

Stafford Station Gateway **Strategic Regeneration** **Framework**

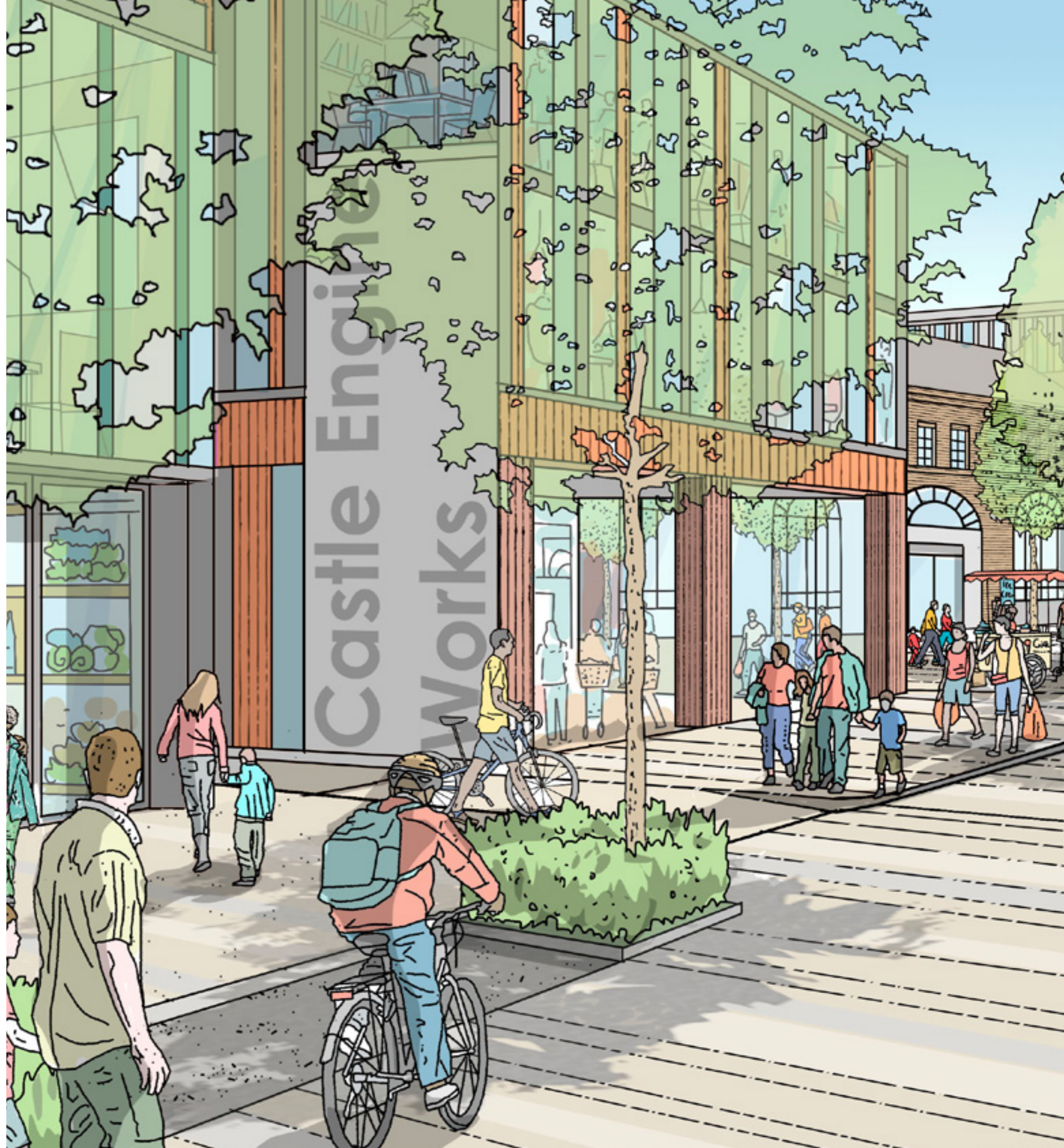
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Delivery Partners



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“By 2040 Stafford Station Gateway will be a thriving, vibrant new community within Stafford Town Centre where people want to live, work and visit, conveniently connected to Stafford Railway Station”

Stafford Station Gateway provides a fantastic opportunity to transform the western approach to Stafford Town Centre. It will create a new vibrant and active neighbourhood, set within a 15-minute walking time of Stafford Railway Station.

The development will maximise social and economic benefits for the town centre and existing communities:

**New employment opportunities will be created;
Innovative workplaces will be delivered;
High-quality housing set in beautiful new green spaces will be realised; and
Quality public squares and new leisure amenities will be enjoyed by all.**

The Gateway study area will benefit from improved connections to London arising from HS2, with journey times reduced to 55 minutes.¹ This provides the scope to deliver a new connected and sustainable mixed-use community, attracting new families and businesses into the Borough. It is a place that will help change the profile of Stafford, building on its importance not just on the West Coast Mainline but as a leading centre between the North West and West Midlands – an attribute that will be increasingly attractive in a post-pandemic, flexible, footloose working world.

The area already benefits from recent highway investment, with the newly opened Stafford Western Access Route which provides access to the west and the north of the town and brings with it reduced journey times and alleviating congestion within the town centre. This route frames the western edge of the town centre and provides the connectivity needed for change in the immediate vicinity and within the town centre itself, while also serving as the main point of access to 1,500 homes within the ongoing Burleyfields development. Connections will be improved for walking and cycling, helping to better connect those communities to the west of Stafford with the Railway Station and the town centre, which has secured £120m of committed investment to help transform the historic town centre.² Most importantly the place itself can be highly sustainable, being one of the biggest underutilised pieces of land adjacent to the West Coast Mainline, within walking distance of the core town centre and having the scale to be a community in itself too.

Stafford Borough and Staffordshire County Councils are working in partnership with LCR Property, the UK government’s placemaking expert, to set out the vision and ambition for Stafford Station Gateway. This Draft Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) establishes design and development aspirations for the Gateway, building upon a masterplan for the study area developed in 2020. It provides a framework for developer and landowner partners, enabling high-quality development to be brought forward that will make a real positive change to the Borough, contributing to the economic growth and success of Staffordshire. We want to hear your views on the proposals for Stafford Station Gateway and are inviting comments to ensure the Gateway area provides the change that you want to see.

1. Phase 2a of HS2 is expected to be connected by 2027.
2. Committed investments include £21m for town centre regeneration (including works to market square and potential for a new indoor market), £7m History Centre off Eastgate Street and £1.6m for Shire Hall small business hub (<https://www.staffordbc.gov.uk/news/stafford-town-120-million>)
- 3.

'By 2040 Stafford Station Gateway will be a thriving, vibrant new community within Stafford Town Centre where people want to live, work and visit, conveniently connected to Stafford Railway Station, and providing access to Staffordshire, the Midlands and beyond.'

Stafford Station Gateway will sustainably connect existing and emerging communities to the west, with the town centre and railway station, and provide high-quality amenities, workspaces and active green and blue spaces and public realm to deliver an exemplar low-carbon development for Stafford. This will provide a very different, yet complementary offer, to the housing sites that have been developed in and around the town over recent years and provide a link to and from them.

By providing this variation, the Gateway will draw new people into Stafford, appealing to families and young professionals, businesses and occupiers, seeking to benefit from the connectivity of the place, but also from the vibrancy and amenity on offer, which in turn will encourage innovation and creativity'

Fig. 01
The vision for the Stafford Station Gateway



Executive Summary

Our vision aligns with the emerging Local Plan and Government's drive to create new communities close to sustainable public transport nodes, and to regenerate brownfield land, whilst at the same time, supporting the Levelling-up agenda in driving forward economic growth for the benefit of existing communities.

Underpinning the overarching vision there are 4 strategic objectives that will enable the vision to be achieved:

- **Strategic Objective 1:** A New Western Gateway for Stafford
- **Strategic Objective 2 :** A Place to Live, Work & Relax
- **Strategic Objective 3:** A Quality of Place Built on Natural and Physical Assets
- **Strategic Objective 4:** A Place that puts Sustainability at its Heart

Both the vision and objectives are supported by key development principles and a comprehensive illustrative masterplan for the Stafford Station Gateway area. This sets out 7 Character Zones and the key moves that are required to facilitate development to come forward, including the required infrastructure, development uses and typologies that will support the positive transformation of Stafford Station Gateway as well as ensuring its links into, and wider contribution to Stafford town centre.

The Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) formalises development proposals for the Stafford Station Gateway area and guides development within the area from now until 2040, in line with the timeframe of the emerging Local Plan. In reality (and given the strategic opportunity that the Stafford Station Gateway represents) it is essential that the delivery of this vision is driven forward expediently, and it is expected that this vision will be delivered well in advance of this 2040. At its heart, this Strategic Regeneration Framework seeks to be both ambitious and innovative. It aims to encourage high-quality mixed-use development which will support the future economic growth of Stafford and the wider County of Staffordshire, providing new employment and leisure opportunities, supported by a range of housing to build, long-term sustainable communities in Staffordshire. It will ultimately create and secure long-lasting economic, social and environmental benefits for Stafford.



Fig. 02
Site plan and redline boundary for the Stafford Station Gateway



Introduction

Purpose of the Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF)

The Stafford Station Gateway provides a once in a generation opportunity to transform Stafford’s western approach into a new destination to live and work, whilst embedding itself with Stafford Station as a connected transport hub that brings together Stafford’s western neighbourhoods and the Town Centre. The regeneration of Stafford’s Station Gateway will catalyse regeneration and deliver transformational change that draws in a mix of uses that encourages sustainable working and living, whilst maximising the potential of the Gateway’s natural and physical assets.

The Stafford Station Gateway Strategic Regeneration Framework (“SRF”) has been prepared collaboratively by Stafford Borough Council (“SBC”), Staffordshire County Council (“SCC”) and LCR, the UK Government’s placemaking expert, to guide the development of the wider Gateway regeneration area and elevate the offer of Stafford as a key regional town that links the Midlands with the North, and as a key hub on the HS2 London and Midlands to Manchester and the north routes building on fantastic existing rail connectivity.

The SRF presents a vision, illustrative masterplan and set of design and development principles to guide the future development of the Gateway area over the next 15 – 20 years, with an initial phase likely to commence by March 2025.

The SRF responds to existing and emerging planning policies and seeks to nurture the assets and opportunities that are unique to this part of Stafford – including its green and blue infrastructure, major development site opportunities and exceptional connectivity.

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Gateway represents) it is essential that the delivery of this vision is driven forward expediently, and it is expected that this vision will be delivered well in advance of this 2040. At its heart, this Strategic Regeneration Framework seeks to be both ambitious and innovative. It aims to encourage high-quality mixed-use development which will support the future economic growth of Stafford and the wider County of Staffordshire, providing new employment and leisure opportunities, supported by a range of housing to build, long-term sustainable communities in Staffordshire. It will ultimately create, and secure long-lasting economic, social and environmental benefits for Stafford.

This Strategic Regeneration Framework has been prepared in light of the rapidly evolving economic landscape resulting from the recent Covid-19 pandemic. Recent CBRE research suggests that COVID-19 has arguably simply sped up pre-existing real estate trends (such as online retail or working from home) which were already well advanced in the UK beforehand. Whilst these trends have played out on UK high streets (with some occupiers struggling), other retail and commercial formats have proved resilient.

Importantly, not all town centres have experienced issues to the same extent. Recent research commissioned by MHCLG and undertaken by the Institute of Place Management and Manchester Metropolitan University collated evidence to support the development of high street and town centre policy, and to consider why some town centres and high streets thrive whereas others fail.

This research found there are a number of key success factors which can be attributed to ensuring a viable high street, inter alia: strong place leadership; communication and partnership working.

Simply put, successful town centres recognise the need to adapt to change and act quickly to stem decline, support the reinvention of the high street and drive footfall. This Strategic Regeneration Framework seeks to address this need to adapt and identifies the factors to be considered in responding to – and embracing - change.

The SRF has been developed with full regard to national planning policy, Stafford’s statutory Development Plan Documents and the emerging Local Plan. Following endorsement, the SRF will be a material consideration in the determination of all planning applications relevant to the study

area. Whilst it does not form part of the Development Plan, it has been prepared to be consistent with the policies of the Council’s adopted and emerging Development Plan.

Core Objectives of the Gateway Opportunity

To achieve the Gateway’s ambition, the SRF identifies seven ‘Character Zones’, which collectively have the potential to deliver:

- Up to 1,000 residential dwellings comprising a mix of townhouses and apartments
- Circa 33,000 sqft new Grade A office space
- Circa 15,000sqft new retail and leisure space
- The opportunity to create smaller workspaces of up to 106,000sqft
- An 80-key hotel
- Up to 350 space new multi-storey car park
- A new Innovation Hub
- High quality public realm and open spaces, including an upgraded water corridor running through the study area and a unique lakeside setting

Stafford benefits from being a highly connected town. It is located at the heart of the country with strong links to the North Staffordshire conurbation as well as the Birmingham City Region. It is easily accessible by both rail and road, being within a short distance from Junction 13 and 14 of the M6 as well as having a busy railway station at a key junction on the West Coast Mainline, which will be strengthened further with the advent of HS2, reducing journey times to London from 80 to 55 minutes and benefiting from increased future capacity. Stafford Station Gateway’s prime location, immediately adjacent to Stafford Station is its biggest strength.

Development in this area will capitalise on improved national and regional rail connections and increased hybrid-working, positioning Stafford as an affordable yet desirable and attractive alternative to dense city life. It will increase the modal share of journeys made by train, thereby reducing the town’s reliance on private vehicles. Additionally, investment into pedestrian and cycling infrastructure will increase the accessibility and permeability of Stafford town centre, particularly from the Western approach towards the station. The study area will provide opportunities for flexible working

and living space in a post pandemic world, where there is strong demand to live in connected communities, but with great access to countryside, ideally on foot and by cycle as is the case here.

Stafford provides good value for money – both for residents and businesses wanting to relocate and grow, and the town centre offers plenty of amenity including access to high-quality leisure facilities such as Victoria Park and associated greenspace, independent eateries and shops, as well as Staffordshire University’s Centre of Excellence and Newcastle and Stafford College Group’s Innovation and Skills Hub and Institute of Technology, both of which are under development. It is imperative that Stafford extends this offering and builds on the recent successful urban extensions of the town, by delivering high quality accommodation with a mix of tenures. This new offering will attract new residents to Stafford, in turn stimulating inward investment and job creation in Stafford town centre.

Stafford Station Gateway will both embrace and reflect the creativity and innovation that Stafford was built on, including engineering, energy, medical technology, construction, digital and agri-tech. Driven by a highly skilled talent pool and the existence of 5000 micro-businesses, the delivery of smaller, alternative and creative workspaces will promote take-up by entrepreneurs, start-ups and self-employed people, not only drawing people into Stafford, but helping to retain those choosing to live in Stafford.

The Gateway will draw upon the success of existing businesses including GE, Saint Gobain, Hitachi and Omicron, who have made significant investments in the Borough, as well as facilitating the emergence and growth of start-ups such as Risual and being linked to local and regional educational establishments to provide job opportunities to young people emerging into the job market.

Introduction

Site Boundary

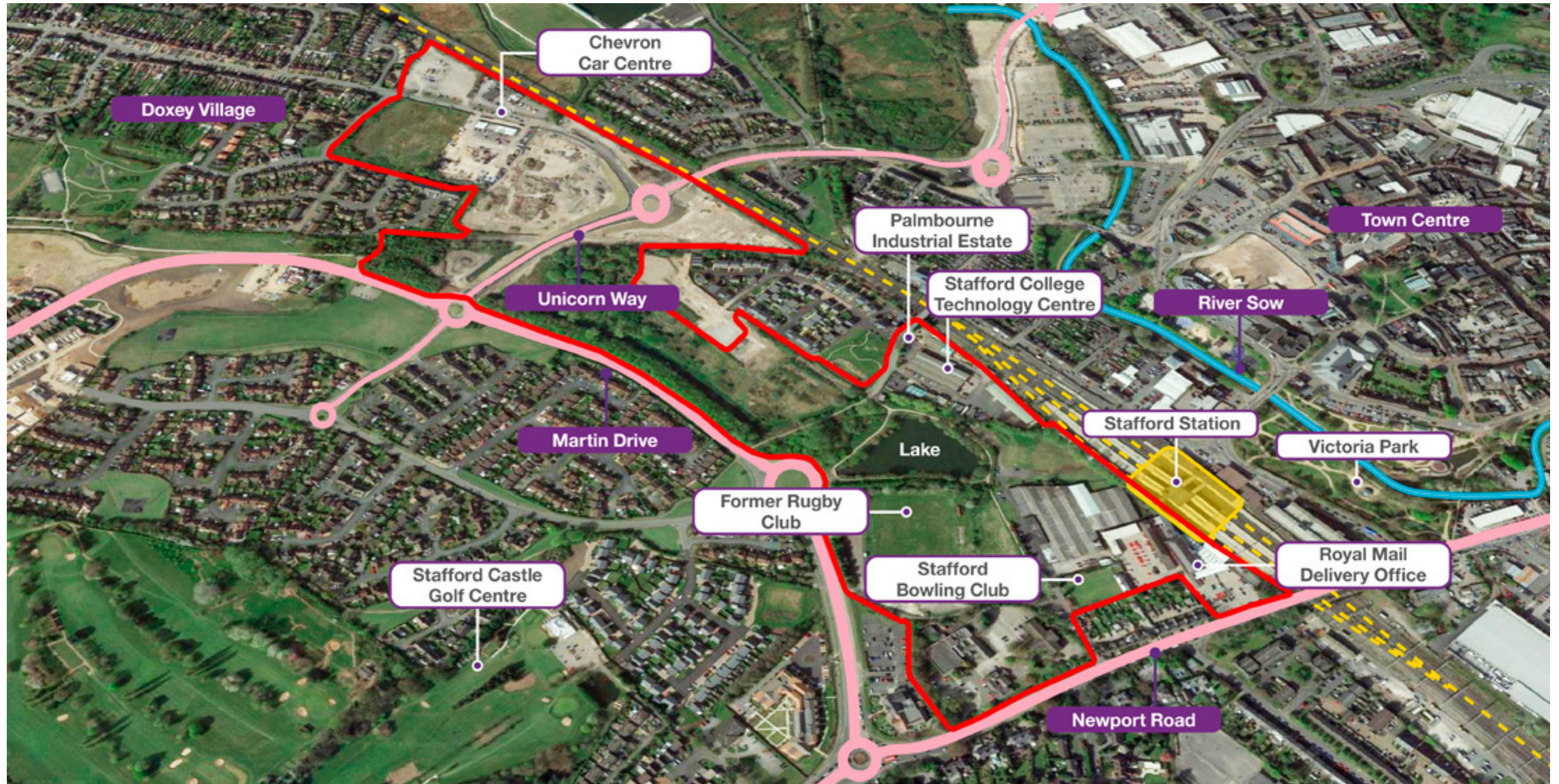


Fig. 03
Local context to the Stafford Station Gateway

Introduction

The Delivery Partners



Staffordshire County Council (SCC) is the upper-tier local authority for the non-metropolitan county of Staffordshire. SCC provides strategic project support and advice to the Stafford Station Gateway project and is also a key landowner within the scheme.

Stafford Borough Council (SBC) - a local government district with borough status in Staffordshire, where the Stafford Station Gateway project is located. SBC manages the project locally and is also involved in taking forward other regeneration initiatives throughout the Borough.

LCR is a regeneration expert with a track record over 25 years of creating exciting new destinations for people to live, work and experience. LCR works to unlock the most complex sites, creating value from underutilised public sector assets and delivering great places for the benefit of all.

The opportunity to deliver an ambitious and innovative regeneration project at Stafford Station Gateway has been identified and shaped as a result of the following key drivers for change:

- **Stafford is the County Town for Staffordshire** and as such should be befitting of this, providing the focus for retail, leisure, commercial and employment opportunities and delivering a wide range of services and amenities to service the Borough. Stafford should be a town that the residents of the Borough are proud of, and a place that residents are attracted to and want to spend their leisure time in. The Local Plan confirms that Stafford should enhance its role through increasing the breadth and depth of services on offer and recognises the opportunity to increase the town's population through new housing delivery. This in turn enhances the vibrancy of the town centre, generating footfall to support town centre amenities, and helps create activity from daytime into the evening.
- **Capitalising on the arrival of HS2 in Stafford and improved connectivity** to Birmingham, London and the North – Staffordshire will be surrounded by full-HS2 stations and benefit from HS2 compatible services, enabling travel to London in under an hour and providing an opportunity to bring more people into Stafford. It will also have the potential for better local connectivity due to increased train capacity that will be made possible – this represents an economic and social opportunity to benefit from the significant national investment in HS2.
- **Delivering a changed economic landscape** with the opportunity to support the transformation of Staffordshire from a traditional industrial base through to one which is a 'thriving digital-led, high-value and a clean economy'.³
- **The opportunity for transformational change** given the size and scale of the largely brownfield location which is adjacent to the existing town centre and railway station. This provides the opportunity to support the regeneration of the wider town centre and complementing existing investment already being funnelled into the town, putting Stafford 'on the map' through creating an exemplar development which catalyses future change within the town centre and the Borough as a whole.
- **A need to provide new high-quality housing to meet local needs** and support the Borough's population growth, as well as the opportunity to diversify the socio-demographic mix within Stafford. There is an opportunity to attract young professionals and more young families into the area, as well as helping to attract and retain graduates, which will support the economic growth of the Borough.
- **Addressing the challenges of climate change** which are becoming increasingly prevalent and require urgent and wholesale action. Stafford Station Gateway offers a chance to capitalise upon a highly sustainable site close to existing facilities and good transport infrastructure, with a view to facilitating active travel and public transport usage centred on a development which promotes biodiversity and sustainable building methods.
- **Improving connections** from the west of Stafford, to Stafford Station and the Town Centre, aligning with emerging Burleyfields neighbourhood, and acting as the link from existing and proposed communities in Stafford West to the railway station and town centre. Importantly the site needs to reflect on the wider local context, and through effective urban design, ensuring that the site helps to knit together and re-connect some of the existing residential communities more effectively with the town centre.
- **Creating a new gateway and 'shop window' into Stafford** – this development has the opportunity to positively change perceptions of Stafford as a place, shifting the focus from a 'commuter town' into a town which is attractive, vibrant, and unique, where people want to stay in, work in, visit and enjoy. The scale and location of the site, as a gateway, really enables the opportunity to do something different from recent developments in the town and create a new local distinctiveness for Stafford.
- **An opportunity to provide and create an alternative and viable live/work balance** – Given the recent Covid-19 pandemic influencing cultural shifts and trends, Stafford Station Gateway provides the opportunity for people to live and work locally, within a high-quality green environment, but equally given the flexibility of the site's connectivity to have the option to commute. This flexibility appeals to a wide demographic and enables people to have a better work/live balance.
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3. Staffordshire Economic Recovery and Renewal Strategy

Introduction

Local Context

- Key**
- Stafford Railway Station
 - Health
 - Stafford Visitor Information Centre
 - Education
 - Retail
 - Restaurants/Cafés
 - Bars
 - Stafford Rugby Union Football Club
 - Stafford Castle Golf-Centre

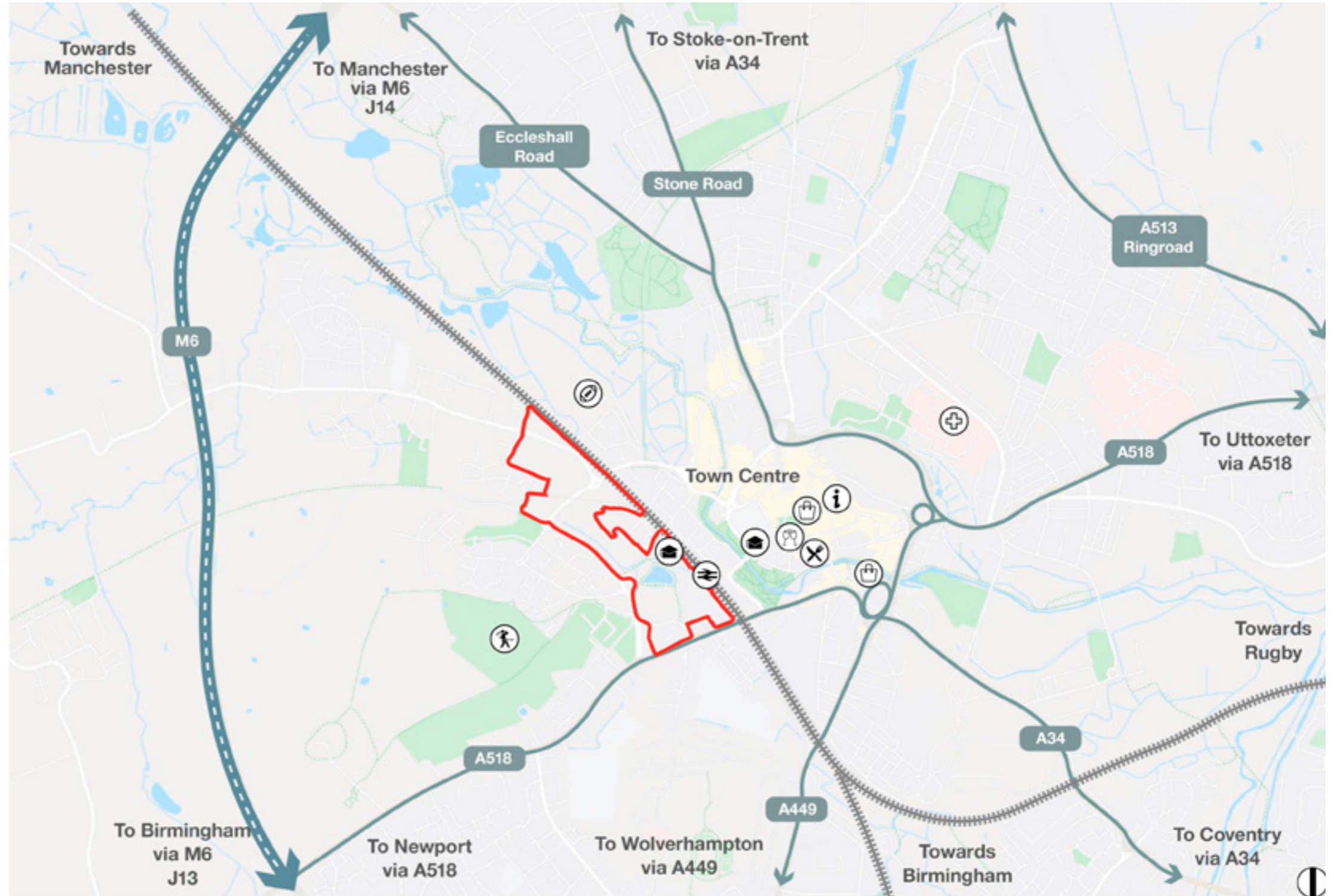


Fig. 04
Local context in Stafford Station Gateway

Introduction

A Transformational Opportunity

Stafford Station Gateway is an aspirational and transformational project that will form a vital part of the county's future, building on the opportunity of HS2 as a key driver for economic growth both within Stafford and for the county as a whole. The area has the potential to be a new sustainable live-work community for Stafford and will become an integral part of the town centre, providing new, high quality commercial office and leisure space for the town and county.

The Gateway is to the west of Stafford Railway Station and the West Coast Mainline and comprises 28 ha of predominately brownfield land. The SRF area primarily falls within the Rowley and Doxey & Castletown wards. The framework area includes the Palmbourne Industrial Estate, former Stafford Rugby Club (no longer in use and whose playing facilities have been relocated), mixed commercial (Blunts Shoes), former Saint Gobain factory land, and former pupil referral unit The Hollies.

The area is a major gateway into Stafford town centre from the west alongside the existing and growing residential communities of Rowley Park, Doxey, Castletown, Castlefields and Burleyfields. These communities are located within and around the West of Stafford Strategic Development Location (SDL)⁴



Fig. 05
The vision for Marling Terrace and the Doxey Brook

Introduction

The SRF Area

The SRF area has been divided into seven proposed neighbourhoods and will form distinct character areas as follows:

- Station Gateway
- The Hollies
- Lakeside
- Castle Engine Works
- Marling Terrace
- Wicketgate
- Doxey Road



Fig. 06
Character areas in the Stafford Station Gateway



Introduction

Status of the Draft SRF

The Draft SRF will be formally consulted on and the final SRF will be taken to Stafford Borough Council's Cabinet for endorsement and full Council for adoption.

Through this robust process, the SRF will form a material planning consideration in the determination of future planning applications across the framework area, and also support and encourage future investment into Stafford Station Gateway.

Planning context

The SRF has been prepared within full regard to relevant statutory legislation including the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2021), Stafford Borough Council's Development Plan including Part 1 (adopted 2014) and Part 2 (adopted 2017), as well as the Council's emerging Local Plan which is currently at Issues and Options Stage (consultation took place between 3rd February and 21st April 2020).

Consultation

A Consultation Statement will be prepared which will accompany the Strategic Regeneration Framework. The Consultation Statement will be prepared in accordance with Stafford's Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) (2018), and will outline the consultation process, detailing who has been consulted with during the preparation of the SRF, and providing an overview of the main issues raised by consultees and how these issues have been addressed within the SRF.

SA/SEA Screening

In the interest of ensuring that the SRF is as robust as possible an SEA/SA Screening Statement has been prepared to screen the need for a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) or Sustainability Appraisal (SA) to be undertaken alongside the SRF.

Public consultation

The Draft Strategic Regeneration Framework will be subject to a formal 4-week period of public consultation, which is intended to allow key stakeholders and the local community to provide their views on the draft proposals. Following the consultation period, the Council will consider any representations received and these will be used to shape and inform the final Strategic Regeneration Framework. The final Strategic Regeneration Framework is expected to be adopted by the Council.

The Draft SRF will be available for you to view and comment on between 22nd August 2022 and 19th September 2022.

Strategic Regeneration Context

National

This section sets out the regional and local context which frames regeneration of the Gateway area.

It sets out the agenda of the UK government, regional stakeholders, and local authorities with respect to infrastructure investment, with a particular focus on railway infrastructure and railway station improvements, as well as regional economic growth and housing delivery in Stafford.

It demonstrates that development at the Stafford Station Gateway has the potential to support the delivery of key national, regional and local strategic objectives and policy initiatives.

Government has a target to deliver 300,000 new homes each year to meet housing need, address the backlog of housing delivery, provide for projected population growth and also support the economic growth ambitions of the country. In 2020/21, 216,000 new homes were delivered and was in part hindered due to delays and disruption caused by Covid-19. Even before the Housing White Paper was published in August 2020, there has been a recognition of the need to bolster housebuilding, reduce unnecessary bureaucracy and streamline the planning system.

There has been a clear effort by Government to make sustainability a core feature of housing and planning. Pillar Two of the Planning White Paper is 'Planning for beautiful and sustainable places', which sets out the importance of addressing the challenges of climate change and the environmental impacts of development.

There has been an increased focus on ensuring that development is located appropriately in relation to transport infrastructure and key public facilities, facilitating a modal shift from the car to active travel and public transport. This can be achieved by encouraging higher densities in the best-connected locations, such as the opportunity offered as part of the Stafford Station Gateway. Increasing density in and around town centres also fosters economic growth within them due to the presence of a captive population likely to spend time there. The location of the Gateway adjacent to a mainline railway station with high frequency services places it in an exceptionally strong position to capitalise on this opportunity to create a sustainable, connected neighbourhood.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

A revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) came into force in July 2021. Chapter 5 relates to ensuring sufficient supply of homes to meet Government's objective of 300,000 new homes built per year. It outlines the importance of providing a range of housing (type and tenure) to meet the needs of different groups, including provision of affordable housing, with the overall objective of creating mixed and balanced communities. The NPPF confirms that strategic policy-making authorities should establish a housing requirement for their area which sets out how their housing need can be met over the plan period, identifying specific, developable sites or broad locations for growth. It recognises that the supply of larger numbers of homes is best achieved through delivering significant extensions to existing villages

or towns, where these are well located and designed, and supported by the required infrastructure, including a choice of transport modes, and facilities (Paragraph 73). Creating new communities (or extensions to existing communities) should reflect the area's economic potential, opportunity to realise net environmental gains, provide good connectivity to services and employment opportunities, make the most of masterplans to ensure high quality development comes forward and have a realistic approach in terms of how these sites come forward and are delivered

National Planning Practice Guidance

The Planning Practice Guidance (PPG) accompanies and provides clarification on the NPPF. Of particular relevance is the guidance around planning for higher density development, outlining that appropriate densities should be identified with reference to a site's proximity to facilities and public transport hubs, taking into consideration the services and destinations available (Reference ID: 66-004-20190722). The PPG also outlines the need for early engagement and collaboration with stakeholders in the delivery of strategic matters, including the provision of housing and infrastructure (Reference ID: 61-059-20190315).

Building Better, Building Beautiful

The Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission is an independent body set up to advise Government on how to promote and increase the use of high-quality design for new build homes and neighbourhoods. In its report, 'Living with Beauty' (January 2020), the Commission set out three overall aims: ask for beauty, refuse ugliness and promote stewardship, and made 45 detailed policy propositions. These recommendations resulted in an amendment to national policy (NPPF) (2021) (Paragraph 134) to have a stronger focus on beauty and the introduction of a National Model Design Code in July 2021.

UK Industrial Strategy

The Strategy highlights the economic importance of transport, digital, energy and utility networks. It sets out the Government's plans to deliver a radical improvement in the quality of infrastructure, with a focus on rebuilding after the Covid-19 pandemic. HS2 is identified as a flagship national project which will deliver benefits to its users and to the classic rail network which will have a substantial release in capacity once the scheme is in operation. The Strategy also includes an aim to invest in infrastructure to support economic

regeneration and create new employment opportunities in the towns across the UK which are most in need, to make them excellent places to live and work.

Build Back Better: Our plan for growth (2021)

Government introduced a refreshed plan for growth in March 2021 to reflect the changes in the business and economic environment since the launch of the UK Industrial Strategy in 2017. The new plan to build back better takes a transformational approach, tackling long-term structural challenges to deliver growth that creates high-quality jobs across the UK. The plan focuses on infrastructure, skills and innovation as the three core pillars of growth.

Levelling Up Agenda

Government has prepared a Levelling Up White Paper, published on 2nd February 2022 which sets out Government's strategy to tackle economic challenges across the country, and the opportunity for everyone to flourish. The White Paper acknowledges that a mix of factors is needed to transform places and bolster local growth, realising the potential of every place and building on existing strengths. Government has put forward key Levelling up Missions to be achieved by 2030. Of relevance to Stafford Station Gateway these include enhancing local public transport connectivity, providing gigabit-capable broadband, ensuring pride in place, enabling renters to have a secure path to home ownership and increasing the number of first-time buyers, and boosting productivity. Through Levelling Up, Government confirms continued support for the Midlands Engine, with £400m allocated for the Midlands Engine Investment Fund, enabling partners to collaborate at scale and prioritise areas of common interest.

Strategic Regeneration Context

Regional

Stafford is located within the West Midlands region and falls within the Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) area, which has over 1.1 million residents and a further 3 million people living with a 45-minute drive-time. The area benefits from being within the heart of the country and includes the City of Stoke-on-Trent as well as the county town of Stafford. It is a highly connected area, easily accessible by rail and road, and is at the centre of three major growth engines (West Midlands, East Midlands and North West). Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire is a fast-growing centre of modern manufacturing, benefits from rich heritage and provides home to a wide range of businesses, including globally important businesses such as JCB, Jaguar Land Rover, GE, Bet 365, Hitachi and Amazon. Over three quarters of residents live and work in the area but there are also strong linkages with Cheshire to the north of the county and the West Midlands to the south.

The area benefits from a well skilled workforce and research capabilities at Staffordshire and Keele Universities, with significant expertise in engineering and computing, health and medical technologies.

Midlands Engine (Fig.07)

The Midlands Engine is a partnership that brings together public sector partners and businesses to complement the activity of local and combined authorities, LEPs, universities, businesses, driving forward economic growth with the overarching aim of greater prosperity. It is home to almost 11 million people, covering the area from the Marches in the west to Lincolnshire and The Wash in the east, alongside notable cities such as Birmingham, Stoke-on-Trent, Leicester and Nottingham, and contributes £246 billion to the UK economy. The partnership's key delivery themes are green growth, digital, transport, expanding international reach, health and providing insight and intelligence to its partners.

Midlands Connect

Midlands Connect is the transport focused arm of the Midlands Engine, working with the government and national bodies to facilitate infrastructure delivery in the region, with a focus on economic growth, levelling up, and climate change. The 2017 Midlands Connect Strategy identifies the importance of realising the benefits of investment in transport infrastructure, recognising that the Midlands needs a fundamental shift in how major infrastructure investment is planned and delivered. The Strategy highlights HS2, which will see conventional-compatible services run through Stafford Station, meaning that more people will be able to access the benefits offered by fast and frequent journeys to the North West and London.

Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership

The Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (SSLEP) was formed in 2011 and has an overarching vision to create 50,000 jobs and increase the value of the economy by 50%. The LEP seeks to build on the region's strong transport links, educational institutions and high quality of life to ensure that Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire continues to be an attractive place to live, work and do business. A primary focus is to build aspiring economic clusters, stimulate enterprise and provide high quality housing to meet the needs of the existing and future workforce. SSLEP Strategic Economic Plan (2018)

The SSLEP Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) seeks to maximise the benefits of HS2 where it interacts with Stoke-on-Trent and Stafford stations. "Stafford Station Gateway" is listed as a potential strategic employment site, underpinned by strong transport infrastructure. The place-led approach aims to ensure that development provides the housing mix needed for growth, offers central locations for growth of business and professional service firms, and provides the quality of life that will help to attract and retain highly skilled workers.

Local Industrial Strategy (March 2020)

The Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) reaffirms Stoke-on-Trent and Staffordshire as a major growth opportunity with specialisms in manufacturing and materials innovation and energy, including UK firsts such as Keele University's Smart Energy Network Demonstrator and HyDeploy.⁵ Key priorities set out within the LIS include:

- Providing flexible business space in key centres
- Support existing business clusters through providing new innovation facilities, making the most of research strengths
- Deliver strategic housing and employment sites where the infrastructure network best supports these
- Support the roll-out of broadband

The LIS sets out key spatial priorities, referencing the M6/ West Coast Main Line Corridor as an opportunity to stimulate further growth and create hubs for business and professional services, creating benefits for Stafford town centre. It also sets out an aspiration to create an Advanced Materials Campus within this corridor.

5. The first project in the UK to inject hydrogen into a natural gas network

Strategic Regeneration Context

Regional

Midlands Engine



Key

- University
- Airport
- HS2
- Motorways
- A Roads

Fig. 07
Midlands Engine

Strategic Regeneration Context

Local

Stafford is the county town of Staffordshire and is predominantly a rural district. It lies between the North Staffordshire conurbation, comprising Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle under Lyme, and the West Midlands urban area to the south, as well as Telford & Wrekin and Shropshire to the west. Although a relatively self-contained location in its own right, its spatial location means that it has an economic influence across Birmingham City Region and North Staffordshire.

Stafford is the principal centre and is well served by the strategic road and rail network. It includes a substantial military site on its north eastern edge (Beaconside Barracks). There are key manufacturing sites within the town (including GE and Bostik), and the town benefits from educational institutions including Staffordshire University and Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group (Stafford College).

Staffordshire County Council Strategic Plan (2022-2026)

Staffordshire County Council (SCC) has an overarching strategic plan which outlines the county's strengths and identifies how these will be built upon. The vision for Staffordshire is to create 'an innovative, ambitious and sustainable county, where everyone has the opportunity to prosper, be healthy and happy'.

The delivery of economic growth is supported by investment in key infrastructure, such as the recently opened Stafford Western Access Route (SWAR) alongside providing opportunities for businesses to thrive, innovate and prosper through working alongside national and regional partners and the creation of an east/west strategic corridor. The Strategic Plan also recognises the importance of working in partnership to regenerate Staffordshire's town centres.

Climate Change Action Plan (2021)

In 2019 the county council declared a climate change emergency and set a target to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. This will be achieved through carbon reduction, a focus on the natural environment, supporting behavioural change and tackling air quality and waste.

Digital Strategy

SCC has six key digital themes and targets to be achieved by 2030. This includes an aim for Staffordshire to have digital infrastructure which embraces full fibre, 5G and the next generation technology to underpin a thriving economy and communities.

Staffordshire Local Transport Plan (2011)

The LTP is supported by the Stafford Borough Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) which provides a greater level of detail on emerging proposals to improve transport across the Stafford Borough area supporting Local Plan led growth. A series of short and long-term solutions are proposed and will support the following objectives:

- Supporting Growth and Regeneration
- Making transport easier to use and places easier to get to
- Improving safety and security
- Reducing emissions and their effect on the highway network and local communities
- Improving health and quality of life
- Respecting the environment

In line with Government policy there is a focus on promoting non-car transport modes and encouraging active travel through place-making.

Stafford Borough Integrated Transport Strategy (2013-31)

The LTP is supported by the Stafford Borough Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) which provides a greater level of detail of proposals to improve transport across the Stafford Borough area supporting Local Plan led growth. The Stafford Western Access Improvements are set out, including the now completed Stafford Western Access Route (SWAR) and associated plans to improve walking, cycling and access to public transport.

SCC (2022) Strategic Plan Objectives



Support Staffordshire's economy to grow, generating more and better paid jobs.



Tackle climate change, enhance our environment, and make Staffordshire more sustainable.



Encourage good health and well-being, resilience and independence.



Fix more roads and improve transport and digital connections.



Offer every Staffordshire child and young person the best start in life, and the chance to achieve their potential.

Strategic Regeneration Context

Local




Staffordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (2021)

The Staffordshire Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) was published to help deliver better mobility, streets and safety. The vision for the Staffordshire LCWIP is to 'increase people's connectivity through cycling and walking, leading to positive changes in modal shift'. It aims to ensure that improvements and modifications to cycle infrastructure and facilities align with LTN 1/20, the most recent national cycle design guidance.

The focus of the LCWIP is around the six main urban areas within the county (of which Stafford is one) due to their potential to support journey distances that can be easily made by walking and cycling. The SRF emphasises the importance of Stafford Station with current demand for parking exceeding supply, and the opportunity to enhance accessibility to the station for cyclists as well as the wider town, supporting the long-term prosperity of the station and Stafford town centre's sustainable economic growth. Whilst there has been investment in the cycle network in recent years, there is a need for this to continue and support the Strategic Development Locations (SDLs) which are likely to bring forward in the region of 5,000 new homes. The document confirms the Stafford Western Access Route (SWAR) will help "remove traffic from the town centre and provide a more attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists".

The Plan references physical constraints of some of the local highway routes making improvements for cycling challenging, including Newport Road and Doxey Road which are directly adjacent to the SRF site.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  National Cycle Network Review - Very Good
-  National Cycle Network Review - Good
-  National Cycle Network Review - Poor
-  National Cycle Network Review - Very Poor
-  National Cycle Network Review - Not audited

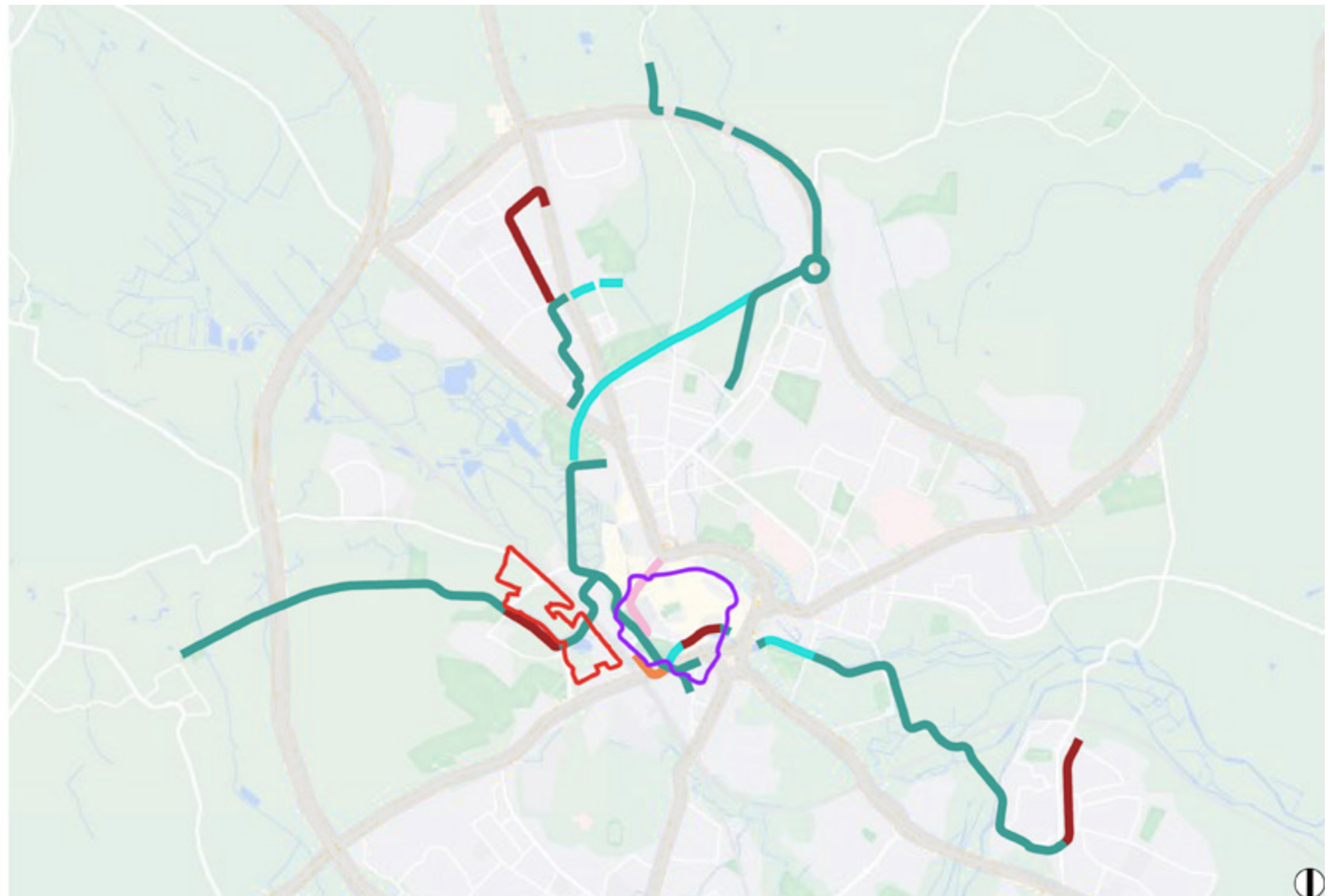


Fig. 08
Existing cycle network

Strategic Regeneration Context

Local

In preparing the SRF, consideration has been given to national, regional and local planning policy.

This includes both adopted and emerging policies in order to establish a full picture of the planning context and direction of travel.

A synopsis of the key policies which have informed the preparation of the SRF is provided in this section.

The Plan for Stafford Borough (Part 1) (2011-2031)

The current statutory development plan for Stafford town centre comprises the Plan for Stafford (Part 1), the Plan for Stafford (Part 2), Staffordshire Minerals Local Plan (2015-2030) and the Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent Joint Waste Local Plan (2010-2026). The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 1 was adopted by the Council in June 2014. It sets out strategic policies for the Borough, identifies Strategic Development Locations for housing and employment, and includes more detailed topic-based policies. The following policies are relevant to this SRF.

Policy Stafford 1 – Stafford Town

The study area falls within the Stafford Town boundary. The policy sets out Stafford Town's housing requirements – the need to provide 7,000 new homes, including affordable provision, with specific reference to key locations including the west of Stafford, and affirms the need to generate employment growth and diversification through providing new opportunities for businesses, with a particular focus on start-ups and business incubation for knowledge and creative industries.

This policy also references the need to deliver the western access improvements (associated with the SWAR), and enhancing infrastructure including creation of new walking and cycling opportunities, improving access to the rail station, providing new open space in line with the Council's requirements, and safeguarding the environment through addressing flood risk and landscape character.

6. Ref. 17/27731/FUL
7. Ref. 21/35230/REM

Policy Stafford 3 – West of Stafford

A proportion of the study area is identified within the West of Stafford Strategic Development Location (SDL) – the area dashed in blue comprises a Protected Employment Area and this includes the part of the study area, which is immediately adjacent to the Railway Station, Residential (outlined and shaded in red), and Mixed Use (outlined and shaded in blue).

The aim for the West of Stafford is to create a sustainable, well-designed mixed-use development which will include approximately 2,200 new homes, 30% of which will be affordable and extra care and specialist housing for older people will also need to be provided. The study area will include a mix of uses to support the new housing, including local retail, public open space, social infrastructure (including a new primary school and community building) and small-scale employment (5 ha).

The policy also sets out key environmental improvements required, including the need for a comprehensive drainage scheme to resolve flooding on the Doxey Brook, protection of nature conservation assets including the Doxey Marshes SSSI and delivering a network of green infrastructure. Development must provide safe, attractive and conveniently designed street, pedestrian and cycling connections within the study area and to Stafford town centre and nearby employment areas. The specific policy requirements pertaining to the Stafford Station Gateway site will be referenced within the specific sections of this SRF where relevant.

Burleyfields Masterplan (2015)

The 2015 Burleyfields Masterplan, which has been endorsed by SBC and is therefore a material planning consideration, encompasses those parts of the Stafford Station Gateway which are within the SDL, identifying a mix of uses in these areas. It sets out the vision for a new community which is socially inclusive, economically successful, and environmentally responsible. This document was developed between the applicants and the Local Planning Authority to satisfy the requirement of Policy Stafford 3 for a masterplan to be submitted and agreed with the Council.

The Masterplan provides a series of development principles to guide the overall development of the SDL.

A hybrid⁶ planning permission was granted on the main western portion of the site in May 2019, with 1,500 homes, a neighbourhood centre and a two-form entry primary school being approved in outline. Full approval was granted for 475 of these homes within Phase 1, which is currently under construction. A Reserved Matters application⁷ for Phase 2a, comprising 122 homes, was submitted in February 2022, which is currently pending determination. Phases three to five will deliver around 750 homes between 2024 and 2035.

The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2

The Plan for Stafford Borough Part 2 was adopted in January 2017. It is a land allocations plan which sets out an approach to development in the sustainable settlement hierarchy, and establishes settlement boundaries for Stafford, Stone and the Key Service Villages.

Policy SB3 – Stafford and Stone Protected Employment Areas confirms that the part of the Stafford Station Gateway site which is immediately adjacent to the station is protected for employment uses. This is the most critical area of the study area in linking into the station and creating a new destination at the western gateway. The continued use of the site for employment will be ensured to provide a focal point in this location.

Strategic Regeneration Context

Local

New Stafford Borough Local Plan 2020-2040 (emerging)

A new plan for Stafford is currently being prepared to provide an updated strategic policy framework for the Borough. The Council invited comments on their Issues and Options consultation document between February and April 2020. This SRF is being prepared ahead of the new Local Plan and will help to inform and shape the proposed policy. We anticipate that the next stage of the Local Plan will be published for consultation in Summer 2022.

Stafford Borough Council Corporate Business Plan 2021-2024

The three-year Corporate Business Plan sets out how Stafford Borough Council will continue to deliver and sustain economic growth, respect the environment, support communities and ensure that the Borough is a great place in which to live, work and visit. The plan was refreshed in 2021 to take into account Climate Change and local recovery from the effects of Covid-19. Corporate Business Objective 1 (To deliver innovative, sustainable economic and housing growth to provide income and jobs) sets out a commitment to deliver a range of major projects including Stafford Station Gateway. The Council envisage that this will ensure the Borough has a dynamic local enterprise culture, which is vital for its long-term competitiveness and overall economic success.

Stafford Borough Economic Growth Strategy 2020-2025

Developed by the Stafford Growth, Regeneration and Infrastructure Partnership the Stafford Borough Growth Strategy is the shared vision of a number of public and private sector organisations. The Strategy aims to develop a high value, high skill, innovative and sustainable economy. Growth Priority 1 (Enabling new and existing businesses to grow and build confidence in Stafford Borough as a hub of productivity with a balanced economy) makes a commitment to working in partnership to deliver an innovative and well-connected development within the Stafford Station Gateway.

Housing Strategy (2015-2019)

Stafford Borough Council's Housing Strategy sets out the overall aim of ensuring the Borough is an attractive place to live, with a good choice of quality housing to meet the needs of existing communities and to attract new people into the Borough. It sets out an annual housing target of 500 new homes each year, including 210 affordable homes, and to encourage major developments which strengthen the Borough's town centres, such as the Stafford Station Gateway site. The Strategy also advocates the need for good quality design and a masterplan approach to ensure key infrastructure requirements alongside design aspirations are realised.

Climate Change and Green Recovery Strategy 2020-2040

The Vision of this Strategy is to create a green, healthy and resilient Stafford Borough where everyone can thrive, by limiting the impacts of climate change and meeting climate change and green recovery commitments. The Council recognise the importance of long-term sustainability goals and commit to taking a proactive leadership role in addressing the challenges.

As part of Objective CC4 a commitment is made to implement green recovery objectives via Green and Blue Infrastructure management and facilitate development that is responsive to climate change. Objective CC4 aims to incorporate a focus upon nature-based solutions in local policy, including through the creation of communities such as Stafford Station Gateway which will increase biodiversity and improve and promote healthier living and lifestyles.

Staffordshire County Council Economic Strategy 2022-2030 (Consultation Draft)

Staffordshire County Council have set out their ambition to ensure that "Everyone in Staffordshire will have access to more good jobs and share the benefits of economic growth." Through collaboration with their partners, and in the context of Government's Levelling Up agenda, the Council recognise a key opportunity to improve economic outcomes throughout Staffordshire. The Economic Strategy aims to focus on a series of priorities around the regeneration of town centres and providing support to people, businesses and places. It establishes a clear road map to achieving these ambitions through leadership, collaboration and advocacy.

Strategic Regeneration Context

Local - Planning Policy Context

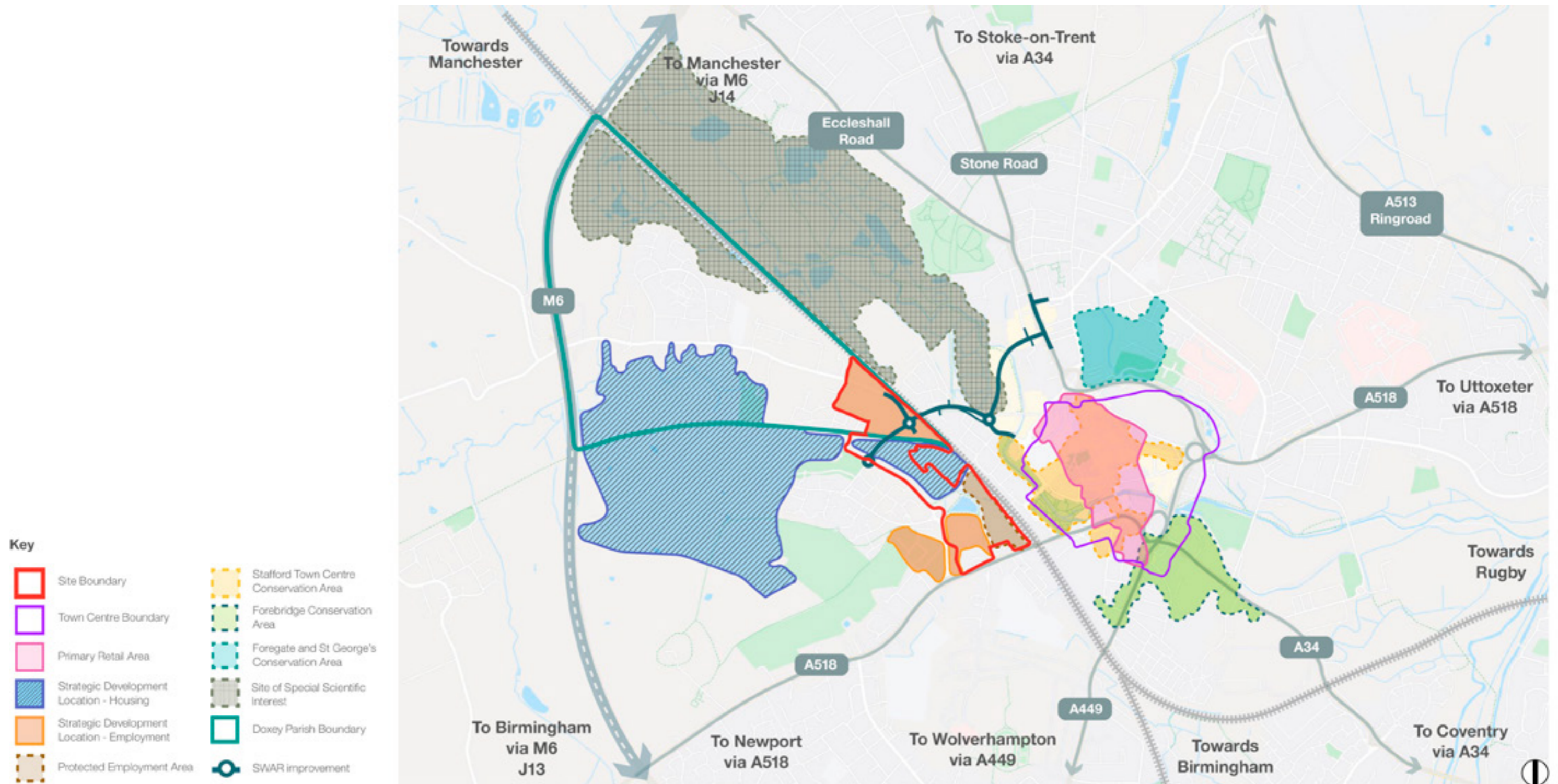


Fig. 09
The Plan for Stafford Borough (Part 1: 2011-2031)
Local Context Map: Planning Policy Allocations

Strategic Regeneration Context

Local - Strategic Development Locations

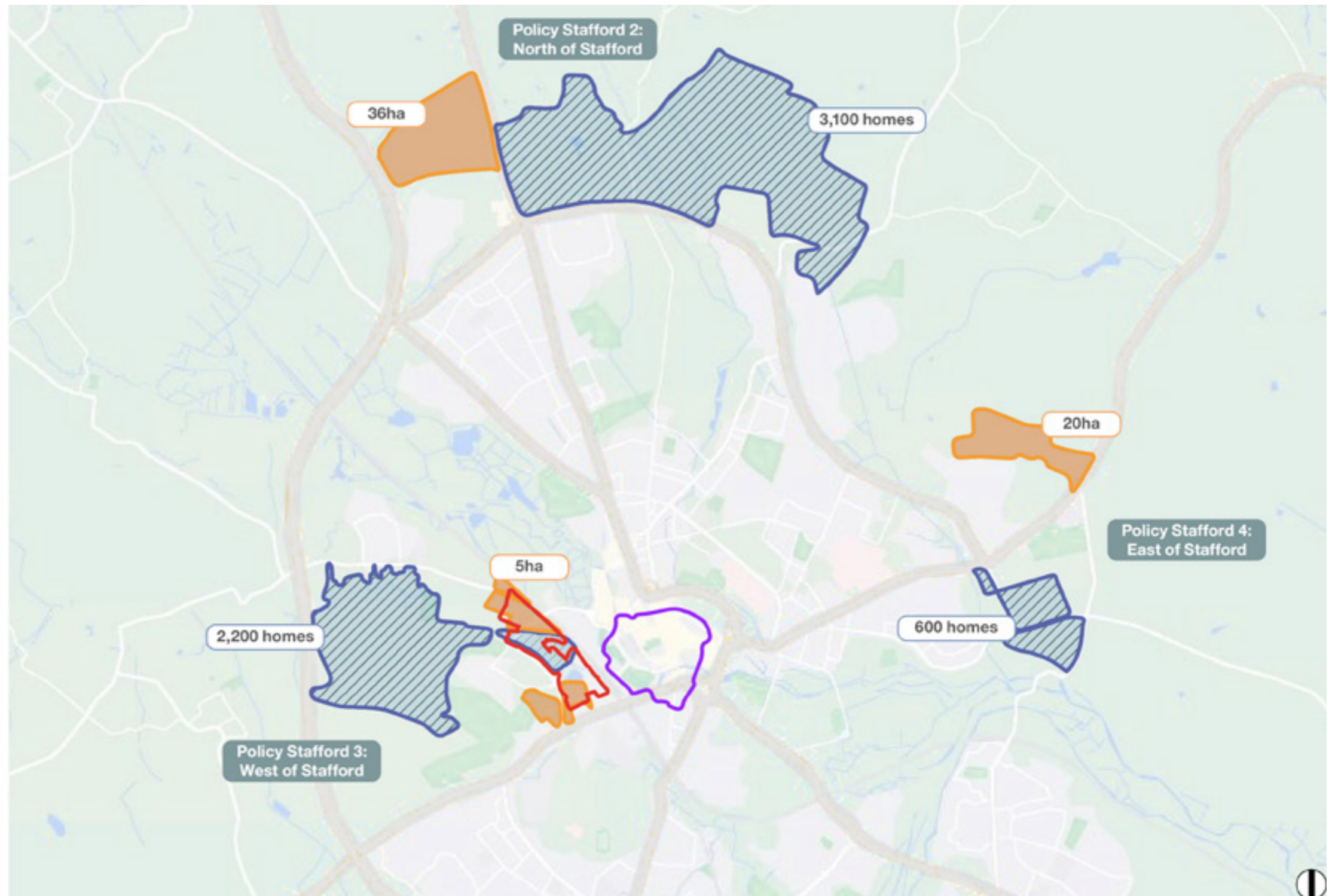


Fig. 10
The Plan for Stafford Borough (Part 1: 2011-2031)
Strategic Growth Allocations

Local Context Overview

This section provides an overview of the local context, in terms of the Stafford Station Gateway and its relationship with the wider Town Centre.

It sets out the main issues and opportunities that need to be responded to, including movement and connectivity, green and blue infrastructure, urban design principles and quality.

It provides a foundation which underpin the proposed development principles and interventions as set out in the illustrative masterplan.

Context

Stafford Station Gateway covers an area of 28 ha and benefits from excellent connectivity given the proximity to Stafford Rail Station. The area benefits from being within a 10-minute walking time from the heart of Stafford town centre and is surrounded by established residential communities of Castletown, Doxey and the area around Castle Street, as well as nearby Burleyfields which continues to be developed through the Burleyfields Masterplan.

The study area is bounded by Newport Road (A518) to the south, Kingsway and Martin Drive to the west, the village of Doxey to the north west, and the West Coast Main Line (WCML) and Stafford Station to the north east and east with the St Modwen's residential development cutting into the study area area. The WCML acts as a significant barrier between the study area and the town centre and forms a prominent part of the local character. The study area occupies a key location bridging the gap between the town centre and the residential communities to the west.

Fig. 11

Former Post Office, Stafford Town Centre



Fig. 12

Palmbourne Industrial Estate, Stafford



Local Context Overview

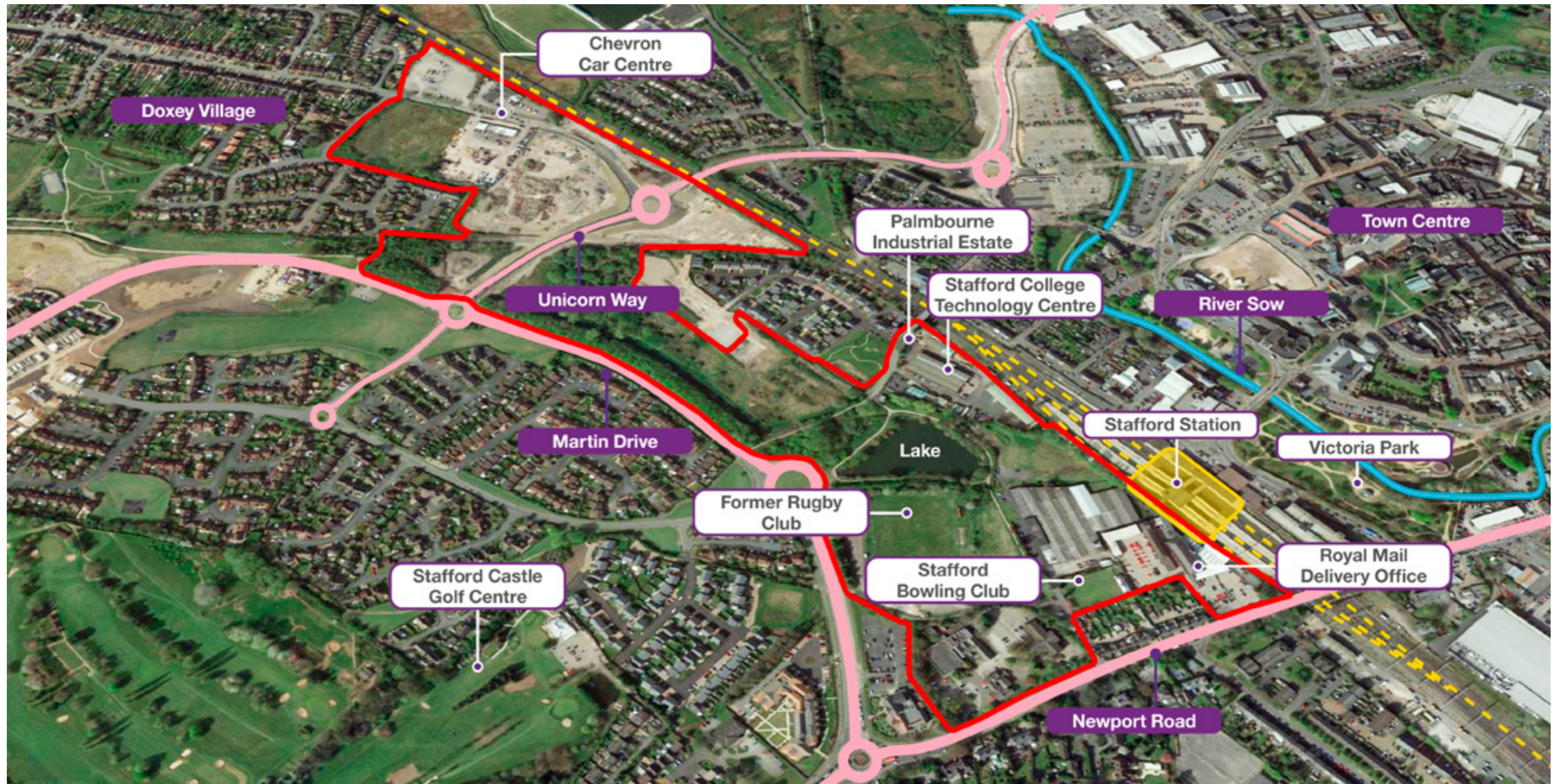


Fig. 13
Local context to the Stafford Station Gateway

Local Context

Land Use

The framework area currently comprises a diverse mix of land uses, including the Royal Mail Delivery Office, small-scale manufacturing (Blunt Shoes), Palmbourne Industrial Park (which includes Stafford College Institute of Technology Centre), a residential development on the former Castleworks site (which previously contained a range of large-scale industrial buildings) which has recently been built out by St Modwen (80 dwellings), the former Saint Gobain factory and associated green/blue infrastructure (including former Rugby Ground, existing Bowling Green, a disused Cricket Pitch, and the Doxey Drain/ Brook and landscaping associated with this).

To the east of the framework area, around Stafford Railway Station, the area is characterised by car parking, green space with the amenity offered by Victoria Park, and primarily terraced housing, interspersed with some commercial uses indicating the change in character as you move closer towards the main town centre. Civic buildings including the Stafford Combined Court are also located here. The western edge of the town centre also features a Sainsbury's supermarket to the north and a large Tesco Extra to the south.

Beyond this area, the NSCG Stafford College campus dominates the character of the town centre periphery and occupies a series of buildings fronting onto Tenterbanks, including the Grade II listed Tenterbanks Building. The College has grown significantly over the last ten years and currently accommodates almost 8,000 students studying full-time, part-time, higher education or on apprenticeship programmes. To support this growth the college has invested around £13 million in new facilities, including the Science and Technology Centre and Riverbank Building, and a new Skills and Innovation Centre which is under construction and due for completion in 2023. To the south of the study area, beyond Newport Road (A518) the area is characterised by residential, including Georgian Terraces along Brunswick Terrace, to more substantial residential properties off the leafy streets in and around Rowley Avenue. This area also accommodates a secondary school – Blessed William Howard Catholic High School.

To the west are the areas of Castlefields, which were mostly completed in the 1990s. The 2015 Burleyfields Masterplan set out a vision for the West of Stafford SDL, which along with the North of Stafford SDL forms a significant urban extension of the town which will help to meet the Borough's housing needs. The implementation of the Burleyfields Masterplan was progressed by a hybrid planning permission granted in 2019, with full details set out in Section 4 above. Phase 1, comprising 449 dwellings, is substantially progressed, and detailed planning applications are under consideration for the next phase. As well as these significant housing developments, there is a green corridor to the north west which includes locally recognised play and amenity space.

To the north of the study area is Doxey Village, which at its centre features a row of detached, semi-detached and terraced period homes lining Doxey Road. Much of the housing stock in the village is more recent, with developments flanking Doxey Road to the north and south, extending towards the M6 in the west. Recent developments include Bellway Homes' Mallard Walk on Sandpiper Drive and Redrow's Castle View development at Reed Drive, immediately North of Burleyfields and East of the Stafford Station Gateway site.

Fig. 14
Victoria Park, Stafford



Fig. 15
Victorian housing developments to Railway Street, North of Stafford Station.



Local Context Land Use

Stafford Station Gateway is within multiple land ownerships. As such, a close working relationship between landowners and project partners will be essential to realise the vision and strategic objectives.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Residential development
-  Education/Nursery
-  Healthcare
-  Food and Beverage
-  Commercial/Workplace
-  Sport and recreation
-  Worship

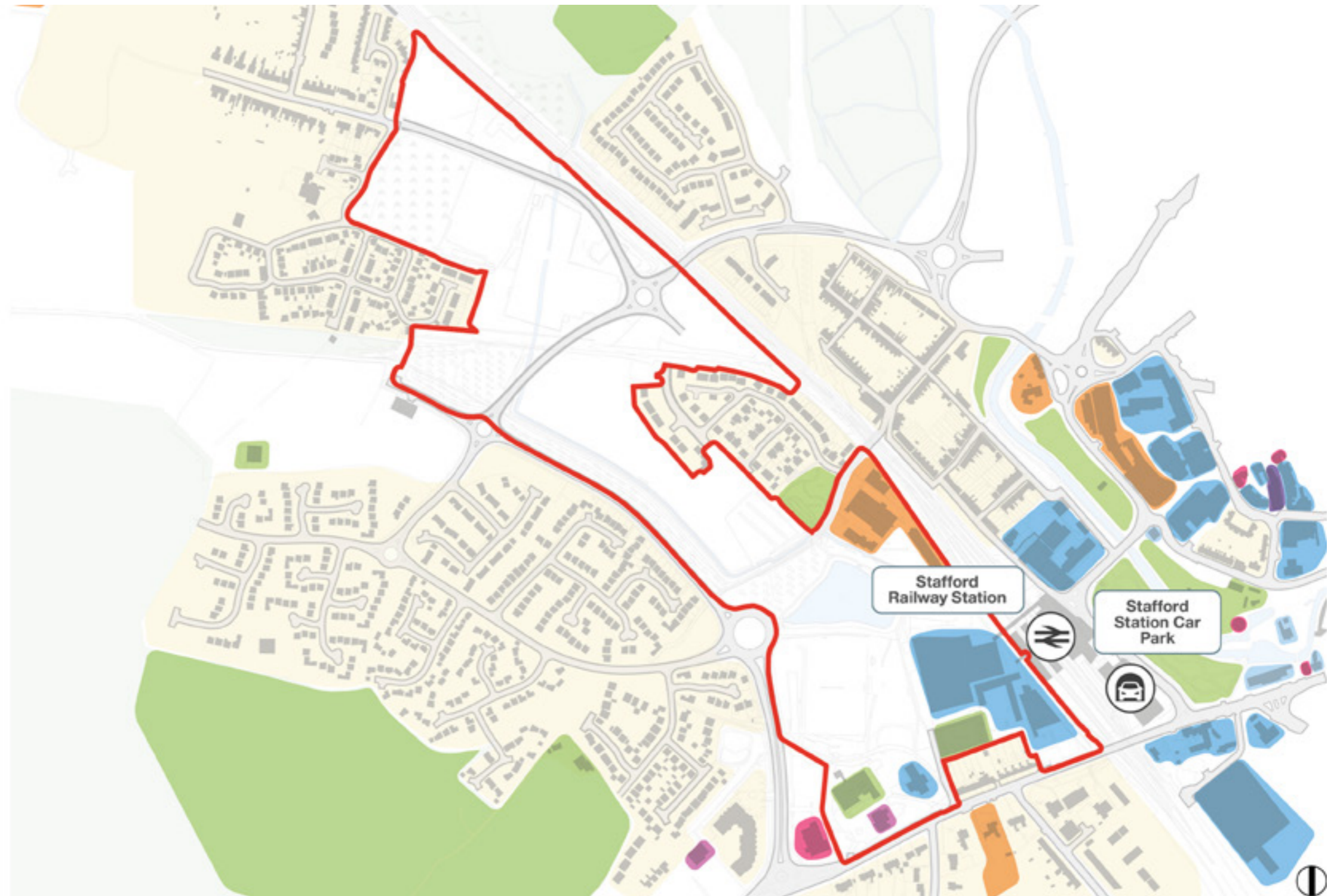


Fig. 16
Land Use adjacent to the Stafford Station Gateway

Local Context

Scale and Density

Stafford Station Gateway is in close proximity to the existing town centre, which comprises a tight-knit street pattern with buildings of typically two or three storeys. The wide range in the ages and typologies of buildings within the town centre adds to the feeling of density here, with older buildings such as the Ancient High House overhanging the street, and imposing frontages created by the likes of the Tenterbanks Building and the Shire Hall.

20th Century additions to the town centre have increased the scale of the town centre, particularly to the south east. These include the modernist Stafford Borough Council offices which reach five storeys; a seven-storey office building at St Chad's Place; and the five-storey Victoria House which is adjacent to Stafford Station.

The five-storey Staffordshire Place development, recently awarded a BREEAM 'Excellent' certification, provides new high-quality office accommodation to the town. Multi-storey car parks at Stafford Station and the Waterfront shopping centre are five and eight storeys respectively.

The residential areas surrounding the study area are suburban in character, with predominantly low-density dwellings. This ranges from detached houses occupying substantial plots to the south of the study area, to densely packed terraced streets within Castletown to the east. There is a proliferation of moderate density developments at Castlefields and Burleyfields to the west along with the St Modwen's study area, which generally consist of two-storey units at typical suburban densities of around 40 homes per hectare.

The SRF explores the opportunity to better utilise the study area, taking advantage of the rare opportunity of being so close to a major transport node.



Fig. 17
Character and local context of the wider area

Local Context

Evolution of Stafford

Stafford is a large market town which is set within a historic layout that has been in place since early medieval times.

The town is believed to have been founded in about 700 AD and became a frontier post in the Anglo Saxon's struggle against the Viking hordes in 913 AD. The Stafford charter was signed in 1206 which made Stafford a borough. The town had its own mint and quickly established a local pottery industry due to the richness of clay in the area

During the Middle Ages Stafford became an important market town, dealing in cloth and wool. The late 18th century saw major growth in the town's substantial shoe industry as a result of mechanisation which in turn supported local timber, glue and packaging businesses.

The main town centre has a rich diversity of buildings ranging from medieval times through to late 19th and 20th century. The railway came to Stafford at around the time of Queen Victoria's accession and towards the end of the 19th century this promoted the development of a number of rail-related factories (Dorman Diesels, Bagnalls and Siemens).

The Stafford Conservation Area encompasses the town centre, key civic buildings (including the Shire Hall) and Victoria Park. Victoria Park, the Edwardian riverside park was opened in 1908 and bridges over the River Sow providing an important amenity space within the heart of the town and welcoming gateway from the station.

The town continued to develop throughout the 20th Century, building upon its strong historic foundations. This has included infill development within the town centre, including higher density office accommodation and dedicated retail provision at the Guildhall Shopping Centre, with an associated multi-storey car park. Several large sites at the edges of the town centre have been developed by national supermarket and retail chains, enhancing Stafford's retail offer but also facilitating increased car dependency.

Since 1990 Stafford has seen further investment as its role as a destination for retail and community facilities, with the addition of the Riverside Shopping Centre at the eastern edge of the town centre, along with Staffordshire Place, which is home to the new Stafford Library, Staffordshire County Council, the University of Wolverhampton, and several other occupiers. Stafford College has also engaged in a significant regeneration of their facilities at Tenterbanks to the west of the town centre, including several new state-of-the-art teaching facilities.



Fig. 18
Historic maps showing the evolution of Stafford between 1888 and 1990

Local Context

Movement and Connectivity - Walking

Stafford Station Gateway is highly accessible by foot, with the central point of the Gateway within a 7-minute walking time from Stafford Railway Station and 15 minutes from the Primary Shopping Area.

The area is well connected with short walking times to key amenities within the town centre. General walking routes around the Stafford Station Gateway site are predominantly on A roads and through routes such as Newport Road, Martin Drive and Doxey Road.

These roads and others nearby the site contain pavements to cater for pedestrian movement in the area.

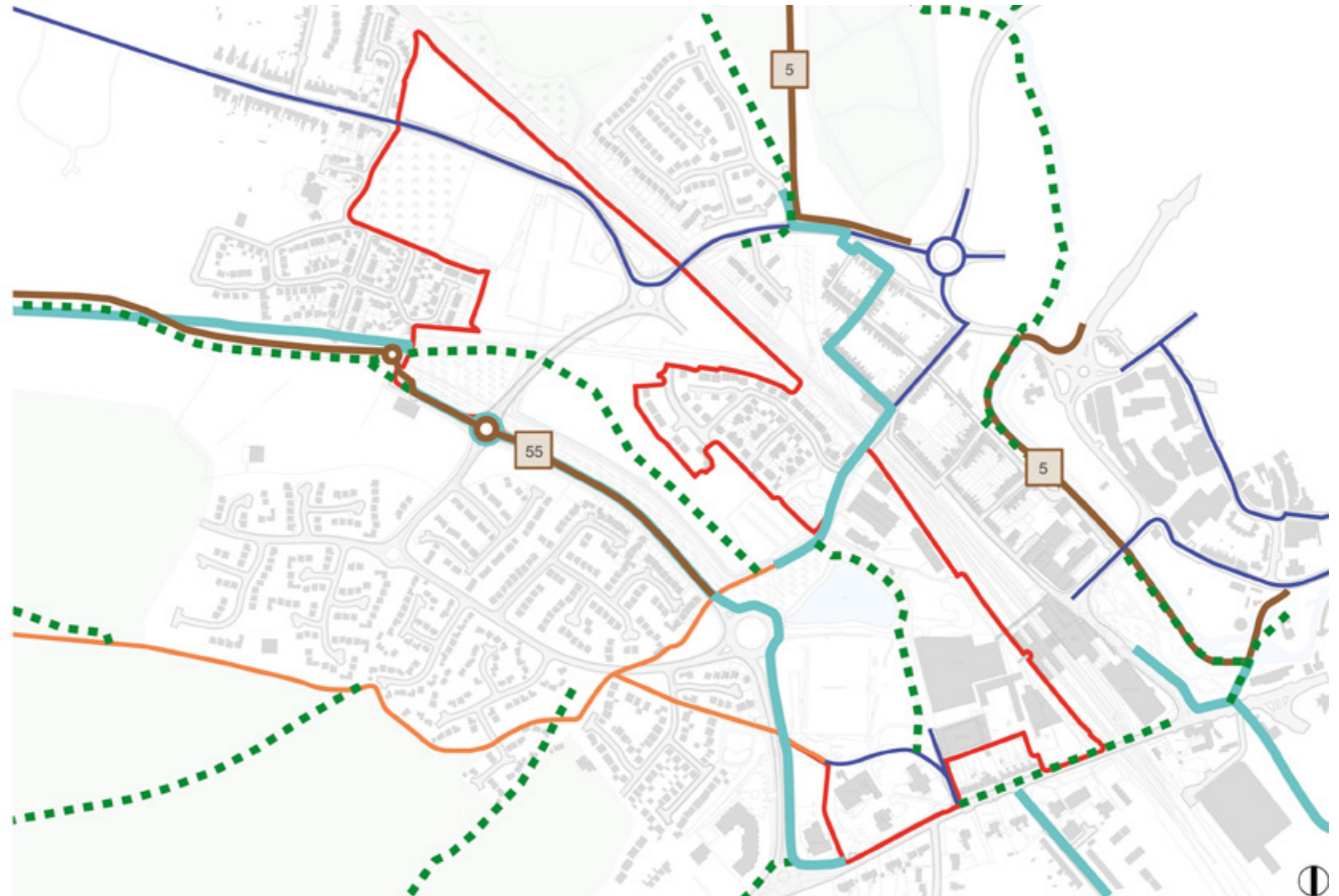


Fig. 19
Existing movement and connectivity plan

Local Context

Movement and Connectivity - Walking

Stafford Station Gateway and surrounding area benefits from an extensive network of footpaths and public rights of way including a footpath covering the length of the River Sow.

Within the Gateway study area itself, there are the following Public Rights of Way:

- Footpath 38 which runs from Castlefields around the existing lake;
- Footpath 40 which runs along the Doxey Drain
- Byway Open to All Traffic (BOAT) 37 which runs from Newport Road into the site, and also from Martin Drive into the site connecting with Castle Street.

Figure 20 shows the walking connectivity from the centre of the Gateway at an average walking speed of 5kph.

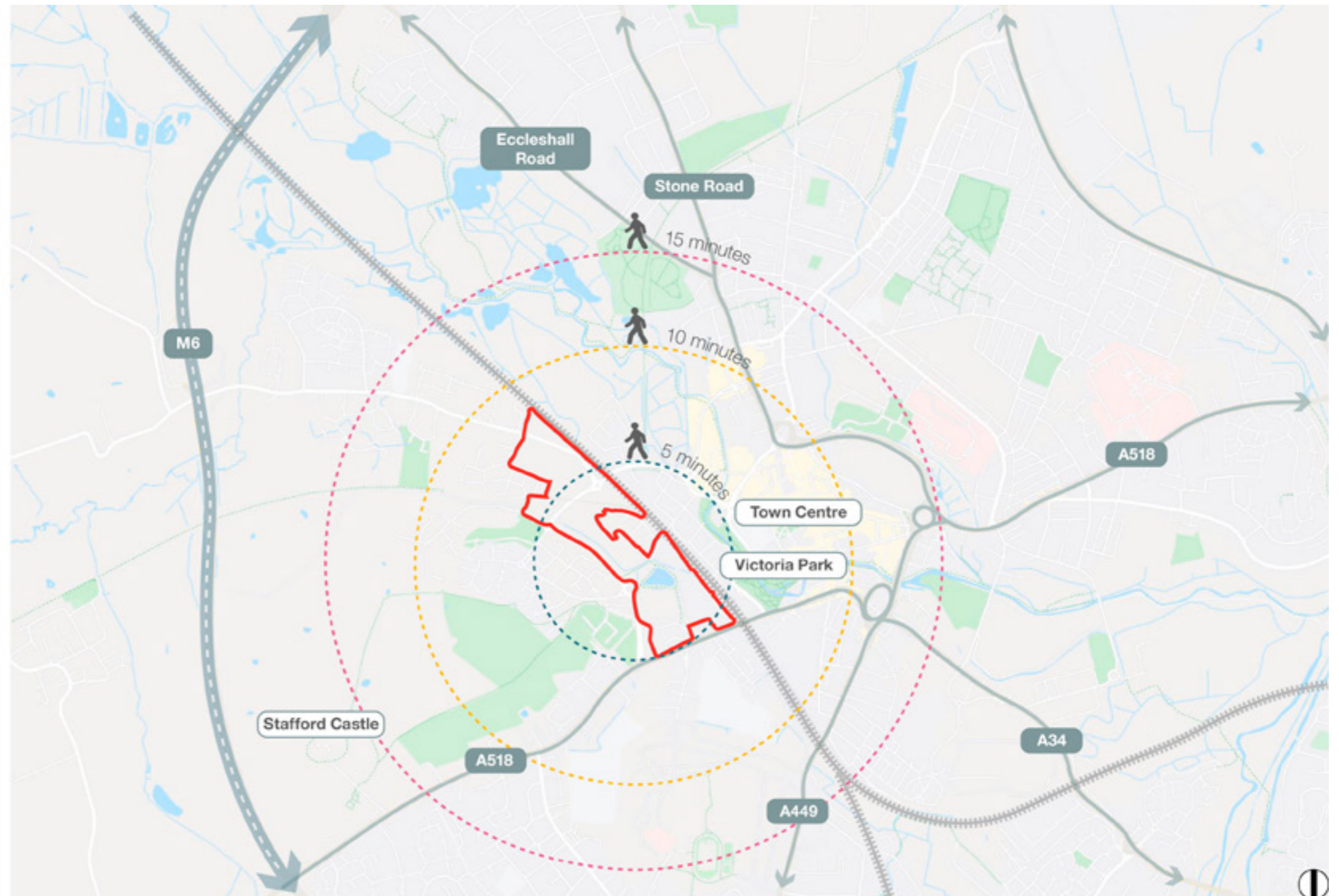


Fig. 20
Walking Connectivity and walking distances in the town centre

Local Context

Movement and Connectivity - Cycling

National Cycle Network route 55 cuts through the Gateway site and route 5 is also close by in the town centre.

Figure 21 shows the cycle connectivity to and from Stafford Station Gateway as it currently stands at a speed of 16 kph.

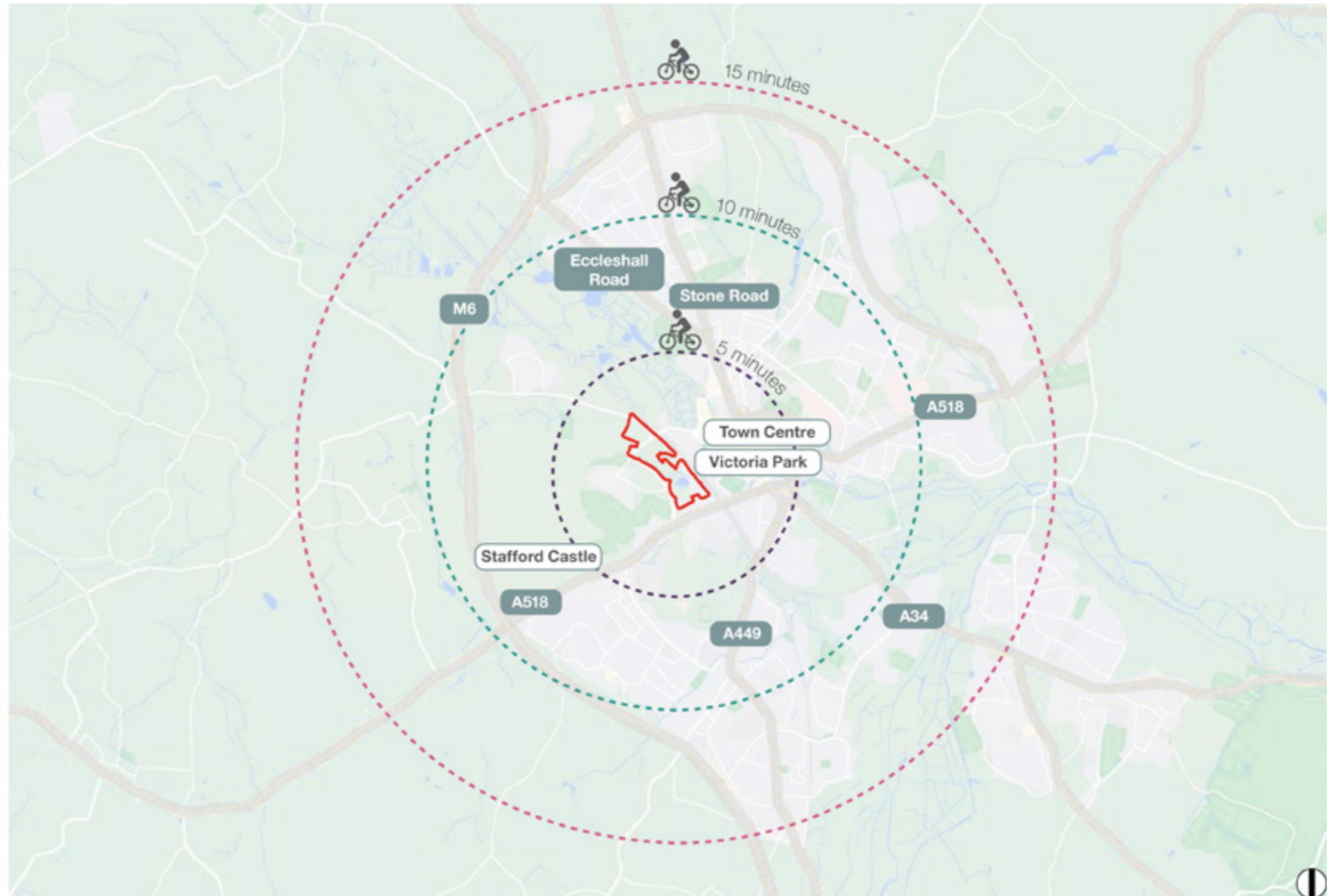


Fig. 21
Cycling connectivity and cycling distances in the town centre

Local Context

Movement and Connectivity - Public Transport

Train

Stafford Station is a major interchange railway station that is currently served by multiple lines. The station is an important calling point on the West Coast Mainline between London and Scotland, providing inter-city connections for the people of Stafford and the wider Staffordshire area. Trains to London Euston are frequent and take from as little as 1 hour 17 minutes, demonstrating a connectivity that is quite unique to towns of a similar scale to Stafford.

As well as the West Coast Main Line, Stafford has services on the Trent Valley (towards Rugby and beyond) and the Birmingham Loop, which connects to the south with Birmingham and Coventry. Cross Country trains from Manchester to and from Reading and the South Coast call at Stafford. The station also benefits from direct connections to Liverpool to the north.

Stafford Station's location between the North West and West Midlands in particular means that it is often a point of interchange, connecting passengers on services to and from Manchester and Liverpool to the north, and Birmingham, London and other destinations to the south.

Bus

The eastern side of Stafford Station is a hub for through bus services within the town, connecting the rail station with the town centre and more outlying parts of the borough. Services call along Newport Road to the south of the study area and Doxey Road to the north, although beyond that bus service provision is fairly limited to provision to the residential developments west of Martin Drive.

The recent opening of the SWAR affords an opportunity for bus routes to potentially be revised to bisect the SRF route and generate patronage for services that are not directly linked to the station, instead focussing on the wider town centre, particularly retail areas north of the town centre around Foregate Street.



Fig. 22
Stafford Railway Station (2020)



Fig. 23
Bus stands to Railway Street (2020)

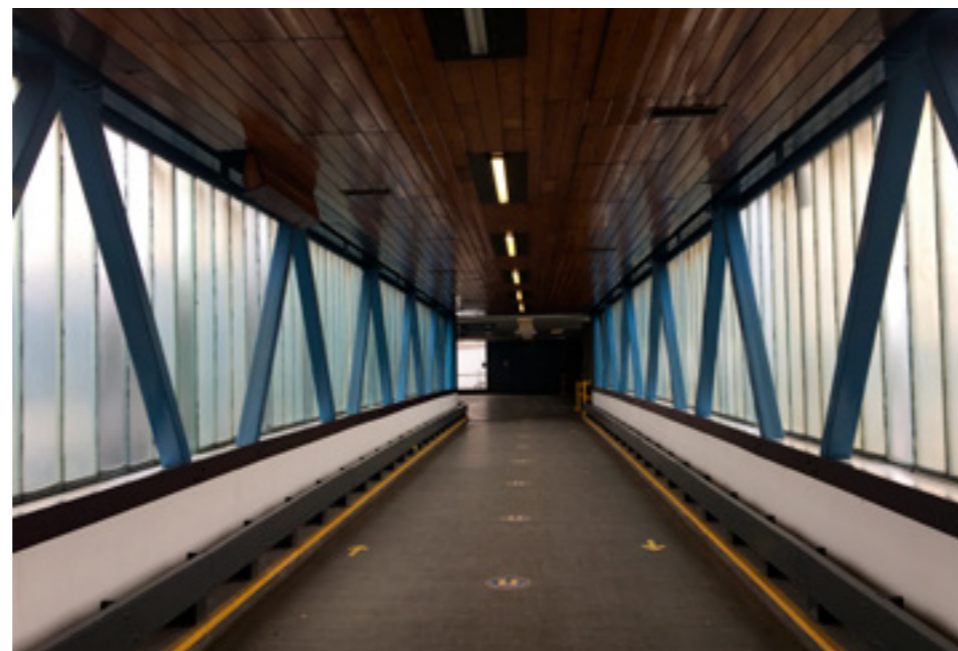


Fig. 24
Stafford Railway Station, bridge connecting platforms across the tracks (2022)



Fig. 25
Unicorn Way (2022)

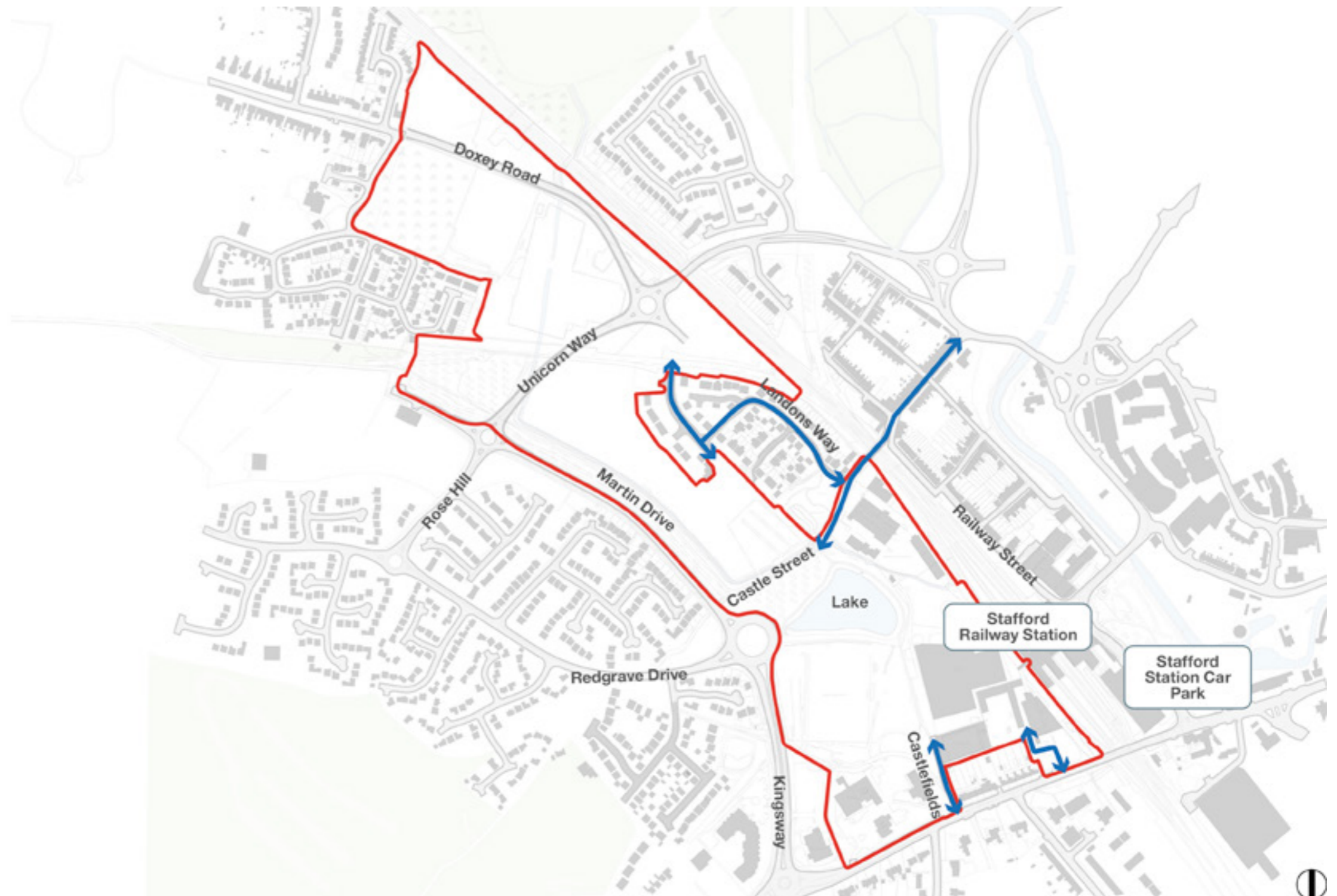
Local Context

Movement and Connectivity - Existing Vehicular Access

There are currently a limited number of vehicular routes into the Stafford Station Gateway site. This is due to the prevalence of some significant highway distributor roads around the site boundaries including the SWAR, which has focussed access into the study area onto land further west or north.

The central area of the study area is currently accessed exclusively from Castle Street. This is a relatively narrow and constrained no-through route that comes into the study area from the east over the railway line via a narrow rail overbridge. This route provides access to the recently completed residential development being undertaken by St Modwen, accessed via the new Landons Way link. As well as the new residential development, access is afforded to the commercial and industrial uses on the Palmbourne estate.

The south of the study area is currently accessible for vehicles via Castlefields and is a relatively narrow, constrained route. This access joins Newport Road, a busy link providing access to/from Stafford town centre to areas to the west of Stafford. The recent opening of the SWAR could be expected to reduce the traffic flow on Newport Road in the future, as the SWAR is likely to displace traffic from this route, creating a bypass for the route through the town centre to the east of the station. There is a further access into the Royal Mail part of the study area from Newport Road. This is currently for staff, servicing and visitors to the Royal Mail premises. Visibility at the junction turning onto Newport Road is limited by the rail overbridge which sees levels rise to the east of the access.



Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Existing access routes

Fig. 26
Existing highway access

Local Context

Blue/Green Infrastructure

Victoria Park

Stafford town centre benefits from the Green Flag award winning Victoria Park which is located on the banks of the River Sow. The park covers 4.95 acres and is the largest formal park in the Borough and has been extended in 1911 and in 1930. The park underwent a £2.5million restoration in 2020, re-opening in October 2020 with a new café and education centre, alongside a restored bandstand, Grade II listed shelter, toilets and enhanced landscaping. Victoria Park sits immediately outside Stafford Rail Station and forms a pleasant link to the heart of the town centre.

River Sow

The River Sow is a tributary of the River Trent and flows through Doxey Marshes nature reserve until it reaches Stafford, after which it continues eastwards to its confluence with the River Trent.

Doxey Brook/ Drain

The Doxey Drain runs through the northern portion of the study area. The site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3 but there is scope for implementing a flood risk and drainage strategy to mitigate this risk and unlock the site for development.

Cricket Pitch

In the north west of the site is a former cricket pitch, adjacent to the village of Doxey. The pitch has not been in use for a prolonged period, nor is it formally identified within the Open Space/Playing Pitch Assessments.⁸ The ground conditions are soft and wet, meaning the site has fallen into a relatively poor state. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the current wet conditions are related in part to the ceasing of water abstraction from the now demolished Saint Gobain factory.

Former Rugby Ground

Stafford RUFC has been an established presence in the town since its founding in 1876. It had several homes around Stafford before settling at Newport Road, within the Stafford Station Gateway site, in 1949.

Stafford RUFC has since moved site to newly established pitches at Blackberry Lane which provides three senior grass pitches, one of which is floodlit, three mini grass pitches and a full-size World Rugby Complaint 3G pitch in addition to a clubhouse and relevant ancillary facilities.

Stafford Crown Green Bowling Club

The Club was established in 1902 and was recently upgraded with financial support from Sport England. The Bowling Green will be retained as part of the wider masterplan. Opposite the Club, on the western side of Castlefields, is a private car park for Club use. This is proposed to be retained.

Existing Lake

The large lake at the centre of the site forms an important open space within the local area. It acts as a beneficial setting for local wildlife and is well used by nearby residents and visitors.

Landscaping areas alongside Doxey Drain/ Martin Drive

The immediate area also benefits from local play parks (e.g Castle View Park), ancillary open space and leisure provision including a golf driving range and Stafford Rugby Union Football Club ground. 20.85 hectares of public open space are also proposed as part of the Burleyfields development approved in outline in May 2019 (ref. 17/27731/FUL). There are further green corridors beyond the boundaries of the Gateway area leading out of Stafford in various directions.

Fig. 27

Stafford Crown Green Bowling Club



Fig. 28

Existing lake to the centre of the site



8. 2013 Stafford Open Space, Sport and Recreation Assessment, 2019 Playing Pitch Assessment

Local Context

Blue/Green Infrastructure










Fig. 29
Existing blue/green infrastructure

Local Context

Heritage

The Stafford Station Gateway site itself does not contain any designated heritage assets but there are key assets within the proximity, as well as three Conservation Areas in and around Stafford town centre.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Stafford Town Centre Conservation Area
-  Forebridge Conservation Area
-  Foregate and St George's Conservation Area
-  Grade I Listed
-  Grade II* Listed
-  Grade II Listed

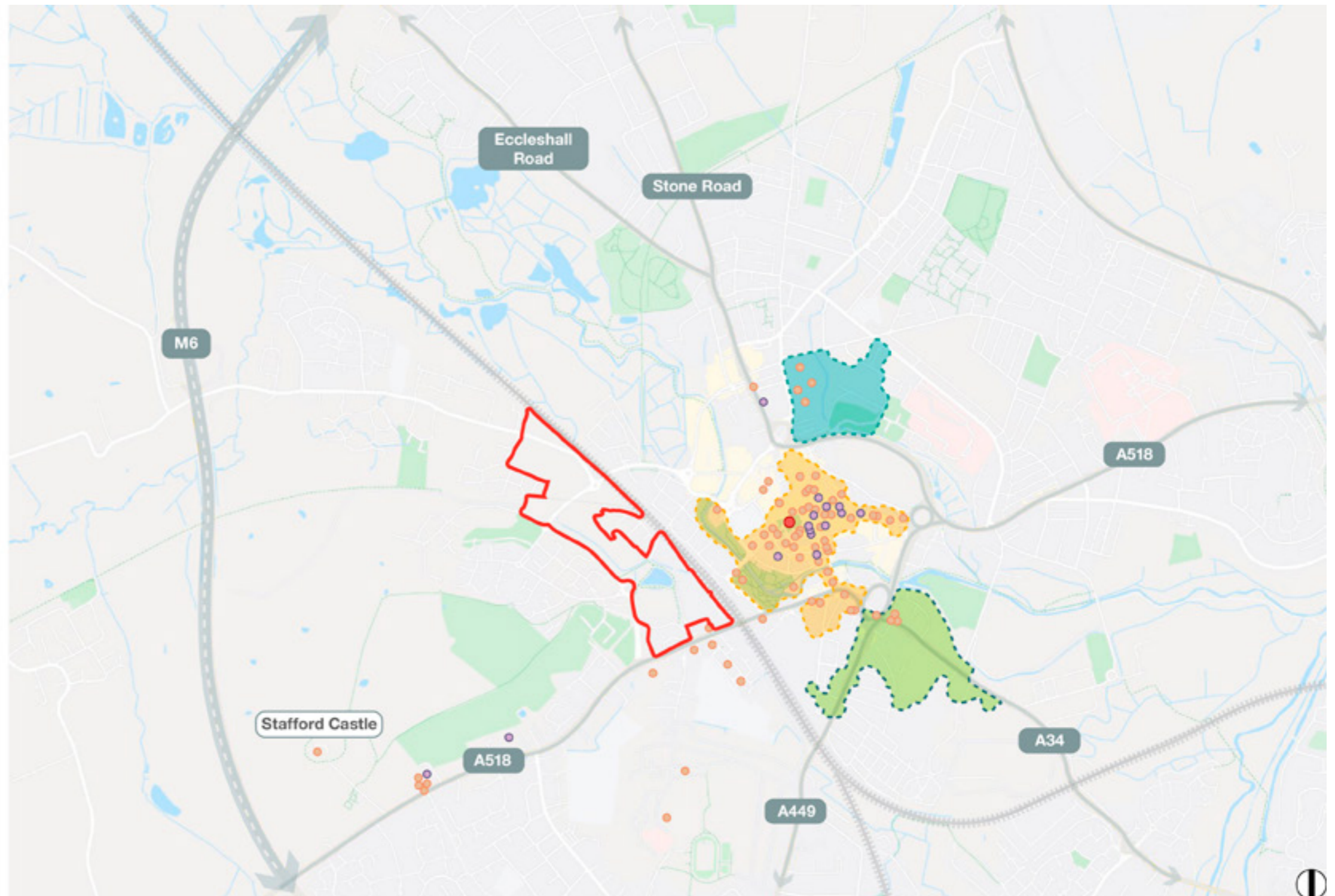


Fig. 30
Existing heritage assets in proximity to the Stafford Station Gateway

Local Context

Heritage

Conservation Areas

Stafford Conservation Area

The Stafford Conservation Area, designated in November 1971, encompasses the town centre, extending up to the east of the railway station. The town has a rich, well documented history, being officially established in 913 AD. It was subsequently developed as a major commercial centre, being a focus of the pottery industry from the 10th Century. Stafford went on to become an administrative centre as the county town, as well as a hub for transport and shoemaking.

Many of the historic buildings of Stafford have been built using mainly local materials, particularly red brick. Some key buildings, such as the churches, have used other materials such as sandstone. Some early timber framed buildings remain in the town centre. The western part of the conservation area closest to the Stafford Station Gateway site is characterised by large civic buildings around Stafford College and Tenterbanks, with a smaller scale of built form around St Mary's and an open expanse at Victoria Park.

Forebridge Conservation Area

The Forebridge Conservation Area lies approximately 450m to the east of the site boundary. It was first designated in 1999, and its area was extended to the east and west in 2013. Having developed along a historic and major trunk route, the area contains a mixture of residential and public buildings, mainly dating from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

Foregate and St George's Conservation Area

The Foregate and St George's Conservation Area lies approximately 600m to the north east of the site boundary. It encompasses St George's Hospital to the north of Stafford, the prison site, Sash Street, and County Road connecting to the General Infirmary to the west. The suburb of Foregate developed in the 17th century, but the built character remaining is predominantly that of the 19th century.

Listed Buildings

The town centre contains a wealth of listed buildings, centred around the Grade I listed Church of St Mary. Four Grade II listed buildings and structures lie closest to the site at the western edge of the town centre, comprising:

- The Mill, a tower windmill built in 1796 using materials from the late 16th Century Shire Hall. The mill was steam powered by 1847 and ceased working in early 1880s and was derelict by the late 1930s. Although derelict, the mill is an important landmark in Stafford and is sometimes claimed as standing on the foundations of the castle keep.
- Stafford College Tenterbanks Building, completed in 1946 in a late classical style, formed of red-brown brick with stone dressings and a parapeted roof. The shell of the building was completed in 1937, after which it was used as an American army hospital during the war, then completed afterwards.
- Staffordshire County War Memorial, a tall ashlar and bronze memorial supporting bronze figures built around 1920, and a bronze plaque commemorating the 2nd World War. The listing includes the flanking walls and gates, featuring inscriptions of the names of battles.
- The Mottram Shelter, approximately 45m south east of the war memorial and dating from 1905. Constructed of cast-iron and timber with a hipped roof and simple benches.

There are a further five listings encompassing buildings located on Newport Road to the south of the site, comprising:

- Former Eagle Inn Public House, a two storey Georgian style brick building built around 1800 on the south side of Newport Road.
- Nos 16 and 17, a pair of two storey Georgian style houses from c.1850. They were part of a mid-19th century development which followed the building of the railway line.
- No. 19, a c.1850 two storey house, built in brick with stucco dressings and an open porch.
- Nos 127-131, a terrace of five Tudor houses completed in 1850. They represent a good and attractive example of workers' housing, having been built for railway workers.
- The Hawthorns, a c.1830 Georgian style house comprising two storeys in brick with a slate roof.

Two additional listings comprise housing on Brunswick Terrace, leading off Newport Road to the south, as follows:

- Nos 1-13, a terrace of thirteen Georgian style houses from c.1850. They were built as part of the development of the area following the opening of the railway in 1837.
- Nos 14, 15 and 16, a terrace of three Georgian style houses from c.1850. They were also built in response to the railway opening in 1837.



Above : Fig. 31
Terrace Tudor houses on Newport Road to the south of the site

Below : Fig. 32
Staffordshire County War Memorial



Local Context

Landscape and Biodiversity

Ecology

The Doxey and Tillington Marshes Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) is situated immediately across the West Coast Main Line to the north east of the site. The Baswich Meadows SSSI is approximately 3km to the east of the site. The Cannock Chase Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and SSSI lies approximately 6km to the south east of the site.

The entire site falls within SSSI impact risk zones.⁹

There are several local nature reserves (LNRs) near to the site:

- Kingsmead Marsh, 1km to the east;
- Riverside, 1.5km to the east;
- Astonfields Balancing Lakes, 1.7km to the north east; and
- Kingston Pool Covert, 2.5km to the east.

Landscape

There are no landscape designations affecting the site, however the Cannock Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty lies approximately 4.5km to the south east of the site.

Ground Conditions

The development area has an extensive industrial history dating back to at least the 1880s including an area of suspected landfill and various works and factories, all of which have the potential to have left behind a legacy of contamination and building foundations / slabs. Below ground is a protected groundwater aquifer and Doxey Drain crosses the site, both of which are protected and regulated by the Environment Agency (EA). Before any redevelopment can take place, it will be necessary to gain a detailed understanding of how potential contamination could affect those sensitive receptors and establish how to protect them. This information will also be required to demonstrate to the Environment Agency that the scheme will not have an adverse effect on water receptors, and also for planning condition discharge.

Before any redevelopment can be carried out it is critical to understand the ground conditions and remediation / ground improvement necessary to make the plots suitable for the proposed end uses. An intrusive ground investigation and the assessments which follow will unlock the area for redevelopment and enable progression of the Masterplan. Once each plot has been thoroughly characterised it can be de-risked by removing impediments to development such as contamination from previous activities and ground abnormalities such as residual building foundations and slabs.

On completion of the intrusive investigation, it will be possible to carry out contaminated land risk assessments and preliminary geotechnical design activities to de-risk the site and inform the future development proposals.

Remediation of the wider Masterplan area and preparation for development will enable long-term improvements to be realised; the Council will be able to promote the plots to developers and investors as a lower-risk proposition once the constraints identified following the ground investigation have been addressed. Advance works will also provide a sustained impact through the removal of blight, allowing the Council to realise a sustained positive impact by improving and enhancing the physical environment whilst unlocking significant socio-economic benefits.

Flood risk

The site is located within Flood Zones 2 and 3, as defined in the Environment Agency's fluvial flood risk mapping published online. To quantify the flood risk to the site more precisely, detailed hydraulic modelling of the Doxey Drain that traverses the site was undertaken. The modelling utilised hydraulic model data provided by both the Sow & Penk Internal Drainage Board and the EA. The results from the modelling confirmed that there is no risk of flooding to the site from Doxey Drain in the 1% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) event, which indicates that flood risk poses a lesser constraint to site development than previously thought. Further consultation with the EA will be required to validate these results.

9. Developments of more than 50 dwellings within the impact risk zone will need to consult with Natural England.

Local Context

Demographic and Socio-Economic Context

140,000

Population of Stafford Borough

Stafford Borough has a population of around 139,895 and this is expected to increase by 6.1% between 2021 and 2030, notably higher than regional and national growth rates. Household growth is also expected to rise by 7% over the same period, equating to an additional 4,242 households in the Borough.

6.1%

Anticipated growth in population between 2021 - 2030

Critically, Stafford has a higher-than-average number of people aged 55 and over, compared to the West Midlands and UK, albeit a younger demographic is present in the Town Centre. It is predicted that Stafford's proportion of over 55s is predicted to increase over the next 5 years, presenting a series of health, social and economic challenges for the Borough.

3%

Unemployment

Unemployment in Stafford is relatively low at 3%, compared to 5.1% for the West Midlands and 4.8% for the UK.

20%

Four of the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Stafford Borough are within the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England

19.5% of Stafford residents are employed as professionals, 13.4% as managers and directors, and 12.8% as associate professionals. Stafford outperforms the regional and national averages for skilled occupations, suggesting Stafford as a Borough is reasonably affluent. This is also reflected in the greater proportion of residents that hold a degree (34.1%), relative to the West Midlands (27.2%) and UK¹⁰ (31.2%).

However, four of the Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Stafford Borough are within the 20% most deprived neighbourhoods in England.¹¹ This suggests that despite a general affluence across the wider Borough, there are pockets of deprivation within Stafford's urban area that need to be addressed. More affluent households are likely to reside in larger detached dwellings in Stafford's rural environs.

10. Experian Estimates

11. Index of Multiple Deprivation (2019)

Local Context

Demographic and Socio-Economic Context

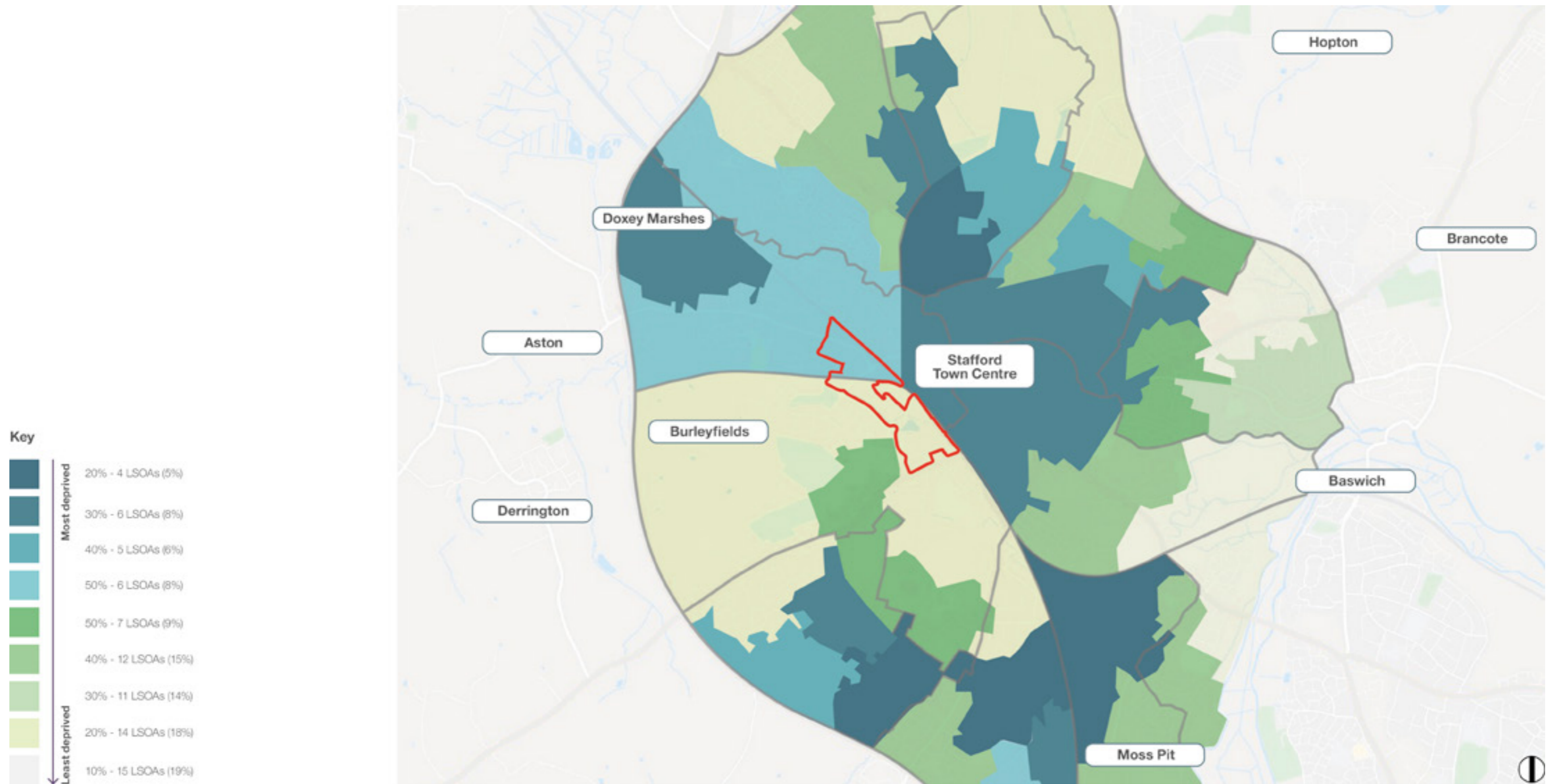


Fig. 33
Demographic and socio-economic context

Local Context Residential

37% of all properties in Stafford are detached properties, closely followed by semi-detached dwellings (32.7%). In the urban core, the majority of properties are flats and terraces. Properties in Stafford had an overall average price of £223,731 in 2021. This is slightly below the average value attained in Staffordshire of £235,000. Overall, sold prices in Stafford over the last year were 6% up on the previous year and 4% up on the 2019 peak of £215,946.

An analysis of sales transactions in Stafford for each residential property type over the last two years produces the values shown in Table 01.

Property Type	Typical Value (£/sq ft)	Typical Value (£)	New Build Value (£/ sq ft)	Resale value (£/ sq ft)
Detached	237	277,000	245	246
Semi-Detached	198	185,000	242	196
Terraced	169	156,000	220	166
Flat	216	146,000	250	201
All Property	202	202,000	237	198

Table 01
Residential property transactions in Stafford

Rental values

Data from Rightmove suggests the rents shown in Table 02 are typical for Stafford.

Property Type	Average Rent Achieved (£/pcm)
Detached	850-1250
Semi-Detached	675-950
Terraced	525-750
Flat	475-800

Table 02
Residential rental values in Stafford

Rental Demand

While Stafford as a local authority area has a relatively high degree of home ownership, Stafford town centre has a higher proportion of privately rented properties, in addition to some social rented housing. According to Mosaic data from Experian the town centre is dominated by 'Rental Hubs' which are characterised by educated young people privately renting in urban neighbourhoods.

Table 03 demonstrates that rental demand is strong within both Stafford as a whole and the ST16 postcode area, covering the town centre, the Gateway, and suburbs to the north of the town. The number of days on the market for both areas have decreased substantially over the past year (-30% on ST16 and -35% in Stafford) and number of new rental listing have increased over the same period (+11% in ST16 and +5% in Stafford).

It is expected that in 2025, Stafford town centre will comprise 23% rental properties, comprising 9% privately rented and 14% socially rented. The predicted growth rate for the Private Rented Sector (PRS) in Stafford is only 3%, compared to 16% for the UK. The Stafford Station Gateway site could represent an opportunity to change this and introducing new forms of tenure into Stafford.

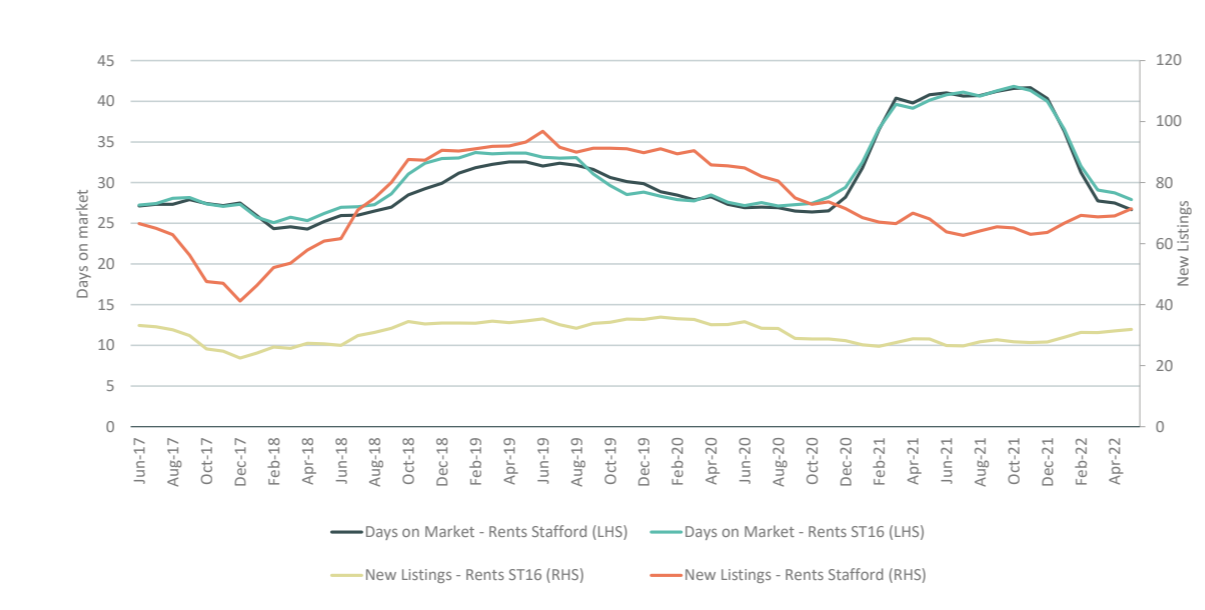


Table 03
Rental demands in Stafford

Local Context

Recent Housing Developments

There have been several housing developments in Stafford in recent years which have led to the Borough achieving around double its housing delivery target in 2020 and 2021.

Key

	Site Boundary		St Thomas Priory Baswich (Elan Homes) Up to 10 Homes
	Mallard Walk (Bailway Homes) Up to 140 Homes		Church View, Tixall Road (Redrow) Up to 70 Homes
	Kings Crest (Lovell Homes) Up to 60 Homes		Priory Park (Redrow) Up to 140 Homes
	Bagnall Meadows (St Modwen) Up to 80 Homes		Marston Grange (Taylor Wimpey) Up to 155 Homes
	Burkleyfields (Taylor Wimpey) Up to 195 Homes		
	The Fairways (St Modwen) Up to 210 Homes		
	St Georges Mansions (Shropshire Homes) Up to 105 Homes		
	Baswich Grange (Bellway) Up to 30 Homes		



Fig. 34
Location of recent housing developments

Local Context

Office / Retail

Office

Occupational Market

The Stafford office stock is comprised of lower grade, secondary space although out-of-town space performs well compared to the town centre, where based on transactional evidence rents between £8-10 per sq ft are possible.

The Staffordshire Technology Park dominates the out-of-town office sector and is the premier office park in Stafford, achieving rents between £11-12 per sq ft. The Technology park sits alongside the Beacon Business Park, while Stafford Enterprise Park immediately to the South is an expanding mixed-use business park operated by New Beacon Group, with asking rents of £15 per sq ft.

Serviced office space can achieve up to £215 pcm for a dedicated desk and private office suites fetching £55 per sq ft. The most recent new build office development in Stafford is Staffordshire Place which was completed in 2011 for Staffordshire County Council's requirements, which is occupied by Wolverhampton University, Stafford Library, iProspect, Verso Lounge and the Liquor Tank.

Investment Market

Stafford's investment market is relatively weak, especially from institutional investors, stemming from a lack of good quality space and low rents being achieved in the town and lack of a strong occupier market.

Due to Covid-19 office yields nationally have been pushed out by 0.5-1% to reflect increased risk and weakening sentiment in secondary regional office space. It is expected that across the UK, Environmental, Social and Governance issues will become more critical as occupiers focus on acquiring the highest quality, greenest buildings available, leading to further divergence between prime and secondary stock.
Opportunities

There are over 5,000 micro businesses in Stafford, which provides an opportunity to explore alternative and more innovative workspace options for Stafford Station Gateway, including the conversion of shipping containers, the creation of co-working spaces, and temporary and pop-up activation/placemaking space. This approach aligns with a shift towards curating great 'work experiences' through integrated space, technology and services.

Retail

Stafford has broadly the expected volume and quality of retail provision, given the size and affluence of the shopping population.

Retail vacancy rates at Q2 2021 was at 26% of town centre units, reflecting a marked increase since 2019. COVID-19 will have accelerated the increase in store closures, which has been a long-term trend across the UK.

Town centre retail rents are between £15-20 per sq ft. Prime Unit yields have been shifting outwards markedly in recent years, although there are now signs of gradual improvement.

Local Context

Hotel

Stafford has a small supply of hotels, totalling around 600 rooms. Branded hotels account for around two-thirds of the existing stock, with the largest being the Holiday Inn Express at 103 rooms.

The only 4-star hotel in the Stafford area is The Moat House at Acton Trussell, a village outside of the town. The majority of the existing stock is three-star accommodation ranging from £30-90 per night and rooms ranging from basic to mid-range finishes.

The two dominant limited-service hotel operators in the market are Travelodge and Premier Inn. Both of these operators would enter into leases and the rent levels are generally analysed on a rent per room basis. The rental range would be £3,500 - £5,500 per bed, dependent upon the location i.e provincial versus city centre. Travelodge have traditionally been at the lower end with Premier Inn towards the upper end, both of which are lease operators and would require a development delivered to their current brand standards. The lease structures would be on an RPI basis subject to a collar and cap.

A hotel at Stafford Station Gateway would be regarded as a significant demand generator due to its close proximity to the station, with demand likely to be driven also by the prospects of HS2 and the delivery of the commercial uses. Taking into account the specific location the rental range would be between £3,500 - £5,000 per bed.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Town Centre Boundary
-  Hotel

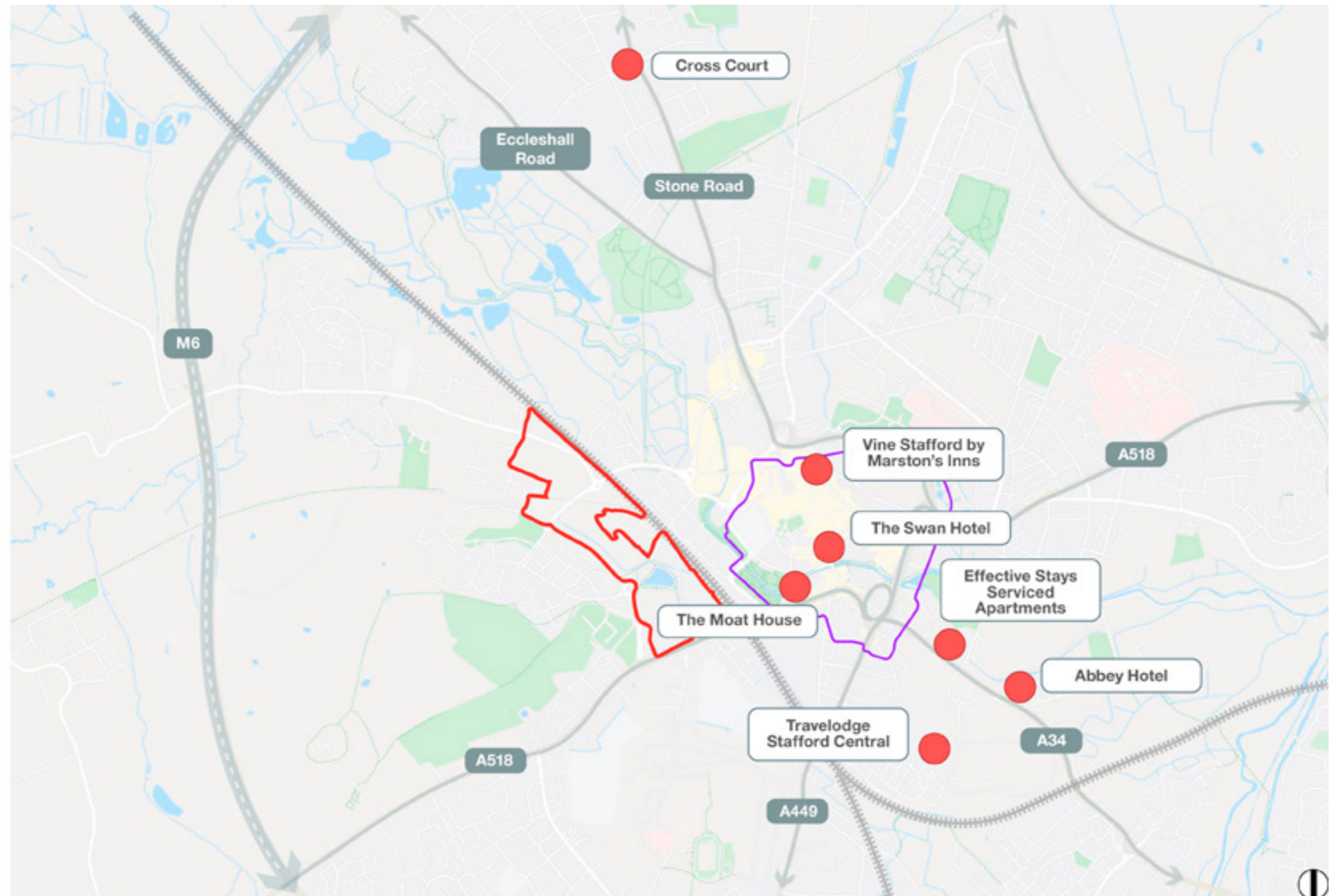


Fig. 35
Location of hotels close to the Stafford Station Gateway

The Vision

'By 2040 Stafford Station Gateway will be a thriving, vibrant new community within Stafford Town Centre where people want to live, work and visit, conveniently connected to Stafford Railway Station, and providing access to Staffordshire, the Midlands and beyond.'

Stafford Station Gateway will sustainably connect existing and emerging communities to the west, with the town centre and railway station, and provide high-quality amenities, workspaces and active green and blue spaces and public realm to deliver an exemplar low-carbon development for Stafford. This will provide a very different, yet complementary offer, to the housing sites that have been developed in and around the town over recent years and provide a link to and from them.

'By providing this variation, the Gateway will draw new people into Stafford, appealing to families and young professionals, businesses and occupiers, seeking to benefit from the connectivity of the place, but also from the vibrancy and amenity on offer, which in turn will encourage innovation and creativity'

The Vision

The Draft Strategic Regeneration Framework sets out a strong vision for delivering transformational change, and one which is supported by a series of strategic objectives and overarching development principles to ensure high-quality place making and sustainable economic growth is achieved.

Strategic Objectives

Four strategic objectives have been prepared to help deliver this vision. These have been informed by the local and regional context and national and local planning policy, as well as the constraints and opportunities of the site.

Strategic Objective 1 - A New Western Gateway for Stafford

- Delivering transformational regeneration that extends Stafford Town Centre and increases its vitality, improves connectivity and diversifies the offer of Stafford as a major regional centre.
- Capitalising on the arrival of HS2 and wider rail improvements by providing a new hub that attracts inward investment and provides a new destination for people to live and work.
- Linking into existing and new western residential suburbs providing improved connectivity between Burleyfields, Castlefields, Stafford Railway Station and Stafford Town Centre.
- Improving movement, permeability and connectivity and encouraging sustainable modes of transport, walking and cycling.

Strategic Objective 2 – A Place to Live, Work & Relax

- Creating a mix of uses that complement the Town Centre and support the type and scale of uses to deliver positive growth within Stafford.
- Creating a place which is not only a destination where people go to work, but one with a distinct identity that offers an integrated approach to living, working and relaxing.
- Catalysing regeneration and delivering a new regionally significant destination which can attract and retain new talent, skills and jobs.
- Providing a hotbed for innovation and start-up industry and providing flexible workspace.
- Providing complementary retail and leisure uses to deliver attractive amenities for those living and working within the Stafford Station Gateway area as well as benefiting existing communities and supporting the uses within the town centre.
- Delivering high quality market and affordable homes to meet the needs of Stafford and to complement emerging strategic growth areas.
-

Strategic Objective 3 – A Quality of Place Built on Natural and Physical Assets

- Delivering outstanding public realm that builds upon and brings to life existing unique natural assets, including green and blue infrastructure.
- Providing green spaces and open space that sets the Gateway within its unique landscape setting, promoting a quality of place and encouraging internal connectivity, as well as extending links to surrounding communities, the railway station and the heart of the town centre.
- To provide open spaces, amenities and shared uses that build on the landscape strengths of the Gateway.
- Integrating the area's green and blue infrastructure with connectivity, accessibility, and movement through the Gateway and beyond.

Strategic Objective 4 – A Place that puts Sustainability at its Heart

- Delivering a holistic new quarter of Stafford that places sustainability at its heart and responds to the challenge of the climate emergency.
- Embedding exemplar sustainable policy and principles into planning decision making and ensuring the development of the Gateway leads the way for sustainable development in Stafford, embracing net zero carbon opportunities and passive design.
- Integrating social value into the fabric of the Gateway and ensure that its' future development delivers social capital.
-

Development Principles

The Draft Strategic Regeneration Framework outlines a proposed spatial framework to implement the Stafford Station Gateway vision and strategic objectives.

Once adopted, the SRF will guide development across the Gateway area over the next 15-20 years.

A series of overarching development principles have been proposed to identify the key influences and considerations as development comes forward across the Stafford Station Gateway area.



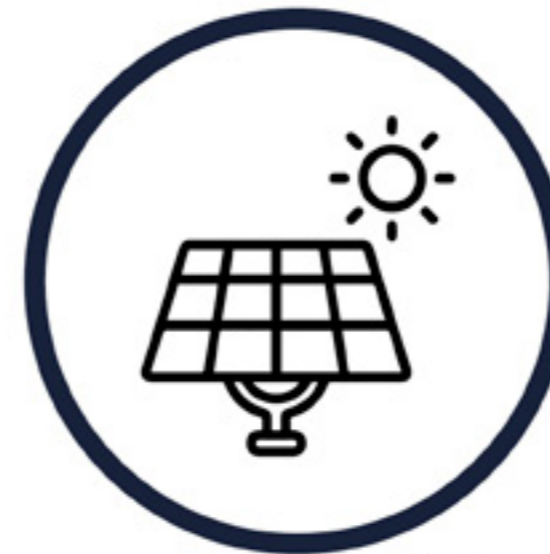
Development Principle 1
A Diverse and Growing Town Centre



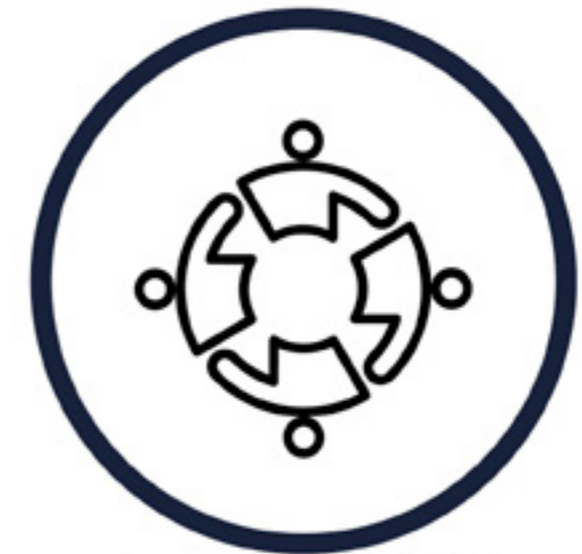
Development Principle 2
A Connected Stafford



Development Principle 3
Delivering a High-Quality Place for Live and Work



Development Principle 4
Promoting a Sustainable New Neighbourhood



Development Principle 5
People, Community and Driving Social Value

Development Principles

Development Principle 1 – A Diverse and Growing Town Centre



Development Principle 1 A Diverse and Growing Town Centre

Stafford Station Gateway in time will become part of Stafford Town Centre, and as such needs to complement and support the amenities and uses already on offer within the Primary Shopping Area, but also provide sufficient scale and mix of uses which equally will attract future residents and workers in the Gateway area and meet the needs of the existing and growing nearby communities.

The proposed mix of uses put forward within the Stafford Station Gateway site is ambitious, but rooted in a robust understanding of market feasibility. It has been based on a market needs analysis undertaken by CBRE but is flexible enough to adapt to future market change, and development parcels can be amended to suit new requirements. There will be a focus on creating a mix of uses to complement the Town Centre and support the type and scale of uses to delivering positive growth within Stafford. It is this principle that guides the relative mix of housing, leisure, and commercial uses across the site.

Strengthen the identity of the Town Centre

Stafford town centre has a rich history with an abundance of heritage assets demonstrating the town's evolution. One of Stafford's primary strengths is drawing on this heritage to create an attractive and visually interesting focal point for residents of the town and the surrounding area. Stafford Station Gateway offers an opportunity to build on these strengths by creating a place which is not only a destination for work, but one with a distinct identity that offers an integrated approach to living, working and relaxing.

Supporting Growth Sectors and Innovation

Stafford has a strong baseline for business and industry, with several multinational firms specialising in advanced manufacturing and technology. Stafford Station Gateway will become a hotbed for innovation and industry start-ups, with the provision of flexible workspaces helping to achieve this. A key focus will be to create and deliver a new regionally significant destination which can attract and retain new talent, skills and jobs that are linked to educational institutions across Staffordshire and can provide opportunities for young people entering the jobs market.

Complement Town Centre Uses

Stafford Station Gateway needs to complement and not compete with existing Town Centre uses, with the focus of traditional retail provision within the Primary Shopping Area. The area will focus on providing retail and leisure uses to deliver attractive amenities for those living and working within the Stafford Station Gateway area as well as benefiting existing communities and supporting the uses within the town centre.

Opportunity for Live and Work

Stafford Station Gateway offers an exciting opportunity to expand on the typical suburban style housing provision available within the town. A wider range of apartments and townhouses will facilitate urban lifestyles, made possible by the proximity of Stafford Station and the range of town centre facilities available nearby. The inclusion of a diversity of housing typologies, for instance live-work units, will be attractive to a broader demographic. Delivering high quality market and affordable homes will help to meet the needs of Stafford and to complement emerging strategic growth areas.

Development Principles

Development Principle 2 – A Connected Stafford



Development Principle 2

A Connected Stafford

Stafford Station Gateway should capitalise on, and further enhance, the excellent transport connectivity that the town of Stafford currently enjoys.

Enhancing Local Connectivity

This connectivity is perhaps best exemplified best by the rail station and the proximity to the M6, however it also highlights the perceived tendency for residents of Stafford to look to leave the town for leisure and employment opportunities, and that the provision of enhanced transport connections more locally can help to encourage residents to spend more time within the town. Stafford is also well positioned to benefit from future improvements in digital connectivity, building on a strong legacy of IT start ups and its central location. The delivery of such enhancements ensures that the SRF vision is futureproofed for the post pandemic world.

Active Travel

The development needs to create the right environment and provide the opportunities for local people to travel short distances using sustainable modes of travel, in particular walking and cycling. Stafford town is a relatively compact urban area, and the Stafford Station Gateway site is within comfortable walking distance of the key retail and commercial offerings within the town centre. Stafford Station Gateway is not a peripheral site that would be badged as an 'urban extension,' rather it is at the very heart of, and a key driver for town centre regeneration.

A New Station Entrance

In terms of public transport, the opportunity to add a new entrance to Stafford Station to the west of the railway line in the heart of the Stafford Station Gateway site could be transformative to the western part of the town and will underpin the opportunity to develop this part of the site. Encouraging a broader residential catchment to have the opportunity to benefit from the excellent rail links provided by both the West Coast Mainline and more local routes, will be key.

Bus Services

The Stafford Station Gateway provides an opportunity to consider re-routing existing or operating new bus services into this part of the town. This could reduce some of the congestion buses experience on the eastern side of the railway and could result in some journey time savings for bus services from the west.

Streets for People

Walking and cycling will be a key feature of the streets and placemaking principles within the Stafford Station Gateway site. Whilst recognising a need to provide appropriate car parking so as not to hinder the viability of the residential and commercial proposals, it is considered essential from a placemaking and well-being perspective to ensure that the streets internal to the site are designed for people, not for cars. Low speed, narrow internal streets are proposed, with pedestrians and cyclists afforded greater priority, in accordance with recent changes to the Highway Code.

Development Principles

Development Principle 3 – Delivering a High-Quality Place for Live and Work



Development Principle 3 Delivering a High-Quality Place for Live and Work

There is the opportunity to create a holistic approach to home and work life. In this area of Stafford with a new model for providing spaces for an innovative community to thrive, and for businesses and families to grow, with a focus on a walkable neighbourhood, that provides more than just work, and more than just homes.

Character

Central to the development of the masterplan is to create distinct neighbourhoods that people can feel proud of and feel a sense of ownership of. These will be underpinned by the historic fabric of the site and context alongside the emerging uses.

There is the opportunity to create a holistic approach to home and work life. In this area of Stafford with a new model for providing spaces for an innovative community to thrive, and for businesses and families to grow, with a focus on a walkable neighbourhood, that provides more than just work, and more than just homes.

There are several key assets within the site that not only capture a part of the character of Stafford but enhance the development by creating moments of familiarity and grounding. The study area also benefits from mature trees, that help to define edges and enhance key amenity spaces.

Amenities

The study area is sited in a central zone that can knit into the existing urban fabric and look to make connections beyond the red line, stitching communities back together and uniting the town across the railway tracks. The aim is to create a thriving, active community with a range of uses that embrace its unique location.

New hubs of commercial and creative activity can be established by leveraging the strengths of Stafford and addressing any challenges. It is expected that the economic activity that flows in will increase with the arrival of HS2 - including job opportunities, additional retail spending, and vibrancy throughout the day and evening. This will help reinvigorate the town and make it a place worth spending time in and a destination of choice.

The site benefits from having the lake at its centre, and by enhancing this with an engaging, connected public realm - one which is interactive, playful, unique, and attractive to a diverse range of citizens - will have both direct and indirect benefits. Creating better spaces has a direct impact on the well-being of residents, from physical benefits such as improved air quality, wind mitigation, access to sunlight/daylight etc. to benefits to one's mental well-being, such as perception of safety and sense of civic pride. Indirect benefits include the potential positive impact on the local economy through increased footfall.

Design

The development will provide an appropriate quantum of housing to support both Stafford Borough Council; Staffordshire County Council; and the site's viability targets, with high-quality, sustainable design at its core.

The SRF seeks to deliver a diverse mix of housing typologies and tenures to promote socio-economic equality and inclusion. All housing delivered across the study area is to demonstrate excellence in design quality.

In accordance with SBC Local Plan policy the following will be required:

Affordable Housing

The scheme is to deliver an appropriate quantum of affordable housing on site, with a target minimum of 30% of all units provided on site being affordable tenures. Development viability will be taken into account when establishing the actual quantum of affordable housing to be delivered on a plot by plot basis, though the start point should be to ensure a policy compliant scheme.

Unit Sizes

The scheme is to contribute to meeting local household needs by providing a mix of dwellings sizes as required by local evidence. Given the nature and location of the study area adjacent to the town centre with excellent public transport access and connectivity, the development has the opportunity to champion sustainable living and active travel. Units should be designed to Nationally described space standards as a minimum.

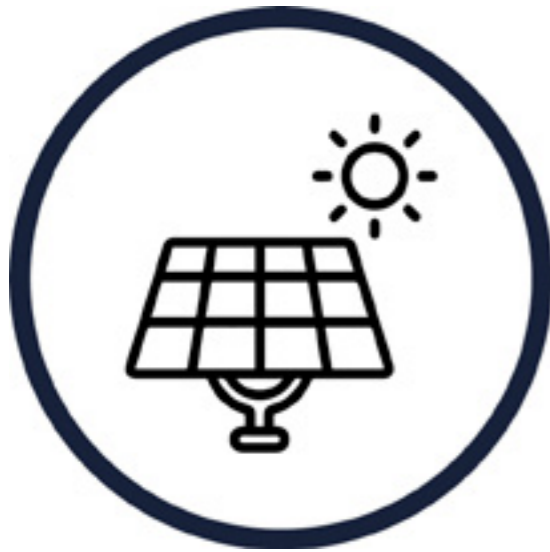
Making beautiful, sustainable places to live and work also means creating places that feel at home with their surroundings, while also pushing the boundaries of design. The site hosts existing buildings and amenity spaces that will anchor the development into Stafford, such as the green and blue infrastructure across the study area; the lake and the Doxey brook.

Scale and Massing

The arrival of HS2, and levelling up agenda across the region places Stafford in a strong position to capitalise on its excellent transport links. There is an opportunity to provide a window into Stafford for train users that shows the ambition of the town, the entrepreneurial spirit the strong history and a future underpinned by innovation. The scale, materiality and texture described across the masterplan seek to reflect the long history of the town whilst introducing a range of contemporary yet complimentary references.

Development Principles

Development Principle 4 – Promoting a Sustainable New Neighbourhood



Development Principle 4

Promoting a Sustainable

New Neighbourhood

Stafford Borough Council declared a climate change emergency on 23rd July 2019 and have a Climate Change and Green Recovery Strategy (2020-2040) and 'A Green Future: Our 25 year plan' to set out the role that the Council will play in delivering key targets.

Putting the green-blue infrastructure on centre stage

The Doxey Brook currently exists as a small drain, culverted north of the SWAR underneath the now-demolished Saint Gobain factory and lost in the undergrowth in its straight man-made channel in the central plot.

The Doxey Brook offers a chance to provide a beautiful, unique residential setting in Stafford, whilst also helping to mitigate flooding issues on the site through widening, lengthening and naturalisation. Moving the Doxey Brook to wind its way through the centre of the north and central plots maximises the impact of the waterway, both for the well-being of residents and for its flood storage and drainage capacity.

Embrace existing and create new high-quality open space

One of the driving principles of the masterplan is to weave green spaces into the full extent of the site, through all of the uses. The site currently has an established variety of mature trees and planting, especially around the lake, although there are several areas of low-quality foliage which will need to be improved. In addition to this, the bowling club in the south and the former cricket pitch in the north provide the opportunity for leisure and sports. Enhancing these existing green and blue assets, the SRF proposes further green open spaces, ranging from small pocket parks to larger linear and brook-side parks. These can provide a variety of spaces for play, leisure and movement.

Knit the existing and proposed greenspaces together

The re-routed Doxey Brook knits the existing assets and the new proposed green spaces together, providing a walk-able route along the whole length of the site, that champions sustainable modes of transport and provides safe, quiet routes from the north and west to the station and town centre.

These more formal green spaces are supported with areas designed to provide shelter and a green fringe that supports and enhances the biodiversity of the site. For example, the banks of the SWAR are fully planted, as are the pockets adjacent to Palmbourne Estate.

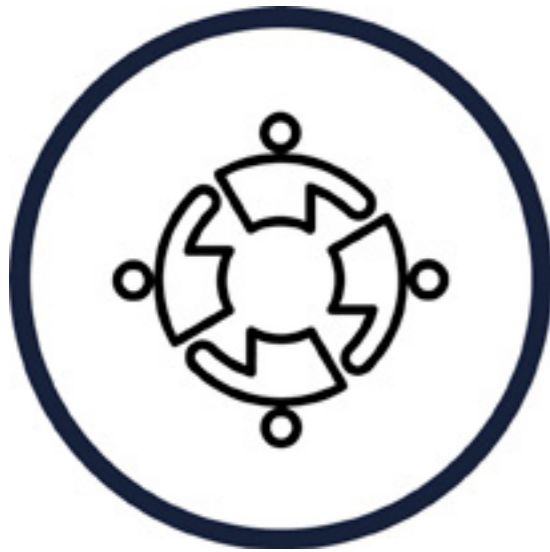
Responding to the Climate Change Emergency

Stafford Borough Council declared a climate change emergency on 23rd July 2019 and have a Climate Change and Green Recovery Strategy (2020-2040) and 'A Green Future: Our 25 year plan' to set out the role that the Council will play in delivering key targets. Stafford Station Gateway needs therefore to respond to these principles and for all new development, proposals will need to demonstrate efficient use of resources (both in terms of construction and operationally); incorporate water efficient features; follow the principles of the energy hierarchy; and seek to incorporate sustainable design features where this is feasible.

New development will need to ensure energy use is minimised and to maximise the opportunity for on-site renewables.

Development Principles

Development Principle 5 – People, Community and Driving Social Value



Development Principle 5 People, Community and Driving Social Value

Stafford Station Gateway presents an exceptional opportunity to establish a new hub for communities in and around Stafford, drawing on the existing strengths of the town and its people. The site's location close to the existing heart of the county town is conveniently accessible for residents, workers and visitors, and will serve as a natural growth of the town centre to the west.

Community and social value

A key driver of the SRF is to ensure that Stafford Station Gateway delivers a welcoming place for individuals to gather and feel part of a beneficial community. Stafford's people are a huge asset to the town, and the Gateway provides an opportunity to give back to the town's communities by ensuring that they have spaces to utilise and take pride in. The Gateway will provide homes, modern workspaces, and convenient retail and community facilities. This will particularly benefit those in the west of the town by bringing town centre amenities within easier reach.

Culture and creativity

The Gateway will be a hub of cultural and creative value for Stafford, hosting local businesses, artists and entrepreneurs. Stafford has a rich history of industry and education, which the Gateway seeks to facilitate further. The new neighbourhood will be an inspiring, engaging place to live, work and spend time in, fostering the creativity of Stafford's residents.

Educational excellence






The existing educational assets within and around the Gateway site form a key part of the development of the area. Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group's Construction & Engineering courses are delivered from their Palmbourne Construction & Skills Centre, within the Gateway site, while the main Stafford campus is a stone's throw away. The proposals represent an excellent opportunity to develop the skills and experience of local students and help to inspire a young generation.

A place to enjoy

The new housing proposed as part of the SRF will create a natural captive population who are likely to spend time within the area, both as a local destination in its own right and while passing through to other places. These residents will be joined by workers and visitors during the daytime, adding to the feeling of the area as a vibrant destination and ensuring the vitality of public spaces and businesses. In particular, the blue and green infrastructure and the new western entrance to Stafford Station will act as key drivers for people to linger in and enjoy the Gateway.

Development Principles

Requirements for Development Proposals

Development principle	Requirements for development proposals
<p>Development Principle 1 A Diverse and Growing Town Centre</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complement and support the amenities and uses already on offer within the town centre. - Provide sufficient scale and mix of uses to attract future residents and workers. - Meet the needs of the existing and growing nearby communities. - Create a place with a distinct identity that offers an integrated approach to living, working and relaxing. - Deliver a new regionally significant destination which can attract and retain new talent. - Focus on providing retail and leisure uses to deliver attractive amenities. - A diversity of housing typologies, for instance live-work units; a wider range of apartments and townhouses; and both market and affordable homes.
<p>Development Principle 2 A Connected Stafford</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Capitalise on and further enhance Stafford's excellent transport connectivity. - Provide enhanced local transport connections to help to encourage residents to spend more time within the town. - Provide the opportunities for local people to travel short distances using sustainable modes of travel, in particular walking and cycling. - Add a new entrance to Stafford Station to the west of the railway line. - Consider re-routing existing or operating new bus services within and around the Gateway. - Ensure that the streets internal to the site are designed for people, not for cars.
<p>Development Principle 3 Delivering a High-Quality Place for Live and Work</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Create distinct neighbourhoods that people can feel proud of and a sense of ownership over. - Develop spaces for the innovative community to thrive, and for businesses and families to grow. - Knit into the existing urban fabric and look to make connections beyond the red line. - Build on existing strengths such as the central lake, and enhancing these through engaging, connected public realm, which is interactive, playful and unique. - Ensure a minimum of 30% of all units provided on site are affordable tenures, taking into account development viability. - Make beautiful, sustainable places to live and work that feel at home with their surroundings, while also pushing the boundaries of design. - Capture the history of the town through scale, materiality and texture whilst introducing more contemporary uses and forms.
<p>Development Principle 4 Promoting a Sustainable New Neighbourhood</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maximise the impact of the Doxey Brook, both for the well-being of residents and for its flood storage and drainage capacity. - Enhance existing green and blue assets, weaving open spaces into the full extent of the site to provide for play, leisure and movement, while supporting the biodiversity of the site. - Provide safe, quiet routes from the north and west to the station and town centre. - Demonstrate efficient use of resources in both construction and operation, following the principles of the energy hierarchy. - Incorporate sustainable design features wherever feasible, ensuring energy use is minimised.
<p>Development Principle 5 People, Community and Driving Social Value</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a new hub for communities in and around Stafford, drawing on the existing strengths of the town and its people. - Deliver a welcoming place for individuals to gather and feel part of a beneficial community. - Introduce a hub of cultural and creative value for Stafford, hosting local businesses, artists and entrepreneurs. - Utilise the existing nearby educational assets to develop the skills and experience of local students and help to inspire a young generation. - Create a natural captive population who are likely to spend time within the area, ensuring the vitality of public spaces and businesses.

Character Zones

Overview

An illustrative masterplan has been prepared to inform and shape future development within the Stafford Station Gateway area, building on the development principles as previously articulated. Flexibility is built into the proposals, to be responsive to market changes as the development progresses.

The masterplan divides Stafford Station Gateway into seven Character Zones, reflecting on the different scale, character, and uses proposed within each zone. These Character Zones reflect the site's historical context, helping to anchor the masterplan into its context and into Stafford.



Fig. 36
Character areas in the Stafford Station Gateway



Character Zones

Indicative Masterplan for the Stafford Station Gateway Area

An illustrative masterplan has been prepared to inform and shape future development within the Stafford Station Gateway area.

Flexibility is built into the proposals, to be responsive to market changes as the development progresses.

The masterplan seeks to unite the entire study area and Character Zones, through an approach to urban flood resilience that creates a quilt of blue-green infrastructure which in turn, supports and enhances the urban realm.

Residential neighbourhoods are designed to be at a tighter density than the developments further to the west, but less dense than the historic, terraced station houses to the east. This is designed to intensify those front-door moments, create closer communities and maximise the impact of the green infrastructure.

Closer to the Station Gateway, the masterplan adopts a mixed-use approach, embedding smaller makers' terraces and units into the masterplan that benefit from flexible, dual frontage - providing the opportunity for a shopfront/ showcase window and separate rear access for deliveries, depending on tenants' requirements.

By linking into Stafford Station, the masterplan provides interconnectivity from/to the north and west. The arrival of HS2 is likely to increase footfall through the station, and the Station Gateway accommodates this by utilising wider gauge roads and the provision of a multi-storey car park north of the station. Nevertheless, the masterplan seeks to encourage and promote sustainable modes of traffic, by prioritising pedestrian and cycle movement across the study area.

This is achieved using a variety of techniques:

- Deploying narrow road gauges outside of the main gateway area
- Introducing a variety of surface treatments to create a movement hierarchy
- Avoiding the provision of 'short-cuts' across the site for vehicles
- Making the connection through to Castle Street from the Station Gateway a bus-only route
- Bridging across and through character areas and development plots more frequently with pedestrian and cyclist only routes
- Ensuring there are no cul-de-sacs or bottle necks
- Introducing cycle highways to the south of the site, to connect into the National Cycle Network west of Kingsway, and provide faster routes to the station and to Newport Road
-

Character Zones

Indicative Masterplan for the Stafford Station Gateway Area



Key

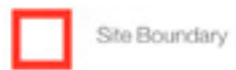


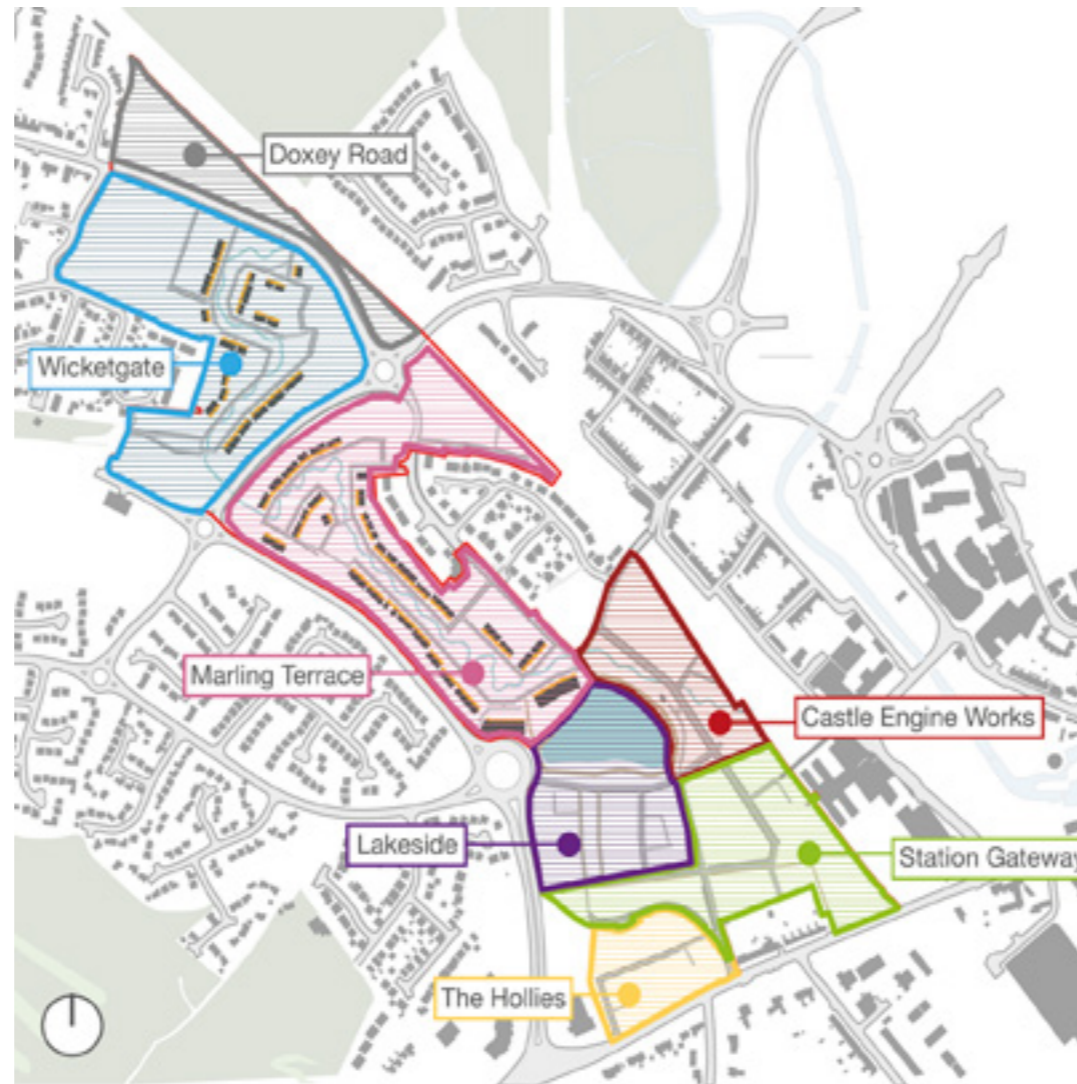
Fig. 37
Indicative masterplan for Stafford Station Gateway

Character Zones

Urban Design Principals

Central to the development of the SRF was creating distinct neighbourhoods that people could feel proud of and feel an ownership of. These were developed from the historic fabric of the site alongside the emerging uses, and their names reflect this.

The study area has a number of existing pedestrian routes, but these often don't link through to the surrounding network. The masterplan takes the existing threads of cycling and pedestrian networks and weaves them together to provide green, safe routes across the site that prioritise these users, and links into the wider town network.



Create distinct character areas



Define routes and establish links for pedestrians and cyclists

Character Zones

Urban Design Principals

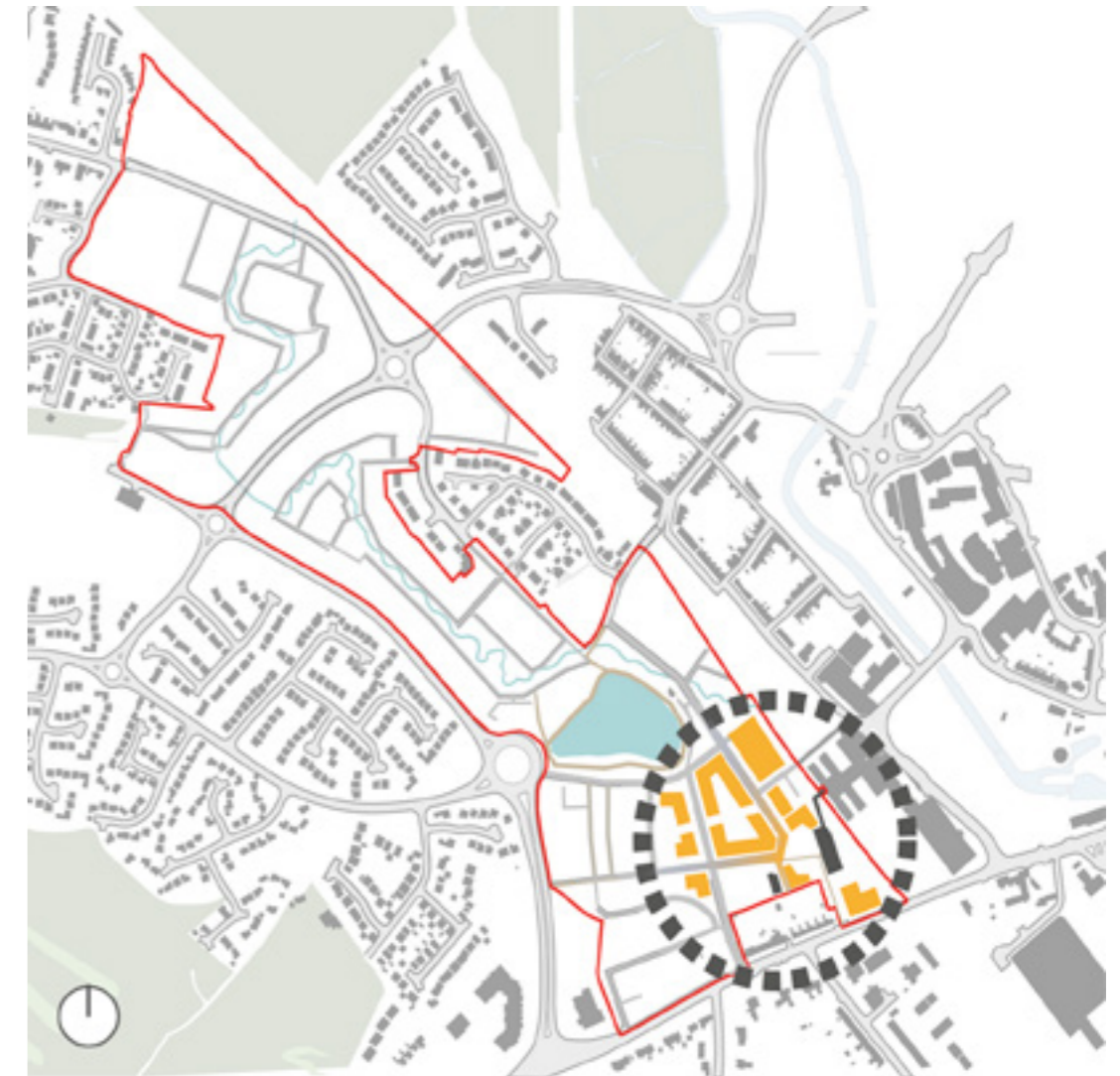
Making beautiful, sustainable places to live and work also means creating places that feel at home with their surroundings, while also pushing the boundaries of design.

The study area hosts a number of existing buildings and amenity spaces that anchor the masterplan into Stafford. One of these anchors is the green infrastructure across the site: the existing mature trees, established tree belts, the lake and brook. These have been preserved, retained, and enhanced wherever possible.

The new Station Gateway naturally forms a focal point, however the retail, civic and commercial functions aren't isolated to this area, and instead radiate outwards from it - drawing people into the site and welcoming both residents and visitors to the Gateway.



Anchor the masterplan by retaining and celebrating the existing assets



Distribute retail, civic and commercial functions along proposed key routes to activate the approach to the station

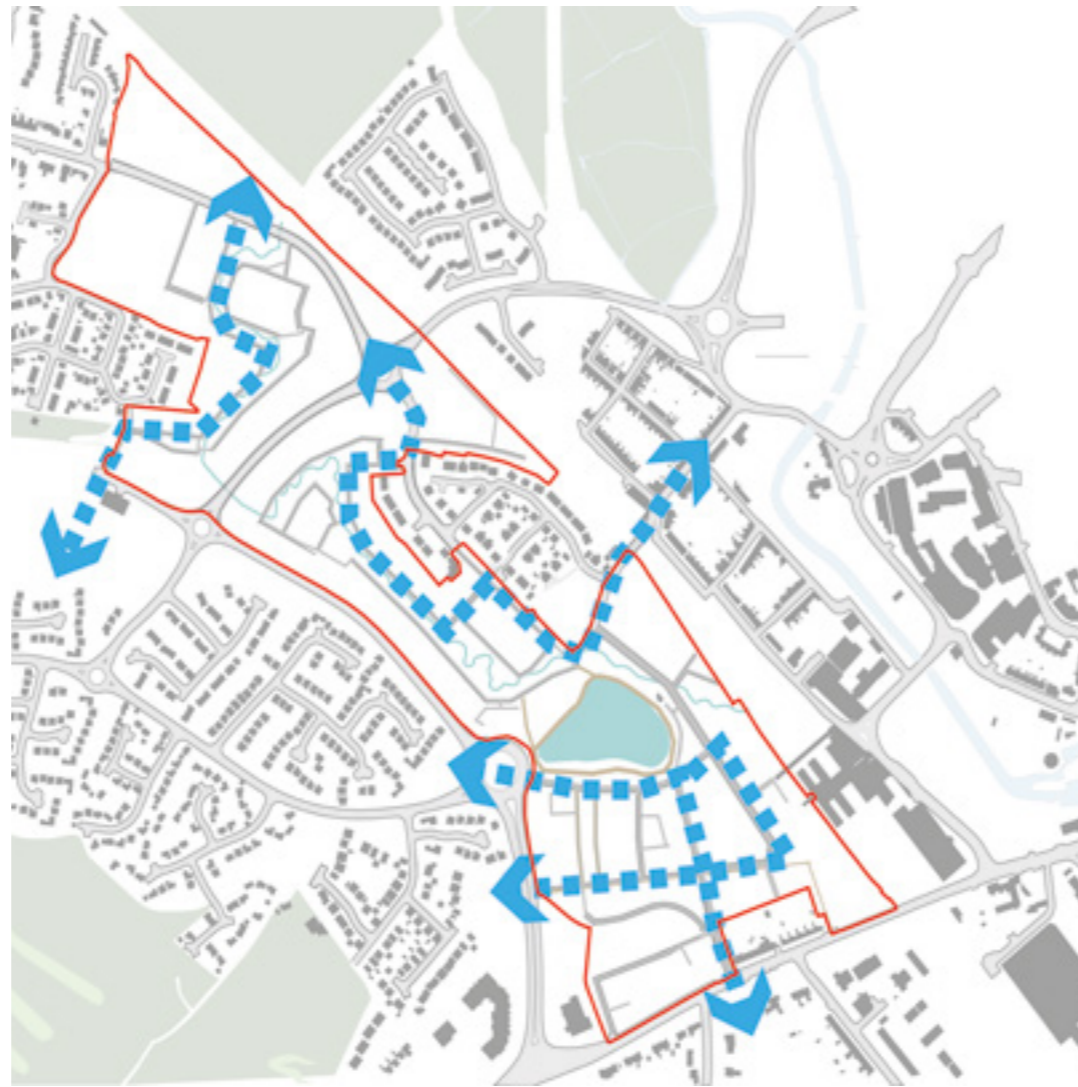
Character Zones

Urban Design Principals

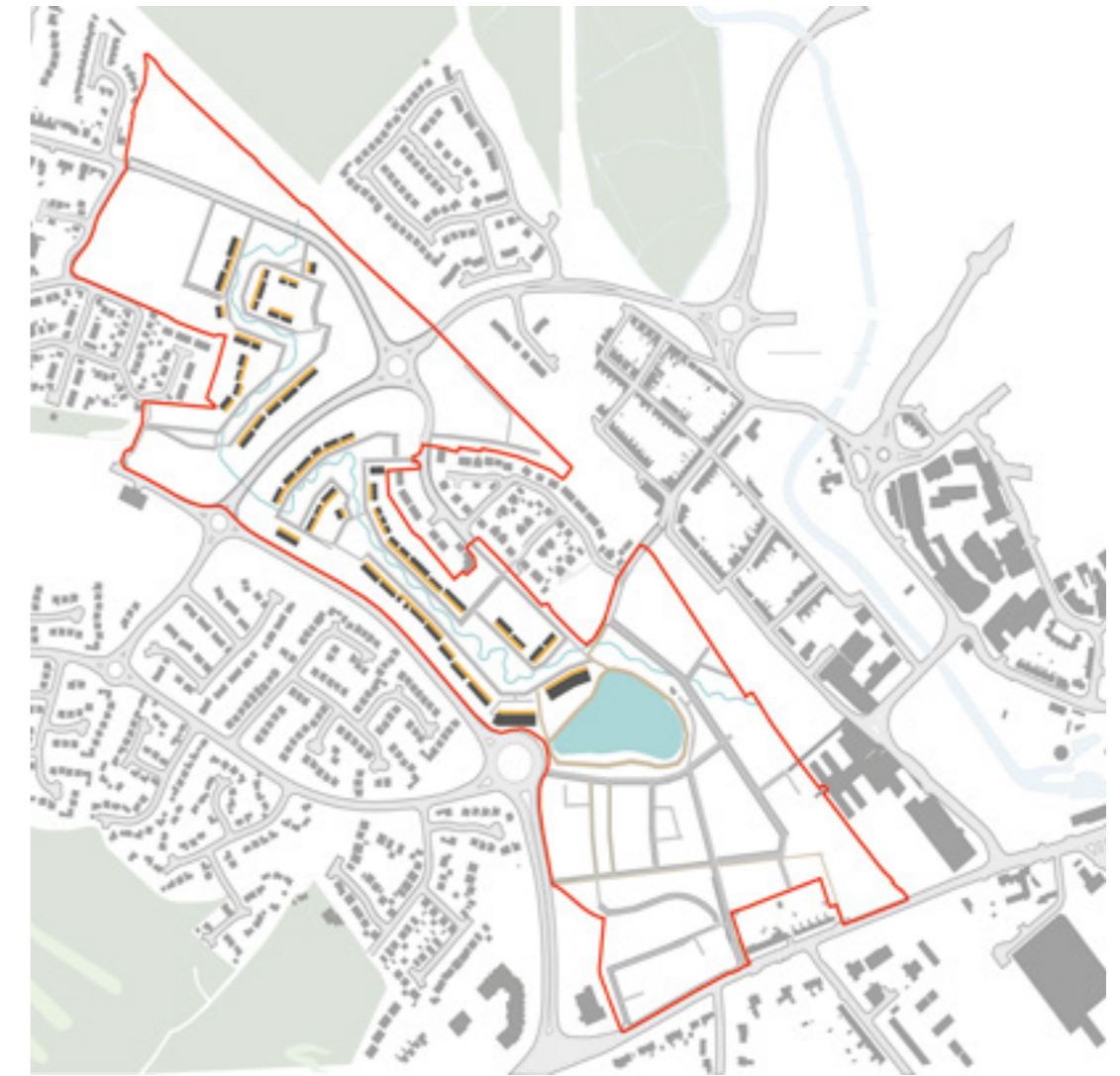
While sustainable modes of transport are championed and encouraged through the masterplan's infrastructure, cars are accommodated across the masterplan, carefully utilising road widths, surface treatments, and carriage layouts to control, direct and slow traffic moving through the site.

This helps form a movement hierarchy that prioritises cyclists and pedestrians over vehicles, without excluding them from the site.

The brook becomes a unique and integrated part of the study area, which is fully utilised by both maximising the number of properties fronting the brook and also providing brook-side open green spaces.



Improve, simplify and clarify a new vehicular network across the site



Create an active edge along the Doxey Brook through a high quality, residential offer

Station Gateway



Castle Engineering Works

Character Zones

Station Gateway - Introduction

The Station Gateway champions a commercial-led, mixed-use approach, retaining the Royal Mail Depot Building as an existing historic asset in which to promote an innovative new community of start-ups that looks to anchor the commercial offering in the south of the study area.

There are opportunities for a varied mix of uses to incorporate a variety of social and community infrastructure, particularly at ground floor level. The Station Gateway has an opportunity to create active frontages across its extent, throughout the day and evening, as people move from their homes to work, retail, cafés and back. Homes are anticipated as a mix of typologies to attract a new community, including apartments and ground floor townhouses that look to support a contemporary, urban lifestyle for residents. The Station Gateway Character Zone provides an opportunity for Stafford to establish a medium to higher density pocket of development in the most accessible location to support a diverse and growing population.

The Station Gateway supports a range of building heights, including taller buildings in strategic locations to mark the new access point to Stafford Station. These serve as local landmarks and beacons to assist legibility across the study area and help residents and visitors navigate the Gateway intuitively.

Existing assets, the Royal Mail Depot Building and Stafford Crown Green Bowling Club should be retained, sensitively integrated as part of any new development and complemented by improved, surrounding public realm.



Fig. 38
Key plan for Stafford Station Gateway



Fig. 39
Aerial view for Stafford Station Gateway

Character Zones

Station Gateway - Quantum of Development

Character Zone Area

3.7 Ha

Residential Development Plots

1.5 Ha

Number of homes

Up to 320

Hotel

Up to 80 keys












GIA of non-residential space (Commercial/F&B/small-scale retail, leisure and community uses):

Up to 6,500 sqm/70,000 sqft

Density (dwellings/hectare)

213

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Station Gateway Boundary
-  Residential development boundary
-  Residential
-  Commercial/Workplaces/retail/F&B
-  Retained and Refurbished existing buildings
-  MSCP
-  Grade A office
-  Station Entrance
-  Hotel
-  Active frontage

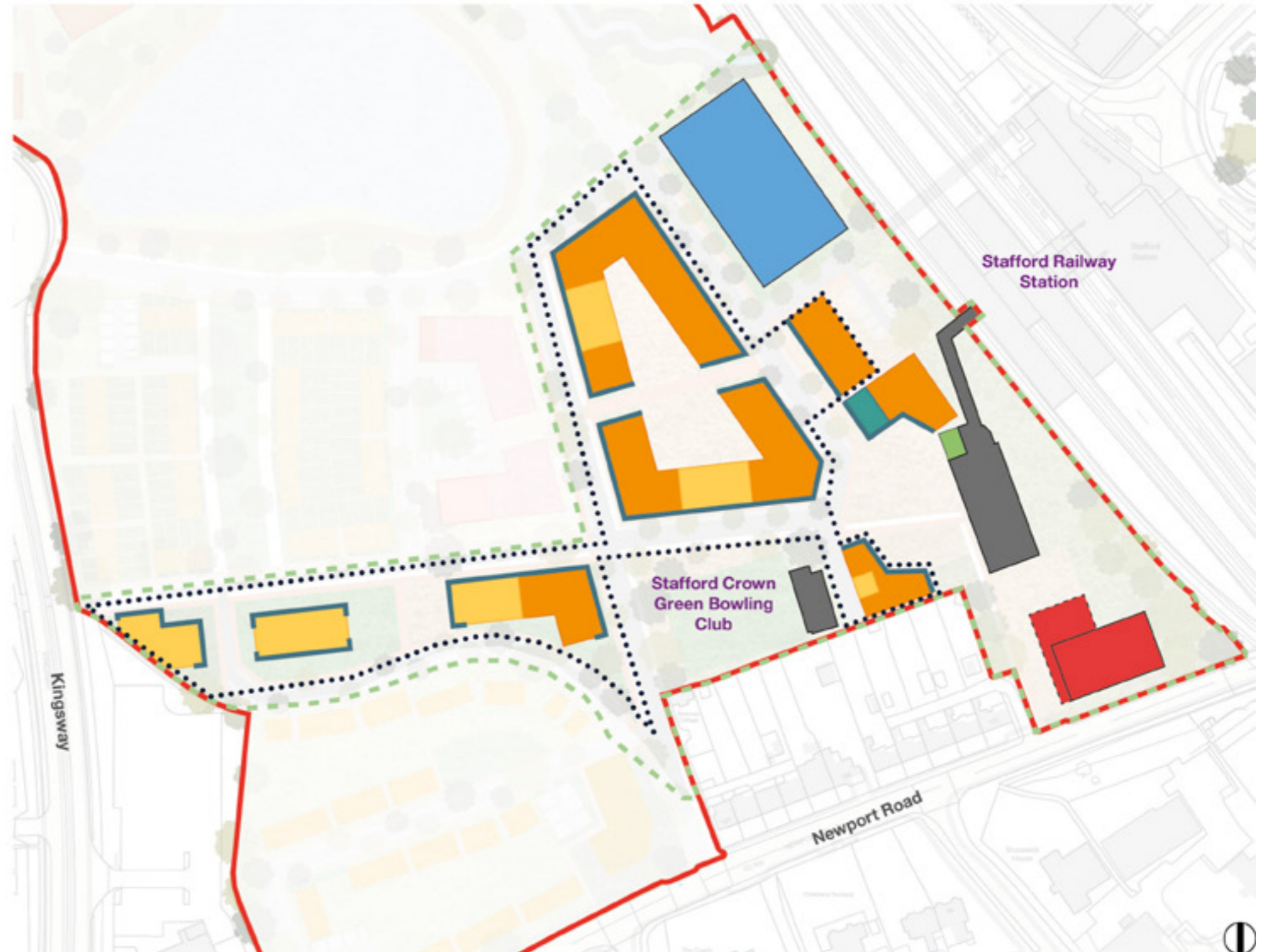


Fig. 40
Land use for the Station Gateway

Character Zones

Station Gateway - Transport, Accessibility and Permeability

North-south connectivity

While sustainable modes of transport are championed and encouraged through the Station Gateway, cars are accommodated by utilising carefully curated road widths, surface treatments and carriage layouts. The Station Gateway lies primarily to the south of the study area, where access will be via two primary routes; Newport Road and Martin Drive. The north-south route from Newport Road will act as a central spine, providing a direct route towards Lakeside and the Hollies, and provide access to the MSCP located in the east of the Station Gateway. This will ensure that the immediate area surrounding the new station entrance and square remains car-free and that Station Square is designed to prioritise pedestrians encouraging users to occupy the space - whether that be through informal spill-out, seating, or special events.

East-west connectivity

The Station Gateway has the potential for a permeable movement network that will serve to enhance connections to the town centre to the east. There is a huge opportunity to connect into the existing footway cycle network to create a safe and attractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists. The east-west connectivity is enhanced by a new access from Martin Drive into the Station Gateway, along Station Approach. This utilises an existing access point that is currently underutilised. This enhanced east-west connectivity is required to enable safe walking and cycling routes to the Station Gateway, connecting directly into the national cycle network route. At Station Square and along Station Approach, enhanced public realm, wayfinding and lighting enhancements will be required to ensure that what are anticipated as high footfall routes are legible, attractive and safe for users.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Lakeside Boundary
-  Primary route
-  Quiet way
-  Cycle highway
-  Green way / Shared surface

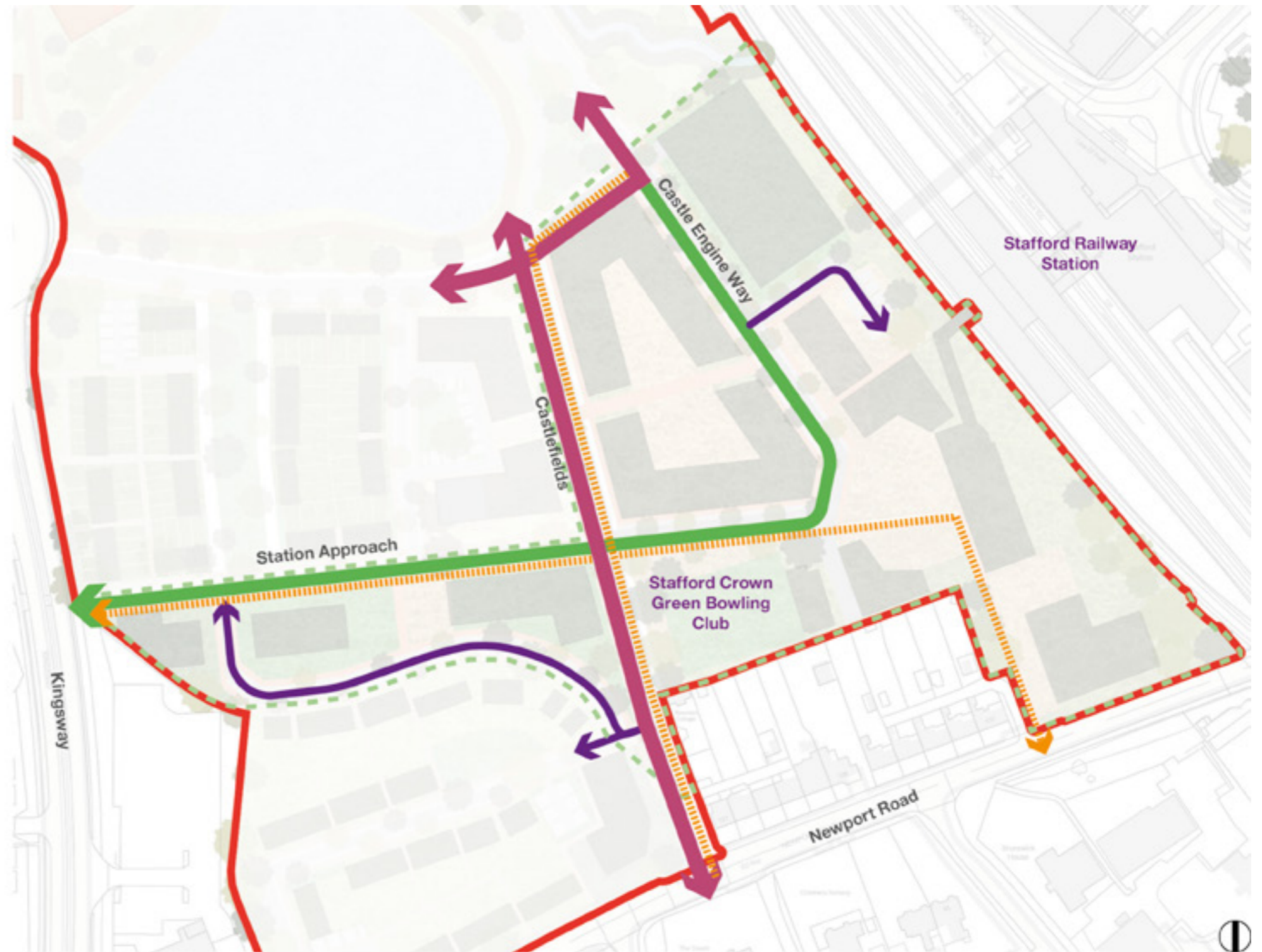


Fig. 41
Connectivity routes within Stafford Station Gateway

Character Zones

Station Gateway - Land Use

The Station Gateway is located in close proximity to the town centre and key public transport nodes, where opportunities for medium to higher density development should be encouraged. Other complementary land uses will also be encouraged to create a dynamic new community, including an incubator hub within the existing Royal Mail building and areas of mixed-use activity around the proposed Station Square.

A mixed-use development

A new community will be established through a range of medium to higher density developments, which should provide a variety of housing types and tenures. Residential developments will be predominantly apartment-led, with opportunities for integrated ground floor accessible townhouses and maisonettes.

Residential-led development will be focused in the north of the Station Gateway towards Lakeside, and along Station Approach, establishing linkages and articulation in massing between Lakeside and the Hollies. The scale and typology of buildings will vary across the Station Gateway to add character and identity and the spaces and places between them will be varied to create a multi-faceted sense of arrival. A new hotel will be located in the south of Station Gateway, fronting onto Newport Road. This will provide welcome capacity for those staying in Stafford and will benefit from close proximity to the mainline station, amenities within the Station Gateway and access to public transport links.



Fig. 42
Key Plan - Station Gateway

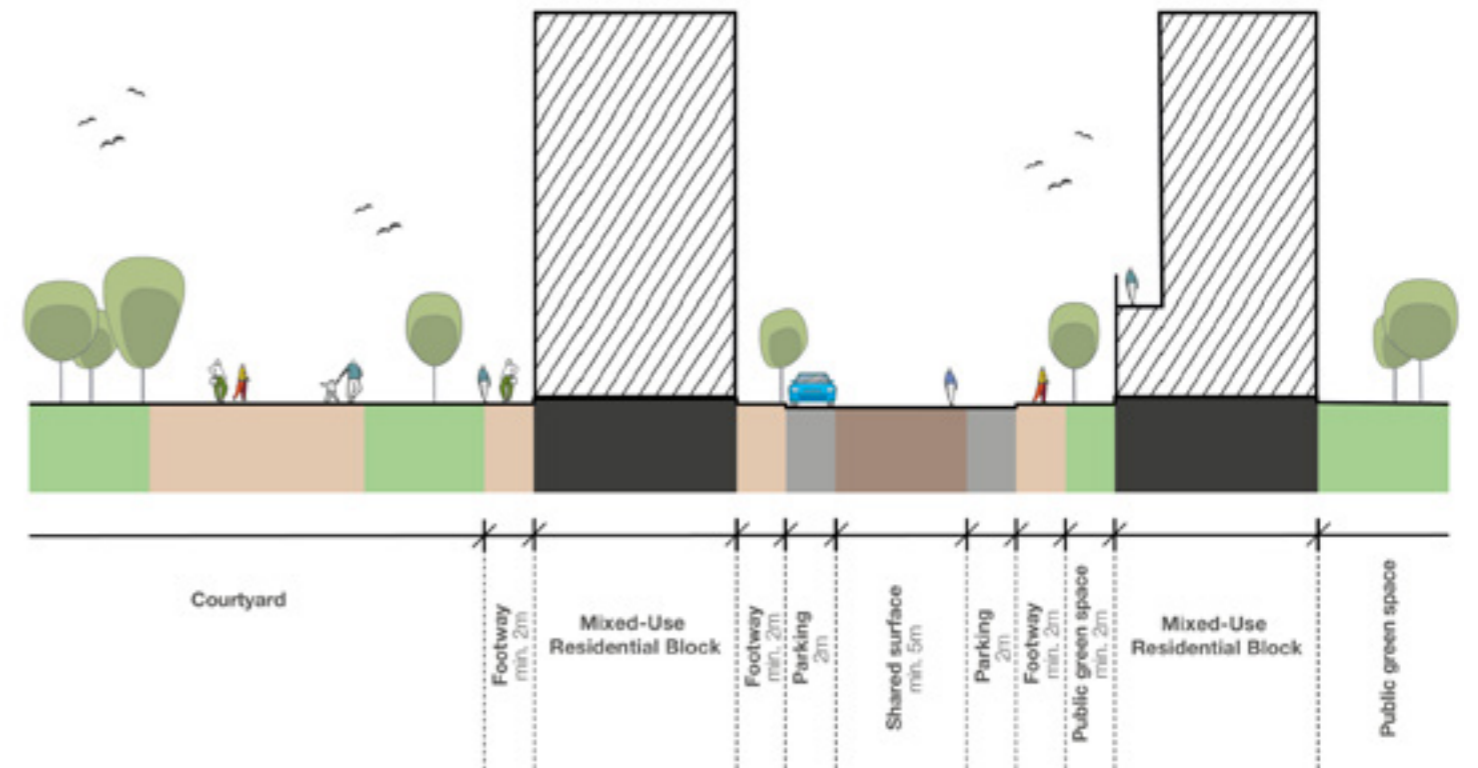
There is a desire to see high-quality independent businesses and growing companies taking space in the Gateway, and the tenant mix should seek to strike a balance between workspace, convenience, F&B and leisure. It should offer a range of convenience and comparator goods and price points to appeal to a wide range of demographics. Brick-and-mortar retail will need to compete with online by incorporating real-life experiences that can't be bought through a screen. Food and beverage, entertainment, and lifestyle-driven comparison brands will be best placed to deliver these experiences.

Retained Stafford Crown Green Bowling Club and Royal Mail building

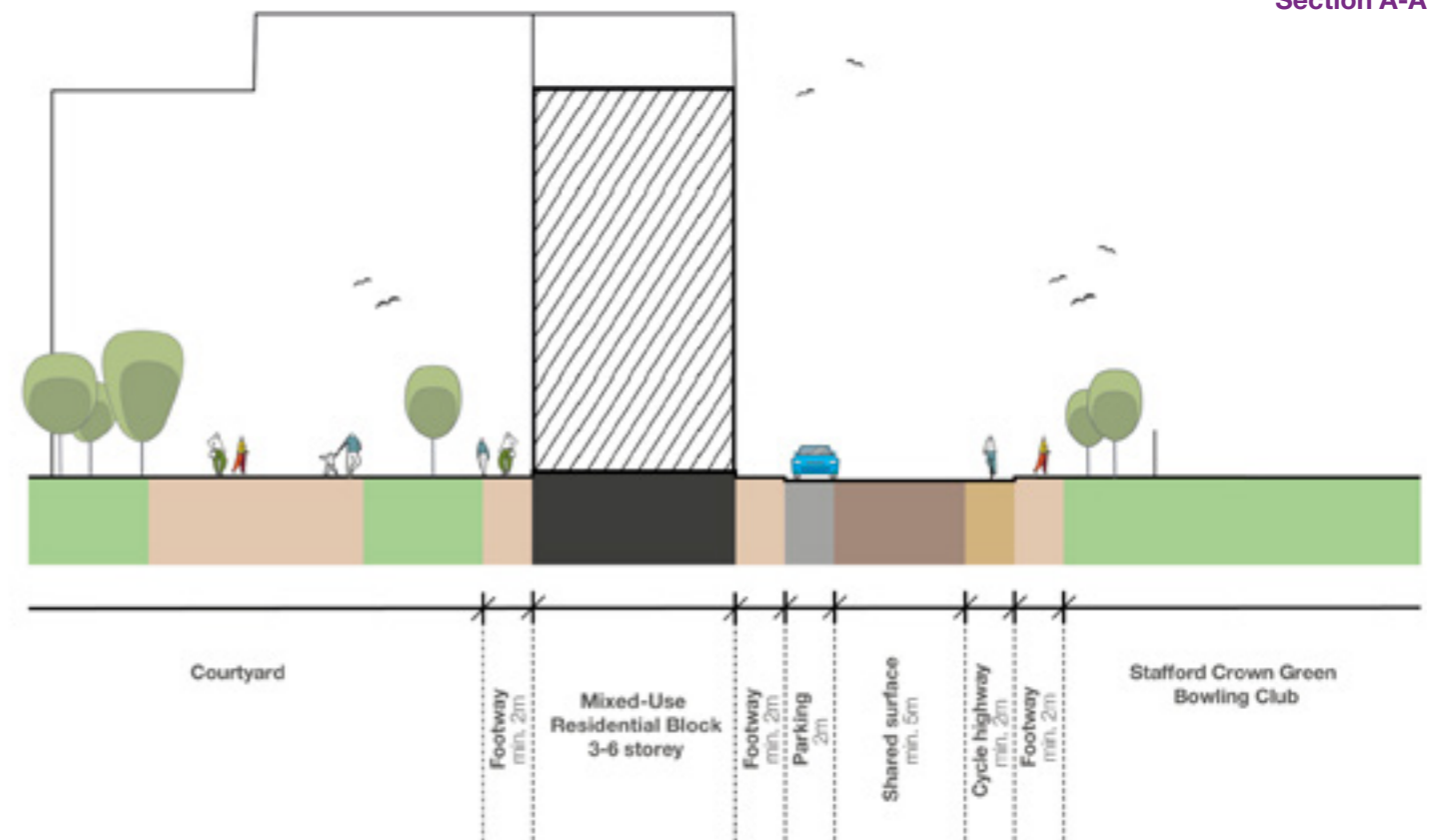
Stafford Bowling Club was established in 1902, has a long history and is a well-loved local asset, providing amenity in an area where most sports clubs are moving out of town. This should be retained, along with the private parking opposite, with enhanced public realm surrounding it to encourage continued use and improved accessibility. Heights immediately adjacent to the Stafford Crown Green Bowling club should be sensitive to the historic residential terraces that back onto it, facing Newport Road. The historic Royal Mail brick building has a direct connection to Stafford Station, and refurbishment as a workplace hub with space for co-work and start-up businesses.

Compatible uses

Where residential uses will be adjacent to rail and commercial uses, architectural and landscape solutions should be implemented to ensure that the operation of existing and new businesses is not compromised, and residential amenity is protected from any potential noise and visual impacts.



Section A-A



Section B-B

Character Zones

Station Gateway - Scale, Density and Form

Medium/ higher density and landmark buildings

The Station Gateway has the potential to support a range of building heights, including taller buildings in strategic locations to mark the new access point to Stafford Station. These buildings should serve as local landmarks and beacons to improve the legibility of the Gateway and help residents and visitors navigate to the Gateway intuitively.

Within the Station Gateway, heights ranging from 2 to 6 storeys are anticipated.

Lower density development

Lower-rise, residential typologies should be located away from the Station entrance and Station Square, facing onto Martin Drive to respond to the existing domestic character in close proximity; Burleyfields development to the west and to interact with the lower density townhouses anticipated in Lakeside and The Hollies.

A sense of place

Development should provide outward facing homes that make use of the existing amenity space around the lake, creating a safe and attractive neighbourhood. Development in the centre of the neighbourhood and on plots close to Lakeside and the Hollies, a finer grain housing should be introduced, creating a modest scaled environment that is well suited to families. Creating high quality open space has a direct impact on the well-being of residents, from physical benefits to environmental benefits such as improved air quality access to sunlight/ daylight etc. Benefits for the community's well-being, such as safety and a sense of civic pride should also be prioritised. Indirect benefits would include the potential positive impact on the local economy through an increase in footfall in the Station Gateway.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Station Gateway Boundary
-  Retained and refurbished existing buildings
-  Proposed buildings

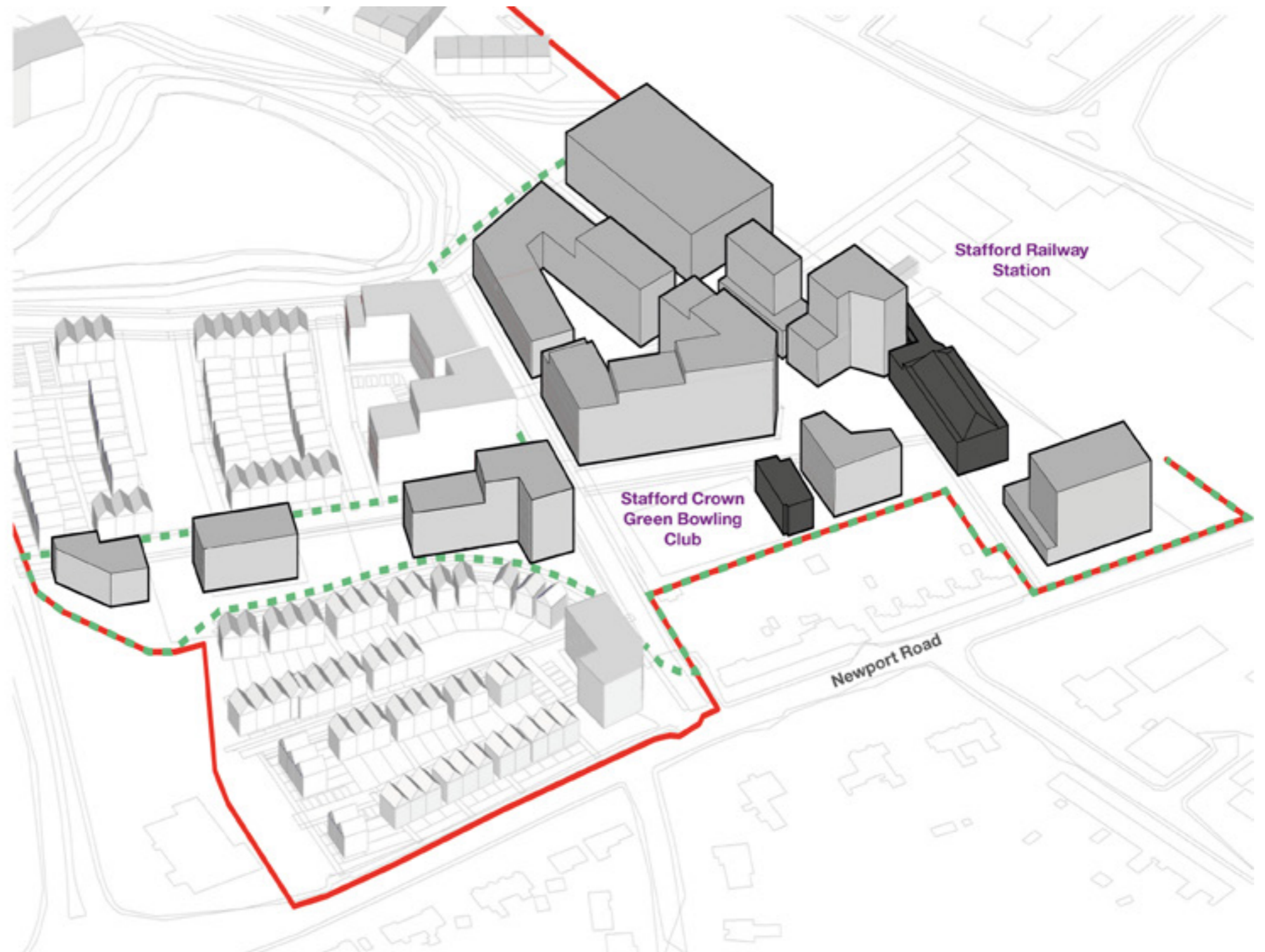


Fig. 43
Massing and density within the Stafford Station Gateway

Character Zones

Station Gateway - Public Realm and Public Space

The Station Gateway will be a mixed-use neighbourhood that embraces the close proximity to the mainline station and the lake. The lake offers a unique opportunity for an integrated and connected blue-green realm with footpaths play areas and more diverse leisure uses.

Station square

There is an opportunity to create a Station Square at the heart of the Station Gateway at the intersection between Station Approach and the new station access point. The proposed new access to the transport hub will become a key attractor in the Stafford Station Gateway masterplan. A high quality, public square adjoining the existing Royal Mail building, the proposed hotel and the new commercial uses facing onto the square would create a strong arrival point. A new pedestrian route connecting to the west of the hotel from Newport Road should support and ease the transition of people into the gateway area.

Treatment of Station Approach

Station Approach will become a strong boulevard, directly connecting the residential developments to the west of Stafford with the Station Gateway and should benefit from public realm enhancements incorporating formal lines of tree planting, wide biodiverse verges and simple pedestrian spaces.

Active frontage

Active frontages should be provided along key routes such as Newport Road, Martin Drive and Station Approach, to support varied and safe streets in areas of increased footfall. The opportunity for development along Station Approach offers an ideal location for social and community infrastructure uses at ground level, which could animate the public realm, invigorate the area, and create a dynamic and active zone. Within the north of the Station Gateway, active frontages could also be provided along the north-south connection from Newport Road, providing a lively, well-lit route towards Lakeside and Marling Terrace.

Top Left: Marmalade Lane, Cambridge

Top Centre: Dujardin Mews, London

Top Right: Plymouth Academy of Creative Arts, Plymouth

Bottom Left: Hulme Leaf, Manchester

Bottom Right: Pavilion Road, London



Core Materials



Feature



The Hollies



Character Zones

The Hollies - Introduction

The Hollies provides residential development, utilising the existing western access point off Newport Road and the curved road to the former rugby club to inform a layout that ensures houses front each other or green spaces, looking outwards from the study area and addressing the wider context.

The Hollies will be predominantly lower-rise, with some higher density moments in the eastern part of the zone. It will provide an entrance to the study area from Newport Road, allowing for a transition between the higher density of Station Gateway. It is anticipated that

The Hollies will be a low to medium density residential-led neighbourhood providing a variety of house types to create diversity and a suitable mixture of typologies, with family housing being the main component.

The Hollies has the potential to become a high-quality residential environment, with a mix of social and community infrastructure that supports a range of lifestyles, including family-living, in close proximity to the Station Gateway.



Fig. 44
Key plan for The Hollies



Fig. 45
Aerial view for The Hollies

Character Zones

The Hollies - Quantum of Development

Character Zone Area

1.5 Ha

Residential Development Plots

1.4 Ha

Number of homes

Up to 90

GIA of non-residential space (Commercial/F&B/small-scale retail, leisure and community uses):

Up to 700sqm/7,500 sqft

Density (dwellings/hectare)

64

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  The Hollies Boundary
-  Residential development boundary
-  Residential
-  Active frontage

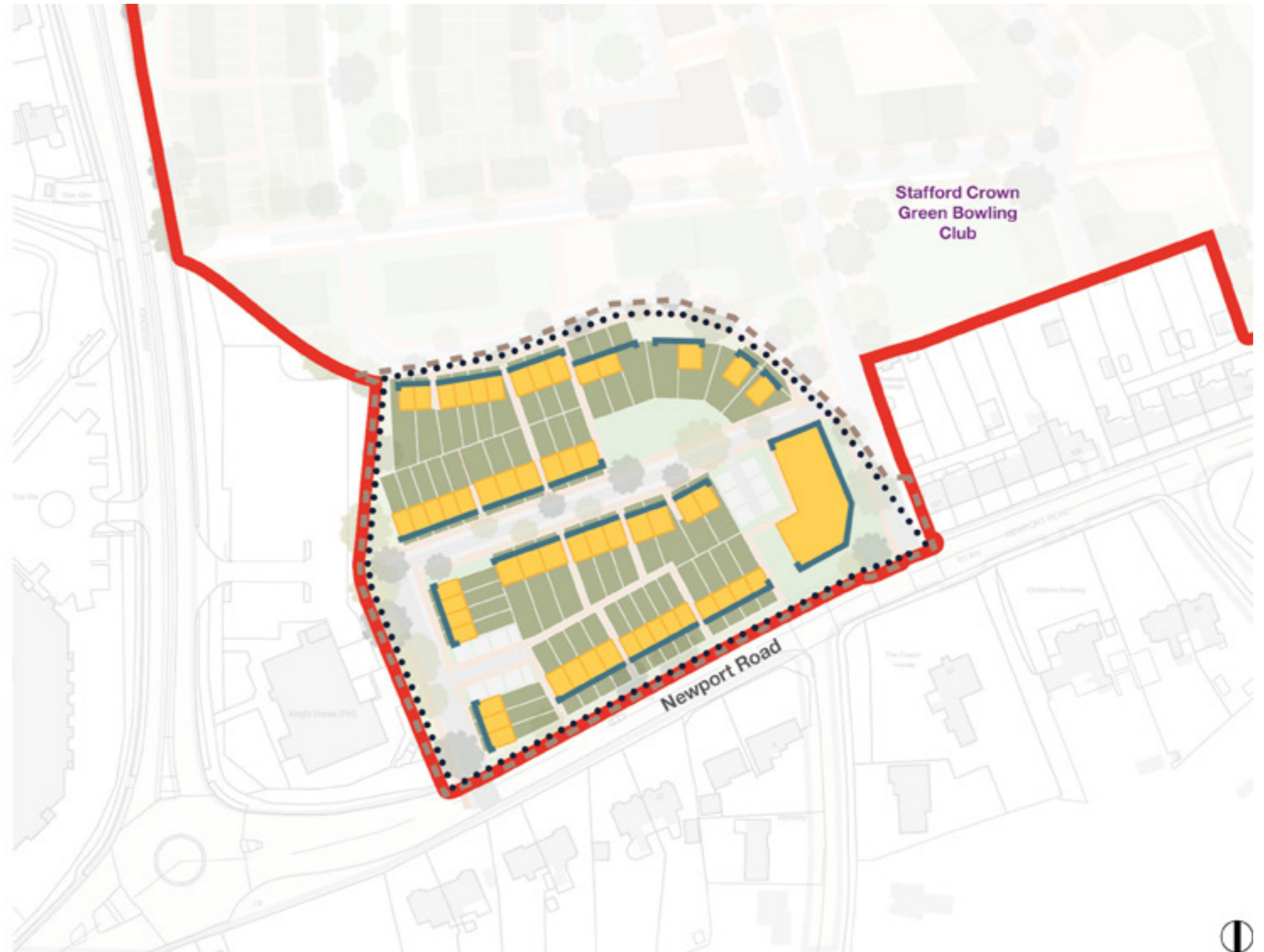


Fig. 46
Land use for the Hollies



Character Zones

The Hollies - Transport, Accessibility and Permeability

The Hollies Character Zone has a direct frontage with Newport Road, which is a major route into the centre of Stafford connecting the town centre with outlying communities to the west. The majority of this Character Zone is proposed for new townhouse development. These will be served by narrow streets designed for people to cycle and walk safely, with vehicular access restricted to residents and their servicing and delivery requirements. Street design should be cognisant of high-quality public realm, designed to reduce vehicular speeds and make the streets safe for all. Carriageway widths for these routes could be as narrow as 3.2m in places, with widened sections for passing places and on street parking areas provided in discrete locations. The east-west connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists is enhanced by a new access from Martin Drive into the Station Gateway. This uses an existing access point that is currently underutilised. This link, which was described in the Station Gateway Character Zone, will run to the north of The Hollies Character Zone.

Car parking for residential apartments will be limited in comparison to more peripheral locations within the SRF area, similar to the Station Gateway zone recognising accessibility to public transport. Parking for the townhouses is proposed to be in the order of one space per dwelling, comprised of a mix of discrete on-and off-street parking.

Cycle parking should be provided within the ground floor back of house apartments blocks whilst the townhouse design should encourage the ability to stock cycles within each individual property.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  The Hollies Boundary
-  Primary route
-  Quiet way
-  Cycle highway

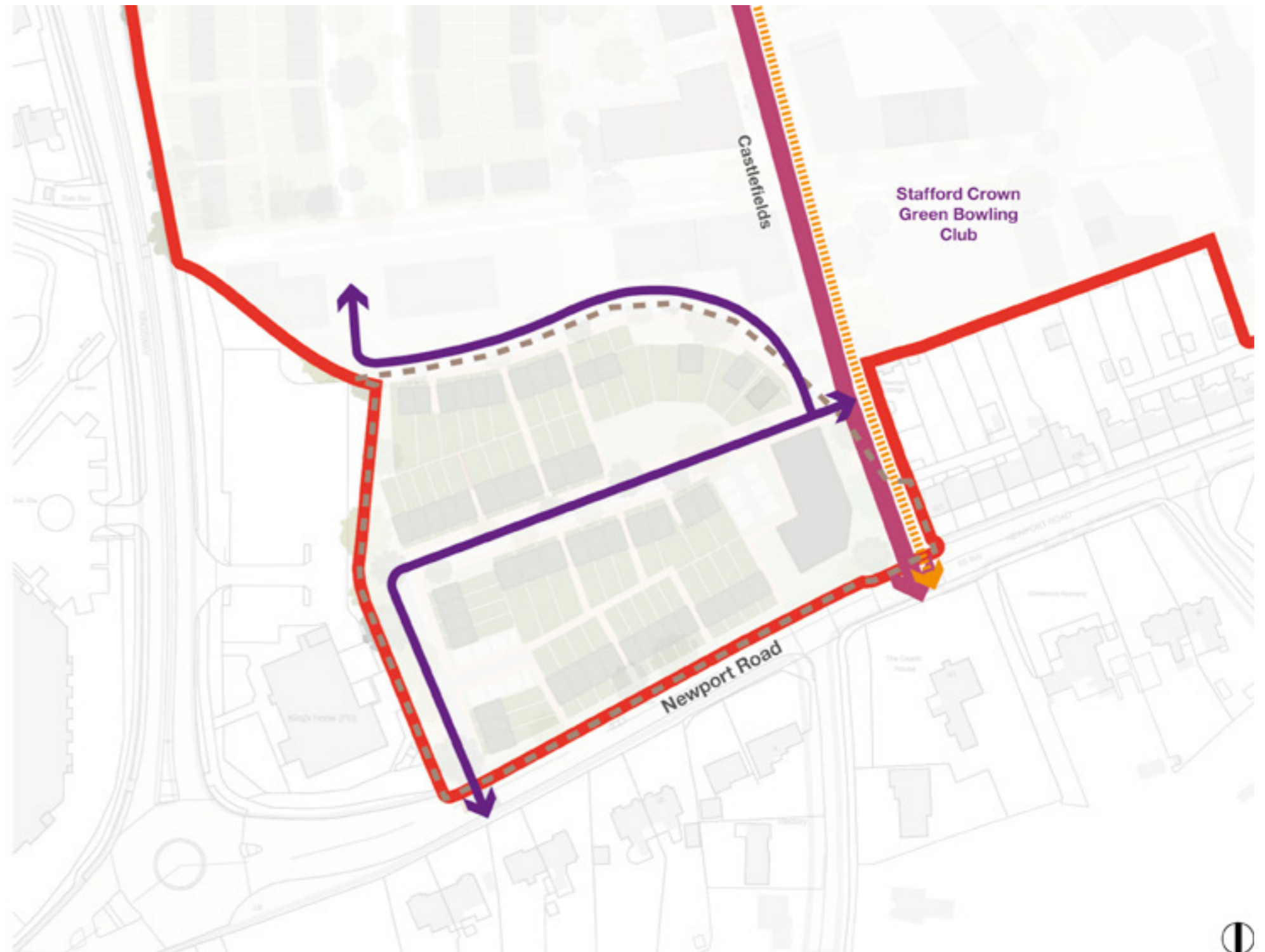


Fig. 47
Connectivity routes within The Hollies

Character Zones

The Hollies - Land Use

The Hollies is located in close proximity to the town centre and key public transport nodes and offers the opportunities for a residential-led area, utilising the existing western access point off Newport Road. Active frontages along Station Approach, Newport Road and Martin Drive will further help to animate the street level and different types of residential properties will help to foster a balanced community.

Residential development

Residential developments will be predominately townhouses, with some opportunities for apartments and maisonettes. Residential uses will be focused around the central area of this zone, with a focus on creating active frontages through the typologies of the townhouses and their arrangement. By reducing the distance from the street to the door, neighbourly interactions are encouraged while still providing personal defensible space and garden space within the plot curtilage.

Active frontage

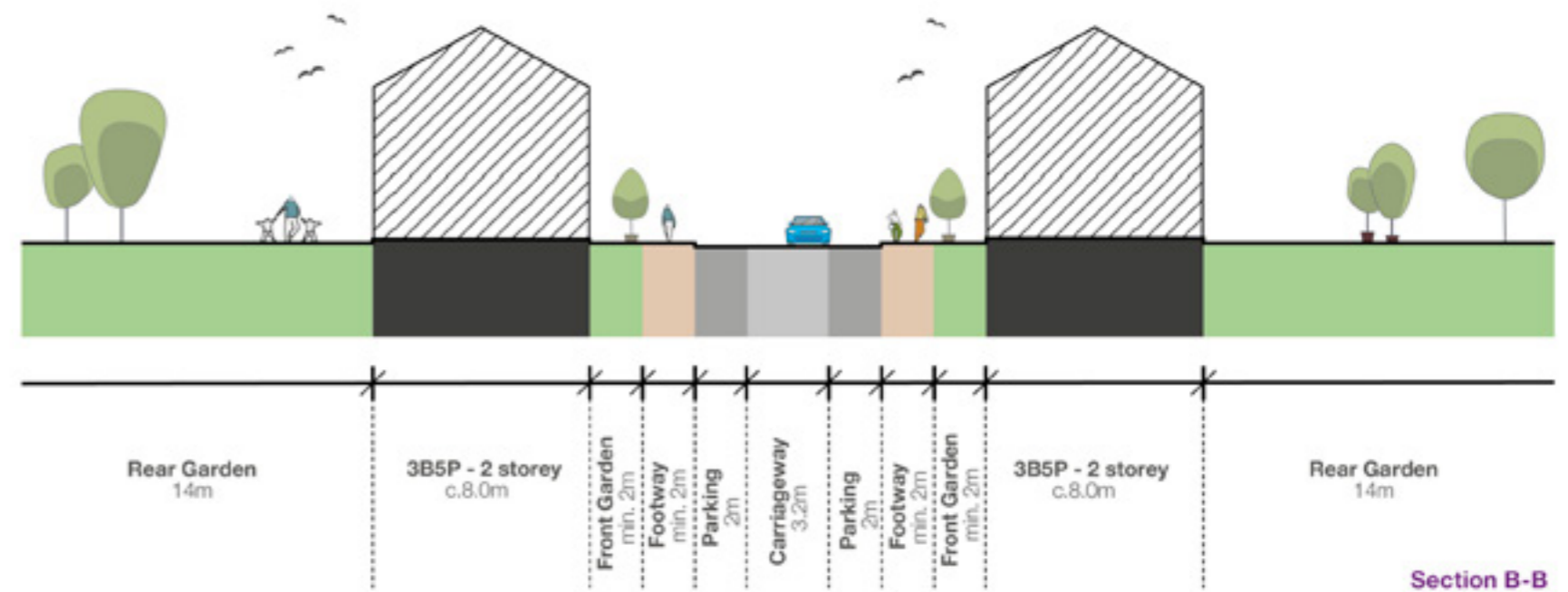
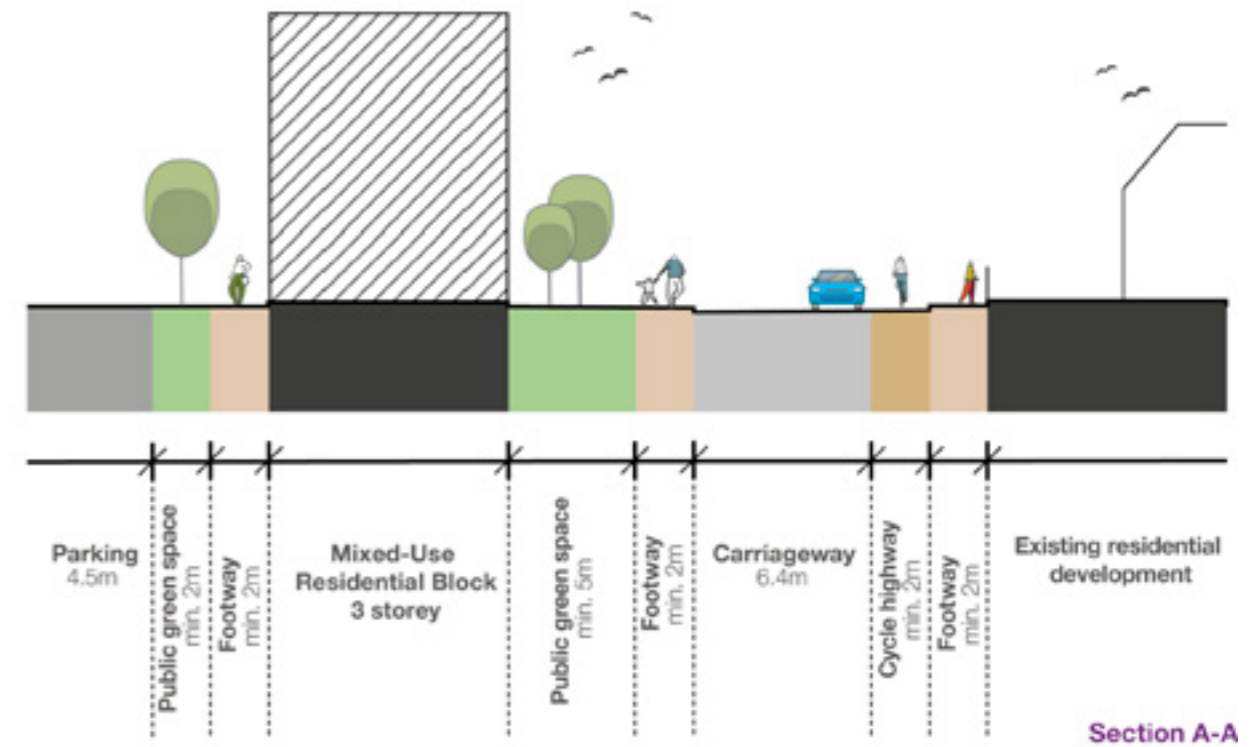
Active frontages should be provided along key routes such as Newport Road and Station Approach, to support varied and safe streets in areas of increased footfall. The opportunity for development along Station Approach offers an ideal location for social and community infrastructure uses at ground level, which could animate the public realm, invigorate the area, and create a dynamic and active zone.

Compatible uses

Where residential uses will be adjacent to key arterial routes, architectural and landscape solutions should be implemented to ensure that noise does not impact the quality of the living environment, and residential amenity is protected from any potential noise and visual impacts.



Fig. 48
Key Plan - The Hollies



Character Zones

The Hollies - Scale, Density and Form

Low and medium density

The Hollies has the potential to support a mix of residential typologies, including a medium rise building in the south-east corner, providing a beacon to denote the Station Approach. This building should serve as local landmark for The Hollies and help residents and visitors navigate towards the Station Gateway intuitively.

Within The Hollies, storey heights ranging from 2 to 4 storeys are anticipated.

A sense of place

The Hollies should provide a fine grain typology of housing creating a modestly scaled environment that is well-suited for families. Creating high quality open space has a direct impact on the well-being of residents, from physical benefits to environmental benefits such as improved air quality, access to sunlight/daylight etc. Benefits for the community's well-being, such as perception of safety and a sense of civic pride should also be prioritised.



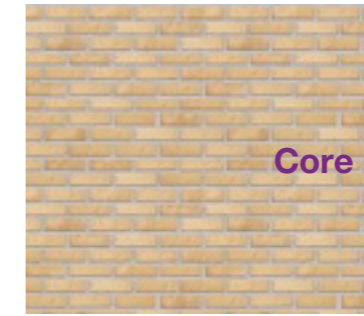
Fig. 49
Massing and density within The Hollies

Character Zones

The Hollies - Public Realm and Public Space

The Hollies will be a residential-led neighbourhood that embraces the close proximity to the mainline station and the lake. The lake offers a unique opportunity for an integrated and connected blue-green realm with footpaths and play areas and more diverse leisure uses.

Sensitive design will deliver public realm improvements, which should include the provision of high-quality paving, the planting of boulevard trees and the installation of street furniture, including cycle parking. The public realm should be appropriate for its location, incorporating hard and soft landscape and accommodate pedestrian and cycle movement, whilst ensuring that vehicle movements, vehicle access and parking do not dominate.



Core Materials



Feature



Top Left: Signal Townhouses, London
Top Right: Alconbury Weald, Cambridgeshire
Bottom Left: Dickens Yard, London
Bottom Right: Marmalade Lane, Cambridge

Lakeside



Character Zones

Lakeside - Introduction

A linear park in the Lakeside Character Zone provides open space at the centre, as well as on-site attenuation in the form of a naturalised swale at the northern and southern ends.

This park sits at the heart of the character area, with townhouses to the west and east, and overlooked by the apartment block to the south - affording views to the lake in the north. Where the zone abuts Castlefields, there is the opportunity for the apartment block to step up in height and this apartment block should be delivered to accommodate ground floor commercial units.

The masterplan shows indicative apartment block gauges that generate an efficient double loaded corridor at upper floors and are flexible to accommodate a variety of uses at ground floor level, which will create an active frontage to both Castlefields and Station Approach.



Fig. 50
Key plan for Lakeside



Fig. 51
Aerial view for Lakeside

Character Zones

Lakeside - Quantum of Development

Character Zone Area

2.9 Ha

Residential Development Plots

1.6 Ha

Number of homes

Up to 145

GIA of non-residential space (Commercial/F&B/small-scale retail, leisure and community uses):

Up to 1,400 sqm/15,000 sqft

Density (dwellings/hectare)

91

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Lakeside Boundary
-  Residential development boundary
-  Residential
-  Commercial/Workplace/retail/F&B
-  Active frontage



Fig. 52
Land use for Lakeside

Character Zones

Lakeside - Transport, Accessibility and Permeability

The Lakeside Character Zone has a direct frontage with the new Lakeside link, providing a new vehicular connection into the site via a new arm of the Martin Way roundabout. This link is likely to be a single carriageway link of around 7m wide. The southern perimeter of the Character Zone is comprised of Station Approach, which will provide access to properties for vehicles as well as a more strategic walking and cycle route.

Lakeside Character Zone will be home to a mix of residential apartments and townhouses. Other than via Lakeside and Station Approach, these will be served by narrower gauge streets designed for people to cycle and walk safely, with vehicular access restricted to residents and their servicing and delivery requirements. Street design should be cognisant of high-quality public realm space designed to reduce vehicular speeds and make streets safe for all. Carriageway widths for these routes could be as narrow as 3.2m in places, with widened sections for passing places and on street parking areas provided in discrete locations.

The east-west connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists should be enhanced by a new access from Martin Drive into the Station Gateway. This utilises an existing access point that is currently underutilised. This link, which was described in the Station Gateway Character Zone, will run to the south of the Lakeside Character Zone.

Car parking for residential apartments will be limited in comparison to more peripheral locations within the SRF area, similar to the Station Gateway zone in terms of the accessibility to non-car modes. Parking for the townhouses is proposed to be in the order of one space per dwelling, comprised of a mix of on-and off-street parking.

Cycle parking should be provided within the residential apartment blocks, and the townhouse design should encourage the ability to store cycles within the properties

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Lakeside Boundary
-  Primary route
-  Quiet way
-  Cycle highway
-  Green way / Shared surface

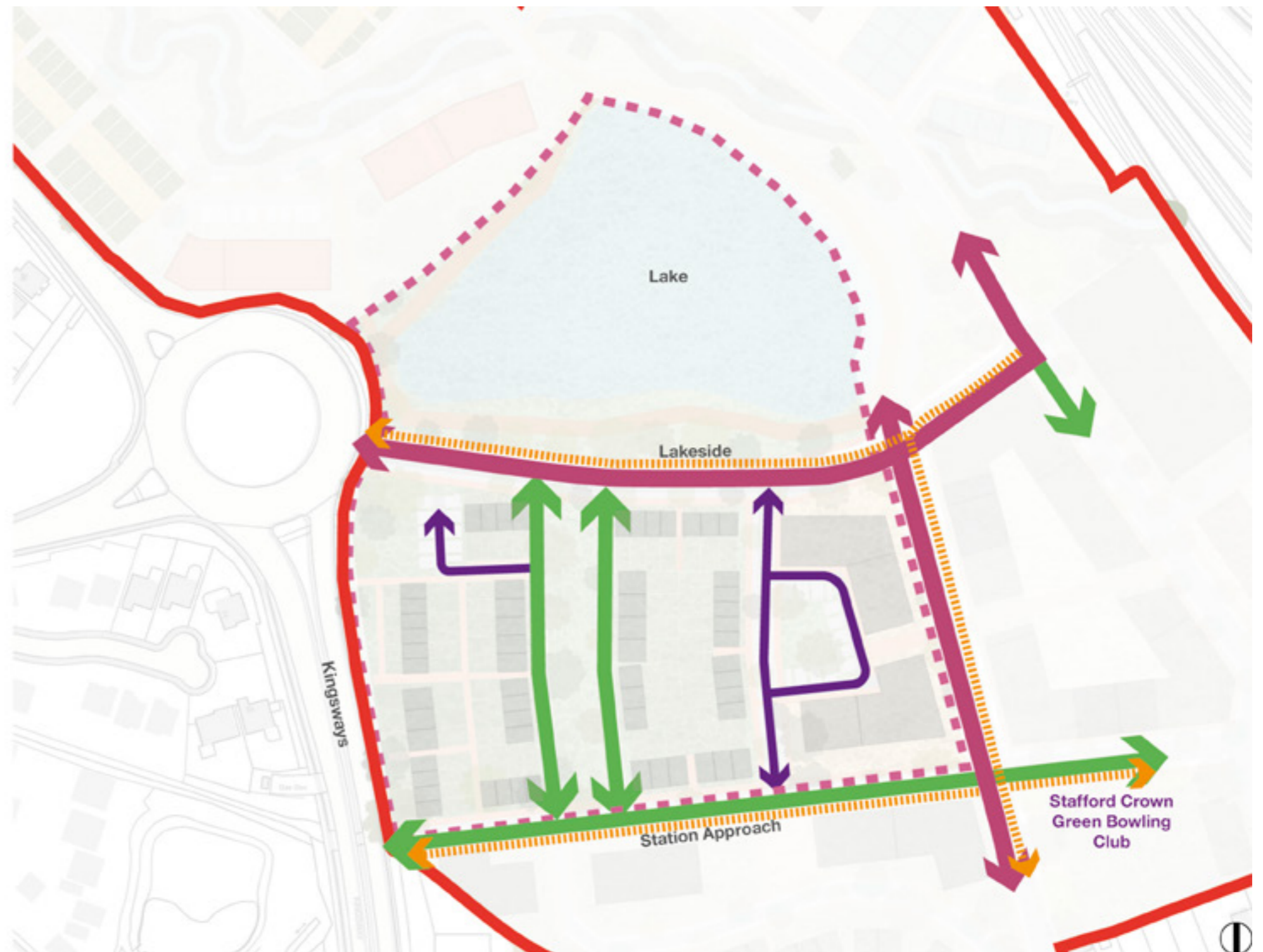


Fig. 53
Connectivity routes within Lakeside

Character Zones

Lakeside - Land Use

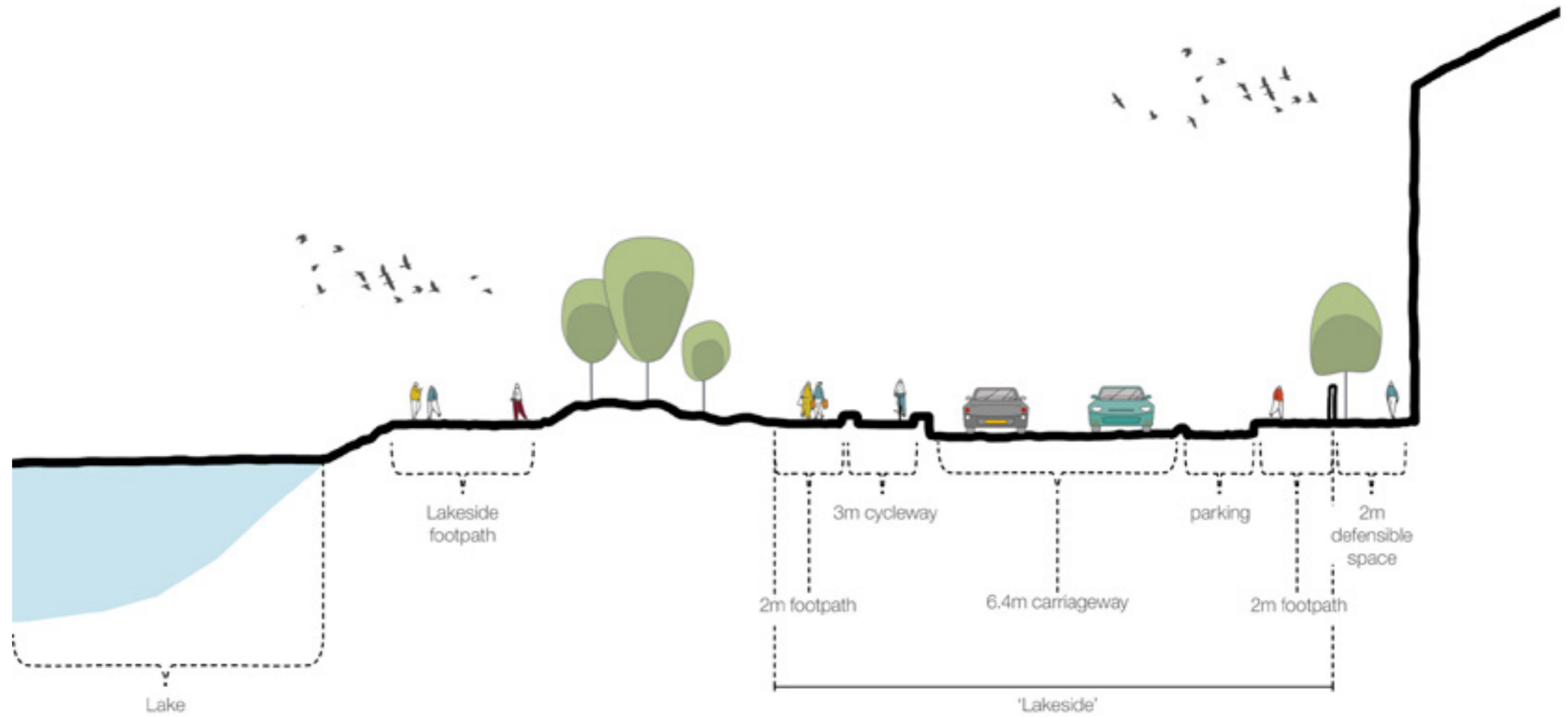
Lakeside is located in close proximity to the lake, affording residential units along the waters edge, excellent views across the lake and up to the Doxey Brook in the north. Medium-rise buildings on the corner of Lakeside and Castlefields offer views over the Station Gateway and serve as local landmark to add character to the space, and assist pedestrians navigating through this area towards the lake.

Residential development

A range of accommodation is anticipated to meet the requirements of residents of all ages, including families. Apartments, townhouses and maisonettes will be provided to ensure a mix of housing types. Residential development will benefit from close proximity to Stafford Station, the Lake and public realm amenities. Active frontages should be prioritised to support varied and safe streets.

Setting the framework for high quality housing

Housing for families should be provided throughout Lakeside as part of a balanced mix of housing types. Family housing will contribute to a less transient population, which will add to the vibrancy of neighbourhoods and help create stable and balanced communities. Appropriate housing options for families will be supported by a high-quality green linear park running perpendicular from the Lake to create a truly sustainable, family-friendly neighbourhood.



Section A-A



Fig. 54
Key Plan - Lakeside

Character Zones

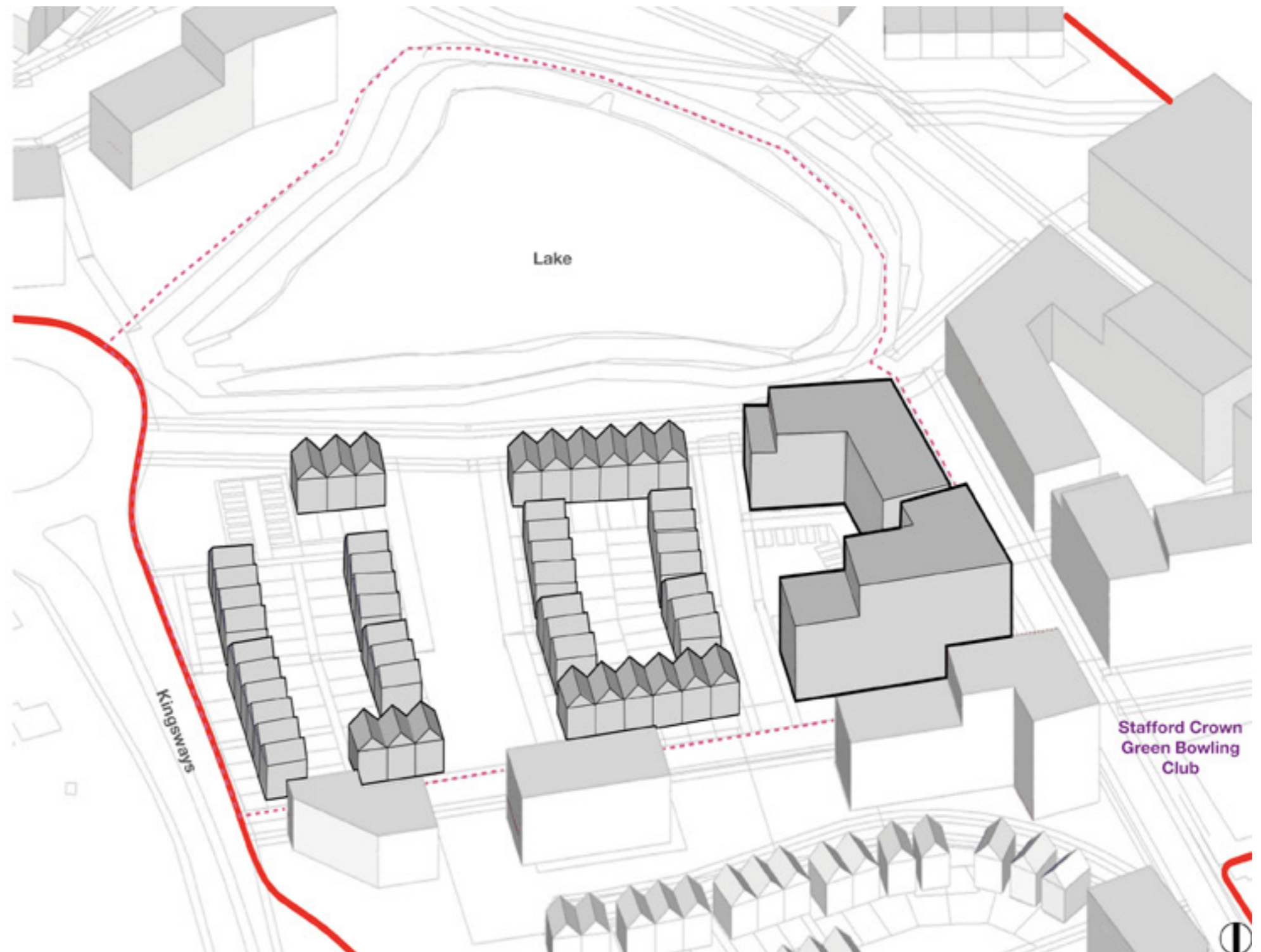
Lakeside - Scale, Density and Form

Medium density

Although historically, the housing developments to the east of the station comprise of terraced housing, newer developments to the west of the station typically comprise of low density, semi-detached housing.

Within Lakeside, the development should be characterised by medium density development comprising townhouse and low-rise apartment blocks, with a tighter urban grain, similar to the Hollies. Setbacks from the primary routes give a sense of space and privacy, whilst ensuring that close-knit neighbourhoods are encouraged. Where the site abuts Castlefields, there is the opportunity for the apartment block to step up in height and should be delivered to accommodate ground floor commercial units. This will provide an active frontage and support varied and safe streets.

Within Lakeside, storey heights ranging from 2 to 5 storeys are anticipated.



Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Lakeside Boundary

Fig. 55
Massing and density within Lakeside

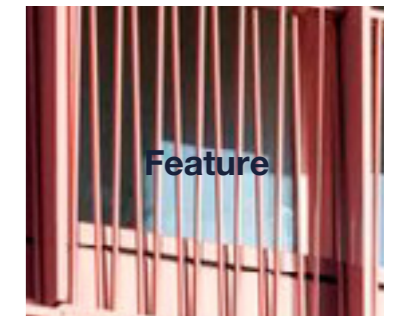
Character Zones

Lakeside - Public Realm and Public Space

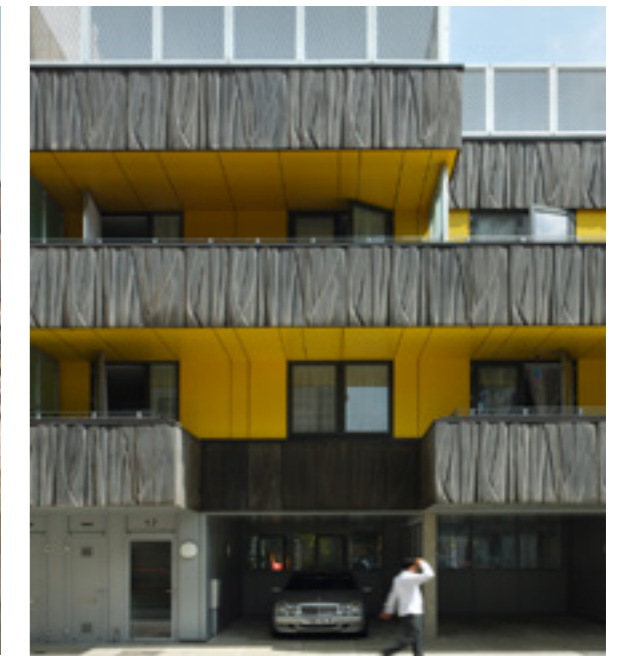
A high quality public realm is pivotal to enhancing built form, interconnecting neighbourhoods and creating environment for activity. The public realm should be appropriate for its location, incorporating hard and soft landscaping and accommodating pedestrians and cycle movements whilst ensuring vehicle movements, vehicle access and parking do not dominate.



Core Materials



Feature



Top Left: Hulme Leaf, Manchester
Top Centre: Rochester Riverside, Rochester
Top Right: James Voller Way, London
Bottom Left: Barking Riverside, London
Bottom Right: Goldsmith Street, Norwich

Character Zones

Castle Engine Works - Introduction

Castle Engine Works champions a commercial-led, mixed-use approach, retaining the Stafford College Technology Centre, and alongside this providing smaller maker terraces in which to promote an innovative new community of start-ups that looks to anchor the commercial offering in the centre of the framework area.

It is vital that proposed uses complement the existing uses within the framework area and don't compete with the existing commercial offer in Stafford town centre. The site must look to provide new space to accommodate growing commercial and business opportunities in Stafford.



Fig. 56
Key plan for Castle Engine Works



Fig. 57
Aerial view for Castle Engine Works

Character Zones

Castle Engine Works - Quantum of Development

Character Zone Area

3.7 Ha

GIA of proposed non-residential space (Commercial/ F&B/small-scale retail, leisure and community uses):

Up to 4,090 sqm/ 44,025 sqft

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Castle Engine Works Boundary
-  Retained and Refurbished existing buildings
-  Makers Terrace



Fig. 58
Land use for Castle Engine Works

Character Zones

Castle Engine Works - Transport, Accessibility and Permeability

Castle Engine Works lies to the north of the Station Gateway Character Zone. This Character Zone is centred around the existing Stafford College Technology Centre.

The Stafford College Technology Centre is accessed via Castle Street. This is a relatively narrow route which arrives at the site via a rail bridge across the West Coast Mainline, and is a no-through route to vehicular traffic to the west of the Technology Centre entrance. Castle Street also provides access to the new residential development north of Castle Street that has been developed by St Modwen.

Whilst vehicular traffic is prohibited beyond this point, the Castle Street alignment continues to afford a strong east-west cycle and pedestrian link through to Martin Drive. This route is currently a popular connection for cyclists and pedestrians between the town centre and the residential areas to the west of Stafford.

The proposals for this Character Area are for the retention of the Technology Centre alongside smaller maker terraces for commercial use. These would require some servicing and delivery access, that could potentially be via the rear of the Technology Centre (via Castle Street) or via connection through from the Station Gateway area.

Parking provision in this area will be centred around consolidating what already exists on the Technology Centre site. Any car parking provided for the new commercial uses should be relatively limited, as these units could make use of the MSCP. Cycle parking should be provided in a secure, convenient location close to the entrances of the new commercial units.

Key






-  Site Boundary
-  Castle Engine Works Boundary
-  Primary route
-  Quiet way
-  Possible Bus Only Link

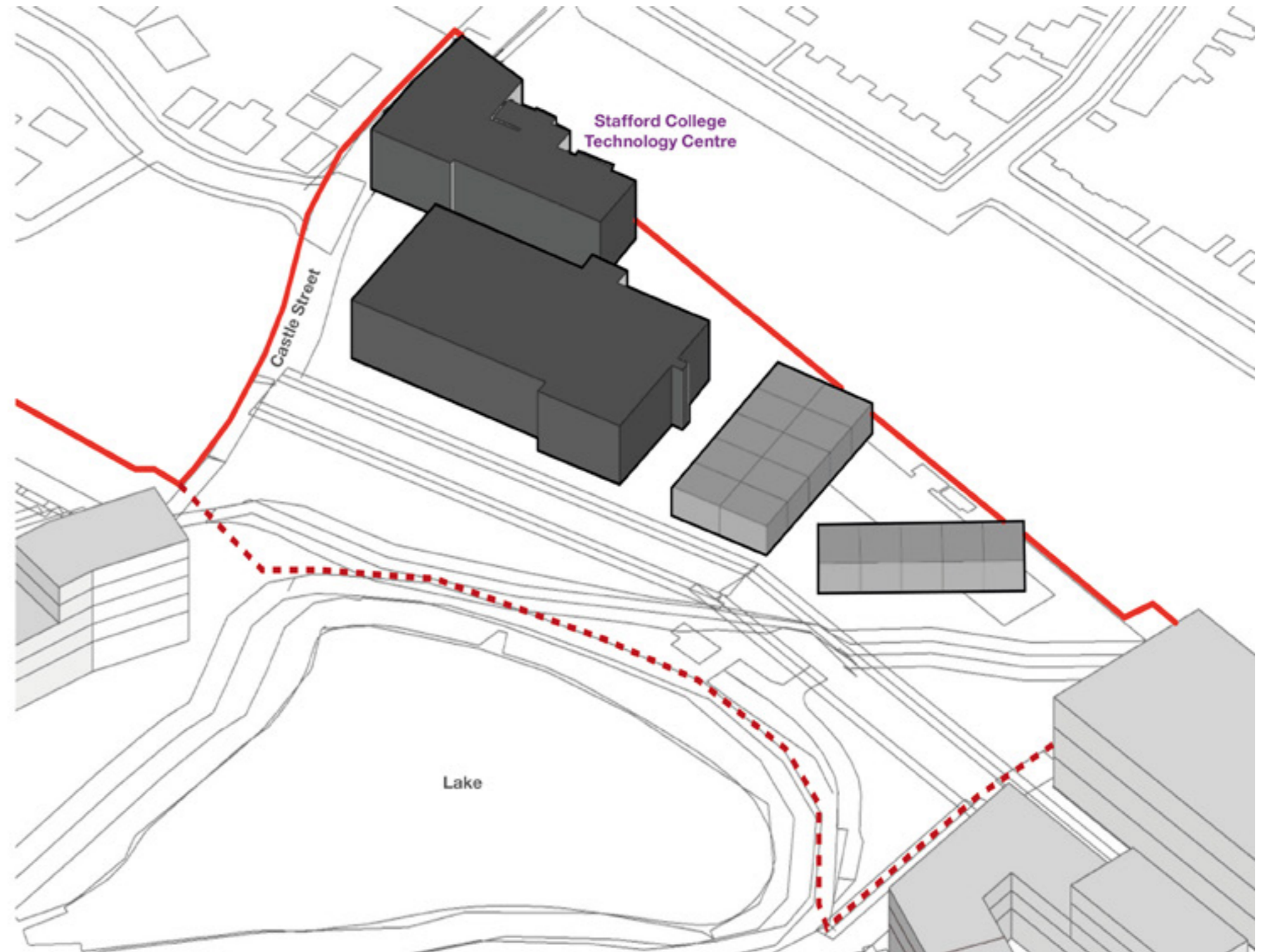


Fig. 59
Connectivity routes for Castle Engine Works

Character Zones

Castle Engine Works - Scale, Density and Form

There is an opportunity for medium-scale buildings to sit alongside lower buildings closer towards the Lake, responding to the existing buildings within the Stafford College Technology Centre. This finer grain mixing of use will ensure a robust and resilient future for Castle Engine Works that complements the adjacent Stafford College Technology Centre.



Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Castle Engine Works Boundary
-  Retained and Refurbished existing buildings
-  Proposed buildings

Fig. 60
Massing and density within Castle Engine Works

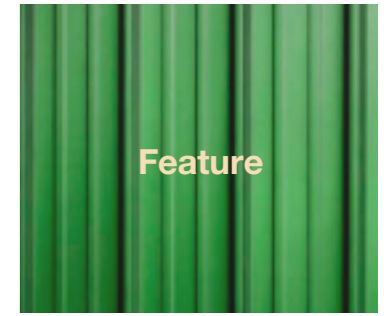
Character Zones

Castle Engine Works - Public Realm and Public Space

Castle Engine Works should deliver high quality commercial accommodation and public amenities, including high quality public realm and spill out spaces within this framework area in order to create a desirable location to work and spend leisure time.



Core Materials



Feature



Top Left: Sloane Street, London
Top Right: Blue House Yard, London
Bottom Right: Ravenswood Industrial Estate, London
Bottom Centre: Foundry Mews, London
Bottom Right: Hatch, Manchester

Marling Terrace



Character Zones

Marling Terrace - Introduction

Marling Terrace takes its name from the old marl pits that dot the Staffordshire countryside. Marl pits allowed farmers to 'sweeten' their poorer soils with the naturally occurring lime-rich sub soils that lie underneath, long before modern artificial fertilisers were used. These forgotten and obsolete pits have long since filled with water and now form important habitats for wildlife.

Marling Terrace puts the Doxey Brook centre-stage, weaving it through the houses and opening out into green open spaces creating a natural edge to these areas and providing a counterpoint to the bounding footways and roads. The neighbourhood celebrates the front door moment, encouraging a community that, whilst benefiting from the natural surveillance proximity brings, also cherishes those front door interactions with neighbours.

The Doxey Brook forms a central and significant feature of the site; the relationship between the brook and the roads that provide access to the houses that overlook it were key to the development of the masterplan.

Marling Terrace comprises apartment blocks and townhouses, with the Doxey Brook weaving down through the centre of the site.

Subtle changes in surface texture provide delineation between pavements, parking and carriageways, prioritising pedestrians and cyclists over vehicles and promoting an open hard landscaping vision for carriageways, rather than a 'roads only' approach.

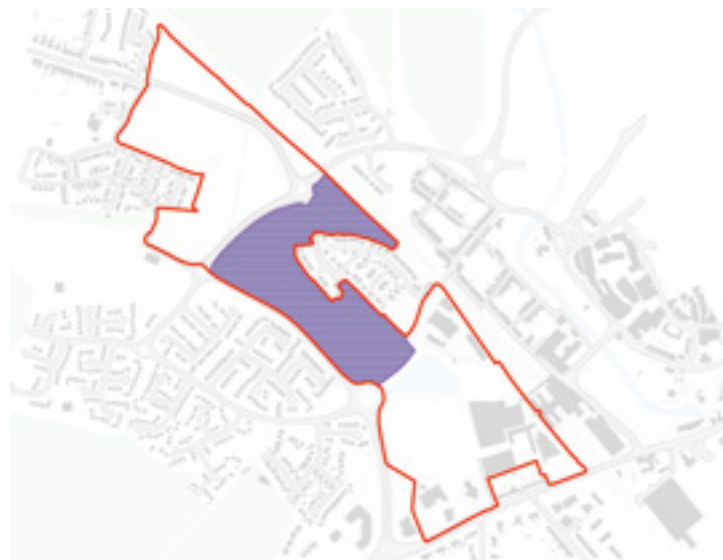


Fig. 61
Key plan for Marling Terrace



Fig. 62
Aerial view for Marling Terrace

Character Zones

Marling Terrace - Quantum of Development

Character Zone Area

6.8 Ha

Residential Development Plots

4.3 Ha

Number of homes

Up to 305



GIA of non-residential space (Commercial/F&B/small-scale retail, leisure and community uses):

Up to 1,700 sqm/18,300 sqft

Density (dwellings/hectare)

71

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Marling Terrace Boundary
-  Residential development boundary
-  Residential
-  Active frontage

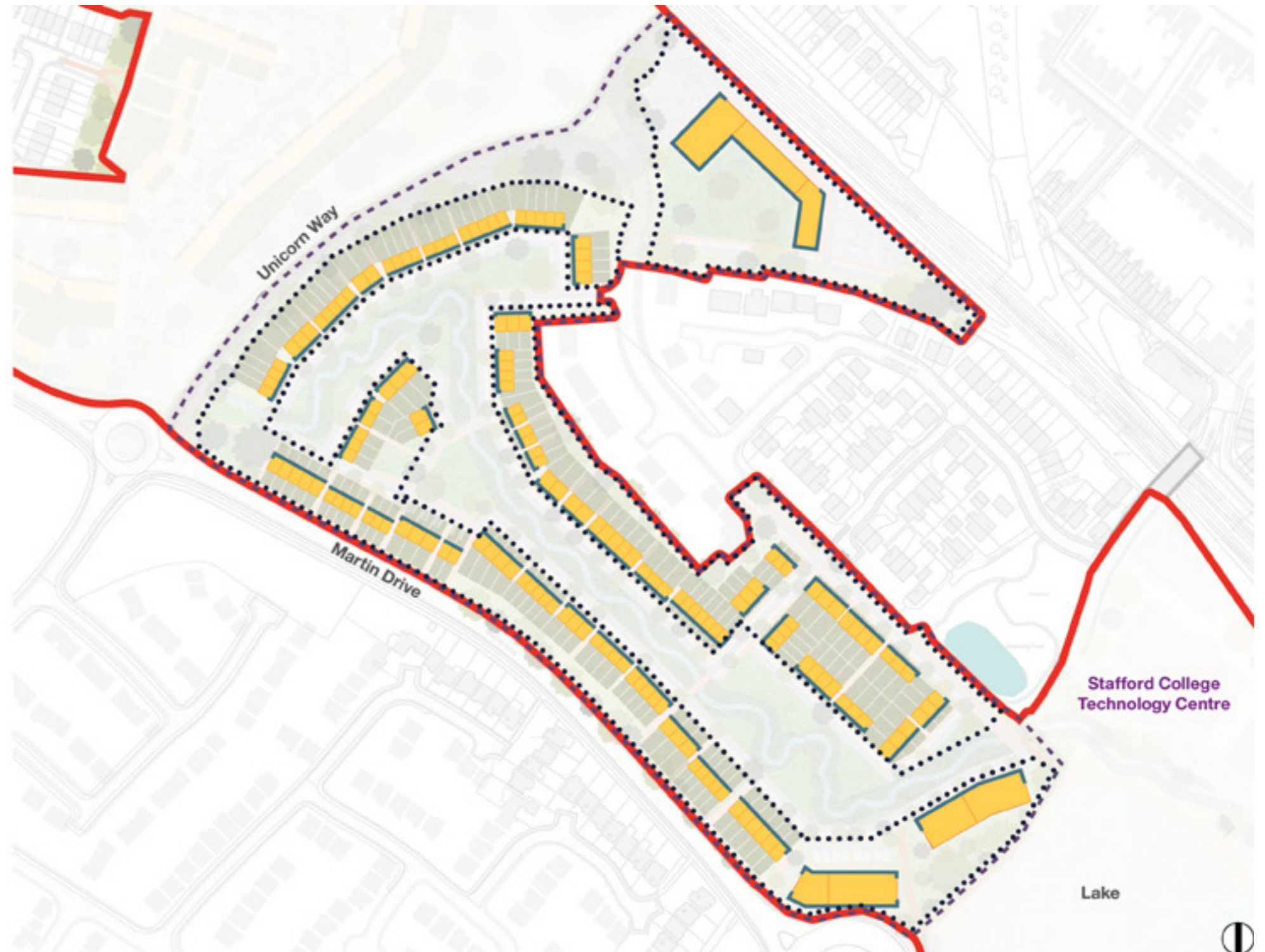


Fig. 63
Land Use for Marling Terrace

Character Zones

Marling Terrace - Transport, Accessibility and Permeability

The Marling Terrace Character Zone is bounded on the northern and western sides by Unicorn Way (part of the SWAR) and Martin Drive.

Marling Terrace Character Zone will be home to residential accommodation in the form of townhouses and residential apartments. These are proposed to have vehicular access from Unicorn Way to the north – either via a southern arm of the Doxey Road roundabout or via a suitable new access point.

The dwellings themselves will be served by narrow streets designed for people to cycle and walk safely, with vehicular access restricted to residents and their servicing and delivery requirements. Street design should be cognisant of high-quality public realm space designed to reduce vehicular speeds and make the streets safe for all. Carriageway widths for these routes could be as narrow as 3.2m in places, with widened sections for passing places and on street parking areas provided in select locations.

The ability for cyclists and pedestrians to cross Unicorn Way will be crucial in terms of connecting Marling Terrace and the other Character Zones closer to the station to Wicketgate. Options for crossing this route, should be at-grade and direct, in line with LTN 1/20 design guidance.

Parking for the townhouses is proposed to be in the order of one space per dwelling, comprised of a mix of on-and off-street parking. Parking for the residential apartments will need to be considered on a site by site basis, mindful of sustainable travel accessibility and proximity to the station. Cycle parking should be provided within the residential apartment blocks, and the townhouse design should encourage the ability to store cycles within the properties.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Marling Terrace Boundary
-  Primary route
-  Quiet way
-  Network Rail Access

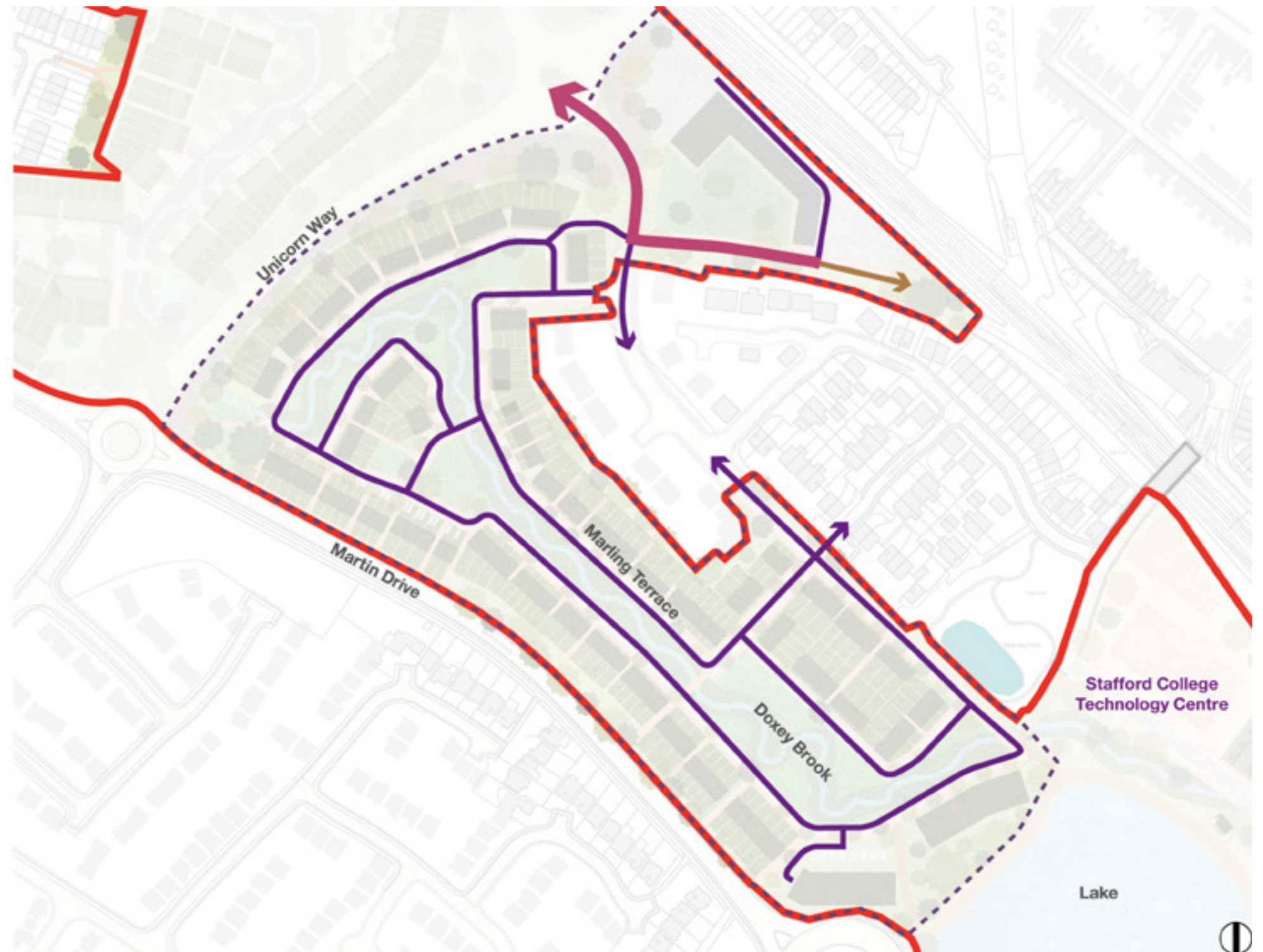


Fig. 64
Connectivity routes for Marling Terrace

Character Zones

Marling Terrace - Land Use

New Residential-led community

Marling Terrace is located in close proximity to the town centre and key public transport nodes where opportunities for a residential-led area should be developed. A new access point could be provided directly from the roundabout at Unicorn Way, will further help to animate the street level, and different types of residential properties will help to foster a balanced community.

Given the area's excellent connectivity, employment opportunities and proximity to extensive green space, Marling Terrace is proposed to be the focus for new, high quality housing within the study area. A broad range of house types, sizes and tenures will be provided in order to create a vibrant new community that meets the needs of a large cross section of society for existing and new residents in Stafford.

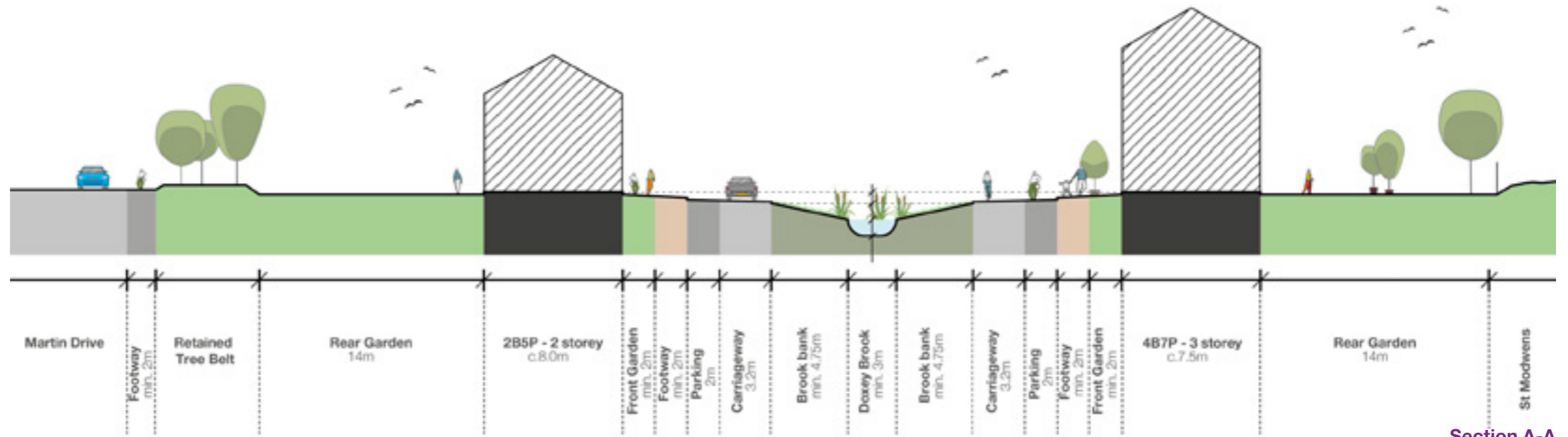
Marling Terrace comprises of apartment blocks and townhouses, with the Doxey Brook weaving down through the centre of the site. The apartment blocks address the lake, Martin Drive roundabout and Unicorn Way to articulate their masses, and link back to the townhouses within Marling Terrace.

Compatible uses

Where residential uses will be adjacent to key atrial routes, architectural and landscape solutions should be implemented to ensure that noise does not impact the quality of the living environment, and residential amenity is protected from any potential noise and visual impacts.



Fig. 65
Key Plan - Marling Terrace



Section A-A



Section B-B

Character Zones

Marling Terrace - Scale, Density and Form

Low to Medium Density Development

The proposals for Marling Terrace should reflect the existing massing, street scale and character of the local neighbourhood providing terraced housing and small apartment blocks in the centre of the development and towards the rail edge, where the land steps down at Unicorn Way and an apartment block would be appropriate.

Form

Townhouses and terraced houses will be located at the centre of the neighbourhood providing a family orientated environment. These houses will include garden spaces and will provide a pleasant and attractive setting, while benefiting from improved connections to the city centre and adjoining neighbourhoods.

Within Marling Terrace, storey heights ranging from 2 to 5 storeys are anticipated.

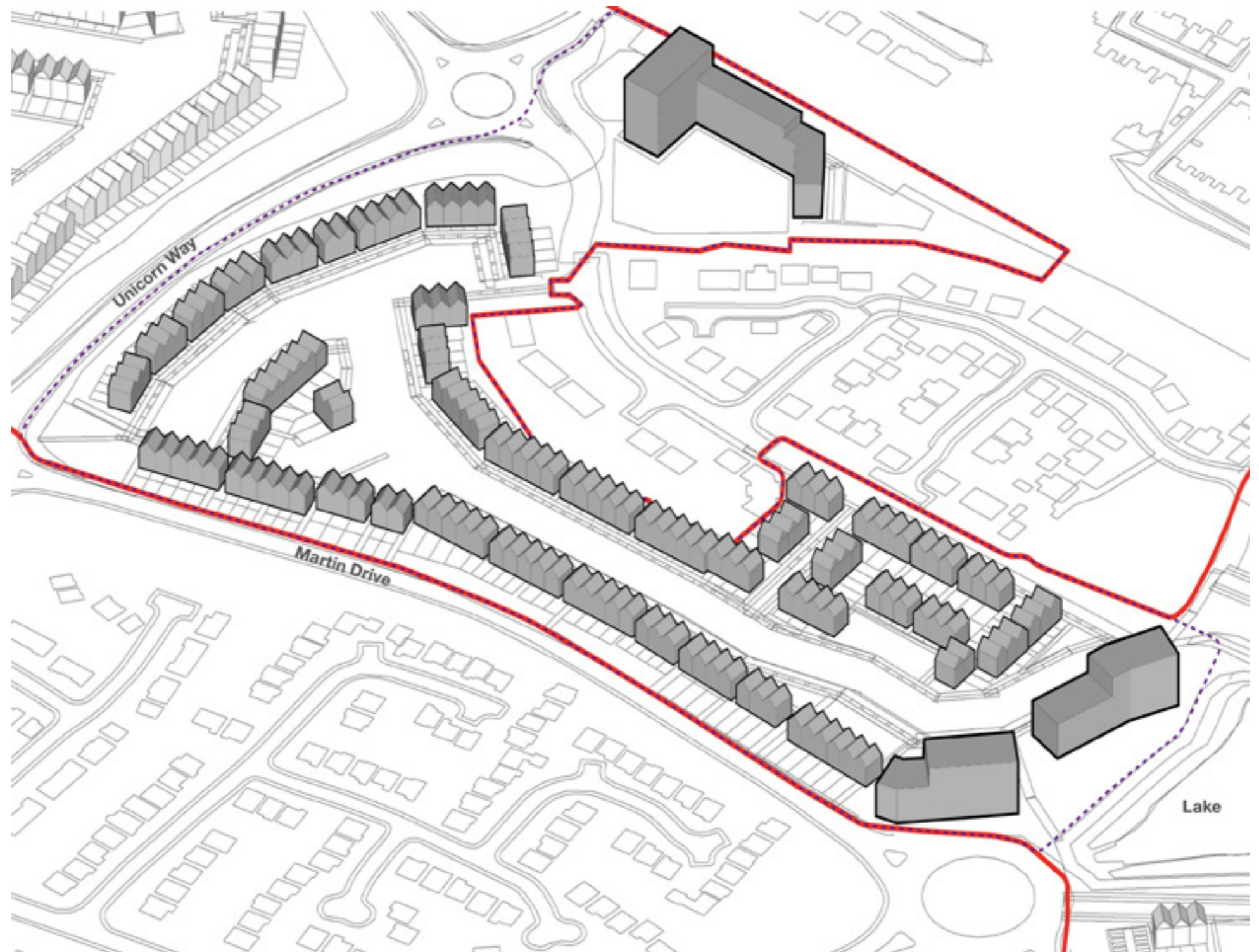
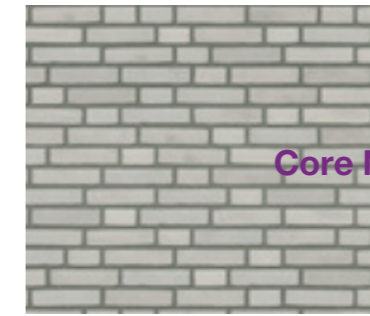


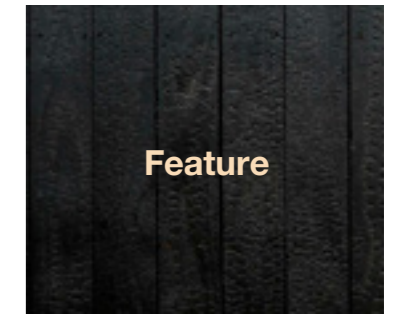
Fig. 66
Massing and density within Marling Terrace

Character Zones

Marling Terrace - Public Realm and Public Space



Core Materials



Feature

Create a High-Quality Public Realm

A high-quality public realm will create a more coherent sense of place with a diverse range of street typologies and character of spaces. This will be achieved through the provision of high-quality routes, civic spaces and green spaces. Other measures will include the improved permeability for pedestrians and cyclists, ensuring that all new and upgraded parts of the public realm achieve the highest quality design.

Proposed linear park along the Doxey Brook

Proposals should break down existing barriers in the study area and improve connectivity by creating stronger links between Marling Terrace, Wicketgate and the Station Gateway. Existing pedestrian and cycle infrastructure will be enhanced through the removal of existing barriers to movement, improved route continuity and accessibility through and within the framework area; stronger key linkages to surrounding areas and pedestrian/ cycle network and better legibility.

The aspiration is to create an environment which encourages people to walk and cycle more regularly, particularly through enhancements to the Doxey Brook and that improves the permeability of the area. A new linear park is proposed along the rerouted Doxey Brook; this will be designed to be of a high quality, incorporating new public realm as appropriate.

Pocket Parks

The domestic scale of Marling Terrace allows for public and private garden spaces which weave between the streets. Pocket parks will be promoted in this zone, providing an extension of the wider green infrastructure.



Top Left: Newhall Be, Harlow

Top Centre: Corner House, London

Top Right: Wildernesse Mews, Sevenoaks

Bottom Left: Bruksgården, Höganäs, Sweden

Bottom Right: Goldney Road, London

Wicketgate



Character Zones

Wicketgate - Introduction

Wicketgate is envisaged as a more intimate community, focused around the Doxey Brook but also around key green spaces, such as the Former Cricket Pitch, and the shared green squares created by drawing the houses back from the vehicular 'quiet ways'.

The zone adopts the design principles that have been used throughout the masterplan but utilises some shared surface treatments to help slow traffic, alongside the use of narrower gauge roads, wide pavements, flexible parking arrangements and a range of house typologies.

New pedestrian routes link into the surrounding developments and establish routes across the previous cricket pitch that will help protect the existing openness whilst also providing clear, and safe pathways for all users. Similarly, new pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular connections are suggested to link into Campion Grove in the new development north of Burleyfields to encourage interaction between the sites and to link them together.

Wicketgate is a residential development that focuses on creating active frontages through the typologies of the townhouses and their arrangement.

Within Wicketgate, storey heights ranging from 2 to 3 storeys are anticipated.

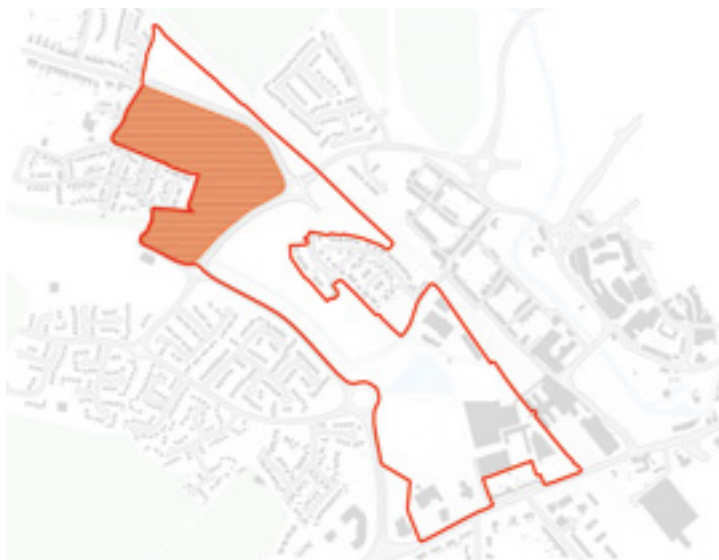


Fig. 67



Fig. 68
Aerial view for Wicketgate

Character Zones

Wicketgate - Quantum of Development

Character Zone Area

6.1 Ha

Residential Development Plots

3 Ha

Number of homes

Up to 175

Density (dwellings/hectare)

58

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Wicketgate Boundary
-  Residential development boundary
-  Residential
-  Active frontage

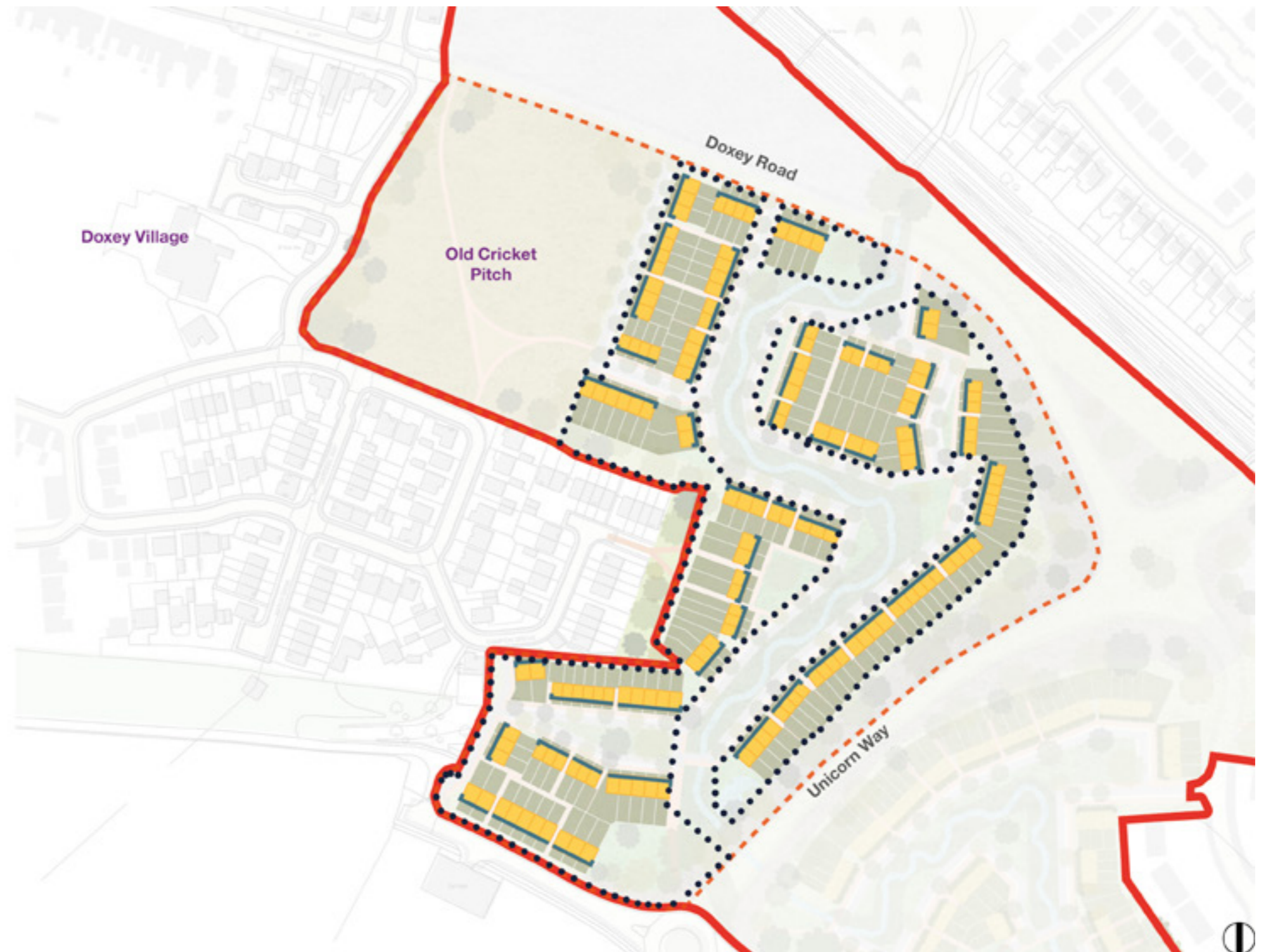


Fig. 68
Land use on Wicketgate

Character Zones

Wicketgate - Transport, Accessibility and Permeability

Wicketgate is bounded on the southern and eastern sides by Doxey Road and the new Unicorn Way (part of the SWAR). Wicketgate is the northernmost Character Zone within the SRF and a key challenge in taking this site forward is to ensure it is not considered peripheral to the remainder of the masterplan site.

Wicketgate will be home to residential accommodation in the form of townhouses. These will be served by narrow streets designed for people to cycle and walk safely, with vehicular access restricted to residents and their servicing and delivery requirements. Street design should be cognisant of high-quality public realm space designed to reduce vehicular speeds and make the streets safe for all. Carriageway widths for these routes could be as narrow as 3.2m in places, with widened sections for passing places and on street parking areas provided in select locations.

The ability for cyclists and pedestrians to cross Unicorn Way will be crucial in terms of connecting Wicketgate with the other Character Zones, and in particular direct connections to the station. Options for crossing this route, should be at-grade and direct, in line with LTN 1/20 design guidance.

Parking for the townhouses is proposed to be in the order of one space per dwelling, comprised of a mix of on-and off-street parking.

Cycle parking should be provided within the residential apartment blocks, and the townhouse design should encourage the ability to store cycles within the properties.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Wicketgate Boundary
-  Quiet way

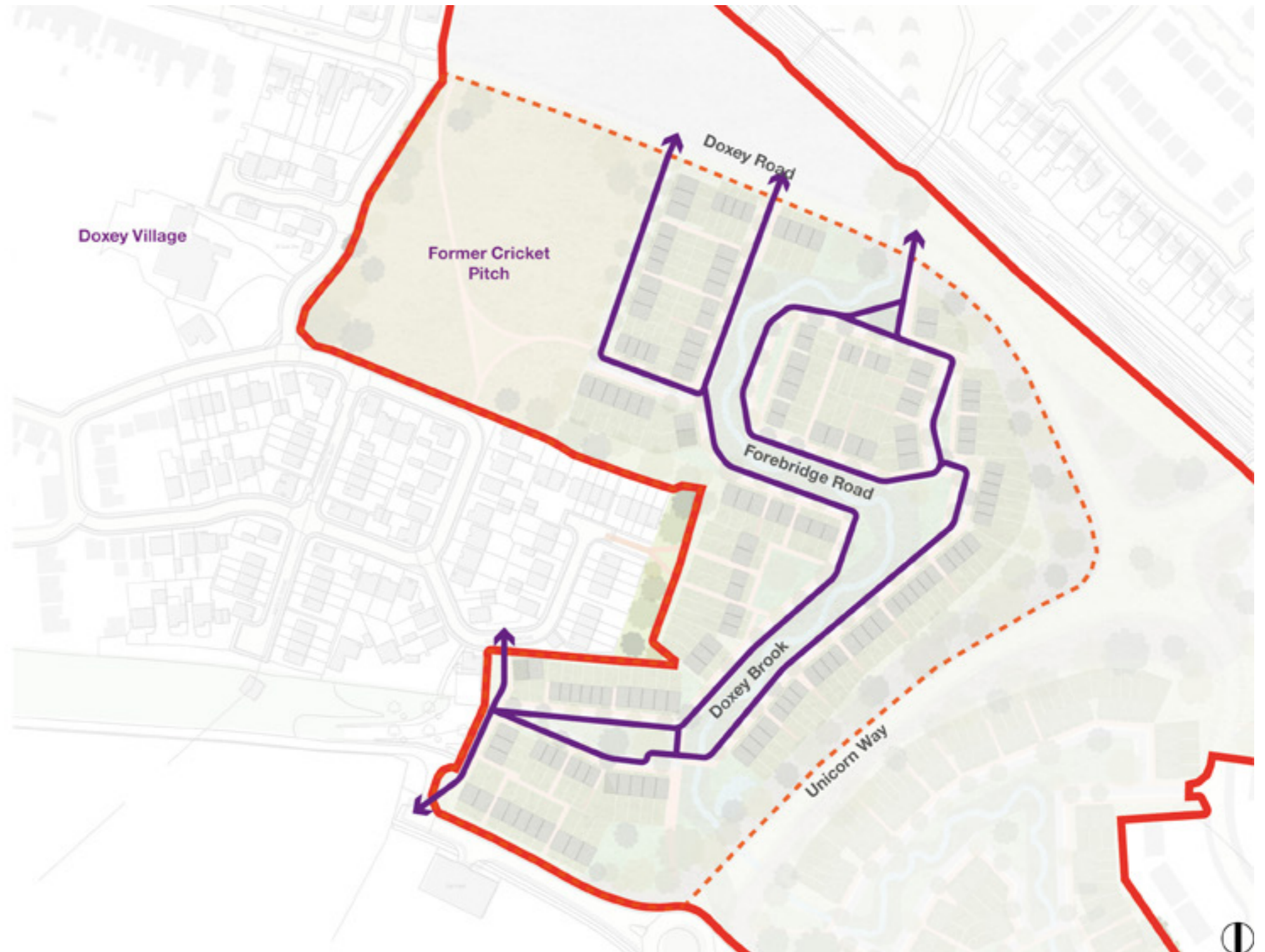


Fig. 69
Connectivity routes for Wicketgate

Character Zones

Wicketgate - Land Use

Wicketgate is located in close proximity to the town centre and key public transport nodes, where opportunities for a residential-led area should be developed. A new access point from Doxey Road will further help to animate the street level, and different types of residential properties will help to foster a balanced community.

Residential development

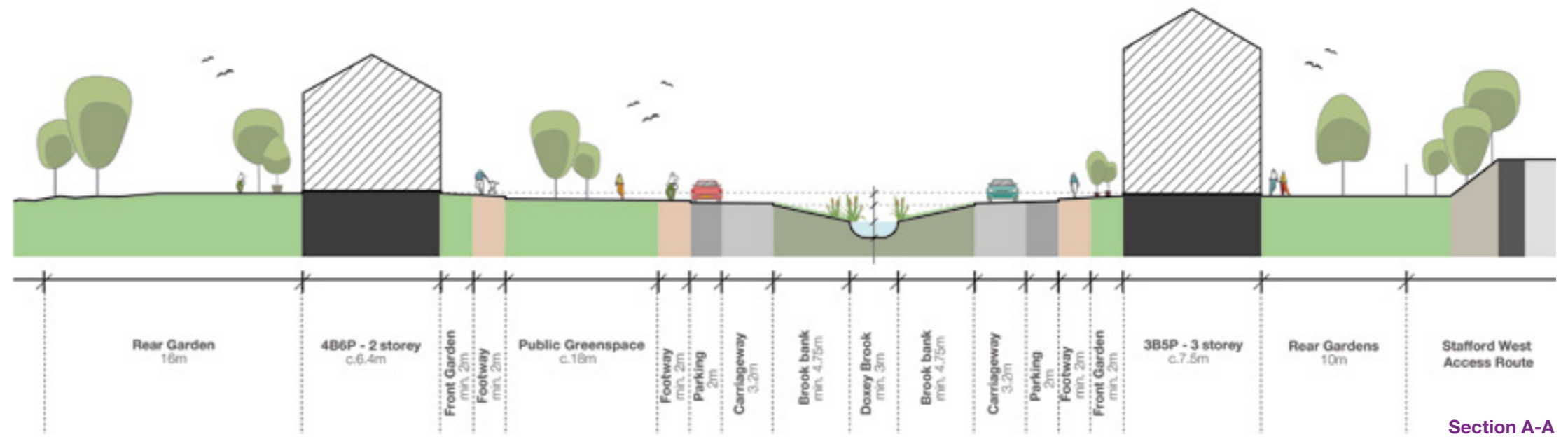
Residential developments will be predominately townhouses, at a higher density than the developments close by in Burleyfields. New pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular connections should aim to link into Campion Grove in the new development north of Burleyfields to encourage interaction between the sites and to link them together.

Active frontage

Active frontages should be provided along key routes such as Doxey Road and Unicorn Way, to support varied and safe streets in areas of increased footfall.

Compatible uses

Where residential uses will be adjacent to rail and key arterial routes, architectural and landscape solutions should be implemented to ensure that noise does not impact the quality of the living environment, and residential amenity is protected from any potential noise and visual impacts.



Section A-A



Fig. 70
Key Plan - Wicketgate

Character Zones

Wicketgate - Scale, Density and Form

Residential-led development

Proposals that demonstrate a compact approach to low-rise housing whilst encouraging medium densities will be supported to encourage sustainable use of land and optimised siting of all properties. Legible layouts that promote active frontages onto public spaces, with positive definition of key routes and entrance points into the zone, should be provided. In lower-density areas such as Wicketgate, there is potential for zero carbon heating and cooling to be achieved through solar PV electricity generation and heat pumps to individual dwellings.

Form

Townhouses and clusters of homes will be located at the centre of the neighbourhood providing a family orientated environment. These houses will include garden spaces and will provide a pleasant and attractive setting, while benefiting from improved connections to the town centre and adjoining neighbourhoods. The orientation of future residential development should avoid single aspect north facing apartments utilizing passive design principles to maximise daylight availability and natural ventilation potential.

Connection to the Doxey Brook

Within Wicketgate, there should be a relationship between the Doxey Brook and public green space such as the Former Cricket pitch. The proposals should allow for green spaces to directly adjoin the brook, whilst others should be stepped back and form their own separate spaces. Where the latter occurs, footpaths should be provided around the full perimeter of the green space, as well as at strategic locations across the green areas to tie in with pedestrian ways connecting into the wider proposals.

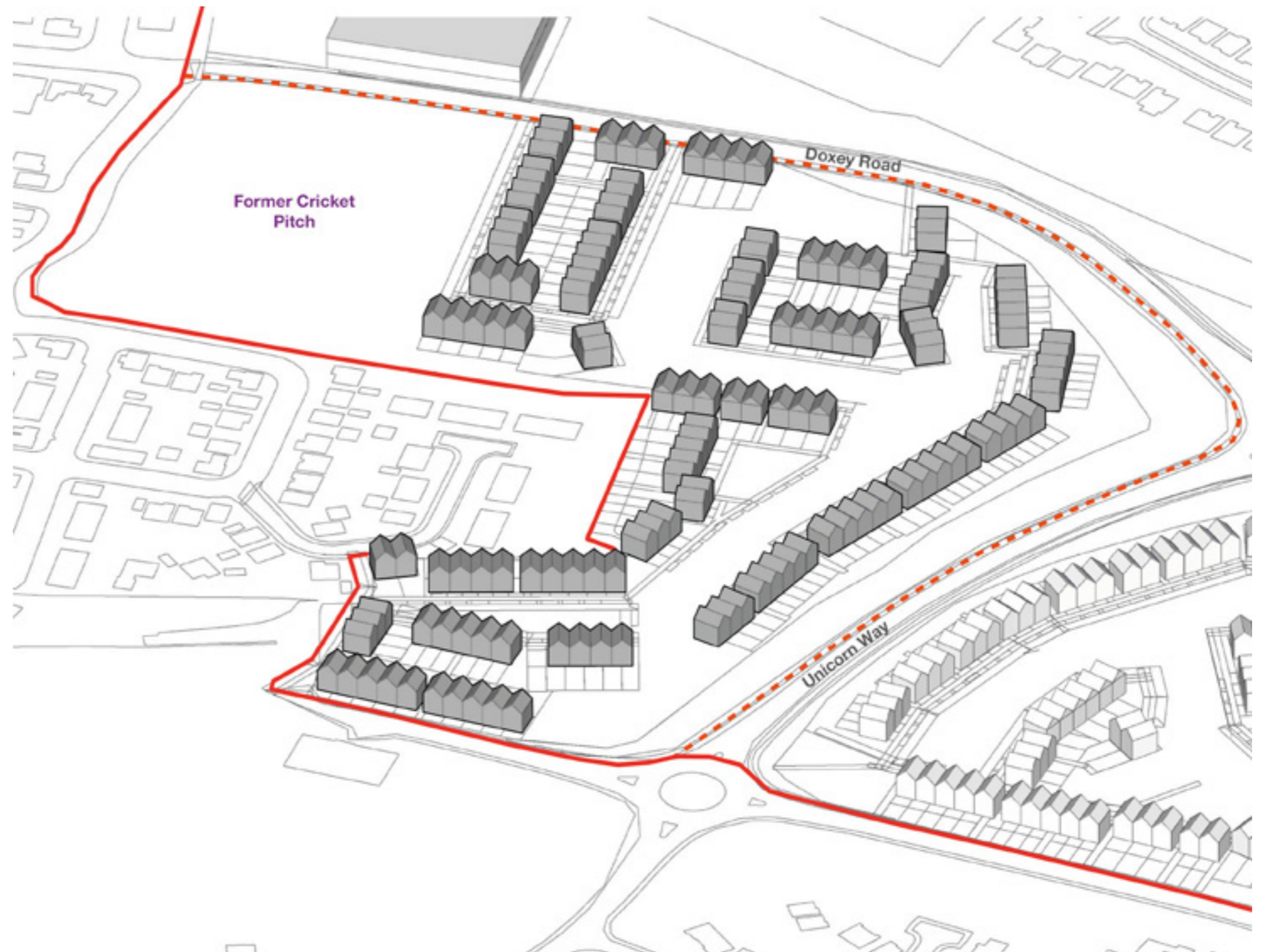
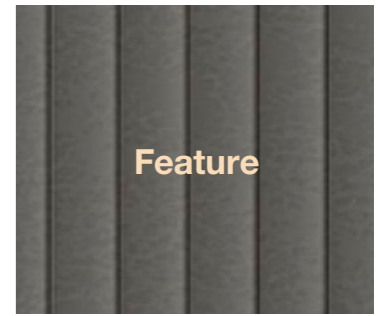


Fig. 71
Massing and density for Wicketgate

Character Zones

Wicketgate - Public Realm and Public Space



Core Materials

Feature

Pedestrian and cycle routes

New pedestrian routes link into the surrounding developments and should establish routes across the Former Cricket Pitch that will help protect the existing openness whilst also providing safe, clear, and stable pathways for all users.

Delivering new green spaces and links

As part of the Green-Blue Infrastructure, a series of new green links should be provided alongside the realigned Doxey Brook that draw together the landscape principles of flood alleviation, water management; and, enhanced public recreation into the heart of the new neighbourhood. Proposals should incorporate green routes with safe and comfortable walking and cycling provision.

Enhancing the Doxey Brook and providing access to the waters edge

The proposals should connect with the Doxey Brook by re-routing the brook into the centre of the zone, and naturalising its alignment and channel by introducing meanders and planting. It is anticipated that the brook will become a unique and integrated part of the site, which is fully utilised by both maximising the number of properties fronting it and also providing brook-side open green spaces.



Top Left: Abode, Great Kneighton
Top Centre: Goldsmith Street, Norwich
Top Right: Dujardin Mews, London
Bottom Left: Horton Kirby Paper Mill, Kent
Bottom Centre: Wildernesse Mews, Sevenoaks
Bottom Right: The Gables, Crosby, Liverpool

Character Zones

Doxey Road - Introduction

Doxey Road could provide a light industrial / commercial-led development, providing the opportunity for a single occupier development such as a new home for Royal Mail.

The site should look to provide new space to accommodate growing commercial and business opportunities in Stafford.



Fig. 72
Massing and density for Wicketgate



Fig. 73
Aerial view for Wicketgate

Character Zones

Doxey Road - Quantum of Development

Character Zone Area

2.7 Ha

GIA of non-residential space (Commercial/F&B/small-scale retail, leisure and community uses):

Up to 2,700 sqm/29,100 sqft



Key

- Site Boundary
- Doxey Road Boundary
- Light industrial

Fig. 74
Land use for Doxey Road

Character Zones

Doxey Road - Transport, Accessibility and Permeability

A strong boulevard

Doxey Road will become a strong boulevard, directly connecting the residential developments to Wicketgate with Marling Terrace and Station Gateway to the south, and into the wider town centre of Stafford. It should benefit from public realm enhancements incorporating formal lines of tree planting, wide biodiverse verges and simple pedestrian spaces.



Key

- Site Boundary
- Doxey Road Boundary
- Primary route
- Indicative access point

Fig. 75
Connectivity routes for Doxey Road

Character Zones

Doxey Road - Scale, Density and Form

The scale and massing should reflect the adjacency to the nearby residential units and primary frontages onto Doxey Road.

The area is largely comprising of poor quality, low rise industrial units housing a number of small businesses. The architectural quality of the built environment is decidedly poor with the existing industrial units not contributing towards promoting a positive character for the area. The current format is devoid of active frontages that positively interact with the streetscape or pedestrians. This area would benefit from a new development to create a vibrant employment-led neighbourhood, that would be attractive to a range of business occupiers.

Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Doxey Road Boundary
-  Proposed building

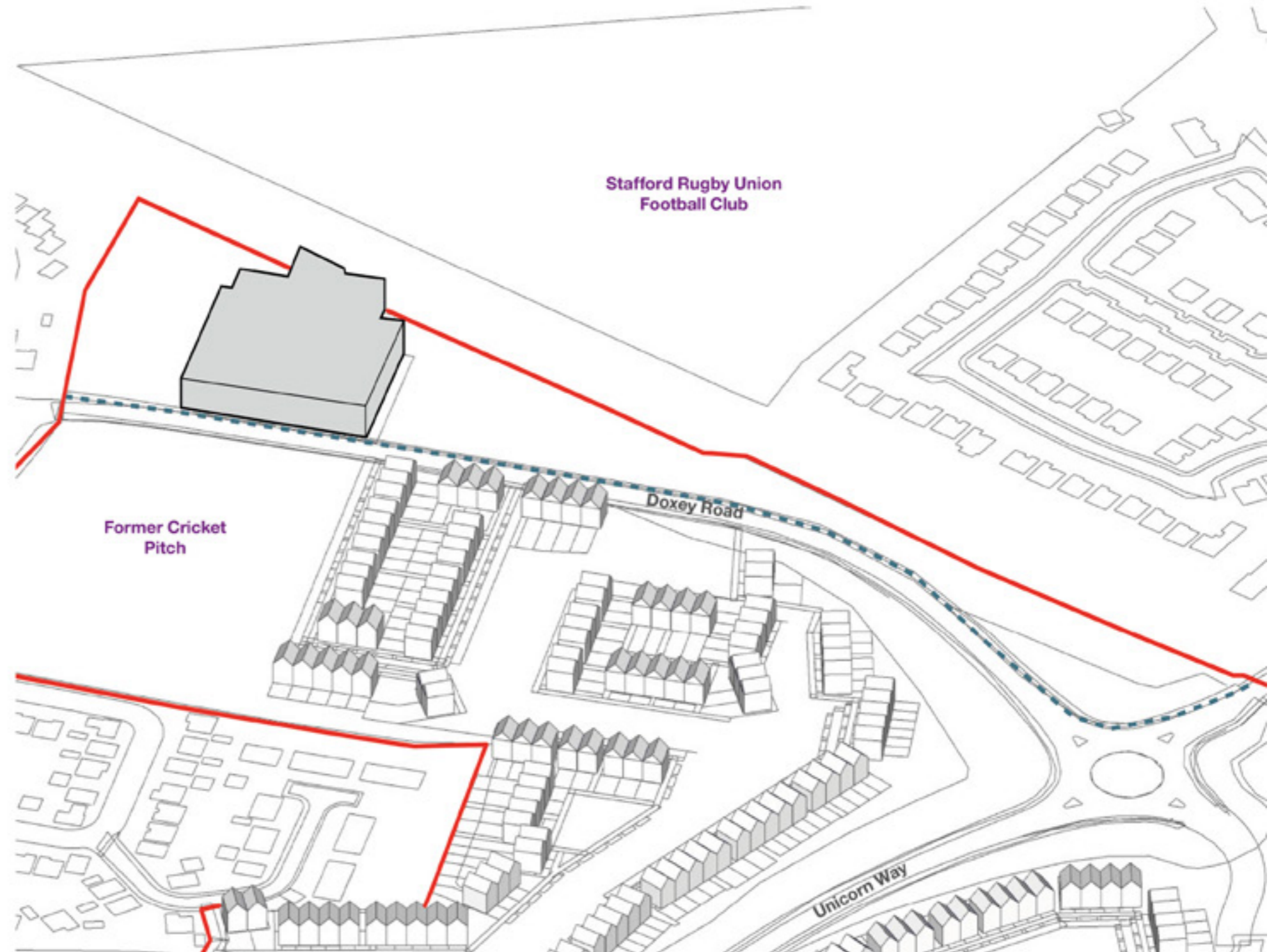


Fig. 76
Massing and density for Doxey Road

Character Zones

Doxey Road - Precedents



Top Left: Charlie Bigham's West, Somerset
Top Right: Dream Factory, Rotterdam
Bottom Left: Heating Infrastructure Project (HIP), Liverpool
Bottom Right: Dream Factory, Rotterdam

Phasing and Delivery

A phasing and delivery plan has been prepared to indicate the potential plot phasing of the proposals, reflecting on site constraints and opportunities, existing public sector land ownership and the necessary infrastructure (highway and social infrastructure) that is required to be in place in advance of key parcels coming forward.

Infrastructure Delivery Strategy

Key infrastructure requirements to support the Stafford Station Gateway site, and will benefit all Character Zones, are as follows:

- Ground work and remediation of key sites (subject to further site investigations which will need to be undertaken and could inform the ultimate development mix)
- Re-alignment of Doxey Drain/Brook through the site
- Implementation of Flood Risk Strategy and necessary future proofing
- Creation of new public realm/ greenspaces
- Utilities and energy infrastructure
- Multi-Storey Car Park
- New pedestrian linkway bridge to Stafford Railway Station
- New access road into site off SWAR

Phasing and Delivery

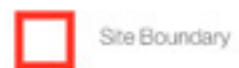
Phase 1a

The initial development parcel is anticipated to comprise Staffordshire County Council's existing ownership (former Saint Gobain site) which is Character Zone known as Wicketgate.

Levelling up Funding is being sought to support and enable this site to come forward early and will be used to remediate the site and prepare the land for development ahead of development plots coming forward.



Key



Site Boundary

Fig. 77
Phasing and delivery plan - Phase 1a

Phasing and Delivery

Phase 1b

Phase 1b, which can happen concurrently with Phase 1a, is likely to comprise the Station Gateway.

Stafford Borough Council is in the process of acquiring land interests in this location, including Blunt Shoes, and as such will look to create development parcels in this location, high quality public realm and infrastructure, and amenity provision to set the benchmark for the remaining development phases to come forward.



Key



Fig. 78
Phasing and delivery plan - Phase 1b



Phasing and Delivery

Phase 2 and Future Phases

Phase 2 and later phases of the development will comprise the central portion of the site, leading up to Unicorn Way, subject to addressing some of the technical infrastructure requirements, including implementation of the flood risk strategy to unlock and enable these sites to come forward.



Key
□ Site Boundary

Fig. 77
Phasing and delivery plan - Phase 2

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