



# A Study of Green Belt Land & Areas of Development Restraint within Redditch Borough

Borough of Redditch  
Core Strategy  
Background Document

27 October 08

0908 ref: 0558

**REDDITCH** BOROUGH COUNCIL

*making  
a  
difference*

[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)

<b>CONTENTS</b>		<b>Page No</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>The Study</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>Planning Policy Guidance 2 (PPG2) and the Study</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>The Study Area</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>The Brockhill Area</b>	<b>5</b>
	1973 Joint Study of Feasibility	5
	Redditch Joint Study 1988	6
	Inspector's Report on Deposit Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2	7
	Inspector's Report on the Second Draft of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.	9
	County of Hereford and Worcester Minerals Local Plan April 1997	9
	White Young Green Report	9
	Summary of Constraints and Sensitivities to further development in the Brockhill Area	9
	Conclusions	10
<b>6</b>	<b>The South West Area</b>	<b>11</b>
	Birmingham Overspill Study 1967	11
	1973 Joint Study of Feasibility	12
	Redditch Joint Study 1988	13
	The South West Study	17
	Inspector's Report on Deposit Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2	28
	Inspector's Report on Modifications to Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 2	33
	County of Hereford and Worcester Minerals Local Plan April 1997	34
	Callow Hill Ridge Landscape Character Assessment Report	35

Inspector's Report on Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3	36
Worcestershire County Council Officers' Advice in Response to the West Midlands Regional Planning Body's Section 4(4) Authorities Brief (As amended), (February 2006)	37
White Young Green Report	38
Redditch Borough Council's Response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy - Phase Two Revision - Spatial Options 8 <sup>th</sup> January – 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2007	41
Summary of Constraints and Sensitivities to development in the South West Area	42
Conclusions	44
<b>7 The Area West of Astwood Bank</b>	<b>45</b>
1973 Joint Study of Feasibility	45
Redditch Joint Study 1988	46
The South West Study	48
Inspector's Report on Deposit Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2	52
Inspector's Report on Modifications to Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2	52
Inspector's Report on Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3	53
Worcestershire County Council Officers' Advice in Response to the West Midlands Regional Planning Body's Section 4(4) Authorities Brief (As amended), (February 2006)	54
Redditch Borough Council's Response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy – Phase Two Revision – Spatial Options 8 <sup>th</sup> January – 5 <sup>th</sup> March 2007	55
White Young Green Report	55
Summary of Constraints and Sensitivities to development West of Astwood Bank	59

<b>8</b>	<b>Areas of Development Restraint (ADRs)</b>	<b>60</b>
	Inspector's Report on Deposit Local Plan No.2	60
	Inspector's Report on Second Deposit on Redditch Local Plan No.3	61
	White Young Green Report	62
	Inspector's Report on Deposit Local Plan no.2	64
	Inspector's Report on Modifications to Local Plan No.2	65
	White Young Green Report	67
	Webheath ADR Conclusions	68
	Inspector's Report on Deposit Local Plan No.2	70
	Inspector's Report on Modifications to Local Plan No.2	71
	Inspector's Report on Second Deposit Local Plan No.3	72
	White Young Green Report	72
	North West Redditch Master Plan	73
	Brockhill ADR Conclusions	76
	Inspector's Report on Deposit Local Plan No.2	78
	Inspector's Report on Modifications to Local Plan No.2	79
	Inspector's Report on Second Deposit Local Plan No.3	80
	Worcestershire County Council's Officers' Advice in response to the West Midlands Regional Planning Body's Section 4(4) Authorities Brief	80
	Redditch Borough Council's Response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revisions	81
	White Young Green Report	81
	A435 ADR Conclusions	85
<b>9</b>	<b>Conclusions</b>	<b>86</b>
	Conclusions regarding Constraints and Sensitivities to further development in the Brockhill Green Belt Areas	86



	Conclusions regarding Constraints and Sensitivities to development in the South West Area Green Belt	86
	Conclusions regarding Constraints and Sensitivities to development in the Green Belt West of Astwood Bank	89
	Conclusions regarding Webheath ADR	91
	Conclusions regarding Brockhill ADR	92
	Conclusions regarding A435 ADR	93
	Overall Conclusion	94
<b>10</b>	<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>95</b>
<b>11</b>	<b>Appendices</b>	<b>98</b>

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.0 The emerging West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has allocated Redditch Borough a housing target of 6600 dwellings. In recognition of the “sensitivities of, and constraints” within the Borough, this target is set out in the RSS as proportioning 3300 dwellings within the Redditch Borough and the remaining 3300 contiguous to the urban area of Redditch town but located in the administrative areas of Bromsgrove and/or Stratford-on-Avon Districts.
- 1.1 The 3300 target for Redditch Borough will essentially be met by using urban in-fill sites and the three Areas of Development Restraint (ADR) – Webheath, Brockhill and A435 corridor – as allocated in the adopted, Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.
- 1.2 In spite of the requirements placed on Redditch, the Green Belt in Redditch should not be used in view of powerful environmental constraints and landscape sensitivities. Instead most of the 3300 additional dwellings should be accommodated on Bromsgrove/Stratford-on-Avon Green Belt lands.

## **2. THE STUDY**

- 2.0 The objective of this study is to demonstrate the acute sensitivities of the Redditch Green Belt and the various constraints and drawbacks it poses against development. In light of these findings, Redditch Borough Council contends that land which is predominantly in the Green Belt in both Bromsgrove and Stratford-on-Avon Districts would offer a more appropriate and accommodating solution to meet the remaining 3300 dwellings.
- 2.1 The document will tell the ‘story’ of each of the previously identified main parcels of Redditch Green Belt land and demonstrate the various factors that would militate against development at each of these locations. In order to provide a comprehensive overview of these Green Belt parcels, much reference will be made to previous reports which have assessed, informed and endorsed the current Green Belt designations, including Local Plan Inspectors’ reports, the Joint Study of 1988 undertaken by Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Council and Warwickshire County Council, the South West Study undertaken by Redditch Borough Council Officers in 1991, the Joint Study into the ‘Future Growth Implications of Redditch Town to 2025’ prepared by White Young Green (WYG Report) in December 2007 and other relevant studies. It is intended that this diverse set of studies will provide and support the Council’s reasoning for avoiding development in the Green Belt in Redditch.
- 2.2 Worcestershire County Council has recently been preparing the ‘Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment’ including ‘Planning for Landscape in Worcestershire – Landscape Character Assessment’ (LCA) which is the third document in the Worcestershire Landscape Character Assessment portfolio. In Paragraph 1.3 of that document, the point is made

that for many years, the concept of landscape conservation was largely based upon the notion of defining and protecting landscapes on the basis of their 'quality' and that this approach had many shortcomings. The LCA endeavours to place the features of a particular landscape in context, providing not just a description of different landscapes within the county but to provide an understanding as to why those differences and different landscapes are there and what they represent. In view of the extensive nature of the Study area of this report, it has not been possible to consider the landscape character of the area in depth in the light of the LCA. However, the plan at Appendix 1 of this report is an abstract of information from the LCA and has been included to give a very broad indication of landscape sensitivity around Redditch. Detailed interrogation of individual areas around Redditch through the LCA process is the only the satisfactory solution to understanding the landscape character of the area which is considered beyond the scope of this Study.

- 2.3 Having excluded the Green Belt as a possible development site, the study will conclude by giving systematic consideration to allocating development within each of the three ADRs in Redditch. Again, the document will draw on a wide range of previous studies to support the conclusion that development of the ADRS is preferable to any development of Green Belt land within Redditch Borough.

### **3. PLANNING POLICY GUIDANCE 2 (PPG2) and the Study**

- 3.0 Since much of the land involved in this Study is contained within the designated Green Belt, it is worth re-iterating the five stated purposes of designating land as Green Belt in PPG2:

- to check the un-restricted sprawl of large built-up areas;
- to prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
- to assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns and;
- to assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

- 3.1 PPG2 (Para 2.6) establishes that if alteration to the general extent of an approved Green Belt is contemplated, the Secretary of State will need to be satisfied that the authority has first considered opportunities for development within the urban areas contained by, and beyond, the Green Belt. Similarly, detailed green belt boundaries, defined in adopted local plans, should only be altered exceptionally.

- 3.2 It will be patently clear throughout this study that the opportunities for development within the urban area, within the Green Belt and at areas outside of the Green Belt but contiguous to Redditch (including the ADRs) have been

both historically and contemporaneously investigated in depth. It is also evident from previous studies that the scope for acceptable growth around Redditch is severely limited; an issue which was fully considered during the preparation and approval of the former Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 and current Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.

- 3.3 At this stage, it is also worth drawing attention to Paragraph 2.10 of PPG2, where it is emphasised that the defining of Green Belt boundaries should take account of the need to promote sustainable development.

#### **4. THE STUDY AREA (Map1)**

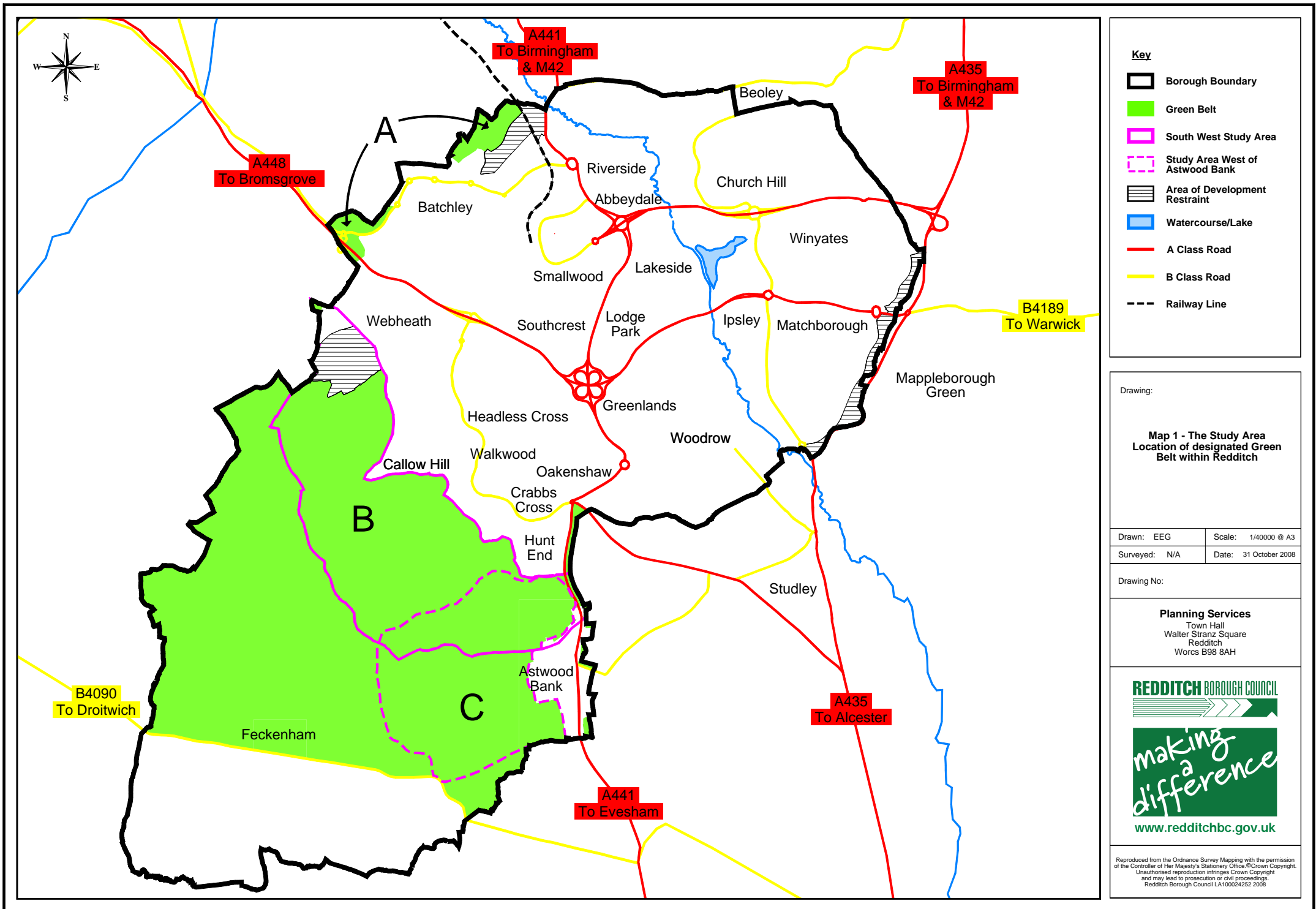
- 4.1 The area of study (Map 1) has primarily embraced the designated Green Belt around the north, west and southwest urban areas of Redditch. For convenience, the Study Area has been sub-divided into three main sectors identified in Local Plan No.2 namely:

- Brockhill north of the Foxlydiate Junction on the A448 and also north of the Brockhill ADR (A)
- The “South West” from the Webheath ADR to Astwood Bank (B)
- Area to the West of Astwood Bank (C)

- 4.2 There is additional Green Belt land adjacent to Redditch’s urban area to the east of the A441 in the vicinity of Crabbs Cross Island. This land falls outside of any of the above main Green Belt areas and there is insufficient study evidence from which to draw conclusions. However it is considered that this area of Green Belt should be treated with no less sensitivity than the three main areas of Green Belt covered in this Study.

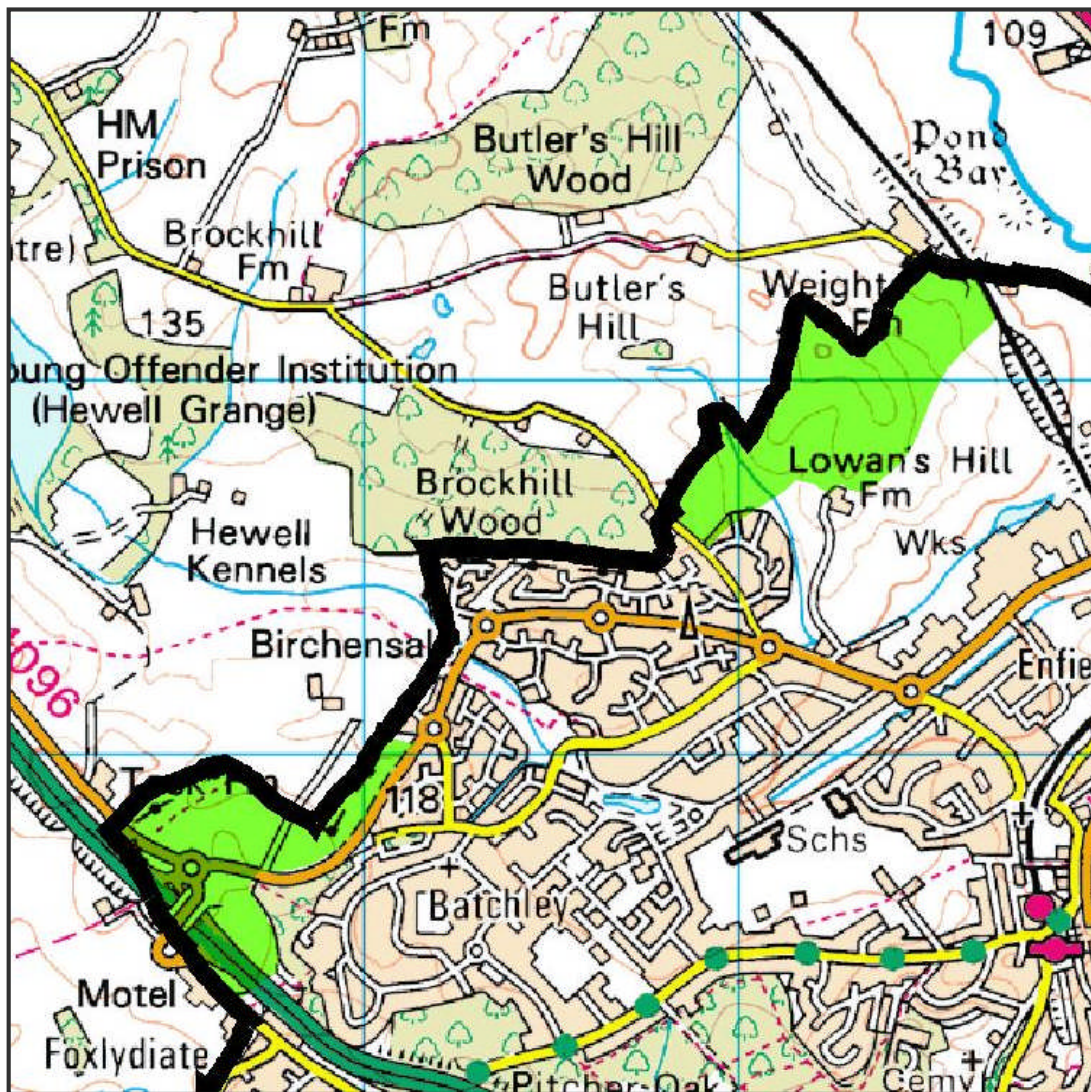
- 4.3 The Study also embraces investigation of other areas identified in the first WYG report.

- 4.4 In view of disparities between the boundaries of the study areas of previous reports, particularly those that define the South West and Astwood Bank areas, there will inevitably be some overlapping and duplication of findings from these previous studies.





## 5. THE BROCKHILL AREA (Map 2)



Map 2

### 5.0.0 1973 Joint Study of Feasibility

This study was designed to assess the different options for expanding the new town; its examination of the Brockhill area proves particularly pertinent to this section of the study. Paragraph 8.4.6 identified that landscape quality presented two kinds of restraint upon development in the Brockhill area namely:

1. Extensive stands of trees
2. High landscape value

In terms of the constraint posed by the presence of trees, an extensive area of woodland was identified in the north-west of the area, and was particularly accentuated at Hewell Grange (in Bromsgrove District). This important woodland area immediately abuts the Brockhill area and therefore affects its

feasibility for development. Similarly, the high landscape value of the area negates its development.

5.0.1 Section 13 of the Report discussed the generation of alternatives for potential development, with Paragraph 13.7 specifically identifying six major areas for consideration which were duly labelled areas a-f for ease of reference and were allocated potential population capacities which totalled 64,500 dwellings. The Brockhill area was contained in Area (f) and had a 'predicted maximum population capacity' of 17,000. However, Area (f) was discounted for 'combination' for Alternative Areas of Growth as its internal structure was poor compared with the other areas identified. (See Appendix 2 of this report).

#### 5.1.0 Redditch Joint Study 1988

Chapter 3 of this Report considered constraints to future development.

5.1.1 Paragraph 3.5 in Chapter 3 established that in accordance with Structure Plan objectives on the use of agricultural land, there was a presumption against development on the use of good quality land i.e. land falling within Grades 1, 2 and 3(a) of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Classification. The viability of farms for development was also raised. The Report identified that the best areas of farmland were to be found in the northwest of Redditch around Foxlydiate and Butlers Hill where there were areas of Grade 3(a) land interspersed with pockets of Grade 2 land. Plan 3 of the Report clearly showed the areas of Grade 3(a) and pockets of Grade 2 land to be situated in and around the Brockhill area and therefore posing a problem for any future development of the area. (See Appendix 3 of this report).

5.1.2 To be in accordance with Structure Plan policies, Paragraph 3.6 identified that development should not allowed on ridge lines as development in these areas would be seen for some distance from the surrounding countryside. Ridge lines were identified at Hewell Park and Butlers Hill to the northwest of Redditch and in the vicinity of the Brockhill area. Map 4 of the Report showed a ridge line in the Foxlydiate area extending into the Brockhill area. Therefore development would be ill-advised in these areas based in view of the visual impact they would have on the aesthetics and vista of the site on the locality. (See Appendix 4 of this report).

5.1.3 Nature conservation and special wildlife site constraints were considered in Paragraph 3.10 and the Hewell area was identified as a zone of high ecological value. Although Map 4 of the Joint Study demonstrated that whilst this zone was solely within Bromsgrove District, it did abut the Brockhill area and, therefore would therefore limit development.

5.1.4 Brockhill Wood northwest of Redditch was again identified in Paragraph 3.11 as major woodland and consequently a constraint to development.

5.1.5 In Paragraph 3.15, a 'less significant deposit' of sand and gravel was identified as a constraint at Foxlydiate and shown in broad terms on Map 2 of

the Joint Study, extending into the Brockhill area. (See Appendix 5 of this report).

5.1.6 Under the heading of 'Directions of Growth excluded from further consideration' – Chapter 4, Paragraph 4.2 – North West, the Foxlydiate and Butlers Hill/Lowans Hill area (which also comprise the Brockhill area of this Study) were identified as two components of the northwest locality which were considered to be unsuitable to accommodate large scale development for the following reasons:

- (a) The majority of the farmland in the area was of good quality (Grade 2 and 3a) and should be protected from future development.
- (b) There were ridges of high ground and development on these ridges would be prominent for some distance from the surrounding countryside.
- (c) In the Foxlydiate area, there were sand and gravel deposits.
- (d) Parts of the area around Hewell Park, Cladshill and Brockhill Wood were classified as being of high ecological value by the Worcestershire Nature Conservation Trust. The Trust's policy was that these zones should be exempt from development.
- (e) There were two main woods in the area - Brockhill and Butlers Hill Wood – development should avoid these woodlands.

5.1.7 These constraints are still applicable to the study area and therefore can be used to reiterate the unsuitability of the Green Belt at Brockhill to meet RSS development proposals.

#### 5.2.0 Inspector's Report on Deposit Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2

The status of Brockhill was given due regard both in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 and the subsequent Inspector's Report. In considering the representations and objections (including those made by Ideal Developments Ltd) to the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 in 1992, the Inspector concluded by recommending that part of the Brockhill area be allocated as a housing site for 1300 dwellings. However, in arriving at his recommendation, he opined in Paragraph 3.93 of the Report that the proposed housing area "would be well contained by existing topographical features which could be reinforced by new planting." Furthermore, he opined that in his view, "a defensible permanent Green Belt boundary could be defined at the outer edge of the allocated area." He went on to deal with this further in Part 5 of his report.

5.2.1 Accordingly, the Inspector recommended in Paragraphs 5.20 and 5.21 that an alternative Green Belt boundary be drawn around the area for housing development and also an ADR abutting the proposed housing area and the

Enfield Industrial Estate. He considered that this boundary would be discernible on the ground and readily defensible.

- 5.2.2 It should be noted that Ideal Developments had submitted a planning application in December 1991 for the development of the Brockhill area under consideration at the Local Plan Inquiry and this was refused by the Borough Council on 1 February 1992. An inquiry to hear the appeal against this decision was held in January 1993, two months after the Local Plan Inquiry. In his report to the Secretary of State, the appeal Inspector recommended that the appeal be upheld. However, the Secretary of State wrote to the main parties in March 1994 indicating that he was minded to approve the application and drew attention to section 78 of the Local Plan Inspector's recommendation and to the Borough Council's subsequential modifications to the Local Plan. The Secretary of State subsequently granted outline planning permission in June 1994.
- 5.2.3 In dealing with the Green Belt, the Inspector appointed in 1995 to consider representations and objections to the Proposed Modifications to Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2, did not disagree with the general point made by objectors about coalescence of Redditch with the Birmingham conurbation (Paragraph 3.7 of Local Plan Modifications Report). However, he concluded that the residential development at Brockhill would represent a negligible threat of coalescence with the conurbation. The Inspector commented further, in Paragraph 3.9, that the topography of the Brockhill site resembled a shallow bowl north of Salters Lane contained by rising land, and that the proposed housing area would be visible from other parts of the town but would be contained by higher land beyond. The protection of this higher land and designated Green Belt is therefore of fundamental importance and is discussed further in paragraph 5.2.4 below.
- 5.2.4 From recent examinations of the area to the north of the now completed housing development at Brockhill, it is apparent that the adopted Green Belt boundary is fundamentally correct. The land to the north rises steeply to Brockhill Wood (Bromsgrove District) and in the north-west rises relatively steeply to Oxstalls Farm and Tack Farm in the vicinity of the Foxlydiate Junction of the B4184 with the A448 Bromsgrove Highway. The Council now concedes that this recent housing development 'sits' well in a bowl in the local landscape, suitably below the prominent slopes and elevated land to the north and north-west. However, the Council maintains that further development on this rising land to the north-west would be damaging to the local landscape.
- 5.2.5 Finally, returning to the Inspector's Report, in considering an objection to a small area of Green Belt at Foxlydiate bounded by Birchfield Road (adjacent to the Foxlydiate Hotel), the A448 and the Old Post Office, the Inspector concluded in paragraph 5.23 that this land contributed to the open character of the corridor between Redditch and Bromsgrove. He considered that this area of land had been properly included in the Green Belt.

### 5.3.0 Inspector's Report on the Second Draft of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3.

The Inspector's Report into objections to the Second Deposit Draft of Local Plan No.3 concluded in paragraph 7.12 that in relation to the 'Green Belt to North of Brockhill ADR':

*"Sufficient lands for housing and employment uses are allocated within the Plan without resorting to sites within the Green Belt. Should the need for housing land arise post 2011, already identified ADR land will, in the absence of more sustainable sites, be available for that purpose....None of the matters raised by the Objector, including the advantages of taking the site into the North West Redditch Regeneration Area are sufficient to outweigh my conclusions that exceptional circumstances do not exist for the Green Belt boundary to be moved."*

### 5.4.0 County of Hereford and Worcester Minerals Local Plan April 1997

The Minerals local Plan adopted in April 1997 seeks to elaborate on Structure Plan Minerals policies; identify where extraction would be least damaging and; set out policies to guide the extraction and restoration of minerals sites.

5.4.1 Whilst there are no 'site specific' proposals in the Plan in the Redditch area, the Proposals Map confirms in broad terms, an 'Identified Minerals Deposit' of sand and gravel at Foxlydiate straddling the administrative boundary between Redditch and Bromsgrove that may militate against development of the Green Belt in the Brockhill area. (See Appendix 6 of this report).

### 5.5.0 White Young Green Report

The SWOT analysis of the WYG Report for Sites 5 and 6 (see Appendix 7 of this report), which include the Brockhill area, identifies the particular weaknesses of this area as relating to Green Belt, steep topography and flooding. However, the WYG Report concludes in paras 9.06 and 9.07 that expansion northwards, including the development of the Brockhill ADR, would be relatively close to the town centre and rail services and should be further evaluated.

### 5.6.0 Summary of Constraints and Sensitivities to further development in the Brockhill Area

A number of key issues have been raised from previous studies and inspectors reports which negate further development on the Brockhill area and can be summarised as follows:

- Prominent landscape and steep topography to north-west of recent housing development at Brockhill and Brockhill ADR

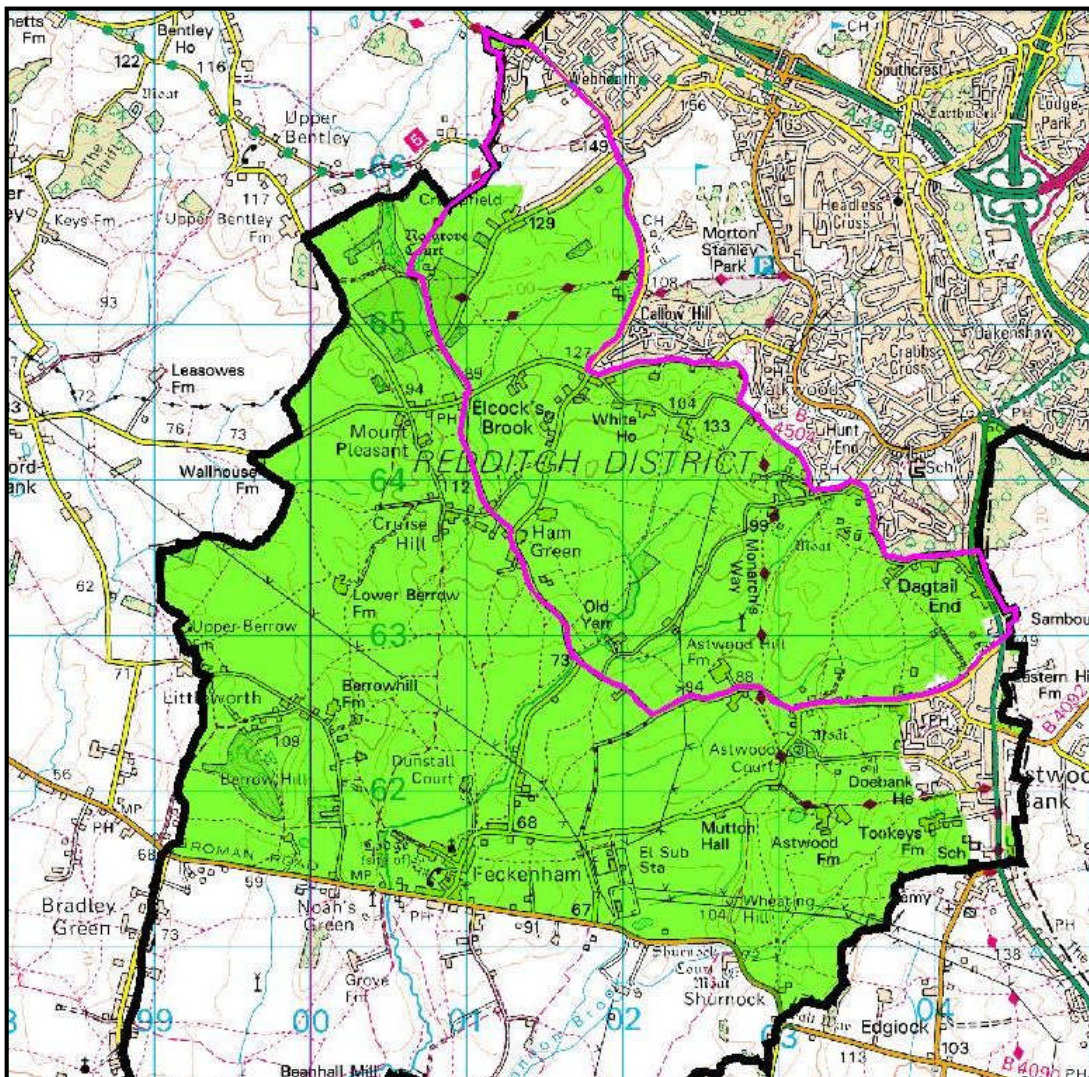


- Recent development sits well in a 'bowl' but any extension beyond this area and ADR would be damaging to surrounding landscape
- Good quality farmland which should be protected from development
- Established and important woodland to north
- Potential sand and gravel deposits in the Foxlydiate area.
- Existing Green Belt boundary discernable on the ground and defensible

#### 5.7.0 Conclusions

Taking into account the constraints identified in previous studies; the Inspector's views on Deposit Local Plan No.2; confirmation of mineral deposits in the Minerals Local Plan and; the landscape and visual analysis in paragraph 5.3 of the White Young Green Report, it is concluded that further development to the north and north-west of the recent development in the Brockhill area in the Green Belt, and beyond the Brockhill ADR, would be most inappropriate.

## 6. THE SOUTH WEST AREA (Map 3)



Map 3

### 6.0.0 Birmingham Overspill Study 1967

At the request of the then Minister of Housing and Local Government, an urgent investigation was carried out by Worcestershire County Council and Birmingham City Council in 1967 to find additional land for 15,000 houses in the public sector for Birmingham people in the period 1971 and 1975.

6.0.1 After a very rapid survey and consultation period, the most unsuitable areas for overspill housing were eliminated and alternative sites were identified for more detailed investigation.

6.0.2 One of these alternative sites was identified as Unit No.6 (Paragraphs 28 and 29 – Part III Analysis of Survey, Chapter 1 Suitability of Areas for Development). This site was located immediately to the south-west of Redditch (falling within the south-west area of this study) and was described in the Report as being 'at present without major road communications to

Birmingham and nearby towns', having a local highway system consisting mainly of narrow country lanes and that accessibility was relatively poor, although it was suggested that the 'proximity to the suggested motorway link could eventually allow improved road access'.

- 6.0.3 The report went on to say that this area was entirely rural in character, and its landscape quality, although not outstanding, was unspoilt and attractive. It was recorded that the land in this area was generally of poorer agricultural quality than most of the remainder of the Study Area (elsewhere in the Study Area, much of the land was deemed to be of medium or good quality and even highest quality).
- 6.0.4 In Paragraph 29, the report concluded that large scale development in this south-west region of Redditch would affect the development of Redditch New Town and would probably necessitate substantial revisions to present proposals. Furthermore, it was argued that the 'physical features of land on this side of Redditch would make it difficult to achieve satisfactory integration'. Having scrutinised this site for possible development, it was deemed that the area to the south-west of Redditch was inappropriate and was rejected from further investigation in their study as a potential overspill site.

#### 6.1.0 1973 Joint Study of Feasibility

In the 'Joint Study of Feasibility for the Expansion of Redditch New Town' published in June 1973, the findings (Paragraph 2.2.2) of the Study were, that of four alternatives for the possible growth of Redditch up to 150,000 population, Alternatives 3 and 4 (development primarily to the south and south-east of Redditch) were consistently and significantly better than Alternatives 1 and 2 (development primarily south-west and south of Redditch, incorporating the south-west area of this study). (See Appendix 8 of this report).

- 6.1.1 Whilst the findings of the Study are general in content, there were some references to constraints relating to the south-west area of Redditch which are set out in the following paragraphs.
- 6.1.2 Paragraph 8.4.1 drew attention to the Ridgeway, stretching south from the then Development Area of Redditch, as being a constraint on development.
- 6.1.3 Paragraph 8.4.6 highlighted the issue of landscape quality, presenting two main kinds of restraint upon development and in particular identified the valley between Norgrove Court and Feckenham, in the south-west of the area, as being of especially high landscape value.
- 6.1.4 In relation to drainage for the western area, the report drew attention to the need for the advisability of designing the installations of the proposed new sewage treatment works at Priest Bridge, Bradley Green as a first phase of a larger works to avoid delay in provision of sewage treatment facilities for any envisaged expansion.

## 6.2.0 Redditch Joint Study 1988

In the period 1986 to March 1988, a joint study was undertaken by Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Council and Warwickshire County Council primarily to recommend preferred options for the scale and location of growth generated by Redditch to the end of the Century. These recommendations were intended to meet housing and employment requirements for the local population and cater for any further inward migration.

- 6.2.1 Section 3 of The Interim Report, dated December 1986, highlighted a number of factors and constraints which are still relevant to this Study.
- 6.2.2 Paragraph 3.5 stated that the best areas of farmland are found to the north-west of Redditch around Foxlydiate and Butlers Hill and that there were Areas of Grade 3(a) land around Crumpfield and Norgrove Court.
- 6.2.3 The Report considered, in Paragraph 3.6, that to be in accordance with Structure Plan policies, development should not be allowed on ridge lines as development in these areas would adversely affect the landscape and would be visible for some distance. Ridges were identified at Astwood Bank and Callow Hill that would negate development in these areas.
- 6.2.4 Whilst there were only two areas of landscape value identified in the prevailing Structure Plan, Paragraph 3.7(b) went on to say that this study used the areas of high landscape value, as defined in the 1973 Joint Study of Feasibility, in assessing the impact of development on the landscape. The main areas of high landscape value included the areas to the south-west of Redditch around Ham Green, Norgrove Court and Upper Bentley (see Para.6.1.3 above).
- 6.2.5 In Paragraph 3.10, the Worcestershire Nature Conservation Trust (WNCT) identified sites of special wildlife interest, including two zones of moderate wildlife interest at Elcocks Brook and Astwood Bank. The Trust's policy was that there should be a presumption against development on special wildlife sites and in areas of high ecological value. If development was to occur in the zones of moderate ecological interest, they also requested that it should be designed so as to prevent fragmentation and ecological isolation.
- 6.2.6 In respect of drainage, Paragraph 3.13 stated that the overriding consideration was the relative situation of the Priest Bridge water reclamation works and Spernal water reclamation works. Priest Bridge serves the western area of Redditch and in theory has spare capacity, but its performance was giving concern which effectively meant it could take no extra flow. The receiving water course is small and it was thought that a consent for increased drainage would not be issued. The works would not be able to service further large scale development located to the west of Redditch, however the pumping of effluent to Spernal Works was possible but this would create additional costs. Severn Trent Water Authority's policy was that significant development should be sewered to the latter works, but the Water

Authority intended to undertake a review of sewage disposal in the Redditch area.

- 6.2.7 With regard to land drainage, Paragraph 3.13 commented that the western area cannot be developed without causing the likelihood of flooding at Feckenham, Priest Bridge and Himbleton, although considerable brook clearance had already been carried out by the Authority downstream of Broughton Hackett. The works involved to overcome the likely flooding problems would be at a considerable cost.
- 6.2.8 Mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified at Bentley and Bank Green (but seemingly extending south-westwards through Ham Green towards Astwood Hill Farm) (see Appendix 5 of this report) and these main areas were to be protected from development.
- 6.2.9 In terms of accessibility, it was recorded that in some of the western and south-western parts of the Study Area, access would be a problem because of narrow lanes. It was concluded that considerable investment would be needed to upgrade the road system, if development were to be located in this part of the Study Area (Paragraph 3.15).
- 6.2.10 In Section 4, the Report excluded a number of potential directions of growth from further consideration. Several areas were deemed unsuitable for large scale development in view of constraints identified by the report. However, it was emphasised that there may be smaller areas of land within the exclusion areas that might be suitable for small scale development, but it was envisaged that the sum of these areas would not accommodate the development needs of Redditch in the 1990s. Specifically, the western area and the area west of Astwood Bank were considered unsuitable for large scale development. The following reasons were cited when explaining the unsuitability of the western area for large scale development (Paragraph 4.9):
- a) There was a large area of Grade 3(a) land to the north-east of Norgrove Court and around Crumpfields Lane. This land should be protected from future development.
  - b) Parts of the area were located on a ridge and had prominent views over the surrounding countryside. Development would be seen for some distance from the surrounding area.
  - c) In the landscape evaluation study that was undertaken at the time of the 1973 Feasibility Study, the area around Norgrove Court was classified as an area of high landscape value.
- 6.2.11 Section 6 of the report examined the feasibility of the three allocation options of 6000 dwellings (Option 1), 4000 dwellings (Option 2) and 2000 dwellings (Option 3), and whether Redditch had the capacity to accommodate these levels of growth and if so, what the implications were and as well as the financial and environmental costs of directing development to areas in Redditch.



6.2.12 In considering Option 1 – 6000 dwellings in Paragraph 6.3, it was stated that to accommodate this level of housing growth, at least three of the directions considered for housing growth in the Study area would be required, in summary, because of:

- a) The need in whichever direction development occurred to avoid good quality agricultural land (Grades 2 and 3a), areas of good landscape and to keep development below the ridge lines and;
- b) The ability of the house building industry to market strategic housing sites.

The two directions having the least environmental or financial costs were north-west of Redditch and west of Studley, but this option would also have required development in either the south-west and west, in the north or east of the then Study Area. The high costs of development to the west and south-west, in terms of services and access, were reiterated.

6.2.13 Option 2 for 4000 houses (Paragraph 6.4) would have required development in at least two directions, but as there was sufficient capacity in the area to the north-west of Redditch and west of Studley, this level of growth could have avoided the directions where development would have involved the greatest environmental or financial costs.

6.2.14 In relation to Option 3 – 2000 dwellings, it was considered that this level of housing growth could also be accommodated within the area to the north-west of Redditch and west of Studley and as with Option 2 could avoid directions where development would mean greater environmental or financial costs. If the preferred direction of growth was, however, to the west and south-west of Redditch, it was considered to be uneconomic for this low growth option to be chosen.

6.2.15 Regarding Employment, Paragraph 6.2 of the Study deemed that land to the north-east of Redditch could accommodate the requirements.

6.2.16 In considering 'Possible Directions of Future Housing Growth' in Section 6, the following extracts relating to the 'West' and 'South West' are particularly relevant to this current Study:

*"E. SOUTH WEST*

*Advantages*

1. *Most of the agricultural land in this area is Grade 3(b) with smaller areas of Grade 3(c) and Grade 4.*
2. *New pupils from large scale development in this area could be accommodated without major capital spending in schools.*

### Disadvantages

1. *Housing development here would extend Redditch's town form from behind the Callow ridge into the countryside.*
2. *The roads in this area are narrow country lanes which are totally inadequate to serve any large scale development. The problem of providing access to this area will be difficult and very expensive to overcome.*
3. *The area is remote from the Redditch town centre.*
4. *Land drainage – run off from large scale development here would exacerbate the flooding problem at Feckenham. To overcome this problem, extensive downstream works would be needed. Alternatively flow balancing may be a possible solution.*
5. *Sewerage Infrastructure – this is likely to be a difficult and expensive area to service. The performance of the Priest Bridge Water Reclamation Works is giving concern. It would not be able to service further large scale development located to the west of Redditch. Pumping to the Spenal Water Reclamation Works is possible, but creates additional cost.*
6. *Water supply – this is one of the more expensive parts of the Study Area to supply with water.*

### **F. WEST**

#### Advantages

1. *There are some areas of good quality Grade 3(a) agricultural land in this part of the Study area. However, development could be directed onto lower Grade 3(b) and 3(c) farmland in the area.*
2. *New pupils from large scale development in this area could be accommodated without major capital spending in schools.*
3. *Water supply – there should be no difficulty in providing water supply to any large scale development in this part of the Study area.*

#### Disadvantages

1. *Land drainage - extensive downstream works would be needed in order to avoid exacerbating the existing flooding problem at Feckenham.*
2. *Sewerage Infrastructure – this is likely to be a difficult and expensive area to service because the performance of the Priest Bridge Water Reclamation Works was giving concern. It will not be able to service*

*further large scale development to the west of Redditch. Improving local treatment or pumping to the Sernal Water Reclamation Works may be possible, but would be extremely expensive solutions to implement.*

3. *This area is remote from the Redditch town centre. Road access from the site to the Redditch road network is inadequate and substantial improvements are necessary to cater for increases in traffic generated from development in this area.*
4. *Development in this area would put pressure on the surrounding good quality agricultural land (Grades 2 and 3a)."*

6.2.17 The Final Report of the Redditch Joint Study was published in March 1988.

6.2.18 In the 'Conclusions of the Study', Paragraph 2.8 stated that the west and south-west had potential for 1500 dwellings, but reiterated that:

- There was no physical limit to development, in that the contours of the land fell away from Redditch and any development would therefore spread away from the town.
- The area is most expensive in terms of provision of infrastructure.
- Access to the site would likely be expensive.
- Land drainage, water supply and sewerage infrastructure would also be expensive.
- Sewage would probably have to be pumped over the ridge to the Sernal Water reclamation Works.

6.2.19 The Final Report concluded that Option 2 be commended to both County Councils i.e. 4000 dwellings, distributed 75% to Hereford and Worcester and 25% to Warwickshire, in locations to be determined through statutory development plans that would necessarily avoid developing in the less suitable directions to the south-west.

### 6.3.0 The South West Study

The South West Study was undertaken by Redditch Borough Council in 1991 and consisted of a full study of the area south-west of Redditch in furtherance of the preparation of Local Plan No.2. Some background information, provided for an earlier Technical Report into the Study Area prepared in September 1990, was included in this report.

6.3.1 In accordance with the brief, the South West Study analysed landscape and highway considerations in depth and also tried to update all aspects of the previous Technical Report (Paragraph 1.2 of South West Study refers). In the main body of this current Study, the main landscape issues and

conclusions that emerged from the 1991 paper have been identified, but references to more detailed issues have been included in the Appendix to this Study.

- 6.3.2 Paragraph 3.2, Landscape Conclusions, considered that, in many respects, the extent of the existing urban area represented an allocation of land for development up to a logical and physically discernible edge. This was particularly relevant to the south west, where the land form acts as a physical constraint to the continuous expansion of the urban area. Continued expansion of the town into any part of the South West study area could not be undertaken without incurring significant landscape costs. No part of the Study Area could be identified as being ideal or wholly satisfactory with respect to the allocation of land for development, when set against the objective of achieving minimal landscape impact.
- 6.3.3 Following that analysis, Paragraph 3.3 outlined a distinct preference for development to the north of Sillins Lane. This was due to the overall qualities of landscape containment in this area which could be utilised to reduce the impact of development within the wider rural landscape, as well as the area's close relationship with the urban area. The land form would not prevent development being highly visible from various locations within the town, but the extent of such impact could, to some degree, be controlled and lessened by careful allocation of areas for development and the use of strategic landscaping, such as high land and ridges, in appropriate areas. Furthermore, consideration could be given to allocating land within the area west of Green Lane for development but with a view to maintaining, as far as possible, the visual corridor through the valley. However, this might involve the allocation of areas of varied topography rather than the more traditional approach of concentrating on lower flatter land. It was not considered that there were any extensive areas within this part of the Study Area which would provide an overriding constraint to traditional residential development. At that time, it was also considered that the establishment of green corridors into the town, possibly along the Alders Brook Valley and over high land to the north of Crumpfields Lane, could serve to be a positive feature in releasing land on the edge of the town.
- 6.3.4 In Paragraph 3.4, with the exception of the western edge of this area, the landscape quality to the north of Sillins Lane was identified as not particularly high. However, Paragraph 3.4 added that the qualities of the western edge of the then Study Area, as well as the need to protect it from intrusive development, might reduce the ability of the area to the north of Sillins Lane to take all of the required development at that time.
- 6.3.5 Callow Hill Ridge (Paragraph 3.5) and the area to the south contain a variety of landscape areas which were considered to be of high landscape quality, particularly important landscape features or, particularly sensitive to development. These landscape areas thereby act as constraints to the allocation of land for development. Callow Hill Ridge and other high land to the north and east of this part of the Study Area were both a landscape and a physical constraint to development and would serve to push development

away from the existing urban edge, leaving extensive areas of land unsuitable or undesirable for development between the existing town and the areas which might be considered appropriate for development. Whilst this alone was not a reason to discard this part of the Study Area, the most significant factor was that it would serve to place development within a landscape area where little could be done to overcome its adverse visual impact. Secondly, landscape features within this area do serve to provide localised areas of containment where development might be considered; however, their re-enforcement would not significantly ameliorate the effects of development.

- 6.3.6 Paragraph 3.6, stated that in comparison with land north of Sillins Lane, development in this southern area would, either directly or indirectly, affect a greater amount of high quality landscape. Consideration could be given to the identification of smaller areas of localised containment, particularly in the northeast of this part of the Study Area, which might be appropriate for development in landscape terms. However, the allocation of very large scale development, and possibly additional long term growth within this area, could not be satisfactorily supported on landscape grounds.
- 6.3.7 The Map from the South West Study entitled 'Major locational constraints to development within Study Area – excepting consideration of highways' has been included as Appendix 9 of this report and illustrates many of the constraints discussed in this part of the report.
- 6.3.8 In respect of the conclusions on the Natural Environment, Paragraph 2.1 of Chapter 3 drew attention to special wildlife sites and a specific policy in the emerging Local Plan No.2 (Policy CTL.21) that was aimed at protecting such sites from development, where these sites would be adversely affected. Bow Brook (Swans Brook), within the Study Area, and Norgrove Pool, adjacent to the Study Area, were subsequently identified under this Policy on the Proposals Map.
- 6.3.9 Furthermore, Paragraph 2.2 of the Natural Environment Conclusions highlighted that some of the Study Area west of Swans Brook fell within an area identified by the WNCT as being relatively rich in minor ecological features and, therefore, valuable as a whole. It appeared appropriate to suggest that the Swans Brook corridor should form the outer edge of the South West Study Area to be considered for the allocation of development, and that any associated development such as roads should also be directed away from this area. As a matter of detail, should land east of the Swans Brook be proposed for development, then measures should be undertaken to provide a substantial buffer between any development and this wildlife resource. If possible, such measures should serve to enhance the wildlife value of the Swans Brook (Bow Brook) corridor and the area as a whole.
- 6.3.10 Paragraph 2.4 of Natural Environment Conclusions drew attention to the need for a detailed ecological survey to be undertaken with respect to areas and features directly or indirectly affected by development. In particular, whilst Callow Hill appeared too steep to accommodate general development, the wildlife value of the area should be established and, if necessary, also means



of protection. The importance of utilising the structural afforestation of large areas, in order to mitigate the effects of development and offer benefits in terms of landscape and habitat enhancement within the Study Area, was raised in Paragraph 2.5.

- 6.3.11 The WNCT and National Rivers Authority (NRA) (Paragraph 2.6) noted the value that the Bow Brook and its tributaries represent, in terms of a wildlife resource. It was therefore essential that brook courses through the Study Area should be retained and protected from development. The lack of highway infrastructure within the Study Area, and the difficulties of connecting it to roads of appropriate status, was seen as a very serious constraint to the possible development of the area. Careful consideration would need to be given to any increase in effluent and to appropriate management of storm water (Paragraph 2.6). It was also noted in Paragraph 2.7 that the Swans Brook, Thickwithy Brook and Wixon/Wharrage Brook passed through the southern section of the Study Area, whilst The Alders (of local ecological importance) passed through the part of the Study Area north of Sillins Lane.
- 6.3.12 Whilst it was observed that that there were significant locations within the Study Area where the quality of the environment was not an overriding constraint upon the allocation of land for development, the WNCT's preference that development should be concentrated at Brockhill and the south-western periphery (ideally north of Sillins Lane), together with small sites in the urban area, was noted (Paragraph 2.8).
- 6.3.13 In terms of the conclusions on agriculture (Paragraph 4.1), parts of the South West were identified as having agricultural land of a relatively high quality. The Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) preferred to see alternative sites elsewhere in the Borough developed in preference to the southwest but, if other planning criteria indicated that land in the south-western periphery was required for development, MAFF was unlikely to formally object. Thus it was considered that agricultural land quality could not be viewed as an over-riding constraint, but regard was to be given to the incidence of those areas of better quality in the Study Area.
- 6.3.14 In terms of utilities, no significant problems were envisaged for the Study Area, but in terms of land drainage and foul drainage (Paragraph 2.2 of Chapter 4 and Paragraph 8.1 of Chapter 5), attention was drawn to the findings of the Bow Brook Study. This intensive study and report was carried out to enable the NRA to address the issues raised by development proposals arising out of the Hereford and Worcester County Structure Plan Review and Local Plan No.2. Essentially, the report recommended in its conclusions that the Borough Council be informed that no more than 1200 houses should be permitted to be built within the catchment area draining to Priest Bridge WRW in any development proposals, including existing unbuilt commitments (as at 31/3/89) and provision for windfall; that no further industrial land should be allocated within the catchment area and; that stormwater treatment ponds would be required for developments which alone, or in combination, exceeded 1 hectare in extent.

The NRA also recommended that:

- i) The implications of restricting development in the South West periphery of Redditch on drainage within the Arrow catchment area should be investigated in a further intensive study.
- ii) No further development in the South West periphery (within or beyond the horizon of the then Local Plan No.2) should be contemplated before a full Environmental Impact Assessment has been carried out and the NRA is satisfied that adequate environmental safeguards can be implemented.
- iii) Strategic options, which would possibly need to be considered, included.
  - a) A valley sewer to Pershore WRW with treated effluent discharge to the River Avon. A proportion of the sewage flow might be required to be discharged at Priest Bridge to compensate for reduced natural baseflows resulting from development).
  - b) Transfer of sewage to the Arrow catchment for treatment at Sernal WRW.

6.3.15 In relation to highways, Chapter 6 dealt with this issue in depth, but this report concentrates on the main issues which were identified.

6.3.16 Paragraph 2.2 of Chapter 6 in the introduction to highway issues emphasised that the lack of highway infrastructure within the Study Area and the difficulties of connecting it to roads of appropriate status was a very serious constraint to development. Paragraph 2.2 continued that 'the necessary highway solutions required to service various parts of the Study Area is a critical factor in determining the relative advantages/disadvantages of one part of the Study Area over another and the identification of a preferred alternative for development within the Study Area i.e. north of Sillins Lane'.

6.3.17 In relation to any possible new road link from the Study Area to the A435, Stratford-on-Avon District Council stated (Paragraph 7.18) that any such new road link would traverse the Ridgeway, which was designated as an Area of Restraint in the then Consultative Draft of the South Warwickshire Local Plan and land designated as Green Belt within the District. The District Council therefore placed great emphasis upon the need to safeguard the appearance of this important landscape feature and the construction of a new road link would conflict with this objective.

6.3.18 In Paragraph 7.21, WNCT felt that the highway solutions in the south-west of the Study Area were generally undesirable. The area affected by an A435 link is administered by the Warwickshire Nature Conservation Trust and, whilst the views of that Trust had not been received at the time of writing the South West Study, it was anticipated that very strong protection would be

afforded to Rough Hill Wood which would be located on, or just to the north of, a possible road line.

- 6.3.19 In Paragraph 10.1 of Chapter 6 of the Conclusions on Highways, the identification of an extensive list of constraints to the introduction of highway infrastructure to the Study Area, and the difficulties associated with attempting to overcome them, served to confirm earlier conclusions that development anywhere in the Study Area would be severely constrained by the lack of highway infrastructure and that providing roads into the area was likely to be very expensive and problematic.
- 6.3.20 The likely nature and impact of new highways required to service various parts of the Study Area was likely to be a major factor in determining the desirability of one part of the Study Area over another (Paragraph 10.2).
- 6.3.21 Broadly speaking, it appeared that the acceptable highway solutions, which did not involve a major new link between the A448 and either the A441 or A435, served to split the Study Area into two potential development areas i.e. north of Sillins Lane and south of Callow Hill Ridge (Paragraph 10.3).
- 6.3.22 The report on Highways concluded in Paragraph 10.9 that development to the north of Sillins Lane would be preferable to development south of Callow Hill due to the relative costs, disadvantages and implications associated with introducing adequate highway infrastructure into this area. However, the report suggested that both areas could be serviced by highway solutions which were feasible in engineering terms.
- 6.3.23 Chapter 7 of the Study considered the Built Environment and Town Form. It was concluded in Paragraph 2.1 that whilst there were a considerable number of Listed Buildings, Ancient Monuments and Sites of Archaeological Interest dispersed throughout the Study Area, it was difficult to assess the potential effects upon them without detailed proposals. However, it was not considered that the incidence of Listed Buildings or Sites of Archaeological Interest would be an over-riding constraint to development of major portions of the Study Area, so as to significantly reduce the development capacity of the area.
- 6.3.24 In Section 3.0 of Chapter 7, it was commented that it could be argued that the Study Area taken as a whole, represented a logical peripheral expansion of the town. However, this ignored the infrastructure, topographical and amenity constraints which led the 1973 Joint Study of Feasibility (Paragraphs 6.1.0 to 6.1.4 of this Study Report) to conclude that development primarily centred on the south-west performed less well than peripheral expansion primarily centred to the east of the town. Setting aside the wider issues, the Town Form Analysis divided the Study Area into three main areas, of which the main findings are summarised below:
- i) North of Crumpfields Lane - This area appeared to be a straightforward small 'blister' site to the west of existing development at Webheath and was well related, in terms of town form, being bounded by existing ribbon

development. Following landscape assessment of this area, it was considered to be relatively self-contained and not particularly intrusive to the open countryside to the west and would therefore be a desirable area to propose for the allocation of development in terms of Town Form (Also see Paragraphs 8.0 et seq. of this Report on the ADRs).

ii) Area west of Green Lane - This area also appeared to represent a straightforward 'blister', or peripheral expansion, on the western side of the town. However, a large part of the urban periphery abutting this area was not built up but rather was situated in open space/recreational use. In many respects, development unsympathetically located to the west of Green Lane would be out on a limb extending the urban area into the rural area. On the other hand, recent development at Callow Hill had been located on higher land than the adjacent land west of Green Lane and was not substantially screened to views from the west. It could therefore be suggested that development to the north of Sillins Lane would relate to this development and represent a continuation of development across the northern aspect of Callow Hill Ridge. However, due to an absence of highways within the Study Area and to the north of Sillins Lane, it is likely that development would necessitate the introduction of a substantial new highway network possibly connected to the A448 to the north. Careful consideration would be required with any such new link to the A448 at Foxlydiat junction and this part of the Study Area to ensure that, given the effects of the area's topography, such a road is not forced significantly to the west thus extending the intrusion of urban development into the rural west and thereby detracting from a cohesive urban form.

lii) Area south of Callow Hill Ridge - Existing development in the southeast of the Study Area at Stonepits Lane, Enfield Road and Hunt End appeared to suggest that development here would represent straightforward peripheral expansion and would relate reasonably well with regard to town form, but this supposition ignores topography and lack of access. The effect of topography in the southwest of the town was noticeable in that it disrupted the pattern of development. The existing pattern was more 'loose knit' than elsewhere: the extent of sites being tailored to suit the contours of the land. With the exception of Love Lyne/Tippings Hill plateau, development would be forced off the slopes which have served to define the edge of the urban area and into the open countryside and would relate poorly in urban terms.

6.3.25 In Public Transport - Conclusions (Paragraph 2.4 Chapter 8), it was concluded that there would be no significant difference between the ability of various parts of the Study Area to accommodate an extended public transport system and therefore should not be taken as a significant constraint to any particular part of the area. However, it was noted that existing bus routes (as opposed to existing Public Transport Routes) extended close to the edge of the existing urban area north of the Study Area.

6.3.26 In terms of Community Facilities (Paragraphs 5.0 et seq. of Chapter 8), it appeared that, in the main, it would be difficult for consultees to comment meaningfully until such time as more specific and detailed proposals for

possible new development areas had been formulated. However, it was not considered that provision of community facilities would prove to be an overriding locational factor in determining the desirability of one part of the Study Area over another, although comments made with respect to Town Form in the west of Webheath were to be noted. Previous analysis suggested that development in the south of the Study Area would be better placed to access community facilities than the area to the west. However, neither of these areas was particularly well placed to provide reasonably direct access for either pedestrians or those using vehicular transport.

6.3.27 The Conclusions on Development Potential (Chapter 9) opined in Paragraph 4.1 that, despite the disparity between the gross areas of land to the north of Sillins Lane and south of Callow Hill, the net development capacities were similar at around 2000 dwellings and that neither location would appear particularly desirable for employment development. It was only the general location south of Callow Hill that offered the possibility of additional capacity, but this could only be achieved by the acceptance that certain constraints be set aside (Paragraph 4.2).

6.3.28 In respect of the possible allocation of land within the Study Area for development and the accepted principles of Green Belt designation, it was observed in Chapter 10 Green Belt Analysis – Paragraph 1.3 that in relation to the South West Area:

*iii) Development north of Sillins Lane would create an intrusion into the Green Belt. However, physical boundaries existed which could be utilised so as to limit development and would relate reasonably well to a definable area in terms of its landscape qualities. Such boundaries would serve to check any unrestricted sprawl of the urban area and to protect the surrounding countryside.*

*Particular attention would be required in order to ensure that land through which any possible link road passes would be afforded full protection from pressure for future development.*

*iv) Setting aside the area identified between Redditch and Astwood Bank, development south of Callow Hill Ridge, due to the area's topography, would be pushed out from the existing urban periphery into an area of poorly contained open countryside where, whilst physical inner boundaries for the Green Belt could be found, such boundaries would not necessarily relate to physical constraints or limitations to development and neither would they relate to well-defined landscape areas. In such circumstances, it might prove difficult to protect these boundaries in the long term.*

*Furthermore, it is possible that development in this general location would require the building of greater lengths of feeder road through areas which might be either proposed to become confirmed Green Belt or, in the instance of the A435 link road, pass through areas of existing confirmed Green Belt.*

- 6.3.29 Paragraph 2.0 Green Belt of Chapter 10 – Conclusions stated that for the above reasons, it was considered that development south of Callow Hill Ridge would bring about greater intrusion into the Green Belt around Redditch than development north of Sillins Lane.
- 6.3.30 It is significant to note that in Paragraph 2.2 of Chapter 11 – General Conclusions – previous observations, that the south western periphery of Redditch represented a logical, and in some areas, physical limit to the existing urban area, had been endorsed by the analysis for this Study.
- 6.3.31 Development of the Study Area as a whole, or in part, would be expensive to undertake due to a combination of infrastructure and the nature of the topography. It could only be achieved at the cost of incurring significant landscape disadvantages and significant losses of Structure Plan Green Belt (Paragraph 2.3).
- 6.3.32 In Paragraph 2.4 - General Conclusions of Chapter 11, the report commented that no major areas which were capable of accommodating current development requirements could be put forward as being particularly desirable areas for peripheral development. However, it had been possible following the analysis of the Study Area to identify two major options for locating growth within this area namely:
- ii) Land north of Sillins Lane
  - iii) Land south of Callow Hill Ridge
- 6.3.33 Paragraph 2.5 stated that at that time it had been possible to identify a preference for growth north of Sillins Lane (but this will be discussed further in considering the comment of the Inspector’s report for Local Plan No.2).
- 6.3.34 Paragraph 2.7 commented that the allocation of a significant amount of employment land within the Study Area was considered undesirable for reasons discussed in Chapter 9 of the Report.
- 6.3.35 Paragraph 2.9 considered that the introduction of adequate highway infrastructure into one sector of the Study Area may encourage the ‘opening up’ of additional land within the Study Area to development. Furthermore, it was perceived that major new highway connections to high status roads outside the Study Area and beyond the Council’s administrative area may lead to some development pressure in these locations.
- 6.3.36 Paragraph 3.0 of Chapter 11 went on to assess the advantages and disadvantages of each area and the following summary is of considerable relevance to this current report:

i) Land North of Sillins Lane

ADVANTAGES

- Landscape - well contained location – limited intrusion into wider rural landscape – preferred option in landscape terms.*
- Ecology - limited impact on important wildlife sites – area preferred by WNCT*
- Water - area preferred by EWWC*
- Highways - new roads would relate reasonably well to possible development areas - in comparison with highway solutions required to service development south of Callow Hill Lane, new roads would produce less need for demolition; less environmental and landscape damage; shorter lengths of new carriageway unsupported by new development: in overall terms they are likely to be less expensive.*
- Town Form - reasonably well related to existing development at Webheath, with opportunity to establish Local Centre for use by both existing and new residents.*
- Green Belt - limited intrusion into green belt – possible to define logical boundaries which relate well to physical/landscape boundaries.*

DISADVANTAGES

- Landscape - would involve development within a sensitive visual corridor, needing careful treatment - areas of high landscape quality to the west.*
- Ecology - within Bow Brook catchment, essential surface water control required, foul effluent implications.*
- Highways - no existing road infrastructure of suitable capacity – major link required to A448 beyond the Borough boundary – Link to Windmill Drive required either through Morton Stanley Park/Golf Course or along improved Callow Hill Lane - pressure for future development - length of new carriageway unsupported by development.*
- Sewerage - implications of Bow Brook Report.*
- Development Potential - full development without compromising constraints would provide around 2000 dwellings, though with possible shortfall*

– no capacity for unrelated development – unsuitable for employment uses – no option for both the current development requirements and also the long-term growth requirement.

*Agricultural Land* - loss of Grade 3a land (not constraint).

ii) Land south of Callow Hill Ridge

ADVANTAGES

*Agricultural Land* - apart from land north of Church Road, Astwood Bank, development would involve land of relatively low agricultural quality.

*Topography-* possible development areas would be relatively flat and could physically accommodate some forms of employment development.

*Development potential* - full development of this area would provide around 2000 dwellings possibly slightly more, meeting the whole of the current development requirements – if certain development constraints were set aside and a less cohesive development form were accepted, then the development capacity could be increased, creating possible modest long term growth capacity (but due to landscape impact this is not considered to be a desirable location for employment).

DISADVANTAGES

*Landscape* - in the main open, poorly contained landscape; therefore, development would be extremely intrusive – extensive areas of high quality and important landscape – feeder roads would need to pass through sensitive landscape areas.

*Ecology* - impact upon specific and general areas of wildlife value, WNCT's least preferred area – within Bow Brook Catchment, essential surface water control; foul effluent implications.

*Highways* - no existing road infrastructure of suitable capacity - major link required to either A441 or A435 which would be expensive and cause considerable environmental and landscape damage, possible adverse impact on wildlife sites, produce numerous demolitions and considerable disruption to Windmill drive either through Morton Stanley Park/Golf Course or along improved Callow Hill lane/or alternative link to A448, both would introduce adverse highway impact north of Sillins Lane



– feeder links would not relate well for built area – greater lengths of road unsupported by development – no support from involved agencies for A435 link.

*Town Form* - due to effects of topography this area would not relate closely to existing development.

*Green Belt* - greater intrusion into green belt – possible boundaries not distinct or logical/defendable in landscape terms.

*Sewerage* - implications of Bow Brook Report.

*Topography*- existing land form has formed a physically definable edge to existing urban area – excessive slopes along Callow Hill Ridge would push development into open countryside - difficulties in obtaining vehicular access to / past A441 in east – lack of significant internal variety within to ameliorate effect of development in wider landscape.

*Utilities* - existing 66kv lines within area - land on southern boundaries more difficult to supply with water.

#### 6.3.37 The summary findings stated that:

5.1 Following analysis of the Study Area, it is noted that development anywhere within the Study Area would be difficult and expensive to undertake and is most significantly constrained by the absence of any useable highway infrastructure. However, the area north of Sillins Lane represents a significantly better option for accommodating a substantial part of the then requirements for residential development than the area south of Callow Hill Ridge, which is probably capable of accommodating all of the requirements but at a cost of incurring significant identified disadvantages.

5.2 The South West Study Area is not considered to be a desirable location for a significant amount of employment development.

5.3 The allocation of land north of Sillins Lane would provide no opportunity for accommodating long term growth requirements. If these are to be met, as well as the requirements of the time, within the Study Area, it could only be through the identification of land south of Callow Hill Ridge as well.

A summary of the major locational constraints identified by the Report was provided by Fig 2 (reproduced in Appendix 9 of this report).

#### 6.4.0 Inspector's Report on Deposit Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2

Policy H2 of the deposit draft Local Plan No.2 (Paragraph 2.1) provided for the allocation of land for residential development at Norgrove (Site75). Many of the Inspector's findings are relevant to this Study and the salient points are summarised in the following paragraphs.

6.4.1 The Inspector considered the issue of Landscape Impact in Paragraphs 2.19 et seq of his report. Whilst commenting that large scale development virtually anywhere at the edge of Redditch would almost inevitably have an adverse effect on the rural landscape (Paragraph 2.22), the Inspector considered in Paragraph 2.23 that the proposed development at Norgrove would result in the loss of some very attractive countryside.

6.4.2 He commented in his Conclusions on Landscape Impact in Paragraphs 2.23 and 2.24 that:

*Although the northern side of the Alders Brook Valley would largely remain open, it would be seriously affected by the proposed distributor road. And the existing patchwork of farmland here give way to more urban open space uses such as playing fields. Most importantly, this area would be dominated by the roofscape of new housing descending the southern flank of the valley from Sillins Lane. In my view of the current charm of this area would be severely damaged.*

*I consider the Alders Brook valley (Paragraph 2.24) to be a great asset to Redditch. It forms an open corridor running from within the built-up area at Windmill Drive; through Morton Stanley Park and the Redditch Golf Course; and on across the proposed development site to Swans Brook and Norgrove Court. In view of its obvious scenic significance, I think that development should be avoided here if at all possible. Ideally the land should remain permanently open.*

6.4.3 In Paragraph 2.25, the Inspector deemed that the area north of Crumpfields Lane was better contained and, given that it already included an amount of sporadic development, and did not think that development on this land would have so serious an effect on the landscape (this area was subsequently selected for ADR).

6.4.4 The Inspector concluded in Paragraph 2.33 that the Council's proposals for Norgrove would have a totally unacceptable effect on the setting of Norgrove Court. He went on to say that Norgrove Court was plainly a house of great distinction standing in delightful, largely unspoilt landscape which still contained features that were present when the building was first erected. The status of Norgrove Court as a Grade I listed building reflected its national importance and the numerous objections received from overseas testified to its international significance. The development, on the scale proposed, on rising ground, and in such close proximity to the building, would have destroyed much of its special character and charm. He noted the advice in Circular 8/87 that there are circumstances in which historic buildings must

accommodate new development nearby, but was not satisfied that such circumstances applied in this case. He did not think that the various measures suggested by the Council in Policy N14 would go very far to mitigate damage done to the context of Norgrove Court (Paragraph 2.34). The valley in which the building stands reads as a whole and provides a setting for the listed building which is essentially open and spacious. The proposed landscaping would hem in the house, but would not hide new development ascending the slope to Crumpfields Lane and, even if the nearest houses were sited 200m away, they would have had a considerable adverse impact on the appearance of Norgrove Court.

- 6.4.6 The Inspector did not think that the protection of Norgrove Court was a matter that should be left to supplementary planning guidance (Paragraph 2.35). In his view, there was an overwhelming case against the allocation of land on the slopes immediately above this house for development and he considered that between Crumpfields Lane and the proposed Hilltop open space, development should be restricted to land above the 125m contour.
- 6.4.7 In respect of agriculture, the Norgrove proposal would have affected an extensive area of farmland (Paragraph 2.45) and the Inspector commented in depth that the areas allocated for primarily residential uses would be permanently rendered unsuitable for cultivation and it would be questionable whether any part of the land reserved for primarily open space, school playing fields and other recreational uses would remain suitable for agriculture.
- 6.4.8 Attention was drawn to the advice in PPG7 in Paragraph 2.47 with regard to protecting the best and most versatile agricultural land, including land grade 3a. The Inspector did not consider the loss from cultivation of up to 49ha of Grade 3a land in Redditch, and perhaps a small area of higher quality farmland in Bromsgrove, to be insignificant. Furthermore, he commented that, whilst policies for the conservation of agricultural land had been relaxed to reflect current economic circumstances, good farmland remained a finite resource which should not be squandered unnecessarily. This was a matter to be taken into account in weighing the merits of the Norgrove proposals against those of other potential development sites.
- 6.4.9 In the conclusions on foul drainage (Paragraph 2.57), it was noted that neither the NRA nor Severn Trent Water had objected to the Norgrove proposals. However, the Inspector noted in Paragraph 2.58 that as a general principle, new housing which relies on a pumped sewage disposal system would be less in tune with the objectives of “sustainable development” and energy conservation than housing served by gravitational sewers.
- 6.4.10 The highway implications of the proposed development at Norgrove were discussed at some length in Paragraphs 2.59 to 2.82. Perhaps the most significant findings as far as this Study Report is concerned, are outlined in the following four paragraphs.
- 6.4.11 In Paragraphs 2.74 to 2.79, the district distributor road proposed in the deposit draft Local plan (and in ‘Option 1’ – favoured by the highway authority

and retained the concept of an unbroken district distributor linking the A448 and B4504) would have had serious adverse effects on the amenity and recreational value of the open area comprising Redditch Golf Course and Morton Stanley Park. This area has a most attractive semi-rural landscape from which the new road with its lighting columns, signage and other paraphernalia, would inevitably detract. Noise and fumes of vehicular traffic would also mar the tranquil and unspoilt atmosphere of this part of Redditch. Other damaging effects of this road proposal were discussed in the ensuing paragraphs, including the inability to be able to satisfactorily mitigate the undesirable effects of this road in this area; the reduction in the Golf Club's practice ground and; safety aspects of positioning the road through the Golf Course.

6.4.12 Consideration was given in Paragraph 2.80 to the proposed link from Norgrove to the A448. If 'Option 2' (favoured by the Borough Council and which dispensed with the link between Norgrove and Windmill Drive) were to be adopted, this link would have provided the sole means of access to Norgrove for general traffic – a situation which was considered to be less than ideal.

6.4.13 Whilst there was no technical evidence to suggest that the Norgrove development would likely to have given rise to significant congestion to the Headless Cross area or on the A441 (Paragraph 2.83), the Inspector understood the general need to ensure that Norgrove traffic would be channelled onto the primary road network and not permitted to filter through the country lanes to the south and west of Redditch. These lanes would be plainly ill-equipped to handle any substantial increase in traffic and Policy N5 indicated how they would be protected from any significant additional use. The Inspector recognised that existing residents of the Norgrove area would have to make longer and more circuitous trips to get to local destinations than was currently the case. This would be regrettable but unavoidable.

6.4.14 In considering objections to the Redditch Local Plan No.2 relating to Norgrove proposals, under 'Norgrove - Green Belt Policy', the Inspector concluded in Paragraph 2.95 that the release of some land previously included in the Interim Green Belt would have to be allocated for development to meet Structure Plan targets.

6.4.15 He was not convinced that the release of land for development at Norgrove would ultimately result in the coalescence of Redditch, Droitwich and Bromsgrove. The principle that these towns should be separated by a green belt was not in question and once the precise extent of that green belt had been defined, it should be regarded as permanent (Paragraph 2.96).

6.4.16 However, the Inspector stated in paragraph 2.97 that he was persuaded that there was a case for keeping the southern part of the Norgrove area permanently open. He considered that the allocation of land for development in the Alders Brook valley and in the environs of Norgrove Court would be highly undesirable. He could see no grounds for excluding further land between Norgrove Lane and Sillins Lane from the Green Belt. On the

contrary, he considered that the southern part of the Norgrove area should be included in the Green Belt.

6.4.17 In his Conclusions on objections to 'Land to the south-west of Redditch below the Callow Hill Ridge', the Inspector commented in Paragraph 3.113 that the Callow Hill Ridge was a striking topographical feature which broadly defined the south-western edge of the urban area of Redditch. He considered that it would be wholly undesirable for the town to spill over this natural limit, which currently provided a dividing line between the built-up area and the countryside. In his view, the boundary proposed for this part of the Green Belt in Local Plan No.2 was clearly defined and was worthy of support. The allocation of land to the south of Feckenham Road, either at Hunt End or at Chapel House Farm, would compromise the clarity of this boundary, would generate pressure for development on other land nearby and would be harmful to the objectives of green belt policy.

6.4.18 The allocation of housing land to the south of Love Lyne had the same shortcomings and the development site here would be particularly ill-related to the urban area of Redditch (Paragraph 3.114). New housing areas would be separated by an extensive tract of open land, would appear as an incongruous tongue of development projecting into open countryside and would be perceived as adding to urban sprawl. They would be plainly visible from the ridge itself, as well as from country lanes and footpaths on the lower lying land. Once the principle was established that new housing could be built in the area, it would be difficult to set a defensible limit to further development.

6.4.19 In relation to access, the developers envisaged, initially, an elongated, single lane carriageway; a cul-de-sac would provide the sole means of access to an estate of up to 1100 dwellings. In the Inspector's view (Paragraph 3,115), this would have been less than satisfactory and he also thought that the formation of a secondary access onto the existing network of country lanes in this area should be avoided. These roads were narrow and poorly aligned and were not equipped to handle the volumes of additional traffic which would be generated by a residential development of the size contemplated.

6.4.20 Whilst the access problems would ultimately have been overcome by the completion of an unbroken distributor link between Windmill Drive and Foxlydiate, it would have been imprudent to have placed any reliance on the connection to the A448 being completed for some years (Paragraph 3.116). He further considered that the long distributor road would have an adverse effect on the extensive tract of delightful countryside including the area above Love Lyne; the valleys of the Swans Brook and Alders Brook; and the areas of Norgrove Court.

6.4.21 Paragraph 3.117 sets out that the proposed residential neighbourhoods on either side of the Swans Brook would be remote from existing social and economic facilities. Whilst recognising that 1500 dwellings could support a limited range of facilities, the Inspector considered that that this site compared badly with Brockhill in terms of its proximity to the town centre, to

the railway station, to a range of schools and to a range of employment opportunities.

6.4.22 Finally, the Inspector deemed that the proposed development of 1500 dwellings to the south of Love Lyne could have adverse ecological consequences, particularly on the Special Wildlife Site (Paragraph 3.118). The distributor road would cross the Swans Brook, introducing an element of noise and air pollution into the locality. Despite the use of trapped gullies and petrol interceptors, there would be increased risk of contaminants entering the natural drainage system and new residents might well cause damage to the wildlife community disturbing nests, by dropping litter and so on. Furthermore, the proposed diversion of the Slough would interfere with the New Coppice Special Wildlife Site.

6.4.23 For these reasons, it was considered that it would be wrong for any additional housing to be allocated south of the Callow Hill Ridge (Paragraph 3.119).

6.4.24 In relation to objections to the 'Policy GB1 - Green Belt to the South West of Redditch', the Inspector was not convinced that it would be appropriate to include Redditch Golf Course, Morton Stanley Park or Walkwood Coppice within the Green Belt (Paragraph 5.31). This area had not been previously protected by Green Belt policy, having been excluded from the Interim Green Belt. In his view, Green Lane provided a clear, defensible and permanent boundary to the Green Belt south of Crumpfields Lane.

6.4.25 In Paragraph 5.32, he considered that the Green Belt boundary between Callow Hill and Dagtail End had the advantage of being easily recognisable and reasonably logical since it followed the natural limit of the urban area of Redditch. Development to the south of this line would be perceived as sprawling into open countryside below the Callow Hill Ridge and would not be particularly well contained. The Inspector added that the exclusion of land to the south of Hunt End from the Green Belt would tend to threaten the continued existence of Astwood Bank as a separate settlement with its own distinctive identity.

#### 6.5.0 Inspector's Report on Modifications to Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2

In considering objections to the allocation of about 526 dwellings at Norgrove, the Inspector appointed to deal with objections to the Modifications concluded in Paragraph 1.10 of his report that there were no convincing reasons why the majority of the Deposit Local Plan Inspector's recommendations should not be followed. In particular, he could detect no fault in the reasoning which led the Local Plan Inspector to his conclusion that the best available site for new development to meet the bulk of the Structure Plan housing requirements would be at Brockhill as opposed to Norgrove.

6.5.1 In Paragraph 2.8, reference is made to the objection from the Commission for the New Towns alleging that the proposed Green Belt boundary had been drawn too tightly and that the quality of the landscape was the only reason given by the Deposit Local Plan Inspector for his recommendation that the

Alders Brook Valley should be included in the Green Belt. The Commission also contended that additional land was required within the ADR designation to meet the long term development needs of the town, and urged that 6.64ha, to the south of Crumpfields Lane in their ownership, should be deleted from Green Belt designation and reassigned as an ADR.

- 6.5.2 After giving careful consideration to these objections in Paragraph 2.9, the Modifications Inspector considered that the proposed Green Belt would check the unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area and would assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment (having regard to the objectives in PPG2). For these reasons, he rejected the contention that the proposed Green Belt at Norgrove had no justification. He gave further consideration to matters of ADR in ensuing paragraphs of his report, and relevant issues summarised in Paragraphs 8.0 et seq of this report.
- 6.5.3 In commenting on the designation of the ADR at Norgrove (Paragraph 2.16) embodied in the 'Modifications', the Modifications Inspector commented that in regard to the highway issue, Norgrove compared unfavourably with the Brockhill site where traffic on the proposed road network necessary to serve development would have a much slighter impact on existing residential areas. However, he concluded that the existing highway network and more particularly, the junctions on the network, could cope with traffic volumes resulting from a 526 dwelling scheme (a more modest scheme proposed for the ADR as compared with the more extensive Deposit proposals for Norgrove).
- 6.5.4 In respect of dependency on the private car in Paragraph 2.20, the Modifications Inspector concurred with the Deposit Local Plan Inspector in that much of the Brockhill area was within reasonable walking distance of the town centre and the disadvantages of the original Norgrove site were beyond dispute.
- 6.5.5 Paragraph 2.21 confirmed that Norgrove Court was a superb example of a seventeenth century English manor house (Grade I listed building) lying in the shallow valley of the Swans Brook. The Modifications Inspector confirmed that development proposals in the Deposit Local Plan would have resulted in new housing development approaching to within 100m of Norgrove Court, and whilst provision for tree planting would have partially mitigated the impact of new development on Norgrove Court, new houses on the rising ground on the east side of the valley would have been clearly visible. The effects of new development on the setting of the listed building were an important reason for the Deposit Local Plan Inspector's rejection of the Norgrove proposals. The Council's modifications meant that the impact of development would be significantly reduced and the Modifications Inspector did not find that the ADR proposals carried the same weight as in the case against development at Norgrove as it did in earlier proposals.



#### 6.6.0 County of Hereford and Worcester Minerals Local Plan April 1997

The Minerals Local Plan adopted in April 1997 seeks to elaborate on Structure Plan Minerals policies; identify where extraction would be least damaging and; set out policies to guide the extraction and restoration of minerals sites.

6.6.1 Whilst there are no 'site specific' proposals in the Plan in the Redditch area, the Proposals Map does show in broad terms, an 'Identified Minerals Deposit' of sand and gravel at Lower Bentley and fringing on the Norgrove Court area. The scale of the proposals map does not facilitate an accurate delineation, but it appears that the eastern boundary of the sand and gravel deposit runs along the administrative boundary between Redditch and Bromsgrove. (See Appendix 6 of this report).

6.6.2 It should be noted that earlier reports, including the Redditch Joint Study of 1988, indicated more extensive deposits in this locality stretching further south through Ham Green and Astwood Bank.

#### 6.7.0 Callow Hill Ridge Landscape Character Assessment Report

This report was prepared in February 2005 by Pleydell Smithyman Limited for Redditch Borough Council to identify land which should be protected in the emerging Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 as open space because of its landscape amenity value.

6.7.1 The aims of the report were to research and produce a Landscape Character Assessment for the Callow Hill Ridge which would:

- Establish how and why the area is valued in terms of amenity landscape
- Establish how the Callow Hill Ridge contributes to the open space amenity of Redditch

6.7.2 The principal findings of this report are very relevant to the examination of part of the fringe of the South West area of this current Study and the most significant issues and conclusions are reproduced in the following paragraphs.

6.7.3 'Site Protection and Development Constraint' reads as follows:

#### 3.2 *Landscape Character*

3.2.2 *Callow Hill Ridge forms an important transition zone between the high density residential districts of Redditch and the open countryside within the Green Belt south and west of the site. Activities within this zone are conducive with the urban fringe environment, comprising rough grazing land, horse grazing/paddock and scrub vegetation, and complementary with these on adjacent land to the scarp slope/ridge north-east and south-west of the site.*

*Adjacent land to the site which is of similar character and land use, falls within the Green Belt,. the character of Callow Hill Ridge integrates with this designation, its character contributing to a harmonious pastoral landscape.*

*In terms of landscape character, the site should be protected from inappropriate development which would alter the character of the scarp transition/urban fringe, degrade the landscape quality and provide inappropriate land use on the periphery of the Green Belt.*

### 3.3 Visual Issues

3.3.1 *Callow Hill Ridge forms part of a south and south-west facing scarp landform and ridge to the south-west of Redditch.*

3.3.2 *The site is visible to short, middle and long distance views ranging from less than 0.5km to in excess of 3.0km. Receptor viewpoints range from public highway, footpaths, national footpath routes, bridleways, residential property and ancient monuments. Receptor views from the south and west are directed towards existing development on the ridgeline at Moorcroft Gardens and Hunt End Lane, where development is screened by existing vegetation, the receptor enjoys a harmonious view of a pastoral landscape where development is visible, the quality of the view is degraded with high density development creating an intrusion into the landscape.*

*In terms of visual amenity, the site should be protected from inappropriate development which will degrade the receptor views at short, middle and long distance.*

6.7.4 The significant elements of the Conclusions section are as follows:

5.5 *The site forms an important transition zone between the districts of Redditch and open countryside within the Green Belt, its characteristics contributing to the rural landscape comprising elements found within the countryside and land use activity conducive with the urban fringe.*

5.6 *The land use of Callow Hill Ridge, its landform and vegetated character provide an important visual screen to views from the south and west and allow the site to integrate with the rural Worcestershire landscape. Where development on the ridge is visible this provides a negative visual intrusion, degrading the quality of the pastoral landscape.*

5.7 *The site should be protected from inappropriate development which would alter land use, land unit scale and pattern, topography, vegetation cover, its contribution to the pastoral landscape and; its role*

*as a transition between upland urban and lowland rural land use characteristics.*

#### 6.8.0 Inspector's Report on Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

In considering B(HSG).1 Housing Provision – Omission Sites, the Inspector recommended in Paragraph 4.36 of his report that land at Woodyard Garage and similarly land in the South West area at Love Lyne (see Appendix 10) designated in the Plan as Primarily Open Space should not be allocated for housing, as development would be environmentally harmful. It was suggested that Webheath (see Appendix 11) not be allocated for development as the site was outside the urban area.

- 6.8.1 In relation to Policy R.1 Open Space Allocations under Issue i) Land at Love Lyne, Hunt End Lane (293), the Inspector commented as follows in Paragraph 13.15:

*The plan (as recommended for modification) also looks to protect areas of land other than those highlighted by the OSNA. They include areas of open space that have visual amenity, even though they do not have public access. The Love Lyne site was a part of the Callow Hill Ridge Landscape Character Assessment Area, which consultants, appointed by the Council, deemed to be worthy of protection. It is an attractive swathe of agricultural land – now apparently used for grazing – and is located at the southern end of the ridge. It sits to the east of Love Lyne and rises fairly sharply to the west residential area beyond. I accept that it should be protected under the Policy. It would be helpful however if the Callow Hill Ridge area was separately identified on the Information Map.*

#### 6.9.0 Worcestershire County Council Officers' Advice in Response to the West Midlands Regional Planning Body's Section 4(4) Authorities Brief (As amended), (February 2006)

Paragraph 2.61 commented that Redditch town is the only large settlement in the district and is the only settlement suitable for future strategic growth in Redditch District. In order to provide for sufficient housing for Redditch's natural growth, significant peripheral expansion of the town on greenfield land would be required. The implications for the RSS were considered in Paragraph 2.105.

- 6.9.1 Paragraph 2.105 observed that in order to deliver sufficient housing capacity to provide for locally generated housing, large scale housing development on greenfield land would be required through the peripheral expansion of the built-up area of Redditch town. This implication highlighted a tension between two elements of the Spatial Strategy which, on the one hand, mitigate against the peripheral expansion of "other large settlements", of which Redditch was one, and on the other hand, advise that new development primarily meeting locally generated needs should be focussed on the Region's other large settlements.

6.9.2 Paragraph 2.124 described that the implications arising from the distribution of the housing provision needed to help meet Redditch's residential requirements under Reference Point C would be large scale incursions of the Green Belt. In this regard, the report advised that the peripheral expansion of Redditch town to the southwest would not be appropriate. The suitability of this direction of growth was considered in detail in the context of the preparation of Local Plan No.2 and the Inquiry Inspector rejected such proposals on the grounds that there were infrastructure problems, primarily in the provision of roads, the negative effects on a Grade 1 Listed Building, the negative impacts on the environment and highways effects. It was concluded that these issues remain largely unchanged.

#### 6.10.0 White, Young Green Report

White Young Green Consulting (WYG) was commissioned in May 2007 by Worcestershire County Council and the Regional Assembly in conjunction with the planning authorities of Bromsgrove, Redditch and Stratford-on-Avon Districts to carry out a strategic assessment of the implications of potential future growth within and adjoining Redditch Borough over the period to 2026.

6.10.1 Paragraph 2.03 of the WYG Report states that:

*One of the RSS objectives is to retain the Green Belt which encircles the conurbation and surrounds Redditch. There is an exception if it can be shown that a release of Green Belt land is necessary to bring about regeneration of an urban centre. Whilst it is the case that new residential development in the Green Belt surrounding Redditch would have a regenerative effect on the town centre of Redditch through increased spending, WYG is of the view that this alone would be insufficient to justify a release of Green Belt land".*

6.10.2 WYG restates the RSS criteria (Paragraph 2.08) that any development proposed on the edge of the MUAs or on other greenfield sites should meet the following criteria:

- there are no suitable alternatives available on previously developed land and buildings within built-up areas;
- the development should be capable of being served by rail or high quality public transport within easy access of centres and facilities; and
- the development respects the natural environment, built environment and historic heritage.

6.10.3 It was considered in the Conclusions of this report that the South West area did not meet these RSS criteria.

6.10.4 In undertaking the SWOT analysis, WYG was able to advise that having regard to the extent and severity of existing constraints, two sites were immediately notable and should effectively be ruled out (paragraph 8.02)

including site 3A - Redditch Golf Club and Morton Stanley Park (see Appendix 7 of this report). WYG continued by asserting that both of these sites were valuable in their own right as part of the town's formal sports provision and most of the land was also affected by important ecological considerations.

6.10.5 The exclusion of these two sites left 19 sites for further consideration and this part of this report highlights the findings for the three sites of the WYG study which encapsulate the South West area of this Study viz; SWOT Sites 1 – Land north of Astwood Bank, 2 – Land adjacent to Ham Green and 3 – Land west of Redditch Golf Course – see Appendix 7 of this report.

6.10.6 In Paragraph 8.14 of the WYG report, the main conclusions arising from the assessment of utility infrastructure capacity constraints are set out and it is of relevance to note that whilst the supply of electricity should not unduly affect residential growth beyond Redditch, development to the south and west of Redditch would be most expensive (SWOT site numbers 1 to 4).

6.10.7 In respect of drainage, the most sustainable and perhaps least expensive locations to construct new homes beyond Redditch are areas where the permeability of the soil is the greatest or, failing this, areas close to existing water courses - most likely to the north and east of Redditch (Paragraph 8.14).

6.10.8 In terms of foul water disposal, WYG's findings in relation to the southwest area (Paragraph 8.15) were that:

- *Severn Trent Water had stated that major planned capital work was planned for the Priest Bridge Sewage Treatment Works (STW). This capital work was based on a current design population of 15,000 and therefore did not cater for any growth options in this study. Severn Trent had advised that Sewage Treatment Works would be difficult to extend once these works had been carried out, thus limiting population growth to the west of Redditch unless new foul flows were pumped over the 'ridge' into the catchment served by the Spernal STW. Pumping all foul water over the 'ridge' from the west to the east would not be a wholly sustainable solution.*
- *The Bow Brook River downstream of the Priest Bridge STW to the west of Redditch and the River Arrow downstream of the Spernal STW to the south of Redditch were considered unsuitable to accept significant amounts of additional treated effluent from the treatment works.*

6.10.9 Effectively any development to the south-west of the 'ridge' would have to be drained to Spernal STW using one or more pumps. These pumps would have to be designed such that foul water was pumped to an outfall downstream of the stressed network in the town centre (Paragraph 8.16).

6.10.10 In terms of foul water disposal (Paragraphs 8.18 and 8.19), the most sustainable solution would be to develop close to, or to the east of, the River Arrow, again a new trunk sewer might be required but this could potentially be

a gravity sewer. The report concludes that it is “*becoming clear that large scale residential development generally to the east of the River Arrow is preferable in terms of reduced capital investment and more sustainable solutions (reduced foul water pumping costs). Both foul water and electricity will be cheaper and simpler to the east of the town i.e. SWOT Sites 8 to 10 and 15 to 20*”.

6.10.11 Continuing with ‘Options for Accommodating Growth around Redditch’, the South West Quadrant (Sites 1 to 4 – see Appendix 7 of this report) was evaluated as follows in Paragraphs 8.27 and 8.28:

The accommodation of major growth within the south-west quadrant would bring with it the following principal advantages:

- *A substantial proportion of the land within sites 1 to 4 (excluding Site 3a – Morton Stanley Park and Golf Course) does not exhibit significant environmental or policy constraints.*
- *There is potential for the Webheath ADR to be developed independently from the remainder of Site 3. The development of that ADR could potentially be achieved in tandem with Site 4 (land west of A448), subject to a new link being created to the A448.*

However, accommodating a major growth in the south-west quadrant would involve a range of significant disadvantages including:

- *Due to the configuration of primary road network within Redditch and constraints in terms of capacity of the A441 (southern) link, Sites 1 to 3 are poorly connected to the main road network and, unlike other quadrants, there is significantly less prospect of being able to achieve satisfactory connection with the main road network in association with major development on Sites 1 to 3, due too the length of new roads which would be have to be built and also the difficult topography existing along all potential routes.*
- *Sites 1 to 3 are relatively remote from either Redditch town centre or the main employment areas within Redditch, in respect of all modes of transport.*
- *While Sites 1 to 3 are not given any specific landscape value in the Redditch Local plan No.3, these areas are equally, if not more attractive than certain areas designated as Special Landscape Area or Areas of Great landscape Value, within other quadrants.*

- *All of the land within Sites 1 to 4 lies to the west of the River Arrow and as such the provision of foul drainage to serve new development would be relatively problematical and costly.*
- *Linked to the lack of potential to provide a new primary road connection between the A448 and the A441 (south) link, it would be difficult to identify defensible long term boundaries for the Green Belt, should development extend in a south westerly direction from the existing built up area.*
- *Development of Site 1 – Land north of Astwood Bank would effectively create the coalescence of Astwood Bank with Redditch, affecting the character of that settlement. (The coalescence of Astwood Bank is discussed further in Section 7 – Astwood Bank – of this Report).*

6.10.12 The full SWOT analysis of identified potential growth options including Sites 1 to 4 can be examined in the full WYG Report. The ‘weaknesses’ of the SWOT analysis for individual sites for the southwest area are also reflected in the ‘Summary of Constraints and Sensitivities for the South West Area’ of the report.

6.10.13 In the Conclusions of the WYG Report, Paragraph 9.05 commented *‘that whilst calculations allow Redditch’s generous levels of green space to be maintained in any expansion area which would facilitate the incorporation of major landscape and ecological features, the extent of urban extension required to meet Option 2 and more particularly Option 3 would be perceived as a major incursion in to surrounding countryside’.*

6.10.14 WYG concluded that constraints imposed by highway and drainage infrastructure were generally less to the north than to the south and west of Redditch (Paragraph 9.06). Paragraph 9.06 further stated that expansion northwards, including the development of the Brockhill ADR, would be relatively close to the town centre and significant savings on vehicle mileage in comparison with the more peripheral locations could be achieved particularly if improved public transportation links were incorporated into any masterplan for the area. For these reasons, the opinion was that development to the north of the town was more likely to result in a more sustainable pattern of development.

#### 6.11.0 Redditch Borough Council’s Response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy - Phase Two Revision - Spatial Options 8<sup>th</sup> January – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2007

In summary, responding to Question H1 of the Spatial Options – Housing in the Questionnaire, the Council considered that the level of new housing development across the Region should be achieved without compromising Spatial Strategy objectives. In particular, with the future growth of Redditch in mind, the Council had concerns that both Options 2 and 3 would compromise RSS objectives in its district.



6.11.1 Other than Option 1, development would need to be accommodated on 100% Green Belt land within the Borough, and/or within land that is predominantly Green Belt in adjoining districts. Such a large amount of development on Green Belt land would be at odds with RSS objectives.

6.11.2 Option 1 would be the only option to be compatible with RSS objectives.

6.11.3 In response to Question H7, the Council drew particular attention to the Redditch urban area being tight up against its administrative boundary in all directions except for the Green Belt area to the south-west of the town. However, it was emphasised that there were many constraints in this part of the Green Belt, including the lack of infrastructure and that part of the area is of particular landscape character. Particular attention was drawn to the previous studies and constraints discussed in depth in this Report in responding to this part of the Questionnaire.

#### 6.12.0 Summary of Constraints and Sensitivities to development in the South West Area

A number of key issues have been raised from previous studies and inspectors reports which negate development in the South West Area and can be summarised as follows:

- Areas of Grade 3(a) around Crumpfields Lane and Norgrove Court. – a finite resource not to be squandered.
- Development around Norgrove would result in loss of attractive countryside.
- Development at Norgrove would be totally unacceptable and incongruent with the setting of Norgrove Court - Grade I Listed Building.
- Western area cannot be developed without causing the likelihood of flooding at Feckenham, Priest Bridge and Himbleton.
- All sites west of River Arrow relatively problematical and costly in terms of foul drainage.
- Bow Brook River, downstream of Priest Bridge STW, considered unsuitable to accept significant amounts of additional treated effluent.
- Pumped sewage from south west area not compatible with sustainable objectives.
- Mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified at Bentley and Bank Green (but seemingly extending south-westwards through Ham Green towards Astwood Hill Farm).
- Housing development in this area would extend Redditch's town form from behind the Callow Hill Ridge into the countryside

- Bow Brook, Swans Brook, Elcocks Brook fell within an area identified by the WNCT as being relatively rich in minor ecological features.
- Alders Brook valley is a great asset to Redditch – development should be avoided here.
- Area south-west of Redditch between Norgrove Court (including Ham Green) and Feckenham is of high landscape value.
- Parts of area located on prominent ridges – development would be visible from a considerable distance.
- Development behind the Callow Hill Ridge would extend Redditch's town form into open countryside.
- Allocation of housing to south of Love Lyne would be particularly ill-related to urban form of Redditch.
- Development south of Callow Hill Ridge and Dagtail End would be perceived as sprawling into open countryside and would not be well contained.
- Development in the area to the west of Green Lane would be out on a limb extending the urban area into the rural area.
- Existing urban area development up to logical and physically discernible edge.
- Roads in this area consist of narrow roads or country lanes – totally inadequate to serve large scale development.
- New roads into area likely to be expensive and problematic.
- New road link from Study Area to A435 would traverse Ridgeway, designated as Area of Restraint in South Warwickshire Local Plan.
- Any new highway network connecting to A448 would extend intrusion of urban development into the rural west.
- Any major new road link to Windmill Drive through Morton Stanley Park/Golf Course unsupported by development/creates pressure for future development/undesirable in environmental and visual terms.
- Continued expansion cannot be undertaken without significant landscape costs.

- Callow Hill Ridge and other high land acts as both a landscape and physical constraint.
- Little could be done to mitigate adverse visual impact of development
- South-west area remote from Town centre, railway station, etc.
- Brook courses should be retained and protected from development within Bow Brook catchment.
- Area not particularly desirable/topographically suitable for employment development/uses

### 6.13.0 Conclusions

From the above, it is considered that there are significant and indisputable reasons for eliminating any release of land for future development from the Green Belt to the south-west of Redditch.

6.13.1 Whilst the South West Study of 1991 identified that the land north of Sillins Lane presented a significantly better option for development than the land south of Callow Hill Ridge, the subsequent Inspector's report on the Deposit Local Plan No.2 (and endorsed by the Inspector's report on the Modifications to Local Plan No.2) found the Council's proposals for the Norgrove Area to be totally unacceptable. This was primarily because of the unacceptable effect on Norgrove Court and the valley in which the Listed Building stood. The loss of Grade 3a agricultural land (a finite resource which in the opinion of the Inspector should not be squandered) the unsustainability of pumped sewage disposal together with the adverse effects of any distributor road upon the Morton Stanley Park and Golf course.

6.13.2 The Local Plan Inspector further considered that the allocation of land for development in the Alders Brook Valley and in the environs of Norgrove Court would be highly undesirable and could see no grounds for excluding the land between Norgrove Lane and Sillins Lane and on the contrary, concluded that this area should be included in the Green Belt.

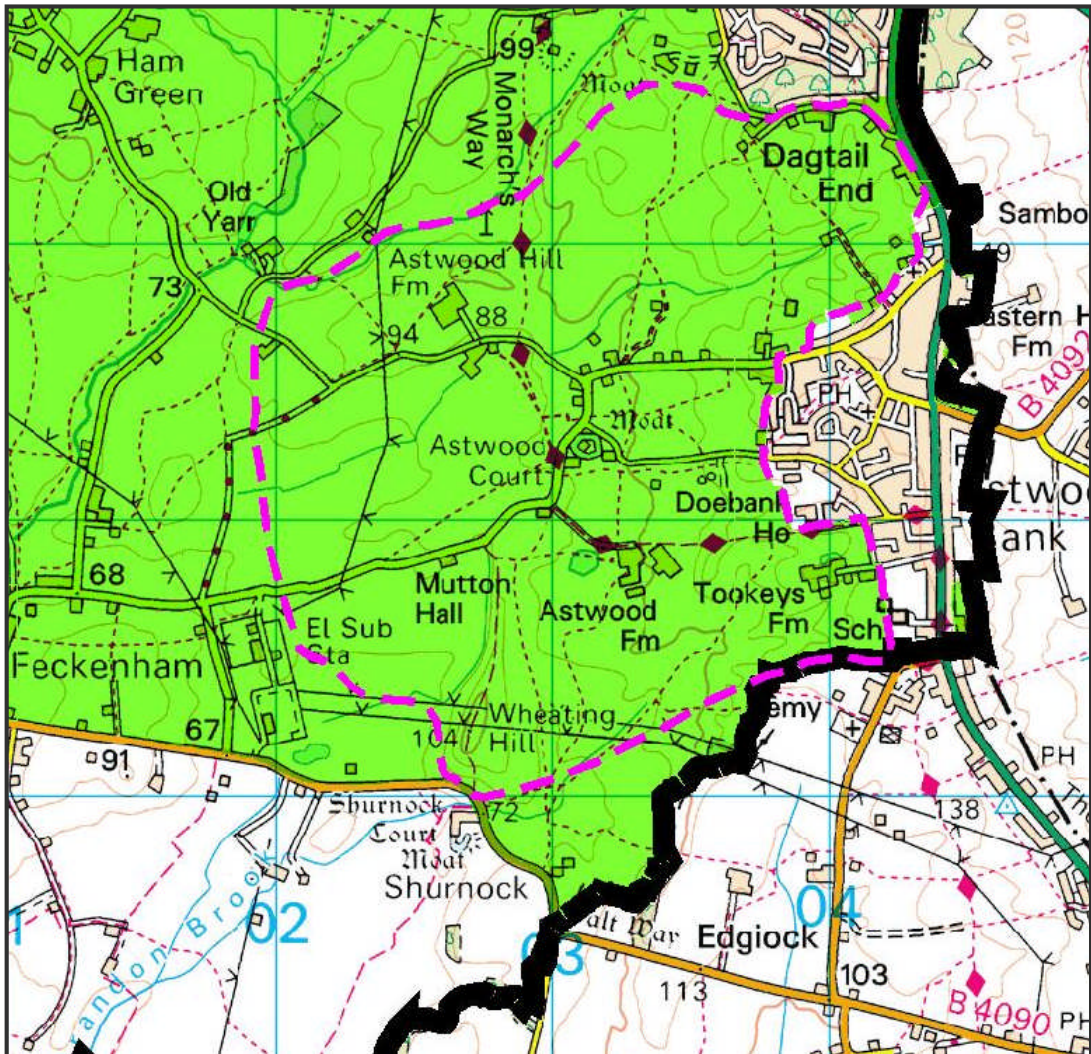
6.13.3 Together with his view that it would be wholly undesirable for the town to spill over the Callow Hill Ridge including the area south of Love Lyne and the Swans Brook valley, this effectively eliminated any further development in the south-west area other than the designated ADR.

6.13.4 The Worcestershire County Council Officer's advice in response to the RSS confirms that the grounds on which the Inquiry Inspector rejected the area to the south-west remain largely unchanged.

6.13.5 The rejection of the land to the south-west is again confirmed by the more recent WYG Report which opines that development to the north of the town is more likely to result in a more sustainable pattern of development.

6.13.6 In essence, the whole of the South West area has been tested in depth and conclusively, there remains no further part of the area which should be considered suitable for development and, in accordance with the objectives of PPG2, no part of the South West area should be excluded from the Green Belt.

## 7. THE AREA WEST OF ASTWOOD BANK (Map 4)



Map 4

7.0.0 There have been no dedicated studies of the area to the west of Astwood Bank. However, previous studies including the South West Study have referred to this area and all relevant findings have been included in this part of the report to ensure that there is a complete and comprehensive review of this area. Additionally, relevant findings from Local Plan Inquiry reports and the WYG report have been incorporated. Whilst this part of the Study is entitled 'Area West of Astwood Bank', the area between Redditch and Astwood Bank is inextricably linked to the consideration of the western zone and therefore, some duplication and overlap with the 'South-west Area' has necessarily occurred.

### 7.0.1 1973 Joint Study of Feasibility

In the 'Joint Study of Feasibility for the Expansion of Redditch New Town' published in June 1973, the findings (Paragraph 2.2.2) of the Study were that of four alternatives for the possible growth of Redditch up to 150,000 population, Alternatives 3 and 4 (development primarily to the south and south east of Redditch) were consistently and significantly better than Alternatives 1 and 2 (primarily development south-west and south of Redditch including land to the west of Astwood Bank). (See Appendix 8 of this report).

7.0.2 Whilst the findings of the Study were general in content, there were some references to constraints relating to the land to the west of Astwood Bank which are set out in the following paragraphs.

7.0.3 Paragraph 8.4.1 drew attention to the Ridgeway stretching south from the then Development Area of Redditch as being a constraint on development.

7.0.4 Paragraph 8.4.6 highlighted landscape quality as presenting two main kinds of restraint upon development and, in particular, identified the valley between Norgrove Court and Feckenham, which would have included land west of Astwood Bank, as being of high landscape value and therefore non-conducive to development.

7.0.5 In relation to drainage for the western area, the report drew attention to the need for the advisability of designing the installations of the proposed new sewage treatment works at Priest Bridge, Bradley Green, as a first phase of a larger works to avoid delay in provision of sewage treatment facilities for any envisaged expansion.

### 7.1.0 Redditch Joint Study 1988

This joint study was undertaken in the period 1986 to March 1988 by Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Council and Warwickshire County Council. Its purpose was primarily to recommend preferred options for Redditch with regard to the scale and location of growth to meet housing and employment requirements for the local population and to cater for any further inward migration generated by Redditch to the end of the century. The Study Area extended southwards to include land immediately to the west of Astwood Bank including the area around Astwood Court and Mutton Hall. (See Appendix 12 of this report).

7.1.1 Section 3 of the Interim Report, dated December 1986, highlighted some factors and constraints to development which are relevant to this part of this Study.

7.1.2 Paragraph 3.4 dealt with the coalescence of towns and villages. It was considered that options for development which would result in the coalescence of towns and villages would be contrary to the objectives of the Green Belt and that these options would not be considered acceptable. In formulating options for development, the Green Belt should be considered as

a constraint to development as should the maintaining of areas of open space between Studley and Redditch, Studley and Astwood Bank, Redditch and Astwood Bank, and Redditch and Feckenham.

- 7.1.3 Paragraph 3.5 recorded that there was Grade 3(a) agricultural land to the west of Redditch which militated against development in this area.
- 7.1.4 The Report considered in Paragraph 3.6 that to be in accordance with Structure Plan policies, development should not be allowed on ridge lines as development in these areas would be seen for some distance from the surrounding countryside. Ridges, where development should be avoided, were identified at Astwood Bank as well as Callow Hill.
- 7.1.5 Whilst there were only two areas of landscape value identified in the prevailing Structure Plan, Paragraph 3.7(b) iterated that this study used the areas of high landscape value, as defined in the 1973 Joint Study of Feasibility, in assessing the impact of development on the landscape. Map 2 of the Study identified one of the main areas of high landscape value as that extending from the south-west of Redditch to the west of Astwood Bank. (See Appendix 5 of this report).
- 7.1.6 In Paragraph 3.10, the Worcestershire Nature Conservation trust identified sites of special wildlife interest including a zone of moderate wildlife interest in the Astwood Bank area. The Trust's policy proposed a presumption against development on special wildlife sites and areas of high ecological value. If development was to occur in zones of moderate ecological interest, they also requested that it should be designed so as to prevent fragmentation and ecological isolation.
- 7.1.7 In respect of drainage, Paragraph 3.13 stated that the overriding consideration was the relative situation of the Priest Bridge Water Reclamation Works and Spernal Water Reclamation Works. Priest Bridge serves the western area of Redditch and in theory has spare capacity, but its performance was giving concern and it was incapable of dealing with extra flow. The receiving water course is small and it was thought that consent for increased drainage would not be issued. The works would not be able to service further large scale development located to the west of Redditch, however the pumping of effluent to Spernal Works was possible but this would create additional costs. Severn Trent Water Authority's policy was that significant development should be sewered to the latter works, but the Water Authority were to undertake a review of sewage disposal in the Redditch area.
- 7.1.8 With regard to land drainage, Paragraph 3.13 commented that the western area (which would have included the Astwood Bank area) could not be developed without causing the likelihood of flooding at Feckenham, Priest Bridge and Himbleton although considerable brook clearance had already been carried out by the Authority downstream of Broughton Hackett. The works involved to overcome the likely flooding problems would be at considerable cost.



7.1.9 In terms of accessibility, it was recorded that in some of the western and south-western parts of the Study Area, access would be a problem because of narrow lanes and that considerable investment would be needed to upgrade the road system to meet the infrastructural requirements of any development to be located in this part of the Study Area (Paragraph 3.15).

7.1.10 In Section 4, the Report considered directions of growth to be excluded from further consideration. In view of constraints identified in the report, it was deemed that there were a number of areas which were unsuitable for large scale development. However, it was emphasised that there may be smaller areas of land within the exclusion areas that might be suitable for small scale development, but it was envisaged that the sum of these areas would not accommodate the then development needs of Redditch in the 1990s. Specifically, the area west of Astwood Bank was considered unsuitable for large scale development for the following reasons (Paragraph 4.8):

- a) There was a large area of Grade 3(a) land which should be protected from future development:
- b) Parts of the area were located on the west side of the Astwood Bank ridge. Here there were prominent views over the Worcestershire countryside. It would be undesirable to locate development in this area as it would be seen for some considerable distance from the surrounding countryside.

#### 7.2.0 The South West Study

The South West Study was undertaken by Redditch Borough Council in 1991 and comprised a full study of the area south-west of Redditch (see Appendix 13 of this report) in furtherance of the preparation of Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2. Some background information, provided for an earlier Technical Report into the Study Area prepared in September 1990, was included in this report. The analysis of the southern extremity of the South West Study is of relevance to the area west of Astwood Bank.

7.2.1 With regard to topography, in Chapter 2 – Topography and Landscape, the earlier Technical Report recorded the following pertinent description (Paragraph 1.1(i):

*“The Callow Hill Ridge then runs east-west and at present defines the extent of the existing built-up area of the town in the south. With the exception of a small plateau in the Love Lyne area, the southern side of the Callow Hill ridge has slopes which are likely to be too steep for development. The ridge then runs in a south easterly direction towards the Enfield Road area where the southern slopes are less severe. The land then rises, quite steeply, towards the ridge at Astwood Bank. To the south of the Callow Hill Ridge and to the southwest of Astwood Bank (Chapel House) the land becomes much flatter, falling gently away to the south west. Although there are some minor ridges and knolls which give certain areas a pleasant undulating nature, there are*

*no major ridge lines or areas of high ground which could act as a major constraint to development until Cruise Hill ridge in the west. To the south, for some considerable distance, there is little marked change in the topography which would suggest a limit to development”.*

- 7.2.2 In relation to the area southwest of Astwood Bank, Paragraph 1.1 (ii) from the 1990 Technical Report further recorded under the heading of Implications that:

*“The extent of the Study Area means that the above analysis is only a very brief summary of the varied topography evident. However, a number of broad implications can be drawn -*

- (d) *As the land rises towards the “Ridge” at Astwood Bank, in the east of the Study Area, it becomes progressively steeper with areas which are obviously too steep or undesirable for cost-effective development. Notwithstanding landscape issues, this effectively sets limits to development in the east. It may also create difficulties with respect to major access roads linking to either the A441 or the A435.*

*“The Ridge”, east of Dagtail Lane, rises to 145 metres, at least 40–50 metres above the lower land south of Callow Hill Ridge. Therefore, should a drainage connection to Priest Bridge Water Reclamation Works be unavailable, connection to Sernal Water Reclamation Works would be lengthy and pumping over the Ridge”.*

- 7.2.3 Under the heading of ‘Landscape Analysis’ in Chapter 2, Paragraph 2.30 - c) *Land West of A441/South of Dagtail Lane/North of Church Road* - states that:

*“The north south ridge along the A441 provides a visual watershed to the east. Whilst the area itself is not of particularly high landscape value, development on the slopes in this area would be prominent and visually intrusive. Existing development at Astwood Bank sits astride the ridge; from views lower down in the valley, however, the shoulders of the ridge serve to ameliorate, to some degree, the most stark skylining effects of such development. This would not be true for new development, which would be intrusive and should be avoided. Furthermore, this high land can be viewed from a considerable distance to the west of the Study Area. Whilst development would be below existing development on the skyline, it would be intrusive to such panoramic views”.*

- 7.2.4 Once again, Paragraph 3.6 – Landscape Conclusions of the South West Study - stated that in comparison with land north of Sillins Lane, development in this southern area (which included the periphery of Astwood Bank) would either directly or indirectly affect a greater amount of high quality landscape. The allocation of very large scale development, and possibly additional long

term growth, within this area could not be satisfactorily supported on landscape grounds.

- 7.2.5 Paragraph 1.2(iii) of Chapter 3 Natural environment – Analysis refers to the identification by the WNCT of a large area rich in ecological minor features (but not designated as a statutory site) north of Church Road/Astwood Lane. Whilst it would be difficult to argue that such areas should not be allocated for development on ecological grounds, notwithstanding the incidence of Special Wildlife Sites and sites of local importance within them, it was considered preferable for any land take and disturbance within such areas to be minimised or indeed avoided.
- 7.2.6 In the conclusions of Chapter 3, Paragraph 2.3 stated that, given its general ecological value, consideration should be given to the undesirability of allocating land to the north of Church Road/Astwood Lane, Astwood Bank for development.
- 7.2.7 Paragraph 2.8 noted WNCT’s preference for development being concentrated at Brockhill rather than the south-west area, which included Astwood Bank on its periphery.
- 7.2.8 Paragraph 2.2 of Chapter 4 – ‘Ground Conditions and Land Drainage’ and Paragraph 8.1 of Chapter 5 – ‘Utilities - Foul Drainage’ drew attention to the findings and analysis of the Bow Brook Report which would clearly impact on the Astwood Bank environs.
- 7.2.9 Consideration of highway implications for development in the South West Study area is, of necessity, complex and lengthy in Chapter 6 – Highways, but for the purposes of this Report, it is probably sufficient to refer to Paragraph 10.6 of Highways – Conclusions.
- 7.2.10 In very basic terms, Paragraph 10.6 stated that it would appear that there were a greater number of constraints and disadvantages associated with the highway infrastructure alternatives arising from development in that part of the South West Study Area which lies to the south of Callow Hill Ridge. The area west of Astwood Bank fringes the above area and it must therefore be assumed, in the absence of any other study of traffic implications, that the same disadvantages would apply to the development of the area west of Astwood Bank.
- 7.2.11 Significantly, Paragraph 1.3(i) of Chapter 10 – Green Belt – considers that in respect of the possible allocation of land within the South West Study Area for development and the accepted principles of Green Belt designation, it was observed that:

*“The area between Redditch and Astwood Bank is particularly sensitive to development. The allocation of this area for development would bring about coalescence of Astwood Bank and Redditch and is therefore considered undesirable”.*

7.2.12 The General Conclusions in Chapter 11 relating to the area south of Callow Hill Ridge also have some relevance to the consideration of the area adjoining Astwood Bank. Accordingly, the relevant advantages/disadvantages for the area south of Callow Hill Ridge as they relate to the area west of Astwood Bank have been reproduced below:

### ADVANTAGES

#### *Agricultural*

*Land - apart from land north of Church Road, Astwood Bank, development would involve land of relatively low agricultural quality.*

### DISADVANTAGES

*Landscape - in the main open, poorly contained landscape; therefore, development would be extremely intrusive - extensive areas of high quality and import landscape -; feeder roads would need to pass through sensitive landscape areas.*

*Ecology - impacts upon specific and general areas of wildlife value; WNCT's least preferred area - within Bow Brook Catchment, essential surface water control,; foul effluent implications.*

*Highways - no existing road infrastructure of suitable capacity - major link required to either A441 or A435 which would be expensive and cause considerable environmental and landscape damage, possible adverse impact on wildlife sites... feeder links would not relate well for built area - greater lengths of road unsupported by development - no support from involved agencies for A435 link.*

*Town Form - due to effects of topography, this area would not relate closely to existing development.*

*Green Belt - greater intrusion into green belt - possible boundaries not distinct or logical/defendable in landscape terms.*

*Sewerage - implications of Bow Brook Report.*

*Topography- existing land form has formed a physically definable edge to existing urban area... - lack of significant internal variety within to ameliorate effect of development in wider landscape.*

*Utilities - land on southern boundaries more difficult to supply with water.*

7.2.13 In the Summary Findings (Paragraphs 5.1 – 5.4), the following findings are also considered to be relevant to the area west of Astwood Bank:

- b) The South West Study Area was not considered to be a desirable location for a significant amount of employment development.
- d) A summary of the major locational constraints identified by the Report was provided by Fig 2 (Appendix 9 of this report).

### 7.3.0 Inspector's Report on Deposit Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2

There are few references to Astwood Bank and the Green Belt in the Inspector's Report on the Deposit Local Plan. However, relevant paragraphs are identified below.

- 7.3.1 In considering an objection to the omission of land at Astwood Bank Farm on the western extremity of the settlement, the Inspector took the view that the extension of the built-up area onto the open land, to the east of the hedgerow between the buildings at Hole Farm and Astwood Bank Farm, would only have a limited visual impact (Paragraph 3.131). He considered that the above hedgerow would provide a clear and defensible boundary.
- 7.3.2 He further deemed in Paragraph 3.132 that the release of this land to the east of the Astwood Bank Farm buildings for housing would not seriously harm the objectives of the Green Belt. Significantly, from the point of view of this Study, he did not consider that the development would spill over the escarpment to the west, nor that it would intrude into the remaining gap between Astwood Bank and Redditch. Therefore, he considered the escarpment to the west of Astwood Bank and the gap between the settlement of Astwood Bank and Redditch as important features, worthy of protection in Green Belt terms.
- 7.3.4 In Paragraphs 4.5 to 4.11 'The Green Belt at Astwood Bank', the Inspector considered the issue of Astwood Bank being "washed over" by the Green Belt and concluded that the Local Plan proposals map should be amended so as to draw the Green Belt boundary around Astwood Bank. In reaching his conclusions in Paragraph 4.9, he reiterated his view that the steeply sloping land to the west of the proposed western boundary (including the land at Astwood Bank Farm) should remain permanently open. In his opinion, development here would be particularly conspicuous from the surrounding countryside.
- 7.3.3 Under the heading of 'The Green Belt to the South West of Redditch' (Paragraph 5.32), the Inspector added, that the exclusion of land to the south of Hunt End from the Green Belt would tend to threaten the continued existence of Astwood Bank as a separate settlement with its own distinctive identity.

#### 7.4.0 Inspector's Report on Modifications to Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2

There were few issues remaining for the Inspector considering the Modifications, but Paragraph 2.23 is worthy of mention.

7.4.1 Headed as the "thin end of the wedge", Paragraph 2.23 acknowledged the frequently expressed concerns held by local people residing in a town which has experienced a large amount of development in its recent past. The Inspector observed that the fears of Redditch residents derived in large measure from the absence of a statutory development plan incorporating established green belt boundaries, but hopefully this situation would be rectified when Local Plan No.2 was finally adopted. He continued by asserting that the designation of ADRs (see Paragraphs 8.0 et seq of this report) would carry a clear indication of the possibility (if not probability) of further development after the turn of the century, but that most of the land on the outskirts of the town would have the protection of green belt policies for much longer than this.

7.4.2 The Inspector considered sundry objections to the proposed modifications to the proposed boundaries and sites on the periphery of Astwood Bank following the recommendation of the Inspector appointed to consider objections to the Deposit Local Plan that Astwood Bank should be excluded from the Green Belt designation. Essentially, the Inspector endorsed the recommendations of the previous Inspector and the Council's subsequential changes with some minor caveats.

#### 7.5.0 Inspector's Report on Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3

In considering B(HSG).1 'Housing provision – Omission Sites' at Astwood Bank, the Inspector recommended, in Paragraph 4.36, that a site at 1123 Evesham Road and land adjacent to Kenilworth Works, Astwood Bank (both east of the A441), should not be allocated for housing. The site was rejected as a major developed site in the Green Belt. Further reference is made to this site in Paragraph 7.5 of the Inspector's Site Specific Reasoning and Conclusions, when he commented that PPG2 states that where local plans are being revised and updated, existing Green Belt boundaries should not be changed unless structure plan alterations have been approved or other exceptional circumstances exist which necessitate such revision. He concluded that no Structure Plan alterations had been approved and he had already concluded that there was no need to allocate additional land for housing in the plan. He accepted that an established hedge could make an acceptable line for the Green Belt, but a good alternative boundary was not a good reason for change. Neither should other possible anomalies elsewhere in the locality carry much weight as each case would need to be considered on its own merits. Exceptional circumstances needed to remove these two sites from the Green Belt did not exist.

7.5.1 In respect of a 'Site Specific' site at 1 Manor Close, west of the A441, the Inspector's starting point was with the guidance in PPG2. He noted that at the time of adopting Local Plan No.2, this garden site was within a different

curtilage and ownership, but this did not amount to exceptional circumstances and therefore was not a matter that should be treated as a precedent for altering the Green Belt boundary.

7.5.2 At Astwood Farm (Paragraph 7.7), on the western edge of Astwood Bank, an objector sought to have the farm complex designated in the Plan as a major developed site in the Green Belt. Whilst the list in PPG2 Annex C of what might be so designated is limited to examples, it was worth noting that farm complexes were not mentioned. To the Inspector's mind, this was deliberate, as sizeable groupings of farm buildings are commonplace throughout the Green Belt nationally and if designation were to be a normally acceptable option, the openness of the Green Belt could be substantially changed by infilling that might occur. He acknowledged that this was a largish complex of buildings and hardstandings and that certain parts did have planning permission for storage/distribution. Whilst it was correct that planning policies lead towards farm diversification, however, that would not normally be permitted if the openness of the Green Belt were to be seriously prejudiced. Although the site was untidy and could benefit from visual improvement, the presence of large scale agricultural buildings in the countryside is a typical characteristic of the English rural scene and therefore the Inspector did not accept that the complex was of exceptional scale or that it looked particularly out of place with its surroundings. In view of these comments, it was concluded that the site should not be designated as a major developed site.

7.5.3 In relation to an objection in Paragraph 7.10, the Inspector commented that the Green Belt between Astwood Bank and Crabbs Cross included a length of Evesham Road. The land to the east of Evesham Road is largely undeveloped but for a group of dwellings at the southern end, whilst on the west side is a field, and to the north, the section of Evesham Road that is within the Green Belt (i.e, up to Dagtail End), the frontage is more or less developed. However, in considering this section to the east and west of Evesham Road in the context of the Green Belt to the south of the Redditch urban area as a whole, it still exhibited the openness that is the most important attribute of Green Belts and acted to separate the urban area from Astwood Bank and therefore was not convinced that any change to the Green Belt boundary was warranted.

7.6.0 Worcestershire County Council Officers' Advice in Response to the West Midlands Regional Planning Body's Section 4(4) Authorities Brief (As amended),(February 2006)

Once again, it is worth recording the views of the County Council's Officers in relation to Astwood Bank. Paragraph 2.61 commented that Redditch town is the only large settlement in the district and is the only settlement suitable for future strategic growth in Redditch District. In order to provide for sufficient housing for Redditch's natural growth, significant peripheral expansion of the town on greenfield land would be required. The implications for the RSS were considered in Paragraph 2.105.

- 7.6.1 Paragraph 2.105 observed that in order to deliver sufficient housing capacity to provide for locally generated housing, large scale housing development on greenfield land would be required through the peripheral expansion of the built-up area of Redditch town. This implication highlighted a tension between two elements of the Spatial Strategy which, on the one hand, mitigate against the peripheral expansion of “other large settlements”, of which Redditch is one, and on the other hand, advise that new development primarily meeting locally generated needs should be focussed on the Region’s other large settlements.
- 7.6.2 Paragraph 2.124 described that the implications arising from the distribution of the housing provision needed to help meet Redditch’s residential requirements under Reference Point C would be large scale incursions of the Green Belt. In this regard the report advised that the peripheral expansion of Redditch town to the south west (which can be construed to include the land to the west of Astwood Bank) would not be appropriate. The County Council Officer’s advice commented that the suitability of this direction of growth was considered in detail in the context of the preparation of Local Plan No.2 and the Inquiry Inspector rejected such proposals on the grounds that there were infrastructure problems, primarily on providing roads, the negative effects on a Grade 1 Listed Building: the negative impact on the environment and highways effects. It was concluded that these issues remain largely unchanged.
- 7.7.0 Redditch Borough Council’s Response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy - Phase Two Revision - Spatial Options 8<sup>th</sup> January – 5<sup>th</sup> March 2007

In order that this section of this Study should be comprehensive, the relevant comments from the response to the RSS Spatial Options have once again been included. In summary, responding to H1 of the Spatial Options – Housing in the Questionnaire, the Council considered that the level of new housing development across the Region should be achieved without compromising Spatial Strategy objectives. In particular, with Redditch in mind, the Council had concerns that both Options 2 and 3 would compromise RSS objectives in its district.

- 7.7.1 Other than Option 1, development would need to be accommodated on 100% Green Belt land within the Borough and/or land that is predominantly within the Green Belt of adjoining districts. Such a large amount of development on Green Belt land would be at odds with RSS objectives.
- 7.7.2 Option 1 would be the only option to be compatible with RSS objectives.
- 7.7.3 In response to Question H7, the Council drew particular attention to the Redditch urban area being tight up against its administrative boundary in all directions, except for the Green Belt area to the south-west of the town. However, it was emphasised that there were many constraints in this part of the Green Belt, including the lack of infrastructure and that part of the area is of particular landscape character. Particular attention was drawn to the previous studies and constraints discussed in depth in this Report.



### 7.8.0 White Young Green Report

Some of the WYG findings for the South West area are equally applicable to the area to the west of Astwood Bank and in the interests of providing a comprehensive assessment of this area, the relevant matters have been repeated, where appropriate, in the accompanying paragraphs.

7.8.1 Paragraph 8.12 records that there are a number of link roads and junctions within Redditch that appear to be at, or nearing, operational capacity, including Crabbs Cross roundabout which serves to connect the main distributor roads from Redditch, Studley and Astwood Bank. Therefore the functioning of this roundabout would clearly be adversely affected by any substantial development west of Astwood Bank.

7.8.2 In Paragraph 8.14, the main conclusions arising from the assessment of utility infrastructure capacity constraints were set out and it is of relevance to note that it was concluded that whilst the supply of electricity should not unduly affect residential growth beyond Redditch, development to the south and west of Redditch would be most expensive (SWOT site numbers 1 to 4 – see Appendix 7 of this report for site identification).

7.8.3 In respect of drainage, the most sustainable, and perhaps least expensive, locations to construct new homes beyond Redditch are areas where the permeability of the soil is the greatest or failing this, areas close to existing water courses - most likely to the north and east of Redditch (Paragraph 8.14).

7.8.4 In terms of foul water disposal (Paragraph 8.15), WYG's findings in relation to the south west area, which would include the area west of Astwood Bank, were that:

- *Severn Trent Water has stated that major planned capital work is planned to the Priest Bridge Sewage Treatment Works. This capital work is based on a current design population of 15,000 and therefore does not include for any growth options in this study. Severn Trent has advised that Sewage Treatment Works will be difficult to extend once these works have been carried out thus limiting population growth to the west of Redditch unless new foul flows are pumped over the 'ridge' into the catchment served by the Spernal STW. Pumping all foul water over the 'ridge' from the west to the east will not be a wholly sustainable solution.*
- *The Bow Brook River downstream of the Priest Bridge STW to the west of Redditch and the River Arrow downstream of the Spernal STW to the south of Redditch are considered unsuitable to accept significant amounts of additional treated effluent from the treatment works.*

7.8.5 Effectively, any development to the south-west of the 'ridge' would have to be drained to Spernal STW using one or more pumps. These pumps would have to be designed such that foul water is pumped to an outfall downstream of the stressed network in the town centre (Paragraph 8.16).

7.8.6 In terms of foul water disposal (Paragraphs 8.18 and 8.19), the most sustainable solution would be to develop close to, or to the east of, the River Arrow. Again a new trunk sewer might be required but this could potentially be a gravity sewer. The report concludes that it is:

*“becoming clear that large scale residential development generally to the east of the River Arrow is preferable in terms of reduced capital investment and more sustainable solutions (reduced foul water pumping costs). Both foul water and electricity will be cheaper and simpler (to the east of the town) and (i.e. SWOT Sites 8 to 10 and 15 to 20)”.*

7.8.7 Continuing with ‘Options for Accommodating Growth around Redditch’, the South West Quadrant (Sites 1 to 4, see Appendix 7 of this report) was evaluated in Paragraphs 8.27 and 8.28 of the WYG Report as follows:

*The accommodation of major growth within the south-west quadrant would bring with it the following principal advantages:*

- *A substantial proportion of the land within sites 1 to 4 (excluding Site 3a – Morton Stanley Park and Golf Course) does not exhibit significant environmental or policy constraints.*
- *There is potential for the Webheath ADR to be developed independently from the remainder of Site 3. The development of that ADR could potentially be achieved in tandem with Site 4 (land west of A448), subject to a new link being created to the A448.*

*However, accommodating a major growth in the southwest quadrant would involve a range of significant disadvantages including:*

- *Due to the configuration of primary road network within Redditch and constraints in terms of capacity of the A441 (southern) link, Sites 1 to 3 are poorly connected to the main road network and, unlike other quadrants, there is significantly less prospect of being able to achieve satisfactory connection with the main road network in association with major development on Sites 1 to 3, due too the length of new roads which would be have to be built and also the difficult topography existing along all potential routes.*
- *Sites 1 to 3 are relatively remote from either Redditch town centre or the main employment areas within Redditch, in respect of all modes of transport.*
- *While Sites 1 to 3 are not given any specific landscape value in the Redditch Local Plan No.3, these areas are equally, if not more attractive than certain areas designated as Special Landscape Area or Areas of Great Landscape Value, within other quadrants.*

- *All of the land within Sites 1 to 4 lies to the west of the River Arrow and as such the provision of foul drainage to serve new development would be relatively problematical and costly.*
- *Linked to the lack of potential to provide a new primary road connection between the A448 and the A441 (south) link, it would be difficult to identify defensible long term boundaries for the Green Belt, should development extend in a south westerly direction from the existing built up area.*
- *Development of Site 1 – Land north of Astwood Bank would effectively create the coalescence of Astwood Bank with Redditch, affecting the character of that settlement.*

7.8.8 The full SWOT analysis of identified potential growth options, including Sites 1 to 4, can be examined in the WYG Report. The ‘weaknesses’ of the SWOT analysis for Site 1, which includes the area immediately adjacent to Astwood Bank, are reflected where appropriate in the ‘Summary of Constraints and Sensitivities’ in this section of this report.

7.8.9 In the Conclusions of the WYG Report, Paragraph 9.05 commented that whilst calculations allow Redditch’s generous levels of green space to be maintained in any expansion which would facilitate the incorporation of major landscape and ecological features, the extent of urban extension required to meet Option 2, and more particularly Option 3, would be perceived as a major incursion in to surrounding countryside.

7.8.10 In the WYG Report, paragraph 9.06 establishes that constraints imposed by highway and drainage infrastructure are generally less to the north, than to the south and west. Paragraphs 9.06 and 9.07 of WYG continue as follows:

*Also expansion northwards including the development of the Brockhill ADR would be relatively close to the town centre and significant savings on vehicle mileage in comparison with the more peripheral locations could be achieved particularly if improved public transportation links are incorporated into any masterplan for the area. The improvement to rail services could make a significant contribution to reducing existing and future reliance on the car and the potential for relocating the station as part of a transportation hub to the north of the town should be further evaluated.*

*For these reasons, the opinion is that development to the north of the town is more likely to result in a more sustainable pattern of development.*

### 7.9.0 Summary of Constraints and Sensitivities to development West of Astwood Bank

A number of key issues have been raised from previous studies and inspectors reports which negate development West of Astwood Bank and can be summarised as follows:

- Coalescence of Astwood Bank with Redditch would be contrary to principles established in PPG2.
- Area to the west of Astwood Bank cannot be developed without causing the likelihood of flooding at Feckenham, Priest Bridge and Himbleton.
- All sites west of River Arrow relatively problematical and costly in terms of foul drainage.
- Bow Brook River, downstream of Priest Bridge STW, considered unsuitable for accepting significant amounts of additional treated effluent.
- Pumped sewage from south west area incompatible with sustainable objectives.
- Zones of moderate wildlife interest - Bow Brook, Swans Brook, Elcocks Brook - fall within an area identified by the WNCT as being relatively rich in minor ecological features.
- Part of area located on prominent Ridgeway – development would be seen for some considerable distance.
- Grade 3(a) land to west of Astwood Bank.
- Existing urban area development up to logical and physically discernible edge.
- Roads in this area are narrow roads and country lanes – totally inadequate to serve large scale development.
- New roads into area likely to be expensive and problematic.
- Continued expansion cannot be undertaken without significant landscape costs – high landscape quality from Norgrove Court to Feckenham.
- Development would be seen for some considerable distance from Worcestershire countryside.
- Little could be done to mitigate adverse visual impact of development.

- No opportunity for discernible or defensible boundary west of existing development in Astwood Bank.
- Land progressively steeper – too steep for cost-effective development.
- South-west area remote from Town centre, railway station, etc.
- Brook courses should be retained and protected from development within Bow Brook catchment.
- Area not considered to be a desirable location for significant employment development.
- To meet Options 1 or 2 of RSS would involve major incursions into surrounding countryside

#### 7.10.0 Conclusions

The arguments for preventing development from spilling out over the ridge west of Astwood Bank are compelling, as are the arguments for preventing the coalescence of Astwood Bank in accordance with the five stated purposes for including land in the Green Belt in PPG2.

7.10.1 The many constraints and disadvantages of development in this area, set out in the preceding paragraphs of this report, further strengthen the arguments against any development in this important section of the designated Green Belt.

## **8. AREAS OF DEVELOPMENT RESTRAINT (ADRs)**

8.0.1 The foregoing sections of the Report have assessed the unsuitability of the Green Belt to meet RSS target having regard to findings of previous reports and studies. In this section of the Study report, the intention is to demonstrate that the Areas of Development Restraint (ADR) are more appropriate for accommodating housing development to meet RSS targets than other land elsewhere in the Green Belt in Redditch Borough.

### **8.0.2 Inspector's Report on Deposit Local Plan No.2**

In Paragraph 5.5 of the Inspector's Report on the Deposit Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2, in considering Policy GB6 – 'The Need to Accommodate Long Term Growth' of the Deposit Local Plan No.2, the Inspector opined that there was some scope for further development to take place on the edge of Redditch after the end of the Plan Period, without encroaching into the Green Belt. He continued by saying that if the Green Belt was drawn too tightly around the existing built-up area, it may not be possible to maintain an appropriate degree of permanence in its protection and that the advice in PPG2 that a Green Belt should not include land which it is unnecessary to keep permanently open. The Inspector concluded by recommending that certain lands at the edge of Redditch be included in the Plan as Areas of Restraint (later altered by the Council to 'Areas of Development Restraint' - ADR).

8.0.3 The principal ADRs recommended by the Inspector were at Norgrove (Webheath), between Crumpfields Lane and Pumphouse lane, at Brockhill, north-west of the Enfield Industrial Area, together with land to the east of Claybrook Drive and Far Moor Lane. These ADRs were subsequently included in the adoption of Local Plan No.2.

### **8.0.4 Inspector's Report on Second Deposit on Redditch Local Plan No.3**

In the Inspector's letter, dated 6th April 2006 to the Borough Director, accompanying the Report on the Public Inquiry into objections to the Second Draft of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3, it was stated:

*Other than the southern part of the Brockhill ADR (site IN67) which is allocated for employment purposes, no ADR land will be needed during the Plan period. It should however remain designated as such should it be needed for allocation after the expiry of this Plan's time span.*

8.0.5 The Inspector, in his letter, went on to comment on the uncertainty of the A435 ADR and recommended that the Council should prepare a study of that area as soon as possible.

8.0.6 In the context of this part of this report, consideration was given by the Inspector to the sequential order under Policy CS.7 – Sustainable Location of Development of LP No.3 and the Inspector established (Paragraph 1.31 Issue b) in the modified Policy CS.7 that the sequential approach, in summary, would essentially be to give consideration to:

- i. locations within the Redditch urban area on brownfield sites which avoids damaging the quality of the environment;
- ii. locations within the Redditch urban area on greenfield land which avoids damaging the quality of the environment;
- iii. locations adjacent to the Redditch urban area, outside the Green Belt and adjacent to the Redditch urban area, in Areas of Development Restraint;
- iv. in exceptional circumstances, when all options for locating development set out above, in sustainable locations, have been exhausted and where there is a clear development need, consideration of locations adjacent to the Redditch urban area on land currently designated as Green Belt but where the purposes of Green Belts were designated would not be compromised.

8.0.7 The Reasoned Justification for Policy CS.7 was modified accordingly and in particular:

*“3. Areas of Development Restraint (ADR) will be considered after sites within the urban area. There are three ADRs in the Borough: the A435 corridor, Brockhill and Webheath. Brockhill and Webheath are considered to be in locations that would enable balanced communities to be achieved and would minimise the need to travel. It is not envisaged that any ADR land will be needed during the Plan period. Likewise it is not expected that any ADR land would need to be removed from the Green Belt.”*

8.0.8 When considering objections to Policy B(HSG).1 of Local Plan No.3 and the five and ten year supply of land, the Inspector concluded in Paragraph 4.10 that sufficient ADR land (in particular that at Webheath and Brockhill) continued to be identified in the Plan for potential future release for housing, amongst other uses. He commented that these constituted substantial areas and might well be sufficient to meet a 10 year supply and beyond.

8.0.9 As to the A435 ADR, the Inspector commented in Paragraph 7.26 that this linear area was originally designated to provide land for the Studley bypass, but this road scheme was abandoned in the latter stages of the Local Plan No.3 Inquiry. The Inspector who considered objections to Local Plan No.2 concluded that there was some scope for limited development. The Inspector considering Local Plan No.3 commented at this Inquiry that possibility of development potential was not fully investigated by either an objector or the Council, and, without such a review, he was reluctant to move the ADR

boundary and thereby include that land, or part of it, within the Green Belt. He continued by stating that the main purpose of this ADR being designated had disappeared and did not believe it to be acceptable for the designation to be retained indefinitely. He concluded that that the Council should as a matter of some urgency, undertake a study of the A435 ADR to ascertain its future.

#### 8.0.10 White Young Green Report

The WYG Report (Paragraph 3.15) commented that for the purposes of the study, taking into account existing RSS policies and Government policy on Green Belts and Housing, a sequential approach should be adopted to meet any identifiable capacity, with first preference being previously developed land within the existing urban area, followed by ADRs and other non-Green Belt land and, finally, land within the Green Belt.

8.0.11 Paragraph 6.01 of the WYG Report recorded that the Redditch Local Plan No.3 contained three ADRs and that these sites had been identified as having long term potential to meet the needs of the town. Whilst they could not be released until the matter had been properly considered at a future review of the Development Plan, they had been excluded from the Green Belt. This land therefore had the same status as White Land and should be regarded as being sequentially preferable to areas within the Green Belt (also confirmed in Paragraph 9.03).

8.0.12 WYG Report Paragraphs 6.05 and 6.06 demonstrated that there was more than sufficient land, which could be brought forward through the development of the sites in the urban area and Webheath, Brockhill and A435 ADR sites within the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3, to accommodate Growth Option 1. However, the Report confirmed that the combined development of the urban area sites and the three ADRs could not meet the overall land requirements for Options 2 and 3. The implications of developing the A435/Winyates Green Triangle are discussed more fully in Paragraphs 8.5.0 et seq.

8.0.13 Chapter 8 of the WYG Report considered options for accommodating growth around Redditch and, more particularly, Paragraph 8.30 commented, once again, that a combination of the three designated ADRs in Redditch and/or the Winyates Green Triangle<sup>1</sup> site had more than sufficient potential to meet the residual land requirements associated with Growth Option 1.

8.0.14 Significantly, the WYG Report records in Paragraph 9.03 that the ADRs could be regarded as being sequentially preferable to other areas of open countryside that have either been considered for development and ruled out, or have never been considered at all.

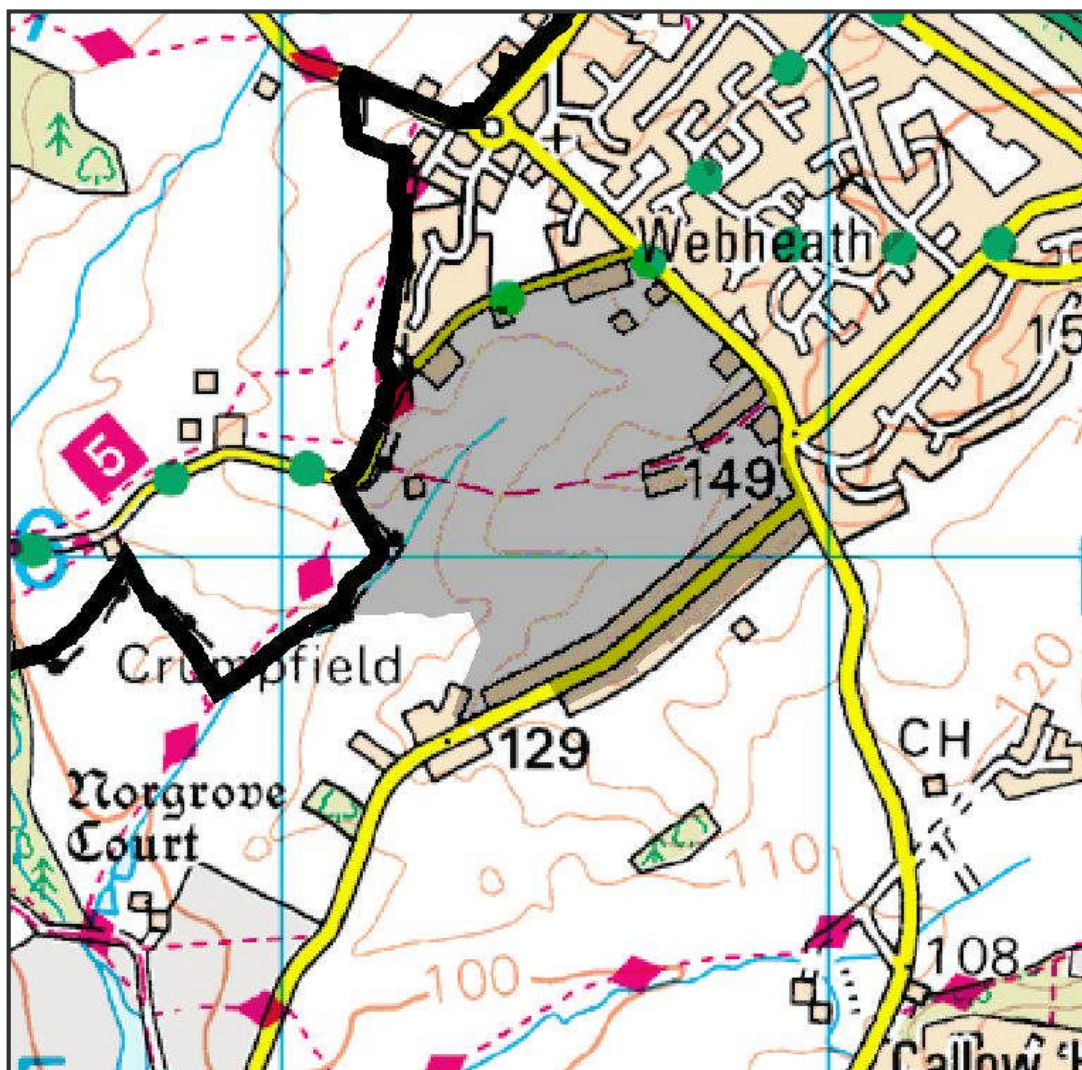
8.0.15 In the following sections, the merits of developing the individual ADRs in Webheath, Brockhill and A435 Corridor rather than in the designated Green Belt, will be demonstrated.

---

<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that the A435 ADR that WYG refer to in Para 6.03 of the WYG Report is larger than the A435 ADR and includes the Winyates Green triangle which embraces land east of the Redditch Borough Council administrative boundary (in Stratford-on-Avon District).



## Webheath ADR (Map 5)



Map 5

### 8.1.0 Inspector's Report on Deposit Local Plan no.2

The Inspector dealing with the Deposit version of Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 considered, in Paragraph 2.25 of his Report (also see Paragraphs 6.4.3 et seq of this report), that the area north of Crumpfields Lane was better contained and, given that the area already included an amount of sporadic development, the Inspector did not think that development on this land would have a serious effect on the landscape. This land was to become the designated ADR and is now known as the Webheath ADR.

- 8.1.1 In Paragraph 2.91, he commented that he saw no reason to think that Norgrove (which included that part which was to become ADR) would be poorly integrated with the adjoining residential areas. There was no reason why the development should not be linked to the adjacent residential neighbourhoods by pedestrian routes, nor had he seen any technical evidence that educational, health or other social facilities would be

overloaded as a result of the growth at Norgrove, rather than in any other part of the town.

- 8.1.2 In relation to Green Belt policy, and in particular in considering the revised Green Belt boundary, the Inspector considered in Paragraph 2.98 that land between Crumpfields Lane and Pumphouse Lane should remain excluded from the Green Belt. This land, he considered, could make a useful contribution to meeting the future needs of Redditch, provided that access problems could be resolved.
- 8.1.3 Under the heading of Green Belt, the Inspector concluded in paragraph 5.5 that it would be beneficial for there to be some scope for further development to take place at the edge of Redditch after the end of the Plan Period, without encroaching onto the Green Belt. Having regard to PPG2, he considered that where such land could be identified, its potential for meeting the long term development requirements of the town should be safeguarded. Accordingly, he recommended that a new Policy, GB6, should be inserted into Local Plan No.2. The recommended new Policy GB6 was as follows:

*Certain lands at the edge of the urban Redditch are shown on the Proposals map as Areas of Restraint. These areas will be safeguarded to meet possible longer term development requirements beyond the year 2001. In the interim, development will not be permitted, except for the purposes of agriculture, forestry, outdoor sport or other open uses appropriate to a rural area.*

8.1.4 Inspector's Report on Modifications to Local Plan No.2

The Inspector appointed to consider the Modifications to Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 acknowledged in Paragraph 1.3 of his Report that the previous Inspector had made a recommendation for a policy providing for the definition of 'Areas of restraint' (later altered by the Council to Areas of Development Restraint' or ADRs) and that the principal ADRs recommended by the previous Inspector were at Norgrove, between Crumpfields Lane and Pumphouse lane, and at Brockhill, northwest of the Enfield Industrial Area.

- 8.1.5 In Chapter 2, Paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3 of the 'Modifications' Report, the Inspector commented that the Inspector considering the earlier Deposit Local Plan had rejected the proposals for Norgrove and had recommended that the Alders Brook Valley and the area north of Norgrove Court should be permanently protected from development by Green Belt designation. However, he considered that some land between Pumphouse Lane and Crumpfields Lane had development potential for about 600 dwellings, but that constraints of the local road network would preclude development within the then plan period and accordingly safeguarded this area by ADR designation for development beyond the year 2001. Redditch Borough Council accepted several of the Inspector's recommendations for the Norgrove area, but on the basis of revised advice from the highway authority, Redditch Borough Council proposed that part of the area recommended for designation as an ADR could be allocated for about 526 dwellings. The Inspector recorded in

Paragraph 2.3 that advice from Hereford and Worcester County Council was that the existing highway network at Norgrove, with minor road improvements and other traffic calming measures, could sustain a development of between 600 and 700 dwellings. Redditch Borough Council had broadly accepted the former Inspector's recommendations about the Green Belt at Norgrove and proposed a modification confirming the proposed boundary, together with other modifications affecting development at Norgrove (now called Webheath ADR).

- 8.1.6 The Inspector considered objections to the proposed modifications and in Paragraph 2.9 recorded that two of the five purposes set out in the new version of PPG2 applied to the Norgrove area. The proposed Green Belt shown on Map GB.1(ii) (see Appendix 14 of this report) would check the unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area and would assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment. Once defined, the Green Belt would have a role in fulfilling the first three of the objectives listed in Para 1,6 in PPG2 and for these reasons, he rejected the contention, expressed in the objections, that the proposed Green Belt at Norgrove had no justification. He was then able to go on to deal with the ADRs.
- 8.1.7 Paragraph 2.11 comments on the ADR designation and the 'reduction' of the ADR at Norgrove as identified by objectors which was a reference to the area proposed by the Local Plan Inspector, as well as to the reduction embodied in Modification GB.1(a)(iv) (see Appendix 14) which only allocated the northern part of the Norgrove area for development.
- 8.1.8 In Paragraph 2.14, the Modifications Inspector commented that Development proposals for 1,900 – 2,100 dwellings in the Deposit Plan envisaged a new highway network independent of existing roads, but that the concerns about the impact of traffic and the scale of development on the village of Webheath led the earlier Inspector to look at a smaller scheme for 600 dwellings. The modifications subsequently proposed by Redditch Borough Council included a scheme for 526 dwellings which would no longer require a new highway infrastructure but would merely require traffic calming and other measures to minimise the effect of additional traffic on existing residential streets and to improve road safety (Paragraph 2.15).
- 8.1.9 In considering the designation of the ADR at Norgrove (Webheath) (Paragraph 2.16) embodied in the Modifications, the Modifications Inspector commented that in regard to the highway issue, Norgrove compared unfavourably with the Brockhill site where traffic on the proposed road network necessary to serve development would have a much slighter impact on existing residential areas. However, he concluded that the existing highway network and in particular, the junctions on the network, could cope with traffic volumes resulting from a 526 dwelling scheme (a more modest scheme proposed for the ADR as compared with the more extensive Deposit proposals for Norgrove).

- 8.1.10 Paragraph 2.21 confirmed that Norgrove Court was a superb example of a seventeenth century English manor house (Grade I listed building) lying in the shallow valley of the Swans Brook. The Modifications Inspector confirmed that development proposals in the Deposit Local Plan would have resulted in new housing development approaching to within 100m of Norgrove Court, and whilst provision for tree planting would have partially mitigated the impact of new development on Norgrove Court, new houses on the rising ground on the east side of the valley would have been clearly visible. The effects of new development on the setting of the listed building were an important reason for the Deposit Local Plan Inspector's rejection of the Norgrove proposals. The Council's modifications meant that the impact of development would be significantly reduced and the Modifications Inspector did not find that the ADR proposals carried the same weight as in the case against development at Norgrove as it did in earlier proposals.
- 8.1.11 In relation to the pollution of watercourses summarised in Paragraph 2.22, it was confirmed that the NRA had set out a series of measures to deal with storm water drainage to serve a 526 dwelling development proposed for this part of the Norgrove area. The Inspector was satisfied that the risks of watercourse pollution would not add significantly to the case against development in Norgrove (Webheath).
- 8.1.12 Referred to as the "thin end of the wedge", in Paragraph 2.23, the Inspector considered this frequently expressed view local people in a town which has experienced a large amount of development in its recent past. The Inspector observed that the fears of Redditch residents derived in large measure from the absence of a statutory development plan incorporating established green belt boundaries, but he hoped that this situation would be rectified when Local Plan No.2 was finally adopted. He continued by saying that the designation of ADRs would carry a clear indication of the possibility (if not probability) of further development after the turn of the century, but that most of the land on the outskirts of the town would have the protection of green belt policies for much longer than this.
- 8.1.13 With regard to objections regarding the lack of facilities in Paragraph 2.27, the Inspector concluded that, although it would not be possible to provide the same range of facilities intended to support the original proposals for Norgrove because the scale of development had been reduced, developers would still be expected to fund social and community provision commensurate with the smaller scheme for the ADR. He added that in his view, objections derived from the mistaken assumption that no further community facilities would be provided in Norgrove added little to the arguments against development in this part of the town.

#### 8.1.14 White Young Green Report

In the WYG Report, Paragraph 8.32 records that there would be no overriding constraint to the early release of any of the three ADRs (which would include Webheath) through the LDF, subject to the outcome of the RSS review process.

8.1.15 In Chapter 8 – ‘Options for Accommodating Growth around Redditch’ in the WYG Report, Paragraph 8.27 states that in the South West Quadrant (Sites 1 to 4, Appendix 7 of this report), there is potential for the Webheath ADR (Norgrove) to be developed independently from the remainder of Site 3.

#### 8.2.0 Webheath ADR Conclusions

Unlike the area South West Area of Redditch in Section 6, or the Area West of Astwood Bank in Section 7 of this Study, the Webheath ADR would:

- Not cause the coalescence of any settlements contrary to the aims of PPG2
- Not result in loss of attractive countryside in the main.
- Not impact on the setting of Norgrove Court - Grade I Listed Building.
- Not impact on the Alders Brook Valley.
- Not present any significant risks of watercourse pollution.
- No mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified within the ADR.

Furthermore, the following conclusions, with regard to the Webheath ADR are made:

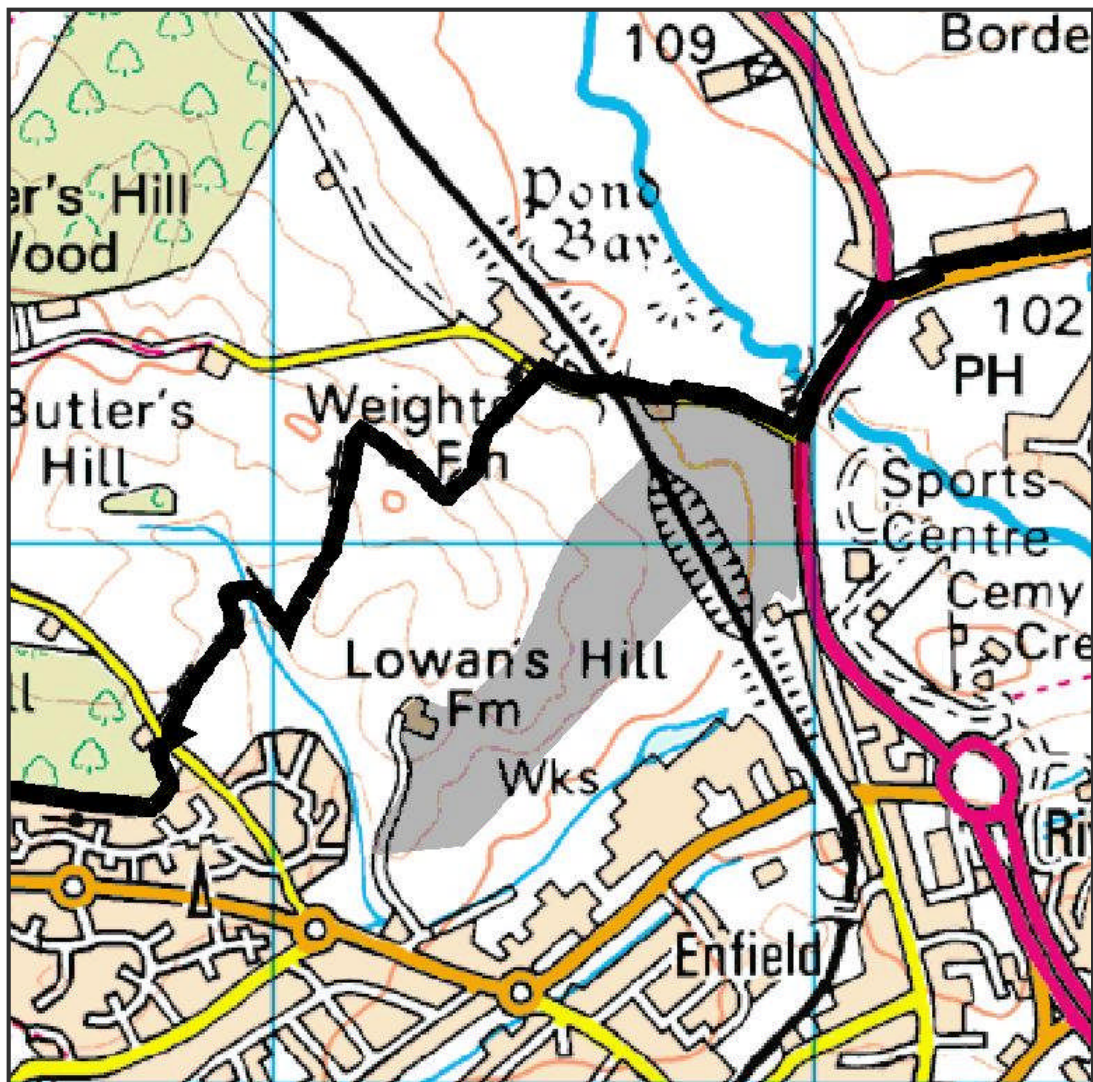
- Area north of Crumpfields Lane better contained.
- Housing development here would not affect any significant ridge lines or prominent slopes.
- Development here would not appear to affect any ecological sites.
- Alders Brook Valley offers a great asset to Redditch – development should be avoided here.
- Not have a serious effect on the landscape.
- Development here would not be perceived as sprawling into open countryside and would be well-contained.

- Area would not be poorly integrated with adjacent residential areas.
- Given some minor improvements to the existing highway network, no major new expensive or problematic highway infrastructure would be required to serve this level of development.
- There would be no major impact on the existing narrow lane network in this general area.
- Good footpath links.
- Area relatively close to Town centre, railway station, etc.
- No technical evidence that educational, health or other social facilities in this area would be overloaded.
- Area not particularly desirable/topographically suitable for employment development/uses.
- Adopted Green Belt boundary would stop unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area and would assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

For all of the reasons outlined above, it is clear that the reduced proposals for the ADR at Webheath are entirely consistent with the advice in PPG2 and that the development would be relatively harmonious with the existing development in the Webheath area of Redditch. The revised proposals would no longer have a harmful effect on Norgrove Court and the surrounding countryside. Given the measures to deal with watercourse pollution, improvements to the local highway network, funding by developers of social and community facilities and so forth, such development of this ADR would be acceptable and would fully integrate with the local area. From the in-depth and independent examinations through the local plan process, it is also evident that the selection of this area of land as an ADR for future development is far more preferable than other land elsewhere in the designated Green Belt around Redditch.



Brockhill ADR (Map 6)



Map 6

8.3.0 Inspector's Report on Deposit Local Plan No.2

In the Conclusions on the Green Belt to the North West of Redditch (Paragraph 5.19), the Inspector, considering objections to the Deposit Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2, concluded that the lower part of the land, lying to the east of the access track to Lowan's Hill Farm and extending north-eastwards as far as the A441, could provide for the further expansion of Redditch after the year 2001. The Inspector commented that the bulk of the land abutted the Enfield Industrial Area and, if eventually developed, might be best suited to industrial or commercial uses. The land to the east of the railway could offer a limited opportunity for longer term residential development, depending on the final alignment of the Proposed Bordesley By-pass.

8.3.1 He considered that the alternative boundary proposed by the objector – Ideal Developments Ltd (Paragraph 5.20) would be both discernible on the ground and readily defensible and made recommendations accordingly.

### 8.3.2 Inspector's Report on Modifications to Local Plan No.2

Under the heading of 'The ADR at Brockhill' (Paragraph 3.13), the Inspector's Report on Local Plan No.2 Modifications records:

*The designated ADRs in the Local Plan have a valid purpose and their eventual development is not inevitable. The future use of ADRs will depend on strategic locations yet to be made at regional and county levels. Moreover, the Council's evidence to the Inquiry stressed that not all land within ADRs is likely to be suitable for development and that some parts might be required for open space uses. It seems to me that the character of the land at the extreme eastern end of Brockhill adjoining the railway illustrates this point. It lies beyond the low ridge south-east from Butlers Hill Farm and has quite different topographical characteristics from those of the remainder of Brockhill. An objection from Bromsgrove District Council makes a similar point, but I do not consider that this justifies an amendment to Policy GB6 as requested by the developers.*

8.3.3 With regard to foul and surface water drainage (Paragraph 3.15), the Inspector was not made aware of any technical evidence to substantiate the assertions that the proposed development at Brockhill would overload the existing sewers serving that area, or that it would exacerbate existing surface water drainage problems. He did not find that the provision of drainage would present an obstacle to development at Brockhill.

8.3.4 He noted in Paragraph 3.16 that the Council had pointed out that no part of the site was subject to any statutory conservation designation and that no objections had been received from WNCT or English Nature.

8.3.5 Perhaps of some significance, in considering the extent of the Brockhill development and the Green Belt boundary adjacent to the ADR in the shallow valley to the west of Lowan's Hill Farm (Paragraph 3.26), the Inspector preferred the line put forward by the objectors since he believed that any development beyond this line could be regarded as encroachment on the countryside.

9.3.6 The Inspector recommended in Paragraph 3.31 (c) that the Borough Council proceed with the modification to define an Area of Development Restraint as indicated on Map GB1(i) (Appendix 15 of this report) and also 3.31(d) to define an area of Primarily Open Space Uses to the west of Lowan's Hill Farm (west of, but abutting, the proposed ADR).



### 8.3.7 Inspector's Report on Second Deposit Local Plan No.3

Paragraph 7.12(f) of the Inspector's Report on Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 related to a Site Specific objection in the Green Belt North of Brockhill ADR in relation to Policy B(RA).1 – Detailed Extent of and Control of Development in the Green Belt. The Inspector expressed the following views:

***(f) Green Belt to North of Brockhill ADR***

*As I indicated earlier, for this or any other area to be removed from the Green Belt, exceptional circumstances need to be shown. Sufficient land for housing and employment uses are allocated within the Plan without resorting to sites within the Green Belt. Should the need for housing land arise post-2011, already identified ADR land will, in the absence of more sustainable sites, be available for that purpose. Some of that land may also be suitable for employment uses. None of the other matters raised by the Objector, including the advantages of taking the site into the North West Redditch Regeneration Area are sufficient to outweigh my conclusion that exceptional circumstances do not exist for the Green Belt boundary to be moved.*

8.3.8 Whilst Section 9 of the Inspector's Report dealt with Employment Provision, it is worth recording that Paragraph 9.6 referred to Site IN67 (site allocated for employment development – see Appendix 16 of this report), located immediately to the north of an existing employment area at Enfield, which the Inspector commented that in conjunction with existing employment uses, development on it would blend acceptably with its surroundings. The Inspector continued in commenting that the site was identified in the North West Redditch Master Plan – a study undertaken on behalf of the Council of the Brockhill ADR and Abbey Stadium site. He continued in Paragraph 9.7 by stating that IN67 at 6.6ha is the largest that could be accommodated for employment uses without substantial topographical remodelling, but that it would not prejudice to any significant degree the possibility of creating a mixed use development at some time in the future (ADR). He had already concluded that no ADR land needs to be allocated in this Plan for residential provision but that ADRs would be available for consideration post-2011.

### 8.3.9 White Young Green Report

In Chapter 8 – 'Options for Accommodating Growth around Redditch' in the WYG Report, Paragraph 8.21 states that in the North West Quadrant (Sites 5, 6 and 11 – see Appendix 7 of this report), amongst the advantages of development of this area, Site 6 contains an ADR with the potential to extend the development beyond the current boundaries. Furthermore, it was identified that Site 6, the southern part of Site 11 and the eastern part of Site 5, are well located relative to Redditch town centre and existing and proposed employment centres. The SWOT Analysis of Identified Potential Growth Options for Site 6 (containing the Brockhill ADR) records that the area has the following strengths and opportunities:

### *Strengths*

1. Good links to Redditch Town centre, including railway station, existing community facilities and also local employment areas.
2. Substantial part of site already designated as ADR – therefore principle of development accepted.
3. Links to existing residential areas.
4. No environmental designation.
5. Relatively low impact on Redditch highways.
6. Provide relatively modest priced utility connections.

### *Opportunities*

1. Sustainable urban expansion, close to existing facilities.
2. If developed in conjunction with land to north, offers opportunity to relocate railway station to provide new transport interchange and park and ride facility linking to town centre.
3. Potential to contribute to implementation of Bordesley By-pass.

8.3.10 Also in the WYG Report, Paragraph 8.32 records that there would be no overriding constraint to the early release of any of the three ADRs (which would include Brockhill) through the LDF, subject to the outcome of the RSS review process.

#### 8.3.11 North West Redditch Master Plan

The North West Redditch Master Plan (NWRMP) records in Section 3: Landscape Context, Paragraph 3.1 (iii) that amongst other features on the north-west of Redditch, the edge of Redditch is enclosed within a bowl of higher land.

8.3.12 Section 4 – Landscape Character of the NWRMP discusses in depth the landscape character of the two study sites north of Redditch. The Brockhill ADR falls within Site A of the NWRMP.

8.3.13 In the Worcestershire County Council Draft Landscape Assessment undertaken in May 1999 (and since adopted as supplementary planning guidance), Site A falls within the 'Bordesley Wooded Estatelands Landscape Unit' (Paragraphs 4.4 et seq of NWRMP).

8.3.14 The NWRMP Report defined four types of local landscape character and the Brockhill ADR falls within Landscape Type 3: The Redditch Bowl, with

Paragraph 4.18 and 4.19 (and Plan LO5 – see Appendix 17 of this report) recording the following:

*Landscape Type 3: Redditch Bowl*

*This landscape forms the transition between high and low ground, creating a bowl in which Redditch is situated. This landscape in this area has a strong sense of enclosure, created by the landform to the north and west, and by the urban edge of the Redditch to the south. The land use consists of some sloping agricultural and pastoral land. A large tract of recent housing development was under construction at the time of the report. Many field boundaries tend to comprise of sparse, gappy, fragmented hedgerows, with very few hedgerow trees. The only significant vegetation is along the Red Ditch, adjacent to the Enfield Industrial estate.*

*Much of the Redditch Bowl has already been developed for housing. The sensitivity to change is low.*

8.3.15 In Section 5: Visual Assessment, Paragraph 5.2 (and Plan LO6, Appendix 18) sets out the assessment of Visual Envelope: Site A (including Brockhill ADR) as follows:

*The assessment shows that:*

- i lower parts of the site are visually well -contained*
- ii there are few views of the site from Redditch, except of the wooded high ground and, even then, this area is seen from a relatively few locations; and*
- iii the northern part of the site, within the Arrow Valley, is the most visible, especially when seen from the rural areas to the north.*

8.3.16 Paragraph 5.31 contains the Summary of the visual assessment for Site A, as follows:

- i the highest parts of the site and the wooded high ground are the most visually sensitive;*
- ii the northern part of the site is most visible from the north, including from Grange Lane, the village of Bordesley and from St. Leonard's Church;*
- iii Lowan's Hill Farm forms a landmark feature in the southern part of the site and is prominent in views from Redditch to the south, south-east and south-west; it is usually seen in the context of the town;*
- iv lower parts of the site are more visually contained, due mainly to the surrounding landform;*

- v *most views of the site from Redditch are filtered by buildings and structures, and;*
- vi *the landform and large blocks of woodland at Butler's Hill and Brockhill limit views in from the north-west.*

8.3.17 In section 6: Constraints and Opportunities, Paragraph 6.2 confirms that there are no landscape designations which apply to Site A. A Landscape Protection Area and AGLV lie to the north, and Green Belt extends to the northern boundary of the site.

8.3.18 For the purposes of this Study, it is worth setting out the relevant elements of the continuing 'Constraint and Opportunities for Site A' as follows:

***The Site: Site A (See Appendices 17 & 18 of this Report)***

6.4 *Site A is constrained to the north by wooded high ground. This is the most visually sensitive, because of its prominence and its well-defined landscape character.*

6.5 *The area around Lowan's Hill Farm is visible from a number of viewpoints within Redditch. Historically, it was situated next to an area of woodland. There is an opportunity to restore this character as part of any development or enhancement, as well as the restoration of lost hedgerows and woodland.*

6.6 *The area of Site A north of the railway is visually sensitive. It forms part of the Arrow Valley Character Area. From many viewpoints to the north, it appears unconnected to Redditch.*

6.7 *The lower part of Site A is visually well-enclosed and least sensitive to change. This area provides a good opportunity for development. Red Ditch runs along the southern boundary of Site A and forms a strong landscape feature, with potential for enhancement.*

***Landscape Character: Site A***

6.12 *The reinstatement of hedgerows and introduction of further woodland on the wooded high ground would help to restore and enhance its landscape character. The visual prominence of the ridgeline would remain intact.*

6.13 *Development on the land north of the railway on Site A would lie within the Arrow Valley. Such development would bring the urban area of Redditch closer to the more rural parts of the valley. However, new planting could integrate the site within the valley and with the Abbey Park Golf and Country Club on the opposite side of the valley.*

*6.14 Development of Site A would continue the pattern of development within the Redditch Bowl.*

*6.15 Existing landscape features, such as the Red Ditch, should be retained and enhanced. New woodland planting should be provided to link with the woodland blocks within the wooded high ground.*

*6.16 Slight views would be available from the Bordesley Parkland. However, these would not be significant. The landscape character of the Bordesley Parkland would remain unchanged.*

#### 8.4.0 Brockhill ADR Conclusions

Unlike the South West Area of Redditch in Section 6, or the Area West of Astwood Bank in Section 7 of this Study, development within the Brockhill ADR is reviewed as follows:

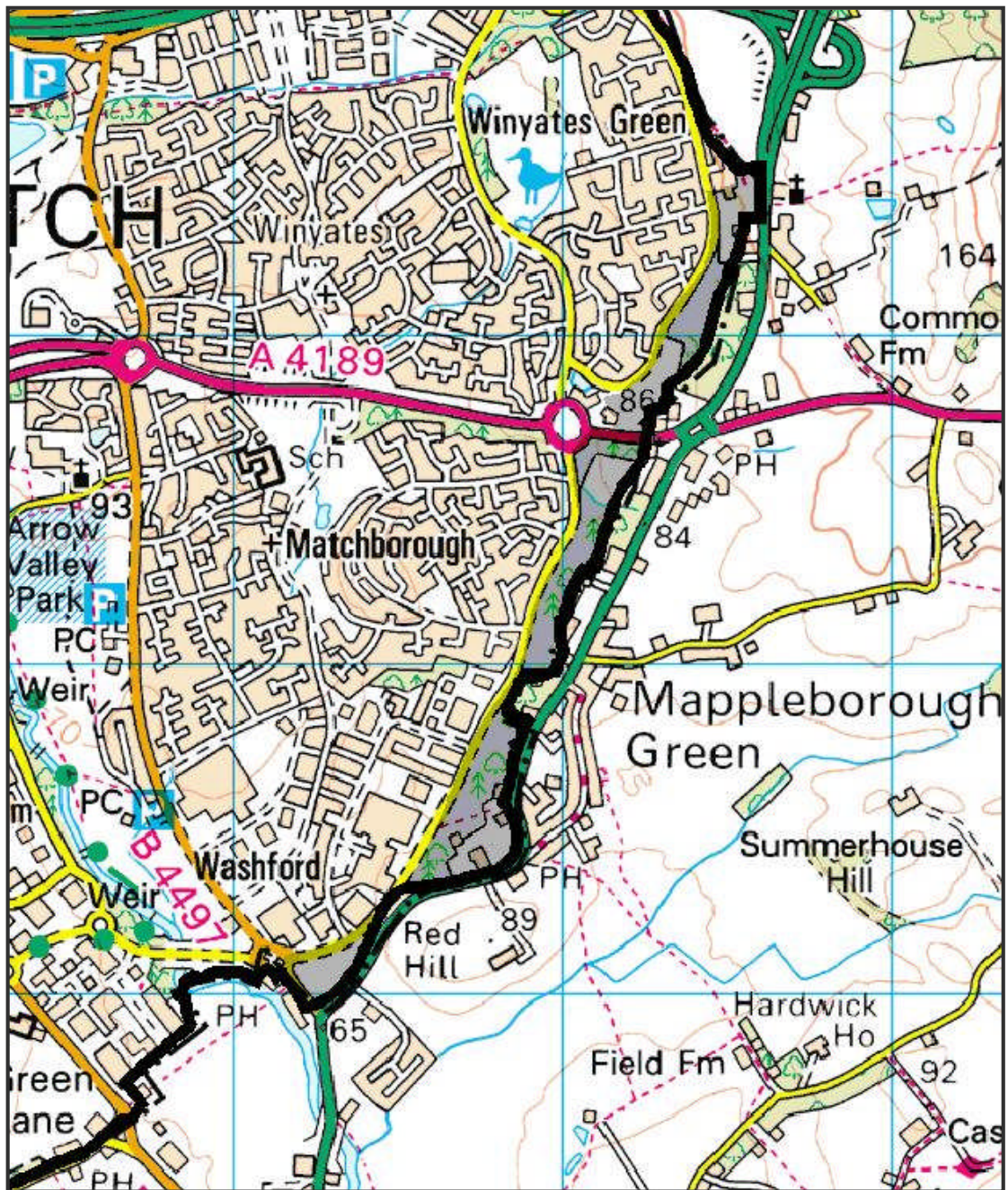
- Development here would not cause the coalescence of any settlements.
- In the main, there would be no resultant loss of attractive countryside.
- Risks of watercourse pollution would not be significant.
- No mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified within the ADR.
- Housing development here would not affect any significant ridge lines or prominent slopes.
- Development here would not appear to affect any ecological sites.
- ADR not considered of high landscape value.
- Development here would not be perceived as sprawling into open countryside and would be well contained.
- Area would not be poorly integrated with adjacent residential areas.
- Given some minor improvements to the existing highway network, no major new expensive or problematic highway infrastructure would be required to serve this level of development.
- There would be no major impact on the existing narrow lane network in this general area.
- Footpath links.
- Area located close to Town Centre, railway station, etc.

- No technical evidence that educational, health or other social facilities in this area would be overloaded.
- Part of ADR suitable for employment development/uses.
- Adopted Green Belt boundary would stop unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area and would assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

For all of the above reasons, It is clear that the proposals for the Brockhill ADR are acceptable in planning terms and the area is preferable to other Green Belt areas south-west of Redditch and west of Astwood Bank.



A435 Corridor ADR (Map 7)



Map 7

Whilst it was not appropriate to explore the A435 ADR in depth with the main parcels of Redditch Green Belt land, this section of the report examines the appropriateness of accommodating housing development to meet RSS targets.

#### 8.5.0 Inspector's Report on Deposit Local Plan No.2

In considering objections to Policy GB1 – The Green Belt to the East of Redditch in the Deposit version of Local Plan No.2, Paragraph 5.8 – Background of the Inspector's Report stated that Local Plan No.2 proposed a narrow strip of mainly open land bounded to the west by Claybrook Drive and Far Moor Lane, and to the east by the Borough boundary should be included in the Green Belt. This land had not previously been shown as Green Belt in any statutory development plan.

8.5.1 Paragraph 5.9 of the Inspector's Report explained that the Council's reasons for including the land in the Green Belt were fourfold. Firstly, in brief, the Warwickshire County Structure Plan, approved in 1991, showed in general terms that the Green Belt should extend up to the County Boundary to the east of Redditch. Secondly, Claybrook drive and Far Moor Lane formed the edge of the built-up area of Redditch, land to the east having been kept open as part of the reservation for the A435 Studley By-pass. Thirdly, although the new line of the A435 would have provided a suitable Green Belt boundary, this had not been finalised when Local Plan No.2 was placed on deposit and fourthly, the corridor of the re-aligned A435 was likely to be the subject of significant development pressure. However, the narrow strip of land between the new road and the existing built-up area would not be suitable for development.

8.5.2 In Paragraphs 5.11 and 5.12, the Inspector concluded that advice in PPG2 was that detailed Green Belt boundaries defined in adopted local plans should only be altered exceptionally. He was not persuaded that there were exceptional circumstances which told in favour of extending the West Midlands Green Belt up to Claybrook Drive/Far Moor Lane and existing line of the A435 formed the western edge of this part of Green Belt. The proposals in the emerging Stratford-on-Avon District Plan might well have been the subject of objection but the Inspector was of the opinion that the A435 provided a clear and defensible Green Belt boundary. The fact that the land to the east of Claybrook Drive/Far Moor Lane was currently undeveloped and did not seem to constitute a special circumstance of sufficient weight to justify its inclusion in the Green Belt. The Inspector went on to say that it seemed that there could well be some limited scope for long term development in this area and recommended that it should be shown as an Area of Restraint (later termed Area of Development Restraint - ADR).

#### 8.5.3 Inspector's Report on Modifications to Local Plan No.2

The Inspector, considering objections to Local Plan No.2 Modifications commented in Paragraphs 5.12 of his Report that Stratford-on-Avon District Council and a local landowner had objected to ADR modification.

8.5.4 The 'Modifications' Inspector concluded that there had been significant progress with the new road and the final line was now fixed. After careful consideration, he was convinced that that the line of this road was the best of the various alternatives for the boundary of the Green Belt at this sensitive



location along the Borough boundary. When the new road was constructed, he was of the opinion that it would form a strong defensible boundary and would exclude land to the west which the Deposit Local Plan Inspector considered might have some development potential. There was also good reason to believe that that it would eventually be complementary to Green Belt proposals in the Stratford-on-Avon District Local Plan when finally adopted.

8.5.5 The Inspector recommended that the Council did not proceed with the Proposed Green Belt Modification but follow an alternative modification to designate as Green Belt land, the land between the Borough boundary and the line of the new A435 and allocate as an Area of Development Restraint land between the road line and Far Moor Lane and Claybrook Drive.

#### 8.5.6 Inspector's Report on Second Deposit Local Plan No.3

Although it has already been referred to in Paragraph 8.0.9 of this section of the Report, it is worth reiterating that the Inspector considering Local Plan No.3 commented on the A435 ADR in Paragraph 7.26 of his Report. He stated that this linear area was originally designated to provide land for the Studley Bypass, but this road scheme was abandoned in the latter stages of the Local Plan No.3 Inquiry. The Inspector who considered objections to Local Plan No.2 concluded that there was some scope for limited development. The Inspector considering Local Plan No.3 commented at the Inquiry that the possibility of development potential was not fully investigated by either an objector or the Council, and, without such a review, he was reluctant to move the ADR boundary and thereby include that land, or part of it, within the Green Belt. He was satisfied that the exceptional circumstances needed to extend the Green Belt over this ADR, or any part of it, did not exist. He formed the conclusion having visited the area and having noted the land ownership of English Partnerships in the locality.

8.5.7 He continued by stating that on the other hand, the main purpose of this ADR being designated had disappeared and did not believe it to be acceptable for the designation to be retained indefinitely without such a review taking place. He further considered that such an exercise would not be possible until the needs flowing from changes to national and regional policy were clear, whereas with the abandonment of the road scheme there were likely be areas of the A435 ADR that no longer need to be safeguarded and, as to which, change in designation should be made sooner rather than later – thereby avoiding long term blight. He concluded that that the Council should, as a matter of some urgency, undertake a study of the A435 ADR to ascertain its future (including whether any designation in addition to ADR or Green Belt is appropriate for any part of it – e.g. a wildlife designation) and in due course to incorporate the results of that study into a DPD.

#### 8.5.8 Worcestershire County Council's Officers' Advice in response to the West Midlands Regional Planning Body's Section 4(4) Authorities Brief

The Worcestershire County Council's Officers' Advice in response to the West Midlands Regional Planning Body's Section 4(4) Authorities Brief in May 2006 comments in Paragraph 2.115 that in transport terms, development to the south and east of Redditch would exacerbate congestion problems focussed on the A435 corridor (which would include the A435 ADR).

#### 8.5.9 Redditch Borough Council's Response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revisions

In the response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revisions in 2007, the Council commented on Question 7 that in relation to potential ADR capacity for the A435 corridor, it was considered too premature to make assumptions about the possible development potential within the A435 corridor at this stage. This was the consensus of a meeting held between various organisations including Redditch Borough Council, Worcestershire County Council, Government Office, Stratford-on-Avon District Council and English Partnerships in February 2007.

8.5.10 The Council commented further in its response that Redditch Borough would benefit from a Joint Study which explores the potential of viable locations beyond the Borough boundaries in both Worcestershire and Warwickshire where development could take place. In the Council's view, a survey needed to be done for Redditch related growth that was similar to that undertaken by White Young Green to deal with Worcester City growth. Without such a study, the RSS review process will not have the information it needs to determine whether the target for Redditch Borough meets RSS objectives and whether or not the growth options are deliverable.

#### 8.5.11 White Young Green Report

Importantly, in relation the A435 ADR, the WYG Report states in Paragraph 6.03 as follows:

*Redditch Borough Council has assessed the combined capacity of Webheath and Brockhill at 525 dwellings for each period 2006-16 and 2016-26, a total of 1050 dwellings. The Council has not previously attributed any capacity to the A435 ADR and this ADR differs from those at Webheath and Brockhill on the basis that it abuts the administrative boundary of Stratford-on-Avon and there is no well defined physical distinction between the designated ADR land and adjoining land within Stratford District to the west of the A435. In assessing the potential capacity of that area of land at strategic level within the scope of this study (WYG), the logical approach is to consider the whole strip of land encompassed by the existing built-up area of Redditch and the A435, rather than the ADR in isolation. In addition, linked to the ADR designation to the north is a triangular area of land situated within the administrative boundary of Stratford-on-Avon*

*District Council bounded by the A435 and the A4023. This land is known as Winyates Green Triangle site. This site is excluded from the Green Belt and is “white land” in the adopted Stratford-on-Avon Local Plan. The site was removed from the Green Belt in the previous (2000) Local Plan and allocated for housing to assist in meeting the needs of Redditch at that time. However, the Local Plan Inspector rejected the case by the Council to re-instate the site as Green Belt hence the current designation as “white land”. A part of the overall area of land (i.e. site 18 on Plan 12 of this report) is potentially affected by flooding, but other than that the site is free from the range of strategic constraints.*

8.5.12 Table 6 – Net Developable Areas within Option Sites in the WYG report assesses Key site 18 – ‘Narrow strip of land between Redditch and A435’ (the ADR) as having a site area of 48 ha, having 3 ha of land subject to ecological, topographical, landscape and flooding constraints and a total available land area of 45 ha.

8.5.13 The main constraints arising from the assessment of highway/transportation capacity and constraints carried out by WYG are established in Paragraph 8.12 and in relation to the A435 ADR, the following findings are of relevance:

- There are a number of link roads and junctions within Redditch that appear to be at or nearing operational capacity including the A435 (east) link.
- Following assessment of the level of additional growth (residential and employment) needed to accommodate the three growth options (RSS) and consequent improvements to the highway network required, it is considered that the primary highway network is able to accommodate the growth associated with Options 1, 2 or 3 within either the north west, north east or south east quadrants, subject to adequate infrastructure improvement measures on parts of the main road network.
- From consideration of the combination of sustainable accessibility and estimated infrastructure costs, the report suggests that the most appropriate locations to accommodate major growth area as follows:
  - for Spatial Option 1, all development is accommodated by existing “committed developments”
  - for Spatial Option 2, development concentrated around A441 (north) link, or A448 Bromsgrove Highway Link (SWOT site numbers 6, 8 and 11)
  - for Spatial Option 3, development concentrated around A441 (north) link, or A448 Bromsgrove Highway Link (SWOT site numbers 5, 6, 8 and 11)

- 8.5.14 It should be noted from the preceding paragraph, that the A435 ADR does not feature in the suggested most appropriate locations to accommodate major growth when considering a combination of sustainable accessibility and estimated infrastructure costs.
- 8.5.15 In relation to utility infrastructure capacity and constraints, Paragraph 8.14 demonstrates that there would be no significant constraints to development in the A435 ADR. In respect of drainage, the most sustainable and perhaps least expensive locations to construct new homes beyond the Redditch area where permeability of the soil is the greatest and failing this close to existing water courses, are most likely to the north and east of Redditch (SWOT numbers 8 to 10 and 15 to 20 – see Appendix 7 of this report) which includes the A435 ADR.
- 8.5.16 WYG found that the single most pertinent utility infrastructure constraint was the provision of foul water disposal and development to the west of the River Arrow would be potentially more expensive and less sustainable in that respect (See Paragraph 8.15 of WYG).
- 8.5.17 In Paragraph 8.19, the report states that the most sustainable solution would be to develop close to or to the east of the River Arrow, again a new trunk sewer might be required but this could potentially be a gravity sewer.
- 8.5.18 Taking into account all identified constraints (policy, physical, natural and infrastructure), in Paragraph 8.20 et seq, WYG sets out its view on the implications of seeking to achieve Growth Options 2 and 3 within the identified Redditch quadrants.
- 8.5.19 The ‘findings’ for the A435 ADR (SWOT Site 18 – see Appendix 7 of this report) area are contained in Paragraphs 8.25 and 8.26 under the heading of South East Quadrant (SWOT Sites 12 to 19). It is relevant to the consideration of the A435 ADR to set out the complete findings for the South East Quadrant as follows:

*With the exception of certain areas of land immediately adjacent to the built up area of Redditch, the south east quadrant effectively contains all of the study area land within Stratford-on-Avon District. Accommodating development within this quadrant would bring with it the following principal advantages:*

- *Site 14, the northern part of Site 15, Sites 17, 18 and 19 are reasonably well located to principal employment areas within Redditch*
- *Major development within Sites 12 and 14 could potentially fund the provision of an A441 (south) link relief road, which would assist in relieving bottle necks at the Crabbs Cross roundabout.*
- *The northern part of Site 15, together with Sites 16 and 19 are located to the east of the River Arrow, so that necessary foul*

*drainage infrastructure would be relatively easy to achieve at a relatively low cost.*

- *Development within Site 18, both within the designated A435 ADR and also within the land designated as Green Belt located between the ADR and the A435, along with the Winyates Green Triangle would appear to be both feasible and sustainable.*

*However, major growth within the south east quadrant would bring with it the following disadvantages:*

- *Sites within this quadrant are relatively remote from Redditch town centre and are less accessible by all modes of transport to the centre than the sites within the north western and north eastern quadrants.*
- *Development on sites within the south east quadrant to the east of A435 (i.e. Sites 15, 16, 17 and 19) would create difficulties in achieving a long term, defensible boundary for the Green Belt in this direction.*
- *Development within sites 12 to 15 would have the effect of submerging the settlements of Astwood Bank, Sambourne and Studley within the built up area of Redditch, affecting the character of those settlements.*
- *The separate development of Site 16, in isolation from Sites 17 and 15 would be unsustainable, effectively creating a new settlement within the Green Belt*

8.5.20 Paragraph 8.30 records that a combination of three designated ADRs in Redditch and/or the Winyates Green Triangle site, have more than sufficient potential to meet the residual land requirements associated with Growth Option 1. WYG also recorded in Paragraph 8.32 that the view was that there was no overriding constraint to the early release of any of the three ADRs (or the Winyates Green Triangle) through the LDF, subject to the outcome of the RSS Review process.

8.5.21 In respect of Redditch accommodating Growth Option 2, Paragraph 8.33 of WYG states that it can be seen from Tables 4 and 5 in the WYG report that notwithstanding the development of the three ADRs and also the Winyates Green Triangle site up to their maximum potential, there would be a requirement to release additional land on the urban periphery currently within the Green Belt. Clearly, a more substantial release would be required for Option 3 (see Paragraph 8.35).

8.5.22 Paragraph 9.03 establishes that the ADRs and Winyates Green Triangle (an area of White Land within Stratford-on-Avon's administrative area) have been assessed in the WYG study as having a capacity of 1948 dwellings.

8.5.23 The full SWOT Analysis of Identified Potential Growth Options for Site 18 (containing the A435 ADR) can be examined in the full WYG Report.

#### 8.6.0 A435 ADR Conclusions

Unlike the South West Area of Redditch in Section 6, or the Area West of Astwood Bank in Section 7 of this Study, development within the A435 ADR is reviewed as follows:

- In the main, there would be no resultant loss of attractive countryside.
- No mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified within the ADR.
- Housing development here would not affect any significant ridge lines or prominent slopes.
- Development here would not appear to affect any ecological sites.
- ADR not considered of high landscape value.
- Development here would not be perceived as sprawling into open countryside and would be well contained.
- Area would not be poorly integrated with adjacent residential areas.
- There would be no major impact on the existing narrow lane network in this general area.
- Footpath links.
- No technical evidence that educational, health or other social facilities in this area would be overloaded.
- ADR close to employment development/uses.
- Adopted Green Belt boundary would stop unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area and would assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- In relation to utility infrastructure capacity and constraints, there would be no significant constraints to development in the A435 ADR.

For all of the above reasons, It is clear that the proposals for the A435 Corridor ADR are acceptable in planning terms and the area is preferable to other Green Belt areas south-west of Redditch and west of Astwood Bank.

## **9. CONCLUSIONS**

9.0.0 It is clear from the foregoing analysis that whilst there is more than sufficient potential to meet the residual land requirements associated with Growth Option 1 of the RSS by the development of the designated ADRs in the approved Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3, it is more than evident that the development of areas in the designated Green Belt to meet other options would be quite contrary to the advice in PPG2.

9.0.1 The Sections on Brockhill, the South West Area of Redditch and Area West of Astwood Bank in this Report establish compelling reasons against releasing Green Belt in these areas for development, whilst the sections on ADR show how some development can be accommodated.

### **9.0.2 Conclusions regarding Constraints and Sensitivities to further development in the Brockhill Green Belt Areas**

A number of key issues have been raised from previous studies and inspectors reports which negate further development on the Brockhill area and can be summarised as follows:

- Prominent landscape and steep topography to north-west of recent housing development at Brockhill and Brockhill ADR
- Recent development sits well in a 'bowl' but any extension beyond this area and ADR would be damaging to surrounding landscape
- Good quality farmland which should be protected from development
- Established and important woodland to north
- Potential sand and gravel deposits in the Foxlydiate area
- Existing Green Belt boundary discernable on the ground and defensible

Taking into account the constraints identified in previous studies; the Inspector's views on Deposit Local Plan No.2; confirmation of mineral deposits in the Minerals Local Plan and; the landscape and visual analysis in paragraph 5.3 of the White Young Green Report, it is concluded that further development to the north and North-west of the recent development in the Brockhill area in the Green Belt, and beyond the Brockhill ADR, would be inappropriate.

### **9.0.3 Conclusions regarding Constraints and Sensitivities to development in the South West Area Green Belt**

A number of key issues have been raised from previous studies and inspectors reports which negate development in the South West Area and can be summarised as follows:

- Areas of Grade 3(a) around Crumpfields Lane and Norgrove Court. – a finite resource not to be squandered.
- Development around Norgrove would result in loss of attractive countryside.
- Development at Norgrove would be totally unacceptable and incongruent with the setting of Norgrove Court - Grade I Listed Building.
- Western area cannot be developed without causing the likelihood of flooding at Feckenham, Priest Bridge and Himbleton.
- All sites west of River Arrow relatively problematical and costly in terms of foul drainage.
- Bow Brook River, downstream of Priest Bridge STW, considered unsuitable for to accept significant amounts of additional treated effluent.
- Pumped sewage from south west area not compatible with sustainable objectives.
- Mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified at Bentley and Bank Green (but seemingly extending south-westwards through Ham Green towards Astwood Hill Farm).
- Housing development in this area would extend Redditch's town form from behind the Callow Hill Ridge into the countryside
- Bow Brook, Swans Brook, Elcocks Brook fell within an area identified by the WNCT as being relatively rich in minor ecological features.
- Alders Brook valley is a great asset to Redditch – development should be avoided here.
- Area south-west of Redditch between Norgrove Court (including Ham Green) and Feckenham is of high landscape value.
- Parts of area located on prominent ridges – development would be visible from a considerable distance.
- Development behind the Callow Hill Ridge would extend Redditch's town form into open countryside.
- Allocation of housing to south of Love Lyne would be particularly ill-related to urban form of Redditch.
- Development south of Callow Hill Ridge and Dagtail End would be perceived as sprawling into open countryside and would not be well contained.



- Development in the area to the west of Green Lane would be out on a limb extending the urban area into the rural area.
- Existing urban area development up to logical and physically discernible edge.
- Roads in this area consist of narrow roads or country lanes – totally inadequate to serve large scale development.
- New roads into area likely to be expensive and problematic.
- New road link from Study Area to A435 would traverse Ridgeway, designated as Area of Restraint in South Warwickshire Local Plan.
- Any new highway network connecting to A448 would extend intrusion of urban development into the rural west.
- Any major new road link to Windmill Drive through Morton Stanley Park/Golf Course unsupported by development/creates pressure for future development/undesirable in environmental and visual terms.
- Continued expansion cannot be undertaken without significant landscape costs.
- Callow Hill Ridge and other high land acts as both a landscape and physical constraint.
- Little could be done to mitigate adverse visual impact of development
- Southwest area remote from Town centre, railway station, etc.
- Brook courses should be retained and protected from development within Bow Brook catchment.
- Area not particularly desirable/topographically suitable for employment development/uses

From the above, it is considered that there are significant and indisputable reasons for eliminating any release of land for future development from the Green Belt to the southwest of Redditch.

Whilst the South West Study of 1991 identified that the land north of Sillins Lane presented a significantly better option for development than the land south of Callow Hill Ridge, the subsequent Inspector's report on the Deposit Local Plan No.2 (and endorsed by the Inspector's report on the Modifications to Local Plan No.2) found the Council's proposals for the Norgrove Area to be totally unacceptable. This was primarily because of the unacceptable effect on Norgrove Court and the valley in which the Listed Building stood. The loss

of Grade 3a agricultural land (a finite resource which in the opinion of the Inspector should not be squandered) the unsustainability of pumped sewage disposal together with the adverse effects of any distributor road upon the Morton Stanley Park and Golf course.

The Local Plan Inspector further considered that the allocation of land for development in the Alders Brook Valley and in the environs of Norgrove Court would be highly undesirable and could see no grounds for excluding the land between Norgrove Lane and Sillins Lane and on the contrary, concluded that this area should be included in the Green Belt.

Together with his view that it would be wholly undesirable for the town to spill over the Callow Hill Ridge including the area south of Love Lyne and the Swans Brook valley, this effectively eliminated any further development in the south-west area other than the designated ADR.

The Worcestershire County Council Officer's advice in response to the RSS confirms that the grounds on which the Inquiry Inspector rejected the area to the southwest remain largely unchanged.

The rejection of the land to the southwest is again confirmed by the more recent WYG Report which opines that development to the north of the town is more likely to result in a more sustainable pattern of development.

In essence, the whole of the South West area has been tested in depth and conclusively, there remains no further part of the area which should be considered suitable for development and, in accordance with the objectives of PPG2, no part of the South West area should be excluded from the Green Belt.

#### **9.0.4 Conclusions regarding Constraints and Sensitivities to development in the Green Belt West of Astwood Bank**

A number of key issues have been raised from previous studies and inspectors reports which negate development West of Astwood Bank and can be summarised as follows:

- Coalescence of Astwood Bank with Redditch would be contrary to principles established in PPG2.
- Area to the west of Astwood Bank cannot be developed without causing the likelihood of flooding at Feckenham, Priest Bridge and Himbleton.
- All sites west of River Arrow relatively problematical and costly in terms of foul drainage.
- Bow Brook River, downstream of Priest Bridge STW, considered unsuitable for accepting significant amounts of additional treated effluent.

- Pumped sewage from south west area incompatible with sustainable objectives.
- Zones of moderate wildlife interest - Bow Brook, Swans Brook, Elcocks Brook - fall within an area identified by the W.N.C.T. as being relatively rich in minor ecological features.
- Part of area located on prominent Ridgeway – development would be seen for some considerable distance.
- Grade 3(a) land to west of Astwood Bank.
- Existing urban area development up to logical and physically discernible edge.
- Roads in this area are narrow roads and country lanes – totally inadequate to serve large scale development.
- New roads into area likely to be expensive and problematic.
- Continued expansion cannot be undertaken without significant landscape costs – high landscape quality from Norgrove Court to Feckenham.
- Development would be seen for some considerable distance from Worcestershire countryside.
- Little could be done to mitigate adverse visual impact of development
- No opportunity for discernible or defensible boundary west of existing development in Astwood Bank.
- Land progressively steeper – too steep for cost-effective development.
- South-west area remote from Town centre, railway station, etc.
- Brook courses should be retained and protected from development within Bow Brook catchment.
- Area not considered to be a desirable location for significant employment development.
- To meet Options 1 or 2 of RSS would involve major incursions into surrounding countryside

The arguments for preventing development from spilling out over the ridge west of Astwood Bank are compelling, as are the arguments for preventing the coalescence of Astwood Bank in accordance with the five stated purposes for including land in the Green Belt in PPG2.

The many constraints and disadvantages of development in this area, set out in the preceding paragraphs of this report, further strengthen the arguments against any development in this important section of the designated Green Belt.

#### 9.0.5 **Conclusions regarding Webheath ADR**

Unlike the area South West Area of Redditch in Section 6, or the Area West of Astwood Bank in Section 7 of this Study, the Webheath ADR would:

- Not cause the coalescence of any settlements contrary to the aims of PPG2
- Not result in loss of attractive countryside in the main.
- Not impact on the setting of Norgrove Court - Grade I Listed Building.
- Not impact on the Alders Brook Valley.
- Not present any significant risks of watercourse pollution.
- No mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified within the ADR.

Furthermore, the following conclusions, with regard to the Webheath ADR are made:

- Area north of Crumpfields Lane better contained.
- Housing development here would not affect any significant ridge lines or prominent slopes.
- Development here would not appear to affect any ecological sites.
- Alders Brook Valley offers a great asset to Redditch – development should be avoided here.
- Locality not considered of high landscape value.
- Development here would not be perceived as sprawling into open countryside and would be well-contained.
- Area would not be poorly integrated with adjacent residential areas.
- Given some minor improvements to the existing highway network, no major new expensive or problematic highway infrastructure would be required to serve this level of development.

- There would be no major impact on the existing narrow lane network in this general area.
- Good footpath links.
- Area relatively close to Town centre, railway station, etc.
- No technical evidence that educational, health or other social facilities in this area would be overloaded.
- Area not particularly desirable/topographically suitable for employment development/uses.
- Adopted Green Belt boundary would stop unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area and would assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

For all of the reasons outlined above, it is clear that the reduced proposals for the ADR at Webheath are entirely consistent with the advice in PPG2 and that the development would be relatively harmonious with the existing development in the Webheath area of Redditch. The revised proposals would no longer have a harmful effect on Norgrove Court and the surrounding countryside. Given the measures to deal with watercourse pollution, improvements to the local highway network, funding by developers of social and community facilities and so forth, such development of this ADR would be acceptable and would fully integrate with the local area. From the in-depth and independent examinations through the local plan process, it is also evident that the selection of this area of land as an ADR for future development is far more preferable than other land elsewhere in the designated Green Belt around Redditch.

#### 9.0.6 **Conclusions regarding Brockhill ADR**

Unlike the South West Area of Redditch in Section 6, or the Area West of Astwood Bank in Section 7 of this Study, development within the Brockhill ADR is reviewed as follows:

- Development here would not cause the coalescence of any settlements.
- In the main, there would be no resultant loss of attractive countryside.
- Risks of watercourse pollution would not be significant.
- No mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified within the ADR.
- Housing development here would not affect any significant ridge lines or prominent slopes.

- Development here would not appear to affect any ecological sites.
- ADR not considered of high landscape value.
- Development here would not be perceived as sprawling into open countryside and would be well contained.
- Area would not be poorly integrated with adjacent residential areas.
- Given some minor improvements to the existing highway network, no major new expensive or problematic highway infrastructure would be required to serve this level of development.
- There would be no major impact on the existing narrow lane network in this general area.
- Footpath links.
- Area located close to Town Centre, railway station, etc.
- No technical evidence that educational, health or other social facilities in this area would be overloaded.
- Part of ADR suitable for employment development/uses.
- Adopted Green Belt boundary would stop unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area and would assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.

For all of the above reasons, It is clear that the proposals for the Brockhill ADR are acceptable in planning terms and the area is preferable to other Green Belt areas south-west of Redditch and west of Astwood Bank.

#### 9.0.7 **Conclusions regarding A435 ADR**

Unlike the South West Area of Redditch in Section 6, or the Area West of Astwood Bank in Section 7 of this Study, development within the A435 ADR is reviewed as follows:

- In the main, there would be no resultant loss of attractive countryside.
- No mineral reserves of sand and gravel deposits were identified within the ADR.
- Housing development here would not affect any significant ridge lines or prominent slopes.
- Development here would not appear to affect any ecological sites.

- ADR not considered of high landscape value.
- Development here would not be perceived as sprawling into open countryside and would be well contained.
- Area would not be poorly integrated with adjacent residential areas.
- There would be no major impact on the existing narrow lane network in this general area.
- Footpath links.
- No technical evidence that educational, health or other social facilities in this area would be overloaded.
- ADR close to employment development/uses.
- Adopted Green Belt boundary would stop unrestricted sprawl of a large built-up area and would assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment.
- In relation to utility infrastructure capacity and constraints, there would be no significant constraints to development in the A435 ADR.

For all of the above reasons, It is clear that the proposals for the A435 Corridor ADR are acceptable in planning terms and the area is preferable to other Green Belt areas south-west of Redditch and west of Astwood Bank.

#### 9.0.8 Overall Conclusion

In conclusion, it has been demonstrated from previous studies and inspectors reports that development on the three ADRs within Redditch Borough is acceptable in planning terms. However in relation to the Redditch Green Belt there are compelling issues. The Green Belt South West of Redditch urban area and west of Astwood Bank are wholly inappropriate for development and no part of these areas should be excluded from the Green Belt. It has also been demonstrated that development at Brockhill Green Belt would be inappropriate. However, as the White Young Green Report favours future development to the north of Redditch, it is considered that future studies may be necessary to revisit the role that the Brockhill Green Belt could play as part of a comprehensive and detailed study for future growth e.g. Green Belt land at Brockhill could fulfil an open space role associated with development beyond the Borough boundary.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

### **Birmingham Overspill Study 1967**

October 1967 – Report to the Minister of Housing and Local Government

Report prepared by County Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council  
in association with:

County Surveyor, Worcestershire County Council  
City Engineer, Birmingham City Council  
Freeman, Fox, Wilbur Smith and Associates – Consulting Engineers, London  
J.B.Cullingworth B.Sc., Director of the Centre for Urban and Regional  
Studies, Birmingham University.

### **Joint Study of Feasibility – Expansion of Redditch New Town**

June 1973 – Report of the officers of;

Warwickshire County Council  
Worcestershire County Council  
Redditch Development Corporation

### **Joint Study of Feasibility – Expansion of Redditch New Town**

July 1973 – Summary of findings submitted to:

Warwickshire County Council  
Worcestershire County Council  
Redditch Development Corporation

### **Redditch Joint Study – Interim Report**

December 1986 – Report prepared by

County Engineer and Planning Officer  
Worcestershire County Council

Director of Planning and Transportation  
Warwickshire County Council

### **Redditch Joint Study – Final Report**

March 1988 – Report prepared by

County Engineer and Planning Officer  
Worcestershire County Council

Director of Planning and Transportation  
Warwickshire County Council



The Bow Brook – An Intensive Study

1989-1990 - Report prepared by National Rivers Authority

South West Study

(Incorporating previous Technical Report into the Study area)

1990-1991 - Prepared by Redditch Borough Council Local Plans Officers for Redditch Borough Council in considering Local Plan No.3

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 – Deposit Draft – Inspector’s Report

1992 – The Planning Inspectorate

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 – Modifications – Inspector’s Report

May 1995 – The Planning Inspectorate

County of Hereford and Worcester Minerals Local Plan

April 1997 – Hereford and Worcester County Council

Supplementary Planning Document – North West Redditch Master Plan

November 2004 – Prepared by Cooper Partnership, Chartered Landscape Architects for Redditch Borough Council

Callow Hill Ridge, Redditch – Landscape Character Assessment Report

February 2005 – Prepared by Pleydell Smithyman Limited for Redditch Borough Council

Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 – Second Deposit Draft – Inspector’s Report

April 2006 – The Planning Inspectorate

Response to the West Midlands Regional Planning Body’s Section 4(4) Brief (As amended (February 2006))

May 2006 – Worcestershire County Council Officer’s Advice

Response to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy – Phase Two Revision – Spatial Options

March 2007 – Prepared by Redditch Borough Council and approved by full Council on 26 February 2007

Joint Study into the Future Growth Implications of Redditch New Town to 2026

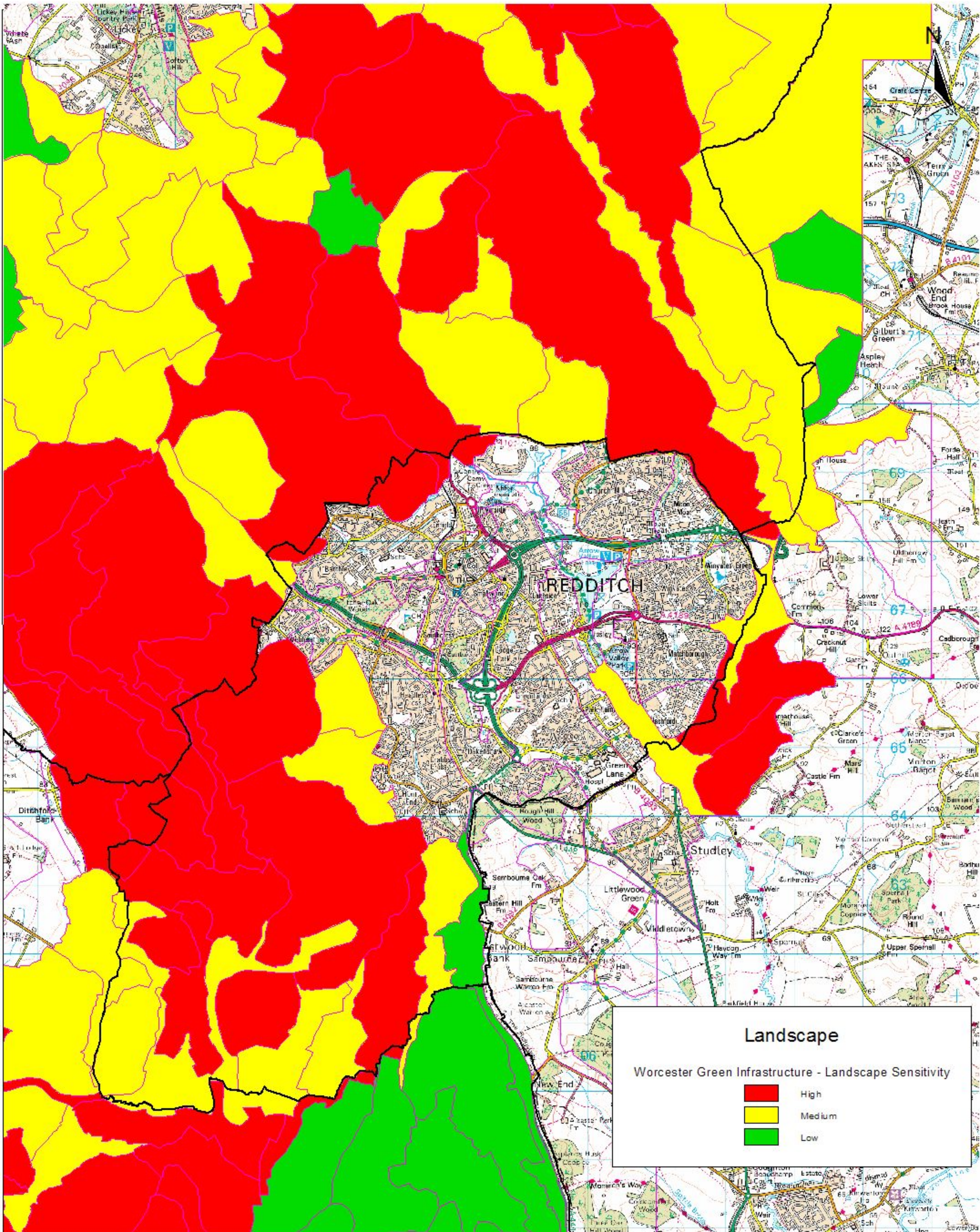
December 2007 – Prepared by White Young Green consulting (WYG) for:

Worcestershire County Council  
Redditch Borough Council  
Bromsgrove district Council  
Stratford-on-Avon District Council

Appendix 1  
Landscape Character Assessment Map







**Landscape**

Worcester Green Infrastructure - Landscape Sensitivity

	High
	Medium
	Low

**worcestershire**  
 county council  
 County Hall,  
 Spetchley Road,  
 Worcester  
 WR5 2NP

Scale: 1:50,000      0.6 0 0.6 1.2 Kilometers

Landscape Sensitivity: Redditch

This map is reproduced from Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Worcestershire County Council, 100015914. For reference purposes only. No further copies may be made.

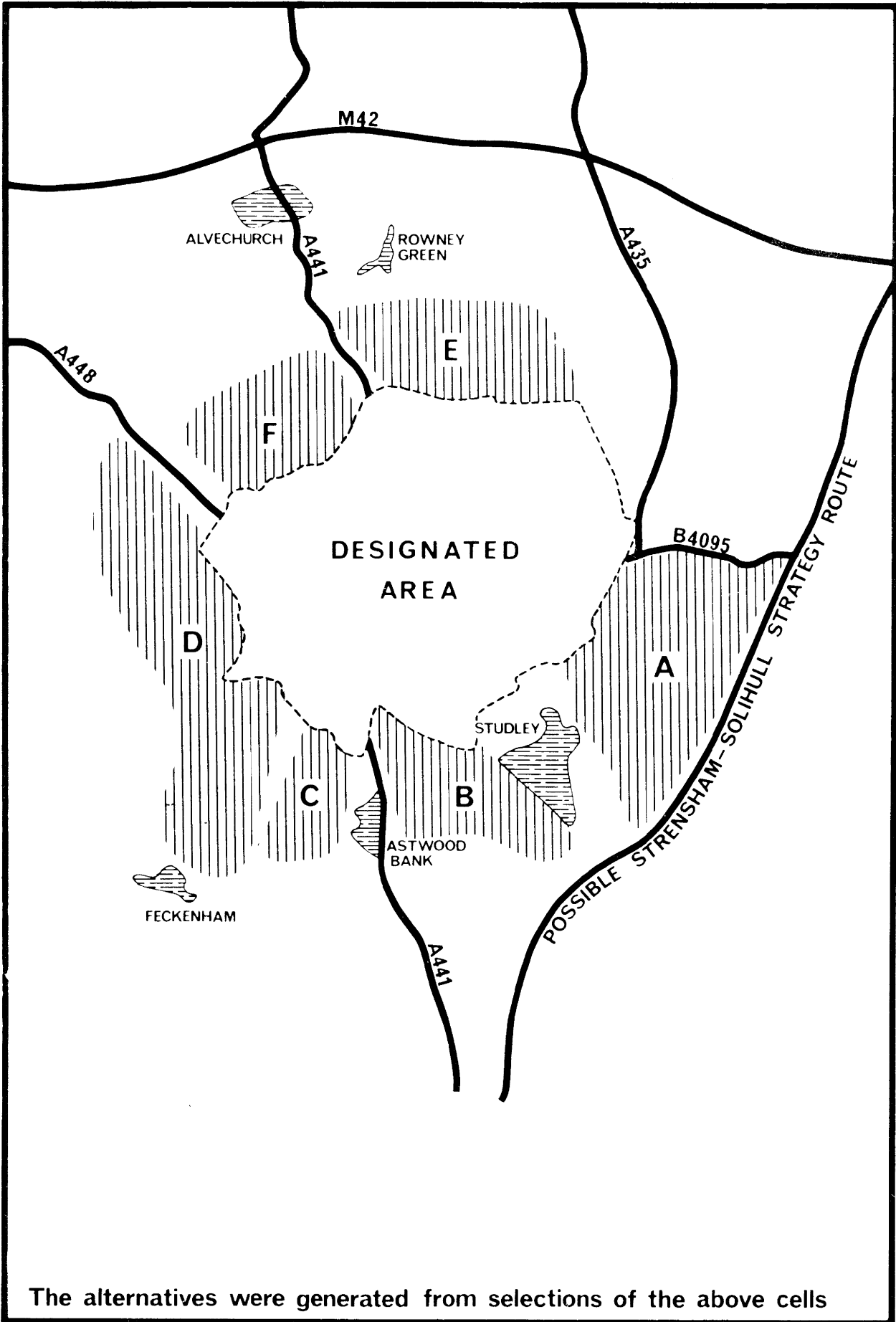




Appendix 2  
1973 Joint Study – Figure 10







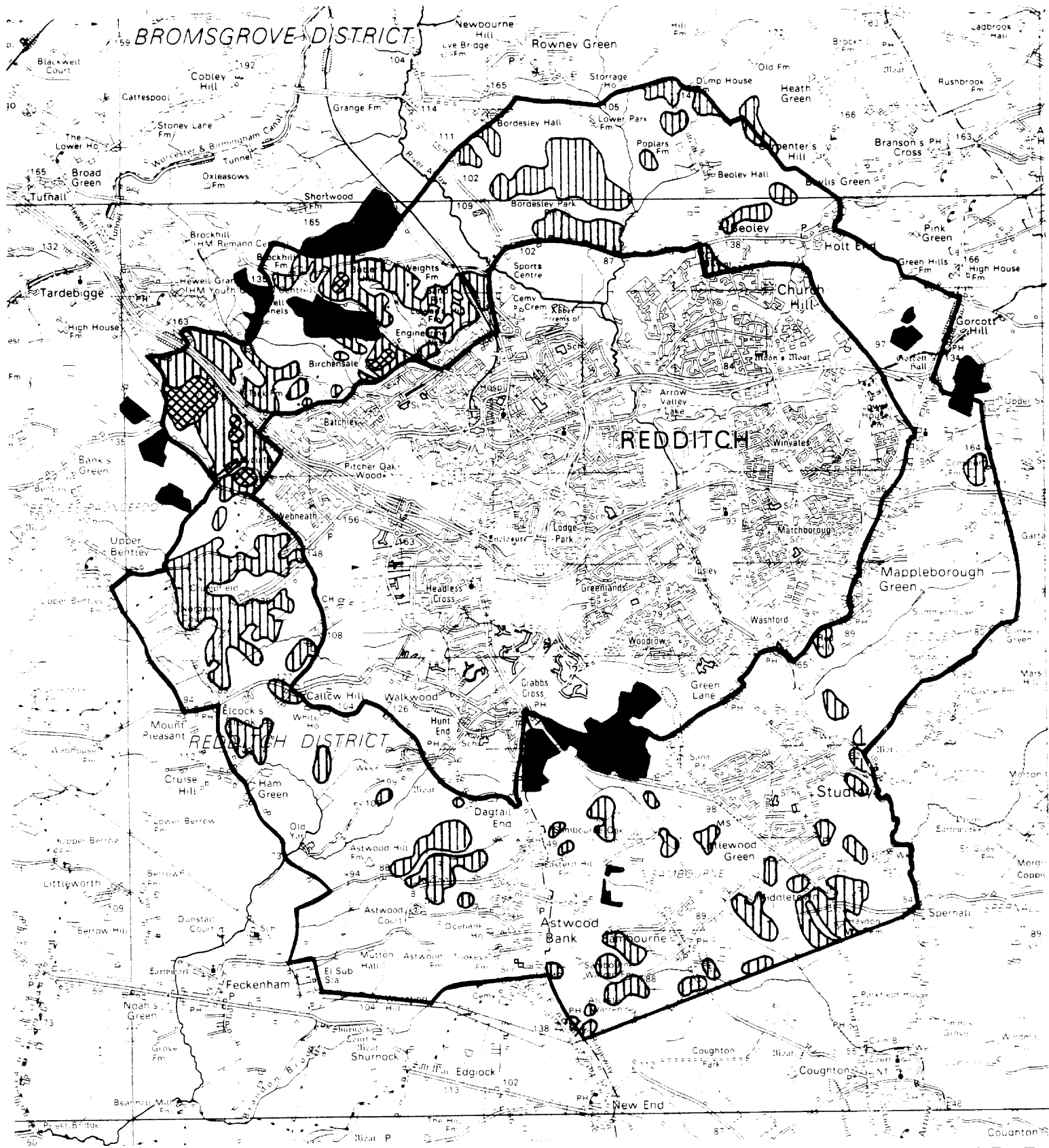
**CELLS OF DEVELOPMENT**

**Fig 10**



Appendix 3  
1988 Joint Study – Map 3





**LAND QUALITY AND WOODLANDS**

**MAP 3**

**AGRICULTURAL LAND CLASSIFICATION**



**GRADE 2**



**GRADE 3A**



**WOODLANDS**



**STUDY AREA**

Not to scale

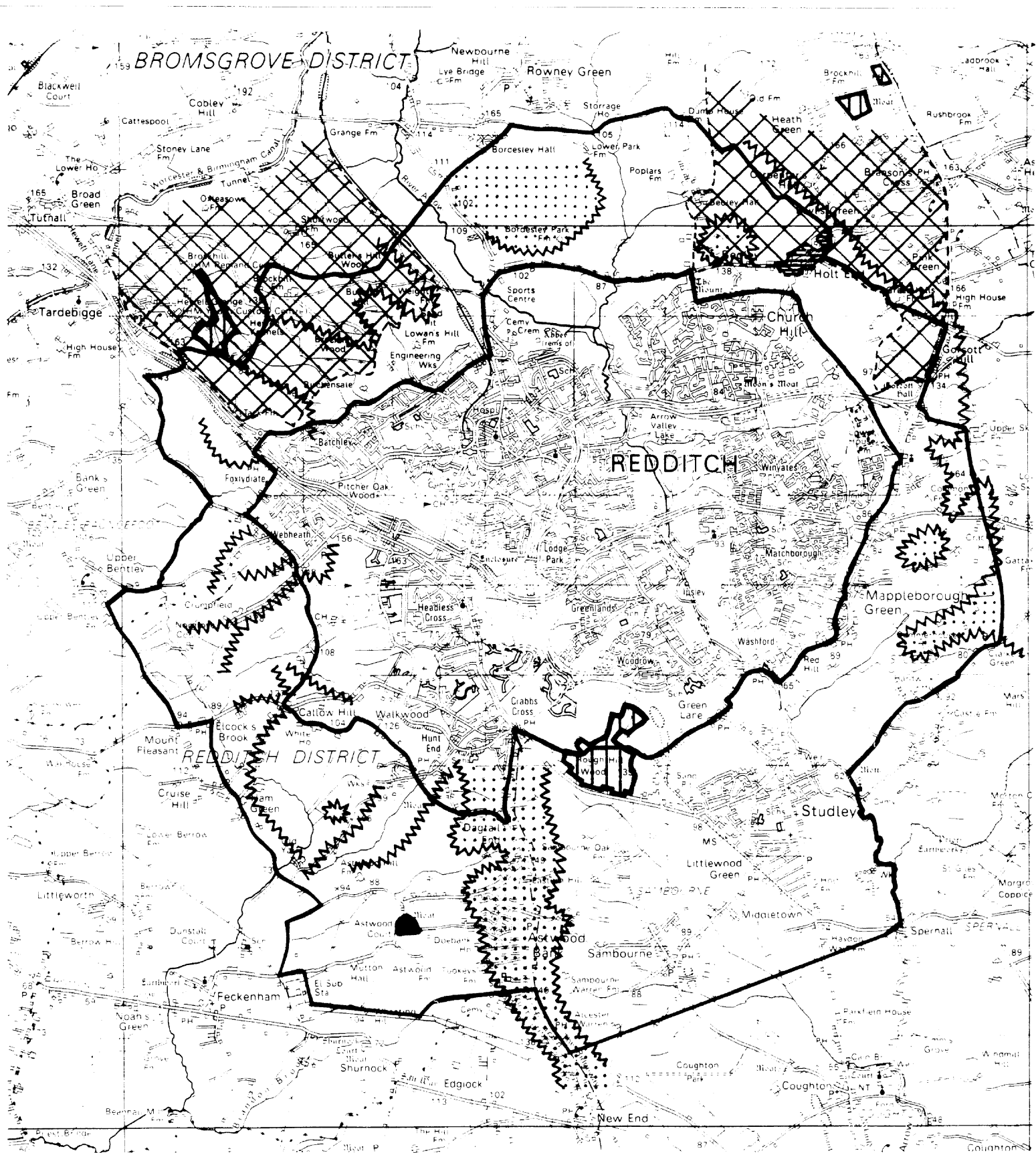




Appendix 4  
1988 Joint Study – Map 4







**CONSERVATION AND TOPOGRAPHY**

**MAP 4**

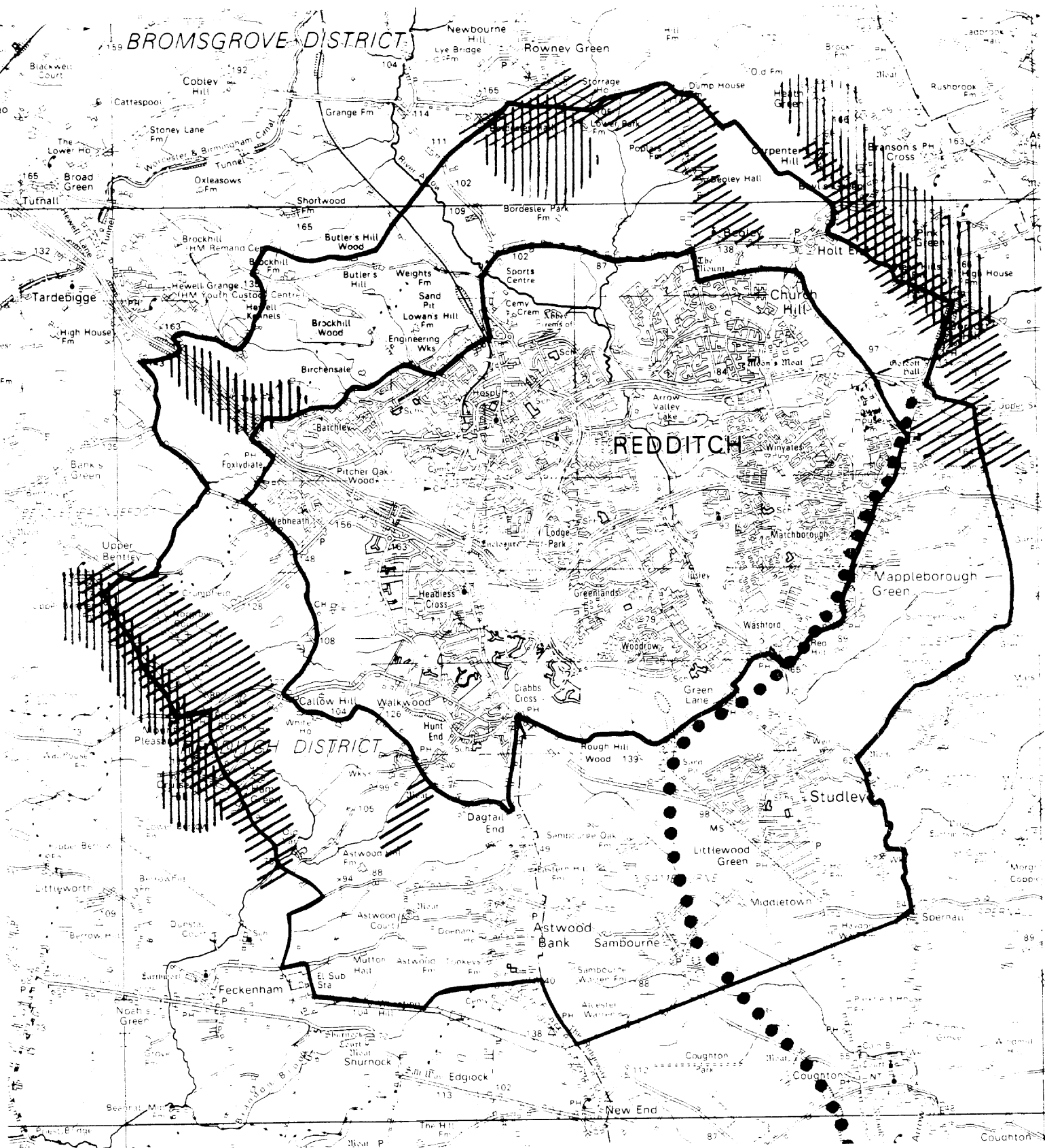
- STUDY AREA
  - CONSERVATION AREA (HOLT END)
  - ZONE OF HIGH ECOLOGICAL INTEREST
  - SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT SITE
- RIDGE LINES
  - HIGH GROUND
  - S.S.S.I. (EXISTING/PROPOSED)

Not to scale







Appendix 5  
1988 Joint Study – Map 2





**LANDSCAPE AND MINERAL RESERVES**

**MAP 2**

-  LANDSCAPE PROTECTION AREAS (1973 STUDY)
-  SAND AND GRAVEL MINERAL RESERVES
-  STUDY AREA
-  PROPOSED LINE OF STUDLEY BYPASS



Appendix 6  
The County of Hereford & Worcester Minerals Proposals Map  
(Extract)





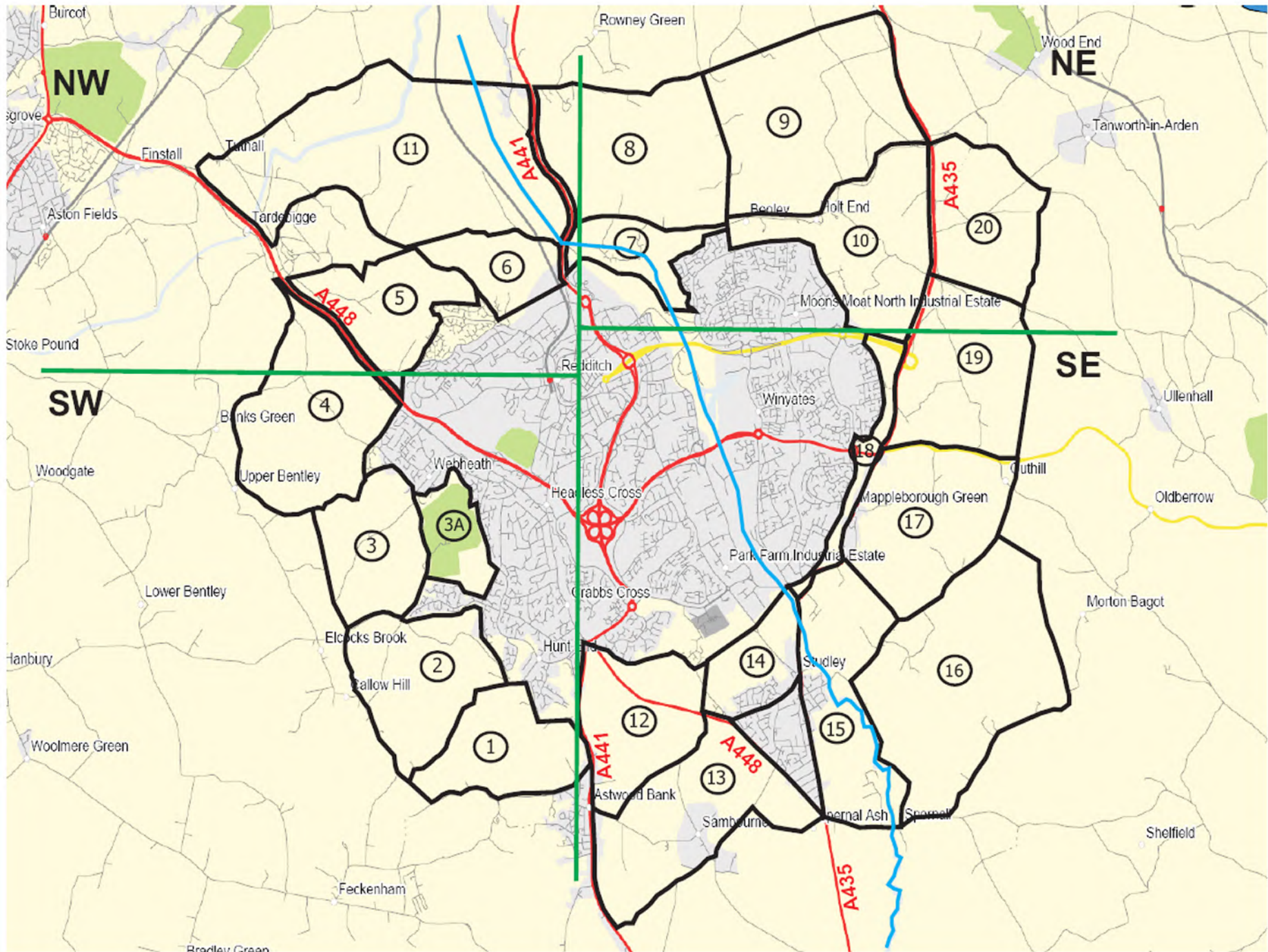




Appendix 7  
White Young Green Study – SWOT Areas









Appendix 8  
1973 Joint Study – Figure 11









Appendix 9  
South West Study 1991 – Figure 2





- 1** - High Landscape Quality  
- Sites of Special Wild life Site Status
- 2** - High Landscape Quality  
- Within Zone of Moderate Ecological Value  
- Swans Brook Corridor
- 3** - High Quality / Prominent / Sensitive Landscape  
- Potential Ecological Value  
- Topography
- 4** - High Quality Landscape  
- Within Zone of Moderate Ecological Value  
- Swans Brook Corridor
- 5** - Blaze Lane Ridge - Landscape Feature
- 6** - Wixon Brook Corridor  
- High Quality / Prominent / Sensitive Landscape  
- Within Zone of Moderate Ecological Value
- 7** - Green Belt - Potential Coalescence  
- Within Zone of Moderate Ecological Value  
- Landscape Sensitive to Development  
- Topography - Steep Slopes

The constraints identified within zones 1 - 7 are major constraints within these areas - however, individual constraints do not necessarily extend over the whole of each zone with which it is allocated.

**BOROUGH OF REDDITCH**  
Planning Department

**Major locational constraints to development within Study Area - excepting consideration of highways**

Drawing No.	Drawn	Checked	Original Date
			Revision Date

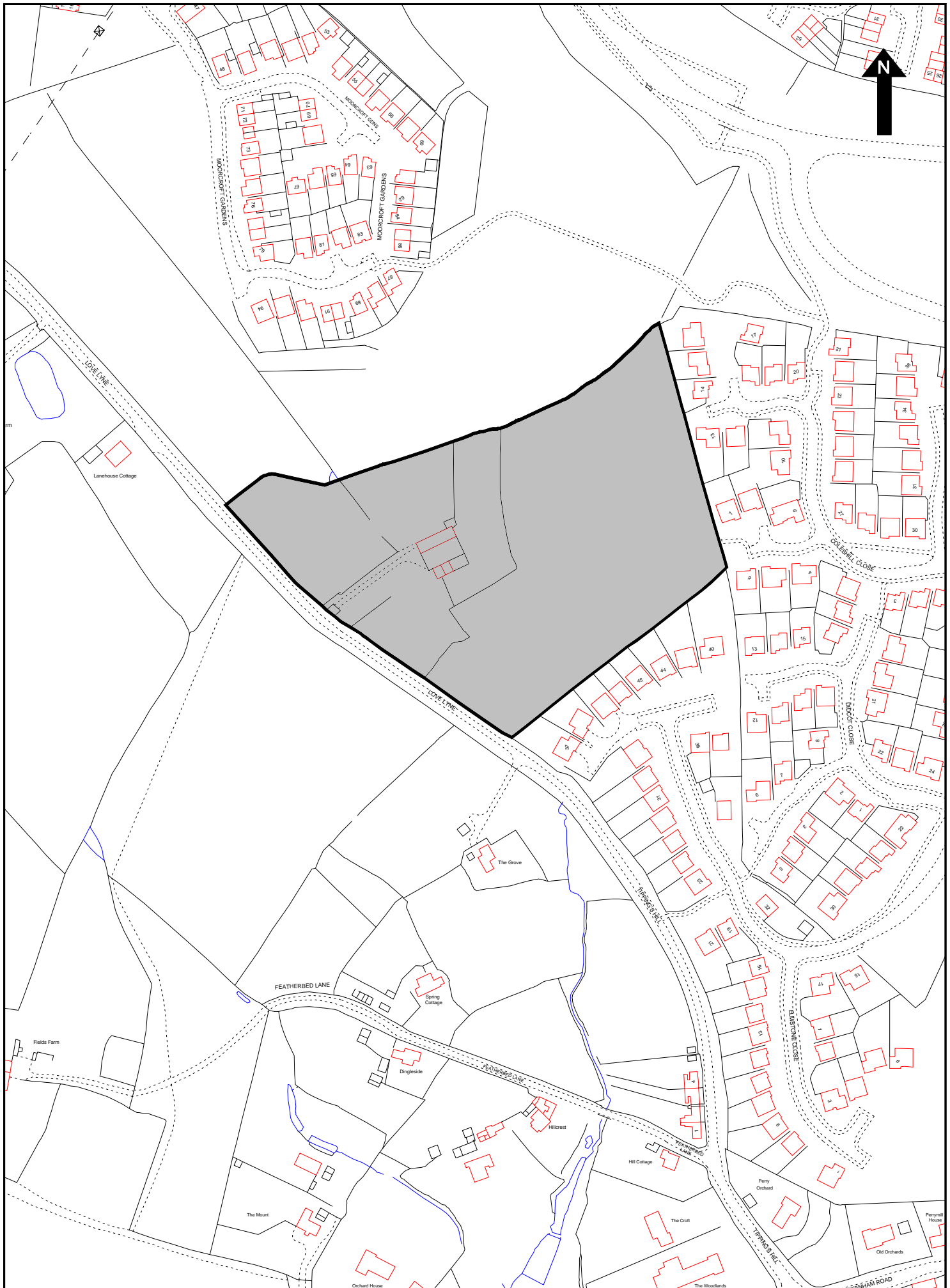




Appendix 10  
The Draft Borough of Redditch LP3 - Omission Sites Consultation  
Omission Site Ref: 7



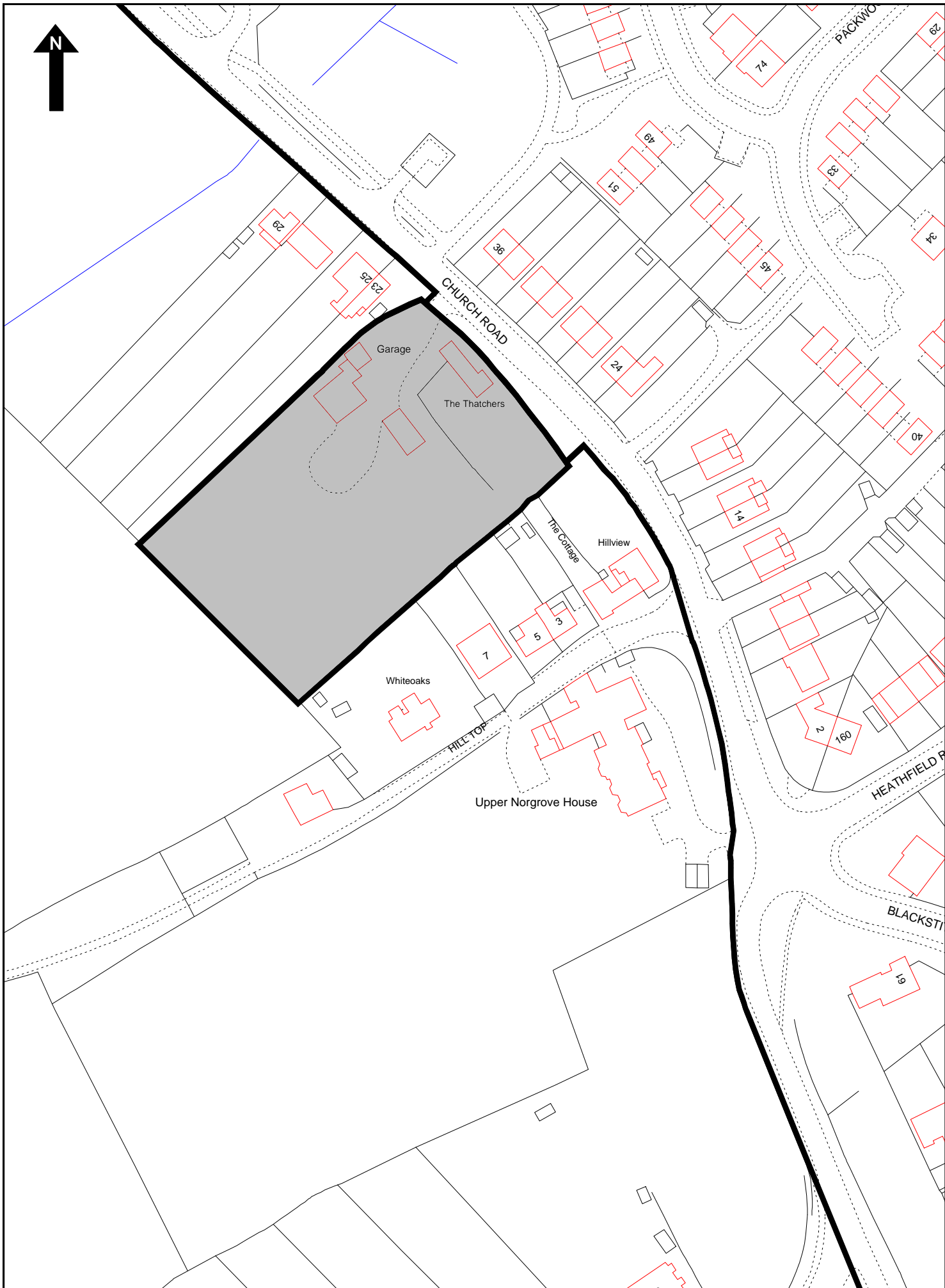






Appendix 11  
The Draft Borough of Redditch LP3 - Omission Sites Consultation  
Omission Site Ref: 15



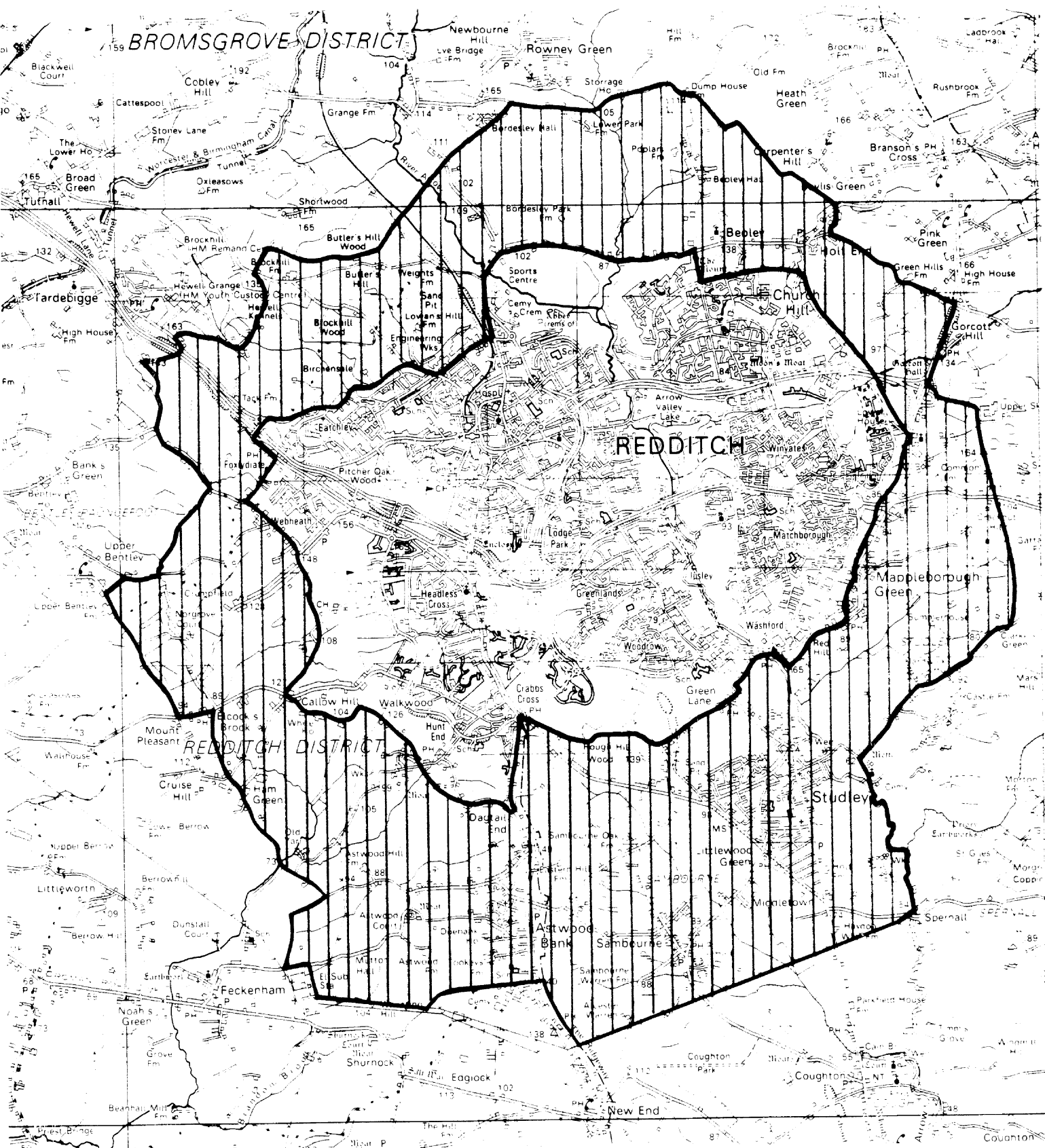





Appendix 12  
1988 Joint Study – Map 1







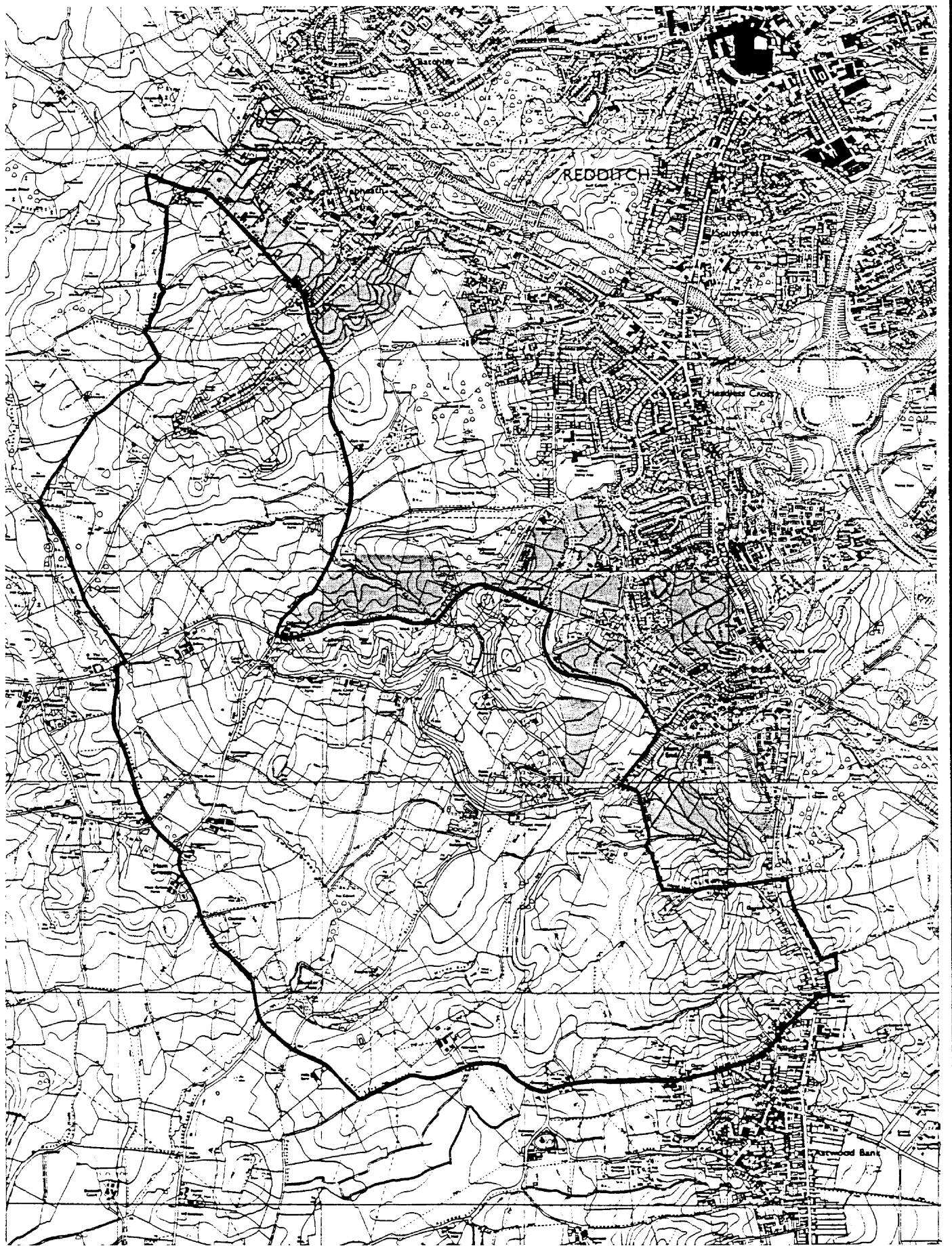
**THE STUDY AREA**

 **THE STUDY AREA**



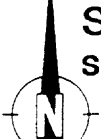
Appendix 13  
South West Study 1991 – Study Area





**SOUTH WEST PERIPHERY - STUDY AREA**

Scale 1:25 000





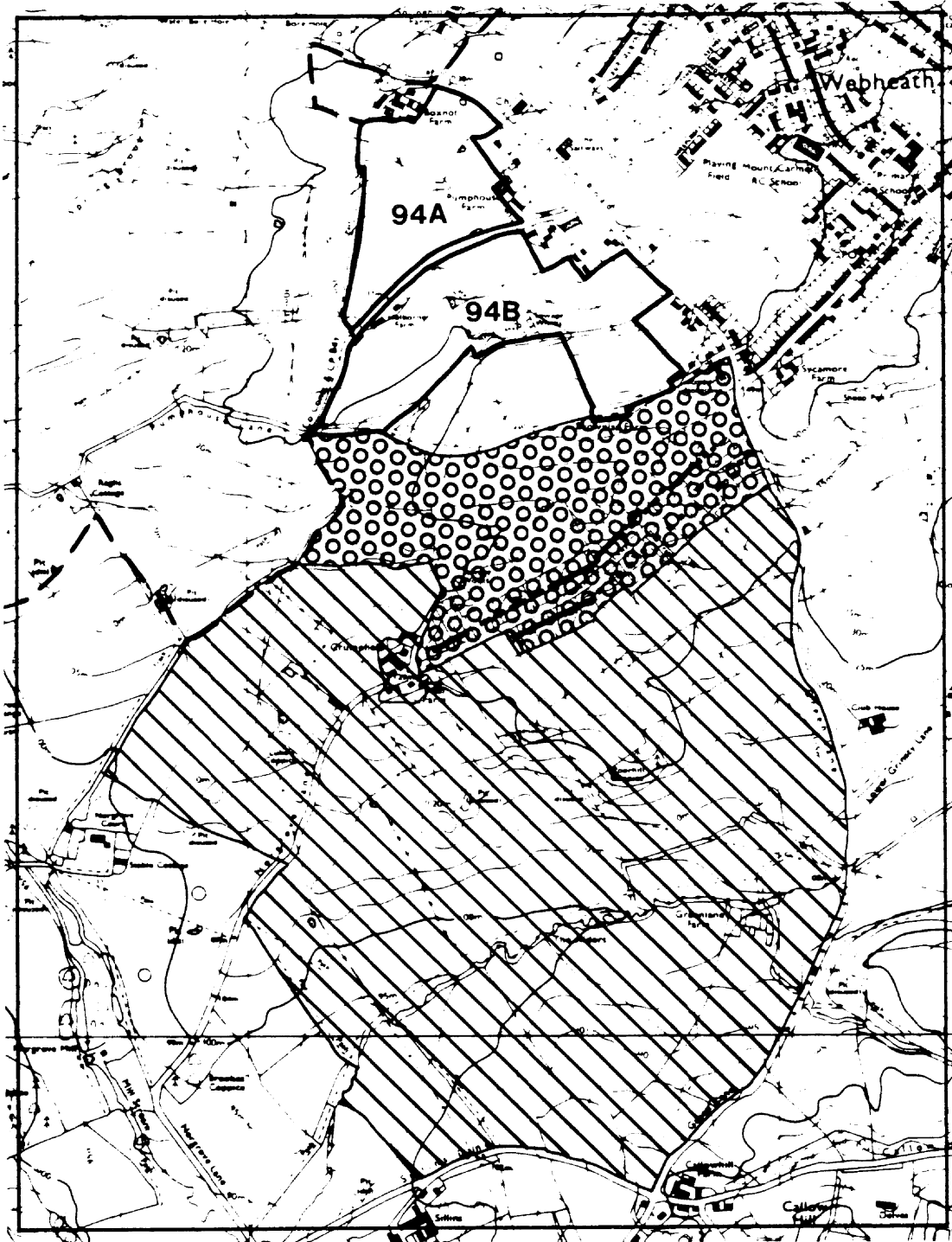
Appendix 14  
Proposed Modifications to the Borough of Redditch LP No.2  
Map GB.1 (ii)


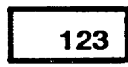






**PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO  
BOROUGH OF REDDITCH  
LOCAL PLAN No.2 PROPOSALS MAP  
SHEET 1**

**Map GB.1 (ii)**  
Scale 1:12 500



-  **Boundary of Borough of Redditch / Boundary of Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2**
-  **Sites allocated for residential development to meet the Structure Plan Requirement of 5750 dwellings for the period 1986-2001 (Policy H.1)**
-  **Green Belt (Policy GB.1)**
-  **Area of Development Restraint (Policy GB.6)**



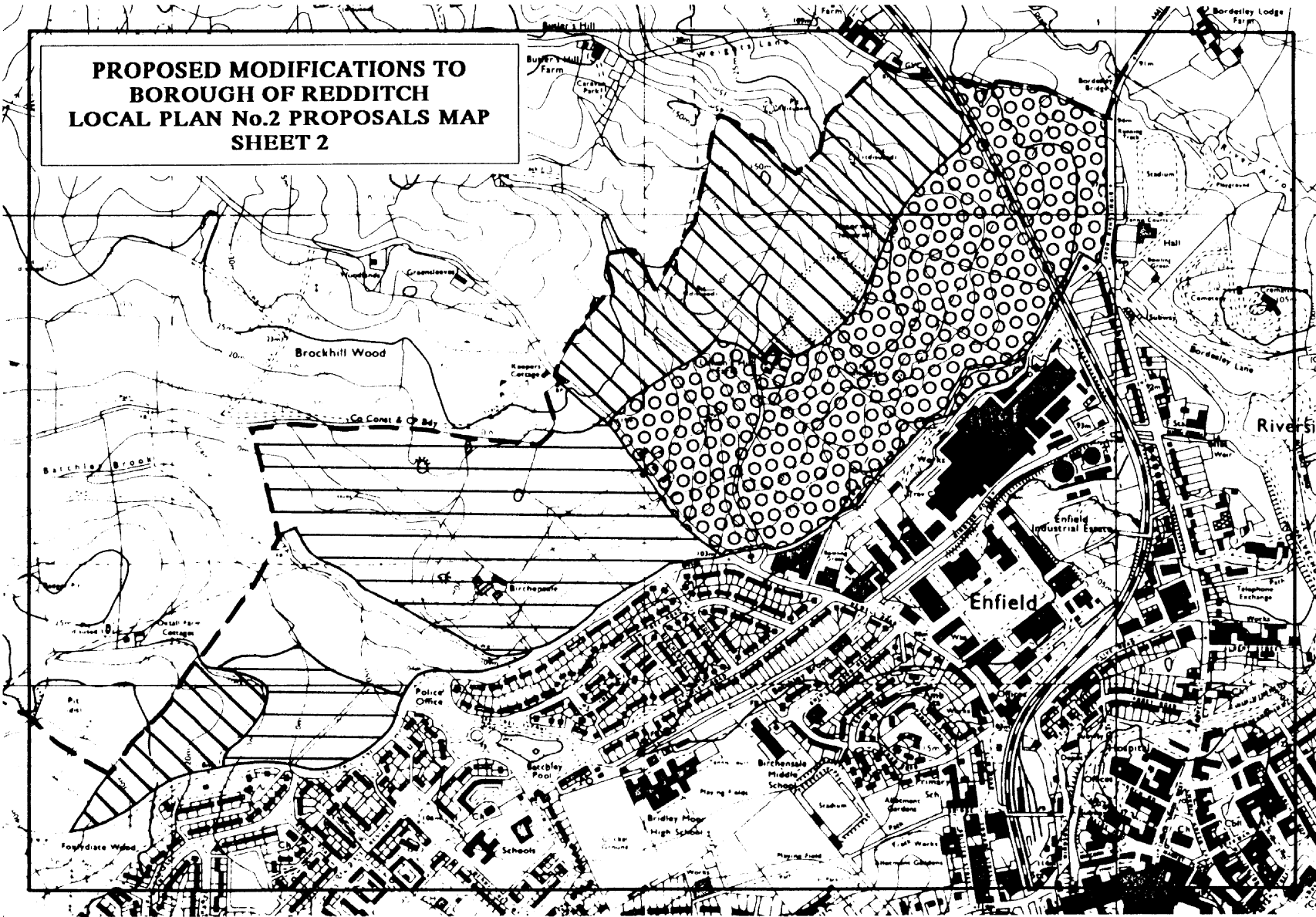
This map only shows the Proposed Modifications to the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2 Proposals Map


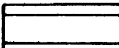



Appendix 15  
Proposed Modifications to the Borough of Redditch LP No.2  
Map GB.1 (i)



**PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS TO  
BOROUGH OF REDDITCH  
LOCAL PLAN No.2 PROPOSALS MAP  
SHEET 2**



-  **Boundary of Borough of Redditch / Boundary of Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.2**
-  **Primarily Residential Uses (Policy H.17)**
-  **Green Belt (Policy GB.1)**

-  **Area of Development Restraint (Policy GB.6)**
-  **Primarily Open Space Uses (Policy RLT.15)**



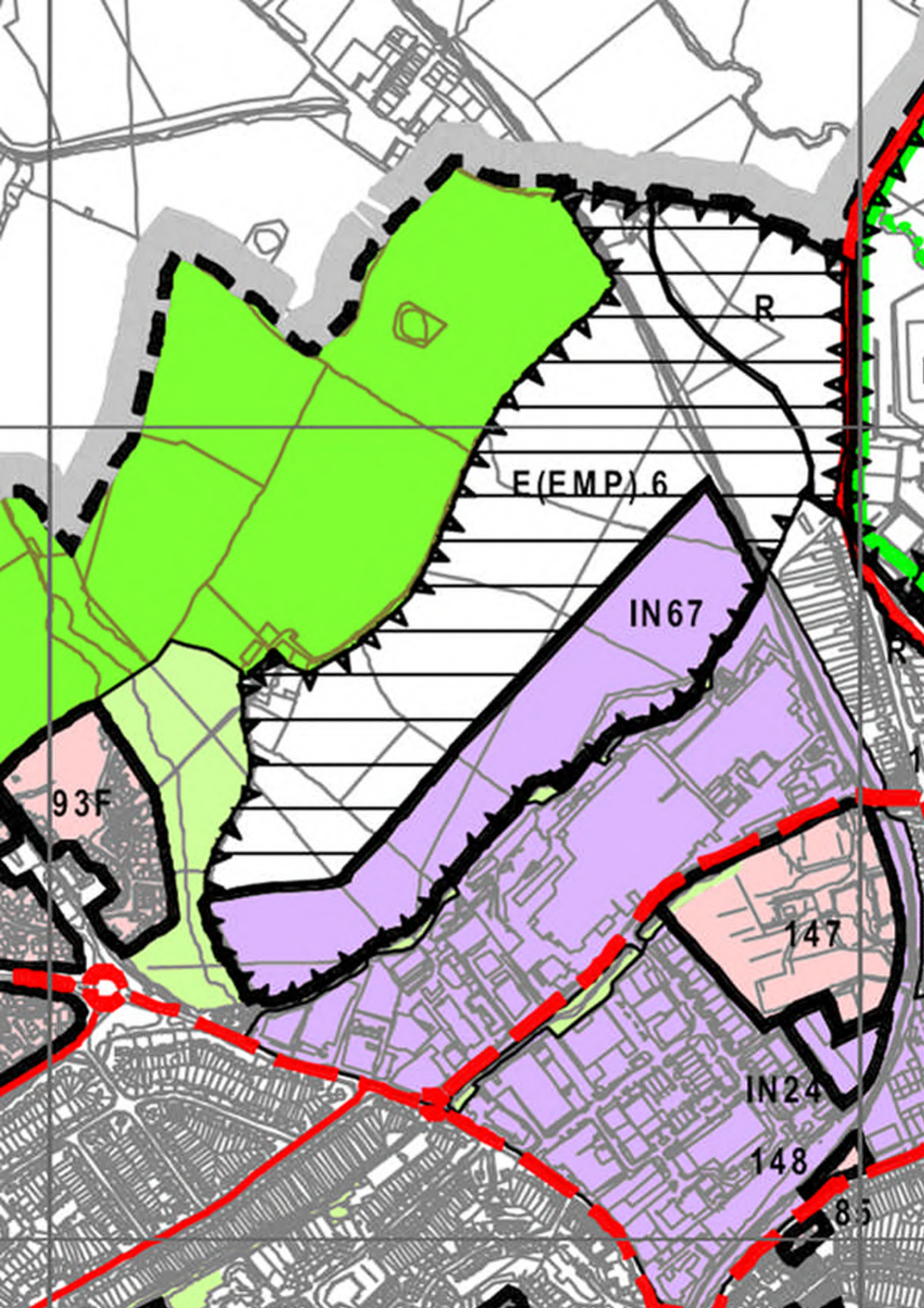
CFT 113



Appendix 16  
Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 Proposals Map  
Site IN67







E(EMP).6

R

IN67

93F

147

IN24

148

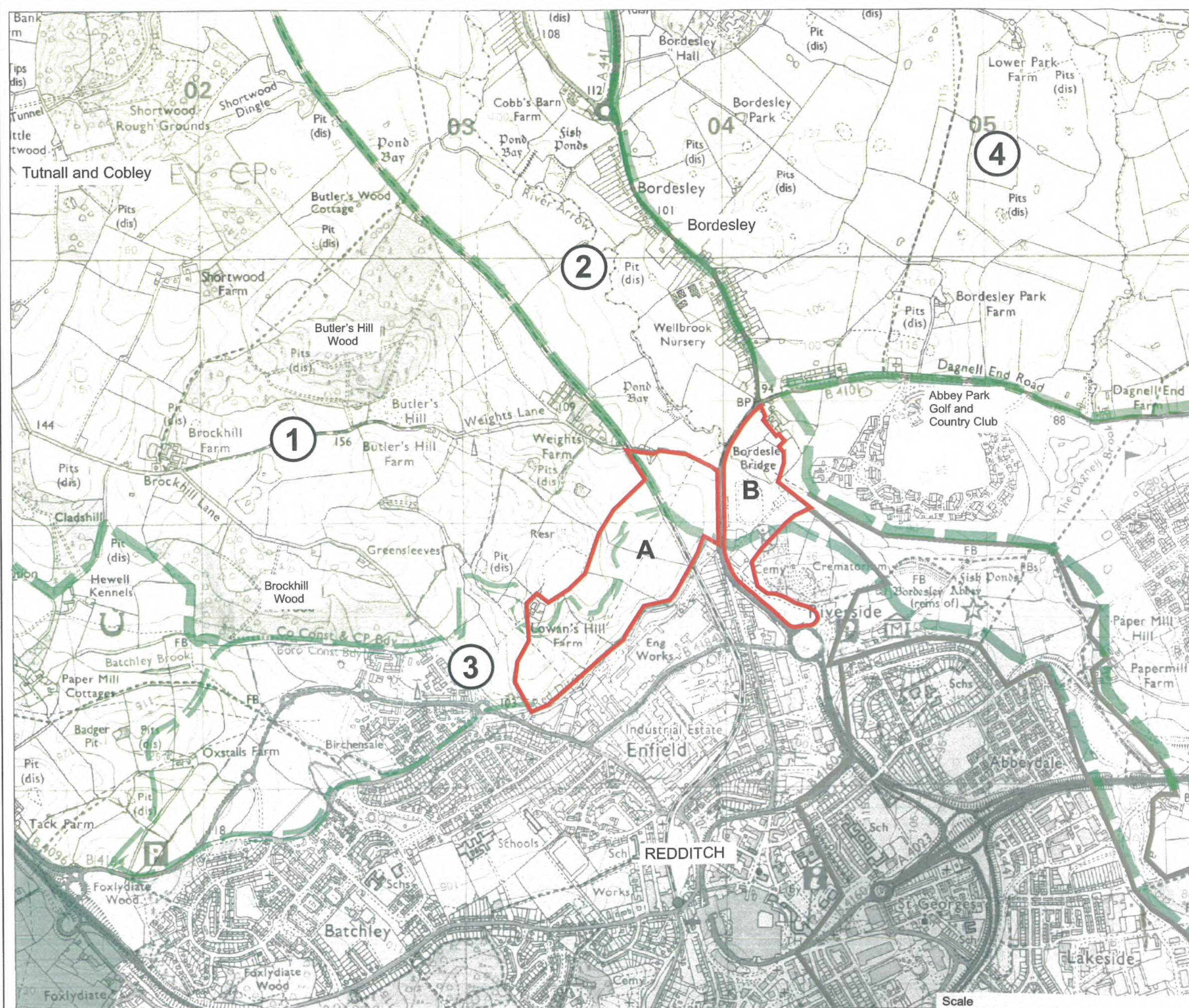
85



Appendix 17  
North West Redditch Master Plan – L05







Do not scale this drawing. All dimensions to be checked on site. This drawing to be read in conjunction with

**LEGEND**

Site boundary

**Worcestershire County Landscape Character Areas**

**ARDEN**  
 Wooded Estate land area 10 (Note1)  
 Urban areas 11,12,13,14 (Note1)

**MID WORCESTERSHIRE FORESTS**  
 Timbered Farmland area 100.2 (Note1)

**Local Character**  
 Landscape Types (Note 2)

**NOTE:**  
 1.) Character areas taken from Worcester County Council Draft Landscape Character Assessment, May 1999  
 2.) Preliminary assessment carried out as local assessment by Cooper Partnership Summer/Autumn 2002

**L05**

A Site B added & amendment to landscape character types  
 SG MW JC 05/03

**COOPER PARTNERSHIP**

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS & ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING CONSULTANTS  
 BRISTOL TEL: 01274 288 288 FAX: 01274 288 288  
 CHESHIRE TEL: 01223 333 130 FAX: 01223 333 275  
 COOPER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

**REDDITCH BOROUGH NORTH FRINGE**

**LANDSCAPE CHARACTER**

Scale	Drawn	Date	Checked	Approved
As shown	KB	12/02	MW	JC

Drawing: 1246/107A

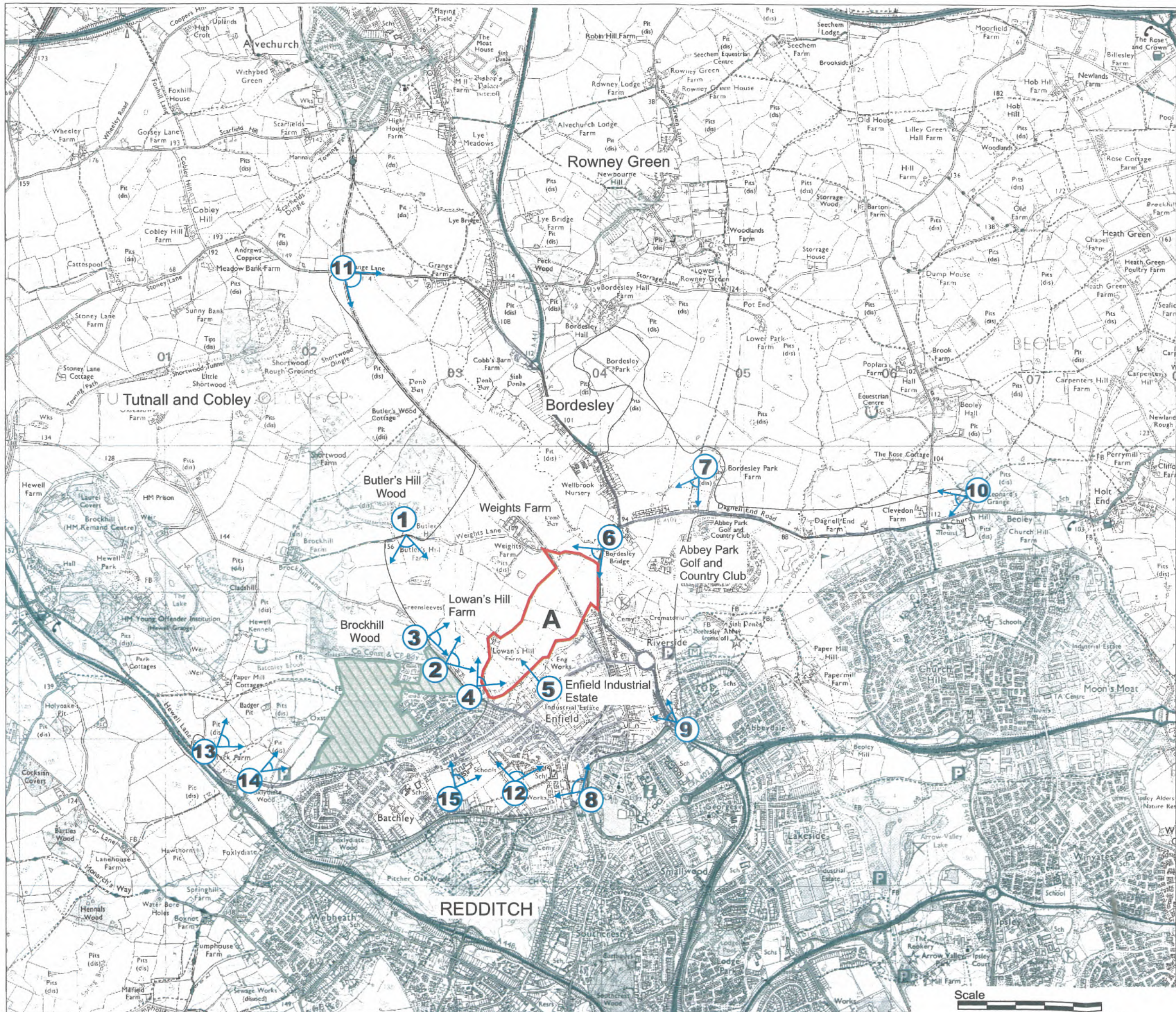




Appendix 18  
North West Redditch Master Plan – L06







Do not scale this drawing. All dimensions to be checked on site. This drawing to be read in conjunction with

**LEGEND**

-  Site boundary
-  Visual Envelope
-  Recent Housing Development
-  Photo Locations



**L06**

A	Amendments to envelope	KB	MW	11/02
---	------------------------	----	----	-------

**COOPER PARTNERSHIP**

LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS & ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNERS CONSULTANTS  
 BRITTEL TEL: 0121 755 7400 FAX: 0121 755 7410  
 CANNIFF TEL: 01223 353 130 FAX: 01223 353 373  
 COOPER PARTNERSHIP LIMITED

**REDDITCH BOROUGH NORTH FRINGE**

**THE VISUAL ENVELOPE SITE A**

As shown	SR	09/02	MW	JC
----------	----	-------	----	----

1246/104A

