

Heritage Impact Assessment for Local Plan Review

Produced by CLAUDE, Planning, Design and Engagement Services, Solihull MBC

Non-Technical Summary for Sites 1 (BC1) (additional land), 2 (BC2), 4 (BL1), 6 (HA1), 7 (NS1), 9 (KN2), 10 (ME1), 11 (as 2016 consultation), 12 (BL2) (additional land), 16 (SO1), 20 (UKC2), 21 (BC4), 22 (BC5), 23 (BC6), 24 (HA2), 25 (HH1), 26 (BL3) (additional land to former Site 13)

These Heritage Impact Assessments consider potential impacts upon heritage assets that could result from the development of 14 sites identified in the Solihull MBC Local Plan Review, and from the addition of land at three sites previously assessed by DBP Planning for the Historic Environment. The assessments have been informed by discussions with colleagues at Historic England.

One or more visits were made to each site to consider the implications of the proposed allocation and gather photographic evidence. Where possible visits were made to heritage assets on or near to sites, to consider views from the asset to the site as well as views from site to asset. Historic map regression has been limited to the First Edition OS onward, apart from instances where earlier map evidence had been submitted by others. The Introductory Statement explains the methodology for the assessments, followed by detailed heritage impact assessments for each site.

*This non-technical briefly describes site characteristics and affected heritage assets, and seeks to explain the site capacity to accommodate development. Where appropriate it recommends areas within the sites that should remain undeveloped in order to protect the setting of the heritage assets as required by primary legislation and sought by government policy in the National Planning Policy Framework. The legislative framework relating to the setting of Listed Buildings is long established and requires local planning authorities to consider ‘...**the desirability of preserving a building or its setting**’, as well as ‘...**any features of special architectural or historic interest which it possesses.**’ The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) explains Government Policy on the Historic Environment and defines the term ‘heritage asset’, ‘significance’, ‘harm’, and ‘setting of a heritage asset’.*

The NPPF expects that great weight should be given to the conservation of heritage assets and that the greater their significance the greater this weight should be.

It then states that harm to heritage assets (or their setting) should be ‘wholly exceptional’ for assets of the highest importance, including Grade II or Grade I buildings, and ‘exceptional’ for those including grade 2 listed buildings.*

These are key considerations because development upon the sites proposed for allocation in this local plan review and within this report have the clear potential to cause harm to the setting of heritage assets within or near to the site. Assumptions about the general scale and appearance of development have had to be made to allow useful conclusions to be reached; the assessment is not about whether the allocation site can be seen from a heritage asset, but seeks to demonstrate what development upon that site would produce as new impacts upon the setting of the asset. This includes new impacts such as streetlighting visible in a previously rural and unlit parcel of land, as well as the view of buildings, roads, community facilities, public open space and play provisions. The purpose of the assessments is to indicate whether the site allocations have the potential to cause harm so that decision takers can make informed decisions about balancing any harm against the need to provide sites for development. In doing so the Council must show that it has taken proper account of the historic environment and acted accordingly before taking the decision as to whether to include a site, and if so how much of that proposed site.

Site 1 (now BC1) Barratt's Farm, Balsall Common - additional land at Waste Lane

The main allocation is a large site east of the settlement of Balsall Common comprising numerous fields established by enclosure of this formerly open land in the early nineteenth century. The post-enclosure field boundaries of hedgerows and trees that still exist give the area a rural character at the village edge. The report for the main site was prepared for the Council by DBP Planning for the Historic Environment in 2019 (see Evidence Base on SMBC Local Plan Review website).

The additional land is east of the original site, and has a heathland edge character with some enclosure hedgerows and the Kenilworth Greenway to its eastern edge. HS2 will run adjacent to that. The nearest Designated Heritage Asset to this additional land is Crabmill Farm, a grade 2 listed building. This is to the east beyond the line of HS2 and the Kenilworth Greenway. The additional site allocation would not affect its setting. The development would affect the setting of undesignated heritage assets on Old Waste Lane and Waste Lane enclosing its southern edge, but as these are of low local value only this could be mitigated by designs using scale, layout and materials that respect their character and context.

Site 2 (now BC2), Frog Lane, Balsall Common

This triangular site lies at the southern edge of Balsall Common. As with Sites 1 and 3 nearby, some field boundaries are part of the post enclosure landscape that forms a significant element of local character and distinctiveness. Frog Lane is sinuous and enclosed, a particularly characterful narrow lane. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Cottage Farm, Frogmore Grange, and Stables at Frogmore Grange, all listed Grade II. Sited at the rural edge they are not isolated, and many dwellings as well as the sports pitches and allotments are close by. These are significant buildings sensitive to change in their settings.

There are some clear views of the assets, and where vegetation blocks or filters those it is reasonable to expect that as plants are removed or die back, views may increase in time. Development of the western or south eastern ends of the site would fail to preserve the settings of the listed buildings. The assessment concludes that the development of those parts of the site would be likely to cause harm to the significance of the heritage assets. Such harm should be exceptional. To avoid the harm, those parts of the site should remain undeveloped as proposed in the current concept Master Plan.

Site 4 (now BL1), Land west of Dickens Heath

This site is rural in overall character, and in its reduced area includes two football clubs and a rugby club, with their associated clubhouses, car parks and playing pitches. A further two football clubs and a garden and heritage centre are now outside the allocation.

The site allocation would not affect designated heritage assets. Whitlock's End Farmhouse lies north of the canal at Site BL3 (formerly 26), but the setting of this grade 2 listed building would not be harmed by the development of Site 4 regardless of whether or not Site BL3 is allocated and developed. Site 4 is assessed as numerous undesignated heritage assets are potentially affected by development and their collective value is locally significant. Assets such as Tyburn Farmhouse and Little Tyburn Coppice (both on Tythebarn Lane) are easily appreciated from public highways. The Stratford canal in cutting and Betteridge's Barn behind fencing, gates and mature plants are less easily seen, but the canal corridor and towpath are accessible and well-used.

The assessment concludes that the development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to the setting of these heritage assets, provided that development closest to each is suitable for its context and not of excessive height. This is based upon the assets only being of local value, and seeking to maintain their contribution to local character and distinctiveness. The development could raise awareness of the canal corridor and increased use of it could enhance the viability of future ongoing maintenance and improvements.

Site 6 (now HA1), Land at Meriden Road, Hampton in Arden

This land comprises of a former World War 2 ammunition depot now in use for commercial bulk storage. It lies east of the village edge, and some distance east of that Hampton in Arden Conservation Area includes dwellings, Hampton Manor, the church, Fentham Hall and a public house all on higher ground. The Conservation Area is of high importance, and close enough in distance terms to warrant assessment of possible impacts upon its significance. The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve the setting of the Hampton in Arden Conservation Area and would cause no harm to it.

The undesignated heritage assets affected would be Patrick's Farm on a low plateau above the Blythe and its flood meadows, and the meadows themselves with planned enclosure hedgerows and evidence of deliberate watercourse management over more than a century. Public views are available from Meriden Road and some public footpaths. When flood waters cover meadows along the river course, the visual spectacle is notable and draws attention for its own qualities of reflection and an element of subtle drama. HS2 will run between Patrick's Farm and the site on the Blythe embankment and viaduct, preventing the site from impacting upon the setting of the heritage assets.

Site 7 (now NS1), Arran Way, Kingshurst

This site is entirely urban in character, with a church, church hall, car parks, and flats above shops. The site allocation would not affect designated heritage assets. Kingshurst Castle site is a Scheduled Ancient Monument of High Importance some way south west of the site; its significance would not be harmed by the development of Site 7. The site is assessed as the undesignated heritage asset of the church of St. Barnabas would be affected by development and its collective value with the shopping centre, housing and open space is locally significant. The church remains easily appreciated from public highways and spaces, as evidence of the intention to include a worship provision and community focus in the development immediately following World War 2. The church is executed in a much more traditional form and materials than those of the adjacent shopping precinct and houses, as a deliberate beacon of stability and continuity after the conflict.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to the setting of the heritage asset, provided that development around the church is suitable for its context. The development could raise awareness of the visual qualities of the church, and increased use of this and the hall could enhance a sense of community value, and assist with future ongoing maintenance and improvements. New public space could clearly improve the setting of the buildings.

Site 9 (now KN2), Land bounded by Station, Grove and Warwick Roads, Knowle

This large area of land lies south of Knowle village and east of the point where Knowle and Dorridge merge around Grove Road and Station Road. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Knowle Conservation Area, and the Grade 2 listed buildings of Rotton Row Farmhouse, Grove Farm west barn, and Norton Green Farmhouse. The Conservation Area is of high importance, and the listed buildings medium. These are all significant heritage assets that are sensitive to change in their settings.

Public views of Rotton Row Farmhouse, Grove Farm west barn and Knowle Conservation Area are available from the highway and some public footpaths. Norton Green Farmhouse is viewed from the lane above hedges and shrubs. Large parts of the proposed site are visible from the assets other than Norton Green Farm. This assessment concludes that development at the south edge of Site 9 would fail to preserve the settings of Rotton Row Farmhouse and Grove Farm barn, and would cause harm to their significances. Such harm should be exceptional. Development at the upper north western edge could also harm the setting and significance of Knowle Conservation Area unless it is suitable for this context near its south western extreme. This harm could be avoided if the fields at the southern extreme of the site remain undeveloped, and provided that the development adjacent to those fields and to Knowle Conservation Area is of a design, scale, layout and materials that suit the context.

Site 10 (now ME1), Land at Birmingham Road, Meriden

This site is enclosed by Birmingham Road, Maxstoke Lane and the A45 in a shallow cutting. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Meriden Green Conservation Area, and the Grade 2 listed buildings of The Laurels (opposite the site), the Pavilion, Workshop and Lodge at the Forest of Arden archery grounds, Corner House, Thatched Cottage, Centre of England Stores, War Memorial and K6 Telephone Kiosk. Of High Importance is the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the village cross that stands on The Green. The Conservation Area around The Green is of high importance, and the listed buildings are of medium architectural and historic interest. Public views of all listed buildings and the Conservation Area are available from the public highway and the assets around The Green are particularly well appreciated as a group that varies in content dependent upon the viewer's location.

The assessment concludes that development on the site would preserve the settings of the Designated Heritage Assets and would not cause harm to their significances provided that the development at the southern edge of the site is suitable in its rural and village edge context.

Site 11 (as per 2016 Consultation), TRW, Stratford Road/ Dog Kennel Lane, Shirley

This site is commercial in overall character, with some undeveloped areas to be allocated for housing and commercial uses and some housing development currently under construction as part of a hybrid planning approval for development of much of the site. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Light Hall, a Grade 2 listed building currently amongst fields, and a Victorian pillar box near Stratford Road on Dog Kennel Lane.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to the settings of Light Hall and the Pillar Box, provided that development closest to the pillar box is suitable for its context and not of excessive height. The development could raise awareness of the pillar box, and increased use of it could enhance its viability in the future.

Site 12 (now BL2), Dog Kennel Lane, Shirley (additional land east of original proposed allocation)

This is a moderately large urban edge site, rural in nature and in use for agriculture. It is to be added to the main Site 12 (BL2). The report for the main site was prepared for the Council by DBP Planning for the Historic Environment in 2019. DBP considered that *'Dog Kennel Lane currently forms a southern edge to the West Midlands conurbation'*. They found that field patterns within the main site were already established by a 1794 survey of estates belonging to John Burman, and many of these hedgerows still remain. This land may have been further estate fields. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Light Hall and the Pillar Box, both Grade 2 listed buildings on Dog Kennel Lane. Light Hall is currently surrounded by fields, and the Pillar Box stands in front of a motor dealership across the road from the fields that form the addition to the site. There is a hybrid planning approval for the development of much of Site 11 which stands opposite the site to the west of Dog Kennel Lane.

The addition of this land would not harm the setting of Light Hall which would be separated from it by development on land in the original allocation parcel. The setting of the Pillar Box does not include this additional land, but it would be ideal to ensure that development opposite suits the context of the heritage asset. The development could raise awareness of the pillar box and increased use of it could enhance its viability in the future.

Site 16 (now SO1), Land at Field and Lugtrout Lanes, Solihull

This site is rural in overall character, with a football clubhouse and its car park and playing pitches at the north east corner. It adjoins the built up area of Solihull to its west edge, and Catherine de Barnes village lies a short distance to the east. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Field Farmhouse on Field Lane and 237 Lugtrout Lane, both Grade 2 listed buildings. Field Farmhouse sits amongst fields with the single track Field Lane enclosed by banks and hedgerows and forming a strong element of local character and distinctiveness. 237 Lugtrout Lane lies beyond the relatively narrow lane also with hedgerows and banks enclosing it, and has the Grand Union canal in a cutting close at its rear boundary.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to their settings, provided that the land closest to the heritage assets remains undeveloped and that development adjacent to that is of a design, layout scale and materials that suit the context.

Site 20 (now UKC2), Land at Damson Parkway, Solihull

This site is rural in overall character but immediately adjacent to strongly contrasting sites at the urban edge - the JLR factory and despatch yard, Solihull Moors FC, and the extensive JLR logistics depot under construction. Between and near these major employment sites are fields and paddocks, with some commercial uses and dwellings at the north edge alongside the A45 Coventry Road, and along Old Damson Lane where there are a play centre, kennels and a residential caravan site. The

heritage assets potentially affected by development are associated with the former Elmdon Hall, and are the church of St. Nicholas, Elmdon War Memorial, The Grange and the Gate Lodge, as well as the separate asset of Castle Hills Farm; all are Grade 2 listed buildings currently standing in public parkland or at its edge, except Castle Hills Farm which lies amongst arable and grazing land. The Elmdon Building north of the Coventry Road beyond warehousing at the airfield edge is grade 2 listed, but its setting would not be affected.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to the settings of the listed buildings, provided that development is suitable for its context and not of excessive height. This is particularly important at the northern edge near Elmdon Hall Gate Lodge, and at the eastern edge nearest to Castle Hills Farm. The development could raise awareness of the group of heritage assets and the history of Castle Hills to the east.

Site 21 (now BC4), Land at Pheasant Oak Farm, Hob Lane, Balsall Common

This site is rural in overall character, and includes several farmsteads with grazing land along the former 'waste' east of Balsall Heath (later Balsall Common). The site is almost flat and divided by numerous remaining enclosure hedgerows. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Berkswell Windmill (grade 2 star listed, in the upper 8 percent of listed buildings) to the south on Windmill Lane, and Image House Farm and Barn (both grade 2 listed) to the south east off Hob Lane. DBP reporting on Site 3 in 2019 considered that the part of Hob Lane south of the site formed part of the wider setting of the windmill. Image House Farm and its Barn lie along a track from Hob Lane beyond a slight ridge that would prevent the site development from impacting upon their settings.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to the settings of Berkswell Windmill, provided that development closest to Hob Lane is suitable for its context and not of excessive height. The development could raise awareness of the windmill as the most complete tower mill in the west midlands, and increased visitor numbers could enhance funding for its ongoing maintenance.

Site 22 (now BC5), Land at Trevalion Stud, Wootton Green Lane, Balsall Common

This site is rural edge in overall character and lies at the north west end of the built up settlement. It is partially closely maintained as grazing paddocks and a seasonal caravan site. The main A452 Kenilworth Road lies to its north, along which are numerous dwellings and a pub, hotel, car sales site, repair garage and car wash. This contrasts with the narrow hedged lanes and fields immediately beyond to other boundaries. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Blythe Prior, a Grade II listed building, and Berkswell Conservation Area. Blythe Prior is a timber framed cottage with white painted infill panels and a thatched roof that sits amongst fields north west of the site. The single track Wootton Lane, enclosed by banks and hedgerows, forms a very strong element of local character and distinctiveness to which the heritage asset contributes strongly. Berkswell Conservation Area lies north of the A452 generally on land lower than the dual carriageway that runs on the dry high ground between the site and Berkswell village. It is not evident from the site.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to the settings of Blythe Prior and Berkswell CA, provided that development is suitable for its context in terms of design, layout, materials, external lighting and building heights tailored to each part of the site.

Site 23 (now BC6), Land at Lavender Hall, Lavender Hall Lane, Balsall Common

This site is of mixed character, formerly a flat grassed area just outside the building group perhaps for occasional farm vehicle parking and storage, to the east of which lies the established fishing lakes site. Unauthorised commercial storage to the south east currently detracts from the setting of the heritage assets. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Lavender Hall and Lavender Hall Barn, Grade 2 star (in the upper 8 percent of listed buildings) and grade 2 listed buildings respectively, and Berkswell Conservation Area. Lavender Hall stands behind its private gardens alongside Lavender Hall Lane, with the barn to its north alongside the lane and former farmyard. East of them are large former farm barns and sheds in varied commercial usage. The nearest part of the site is marred by commercial uses and storage which are unauthorised and liable to enforcement action. The house and barn are evident from the site and in views of and from it, whilst Berkswell CA is less obvious apart from the former hall parkland element.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would not preserve and would cause harm to the settings of Lavender Hall and Lavender Hall Barn. This harm could be reduced if development avoids the area closest to the assets and the remainder is designed to be suitable for its context. This requires appropriate design, layout, materials and scale, and the most sensitive access solution possible as this adjoins the garden of Lavender Hall. It is unlikely that the access could be achieved without causing harm to the grade 2* listed building which in NPPF terms should be 'wholly exceptional'. The development would not harm the setting or significance of Berkswell CA, provided that it is suitable for its context and not of excessive height.

Site 24 (now HA2), Oak Farm, Hampton Lane, Catherine-de-Barnes

This site is semi-rural in character, a former village edge agricultural site in new usage, with a mix of large buildings including post-war portal framed sheds. The adjacent canal adds much to local character. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Walford Hall Farm on Solihull Road and Bogay Hall in Henwood Lane, both Grade 2 star listed buildings (in the upper 8 percent of listed buildings). Walford Hall Farm sits amongst fields on high ground to the east. Bogay Hall is to the south west on the narrow Henwood Lane enclosed by banks and hedgerows and forming a strong element of local character and distinctiveness. The Grand Union canal is a heritage asset.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to the settings of Walford Hall Farm or Bogay Hall, provided that development is suitable for its context and not of excessive height. They are a good distance from the site, which combined with topography, vegetation and buildings in between would prevent harm to their significances. The heritage asset of the canal would be impacted but it is of low local value and development in context would not cause harm of any significant weight. The development could raise awareness of the canal and increased use of it could enhance its viability and maintenance in the future.

Site 25 (now HH1), Land at School Road, Hockley Heath

This site is rural in character, but at the settlement edge with extensive late 20th century and some 19th or early 20th century houses to its north and east. The heritage assets potentially affected by development are Grade II listed buildings: 63/65 Orchard Road, the Church of St. Thomas, and the village War Memorial. The church lies at the village edge with fields to its south and west. The other two Designated Heritage Assets are within the built-up settlement; 63/65 Orchard Road amongst largely post-war dwellings, and the War Memorial alongside a car dealership and with a pub and shops nearby alongside the A3400 Stratford Road. The Stratford canal forms the south west site

boundary and in this rural section it follows a long shallow tree-lined curve with a soft bank to the south that gives a very attractive character more akin to that of a river.

The assessment concludes that development of the site would preserve and would not cause harm to the settings of the Designated Heritage Assets due to the many dwellings and commercial buildings that separate them from it. Provided that development close to the canal suits its context and is not of excessive height it could preserve the significance of this heritage asset. The development could raise awareness of the canal, and increased use of it could help to ensure its ongoing maintenance.

Site 26 (now BL3), Land at Whitlock's End Farm, Shirley

This site adjoins and lies immediately west of the previously proposed Site 13. DBP Planning for the Historic Environment considered and reported on Site 13 in 2019 (see Evidence Base documents at <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr/evidence>). The heritage assets potentially affected are Whitlock's End Farm, a grade 2 listed house, and a barn east of its access track on the Local List of Heritage Assets.

The assessment included BL3 and found that the development of the land in BL3 could produce slight harm to the setting of Whitlock's End Farm. However, its setting has been degraded by conifer plantations, farm buildings and conversions of former farm buildings, such that the site may offer an opportunity to enhance the setting with appropriate landscape measures including hedgerow reinstatement.

Other Sites

Sites 1 (BC1), 3 (BC3), 8 (KN1), 12 (BL2), 13 (previously proposed including 26, now BL3) and 19 (now UKC1) Arden Triangle Bickenhill are reported on by DBP Planning for the Historic Environment (see Evidence Base documents at <https://www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr/evidence>)

Sites 5 (Bacon's End island, Fordbridge), 14 (Arran Way Smithswood), and 18 (Sharman's Cross Road, Solihull)

These sites are not reported here, but have been assessed. They have no heritage assets on the site but one or more nearby. At Site 5, local context means that there would be no harm to the setting and therefore the significance of the grade 2 listed Bacon's End Bridge concealed beneath the widened Chester Road. At Sites 14 and 18 the heritage assets are only of low local value, and any impact upon their settings would be of very little weight.

Sites 15 (Auckland Drive, Smithswood), and 17 (Moat Lane/ Vulcan Road, Solihull)

These sites have no heritage assets on the site or nearby. They are not reported here but have been assessed.