

Strategic Level Context and Analysis

Introduction

Desktop analysis has been undertaken at a strategic level, presenting Kenilworth in context with the surrounding area - as far as Coventry in the north, Solihull in the west, Leamington Spa in the south and Ryton-on-Dunsmore in the east.

Settlements do not exist in isolation from each other. A strategic level of analysis enables a greater level of understanding of how Kenilworth operates in relation to its neighbouring towns and cities.



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Strategic Location

Figure 1 maps the geographic location of Kenilworth in relation to neighbouring administrative authorities of Solihull, Stratford-on-Avon, Rugby and Coventry.

Since the railway arrived in Kenilworth in 1844, Kenilworth has been a commuter town to larger towns and cities that surround it. Many residents of Kenilworth commute to Coventry, Warwick, Birmingham and Leamington Spa.

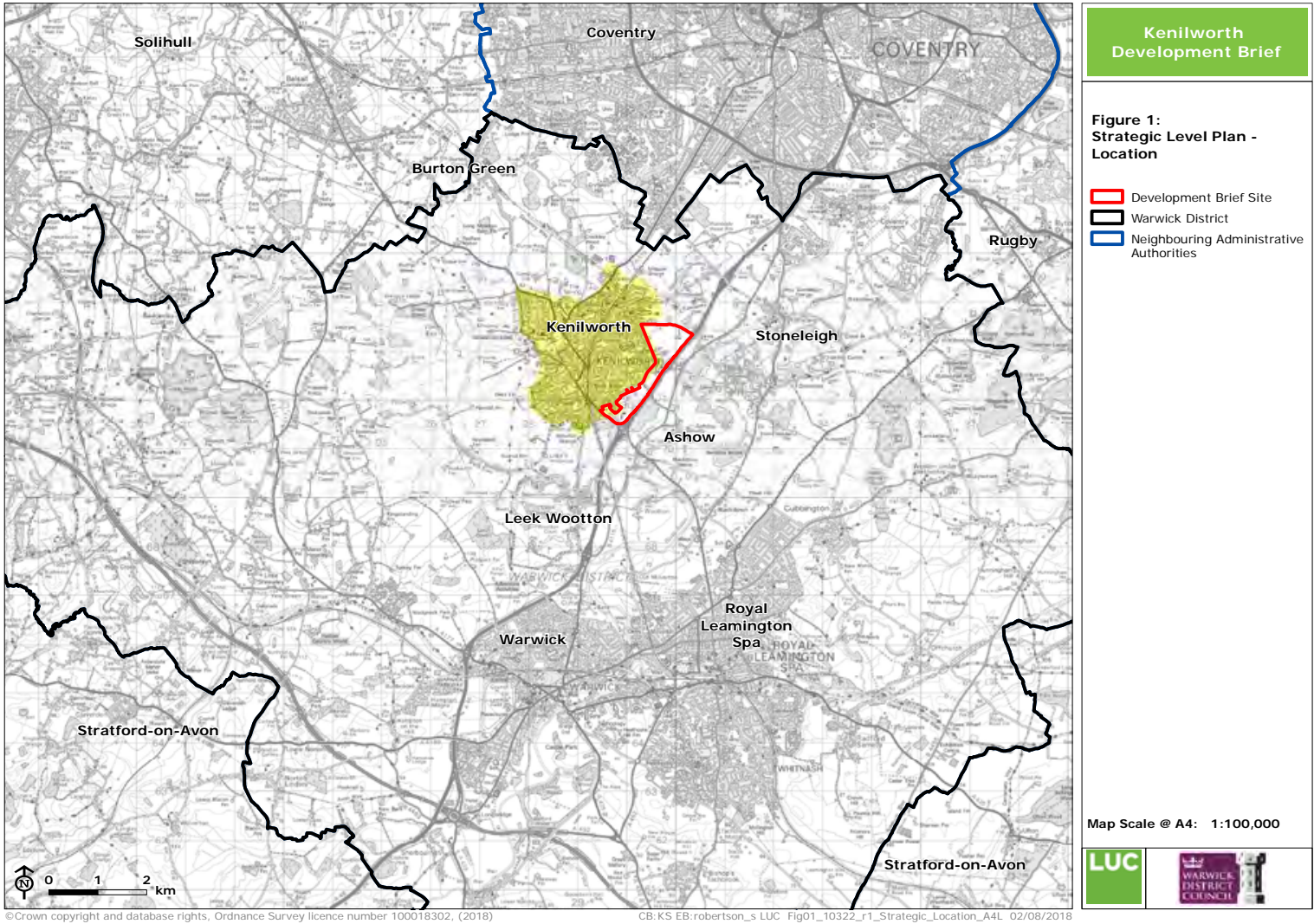


Figure 1 - Strategic Location

Destinations and Key Attractions

There are a number of key facilities and destinations dispersed across the area with a high concentration within the surrounding areas of Coventry and Royal Leamington Spa and towards Solihull.

Four key destinations are located within close proximity to Kenilworth. These are Kenilworth Castle, The University of Warwick, Crackley Woods Nature Reserve and Stoneleigh Abbey. It will therefore be important that the future housing sites are able to include transport infrastructure (particularly walking, cycling and public transport) that facilitate access to these destinations. Furthermore future housing and development sites should not impact on the setting of these key destinations, or the visitor experience provided by the places.

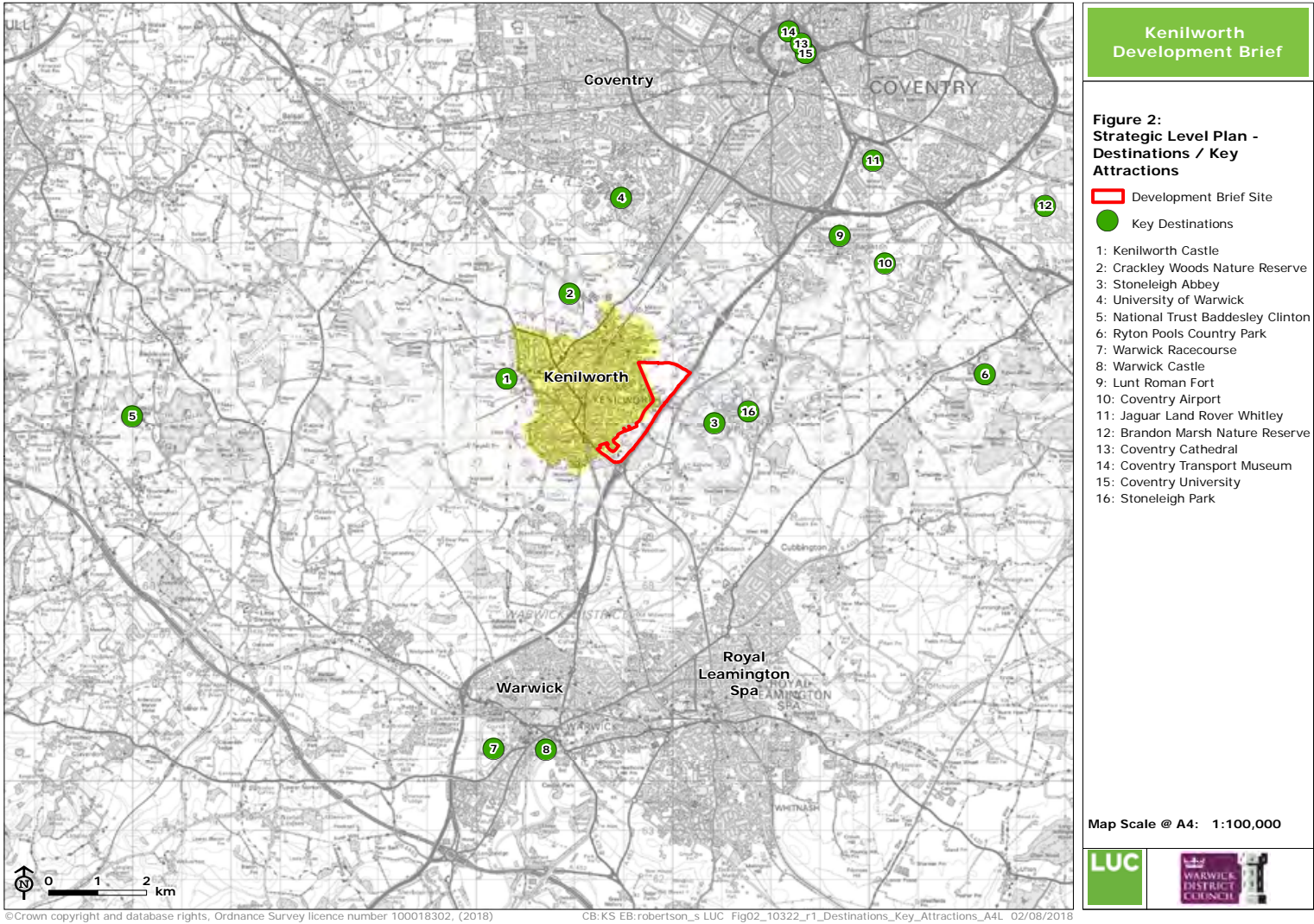


Figure 2 - Key Destinations and Attractions

Agricultural Land Classification and Existing Woodland

Agricultural land is classified into five categories according to its suitability to grow crops, where 1 is the best and most versatile and 5 is the worst. The majority of land to the west of Kenilworth and the surrounding areas are graded 3 with a couple of exceptions around the west and south of Coventry, the south of Warwick and the east and north of Royal Leamington Spa which are graded 2. There are pockets of grade 2 agricultural land to the north west, north, north east and south east of Kenilworth.

There are also woodland areas dispersed across the site including ancient woodland within and immediately adjacent to the site.

The Development Brief Site is located on agricultural land that is classified as grade 2 and 3. Therefore as a result of the proposed development at this site there would be a loss of very good and good to moderate quality agricultural land. National Planning Policy Chapter 11 Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment, paragraph 112 states that local authorities should seek to use poorer quality agricultural land for development in preference to higher quality land. It should be noted that the loss of agricultural land to housing within the Development Brief Site has been deemed acceptable by the planning inspector responsible for approving the Local Plan and subsequent housing allocation within in. Furthermore whilst grade 2 agricultural land will be lost a significant amount of grade 2 land will remain around Kenilworth.

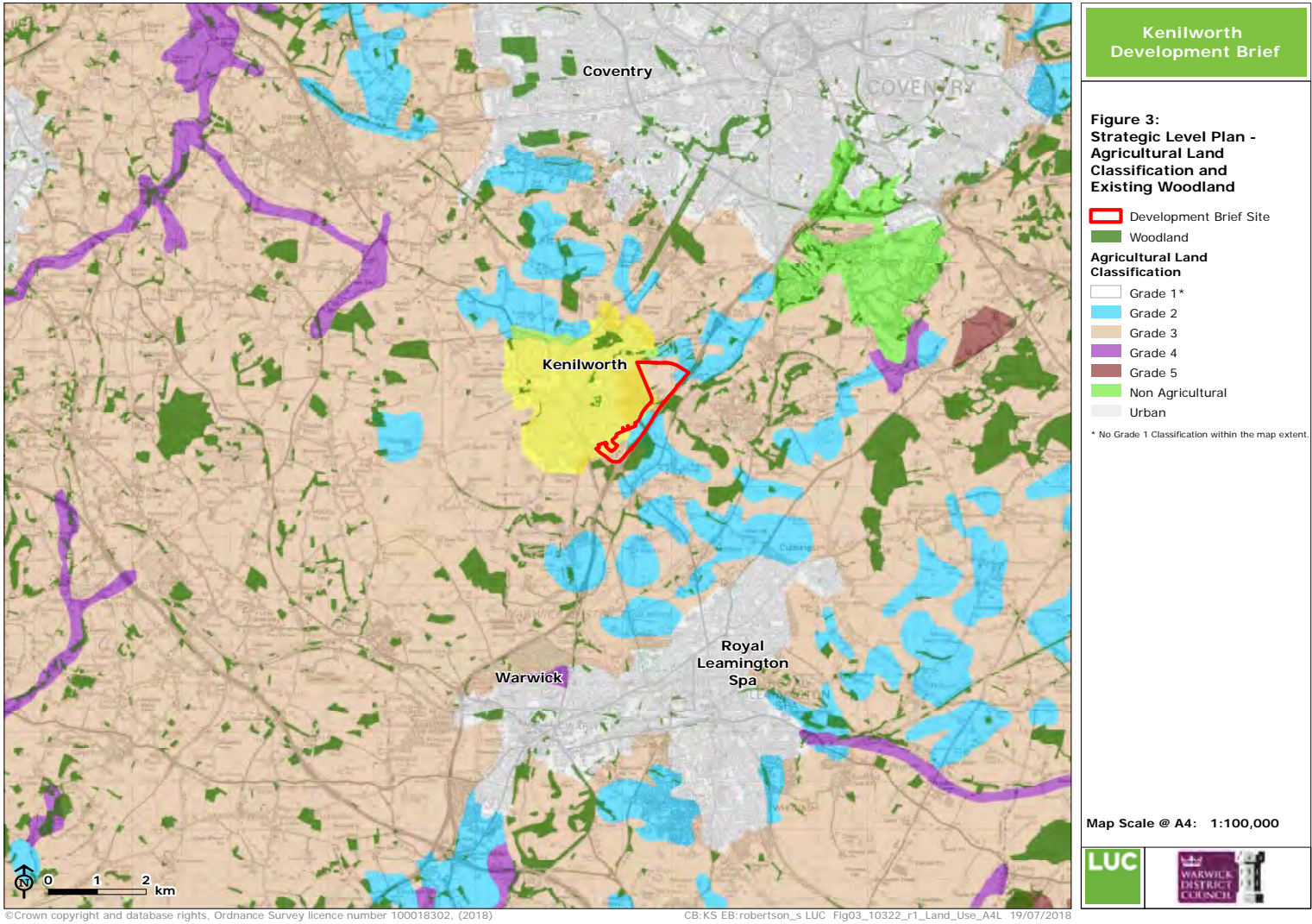


Figure 3 - Agricultural Land Classification and Existing Woodland

Movement and Connectivity

Kenilworth is surrounded by a strategic road network joining it to surrounding settlements of Coventry and Royal Leamington Spa. These include the A46 which lies immediately adjacent to the south east of the Development Brief Site and connect Coventry to Warwick and Leamington Spa. This also connects Kenilworth to the M40 via Warwick. The A452 connects Kenilworth to the M42 motorway, Leamington Spa and Solihull, and the A429 provides an alternative route connecting Kenilworth and Coventry. The M40 and the M6 are located within close proximity of Kenilworth and a railway network connecting Coventry and Royal Leamington Spa passes through the town, making it popular with commuters. This also connects Kenilworth to the national rail network as well as neighbouring towns.

National Cycle Route 52 which connects Coventry to Warwick runs through the University of Warwick and then Kenilworth before heading south towards Warwick via Rounds Hill. This route should be upgraded where necessary to provide improved cycle connectivity between Kenilworth and the University. Furthermore housing allocation sites should seek to connect into this route wherever possible to allow for improved cycle connectivity to the university and other settlements.

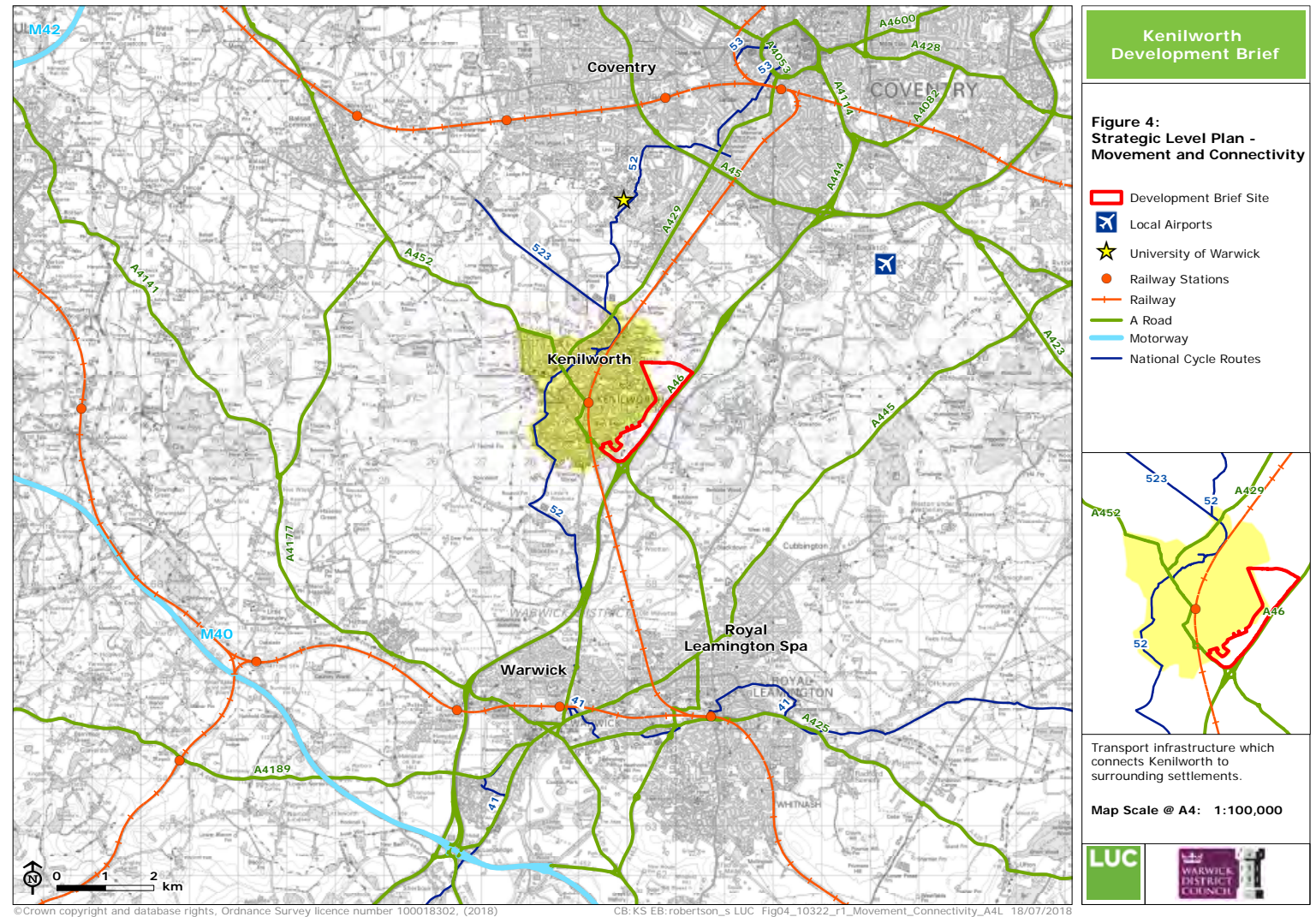


Figure 4 - Movement and Connectivity

Green and Blue Infrastructure

Kenilworth is surrounded by Green Belt, established in the 1950s to maintain the openness of rural areas between Coventry and Kenilworth as well as preventing coalescence with neighbouring settlements. Ancient Woodland is prevalent, with larger woodland blocks concentrated to the east of Kenilworth. Recreational green spaces are dotted throughout urban areas and the wider countryside. Local Nature Reserves tend to be located within urban areas.

The River Avon flows to the east of Kenilworth and continues through Stratford. The Stratford Canal waterways are situated within the Henley-in-Arden area in the west.

As a result Ancient Woodland within the Development Brief Site it will be necessary for future development to minimise any impact on designated areas of woodland. The site is also adjacent to Green Belt (albeit separated from it by the A46) and therefore the layout and design of future housing should allow for a gradual transition between town and country in order to integrate the development into the wider landscape as well as minimise any visual impact of the development.

For further information concerning Green Infrastructure please refer to Figure 13: Settlement Level Plan - Green Infrastructure.

For information concerning connectivity please refer to figure 8a: Settlement Level Plan - Existing Vehicular Transport Connectivity and figure 8b: Settlement Level Plan - Non-Motorised Transport Connectivity.

For information concerning flood risk refer to figure 11: Settlement Level Plan - Flood Risk and for information concerning biodiversity refer to figure 12: Settlement Level Plan - Biodiversity.

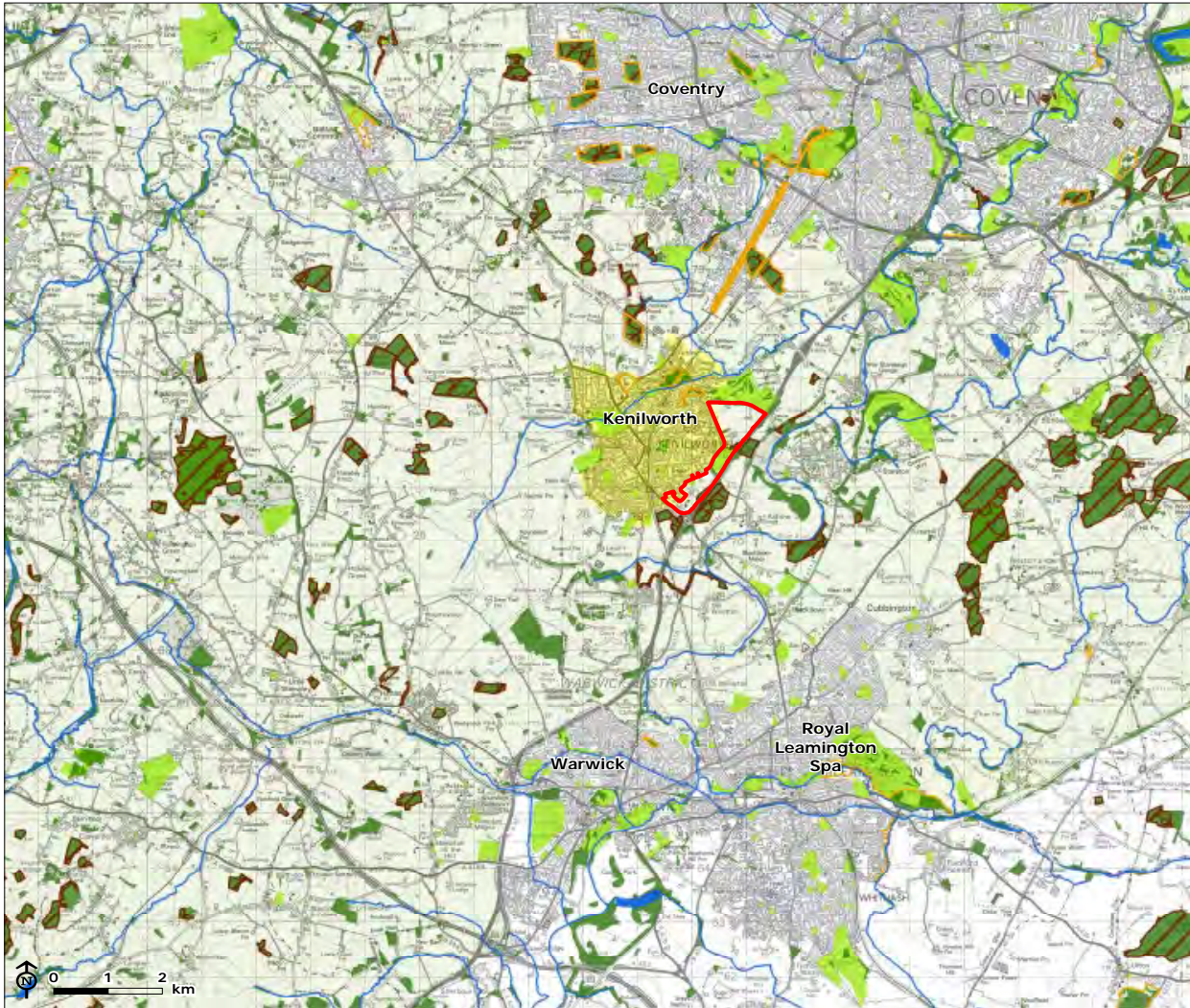


Figure 5 - Green and Blue Infrastructure

Landscape Character Areas

Kenilworth lies within the National Character Area (NCA) 97: Arden with NCA 96: Dunsmore and Feldon area to the east.

Kenilworth and the Development Brief Site lie entirely within the Arden Regional Landscape Character Area. This is an historic region for former wood pasture and heath characterised by dispersed settlement pattern, ancient woodland and mature hedgerow oak trees. Arden is characterised by a wide range of historical and ecological features which create a landscape of intimacy and a strong sense of place.

Relevant development guidelines associated with the Arden Landscape Character Area include:

- Conserve all sites of archaeological and historical importance
- Conserve the character of rural settlements by retaining existing features
- Soften hard built edges through increased tree planting within and around new development
- Protect and conserve the irregular pattern and characteristic features of roads and lanes
- Conserve ancient woodland sites
- Conserve the built character of Arden by ensuring that new development reflects the vernacular style of which brick and timber are the dominant building materials.

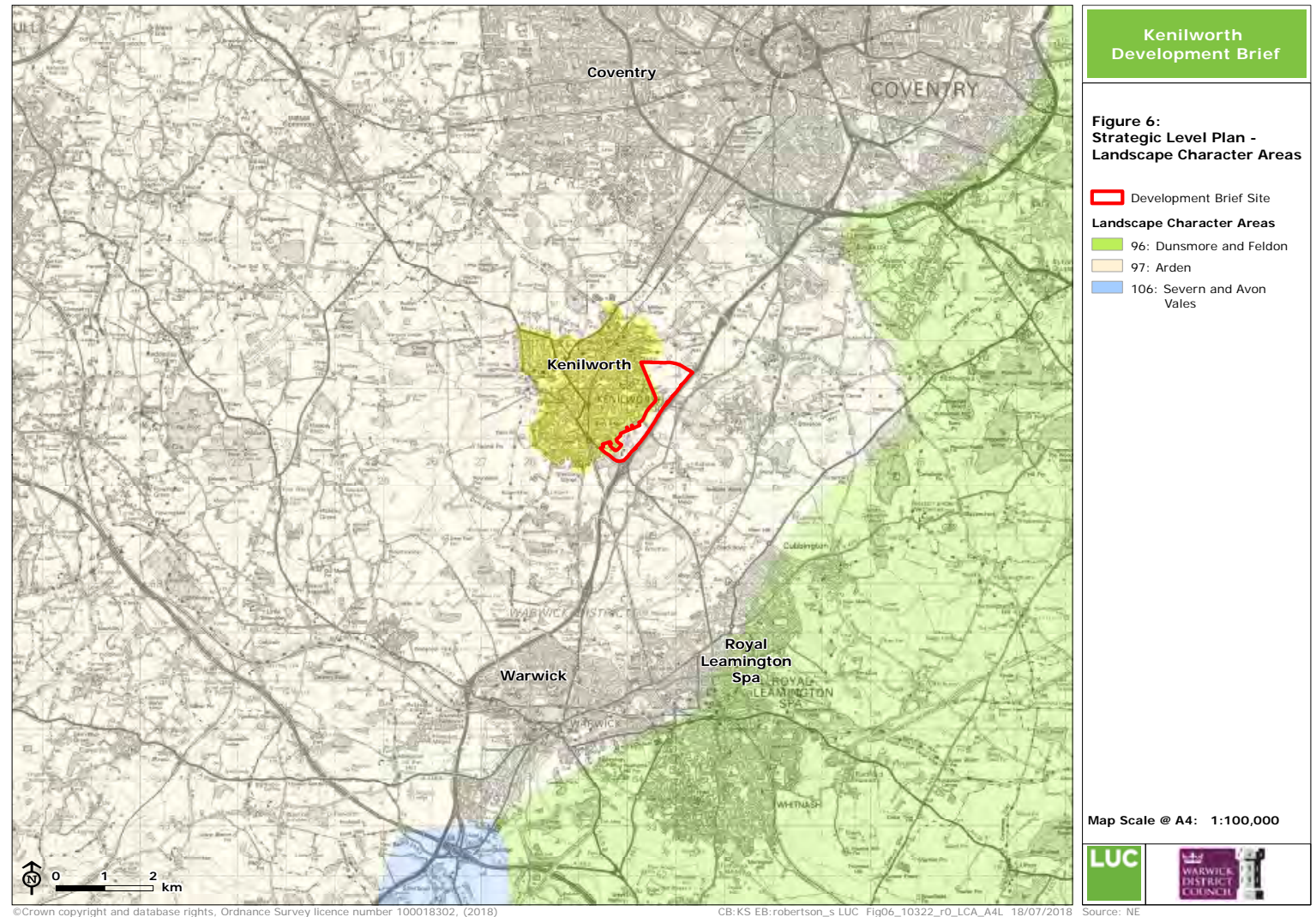


Figure 6 - Landscape Character Areas

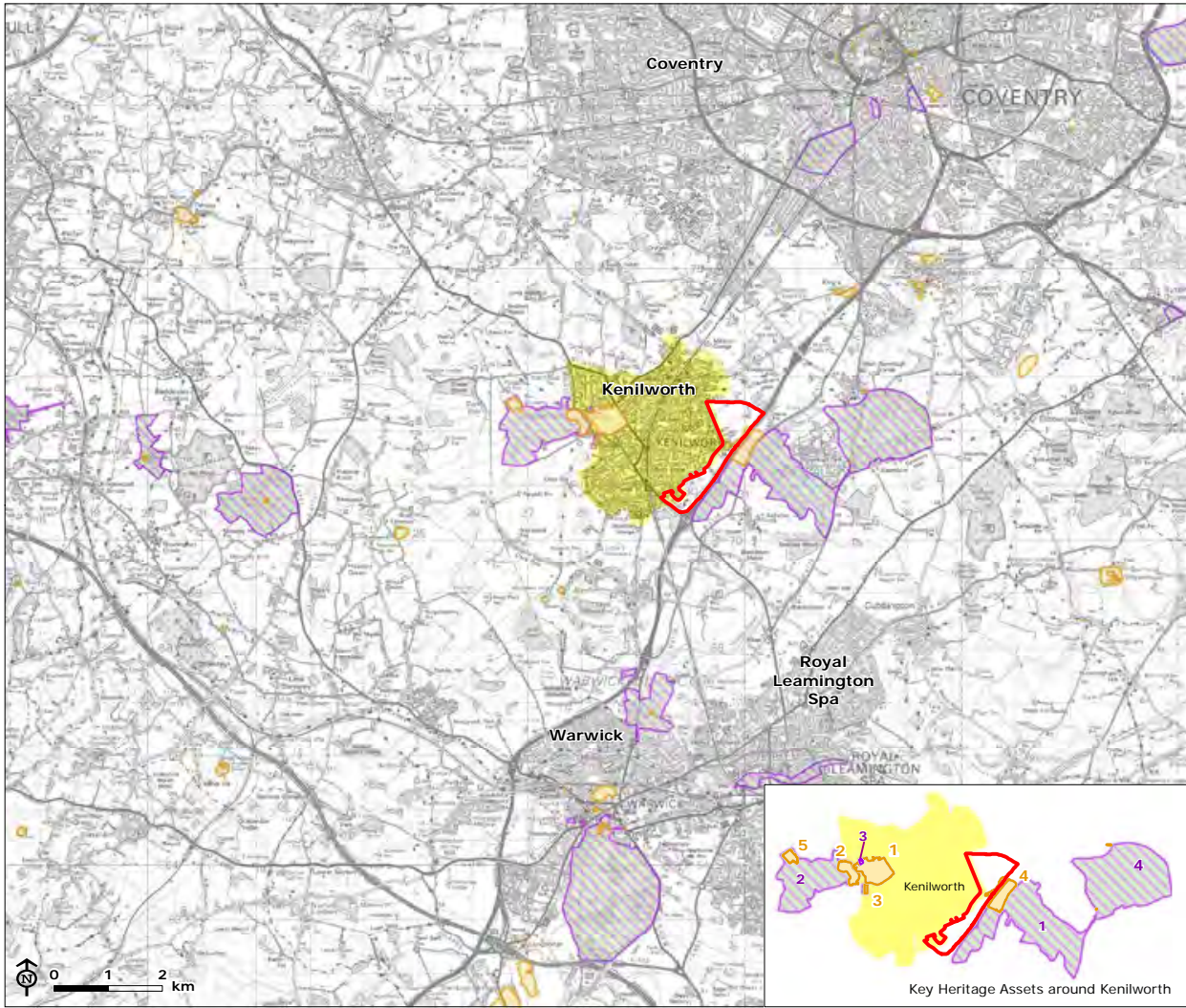
Heritage Assets

There are Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAMs) located across the wider settlement area and several large scale Registered Parks and Gardens.

Key Registered Parks and Gardens include Warwick Castle Park in Warwick, Abbey Fields in Kenilworth; the Stoneleigh Deer Park, east of Kenilworth and Coombe Abbey Country Park to the east of Coventry.

The roman settlement at Glasshouse Wood (SAM) lies immediately to the east of the Development Brief Site and the north western edge of the SAM lies within the northern part of the Development Brief Site. As a result it will be necessary to minimise the impact on the setting of the historic site. Stoneleigh Abbey and Country Park lie to the east of the Development Brief Site. Again it will be necessary to minimise the impact on the setting of this historic asset.

Please note that listed buildings are identified in Figure 15: Settlement Level Plan - Heritage Assets.



Kenilworth Development Brief

**Figure 7:
Strategic Level Plan -
Heritage Assets**

Development Brief Site

Scheduled Monuments

Registered Parks and Gardens

1. Kenilworth Abbey

2. Kenilworth Castle

3. Fishpond complex - 260m east of Castle Farm

4. Roman settlement at Glasshouse Wood

5. The Pleasance moated site

1. Stoneleigh Abbey & Country Park

2. Kenilworth Castle

3. Garden at 1 Castle Hill (formerly Wantage)

4. Stoneleigh Abbey Deer Park

Map Scale @ A4: 1:109,925

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Figure 7 - Heritage Assets



View from Leamington Road towards St. Johns Church