

LAND AT FOXLYDIATE LANE,  
WEBHEATH, REDDITCH

**Landscape & Visual Appraisal**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. Aspect Landscape Planning have been instructed by Heyford Developments to provide a landscape and visual appraisal in respect of land to the northwest of Redditch in terms of its suitability for development. The client has control of land at Foxlydiat Lane, Webheath, Redditch, hereby referred to as the Subject Site, which measures in the region of 40ha. The subject site is part of a wider parcel of land that was considered in a Special Consultation on Redditch Expansion (February 2010), identifying three potential Growth Options for Redditch (refer Appendix 1).
- 1.2. By way of background, a Joint Study into the Future Growth Implications of Redditch was carried out in December 2007 by White Young Green, commissioned by Worcestershire County Council in conjunction Redditch Borough and Bromsgrove District Councils. This was a strategic assessment of the implications for potential future growth to 2026 and, whilst useful at a strategic level, does not provide an in-depth look at site specific constraints and is a rather cursory review of growth opportunities.
- 1.3. The purpose of this report is to appraise the subject site against two of the three strategic sites identified in the Growth Options paper, at 'Foxlydiat/Webheath' and 'West of the A441'. The option to the East of the A441 is considered too detached from the subject site to offer a useful comparison. The report presents the opportunities and constraints of the subject site to assist decision-making through the emerging Local Plans for Bromsgrove and Redditch. This should be weighed in the balance with other planning considerations to determine the suitability of strategic sites for development.
- 1.4. In order to assess the capacity for new development, the report seeks to analyse the landscape character and visual environment of the local area, define the sensitivity of the receiving landscape and assess the ability of the growth options and particularly the subject site to accommodate an urban extension to Redditch. A number of plans and photographs have been prepared to illustrate the character and visual

environment of the subject site and the wider option areas and these accompany this report.

## 2. POLICY BACKGROUND

- 2.1. The strategic growth options and the subject site are located within Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) and therefore are covered by the BDC Adopted Local Plan (2004). The subject site is designated as Green Belt, as are the other growth options, although a Landscape Protection Area under Policy C1 of BDC covers a large proportion of land to the west of A441. Refer to Aspect Plan ASP1. The Redditch Borough Council (RBC) administrative area lies directly adjacent to the strategic sites and is covered by the Local Plan No.3, adopted in May 2006. Further work has been carried out on the emerging Local Plan No.4, and this is supported by an evidence base.

### **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (March 2012)**

- 2.2. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) has replaced the old system of national planning policy guidance and statements. The document sets out the Government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. This document is a material consideration when preparing Development Plans and also in the determination of planning applications, especially where a Development Plan is out-of-date.
- 2.3. The guidance sets out a number of core land-use planning principles in paragraph 17, which underpin both plan-making and decision-taking. The core principles embrace good design and protect character, stating that planning should;

***“take account of the different roles and character of different areas, promoting the vitality of our main urban areas, protecting the Green Belts around them, recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside and supporting thriving rural communities within it”***

**Bromsgrove District Local Plan (adopted 2004)**

- 2.4. Within the Local Plan, the following saved policies are considered to be of particular relevance to the subject site and its setting in terms of landscape character: Policy DS1 Green Belt Designation; Policy DS2 Green Belt Development Criteria; Policy DS8 Areas of Development Restraint; Policy DS10 Environmental Assessment; Policy DS13 Sustainable Development; Policy C1 Landscape Protection Areas; Policy C17 Retention of Existing Trees; and Policy C18 Retention of Woodland.

**Bromsgrove District Council Local Development Framework - Draft Core Strategy 2 (2011)**

- 2.5. This document, produced by the District Council, remains at a draft stage and is a basis for consultation on the next stage of preparing Bromsgrove's Local Plan. It is a revised document that has been updated following consultation on the first draft.

***Special Consultation on Redditch Expansion (February 2010)***

- 2.6. This document forms part of the Core Strategy consultation for both boroughs; coming out of the West Midlands' Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) inquiry in 2009. Following the RSS recommendations, 7,000 dwellings and land for employment were deemed required to meet Redditch's needs. These needs included around 4,000 dwellings within Redditch and around 3,000 within Bromsgrove's area (within the Green Belt adjacent to Redditch's boundary). These figures give an indication of the scope and scale of the new development that was being considered by the Council at that time. While opportunities in RBC were considered in this paper, the options for BDC included 3 areas; Foxlydiate/Webheath, West of the A441 and East of the A441. The benefits and constraints were outlined for each option and in summary comprised:

Option Foxlydiate/ Webheath (spanning A448 - Bromsgrove Highway)

- Further from Redditch town centre and employment opportunities than the other two options, but would still have good road accessibility.
- Opportunity to provide a mix of housing, employment, shops, schools and other essential services, integrating with other development areas in Redditch (Green Belt Development Parcel).
- No obvious boundary to potential development.
- Development would reduce the gap with Bromsgrove.
- Only limited views from publicly accessible areas for part of the site.

Option West of A441 (Birmingham Road)

- Strong links with the Brockhill Area of Development Restraint and a small area of Green Belt situated within Redditch's boundary.
- The site is located in close proximity to the town centre.
- Development could include housing, new employment, schools, shops and other essential services, as well as providing enhanced transport links into the town centre.
- Proposed development should respect local topography and ensure that the natural environment is protected, including Brockhill Wood.
- Opportunity to develop a network of green corridors and open spaces within any new development.
- No obvious boundary for development, although development could be partially "contained" by natural features.

- 2.7. In response to this information on the strategic sites around Redditch, further information has been gathered and analysed to demonstrate the landscape and visual implications of developing all or part of these options. To assist in this process, the two Growth Options relevant to the assessment have been broken down into study areas A to D (refer to Aspect Plan ASP1). This assessment is provided in the next section.

**Landscape Character Assessment**

- 2.8. A landscape assessment of the local area has been carried out which seeks to identify broadly homogenous zones that can be categorised in



terms of quality and character. This is necessary in order to assess the potential impact that change will have on a particular landscape. The Countryside Agency produced a country-wide landscape character assessment resulting in the published Character Map of England.

- 2.9. Within the Countryside Agency Character Map of England document, the site lies within the Severn and Avon Vales Character Area (NCA 106).
- 2.10. At a county level, Worcestershire County Council has prepared a supplementary guidance "Landscape Character Assessment" (October 2011). Within this study, the regional character areas within the county of Worcestershire have been divided into 'Landscape Types', each with their own characteristics.
- 2.11. Regional character areas: the area to the northwest of Redditch sits on the boundary between two character areas: Arden and Mid-Worcestershire Forests.
- 2.12. In terms of Landscape Types, the 'West of the A441' option and the western part of the 'Foxlydiate/Webheath' option (Area B) lies within the 'Wooded Estatelands' landscape type. The characteristics are as follows:

**Primary**

- *Large discrete blocks of irregularly shaped woodland;*
- *Mixed farming land use;*

**Secondary**

- *Rolling topography with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpments;*
- *Semi-regular pattern of large, hedged fields;*
- *Woodland of ancient character;*
- *Discrete settlement clusters often in the form of small estate villages;*
- *Medium distance framed views;*
- *Large country houses set in parkland and ornamental grounds;*

- 2.13. The subject site along with Area A of the 'Foxlydiate/Webheath' option that lies to the west of the A448 is located within the 'Principal Timbered Farmlands' landscape type. The characteristics are as follows:

**Primary**

- *Notable pattern of hedgerow trees, predominantly oak;*
- *Hedgerow boundaries to fields;*
- *Ancient wooded character;*

**Secondary**

- *Organic enclosure pattern;*
- *Small-scale landscape with hedgerow trees creating filtered views;*
- *Brick and timber building style of older properties;*
- *Rolling lowland with occasional steep-sided hills and low escarpments;*

**Tertiary**

- *Mixed farming land use;*
- *Dispersed settlement pattern;*

- 2.14. In terms of landscape character, the descriptions are useful in a broad context to outline the main characteristics of an area. The next section deals with site specific character in more detail, with a view to considering the capacity of the landscape to accommodate development.

### 3. APPRAISAL OF POTENTIAL GROWTH OPTION SITES

#### **Foxlydiat/Webheath (Area B/Area A - including the Subject Site)**

3.1. This area spans the A448 dual carriageway which links Redditch to Bromsgrove and lies to the northwest of the town. The large residential area of Webheath lies to the southeast and the smaller area of Foxlydiat is located on the B4096 close to the main road junction with A448. For ease of reference, this area is divided into two parcels, Area A to the south west of the A448 and Area B to the north east. Photographs have been taken to illustrate each area and these are shown on ASP5.

#### Landscape Character

3.2. Area A of the 'Foxlydiat/Webheath' option is located within the 'Principal Timbered Farmlands' landscape type, whilst that to the north east (Area B) is categorised as 'Wooded Estatelands'. Primary characteristics of both landscape types refer to their woodland character and, although the option site is devoid of such woodland blocks, they are present in the surrounding landscape. Area A is somewhat disconnected from the broad character of the area, with the area to the north of the bridleway comprising large fields in agricultural use, with limited hedgerow boundaries to fields, and extensive arable cultivation.

3.3. The subject site forms the southern half of Area A and contains a smaller pattern of fields, hedgerow trees and a copse formed around a former clay pit (Hawthorn Pit). This is a mixed, largely pastoral landscape that contains Springhill Farm; a brick and timber building style in keeping with local vernacular. A number of overhead cables traverse the site and the presence of the A448 is visually apparent from the bridleway. The landscape quality is relatively intact in the vicinity of the subject site, although, due to extensive farming, it is generally of low/moderate quality. Analysis of Area A is illustrated on ASP3.

3.4. In Area B, the landscape is noticeably more intimate, with rolling topography and the visible presence of the Registered Park & Garden of

Hewell Grange to the north and Brockhill Wood to the east. This area does display characteristics of the landscape type; a semi-regular pattern of large, hedged fields, parkland associated with large country houses and medium distance framed views. The urban edge of Redditch has been recently extended at Birchensale and has been well integrated with new linear parks providing good access to the countryside. The small scale landscape creates a more diverse structure, with some views in and out of the area, and the presence of large woodlands which contribute to the physical enclosure of this area. Batchley Brook runs through the small valley fed from Hewell Park lake to the north, and passing through the Paper Mill Cottages within the option area. The quality of the landscape is considered moderate/ high, as its distinctive character is clearly apparent and should be retained and enhanced.

#### Topography

- 3.5. The A448 runs along a localised ridgeline which peaks at 154AOD around Tack Farm. From the A448, Area A slopes gently to the southwest to Cur Lane, where several springs and brooks converge within the shallow valley. The copse around Hawthorne Pit is located on a small hillock which provides some variation in the gradient. To the east of the A448 (Area B), the contours form a steeper slope down to Batchley Brook, creating a rolling landscape with a series of mounds and hillocks, combined with small scale fields and hedgerows. Refer to ASP2 for illustration.

#### Visual environment

- 3.6. The Growth Option area is located on the northwest edge of Redditch and is contained by rising topography to the west and north, limiting views from the wider landscape. Beyond Cur Lane to the west, the Monarch's Way national trail has restricted views available of the western edge of the subject site, and wider views are limited due to topography and vegetation. Cur Lane is winding and enclosed by hedgerows and trees that limit views into Area A, except at the junction

with Gypsy Lane where views extend east towards the existing urban edge (refer to ASP5).

- 3.7. In Area B to the north east of the A448, the rolling landscape provides more open, middle distance views of the countryside and urban edge. A public footpath runs through this area linking Hewell Lane in the west with Brockhill Drive to the east, allowing public access to this area and views of the local landscape. Large blocks of woodland enclose views to the northern extent of the option area, and the presence of Hewell Grange is apparent in views looking north.

#### Landscape Sensitivity

- 3.8. In terms of the sensitivity of the landscape character, there is a noticeable difference in the quality of the landscape resource from east to west. The northern part of Area A is a large scale agricultural landscape with relatively limited visual receptors and the landscape character is clearly disturbed and in need of restoration. The subject site is a more managed character and smaller scale, with remnant field boundaries and copses retained. Area A is considered to be of low to medium sensitivity.
- 3.9. The more discrete rolling topography and parkland character of Area B to the east is notably more diverse, with the existence of Hewell Grange to the north and Brockhill Wood to the east. This area has a good strength of character, displaying characteristics of the landscape type, and therefore would have a moderate/ high sensitivity to change.

#### **West of the A441 (Area C/Area D)**

- 3.10. This parcel of land lies to the west of the A441 and broadly up to and including Brockhill Wood to the west. Area C is covered by the Landscape Protection Area designation in the BDC Local Plan. Within RBC there is an area of land to the edge of Redditch which is an Area of Development Restraint (ADR), and a Green Belt development parcel. The Growth Option area covers an area of former clays works which has resulted in a number of pits and exposed hillsides creating a varied

and intimate landscape, largely undeveloped and containing the woodlands of Brockhill Wood and Butler's Hill Wood. Area D lies to the east of the railway line. Photographs have been taken to illustrate each area and these are shown on ASP6.

#### Landscape Character

- 3.11. Area C, in terms of landscape character, is an extension of that found in Area B to the east of the A448, where the topography is well defined by local valleys and slopes. The steep sided Butler's Hill, facing northeast, has long distance views over Weights Farm and the railway to the east. Beyond the railway line the landscape becomes gently undulating and larger scale, broken up by the A441 and the ribbon development of Bordesley. There are large isolated blocks of woodland that contain views from the north and west and provide strong, distinct, landscape features. A single large copse is situated between the two large woodland blocks; this breaks up views to the urban edge from Butlers Hill looking south. This area displays the characteristics of the landscape type. The railway line forms a division within the option area; with the large development of Weights Farm within the valley, generally industrial works in the form of large scale buildings and sheds, detracting from the rolling landscape.
- 3.12. Area D to the east of the railway line is a gently sloping valley side ascending to Bordesley, containing the River Arrow. The quality of the landscape resource for both Area's C and D is considered moderate.

#### Topography

- 3.13. The area varies in topography from east to west in a similar way to Foxlydiat/Webheath. The area between Brockhill Wood and Butler's Hill Wood is steeply undulating around the ridgeline, which is highly prominent in views from the east. From a high point of 156AOD the land descends south towards the existing urban edge and localised valleys and outcrops create a more diverse landscape (refer to plan ASP2). To the northeast of the ridgeline in Area D a slope gradually descends to the River Arrow in the east of the option area, through which the railway line runs.

### Visual environment

- 3.14. From Weights Lane, on the ridgeline that runs through this option area, open views are available looking north and east, with views back to the area from Bordesley. Likewise, the bridleway from Weights Lane offers views south towards the urban edge that is characterised by the new development at Birchensale (see photograph G on ASP6). Butler's Hill Wood forms an effective break in views from the wider landscape to the north. Likewise, Brockhill Wood to the south is an enclosing feature from views further to the west. Brockhill Lane lies at the western end of the area on the edge of Brockhill Wood and only limited glimpsed views are available into the fields to the north.

### Landscape Sensitivity

- 3.15. The key landscape features are the woodlands to the north and south and the exposed ridgeline which divides the site into distinct areas. In Area C, the landscape is noticeably more intimate and secluded, with rolling topography and a steep-sided ridgeline. Field patterns are irregular and two large ponds are located near Brockhill Farm to the west of the area, which represent attractive features of wildlife value. In the light of the above and having regard to its inclusion within the Landscape Protection Area designation and the quality of the landscape resource, it is considered that Area C is of moderate/high sensitivity.
- 3.16. In Area D, the landscape is a simple, isolated valley, detached from the existing urban edge and forming a green finger along the course of the River Arrow, disconnecting Bordesley. This area is considered to be of moderate sensitivity.

### Summary

- 3.17. To conclude, the appraisal considers the two Growth Options to the northwest of Redditch identified put forward by the Council (excluding East of the A441). There is variety in the landscape character, topography, visual environment and landscape sensitivity between

different parts of the option areas. The summary table (Table 1) should be referred to for each area.

- 3.18. Area A of the Foxlydiate/ Webheath option is locally contained by landform and vegetation and consists of a medium to large scale mixed landscape of low/medium sensitivity. There are some high sensitivity visual receptors such as users of Monarch's Way and Springhill Farm and, combined with the quality of the landscape resource, the capacity for new development is considered medium/ high, having regard to the sensitivity of views from the east.
- 3.19. Area B comprises rolling topography and parkland character and is physically constrained by topography and frequent landscape features. There are some sensitive visual receptors and a moderate/ high landscape quality, therefore, the capacity to accommodate development is low/ medium.
- 3.20. The option West of the A441 is located on a prominent ridgeline of Butler's Hill, constrained by large woodland blocks and diverse landform in Area C, and a simple valley landscape in Area D. Due to its attractive qualities and frequency of landscape features, as well as the presence of the Landscape Protection Area designation, Area C is considered of moderate/high overall sensitivity and of low/ medium capacity for development. This is supported in the Growth Options paper where it was acknowledged that proposed development in this area should respect local topography and ensure that the natural environment is protected. Area D is detached from the existing urban edge and forms a strategic gap to Bordesley, thereby it has a medium capacity for development.



**Table 1: Summary of landscape and visual constraints**

Category:	Foxydiate/Webheath			West of the A441	Area D
	Area A (inc. subject site)	Area B	Area C		
Landscape Designations	Green Belt	Green Belt Registered Park & Garden (Hewell Grange)	Green Belt Landscape Protection Area	Green Belt	
Landscape Character Area	Principal Timbered Farmlands	Wooded Estatelands	Wooded Estatelands	Wooded Estatelands	
Strength of Character	Low/ Moderate	High	High	Moderate	
Landscape Quality	Low/ Moderate	Moderate/ High	Moderate/ High	Moderate	
Landscape Sensitivity	Low/ Moderate	Moderate/ High	Moderate/ High	Moderate	
Visual Receptors	A448 Foxydiate Lane Cur Lane Bridleway Monarch's Way Springhill Farm Public footpath	Hewell Lane Birchensale estate Public footpath Oxstalls Farm Paper Mill Cottages	Brockhill Farm Brockhill Lane Bridleway	Bordesley A441	
Visual Sensitivity of Receptors	Moderate/ High	Moderate/ High	Moderate/ High	Moderate/ High	
Visual impact of existing development	Negligible – Webheath is well obscured by vegetation	Negligible – Urban edge is glimpsed from limited areas	Low – Weight's Farm: medium distance views to urban edge	Low – Weight's Farm: occasional medium distance views to urban edge	
Overall Sensitivity	Moderate	Moderate/ High	Moderate/ High	Moderate/ High	
Capacity to accommodate development	Medium/ High	Low/ Medium	Low/ Medium	Medium	

#### 4. THE SUBJECT SITE

- 4.1. Heyford Developments are promoting the southern part of Area A (the Subject Site) at Foxlydiat Lane for development within the Local Plan Review. The subject site measures in the region of 40ha and would form a northern extension to the Webheath area of Redditch. It is bounded by the A448 Bromsgrove Highway to the northeast; Foxlydiat Lane to the south east and Cur Lane to the southwest. The northern boundary of the site extends up to the bridleway that forms a natural change in the general character of the site (refer to ASP4).
- 4.2. The visual perception of the site is one of a pastoral landscape, with relatively few detracting elements despite its close proximity to the existing urban edge. Telegraph/electricity poles traverse the site, the influence of the A448 is defining along the northeast boundary of the site and the location of the prominent junction with Birchfield Road and Hewell Lane creates a strong transport character at this point. Foxlydiat Lane is a minor road linking Cur Lane and Birchfield Road and residential development is apparent and characteristic to the east with driveways, accesses and paths along with on-street parking. The boundary with the subject site is largely enclosed by trees and hedgerows, with occasional gaps for farm access. Springhill Farm and grounds are located in the southern part of the site and are very well screened from the road. Cur Lane is a sunken rural lane which meanders inconspicuously, linking a number of farms and isolated properties.
- 4.3. The northern boundary of the subject site is open with views into the site from the bridleway and glimpsed views of the edge of Redditch, notable at the eastern end of the bridleway where a private property is located. The eastern boundary lies alongside Birchfield Road and the Foxlydiat Arms and Premier Inn complex that occupies land bordering the site. A petrol station and car garage is also located off Birchfield Road and the figure of eight junction with the A448 combine to create a utilitarian character with limited views into the subject site.

- 4.4. In terms of topography, the site descends from northeast to southwest; with the A448 Bromsgrove Highways running along the ridgeline, and Cur Lane at the south east boundary in a localised valley. The topography ascends again from Cur Lane to the west and provides some views from the wider landscape; notably those from Monarch's Way national trail. The vegetation structure is effective in breaking up the site into smaller parcels, with a number of hedgerows that remain intact, a large woodland copse in the centre of the site and frequent hedgerow trees. A spring-fed watercourse extends through the southern part of the site, is flanked with trees and forms a notable landscape feature. The field pattern is semi-regular and distinctly smaller scale than the adjacent arable fields to the north. The land use is a mixture of pasture, arable crops, and equestrian use around Springhill Farm.

#### Visual Assessment

- 4.5. A number of photographs have been taken to illustrate the subject site and its setting and these are included within Appendix 2 of this report. These photographs are intended to form representative views from publicly accessible viewpoints. There are relatively limited visual receptors in and around the site, primarily from the bridleway running east-west across the north of the site (views 4 and 5). Foxlydiate Lane is very well enclosed by vegetation and topography and infrequent breaks in the hedge allow channelled views (view 2). To the western side of the site, Cur Lane is low-lying and visually confined, however the national trail (Monarch's Way) ascends westwards and allows views into the site (view 3). The impact upon residential amenity is very limited in and around the site due to the extent of screening to the existing urban edge, particularly along Foxlydiate Lane, and a further three properties located in or close to the subject site (see Aspect Plan ASP4).

#### Landscape Sensitivity/ Capacity

- 4.6. The subject site lies within Area A, and although it has a somewhat pastoral character with small scale field pattern and hedgerow boundaries, the area to the north is distinctly contrasting with extensive arable fields and very limited hedgerows and trees. The subject site has

a low/ moderate strength of character in relation to the Landscape Type (Principal Timbered Farmlands), and there are no ancient woodlands present in the site, although small isolated woodland blocks lie to the west. A combination of the landscape quality (low/moderate) and the overall sensitivity (moderate) determines that the subject site has the capacity to accommodate a major urban extension, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. There is certain landscape and visual features that may require protection and could possibly be strengthened, including the spring and Hawthorn Pit copse (see Aspect Plan ASP4).

#### Overall Conclusion

- 4.7. The Growth Options for Redditch are strategic areas that have been consulted on by the Council in order to provide new development opportunities to meet the future housing needs of Redditch. Following the appraisal of two growth options (Foxlydiate/Webheath and West of the A441) and a more detailed appraisal of the subject site, it is considered that the subject site offers considerable scope to accommodate an extension of the existing urban area, either in isolation, or potentially in conjunction with some areas of the other growth options, subject to further detailed investigations.
- 4.8. The land in the northern part of Area A also has a notable capacity to accommodate development as there are few landscape features present and it is visible from only a limited number of receptors, albeit that it is gently sloping from the A448 and so is slightly more visually exposed than the subject site. This area extends further out into the countryside however this could be considered as a natural extension to the subject site with appropriate landscape buffers in place.
- 4.9. The boundaries to the subject site are relatively robust, with roads to the south and west, the existing development on Birchfield Road, and the recommended extent of the site as the bridleway to the north. The northern boundary is relatively open to views from the north and therefore would benefit from additional planting to enhance the existing

hedgerow and provide a strategic landscape buffer should the site be developed. Similarly, to the western edge along Cur Lane, views are available from Monarch's Way (see photograph 3 in Appendix 2) and any development of the subject site would be visible and should be mitigated by means of strategic planting to offset any impact a development might have. The internal pattern of fields and landscape features would largely dictate how the site would be developed and the amenity of properties of Springhill Farm, Lanehouse Farm and the property to the north would need to be carefully considered.

- 4.10. In conclusion, from a landscape perspective, it is suggested that the subject site offers strong credentials to accommodate an urban extension due to very few visual receptors, the moderate landscape quality, the strong sense of containment by roads and vegetation and the ability to mitigate likely visual impacts.

## 5. SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

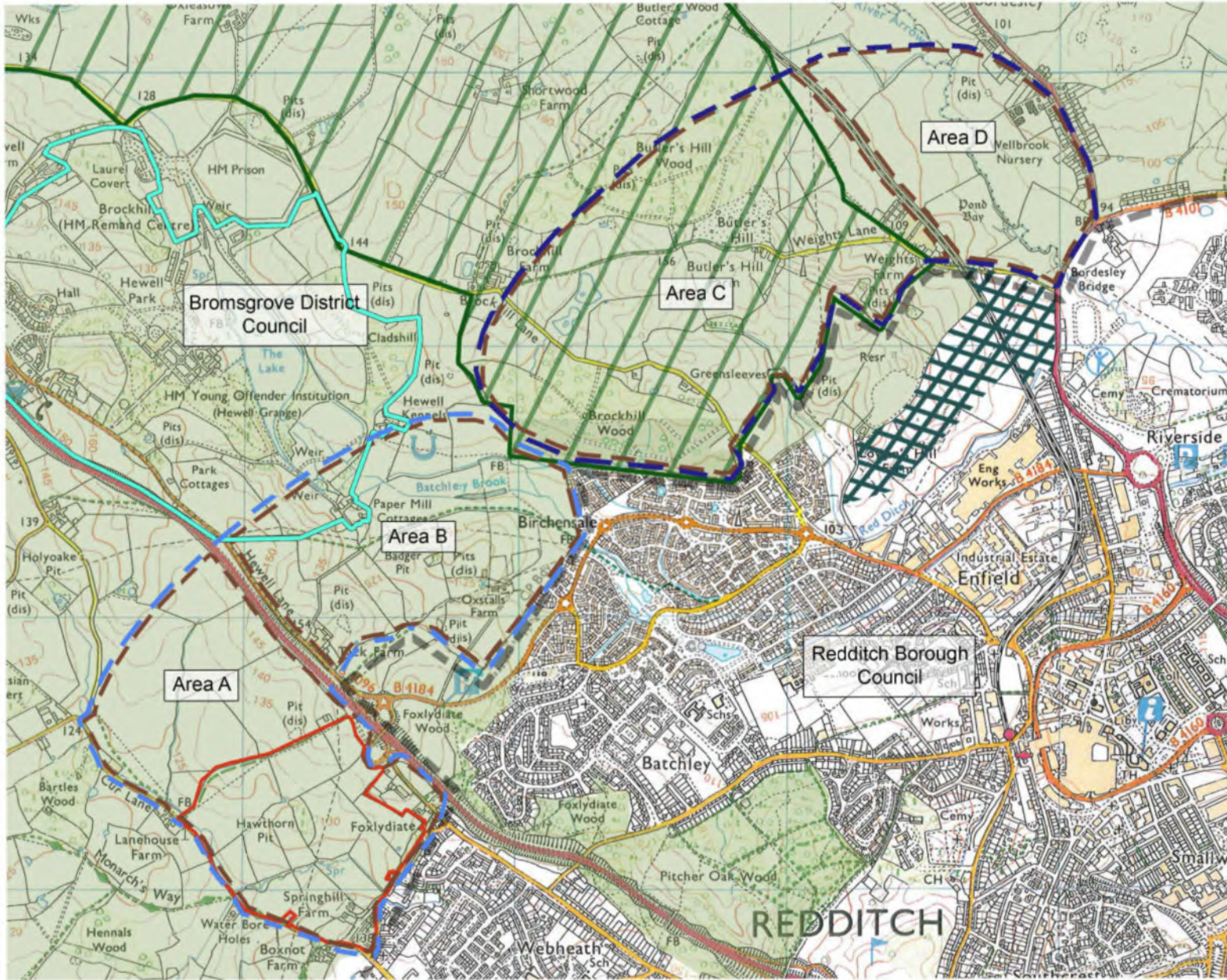
- 5.1. The subject site lies to the northwest of Redditch adjacent to the A448 road corridor. A Special Consultation Paper on Redditch expansion (February 2010) highlighted this area as the 'Foxlydiat/Webheath' option, and considered that although this option land is slightly further from Redditch town centre than the other two options put forward, it would provide an opportunity for a mix of housing, employment, shops, schools and other essential services enabling integration with other development. All option areas are all within the designated Green Belt and will require release within the emerging policy and some locations are designated as Landscape Protection Areas.
- 5.2. The Councils also commissioned a Joint Study into the Future Growth Implications of Redditch (WYG - December 2007), which was a strategic assessment and did not provide the level of detail required to put forward a robust and defensible case for development in a particular area of Redditch.
- 5.3. The purpose of this report was to appraise the strategic areas identified in the Growth Options paper, and to present the opportunities and constraints of the subject site to assist the Council in their decision making.
- 5.4. The subject site is located to the northwest of Webheath, and lies in a localised valley which affords it a degree of containment and enclosure by roads and strong boundary vegetation. The existing urban edge is largely screened by planting along Foxlydiat Lane, and only limited local views are available, notably from Monarch's Way national trail to the west.
- 5.5. In terms of landscape sensitivity, the subject site is generally a pastoral landscape with some arable and equestrian use, some natural features, and of moderate landscape quality. The limited visual receptors adds to the moderate level of overall sensitivity for the whole of Area A, which is in contrast to Area B which is moderate/high due to its distinctive character and visual prominence. The remainder of Area A consists of

large arable fields, gently sloping from the A448, and more visually exposed than the subject site. **Area A (including the subject site) is considered to have medium/high capacity to accommodate development.**

- 5.6. Area B comprises rolling topography and parkland character and is physically constrained by topography, frequent landscape features and the notable presence of Hewell Grange Registered Park and Garden and Conservation Area. There are very limited visual receptors, and a moderate landscape quality. **The capacity of Area B to accommodate development is low/ medium.**
- 5.7. The option West of the A441 Birmingham Road (Areas C and D) has strong links with the Brockhill Area of Development Restraint; although any proposed development will need to ensure that the natural environment is protected from inappropriate development. Features such as Brockhill Wood and the potential prominence on the edge of Butler's Hill would be significant constraints on development and require careful consideration. The majority of the area lies within the Landscape Protection Area designation, and the quality of the landscape resource is therefore considered moderate to moderate/high. **Areas C and D are of low to low/medium to medium landscape capacity for development.**
- 5.8. In summary, the subject site has been analysed for its quality of landscape character, its visibility from high sensitivity receptors, and its inherent sensitivity to change. This taken into account, from a landscape perspective, it is considered that the subject site offers the strongest potential to accommodate development that is carefully designed to respect the setting of the existing urban area, and the sensitivity of the adjacent landscape character.

## **ASPECT PLANS**











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-  Subject Site
-  Option - West of the A441
-  Option - Foxlydiat/Webheath
-  Landscape Protection Area (Policy C1 of Bromsgrove District Council)
-  Area of Development Restraint (Policy B(RA).3 of Redditch Borough Council)
-  Green Belt (Policy DS1 of Bromsgrove District Council Policy B(RA).1 of Redditch Borough Council)
-  Administrative Boundary
-  Area Boundary
-  Hewell Grange Registered Park and Garden and Conservation Area

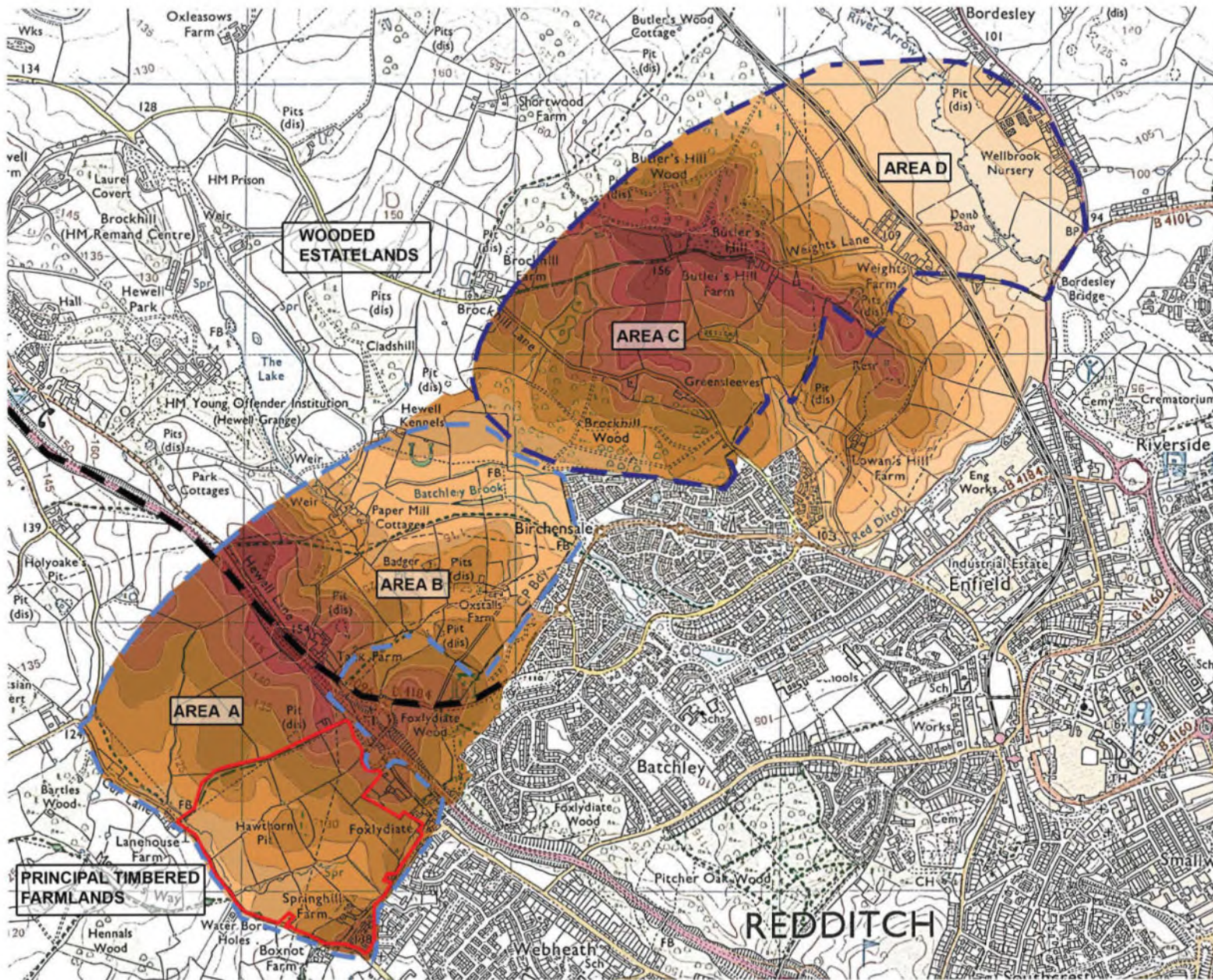
REV	DATE	NOTE	Drawn by

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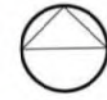
TITLE  
 Land at Foxlydiat Lane, Redditch  
 Landscape Policy Context

CLIENT  
 Heyford Developments Ltd.

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN
Not to Scale	OCT 2012	EW
DRAWING NUMBER		REVISION
5127 / ASP1		A



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-  90-95 m
-  95-100 m
-  100-105 m
-  105-110 m
-  110-115 m
-  115-120 m
-  120-125 m
-  125-130 m
-  130-135 m
-  135-140 m
-  140-145 m
-  145-150 m
-  150-155 m
-  Subject Site
-  Option- Foxydiate/Webheath
-  Option- West of the A441
-  Boundary of Landscape Types (Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment)

REV	DATE	NOTE	Drawn/Chek
REVISIONS			

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TITLE  
 Land at Foxydiate Lane, Redditch  
 Topographical Context

CLIENT  
 Heyford Developments Ltd.

SCALE Not to Scale	DATE OCT 2012	DRAWN CW
DRAWING NUMBER 5127/ ASP2	REVISION	



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-  Subject Site
-  Area A Boundary
-  Public Footpath

REV	DATE	NOTE	Drawn: CW/c
REVISIONS			

**aspect** landscape planning

TITLE  
 Land at Foxlydiate Lane, Redditch  
 Area A site analysis

CLIENT  
 Heyford Developments Ltd.

SCALE  
 Not to Scale      DATE: NOV 2012      DRAWN: CW

DRAWING NUMBER: 5127/ ASP3      REVISION



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-  Subject Site
-  Contours
-  Public Footpath
-  Stream
-  Bridleway
-  Isolated Residential properties

REV	DATE	NOTE	Drawn: CW/3
REVISIONS			

**aspect** landscape planning

TITLE  
 Land at Foxlydiat Lane, Redditch  
 Site Analysis

CLIENT  
 Heyford Developments Ltd.

SCALE Not to Scale	DATE OCT 2012	DRAWN EW
DRAWING NUMBER 5127 / ASP4	REVISION	

A



View from Cur Lane

D



View from footpath on the edge of Birchensale estate

B



View from Foxlydiate Lane

E



View from public footpath adjacent to A448

C



View from footpath leading from Hewell Lane



LOCATION PLAN

REV	DATE	NOTE	DRAWN	CHK'D
REVISIONS				

**aspect** landscape planning

TITLE  
 Land at Foxlydiate Lane, Redditch  
 Photo location, Foxlydiate/ Webheath  
 CLIENT  
 Heyford Developments Ltd.

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN
Not to Scale	OCT 2012	CW
DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION	
5127/ASP05		

## FOXLYDIATE/ WEBHEATH

Growth option (Foxlydiate/ Webheath) spans across the A448, which forms the boundary between two landscape types. Generally, head south of A448 is large scale, where agricultural practises are prevalent, and limited hedgerows. To the north, the field pattern is medium scale and semi regular, with pockets of parkland and medium distance views.

F



View from Brockhill Lane

G



View from Butlers Hill

H



View from Weights Lane

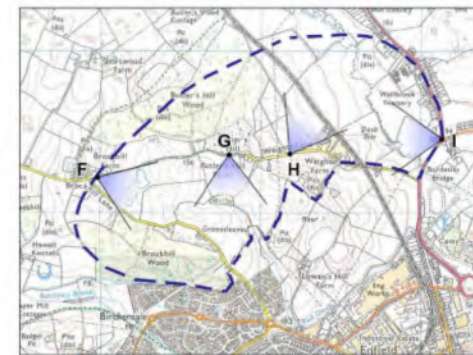
I



View from A441

Growth option (Land west of the A441) includes land within the 'Wooded Estatelands' landscape type', of rolling topography with large discrete blocks of woodland, parkland, and hedgerow fields boundaries. Views are long distance from the ridgeline, and become more enclosed to the west.

1 Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment 2011



LOCATION PLAN

REV	DATE	NOTE	DRAWN	CW/D
REVISIONS				

**aspect** landscape planning

TITLE  
Land at Foxlydiate Lane, Redditch  
Photo location, West of the A441

CLIENT  
Heyford Developments Ltd.

SCALE	DATE	DRAWN
Not to Scale	OCT 2012	CW
DRAWING NUMBER	REVISION	
5127/APS06		

**WEST OF THE A441**

**APPENDIX 1**

GROWTH OPTIONS FOR REDDITCH 2010

# Bromsgrove and Redditch Core Strategies

Special consultation on Redditch expansion

## Redditch Growth

### Help us to plan the future of the area

Anyone with an interest in the future of Bromsgrove and Redditch is being asked to give their views on development over the next 16 years. As part of the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS), Redditch Borough has been given a target of accommodating around 7,000 houses by 2026. Bromsgrove District is required to take around 3,000 of these new homes, which will be built within its boundaries adjacent to Redditch town where the borders of both authorities meet.

In order to decide where these new properties can be placed within the two areas, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council are working together and would like to hear what residents think of all the possible options.

### Why are we doing this?

The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy has been revised following an inquiry between April and June 2009.



The Inspector's report states how many houses need to be built and how much employment land needs to be set aside over the next 16 years to meet the region's housing needs.

Both Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council are currently preparing their Core Strategies which will guide growth and development in these areas up to 2026.

These documents will have to incorporate the recommendations of the Regional Spatial Strategy as well as conforming to national guidance such as planning policy statements.



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# Bromsgrove and Redditch Core Strategies

Special consultation on Redditch expansion

If you would like to find out more about the proposed development sites in Redditch Borough or read the draft 'Development Strategy' policy, please see the accompanying consultation paper available at [www.redditchbc.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/corestrategy).

## What options do we have in Bromsgrove?

All of the following options put forward are unavoidably located within the Green Belt. This is due to the requirement in the RSS report that growth must be adjacent to the boundary of Redditch.

***It should be stressed that the boundaries of the options presented below are flexible and represent potential locations for growth. As these boundaries are not fixed, the amount of new dwellings in each option is not specified at this stage. For example, it is possible that development on a limited scale could take place spread over all the three areas identified.*** It is important to remember that land for around 3000 houses and associated jobs and other facilities, such as schools and shops, needs to be identified and by focussing on these areas it will be possible to deliver the required amount of development.

**Ravensbank ADR** an existing employment area is located to the north of the A4023, in Bromsgrove District at Ravensbank, which serves Redditch's needs. There is an ADR adjacent to this area which could be released and this could potentially link with the Winyates Green Triangle site located across the boundary within Stratford-on-Avon District. The RSS panel report states in relation to employment provision:

***"...at least 12 ha will be provided within Stratford-upon-Avon west of the A435 and the balance remaining out of a total of up to 37ha will be provided in Bromsgrove District at a location or locations to be agreed..."***

***The development of the Winyates Green triangle site will be addressed and consulted upon independently via Stratford on Avon District Council's Core Strategy process.***

### Option East of A441 (Birmingham Road)

The development of the land to the east of the A441 has the advantage that it would be located close to Redditch Town Centre with all the facilities that this offers, including commercial, retail and leisure facilities. It is strategically accessible being within easy reach of junction 2 of the M42. Development here could potentially encourage progression of the Bordesley Bypass, congestion. It is envisaged that development here could offer housing, jobs, schools and shops. This area is dissected by the flood plain, providing the opportunity to reinforce the green linkages and integrate existing and new development. Whilst development at this location would be in the Green Belt, it would reduce the gap with Birmingham. There is no obvious boundary to potential development in this location but it could be contained by topography. Development here would also result in the merging with existing development at Bordesley.

### Option West of A441 (Birmingham Road)

The land to the west of the A441 could include land both within Redditch and Bromsgrove and build upon existing development at Brockhill. It is envisaged that it would have strong links with the Brockhill Area of Development Restraint and a small area of Green Belt situated within Redditch's boundary. This site is located in close proximity to the town centre. Development here could include housing, new employment, schools, shops and other essential services, as well as providing enhanced transport links into the town centre. It is envisaged that any proposed development here would respect local topography and would ensure that the natural environment is protected, including Brockhill Wood. The opportunity exists to develop a network of green corridors and open spaces within any new development. Again there is no obvious boundary for development in this location, although development could be partially "contained" by natural features.

### Option adjacent to A448 (Bromsgrove Highway)

Development adjacent to the Bromsgrove Highway would be located slightly further away from Redditch town centre and employment opportunities, than the two options above but

# Bromsgrove and Redditch Core Strategies

Special consultation on Redditch expansion

would still have good road accessibility via the Bromsgrove and Alvechurch Highways. Development here could however provide a mix of housing, employment, shops, schools and other essential services. Mutual benefits, such as improvements to the transport network, could also be realised by integrating the development of this area with other areas in Redditch such as an area of green belt found nearby within the boundary of Redditch. Again in this location there is no obvious boundary to potential development. Development here would reduce the gap with Bromsgrove. There are only limited views from publicly accessible areas for part of the site.

## Other Options

Options for development in the Green Belt to the south-west of Redditch or the open countryside beyond and on the open spaces in Redditch have not been considered on sustainability grounds, and due to significant infrastructure constraints.

An option for development to the north east of Redditch within Bromsgrove District at Beoley has not been included at this stage due to the many disadvantages of development in this area, including the potential adverse impact on the setting of the Conservation Area at Beoley, the merging of settlements, the topography, limited linkages to the Town Centre and so on.

If you have any comments to make on development in these or any other areas in the Borough or District please submit them during this consultation period.

## Background

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough are adjacent areas located in the north of Worcestershire County, south of Birmingham. Although of a similar size in terms of population, 87,837<sup>1</sup> and 78,807 respectively, they are of a different geographical size. Bromsgrove District totals 21,697 hectares and Redditch Borough is 5,435 hectares. The areas are also quite different. Redditch, a former New Town, has the majority of development concentrated to the north and approximately 50 per cent of the Borough is rural. Bromsgrove has a predominantly rural character being 91 per cent Green Belt, with development being distributed throughout the District.

There have always been economic, environmental and social linkages between the two areas. However, due to recent events, particularly at a regional planning level, the futures of both areas are likely to become even more closely related.

<sup>1</sup> Based on 2001 Census

## Sustainable Community Strategy & Vision and Objectives

The Redditch Partnership brings together representatives from public, private, community and voluntary agencies to work together effectively to deliver a range of local projects, services and initiatives. Redditch Partnership has a vision for *“Redditch to be successful and vibrant with sustainable communities built on partnership and shared responsibility. We want people to be proud that they live or work in Redditch”* (Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy, 2008-2011). This vision contains key priorities such as:

- To create safer communities
- To develop a cleaner/greener and more sustainable environment
- To tackle the issue of climate change and the impact of high levels of domestic and workplace energy consumption
- To increase the rate of employment opportunities
- To look at ways of diversifying working opportunities to reduce reliance on traditional industries
- To develop the Town Centre as a destination with excellent facilities and transport links
- To increase the availability of affordable housing
- To improve access to public transport services

The Redditch Core Strategy must contribute to achieving this vision through its own vision and objectives. The development strategy set out in this consultation will achieve the Core Strategy vision and objectives in a number of ways:

- new homes will be tailored to meet the needs of those living in Redditch, in terms of their size, type and tenure;
- employment-related development will support a changing skills base by offering a diversification park;
- locating development within and adjacent to Redditch will, in some locations, provide strong and sustainable transport facilities;
- development with good links to the town centre will contribute to its regeneration and improving its vitality and viability, for example by increasing the amount of residential properties and therefore the number of people using and visiting the town centre;

# Bromsgrove and Redditch Core Strategies

Special consultation on Redditch expansion

- the high levels of open space are a distinctive feature of the Borough, the natural environment will be protected and developments will provide the opportunity to enhance the green infrastructure network;
- all new development will contribute to the mitigation of, and adaptation to, the effects of climate change;
- development to the north or north-west of the town will contribute to the improvement of leisure facilities at the Abbey Stadium development across the Borough and beyond will contribute to the improvement of community, retail and leisure facilities.

## What happens next?

We would welcome your views on the suitability of the various locations for the future growth of the Borough as shown on the map in this leaflet. **These options are initially put forward to promote discussion but if you have an alternative option please let us know.** All responses and options put forward will be carefully considered and may be taken forward to the next stage. There are of course many factors to take into account when considering site selection, including environmental, economic and social issues, and all options will be subject to a rigorous sustainability appraisal to weigh up relevant issues and also deliverability.

## How can I get involved?

More information is available on both of the Councils' websites [www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/planningpolicy](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/planningpolicy) [www.redditchbc.gov.uk/corestrategy](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/corestrategy)

We will also be holding drop in sessions where you can speak to planning officers from both Councils at the following locations

**11th February Town Hall, Redditch (2-9pm)**

**13th February  
Kingfisher Centre, Redditch (all day)**

**24th February  
Palace Theatre, Redditch (from 6.30pm)**

Meetings will also be held in Bromsgrove local Parish's such as Alvechurch, Beoley, Bentley/Pauncefoot and Tutnall/Cobley.

## You can send your views to either Council

By writing to:

**Bromsgrove District Council**  
Planning and Environment Services  
The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
Bromsgrove  
Worcestershire B60 1AA  
**01527 881316**

**Redditch Borough Council**  
Development Plans  
Town Hall  
Walter Stranz Square  
Redditch  
Worcestershire B98 8AH  
**01527 64252 ext. 3081**

Or email:

**LDF@bromsgrove.gov.uk**  
**devplans@redditchbc.gov.uk**

Please let us have your views by

**22nd March 2010.**



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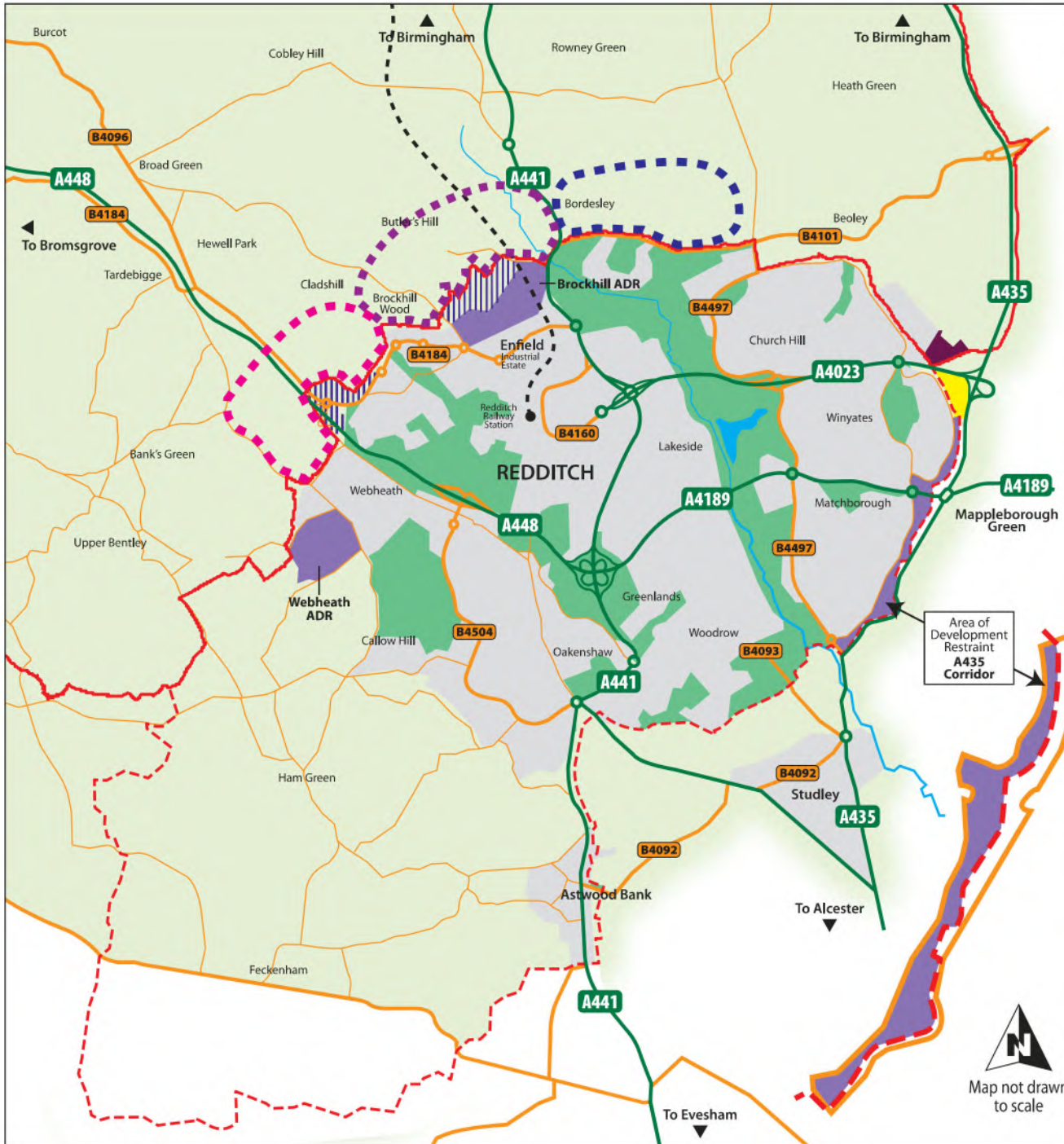
# Growth Options for Redditch

## KEY

-  Built up Areas
-  Open Space and Parkland
-  Green Belt
-  Bromsgrove District Council Boundary
-  Redditch Borough Council Boundary
-  Railway Line

Options for the expansion of Redditch in line with the governments requirements have been developed, the areas shown on the map opposite and indicated below are not specific site boundaries, and at this moment we are considering developing both variations of the options as well as the sites individually. For more detail on the various options please see inside this document.

-  Option - Foxlydiate/Webheath
-  Option - West of the A441
-  Option - East of the A441
-  BDC Ravensbank Area of Development Restraint (ADR)
-  Winyates Green Triangle
-  RBC Areas of Development Restraint (ADR)
-  Green Belt Development Parcels



Area of Development Restraint A435 Corridor



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Map not drawn to scale

**APPENDIX 2**

PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD



**PHOTO LOCATION**



**PHOTOGRAPH 1**



**PHOTOGRAPH 2**



**PHOTOGRAPH 3**



**PHOTOGRAPH 4**



**PHOTOGRAPH 5**



### **APPENDIX 3**

#### ASPECT METHODOLOGY FOR CAPACITY STUDY

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER & CAPACITY STUDY**  
**METHODOLOGY**

**a: LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND QUALITY**

**a1: Overall Strength of Character in Relation to Landscape Type**

The compatibility with the characteristic elements of the landscape type in which it is located

- Weak     Medium     Strong

**a2: Landscape Quality**

The condition of the distinctive landscape character, whether in a state of decline or relative intactness

- Low     L/M     Moderate     M/H     High

**a3: Landscape Sensitivity**

Evaluation of the key elements (natural or built features) and the perception of the landscape character

- Low     L/M     Moderate     M/H     High

NOTES:.....  
.....  
.....

**b: VISUAL IMPACT**

**b1: Level of visual intrusion on a landscape/view :**

Detracting features such as transport corridor/ large scale buildings/ utilities/ structures etc.

- Low     L/M     Moderate     M/H     High

**b2: Level of visual unity/ intactness :**

Perception of Chaotic/ fragmented/ interrupted/ coherent/ unified

- Low     L/M     Moderate     M/H     High

**b3: Visual Sensitivity**

The nature of the view, extent of viewers and the ability to mitigate visual impact on identified viewpoint

- Low     L/M     Moderate     M/H     High

NOTES:.....  
.....  
.....

**c: OVERALL SENSITIVITY**

The visual sensitivity and landscape sensitivity are combined to give the overall sensitivity of the character area

VISUAL SENSITIVITY		LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY					
High	M	M/H	M/H	M/H	H	H	
Mod/High	M/L	M	M/H	M/H	M/H	H	
Moderate	M/L	M/L	M	M	M/H	M/H	
Low/ Mod	L	M/L	M/L	M/L	M	M/H	
Low	L	L	M/L	M/L	M/L	M	
	Low	Low/ Mod	Moderate	Moderate	Mod/High	High	

c1: Overall Sensitivity .....

**d: LANDSCAPE CAPACITY**

The ability of the site to accommodate development, determined by comparing the overall sensitivity (a combination landscape and visual sensitivity), and the landscape quality at (a2).

OVERALL SENSITIVITY		LANDSCAPE QUALITY					
High	M	M	M	M/L	L	L	
Mod/High	M/H	M	M	M	M/L	L	
Moderate	M/H	M/H	M	M	M	M/L	
Low/ Mod	H	M/H	M/H	M/H	M	M	
Low	H	H	M/H	M/H	M/H	M	
	Low	Low/ Mod	Moderate	Moderate	Mod/High	High	

d1: Landscape Capacity .....

**Capacity Definitions**

**Low capacity** – New development would have a significant and adverse impact on the landscape character. Occasional, very small scale development may be possible, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

**Low/ Medium capacity** – Limited development could be accommodated although it would be severely constrained by the need to avoid any adverse impact on the landscape character, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

**Medium capacity** - The site could accommodate new development in some areas, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. There are landscape constraints and therefore the key landscape and visual characteristics must be retained and enhanced.

**Medium/ High capacity** – The site could accommodate development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas. Certain landscape and visual features in the area may require protection.

**High capacity** – The majority of the area could accommodate significant areas of development, providing it has regard to the setting and form of existing settlement and the character and the sensitivity of adjacent landscape character areas.

**FIELD SURVEY FORM**

**Viewpoint No:**

**Landscape Character Type:**

**Location:**

**Landscape Character Area:**

**Date:**

**Panoramic Photo Nos:**

**Landform**

flat	plain	hills	
gently undulating	plateau	ridge	floodplain
rolling	scarp/cliffs	deep gorge	basin
sloping	upland	broad valley	
steep	rolling lowland	narrow valley	

**Physical Elements**

<b>Land Use:</b> residential commercial leisure/recreation farmland nature reserve industrial/mining natural heritage forestry nursery/allotments	<b>Built features:</b> village town/urban edge isolated houses farm buildings industry mining military historic monument church fort/castle/ruins	<b>Communications:</b> road Roman road lane track footpath railway tramway pylons communication masts airfield	<b>Land Cover:</b> parkland scrub/setaside marsh heath water meadows disturbed (mine/quarry) restored disturbed open water grassland
------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

<b>Woodland/Trees:</b> deciduous woodland coniferous plantation mixed woodland shelterbelt hedge trees orchard clumps isolated trees parkland trees ancient woodland	<b>Hydrology:</b> river stream brook dry valley pond lake drainage ditch wetland canal	<b>Farming:</b> arable pastoral mixed paddocks improved pasture rough grazing grazing marsh orchard plantation	<b>Field boundaries:</b> hedgerow hedgerow trees bank ditch wall fence – urban fence – rural linear sinuous other
----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

**Aesthetic Criteria**

<b>Form/pattern:</b> geometric (ordered) semi-regular irregular/winding organic	<b>Scale:</b> intimate small medium large	<b>Variety:</b> uniform simple diverse complex	<b>Enclosure:</b> exposed open contained confined
<b>Views:</b> distant framed intermittent panoramic	<b>Tranquillity:</b> remote peaceful interrupted busy	<b>Naturalness:</b> settled restrained managed disturbed	<b>Movement:</b> secluded gentle active dynamic

NOTES:.....  
.....  
.....

landscape planning • ecology • arboriculture

aspect

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