

# **Solihull Local Plan**

Shaping a Sustainable Future  
December 2013

**Authority Monitoring Report**  
**2023/24**

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## 1. Introduction

### What is the Role of the Authority Monitoring Report?

1. The principal purpose of a Council's Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) is to set out progress on meeting the objectives in the Council's Development Plan. Local authorities have flexibility in terms of how progress is assessed and the indicators used to monitor effectiveness of the plan.
2. Regulation 34 of The Town and Country Planning Country Planning 2012(Local Planning) (England) sets out the minimum requirements for what the Authority Monitoring Report should include:
  - Information on the Local Plan and any supplementary planning documents included in the Local Development Scheme, including the timetable for preparation and the stage that has been reached, and information on adoption.
  - Identify any policies which are not being implemented and the reasons for this including any steps which are being taken to ensure the policy could be implemented.
  - Housing monitoring – to report on the annual number of additional dwellings or affordable dwellings where this has been specified in a plan.
  - Provide details of neighbourhood development orders or neighbourhood plans.
  - Where the authority has prepared a report in accordance with regulation 62 of the CIL regulations the report should include information in relation to this.
  - Report on any work undertaken cooperatively with other local planning authorities, county councils and other statutory consultees as part of the Duty to Cooperate
3. The principal component of the Development Plan in the Borough is the Solihull Local Plan which was adopted in December 2013. Chapter 13 of this plan sets out the delivery and monitoring arrangements for the plan. This includes a schedule of monitoring indicators that are to be reported on. This report sets out these indicators and how progress is being made against them
4. The Council adopted the current Local Plan in 2013 however following a High Court challenge and Court of Appeal decision the section of the plan relating to the housing requirement has been declared to be treated as not adopted. The remainder of the plan forms the adopted plan for the Borough and is the principal local planning policy used in the determination of planning applications.
5. This AMR focuses on the implementation of the 2013 plan.

### Reviewing the 2013 Plan

6. A Review of the Local Plan began in 2015 to set out an up-to-date planning framework for the Borough over the next 15 years. This review intended to respond to the legal challenge to the 2013 plan; set out how Solihull will meet its housing needs over the plan period and provide a proper planning framework for the delivery of HS2 and the associated interchange station being accommodated in the Borough.
7. The review commenced in Nov 2015 with the publication of the Scope, Issues and Options. A Draft Local Plan followed in Nov 2016. The Draft Submission Plan was published in October 2020 and submitted to the planning inspectorate in May 2021. The main examination hearings took place in the period between September 2021 and January 2022.

8. Due to the then anticipated changes to the NPPF, the examination was held in abeyance following the publication of the draft NPPF in December 2022. In the meantime, as the Council had received planning applications for sites allocated in the plan it decided to set out a consistent framework for determining them. This was achieved via a report to Climate Change and Planning Cabinet in July 2023.
9. Correspondence with the Inspectors since the hearing sessions led to the Submission Draft Local Plan being withdrawn in October 2024. Despite withdrawal of the Local Plan the evidence base underpinning the review work and the general strategy of the Local Plan may still be an important starting point for the new review process. A review of the monitoring indicators will be important as part of this process to ensure an effective framework is in place to monitor the planning policy framework.
10. An update to the Local Development Scheme was made in December 2024 which indicated that a new development plan for the Borough would be pursued.
11. Other components of the Borough's Development Plan include the Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Plan and the Neighbourhood plans which have been adopted 'made' to date in the Borough. These include Neighbourhood Plans for Meriden, Balsall Common, Hampton in Arden, Knowle, Dorridge and Bentley Heath, and Berkswell. These are key components of the development plan articulating the objectives and aspirations of the local community.

## Context

12. The previous Authority Monitoring Report was published in January 2020 and reported on the period from 2013 to March 2019. Since then, the authority has continued to monitor progress on achieving the policy objectives in the adopted Local Plan as well as reporting information on housing and employment at a regional level. This is important in planning to meet development needs across authority boundaries within the West Midlands as part of duty to cooperate discussions.

## Content

13. This AMR document reports on the indicators in the Adopted Local Plan for the monitoring year April 2023 to March 2024, and where possible the previous 5 years (from the previous AMR). This information will provide an indication of the effectiveness of each policy in delivering the strategic objectives of the Local Plan. It also updates the current position of significant planning policy projects and documents.
14. The report is structured according to the key themes in the 2013 Adopted Local Plan which are as follows:
  - Sustainable Economic Growth
  - Providing Homes for all
  - Improving Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel
  - Protecting and Enhancing our Environment
  - Promoting Quality of Place
  - Health and Supporting Local Communities
  - Delivery and Monitoring (including information on Community Infrastructure Levy receipts)
15. It also includes the following sections which reflect updated planning policy requirements since the adoption of Local Plan.
  - Duty to Cooperate discussions
  - Progress against meeting the targets set out in the Local Development Scheme

16. Within each section the relevant challenges the plan was designed to address are set out under each key theme. This will help to give some context to the monitoring indicator being examined. Each monitoring indicator is set out in a red box, and then followed by the progress/key information which is generally then explained in more detail with some commentary for each.

## 2. Spatial Portrait of the Borough

17. Solihull is located on the south-eastern edge of the West Midlands Conurbation and is adjoined by the neighbouring areas of Birmingham and the Black Country to the west and Coventry to the East. To the north it is bounded by the rural area of North Warwickshire and to the south Warwick, Stratford upon Avon and Bromsgrove. A significant proportion of the Borough is covered by Green Belt which is strategically important in maintaining the open gap between the area of Birmingham and Solihull and the ‘Meriden Gap’ between Solihull and Coventry. It also contributes to the open character and quality of environment within the Borough.

18. The following table includes key Borough wide statistics.

Area of the Borough	17,828 ha
Area of Green Belt	67%
Population	217,678 ONS / NOMIS Midyear population estimate 2022
Households	93,332 ONS household projections for England 2024 estimate based on 2018 projection
Average car ownership	1.42 average number of cars per household based on 2021 census
Unemployment	3.5% unemployment rate for 16- to 64-year-olds ONS / Nomis Annual Population Survey December 2023
Average house price	£330,000 ONS house prices based on median house price (existing dwellings)
Average workplace earnings	£34,959 ONS / Nomis Annual survey of hours and earnings – workplace analysis 2023

19. Solihull is well served in terms of the national rail and motorway network with the M42 running through the Borough linking to the M40 in the south and the M6 to the north. There are direct rail services to Birmingham and London and to the north along the West Coast and Chiltern mainlines. Birmingham Airport has a major role in the national airport infrastructure acting as a gateway linking the Borough and the rest of the West Midlands region internationally.

20. The Borough contains an extensive rural area characterised by smaller settlements and villages as well as more mature suburbs surrounding the town centre characterised by Victorian and Edwardian development.

21. It is characterised by a high-quality environment including 17 green flag awarded parks and gardens, open spaces and areas of ecological significance as well as historic assets such as listed buildings and a number of Conservation Areas. The Borough has five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Including the extensive River Blythe network. These are nationally important sites notified by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) and protected because of their special interest for flora, fauna, habitats, geological or physiographical features.

22. The Borough has a number of other regionally and nationally significant economic assets including the NEC, Jaguar Land Rover, Birmingham Business Park, and Blythe Valley Business Park.

The Borough is the planned location of the first high speed rail interchange station outside London which is key in the delivery of the HS2 line to Birmingham. It is anticipated that this will generate significant investment opportunities which are being progressed as the UK Central proposals. This comprises of four interconnected economic opportunity zones around junctions 4, 5 and 6 of the M42. Together with the UK Central Hub which makes up Zone 1 the programme includes; Zone 2 – North Solihull, Zone 3 – Solihull Town Centre and Zone 4 – Blythe Valley Business Park.

23. Work has progressed on the delivery of HS2 and the associated infrastructure in the Borough. Under the HS2 Act consent has now been granted for key infrastructure and necessary works including the station building in 2020 and an automated people movement system in 2022 to allow movement through the site together with a station stop at Birmingham International Rail Station
24. It is anticipated that HS2 will begin running between 2029 and 2033 when the section between London and the West Midlands is complete.
25. Solihull Town Centre is a vibrant centre which is the focus for retail facilities in the Borough.
26. The Borough is part of a wider housing market area which incorporates Birmingham and 13 surrounding local authorities, and the Council is working with these authorities to address the housing need across the area. House prices across the Borough are high and the area has a significant need for affordable housing.
27. In contrast to the rest of the Borough the North Solihull area has had a high proportion of local neighbourhoods within the 10% most deprived in the country and some in the bottom 5%. Significant improvements were made to the area in terms of housing and the provision of local services and facilities through an extensive regeneration programme led by the North Solihull Partnership and supported by policies in the Local Plan. The Local plan released a number of Green Belt sites in support of the regeneration programme which have now largely been developed. There is still scope to improve access to employment opportunities and improve the skills base within the area. The wider impacts of economic growth through the UK Central proposals will contribute to investment in the North of the Borough.



## Key Settlements

28. The following table indicates the population and number of households for the rural (or part rural) settlements/parishes in the Borough. All figures are taken from the 2021 census. The figures are not necessarily those of the settlement alone as the wider area will contain a number of dwellings. The figures are provided to provide a general size comparison between settlements.
29. ONS Census 2021 [https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census\\_2021\\_pp](https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/sources/census_2021_pp)

Parish	Number of households	Population
Balsall	2,512	6,345
Barston	219	595
Berkswell	1,327	3,203
Bickenhill and Marston Green	2,997	7,404
Castle Bromwich	4,779	11,449
Chadwick End	291	697
Chelmsley Wood	5,982	13,755
Cheswick Green	1,429	3,509
Dickens Heath	2,168	4,913
Fordbridge	3,745	8,737
Hampton in Arden	1,173	2,808
Hockley Heath	767	1,902
Kingshurst	3,280	8,292
Meriden	1,414	3,249
Smith's Wood	4,448	10,935
Tidbury Green	686	1,815
Total Parish	37,217	89,608
Solihull non-parished areas	52,269	126,630
Solihull Borough Total (based on ONS 2021 Census)	89,486	216,238

### 3. Sustainable Economic Growth

#### Key Challenges

- Challenge A – Reducing Inequalities in the Borough
- Challenge D – Securing Sustainable Economic Growth

#### Key policies

- Policy P1 – Support Economic Success
- Policy P2 – Maintain Strong, Competitive Town Centres
- Policy P3 – Provision of Land for General Business and Premises

#### Introduction

30. The SLP provides a policy framework to support the continued sustainable economic growth of the Borough. Solihull has a buoyant economy driven by its central location on the national motorway and rail network, its role through Birmingham Airport as an international gateway and by the presence of a number of regionally and nationally important assets within the Borough including the NEC, Jaguar Land Rover, and Blythe Valley/Birmingham Business Parks. These assets, located in and around the area between junctions 4 to 6 of the M42, have made the Borough a focus for investment particularly in high value-added sectors such as business and professional services, engineering, ICT, creative industries and automotive industries.
31. Birmingham Airport published its updated masterplan in 2019 which sets out a framework for sustainable growth at the Airport
32. An updated Master plan is being prepared for the NEC to set out future proposals for expansion including significant residential development, leisure and business development. The draft Masterplan was subject to consultation in 2021 and 2023 and will shape development on the site for the next 20 years.
33. Jaguar Land Rover is a key national business which continues to expand its operations within the Borough. The policy framework within the Local Plan acknowledges the significance of these assets and is supportive of their continued economic success.
34. The Borough is the intended location for the first interchange station outside London which is the focus for significant investment proposals being progressed as the UK Central Hub. It is anticipated that economic development at the UK Central Hub site will be of regional and national significance reaching beyond the authority boundaries. The Greater Birmingham and Solihull LEP has set out a comprehensive growth agenda relating to HS2 which includes associated infrastructure projects such as SPRINT (a bus based rapid transport mode) which will further link the Boroughs economic assets across the region. Plans for HS2 and the interchange station have progressed significantly since the adoption of the Local Plan.
35. The Borough also has a number of key local businesses and established industrial estates which provide a range of business accommodation for local employment opportunities, such as Cranmore Industrial Estate, Elmdon Trading Estate and Solihull Business Park. The Local Plan provides a policy framework to support their retention and protect the provision of a range of opportunities in the size and type of employment floor space.
36. The Council is committed through the Local Plan to ensuring a pattern of sustainable economic growth which can benefit the whole borough to ensure residents from disadvantaged areas are able to access job opportunities. In contrast to the rest of the Borough, the North Solihull area had a high proportion of local neighbourhoods within the

most deprived in the country and has been the subject of an extensive regeneration programme supported by policies in the Local Plan. This has delivered significant improvements to the area, however there are still opportunities to improve access to employment and improvements to the skills base as well as wider environmental enhancements. There are also pockets of deprivation within the mature suburbs and rural areas. A key objective of the Local Plan is to reduce the gap of inequality between the most and least affluent wards in terms of access to public transport, employment, housing, health and social care.

37. Solihull Town Centre is strategically important within the West Midlands and is the principal centre for business and civic activity within the Borough. The town centre has a broad range of retail, leisure, entertainment and recreation uses which contribute to its vitality, as well as the key shopping function focused on the primary retail frontages that include the Touchwood shopping mall. The town centre strategy within the Local Plan aims to strengthen the role of the town centre and allow for appropriate planned development during the plan period identifying a series of opportunity sites as the focus for development.
38. A Solihull Town Centre Masterplan has been prepared to guide future investment and development, setting out a vision for the town up to 2036. It sees Solihull as a 'thriving, premier town centre and a vibrant destination at the forefront of visionary design, sustainability and innovation'. Key interventions proposed through the Masterplan include redevelopment of Solihull Station to create a modern integrated transport hub, traffic management interventions and enhancements to the public realm, new high-quality office and residential development, the redevelopment of Mell Square, new north south pedestrian and cycle links and new multi storey car parking.
39. The Local Plan recognises the specific issues relating to Shirley and Chelmsley Wood Town Centres and a key objective is to encourage investment in these centres to improve competitiveness and the shopping environment. The Council is developing a long-term plan to ensure that Chelmsley Wood Town Centre continues to thrive and meet the needs of the local community. The Chelmsley Wood Town Centre (CWTC) North-West Quarter redevelopment is the progression of wider town centre masterplanning work that was undertaken in 2019, which set out a vision for the transformation of the town centre to deliver a better and more diverse range of facilities and services. The proposals are considered to address some of the deficiencies in the town centre including, limited food and beverage offers, scarcity of a night-time economy, poor quantum and quality of public realm, lack of a discount food retailer and poor connectivity to both the existing retail centre and wider community. A concept masterplan for phased delivery of the site was prepared and approved by Cabinet in January 2023.

## Policy P1 – Support Economic Success

*Indicator – Quantum and Type of floor space developed at Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks*

40. The following table indicates the employment related floorspace developed at **Birmingham Business Park** (53ha net developable).

Time Period	Area (ha)	Floorspace (m <sup>2</sup> )
Developed at Mar 2024	52.7	181,030
Remaining to be developed	2.45	7,751

41. The following table indicates the employment related floorspace developed at **Birmingham Business Park Extension Land** (9ha developable – SLP site 31).

Time Period	Area (ha)	Floorspace (m <sup>2</sup> )
Developed at Mar 2024	9.0	40,140
Remaining to be developed	0	0

42. The following table indicates business floorspace and area developed at **Blythe Valley Business Park** (including extension land) (49ha developable – SLP site 10).

Time Period	Area (ha)	Floorspace (m <sup>2</sup> )
Completed development at Apr 13 (mainly business classes)	16	58,249
Development completed Apr 13 to Mar 18	0	0
Development completed Apr 18 to Mar 19	6	19,416
Development completed Apr 19 to Mar 23	13.6	38,257
Development completed at Mar 24	35.8	116,022

### Commentary

43. At April 2013, approximately 56ha of business land at Birmingham and Blythe Valley Business Parks had been developed, equating to an average annual development rate of about 1.5ha at Birmingham Business Park and 1ha at Blythe Valley Business Park.
44. A significant slowing of development post-2006 had prompted a review of the role of these strategic sites as part of the 2011 Solihull Employment Land Study that concluded a broader range of uses was needed in order to reinvigorate them as important flagship sites.
45. The study informed the approach of the Adopted Local Plan which acknowledges the success of the 2 business parks in attracting new investment to Solihull and the Region and the importance of continuing to attract 'knowledge economy' investment to underpin economic recovery and growth. For Blythe Valley Business Park this includes realising its potential as a

location for innovation uses and new enterprise and for Birmingham Business Park realising its potential for a greater role in linking investment and employment opportunities to the regeneration of North Solihull. To reinvigorate the business parks, the adopted plan broadened the range of acceptable uses from the original narrow 'top quality' B1 uses only restriction to B1, B2, B8 together with supporting ancillary uses, of a suitable scale, which will enhance the attraction of the parks.

46. At Blythe Valley Business Park the original planning consent provided for 40 hectares of class B1 floor space (32 ha net developable area – estimated by excluding its distributor road and verge). A further 21 hectares of land was approved as an extension to this land (17 ha net developable area - estimated) in 2006. Up to 2013, 16 hectares of employment land had been developed within the original Business Park, however there were no employment land completions between 2013 and 2018 at the Business Park as extended (Local Plan site 10).
47. The Local Plan committed to seeking a major quantum of business floorspace at Blythe Valley Park through an improved range of amenities offered, supported by well planned residential development to create a sense of place and a more sustainable location. In July 2018 planning consent was granted for mixed-use development, guided by a masterplan that includes 720 dwellings, 250-unit housing with a care facility, 2,500sqm of retail support facilities, a hotel and up to 98,850 sqm of B1, B2, B8 floorspace.
48. At April 2024 the site, for business purposes, is developed out at about 35.8ha and about 116,022 of business floorspace. No significant new business floorspace was completed during the monitoring year. At the extension land development is well progressed for residential purposes with additions to the small service centre.
49. At Birmingham Business Park, since April 2020 the only remaining land to be developed is Plot 6700 - 2.45ha (and 3ha retained by a large 10ha occupier for its own future expansion aspirations) At the adjacent extension land (9ha – site 31 of the SLP) a 6 hectare industrial and warehousing development was completed by Spring 2020 and remaining land was developed out by about Summer 2021 again for industrial and warehouse purposes. Consequently, there has been no new development at the extension site during the monitoring year and no further new development is anticipated. In terms of the Local Plan policy aim at Blythe Valley Business Park, enabling a much more diverse range of uses under a comprehensive master plan has allowed for substantial business development incorporating a range of business class uses.

At Birmingham Business Park, the main part of the Business Park was already largely developed by 2013 (approximately 40ha), mainly for B1 office use. Enabling a broader range of business uses has brought forward further business development that includes that in the former B1 use class, alongside B2 development. The original Business Park is now nearly built out (only Plot 6700 remains – 2.45ha). The adjacent extension land, fully developed for business use, is, together with the original site, in a location close to North Solihull.

50. Together with neighbouring authorities the Council has engaged in the West Midlands Strategic Employment Sites Study (WMSESS) that assesses the supply and demand for land that could accommodate strategic scale developments. The study was published in September 2024.

*Indicator – Extent to which development is linked to local employment needs (measures adopted to target local needs and the quantum of development)*

51. No specific data recorded. This monitoring indicator will be reviewed to assess its usefulness.

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## Commentary

52. The Council supports measures to recruit and retain the local labour force through development as well as ensuring the wider benefits of development are distributed across the Borough. It is intended that the UK Central proposals being delivered as part of HS2 will address gaps in the skill base across the Borough particularly within North Solihull, providing access to opportunities and learning. The Council is targeting schemes to encourage the use of local labour.

## Policy P2 – Maintain Strong, Competitive Town Centres

53. The following table sets out retail, office and leisure floorspace (sqm) completed in the Borough's main town centres between April 2019 to March 2024:

### Commentary

Centre	Class A1	Other A	Class D2	Class B1a
Solihull	2,100	390	0	0
Shirley	1,254	0	0	0
Chelmsley Wood	0	0	0	0

54. The adopted Local Plan was informed by a borough wide Retail, Leisure and Offices study published in November 2011.
55. Since 2013 Solihull Town Centre has seen the development of a convenience retail Waitrose foodstore of 2,647 sqm at Homer Road, completed in June 2016. The foodstore replaced an office building. An Aldi convenience store (2,100 sqm) opened early in 2020 replacing the former magistrate's court in Homer Road. Together these 2 stores surpass the Local Plan anticipated quantum of floorspace for convenience retailing.
56. No new comparison retail floorspace has been completed and construction of a substantial expansion of the Touchwood retail mall that gained planning permission was not implemented.
57. About 1,024 sqm of offices were constructed as part of a High Street mixed-use scheme (restaurant 320 sqm with offices above – completed about Winter 2017). A new bank was built in the High Street and opened at about Autumn 2019, again through redevelopment (Metro Bank - 390sqm).
58. No further significant new retail A1 or office floorspace was completed in the centre over the current monitoring year. The way people shop is rapidly changing as is the expectation of the public of the shopping experience. Online shopping has created far less certainty in terms of forecast need for new floorspace and the size of stores needed. The evidence base undertaken to the Local Plan Review suggests less need for new retail floorspace, more offices in response to a growing popularity of office locations in town centres, where there are accessible amenities, and a substantial quantum of residential development. There may, however, be less certainty in regard to the popularity of new offices generally since Covid in 2019, that escalated a trend towards 'home working'. A major office development at the Homer Rd/Station Rd entrance to the town centre was granted consent in March 2020 but whilst the site is cleared in readiness, the development has not started (Westgate – 8 storeys 13,916 sqm 0.65ha). It is estimated that the development could support 1390 FTE jobs. Since 2019, attention has diverted from new office development to refurbishment of existing offices to Grade A offer and to the conversion of some office premises to residential apartments, encouraged by freedoms in the planning regulations.
59. At Shirley Town Centre there is no specific target for additional floorspace, but the Local Plan acknowledges the grant of consent for the Parkgate retail (and residential) development and its role to strengthen the competitive position of the centre. Parkgate was completed in April 2014 and the development is anchored by an Asda (8,207 sqm). Other retail units total 9,976 sqm and there are over 130 dwelling units and basement parking for 550 cars. The development has successfully attracted a variety of occupiers by providing much needed modern retail units in a variety of sizes.

- 60. M&S Food, formerly at Red Lion Square, relocated to the Solihull Retail Park in 2015 with a loss of 197 sqm of convenience retail (now a restaurant). An Aldi convenience store 1,254 sqm, replacing an existing 864 sqm Aldi fronting the A34, was completed late in 2019 The Local Plan also supported the redevelopment of the former Powergen office premises at the corner of Stratford Road and Haslucks Green Road that had been vacant for about 20 years. A consent for a residential scheme was granted and work is completed. There are few opportunities for further development in the centre without redevelopment but there is no robust evidence of pressures for significant new floorspace, and any future changes could focus on improving the shopping environment. However, the closure of the Morrisons convenience foodstore (about 2780 sqm 0.36ha) at the southern end of the centre, at about the end of 2019, created one such opportunity although market interest has so far been in apartments for the elderly. The site remains undeveloped. No significant new office or leisure development has come forward since publication of the previous monitoring document.
- 61. At Chelmsley Wood Town Centre the Local Plan acknowledges the strengthening of the centre through the development, in about 2009, of an ASDA anchor foodstore accompanied by other units and improvements to the public realm, representing a major investment in the centre. The centre remains the main retail focus for North Solihull. As with Shirley Centre there is no strong evidence of pressures for further retail floorspace but improvements to retail offer and to the public realm may come forward through limited redevelopment opportunities within the centre.

*Indicator – The number of dwelling units built in Solihull town centre.*

- 62. Within the town centre boundary, (as defined in the adopted Local Plan) 160 new dwellings have been provided in the period 2019 to 2024.

**Commentary**

- 63. The 160 units relate to a large office to residential scheme at Prince’s Gate, just within the Solihull Town Centre boundary. These have come forward as windfall sites. N.B. 1 dwelling unit was converted to a commercial use in this time period.

*Indicator – Extent of encroachment of non-retail into primary retail frontages*

- 64. The following table records the extent of non-retail uses within primary retail frontages as of Mar 2024.

Location	No. of occupiers	% of frontage in A1 retail use
High Street (1-161 and 12-134)	49	65
Poplar Way	8	88
Mill Lane	35	89
Mell Square	10	90
Drury Lane (10-58 and 5-54) and Warwick Road (700)	32	88
Touchwood	90	80

**Commentary**

- 65. Only Solihull Town Centre, as the main retail centre for the borough, has defined primary retail frontages. The High Street returns the lowest score of any of the primary frontages at 65% in A1 retail use. Most of the remaining High Street units are in A2 or A3 use. This continues to represent a predominance of A1 retailing as the main street level activity as envisaged by the Local Plan.



66. The Council remains committed to maintaining the vitality of the town centre as a highly accessible and inclusive location for the provision of a very broad range of goods and services including retail shops. Future policies will need to take into account changing shopping patterns and the most up-to-date information on retail need. Primary retail frontages remain a means of encouraging core areas in the town centre to remain mainly in shop use.

**Out of Centre Retail**

67. Out of centre retailing has been significant within the Borough. Whilst there is no specific indicator to report on it is useful to understand what retail development has occurred outside of the main centres to provide an overall picture of retailing within the Borough.
68. The following table records the extent of out of centre completed development (in sqm).

Location	Developed as of Mar 2019	Developed as of Mar 2024
Solihull Retail Park	Gross 22,938 Net 19,103	Gross 23,044 Net 19,103
Sears Retail Park	Gross 24,637 Net 15,916	Gross 26,141 Net 18,148
Solihull Gate	Gross 6,430 Net 5,525	Gross 6,430 Net 5,528
NEC Factory Outlet Centre (completed Aug 2015)	Gross 14,362 Net 9,594	Gross 14,362 Net 9,594
Free standing convenience (main stores)	Gross 22,334 Net 14,471	Gross 22,334 Net 14,471
Free standing non-food (main stores)	Gross 6,494 Net 5,311	Gross 6,494 Net 5,311

**Commentary**

69. Since 2013 the main Shirley retail parks show some modest increase in overall floorspace. Most of this increase is due to the construction of the Next homewares and clothing store which was completed in 2014 through redevelopment of a former Comet unit on the Sears Retail Park and the construction of an M&S store (opened Summer 2021) that redeveloped Homebase, also on Sears. The M&S store links to M&S food that moved to the retail park from Shirley in about 2014. Two small kiosks were developed in about 2019 and are occupied by Costa Coffee and Subway. Solihull Gate redeveloped a car showroom site in about 2012 and units were substantially completed by 2014-
70. Changes have occurred since 2013 through the subdivision of larger units into smaller units, for example, part of Homebase was divided to create units for M&S Food and Homesense. The former Toys R Us unit at Sears Retail Park was divided to create a Lidl and a Smyths toy store (opened about 2020). PC World (formerly a freestanding unit off the A34 in Shirley) now shares some of the floorspace of the Curry’s unit, as does Carphone Warehouse. Other retailers also share floorspace from some of the bigger units.
71. The division of units, some with mezzanine space; the construction of the food/drink kiosks; the emergence of café/restaurant facilities within units; and the sharing of floorspace, may be indicative that the retail parks are feeling the effects of the same changes in shopping patterns that are affecting town centres and are therefore seeking greater flexibility of offer. The encroachment of convenience retailing and of Next and M&S is perhaps indicative of the difficulties in finding suitably well progressed site opportunities in centres. M&S in Solihull

Town Centre remains a vacant unit but Next in the centre remains trading. Other High Street names are (or like Argos were), also present on the retail parks such as Boots and B&M. At about Summer 2021 a leisure use (gym) occupied space on Sears.

- 72. At the NEC, the resorts world Factory Outlet Centre (FOC) was completed in October 2015 adding 14,362 sqm of retail development. Other uses include a casino, cinema, food and beverage provision, conference facilities and a hotel. The whole development is 47,000 sqm. The FOC has restrictions on goods that can be sold but the development is indicative of NEC ambitions to broaden its leisure offer to visitors.
- 73. The only notable freestanding retail store to come forward since 2013 was Sports Direct which occupied the former PC World Unit (now in the Retail Park Curry’s unit) off the A34 at Shirley. The existing store was 3,255 sqm and Sports Direct added 1,567 sqm.

**Policy P3 – Provision of Land for General Business and Premises**

*Indicator – Floorspace developed for employment use by type, size and number of employees*

- 74. The following table sets out floorspace developed for employment use by type and the number of employees.

Use Class	Developed Apr 13 – Mar 19	Developed Apr 18 – Mar 19	Developed Apr 13 – Mar 19	Developed Apr 18 – Mar 19
	Floorspace (sqm)		Jobs	
B1a	28,420	7,299	2,221	582
B1b&c	0	0	0	0
B2/B8	18,335	0	374	0
B8	23,113	0	300	0

- 75. Update Apr 2019 to Mar 2024 & Apr 2023 to Mar 2024

Use Class	Developed Apr 19 – Mar 24	Developed Apr 23 – Mar 24	Developed Apr 19 – Mar 24	Developed Apr 23 – Mar 24
	Floorspace (sqm)		Jobs	
B1a	10,930	7,169	841	551
B1b&c	0	0	0	0
B2	329	0	9	0
B8	5,888	5,888	76	76
B2/B8	40,140	0	704	0

Use Class	Developed Apr 19 – Mar 24	Developed Apr 23 – Mar 24	Developed Apr 19 – Mar 24	Developed Apr 23 – Mar 24
	Floorspace (sqm)		Jobs	
B1a	14,873	0	1,533	0
B1b&c	0	0	0	0
B2	11,836	0	329	0
B8	22,573	0	293	0

### Commentary

76. The Local Plan allocates a total of 41.5 ha of land for general business purposes in the B1/B2/B8 use classes, as set out in Fig. 13 in the plan (excludes Birmingham Business Park, Blythe Valley Business Park and Jaguar Land Rover). About 26ha of the Fig. 13 land is located in the south of the borough at The Green (formerly TRW) Shirley and at Fore and Solihull Business Park at Monkspath. The remainder is located north of the A45 near the Airport and NEC at Chep/Higginson, Land North of Clock Interchange and land adjacent Birmingham Business Park.
77. The following table records the business land supply as of Mar 19 on allocated sites (update to Fig. 13 of the SLP). This was the position when the AMR 2020 was published.

Site	Area remaining (ha)	Preferred Use Class
The Green (site 25)	0	B1, B2, B8
Solihull Business Park (site 26)	0	B1, B2, B8
Fore, Stratford Road (site 27)	2	B1
CHEP/Higginson, Bickenhill Lane (site 28)	4	B1, B2, B8
Land north of Clock Interchange (site 29)	2	B1
Land adjacent Birmingham Business Park (site 31)	3	B1, B2, B8

78. The following table records the business land supply as of Mar 24 on allocated sites (further update to Fig. 13 of the SLP).

Site	Area remaining (ha)	Preferred Use Class
The Green (site 25)	0	B1, B2, B8
Solihull Business Park (site 26)	0	B1, B2, B8
Fore, Stratford Road (site 27)	0	B1
CHEP/Higginson, Bickenhill Lane (site 28)	4	B1, B2, B8
Land north of Clock Interchange (site 29)	2	B1
Land adjacent Birmingham Business Park (site 31)	0	B1, B2, B8

79. Between March 2019 and March 2024 new employment development was completed at Fore. The Green was redeveloped mainly for residential, and car showroom use. Development at the Green has also included a 0.6ha B8 storage unit developed over the monitoring year. About 0.7ha remains at The Green, intended to be a car showroom adjacent the B8 storage unit, but further business development could potentially come forward on this plot.
80. In addition to the above sites there are several older sites of significant size within or at the edge of the main urban area. Largest among these are Cranmore Industrial Estate at Shirley (47ha), Elmdon Trading Estate and Birmingham International Park at Bickenhill (each about 17ha) and Lode Lane Industrial Estate (5ha) north of Solihull Town Centre.
81. These sites continue to provide employment development opportunities to varying extent through redevelopment. In addition, Solihull Town centre is a focus for B1 offices.
82. Since 2013 these allocated and non-allocated sites have provided the development set out above. During the monitoring period from April 2013 to March 2019 about 3ha of office development was at Elmdon Trading Estate (Ingenuity House), Fore and Cranmore Industrial Estate. Approx. 4ha of B8 development was at Solihull Business Park and Cranmore Industrial Estate and about 3ha of B2/B8 development was at Elmdon Trading Estate and Cranmore Industrial Estate.
83. From April 2019 to March 2024 about 2ha of offices were completed at Fore, about 0.6ha of B8 development was at The Green and 9ha of B2/B8 development was at the Birmingham Business Park extension land. About 0.7ha of B2 development was completed at Cranmore Industrial Estate. The only development during the monitoring year on these sites was the 0.6ha of B8 at The Green and the 2ha of offices at Fore.
84. Developed land on these sites between April 2013 and March 2024 amounts to about 22ha which equates to about 2ha per year on average. A significant part of this figure is the B2/B8 development at Birmingham Business Park extension (9ha) that was substantially developed

between Winter 2018 to Spring 2020. For the preceding 12 years before March 2013 average yearly take up had been 2.3ha.

85. The quantum of employment generated by the developed land can be estimated using the Homes & Communities Agency Employment Density Guide (3rd Edition Nov 2015). From April 2013 to March 2019 development yielded an estimated 2,221 office jobs and an estimated 674 jobs through B2 and B8 development. About 1,039 of estimated jobs were in the south of the borough. In the north of the borough, where unemployment is persistently high about 1,855 jobs were estimated to have been created. Using the same employment density guide, estimated employment from development completed between April 2019 and March 2024 equates to 1,630 jobs, including at Birmingham Business Park extension land (local plan site 31) that alone would provide for about 704 jobs in the North of the borough.
86. In regard to Birmingham Business Park (excluding site 31) and Blythe Valley Business Park, development between 2013 and 2019 potentially yielded about 1,411 business class jobs. The updated figures for these 2 important business sites for development between April 2019 and 2024, provide an estimated 1,766 additional jobs, 173 in the north of the borough.
87. The UK Central proposals being progressed with the delivery of HS2 will provide significant employment floorspace. Land at Damson Parkway is expected to meet the future expansion needs of Jaguar Land Rover as well as wider local and strategic employment needs into the future. A masterplan published in 2021 to guide development on land at Arden Cross sets out aspirations for industrial, retail, hotel and educational floorspace together with significant residential development.

#### *Indicator – Loss of employment land to other uses*

88. No specific data collected, see following commentary.

#### **Commentary**

89. Policy P3 of the Local Plan provides for a continuing supply of employment land in the business use classes and seeks to protect the supply for its intended purpose. Protection applies to both allocated and non-allocated employment sites. Alternative uses may be accepted where the criteria given in the policy are met.
90. **Blythe Valley Business Park** - No significant business class losses from 2013 to 2019. In July 2018 planning consent was granted for mixed development that included substantial residential development, supporting retail development and a hotel on an estimated 20 hectares, in relation to Site 10 (residential) in the Plan. The application also proposed up to 98,850 sqm of business class development to meet requirements under Local Plan policy P1 which expects provision for a substantial quantum of business development. From the master plan accompanying the application this equated to an estimated 13 hectares. In terms of business class development, the site is developed out, and no significant new completed development took place in the monitoring year to March 2024.
91. **The Green/TRW** - Provided 18 hectares of the local plan employment land supply at time of adoption of the Plan. In 2018 consent was granted for 2 residential care units. In March 2019 substantial residential and car dealerships were approved on the remaining land. Residential development is substantially progressed, but during the monitoring year to March 2024 a B8 storage facility was developed, leaving about 0.7ha for car showroom use (or other commercial uses). Overall, the Green is a substantial loss of employment land.
92. **Solihull Business Park** - About 2 hectares was lost to a car dealership with a substantial workshop facility (during 2011) and to a public house/restaurant (during 2015) that provides

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a supporting amenity to the business site and to nearby business developments such as Cranmore Industrial Estate, Monkspath Business Park and Solar Park.

93. **Town centre** - Consort House was converted to 100 apartments (during 2018/2019), Catherine's Court offices were demolished to create a Waitrose foodstore (2016 - 0.7ha) and Sapphire Court (large office block near the centre and the railway station) was part converted and redeveloped to create a hotel and apartments. The former Magistrate Court in Homer Road has been redeveloped and occupied by an Aldi foodstore (2020 – 0.5ha).
94. **Established business estates** - A number of changes of use and small-scale developments have been granted consent for leisure and other uses of a nature that can find difficulty locating in a town centre. Collectively they amount only to about 0.8 hectares (2013 to 2019). Similarly, no significant losses have emerged 2019 to 2024.
95. **PD Rights** – Across 12 sites, office floorspace has been lost to provide 523 dwelling units under permitted development rights that allow office floorspace to be converted for such purposes.

## 4. Providing Homes for All

### Key Challenges

- Challenge A – Reducing Inequalities in the Borough
- Challenge B – Addressing Affordable Housing Needs across the Borough
- Challenge G – Imbalance in the Housing offer across the Borough and a Shortage of Gypsy and Traveller Sites

### Key policies

- P4 – Meeting Housing Needs
- P5 - Provision of Land for Housing
- P6 – Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers

96. The Local Plan aims to ensure a broad range of different sizes and types of housing, of different tenures and values is provided to meet all needs within the Borough to create and maintain mixed and balanced sustainable communities. Solihull is part of a wider housing market area which incorporates Birmingham and 12 other surrounding local authorities and is working with these authorities to address the housing need across the area.
97. As a consequence of the High Court challenge and Court of Appeal decision the adopted Local Plan does not include an adopted figure for the Borough's housing requirement. This will be addressed in the Local Plan review.
98. Across the Borough there is a shortage of affordable housing. A key objective of the plan is to make provision for the right size, type and tenure of affordable housing in the right locations to help meet the local housing need. To address one of the constraints in delivering affordable housing the Local Plan reduced the site threshold at which the requirement for providing affordable housing was previously sought. However, as a result of changes to national planning policy, affordable housing provision requirements have been largely restricted to major developments, rather than using the lower threshold (of 3 dwellings) set out in the SLP.
99. Solihull has an ageing population, and it is important that older people have good housing options. This may include general needs housing built to more accessible standards, 'age-exclusive' retirement schemes and a range of specialist accommodation including housing with care and nursing care provision.
100. The private market has responded strongly in bringing forward a broad range of planning applications for schemes to meet the requirements of older people. The Council has also enabled and also directly developed a range of affordable housing and care schemes to meet the needs of people on lower and median incomes. The Council will seek to monitor the build out and occupancy rates of older persons accommodation to ensure it is meeting appropriate needs.
101. There is also a need for specialist affordable housing for younger adults with disabilities. The Council works with partners to identify needs, agree suitable solutions and identify opportunities to bring forward housing that can meet the needs of people with physical, sensory or learning disabilities.
102. Since the adoption of the Local Plan the Government has introduced a new requirement that local authorities should maintain a list of those wishing to register for land to self-build. The Self-build and Custom House building Act 2015 places a duty on local authorities to keep a register of individuals and associations of individuals who wish to acquire serviced plots of land to bring forward self-build and custom build house building projects and also placed a

duty to have regard to those registers in carrying out their housing, planning and land functions.

103. The Local Authority has a duty under the Housing Act 2004 to assess the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and Traveller community and set out how this need will be met. Gypsies and Travellers are amongst the most socially excluded groups in society and the link between the lack of sites and poor health and education within this group is established and acknowledged by the Council. The Local Plan sets the policy framework for delivering the need for pitches over the plan period in appropriate locations to reduce the number of unauthorised encampments and enable Gypsies and Travellers to access services and facilities to meet their needs.

### Policy P4 – Meeting Housing Needs

#### Policy P4 (a) Affordable Housing

*Indicator – Number of affordable dwellings delivered through the planning system*

104. A total of 1,974 dwellings have been complete as affordable units over the period Apr 14 to Mar 24. This has included 1,239 for social rent and 735 for shared ownership, as shown in the tables below

#### Commentary

105. The following table indicates the number of **social and affordable rent** properties that have been completed by March 2024:

Year <sup>1</sup>	1 bed bung.	2 bed bung.	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4 bed house
2014/15	0	0	75	6	11	55	58	20
2015/16	0	5	53	43	0	50	42	5
2016/17	0	4	36	14	0	30	20	6
2017/18	12	2	60	1	0	34	26	6
2018/19	4	0	81	16	7	36	24	2
2019/20	0	0	80	16	0	26	6	0
2020/21	3	5	48	19	0	27	13	0
2021/22	0	0	16	0	0	28	26	1
2022/23	0	0	12	1	7	7	14	3
2023/24	0	0	12	2	0	10	10	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>473</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>46</b>



106. The following table indicates the number of **shared ownership** properties that have been completed by Mar 2019 and estimations for completions to March 2024:

Year <sup>2</sup>	1 bed bung.	2 bed bung.	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4 bed house
2014/15	0	0	2	18	0	15	16	0
2015/16	0	0	0	0	0	11	21	0
2016/17	0	0	1	0	0	24	14	0
2017/18	0	4	6	0	0	29	13	0
2018/19	0	0	2	4	0	44	37	0
2019/20	0	0	0	4	0	33	12	0
2020/21	0	0	52	58	0	11	20	0
2021/22	0	0	7	31	0	20	46	0
2022/23	0	0	6	28	0	38	32	8
2023/24	0	0	0	58	0	8	6	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>8</b>

107. There is no target set for this measure as most of the delivery is through the 40% affordable housing target which is explained below.

*Indicator – Percentage of affordable housing on qualifying sites, with a target of 40%*

108. Over the period Apr 14 to Mar 24 permissions were granted for 6,584 dwellings (of all tenures) on 229 sites (qualifying sites of 3 or more net dwellings as per the Policy 4a in the 2013 Local Plan. The policy was amended following national changes to NPPF). Of this total, 1,627 dwellings (on 48 sites) have been, or are to be, provided as affordable dwellings. This represents an overall percentage of 25%. However, it is important to note that the 40% target was not applicable to all of these sites, as many were exempt, for instance because the number of dwellings fell below the applicable threshold. **Of the 48 sites that have included on-site provision of affordable housing, this has been at 43% of the total number of dwellings provided on these sites.** These figures are set out in more detail in the following tables.

**Commentary**

109. The affordable housing permissions were as follows:

- Planning policy (Policy 4a of Solihull Local Plan). On-site percentage achieved: 35% (996/2,847)
- North Solihull Regeneration. On-site percentage achieved: 49% (297/606)

- Direct development (Council and housing associations). On-site percentage achieved: 100% (334/335)

110. The following table sets out the affordable housing position on all 229 sites that received any residential permission in the period Apr 14 to Mar 24:

Outcome	No. of sites	Comment
Affordable housing provided on site	48	See table below
Commuted sum at 40%	7	These related to 4 elderly living schemes; 2 very small sites; and 1 scheme design making on site affordable difficult
Commuted sum at <40%	7	Viability evidence supplied and agreed to justify less than 40% or the commuted sum was reduced by the vacant building credit
Viability justified no affordable house	4	Viability assessments that were supplied by the applicant were also scrutinised by the Council
National planning policy exemptions	138	See table below
Development provided for C2 accommodation	20	1,164 dwellings have included care provision, thus falling outside of (current) policy
North Solihull Regeneration schemes	5	233 dwellings on these sites made no contribution <sup>3</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>229</b>	

111. Off-site Section 106 affordable financial obligations (commuted sums) have been agreed on 11 sites providing a total value of £3.026m. The Council currently has £1.149m of off-site payments which are either received or secured through legal agreement and uncommitted. Off-site financial contributions are used to meet housing need by delivering affordable housing elsewhere.

<sup>3</sup> It was recognised that this would generally be balanced against some schemes that would provide more than 40% provision, and in overall terms schemes developed by the North Solihull Partnership delivered 47% of units as affordable housing.

112. Of the 48 sites that have included on-site provision of affordable dwellings, the following table sets out the percentages achieved:

Percentage achieved	No. of sites	No. of dwellings	Comment
16%	1	13	Number reduced due to Vacant Building Credit and use of a commuted sum (30% overall achieved)
20%	2	122	One site reduced due to Vacant Building Credit and the other also provided a commuted sum (achieving 40% overall)
25%	1	187	Viability evidence supplied and agreed to justify less than 40%
26%	1	19	North Solihull Regeneration scheme
40%	16	550	Mainly SLP allocated sites.
42%	1	156	Powergen where 60% is provided via Extra Care Charitable Trust which when balanced across the whole development provide an overall level of 42%
56%	1	82	North Solihull Regeneration scheme
65%	1	17	North Solihull Regeneration scheme
98%	1	76	Kingshurst Village Centre, one dwelling is a replacement vicarage
100%	23	405	Two North Solihull Regeneration schemes; others Council and Housing Association developments.
<b>Total</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>1,627</b>	<b>Overall percentage of on-site affordable housing is 40%.</b>

113. A significant number of sites with approved applications (138) were outside the scope of Local Plan Policy 4a due to national planning policy exemptions. These are set out in the following table.

Exemption	No. of sites	No. of dwellings	Comment
Under affordable housing threshold	121	679	National policy exemption set at 10 dwellings <sup>4</sup> , this supersedes SLP policy threshold of 3 dwellings.
Permitted Development Rights	13	559	National policy exemption that policy not applied to office to residential conversions
Vacant Building Credit, leading to no affordable housing	4	57	National policy exemption that sees level of affordable housing being discounted in proportion to extent of demolition taking place, these are scheme where there was no affordable
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>1,295</b>	

114. Approvals have been granted on 19 of the allocated sites in the Solihull Local Plan. Some of these sites were granted approval prior to 1 April 2014 and the table below therefore analyses a slightly different range of sites. However, it was considered useful to illustrate the level of affordable housing provided on allocated sites.

Outcome	No. of sites	Comment
No on-site provision	2	Both North Solihull Regeneration schemes. One conditioned with 100% on an associated site (thus achieving 30% overall). Overall, 47% of housing developed by North Solihull Partnership has been affordable housing.
<40%	3	Blythe Valley Park - viability evidence supplied and agreed to justify less than 40%. Two sites at Kenilworth Road (Balsall Common) – commuted sum (at 40% in lieu of on-site provision) and application of Vacant Building Credit resulting in 30% provision.
40%	14	In accordance with policy.
<b>Total</b>	<b>19</b>	

<sup>4</sup> Unless more than 1,000 sqm being provided.

**Policy P4 (c) Market Housing**

*Indicator – Mix of market housing reflecting the likely profile of household types requiring market housing as evidenced by the latest SHMA*

115. The following table indicates i) the market dwelling mix achieved on all completed developments to date on planning applications approved since the date of the adoption of the 2013 Solihull Local Plan until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024; and ii) applications approved in that timeframe that have started, but are yet to be completed.

Dwelling Size	Percentage of Units on All Completed Developments	Percentage of Units on Completed and Yet to be All Completed Developments
1 or 2 bedrooms	56%	46%
3 bedrooms	18%	26%
4 or more bedrooms	26%	28%

116. The following table indicates i) the market dwelling mix achieved on housing developments (but **excluding** C2 and specialist C3 housing) to date on planning applications approved from the date of the adoption of the 2013 Solihull Local Plan until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024Apr 2014 to Mar 2019; and ii) applications approved in that timeframe that have started, but are yet to be completed.

Dwelling Size	Percentage of Units on C3 Completed Developments	Percentage of Units on Completed and Yet to be C3 Completed Developments
1 or 2 bedrooms	50%	40%
3 bedrooms	21%	29%
4 or more bedrooms	29%	31%

**Commentary**

117. The Council monitors housing completions and land supply from 1st April – 31st March annually. The Council operates a live monitoring system with data on planning applications collected throughout the year. During April and May the data collected is validated against the planning applications system and every site that had the benefit of an extant planning permission during the previous monitoring year is visited to collect data on housing starts and completions.
118. Given the number of applications to be monitored, the Council do not monitor the mix of housing built each year, but rather the number of dwellings either under construction or built out. Therefore, it is not possible to report on the market mix that is completed each individual year, in the same way that affordable housing is monitored. For this reason, the tables below show the overall market mix of developments that have been granted planning permission (in that particular year) since the formal adoption of the Local Plan in Dec 2013 which are on sites where development has been completed. The row in each table after the total indicates

the number of dwellings with planning permission that that have not yet been completed (either on sites not yet started or on sites where development is not yet complete).

119. The Council adopted its Meeting Housing Needs SPD in July 2014, which included guidelines for market mix, based on the latest SHMA evidence at the time. This policy direction encouraged a greater proportion of smaller dwellings to be delivered. From the publication of the 2016 SHMA for the Local Plan Review evidence base, the policy direction on major applications had been to encourage a 30:35:35 split on 1 or 2 beds: 3 beds: 4+ beds as this related to more up-to-date evidence. From the publication of the 2020 HEDNA for the Local Plan Review, the evidence base was updated, and the split 30:50:20 was encouraged on major developments.
120. The monitoring data shows that a range of market housing types have been delivered since the implementation of the Local Plan policy. The higher number of 2-bedroom flats reflects delivering the SHMA & HEDNA market mix; the propensity of C2 and specialist C3 accommodation to be 2 bedroom or less; and office conversions. Prior notification applications for office conversions fall under permitted development rights, and therefore the Council has less control over the mix.
121. The data below has been split between major and minor applications, as comments on market mix are focussed on major applications. The data has been further split to separate standard C3 housing, and C2 housing. Note, Category II type sheltered accommodation has been included in C2. All dwelling types reported here, however, are considered 'independent' units of accommodation.
122. The following table indicates the number of **dwellings (C3)** completed to date on **major**<sup>5</sup> sites that commenced construction in the year indicated:

Year	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	3 bed flat	4 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4+ bed house
2014/15	0	0	0	0	0	12	47	70
2015/16	22	72	0	0	2	19	45	80
2016/17	51	98	1	0	8	68	76	92
2017/18	0	63	0	0	12	122	89	99
2018/19	31	25	2	0	10	122	89	99
2019/20	67	61	0	0	0	60	93	112
2020/21	61	39	0	0	0	11	55	29
2021/22	29	57	0	0	0	19	35	53
2022/23	26	39	0	0	0	4	3	3
2023/24	84	36	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total built</b>	371	490	3	0	32	370	505	620

<sup>5</sup> Major developments are classed as accommodating 10 or more dwellings.

Year	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	3 bed flat	4 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4+ bed house
<b>To be completed</b>	8	189	0	0	0	26	211	185

123. The following table indicates the number of **dwelling (C2 and/or specialist C3 housing)** completed to date on **major** sites that commenced construction in the year indicated:

Year	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	3 bed flat	4 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4+ bed house
2014/15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015/16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2016/17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2017/18	49	41	0	0	0	10	0	0
2018/19	23	32	0	0	0	12	4	0
2019/20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020/21	0	0	0	0	0	30	96	128
2021/22	26	74	0	0	0	0	0	0
2022/23	38	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023/24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total built</b>	136	169	0	0	0	52	100	128
<b>To be completed</b>	36	49	0	0	0	0	0	0

124. The following table indicates the number of **dwelling (C3)** completed to date on **minor**<sup>6</sup> sites that commenced construction in the year indicated:

Year	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	3 bed flat	4 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4+ bed house
2014/15	3	7	1	0	0	2	9	11
2015/16	16	5	1	0	1	0	16	14
2016/17	9	6	0	0	2	11	11	30

<sup>6</sup> Minor developments are classed as accommodating less than 10 dwellings.

Year	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	3 bed flat	4 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4+ bed house
2017/18	18	19	0	0	5	11	12	39
2018/19	12	3	0	0	1	3		25
2019/20	13	24	7	0	0	14	7	26
2020/21	12	7	0	0	0	2	1	16
2021/22	11	15	0	0	2	12	47	55
2022/23	12	10	2	0	6	21	25	59
2023/24	10	18	0	0	1	11	13	43
<b>Total built</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>318</b>
<b>To be completed</b>	37	27	0	0	6	16	18	56

125. The following table indicates the number of **dwelling (C2 and/or specialist C3 housing)** completed to date on **minor** sites that commenced construction in the year indicated:

Year	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	3 bed flat	4 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4+ bed house
2014/15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2015/16	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2016/17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2017/18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2018/19	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2019/20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2020/21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2021/22	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2022/23	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
2023/24	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total built</b>	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	0



Year	1 bed flat	2 bed flat	3 bed flat	4 bed flat	1 bed house	2 bed house	3 bed house	4+ bed house
To be completed	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

126. The SLP does not have an indicator regarding housing for disabled and older people but recognises the growing need for homes which are suitable for both older people and younger adults with disabilities.
127. The Council works with social care commissioners and developers to help bring forward additional accommodation to help meet these needs. The Council will seek to monitor the build out and occupancy rates of older persons accommodation to ensure it is meeting appropriate needs
128. The table below shows additions of specialist independent dwellings, both market and affordable, and care bedspaces (i.e. in care homes or other communal type establishments) during the period April 2014 to March 2024<sup>7</sup>.

Planning Status	C2 (e.g. Extra Care) and C3 'Category II' Independent Units	Bedspaces in Communal Establishments <sup>8</sup>	Total
Completed or Under Construction Apr 14 to Apr 24	751	614	1,365
Not Commenced	0	87	87
<b>Total</b>	<b>751</b>	<b>701</b>	<b>1,452</b>

<sup>7</sup> The market and affordable numbers are presented slightly differently here to those in earlier paragraphs and so will not directly tally.

<sup>8</sup> Not including children's homes.

**P4d (Local Plan Review policy) Self and Custom Housebuilding**

*Indicator – Number of people on the Solihull Self and Custom Housebuilding and number of permissions grated in each base period.*

129. Although this is not an indicator from the SLP, it is a measure that Government collect data on and is related to the monitoring data that is collected. It is considered that it would be helpful to provide this as part of the AMR.
130. The following table indicates the number of people/associations<sup>9</sup> on the Council's Self & Custom Build Register at the end of each base period (the end of October in each year), and the number of relevant permissions granted.

Time Period	No. on register at end of period	No. of permissions granted in period
Apr 16 – Oct 16	103	
Nov 16 – Oct 17	205	10
Nov 17 – Oct 18	297	19
Nov 18 – Oct 19	374	35
Nov 19 – Oct 20	450	25
Nov 20 - Oct 21	567	28
Nov 21 – Oct 22	576	18
Nov 22 – Oct 23	21	13

131. Government Regulations enable the Council to split the Register into two parts. Part 1 of the Register is for those who potentially meet Local Connection Criteria and Assessment of Financial Resource. Applicants who meet these qualifying criteria will have the 'Right to Build' and the Council will need to identify enough suitable plots of land to build or commission their own home to meet local demand through their Local Plan. Part 2 of the Register is for all other applicants; however, the Council does not have a legal obligation to identify enough suitable plots of land to build or commission their own home to meet local demand through their Local Plan.
132. The Council consulted on and approved the introduction of a Solihull Self-Build and Custom Housebuilding Register Local Connection Criteria, Assessment of Financial Resources and Fee Policy in 2017.
133. The Council has held implementation of this policy in abeyance since 2017, due to work on its emerging local plan which is seeking to boost the supply of custom & self-build plots. The Council wrote to all those on the Self and Custom Housebuilding Register on 17 August 2022 advising of the plan to implement the policy. This policy was implemented during the 2022/23

<sup>9</sup> The number of 'entries' on the register are recorded (rather than plot numbers) to align with annual returns made to Government.

base period and the Council has emailed those on the register encouraging them to join up. In accordance with PPG, and also in fairness to those that have paid the fee, during the 2022/23 base period those entries that have not paid the annual fee due have now been removed from the register. We have also emailed them to confirm this and advised they can rejoin the register at any point via the app and pay the fee.

134. The split of the register is shown below. Those on part 1 of the register have the 'right to build', as outlined above.

01/11/2022 to 31/10/2023	Part 1	Part 2
Number of Register at start of period	7	568
Net change in number	-3	-557
Number on register at end of period	10	11

### Commentary

135. The Solihull Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Register was launched in March 2016 and is available on the Council's website at [www.solihull.gov.uk/selfbuild](http://www.solihull.gov.uk/selfbuild).
136. The Housing and Planning Act 2016 took forward the requirements of the Self-build and Custom Housebuilding Act 2015 further by introducing a 'Right to Build'. The obligation to grant planning permission for sufficient serviced plots to meet demand, is measured by the number on the register on the 31st October each year, and this is the number of plots that should then be granted over the following three-year period.
137. The first three-year period under this obligation (within which the requisite number of planning permissions should have been granted) ended on 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2019. By then plots should have been granted to satisfy the demand as indicated by the number on the register as of 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2016.
138. The Council currently has a restricted land supply and most of the sites allocated in the currently adopted plan are developed or are under construction – and without a policy for self/custom build in that plan there are few opportunities on these sites for such developments. Until a new plan is adopted it is windfall developments that are likely to provide the principal land source to accommodate self/custom build opportunities.

## Policy P5 – Provision of Land for Housing

*Indicator – The delivery of 500 (net) dwellings per annum (2006-2028).*

139. The following table sets out housing completions<sup>10</sup> for each year from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2001.

Year	Net Additional Dwellings Provided
01/02	586
02/03	325
03/04	377
04/05	555
05/06	836
06/07	680
07/08	514
08/09	449
09/10	310
10/11	194
11/12	268
12/13	336
13/14	133
14/15	675
15/16	687
16/17	574
17/18	715
18/19	807
19/20	716
20/21	760
21/22	828
22/23	608

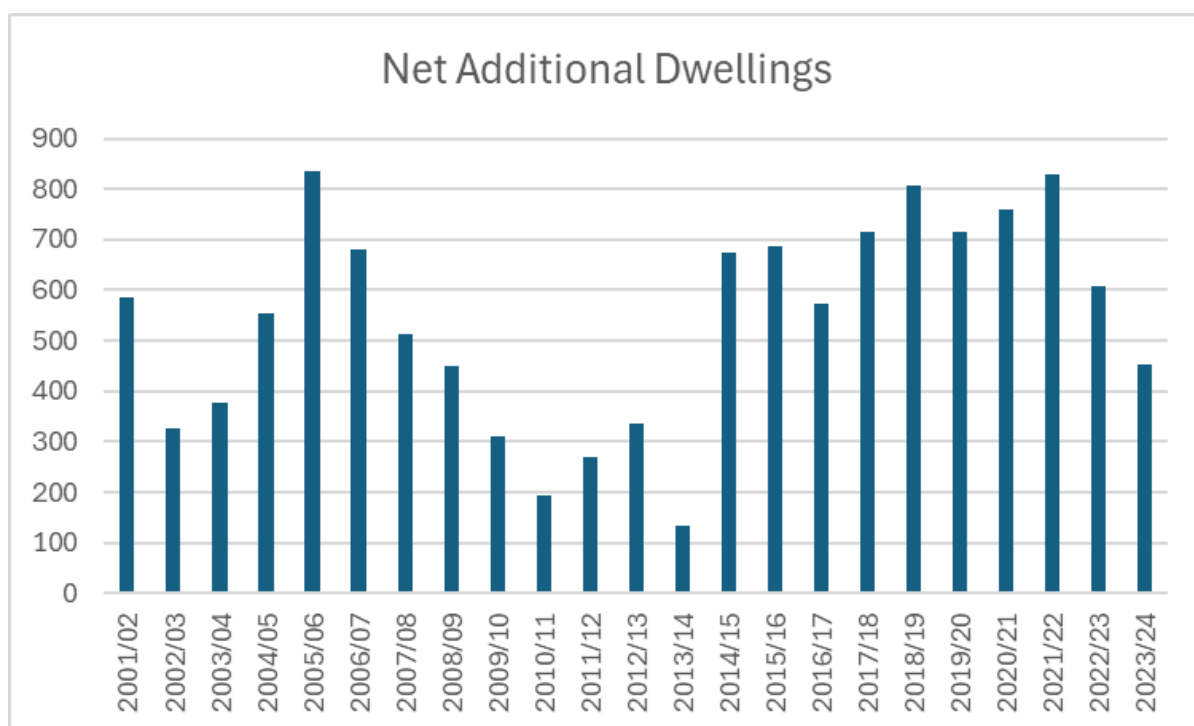
<sup>10</sup> 2001-2011 figures extracted from the MHCLG publication: '[live tables on dwelling stock](#)' (table 122). Other figures are from Council's monitoring data. There may be slight variations from previous versions due to corrections since the HFR.

23/24	452
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140. Average completions per year over different time ranges

- 538 dwellings per year as an average of the 23 years from 2001/02 to 2023/2024
- 453 dwellings per year as an average of UDP period from 2001/02 to 2012/2013
- 632 dwelling per year as an average of Local Plan period from 2013/2014 to 2023/24
- 682 dwelling per year as an average of the 10 years up to 2023/2024
- 673 dwellings per year as an average of the 5 years up to 2023/2024

141. The following graph indicates the number of completions from 2001/02 to 2023/24:



**Commentary**

142. As a result of the High Court legal challenge in 2014, the Council does not have an adopted housing requirement figure (as per Para. 65 of the NPPF). The use of the 500 dwellings per annum in the monitoring indicator is therefore not appropriate.

143. The Council’s housing requirement is therefore derived from the local housing need calculated using the standard method in national planning guidance.

**Local Housing Need**

144. The LHN is arrived at by using the 2014 household projections (published in July 2016) and applying an affordability ratio to them. The affordability ratio is a comparison of the median house prices in an area to the median workplace earnings in that area. These are published by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The latest statistics were published in March 2023. A ratio over 4:1 (house price to earnings) indicates an affordability issue in an area that should be addressed by increasing the number of homes to be built in an area compared with what is expected through the household projections.

145. The 2014 household projections indicate the following:

- Number of households in 2024: 93,376
- Number of households in 2034: 99835
- Difference (ten-year period 2019 to 2029): 6,459
- Annual average: 646

146. The March 2024 affordability statistics indicate the following:

- Median house price £330,000
- Median workplace earnings: £34,959
- Affordability ration: 9.44

147. As the affordability ratio of 9.44 is over 4 an adjustment factor needs to be applied. Using the standard methodology, the adjustment factor is 34.0%, meaning that the household projections should be increased by this amount.

148. Therefore, Local Housing Need is  $646 + 34.0\% = 866$  dwellings per annum. This will be used for any measure where a housing need figure is required during the year Apr 24 to Mar 25.

**Housing Delivery Test**

149. The Local Housing Need figure sets out the housing requirement going forward, and this can be subject to change in each year as the affordability ratio is updated.

150. Alongside the introduction of the Local Housing Need figure, the Government also introduced the Housing Delivery Test (HDT) measurement, which compares housing delivery over the previous 3 years to an expected delivery rate for each local planning authority.

Period	Annual Need <sup>11</sup>	Annual Supply <sup>12</sup>	3 year need	3 year supply	HDT Result & date announced
2015-16	616	711			
2016-17	623	547			
2017-18	610	751	1,849	2,009	<b>109% (Feb 19)</b>
2018-19	767	807	2,000	2,105	<b>105% (Feb 20)</b>
2019-20	706	716	2,083	2,279	<b>109% (Jan 21)</b>
2020-21	537	760	2,010	2,283	<b>114% (Feb 22)</b>
2021-22	850	828	2,093	2,304	<b>110% (Dec 23)</b>
2022-23	852	607	2,239	2,241	<b>100% (Dec 24)</b>

151. If HDT results fall below certain thresholds set out in the NPPF (Para. 79), the following consequences apply:

- Below 95% - The Council must produce an action plan addressing the under delivery.

<sup>11</sup> This equates to the LHN

<sup>12</sup> The HDT results are based on number of net additional dwellings provided in each local authority (table 122 reported earlier), but these are then adjusted to include (for instance) an allowance for communal properties. Therefore, the supply figure in this table will not match the supply figures provided in an earlier table. Also, there are at times annual checks that change the delivery figures. For instance, the supply in 17-18 was updated to 756 in 2018/19.

- Below 85% - A buffer of 20% is applied to the 5YLS calculation as well as the need for an action plan.
- Below 75% - The NPPF ‘tilted balance’ applies as relevant policies would be treated as ‘out-of-date, as well as the 20% buffer and action plan.

*Indicator – Maintain a continuous five years (+5%) housing land supply based on the delivery target of 500 (net) dwellings per annum (2006-2028) and taking delivery to date into account.*

As of 1<sup>st</sup> Apr 2024, the Council could demonstrate a land supply of 2.13 years.

### Commentary

#### Housing Need

152. Due to the High Court challenge to the Local Plan in 2014, the housing requirement element was removed from the Plan. Since the introduction of the LHN, the LHN figure amounts to the housing need for the Borough. See above for more detail, and Appendix A ‘Five Year Land Supply 01.04.2024).
153. For the purposes of the 5YLS, the housing need is 866 dwellings per annum, and 4,330 dwellings for the period April 2024 to March 2029.

#### Housing Supply

154. The Council’s five year housing land supply is comprised of planning applications that are either live, or started on the ground; extant Local Plan Allocations, sites from Land Availability Assessments and the Brownfield Land Register. A windfall rate of 200 dwellings per annum, for the last 3 years of the period has also been included. Only those sites that are considered deliverable, i.e. with a realistic prospect of completion within five years, have been included. The following table sets out the land supply.

	Source	Capacity <sup>13</sup>
1	Sites with planning permission (live)	208
2	Sites with planning permission (communal dwellings) (live)	46
3	Solihull Local Plan (SLP) 2013 Allocations	190
4	Land Availability Assessments	3
5	Brownfield Land Register	0
6	Town Centre Sites	125
7	UKC Hub Sites	0
8	Allocations in the Draft Submission Plan (2020)	1,256
9	Subtotal of above (rows 1 to 8)	1,828

<sup>13</sup> Deliverable - i.e. completions within 5 years

10	Less 10% non-implementation discount rate of rows 1 to 5 (i.e. 10% of 1,840)	-183
11	Sites with planning permission (started)	718
12	Sites with planning permission (communal dwellings) (started)	0
13	Windfall allowance <sup>14</sup>	600
14	Total (rows 9 to 13)	2,963

### **Windfall Rate**

155. The windfall assumption was based on past delivery as indicated in the following table:

Year	Net Windfall	Dwellings per annum (5-year average)	Dwellings per annum (3-year average)
2012-13	218		
2013-14	234		
2014-15	437		296
2015-16	190		287
2016-17	200	256	276
2017-18	158	244	183
2018-19	295	256	218
2019-20	350	239	268
2020-21	259	252	301
2021-22	310	274	306
2022-23	340	311	303
2023-24	198	291	283

### **Five Year Land Supply Conclusion**

156. The supply of 2,963 dwellings amounts to 2.13 years supply against the five year requirement of 6,946 dwellings.

<sup>14</sup> 200 dwellings per year for years 3 to 5 (inc.) Only years 3 to 5 are included to avoid double counting in years 1 and 2. Completions in year 1 and 2 from windfall developments are likely from planning permissions already granted rather than from windfalls yet to be granted permission.



**Policy P6 - Provision of Sites for Gypsies and Travellers**

*Indicator - Whether the identified need for permanent residential pitches has been met for the period 2012 – 2017, 2017 – 2022 and 2022 – 2027.*

157. The number of pitches that have either been granted permission or, for those without planning permission have been included as an allocation in the adopted plan, matches the identified need over the plan period (2012 to 2027).

**Commentary**

158. The following table sets out the identified need for pitches and the number allocated (through the Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Plan (December 2014)) and/or those with planning permission:

Period <sup>15</sup>	Identified Need (Pitches) <sup>16</sup>	No. of Pitches Allocated and/or Permitted
2012-2016	26	28
2017-2021	8.5	16
2022-2027	8.5	
<b>Total</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>44</b>

*Indicator – The number of authorised pitches provided per annum.*

159. The following table sets out the number of pitches granted planning permission per annum and the number completed:

Period	Identified need	Cumulative need	Pitches granted permission	Cumulative permissions	Pitches competed
2012	5.2	5.2	0	0	27
2013	5.2	10.4	22	22	
2014	5.2	15.6	6	28	
2015	5.2	20.8	0	28	
2016	5.2	26	0	28	
2017	1.7	27.7	5	33	
2018	1.7	29.4	2	35	

<sup>15</sup> Most monitoring periods run from 01/04 to 31/03, however the GTAA was based on calendar years and therefore this is reflected in the monitoring reported here.

<sup>16</sup> The need for the period post 2016 has been adjusted to add a further requirement of 5 pitches to that included in the SLP. This is to reflect appeal decisions at Shadowbrook Lane (APP/Q4625/C/13/2209742 and APP/Q4625/C/13/2209777) which effectively added to the need but was balanced with the grant of permission for 5 pitches.

Period	Identified need	Cumulative need	Pitches granted permission	Cumulative permissions	Pitches competed
2019	1.7	31.1	0	35	
2020	1.7	32.8	1	36	
2021	1.7	34.5	0	36	
2022	1.7	36.2	0	36	
2023	1.7	37.9	0	36	
2024	1.7	39.6	0	36	
<b>Total</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>39.6</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>27</b>

### Commentary

160. Policy P6 of the 2013 Solihull Local Plan sets out the Council's approach to the provision of sites for Gypsies and Travellers and establishes that the identified need for 38 will be determined through a Gypsy and Traveller Site Allocations Plan. The GTAA identified no requirement for a travelling show people site or formal transit site in the Borough. The Site Allocations Plan was adopted in December 2014 and allocates sites to meet the Council's identified need in full.
161. Since publication of the GTAA in 2012, a total of 36 pitches on 8 separate sites have been granted planning permission. Six of these pitches were granted on appeal and did not form part of the need requirement in the GTAA. Therefore, there are still 8 pitches to be granted planning permission to meet the 2012 GTAA requirement, although these are allocated in the Site Allocations Plan. The Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Plan recognised that the GTAA would need to be updated after 5 years. The GTAA has now been updated and this refreshed assessment will inform the Local Plan Review.

### *Indicator – The number of unauthorised developments and encampments per annum*

162. The following table sets out the number of new unauthorised encampments and the number of new unauthorised developments:

Period	No. of new unauthorised encampments	No. of new unauthorised developments
2014	Data not available	0
2015	Data not available	0
2016	6	0
2017	25	0
2018	14	0

2019	6	0
2020	7	0
2021	6	0
2022	6	0
2023	4	0
2024 (to 31 March)	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>0</b>

### Commentary

163. A peak of activity relating to unauthorised encampments occurred around 2017 & 2018 and this led the Council to obtaining a civil injunction prohibiting illegal encampments in 2018. Since then, the number of new unauthorised encampments has reduced.
164. Since 2012 (the GTAA base date), there have only been three instances of unauthorised development; all related to sites where initial occupation took place before 2012. These sites are as follows:
- Shadowbrook Lane<sup>17</sup>, Bickenhill
  - Eaves Green Lane, Meriden
  - Salter Street, Earlswood
165. The Shadowbrook Lane site was subject to initial occupation in 2005. The site was subject to enforcement action, and an appeal was subsequently allowed and added 5 additional pitches to the Council's pitch requirement figures.
166. The site at Eaves Green Lane in Meriden was first occupied in May 2010. Following legal action, the site was restored, and the breach remedied, in spring 2013.
167. The Salter Street case related to an unauthorised extension to an existing lawful site. This was remedied in 2014 through enforcement action.
168. There are no outstanding breaches of planning control at these sites and there have been no new unauthorised developments in the Borough since 2014.

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<sup>17</sup> This can be regarded as one site split into a number of sub-sites that may be planning units in their own right as a result of how it became established and evolved over time.

## 5. Improving Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

### Key Challenge

- Challenge H – Increasing Accessibility and Encouraging Sustainable Travel

### Key policies

- Policy P7 – Accessibility and Ease of Access
- Policy P8 – Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion

### Introduction

169. Ensuring safe easy access to facilities and services such as education, employment opportunities, and open space by all modes of transport is key in supporting economic growth and the creation of sustainable cohesive communities. The Borough is well placed in terms of the national rail and motorway network however there are challenges with congestion on some the Borough's local and strategic roads during peak periods. Some parts of the Borough such as North Solihull and the rural areas have poor access to public transport and there is high car usage in the Mature Suburbs. In certain areas there is poor pedestrian and cycling connectivity between communities and key services such as retail and employment.
170. In responding to these issues key objectives of the Local Plan include improving accessibility, reducing the need to travel, managing transport demand and reliance on the car, encouraging the use of sustainable forms of transport and addressing the relationship between economic growth and increases in car use.
171. The transport policies within the Local Plan aim to:
- Enable economic growth
  - Reduce greenhouse emissions
  - Connect communities, Centres and Employment
  - Encourage Ease of Access and Movement
  - Make Best Use of Existing Assets
172. In March 2023, the Council adopted a new transport strategy for the Borough, *Solihull Connected 2023*. The Strategy sets out the Council's future vision for transport in that '*Solihull will have a multi-modal transport system that accesses all parts of the Borough, supports our economy, is safe to use and makes the Borough healthier and fairer for communities, businesses, and visitors*'.
173. The Strategy places an increased onus on the need to improve public transport across the borough. It highlights the need to reconfigure the bus network to better meet local needs, not just to serve arterial routes to Birmingham City Centre, with a key priority being the delivery of a priority bus rapid transit route between Chelmsley Wood Town Centre, Birmingham Airport / Birmingham International Station / NEC, Solihull Town Centre and Blythe Valley Business Park. In addition, it promotes the delivery of a strategic cycle network to connect key destinations throughout the borough, the implementation of highway capacity improvements in key locations to ensure the ongoing economic vitality of major economic assets that serve the region and the commissioning of further work exploring the benefits and implications of innovative transport solutions such as Connected Autonomous Vehicles.
174. Through the production of an associated Delivery Plan, the strategy highlights the need for a variety of interventions ranging from improved public transport to better connect key

locations within the borough to junction capacity enhancements and the delivery of strategic cycle infrastructure. Priority projects include:

- A45 / Damson Parkway Multi-modal Junction Improvements
- A452 Chester Road Corridor – Segregated Cycleway and Capacity Enhancement
- A new cycle link between Solihull Town Centre and Knowle
- A new cycle link between Solihull Town Centre and Dickens Heath
- New public transport and active travel bridge crossings over the West Coast Mainline and M42;
- A new pedestrian and cycle bridge over the A45 (west of Stonebridge Island);
- Junction capacity improvements at M6 J4 and A45 'Stonebridge Island'.
- Solihull Station Multi-modal Interchange
- A new cycle link between Castle Bromwich and the UKC Hub.
- A new cycle link between Balsall Common and the UKC Hub.
- A new cycle link along the A45 between Birmingham City Centre and the UKC Hub
- A range of multi-modal junction improvements within Solihull Town Centre
- A range of multi-modal improvements along the A34 Stratford Road corridor.

### Policy P7 – Accessibility and Ease of Access

*Indicator – Percentage of qualifying residential development within accessibility parameters*

175. All appropriate applications are assessed against the accessibility criteria set out in policy P7 as the basis for determining accessibility. The framework for monitoring this indicator will be considered as part of the Local Plan Review.

*Indicator – Percentage of qualifying B1 office, retail, leisure developments within accessibility parameters*

176. All appropriate applications are assessed against the accessibility criteria set out in policy P7 as the basis for determining accessibility. The framework for monitoring this indicator will be considered as part of the Local Plan Review.

**Policy P8 – Managing Demand for Travel and Reducing Congestion**

*Indicator – Increase the proportion of trips by public transport, walking and cycling into Solihull Town Centre during the AM Peak Period*

177. The table below indicates the estimated inward trips into Solihull town centre on an average weekday between 07:30 and 09:30.

Mode	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Car & Taxi	15,608	15,648	13,503	15,088	12,797	12,761
Bus	3,415	3,560	3,089	2,581	2,433	2,520
Rail	781	1,043	990	1,081	440	524
Bus and Rail	4,196	4,603	4,079	3,662	2,873	3,044
Cycle	81	106	74	94	76	97
Light Vehicles (Excluding Car & Taxi)	706	787	627	906	776	711
Light Vehicles (Including Car & Taxi)	16,315	16,435	14,130	15,994	13,572	13,472
Heavy Vehicles	253	117	77	139	222	247
All Trips	20,845	21,262	18,360	19,889	16,744	16,860
% Public Transport All Trips	20.1%	21.6%	22.2%	18.4%	17.2%	18.1%
% Public Transport and Cycle All Trips	21.1%	22.6%	23.1%	19.4%	18.2%	19.1%

178. Between 2013 and 2023 trips across all modes of transport have fluctuated with a reduced number of trips for all modes. Since 2019 the average number of trips by rail has declined significantly whilst the number of trips made into Solihull by bus and cycle has remained reasonably consistent. Car and taxi trips have reduced considerably over the same time period. Overall public transport trips have slightly declined since 2019.

179. The Council is committed to reducing reliance on the car both through the location of new development and improving access to public transport.

*Indicator – Level of compliance with parking standards*

180. Requirements for the level of parking provision are set out in the Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans SPD 2006. All applications are assessed against this and where proposals do not meet the required standard this would be noted and explained and justified in the officer report.

181. The Council adopted a Travel Plan SPD on the 9th January 2023 that provides detailed guidance for developers on what they must do as part of their development proposals to promote travel demand management. The SPD replaced guidance on Travel Plans contained within the 2006 SPD Vehicle Parking Standards and Green Travel Plans.

182. A Car Parking SPD is being pursued which will replace the guidance on parking standards contained within the 2006 SPD.

*Indicator – Percentage change in transport modal share across the Borough for bus, rail and cycle use*

183. The table below indicates the inward bound modal split (am peak):

Mode	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Car & Taxi Modal Share	74.9%	73.6%	73.5%	75.9%	76.4%	75.7%
Bus Modal Share	16.4%	16.7%	16.8%	13.0%	14.5%	14.9%
Rail Modal Share	3.7%	4.9%	5.4%	5.4%	2.6%	3.1%
Public Transport Modal Share	20.1%	21.6%	22.2%	18.4%	17.2%	18.1%
Cycle Modal Share	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.6%
Light Vehicles Modal Share	3.4%	3.7%	3.4%	4.6%	4.6%	4.2%
Heavy Vehicles Modal Share	1.2%	0.6%	0.4%	0.7%	1.3%	1.5%

184. The table below indicates the outward bound modal split (am peak):

Mode	2013	2015	2017	2019	2021	2023
Car & Taxi Modal Share	78.9%	79.0%	78.2%	76.1%	78.3%	82.4%
Bus Modal Share	10.9%	7.8%	8.4%	8.2%	8.6%	5.8%
Rail Modal Share	4.6%	6.7%	7.3%	9.5%	4.1%	3.8%
Public Transport Modal Share	15.5%	14.4%	15.7%	17.8%	12.7%	9.6%
Cycle Modal Share	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	0.5%	0.3%
Light Vehicles Modal Share	3.2%	4.8%	5.3%	5.1%	6.7%	5.5%
Heavy Vehicles Modal Share	2.0%	1.3%	0.6%	1.0%	1.9%	2.2%

185. Since 2019 in terms of inward bound modal share the amount of people travelling to Solihull by bus has increased however there has been a decrease in modal share of rail trips. Overall, during the period 2013 to 2023 public transport modal share has decreased for inward bound trips and car/taxi and cycle modal share trips have slightly increased.
186. In terms of the outward-bound modal split over the period 2013 to 2023 public transport modal share has significantly decreased and car modal share has increased.

## 6. Protecting & Enhancing Our Environment

### Key Challenges

- Challenge F – Climate Change
- Challenge I – Providing Sufficient Waste Management Facilities & Sand & Gravel Aggregates
- Challenge K – Protecting & Enhancing our Natural Assets
- Challenge L – Water Quality & Flood Risk

### Key policies

- Policy P9 – Climate Change
- Policy P10 – Natural Environment
- Policy P11 – Water Management
- Policy P12 – Resource Management
- Policy P13 - Minerals

### Introduction

187. The protection and enhancement of the environment is a key objective in achieving sustainable development. The NPPF sets out objectives for the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, minimising waste and pollution and mitigating and adapting to climate change
188. Nationally the importance of enhancing biodiversity has been recognised in the obligation for Biodiversity Net Gain which requires a 10% increase in biodiversity value to be achieved as part of development proposals relative to the predevelopment biodiversity value.
189. The Local Plan recognises that climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing society and that planning can help the transition to a low carbon economy and provide resilience to impacts. Local Plan strategy and policies will help to minimise greenhouse gas emissions through the location and design of development and by encouraging the use of renewable and low carbon energy
190. The Council is a founder member of the Warwickshire, Coventry & Solihull Habitat Biodiversity Audit and Local Nature Partnerships. It has also secured significant funding through the European Regional Development Fund to undertake a wide range of habitat and biodiversity projects that will deliver enhanced conservation status to over 190 hectares of Council owned woodlands, wetlands and grasslands. The Local Plan provides protection for non-statutory sites, such as Local Wildlife Sites and for mitigation to achieve net gain.
191. There are five Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI's) in the Borough (of twenty-five within the WMCA region), these are nationally important sites notified by Natural England under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). These are identified as Berkswell Marsh, Bickenhill Meadows, River Blythe, Monkspath Meadow and Clowes Wood & New Fallings Coppice.
192. The Local Plan requires developers to protect water quality and use sustainable drainage systems in new developments, and to meet the highest possible standards of water efficiency. Flood risk has been increasing due to climate change, and the Local Plan seeks to achieve greenfield equivalent run off rates for major development whilst requiring flood risk assessments, where a risk exists.
193. The Local Plan seeks to ensure that waste is managed by means such as reduction, re-use and recycling rather than landfill and that operators in Solihull manage an equivalent tonnage to



that arising in the Borough. It also provides for extraction and recycling of sand and gravel, and construction aggregates, for which Solihull is the prime provider in the Metropolitan Area.

**Policy P9 – Climate Change**

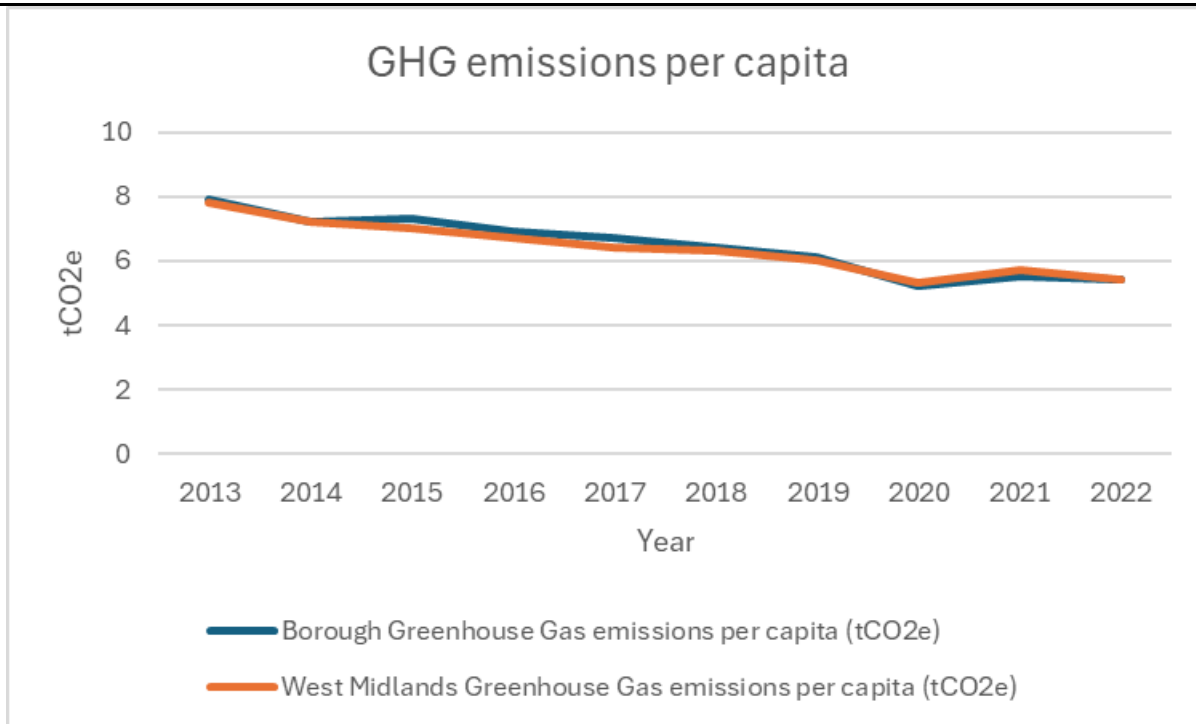
*Indicator – Borough-wide carbon dioxide emissions per capita*

194. The table below sets out the greenhouse gas emissions per capita for the Borough and West Midlands region:

Period	Borough Greenhouse Gas emissions per capita (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	West Midlands Greenhouse Gas emissions per capita (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)
2013	7.9	7.8
2014	7.2	7.2
2015	7.3	7.0
2016	6.9	6.7
2017	6.7	6.4
2018	6.4	6.3
2019	6.1	6
2020	5.2	5.3
2021	5.5	5.7
2022	5.4	5.4

Source - UK Local Authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions statistics 2005 to 2022 - - Department for Energy Security and Net Zero

- 195. The government publishes local authority and regional estimates of greenhouse emissions annually. The data in the above table updates previous information on greenhouse gas emissions presented in the 2020 AMR from 2013 onwards. It takes into account methodological improvements and to be consistent with government statistics
- 196. Latest figures published by the government show that levels in Solihull have steadily declined since 2013 in line with reductions across the WMCA region.



- 197. Policy P9 has a role in supporting national targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and in mitigating and adapting to climate change through the design and location of new development. The policy aims to ensure resilience to the future impacts of climate change in new development using adaptation measures linked to the design, build, and use of materials and green infrastructure.
- 198. In 2015, the Housing Standards Review removed the trajectory for achieving zero carbon homes by 2016; and effectively put an end to the Code for Sustainable Homes. The Review also recommended that standards on lowering carbon emissions should be implemented through Building Regulations rather than planning policy.
- 199. In 2021 Part L of the Building Regulations, along with Parts F and O, were updated. These will result in greater energy efficiency and ventilation of new build, with a 30% reduction of carbon emissions relative to the 2013 Regulations.
- 200. A consultation on a ‘Future Homes Standard’ was carried out in early 2024. This standard would reduce carbon emissions of new homes by 75-80% compared to those built to 2013 standards. It is anticipated that the Future Homes standard will be introduced in 2025.
- 201. The framework within the Borough for delivering net zero carbon homes in conjunction with these standards will be progressed through the forthcoming Local Plan Review.

**Policy P10 – Natural Environment**

*Indicator – Proportion of local sites where positive conservation management is being achieved*

202. The table below sets out DEFRA data on local sites (i.e. Local Wildlife Sites):

Period	Total no. of sites (LWS) in area	No. of sites with conservation management <sup>18</sup>	Percentage of sites with conservation management
2013/14	104	52	50%
2014/15	107	53	50%
2017/18	120	55	46%
2023/24	128	54	42%

203. Since 2013, the total number of Local Wildlife Sites has increased. This is mainly due to the improvement of habitats to LWS standard on sites owned by the Council. These improvements were facilitated by grant funding and S.106 contributions.

204. As part of the Council’s award-winning Solihull Habitats and Nature Improvement Programme (SHNIP), Wildlife Ways and Small Habitat Grant programme, part funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), an area of 62.72 ha of formerly frequently mown amenity grassland is now being managed as urban wildflower meadows. In addition, 105.89 ha of Council owned woodland is now in positive woodland management.

205. Despite the increase in Local Wildlife sites, the number of nature conservation sites in positive management has stayed about the same, resulting in a lower percentage of the overall number. This is due to threats associated with development (e.g. HS2) and lack of management (e.g. sites in private ownership where the type and extent of active management cannot be confirmed). It should be noted however, that these figures do not include hectareage of sites.

206. The previous Government, through the Environment Act 2021, introduced an enhanced duty for public authorities to conserve and enhance biodiversity in the exercise of their functions. It also sets out that a local authority must have regard to any relevant Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and any relevant species conservation strategy.

207. In July 2024, the Council’s adopted a Natural Capital Investment Strategy (NCIS) and Delivery Plan in response to the biodiversity crisis. The NCIS is a strategic document, which is referenced in the most recent Council Plan and summarises the Council’s current activity in terms of the natural environment and sets out a delivery plan of actions to increase opportunities for investment in natural capital. One objective of the NCIS is the positive management of Council owned land and buildings to enhance biodiversity and ensure that existing habitats and species are safeguarded and managed appropriately.

208. However, the natural environment does not respect administrative boundaries. To achieve our collective aims across the region, we need to work collaboratively with partners and key stakeholders and the Council recognises the need for a landscape-scale approach to the

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<sup>18</sup> Sites where positive conservation management is being or has been implemented in the 5 years prior to the monitoring period.

natural environment and the protection, restoration and enhancement of nature, natural capital, and the natural processes that support our wellbeing.

209. The Council is contributing to the emerging West Midlands Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which is another new requirement introduced by the Environment Act 2021. The core purpose of LNRS is to reverse the ongoing decline of biodiversity and nature. The Strategy will agree priorities for nature's recovery; map the most valuable existing areas for nature; and map specific proposals for creating or improving habitat for nature and wider environmental goals (nature-based solutions). Solihull sits within the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) LNRS but is also closely aligned to the LNRS led by Warwickshire County Council (WCC) through the Warwickshire, Coventry and Solihull Local Nature Partnership. The WMCA LNRS is expected to be in place by the end of March 2025.
210. The Environment Act has introduced a mandatory requirement for a minimum of 10% 'Biodiversity Net Gain' (BNG) on major development sites from 12th February 2024 and small sites from 2nd April 2024, and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) from November 2025. The aim of BNG is to "ensure that new developments enhance biodiversity and create new green spaces for local communities to enjoy."
211. The adopted Local Plan provides protection for non-statutory sites, such as Local Wildlife Sites, and for mitigation to achieve biodiversity net gain.
212. Together these elements combine to reflect and reinforce Solihull's character of 'town in the country' living up to the Borough's motto: "Urbs in Rure" and delivery of the Council Plan in respect of planning and the environment to create an enhanced, well connected natural environment.

## Policy P11 – Water Management

### Indicator – Water quality status of Rivers Blythe and Cole and their tributaries

213. The following table sets out the water quality status of various water bodies in the Borough (overall waterbody classification level):

Water Body	2013	2014	2015	2016	2019
River Blythe: source to Cuttle Brook	Moderate	Moderate	Poor	Poor	Poor
Cuttle Brook: source to River Blythe	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Moderate
Temple Balsall Brook: source to River Blythe	Bad	Bad	Bad	Bad	Poor
River Blythe: Temple Balsall Brook to Patrick Bridge	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
River Blythe: Patrick Bridge to River Tame	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
River Cole: source to Springfield	Moderate	Moderate	Poor	Poor	Poor
River Cole: Springfield to Hatchford/Kingshurst Brook	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Hatchford/Kingshurst Brook: source to River Cole	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
River Cole: Hatchford/Kingshurst to River Blythe	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Grand Union Canal: Warwick to Solihull	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
Grand Union Canal: Solihull to Birmingham	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
North Stratford Canal	Good	Good	Good	Good	Moderate

Source: Environment Agency ([England | Catchment Data Explorer](#))

### Commentary

214. The Water Framework Directive (WFD) provides a framework for the Environment Agency to assess and improve the ecological condition of water bodies in the Borough. The target for 'Good' status of England's water bodies remains 2027, which is a legal target set out in the WFD.

215. The 'Bad' and 'Poor' status of the River Blythe is due principally to sewage discharges, pollution, urbanisation and poor soil and livestock management. The poor water quality of the River Blythe is reflected in the unfavourable condition of this Site of Special Scientific Interest, whose conservation and enhancement is of national importance. The 'Poor' status of the River Cole results mainly from the impacts of urbanisation and transport.
216. The Environment Agency's River Basin Management Plans (updated in 2022) are a legally binding environmental planning framework setting environmental objectives to tackle the challenges facing the water environment, including water company pollution, agricultural pollution, climate change and population growth. Solihull Borough falls within the Tame Anker and Mease Management Catchment within the 'Humber River Basin District'.

*Indicator – Planning permissions granted contrary to Environment Agency objections on water quality and flood risk grounds*

217. No planning permissions were granted contrary to Environment Agency advice.

### **Commentary**

218. The latest data on applications where the Environment Agency has objected on flood risk (1 April 2016 to 31 March 2024), or water quality grounds (1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024) shows that no planning permissions were granted contrary to Agency advice.
219. In 2022, planning permission was granted for the erection of a detached outbuilding to replace an existing outbuilding at Brookside Cottage in Barston (PL/2021/03262/MINFH). The Agency initially objected to the proposal due to an unsatisfactory Flood Risk Assessment provided. However, the objection was removed following submission of additional information, which enabled planning permission to be granted.

## Policy P12 – Resource Management

*Indicator – Amount of waste arising and capacity of waste management facilities in the Borough*

220. The following table shows the waste arising in tonnes.

Period	LA collected	Recycled/reuse	Commercial & industrial	Construction & demolition	Agricultural	Hazardous
2013-14	95,948	*	*	*	*	*
2014-15	96,608	*	*	*	*	*
2015-16	97,783	*	*	*	*	*
2016-17	99,246	*	*	*	*	*
2017-18	97,013	*	39,600 – 48,400	447,000 – 513,000	300 - 500	9,405
2018-19	94,954	38,356 (40%)	*	*	*	8,784
2019-20	97,093	37,856 (39%)		*	*	*
2020-21	99,512	38,990 (39%)		*	*	*
2021-22	96,858	36,148 (37%)	*	*	*	*
2022-23	92,914	39,830 (43%)		*	*	*
2023-24	95,893** *	42,168 (44%)*	*	*	*	*

\*Note that data is not available on an annual basis for waste streams except Local Authority collected

\*\*The 2023-24 figures are provisional and subject to change following validation by DEFRA.

Source: SMBC Waste & Recycling, Waste Needs Assessment for Solihull, 2018

221. The following table indicates waste facility capacity (in tonnes):

Period	Environmental Permit	Waste Input
2015	918,895	363,555
2016	1,895,896	778,629



2017	2,169,895	1,031,843
2018		615,926

### Capacity of Waste Management facilities

Tonnes	Waste Removed	Waste Received
2019	264,012	1,261,034
2020	243,053	1,371,180
2021	272,948	1,364,068
2022	206,998	1,183,256

### Commentary

222. Since publication of the 2020 AMR the Environment Agency has changed the way data on waste is presented to provide information on waste received and waste removed from sites to provide a better indication of the amounts being dealt with rather than exported elsewhere. Consequently, information in this report is organised differently within two tables.
223. Data on Local Authority Collected Waste is the most accurate and up to date. There has been a decline in this figure over the past three years which is due to a number of factors, but the cost-of-living crisis is likely to have had an impact as the last time waste tonnages declined was during the last economic downturn. However, the Borough's Household Waste and Recycling Centre at Bickenhill is at capacity and will require expansion or relocation to manage inputs from an increasing population and to meet changes in legislation.
224. Other waste stream arising data are estimates, with much greater uncertainty. The 2017 figures published in Waste Needs Assessment for Solihull are the most comprehensive.
225. In 2022-23 we saw an increase in recycling performance, with Solihull reporting the largest percentage increase in recycling of all English local authorities. Our recycling rate increased from 35% in 2021-22 to 41.5% in 2022-23. The increase was almost exclusively due to improvements in material management at Bickenhill Household Waste Recycling Centre and changes in treatment processes for wood and street sweepings, which means that the outputs can now be classified as recycling and count towards our overall recycling rate. There is potential to increase our recycling rate further with the introduction of food waste collections, scheduled for 2026.
226. The Environment Agency licences most waste management facilities and provides data on waste removed and managed elsewhere, and waste received and managed at the facilities. Of the waste removed, just under half goes elsewhere in the West Midlands and a quarter to Wales. Most of the waste received comes from elsewhere in the West Midlands, with over two-thirds being construction and demolition waste. Waste received has increased significantly since 2015 due to recycling and landfill activities at Berkswell and Meriden quarries.
227. Some waste streams are exempt from Environment Agency licencing, so the data is only a partial picture.

## Policy P13 – Minerals

*Indicator – Data from West Midlands Aggregates Working Party Annual Reports on sub-regional sand and gravel aggregate production and landbanks*

228. The following table shows sand and gravel production across the West Midlands metropolitan area (in million tonnes)

Period	Sand & Gravel Production	Landbank
2012	0.46	4.58
2013	0.49	5.39
2014	0.50	4.85
2015	0.53	5.18
2016	0.58	5.86
2017	0.48	3.99
Average 10-year sales	0.48	

Period	Sand & Gravel	10-year average	Permitted Reserves	Landbank
2018	36,0000		326,0000	
2019	26,0000		471,0000	
2020	39,0000		426,0000	
2021	50,0000		296,0000	
2022	56,0000	46,5000	2,930,000	6.3 years

Source: West Midlands Aggregates Working Party Annual Report 2023 (2022 data)

### Commentary

229. The West Midlands Metropolitan Area Local Aggregates Assessment 2015 provides evidence of need and supply for the Metropolitan Area. It identified a sand and gravel production figure of 0.5 million tonnes per year for the Metropolitan Area sub-region based on past sales. Solihull is the main source of primary sand and gravel aggregates in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area and has provided 100% of production in recent years.
230. There are two sand and gravel quarries in the Borough, Berkswell and Meriden quarries. Production dipped following the closure of Stonebridge quarry in 2017, but in recent years has increased to around the Local Aggregate Assessment figure following increased activities at Meriden.

231. The sand and gravel landbank in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area has varied as extensions to quarries have come forward, but fell to under 3 million tonnes, equivalent to 6.3 years at the average sales rate in 2022. This reflects the loss of reserves at Stonebridge Quarry and the potential sterilising of SLP 2013 preferred areas for sand and gravel extraction at Berkswell Quarry by the HS2 rail link.
232. Further opportunities for sand and gravel extraction have been identified through the Local Plan Review, with two specific sites proposed for extensions to Berkswell and Meriden quarries. The SLP 2013 includes an area of search for sand and gravel extraction, which includes the areas of the two proposals, and can provide for longer term extraction where sites or preferred areas are not specifically identified.

## 7. Promoting Quality of Place

### Key Challenges

- Challenge C – Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough for people who live, work and invest in Solihull
- Challenge E – Protecting Key Gaps between Urban Areas & Settlements

### Key policies

- Policy P15 – Securing Design Quality
- Policy P16 – Conservation of Heritage Assets & Local Distinctiveness
- Policy P17 – Countryside & Green Belt

### Introduction

233. The Local Plan seeks to ensure that new development can be accommodated whilst maintaining the existing qualities of the Borough and the characteristics which make places attractive areas to live. This includes ensuring high quality design which integrates with its surroundings and makes a positive contribution to the Borough's sense of place and ensuring development does not have an impact on residential amenity. For example, providing for amenity space such as play areas. It is also important that the design of new buildings also takes account of the need to mitigate and adapt to future climate change.
234. The Borough has a number of listed buildings and conservation areas, and the Council recognises the importance of the historic environment in contributing to the Boroughs local character and distinctiveness. A key objective of the policy framework is to “conserve and enhance the qualities of the built, natural and historic environment that contribute to character and local distinctiveness and the attractiveness of the mature residential suburbs and the rural area”.
235. A significant proportion of the Borough is included within the Green Belt which performs a strategically important role maintaining the open gap between the area of Birmingham and Solihull and the ‘Meriden Gap’ between Solihull and Coventry. It is also important in maintaining the attractiveness of the rural area and as the Borough as a place to live. However, there is pressure within the Borough for development within the Green Belt. In line with national policy the Local Plan has a presumption against inappropriate development within the Green Belt. The Plan acknowledges that there may be exceptional circumstances where adjustments to the green belt are required to facilitate developments of regional and national significance.

**Policy P15 – Securing Design Quality**

*Indicator – Number/proportion of developments achieving at least 10 out of 12 ‘green lights’ measured against Building for Life 12 Standard*

- 236. There has not been complete coverage in the use of the BfL standard and in some cases its contents have instead been used by applicants in their Design and Access Statements.

**Commentary**

- 237. As part of the planning application process applicants are required to produce a Building for Life Assessment on appropriate schemes as part of the Design and Access Statement. This provides a checklist for developments to demonstrate how they are performing against the standard. The Council is committed to ensuring that the design of new development is of the highest quality and this measure along with the other requirements in the policy is used to measure this.

*Indicator – Number/proportion of developments achieving a higher environmental performance than the national standard at that time (Code for Sustainable Homes or BREEAM)*

- 238. The following table is a schedule of certified BREEAM assessments undertaken since 2013 (data from [BREEAM Projects](#) website)

Date	Name	Project Type	Rating
2014	Prologis Park, Bickenhill Link	Industrial	Excellent (73%)
2014	Plot F2 PCR, Blythe Valley	Other buildings/mixed use	Very Good (57%)
2014	F3 Prologis, Blythe Valley	Other buildings/mixed use	Very Good (58%)
2014	F3 Prologis PCR, Blythe Valley	Other buildings/mixed use	Very Good (59%)
2018	Connexion II	Industrial	Excellent 72.9%
2018	Connexion II PCR	Industrial	Excellent 71.7%

- 239. The following table is a schedule of certified Code for Sustainable Homes assessments undertaken since 2013:

Location	No. of properties	Code Level
Alcott Hall	2	3
Digeley Grove/Gilson Way	24	4

Ramsay Close	11	4
Temple Avenue	6	4
Peace Court	5	4

### Commentary

240. Solihull has a number of buildings which have been certified according to BREEAM standards. The table above shows those buildings rated since 2013.
241. Since adoption of the Local Plan the requirements of the policy relating to national standards for Code for Sustainable Homes and BREEAM were superseded by the Housing Standards Review. As part of this review requirements for low carbon and renewable energy are proposed to be progressed through the tightening of building regulations.
242. However, the Council is committed to ensuring developments and places are designed to deal with the challenge of adapting to and mitigating to Climate Change and would therefore still encourage applicants to exceed building regulations where possible.

### Policy P16 – Conservation of Heritage Assets & Local Distinctiveness

*Indicator – Number / proportion of heritage assets at risk (Grade I, II\* and II Listed buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Registered Parks and Gardens and Conservation Areas)*

Property/Asset	Status	Comment
Bedsworth Farm, Tamworth Lane, Shirley	Grade II	Partially collapsed
Grove Avenue, Solihull	Conservation Area	Insensitive alterations undertaken
Walford Hall Farmhouse, Solihull Road, Hampton in Arden (Grade II* listed)	Grade II*	In very poor condition despite emergency repairs to roofs, immediate risk of further rapid deterioration or loss of fabric. Approved scheme extant to repair and adapt as offices.

### Commentary

243. The Grove Avenue, Solihull Conservation Area has been reported to Historic England as being at risk due to insensitive alterations undertaken. The Local Authority does not monitor the condition of Scheduled Ancient Monuments but is not aware that any located within the Borough are at risk. The Authority would seek the views of Historic England in terms of identifying any at risk. The Borough has one entry on the register of Historic Parks and Gardens - Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens. This site does not suffer from any problems with condition. Historic England West Midlands monitor Conservation Areas at Risk (CAAR project) however there are currently no assets within the Borough included.

244. All proposals affecting a listed building or a designated Conservation Area are assessed against this policy. Historic environment advice is provided on these applications as part of the planning application process to determine any impact on the heritage asset.

*Indicator – Number/proportion of Conservation Areas with up-to-date Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans*

245. The following table indicates the number of conservation areas with an up-to-date conservation area appraisal and management plan.

Period	No. of Conservation Areas	No. of Conservation Areas with up-to-date appraisal	% of Conservation Areas with up-to-date appraisal
2023/24	20	5	20%

**Commentary**

246. The Council will continue to produce Conservation Area appraisals and Management Plans working together with the local community to ensure the continued protection of heritage assets. The Solihull Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan was completed in 2022, and work is ongoing on 4 other Conservation Area Appraisals.

247. Article 4 directions can be used to prevent the erosion of historic detail within the Borough. An Article 4 direction has been made in part of the Olton Conservation Area and research to inform further Directions is underway.

## Policy P17 – Countryside & Green Belt

### Indicator – Loss of Green Belt to development

248. The following table sets out the number of applications approved in the Green Belt between April 19 and March 24, together with a category of reason for doing so in relation to those that are significant.

Period	Approvals	Significant approvals <sup>19</sup>	Not inapprop. <sup>20</sup>	Limited impact <sup>21</sup>	Replace <sup>22</sup>	Other
2019-20	211	14	3	0	2	9
2020-21	212	10	2	0	1	7
2021-22	227		3	0	0	8
2022-23	232	17	4	2	3	8
2023-24	155	13	5	3	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>1037</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>36</b>

### Commentary

249. Following the adoption of the Solihull Local Plan 2013 and the outcome of the subsequent legal challenge, the area of Green Belt in Solihull was 11,876 hectares. In 2014, the Gypsy & Traveller Site Allocations Plan removed 7.46 hectares from the Green Belt. Since then, there have been no further changes to the area of the Green Belt in Solihull, which currently stands at 11,868 hectares.
250. The number of planning applications granted conditional approval in the Green Belt has been broadly consistent over recent years. Only a small proportion of the total approvals are for significant development, which is defined as 5 or more dwellings, or 500 or more square metres in area for non-residential uses. Most of these approvals fall within one of the exceptions to inappropriate development detailed in paragraphs 154 or 155 of the NPPF. The largest areas of Green Belt affected were for extensions to mineral working.

<sup>19</sup> Five or more dwellings or more than 500m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace

<sup>20</sup> Not considered to be an inappropriate development

<sup>21</sup> Only considered to have a limited impact on the openness of the Green Belt

<sup>22</sup> Replacement, extension or redevelopment



**Indicator – Number of Neighbourhood Plans adopted**

251. The following table sets out the number of neighbourhood plans 'made' which now form part of the adopted development plan for the Borough:

Period	Locations with a made Plan	No. of plans made
2017-18	Hampton-in-Arden	1
2018-19		0
2019-20	Knowle, Dorridge & Bentley Heath, Berkswell	2
2020-21		0
2021-22	Meriden, Balsall Common	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>5</b>

**Commentary**

252. There are five adopted (made) Neighbourhood Plans within the Borough. The Hampton-in-Arden Neighbourhood Plan 2017-2028 became the first Neighbourhood Plan 'made' in the Borough in August 2017, covering the Parish of Hampton-in-Arden as it was at the time. In April 2019, the Parish boundary was altered to include the whole of Catherine de Barnes, and the Parish Council are seeking to address this as part of an ongoing Neighbourhood Plan Review
253. The Neighbourhood Plan for Knowle, Dorridge & Bentley Heath was made in April 2019 and for Berkswell in September 2019. Balsall Common and Meriden Neighbourhood Plans were both made in June 2021 following referendum.
254. The Council has approved Neighbourhood Area designations for Cheswick Green (July 2014), Dickens Heath (2016), Hockley Heath (2016), Bickenhill (April 2021) and Tidbury Green (February 2023), but no other plans are at an advanced stage.

## 8. Supporting Local Communities

### Key Challenges

- Challenge A – Reducing Inequalities in the Borough
- Challenge C – Sustaining the Attractiveness of the Borough
- Challenge J – Improving Health & Well Being

### Key policies

- Policy P18 – Health & Well Being
- Policy P19 – Range & Quality of Local Services
- Policy P20 – Provision for Open Space, Children's Play, Sport Recreation & Leisure

### Introduction

255. The Local Plan supports the creation of strong, vibrant and healthy communities by ensuring that the appropriate physical and social infrastructure and facilities and services are provided to contribute towards improving people's overall quality of life and well-being.
256. Ensuring that local communities are supported encompasses policy objectives throughout the plan including access to employment opportunities and appropriate housing as well as access to local services such as retail, healthcare, and opportunities for recreation and exercise. Policy P18 seeks to maximise opportunities for achieving positive health outcomes as part of development. This includes the following: access to opportunities for recreation and play, contributing towards the creation of a high quality, safe and attractive public realm and walking and cycling network, improving the green infrastructure network, delivering facilities for primary medical care, increasing access to healthy food by sustainable modes of transport, additional homes designed to meet the needs of older people and those with disabilities, and improving the energy efficiency of housing.
257. A key objective is to ensure access to these key services and facilities is equitable across the Borough. For example, a key objective for North Solihull is addressing deficiencies in green infrastructure. Other issues include disparities which exist within North Solihull and some rural areas compared to the rest of the Borough in relation to access to public transport.
258. The Council recognises the importance of green spaces in maintaining healthy communities. Enhancements at Hope Coppice in Shirley are a good illustration of the value that open spaces have towards helping with well-being objectives.
259. The Council is producing a Health and Wellbeing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) to provide supporting information and guidance for planners and developers on how our environment and the planning decisions we make impact on the health and wellbeing of the population. The SPD will also include guidance and best practice examples on carrying out a Health Impact Assessment (HiA) for new developments.
260. Once adopted, the SPD would be a material consideration in determining planning applications and should be used in preparing future plans, strategies and development briefs and in making policy decisions.

## Policy P18 – Health & Well Being

*Indicator – The number of community facilities lost to alternative development where no replacement has been provided*

261. During this monitoring period (March 2023 to April 2024), 4 applications were approved which resulted in a potential loss of community facilities, these included the loss of banking facilities, a public house and a centre providing community services.

### Commentary

262. The policy seeks to protect the loss of important community facilities to ensure the proposal would not result in the loss of a key service. As such any proposals are assessed according to the criteria in the policy. The monitoring framework for this indicator will be reviewed as part of the forthcoming Local Plan Review.

*Indicator – The number of new planning permissions for hot food takeaways*

263. The following table sets out the number of new planning permissions granted for hot food takeaways.

Period	No. of new permissions for hot food takeaways
2018/19	5
2023/24	1

### Commentary

264. During this monitoring year across the borough there was 1 new planning permission for change of use to hot food takeaway. There were no further applications for change of use to, for example, restaurant or cafe with ancillary takeaway use. (In the monitoring year 2018-19 there had been 6).
265. It is acknowledged that the presence of high concentrations of hot food takeaways can have a detrimental impact on the vitality and viability of town and local centres, as it reduces the number of premises open during the daytime and reducing the range of services available. There is an established link between exposure to takeaways and obesity.

## Policy P19 – Range & Quality of Local Services

### *Indicator – The number and location of vacant units in town and local centres*

266. The table below sets out the number of vacant units in the Borough's main town centres and at other centres as of 2024.

Main Centre	No. of units	No. of vacant units	% of units vacant
Solihull	301	29	9.6%
Shirley	151	14	9.3%
Chelmsley Wood	70	7	10%

### Commentary

#### **Town centres**

267. In 2019 the borough's 3 town centres were considered to be performing well, albeit Chelmsley Wood had a slightly higher vacancy level. Since 2019 UK town centres have been exposed to the economic effects of the COVID outbreak that limited shopping activity and accelerated home working. These affects added to the pressures of online retailing. Overall, UK High Street shop vacancy rates for the first part of 2023 were approaching 14% and in UK shopping centres nearly 18%. Against this, the 3 town centres can again be said to be performing relatively well with Solihull and Shirley at about 9% and Chelmsley Wood only slightly higher at 10%. The loss of M&S and Beattie's department stores in Solihull Town Centre is ongoing, but the John Lewis Department Store remains trading and is an important anchor for the Touchwood Shopping Centre. At Chelmsley Wood Town Centre consultation took place early in 2023 on a masterplan focussing on the north-west quarter of the centre as the first step in a phased plan of redevelopment that seeks to ensure that the centre continues to serve the needs of the community.

#### **Other centres**

268. The local centres within the Borough are generally performing well in terms of retail function. An exception has been Kingshurst that had high vacancy rates, but is now demolished in readiness for development for retail, residential and other uses that will revitalise the centre and ensure accessible facilities are in place to support the local community.
269. Knowle village centre is the main centre for the borough's rural area and has an overall vacancy rate of 13.4%. However, this is significantly influenced by St John's Precinct that has about fifteen units and most are vacant. If the precinct is discounted the vacancy rate for the centre is about 7%.
270. It should be noted that an element of vacancy is needed with centres to allow for 'churn' enabling new occupiers to establish or existing occupiers to move within a centre as floorspace needs change.

***Local centres***

271. The local centres within the Borough are performing well in terms of their retail function with generally low levels of vacancy.

*Indicator – The number and type of community facilities lost to alternative development where no replacement has been provided is dealt with in Policy 18 above*

272. See commentary for Policy P18.

## Policy P20 – Provision for Open Space, Childrens Play, Sport and Recreation & Leisure

*Indicator – Change in value of open space through development in North Solihull Regeneration Area*

273. The North Solihull Regeneration Area Regeneration programme was undertaken before the monitoring period. This indicator will be reviewed as part of the Local Plan Review, which is being informed by an Open Space Assessment and Playing Pitch Assessment and Strategy.

### Commentary

274. The North Solihull Green Space Review provides a baseline for the quantity and quality of green space in North Solihull, and a methodology for assessing the value of green spaces. The North Solihull Strategic Framework includes a commitment to ensure no net loss in value of green space. Applications for housing that involve the loss of green space have been assessed using the Green Space Review methodology to ensure no net loss in value.

*Indicator – Proportion of eligible open space managed to Green Flag Award standards*

275. Green flag award status is an international quality mark for parks and gardens. The Green Space Strategy Review 2014 confirmed that 10 parks and green spaces had achieved Green Flag standards and set a target for a further 3 to be achieved by 2018. As of July 2024, there are a total of 17 parks and green spaces that have achieved Green Flag standards in the Borough. Hope Coppice was awarded green flag status in July 2024.

*Indicator – Progress towards the priorities for action & proportion of zones meeting local standards outlined in the adopted Green Spaces Strategy and the Indoor Facilities Strategy.*

276. The Solihull Green Spaces Strategy 2006 set local standards for a range of green space typologies and reviewed provision against the standards. It also identified priorities for action across the six zones covering the Borough in zone action plans. Progress was monitored periodically until around 2012 and a Green Spaces Review was published in 2014, focusing on local authority managed green space.
277. As part of the evidence of the Solihull Local Plan Review, it was felt timely to commission evidence compliant with the latest national planning guidance and update the demand for and supply of public open space. Subsequently an Open Space Assessment was carried out in 2019, which included a full examination of the amount, location, type and quality of open spaces available across the Borough. The findings of the Assessment will provide a baseline for a new Public Open Space SPD and the standards set out in Solihull's previous Green Spaces Strategy will be replaced. The Assessment recommended a combined Open Space standard of 3.57ha/1000 population for residential development as well as quantitative and qualitative standards for each typology and thresholds for when those standards should apply.
278. Work on an Indoor Built Sports Facility Strategy will commence in Winter 2024/25 due for completion in 2025, replacing the previous 2012 version and complimenting the refreshed Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy setting a long-term vision for sports and recreational facilities across the Borough considering supply and demand, whilst positioning its contribution towards wider strategic Council outcomes.
279. This indicator will be reviewed as part of the Local Plan Review to provide a deliverable means of monitoring policy.

## 9. Delivery and Monitoring

### Key policies

- Policy P21 – Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Provision

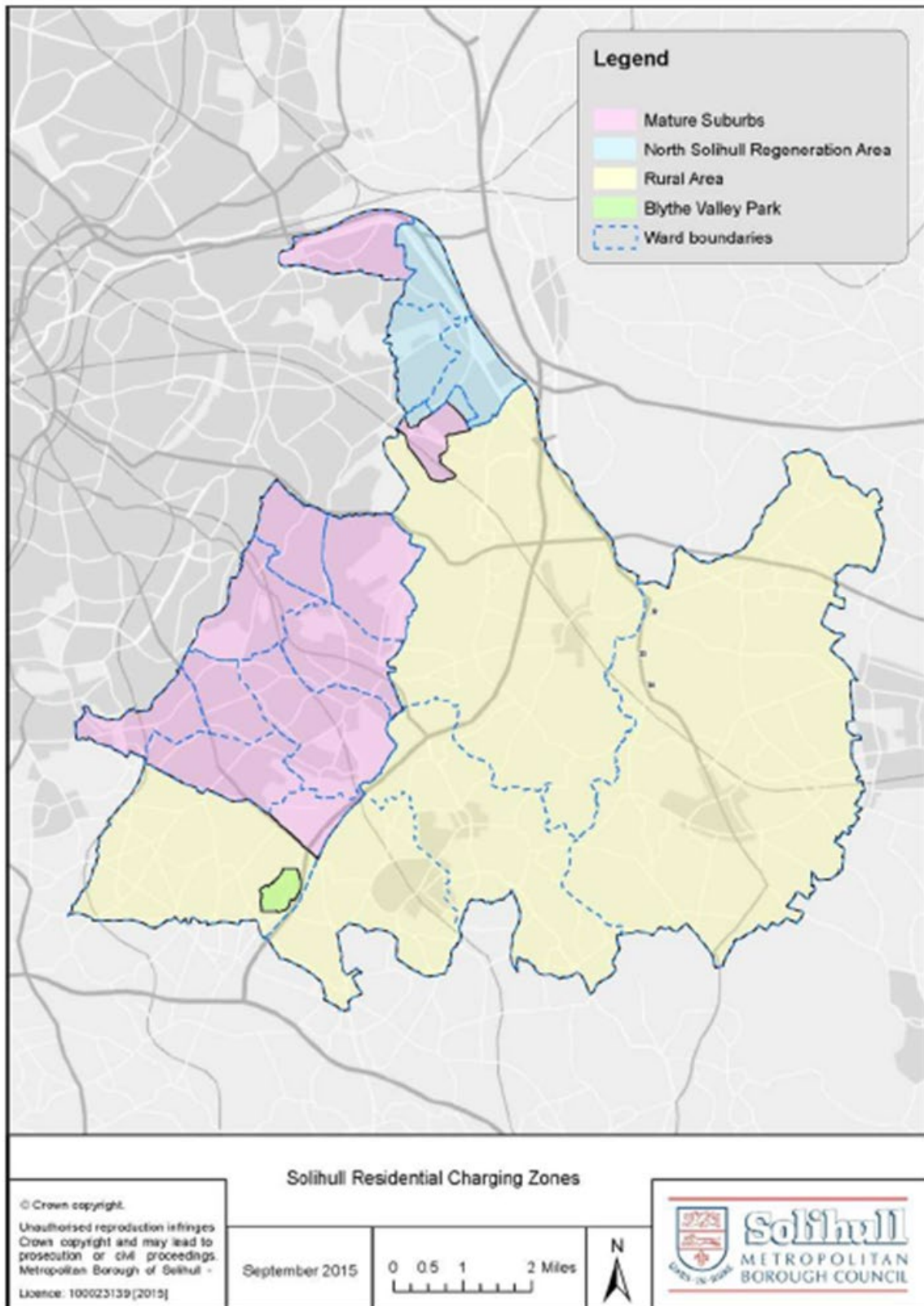
### Introduction

280. The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) was introduced in the Planning Act 2008, to provide a fair and transparent means for ensuring that development contributes to the cost of infrastructure. As CIL takes the form of a tariff on development, it is deemed to be a more certain way of securing developer contributions, compared to the current system of planning obligations which are generally negotiated on a case-by-case basis on larger sites. As almost all development has an impact on surrounding infrastructure and CIL attempts to tackle this by ensuring that a larger proportion of development shares the overall cost of infrastructure. The infrastructure will support the growth aspirations outlined in the SDLP and could include new schools, roads, parks and public transport improvements.
281. Section 106 agreements tend to be negotiated to address site specific issues and site regulation or mitigation. This can include obligations that ensure developments are acceptable in planning terms, for example, access to the site or the placement of affordable housing units. Therefore, S106 still plays an essential role in planning obligations, as they enable the Authority to be confident that certain forms of infrastructure will be delivered. The incorporation of S106 obligations and funds collected through CIL provide flexibility and transparency whilst providing essential infrastructure.
282. Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council's CIL rates are set out in an adopted Charging Schedule which was approved by Full Council on 12th April 2016. The levy is applied to liable planning approvals from 4th July 2016. SMBC's agreed charging schedule for certain types of development, charged at variable rates dependent on the proposed use of the development.
283. CIL is charged on the following types of development:
- Residential (C3)
  - Residential Institutions (C2) (excluding hospitals & training centres)
  - Retail (A1)<sup>23</sup>
  - Financial & Professional Services (A2)
  - Restaurants and Cafes (A3)
  - Drinking Establishments (A4)
  - Hot Food Takeaways (A5)
  - Hotels (C1)
  - Car Dealerships (sui generis)
284. The charging rate for residential development is divided into 4 zones, to reflect the variable cost of land in different areas of the borough, and the value of residential development across the borough. A 'nil' rate is applied to all development in the North Solihull Regeneration area (ward areas of Chelmsley Wood, Kingshurst and Fordbridge and Smiths Wood and part of Bickenhill), and Blythe Valley Park.

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<sup>23</sup>These relate to the Use Class Order at the time of adoption of the CIL Charging Schedule.

285. The variable rates for residential developments are illustrated on the map below:





## Policy P21 - Developer Contributions and Infrastructure Provision

### Indicator – Total developer contributions per annum

286. The following table indicates the CIL receipts received to date, and the relevant funds they have been allocated to:

Period	Strategic Fund	Neighbourhood Fund	Admin Fund	Total Receipts
2016-17	£222,944	£41,802	£13,934	£278,680
2017-18	£698,387	£130,578	£43,521	£870,485
2018-19	£1,265,527	£236,657	£78,035	£1,580,219
2019-20	£2,447,980	£451,217	£152,590	£3,051,786
2020-21	£902,687	£192,758	£57,146	£1,152,591
2021-22	£1,241,163	£268,468	£78,816	£1,588,447
2022-23	£863,438	£160,344	£50,291	£1,074,073
2023-24	£2,021,004	£424,253	£128,697	£2,573,956
<b>Total</b>	<b>£9,663,130</b>	<b>£1,906,077</b>	<b>£603,030</b>	<b>£12,170,237</b>

287. Due to the lag times associated with when developments become liable for CIL<sup>24</sup>, the build-up of CIL funds was always expected to take some time and this is reflected both in the table above, and the fact that in the year to date of 23/24<sup>25</sup> approximately £12 million has been collected. This includes over £1.9 million into the Neighbourhood fund.

288. The following table indicates the S106 monies received:

Period	S106 monies received	S106 monies spent
2016-17	£2,985,139	£2,632,711
2017-18	£3,544,579	£2,392,271
2018-19	£3,527,886	£2,155,472
2019-20	£4,365,097	£2,984,608
2020-21	£2,518,173	£591,834
2021-22	£2,517,720	£1,561,081
2022-23	£1,657,237	£2,649,181

<sup>24</sup> The levy is only due on commencement of developments granted permission since July 2016.

<sup>25</sup> To the beginning of March 2024.

2023-24	TBC	TBC
Total	£21,115,831	£14,967,158

## Commentary

### *CIL expenditure*

289. Once funds have been received, 15% is apportioned to either a parish fund (if the development was undertaken within a parished area) or a ward fund (if the development is undertaken within an unparished area). The neighbourhood proportion will be increased from 15% to 25% following the adoption of a neighbourhood plan. Up to 5% of funds collected are allocated to the administration of the fund. The remaining 80% is allocated to strategic infrastructure projects across the whole borough.
290. Spending of the Neighbourhood Pot (15% of CIL, or 25% with a Neighbourhood Plan in place) is apportioned to ward and parish areas. If an area is Parished, the spending responsibility lies with the Parish Council. The monies received from CIL should be spent on mitigating the impacts of development, in consultation with the community. Where there is no Parish Council to manage the spending of CIL, the responsibility lies with SMBC. Communities are given an opportunity to bid for funds for projects to be carried out in their community on a yearly basis.
291. Spending of the Strategic Pot (80% of CIL) will be allocated through the Growth & Development Investment Plan, which intends to fund strategic infrastructure on a borough wide level. This fund is being allowed to increase to provide the opportunity to fund larger projects in the future that can have greater and wider benefit. It will also ensure that any infrastructure provided through CIL will compliment infrastructure funding from other sources (e.g. WMCA).

### Section 106 contributions

292. Developer contributions for various purposes were received by way of S106 Planning Agreements in the borough. Note that as well as financial contributions, S106 agreements typically also include other obligations such as affordable housing, open space, and play areas and youth facilities.
293. In 2023/24 projects funded by Section 106 contributions included:
- Replacement tree contribution made by a development in Elmdon which will contribute towards the replacement of semi-mature trees within the Elmdon Park Local Wildlife Site.
  - Health contribution made by a development in Shirley which will contribute towards the provision of acute and accident and emergency healthcare services at the Heartlands, Good Hope and Solihull Hospitals
  - Secondary Education contribution made by a development in Blythe which will contribute towards the provision of secondary school places at Light Hall School.

## 10. Duty to Cooperate

294. Planning for an area's housing needs should normally be undertaken at the 'Housing Market Area' level, and in this respect Solihull is one of 14 local planning authorities that is within (in whole or in part) the HMA that includes Birmingham and surrounding authorities.
295. The 2020 Submission Draft Local Plan was prepared and tested on the basis that the only adopted development plan (and therefore tested through an examination) in the HMA that identified a shortfall that could not be accommodated was the Birmingham Development Plan (2017). The Council considered that this constituted exceptional circumstances for releasing land from the Green Belt in Solihull to help accommodate this need. Accordingly, a figure of 2,000 dwellings was added to the Borough's own needs, and included in the 2020 plan. Now that the plan has been withdrawn it will be necessary to reconsider the duty-to-cooperate implications in the preparation of the new plan.
296. In March 2017 the 14 HMA authorities commissioned a HMA wide "Strategic Growth Study". The purpose of the study was as follows:
- "The scale of the housing shortfall in the Greater Birmingham and Black Country Housing Market Area (GBHMA) has been formally acknowledged through the adopted Birmingham Development Plan and the PBA Strategic Housing Needs Study. The purpose of this study is to build on this and other evidence to identify more specific options and broad locations for addressing the shortfall, which can be delivered by the market."*
297. The study [report](#) was published in February 2018 and was accompanied by a [position statement](#) on behalf of the 14 HMA authorities.
298. It is important to be clear about the status of the Strategic Growth Study. It constitutes technical evidence that the Council needs to take into account and respond to; it is not a policy document that is proposing what should be built and where. It is only if and when such options are incorporated into the Council's emerging local plan could they be considered as formally proposed options.
299. It is important to stress that through the duty to cooperate the constituent local authorities agree to test the distribution of the housing shortfall in their plans. If through the plan making process it becomes clear that the level of housing expected to be provided in an area cannot be sustainably accommodated (and a plan is found sound on this basis) then the issue would need fresh consideration across the HMA. This was a factor effectively acknowledged by the Birmingham Development Plan Inspector who recommended modifications to the plan to ensure appropriate monitoring of plan making progress takes place across the HMA as a whole.
300. The duty to cooperate is a fundamental aspect supporting the plan making progress, not just because of its standing in legislation, but also because the output from the duty has a strong influence over, for instance, the number of dwellings to be accommodated. This in turn impacts both on the plan's strategy and the nature and number of sites needed to accommodate an appropriate level of growth.
301. The likely changes to the NPPF (as heralded by the July 2024 draft) include a significant shift of need from urban to rural areas and this is likely to have an impact on how the duty-to-cooperate is likely to be engaged. This, together with any further changes that affect strategic planning will need to be taken into account as the new plan is progressed.

## 11. Local Development Scheme (LDS)

302. Progress on plan-making as measured against the LDS is presently best considered in two parts:
- Local Plan Review 2015-24 – This considers the plan making activities over the period 2015 to 2024.
  - Local Plan Review 2026-43 – This covers the plan making activities for a plan that is expected to have a plan period of 2026-43.

### Local Plan Review 2015-24

303. The adopted Solihull Local Plan covers the period 2011-2028. In 2015 it was recognised that it needed to be updated, and a review was triggered for 3 principal reasons:
- Firstly, the successful legal challenge to the SLP post adoption means that the current Local Plan has no overall housing requirement for the plan period. This makes it difficult to demonstrate that the Borough has a five-year housing land supply, as required by the National Planning Policy Framework. The absence of an adequate housing land supply increases the risk of speculative housing developments being allowed on appeal.
  - Secondly, the examination of the Birmingham Development Plan (2017) made it clear that the City Council was unable to meet its own housing need within its boundaries, and that the shortfall will have to be met elsewhere within the Housing Market Area (HMA) (or other nearby areas) such as Solihull. Paragraphs 8.4.5 to 8.4.6 of the adopted Solihull Local Plan acknowledges that when work on housing needs identifies a need for further provision in the Borough, a review will be brought forward to address this.
  - Finally, the UK Central Masterplan and Prospectus for a 'Garden City' approach to the High Speed 2 Interchange have set out the Council's ambitions for this part of the Borough. The Proposed Local Area Plan<sup>26</sup> for the High Speed 2 Interchange and Adjoining Area highlighted the need to review the Green Belt boundary to enable the Interchange Area to be allocated for development.
304. The review that was undertaken included the following key milestones:
- Scope, Issues and Options consultation (2015)
  - Draft Local Plan (preferred options) (2016)
  - Supplementary Consultation – Draft Local Plan (preferred options) (2019)
  - Draft Submission Plan (Regulation 19) (2020)
  - Plan Examination (May 2021 to October 2024)
305. Although the Inspectors conducting the examination of the plan recognised that the NEC was an appropriate location for significant residential development, and supported its inclusion in the plan, they were not convinced that delivery at the site during the plan period would be of

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<sup>26</sup> A draft Local Area Plan for the site around HS2 Interchange was published in November 2014, but as a result of the other factors noted here, it was decided to pursue a whole plan review rather than a local area plan.

the scale and pace envisaged. They therefore identified that there would be a shortfall in the land supply in the plan of around 1,700 dwellings.

306. The only realistic way this shortfall could have been addressed would be through further Green Belt land release, in addition to the 574ha already proposed to be released.
307. Shortly after the Inspectors issued their conclusion on this issue draft revisions to the July 2021 NPPF were published in December 2022. This indicated that LPAs may 'choose' whether to review and alter Green Belt boundaries. As this change could have directly affected the submitted plan, and the need for potential amendments, it was agreed that the examination would be held in abeyance.
308. Subsequent changes to the NPPF were then published in December 2023 but included transitional arrangements that were not included in the December 2022 draft. These transitional arrangements indicated that plans already at examination should continue to be examined under the previous NPPF, not the 2023 update.
309. Despite the potential for the 2023 NPPF to still have at least an indirect bearing on the examination of the plan; and in the context of the July 2023 draft NPPF, the Inspectors wrote to the Council in September 2024 recommending that the plan be withdrawn.
310. At a meeting of Full Council on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2024 it was resolved that the plan be withdrawn; that the Council commences preparation of a new plan; and that a revised LDS be reported to Climate Change and Planning Cabinet at the earliest opportunity.
311. Despite the Inspectors' conclusion, it should be noted that the examination had established the following:
  - That the duty-to-cooperate had been complied with.
  - The overall spatial strategy of the Plan was appropriate.
  - The housing allocations are, in principle, appropriate (and by implication this supports the site selection methodology).

### **Local Plan Review 2026-43**

312. Following withdrawal of the 2020 plan, a new LDS is being published alongside this AMR. The LDS contains the following milestones for the new plan:
  - Winter 24/25 – Launch Call-for-Sites exercise
  - Autumn 25 – Publish a Regulation 18 Preferred Options Plan
  - Summer 26 – Publish a Regulation 19 Draft Submission Plan
  - Autumn 26 – Submit plan for examination
  - Winter 26/27 – Examination hearings
  - Summer/autumn 27 – Plan adoption

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