

Churchfields Masterplan

August 2011



ReWyre
initiative

 **Wyre Forest**
District Council

Supplementary Planning Document

As part of the **ReWyre** Initiative, Wyre Forest District Council, in Partnership with the Homes & Communities Agency and Worcestershire County Council, teamed up with MADE to bring together expert designers to prepare this draft Masterplan. This team includes:



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n o d e
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This draft masterplan is also supported by:



Homes &
Communities
Agency



worcestershire
countycouncil





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PREFACE

Kidderminster Regeneration Prospectus & ReWyre Initiative

The ReWyre Initiative was launched in September 2009 with the publication of a Regeneration Prospectus for Kidderminster. Key agencies including Wyre Forest District Council (WFDC), Worcestershire County Council (WCC), Homes & Communities Agency (HCA) and British Waterways came together to make a commitment to regenerate Kidderminster through the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Prospectus had been developed following extensive public consultation and debate which has been well documented. It highlights the importance of four key 'action areas' which include the Town Centre (A); Comberton Hill (B); Churchfields (C); and the former British Sugar Site (D).

The Prospectus also highlighted four key themes that emerged strongly in public consultation, these are: Jobs; Transport; Homes and Communities; and Design and Environmental Quality. These themes will prove crucial to this Masterplan.

'C' is for Churchfields: Through the development of the Prospectus a new vision of Churchfields as an "urban village" of mixed housing, business and community uses emerged.

In terms of **homes and communities**, the focus is clearly on the creation of new homes and the creation of a quality urban environment. Following the launch of the ReWyre Initiative, the HCA recognised Churchfields as one of a limited number of priority housing locations in the West Midlands. The aim is to recreate a residential community around a host of existing and new community assets.

In **design** terms, the aim is to make the most of the area's key built and environmental assets which include Listed Buildings and the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area. It is also about driving forward design quality in line with the District Council's Design Quality SPG with the creation of connected layouts and appropriate block structures.

In terms of access to **jobs** there is emerging provision for small

scale office and business use, community facilities and a local retail centre. Otherwise the focus is on improving links to the town centre and Crossley Park as major nearby employment centres.

For **transport** the focus is on better connecting Churchfields into the wider town including new access points to the ring road, tackling the congestion and air quality problems of Blackwell Street and providing new links across the canal and ring road to Crossley Park and the town centre respectively. It is intended that these new links will deliver improved public transport, walking, and cycling accessibility.

Despite being within 500 metres of the town centre, and adjacent to one of the main arterial routes into Kidderminster, the Churchfields and Horsefair area has the sense of being cut off from the wider town. This is compounded by the fact that there is currently only one route in and out of the area for traffic.

Individual communities such as Grasmere Close are uninviting to visitors and accessibility through the wider area is limited. It can be threatening and opportunities for natural surveillance and security are reduced through poor definition of public and private space.

The 'urban village' concept aims to create a vibrant, connected and welcoming neighbourhood with a network of complementary commercial and residential communities.



C Churchfields



Birds eye view: The urban village concept illustrated in the Prospectus, Sept. 2009



Role of Planning & Economic Development

Wyre Forest District Council has a key role in providing the planning policy framework and determining planning applications for development in the area.

Characterised by complex brownfield sites and land ownerships, Churchfields faces multiple challenges including accessibility, air quality, and social and economic deprivation.

A range of businesses currently occupy the site. Many are on short term tenancies and the North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration Team will need to assist with any relocation.

It is important to ensure a comprehensive approach that safeguards against the piecemeal development of sites. To do otherwise would be to risk minimising the overall package of benefits that holistic development would provide.

Statutory Development Plan

Wyre Forest District Council has a legal duty to prepare a development plan for the district. The Local Development Framework Core Strategy, adopted in December 2010, sets out the number of homes and the amount of land for industry and commerce to be built across the District.

The next stage in the production of the Local Development Framework (LDF) is the creation of a more detailed development blueprint to include policies for particular sites. The Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan will provide the detail for Churchfields and will allocate sites for different uses such as housing, business, community uses and commercial uses such as retail and leisure.

Purpose of the Masterplan

Masterplanning is a means of exploring how an area could develop in more detail i.e. understanding what currently exists and outlining what could be done. It provides a more detailed and focussed engagement and exploration exercise.

The Masterplan can perform two main roles. Firstly, it can provide an evidence base to inform the development of the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan. Secondly, it can set out a detailed design framework to guide new development. In relation to the latter, a Masterplan can guide, challenge and inform the determination of planning applications.

Delivering the Masterplan

In 2009/10, the District Council and the HCA agreed to jointly fund the development of a masterplan in order to address the above issues and provide a positive, proactive framework.

In 2010, Midlands Architecture & Designed Environment (MADE) were commissioned to undertake the masterplan on behalf of the ReWyre Initiative. The 'client team' includes WFDC, HCA and WCC Highways.

Bellway Homes and Asda have announced their visions through separate pre-application consultation. These are separate and not endorsed by the masterplan under development by MADE.

Masterplan Status

The masterplan has been formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document and as such will be a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.



Structure

The structure of the masterplan is as follows:

1. Introduction: background to the area and the masterplan.
2. Appreciating the physical, social and economic context: summarises the analysis of the site, surroundings and planning policy.
3. Opportunities and constraints: identifies the area's key opportunities and constraints, based on the findings of section 2.
4. Consultation: details the process of engaging with the public and statutory consultees.
5. Strategic framework: establishes design principles and urban structure for the area.
6. Detailing the Place: Character areas will be defined in order to establish more detailed design principles on individual sites.
7. Delivery and implementation: will consider issues of phasing, and requirements for applying for planning permission.
8. Contacts: lists the important contacts associated with this project.

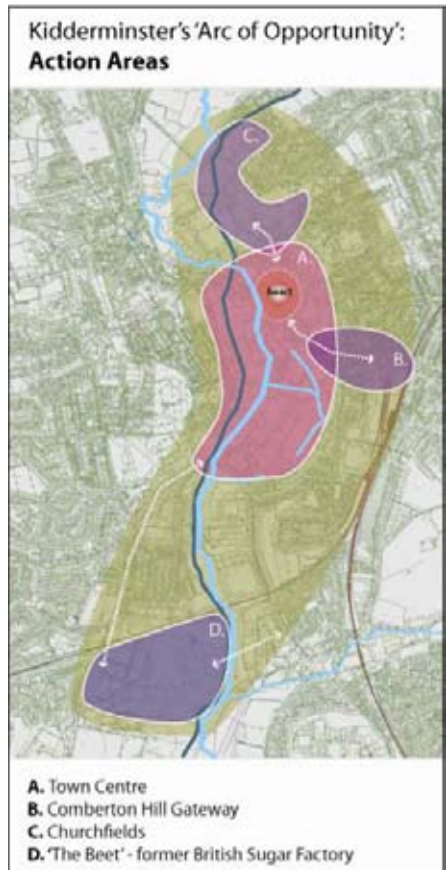
1. INTRODUCTION

Background

This masterplan has been prepared by MADE on behalf of the ReWyre Board and Wyre Forest District Council. The document has been adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) providing design policies and guidance for the regeneration of the area.

The masterplan has been developed following several periods of public consultation. Two public consultation weekends were held in November 2010 and February 2011. These explored the rationale for the masterplan, site area and overall vision. The draft masterplan was prepared having full regard to the findings of this engagement with the local community. The findings of the consultation are highlighted within the relevant sections of the plan. A consultation period on the draft masterplan was held over six weeks between May and July 2011 jointly with the consultations on the preferred options stage Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan and Site Allocations & Policies Development Plan Documents.

The masterplan area (see figure 1) is located to the north of Kidderminster Town Centre. It has been highlighted as an important housing-led mixed use regeneration site. Following consultation the site boundary was extended to include St George's Park and adjacent land at Crossley Park with the area now covering more than 30 ha.



The Churchfields area is accessed from a single point at the junction of Broad Street, Stourbridge Road, Blackwell Street and Radford Avenue. This is a congestion hotspot and suffers from poor air quality and is a designated Air Quality Management Area (AQMA). Public transport in the area is poor and limited to the A451. The disconnected road network means that it is difficult for public transport to penetrate the area. Walking and cycling links to the town centre are indirect and unwelcoming.

Outputs



A masterplanning process should lead to:

The creation of a three dimensional plan which presents proposals or aspirations for the development of:

- buildings
- street blocks
- public spaces
- streets
- landscape
- approaches to parking and servicing

The masterplan does not go as far as designing buildings.

The spatial masterplan is expressed in diagrams, land use plans, models and explanatory images as well as in words.

It needs to be supported by the data gathered during preparation and demonstrate how it relates to the implementation strategy.



Fig 1: The site area plan: The Churchfields Masterplan area edged red with key development areas highlighted



AIMS - The Masterplan must be:

Visionary - Raise aspirations and provide a vehicle for consensus building and implementation.

Deliverable - take account of implementation and delivery routes and integrate with the land use planning system, yet challenge it.

Flexible - provide the basis for negotiation and dispute resolution and be adaptive to changing circumstances.

Participatory - provide stakeholders the opportunity to fully engage.

It should aim to rethink existing neighbourhoods and create new ones.

OBJECTIVES

The masterplan sets out planning and design principles and aims to enable a coherent and informed approach to the future masterplanning of the area in order to ensure high quality design.

The masterplan will:

- Ensure development is based on a sound understanding of local character and circumstances, especially given the historic context set by the canal conservation area and nearby Listed Buildings and historic churches.
- Establish the relevant planning and design policies that will influence and shape the form of development.
- Establish key principles to guide sustainable development.

- Give certainty to interested developers and investors about the expectations of the local planning authority and wider community.

- Make provision for the delivery and phasing of development.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES include:

1) Show how streets, squares and open spaces are to be connected.

2) Define the height, bulk and massing of buildings.

3) Suggest relationships between buildings and public spaces.

4) Determine the activities and land uses to take place in the area.*

5) Identify movement patterns for people on foot, or by bicycle, car or public transport, as well as looking at the needs of service and refuse vehicles.

6) Relate to the physical form of the site to social, economic and cultural contexts and take account of needs of people living and working in the area.

7) Show ways in which new neighbourhoods can be incorporated into existing communities, as well as built and natural environments.

* The Masterplan suggests activities. However, these aspects of the plan will need to be ratified through the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan as the formal Development Plan Document. In the meantime, in all other respects, the Masterplan provides appropriate design guidance that is capable of being adopted as formal planning policy in the form of a Supplementary Planning Document.





VISION FOR CHURCHFIELDS:

“Churchfields in Kidderminster should be redeveloped in a way that embraces its existing character and that of the surrounding context and delivers a sustainable urban village of quality, which creates a unique sense of place.”



2) APPRECIATING THE CONTEXT

Area description

The area is an eclectic mix of housing, industry, warehousing, offices, retail, open spaces, car sales and community uses but the individual elements are disconnected and serve to create poor relationships creating an uninviting environment.

It has been subject to several periods of insensitive comprehensive redevelopment. To the west this involved replacing historic communities to make way for large factories and in the east the creation of 1960s high rise homes at Grasmere Close.

The final act was the creation of the town centre ring road in the 1960s/ 70s which tore through the area. This severed the neighbourhood from the town centre. St Mary's Street was closed to concentrate traffic on Blackwell Street, and the important link from St Mary's Church to the town centre via Church Street was severed. Blackwell Street itself, one of the main arterial routes of the town, was cut in two by the ring road.

Whilst there are a number of very strong heritage assets



including the canal conservation area and Listed Buildings, such as the Grade 1* Listed St Mary's Church, you have to search them out as the area currently turns its back on its key assets. Despite being highly visible from the ring road, St Mary's Church lacks a sense of place that belies its medieval origins.

The area benefits from changes in levels which offer distant views and increases the prominence of landmarks in their setting, whilst offering the opportunity to impact positively on the landscape through sensitively designed development atop the ridges of the Stour valley.

The River Stour and Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal offer a strong linear landscape influence, with the Stour having a wider impact through the defining topography of the valley sides. From the wetlands of the Puxton Marsh SSSI in the west the land rises towards the east of the area through a series of marked ridges.

Despite a rich and varied landscape, the character of the area is strongly influenced by social, economic and environmental deprivation. The majority of the area falls within one of the most deprived wards of Worcestershire and Broad Street is recognised as one of the 'Areas of Highest Need'.

The following sections explore individual elements of the area's context in more detail, these are:

- Historic
- Land Use
- Land Ownership
- Movement and Access
- Topography
- Landscape, Ecology, and Open Space
- Gateways, Edges, Nodes, and Landmarks



Historic context



Churchfields in context: 1880s

The medieval St Mary's Church sits in a prominent position and was the centre of a community around Dudley Street, Churchfields and Duke Street (now the public meeting rooms to Duke House). St Mary's school used to be located adjacent to the church before moving to Stoney Lane around the 1970s.

The grain of development was fine with terraced streets reflecting the topography running north south radiating from Dudley Street. This street (now cut off by CMS Vauxhall dealership and Kwik Fit) was a key street connecting to Church Street and the town centre. The only trace of the street now is a short spur off Blackwell Street in the Horsefair.

The junction of Dudley Street and Blackwell Street continues to have a strong sense of enclosure and space. The place is framed by landmarks such as the Old Peacock PH and three storey Georgian properties which befit the site's heritage as an important junction. A number of the critical landmark buildings that framed this sense of place remain throughout the area. This is illustrated a little further north from Dudley Street at the Horsefair which historic mapping indicates was one of the most

significant public spaces in the town. Presumably this reflects its historic significance as a place where horses were once traded.

Elsewhere, the larger buildings associated with industry tended to straddle the River Stour and the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal. This made sense as part of a legible landscape where industry needed the resources of the River Stour and the canal for transport.



Churchfields in context: 2010

The above plan illustrates how the area's fine grain and legibility has been lost. The Tomkinson Carpet factory off Churchfields was the only major carpet factory located outside the River Stour valley bottom.

The following images and plans illustrate the heritage assets within the area with a photo montage identifying examples of how important heritage buildings can be refurbished and used in a productive manner, whilst still protecting their historic fabric.

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Fig 2: Statutory Heritage Designations



Green Street, Kidderminster - precedent for conversion



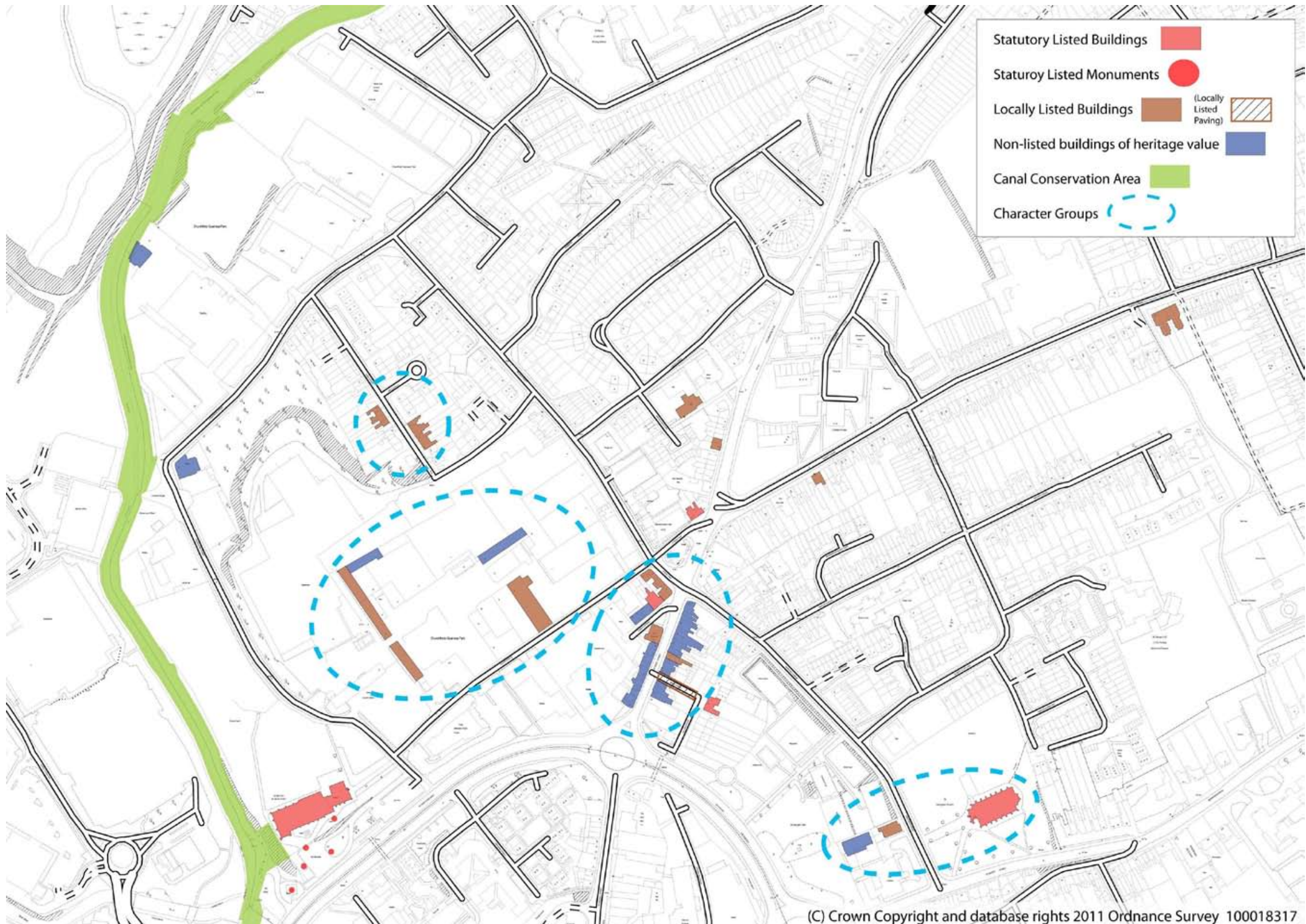


Fig 3: Heritage assets and character groups

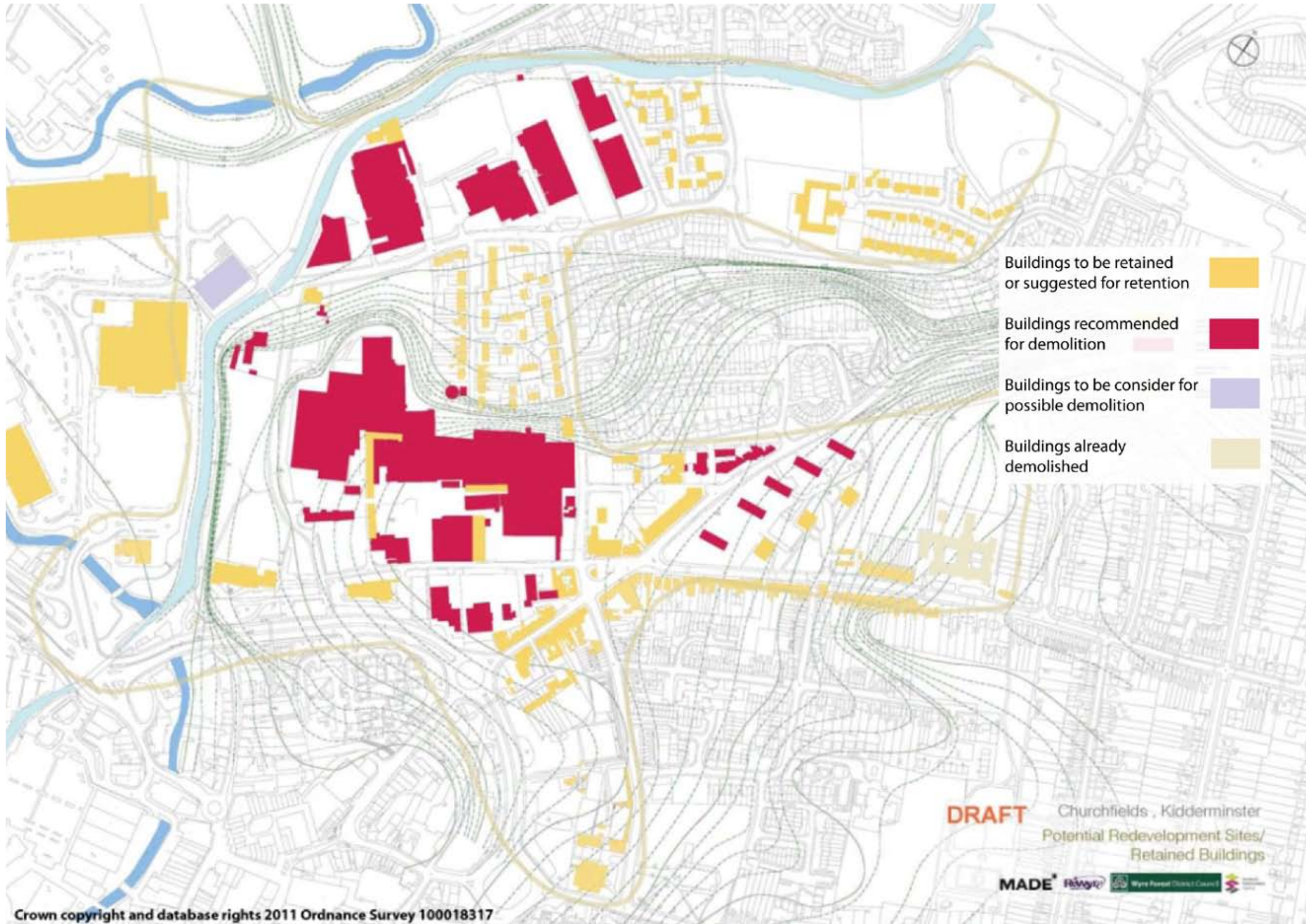


Fig 4: Buildings to be retained/redeveloped/reviewed



Land Use

The Churchfields area is focussed on a designated local centre of specialist and convenience retailing along Blackwell Street and at Horsefair. To the west is an extensive area of historic industry in the form of two former carpet factories now sub-divided and in temporary uses. Other small scale workshops and business premises exist in this area.

There are extensive car sales which front onto the ring road and back onto Churchfields. This creates a very industrial edge to Churchfields and the access to the two prominent churches of St Mary's and Trinity. The east of the area is characterised by suburban residential and 1960s high rise developments.

There is also a significant formal park at St George's and a number of defining open spaces on the edge of the neighbourhoods. To the west this is defined by the linear corridor of the canal and river and to the east by St George's churchyard and park and Baxter Gardens.

To the north and east the adjoining character is residential with some business premises interspersed. To the north west is Puxton Marsh SSSI and to the west is Crossley Park including an extensive retail park. To the south beyond the ring road is the town centre which is approximately a 10 minute walk.

The area's position on the north west facing slopes of the valley side offers distant views over the valley to wooded escarpments and fields beyond.

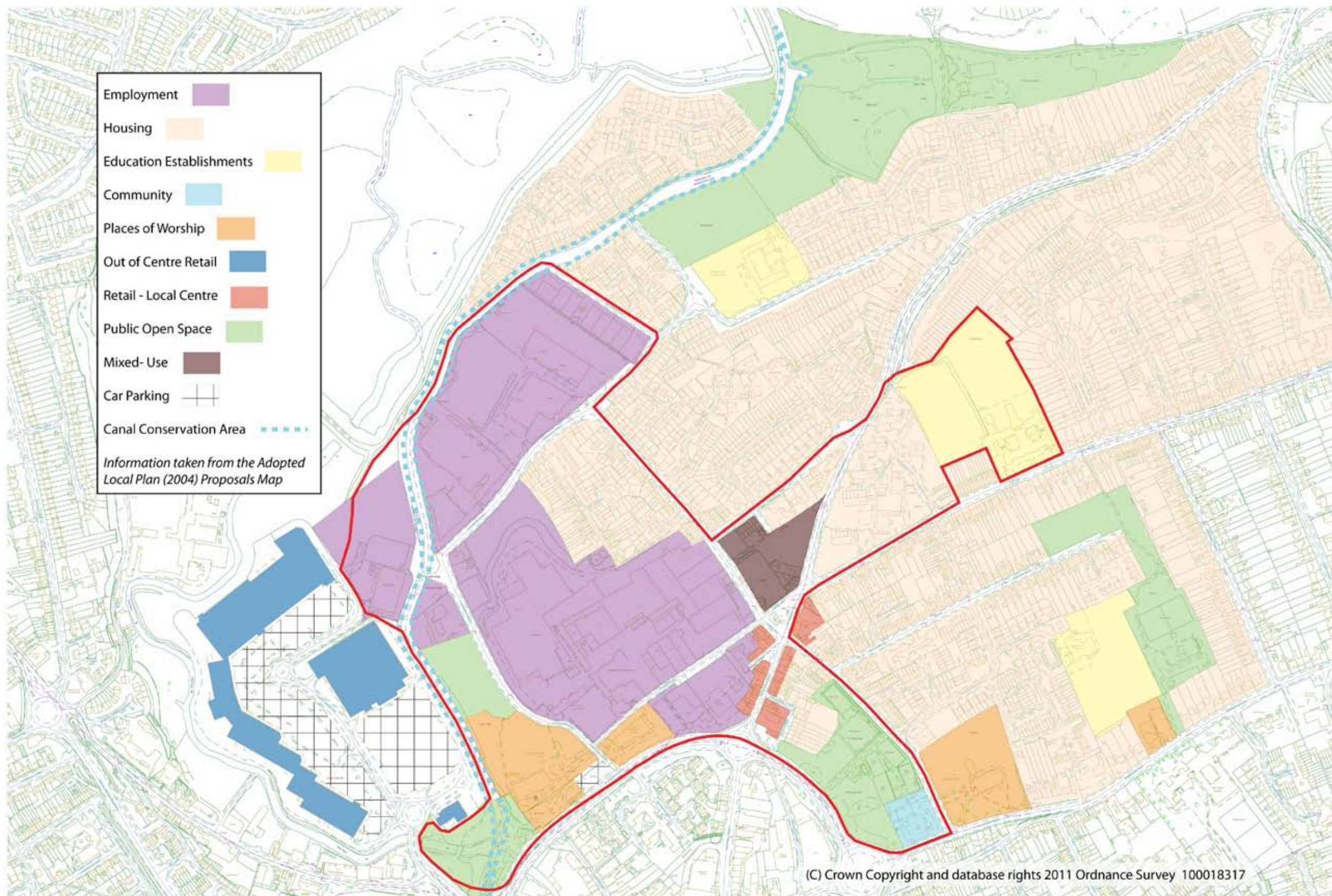
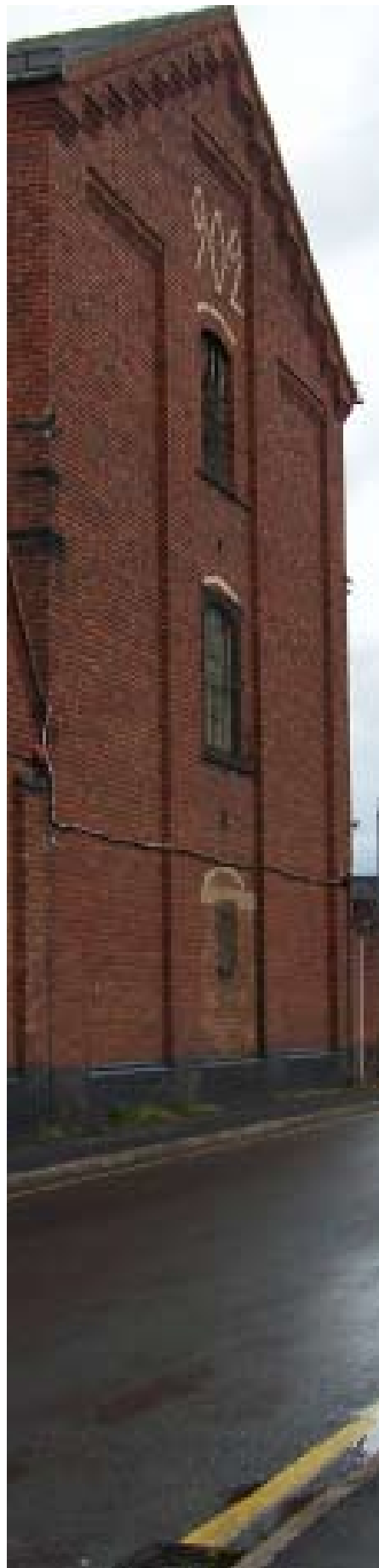


Fig 5: Existing land uses



Land Ownership

The majority of the masterplan area is owned by three principal interests:

1) Kidderminster Property Investments (KPI) have assembled the largest part of the redevelopment site and specifically the main industrial premises at Churchfields, Clensmore and Stoney Lane. They also own the land at CMS car dealership fronting the ring road that will be important for the future transport infrastructure of the area. This single land ownership is significant as it minimises the potential barriers to delivery.

2) Community Housing Group own the land at the Grasmere Close estate that is anticipated to form the first phase of the area's redevelopment.

3) Local Authority land - Worcestershire County Council own the land at the former Sladen Middle School and Wyre Forest District Council own smaller sites in Churchfields, Clensmore and Crossley Park.

Elsewhere, other smaller parcels of land are in private ownership.

Finally, the car park associated with the Royal Mail at Crossley Park will be important in facilitating the proposed new bridge link to Churchfields.

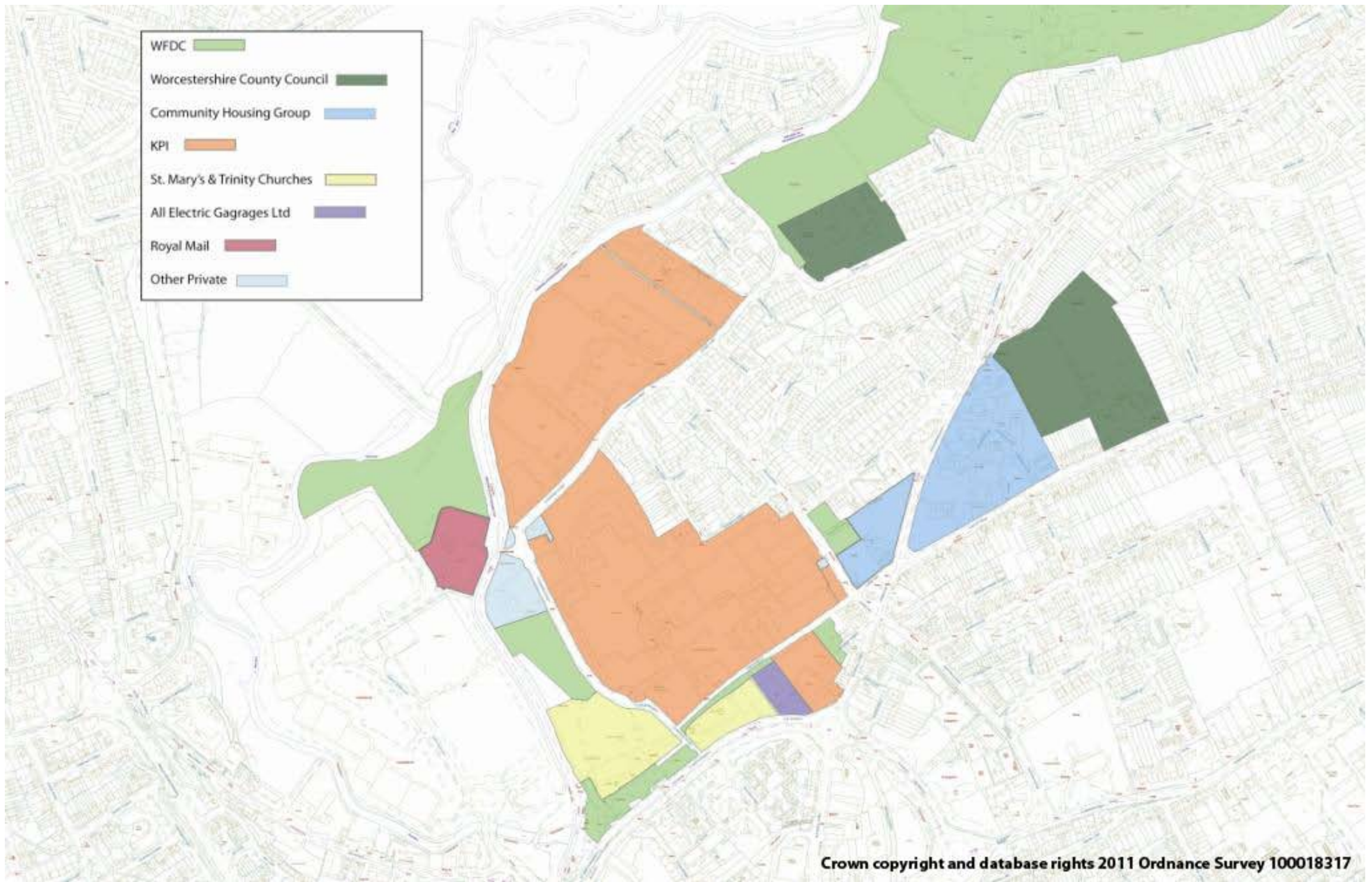


Fig 6: Land ownerships

Movement and Access

Highway Network

The Churchfields area has a number of movement and access issues. The area is accessed from the ring road by one main arterial route (Blackwell Street), which is often congested and is identified as an AQMA. Through the masterplan, opportunities exist to explore the provision of new access points to allow a choice of movement to and from the masterplan area by a variety of travel modes.

The Churchfields area is bordered to the south by the St Mary's Ringway section of the A456 Kidderminster Ring Road. This engineered dual carriageway forms the principal route through Kidderminster and around the town centre, and this section carries some 20,000 vehicles per day. There is congestion at peak periods at the roundabout junction with Blackwell Street and the traffic signals at Carpet Trades Way.

To the east of the area is the A451 Blackwell Street/Stourbridge Road which carries some 10,000 vehicles per day and forms one of the main radial routes of the town, leading to Stourbridge and the Black Country. Blackwell Street is narrow with inadequate footways and is a designated AQMA, due to the high levels of nitrogen dioxide. This is a consequence of the relatively high volumes of traffic, the narrow space between the buildings and traffic congestion at the junctions with the ring road and the Horsefair.

Blackwell Street/Stourbridge Road joins Broad Street, Churchfields and Radford Avenue at the triangular space of the Horsefair, with Radford Avenue forming a link to the next radial route to the east, the A456 Birmingham Road. The Radford Avenue/Stourbridge Road/Blackwell Street junction is controlled by traffic signals with pedestrian facilities.

Although only the eastern side of the Horsefair is busy, the two-way routes around the space and the parking in the centre mean that there is little room left over for non-highway functions, although a public art scheme is planned for the site.

Improving the access, movement and permeability of the whole masterplan area is one of the key themes of the SPD. Development will need to open up the access to the site and allow better connections to, and within, the area. Options to enable this to happen (such as linking over to Crossley Retail Park and providing a new access point from the ring road) are discussed later in the document.*

Wyre Forest District Council will continue to work closely with Worcestershire County Council and developers to identify options for improving access to the Churchfields and Horsefair area for motorised modes from adjacent areas.

** The Churchfields masterplan is a design framework to guide the future development of the area. The specific transport proposals present in this document are ambitions for the area and have been developed using specialist transport advice. However, at this stage they are indicative and have not been fully tested. Specific proposals will need to be supported by technical evidence to show their impacts on the wider traffic network.*



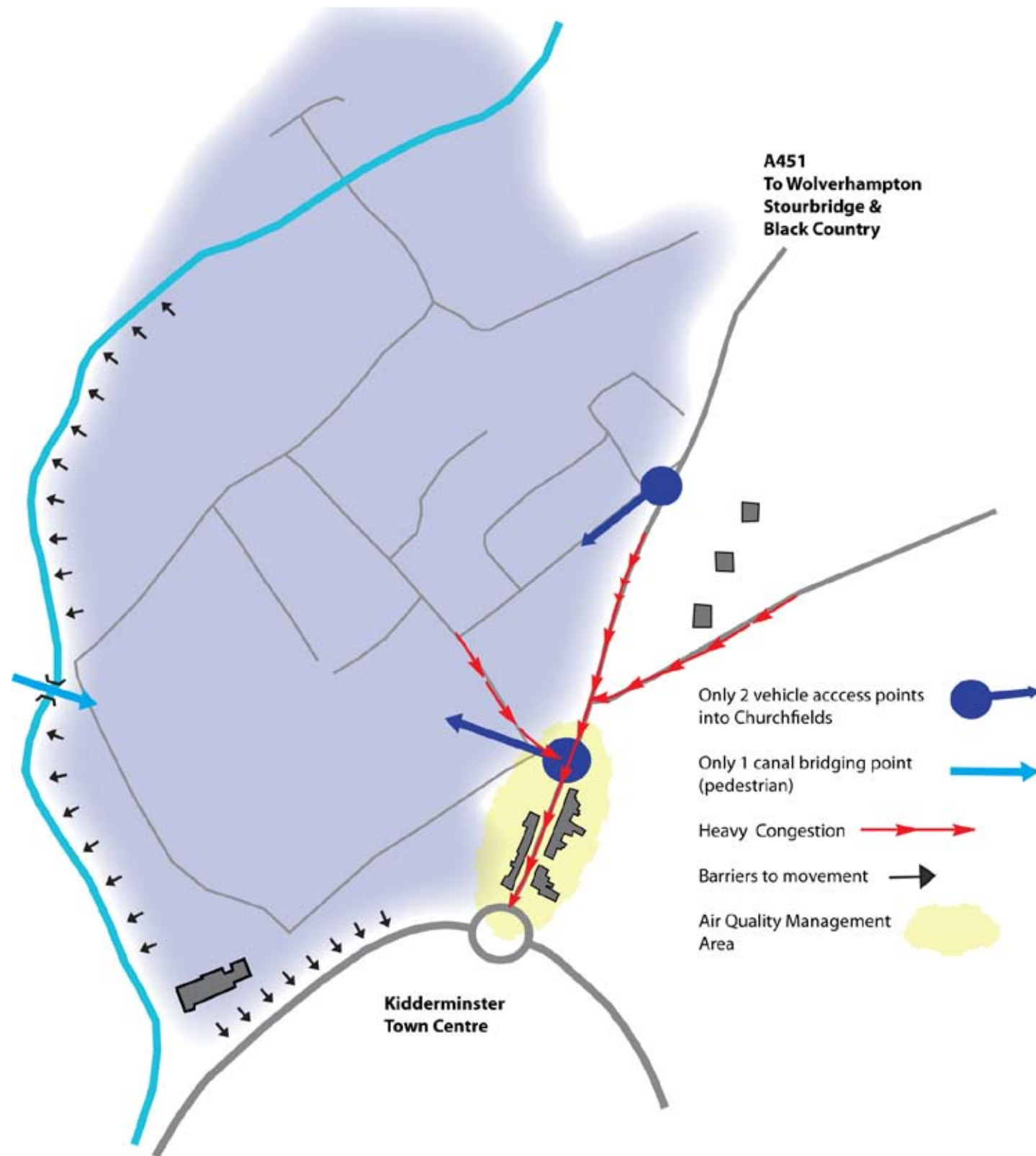


Fig 7: Limited access opportunities leads to congestion

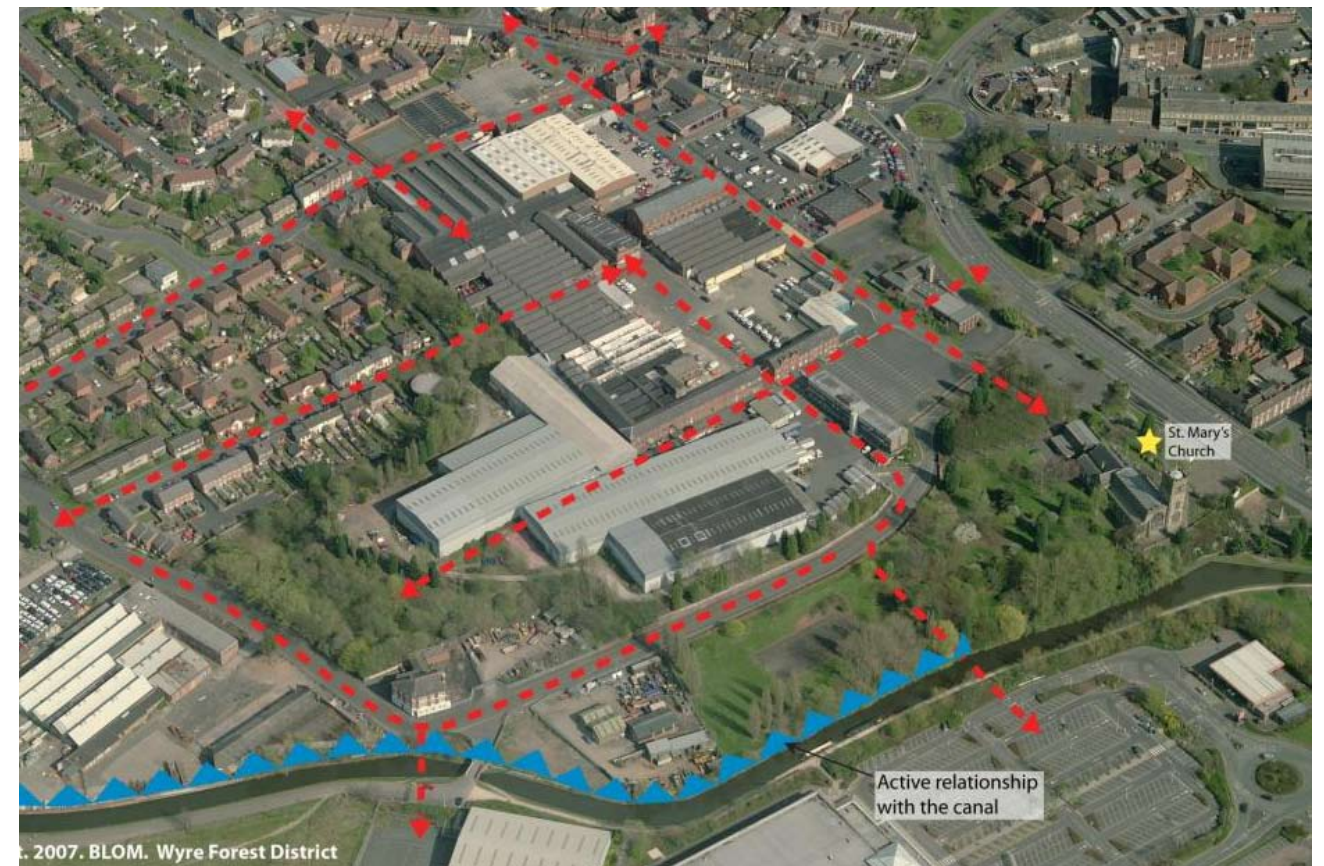


Fig 8: Improving connectivity through the area



Movement and Access

Pedestrian, Cycle, and Public Transport

Within the masterplan area itself, the low levels of traffic mean that walking and cycling conditions are reasonable, except on Blackwell Street, and there are footways along all of the routes. Although there are some personal security issues, particularly after dark, the canal towpath forms a reasonably attractive route into to the town.

Crossing or negotiating the routes that border the area is more difficult, however. The ring road forms a substantial barrier between Churchfields and the town centre, with crossing only being possible at the underpasses at the Blackwell Street roundabout and near St Mary's Church, and via the towpath of the canal that passes beneath the traffic signal junction with Carpet Trades Way. All of these routes are highly unwelcoming to pedestrians.

Routes across the canal are limited to Lime Kiln Bridge, at the lock near to the ring road and via the Waterside Grange estate to the north. None of these routes are particularly welcoming.

Stourbridge Road and Blackwell Street are less of a barrier to movement, although formal crossing opportunities are limited to a pelican crossing near the Hurcott Road flats and pedestrian facilities at the signalised junction of Blackwell Street and Radford Avenue.

Footways along Blackwell Street are narrow and the heavy traffic makes this an unpleasant place to walk through, although pedestrian volumes are high as this is a key route into the town centre for much of north Kidderminster.

There are no dedicated cycling facilities within the masterplan area, although the canal towpath is designated as part of the

National Cycle Network. There is also a pleasant traffic-free route leading to the Marlpool Estate via the flood defence bund across the Stour valley.

Public transport in the masterplan area is limited to the 30 minute frequency No.9 bus route along Stourbridge Road/ Blackwell Street, which extends to Caunsell/Cookley. There is also the twice daily No.580 service along Hurcott Road/Blackwell Street to Kinver. When the Crossley Retail Park site was opened a bus service was funded by the developer, linking the site with the town centre via Carpet Trades Way, but this did not prove to be viable once the initial subsidy had ended, due to the limited patronage and the congestion at the ring road junction.

All of the local bus services terminate in the town centre to the south of the masterplan area but, as noted above, the walking links to the town centre are poor.

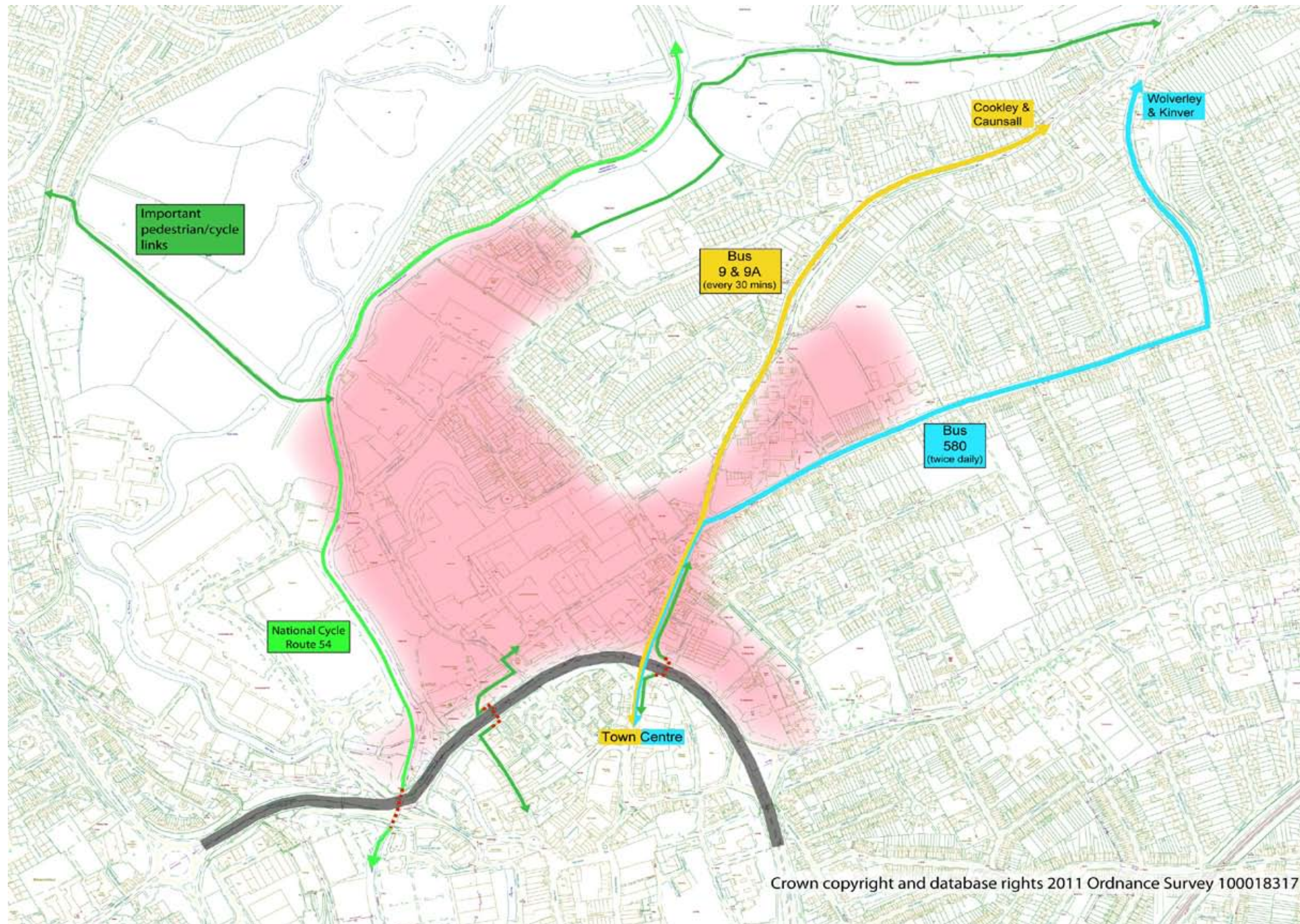


Fig 9: Bus routes serving Churchfields and key pedestrian/cycle links



Topography

The area is strongly influenced by the River Stour Valley, with quite a dramatic change in levels from the higher ground in the east to the river bed in the west. There are a series of three plateaus within the area with two ridges running through the area marking the separation between these areas. Sandstone ridges are a characteristic of the town's underlying geology, although within the landscape of Churchfields, they are characterised by soft vegetation or retaining walls.

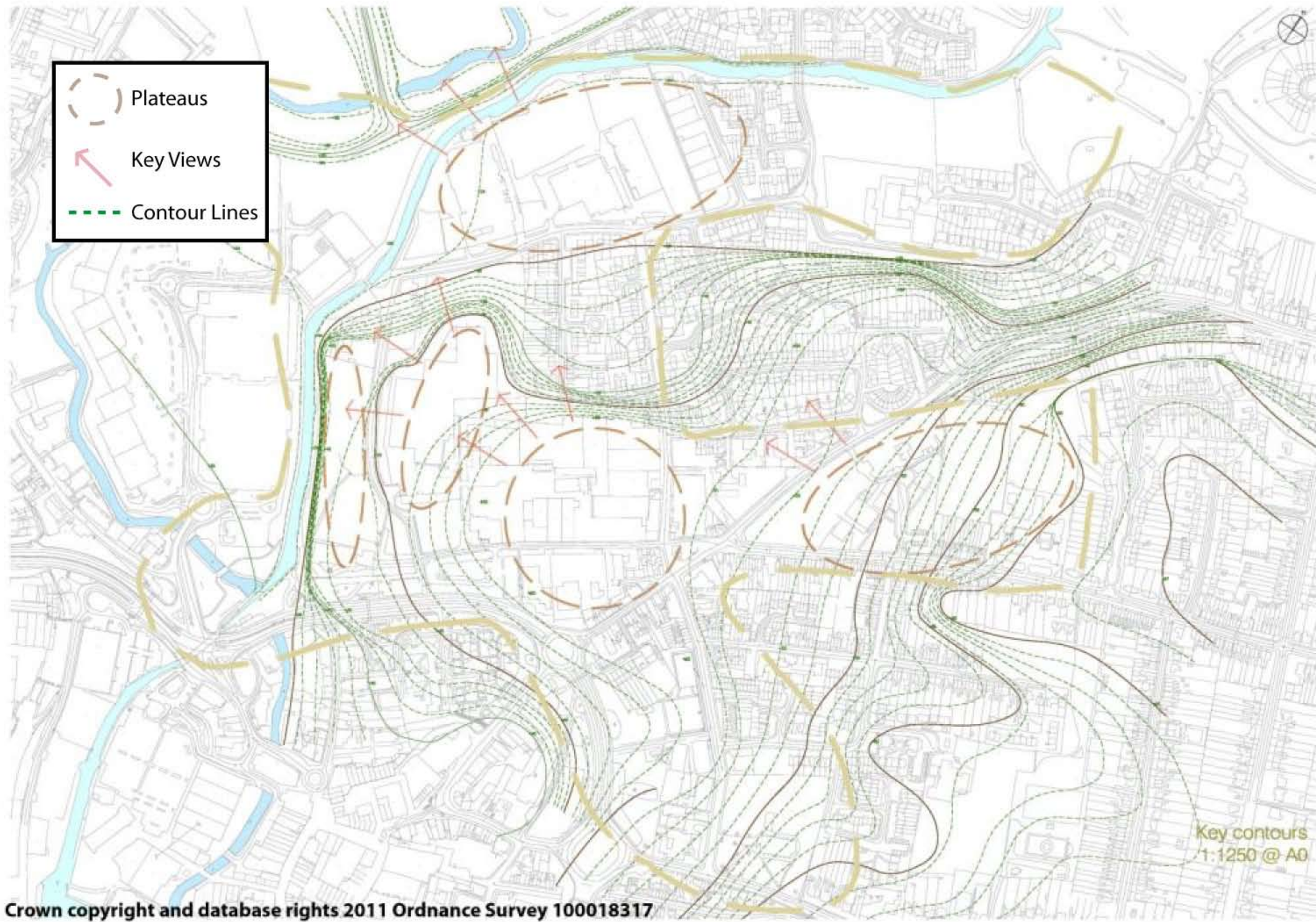


Fig 10: Topography



Landscape, Ecology and Open Space

To the north west of the area, the sites are strongly influenced by the Puxton Marsh SSSI. The area benefits from distant views of the surrounding rolling Worcestershire countryside.

Suburban housing areas are characterised by mature trees within private gardens and the street scene. However, the majority of the opportunity sites are extensive former carpet factory premises that are largely devoid of vegetation on the interior except for soft edges on the periphery of the sites i.e. either to the canal (the former Georgian Carpets factory) and the ridge running to the west and north of the former Tomkinsons factory.

The area includes the formal St George's Park with a strong community focus through the 'Friends of St George's Park' group. There are also two major church cemeteries at St George's and the medieval St Mary's Church.

The Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal has a heavily vegetated green edge which almost gives it a semi-rural feel that belies its urban setting. This is more the result of neglect than design with much development turning its back on the canal. As a result there are low levels of natural surveillance and a high incidence of anti-social behaviour.

The area is well served by a range of strategic open spaces around its edge. These provide community, sport and recreation opportunities for residents. They include St George's Park (within the masterplan area), Springfield Park to the north and Baxter Gardens to the east of the master plan area.

There are opportunities to enhance

provision for play and recreation within the interior of the masterplan area. In addition, significant off-site improvements may be sought for playing fields at Springfield Park and Sion Hill as a means of improving facilities serving the community. These opportunities will be explored and developed as part of the plan making process.

Biodiversity

The many green corridors and open spaces in the Churchfields area provide good opportunities to preserve and enhance biodiversity. The areas position within the Stour Valley Corridor further underlines the importance of preserving these links through the site and beyond.

The canal is an important green corridor that runs close to, and in parallel with, the river Stour. However, it must be recognised that the canal traditionally had an urban/industrial heritage and environment and the lack of built development now apparent leads to issues of anti-social behaviour. It will be important to consider the biodiversity habitat of the canal side areas in the face of new development. However, this must be carefully balanced with the need to provide an active frontage and natural surveillance on to the canal.

Fig 11: Stour Valley Corridor

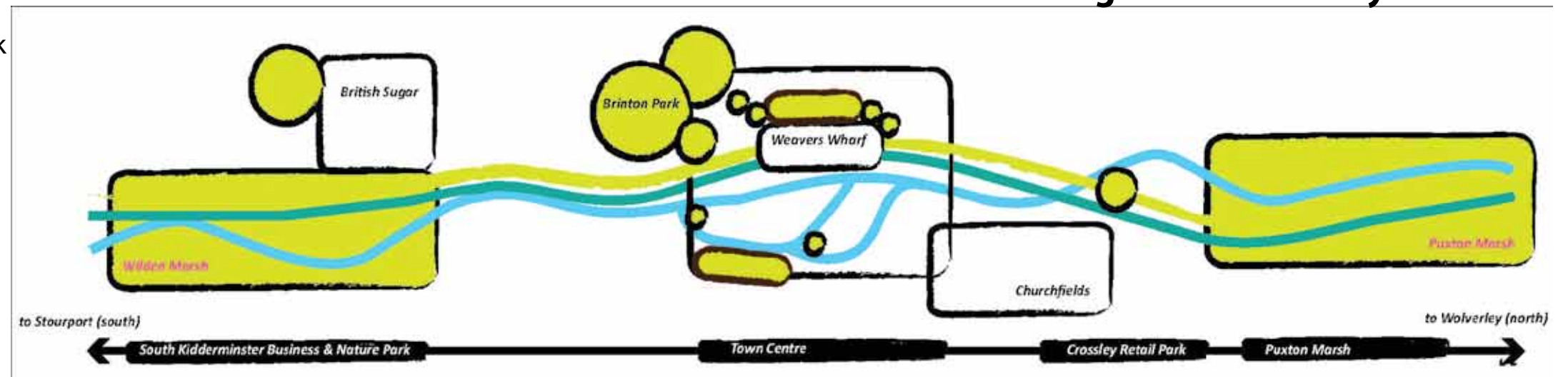


Fig 12: Landscape, ecology, and open space



Poorly defined spaces



Consider relocating



Mature trees and green space reflect the edge of the former Tomkinson factory and create a link through the area.



Water Management & Flood Risk

Most of the Churchfields masterplan area falls outside of the River Stour floodplain. However, a small area of land west of the canal at Crossley Retail Park falls within Flood Zone 3 and a small edge adjacent to the canal of the Churchfields North site is within Flood Zone 2.

A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was undertaken as part of the evidence base for the Local Development Framework and the adopted Core Strategy contains policies on Water Management. Policy CP02: Water Management states that appropriate mitigation and construction methods will be required for development in areas with known surface water flooding issues. It also states that Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS) will need to be incorporated within new developments and they should be informed by the Water Cycle Strategy.

The emerging Site Allocations & Policies Document also contains a section on water management, flood risk, and SUDS.

New developments in the Churchfields area will need to take into account the following advice in regards to water management:

- PPS25: Development and Flood Risk
- Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
- Water Cycle Strategy
- Water Framework Directive
- River Severn River Basin Management Plan

All new development in flood risk areas will be expected to produce a flood risk assessment as part of any planning application in line with the advice in PPS25.

Ground Water & Contamination

The Churchfields area overlies a principal aquifer of regional strategic importance and falls within the Source Protection Zone 3 of a public water supply borehole. Therefore, this area is within a hydrologically sensitive setting.

As Churchfields has been a significant industrial area for over 100 years, there are likely to be issues of contamination. New development will need to ensure that contamination is fully addressed and appropriate remediation measures are taken to preserve this sensitive area.

This is in line with adopted Core Strategy policy CP01: Delivering Sustainable Development Standards.



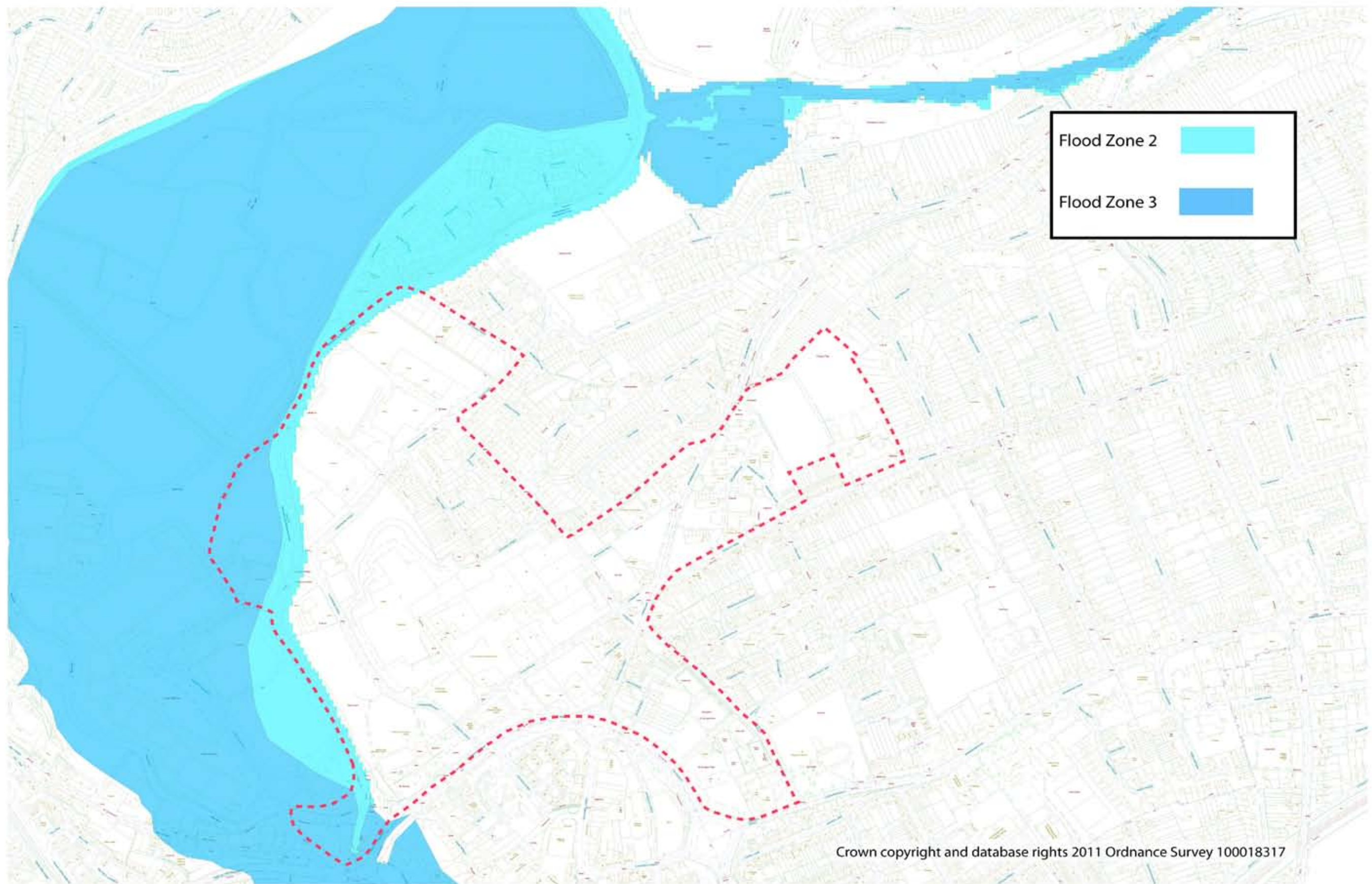


Fig 13: Flood zones

Gateways, Edges, Nodes and Landmarks

In an inner urban environment, the green edge strangely lacks human activity and natural surveillance. It screens and hides the community behind it. Poor levels of natural surveillance and high levels of deprivation in the surrounding communities serve to create an unsociable edge space that does not support positive human interaction with their surroundings.

This edge serves to deter visitors from accessing the surrounding area. Similar characteristics exist beyond the confines of the canal and river at Grasmere Close. Here, the heavy vegetation on the edge of the estate, coupled with the development design which lacks active frontages onto the street, works to quite a similar effect as the canalside.

The key gateway from the north (A451) is characterised by the 1960s multi-storey housing estate. This is then immediately followed by the congestion along Blackwell Street which results in poor air quality locally.

The congestion and poor quality pedestrian environment in Blackwell Street give rise to an ageing retail experience with many properties in a poor state of repair. This is highly visible at one of the town's main arterial access points. The 'state' of Blackwell Street and the Horsefair (the shopping area) is a common source of critical comment from townsfolk. However, the actual built fabric there is generally of good quality heritage value with a number of landmark buildings serving to highlight the historic importance of this key arrival space. Historically it was a key place of exchange of goods and trade etc.

From the south the area is accessed directly from the Town Centre ring road where visitors are greeted by congestion and a severed street. The ring road cuts Blackwell Street in half and has resulted in a heavily trafficked roundabout forming a poorly defined space which lacks enclosure.

From the east, the site is accessed from Radford Avenue with its impressive St George's Church (designed by Sir Gilbert Scott) and the adjacent park. The approach from the A456 to the north east via Radford Avenue is defined by suburban terraced housing on the approach to the local centre. A secondary access to the Churchfields area via Hurcott Road provides a high quality Edwardian approach but on the descent into the main masterplan area becomes characterised by the 1960s high rise blocks at Grasmere Close.

From the west there is no direct access over the river and canal for vehicles. As a result the largest part of the area to the west of the A451 feels like an island with a single point of access via the Horsefair.

Around 20,000 vehicles a day pass to the south of the masterplan area along the ring road. This route offers views of St Mary's Church, but few will have any knowledge of what lies behind.

In urban design terms, a large part of the masterplan area is ill-defined with blank edges lacking activity, and in consequence, opportunities for natural surveillance, positive exchange and commercial vibrancy are limited.



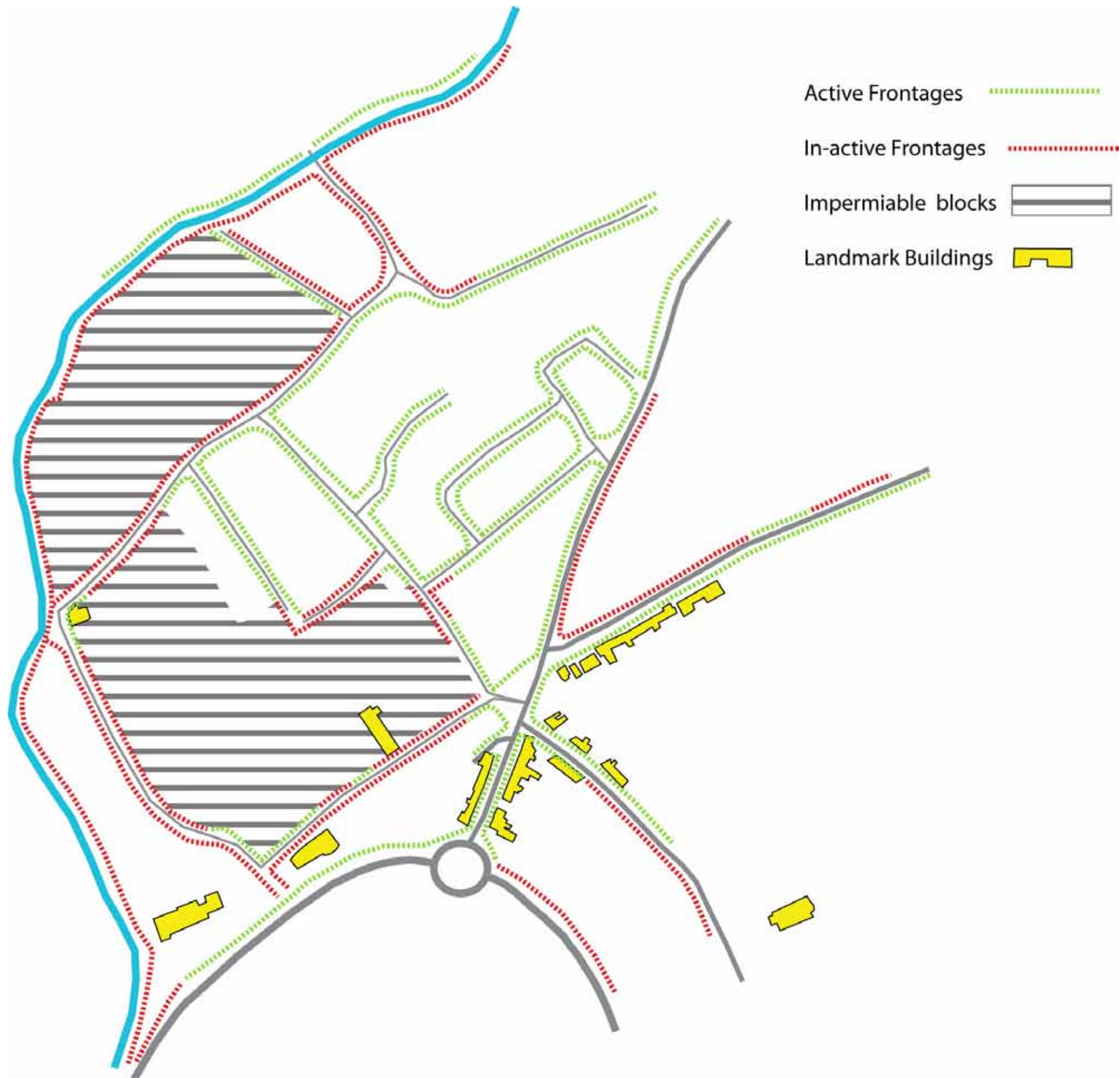


Fig 14: Edges, frontages and key landmarks



Planning Policy

Wyre Forest District Local Development Framework continues to be developed. The Core Strategy was adopted in December 2010 and this sets the strategic framework for development including the overall quantum of housing, industry and commercial development that needs to be provided for within the District to 2026. This draft masterplan has been prepared having full regard to the provisions of the Core Strategy and the Wyre Forest District Design Quality SPG.

Adopted Core Strategy	
DS01	Development Locations
DS02	Kidderminster Regeneration Area
DS05	Phasing and Implementation
CP01	Delivering Sustainable Development Standards
CP02	Water Management
CP03	Promoting Transport Choice and Accessibility
CP04	Providing Affordable Housing
CP05	Delivering Mixed Communities
CP07	Delivering Community Wellbeing
CP09	Retail and Commercial Development
CP11	Quality Design and Local Distinctiveness
CP13	Providing A Green Infrastructure Network
CP14	Providing Opportunities for Local Biodiversity & Geodiversity
CP15	Regenerating the Waterways

Draft Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan	
Policy 1	Sites for Housing
Policy 2	Mixed Use
Policy 3	Retail Development
Policy 6	Edge-of-Centre and Out-of-Centre Retailing
Policy 7	Employment Development
Policy 10	Sustainable Transport
Policy 11	Walkable Town
Policy 12	Urban Design Key Principles
Policy 13	Public Realm
Policy 14	Ring Road Framework
Policy 15	Ring Road Character Areas
Policy 16	Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal
Policy 18	Green Infrastructure
Policy 19	Churchfields Masterplan
Policies 20 to 26	Churchfields Masterplan Sites

Draft Site Allocations & Policies	
Policy 3	Financial Viability Policy
Policy 5	Specialist Housing
Policy 11	Protecting and Enhancing Local Retail Services
Policy 14	Sustainable Transport
Policy 15	Parking
Policy 19	Implementation of SUDS
Policy 22	Providing a Green Infrastructure Network
Policy 23	Providing Opportunities for Safeguarding Local Biodiversity and Geodiversity
Policy 24	Heritage Assets
Policy 26	Landscaping and Boundary Treatment



3) OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS

Constraints

The top five constraints are:

- i) Access, traffic and parking - barriers to movement.
- ii) Environmental quality.
- iii) Out-of-centre location limits land use options.
- iv) Land ownership.
- v) Delivery issues.

Turning 'Challenges' into 'Opportunities'

The top five key opportunities are:

- i) Improve links to the Town Centre and Crossley Park.
- ii) Create a series of connected spaces and squares.
- iii) Support and strengthen the town centre.
- iv) Improve traffic capacity at Blackwell Street.
- v) Incorporate heritage assets - canal and buildings.
- vi) Ensure development form respects topography.

Improving access to jobs in nearby retail and service centres is a key ambition of the masterplan. The plan serves to support and strengthen the town centre by creating additional homes and residents to provide additional vitality and spending capacity in the centre. At the same time it will also serve to do the same for the complementary 'local centre' of Blackwell Street/Horsefair as a small-scale retail environment serving the local needs of the Churchfields neighbourhood and specialist shopping.

CHALLENGES



INTO



OPPORTUNITIES

4) COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

Extensive consultation on the Kidderminster Prospectus was undertaken during 2008/09 that established the idea of Churchfields as an urban village and focus for new homes.

This masterplan has involved two further periods of public consultation including a series of workshops and two roadshow events.

Phase 1: Issues and Options Consultation, took place in November 2010 with a special 'pop up shop' in Blackwell Street.

Phase 2: Concepts and Ideas Consultation was held at the Salvation Army, Jerusalem Walk in February 2011, at which initial concepts were presented to the local community. Over the course of the two events the consultation team met over 250 people.

There has been continuous engagement with public and private sector stakeholders, including local councillors, professional officers, and the business community.

The consultation events provided some excellent and productive feedback that has been pivotal in the development of the plan for the area. The top 5 issues highlighted by the local community were:

1. Improve connections to the town centre and around the area.
2. Regenerate the Horsefair and improve the retail area.
3. Solve traffic and congestion issues.
4. Provide new homes to replace industry.
5. Improve community facilities.



A separate consultation report is available as an Appendix to this report.

Draft Masterplan Consultation

A six week consultation period on the draft masterplan took place between May and July 2011. Written notifications were sent to stakeholders and statutory bodies and adverts were taken out in the local press. Staffed exhibitions were also held at the, Kidderminster market, the Rowland Hill Centre, Kidderminster, the former Lloyds Garage, Stourport, and Bewdley Museum, Bewdley.

A total of 103 responses were received from 47 respondents. All of the comments were taken into account by the District Council when producing the final version of the masterplan. An individual response to each comment was also supplied.

Horsefair, Broadwaters & Greenhill Partnership

Local community group the Horsefair, Broadwaters & Greenhill Partnership have been engaged throughout the masterplanning process. They have helped identify key issues for the masterplan to address, such as improving traffic management and providing new and enhanced open spaces.



The Partnership will have an important future role in helping to guide and deliver future change in the area.



5) THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

The design guidance for the Churchfields area is set out below and is based on the key urban design objectives and development principles as set out in the Wyre Forest District Design Quality SPG (2004).

Urban design objectives

Successful streets, spaces, villages, towns and cities tend to have characteristics in common. These factors have been analysed to produce principles or objectives of good urban design. These objectives should be followed and will be fundamental in creating a successful new urban village for Churchfields

Character

The development of the site should create a place with its own identity and promote character in townscape and landscape by responding to and reinforcing locally distinctive patterns of development, landscape and culture within the Churchfields area of Kidderminster.

Continuity and enclosure

The development should promote the continuity of street frontages and the enclosure of space by clearly defining private and public areas.

Quality of the public realm

The development should promote public spaces and routes that are attractive, safe, uncluttered and work effectively for all in society, including disabled and elderly people.

Ease of movement

The development should promote accessibility and local permeability by making a place that is connected and easy to

move through, putting people before traffic and integrating land uses and transport.

Legibility

The development should help to promote legibility by providing recognisable routes, intersections and landmarks to help people find their way around.

Adaptability

The development should demonstrate how sustainable principles of urban design are met including issues of adaptability allowing development to respond to changing social, technological and economic conditions.

Diversity

The development should promote diversity and choice through a mix of compatible uses that work together to create viable places that respond to local needs.



6) DESIGN PRINCIPLES

The development principles below articulate how the urban design objectives can be achieved and set out acceptable land uses and aspects of development form.

Design Principle 1 (DP1): 'Improve connectivity'*

- Create a new one-way link road from the ring road to Churchfields to relieve Blackwell Street of half its traffic to deal with congestion and air quality.
- Make effective use of existing infrastructure such as Clensmore Street - linking it to Crossley Park and the ring road.
- Provide a bridge link to Crossley Park for all traffic with particular benefit for public transport.
- Provide pedestrian/ cycle bridges across the canal to link Churchfields to Crossley Park and Puxton Marsh.
- Introduce street level crossings over the ring road to the town centre, including the link to Church Street.
- Give greater priority to pedestrians and cyclists to and through the area.
- Create a connected and legible street pattern.
- Create a hierarchy of town, district, local and pedestrian streets characterised by distinct building forms, landscaping treatments, activities and sense of enclosure.

DP1: Consultation Feedback

This was the most important issue for local people, so the Masterplan makes this the first principle.

** The Churchfields masterplan is a design framework to guide the future development of the area. The specific transport proposals present in this document are ambitions for the area and have been developed using specialist transport advice. However, at this stage they are indicative and have not been fully tested. Specific proposals will need to be supported by technical evidence to show their impacts on the wider traffic network.*



Fig 15: DP1 - Connectivity



Proposed Transport Links

The main highway proposal involves changes at the junction of Blackwell Street and the ring road and consists of:

- Replacing existing roundabout junction with traffic signals and incorporating at-grade crossings over the ring road.
- Making Blackwell Street one-way southbound, enabling footways to be widened and on-street parking to be introduced.
- Constructing a new one-way link from the ring road to Churchfields to carry traffic away from the town centre.
- Introducing of one-way traffic around the Horsefair, enabling carriageways to be reduced in width and the central public space to be enlarged. Crossings will be provided to enable this important space to be accessed on foot.

These measures will relieve congestion and improve air quality along Blackwell Street. They will also provide much improved access to the masterplan area.

Other proposed highway improvements are:

- Connection of Clensmore Street to the ring road at a left-in, left-out junction. This will provide additional accessibility to the masterplan area;
- Construction of a vehicular bridge across the canal adjacent to the existing Lime Kiln Bridge.

These links will enable the development of business space on District Council land to the west of the canal. They will also improve accessibility to Churchfields to and from the west, as well as providing a second access to the Crossley Retail Park, relieving congestion at the Carpet Trades Way/ring road junction. New connections will also enable bus routes to be established to connect Churchfields with the town centre through the Crossley

Retail Park, maximising patronage and long term viability.

Key improvements are proposed to the walking and cycling network, namely:

- An at-grade crossing of the ring road opposite St Mary's Church, reinstating the historic link between the town centre, the church and the canal.
- Pedestrian and cycle bridges across the canal to the west, linking directly to the Crossley Retail Park and to the north, providing improved connectivity to the northern parts of the town via the existing link to the Marlpool Estate.

The District Council has worked closely with Worcestershire County Council on developing these initial transport proposals.

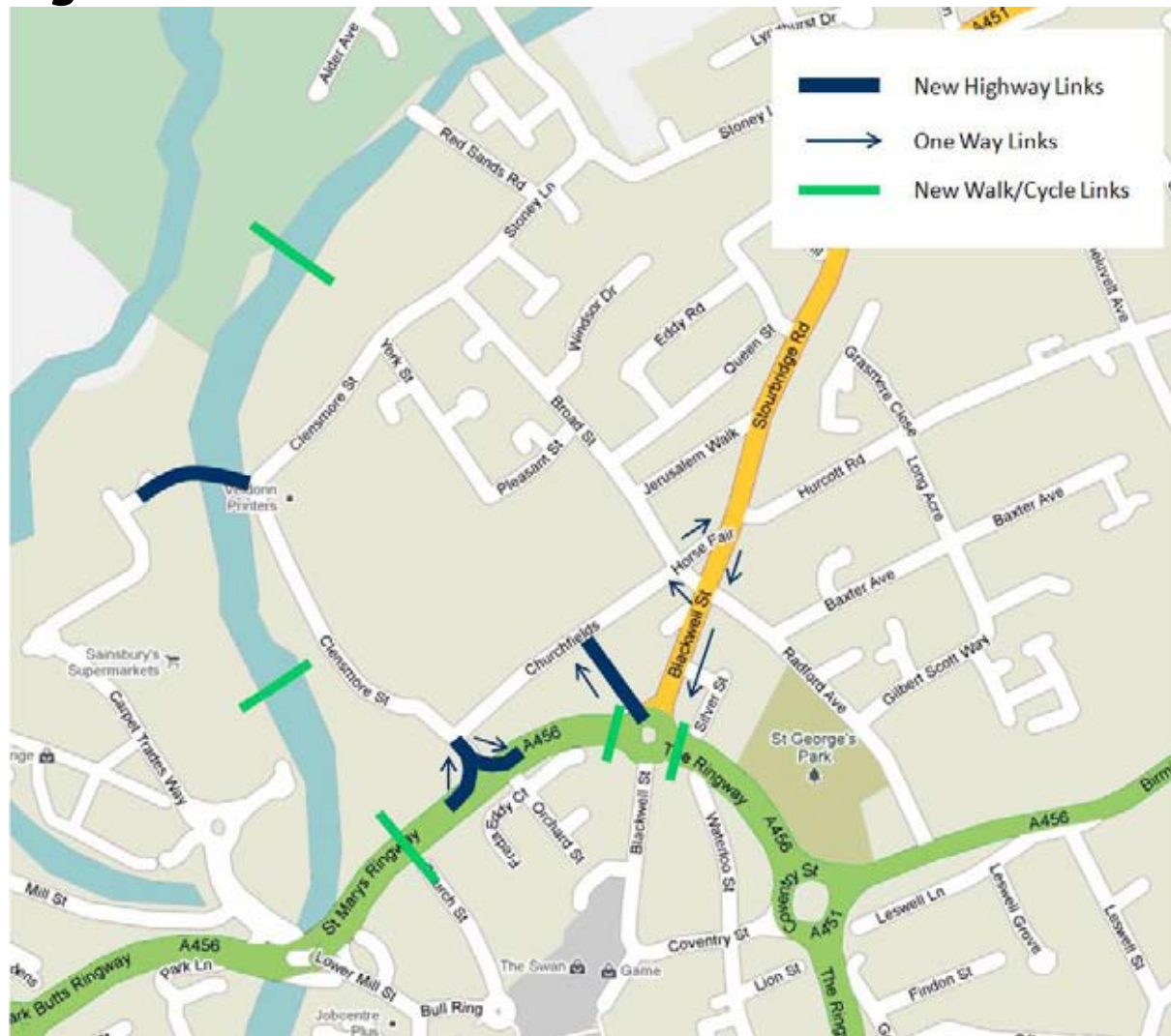
Movement Hierarchy

Figure 18 shows the proposed movement hierarchy of the new and existing links within the masterplan area and its surroundings. This hierarchy generally indicates the nature of the principal journeys being made along the routes – between towns, between districts and locally.

Overlaid on this movement hierarchy is the place hierarchy – some of these streets are more important than others in terms of their local place-making functions. This will be reflected in the character and detailed design of the routes.

For example, although Broad Street has a district-wide function serving much of the Churchfields area, it is a residential street with an excessively wide carriageway and where traffic speed needs to be reduced and place functions need to be enhanced. It is therefore proposed that this route should be enhanced as a 'DIY Street', with residents being involved in the traffic calming/landscape improvements.

Fig 16: Possible new vehicle links



**Fig 17:
Indicative
Blackwell
Street
bypass**

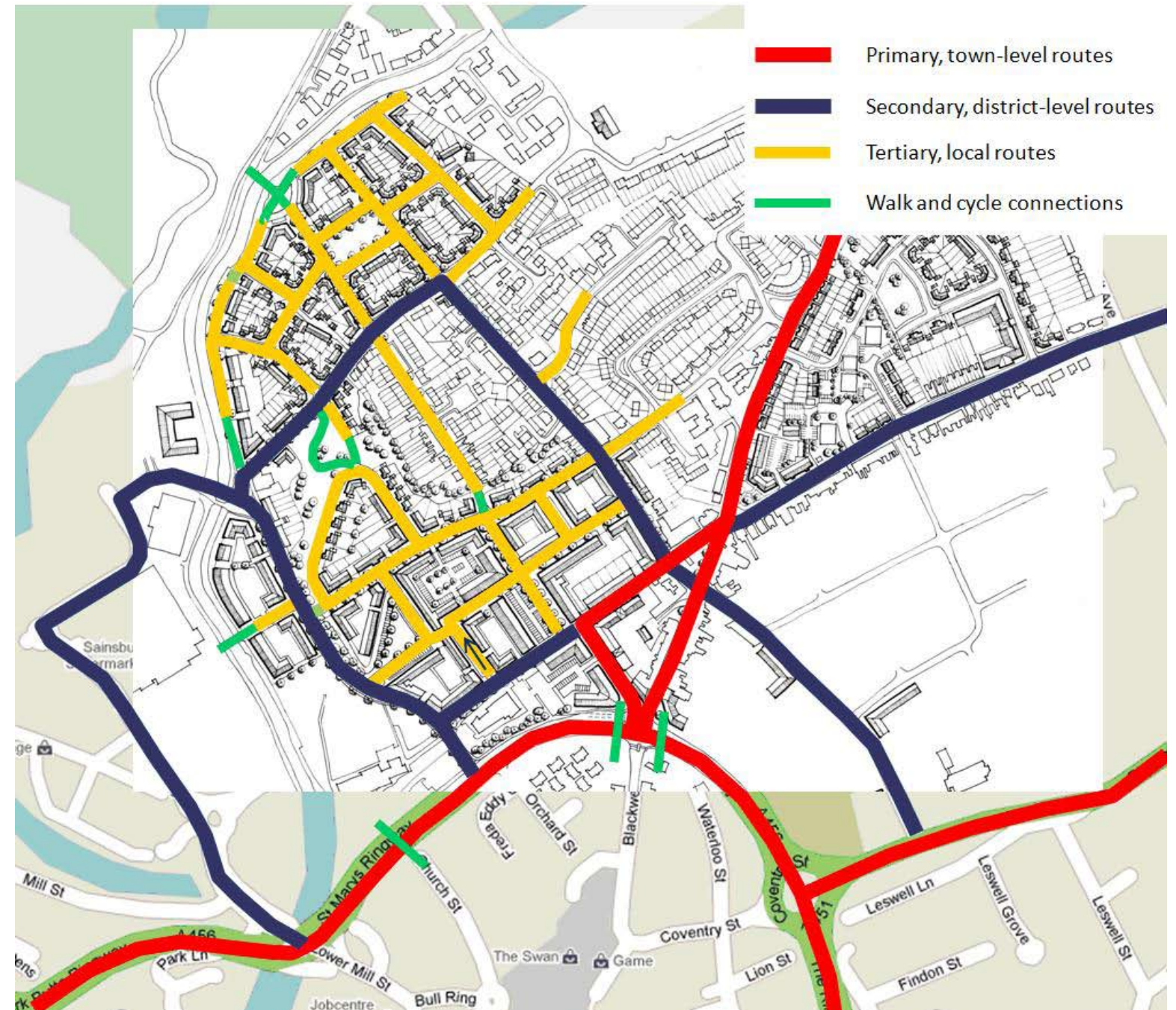


Fig 18: New street hierarchy - including possible new links



Design Principle 2 (DP2): 'Utilise the open space network and topography for visual interest and recreation'

- Adapt house types to account for topography.
- Maximise views across the valley.
- Create prominent architecture to define the area.
- Safeguard and strengthen the coherence of green infrastructure including the ridges that define the valley and the edge of character areas.
- Create a complementary network of sport, play and recreation opportunities both within and serving the masterplan area.

DP2: Consultation Feedback

Not specifically in the top 5 issues, but most people regarded the surrounding open space network to be the areas most important asset and asked for better connections to be made with green spaces.



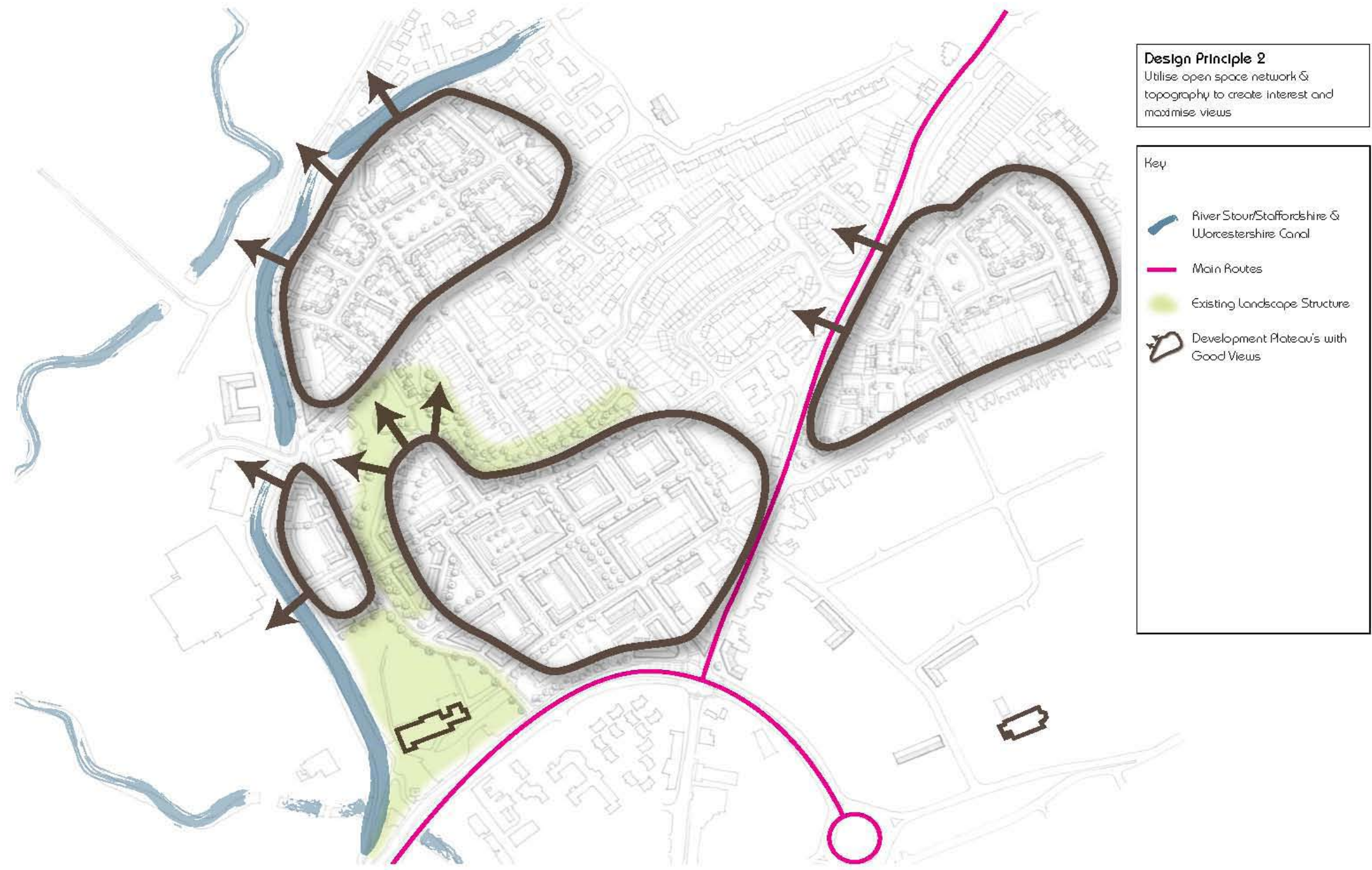


Fig 19: DP2 - Open space and topography



Design principle 3: 'Creation of character areas and a legible development'

- Provide five new character areas to define place.
- Selective use of landmark buildings to terminate vistas and define active spaces and junctions.
- Integrate heritage assets and open spaces to strengthen character.
- Integrate a variety of multi-functional spaces and squares to define character.
- Make the most of landmarks, views and vistas.
- Plan for phasing - the sites will need to be developed in stages. Different developers can leave their own mark, but they must work within the guidelines of the masterplan and make an appropriate contribution towards the area-wide benefits package.

DP3: Consultation Feedback

Heritage proved to be a contentious issue. Although people were exceptionally proud of their area and the history of Churchfields, the feeling was that the past was holding back the area.

The wider public view in Kidderminster, however, was that Churchfields was a special place that needed to preserve its historic value.

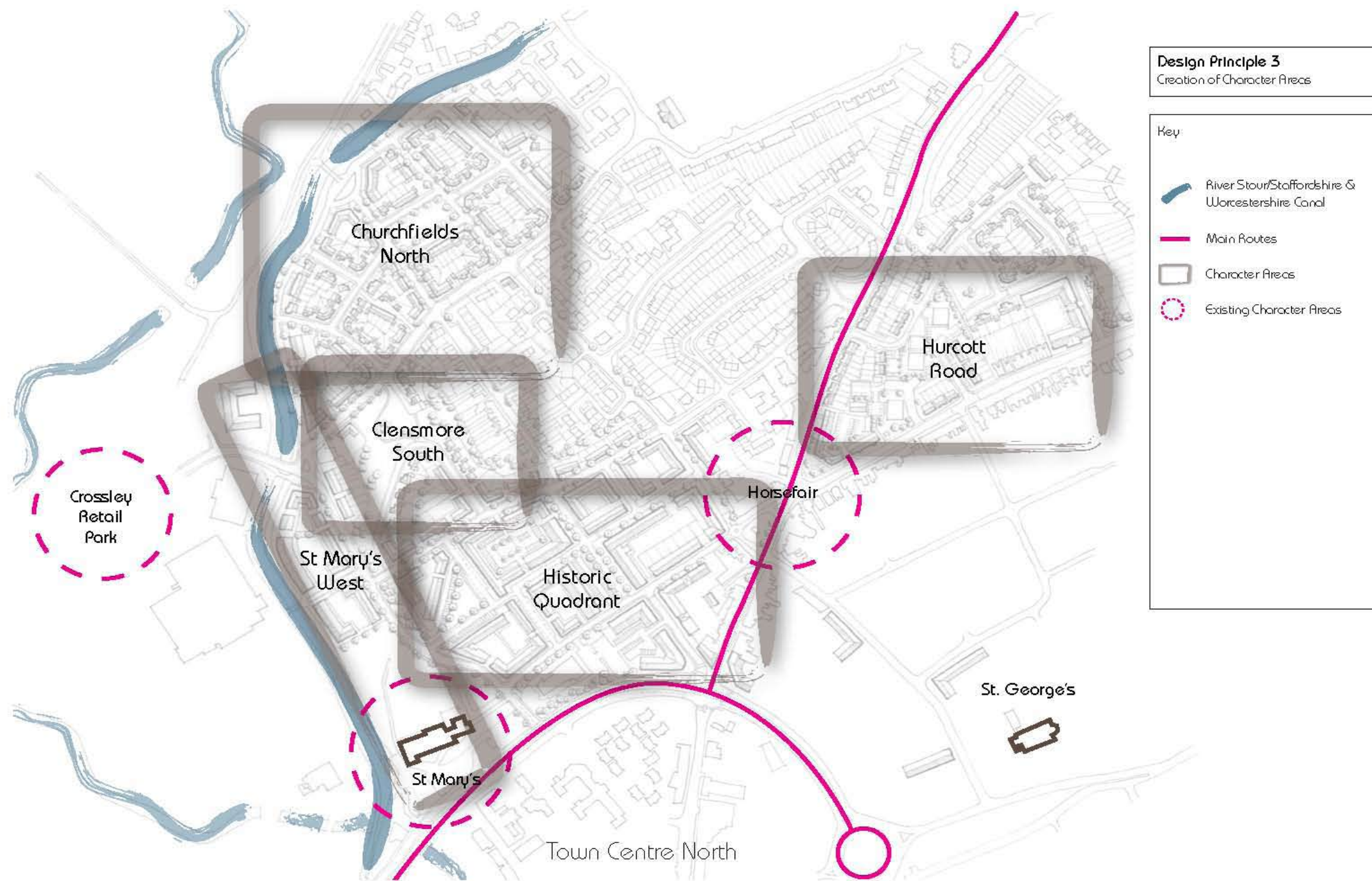


Fig 20: DP 3 -Character areas



Design Principle 4: 'Provide a positive frontage to the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal'

- All development should front onto the canal by one or more of the following techniques:
 1. Multi-modal street frontages (essential at least in part on the main development site at the former Georgian Carpet factory).
 2. Pedestrian public right of way in front of development (publicly adopted or privately owned/ maintained) with high quality and private parking courts at the rear.
- Ensure the architectural treatment of buildings relates well to the waterside setting and offers a richness and variety of style and modulation.
- Create a safe, secure, and crime free environment with quality surface treatment and quality landscape treatment and appropriate levels of pedestrian lighting.
- Without prejudice to the above, make appropriate provision for biodiversity (on and/or off site) to enhance the green infrastructure network in the area .
- Explore the scope for residential moorings within the waterside developments at Crossley Park and Clensmore.

DP4: Consultation Feedback

The public was unanimous in their view that the canal was of outstanding natural and historic beauty.



Fig 21: DP4 - Frontages



Design Principle 5: 'Create a series of new public spaces'

- Create spaces within each of the development sites to provide green links with the wider landscape setting.
- Enlarge and improve the public space at the Horsefair.
- Streets should be designed as a series of connected spaces with a sense of enclosure and providing legible and direct routes for all modes of travel.
- Define public space with active edges including living room windows. They should be Secure by Design and ensure the backs of properties are private.
- Create active edges and avoid the creation of streets and spaces characterised by blank walls and fences - they will not be supported.
- Fully utilise the space between Trinity Church, St Mary's Parish Church and the canalside to create a coherent public space and car park facing a downgraded ring road (boulevard).

DP5: Consultation Feedback

The perception of social problems and fear of crime was a strong theme when people talked about Horsefair. The physical regeneration and improvements to Horsefair with the development of quality public spaces could help to regenerate the area by shifting the perception that this is a problem area and kick start the regeneration.



Fig 22: DP5 - New public spaces



Design Principle 6: 'Integrate existing heritage assets into new development'

- Protect, reuse and enhance the setting of all Listed Buildings (including locally listed) e.g. the 1902 building and other heritage buildings of complementary group value.
- Safeguard and enhance the open spaces at St Mary's Parish Church and St George's Church.
- Sensitively incorporate historic areas including the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal Conservation Area and Blackwell Street/ Horsefair local centre.
- A townscape heritage initiative or similar should be used to enhance existing shop fronts.

DP6: Consultation Feedback

See feedback under DP3.



Fig 23: DP6 - Heritage assets



Design Principle 7: 'High quality architecture and finish'

- Building forms should respond positively to context with variety, rhythm and richness across the area and internally within larger developments.
- Ensure mass and land use reflects the location within the layout including key junctions and spaces and the hierarchy of streets.
- The larger and more important the street and/ or space the greater the height and mass that may be appropriate to create an appropriate sense of enclosure and vibrancy.
- Apply a design code to a specification agreed by the District Council based on the Design Quality Supplementary Planning Guidance.
- Incorporate Secure by Design principles to reduce opportunities for crime and anti-social behaviour
- Incorporate high quality materials in the design of street furniture, surfaces and landscaping including semi-mature planting.
- Demonstrate sustainability, adaptability and flexibility of use.
- Incorporate energy efficiency and renewable energy measures
- Incorporate water efficiency measures, including SUDS
- Incorporate or make a contribution towards public art in the local neighbourhood



Fig 24: DP7 - High quality architecture

Design Principle 8: 'Vibrant mixed communities'

- Combine layouts, building form, orientations and land uses to maximise vibrancy at strategically positioned nodes and along key movement corridors.
- Provide a mix of tenures and types of housing within residential developments. This includes specialist housing for elderly care.
- Integrate community facilities and commercial development at every opportunity.
- Safeguard, enhance and improve connections to community assets including the local centre, meeting rooms, religious buildings, open spaces and Puxton Marsh SSSI.
- Provide a more attractive environment for boaters including opportunities for mooring along the canal.
- Serve to strengthen the vitality and viability of the town centre as the main employment, retail and service centre by improving links for new residents and business.
- Suitably incorporate car parking to include a variety of approaches appropriate to site context including on-street, in-plot, shared parking, parking courts, multi-functional squares and undercroft parking.
- Care should be taken with parking courts to ensure they are secure by design and are private spaces that have an intrinsic residential amenity value.



Design Principle 9: 'Deliverable and realistic'

Proposals that fail to demonstrate consistency with the design principles of this masterplan will be refused unless the applicant can demonstrate very special circumstances in terms of viability

DP8: Consultation Feedback

The development of new housing to create a 'vibrant and mixed community', was supported by the local community. However, this needs to be consistent with the environmental carrying capacity of the area. The community expressed concerns about the rise in people demanding new facilities and increasing traffic. Development needs to be appropriate in scale to Churchfields and capacity will be considered further as part of the delivery and implementation strategy within the masterplan.



Fig 25: DP8 - Vibrant communities



7) CHARACTER AREAS

The area has been broken down into five character areas:-

- Churchfields Historic Quadrant
- Clensmore Street South
- St Mary's and Waterfront West
- Churchfields North
- Hurcott Road

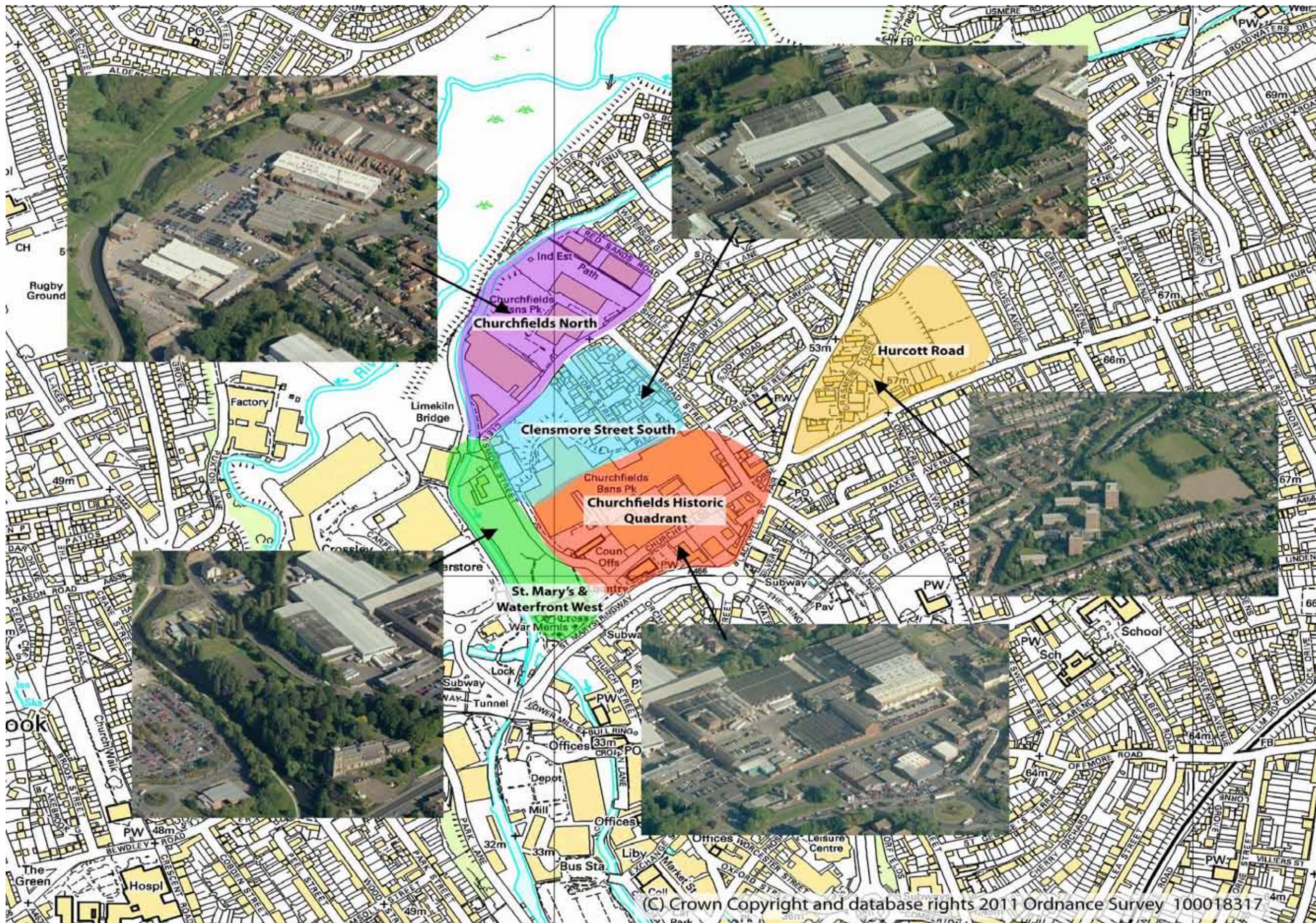
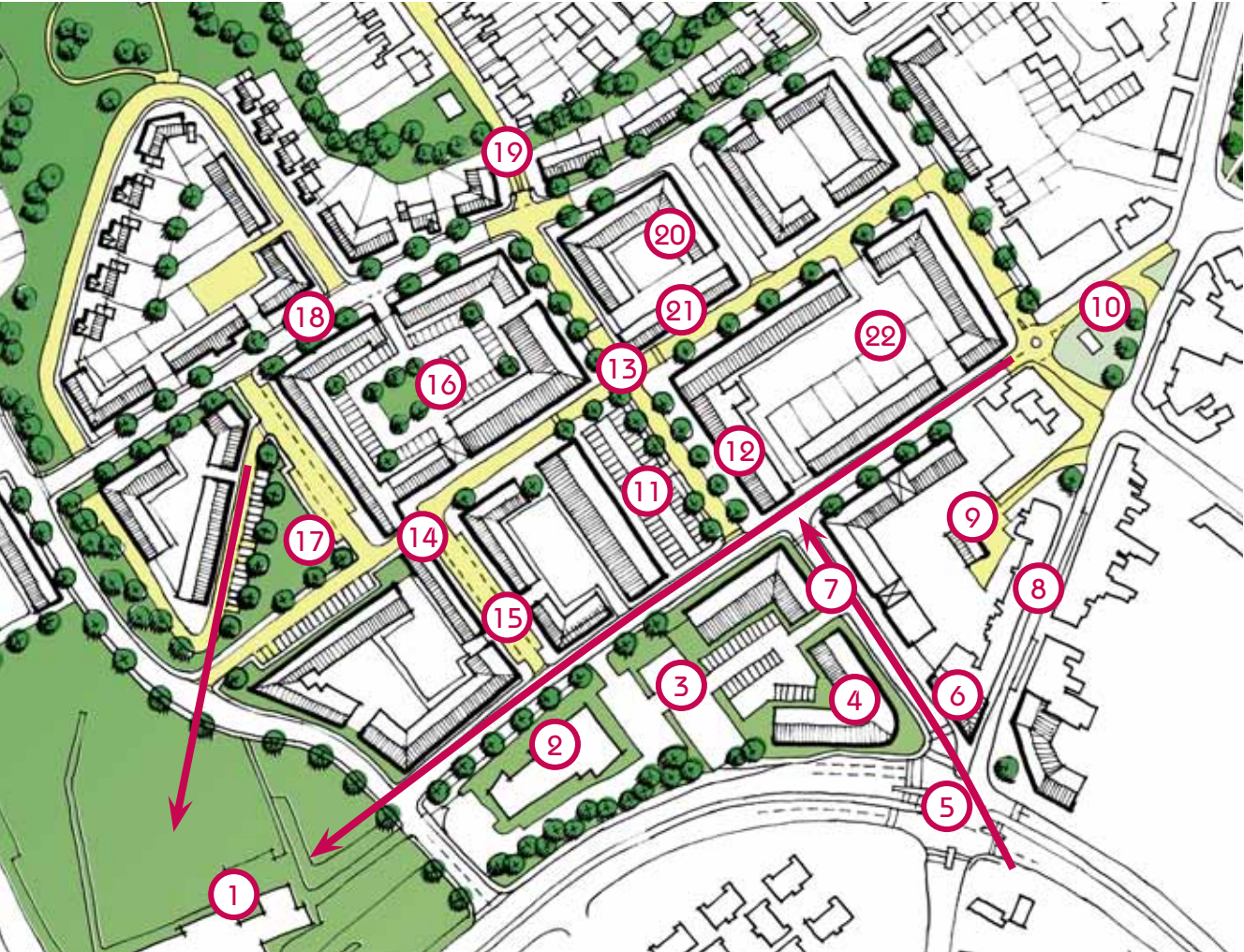


Fig 26: Snapshot of Character Areas

Churchfields Historic Quadrant

The character of this area is influenced by the industrial and building heritage. This area will have a mix of uses including residential, offices, commercial, hotel, small-scale retail, and leisure uses.

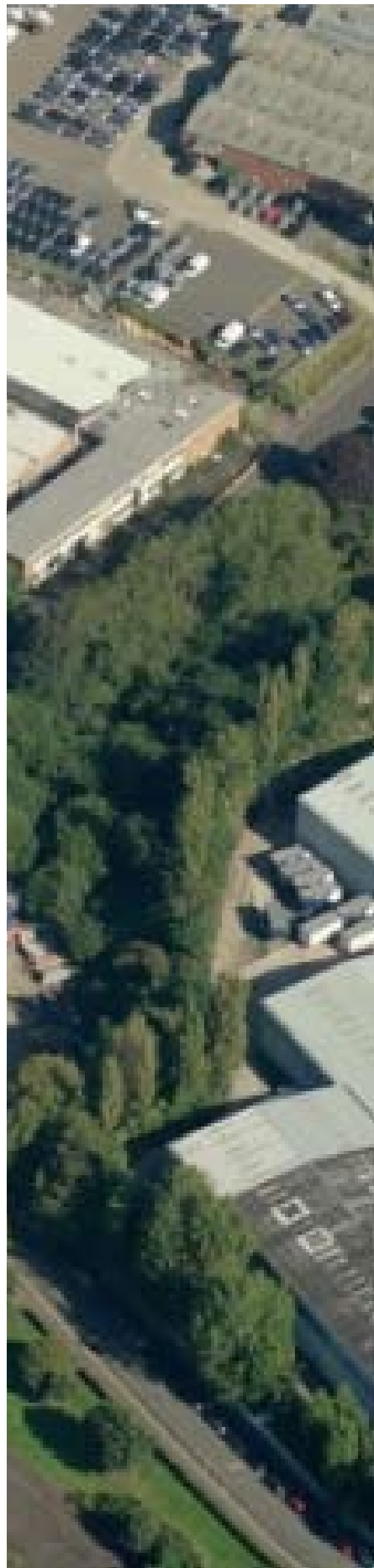
An industrial urban feel to the area will be created through the retention of historic buildings. New development will create a tight urban form based on an urban grid. Some routes will provide important sightlines to St Mary’s Church, while landmark buildings will terminate others. Development will tend to be back of footway with parking provided on street and in rear parking courtyards. A new public car park will be provided at the centre of this area as well as new and improved public spaces at the Horsefair and behind what was historically Duke’s Place.



- 1) Maintain views towards St Mary’s Church
- 2) Retain church/ community facility
- 3) Car parking at centre of block
- 4) Potential new hotel to provide new landmark building at gateway to Churchfields
- 5) Removal of roundabout and provision of new signalized junction
- 6) New landmark building at junction of Blackwell Street
- 7) New one-way link – North West
- 8) New one- way link – South West. Pavements to be widened and provision of on street parking
- 9) New mews style development
- 10) New public space at the Horsefair
- 11) Potential new on street public parking
- 12) Retention of 1902 building – conversion to new office space
- 13) Raised table giving greater priority to pedestrians
- 14) Maintain pinch point between locally listed buildings
- 15) Provision of on-street parking
- 16) Provision of courtyard parking to reduce impact on street scene
- 17) Creation of new green public space overlooked and enclosed by surrounding development. The creation of a new vista to St Mary’s Church
- 18) New tree lined street connecting Broad Street with Clensmore Street
- 19) Pedestrian/ cycle connection to York Street
- 20) New residential development
- 21) Retention of building of heritage value
- 22) New mixed use development

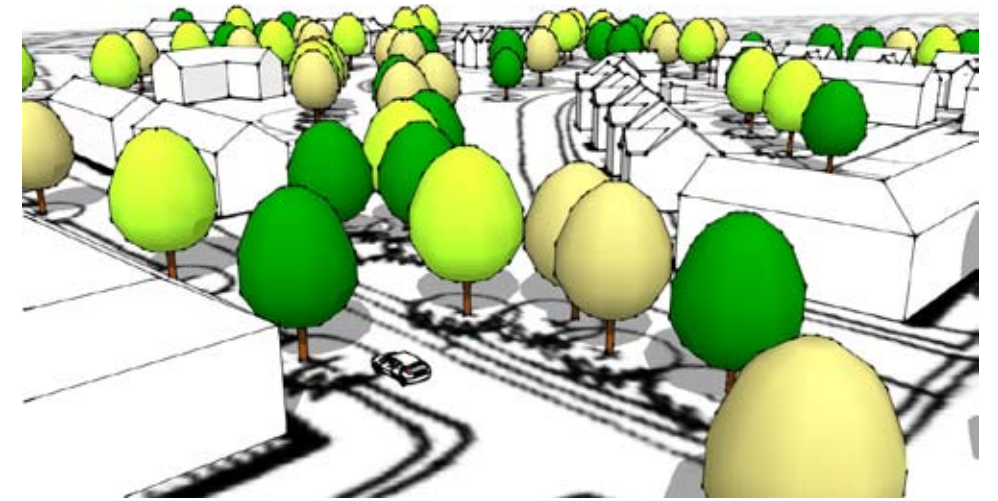
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Vistas

Fig 27: Churchfields Historic Quadrant



Clensmore Street South

The character of this area is influenced by the topography of the site and views across the Stour Valley. This area should include a mix of residential properties including detached, semi-detached and terraced. A new pedestrian and cycle route should connect development from the Churchfields Historic Quadrant down to Clensmore Street. A pedestrian connection should also be maintained to York Street. A new park should be provided which is well overlooked by surrounding development.



- 1) Retention of retaining wall and mature landscape
- 2) Creation of residential block taking into account the topography of the site and splendid views
- 3) Shared surface road – pedestrian priority
- 4) New pedestrian link
- 5) New pedestrian link
- 6) New residential development at lower level to provide good natural visual surveillance of new public space
- 7) Trees to be selectively thinned to create usable public space
- 8) New residential development fronting onto public open space and Clensmore Street
- 9) Retention of mature landscape
- 10) Innovative architecture to take into account change in levels. Provision of terraced garden
- 11) Provision of landmark building to terminate vista
- 12) New residential development to complete perimeter block


 Provision of visual connections with canal

Fig 28: Clensmore Street South



St Mary's and Waterfront West

The character of this area is influenced by the dominance of St Mary's Church and its landscape setting as well as views down onto the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal. New development adjacent to the canal should provide an active frontage onto it and increased natural surveillance. A new pedestrian/ cycle bridge link should be provided across the Staffordshire & Worcestershire Canal to improve connectivity to Crossley Retail Park. The area should include a mix of uses including residential, commercial and leisure uses.



- 1) Protection of green space that provides setting for St Mary's Church
- 2) New pedestrian/ cycle link across canal to Crossley retail park
- 3) Mixed use development to front onto the canal
- 4) Development to front onto Clensmore Street
- 5) Provision of new tree planting on Clensmore Street
- 6) Provision of courtyard parking
- 7) New landmark building
- 8) Provision of new multi-modal bridge to improve connectivity
- 9) New commercial development on opposite side of the canal

Fig 29: St. Mary's and Waterfront West

Churchfields North

Residential development in Churchfields North should front onto the canal to provide good natural visual surveillance. The provision of a traffic-calmed street will allow vehicular access to front doors, creating activity and security. Visual and physical connections should be provided from Clensmore Street to the canal in order to reinforce the importance of the canal. A new central space will also help to meet some of the recreational needs of the proposed development including the need for children’s play space.



- 1) Provision of a new pedestrian/ cycle bridge
- 2) Provision of a new arrival space
- 3) Shared surface street adjacent to the canal to allow access to front doors
- 4) Provision of on street parking
- 5) Development to back onto high wall to form an enclosed perimeter block
- 6) Provision of secure perimeter blocks that are small to improve overall connectivity
- 7) Provision of new central open space to include children’s play facilities
- 8) Create visual and physical connections with canal from Clensmore Street
- 9) Provision of mews style development
- 10) Provision of landmark corners to provide a gateway to Churchfield North
- 11) Provision of new landmark Apartment building with potential mixed use on the ground floor
- 12) Provision of pedestrian and cycle route alongside the canal
- 13) Varied street type alongside the canal to allow vehicular access along small stretches to improve pedestrian priority.

→
Provision of visual connections with canal

Fig 30: Churchfields North



Hurcott Road

The development site at Hurcott Road has the opportunity to be developed out for new residential development incorporating a new medical centre and care home. Consideration needs to be given to providing positive frontage to both Stourbridge Road and Hurcott Road. Opportunities also exist to improve connectivity between these two important routes. The provision of a new central open space should be provided which is well overlooked by surrounding development



- 1) New landmark building at the corner of Hurcott Street and Horsefair
- 2) Retention of residential tower blocks
- 3) Residential development fronting onto Stourbridge Road
- 4) Potential creation of new links and public open space
- 5) New open space well overlooked by residential development
- 6) Secure perimeter blocks overlooking new streets
- 7) Development to back onto existing housing to ensure no inactive edges
- 8) Provision of on-plot parking
- 9) New medical centre with courtyard parking
- 10) New care home

→
Potential Links

Fig 31: Hurcott Road

8) THE MASTERPLAN

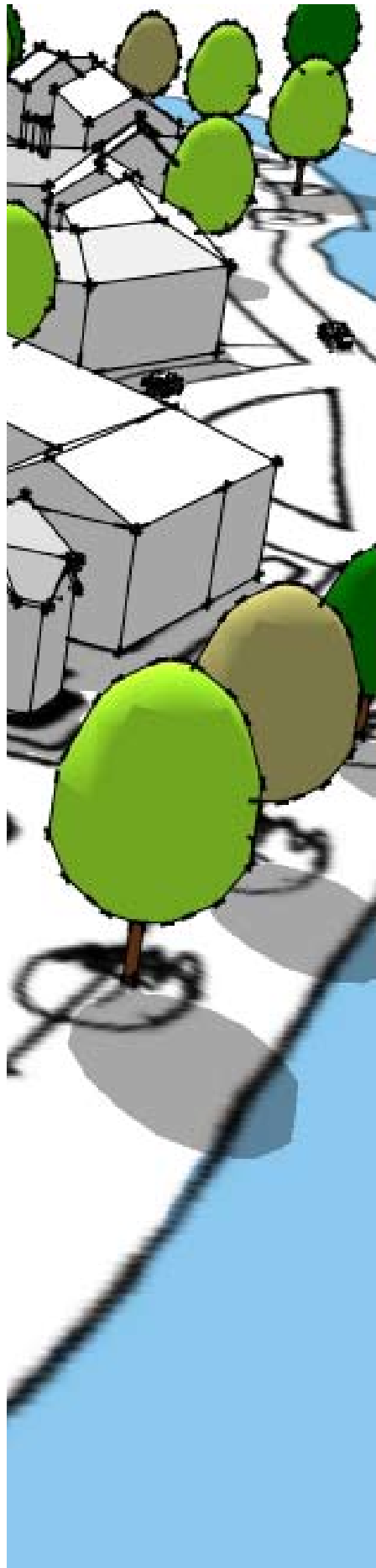


Fig 32: Churchfields Masterplan

9) DELIVERY & IMPLEMENTATION

Viability

Bruton Knowles were appointed by Wyre Forest District Council to provide commercial property advice in relation to the suitability, viability and delivery of the Masterplan proposals in the context of current market conditions.

Bruton Knowles have appraised the component areas of the Masterplan and have concluded that the proposed uses are sustainable in terms of both viability and market appeal, and currently deliver positive land values.

Whilst overall land values are considered positive, in some instances these will be close to viability thresholds in the current market, due to the impact of high abnormal costs required for site preparation to remove existing uses and resolve historic contamination. However, this should not hinder development coming forward or preclude the delivery of the proposed highways/infrastructure works outlined in the Masterplan. It is therefore essential that a flexible approach to viability and delivery is adopted, alongside the prioritisation of infrastructure requirements and alignment of financial contributions with a mix of funding sources.

Infrastructure Prioritisation

Highways and infrastructure proposals are an integral component of the master plan, restoring access and resolving existing highways problems. Bruton Knowles consider that the proposals are deliverable, although some cooperation from landowners will be required.

The total costs to deliver the indicative highway and infrastructure requirements set out in the Masterplan is understood to be in the region of £4.2m. This is considered reasonable for a regeneration

project of the size of Churchfields

However, it is acknowledged that there will be a limit to the amount that can be levied through S106 or Community Infrastructure Levy contributions without breaching viability.

Therefore infrastructure has been prioritised accordingly, to give certainty and confidence to developers and landowners. The priority infrastructure project for Churchfields is the proposed works to St Mary's Ringway and the more generic highways improvements/pedestrian links to the wider Churchfields area.

Further infrastructure priorities will be considered alongside the phasing of individual sites to ensure that delivery of vital infrastructure does not constrain development.



10) FUNDING MECHANISMS

It is recognized that market conditions are subject to change, and that these circumstances can impact on the viability of development. Consequently, in order to achieve the master plan there will be a requirement for a flexible approach to negotiations at planning application stage to ensure viability and that the delivery of an acceptable scheme is not constrained or delayed.

Planning obligations

A legal agreement under Section 106 of the Town and Country Act (1990) (as amended) will be required which could contain provisions including financial contributions in the following priority order:

- Off-site highway works.
- Public Transport (for commercial development).
- Affordable housing (for proposals involving residential development).

Additional Section 106 contributions will also be sought as part of site specific proposals to include (in alphabetical order):

- Drainage Infrastructure.
- Education.
- Off-site improvements to cycle and pedestrian routes.
- Open space, play provision and maintenance.
- Public art.
- Upgrade of Police Post.

The above priorities reflect the core design principles for the site and the adopted Wyre Forest District Planning Obligations SPD.

The District Council recognises that the economics of residential development may mean that not all of the expectations can be delivered directly from the developers via s.106 contributions. In this respect, any departure from this masterplan and associated DPD policies will need to be robustly justified with an open book viability exercise. It will also be necessary to demonstrate that the attainment of the overall masterplan objectives will not be adversely compromised or prejudiced.

Other funding mechanisms

Whilst post recession funding options for regeneration delivery have been reduced, a range of new funding sources are evolving that are applicable to regeneration schemes.

The District Council will consider utilising a blend of funding sources to assist in delivery, including Tax Increment Funding (TIF) and New Homes Bonus (NHB) when relevant legislation is in place.



11) PHASING

In terms of the phasing of the development, it is anticipated that Grassmere Close and the most northern area adjoining the Staffordshire and Worcestershire Canal as being the initial points of regeneration, with the development phasing moving southwards towards the ring road with the later part of the regeneration in the areas close to St Mary's Church.

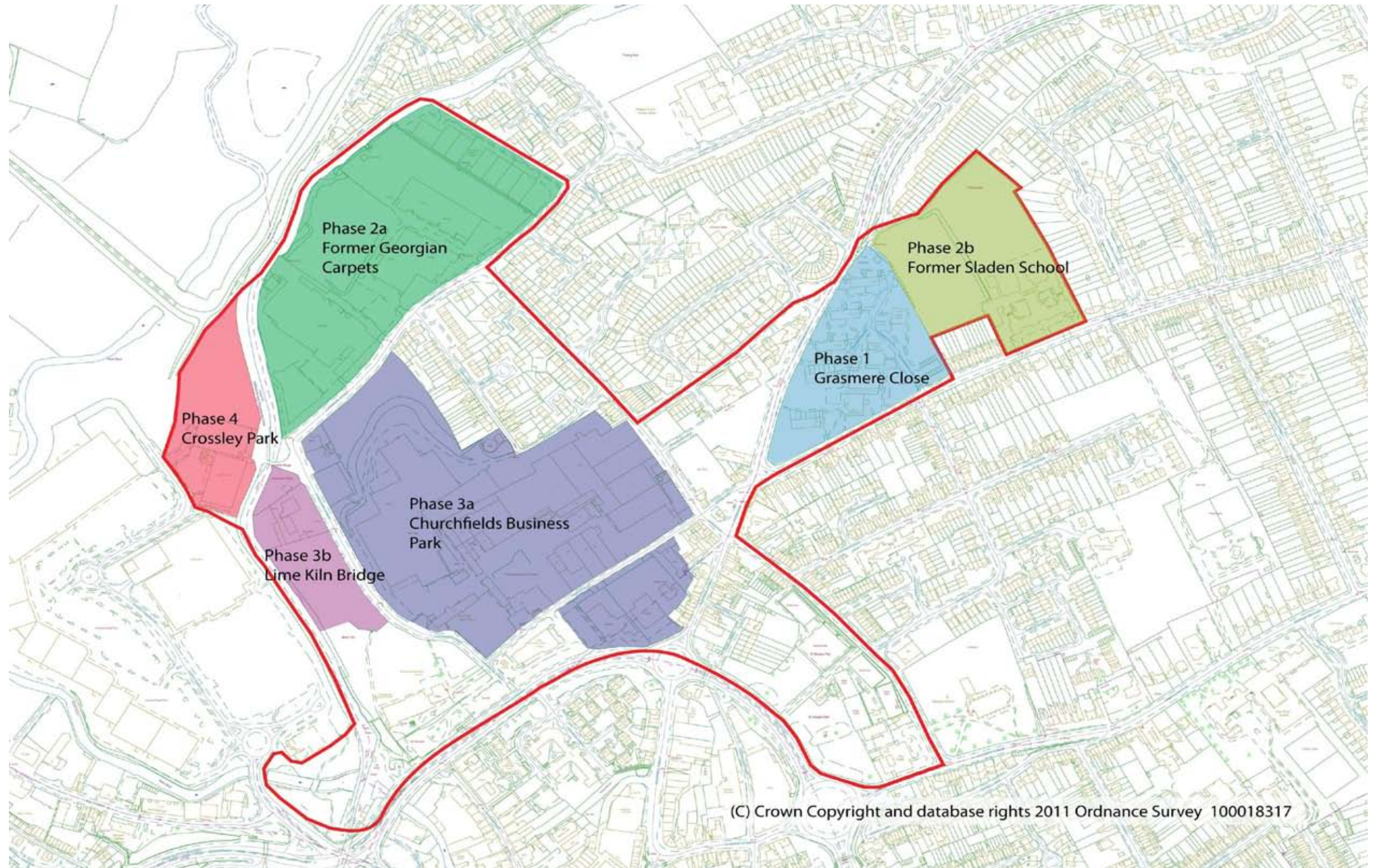
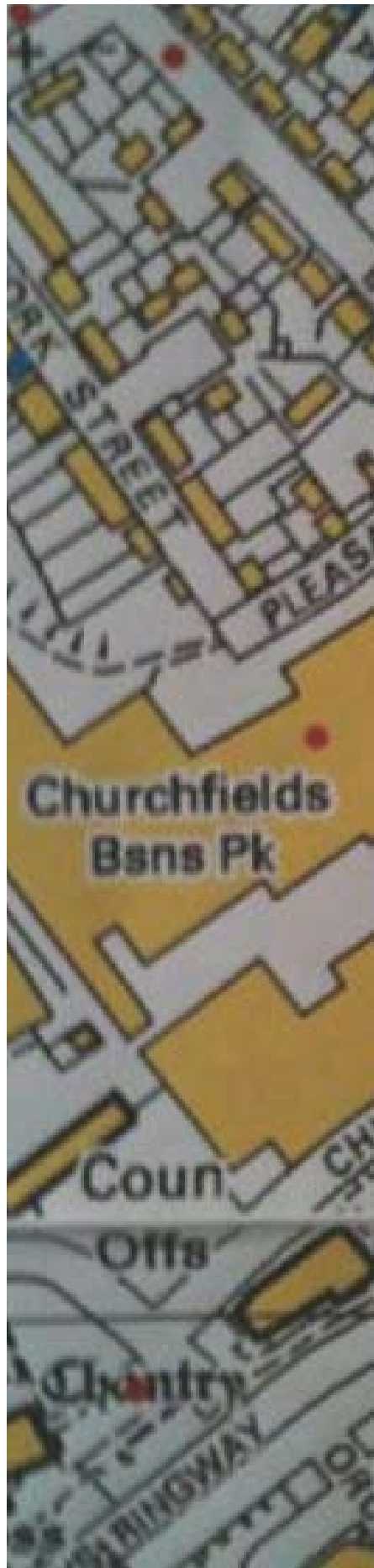


Fig 33: Approximate Site Phasing Plan



12) PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Planning applications will be expected to comply with the Wyre Forest District Council Local Development Framework, including the Adopted Core Strategy (2010), the emerging Development Plan Documents, and all relevant Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance.

Design and Access Statement

It is a formal requirement for a design and access statement to accompany most types of planning application. 'Guidance on information requirements and validation' indicates that statements should explain the design thinking and principles that have informed the development and how access issues have been dealt with. In short, a statement should detail:

Use - what buildings and spaces will be used for.

Amount - how much will be built on site.

Layout - how the buildings and public and private spaces will be arranged on the site, and the relationship between them and the buildings and spaces around the site.

Scale - how big the buildings and spaces will be (their height, width and length).

Landscaping - how open spaces will be treated to enhance and protect the character of a place.

Appearance - what the buildings and spaces will look like.

Access - why the access points and routes have been chosen, and how the site responds to road layout, including how everyone can get to and move through the place on equal terms.

Design - how the proposed design of the development will deal with any potential conflicts between the proposed use on the site and the activities taking place in the public open spaces. It must also ensure that development will not unreasonably affect the current recreational activities enjoyed by the community.

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) has produced best practice guidance on 'Design and Access Statements: how to write, read and use them' (2006).

Landscape strategy

Developers will be expected to provide information as to how the landscape will be maintained during the establishment period (usually five years).

Achieving sustainable design

It will be essential that planning applications clearly demonstrate how the development meets standards set by the Sustainable Development Supplementary Planning Guidance and supporting checklist. It should also meet the sustainability criteria set out in the adopted Core Strategy and emerging Development Plan Documents.



13) CONTACTS

For more information on the ReWyre Initiative and the Regeneration Prospectus, as well as other regeneration initiatives and sites, please visit our website at www.wyreforestdc.gov.uk.

If you are a landowner, developer or investor interested in regeneration opportunities within the Churchfields Masterplan area, please contact the Regeneration Team at:

Email: regeneration@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01562 732192

For more information on the Wyre Forest Local Development Framework, including the Kidderminster Central Area Action Plan Development Plan Document, then please also visit the website above.

Alternatively you can contact the Planning Policy Team at:

Planning Policy
Wyre Forest District Council
Duke House
Clensmore Street
Kidderminster
DY10 2JX

Or why not send us an e-mail or give us a call:

E-mail: Planning.policy@wyreforestdc.gov.uk

Telephone: 01562 732928