

# Meecebrook Garden Community

# The Team

Working collaboratively with key partner organisations, Stafford Borough Council (SBC) has developed the definition and structure of Meecebrook Garden Community as a distinct project. It is currently leading the day-to-day management and delivery of the project programme.

In 2019, Stafford Borough Council appointed JTP to prepare a Vision and Development Charter for the new Garden Community, which will set the parameters for its future development. This Vision and Development Charter document (which includes a Concept Masterplan) encapsulates and articulates the aspirations and ambitions that emerged during the Visioning process and delivers an ambitious, innovative, and distinctive placemaking Vision for Meecebrook Garden Community.

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# Chapter One

## The Ambition

**This section sets out the ambition for Meecebrook, one shaped by landscape and defined by the green and the blue, and introduces the themes and objectives of the Development Charter.**

# The Vision

## Meecebrook Garden Community: shaped by landscape, defined by the green and the blue.

**Meadows, wetlands, parkland and woods will thread through the heart of Meecebrook; a cohesive community that will grow in harmony with its landscape setting as reconnected and extended habitats allow nature to flourish. Meanwhile the citizens of Meecebrook will be engaged in shaping their new community into a place to be proud of, creating real choice in types of homes, ways of working, and ways of living.**

The new settlement will be of a scale that supports self-sufficiency, with day to day services, community facilities, and a new main line rail station - all within easy reach for those who will live and work there.

- Shaped by the green and the blue: a responsive and multi-functional landscape
- Naturally supported health and well-being
- A cohesive and proud community
- Innovation and diversity, in homes and tenure types
- Localised identity: celebrating the unique, the one-off
- Walking and cycling: the natural choice
- Cars will be put in their place
- A growing culture of self-sufficiency
- Delivery of ambition
- Enterprising and economically stimulating
- Reduced consumption, climate-neutral
- Connected, future-looking and dynamic

# Chapter Two

# The Development Charter

**This section sets out the overarching Vision for Meecebrook, articulated by a 12-point Charter; a statement of ambitions and intent that will guide the design and delivery process for years to come and to which all future proposals pertaining to the Garden Community must refer and respond.**

# Development Charter

**The Vision for Meecebrook is articulated by a 12-point Charter; a statement of ambitions and intent that will serve to guide the design and delivery process for years to come. It establishes themes and objectives to which all future proposals pertaining to the Garden Community must refer and respond.**

Any project of this significance must be considered in the context of its sustainability in all its forms. Human impact on the planet is resulting in climate change leaving communities vulnerable to extreme weather events. It has also resulted in mass extinction of flora and fauna and a loss of critical ecosystem services. We need to reduce our carbon footprint and energy use, potable water consumption, material consumption and waste generation. Developments such as at Meecebrook Garden Community can contribute to these goals by creating new places that demonstrate major reductions in carbon, significantly reduce their water footprint, optimise material use and eradicate waste to landfill.

## 12 Point Development Charter

### **One. Shaped by the Green and The Blue: A Responsive and Multi-Functional Landscape.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will be green by nature, a place that is defined by the existing and future landscape within which it sits. Meecebrook will repair and cleanse the landscape, and at all phases of its development demonstrate how wildlife and people can live and thrive harmoniously, in an ecologically-enriched, diversified environment, one that demands to be explored and enjoyed.

The landscape will provide new and extended habitats, and important ecological benefits including pollination, nutrient recycling and climate regulation – whilst integrating routes and spaces for human activity, enjoyment and appreciation of the natural world. It will be given the space it needs to protect and enhance ecosystems and allow biodiversity to thrive, whilst, through surface water attenuation features, mitigating the risk of flooding. Water courses and water bodies in the lower lying areas will be multi-functional, and a defining characteristic of the Meecebrook landscape.

### **Two. Naturally Supported Health and Well-Being.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will create a health-promoting environment for people of all ages, where active travel, exercise, recreation and relaxation can all take place in appealing and safe natural environments. It will integrate with landscape in a way that will directly and indirectly contribute to physical and psychological health and wellbeing, with the educational and mental-health benefits of engagement with nature representing a key objective. Places of tranquillity for retreat and reflection will offer contrast to the busier and more active environments.

Healthy lifestyles will be gently encouraged by the creation of a place in which the simple ability to walk, to cycle or to enjoy fresh air and outdoor spaces of a multitude of types and sizes is readily available for everyone. The benefits of a landscape that is seen as well as actively used will be brought into the new neighbourhoods through sensitive and integrated design. As the Garden Community grows so will the range and provision of health services to support it, alongside an expanding range of opportunities for outdoor sports, recreation, and relaxation.

### **Three. A Cohesive and Proud Community.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will support and nurture a community that is equitable, diverse and inclusive – one that is given the means to be supportive and influential in how the place establishes and is looked after, and the opportunity to take pride in so doing. The community will be given an active involvement in the ongoing design and management of Meecebrook, through genuine engagement - and with this will grow an associated nurturing of community spirit.

From the outset of its development, the Garden Community will provide space and facilities for the community to gather together to enjoy and to use; places for shared use promoting equality and inclusion, for social interaction, for performances and events, for worship. These may be indoor and outdoor, and often multi-functional. Sometimes temporary - before other facilities are brought forward – and sometimes permanent. A suitable method of community stewardship of such assets and spaces will be derived and established, one that benefits from revenue generation where it accrues. Existing networks of local clubs, religious groups, societies, arts groups and festivals will be welcomed and extended.

## **Four. Innovation and Diversity, in Homes and Tenure Types.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will actively promote different models of housing delivery, in support of its objectives for diversity and inclusivity, and to demonstrate from early phases that it is a place where things can be done differently. Opportunities for self-build, co-housing initiatives, and community land trusts will be provided alongside more conventional methods of delivery. Such models will establish early a culture of supportive entrepreneurialism, where pioneering residents are able to actively engage in the growth and stewardship of Meecebrook.

For those that want it to, the Garden Community will be a place to live for life. It will offer a rich mix of housing typologies and tenures suited to all ages, including adaptable and flexible homes. Residents may choose to move locally to a property that better suits their changing needs, or to stay put and adapt their home. Specialist housing types offering care and later living communities will be integrated into new neighbourhoods.

## **Five. Localised Identity: Celebrating the Unique, the One-Off.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will be distinctive and talked-about, visited by the curious and advocated by its community. This will be predicated on an understanding of its context, history and heritage, and ensuring that at all stages opportunities are taken to positively embed – in buildings, public realm or landscape - a reflection of this. All phases of development will incorporate features and measures that mean they are ‘of Meecebrook’, not standardised, and could not simply be found anywhere - making it attractive to residents and investors. Developers and designers will be compelled to demonstrate how their proposals will genuinely achieve this, utilising the involvement of artists and those in creative pursuits in the region.

Identity and character will be embedded as the Garden Community grows, with every phase bringing a space, building, facility or point of community focus that is unique to it whilst complementary to what has come before. These features might relate to leisure, food, social interaction, memorial, community projects, art, or functional public realm and viewpoints. Certain areas of landscape will take on a role as cultural assets.

## **Six. Walking and Cycling: the Natural Choice.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will be inherently and conveniently walkable and have a wide range of destinations either within walking distance or a cycle ride away. Across all phases the accessibility of supporting spaces and facilities will be assessed by what lies within a 15-minute journey, and the network of walking and cycling routes will consistently be that which most directly links important nodes and facilities. Meecebrook will be designed such that for all short journeys, walking, cycling or use of other sustainable modes of transport will be more appealing than a default to use of the private car.

For Meecebrook to rebalance movement options in favour of these means of active travel will require a progressive approach to highway design and establishing a hierarchy of routes for different users. At junctions and crossing points priority will be given to those walking, scooting or cycling. Completed neighbourhoods will not be blighted by ongoing construction activity. The movement network will need to evolve; at the outset it must take steps to promote walking and cycling, while recognising that car use will still be required. But as the Garden Community grows, so will its network of sustainable transport routes and its degree of self-sufficiency.

## **Seven. Cars Will Be Put in Their Place.**

Car parking will not be allowed to fundamentally influence the design of streets and spaces throughout Meecebrook. Parked cars will be located to minimise their visual impact. As the Garden Community grows – and the reliance on car ownership can reduce - an increasingly flexible approach to the provision of car parking will be taken, one that reduces on-plot provision, encourages communal schemes of ownership and car use, and allows for future repurposing of the land.

Connectivity is an essential component of successful places and economies, and movement will be as low carbon and low impact as possible. Public transport access is critical and, as the place grows, it will be further supported by initiatives such as car clubs, communal electric vehicles, access to electric bikes and scooters, autonomous vehicles, and other social transport-based systems – progressively and steadily effecting modal shift. All meaning that at Meecebrook, over time, owned and parked cars can be steadily retracted from the public realm.

## **Eight. A Growing Culture of Self-Sufficiency.**

Through a staged process of placemaking at Meecebrook, each new neighbourhood will have its own sense of place, and will bring additional benefits the existing, growing and new community. Development will be complementary to that which has preceded it, whilst steadily expanding the offer and range of amenities. The type and scale of facilities – such as schools, nurseries, shops, cafes, restaurants, community facilities, and local healthcare provision - will be commensurate with the growing scale of the Garden Community, but an innovative and adaptable approach to their delivery will offer benefit to the wider locality.

In its earliest phases, Meecebrook will need to rely in part on its neighbouring settlements and to make use of what they offer. As it grows, it will increasingly demonstrate aspects of self-sufficiency, reducing reliance on surrounding infrastructure and services, whilst adding facilities and destinations of a type not necessarily existent in the local area. Local community projects, in food-production/making/activities and events will be actively supported.

## **Nine. Delivery of Ambition.**

In achieving the ambitions of the Development Charter, Meecebrook Garden Community will be promoted and brought forward by an empowered delivery team, within a Development Plan context that encourages innovation, dynamic placemaking, and access to funding streams. Stakeholder engagement will continue through the established Project Governance structure but will expand into its fullest dimensions: those of the existing and future community. A collaborative ethos will be promoted at all stages, and the ambitions set out by this Charter carefully explained to all those with interests in the project and the locality.

As the Meecebrook community grows, as proposals for Meecebrook develop in their detail, and as the range of participants involved in its creation expands, the Project Governance teams will establish a forum for regular dialogue and testing of proposals against the Vision and the Development Charter.

## **Ten. Enterprising and Economically Stimulating.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will diversify the local economy through job creation, training opportunities, and flexible space for employment and business over a wide range of scales. New forms of employment land will be complementary to existing business uses, while opportunities for the growth of those with long-term ambitions to remain in the area will be provided. Alongside dedicated employment areas, Meecebrook will be designed to accommodate changing patterns in working and commuting, and to encourage greater flexibility in how residents and employees are able to balance – and where appropriate, integrate - home and work life. Existing and potential residents will be invited to consider and exemplify these patterns, in a way that influences future phases of Meecebrook's development.

Successful placemaking will make Meecebrook attractive to future investment as well as to start-up businesses, for whom an evidently welcoming response to entrepreneurialism and a range of opportunities to interact with those of similar ambition and interests will appeal. Small scale and affordable workspace will be made available to encourage local and individual business initiatives.

## **Eleven. Reduced Consumption, Climate-Neutral.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will exemplify how 21st century development can minimise its environmental impact and support the prevention of climate change. It will utilise advancements in technology and materials and work towards a socio-economic model that is climate-neutral, resilient, sustainable, inclusive and that safeguards the natural assets of the whole area. It will aim crucially to establish comprehensive site-wide green energy infrastructure.

As the settlement grows renewable energy technologies on-site and in the local area, will generate enough renewable energy to balance the operational and embodied carbon consequent of the new community. Water consumption will be minimised, recycling will be local, requiring additional and visible infrastructure.

Built development will, from the outset, incorporate renewable heat sources and achieve genuinely low running costs for its occupants.

Local energy generation will be implemented from the very first phases of development and homes built will be carbon neutral. Methods of local-sourcing – of energy, materials, daily supplies and goods – will be demonstrated from the outset of Meecebrook's development.

## **Twelve. Connected, Future-Looking and Dynamic.**

Meecebrook Garden Community will exemplify dynamic placemaking, embracing the positive change that the future brings, while making sense at all stages of its growth. To do this it will continually look to the future. The community must be able to respond and adapt to a world in which retail, leisure, jobs, technology and communication will continue to change rapidly – with a digital infrastructure that supports all of these.

The plans for Meecebrook will therefore be agile and yet resilient, to allow for flexibility in future patterns of living and working. Smart homes will, in their running and quality of internal environment, benefit from the application of technology. Communities will be supported by high-speed broadband, excellent connectivity, ubiquitous WIFI, shared workspaces and meeting places. From the beginnings of its development the Garden Community will promote community networks and knowledge-sharing through a dedicated app, website, and digital communication platform.



# Chapter Three

# Planning and

# Background

**This section provides an explanation of the purpose and scope of this document and sets out the planning policy context for the delivery of the Garden Community.**

# Introduction

## Foreword.

JTP are appointed by Stafford Borough Council (SBC) to develop and deliver a compelling, deliverable and place specific Vision and Development Charter for Meecebrook Garden Community. By responding to and augmenting the aspirations and ambitions already identified in the work done by SBC date, this process will articulate an ambitious, innovative and distinctive place-making Vision for the project; one that will underpin and provide direction to the future masterplanning process and production of a Development Plan Document (DPD).

## Purpose of the document.

This document summarises the process by which the Vision has been collaboratively developed, and sets out some of the key themes to emerge from the thorough process of stakeholder engagement to date. It presents analysis of the site – its characteristics and constraints – before illustrating the emerging Concept Masterplan that is being shaped by the engagement process. It also sets out the Development Charter for Meecebrook, a set of 12 statements of ambition that seek to encapsulate the collective ambitions of those who have contributed to the dialogue so far.

**“It’s very important to have a strong vision which will be there for years, for decades, for people to keep going back to, and check, ‘Are we adhering to the vision?’ It needs to really matter to the community. Respect the Vision and keep to it.” Tim Clegg, CEO, Stafford Borough Council.**

## Planning Context.

The concept of locating a new settlement at Coldmece is not a new one and has been mentioned since munition production at MOD Swynnerton ceased after WW2. The concept for this new settlement was re-visited in 2015, gaining further momentum when it was included in the HS2 inspired Constellation Partnership Growth Strategy which was submitted to Government in early 2017.

Impetus increased during the Local Plan Review “Call for Sites” process (Oct 2017-Jan 2018) in which land holdings were put forward by landowners/developers as potential allocations for development within the new Local Plan.

In March 2019, after a successful bid submitted by Stafford Borough Council, MHCLG announced that Meecebrook had been officially invested as part of the Garden Community Programme. This resulted in financial support to further explore and examine the viability of the proposal for consideration through the New Local Plan process.

Subsequently, the concept of a new Garden Community at Meecebrook formed one of the options to be considered for the future strategic growth in the Borough, as part of the New Local Plan process.

Since this announcement Stafford Borough Council, alongside key partner organisations, have progressed the definition and structure of “Meecebrook” and are currently leading the day to day management and delivery of the project. The governance structure broadly consists of the following groups and partnerships;

- Programme Board – Strategy and decision making board consisting of representatives of; Stafford Borough Council (SBC), Key Land Owners, Staffordshire County Council (SCC), Homes England (HE).
- Project Delivery Team – Day to day project management and delivery consisting of representatives of; SBC, HE, SCC.
- Themed Working Groups – The Transport and Water thematic groups are already working to better understand Meecebrook, with Energy, Masterplanning and Communications to follow.

# Chapter Four

## The Site

This section provides an analytical understanding of the site and its immediate surroundings. These findings are consolidated in the constraints plan and have directly informed the design proposals.

# The Site Within Staffordshire

## Understanding Meecebrook.










### The Local Context.

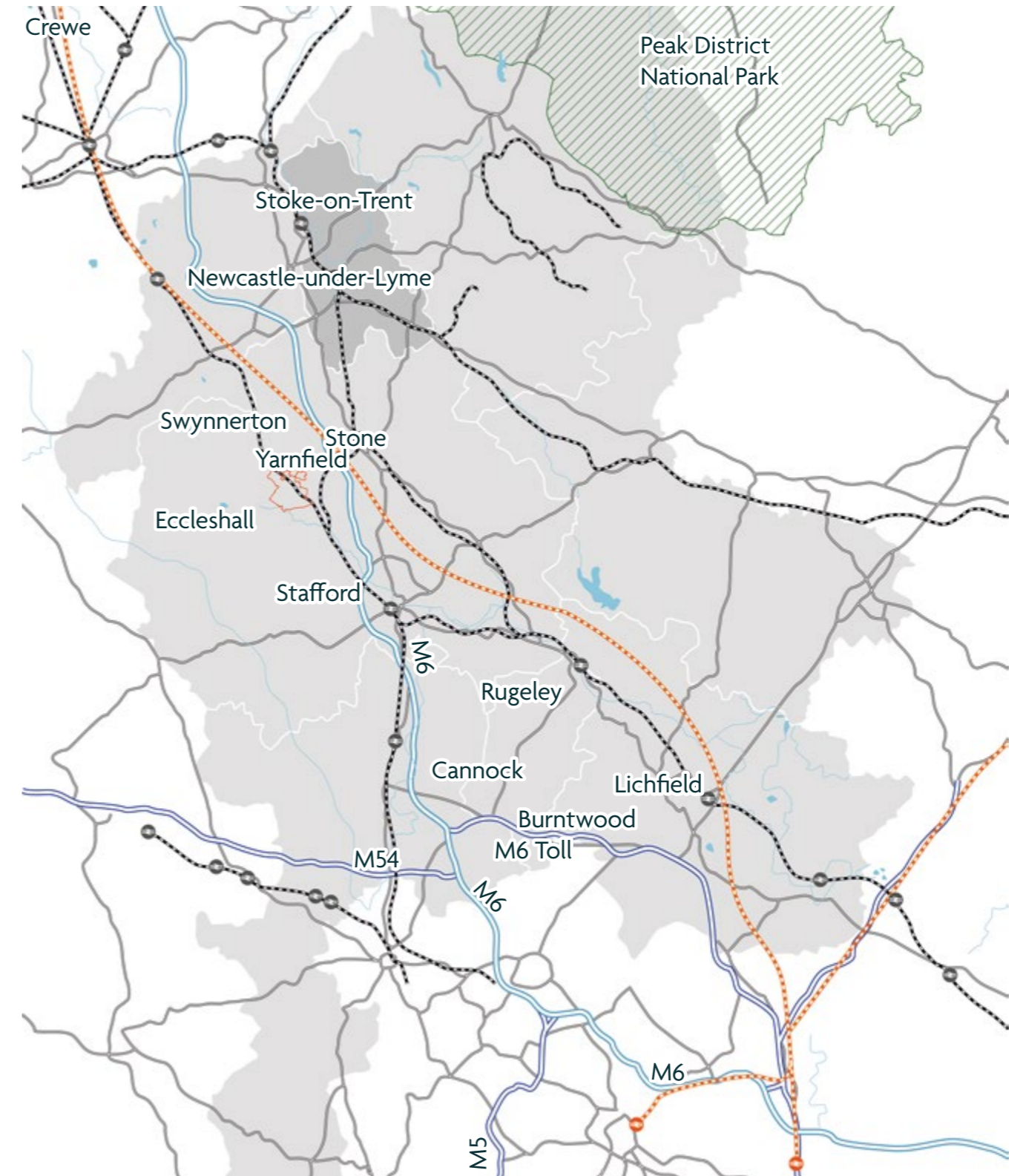
The site for Meecebrook Garden Community lies approximately 6km west of the market town of Stone, in Staffordshire and near to the villages of Eccleshall, Swynnerton and Yarnfield. The M6 motorway runs east of the site, along with the HS2 line. The West Coast Main Line and Stafford to Manchester Railway Line, via Stoke-on-Trent, form part of the extensive railway network surrounding the site, with the closest station located in Stone. The Meece Brook is the closest main river, running south west within the site, where it flows through elongated ponds. A tributary of the Meece Brook rises in Pilstones Wood, east of the site.

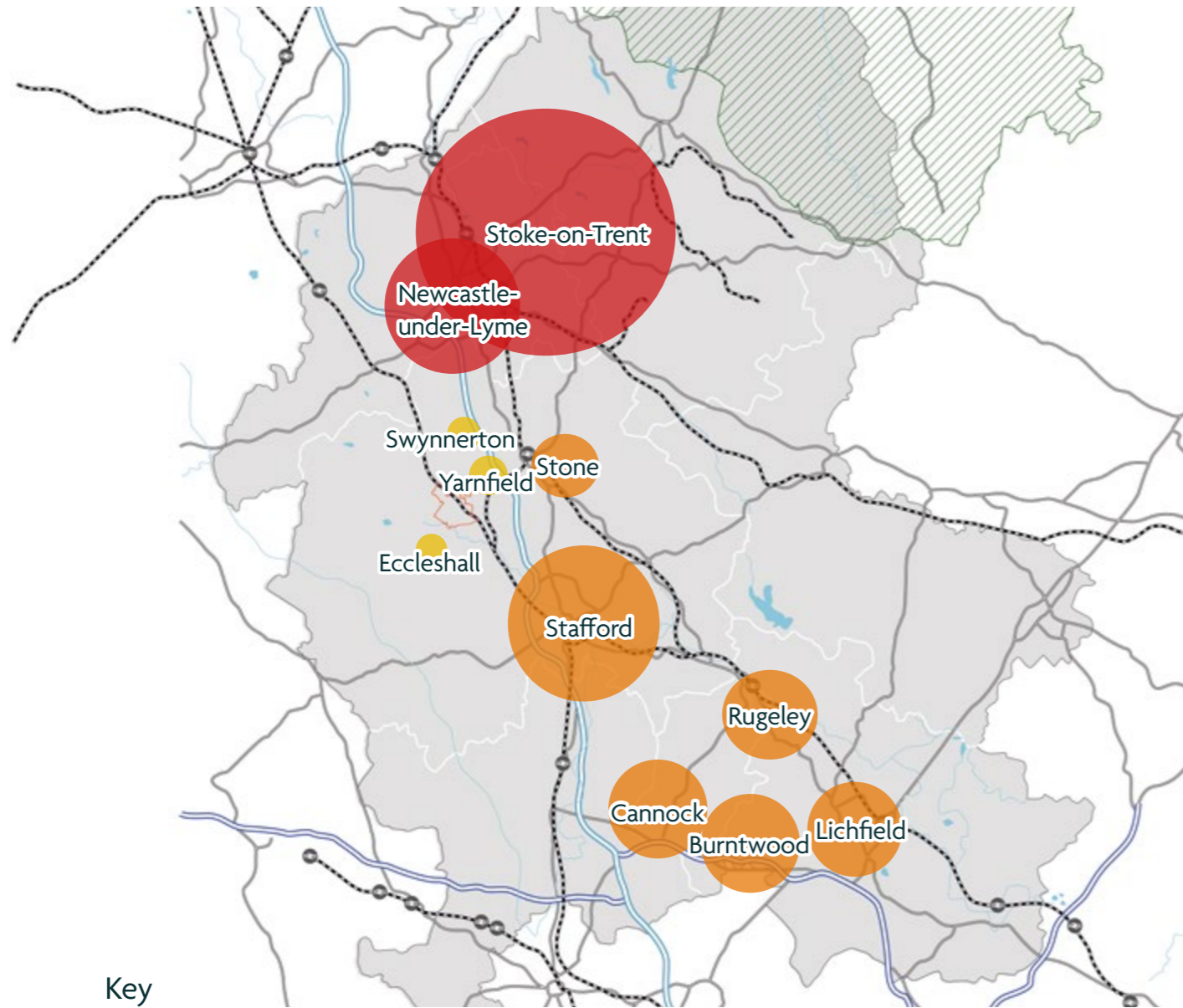
### Approximate distances from the centre of the site:

- Yarnfield: 2km
- Eccleshall: 3km
- Swynnerton: 4km
- Stone: 6km
- Stafford: 11km
- Stoke-On-Trent: 14km

### Key

-  Site boundary
-  Railway lines
-  Railway stations
-  HS2
-  HS2 stations
-  Motorways
-  Main roads
-  Staffordshire
-  National Park





**Key**

- Site boundary
- Larger-sized Settlements
- Medium-sized Settlements
- Smaller-sized Settlements
- Watercourses

Key settlements	District	Population numbers (2011 Census)
Stoke-on-Trent	Stoke-on-Trent	249,008
Tamworth	Tamworth	76,813
Newcastle-under-Lyme	Newcastle-under-Lyme	75,082
Burton-upon-Trent	East Staffordshire	72,299
Stafford	Stafford	68,472
Lichfield	Lichfield	32,877
Cannock	Cannock Chase	29,018
Burntwood	Lichfield	28,553
Kidsgrove	Newcastle-under-Lyme	26,293
Rugeley	Cannock Chase	24,033
Leek	Staffordshire Moorlands	19,624
Biddulph	Staffordshire Moorlands	17,669
Hednesford	Cannock Chase	17,343
Stone. Including settlements of Yarnfield and Swynnerton.	Stafford	16,385
Wombourne	South Staffordshire	13,511
Uttoxeter	East Staffordshire	13,089
Heath Hayes and Wimblebury	Cannock Chase	14,085
Cheadle	Staffordshire Moorlands	11,404
Great Wyrley	South Staffordshire	11,060
Penkridge	South Staffordshire	7,749
North Canes	Cannock Chase	7,479
Eccleshall	Stafford	6,657

# Railway Connections

**Railway services provide direct routes to London (Euston St) and Manchester Piccadilly. Located north west of Stafford, the site is accessible by bus in just over thirty minutes. Stone to the east can be accessed by bus in about thirty eight minutes.**

Stafford bus stop to Coldmeece bus stop (South Road) in 31 minutes.

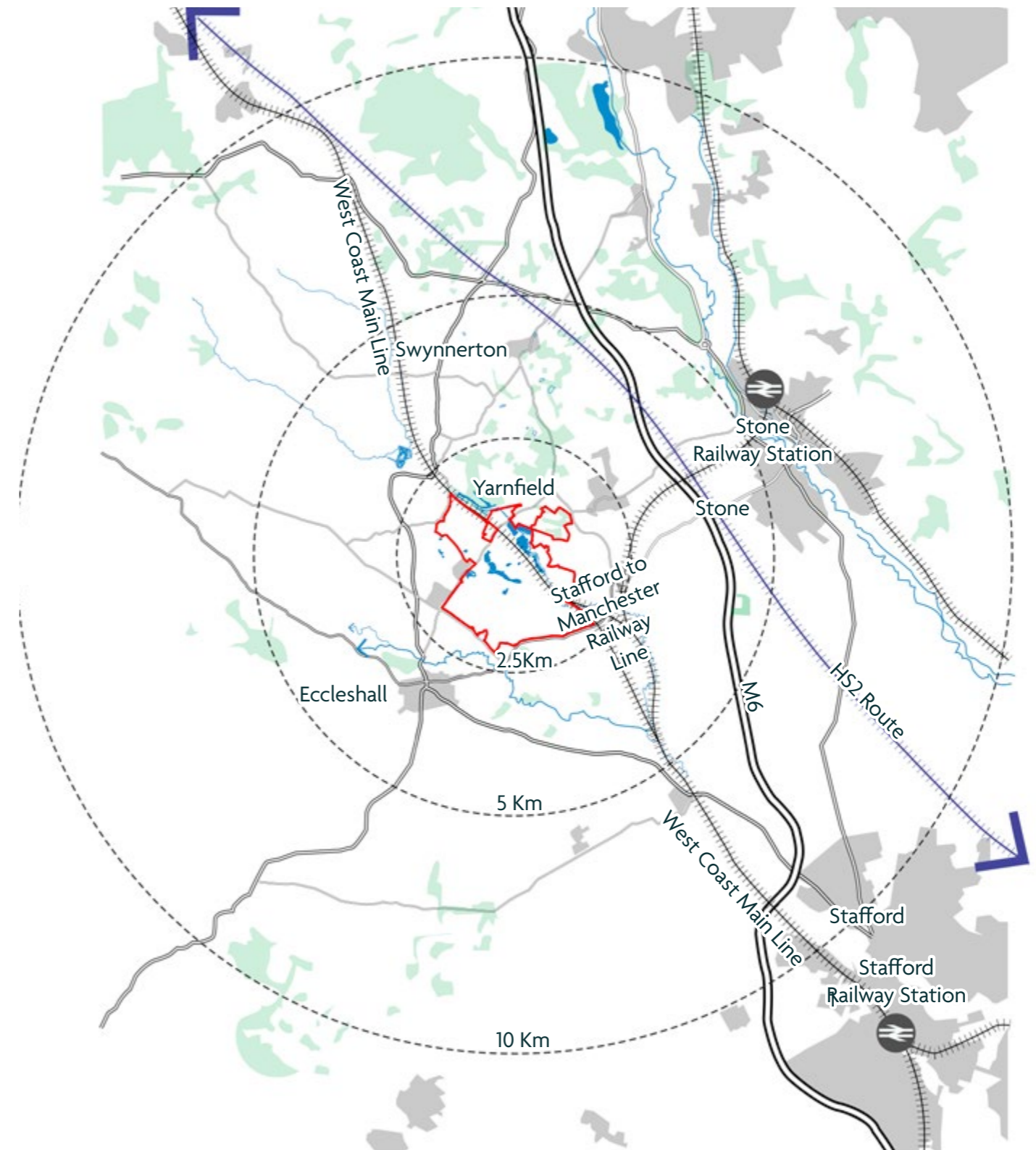
Stone bus stop to South Road bus stop in 38 minutes.

Manchester Piccadilly railway station to Stafford railway station in 55 minutes.

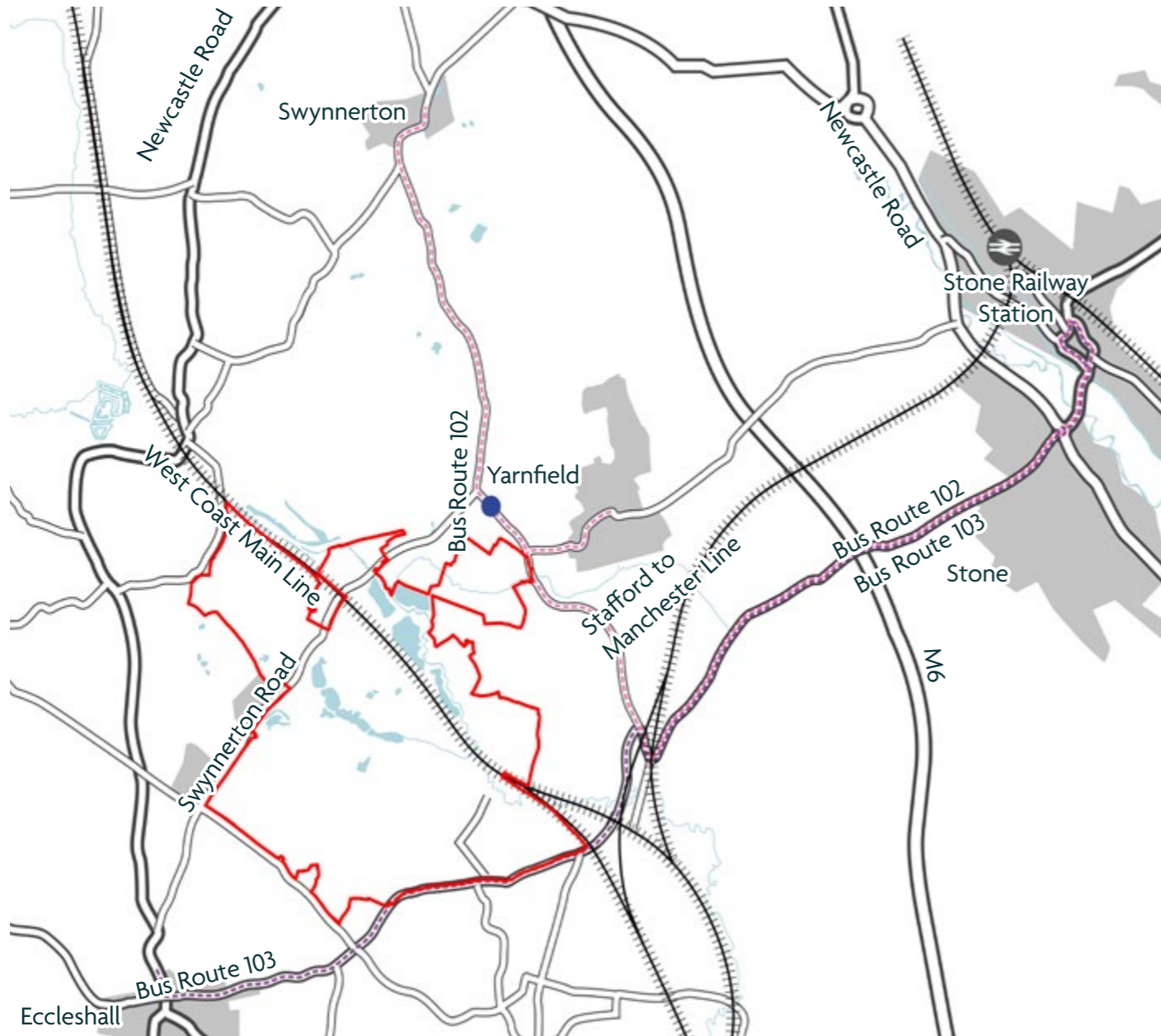
London Euston railway station to Stafford railway station in 77 minutes.

London HS2 to Stafford railway station in 55 minutes.

- Key**
- Site boundary
  - HS2 line
  - Railway lines
  - Railway stations
  - Roads
  - Existing urbanised areas
  - Existing woodland
  - Watercourses/waterbodies
  - Isochrones

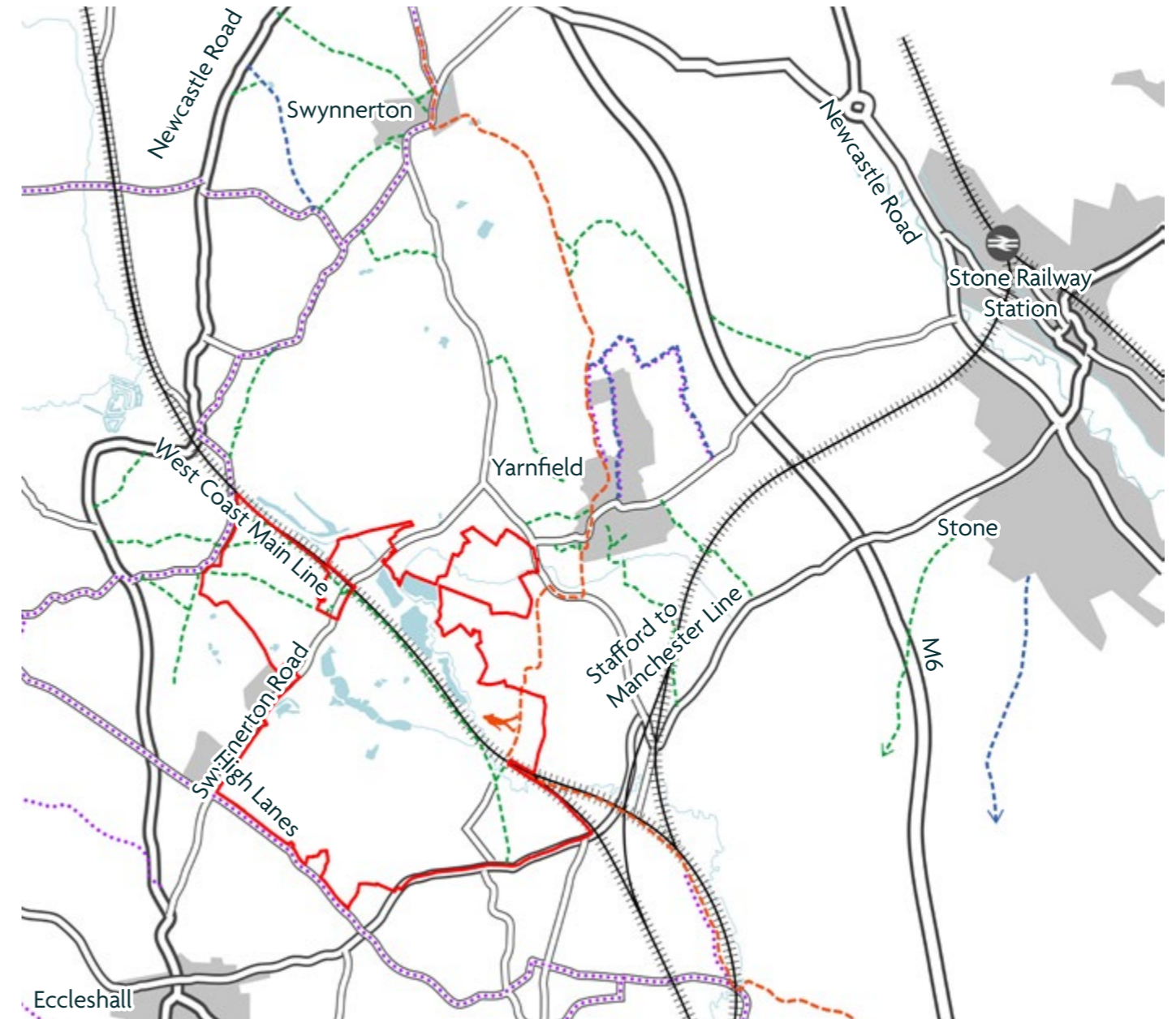


# Movement



## Key

- Site boundary
- - - Bus (102) to Stone (via Walton Hill/Yarnfield)  
1 bus every 2 hours (no sunday service)
- South Road Bus Stop
- - - Bus (103) to Eccleshall/Barlaston Park via  
Stone 1 bus every 2 hours (no sunday service)
- Railway line
- Railway Station

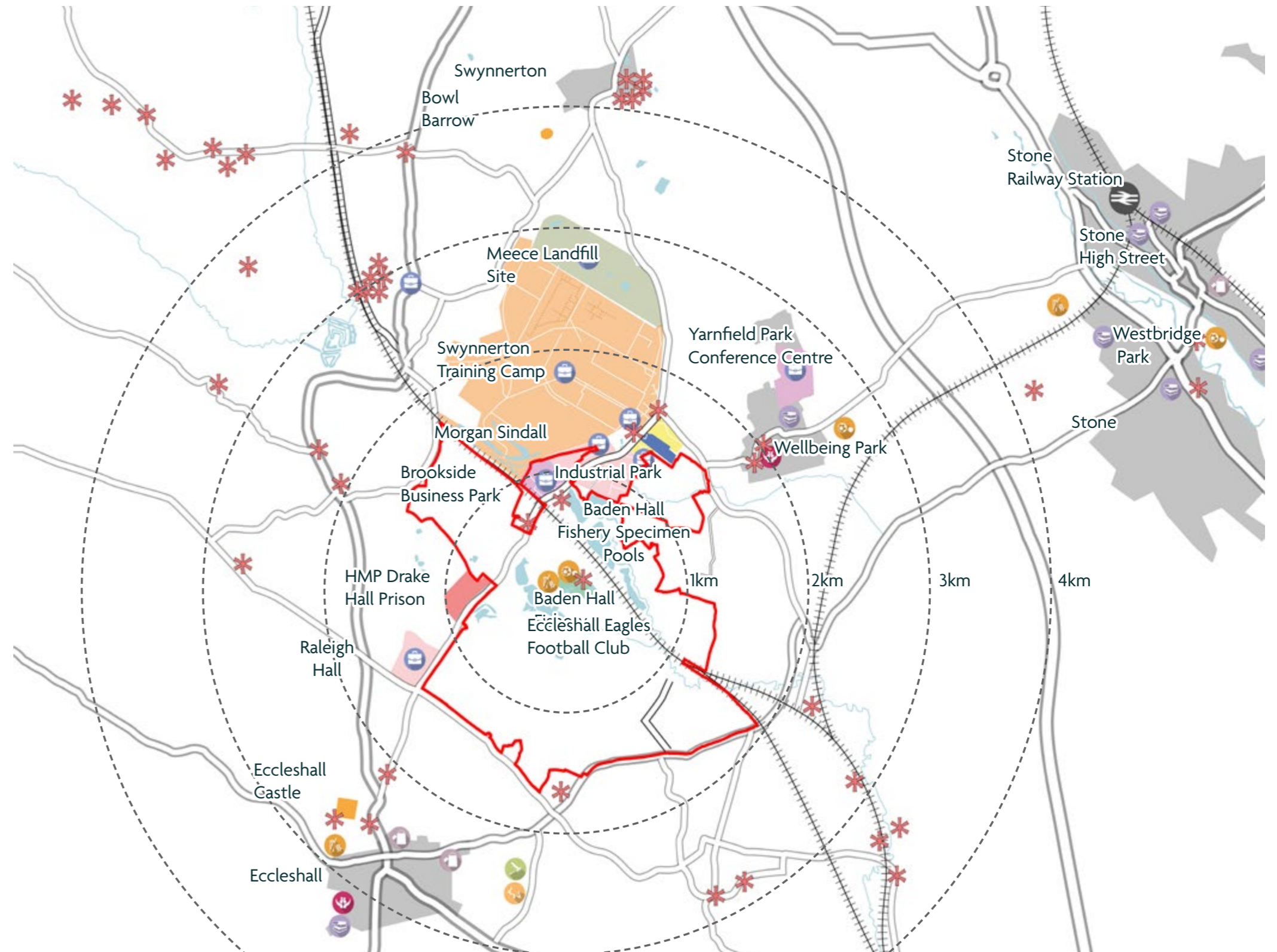


## Key

- Site boundary
- - - Public Right of Way (Footpaths)
- - - Public Right of Way (Bridleway)
- - - National trail
- - - Cycle route
- Railway line
- Railway station

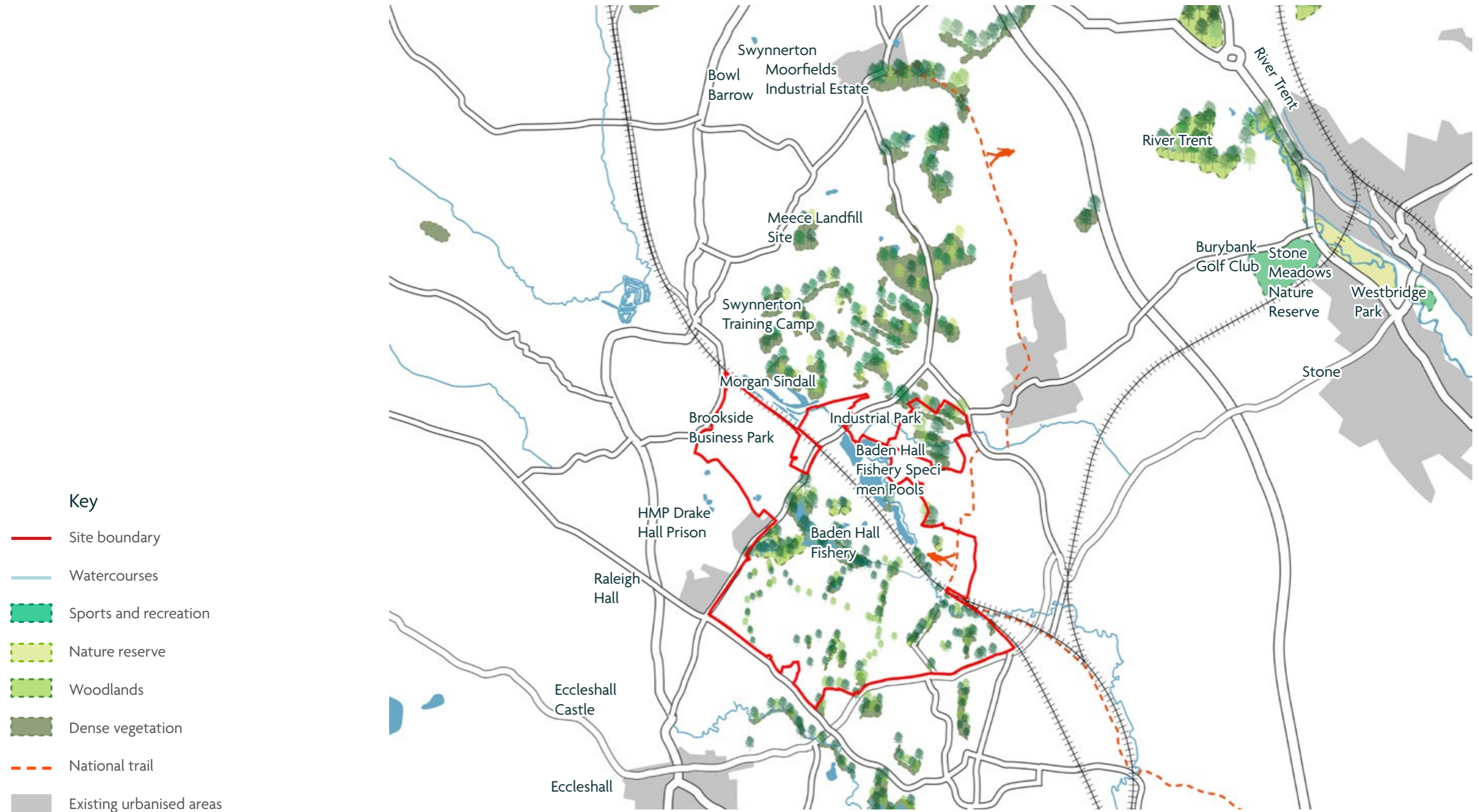
# Land Use and Local Amenities

- Key**
- Site boundary
  - Scheduled Monument
  - ✱ Listed building
  - Meece Landfill site
  - Swynnerton Training Camp
  - Dismantled railway station
  - Waterways
  - Industrial park
  - Business park
  - Fishery
  - Prison
  - Residential
  - 🎓 Schools
  - 🏢 Employment
  - 🏠 Community centre
  - 🏃 Sports Hub
  - 🌿 Wildlife centre
  - 🏪 Retail
  - 🎮 Play
  - 🚉 Railway station
  - Isochrones

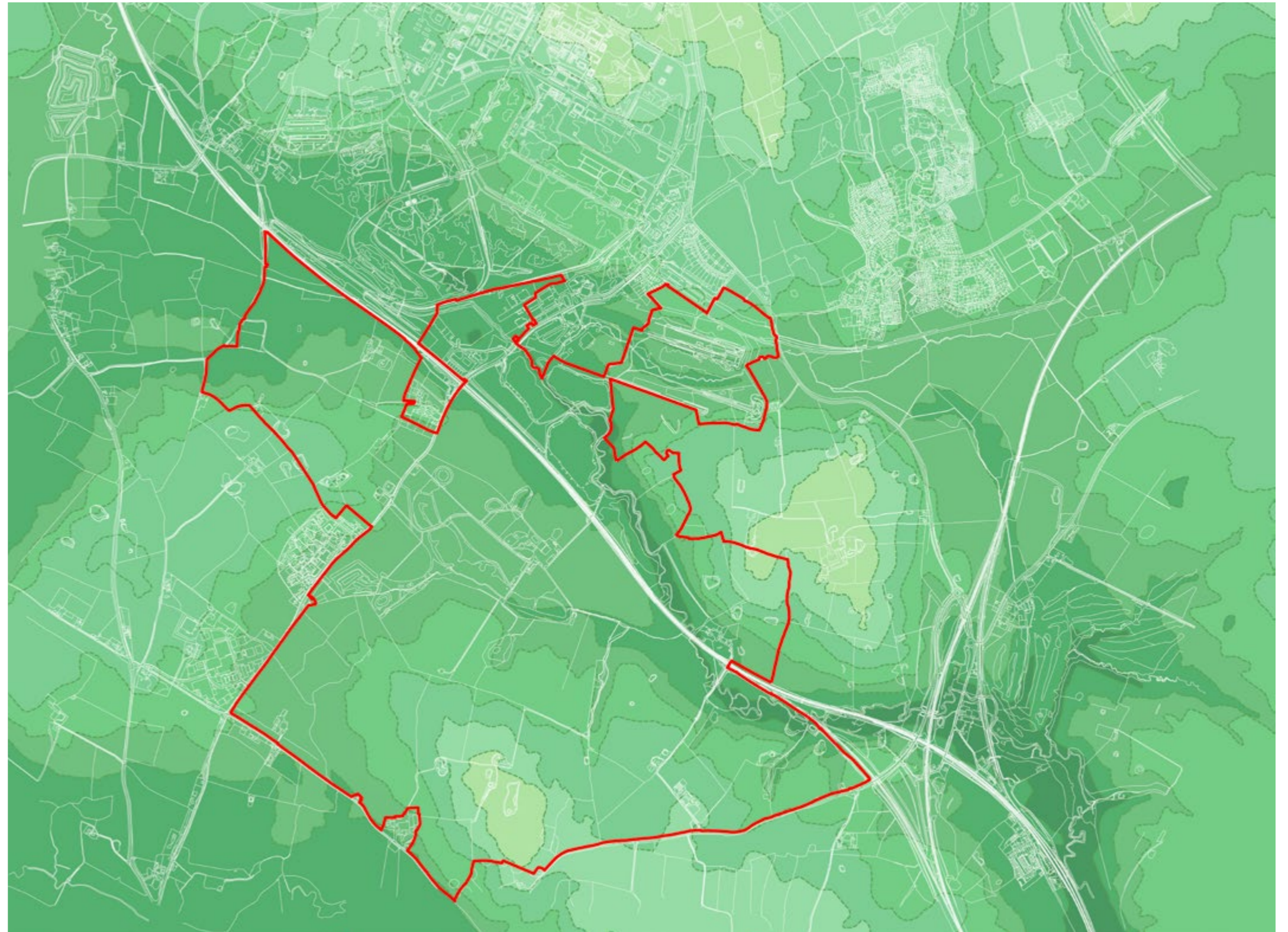
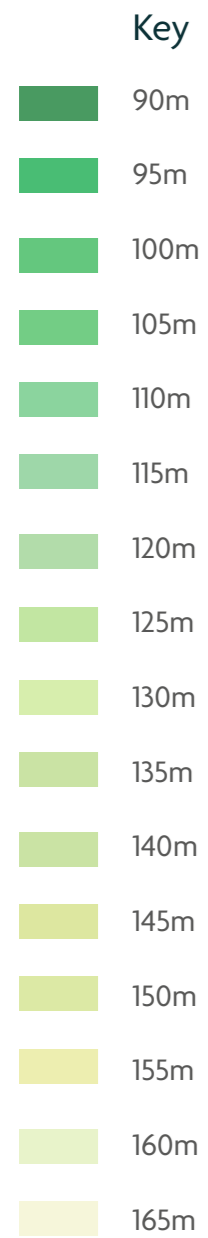




# Ecology

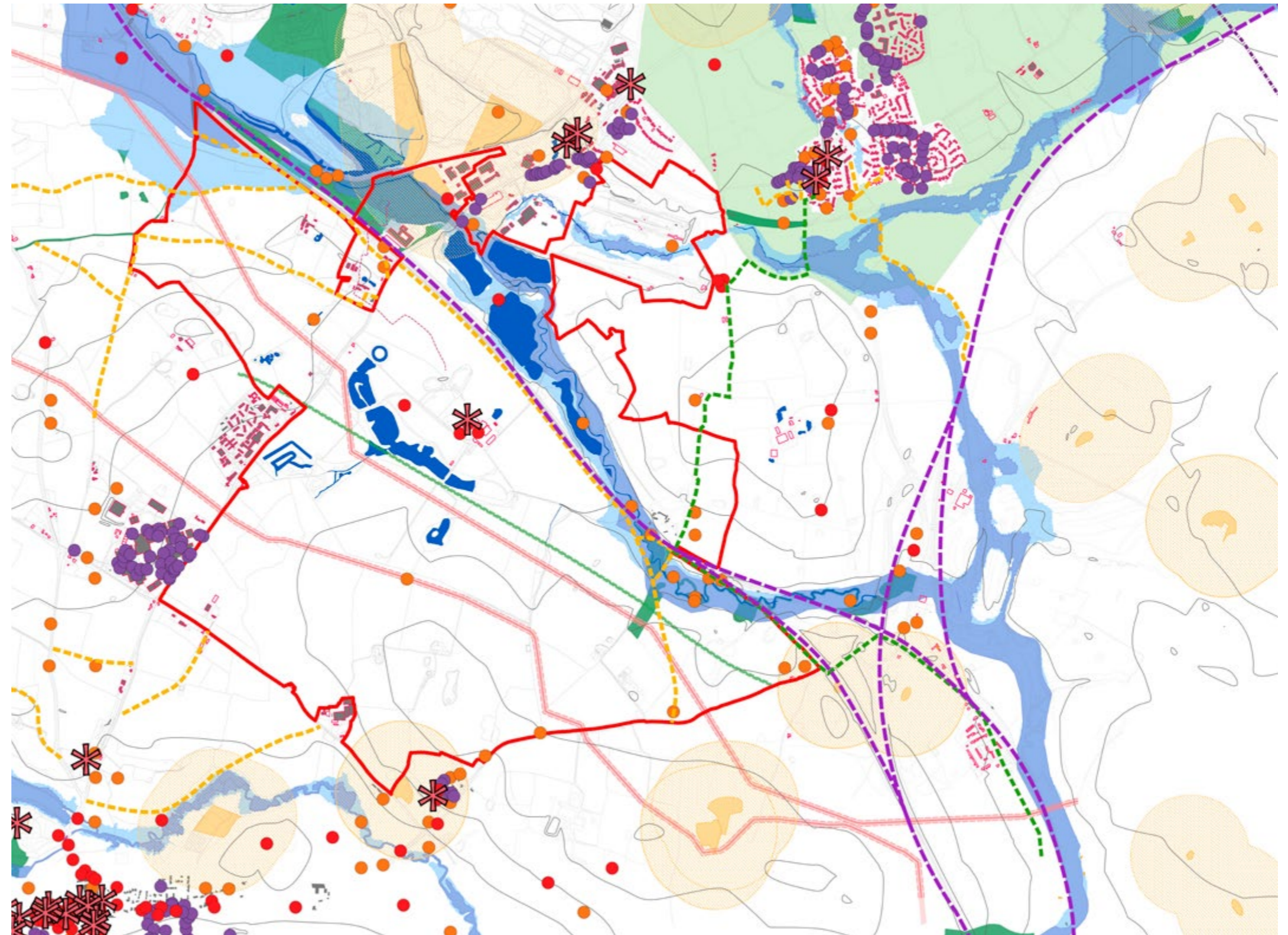


# Topography



# Constraints

- Key**
- Site boundary
  - - - Railway line
  - . - . - HS2
  - = = = Gas Pipeline and 24.4m easement (12.2m from centreline)
  - = = = Oil Pipeline and 12m easement (6m from centreline)
  - Contour lines
  - - - Public Footpath (PRoW)
  - - - National Trail Route (PRoW)
  - █ Existing waterbodies/watercourses
  - █ Flood Zone 2 (Between 1/100 and 1/1000 annual probability)
  - █ Flood Zone 3 (Land 1/100 or greater annual probability)
  - Existing buildings
  - █ Greenbelt
  - █ Landfill
  - Landfill buffer zone
  - ✱ Listed Buildings
  - HER Monuments
  - TPOs
  - █ SBI - Sites of Biological Importance 'Semi-natural habitats'
  - BAP's (Biodiversity Action Plan)



# Chapter Five

# Stakeholder

# Engagement

**This section sets out some key themes to emerge from the thorough process of stakeholder engagement to date, which fed into the subsequent design process and development of the Concept Masterplan.**

# Summary

## Process.

### **In late 2019, JTP were appointed by Stafford Borough Council to work with the Council and other stakeholders to deliver a collaborative planning process to co-create a Vision and Development Charter for Meecebrook Garden Community.**

Following appointment JTP proposed a two stage stakeholder Charrette process, which began with a two day team site visit and briefing on 25 and 26 February 2020. The team were kindly offered the use of Baden Hall clubhouse as a base.

Day one comprised a mini-bus tour of the immediate area and walking tours of the Baden Hall estate, including the shooting ranges, and other farmland within the red line. Day two began with an organised tour of MOD Swynnerton Training Camp and concluded with a team briefing and Q and A session back at Baden Hall clubhouse.

The second stage, comprising a stakeholder workshop, team working and a report back of the draft Vision and Development Charter had been planned for late March but was unfortunately postponed due the developing Covid-19 emergency. Over the coming weeks, revised arrangements were made to run multiple virtual workshops with stakeholders.

15 workshops and conversations took place between May 5 – May 15, 2020 facilitated by JTP including with Borough and County Council officers, on and off site landowners and their agents/consultants, statutory bodies and their consultants and environmental charities.

The outcomes were fed into the subsequent JTP team design process to create a Concept Masterplan, Vision and Development Charter, which was presented back to the stakeholder group in early July 2020.

Following ongoing discussions with the various landowners, at the beginning of 2022 JTP was instructed to review the Vision and Development Charter for Meecebrook Garden Community.

## Project Timeline.

- February 2020. Site Visit and briefing Part 1.
- May 2020. Consultation with Stakeholders Part 2.
- Early June 2020. Design Charette.
- July 2020 to June 2021. Vision Document.
- April 2022 and ongoing. Landowner Engagement.

## Quotes from Stakeholders.

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# Key Themes

## One. Balanced, Equitable and Enterprising Community.

The pandemic has thrown into stark relief many aspects of our way of life that are being challenged as we build for a post Covid-19 world. The new Garden Community presents the opportunity to plan in true social, environmental and economic sustainability, using current best practice, whilst simultaneously embracing innovation. Meecebrook should create a mixed community with a range of high quality, attractive and sustainable homes for all income groups designed within walkable neighbourhoods.

The Garden Community should foster an ethos of mutual support and sharing, with community facilities and networks designed to meet the needs of all ages and promoting a strong, cohesive community. Meecebrook should also foster a diverse local economy promoting equity and local sourcing and trading, with a range of jobs and training opportunities, support for start-ups and maker/seller communities and community enterprises.

Quotes from Stakeholders.

“We could make a difference to a generation and a lot of people’s lives just by delivering a house.”

“It will be an economic hub as well as a residential community, so good connectivity is important.”

## Two. Challenges and Uncertainties.

Planning any new settlement is a lengthy and complex process and participants raised a number of challenges and uncertainties to be negotiated and resolved including: landowner expectations; land assembly and equalisation; HS2 and strategic highways infrastructure delivery; railway station location; viability; phasing and pace; funding, and last but not least; post-pandemic uncertainties.

These issues and more will need to be built into the masterplan, which in itself should be “futureproofed” and flexible enough to ensure that later phases, perhaps 20 years from now, can accommodate the needs of that time, whilst blending with earlier phases.

Quotes from Stakeholders.

“We need a strong evidence base to guide solutions, directions and delivery.”

“Each phase will look different but how do we keep the integrity of the Vision?”

## Three. Narrative and Identity.

While a key driver of the Garden Communities programme is to promote economic development and provide much needed homes as part of a new, distinct and sustainable community, beyond this, participants recognised the need to create a strong narrative for the Meecebrook that recognises and makes sense of the site’s context and character, cultural and historic references and its relationships with nearby towns and villages including Stafford, Stone, Yarnfield and Eccleshall and the wider region.

Careful analysis and engagement will be needed to co-create an exemplar new Garden Community with a strong identity that embodies its local context and heritage and is attractive to new residents and investors.

Quotes from Stakeholders.

“The settlement should feel self-contained but well connected.”

“There must be a strong sense of place - steer away from Anywhere-ville”

## Four. A Landscape to be Explored.

The existing Meecebrook site comprises a variety of landscapes including small areas of intensively farmed land, watercourses, ponds and lakes, wilder and overgrown land, and remnants of munitions testing activity such as firing ranges. These features constitute various constraints that will need to be fully understood, and in some cases mitigated, through the masterplanning process, whilst simultaneously offering opportunities to restore nature and create unique, diverse and distinctive environments for people of all age groups and abilities.

The landscape setting should be designed and interpreted as “a landscape to be explored” to promote health and wellbeing in the new community, with opportunities for land and water based sport, recreation and play, linked by an active movement network running through beautiful blue, green and urban environments.

Quotes from Stakeholders.

“It must be easy to get to somewhere green, for exercise and mental well-being.”

## Five. Getting About.

The site benefits from easy access onto Swynnerton Road but participants were concerned that the existing road network, stressed at times now, would need investment to accommodate extra traffic generated by the new settlement. Whilst accommodating the car, the settlement should be planned around “15 minute neighbourhoods” with homes, work, school, shops and leisure amenities within 15 minutes walk, with a focus on “active travel”. This should establish an equitable and healthy cycling and walking culture incorporating on and off road cycle infrastructure, and a network of paths, trails, and boardwalks.

Public transport is expected to be central part of a sustainable movement plan to, from and within the new settlement and the delivery and phasing of new rail and bus service provision will be key to ensuring that the first residents have access to viable public transport and “active travel” options and will not be reliant solely on the car. Other ideas to reduce the need for private car ownership include community car clubs, e-bike and e-scooter schemes and other forms of micro-mobility as they come on stream.

“We must make sure it’s a sustainable site from the outset – don’t design in bad habits.”

“A key aspiration is a new train station, encouraging cars to stay at home. But this has to fit in with post-Covid measures and be linked in to walking and cycling.”

## Six. Characterful Neighbourhoods and Community Hubs.

The site and its context contain a rich and varied heritage. The Vision should build on and celebrate this heritage as the foundation for the next chapter in the place’s narrative, to create sociable, characterful residential neighbourhoods and strong mixed-use community hearts providing jobs and services to support a healthy, equitable and inclusive community. For example, community ownership and management of buildings and landscape can provide sustainable long-term governance within the new settlement. All residents should have easy access to blue and green landscape with points of interpretation and interaction, including through food growing, leisure and culture and strong connections to the surrounding countryside.

“Great places are multi layered and integrated.”

“Public buildings should be high quality, built to last and say something about the place. They should express community pride and say something about that community - as the Victorians did.

## Seven. Sustainable Housing and Neighbourhoods.

Housing should be designed to a high environmental standard, using locally sourced sustainable materials, and designed to reflect the character of the area. Sustainable energy, water and other services should be designed and delivered early to minimise carbon emissions and the use of resources, and mitigate climate change. Innovative housing procurement, including opportunities for self, custom and community-build, will bring a variety of flexible housing typologies to suit all income and age groups and become the anchor to the new community.

“The word “sustainability” means different things to different people. But it’s everything that will thrive and endure: ecology, quality of housing, the means of getting around, they are all interconnected.”

## Eight. Community Infrastructure and Stewardship.

A key aspect of the process will be the development of bespoke community infrastructure to meet the lifetime needs of the whole community. Community governance should deliver a responsive and flexible structure of ownership and management of a range of community assets, including open space management.

“It’s not just about place making, it’s about place keeping too. The need for community ownership and initiatives.”

“Schools should belong to the whole community, with children using the community facilities not the other way around.”

## Nine. Engagement, Collaboration and Partnership.

The next steps in developing the proposals for the Garden Community should be to broaden out the process, engaging local stakeholders and the wider community to establish and confirm the long term status of the Vision. Open and transparent collaboration will be critical to build support around the Vision and develop partnerships which are so crucial to effective delivery.

A continuing process of engagement will include further understanding the existing community and the place, learning lessons from elsewhere and establishing appropriate governance structures for the Garden Community with strong leadership and potential for community management of assets to build a strong, empowered community.

“Have a strong vision that is signed up by everyone and stick to it. Then the central principles and ethos will stick.”

“Create a community vision ‘brand’, making it easier for people to understand what they are moving into.”

# Chapter Six

# Concept

# Masterplan

**This section introduces the layout principles that form the framework for the proposal at Meecebrook Garden Community, resulting in the emerging Concept Masterplan.**



# Concept Diagrams

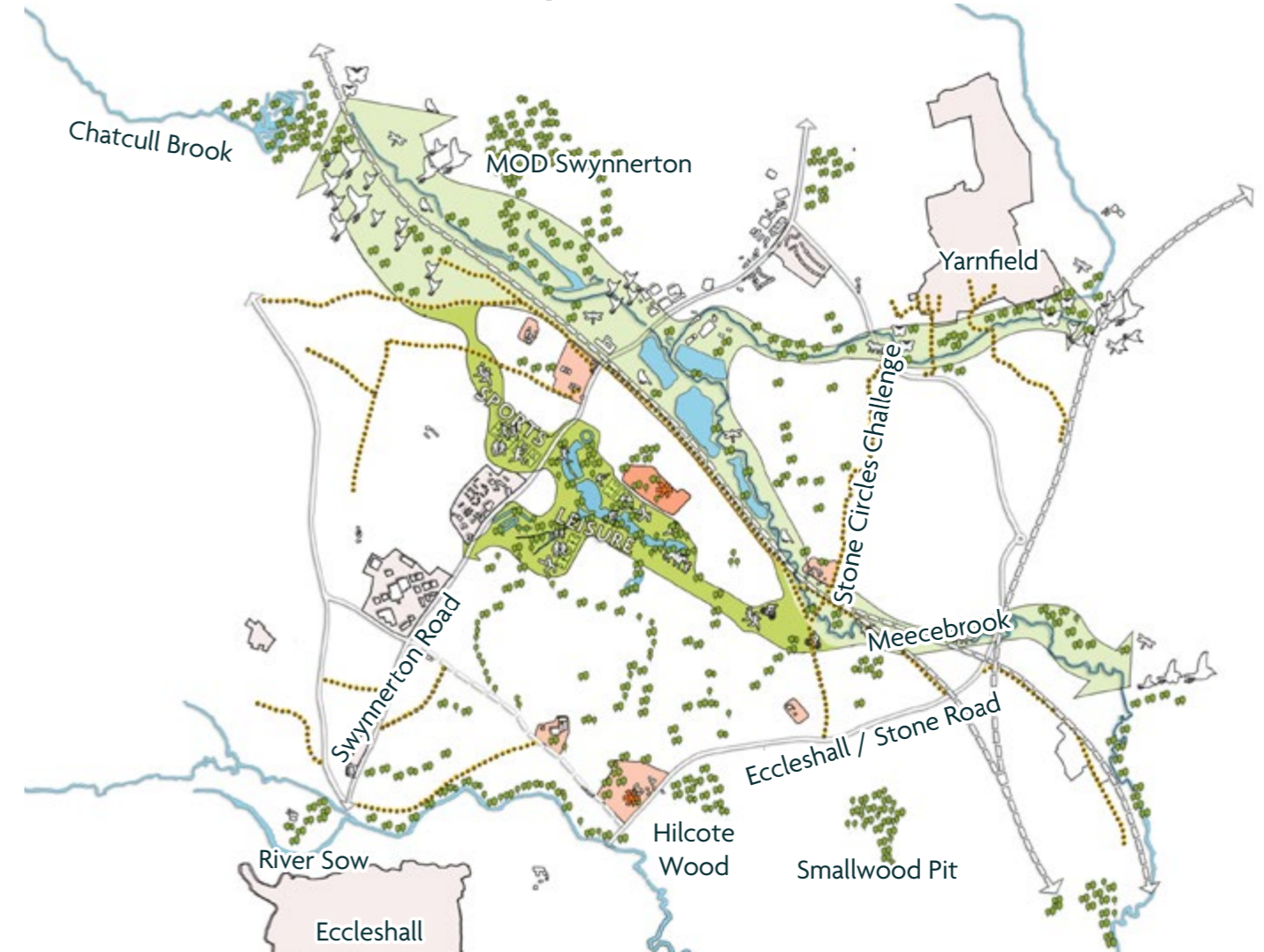
One. A wildlife corridor defined by the Meece Brook.



Key

- |                                      |                   |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|
| The Meece Brook wildlife corridor    | Listed buildings  |
| Existing land uses                   | Baden Hall Estate |
| Trees / woodlands                    | Existing roads    |
| Waterbodies                          | PRoW network      |
| Clusters of buildings to be retained | Railway line      |

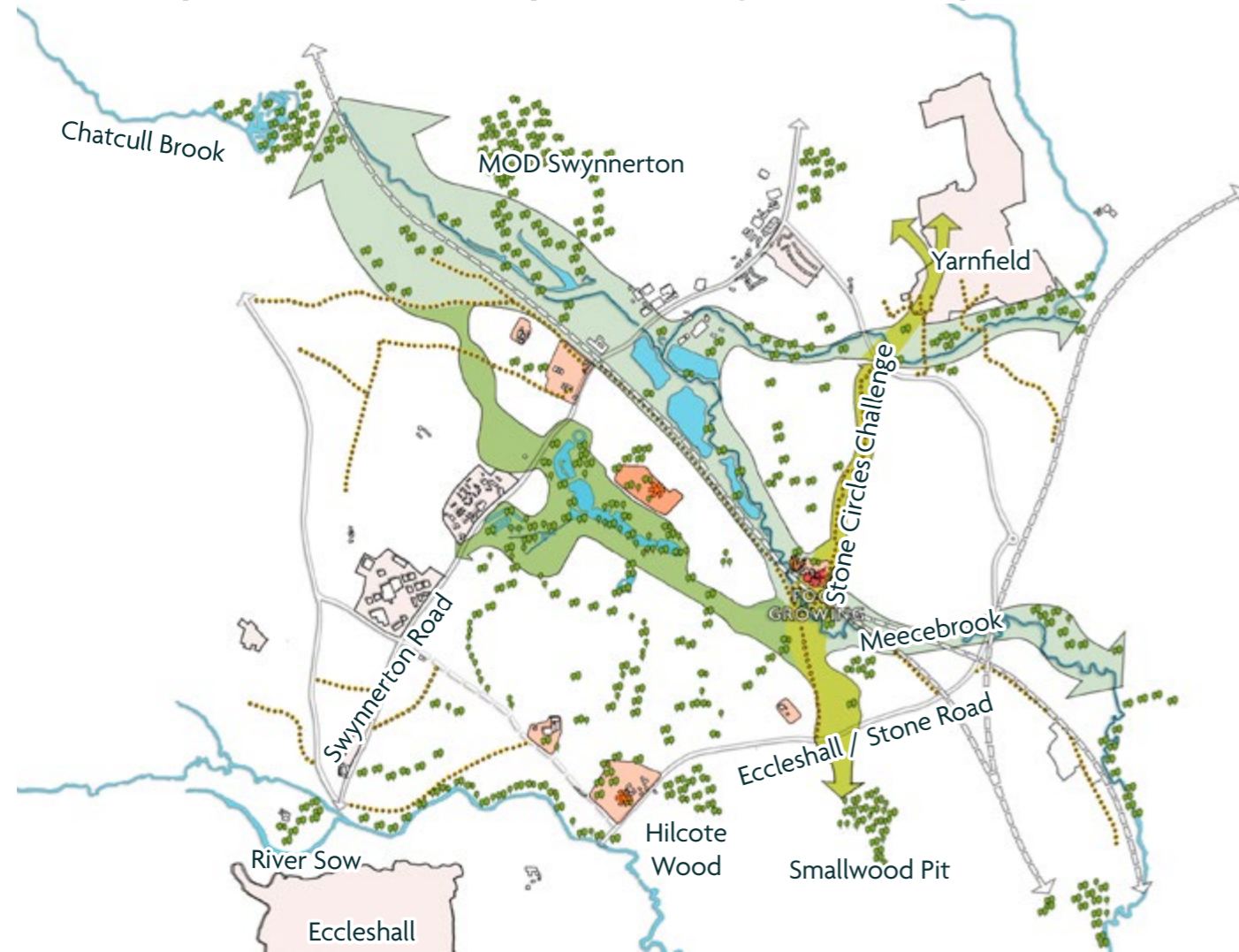
Two. A leisure corridor and sports hub.













Key

- |                                   |                                      |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Leisure / sports green corridor   | Clusters of buildings to be retained |
| Sports pitches                    | Baden Hall Estate                    |
| The Meece Brook wildlife corridor | Existing roads                       |
| Existing land uses                | PRoW network                         |
| Trees / woodlands                 | Railway line                         |
| Waterbodies                       |                                      |

### Three. A productive landscape including local food production.









#### Key

- |   |                                   |   |                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|---|-------------------|
|  | PRoW green corridor               |  | Waterbodies       |
|  | Leisure/sports green corridor     |  | Baden Hall Estate |
|  | The Meece Brook wildlife corridor |  | Existing roads    |
|  | Existing land uses                |  | PRoW network      |
|  | Trees/woodlands                   |  | Railway line      |

### Four. A landscape network for nature recovery.



#### Key

- |   |                            |   |                |
|---|----------------------------|---|----------------|
|  | Network of green corridors |  | Existing roads |
|  | Existing land uses         |  | PRoW network   |
|  | Trees/woodlands            |  | Railway line   |
|  | Waterbodies                |   |                |
|  | Baden Hall Estate          |   |                |

### Five. A permeable network of active travel routes.



#### Key

- |  |                                      |  |                   |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------|
|  | Proposed train station location      |  | Trees/woodlands   |
|  | Potential connections across railway |  | Waterbodies       |
|  | Main access point                    |  | Baden Hall Estate |
|  | Secondary access point               |  | Existing roads    |
|  | Potential access point into site     |  | PRoW network      |
|  | Landscape framework                  |  | Railway line      |

### Six. An extension of commercial uses along Swynnerton Road.



#### Key

- |  |                                  |  |                   |
|--|----------------------------------|--|-------------------|
|  | Proposed train station location  |  | Waterbodies       |
|  | Existing employment              |  | Baden Hall Estate |
|  | Proposed expansion to employment |  | Existing roads    |
|  | Landscape framework              |  | PRoW network      |
|  | Trees/woodlands                  |  | Railway Line      |

### Seven. Local centres and hubs act as a focal point.



#### Key

- |                                 |                                      |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Development parcels             | Potential connections across railway |
| Listed buildings                | Proposed employment                  |
| Local centres/hubs              | Landscape framework                  |
| Baden Hall Estate               | Existing roads                       |
| Existing clusters of buildings  | PRoW network                         |
| Proposed train station location | Railway Line                         |

### Eight. Distinctive and characterful neighbourhoods.



#### Key

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| Railway interface neighbourhood (higher density) | Existing clusters of buildings  |
| Rifle range neighbourhood (medium density)       | Proposed train station location |
| Southern neighbourhood (medium density)          | Proposed employment             |
| Rural clusters neighbourhood (lower density)     | Potential school locations      |
| Local centres/hubs                               | Existing roads                  |
| Mixed use  | PRoW network                    |
| Baden Hall Estate                                | Railway Line                    |

# Emerging Concept

**The emerging Concept Masterplan has been shaped by a thorough engagement process – one that will continue and which this masterplan will inform in its next stages.**

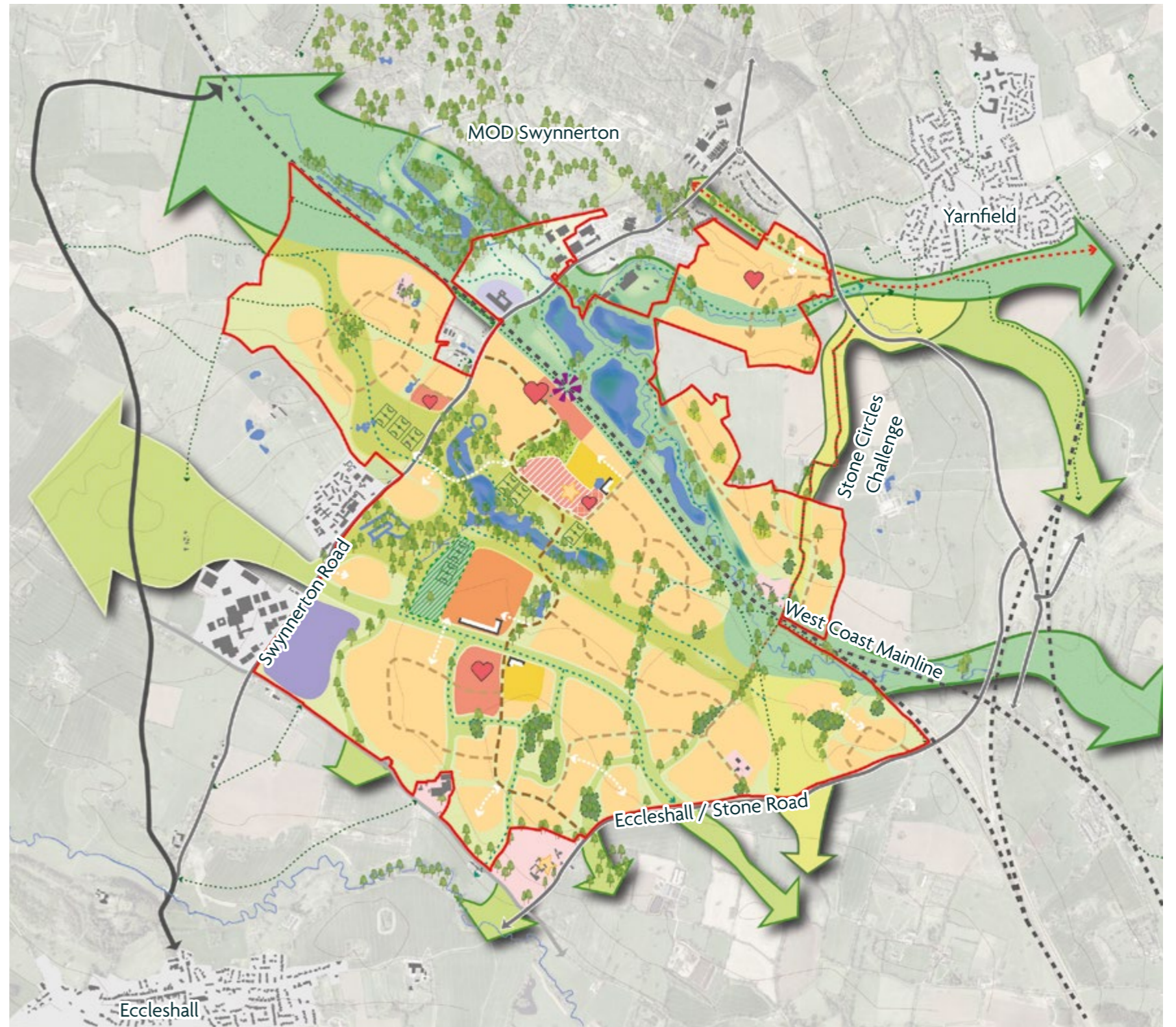
The drawing is a preliminary representation of how the opportunities and constraints presented by the site, and the ambitions for its redevelopment as articulated by the stakeholder group, could be translated into a framework for the creation of an exemplary new Garden Community, and will be subject to change as the technical masterplanning is progressed.

## **Key components of the Concept Masterplan include:**

- A substantial linear park incorporating significant waterbodies, watercourses, and landscape elements running alongside the railway corridor and connecting to a wider network of public routes and spaces, and wildlife habitat;
- A further expansive green corridor running east to west providing a hub of outdoor sporting and recreational activity;
- A network of green corridors through the proposed neighbourhoods providing a rich variety of open space character and function, including areas of wetlands, woodlands, open space, connecting to onward public routes, and providing nature recovery;
- A new station on the West Coast Main Line, adjacent to a mixed-use local centre as one of several hubs located throughout the Garden Community;
- A new educational offer including two new primary schools and a secondary school, forming an anchor within new neighbourhoods;
- Expansion of commercial uses along Swynnerton Road;
- A proposed framework for areas of new development arranged as permeable, walkable neighbourhoods displaying distinct character areas according to their location and setting;
- A new mixed-use neighbourhood of high density located adjacent to and providing activity and intensity to the new railway station; its character defined by the wetlands landscape that surrounds it.
- A mixed-use neighbourhood to the south, shaped by the woodlands and landscape features that weave through it.
- A distinctive neighbourhood set within the historic rifle range land.
- A neighbourhood of rural clusters of low density set within the landscape.
- Potential for a sustainable transport link connecting eastwards towards Stone, following in part the alignment of the dismantled railway; and
- Utilisation of the existing bridges to integrate the neighbourhoods each side of the railway.

# Concept Masterplan

- Key**
- Redline boundary
  - Residential parcels
  - Wildlife corridor
  - Leisure / sports corridor
  - PRow green corridor
  - Green corridor
  - Pocket Parks
  - Primary School (PS)
  - Secondary School (SS)
  - Sports pitches / expansion area for SS
  - Baden Hall retained / potential for community use
  - Mixed use
  - Mixed use (including residential)
  - Expansion of commercial uses
  - Waterbodies/watercourses
  - Clusters of trees
  - ✳ Potential train station location
  - Railway line
  - Existing PRowWs
  - Pedestrian routes connecting to existing PRowWs
  - Potential sustainable transport route
  - Existing roads
  - Primary routes
  - Secondary routes
  - Tertiary routes
  - ♥ Local centres / community hubs
  - ★ Listed buildings
  - Existing buildings
  - Clusters of buildings to be retained



# End of document