



# DESIGN & ACCESS STATEMENT

Pheasant Oak Farm, Balsall Common

PREPARED BY



IN CONJUNCTION WITH



- PLANNING



- LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY & HERITAGE



- HIGHWAYS & DRAINAGE

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Prepared for Barwood Development Securities Ltd

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# VISION

*'TO TRANSFORM A SITE ON THE COUNCIL'S BROWNFIELD REGISTER, CREATING A SUSTAINABLE HIGH QUALITY DEVELOPMENT WHICH WILL POSITIVELY INTEGRATE WITH ITS SURROUNDINGS, SEAMLESSLY FORMING PART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY'*



*View of existing poultry pens on site. These adjoin the rear of existing residential properties fronting onto Windmill Lane*

#### Key Features:

- Up to 250 new high quality homes, in a range of sizes to meet the need of local residents including affordable housing;
- 5% of open market dwellings, subject to demand, to be provided in the form of Self and Custom Build Plots;
- A development that sits within a robust landscape framework, enhancing existing landscape features and creating significant Biodiversity Gain;
- Comprehensive natural drainage design using SuDS, integrated with ecological areas;
- A framework for development that promotes outward looking residential parcels to provide high levels of natural surveillance, creating a safe and inclusive environment;
- The enhancement of Millennium Way increases usage, including a new pedestrian crossing point on Waste Lane;
- Enhancement of the existing footpath and cycle network and the creation of a new network of pedestrian walkways on the site to promote sustainable travel and connecting to facilities in the village including the railway station;
- Extensive areas of multifunctional and high quality public open space including areas for play and a community growing space/orchard.



*Artist impression of how the development proposals may look upon completion with the Millennium Way at the centre of the image.*

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## OVERVIEW

- 1.1 This Design and Access Statement (DAS) has been prepared by BHB Architects on behalf of Barwood Development Securities Ltd to accompany an outline application for residential development at Pheasant Oak Farm, Balsall Common, Solihull.
- 1.2 The site has the benefit of falling under the Draft Housing Allocation of Policy BC4 of the emerging Solihull Local Plan, which is in the final stages of examination.
- 1.3 The proposals are described as follows;
- 'Outline Application for Residential Development (up to 250 homes, including 40% affordable) with vehicular access off Waste Lane; demolition of existing buildings/structures; associated landscaping and new public open spaces; community growing area/orchard; and enhancements to Millennium Way through the Site'*
- 1.4 This statement should be read in conjunction with the outline planning application and its accompanying supporting documents.

## PURPOSE OF THE DOCUMENT

- 1.5 This DAS has been prepared to explain the design concepts and principles behind the proposals as well as dealing with issues of access as required by the Town and Country Planning (Development Procedure)(England) Order (DMPO) 2015, along with the guidance given in the Department of Communities and Local Government documents: National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance (NPPG).

- 1.6 The DMPO sets out the following requirements:

*'An application for planning permission to which this paragraph applies must, except where paragraph (4) applies, be accompanied by a statement (a design and access statement) about:*

- (a) the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development ; and*
- (b) how issues relating to access to the development have been dealt with.*

*A design and access statement must:*

- (a) explain the design principles and concepts that have been applied to the development;*
- (b) demonstrate the steps taken to appraise the context of the development and how the design of the development takes that context into account;*
- (c) explain the policy adopted as to access, and how policies relating to access in relevant local development documents have been taken into account;*
- (d) state what, if any, consultation has been undertaken on issues relating to access to the development and what account has been taken of the outcome of any such consultation; and*
- (e) explain how specific issues which might affect access to the development have been addressed.'*

1.7 In order to address the requirements of the DMPO, this statement is structured as follows:

SECTION  
**1**



**INTRODUCTION**

Outlining the purpose of this document and introducing the site.

SECTION  
**2**



**PLANNING POLICY**

An overview of key planning policies that will inform the design process.

SECTION  
**3**



**CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS**

Appraises the site surroundings and its context.

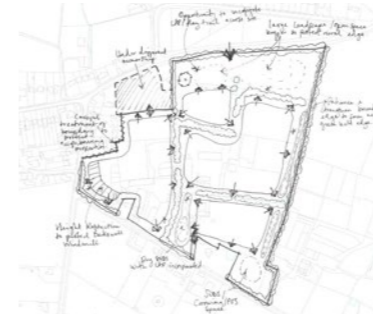
SECTION  
**4**



**SITE ANALYSIS**

This section of the DAS provides an evaluation of the sites technical appraisals, identify opportunities and considerations that will inform the scheme proposals.

SECTION  
**5**



**DESIGN DEVELOPMENT**

In this section of the statement we present design principles and their evolution in light of stakeholder consultation and feedback.

SECTION  
**6**



**SCHEME PROPOSALS**

This section of the DAS presents the Scheme Proposals, supportive plans and design strategies.

SECTION  
**7**



**SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS**

A summary of the proposals and scheme benefits.

## SITE LOCATION

- 1.8 The application site is located in the village of Balsall Common within the Parish of Berkswell.
- 1.9 The village of Balsall Common is situated approximately 11km to the west of Coventry city centre and 12km to the east of Solihull. Birmingham is located 28km to the north-west.
- 1.10 The village is accessed primarily via the A452 which runs south-east to north-west. This route provides good connectivity to Solihull, Kenilworth and Coventry.
- 1.11 The village's local services and facilities include convenience shops, places of worship and public houses. Local amenities are analysed later in this document.
- 1.12 The Village is served by both rail and bus services.
- 1.13 The site sits within, and forms the significant majority of, a parcel of land that has been identified in the emerging Solihull Local Plan as a proposed allocation for residential development (Policy BC4)



Photograph showing existing farm yard use

## SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.14 The application site extends to approximately 12.7 hectares and is currently occupied by a farm yard, commercial and storage units, poultry sheds and an extensive caravan storage area, with associated hard standing areas, as well as grassed fields.
- 1.15 The site is identified on the Council's Brownfield Register.
- 1.16 The Millennium Way Promoted Route runs through the site, providing a pedestrian access link between Waste Lane and Hob Lane, along with Balsall Common and the wider surrounding countryside.

- 1.17 The site adjoins and is located to the south-eastern corner of the village. The village centre is accessible within a 15-20 minute walk.
- 1.18 The site is bounded by Waste Lane to the north, Windmill Lane to the west and Hob Lane to the south, these provide linkages into the wider highway network.
- 1.19 Topographical Survey information shows a relatively flat plain across the site, falling nominally to the site's south-eastern corner.
- 1.20 Existing hedgerows mean the site has a good sense of enclosure with limited views into the site.



Plan showing the Site in a wider context





**KEY**

-  PROPOSED SITE BOUNDARY (TOTAL AREA 12.7HA)
-  LAND OUTSIDE OF APPLICATION BOUNDARY, BUT WITHIN BC4 SITE ALLOCATION
-  MILLENNIUM WAY FOOTPATH

Site Location Plan



Photo of poultry farm located on site



Photo of farm yard located on site



Photo of commercial units located on site



Photo of caravan storage facility on site

## 2. PLANNING POLICY

### NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

2.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the planning policies for England as prescribed by the Government. Under the Achieving Well-Designed Places section of the NPPF, the guidance states;

***'THE CREATION OF HIGH QUALITY, BEAUTIFUL AND SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS AND PLACES IS FUNDAMENTAL TO WHAT THE PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT PROCESS SHOULD ACHIEVE'. THE BETTERMENT OF PLACES TO LIVE AND WORK, ALONGSIDE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ARE CORE FACTORS OF 'GOOD DESIGN'.***

2.2 The NPPF expands on principles of good design and defines the expectations of well-designed places.

2.3 The NPPF has a presumption in favour of sustainable development. The framework identifies three objectives for supporting sustainable development;

'a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;

b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities' health, social and cultural well-being; and

c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.'

2.4 Sustainable development can also be categorised by high quality, good design, which creates a better place to live, work and engage communities.

2.5 Paragraph 130 states developments;  
'a) will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;

b) are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;

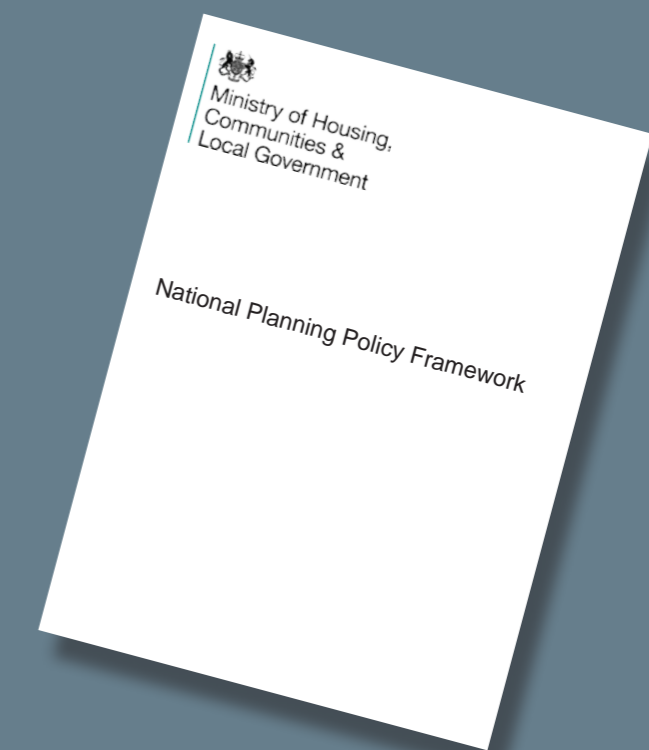
c) are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and

landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);

d) establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;

e) optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and

f) create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.'



## NATIONAL DESIGN GUIDE

2.6 The National Design Guide (NDG) was published by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) in September 2019 and updated in January 2021 to reinforce the delivery of quality places through the design process.

***'A WELL-DESIGNED PLACE IS UNLIKELY TO BE ACHIEVED BY FOCUSING ONLY ON THE APPEARANCE, MATERIALS AND DETAILING OF BUILDINGS. IT COMES ABOUT THROUGH MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICES AT ALL LEVELS.'***

## THE TEN CHARACTERISTICS

2.7 The NDG identifies the Governments priorities for a well-designed place using national planning policy, planning guidance and objectives for good design. These are set out in ten characteristics that together combines, create a cross-disciplinary framework for good design, as set out in the NPPF;

- To create physical character;
- To help to nurture and sustain a sense of community; and;
- To positively address environmental issues affecting climate.

2.8 The ten characteristics are detailed on the following page.

2.9 In order to demonstrate that the objectives for good design have been met, Section 6 of this document, which describes the scheme proposals, is broken down into sub-sections, each relating to the identified characteristics of good design.



*The ten characteristics of well-designed places as set out within the National Design Guide*

# THE TEN CHARACTERISTICS

## CONTEXT

'Enhance the surroundings' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'...will function and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development.' (NPPF, ch. 130a)



## IDENTITY

'Attractive and distinctive' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'...are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping' (NPPF, ch. 130b)



## BUILT FORM

'A coherent pattern of development' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'...are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities).' (NPPF, ch. 130c)



## MOVEMENT

'Accessible and easy to move around' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'...provide for attractive and well-designed walking and cycling networks with supporting facilities such as secure cycle parking... create places that are safe, secure and attractive – which minimise the scope for conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, avoid unnecessary street clutter, and respond to local character and design standards' (NPPF, ch 106d, 112c)



## NATURE

'Enhanced and optimised' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'... trees make an important contribution to the character and quality of urban environments, and can also help mitigate and adapt to climate change. Planning policies and decisions should ensure that new streets are tree-lined, ...opportunities are taken to incorporate trees elsewhere in developments ...and that existing trees are retained wherever possible.' (NPPF, ch 131)



## PUBLIC SPACES

'Safe, social and inclusive' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'...enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address identified local health and well-being needs – for example through the provision of safe and accessible green infrastructure, sports facilities, local shops, access to healthier food, allotments and layouts that encourage walking and cycling.' (NPPF, ch 92c)



## USES

'Mixed and integrated' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'...optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks.' (NPPF, ch. 130e)



## HOMES AND BUILDINGS

'Functional, healthy and sustainable' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'...establish and maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit.' (NPPF, ch. 130d)



## RESOURCE

'Efficient and Resilient' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'...create places that are safe, inclusive and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.' (NPPF, ch. 130f)



## LIFESPAN

'Made to last' (National Design Guide, Ten Characteristics)

'... to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.' (NPPF, ch. 8c)

## SOLIHULL LOCAL PLAN 2011-2028

2.10 The Solihull Local Plan has been developed by the local authority setting out the long-term spatial vision for its town, villages and countryside for development and change. The plan sets out the vision for delivery through a strategy of promotion, distribution and delivery of sustainable development and growth.

2.11 The following policies have been identified as relevant to this proposal;

### **POLICY P4 - MEETING HOUSING NEEDS**

This policy sets out the housing requirements for affordable and market housing, alongside setting out the exceptions in rural locations.

### **POLICY P7 - ACCESSIBILITY AND EASE OF ACCESS**

This policy sets out the requirements to ensure new developments are located in accessible locations and within set distances of amenities to promote ease of access.

### **POLICY P8 - MANAGING DEMAND FOR TRAVEL AND REDUCING CONGESTION**

This policy sets out the requirements for regard for transport efficiency and highway safety.

### **POLICY P9 - CLIMATE CHANGE**

This policy sets out measures to help tackle climate change and aid in future resiliency.

### **POLICY P10 - NATURAL ENVIRONMENT**

This policy sets out the value and benefits of the natural environment and how these should be considered for all development proposals.

### **POLICY P11 - WATER MANAGEMENT**

This policy sets out the requirements for the incorporation of sustainable drainage systems (SUDS) in new developments.

### **POLICY P14 - AMENITY**

This policy sets out provisions to protect and enhance the amenity and existing and future occupiers when considering proposals for new development.

### **POLICY P15 - SECURING DESIGN QUALITY**

This policy sets out the principles and requirements for achieving good quality, inclusive and sustainable design.

The policy includes principles that cover conserving and enhancing local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality and ensure scale, massing, density, layout, materials and landscape of the development respect the surrounding natural and built (and historic) environment. The policy stipulates that development proposals will be expected to contribute to or create a sense of place.

### **POLICY P17 - COUNTRYSIDE AND GREENBELT**

This policy sets out safeguarding and exceptions for development in countryside and greenbelt land.

### **POLICY P18 - HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

This policy advises the potential for achieving positive health outcomes will be taken into account when considering all development proposals, and how this can be achieved in accordance with Policy P15.

### **POLICY P20 - PROVISION FOR OPEN SPACE, CHILDREN'S PLAY, SPORT, RECREATION AND LEISURE**

This policy recognises the importance of POS, sports & recreational facilities.

### **POLICY P21 - DEVELOPER CONTRIBUTIONS AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISION**

This policy sets out developer contributions and confirms contribution towards the provision of:

- Measures to directly mitigate its impact and make it acceptable in planning terms;
- Physical, social and green infrastructure to support the needs associated with the development.



## BERKSWELL NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

2.12 The Berkswell Neighbourhood Development Plan has a vision for the Parish of Berkswell to remain a pleasant and safe place to live and bring up families. The NDP aims to protect the rural environment whilst also providing good transport links with modern and enhanced connections.

2.13 The historic character of Berkswell should be conserved with new development being sensitive to local heritage, character and distinctiveness.

2.14 The NDP sets out a series of planning policies that are designed to meet the identified objectives.

- Housing Objectives
- Landscape Character and the Rural Area Objectives
- Accessibility and Infrastructure Objectives
- Business Objectives

2.15 The following policies have been identified as relevant to this proposal;

### **B1 – NEW HOUSING – GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

2b. 'Layouts should be designed to help facilitate social cohesion and community security.'

2f. 'Schemes should aim to integrate the natural environment into the layout and form of new development through the provision of gardens.'

2g. 'Development scheme should create and maintain safe neighbourhoods by including measures to reduce crime and the fear of crime...'

3b. 'All areas of priority habitats...should be retained and naturalised to support local wildlife and enhance biodiversity.'

4d. 'Developments should incorporate principles of sustainable design, maximising energy, water and resource efficiency both in terms of construction methods and for the benefit of future occupants.'

### **B3 – PROTECTING LOCAL LANDSCAPE AND BUILT CHARACTER**

2a. Designs should respond positively to the distinctive local and historic character of individual settlements and character areas of the parish.

2. The use of traditional materials used locally is encouraged as traditional red brick and render for elevations and tiles roofs.

2d. Innovative design and materials to achieve enhanced environmental performance are encouraged.

### **B9 – IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY FOR ALL**

1. Development proposals should where applicable include linkages to existing footpaths and cycle routes (as identified on Map 6) in order to improve connectivity between existing networks and enhance the attractiveness of walking and cycling in and around the area. All existing public rights of way should be retained within development schemes wherever possible.

2. Where new (or diverted) non-vehicular routes are proposed, paths should avoid the use of estate roads wherever possible, and preference will be given to routes through landscaped areas or open spaces away from vehicular traffic.

3. Designs should maximise safe accessibility for all non-vehicle users. Path widths should be suitable for safe use by users of mobility scooters, wheelchairs and pushchairs.

4. All new and existing pedestrian and cycle routes within the built-up area should be well lit to encourage confident use and reduce anti-social behaviour. Routes should not be enclosed on both sides by high fences, walls or hedging which can lead to narrow, unattractive corridors with limited overlooking.



## THE EMERGING SOLIHULL LOCAL PLAN

- 2.16 Solihull District Council submitted the Solihull Local Plan – Draft Submission to the Secretary of State for independent examination on the 13th May 2021. The plan is a strategic document that sets out the visions and objectives and identifies development sites for allocation and deliverance of the plan.

### ***‘A PLAN FOR THE PEOPLE AND PLACES; WHERE WELLBEING AND THE ENVIRONMENT MATTER.’***

- 2.17 The following policies have been identified as relevant to this proposal;

#### **POLICY P4 - MEETING HOUSING NEEDS**

P4A – This policy states that developers are required to make a contribution of affordable housing residential sites of major development where 10 or more homes are provided, or the site has an area of 0.5 hectares or more. Affordable homes should be built upon the definitions and expectations of national guidance. A standard allocation of 40% is required however considerations can be undertaken by the local authority where this provision may not be deemed viable.

P4C – This policy states a recommendation of dwelling types, size and density that responds to the demands of the local Borough. The density viable on sites will be considered on a site by site basis. The aims of any site is promote a range of house types and sizes that reflect the locality and achieve the balance and mix of communities. Developments are expected to make the most efficient use of the land and provide a site that is accessible to local services and facilities.

#### **POLICY P5 - PROVISION OF LAND FOR HOUSING**

This policy identifies the allocation of land to supply the annual housing provision. The policy states new residential development should comply with nationally described space standards set out by the Government.

Policy P4 can be read in conjunction with this policy with the need to maximise efficient use of land, density and housing mix to be considered in accordance with Policy P4.

#### **POLICY P9 - MITIGATING AND ADAPTING TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

This policy underlines the requirements of development that demonstrate the mitigation and impact on climate change. At a strategic level the policy promotes the need to minimise the need to travel, with sustainable forms of travel such as cycling, walking and public transport seen more favourably.

At a site level the policy aims for development to achieve a 30% reduction in energy demand/carbon reduction improvement. A minimum of 15% of energy should be supplied from renewable and/or low carbon sources and developments should be adaptive and resilient to climate change.

#### **POLICY P11 - WATER AND FLOOD RISK MANAGEMENT**

This policy states that the council require development sites to be resistant and resilient to flooding, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework.

Drainage systems must be designed so that flooding does not occur on the site in a 1 to 30 year rainfall event. Sustainable measures to deal with surface water, including the provision of SuDS, are a requirement on all sites with designs expected to be implemented at early stages of the new development to maximise benefits.

#### **POLICY P14 - AMENITY**

This policy identifies the safeguarding of amenities of existing and future occupants of homes. The policy includes the need to protect and minimise adverse impacts to the environment. Where appropriate developments should provide attenuation or mitigation

of compensatory measures against these.

#### **POLICY P15 - SECURING DESIGN QUALITY**

This policy states that all development must be of a high quality design, with proposals expected to contribute to, or create high quality places with a regard to local distinctiveness and achieving inclusive and sustainable design. A number of principles are expected of new developments and include, but not limited to;

- Conserve and contribute to local character, distinctiveness and streetscape quality and ensure that the scale, massing, density, layout, territory (including space between buildings), materials and landscape of the development is sympathetic to the surrounding natural, built and historic environment;
- Ensure new developments include useable private outdoor amenity space and provide public and private open space;
- Secure the sustainable, long term use of new development through development through flexible, robust and future-proofed design and layout;
- Respect and enhance landscape character quality, including trees, hedgerows and other landscape features, integrating them into the development, and contribute to strategic and local green infrastructure;
- Contribute positively to the creation of high quality places which are accessible, interconnected and easily maintained. The design and layout of developments should promote health and wellbeing, support wildlife, encourage walking and cycling, and reduce crime and fear of crime through the adoption of Secured by Design principles.

**POLICY P20 - PROVISION FOR OPEN SPACE, CHILDREN'S PLAY, SPORT, RECREATION AND LEISURE**

This policy identifies the need for protecting public open space, children's play, sports and recreational facilities. It is expected that any existing facilities of value to the local community should be protected, however a series of exceptions are applicable to this and include the terms of a development providing equivalent or better replacement open space and association facilities for the community.

National Planning Guidance stipulate existing facilities should not be built upon for development proposals unless the development meets expectations as set out in the NPPF. This policy advocates for the protection of open spaces and associated facilities with compensation for loss and a mitigation strategy set out by the LPA.

Where new or enhanced public open spaces, children's play, sports and recreational facilities are being proposed, the design should be in accordance with Policy 15 – Securing Design Quality, and Policy P10 – Natural Environment.

New developments are required to provide or contribute to the improvement or creation of new provisions in the area, with a minimum standard of 3.57ha per 1,000 population. If existing children's play facility requirements are already met in the area, additional enhancements will be required of new developments.

**EMERGING SOLIHULL LOCAL PLAN LAND ALLOCATION**

2.18 Pheasant Oak Farm has been identified, with others, as a viable site for the allocation of housing supply in the emerging Solihull Local Plan. The land at Pheasant Oak Farm includes a parcel of Greenbelt Land to the west of the site. All of the site is included in the Council's Brownfield Land Register, with the use of this land dominated by a caravan storage facility.

**POLICY BC4 - PHEASANT OAK FARM, BALSALL COMMON**

2.19 This draft policy currently identifies the opportunity for development at Pheasant Oak Farm, with a provision of 220 dwellings allocated to the site.

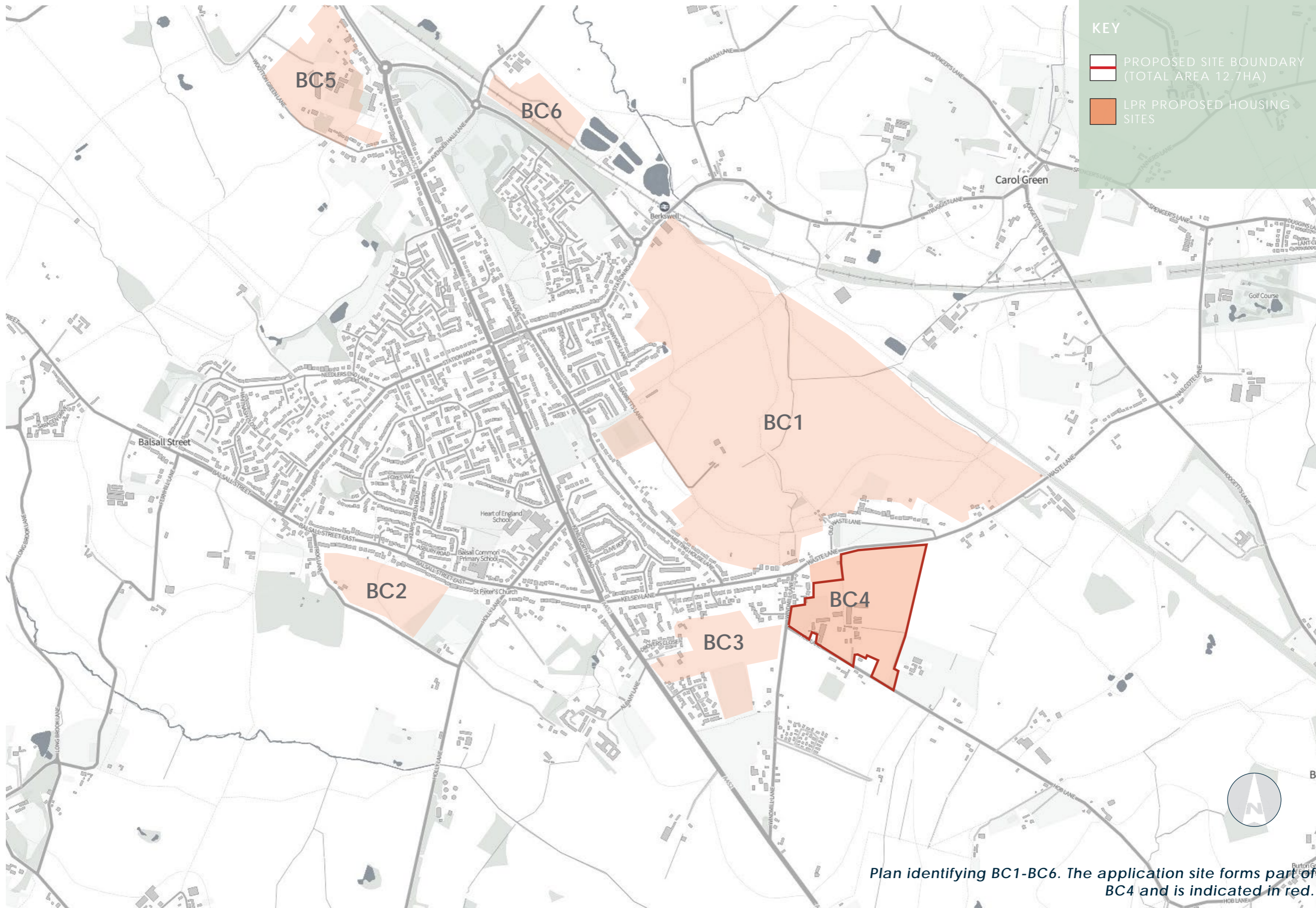
2.20 A series of principles were identified from the concept masterplan and development should be consistent with these, under Paragraph 2;

- i. Protection of the setting of heritage assets adjacent the site;
- ii. Safeguarding the rural character of Hob Lane, Waste Lane and Windmill Lane;
- iii. Provision of above ground SuDS features;
- iv. Provision of a significant area of public open space forming a buffer to Waste Lane, including a play area and allotments;
- v. Facilitating easy access by walking and cycling to the rail station and other facilities;
- vi. 5% of open market dwellings to be provided in the form of Self and Custom Build Plots.



	Future Access		Medium density housing		Indicative potential Relief Road line
	Road		Low density housing		Semi-improved grassland – significant habitat value
	Listed building		Public Open Space		Improve pedestrian and cycle links
	Footpath		SuDS feature		





Plan identifying BC1-BC6. The application site forms part of BC4 and is indicated in red.

# 3. CONTEXTUAL ANALYSIS

3.1 This section of the DAS appraises the site surroundings and its context.

## CONNECTIVITY

3.2 Balsall Common is serviced by a range of transport links and the site can be seen to benefit from the following:

### BUS

3.3 Local bus routes connect Balsall Common to Solihull and Coventry. The site is within walking distance to bus stops as well as the village centre.

3.4 Following a review of the existing accessibility of the site via bus, it is considered that while existing bus stops are suitably located to serve the development. However, the following enhancement measures could be incorporated as part of any scheme proposal;

- Upgrading the existing bus stops on Waste Lane to comprise sheltered waiting facilities and real time information, with possible relocation closer to the site access (subject to agreement with SMBC).

### RAIL

3.5 Berkswell train stations offers services to Northampton, Coventry, Birmingham New Street and London Euston with a minimum of four services per hour. Berkswell

station has sheltered cycle parking stands with space for eight cycles on the station platform.

3.6 The existing PRow network in and around the site provides opportunities for pedestrians to access the station. The railway station is located approximately 2.1km from the application site, taking approximately 20 minutes to travel via foot.

3.7 Berkswell Station provides both vehicular and bicycle parking facilities, with accessible parking spaces also available.

## FOOTPATHS AND CYCLEWAYS

3.8 The village centre and most of the amenities are along the main road (A452), which connects to Kelsey Lane leading to the site.

3.9 The site has good access to the local footpath network. These existing footpath links offer routes for pedestrians to and around the centre of the village, including for dog walkers and journeys by foot to the local schools.

3.10 A number of Public Rights of Way (PRow) are situated within close proximity of the site in the surrounding countryside near the south western boundaries.

3.11 The Millennium Way ProW crosses the site, running north to south, linking the site to wider scenic routes and facilities extending out of Balsall Common. This portion of the route that passes through the site is poorly signed and requires you to navigate through a caravan storage area and commercial yard. There is potential through the development of the site to enhance this route significantly and improve the point of crossing at Waste Lane.

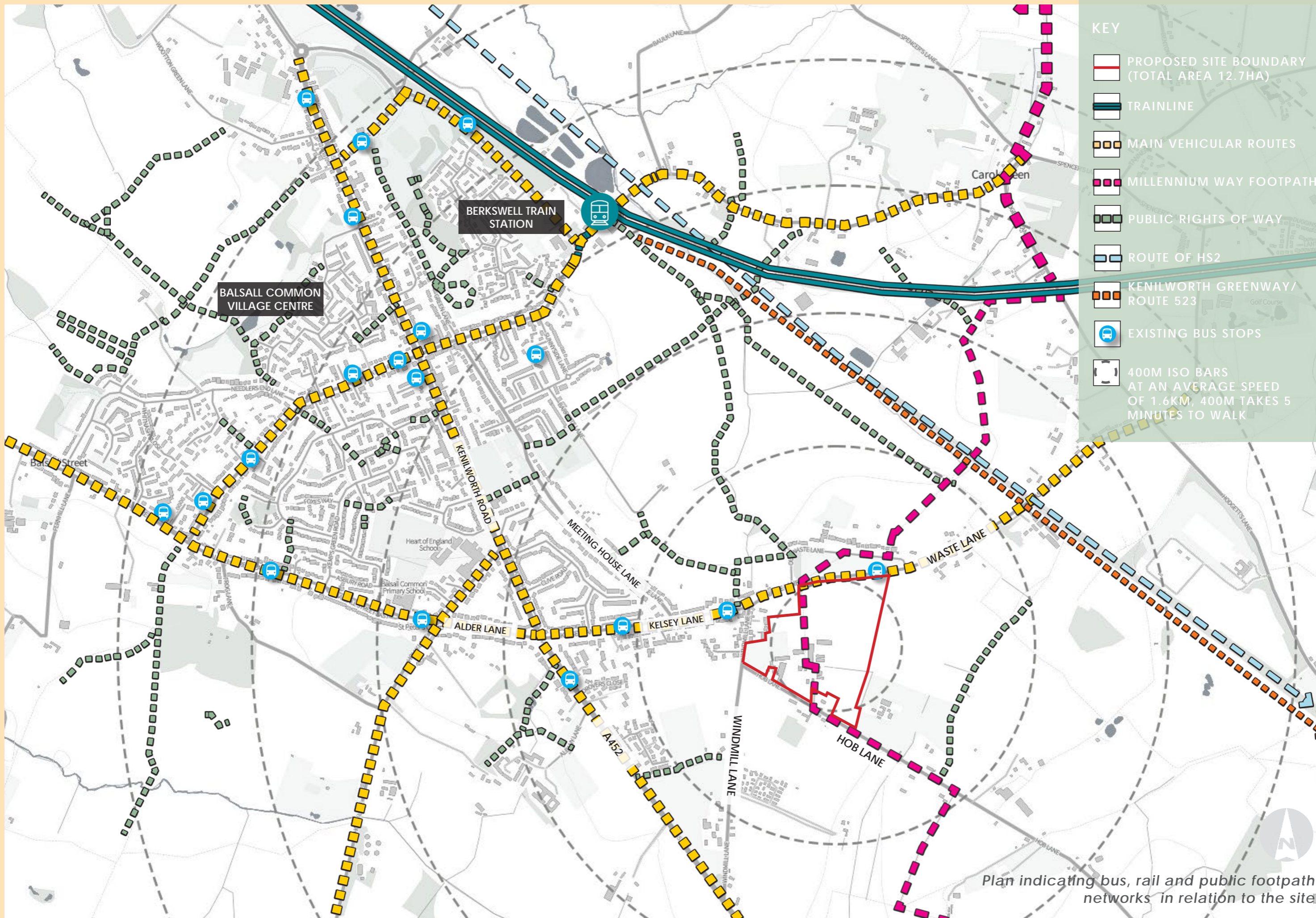
3.12 Kenilworth Greenway is located to the north-east of the site and provides a route for both cyclists and pedestrians, linking between Balsall Common, Kenilworth and Burton Green.

3.13 The surrounding road infrastructure provides suitable on-road cycling routes due to existing traffic calming measures.

3.14 **In summary the site is well connected to the surrounding area of Balsall Common, and benefits from easy access to public transport, including bus and rail, and the wider highways network that sits within close proximity of the site. The development of the site presents the opportunity to enhance the Millennium Way footpath that crosses the site including an improved crossing point on Waste Lane.**

- 01 Cross Road Junction in Balsall Common
- 02 Berkswell Train Station
- 03 Bus Shelter on Kelsey Lane





Plan indicating bus, rail and public footpath networks in relation to the site

## LOCAL FACILITIES

- 3.15 Balsall Common has a large range of facilities which are within a 20 minute walking distance of the site. This includes several nearby primary schools. Most of the local amenities are situated in the centre of Balsall Common.
- 3.16 Public transport is also accessible within 150m of the site, with bus routes available to Solihull and Coventry. The National Rail Network is also available approximately 1.48km from the application site, when accessed via existing public rights of way.
- 3.17 Balsall Common benefits from many surrounding public open spaces such as Willow Park and Lavender Hall Park, both approximately a 30 minute walk from the site.
- 3.18 In summary Balsall Common offers a broad range of facilities and as such is well placed to accommodate levels of growth. The site is in a sustainable location, with schools, convenience stores, public houses and sports facilities all located within walking distance.



01



02



























03

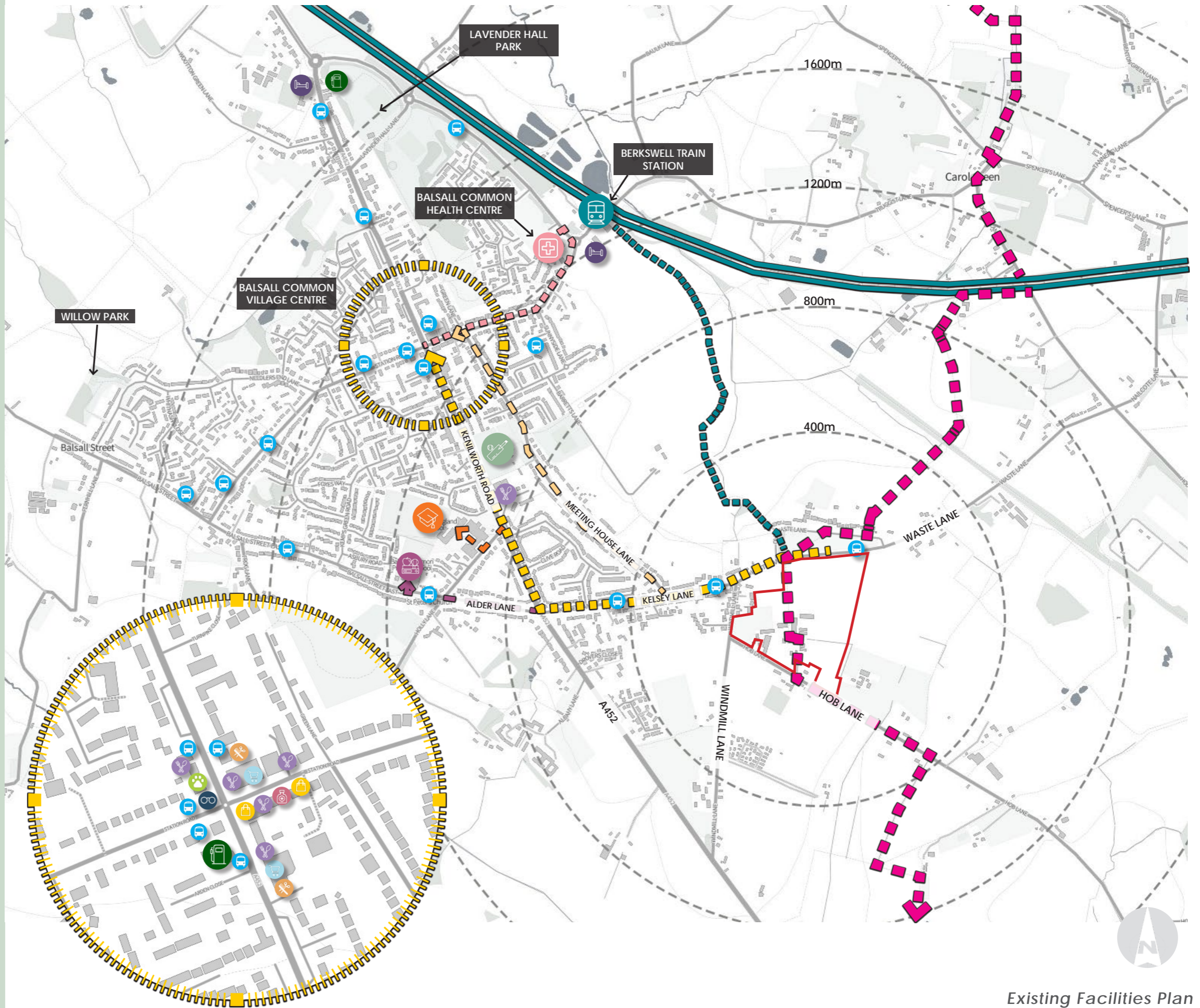


04

- 01 Amenities in Balsall Common
- 02 Heart of England School
- 03 Village Hall
- 04 The White Horse Public House

KEY

-  BUS STOP
-  HEART OF ENGLAND SCHOOL
-  BALSALL COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL
-  TRAIN STATION
-  BALSALL COMMON HEALTH CENTRE
-  FUEL STATION
-  GROCERY STORE
-  RESTAURANT / CAFE
-  SHOP
-  PHARMACY
-  OPTICIANS
-  HAIRDRESSER / BARBER
-  VET
-  HOTEL / B&B
-  COMMUNITY SPORTS / RECREATIONAL FACILITIES
-  PROPOSED SITE BOUNDARY (TOTAL AREA 12.7HA)
-  MILLENNIUM WAY FOOTPATH
-  ROUTE FROM APPLICATION SITE TO HEART OF ENGLAND SCHOOL 1.2KM WALK - 14 MINUTES CYCLE - 5 MINUTES
-  ROUTE FROM APPLICATION SITE TO BALSALL COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL - 1.3KM WALK - 15 MINUTES CYCLE - 5 MINUTES
-  WALKING ROUTE FROM APPLICATION SITE TO BALSALL COMMON VILLAGE CENTRE - 1.6KM WALK WITHIN 19 MINUTES
-  CYCLE ROUTE FROM APPLICATION SITE TO BALSALL COMMON VILLAGE CENTRE - 1.6KM AMENITIES WITHIN 6 MINUTES
-  ROUTE FROM APPLICATION SITE TO BERKSWELL TRAIN STATION - 1.48KM WALK - 18MINUTES CYCLE - 6 MINUTES
-  ROUTE FROM APPLICATION SITE TO BALSALL COMMON HEALTH CENTRE - 2KM WALK - 24 MINUTES CYCLE - 8 MINUTES
-  400M ISO BARS  
400M TAKES APPROXIMATELY 5 MINUTES TO WALK



Existing Facilities Plan

## LOCAL CHARACTER APPRAISAL

3.19 This section provides analysis of the existing built form of the surrounding context to identify patterns of development that will aid and inform the character of scheme proposals. This will ensure that proposals converse and contribute to local character distinctiveness.

### DEVELOPMENT PATTERN

3.20 Balsall Common is a large village in the Metropolitan Borough of Solihull, with a population of circa 8000 residents. The village straddles the parish boundaries of Balsall Parish Council to the west of the A452 and Berkswell Parish Council to the east.

3.21 Up until the early 20th century Balsall Common consisted of a series of hamlets, scattered cottages and farmsteads.

3.22 The Majority of development and what we recognise as Balsall Common today is the result of significant post war expansion, initially to the west of the A452, before spreading east over time.

3.23 The resulting character is one of a village pocket character area within a settlement of overriding suburban character.

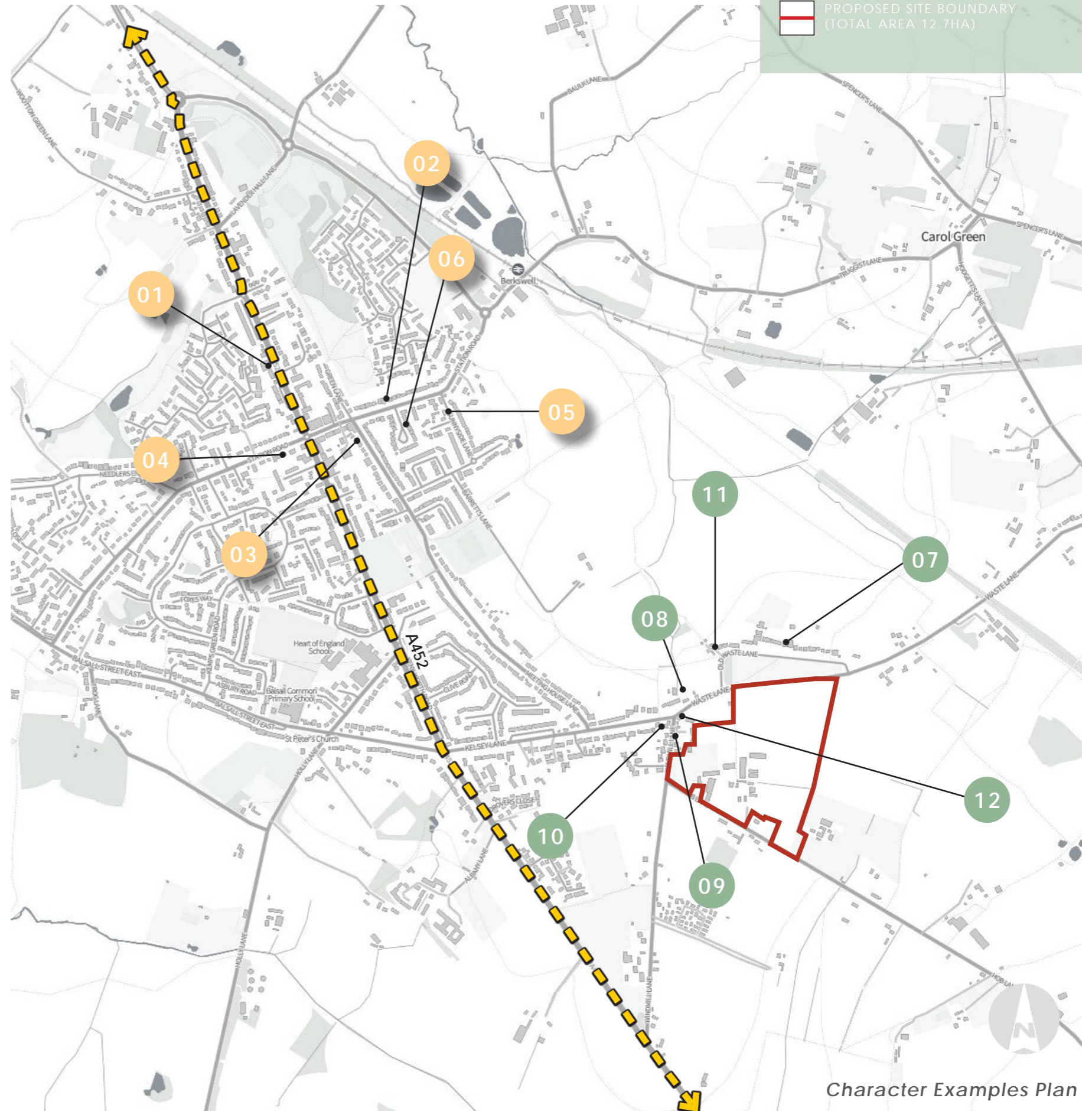
3.24 As is evident from the plan opposite and corresponding photographs on page 25, the application site is most directly influenced by a 'village' character area that radiates from the junction of Windmill and Waste Lane.

3.25 The following case study areas examine the identified contrasting characteristics of 'suburban' and 'village' character areas, so that the design proposals can seek to reflect and compliment their built context.

3.26 The following pages of this section of the DAS seek, using study areas, to appraise and identify the distinct characteristics of the two character areas identified;

- Village
- Suburban

3.27 The aim being to integrate within the design proposals an identity that assimilates with and is complimentary to the sites context and the character of Balsall Common.



*Character Examples Plan*