

# SHIFNAL EXTENSION, LODGE HILL

APPENDIX 1

WALLACE LAND INVESTMENTS

SEPTEMBER 2020

PREPARED BY PEGASUS GROUP



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Lodge Hill Sub-Appendix 1/  
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Preliminary Landscape & Visual Appraisal  
Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment  
Ecological Assessment  
Flood Risk Assessment

# SECTION

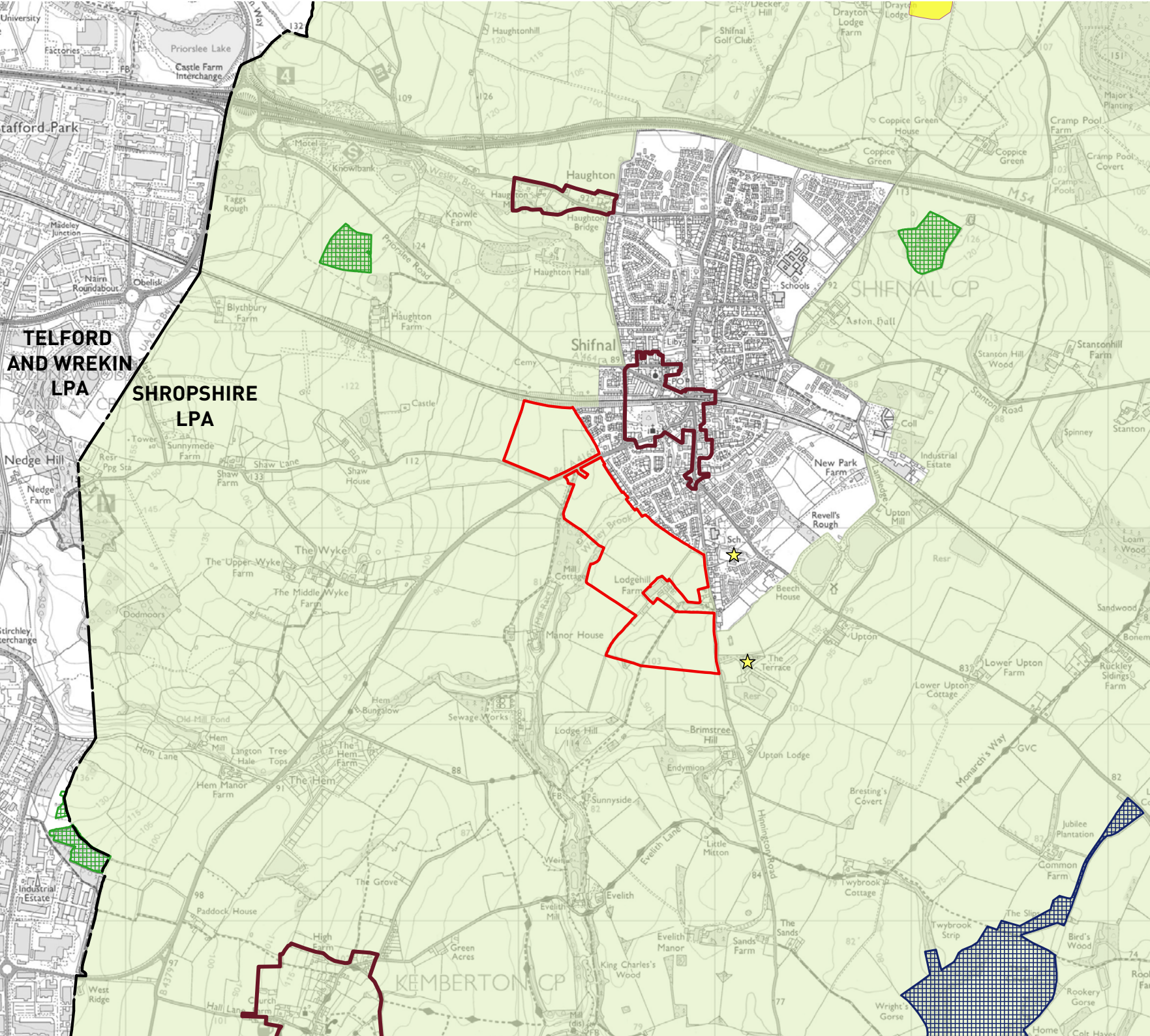
# 01









## INTRODUCTION

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# 01



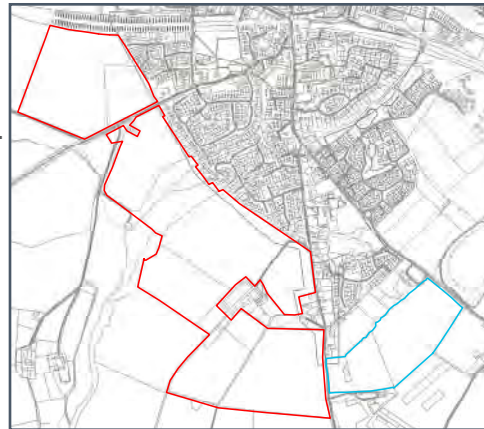
- KEY**
-  Site boundary
  -  LPA boundary\*\*
  -  Conservation Area Boundary\*
  -  Green Belt\*\*
  -  Ancient Woodland\*\*
  -  Scheduled Monuments\*\*
  -  Registered Parks and Gardens\*\*
  -  Listed buildings within 200m of the site\*\*

Sources:  
 \* Shropshire County Council General Map Viewer (Last modified August 2019)  
 \*\* www.magic.gov.uk

# 01 INTRODUCTION

Wallace Land Investments (Wallace) is promoting the site shown opposite as a sustainable extension to Shifnal. Apart from its Green Belt designation, it has no significant constraints, and has the potential to deliver approximately 1,100 dwellings with associated infrastructure and green space.

It is part of a wider vision to deliver a sustainable extension to Shifnal, as expressed in the Development Framework Document (DFD) submitted jointly with Miller Homes Ltd. The proposed sustainable extension can meet Shifnal's medium and long-term housing needs as well as delivering a new link road and community facilities.



This DFD seeks to assist Shropshire Council by providing an update on the site's constraints and how development will be well designed in relation to its context. It summarises a number of detailed technical reports which provide further detail and are appended to the document, namely:

- Preliminary Landscape and Visual Appraisal (2020, Pegasus Group)
- Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment (2020, Nexus Heritage)
- Ecological Appraisal (2020, FPCR)
- Flood Risk Assessment (2020, SWECO)

Wallace has engaged with Shropshire Council at every stage of the Local Plan Review process, providing increasingly detailed information about land in its control. The site is proposed to be released from the Green Belt and safeguarded for development beyond the end of the plan period of 2038. However, Wallace consider that the site is suitable to be allocated for housing development, to come forward before then, in the medium and longer terms of the plan period.

Shropshire Council's own site assessment work includes:

- Sustainability Appraisal and Site Assessment Environment Report (2020, Shropshire Council)
- Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Study (2018, Gillespies)
- Green Belt Assessment (2017, LUC)
- Green Belt Review (2018, LUC)
- M54 Corridor Strategic Options Assessment (2019, Avison Young)
- Economic Growth Strategy for Shropshire 2017-2021 (undated, Shropshire Council)

The site has a 'good' overall score in the Council's Sustainability Appraisal and is proposed to be removed from the Green Belt and safeguarded in the Pre-Submission Draft Plan. The Council's own evidence base therefore supports the case for removing the site from the Green Belt to deliver sustainable development.



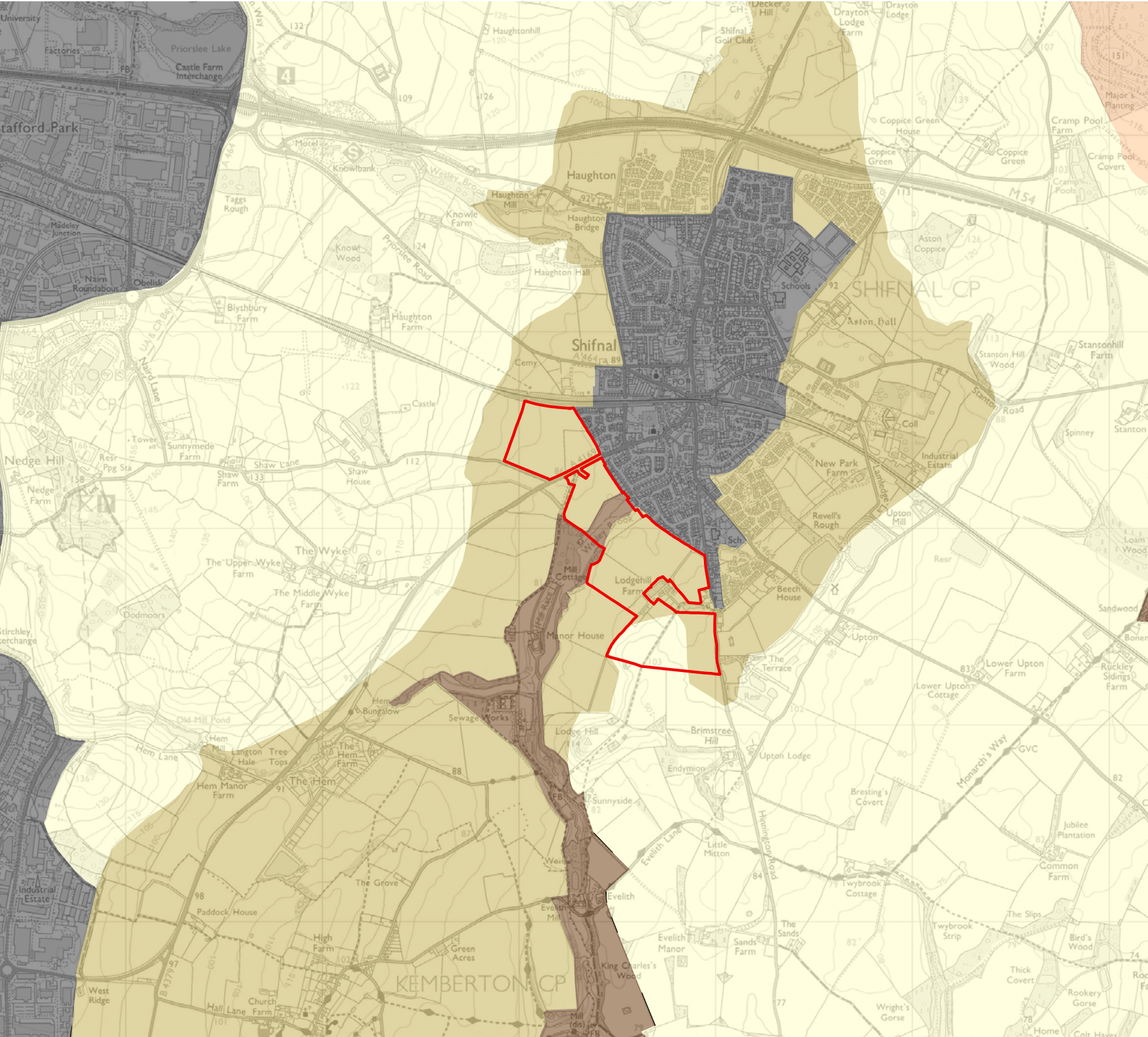
# SECTION

# 02

## LANDSCAPE

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# 02



**KEY**


 Site boundary


National Character Area:  
The whole study area is located within:  
NCA 66: Mid Severn Sandstone Plateau


**The Shropshire Landscape Typology (September 2006)**

 Urban

**Landscape Types:**

 Incised Sandstone Valleys

 Enclosed Lowland Heaths

 Sandstone Estatelands

 Estate Farmlands



# 02 LANDSCAPE

## 2.1 SITE CONTEXT

2.1.1 The landscape in the middle of the site (south of the A4169) is gently rolling and has mature woodland that obscures views of parts of the site. The land to the centre of the site around the Wesley Brook is slightly undulating and generally falling toward the watercourse. The topography rises gently to Lodge Hill to the south of the site. The eastern and western ends of the site are relatively flat.

## 2.2 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

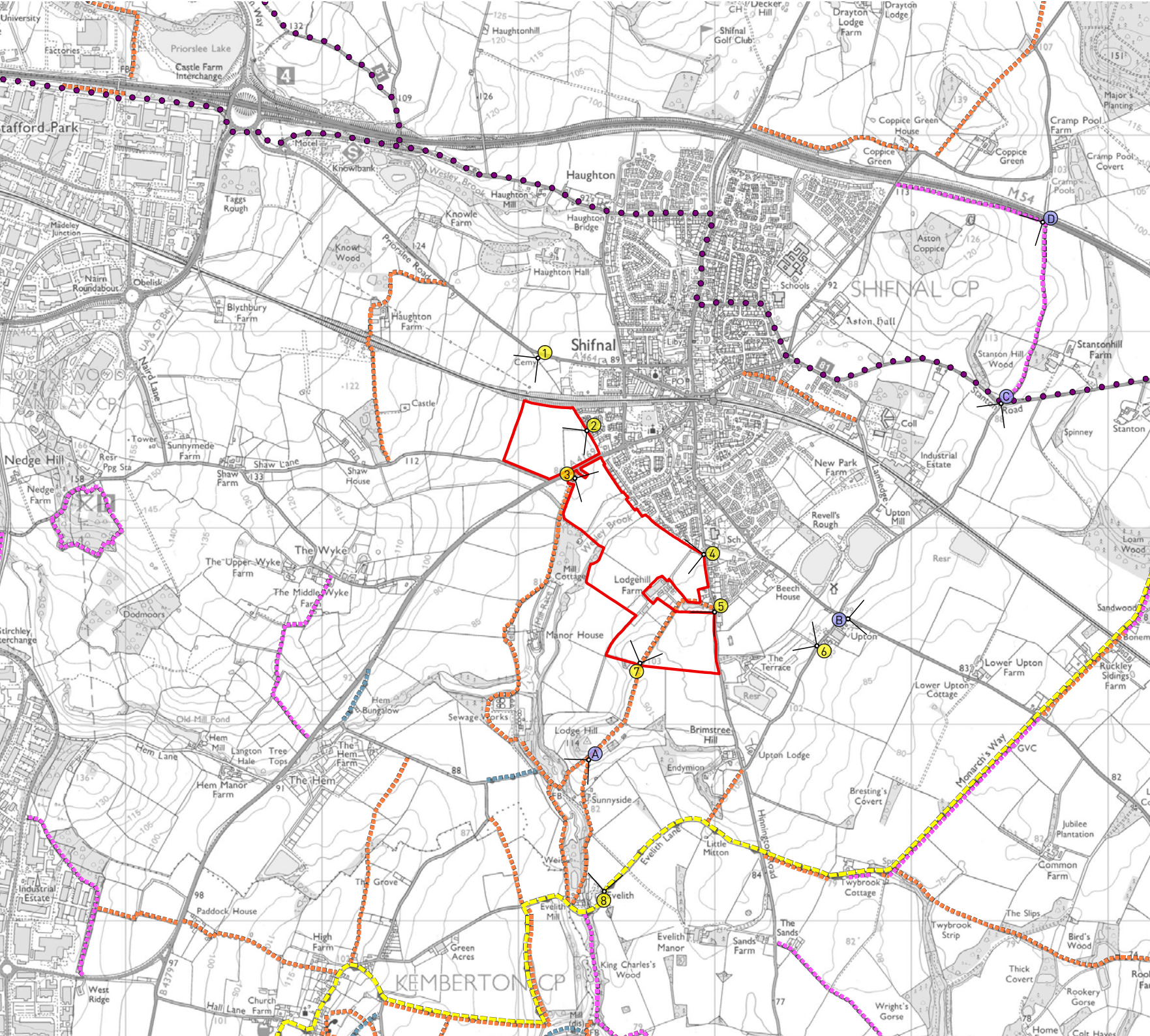
2.2.1 At a national level, the site is located in an area of landscape character defined by Natural England as NCA66, the Mid-Severn Sandstone Plateau.









2.2.2 At a more local level the majority of the site is Sandstone Estatelands typology. The key characteristics of this typology are defined by the guidance as:

- Mixed farming land use;
- Clustered settlement pattern;
- Large country houses with associated parklands;
- Planned woodland character; and
- Medium-large scale landscapes with framed views.

2.2.3 Small pockets of the site are also Incised Sandstone Valleys typology (i.e. the Wesley Brook and associated valley formation) and the Estate Farmlands typology (i.e. the northern knoll of Lodge Hill).

2.2.4 These are set against the backdrop of the extended settlement area of Shifnal, which is also noted in the published guidance as 'Urban'.



- KEY**
-  Site boundary
  -  Representative viewpoints
  -  Contextual viewpoints
  -  Public footpath
  -  Public bridleway
  -  Other routes with public access
  -  Recreational route
  -  National Cycle Network Route 81

**Landscape Viewpoint Locations Plan**





Viewpoint A | View looking south-west from public footpath south of Lodge Hill.



Viewpoint B | View looking east from the A464 corridor.

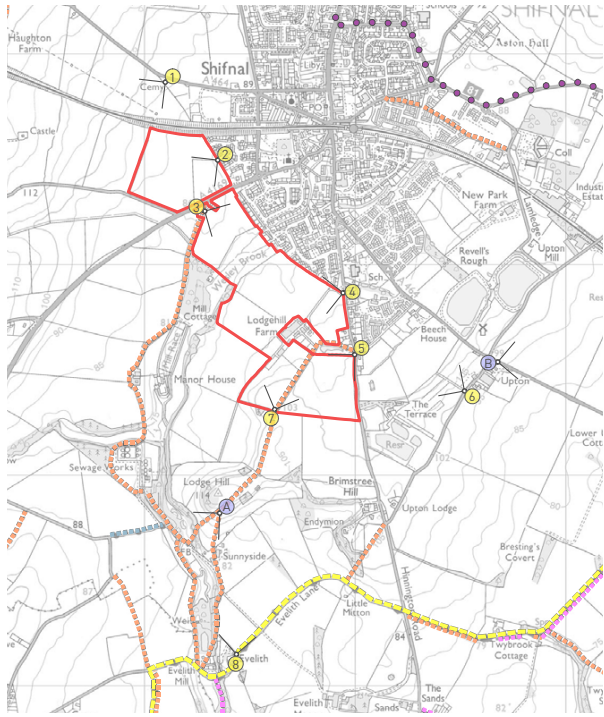


Viewpoint C | View looking south-west from public bridleway at the junction of National Cycle Route 81 and Upton Lane.



Viewpoint D | View looking south-west from public bridleway adjacent to the M54 corridor.





Viewpoint 1 | View looking south-west from Shifnal Cemetery.



Viewpoint 2 | View looking south-west from Talbot Close.



Viewpoint 3 | View looking east from public footpath off the A4169 corridor.



Viewpoint 4 | View looking west from Park Lane.





Viewpoint 5 | View looking south-west from Park Lane.



Viewpoint 6 | View looking north-west from Upton Lane.

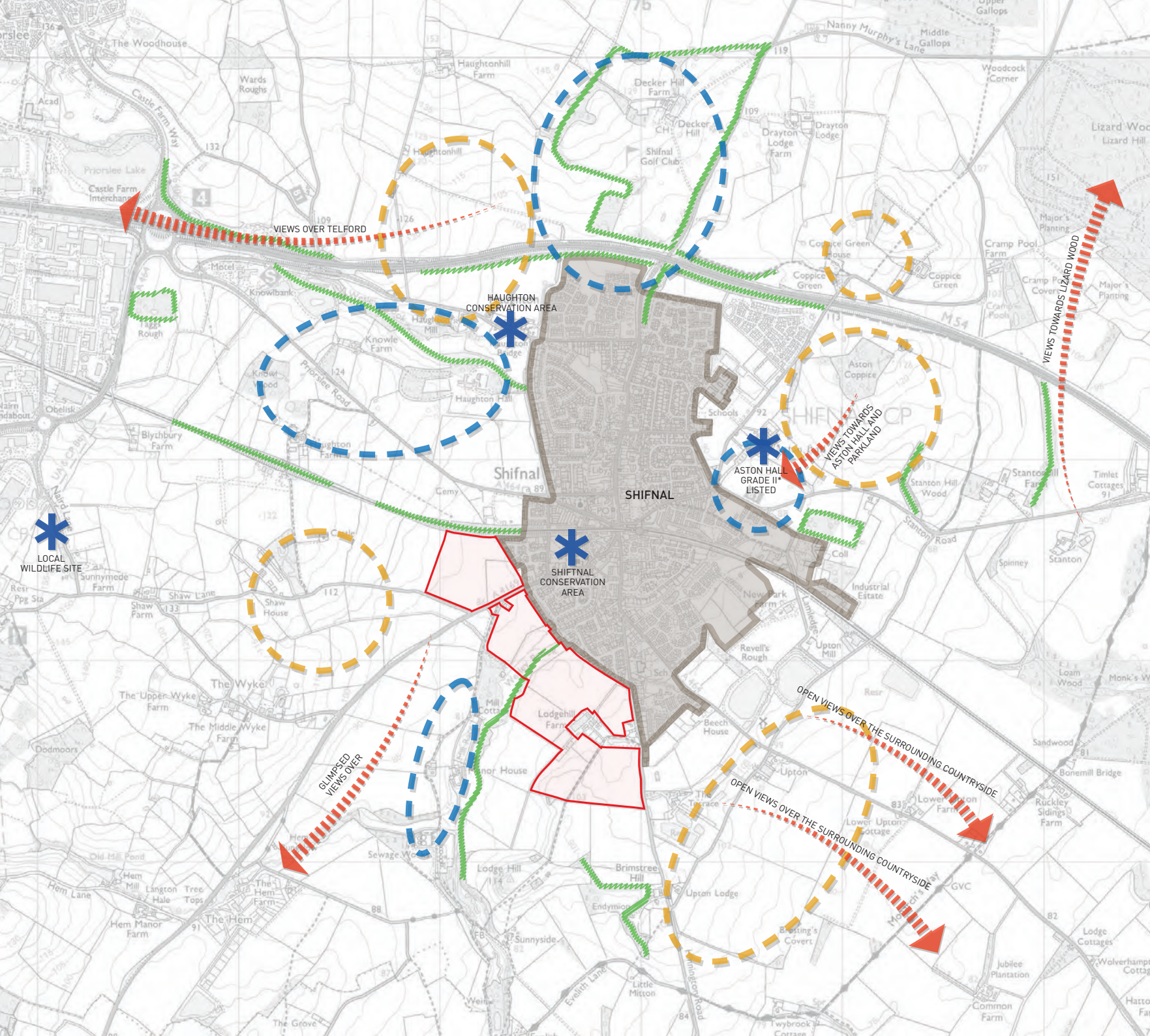


Viewpoint 7 | View looking north from public footpath south of Lodgehill Farm.



Viewpoint 8 | View looking north from Evelith Lane recreational route east of Evelith Mill.











- KEY**
-  SITE BOUNDARY
  -  URBAN EXTENT
  -  HIGHER LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY TO DEVELOPMENT
  -  HIGHER VISUAL SENSITIVITY TO DEVELOPMENT
  -  VIEWS TO BE PROTECTED
  -  DESIGNATED FEATURES WHERE THE SETTING SHOULD BE CONSIDERED
  -  IMPORTANT LANDSCAPE FEATURE WHICH SHOULD BE RETAINED

Figure based upon the council's Shropshire Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Assessment (2018) findings.



## 2.3 THE COUNCIL'S LANDSCAPE & VISUAL SENSITIVITY STUDY

- 2.3.1 The Council's own Landscape & Visual Sensitivity Study (LVSS) confirms that the site has lower visual sensitivity than other areas to the east of Shifnal and avoids areas of higher visual and landscape sensitivity shown on the previous page. The woodland to the west of the site acts to screen the site in the landscape.
- 2.3.2 A public right of way runs westwards from Park Lane along the access road to Lodge Hill before turning southwards away from Shifnal. Development would extend the existing footpaths and create a new network of public footpaths in the area, making good use of a new area of public open space along the Wesley Brook. These new footpaths would open up more views of the wider landscape for public enjoyment than would be lost.
- 2.3.3 The northern third of the Lodge Hill site is described in the LVSS as having no particularly distinctive features and having low tranquillity due to the mainline railway, the A4169, the A464 and overhead powerlines. Furthermore, the railway embankment screens views. Fields are enclosed and there are no environmental designations. The LVSS confirms that the rural quality is eroded due to intensive farming and the introduction of houses on the edge of the settlement, meaning that sensitivity to the landscape from new housing is low - medium.
- 2.3.4 Additional landscaping as part of the development would further screen development and provide a soft edge to the town.

## 2.4 SUMMARY

- 2.4.1 A site-specific Preliminary Landscape and Visual Appraisal (PLVA) has been carried out by Pegasus Group and accompanies this DFD (Appendix 1). It concludes that a landscape led approach can ensure that a scheme comes forward that embeds mitigation in the overarching design principles and that this approach recognises the local landscape character.
- 2.4.2 On the basis of the published LVSS and the more detailed PLVA, the site is considered to be of low to medium visual and landscape sensitivity to new residential development and is suitable and preferable for a residentially led masterplan.

# SECTION

# 03

## THE GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

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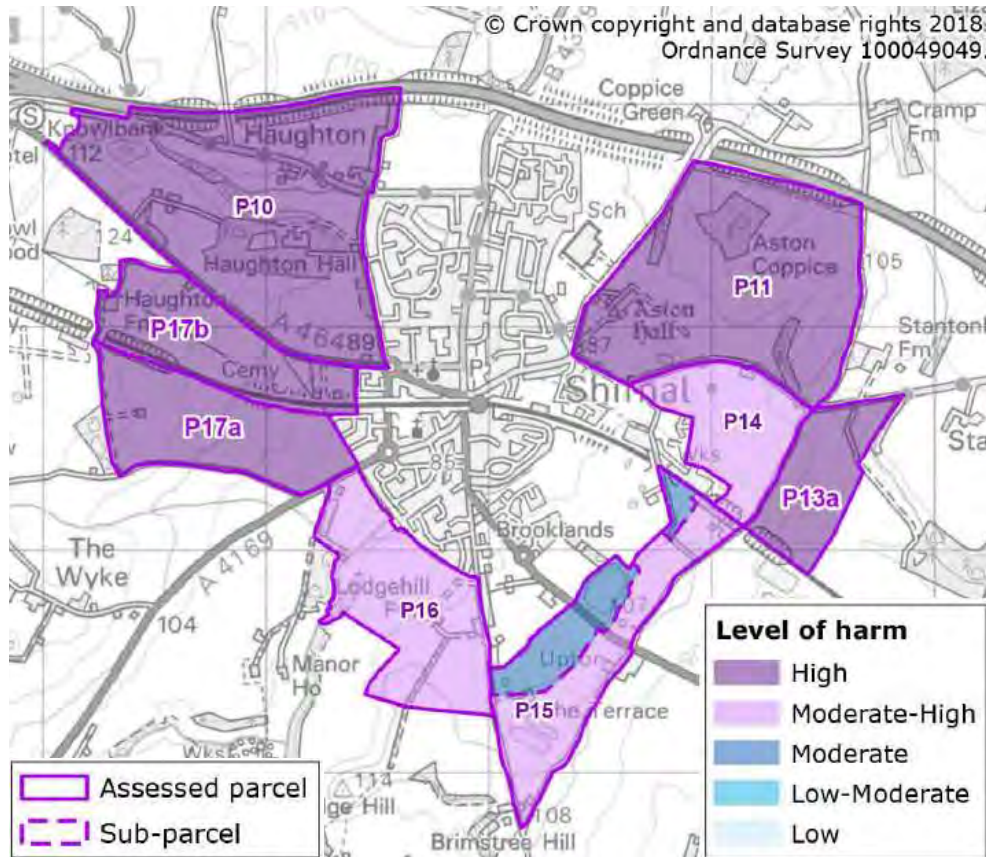
# 03



# 03 THE GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT

Figure A7.18 from Council's Green Belt Assessment (2018, LUC).

Summary from Council's Green Belt Assessment (2018, LUC)



Green Belt Parcel	Assessment of Harm	Contribution to Purpose 1	Contribution to Purpose 2	Contribution to Purpose 3	Contribution to Purpose 4
P16	Moderate-High	None	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
P17 (a&b)	High	None	Strong	Moderate	Strong

## 3.1 GREEN BELT ASSESSMENT OF THE WALLACE SITE

- 3.1.1 The Council's consultants have prepared a Green Belt Review to inform the Local Plan review. The Site is covered by parcels P16, and P17a, and the results from the Council's assessment are shown on the previous page. However, these parcels do not unfortunately coincide with the boundaries of the site. The Green Belt Review also considers opportunity areas Sh-1a, Sh-2 and Sh-3, but again these do not coincide with the site.
- 3.1.2 Wallace commend the Council's decision to remove the site from the Green Belt in the Pre-Submission Draft Plan but consider that the evidence base to support that decision should be as robust as possible. As such, a bespoke Green Belt assessment for the site is provided in this DFD. The site is divided into the following areas of land, to coincide with the areas of land proposed to be released from the Green Belt in the Pre-Submission Draft Plan:
- Land between the A4169 and Park Lane (part of P16)
  - Land between A4169 and the western railway line (part of P17)

### **P16 - LAND BETWEEN THE A4169 AND PARK LANE**

- 3.1.3 This land is bounded by the A4169 to the north, the urban edge and the A464 Park Lane to the east, and a service road, thick tree belts and hedgerows to the east.

#### **PURPOSE 1 - TO CHECK THE UNRESTRICTED SPRAWL OF LARGE BUILT-UP AREAS**

- 3.1.4 The Council's Green Belt Review establishes that the Green Belt lying adjacent to settlements, including Shifnal, do not contribute to purpose 1 as they do not form part of a 'large built up area'. On the basis, this land makes no contribution to purpose 1.

#### **PURPOSE 2 - TO PREVENT NEIGHBOURING TOWNS MERGING INTO ONE ANOTHER**

- 3.1.5 This land is located on the south-western edge of the settlement of Shifnal. The built-up area of Telford is located approximately 2.8km to the east and intercepted by rising landform. Given the extent of the visual and physical gap, any new development that took place on this land could only lead to the perception of narrowing the gap to a very moderate degree when travelling between Shifnal and Telford along the A4169. On this basis, this land makes a weak contribution to purpose 2.

#### **PURPOSE 3 - TO ASSIST IN THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE COUNTRYSIDE FROM ENCROACHMENT**

- 3.1.6 The urbanising influences of the land include the large sheds at Lodge Hill Farm, a number of detached properties on Park Lane, East House and West House on the A4169, and the urban edge of Shifnal. These urbanising features are considered to influence the open characteristics of this land to an extent whereby it only makes a weak contribution to purpose 3.

#### **PURPOSE 4 - TO PRESERVE THE SETTING AND SPECIAL CHARACTER OF HISTORIC TOWNS**

- 3.1.7 This land is considered to play a weak role in the immediate setting of this historic settlement. This is evident in the Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment which identifies that there are no heritage assets (designated or otherwise) within the vicinity of the site that are not capable of being preserved should this land be developed.

#### **PURPOSE 5 - TO ASSIST IN URBAN REGENERATION BY ENCOURAGING THE RECYCLING OF DERELICT AND OTHER URBAN LAND**

- 3.1.8 All parcels make an equally significant contribution to this purpose.



### **P17A - LAND BETWEEN A4169 AND THE RAILWAY LINE**

- 3.1.9 This land is bounded by the western railway line to the north, the urban edge to the east, the A4169 to the south, and Shaw Lane and hedgerow to the west.

#### **PURPOSE 1 - TO CHECK THE UNRESTRICTED SPRAWL OF LARGE BUILT-UP AREA**

- 3.1.10 The Council's Green Belt Review establishes that the Green Belt lying adjacent to settlements, including Shifnal, do not contribute to purpose 1 as they do not form part of a 'large built up area'. On the basis, this land makes no contribution to purpose 1.

#### **PURPOSE 2 - TO PREVENT NEIGHBOURING TOWNS MERGING INTO ONE ANOTHER**

- 3.1.11 The land is located on the western edge of the settlement of Shifnal which has a relationship with the settlement of Telford to the west. However, given that Telford is approximately 2.5km away any new development that took place on this land could only lead to the perception of narrowing the gap to a moderate degree when travelling between Telford and Shifnal along the A4169 or western railway line. On this basis, this land is considered to make a moderate contribution to purpose 2.

#### **PURPOSE 3 - TO ASSIST IN THE SAFEGUARDING OF THE COUNTRYSIDE FROM ENCROACHMENT**

- 3.1.12 The urbanising influences within the land include the urban edge and several pylons which cross the site. These urbanising features are considered to influence the open characteristics of this land to an extent whereby it makes a moderate contribution to purpose 3.

#### **PURPOSE 4 - TO PRESERVE THE SETTING AND SPECIAL CHARACTER OF HISTORIC TOWNS**

- 3.1.13 This land is considered to play a weak role in the immediate setting of this historic settlement. This is evident in the Historic Environment Desk-Based Assessment which identifies that there are no heritage assets (designated or otherwise) within the vicinity of the site that are not capable of being preserved should this land be developed.

#### **PURPOSE 5 - TO ASSIST IN URBAN REGENERATION BY ENCOURAGING THE RECYCLING OF DERELICT AND OTHER URBAN LAND**

- 3.1.14 All parcels make an equally significant contribution to this purpose.

## EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- 3.1.15 Paragraph 136 of the Framework requires exceptional circumstances to be fully evidenced and justified, through the Local Plan process. The High Court has made it clear that this is not to be misconstrued as overly onerous. In a Judgment between Compton Parish Council et al and Guildford Borough Council and DCLG, issued 4th December 2019, it is stated that, “The phrase “exceptional circumstances” should be considered as a whole, and in its context, which is to judge whether Green Belt boundaries should be altered in a Local Plan review. It is not necessary to explain why each factor or the combination is itself “exceptional”. It does not mean that they have to be unlikely to recur in a similar fashion elsewhere. It is sufficient reasoning to spell out what those factors are, and to reach the judgment. There is a limit to the extent to which such a judgment can or should be elaborated.” (paragraph 74 in the Judgment [2019] EWHC 3242 (Admin))
- 3.1.16 The Council has, commendably, concluded that there are exceptional circumstances to remove land from the Green Belt around Shifnal, as set out in their Green Belt Release Exceptional Circumstances Statement 2020. Indeed, the Pre-Submission Draft Plan seeks to release the site from the Green Belt.
- 3.1.17 The High Court has ruled, “there is no requirement that Green Belt land be released as a last resort” (paragraph 70 in the above Judgment) and that the supply of land for ordinary housing can amount to exceptional circumstances (paragraph 73).
- 3.1.18 Wallace concur that exceptional circumstances exist to justify the removal of Green Belt land on the western and southern side of Shifnal, notably:
- Provision of a sustainable pattern of development that utilises the existing infrastructure in Shifnal, including the railway station, shops, schools, GP surgery and other facilities;
  - Provision of additional infrastructure in Shifnal, including a new western link road;
  - Balancing the growth of Shifnal, which has previously been to the east of the town where it aggravates traffic problems;
  - An acknowledged need to deliver development in the M54 corridor, to help meet the housing needs of the Black Country Authorities;
  - Excellent strategic location close to job opportunities at Cosford, Telford and the Black Country;
  - Minimal harm to the purposes of the Green Belt;
  - Delivering environmental and access improvements to the remaining Green Belt.

## 3.2 NATIONAL PRIORITIES FOR GREEN BELT RELEASE

- 3.2.1 Paragraph 138 of the National Planning Policy Framework states that, “Where it has been concluded that it is necessary to release Green Belt land for development, plans should give first consideration to land which has been previously developed and/or is well-served by public transport.”
- 3.2.2 The Site is approximately a 5 to 10 minute walk from the railway station, making it suitable for release from the Green Belt in this regard.

## 3.3 DELIVERING ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENTS TO SHIFNAL'S GREEN BELT

- 3.3.1 The Shifnal Place Plan published in December 2019 sets out the community's infrastructure priorities, based on close working between Shropshire Council and Shifnal Town Council. Among the projects identified by the Town Council is the “Manor Wood recreational facility – provision of an additional facility to meet the demand of an expanded town” (page 12, Dec 2019).

- 3.3.2 The Wesley Brook enters woodland just north of Manor House, to the west of Lodge Hill. An opportunity exists to improve public access to the Wesley Brook corridor and provide significant new planting and recreational facilities in this area north of the Manor House.
- 3.3.3 The Masterplan provides a new linear green infrastructure corridor along Wesley Brook in response to the councils green infrastructure strategy, which will incorporate a new public park and active travel route to the town.
- 3.3.4 Furthermore, there is sufficient land within the same landowners' control to provide environmental and recreational improvements to the south, offsetting the loss of Green Belt with compensatory improvements of the environmental quality and accessibility of remaining Green Belt land in accordance with para 138 of the Framework.
- 3.3.5 All the existing hedges defining the edge of the proposed safeguarded land can be reinforced with additional planting to create a strong buffer between the development and the redefined Green Belt.



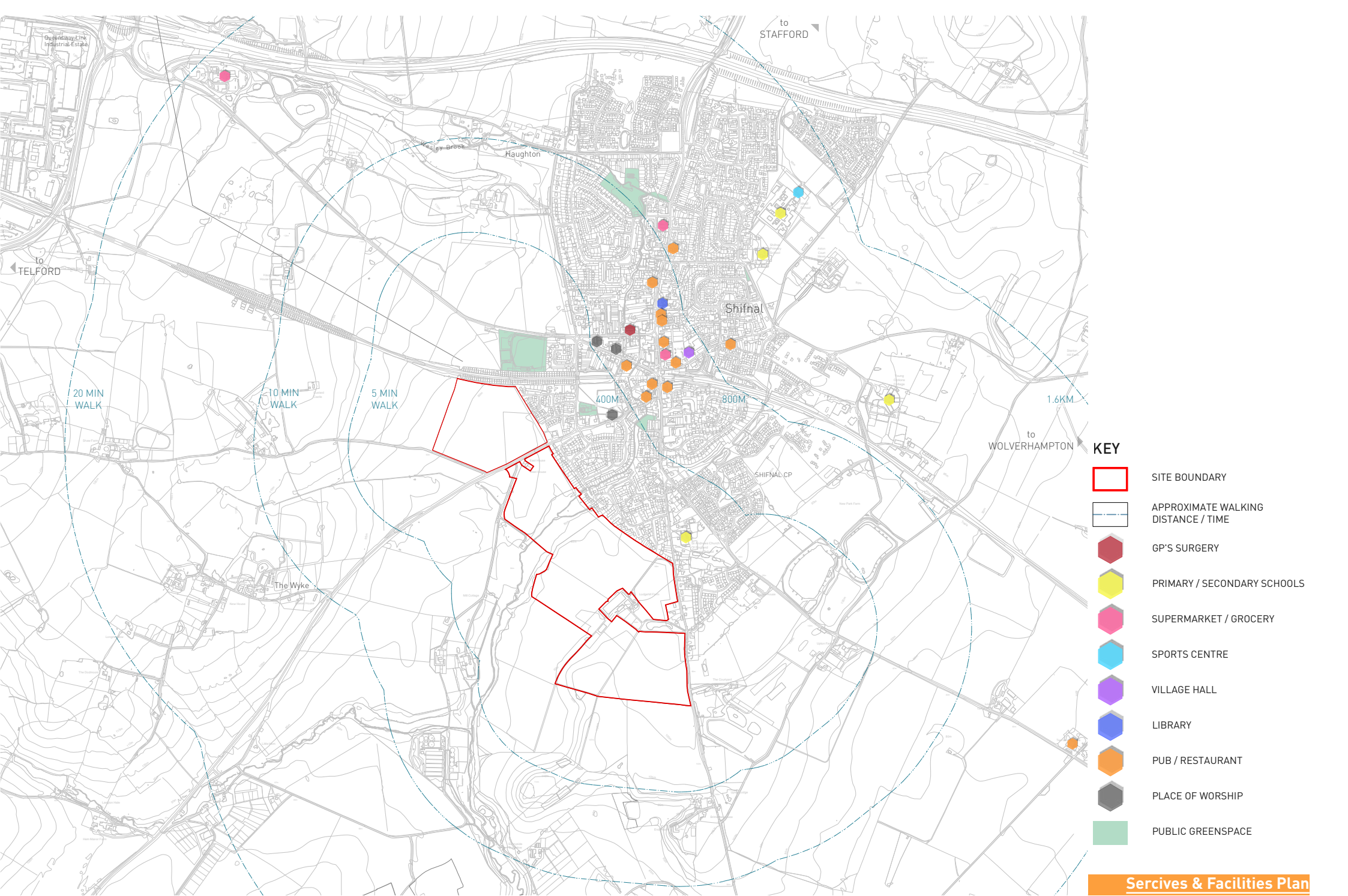
# SECTION

# 04

## ACCESSIBILITY & MOVEMENT

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# 04



**Sercives & Facilities Plan**



# 04 ACCESSIBILITY & MOVEMENT

## 4.1 TRAFFIC

- 4.1.1 The made Shifnal Neighbourhood Plan adopted 2016 highlights the concerns of the local community regarding traffic through the town. A key objective of the Neighbourhood Plan is:

“The road network should be improved to accommodate the extra local traffic generated by the new housing developments as well as through traffic.”

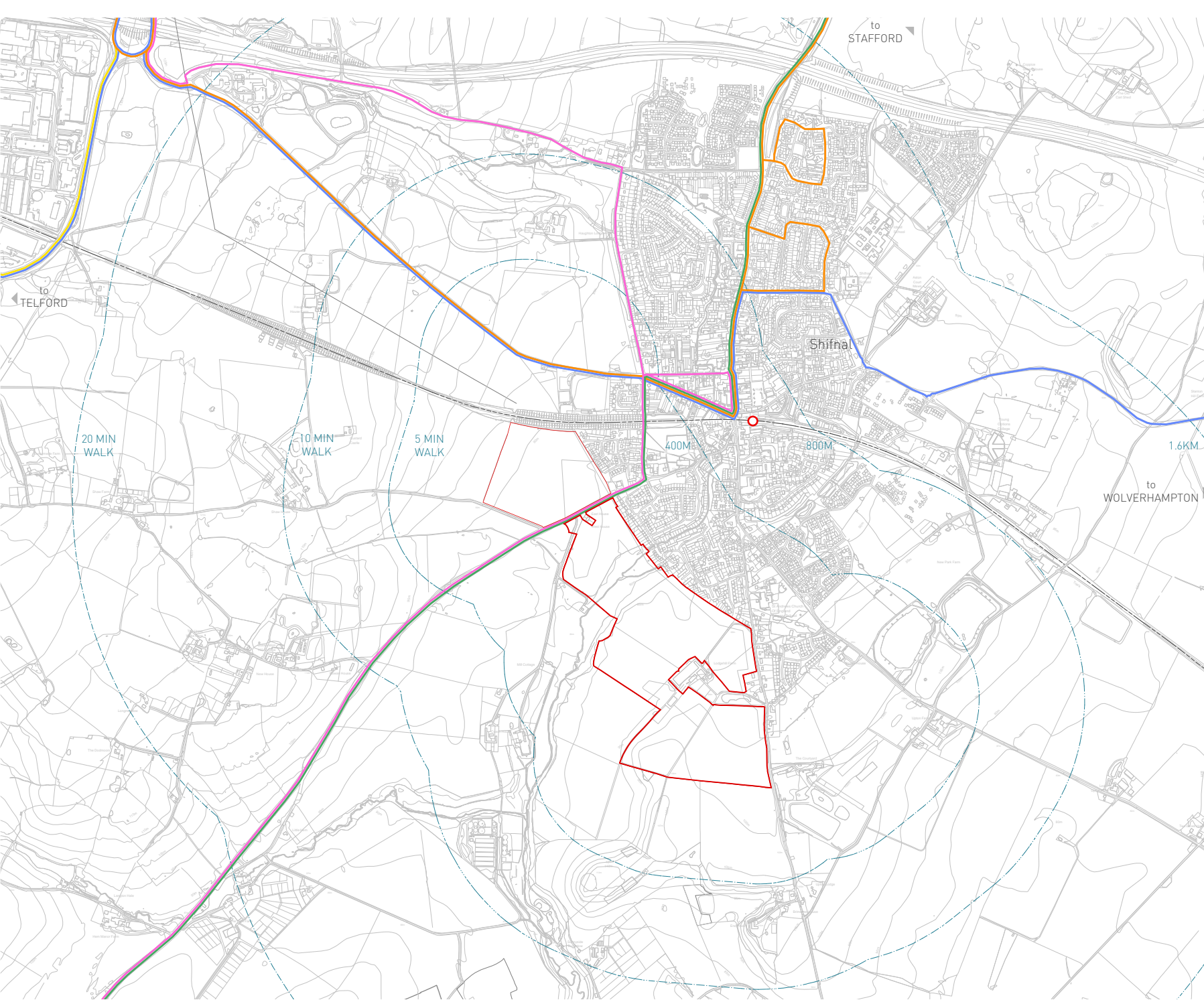
- 4.1.2 Shropshire Council’s Shifnal Transport Strategy notes that there is pressure at key junctions around the town. This can result in short term, peak hour congestion, which is most noticeable where the A464 converges with a number of other key routes in the town centre, close to the shopping areas and the railway station. Capacity at the Five-Ways roundabout and on-street parking on Innage Road are also matters of concern.
- 4.1.3 Shropshire Council has examined traffic circulation around the town and is developing proposals designed to improve traffic flows. Further detail is contained within the Phasing Strategy and Access Arrangements which is included as Appendix 4 of the joint Wallace and Miller DFD.

### THROUGH TRAFFIC

- 4.1.4 Examination of available data suggest that approximately 35% of the total traffic present on Market Place during the peak hours is through traffic travelling on the A464 corridor.
- 4.1.5 Similarly, 25% of the total is through traffic travelling between the A464 (Market Place) corridor and the A4169 corridor using a combination of Victoria Road, Innage Road and Church Street depending upon direction of travel.

### LOCAL TRAFFIC

- 4.1.6 Travel to Work statistics for Shifnal indicate that 50% to 60% of future employees would be drawn towards the employment opportunities at Telford, the M54 Motorway and other destinations to the west. Consequently, the majority of traffic to and from the site would not be required to utilise the town centre road network.



- KEY**
- SITE BOUNDARY
  - APPROXIMATE WALKING DISTANCE / TIME
  - BUS ROUTES 14, 14A
  - BUS ROUTE 14A
  - BUS ROUTES 113, 114
  - BUS ROUTES 115, 116
  - BUS ROUTE 891
  - o EXISTING RAILWAY