

## **Options for Future Urban Expansion in Warwick District Considerations for Sustainable Landscape Planning 2015–2016**



### **Appendix A**

#### **An appraisal of sixteen<sup>1</sup> study areas in Warwick District.**

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<sup>1</sup> Note that sub land parcels are assessed as part of a larger area – refer to ‘Location of Sites’ plan.

## 1. Land at King's Hill, Stoneleigh

1.1.1 This land parcel of approximately 270 hectares is located at the southern edge of Coventry but within the District of Warwick. It is defined by Green Lane to the north, the Coventry to Kenilworth rail line to the west, Stoneleigh Road to the south and the A46 to the east. It lies within the West Midlands Green Belt and was therefore considered in the 2008 Joint Green Belt Study and again recently in the 2015 JGBS.

1.1.2 In the 2008 JGBS, the area was divided into two land parcels 12e (which straddled the Warwick/Coventry district boundary at Bishop Ullathorne School) and 12d (south-east of King's Hill Lane). The landscape review of this area in 2008 can be summarised as follows:

<b>Study Area Reference</b>	C12d / C12e
<b>Study Area Description</b>	An area at the southern edge of Coventry defined by Green Lane and schools to the north, the Coventry to Kenilworth railway and Gibbet Hill to the west, Stoneleigh Road to the south and the A46 to the west.
<b>Landscape Character</b>	C12 is in the <i>Arden</i> character area and the <i>Arden Parkland</i> character type. Principally arable agriculture at the edge of the city with some nurseries, playing fields and woodland. A small valley drains to Finham Brook.
<b>Visual Issues</b>	Woodland, hedgerows and trees help to enclose much of the site from the peripheral roads, but within this area the agricultural landscape appears to be quite open. Notable tree cover along the watercourse. Mid-distant views. A notable ridge north-east of Finham Brook (King's Hill) – where distant views of landmarks in central Coventry are possible.
<b>Historic and Cultural Issues</b>	Sites at King's Hill are scheduled monuments (medieval village). Gibbet Hill lies within the Kenilworth Road conservation area (outside the site). Wainbody Wood – ancient woodland. Grade II listed buildings at Wainbody Wood Farm and Hill Farm. Area generally understood to be formerly part of the Stoneleigh estate. There are no designated footpaths in the land parcel.
<b>Ecological Features</b>	Wainbody Wood (east of the railway line – with no public access); Finham Brook; permanent pasture, hedges and hedge trees. Field ponds.
<b>Landscape Condition</b>	Medium to large-scale field pattern and isolated field trees suggest hedge loss and field agglomeration. Some urbanising land-uses and non-native planting characterising the area.
<b>Conclusion / Recommendation</b>	A strategically important section of Green Belt lying between Stoneleigh, Kenilworth and Coventry that we recommend is retained within the Green Belt. Consider improved access and landscape enhancement projects.

1.1.3 Therefore in 2008 the landscape review suggested that this land parcel should be safeguarded from development. However, as it was eventually considered non-essential for preventing settlement merger (with Kenilworth and Stoneleigh village to the south and south-east), and to not be significantly contributing to the character and setting of Coventry, the parcel 12e (i.e. that area west of King's Hill Lane) was eventually categorised as 'least constrained' in the 2008 JGBS study.

1.1.4 The recent 2015 JGBS has considered the whole area as one land parcel (referred to as C14). The assessment contributed particular value to the distant views of the city centre from King's Hill.

### 1.2.0 2015 Review:

1.2.1 **General.** The general landscape context within the land parcel has not altered significantly since 2008. However, the presently unmet need for housing development land in Coventry requires this area to be reviewed again in detail to ascertain opportunities for urban expansion.

1.2.2 The King's Hill study area can be usefully divided into four quadrats for landscape and planning analysis. The north-east quadrat includes the relatively high ridge (King's Hill) with King's

Hill Farm, Hill Farm and five other cottages. The character is predominantly rural – with the hedge-lined King’s Hill Lane, some pasture with stock and some traditional buildings. It is understood that the scheduled monument site (medieval village) lies on two sites, within two pasture paddocks south-east of the lane and north of King’s Hill Farm (refer to Figure 1). Looking north and west from the lane over medium-to-large scale arable fields, there is some opportunity for long views of landmarks in Coventry city centre and the treeline of the avenue at Kenilworth Road (Gibbet Hill – conservation area). Proximity to the A46 (150–300m to the east) is notable – visually and audibly. To the north the quadrat is defined by Green Lane, where residents at perhaps 30+ dwellings will have potential views south-west over the rising arable farmland. (It is not clear whether there would be views beyond King’s Hill towards Kenilworth from the upper floor of these dwellings, but it is unlikely due to topography and hedges and trees along King’s Hill Lane and non-native planting around Hill Farm).

1.2.3 The north-west quadrat is predominantly flat, medium-to large-scale arable land – but with a peri-urban fringe along Green Lane that includes Finham Primary School, the Alvis sports and social ground, Leasowes Nursery and Leasowes Farm and Farm cottages. Green Lane becomes increasingly suburban in character as one travels north-west, and the relationship with the countryside to the south-west is less noteworthy. The Warwick District boundary is adjoined by Finham Park secondary school (and extensive hedge-lined playing fields) and the Coventry to Kenilworth railway line. The farmland in the rest of this quadrat is ostensibly flat, with field boundaries defined by gappy hedges and shallow drainage ditches. These appear to drain to a larger stream that flows south-west in a shallow valley to Finham Brook. The stream course has scrubby riparian trees along it (including alder and willow) and some ‘setaside’ grassland margins. There are also a notable number of field ponds, the origins of which have not been established, but generally now supporting small copses of mature trees (predominantly oak/ash). These and other scattered trees (likely to have remained after hedge removals) accumulate to provide some local enclosure – but the landscape is predominantly open in character.

1.2.4 The south-west quadrat includes a significant block of woodland (‘south’ Wainbody Wood – approximately 15 Ha) which appears to have been historically severed from ‘north’ Wainbody Wood (local nature reserve) by the Coventry-Kenilworth railway line. There is apparently no public access to the southern wood. At the south-eastern end of the wood lies Wainbody Wood Farm (grade II listed buildings) and an area (approximately 7Ha) of smaller paddocks (in mainly equestrian usage with tall overgrown hedges). South of the wood and farm is another 20 Ha of open arable land before the boundary with Stoneleigh Road. Large detached dwellings create a suburban ‘gateway’ to Gibbet Hill and Coventry beyond the south-west boundary of the study site.

1.2.5 The south-east quadrat includes the meandering streamcourse of Finham Brook, which is the main drainage corridor for Kenilworth to the south-west and southern Coventry (via the Canley Brook) to the north-west. The brook lies at around 60m AOD – with King’s Hill to the north and a spur from Gibbet Hill to the south (both over 80m AOD), so that the topographic variety is noteworthy. Newera Farm (modern house with approximately 20 Ha of adjacent paddocks) is prominent on the latter high ground. There is also a large nursery (King’s Hill nurseries) and at least one business office premises. There are some notable blocks of woodland – although these appear to be relatively recent in origin. Stoneleigh Road, although hedge-lined with some mature hedge trees, is a busy thoroughfare, used as an access to southern Coventry from the A46. There is also a roundabout junction with Dalehouse Lane, which appears to be a popular route into Kenilworth. Between the A46 and Finham Brook is around 15 Ha of arable land.

1.2.6 **What if?** The King’s Hill land parcel is relatively large and if released from the Green Belt could provide a significant opportunity for a new residential neighbourhood.

- It is well defined by the roads and railway line so that development here is unlikely to lead to further urban sprawl. It could be argued that development here is infilling a corner of the existing Coventry settlement footprint.

- Development here would reduce the area of open countryside between Coventry, Kenilworth and Stoneleigh – but there would still be a definable and relevant gap between these settlements.
- There would be potential to retain significant landscape elements and green space within the parcel – assisting a successful urban/rural transition.
- The scale of potential development here would constitute a new neighbourhood with additional facilities that could benefit existing residents as well as new. It would also be likely to require new infrastructure – especially roads.

1.2.7 Green Lane to the north is essentially a residential distributor road and Stoneleigh Road to the south already seems well used and may be constrained for significant road improvements. The railway line to the west and the A46 to the east may restrict other access options. However, the existing A46 junction at Stoneleigh Road provides a good opportunity for local access to the main trunk road network. In addition, the proximity to the Kenilworth/Coventry rail track would appear to provide excellent potential for a new stop and a sustainable alternative to road-based transport access.

1.2.8 If urban expansion was proposed in the King's Hill parcel, we would suggest the following landscape considerations might be key to the development of a successful masterplan:

- i. Protect the principal drainage pattern by integrating it into a network of multifunctional green infrastructure throughout the site. This will sustain important ecosystem services and assist sustainable drainage for development.
- ii. Protect and enhance Wainbody Wood (south). Wainbody wood (north) has become a cherished public access environment with paths, interpretation and active woodland management. Wainbody Wood (south) could have a similar function within a new urban area. To offset the inevitable impacts of visitors, it will be important to provide managed landscape buffer zones around the woodland (perhaps meadow areas) and to integrate the wood within a network of greenspace to ensure ecological corridor linkage.
- iii. Sustain and integrate other historic landscape assets wherever possible – notably field ponds, veteran trees and hedgerows.
- iv. Where varied topography exists, use it to make distinctive and unique spatial design.
- v. Through considered design, minimise potentially adverse environmental impacts. Consider landscape buffers adjacent the A46 and a sensitive approach to development adjacent existing properties and the scheduled monuments.
- vi. Ensure provision of an integrated range of public open space, footpaths and connections to the wider area for the benefit of existing and future residents.
- vii. Ensure the inclusion of new landscape elements that complement the landscape type – including native hedge planting, hedge trees (particularly oaks), small copses and riverine habitats along the small watercourses.

1.2.9 **Potential development areas?** The north-west quadrat would appear to have good potential for development. The landscape is relatively flat and unconstrained, although sustainable drainage would need to be addressed. The Green Lane corridor is already becoming suburban in character and it would be relatively easy to integrate new development with the existing urban form without significant adverse environmental impacts. Development here would be visible from King's Hill – but would be relatively discrete in the wider setting apart from the boundary frontages. There may be opportunities for land swaps with existing schools if their premises are in need of renewal. The potential for a new rail transport interchange (if viable) could provide a focal point and local centre opportunity for the new neighbourhood.

1.2.10 In the south-west quadrat, the available land for development is located between Wainbody Wood (south) and the existing linear residential development along Stoneleigh Road, stretching south to King's Hill Lane. The area would again be relatively discrete in the wider landscape – although partially visible from King's Hill. Wainbody Wood Farm could be retained within a 'green

infrastructure spine’ including Wainbody Wood. It is anticipated that road access would be from Stoneleigh Road / King’s Hill Lane.

1.2.11 The eastern edge of the King’s Hill land parcel is more problematic for development, with significant constraints including Finham Brook, the scheduled ancient monuments, the proximity of the A46 and a variety of landholdings. In addition, the topography of this land would make development here potentially much more prominent – certainly from the A46 but also from dwellings along Green Lane (Finham) to the north and north-west. It seems likely that a preferable new road access would be from the south-east corner of the site to allow an advantageous direct connection to the A46. This would have to cross Finham Brook. Development around King’s Hill itself would need to be sensitively considered and there may be a case for avoiding development on the highest ground. It is not clear whether land at Newera Farm and King’s Hill nurseries is presently available for development consideration.

### 1.3.0 **Other Landscape and Planning Issues:**

1.3.1 **Infrastructure requirements:** Further work will clearly be required on transport infrastructure, where the provisions suggested above would need to be assessed for viability. There would appear to be good potential for new transport access that could be contained within the site. No assessment of utility infrastructure requirements has been undertaken. There would be good opportunities for sustainable urban drainage relating to the Finham Brook valley. An assessment of schools provision would be required, but a new Primary School seems likely based on the potential housing numbers outlined above. Other requirements for community facilities have not been assessed although there is some shop provision and a medical centre on Green Lane – as well as the existing schools and sports pitches.

1.3.2 **Cumulative impacts:** The proposed HS2 railway route is located approximately 750 metres south of Stoneleigh Road. As it will be largely in cutting, it may not be directly visible from the King’s Hill land parcel, although associated works such as the bridgeworks for the A429 may be visible. It is unlikely to be significantly intrusive in the King’s Hill setting. However, the perceived width of ‘countryside’ remaining between ‘Coventry’ and ‘Kenilworth’ will be further reduced. The railway would create a significant new barrier / boundary in the landscape (although it is assumed footpath and wildlife crossings will be incorporated into the design).

1.3.3 Several land parcels are being considered for urban expansion to the south (north-east of Kenilworth) and to the west (south of Gibbet Hill Road and Westwood Heath Road). Intervisibility between these areas and the King’s Hill parcel is unlikely – assuming a sensitive and appropriate design approach at all sites.

1.3.4 In the wider context, the large-scale proposals for the ‘Coventry Gateway’ site at Coventry airport (approximately 1500m east of King’s Hill) appear to have been blocked after a Secretary of State decision in early 2015. It is not clear whether these proposals will be resuscitated in future. The A46 road corridor does in any case form a significant western boundary to the King’s Hill site – and although there might be some partial intervisibility between King’s Hill and the airport area (both areas have some land above 80m AOD), it is unlikely that this would be a critical issue in development considerations for either site.

1.3.5 **Potential Landscape and Visual Impacts:** With an appropriate design approach, development in the King’s Hill land parcel could retain principal landscape features – including the watercourses, ancient woodland, scheduled monuments and ideally the majority of veteran trees and field ponds. Appropriate design would ideally avoid substantial ground modelling so as to retain topographic variety and interest across the site. It is inevitable that some hedges and trees will be lost – and it should be a design goal to balance those lost with new planting that complements the landscape setting. Landscape impacts could be minimised by observing the considerations outlined in

1.2.8 above. There would seem to be good potential to create an attractive urban/rural transition environment with improved opportunities for recreation and countryside access.

1.3.6 A development as described would be visible from approximately fifteen existing properties within the land parcel (those scattered along King's Hill Lane and Green Lane) and for residents at neighbouring dwellings with a south-facing outlook along Green Lane. Development on the southern side of the parcel would be visible from approximately fifteen dwellings along Stoneleigh Road near Gibbet Hill. From the north-west, there would be potential for residents at dwellings with an easterly outlook on Gretna Road (and small cul-de-sacs off Gretna Road), and some residential streets to the north (e.g. Beanfield, Moat, Wainbody, Woodside Avenues) to have partial views of the development over school playing fields (but most likely only from upper floor windows). There are partial views of the site along short sections of the A46, Stoneleigh Road, Green Lane and the Coventry–Kenilworth railway line. There are some limited views of the site from higher ground east of the A46, but not from the settlements of Baginton or Stoneleigh. Although there are some longer views from the highest parts of King's Hill (to the city centre and to trees within the conservation area at Gibbet Hill), these are not expected to lead to intervisibility with many residential or public access locations. In general, it is concluded that this land parcel is relatively well visually contained and that, depending on the final layout and design of any development, the zone of visual influence will mainly be confined to a few hundred metres beyond the site boundary.

#### **1.4.0 Conclusions:**

1.4.1 Although this land parcel provides a rural outlook for neighbouring local residents at the southern edge of Coventry, and is partially visible from the A46 and Coventry–Kenilworth railway line, development here would be relatively well contained within the wider landscape. Appropriate development is unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on the character of the historic centres of Coventry, Kenilworth or Stoneleigh or approaches to those settlements. The land presently provides for some of the purposes of Green Belt, but allowing development at this parcel would have clear boundaries to prevent future urban sprawl, would not result in settlement coalescence, will 'fit' the wider settlement pattern and will provide a variety of opportunities for positive planning.

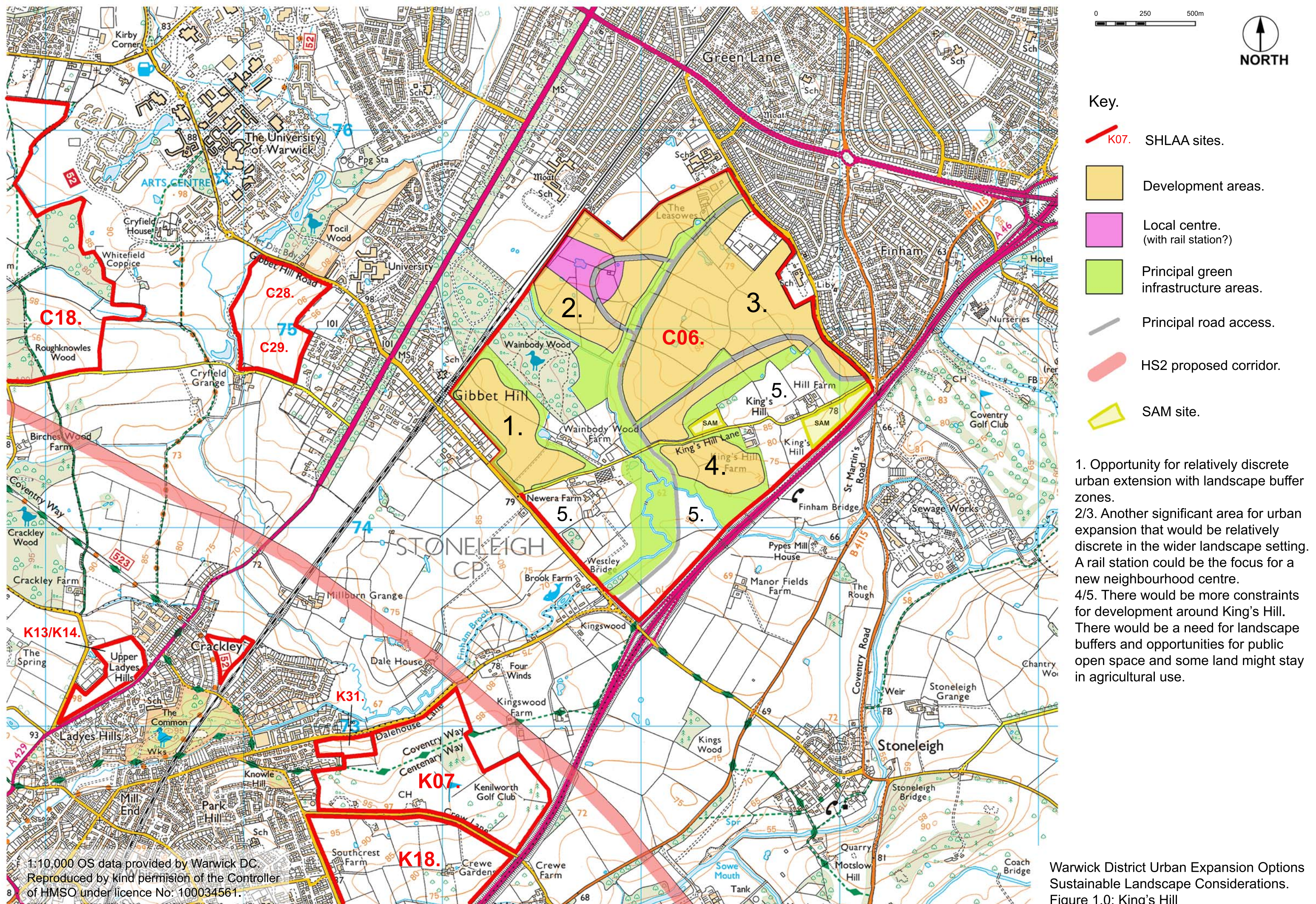
#### Opportunities, assets, benefits:

- Potential for attractive and distinctive urban form utilising existing landscape features – woodland, watercourses and King's Hill with its scheduled monuments.
- Opportunity to create a substantial new community/neighbourhood – with facilities and public open space that could also benefit existing residents. Little loss of existing community assets anticipated (e.g. footpaths).
- Opportunity to provide new transport infrastructure – also with benefits for existing neighbourhoods.
- Potential to retain successful urban/rural transition at edge of urban area.

#### Constraints and Challenges:

- Identifying viable and sustainable transport and access options would appear to be key to the success of a new neighbourhood here. A successful solution will avoid additional adverse landscape impacts (e.g. widening roads at the expense of mature trees).
- A number of substantial constraints must be sensitively addressed – notably drainage and ecological corridors.
- Multifunctional green infrastructure must ensure sustainable integration of key landscape assets without degrading or losing them over time.









Panoramic view north-west from King's Hill - with views toward trees at Gibbet Hill, housing at Green Lane and distant landmarks in Coventry city centre.



Panoramic view toward Newera Farm on King's Hill Lane, from Stoneleigh Lane.



Panoramic view looking north-west from the Stoneleigh Lane junction with A46. King's Hill to right and Finham Brook in foreground.





Looking west from east end of Green Lane, Finham. Peri-urban character with mature trees and street lights.



Views south are to a ridge with vegetation at 'Hill Farm' - approximately 250m away. Views from the upper floor of Green Lane dwellings may extend further south



The character of Green Lane becomes increasingly 'suburban' as one travels west ...



... although glimpsed views to the south are rural in character.



Development south of Green Lane begins at Finham Primary School.



Mature trees near Leasowes Cottages retain rural character.



The Alvis Sports and Social Club includes around 4Ha of sports fields - including floodlit pitches.



Leasowes Farm retains some rural character, but Leasowes Nursery, Finham Park secondary school, St Martin's Church and the inter-war housing of Gretna Road, complete a transition to the suburban edge of Coventry



Warwick District Urban Expansion Options Sustainable Landscape Considerations. Figure 1.2: King's Hill Site Character of the northern boundary.



## 2. Land south of Gibbet Hill Road and Westwood Heath Road, Stoneleigh

2.1.1 A number of land parcels have been promoted for development allocation in the countryside east of Burton Green, west of Gibbet Hill and south of Warwick University and Westwood Heath Road. The overall area is around 3km long and 700m deep at its widest points. It lies within the West Midlands Green Belt and was therefore considered in the 2008 Joint Green Belt Study and again recently in the 2015 JGBS.

2.1.2 In the 2008 JGBS, the area was subdivided into several land parcels which covered a wider area than presently under review – but broadly similar in context. The landscape review from 2008 can be summarised as follows:

<b>Study Area Reference</b>	C13 a/b and c. (Later consolidated to ‘13b’)
<b>Study Area Description</b>	Area lying to the south of Coventry and to the west of Gibbet Hill. Defined by the A429 to the east, Gibbet Hill Road and Westwood Heath Road to the north, Crackley Lane to the west and a former rail line that is now a footpath to the south. A large part of this study is within the grounds of Warwick University and includes campus facilities and playing fields. The rest of the area is principally arable farmland. C13c is the Canley Brook corridor.
<b>Landscape Character</b>	C13 is in the <i>Arden</i> character area and the <i>Arden Parkland</i> character type. A medium-scale field system with a number of woods and scattered farms.
<b>Visual Issues</b>	Quite an enclosed landscape due to topographic variety, mature vegetation around the university lands and woodland, hedges and hedge trees in the agricultural parts.
<b>Historic and Cultural Issues</b>	Some significant blocks of ancient woodland. Gibbet Hill is a conservation area. ‘Cryfield Grange’ (Grade II listed building) suggests monastic agricultural past. Various paths including the Coventry Way long distance path along the old rail line (former Berkswell–Kenilworth line). Tocil Wood (13c) is ancient woodland with earthworks. There is ridge and furrow nearer Canley.
<b>Ecological Features</b>	Woodland; Canley Brook and other watercourses and ponds; permanent pasture, hedges and hedge trees; field ponds.
<b>Landscape Condition</b>	Hedge loss through agriculture. Ongoing development of the University landholding. Non-native planting.
<b>Conclusion / Recommendation</b>	This is a strategically important section of the Green Belt located between Coventry and Kenilworth. It is understood that the University have planning permission to greatly increase their campus facilities within their landholding and whereas this is expected to be well considered development, it will in effect substantially reduce the gap between the main settlements. It is recommended the areas of C13 that lie outside of the University grounds are retained as Green Belt.

<b>Study Area Reference</b>	C14a/b/c (Later consolidated to ‘14b’)
<b>Study Area Description</b>	An area to the south-west of Coventry defined by Burton Green and field boundaries to the west, the A452 Birmingham Road to the south, field boundaries and Crackley Lane to the east. Although this is principally agricultural land with blocks of woodland, the notable feature is a long stretch of inter-war and/or post-war ribbon development through Burton Green and down Red Lane.
<b>Landscape Character</b>	C14 is in the <i>Arden</i> character area and the <i>Arden Parkland</i> character type. A medium-scale field system with a number of woods and scattered farms.
<b>Visual Issues</b>	Relatively enclosed landscape (topographic variety, woodland, hedges and hedge trees) and the ribbon development also encloses views out from principal routes (Red Lane/Cromwell Lane). Burton Green is on a ridge. Prominent water towers.
<b>Historic and Cultural Issues</b>	‘Bockendon Grange’ suggests monastic agricultural past. Some ancient woodland. Two moated sites and fish ponds. ‘Black Waste’ Wood might suggest charcoal or mining (?). Various paths including the Coventry Way long distance path along the old rail line (former Berkswell–Kenilworth line).
<b>Ecological Features</b>	Woodland (including wet woodland); watercourses; hedges and hedge trees; permanent pasture, field ponds.



<b>Landscape Condition</b>	Some decline in field pattern due to modern arable – but generally the impression is that green belt policy has prevented urban sprawl and current farming practice is retaining existing hedges and trees.
<b>Conclusion / Recommendation</b>	Another strategically important section of the Green Belt located between Coventry and Kenilworth – and due to earlier ribbon development one of the narrowest sections of the ‘gap’. Our recommendation is to retain all of C14 within the Green Belt. However, there may be some opportunities for minor infill and widening of the Burton Green settlement footprint as long as it doesn’t extend the ribbon development. Consider for further detailed study.

2.1.3 Therefore in 2008 the landscape review suggested that this area should be mainly safeguarded from development – although that there may be opportunities for smaller-scale development infill adjacent Burton Green. In fact, the whole area was eventually categorised as ‘least constrained’ in the JGBS study, as, like King’s Hill, it was not considered essential to prevent settlement merger (with Kenilworth to the south), or to be providing a significant contribution to the character and setting of Coventry.

2.1.4 The recent 2015 JGBS has considered the area in a number of different land parcels – C16 (which wraps around Gibbet Hill and includes land at Cryfield Grange); C19 (which is essentially the University campus) and C20 (which is the remaining large area north of the Coventry Way footpath, south of Westwood Heath Road and east of Burton Green).

2.1.5 Richard Morrish Associates (RMA) also reviewed this area in the 2012 study *Options for Future Urban Expansion in Warwick District*. In 2012, the proposed route for the HS2 railway had already been established and it was noted that construction of this route and the associated infrastructure would have a substantial impact on the landscape between Coventry and Kenilworth. It was also noted that expansion of Warwick University had continued apace and both developments would serve to reduce the open countryside between settlements. The LUC *Green Infrastructure Delivery Plan* (for WDC, 2012) had proposed developing a ‘peri-urban park’ in this area to safeguard, link and enhance existing ecological and recreational assets.

2.1.6 The 2012 RMA report concluded of this area:  
There is considerable development pressure on this important landscape at the interface of Coventry and Kenilworth. There is no doubt that this area fulfils primary functions of Green Belt and is already a successful multifunctional landscape – with a good network of paths and ecological features. There is an established proposal to further enhance the locality’s green infrastructure assets by developing a ‘peri-urban park’. However, the proposed HS2 rail corridor would have a substantial impact on the setting, whilst it is not established to what extent Warwick University may wish to further develop their campus in future decades.

#### Recommendations

- Aim to retain the strategic gap between Kenilworth and Coventry – especially because of the potential impact of HS2 and future Warwick University expansion.
- Seek to develop and enhance the green infrastructure in the gap, developing the peri-urban park concept and aiming to link to the wider setting – east towards Baginton, west towards Balsall Common and Carol Green and south to Kenilworth and beyond.
- There may be opportunities for small areas of urban expansion in the north-west portion of the site near Burton Green and south, at the northern edge of Kenilworth. These areas are not anticipated to have substantial impacts on the wider landscape context and could offer local opportunities for improvements to green infrastructure, public access and the urban / rural interface whilst also facilitating sustainable, high quality development.



### 2.2.0 **2015 Review:**

2.2.1 **General.** Since 2012, development at the Warwick University campus has continued and although the campus has a good public transport hub, it would appear that resulting peak time car traffic is becoming problematic on Gibbet Hill Road. This may have implications for other development that may need to utilise this road access.

2.2.2 It is still understood that the HS2 project will proceed and the route will cut a swathe, mostly in cutting, through a setting that is presently strongly rural in character. Crackley Lane will pass over the railway on a new bridge, but it hasn't been ascertained whether several existing footpaths will be given footbridge crossings or whether the existing network will be severed.

2.2.3 A number of sites have been promoted for development allocation in the area. Most recently developers 'Commercial Estates Group' (CEG) have promoted an area between Westwood Heath Road and Crackley Lane for between 900 and 2,500 dwellings within a 'garden suburb' concept.

2.2.4 The RMA 2012 study reviewed the area based on the WDC SHLAA sites. These sites have been revisited in November 2015 to again consider their suitability for allocation. These are SHLAA sites C02 and C05 (also identified together as C23 – Land off Cromwell Lane and Westwood Heath Road), C03 (Land east of Bockendon Lane, south of Westwood Heath Road), C13 (Lodge Farm, Westwood Heath Road), and C018 (Hurst Farm, Crackley Lane). An additional site at the western edge of Gibbet Hill has also been reviewed which is referred to here as Cryfield Grange Farm (SHLAA sites C27/C28).

2.2.5 **C23 – Land of Cromwell Lane** lies at the edge of Burton and is defined by the existing dwellings on Cromwell Lane to the west and Westwood Heath Road to the north. It is defined partly by an access road to Lodge Farm, Lodge Farm itself and the boundary of a small paddock to the east, and a clipped field hedge to the south. The land is essentially flat (at around 120m AOD) and divided into two apparently derelict fields, one an overgrown paddock and the other an overgrown former playing field with goalposts. It is not clear why the sites have become derelict. There is a public right of way along the eastern boundary and across the site – with poor quality paths. Although the land is elevated, the site is actually quite well contained by the housing (with mature vegetation along most garden boundaries) and the buildings and mature vegetation around Lodge Farm. The site is more open at the south-eastern corner – although woodland (Black Waste Wood) defines the skyline 200m to the south. Removal of this site from the Green Belt would appear unlikely to have a serious detrimental effect on the wider landscape setting or Green Belt function. The site would appear to be suitable for development pending confirmation of access and other infrastructure requirements. The site is not included in the recent 'garden suburb' representation by CEG developers.

2.2.6 **C03 – Land east of Bockendon Lane**, south of Westwood Heath Road is a land parcel of approximately 14 hectares, wrapping 'L' shaped around a smallholding that appears to have no dwelling house (Dixons Farm) and an area of sports pitch (approximately 5Ha in area). The land is in arable use and is gently south facing, falling from around 105m AOD near Westwood Heath Road to around 95m AOD at the southern edge. The southern boundary is defined by a small brook and associated woodland. The upper catchment for this watercourse appears to be all the land east of Burton Green and south of Westwood Heath Road – and it flows into Canley Brook near Cryfield Grange Farm. The brook forms a significant boundary in the local landscape due both to the mature vegetation and blocks of woodland along it (which define local views) and its important local drainage function. If development was proposed here, it is anticipated that sustainable urban drainage requirements will necessitate safeguarding this corridor – with the potential to create a new green infrastructure corridor, incorporating the stream and associated vegetation. There is a gappy overgrown hedge running diagonally across part of SHLAA C03, but the land is otherwise open in character with no obvious development constraints, although a gas main is known to cross the land.

2.2.7 Development allocation of land at C03 would be isolated without similar allocations to the west and east. Westwood Heath Road presently acts as the definitive edge to Coventry and the existing urban area, with only scattered properties and urban fringe land-use to the south of it (allotments / playing fields). To jump this boundary would result in a significant change in the setting of Westwood Heath and to prevent this becoming urban sprawl into open countryside, there would need to be a clear southern boundary to expansion. A green infrastructure corridor based on the existing watercourse and valley bottom could form this boundary and in landscape terms this would have benefits for urban/rural transition, visual enclosure and integration of development, recreation provision and other environmental services.

2.2.8 Principal access to this site would presumably be from Westwood Heath Road as Bockendon Lane / Crackley Lane are fairly minor routes. The site is included within the CEG representation.

2.2.9 **C13 – Lodge Farm** is a land parcel of just over 30 Ha and is defined by the C23 SHLAA site and dwellings on Cromwell Lane to the west, Westwood Heath Road to the north, Bockendon Lane to the east and field boundaries and a modern domestic property (the Moat) to the south (thought to be located at a much older site). The western parts of the site are relatively high at around 120m AOD, but the land slopes to the south-east with a low point of around 95m AOD near the Moat – which appears to be the source of the watercourse noted in C03. The land is all arable (the grounds and small paddock at Lodge Farm itself are excluded) and open in character, with low clipped, gappy hedges along field boundaries and a few hedge trees. Enclosed to the north, west and south-west, the site is open to the east and south-east.

2.2.10 As identified in the RMA 2012 study, it is considered that this land could be suitable for development allocation pending evaluation of access infrastructure and other service needs. There is a gas pipeline across the north-east corner of the site, and there may be water mains associated with the Burton Green water tower located at the south-western edge of the site. It is recommended that the south and south-east portion of the site would be utilised for green infrastructure (or retained for agriculture), to provide a landscape buffer to Black Waste Wood, to mitigate the development from views from the south-east and to strengthen the landscape setting – where the proposed route for HS2 would only be 500–600m to the south. Mitigating the potential impact to views from dwellings along Cromwell Lane must also be considered.

2.2.11 Principal access to this site would presumably be from Westwood Heath Road as Bockendon Lane / Crackley Lane are fairly minor routes. The site is partially included within the CEG representation.

2.2.12 **C18 – Hurst Farm** is a larger land parcel of around 100 hectares of arable and pastoral land and two large blocks of ancient woodland (Whitefield Coppice and Roughknowles Wood). There are field boundary hedges and veteran hedge trees. The land essentially comprises the south side of a gentle valley, climbing up from the tree-lined watercourse, referred to in C03 above, at 80–85m AOD, to Crackley Lane and Cryfield Grange Lane (high point of 100m AOD at Roughknowles Wood). The site is strongly rural in character, with a number of designated rights of way. The site is mainly enclosed from the adjacent lanes, and the woodland and other mature vegetation provide further local enclosure, but the varied topography allows various views and distant intervisibility with residential areas along Westwood Heath Road, the University campus and Gibbet Hill.

2.2.13 Development allocation within this site would create a large urban expansion into open countryside. Even if other sites were allocated to the north, along Westwood Heath Road (including land that is presently allotment gardens and sports pitches), development of this land parcel would still constitute a rather detached urban extension and would be notable in any views from higher ground to the north, north-west and east. Crackley Lane is unlikely to form a strong southern edge to development, and, as it is likely to be required for future traffic access, it would be likely to require widening – with consequential loss of its rural character. The Warwick University campus adjoins this



site to the north-east, but its urbanising influence is relatively well contained by Whitefield Coppice, the stream course and new green infrastructure within the campus. To the south, the HS2 rail corridor will also have a very significant impact on the landscape immediately south of this land parcel, and would reduce the width of open countryside between the two developments to as little as 200m near Roughknowles Wood.

2.2.14 In landscape terms, it would appear likely that there would be significant adverse impacts from the allocation of this land parcel as a whole and it cannot be recommended. However, as identified previously, it could be argued that the watercourse that runs through the most northerly section of this land has the potential to be a strong and natural southern boundary for development adjacent Westwood Heath Road – especially if it was incorporated into a more generous green infrastructure corridor. With this in mind, it is suggested that the single field north of the brook within this land parcel (7 Ha) is considered for development allocation. It would be dependent on allocation of the sites C13 and C03 to the west. The field is included within the CEG representation.

2.2.15 **C27/C28 – Land at Cryfield Farm Grange.** This land lies east of the Warwick University campus and west of the existing residential area at Gibbet Hill. It is defined by Gibbet Hill Road to the north, the Canley Brook and university sports pitches to the west, Cryfield Grange Lane to the south and large detached houses in large mature gardens to the west (although there is a smaller arable field and paddock separated by a recently planted woodland shelterbelt in the north-west corner). The land is one large arable field, south-west facing and falling from around 100m AOD on the west boundary to around 75m AOD adjacent Canley Brook. Cryfield Grange (farmhouse Grade II listed) lies south of the lane and was presumably once the principal farm in the setting, but now appears to be wholly domestic, including barn conversions. Farm buildings at the edge of the field and on the northern side of the lane are predominantly modern and appear derelict. There appear to have been previous level changes in the north-west corner of the site – possibly related to groundmodelling excess topsoil from the adjacent university sports pitches. The site is approximately 16 Ha in area. The WDC SHLAA assessment divides the site in half (south C27, north C28), but there is little to support this division in landscape terms and it would make sense to consider the two portions as one land parcel.

2.2.16 Development at this site would be substantially enclosed from the north and east and south-east, with some potential visual intrusion for west-facing views from five adjacent dwellings at Cryfield Heights / Little Cryfield. Development on the higher land at the eastern edge of the site would likely be intervisible from the open countryside to the west – as far as Burton Green and Westwood Heath Road and potentially, partially, Crackley at the edge of Kenilworth to the south. The site is intervisible with larger buildings at the university campus, the Cryfield sports pavilion and sports pitches. Development on the lower parts of the site are likely to be substantially screened from the west by woodland along the Canley Brook valley. Road access to the site would appear to be straightforward to establish from Gibbet Hill Road to the north and from Cryfield Grange lane to the south – although the latter route appears to be an ancient laneway, part of which is sunken and there is little capacity for road widening without adverse landscape and heritage impacts. There may be some potential for access from the Cryfield Heights estate to the east.

2.2.17 This site offers potential for expansion of the Gibbet Hill residential area that could potentially fit well with the wider settlement pattern. As part of the development, there would be good potential for improving green infrastructure along the Canley Brook corridor with landscape, ecological and recreational benefits. A masterplan could leave the highest land on the eastern boundary as open space – which could help minimise potential visual impacts and potentially create an attractive public access space with long views to the west. The nearby University provides a range of amenities that could assist the sustainability of this site. Ensuring there is sufficient traffic capacity on adjacent roads would seem to be a major issue. The site has not been included in the CEG representation.

2.2.18 **What if?** If all five of the land parcels outlined above were released from the Green Belt, there would be potential for a considerable number of new dwellings in the Burton Green / Westward Heath area and a distinctive residential neighbourhood at Gibbet Hill.

- The larger area should be big enough to create a sustainable new neighbourhood that might support community facilities that could benefit the existing and proposed community.
- The smaller area would occupy a prime setting close to the university with potential sustainability benefits.
- Both sites would offer opportunities to deliver significant green infrastructure – with benefits for landscape, ecology, recreation and other environmental services. Such works would help to strengthen the urban/rural interface and deliver the ‘peri-urban park’ envisaged by LUC in 2012.
- A substantial buffer of open countryside would still be retained between the urban area and the proposed HS2 corridor. The removal of Green Belt land would not significantly reduce the gap between Coventry and Kenilworth.

2.2.19 If urban expansion was proposed as outlined above, key landscape considerations would include:

- i. Safeguarding the streamcourse between Bockendon Lane and Cryfield Grange (and its minor tributaries) and using this as the focal point for a new ‘green corridor’, with the expanded urban area to the north and open countryside to the south. There would be opportunities for sustainable urban drainage features, enhanced riparian habitats and links to other green spaces and footpaths.
- ii. Providing a similar enhancement and enlargement of the Canley Brook ‘green corridor’ adjacent the Cryfield Grange site.
- iii. Protecting existing ancient woodland such as Black Waste Wood with a green infrastructure buffer, ideally introducing new native habitats and a clear management plan for ongoing sustainability.
- iv. Sustaining and integrating other historic landscape assets wherever possible – notably field ponds, veteran trees, and hedgerows – and also the character of existing lanes and roads.
- v. Where varied topography exists, use it to make distinctive and unique spatial design.
- vi. Through considered design, minimise potentially adverse environmental impacts to adjacent properties and consider the wider setting and longer views in the locality. Consider mitigating any future impacts of the HS2 railway.
- vii. Provide an integrated network of public open space, footpaths and connections to the wider area for the benefit of existing and future residents and to optimise alternatives to vehicular transport.
- viii. Ensure the inclusion of new landscape elements that complement the landscape type – including native hedge planting, hedge trees (particularly oaks) and small copses – especially in relation to new transport corridors.

### 2.3.0 **Other Landscape and Planning Issues:**

2.3.1 **Infrastructure requirements:** Further work will be required on transport infrastructure, where the traffic that might be generated by the suggested development would need to be assessed against local road capacity. The CEG proposal has indicated potential new road access through the University campus, but it is difficult to see how this could fit with the existing campus environment without substantial alterations. Similarly, it is difficult to see how the capacity of Crackley Lane and Cryfield Grange Lane could be greatly increased without a significant impact on their present rural character. New road-building around the southern edge of Coventry would be likely to result in significant environmental impacts. No assessment of utility infrastructure requirements has been undertaken. There would seem to be good opportunities for sustainable urban drainage relating to the existing watercourses. An assessment of schools provision would be required. Other requirements for community facilities have not been assessed. There are allotments, sports pitches and a range of facilities at the university campus – although these may not all be available to local residents.



**2.3.2 Cumulative impacts:** If the two sites identified above were both released from the Green Belt, they would be partially intervisible (approximately 1300m apart) and together with the expanding University campus between them, will have a cumulative impact on perceptions of the urban area and its expansion into the countryside. However, by restricting growth southwards to the watercourse as described, it is considered there will be an acceptable balance and that where views exist, the outlook from the north will still retain a mainly rural character.

**2.3.3** The proposed HS2 railway route is located between 700 and 1,100 metres south of the sites being considered for development allocation in the above analysis. It will be largely in cutting, although these cuttings may not be deep and it is likely that the rail infrastructure will still be evident from some positions in the local landscape. However, if this breadth of open countryside between rail and proposed allocation sites could be safeguarded, it should be adequate to retain a predominantly rural landscape character. Local topographic variety and blocks of woodland will certainly assist visual screening and integration of both developments.

**2.3.4** Allocation of land at King's Hill would not be intervisible with these sites and it is unlikely that the sites being considered north-east of Kenilworth, including Kenilworth golf course, would be intervisible, assuming appropriate development and retention of boundary vegetation. There is some potential for partial intervisibility between the site at Cryfield Grange and the allocated site at Common Lane, Crackley, and possibly land at Upper Ladyes Hills (SHLAA site K13/K14).

**2.3.5 Potential Landscape and Visual Impacts:** The integrated land parcel at Burton Green and Westwood Heath Road would result in visual impacts for adjacent properties on Cromwell Lane and Westwood Heath Road – perhaps 100–150 dwellings in all, plus scattered dwellings to the south (Bockendon Grange, The Moat and dwellings along Crackley Lane). It would be visible from other adjoining premises (e.g. the Network Rail headquarters, a Greek Orthodox church and some buildings at Warwick University, including halls of residence at Cryfield). It will create a significant change to the outlook from a section of Westwood Heath Road, Bockendon Lane and a limited section of Crackley Lane. Development would alter the setting of some sections of footpath and views from others in the landscape to the south including the Coventry Way. However, in general the zone of visual influence will be short (250m or less) to the west, north and north-east and mainly less than 1km from the south and south-east direction. Few landscape features would be affected by development of the open agricultural land, and a sensitive approach to infrastructure delivery and site boundary treatment should ensure limited landscape impacts in general.

**2.3.6** Although the Cryfield Grange site is relatively elevated, the zone of visual influence will again be limited in all but the south-westerly direction. Again, assuming an acceptable approach to infrastructure provision, building layout and boundary design, landscape impacts should be limited.

## **2.4.0 Conclusions:**

**2.4.1** As identified in 2012, there would appear to be opportunities for development allocation in this land parcel without substantial adverse impacts to the wider landscape setting or Green Belt function. This review has extended the area that might be considered acceptable for urban expansion, with the assumption that such development would be accompanied by provision of new green infrastructure to create a 'peri-urban park'.

### Opportunities, assets, benefits:

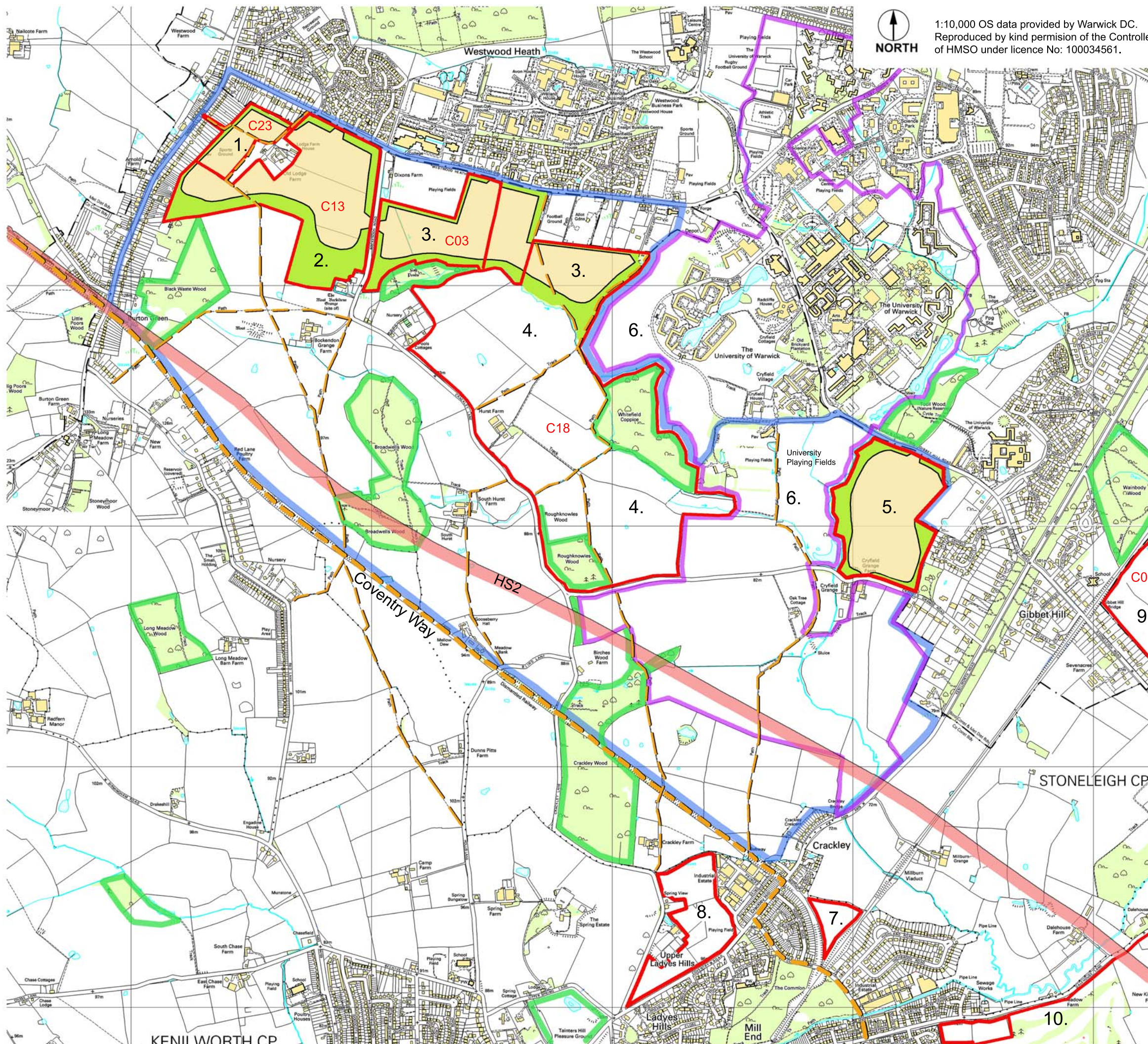
- Potential for logical and integrated expansion of the urban area at a scale sufficient to justify new local centre facilities (or to benefit from the proximity of the university at Cryfield Grange). This should offer the potential for sustainable new communities with benefits for existing residents.

- Opportunity to create new green infrastructure that will help integrate the urban/rural interface and provide a range of other benefits.
- A sustainable buffer of open countryside can still be retained between the expanded settlement and the HS2 railway

Constraints and Challenges:

- It is not clear whether the existing road system has the capacity to absorb substantial additional traffic. Widening local lanes or building new roads could result in substantial environmental impacts in this setting.
- The entire area has not been put forward by one promoter and it would be necessary to coordinate different landowners to get the best landscape planning outcome.
- Successful integration with neighbouring properties and the wider landscape to the south will require careful planning, design and construction – but is considered to be achievable.





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0 250 500m

-  Study site.
-  SHLAA sites.
-  HS2 proposed corridor.
-  Green Assets.  
(Nature reserves, ancient woodland etc)
-  Footpaths.
-  University of Warwick landholding
-  Potential development opportunities  
(with green infrastructure).

1. C23 constitutes derelict land that could be developed to create a relatively discrete extension to Burton Green. Access may be required through C13.
2. Developing C13 would not have a significant adverse impact on the wider landscape setting or Green Belt function. It would enable creation of green infrastructure to mitigate development and enhance the edge of the urban area.
3. It is considered that further settlement expansion might be acceptable south of Westwood Heath Road, but that an appropriate southern boundary would be the existing stream course. This could feature in a new 'peri-urban park' along the whole valley.
4. Development south of the stream would make a very large urban extension with significant adverse impacts on the wider rural setting and is not recommended.
5. Development at Cryfield Grange Farm (SHLAA sites C28 and C29) could be relatively discrete in the wider landscape and integrate well with settlement at Gibbet Hill. Opportunities for enhanced green infrastructure.
6. Warwick University campus.
7. Allocated site at Crackley triangle.
8. SHLAA sites K13/K14.
9. King's Hill - SHLAA site C06.
10. Kenilworth golf course and SHLAA site K31.

Warwick District Urban Expansion Options  
Sustainable Landscape Considerations.  
Figure 2.0: Burton Green, Westwood Heath  
and Coventry.





View south-east from footpath at Lodge Farm, Burton Green. Some long views are possible towards Warwick University, but Black Waste Wood (right) defines the viewshed to the immediate south.



View west from Bockendon Road with housing on Westwood Heath Road to right, Lodge Farm and Burton Green water tower on the skyline and Black Waste Wood to left.



Panoramic view looking west and south-west from land at Cryfield Grange. Note the Warwick University buildings to right and University playing fields in the mid-distance.



### 3. Land north and south of Crewe Lane, Kenilworth

- 3.1.1 An area north-east of Kenilworth comprising approximately 103 hectares is being considered for development allocation in the Local Plan. The area is defined by Glasshouse Lane to the west, a woodland shelterbelt to the south, the A46 to the east and a combination of Dalehouse Lane and agricultural land to the north. Crewe Lane (which provides access between Kenilworth and Stoneleigh, passing under the A46) cuts across the area. The land has previously been divided into three land parcels for SHLAA analysis, comprising ‘Woodside’ (15Ha) to the south, ‘Crewe Gardens’ and ‘Southcrest Farm’ (37 Ha) in the central area (which has also been subdivided into ‘east’ and ‘west’ portions), and Kenilworth Golf Club (51 Ha) to the north of Crewe Lane.
- 3.1.2 The land lies within the West Midlands Green Belt and was therefore considered in the 2008 Joint Green Belt Study and again recently in the 2015 JGBS. The landscape appraisal from 2008 is summarised as follows:

<b>Study Area Reference</b>	Originally K3 (also referenced as C12c) and mainly consisting of Kenilworth Golf Club – but also farmland to the north.
<b>Study Area Description</b>	K3 is a ridge lying between the Finham Brook valley to the west and the Avon valley to the east. Defined by Dalehouse Lane to the north, the A46 to the east, Crewe Lane to the south and Kenilworth to the west.
<b>Landscape Character</b>	K3 lies within the <i>Arden</i> landscape character area and <i>Arden Parklands</i> character type. Mature tree cover along the road fronts and within the golf course and farm landscape gives a well wooded appearance.
<b>Visual Issues</b>	The area forms a viewshed and acts as a backdrop to adjacent areas to the north, east and south.
<b>Historic and Cultural Issues</b>	No historic environment data established. It is understood the golf club has only been on this site since the 1970s. The ‘Coventry Way’ long distance footpath passes through the centre of the site.
<b>Ecological Features</b>	Mature tree cover; Hedges and hedge trees; Permanent pasture.
<b>Landscape Condition</b>	The 1993 Warwickshire landscape guidelines recommended new woodland planting, woodland management and hedge improvement towards the eastern edge of this area. The golf course includes a variety of non-native planting.
<b>Conclusion / Recommendation</b>	This area is prominent in the local landscape and serves the important Green Belt functions of provision of recreational space and public access to the countryside. Although development here could be contained by the existing roads, a substantial urban extension would reduce the gap between Coventry and Kenilworth. It is recommended that the entire area is retained within the Green Belt.

<b>Study Area Reference</b>	K4 (also referenced as C12a and C12b) (comprising Crewe Gardens, Southcrest Farm and Woodside and sports pitches south of Woodside).
<b>Study Area Description</b>	K4 is mainly south-east-facing pastoral farmland located between post-war Kenilworth and the A46 dual carriageway. Boundaries are Crewe Lane to the north, the A46 to the east, a lane retained as a footpath (Rocky Lane) to the south and Glasshouse Lane to the west. There are four properties (Crewe Gardens, Southcrest, Southcrest Farm and Woodside). Southcrest is a large modern domestic dwelling with extensive gardens and mature trees and may be associated with the farm land. There are some small blocks of woodland around ‘Woodside’.
<b>Landscape Character</b>	K4 lies within the <i>Arden</i> landscape character area and <i>Arden Parklands</i> character type.
<b>Visual Issues</b>	Although the topographic aspect would naturally link this area to the Avon valley and Stoneleigh to the east, in fact the A46 corridor, which features maturing woodland screen planting, creates enclosure and a physical and visual

	break. K4 therefore acts as a mainly pastoral buffer between Kenilworth and the A46.
<b>Historic and Cultural Issues</b>	It is understood that there is a Romano British site of interest under Glasshouse Wood (Scheduled Monument). The A46 has severed this area from its historical relationship with Stoneleigh Park (registered park). ‘Woodside’ is a large Victorian/Edwardian country house (not listed), now used as a conference centre. The dwelling at Southcrest Farm (Knoll House) may be a former estate cottage/farmhouse? A path through Glasshouse Wood and Rocky Lane provides access over the A46 towards the Avon and Stoneleigh corridor.
<b>Ecological Features</b>	Woodland (corner of Glasshouse wood – ancient woodland). Other copses. Hedgerows. Veteran trees. At least two ponds (age unknown) Permanent pasture (apparently improved).
<b>Landscape Condition</b>	Hedge loss and declining tree cover is evident. Crewe Gardens rather a scruffy farmstead with various ‘farm diversification’ apparent. BMX track in Glasshouse Wood – unfortunate. There are opportunities for hedgerow improvement and new tree planting which would sustain the <i>Arden Parkland</i> character type.
<b>Conclusion / Recommendation</b>	Glasshouse Lane presently forms a definitive edge to the east side of Kenilworth at this location and appears to enable the agricultural land-use to have continued in K4 without obvious urban fringe conflicts. However, it could be argued that the A46 road has already undermined the historic landscape continuity between Kenilworth and the Avon valley and that it is the A46 corridor that forms the real interface between the settlement and the rural landscape setting. It might be demonstrated that further development up to the A46 corridor would not have major impacts to the wider landscape context. Existing mature vegetation would allow this area to be visually contained whilst sensitive design could extend this enclosure. We consider that area K4 could be identified for a further level of detailed study and consideration for removal from the Green Belt.

3.1.3 Therefore in 2008, the landscape review suggested that this land parcel might be considered for urban expansion up to Crewe Lane, but that to the north the Golf Course provided a useful Green Belt function and helped to provide separation between Kenilworth and Coventry. Ultimately the whole area was categorised as ‘least constrained’ in the 2008 JGBS study. Land to the south towards Thickthorn (including the sports pitches south of ‘Woodside’) has subsequently been allocated for development.

3.1.4 The recent 2015 JGBS has considered the whole land parcel (referred to as KE1) and has also concluded that the area does not contribute significantly to Green Belt function.

### 3.2.0 **2015 Review:**

3.2.1 **General.** The landscape within this land parcel has not altered significantly since 2008. However, there are some relevant changes to the planning context. As noted, approximately 4Ha of land to the south, lying between the A46 and Kenilworth, has now been allocated for residential and employment sector development. School sites within Kenilworth have also been proposed for residential development, whilst a replacement school site has been proposed within this land parcel, at Southcrest Farm, (on an area of approximately 18Ha – although the whole site may not be required).

3.2.2 Another significant planning proposal that will influence this setting is the HS2 railway corridor. This will pass within 50m of the northern boundary of Kenilworth Golf Club land and is likely to utilise a portion of the land parcel (which includes a paddock at New Kingswood Farm that is presently outside of the golf course). New Kingswood Farm would be demolished to make room for the railway. The railway will make a substantial new boundary in the landscape and may come to be regarded as the northern ‘edge’ of Kenilworth. It will in itself reduce the width of open countryside between Kenilworth and Gibbet Hill at the southern edge of Coventry. Some severed pieces of farmland adjacent the railway are unlikely to remain viable for agriculture and a review of land use will be required.



**3.2.3 Further site description.** The land south of Crewe Lane forms the central portion of the site and has a south-east-facing aspect with a highpoint of around 95m AOD at the junction of Crewe Lane and Glasshouse Lane and a low point of around 75m AOD near the south-east boundary with the A46. As noted, Crewe Lane provides local access to Stoneleigh and also Kenilworth Golf Club. To the east, the A46 is partly in cutting and partly on embankment and even with maturing woodland planting along the road corridor, traffic is visible and audible from the land at Crewe Gardens. The Crewe Gardens holding occupies approximately 19 hectares divided into a series of grazing paddocks with clipped hedges or post and wire boundaries. There is a dwelling and a number of modern outbuildings. The land is open in character, with a few scattered trees mainly within hedge boundaries. To the north alongside Crewe Lane is a large modern house (Southcrest) within a large garden with a variety of mature trees. This tree planting actually extends for approximately 650m alongside Crewe Lane and provides enclosure between the site and the lane. Southcrest Farm, like Crewe Gardens, is open pastoral land, mainly flatter in character, with some scattered sections of remnant hedge, a few veteran oak trees and one notable pond. The farm buildings are again relatively modern in character with the dwelling (Knoll House) probably early 19th century. The proximity of the A46 is less evident, but Glasshouse Lane is a busy local distributor road at the edge of Kenilworth that provides access to a late 20th-century housing estate opposite the site. It is worth noting that both sides of the road feature large mature trees with either an understorey of scrubby ‘woodland’ or a hedge – providing a strong rural component to the character of this road corridor. It is also worth noting that adjacent the modern housing, the strip of land with retained trees and understorey varies between 10 and 5m in width – and that the 10m width is much more effective as both a screen and apparently in supporting larger, healthy trees. This should be used as a guide for future development and retention of mature trees.

**3.2.4** Woodside is a large house accessed off Glasshouse Lane and lying south of Southcrest Farm and now used as a hotel and conference venue. The building has a number of modern extensions and is immediately set within lawns and gardens (including tennis court and putting green), but within a wider setting of paddocks – which are presumably seasonally grazed. Around the house are some notable specimen trees including Wellingtonia, which are local landmarks. The property is generally enclosed from Glasshouse Lane by hedges, groups of trees and shrubby planting. There is a small lodge house near Glasshouse Lane which may have Victorian origins but, if so, is much altered and now appears to be a separate property. The site is enclosed from the A46 (which is in cutting at this section, and screened by hedges and roadside planting). To the north there is also a notable copse (20–50m wide, which encloses Woodside from Southcrest Farm and Crewe Gardens. To the south lies another triangular block of woodland (mainly oak/birch, but toward the west end featuring Limes and an understorey of evergreen shrubs suggesting Victorian origins). The main body of woodland appears to be a westerly section of *Glasshouse Wood*, apparently severed by the construction of the A46. This planting encloses the site from the south (the allocated land) – although there is a public footpath through the wood that passes over the A46 by footbridge and provides access to Stoneleigh Park.

**3.2.5** Kenilworth Golf Course lies to the north of Crewe Lane and to the east of late 20th- / early 21st-century housing accessed from Glasshouse Lane and Knowle Hill (‘Fairway Rise’ and ‘Frythe Close’). It is predominantly a modern landscaped environment with a variety of native and exotic tree and shrub species planted around fairways and other golf facilities. There are, however, vestiges of the previous landscape remaining, including veteran oak trees and hedge and ditch boundaries. There is a significant area of native woodland (ash, oak, sycamore) adjacent Frythe Close which may also pre-date the golf course. Most of the modern planting is well established – and the setting is generally well enclosed. The clubhouse and main facilities are located in modern buildings near Crewe Lane. There also appears to be one dwelling (‘The Dingle’) at the south-west corner of the course.

**3.2.6** Dalehouse Lane defines the golf course to the north-west – apparently an ancient laneway following the eastern bank of the Finham Brook. (Because the lane is so low, the HS2 railway is

proposed to pass over it.) The boundary with the golf course is defined by an overgrown hedge and mature trees providing a reasonably good screen and a ‘rural’ approach to Kenilworth. There is a small area of paddock (2.7Ha) at the edge of Kenilworth, north of Frythe Close, but outside the golf course and land parcel. (This small land parcel is now identified as SHLAA site K31 and is discussed in more detail below.) To the north-east, the golf course boundary planting (including veteran trees from previous field boundaries) again provides considerable visual enclosure. Beyond the golf course, New Kingswood Farm, Kingswood Farm and Kingswood Barn are dwellings located on the highest part of the ridge within a rural setting of paddocks and small-/medium-scale arable fields. There is some enclosure in this farmland (hedges/trees) but there are also some long views possible to the north and north-west (King’s Hill, Gibbet Hill and as far as Westwood Heath Road). To the east, the proximity of the A46 becomes evident visually and audibly within 100m of the road – although there is woodland planting including conifers alongside the road corridor and also, within the golf course, a noteworthy shelterbelt of pine trees. Intervisibility with points further east was not identified in fieldwork.

3.2.7 SHLAA site K31 is a small area of paddock (2.7Ha), which appears to be managed but had no stock at the time of the site visit. The site has a north facing aspect, sloping from around 85m AOD on the southern edge to 75m AOD at Dalehouse Lane. To the south and west, the site is defined by late 20th-century housing (Lulworth Park and to the south-west, Frythe Close and Knowle Hill Park). Boundaries are defined by a variety of walls, fences and hedges – where the hedge adjacent Lulworth Park is likely to be an original field hedge that has become overgrown. The south-east and eastern boundaries of the site adjoin the Kenilworth Golf Course and include overgrown field hedges, cypress screen planting and, at the eastern end, an area of developing woodland including ash regeneration. The northern site boundary is defined by Dalehouse Lane, along which is a verge with approximately 30 mature trees, estimated to be around 200 years old. At some points, this verge is around 15 metres wide, but in a central section is narrower and defined only by a hedge. On the other side of Dalehouse Road is residential development (including Whitehead Drive), a sewage treatment plant and what appears to be a landscape contractor’s yard. However, the mature trees and hedges along the road and views to the paddock provide a strong rural character to this approach into Kenilworth. From the higher parts of the site there are wide views over the Green Belt land to the north and some intervisibility with Gibbet Hill.

3.2.8 **What if?** Assuming that the land at Southcrest Farm will be utilised for a new school as proposed and that this might require around 14 Ha of land, there would be around 90 hectares to consider for other development (north and south of Crewe Lane) as described above. In conjunction with the land already allocated for development to the south, there would therefore seem to be potential to create a significant new community/neighbourhood that would be capable of supporting local centre facilities. This might offer a more sustainable outcome for growth in Kenilworth than a more piecemeal residential expansion.

- Existing topography and landscape features could provide for an attractive and varied development environment that could be relatively well contained within the wider landscape.
- By including the golf course within the plan, there might be an opportunity for new road access to Dalehouse Lane that would ‘bypass’ Knowle Hill and the existing town and provide for a more diversified local road network.
- If HS2 proceeds, there will be inevitable change and intrusion into the landscape north of Kenilworth. A positive planning approach might provide opportunities to rationalise land use adjacent this new corridor.
- Appropriate design could retain and enhance access to the countryside and public open space around Kenilworth.
- The position of SHLAA site K31 and its mature trees make it important to the character of Kenilworth at a gateway to the town. Development here must particularly ensure retention of principal landscape assets.



3.2.9 The growth of Kenilworth is constrained to the west by the historic setting of the castle, to the north and north-west by a successful and important portion of Green Belt adjacent Coventry, and to the south by a similarly important Green Belt separation with Leek Wootton. With the A46 providing a strong boundary to growth to the east, this land parcel appears to be the most appropriate opportunity for future settlement expansion. With the HS2 corridor to the north and Dalehouse Lane and Finham Brook to the north-west, development here will have very definable boundaries that would help to prevent further expansion and encroachment into countryside. Only the paddock noted adjacent Dalehouse Lane (SHLAA site K31) is likely to come under additional development pressure.

3.2.10 We would suggest the following landscape considerations would be key to creating a successful masterplan for this land parcel:

- i. Retain the established woodland and tree cover where possible to define the character of the new environment. This will be especially important within the golf course land, but also alongside Crewe Lane adjacent Southcrest and in and around the grounds at Woodside. The established tree and hedge planting along road corridors would also be very important – notably along Dalehouse Lane (gateway to Kenilworth) and Glasshouse Lane.
- ii. Retain existing planting on the golf course alongside the A46 to ensure enclosure and screening of the road. Extend this planting alongside the A46 at Crewe Gardens. The land along this boundary is also generally the lowest on the site and is likely to be appropriate for sustainable urban drainage infrastructure. It would be ideal to integrate screen planting, drainage infrastructure and habitat creation with new public open space to create multifunctional green infrastructure at the urban/rural interface.
- iii. Where varied topography exists, use it to make distinctive and unique spatial design. Consider the zone of visual influence for development – notably from the north-west, north and east, where ill-conceived development could be prominent and intrusive in the wider setting.
- iv. Sustain and integrate other historic landscape assets wherever possible – notably field ponds, veteran trees, and hedgerows.
- v. Through considered design, minimise potentially adverse environmental impacts to existing assets – e.g. the scheduled ancient monument, Woodside and its immediate setting and existing neighbouring properties.
- vi. Ensure provision of an integrated range of public open space, footpaths and connections to the wider area for the benefit of existing and future residents.
- vii. Ensure the inclusion of new landscape elements that complement the landscape type – including native hedge planting, hedge trees (particularly oaks) and copse planting.

3.2.11 **Potential development areas?** The land at Crewe Gardens, Southcrest Farm and Woodside will ideally be considered as a unified site – notwithstanding that the proposed new school campus would be a dominant feature of the Glasshouse Lane corridor. The existing wide verge along this lane should provide opportunity for a new a dual-use footpath whilst retaining the existing hedge and mature trees on the frontage. It is unclear whether ‘Knoll House’ and ‘Southcrest’ are worthy of retention within the school site, but there would appear to be few constraints to redeveloping the rest of this land. At Woodside, although unlisted, the original house would appear to have heritage value – as do the immediate gardens and specimen trees. It would seem appropriate to retain these as well as the 0.8Ha copse north of the house and the mature trees along Glasshouse Lane. Towards the east end of this area is a curving hedgeline that provides screening from the A46. There may be potential to utilise this hedge in defining the edge of a new public open space / green ‘buffer’ along the A46 road frontage. Development at Crewe Gardens should consider the Crewe Lane frontage – where the lane presently provides views over the site and south-west towards Kenilworth.

3.2.12 Should the golf course be allocated for development, a suitable masterplan would ideally utilise the considerable topographic variety and extensive tree planting. This is likely to result in a fairly low-density development – but a potentially very attractive residential setting. With careful design, the existing boundary planting should enable a relatively discrete urban extension, even considering the elevated topography. This might be assisted along the northern boundary by ensuring

a satisfactory landscape buffer between the site and the HS2 rail corridor. However, as noted, it seems likely that a new road access onto Dalehouse Lane may be required to alleviate the impact on Crewe Lane. This would have to be carefully designed if the rural character of the lane was to be retained (notwithstanding the likely impact of the HS2 crossing). If additional community recreation space was required to serve this new neighbourhood (it is expected that it would be), it may be most appropriately located within the current golf course setting.

3.2.13 The land at SHLAA K31 is on a north-facing bank and development of this site is likely to require considerable cut and fill and retaining structures. The existing housing arrangement at adjacent Lulworth Park may indicate how this site could be developed. Careful design will be required to avoid adverse impacts to boundary features – especially the trees along Dalehouse Lane. New access from Dalehouse Lane may be possible without significant adverse impact to the trees and existing road corridor character – e.g. by utilising an existing field entrance at the north-east corner of the site. There would also appear to be an opportunity for site access at the top of the site from Frythe Close. However, if land at the adjacent golf course was also developed, it may be most appropriate to incorporate the land at K31 site as a small cul-de-sac of a larger scheme. Access may therefore be possible from the golf course site. Site design and especially building heights would need to consider visual impacts to adjacent properties (notably at Knowle Hill Park) and the wider setting to the north.

### 3.3.0 **Other Landscape and Planning Issues:**

3.3.1 **Infrastructure requirements:** Further work will clearly be required to ascertain access and transport infrastructure. Public transport will presumably be required for the school and it may be possible to develop a transport hub that also benefits the wider residential setting. No assessment of utility infrastructure requirements has been undertaken. Other requirements for community facilities have not been assessed.

3.3.2 **Cumulative impacts:** The proposed HS2 railway route is located immediately to the north of this land parcel. The construction process is likely to be disruptive, but it is not clear what operational impacts might emerge. A landscape buffer is likely to be required adjacent residential development and, as outlined above, this could be incorporated into a masterplan as public open space. Existing tree cover largely prevents intervisibility between the golf course and King's Hill and Gibbet Hill – although development on the higher land at K31 is likely to be visible from the north possibly as far as Warwick University. An additional landscape buffer alongside the railway could ensure any development at the Golf Course was enclosed from the north-east, but perhaps not all views from the north. (In the case that the HS2 project does not proceed, then the existing golf course boundaries could define the extent of land allocation.) HS2 will substantially alter the setting of Dalehouse Lane and if a new residential road access was also constructed (and/or K31 was developed), there would be a significant change to the character of this approach to Kenilworth.

3.3.3 If the land parcel at King's Hill was also allocated for development, the Green Belt gap between HS2 and Stoneleigh Road would be reduced to between 750 and 800m. As noted, with appropriate landscape infrastructure, it is anticipated there would be little or no intervisibility between King's Hill and development at Kenilworth golf course and none with the Southcrest Farm, Crewe Gardens and Woodside sites, but potentially some between Stoneleigh Lane and the land at K31. No direct intervisibility is anticipated with the existing allocated sites within Kenilworth – although the development of the Thickthorn sites to the south will clearly be seen successively along Glasshouse Lane and there will be a substantial and permanent change to the eastern setting of Kenilworth.

3.3.4 **Potential Landscape and Visual Impacts:** Development of Southcrest Farm, Southcrest and Crewe Gardens could be partially visible from around 50 dwellings located to the west of Glasshouse Lane. Existing mature trees and other vegetation significantly enclose this frontage – but the present views over a mainly rural setting will be lost. Longer views to the east from these neighbouring



dwelling would appear to be limited to a treeline along the A46 and around Stoneleigh. These views may also be relevant to road users on Glasshouse Lane. At Woodside, easterly views are expected to be more limited due to tree cover and the buildings.

3.3.5 There are open views south-west across Crewe Gardens and Southcrest Farm from a short section (400m) of Crewe Lane, although intervisibility with other parts of Kenilworth beyond appear limited. Most of this lane is enclosed by roadside vegetation and it would be expected that trees here will be retained, especially as they largely grow on steeper slopes that would be unsuitable for development. Partial views of the land parcel may be possible from a section of between 800 and 900m of the A46. Appropriate development would seek setbacks and landscape screening as noted above.

3.3.6 A number of dwellings at Fairway Rise, Frythe Close, Knowle Hill Park and Lulworth Park back onto the golf course or have potential views towards it and there would therefore be some potential for intervisibility with new development on the Golf Course and at K31. Mature boundary vegetation around the golf course will generally filter such views and additional planting could be provided. Views of development at the golf course from Dalehouse Lane and dwellings along Dalehouse Lane are likely to be evident but limited – pending confirmation of access infrastructure (and the final design of HS2). Views of development at the paddock on Dalehouse Lane (K31) are likely to be more notable, both to dwellings opposite and road users – especially if there is a new road entrance created. There is also potential for cherished views north from Knowle Hill Park to be blocked by new housing at K31, unless it is carefully planned.

3.3.7 The Centenary Way footpath presently passes through the golf course and the setting of the path would be altered by development for around 650m. Views from the footpath are mainly restricted to the golf course in this section.

### **3.4.0 Conclusions:**

3.4.1 This land parcel was identified as being one of the ‘least constrained’ Green Belt parcels reviewed in 2008. The advent of the HS2 railway proposal will greatly alter the northern fringe of Kenilworth and it is now considered appropriate to consider ‘positive planning’ approaches that might integrate the rail corridor with adjacent land use. A review of the study site has indicated that development of this entire parcel may provide opportunities for an integrated new neighbourhood that could provide a more sustainable outcome for existing allocated sites to the south and the proposed new school site.

#### Opportunities, assets, benefits:

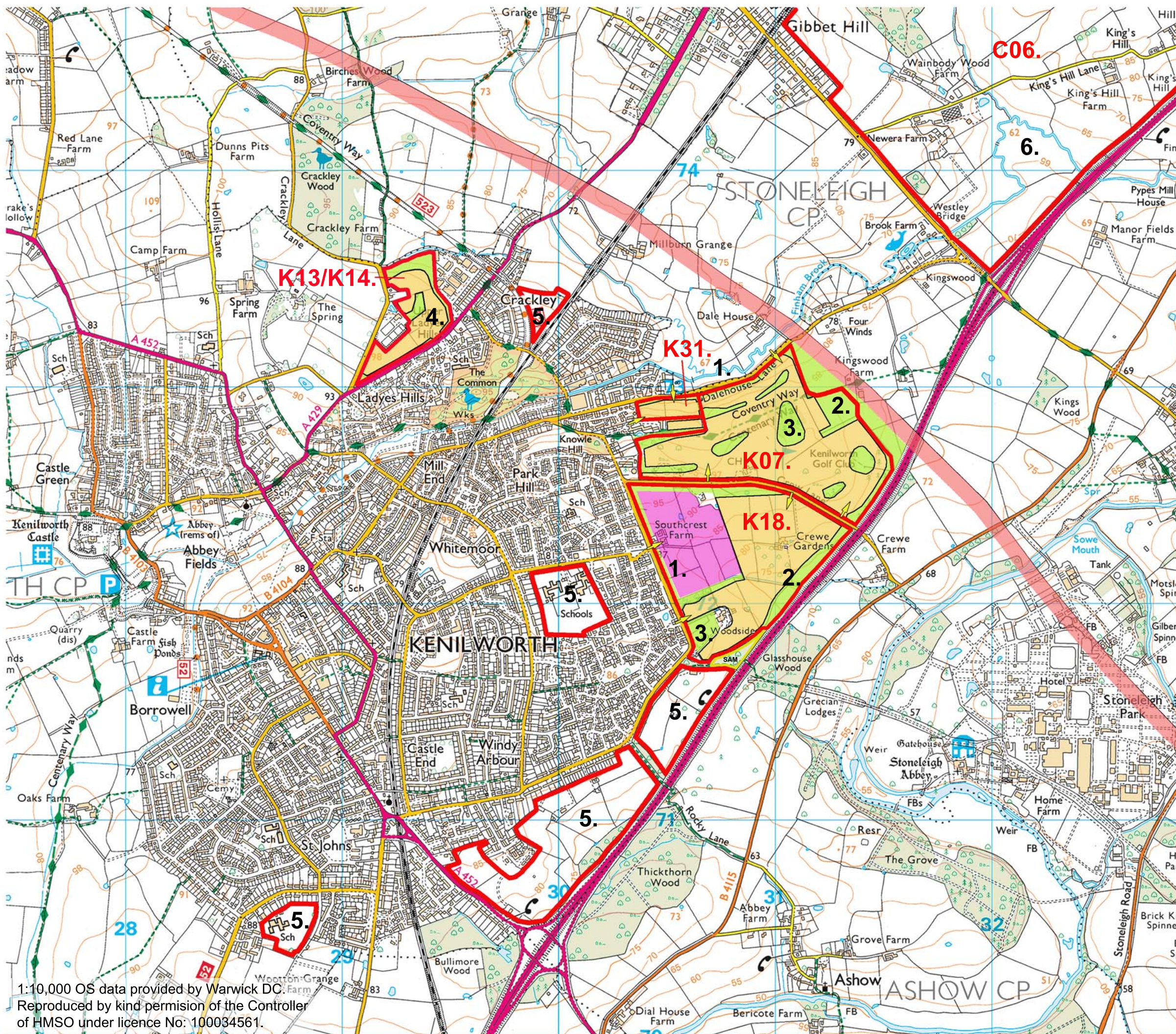
- Potential for attractive and distinctive urban form utilising existing topography, woodland, mature trees and other landscape features.
- Opportunity to create a substantial new community/neighbourhood – integrating the proposed school and providing opportunities for other local centre amenities that will assist sustainability and avoid creating ‘dormitory’ residential estates.
- Opportunity to provide new transport infrastructure – with benefits for existing and proposed future residents.
- Potential to retain/enhance a successful urban/rural transition at edge of urban area. This could include new public open space, habitat creation and a footpath network.

#### Constraints and Challenges:

- Ensuring that development does not overload the existing road system and other community infrastructure.
- Integrating the existing and proposed urban form.

- Mitigating impacts on existing residential neighbours and landscape assets (e.g. ancient woodland, veteran trees and scheduled monuments). Mitigating potential impacts of the A46 and the proposed HS2 rail corridor on the proposed development.
- Multifunctional green infrastructure must ensure sustainable integration of key landscape assets without degrading or losing them over time.





Key.

- K07. SHLAA sites.
- Development areas.
- New school.  
(and local centre?)
- Principal green infrastructure areas.
- HS2 proposed corridor.

1. Retain 'rural' frontages along Crewe, Glasshouse and Dalehouse Lane by saving mature trees and hedgerows.
2. Create landscape buffer adjacent A46 and proposed HS2 corridors - to provide landscape, ecological and recreational benefits and to enhance urban/rural interface.
3. Retain principal landscape assets including mature trees and ponds. Retain setting to Woodside house.
4. Opportunity to enhance urban./ rural interface and 'peri-urban' amenities with new development at Upper Ladyes Hills.
5. Existing allocated development sites.
6. Kings Hill site.

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Warwick District Urban Expansion Options  
Sustainable Landscape Considerations.  
Figure 3.0: Kenilworth Sites





View over part of Kenilworth golf course. A generally enclosed setting with a variety of ornamental tree planting. There are also some former hedgerows and veteran trees.



View south and south-west over 'Crewe Gardens' from Crewe Lane. The A46 is notable to the east. Tall conifers in the distance are in the grounds of 'Woodside'



View east across land at Southcrest Farm from Glasshouse Lane. Scattered veteran trees with distant views of A46 and trees at Stonleigh Park. The copse to the right defines the boundary of 'Woodside'.





Panoramic view looking north from the centre of SHLAA site K31. The upper parts of the site will be intervisible with dwellings on the northern edge of Kenilworth, and more distantly with Gibbett Hill and dwellings on a section of Stoneleigh Lane.



View east from north-west corner of site. Note relatively steep slope and dwellings at 'Knowle Hill Park' at southern edge of site.



View looking east on Dalehouse Lane road front, with mature trees.



View looking west on Dalehouse Lane with mature trees.



Potential site access from Frythe Close. Knowle Hill Park to right.



Southern site boundary looking east.



#### **4. Land at Upper Ladves Hills, Coventry Road, Kenilworth**

4.1.1 This area lies within the West Midlands Green Belt and was therefore considered in the 2008 Joint Green Belt Study and again recently in the 2015 JGBS. The area is presently described as SHLAA site K13 (approximately 9 hectares of land managed as two irregular-shaped arable fields) and SHLAA site K14 (just over 3 hectares of playing field used by Crackley Hall School). Refer to Figure 3.0 (Plan) and Figure 3.3 (Photographs).

4.1.2 In the 2008 JGBS, this 12-hectare area fell within a much larger land parcel (referred to as K1), which included Crackley Wood and extended all the way to Gibbet Hill. The parcel as a whole was considered very important for Green Belt function, providing the separation between Kenilworth and Coventry. However, in the landscape analysis at the time, it was noted that the Princes Drive Industrial Estate at Crackley was a detracting element that had ‘jumped’ the A429 Coventry Road resulting in a poor urban-rural interface.

4.1.3 The recent 2015 JGBS also considered this area within a much larger land parcel, this time extending west into the open countryside, using a former railway (now the Coventry Way cycle/foot path) as a northern boundary. This review also concluded that the area was important for Green Belt function.

4.1.4 Between 2008 and 2012, the sites were promoted for development and defined as SHLAA sites K13/K14. They were the subject of review in the RMA report *Considerations for Sustainable Landscape Planning* report (2012). The sites were considered in relation to a larger area extending from Burton Green in the west to Gibbet Hill in the east. It was concluded that there might be some potential for development here, that would not significantly reduce the Green Belt buffer between Kenilworth and Coventry and might have potential to improve the current urban / rural interface as well as contributing to a ‘peri-urban park’ that had been previously promoted by Warwick District Council (see Warwick District Green Infrastructure Delivery Assessment, LUC, 2012).

#### **4.2.0 2015/16 Review:**

4.2.1 **General.** The landscape within the K13/K14 land parcel does not appear to have altered significantly since previous reviews. However, the planning context is changing due to the other existing and proposed site allocations around Kenilworth and the increasing likelihood that the HS2 project will proceed. A current planning application is noted for a new car park associated with the Crackley Hall playing fields (ref W/16/0028).

4.2.2 **Further site description.** The Crackley Hall School playing fields (K14) are located towards the south-east corner of the land parcel. The land is essentially flat at around 95m AOD and to the south has a fairly open boundary (post and rail fence / recent hedge planting) with the A429, Coventry Road. On the opposite side of the road are a variety of large detached dwellings as well as the school itself. To the north-east is the Princes Drive Industrial Estate featuring a variety of one- and two-storey commercial premises, and south-east of them a linear development of two-storey post-war housing fronting the A429. There is a rather scruffy boundary between the industrial estate and playing fields, with bramble and various fencing. The agricultural land (K13) features a very flat, triangular area south-east of the playing fields, defined by the A429 to the south and Crackley Lane to the west. The Kenilworth Tennis and Squash Club is located on Crackley Lane and includes a club house, indoor and outdoor courts, all enclosed with hedges and trees. Floodlights for the outdoor courts were noted. Further along Crackley Lane are two detached dwellings with enclosed gardens (*Springfield House* – an estate-style cottage, and *Spring View* – a modern dwelling). The second arable field wraps around these dwellings and slopes down to a ditch and hedge boundary near Crackley Farm – with the playing fields and industrial estate forming the eastern boundary. In January 2016, standing water was noted at the southern edge of this field suggesting a drainage issue.



4.2.3 From the playing field, open views to the north are notable including distant intervisibility with Gibbet Hill and buildings at Warwick University. However, to the north-west and west, local topography and tree cover tend to enclose the site from the wider setting within 100–300 metres. This tree cover includes trees along the Coventry Way cycle/footpath (parts of which are in cutting and others in embankment), Crackley Wood, and trees around a parkland setting at Spring Farm to the west. There are no public footpaths across the site and the playing field belongs to a private school. There is a pavement alongside the A429 and also a section of Crackley Lane up to the Tennis Club.

4.2.4 **What if?** If both K13 and K14 were allocated for residential development, the resulting settlement form could be defined by the existing employment area to the east, Crackley Lane, the tennis club and existing dwellings to the west, the hedge, ditch and a shallow valley to the north and the A429 and existing settlement to the south-east. It could be argued that these are reasonably strong boundaries that could be further defined to prevent sprawl and that this ‘infill’ would make a logical settlement footprint for Kenilworth. There would be potential to improve public access linking to existing footpaths at Crackley Farm and the Coventry Way, and also to green assets such as Crackley Wood. Some standing water within K13 and the lower land towards the northern edge of the land parcel would suggest the need for careful surface water management planning – and this would ideally be integrated into a multifunctional green infrastructure solution that could also incorporate better public access routes, screen planting and landscape amenity areas. It would be prescient to include an appropriate level of green infrastructure within the new development here, as it would assist in mitigating visitor impacts to existing conservation assets such as Crackley Wood.

4.2.5 It is less clear whether development at this site would offer a sustainable outcome in terms of walkable access to existing facilities within the town (shops / schools / employment). If such amenities are not within walking distance, it may escalate local car use. It is not established whether the scale of development would sustain new local services. It is not yet established where the school playing fields would be relocated to.

4.2.6 **Potential development areas?** The flat land south and east of the squash and tennis club might be relatively easily developed – assuming access from the A429 had no Highways constraints. There would be an opportunity to enhance the A429 road corridor with tree planting and to enhance/enclose the setting of the adjacent industrial estate (although less so on its northern boundary). It might be appropriate to locate new public open space towards the northern edge of the development to mitigate visual impacts and provide an appropriate transition to the rural setting (refer to Figure 3.0 – Kenilworth Sites).

#### 4.3.0 **Other Landscape and Planning Issues:**

4.3.1 **Infrastructure requirements:** Further work will be required to ascertain access and transport infrastructure requirements. Crackley Lane is a relatively minor road, so road access to the site is most likely to be suitable from the A429. No assessment of utility infrastructure requirements has been undertaken. Water mains were noted adjacent the A429. Other requirements for community facilities have not been assessed. As noted, surface water management may be a key issue at this site – but this could create a green infrastructure opportunity.

4.3.2 **Cumulative impacts:** The proposed HS2 railway route is located approximately 600m north of this land parcel, although the construction land-take may come much closer. It will undoubtedly alter the landscape of the ‘Kenilworth Gap’, but it is not clear that these changes will be intervisible with the K13/K14 land parcel. Existing woodland along the Coventry Way footpath, and the fact that HS2 is proposed in cutting in this section, may prevent direct views. Footpaths may be severed by the new railway (e.g. an existing cycleway to the University), and there is likely to be wider disruption to roads and the community during construction stages.

4.3.3 No intervisibility is anticipated between this site and other development site allocations in Kenilworth – including the now permitted proposal for housing at the ‘Crackley triangle’ (which will be accessed from Common Lane or Redthorne Grove). There is unlikely to be intervisibility between this site and potential site allocations around the southern edge of Coventry, except possibly land at Cryfield Grange (SHLAA sites C28/C29).

4.3.4 **Potential Landscape and Visual Impacts:** The site is mainly open in character, with only a few notable trees near the centre of the site and along boundaries. Much of the site is relatively flat and should be straightforward to develop without significant level changes or landscape impacts.

4.3.5 Development at the site is likely to be visible from some positions to the north, including a short section of the Coventry Way (although this would be a filtered view through trees), and potentially as far away as Gibbet Hill. It would also be likely to intrude upon views north from dwellings along the A429, Coventry Road, views south-east from Crackley Farm (and adjacent footpath) and the two dwellings on Crackley Lane (although these appear to be quite well enclosed by mature vegetation. There is a group of Grade II listed buildings at Upper Ladyes Road (south-west of the site) but it is not clear that there will be intervisibility. There would be views of the northern portion of the site (K13) from Crackley Lane and the entrance to Crackley Wood. These locations are predominantly rural in character at present and development here (i.e. north of the *Spring View* dwelling) could be construed as encroachment into open countryside. No intervisibility is anticipated between this site and Kenilworth Castle or other parts of the historic environment west of the town.

#### 4.4.0 **Conclusions:**

It is considered there is potential for development of this land parcel that would ‘infill’ a corner of the existing Kenilworth town footprint without substantially reducing the important Green Belt separation between Kenilworth and Coventry.

#### Opportunities, assets, benefits:

- With appropriate design, there would be opportunities to enhance and strengthen the ‘urban/rural interface’ at this edge of the town.
- Opportunity to better integrate existing elements such as the industrial estate and tennis club and improve cycle and footpath links to existing green infrastructure.
- Opportunity to enhance the A429 road corridor with tree planting and pavements to create an attractive ‘urban avenue’.
- Opportunity to retain existing trees, some hedges and local topographic features to produce a distinctive and attractive new urban environment.

#### Constraints and Challenges:

- Ensuring that development does not overload the existing road system and other community infrastructure.
- Ensuring sufficient integration / access with the existing amenities and facilities in Kenilworth in order to minimise local car traffic.
- Providing appropriate scale of green infrastructure to ensure successful integration / transition with open countryside and to mitigate against impacts to existing green assets.
- Managing surface water issues.
- Replacement of existing playing fields.





Panoramic view over the Crackley Hall School playing fields - looking north from the A429 Coventry Road.



Panoramic view over countryside north of the site. Trees to the left are at 'Spring View' on Crackley Lane. Note Crackley Farm and Crackley Wood, centre left. The Princes Road Industrial Estate is to the right.



View looking north-east at junction of A429 and Crackley Lane. Development at the site could be prominent and will required thoughtful design.



Trees near the centre of the site.



Standing water noted east of the Tennis Club.



View looking east along Crackley Lane from Crackley Wood parking area. The industrial estate is already visible from this position but development at K13 would bring the urban area closer.



## 5. Land at Warwick Road, Kenilworth

5.1.1 This area of land south of Kenilworth has been promoted for development and was reviewed in a 2014 addendum to the Richard Morrish Associates *Considerations for Sustainable Landscape Planning* report (2012). A proposal has been made for an area of housing and a new site for Kenilworth Rugby Club (which will be relocated from Thickthorn). The 2014 review concluded as follows:

- Development as outlined in the Richborough Estates representation for land off Warwick Road would constitute a notable extension to the existing settlement footprint at Kenilworth and would significantly reduce the section of open countryside between Kenilworth and Leek Wootton. It would run contrary to other purposes of Green Belt in that it would encroach into countryside, would impact on the setting of Kenilworth and will not assist urban regeneration (although a small area of land adjacent Kenilworth Cricket Club appears to be unused paddock at present). There would be potential impacts on existing land-use in that close residential development may undermine the sustainability of the Cricket Club.
- Concept plans supporting the residential development appear to propose appropriate green infrastructure and in time there would be the potential to enclose the new housing from the south. Vegetation along the Leamington/Kenilworth rail line and Bullimore Wood substantially enclose the site from the east. Existing vegetation along Warwick Road may be possible to partly retain and the proposed road access point appears to be practicable. Further detailed survey and review would be required – but in essence, if it was accepted that a significant portion of the functional Green Belt between Kenilworth and Leek Wootton was to be sacrificed, then the concept plan submitted would appear to be appropriate pending confirmation of other infrastructure needs.
- The additional Rugby Club development proposed to the south and east of the Richborough Estates housing scheme is also considered likely to have adverse impacts on the character of the Green Belt and the setting of Kenilworth. Although it could be argued that this land-use will retain an ‘open’ landscape, likely requirements such as extensive ground modelling and terracing to achieve flat pitches, flood lighting for winter operations, as well as club buildings, parking and access arrangements will combine to ‘urbanise’ an historic rural landscape. If development of these facilities was accepted here, a range of design conditions are suggested.

### 5.2.0 **2015 Review:** (Refer Figure 4.0).

5.2.1 **General.** In 2014 as part of the Local Plan Publication Draft Consultation Richborough Estates submitted a slightly revised masterplan (RepID – 66609) for consideration by WDC, but with a similar arrangement of housing and the relocated rugby club. The 2014 plan claimed the developable housing area was around 11 Ha and could provide space for 145 dwellings at 25dph. The new plan appears to utilise a smaller proportion of the site for housing, defined by an existing hedge with trees that lies more or less opposite Wootton Grange Farm. The site is estimated to be around 4.8 hectares in size – and therefore might provide space for perhaps 50-60 dwellings at the same density.

5.2.2 A residential development at this site will ideally provide an acceptable setting and boundary arrangement adjacent the existing Kenilworth Cricket Club at the north end of the site; a mitigating setback for the railway adjacent the east boundary of the site; retention of key trees and landscape enhancement along the Warwick Road frontage; and, provision of an appropriate landscape buffer along the southern site boundary to assist integration with the Green Belt. The new proposed scheme (refer Figure 4.0) appears to allow for all of these provisions. Development as proposed is likely to be partially visible from Leek Wootton and footpaths to the south. However, by retaining the southern hedgerow and trees, the proposed housing development would be reasonably well enclosed from its inception. It is also anticipated that by not extending south beyond *Wootton Grange*, the development would be perceived to be falling within the existing settlement envelope of Kenilworth.

5.2.3 In the new layout, the proposed rugby club has been rearranged to place the clubhouse (and presumably therefore the main first team pitches, which are likely to be floodlit) on the land to the east of the railway line. Previously the clubhouse was located to the west of the railway line and to the south of the housing. This new arrangement may have some benefits in terms of reducing visual impact (pending submission of a detailed layout determining all construction details). The new layout indicates three rugby pitches immediately south of the housing and a new shelterbelt to define the southern edge of the pitches. It is assumed these pitches will not be floodlit (and this would be preferable). As identified in 2014, a principal concern with the rugby club on this site would appear to be the existing gradient across parts of the site – which will necessitate cut and fill to create level pitch areas. In landscape terms, this can be problematic for existing landscape components, e.g. trees and hedges, where significant changes of level are unlikely to be compatible with their sustainable retention. The proposed access from Warwick Road could also be problematic in this respect, as it would cut through an existing roadside bank with mature trees. Allowing for contouring to allow for highway sight-lines, this could result in more tree removals and adverse impact on the character of the Warwick Road and this site boundary. It may therefore be less intrusive to have the club access along the northern edge of the pitches. Fitting in all the proposed pitches to the east of the railway line (including junior pitches) may also be problematic, as this part of the site has steeper topography, is likely to need cut and fill, and lies adjacent woodland and mature trees around several pits.

### **5.3.0 Conclusions:**

5.3.1 The present gap between Kenilworth and Leek Wootton is around 1200m and the proposed development including the rugby club would reduce this by approximately 400m (where the housing component is around 250m wide). With retention of existing mature vegetation within and around the site and the establishment of a meaningful shelterbelt along the new southern boundary of the rugby club, this shrinkage of the Green Belt could be acceptable in landscape terms. A mixed native woodland shelterbelt 20–30m wide is recommended as a minimum landscape requirement along the southern rugby club boundary. There might be advantages from creating public access through it for the benefit of new and existing residents. It is recommended that the remaining land to the south is safeguarded for agricultural use.

5.3.2 The size of housing development would be unlikely to support new local amenities and is some distance from the existing town centre. However, it could provide some new green infrastructure at the edge of Kenilworth which would help to mitigate and integrate the new housing in the wider setting. Providing the Rugby Club with a new site would also relocate an important community facility – but a detailed design scheme is required before the environmental impacts of such a proposal can be fully ascertained. As concluded in 2014, if allocation of this site was approved, some strict planning conditions would be appropriate to ensure the best landscape outcome. These should include conditions controlling tree and hedge preservation during construction, design requirements on new green infrastructure and ongoing management and maintenance assurances.





- 1 Vehicular access serving residential development.
- 2 Crescent retaining existing tree
- 3 New streets positioned to overlook existing cricket ground with frontages
- 4 Views towards St John's Church retained.
- 5 Sustainable Urban Drainage
- 6 Retention of existing hedgerows and field patterns.
- 7 New Rugby Club in accordance with AJA Architects drawing 4928-8
- 8 Vehicular access serving Rugby club.
- 9 New tree planting and landscape
- 10 Woodland planting to continue existing woodland areas.
- 11 Existing bridge utilised

#### KEY

- Residential development
- Proposed rugby club pitches
- Proposed rugby club house
- Public open space
- Rugby club access
- Residential primary roads
- Residential secondary roads
- Views to focal point feature (St John's Church)
- Housing frontages

Some concerns about landscape impacts due to likely terracing arrangements for pitches.

Care required in planning access. May be less intrusive to come round top edge of pitches.

Recommend generous shelterbelt here and retention of farmland to the south of it.

As the valley bottom is lower lying, screen planting here may be less effective in views from south.

### Warwick Road, Kenilworth - Proposed Indicative Masterplan

This drawing is subject to detailed design and survey. Site areas and quantum are indicative.

Pegasus  
Urban Design



Two photographs from the 2014 review of this site. One indicates the wooded bank adjacent the Warwick Road, which will ideally be safeguarded from new access arrangements. The other indicates potential intervisibility with the site from the A46.



Warwick District Urban Expansion Options  
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Figure 4.0 Land at Warwick Rd, Kenilworth