EMP	+/-
SH1	HSG	0
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-46	EMP	+/-
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-29	EMP	+/-
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH2	HSG/EMP	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	Potential Increase in Household Waste Generation
SEC4-4	EMP	+/-
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	0
SEC3-133	HSG	+/-
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC1-4	EMP	+/-
SH3	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH4	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH5	HSG	0
SH6	HSG	-
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+/-
SH8	HSG	0
SH9	HSG	0
29	HSG	0
SH10	HSG	0
SH11	HSG	-
SH12	HSG	0
34	HSG	0
35	HSG/EMP	+/-
36	HSG	0
38	HSG	0
40	HSG	0
42	HSG	0
43	HSG	0
44	HSG	0
45	HSG/EMP	+/-
46	HSG	0
SH13	HSG	0
SH14	HSG	0
SH15	HSG	0
52	EMP	+/-
SH16	HSG	-
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+/-
SH18	HSG/EMP	+/-
56	HSG	0
SH19	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH21	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH22	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH23	HSG	0
63	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH24	HSG	0
SH25	HSG/EMP	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	Potential Increase in Household Waste Generation
SH26	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH27	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH28	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH29	HSG/EMP	+/-
71	HSG	0
74	EMP	+/-
SH30	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH34	HSG	-
SH35	HSG	-
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH37	HSG	-
SEC3-66	EMP	+/-
SH38	HSG/EMP	+/-
91	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH39	HSG	0
SH40	HSG	0
SH41	HSG	-
SH42	HSG	0
SEC1-3	EMP	+/-
110	HSG/EMP	+/-
118	HSG	0
120	HSG	0
132	HSG	0
137	HSG	0
140	HSG	0
142	HSG	0
SH43	HSG	0
SH44	HSG	0
SH45	HSG	0
SH46	HSG	0
SH47	HSG	0
171	HSG	-
SH48	HSG	0
173	HSG	0
SH49	HSG	-
SH50	HSG	0
176	HSG	0
177	HSG	-
178	HSG	-
SH51	HSG	0
SH52	HSG	-
SH53	HSG	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Potential Increase in Household Waste Generation
SH54	HSG	0
SH55	HSG	0
SH56	HSG	0
SH57	HSG	0
SH58	HSG	-
SG1	GTTS	+/-
188	HSG	0
189	HSG	0
SH59	HSG	0
191	HSG	0
SH61	HSG	0
SEC1-1	EMP	+/-
SEC1-8	EMP	+/-
SEC1-5	EMP	+/-
SEC1-6	EMP	+/-
SEC1-2	EMP	+/-
SEC1-7	EMP	+/-
199	Mixed-use	-
SH60	HSG/EMP	+/-

C.10 SA Objective 9: Transport and Accessibility

C.10.1 Bus Stop

C.10.1.1 In Sandwell, there are many bus stops, which would be expected to generally provide good public transport access, with the exception of some small areas to the east of the borough and pockets in the centre where bus stops are more thinly distributed. The majority of sites within Sandwell are located within 400m of a bus stop (118 sites in total), and therefore, the proposed development at these sites would be expected to have a minor positive impact on access to sustainable transport options.

C.10.1.2 Three sites (SH18, SH35, and SH36) are located wholly or partially outside of the sustainable distance of 400m from a bus stop providing regular services, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on site end users' access to sustainable transport.

C.10.2 Railway Station

C.10.2.1 There are several railway stations located within the borough of Sandwell, as well as many metro stations located along the West Midlands Metro line which goes through West Bromwich Central Station. A large proportion of the borough would be expected to have good access to these stations, although small areas in the south west, south east and north east lie outside of a sustainable 2km distance from these stations. The majority of the sites are located within 2km of a railway station, and therefore, the proposed development at these 117 sites would be likely to have a minor positive impact on access to rail services.

C.10.2.2 However, four sites (SH12, SH37, SH42, and 120) are located over 2km from a railway station, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on site end users' access to rail services.

C.10.3 Pedestrian Access

C.10.3.1 Sites with good pedestrian access can be described those with existing pavements or pathways which are segregated from traffic use in the area, which are generally well distributed throughout Sandwell, due to its built-up nature. The majority of the sites within Sandwell are well connected to the existing footpath networks. Therefore, the proposed development at these 119 sites would be likely to have a minor positive impact on local transport and accessibility, by potentially encouraging travel by foot and reducing requirement for new pedestrian access to be created.

C.10.3.2 However, Sites SEC3-29 and SH2 currently have poor access to the existing footpath network. Therefore, the proposed development at these two sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on local accessibility, and pedestrian access to the wider community would need improvement to be considered a viable transport option.

C.10.4 Road Access

- C.10.4.1 A network of major and minor roads can be found throughout Sandwell, which would be expected to provide good road access in the local area and nationally. The majority of sites proposed within Sandwell are adjacent to a road, and therefore, the proposed development at these 118 sites would be expected to provide site end users with good access to the existing road network, resulting in a minor positive impact on transport and accessibility.
- C.10.4.2 However, three sites (SEC3-29, SH2, and SEC4-4) are not accessible from the current road network. The proposed development at these three sites could potentially result in a minor negative impact on accessibility as more significant infrastructure improvements would likely be required compared to other sites.

C.10.5 Pedestrian Access to Local Services

- C.10.5.1 Sites with sustainable pedestrian access to local fresh food and services in Sandwell are considered to be those within a 15-minute walking distance. According to accessibility modelling data, a large proportion of the borough meets these criteria, however, there are some sections in the north east, south west and centre of the borough where pedestrian access to services is likely to be more restricted. 90 sites are identified to be within a 15-minute walking distance to local services. Of these 90 sites, 59 are located within a 10-minute walking distance and would be expected to have a major positive impact on sustainable access to local services, and the remaining 31 sites are located within a 15-minute walking distance and would be expected to have a minor positive impact on sustainable access to local services.
- C.10.5.2 The remaining 31 sites are located wholly or partially outside of a 15-minute walking distance to these services, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on the sustainable access of site end users to local services, based on current infrastructure.

C.10.6 Public Transport Access to Local Services

- C.10.6.1 Accessibility modelling data indicates that almost the entirety of the borough has good sustainable transport access to local fresh food and services, within 15 minutes travel time via public transport. The majority of sites (119 in total) are situated within the sustainable travel time via public transport to local services. Of these 119 sites, 102 sites are located within 10 minutes travel time via public transport to local services and would be expected to have a major positive impact on the access of site end users to local services. The remaining 17 sites out of the 119 are within a 15-minute travel time via public transport and would be expected to have a minor positive impact on the access of site end users to local services.
- C.10.6.2 Site 35 and 56 are wholly located outside a 15 minute travel time via public transport and would be expected to have a minor negative impact on the access of site end users to local services, based on current infrastructure.

Table C.10.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 9 – Transport and accessibility

Site Reference	Site Use	Bus Stop	Railway Station	Pedestrian Access	Road Access	Pedestrian Access to Local Services	Public Transport Access to Local Services
SEC3-181	EMP	+	+	+	+	+	++
SEC4-1	EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC3-99	EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH1	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	+	++
SEC3-46	EMP	+	+	+	+	-	++
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	+	++
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC3-29	EMP	+	+	-	-	-	+
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH2	HSG/EMP	+	+	-	-	++	++
SEC4-4	EMP	+	+	+	-	-	+
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC3-133	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	-	+
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC1-4	EMP	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH3	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH4	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH5	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH6	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH8	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH9	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	+
29	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH10	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH11	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH12	HSG	+	-	+	+	-	+
34	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
35	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	-	-
36	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
38	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
40	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
42	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
43	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
44	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
45	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	-	+
46	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++

Site Reference	Site Use	Bus Stop	Railway Station	Pedestrian Access	Road Access	Pedestrian Access to Local Services	Public Transport Access to Local Services
SH13	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH14	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH15	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
52	EMP	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH16	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+	+	+	+	-	++
SH18	HSG/EMP	-	+	+	+	+	++
56	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	-
SH19	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH21	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	-	++
SH22	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH23	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	++
63	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH24	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH25	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH26	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	+	+
SH27	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH28	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH29	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
71	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
74	EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH30	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	+	+
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	+	+	+	-	++
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH34	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH35	HSG	-	+	+	+	-	++
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-	+	+	+	-	++
SH37	HSG	+	-	+	+	-	+
SEC3-66	EMP	+	+	+	+	-	+
SH38	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	-	++
91	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH39	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH40	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH41	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH42	HSG	+	-	+	+	+	++
SEC1-3	EMP	+	+	+	+	+	++
110	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	+	+
118	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	++
120	HSG	+	-	+	+	+	++
132	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++

Site Reference	Site Use	Bus Stop	Railway Station	Pedestrian Access	Road Access	Pedestrian Access to Local Services	Public Transport Access to Local Services
137	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
140	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	++
142	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH43	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	++
SH44	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH45	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH46	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH47	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
171	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH48	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
173	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH49	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH50	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
176	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
177	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
178	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH51	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH52	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH53	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	+
SH54	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	+
SH55	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	+
SH56	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	++
SH57	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	++
SH58	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	+
SG1	GTTS	+	+	+	+	-	++
188	HSG	+	+	+	+	++	++
189	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	++
SH59	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
191	HSG	+	+	+	+	+	++
SH61	HSG	+	+	+	+	-	+
SEC1-1	EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC1-8	EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++
SEC1-5	EMP	+	+	+	+	+	++
SEC1-6	EMP	+	+	+	+	-	+
SEC1-2	EMP	+	+	+	+	+	++
SEC1-7	EMP	+	+	+	+	-	++
199	Mixed-use	+	+	+	+	++	++
SH60	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	++	++

C.11 SA Objective 10: Housing

C.11.1 Housing Provision

- C.11.1.1 Residential-led development is likely to result in a net gain in housing. The sites in Sandwell proposed solely for residential use would therefore be expected to result in positive impacts under this objective. Sites which have been identified as having capacity for 100 or more dwellings would be expected to make a significant contribution towards meeting housing needs if developed, and as such, result in a major positive impact on housing provision. Sites which have been identified as having capacity for 99 dwellings or less would be expected to result in a minor positive impact on housing provision.
- C.11.1.2 Site 199 is proposed for mixed-use development and has a housing capacity of 200. The site would therefore expect to have a major positive impact on housing provision.
- C.11.1.3 Employment-led sites in Sandwell would not be expected to result in a net change in housing provision and therefore a negligible impact would be likely.
- C.11.1.4 37 sites are identified as reasonable alternatives for multiple uses (i.e. the sites could potentially be developed for residential, employment and/or GTTS use). Therefore, it is uncertain whether these sites would result in a net change in housing provision. A minor positive impact is however identified for the two housing/GTTS sites as these sites would increase housing provision to some extent.

Table C.11.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 10 – Housing

Site Reference	Site Use	Housing Provision
SEC3-181	EMP	0
SEC4-1	EMP	0
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-99	EMP	0
SH1	HSG	+
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-46	EMP	0
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-29	EMP	0
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH2	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC4-4	EMP	0
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-133	HSG	+
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+/-
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+/-

Site Reference	Site Use	Housing Provision
SEC1-4	EMP	0
SH3	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH4	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH5	HSG	+
SH6	HSG	++
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+
SH8	HSG	+
SH9	HSG	+
29	HSG	+
SH10	HSG	+
SH11	HSG	++
SH12	HSG	+
34	HSG	+
35	HSG/EMP	+/-
36	HSG	+
38	HSG	+
40	HSG	+
42	HSG	+
43	HSG	+
44	HSG	+
45	HSG/EMP	+/-
46	HSG	+
SH13	HSG	++
SH14	HSG	+
SH15	HSG	+
52	EMP	0
SH16	HSG	++
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+
SH18	HSG/EMP	+/-
56	HSG	+
SH19	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH21	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH22	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH23	HSG	+
63	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH24	HSG	+
SH25	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH26	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH27	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH28	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH29	HSG/EMP	+/-
71	HSG	+

Site Reference	Site Use	Housing Provision
74	EMP	0
SH30	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH34	HSG	++
SH35	HSG	++
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-
SH37	HSG	++
SEC3-66	EMP	0
SH38	HSG/EMP	+/-
91	HSG/EMP	+/-
SH39	HSG	+
SH40	HSG	+
SH41	HSG	++
SH42	HSG	+
SEC1-3	EMP	0
110	HSG/EMP	+/-
118	HSG	+
120	HSG	++
132	HSG	++
137	HSG	+
140	HSG	+
142	HSG	+
SH43	HSG	+
SH44	HSG	+
SH45	HSG	+
SH46	HSG	+
SH47	HSG	+
171	HSG	++
SH48	HSG	+
173	HSG	+
SH49	HSG	++
SH50	HSG	+
176	HSG	+
177	HSG	++
178	HSG	++
SH51	HSG	+
SH52	HSG	++
SH53	HSG	+
SH54	HSG	++
SH55	HSG	++
SH56	HSG	+

Site Reference	Site Use	Housing Provision
SH57	HSG	+
SH58	HSG	++
SG1	GTTS	+
188	HSG	+
189	HSG	+
SH59	HSG	+
191	HSG	+
SH61	HSG	+
SEC1-1	EMP	0
SEC1-8	EMP	0
SEC1-5	EMP	0
SEC1-6	EMP	0
SEC1-2	EMP	0
SEC1-7	EMP	0
199	Mixed-use	++
SH60	HSG/EMP	+/-

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C.12 SA Objective 11: Equality

C.12.1 Index of Multiple Deprivation

C.12.1.1 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures the relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England⁵. Out of 317 Local Authorities in England, Sandwell is ranked as the 12th most deprived⁶. Overall deprivation is relatively high across the Black Country, with 36 of the LSOAs in Sandwell ranked among the 10% most deprived in England. Deprivation levels within the borough of Sandwell varies from area to area, with the 36 most deprived LSOAs found throughout the borough, and in particular clustered within the south eastern and north western parts of the borough.

C.12.1.2 45 sites are located wholly or partially within the 10% most deprived LSOAs, and therefore development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on equality by exacerbating existing social pressures faced by current residents and place increased pressure on local services. The remaining 76 sites are located outside of the most deprived 10% LSOAs, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites may have a negligible impact on equality.

C.12.1.3 It should be noted that there is a degree of uncertainty in regard to the impacts of each site on equality, which will be dependent on site-specific circumstances that are unknown at the time of writing.

Table C.12.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 11 – Equality

Site Reference	Site Use	IMD 10% Most Deprived
SEC3-181	EMP	0
SEC4-1	EMP	-
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	-
SEC3-99	EMP	0
SH1	HSG	0
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	-
SEC3-46	EMP	0
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	0
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	0
SEC3-29	EMP	0
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	0
SH2	HSG/EMP	-
SEC4-4	EMP	-

⁵ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2019) English indices of deprivation 2019. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019> [Date accessed: 15/09/23]

⁶ Active Black Country (2023) Indices of Multiple Deprivation, 2019. Available at: <https://www.activeblackcountry.co.uk/insight-hub/data/communities/indices-of-multiple-deprivation-2019/> [Date accessed: 15/09/23]

Site Reference	Site Use	IMD 10% Most Deprived
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	-
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	-
SEC3-133	HSG	-
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	0
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	0
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	-
SEC1-4	EMP	0
SH3	HSG/EMP	0
SH4	HSG/EMP	0
SH5	HSG	-
SH6	HSG	-
SH7	HSG/GTTS	0
SH8	HSG	0
SH9	HSG	-
29	HSG	-
SH10	HSG	-
SH11	HSG	0
SH12	HSG	0
34	HSG	0
35	HSG/EMP	0
36	HSG	0
38	HSG	0
40	HSG	0
42	HSG	0
43	HSG	0
44	HSG	0
45	HSG/EMP	0
46	HSG	0
SH13	HSG	0
SH14	HSG	-
SH15	HSG	0
52	EMP	0
SH16	HSG	0
SH17	HSG/GTTS	0
SH18	HSG/EMP	0
56	HSG	-
SH19	HSG/EMP	0
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0
SH21	HSG/EMP	0
SH22	HSG/EMP	0
SH23	HSG	-
63	HSG/EMP	0
SH24	HSG	0

Site Reference	Site Use	IMD 10% Most Deprived
SH25	HSG/EMP	-
SH26	HSG/EMP	0
SH27	HSG/EMP	0
SH28	HSG/EMP	0
SH29	HSG/EMP	-
71	HSG	0
74	EMP	0
SH30	HSG/EMP	0
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	-
SH34	HSG	0
SH35	HSG	0
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	0
SH37	HSG	0
SEC3-66	EMP	-
SH38	HSG/EMP	0
91	HSG/EMP	-
SH39	HSG	-
SH40	HSG	0
SH41	HSG	-
SH42	HSG	0
SEC1-3	EMP	-
110	HSG/EMP	0
118	HSG	-
120	HSG	0
132	HSG	-
137	HSG	0
140	HSG	0
142	HSG	0
SH43	HSG	0
SH44	HSG	-
SH45	HSG	-
SH46	HSG	0
SH47	HSG	0
171	HSG	0
SH48	HSG	0
173	HSG	0
SH49	HSG	0
SH50	HSG	0
176	HSG	0
177	HSG	-
178	HSG	-

Site Reference	Site Use	IMD 10% Most Deprived
SH51	HSG	-
SH52	HSG	-
SH53	HSG	-
SH54	HSG	-
SH55	HSG	-
SH56	HSG	-
SH57	HSG	-
SH58	HSG	-
SG1	GTTS	0
188	HSG	-
189	HSG	0
SH59	HSG	0
191	HSG	-
SH61	HSG	-
SEC1-1	EMP	-
SEC1-8	EMP	0
SEC1-5	EMP	0
SEC1-6	EMP	0
SEC1-2	EMP	0
SEC1-7	EMP	0
199	Mixed-use	0
SH60	HSG/EMP	0

C.13 SA Objective 12: Health

C.13.1 NHS Hospital with Accident & Emergency Department

C.13.1.1 Currently Sandwell General Hospital is the only NHS Hospital with an Accident & Emergency department within the borough itself, although there are other nearby hospitals such as Manor Hospital in Walsall to the north, and the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital scheduled to open in 2024 within Sandwell Borough, which will also provide these services. The majority of the proposed sites are located within 5km of one or more of these hospitals (109 sites in total). Therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor positive impact on access to emergency healthcare due being within a sustainable distance to the services.

C.13.1.2 The remaining 12 sites are located wholly over 5km from a hospital, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on access to emergency healthcare.

C.13.2 Pedestrian Access to GP Surgery

C.13.2.1 There are 73 GP Surgeries distributed within Sandwell, serving the existing local communities, particularly clustered within the south east and north west of the borough. Accessibility modelling data has been provided to Lepus by SMBC, mapping the location of GP surgeries and areas within a sustainable travel time to these facilities for pedestrians. A large proportion of the built-up areas are located within a 15-minute walk to a GP surgery; however, the modelling data indicates that some areas in the north east and centre of Sandwell are likely to have more restricted access for pedestrians.

C.13.2.2 The majority of proposed sites (110) in Sandwell are located within a 15-minute walking distance to a GP surgery. Of the 110 sites, 73 of these are located within a 10-minute walking distance to a GP surgery and would be expected to have a major positive impact on access to healthcare. The remaining 37 sites of the 110 are located within a 15-minute walking distance to a GP surgery and would be expected to have a minor positive impact on access to healthcare.

C.13.2.3 11 sites are located wholly or partially outside of this sustainable travel time. Therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on pedestrian access to healthcare, based on existing infrastructure.

C.13.3 Public Transport Access to GP Surgery

C.13.3.1 Good and sustainable public transport access to a local GP surgery is identified to be within a 15-minute journey. According to accessibility modelling data, this travel time to healthcare is likely to be achieved across the majority of Sandwell, with the exception of small pockets in the east and west.

C.13.3.2 All sites within Sandwell are all situated in areas within this 15-minute time frame, with the exception of Sites SEC3-22 and SH19, where Site SEC3-22 is wholly located outside this travel time and the majority of Site SH19 is located partially outside this travel time.

These two sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on sustainable access to healthcare, based on current infrastructure. Of the 119 sites that are within the sustainable travel time, 103 are located within a 10-minute journey and would be expected to have a major positive impact on sustainable access to healthcare, while the remaining 16 sites are within a 15-minute journey and would be expected to have a minor positive impact on sustainable access to healthcare.

C.13.4 Access to Greenspace

C.13.4.1 Greenspaces are distributed throughout the borough, including parks, allotments, playing fields and Sandwell Valley Country Park located in the north east of the borough. All of the proposed in Sandwell are located within 600m of one or more greenspaces. Therefore, a minor positive impact would be expected at these 121 sites, as the proposed development would be likely to provide site end users with good access to outdoor space and a diverse range of natural habitats, which is known to have physical and mental health benefits.

C.13.5 Net Loss of Greenspace

C.13.5.1 10 proposed sites coincide wholly or partially with publicly available greenspaces and/ or greenspaces with public access, including Sites SH9 and SH18 which both coincide with playing fields. The proposed development at these 10 sites could potentially result in the net loss of greenspace, and therefore, have a minor negative impact on the provision of greenspace across the Plan area.

C.13.6 Public Right of Way / Cycle Path

C.13.6.1 104 sites in Sandwell are located within 600m of the PRow and/or cycle network. The proposed development at these sites would be likely to provide site end users with good pedestrian and/or cycle access and encourage physical activity, and therefore, have a minor positive impact on the health and wellbeing of local residents. However, the remaining 17 sites are located wholly or partially over 600m from the PRow and cycle network; therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on pedestrian and cycle access.

Table C.13.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 12 – Health

Site Reference	Site Use	NHS Hospital with A&E Department	Pedestrian Access to GP Surgery	Public Transport Access to GP Surgery	Access to Greenspace	Net Loss of Greenspace	PRow/ Cycle Path
SEC3-181	EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SEC4-1	EMP	-	+	++	+	0	+
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SEC3-99	EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH1	HSG	-	-	+	+	0	+
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+

Site Reference	Site Use	NHS Hospital with A&E Department	Pedestrian Access to GP Surgery	Public Transport Access to GP Surgery	Access to Greenspace	Net Loss of Greenspace	PRoW/ Cycle Path
SEC3-46	EMP	-	+	++	+	0	+
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SEC3-29	EMP	+	+	+	+	0	+
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH2	HSG/EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SEC4-4	EMP	+	+	++	+	0	-
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SEC3-133	HSG	-	-	++	+	0	+
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	-	+	++	+	0	+
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+	+	-	+	0	+
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SEC1-4	EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SH3	HSG/EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SH4	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH5	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH6	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH8	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH9	HSG	+	+	++	+	-	+
29	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH10	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH11	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH12	HSG	+	+	++	+	-	+
34	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
35	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
36	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
38	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
40	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
42	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
43	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
44	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	-
45	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
46	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH13	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH14	HSG	+	+	++	+	0	+
SH15	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
52	EMP	-	++	++	+	0	+
SH16	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH17	HSG/GTTS	-	+	++	+	0	+
SH18	HSG/EMP	+	-	+	+	-	+
56	HSG	+	+	++	+	0	-
SH19	HSG/EMP	+	++	-	+	0	+

Site Reference	Site Use	NHS Hospital with A&E Department	Pedestrian Access to GP Surgery	Public Transport Access to GP Surgery	Access to Greenspace	Net Loss of Greenspace	PRoW/ Cycle Path
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH21	HSG/EMP	+	-	+	+	0	+
SH22	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	-
SH23	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
63	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH24	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH25	HSG/EMP	-	-	++	+	0	+
SH26	HSG/EMP	+	-	+	+	0	+
SH27	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH28	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH29	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	0	+
71	HSG	+	+	++	+	0	+
74	EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH30	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	-	+	+	0	+
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH34	HSG	+	+	++	+	-	+
SH35	HSG	+	-	+	+	0	+
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	-	+	+	0	+
SH37	HSG	+	+	++	+	-	+
SEC3-66	EMP	+	+	+	+	0	-
SH38	HSG/EMP	+	-	+	+	0	+
91	HSG/EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SH39	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH40	HSG	+	++	++	+	-	-
SH41	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH42	HSG	+	+	+	+	0	+
SEC1-3	EMP	+	+	+	+	0	+
110	HSG/EMP	+	+	+	+	0	+
118	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
120	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
132	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
137	HSG	+	+	++	+	0	+
140	HSG	-	++	++	+	0	-
142	HSG	-	+	++	+	0	+
SH43	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH44	HSG	+	+	++	+	0	+
SH45	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH46	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH47	HSG	+	+	++	+	0	+
171	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH48	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
173	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+

Site Reference	Site Use	NHS Hospital with A&E Department	Pedestrian Access to GP Surgery	Public Transport Access to GP Surgery	Access to Greenspace	Net Loss of Greenspace	PRoW/ Cycle Path
SH49	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH50	HSG	+	++	++	+	-	+
176	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
177	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
178	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH51	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH52	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
SH53	HSG	+	++	+	+	0	-
SH54	HSG	+	+	++	+	0	-
SH55	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	-
SH56	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	-
SH57	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	-
SH58	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	-
SG1	GTTS	-	++	++	+	0	+
188	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	+
189	HSG	-	++	++	+	-	+
SH59	HSG	+	+	++	+	-	+
191	HSG	+	++	++	+	0	-
SH61	HSG	+	+	+	+	0	-
SEC1-1	EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SEC1-8	EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+
SEC1-5	EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SEC1-6	EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SEC1-2	EMP	+	+	++	+	0	+
SEC1-7	EMP	+	-	++	+	0	+
199	Mixed-Use	+	++	++	+	-	+
SH60	HSG/EMP	+	++	++	+	0	+

C.14 SA Objective 13: Economy

C.14.1 Employment Floorspace Provision

- C.14.1.1 Employment floorspace provision has been assessed with consideration of current land use and the proposed development at each site.
- C.14.1.2 There are 17 sites proposed solely for employment use in Sandwell. Eight of these sites currently comprise (either wholly or the majority of the site) areas of undeveloped or vacant land; therefore, the proposed development at these sites would be expected to result in a significant net gain in employment floorspace and have a major positive impact on providing local employment opportunities. The remaining nine sites proposed for employment use currently coincide with employment areas or existing businesses, including Site SEC1-7 which currently coincides with 'BHM Motorhome Hire Depot' and Site 52 which coincides with several businesses including 'Aspen Concepts', 'Totally Modular' and 'Kee Safety'. It is uncertain whether the proposed development at these sites would result in a net change in employment floorspace.
- C.14.1.3 Site 199 is proposed for mixed-use development with a proportion of the site proposed for employment. Site 199 is located on greenfield land and would be expected to result in a significant net gain in employment floorspace, leading to a major positive impact on providing local employment opportunities.
- C.14.1.4 34 sites proposed solely for residential use coincide with existing employment areas, and therefore, development at these sites could potentially result in a net loss of employment floorspace. The proposed development at 24 of these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on employment floorspace provision due to the possible loss of small areas of employment land or small businesses, whereas the proposed development at 10 of these sites could potentially have a major negative impact due to the possible loss of a large area of employment land.
- C.14.1.5 37 sites are identified as reasonable alternatives for multiple uses (i.e. the sites could potentially be developed for residential, employment and/or GTTS use). The potential net change in employment floorspace is unknown and therefore it is uncertain whether these sites would be likely to have an impact on the provision of employment opportunities.
- C.14.1.6 It is uncertain whether the proposed housing development at Site 34 would impact employment opportunities. The site coincides with the 'YMCA' building and it is unknown whether there are any jobs associated with this.
- C.14.1.7 The remaining 31 sites proposed solely for residential development and the single GTTS site, are located on previously undeveloped land or vacant land and would not be expected to result in a net change in employment floorspace; therefore, the proposed development at these sites would be likely to have a negligible impact on the provision of employment opportunities.

C.14.2 Pedestrian Access to Employment Opportunities

C.14.2.1 There are many employment opportunities currently within Sandwell, with 254 key employment locations identified. Most existing employment land is concentrated in the centre of the borough and close to the strategic road network. Accessibility modelling data has been provided to Lepus by SMBC, mapping key employment locations and areas within a sustainable travel time. According to the modelling data, almost the entirety of the borough is within a 30-minute walk to an employment location, however, a small area in the north east is likely to have more restricted access for pedestrians.

C.14.2.2 The majority of reasonable alternative sites with potential to deliver housing in Sandwell (104 sites) would be expected to have a positive impact on pedestrian access to employment due to being within this sustainable travel time to employment opportunities. Of the 104 sites within this travel time, 103 sites are located within a 20-minute walk to an employment location and could potentially have a major positive impact on pedestrian access to employment. The remaining one site would be expected to have a minor positive impact on pedestrian access to employment as it is within a 30-minute walk to an employment location.

C.14.2.3 Two sites are located outside this sustainable travel time; Site 34 is wholly located outside of this travel time, and the majority of Site SH43 is located outside this travel time. Therefore, the proposed development at these two sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on pedestrian access to employment opportunities, based on current infrastructure.

C.14.3 Public Transport Access to Employment Opportunities

C.14.3.1 Accessibility modelling data indicates that the majority of the borough is located within a sustainable travel time via public transport to employment opportunities, identified as being within a 30-minute journey. All of the reasonable alternative sites with potential to deliver residential development would be expected to have a positive impact on sustainable access to employment opportunities. 102 sites are located within a 20-minute travel time via public transport, which would be expected to have a major positive impact on sustainable access to employment opportunities. Four sites are located within a 30-minute travel time via public transport and would be expected to have a minor positive impact on sustainable access to employment opportunities.

Table C.14.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 13 – Economy

Site Reference	Site Use	Employment Floorspace Provision	Pedestrian Access to Employment Opportunities	Public Transport Access to Employment Opportunities
SEC3-181	EMP	+/-	0	0
SEC4-1	EMP	+/-	0	0
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC3-99	EMP	+/-	0	0
SH1	HSG	0	++	++
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC3-46	EMP	+/-	0	0

Site Reference	Site Use	Employment Floorspace Provision	Pedestrian Access to Employment Opportunities	Public Transport Access to Employment Opportunities
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC3-29	EMP	++	0	0
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH2	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC4-4	EMP	++	0	0
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC3-133	HSG	--	++	++
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SEC1-4	EMP	++	0	0
SH3	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH4	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH5	HSG	-	++	++
SH6	HSG	--	++	++
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+/-	++	++
SH8	HSG	-	++	++
SH9	HSG	0	++	++
29	HSG	0	++	++
SH10	HSG	0	++	++
SH11	HSG	-	++	++
SH12	HSG	0	++	++
34	HSG	+/-	-	+
35	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
36	HSG	-	++	++
38	HSG	0	++	++
40	HSG	-	++	++
42	HSG	0	++	++
43	HSG	0	++	++
44	HSG	0	++	++
45	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
46	HSG	-	++	++
SH13	HSG	-	++	++
SH14	HSG	--	++	++
SH15	HSG	-	++	++
52	EMP	+/-	0	0
SH16	HSG	--	++	++
SH17	HSG/GTTS	+/-	++	++
SH18	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
56	HSG	0	++	++
SH19	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++

Site Reference	Site Use	Employment Floorpace Provision	Pedestrian Access to Employment Opportunities	Public Transport Access to Employment Opportunities
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	++	++
SH21	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH22	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH23	HSG	-	++	++
63	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH24	HSG	-	++	++
SH25	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH26	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH27	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH28	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH29	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
71	HSG	-	++	++
74	EMP	+/-	0	0
SH30	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	++	++
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	++	++
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	++	++
SH34	HSG	0	++	++
SH35	HSG	0	++	++
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+/-	++	++
SH37	HSG	0	++	++
SEC3-66	EMP	+/-	0	0
SH38	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
91	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
SH39	HSG	-	++	++
SH40	HSG	-	++	++
SH41	HSG	--	++	++
SH42	HSG	0	++	++
SEC1-3	EMP	++	0	0
110	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++
118	HSG	0	++	++
120	HSG	0	+	++
132	HSG	0	++	++
137	HSG	0	++	++
140	HSG	0	++	++
142	HSG	0	++	++
SH43	HSG	0	-	+
SH44	HSG	0	++	++
SH45	HSG	0	++	++
SH46	HSG	0	++	++
SH47	HSG	-	++	++
171	HSG	-	++	++
SH48	HSG	0	++	++

Site Reference	Site Use	Employment Floorspace Provision	Pedestrian Access to Employment Opportunities	Public Transport Access to Employment Opportunities
173	HSG	-	++	++
SH49	HSG	-	++	++
SH50	HSG	0	++	++
176	HSG	-	++	++
177	HSG	--	++	++
178	HSG	--	++	++
SH51	HSG	-	++	++
SH52	HSG	-	++	++
SH53	HSG	-	++	++
SH54	HSG	-	++	++
SH55	HSG	--	++	++
SH56	HSG	-	++	+
SH57	HSG	--	++	+
SH58	HSG	--	++	++
SG1	GTTS	0	++	++
188	HSG	0	++	++
189	HSG	0	++	++
SH59	HSG	0	++	++
191	HSG	0	++	++
SH61	HSG	-	++	++
SEC1-1	EMP	+/-	0	0
SEC1-8	EMP	++	0	0
SEC1-5	EMP	++	0	0
SEC1-6	EMP	++	0	0
SEC1-2	EMP	++	0	0
SEC1-7	EMP	+/-	0	0
199	Mixed-use	++	++	++
SH60	HSG/EMP	+/-	++	++

C.15 SA Objective 14: Education, Skills and Training

C.15.1 Pedestrian Access to Primary School

C.15.1.1 There are 98 primary schools distributed throughout Sandwell. Accessibility modelling data has been provided to Lepus by SMBC, mapping the location of primary schools and areas within a sustainable travel time to these schools. The majority of borough is located within a 15-minute walk to a primary school, however, some areas are likely to have more restricted access, such as along the M5 corridor in the east.

C.15.1.2 The majority of the proposed housing sites are situated within a 15-minute walking distance to a primary school (103 sites). Of these 103 sites, 69 sites are within a 10-minute walking distance to primary school, and therefore, the proposed development at these 69 sites would be likely to have a major positive impact on pedestrian access to primary schools. The remaining 34 sites of these 103 are within 15-minute walking distance to primary school, and therefore, the proposed development at these 34 sites would be likely to have a minor positive impact on pedestrian access to primary schools.

C.15.1.3 However, Site SH17 is located outside of a 15-minute walk to a primary school, and therefore, the proposed development at this site could potentially have a minor negative impact on access to primary schools due to the likely increased reliance on less sustainable travel methods.

C.15.2 Pedestrian Access to Secondary School

C.15.2.1 Accessibility modelling data has been provided to Lepus by SMBC, mapping the location of secondary schools and areas within a sustainable travel time to these schools. There are 20 secondary schools within Sandwell which are fairly evenly distributed across the borough, serving communities within the existing built-up areas but providing more limited access for areas which currently contain less dense development, particularly in the Green Belt to the north east.

C.15.2.2 The majority of proposed housing sites in Sandwell are located within a 25-minute walk to a secondary school. Therefore, the proposed development at these 88 sites would be expected to have a positive impact on sustainable access to education, as development at these locations would be likely to encourage pedestrian access to secondary schools. Of the 88 sites, 69 sites are located within a 20-minute walk to a secondary school and would be expected to have a major positive impact on sustainable access to education. The remaining 19 sites are located within a 25-minute walk to a secondary school and would be expected to have a minor positive impact on sustainable access to education.

C.15.2.3 However, 16 residential sites are situated in the areas of the borough outside of a 25-minute walk to a secondary school, and as such, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on sustainable access to education.

C.15.3 Public Transport Access to Secondary School

- C.15.3.1 Existing public transport access to secondary schools within Sandwell is widespread, according to accessibility modelling data, and would be likely to provide local residents with good access to schools in the local and wider area. The data indicates only localised pockets of the borough where public transport access to secondary schools is more limited.
- C.15.3.2 The majority of housing sites in Sandwell are located within a 25-minute public transport journey to a secondary school, and therefore, the proposed development at these 97 sites would be expected to have a positive impact on sustainable access to education, based on current infrastructure. Of the 97 sites, 89 of these are located within a 20-minute public transport journey to a secondary school, and therefore would be expected to have a major positive impact on sustainable access to education. The remaining eight sites are located within a 25-minute public transport journey to a secondary school, and therefore, would be expected to have a minor positive impact on sustainable access to education.
- C.15.3.3 Seven of the proposed housing sites (SEC3-113, SH8, SH14, SH28, SH35, SH36, and SH45) are located wholly or partially outside of this sustainable travel time to a secondary school, and therefore, the proposed development at these sites could potentially have a minor negative impact on new residents' access to education, based on current infrastructure.

Table C.15.1: Sites impact matrix for SA Objective 14 – Education, skills and training

Site Reference	Site Use	Pedestrian Access to Primary School	Pedestrian Access to Secondary School	Public Transport Access to Secondary School
SEC3-181	EMP	0	0	0
SEC4-1	EMP	0	0	0
SEC3-9	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
SEC3-99	EMP	0	0	0
SH1	HSG	+	-	++
SEC3-113	HSG/EMP	+	++	-
SEC3-46	EMP	0	0	0
SEC3-175	HSG/EMP	++	-	+
SEC-36	HSG/EMP	+	-	++
SEC3-29	EMP	0	0	0
SEC3-148	HSG/EMP	++	-	++
SH2	HSG/EMP	+	++	++
SEC4-4	EMP	0	0	0
SEC3-191	HSG/EMP	++	+	+
SEC4-3	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
SEC3-133	HSG	++	-	++
SEC3-189	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
SEC3-22	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
SEC3-40	HSG/EMP	++	+	++
SEC1-4	EMP	0	0	0
SH3	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
SH4	HSG/EMP	+	-	++
SH5	HSG	++	++	++
SH6	HSG	++	++	++

Site Reference	Site Use	Pedestrian Access to Primary School	Pedestrian Access to Secondary School	Public Transport Access to Secondary School
SH7	HSG/GTTS	+	-	++
SH8	HSG	++	++	-
SH9	HSG	+	+	++
29	HSG	++	++	++
SH10	HSG	+	+	++
SH11	HSG	++	+	++
SH12	HSG	++	++	++
34	HSG	++	++	++
35	HSG/EMP	+	++	++
36	HSG	++	+	++
38	HSG	++	++	++
40	HSG	++	++	++
42	HSG	+	++	++
43	HSG	+	-	++
44	HSG	+	++	++
45	HSG/EMP	+	++	++
46	HSG	++	++	++
SH13	HSG	+	-	++
SH14	HSG	++	++	-
SH15	HSG	++	-	++
52	EMP	0	0	0
SH16	HSG	+	-	++
SH17	HSG/GTTS	-	++	++
SH18	HSG/EMP	++	-	++
56	HSG	++	++	++
SH19	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
SH20	HSG/EMP/GTTS	++	++	++
SH21	HSG/EMP	+	++	++
SH22	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
SH23	HSG	++	+	++
63	HSG/EMP	++	+	++
SH24	HSG	+	+	++
SH25	HSG/EMP	++	+	++
SH26	HSG/EMP	+	++	++
SH27	HSG/EMP	+	++	++
SH28	HSG/EMP	++	++	-
SH29	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
71	HSG	++	++	+
74	EMP	0	0	0
SH30	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
SH31	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	++	++
SH32	HSG/EMP/GTTS	++	++	++
SH33	HSG/EMP/GTTS	++	++	+
SH34	HSG	++	++	++

Site Reference	Site Use	Pedestrian Access to Primary School	Pedestrian Access to Secondary School	Public Transport Access to Secondary School
SH35	HSG	+	+	-
SH36	HSG/EMP/GTTS	+	++	-
SH37	HSG	++	++	++
SEC3-66	EMP	0	0	0
SH38	HSG/EMP	++	++	++
91	HSG/EMP	+	++	++
SH39	HSG	++	++	++
SH40	HSG	++	++	++
SH41	HSG	++	++	++
SH42	HSG	++	++	++
SEC1-3	EMP	0	0	0
110	HSG/EMP	+	-	++
118	HSG	++	++	++
120	HSG	++	+	++
132	HSG	++	++	++
137	HSG	+	++	++
140	HSG	++	-	+
142	HSG	+	++	++
SH43	HSG	++	+	++
SH44	HSG	++	-	++
SH45	HSG	++	+	-
SH46	HSG	++	++	++
SH47	HSG	++	+	+
171	HSG	+	++	++
SH48	HSG	+	++	++
173	HSG	+	++	++
SH49	HSG	++	++	++
SH50	HSG	++	++	++
176	HSG	++	++	++
177	HSG	++	+	++
178	HSG	++	+	++
SH51	HSG	++	+	++
SH52	HSG	++	++	++
SH53	HSG	++	++	++
SH54	HSG	+	++	++
SH55	HSG	++	++	++
SH56	HSG	++	++	++
SH57	HSG	++	++	++
SH58	HSG	++	++	++
SG1	GTTS	+	+	++
188	HSG	++	++	+
189	HSG	+	++	++
SH59	HSG	++	++	+
191	HSG	++	++	++

Site Reference	Site Use	Pedestrian Access to Primary School	Pedestrian Access to Secondary School	Public Transport Access to Secondary School
SH61	HSG	+	++	++
SEC1-1	EMP	0	0	0
SEC1-8	EMP	0	0	0
SEC1-5	EMP	0	0	0
SEC1-6	EMP	0	0	0
SEC1-2	EMP	0	0	0
SEC1-7	EMP	0	0	0
199	Mixed-use	+	-	++
SH60	HSG/EMP	++	++	++

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Appendix D: Policy Assessments

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D.1 Overview

D.1.1 Introduction

- D.1.1.1 This appendix provides an assessment of draft policies proposed by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) at the Regulation 18 'Draft Plan' stage of the preparation of the Sandwell Local Plan (SLP).
- D.1.1.2 Many of the proposed SLP policies are derived from the ceased Black Country Plan (BCP). A total of 63 policies were set out in the draft BCP and were consulted on as part of the BCP process, before the decision was made to end work on the BCP in October 2022. A number of SLP policies have also been derived from the adopted Sandwell SAD.
- D.1.1.3 SMBC have considered the extent to which each of the draft BCP policies and adopted SAD policies remain relevant and applicable to the SLP area, in light of consultation responses received during the BCP Regulation 18 consultation, and in the context of the latest national and local guidance and strategies.
- D.1.1.4 The relevant existing policies have been updated and together with a number of new policies prepared for the SLP, has resulted in a total of 87 policies identified and presented within the Draft SLP. The Draft SLP also contains a proposed 'vision' and 13 associated objectives, which have been refined since the Issues and Options Consultation.
- D.1.1.5 The assessments within this report are based on the policies, vision and objectives within the Draft Sandwell Local Plan 2025-2041 Regulation 18 Consultation document, version 56 provided to Lepus on 25th September 2023.
- D.1.1.6 Each policy (as well as the SLP Vision and Objectives) appraised in this report has been assessed for its likely impacts on each SA Objective of the SA Framework (see **Appendix A**) in accordance with the methodology as set out in the SA Main Report.
- D.1.1.7 For ease of reference the scoring system is summarised in **Table D.1.1** below.

Table D.1.1: Presenting likely impacts

Likely Impact	Description	Impact Symbol
Major Positive Impact	The proposed option contributes to the achievement of the SA Objective to a significant extent.	++
Minor Positive Impact	The proposed option contributes to the achievement of the SA Objective to some extent.	+
Negligible/ Neutral Impact	The proposed option has no effect or an insignificant effect on the achievement of the SA Objective.	0
Uncertain Impact	The proposed option has an uncertain relationship with the SA Objective or insufficient information is available for an appraisal to be made.	+/-
Minor Negative Impact	The proposed option prevents the achievement of the SA Objective to some extent.	-

Likely Impact	Description	Impact Symbol
Major Negative Impact	The proposed option prevents the achievement of the SA Objective to a significant extent.	--

D.1.1.8 Each appraisal in the following sections of this report includes an SA impact matrix that provides an indication of the nature and magnitude of effects. Assessment narratives follow the impact matrices for each policy, within which the findings of the appraisal and the rationale for the recorded impacts are described.

D.1.2 Overview of Policy Assessments

D.1.2.1 The impact matrices for all draft policy assessments are presented in Table D.1.2 below. These impacts should be read in conjunction with the assessment text narratives which follow in the subsequent sections of this appendix.

D.1.2.2 Within these policy assessments, where relevant, some recommendations for enhancement or improvement of the draft policies have been suggested. Further detailed recommendations are presented in Table D.14.1.

Table D.1.2: Summary of policy assessments

Policy Ref	SA1 Cultural Heritage	SA2 Landscape	SA3 Biodiversity	SA4 CC Mitigation	SA5 CC Adaptation	SA6 Natural Resources	SA7 Pollution	SA8 Waste	SA9 Transport	SA10 Housing	SA11 Equality	SA12 Health	SA13 Economy	SA14 Education
SDS1	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	0	+	+	0
SDS2	+	+	+	+	0	++	+	0	+	+	+	+	++	+
SDS3	0	0	+	+/-	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0
SDS4	++	++	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
SDS5	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0
SDS6	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SDS7	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0
SNE1	0	+	++	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SNE2	0	+	++	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SNE3	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SNE4	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
SNE5	+	++	++	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SNE6	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0
SHE1	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHE2	++	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SHE3	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHE4	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+
SCC1	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0
SCC2	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SCC3	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCC4	0	0	+	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCC5	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCC6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SHW1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0
SHW2	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0
SHW3	0	0	+	+	0	0	++	0	+	0	0	+	+	0
SHW4	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0
SHW5	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
SHW6	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
SHO1	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
SHO2	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-
SHO3	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	0
SHO4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0
SHO5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0
SHO6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+/-	0	0	0
SHO7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0
SHO8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0
SHO9	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	++
SHO10	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+	+/-	+
SH011	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
SEC1	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
SEC2	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
SEC3	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
SEC4	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+	+/-
SEC5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	+
SEC6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SCE1	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+	+	+/-
SCE2	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SCE3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+
SCE4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0
SCE5	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0
SCE6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0
SWB1	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+
SWB2	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+
STR1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	+	0	0
STR2	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
STR3	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
STR4	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0
STR5	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	+	0	0
STR6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	0
STR7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
STR8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0

	SA1	SA2	SA3	SA4	SA5	SA6	SA7	SA8	SA9	SA10	SA11	SA12	SA13	SA14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR9	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
STR10	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	0
SID1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0
SID2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SID3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWA1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWA2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWA3	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	++	+/-	0	0	0	0	0
SWA4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
SWA5	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0
SMI1	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SMI2	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCO1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCO2	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SCO3	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDM1	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
SDM2	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0
SDM3	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0
SDM4	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SDM5	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0
SDM6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
SDM7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0
SDM8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/-	0
SDM9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
SDM10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

D.2 Vision and Objectives

D.2.1.1 In the Regulation 18 (I) Issues and Options SA, two options for the SLP Vision and 11 draft Objectives for the SLP were assessed. Following consideration of the SA findings and comments received during the Issues and Options Consultation, SMBC have in the Draft SLP proposed a Vision for the Sandwell Local Plan to 2041, and 13 Objectives. The updated Vision and Objectives have therefore been assessed below.

D.2.2 Sandwell Local Plan Vision

Sandwell Local Plan Vision 2041

In 2041, Sandwell is a thriving, growing and active Borough, leading the urban renaissance of the West Midlands conurbation.

Sandwell is at the forefront of tackling climate change, in its role as a hub for climate adaptation and mitigation technologies and industries. Its new buildings are clean and energy efficient in their design, materials and operations, its old buildings are adapted to deliver low and zero carbon outputs. It sets the standard in both public and private sectors for embedding climate change awareness and sensitivity in all its actions, outcomes and decisions.

Notwithstanding its urban character, Sandwell's residents enjoy access to country and town parks, open spaces, green networks and corridors and increasing numbers of pocket parks, landscaping schemes and tree cover, as part of their everyday activities and leisure time. Sandwell's natural environment is valued for its own sake as well as for its contribution to the health and wellbeing of people living, working, learning in and enjoying the borough.

Sandwell's historic environment is a source of pride for its communities and continues to reflect its industrial and architectural heritage, in restoration and renovation schemes and in the sensitive design of new buildings. Historic buildings in Sandwell are reused, repurposed and retrofitted to enable their retention and occupation for years to come.

Sandwell continues to deliver sustained and sustainable economic growth and investment opportunities from its highly accessible location at the heart of the country. It provides high-quality goods and services from its powerful industrial base and levels of employment, wages and economic activity are high and rising.

Sandwell's residents enjoy longer and healthier lives than in previous decades, thanks to the increase in open spaces, the provision of services and facilities designed to promote active recreation and leisure, the improvement of and increased accessibility to healthcare infrastructure and the promotion of healthy lifestyle choices. They have access to well-performing schools, higher and further education provision at all levels and to continued opportunities for skills development and training.

There is a wide range of housing available to Sandwell residents, designed to support sustainable living and capable of adaptation to suit all sections of the community. Affordable, social and council houses are available to those who need them. New developments are located within attractively landscaped areas, with access to district and low-cost energy and heating projects, sustainable drainage designed to improve the local environment as well as provide reliable protection against flooding and run-off and all necessary services and facilities within walking distance or a short bus ride away.

Sandwell's town centres thrive by day and by night, with an expanded range of retail, leisure and socialising opportunities as well as acting as the foci for new residential developments, community activities and social enterprises.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Vision	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SLP Vision	++	++	+	++	++	+	+	0	++	++	++	++	++	++

- D.2.2.1 The proposed Vision for Sandwell in 2041 sets out the aspiration to support growth and regeneration for the borough, meeting the needs of the local population and addressing key issues, whilst conserving the natural and historic environment.
- D.2.2.2 The SLP Vision seeks to develop Sandwell’s role as an industrial hub for the West Midlands by driving climate change adaptation and mitigation technologies, to ensure that the borough plays a key role in tackling climate change whilst striving for economic growth. Sustainable and energy efficient design and construction techniques, and exploration of alternative and low-carbon technologies would also be supported. A major positive impact could be achieved regarding climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4). Through encouraging sustainable economic growth and investment, alongside regeneration and revitalisation of Sandwell’s towns including retrofitting of historic buildings, a major positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13) would also be likely.
- D.2.2.3 The SLP Vision encourages the delivery of new developments that are carefully planned to take the effects of climate change into account, including incorporation of sustainable drainage techniques, flood mitigation and adaptation measures, as well as access to district and low-cost energy and heating projects. Recognising the multi-functional benefits of green infrastructure (GI), the SLP Vision promotes the conservation and enhancement of parks, open spaces, green networks and tree coverage within Sandwell. GI can play a key role in helping urban areas adapt to the effects of climate change, for example through providing protection from extreme weather events, and helping to alleviate the ‘urban heat island’ effect. Together, these measures would be likely to lead to a major positive impact on climate change adaptation (SA Objective 5).
- D.2.2.4 Through encouraging the conservation and enhancement of GI and Sandwell’s natural environment, the SLP Vision would be likely to lead to a minor positive impact on biodiversity and natural resources (SA Objectives 3 and 6), through potentially helping to increase the coverage and connectivity of ecological networks and GI, supporting the ecosystem services they provide.
- D.2.2.5 Additionally, the emphasis on providing access to a variety of parks and open spaces for new developments would be likely to lead to positive effects on human health. Access to a range of open and green spaces is known to be beneficial for both mental and physical wellbeing, by providing areas for recreation, exercise and reflection. Well designed and attractive neighbourhoods which incorporate GI are likely to encourage people to live more active lifestyles. Furthermore, the Vision promotes the improvement of and increased accessibility to healthcare infrastructure, which would be likely to help address health inequalities. Overall, the SLP Vision could lead to a major positive impact on health (SA Objective 12).

- D.2.2.6 Pocket parks and other open spaces within urban areas can also provide valuable spaces for community involvement and help to encourage social cohesion. More cohesive and vibrant neighbourhoods would be likely to contribute towards improved quality of life and strengthen the sense of local identity. Alongside the proposed improvement of employment and training opportunities, as well as improved access to amenities, this would be likely to lead to a major positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11).
- D.2.2.7 Town centres are proposed to be the focus for the majority of new residential and community growth, where existing services are concentrated and there is most potential for new provision. The SLP Vision would help to ensure that residents, workers and visitors within the borough have access to a range of facilities to meet their needs as well as opportunities for leisure and entertainment. In addition to helping revitalise Sandwell's town centres and high streets, this would see benefits to transport and accessibility, through reducing the need to travel and promoting more sustainable travel including walkable neighbourhoods and improved public transport. A major positive impact on transport could be achieved (SA Objective 9), with potential for a minor positive impact on pollution (SA Objective 7) owing to the associated reduction in transport-related emissions.
- D.2.2.8 Through rejuvenating townscapes, promoting landscape schemes and increasing the quantity and quality of open spaces and GI, the SLP Vision would be likely to lead to an improvement in the local landscape and townscape character. In combination with the promotion of community facilities, the SLP Vision could potentially help to strengthen sense of place and local identity, resulting in a major positive impact on landscape overall (SA Objective 2).
- D.2.2.9 The SLP Vision supports the conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage assets and encourages their conservation and renewal where appropriate, recognising the importance of Sandwell's historic environment in providing a sense of place. Therefore, the SLP Vision would be likely to have major positive effects in relation to the cultural heritage (SA Objective 1) through sensitive design of new buildings, restoration and renovation schemes, and reusing and repurposing historic buildings in Sandwell.
- D.2.2.10 The Vision seeks to ensure the provision of a range of housing types to meet the diverse needs of the population, including accessible and adaptable homes, affordable homes, and social housing. As such, a major positive impact on housing provision would be likely (SA Objective 10).
- D.2.2.11 The Vision seeks to improve access to schools and training opportunities and improve educational attainment. Access to higher and further education provision is also highlighted. Together, these provisions would help to encourage more diversity in opportunities including for life-long learning and support the provision of an appropriately skilled workforce. A major positive impact on education would be likely (SA Objective 14).
- D.2.2.12 The Vision does not directly reference waste or recycling, and as such, a negligible impact is identified for SA Objective 8.

D.2.3 Sandwell Local Plan Objectives

Sandwell Local Plan Objectives

Climate Change

1. Ensure new development takes a proactive approach to climate change mitigation, adaptation and carbon reduction, and that development is resilient to climate change.
2. Deliver sustainable development in locations where people can access jobs and services, delivering wider positive social and economic outcomes and protecting and enhancing local built and natural environments.

Enhancing our natural environment

3. To protect and enhance Sandwell's natural environment, natural resources, biodiversity, wildlife corridors geological resources, countryside and landscapes, whilst ensuring that residents have good access to interlinked green infrastructure.

Enhancing our historic environment

4. Protect, sustain and enhance the quality of the historic built environment, ensuring the retention of distinctive and attractive places and beautiful buildings, including listed parks, scheduled monuments and their settings.
5. To manage and maintain the wider historic environment across Sandwell, including parks and gardens, areas of industrial heritage value, sites of geological and archaeological interest and locally listed buildings, structures and historic assets.

Housing that meets all our needs

6. Address Sandwell's identified and wide-ranging housing needs by supporting the provision of high-quality new homes, to include a wide mix of housing type and tenure, that: -
 - o are capable of being adapted to meet the future needs of occupiers;
 - o provide sufficient internal and external space; and
 - o promote and support climate change adaptation and mitigation through good design and in the materials and techniques used for their construction.
7. Ensure communities in Sandwell are safe and resilient and social cohesion is promoted and enhanced.

Enabling a strong, stable and inclusive economy

8. Support regeneration, business investment and job creation to maintain and grow a prosperous and resilient local and regional economy in ways that consider environmental and climate change factors.
9. To enable communities to share the benefits of economic growth through securing access to new job opportunities and enhanced skills and training programmes.

Improving the Health and Wellbeing of residents and promoting social inclusion

10. To provide a built and natural environment that supports the making of healthier choices through provision for physical activity and recreation, active travel, encouraging social interaction and discouraging harmful behaviours.
11. Ensure new development and open spaces support health and wellbeing for all, reduce health inequalities and encourage active and healthy lifestyles.
12. To provide a built and natural environment that protects health and wellbeing through minimising pollution (air, noise and other forms), providing healthy homes, reducing the negative health effects of climate change and providing streets safe for active, low emission travel for all.

Good Design

13. Require new development to deliver a high standard of design reflecting local character and distinctiveness and that creates greener and safer places that people feel proud to live and work in.

Brownfield First

14. Encourage the effective and prudent use of previously developed land and natural resources, including the efficient use of land and buildings and the use of sustainable and climate-aware

Sandwell Local Plan Objectives

construction techniques within new developments, as well as providing for waste management and disposal.

Enhancing the vitality of our centres

15. Support Sandwell’s towns and local centres as places for economic, residential and cultural activity with good access to services, in ways that protect their heritage, character and identity.

Promoting sustainable transport and active travel

16. To prioritise sustainable and active travel and seek to improve transport infrastructure to ensure efficient and sustainable accessibility within an integrated network.
 17. To manage waste as a resource and minimise the amount produced and sent to landfill.

Meeting our resource and infrastructure needs

18. Ensure development is supported by essential infrastructure and services and promotes safe movement and more sustainable modes of travel through promoting greener travel networks for walking, cycling and public transport.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
SLP Objective	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
1	0	0	0	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	0	+	++	++	++
3	0	++	++	++	++	+	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0
4	++	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
5	+	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+
6	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	0	0
7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	+	0	0
8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	++	0
9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	++	+
10	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	++	++	0	0
11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	++	0	0
12	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	++	0	++	++	0	0
13	+	++	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0
14	0	+	0	+	0	++	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0

SLP Objective	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
15	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	++	+
16	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	+	0	0
17	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0
18	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	++	0	+	+	+	+

D.2.3.1 SLP Objective 1 promotes the future proofing of new development to the effects of climate change and supports reducing GHGs. By embedding these principles into the SLP objectives, this demonstrates SMBC’s commitment to reducing Sandwell’s contributions towards the causes of climate change. A major positive impact on climate change mitigation and adaptation could be achieved (SA Objectives 4 and 5).

D.2.3.2 SLP Objective 2 seeks to locate development in areas with good accessibility to local services. This is likely to include healthcare facilities, employment opportunities and schools, with major positive impacts anticipated for health, the economy and education (SA Objectives 12, 13 and 14). Through directing growth to accessible locations, the SLP Objective would be likely to reduce the need to travel, resulting in a major positive impact on transport (SA Objective 9) and potentially leading to a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation and air pollution by reducing associated emissions (SA Objectives 4 and 7). By promoting good access for all, a minor positive impact would also be expected for equality (SA Objective 11). SLP Objective 2 also seeks to ensure the protection and enhancement of both the built and natural environment of the local area, with potential secondary minor positive benefits in relation to cultural heritage and landscape (SA Objectives 1 and 2).

D.2.3.3 SLP Objective 3 aims to conserve and enhance the natural environment of Sandwell, including designated habitats, landscapes and GI. By protecting and enhancing natural features including habitats and ecological networks, a major positive impact on landscape and biodiversity would be likely (SA Objectives 2 and 3) as well as a minor positive impact on natural resources (SA Objective 6). GI can provide a range of ecosystem services, including helping urban areas to adapt to climate change, for example through providing protection from extreme weather events, and helping to alleviate the ‘urban heat island’ effect. As such, conserving and enhancing GI would be expected to lead to a major positive impact on climate change mitigation and adaptation (SA Objectives 4 and 5). Supporting interlinked GI may also help to encourage active travel, reduce motorised transport and therefore reduce air pollution. SLP Objective 3 could therefore potentially have a minor positive impact on pollution and transport (SA Objectives 7 and 9), as well as in terms of health and equality through improving access to GI (SA Objectives 11 and 12).

- D.2.3.4 SLP Objective 4 recognises the importance of Sandwell’s heritage. A major positive impact on cultural heritage would be expected through the protection and enhancement of important historical sites including Listed Buildings and SMs (SA Objective 1). SLP Objective 4 also seeks to retain and enhance local distinctiveness and create an attractive public realm, which could lead to a major positive impact on landscape (SA Objective 2). This could also have a knock-on minor positive impact on the visitor economy, through conserving and enhancing cultural heritage assets and historic structures of interest (SA Objective 13). Furthermore, enhancing cultural heritage sites could promote education about the historic environment within Sandwell and result in a minor positive impact on education (SA Objective 14).
- D.2.3.5 SLP Objective 5 supports the conservation of the historic environment and will ensure its protection, therefore having a minor positive impact on cultural heritage (SA Objective 1). SLP Objective 5 specifically mentions the maintenance of parks and gardens, archaeological sites and locally listed heritage assets. The protection of these particular areas will also contribute to safeguarding the character of the landscape and local distinctiveness, so a major positive impact on landscape would be expected (SA Objective 2). Furthermore, by protecting heritage sites and landscapes that strengthen local distinctiveness, as well as sites of geological interest, opportunities may arise for educational activities and economic prosperities through the use of such sites, hence, we could expect a minor positive impact on geodiversity, economy and education (SA Objectives 3, 13 and 14).
- D.2.3.6 SLP Objective 6 supports sustainable high-quality housing development to meet the needs of the population, which is likely to result in a major positive impact on housing (SA Objective 10). The support for sustainable and adaptable homes would be likely to lead to a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation and adaption (SA Objectives 4 and 5). SLP Objective 6 states that a wide range of housing needs must be met therefore a minor positive impact on equality would be expected (SA Objective 11).
- D.2.3.7 SLP Objective 7 aims to strengthen Sandwell’s communities and improve social cohesion. This is likely to lead to a greater sense of identity for local residents and promote more vibrant communities where people from all backgrounds can feel valued and safe. Therefore, a major positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11) could be achieved, with a secondary minor positive impact on wellbeing (SA Objective 12).
- D.2.3.8 SLP Objective 8 supports economic growth within Sandwell, to increase the provision of jobs and boost the prosperity of the local economy. Through seeking to maintain a resilient economy and encourage new businesses and regeneration within the SLP area, a major positive impact on the economy would be likely (SA Objective 13). Through increasing the number and variety of jobs in the area, this SLP Objective would be likely to lead to a minor positive impact on access to employment opportunities, with benefits to equality (SA Objective 11).
- D.2.3.9 SLP Objective 9 supports equality, education and the economy. The SLP will aim to provide new job opportunities and training programmes as a result of economic growth. By sharing the benefits of economic growth, this would be likely to result in a minor positive impact on equality and education (SA Objectives 11 and 14). In doing so, these impacts

will help to further boost the economy, hence a major positive impact would be seen on SA Objective 13.

- D.2.3.10 SLP Objective 10 promotes healthy lifestyles and active travel, thereby supporting a shift away from private car use where possible. Providing a built environment that supports active travel would likely have a minor positive impact on transport (SA Objective 9), and potentially climate change mitigation and pollution (SA Objectives 4 and 7), as well as a major positive impact on health (SA Objective 12). This SLP Objective also seeks to improve social interaction and discourage harmful behaviours which would likely have a major positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11).
- D.2.3.11 SLP Objective 11 is centred around health. Through the encouragement of active lifestyles and ensuring open spaces are provided alongside development, there is likely to be improved sustainable access to outdoor space for exercise and leisure. By supporting health and wellbeing for all and reducing health inequalities, a reduction in social deprivation is likely. SLP Objective 11 will likely have a major positive impact on equality and health (SA Objectives 11 and 12).
- D.2.3.12 SLP Objective 12 promotes conserving and enhancing the built and natural environment, aiming to ensure that developments protect health, minimise air and noise pollution, promote low emission travel and provide safe streets. The focus on encouraging active and healthy lifestyles could potentially also lead to improvements to the active travel network. A major positive impact on transport, equality and health would be anticipated (SA Objectives 9, 11 and 12). Through promoting active and low emission travel, and seeking to minimise adverse effects of pollution, SLP Objective 12 could also lead to minor positive impacts on residential amenity and the landscape, climate change mitigation, natural resources and pollution (SA Objectives 2, 4, 6 and 7).
- D.2.3.13 SLP Objective 13 promotes high quality design for new development that is in keeping with the local character of the area. Good design that is planned carefully to consider its surroundings would be likely to strengthen local distinctiveness and sense of place. A major positive impact would be likely in terms of the local landscape and townscape character (SA Objective 2). A minor positive impact could also occur in relation to cultural heritage (SA Objective 1), where historic landscapes and buildings form a key part of the local character. Furthermore, through seeking to create a high standard of design with greener and safer neighbourhoods, SLP Objective 13 would also be expected to secure benefits in terms of equality and wellbeing of local residents (SA Objectives 11 and 12).
- D.2.3.14 SLP Objective 14 promotes an efficient use of land and seeks to ensure that the SLP focuses development on previously developed land where appropriate, in accordance with the NPPF. A major positive impact on natural resources (SA Objective 6) could be achieved. SLP Objective 14 is likely to also encourage appropriate re-use or intensification of under-utilised land, which may help to stimulate urban regeneration, with potential minor positive benefits to townscapes and the economy (SA Objectives 2 and 13). Benefits for pollution (SA Objective 7), waste (SA Objective 8) and climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4) could also be achieved, through the potential for remediation of contaminated brownfield land for development as well as the intention to support sustainable waste management and construction techniques.

- D.2.3.15 SLP Objective 15 seeks to develop the role of Sandwell's towns and centres as hubs of economic, residential and cultural activities, whilst ensuring the landscape and historic character and identity of the local area are protected. Investing in Sandwell's centres and supporting appropriate growth would be likely to help promote urban regeneration and improve the vibrancy of town centres, with a major positive impact on the local economy (SA Objective 13) and a minor positive impact on landscapes, townscapes and cultural heritage (SA Objectives 1 and 2). Through supporting residential growth in areas with good access to services, potentially including community facilities, healthcare and schools, SLP Objective 15 could also lead to a minor positive impact on transport, housing, equality, health and education (SA Objectives 9, 10, 11, 12 and 14).
- D.2.3.16 SLP Objective 16 prioritises sustainable travel and improved transport infrastructure. This should help to reduce the per capita carbon footprint of Sandwell and increase the efficiency of the transport network, therefore having a major positive impact on transport (SA Objective 9), and a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4). Supporting active travel is also likely to have a minor positive impact on health (SA Objective 12). As a consequence of improving transport infrastructure, it is likely air and noise pollution will slightly decrease, so a minor positive impact on pollution can be expected (SA Objective 7).
- D.2.3.17 SLP Objective 17 is likely to have a minor positive impact on waste (SA Objective 8) as it seeks to reduce the amount of waste sent to landfill. However, greater detail would be useful to explain how waste generation can be reduced and sustainably managed during both construction and occupation of new development. A minor positive impact can also be expected on pollution (SA Objective 7) since reducing waste sent to landfill will help to reduce soil pollution.
- D.2.3.18 SLP Objective 18 seeks to ensure that new development proposed through the SLP is supported by essential infrastructure and services, with a particular focus on transport infrastructure. The SLP Objective supports green travel networks which encourage walking, cycling and public transport, which would be likely to facilitate a modal shift away from private car use. A major positive impact on transport and accessibility would be likely (SA Objective 9), with a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4) and pollution (SA Objective 7) owing to the associated reduction in transport-related emissions including GHGs. By encouraging active travel, SLP Objective 18 could also lead to benefits in terms of health and wellbeing (SA Objective 12). By providing essential infrastructure, this is expected to ensure provision of appropriate connections to utilities such as water and sewerage, with a minor positive effect likely for natural resources and waste (SA Objectives 6 and 8). Benefits could also be secured in terms of access to social infrastructure such as community facilities, healthcare, jobs and schools, with minor positive impacts anticipated (SA Objectives 11, 12, 13 and 14).

D.3 Development Strategy

D.3.1 Policy SDS1 – Development Strategy

Policy SDS1 – Development Strategy

1. To support the attainment of the Sandwell SLP Vision, drive sustainable and strategic economic and housing growth and meet local aspirations, Sandwell, working with local communities, partners and key stakeholders, will make sure that decisions on planning proposals:
 - a. deliver at least 10,686 new net homes and create sustainable mixed communities including a range and choice of new homes supported by adequate infrastructure.
 - b. deliver at least 1,206ha of employment land (of which 29ha is currently vacant)
 - c. ensure that sufficient physical, social, and environmental infrastructure is delivered to meet identified requirements
 - d. support improvements to the health and wellbeing of Sandwell’s communities by requiring new development to address the following: -
 - i. increased access to green spaces;
 - ii. active and passive recreation;
 - iii. active travel;
 - iv. improved and accessible education and healthcare infrastructure;
 - v. opportunities for people to make healthier choices.
 - e. minimise and mitigate the likely effects of climate change, recognising the multifunctional benefits that open spaces, landscaping, trees, nature conservation habitats and both green and blue infrastructure can deliver in doing so;
 - f. create new public open spaces to serve new housing developments;
 - g. protect and improve parks, woodland and tree planting, open spaces, landscapes and habitats across the borough;
 - h. protect the openness, integrity and function of Sandwell’s designated green belt by resisting inappropriate development in it;
 - i. protect habitats and areas of ecological value;
 - j. conserve the historic and archaeological environment and protect areas with geological and landscape value;
 - k. promote the use of zero- and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in all new development.
2. The SLP seeks to ensure this growth is sustainable by requiring the following issues are addressed in planning proposals: -
 - a. delivering as much new development as possible on previously developed land and sites in the urban area;
 - b. allocating housing in locations with the highest levels of sustainable transport access to residential services (retail provision, schools, healthcare facilities, fresh food, employment etc.);
 - c. regenerating existing housing and employment areas and help them deliver: -

Policy SDS1 – Development Strategy

- i. cleaner, more energy-efficient and more intensive areas of growth; and ii. improving the environmental, climate change, accessibility and socioeconomic capacity of existing residential and employment areas;
- d. allocating new employment land where sustainable access and good public transport links are available;
- e. taking advantage of existing and improved infrastructure capacity to maximise development on new sites;
- f. supporting and enhancing the sustainability of existing communities through the focussing of growth and regeneration into West Bromwich and other town centres and regeneration areas (Policy SDS2);

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDS1	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	0	+	+	0

D.3.1.1 Policy SDS1 sets out the overarching strategy for development in Sandwell for the plan period.

D.3.1.2 The construction, occupation and operation of 10,686 homes and 1,206ha of employment land as well as supporting infrastructure through this policy would be expected to exacerbate air pollution, including greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and particulate matter (PM). Additionally, the increase in homes would expect an increase in waste production, by the nature of the development and the population increase. However, by directing development towards the Strategic Centre (West Bromwich) and the hierarchy of Town, District and Local Centres, Policy SDS1 would be likely to facilitate more sustainable communities, by locating residents in close proximity to services, facilities and public transport. This could potentially help to improve the sustainability of development (in terms of carbon footprint) in some locations through reducing the need to travel by private car. The policy recognises the influence of climate change on flood risk and includes measures to adapt, including *"the use of zero- and low-carbon designs, building techniques, materials and technologies in all new development"* and acknowledges the important role and *"multifunctional benefits that open spaces, landscaping, trees, nature conservation habitats and both green and blue infrastructure can deliver"*. Overall, the policy would therefore be expected to have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, transport, housing, and the economy (SA Objectives 4, 5, 9, 10 and 13) and a minor negative impact on pollution and waste (SA Objectives 7 and 8).

D.3.1.3 Policy SDS1 states that development will be directed towards town centres and therefore can provide greater access to local services, including healthcare facilities and the public

transport network. The policy can therefore be expected to have a minor positive impact on health (SA Objective 12).

D.3.1.4 Policy SDS1 seeks to deliver sustainable development through "*delivering as much new development as possible on previously developed land and sites in the urban area*". The reuse of previously developed land would be expected to promote an efficient use of land and have a minor positive impact on the natural resources of the borough (SA Objective 6).

D.3.1.5 The policy states that decisions in the planning process will "*protect habitats and areas of ecological value*" and also "*conserve the historic and archaeological environment and protect areas with geological and landscape value*". Additionally, the policy ensures that development within the Green Belt will be resisted, protecting the "*openness, integrity and function*" of the Green Belt. These measures will ensure that the landscape of the borough, historical assets and local biodiversity will be protected and where possible enhanced. The emphasis on regeneration could also help to revitalise centres and improve the character and quality of the public realm. Therefore, the policy could potentially have a minor positive impact on cultural heritage, landscape and biodiversity (SA Objectives 1, 2 and 3).

D.3.2 Policy SDS2 – Regeneration in Sandwell

Policy SDS2 – Regeneration in Sandwell

1. The Regeneration Areas identified on the Policies Map and the strategic centre of West Bromwich will be the focus for new development, regeneration, and public and private investment in the borough.
2. Proposals will be subject to relevant development plan policies and the form and location of regeneration will be guided by masterplans and /or design briefs, which will be prepared by the Council in partnership with developers, promoters and other stakeholders.

West Bromwich

- a. West Bromwich is a major destination for residents and visitors and will benefit from a step change in the quality of its public realm, including new green links, squares and parks.
- b. Residential and employment growth will be sought at a transformational scale to help create a vibrant and sustainable town centre with a diverse range of uses, including commercial, educational, cultural, recreational, leisure and community facilities.
- c. Sustainable and active travel modes will be the default choice for accessing and moving within the town.

Carter's Green

- d. Carter's Green will accommodate considerable new residential development on under-used land. The scale of growth will be complementary and subordinate to the transformation of West Bromwich.

Dudley Port

- e. The regeneration of Dudley Port will include employment development and the construction of new residential communities developed along Garden City principles.
- f. A new public transport hub will be developed around the interchange of the Midland Metro Extension and Dudley Port railway station.

Policy SDS2 – Regeneration in Sandwell

Smethwick

- g. The historic Smethwick to Birmingham canal corridor will accommodate new green neighbourhoods on re-purposed employment land and accessible active travel routes.
- h. Regeneration at Grove Lane will be focussed around the new Midland Metropolitan Hospital, and will include the development of new homes, employment, and education facilities.
- i. Industrial land at Rolfe Street will be regenerated to create a distinctive, well- designed residential community that respects the heritage of the area and its canal-side setting.

Wednesbury to Tipton Metro Corridor

- j. Proposals for the regeneration of industrial land along the corridor of the Midland Metro Extension will be supported, including new employment development on vacant and underdeveloped land.
- k. Retail, residential, and mixed-use development will be encouraged in Wednesbury Town Centre, Great Bridge Town Centre and Owen Street District Centre in line with their position within the hierarchy of centres and the requirements of the relevant policies in the Centres chapter of the SLP.

Development within Regeneration Areas

- 3. Excluding West Bromwich (Policy SWB2) the regeneration areas will provide:
 - a. the principal locations for strategic employment areas;
 - b. high-quality employment areas to support the long-term success of Sandwell’s economy (Policy SEC)
 - c. the main clusters of local employment land providing for local jobs (Policies SEC3 and SEC4).
 - d. the principal locations for new industrial and logistics development – providing at least 600ha of developable employment land to meet growth needs;
 - e. a minimum of 3,414 new homes (of which 1,656 are in addition to previous allocations) of mixed type and tenure in sustainable locations well-supported by community services and local shops, set within and linked by comprehensive networks of green infrastructure with cycling and pedestrian routes;
 - f. investment in existing, new, and improved transportation infrastructure with a focus on public transport routes and hubs, to maximise their use by residents, workers and visitors;
 - g. strong links with surrounding communities and the wider network of centres;
 - h. enhanced green infrastructure, including enhancements to nature conservation sites and wildlife habitats, new and improved green spaces, and new urban greening features (Policy SDS7).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDS2	+	+	+	+	0	++	+	0	+	+	+	+	++	+

- D.3.2.1 Policy SDS2 identifies Regeneration Areas within Sandwell and sets out how specific areas will accommodate different types of development, infrastructure and investment. The policy outlines a minimum number of **X homes** to be built within the Regeneration Areas and includes measures throughout the policy that encourage the reuse of previously developed land or vacant land, for both residential and employment purposes. A minor positive impact on housing provision (SA Objective 10) would be likely.
- D.3.2.2 Furthermore, a major positive impact is anticipated in terms of natural resources (SA Objective 6) and a minor positive impact on landscape (SA Objective 2), owing to the primary focus on regeneration of existing urban areas and high-quality design. There may be opportunities for sensitive heritage-led regeneration such as the “*historic Smethwick to Birmingham canal corridor*”, with a potential minor positive impact on cultural heritage (SA Objective 1).
- D.3.2.3 The policy states that the defined Regeneration Areas will provide high-quality employment land and will be the principal location for new industrial/logistics development, with likely benefits in terms of economic growth and providing opportunities for developing a skilled workforce. A major positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13) and a minor positive impact on education (SA Objective 14) would therefore be likely.
- D.3.2.4 For the Regeneration Areas collectively, the policy encourages investment in transport infrastructure, especially public transport. Directing development to these areas would help to ensure that residents have good access to services including community services, local shops and employment and educational opportunities by foot or public transport and could see less reliance on private car use. The strategic location of development would therefore encourage active lifestyles and could contribute to reducing the overall carbon footprint of the borough. Overall, the policy can expect to have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation, pollution, transport and equality (SA Objectives 4, 7, 9 and 11).
- D.3.2.5 The policy also states that development proposals will incorporate GI and green neighbourhoods which could potentially have a minor positive impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 3). However, it is recommended that the policy provides further specification of the GI measures to strengthen the policy.

D.3.3 Policy SDS3 – Towns and Local Areas

Policy SDS3 – Towns and Local Areas

1. Towns and local communities outside West Bromwich and the regeneration areas identified in Figure 3 will provide:
 - a. 1,046 new homes delivered through:
 - i. The allocation of previously identified housing sites or ones submitted as part of a Call for Sites exercise;
 - ii. the repurposing of a small number of brownfield employment sites and other previously developed and surplus land for new housing;
 - iii. small-scale residential development opportunities in highly sustainable locations;
 - iv. housing renewal areas;

Policy SDS3 – Towns and Local Areas

- v. estimating the capacity of vacant retail floorspace
- b. Clusters of local employment land that provide land and premises to meet localised business needs.
- c. 606ha of additional employment land to meet employment needs;
- d. An integrated and (where possible) continuous network of green infrastructure and walking and cycling routes, as well as a network of centres, health, leisure, sports, recreation and community facilities;
- e. improved access and infrastructure links between regeneration projects, local areas and West Bromwich, to allow related positive outcomes to be integrated into existing and newer communities.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDS3	0	0	+	+/-	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	0

- D.3.3.1 Policy SDS3 requires land outside of the identified Regeneration Areas to provide 606ha of employment land that will meet employment needs and local business needs. The policy would therefore expect to increase job provision in the towns and local communities, and result in a minor positive impact on employment (SA Objective 13).
- D.3.3.2 The policy states that 1,046 will be delivered through the repurposing of brownfield employment sites and other brownfield sites, reducing the need for greenfield land for development. New growth would also be directed to housing renewal areas, which would help to upgrade the existing housing stock, with benefits to housing quality, wellbeing of residents and reducing land-take for new development. Therefore, it can be expected the policy would have a minor positive impact on natural resources, housing and equality (SA Objectives 6, 10 and 11).
- D.3.3.3 Although the proposed housing renewal areas may provide opportunities to integrate energy efficient designs and other carbon-reducing measures, if this involves demolishing and rebuilding homes it could also release embodied carbon, the implications of which should be considered carefully. The overall impact on climate change mitigation is uncertain (SA Objective 4).
- D.3.3.4 The policy will ensure that new development provides *"an integrated and (where possible) continuous network of green infrastructure and walking and cycling routes"*. In addition, the policy states that integration of local facilities for health and leisure would be implemented. The combination of GI, active modes of travel and local facilities would expect to result in benefits to public health and accessibility, as well as potentially improving ecological connectivity. Overall, the policy would be expected to have minor positive impacts on biodiversity, transport and health (SA Objectives 3, 9 and 12).

D.3.4 Policy SDS4 – Achieving well-designed places

Policy SDS4 – Achieving well-designed places

1. Building designs will be sought that are appropriate to Sandwell and should be of a size, scale and type to integrate into their neighbourhood.
2. All development will be required to demonstrate a clear understanding of the local and wider context, character, heritage and local distinctiveness of its location and show how proposals make a positive contribution to place-making and environmental improvement.
3. The setting and significance of heritage assets should be conserved and enhanced where it exists and is likely to be impacted by new development (Policy SHE2).
4. Development proposals should employ innovative design and sustainable technologies in their schemes to help climate change mitigation and adaptation and the Council will support schemes and projects adopting a climate-sensitive approach (Policies SCC1 – SCC6).
5. To facilitate permeability and accessibility, transport proposals of a high design quality and utility will be sought. These should:
 - a. include connections to and between transport hubs;
 - b. promote active travel;
 - c. ensure that transport and travel infrastructure make a positive contribution to place-making; and
 - d. increase connectivity for all modes of travel.
6. Development should positively contribute to creating high quality, active, safe and accessible places. Design approaches that will help contribute to healthier communities and reduce health inequalities should be incorporated in developments.
7. To support the development of safe neighbourhoods, ensure quality of life and community cohesion are not undermined and minimise the fear of crime, the design of new development should create secure and accessible environments where opportunities for crime and disorder are reduced or designed out.
8. An integrated and well-connected multifunctional open space network will be pursued throughout Sandwell (linking to opportunities in the wider Black Country where possible), including through the design and layout of new developments.
9. A Design Code will be produced for Sandwell, reflecting local character and local design preferences and providing a framework for creating high-quality places.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDS4	++	++	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0

D.3.4.1 Policy SDS4 seeks to ensure that all new developments within the Plan area are of high-quality design and have regard for the natural, built, and historic environment.

- D.3.4.2 This policy would be likely to encourage climate change resilience and help reduce carbon emissions associated with development, due to the promotion of energy efficient design and support for an innovative "*climate-sensitive*" approach. The use of modern and sustainable technologies would be likely to have minor positive impacts on climate change mitigation and adaptation (SA Objectives 4 and 5).
- D.3.4.3 Policy SDS4 seeks to ensure that the development contributes to creating "*high quality, active, safe and accessible places*" in a bid to reduce health inequalities, improve social cohesion and reduce the fear of crime within the borough. Therefore, the policy can expect to have a minor positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11).
- D.3.4.4 The policy requires that development facilitates transport of high-quality design that will contribute to greater accessibility. High quality transport design will include the promotion of active travel, increased connectivity of travel modes and transport hubs. In addition, the policy seeks to produce "*an integrated and well-connected multifunctional open space network*", which would help to facilitate active travel and provide open space for outdoor exercise and recreation. The measures outlined in the policy would encourage active transport and less reliance on private car use, having benefits to carbon emissions, air pollution, congestion, and public health. Overall, the policy would expect to have minor positive impacts on pollution, transport, and public health (SA Objectives 7, 9 and 12).
- D.3.4.5 The policy states that development must demonstrate "*a clear understanding of the local and wider context, character, heritage and local distinctiveness of its location*", and positively contribute towards high quality design and placemaking. Furthermore, the policy states that "*the setting and significance of heritage assets should be conserved and enhanced where it exists and is likely to be impacted by new development*". A major positive impact in relation to the historic character and local landscape would be expected (SA Objectives 1 and 2).

D.3.5 Policy SDS5 – Cultural Facilities and the visitor economy

Policy SDS5 – Cultural Facilities and the visitor economy

Development proposals

1. Cultural, tourist and leisure facilities within Sandwell will be protected, enhanced and expanded (where appropriate) in partnership with key delivery partners and stakeholders.
2. Proposals for new development or uses that contribute to the attractiveness of Sandwell as a visitor destination (including for business tourism) will be supported in principle, subject to national guidance and the policy requirements set out elsewhere in this Plan.
3. Proposals for new cultural, tourist or leisure facilities or uses, or extensions to existing ones, should: -
 - a. be of a high-quality design,
 - b. be highly accessible and sustainable, being located within centres wherever possible;
 - c. not adversely impact on residential amenity or the operation of existing businesses,
 - d. be designed to be flexible, adaptable, and where possible be capable of alternative or community use.

Policy SDS5 – Cultural Facilities and the visitor economy

4. Well-designed and accessible ancillary facilities in appropriate locations will be supported. Additional facilities within centres that support the visitor economy and business tourism sectors¹ will be encouraged and promoted.
5. An assessment should be undertaken (as part of the design of new developments likely to attract large numbers of people) to demonstrate and document how potential security and crime-related vulnerabilities have been identified, assessed and where necessary, addressed in a manner that is appropriate and proportionate.
6. Development that would lead to the loss of an existing cultural / tourism facility in Sandwell will be resisted unless:
 - a. the intention is to replace it with a facility that will provide an improved cultural or tourist offer;
 - b.
 - c. it can be demonstrated that there would be significant benefits to the local and wider community in removing the use and / or redeveloping the site.
 - d. An appropriate contribution is made to support and sustain an alternative local cultural, tourist or leisure facility.

The Visitor Economy

7. The improvement and further development of visitor attractions will be supported where appropriate, to ensure that accessibility is maximised and to continue to raise the quality of the visitor experience throughout Sandwell. This can be achieved by:
 - a. enhancing / extending current attractions;
 - b. providing inclusive access, particularly within centres;
 - c. enhancing the visitor experience; and
 - d. delivering necessary infrastructure.
8. Links should be made to centres and those parts of Sandwell and beyond that are well-connected by public transport, considering the needs of business as well as leisure visitors, to encourage more sustainable local use of cultural and tourist attractions.
9. The canal network is also a significant visitor attraction within the Black Country, providing waterway links to Birmingham, Staffordshire, Worcestershire and beyond. Facilities adjoining and serving the canal network should be maintained and expanded to help provide a network of linked amenities and visitor hubs.
10. Physical and promotional links to visitor attractions close to Sandwell will be enhanced and encouraged, particularly in relation to Birmingham as a Global City and a business economy destination.
11. Proposals for heritage-related tourism will be supported where they provide positive and sustainable opportunities for social, educational and / or economic activity; heritage assets forming part of a tourist attraction will be protected from development or new or intensified activities that would adversely impact on their significance and setting (Policy SHE2).

Cultural facilities and events

¹ This will include the provision of hotels and other accommodation with strong links to key destinations and associated facilities.

Policy SDS5 – Cultural Facilities and the visitor economy

12. Libraries across Sandwell together act as one of the borough’s main locations for the delivery of cultural events and activities (e.g. music, theatre, dance, poetry, literature). Their role as community venues should be maintained and supported as part of the wider cultural offer of the borough.
13. To ensure Sandwell can provide opportunities for cultural growth, the retention and protection of venues providing performance spaces, recording facilities and practice amenities will be sought. The provision of new venues and facilities in sustainable and accessible locations will also be welcomed and supported, particularly within town centres.
14. In cases where new development could potentially prejudice the successful ongoing operation of an adjacent cultural / performance venue, the “agents of change” principle will be applied².
15. The promotion and protection of attractions and events that represent and celebrate the wide cultural and ethnic diversity across Sandwell will be encouraged, including spectator sports and other activities. This will include the protection of valuable cultural and religious buildings and the promotion of cultural, religious and community festivals on a Sandwell-wide basis in a range of suitable locations.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDS5	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	0

- D.3.5.1 This policy aims to provide for the protection, enhancement, promotion, and expansion of cultural, tourist and leisure facilities within the borough. Policy SDS5 would be likely to have a minor positive impact on the economy through the safeguarding and promotion of such sites and by enhancing the tourism potential of Sandwell (SA Objective 13).
- D.3.5.2 Alongside the delivery of highly accessible facilities and provision of local employment opportunities, various provisions within this policy would be expected to have benefits to the community and promote social inclusion. These include the promotion of *“opportunities for cultural growth, the retention and protection of venues”* and *“the protection of valuable cultural and religious buildings and the promotion of cultural, religious and community festivals on a Sandwell-wide basis”*. A minor positive impact on equality would therefore be expected (SA Objective 11).
- D.3.5.3 The policy includes measures that would improve the accessibility of the visitor facilities within the borough, enabled through delivering the necessary infrastructure to ensure links to centres that are well supported by public transport. The policy also identifies the importance of the canal network, where *“facilities adjoining and serving the canal network*

² Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2023) states that both planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (e.g. places of worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Unreasonable restrictions should not be placed on existing businesses because of development permitted after they were established.

should be maintained and expanded to help provide a network of linked amenities and visitor hubs". Encouraging the use of local attractions and facilitating accessibility to these attractions would encourage active travel and improve health of residents and can further reduce the reliance on private car use. Therefore, the policy can expect to have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation, transport, and health (SA Objectives 4, 9 and 12).

D.3.5.4 The policy states that *"cultural, tourist and leisure facilities within Sandwell will be protected, enhanced and expanded"*. This would be likely to help ensure developments are of high-quality design and create attractive areas. In addition, this policy aims to ensure *"heritage assets forming part of a tourist attraction will be protected from development or new or intensified activities that would adversely impact on their significance and setting"*. This would be likely to have a minor positive impact on cultural heritage and landscape (SA Objectives 1 and 2).

D.3.6 Policy SDS6 – Sandwell’s Green Belt

Policy SDS6 – Sandwell’s Green Belt

1. Sandwell Council will maintain a defensible green belt boundary³ around the Sandwell green belt, to help promote urban renaissance, to maximise its role in helping to mitigate climate change impacts and to support easy access to the countryside for residents.
2. Sandwell green belt’s nature conservation, landscape, heritage and agricultural value will be protected and enhanced.
3. Opportunities will be taken to improve the value and recreational role of the green belt in Sandwell Valley:
 - a. through improving safe accessibility for all users;
 - b. by providing facilities for active and passive recreation (if this preserves the openness of the Green Belt and does not conflict with the purposes of including land within it⁴);
 - c. by protecting tranquil areas and locations with ecological and historic value.
4. Extensions to existing buildings, the re-use of buildings⁵ or limited infilling / redevelopment / replacement of them within the footprint of an existing developed site within Sandwell’s Green Belt will be considered for approval provided:
 - a. extensions are not disproportionately over and above the size of the existing building(s) as originally constructed;
 - b. for replacement buildings, the new building is in the same use and not materially larger than the one it replaces;
 - c. the scale, materials and general design of the proposed development or redevelopment are in keeping with the character of the buildings and their surroundings and avoid greater impact and harm to the openness of the Green Belt; and
 - d. it does not lead to an increase in the developed proportion of the overall site.

³ The boundary of the Sandwell Green Belt is shown on the Policies Map.

⁴ Paragraph 149c (or any subsequent update) of the NPPF (2023).

⁵ Provided they are of permanent and substantial construction

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDS6	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

D.3.6.1 The policy aims to maintain a strong Green Belt boundary that will *"promote urban renaissance"* alongside aiding climate change mitigation and providing accessibility to the open countryside for residents of the borough. The policy aligns its aims with the purposes of the Green Belt as defined by the NPPF⁶, *"the fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open; the essential characteristics of Green Belts are their openness and their permanence"*.

D.3.6.2 The policy states that *"Sandwell green belt's nature conservation, landscape, heritage and agricultural value will be protected and enhanced"*. In addition, the policy seeks to utilise opportunities for the improvement of the Green Belt's recreational role by improving accessibility, improving facilities for active and passive recreation, and protecting tranquil areas of ecological and historic value. The policy would therefore be likely to result in a minor positive impact on the conservation of heritage and landscape character (SA Objectives 1 and 2) and to human health and wellbeing in terms of improving opportunities for recreation and access to the countryside (SA Objective 12).

D.3.6.3 Policy SDS6 includes measures that promote the reuse of old buildings within the Green Belt, considered for development permitting that they follow the requirements of 4a, 4b, 4c and 4d of the policy. The policy promotes the efficient use of land and prevents the loss of undeveloped land for built form. Therefore, the policy would be expected to have a minor positive impact on natural resources (SA Objective 6).

D.3.7 Policy SDS7 – Green and Blue Infrastructure in Sandwell

Policy SDS7 – Green and Blue Infrastructure in Sandwell

1. The Council will support a strategic approach to green and blue infrastructure by:
 - a. working with relevant partners to prepare, adopt and implement a strategic Green Infrastructure Strategy for the borough;
 - b. planning, designing and managing green infrastructure in an integrated way to achieve multiple benefits;
 - c. identifying key green infrastructure assets, their function and their potential function;
 - d. identifying opportunities for addressing environmental and social challenges through strategic green infrastructure interventions.

⁶ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework-2> [Date accessed: 27/06/23]

Policy SDS7 – Green and Blue Infrastructure in Sandwell

2. Sandwell’s green and blue infrastructure networks, including open spaces, green spaces, nature conservation sites, habitats, rivers, canals, other waterways, trees and green features, should be enhanced wherever possible (see SNE1 – SNE6).
3. Development in Sandwell will be expected to maintain the existing network of green infrastructure across the borough.
4. Major developments will also be required to ensure green spaces and urban greening features (including tree planting, vegetation, gardens, green roofs and green walls, sustainable drainage systems, etc.) are planned, designed and managed in an integrated way to deliver multiple environmental benefits over the lifetime of the development (Policies SCC1 – SCC6).
5. Proposals that would result in the loss of existing green infrastructure will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that new opportunities will be provided that mitigate or compensate for this loss and ensure that the ecosystem services of the area are retained (Policy SNE2).
6. Major developments will be expected to maximise opportunities for enhancing existing green spaces and waterways by incorporating appropriate urban greening to enhance the visual quality and ecological functions of the site.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDS7	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	+	0

D.3.7.1 Policy SDS7 outlines the requirements of developments to incorporate GI and blue infrastructure (BI) and how this will embed into the wider GI and BI network across the borough. The intention to prepare a GI Strategy for the borough is also set out in the policy.

D.3.7.2 The policy identifies that the various GI and BI assets throughout the borough *"should be enhanced wherever possible"* and that *"major developments will be expected to maximise opportunities for enhancing existing green spaces and waterways"*. Providing green spaces would help to enhance the appearance and character of the public realm and additionally provide health benefits through the provision of open and green spaces⁷. Therefore, the policy would expect to have a minor positive impact on landscape and public health and wellbeing (SA Objectives 2 and 12).

D.3.7.3 The GI and BI network within the borough include *"open spaces, green spaces, nature conservation sites, habitats, rivers, canals, other waterways, trees and green features"*; enhancement of these features would be expected to benefit the biodiversity of the borough and could also potentially enhance ecosystem services, including carbon storage,

⁷ Houlden. V., Weich. S. and Jarvis. S. (2017) A cross-sectional analysis of green space prevalence and mental wellbeing in England

natural cooling, filtration of pollutants and reduce surface water run-off rates. The policy would expect to have a minor positive impact on biodiversity, climate change mitigation, adaptation and pollution (SA Objectives 3, 4, 5 and 7).

- D.3.7.4 Furthermore, the protection and creation of GI/BI provides the opportunity to improve the local economy through the enhancement of the local environment, increasing property values, attracting inward investment, and potentially supporting economic growth. A minor positive impact on the local economy (SA Objective 13) could therefore be achieved.

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D.4 Sandwell’s Natural and Historic Environment

D.4.1 Policy SNE1 – Nature Conservation

Policy SNE1 – Nature Conservation

1. Development will not be permitted where it would, alone or in combination with other plans or projects, have an adverse impact on the integrity of an internationally designated site, such as Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation or Fens Pools Special Area of Conservation.
2. Development will not be permitted where it would harm nationally (Sites of Special Scientific Interest and National Nature Reserves) or regionally (Local Nature Reserves and Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation) designated nature conservation sites.
3. Species that are legally protected, in decline, are rare within Sandwell / the Black Country or that are covered by national, regional, or local Biodiversity Action Plans will be protected when development occurs in accordance with Part I of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
4. Where, exceptionally, the strategic benefits of a development clearly outweigh the importance of a local nature conservation site (Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation), species, habitat or geological feature, damage must be minimised. Any remaining impacts, including any reduction in area, must be fully mitigated. A mitigation strategy must accompany relevant planning applications. Compensation will only be accepted in exceptional circumstances.
5. The movement of wildlife within Sandwell and into / out of adjoining areas, through both linear habitats (e.g. wildlife corridors) and the wider urban matrix (e.g. stepping-stone sites) should not be impeded by development. Developers must take account of the Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy (Policy SNE2) when preparing their schemes and should plan for the maintenance and where possible enhancement of such linkages.
6. Details of how improvements (appropriate to their location and scale) will contribute to the natural environment, and their ongoing management for the benefit of biodiversity and geodiversity, will be expected to accompany planning applications. Adequate information must be submitted with applications for proposals that may affect any designated site or important habitat, species, or geological feature, to ensure that the likely impacts of the proposal can be fully assessed. Where the necessary information is not made available, there will be a presumption against granting planning permission.
7. Over the plan period, Sandwell will update evidence on designated nature conservation sites and Local Nature Reserves as necessary in conjunction with the Local Sites Partnership and Natural England and will amend existing designations in accordance with this evidence. Consequently, sites may receive new, or increased, protection over the Plan period.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SNE1	0	+	++	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

D.4.1.1 Policy SNE1 aims to protect, conserve, and enhance the biodiversity assets within the borough, from internationally designated to locally protected sites. Alongside the requirements of the policy to improve the biodiversity assets within the borough, including the management and connectivity of these assets, the policy also outlines requirements for development proposals that could result in adverse impacts on biodiversity. The policy states that *"a mitigation strategy must accompany relevant planning applications"* and additionally *"adequate information"* is also required alongside planning applications to ensure impacts are fully assessed. The policy also requires developers to accommodate the Local Nature Recovery Strategy in preparation of their schemes, which should *"plan for the maintenance and where possible enhancement of such linkages"*. The policy would expect to have a major positive impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 3).

D.4.1.2 The biodiversity assets outlined in the policy, including designated sites and other wildlife habitats, often make up key characteristics of the surrounding landscape and through protection and enhancement of these assets it would be expected to benefit the local character and visual amenity. The protection of open spaces and the natural environment would likely improve the health and mental wellbeing of residents, who would be provided with improved access to nature and opportunities for physical activity. The policy would therefore be expected to have a minor positive impact on the local landscape and health of residents (SA Objectives 2 and 12).

D.4.1.3 The biodiversity assets that would be protected and enhanced by Policy SNE1 would contribute to ecosystem services. Such ecosystem services include carbon storage, flood risk reduction, filtering of air pollutants and nutrient cycling. Therefore, a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation and pollution would be expected (SA Objectives 4, 5 and 7).

D.4.2 Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

Biodiversity Net Gain

- All development proposals in Sandwell shall deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value when measured against baseline site information. Where achievable, a higher net gain may be agreed. Losses and gains will be calculated using the extant national Biodiversity Metric⁸.

⁸ BNG is measured using the Biodiversity Metric 4.0 Calculation Tool (version correct as at September 2023). Natural England have published detailed guidance on how to use the metric.

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

2. Where site clearance or other activities have lowered the biodiversity value of an on-site habitat after 30 January 2020, an estimate of the biodiversity units on site prior to those activities will be used as its baseline for calculating the site’s initial BNG value. This estimate will be based on habitat surveys, aerial photos and / or other appropriate evidence of the condition of the site, applying the precautionary principle.
3. Biodiversity net gain must be provided in line with the following principles:
 - a. there will be a requirement for on-site habitat provision / enhancement wherever practicable, followed by improvements to sites within the local area, and then other sites elsewhere within Sandwell;
 - b. where off-site measures are needed to meet biodiversity net gain requirements, it is expected that the off-site habitat enhancement or creation will be located as close to the development site as possible;
 - c. the maintenance and enhancement of the ability of plants and animals (including pollinating insects) to move, migrate and genetically disperse across Sandwell and the wider Black Country must be supported;
 - d. the provision/enhancement of priority habitats identified at the national, regional, or local level, having regard to the scarcity of that habitat within Sandwell, will be expected.
4. Compensation in the form of national biodiversity credits will only be accepted as a fall-back if mitigation is not possible within the development site boundary, elsewhere in its immediate vicinity or in the wider Sandwell area.
5. Provision of on- or off-site compensation on other sites should not replace or adversely impact on existing alternative / valuable habitats in those locations; compensatory works on them should be established via a legal agreement or under way prior to the related development being undertaken.
6. Monitoring of BNG compensation measures will be required to ensure its successful delivery, with further compensation being required in the event of initial measures being ineffective. Ongoing management of any new or improved BNG habitats together with monitoring and reporting will need to be planned for and funded for 30 years by developers, using a conservation covenant or s106 agreement as necessary.
7. Sandwell Council has identified the following site(s) and recorded them on the national register as suitable for the provision of biodiversity units to developers unable to provide a minimum 10% net gain on their own sites (See Appendix A and evidence base):

Location	Potential Project types	Baseline Units	Potential Uplift Units (%)
Hill House Farm	Large areas of ‘modified grassland’ within the site that could be improved to ‘other neutral grassland’ of good condition. The current land use may have to be adapted to accommodate these changes (arable). There is potential for uplift in other habitats on site.	241.73	+255.87 (105.85)
Hill Farm Bridge Fields	Vary sward height and increase species diversity to improve the	181.24	65.90 (36.36)

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

	condition of the grasslands. Condition of the woodland can be improved through introduction of deadwood and management of habitat regeneration.		
Tibbington Open Space (The Cracker)	improvement Relatively large areas of woodland offer strong uplift potential. ‘Other neutral grassland’ habitats and the parkland habitat both provide uplift opportunities.	90.57	+32.91 (36.17)
Menzies Open Space	Woodland improvement, some grassland improvement Areas of ‘other neutral grassland’ can provide uplift. Site contains a pond (non-priority). There is potential to create more uplift by improving the condition of the pond from poor to good.	157.4	+42.28 (26.86)
Warrens Hall Park Strategic Open Space	Woodland improvement, some grassland improvement	211.70	+26.93 (12.72)
Tividale Park	Scrub Species and structural improvement, tree and woodland improvement	49.66	+10.39 (20.92)

Developers do not have to buy units on these sites.

Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy

8. All development should help deliver the Local Nature Recovery Network Strategy in line with the following principles:
 - a. take account of where in the Local Nature Recovery Network the development is located and deliver benefits appropriate to that zone, in accordance with section 3d above;
 - b. follow the mitigation hierarchy of avoidance, mitigation and compensation, and provide for the protection, enhancement, restoration and creation of wildlife habitat and green infrastructure;
 - c. follow the principles of Making Space for Nature - recognise that spaces are needed for nature and that these should be of sufficient size and quality and must be appropriately connected to other areas of green infrastructure, to address the objectives of the local Nature Recovery Network Strategy.
9. Priority locations for habitat creation and enhancement are as shown on the Sandwell NRN Map (Appendix A). Development sites within the identified zones will be expected to contribute towards the creation of appropriate habitat linkages and types to support those priority areas.

Policy SNE2 – Protection and Enhancement of Wildlife Habitats

10. Development should be designed to protect and enhance existing habitats and ecological networks, including wildlife corridors and stepping stones. Development should minimise any potential disturbance to species and habitats, including from site lighting.
11. Exemptions to the need to provide biodiversity net gain on development sites will be as set out in the relevant legislation and national guidance.

Local opportunities for habitats and wildlife

12. All development shall secure the eradication of invasive species within site boundaries, where opportunities arise to do so.
13. All major development proposals with an eaves height or roof commencement height of 5m and above are required to provide integrated nesting bricks / boxes for swifts, house martins, house sparrows, starlings, and/ or bats as appropriate, to help preserve endangered species and urban biodiversity in Sandwell.
14. All applicants, including those undertaking householder schemes and smaller-scale developments are asked to consider including additional enhancement opportunities for wildlife and conservation in their proposals; the Council will consider such contributions positively when determining planning applications.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SNE2	0	+	++	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

D.4.2.1 Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) is a requirement of the Environment Act 2021⁹, with Schedules 14 and 15 requiring all development under the Town and County Planning Act¹⁰ to deliver at least 10% BNG from an as yet, unconfirmed date¹¹. Goal 1 of the Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) promotes BNG to ensure thriving plants and wildlife and that development leaves habitats in a better state for wildlife than before¹². The NPPF¹³ requires Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) when making plans and determining planning

⁹ The Environment Act 2021. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents> [Date accessed: 05/05/23]

¹⁰ The Town and County Planning Act 1990. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1990/8/contents> [Date accessed: 05/05/23]

¹¹ Current estimated date November 2023.

¹² DEFRA (2023) Environmental Improvement Plan 2023: First Revision of the 25 Year Environment Plan Available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environmental-improvement-plan> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

¹³ Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (2023). National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf [Date accessed: 05/05/23]

applications to deliver BNG stating that they must “*secure measurable net gains for biodiversity*”.

- D.4.2.2 Policy SNE2 aligns with current statutory requirements and requires development to deliver a minimum 10% net gain in biodiversity value. Where uplift is not possible on-site, SMBC has identified sites and recorded these on the national register as suitable for the provision of off-site biodiversity units. This will help to secure BNG in line with the mitigation hierarchy and also ensure that off-site BNG aligns with SMBC’s priorities and will benefit the residents of Sandwell.
- D.4.2.3 The Environment Act 2021 made Local Nature Recovery Networks (LNRN) mandatory. These aim to target action and investment in nature locally and will cover the whole of England. Policy SNE2 requires development proposals to help deliver the LNRN and requires development “*to protect and enhance existing habitats and ecological networks, including wildlife corridors and stepping stones*”.
- D.4.2.4 Overall, a major positive impact on biodiversity would be anticipated as a result of the policy (SA Objective 3).
- D.4.2.5 BNG would be expected to contribute towards improved air quality due to the increased uptake of carbon dioxide and filtration of pollutants associated with road transport, which could potentially help to reduce residents’ exposure to air pollution. Furthermore, due to this enhanced carbon storage capacity, this policy could potentially help to mitigate anthropogenic climate change. A minor positive impact on the climate change mitigation and pollution objectives would therefore be expected (SA Objectives 4 and 7).
- D.4.2.6 Enhanced biodiversity and green cover across the borough would be likely to have positive impact on residents’ wellbeing through providing increased access to a diverse range of natural habitats, which is known to be beneficial for mental and physical health¹⁴. A minor positive impact on human health and wellbeing would therefore be expected (SA Objective 12).
- D.4.2.7 Furthermore, the enhancement of the green network could potentially provide opportunities to safeguard and improve the character and appearance of local landscapes and townscapes and create more pleasant outdoor spaces for both people and wildlife. This would be likely to result in a minor positive impact on the local landscape quality (SA Objective 2).

D.4.3 Policy SNE3 – Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows

Policy SNE3 – Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows

Retention and protection of ancient woodland and veteran or ancient trees

¹⁴ Houlden. V., Weich. S. and Jarvis. S. (2017) A cross-sectional analysis of green space prevalence and mental wellbeing in England

Policy SNE3 – Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows

1. Development that would result in the loss of or damage to ancient woodland and / or ancient or veteran trees will not be permitted.
2. Development adjacent to ancient woodland and / or ancient or veteran trees will be required to provide an appropriate landscaping buffer, with a minimum depth of 15m and a preferred depth of 50m.
3. Provision should be made for the protection of individual veteran or ancient trees likely to be impacted by development, by providing a buffer around such trees of a minimum of 15 times the diameter of the tree. The buffer zone should be 5m from the edge of the tree's canopy if that area is larger than 15 times its diameter.

Habitat Creation

4. Opportunities for increasing tree cover across Sandwell through habitat creation and the enhancement of ecological networks, including connecting areas of ancient woodland, should be maximised in public and private sector development layouts and landscaping, in particular through biodiversity net gain and nature recovery network initiatives (see Policy SNE2)
5. Replacement trees must not be planted in locations where they would impact on sites identified / designated as ecologically important, unless this has been specifically agreed with the Council.

Shading and air quality issues

6. New houses and other buildings must be carefully designed and situated to prevent an incompatible degree of shade¹⁵ being cast on them by both existing and new trees, which might generate subsequent pressure for the trees to be removed.
7. The positioning of trees in relation to streets and buildings should not worsen air quality for people using and living in them. Care should be taken when choosing and positioning new street trees, and designing streets and buildings, to allow for street-level ventilation to occur and to avoid trapping pollution between ground level and tree canopies (Policy SHW3).

Canopy cover

8. The planting of new, predominantly native, trees and woodlands will be sought¹⁶ in appropriate locations, to increase the extent of canopy cover in Sandwell by around 6% by 2030, in line with the Council's Tree Strategy.
9. Tree planting on new development sites should make a minimum contribution of 20% canopy cover and a recommended contribution of 30% canopy cover across the site¹⁷, especially in areas where evidence demonstrates that current levels of canopy cover are lower than the local average.
10. Development proposals should use large-canopied species where possible¹⁸, as they provide a wider range of health, biodiversity and climate change mitigation and adaptation benefits because of their

¹⁵ This will be in the context of the requirements outlined in policies elsewhere in this plan on the role of trees in mitigating climate change and providing appropriate levels of shade and cooling.

¹⁶ Where possible and in most cases, replacement trees should be UK and Ireland sourced and grown, to help limit the spread of tree pests and diseases, while supporting regional nurseries when acquiring them.

¹⁷ Emergency Tree Plan for the UK – The Woodland Trust 2020

¹⁸ Taking into account the requirements of points 6 and 7 of this policy

Policy SNE3 – Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows

larger surface area; they will also make a positive contribution to increasing overall canopy cover¹⁹ within Sandwell, as set out in the Sandwell Tree Strategy.

Trees and Design

11. Development proposals should be designed around the need to incorporate trees already present on sites, using sensitive and well-designed site layouts to maximise their retention. Existing mature and healthy trees²⁰, trees that are ecologically important, and ancient / veteran trees should be retained and integrated into landscaping schemes, recognising the important contribution they make to the character and amenity²¹ of a development site and to local biodiversity networks.
12. For every tree removed from a development site, a minimum of three replacement trees will be required to be planted, in accordance with the Council's aim to increase tree canopy cover across the district by 6% and to ensure that the minimum requirement of 10% biodiversity net gain is met and preferably exceeded.
13. The species, eventual size and amenity value of replacement trees must be commensurate with the size, stature, rarity, and / or public amenity of the tree(s) to be removed. Where trees to be replaced form a group of amenity value (rather than individual specimens), replacements must also be in the form of a group commensurate with the area covered, size and species of trees and established quality of the original group. Where possible, they must be planted in a position that will mitigate the loss of visual amenity associated with the original group.
14. Where planning permission has been granted that involves the removal of trees, suitable replacement trees must be provided onsite. Where sufficient suitable onsite replacements cannot be provided, off-site planting or woodland enhancement, including support for natural regeneration, in the near vicinity of the removed tree(s) must be provided, in line with the mitigation hierarchy set out in SNE2
15. Where new trees are to be planted on a development site, the species of trees and their location within the site should be informed by a site-specific survey carried out by a qualified ecologist / arboriculturalist.
16. New trees on development sites should be planted in accordance with arboricultural best practice, including the use of suitably-sized planting pits²², supporting stakes, root barriers, underground guying, and appropriate protective fencing during the construction phase.

Hedgerows

17. There will be a presumption against the wholesale removal of hedgerows for development purposes, especially where ecological surveys have identified them to be species-rich and where they exist on previously undeveloped land.

¹⁹ The area of ground covered by trees when seen from above.

²⁰ Health and status as assessed in a report produced by an accredited arboriculturalist

²¹ National planning guidance identifies trees worthy of retention on amenity grounds (through use of a TPO) as those that are visible in part or whole from a public place and / or those with individual, collective and wider impact (in terms of size, form, future potential, rarity, cultural / historic value, landscape contribution and / or contribution to a conservation area). Other factors such as value for nature conservation and climate change may also be considered.

²² To allow for an appropriate volume of soil in which to develop a viable root system and to prevent future stress that might affect the trees' long-term health and lifespan

Policy SNE3 – Provision, retention and protection of trees, woodlands and hedgerows

18. New hedgerows will be sought as part of site layouts and landscaping schemes.

19. Protection of existing hedgerows before and during development must be undertaken.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SNE3	0	+	+	+	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

D.4.3.1 Policy SNE3 aims to create, retain and protect trees, woodlands and hedgerows, including ancient trees, ancient woodlands and veteran trees across the Plan area. Where the loss of a tree is unavoidable, this policy requires the planting of at least three appropriate trees in replacement of every tree lost, ideally native species. The policy seeks to meet aims of increasing the canopy cover of the borough by 6% to contribute to BNG requirements. Ecological surveys will also be required to identify the ecological importance of hedgerows. This would be expected to help prevent the inappropriate loss of vegetation. Trees, woodlands and hedgerows support a vast array of important flora and fauna and can serve as useful connecting habitats to facilitate the movement of species. Therefore, this policy would be expected to result in a minor positive impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 3).

D.4.3.2 The retention and enhancement of trees and woodland supported under this policy would be likely to boost the natural carbon sink and air filtration ecosystem services provided by trees and vegetation. This could also potentially help to reduce residents' exposure to air pollution, for example through the filtration or buffering of emissions associated with road transport. Furthermore, due to the enhanced carbon storage capacity tree planting would provide, this policy could potentially contribute towards mitigating anthropogenic climate change. A minor positive impact on the climate change mitigation and pollution objectives would therefore be expected (SA Objectives 4 and 7). This could also help to improve the respiratory health of residents and provide opportunities for integrating green spaces amongst development for recreation. Access to a diverse range of natural habitats is also expected to benefit mental wellbeing. Therefore, a minor positive impact would also be expected in terms of public health (SA Objective 12).

D.4.3.3 Trees serve an important role in protecting soil from erosion as a result of rainfall and surface water runoff, due to the stabilisation provided by roots and interception of rainfall by foliage. Through conserving and enhancing tree coverage across the Plan area, this policy would therefore increase the area and connectivity of GI with benefits for climate change adaptation (SA Objective 5), and be likely to help preserve soils resulting in a minor positive impact on natural resources (SA Objective 6).

D.4.3.4 Furthermore, trees, woodlands and hedgerows can be a useful tool to help integrate new development into the existing landscape character, for example, in terms of protecting or

enhancing views, or providing visual interest. Therefore, this policy could potentially result in minor positive impact to the local landscape (SA Objective 2).

- D.4.3.5 It is recommended that this policy is expanded to ensure that the species of trees planted and their location within the development is informed by a site-specific survey carried out by a qualified ecologist/arboriculturalist.

D.4.4 Policy SNE4 – Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark

Policy SNE4 – Geodiversity and the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark

1. Development proposals in Sandwell will not be supported where they would have significant adverse impact on Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark geosites, except:
 - a. where suitable mitigation and / or compensation is provided to address the adverse impacts of the proposed development;
 - or
 - b. where any residual harm following mitigation / compensation, along with any other harm, is clearly outweighed by the benefits of the development.
2. Development proposals in Sandwell should:
 - a. wherever possible, make a positive contribution to the protection and enhancement of geodiversity within the boundaries of the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark and in relation to the geosites identified within it;
 - b. give locally significant geological sites²³ a level of protection commensurate with their importance;
 - c. consider, and avoid any disruption to, the importance of the inter-connectivity of greenspace and public access between geosites within the boundary of the Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark;
 - d. ensure geological sites of importance²⁴ are clearly identified where they are within or close to development proposals;
 - e. make it easy to access geoheritage features – including temporary exposures – for research and educational purposes;
 - f. enable access to records and samples as part of local and national geological record keeping.
3. Where necessary, conditions will be put in place on approvals for planning permission to ensure appropriate monitoring is undertaken and to make sure mitigation, compensation and offsetting is delivered effectively.

²³ Many of which are identified as Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINCs) or Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINCs), and / or lie within areas of significant historic value, such as conservation areas, registered parks and gardens or other parts of the Black Country's historic landscape.

²⁴ Statutory designations and sites of local importance such as SINCs and SLINCs with a geological component

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SNE4	+	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+

D.4.4.1 Policy SNE4 would be expected to help protect and enhance geodiversity sites across the borough. The Black Country UNESCO Global Geopark is of particular importance. Development proposals which could potentially result in an adverse impact on geodiversity sites of international or national importance will be resisted. This policy would be likely to have a minor positive impact on local geodiversity (SA Objective 3). Sites of geological importance are often strongly linked to the surrounding local landscape and historic features, including the industrial heritage within Sandwell. By protecting local geodiversity, this policy would also be expected to have a minor positive impact on cultural heritage and the local landscape (SA Objectives 1 and 2).

D.4.4.2 The protection and enhancement of geologically important sites including the UNESCO Global Geopark would be likely to have benefits to tourism in the area, and therefore, have a minor positive impact on the local economy (SA Objective 13). Furthermore, sustainable tourism, outdoor learning and education are major themes of the Geopark²⁵. Policy SNE4 states that development proposals in Sandwell should *"make it easy to access geoheritage features – including temporary exposures – for research and educational purposes"* which could potentially have a minor positive impact on education (SA Objective 14).

D.4.5 Policy SNE5 – The Rowley Hills

Policy SNE5 – The Rowley Hills

1. The strategic importance of the Rowley Hills to the character and amenity of Sandwell and the wider Black Country is derived from their prominent location, open appearance and importance for the natural environment and recreation, which will be defended from the incursion of built development or other inappropriate uses.
2. Development will not be permitted within the Rowley Hills Strategic Open Space that would impact on the following valued qualities, which include natural, cultural, perceptual and aesthetic aspects:
 - an open and undeveloped skyline;
 - expansive panoramic views into and out of the strategic open space;
 - wildlife habitats that support biodiversity;
 - ecological and geological designations;
 - areas of relative tranquillity;
 - the setting of designated heritage assets;
 - multi-functional green infrastructure assets;

²⁵ Black Country Geopark (2021) Black Country Geopark – Education, Events & Sustainable Tourism. Available at: <https://blackcountrygeopark.dudley.gov.uk/education/> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

Policy SNE5 – The Rowley Hills

- highly valued open spaces for informal recreation.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SNE5	+	++	++	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

D.4.5.1 Policy SNE5 aims to protect the Rowley Hills from inappropriate development that would lead to the loss of valued qualities that contribute towards the local landscape character. The policy ensures that development would not impact *"expansive panoramic views into or out of the strategic open space"* and additionally not permit development that would impact the open and undeveloped skyline. The policy would be expected to have a major positive impact on safeguarding and protecting the local landscape character and visual amenity of the area (SA Objective 2).

D.4.5.2 Policy SNE5 would also help to reduce noise pollution by preventing development that would impact *"areas of relative tranquillity"*. Therefore, a minor positive impact on noise pollution would be expected (SA Objective 7).

D.4.5.3 The policy includes measures that protect local wildlife and biodiversity, resisting development that would impact both ecological and geological designations and habitats that support local biodiversity. Furthermore, the policy includes measures that would prevent impacts upon *"multi-functional green infrastructure assets"* and *"high value open spaces"*. Overall, the policy would be expected to have a major positive impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 3), and a minor positive impact on protecting green infrastructure assets and the health and wellbeing of residents, increasing access to open space and improving climate change resilience (SA Objectives 5 and 12).

D.4.5.4 Policy SNE5 additionally includes measures that would ensure designated heritage assets are not impacted by proposed development including their settings. Therefore, the policy would expect to have a minor positive impact on the conservation of cultural heritage (SA Objective 1).

D.4.6 Policy SNE6 – Canals

Policy SNE6 – Canals

- Sandwell’s canal network comprises the canals and their surrounding landscape corridors, designated and non-designated heritage assets, character, settings, views and interrelationships.
- All development proposals likely to affect the canal network must:

Policy SNE6 – Canals

- a. demonstrate that they will not adversely affect the structural integrity of canal infrastructure²⁶ to avoid increased flood risk, land instability and / or harm to the usability of the canal (including its towpath) as a green-blue infrastructure asset;
 - b. ensure that any proposals for reinstatement or reuse would not adversely impact on locations of significant environmental value where canals are not currently navigable;
 - c. protect and enhance its special historic, architectural, archaeological, and cultural significance and its setting, including the potential to record, preserve and restore such features;
 - d. protect and enhance its nature conservation value including habitat creation and restoration along the waterway and its surrounding environs;
 - e. protect and enhance its visual amenity, key views and setting;
 - f. protect and enhance water quality in the canal and protect water resource availability both in the canal and the wider environment.
 - g. reinstate and / or upgrade towpaths, including through the introduction of suitably designed and sized wayfinding information, and link them into high quality, wider, integrated pedestrian and cycle networks, particularly where they can provide links to transport hubs, centres and opportunities for employment.
3. Where opportunities exist, all development proposals within the canal network must:
- a. support and complement its role in providing opportunities for leisure, recreation and tourism activities;
 - b. enhance and promote opportunities for off-road walking, cycling, and boating access, including for small-scale commercial freight activities;
 - c. protect and enhance the historical, geological, and ecological value of the canal network and its associated infrastructure;
 - d. relate positively to the adjacent waterway by promoting high quality design, including active frontages onto the canal and improving the public realm;
 - e. integrate sensitively with the canal and any associated canal-side features and, where the chance to do so arises, incorporate canal features into the new development;
 - f. explore opportunities associated with alternative or new uses for the canals and their towpaths, such as to help mitigate the effects of climate change or support the delivery of fibre networks and communications technology (see **Policy SID1, Policy SCC3**).
4. Development proposals must be supported by evidence that the above factors have been fully considered and properly incorporated into their design and layout.
5. Where proposed development overlays any disused canal features, the potential to record, preserve and restore such features must be fully explored unless canals have been removed in their entirety.
6. Development on sites that include sections of disused canals should protect the line of the canal through the detailed layout of the proposal.
7. Development will not be permitted that would sever the route of a disused canal or prevent the restoration of a canal link where there is a realistic possibility of restoration, wholly or in part.

²⁶ Including (but not limited to) waterway walls, embankments, cuttings, locks, culverts, weirs, aqueducts, tunnels and bridges

Policy SNE6 – Canals

8. Proposals must safeguard the amenity of existing residential moorings when planning consent is sought on sites adjacent to them.

Residential Canal Moorings

9. For residential moorings, planning consent will only be granted for proposals that include the provision of:

- a. all necessary boating facilities;
- b. appropriate access to cycling and walking routes;
- c. an adequate level of amenity for boaters, not unduly impacted upon by reason of noise, fumes or other nearby polluting activities.

10. In determining a planning application for residential moorings, account will be taken of the effect that such moorings and their associated activities may have on the amenities or activities of nearby residential or other uses.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SNE6	+	+	+	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	+	+	0

D.4.6.1 Policy SNE6 aims to protect and enhance the borough’s canal network. The policy also requires development proposals to seek to reinstate and/or upgrade towpaths and link them into high-quality, wider pedestrian and cycle networks. This would be expected to ensure the canal network remains functional across the Plan area, with minor positive impacts in regard to transport and accessibility (SA Objective 9). Furthermore, enhancing the canal towpath network for use by pedestrians and cyclists could potentially encourage outdoor exercise and active travel, resulting in a minor positive impact on physical and mental health (SA Objective 12).

D.4.6.2 Sandwell’s canal network forms an important biodiversity, amenity and cultural heritage asset. Policy SNE6 requires development proposals to protect and enhance the canals “*special historic, architectural, archaeological and cultural significance and its setting*”, “*nature conservation value including habitat creation and restoration*”, “*visual amenity, key views and its setting*” and “*water quality*”. These requirements would be likely to result in minor positive impacts in relation to cultural heritage, landscape, biodiversity and pollution (SA Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 7).

D.4.6.3 The policy states that where the opportunity exists, future development should aim to improve leisure, recreation and tourism activities associated with the canals. Additionally, the policy includes measures to improve connectivity to transport hubs, centres and employment sites. This would be likely to have a minor positive impact on the local economy (SA Objective 13).

D.4.6.4 This policy would support the development of residential moorings within the borough, which could potentially lead to a minor positive impact on the overall accommodation provision (SA Objective 10).

D.4.7 Policy SHE1 – Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

Policy SHE1 – Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas

1. The impact of development proposals on the significance of Sandwell’s heritage assets and their settings will be considered in accordance with case law, legislation, and the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. Development proposals will be required to preserve and enhance local character and those aspects of the historic environment together with their settings that are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, landscape or townscape quality.
3. All proposals for development that may affect a heritage asset or its setting must be accompanied by an Assessment of Significance that should form part of a Design and Access Statement and / or a Heritage Impact Assessment. It should set out clearly the significance of the heritage asset, including any contribution made by its setting. The proposals should demonstrate how they respond to the significance of the asset.
4. Sandwell Council will seek to preserve and enhance the settings of listed buildings by exercising appropriate control over the design of new development in their vicinity and the use of adjacent land; and, where appropriate, by the preservation of trees and landscape features.
5. Proposals for new build, alterations or extensions within Sandwell’s conservation areas must respect the local historic character and architectural styles. This will include considering building scale, grouping, materials and fenestration. Design and Access Statements should highlight the significant components of the conservation area in relation to the proposal and clearly demonstrate how these proposals preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
6. Proposals for enabling development that support securing a viable future use or improvement to a historic asset may be supported.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHE1	++	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.4.7.1 This policy would be expected to help ensure that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, in line with national policy, and that the setting and special character of heritage assets are not adversely impacted by development.

D.4.7.2 Policy SHE1 outlines the requirements of development proposals to *"preserve and enhance local character"* and *"settings that are recognised as being of special historic, archaeological, architectural, landscape or townscape quality"*. Proposals for development that could potentially affect a heritage asset are required to be accompanied by an

Assessment of Significance that would be part of a Design and Access Statement and / or a Heritage Impact Assessment. The policy would be likely to have a major positive impact on cultural heritage (SA Objective 1). The protection and enhancement of heritage assets and their settings would be expected to positively impact the local character and would contribute to the surrounding local landscape / townscape in terms of local identity. It would therefore be expected to have a minor positive impact on landscape (SA Objective 2).

- D.4.7.3 It is recommended that the word “*conserve*” rather than “*preserve*” is used with regard to cultural heritage, reflecting the wording in the NPPF. The Council could also consider the potential to merge Policy SHE1 and SHE2 into a single policy to provide a clear position across all designated heritage assets and to avoid repetition.

D.4.8 Policy SHE2 – Development in the Historic Environment

Policy SHE2 – Development in the Historic Environment

1. New development in Sandwell that impacts on the historic environment should demonstrate that:
 - a. all aspects of the historic character and distinctiveness of the locality, including any contribution made by their setting, and (where applicable) views into, from, or within them, have been fully assessed and used to inform proposals; and
 - b. proposals have been prepared with full reference to the Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study (BCHLCS) (October 2019), the Historic Environment Record (HER), relevant conservation area appraisals and national and local policy.
2. Development proposals that could have an impact on the historic significance²⁷ of either designated heritage assets²⁸ or non-designated heritage assets²⁹ should be supported by evidence that their historic character and distinctiveness has been fully assessed and used to inform proposals.
3. Historic assets that contribute positively to the local character and distinctiveness of Sandwell’s specific townscapes should be retained and, wherever possible, enhanced and their settings respected.
4. The locally-specific urban grain, vernacular and other architectural and historic details that contribute to local character and distinctiveness should be used to inform the form, scale, appearance, details, and materials of new development.
5. All proposals should aim to sustain and reinforce special character and conserve the locally distinctive historic aspects of Sandwell, for example:
 - a. The surviving pre-industrial settlements of medieval origin such as Wednesbury and Oldbury;

²⁷ NPPF 2023 Annex 2 Significance (for heritage policy): The value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. The interest may be archaeological, architectural, artistic, or historic. Significance derives not only from a heritage asset’s physical presence, but also from its setting.

²⁸ NPPF 2023 Annex 2 Designated heritage asset: A World Heritage Site, Scheduled Monument, Listed Building, Protected Wreck Site, Registered Park and Garden, Registered Battlefield or Conservation Area designated under the relevant legislation

²⁹ NPPF 2023 Annex 2 Heritage asset: A building monument, site, place, area, or landscape identified as having a degree of significance meriting consideration in planning decisions, because of its heritage interest. It includes designated heritage assets and assets identified by the local planning authority (including local listing).

Policy SHE2 – Development in the Historic Environment

- b. Areas of Victorian and Edwardian higher-density development, which survive with a high degree of integrity, including terraced housing and its associated amenities, such as residential areas within West Bromwich Conservation Area;
- c. Areas of extensive lower density suburban development of the early and mid- 20th century, including public housing and private developments of semi- detached and detached housing;
- d. Public open spaces, including Victorian and Edwardian municipal parks, often created upon land retaining elements of relict industrial landscape features such as Windmill End;
- e. The canal network and its associated infrastructure, surviving canal-side pre- 1939 buildings and structures, and archaeological evidence of the development of canal-side industries and former canal routes;
- f. Buildings, structures and archaeological remains of the traditional industries of Sandwell, including metal trades such as chain-making and extractive industries such as quarrying such as on the Rowley Hills;
- g. The Rowley Hills (Turners Hill) and other largely undeveloped high prominences and views to and from these locations.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHE2	++	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

D.4.8.1 Policy SHE2 would be expected to ensure heritage assets, both designated and non-designated, are protected throughout the borough and that proposals should *"aim to sustain and reinforce special character and conserve the locally distinctive historic aspects of Sandwell"*. The policy identifies examples of areas and particular assets that offer opportunities to reinforce the special character and identity of Sandwell. The identified assets are to be *"retained and, wherever possible, enhanced and their settings respected"*. This policy would be expected to help ensure that heritage assets are conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, in line with national policy, and would ensure developments have regard to the Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC). Overall, a major positive impact on cultural heritage would be likely (SA Objective 1).

D.4.8.2 The heritage assets identified contribute to the local landscape character of Sandwell. Furthermore, the policy seeks to ensure that the *"urban grain, vernacular and other architectural and historic details"* are considered, with new development reflecting an appropriate form, scale, appearance, and building materials to ensure that the landscape / townscape character is conserved and enhanced. Through protection and enhancement of these assets it would be expected that the policy would have a minor positive impact on the local landscape (SA Objective 2).

D.4.8.3 Through ensuring the conservation and enhancement of historic assets including the canal network and open spaces such as the Rowley Hills, Policy SHE2 could also result in a minor positive impact on biodiversity and geodiversity (SA Objective 3).

D.4.8.4 Furthermore, the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets and historic townscapes can have benefits to the economy including through encouraging tourism and attracting investment³⁰. The policy could potentially result in a minor positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13).

D.4.9 Policy SHE3 – Locally Listed Buildings

Policy SHE3 – Locally Listed Buildings

1. Proposals for alteration, extension and change of use to locally listed buildings or structures should clearly demonstrate that they will positively contribute towards the architectural or historical significance of the heritage asset.
2. Demolition of locally listed buildings will be resisted unless it can be demonstrated that no viable use can be found for the building or that the proposed development will have a substantial public benefit.
3. When demolition of a locally-listed building is unavoidable as part of a wider development, the Council will require an appropriate level of building recording prior to demolition taking place through the imposition of planning conditions. The approved recording shall be incorporated within the Historic Environment Record (HER).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHE3	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.4.9.1 Policy SHE3 sets out the requirements for development proposals in regard to locally listed buildings within the borough and how proposals should be treated when they threaten the appearance or use of a locally listed building.

D.4.9.2 The policy would help to avoid the loss of locally listed buildings, unless there are demonstrable public benefits outweighing the loss, and ensure that any development proposals affecting locally listed buildings are only permitted where they will “*positively contribute towards the architectural or historical significance*”. These provisions could help to conserve and enhance the townscape character and cultural heritage features, resulting in a minor positive impact on SA Objectives 1 and 2.

³⁰ Historic England (2020) Heritage and the Economy 2020. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/heritage-counts/heritage-and-economy/> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

D.4.10 Policy SHE4 – Archaeology

Policy SHE4 – Archaeology

1. Development should safeguard both designated and non-designated archaeological assets and the character and setting of areas of acknowledged significance.
2. In considering proposals for development, Sandwell Council will seek to ensure that designated archaeological assets are preserved in situ, avoiding loss or harm to their significance, and their settings are also preserved and enhanced, to fully understand and utilise their archaeological, recreational and educational value.
3. Development proposals that are likely to have a significant adverse impact on designated archaeological assets and their settings that cannot be avoided, or where the asset cannot be preserved in situ, will be resisted.
4. Non-designated archaeological assets must be preserved wherever possible. Where it would be unreasonable to withhold planning permission for the development of such sites, provision will be made through agreements and conditions of planning permissions for an appropriate level of archaeological evaluation and recording to be undertaken, prior to impact on or loss of the asset. Evaluations / recordings will be included within Sandwell’s Historic Environment Record.
5. For sites with known archaeological potential, Sandwell Council may require developers to provide archaeological assessments and / or field evaluation to support their proposals. This information will be used to assess the archaeological implications of the development and to identify requirements for archaeological preservation or investigation.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHE4	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+

D.4.10.1 Policy SHE4 sets out the requirements for development proposals in regard to heritage assets within the borough and specific requirements in relation to the archaeological nature of these assets.

D.4.10.2 Archaeological assets, both designated and non-designated, will be safeguarded under the policy and it will ensure that *"their settings are also preserved and enhanced, to fully understand and utilise their archaeological, recreational and educational value"*. Additionally, the policy identifies measures to protect sites of known archaeological potential, requiring an archaeological assessment and / or field evaluation to be included within development proposals. The heritage assets would be likely to contribute to the local landscape of the area and may be important in contributing to local identity and the sense of place. Therefore, a minor positive impact on cultural heritage, landscape, and education would be expected (SA Objectives 1, 2, and 14).

D.5 Climate Change

D.5.1 Policy SCC1 – Increasing efficiency and resilience

Policy SCC1 – Increasing efficiency and resilience

1. Development should be designed to mitigate climate change impacts and provide adaptations that will help communities and individuals to continue to avoid or mitigate adverse effects on human health.
2. Proposals for development will need to demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change through addressing the following requirements: -
 - a. new buildings will be orientated to maximise opportunities for both natural heating and ventilation and to reduce exposure to wind and other elements (Policy SDS4; Policy SDM1);
 - b. development proposals will need to meet the needs of all sections of the community by including a range of sustainable and low carbon transport modes as alternatives to private car use (Policy STR6);
 - c. use of trees and other planting in landscaping schemes will be required throughout Sandwell, to provide for the shading of amenity areas, buildings and streets, mitigate against poor air quality and help connect fragmented habitats and protect and support biodiversity networks;
 - d. landscaping schemes should be designed using a mix of native tree species and plants where appropriate and should also use species that are able to adapt to changing climate conditions (Policy SNE3);
 - e. all development will need to minimise the impact of surface water runoff through the design of proposed drainage systems, including where possible grey water recycling and rainwater collection, and the use of permeable surfaces (Policy SCC4);
 - f. development should make provision for sustainable drainage infrastructure, which should be built into landscaping schemes / open space provision as appropriate (Policy SCC5);
 - g. development will be required to incorporate mitigation and resilience measures designed to reduce the risk of river, surface and other potential water flooding (Policy SCC4);
 - h. the conversion of non-domestic buildings to residential use will be expected to employ high environmental standards, incorporating improved thermal insulation, appropriate levels of natural ventilation and measures to improve water efficiency;
 - i. proposals for increasing the energy efficiency and resilience to climate change of designated heritage assets will be supported only where this will not cause demonstrable harm to the historic fabric, character, setting or appearance of the asset.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCC1	+	+	+	++	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0

- D.5.1.1 Policy SCC1 aims to ensure that development proposals seek opportunities for adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change. This would help to promote sustainable development throughout the Plan area and help to protect the environment.
- D.5.1.2 This policy supports the development of energy efficient technologies associated with historic assets as long as the development *"will not cause demonstrable harm to the historic fabric, character, setting or appearance of the asset"*. Therefore, a minor positive impact on cultural heritage would be anticipated (SA Objective 1).
- D.5.1.3 The policy requires development proposals to *"protect and support biodiversity networks"*, to incorporate *"landscaping schemes"* and to be designed *"using a mix of native tree species and plants where appropriate"*. This policy could potentially help to protect and enhance, and therefore have a minor positive impact in relation to, biodiversity and landscape character (SA Objectives 2 and 3).
- D.5.1.4 In addition to increased green cover, the policy states that *"all development will need to minimise the impact of surface water runoff through the design of proposed drainage systems, including where possible grey water recycling and rainwater collection, and the use of permeable surfaces"*. These requirements will provide mitigation for potential surface water flood events. Therefore, a minor positive impact on climate change adaptation would be expected (SA Objective 5). In addition, these requirements will benefit water efficiency, and have a minor positive impact on natural resources (SA Objective 6).
- D.5.1.5 Enhanced green cover alongside amenity areas, buildings and streets could potentially help to promote natural air filtration, and as such, reduce residents' exposure to transport-associated air pollution. Furthermore, providing a more attractive local area could potentially encourage walkable neighbourhoods and facilitate outdoor exercise. Policy SCC1 also requires development proposals to consider accessibility via *"a range of sustainable and low carbon transport modes as alternatives to private car use"*. This would be likely to reduce reliance on private car use, reducing local GHG emissions, as well as improving access via walking and cycling to encourage the uptake of active travel. This policy states that new development should incorporate natural heating and ventilation, wherever possible. This would be expected to ensure that living conditions are of a high quality. Overall, a minor positive impact on local air quality, accessibility and human health would be expected (SA Objectives 7, 9 and 12).
- D.5.1.6 The incorporation of green cover, minimisation of flood risk, use of greywater recycling and promotion of natural heating systems would be expected to help reduce the Plan area's contributions to the causes of climate change. By requiring adaptation and mitigation measures to ensure that development proposals are resilient in the face of climate change, this policy would be expected to have a major positive impact on climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4).

D.5.2 Policy SCC2 – Energy Infrastructure

Policy SCC2 – Energy Infrastructure

Decentralised energy networks and district heating provision

Policy SCC2 – Energy Infrastructure

1. Any development including ten homes or more, or non-residential floorspace of 1,000 sq m or more must include opportunities for decentralised energy provision within the site, unless it can be demonstrated that the development is not suitable, feasible or viable for district heat or decentralised energy networks.
2. Where there is existing decentralised energy provision available close to the site, the development will be expected to link into it, or should be designed to accommodate a subsequent connection³¹ if a source has not yet become operational.
3. Where developers can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Council that a link to an existing or committed decentralised energy source nearby is not viable, the local authority will support the provision of alternative onsite carbon elimination measures that can be incorporated into the scheme (Policy SCC6).
4. Proposals intended to deliver decentralised networks and related infrastructure will need to prevent or minimise any adverse impacts on the historic environment by ensuring that they protect the significance of heritage assets, including their setting.

Onsite energy provision

5. Developers should engage with relevant energy companies and bodies at an early stage in the development process to establish the likely future energy and infrastructure requirements arising from large-scale development proposals including 100 homes or more, or non-residential floorspace of 10,000 sq m or more. Proposals for addressing energy provision on such sites should be developed and agreed between the local planning authority and developer(s) to establish the lowest lifetime carbon energy provision.
6. Information to support the preferred solution(s) should identify and address:
 - a. current and future major sources of demand for heat (e.g. sites such as industrial / manufacturing sites, universities, large-scale sporting or leisure development, hospitals and social housing);
 - b. demands for heat from existing buildings that can be connected to future phases of a heat network;
 - c. major heat supply plant;
 - d. possible opportunities to utilise energy from waste or waste heat from industrial processes;
 - e. opportunities for heat networks;
 - f. opportunities for private wire electricity supply;
 - g. possible land for energy centres and / or energy storage;
 - h. possible heating and cooling network routes;
 - i. infrastructure and land requirements for electricity and gas supplies;
 - j. feasibility of built-in renewable energy generation (Policy SCC6); and
 - k. implementation options for delivering feasible projects, considering issues of procurement, funding and risk, and the role of the public sector.

Heating / hot water systems

³¹ Where a decentralised energy source is extant or will become operational during the construction of the development, and a proposed linkage has been agreed, suitable means of access / connection should be provided along roads / footpaths as a minimum form of infrastructure.

Policy SCC2 – Energy Infrastructure

7. Heat sources for a district heating system should be chosen to minimise likely emissions and to make best use of any local decentralised networks, in preference to other solutions.
8. Where a district heating system is provided, development proposals must provide evidence to show that NOx emissions related to energy generation will be equivalent to or lower than those of an ultra-low NOx³² gas boiler.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCC2	0	0	0	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

D.5.2.1 Policy SCC2 aims to encourage the use of decentralised energy sources within development proposals and, where appropriate, the use of communal heating systems to reduce GHG emissions. More efficient energy infrastructure will lead to a decrease in the amount of energy needed, and consequently, a decrease in GHG emissions released through the generation of energy. Policy SCC2 would therefore be likely to have a minor positive impact in relation to climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4). By identifying and improving heating and cooling networks and considering future requirements, this policy could also potentially result in a minor positive impact on climate change adaptation (SA Objective 5).

D.5.2.2 In addition, through improved energy efficiency, this policy would be likely to result in health benefits. This is due to a reduction in GHG emissions, which can cause poor air quality and impact human health, primarily due to particulate matter pollution. Therefore, this policy would have a minor positive impact in regard to pollution and human health (SA Objectives 7 and 12).

D.5.3 Policy SCC3 – Managing Heat Risk

Policy SCC3 – Managing Heat Risk

1. Development proposals³³ should minimise both internal heat gain and the impacts of urban heat islands³⁴ by using appropriate design, layout, orientation and materials.
2. Opportunities to benefit from the proximity of existing heat sinks such as canals and other bodies of water should be explored and incorporated into proposals where available.
3. Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate how their potential for overheating and reliance on artificial cooling systems will be reduced, in accordance with the following cooling hierarchy:

³² Ultra-low NOx boiler Standard specified in the Black Country Air Quality Supplementary Planning Document.

³³ Excluding domestic extensions.

³⁴ Caused by extensive built-up areas absorbing and retaining heat.

Policy SCC3 – Managing Heat Risk

- a. minimise internal heat generation through energy-efficient design;
- b. reduce the amount of heat entering a building through orientation, shading, albedo³⁵, fenestration, insulation and the provision of green roofs and walls (Policies SDS4 and SDM1);
- c. manage heat within a building through exposed internal thermal mass³⁶ and high ceilings;
- d. provide passive ventilation;
- e. provide mechanical ventilation;
- f. provide active cooling systems³⁷.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCC3	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.5.3.1 Efficient design and building of development proposals can help to reduce the risk of heat gain and the urban heat island effect (UHI). UHI refers to an urban area which is significantly warmer than the surrounding rural areas, caused primarily by human activity. This could potentially be an issue within Sandwell due to the predominantly urban area, tall buildings and large population, coupled with the implications of climate change and more frequent heatwaves. The policy states that "*energy-efficient design*", "*passive ventilation*" and "*active cooling systems*" will be required within developments. This would be expected to help reduce heat gain and the UHI effect, reduce the amount of energy needed to cool environments and reduce heat lost to the environment. This policy would therefore be likely to have minor positive impacts in relation to climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation and pollution (SA Objectives 4, 5 and 7).

D.5.3.2 Furthermore, Policy SCC3 encourages "*provision of green roofs and walls*" which could potentially help to support wildlife networks and opportunities for habitat creation amongst the urban areas. Therefore, this policy could result in a minor positive impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 3).

³⁵ The reflectivity of a surface. A high albedo surface reflects the sun's heat back into the atmosphere; low albedo surfaces absorb it. Pale-coloured surfaces have a high albedo and can help to minimise heat gain.

³⁶ 'Thermal mass' is a material's capacity to absorb, store and release heat.

³⁷ Systems using energy to provide cooling. They circulate a coolant (gas, fluid) to transfer heat from one place to another.

D.5.4 Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

1. Sandwell Council will seek to minimise the probability and consequences of flooding from all sources by adopting a strong risk-based approach to site allocations and the granting of planning permission, in line with the National Planning Policy Framework.
2. The sequential test³⁸ will:
 - a. be applied to all developments to ensure that development takes place in areas with the lowest flood risk, in line with NPPF requirements;
 - b. take account of the most up-to-date information available on river flooding and all other sources of flooding, making use of the information provided in the **2020 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) updated in 2021** and any future updates; and
 - c. consider the impact of climate change over the lifetime of that development.
3. Developers should apply the Sequential Test to all development sites, unless the proposal is for:
 - a. a strategic allocation and the test has already been carried out by the LPA; or
 - b. a change of use (except to a more vulnerable use); or
 - c. a minor development (householder development, small non-residential extensions with a footprint of less than 250m²); or
 - d. a development in Flood Zone 1, unless there are other flooding issues in the area of the development (i.e. surface water, ground water, sewer flooding). The SFRA can be used to identify where there are flooding issues from sources others than rivers.
4. Developers should provide evidence to the Council that they have considered all reasonably available alternative sites that are at a lower risk of flooding prior to determining the suitability of the chosen site for the proposed development type, in relation to all sources of flood risk on it.
5. For all developments the vulnerability of the development type to flooding should be considered with regard to the most up-to-date flood zone information in accordance with the NPPF, as set out below:
 - a. Flood Zone 3
 - i. Where the site is in Flood Zone 3b (Functional Floodplain), all development other than essential infrastructure (subject to the Exception Test) will be refused (including extensions and intensification of use and changes of use) and opportunities to relocate development out of the floodplain should be sought;
 - ii. Where the site is in Flood Zone 3a (High Probability), new homes can only be permitted subject to the Exception Test.
 - b. Flood Zone 2
 - i. Where the site is in Flood Zone 2 (Medium Probability), most development can be permitted, subject to a site-specific flood risk assessment;
 - ii. Highly vulnerable developments, such as caravans, mobile homes and park homes with permanent residential use can be permitted, subject to the Exception Test;
 - c. Flood Zone 1

³⁸ NPPF (2023), paragraph 162

Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

- i. Where the site is in Flood Zone 1 (Low Probability), the information in the 2020 SFRA should be used to assess if a development is at risk from other sources of flooding and / or if there is an increased risk of flooding in the future due to climate change. If this site is shown to be at risk, a site-specific flood risk assessment should accompany a planning application.
6. To pass the Exception Test, developments will need to:
 - a. Demonstrate that wider sustainability benefits to the community outweigh flood risk. Matters such as biodiversity, green infrastructure, historic environment, climate change adaptation, flood risk, green energy, pollution, health and transport should be considered;
 - b. prove that the development will be safe from flooding for its lifetime, taking account of the vulnerability of its users;
 - c. prove that the development can be achieved without increasing flood risk elsewhere, and, where possible, will result in a reduced flood risk overall.
7. All new developments in the following locations should be accompanied by a flood risk assessment and surface water drainage strategy that sets out how the development will provide a betterment in flood risk terms i.e. help to reduce flood risk both on and off site:
 - a. where any part of the site is within Flood Zone 2 or Flood Zone 3;
 - b. where the site is greater than one hectare and is within Flood Zone 1;
 - c. where the site is a minerals or waste development;
 - d. where the site is within five metres of an ordinary watercourse;
 - e. where the site is within 20m of a known flooding hotspot;
 - f. where the site is within the 1 in 100-year flood extent based on the Risk of Flooding from Surface Water Map.
8. Surface water drainage strategies are also required for all major developments. These should consider all sources of flooding to ensure that future development is resilient to flood risk and does not increase flood risk elsewhere.

Groundwater Source Protection Zones

9. No development will be permitted within a groundwater Source Protection Zone that would physically disturb an aquifer. A risk assessment demonstrating there would be no adverse effect on water resources will be required prior to the grant of planning permission.

Watercourses and flood mitigation

10. Developments should, where possible naturalise urban watercourses (by reinstating a natural, sinuous river channel and restoring the functional floodplain) and open up underground culverts, to provide biodiversity net gain as well as amenity improvements; reference should be made to the latest River Basin Management Plans³⁹.
11. Developers should set out how their mitigation designs will ensure that there is no net increase to fluvial flood risk downstream and where practicable how the development could help mitigate against downstream fluvial flood risk.

³⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/river-basin-management-plans-updated-2022>

Policy SCC4 – Flood Risk

12. Development should not take place over culverted watercourses and a suitable easement should be provided from the outside edge of the culvert.
13. There should be no built development within five metres of an ordinary watercourse and within ten metres of the top of the bank of a main river. This is to enable the preservation of the watercourse corridor, wildlife habitat, flood flow conveyance and future watercourse maintenance or improvement.
14. Where there is a known or suspected culverted watercourse either on or immediately downstream of a site, where the SFRA highlights there may be a risk of flooding, developers should:
 - a. confirm the location and presence of a watercourse (or otherwise) through ground-truthing strategic datasets and undertaking an assessment of the culvert extent and condition;
 - b. confirm by survey, modelling and mapping, the flood extents of the watercourse(s), as many of the flood outlines associated with such watercourses have been carried out at a broad scale and may not take into account specific local features, such as culverts, bridges and detailed topographical survey;
 - c. design the development to accommodate the floodplain of the watercourse and mitigate against flooding to properties on the site. This should include a consideration of residual flood risk e.g. if a culvert were to block downstream.
15. All developments should seek to provide wider betterment by demonstrating in site-specific flood risk assessments and surface water drainage strategies (where required) what measures can be put in place to contribute to a reduction in overall flood risk downstream. This may be by: -
 - a. provision of additional storage on site e.g. through oversized SuDS, natural flood management techniques, green infrastructure and green-blue corridors; and / or
 - b. by providing a partnership funding contribution towards wider community schemes (both within and beyond the Black Country, in shared catchments with Southern Staffordshire and Birmingham).
16. Consultation on site-specific requirements should be undertaken with the Council, the Environment Agency and Severn Trent Water (where this is a sewer flooding issue) at the earliest opportunity.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCC4	0	0	+	0	++	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

D.5.4.1 Policy SCC5 seeks to manage the risk of flooding throughout the Plan area and ensure that measures are in place within new developments to promote resilience to flooding.

D.5.4.2 The policy sets out criteria requiring development proposals to carry out a Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy. The Sequential Test will be applied to all development proposals to ensure that development takes place in areas with the lowest flood risk. This, and other requirements as set out in the policy, would be expected to

ensure that all future development proposals would not place new residents at risk of flooding or exacerbate flood risk in areas surrounding the development. The policy states that all development proposals should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to help reduce the risk of surface water flooding and seek to provide wider flood risk betterment. Overall, a major positive impact on climate change adaptation would be anticipated (SA Objective 5).

D.5.4.3 Flooding can pose a number of risks to human health and wellbeing, including physical and mental trauma, disease and disruption to power and water supplies⁴⁰. Providing new development which is flood resilient and results in flood risk betterment in surrounding areas would therefore be expected to have a minor positive impact on human health (SA Objective 12).

D.5.4.4 Surface water run-off can lead to flooding and a decrease in water quality. The incorporation of SuDS into developments would be expected to benefit water quality, biodiversity and amenity interest through the integration into the wider green and blue infrastructure networks and promoting natural management of flood water. Under the policy, developments should, where possible, naturalise urban watercourses and open up underground culverts *"to provide biodiversity net gain as well as amenity improvements"*. This would be likely to benefit biodiversity and provide opportunities for habitat connectivity and the filtration of pollutants. Therefore, Policy SCC5 would be likely to have a minor positive impact on biodiversity and pollution (SA Objectives 3 and 7).

D.5.5 Policy SCC5 – Sustainable drainage and surface water management

Policy SCC5 – Sustainable drainage and surface water management

1. All new developments in Sandwell should incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS); development proposals should provide details of adoption, ongoing maintenance and management of SuDS.
2. SuDS shall be designed in line with the Black Country Local Standards for SUDS. Preference will be given to systems that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure in the wider area.
3. For all major developments, surface water flows must be reduced back to equivalent greenfield rates. If greenfield runoff rates are not considered to be feasible for viability or other reasons, the developer must submit evidence demonstrating what the constraints are and how the development will accommodate runoff rates that are as close as possible to greenfield rates.
4. For all minor developments, a minimum reduction of 30% over pre-development runoff rates will be required. Under no circumstances will post-development runoff rates that are greater than pre-development runoff rates be permitted. Surface water run-off should be managed as close to its source as possible.
5. Surface water drainage strategies are required for all major developments, regardless of their size and the flood zone and catchment they are in to meet the requirements of the Lead Local Flood Authority.

⁴⁰ Public Health England (2014) Flooding and the public's health: looking beyond the short-term. Available at: <https://publichealthmatters.blog.gov.uk/2014/01/06/flooding-and-the-publics-health-looking-beyond-the-short-term/>
[Date accessed: 21/07/23]

Policy SCC5 – Sustainable drainage and surface water management

These should consider all sources of flooding to ensure that future development is resilient to flood risk and does not increase flood risk elsewhere and should look to provide wider betterment.

6. A hydrogeological risk assessment is required where infiltration SuDS is proposed for anything other than clean roof drainage in a Source Protection Zone 1⁴¹.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCC5	0	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.5.5.1 Policy SCC5 sets out guidelines for future development in Sandwell with respect to Sustainable Drainage and Surface Water Management.

D.5.5.2 The policy requires developments to incorporate SuDS designed in line with the **Black Country Local Standards for SuDS** which would be anticipated to help reduce the risk of surface water flooding. The policy further states that “*surface water drainage strategies are required for all major developments, regardless of their size and the flood zone and catchment they are in*”. This policy would be expected to have a minor positive impact on climate change adaptation (SA Objective 5).

D.5.5.3 The policy states that “*Preference will be given to systems that contribute to the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity and green infrastructure in the wider area*”. In line with PPG, SMBC should seek to ensure that opportunities are sought for SuDS to provide benefits to water quantity, water quality, biodiversity and amenity⁴². As such, there is potential for the policy to lead to a minor positive impact on landscape, biodiversity and pollution (SA Objectives 2, 3 and 7).

D.5.6 Policy SCC6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

Policy SCC6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

Renewable and Low Carbon Energy generation

1. Proposals involving the development of renewable or low carbon energy sources will be permitted where the proposal: -
 - a. accords with local and national guidance;
 - b. would not significantly harm the natural or built environment;

⁴¹ Source Protection Zones are designed to control activities close to water supplies intended for human consumption. These water sources include wells, boreholes and springs, all of which are used for public drinking. Zone 1, defined as the inner zone, is the most sensitive part of an area within a zone.

⁴² DLUHC and MHCLG (2022) Flood risk and coastal change: Sustainable drainage systems. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-and-coastal-change#para55> [Date accessed: 26/07/23]

Policy SCC6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

- c. maintains and safeguards the historic environment and heritage assets, including their setting; and
- d. will not have a significant adverse effect on the amenities of those living or working nearby⁴³.

Low carbon and renewable requirements for development

2. Small developments creating between one and nine homes or non-residential floorspace of less than 1,000 sqm gross (whether new build or conversion) must incorporate generation of energy from renewable or low carbon sources sufficient to off-set at least 10% of the estimated residual energy demand⁴⁴ of the development on completion.
3. Major developments creating ten or more homes or non-residential floorspace of 1,000 sqm gross or more (whether new build or conversion) must incorporate the generation of energy from renewable or low carbon sources sufficient to off-set at least 20% of the estimated residual energy demand of the development on completion.
4. A variety of renewable and low-carbon energy sources and generation methods should be assessed and costed, including on-site and off-site sources where appropriate and the use of district heat and / or decentralised energy networks where available or proposed. An energy assessment must be submitted with the planning application to demonstrate that these requirements have been met.
5. The potential for inland waterways to promote low carbon technologies is recognised; in appropriate locations adjacent to Sandwell’s canal network, proposals to heat and cool new properties using water source heat pumps will be welcomed and supported.
6. The renewable energy target will only be reduced if it can be demonstrated that achievement of the target would:
 - a. make the proposal unviable through submission of an independently assessed financial viability appraisal; or
 - b. would not be feasible due to practical constraints.

BREEAM Standards

7. All new build non-residential developments, student housing and care homes of 1,000 sqm gross or more should achieve the following standards of BREEAM New Construction certification, including full credits for category Wat 01 (water efficiency):

Size	Standard	Year
1,000-5,000 sqm gross:	BREEAM Very Good	up to 2029*
	BREEAM Excellent	2029-2039*
>5,000 sqm gross:	BREEAM Excellent	

* Year refers to date planning permission is granted

⁴³ E.g. by generating adverse visual, noise, odour, air pollution or other effects

⁴⁴ Residual energy demand means that the estimated energy demand for the operational development after allowance has been made for the full range of energy efficiency measures required under Building Regulations (at the time of construction).

Policy SCC6 – Renewable and Low Carbon Energy and BREEAM Standards

8. BREEAM requirements may be varied if it can be demonstrated that achievement of the standard would make the proposal unviable, through submission of an independently assessed financial viability appraisal.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCC6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

- D.5.6.1 The promotion of on-site renewable or low carbon technologies incorporated within new development in the borough will help to decrease reliance on energy that is generated from unsustainable sources, such as fossil fuels. A reduction in the use of fossil fuels would help to reduce the volume of GHGs that are emitted into the atmosphere. This in turn would reduce Sandwell’s contribution towards the causes of climate change. Policy SCC6 requires all non-residential development of 1,000 sqm gross or more to be in accordance with the BREEAM New Construction Technical Standards⁴⁵. The policy states that development proposals should in particular achieve full credits for category Wat 01 (water efficiency).
- D.5.6.2 This policy would be likely to have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation by helping to ensure development proposals are more energy efficient and seek opportunities to utilise renewable and low carbon energy sources (SA Objective 4).
- D.5.6.3 Although this policy would help to ensure that major development within the Plan area meets the carbon neutrality target and that 20% of energy used is from renewable sources, only a 10% renewable energy target is set for development between one and nine dwellings. This policy could potentially be further expanded to help to ensure future development within the borough aims to reach higher energy efficient targets from renewable and low carbon technologies.
- D.5.6.4 The promotion of alternative renewable and low carbon technologies would be likely to result in reduced emission of pollutants. This would be expected to have a minor positive impact on pollution (SA Objective 7).
- D.5.6.5 Furthermore, by ensuring that development proposals “*would not significantly harm the natural, historic or built environment or have a significant adverse effect on the amenity of those living or working nearby*” the policy would be expected to reduce the potential for adverse impacts on cultural heritage, landscape, biodiversity and human health.

⁴⁵ BREEAM (2018) New Construction Technical Standards. Available at: <https://www.breeam.com/discover/technical-standards/newconstruction/> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

Therefore, negligible impacts would be likely against these objectives (SA Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 12).

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D.6 Health and Wellbeing in Sandwell

D.6.1 Policy SHW1 – Health Impact Assessments

Policy SHW1 – Health Impact Assessments

1. Sandwell Council will require the following forms of development to provide an assessment of its potential impacts on the health and wellbeing of adjacent communities, residents and businesses, and to mitigate any potential negative impacts, maximise potential positive impacts and help reduce health inequalities;
 - a. housing developments of over 10 dwellings;
 - b. non-residential developments of 1,000m² or more floorspace.
 - c. major new waste handling / processing development;
 - d. any development that would have an adverse impact on locations with currently poor air quality;
 - e. any other development that the Council considers has the potential to impact on public health.Such development will only be permitted where it is demonstrated that it will not, in isolation or in conjunction with other planned, committed or completed development, contribute to a negative impact on the health of the borough's population.
2. To ensure that new developments have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of new and existing residents the Council will require an HIA of development proposals to a level of detail appropriate to its scale and nature;
 - a. For developments of 100 or more dwellings, or non-residential development that extends to 5,000m² or more in area, a full Health Impact Assessment will be required;
 - b. For developments of between 20 to 100 dwellings or non-residential development that extends from 1,000 - 5,000m² in area, the Health Impact Assessment will take the form of an extended screening or rapid Health Impact Assessment;
 - c. For developments of 10 – 19 dwellings, or other developments that the Council considers may have a potential impact on public health, either a Design and Access Statement, Planning Statement or an extended screening or rapid Health Impact Assessment should be provided.
3. Sandwell Council will support vibrant centres and local facilities, which offer services and retail outlets that promote choice, and which enable and encourage healthy choices. This will include managing the location, concentration of and operation (including opening hours) of businesses that contain uses running contrary to these aims, including:
 - a. hot food takeaways (sui generis), or hybrid uses incorporating such uses (Policy SDM6)
 - b. betting shops and amusement arcades (Policy SDM8);
 - c. shisha cafes / lounges, where the balance of uses is such that the use of the premises is predominantly for shisha smoking.
4. Where the development of a new shop is acceptable in principle under other policies, planning permission will only be granted where a condition can be imposed that prevents the subsequent establishment of a stand-alone off-licence without the need to apply for planning permission where there is evidence of existing alcohol drinking establishments contributing to existing negative health and wellbeing impacts and patterns of anti-social behaviour.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHW1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0

D.6.1.1 Policy SHW1 sets out the requirement for development proposals within the borough to undertake a Health Impact Assessment (HIA), dependent on the scale and nature of the proposal. This would help to ensure that opportunities for promoting healthy lifestyles are maximised. This would be likely to result in benefits such as creating engaging public spaces that facilitate social interaction and encourage walking and cycling. Additionally, the policy sets out requirements to support healthy food choices and vibrant local centres. Overall, the policy would be expected to have a major positive impact on the health and wellbeing of local residents (SA Objective 12).

D.6.1.2 By requiring some developments to submit an HIA, this policy would help to ensure development proposals do not have direct adverse impacts on: residents’ physical or mental health; social, economic and environmental living conditions; demand for or access to health and social care services; or an individual’s ability to improve their own health and wellbeing. Therefore, this policy would also be likely to have minor positive impact in relation to equality (SA Objective 11).

D.6.1.3 In addition, Policy SHW1 could potentially have a minor positive impact on transport and accessibility within the Plan area by promoting walking and cycling over the use of private vehicles, and as such, encouraging people to engage in higher levels of daily physical activity (SA Objective 9). This could also result in consequent benefits in terms of reducing the emission of road transport-associated pollutants which can be harmful to health, potentially leading to minor positive impacts regarding climate change mitigation and pollution (SA Objectives 4 and 7).

D.6.2 Policy SHW2 – Healthcare Infrastructure

Policy SHW2 – Healthcare Infrastructure

1. New healthcare facilities should be:
 - a. well-designed and complement and enhance neighbourhood services and amenities;
 - b. well-served by public transport infrastructure, walking and cycling facilities and directed to a centre appropriate in role and scale to the proposed development, and its intended catchment area, in accordance with Policies SCE3 and SCE4. Proposals located outside centres must be justified in terms of relevant policies such as Policy SCE6, where applicable;
 - c. wherever possible, located to address accessibility gaps in terms of the standards set out in Policy SHO3 particularly where a significant amount of new housing is proposed;
 - d. where possible, co-located with a mix of compatible community services on a single site.

Policy SHW2 – Healthcare Infrastructure

2. Existing primary and secondary healthcare infrastructure and services will be protected, unless it has been demonstrated that the loss or partial loss of a facility or site arises from a wider public service transformation plan that requires investment in modern, fit for purpose infrastructure and facilities. New or improved healthcare facilities and services will be provided in accordance with requirements agreed between Sandwell Council and local health organisations.
3. Proposals for major residential developments of ten units or more must be assessed against the capacity of existing healthcare facilities and / or services as set out in local development documents. Where the demand generated by the residents of the new development would have unacceptable impacts upon the capacity of these facilities, developers will be required to contribute to the provision or improvement of such services, in line with the requirements and calculation methods set out in local development documents.
4. Where it is not possible to address such provision through planning conditions, a planning agreement or planning obligation may be required.
5. In the first instance, infrastructure contributions will be sought to deal with relevant issues on the site or in its immediate vicinity. Where this is not possible, however, any contribution will be used to support offsite provision of healthcare infrastructure and / or related services.
6. The effects of the obligations on the financial viability of development may be a relevant consideration.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHW2	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0

D.6.2.1 Policy SHW2 seeks to ensure that all new healthcare facilities are well designed and accessible, with a particular focus on ensuring facilities are accessible by public transport. The policy also aims to protect existing healthcare facilities, and details how larger residential developments of ten or more homes should be assessed against the capacity of surrounding facilities and new facilities should be *"located to address accessibility gaps"*. These factors would be expected to help ensure all new residents have good access to healthcare facilities, and as such, a major positive on health would be expected (SA Objective 12).

D.6.2.2 By identifying and addressing accessibility gaps, this policy would also be expected to promote equal access to healthcare and could potentially help to reduce health inequalities; therefore, a minor positive impact on equality would be expected (SA Objective 11).

D.6.2.3 This policy seeks to ensure that all healthcare developments are located in areas with good public transport access for residents, and that where possible, healthcare facilities are co-located alongside other community services to serve nearby residential development. This policy could potentially reduce the need to travel and reduce the volume of visitors arriving

at facilities via private car, with subsequent benefits in terms of reducing local congestion and transport-associated emissions. Therefore, due to the focus on sustainable transport and accessibility, this policy could potentially have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation, pollution and transport (SA Objectives 4, 7 and 9).

D.6.3 Policy SHW3 – Air Quality

Policy SHW3 – Air Quality

Strategic Approach

1. The SLP will support a diverse approach to addressing the issue of poor air quality across the borough, including:
 - a. requiring development and other land use proposals to promote the integration of cycling, walking, public transport and electric charging points as part of their transport provision;
 - b. promoting and supporting (including through continued joint working with adjacent Black Country authorities and others) a modal shift from private motorised vehicles to the use of clean, fast and accessible public transport alternatives such as rail, the Metro and bus transport networks, cycling and walking;
 - c. including a range of measures relating to energy generation at developments as set out in the hierarchy identified in Policy SCC2 Energy Infrastructure, such as the installation of renewables-based systems, or the use of ultra-low emission NOx boilers;
 - d. requiring the provision and protection of green open spaces and significant additional tree cover (Policies SDS7 and SNE3);
 - e. ensuring the sustainable location of new residential and employment development to minimise commute times; and
 - f. as part of an integrated zero-emission public transport system, promoting and requiring the use of sustainable technologies, zero-emission vehicles, design and materials and providing new or extended bus services to meet demand when development of a strategic nature is planned and constructed.
2. New development must be at least air quality neutral following any required mitigation. Planning permission for new development or changes of use will be refused where data assessment indicates that development will:
 - a. lead to deterioration of existing poor air quality;
 - b. create any new areas that exceed air quality objectives; or
 - c. delay compliance being achieved in areas that are currently in exceedance of legal limits unless sufficient mitigation can be achieved.

Improving air quality

3. Residential or other sensitive development such as schools, hospitals / health care and care facilities should be sited in areas where air quality already meets national objectives, or where compliance with those objectives can be achieved with suitable mitigation proposed as part of the development proposal and verified as being achieved before occupation of the development.
4. Developments that will have a moderate air quality impact, and which can be dealt with through standard mitigation measures, will not require an air quality assessment.

Policy SHW3 – Air Quality

5. Whenever development is proposed in locations where air quality does not or will not meet national objectives, or where significant air quality impacts are likely to be generated onsite or elsewhere by the development itself or its subsequent use / activities, an appropriate Air Quality Assessment will be required to demonstrate that the proposed development will improve air quality to meet relevant objectives once the development is completed and occupied / operational:
 - a. the assessment must take into consideration the potential cumulative impact on air quality of all extant planning permissions in the locality, for both large / strategic and small schemes;
 - b. the impact of point source emissions⁴⁶ of pollutants to air on the scheme must also be addressed;
 - c. the assessment must take into consideration the types of pollutant emissions likely to be generated by the development and its future use / associated activities that will have an impact on human health;
 - d. where assessments show that a development is likely to result in exposure to pollutant concentrations that exceed national objectives, a mitigation plan will be required to determine that the development will improve air quality, in order that it will meet air quality objectives once it is complete and occupied / operational;
 - e. adequate and satisfactory mitigation measures that are capable of implementation, including the planting of additional and replacement trees in appropriate locations, must be identified, submitted as part of an application, and made subject to appropriate conditions before planning permission is granted.
6. Developments should not include materials or be positioned or ventilated in a way that would result in poor indoor air quality. Guidance will be provided to detail how such issues should be addressed.

Emissions from Construction Sites

7. For all types of development, the control of emissions from construction sites will be agreed with the local authority.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHW3	0	0	+	+	0	0	++	0	+	0	0	+	+	0

D.6.3.1 Air pollution is a significant concern internationally and locally. Sandwell is wholly designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) alongside the surrounding authorities within the Black Country. Without careful planning, introducing new development within an AQMA would make it more difficult to meet national air quality objectives within the AQMA, whilst also exposing new residents to existing poor air quality.

⁴⁶ Pollution that originates from one place

- D.6.3.2 Policy SHW3 requires development proposals to promote the use of pedestrian and cycle routes, access to rail, the Metro and bus transport networks, plus provide electric car charging points. These measures would be expected to support a modal shift to the use of public transport and more sustainable travel options, rather than private vehicles. In terms of air quality, electric vehicles are an effective alternative to petrol or diesel-powered vehicles as they emit fewer, or zero, air pollutants. By discouraging the use of the private car, this policy would be expected to help reduce transport-associated emissions and have a positive impact on local air quality.
- D.6.3.3 Where a development proposal is situated in a location that does not currently meet national objectives, the policy requires an appropriate Air Quality Assessment (AQA) to be carried out to demonstrate that the proposed development will meet air quality objectives once the development is completed. Overall, Policy SHW3 would be expected to have a major positive impact on air pollution (SA Objective 7).
- D.6.3.4 The requirements set out in Policy SHW3 could potentially help to minimise the Plan area's contributions to climate change by offering alternative, lower emission and more sustainable means of transport. A minor positive impact would therefore also be expected for climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4).
- D.6.3.5 As well as contributing towards the improvement of local air quality, encouraging the provision of sustainable transport methods and electric car charging points would be expected to have a minor positive impact on transport and accessibility (SA Objective 9).
- D.6.3.6 Policy SHW3 aims to encourage active travel by integrating pedestrian and cycle routes into development proposals. In addition, the policy aims to increase the provision of green and open spaces across the borough. This would be likely to facilitate healthy lifestyles, through promoting outdoor exercise and benefiting mental wellbeing of residents. Overall, this policy would be likely to have a minor positive impact in regard to human health (SA Objective 12).
- D.6.3.7 Some habitats are sensitive to air pollution in the form of atmospheric nitrogen deposition. This policy would help to prevent deterioration of air quality and thereby help to protect sensitive habitats from elevated rates of atmospheric nitrogen deposition. Therefore, this policy could potentially have a minor positive impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 3).
- D.6.3.8 In addition, this policy requires development proposals to be situated in a sustainable location to minimise commuter distance and time. This would be likely to situate residents in close proximity to a range of job opportunities, and therefore, have a minor positive impact on the local economy (SA Objective 13).

D.6.4 Policy SHW4 – Open Space and Recreation

Policy SHW4 – Open Space and Recreation

- 1. All new housing sites providing over ten units will be expected to contribute towards the provision of unrestricted open space, in line with the standards set out in Appendix K. Where such provision on-site would make a site unviable or where there is no physical capacity to**

Policy SHW4 – Open Space and Recreation

include it, the Council will in exceptional circumstances accept a commuted sum for nearby off-site provision in lieu or for the improvement of existing facilities within walking distance.

- 2. On new housing sites of 2ha or over, Sandwell Council will seek the provision of new unrestricted open space at a minimum ratio of 3.63 hectares of space per 1,000 population. This open space will be provided on site.**
3. The Council will seek to ensure that at least one hectare of unrestricted open space is provided within walking distance (0.4 km) of all the Borough's residents and proposals that help it meet this aim will be welcomed.
4. Sandwell Council will support proposals⁴⁷ that:
 - a. deliver against up-to-date local open space and recreation standards for the borough, in terms of quantity, quality and access;
 - b. address the ecological and environmental priorities set out in the Black Country Nature Recovery Network Strategy;
 - c. make more efficient use of open spaces in the urban area by:
 - i. creating more multifunctional open spaces;
 - ii. protecting the existing open space network for recreation and biodiversity and taking opportunities to strengthen and expand it
 - iii. significantly expanding community use of open space and recreation facilities provided at places of education;
 - iv. making creative use of land exchanges and disposing of surplus assets to generate resources for investment;
 - v. increasing access to open space and recreation facilities for all, including people with disabilities and other target groups with limited access at present; and
 - vi. where a place, site or facility has a cross-boundary catchment, identifying the most appropriate location to maximise community access and use of new facilities.
5. Aspects of development that would increase the overall value of the open space and recreation network in Sandwell will be supported, especially in areas of proven deficiency against adopted quantity, quality and accessibility standards.
6. Proposals should maintain and / or enhance the quantity, quality and accessibility of open space and address any shortfalls in provision, when measured against adopted local standards. Where practicable, new open space should be provided on-site and relate well to other green infrastructure features.
7. Development that would result in the loss of land allocated as open space and used for recreation in Sandwell will be refused unless it can be demonstrated that
 - a. there is a robust and overriding matter of public interest at stake; and
 - b. a sufficient quantity of alternative open space can be provided in the vicinity, of the same or higher quality than what was lost; or
 - c. if open space of sufficient quantity and quality cannot be delivered in the immediate vicinity, a financial contribution in lieu of on-site provision will be made available and compensatory gains

⁴⁷ involving both current activities and facilities and where there are plans for new open spaces and recreation sites / uses

Policy SHW4 – Open Space and Recreation

in quality / accessibility secured on other open spaces or facilities that are of value to the local area.

8. Development proposals should focus on supporting / delivering the following functions of open space in Sandwell:
- a. improving the image and environmental quality of the borough;
 - b. protecting and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and their settings;
 - c. enhancing visual amenity;
 - d. providing buffer zones between incompatible uses;
 - e. mitigating the effects of climate change, through flood risk betterment, installing SuDS, reducing potential urban heat island effects and providing opportunities for additional landscaping and tree planting;
 - f. preserving and enhancing environmental and habitat diversity and preventing the fragmentation of ecological networks;
 - g. extending, increasing access to and enhancing the ecological value of multifunctional green spaces and networks;
 - h. supporting outdoor sport and physical activity, including through footpath and cycle network infrastructure, and providing areas for informal recreation and children’s play;
 - i. providing opportunities for people to grow their own food on allotments and encouraging urban horticulture.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHW4	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	++	0	0

D.6.4.1 Policy SHW4 seeks to ensure that open space and recreation facilities throughout the Plan area will be protected, managed and enhanced, in order to provide safe and accessible community facilities for existing and future residents. Open space has multiple benefits within an area. This includes physical and mental health benefits associated with residents’ access to a diverse range of natural habitats, alongside the facilitation of outdoor recreation.

D.6.4.2 Access to sports, recreation and leisure facilities is essential for residents to be able to pursue healthy and active lifestyles. This policy supports the development of new sports, recreation and leisure facilities within the Plan area. This policy would be expected to improve current facilities, contribute to the development of new facilities and ensure residents have good access to outdoor space. Therefore, this policy would be expected to have a major positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents (SA Objective 12). This policy also encourages the development of footpath and cycle networks, with benefits to local accessibility (SA Objective 9).

- D.6.4.3 Furthermore, through *“increasing access to open space and recreation facilities for all, including people with disabilities and other target groups with limited access at present”* this policy would be expected to help fill gaps in accessibility for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, providing more equitable access to these important facilities. Therefore, a minor positive impact on equality would be expected (SA Objective 11).
- D.6.4.4 Open space can be beneficial to the local biodiversity network by providing an increased number of natural habitats and providing the opportunity to create green links within urban areas. Policy SHW4 sets out particular support for proposals which *“address the ecological and environmental priorities set out in the Black Country Nature Recovery Network Strategy”*. This could also benefit the local landscape by creating attractive open spaces within the area. This policy aims to improve visual amenity and contribute towards the preservation and enhancement of the natural and built environment. As a result, it would be expected that Policy SHW4 would have a minor positive impact on the local landscape and biodiversity (SA Objectives 2 and 3).
- D.6.4.5 Potential new or enhanced open spaces, and associated GI, would be expected to contribute towards improved air quality due to the increased uptake of carbon dioxide. Due to this enhanced carbon storage capacity, this policy could potentially contribute towards the mitigation anthropogenic climate change. GI could also potentially provide natural filtration to reduce residents’ exposure to air pollution, for example from emissions associated with road transport. Furthermore, this policy encourages active travel, which would be expected to reduce the reliance on private car use. A minor positive impact on climate change mitigation and pollution would therefore be expected (SA Objectives 4 and 7). Enhanced open space and GI could also potentially help to reduce water runoff rates, and as such, have a minor positive impact by reducing the risk of flooding (SA Objective 5).

D.6.5 Policy SHW5 – Playing Fields and Sports Facilities

Policy SHW5 – Playing Fields and Sports Facilities

1. Existing playing fields and built sports facilities must be retained unless:
 - a. an assessment has been undertaken that has clearly shown the playing fields or built sports facilities to be surplus to requirements (for existing or alternative sports provision) at the local and sub-regional level; or
 - b. the loss resulting from the proposed development would be replaced by equivalent or better provision in terms of quantity and quality in a suitable and accessible location; or
 - c. the development is for alternative sports provision, the benefits of which clearly outweigh the loss of the current or former use; or
 - d. The proposed development affects only land incapable of forming part of a playing pitch and would not prejudice the use of any playing pitch or remaining areas of playing field on the site.
2. New build sports facilities should be:
 - a. in accordance with local needs identified in the current Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy, to ensure provision of appropriate facilities in a suitable location to meet that need;
 - b. well-designed, including through the provision of high quality landscaping and public realm enhancements, and well-related to neighbourhood services and amenities; and

Policy SHW5 – Playing Fields and Sports Facilities

- c. well-linked to public transport infrastructure and footpath and cycleway networks and directed to a centre appropriate in role and scale to the proposed development and its intended catchment area. Proposals located outside centres must be justified in terms of relevant national policy.
3. Where assessments demonstrate that a housing development would increase the need for playing pitches or built sports facilities to a level where significant new or improved facilities are required to meet demand, proportionate planning obligations or Community Infrastructure Levy will be used to acquire or create sufficient provision, where it is financially viable and appropriate to do so, and long-term management arrangements can be secured and funded.
4. Where land is provided for a new built sports facility as part of a housing development, the financial contribution made by that development towards built sports facilities will be reduced accordingly.
5. The wider community use of school playing fields, other school facilities, such as sports halls, and private facilities will be encouraged, especially in areas where public provision is deficient.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHW5	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0

D.6.5.1 Policy SHW5 seeks to ensure that playing fields and sports facilities throughout the Plan area will be protected, managed, and enhanced, in order to provide safe and accessible community facilities for existing and future residents.

D.6.5.2 Providing good access to sports facilities would allow residents to pursue active and healthy lifestyles. The policy states that “*facilities will be encouraged, especially in areas where public provision is deficient*”, and would ensure that new facilities will be “*well linked to public transport infrastructure and footpath and cycleway networks*” which can be expected to encourage active modes of transport. Therefore, a minor positive impact on active travel, equal access to leisure and sport facilities and the health of residents would be expected (SA Objectives 9, 11, and 12).

D.6.5.3 The policy states that new facilities will be well-designed and will provide “*high-quality landscaping and public realm enhancements*”. A minor positive impact on landscape could therefore be achieved (SA Objective 2).

D.6.6 Policy SHW6 – Allotments

Policy SHW6 – Allotments

1. The provision and promotion of allotments and community gardens in Sandwell will be supported by the Council. This will be achieved by: -

Policy SHW6 – Allotments

- a. retaining existing allotments and resisting their loss unless in accordance with allocations identified in this plan;
 - b. working with partners and local communities to identify sites with potential for local food growing;
 - c. supporting projects that promote community gardening, farming and orchards.
2. If allotments are to be redeveloped, compensatory measures will be required for the loss, either through provision of new allotments on an open space of equivalent value nearby, or through a commensurate contribution to the enhancement of existing allotment provision in the vicinity.
 3. Proposals for community agriculture will be supported where appropriate.
 4. Development proposals that are located next to, or which may have an impact on, existing allotments will be expected to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts on them by employing the agent of change principle.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHW6	0	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0

- D.6.6.1 Policy SHW6 aims to protect and support the allotments and community gardens within the borough.
- D.6.6.2 The policy will help to maintain and strengthen local distinctiveness and sense of place by “*retaining existing allotments*” and “*supporting projects that promote community gardening, farming and orchards*”. Allotments could contribute towards the local character, leading to a minor positive impact on landscape (SA Objective 2).
- D.6.6.3 Allotment provision would assist in providing habitats for local wildlife amongst the urban areas. Under the policy, allotments would be positively managed and therefore a minor positive impact on local biodiversity would be expected (SA Objective 3).
- D.6.6.4 Allotments provide health benefits to residents, being an open space equivalent that can provide a peaceful, aesthetically pleasing environment. Additionally, the allotments can provide shared space for community activities that can improve social cohesion. The policy would therefore be likely to have a minor positive impact on equality and health (SA Objectives 11 and 12).

D.7 Sandwell’s Housing

D.7.1 Policy SHO1 – Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth

Policy SHO1 – Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth

1. Sufficient land will be provided to deliver at least 10,686 net new homes over the period 2023-2041.
2. The key sources of housing land supply are summarised in Table 5, which also sets out the minimum housing target for each of the Plan phases: 2023- 30, 2030-35 and 2035-41 and are also illustrated in the Housing Spatial Diagram. Housing allocations are set out in Appendix B.

Table 5 – Housing Land Supply – sources

Source of Supply	Type of Supply	2022-2027	2027-2032	2032-2037	2037-2041	Total
	Sites Under Construction	1098	40	0	0	1138
Current Supply as of April 2022	Sites with Planning Permission or Prior Approval ▲	1636	509	92	190	2427
	Sites with Other Commitments (as set out in 2022 SHLAA) ◆	18	229	49	0	295
	Gypsy and Traveller Pitches	10	0	0	0	10
Housing Allocations	Occupied Employment Land †	0	1088	361	196	1645
	Other	0	311	571	483	1365
Total Identified Sites		2762	2177	1073	869	6881
Total Windfall Allowance	Small sites (<10 homes / 0.25ha)	0	671	665	532	1868
Total Density Uplift		0	50	12	0	62
Additional Site Capacity in Regeneration Areas (RA)	Dudley Port and Tipton RA	0	52	0	0	52
	Smethwick RA	0	135	124	0	259
	Wednesbury	0	0	0	0	0
	West Bromwich and Carters Green RA	0	482	482	382	1345
Total capacity in Regeneration Areas		0	669	606	382	1656

3. Most of the requirement will be met through sites with existing planning permission and sites allocated for housing by this Plan. Additional housing supply will also be secured on windfall sites throughout the urban area. The estimated net effect of housing renewal up to 2041 will be reviewed annually and used in the calculation of housing land supply.

Policy SHO1 – Delivering Sustainable Housing Growth

4. The development of sites for housing should demonstrate a comprehensive approach, making best use of available land and infrastructure and not prejudicing neighbouring uses. Incremental development of an allocated site will only be allowed where it would not prejudice the achievement of high-quality design across the wider site. Masterplans and other planning documents⁴⁸ will be produced, where appropriate, to provide detailed guidance on the development of allocations.
5. Ancillary uses appropriate for residential areas, such as health facilities, community facilities and local shops, may be acceptable where there is a gap in service provision and where they can be integrated successfully into the residential environment. Other uses will not be acceptable on these sites.
6. A minimum of 10% biodiversity net gain is required for each site in accordance with Policy SNE2.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO1	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-

D.7.1.1 Policy SHO1 would be expected to deliver a high quantum of residential development of 10,686 net new homes over the plan period in Sandwell. However, this policy would not be expected to fully meet the identified housing needs of the SMBC. Overall, a minor positive impact on housing provision would be expected (SA Objective 10).

D.7.1.2 Policy SHO1 could potentially have a minor positive impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 3) in the long term, as the minimum 10% BNG requirement will help to ensure that the number and diversity of species in the area increases. This would need careful management and monitoring to ensure that BNG is successful.

D.7.1.3 An uncertain impact has been identified on the remaining SA objectives as the extent of both positive and negative impacts on these objectives are dependent on the development location, scale of development and contextual factors relating to site specific characteristics. These are assessed in the SA process through the assessment of reasonable alternatives, as documented in this SA report and supporting appendices (see **Appendix C**).

D.7.2 Policy SHO2 – Windfall developments

Policy SHO2 – Windfall developments

1. Proposals for residential development on sites not specifically allocated for residential use (windfall developments) will be permitted where the site is previously developed land and in accordance with other local plan policies.

⁴⁸ E.g. design codes, development frameworks and supplementary plans

Policy SHO2 – Windfall developments

2. Proposals for residential development on unallocated greenfield land will only be considered where:
 - a. the site is not protected as community open space; or
 - b. the site is Council-owned land that is deemed surplus to requirements; or
 - c. the development of the site will bring an under-used piece of land back into beneficial use and will not harm the environmental, ecological or historic value of the site and the wider area, in accordance with other relevant policies in the SLP.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO2	0	0	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-

D.7.2.1 Policy SHO2 prevents the use of unallocated greenfield land for development except for under specific circumstances. Therefore, a minor positive impact on the conservation of natural resources would be expected (SA Objective 6).

D.7.2.2 The support for residential development on windfall sites could help to increase housing provision, contributing towards the identified housing need, and resulting in a minor positive impact on SA Objective 10.

D.7.2.3 The policy states that windfall sites will be considered where they “*will not harm environmental, ecological or historic value of the site and the wider area*”. Through reducing the potential for adverse effects, a negligible impact on cultural heritage, landscape, and biodiversity would be likely (SA Objectives 1, 2, and 3).

D.7.2.4 The impact of Policy SHO2 on all the other SA objectives is uncertain. Without understanding the number, scale and nature of potential windfall developments, it is difficult to identify the overall impacts on relevant objectives.

D.7.3 Policy SHO3 – Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

Policy SHO3 – Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

1. The density and type of new housing provided on any housing site should be informed by:
 - a. The need for a range of types and sizes of accommodation to meet identified local needs;
 - b. The level of accessibility by sustainable transport to residential services, including any improvements to be secured through development, as set out in Table 6;
 - c. The need to achieve high-quality design and minimise amenity impacts, considering the characteristics and mix of uses in the area where the proposal is located
2. The council will aim to provide an overall mix of house types over the plan period, tailored to best meet local needs and will support development that creates mixed, sustainable and inclusive communities.

Policy SHO3 – Housing Density, Type and Accessibility

Developments of ten homes or more should provide a range of house types and sizes that will meet the accommodation needs of both existing and future residents, in line with the most recently available information.

3. All developments of ten homes or more should achieve the minimum net density set out below, except where this would prejudice historic character and local distinctiveness as defined in Policy SHE2:
 - a. 100 dwellings per hectare where Table 6 accessibility standards for very high- density housing are met and the site is located within West Bromwich
 - b. 45 dwellings per hectare where Table 6 accessibility standards for high density housing are met;
 - c. 40 dwellings per hectare where Table 6 accessibility standards for moderate density housing are met.
4. Table 6 provides details of the appropriate density and, where appropriate, house type mix, to be sought on each housing allocation site, in accordance with the requirements set out in this Policy. Further details of design requirements for housing developments will be set out in Sandwell’s Design Code.

Table 6 – Minimum Housing Densities and Accessibility

Density (homes per hectare net)	Very High: 100 + Only appropriate within West Bromwich	High: 45 +	Moderate: 40 +
Indicative proportion of flats	100%	>15%	0 – 15%
Indicative amount of housing suited to families	low	medium	high
Accessibility (by either walking or public transport, unless stated)			
Employment - Strategic Centre or other employment area	20 mins	20 mins	30 mins
Health – Primary Care e.g. GP Surgery or Health Centre	10 mins	10 mins	15 mins
Fresh Food - Centre or food store	N/a	10 mins	15 mins
Education - Primary School (walking distance only)	N/a	15 mins	10 mins
Education - Secondary School	N/a	25 mins	20 mins

5. Any development that fails to make efficient use of land, by providing a disproportionate amount of large, 4+ bedroom homes when compared with local housing need, will be refused in accordance with the requirements of this policy.
6. Development proposals should be consistent with other Local Plan policies.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO3	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	+	0	0

D.7.3.1 An appropriate mix of housing is required across the Plan area to help to ensure that the varied needs of current and future residents are met. In particular, this may include an increased number of smaller homes which would be likely to help provide appropriate accommodation for the elderly and first-time buyers entering the market.

D.7.3.2 Policy SHO3 aims to ensure that residential developments contribute towards the local housing need, supporting the current and future requirements of the population in terms of housing type and size, as well as ensuring new residents have good access to sustainable transport options. The policy sets out criteria for accessibility standards and appropriate densities of housing within each zone, which would be expected to ensure housing is provided in sustainable locations which results in a reduced need to travel, encourages local shopping and promotes social inclusion in the community. This would be likely to have a minor positive impact on local accessibility, housing provision and equality (SA Objectives 9, 10 and 11).

D.7.3.3 Due to the requirement to ensure that the density and type of housing development is informed by the level of accessibility via sustainable transport, this policy could potentially help to reduce emission of road transport associated GHGs and air pollutants. Therefore, a minor positive impact would be anticipated on climate change mitigation and pollution (SA Objectives 4 and 7).

D.7.3.4 By providing a suitable mix of housing types and tenure, this policy would be expected to meet the varying needs of residents, and as such, have a minor positive impact on health and wellbeing (SA Objective 12).

D.7.4 Policy SHO4 – Affordable Housing

Policy SHO4 – Affordable Housing

1. Developments of ten homes or more should, where financially viable, provide a range of tenures that will meet the accommodation needs of both existing and future residents, in line with the most recently available information.
2. All developments of ten homes or more should provide a proportion of affordable housing, where this is financially viable. Smaller sites, which could reasonably be expected to form part of a larger site in the future, will also need to take this policy into account. The minimum proportion of affordable housing that should be provided, subject to viability, is 25%.
3. 25% of the affordable homes required to meet part 2a - c of this Policy will be First Homes tenure, as defined in national guidance.

Policy SHO4 – Affordable Housing

4. Beyond the tenure requirements set out in parts 2 and 3 of this policy, the tenure and type of affordable homes sought will be determined on a site by site basis, based on national planning policy and best available information regarding local housing needs, site surroundings and viability considerations.
5. Where providing 25% affordable homes cannot be achieved, the maximum proportion of affordable housing will be required that does not undermine the development’s viability (Policy SHO6).
6. The affordable housing created will remain affordable in perpetuity.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0

D.7.4.1 Policy SHO4 would help to ensure that, throughout the Plan area, SMBC delivers an appropriate mix of affordable housing that meets the varied needs of current and future residents. This policy sets out the requirements for 25% affordable housing to be delivered within developments of ten dwellings or more, to ensure that suitable residential development is provided to meet the social and economic needs of the population.

D.7.4.2 Overall, Policy SHO4 would be anticipated to result in minor positive impacts in relation to housing and equality (SA Objectives 10 and 11).

D.7.4.3 The policy wording could be strengthened to ensure that all new developments contribute towards the provision of affordable homes and that the number/proportion will be determined through site-specific considerations including viability evidence. Policy SHO4 could usefully cross-reference to (or incorporate the wording from) Policy SHO6 to ensure that where providing 25% affordable homes is not possible, the maximum proportion of affordable housing is required that does not undermine the development's viability. The policy should include wording to ensure that the affordable housing provided will remain affordable in perpetuity.

D.7.5 Policy SHO5 – Delivering Wheelchair Accessible and Self / Custom Build Housing

Policy SHO5 – Delivering Wheelchair Accessible and Self / Custom Build Housing

National Accessibility and Wheelchair Housing Standards

1. All new homes will be required to meet M4(2) (Category 2: Accessible and adaptable dwellings) requirement in Building Regulations⁴⁹.

⁴⁹ Or any subsequent national equivalent standard

Policy SHO5 – Delivering Wheelchair Accessible and Self / Custom Build Housing

2. Developments of ten homes or more should provide a proportion of accessible and adaptable or wheelchair user housing, where this is financially viable. The minimum proportion that should be provided is:
 - a. an additional 15% of homes to meet the optional Building Regulations Requirement M4(3): Wheelchair User Dwellings⁵⁰.
3. Other than for reasons of financial viability, these requirements will only be reduced where it can be demonstrated that any of the following apply:
 - a. it is not practically achievable given the physical characteristics of the site; or
 - b. site specific factors mean that step-free access to the dwelling cannot be achieved; or
 - c. the homes are located on the first floor or above of a non-lift serviced multistorey development; or
 - d. the amount of M4(3) housing is limited by the number of homes that can be provided where the local authority is likely to be responsible for allocating or nominating a person to live in that home.

Self-Build and Custom Build Plots

4. On developments of 100 homes or more, where there is currently a demand for self-build and custom build plots (defined as the number of entries added to the self-build and custom build register in the most recent base period for the local authority where the site is located), at least 5% of plots should be made available for self-build or custom build, or sufficient to match demand if lower.
5. All plots set aside for self-build or custom build housing (secured via a legal agreement or planning condition) must include:
 - a. legal access onto a public highway;
 - b. water, foul drainage, broadband connection, and electricity supply available at the plot boundary;
 - c. sufficient space to build without compromising neighbouring properties and their amenity and the amenity of future occupiers; and
 - d. an agreed design code or plot passport for the plots.
6. If plots remain unsold after six months, after a thorough and proportionate marketing exercise that includes making details available to people on the custom and self-build register, the requirement to make the plot available for self-build or custom build will fall away.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	0

⁵⁰ Or any subsequent national equivalent standard

- D.7.5.1 Policy SH05 seeks to ensure an appropriate mix of accessible homes are delivered across the Plan area, as well as the opportunity for self-build homes. The policy also sets out requirements for developments where the criteria for accessible and self-build homes on site are not viable.
- D.7.5.2 Future residential development needs to consider accessibility requirements for the elderly and those with specific needs. Policy SH05 would be likely to help ensure residential developments allow for the safe and convenient access for all residents, including older people and wheelchair users.
- D.7.5.3 This policy also seeks to meet the needs of those wishing to build their own homes. The policy aims to secure a 5% of major developments of 100 or more units to be available for self-build housing. This would help to ensure that new housing delivered across the Plan area can accommodate the diverse requirements of residents within the SMBC.
- D.7.5.4 Overall, Policy SH05 would be anticipated to result in minor positive impacts in relation to housing, equality and human health (SA Objectives 10, 11 and 12).

D.7.6 Policy SH06 – Financial Viability Assessment for Housing

Policy SH06 – Financial Viability Assessment for Housing

1. A planning application that compiles up-to-date policies within this plan will be assumed to be viable and should seek to provide any relevant planning contributions necessary to make it acceptable in planning terms. The onus will be on the applicant to demonstrate that the provision of planning contributions would adversely affect the financial viability of the development proposals.
2. Financial viability assessments conforming to national guidance will be required to be submitted and, where necessary, independently appraised by an appropriate professional appointed by the local planning authority at the cost of the applicant. Flexible arrangements will be sought through planning agreements, wherever possible, to allow for changing market conditions in future years.
3. Any viability assessment should be prepared on the basis that it will be made publicly available other than in exceptional circumstances, and in such circumstances an executive summary will be made publicly available.
4. On sites where applying the affordable housing or accessibility and wheelchair user requirements set out in Policies SH04 and SH05 can be demonstrated to make the development unviable, the maximum proportion of such housing will be sought that will not undermine the viability of the development, subject to achieving optimum tenure mix and securing other planning obligations necessary for the development to gain planning permission.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+/-	0	0	0

D.7.6.1 Policy SHO6 aims to ensure that a mix of good-quality, affordable housing will be provided, subject to the findings of financial viability assessments. The policy states that where accessibility requirements make a development financially unviable, *"the maximum proportion of such housing will be sought that will not undermine the viability of the development"*.

D.7.6.2 By ensuring developments are appraised and meet local authority guidelines before they go ahead, a minor positive impact on housing provision (SA Objective 10) should result.

D.7.6.3 However, the policy provision means that fewer affordable / adaptable homes could be delivered compared to the identified needs. The impact of Policy SHO6 on equality is uncertain as it is dependent on financial circumstances.

D.7.7 Policy SHO7 – Protecting Family Housing (Use Class C3)

Policy SHO7 – Protecting Family Housing (Use Class C3)

1. To address the shortage of homes throughout the borough that are suitable and attractive to families and to encourage the provision of sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities, there will be a presumption against the loss of dwelling houses (Use Class C3) for family occupation through either sub-division, conversion to Use Class C4⁵¹, conversion to other non-residential uses or demolition and redevelopment, unless:
 - a. the property / properties is / are located within a site allocation and the corresponding development principles indicate that an alternative use or mix of housing will be more appropriate;
 - b. the proposed development fulfils other regeneration aspirations of the Council;
 - c. evidence of local housing need and demand indicates that an alternative mix of housing is appropriate;
 - d. alternative provision will help meet other housing priorities of the Council, such as provision for elderly persons (including bungalows);
 - e. an applicant can demonstrate that the property / properties is / are no longer suitable for family occupation, in which case, replacement with a new Class C3 dwelling house(s), suitable for family occupation will be the preferred approach, unless one of the criteria set out above can be satisfied.

⁵¹ Or subsequent / equivalent iterations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SH07	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0	0

D.7.7.1 Policy SH07 seeks to respond to the local context and identified needs, ensuring housing suitable for families is protected. By encouraging dwellings that provide "*sustainable, inclusive and mixed communities*", Policy SH07 will aid the provision of affordable, environmentally sound and good quality housing for all, therefore, having a minor positive impact on housing and equality (SA Objectives 10 and 11).

D.7.8 Policy SH08 – Houses in Multiple Occupation

Policy SH08 – Houses in Multiple Occupation

- Proposals for the creation of a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), including the conversion of buildings or sub-division of dwellings, will only be permitted if this would not result in over 10% of the number of residential properties⁵² within a 100- metre radius of the application site, measured from the centre point of the property (referred to in this policy as the "relevant area") operating as HMOs and if the proposals would meet the additional criteria set out in this policy.
- The methodology for establishing the quantum of HMOs in a relevant area is set out in the table below:

Table 8 - methodology for calculating concentration of HMOs within a relevant area

⁵² See paragraph 7.57

Policy SHO8 – Houses in Multiple Occupation

Methodology / Evidence:

The Council will calculate the number of HMOs in the relevant area for each individual planning application by using the following approach:

i. Identifying the current distribution of residential properties in the relevant area -

For the purposes of assessing applications for HMO development, dwelling houses and HMOS that are located within blocks of flats or subdivided properties are counted as one property. Residential institutions, care homes, hostels and purpose-built student accommodation and other specialist housing types are also counted as one property per block. This will ensure that calculations of HMO concentration are not skewed.

ii. Calculating the number of HMOs in the relevant area -

Current HMO numbers will be identified from the following sources:

- **Properties licensed as a HMO**
- **Properties with C4 or Sui Generis HMO planning consent or issued with a Certificate of Lawful Development**
- **Council tax records – student exemptions for council tax excluding purpose-built student accommodation and private flats**

iii. Calculating the concentration of HMOs in the relevant area -

The concentration of HMOs surrounding the application site is calculated as a percentage of the total estimated number of existing HMO units against the total number of residential properties. It is accepted that although the HMO sources listed above provide the most robust approach to identifying the numbers and locations of HMOs in an area, it will not identify all HMOs.

3. Once the current level of HMO provision has been established in a relevant area, the following criteria will be applied to the proposal:

a. the development would not:

- i. result in the loss of C3 family-sized dwellings in areas where there is a proven demand for such accommodation (see Policy SHO7);
- ii. result in a C3 family dwelling house being sandwiched⁵³ between two HMOs or other non-family residential uses⁵⁴;
- iii. lead to a continuous frontage of three or more HMOs or non-family residential uses.

⁵³ See justification for more detailed explanation

⁵⁴ For the purposes of this policy a non-family residential use is defined as a HMO, student accommodation, residential accommodation within C1 and C2 Use and self-contained flats

Policy SHO8 – Houses in Multiple Occupation

- b. the development is unlikely to be detrimental to the amenities of the occupiers of adjoining or neighbouring properties by way of noise, overlooking, general disturbance, or impact on visual amenity;
 - c. the development would not have a significant adverse impact on the character or appearance of the area, or of the historic or natural environment;
 - d. the development would not give rise to unacceptable adverse cumulative impacts on amenity, character, appearance, security, crime, anti-social behaviour or the fear of crime⁵⁵;
 - e. in areas at risk of a 1 in 100-year plus flood event, finished ground floor levels are at least 60cm above the 1 in 100-year plus flood level;
 - f. provision for off- and on- streetcar and cycle parking is sufficient and appropriately incorporated and would not have an adverse impact on the surrounding area by way of increased on-street parking, impaired highway safety or impeding proper access to the area;
 - g. the site is in an area that has good access by walking and public transport to residential services, as set out in Policy SHO3;
 - h. the development provides a satisfactory standard of living accommodation and the internal layout is shown to be suitable for the number of units proposed in terms of daylight, outlook and the juxtaposition of living rooms and bedrooms;
4. The construction or conversion of the building / dwelling intended to form the HMO should be undertaken to provide adequate personal living space and residential facilities⁵⁶, including: -
 - a. bedrooms of at least 7.5 sq.m. (single) and 11.5 sq.m. (double);
 - b. communal living space comprising lounge, kitchen and dining space either as distinct rooms or in an open plan format;
 - c. washing facilities;
 - d. adequate provision for the storage and disposal of refuse and recycling;
 - e. outdoor amenity space for sitting out, play and drying clothes and external storage space, including cycle storage⁵⁷.
 5. Where an HMO has been established in breach of the need for planning permission, retrospective consent will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
 6. Proposals for the intensification or expansion of an existing HMO should comply with the criteria above, having regard to the size and character of the property.

⁵⁵ It is recommended that pre-application and planning application advice is sought for HMO proposals from the West Midlands Police Design Out Crime Offices

⁵⁶ Some national planning guidance is available, covering licensing and mandatory minimum room sizes https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/925269/HMOs_and_residential_property_licensing_reforms_guidance.pdf

⁵⁷ This would normally be calculated to match the same amenity provision for an apartment block (10m² per person)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	0	0

D.7.8.1 A dwelling is classed as a house in multiple occupation (HMO) if at least three tenants live there and share a toilet, bathroom or kitchen. Policy SHO8 supports the development of HMOs, providing the proposal is in accordance with the criteria set out in the policy. This would be likely to provide a range of housing options to residents of Sandwell, and therefore, a minor positive impact on housing and equality would be expected (SA Objectives 10 and 11).

D.7.8.2 This policy seeks to ensure development proposals are located in an area which has "good access by walking and public transport to residential services". This would be expected to have a minor positive impact on transport and accessibility and could potentially encourage outdoor exercise and active travel, with benefits to human health and wellbeing (SA Objectives 9 and 12).

D.7.8.3 In addition, the policy seeks to ensure the development of any HMOs would not significantly impact cultural heritage, landscape or biodiversity features, resulting in a likely overall negligible impact on SA Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

D.7.9 Policy SHO9 – Education Facilities

Policy SHO9 – Education Facilities

1. New nursery, school and further and higher education facilities should be:
 - a. Well-designed, to the relevant local / national standards / guidance in place, and should complement and enhance neighbourhood services and amenities;
 - b. Well-served by public transport infrastructure, walking, and cycling facilities, particularly in centres, and located to minimise the number and length of journeys needed in relation to the home to school travel distances;
 - c. Wherever possible, located to address accessibility gaps in terms of the standards set out in Policy SHO3, particularly where a significant amount of new housing is proposed.
2. New and improved education facilities will be secured through a range of funding measures:-
 - a. Where a housing development of ten or more homes would increase the need for education facilities to the extent that new or improved facilities would be required to meet this need, planning obligations or Community Infrastructure Levy will be secured sufficient to meet the need in a timely manner, where this is financially viable.
 - b. Contributions will be secured retrospectively where forward funding of improvements is necessary to meet immediate needs.

Policy SHO9 – Education Facilities

- c. For sites where there is likely to be a requirement for on-site provision of new schools this is set out in Appendix B.
3. Where land is provided for a new school as part of a housing development, the financial contribution made by that development towards education facilities will be reduced accordingly.
 4. On sites where the education facility requirement is proven not to be viable, the maximum proportion of funding will be sought that will not undermine the viability of the development, subject to securing other planning obligations necessary for the development to gain planning permission. A financial viability assessment will be required to be submitted, meeting the requirements set out in Policy SHO6.
 5. New and redeveloped education facilities should include provision for wider community use of sports and other facilities where this would be in accordance with evidence of need, secured through a suitably worded community use agreement
 6. The existing network of education facilities will be protected and proposals that seek to enhance this network will be supported. The physical enhancement and expansion of higher and further educational facilities and related business and research will be supported where it helps to realise the educational, training and research potential of Sandwell.
 7. Proposals involving the loss, in part or the whole of an education facility will be permitted only where adequate alternative provision is available to meet the needs of the community served by the facility.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO9	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	++

D.7.9.1 Policy SHO9 seeks to support the development or expansion of education facilities secured through a range of funding measures, including planning obligations or through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). New facilities would be required to be in accordance with the criteria set out in the policy. The policy also aims to protect and enhance existing facilities. This policy would therefore be expected to have a major positive impact on education (SA Objective 14).

D.7.9.2 Improved access to education would also be likely to have benefits to the local economy, by ensuring a greater proportion of residents have skills desirable in many employment sectors. The policy seeks to address accessibility gaps and ensure all residents have good access to educational facilities via public transport. Therefore, this policy would be likely to have a minor positive impact on transport and accessibility, equality and the local economy (SA Objectives 9, 11 and 13).

D.7.9.3 The policy also states that new education facilities should be *"well-served by public transport infrastructure, walking, and cycling facilities, particularly in centres, and located to minimise the number and length of journeys needed in relation to the home to school travel distances"*. This could potentially result in a minor positive impact on climate change

mitigation and pollution, by reducing reliance on travel via car and consequently reducing emission of GHGs and harmful pollutants (SA Objectives 4 and 7).

- D.7.9.4 In addition, this policy seeks to ensure that “*new and redeveloped education facilities should include maximum provision for community use of sports and other facilities*”. This would be expected to have a minor positive impact on the health of local residents (SA Objective 12).

D.7.10 Policy SHO10 – Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Policy SHO10 – Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

Safeguarding Existing Supply

1. Existing Gypsy and Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites (shown on the policies map) will be protected unless it can be demonstrated that they are no longer required or suitable alternative provision can be made.

Meeting Future Need

2. New Gypsy and Traveller permanent pitches will be provided to meet identified need up to 2031 as set out in Table 7, in accordance with the Black Country Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) 2022.
3. Accommodation needs for Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople over the Plan period will be met through sites with outstanding planning permission, allocated sites and other sites granted planning permission during the Plan period in accordance with the criteria set out below. The council will pursue funding and / or management arrangements for new sites, where necessary.
4. Proposals for permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches and Travelling Showpeople plots will be assessed against the following criteria:
 - a. The site should be suitable as a place to live, particularly regarding health and safety, and the development should be designed to provide adequate levels of privacy and amenity for both occupants and neighbouring uses;
 - b. The site should meet moderate standards of access to residential services as set out in Policy SHO3, Table 6;
 - c. The site should be located and designed to facilitate integration with neighbouring communities;
 - d. The site should be suitable to allow for the planned number of pitches, an amenity block, a play area, access roads, parking and an area set aside for work purposes where appropriate, including, in the case of Travelling Showpeople, sufficient level space for outdoor storage and maintenance of equipment;
 - e. The site should be served or capable of being served by adequate on-site services for water supply, power, drainage, sewage and waste disposal (storage and collection).
 - f. A minimum 10% biodiversity net gain is demonstrated in accordance with Policy SNE2.
5. The location, design and facilities provided on new sites will be determined in consultation with local Gypsies and Travellers and Travelling Showpeople and will also consider / reflect any available national guidance.

Policy SHO10 – Accommodation for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople

6. Proposals should be well designed and laid out in accordance with Secured by Design principles as set out in SDM1. It is recommended that pre-application advice is sought from the West Midlands Police Design Out Crime Officers.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SHO10	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+	+/-	+

- D.7.10.1 In accordance with the planning policy for traveller sites⁵⁸, Gypsies and Travellers are defined as *"persons of nomadic habit of life whatever their race or origin, including such persons who on grounds only of their own or their family's or dependants' educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excluding members of an organised group of travelling showpeople or circus people travelling together as such"*.
- D.7.10.2 Travelling Showpeople are defined as *"members of a group organised for the purposes of holding fairs, circuses or shows (whether or not travelling together as such). This includes such persons who on the grounds of their own or their family's or dependants' more localised pattern of trading, educational or health needs or old age have ceased to travel temporarily, but excludes Gypsies and Travellers as defined above"*⁵⁹.
- D.7.10.3 This policy would be expected to meet the identified pitch targets for Gypsies and Travellers and plot targets for Travelling Showpeople which address the likely permanent and transit accommodation needs as set out in the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA). Therefore, this policy would be likely to have a minor positive impact on housing (SA Objective 10).
- D.7.10.4 The policy would also be expected to have a minor positive impact on equality, as the provision of pitches and plots will help to ensure that a diverse range of residents in Sandwell have access to appropriate accommodation to suit their needs (SA Objective 11).
- D.7.10.5 The criteria set out in Policy SHO10 requires all development proposals for Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople pitches and plots to have good access in accordance with **Policy SLP***, integrate with neighbouring communities, include play areas and access roads, and have adequate access to on site services including water supply, power, drainage, sewage and waste disposal. These requirements would be expected to result in minor positive impacts in regard to transport and accessibility, equality, health and education (SA Objectives 9, 11, 12 and 14).

⁵⁸ MHCLG (2015) Planning policy for traveller sites. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-policy-for-traveller-sites> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

⁵⁹ Ibid

D.7.10.6 Policy SHO10 could potentially have a minor positive impact on biodiversity (SA Objective 3) in the long term, as the minimum 10% BNG requirement will help to ensure that the number and diversity of species in the area increases. This would need careful management and monitoring to ensure that BNG is successful.

D.7.10.7 An uncertain impact has been identified on the remaining SA objectives as the extent of both positive and negative impacts on these objectives are dependent on the development location, scale of development and contextual factors relating to site specific characteristics. Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople sites are assessed in the SA process through the assessment of reasonable alternatives, as documented in this SA report and supporting appendix (see **Appendix C**).

D.7.11 Policy SHO11 – Housing for people with specific needs

Policy SHO11 – Housing for people with specific needs

1. Proposals for specific forms of housing including children’s homes, care homes, nursing homes, extra care facilities, or any other identified need, will be considered in relation to the following criteria:
 - a. compatibility with adjacent uses;
 - b. the suitability of the site and building;
 - c. the potential for undue noise and general disturbance to surrounding residents;
 - d. the character and quality of the resulting environment;
 - e. the impact on parking provision and highway safety;
 - f. accessibility by a choice of means of transport; and
 - g. proximity to facilities.
2. Supporting information will be required in the form of a planning statement which, as a minimum, must set out the day-to-day activities associated with the use, staffing numbers and visitor numbers. Additional information such as a transport statement or noise statement may be required depending circumstances.

Policy Ref	1 Cultural Heritage	2 Landscape	3 Biodiversity	4 CC Mitigation	5 CC Adaptation	6 Natural Resources	7 Pollution	8 Waste	9 Transport	10 Housing	11 Equality	12 Health	13 Economy	14 Education
SHO11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	0	0

D.7.11.1 Policy SHO11 outlines the requirements for development proposals for specific forms of housing for people with specific needs. The policy would increase equal opportunities in the area and would be expected to have a minor positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11). A minor positive impact on health could also be achieved, through helping to ensure that people in need of care are provided with suitable accommodation to meet their needs (SA Objective 12).

- D.7.11.2 The policy states that the proposed development of specific forms of housing would require "*accessibility by a choice of means of transport*"; and could therefore expect to have a minor positive impact on access to sustainable transport methods (SA Objective 9).
- D.7.11.3 The policy additionally states that the proposals would need to consider "*the character and quality of the resulting environment*" and the "*suitability of the site and building*". Therefore, the policy could help to reduce the potential for adverse effects on the surrounding landscape, resulting in a negligible impact (SA Objective 2).

DRAFT

D.8 Sandwell’s Economy

D.8.1 Policy SEC1 – Providing for Economic Growth and Jobs

Policy SEC1 – Providing for Economic Growth and Jobs

1. The Sandwell Local Plan will seek the delivery of at least 1,206ha of employment land (of which 29ha is currently vacant) within the borough⁶⁰ between 2020 and 2041, to support the growth of the sub-regional economy and increase productivity. Most of this requirement will be met through sites allocated for development in this Plan as set out below.
2. Additional employment development will be brought forward on other sites throughout Sandwell, mainly through the redevelopment, intensification and enhancement of existing employment areas and premises.
3. The Plan will deliver a portfolio of sites of various sizes and quality to meet a range of business needs. This land is in addition to those sites currently occupied for employment purposes. These sites will be safeguarded for industrial employment uses⁶¹
4. Within the existing employment areas subject to Policies SEC2, SEC3 and SEC4, the Council will support, with public intervention as necessary, the regeneration and renewal of such areas, including their environmental enhancement and incorporation of sustainable measures to mitigate climate change impacts. Industrial developments will need to demonstrate how they have been designed to maximise resistance and resilience to climate change, as set out in Policy SCC1.
5. To enable Sandwell’s employment areas to be fit-for-purpose in the long term and aid in the economic recovery and rejuvenation of the sub-regional industrial economy, new and resident companies should be encouraged to adopt a circular economy approach and related infrastructure.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SEC1	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-

D.8.1.1 The SLP allocates 1,206ha of employment land for the period between 2020 – 2041. Further land is provided on other sites which have planning permission for employment development. A minor positive impact on the economy is likely as the policy would deliver a significant quantum of employment land, however, this would not meet the full identified needs for Sandwell (SA Objective 13).

D.8.1.2 The policy encourages the adoption of a circular economy approach and states that “*Industrial developments will need to demonstrate how they have been designed to*

⁶⁰ In Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2, and B8

⁶¹ In Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii), B2, and B8

maximise resistance and resilience to climate change". The policy would therefore expect to have a minor positive impact on promoting sustainable construction principles (SA Objective 4).

D.8.1.3 An uncertain impact has been identified on the remaining SA Objectives as the extent of both positive and negative impacts on these objectives are dependent on the development location, scale of development and contextual factors relating to site specific characteristics. These are assessed in the SA process through the assessment of reasonable alternatives, as documented in this SA report (see **Appendix C**).

D.8.2 Policy SEC2 – Strategic Employment Areas

Policy SEC2 – Strategic Employment Areas

1. The Strategic Employment Areas are shown on the Policies Map. They are characterised by excellent accessibility, high-quality environments and clusters of high technology growth sector businesses. These areas will be safeguarded for manufacturing and logistics uses within Use Classes E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii)), B2 and B8.
2. Within Strategic Employment Areas, high-quality development or redevelopment of sites and premises will be required, and planning applications that prejudice or dilute the delivery of appropriate employment activity, or deter investment in such uses, will be refused.
3. Strategic Employment Areas will be safeguarded from redevelopment for other non- manufacturing / logistics uses.
4. Some ancillary employment-generating non-Class E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii)), and Class-B2 and B8 uses, such as childcare facilities and small-scale food and drink outlets, may also be permitted in Strategic Employment Areas, where they can be shown to strongly support, maintain or enhance the business and employment function and attractiveness of the area, and meet sequential and other national or local policy tests relating to appropriate uses as necessary.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SEC2	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-

D.8.2.1 Policy SEC2 seeks to allocate Strategic Employment Areas within Sandwell, which correspond to areas of highest market demand and are characterised by “*clusters of high technology growth*”. This would be likely to have benefits to the local economy, as employment land would be located in desirable areas and would provide technology to enable businesses to thrive. A minor positive impact on the economy would be expected (SA Objective 13).

D.8.2.2 The policy states that Strategic Employment Areas will be characterised by “*excellent accessibility*”, which would be expected to ensure residents have good access to

employment opportunities and surrounding services via sustainable transport modes. Therefore, a minor positive impact in relation to transport and accessibility would be likely (SA Objective 9).

D.8.2.3 Without further knowledge regarding the nature, scale and type of development that may come forward within the Strategic Employment Areas in accordance with this policy, an uncertain impact has been identified for the remaining SA Objectives.

D.8.3 Policy SEC3 – Local Employment Areas

Policy SEC3 – Local Employment Areas	
1.	Local Employment Areas are shown on the Policies Map. They are characterised by a critical mass of industrial, warehousing and service activity with good access to local markets and employees.
2.	These areas will provide for the needs of locally based investment and will be safeguarded for the following uses; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Industry and warehousing⁶² (E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii)), B2 and B8 use) b. Motor trade activities, including car showrooms and vehicle repair c. Haulage and transfer depots d. Trade, wholesale retailing and builders’ merchants e. Scrap metal, timber and construction premises and yards f. Waste collection, transfer and recycling uses
3.	Not all areas will be suitable for all uses.
4.	Some ancillary employment-generating non-Class E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii)) and B uses such as childcare facilities and food and drink outlets may also be permitted in Local Employment Areas where they can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. be shown to strongly support, maintain or enhance the business and employment function of the area; and b. meet sequential and other national or local policy tests (particularly Policies SCE5 and SCE6) relating to appropriate uses, as necessary.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SEC3	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-

D.8.3.1 Policy SEC3 seeks to allocate Local Employment Areas in Sandwell to support the provision of industrial, logistics and commercial activities, which would be likely to result in benefits for the local economy and provision of local employment opportunities. This policy would therefore be likely to have a minor positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13).

⁶² (E(g)(ii), E(g)(iii)), B2 and B8 use)

D.8.3.2 Policy SEC3 also seeks to safeguard areas for "waste collection, transfer and recycling uses". This policy would therefore be expected to have a minor positive impact on waste, by supporting the efficient management and disposal of waste (SA Objective 8).

D.8.3.3 Without further knowledge regarding the nature, scale and type of development that may come forward within the Local Employment Areas in accordance with this policy, an uncertain impact has been identified for the remaining SA Objectives.

D.8.4 Policy SEC4 – Other Employment Sites

Policy SEC4 – Other Employment Sites	
1.	In employment areas that are not designated as either Strategic Employment Areas or Local Employment Areas on the Policies Map, but which comprise land / sites that are currently in use (or if currently vacant, were last used) for employment purposes, development will be supported for: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> new industrial employment uses or extensions to existing industrial employment uses, or housing or other non-ancillary non-industrial employment uses.
2.	Development or uses under 1(b) will only be supported where there is robust evidence that: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> if the site is vacant, that it has been marketed for employment use for a period of at least 12 months, including by site notice and through the internet or as may be agreed by the local planning authority; if the site is occupied or part occupied, that successful engagement has been undertaken with the occupiers to secure their relocation if the site forms part of a larger areas occupied or last occupied for employment, that residential or any other use will not be adversely affected by the continuing operation of employment uses in the remainder of the area; the site could be brought forward for housing in a comprehensive manner and would not lead to piecemeal development; residential development would not adversely affect the ongoing operation of existing or proposed employment uses on the site or nearby; and the site is suitable for housing or other non-ancillary non-employment uses in accordance with local or national policies relating to these uses.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SEC4	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+	+/-

D.8.4.1 The policy supports "new industrial employment uses or extensions to existing industrial employment uses" which would be likely to increase the provision of employment floorspace across the SMBC, outside of the identified Strategic and Local Employment

Areas. A minor positive impact on employment opportunities and the economy would be expected (SA Objective 13).

D.8.4.2 This policy would also support the redevelopment of some employment sites to housing or other non-employment uses, where the employment site is no longer required for employment purposes. Therefore, this could potentially result in a minor positive impact on local housing provision (SA Objective 10).

D.8.4.3 At present, the location of the 'other employment sites' is unknown. It is therefore uncertain what impact Policy SEC4 would have on the remaining SA Objectives.

D.8.5 Policy SEC5 – Improving Access to the Labour Market

Policy SEC5 – Improving Access to the Labour Market

1. Planning applications for new major job-creating development will be required to demonstrate how job opportunities arising from the proposed development will be made available to the residents of Sandwell, particularly those in the most deprived areas of the borough and other priority groups.
2. Planning conditions or obligations will be negotiated with applicants and applied as appropriate to secure initiatives and /or contributions to a range of measures to benefit the local community, including the potential for working with local colleges and universities, to ensure:
 - a. the provision of training opportunities to assist residents in accessing employment opportunities;
 - b. the provision of support to residents in applying for jobs arising from the development;
 - c. enhancement of the accessibility of the development to residents by a choice of means of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport (see Policy STR1);
 - d. child-care provision which enables residents to access employment opportunities;
 - e. measures to assist those with physical or mental health disabilities to access employment opportunities.
3. In respect of planning applications for new employment-generating development Sandwell will negotiate with applicants on financial or other contributions, to be secured through planning obligations or the CIL Charging Schedule.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SEC5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	+	+	+	+

D.8.5.1 Policy SEC5 supports proposals for new employment development, so long as the employment opportunities are accessible, in particular for disadvantaged people and residents in the most deprived areas of Sandwell. The development of new employment sites would be expected to have a minor positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13), whilst ensuring the associated employment opportunities are available for all residents

within the Plan area would have a minor positive impact in relation to equality (SA Objective 11).

D.8.5.2 Policy SEC5 will also be likely to have a minor positive impact on transport (SA Objective 9) by enhancing “the accessibility of the development to residents by a choice of means of transport, including walking, cycling and public transport”.

D.8.5.3 The policy seeks to ensure that provision is made “to assist those with physical or mental health disabilities to access employment opportunities”. The provision of improved accessible employment opportunities across the Plan area would be expected to have a minor positive impact on health and wellbeing (SA Objective 12).

D.8.5.4 Furthermore, this policy would be likely to have benefits to education, by ensuring a diverse range of residents have access to training opportunities to increase their skills and employability. Therefore, a minor positive impact on education would be likely (SA Objective 14).

D.8.6 Policy SEC6 – Relationship between Industry and Sensitive Uses

Policy SEC6 – Relationship between Industry and Sensitive Uses

1. Proposals for new industrial development that is likely to have an adverse effect⁶³ on neighbouring uses will not be permitted, unless the adverse effects can be reduced to an acceptable level, by means of a buffer⁶⁴ or other robust mitigation measures.
2. Equally, new proposals that may adversely affect, or be adversely affected by, existing industry operating in appropriate locations will not be permitted unless the adverse effects can be reduced to an acceptable level. Where this is to be achieved by means of a buffer, the new development will be required to provide and maintain the buffer.
3. Where existing industry operates within residential areas the Council will seek to ensure that any harmful effects are mitigated. If necessary, the Council will consider the enforcement of appropriate regulations or other means to reduce the problem.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SEC6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

D.8.6.1 Policy SEC6 seeks to ensure that any development of new industrial sites does not majorly disrupt neighbouring land uses, using buffers where appropriate. Increasing industrial

⁶³ E.g. excessive traffic, pollution (air, noise, fumes, water, soil), disturbance, visual amenity etc.

⁶⁴ An appropriate buffer may take a variety of forms such as open space, a landscaped area, a wall or other physical barrier.

sites should create more jobs across the SMBC which could potentially result in a minor positive impact on local economy (SA Objective 13).

- D.8.6.2 Through seeking to avoid or minimise the potential for adverse effects, the policy would help to prevent adverse impacts across environmental / amenity topics. A negligible impact has been identified across the remaining SA Objectives. However, the policy could be improved through including reference to the types of adverse effect covered to ensure clarity, for example whether this should include visual impacts, traffic generation, pollution (air, noise, water, soil), disturbance etc.

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D.9 Sandwell's Centres

D.9.1 Policy SCE1 – Sandwell's Centres

Policy SCE1 – Sandwell's Centres

1. The priority for Sandwell's centres is to ensure they remain focused on serving the needs of their communities, through delivering a well-balanced diversity of commercial, business and service functions. This includes retail provision and an increasing mix of leisure, office, residential and other appropriate, complementary uses that are accessible by a variety of sustainable means of transport. This will enable centres to make a key contribution to regeneration, tackling climate change, fostering healthy communities, and creating pleasant, safe public spaces to increase social interaction and cohesion.
2. Sandwell's centres comprise a hierarchy, set out in Table 10. This hierarchy will be supported and protected by ensuring that development in centres is facilitated in a manner that reflects their scale, role, and function, and resisting proposals that would undermine this strategy.
3. Proposals for centre uses that are in-centre⁶⁵ are subject to specific policy requirements, as set out in Table 10, Policies SCE4 and SCE5, centre insets and Policies SWB1 and SWB2 (West Bromwich).
4. Proposals for centre uses that are not in-centre⁶⁶ must meet the sequential test and other relevant requirements, such as impact tests as set out in Table 10 and Policy SCE6), as well as any specific policies in the town centre insets.
5. Future growth and allocations in Sandwell, particularly housing and employment development identified in Policies SDS1, SHO1 and SEC1, should have their service needs met by, and contribute to the regeneration of, the existing network of centres.
6. A land use approach will be adopted to encourage regeneration and to meet the challenges facing Sandwell's centres, particularly as little retail capacity has been identified to support additional floorspace, through supporting:
 - a. diversifying and repurposing of centres enhanced by appropriate complementary uses, particularly residential, education, health and community uses and supporting the evening economy;
 - b. the consolidation and reconfiguration of vacant floorspace into a mix of uses, especially the use of upper floors, and / or extensions to existing floorspace, with any new development being well-integrated with existing provision;
 - c. enhancing the vitality, accessibility and sustainability of centres, including maximising public realm, open space, provision of suitably-located and accessible pedestrian and cycle networks, and provision of green infrastructure and vehicle charging points

⁶⁵ Within the relevant boundaries or Primary Shopping Areas of defined centres

⁶⁶ Not within the relevant boundaries / Primary Shopping Areas of a defined centre but are in edge-of-centre or out-of-centre locations

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCE1	+/-	+/-	+/-	+	+/-	+	+/-	+/-	+	+	+	+	+	+/-

- D.9.1.1 Policy SCE1 aims to ensure centres within Sandwell provide residents with services and facilities that meet the local needs in regard to retail, leisure, commercial, residential, community and civil services.
- D.9.1.2 The hierarchy of centres as set out under this policy would be likely to ensure a range of facilities are provided at these locations which are appropriate to meet the local need. This would be expected to have benefits to the local community by ensuring all residents have access to essential services, and the local economy through encouraging economic regeneration. Therefore, Policy SCE1 would be likely to have minor positive impacts in relation to equality and the economy (SA Objectives 11 and 13). The policy would also support residential development in centres, where appropriate, which could lead to a minor positive impact on housing provision (SA Objective 10).
- D.9.1.3 The policy seeks to ensure development proposals within centres facilitate *"healthy communities"* and are *"accessible by a variety of sustainable means of transport"*, in particular public transport, walking and cycling. This policy would be likely to encourage residents to live healthy lifestyles by supporting active travel. Residents would also be encouraged to use public transport, which would subsequently reduce the number of cars on the road network, with likely benefits for carbon emissions, congestion and air quality (SA Objectives 4, 9 and 12).
- D.9.1.4 The policy encourages regeneration and states that *"the consolidation and reconfiguration of vacant floorspace"* will be supported under this policy. This would be likely to have a minor positive impact in relation to natural resources, by encouraging the efficient use of previously developed land and reducing the quantity of greenfield land that would be lost to development (SA Objective 6).
- D.9.1.5 The support for regeneration under Policy SCE1 may provide opportunities to improve the local townscape character. However, the type, scale and quantity of development that may be directed to each of the identified centres under this policy is not known as this policy sets out the strategic context, priorities and approach to the borough's centres. Therefore, the overall impact of the policy on the remaining SA objectives is uncertain (SA Objectives 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8 and 14).

D.9.2 Policy SCE2 – Non-Retail Uses in Town Centres

Policy SCE2 – Non-E Class Uses in Town Centres

Primary Shopping Areas and Retail Frontages

1. The Retail Core / Primary Shopping Areas within the centres of Sandwell are defined on the Policies Map.

Policy SCE2 – Non-E Class Uses in Town Centres

2. To ensure that uses defined by Use Class E (commercial, business and services⁶⁷) remain the predominant uses within the defined retail core / primary shopping areas, new development, including that with residential use above ground floor, will be permitted where:
 - a. the proposal is for commercial Class E use at ground floor level (or ground floor plus higher storeys); or
 - b. the proposal is for other town centre uses falling outside of Class E that would support the overall vitality and viability of the centre and fall within sui generis uses, to include the following:
 - i. public houses, wine bars, or drinking establishments;
 - ii. hot food takeaways (subject to the provisions of the relevant SLP policies);
 - iii. live music venues.
3. Changes of use of ground floor premises that require planning consent in Retail Core / Primary Shopping Areas will be assessed on whether the proposed use:
 - a. retains an active frontage and maintains or enhances the vitality, attractiveness, and viability of the primary shopping frontage and the wider commercial area;
 - b. is complementary to the shopping / commercial function of the area and provides a direct service to the public;
 - c. is for a temporary period to occupy temporarily vacant units such as for occupiers testing new business concepts, a pop-up store, or for use for events which would support the vitality and viability of the town centre;
 - d. does not result in an over-concentration of sui generis uses within one area, and contributes to an appropriate mix and diverse offer;
 - e. does not conflict with other Sandwell Local Plan policy objectives and requirements (e.g. Policy SDM6, Policy SDM8).

Other Shopping Areas and Retail Frontages

4. In centres with no defined retail core or primary shopping area, proposals for non- 'E' Class uses will be resisted where they do not contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre, or where they would undermine its primary commercial, business and services functions.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCE2	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

⁶⁷ <https://www.planningportal.co.uk/permission/common-projects/change-of-use/use-classes>

- D.9.2.1 Policy SCE2 outlines measures in place to retain the predominance of retail uses (Class E)⁶⁸ within defined Retail Core / Primary Shopping Areas.
- D.9.2.2 The policy includes measures that would ensure that non-E Class uses are resisted where they are found incapable of being able to *"contribute to the vitality and viability of the centre, or where they would undermine its primary commercial, business and services functions"*. These measures would expect to protect the vitality and viability of the retail areas and additionally protect jobs in the area. Therefore, Policy SCE2 would be expected to have a minor positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13).
- D.9.2.3 Through ensuring that any proposals to change ground floor uses within these areas *"retains an active frontage and maintains or enhances the vitality, attractiveness, and viability"* of the local area, there is potential for the policy to result in a minor positive impact on the townscape (SA Objective 2).

D.9.3 Policy SCE3 – Town Centres (tier-two centres)

Policy SCE3 – Town Centres (tier-two centres)

1. Proposals for appropriate uses will be supported within Town Centres (-tier-two centres (in-centre locations being defined in Policy SCE1, parts 3 and 4), particularly where they contribute to providing a diverse mix of uses, such as retail, office, leisure, residential, community, health, education and cultural facilities, and where they are of a scale that reflects the size, role and function of those centres and the catchments the centres serve.
2. It is a priority for Town Centres to serve the needs of development identified in the SLP, particularly for residential and employment allocations (Policy SCE1)
3. Convenience retail development is encouraged, and proposals to extend or refurbish existing stores where they are well-integrated with the centre will be supported.
4. In the assessment and determination of planning proposals, the distinctive offer, unique character, and special roles played by individual centres will be recognised and will be given appropriate weight when decisions are taken on applications that may affect the characteristics of the area.
5. Proposals in edge-of-centre and / or out-of-centre locations (Policy SCE1 parts 3 and 4) must meet the relevant requirements set out in Policy SCE6 – such as accessibility, impact and sequential tests and flexibility.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCE3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+

⁶⁸ ibid

D.9.3.1 Policy SCE3 supports the development of “*retail, office, leisure, residential, community, health, education and cultural facilities*” with the defined Town Centres. This would be expected to ensure there is adequate supply of employment opportunities within these areas. In addition, this policy would be likely to support a diverse range of retail, services and facilities within town centres, including healthcare and education, ensuring good accessibility for existing local residents and promoting community cohesion. The policy could potentially direct some residential development to these town centres, further ensuring that new residents would also have good access to services and boosting the local economy. This would be expected to have minor positive impacts in relation to accessibility, housing, equality, health, the economy and education (SA Objectives 9, 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14).

D.9.4 Policy SCE4 – District and Local Centres (tier-three centres)

Policy SCE4 – District and Local Centres (tier-three centres)

1. Proposals for appropriate uses (paragraph 9.68) will be supported within tier-three centres (in-centre locations being defined in paragraph 9.66) particularly commercial, business and service uses that meet day-to-day needs and serve local communities within the catchment area of those centres
2. It is a priority for tier-three centres to serve the day-to-day shopping and service needs of development identified in the Sandwell Local Plan, particularly residential and employment allocations (Policy CEN1). Convenience retail development is encouraged and proposals to extend or refurbish existing food stores where they are well-integrated with the centre will be supported.
3. Proposals in edge-of-centre (directly adjoining a centre boundary) and / or out-of- centre locations must meet the relevant requirements as set out in Policies SCE1 Table 10, SCE5 and SCE6.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCE4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	+	0	+	0

D.9.4.1 Policy SCE4 supports development within defined District or Local Centres that would serve communities, including food stores and day-to-day services, complementing the higher tier centres. This could potentially help to encourage social interaction and community cohesion and help to meet the needs of the community within the local area, reducing the need to travel. This would be likely to have a minor positive impact in relation to local accessibility and equality (SA Objectives 9 and 11).

D.9.4.2 By supporting appropriate residential and employment development within district and local centres and providing job opportunities, this policy would also be likely to have a minor positive impact on housing and the local economy (SA Objectives 10 and 13).

D.9.5 Policy SCE5 – Provision of Small-Scale Local Facilities not in centres

Policy SCE5 – Provision of Small-Scale Local Facilities not in centres

1. Small-scale (up to 280m² gross) proposals for centre uses and complementary uses that are subject to planning control will only be permitted if all the following requirements are met:
 - a. The proposal does not unduly impact on the health and wellbeing of the community it is intended to serve.
 - b. The proposal is of an appropriate scale and nature to meet the specific day-to-day needs of a population within convenient, safe walking distance for new or improved facilities.
 - c. Local provision could not be better met by investment in a nearby centre.
 - d. Existing facilities that meet day-to-day needs will not be undermined.
 - e. Access to the proposal by means other than by car can be demonstrated; this will be evidenced by the proposal being within convenient, safe walking distance of the community it will serve.
2. Development involving the loss of a local facility, particularly a convenience shop, pharmacy, community facility or post office, will be resisted where this would result in an increase in the number of people living more than a convenient, safe walking distance from alternative provision.
3. Where planning consents are granted, effective planning conditions and / or planning obligations will be required to support the regeneration strategy and minimise impacts (Policy SDS2).
4. Proposals where total floorspace exceeds 280m² (gross) will also have to meet the requirements of Policy SCE6.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCE5	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0

D.9.5.1 Policy SCE5 supports the development of small-scale centre uses outside of the defined centres to meet the needs of community, where proposals meet a number of criteria outlined in the policy. These small development proposals would be expected to have benefits to the local economy and the local population by encouraging community cohesion, social inclusion and ensuring residents have good access to essential services in close proximity to their homes. The policy also seeks to retain existing services such as a “convenience shop, pharmacy, community facility or post office”. Therefore, a minor positive impact in regard to equality and the economy would be expected (SA Objectives 11 and 13).

D.9.5.2 The policy also seeks to ensure proposals are located “within convenient, safe walking distance for new or improved facilities” for residents. The policy would be likely to ensure good access to local facilities, whilst encouraging active travel and reducing reliance on private cars, with subsequent benefits to local air quality. This would be likely to have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation, pollution, transport, and health (SA Objectives 4, 7, 9 and 12).

D.9.6 Policy SCE6 – Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development

Policy SCE6 – Edge of Centre and Out of Centre Development

1. There is a clear presumption in favour of focusing appropriate uses in centres.

Sequential Test

2. All edge-of-centre and out-of-centre proposals (as defined in paragraph 9.66) for centre uses (paragraph 9.68) should meet the requirements of the sequential test set out in the latest national guidance.
3. Edge and out-of-centre proposals should be assessed for accessibility by a choice of modes of transport, in particular public transport, walking and cycling, and should demonstrate that they will support both social inclusion and cohesion, and the need to sustain strategic transport links.
4. Edge-of-centre proposals will need to demonstrate that they will be well-integrated with existing in-centre provision, for example through the availability of safe and well-located pedestrian access across major roads that would otherwise bisect a centre.
5. When assessing sequentially preferable locations, proposals will need to demonstrate flexibility in their operational requirements, particularly in terms of their format and the types of goods being sold.

Impact Tests

6. The locally-set floorspace thresholds for edge and out-of-centre retail and leisure proposals to meet the requirements of the Impact Assessment as set out in the latest national guidance is 280m² (gross (Policy SCE1, Table 10)).
7. Impact tests should be proportionate to the nature and scale of proposals.
8. Proposals should be informed by the latest available robust evidence.
9. Where planning permissions are granted, effective planning conditions and / or planning obligations will be required to support the regeneration strategy and minimise adverse impacts (Policy SDS2).
10. Proposals that include unit sizes under 280m² (gross) will also have to meet the requirements of (Policy SCE5).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCE6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	+	0

D.9.6.1 Policy SCE6 sets out criteria for the development of edge-of-centre and out-of-centre proposals for centre uses. This could potentially have benefits to the local economy, by encouraging development in centres which are highly sustainable locations. A minor positive impact on the economy would be expected (SA Objective 13).

D.9.6.2 This policy encourages development in centres which are highly sustainable locations. All development proposals under this policy would be required to be assessed for accessibility via public transport, walking and cycling. This would be expected to ensure all residents and visitors have safe access to these facilities. By supporting access via walking and cycling, this policy could potentially encourage active travel and facilitate healthy lifestyles.

If there is adequate access via public transport, there could potentially be a reduction in car use, with benefits to climate change, air pollution and congestion. Therefore, as the policy prioritises development in centres and assuming the assessments outlined in the policy would ensure sustainable access to out-of-centre developments is prioritised, this policy would be likely to have minor positive impacts in relation to climate change mitigation, air pollution, transport, and health (SA Objectives 4, 7, 9 and 12).

- D.9.6.3 The policy also requires proposals to “*demonstrate that they will support both social inclusion and cohesion*”, which would be likely to result in a minor positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11).

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D.10 West Bromwich

D.10.1 Policy SWB1 – West Bromwich Town Centre

Policy SWB1 – West Bromwich Town Centre

1. The strategic priorities for West Bromwich are
 - a. to reinvigorate the town centre;
 - b. to unlock land to aid regeneration;
 - c. to support good quality jobs;
 - d. to stimulate Covid-19 recovery;
 - e. to promote the highest standards of sustainable urban design.
2. This will be achieved by:
 - a. delivering a significant number of new homes in and around the centre (Policy SWB2) to support the creation of a vibrant, active and sustainable town centre;
 - b. creating a Metro gateway and new town square and promoting a step change in the quality of local places / the public realm;
 - c. delivering mixed use, leisure, commercial and ancillary office growth in sustainable core locations;
 - d. repurposing vacant premises and sites in the centre to deliver community, education and healthcare provision;
 - e. undertaking site assembly and redevelopment to provide land suitable for new markets, education facilities and high-quality housing;
 - f. regenerating the Town Hall Quarter to establish a fully restored cultural and evening / night-time offer in the town centre;
 - g. creating sustainable travel networks across the centre and into surrounding locations;
 - h. providing a green link from the Metro through the heart of the town centre to connect the town centre to Dartmouth Park and Sandwell Valley, including cycling and walking routes across the town centre through to Sandwell Valley;
 - i. providing landscaping, green links, squares, parks and parklets, sustainable travel networks and additional green infrastructure throughout the centre.
3. Opportunities for future development in and around West Bromwich will be supported where they help deliver the aims and objectives set out above.
4. Areas such as The Lyng may be suitable for high quality, well-designed mixed-use development and investment; should such sites become available through land assembly or allocation during the timescale of the SLP, the Council will support the production of masterplans that demonstrate how sustainable new development could be brought forward in those areas.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SWB1	0	+	0	+	+	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+

D.10.1.1 Policy SWB1 sets out the strategic priorities for West Bromwich Town Centre and outlines measures that will be carried out to meet these priorities. The policy states that regeneration will be achieved by *"repurposing vacant premises and sites in the centre to deliver community, education and healthcare provision"*. Utilising vacant premises would protect greenfield land and ensure sustainable development remains a core element within the town centre’s strategic priorities. Furthermore, the town centre will be provided with *"landscaping, green links, squares, parks and parklets, sustainable travel networks and additional green infrastructure"*. The provision of increased green space and increased access to sustainable travel methods would encourage active lifestyles and potentially reduce reliance on private car use. Furthermore, the proposed landscaping and increased green cover would be expected to benefit the local townscape character. Overall, the policy would be expected to have a minor positive impact on the local landscape character, climate change mitigation, green infrastructure provision, the borough’s greenfield land, residents’ access to sustainable transport, and health and wellbeing (SA Objectives 2, 4, 5, 6, 9, and 12).

D.10.1.2 The policy sets out how the housing need of the area will be met, where *"a significant number of new homes in and around the centre (Policy SWB2) to support the creation of a vibrant, active and sustainable town centre"* will be required. Furthermore, Policy SWB1 states that measures will include *"regenerating the Town Hall Quarter to establish a fully restored cultural and evening / night-time offer in the town centre"* and additionally *"redevelopment to provide land suitable for new markets, education facilities and high-quality housing"*. Overall, the policy would be likely to have a minor positive impact on the local housing supply, access to affordable homes, the local economy and educational facilities (SA Objectives 10, 11, 13, and 14).

D.10.2 Policy SWB2 – Development in West Bromwich

Policy SWB2 – Development in West Bromwich

1. It is a priority for West Bromwich to serve identified housing and employment growth aspirations (Policy SDS1, Policy SDS2). The diversification of West Bromwich to provide a re-purposed, well-balanced mix of appropriate uses will be supported, in particular:
 - a. Residential provision will be maximised, to increase and strengthen communities, with indicative housing capacity identified by the West Bromwich Masterplan and West Bromwich Inset, providing a minimum of 1,345 new homes by 2041 (this figure includes provision in Carter’s Green).

Policy SWB2 – Development in West Bromwich

- b. Most new homes will be built at very high densities (Policy SHO3, Table 5) and as part of mixed-use developments where suitable, with additional residential use helping to attract investment and promoting the vitality of the centre.
 - c. Complementary uses, particularly community, leisure, health and education use (Policy SDS5, Policy SDM9).
2. Large-scale proposals to serve wider catchment areas should be focussed in West Bromwich to maximise linked trips, promote the use of sustainable modes of transport and support regeneration.

Retail

3. Existing convenience and comparison retail provision will be protected and appropriate new development in this use supported, to meet both local shopping needs and large-scale provision serving the wider catchment; this should be focused on re-purposing vacant floorspace and re-using existing sites within the centre in the first instance.

Leisure

4. Leisure uses, especially large-scale public and commercial facilities such as cinemas, hotels, and a wide range of high-quality family venues and activities, will be supported where they help to diversify the centre, encourage linked trips and enhance the evening economy and visitor experience

Office

5. Office provision will be supported, as West Bromwich is an important location for such employment. Future demand will be market-led; suitable sites are identified in the Masterplan.
6. Proposals in edge-of-centre and / or out-of-centre locations must meet the relevant requirements set out in Policy SCE6.

Sustainability

7. West Bromwich is a highly sustainable focus for service provision; it is a priority to ensure high quality public realm and standards of design are delivered and supported through environmental policies to deliver the aims and objectives in the Masterplan.

Accessibility

8. Proposals for commercial and business development that involve more than 500m2 (gross) of floorspace within the primary shopping areas of the centre and well-linked edge-of-centre locations should provide a travel plan.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SWB2	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	+	+

D.10.2.1 The policy aims to support the diversification of West Bromwich as Sandwell’s Strategic Centre to provide residents with a well-balanced provision of local facilities and uses.

- D.10.2.2 The policy identifies the importance of maximising residential provision to meet the borough-wide targets, ensuring that any large-scale proposals are located within West Bromwich to provide improved access to and uptake of sustainable means of transport. Locating large-scale developments within proximity of public transport networks would encourage active travel and could reduce reliance on private cars, reducing congestion within the area. Therefore, the policy could potentially have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation and transport (SA Objectives 4 and 9) as well as the provision of housing (SA Objective 10). These measures, in addition to the policy provision to ensure car parking demand and traffic are considered, could help to reduce adverse effects associated with air pollution, leading to an overall negligible effect on SA Objective 7.
- D.10.2.3 Policy SCE3 supports leisure uses that aim to *"diversify the centre, encourage linked trips and enhance the evening economy and visitor experience"*. Additionally, the policy includes measures to support the provision of office space, where future demand would be *"market led"*. The specifications of the policy would be likely to provide improved employment opportunities and retail developments to boost the local economy as well as human health and equality, by helping to ensure all residents have good access to a range of services and facilities, including education, leisure and healthcare, by providing community uses within centres. Overall, the measures within the policy would expect to have a minor positive impact on equality, health, the local economy and education (SA Objectives 11, 12, 13 and 14).
- D.10.2.4 The policy states that *"it is a priority to ensure high quality public realm and standards of design are delivered"*, which would help to ensure new development conserves and enhances the local landscape and townscape character, potentially resulting in a minor positive impact on SA Objective 2.
- D.10.2.5 The policy states that there will be a focus on *"re-purposing vacant floorspace and re-using existing sites within the centre"*. These measures would help to protect undeveloped land from new development and encourage an efficient use of land, with a likely minor positive impact on natural resources (SA Objective 6).

D.11 Transport

D.11.1 Policy STR1 – Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network

Policy STR1 – Priorities for the Development of the Transport Network

1. Land needed for the implementation of priority transport projects will be safeguarded to allow for their future delivery.
2. All new developments must provide adequate access for all modes of travel, prioritising walking, cycling and public transport to influence travel choices. Residential development will be expected to meet the accessibility standards set out elsewhere in this Plan.
3. Key transport corridors will be prioritised through the delivery of infrastructure to support active travel (walking, cycling), public transport improvements, traffic management (including localised junction improvements) and road safety.
4. Key transport priorities identified for delivery during the lifetime of the SLP currently include the following:
 - a. Motorways:
M5 Improvements (Junctions 1 and 2)
 - b. Rail:
Midlands Rail Hub
 - c. Rapid Transit
Wednesbury – Brierley Hill
A34 Walsall Road Sprint Corridor
Walsall – Stourbridge corridor tram-train extensions
 - d. Key road corridors including the following (but not limited to): A4123 Corridor Upgrade
A461 Black Country Corridor
A457/B4135 Oldbury, Smethwick to Birmingham Corridor
A4034 Blackheath and Oldbury Corridor
 - e. Interchanges
Dudley Port Integrated Transport Hub

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	+	0	0

D.11.1.1 Policy STR1 outlines SMBC’s priorities for the transport network during the Plan period, covering a wide range of transport modes including the strategic road network, rail, rapid transit and interchanges. The transport projects identified within this policy would all be expected to contribute towards improving the delivery of sustainable transport options,

improving the integration of different modes of transport, reducing issues with congestion and improving traffic flows. Overall, a major positive impact on transport would be expected (SA Objective 9).

D.11.1.2 The policy states that “*all new developments must provide adequate access for all modes of travel, including walking, cycling and public transport*” in accordance with the identified accessibility standards. The promotion of active travel and public transport improvements within key transport corridors would be likely to encourage the uptake of sustainable transport and could potentially help to reduce reliance on travel via car. A modal shift away from private car use towards public transport and active travel would be expected to result in a reduction in transport-associated emission of GHGs and other air pollutants. Therefore, Policy STR1 could potentially result in a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation and pollution (SA Objectives 4 and 7).

D.11.1.3 Furthermore, by encouraging the uptake of active travel and ensuring development is accessible via walking and cycling, Policy STR1 could potentially improve the physical and mental wellbeing of residents. Ensuring that road safety and pedestrian access are considered when designing new development would be likely to encourage more people to choose these forms of travel, encouraging physical exercise and social interaction. A minor positive impact on health would be anticipated (SA Objective 12).

D.11.2 Policy STR2 – Safeguarding the Development of the Key Route Network (KRN)

Policy STR2 – Safeguarding the Development of the Key Route Network (KRN)

1. Sandwell will, in conjunction with Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) and other neighbouring local highway authorities, identify capital improvements and management strategies to ensure the KRN meets its strategic functions.
2. Land needed for the implementation of improvements to the KRN will be safeguarded to assist in their future delivery.
3. Where new development is expected to result in adverse impacts on the KRN, appropriate mitigation measures will need to be identified through transport assessments and provided through planning obligations.
4. When working with neighbouring authorities, sub-national transport bodies, infrastructure providers and statutory bodies, there will be a focus on reducing the impact of private car use on the KRN and delivering a net-zero transport system.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR2	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

- D.11.2.1 New development within Sandwell as proposed within the SLP would be expected to result in an increased number of vehicles on the local road network, adding more pressure to road infrastructure and travel corridors. An increased volume of traffic on the road can have implications for a variety of issues such as congestion, road safety and air quality as well as resulting in longer journey times. Policy STR2 seeks to ensure that the Key Route Network (KRN) is effectively managed in order to support the level of growth proposed in the SLP over the Plan period.
- D.11.2.2 The policy states that suitable mitigation measures will be identified and put in place, to ensure that any potential adverse impacts on the road network are avoided. Furthermore, the policy would help to ensure that transport connectivity is improved, through requiring liaison with Transport for West Midlands or other relevant authorities. Policy STR2 could potentially encourage coordination and streamlining of transport systems including public transport such as rapid transit and bus routes. Overall, a minor positive impact on transport would be anticipated (SA Objective 9).
- D.11.2.3 Since Policy STR2 will seek to "focus on reducing the impact of private car use on the KRN and delivering a net-zero transport system", there may be potential for a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4).

D.11.3 Policy STR3 – Managing Transport Impacts of New Development

Policy STR3 – Managing Transport Impacts of New Development

1. Planning permission will not be granted for any proposals that are likely to have significant transport implications, unless accompanied by mitigation schemes that demonstrate an acceptable level of accessibility and safety can be achieved using all modes of transport to, from and through the development. Mitigation schemes must address in particular access by walking, cycling, public transport and shared transport.
2. These proposals should be in accordance with an agreed Transport Assessment, where deemed necessary by the Local Highway Authority, and include the implementation of measures to promote and improve such sustainable transport infrastructure and facilities through agreed Travel Plans and similar measures.
3. Sustainable transport modes must be made more convenient for the majority of journeys than car usage in order to promote genuine modal shift. They should be supported by the necessary management and regulatory measures if deemed necessary by the Local Highway Authority. Planning conditions and /or legal agreements may be required to ensure the implementation of agreed measures.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR3	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

D.11.3.1 Policy STR3 would help to ensure that new development is not permitted where there is potential for significant adverse effects on transport “*unless accompanied by mitigation schemes that demonstrate an acceptable level of accessibility and safety can be achieved using all modes of transport to, from and through the development. Mitigation schemes must address in particular access by walking, cycling, public transport and shared transport*”. The policy emphasises that sustainable travel options should be more convenient to site end users than private cars, which would be likely to increase their uptake. Overall, a minor positive impact on transport and climate change mitigation would be anticipated (SA Objectives 4 and 9).

D.11.4 Policy STR4 – The Efficient Movement of Freight & Logistics

Policy STR4 – The Efficient Movement of Freight & Logistics

1. The movement of freight by sustainable modes of transport such as rail and waterways will be encouraged. Road-based freight will be encouraged to use the Key Route Network whenever practicable.
2. Junction improvements and routeing strategies will be focussed on those parts of the highway network evidenced as being of particular importance for freight access to employment sites and the motorway network.
3. Proposals that generate significant freight movements will be directed to sites with satisfactory access to the Key Route Network.
4. Existing and disused railway lines will be safeguarded for rail-related uses.
5. Sites with existing and potential access to the rail network for freight will be safeguarded for rail-related uses.
6. Consideration will be given to the movement of freight, goods and other courier services on Sandwell’s roads when determining location of new development.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR4	0	0	-	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0

D.11.4.1 Policy STR4 sets out guidelines for the movement of freight, and the prioritisation of sustainable modes of transport where possible. Road transport is a major source of air pollution and GHG emissions in the UK⁶⁹. Transporting freight via rail and waterways

⁶⁹ ONS (2019) Road transport and air emissions. Available at:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/economy/environmentalaccounts/articles/roadtransportandairemissions/2019-09-16> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

would be expected to result in lower emissions and higher energy efficiency compared to road transport using heavy goods vehicles (HGVs)⁷⁰.

- D.11.4.2 By encouraging the movement of freight via rail and waterways, Policy STR4 could potentially help to relieve road congestion issues and result in more sustainable freight transport across the Plan area. Therefore, a minor positive impact on transport would be expected (SA Objective 9).
- D.11.4.3 Furthermore, this policy could potentially result in more cost-effective and efficient movement of freight, which would help to improve economic productivity. As such, this policy could potentially result in a minor positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13).
- D.11.4.4 The policy states that “*existing and disused railway lines will be safeguarded for rail-related uses*” and seeks to encourage the use of waterways for freight transport. In Sandwell, canals and disused railway lines form part of the ecological network in an otherwise heavily urbanised area, for example, the ‘Ridgeacre Branch Canal’ Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC), ‘Snow Hill to Wolverhampton Railway’ Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) and the ‘Princes End Disused Railway’ SLINC. The conversion of these routes back into regular use for freight transport could potentially result in a minor negative impact on biodiversity through the increased disturbance of important wildlife corridors (SA Objective 3).

D.11.5 Policy STR5 – Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and Walking

Policy STR5 – Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and Walking

1. By working in partnership with Transport for West Midlands and neighbouring local authorities, Sandwell will ensure that it can create and maintain a comprehensive cycle network based on the four tiers of the West Midlands cycle network, including the use of common cycle infrastructure design standards such as LTN1/20 and Manual for Streets 2 or such future relevant guidance as may be appropriate.
2. Creating an environment that encourages active travel requires new developments to link to existing walking and cycling networks. The links should be coherent, safe, direct, comfortable, attractive, and not impeded by other infrastructure including that provided for other forms of transport and digital / communication infrastructure.
3. Where possible, existing links including the canal network should be enhanced and the networks extended to serve new developments.
4. New developments should have good walking and cycling links to public transport nodes and interchanges.
5. Where possible, a compact and legible urban realm with easy to reach destinations on foot and by cycle should be delivered, including appropriate signage and wayfinding.

⁷⁰ Government Office for Science (2019) Understanding the UK freight transport system. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/future-of-mobility-the-uk-freight-transport-system> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

Policy STR5 – Creating Coherent Networks for Cycling and Walking

6. Cycle parking facilities should be provided at all new developments and should be in convenient locations with good natural surveillance, e.g. near to main front entrances for short stay visitors or under shelter for long stay visitors.
7. The number of cycle parking spaces required in new developments and in public realm schemes will be determined by local parking standards set out in Appendix L.
8. Sandwell Council will work with Transport for West Midlands and neighbouring local authorities on expanding the West Midlands Cycle Hire scheme and location and provision of cycle hire infrastructure will be integral when determining new development.
9. The design of cycle infrastructure should be in accordance with the principles and standards contained in the Department for Transport’s Local Transport Note 1/20 (LTN1/20): Cycle Infrastructure Design.
10. Where feasible, to improve the local environment for pedestrians and cyclists, measures to manage traffic should be considered, which may include measures such as modal filters, reducing traffic speeds, road space reallocation, and implementing parking management policies.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR5	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	++	0	+	+	0	0

- D.11.5.1 Policy STR5 seeks to ensure that walking and cycling infrastructure networks are developed and maintained across the borough to encourage sustainable travel choices.
- D.11.5.2 The policy requires the development of cycle and walking links which are *"coherent, safe, direct, comfortable, attractive, and not impeded by other infrastructure including that provided for other forms of transport"* and states that *"cycle parking facilities should be provided at all new developments and should be in convenient locations with good natural surveillance"*. These factors would be likely to encourage more people to consider cycling and walking as alternative forms of travel, reducing reliance on private car use. Therefore, a major positive impact on transport would be expected (SA Objective 9). This would also be expected to contribute towards a reduction in GHG emissions, and as such, a minor positive impact has been identified for climate change mitigation (SA Objective 4).
- D.11.5.3 Furthermore, through facilitating active travel, this policy could potentially encourage outdoor exercise and result in benefits to mental and physical wellbeing. A minor positive impact on health would be likely (SA Objective 12).
- D.11.5.4 Policy STR5 seeks to ensure that walking and cycling networks are safe, and bicycle storage is in *"convenient locations with good natural surveillance"*, which could help to reduce crime and the fear of crime. Therefore, this could potentially result in a minor positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11).

D.11.6 Policy STR6 – Influencing the Demand for Travel and Travel Choices

Policy STR6 – Influencing the Demand for Travel and Travel Choices

1. Sandwell is committed to considering all aspects of traffic management in the centres and wider area in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004. The priorities for traffic management in Sandwell are:
 - a. identifying appropriate strategic park and ride sites on current public transport routes to ease traffic flows into centres;
 - b. working together with the rest of the region to manage region-wide traffic flows through the West Midlands Regional Traffic Control Centre and further joint working;
 - c. implementing demand management measures to restrain car usage and managing car parking demand, thereby encouraging behaviour change and increasing travel by sustainable modes of transport;
 - d. providing better accessibility to shared transport services such as demand responsive transport services and mobility hubs, reducing the need to travel long distances by car or helping people to travel by more sustainable modes of transport;
 - e. maximising access to high speed broadband /digital infrastructure will be required to enable smarter working for those that are able to do so, thus further reducing the need to travel.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR6	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	0

D.11.6.1 Policy STR6 promotes the holistic management of traffic across the borough and wider area and seeks to encourage a modal shift towards more sustainable travel options, in accordance with the Traffic Management Act 2004 (TMA). The aim of the TMA is to “*tackle congestion and disruption on the road network ... [and] places a duty on local authorities to make sure traffic moves freely and quickly*”⁷¹.

D.11.6.2 Through requiring the identification of strategic park and ride sites and improving access to transport hubs, this policy would be expected to encourage the development of better-connected public transport systems and deliver more widespread changes to the transport network. The promotion of public transport and development of additional strategic and local sites for delivery, coupled with the policy provisions to ensure “*demand management measures to restrain car usage and managing car parking*” would be likely to reduce reliance on private car use and consequently reduce the emission of GHGs and other air pollutants. Moreover, maximising high speed broadband connections and encouraging smarter working will further reduce the need to travel. Overall, a major positive impact in

⁷¹ Department for Transport (2022) Traffic management Act 2004 overview. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/traffic-management-act-2004-overview> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

relation transport (SA Objective 9) and a minor positive impact to climate change mitigation and pollution (SA Objectives 4 and 7) would be expected.

D.11.7 Policy STR7 – Network Management

Policy STR7 – Network Management

1. Depending on the location of new development, the deployment of advanced and smart technologies that allow the public to plan their journeys more effectively may be appropriate, for example providing real time travel information and satellite navigation systems, Variable Message Signs (VMS) along congested parts of the network and digital sensors /cameras to monitor traffic and collect data on traffic patterns for future planning.
2. All new developments that impact the existing highway network, or which result in a new asset to be adopted by the Local Highway Authority, may be subject to fees and obligations for the maintenance of the highway network as part of a relevant legal agreement

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

D.11.7.1 Policy STR7 sets out the potential to introduce technologies to allow the effective planning of journeys, which could help to improve the overall management of the transport network and reduce congestion. A minor positive impact on transport (SA Objective 9) could be achieved, however this would be dependent on effective implementation and monitoring.

D.11.8 Policy STR8 – Parking Management

Policy STR8 – Parking Management

1. The priorities for traffic management in Sandwell include the sustainable delivery and management of parking in centres and beyond, through use of some or all the following measures as appropriate: -
 - a. The management and control of parking - ensuring that it is not used as a tool for competition between centres;
 - b. The type of parking – ensuring that where appropriate long-stay parking is removed from town centres, to support parking for leisure and retail customers and to encourage commuters to use more sustainable means and reduce peak hour traffic flows;
 - c. Maximum parking standards – ensuring that a consistent approach to maximum parking standards is enforced in new developments as set out in the guidance and standards contained at Appendix L;

Policy STR8 – Parking Management

- d. The location of parking – by reviewing the location of town centre car parks through the “Network Management Duty”, to ensure that the flow of traffic around town centres is as efficient as possible.
- e. Providing more convenient, secure, and accessible cycle parking will be a critical part of increasing cycling in Sandwell and making it a natural first choice for journeys. Considering different users and types of cycle parking will be an essential part of this and new developments should consider this in accordance with guidance set out in Appendix L.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	+	0

D.11.8.1 Policy STR8 sets out the approach to parking management in Sandwell, including the type, location and standards for parking in or near to town centres. By regulating the types of parking available in different locations, and ensuring these standards are applied consistently across the Plan area, this policy would be expected to encourage people to choose more sustainable travel modes where possible. The policy also aims to ensure that the efficiency of traffic flows in and around town centres is improved. Overall, a minor positive impact on transport would be anticipated (SA Objective 9).

D.11.8.2 The policy seeks to ensure that the type of parking is appropriate to the location, for example ensuring that “*long stay parking is removed near to town centres, to support parking for leisure and retail customers*”. Furthermore, the policy states that the control of parking should not be used “*as a tool for competition between centres*”. Therefore, this could potentially help to support local shops and businesses and result in a minor positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13).

D.11.9 Policy STR9 – Planning for Low Emission Vehicles

Policy STR9 – Planning for Low Emission Vehicles

1. Proposals for low emission vehicles will be supported by:
 - a. Ensuring that new developments include adequate provision for charging infrastructure e.g. electric vehicle charging points in car parks, measures to encourage LEV use through travel plans and other initiatives.
 - b. Where appropriate the Council will facilitate the introduction of charging points in public locations.
 - c. Working with partners to explore support for alternative low emission vehicle technologies, such as hydrogen fuel cells, across a range of modes; private cars, buses and/or small passenger and fleet vehicles

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR9	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

D.11.9.1 Policy STR9 promotes development proposals which would support low emission vehicles (LEV). The term LEV can be used to refer to motorised vehicles which emit lower levels of emissions than traditional petrol- or diesel-powered cars or use low carbon technologies, including pure electric vehicles and plug-in hybrid vehicles⁷².

D.11.9.2 This policy would help to encourage the use of LEVs within Sandwell, by ensuring the appropriate infrastructure such as electric vehicle charging points are incorporated within new developments and appropriate public locations. The policy also encourages the exploration of alternative low emission vehicle technologies. Overall, this would be expected to result in a minor positive impact on sustainable transport (SA Objective 9). Furthermore, encouraging the use of LEVs could potentially help to reduce the emission of GHGs and other air pollutants, resulting in a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation and pollution (SA Objectives 4 and 7).

D.11.10 Policy STR10 – Transport Innovation & Digital Connectivity

Policy STR10 – Transport Innovation & Digital Connectivity

1. Opportunities for integrating 5G connectivity within the transport network should be explored when development proposals, masterplanning and major housing and employment schemes are being promoted, to improve transport services and ensure there is 5G connectivity throughout Sandwell. This should include the provision of 5G connectivity as part of new development proposals, which will encourage more people to connect remotely, reducing the need to travel (see Policy SID1).
2. Sandwell will ensure the integration of 'smart infrastructure' where possible as part of new development proposals. In transport terms, examples of smart infrastructure include: -
 - a. smart parking sensors, which provide live parking capacity data;
 - b. traffic signals that can respond to levels of congestion and prioritise sustainable transport modes; and
 - c. transport volume monitoring sensors, which can provide information on the use of different modes, journey time or tracking data.

⁷² SMMT (2020) Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs). Available at: <https://www.smmt.co.uk/industry-topics/technology-innovation/ultra-low-emission-vehicles-ulevs/> [Date accessed: 21/07/23]

Policy STR10 – Transport Innovation & Digital Connectivity

3. Working in partnership with Transport for West Midlands and neighbouring Local Authorities, Sandwell will facilitate Mobility as a Service⁷³ and will ensure this is integrated into any new infrastructure where applicable.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
STR10	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	0	0	+	0

D.11.10.1 Policy STR10 promotes the provision of 5G connectivity, including within new homes and businesses and integrated within the transport network, which would encourage remote working and reduce the need to travel. A minor positive impact on the economy could therefore be achieved (SA Objective 13).

D.11.10.2 The integration of 'smart infrastructure' as outlined within the policy could help to reduce congestion, potentially helping to reduce the emission of GHGs and other air pollutants. Overall, if implementation and monitoring prove successful, this would be expected to result in a minor positive impact on sustainable transport, pollution and climate change mitigation (SA Objectives 4, 7 and 9).

⁷³ Digital transport service platforms that enable users to access, pay for, and get real-time information on, a range of public and private transport options.

D.12 Infrastructure and Delivery

D.12.1 Policy SID1 – Promotion of Fibre to the Premises and 5G Networks

Policy SID1 – Promotion of Fibre to the Premises and 5G Networks

Fibre to the Premise

1. Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) is essential infrastructure and is vital to the delivery of sustainable development. All major developments that provide ten or more new homes or more than 1,000 sqm of non-residential floorspace will be required to deliver FTTP capacity / infrastructure to all individual properties.
2. All eligible proposals should be supported by an FTTP Statement that details how FTTP will be provided to serve the development and confirms that FTTP will be available at first occupation.

5G Networks

3. Any proposals for infrastructure to support the delivery of 5G networks will be supported in principle, subject to meeting the following criteria and the requirements of other local policies and national guidance:
 - a. Proposals should be sensitively sited and designed to minimise impacts on the environment, amenity, and character of the surrounding area.
 - b. Proposals should not have an adverse impact on areas of ecological interest or areas of landscape importance, and should protect and, where possible, enhance the significance of heritage assets and their setting (Policies SNE2 and SHE2).
 - c. Proposals should demonstrate that proper regard has been given to location and landscaping requirements, including the potential for innovative solutions complementary to the immediate surroundings.
 - d. The potential to use canal towpaths to accommodate 5G or other network infrastructure and cabling should be explored, where this would not adversely affect areas of ecological or historic interest (Policy SNE6).
4. Operators proposing 5G network infrastructure are strongly recommended to enter into early discussions with the Council.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SID1	0	0	0	+	0	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	0

D.12.1.1 Policy SID1 supports the provision of Fibre to the Premise (FTTP), for residential developments of ten or more dwellings or over 1,000m² of non-residential uses, and 5G networks in principle. The promotion of such infrastructure would be likely to help ensure that development proposals can meet the needs of current and future populations.

- D.12.1.2 With the development of FTTP and 5G within the borough under this policy, residents would be likely to have greater access to essential services from home and the workplace. This would provide increased opportunities to work from home and access to a wider range of employment opportunities, resulting in a minor positive impact on the local community and economy (SA Objective 13). By ensuring all development of ten or more homes incorporates FTTP, this policy would be likely to ensure the majority of new residents across the Plan area have access to this service, and the benefits this brings in terms of employment opportunities and digital inclusion, with a likely minor positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11).
- D.12.1.3 In addition, with improved access to online facilities and home working, this policy could potentially help to reduce reliance on private car use such as for commuting to workplaces, and in turn, reduce local congestion. This would be expected to have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation, air pollution and transport, due to reduced emissions and congestion associated with less traffic (SA Objectives 4, 7, and 9).
- D.12.1.4 The policy seeks to minimise adverse effects on the surrounding environment in terms of amenity, landscape, character and ecology. As such, negligible impacts would be likely for SA Objectives 1, 2 and 3.

D.12.2 Policy SID2 – Mobile Network Infrastructure

Policy SID2 – Mobile Network Infrastructure

1. To ensure that the installation of masts is in full compliance with the requirements of the radio frequency (RF) public exposure guidelines of the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP) applications for all prior approval and full planning applications must:
 - a. provide self-certification to the effect that a mobile phone base station when operational will meet the ICNRP guidelines; and
 - b. provide a statement for each site indicating its location, the height of the antenna, the frequency and modulation characteristics and details of power output and where a mobile phone base station is added to an external mast or site, confirmation that the cumulative exposure will not exceed the ICNRP guidelines.
2. Infrastructure should be located where it will have the least adverse impact on local landscapes, biodiversity and heritage assets wherever possible. Where unavoidable impacts arise in sensitive locations, they should be considered fully and avoided or mitigated accordingly.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SID2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.12.2.1 Policy SID2 sets out the requirements of mobile network infrastructure in regard to public health. The policy requires development proposals to meet the guidelines set by the International Commission on Non-Ionizing Radiation Protection (ICNIRP). This could help to reduce the potential for adverse effects in terms of human health, with a negligible impact identified under SA Objective 12.

D.12.2.2 Policy SID2 states that *"infrastructure should be located where it will have the least adverse impact on local landscapes, biodiversity and heritage assets wherever possible"* and would therefore expect to have a negligible impact on cultural heritage, landscape and local biodiversity (SA Objectives 1, 2, and 3).

D.12.3 Policy SID3 – Digital Infrastructure / Equipment

Policy SID3 – Digital Infrastructure / Equipment

1. The siting and design (including materials) of digital infrastructure / equipment, which includes (but is not limited to) telephone kiosks and digital interactive finger posts, will be carefully controlled to ensure: -
 - a. they do not detract from the visual amenities of the street scene;
 - b. they avoid harmful impacts on public amenity or unacceptable street clutter in the public realm;
 - c. they avoid harm to the significance of heritage assets or their settings and support local distinctiveness.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SID3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.12.3.1 Policy SID3 sets out the requirements of the design and location of digital infrastructure to ensure that harm is avoided to visual amenity, *"heritage assets or their settings"*, and *"the public realm"*. The policy would protect the local landscape character and the heritage assets and settings that contribute to the creation of local distinctiveness and identity, and would be expected to have a negligible impact on cultural heritage and the local landscape (SA Objectives 1 and 2).

D.13 Waste and Minerals

D.13.1 Policy SWA1 – Waste Infrastructure Future Requirements

Policy SWA1 – Waste Infrastructure Future Requirements

1. Proposals for relevant, major development shall evidence how its operation will minimise waste production, as well as facilitating the re-use and recovery of waste materials including, for example, through recycling, composting and energy from waste.
2. Waste operators will be expected to demonstrate that the greenhouse gas emissions from the operations involved and associated transport of waste from source to processing facility have been minimised, in line with national and local targets for the transition to a net zero carbon economy.
3. Proposals for waste management facilities will be supported based upon the following principles;
 - a. managing waste through the waste hierarchy in sequential order. Sites for the disposal of waste will only be permitted where it meets a need which cannot be met by treatment higher in the waste hierarchy;
 - b. promoting the opportunities for on-site management of waste where it arises and encouraging the co-location of waste developments that can use each other’s waste materials;
 - c. ensuring that sufficient capacity is located within Sandwell to accommodate the waste capacity requirements during the plan period and reducing the reliance on other authority areas;
 - d. enabling the development of recycling facilities across the Sandwell, including civic amenity sites, and ensuring that there is enough capacity and access for the deposit of municipal waste for re-reuse, recycling, and disposal;
 - e. waste must be disposed of, or be recovered in, one of the nearest appropriate facilities, by means of the most appropriate methods and technologies, to ensure a high level of protection for the environment and public health;
 - f. ensuring new waste management facilities are located and designed to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the townscape and landscape, human health and well-being, nature conservation and heritage assets and amenity;
 - g. working collaboratively with neighbouring authorities with responsibilities for waste who import waste into, or export waste out of, the Sandwell, to ensure a co-operative cross boundary approach to waste management is maintained.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SWA1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.13.1.1 Policy SWA1 sets out the strategy for waste management within Sandwell, seeking to reduce the generation of waste and associated pollution, promote re-use and recycling of

waste in line with the waste hierarchy, and ensure sufficient capacity in the waste management system.

- D.13.1.2 Policy SWA1 supports the “*minimisation of waste production and the re-use and recovery of waste materials*” and encourages development proposals to manage waste through the waste hierarchy, “*ensuring that sufficient capacity is located within Sandwell to accommodate forecast waste arisings of all types during the Plan period and reducing the reliance on other authority areas*”. The policy promotes the re-use and recycling of materials. Overall, the policy would be expected to help reduce the volume of waste generated in the borough and improve the management and disposal of waste. Therefore, a major positive impact on waste would be expected (SA Objective 8).
- D.13.1.3 The policy also seeks to ensure “*new waste management facilities are located and designed to avoid unacceptable adverse impacts on the environment, human health and well-being, wildlife, heritage assets and amenity*”. These criteria would be likely to help avoid adverse impacts in relation to human health, biodiversity and cultural heritage; therefore, negligible impacts would be likely against these objectives (SA Objectives 1, 3 and 12).

D.13.2 Policy SWA2 – Waste Sites

Policy SWA2 – Waste Sites

Protecting Waste Sites

1. Sandwell will safeguard all existing strategic and other waste management facilities from inappropriate development, in order to maintain existing levels of waste management capacity and meet Strategic Objective 17, unless it can be demonstrated that:
 - a. there is no longer a need for the facility; and
 - b. capacity can be met elsewhere; or
 - c. appropriate compensatory provision is made in appropriate locations elsewhere in the Black Country; or
 - d. the site is required to facilitate the strategic objectives of the Sandwell.
2. This policy will also apply to all new waste management sites that are implemented within the lifetime of the plan.

New development near existing waste facilities

3. Proposals for housing and other potentially sensitive uses will not be permitted near to or adjacent to an existing waste management site where there is potential for conflict between the uses,
 - a. unless a temporary permission for a waste use has expired, or the waste management use has otherwise ceased, and the site or infrastructure is considered unsuitable for a subsequent waste use;
 - b. or redevelopment of the waste site or loss of waste infrastructure would form part of a strategy or scheme that has wider environmental, social and / or economic benefits that outweigh the retention of the site or infrastructure for the waste use and alternative provision is made for the displaced waste use;
 - c. or a suitable replacement site or infrastructure has otherwise been identified and permitted.

Policy SWA2 – Waste Sites

- Waste Site Impact Assessments will be expected to demonstrate that at least one of the above criteria applies. Applications should also identify any 'legacy' issues arising from existing or former waste uses, and how these will be addressed through the design of the development and the construction process.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SWA2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.13.2.1 The aim of Policy SWA2 is to safeguard and retain capacity of the existing waste facilities in Sandwell. The policy also states that “*proposals for housing and other potentially sensitive uses will not be permitted near to or adjacent to an existing waste management site where there is potential for conflict between the uses*”. The policy would be likely to help ensure appropriate waste management continues in the borough and that capacity at these facilities does not decrease. Overall, a minor positive impact on waste would be expected (SA Objective 8).

D.13.3 Policy SWA3 – Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities

Policy SWA3 – Preferred Areas for New Waste Facilities

- The preferred locations for waste management facilities are the Local Employment Areas shown on the Sandwell Policies Map, Waste Key Diagram.
- All proposals for new waste management facilities should demonstrate how they will contribute to Strategic Objective 17 and the strategic objectives of Policy SWA1, such as the contribution they will make to landfill diversion, delivery of new waste management capacity and diversification of the range of facilities currently available.
- All applications for waste development will be expected to comply with the requirements in Policy SWA4.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SWA3	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	+/-	++	+/-	0	0	0	0	0

D.13.3.1 Policy SWA3 identifies preferred locations for new waste management infrastructure in Sandwell. The provision of waste management facilities would be likely to have a major

positive impact on waste, by ensuring there are adequate facilities and capacity within the borough to effectively manage waste (SA Objective 8).

D.13.3.2 At present, the scale and potential capacity of the proposed waste management facilities is unknown. Seeking to manage Sandwell's waste rather than exporting to surrounding areas could potentially result in some benefits associated with reduced need to transport waste, although the extent / likelihood of these benefits is unknown at present. Overall, the likely impact in relation to environmental objectives is uncertain (SA Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9).

D.13.3.3 The provision of waste management facilities would not be expected to impact housing, equality, health, economy or education (SA Objectives 10, 11, 12, 13 and 14).

D.13.4 Policy SWA4 – Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities

Policy SWA4 – Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities

Key Locational Considerations for All Waste Management Proposals

1. Proposals should demonstrate how they will contribute to Strategic Objective 17 and the strategic objectives of Policy SWA1, such as the contribution they will make towards landfill diversion, delivery of new waste management capacity and diversification of the range of facilities currently available.
2. Development for new build waste management facilities⁷⁴ should be focused in local employment areas and will be required to meet the following criteria:
 - a. evidence the need for the facility;
 - b. all waste processes and operations must be contained, processed and managed within buildings unless there are acceptable operational reasons why these processes cannot be contained in buildings;
 - c. proposals must accord with all other policies in relation to the protection of the environment and public amenity, or demonstrate that other material considerations outweigh any policy conflicts;
 - d. consideration will be given to the potential impacts of waste management proposals on: -
 - i. minimising adverse visual impacts;
 - ii. potential detrimental effects on the environment and public health;
 - iii. generation of odours, litter, light, dust, and other infestation;
 - iv. noise, excessive traffic and vibration;
 - v. risk of serious fires through combustion of accumulated wastes;
 - vi. harm to water quality and resources and flood risk management;
 - vii. land instability;
 - viii. land use conflict; proposals should demonstrate compatibility with the uses already present within / adjacent to the area;
 - ix. where necessary mitigation measures should be identified to reduce any adverse effects to an acceptable level.

⁷⁴ Waste development covers the use of any land or buildings for the storage, treatment, processing, transfer, bulking-up, recycling, recovery, or final deposit of any substance classified as 'waste'.

Policy SWA4 – Locational Considerations for New Waste Facilities

- x. whether the proposal would provide opportunities for co-location of related uses and / or generate other benefits (for example; produce a range of waste types or streams, produce high quality aggregates or other useful raw materials, or supply heat and power or other forms of energy to adjacent uses).

Waste Applications – Supporting Information

3. Planning applications for waste development⁷⁵ should include a supporting statement that clearly describes the key characteristics of the development. It should also explain how the development aligns with Strategic Objective 17 and the General Principles and Preferred Methods of managing waste in Policy SWA1. In particular, the application should explain the contribution the development would make towards driving waste up the waste hierarchy, supporting the development of a more circular economy, meeting the Black Country’s additional waste capacity requirements, and broadening the range of waste facilities currently available in the plan area.
4. The following information should also be included in the supporting statement and /or on the planning application form:
 - a. the type of waste facility or facilities proposed;
 - b. the waste streams and types of waste to be managed;
 - c. the types of operation to be carried out on the site;
 - d. whether waste would be sourced locally, regionally or nationally;
 - e. the maximum operational throughput in tonnes per annum;
 - f. for waste disposal, the total void space to be infilled in cubic metres;
 - g. the outputs from the operations, including waste residues;
 - h. the expected fate and destination of the outputs;
 - i. the number of associated vehicular movements;
 - j. the number of jobs created.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SWA4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.13.4.1 Policy SWA4 sets out criteria to which new waste management facilities should be in accordance with. Waste management facilities will only be supported where there is an identified need for the facility. This would be likely to help fill any gaps in the borough

⁷⁵ This includes applications for new build waste developments, changes of use to waste developments, applications for new operational development and other material changes to existing waste sites, and ‘s73’ applications to vary a condition attached to an existing waste permission. For definitions of ‘waste development’ and ‘waste’ see the Policy Justification.

and meet the locally identified waste management needs. A minor positive impact on waste would therefore be expected (SA Objective 8).

D.13.4.2 The policy states that consideration will be given to *"visual impacts"*, *"detrimental effects on the environment and public health"*, *"noise, excessive traffic and vibration"* and *"water quality and resources and flood risk management"* when allocating waste management facilities. These criteria would be expected to help prevent adverse impacts, and therefore, negligible impacts have been identified in relation to landscape, biodiversity, human health, transport, flood risk and pollution (SA Objectives 2, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 12).

D.13.4.3 Policy SWA4 states *"proposals must accord with all other policies in relation to the protection of the environment and public amenity"*. However, it is uncertain what policies this is referring to. It is recommended that this statement is expanded, and further detail provided.

D.13.5 Policy SWA5 – Resource Management and New Development

Policy SWA5 – Resource Management and New Development

Waste Management in new developments

1. All new developments should;
 - a. address waste as a resource;
 - b. minimise waste as far as possible
 - c. design sites with resource and waste management in mind;
 - d. manage unavoidable waste in a sustainable and responsible manner; and
 - e. maximise use of materials with low environmental impacts.
2. Where a proposal includes uses likely to generate significant amounts of waste, these should be managed either on-site or in as close a proximity as possible to the source of the waste.
3. Resource and waste management requirements should be reflected in the design and layout of new development schemes. Wherever possible building, engineering and landscaping projects should use alternatives to primary aggregates, such as secondary and recycled materials, renewable and locally sourced products and materials with low environmental impacts. Consideration should also be given to how waste will be managed within the development once it is in use.
4. Where redevelopment of existing buildings or structures and / or remediation of derelict land is proposed, construction, demolition and excavation wastes (CD&EW) should be managed on-site where feasible and as much material as possible should be recovered and re-used for engineering or building either on-site or elsewhere.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SWA5	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	++	0	0	0	0	0	0

- D.13.5.1 Policy SWA5 sets out criteria for the sustainable management of waste and resources associated with new developments, during both construction and occupation.
- D.13.5.2 The policy requires all new developments to “*minimise waste as far as possible*” and seeks to maximise the use of “*secondary and recycled materials, renewable and locally sourced products and materials with low environmental impacts*” wherever possible. This policy would be expected to promote sustainable and efficient waste management and use of materials across all new development in Sandwell and limit the generation of waste as much as is feasible. Furthermore, Policy SWA5 seeks to ensure that development design takes into account the need for waste management, when occupied. Overall, a major positive impact on waste would be expected (SA Objective 8).
- D.13.5.3 Additionally, through encouraging the efficient use of resources and reducing the need for extraction of primary aggregates, Policy SWA5 would be expected to result in a minor positive impact on natural resources (SA Objective 6).
- D.13.5.4 Policy SWA5 also seeks to ensure that environmental impacts as a result of resource management and new development are minimised. The policy encourages the use of materials with low environmental impacts and the management of waste either on-site or as close as possible to the source. These factors would be expected to minimise the potential for, and scale of, adverse impacts on the environment by reducing the distances travelled by waste management vehicles such as HGVs. Therefore, negligible impacts have been identified for landscape, biodiversity, pollution and transport (SA Objectives 2, 3, 7 and 9).

D.13.6 Policy SMI1 – Minerals Safeguarding

Policy SMI1 – Minerals Safeguarding

1. Mineral deposits that are identified as being, or may become of, economic importance will be safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation.
2. Where development is proposed, encouragement will be given to the extraction of the mineral resource prior to or in conjunction with, development, where this would not have unacceptable impacts on neighbouring uses. Developments over five hectares should be accompanied by supporting information (as set out in the Justification) demonstrating that mineral resources will not be needlessly sterilised.
Secondary and Recycled Aggregates
3. At the end of 2017 the Sandwell was estimated to be producing around 330,000 tonnes of secondary and recycled aggregates per annum at permitted production sites. As a minimum, Sandwell will aim to maintain its share of this level of production throughout the plan period. In support of this, permitted secondary and recycled aggregate sites expected to continue in production up to 2041 will be safeguarded.
4. The location of all permitted mineral infrastructure sites in Sandwell, are identified on the Policy Map and these sites are also listed below. Applications for development within a 150m buffer zone of these sites will need to demonstrate they will not have any unacceptable impacts on these sites that would prevent them from continuing to operate.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SMI1	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

D.13.6.1 Although Sandwell itself does not contain any Mineral Safeguarding Areas at present, Policy SMI1 sets out requirements for any mineral deposits identified as being or becoming of economic importance to be "*safeguarded from unnecessary sterilisation*". Therefore, the policy would be expected to protect mineral resources and have a minor positive impact on natural resources (SA Objective 6).

D.13.6.2 This policy would be expected to have a minor positive impact on the local economy, by supporting local construction and industrial businesses (SA Objective 13).

D.13.7 Policy SMI2 – Managing the Effects of Mineral Development

Policy SMI2 – Managing the Effects of Mineral Development

General Requirements for Minerals Developments

1. When working ceases, all plant and equipment should be removed, and sites should be restored as soon as possible.
2. The working, processing or recycling of minerals must accord with all other policies in relation to the protection of the environment, public amenity and health, and surrounding land uses as set out in this plan or in any other adopted development plan – or otherwise demonstrate that other material considerations outweigh any policy conflict.
3. Subject to other policies within the Plan, planning permission will be granted for built development within the Consideration Zones around Coneygre Mine and Blackham Mine, where the applicant is able to demonstrate that a collapse in the mine would not prejudice public safety or compromise the structural integrity of the proposed structures.
4. Proposals should address the impact of transporting minerals and mineral products on the highway network and should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment if generating a significant number of vehicle movements.

Additional Assessment Criteria for Minerals Developments

5. In addition to the general requirements set out above, proposals for mineral working or mineral-related infrastructure at both new and existing sites will be further assessed in terms of:
 - a. minimising any adverse visual impacts;
 - b. effects on natural, built, and historic (including archaeological) environments and on public health;
 - c. generation of noise, dust, vibration, lighting, and excessive vehicle movements;
 - d. compatibility with neighbouring uses – taking into account the nature of the operations, hours of working, the timing and duration of operations and any cumulative effects;

Policy SMI2 – Managing the Effects of Mineral Development

- e. harm to water quality and resources and flood risk management;
- f. ground conditions and land stability;
- g. land use conflict – proposals should demonstrate compatibility with the uses already present within the surrounding area;
- h. impacts on the highway, transport, and drainage network;
- i. where necessary, mitigation measures should be identified to reduce any adverse effects to an acceptable level.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SMI2	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

- D.13.7.1 Policy SMI2 sets out criteria by which development proposals for minerals working and infrastructure would be expected to comply. All development proposals will need to contribute to the extraction of minerals as set out in Policy SMI1. A minor positive impact on natural resources would therefore be expected (SA Objective 6).
- D.13.7.2 Under this policy, mineral extraction sites would be required to be restored as soon as possible once work ceases. This would be likely to help prevent adverse impacts on landscape and biodiversity, and therefore, negligible impacts have been identified (SA Objectives 2 and 3). Positive effects could be achieved in the longer term.
- D.13.7.3 Policy SMI2 seeks to *"address the impact of transporting minerals and mineral products on the highway network and should be accompanied by a Transport Assessment if generating a significant number of vehicle movements"*. This would be expected to have benefits to transport and local congestion, as well as reducing transport-related air pollution and carbon emissions. Nevertheless, the transportation of minerals would be expected to lead to a high number of HGVs on nearby roads. Overall, a negligible impact on climate change mitigation, pollution and transport would be likely (SA Objectives 4, 7 and 9).
- D.13.7.4 Development proposals for minerals extraction will be assessed for their effect on public health under this policy. This would be expected to help prevent development resulting in adverse impacts on human health, including inappropriate noise pollution and vibrations. Overall, a negligible impact on health would be likely (SA Objective 12).
- D.13.7.5 The policy also seeks to assess development proposals for their effects on *"historic (including archaeological) environments"* and would be likely to prevent adverse impacts on the historic environment. Therefore, a negligible impact on cultural heritage would be expected (SA Objective 1).

- D.13.7.6 Policy SMI2 will assess development proposals in terms of "*harm to water quality and resources and flood risk management*". This would be likely to help ensure proposals under this policy do not exacerbate local flood risk, and therefore, a negligible impact would be expected (SA Objective 5).

DRAFT

D.14 Development Constraints and Industrial Legacy

D.14.1 Policy SCO1 – Hazardous Installations and Substances

Policy SCO1 – Hazardous Installations and Substances

1. The Council will seek the reduction or removal of the hazardous component of notified installations. Where any existing or proposed industrial development presents a significant potential hazard to the health and safety of employees, or to people living and working in the surrounding area, the Council will seek either a reduction in the risk or its elimination.
2. The Council will use its powers under the Planning (Hazardous Substances) Act 1990 (or any subsequent legislative powers that supersede this Act) to revoke or modify a hazardous substances consent where either the consent has not been relied upon for five years or where all potential claimants for compensation indicate that they will not seek compensation.
3. The Council will oppose the expansion of existing hazardous installations unless it can be demonstrated that consent will not: -
 - a. increase the population at risk or the level of risk itself; or
 - b. adversely impact on the potential for development and / or redevelopment of adjoining land.
4. The Council will consult the Health and Safety Executive, the Environment Agency and other relevant bodies on all applications for hazardous substances consent and planning permission in the consultation zones around hazardous premises as may be notified from time to time to the Council by the Health and Safety Executive.
5. The Council will not grant either planning permission or hazardous substances consent for new development that when operational will: -
 - a. result in a significant increase to the risk or consequences of a major incident; and / or
 - b. adversely impact on the potential for development / redevelopment of adjoining land.

Policy Ref	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCO1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.14.1.1 Policy SCO1 sets out criteria by which development proposals will be expected to comply regarding installations and substances that could be harmful to health, including those which are toxic, explosive, inflammable, highly reactive and hazardous. This would be expected to help prevent development resulting in adverse impacts on human health, as the policy seeks to reduce or remove “*the hazardous component of notified installations*”.

Overall, a negligible impact on health (SA Objective 12), as well as all other SA Objectives, would be expected.

D.14.2 Policy SCO2 – Pollution Control

Policy SCO2 – Pollution Control

1. Development proposals that are likely to cause or increase pollution or expose their occupants, users or adjacent residents to new or increased pollution will only be permitted where it can be demonstrated that sufficient mitigation measures are available and will be used to minimise harmful impacts to a level that protects the health and amenity of people and the environment. Measures that seek to eliminate existing pollution sources or reduce existing levels of pollution will be supported.
2. Development proposals must not, either individually or cumulatively, contribute to or produce poor air quality, odour nuisance and / or unacceptable levels of emissions from commercial and industrial premises that could cause detriment to local amenity. Proposals should be designed to reduce the exposure of occupants and users of the development to poor air quality and mitigate the effects of all relevant pollution sources⁷⁶. The Council will seek to improve air quality across the borough (Policy SHW3). Proposals that include measures to improve air quality will be supported.
3. Development proposals that incorporate artificial lighting must have regard to the siting, design and luminance of external lighting sources, and the relationship between light spill and the design of the scheme, to avoid adversely affecting local amenity and nature conservation⁷⁷. Measures should be employed to ensure external lighting is only used when required.
4. Development proposals must not give rise to noise and vibration at such levels that they are likely to adversely impact health and quality of life, both during the construction of development and following its completion.
5. Development proposals that are sensitive to noise should not be located within an area of existing high levels of noise unless it has been demonstrated that noise impacts can be satisfactorily mitigated by the design and layout of the scheme, and / or the incorporation of insulation, including acoustic glazing.
6. The 'agent of change' principle set out in the National Planning Policy Framework will be applied when determining applications for planning permission.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCO2	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.14.2.1 Policy SCO2 sets out criteria by which development proposals will be expected to comply regarding air, noise and light pollution. This would be expected to help prevent

⁷⁶ Further guidance in relation to air quality is provided by policy SLP18

⁷⁷ See also Policy SNE* - habitats

development resulting in adverse impacts on human health, including inappropriate noise and light pollution, resulting in a negligible impact on SA Objective 10. The policy also requires new development to avoid exacerbating poor air quality and other pollutants, both individually and cumulatively, and states that “*proposals that include measures to improve air quality will be supported*”. Overall, a minor positive impact on pollution could be achieved (SA Objective 7), however the policy would benefit from stronger wording to seek an improvement in air quality and remediation of other pollutants.

D.14.3 Policy SCO3 – Land contamination and instability

Policy SCO3 – Land contamination and instability	
1.	Planning permission will be granted for development on: - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> land that is unstable; land that is contaminated or suspected of being contaminated due to its historic use or geology; or land that will potentially become contaminated as a result of the development; subject to the submission of satisfactory information relating to ground conditions and the presence of ground gas, and full details of the assessment and remedial measures that will be used to deal with instability and contaminants.
2.	The assessment must demonstrate that: - <ol style="list-style-type: none"> there will be no significant harm, or any risk of significant harm, to the health and wellbeing of people and the environment; there will be no current likelihood, or future risk, that watercourses and groundwater will become contaminated; and any necessary remedial action is undertaken to safeguard users of the land or neighbouring land both during the construction of development and following occupation.
3.	The Council will support the reclamation and remediation of derelict, despoiled, degraded and contaminated land as part of the ongoing regeneration of the borough.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SCO3	0	+	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

D.14.3.1 The aim of Policy SCO3 is to ensure any development on unstable or contaminated land is structurally sound and poses no danger to human health. SMBC will support the reuse of degraded landscapes and regeneration of the borough, including “*derelict, despoiled, degraded or contaminated land*”, therefore having a minor positive impact on landscape and natural resources (SA Objectives 2 and 6).

- D.14.3.2 By seeking to avoid harm to health and wellbeing of people and the environment, including the water environment, the policy would be likely to result in negligible impacts on pollution and health (SA Objectives 7 and 12).

DRAFT

D.15 Development Management

D.15.1 Policy SDM1 – Design Quality

Policy SDM1 – Design Quality

1. Developments must be designed to high standards and should create a strong sense of place and reflect Sandwell’s unique character. They must address as appropriate:
 - a. the topography, townscapes and landscapes of Sandwell;
 - b. the need to maintain strategic gaps and views, including to and from the Rowley Hills;
 - c. the built and natural settings of development;
 - d. the need to ensure that domestic extensions should generally be subservient and proportionate to the existing dwelling and should be in keeping with their surroundings by virtue of their scale, architecture and materials.
 - e. the treatment of ‘gateway’ opportunities where they occur in key locations;
 - f. Sandwell’s industrial and domestic architecture;
 - g. the need to ensure development has no harmful impacts on key environmental and historic assets, townscapes and locations and that wherever possible it contributes to the conservation and enhancement of environmental and historic assets and their settings;
 - h. the presence of canals in Sandwell’s urban environments and the opportunities they offer for design, accessibility, the environment and technology;
 - i. the matter of land instability where this is an issue in relation to specific development proposals.
2. Development proposals must demonstrate that the following have been addressed in design and access statements that reflect their Sandwell-specific context: -
 - a. the ten characteristics of the National Design Guide⁷⁸, to provide a high-quality network of streets, buildings and spaces;
 - b. the principles of Manual for Streets⁷⁹, to ensure urban streets and spaces provide a high quality public realm and an attractive, safe and permeable movement network;
 - c. use of the Building for a Healthy Life⁸⁰ criteria (or subsequent iterations) and Sandwell's local housing design codes, masterplans and guidance for new housing developments, to achieve high design standards, good place-making and sustainable development;
 - d. crime prevention measures, Secured by Design and Park Mark principles and the requirements of Part Q of the Building Regulations 2010 or any successor legislation;
 - e. the agent of change⁸¹ principle, in relation to existing uses adjacent to proposed development sites.

⁷⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide>

⁷⁹ Current and future iterations - <https://www.ciht.org.uk/knowledge-resource-centre/resources/revising-manual-for-streets/>

⁸⁰ <https://www.udg.org.uk/publications/othermanuals/building-healthy-life>

⁸¹ Paragraph 187 of the NPPF (2023) states that both planning policies and decisions should ensure that new development can be integrated effectively with existing businesses and community facilities (e.g. places of

Policy SDM1 – Design Quality

3. Major development proposals should contribute to the greening of Sandwell by:
 - a. including urban greening⁸² as a fundamental element of site and building design;
 - b. incorporating measures such as high-quality landscaping and tree planting⁸³, other soft landscaping, green roofs, green walls and sustainable drainage and conserving existing green spaces and natural resources;
 - c. optimising the use of multi-functional green infrastructure (including water features, green roofs and planting) for urban cooling, local flood risk management and to provide access to outdoor space and shading.
4. Development must not cause an adverse impact on the living environment of occupiers of existing residential properties, or unacceptable living conditions for future occupiers of new residential properties, in terms of:
 - a. privacy and overlooking
 - b. access to sunlight and daylight;
 - c. artificial lighting;
 - d. vibration;
 - e. dust and fumes;
 - f. smell;
 - g. noise;
 - h. crime and safety; and / or
 - i. wind, where the proposals involve the development of tall buildings.
5. To improve the quality and perception of the public realm in Sandwell, the Council will encourage the promotion of public art, subject to appropriate public consultation and in accordance with other relevant policies. Where new development changes or creates public spaces, the Council will welcome the provision of public art as part of the proposal.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM1	0	+	+	+	+	0	+	0	+	0	+	+	0	0

D.15.1.1 Policy SDM1 sets out design requirements to ensure that developments *"create a strong sense of place and reflect Sandwell's unique character"*. The policy also refers to a range of guidance documents that must be adhered to, including the National Design Guide,

worship, pubs, music venues and sports clubs). Unreasonable restrictions should not be placed on existing businesses because of development permitted after they were established.

⁸² e.g. landscaping, provision of formal / informal open space, habitat creation and improvement, tree planting, certain forms of infrastructure such as types of SuDS etc. in urban locations

⁸³ Including street trees where appropriate and in accordance with other policies of the SLP

Manual for Streets and Building for Life, as well as considering local guidance and design codes for Sandwell. Good design can enhance the quality of life for residents, strengthen the sense of place, improve the attractiveness of a location and create safer places to live and work.

- D.15.1.2 Development under Policy SDM1 must ensure that the design of the development is *"in keeping with their surroundings by virtue of their scale, architecture and materials"* and conserves important views and other locally distinctive features. Additionally, the policy states that development should ensure it has *"no harmful impacts on key environmental and historic assets, townscapes and locations"* and *"wherever possible it contributes to the conservation and enhancement of environmental and historic assets and their settings"*. The policy would therefore be expected to have a minor positive impact on the landscape and cultural heritage (SA Objectives 1 and 2).
- D.15.1.3 The policy includes measures that promote the 'greening' of Sandwell. The policy states that major development proposals within Sandwell should include *"high-quality landscaping and tree planting, other soft landscaping, green roofs, green walls and sustainable drainage and conserving existing green spaces and natural resources"*. Optimising multi-functional GI would help to support wildlife networks and opportunities for habitat creation amongst the urban areas. Additionally, greening and GI could also increase cooling, filtration of pollutants and reduce surface water-run off rates. The policy would therefore be expected to have a minor positive impact on biodiversity, climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation and pollution (SA Objectives 3, 4, 5, and 7).
- D.15.1.4 The policy identifies the importance of accessibility within the borough and states that the design of urban streets and spaces should provide a *"high quality public realm and an attractive, safe and permeable movement network"*. The measures to increase accessibility would be expected to enable the use of public transport within the borough and encourage active travel. The policy also includes measures to ensure development proposals should not cause adverse impacts on the safety and privacy of residents, and would be likely to contribute towards a reduction in crime and the fear of crime, helping to create safe and cohesive communities. The policy would therefore expect to have a minor positive impact on transport, accessibility, equality and public safety (SA Objectives 9, 11 and 12).

D.15.2 Policy SDM2 – Development and Design Standards

Policy SDM2 – Development and Design Standards

Nationally Described Space Standards

1. New residential development (including the conversion of buildings) will be required to meet the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS)⁸⁴, except where it can be clearly evidenced that the implementation of the NDSS would cause harm to the significance of a heritage asset⁸⁵.

⁸⁴ <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/housing-optional-technical-standards#internal-space-standards>

⁸⁵ More specialised types of housing provision will be required to meet the relevant space standards for their typology

Policy SDM2 – Development and Design Standards

2. Where NDSS are not used, development⁸⁶ should reflect National Design Guide principle H1⁸⁷ in delivering functional, healthy, and sustainable homes and buildings, particularly in relation to creating healthy, comfortable and safe internal and external environments.

Water efficiency in new dwellings

3. New residential development (including conversions from non-residential properties) and houses in multiple occupation will be required to meet the lower water efficiency standard of 110 litres per person per day, as set out in Part G2 of current Building Regulations or as identified in any successor legislation.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM2	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0

D.15.2.1 Policy SDM2 sets out the requirements of development proposals to incorporate specific design standards that are nationally recognised. The Nationally Described Space Standards⁸⁸ help to ensure that all development satisfies the requirement for internal space, in particular, ensuring more affordable homes still provide residents with enough internal space. In general, the greater the internal space within a property, the better the standard of living for residents. Therefore, a minor positive impact on health and wellbeing can be expected (SA Objective 12).

D.15.2.2 The policy requires residential development to be in keeping with the optional water efficiency standards from Part G2 of the current Building Regulations, where residents are to have an average water usage of "110 litres per person per day". The policy would be expected to have a minor positive impact on water resources (SA Objective 6).

D.15.3 Policy SDM3 – Tall Buildings and Gateway Sites

Policy SDM3 – Tall Buildings and Gateway Sites

Tall buildings

1. The proposed heights for buildings should reflect other design and policy requirements, including the need to have regard to the existing or emerging character and context of the area.

⁸⁶ Excluding prior notification / permitted development where new dwellings are being created – NDSS will apply in all such cases

⁸⁷ Or any succeeding guidance or legislation on design standards.

⁸⁸ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2015) Technical housing standards – nationally described space standards. Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/524531/160519_Nationally_Described_Space_Standard_Final_Web_version.pdf [Date accessed: 27/07/23]

Policy SDM3 – Tall Buildings and Gateway Sites

2. The height and location of tall buildings in relation to other existing and proposed buildings / structures should be clearly identified in masterplans and / or design and access statements, which should also set out a clear rationale for the development of tall buildings.
3. Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments will be necessary to enable the visual impact of tall buildings to be assessed from near and distant viewpoints. Accurate visual representations of the submitted scheme should be provided from key viewpoints agreed with Sandwell Council. Information on local microclimate impacts should also be submitted, as a separate assessment or as part of the Design and Access Statement.
4. For development proposals that include taller buildings, applicants must submit design appraisals with alternative options to demonstrate whether similar densities can be achieved using more traditional and human- scaled typologies including terraced housing, maisonettes, and courtyard apartments.
5. The planning application and its supporting information must demonstrate that:
 - a. There is sufficient access to public transport for occupants/users of the building;
 - b. There is access to local services and facilities, depending on the number and type of residents expected;
 - c. the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on local character, including heritage assets;
 - d. the design considers topography;
 - e. the proposal will not create unacceptable adverse environmental impacts, including flood risk, creation of a wind tunnel, loss or lack of daylight / sunlight;
 - f. the design is of high architectural quality; and
 - g. the proposal will integrate into its surroundings at all levels, particularly at street level and skyline.

Gateway Sites

6. When assessing proposals and applications for planning permission on gateway sites⁸⁹ the Council will apply the following principles:
 - a. Key landmark buildings, structures and features will be preserved and improved;
 - b. The topography of the area will be emphasised in the design and location of new buildings or features;
 - c. New development should be of architectural merit and use high-grade materials.
 - d. Proposals should include hard and soft landscaping, including trees, water and public art;
 - e. Where possible and appropriate, redundant street furniture, associated clutter and advertisements should be removed.

⁸⁹ Sites and other development opportunities that stand at major road- or rail-linked points of access into Sandwell, or on the outskirts of West Bromwich and other main town centres.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM3	0	+	0	+	0	+	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	0

- D.15.3.1 Policy SDM3 sets out the requirements for development proposals regarding tall buildings and gateway sites, specifically the design and location of proposals.
- D.15.3.2 The development of tall buildings can significantly alter the image, character and identity of towns and cities⁹⁰. In appropriate locations the development of tall buildings can have a positive contribution to the urban landscape; however, if not in the right place, by virtue of the size of the building, taller developments could potentially harm key aspects of the landscape and historic environment that are valued.
- D.15.3.3 The policy states that when assessing gateway site applications, the consideration of how “*key landmark buildings, structures and features will be preserved and improved*” will be applied. Tall buildings likewise would also be required to “*have regard to the existing or emerging character and context of the area*”. Through careful design, and ensuring designs are informed by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA)/Landscape Visual Appraisal (LVA), the policy could potentially have a minor positive impact on the safeguarding and enhancement of the local character (SA Objective 2) and negligible impact on cultural heritage through ensuring “*the proposal will not have an unacceptable adverse impact on local character, including heritage assets*” (SA Objective 1).
- D.15.3.4 Tall building development proposals must ensure that they demonstrate “*sufficient access to public transport for occupants/users of the building*” and “*access to local services and facilities*”. The policy would provide access to public transport networks and encourage their usage by residents, this could also reduce the reliance on private car use by residents and reduce congestion in the area. The policy would therefore expect to have a minor positive impact on climate change mitigation and transport (SA Objective 4 and 9).
- D.15.3.5 Supporting tall buildings would lead to higher density development, reducing overall land take and making efficient use of land. As such, a minor positive impact on natural resources would be expected (SA Objective 6).

D.15.4 Policy SDM4 – Advertisements

Policy SDM4 – Advertisements

1. Proposals for advertisements will not be given consent where they would have an unacceptable impact on amenity or public safety.

⁹⁰ Historic England (2015) Tall Buildings: Historic England Advice Note 4. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/tall-buildings-advice-note-4/heag037-tall-buildings/> [Date Accessed: 05/02/21]

Policy SDM4 – Advertisements

2. An advertisement will be considered to have an unacceptable impact on amenity where it would:
 - a. create or reinforce a negative visual impact in its immediate neighbourhood;
 - b. detract from the character or setting of any feature of historic, architectural or cultural interest;
 - c. generate a negative impact on the living conditions of nearby residents by reason of its siting or illumination.
3. Advertisement proposals of all types will be considered harmful to public and road safety where they would:
 - a. obscure views into an area, reducing natural surveillance;
 - b. create an unwelcoming sense of enclosure;
 - c. obscure safety cameras;
 - d. unsafely reduce natural or street lighting;
 - e. create visual distraction that would be harmful to the attention of drivers or the ready interpretation of road signs, traffic signals and / or visibility at junctions (see sections 6 – 8 below for details).

Poster Panels and Hoardings

4. Applications for poster panels will be considered in light of local amenity and public safety. Regard should be given to the scale of buildings and the character of the location in which they are to be sited, together with any potential impact on highway safety.
5. In general, advertisement hoardings will not be appropriate in wholly residential areas. Poster advertising may be appropriate in predominantly shopping and business parts of Conservation Areas and Areas of Townscape Value, though care will be needed in how they are accommodated.

Illuminated and Moving Advertisements

6. The intensity of the illumination of an advertising unit and display should be set at a suitable level of luminance at night for its size and location and the panel must be fitted with a light sensor designed to adjust the brightness when changes in ambient light levels occur.
7. For moving / electronic advertising, the minimum display time for each advertisement shall be 10 seconds. There must be no moving images, animation, video or full motion images or any images that resemble road signs, traffic lights or traffic signs of any kind before, during or after the display of any advertisement
8. The interval between the display of each moving advertisement shall be 0.1 seconds or less and the complete display screen shall change without visual effects (including fading, swiping or other animated transition methods) between each advertisement.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM4	0	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

- D.15.4.1 Policy SDM4 sets out the requirements for the appropriate design and location of advertisements to prevent adverse impacts on the surrounding landscape and health and safety of local residents.
- D.15.4.2 The policy states that advertisements will need to have regard to the “*scale of the buildings and the character of the location in which they are to be sited*”. The policy would be likely to have a minor positive impact on the protection of the local landscape character and conserving local identity (SA Objective 2).
- D.15.4.3 Advertisement proposals will be considered in regard to “*local amenity and public safety*” and includes measures that prevent impacts on highway safety. The policy would therefore expect to have a negligible impact on the health and safety of residents within the borough (SA Objective 12).
- D.15.4.4 The policy states that advertisement proposals that “*detract from the character or setting of any feature of historic, architectural or cultural interest*” will be unacceptable. These measures would be expected to have a negligible impact on the cultural heritage within the borough, by seeking to reduce potential for harm to heritage assets (SA Objective 1).

D.15.5 Policy SDM5 – Shop Fronts and Roller Shutters

Policy SDM5 – Shop Fronts and Roller Shutters

Roller Shutters

1. Planning permission is required for the installation of all permanent roller shutters. All applications for the installation of roller shutters will be assessed using the following criteria: -
 - a. Encouragement will be given to the integration of roller shutters as part of development proposals for new shop fronts, through the planning application process and pre-application discussion.
 - b. The applicant must satisfy the local planning authority that the type of security shutter they are proposing is the most appropriate.
 - c. Roller shutters should, wherever possible, not project across the pilasters of the shop front, or obscure any architectural detail. The submitted plans should indicate this.
 - d. Roller shutter boxes should, where ever possible, be hidden within the structure of the building or behind shop fascias, so as not to affect the character and architecture of the building.
 - e. Metal roller shutters should be perforated and be colour powder coated or painted
 - f. Details of materials should be submitted with the planning application.

Policy SDM5 – Shop Fronts and Roller Shutters

- g. No more than 50% of the shutters should be solid.
- h. Roller shutters that are totally solid will not be acceptable.

Shop Front Design

2. All planning applications for the installation of shop fronts will be assessed against the following criteria: -
- a. All shop fronts should be designed to fit in with the scale and architectural character of the building in which they are to be contained.
 - b. All shop fronts should remain within their existing structural openings and be fully framed with fascia signs. Shop fronts and fascias must also be recessed behind pilasters.
 - c. Adjacent shop fronts should be separated by a pilaster, matching the building. However, original pilasters should be retained where they exist.
 - d. Original features, such as iron columns, ornamental brackets or carved stonework, should be preserved or restored.
 - e. Canopies should be retractable and sited below the fascia.
 - f. To ensure a high standard of shop front design, all applications for planning permission will require the submission of a detailed elevation of the proposed shop front in relation to the building within which it is to be contained, as well as adjacent shop fronts.
 - g. Retention of facades above shop fronts that are of good quality, or which have special, architectural or historic interest, should be encouraged.
 - h. Whilst the appearance of a building should not become promised, consideration should be given to natural surveillance, safety and security when designing new shop fronts.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM5	+	+	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

- D.15.5.1 Policy SDM5 provides requirements for planning proposals involving shop fronts and roller shutters in relation to their design, installation and location.
- D.15.5.2 Through supporting the safe operation of businesses and appropriate use of security fixtures, the policy could potentially lead to a minor positive impact on the local economy (SA Objective 13).
- D.15.5.3 Policy SDM5 requires the design of shop fronts to *"fit in with the scale and architectural character of the building in which they are to be contained"* and states that *"original features, such as iron columns, ornamental brackets or carved stonework, should be preserved or restored"*. Therefore, the policy would help to conserve, and potentially enhance, the character and appearance of buildings and historic features which could potentially lead to a minor positive impact on cultural heritage and landscape (SA Objectives 1 and 2).

D.15.6 Policy SDM6 – Hot Food Takeaways

Policy SDM6 – Hot Food Takeaways

Vitality and Viability

1. A percentage limit for the appropriate number of hot food takeaways (HFT) in centres, including HFT permissions, and vacant units with an HFT as their lawful use (Strategic, Town, District and Local) is as follows:
 - a. In centres with 40 units or more – no more than 7% of frontages should be occupied by HFTs.
 - b. In centres with less than 40 units – no more than 12% of the frontages should be occupied by HFTs.

Clustering of hot food takeaways in centres.

2. No more than two hot food takeaway outlets should be located next to each other. Any application for a further hot food takeaway use that would exceed this limit will not be permitted.
3. Where two HFTs are located next to each other, they should be separated by at least two non-HFT units from any similar uses.

Exclusion Zones

4. An exclusion zone will be implemented near to secondary schools and higher education establishments; no new hot food takeaway developments will be permitted where they are within 400 metres of a secondary school or college site (as measured in a direct line from the school entrance(s) used by pupils / students).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0

D.15.6.1 Policy SDM6 aims to counteract the over-concentration of hot food takeaways and provide a healthy balance of food choices across the borough. In addition to limits on the number of hot food takeaways (HFTs) within centres, an exclusion zone is implemented under the policy to place HFTs away from secondary schools and higher education establishments. The policy states that HFT developments will not be permitted *"where they are within 400 metres of a secondary school or college site"*.

D.15.6.2 Reducing access to HFTs can help to promote healthier food choices and reduce inequalities for those living in areas that would otherwise be located in areas densely populated by unhealthy food choices. By ensuring takeaway vendors are situated a suitable distance from schools, this could also help to encourage healthier choices for children and combat childhood obesity issues. Therefore, the policy can be expected to have a minor positive impact on equality and health (SA Objective 11 and 12).

D.15.7 Policy SDM7 – Management of Hot Food Takeaways

Policy SDM7 – Management of Hot Food Takeaways

Measures to protect the amenity of surrounding residential occupiers

1. No new hot food takeaways (HFT) will be permitted where they are directly adjacent to residential property at ground floor level. This does not apply to first / second floor flats above or diagonally above a proposed HFT.
2. Where there is an existing residential unit above a HFT, which is not connected with its operation, private residential amenity should not be prejudiced. Specific care will need to be given to odour extraction, noise insulation, private accessibility and public convenience. Appropriate mitigation measures will include control over hours of opening hours. Where appropriate provisions cannot be included then such uses will not be supported, even within designated centres.

Local environmental issues

3. All HFTs will require appropriate fume extraction equipment to be installed, retained and maintained to reduce / remove potential nuisance from odours. Extraction systems should be effective in dispersing odours from hot food takeaways, whilst satisfying the council's design policies, especially in areas of historic character.

Disposal of waste products and litter

4. Appropriate fat traps will be required on drains to prevent fats from reaching the water system. Suitable grease traps also must be installed on all drains to prevent blockages and the subsequent flooding of property.
5. Appropriate storage areas must be specified for food waste bins and packaging waste and included in any new proposal.
6. The bins to be provided must be a suitable size and should be stored in a location so as not to cause a nuisance to neighbouring residential or commercial properties, including with regard to odours and accessibility.
7. Commercial bin stores must be contained within the site. Where this is not possible, secure storage structures should be provided to prevent animal attack and to reduce odours.

Nuisance and Anti-Social Behaviour

8. Proposals for any new HFT that could potentially cause nuisance or antisocial behaviour will only be granted permission subject to stringent planning conditions, to address matters such as (but not limited to): -
 - a. opening hours;
 - b. parking restrictions;
 - c. highway safety;
 - d. the installation of or contributions towards monitoring technology such as CCTV.

In some cases, they may be limited to a personal permission and / or a temporary consent.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0	0	0	0	+	0

- D.15.7.1 Policy SDM7 sets out the requirements for the management of HFTs in relation to the issues that could arise on residents, the environment and waste.
- D.15.7.2 Strict regulation on "odour extraction, opening hours, parking restrictions and safety measures" outlined within the policy will help to avoid adverse impacts on pollution, transport, and health, resulting in negligible effects overall for SA Objectives 7, 9 and 12.
- D.15.7.3 By ensuring appropriate drainage systems, food storage and waste disposal units are in place, a minor positive impact on waste could be expected (SA Objective 8).
- D.15.7.4 Allowing new HFTs in the area that comply with the regulations set out in Policy SDM7 would potentially create more jobs, which would have a minor positive impact on the economy (SA Objective 13).

D.15.8 Policy SDM8 – Gambling activities and alternative financial services

Policy SDM8 – Gambling activities and alternative financial services

1. Planning permission for a payday loan shop, pawnbroker's, amusement arcade or betting shop within a retail centre will not be granted if to do so would cause an unacceptable grouping of uses that would have a negative impact on the character and vitality of the centre.
2. A negative impact on the character of the centre is likely to occur when the following thresholds⁹¹ are exceeded:
 - a. Within a town centre: more than 5% of the number of ground floor units being in a gambling or arcade use.
 - b. Within a district or local centre, or local shopping centre / parade: more than 10% of the number of ground floor units being a gambling or arcade use.
 - c. In all locations: two or more uses immediately adjacent to each other.
 - d. In all locations: less than two units in other uses between gambling or arcade uses.
3. In calculating the existing or proposed percentage of units, payday loan shops, pawnbrokers, betting shops and arcade uses will be counted together.
4. When applying the thresholds set out above:
 - a. Only ground floor units will be counted; and
 - b. When rounding percentages, percentages should be rounded down.

⁹¹ Taken from the Knowsley Town Centre Uses SPD 2022

Policy SDM8 – Gambling activities and alternative financial services

5. Proposals will be considered against the potential detrimental impact on the amenity of neighbouring uses, through increased noise and disturbance. They will also be required to provide an active frontage, through a permanent shop front and window display.
6. In determining any planning application for all pay day loan shops, pawnbrokers, and gambling uses the Council will consider any issues concerning community safety, crime, and disorder and will, where necessary, seek advice from the police and other safety organisations.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+/-	0

D.15.8.1 An increase in gambling or other financial services has the potential to increase noise pollution, anti-social behaviour and encourage unhealthy mental and physical habits. However, Policy SDM8 aims to prevent “*issues concerning community safety, crime, and disorder*” during the assessment of planning applications. Overall, Policy SDM8 will likely have a negligible impact on pollution, equality, and health (SA Objectives 7, 11 and 12).

D.15.8.2 The impact on the economy (SA Objective 13) is uncertain. Although an increase in gambling activities and financial services could provide employment opportunities and positively impact the local economy, there is potential for residents to acquire unhealthy habits which may cause them to lose their jobs or deter them from seeking employment.

D.15.9 Policy SDM9 – Community Facilities

Policy SDM9 – Community Facilities

1. In considering proposals for new community facilities, examples of which include but are not limited to: -
 - banqueting suites and entertainment venues;
 - places of worship and / or religious instruction;
 - leisure and recreational activities;
 - larger-scale non-employment uses e.g. nurseries, wholesale catering, animal day care;
 - community centres;
 or the conversion or extension of existing community facilities, the following criteria will be considered:
 - a. Any proposal for a community facility or use that involves the loss of premises and sites identified as falling within either strategic or local employment areas⁹² will be refused.
 - b. Proposals for new community facilities on land or premises identified under Policy SEC4, which are either currently or formerly in employment use, will be resisted; applicants

⁹² See **Policies SLP*** in the Employment chapter of the SLP

Policy SDM9 – Community Facilities

- wishing to reuse such buildings or sites will need to meet the criteria set out in that policy and be able to demonstrate why the site is no longer suitable for employment use now or in the future.
- c. Encouragement will be given to locating community facilities and uses on sites with main road frontages at the fringes of commercial areas, and particularly in town, district or local centres.
 - d. If the building(s) to be used shares a party wall with any sensitive use (particularly residential) it is unlikely that planning permission will be granted. Exceptions to this are likely to occur only when there is clear evidence submitted to the Council that the use will not adversely affect the occupiers of adjoining properties.
2. Where noise from the proposed new activities is likely to affect neighbouring properties, consideration will be given to attaching conditions to any planning permission granted, which would reduce or eliminate such problems. These may include:
 - a. installation and retention of suitable sound insulation;
 - b. restricting the use of parts of the building, or the type of uses proposed;
 - c. restricting the hours of use of all or parts of the building.
 3. Consideration will be given to the need for the provision of car parking in association with the development. This will include an assessment of: -
 - a. the proximity and availability of public transport facilities;
 - b. whether most people walk to a particular place of worship or religious instruction;
 - c. the use of the centre for wider community purposes and for special events drawing large numbers of participants;
 - d. the availability of other car parking in the vicinity;
 - e. the adverse effects of on-street parking on adjacent occupiers, the environment of the neighbourhood, and whether it would create potential hazards to pedestrians and other road users.
 4. Consideration may also be given to the granting of planning permission for a limited period where concerns relating to an application are insufficient to warrant refusal.
 5. The provision of additional community facilities will be encouraged, including those serving cultural and other social needs.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	+	0	0

D.15.9.1 Policy SDM9 sets out support for new community facilities within centres, provided a set of criteria are met.

- D.15.9.2 The policy would be likely to ensure that any new community facilities have a negligible impact on pollution by requiring suitable sound insulation to be installed and “*restricting the hours of use of all or parts of the building*”.
- D.15.9.3 Policy SDM9 seeks to ensure any new community facilities are in easy to access areas, noting “*sites with main road frontages at the fringes of commercial areas, and particularly in town, district or local centres*” as suitable locations. Policy SDM9 also considers: how people are likely to commute to such facilities; availability of public transport; and the availability of, and adverse effects on car parking. Therefore, a negligible impact would be expected on pollution and transport (SA Objectives 7 and 9).
- D.15.9.4 New community facilities will provide a safe space for residents of Sandwell and encourage social activities. This should encourage comradery amongst residents and provide activities to help entertain younger residents. This has the potential to reduce crime and social deprivation and to have a minor positive impact on equality (SA Objective 11). Community facilities may also be used for leisure and recreational activities, some of which are likely to have a minor positive impact on physical health (SA Objective 12).

D.15.10 Policy SDM10 – Telecommunications

Policy SDM10 – Telecommunications

1. In considering proposals for telecommunication development for which planning permission is required, or to which the prior approval procedure is applicable, the following criteria will apply:
 - a. The siting and external appearance of apparatus including any location or landscaping requirements have been designed to minimise the impact of such apparatus on amenity, while respecting operational efficiency.
 - b. Antenna have, so far as is practicable, been sited either to minimise the effect on, or to complement or beneficially add to the external appearance of the building on which they are installed.
 - c. Applicants must demonstrate that they have explored all possibilities for sharing masts, or for siting masts on existing buildings or structures.
 - d. The development would not impact on scheduled highway improvement works.
2. Microcell installations will be expected where agreements exist with the relevant highway authority to utilise existing street furniture, not add to the clutter of the street scene, impede pedestrian flows or contribute to highway safety issues.
3. The use of Article 4 directions removing permitted development rights for telecommunication development will be considered where there is a serious risk to amenity.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Policy Ref	Cultural Heritage	Landscape	Biodiversity	CC Mitigation	CC Adaptation	Natural Resources	Pollution	Waste	Transport	Housing	Equality	Health	Economy	Education
SDM10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	+	0

D.15.10.1 Policy SDM10 supports the provision of telecommunications infrastructure, where this would not impede on highways or the street scene. The policy seeks to ensure that the location and appearance of telecommunications infrastructure avoids or reduces harm to amenity, which would be expected to result in an overall negligible impact on the landscape.

D.15.10.2 Increased telecommunications coverage may help to improve digital connectivity and information sharing, potentially resulting in a minor positive impact on local businesses and opportunities for home working (SA Objective 13).

DRAFT



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Appendix D - Draft Sandwell Local Plan – Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Consultation Stage	Target Audience	Consultation Methods to be used	Who to Action	Timescale/Target Date
Draft Local Plan November – December 2023				
Member briefings prior to Cabinet meetings and agendas being released	Elected Members	Briefings on key elements of Reg 18 Draft Plan and consultation	Planning Officers Comms Team	Cabinet Briefing – 6 th September 2023
Member briefings/drop-in sessions as consultation rolls out	Elected Members	Member briefings on key elements of the Reg 18 Draft Plan and consultation	Planning Officers Comms Team	All Member Briefing session – November 2023
MP Briefings (if requested)	Members of Parliament	Briefings on key elements of Reg 18 Draft Plan and consultation	Planning Officers	November/December 2023 MPs will be consulted with briefings arranged on request
West Midlands Mayor briefing (if requested)	West Midlands Mayor	Briefings on key elements of Reg 18 Draft Plan and consultation	Planning Officers	November/December 2023 WMCA/Mayors Office will be consulted with briefings arranged on request
Press release to go out stating Reg 18 Draft Plan to be considered by Cabinet ahead of consultation.	All Stakeholders	Press Release to be issued - reinforcing the consultation dates of 06/11/23 – 18/12/23	Comms Team	Pre-publication of Cabinet agenda on 11 th October
Update website, ready to go 'live' with Plan consultation post Cabinet decision	All stakeholders	Web content – to include Draft Plan and supporting information, online consultation details and summary documents and FAQs	Planning Officers Comms Team	Post Cabinet meeting – 18 th October 2023
Public consultation launched Six weeks November to December. (6 th November – 18 th December 2023). Publish Draft Local Plan and Appendices, Policies Map, summary document and supporting documents and evidence base on website and roll out public communications campaign	All Stakeholders including: Public Businesses Organisations Developers/Consultants Members MPs DtC/Statutory Consultees.	Launch press release, plus two to three follow-up releases Update Sandwell MBC website with details of consultation. The website will include an information video being prepared by Comms Team. Articles to be included in Sandwell Herald newspaper and Sandwell Social Media platforms - Digital/social media comms plan Display Pop up exhibitions in the 6 main libraries and leisure centres, as well as the Council House, Oldbury. Planning officers available to discuss any issues via an appointment system, on the telephone and via email. Information leaflets will be available at each venue. Details to be circulated on residents ebulletin and Let's Get Physical newsletter, SCVO networks, Sandwell Business Networks, SHAPE Youth Forum networks, Regenerating Sandwell and Sandwell Business Growth websites Internal campaign - staff ebulletin The consultation documents will also be accessible via a link from the Sandwell Council Consultation Hub An email banner will be developed for use by officers on all email communication	Planning Officers Comms Team	November 2023


Consultation Stage	Target Audience	Consultation Methods to be used	Who to Action	Timescale/Target Date
Press release /ebulletin to announce deadline for responses to Consultation	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members	Comms Team	December
Press release /ebulletin to confirm closure for Consultation and next steps	All Stakeholders	Press and ebulletin Email to Members Update Website to confirm end of consultation	Comms Team	December
Post Draft Plan Consultation December 2023 – June 2024				
Feedback on process/next steps via website/media/ebulletins		ebulletin Email to Members Update Website	Planning Officers Comms Team	December/January

APPENDIX E

Equality Impact Assessment

**Draft Sandwell Local Plan
(Regulation 18)**

September 2023

Title of proposal	Sandwell Development Plan – Regulation 18 draft for public consultation
Directorate and Service Area	Regeneration and Growth Planning and Development
Name and title of Lead Officer completing this EIA	Samantha Holder – Senior Planning Policy Officer
Contact Details	samantha_holder@sandwell.gov.uk
Names and titles of other officers involved in completing this EIA	-
Partners involved with the EIA where jointly completed	N/A
Date EIA completed	27.09.2023
Date EIA signed off or agreed by Director or Executive Director	
Name of Director or Executive Director signing off EIA	Tony McGovern -
Date EIA considered by Cabinet Member	

1. The purpose of the proposal or decision required (Please provide as much information as possible)

The planning system has the potential to affect everyone living and working in Sandwell. Communities, employers and interested bodies within and beyond Sandwell are being asked to contribute to the preparation of plans and policies in the new Sandwell Local Plan (SLP).

The first steps towards the preparation of a new local plan is to identify draft planning policies and proposals and to subsequently undertake further public consultation with both local people and the wider community, stakeholders and developers. This will enable their views to be included as necessary in the emerging document.

The decision required is that the draft SLP document be approved for consultation.

2. Evidence used / considered

A significant part of the evidence used to inform this document has been taken from existing sources, such as the Council's Corporate Plan, the previous draft Black Country Plan (BCP), the Sandwell Site Allocations and Delivery Document (SADD) and from other strategies, documents and research undertaken across the Council. Where necessary, further research and evidence gathering will be undertaken to inform the development of policies.

Additional evidence has also been generated from previous relevant consultation processes, including those undertaken for the draft BCP, and from the BCP's evidence base.

National planning policy guidance has been revised (2023) and has been used to shape the SLP; it is a benchmark against which the contents of policies and proposals can be measured. In addition, since the last local plan for Sandwell was adopted, there has been additional information and requirements identified at a national level, such as for design, the environment and climate change, which have informed the emerging plan.

Additional work has also been commissioned specifically to inform the draft Local Plan – this includes reports on biodiversity, viability, infrastructure requirements and the Rowley Hills. Future work will include studies relating to flooding, transportation modelling, design codes and green infrastructure.

3. Consultation

A public consultation process for the SDP issues and options work was undertaken in February - March 2023. The responses to that have been used in producing the subsequent draft policies.

A further public consultation is scheduled to begin in November 2023, the outcome of which will be used to finalise the draft plan for submission to the Planning Inspectorate in 2024.

4. Assess likely impact

The impact or likely impact of the emerging SLP and its issues and options work on specific groups (race, gender, disability, age, religion and belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy / maternity) has been considered. It is anticipated that all groups will experience positive benefits through the production of updated and locally focussed policies and proposals.

No significant negative impacts are anticipated, although where the SLP identifies sites for development, this will have some locally significant impacts on communities and individuals.

The Council's Statement of Community Involvement will help inform relevant stakeholders, how they can become involved in the plan making process, and the planning application process

4a. Use the table to show:

- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a negative impact on any of the equality strands (protected characteristics), that is it could disadvantage them or if there is no impact, please note the evidence and/or reasons for this.
- Where you think that the strategy, project or policy could have a positive impact on any of the groups or contribute to promoting equality, equal opportunities or improving relationships within equality characteristics.

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact ✓	Negative Impact ✓	No Impact ✓	Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)
Age	✓			<p>The document aims to cater for the needs of all age groups by starting the process of identifying the amount and location of sites suitable for housing, community facilities and services (including medical), transportation links and open space, all of which contribute towards the creation of an environment suitable for the elderly and other vulnerable sections of the community.</p> <p>The draft plan policies will also address the need for adaptable housing and the provision of specialist accommodation for the elderly in Sandwell.</p>

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact ✓	Negative Impact ✓	No Impact ✓	Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)
Disability	✓			<p>The draft plan policies seek to identify opportunities for improving design in the built environment and the protection of the natural environment through developing policies that are supportive of the needs of all sections of the community. This will include through promoting clean air, accessibility and the provision of user-friendly spaces and designs.</p> <p>The draft plan incorporates policies on making sure new houses are accessible for people with disabilities and wheelchair users, on a mix of housing types suitable for all members of the community and on the provision of housing suitable for subsequent adaptation as necessary.</p>
Gender reassignment	✓			<p>The draft plan policies seek to identify opportunities for improving design in the built environment. This will include supporting the creation of public places and infrastructure with layouts that are safe and welcoming for all members of the community, and which reduce the potential for abusive or threatening behaviour.</p>
Marriage and civil partnership			✓	

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact ✓	Negative Impact ✓	No Impact ✓	Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)
Pregnancy and maternity	✓			<p>The draft plan identifies the need for suitable sites for general healthcare provision, as part of creating sustainable communities. This will benefit people with various health-related issues, including pregnancy and maternity.</p> <p>It also contains draft policies on health and wellbeing, including healthcare infrastructure, and on the educational requirements generated by additional housing provision.</p>
Race	✓			<p>The draft plan contains several policies relating to the need for good design, including around the design and creation of safe and welcoming spaces, communities and recreation, where all sections of the community can feel comfortable. It considers the need to design out opportunities for anti-social behaviours and instead seek to create spaces where people can interact positively.</p>
Religion or belief	✓			<p>The draft plan includes policies about the need to support new and existing community spaces, such as churches, mosques and other places of worship. The draft policies look at where such uses should best be located.</p>

Protected Characteristic	Positive Impact ✓	Negative Impact ✓	No Impact ✓	Reason and evidence (Provide details of specific groups affected even for no impact and where negative impact has been identified what mitigating actions can we take?)
Sex			✓	
Sexual orientation	✓			The draft plan contains several policies relating to the need for good design, including around the design and creation of safe and welcoming spaces, communities and recreation, where all sections of the community can feel comfortable. It considers the need to design out opportunities for anti-social behaviours and instead seek to create spaces where people can interact positively.
Other	✓			The aim of the SDP is to support and deliver a safe, supportive and attractive living and working environment for all sections of the community. The draft plan will help to identify what matters to those local communities and should enable the Council to address some of the systemic problems around inequality in the built and natural environment.

Does this EIA require a full impact assessment? Yes No

If there are no adverse impacts or any issues of concern or you can adequately explain or justify them, then you do not need to go any further. You have completed the screening stage. You must, however, complete sections 7 and 9 and publish the EIA as it stands.

If you have answered yes to the above, please complete the questions below referring to the guidance document.

<p>5. What actions can be taken to mitigate any adverse impacts?</p>
<p>No adverse impacts have been identified. On this basis, it is considered that mitigation measures are not required. We will continue to mainstream the need for good design, the creation of accessible and safe environments and opportunities for all sections of the community to benefit from their environments through ongoing public consultation and an iterative approach to the policies we include in the draft plan.</p>
<p>6. As a result of the EIA what decision or actions are being proposed in relation to the original proposals?</p>
<p></p>
<p>7. Monitoring arrangements</p>
<p>The emerging Sandwell Local Plan will have a full set of monitoring targets once it has been adopted, which will be used to measure the success of policies based on the outcome of the issues and options work.</p>
<p>8. Action planning</p>
<p></p>
<p>9. Publish the EIA</p>
<p>EIA report to be published on SLP web page</p>

Report to the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

8 November 2023

Subject:	Highway Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030 – Report of the Working Group
Director:	Director of Borough Economy Alice Davey
Contact Officer:	Highways Network Development and Road Safety Manager, Simon Chadwick simon_chadwick@sandwell.gov.uk Democratic Services Officer, Anthony Lloyd Ant_lloyd@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations

- 1.1 That the Board consider and comment upon the outcome of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Working Group regarding the Highway Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030.
- 1.2 That, in relation to the Highway Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030, the Chair of the Budget and Corporate Scrutiny Management Board be requested to present the findings of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board to Full Council.







2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 On 18 January 2022 Full Council requested the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board to conduct a review into the Strategic Road Safety Plan. The Strategic Road Safety Plan covered the period 2017-2022 and was therefore due for renewal.



- 2.2 On 23 October 2023, members of the working group, alongside officers from the Council’s Highways department, met for a final time to consider the contents of the Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030.
- 2.3 The findings of the working group are set out in section 4.

3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	<p>Best start in life for children and young people: The new strategic plan will help ensure good, well maintained and safe highway infrastructure to encourage more walking and cycling among our younger people increasing their wellbeing and health, improving road safety, reducing road casualties and promoting cleaner air quality.</p>
	<p>People live well and age well: A safe and well-maintained highway environment plays an important role in the life of the community, particularly the positive opportunities that they can bring from health, independence, social inclusion and interaction.</p>
	<p>Strong resilient communities: A safe highway infrastructure will make our communities feel safe, more protected and confident in their homes and neighbourhoods.</p>
	<p>Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods: The new strategic plan will ensure all new housing estates are designed and construed with the community’s safety in built from the start.</p>
	<p>A strong and inclusive economy: Our local highways are the arteries of our communities. They connect our residents to employment, education, local services and the wider world. They enable economic growth, social mobility and are vital in ensuring good health and economy.</p>
	<p>A connected and accessible Sandwell: Our residents will have excellent public transport that connects them to jobs and opportunities not only in the West Midlands region but across the nation and safe sustainable links to allow them to access these public transport services</p>



4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 On 18 January 2022 (Minute No. 22/22(a)), the Council requested that the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board conduct a review into the Strategic Road Safety Plan. The Strategic Road Safety Plan covered the period 2017-2022 and was therefore due for renewal.
- 4.2 Several meetings occurred throughout the 2022/23 municipal year between members of the working group and highway officers to discuss the contents of the plan.
- 4.3 Following a change in membership of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board in May 2023, a final working group was established in July 2023 to complete the review.
- 4.4 On 23 October 2023, members of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board working group, alongside officers from the Council's Highways department, met for a final time to consider the contents of the Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030.
- 4.5 Members received a detailed presentation in relation to Road Safety legislation as well as Sandwell Council's Statutory Duty under Section 39 of the Road Traffic Act 1988.
- 4.6 The Working group noted the importance of ensuring the safety of roads and how enabling sustainable mobility played an important role in providing for basic humans needs as well as helping mitigate the impact of climate change.
- 4.7 It was highlighted that a "Safe System" approach was built on the principle of Vision Zero whereby no one should be killed or seriously injured whilst using the road network. It also recognised that human bodies are fragile, and minds are prone to making mistakes. Consequently, a Safe System considered road safety to be a responsibility shared by all those that use the road, those that design, manage, construct and maintain the network, those that enforce highway laws and those who provide post-crash care.
- 4.8 Members also noted that a Safe System approach considered that 5 elements must work together as one to minimise risk; Safe Road Use, Safe Speeds, Safe Vehicles, Safe Roads and Roadsides, Post-Crash Response and agreed that all should remain a priority.
- 4.9 It was highlighted that Sandwell had traditionally held a good record of reducing road casualties in the borough. Over the past 22 years, total



road casualties had halved, including those resulting in fatalities or serious injuries. More encouragingly child casualties had reduced by two thirds.

- 4.10 Members discussed the general layout of the Borough and how, when compared to other authorities in the region, accidents tended to be more spread out; possibly due to the lack of a “city centre” such as ones seen in Wolverhampton or Birmingham.
- 4.11 Clarification was provided on what could be done to improve the road safety on roads that did not experience frequent crashes or injuries but were still considered dangerous by residents. Although funding could not always be obtained to change the layout of the areas of concern, line-painting and signage could be considered to increase safety. Officers also highlighted that roads usually perceived as more dangerous, frequently had less accidents due to the change in driving style as motorists were more cautious when using those road networks. Members suggested the publication of a document that detailed priority areas for road safety improvements and the reasoning as to why the aforementioned areas were being prioritised to begin with to help residents understand the process.
- 4.12 Information was also provided on the West Midlands Regional Refreshed Road Safety Strategy 2023-2030, which integrated Vision Zero as the region’s long-term mission, supported by the Safe Systems approach. The strategy also stretched the previous Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI) casualty reduction target from 40% to 50% by 2030, to align with the UN General Assembly’s latest target.
- 4.13 The new Sandwell Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030 would continue to utilise and build on the previously successful Sandwell Safe System approach to support and complement the refreshed West Midlands Regional Road Safety Strategy at a local level.
- 4.14 Sandwell’s new Strategic Road Safety Plan would stretch its casualty reduction targets to complement the regional and UN aspiration, as well as embracing Vision Zero. It was unrealistic to expect Vision Zero can be achieved within the timeframe of this new strategy, but it was vital that the right building blocks were put in place for the future to ensure that in time people would be able to use Sandwell’s road network without the risk of death and serious injury.
- 4.15 The Road Safety Plan was to be considered by Cabinet in December 2023 for final approval.
- 4.16 The working group was satisfied with the Road Safety plan and



members thanked officers for their hard work in helping make Sandwell's roads a safer place.

5 Implications

Resources:	Road safety and infrastructure improvements are funded through various approved Capital Budgets, Grants and revenue allocations, who spend is prioritised through evidence led campaigns and interventions.
Legal and Governance:	<p>The principal legal statutory duties and processes required to implement the highway improvement and traffic management requirements are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Highways Act 1980. • The Road Traffic Act 1988 • The Traffic Management Act 2004 • The Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 <p>Road Casualty Reduction Safety targets match those published by the United Nations and World Health Organisation and those required in the regional West Midlands Regional Road Safety Strategy.</p>
Risk:	Without a Strategic Road Safety Strategy, Policy and Action Plan the risk is that the Council will not meet its statutory duties in relation to road casualty reduction.
Equality:	The introduction of a targeted road safety policy will benefit the most vulnerable user groups on the highway network and will help balance the needs of all road user.
Health and Wellbeing:	Improvements to the road safety environment will ensure all users of the highway network are protected and managed safely to reduce the risk of conflict and injury. Greater encouragement of sustainable travel choice will inevitably improve the health and wellbeing of the neighbourhood. Adoption of Vision Zero will aim to reduce all serious and fatal casualties to zero in the future.
Social Value:	Social Value benefits are derived from the important role a well-maintained and safe highway environment plays in the life of the community, particularly the positive opportunities that they can bring from social



	inclusion, sustainable travel choice and social interaction.
Climate Change:	A well maintained and safe highway infrastructure will encourage more walking and cycling, reducing car borne trips and improving air quality.
Corporate Parenting:	A Road Safety Strategy is vital in ensuring that Children are protected on Sandwell's highways.

6 Appendices

Appendix A – Strategic Road Safety Plan Summary

Appendix B – Road Safety Plan, Policy and Legislation

7. Background Papers



Sandwell Strategy Road Safety Plan 2024-2030



Strategic Road Safety Working Group
23th October 2023

Background

Road Casualties

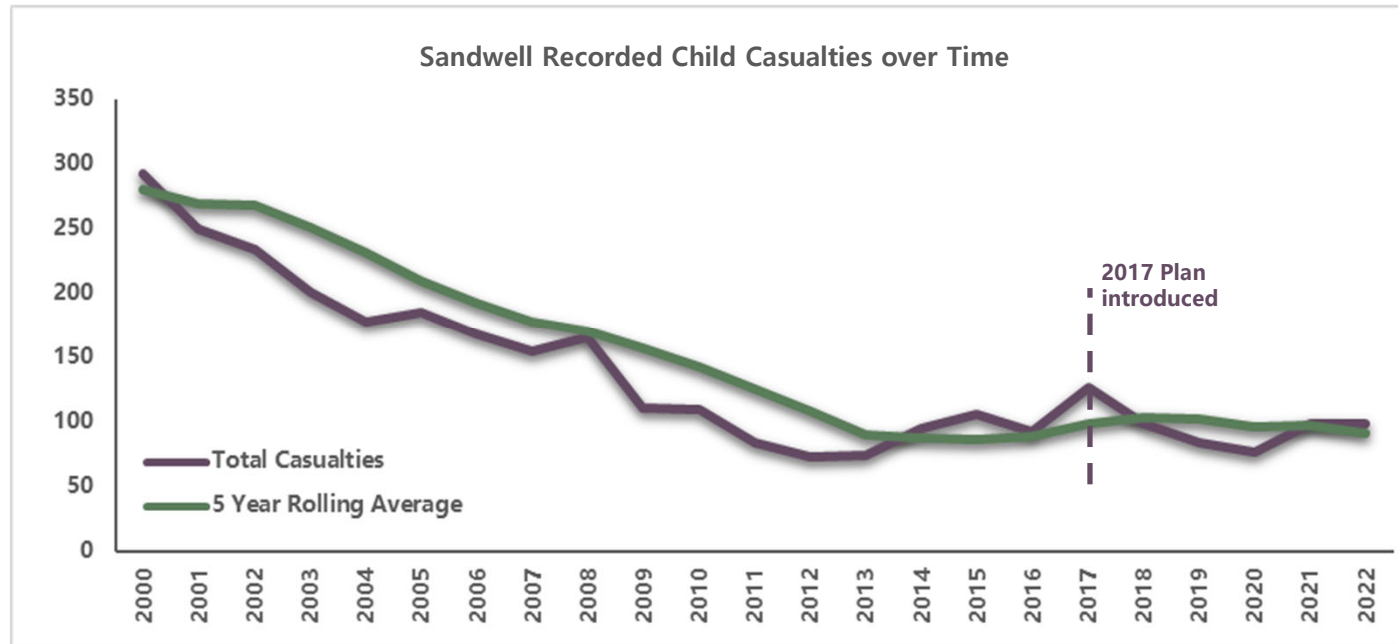
- What is a road casualty? Slight, Serious, Fatal
- Police Stats 19 data for Killed and Seriously Injured (KSI)
- CRASH system for slight (self reporting)
- TfWM Data Insight system

Sandwell Strategic Road Safety Plan 2017-2022

- Approved in December 2017
- Established key priority groups for interventions
 - KSI, Child, Pedestrians, Cyclists, Motorcyclists
- Sets local Road Safety Action Plan and Strategies
 - For the first time based on the Safe System approach



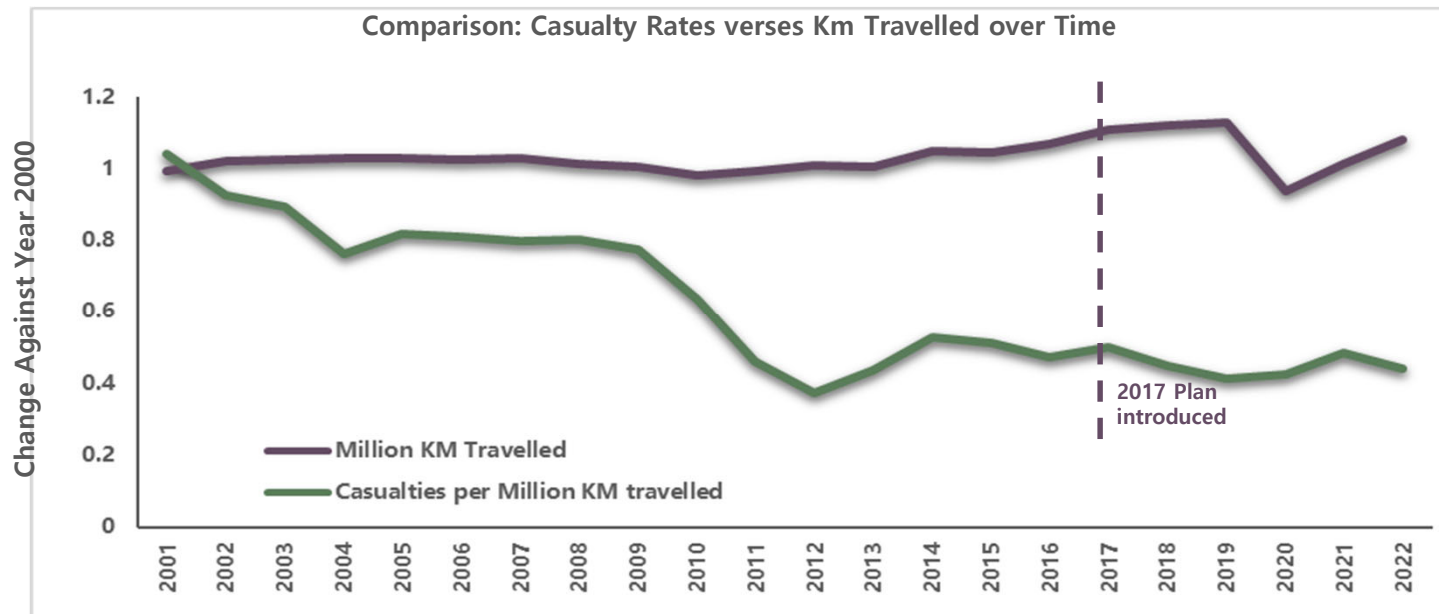
Road Casualty Summary 2000-2022



- Total Casualties fallen by 52% since 2000 (1639 to 785)
- Total KSI fallen by 44% in the same period (207 to 117)
- Child Casualties fallen by 67% since 2000 (278 to 98)

Million Km Travelled

- Sandwell land locked by 4 other urban councils
- Carries highest yearly amount of traffic in Black Country (million Km)
 - Sandwell 2084, Dudley 1644, Walsall 1578, Wolverhampton 1113
- Approximately 60 motorway casualties per year in Sandwell



- Casualty Rates per Km travelled reduced by 58% since 2000
- Highest increase rate in traffic in region since 2015

Comparisons

- Baseline from WM Regional Road Strategy - average 2015 to 2017 figures

National and Regional Comparisons

	% Reduction 2019 to Baseline			% Reduction 2017 to 2019		
	Total	KSI	Child	Total	KSI	Child
Great Britain	-14.7	-5.4	-14.8	-10.4	-2.0	-13.7
West Midlands	-8.4	-6.5	-5.7	-4.6	-3.8	-5.3
Black Country	-7.5	-10.1	-2.7	-5.6	-8.3	-10.5
Sandwell	-12.1	-16.8	-22.7	-16.1	-15.0	-33.9

Local Comparisons

- Baseline to 2019
 - Sandwell best in WM and BC for Child Reduction rates
 - Best in BC for all casualties and KSI reductions and second best in WM
 - Best in BC and WM for reduction of casualties per million Km Travelled
- 2017-2019
 - Sandwell best in WM and BC for child and total casualty reduction rates
 - Best in WM and BC for reduction of casualties per million Km Travelled

User Group Analysis (2017-2022)

Total Casualties



1 in 5 were Pedestrians



1 in 8 were Children



2 in 3 were Car Occupants



2 in 3 were Male

- 1 in 8 were KSI
- Quarter all injuries in 20-29 group
- November worst month & Friday riskiest day
- 1 in 20 were cyclists and motorcyclists
- Wards with higher levels of deprivation were seen to have higher casualty numbers

Killed and Seriously Injured



1 in 3 were Pedestrians



1 in 6 were Children



1 in 5 were Motorcyclists



1 in 10 were Cyclists







70% were Male



- 20-29 old group most at risk
- KSI 6 times more likely per Km on A & B roads than on residential streets

User Group Analysis (2017-2022)

Child Casualties (0-15 year olds)

- 1 in 6 were KSI
-  Half were pedestrians
-  Half of total were boys but increased to 2 in 3 for KSI
-  45% were Car Passengers
-  Quarter all injuries occurred on school journeys BUT very few outside school gates
- Secondary school children greater risk of pedestrian injury whilst Primary School children greater risk of car passenger injury

Pedestrian Casualties

- 1 in 4 were KSI
-  1 in 3 involved children
-  7 in 10 were male
- Almost 1/3rd occurred between 8am to 9am and 3pm to 4pm
- Age most at risk of pedestrian injury are 12-15 year olds
- Majority of pedestrian injuries occurred away from A roads

User Group Analysis (2017-2022)

Cyclist Casualties

- 1 in 4 were KSI
- 9 in 10 were male
- 1 in 8 were children
- Two thirds occurred at peak journey times
- 20-29 old group most at risk
- Most occurred on A and B roads

Car Occupant Casualties

- Only 1 in 14 were KSI
- Equal number of male & female
- 1 in 13 were children
- 2 in every 3 total casualties was in a car
- 17-29 age group account for 30% of car injuries
- 7% car casualties were on the motorway
- Majority occur on A roads and motorway

Powered Two Wheeled Casualties

- 2 in every 5 were KSI
- 93% male casualties
- Half involved small bikes and mopeds
- 16-29 age group account for half of PTW injuries
- Women more likely to be hurt as passengers
- Small bike / moped injuries on local roads
- Large bike injuries on A roads

Priorities and Targets 2024-2030

Key Priority Groups

Vulnerability, Susceptibility, Exposure

- Killed and Seriously Injured Casualties
- Child Casualties
- Pedestrian Casualties
- Cyclist Casualties
- Motorcyclist Casualties
- 17-30 Year Old Casualties



Targets 2024-2030 – Based on average 2015-2017 Baseline

- Reduce the number of Killed and Seriously Injured Casualties by at least 50% by 2030 (regional target)
- Reduce the number of All Road Casualties by at least 20% by 2030 (local target)
- Reduce the number of All Child Casualties by at least 20% by 2030 (local target)

Sandwell Local Road Safety Action Plan 2024-2030

Vision Zero

- Based on the belief that no death or serious injury is acceptable on the roads
- Created in Sweden (safest roads in the world)
- Follows the principle of a Safe System Approach to Road Safety

Safe Systems Approach

- Recognises that humans are fallible and will make mistakes
- Recognises humans are fragile
- Puts joint and proportional responsibility on every one
- Aspires to safety not being compromised by cost
- 5 key elements to a Safe System that must work together



Safe Road Use

Everyone who uses the road has a responsibility to use it safely and comply with rules and laws of the land. It is extremely important that road users who can do the greatest harm take the greatest responsibility.

Action Plan

- In House Road Safety Education, Training and Publicity
 - Road safety assemblies, lessons and campaigns in primary schools, Colleges and libraries
 - Digital Road Safety



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 - School Crossing patrol service, Bikeability & School Streets



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 - MTC and Bus Lanes



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- Enforcement
 - CEO's for Parking & Mobile Cars
 - MTC and Bus Lanes
- Community Involvement
 - Take responsibility for own actions in their neighbourhoods
 - Develop a series of campaigns aimed at removing cultural barriers
 - Further analysis of casualty rates in deprived areas

Safe Roads and Roadsides

In a Safe System, roads and roadsides need to be designed and suitably maintained to help reduce the risk of collisions occurring, or if they do occur to mitigate the severity of any injury.

Action Plan

- Casualty Reduction Schemes
 - Proactively identified by robust analysis and evidence targeted at priority groups
 - Mainly capital funded via WMCA
 - Minor works budgets for reactive schemes – match fund via LABs?
 - Safer Roads Fund for ‘potential site’



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- **Active Travel Schemes**
 - Safe and segregated environment for vulnerable groups
 - Road safety embedded in designs



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- **Asset Management**
 - Programmed and reactive maintenance
 - Decluttering and LED upgrades
 - Winter Gritting



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 - Safe and segregated environment for vulnerable groups
 - Road safety embedded in designs
- **Asset Management**
 - Programmed and reactive maintenance of road infrastructure
 - Decluttering and LED upgrades
 - Winter Gritting
- **Planning and Development**
 - Developments mitigate against potential road safety problems and fund improvements
 - New residential estates have 20mph and Traffic Calming inbuilt

Safe Roads and Roadsides

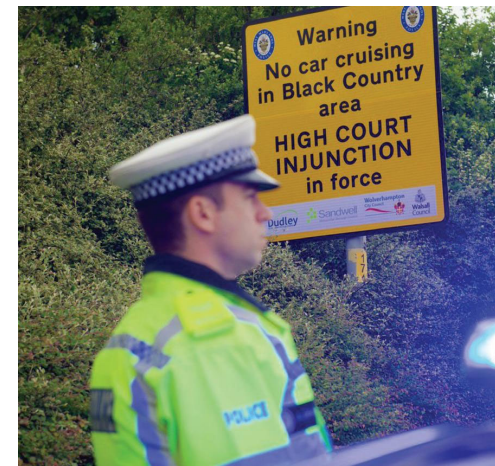


Safe Speeds

The management of appropriate vehicle speeds in a Safe System is extremely important and should be based on ensuring collisions are avoided or reducing the speed at which impacts occur. One of the biggest challenges for the council.

Action Plan

- Enforcement
 - Only WM Police have powers to prosecute speeding – criminal act
 - Average Speed Enforcement
 - Mobile Camera Enforcement
 - Speed Awareness Courses
 - Car cruising injunction



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The management of appropriate vehicle speeds in a Safe System is extremely important and should be based on ensuring collisions are avoided or reducing the speed at which impacts occur. One of the biggest challenges for the council.

Action Plan

- Enforcement
 - Only WM Police have powers to prosecute speeding – criminal act
 - Average Speed Enforcement
 - Mobile Camera Enforcement
 - Speed Awareness Courses
 - Car cruising injunction
- Speed Limit Review
 - Commitment to undertake review across the borough
 - Caution not to just reduce a speed limit without mitigation
- Community Involvement
 - Community Speed Watch
 - Support training of local neighbourhood police to undertake speed enforcement



Safe Vehicles

Modern vehicles are designed and regulated to minimise the occurrence and improve the survivability of not only drivers and passengers, but also to pedestrians, cyclists and motorcyclists. Although important in the reduction of casualties, the design of safe vehicles is not in the gift of Sandwell Council.

Action Plan

- Regulation and Control
 - Private Hire and Hackney Carriage checks and licencing
- Fleet Management
 - Maintained and roadworthy. Training for drivers.

Post Crash Response

Effective post collision emergency care is at the heart of post-crash response. It is essential that any information collected at the scene is accurately recorded and stored as this will be used by partners to formulate road safety initiatives.

Action Plan

- Police Fatal Collision Protocol
 - Real time notification by police. Site visit with police following incidents.

Summary & Approvals

Strategy

- Vision Zero
- Safe System Approach

Priority Groups

- Killed & Serious
- Children
- Pedestrians
- Cyclists
- Motorcyclists
- 17-30 Year Olds

Targets

- Reduce the number of Killed and Seriously Injured Casualties by at least 50% by 2030 (regional target)
- Reduce the number of All Road Casualties by at least 20% by 2030 (local target)
- Reduce the number of All Child Casualties by at least 20% by 2030 (local target)

Action Plan

- Considers road safety to be a responsibility shared by all those that use the road network, those that design, manage, & maintain the network, those that enforce laws and those who provide post crash care.
- Based on Safe Road Use, Safe Road & Roadsides, Safe Speeds, Safe Vehicles and Post Crash Response

Sandwell Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030



Questions ?

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Introduction

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1. Context – Primary Statutory Duties and Functions
2. Road Safety Policy
3. West Midlands Key Partners
4. West Midlands Commitments, Accident Map and KRN Map
5. Sandwell Key Facts
6. Sandwell Strategic Plan Funding (Policy)
7. Sandwell Policy Achievements
8. Risks of Departure from Existing Policy
9. Next Steps
10. Comments and Questions

1. Context - Statutory Duties

Page 0962

General Safety – Duty of Care, H&S AW Act, CDM Regs

Primary Road Safety Duty of the Local Traffic Authority

Road Traffic Act 1988, Section 39 > Each local authority >

- **must** prepare and carry out a programme of measures designed to promote road safety,
- **must** carry out studies into accidents arising out of the use of vehicles
- **must**, in the light of those studies, take such measures as appear to the authority to be appropriate to prevent such accidents,

2. Road Safety Policy

- United Nations Global Plan for Road Safety
- UN decade of Action 2020–2030 Reduce KSI's by 50%
- National Road Safety Statement 2019:
A Lifetime of Road Safety
- West Midlands Regional Road Safety Strategy
- Sandwell Strategic Road Safety Plan

3. West Midlands Regional Strategy

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The Key Partners

West Midlands Combined Authority

Local Authorities

Transport for West Midlands

West Midlands Police

Police and Crime Commissioner

West Midlands Fire Service

National Highways

ROSPA

4a. W.M. Regional Commitment

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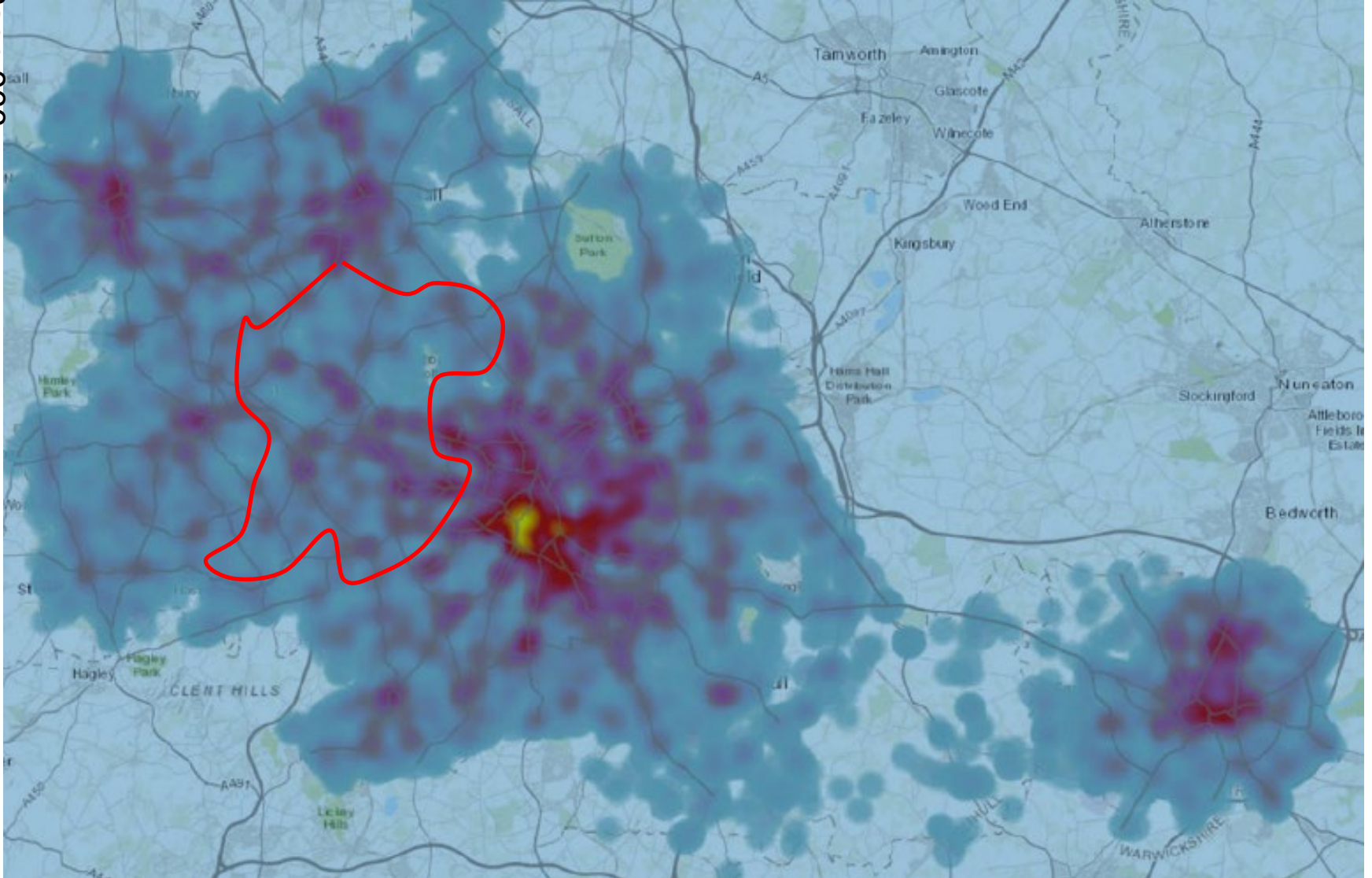
Partners agree to work in partnership to reduce road traffic casualties in the West Midlands, with the objective of:

- Adopting an iterative approach to evaluating the cause of personal injury collisions and develop a consistent approach to casualty reduction;
- Developing a consistent approach to the intelligence led enforcement of road traffic violations and driver awareness;
- Agreeing the West Midlands Road Safety Strategy
- Action Plan which is aimed at achieving casualty reduction targets; and
- Using available resources to effectively and efficiently support the Regional Road Safety Strategic Group (RRSSG).

Key decision making about how to allocate resources will be undertaken by the W.M. Road Safety Strategic Group (RRSSG).

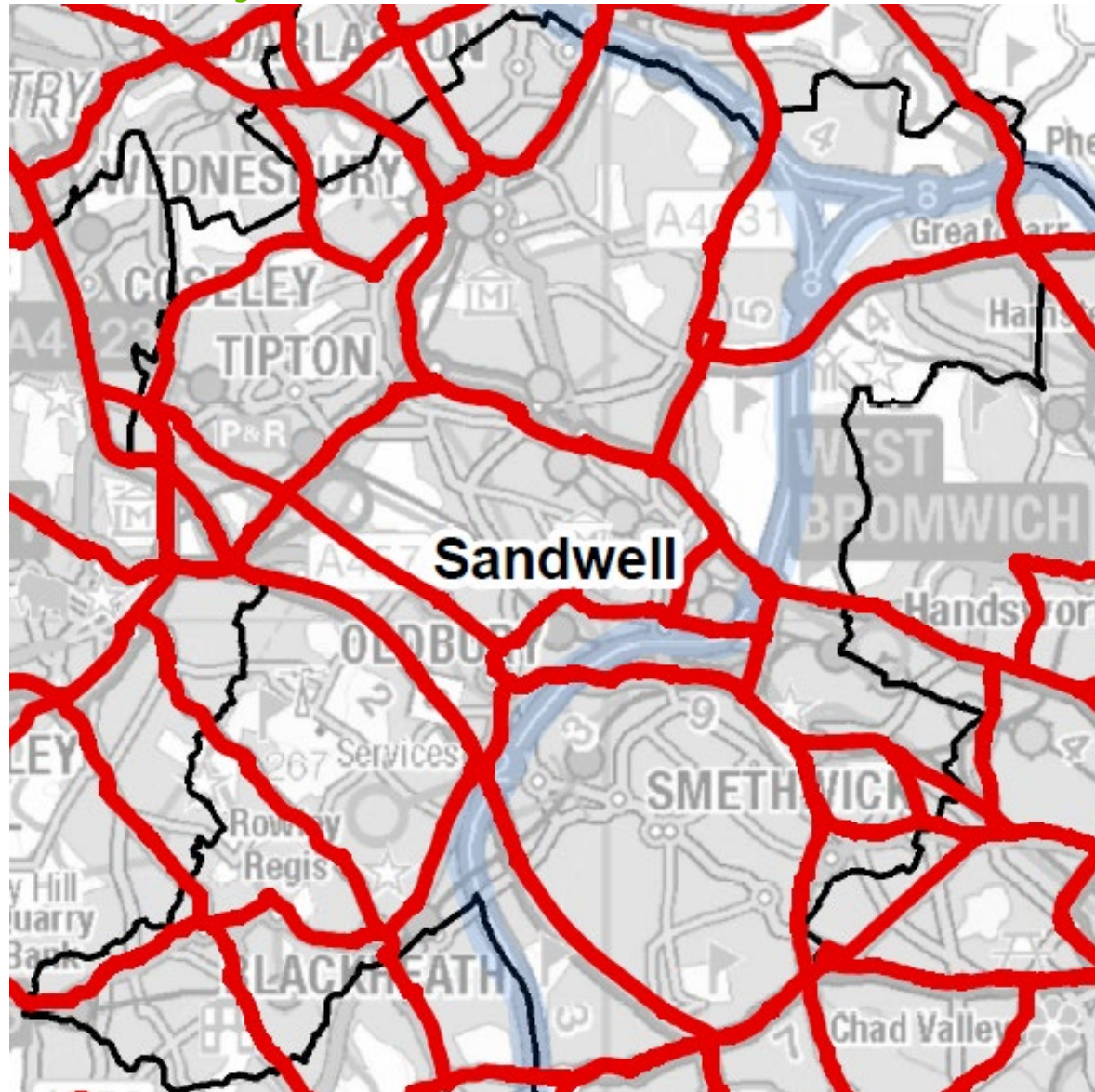
4b. Regional Traffic Collision Distribution

Page 966



4c. Key Route Network in Sandwell

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5. Sandwell Key Facts

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550 miles of Road Network, 2 million journeys PER DAY

Around 850 casualties per year

- Around £300,000 to £400,000 in Claims per year
- Over 10,000 road safety enquiries received per year
- Analysis Undertaken annually using STATS 19 police data
- Each request investigated – Perceived or Evidenced
- Funding Priority - Locations with most treatable casualties
- Speeding a Criminal Act enforced by West Midlands Police

6. Sandwell Strategic Plan (Policy)

ROAD SAFETY ACTIVITY (annual budgets)	FUNDING SOURCE
Road Safety Education & Campaigns (£74k)	Council Revenue supplemented with Local Area Budget
Minor Schemes, Surveys, Community (£168k)	
School Crossing Patrols (£300k)	
Enforcement (speed, dangerous driving, ASB)	West Midlands Police
Bikeability (cycle training) (£40k)	DfT Grant Direct
Casualty Reduction Schemes (£740k)	DfT Grant via WMCA
Transportation Pipeline (@ 5% of £168m/5 yrs)	DfT Grants via WMCA

£750k DfT Safer Roads Fund for Smethwick

7. Sandwell Policy Achievements

Page 970

- Injury accidents more than halved over 20 years
- TOTAL > **1,702 in 2001** reduced to **806 in 2021**
- KSI > **207 in 2000** reduced to **106 in 2021**
- CHILD > **293 in 2000** reduced to **97 in 2021**
- Average Cost to Society > 800,000 per accident
- Economic benefit to Society > £700m over 20 years
- WMCA & Sandwell Target 50% KSI reduction by 2030

8. Risks of Departure from Strategy

Page 971

Unsuccessful funding allocation based on Perception

- Failure to discharge Statutory Duties under RTA 1988
- Failure to deliver Regional Policy Commitments
- Potential withdrawal of DfT grants via WMCA
- Potential claims of Negligent allocation of resources
- Expensive claims for damages and injury
- Potential allegations of Corporate Manslaughter
- Reputational Damage and reverse of 20 years of gains

If successful

- WMCA redistribution of funding away from Sandwell?

9. Next Steps

- Summer 23 - Analyse Accident Statistics 2018 to 2022
- Autumn 23 - Update Strategic Road Safety Plan
- Autumn 23 - Scrutiny Review - Final Session
- December 23 - Report to Cabinet for Policy Approval
- New Strategic Road Safety Plan 2023 to 2030

Report to Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board

8 November 2023

Subject:	Cabinet Forward Plan and Board Work Programme
Director:	Law and Governance Surjit Tour Surjir_tour@sandwell.gov.uk
Contact Officer:	Suky Suthi-Nagra Democratic Services Manager Suky_suthinagra@sandwell.gov.uk

1 Recommendations







- 1.1 That the Board notes the Cabinet Forward Plan, which sets out the matters programmed to be considered by the Cabinet.
- 1.2 That the Board notes its work programme, which sets out matters to be considered by the Board in 2023/24 and considers whether any changes are required to the programme.

2 Reasons for Recommendations

- 2.1 A strong and effective work programme underpins the work and approach of Scrutiny.
- 2.2 It is good practice for work programmes to remain fluid, to allow for scrutiny of new and emerging issues in a timely manner.



3 How does this deliver objectives of the Corporate Plan?

	Best start in life for children and young people	The scrutiny function supports all of the objectives of the Corporate Plan by seeking to improve services for the people of Sandwell. It does this by influencing the policies and decisions made by the Council and other organisations involved in delivering public services.
	People live well and age well	
	Strong resilient communities	
	Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods	
	A strong and inclusive economy	
	A connected and accessible Sandwell	

4 Context and Key Issues

- 4.1 Scrutiny is a member led and driven function, driven by members' commitment to improve services and thereby people's lives.
- 4.2 An annual work programming event, involving chief officers, executive members and key partners, was held in June 2023 and all boards approved their work programmes for 2023/24 at their first meeting of the municipal year.
- 4.3 Boards have responsibility for their own work programmes, and it is good practice to keep them under review, to allow for new and emerging issues to be scrutinised in a timely manner.
- 4.4 Scrutiny Procedure Rules allow any member to request that an item is added to a scrutiny board's work programme. Each request should be carefully assessed, using the agreed process, to ensure that resources can be prioritised and that the scrutiny activity will add value.



5 Implications

Resources:	<p>Any resources implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Legal and Governance:	<p>The duty to undertake overview and scrutiny is set out in Part 1A Section 9 of the Local Government Act 2000.</p> <p>The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 places a duty on the Executive to respond to Scrutiny recommendations within two months of receiving them.</p> <p>NHS service commissioners and providers have a duty to respond in writing to a report or recommendation where health scrutiny requests this, within 28 days of the request. This applies to requests from individual health scrutiny committees or sub-committees, from local authorities and from joint health scrutiny committees or sub-committees.</p>
Risk:	<p>Any risk implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific risks for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Equality:	<p>Any equality implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific equality implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Health and Wellbeing:	<p>Any health and wellbeing implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific health and wellbeing implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>



Social Value	<p>Any social value implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific social value implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Corporate Parenting	<p>Any corporate parenting implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific corporate parenting implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>
Climate Change	<p>Any climate change implications arising from scrutiny activity are considered as required by the appropriate director or cabinet member/cabinet.</p> <p>Any specific climate change implications for the Board's attention are detailed in the Appendix.</p>

6 Appendices

Appendix 1 – Cabinet Forward Plan

Appendix 2 – Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board Work Programme

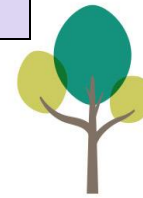
7. Background Papers

None.



The following items set out key decisions to be taken by the Executive:-

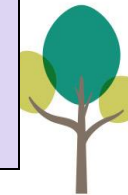
	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
1	Black Country Medium Schemes Framework – Re-Procurement Contact Officer: Robin Weare Director: Alice Davey - Director of Borough Economy	Cabinet - Environment & Highways (Cllr Millard)	Public	6 December 2023	No	Report



	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
2	<p>Highway Strategic Road Safety Plan 2023-2030</p> <p>Contact Officer: Simon Chadwick</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	<p>Cabinet - Environment & Highways (Cllr Millard)</p>		<p>6 December 2023</p>		



	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
3	<p>A4123 Cycle, Walk and Bus Corridor – In Principle scheme approval</p> <p>Contact Officer: Andy Miller – Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director Regeneration & Growth</p>	<p>Cabinet - Regeneration & WMCA (Cllr Hughes)</p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>6 December 2023</p>	<p>N/A</p>	

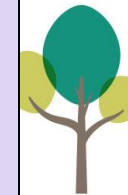


	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
4	<p>Smethwick to Birmingham Inclusive Growth Corridor Transport Package – In Principle scheme approval and imposition of Highway Improvement Lines</p> <p>Contact Officer: Andy Miller – Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director Regeneration & Growth</p>	<p>Cabinet - Regeneration & WMCA (Cllr Hughes)</p>	Public	6 December 2023	N/A	



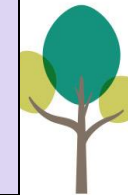
ONE COUNCIL
ONE TEAM

	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
5	<p>A461 Cycle, Walk and Bus Corridor – In Principle scheme approval</p> <p>Contact Officer: Andy Miller – Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director Regeneration & Growth</p>	<p>Cabinet - Regeneration & WMCA (Cllr Hughes)</p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>6 December 2023</p>	<p>N/A</p>	



ONE COUNCIL
ONE TEAM

	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
6	<p>Wednesbury to Brierley Hill Extension Sustainable Access Measures – In Principle scheme approval</p> <p>Contact Officer: Andy Miller – Strategic Planning & Transportation Manager</p> <p>Director: Tony McGovern – Director Regeneration & Growth</p>	<p>Cabinet - Regeneration & WMCA (Cllr Hughes)</p>	Public	6 December 2023	N/A	



	Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
7	Single Use Plastics Policy Contact Officer: Phil Kingston Director: Tony McGovern	Cabinet	Public	6 December 2023	N/A	Cabinet Report Single Use Plastics Policy
8	Regional Speed Enforcement Contact Officer: Robin Weare Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy	Cabinet - Environment & Highways (Cllr Millard)		17 January 2024		



ONE COUNCIL
ONE TEAM

Title/Subject	Decision Maker	Public or exempt report? If exempt – state reason for exemption	Decision Date	Pre or post decision Scrutiny to be carried out? (Board and date)	List of documents to be considered
<p>9 Cultural Development Fund Bid</p> <p>Contact Officer: Dawn Winter</p> <p>Director: Alice Davey – Director of Borough Economy</p>	<p>Cabinet - Leisure and Tourism (Cllr Padda)</p>		<p>17 January 2024</p>		



Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2023/ 24

Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment



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Standing Items:-

- Tracking and Monitoring of Recommendations to the Executive
- Work Programme (including Cabinet Forward Plan)

Meeting Date	Item	Presented by
13 July 2023	Cycle Route (Europa Avenue – Sandwell Valley) – referral from Cabinet Petitions Committee	Andy Miller/ Wayne Moore/ Tony McGovern/ Robin Weare (delivery of project/ Talvinder Sandu
	Work Programme 2023/24 and establishment of Scrutiny Review Working Group	Alex Goddard
03 October 2023	Towns Fund Update	Rina Rahim
	Europa Avenue Cycle Path and Associated Consultation – Considerations and Conclusion	Councillor Owen (Vice-Chair of Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board)
8 November 2023	Sandwell Local Plan – Draft Plan Consultation	Andy Miller
	Local Transport Plan	TfWM Officers (Via Andy Miller)
	Highway Strategic Road Safety Plan 2024-2030 – Report of the Working Group	Chair of the Economy, Skills, Transport and Environment Scrutiny Board
8 February 2024	Towns Fund Update	Rina Rahim
	Mixed Used Community Spaces in Town Centres	Alexander Oxley

Items to be scheduled:

Watching Briefs:

- Private hire and hackney carriage licensing policy
- Corporate Fleet Management
- Development of Brownfield Sites
- Congestion/ULEZ

Scrutiny Review/s

Local Centres – revitalisation and diversification

