

Sustainability Appraisal of the Sandwell Local Plan

Scoping Report

January 2023



LEPUS CONSULTING
LANDSCAPE, ECOLOGY, PLANNING & URBAN SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability Appraisal of the Sandwell Local Plan

SA Scoping Report

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meets the requirements of the SEA Regulations. It is not intended to be a substitute for an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) or Appropriate Assessment (AA).

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Acronyms & Abbreviations

A&E	Accident and Emergency
ALC	Agricultural Land Classification
AQMA	Air Quality Management Area
BCCS	Black Country Core Strategy
BCP	Black Country Plan
BMV	Best and most versatile
BNG	Biodiversity Net Gain
CfS	Call for Sites
DBEIS	Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
DEFRA	Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
EDNA	Economic Development Needs Assessment
EU	European Union
FEMA	Functional Economic Market Area
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GI	Green Infrastructure
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GP	General Practitioner
HRA	Habitats Regulations Assessment
IRZ	Impact Risk Zone
LNR	Local Nature Reserve
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MHCLG	Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government
NHS	National Health Service
NNR	National Nature Reserve
NO₂	Nitrogen Dioxide
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
ONS	Office of National Statistics
PDL	Previously developed land
PPP	Policies Plans and Programmes
PRoW	Public Rights of Way
RPG	Registered Park and Garden
SA	Sustainability Appraisal
SAC	Special Area of Conservation
SAD	Site Allocation Document
SEA	Strategic Environmental Assessment
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
SLP	Sandwell Local Plan
SM	Scheduled Monument
SMBC	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPZ	Source Protection Zone
SSSI	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
SuDS	Sustainable Drainage System

1 Introduction

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (SMBC) have commissioned Lepus Consulting to carry out a Sustainability Appraisal (SA), incorporating the requirements of Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), to support the preparation of the Sandwell Local Plan (SLP). The purpose of Sustainability Appraisal is to assess the extent to which a plan or programme will help to achieve environmental, economic and social sustainability.
- 1.1.2 The SLP is being prepared by SMBC with the intention to support high-quality development in suitable locations to meet future needs whilst also protecting and enhancing the natural and built environment for residents, businesses and visitors.
- 1.1.3 This Scoping Report has been prepared as the first stage of the SA process in order to inform the Sustainability Appraisal of the SLP. This report will be published for consultation with the statutory consultation bodies (Natural England, Historic England, and the Environment Agency) as required by Regulation 12 (5) of The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004¹ (SEA Regulations).

1.2 Sandwell Metropolitan Borough

- 1.2.1 Sandwell is a metropolitan borough covering approximately 8,556ha, with a population of 341,900 according to the Census (2021)².
- 1.2.2 The borough's population is predicted to grow at a faster rate than both the population of the West Midlands and the national average and is forecast to increase by 30,000 between 2016 and 2030. On average, Sandwell has a younger population and a more ethnically diverse population, compared to the rest of the UK.
- 1.2.3 Sandwell lies within the Black Country, which is a predominantly urban sub-region of the West Midlands. The sub-region also includes the boroughs of Dudley, Walsall and the City of Wolverhampton. The location of Sandwell is shown in **Figure 1.1**.
- 1.2.4 The strategic centre of Sandwell is West Bromwich, with several main towns and centres including Bearwood, Blackheath, Cape Hill, Cradley Heath, Great Bridge, Oldbury, and Wednesbury, alongside various smaller towns and settlements.
- 1.2.5 Sandwell has a strong history of heavy industry and manufacturing, with the borough characterised by its rail and canal corridors. Today Sandwell is an important centre of engineering and iron foundries, producing a wide range of metal products, as well as chemicals and glass.

¹ Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations (2004). Available at:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

² Office for National Statistics (2022) How the population changed in Sandwell: Census 2021. Available at:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E08000028/> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

-
- 1.2.6 Sandwell is well connected in terms of strategic transport routes, with the M5 and M6 passing through the borough. The borough also supports a range of parks and open spaces including the Rowley Hills in the south west, and Sandwell Valley in the north east. Sandwell Valley forms Sandwell's only extent of Green Belt land.
- 1.2.7 Sandwell is one of the most deprived local authorities in England, with approximately 25.5% of children living in low-income families and life expectancy for both women and men lower than the national average.
- 1.2.8 The SLP will provide an opportunity to identify and address key issues within the borough, seeking to promote regeneration and sustainable growth.

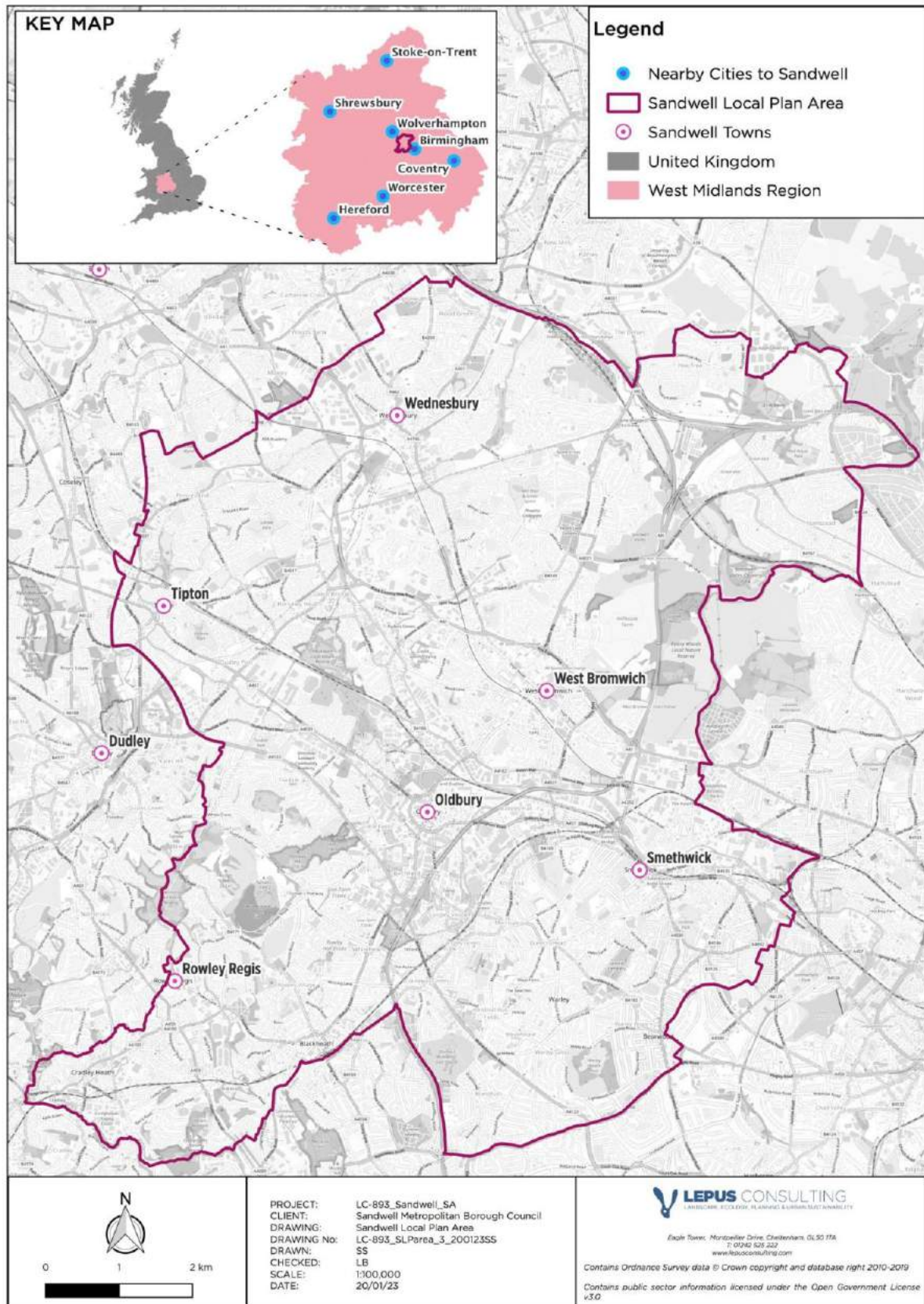


Figure 1.1: Sandwell administrative boundary

1.3 The Sandwell Local Plan

- 1.3.1 The SLP will provide a vision, objectives, planning policies and proposals for Sandwell Metropolitan Borough, to address needs and opportunities in relation to housing and the economy, whilst ensuring there are sufficient community facilities and infrastructure to support the growing population. The SLP will assist with decision making regarding planning applications in the borough and will set out policies for the local area aiming to safeguard the environment, mitigate and adapt to climate change, and achieve well-designed neighbourhoods.
- 1.3.2 The SLP is being prepared by SMBC, following the ending of work on the Black Country Plan (BCP) in autumn 2022. The SLP will also seek to incorporate strategic and other high-level policies adapted from some of those included in the draft BCP, to ensure that the SLP provides appropriate guidance at both the strategic and locally specific levels.
- 1.3.3 An Issues and Options document has been prepared by SMBC and is being consulted on alongside this SA Scoping Report and the Regulation 18 Issues and Options SA Report, whereby the public will be asked to give their views on the topics and issues the new plan should cover as it progresses. Comments received during the consultation will help to inform the plan making process and accompanying SA process going forward. Further consultations and opportunities to comment on the emerging SLP and accompanying SA outputs will occur at each plan making stage.
- 1.3.4 Once adopted, the SLP will form part of the statutory development plan for the borough covering a minimum of 15 years, replacing and updating the currently adopted Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS)³, Sandwell Site Allocation and Delivery Development Plan Document (SAD)⁴, and various Area Action Plans which cover the period from 2006 to 2026.
- 1.3.5 Key facts relating to the emerging SLP are presented in **Table 1.1**.

Table 1.1: Key facts relating to the Sandwell Local Plan

Responsible authority	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council
Title of plan	Sandwell Local Plan
What prompted the plan (e.g. legislative, regulatory or administrative provision)	The SLP is being developed in accordance with the requirements of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 and The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2012.
Area covered by the plan	Sandwell Metropolitan Borough (see Figure 1.1).

³ Black Country Authorities (2011) Black Country Core Strategy. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t1/p2/> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

⁴ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2012) Site Allocations and Delivery Development Plan Document. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200275/planning_and_buildings/676/site_allocations_and_delivery_development_plan_document [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

Purpose and/or objectives of the plan	The SLP will set out the spatial planning strategy for the local authority area. The SLP's vision will be guided by and echo the priorities identified in the Corporate Plan and other adopted Council strategies, to deliver safe, healthy and sustainable growth to support communities across the borough.
Contact point	The Planning Policy Team, Sandwell Council, PO Box 2374, Oldbury, B69 3DE Email: Sandwell_LocalPlan@sandwell.gov.uk Website: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/sandwelllocalplan

1.4 Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment

- 1.4.1 This document constitutes the SA Scoping Report for the SLP. This represents Stage A of the SA process, according to the Planning Practice Guidance on Sustainability Appraisal⁵ (see **Figure 1.2**).
- 1.4.2 SA is the process of informing local development plans to maximise their sustainability value. SA is a statutory requirement for development plan documents, the key objective of which is to promote sustainable development.
- 1.4.3 The requirements to carry out SA and SEA are distinct, although it is possible to satisfy both obligations using a single appraisal process.
- 1.4.4 The European Union Directive 2001/42/EC⁶ (SEA Directive) applies to a wide range of public plans and programmes on land use, energy, waste, agriculture, transport and more (see Article 3(2) of the Directive for other plan or programme types). The objective of the SEA procedure can be summarised as follows: *"the objective of this Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development"*.

⁵ MHCLG (2021) Planning practice guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁶ Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 June 2001 on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (SEA Directive). Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32001L0042&from=EN> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

- 1.4.5 The SEA Directive has been transposed into English law by the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004⁷ (SEA Regulations). Under the requirements of the SEA Directive and SEA Regulations, specific types of plans that set the framework for the future development consent of projects must be subject to an environmental assessment. Therefore, it is a legal requirement for the Local Plan to be subject to SEA throughout its preparation.
- 1.4.6 SA is a UK-specific procedure used to appraise the impacts and effects of development plans in the UK. It is a legal requirement as specified by S19(5) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004⁸ and should be an appraisal of the economic, social and environmental sustainability of development plans. The present statutory requirement for SA lies in The Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012⁹. SA is a systematic process for evaluating the environmental consequences of proposed plans or programmes to ensure environmental issues are fully integrated and addressed at the earliest appropriate stage of decision-making.
- 1.4.7 Public consultation is an important aspect of the integrated SA/SEA process.

1.5 Best Practice Guidance

- 1.5.1 Government policy recommends that both SA and SEA are undertaken under a single sustainability appraisal process, which incorporates the requirements of the SEA Regulations. This can be achieved through integrating the requirements of SEA into the SA process. The approach for carrying out an integrated SA and SEA is based on best practice guidance, including the following:
- European Commission (2004) Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the assessment of the effects of certain plan and programmes on the environment¹⁰.
 - Office of Deputy Prime Minister (2005) A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive¹¹.
 - Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021) National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)¹².

⁷ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/contents/made> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

⁸ Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2004/5/contents> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

⁹ The Town and Country Planning Regulations 2012. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2012/767/contents/made> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

¹⁰ European Commission (2004) Implementation of Directive 2001/42 on the assessment of the effects of certain plan and programmes on the environment. Available at: http://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/eia/pdf/030923_sea_guidance.pdf [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

¹¹ Office of Deputy Prime Minister (2005) A Practical Guide to the SEA Directive. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7657/practicalguides_ea.pdf [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

¹² MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

- Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (2021) Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)¹³.
- Royal Town Planning Institute (2018) Strategic Environmental Assessment, Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of SEA/SA for land use plans¹⁴.

1.6 SEA Regulations Requirements

1.6.1 This Scoping Report represents Stage A of the SA process (see **Figure 1.2**), and presents information in relation to:

- Identifying other relevant plans, programmes and environmental protection objectives;
- Collecting baseline information;
- Identifying sustainability problems and key issues;
- Preparing the SA Framework; and
- Consultation on the scope of SA with the consultation bodies.

1.6.2 Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations¹⁵ sets out the various topics that should be considered in the SEA process, as follows:

- a) biodiversity;
- b) population;
- c) human health;
- d) fauna;
- e) flora;
- f) soil;
- g) water;
- h) air;
- i) climatic factors;
- j) material assets;
- k) cultural heritage, including architectural and archaeological heritage;
- l) landscape; and
- m) the inter-relationship between these factors.

1.6.3 The policy, plan and programme (PPP) review, the baseline data and the other relevant sustainability issues are largely structured in accordance with the topics of Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations, the details of which are presented in **Table 1.2**.

¹³ DLUHC & MHCLG (2021) Planning practice guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

¹⁴ Royal Town Planning Institute (2018) Strategic Environmental Assessment, Improving the effectiveness and efficiency of SEA/SA for land use plans. Available at: <https://www.rtpi.org.uk/media/1822/sea-sapracticeadvicefull2018c.pdf> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

¹⁵ The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004. Schedule 2: Information for Environmental Reports. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2004/1633/schedules/made> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

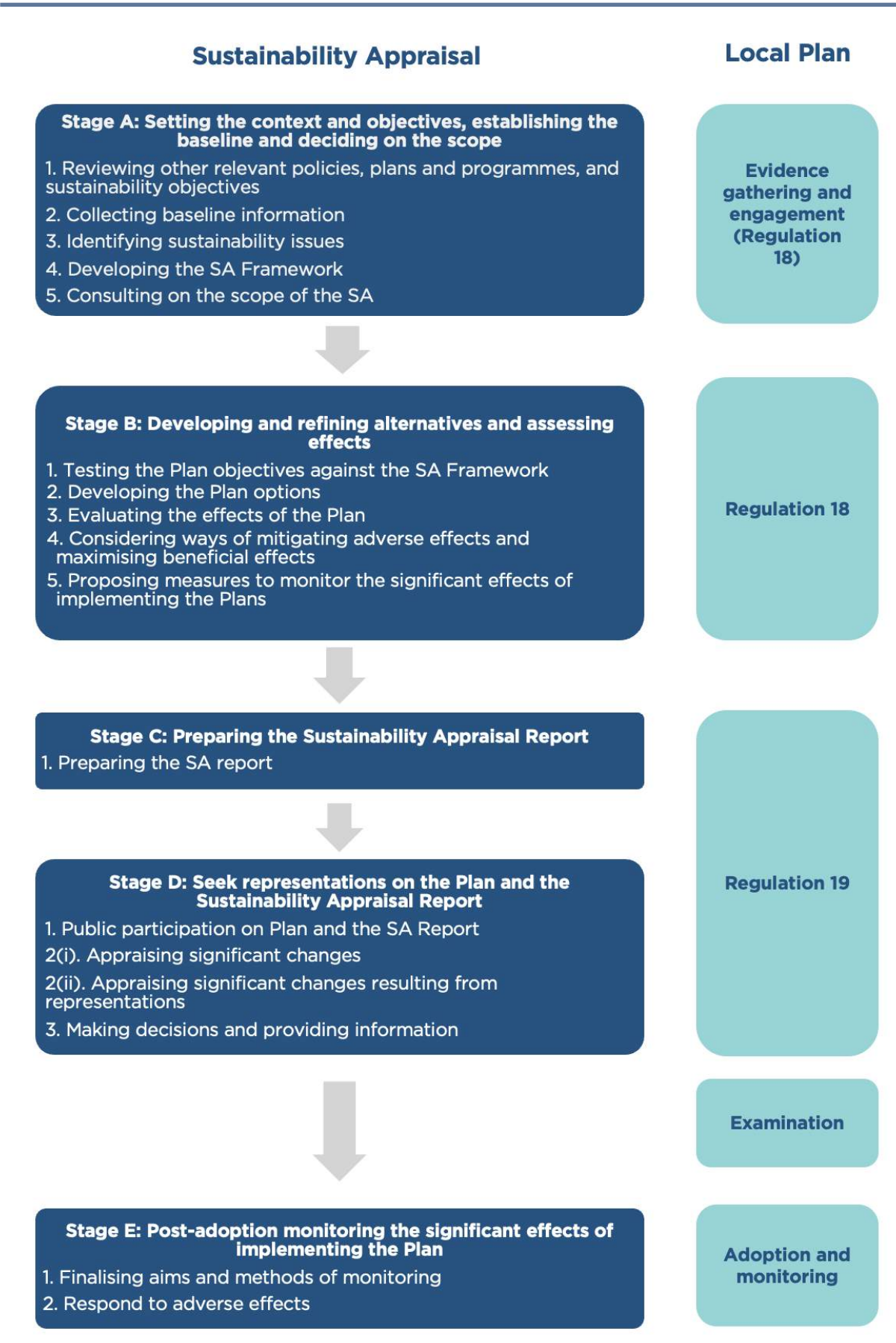


Figure 1.2: Sustainability appraisal process

Table 1.2: Sustainability themes

Sustainability theme	Relevant SEA topics included in Schedule 2 of SEA Regulations	What is included in the sustainability theme? (not exhaustive)
Accessibility and transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transport infrastructure; Walking and cycling; Accessibility.
Air quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air pollution sources; Air quality hotspots; Air quality management.
Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Flora Fauna 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Habitats and species; Nature conservation designations; Landscape features; Geological features.
Climatic factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climatic factors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greenhouse gas emissions; Effects of climate change; Renewable energy; Climate change adaptation; Flooding.
Human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human health 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health inequalities; Access to healthcare; Sport, fitness and activity levels.
Cultural heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated and non-designated heritage features; Setting of cultural heritage assets; Historic landscape character; Archaeological assets.
Landscape and townscape	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape designations; Visual amenity; Landscape/townscape character; Tranquility.
Population and material assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population Material assets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Waste and recycling; Minerals; Skills, education and employment; House prices, quality and affordability; Population size and density; Indices of Multiple Deprivation; Crime; Access to community facilities and local services; Recreation and amenity.
Water and Soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water Soil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soils; Water resources; Water quality; Contaminated land.

1.7 Policy, Plan and Programme review

- 1.7.1 The SLP may be influenced in various ways by other policies, plans or programmes (PPPs), or by external sustainability objectives such as those put forward in higher strategies or by legislation. The SA/SEA process will consider potential synergies between these PPPs and address any inconsistencies and constraints.
- 1.7.2 A short introduction to each theme, based on the PPP review, is presented in **Chapters 2 - 10**. The full PPP Review is included in **Appendix A**.

1.8 Baseline data collection

- 1.8.1 **Chapters 2 - 10** review the current environmental, social and economic conditions relevant to Sandwell and the emerging SLP. The purpose of the baseline review is to help define the key sustainability issues for the SLP. The baseline data should be indicative of local circumstances, be up to date and be fit for purpose.
- 1.8.2 One of the purposes of consultation on the Scoping Report is to seek views on whether the selected data is appropriate. The baseline has been constructed utilising a wide range of data sources, with GIS (Geographic Information Systems) data used where available. The data has been presented through tables, text and GIS mapping, and all data sources have been referenced as appropriate.
- 1.8.3 Where data is available at a local scale it has been used to inform the scoping process. If local data is not available, regional information has been used and clearly stated.
- 1.8.4 Within **Chapters 2 – 10**, a summary of the key sustainability issues that have been identified relating to each sustainability theme have been provided, as well as the likely evolution of the baseline without the SLP.

1.9 Structure of the Scoping Report

- 1.9.1 This chapter has provided background information to the SLP and the accompanying SA. The remainder of the report is structured as follows:
- **Chapter 2** – Accessibility and transport
 - **Chapter 3** – Air quality
 - **Chapter 4** – Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity
 - **Chapter 5** – Climatic factors
 - **Chapter 6** – Cultural heritage
 - **Chapter 7** – Human health
 - **Chapter 8** – Landscape and townscape
 - **Chapter 9** – Population and material assets
 - **Chapter 10** – Water and soil resources
 - **Chapter 11** – Outlines the purpose of the SA Framework and SA Objectives
 - **Chapter 12** – Outlines the next steps for the SLP and SA process
 - **Appendix A** – Review of relevant PPPs

2 Accessibility and Transport

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Whilst not a topic listed in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations in itself, accessibility and transport interact with several other topics such as population and human health, material assets and climatic factors. Improving sustainable transport accessibility and usage would be likely to lead to a reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, encourage cycling and walking, and reduce congestion, with benefits to climate change mitigation, health and wellbeing and the economy.

2.1.2 Key challenges faced regarding accessibility and transport include the need to modernise transport infrastructure and make transport more sustainable. Various PPPs promote the need for a transport network which is sustainable but also supports economic growth, including the Eddington Transport Study¹⁶, the 'Road to Zero' strategy¹⁷ and Transport for West Midlands 'Movement for Growth' Delivery Plan¹⁸. The introduction of car free zones, walkable neighbourhoods, and the development of new technologies such as electric vehicle infrastructure should form fundamental aspects of sustainable transport going forward.

2.1.3 The PPPs highlight that congestion on roads continues to be a key challenge. Local plans should therefore focus on meeting transport needs more effectively through improved access to jobs and services, particularly for those most in need, in ways which are more sustainable.

2.2 Baseline and key issues

2.2.1 Sandwell is well connected in terms of strategic transport routes, with the M5 and M6 passing through the borough as well as a network of A and B roads linking the local centres (see **Figure 2.1**). Several bus routes pass through the area, including services from National Express West Midlands and Diamond Bus providing regular connections to centres within and surrounding the SLP area.

¹⁶ Eddington Transport Study (2006) Transport's Role in Sustaining the UK's Productivity and Competitiveness. Available at: <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20090115123436/http://www.dft.gov.uk/162259/187604/206711/volume1.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

¹⁷ HM Government (2018) The Road to Zero: Next steps towards cleaner road transport and delivering our Industrial Strategy. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/739460/road-to-zero.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

¹⁸ TfWM Movement for Growth: 2026 Delivery Plan for Transport. Available at: <https://governance.wmca.org.uk/documents/s674/Draft%202026%20Delivery%20Plan%20for%20Transport.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

-
- 2.2.2 Sandwell is well served by rail and metro (see **Figure 2.2**). 12 railway stations can be found in the borough, providing links to Birmingham, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Stourbridge as well as the wider national rail network. The West Midlands Metro line passes through Sandwell, providing connections between Wolverhampton and Birmingham City Centre.



Figure 2.1: Road transportation networks in and around the SLP area (source: Transport for West Midlands and Ordnance Survey)

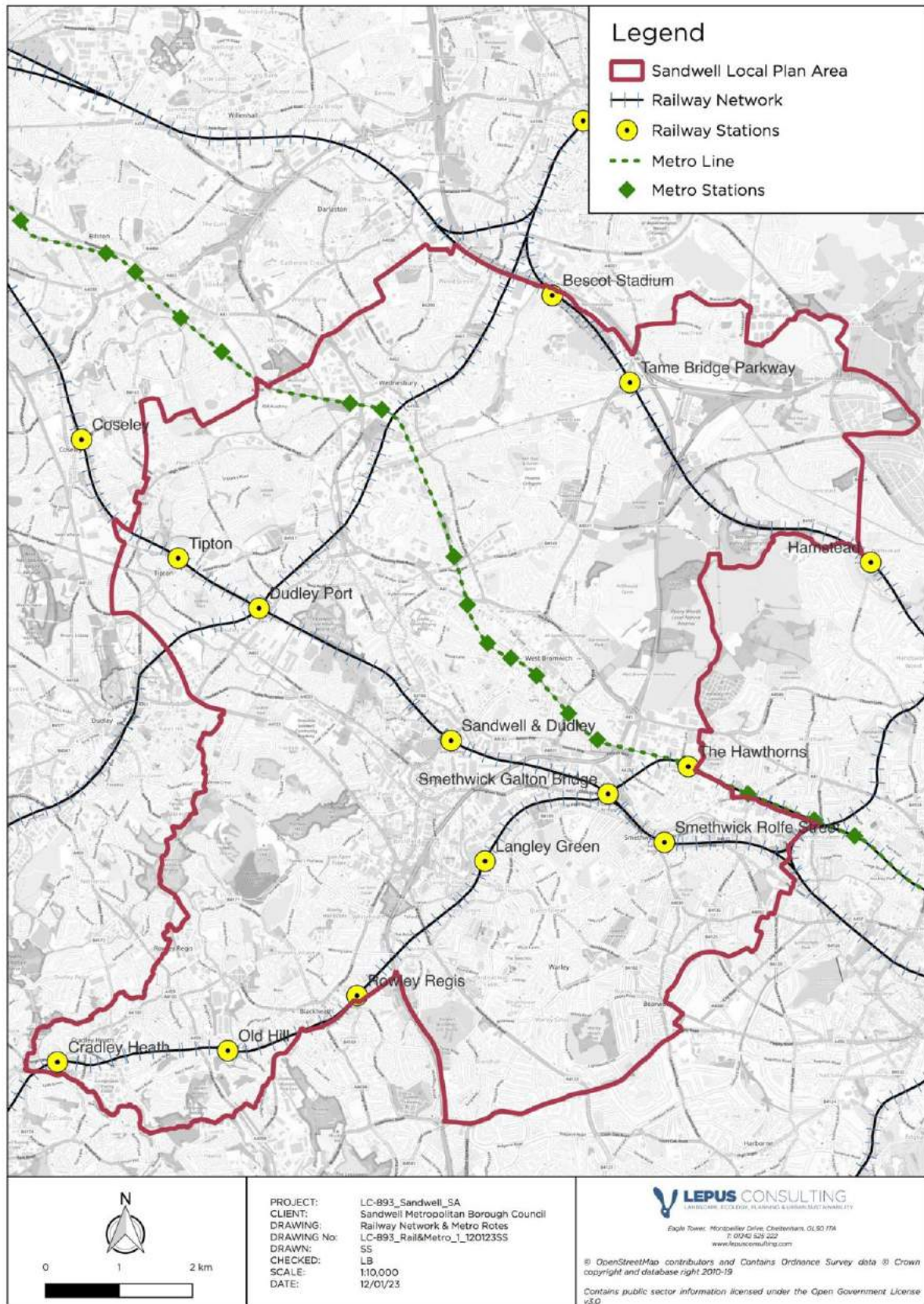


Figure 2.2: Rail and metro transportation networks in and around the SLP area (source: Transport for West Midlands and Ordnance Survey)

2.2.3 Census data indicates that the majority of residents (53%) travel to work by driving a car or van, with smaller proportions of residents travelling via public transport (see **Figure 2.3**).

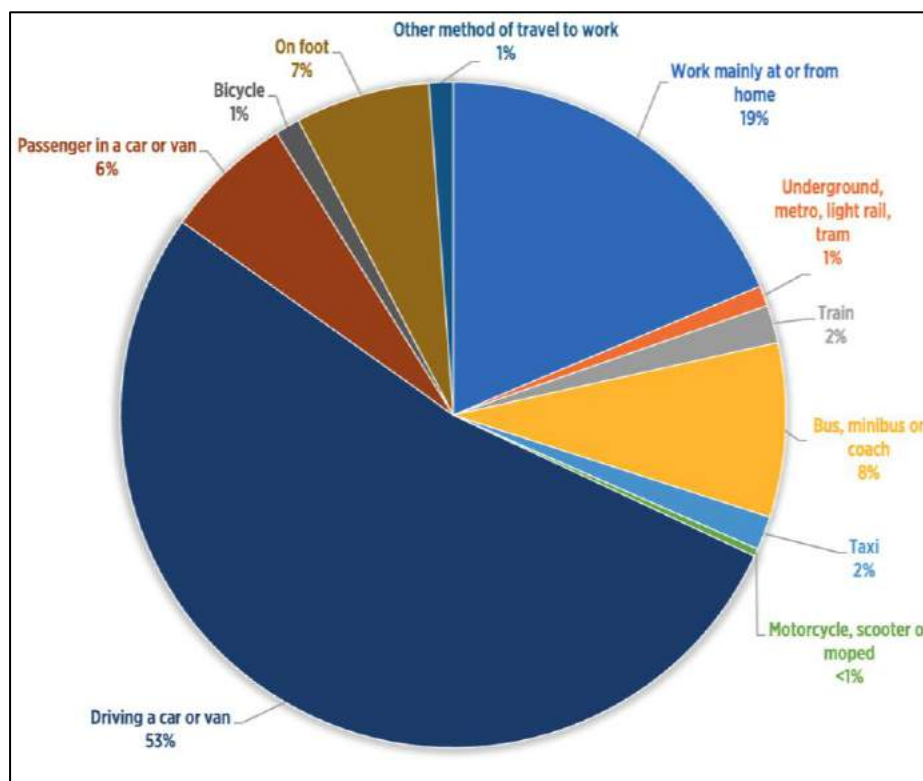


Figure 2.3: Method of travel to work for residents in Sandwell¹⁹

2.2.4 Within Sandwell the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network is fragmented owing to the highly urbanised nature of the borough. The less developed areas, such as Sandwell Valley in the north east, support a greater extent of PRoW. The borough also supports a number of strategic and local cycle paths. The canal network in particular acts as an important active travel route through the urban areas. Cycle and walking routes are shown on **Figure 2.4**.

2.2.5 As part of the evidence base for the former BCP, transport modelling data²⁰ was produced which indicates travel times to employment, schools and local services which will be used to inform the appraisal of options and sites in the SLP SA process.

¹⁹ ONS (2022) Travel to work, England and Wales: Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemployeetypes/bulletins/traveltoworkenglandandwales/census2021> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

²⁰ Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council

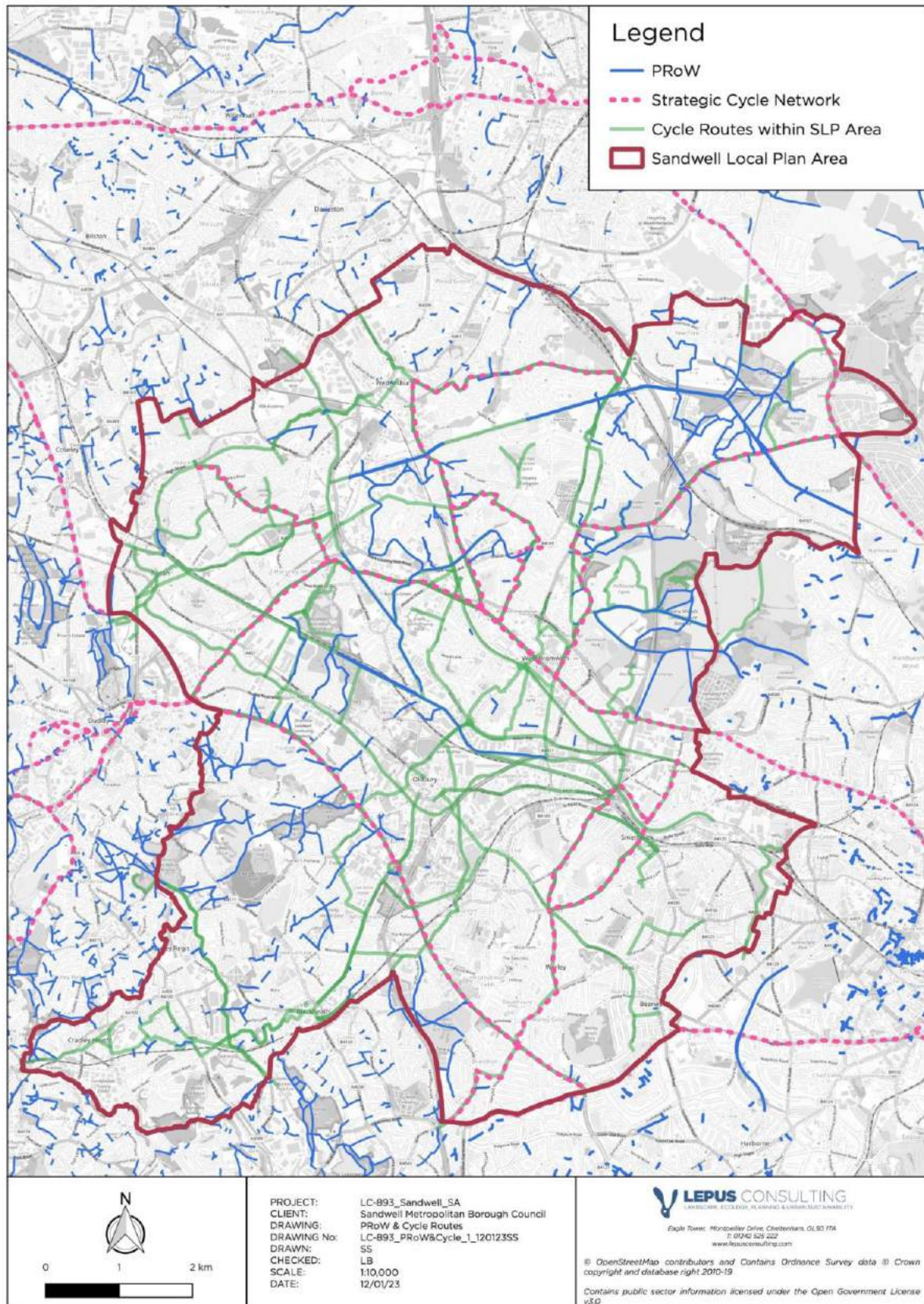


Figure 2.4: Public Rights of Way and cycle routes in the SLP area (source: SMBC and Transport for West Midlands)

Box 2.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Accessibility and Transport

Key issues for accessibility and transport include:

- ⇒ Although there is a high amount of traffic and cross-boundary movement to neighbouring authorities including Birmingham, Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton, 29.2% of Sandwell residents have no access to a car according to the 2021 Census.
- ⇒ Severance of active travel routes owing to Sandwell's location alongside the motorway network and the local conurbation has resulted in the landscape being dominated by local highway networks.
- ⇒ Access to transport can be a barrier to work, and for social wellbeing. Better access to shops, services, healthcare, education, entertainment, and other services is needed for all residents, and particularly for socially excluded groups.
- ⇒ There is a need to focus development within locations where there is good access to high quality public transport infrastructure, or the opportunity to provide it. Residential development in particular should be focused within walkable neighbourhoods where people can access local services on foot.
- ⇒ Better integration of, and connections between, different transport modes is required to facilitate sustainable and well-connected neighbourhoods. Public transport, park and ride and cycle hire schemes should be improved.

Box 2.2: Likely evolution without the Plan: Accessibility and Transport

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- There is likely to be an increase in the proportion of the road transport fleet which are electric or hybrid vehicles, in line with national trends. Over time, there is likely to be a rise in car ownership in general.
- The Local Transport Plan will still be implemented, which would be likely to have a positive impact on Sandwell's road network, seeking to relieve congestion and improve provision of public transport across the plan area. Although, in absence of the SLP there may be reduced scope to implement and monitor effective policies and strategies which can facilitate alternative transport modes and encourage behavioural changes.

3 Air Quality

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Poor air quality is among the largest environmental risks to public health in the UK. Several objectives have been established in relation to air quality at the European, UK and regional levels seeking to reduce emissions of specific pollutants to minimise adverse effects on health and the environment. Key legislation / PPPs include the Environment Act (2021)²¹ which sets out air quality as a priority area, the Air Quality Plan for NO₂²² and the Clean Air Strategy²³.

3.2 Baseline and key issues

3.2.1 The entirety of Sandwell Borough is designated as an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), known as 'Sandwell AQMA'. The AQMA was declared in 2005, due to exceedances in the national annual mean objectives for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂)²⁴ owing to the borough's large areas of established industry and complex road network of major arterial roads, including the M5 and M6 motorways.

3.2.2 The principal source of air pollution in Sandwell is vehicle exhaust emissions. Elevated NO₂ levels are observed at busy junctions, narrow congested streets and in town centres.

3.2.3 The adjacent authorities of Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton are also wholly designated as AQMAs.

3.2.4 The latest Air Quality Action Plan for Sandwell²⁵ states that NO₂ concentrations in seven areas continue to exceed the annual mean objective. Whilst this represents a decrease compared to the extent of exceedances which led to the AQMA's declaration, the Action Plan sets out key priorities for the Council to continue to improve air quality and reduce associated adverse health impacts, including:

- Developing specific measures in consultation with communities to reduce NO₂ concentrations at 'hot spot' locations;
- Promoting public transport, walking, cycling and switching to low or zero emission vehicles;

²¹ Environment Act 2021. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

²² DEFRA and DfT (2018) Air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-quality-plan-for-nitrogen-dioxide-no2-in-uk-2017> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

²³ DEFRA (2019) Clean Air Strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019/clean-air-strategy-2019-executive-summary> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

²⁴ DEFRA (no date) AQMAs Declared by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. Available at: https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/aqma/local-authorities?la_id=222 [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

²⁵ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Air Quality Action Plan 2020 – 2025. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/30801/aqap_2020-2025 [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

- Reviewing what impact the council has on air quality in its role as a provider of public services and develop a plan to reduce emissions from its activities;
- Supporting and encourage taxi and private hire vehicle operators and drivers in reducing emissions from vehicles;
- Applying existing and developing new planning development policies that support air quality improvements;
- Developing information, social media and campaigns to encourage behaviour change around improving physical health and increasing use of low emission vehicles; and
- Working in partnership with Birmingham City Council to minimise negative impacts on Sandwell residents resulted from the implementation of the Clean Air Zone.

3.2.5 As all proposed development in Sandwell will be located within an AQMA, this is likely to lead to adverse impacts on health and may prevent the Council from achieving air quality targets. It is assumed that new development proposals would result in an increase in traffic and thus could potentially increase traffic-related air pollution. Both existing and future residents would be exposed to this change in air quality.

3.2.6 It is widely accepted that the effects of air pollution from road transport decreases with distance from the source of pollution. The Department for Transport (DfT) in their Transport Analysis Guidance consider that, *"beyond 200m from the link centre, the contribution of vehicle emissions to local pollution levels is not significant"*²⁶. This statement is supported by National Highways and Natural England based on evidence presented in a number of research papers^{27 28}. Exposure to road transport associated emissions may have long term health impacts.

3.2.7 Air pollution, particularly excessive nitrogen deposition, is known to be harmful to the health and functioning of natural habitats.

²⁶ Department for Transport (2019) TAG unit A3 Environmental Impact Appraisal. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/825064/tag-unit-a3-environmental-impact-appraisal.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

²⁷ Bignal, K., Ashmore, M & Power, S. (2004) The ecological effects of diffuse air pollution from road transport. English Nature Research Report No. 580, Peterborough.

²⁸ Ricardo-AEA (2016) The ecological effects of air pollution from road transport: an updated review. Natural England Commissioned Report No. 199.

Box 3.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Air Quality

Key issues for air quality include:

- ⇒ The borough's industrial character accompanied by the strategic network of local and major arterial roads, including the M5 and M6, has led to high traffic volumes and congestion, with adverse implications for air quality.
- ⇒ Sandwell AQMA covers the whole local authority area and the principal pollutant affecting air quality is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), mostly sourced from road traffic. There is a need to ensure development avoids exacerbating air pollution issues in existing AQMAs and contributes to air quality improvement measures.
- ⇒ There is a need to ensure development proposals are designed in order to avoid any significant adverse impacts from pollution, including cumulative impacts, on human health and wellbeing, biodiversity, the effective operation of neighbouring land uses and the water environment.

Box 3.2: Likely evolution without the Plan: Air Quality

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- Sandwell AQMA covers the whole local authority area and the principal pollutant affecting air quality is nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), mostly sourced from road traffic. Continuing to monitor air quality, especially within AQMAs, and implementation of measures outlined in Air Quality Action Plans will ensure that objectives are in place to decrease exceedances over time.
- Traffic and congestion are likely to increase with population growth, with implications in particular for air quality, residents and wildlife. Although national trends suggest there is an increasing uptake of lower emission vehicle types which will be likely to help limit road transport associated emissions in the SLP area, in absence of the plan there may be reduced scope to implement and monitor effective policies and strategies which can facilitate alternative transport modes and encourage behavioural changes to improve air quality.

4 Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Geodiversity

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The conservation of biological and geological diversity and the protection and monitoring of endangered and vulnerable species and habitats is of great importance. National and European policies identify a hierarchy of designations which aim to promote the protection and enhancement of the natural environment. Key PPPs include the 25 Year Environment Plan²⁹ and the Biodiversity Strategy for England³⁰ which seek to halt biodiversity loss, promote nature recovery, and expand multi-functional green infrastructure (GI) networks.
- 4.1.2 The Environment Act 2021³¹ introduced targets, plans and policies for improving the natural environment. An important aspect of the Act is the focus on biodiversity net gain (BNG), and the incorporation of the Biodiversity Metric 3.1³² (or its successor) into law to ensure all new development delivers 10% net gain in biodiversity. Mandatory BNG is expected to come into force for Town and Country Planning Act developments in November 2023³³.
- 4.1.3 Local-level action plans for biodiversity and GI strategies should reflect these ecosystem-wide approaches and complement this with local priorities and goals to ensure that the Plan area's wildlife, ecology, geology and ecosystem services are protected and enhanced.

²⁹ HM Government (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

³⁰ Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2011) Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

³¹ Environment Act 2021. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/30/contents/enacted> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

³² Natural England (2021) The Biodiversity Metric 3.1. Available at: <http://nepubprod.appspot.com/publication/6049804846366720> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

³³ Natural England (2022) Biodiversity Metric Milestone – Defra consultation on the biodiversity metric. Available at: <https://naturalengland.blog.gov.uk/2022/08/05/biodiversity-metric-milestone-defra-consultation-on-the-biodiversity-metric/> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

4.2 Baseline and key issues

Habitats sites

- 4.2.1 Habitats sites provide valuable ecological infrastructure for the protection of rare, endangered and/or vulnerable natural habitats and species of exceptional importance within the EU. These sites consist of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) designated under the Habitats Directive, and Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under the Birds Directive. Additionally, paragraph 181 of the NPPF (2021) requires that sites listed under the Ramsar Convention are to be given the same protection as fully designated Habitats sites.
- 4.2.2 The closest Habitats sites to Sandwell are 'Fens Pools' SAC approximately 3km to the west and 'Cannock Extension Canal' SAC approximately 8km to the north. Threats and pressures to Fens Pools include habitat fragmentation and water pollution³⁴, and for Cannock Extension Canal water pollution and air pollution are key threats³⁵.
- 4.2.3 A Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA) is being prepared alongside the development of the SLP which will provide an in-depth assessment of the potential threats and pressures to a number of Habitats sites and analysis of potential impact pathways. The outputs of the HRA process will help to inform the SA.

National and local designations

- 4.2.4 There are no Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) within Sandwell. Nearby SSSIs include 'Wren's Nest' and 'The Leasowes' in Dudley. SSSI Impact Risk Zones (IRZs) within Sandwell flag larger scale industrial / commercial development as requiring consultation with Natural England such as aviation and quarrying, rather than residential development likely to be within influence of the SLP.
- 4.2.5 There are no National Nature Reserves (NNRs) located within the SLP area, but both 'Wren's Nest' and 'Saltwells' NNRs lie within 1km of the Sandwell boundary to the west, in Dudley.
- 4.2.6 Nine Local Nature Reserves (LNRs) are located within Sandwell, forming key sections of the ecological network within the SLP area in addition to the numerous Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC) and Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC). Areas of geological interest include Sandwell Valley Country Park and the Rowley Hills. National and local designations in and around Sandwell are shown on **Figure 4.1**.
- 4.2.7 Following ecological survey work conducted between 2019 and 2022, and endorsement by the Local Sites Partnership, the boundaries of some SLINCs in Sandwell have been amended. This includes the SLINCs at 'Alexandra Road', 'John's Lane', 'Land at Yew Tree' and 'Brandhall'. The updated SLINCs will be used as part of the evidence base to inform assessments in the SA process going forward.

³⁴ Natural England (2014) Site Improvement Plan: Fens Pools. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/4872756676001792> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

³⁵ Natural England (2014) Site Improvement Plan: Cannock Extension Canal. Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/file/6749431462363136> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

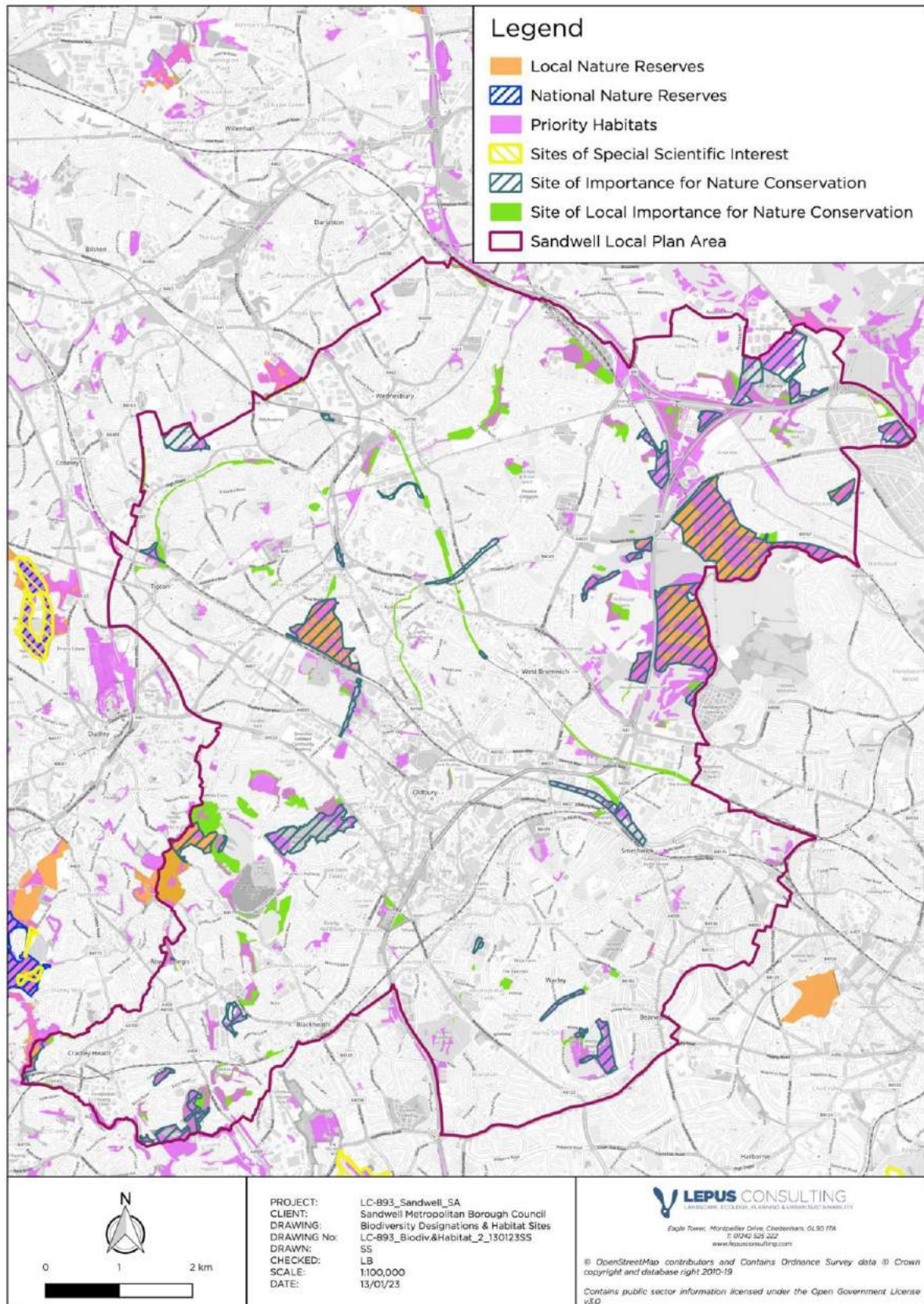


Figure 4.1: Biodiversity sites and habitats in and around the SLP area (source: Natural England and SMBC)

Habitats and green infrastructure

- 4.2.8 Priority habitats found within Sandwell include deciduous woodland, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, and good quality semi-improved grassland. Some small extents of lowland priority habitats including heathland, meadows and acid grassland can also be found. Careful consideration should be given during the plan-making process to the potential impacts on habitats and species of principle importance in accordance with the NERC Act 2006³⁶.
- 4.2.9 Ancient woodland is defined as an area that has been wooded continuously since at least 1600AD and includes 'ancient semi-natural woodland' and 'plantations on ancient woodland sites', both of which have equal protection under the NPPF³⁷. There are very few areas of ancient woodland within the SLP area.
- 4.2.10 Sandwell contains a relatively small area of Green Belt land; however, it supports a high level of ecological value³⁸ with opportunities for implementing the Nature Recovery Network (see Figure 4.2). Multi-functional GI assets including natural and semi-natural features within the urban areas should also be conserved and enhanced to support ecosystem services and nature recovery.

³⁶ Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006. Available at:
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/16/contents> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

³⁷ Forestry Commission and Natural England (2022) Ancient woodland, ancient trees and veteran trees: protecting them from development. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/ancient-woodland-and-veteran-trees-protection-surveys-licences> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

³⁸ EcoRecord (2019) An Ecological Evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt, October 2019. Available at:
<https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13896/an-ecological-evaluation-of-the-black-country-green-belt-final-report-2019-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

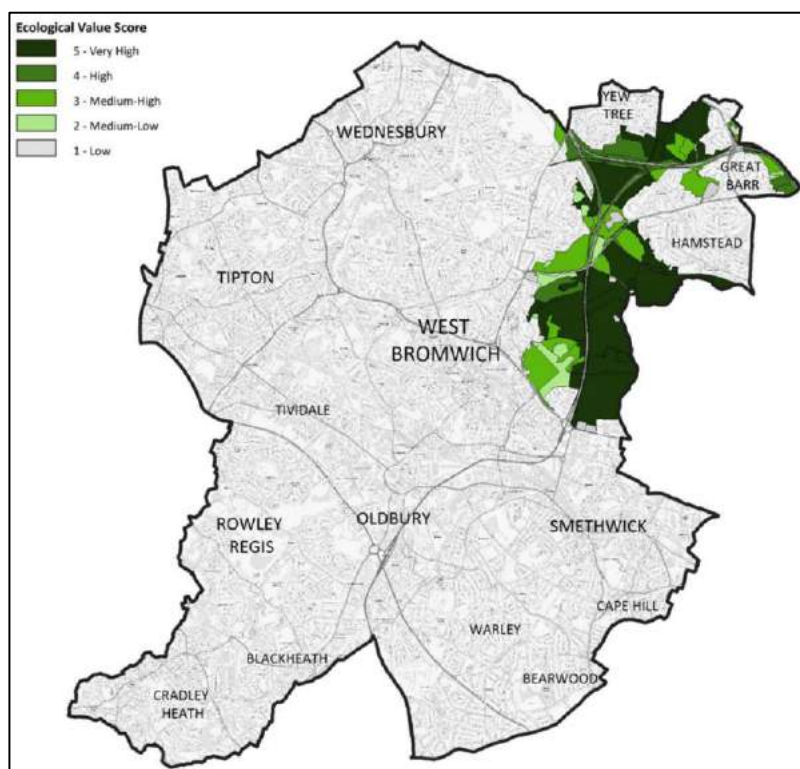


Figure 4.2: The Ecological Value Score of Sandwell's Green Belt³⁹

Box 4.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Geodiversity

Key issues for biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity include:

- ⇒ Growth promoted within the emerging SLP is likely to put pressure on biodiversity resources. There are potential impacts such as habitat fragmentation resulting from new development areas and recreational pressures on wildlife sites.
- ⇒ A number of Habitats sites, which are sensitive to changes in air quality, may be affected by changes in traffic generated by the SLP growth alone and in-combination with other plans and projects. The HRA of the SLP alongside a review of traffic modelling data will explore these potential effects in detail.
- ⇒ The SLP area is hydrologically connected to the Severn and the Humber Estuaries and their associated biodiversity designations. Habitats at these sites and migratory species of fish which use the wider catchment for phases of their lifecycle are sensitive to changes in water supply and quality which may be influenced by development proposals within the SLP. The HRA of the SLP will explore these potential effects in detail.
- ⇒ Careful consideration should be given during the plan-making process to the potential impacts on habitats and species of principle importance. The remaining areas of priority habitats within Sandwell should be protected from development and enhanced where possible.
- ⇒ There is a need to establish a coordinated and comprehensive GI network providing connectivity between biodiversity sites, green spaces, watercourses and other environmental features across the SLP area and wider Black Country.
- ⇒ Sandwell Valley supports a high level of ecological value, which may be lost or degraded as pressure increases for new development.

³⁹ Ibid

Box 4.2: *Likely evolution without the Plan: Biodiversity, Flora, Fauna and Geodiversity*

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- Sites designated for their national and international biodiversity and/or geodiversity value would continue to benefit from legislative protection. The NPPF and its policies relating to biodiversity would continue to be material considerations in planning decisions.
- Mandatory BNG is expected to come into force for Town and Country Planning Act developments in November 2023, although without the SLP there may be more limited opportunity to strive for higher BNG targets or other biodiversity enhancement measures. Without the SLP there may be less opportunity to establish a strategically planned GI network across Sandwell, and/or potential habitat banks for delivering compensatory BNG off-site, where on-site delivery is proved to be unviable.
- It may be difficult to ensure that development is of appropriate type, scale and location to avoid adverse impacts on either biodiversity/geodiversity designations (of international or local significance) or on the functioning ecological network of Sandwell and the wider area and the various essential ecosystem services this provides, without the SLP.

5 Climatic Factors

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 Anthropogenic climate change is predominantly the result of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. GHGs are emitted from a wide variety of sources, including transport, construction, agriculture and waste. Typically, development leads to a net increase in GHG emissions in the local area, although efforts can be made to help limit these increases.
- 5.1.2 Commitments to reduce GHG emissions have been introduced from the international level to the sub-regional level. The PPPs address policy development across all sectors and at all levels, combining both demand management (reduced energy consumption and increased efficiency of use) and supply-side measures (low carbon options and renewables). The Committee on Climate Change (CCC)'s latest progress report⁴⁰ discusses the need for further measures to be implemented by the government to ensure the UK meets the target of net zero by 2050. The West Midlands Combined Authority are aiming to achieve net zero by 2041, with key priorities identified in their Five Year Plan⁴¹.
- 5.1.3 The Environment Agency (EA) provides guidance on flood risk for planners, developers and advisors in order to inform flood risk assessments and the plan-making process and stresses the importance of making allowances for climate change⁴². Adaptation measures proposed by the PPPs include a presumption against development in flood risk areas, appropriate design of new development, the promotion of new infrastructure such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), measures to increase biodiversity, measures dealing with overheating and improved maintenance to help address the changes that are likely to occur as a result of climate change.

⁴⁰ CCC (2022) Reducing UK emissions: 2022 Progress Report to Parliament. Available at: <https://www.theccc.org.uk/publication/2022-progress-report-to-parliament/> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

⁴¹ West Midlands Combined Authority (2022) WM2041 Five Year Plan 2021 – 2026. Available at: <https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/environment-and-energy/> [Date accessed: 23/01/23]

⁴² Environment Agency (2022) Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change-allowances> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

5.2 Baseline and key issues

Carbon emissions

5.2.1 The latest UK local authority emissions estimates⁴³ indicate that Sandwell has lower per capita carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions compared to the West Midlands and the national average (see **Table 5.1**). The dataset shows a general trend of reduced emissions over time; however, it will be an important role of the SLP to encourage sustainable development and construction and support low carbon energy sources and transport infrastructure to speed up this trend. Transport is the largest source of CO₂ emissions in Sandwell, followed by domestic.

Table 5.1: Estimated CO₂ emissions in 2020⁴⁴

	Total CO ₂ emissions estimates (kt CO ₂)	Per Capita CO ₂ emissions (t CO ₂)
Sandwell	1259.1	3.8
West Midlands	26,314.5	4.4
National Total	305,992.7	4.6

5.2.2 SMBC declared a Climate Emergency in March 2020 and have produced a Climate Strategy⁴⁵ which sets out the target to reach carbon neutrality by 2041, and includes an Action Plan to reach this, based on six delivery themes as follows:

- Council estate and operations;
- The built environment;
- Transport;
- Waste;
- Adaptation; and
- Natural capital.

5.2.3 The Climate Change Strategy and each of the six action plans sets out progress to date, future ambitions and immediate actions for each service area. The principles set out in the Strategy and Action Plan should be embedded into emerging SLP policies.

⁴³ DBEIS (2022) UK local authority and regional carbon dioxide emissions national statistics: 2005 to 2020. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/uk-local-authority-and-regional-greenhouse-gas-emissions-national-statistics-2005-to-2020> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

⁴⁴ Ibid

⁴⁵ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Climate Change Strategy 2020-2041. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200274/pollution/4402/climate_change_and_air_quality_in_sandwell [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

- 5.2.4 The layout and design of future development can have benefits to achieving sustainable development and reducing contributions to climate change. The SLP could potentially help to encourage the development of more energy efficient homes to help reduce Sandwell's GHG emissions. Energy efficient homes can include Eco Houses, Zero Carbon Homes and Passivhaus⁴⁶.
- 5.2.5 The promotion of on-site renewable or low carbon technologies incorporated with new development in the SLP would help to decrease reliance on energy that is generated from unsustainable sources, such as fossil fuels.

Flooding

- 5.2.6 Climate change is anticipated to increase the risk of extreme weather events, leading to rising risk of flooding. Surface water flooding in urban areas may increase in particular in light of more torrential and frequent rainfall events, especially during winter. Extents of low, medium and high surface water flood risk are present across the SLP area (see **Figure 5.1**).
- 5.2.7 Some significant areas of Flood Zones 2, 3a and 3b can be found throughout Sandwell and particularly in the north, associated with the River Tame (see **Figure 5.2**).
- 5.2.8 A Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)⁴⁷ identified flood risk across the Black Country, including Sandwell, from all sources in the present and in the future. The assessment has identified potential increases in flood risk due to climate change and produced modelled outputs. Indicative Flood Zone 3b identified in this study can be found in the central and northern areas of Sandwell (see **Figure 5.2**).
- 5.2.9 Careful consideration should be given to the level of flood risk new residents are exposed to, as well as the impacts of development on risk. It is good practice to make allowances for climate change in flood risk assessments⁴⁸. Allowing for the impacts of climate change helps to minimise vulnerability whilst providing greater resilience to flooding by anticipating changes to peak river flows, peak rainfall intensities, sea level rise and offshore wind speeds. Climate change allowances can be based on climate change projections under different CO₂ scenarios.
- 5.2.10 Increased naturalisation of watercourses and restoration of the flood plain, including the opening up of culverts where possible, would help to reduce the risk of flooding, as well as provide benefits to biodiversity, amenity and water quality.

⁴⁶ Urbanist Architecture (2022) How to design Eco, Passivhaus and Zero Carbon Homes. Available at: <https://urbanistarchitecture.co.uk/how-to-design-eco-houses-passivhaus-and-zero-carbon-houses/> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁴⁷ JBA Consulting (2020) The Black Country Authorities Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Final Report 25th June 2020. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/t2/p4/t2p4h/> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

⁴⁸ Environment Agency (2022) Flood risk assessments: climate change allowances. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/flood-risk-assessments-climate-change-allowances> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

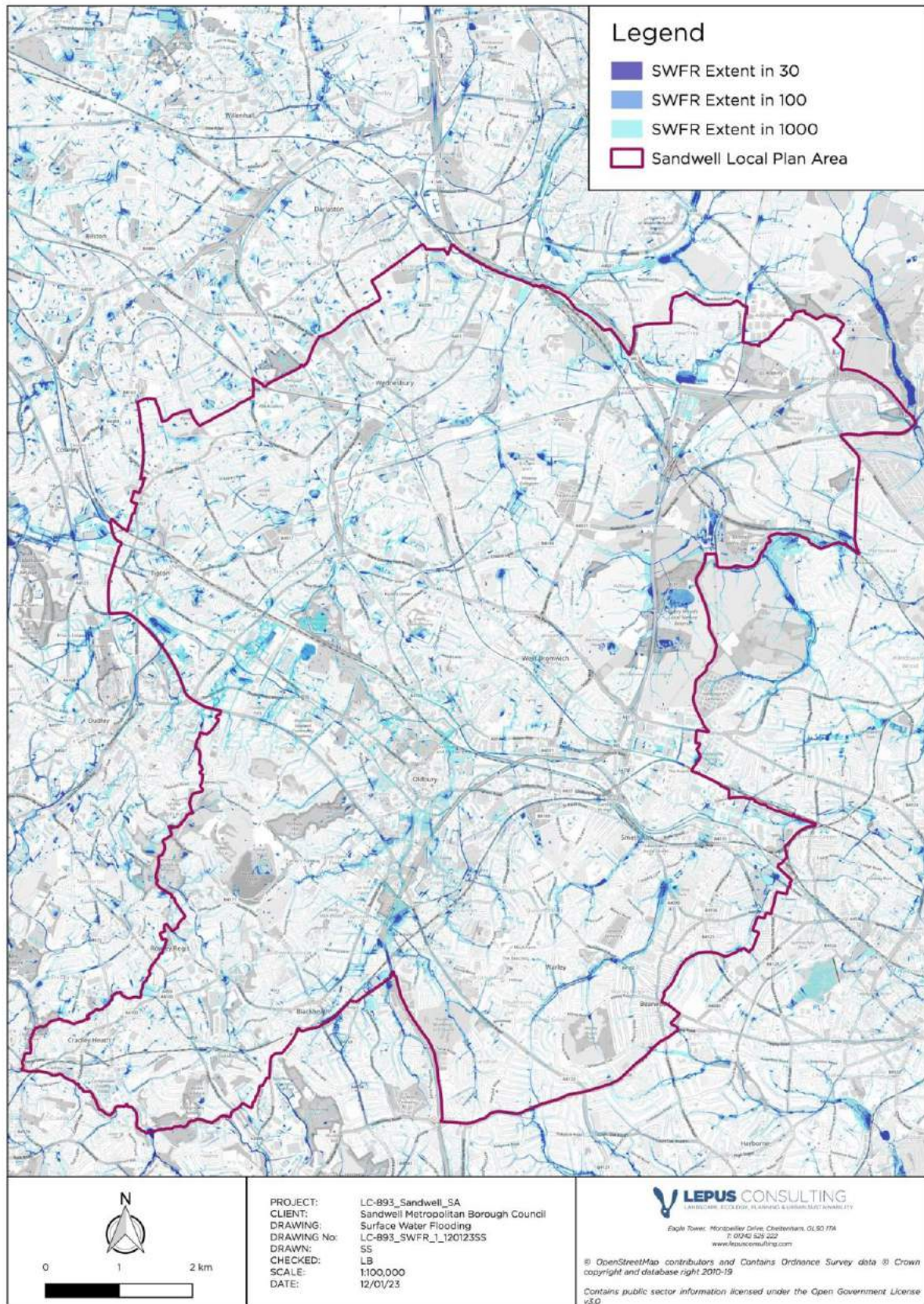


Figure 5.1: Extent of Surface Water Flood Risk in and around the SLP area (source: JBA Consulting and Environment Agency)

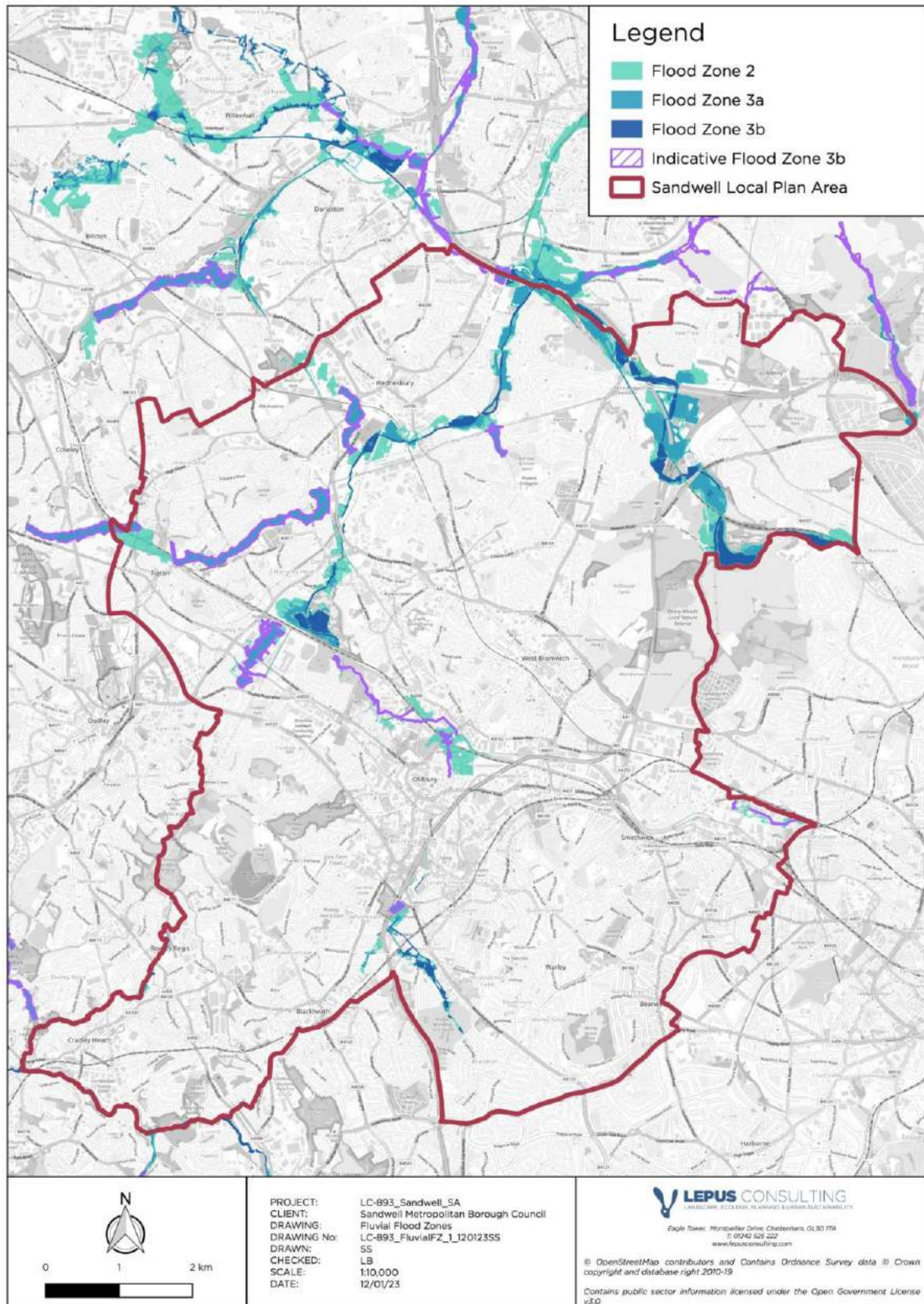


Figure 5.2: Fluvial Flood Zones and Indicative Flood Zone 3b within the SLP area (source: JBA Consulting and Environment Agency)

Green and Blue Infrastructure

- 5.2.11 Sandwell's GI network has an important role to play in providing ecosystem services. A well-managed and robust GI network can provide many benefits including for human health, climate change adaptation and wildlife value. GI can play an important role in helping urban areas adapt to climate change, by filtering airborne pollutants, providing shade and local cooling, carbon sink functions, and reducing surface water runoff⁴⁹. The water environment (such as canals, rivers and ponds) can also be referred to as Blue Infrastructure and often works alongside GI to provide multi-functional benefits including building resilience to climate change and acting as wildlife refuges and corridors.
- 5.2.12 Sandwell's GI network includes natural and semi-natural features such as LNRs, SLINCs, SINCs, allotments, playing fields, parks, woodlands, field margins, hedgerows, golf courses and canals. These assets should be protected and enhanced where possible, to increase resilience to climate change as well as increasing wildlife and amenity value.

Box 5.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Climatic Factors

Key issues for climatic factors include:

- ⇒ Fluvial and surface water flooding pose significant risks to areas within Sandwell. Flash flooding, resulting from excessive overland flow or overtopping of minor watercourses, is a key issue and as such surface water run-off management and incorporation of effective sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) should be a priority for new developments within the borough. Climate change has the potential to increase the risk of flooding.
- ⇒ There is a need to increase the quality and quantity of GI within the SLP area, and the wider Black Country, to provide multi-functional benefits including improved carbon storage, urban cooling, natural flood resilience/flood water storage, and provide a more attractive public realm to encourage active travel.
- ⇒ New development needs to incorporate energy efficiency measures and climate change adaptive features in order to respond to predicted levels of climate change, and to increase low-carbon and renewable energy generation and usage throughout the SLP area.
- ⇒ A range of further risks linked to climate change may affect the SLP area. These include the following:
 - an increased incidence of heat related illnesses and deaths during the summer;
 - increased risk of injuries and deaths due to increased number of storm events and flooding;
 - adverse effects on water quality from watercourse levels and turbulent flow after heavy rain and a reduction of water flow;
 - loss of species that are at the edge of their southerly distribution and spread of species at the northern edge of their distribution;
 - an increased move by the insurance industry towards a more risk-based approach to insurance underwriting, leading to higher cost premiums for local business; and
 - increased drought and flood related problems such as soil shrinkages and subsidence.

⁴⁹ Landscape Institute (no date) Green Infrastructure (GI). Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/policy/green-infrastructure/> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

Box 5.2: *Likely evolution without the Plan: Climatic Factors*

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- Climatic and anthropogenic-induced climate change are increasing concerns nationally and globally. Without a clear strategy to reduce emissions across all sectors at the local level, Sandwell's contributions towards the causes of climate change may be exacerbated, particularly policies and strategies to facilitate and encourage a modal shift away from private car use.
- In absence of a clear growth strategy implemented through the SLP, a less sustainable development pattern could result within Sandwell which could potentially result in an increased need to travel, with associated increases in GHG emissions.
- Technological advances, which may include renewable energies, electric vehicles, and efficient electricity supplies, would be expected to occur over time in the UK energy market. However, there may be less opportunity to seek aspirational targets regarding improving energy efficiency within developments in association with meeting the target of carbon neutrality by 2050, in the absence of the SLP.
- The risk of flooding will be likely to increase over time due to the changing climate, increasing the occurrence of extreme weather events. Although national policies and legislation will continue to restrict uses within flood zones, without the SLP there may be less control over the location of growth which could limit the effectiveness of strategic GI networks and natural water management functions.

6 Cultural Heritage

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Historic environment priorities from the international to local levels seek to address a range of issues, particularly in relation to the conservation and enhancement of heritage assets that are irreplaceable and play an important role in placemaking and the quality of life.
- 6.1.2 National and local guidance seeks to protect designated assets and their settings, including Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas (CAs), Scheduled Monuments (SMs), and Registered Parks and Gardens (RPGs). Various PPPs seek to ensure that cultural aspects of landscapes are recognised and protected against inappropriate development, encourage recognition of the potential and actual value of unknown and undesignated assets, as well as the conservation and enhancement of sites and landscapes of archaeological and heritage interest so that they may be enjoyed by both present and future generations.
- 6.1.3 Historic England advocate the seeking of opportunities alongside development for delivering heritage-led regeneration⁵⁰, creating local distinctiveness, encouraging the use of traditional building skills, and promoting climate change resilience and innovative reuse of historic buildings where appropriate⁵¹. The SLP will also have a role to play in establishing cross-cutting provisions relating to development, including between the historic environment and the functionality of open spaces and landscape connectivity.

6.2 Baseline and key issues

- 6.2.1 Within Sandwell there are four RPGs (plus a section of 'Great Barr Hall, Walsall' RPG), seven SMs, nine CAs, two Grade I Listed Buildings, eight Grade II* Listed Buildings and 195 Grade II Listed Buildings (see **Figure 6.1**).

⁵⁰ BPF (2017) Heritage Works: A toolkit of best practice in heritage regeneration. Available at: <https://bpf.org.uk/our-work/research-and-briefings/heritage-works-a-toolkit-of-best-practice-in-heritage-regeneration/> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁵¹ Historic England (2016) Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment – Historic England Advice Note 8. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/sustainability-appraisal-and-strategic-environmental-assessment-advice-note-8/> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

6.2.2 Six heritage assets within Sandwell are listed on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register⁵²: 'Chances Glassworks, Smethwick' SM; 'High Street, West Bromwich, Black Country' CA; 'Market Place, Wednesbury' CA; 'Great Barr Hall, Walsall' RPG; and the Listed Buildings 'Waterloo Hotel, Shireland Road, Smethwick' and 'Soho Foundry, Foundry Lane, Smethwick'. Local heritage initiatives include the Wednesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone (HSHAZ)⁵³ funded by Historic England, which seeks to restore, enhance and celebrate Wednesbury's historic town centre including the 'Market Place, Wednesbury' CA. Similar initiatives could be pursued to target improvement of other Heritage at Risk features.

⁵² Historic England (2022) Heritage at Risk Register – Sandwell. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/heritage-at-risk/search-register/results/?searchType=HAR&search=sandwell> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

⁵³ Wednesbury High Street Heritage Action Zone. Available at: https://regeneratingsandwell.co.uk/sandwell_projects/wednesbury-high-street-heritage-action-zone/ [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

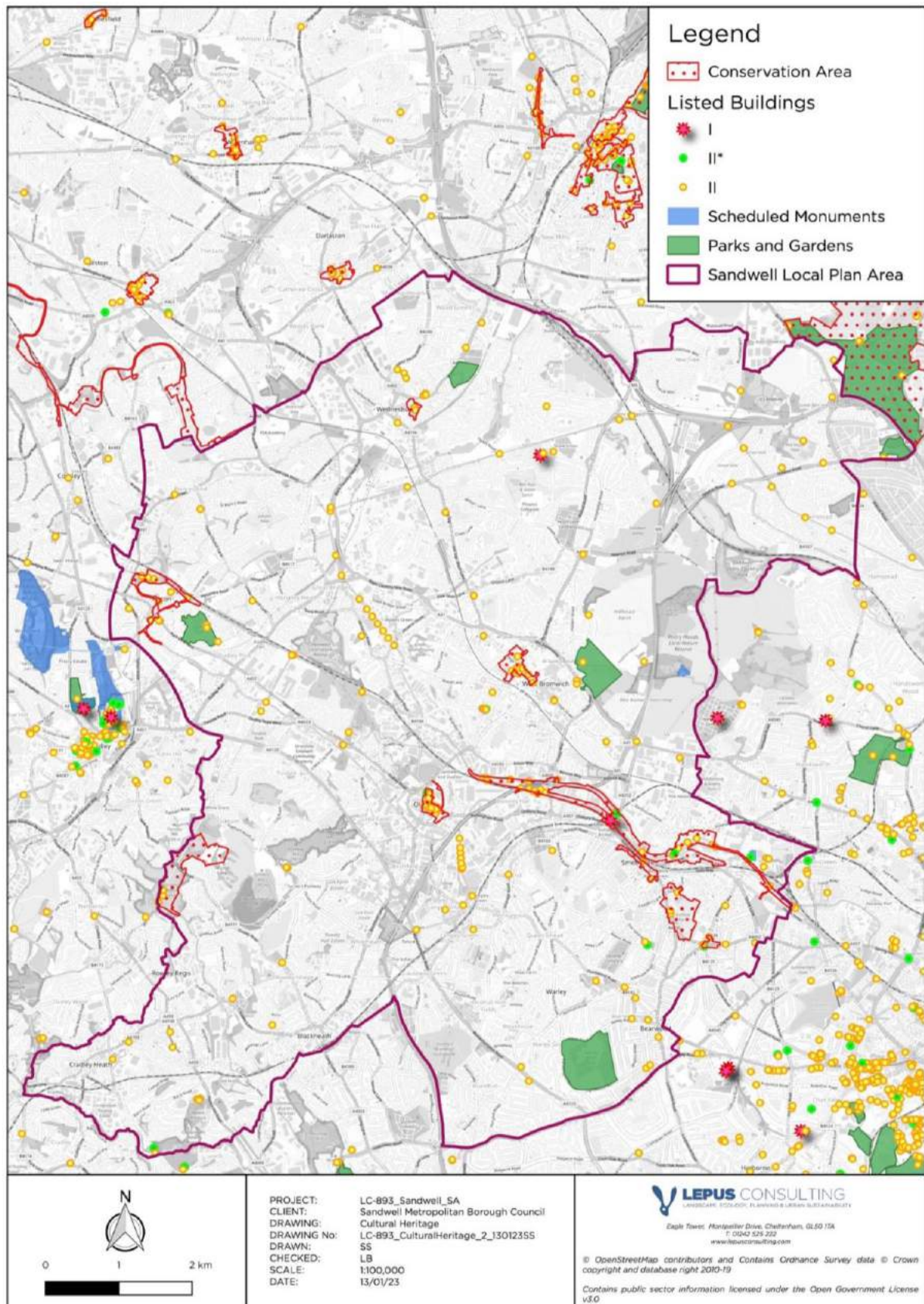


Figure 6.1: Cultural heritage assets in and around the SLP area (source: Historic England)

- 6.2.3 The Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) Study⁵⁴ aimed to create a strategic landscape-level understanding of the historic character and environment of the Black Country, including Sandwell. The study identified several Historic Environment Area Designations (HEADs) within Sandwell's Green Belt and in the urban area. The study also identified a number of Archaeological Priority Areas (APAs), which are considered to contain particularly rare or well-preserved remains of high archaeological and historic interest.
- 6.2.4 The HLC Study identifies 15 Character Areas within Sandwell. Like the other Black Country authorities, Sandwell has a rich industrial history, and this is reflected in the Character Areas with many aspects dominated by the legacy of mining as well as the canal and rail network, with significant housing growth particularly in the 19th Century.
- 6.2.5 Areas of High Historic Townscape Value (AHHTVs) and Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value (DLHHVs) have also been identified within the HLC. AHHTVs are areas "*where built heritage makes a significant contribution to the local character and distinctiveness*" and have been identified due to their sense of place, street plan and form, streetscape, views and setting, and representation. DLHHVs are "*designed landscapes that make an important contribution to local historic character but do not meet the criteria for inclusion on the national Register of Parks and Gardens*" and have been identified due to the date, preservation, aesthetics, and associations with people and past events. The HEADs including AHHTVs, DLHHVs and APAs are shown on **Figure 6.2**.
- 6.2.6 Impacts on heritage assets will be largely determined by the specific layout and design of development proposals. The level of impact will be assessed based on the nature and significance of, and proximity of the proposal to, the heritage asset in question, using professional judgement and with reference to evidence base documents.
- 6.2.7 Adverse impacts on heritage assets can include direct loss or truncation of an asset, impacts on the existing setting of the asset and the character of the local area, as well as adverse impacts on views of, or from, the asset. These negative impacts are expected to be long-term and irreversible. It is anticipated that the SLP will require a Heritage Statement or Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment to be prepared to accompany future planning applications, where appropriate.

⁵⁴ Oxford Archaeology (2019) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf
[Date accessed: 09/01/23]

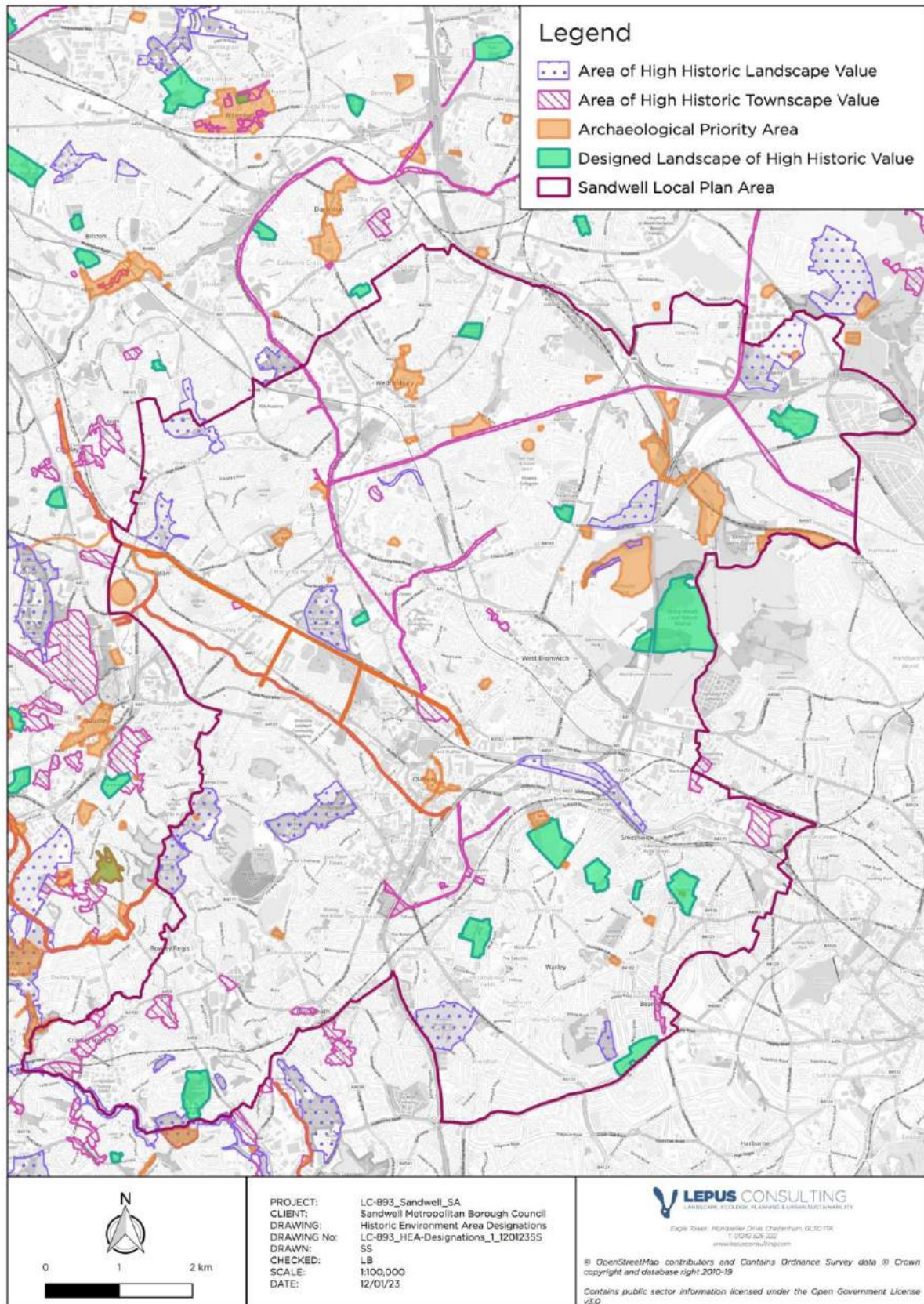


Figure 6.2: Historic Environment Area Designations in the SLP area (source: SMBC)

Box 6.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Cultural Heritage

Key issues for cultural heritage include:

- ⇒ Development promoted through the emerging SLP may have the potential to cause adverse effects on historic landscapes and lead to damage to archaeological sites, monuments and buildings and / or their settings.
- ⇒ There are six heritage assets listed on the Heritage at Risk register within the SLP area which should be protected from inappropriate development and require improved management.
- ⇒ There is a need to promote innovative re-use of existing building stocks. The SLP should seek to improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings and take into account their embodied carbon value when considering their retention and re-use, versus their replacement.
- ⇒ Archaeological remains, both seen and unseen, have the potential to be adversely affected by new development. The Black Country HLC indicates some rare archaeological features of interest within Sandwell that should be preserved.

Box 6.2: Likely evolution without the Plan: Cultural Heritage

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- National and local guidance seeks to protect designated assets and their settings such as Listed Buildings, Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, and Registered Parks and Gardens, which would continue with or without the SLP.
- The Heritage at Risk Register will continue to be managed by Historic England who will continue to work with stakeholders to protect these assets, although there could be less opportunity to focus on regeneration and investment without the SLP.
- It is uncertain if connectivity with places, local distinctiveness and culture would be emphasised and protected in the absence of the plan, as it is anticipated that the SLP will require a Heritage Statement or Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment to be prepared to accompany future planning applications, where appropriate.

7 Human Health

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 National and local health strategies and policies seek to promote the development of healthy communities, such as through delivering age-friendly environments for the elderly, encouraging healthier food choices and facilitating active travel. In line with the NPPF, local planning authorities should seek to promote social interaction, create communities which are safe and accessible, and ensure there is good accessibility to a range of GI, sports facilities, local shops, cultural buildings and outdoor space.

7.1.2 Key PPPs include Public Health England's Strategy for 2020 – 2025⁵⁵ which sets out priorities within the health system including a focus on addressing health inequalities, an issue that is particularly relevant for Sandwell.

7.2 Baseline and key issues

Air quality

7.2.1 As discussed in **Chapter 3**, the entirety of the SLP area is designated as an AQMA. Development proposals located within an AQMA, and particularly those in close proximity to main roads, would be likely to expose site end users to transport associated noise and air pollution, with adverse impacts on health and wellbeing.

7.2.2 As all proposed development in Sandwell will be located within an AQMA, this is likely to lead to adverse impacts on health and may prevent the Council from achieving air quality targets. It is assumed that new development proposals would result in an increase in traffic and thus could potentially increase traffic-related air pollution. Both existing and future residents would be exposed to this change in air quality.

Healthcare facilities

7.2.3 In order to facilitate healthy and active lifestyles for existing and new residents, it is expected that the SLP should seek to ensure that residents have good access to NHS hospitals and GP surgeries.

7.2.4 Healthcare provision within the SLP area includes Sandwell General Hospital, which provides an A&E service, and a total of 73 healthcare centres. Ideally, residents should be within an approximate ten-minute walking distance to their nearest GP surgery, whilst a hospital within 5km would be considered a sustainable distance. According to accessibility modelling data⁵⁶, almost the entirety of Sandwell lies within a sustainable 15-minute walking distance or travel time via public transport to a GP surgery (see **Figure 7.1**).

⁵⁵ Public Health England (2019) PHE Strategy 2020 to 2025. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phe-strategy-2020-to-2025> [Date accessed: 10/01/23]

⁵⁶ Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council

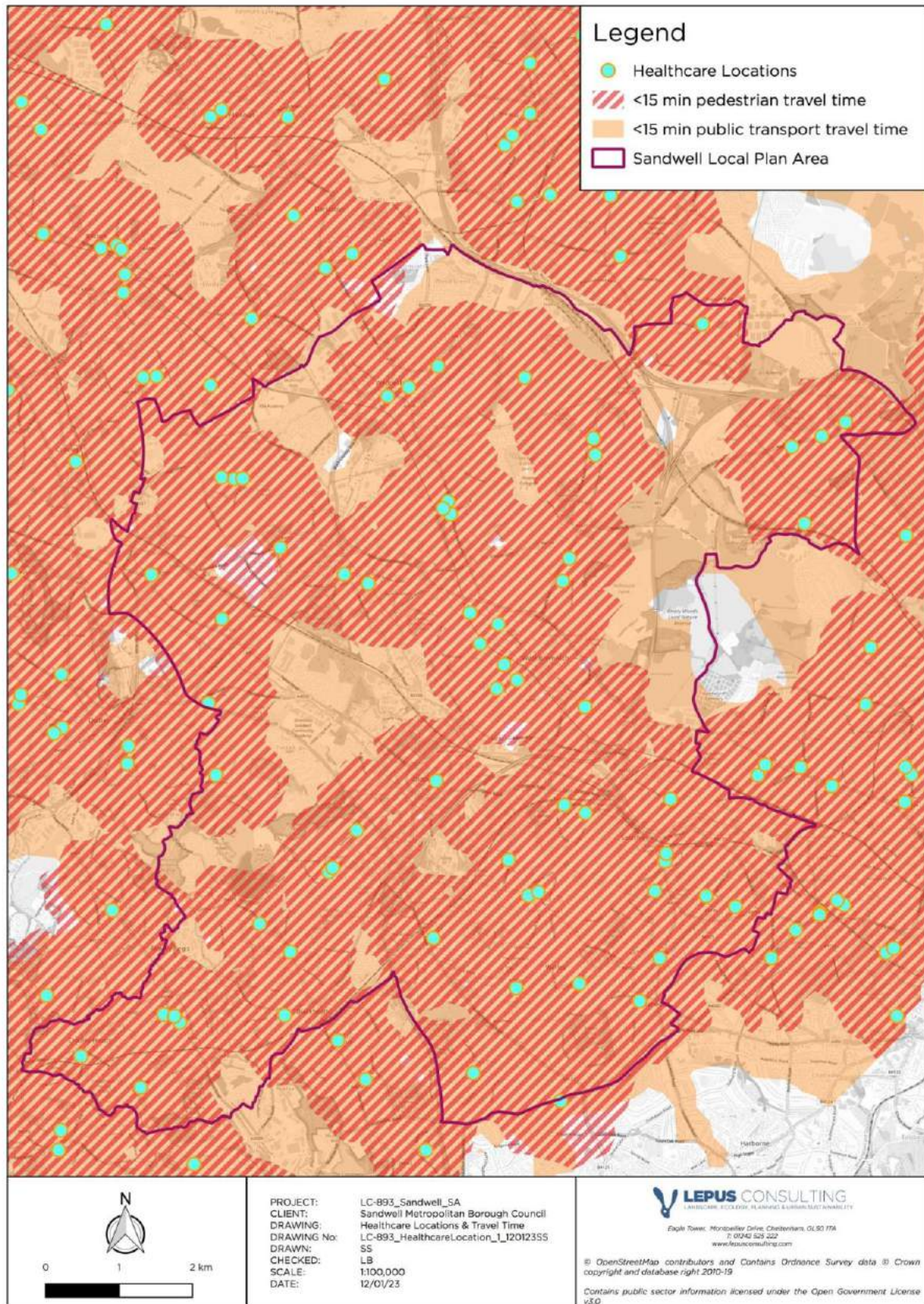


Figure 7.1: Location of healthcare facilities and modelled travel time across the SLP area (source: SMBC)

Green spaces

- 7.2.5 Opportunities to experience a diverse range of natural habitats and recreational spaces is known to be beneficial for physical and mental health and wellbeing. Good access to such areas can reduce stress, fatigue, anxiety and depression⁵⁷, and has been linked with healthy foetal growth in pregnant women, higher birth weights, healthy microbiomes in babies and reduced rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes. Impacts of restricted access to the natural environment are particularly significant for lower socio-economic groups.
- 7.2.6 Providing residents with sustainable access to a diverse range of natural habitats can be an effective means of reducing health inequalities in the area. According to the Green Space Strategy⁵⁸, Sandwell contains a total of 539 green sites covering an area of 2,042ha, equivalent to 24% of the total area of the borough, with 14% being accessible green space. Key features include parks, nature reserves and play areas. Other key elements of outdoor recreational space include the PRoW network and the canal system, which serve a purpose in encouraging active travel.
- 7.2.7 The SLP area supports a network of biodiversity sites, providing local residents with opportunities to visit natural outdoor spaces and view wildlife (see **Chapter 3**).

Box 7.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Human Health

Key issues for human health include:

- ⇒ As all the proposed development within the SLP will be located within an AQMA, this is likely to lead to adverse impacts on health, without intervention.
- ⇒ Residents in Sandwell experience significant inequalities in health, with residents having a lower life expectancy and experiencing illness and disability at a younger age on average, compared to other parts of England.
- ⇒ The increasing population in Sandwell is likely to place pressure on the capacity of health infrastructure and leisure facilities, which will need careful planning.
- ⇒ Anti-social behaviour is an issue within some of Sandwell's green spaces according to the Green Space Strategy, which may discourage their use by the local community. There is a need to establish greater management and maintenance of green spaces, and support more local involvement.

⁵⁷ Houlden. V., Weich. S. and Jarvis. S. (2017) A cross-sectional analysis of green space prevalence and mental wellbeing in England

⁵⁸ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Green Space Strategy 2010 – 2020. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/24989/april_2017_-_parks_and_green_spaces_strategy_document.pdf [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

Box 7.2: *Likely evolution without the Plan: Human Health*

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- Sandwell's population is expected to continue to increase, which is likely to place greater pressure on the capacity of key services and amenities, including health and leisure facilities and housing.
- The life expectancy of men and women is anticipated to rise over time, in line with national trends, leading to a greater proportion of older residents with specific needs for housing and services. It may be more difficult to ensure these needs are met in absence of the plan.
- Without a clear plan-led development strategy, it is uncertain if existing public green spaces and open spaces would be maintained or enhanced to encourage residents to live healthy and active lifestyles. Existing open spaces may be under greater pressure from windfall development without the SLP.

8 Landscape and Townscape

8.1 Introduction

- 8.1.1 At the European, national, regional and local levels emphasis is placed on the protection of landscape as an essential component of people's surroundings and sense of place. Landscape is described as comprising natural, cultural, social, aesthetic and perceptual elements. This includes flora, fauna, soils, land use, settlement, sight, smells and sound⁵⁹.
- 8.1.2 Various PPPs seek to increase recognition of the relationships between the different aspects of landscapes including but not limited to local distinctiveness, the historic environment, natural resources, farming and forestry, education, leisure and recreation, transport and infrastructure, and nature conservation.
- 8.1.3 National Design Guidance⁶⁰ advocates well-designed places that are functional, attractive and provide a sense of safety, inclusion and community cohesion. Landscape also links closely with GI, with well-managed GI networks providing multi-functional benefits including improving the health of people and wildlife.

8.2 Baseline and key issues

Green Belt

- 8.2.1 Sandwell is highly urbanised, with only a small extent of Green Belt land situated to the north east of the SLP area, forming part of the West Midlands Green Belt which surrounds the West Midlands Conurbation. Although Green Belt itself is not necessarily of high landscape value, it often serves to protect the character and setting of historic towns and support landscape-scale biodiversity networks. New development could potentially increase noise and light pollution and reduce the perception of tranquillity in some areas.
- 8.2.2 Whilst the Green Belt is not a statutory landscape designation, it is a significant element of landscape protection in the area. The Green Belt is intended to⁶¹:
- check the unrestricted sprawl of larger built-up areas;
 - prevent neighbouring towns from merging into one another;
 - assist in safeguarding the countryside from encroachment;
 - preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and

⁵⁹ Natural England (2014) An Approach to Landscape Character Assessment. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/landscape-character-assessments-identify-and-describe-landscape-types> [Date accessed: 10/01/23]

⁶⁰ MHCLG (2021) National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide> [Date accessed: 10/01/23]

⁶¹ MHCLG (2021) NPPF, Chapter 13: Protecting Green Belt land. Available at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/6077/2116950.pdf [Date accessed: 10/01/23]

- assist in urban regeneration, by encouraging the recycling of derelict and other urban land.

8.2.3 As part of the evidence base for the former BCP, the Green Belt Study⁶² classified parcels of Green Belt land into different 'harm' ratings, based on the assessment of potential harm caused by removing each parcel from the Green Belt based on a range of criteria (see **Figure 8.1**). Appropriate areas of the Green Belt which can support a limited amount of development will be identified through using the findings of the Green Belt Study, where identified housing requirements cannot be met within existing urban areas.

Landscape character and sensitivity

8.2.4 The Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment⁶³ assessed the sensitivity of Green Belt land to housing and commercial development. The aim of the study was to identify the extent to which the character and quality of Green Belt land is susceptible to change as a result of future development. Parcels of land were classified ranging from 'high' to 'low' sensitivity (see **Figure 8.2**).

8.2.5 It should be noted that although there is a relationship between the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment and the Green Belt Harm Assessment, the Green Belt Study states that "*there are fundamental distinctions in the purposes of the two assessments, reflecting the fact that landscape quality is not a relevant factor in determining the contribution to Green Belt purposes, or harm to those purposes resulting from the release of land*".

⁶² LUC (2019) Black Country Green Belt Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13882/bcgb-0919-black-country-gb-stage-1-and-2-plus-app1-final-reduced_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 10/01/23]

⁶³ LUC (2019) Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13883/black-country-lsa-front-end-report-final-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 10/01/23]

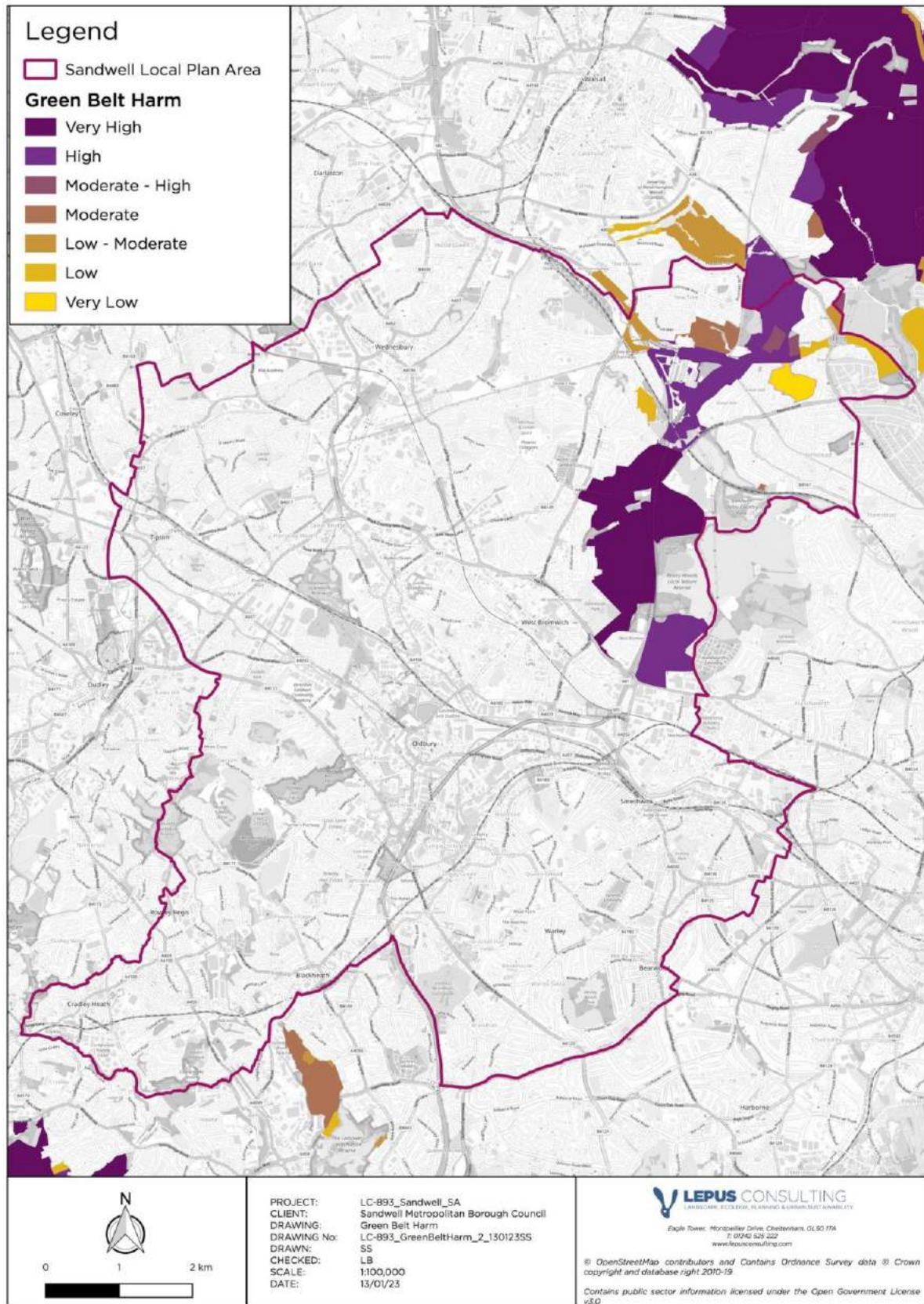


Figure 8.1: Green Belt Harm Rating in and around the SLP area (source: LUC)

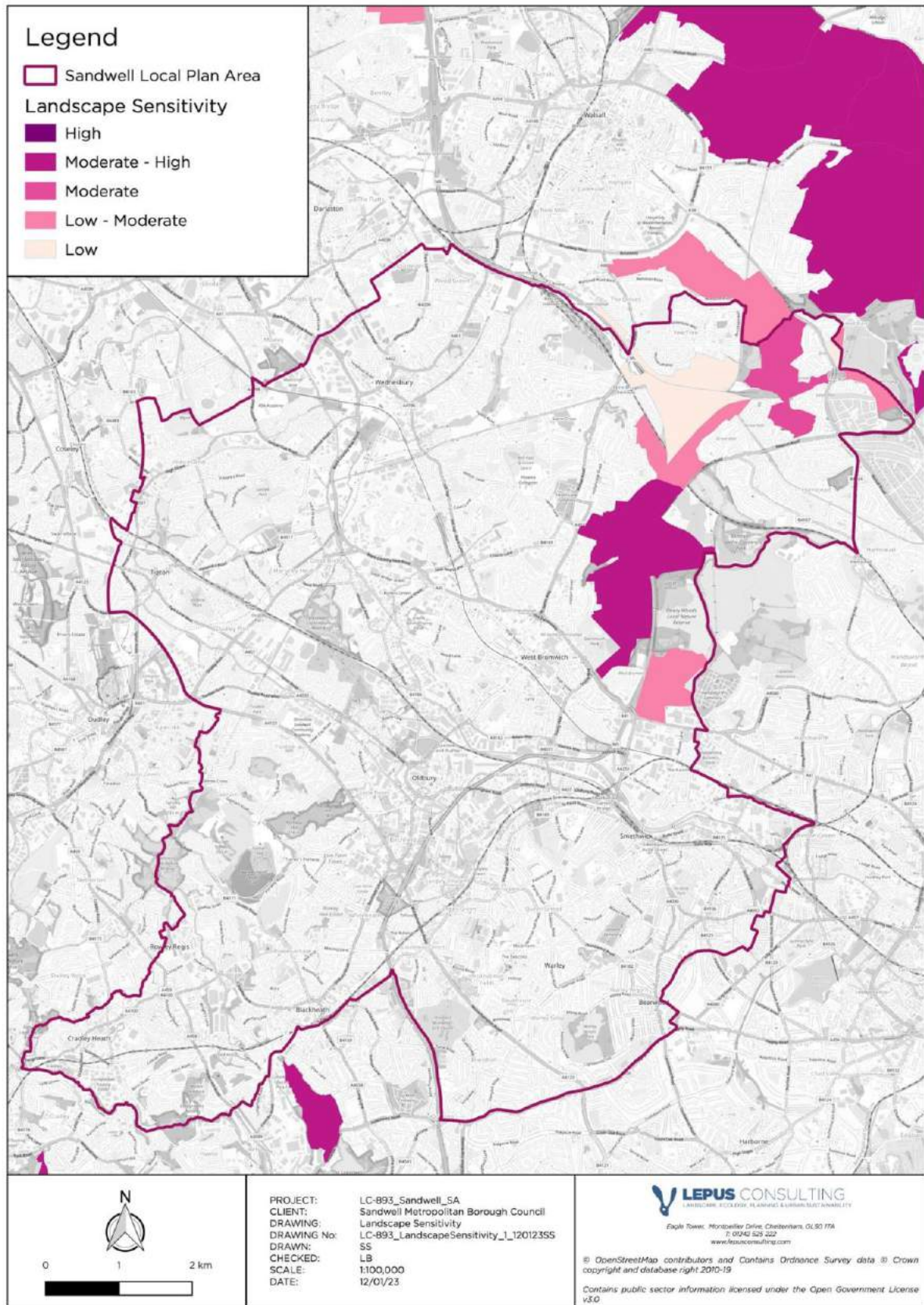


Figure 8.2: Landscape Sensitivity within and around the SLP area (source: LUC)

Townscape character

- 8.2.6 Townscapes can be defined as “*the landscape within the built-up area, including the buildings, the relationship between them, the different types of urban open spaces, including green spaces and the relationship between buildings and open spaces*”⁶⁴.
- 8.2.7 The character of townscapes interacts strongly with cultural heritage aspects (see **Chapter 6**). The Black Country HLC Study⁶⁵ identifies 15 Character Areas within Sandwell. The area’s history and industrial legacy provides distinctive character and a sense of local identity, but can also present challenges in terms of maintaining and enhancing the local character when historic buildings are no longer in active use.
- 8.2.8 The emerging SLP should seek to embed the priorities of the Sandwell Regeneration Strategy 2022 - 2027⁶⁶ which aspires to rejuvenate Sandwell, boosting the economy and improving quality of life for residents and visitors, whilst remaining in keeping with its history.

Box 8.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Landscape and Townscape

Key issues for landscape and townscape include:

- ⇒ The north east of Sandwell lies within the West Midlands Green Belt. Parts of land in this area, within the Sandwell Valley, are identified as being of ‘moderate’ or ‘moderate-high’ landscape sensitivity.
- ⇒ There is a risk that the need for new housing development could increase the risk of encroachment into the remaining undeveloped areas of the borough or alter the character, tranquility and sense of place in suburban settlements. This includes the Rowley Hills, in the south west of the borough.
- ⇒ There is a need for new development to be in accordance with the scale and character of the local area and seek to conserve and enhance the quality of the surrounding landscape or townscape.

Box 8.2: Likely evolution without the Plan: Landscape and Townscape

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- The West Midlands Green Belt will continue to benefit from legislative protection.
- In the absence of Plan-led development, there may be less opportunity to promote the conservation and enhancement of the local landscape / townscape character. There could potentially be a rise in the quantity of new development which discords with the local character by altering the style and scale of development, depending on the nature of any future changes to national regulations, such as the proposed revisions to the NPPF and potential implementation of mandatory design codes promoted in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill.

⁶⁴ Landscape Institute (2017) Townscape character assessment. Available at: <https://www.landscapeinstitute.org/technical-resource/townscape/> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁶⁵ Oxford Archaeology (2019) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

⁶⁶ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2022) Sandwell Regeneration Strategy 2022 – 2027. March 2022. Available at: <https://regeneratingsandwell.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Regeneration-Strategy-2022-2027.pdf> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

9 Population and Material Assets

9.1 Introduction

- 9.1.1 The consideration of 'Population' is a broad matter and includes topics such as pollution and waste, housing, transport and accessibility, education, economy and employment. The population topic seeks to create places where residents live a high quality of life for longer, are well educated and have the necessary skills to gain employment and succeed in modern society. Indicators of these objectives include the proximity of development proposals to schools, accessibility to employment land and proximity to services and amenities.
- 9.1.2 PPPs on population cover a range of different objectives, including tackling social exclusion and inequalities, improving health, improving housing quality, and reducing levels of education failure, ill health, substance misuse, crime and anti-social behaviour. At the regional and local levels, support for cultural diversity and young people are key aims.
- 9.1.3 'Material assets' covers a variety of built and natural assets which are accounted for in a range of topics. It is a requirement of Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations to consider material assets, although the Regulations does not define them. The SA process considers material assets as the social, physical and environmental infrastructure implications of the local plan.
- 9.1.4 The material assets sustainability theme covers a range of policy areas, including waste management, minerals, energy production and previously developed land. PPPs seek to the protect minerals resources and promote appropriate after uses for mineral workings, and promote the 'waste hierarchy'.

9.2 Baseline and key issues

Population

- 9.2.1 Sandwell has a population of 341,900 according to the latest Census (2021)⁶⁷. Population size has increased by 11.0%, from around 308,100 in 2011 to 341,900 in 2021. This is higher than the overall increase for England (6.6%), where the population grew by nearly 3.5 million to 56,489,800.
- 9.2.2 The borough's population is predicted to grow at a faster rate than both the population of the West Midlands and the national average and is forecast to increase by 30,000 between 2016 and 2030. On average, Sandwell has a higher proportion of the population aged under 20, and a lower proportion aged over 50, than the average for the rest of the UK⁶⁸.

⁶⁷ Office for National Statistics (2022) How the population changed in Sandwell: Census 2021. Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E08000028/> [Date accessed: 03/01/23]

⁶⁸ Sandwell Trends (2022) 2021 Census: Overview. Available at: <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/2021-census/#:~:text=Ethnic%20Group%20%26%20Language,69.9%25%20in%20the%202011%20Census.> [Date accessed: 23/01/23]

Equality and diversity

- 9.2.3 Sandwell is a diverse area, with individuals from a range of ethnic backgrounds, religions and cultures. In 2021, 57.3% (195,620) of usual residents in Sandwell identified their ethnic group within the high-level 'White' category, compared with 81.7% in England & Wales⁶⁹.
- 9.2.4 The Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) measures the relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in England⁷⁰. LSOAs are small areas designed to be of similar population, of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households. Out of 317 Local Authorities in England, Sandwell is ranked as the 12th most deprived. Overall, deprivation is high across the SLP area, with 36 LSOAs in Sandwell ranked among the 10% most deprived in England.

Housing

- 9.2.5 Government guidance requires local authorities to determine the local housing need figure for their area. The local plan preparation process should then test the deliverability of this housing need figure. The local housing need figure is calculated by summing the national standard method figure, using 2014-based ONS household projections and affordability ratios which are updated annually.
- 9.2.6 SMBC have produced a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)⁷¹, which will be updated annually, to assess land with potential for development in order to inform the housing land supply and trajectory.
- 9.2.7 Any identified options for the quantum of housing growth, as well as reasonable alternative sites for development, will be assessed as part of the SA process.

Economy

- 9.2.8 Sandwell Borough is multi-centric, with a Strategic Centre (West Bromwich), seven other main town centres and several smaller local centres serving the population. The highest density of employment locations can be found in the centre and north of the SLP area and along the key transport routes. Accessibility modelling data⁷² indicates that the majority of Sandwell lies within a 30-minute travel time to an employment site, either via walking or public transport (see **Figure 9.1**).

⁶⁹ Sandwell Trends (2022) 2021 Census: Overview. Available at: <https://www.sandwelltrends.info/2021-census/#:~:text=Ethnic%20Group%20%26%20Language,69.9%25%20in%20the%202011%20Census.> [Date accessed: 11/01/23]

⁷⁰ MHCLG (2019) The English Indices of Deprivation 2019. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/835115/iod2019_Statistical_Release.pdf [Date accessed: 11/01/23]

⁷¹ Sandwell Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (April 2021) Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/28625/sandwell_strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_201920_update.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁷² Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council

- 9.2.9 The proportion of unemployed adults in Sandwell is 6%, which is higher than the average for West Midlands (4.9%) and for Great Britain (3.8%)⁷³. Sandwell has a high proportion of workers in the manufacturing and wholesale and retail trade industries, with fewer employees in financial, IT and professional occupations than the average for the West Midlands and Great Britain.
- 9.2.10 Sandwell lies within the Black Country Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) which also covers the local authorities of Dudley, Walsall and Wolverhampton. The Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) will set out the identified employment land requirements within Sandwell. Any identified options for the quantum of employment growth, as well as reasonable alternative sites for development, will be assessed as part of the SA process.

Education, skills and training

- 9.2.11 20 secondary schools and 98 primary schools can be found within Sandwell. It is assumed that new residents in the SLP area will require access to primary and secondary education to help facilitate good levels of education, skills and qualifications of residents. Accessibility modelling data⁷⁴ indicates generally good levels of sustainable accessibility to schools across the SLP area although some gaps are identified (see **Figures 9.2** and **9.3**).
- 9.2.12 Further and higher education opportunities in Sandwell and nearby areas include Sandwell College, University of Wolverhampton and Dudley College of Technology. Within the wider West Midlands, there are several universities including the University of Birmingham, Birmingham City University and Aston University.
- 9.2.13 Sandwell's residents have on average lower qualification levels compared to the West Midlands and Great Britain⁷⁵.

⁷³ Nomis (2021) Labour Market Profile – Sandwell. Available at:
<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157189/report.aspx> [Date accessed: 11/01/23]

⁷⁴ Unpublished data provided to Lepus by the Council

⁷⁵ Nomis (2021) Labour Market Profile – Sandwell. Available at:
<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157189/report.aspx> [Date accessed: 11/01/23]

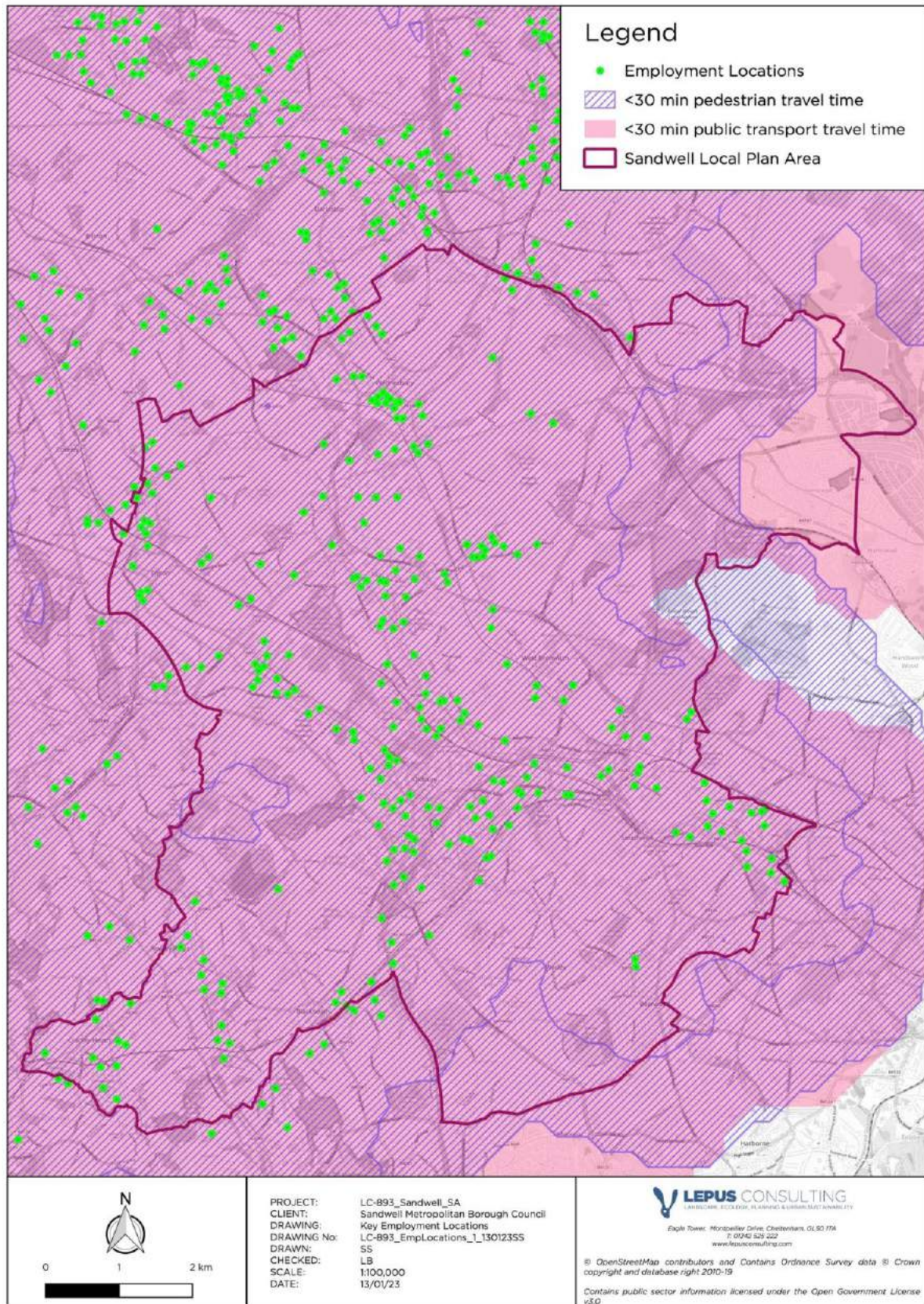


Figure 9.1: Key employment Locations and modelled travel time across the SLP area (source: SMBC)

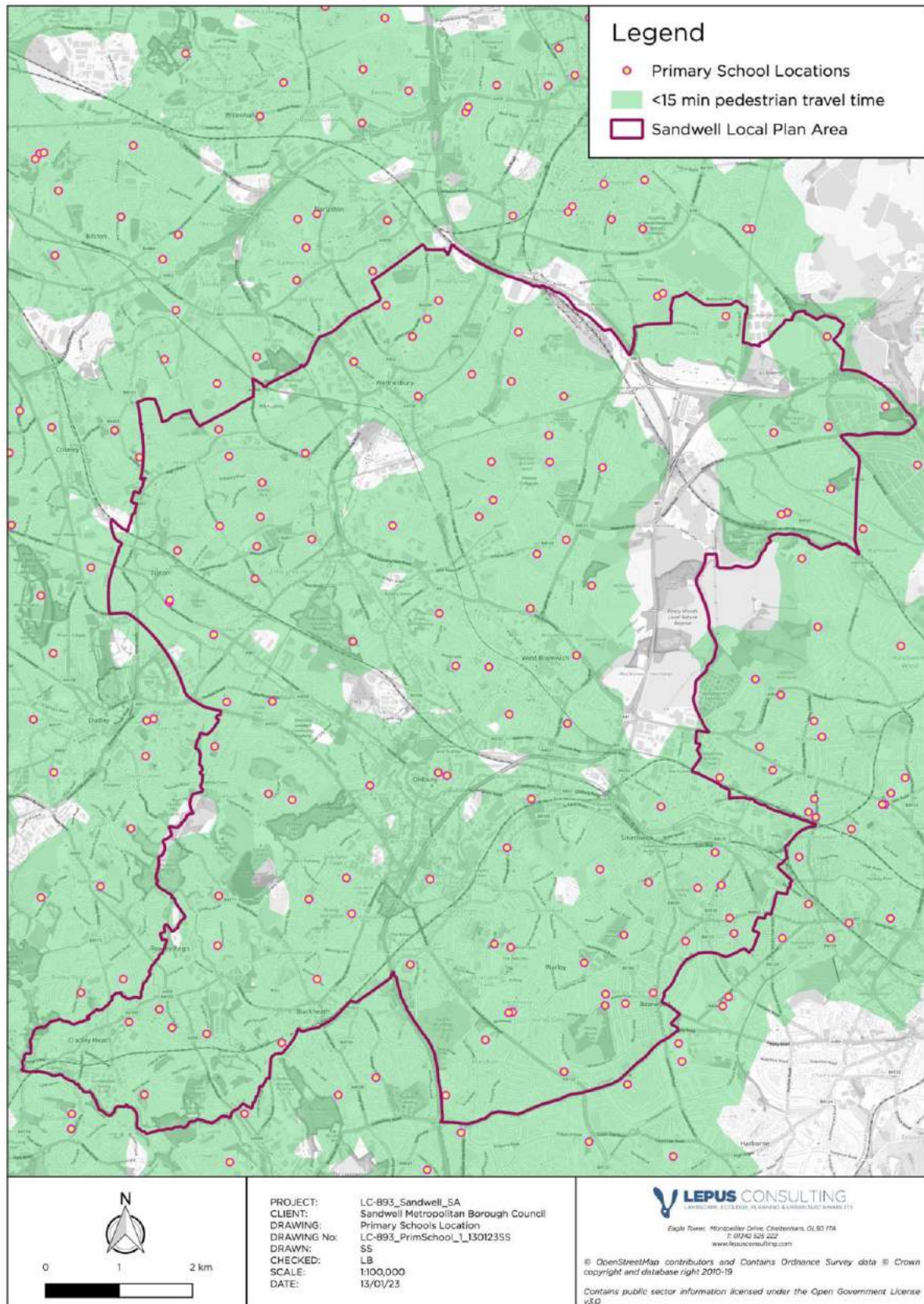


Figure 9.2: Location of primary schools and modelled travel time across the SLP area (source: SMBC)

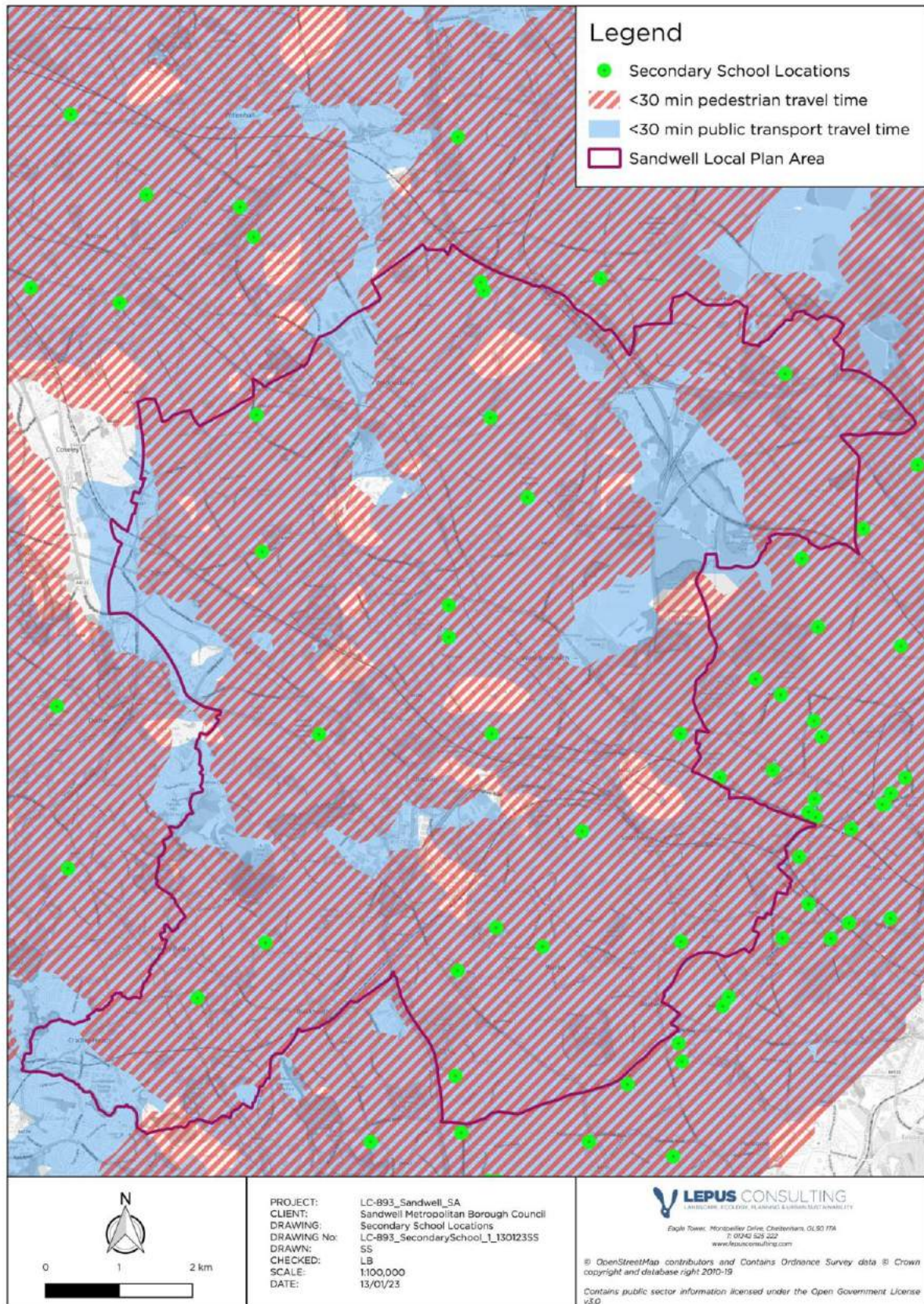


Figure 9.3: Location of secondary schools and modelled travel time across the SLP area (source: SMBC)

Waste

- 9.2.14 The proposed development within the SLP area and associated increase in residents would be expected to result in a significant increase in waste produced. It is assumed that new residents will have an annual waste production in line with the national average, which was 399kg per person in 2020⁷⁶.
- 9.2.15 The proportion of local authority collected waste in the West Midlands sent for recycling and composting is below the national levels, whereas the waste managed through incineration is higher than national levels.
- 9.2.16 Although national trends suggest that the volume of household waste produced is decreasing, the Black Country Waste Study⁷⁷ indicates that additional capacity for certain types of waste management will be required, taking into account the large amount of projected growth in the area as well as continuing to facilitate the import of waste from other neighbouring authorities.

Minerals

- 9.2.17 The presence of mineral resources, in particular coal, was a key reason for the original prosperity and development of the Black Country region. The legacy of mineral extraction on ground stability and contamination remains a key issue affecting future development, and some minerals are still of economic importance with active quarries and brickworks.
- 9.2.18 There is a need for a balanced approach between safeguarding mineral resources and supporting housing and economic growth. The protection and extraction of mineral resources is important to help support the levels of development proposed over the Plan period and to meet demand for aggregates. There are no Mineral Safeguarding Areas within Sandwell, although there are various mineral infrastructure sites including brickworks, concrete plants and aggregate recycling facilities present within the SLP area⁷⁸.

⁷⁶ DEFRA (2021) Statistics on waste managed by local authorities in England in 2020/21. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1040756/Statistics_on_waste_managed_by_local_authorities_in_England_in_2020_v2rev_accessible.pdf [Date accessed: 11/01/23]

⁷⁷ Wood (2020) Black Country Waste Study – Review of the Evidence Base for Waste to support Preparation of the Black Country Plan Revised Final Report. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/15811/black-country-waste-study-final-report_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 11/01/23]

⁷⁸ Wood (2019) Black Country Minerals Study. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/15815/minerals-study-evidence-base-review-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Box 9.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Population and Material Assets

Key issues for population and material assets include:

- ⇒ Sandwell's residents have on average lower qualification levels and employment rates compared to the West Midlands and Great Britain.
- ⇒ There is a need to increase the proportion of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting and move away from the use of landfill for waste disposal.
- ⇒ Sandwell is ranked as the 12th most deprived local authority in England. There is a need to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities by:
 - Providing the supply of housing required to meet the needs of present and future generations;
 - Creating a high-quality built environment, with accessible local services that reflect the community's needs and support health, social and cultural wellbeing;
 - Creating a strong sense of place by strengthening the distinctive and cultural qualities of towns and villages; and
 - Creating safe and accessible environments where crime, disorder and the fear of crime do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion.
- ⇒ Due to Sandwell's demography and urban structure, the population was hit hard by the COVID-19 pandemic, most notably its central corridor of older, poor-quality housing and communities from ethnic minority backgrounds, where infection rates were highest. The pandemic has deepened hardship and inequality in the already deprived area, with high reliance on Universal Credit, increased mental health issues and educational disruption.

Box 9.2: Likely evolution without the Plan: Population and Material Assets

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- The borough's population is forecast to increase by 30,000 between 2016 and 2030, leading to the potential for secondary effects. Without plan-led development, there may be less scope to manage and implement sufficient health, education, social and transport infrastructure to meet local needs and address inequalities.
- It is uncertain if future housing provision would satisfy local needs in terms of type, cost and location. There is likely to be a continued increase in the cost of buying or renting housing, although the rate of increase may reduce compared to previous years, in line with national trends. It is uncertain whether affordable housing needs would be met.
- Without the influence of the SLP, there would be less planning control over the location of housing with potential for new housing being allowed in unsustainable locations and/or without necessary supporting infrastructure.
- Without plan-led development it is likely that housing shortages will be exacerbated. This could lead to existing residents who wish to form new households living in overcrowded conditions or being forced to move outside the area, and potential new residents being unable to move in.
- Without a clear plan-led strategy to focus the limited amount of investment into centres and to defend against further investment in out-of-centre locations, the vitality of Sandwell's centres may decline. This could lead to a less sustainable development pattern resulting in an increased need to travel, with associated increases in GHG emissions and potentially exacerbating issues with social exclusion and access to key services.
- The overall number of jobs and businesses operating within Sandwell may continue to increase; however, there may be less planning control over the location of employment land and there may be limited job availability in some sectors if land is not allocated through the SLP.

10 Water and Soil Resources

10.1 Introduction

- 10.1.1 National water policies are primarily driven by the aims of the EU Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC, as translated into national law by the Water Framework Regulations 2003. Key objectives include improving the quality of rivers and other water bodies to 'good' ecological status by 2027; considering flood risk at all stages of the plan and development process in order to reduce future damage to property and loss of life; and incorporating water efficiency measures into new developments. Key PPPs for the SLP area include the Severn⁷⁹ and Humber⁸⁰ River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) which provide information on the status of surface and groundwater bodies and how water quality can be improved.
- 10.1.2 National policies and strategies on soil, including DEFRA's 'Safeguarding our Soils' strategy⁸¹, seek to prevent soil pollution; reduce soil erosion from wind and water; maintain soil diversity; improve the quality of soil, including through promoting an increase in organic matter in soil; and increase the resilience of soils to a changing climate. Focus should be placed on protecting the quality and availability of agricultural land, through reducing soil degradation and maintaining soil productivity.

10.2 Baseline and key issues

Soil

- 10.2.1 Soil is an essential and non-renewable resource that provides a wide range of ecosystem services. It filters air, stores and cycles water and nutrients, decomposes and cycles organic matter, supports plant growth and provides medicines. It is also one of the most important natural carbon sinks available and its conservation is therefore vital in efforts to mitigate climate change.
- 10.2.2 Development can potentially have adverse impacts on soil stocks, such as by direct loss of soil (e.g. excavating), contamination, increased erosion, breakdown of structure and loss of nutrients. The quality of soils in the UK has rapidly degraded, predominantly due to intensive agricultural production and industrial pollution.

⁷⁹ DEFRA & Environment Agency (2018) Severn River basin district, river basin management plan. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/severn-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

⁸⁰ DEFRA & Environment Agency (2018) Humber River basin district river basin management plan. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/humber-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

⁸¹ Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (2011) Safeguarding our soils: A strategy for England. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-our-soils-a-strategy-for-england> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

- 10.2.3 As a highly urbanised borough, there are few areas of undeveloped land, the majority of which are restricted to the Green Belt. According to the Agricultural Land Classification (ALC), Sandwell is almost entirely 'urban' land, with sections of 'non-agricultural' land, a small area of Grade 4 ALC (poor quality agricultural land) and a small area of Grade 3 ALC (good to moderate quality agricultural land) found in the Sandwell Valley area in the north east of the borough (see **Figure 10.1**). The top three ALC grades, Grades 1, 2 and 3a, are referred to as 'best and most versatile' (BMV) land⁸².
- 10.2.4 In accordance with the NPPF, development on previously developed land (PDL) will be recognised as an efficient use of land. Development on previously undeveloped land is expected to pose a threat to the soil resource within the proposal perimeter due to excavation, soil compaction, erosion and an increased risk of soil pollution and contamination during the construction phase. This is expected to be a permanent and irreversible impact.
- 10.2.5 It should be noted that PDL can also be of environmental value, and as such, potential impacts on natural resources should be considered on a site-by-site basis.
- 10.2.6 Many urban brownfield sites, and some greenfield sites, in Sandwell and the surrounding area are affected by the legacy of mining and industrial processes. It is anticipated that development proposals within the SLP will require site-specific assessments of ground contamination and effective remediation of soils affected prior to development.

⁸² MAFF (1988) Agricultural Land Classification of England and Wales: Revised criteria for grading the quality of agricultural land. Available at:
<http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/6257050620264448?category=5954148537204736> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

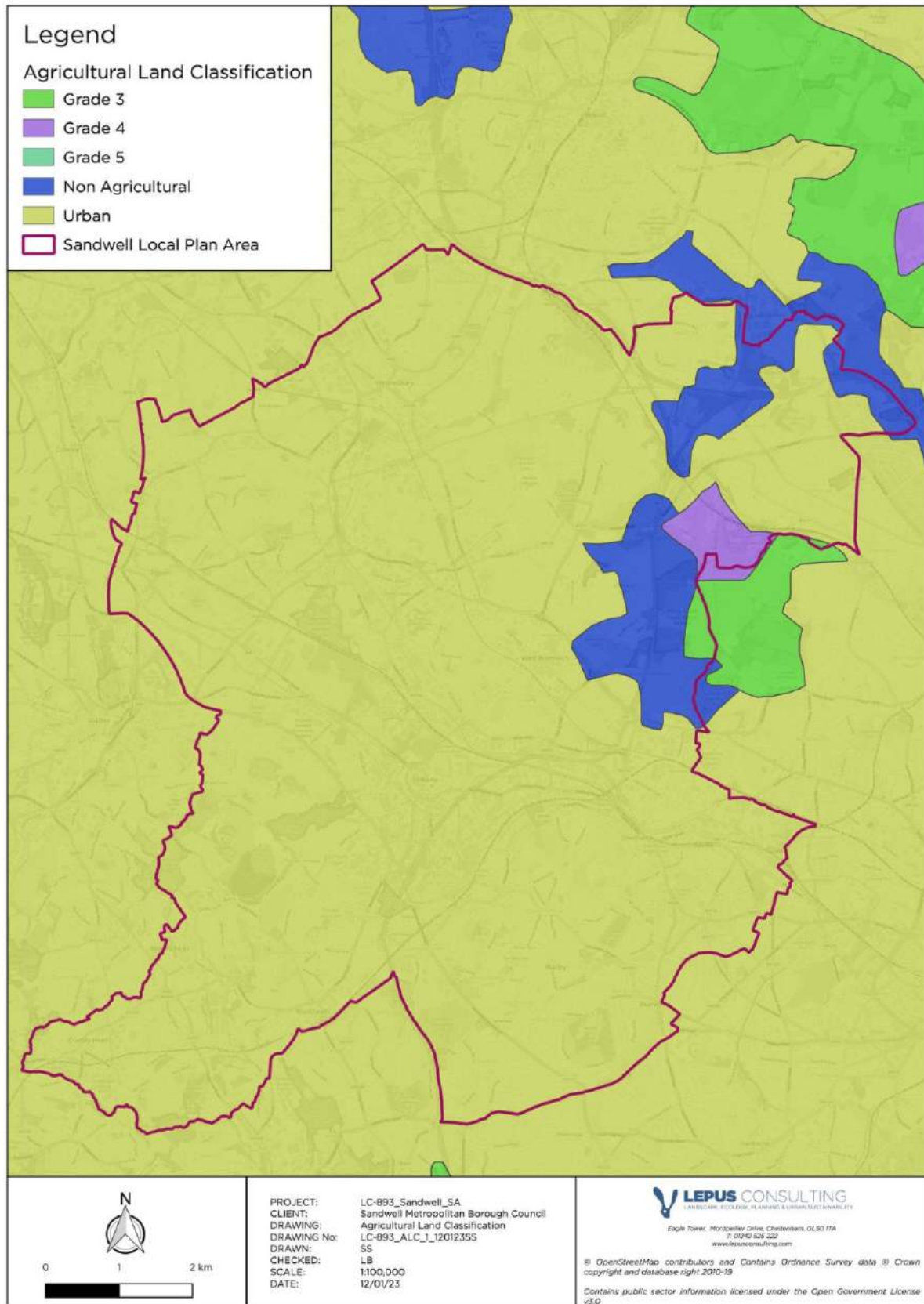


Figure 10.1: Agricultural Land Classification in and around the SLP area (source: Natural England)

Water resources

- 10.2.7 It is likely that the demand for water and the volume of wastewater will increase during the plan period owing to the increasing population. Wastewater treatment plants will need to ensure there is the capability to withstand the additional capacity and be expanded, if necessary, prior to development taking place.
- 10.2.8 Sandwell is supplied with water by Severn Trent Water and South Staffs Water. Severn Trent Water⁸³ and South Staffs Water⁸⁴ plan to manage and meet future demand through encouraging water use efficiency, for example by installing water meters, and reducing leakage.
- 10.2.9 Undertaking a Water Cycle Study (WCS) can help to inform local plans and wastewater infrastructure delivery requirements, water resources and water efficiency requirements to plan for sustainable growth. Through understanding environmental and infrastructure capacity, a WCS can identify joined up and cost-effective solutions that are resilient to climate change⁸⁵. A Phase 1 WCS Scoping Study was undertaken to support the preparation of the former BCP⁸⁶, the findings of which remain applicable to the preparation of the SLP.

Water quality

- 10.2.10 The River Tame (Oldbury Arm) and its tributaries the Hockley Brook and Tipton Brook run through the borough (see **Figure 10.2**). The River Stour is located along the south western boundary of the borough. The Walsall Canal, Birmingham Canal and Titford Canal also pass through the area. Construction activities in or near watercourses have the potential to cause pollution, impact upon the bed and banks of watercourses and impact upon the quality of the water⁸⁷.
- 10.2.11 The ecological status of the sections of the River Tame within Sandwell was 'moderate' in 2019, although the majority of canal sections were 'good'. The chemical status of all watercourses in Sandwell is classed as 'fail' when ubiquitous, persistent, bioaccumulative and toxic substances (uPBTs) are considered⁸⁸.

⁸³ Severn Trent Water (2019) Water Resources Management Plan 2019. Available at: <https://www.stwater.co.uk/content/dam/stw-plc/our-plans/severn-trent-water-resource-management-plan.pdf> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁸⁴ South Staffs Water (2019) Water Resources Management Plan 2019. Available at: <https://www.south-staffs-water.co.uk/media/2676/final-wrmp-2019-south-staffs-water.pdf> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁸⁵ MHCLG (2019) Water supply, wastewater and water quality. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/water-supply-wastewater-and-water-quality#water-cycle-studies> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁸⁶ JBA Consulting (2020) Black Country Councils Water Cycle Study: Phase 1 Scoping Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/17929/watercyclestudy_phs1_scopingstudy.pdf [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁸⁷ World Health Organisation (1996) Water Quality Monitoring - A Practical Guide to the Design and Implementation of Freshwater Quality Studies and Monitoring Programmes: Chapter 2 – Water Quality. Available at: <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/41851> [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

⁸⁸ Environment Agency (2019) River Basin Management Plan: maps. Available at: <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/73ed24b6d30441648f24f043e75ebed2/page/Introduction/> [Date accessed: 13/01/23]

- 10.2.12 The vulnerability of groundwater to pollution is determined by the physical, chemical and biological properties of the soil and rocks, which control the ease with which an unprotected hazard can affect groundwater. Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) indicate the risk to groundwater supplies from potentially polluting activities and accidental releases of pollutants. SPZ 3, known as the 'Source Catchment Protection Zone' is found in the south east of the SLP area which represents "*the area needed to support the protected yield from long-term groundwater recharge*"⁸⁹ (see **Figure 10.2**).

Box 10.1: Summary of key sustainability issues: Water and Soil Resources

Key issues for water and soil resources include:

- ⇒ Soil is a non-renewable resource that will continue to be lost as a result of new development proposed within the emerging SLP as well as supporting infrastructure. The majority of land in the SLP area is ALC 'urban', with pockets of ALC Grade 3 and 4, which may be under threat from new growth areas and associated infrastructure.
- ⇒ New development and an increased population would be likely to place pressure on water resources and may result in a deficit between supply and demand if not carefully planned and managed alongside the water companies.
- ⇒ There is a need to give close consideration to the impacts of development proposals on wastewater treatment in the local area, and the capacity of treatment works, as well as the consequences of new wastewater generation for local water quality and the ecological status of ground and surface water bodies.
- ⇒ Culverted watercourses have the potential to become blocked by debris during periods of heavy or sustained rainfall. They also offer little biodiversity or recreational interest relative to more natural watercourses. In such cases, environmental and water quality benefits can be secured at minimal cost.
- ⇒ Most forms of development reduce the amount of rainfall that is intercepted by vegetation on the ground and can have detrimental implications for surface water run-off.

Box 10.2: Likely evolution without the Plan: Water and Soil Resources

Likely evolution of the baseline without the Plan

- Soil is a non-renewable resource that would be likely to continue to be lost. Rates of soil erosion and loss of soil fertility will be likely to continue to rise due to the impacts of agriculture and climate change.
- Water abstraction, consumption and treatment in the local area will continue to be managed by the Environment Agency and water companies through the Humber and Severn RBMPs, WRMP and CAMS in line with the Water Framework Directive. However, without plan-led development, there could potentially be new developments that result in over-capacity issues at wastewater treatment works (either cumulatively or individually).
- In the absence of plan-led development, the efficiency and sustainability of water consumption may be unlikely to improve as the local population grows and increases water demand, depending on the nature of any future changes to national regulations, such as the Building Regulations and any emerging policy / regulations relating to water neutrality.

⁸⁹ Environment Agency (2019) Manual for the production of Groundwater Source Protection Zones – March 2019.

Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/822402/Manual-for-the-production-of-Groundwater-Source-Protection-Zones.pdf [Date accessed: 12/01/23]

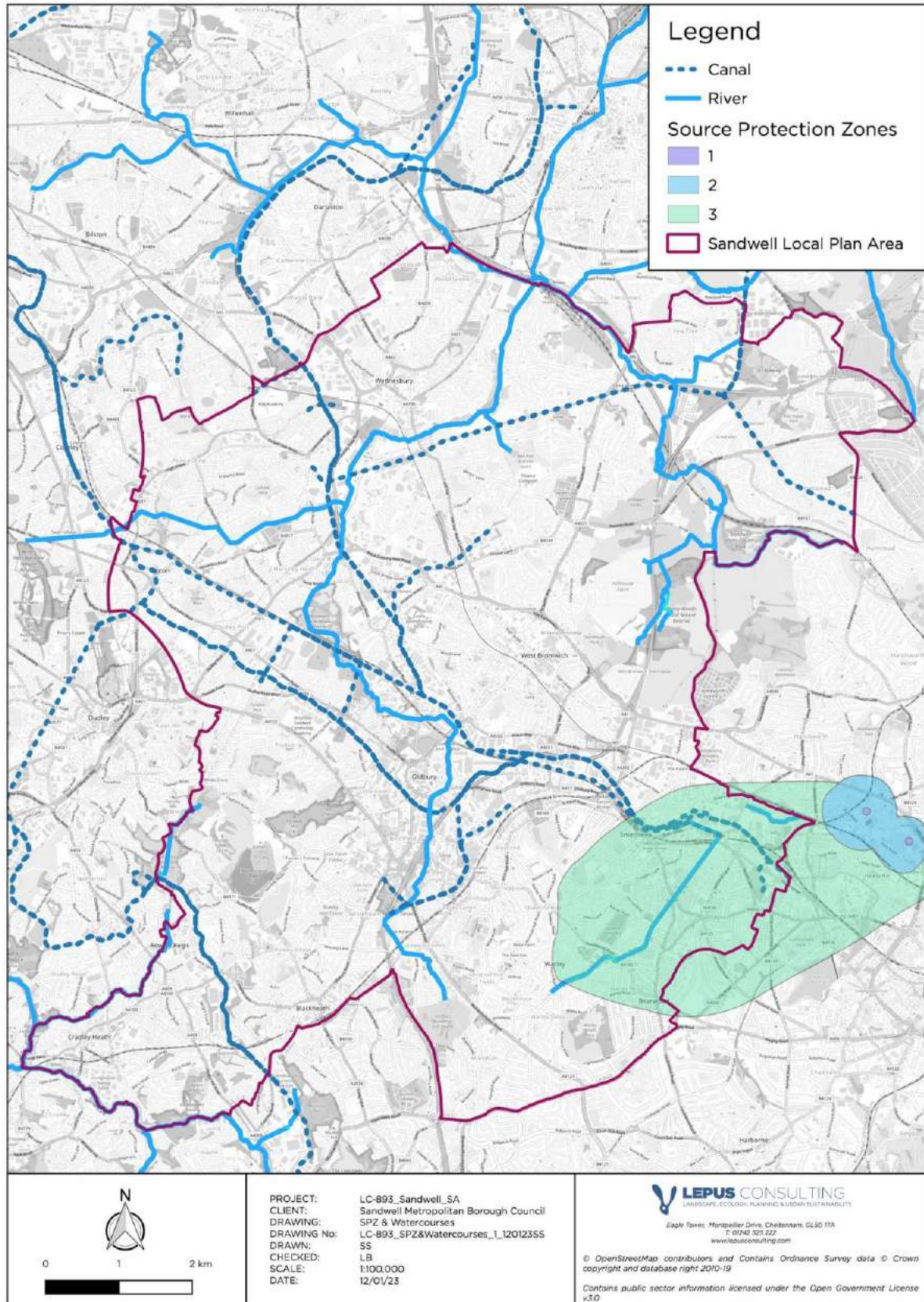


Figure 10.2: Watercourses and Groundwater Source Protection Zones (SPZs) in and around the SLP area (source: Environment Agency)

11 SA Framework

11.1 Purpose of the SA Framework

11.1.1 The SA Framework sets out objectives, decision-making criteria and indicators relating to sustainability themes, against which the SLP will be assessed. The full proposed SA Framework is presented in **Table 11.1**.

11.1.2 The SA Framework provides a way in which sustainability effects can be described, analysed and compared. The SA Framework consists of SA Objectives, the achievement of which (where practicable), is measurable using indicators. SA Objectives and indicators can be revised as further baseline information is collected and sustainability issues and challenges are identified and are used in monitoring the implementation of the SLP.

11.1.3 To expand on the central focus of each SA Objective (as they are high-level and potentially open-ended) the SA Framework includes a series of questions or 'decision making criteria' for use when applying the SA Framework to the assessment of proposed policies.

11.2 SA Objectives

11.2.1 The purpose of the SA Objectives is to provide a way of ensuring the proposed policies consider the needs of the SLP area in terms of the environmental, social and economic effects. The SA topics identified in Schedule 2 of the SEA Regulations are one of the key determinants when considering which SA Objectives should be used for the environmental criteria. Consequently, the SA Objectives seek to reflect all subject areas to ensure the assessment process is transparent, robust and thorough.

11.2.2 The SA Objectives have drawn on the baseline information, the key issues and other plans and programmes of particular interest discussed earlier in this Scoping Report (see **Chapters 2 to 10**). It should be noted that the order of the SA Objectives does not infer any prioritisation.

11.2.3 The SA Framework for the SLP is derived from the SA Framework that was developed as part of the SA process to support the draft BCP. There are a number of planning issues, cross-boundary factors and key issues for the Black Country Authorities that remain relevant and appropriate for Sandwell, which are reflected in the proposed SA Objectives and indicators as set out in **Table 11.1**.

Table 11.1: Proposed SA Framework for the SLP

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA Regulations topics	Decision making criteria: Will the option / proposal...	Indicators (this list is not exhaustive)
1	Cultural heritage: Protect, enhance and manage sites, features and areas of archaeological, historical and cultural heritage importance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cultural heritage 	a) conserve features of architectural or historic interest and, where necessary, encourage their conservation and renewal? b) conserve or enhance archaeological sites/remains? c) conserve or enhance the setting of cultural heritage assets? d) improve the energy efficiency of historic buildings?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and condition of historic assets on the Heritage at Risk register. Developments with potential to adversely affect cultural heritage designations or areas of historic value in the SLP area. Statutory and non-statutory sites in the Historic Environment Record (HER) and identified in the HLC.
2	Landscape: Protect, enhance and manage the character and appearance of the landscape and townscape, maintaining and strengthening local distinctiveness and sense of place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Landscape Cultural heritage 	a) safeguard and enhance the character of the landscape and local distinctiveness and identity? b) protect and enhance visual amenity, including light and noise pollution? c) reuse degraded landscapes/townscapes? d) compromise the purpose of the Green Belt e.g. will it lead to coalescence of settlements and/or urban sprawl?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tranquillity rating of area. Re-use of brownfield land and/or derelict buildings. Developments with potential to alter existing landscape or townscape character. Developments in the Green Belt which contradict with the findings of the Green Belt Study. Developments in areas identified as being of 'moderate' or 'moderate-high' sensitivity in the Landscape Sensitivity Study.
3	Biodiversity, flora, fauna and geodiversity: Protect, enhance and manage biodiversity and geodiversity.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biodiversity Flora Fauna 	a) maintain and enhance features and assets of nature conservation value including biodiversity and geodiversity? b) support positive management of local sites (SLINCs and SINCs) designated for nature conservation and geodiversity value? c) contribute towards wider GI networks and promote habitat connectivity? d) deliver biodiversity net gain?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and diversity of protected species present in the area. Quality and extent of priority habitats (habitats of principle importance). Area and condition of sites designated for biological and geological interest. Provision and connectivity of GI. Amount of biodiversity net gain provided in new developments measured using the DEFRA Biodiversity Metric.

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA Regulations topics	Decision making criteria: Will the option / proposal...	Indicators (this list is not exhaustive)
4	Climate change mitigation: Minimise Sandwell's contribution to climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climatic factors 	a) help to reduce the per capita carbon footprint of Sandwell? b) encourage renewable energy generation or use of energy from renewable or low-carbon sources? c) promote sustainable construction principles? d) help to reduce reliance on private car use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carbon emissions from domestic / industrial / commercial sources. Percentage of energy in the area generated from renewable sources. Proximity to, and frequency of, public transport links. Distance to local services and amenities.
5	Climate change adaptation: Plan for the anticipated levels of climate change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climatic factors Soil Water 	a) avoid development in areas at high risk of flooding and seek to reduce flood risk? b) increase the coverage and connectivity of GI? c) promote use of technologies and techniques to adapt to the impacts of climate change? d) ensure that new development is resilient to the effects of extreme weather events?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of properties at risk of flooding. Area of new greenspace created per capita. Area and connectivity of GI. Implementation of adaptive techniques, such as SuDS and passive heating/cooling.
6	Natural resources: Protect and conserve natural resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil Water Material assets 	a) utilise previously developed, degraded and under-used land? b) lead to the loss of the best and most versatile agricultural land? c) lead to the loss or sterilisation of mineral resources, or affect mineral working?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-use of previously developed or brownfield land. Area of potential BMV agricultural land lost to development. Development within groundwater SPZs. Proposed Mineral Safeguarding Area(s).
7	Pollution: Reduce air, soil, water and noise pollution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air Water Soil Human health 	a) improve air quality and avoid generating further air pollution? b) conserve soil quality or help to remediate land affected by ground contamination? c) conserve and improve water quality? d) help to reduce noise pollution and protect sensitive receptors from existing ambient noise?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of exceedances in NO₂, PM₁₀ or PM_{2.5} annual mean objectives within Sandwell AQMA. Development with potential to generate a significant increase in road traffic emissions or other air pollutants. Area of contaminated land remediated. Proximity to watercourses or groundwater receptors. Ecological and chemical status of waterbodies within the SLP area and downstream.

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA Regulations topics	Decision making criteria: Will the option / proposal...	Indicators (this list is not exhaustive)
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage change in pollution incidents.
8	Waste: Reduce waste generation and disposal and achieve the sustainable management of waste.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population Material assets 	a) encourage recycling, re-use and composting of waste? b) minimise and where possible eliminate generation of waste, during both construction and occupation of development?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number and capacity of waste management facilities. Rate of recycling and composting. Management of local authority collected waste.
9	Transport and accessibility: Improve the efficiency of transport networks by increasing the proportion of travel by sustainable modes and by promoting policies which reduce the need to travel.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Climatic factors Population Material assets 	a) reduce the need to travel and/or reduce travel time? b) provide adequate means of access by a range of sustainable transport modes (i.e. walking, cycling, and public transport)? c) support a modal shift away from private car use?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity and connectivity of walking and cycling links. Proximity to public transport links including bus services, metro and rail. Frequency of bus services. Provision or expansion of public transport and active travel infrastructure. Distance / travel times to place of work, local amenities and key services.
10	Housing: Provide affordable, environmentally sound and good quality housing for all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population 	a) provide a mix of good-quality housing, including homes that are suitable for first-time buyers? b) provide housing suitable for the growing elderly population? c) provide decent, affordable, and accessible homes?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varied housing mix. Percentage of dwellings delivered as affordable housing. Number of extra care homes. Provision of pitches and plots for Gypsies, Travellers and Travelling Showpeople.
11	Equality: Reduce poverty, crime and social deprivation and secure economic inclusion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population Human health 	a) eliminate unlawful discrimination, victimisation and harassment? b) reduce crime and the fear of crime? c) create safe neighbourhoods and support community cohesion? d) advance equality of opportunity? e) help to achieve life-long learning and increase learning participation and adult education?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indices of Multiple Deprivation. Level of qualifications e.g. number. of people with NVQ2. Rates of crime. Provision of and access to community facilities including libraries and local centres. Provision of accessible and adaptable homes to meet the needs of the population.

#	SA Objective	Relevant SEA Regulations topics	Decision making criteria: Will the option / proposal...	Indicators (this list is not exhaustive)
12	Health: Safeguard and improve community health, safety and wellbeing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Human health Population 	a) improve sustainable access for all to health, leisure and recreational facilities? b) improve and enhance Sandwell's GI network? c) improve road safety? d) consider the needs of Sandwell's growing elderly population?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Travel time by active travel and/or public transport to healthcare facilities and services. Provision and accessibility of open greenspace and GI. Accessibility to sports facilities e.g. football pitches, playing fields, tennis courts and leisure centres.
13	Economy: Develop a dynamic, diverse and knowledge-based economy that excels in innovation with higher value, lower impact activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population Material assets 	a) improve sustainable access to employment opportunities? b) encourage business start-ups in the SLP area? c) protect and enhance the vitality and viability of existing employment and retail areas? d) protect and create jobs?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity and sustainable accessibility to employment opportunities. Number of residents working within Sandwell, and rates of unemployment. Number of new business start-ups as a result of the development. Total amount of employment land. Number of vacant units in strategic centres.
14	Education, skills and training: Raise educational attainment and develop and maintain a skilled workforce to support long-term competitiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Population 	a) improve sustainable access for all to education and training opportunities? b) encourage a diversity of education and training opportunities? c) Support the provision of an appropriately skilled workforce?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proximity to education and training, particularly primary schools and secondary schools. Provision of new education and training facilities and opportunities. Accessibility of education and training facilities by public transport. Capacity of local schools to meet demand from new development.

12 Next steps

12.1 Background

12.1.1 This chapter summarises the stages of, and approach to, the processes that will be carried out for the SLP following consultation at the Scoping stage. Where appropriate, the proposed assessment methods to be used have been included.

12.2 Refining options and assessing effects

12.2.1 The assessment of options (or alternatives) is an important requirement of the SEA Regulations, which requires the Environmental Report to include *"an outline of the reasons for selecting the alternatives dealt with, and a description of how the assessment was undertaken including any difficulties (such as technical deficiencies or lack of know-how) encountered in compiling the required information"*.

12.2.2 Reasonable alternatives will be assessed through the SA process to enable options for the SLP to be explored. In this way, the SA can provide a coherent story of the SLP's evolution and choice of options by assessing reasonable alternatives in reports prepared throughout the plan making process.

12.3 Sustainability Appraisal and Publication/Submission

12.3.1 The next stage of the SA will involve assessing successive drafts of the SLP. In terms of the assessment methodology, an assessment of all options, policies and proposals presented in the SLP iterations will be undertaken. Findings from the assessment will be presented in a single-line matrix format. The high-level matrix is not a conclusive tool or model. Its main function is to identify at a strategic level whether or not the assessment requires a more detailed examination or whether satisfactory conclusions may be drawn from the high-level assessment without the need for further (time consuming) detailed analysis of a particular policy.

12.3.2 The assessment of policies and options will include:

- A description of the predicted effect;
- The duration of the effect: whether the effect is long, medium or short term;
- The frequency of the effect;
- Whether the effect is temporary or permanent;
- The geographic significance: whether the effect is of local, regional, national or international significance;
- The magnitude of effect;
- The severity of significance; and
- Whether mitigation is required/possible to reduce the effect.

12.3.3 As required by the SEA Regulations, cumulative, indirect and synergistic effects will also be identified and evaluated during the assessment. An explanation of these is as follows:

- **Cumulative effects** arise where several developments each have insignificant effects but together have a significant effect, or where several individual effects of the SLP have a combined effect.
- **Indirect effects** are effects that are not a direct result of the SLP but occur away from the original effect or as a result of a complex pathway.
- **Synergistic effects** interact to produce a total effect greater than the sum of the individual effects.

12.3.4 The assessment of these effects will be presented in tabular format and show where the different effects arise when two or more draft policies operate together.

12.3.5 Wherever possible, throughout the appraisal process, GIS will be used as an analytical tool to examine the spatial distribution of identified effects.

12.3.6 The Regulation 18 Issues and Options SA Report has been prepared, drawing on the contents of this SA Scoping Report, and will be consulted on alongside this report and the SLP Issues and Options Consultation Document. Comments received during the consultation will be carefully considered and used to inform subsequent SA outputs in the SA process.

12.3.7 Following consultation on this SA Scoping Report and the Regulation 18 Issues and Options SA Report, any amendments that are made to the SLP and any further Regulation 18 stages carried out will be appraised, and consulted on with the statutory consultees and general public, before preparing the final version of the SA Report to accompany the Publication (Regulation 19) version of the SLP.

Habitats Regulations Assessments

Sustainability Appraisals

Strategic Environmental Assessments

Landscape Character Assessments

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessments

Green Belt Reviews

Expert Witness

Ecological Impact Assessments

Habitat and Ecology Surveys



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CHELTENHAM

Appendix A: Plan, Policy and Programme Review

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A.1 Accessibility and transport

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to accessibility and transport
National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ¹	<p>The NPPF seeks to streamline the planning system and sets out the government’s planning policies and how these should be applied. The NPPF includes guidance on promoting sustainable transport, and requires development plans to seek to reduce GHG emissions and congestion, reduce the need to travel, and explore opportunities for the sustainable movement of people and goods. Transport should be considered from the earliest stages of plan-making and development proposals so that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the potential impacts of development on transport networks can be addressed; • opportunities from existing or proposed transport infrastructure, and changing transport technology and usage, are realised – for example in relation to the scale, location or density of development that can be accommodated; • opportunities to promote walking, cycling and public transport use are identified and pursued; • the environmental impacts of traffic and transport infrastructure can be identified, assessed and considered – including appropriate opportunities for avoiding and mitigating any adverse effects, and for net environmental gains; and • patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places.
Department for Transport: Transport White Paper: The Future of Transport – A Network for 2030 (2004) ²	Sets out factors that will shape transport in the UK over the next thirty years. Also sets out how the Government will respond to the increasing demand for travel, while minimising the negative impact on people and the environment.
HM Government: The Road to Zero (2018)	This report outlines the transition to zero-emission road transport. This includes measures to reduce emissions from vehicles including specific targets for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs), promoting low- and zero- emission cars and developing high quality electric vehicle infrastructure networks.
Department for Transport: Towards a Sustainable Transport System: Supporting	Outlines five national goals for transport, focusing on the challenge of delivering strong economic growth while at the same time reducing greenhouse gas emissions. It outlines the key components of national infrastructure, discusses the difficulties of planning over the long term in the context of uncertain future demand and describes the substantial investments we are making to tackle congestion and

¹ MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

² Department for Transport: Transport White Paper: The Future of Transport – A Network for 2030 (2004) Available at:

<https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/+http://www.dft.gov.uk/about/strategy/whitepapers/previous/fot/> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to accessibility and transport
Economic Growth in a Low Carbon World (2008) ³	<p>crowding on transport networks. The National Goals for Transport are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goal 1: To reduce transport’s emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, with the desired outcome of tackling climate change. • Goal 2: To support economic competitiveness and growth, by delivering reliable and efficient transport networks. • Goal 3: To promote greater equality of opportunity for all citizens, with the desired outcome of achieving a fairer society. • Goal 4: To contribute to better safety, security and health and longer life expectancy by reducing the risk of death, injury or illness arising from transport, and by promoting travel modes that are beneficial to health. • Goal 5: To improve quality of life for transport users and non-transport users, and to promote a healthy natural environment.
Department for Transport: The Future of Rail White Paper (2004) ⁴	Sets out a blueprint for a new streamlined structure for Britain’s Railway. The proposals aim to provide a single point of accountability for the network’s performance, allow closer working between track and train and provide for greater devolution of decision-making.
Cycling and walking plan for England (2020) ⁵	<p>The ‘Gear change: a bold vision for cycling and walking’ document sets out a vision for a travel revolution in England’s streets, towns and communities. The plan sets out the multiple benefits of increased cycling and walking including health, congestion, the economy and air quality, and the vision that “<i>cycling and walking will be the natural first choice for many journeys with half of all journeys in towns and cities being cycled or walked by 2030</i>”. The plan sets out four main themes to achieve this vision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 1: Better streets for cycling and people; • Theme 2: Cycling at the heart of decision-making; • Theme 3: Empowering and encouraging Local Authorities; and • Theme 4: Enabling people to cycle and protecting them when they do.
Secretary of State for Transport (2013) Aviation Policy Framework ⁶	<p>This document will fully replace the 2003 Air Transport White Paper as government’s policy on aviation, alongside any decisions Government makes following the recommendations of the independent Airports Commission. Key aims of this document includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the UK’s air links continue to make it one of the best connected countries in the world. This includes increasing our links to emerging markets so that the UK can compete successfully for economic growth opportunities;

³ Department for Transport: Towards a Sustainable Transport System: Supporting Economic Growth in a Low Carbon World (2007) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/228953/7226.pdf [Date accessed: 04/01/232]

⁴ Department for Transport: The Future of Rail White Paper (2004) Available at: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/SN03142/SN03142.pdf> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

⁵ Department for Transport (2020) Cycling and walking plan for England. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/cycling-and-walking-plan-for-england> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶ Secretary of State for Transport (2013) Aviation Policy Framework Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/aviation-policy-framework> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to accessibility and transport
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To ensure that the aviation sector makes a significant and cost-effective contribution towards reducing global emissions; • To limit and where possible reduce the number of people in the UK significantly affected by aircraft noise; and • To encourage the aviation industry and local stakeholders to strengthen and streamline the way in which they work together.
Movement for Growth: The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan ⁷	<p>The Movement for Growth Strategy is based on the West Midlands Combined Authority's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) and seeks to create a modern, efficient and reliable transport system. The Movement for Growth document is accompanied by a 10-year delivery plan which outlines key supporting transport projects that will deliver many of the SEP's outcomes over the coming decade.</p> <p>The vision for transport in the West Midlands Metropolitan Area is: "<i>We will make great progress for a Midlands economic 'Engine for Growth', clean air, improved health and quality of life for the people of the West Midlands. We will do this by creating a transport system befitting a sustainable, attractive and economically vibrant conurbation in the world's sixth largest economy</i>".</p>
West Midlands Local Transport Plan Green Paper: Reimagining transport in the West Midlands: Local Transport Plan Draft Core Strategy (2021) ⁸	<p>The proposed Core Strategy for the fifth LTP for the West Midlands sets out the overall aims, vision and approach to guide the development and delivery of transport policies until the end of 2041. It seeks to: Sustain economic success; Create a fairer society; Support local communities and places; Become more active; and Tackle the climate emergency.</p> <p>The emerging fifth Local Transport Plan for the West Midlands will replace the Movement for Growth Strategy, when adopted.</p>
Transport for West Midlands: Congestion Management Plan ⁹	<p>The Congestion Management Plan aims to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tackle congestion hotspots through further investment in roads; 2. Push for greater traffic management powers, including moving traffic offences; 3. Invest in technology to help monitor performance and manage traffic; 4. Deliver a regional transport coordination centre for all modes in partnership with local authorities, Highways England and West Midlands Police to manage incidents/major events; 5. Invest in road safety and work with the Police and Crime Commissioner to manage road incidents more efficiently; 6. Continue to build capacity into the public transport networks; 7. Invest in communication and information tools and become a trusted source of travel advice; 8. Coordinate the delivery of the transport investment programme and minimise impact through collaboration with the Resilience Partnership;

⁷ West Midlands Combined Authority (no date) Movement for Growth: The West Midlands Strategic Transport Plan. Available at: <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/3uki3yw0/movement-for-growth.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁸ Transport for West Midlands (2021) Reimagining transport in the West Midlands: Local Transport Plan Draft Core Strategy. Available at: <https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/icyfrghp/wm-ltp-core-strategy-v0-7.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁹ Transport for West Midlands (no date) Congestion Management Plan. Available at: https://www.tfwm.org.uk/media/oxyfypvz/tfwm_cm-plan-aw_v3_lr_spreads.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to accessibility and transport
	<p>9. Make better use of the M6 Toll; and</p> <p>10. Deliver a travel demand action plan to encourage residents and businesses to re-mode, re-route, re-time or remove some journeys.</p>
Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy for Schools in Sandwell (2019) ¹⁰	<p>The strategy aims to encourage and enable young people and school staff across Sandwell to use more sustainable modes (walking, cycling, public transport, car sharing, and 'park and stride' schemes) to travel to and from school. Some specific objectives of the strategy are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Travel Plans: to ensure all schools have School Travel Plans that are regularly monitored, reviewed and kept up to date. • Awareness: to ensure that all young people and parents are aware of the travel options, particularly when they are making decisions about admissions and their choice of school. • Travel choice: to ensure that Sandwell builds on its achievements to date and reduces the number of pupils travelling to and from school by car.
Sandwell Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2020) ¹¹	<p>Sandwell's Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (SCWIP) carried out audits of existing walking and cycling routes across the borough to identify areas with the greatest opportunity to affect mode shift towards active transport modes, in line with SMBC's aim to increase the number of trips made by foot or bicycle. The SCWIP aims to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the implementation of the West Midlands Strategic Cycle Network; • Identify the local networks within Sandwell with a prioritised plan for delivery; • Coordinate the plan with existing plans for the Black Country and the West Midlands to ensure a consistent and aligned approach to delivery; and • Integrate this plan into a clear planning and transport policy document and delivery plan, taking into consideration the overarching West Midlands strategies for planning and transport. <p>The SCWIP will be integrated with other walking and cycling strategies and used on an ongoing basis to shape the cycling and walking implementation plans. The SCWIP will be refreshed in 2024 incorporating new routes and walking zones, with improved data including school data from the Propensity to Cycle tool, 2021 Census data and more detailed data to support walking interventions.</p>

¹⁰ Sustainable Modes of Travel Strategy for Schools in Sandwell (2019). Available at:

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/28553/smbc_sustainable_modes_of_travel_to_school_strategy_-_2019_update.pdf [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

¹¹ Mott MacDonald (2020) Sandwell Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (SCWIP) January 2020. Available at:

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/29952/sandwell_cycling_and_walking_infrastructure_plan_2020 [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

A.2 Air

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to air
EC Air Quality Directive (1996) ¹²	Aims to improve air quality throughout Europe by controlling the level of certain pollutants and monitoring their concentrations. In particular, the Directive aims to establish levels for different air pollutants; draw up common methods for assessing air quality; methods to improve air quality; and make sure that information on air quality is easily accessible to Member States and the public.
Clean Air Strategy (2019) ¹³	This Clean Air Strategy sets out how the Government will tackle all sources of air pollution, making air healthier to breathe, protecting nature and boosting the economy. The strategy includes targets such as a commitment to reduce PM2.5 concentrations across the UK, so that the number of people living in locations above the World Health Organisation (WHO) guideline level of 10 µg/m ³ is reduced by 50% by 2025.
Air Quality Plan for Nitrogen Dioxide in the UK (2017) ¹⁴	<p>The Air Quality Plan represents the statutory air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), setting out how the UK will be reducing roadside NO₂ concentrations. This plan focuses on meeting the legal requirements for reducing nitrogen dioxide set out in the Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010¹⁵.</p> <p>The document sets out the background to the issues, including the impacts of air pollution on public health, the natural environment and the economy, and key sources of NO₂ pollution. The document summarises the range of existing actions that have been put in place to tackle pollution from road transport, and sets out additional actions that will be required, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More stringent laboratory testing requirements for type approval of new Light Duty Vehicles; • New Real Driving Emissions requirements for light passenger and commercial vehicles; • Support for low emission freight; • Lorry emission technology checks at roadside; • Additional funding for new low emission buses and electric taxis, and retrofitting older buses; • Review of information available to car buyers at the point of sale; and • Review and update of regulations to support alternative fuels and changed approach to vehicle tax and levies.

¹² EC Air Quality Directive (1996) Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:31996L0062&from=ES> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

¹³ DEFRA et al. (2019) Clean Air Strategy 2019. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-air-strategy-2019> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

¹⁴ DEFRA and DfT (2018) Air quality plan for nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in UK. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/air-quality-plan-for-nitrogen-dioxide-no2-in-uk-2017> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

¹⁵ Air Quality Standards Regulations 2010. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/1001/contents/made> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to air
National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ¹⁶	The NPPF states that plans should prevent development from contributing to, or being put at risk of, air or water pollution. Plans should consider the presence of Air Quality Management Areas and cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas.
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018) ¹⁷	<p>The document sets out Government action to help achieve natural world regain and retain good health.</p> <p>The main goals of the Plan are to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean air; • Clean and plentiful water; • Thriving plants and wildlife; • A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought; • Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently; and • Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment. <p>The Plan seeks to achieve clean air by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting legally binding targets to reduce emissions of five damaging air pollutants. This should halve the effects of air pollution on health by 2030; • Ending the sale of new conventional petrol and diesel cars and vans by 2040; and • Maintaining the continuous improvement in industrial emissions by building on existing good practice and the successful regulatory framework. <p>The 2021 Environment Act (2021) embeds several of these aspects into the new legislation.</p>
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council: 2022 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) (2022) ¹⁸	<p>The ASR summarises actions to improve air quality that have been taken, and will be taken, in Sandwell AQMA. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase and update our monitoring capability of particulate matter (PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) – to provide data for the national network as well as supporting the development of local strategies. • Provide real time, air quality data including PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} to those living and working in Sandwell, in an easily accessible and understandable format.

¹⁶ MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

¹⁷ DEFRA (2021) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

¹⁸ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2022) Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR): June 2022. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/33233/air_quality_annual_status_report_2022.pdf [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to air
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow the principles of behaviour change theory, to engage people, not through dictatorship or instruction, but by communicating a whole range of choices for individuals and groups to adopt in addressing local air pollution concerns. • Utilise existing community groups and networks with established interest in their local area and environment and equip these communities with the knowledge and support to help them understand and assist in improving local air quality <p>In 2018, Sandwell Council had seven priority zones for air quality, as well as two Hotspots. These zones and hotspots are included within Sandwell’s Air Quality Action Plan 2020-2025. In 2019, two zones and one hotspot were found to be compliant with NO₂ objectives, whilst in 2020 all were compliant. In 2021 an exceedance was recorded on the A41 link road to the M5 which sits in Zone 3.</p>
Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council: Air Quality Action Plan 2020-2025 ¹⁹	<p>The Air Quality Action Plan identifies seven key priorities with the aim to reduce the overall health impacts and burdens of poor air quality; to achieve the national air quality NO₂ annual mean objective across the borough in the shortest possible timeframe; and to reduce PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations to protect human health. The following options are to be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of signaling • Speed Management & Enforcement • Traffic calming • Bus Retrofit to Euro VI & Route Management • Alternative walking & cycling routes • Barrier screening • Driver training • Travel planning • Highway upgrades

¹⁹ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Air Quality Action Plan 2020-2025. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/30801/aqap_2020-2025 [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

A.3 Biodiversity, flora and fauna

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to biodiversity, flora and fauna
UN Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) ²⁰	The aims of the Convention include the conservation of biological diversity (including a commitment to significantly reduce the current rate of biodiversity loss), the sustainable use of its components and the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits arising out of the utilization of genetic resources.
Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979) ²¹	The Convention seeks to conserve wild flora and fauna and their natural habitats, and to monitor and control endangered and vulnerable species.
Directive on the Conservation of Natural Habitats and of Wild Fauna and Flora 1992 (the Habitats Directive) ²²	<p>The main aim of the Habitats Directive is to promote the maintenance of biodiversity by requiring Member States to take measures to maintain or restore natural habitats and wild species listed on the Annexes to the Directive at a favourable conservation status, introducing robust protection for those habitats and species of European importance. In applying these measures Member States are required to take account of economic, social and cultural requirements, as well as regional and local characteristics.</p> <p>The provisions of the Directive require Member States to introduce a range of measures, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain or restore European protected habitats and species listed in the Annexes at a favourable conservation status; • Contribute to a coherent European ecological network of protected sites by designating Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) for habitats listed on Annex I and for species listed on Annex II. These measures are also to be applied to Special Protection Areas (SPAs) classified under Article 4 of the Birds Directive. Together SACs and SPAs make up the Natura 2000 network (Article 3); • Ensure conservation measures are in place to appropriately manage SACs and ensure appropriate assessment of plans and projects likely to have a significant effect on the integrity of an SAC; • Projects may still be permitted if there are no alternatives, and there are imperative reasons of overriding public interest. In such cases compensatory measures are necessary to ensure the overall coherence of the Natura 2000 network (Article 6); • Encourage the management of features of the landscape that support the Natura 2000 network.
The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017	This transposes into national law the Habitats Directive and also consolidates all amendments that have been made to the previous 1994

²⁰ UN Convention on Biological Diversity (1992) Available at: <https://www.cbd.int/doc/legal/cbd-en.pdf> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

²¹ Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats (1979) Available at: <https://rm.coe.int/1680078aff> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

²² Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:31992L0043> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to biodiversity, flora and fauna
(as amended) (Habitats Regulations) ²³	Regulations. This means that competent authorities have a general duty in the exercise of any of their functions to have regard to the Directive.
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018) ²⁴	<p>The document sets out government action to help achieve natural world regain and retain good health. The main goals of the Plan are to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean air; • Clean and plentiful water; • Thriving plants and wildlife; • A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought; • Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently; and • Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment. <p>The Environment Act (2021) embeds several of these aspects into new legislation.</p>
DEFRA: Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011) ²⁵	<p>The England biodiversity strategy 2020 ties in with the EU biodiversity strategy in addition to drawing links to the concept of ecosystem services. The strategy's vision for England is: <i>"By 2050 our land and seas will be rich in wildlife, our biodiversity will be valued, conserved, restored, managed sustainably and be more resilient and able to adapt to change, providing essential services and delivering benefits for everyone"</i>.</p> <p>The Strategy's overall mission is: <i>"to halt overall biodiversity loss, support healthy well-functioning ecosystems and establish coherent ecological networks, with more and better places for nature for the benefit of wildlife and people"</i>.</p>
TCPA: Biodiversity by Design: A Guide for Sustainable Communities (2004) ²⁶	The development process should consider ecological potential of all areas including both greenfield and brownfield sites. Local authorities and developers have a responsibility to mitigate impacts of development on designated sites and priority habitats and species and avoid damage to ecosystems.

²³ The Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 (Habitats Regulations) Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2017/1012/contents/made> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

²⁴ HM Government (2018) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/693158/25-year-environment-plan.pdf [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

²⁵ DEFRA (2011). Biodiversity 2020: A strategy for England's wildlife and ecosystem services (2011) Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/biodiversity-2020-a-strategy-for-england-s-wildlife-and-ecosystem-services> [Date accessed: 04/01/23]

²⁶ TCPA (2004) Biodiversity by Design: A Guide for Sustainable Communities. Available at: [https://library.uniteddiversity.coop/Ecovillages and Low Impact Development/Biodiversity%20by%20Design.pdf](https://library.uniteddiversity.coop/Ecovillages%20and%20Low%20Impact%20Development/Biodiversity%20by%20Design.pdf) [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to biodiversity, flora and fauna
National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ²⁷	<p>The 2021 version of the NPPF seeks to streamline the planning system and sets out the government’s planning policies and how these should be applied. The NPPF includes guidance on promoting the conservation and enhancement of the natural environment. It requires the planning system to contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geological conservation interests and soils; • recognising the wider benefits of ecosystem services; • minimising impacts on biodiversity and providing net gains in biodiversity where possible, contributing to the government’s commitment to halt the overall decline in biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures; • preventing both new and existing development from contributing to or being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability; and • remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate.
Making Space for Nature: a review of England’s wildlife sites and ecological network (2010) ²⁸	<p>The Making Space for Nature report, which investigated the resilience of England’s ecological network to multiple pressures, concluded that England’s wildlife sites do not comprise of a coherent and resilient ecological network. The report advocates the need for a step change in conservation of England’s wildlife sites to ensure they are able to adapt and become part of a strong and resilient network. The report summarises what needs to be done to improve England’s wildlife sites to enhance the resilience and coherence of England’s ecological network in four words; more, bigger, better, and joined. There are five key approaches which encompass these, which also take into account of the land around the ecological network:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the quality of current sites by better habitat management. • Increase the size of current wildlife sites. • Enhance connections between, or join up, sites, either through physical corridors, or through ‘steppingstones’. • Create new sites. • Reduce the pressures on wildlife by improving the wider environment, including through buffering wildlife sites.
The England Trees Action Plan 2021-2024 (2021) ²⁹	<p>The Trees Action Plan sets out how the Government will tackle the challenges of biodiversity loss and climate change, in line with the goals of the 25 Year Environment Plan. The plan provides a strategic framework for implementing the Nature for Climate Fund and outlines over 80 policy actions the government is taking over this Parliament to help deliver this vision. Planting vastly more trees in England, and protecting and improving our existing woodlands, will be key to the government’s plan to achieve net zero and to create a</p>

²⁷ MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

²⁸ DEFRA (2010) Making Space for Nature: a review of England’s wildlife sites and ecological network. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/making-space-for-nature-a-review-of-englands-wildlife-sites-published-today> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

²⁹ DEFRA (2021) England Trees Action Plan 2021 to 2024. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/england-trees-action-plan-2021-to-2024> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to biodiversity, flora and fauna
	Nature Recovery Network across the length of England.
The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature. The Natural Environment White Paper (2011) ³⁰	<p>Published in June 2011, the Natural Environment White paper sets out the government’s plans to ensure the natural environment is protected and fully integrated into society and economic growth. The White Paper sets out four key aims:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protecting and improving our natural environment; • Growing a green economy; • Reconnecting people and nature; and • International and EU leadership.
CABE Making Contracts Work for Wildlife: How to Encourage Biodiversity in Urban Parks (2006) ³¹	Advises on how to make the most of the potential for biodiversity in urban parks and it shows how the commitment of individuals and employers can make the difference between failure and inspiring success.
Birmingham and the Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan (2010) ³²	<p>The vision for the Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan is to create “<i>A diverse and natural Birmingham and Black Country, where we are connected to our wildlife and landscape; healthy, sustainable communities and local livelihoods, working with nature and securing its future</i>”. They key aims of this action plan are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and increase the biodiversity of key sites and landscapes through appropriate protection and management. • Restore degraded habitats and key species populations by restoring key areas. • Link key areas with ecological corridors to reconnect wildlife populations and make them less vulnerable. • Promote and support the use of the natural environment to mitigate against, and adapt to, the effects of climate change. • Enable the sustainable use of the natural environment to benefit health and wellbeing of residents, workers and visitors as well as improving the local economy.

³⁰ DEFRA (2011) The Natural Choice: Securing the Value of Nature. The Natural Environment White Paper. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-natural-choice-securing-the-value-of-nature> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

³¹ CABE (2006) Making Contracts Work for Wildlife: How to Encourage Biodiversity in Urban Parks Available at: <http://downloads.gigl.org.uk/website/making-contracts-work-for-wildlife.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

³² The Birmingham and Black Country Biodiversity LBAP Review Group (2010) Birmingham and the Black Country Biodiversity Action Plan 2010. Available at: <https://www.bbcwildlife.org.uk/sites/default/files/2018-10/bbcapfinal2010.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to biodiversity, flora and fauna
An Ecological Evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt (2019) ³³	<p>The Ecological Evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt was prepared to inform the review of the former Black Country Plan. Although this is no longer being pursued, the study provides evidence base information relating to the geographic area including the Sandwell Development Plan.</p> <p>The primary output of the ecological evaluation is a GIS data set which assigns ecological value to individual landscape units through analysis and interpretation of a number of relevant data sets. The evaluation can be used in the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informs the prioritisation of ecological field survey and statutory and non-statutory site assessment. • Contributes to the defining of the ecological network of the Black Country Green Belt and beyond at a high resolution, and the identification of the component parts of a Black Country Nature Recovery Network. • Can be utilised to inform more effective nature conservation project targeting and delivery. • Can be utilised to inform the targeting of future agricultural environmental stewardship schemes. • Can be utilised to inform the targeting and delivery of Biodiversity Net Gain through the planning system. • Is a key data set to be analysed (in conjunction with others) as part of the proposed West Midlands Combined Authority Natural Capital Investment Strategy.
Streetscene Urban Tree Policy (2015) ³⁴	<p>The policies (listed below) are aimed to ensure that the council's trees and woodlands are adequately protected and cared for so that their extent, quality, biological diversity and contribution to the character and appearance of the area can be sustained and enriched for the benefit and enjoyment of the residents and visitors to the borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Tree Management- existing trees • General Tree Management- new planting • Specific policies relating to Street Trees • Specific policies in respect to Parks, Schools, Cemeteries/ Crematoria, Educational Establishments and Woodlands • Policies in relation to new Housing, Commercial or Industrial Developments • Tree Preservation Orders • Policies in relation to damage caused by trees

³³ EcoRecord (2019) An Ecological Evaluation of the Black Country Green Belt, October 2019. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13896/an-ecological-evaluation-of-the-black-country-green-belt-final-report-2019-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

³⁴ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2015) Streetscene Urban Tree Policy 2015-2018. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/28265/fs10691773_tree_policy_attachment_document.doc [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

A.4 Climatic factors

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to climatic factors
UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) ³⁵	Sets an overall framework for intergovernmental efforts to tackle the challenge posed by climate change.
IPCC Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1997) ³⁶	Commits member nations to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases or engage in emissions trading if they maintain or increase emissions of these gases.
EC Sixth Environmental Action Programme Community 2002-2012 (2002) ³⁷	Climate change has been identified as one of four priority areas for Europe. The EAP's main objective is a reduction in emissions of GHGs without a reduction in levels of growth and prosperity, as well as adaptation and preparation for the effects of climate change.
EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006) ³⁸	This Strategy identifies key priorities for an enlarged Europe. This includes health, social inclusion and fighting global poverty. It aims to achieve better policy integration in addressing these challenges, and to ensure that Europe looks beyond its boundaries in making informed decisions about sustainability. The Sustainable Development Strategy was review in 2009 and " <i>underlined that in recent years the EU has mainstreamed sustainable development into a broad range of its policies. In particular, the EU has taken the lead in the fight against climate change and the promotion of a low-carbon economy. At the same time, unsustainable trends persist in many areas and the efforts need to be intensified</i> ". Sustainable development is a key focus of the EU and the strategy continues to be monitored and reviewed.
UK Renewable Energy Strategy (2009) ³⁹	The UK has committed to sourcing 15% of its energy from renewable sources by 2020 – an increase in the share of renewables from about 2.25% in 2008. The Renewable Energy Strategy sets out how the Government will achieve this target through utilising a variety of mechanisms to encourage Renewable Energy provision in the UK. This includes streamlining the planning system, increasing investment in technologies as well as improving funding for advice and awareness raising.

³⁵ UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (1992) Available at: <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/conveng.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

³⁶ IPCC Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (1997) Available at: <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/convkp/kpeng.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

³⁷ EC Sixth Environmental Action Programme Community 2002-2012 Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/environment/archives/action-programme/strategies_en.htm [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

³⁸ EU Sustainable Development Strategy (2006) Available at: <https://www.eea.europa.eu/policy-documents/renewed-eu-strategy-for-sustainable-development> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

³⁹ DECC (2009) UK Renewable Energy Strategy. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-renewable-energy-strategy> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to climatic factors
UK Renewable Energy Roadmap Update (2013) ⁴⁰	This is the second Update to the 2011 Renewable Energy Roadmap. It sets out the progress that has been made and the changes that have occurred in the sector over the past year. It also describes the continuing high ambitions and actions along with the challenges going forward.
The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan (2009) ⁴¹	<p>The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan sets out how the UK will meet the Climate Change Act's legally binding target of 34 per cent cut in emissions on 1990 levels by 2020. It also seeks to deliver emissions cuts of 18% on 2008 levels. The main aims of the Transition Plan include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Producing 30% of energy from renewables by 2020; • Improving the energy efficiency of existing housing; • Increasing the number of people in 'green jobs'; and • Supporting the use and development of clean technologies.
National Planning Policy Framework (2012) ⁴²	<p>The NPPF includes guidance on climate change, flooding, and coastal change. Plans should take account of climate change over the longer term, including factors such as flood risk, coastal change, water supply and changes to biodiversity and landscape. New development should be planned to avoid increased vulnerability to the range of impacts arising from climate change. When new development is brought forward in areas which are vulnerable, care should be taken to ensure that risks can be managed through suitable adaptation measures, including through the planning of green infrastructure.</p> <p>To support the move to a low carbon future, planning authorities should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan for new development in locations and ways which reduce greenhouse gas emissions; • actively support energy efficiency improvements to existing buildings; and • when setting any local requirement for a building's sustainability, do so in a way consistent with the government's zero carbon buildings policy and adopt nationally described standards. <p>Local plans should apply a sequential, risk-based approach to the location of development to avoid where possible flood risk to people and property and manage any residual risk, taking account of the impacts of climate change, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • applying the Sequential Test; • if necessary, applying the Exception Test; • safeguarding land from development that is required for current and future flood management;

⁴⁰ UK Renewable Energy Roadmap Update Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-renewable-energy-roadmap-second-update> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁴¹ The UK Low Carbon Transition Plan Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-uk-low-carbon-transition-plan-national-strategy-for-climate-and-energy> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁴² MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to climatic factors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • using opportunities offered by new development to reduce the causes and impacts of flooding.
Carbon Trust: The Climate Change Challenge: Scientific Evidence and Implications (2005) ⁴³	This report summarises the nature of the climate change issue. It explains the fundamental science and the accumulating evidence that climate change is real and needs to be addressed. It also explains the future potential impacts, including the outstanding uncertainties.
Energy Saving Trust: Renewable Energy Sources for Homes in Urban Environments (2005) ⁴⁴	Provides information about the integration of renewable energy sources into new and existing dwellings in urban environments. It covers the basic principles, benefits, limitations, costs and suitability of various technologies.
Environment Agency, Adapting to Climate Change: A Checklist for Development (2005) ⁴⁵	The document contains a checklist and guidance for new developments to adapt to climate change. The main actions are summarised in a checklist.
West Midlands Combined Authority Five Year Plan (2022) ⁴⁶	<p>The Five Year Plan (FYP) sets out how the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) area can start to deliver net zero carbon emissions by 2041. The aim of the FYP is to provide clear guidance on the types of measures that will need to be implemented to achieve this. The FYP identifies key priorities for delivery, working with regional stakeholders across a range of sectors. Priorities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investment in renewables and to deliver energy efficient homes and low carbon heating; • Working with local authorities to deliver improvements to active travel and public transport as set out in the existing Local Transport Plan (LTP), Movement for Growth, as well as producing a new LTP aligned to WM2041. • Implementing the Zero Carbon Homes Routemap which provides clear actions and targets for reducing operational, embodied and whole life emissions for new residential development. • Establishing a regional natural capital board to produce a natural capital plan for the West Midlands to increase forestry cover. • Working with colleges, universities and employers to develop the skills and training programmes required to provide the work force for the net zero transition.

⁴³ Carbon Trust: The Climate Change Challenge: Scientific Evidence and Implications Available at: <https://www.carbontrust.com/resources/the-climate-change-challenge> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁴⁴ Energy Saving Trust: Renewable Energy Sources for Homes in Urban Environments Available at: https://www.buildingcentre.co.uk/media/_file/pdf/22220_pdf30.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁴⁵ Environment Agency, Adapting to Climate Change: A Checklist for Development Available at: https://www.ukcip.org.uk/wp-content/Wizard/Checklist_for_development.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁴⁶ West Midlands Combined Authority (2022) WM2041 Five Year Plan 2021 – 2026. Available at: <https://www.wmca.org.uk/what-we-do/environment-and-energy/> [Date accessed: 23/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to climatic factors
Sandwell Corporate Climate Change Action Plan 2022 – 2025 (2022) ⁴⁷	<p>The Action Plan sets out the council's priorities and proposed actions to meet 2030 and 2041 targets for reaching net zero. The report is designed to put the council's corporate agenda and sets out priorities to tackle climate change. These priorities are categorised into:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council Estates and Operations (Corporate Building Stock, School Buildings, Street Lighting, Fleet, etc.); • Reducing emissions from transport; • Reducing emissions from existing homes; • Reducing emissions from new homes; • Reducing emissions from businesses; • Reducing emissions from household waste; • Community Engagement; • Energy; • Air Quality; and • Natural Environment.
Sandwell Climate Change Strategy (2020-2041) ⁴⁸	<p>Following the declaration of Climate Emergency in March 2020 by SMBC, the document represents a high-level strategy for meeting science-based targets that will enable Sandwell to make its fair contribution to reducing UK emissions. Sandwell has adopted the following overarching targets:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (1) to reach carbon neutrality across all Council functions by 2030. • (2) to reach carbon neutrality borough-wide by 2041. <p>The strategy covers both mitigation of climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and also adaptation to the effects of climate change on the area, in order to reduce harm from heatwaves, floods and air pollution among other impacts. The targets set out accompanies the Climate Change Action Plan.</p>
The Black Country Authorities Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment: Final Report (2020) ⁴⁹	<p>A Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) has been carried out for the Black Country to inform the local authorities of flood risk across their areas from all sources, in the present and in the future. The assessment has identified potential increases in flood risk due to climate change and produced modelled outputs.</p> <p>A Level 2 SFRA of proposed sites within the Sandwell will be prepared at a later stage of the plan making process.</p>

⁴⁷ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2022) Corporate Climate Change Action Plan 2022 – 2025. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200274/pollution/4402/climate_change_and_air_quality_in_sandwell [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁴⁸ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2020) Climate Change Strategy 2020-2041. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/info/200274/pollution/4402/climate_change_and_air_quality_in_sandwell [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁴⁹ JBA Consulting (2020) The Black Country Authorities Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment: Final Report, 25th June 2020. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/15818/2018s1436-black-country-councils-level-1-sfra-final-50_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to climatic factors
The Black Country Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management (2016) ⁵⁰	The Strategy provides an overview and assessment of local flood risk in the Black Country, setting out objectives and measures for how the LLFAs will manage and reduce local flood risk. It is the document that sets out how flood risk associated with surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses in an area will be managed by the relevant Councils and their partners. It is a statutory duty of the local authorities within the Black Country to produce and maintain a Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management.
Sandwell Council Flood Plan (2021) ⁵¹	<p>The plan outlines the Council’s actions for responding to flooding (river/fluviial, surface water and groundwater) emergencies within Sandwell, ensuring that resources can be mobilised when required. The plan also supports the wider multi-agency response to flooding. The plan should be read in conjunction with other relevant plans of the emergency services, the local authority, the Environment Agency and any other additional organisation or agency, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sandwell’s Emergency Plan; • Sandwell Extreme Weather Plan; • Sandwell Reservoir Plan; • Preliminary Flood Risk Assessment; • Environment Agency Local Flood Warning Plan for the West Midlands; and • The Black Country Authorities Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

⁵⁰ Black Country Authorities (2016) Local Strategy for Flood Risk Management. Available at:

https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/sites/default/files/pdf/Local_Flood_Risk_Management_Strategy_-_The_Black_Country_final_version.pdf [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

⁵¹ Sandwell Council Flood Plan (2021). Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/3218/sandwell_flood_plan.pdf [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

A.5 Cultural heritage

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to cultural heritage
Council of Europe: Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985) ⁵²	Aims for signatories to protect their architectural heritage by means of identifying monuments, buildings and sites to be protected; preventing the disfigurement, dilapidation or demolition of protected properties; providing financial support by the public authorities for maintaining and restoring the architectural heritage on its territory; and supporting scientific research for identifying and analysing the harmful effects of pollution and for defining ways and means to reduce or eradicate these effects.
Council of Europe: The Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (Revised) (Valetta Convention) (1992) ⁵³	The convention defines archaeological heritage and identifies measures for its protection. Aims include integrated conservation of the archaeological heritage and financing of archaeological research and conservation.
National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ⁵⁴	<p>The updated NPPF seeks to streamline the planning system and sets out the government’s planning policies and how these should be applied. At the heart of the NPPF is presumption in favour of sustainable development.</p> <p>The NPPF includes guidance on conserving and enhancing the historic environment. It seeks to ensure local authorities plan recognise heritage assets as an irreplaceable resource and conserve them in a manner that reflects their significance.</p> <p>Planning authorities should take into account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation; • The wider social, cultural, economic and environmental benefits that conservation of the historic environment can bring; and • The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness; and opportunities to draw on the contribution made by the historic environment to the character of a place.
Historic England: Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable	This Historic England document sets out the framework for the sustainable management of the historic environment. This is presented under the following six headline ‘principles’:

⁵² Council of Europe: Convention on the Protection of the Architectural Heritage of Europe (1985). Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/herein-system/council-of-europe> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁵³ Council of Europe: The Convention on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage (Revised). Available at: <https://www.coe.int/en/web/herein-system/council-of-europe> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁵⁴ MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to cultural heritage
Management of the Historic Environment (2008) ⁵⁵	<p>Principle 1: The historic environment is a shared resource.</p> <p>Principle 2: Everyone should be able to participate in sustaining the historic environment.</p> <p>Principle 3: Understanding the significance of places is vital.</p> <p>Principle 4: Significant places should be managed to sustain their values.</p> <p>Principle 5: Decisions about change must be reasonable, transparent and consistent.</p> <p>Principle 6: Documenting and learning from decisions is essential.</p>
Historic England: Tall Buildings: Historic England Advice Note 4 (2015) ⁵⁶	This Historic England Advice Note updates previous guidance by Historic England and CABE, produced in 2007. It seeks to guide people involved in planning for and designing tall buildings so that they may be delivered in a sustainable and successful way through the development plan and development management process. The advice is for all relevant developers, designers, local authorities and other interested parties.
Historic England (2015) The Historic Environment in Local Plans, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 1 ⁵⁷	Practice Advice note is to provide information to assist local authorities, planning and other consultants, owners, applicants and other interested parties in implementing historic environment policy in the NPPF and the related guidance given in the National Planning Practice Guide (PPG).
Historic England (2015) Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2 ⁵⁸	The purpose of this Historic England Good Practice Advice note is to provide information in relation to assessing the significance of heritage assets, using appropriate expertise, historic environment records, recording and furthering understanding, neglect and unauthorised works, marketing and design and distinctiveness.

⁵⁵ Historic England: Conservation Principles Policies and Guidance for the Sustainable Management of the Historic Environment (2008). Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-principles-sustainable-management-historic-environment/> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁵⁶ Historic England: Tall Buildings: Historic England Advice Note 4. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/tall-buildings-advice-note-4/> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁵⁷ Historic England (2015) The Historic Environment in Local Plans, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 1. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa1-historic-environment-local-plans/> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁵⁸ Historic England (2015) Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 2. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa2-managing-significance-in-decision-taking/> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to cultural heritage
Historic England (2013) The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (II Edition) ⁵⁹	This document sets out guidance, against the background of the NPPF and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guide (PPG), on managing change within the settings of heritage assets, including archaeological remains and historic buildings, sites, areas, and landscapes.
The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans Historic England Advice Note 3 (2015) ⁶⁰	The purpose of this Historic England advice note is to support all those involved in the Local Plan site allocation process in implementing historic environment legislation, the relevant policy in the NPPF and the related guidance given in the Planning Practice Guide (PPG). In addition to these documents, this advice should be read in conjunction with the relevant Good Practice Advice and Historic England advice notes. Alternative approaches may be equally acceptable, provided they are demonstrably compliant with legislation and national policy objectives.
Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study ⁶¹	<p>The HLC aimed to create a strategic landscape-level understanding of the historic character and environment of the Black Country. The study identified 103 Historic Environment Area Designations (HEADs) within the Black Country Green Belt and 354 HEADs in the urban area. The study also identified a number of Archaeological Priority Areas, which are considered to contain particularly rare or well-preserved remains of high archaeological and historic interest.</p> <p>Areas of High Historic Townscape Value (AHHTVs) and Designed Landscapes of High Historic Value (DLHHVs) have also been identified within the Historic Landscape Characterisation.</p>

⁵⁹ Historic England (2017) The Setting of Heritage Assets, Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning: 3 (II Edition). Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/gpa3-setting-of-heritage-assets/> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶⁰ Historic England (2015) The Historic Environment and Site Allocations in Local Plans Historic England Advice Note 3. Available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/historic-environment-and-site-allocations-in-local-plans/> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶¹ Oxford Archaeology (2019) Black Country Historic Landscape Characterisation Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13895/comp_black-country-hlc-final-report-30-10-2019-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

A.6 Human health

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to human health
DCMS: Playing to win: a new era for sport. (2008) ⁶²	The government’s vision for sport and physical activity for 2012 and beyond is to increase significantly levels of sport and physical activity for people of all ages and to achieve sustained levels of success in international competition. The ambition is for England to become –a truly world leading sporting nation. The vision is to give more people of all ages the opportunity to participate in high quality competitive sport.
DoH: Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England White Paper (2011) ⁶³	Sets out the government’s approach to tackling threats to public health and dealing with health inequalities. It sets out an approach that will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the population from health threats – led by central government, with a strong system to the frontline; • Empower local leadership and encourage wide responsibility across society to improve everyone’s health and wellbeing, and tackle the wider factors that influence it; • Focus on key outcomes, doing what works to deliver them, with transparency of outcomes to enable accountability through a proposed new public health outcomes framework; • Reflect the government’s core values of freedom, fairness and responsibility by strengthening self-esteem, confidence and personal responsibility; positively promoting healthy behaviours and lifestyles; and adapting the environment to make healthy choices easier; and • Balance the freedoms of individuals and organisations with the need to avoid harm to others, use a ‘ladder’ of interventions to determine the least intrusive approach necessary to achieve the desired effect and aim to make voluntary approaches work before resorting to regulation.
Public Health Strategy 2020-2025 (2019) ⁶⁴	The strategy sets out priorities within the public health system and areas of focus including addressing health inequalities and narrowing the ‘health gap’ between poor and wealthy communities, reducing rates of infectious diseases, addressing unhealthy behaviours and ensuring the potential of new technologies is realised.
DoH & Department for Work and Pensions. Improving	This sets out the government’s response to a review into the health of Britain’s working age population conducted by Dame Carol Black. The vision is to: “ <i>create a society where the positive links between work and health are recognised by all, where everyone aspires to a</i>

⁶² DCMS (2008) Playing to win: a new era for sport Available at: http://www.lsera.org/old/news/sse/sportstrategies/DCMS_PlayingtoWin_singles.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶³ DoH (2011) Healthy Lives, Healthy People: Our strategy for public health in England White Paper Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/healthy-lives-healthy-people-our-strategy-for-public-health-in-england> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶⁴ Public Health England (2019) PHE Strategy 2020 to 2025 <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phe-strategy-2020-to-2025> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to human health
health and work: changing lives: The Government's Response to Dame Carol Black's Review of the health of Britain's working-age population (2008) ⁶⁵	<p><i>healthy and fulfilling working life and where health conditions and disabilities are not a bar to enjoying the benefits of work</i>".</p> <p>To achieve the vision three key aspirations have been identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. creating new perspectives on health and work; 2. improving work and workplaces; and 3. supporting people to work. <p>Through these three aspirations Britain's working population will fulfil their full potential, create stronger communities and help relieve the financial burden of health problems on the economy.</p>
DoH: Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services (2006) ⁶⁶	Puts emphasis on moving healthcare into the community and will therefore have an impact on sustainable development considerations, including supporting local economies and how people travel to healthcare facilities.
Forestry Commission: Trees and Woodlands – Nature's Health Service (2005) ⁶⁷	Provides detailed examples of how the Woodland Sector (trees, woodlands and green spaces) can significantly contribute to people's health, well-being (physical, psychological and social) and quality of life. Increasing levels of physical activity is a particular priority.
Accessible Natural Green Space Standards Towns and Cities: Review & Toolkit for Implementation (2003) ⁶⁸	Aims to help Local Authorities develop policies which acknowledge, protect and enhance the contribution natural spaces make to local sustainability. Three aspects of natural space in cities and towns are discussed: their biodiversity; their ability to cope with urban pollution; ensuring natural spaces are accessible to everyone.
Active Design Guidance: Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity (2015) ⁶⁹	Active Design focuses on ensuring the places where people live, work, and enjoy can promote regular physical activity in daily life, through walking, cycling, informal or formal sport and other means. Active Design is rooted in Sport England's aims and objectives to promote the role of sport and physical activity in creating healthy and sustainable communities. Active Design provides advice on how plan-makers, health professionals and developers can use Active Design. The ten principles of active design are:

⁶⁵ Improving health and work: changing lives. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/improving-health-and-work-changing-lives> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶⁶ DoH (2006) Our health, our care, our say: a new direction for community services Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/our-health-our-care-our-say-a-new-direction-for-community-services> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶⁷ Forestry Commission (2005) Trees and Woodlands - Nature's Health Service Available at: <https://www.forestresearch.gov.uk/publications/trees-and-woodlands-natures-health-service/> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶⁸ Accessible Natural Green Space Standards Towns and Cities: Review & Toolkit for Implementation Available at: <http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/65021> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁶⁹ Sport England (2015) Active Design Guidance: Planning for health and wellbeing through sport and physical activity. Available at: <https://www.sportengland.org/guidance-and-support/facilities-and-planning/design-and-cost-guidance/active-design#activedesign-19603> [Date accessed: 23/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to human health
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activity for all; 2. Walkable communities; 3. Connected walking & cycling routes; 4. Co-location of community facilities; 5. Network of multifunctional open space; 6. High quality streets and space; 7. Appropriate infrastructure; 8. Active buildings; 9. Management, maintenance, monitoring & evaluation; and 10. Activity promotion & local champions. <p>At the time of writing, the latest version of the Active Design guidance is being consulted on to gather views from a range of organisations and people to help shape the final version of the guidance.</p>
Sandwell Green Space Strategy 2019 – 2020 ⁷⁰	<p>This strategy takes as its starting point the results of a Green Space Audit completed in 2006, which revealed a great diversity of green space ranging in quality and seeks to address deficiencies identified. Four overarching aims were identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spaces and Places – influencing the way Sandwell’s green spaces are viewed; 2. People and Partnerships – develop a more community-centred approach to rejuvenating green spaces; 3. Resources and Services – improve and maintain the quality and management of open spaces; and 4. Audience Development – develop new audiences to Sandwell’s green spaces by holding events and activities and encouraging visits.
Green Spaces Strategy Implementation and Business Plan 22/23 – 25/26 ⁷¹	<p>Green Spaces Strategy and Business Plan will seek to implement actions from the Green Space Strategy, and sets out to achieve the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase average quality and value scores for green spaces. • Improve accessibility and use of green spaces for sport and physical activity. • Improve accessibility and use of green spaces to target health inequalities, loneliness, disability, and mental health. • Improve stakeholder engagement in the development, management, and maintenance of green spaces. • Continue to improve the security and safety of green spaces. • Increase educational activity for children and young people in green spaces, conservation, wildlife management, and access to nature.

⁷⁰ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council Green Space Strategy 2010 – 2020. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/24989/april_2017_-_parks_and_green_spaces_strategy_document.pdf [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

⁷¹ Green Spaces Strategy Implementation and Business Plan 22/23 – 25/26 (June 2022) Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/33192/green_spaces_strategy_implementation_and_business_plan_2223_%E2%80%93_2526.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to human health
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the accessibility and use of green spaces buildings and facilities – achieving maximum utilisation of spaces. • Improve the provision of allotments and community food production.
Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2022) ⁷²	The Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Strategy seeks to ensure the Sandwell Health & Social Care Partnership and the Sandwell Health & Wellbeing Board work together in partnership to improve the lives and opportunities of people in Sandwell. The partnership will seek to embed cross-cutting themes into their workstreams, including mental health, children, estates management, digital innovation, safeguarding and workforce development.
Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board: Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2016-2020) ⁷³	<p>The strategy describes how the Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board will work with the people of Sandwell and with partners and providers of services to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address the challenges of deprivation and unemployment in Sandwell; and • help people to stay healthier for longer and reduce the inequalities between Sandwell and the rest of England. <p>The strategy is based on a wide range of evidence for what influences people’s health and how long they live, supported by survey responses about what needs to change in Sandwell.</p>

⁷² Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2022) Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Strategy. Available at: <https://view.publitas.com/renaissance-creative/sandwell-health-and-wellbeing-strategy-2022-4/page/1> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

⁷³ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2022) Sandwell Health and Wellbeing Board: Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2016 – 2020. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/4676/sandwell_joint_health_and_wellbeing_strategy_2016-2020.pdf [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

A.7 Landscape

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to landscape
Council of Europe: European Landscape Convention (2006) ⁷⁴	Aims to promote the protection, management and planning (including active design and creation of Europe’s landscapes, both rural and urban, and to foster European co-operation on landscape issues.
English Heritage and CABE: Guidance on Tall Buildings (2007) ⁷⁵	Provides advice and guidance on good practice in relation to tall buildings in the planning process and to highlight other related issues, which need to be taken into account, i.e. where tall buildings would and would not be appropriate.
National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ⁷⁶	The NPPF states that development could seek to promote or reinforce local distinctiveness; both aesthetic considerations and connections between people and places should be considered. The NPPF also promotes the protection and enhancements of valued landscapes, giving greatest weight to National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
MHCLG: National Design Guide: Planning practice guidance for beautiful, enduring and successful places (2021) ⁷⁷	This design guide illustrates how well-designed places that are beautiful, enduring and successful can be achieved in practice. It forms part of the government’s collection of planning practice guidance and should be read alongside the separate planning practice guidance on design process and tools.
Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2019) ⁷⁸	<p>The Landscape Sensitivity Study was prepared to inform the review of the former Black Country Plan. Although this is no longer being pursued, the study provides evidence base information relating to the geographic area including the Sandwell Development Plan.</p> <p>The purpose of this study is to provide an assessment of the extent to which the character and quality of the landscape abutting the West Midlands conurbation within the Black Country and around settlements in South Staffordshire is, in principle, susceptible to change as a result of introducing built development.</p>

⁷⁴ Council of Europe: European Landscape Convention (2006) Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/236096/8413.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁷⁵ English Heritage and CABE: Guidance on Tall Buildings (2007) Available at: https://www.designcouncil.org.uk/sites/default/files/asset/document/guidance-on-tall-buildings_0.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁷⁶ MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁷⁷ MHCLG & DLUHC (2021) National design guide. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-design-guide> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁷⁸ LUC (2019) Black Country Landscape Sensitivity Assessment. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13883/black-country-lsa-front-end-report-final-lr_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to landscape
	The study highlights likely landscape and visual sensitivities within each assessment area and provides a broad landscape character-based assessment rather than a site level assessment as might be required for a planning application.
Black Country Green Belt Study (2019) ⁷⁹	<p>The Green Belt Study was prepared to inform the review of the former Black Country Plan. Although this is no longer being pursued, the study provides evidence base information relating to the geographic area including the Sandwell Development Plan.</p> <p>The overall aim of the Study was to undertake an independent, robust and transparent assessment of Green Belt within the Black Country. This includes a comprehensive assessment of the performance of Green Belt land in line with policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) good practice guidance, local plan examination inspectors' reports and case law. The Study draws out variations in the contribution of land to the five Green Belt purposes, identifying areas of land whose performance ranges from relatively weak to relatively strong in Green Belt terms.</p>
Sandwell Residential Design Guide (2014) ⁸⁰	This document provides detailed design guidance for all aspects of new residential development in Sandwell. The aim of this document is to provide clear design guidance for achieving residential development quality within the Borough so that attractive, high-quality, sustainable living environments are created, thereby improving the desirability of the borough as a place to live and also improve places for new and existing residents.
Sandwell Regeneration Strategy 2022 - 2027 ⁸¹	<p>The vision as presented in the Regeneration Strategy is to "<i>create a wealthier Sandwell, regenerating our place and using the limited amount of new land available to create:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>an inviting place to live, with thriving communities and energy efficient housing in well planned neighbourhoods.</i> • <i>high quality employment space for decent jobs.</i> • <i>a convenient and reliable public transport and active travel network, which people prefer to private cars.</i> • <i>exciting, busy, and green centres where people meet throughout the day, with a thriving cultural and night-time economy."</i> <p>Placemaking forms one of the seven delivery themes as presented in the strategy, which seeks to transform Sandwell's town centres, high streets and neighbourhoods in the right way for their place and to their full potential.</p>

⁷⁹ LUC (2019) Black Country Green Belt Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/13882/bcgb-0919-black-country-gb-stage-1-and-2-plus-app1-final-reduced_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁸⁰ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2014) Revised Residential Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document, January 2014. Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/downloads/file/4164/residential_design_guide_spd_2014 [Date accessed: 11/01/23]

⁸¹ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2022) Sandwell Regeneration Strategy 2022 – 2027. March 2022. Available at: <https://regeneratingsandwell.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Regeneration-Strategy-2022-2027.pdf> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

A.8 Population and material assets

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to population and material assets
National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ⁸²	<p>The NPPF includes guidance on promoting healthy communities. The NPPF requires planning authorities to aim to achieve places which promote:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opportunities for meetings between members of the community who might not otherwise come into contact with each other, including through mixed-use developments, strong neighbourhood centres and active street frontages which bring together those who work, live and play in the vicinity; • Safe and accessible environments where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine quality of life or community cohesion; and • Safe and accessible developments, containing clear and legible pedestrian routes, and high quality public space, which encourage the active and continual use of public areas. <p>In order to deliver the social, recreational and cultural facilities and services the community needs, planning policies and decisions should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan positively for the provision and use of shared space, community facilities (such as local shops, meeting places, sports venues, cultural buildings, public houses and places of worship) and other local services to enhance the sustainability of communities and residential environments; • Guard against the unnecessary loss of valued facilities and services, particularly where this would reduce the community’s ability to meet its day-to-day needs; • Ensure that established shops, facilities and services are able to develop and modernise in a way that is sustainable, and retained for the benefit of the community; and • Ensure an integrated approach to considering the location of housing, economic uses and community facilities and services.
DCLG Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable (2007) ⁸³	<p>The Housing Green Paper outlines plans for delivering homes; new ways of identifying and using land for development; more social housing- ensuring that a decent home at an affordable price is for the many; building homes more quickly; more affordable homes; and greener homes – with high environmental standards and flagship developments leading the way.</p>

⁸² National Planning Policy Framework Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁸³ DCLG Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable (2007) Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/243191/7191.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to population and material assets
ODPM & Home Office: Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention (2004) ⁸⁴	Practical guide to designs and layouts that may help with crime prevention and community safety, including well-defined routes, places structured so that different uses do not cause conflict, places designed to include natural surveillance and places designed with management and maintenance in mind.
Cabinet Office: Reaching Out: An Action Plan on Social Exclusion (2006) ⁸⁵	Sets out an action plan to improve the life chances of those who suffer, or may suffer in the future, from disadvantage. Guiding principles for action include: better identification and earlier intervention; systematically identifying 'what works'; promoting multi-agency working; personalisation, rights and responsibilities; and supporting achievement and managing underperformance.
EC Waste Framework Directive (1975, updated 2006) ⁸⁶	Objective is the protection of human health and the environment against harmful effects caused by the collection, transport, treatment, storage and tipping of waste. Particular focus is placed on the re-use of recovered materials as raw materials; restricting the production of waste; promoting clean technologies; and the drawing up of waste management plans.
EC Landfill Directive (1999) ⁸⁷	Aims to prevent or reduce as far as possible negative effects on the environment, in particular the pollution of surface water, groundwater, soil and air, and on the global environment, including the greenhouse effect, as well as any resulting risk to human health, from the landfilling of waste, during the whole lifecycle of the landfill.
Cabinet Office: Waste Not, Want Not, A Strategy for tackling the waste problem (2002) ⁸⁸	A study into how England's current waste management practices could be improved to reduce the current, and growing, waste problem.
DEFRA Waste Strategy for England (2007) ⁸⁹	Aims are to reduce waste by making products with fewer natural resources; break the link between economic growth and waste growth; re-use products or recycle their materials; and recover energy from other wastes where possible. Notes that for a small amount of residual material, landfill will be necessary.

⁸⁴ ODPM & Home Office: Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime Prevention Available at:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7784/147627.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁸⁵ Cabinet Office: Reaching Out: An Action Plan on Social Exclusion Available at: https://www.bristol.ac.uk/poverty/downloads/keyofficialdocuments/reaching_out_full.pdf [Date accessed: 13/01/23]

⁸⁶ EC Waste Framework Directive Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31975L0442> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁸⁷ EC Landfill Directive (1999) Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A31999L0031> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁸⁸ Cabinet Office: Waste Not, Want Not, A Strategy for tackling the waste problem (2002) Available at: <https://statesassembly.gov.ie/scrutinyreviewresearches/2007/s-6482-38840-1972007.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁸⁹ DEFRA Waste Strategy for England (2007) Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/waste-strategy-for-england-2007> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to population and material assets
DECC Energy White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge (2007) ⁹⁰	Sets out government's long term energy policy, including requirements for cleaner, smarter energy; improved energy efficiency; reduced carbon emissions; and reliable, competitive and affordable supplies. The White Paper sets out the UK's international and domestic energy strategy, in the shape of four policy goals: 1) aiming to cut CO ₂ emissions by some 60% by about 2050, with real progress by 2020; 2) maintaining the reliability of energy supplies; 3) promoting competitive markets in the UK and beyond; and 4) ensuring every home is heated adequately and affordably.
DTI Micro Generation Strategy (2006) ⁹¹	Acknowledges that local authorities can be pro-active in promoting small-scale, local renewable energy generation schemes through " <i>sensible use of planning policies</i> ".
DEFRA, Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) (2010) ⁹²	This document seeks to clarify the underlying principles and aims in existing policy documents, legislation and guidance that relate to noise. The key aims of this document are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid significant adverse impacts on health and quality of life; • Mitigate and minimise adverse impacts on health and quality of life; and • Where possible, contribute to the improvement of health and quality of life.
Strategy for Sustainable Construction (2008) ⁹³	'Themes for Action' include: re-use existing built assets; design for minimum waste; aim for lean construction; minimise energy in construction; minimise energy in building use; avoid polluting the environment; preserve and enhance bio-diversity; conserve water resources; respect people and their local environment; and set targets (benchmarks & performance indicators).
Planning for Town Centres: Practice guidance on need, impact and the sequential approach (2009) ⁹⁴	This practice guidance was intended to support the implementation of town centre policies set out in Planning Policy Statement 4: Planning for Sustainable Economic Growth (PPS4) (now replaced by PPG). It is aimed at helping those involved in preparing or reviewing need, impact and sequential site assessments.

⁹⁰ DECC Energy White Paper: Meeting the Energy Challenge Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/meeting-the-energy-challenge-a-white-paper-on-energy> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁹¹ DTI Micro Generation Strategy. Available at: <https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/sites/default/files/docs/2006/10/ofgem-microgen-next-steps-oct-2006.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁹² DEFRA (2010) Noise Policy Statement for England (NPSE) Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/noise-policy-statement-for-england> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁹³ Strategy for Sustainable Construction (2008) Available at: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/+http://www.bis.gov.uk/files/file46535.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁹⁴ Planning for Town Centres: Practice guidance on need, impact and the sequential approach (December 2009) Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/planning-for-town-centres-practice-guidance-on-need-impact-and-the-sequential-approach> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to population and material assets
West Midlands Strategic Economic Plan 2016-2030 ⁹⁵	<p>The Strategic Economic Plan outlines three key strategic objectives for delivering economic growth across Greater Birmingham and Solihull:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Becoming a world leader in innovation and creativity • Taking full advantage of our global connections • Creating stronger conditions for growth across our communities <p>The LEP works across these objectives, building on the scale and diversity of the assets of the GBSLEP area, to enable sustainable economic growth throughout our geography.</p>
Greater Birmingham Housing Market Area Strategic Growth Study (2018) ⁹⁶	<p>The NPPF and the Localism Act 2011 requires local authorities to work together through the 'Duty to Cooperate' across the relevant Housing Market Area (HMA) to identify and then meet housing need where it is sustainable to do so. The Birmingham Strategic Growth Study builds on work undertaken by Peter Brett Associates (PBA) who prepared a Strategic Housing Needs Study Stage 2 Report (November, 2014) and Strategic Housing Needs Study Stage 3 Report (August, 2015). These provide a framework and starting point for this Study, which the HMA authorities have jointly commissioned to further consider strategic development options to meet housing need across the HMA. It is intended to identify more specific options and broad locations for addressing the housing supply shortfall.</p>
Emerging Black Country Economic Development Needs Assessment (EDNA) Update (2022)	<p>The aim of the EDNA is to provide an updated objective assessment of economic land needs for the Black Country, including Sandwell Borough, drawing upon an independent assessment of the area's economic development needs. The EDNA Update 2022 will provide an up-to-date assessment, building on the findings of the previous EDNA (2017).</p>
Black Country Minerals Study (2019) ⁹⁷	<p>The Study provides up-to-date information about the Black Country's mineral resources and current and future demand for minerals and mineral products, which was originally prepared as part of the evidence base to inform the former Black Country Plan. Although this is no longer being pursued, the study provides evidence base information relating to the geographic area including the Sandwell Development Plan. The Minerals Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimates the current demand for minerals and mineral products in the Black Country; • Predicts how demand for minerals and mineral products is likely to change over the plan period and beyond; • Reviews the capacity and vulnerability of existing mineral production sites and processing facilities in the Black Country; • Analyses where our mineral supplies are coming from at the moment and whether this is having a significant effect on other areas; and • Reviews the extent of unworked mineral resources in the Black Country and resource areas that should be safeguarded.

⁹⁵ Greater Birmingham & Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership: Strategic Economic Plan 2016-2030. Available at: <https://gbslep.co.uk/strategy/strategic-economic-plan/#:~:text=The%20Strategic%20Economic%20Plan%20outlines,for%20growth%20across%20our%20communities> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁹⁶ Wood (2018) Greater Birmingham HMA Strategic Growth Study. Available at: https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/downloads/download/1945/greater_birmingham_hma_strategic_growth_study [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁹⁷ Wood (2019) Black Country Minerals Study. Available at: <https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/15815/minerals-study-evidence-base-review-redacted.pdf> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to population and material assets
Black Country Waste Study (2020) ⁹⁸	<p>The Study provides up-to-date information about the Black Country's current and future waste management needs, which was originally prepared as part of the evidence base to inform the former Black Country Plan. Although this is no longer being pursued, the study provides evidence base information relating to the geographic area including the Sandwell Development Plan.</p> <p>The Waste Study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Estimates how much waste we produce in the Black Country and how it is managed; • Predicts how the amount of waste we produce might change over the plan period and beyond; • Assesses whether the Black Country's existing waste management sites have the capacity to meet our current and future needs; • Analyses where our waste goes and whether this is having a significant effect on other areas; and • Provides advice on how we should plan for our future waste management needs.
Sandwell Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) ⁹⁹	<p>The Sandwell Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) is a comprehensive study of sites within Sandwell which have the potential to accommodate new housing development. The Council is required to produce a SHLAA by national planning policy set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The SHLAA will be updated annually, and forms part of the evidence base to inform the Sandwell Development Plan and will help to ensure the timely delivery of new housing to meet government targets.</p>
Sandwell Regeneration Strategy 2022 - 2027 ¹⁰⁰	<p>The vision as presented in the Regeneration Strategy is to "<i>create a wealthier Sandwell, regenerating our place and using the limited amount of new land available to create:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>an inviting place to live, with thriving communities and energy efficient housing in well planned neighbourhoods.</i> • <i>high quality employment space for decent jobs.</i> • <i>a convenient and reliable public transport and active travel network, which people prefer to private cars.</i> • <i>exciting, busy, and green centres where people meet throughout the day, with a thriving cultural and night-time economy."</i> <p>The strategy encompasses the different aspects of Sandwell's built environment. Alongside the Inclusive Recovery Action Plan for Businesses, the Regeneration Strategy seeks to set out the framework for meeting the needs of local people and businesses, improving quality of life and creating a wealthier Sandwell. The strategy sets out a number of priorities for action, with key themes including: housing; education; placemaking; education and skills; transport; digital; and sustainability.</p>

⁹⁸ Wood (2020) Black Country Waste Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/15811/black-country-waste-study-final-report_redacted.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

⁹⁹ Sandwell Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (April 2021) Available at: https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/28625/sandwell_strategic_housing_land_availability_assessment_201920_update.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

¹⁰⁰ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council (2022) Sandwell Regeneration Strategy 2022 – 2027. March 2022. Available at: <https://regeneratingsandwell.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/09/Regeneration-Strategy-2022-2027.pdf> [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to population and material assets
Sandwell Corporate Plan 2021 – 2025 ¹⁰¹	<p>Big Plans for a Great Place sets out what the Council will do to deliver the 'Sandwell Vision 2030' and key priorities for the borough, including six strategic outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The best start in life for children and young people. • People live well and age well. • Strong, resilient communities. • Quality homes in thriving neighbourhoods. • A strong and inclusive economy. • A connected and accessible Sandwell.

¹⁰¹ Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council 2021 – 2025. Big Plans for a Great Place: The Sandwell Plan. Available at:

https://www.sandwell.gov.uk/download/downloads/id/29963/corporate_plan_-_big_plans_for_a_great_place_for_the_people_of_sandwell.pdf [Date accessed: 09/01/23]

A.9 Soil

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to soil
DEFRA: Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England (2011) ¹⁰²	<p>The Soil Strategy for England outlines the government’s approach to safeguarding our soils for the long term. It provides a vision to guide future policy development across a range of areas and sets out the practical steps that are needed to take to prevent further degradation of our soils, enhance, restore and ensure their resilience, and improve understanding of the threats to soil and best practice in responding to them. Key objectives of the strategy include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Better protection for agricultural soils; • Protecting and enhancing stores of soil carbon; • Building the resilience of soils to a changing climate; • Preventing soil pollution; • Effective soil protection during construction and development; and • Dealing with our legacy of contaminated land.
DEFRA: Environmental Protection Act 1990: Part 2A. Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance (2012) ¹⁰³	<p>This document establishes a legal framework for dealing with contaminated land in England. This document provides guidelines for how local authorities should implement the regime, including how they should go about deciding whether land is contaminated land in the legal sense of the term.</p> <p>Key aims are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To identify and remove unacceptable risks to human health and the environment. • To seek to ensure that contaminated land is made suitable for its current use. • To ensure that the burdens faced by individuals, companies and society as a whole are proportionate, manageable and compatible with the principles of sustainable development.
National Planning Policy Framework (2021) ¹⁰⁴	<p>The NPPF states that plans should prevent development from contributing to, or being put at risk of, air or water pollution.</p> <p>The NPPF states that planning should protect and enhance soils, particularly those recognised as best and most versatile agricultural land (Grades 1, 2 and 3a).</p>

¹⁰² DEFRA (2011) Safeguarding our Soils: A Strategy for England Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/safeguarding-our-soils-a-strategy-for-england> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

¹⁰³ DEFRA (2012) Environmental Protection Act 1990: Part 2A. Contaminated Land Statutory Guidance Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/223705/pb13735cont-land-guidance.pdf [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

¹⁰⁴ MHCLG (2021) National Planning Policy Framework Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2> [Date accessed: 05/01/23]

A.10 Water

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to water
Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC ¹⁰⁵	This provides an overarching strategy, including a requirement for EU Member States to ensure that they achieve 'good ecological status' by 2015. River Basin Management Plans were defined as the key means of achieving this. They contain the main issues for the water environment and the actions we all need to take to deal with them.
HM Government Strategy for Sustainable Construction (2008) ¹⁰⁶	Encourages the construction industry to adopt a more sustainable approach towards development; identifies eleven themes for Targeting Action, which includes conserving water resources.
DEFRA The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations (2003) ¹⁰⁷	<p>Requires all inland and coastal waters to reach 'good' status by 2015. It mandates that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development must not cause a deterioration in status of a waterbody; and • Development must not prevent future attainment of 'good status', hence it is not acceptable to allow an impact to occur just because other impacts are causing the status of a water body to already be less than good. <p>This is being done by establishing a river basin district structure within which demanding environmental objectives are being set, including ecological targets for surface waters.</p>
Environment Agency: Building a Better Environment: Our role in development and how we can help (2013) ¹⁰⁸	Guidance on addressing key environmental issues through the development process (focusing mainly on the issues dealt with by the Environment Agency), including managing flood risk, surface water management, use of water resources, preventing pollution.

¹⁰⁵ Water Framework Directive 2000/60/EC Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:32000L0060> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

¹⁰⁶ HM Government (2008) Strategy for Sustainable Construction. Available at: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/+http://www.bis.gov.uk/files/file46535.pdf> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

¹⁰⁷ The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) (England and Wales) Regulations 2003. Available at: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2003/3242/contents/made> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

¹⁰⁸ Environment Agency (2013) Building a Better Environment: Our role in development and how we can help. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/289894/LIT_2745_c8ed3d.pdf [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to water
A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment (2018) ¹⁰⁹	<p>The document sets out Government action to help achieve natural world regain and retain good health. The main goals of the Plan are to achieve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean air; • Clean and plentiful water; • Thriving plants and wildlife; • A reduced risk of harm from environmental hazards such as flooding and drought; • Using resources from nature more sustainably and efficiently; and • Enhanced beauty, heritage and engagement with the natural environment. <p>The Plan seeks to achieve clean and plentiful water by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing the damaging abstraction of water from rivers and groundwater, ensuring that by 2021 the proportion of water bodies with enough water to support environmental standards increases from 82% to 90% for surface water bodies and from 72% to 77% for groundwater bodies; • Reaching or exceeding objectives for rivers, lakes, coastal and ground waters that are specially protected, whether for biodiversity or drinking water as per our River Basin Management Plans; • Supporting OFWAT’s ambitions on leakage, minimising the amount of water lost through leakage year on year, with water companies expected to reduce leakage by at least an average of 15% by 2025; and • Minimising by 2030 the harmful bacteria in our designated bathing waters and continuing to improve the cleanliness of our waters. We will make sure that potential bathers are warned of any short-term pollution risks. <p>The 2021 Environment Act (2021) embeds several of these aspects into the new legislation.</p>
Environment Agency: Water for people and the environment: A Strategy for England and Wales (2009) ¹¹⁰	Looks at the steps needed, in the face of climate change, to manage water resources to the 2040s and beyond, with the overall aim of improving the environment while allowing enough water for human uses.
Severn River Basin District: River Basin Management Plan	RBMPs presents the ecological, chemical and quantitative status of the surface and groundwater bodies present in the river basin. In accordance with the RBMP, new development should not lead to deterioration of the water body. Objectives, according to the Water Framework Directive, are as follows:

¹⁰⁹ DEFRA (2021) A Green Future: Our 25 Year Plan to Improve the Environment. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/25-year-environment-plan> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

¹¹⁰ Environment Agency: Water for people and the environment: A Strategy for England and Wales Available at: <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20140328091448/http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/library/publications/40731.aspx> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

Title of PPP	Main objectives of relevant plans, policies and programmes in relation to water
(2015) ¹¹¹ and Humber River Basin District: River Basin Management Plan (2015) ¹¹²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To prevent deterioration of the status of surface waters and groundwater; • To achieve objectives and standards for protected areas; • To aim to achieve good status for all water bodies or, for heavily modified water bodies and artificial water bodies, good ecological potential and good surface water chemical status; • To reverse any significant and sustained upward trends in pollutant concentrations in groundwater; • The cessation of discharges, emissions and losses of priority hazardous substances into surface waters; and • Progressively reduce the pollution of groundwater and prevent or limit the entry of pollutants.
Severn Trent Water, Water Resource Management Plan (2019) ¹¹³	The Plan sets out how Severn Trent Water maintains the balance between supply and demand for water. Their priorities for the future include keeping bills for customers at a minimum, taking fair and balanced approach for all stakeholders and delivering long term environmental benefits.
Black Country Councils Water Cycle Study: Phase 1 Scoping Study (2020) ¹¹⁴	<p>This study assesses the potential issues relating to future development within the Black Country Councils and the impacts on water supply, wastewater collection and wastewater treatment. The Water Cycle Study is required to assess the constraints and requirements that will arise from potential growth on the water infrastructure.</p> <p>This study aims to assist the Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) to identify development locations where there is minimal impact on the environment, water quality, water resources, infrastructure, and flood risk. This will be achieved by identifying areas where there may be conflict between any proposed development, the requirements of the environment and by recommending potential solutions to these conflicts.</p>

¹¹¹ DEFRA & Environment Agency (2018) Severn River basin district, river basin management plan. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/severn-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

¹¹² DEFRA & Environment Agency (2018) Humber River basin district river basin management plan. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/humber-river-basin-district-river-basin-management-plan> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

¹¹³ Severn Trent Water, Water Resource Management Plan 2019 Available at: <https://www.stwater.co.uk/content/dam/stw-plc/our-plans/severn-trent-water-resource-management-plan.pdf> [Date accessed: 06/01/23]

¹¹⁴ JBA Consulting (2020) Black Country Councils Water Cycle Study: Phase 1 Scoping Study. Available at: https://blackcountryplan.dudley.gov.uk/media/17929/watercyclestudy_phs1_scopingstudy.pdf [Date accessed: 06/01/23]



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