

# Walsall Site Allocation Document Issues and Options **Consultation Summary Document**



**Planning 2026: Have Your Say**

Consultation Period: April 22nd – June 3rd 2013



**Walsall Council**



## SUMMARY

### What is the purpose of the Site Allocation Document – Consultation Summary Document?

The Site Allocation Document will allocate sites for housing, employment and other land uses such as community and leisure facilities or public open spaces throughout the whole of the borough (excluding Walsall Town Centre, and the other District Centres).

This Consultation Summary document provides a summary of the main Issues and Options report and enables you to respond to key questions. The key questions in this summary document use the same numbering as the main report and are shown in bold. You should view the main report for full details and full list of questions if you have a specific interest.

A separate Schedule of Ward Maps has been provided to set out the sites we are considering to allocate and to show other assets that are located within each ward.

### Where does the requirement to produce the Site Allocation Document come from?

The Council adopted the Black Country Core Strategy in 2011 that sets out the vision for the future of Walsall up to 2026 and includes targets for matters such as the amount of land that has to be provided for new housing and industry.

The flow diagram below sets out the process we intend to follow to adopt the Site Allocation Document:



### How have we identified sites?

Many of the sites have been identified from our own evidence, but some have also been submitted by land owners and developers in response to a 'Call for Sites' in 2011. The sites and land uses proposed in the 'Call for Sites' may not necessarily be ones that we consider to be suitable and will be considered further at the next 'Preferred Options' stage.

If you would like this information in another language or format please contact Planning Policy on Phone: 01922 658020, Textphone: 01922 654000 or Email: [ldf@walsall.gov.uk](mailto:ldf@walsall.gov.uk)

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## 1. Introduction Summary

This is a summary of the issues which are explained in more detail in Chapter 1 of the main Site Allocation Document Issues and Options report. This summary focuses on the really crucial questions that we want your help with. You can comment on either document, but generally speaking the main document contains more background information, technical details, site specific information and in-depth questions. A questionnaire for you to complete has been produced and is available on our website. You can answer as many or as few questions as you like. Where possible please provide details and evidence to support your answers.

The Issues and Options report is the first stage in the preparation of Walsall's Sites and Allocations Document. The report examines the issues that need to be addressed about particular topics and asks questions where we think further information may be required.

### **What is the Site Allocation Document (SAD)?**

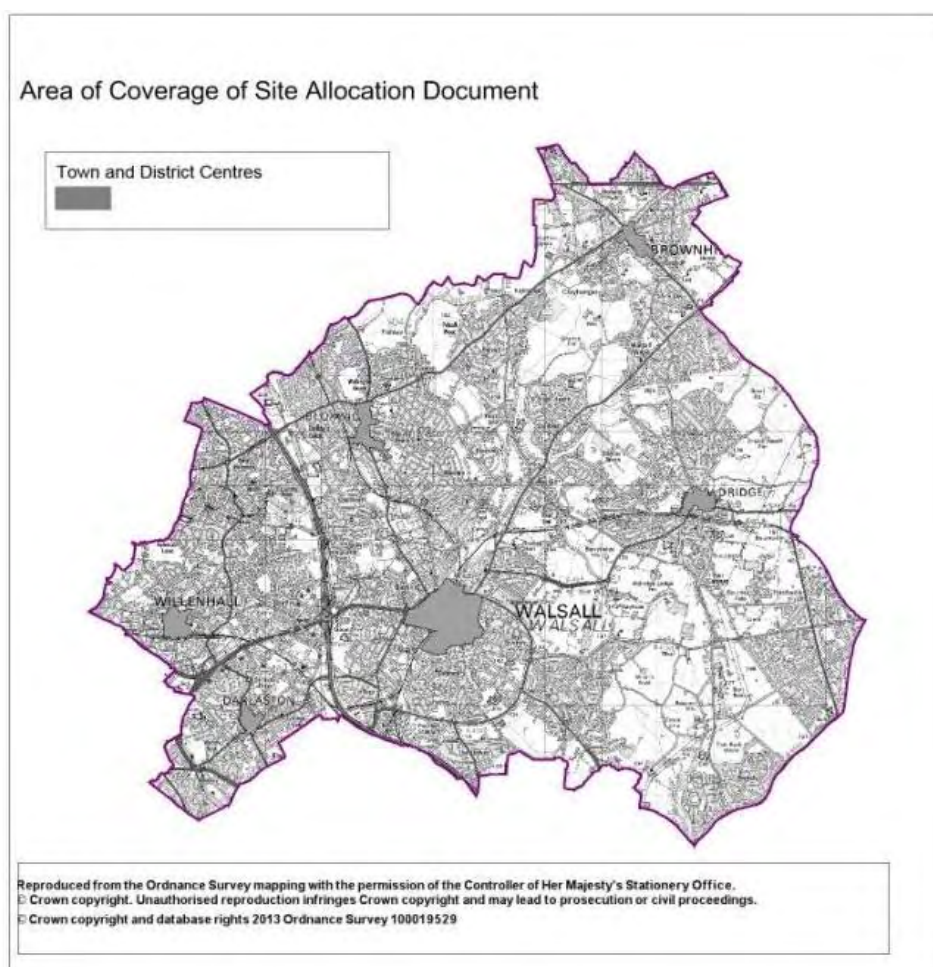
The Site Allocation Document (SAD) is being prepared by the Council to show (allocate) where new development for housing, employment and other land uses might be provided to meet the needs of current and future residents, businesses and visitors. It will also show important existing land uses, such as transport networks, as well as features of the natural and historic built environment that should be safeguarded.

The SAD is intended to provide detail to build on the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS) that sets out the overall development needs of the Borough up to 2026. These two documents together will form part of the Walsall Local Plan: they will be used as the basis for determining planning applications and will help to promote sites to aid the delivery of new development.

The SAD (and Town Centre AAP) will be accompanied by a Map that will replace the existing Walsall Unitary Development Plan (UDP) Proposals Map. The SAD will

cover the entire Borough except for Walsall Town Centre and the five District Centres as shown on the map below. Detailed proposals and allocations of land in Walsall Town Centre are being considered in the Walsall Town Centre Area Action Plan (AAP). The District Centres will be covered by individual Area Action Plans that are expected to be prepared in future years. Until then, the District Centre Inset Maps (which accompany the existing UDP Proposals Map) will remain in use.

### SAD Coverage



The report looks at possible sites that might be allocated for particular uses across the entire borough. It also examines how allocations for different uses might fit together in local areas. We have included a range of maps showing the options for individual topics at a borough-wide level and also composite maps showing the different potential uses at individual ward level. These maps are accompanied by lists of sites.

Many of the sites and proposed land uses have been proposed by landowners and developers. None of the sites listed are necessarily supported by the Council at this stage. For each topic we have listed various options. We have also listed separately “rejected options” that we do not think would comply with the BCCS or other local or national policies.

At this stage we are only listing what we think are the issues that the SAD should address. We are also inviting comments about the sites that have been proposed.

A summary of the **key objectives** of the SAD

1. To allocate high quality employment land in the best locations, allowing existing businesses to expand and new businesses to locate in the Borough;
2. To retain local quality employment land in long-term employment use, to enable existing businesses to stay in Walsall;
3. To deliver sustainable communities through the development of new housing on vacant, derelict, and under-used land, and redundant employment land, as well as the regeneration of existing housing areas;
4. To encourage and direct investment of a suitable scale to Walsall’s local centres;
5. To provide a high quality environment across Walsall by defining integrated environmental networks, including areas of urban open space for recreation;
6. To protect and enhance existing natural and built environmental assets of national and local importance in Walsall;
7. To deliver a first class transport network;
8. To deliver a network of high quality community services accessible to all communities within Walsall;

9. To identify opportunities for the development of waste management facilities in employment areas and in other suitable and accessible locations in Walsall; and
10. To identify and safeguard mineral resources of national and local importance and identify suitable sites and areas for mineral extraction and production of secondary and recycled materials.

**Question**

**INT:Q1 Do you agree that the proposed objectives for the SAD are appropriate for the Borough of Walsall? If not, what would you add?**

## 2. About Walsall and Policy Context Summary

This is a summary of the issues which are explained in more detail in Chapter 2 of the main Site Allocation Document Issues and Options report. This summary focuses on the really crucial questions that we want your help with. You can comment on either document, but generally speaking the main document contains more background information, technical details, site specific information and in-depth questions. A questionnaire for you to complete has been produced and is available on our website. You can answer as many or as few questions as you like. Where possible please provide details and evidence to support your answers.

The Issues and Options report is the first stage in the preparation of Walsall's Sites and Allocations Document. The report examines the issues that need to be addressed about particular topics and asks questions where we think further information may be required.

### **Key Issues about Walsall**

We want to make sure that the SAD addresses key issues that affect people and the environment. We examine these issues in detail in the individual topic chapters but we have summarised them below.

The population of Walsall is generally less prosperous than the national and regional average, but the "borough-wide" facts and figures mask considerable differences in the prosperity and health of the population across the Borough, and some areas are much more deprived than others. Walsall has large areas of attractive countryside and open space, but the industrial history of the borough has left many former factory premises and other sites that are affected by contamination and ground stability.

For the individual topics, we think the issues we need to take account of include:

### **Housing**



- the location, type, tenure and affordability of housing;
- the accessibility of housing to services, community facilities and open space;

### **Land for Industry**

- the need for more 'readily available' employment land;
- the opportunity to allocate land for other uses on sites that are no longer suitable for industrial premises;

### **Shopping and Services**

- the need to strengthen investment in centres;
- to establish whether more development opportunities can be identified in local centres;

### **Open Space, Leisure and Community Facilities**

- to protect open spaces in areas of local need for sport, recreation and local amenity value;
- to provide facilities for communities in the most appropriate locations, including for education, healthcare, leisure centres, faith buildings and other community needs;

### **Environmental Network**

- to link and improve existing environmental assets to enhance green corridors ('the environmental network') across the Borough;
- the opportunity to deal with environmental constraints, e.g. flood risk, by providing mitigation that is multi-functional and can lead to improvements to the existing environment;

### **Waste and Resource Management**

- the need to safeguard the capacity of our existing waste infrastructure;
- to plan for the provision of additional waste infrastructure required to enable Walsall to manage the types of waste produced by local communities and businesses, and meet national targets for waste management;

**Minerals**

- the need to safeguard mineral resources and mineral infrastructure of potential local and national importance;
- to plan to provide minerals essential to support sustainable economic growth, including making provision for mineral extraction where necessary;

**Transport**

- the need to tackle problems of traffic congestion in certain ‘hotspots’ around the Borough;
- to provide greater accessibility for people across the Borough in their choice of means of transport;
- the need to reserve land for future transport improvements

**Utilities Infrastructure**

- to find whether there are opportunities in the Borough for low carbon development and renewable energy generation;
- to ensure the necessary water supply to support new development sites being allocated through the SAD can be provided;

**Sites, Choices and Constraints**

- to gain further information and offer initial assessment on sites already put forward by developers and sites identified as “Choices Sites” – sites where we need to make choices about what the site should be used for;
- to identify major constraints to development and carry forward the BCCS regeneration corridors as a focus for development and infrastructure improvements;

**Delivery and Viability**

- to identify different approaches and means of attracting investment and enabling new development to take place on allocated sites.

**Question**

**AW:Q1 Do you think we have captured all the key issues that the SAD should try and deal with? If not, what have we missed?** (You may wish to answer questions about the specific key issues under each topic chapter).

**Policy Context**

The SAD will form part of the “Local Plan” for Walsall so has to be in conformity with existing local and national policies. These include the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the Black Country Core Strategy (BCCS). The SAD is intended to replace many of the remaining policies in the Walsall Unitary Development Plan (UDP) and will be accompanied by a Policies Map that will replace the UDP Proposals Map.

**Question**

**AW:Q3 Are there any other policy documents that we ought to take into account (other than those that are described in the topic chapters)?**

### 3. Housing Summary



We need to provide sufficient homes of the right types and in the right places for the number of people who are expected to live in Walsall in the future. The Black Country Core Strategy expects the total number of homes in the Borough to increase by at least **11,973** over the period 2006 to 2026. This represents an increase of about 10% compared with the current number.

Sites for a large proportion of these new homes have already been identified. These include dwellings completed since 2006 and sites that have already been granted planning permission. We think we need to identify sites for a further **2,700** homes. We also need to decide whether any of the sites that have already been granted planning permission should be allocated to ensure they remain available for housing development or used for another purpose: if the latter, additional housing sites will need to be found to replace them.

We will need to identify some sites as being specially allocated for particular types of housing. These include **sites for gypsies, travellers and travelling show people**. We might also need to allocate sites as being particularly suitable for the **elderly**, or for high quality “**aspirational**” housing.

Many people are not able to buy their homes. We therefore need to find ways of providing an adequate supply of **affordable housing**.

Residents of new homes generate additional traffic, and demand on infrastructure such as water supplies, sewage and electricity. They also need schools, health services, open space and other facilities such as leisure provision and shops. We will need to examine the capacity of these **supporting facilities**.

## **What are the options?**

The total amount of land that has potential to be used for housing is considerably in excess of the amount we actually require. However, much of this land might also be needed for industry, should be allocated as open space or retained as Green Belt. For many potential housing sites we therefore have to choose between alternative options.

The map below shows the sites that could be allocated for housing, together with the sites where there is a choice to be made between housing and another allocation. The map also shows sites that are currently in employment use but which might be suitable for release for housing: however, we do not propose to allocate this land for housing in the SAD and we expect much of it to remain in employment use.

A separate map has been prepared that shows potential sites for Gypsies, Travellers or Travelling Show people. This is attached to the full version of the Housing Chapter and the Housing Technical Appendix.

### **Option 1 – concentrate all new housing development on surplus former employment land**

This is likely to provide sufficient housing land to meet our needs. However, some former employment land will not be suitable for housing development. A mechanism would also be needed to ensure that existing jobs are safeguarded as industry relocates elsewhere, and that sufficient land is available elsewhere to meet the needs of industry.

Former employment sites are not spread evenly across the borough in locations where people might want to live.

### **Option 2 - retain all existing employment land and allocate new housing on other previously developed land, including cleared former local authority housing sites and areas of surplus open space, instead.**

This option would safeguard current employment uses and might allow the most efficient use of existing infrastructure such as roads. However, some employment land is no longer suitable for use by modern industry. Directing new housing to other sites would leave such land derelict and discourage the regeneration of the area.

Although some open space might be underused because of the current population levels, increasing the numbers of residents in certain areas might lead to greater demand for this open space. The volume of new housing that is proposed is also likely to result in a requirement for new community infrastructure such as new or extended schools and health facilities.

**Option 3 - Concentrate new housing development on greenfield sites, which would mainly involve sites in the Green Belt.**

Many sites submitted through the Call for Sites propose development on such sites. Such sites will usually have fewer problems relating to ground conditions than brownfield sites. However, greenfield sites are likely to require more costly infrastructure such as new roads and sewers. They are also likely to be less accessible by public transport and will be more remote from services such as schools and shops.

Directing development to greenfield sites would discourage the regeneration of previously developed land elsewhere in the area and would be contrary to the objectives of the BCCS.

**HO:Q1. Have we identified all the key housing issues?**

**HO:Q2. Are there any sites that should be identified specifically for development for accommodation for the elderly, disabled or other “special needs”?**

**HO:Q4. Are you aware of any sites that would be suitable for development to**

**provide pitches for gypsies or travellers, or to provide yards for travelling show people?**

**HO:Q5. Are there any sites that might be particularly suitable for development for affordable housing or “aspirational” housing?**

**HO:Q7. Are there any specific sites or areas of the borough where new housing development would create pressures that could not be handled by the existing infrastructure?**

**HO:Q10. Do you agree with our initial assessments of the potential housing sites, including those in the SHLAA and those that have been submitted through the “Call for Sites”? Do you support or have information about these?**

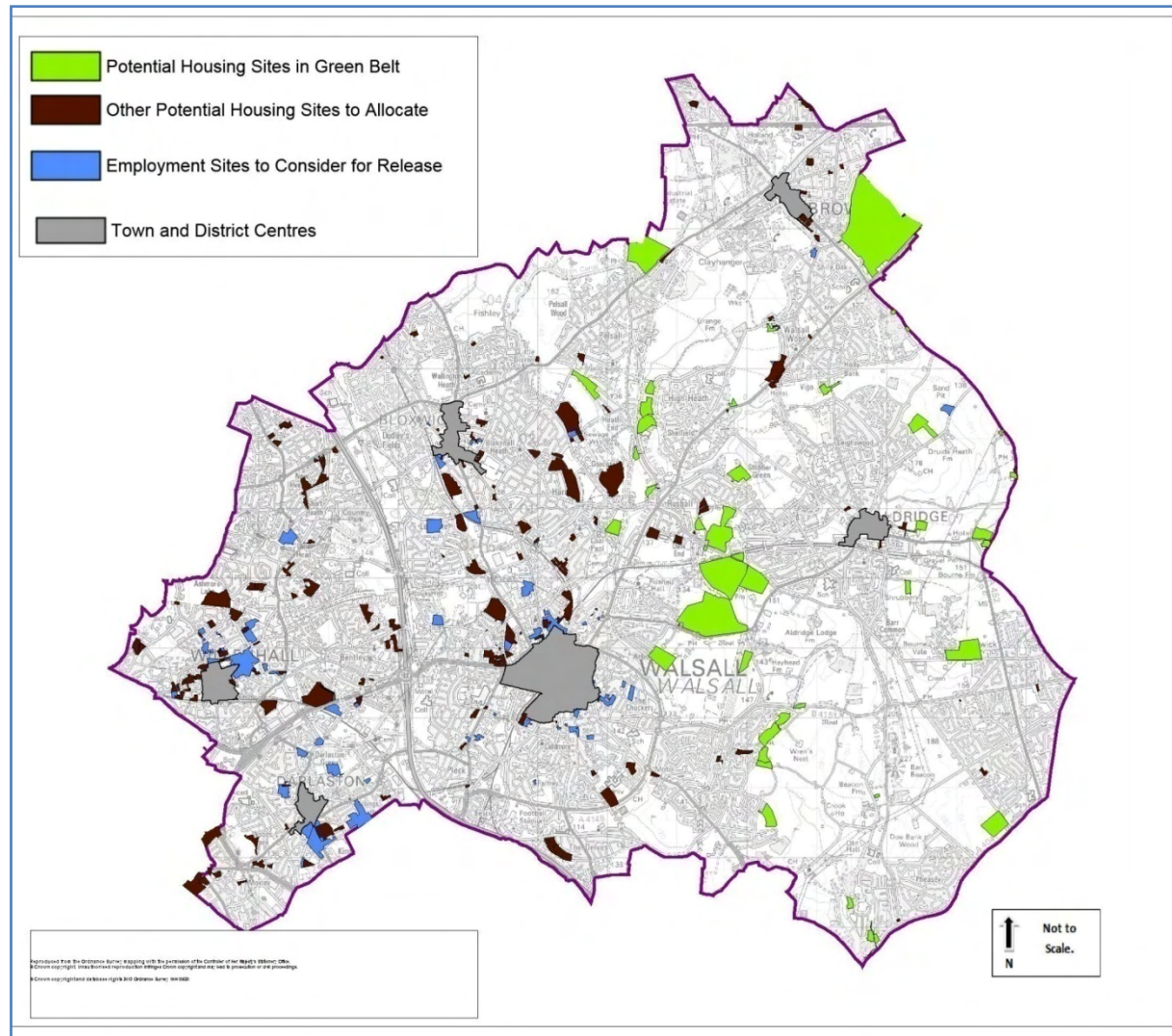
**HO:Q13. Are you aware of any other sites that might be suitable for development for housing? (if so, please refer to the “Call for Sites”)**

**HO:Q14. Is there any other evidence that we need to collect to show the amount and types of sites that we should allocate for housing?**

**HO:Q15. Which option or mix of options do you prefer and why? What evidence do you have to support this option?**

**HO:Q16. If the preferred option does not result in sufficient land to accommodate the number of new dwellings we need to accommodate, are there any other possible options? For example, should we consider allowing development on the Green Belt if there is insufficient land elsewhere? Or should we require housing to be built to higher densities elsewhere?**

### Land for Housing Map





## 4. Land for Industry Summary



Walsall is an industrial town, with a strong manufacturing element. The spending power from jobs in the manufacturing sector in particular sustains jobs in local consumer services. It is very important that we provide enough land to allow local companies to grow, and for inward

investment.

The SAD Issues and Options proposes to classify Walsall's industrial land into the following categories:

- Existing high quality industry, which is clean, advanced manufacturing or logistics, with well designed premises and very good access
- Potential high quality industry, which is land and/or premises that over the plan period could become high quality
- Retained local quality employment that, in addition to manufacturing and logistics, has a wider set of uses, such as depots, waste management, trade sales and scrap yards
- Land that we should consider for release to other uses, particularly housing, if industry vacates, due to the surrounding uses or because the land is not well located for modern industry
- Land that used to be industrial but we are proposing to allocate for other uses, notably housing, because it is unsuitable for modern industry due to poor access or the surrounding uses constraining industrial use.

SAD Option 1 shows all the land that is currently in employment use, categorised as above.

We also need to provide enough readily available vacant land (that is, land that has no major problems and is being actively marketed for industry or with a willing seller

or developer). Walsall has been assessed as needing 46ha of readily available land at any one time, over the plan period. But the key issue is that we only have, at present, around 22ha of readily available land. If we do not provide more, we will miss out on investment and badly needed jobs, as industry is forced to relocate and new investment goes elsewhere. Unemployment could go higher and deprivation could increase.

The SAD therefore presents options to expand the stock of readily available industrial land.

## **What are the options?**

### **Option 1 – we could continue with the present supply and not use any other land.**

At current rates of development on vacant sites, we would only have about three years or so of supply left. Then, in terms of job-creating investment we would have to rely on extensions to existing works and redevelopments of the existing stock. Given that most industrial development happens on vacant land (mostly readily available), this is a serious issue for regeneration, because it implies that growing companies will leave Walsall, taking job creating potential with them.

### **Option 2 - we could look to expand the employment land by allocating extra land from the urban area that is not currently designated as employment land.**

As well as the existing stock in option1, this would involve using land from other sources, from within the urban area. Some opportunities could come from out-of-centre shopping and leisure developments, lapsing housing permissions in previous industrial land, and other vacant bits of land that could be of interest to industry. Vacant land or premises could be short term opportunities, and occupied premises could provide long term ones. This assumes that these opportunities will be suitable for industry. Although we could expect to have more jobs and investment than option 1, we expect there to still be a shortfall of readily available land.

**Option 3 - we could also use open space and greenfield land**

As well as using land from options 1 & 2, we could use open space sites that do not have a nature conservation use and do not create a local deficiency. There are also two greenfield sites (sites that have not been previously developed but are not in the Green Belt) near Rushall that have been put forward through the Call for Sites. These are shown on this option, and they will be assessed further.

**Option 4 – we could expand the land supply by using Green Belt land as well as other urban land**

In the Call for Sites that accompanied the first stage of the SAD process, various sites in the Green Belt were proposed, for housing and/or industrial use. We could use some of this, but we would have to be careful that it meets our overall objectives, to concentrate development in areas where it is most needed, and where it most suitable for industry – otherwise, if we released too much Green Belt Land too quickly on the periphery of the Borough, it might simply cause an outflow of investment and jobs from the inner urban part that is most deprived and in need of that investment. Also, we need to make sure that we do not undermine the Green Belt, for example by causing communities to merge with each other, as well as examining whether these sites are suitable for industry.

**IN Q1 Which option or mix of options do you prefer and why? What evidence do you have to support your preferred option?**

**IN Q2 Have we identified all the existing high quality employment land, or is there more? If so, where?**

**IN Q3 Have we identified all the potential high quality employment land, or is there more? If so, where?**

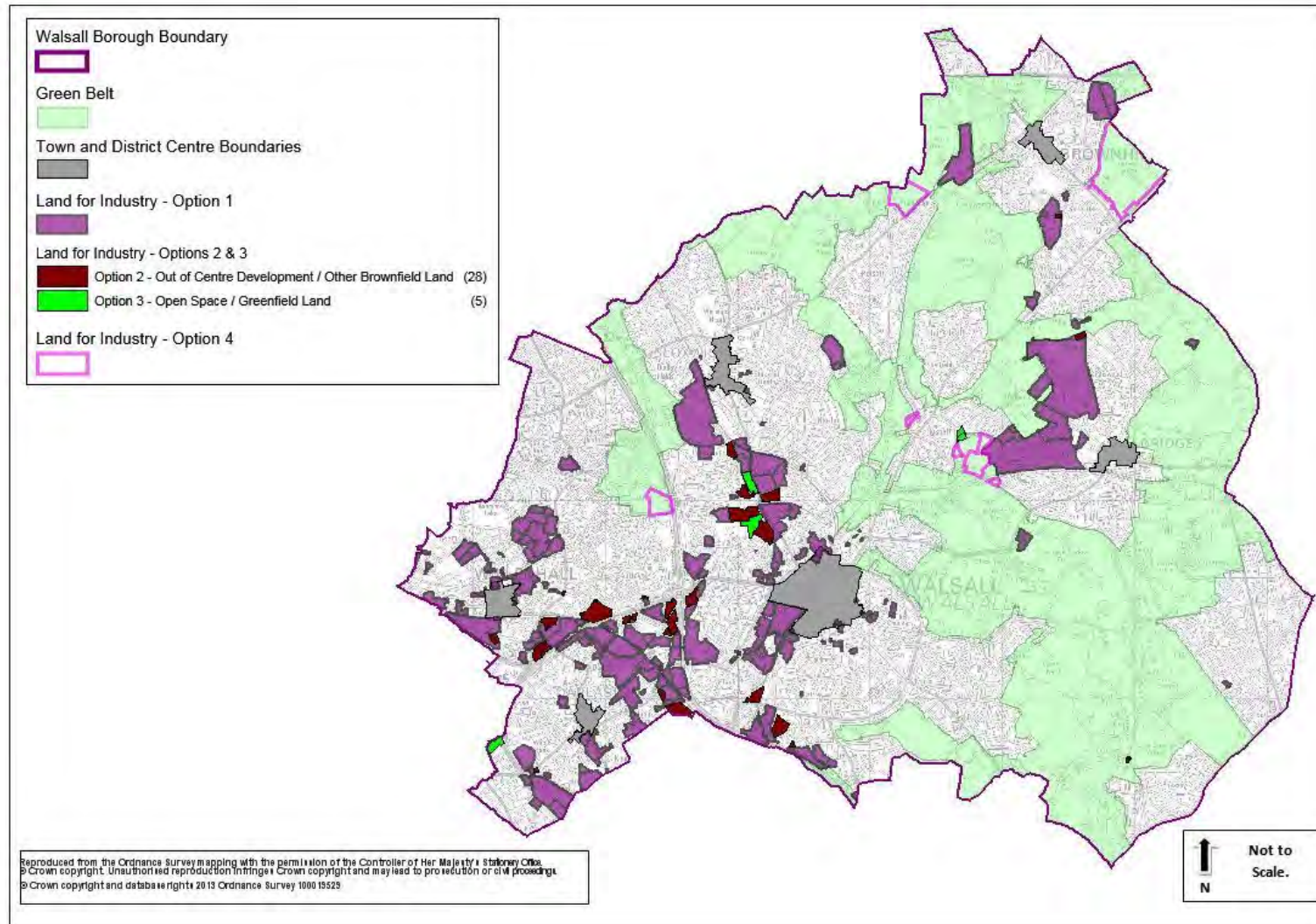
**IN Q4 Should some of the land identified for high quality employment or potential high quality uses be better categorised as local employment land? If**

**so, where?**

**IN Q5 Should any industrial employment land be identified as eligible for release to other uses? If so, where?**

**IN Q6 Should some of the industrial land that we are considering for release to alternative uses be retained for employment instead? If so, where?**

Map 4.1 – Land for Industry



## 5. Shopping and Services Summary

Walsall's centres are the focus for retail, leisure, commercial and civic uses. They play a crucial role in the strength and liveliness of the borough as a whole as well as meeting the needs of Walsall's communities.



### Key Issues

- 1) **The decline of Walsall Centres:** Our centres are declining with a lack of investment, decreased visitor numbers and rise in vacant units.
- 2) **Encouraging investment towards Walsall Centres:** Walsall's centres face large amounts of competition from surrounding centres and out-of-centre developments.
- 3) **The role of Local Centres:** A number of development opportunities remain in Local Centres and we need to explore if these are still appropriate and sufficient to meet any future needs.
- 4) **Managing the impact of out-of-centre development:** The past few years saw the growth in out-of-centre development in and around Walsall. The result of this investment in out-of-centre locations is that the established centres lose out on the initial investment then have to compete with these locations for visitors and spending. Walsall needs to maintain a strong approach against future out-of-centre developments in order to prevent further negative impacts and some sites could even be seen as potential redevelopment opportunities for uses such as housing or employment land.

The centres are distinguished by a well established 3 tier hierarchy in terms of their scale, nature and the area they serve. The Town Centre, which is identified as the **Strategic Centre** for Walsall Borough is at the top. This plays a key role in the prosperity of the Borough as a whole and is of regional importance, an Area Action Plan is therefore being produced to plan for the future of the town centre. This is followed by the 5 **District Centres** of Willenhall, Bloxwich, Brownhills, Aldridge and

Darlaston. The District Centres need comprehensive examination so detailed plans will be produced in the future. At the local level Walsall is characterised by lots of **Local Centres** which meet the day-to-day needs of communities.

There are a number of opportunities for development and investment in Local Centres that have previously been identified by the Council. These need to be reviewed to establish if they are still relevant or if any new development opportunities need to be allocated. The boundaries of the Local Centres and the development opportunities are shown on **Map 5.1** on the following page.

**SH:Q3 There are any shops that need to be designated as a Local Centre? If so which and why?**

**SH:Q4 There are any Local Centres that need to be reviewed? If yes, please provide evidence to support the need for a review.**

**SH:Q5 The 2012 updates that propose to remove or keep the current Local Centre development opportunities correct? (See Appendix 5a) If not, why not?**

**SH:Q6 There are any other Development Opportunities in the Local Centres other than the ones listed in Appendix 5a? If you would like to suggest a Development Opportunity please complete a Call for Site form available on the website.**

**SH:Q7 There are any new housing or employment sites that would result in the need for further town centre uses e.g. convenience retailing? Please see appendix 3a and 4a for the list of potential housing and employment land sites.**

**SH:Q8 Do you think there are currently any housing areas that are not well served by a centre or by centre uses such as retail? If yes please provide evidence.**

Policy states that the Council will encourage proposals for the conversion or redevelopment of out-of-centre units which are, or have been, used for retailing or other uses such as offices or leisure to employment, housing or other appropriate uses. We need to consider if this policy can be used to address the issue of the negative impact of out-of-centre developments. These sites have been included as possible sites for allocation in **Appendix 3a and 4a** of the main document.

**SH:Q10 Do you know of any other Out-of-Centre developments that we should consider for alternative uses? If you do, please provide as much information about the development as possible in your response.**

## What are the options?

### Local Centres

<p><b>Local Centres Option 1</b> Do not review the Local Centres. This would mean keeping the current development opportunities identified in the UDP and addressing issues of local need on an individual basis.</p>	<p><b>Implications</b> This may mean that some land will not be safeguarded for centre uses and that some communities could be poorly served, especially where there is a large amount of new housing. It would however be the case that the Council would look favourably on proposals for centre uses where it can be demonstrated there is a need for such a use as in accordance with the policies set out in the UDP and BCCS.</p>
<p><b>Shopping and Services Local Centres Option 2</b> Review Local Centres as a result of new housing locations in order to ensure they are of the appropriate scale and form to meet their catchments needs.</p>	<p><b>Implications</b> Local Centres are of an appropriate scale and have development opportunities identified meaning that they continue to meet the needs of the catchment area.  It may be difficult however to ensure the timing of new retail, office, leisure and community facilities development comes forward in the same time period as new housing delivery. This may mean a centre grows faster than there is actually a need for.</p>

### Out-of-Centre Developments

<p><b>Out-of-Centre Developments Option 1</b> Allow out-of-centre development to remain as it is and deal with any proposed change of use on an individual proposal basis.</p>	<p><b>Implications</b> This would mean we couldn't allocate the land for alternative uses such as housing or employment and that the land couldn't count towards the targets for land supply. This could result in land for other uses such as open space or green belt needing to be considered for reallocation as housing or employment land.  Out-of-centre developments may decline over time or become vacant without a positive allocation for alternative uses.</p>
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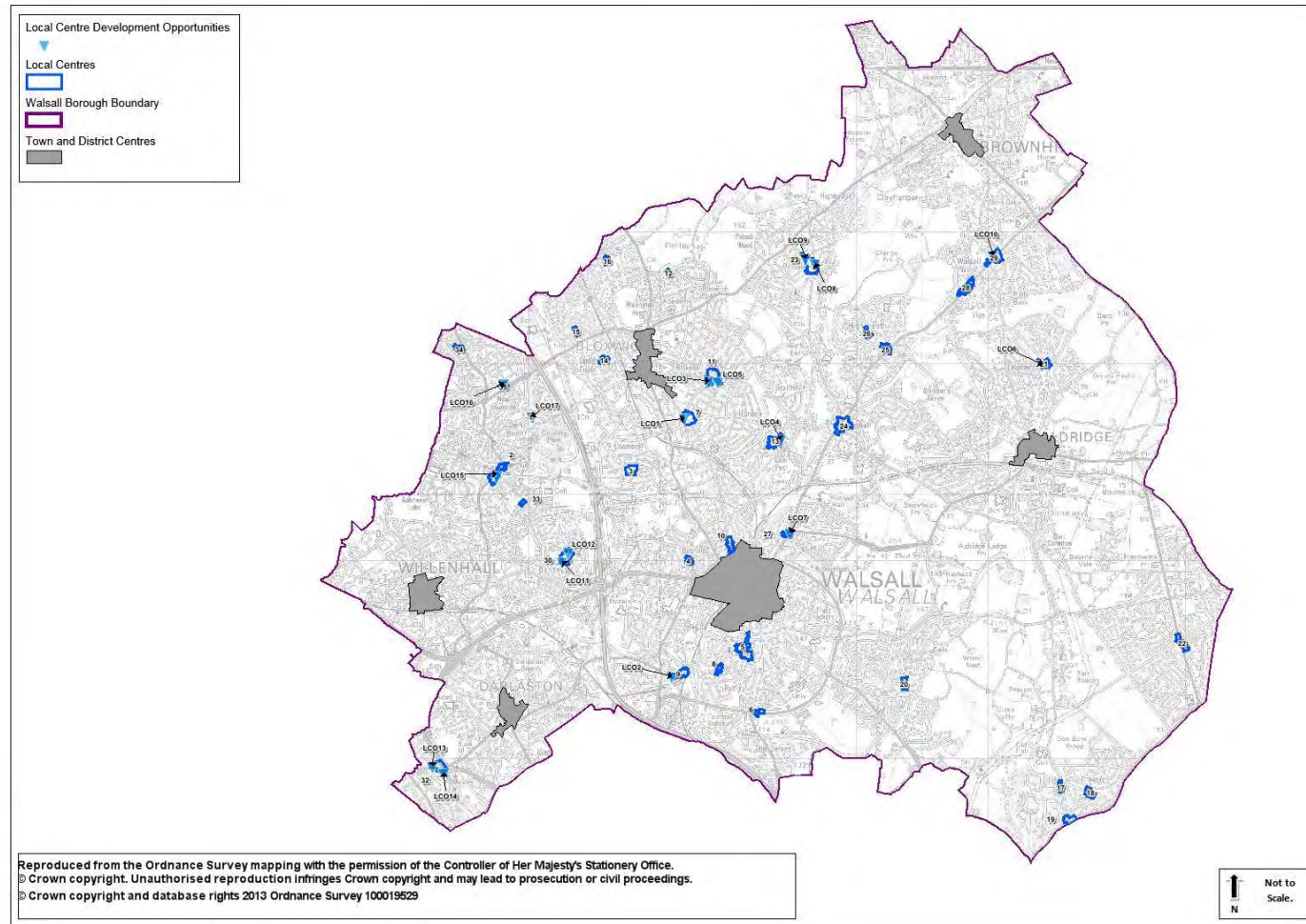


<b>Out-of-Centre Developments Option 2</b> Reallocate developments to be transferred to industry or housing.	<b>Implications</b> This could help deliver much needed employment land, housing and job creation. Would also help to protect centres by reducing competition from out-of-centre retailing as in accordance with the regeneration strategy set by the BCCS.
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**SH:Q11 Which of the above options do you agree with most, and why?**

**SH:Q12 Are there any other options you think the Council should consider for Shopping and Services? If yes, what and why?**

### Map 5.1: Showing Local Centre Boundaries and Local Centre Development Opportunities



The list of Local Centres and the table of Local Centre Development Opportunities can be found at **Appendix 5a** of the main document.

## 6. Open Space, Leisure and Community Facilities Summary

### 6.1 Open Space



Despite the Borough having a good supply of open space in terms of the overall number of sites, it will be important to avoid shortages or problems with the provision of open space at a local level. Open Space can be used for a wide range of different purposes and for that reason it is an extremely valuable resource for the Site

Allocation Document to protect. It can provide an attractive environment for new development, maintain and enhance biodiversity, provide space for children and young people's play, offer health benefits as space for sport and recreation, and can provide space for community facilities and events.

#### Open Space - Key Issues

1. Physical activity levels are persistently low (and long-term) in the Borough and increased participation in sport and physical activity will help to address Walsall's health inequalities.
2. Not all of the open spaces are of good quality; in fact many are of quite poor quality. Lower quality open spaces may put off people from using them and can also have a knock-on effect on better quality sites as these may become overused.
3. Some areas of the Borough don't have enough of the right type of open space to provide for local needs – there may be many open spaces of a particular

type (e.g. allotments) but none of another type (e.g. outdoor sports facilities) to serve the needs or interests of the local community.

4. Some areas of open space, particularly larger sites of importance to the whole Borough, might not be easily accessible (e.g. within a certain travel time or distance) to enough people.
5. Some local areas of the Borough may have open space sites that are surplus to requirements, or the difficulty in maintaining these sites might mean they are too low quality for regular use. Community ownership and maintenance may be one possible solution to this issue.

The existing picture of open space sites in the Borough is shown on Map 6.1 below.

This includes sites that the Council is proposing to allocate for open space protection at this stage (green sites). It also includes 'choices' sites (red striped sites) where there may be another potential use other than open space and the Council's preferred allocation is not yet known. See Chapter 12.

## What are the options for Open Space?

To try to address these issues to ensure the SAD can identify enough open space sites of high enough quality and accessibility levels to allocate for protection, the following options have been put forward:

<b>OPEN SPACE OPTION 1</b>	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>
Allocate extra open space sites in areas of the Borough that currently have deficiencies in provision.	This could enable the current provision of open space (ha / 1000 population) to be maintained across the Borough as new development occurs, while allowing for local variations depending on the types of existing open space in a particular area.

	However, it is likely that there will be limited space available for new open space allocations in areas of the Borough where the majority of new development will be located.
<b>OPEN SPACE OPTION 2</b>  Maintain the current level of open space sites for allocation as shown in Map 6.1.	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>  This would maintain the current provision of open space across the Borough but may mean provision falls below current levels if population increases as a result of new development.
<b>OPEN SPACE OPTION 3</b>  Remove open space allocations on some sites that have limited value for open space or where there are not sufficient resources available to maintain the site for appropriate open space uses.	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>  This could provide land for other development needs in the Borough; however this would be likely to lead to deficiencies in open space provision in local areas that may need to be mitigated through improving the quality of other important open spaces in the Borough.

To help us choose the best option(s) for taking the SAD to the next stage (Preferred Options) of public consultation, we would welcome your views on any of the following questions.

**OS:Q1 Have we identified the most important issues for the allocation, protection, improvement and, in some cases, disposal of urban open space? If not, what has been missed?**

**OS:Q2 Do you know of any specific parts of the Borough that lack a particular type of open space, i.e. an area where you consider there to be an open space deficiency?**

**OS:Q3 Are there any sites not currently identified as open space on Map 6.1 that could be allocated as such? If so, what site?**

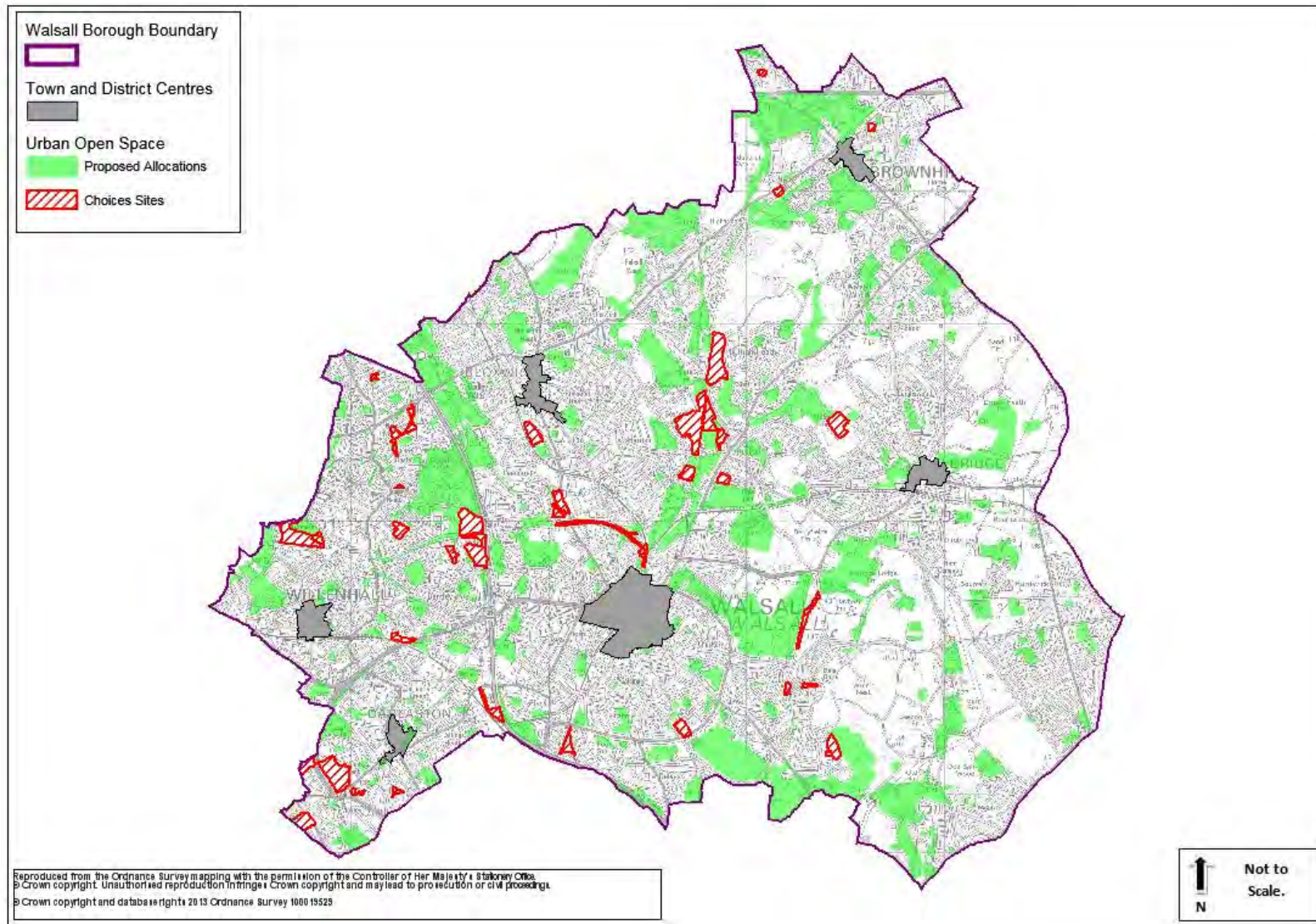
**OS:Q4 Are there any open space sites on Map 6.1 which should not be allocated? If so, why?**

**OS:Q5 Which of the open space options, or mix of options, do you agree with most and why?**

**OS:Q6 Should enhancements to existing open spaces be prioritised over the allocation of new sites? If so, do you know of any existing sites that need significant improvement?**

**OS:Q7 Do you know of any open space sites that could be suitable for community ownership to enable the ongoing maintenance of the open space to be carried out?**

### Map 6.1 – Open Space Sites Proposed for Allocation



## 6.2 Community and Leisure Facilities



Local 'Black Country' identities remain strong in Walsall, although the population is also very diverse. Community facilities can provide support opportunities for local people as well as supporting the area's quality of life. Planning policy (including in the BCCS)

promotes the borough's town and district centres as important focal points for community activities and for leisure, but local centres will also be important and there will be needs that are best met at a more local scale and facilities that exist or will be most appropriately accommodated outside of centres.

Growth and regeneration might require new or improved facilities or make more use of existing provision. On the other hand, many community and leisure facilities have relied to some degree on public funding and such funding will be scarce in future.

The main community and indoor leisure facilities owned by the Council are shown on Map 6.3. However, it is important to recognise the role of community, voluntary, religious and other organisations in providing facilities across the borough. At present the council does not have comprehensive details of all of the facilities they operate and their plans for the future. This document is an opportunity to provide evidence to support positive planning to protect, maintain and provide facilities for the future.

### Community and Leisure Facilities - Key Issues

(These relate also to issues around sport and open space, covered previously)

1. The need for new facilities, of a range of different types by a variety of providers, is difficult to ascertain.
2. There is a need for careful consideration of where facilities should be located. Where a facility is justified by a 'local need' (perhaps generated by new



housing development) or is otherwise best accommodated outside of a centre it will be important to ensure it would be accessible to all of those it is intended to serve.

3. It is important to recognise local facilities valued by their communities and to ensure that otherwise viable facilities are not lost without strong justification and / or compensatory provision.
4. The current quality of provision is varied and many existing facilities are in need of improvement. It will be important to plan improvements so they can support the best practical sustainable and inclusive range of facilities into the future.
5. Existing and future limits on resources will have to be taken into account when considering both existing facilities and the ability to support new or improved community or leisure centres.
6. The Government is promoting 'Localism' with increased roles for community groups in managing, operating and/or owning facilities. The council is already supporting such initiatives.

To help decide on whether and how the SAD might plan for community needs, the council has developed two options.

<p><b>COMMUNITY AND LEISURE FACILITIES OPTION 1</b></p> <p>The SAD does not allocate land for community and leisure facilities and deals with applications for such uses on an individual basis in accordance with the relevant planning policy.</p>	<p><b>IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>This approach could mean that facilities are not located at the best possible sites to serve the catchment area.</p> <p>New housing development in certain areas may suffer from a lack of facilities or may result in existing facilities being overwhelmed by demand.</p>
<p><b>COMMUNITY AND LEISURE FACILITIES OPTION 2</b></p> <p>The SAD allocates sites for community and leisure facilities where evidence has been submitted by a provider or community group to support a local need in that area that can be delivered</p>	<p><b>IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>This could act as a way to protect current or future sites for community facilities where there is evidence to show a need. The allocation for such uses may lead to land being left unused if a need or the investment does not materialise.</p> <p>Over-reliance on evidence from particular groups may not give a balanced picture of needs across the borough and may result in the needs of areas that have not responded being overlooked.</p>

To help us choose the best option(s) for taking the SAD to the next stage (Preferred Options) of public consultation, we would welcome your views on any of the following questions.

**CL:Q1 Have we included all the issues, if not what are we missing?**

**CL:Q2 Are there any community or indoor leisure facilities that we have not included so far and that need to be considered? Please provide facility name, address and status i.e. occupied or vacant.**

**CL:Q3 Which of the above options do you agree with most, and why?**

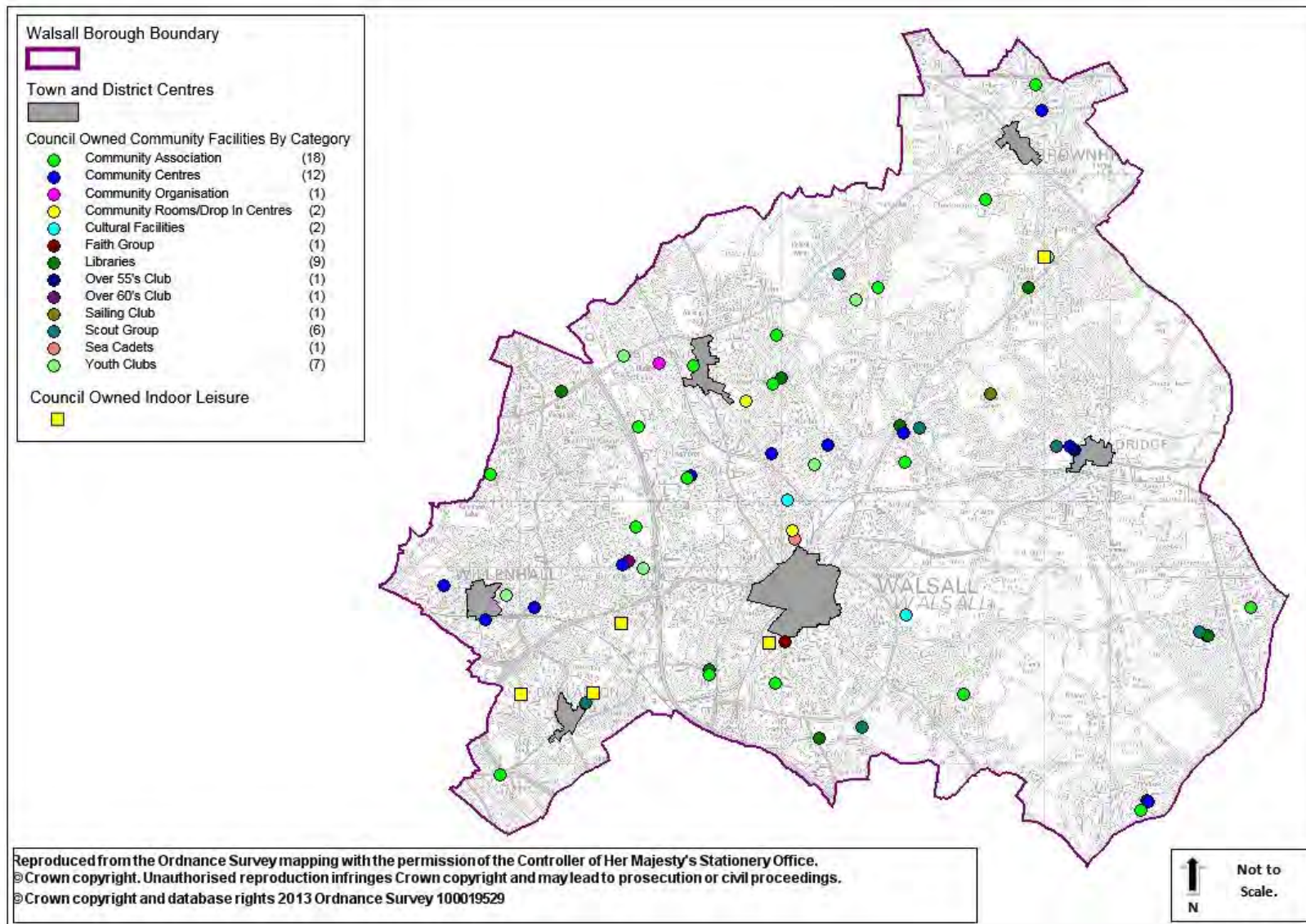
**CL:Q4 Do you have any evidence of the need for any new community or leisure facilities as a result of any new housing developments proposed? (see Chapter 3 for new housing locations) What type of facility should it be and where should this new facility be located?**

**CL:Q5 Do you have any evidence of unacceptable pressure being placed on the capacity of current community or leisure facilities as a result of any new housing developments proposed? (see Chapter 3 for new housing locations) If so which facility and what evidence do you have to support this statement?**

**CL:Q6 Are there any existing community or leisure facilities that should be specifically designated for protection? Please submit evidence to support your suggestions.**

**CL:Q7 What community and / or leisure facilities are lacking or would you like in a particular area? What evidence do you have of the demand for such a facility?**

### Map 6.2 – Council Owned Community and Indoor Leisure Facilities



## 6.3 Education and Healthcare

Existing education and healthcare facilities in Walsall Borough are shown in Map 6.3 below. New housing is likely to create additional demand for school places and medical facilities. At the same time, changes in the existing population structure, for example an aging population, and changes in the way that services are delivered, mean that alterations may need to be made to the types and locations of facilities. Schools and other training establishments, and medical clinics and hospitals, need land on which to operate and expand. At the same time, some buildings and land might become surplus to requirements and available for other uses.

### Education and Healthcare - Key Issues

1. The overall number of children in the borough is expected to remain unchanged over the period of the SAD. However, there is currently a high demand for school places: it is unclear whether this is only a short term issue or whether there is a need to identify sites for new schools or to expand existing ones. We are working with education officers to identify where schools have spare capacity or may need to be expanded.
2. Is there a need to allocate land for any new training establishments, or is there a need to protect existing ones?
3. The number of elderly residents is expected to increase considerably. This will have implications for the location and provision of health and social care facilities.

To help us to best plan to meet the borough's future requirements for education, training and healthcare we would like your help with the following questions.

**EH:Q1 Have we included all the issues in relation to health and education?**

**EH:Q2 Do you have any evidence of a requirement for new education, training or health facilities to serve existing needs? If so, what type of facility should it be and where should this new facility be located?**

**EH:Q3 Will the existing education and health facilities be adequate to serve the new sites for housing and other uses that we are proposing in this document, or will these facilities need to be expanded?**

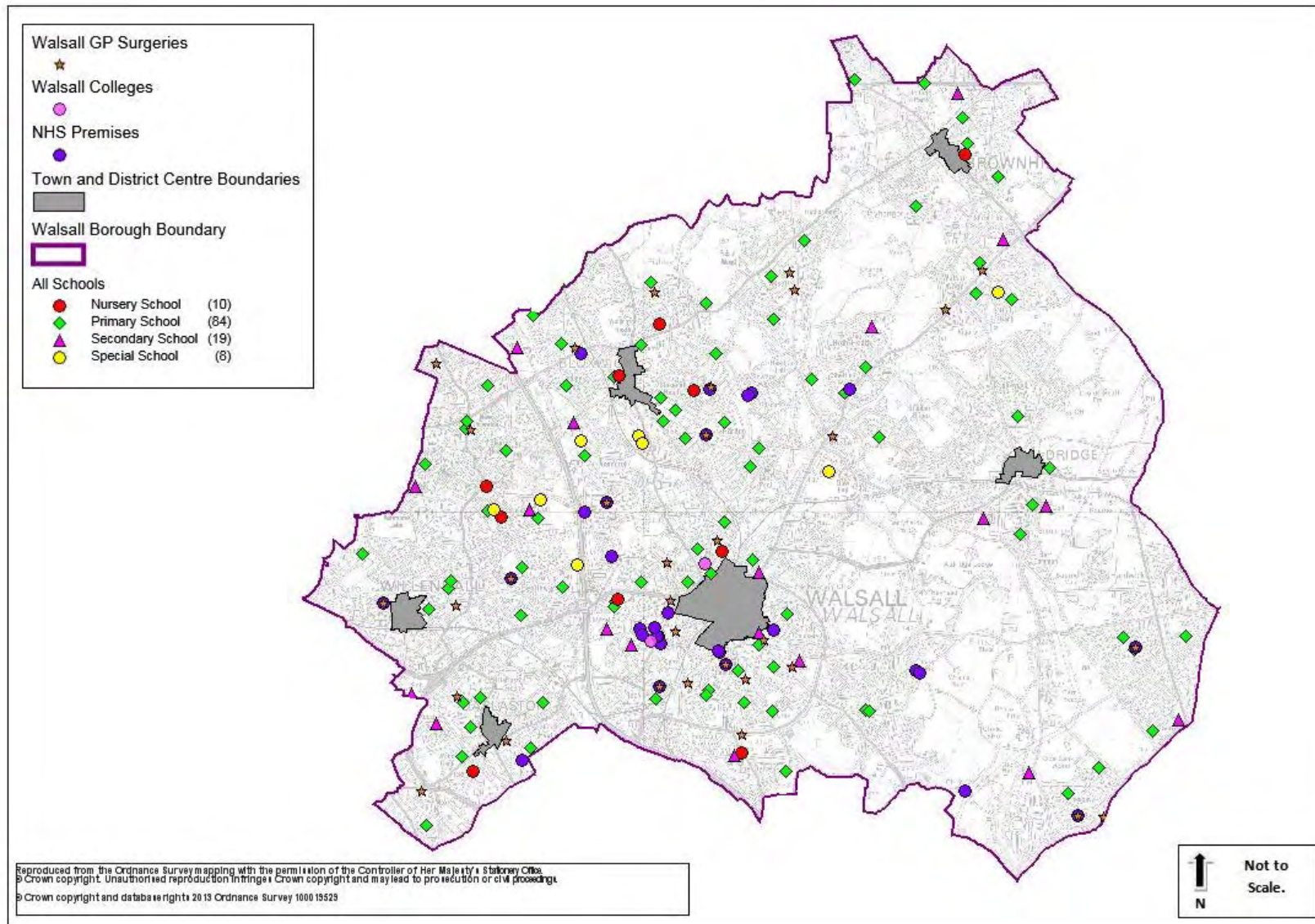
**EH:Q4 Are there any proposals for Free Schools or other education, training and healthcare facilities that would result in the need to allocate a specific location for such a use?**

**EH:Q5 The BCCS and UDP contain requirements relating to accessibility and location. Are these sufficient to ensure that education, training, health and social care facilities will be accessible to the people they are intended to serve? If not, what additional criteria that should be considered and why?**

**EH:Q6 Following recent developments at Gorway Campus of Wolverhampton University, do we need to retain site allocation Policy LC10 to facilitate further development of the Campus?**

**EH:Q7 Are there any education, training or health facilities that we have not shown on the map that we need to consider?**

### Map 6.3 – Education and Healthcare Facilities



## 7. Environmental Network Summary



Environmental Networks are a collection of natural and built environmental assets with a range of uses or benefits, which can add value to the appearance and function of existing and new development. The networks can be in urban or more rural locations, or more importantly in a Borough

like Walsall, can link these two types of area together in the Urban-Rural fringe. The key issues for environmental networks in the Borough are as follows:

### Environmental Network – Key Issues

1. The Borough contains many environmental sites in isolation but consideration could be given to linking these to form more cohesive networks;
2. Individual sites within environmental networks may need to be enhanced in order for people or wildlife to use or enjoy them to their full value. Enhancement of different sites within the same network could provide an attractive environment across a larger area for leisure and recreation, as well as improving the quality of the environment for other nearby land uses such as housing or businesses;
3. The mitigation of environmental features that may form development constraints, such as flood risk from watercourses, could be carried out in terms of positive improvements to the environment, e.g. a multi-functional approach to the design of a Sustainable Drainage System that improves the public realm while helping to address the impact of the flood risk.

The existing environmental network in Walsall can be seen on Map 7.1 below. This includes the following environmental assets: strategic open space sites (those of

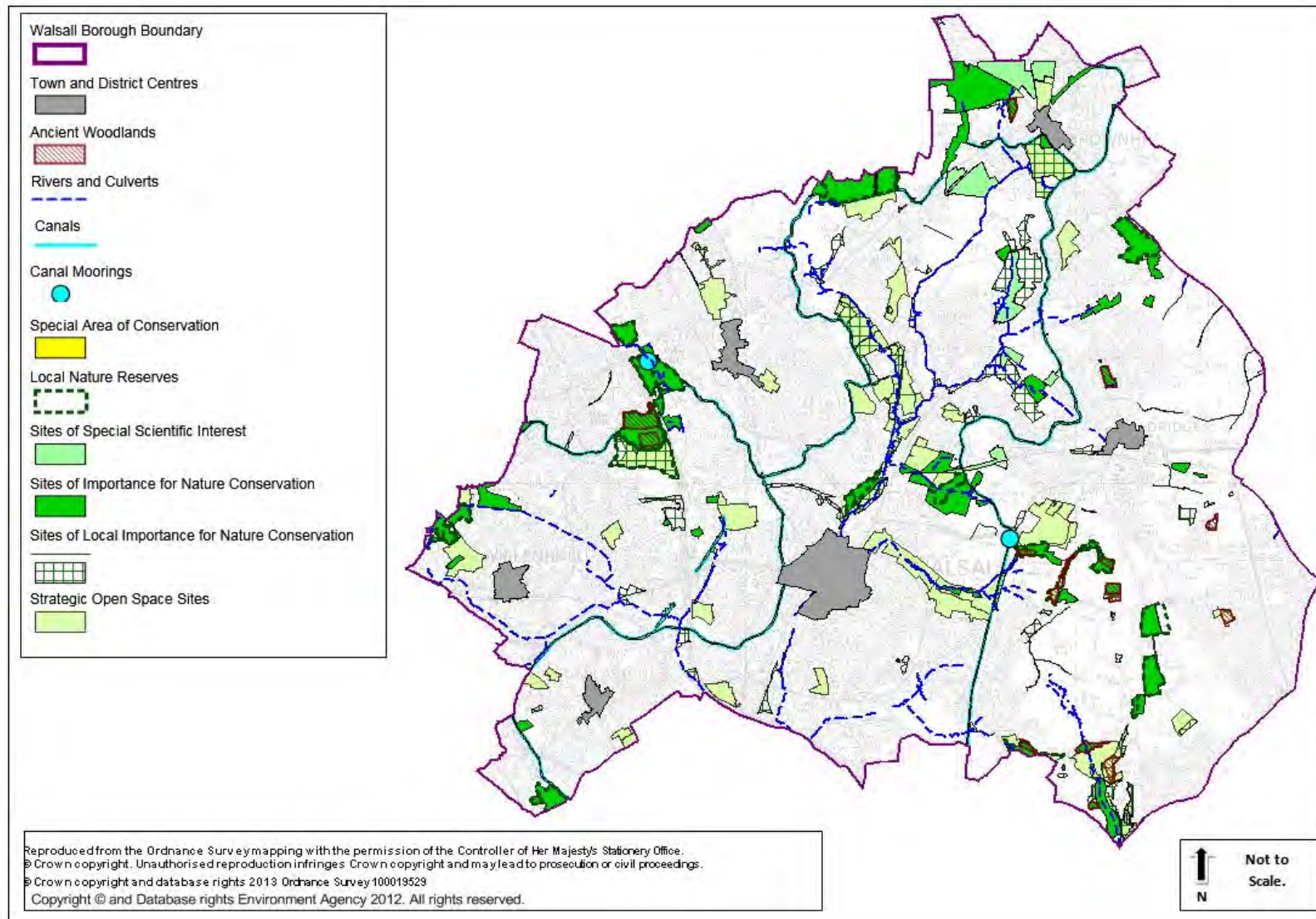


most importance for sport and recreation across the whole Borough); designated nature conservation sites; ancient woodlands; and, the existing watercourses in the Borough.

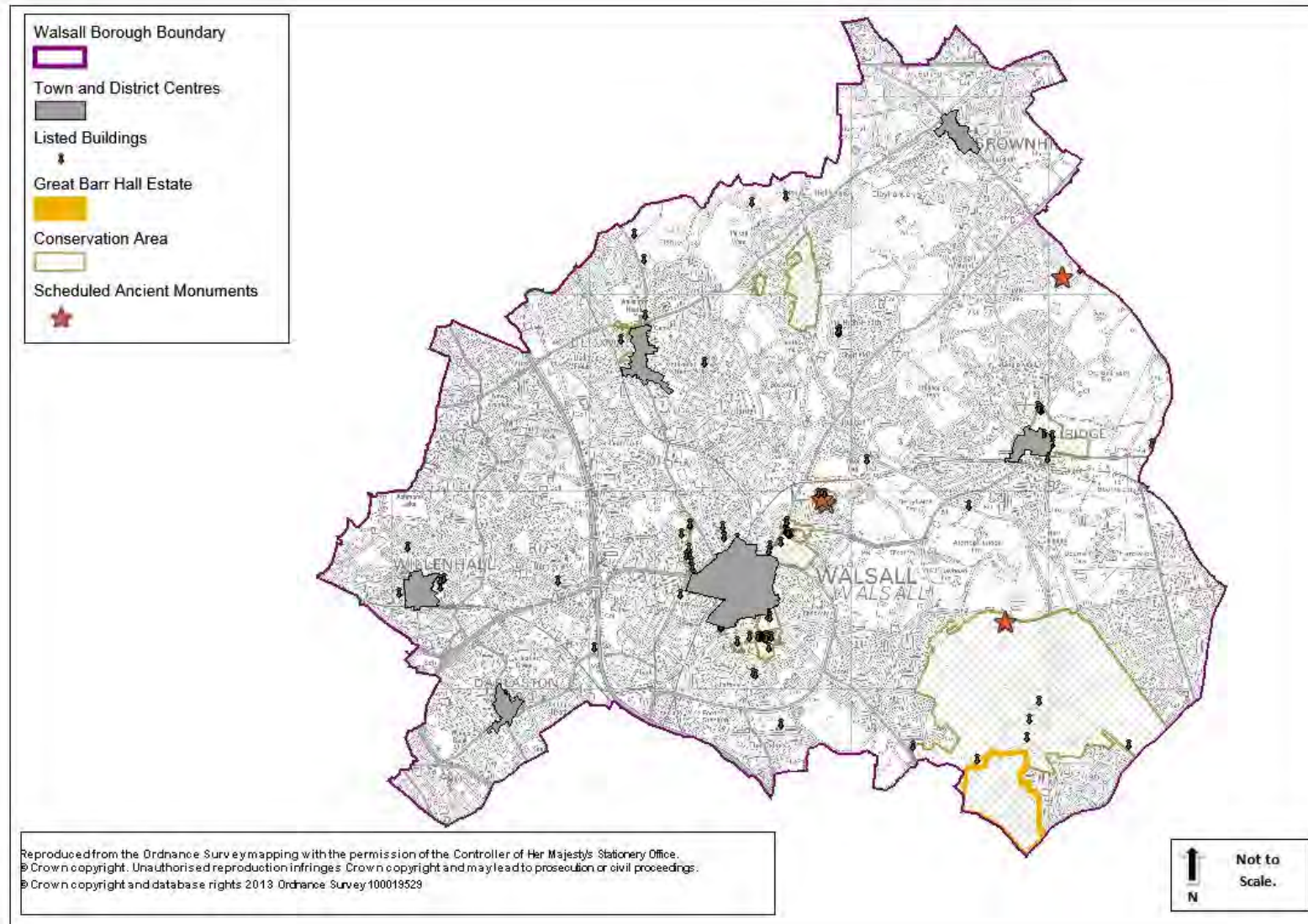
**ENV:Q1 Can you think of areas or sites within the Borough that are suitable for designation for environmental protection that have not already been identified on either Map 7.1 or Map 7.2 below?**

**ENV:Q2 Do you know of areas of the Borough where a deficiency in environmental assets exists over a larger area than one site? If so are there other existing environmental sites or areas nearby that new provision could link to?**

**Map 7.1 – Environmental Assets Network**



Map 7.2 – Historic Environment Assets



The particular parts or components of the environmental network are summarised below and specific questions are asked:

**Nature Conservation** – sites that provide ecological and geological interest within the Borough are designated for protection from being damaged or lost to new development. The role of nature conservation is to protect and conserve sites, different species and their habitats, and geological features.

**ENV:Q3 Do you know any sites that are valuable for nature conservation that could be designated for protection?**

**ENV:Q4 Do you know of any proposals for site allocations that would have a negative impact on any protected nature conservation sites?**

**Flood Risk Management** – the risk of flooding from watercourses is reasonably low in the Borough due to its location near the top of the River Trent catchment and the fact that large sections of the Borough's watercourses now run through culverts. Flooding that does occur from watercourses is most likely to be due to problems with culverts, in particular limited capacity in places or blockages. The steep and largely urban nature of the Borough makes it prone to localised surface water flooding from surface water runoff.

The Council are looking at approaches to the use of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) in new developments. This includes considering how drainage and flood risk features and assets can be considered as part of the wider environmental network in different parts of the Borough.

**ENV:Q5 Have we identified the key issues for flood risk?**

**ENV:Q6 Should the Council consider guidance on how developers and other applicants can incorporate sustainable drainage systems in new developments?**

**Water Resources** – the government’s Water White Paper (2011) has raised concerns about the future sustainability of water abstraction continuing at current rates, in the context of climate change (lower rainfall and increasing vulnerability to drought), and risks to water quality from pollution. However the latest Water Resource Management Plan (WMRP, 2009) produced by South Staffordshire Water indicates that there are sufficient water resources to meet the forecast growth in demand for Walsall over the period of the Site Allocations Document.

**ENV:Q7 Are there any specific areas of the Borough that should be the focus of future work to assess impacts on water supply?**

**Water Quality** – water quality is a key issue affecting the water environment, including biodiversity, as well as the supply of water to new development. The process of allocating sites will consider the effects on water quality likely to arise from new development proposals, and mitigation measures that may be required to address them. The Council is proposing to commission a detailed Water Cycle Study, which will consider whether the water environment has the capacity to absorb further wastewater arising from planned development.

**ENV:Q9 Are there any specific areas of the Borough that should be the focus of future work to assess impacts on water quality?**

**The Canal Network** – the canal network is one of the Borough’s most important environmental assets as it provides opportunities for many different uses. Apart from maintaining its use as an operational waterway, the SAD will seek to protect and enhance the historic environment of the canal network, water quality, and leisure and recreation value by providing routes for walking and cycling. It will also seek to

protect nature conservation value, particularly its importance in acting as wildlife corridors, which is especially important through built up areas of the Borough.

**ENV:Q10 Do you know of any proposals for site allocations that would have an adverse impact on the canal network?**

**ENV:Q11 Do you know of any canalside sites that could be promoted through the planning system for development, e.g. residential moorings?**

**The Historic Environment** – the need to accommodate a growing population, and provide more jobs and new uses in centres, provides an opportunity to bring heritage assets back into use, often for new purposes, and to enhance their surroundings. However, insensitive new development can damage these assets and a balance therefore must be struck.

The Borough currently has 4 scheduled monuments, 148 listed buildings (including (6) Grade II\* buildings), 18 conservation areas (5 of which are in the town centre), 3 registered parks and gardens and a number of 'locally listed buildings'. These assets are shown on Map 7.2 above.

The Borough is continually evolving in terms of its economy, communities, communications, infrastructure and cultural values. Heritage must respond to these changes and adapt to the modern environment and as such it is appropriate and necessary to continually appraise the historic assets in Walsall. This includes their extent, geographical coverage, type, management and definition, and is important if they are to remain relevant to new development and a modern society.

**ENV:Q12 Should the Borough's heritage assets (as shown on Map 7.2) be shown on the final Site Allocations Proposals Map?**

**ENV:Q13 Should archaeological sites also be identified on the Site Allocations Proposals Map?**

## What are the Options?

To ensure the environmental networks around the Borough are protected and wherever possible enhanced, the following options have been put forward.

<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK OPTION 1</b></p> <p>The expansion and enhancement of natural and built environmental infrastructure (linking designated nature sites with other open space sites, watercourses and features of the historic environment) should take place wherever opportunities arise</p>	<p><b>IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>This would provide an opportunity to link existing environmental asset sites across the Borough, but may reduce the area of developable land around any given site in the interests of providing a more enhanced local environment</p>
<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK OPTION 2</b></p> <p>The expansion and enhancement of natural and built environmental infrastructure should be targeted at areas of natural green space deprivation (i.e. where there is little green space) or places where the network is deficient (i.e. there are few assets in a local area).</p>	<p><b>IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>This would provide an opportunity to link existing environmental asset sites in areas of the Borough likely to be in greatest need of environmental transformation. However this approach could reduce the area of land available for other development in any such targeted areas of the Borough. Examples of such targeted areas could be based on the BCCS Regeneration Corridors</p>

We would like to know people's views on these options for the overall approach to protecting Borough-wide environmental assets.

**ENV:Q16 Which option do you agree with most and why?**

## 8. Waste Management Summary



Interserve Material Recycling Facility, Brickyard Road, Aldridge  
(Reproduced with kind permission of Interserve Construction Limited)

The SAD must make provision for any new infrastructure needed to manage waste. This does not just include waste the Council collects from households and small businesses in the borough, which it is directly responsible for. It also includes:

- Waste produced by businesses and industry;
- Waste generated by construction and demolition;
- Hazardous wastes of all types and from all sources;
- Agricultural wastes; and
- Waste water (including sewage).

It is an important objective of national policy that waste should be managed more sustainably, so targets have been set for the re-use and recycling of waste paper, metals, glass and plastics collected from households and businesses. Planning authorities are expected to work together and with other organisations (such as the waste industry, local communities and voluntary groups) to develop a national network of waste disposal facilities and recovery facilities for the above types of



waste. However, some sharing of facilities across boundaries is expected, as it will not be feasible for every area to have every type of facility.

As there is a general need for infrastructure to manage waste more sustainably, the Council is expected to support proposals for new recycling, composting and recovery facilities, unless there is evidence that they would be harmful to health or the environment, or cause problems for businesses, communities or infrastructure.

The Black Country Authorities have already worked together to produce a joint Core Strategy, which provides a framework for waste management in the area. The Core Strategy aims to broaden the range of facilities we have, sets targets for reducing the amount of household and business waste sent to landfill, and identifies - in broad terms - how much waste management capacity each authority will need by 2026 to meet the targets, and where it should go. More specific guidance for each area is expected to be provided through local plans such as the SAD.

Many recycling and recovery operations take place within industrial units and do not have any greater impact than other industrial processes. The Core Strategy therefore identifies industrial areas as the most appropriate places for these types of facilities. However, it also recognises that landfill sites, composting sites and sites for recycling construction and demolition waste may have to be located outside the main built-up areas, on Green Belt land and other open land.

### **What are the key waste management issues we need to consider?**

Taking into account the guidance already included in the Core Strategy, we have identified four key issues for waste management:

- a) We need to review **how much waste management capacity in Walsall needs to have by 2026** to meet local and national targets for landfill reduction and recycling, including those in the Core Strategy;

- b) We need to consider how the SAD should **safeguard existing waste management sites** likely to remain in operation up to 2026, in particular, “Strategic Sites” which provide most of our waste management capacity;
- c) We need to decide whether the SAD should **identify (allocate) sites for the development of new waste management infrastructure**, other than those in the Core Strategy, where this will contribute towards the local and national targets that have been identified or meet other local needs;
- d) We need to think about whether the SAD should **provide more specific guidance than the Core Strategy on places in Walsall that are suitable for developing different types of waste facilities**.

## What are the options for waste management?

There are certain requirements in the Core Strategy and current legislation that the Council must comply with. However, there are choices to be made about some of the issues. The options we have identified are summarised below.

<b>Waste Option 1: Future Waste Management Requirements</b>
<b>Waste Option 1a: Waste Recovery Targets</b> – any new facilities that recover value from waste – including energy recovery – would count towards the Core Strategy targets for managing waste from households and businesses.
<b>Waste Option 1b: Waste Recycling Targets</b> - only facilities that recycle or compost waste would count towards the Core Strategy targets for managing waste from households and businesses – energy recovery would not count.
<b>Waste Option 1c: Additional Target for CD&amp;EW Recycling</b> – in addition to Option 1a or Option 1b, there would be a target for development of new sites to recycle construction, demolition and excavation waste (CD&EW).
<b>Waste Option 1d: No Waste Management Targets</b> – there would be no waste

management targets. The Council does not think this is a realistic option.

### **Waste Option 2: Safeguarding Walsall's Existing Waste Infrastructure**

**Waste Option 2a: Prioritise Safeguarding of Existing Strategic Sites** – Strategic Sites would be safeguarded in the SAD, but not other waste sites.

**Waste Option 2b: Safeguard All Existing Waste Sites** – the SAD would identify all existing waste sites, including Strategic Sites, as sites to be safeguarded.

### **Waste Option 3: Suitable Waste Development Locations in Walsall**

**Waste Option 3a: Rely on BCCS Policies and SAD Site Allocations and Designations** – other than allocating sites for industry and urban open space, and defining the extent of the Green Belt, the SAD would not include any further guidance on where waste management sites could be developed in Walsall.

**Waste Option 3b: Provide Additional Guidance in the SAD** – the SAD would indicate which types of waste facility could be located on land allocated for industry, urban open space, and in the Green Belt, and could also identify specific areas where development of different facilities would be supported.

The waste management requirements identified in the Core Strategy were based on evidence which now needs to be reviewed and updated. We have produced a separate Waste Background Paper on this. We also need to make sure that local policies for Walsall comply with the latest national policy guidance on waste, which came out after the Core Strategy was approved.

Map W1 below shows the location of all the waste management sites we have identified in the borough, more than 70 in total. As the map shows, a high proportion of them are metal recycling sites, including scrap yards, vehicle dismantlers and end of life vehicle (ELV) de-pollution facilities. We also have a material recycling facility which accepts mixed wastes (paper, card, cans, glass and plastics), facilities for recycling specific types of waste, several waste transfer facilities, and facilities for the treatment and transfer of hazardous wastes.

However, Walsall has no facilities to manage food waste, garden waste, agricultural waste or wood, and no facilities specialising in recycling of plastics or glass. Although we have four sites that can recycle construction, demolition and excavation waste (CD&EW), they may not have enough capacity to cope with the amount of waste that could be generated by planned housing, employment and other development in the borough between now and 2026. We also have no facilities to treat contaminated soils (see Delivery and Viability).

Map W2 shows 20 Strategic Sites and 9 Potential Waste Site Allocations (see Key below). The boundaries of these sites are also shown on the Ward Maps. The Strategic Sites include 16 sites identified in the Core Strategy and 4 sites identified by the Council. The Potential Waste Site Allocations include 3 proposals identified in the Core Strategy, other sites with planning permission, and 2 “Choices Sites” (highlighted). The main document also identifies waste management operations that may be suitable on different categories of industrial land and open land, which could be used to identify other sites and guide decisions on planning applications.

Map W2 – Key to Sites	
Existing and Potential Strategic Waste Sites:	Potential Waste Site Allocations:
WS1: Former Bace Groundworks Site (CD&EW Recycling Site)	WP1: Aldridge Quarry – Proposed Inert Landfill
WS2: Branton Hill Landfill and CD&EW Recycling Site	WP2: Land at Fryers Road – Proposed Resource Recovery Park
WS3: Credential Environmental (Specialist Tyre Recycling Site)	WP3: Sandown Quarry – Proposed Non-Hazardous Landfill
WS4: G & P Batteries (Specialist Battery Recycling Site)	WP4: Darlaston Biomass Proposal – Proposed Biomass Plant
WS5: EMR Darlaston (Metal Recycling and Fridge Recycling Site)	WP5: North Walsall Cutting – Proposed Inert Waste Infill
WS6: Empire Treatment Works (Hazardous Waste Treatment)	WP6: Branton Hill Quarry – Proposed Relocation of Recycling Area
WS7: Former Metal & Waste Recycling Site (Bull Lane)	WP7: Former Moxley Tip – Potential CD&EW Recycling Site
WS8: Fryers Road Transfer Station & HWRC	WP8: Land at Yorks Bridge – Facility Type Not Specified
WS9: Biffa Aldridge Material Recycling Facility	WP9: Atlas Quarry – Potential Long-Term Landfill Site
WS10: Highfields South Landfill Site	
WS11: Veolia Darlaston (Paper Recycling Facility)	
WS12: Former Interserve Transfer Station	
WS13: Metal & Waste Recycling (Jute Works)	
WS14: Merchants Way HWRC	
WS15: Former Vigo/ Utopia Landfill Site	
WS16: Willenhall Skips (Waste Transfer Site)	

WS17: Land at Bescot Triangle (CD&EW Recycling Site)	
WS18: EnviroSol Environmental Treatment Facility (Hazardous and Non-Hazardous Waste Treatment)	
WS19: Walsall Council Environmental Depot	
WS20: Interserve Material Recycling Facility	

**W:Q1 Have we identified all of the key waste management issues for the SAD? Please provide details of any other issues you have identified, and explain why you think they should be addressed in the SAD.**

**W:Q2 Do you agree that the SAD should set targets for landfill reduction and recycling in Walsall, based on existing national and local targets such as those in the Black Country Core Strategy?**

**W:Q3 Do we need more waste management facilities in Walsall to meet the targets mentioned in Question WQ2 or manage types of waste that are not currently catered for in the borough? If so, what facilities do we need?**

**W:Q4 Other than landfill sites, does Walsall need to provide new facilities to manage waste from areas outside the Black Country - and if so, why?**

**W:Q5 Do you have any comments on the information in the Waste Background Paper about future waste management requirements and the need for new waste management infrastructure in Walsall?**

**W:Q6 Do you agree that the SAD should safeguard existing waste infrastructure in Walsall, including Strategic Sites?**

**W:Q7 Do you have any comments on the Existing and Potential Strategic Sites (WS1 – WS20) and the other waste sites (shown as symbols) on Maps W1 and W2 and the Ward Maps?**

**W:Q8 Do you agree that the SAD should allocate sites for new waste management infrastructure expected to be delivered by 2026, including the three proposals already identified in the Core Strategy?**

**W:Q9 Do you have any comments on the Potential Waste Site Allocations (WP1 – WP9) shown on Map W2 and on the Ward Maps?**

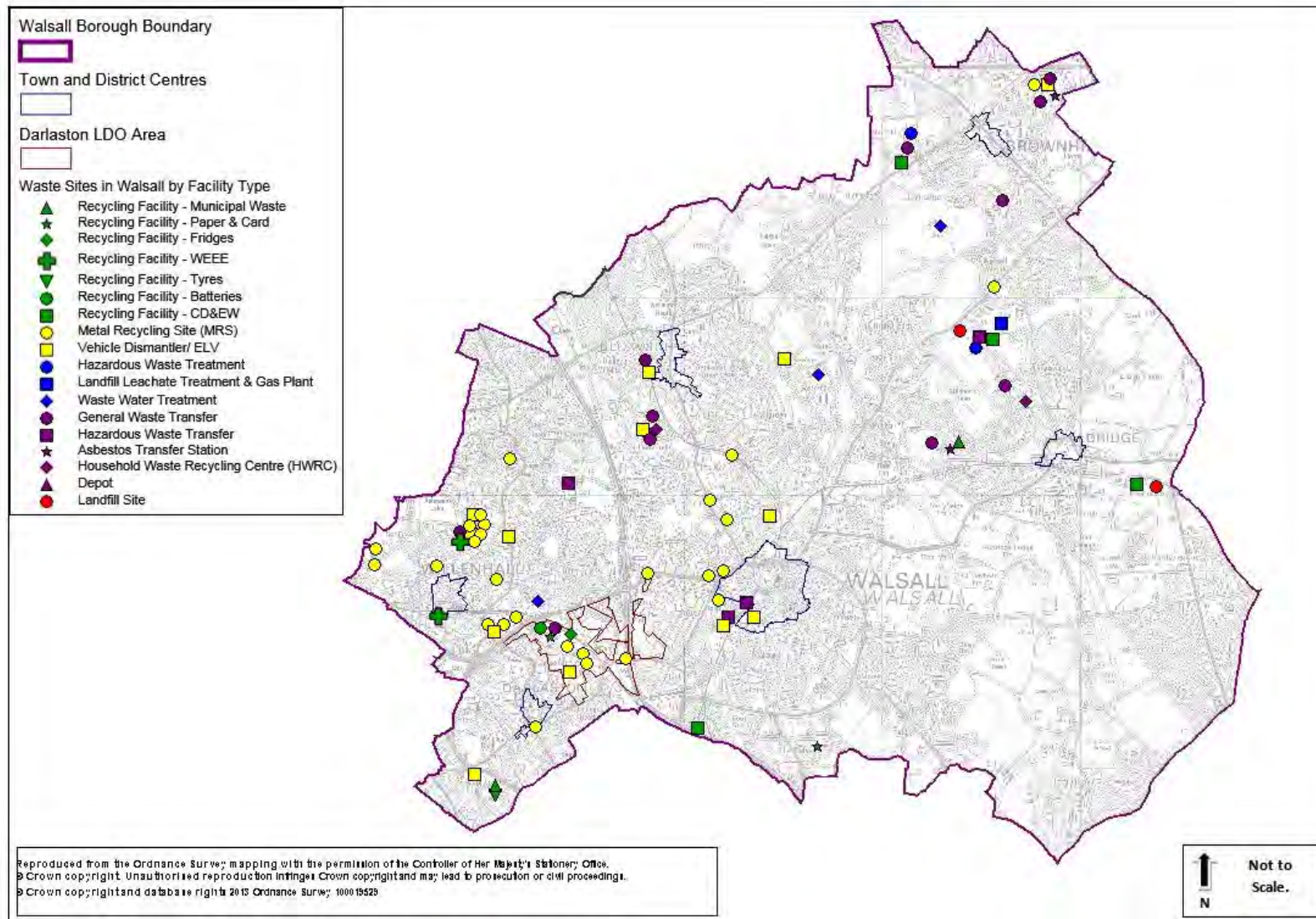
**W:Q10 Are there any areas in Walsall that are particularly suitable for new waste management facilities? If so, which areas are suitable, and what sort of facilities should be developed there?**

**W:Q11 Does waste management have the potential to affect health, the environment, businesses, the amenity of local communities or other infrastructure (e.g. the highway network) in Walsall? Please indicate which operations could have positive and negative effects and provide evidence in support of your views.**

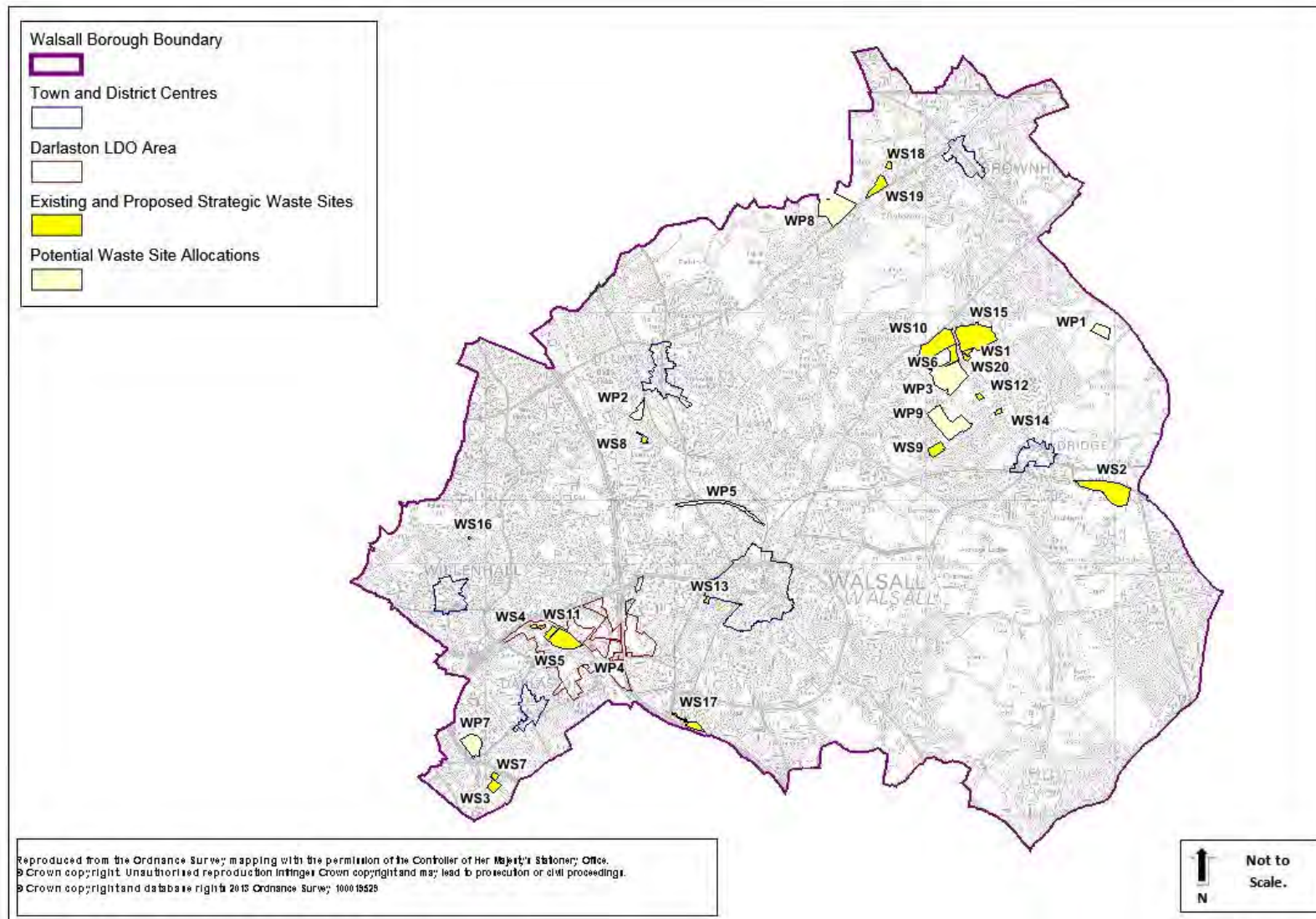
**W:Q12 Which of the alternative options for Future Waste Management Requirements, Safeguarding Walsall's Existing Waste Infrastructure and Suitable Waste Development Locations in Walsall do you prefer and why?**

**W:Q13 Are there any other options for waste management in Walsall that we have not identified? Please provide details and explain why you think we should consider these options.**

**Map W1 – Waste Management Infrastructure in Walsall – Waste Management Sites Identified @ March 2013**



**Map W2 – Strategic Waste Sites in Walsall and Potential Waste Site Allocations Identified @ March 2013**





## 9. Minerals Summary



The “Brownhills Miner” – symbol of the historic importance of mining in Walsall

Minerals are essential to provide the raw materials to support economic growth. National policy guidance therefore requires us to identify mineral resources and mineral infrastructure sites in the borough that should be safeguarded, and areas where mineral extraction can take place.

Map M1 shows the extent of mineral resources of potential local and national importance in Walsall. They include sand and gravel, which is still being extracted at Branton Hill Quarry in Aldridge, and a red brick clay called Etruria marl, which is being extracted at three sites in Stubbers Green and supplied to the three brickworks nearby. In Brownhills there are coal resources that also have fireclay within them - this is a buff/ yellow coloured clay used in brick clay and pot clay blends.

Mineral infrastructure sites are sites where minerals are processed into raw materials for building and engineering or are used for the bulk transport of minerals. They include facilities producing recycled aggregate, asphalt, cement and ready-mix concrete, and depots linked to the rail network. Existing and Potential Mineral Infrastructure Sites in Walsall are shown as symbols on Map M2. The boundaries are shown on the Ward Maps because they would be too small to see on Map M2.

Minerals can only be worked where they are found, and some of the resources we have in Walsall – in particular, Etruria marl and fireclay – are nationally scarce. The Council therefore cannot say “no” to mineral extraction (Minerals Option 2) unless the need for the resources would be outweighed by any harm caused to health, the environment, businesses, communities, or infrastructure. To minimise the harm that mineral extraction could cause, the SAD may be able to limit the amount of land that could be opened up for extraction at any one time (see Minerals Option 6).

National policy guidance requires planning authorities to work with each other, the minerals industry and other organisations so that each area makes an appropriate contribution towards local and national requirements. These include national annual production targets for construction aggregates, such as sand and gravel. We are also expected to identify enough brick clay resources to provide a 25-year supply to each brick factory in the area.

The Black Country Authorities have already worked together to produce a joint Core Strategy, which includes policies on minerals. The Core Strategy identifies a Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA) and three mineral infrastructure sites in Walsall. It indicates the quantities of sand and gravel and brick clay likely to be required between now and 2026, and identifies four Areas of Search in Walsall containing resources that could meet these requirements. More specific guidance is expected to be provided through local plans such as the SAD.

## **What are the key mineral issues we need to consider?**

Taking into account the guidance already included in the Core Strategy, we have identified four key issues for minerals:

- a) We need to define a **mineral safeguarding area (MSA)**, based on the area indicated in the Core Strategy, so that other development proposals have to take into account the existence of minerals of local and national importance;
- b) We also need to **safeguard mineral infrastructure sites** likely to remain in operation to 2026 and beyond;

- c) We need to **identify the areas in Walsall where sand and gravel, brick clay and fireclay extraction could take place during the plan period**, to maintain supplies of the raw materials needed to support economic growth;
- d) We need to consider how best to **manage the impacts of planned mineral extraction, stocking and processing on the environment and amenity of local communities**, including how former quarries should be restored.

## What are the options for minerals?

The Core Strategy has already established which areas are suitable for mineral extraction in Walsall. However, there are choices to be made about some of the details. The options we have identified are summarised below.

### Minerals Option 1: Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA)

**Minerals Option 1a: Single MSA** – the SAD would show one MSA covering all mineral resources in Walsall, as indicated in the Core Strategy, with separate maps in an Appendix showing where different types of mineral are found.

**Minerals Option 1b: Multiple MSAs** – the SAD would show separate MSAs, each one covering a separate type of mineral resource.

**Minerals Option 1c: MSA Buffers** – in addition to Option 1a or Option 1b, the MSA(s) would include “buffers” around the mineral resource areas to prevent encroachment into these areas by non-mineral land uses.

**Minerals Option 1d: No MSA** – the Council does not think this is a realistic option.

### Minerals Option 2: Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – General

**No Mineral Extraction Areas** - the Council does not think this is a realistic option

### Minerals Option 3: Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – Brick Clay

**Minerals Option 3a: Stubbers Green Area of Search Only** – the SAD would only identify one Area of Search for brick clay extraction in Walsall at Stubbers Green, as indicated in the Core Strategy (see MXA3 on Map M2).

**Minerals Option 3b: Additional Area of Search North of A461** - as well as the Area of Search at Stubbers Green (Option 3a), the SAD would identify another area to the north of Walsall Road (A461) for potential brick clay extraction.

#### **Minerals Option 4: Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – Fireclay**

**Minerals Option 4a: Wyrley Estates Option** – the Area of Search for fireclay extraction at Yorks Bridge, indicated in the Core Strategy, would be based on an area suggested by Wyrley Estates (see MXA4 (blue) on Map M2).

**Minerals Option 4b: Potters Clay & Coal Company Option** - the Area of Search for fireclay extraction at Yorks Bridge would be based on an area suggested by Potters Clay & Coal Company (see MXA4 (green) on Map M2).

**Minerals Option 4c: Include Brownhills Common and Land at Yorks Bridge** - the Area of Search for fireclay extraction at Yorks Bridge would include the land covered by Options M3a and M3b, the permitted site at Brownhills Common and Land at Yorks Bridge (see MXA4 (red), MP5 and MXP4 on Map M2).

#### **Minerals Option 5: Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements – Site Allocations**

**Minerals Option 5a: Allocate Sites for Mineral Extraction** – the SAD would allocate sites for mineral extraction where appropriate – requirements for mitigation, enhancement, restoration, aftercare and after use would be included.

**Minerals Option 5b: No Site Allocations** – the SAD would not identify any site allocations for mineral extraction, and would rely on the Areas of Search to indicate where future mineral extraction may take place in Walsall.

#### **Minerals Option 6: Managing the Impacts of Mineral Development**

**Minerals Option 6a: Phasing Policy** – potential harmful impacts of mineral extraction would be controlled through a phasing policy, limiting the amount of mineral extraction that could take place in the same area at any one time.

**Minerals Option 6b: No Phasing Policy** – we would rely on Core Strategy policies and national policy guidance to control the impacts of mineral working.

We have produced a separate Minerals Background Paper which updates the information included in the Core Strategy on mineral resources and future requirements. The SAD must also comply with the latest national policy guidance on minerals, some of which came out after the Core Strategy was adopted.

Map M1 shows which parts of Walsall would be included in a MSA that covers all of the mineral resources of potential local and national importance, excluding the “buffers” suggested in Minerals Option 1c. This would include nearly all parts of the borough. The geology of Walsall is so complex that if we have separate MSAs, one covering each type of mineral, it might be difficult to show them clearly on the map in the SAD, which also has to show other sites for other land uses.

Map M2 shows Permitted and Potential New Mineral Infrastructure Sites, Permitted Mineral Extraction Sites, Brick Works, a Pot Clay Supply Outlet, proposed Areas of Search, and Potential New Mineral Extraction Sites. The table below provides a key to the sites shown. Some of the sites we have identified are “Choices Sites” which could be allocated or designated for other uses – these are highlighted. In these cases, the Council will need to decide whether the need for mineral extraction should be given priority over the alternative land uses identified for these sites.

The Permitted Mineral Infrastructure Sites and Mineral Extraction Sites already have planning permission. It is proposed to include these sites in the SAD so that people wishing to develop land nearby will be aware of them, as they are a potential constraint to other types of development. As well as identifying sites that are already permitted, the SAD needs to define the Minerals Areas of Search identified in the Core Strategy SAD (MXA1 – MXA4) – these are areas containing mineral resources, where extraction could take place between now and 2026. Suggested boundaries are shown on Map M2 and the Ward Maps. We have also identified four potential extraction sites (MXP1 – MXP4).

The Core Strategy recognises there could be a future need for “borrow pits” in Walsall. These are small extraction sites which provide fill and landscaping material for major engineering projects, such as new roads. If we can identify projects likely to

take place between now and 2026 that might require “borrow pits,” the SAD could identify suitable locations for extraction of material.

The Core Strategy also recognises that extracted fireclay might have to be stockpiled to provide long-term supplies to the brickworks and pot clay supply outlet in Walsall. This is because fireclay occurs beneath coal seams and has to be extracted at the same time as the coal, using opencast (surface mining) methods, over a relatively short period. We think that if a “strategic stockpile” is needed, it would be best located somewhere within the extraction area, which would be within the Yorks Bridge Area of Search. However, as a stockpile would have to be in place for a long period, it is likely to affect the method and timescale for site restoration.

<b>Map M2 – Key to Sites</b>	
<b>Permitted Mineral Infrastructure Sites:</b>	<b>Permitted Mineral Extraction Sites:</b>
MI1: Former Bace Groundworks Site (Recycled Aggregate Site)	MP1: Aldridge Quarry (Sand and Gravel)
MI2: Branton Hill CLEUD Site (Recycled Aggregate Site)	MP2: Atlas Quarry (Brick Clay (Etruria marl))
MI3: Walsall Cement Bulk/ Dalkia (Cement Distribution Facility)	MP3: Birch Coppice (Fireclay and Coal)
MI4: Land at Bescot Triangle (Recycled Aggregate Site)	MP4: Branton Hill Quarry (Sand and Gravel)
MI5: Express Asphalt Darlaston (Coating Plant)	MP5: Brownhills Common (Fireclay and Coal)
MI6: G & BG Morris Contractors (Secondary Aggregate Site)	MP6: Highfields South Quarry (Brick Clay (Etruria marl))
MI7: Interserve Waste Recycling Centre (Recycled Aggregate Site)	MP7: Sandown Quarry (Brick Clay (Etruria marl))
MI8: Lafarge Readymix (Concrete Batching Plant)	MP8: Former Vigo/ Utopia Site (restored former clay pit)
<b>Potential New Mineral Infrastructure Sites:</b>	<b>Minerals Areas of Search:</b>
MIP1: Branton Hill CLEUD Site – Proposed Relocation	MXA1: Aldridge (Sand and Gravel)
MIP2: Former Moxley Tip – Potential Recycled Aggregate Site	MXA2: Branton Hill (Sand and Gravel)
	MXA3: Stubbers Green (Brick Clay (Etruria marl))
<b>Brick Works (shown as black circles):</b>	MXA4: Yorks Bridge (Fireclay)
Aldridge Factory, Brickyard Road, Aldridge	
Atlas Factory, Stubbers Green Road, Aldridge	<b>Potential New Mineral Extraction Sites:</b>
Sandown Works, Stubbers Green Road, Aldridge	MXP1: Land Near Aldridge Quarry (Sand and Gravel)
	MXP2: Branton Hill Quarry Extension (Sand and Gravel)
<b>Pot Clay Supply Outlet (shown as black triangle):</b>	MXP3: Recordon Land (Brick Clay (Etruria marl))
Swan Works, Pelsall Road, Brownhills	MXP4: Land at Yorks Bridge (Fireclay and Coal)

**M:Q1 Have we identified all of the key mineral issues that need to be addressed in the SAD? Please provide details of any other issues you have identified, and explain why you think they should be addressed in the SAD.**

**M:Q2 Are there any mineral types or areas in Walsall that should be excluded from the MSA? Please provide evidence supporting the exclusion of any mineral types or areas you are suggesting.**

**M:Q3 Do you agree that the SAD should identify all of the Permitted Mineral Infrastructure Sites in Walsall likely to remain in place in the long-term, because they are potential constraints to other development?**

**M:Q4 Do you have any comments on the Permitted and Potential New Mineral Infrastructure Sites (MI1 – MI8 and MIP1 – MIP2) shown on Map M2?**

**M:Q5 Do you agree that the SAD should indicate the location of Permitted Mineral Extraction Sites, Brick Works and Pot Clay Supply Outlet, as shown on Map M2, because they are also potential constraints to other development?**

**M:Q6 Do you agree that the SAD should define the boundaries of the four Areas of Search identified in the Core Strategy (see MXA1 – MXA4 on Map M2)?**

**M:Q7 Do you think the SAD should allocate sites for mineral extraction, where working is expected to take place between now and 2026? If so, which sites should be allocated and why?**

**M:Q8 Do you have any comments on the Potential New Mineral Extraction Sites (MXP1 – MXP4) shown on Map M2?**

**M:Q9 Do you think there will be a need for “borrow pits” in Walsall at any time during the plan period, to supply fill material for engineering projects? Please provide evidence in support of your views.**

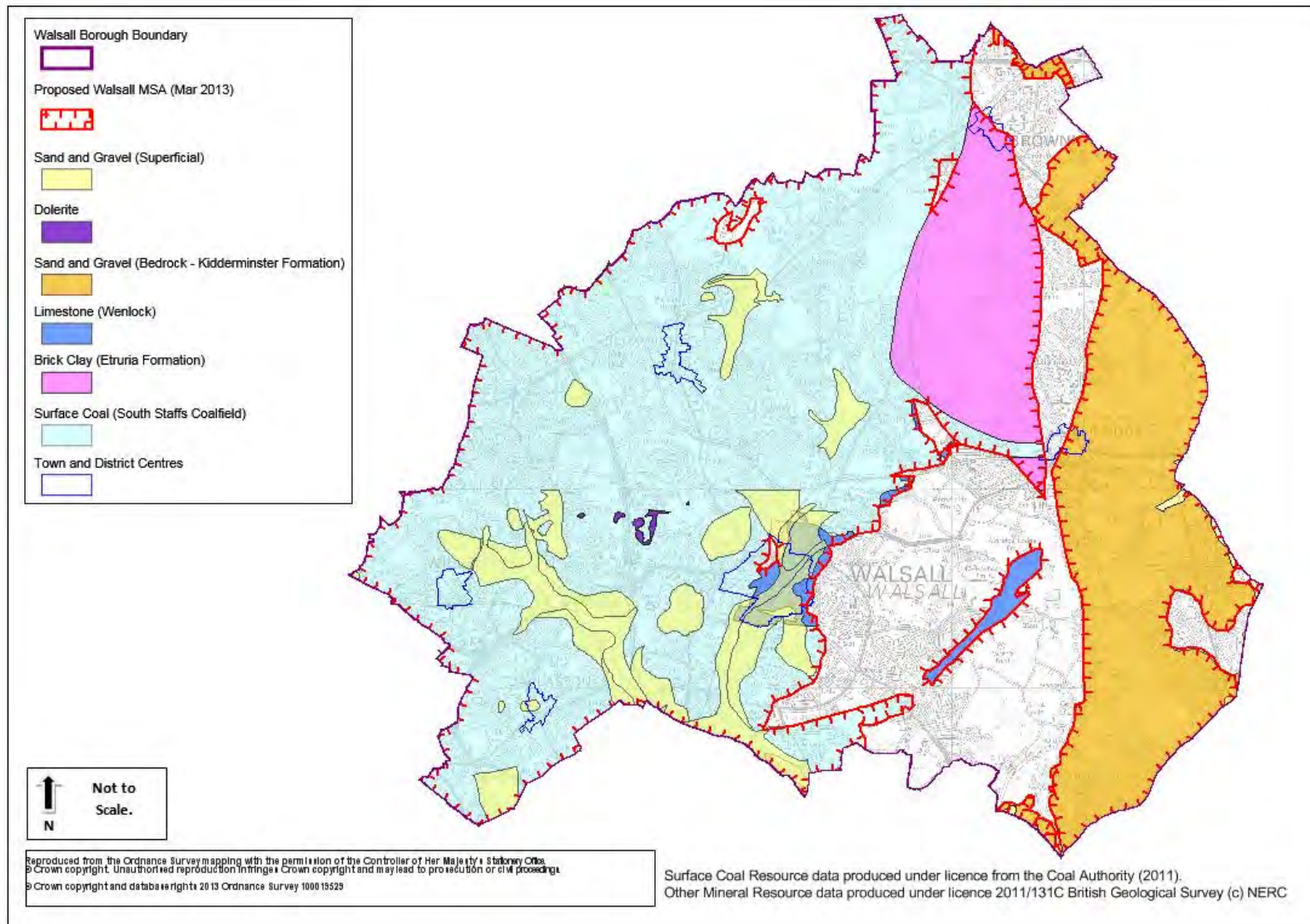
**M:Q10 Do you think there will be a need for a “strategic stockpile” of extracted fireclay in Walsall at any time during the plan period, to provide long-term supplies to Walsall’s brickworks and pot clay outlet? Please provide supporting evidence.**

**M:Q11 How is mineral extraction within the Potential New Mineral Extraction Sites (MXP1 – MXP4), or elsewhere in the Areas of Search, likely to affect health, the environment, businesses, the amenity of local communities and other infrastructure (e.g. the highway network) in Walsall? Please indicate likely positive and negative effects and provide evidence in support of your views.**

**M:Q12 Which of the alternative options for the Mineral Safeguarding Area (MSA), Meeting Mineral Supply Requirements and Managing the Impacts of Mineral Development do you prefer and why?**

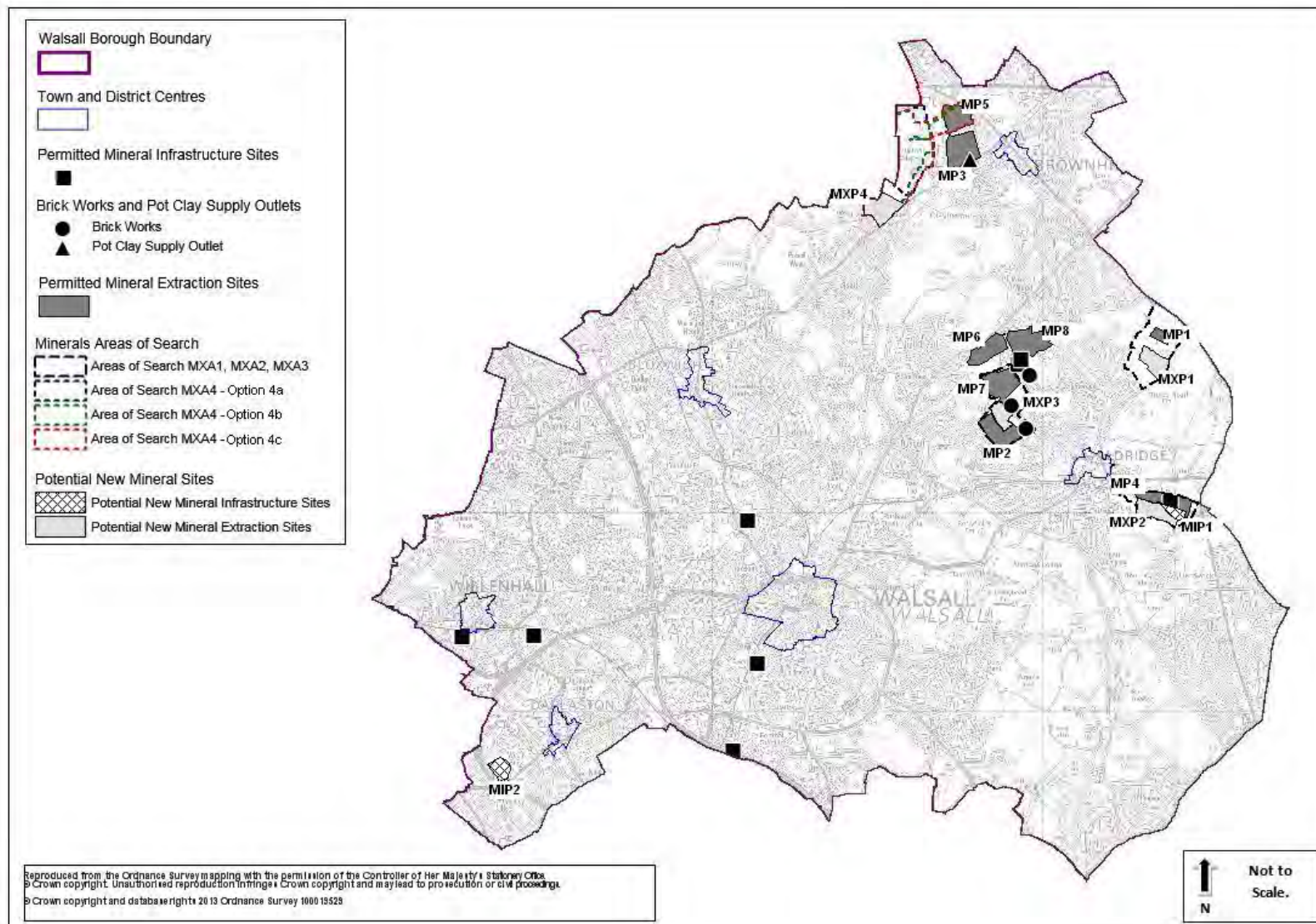
**M:Q13 Are there any other options for mineral development in Walsall that we have not identified? Please provide details and explain why you think we should consider these options.**

**Map M1: Mineral Resources in Walsall and Potential Mineral Safeguarding Area**





**Map M2: Permitted Mineral Infrastructure and Mineral Extraction Sites and Potential New Mineral Working Areas in Walsall**



## 10. Transport Summary



Transport is not an end in itself – people use the transport network to get to destinations to do other things. But a good transport network is fundamental to the Borough's prosperity. Walsall is well placed in relation to the national transport network, being close to the M6 and M5 interchange. It is also close to the national rail

hub at Birmingham New Street. Many logistics companies have been attracted to the Borough because of this centrality. But Walsall has not benefitted as much as could have been expected from this advantageous location. One reason is that often the local connection into the trunk road network from the industrial area is not very good. Congestion on the M6 and Junctions 9 and 10 is a nationally recognised issue, and Walsall has to provide for traffic that is only passing through to get to other areas – for example from the north east to the interior of the Black Country and vice versa.

Walsall, as a disadvantaged area, has lower car ownership than average and therefore more dependent on public transport. Over the years, out of centre shopping and leisure developments have been located where it is more difficult to serve the surrounding shopper catchment by public transport than the network that is focused on Walsall town centre. This has worked to the detriment of non car owners, reducing their access to a good range of shops and services. It will be important in the coming years to direct investment in such facilities into centres so that they can be available to all sections of the community, not just car owners. Better public transport can also help reduce congestion on the roads: for example, new rail passenger services to Aldridge and Brownhills could reduce rush hour congestion on the A461 north of Walsall town centre.

Walsall has a network of walk-cycleways, called Greenways. These are segregated from the road network and are used mainly for leisure/recreation purposes, but people also use them for transport related journeys by bike and on foot. The canal network and old rail alignments are the main focus of the Greenway network. Sometimes, by using an old rail route as a Greenway, it can be kept safe for long term use for rail or rapid transit services. This is the case for example with the old rail formation between Walsall and Brownhills.

Walsall's transport priorities therefore involve a mix of projects to improve the highway network and public transport, to be carried out by Walsall Council and other partners such as Network Rail and Centro, the public transport authority for the Birmingham, the Black Country, Solihull and Coventry.

The SAD's role is to safeguard land for transport projects where necessary so that the routes that could be used are not severed by other development. We propose to safeguard land for the following projects:

(1) The new road alignment for the DSDA Access project (see above). This has planning permission but funding has still to be confirmed;

(2) The disused rail formation between Ryecroft and Brownhills, currently used as a "greenway," for rail passenger and freight services in the long term. At the moment the UDP safeguards it for rail or metro, but, in view of Centro's latest plans, we need to change the safeguarding policy to heavy rail only.

We also need to consider whether land should be safeguarded for:

(3) New rail-freight facilities;

(4) Park and ride sites for rail, bus and rapid transit services. One site that has been suggested is the former rail sidings off Middlemore Lane, Aldridge (see plan) is a possibility to serve Aldridge (if new passenger rail services are forthcoming);

(5) Possible new railway stations.

## What are the options?

TRANSPORT OPTION 1	IMPLICATIONS
Safeguard the Walsall – Brownhills rail formation and land for the DSDA Access	This would involve safeguarding land that we know will be used for a road and a rail

<p>project, and land for park and ride to serve Aldridge.</p>	<p>scheme in the Core Strategy timescale or there is a transport route such as old rail formation that could be used for new passenger and freight services in the long term, as with the Walsall - Brownhills rail formation. This option would effectively be a continuation of what the UDP is doing already, plus safeguarding land for the DSDA Access Project. It helps to ensure that options are kept open to improve industrial access in Darlaston if there are delays to the DSDA access scheme. It would also providing for better rail services, to reduce rail problems on the West Midlands network and give people an alternative to the car in the Walsall-Brownhills corridor, and also reducing localised congestion on the A461</p>
<p><b>TRANSPORT OPTION 2</b></p> <p>Do not safeguard any land for transport purposes.</p>	<p><b>IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>This would involve relinquishing the safeguard on the Walsall – Brownhills rail line and relying solely on the planning permission to deliver the DSDA Access project. It would mean that we could lose the opportunity to reinstate local and regional rail services to Brownhills and beyond, if the rail alignment is severed and used for something else.</p>

**TR:Q1 Have we identified all the key transport issues that the SAD needs to address?**

**TR:Q2 are there any locations where the SAD needs to safeguard land for new or improved highways infrastructure to provide better access to employment areas and centres? Please provide evidence in support of your suggestions.**

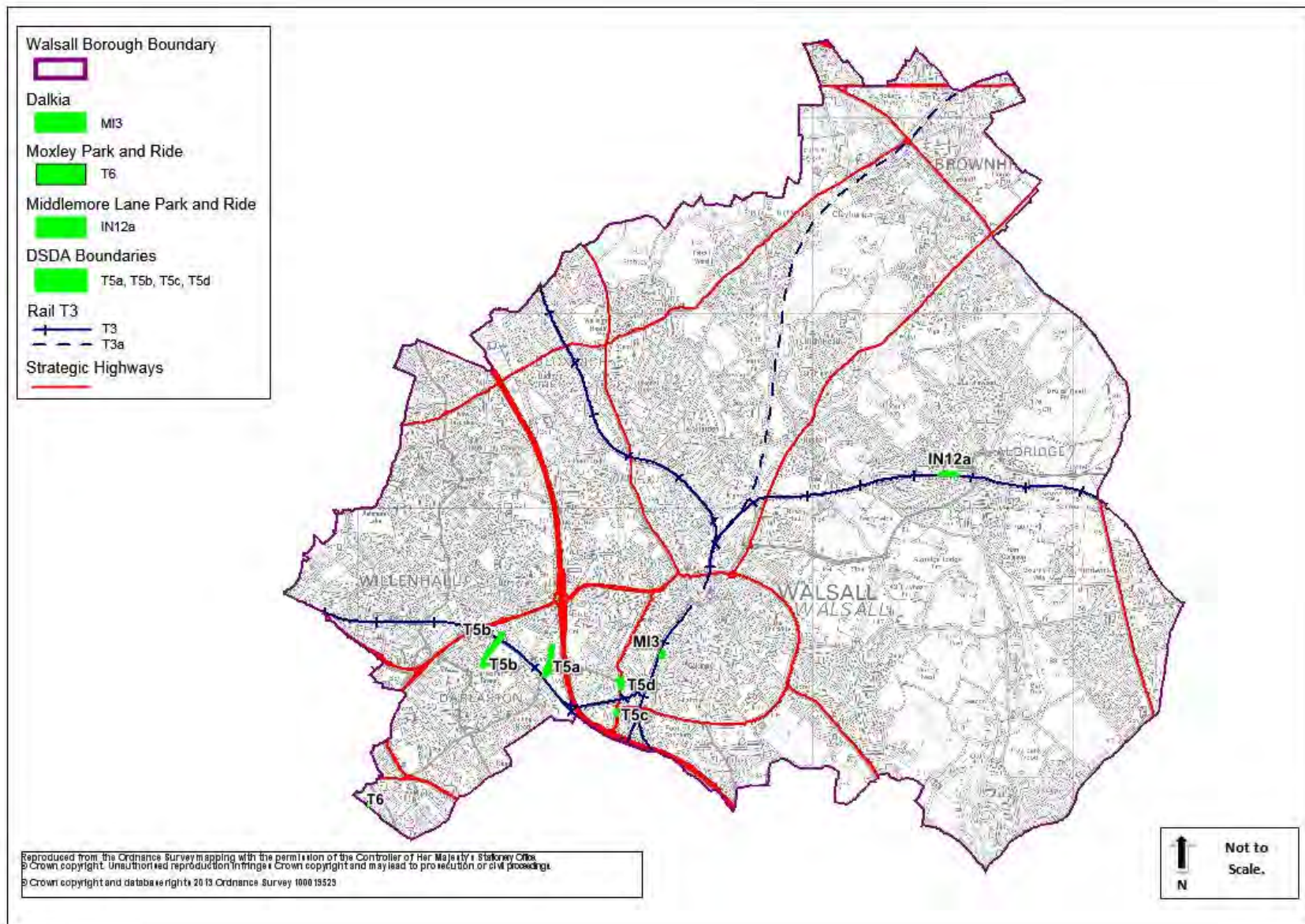
**TR:Q3: Do you think the SAD should identify locations for new rail stations? If so where? Please provide evidence in support of your suggestions.**

**TR:Q4 Do you think that the SAD should safeguard land for rail freight purposes? If so where? Please provide evidence in support of your suggestions.**

**TR:Q5 Do you think that the SAD should allocate sites for park and ride facilities? If so where? Please provide evidence in support of your suggestions.**

**TR:Q6 Which of the transport options do you prefer and why?**

**Map 10.1 - Key Transport Networks and Major Transport Infrastructure Proposals in Walsall**



## 11. Utilities Infrastructure Summary



Utilities Infrastructure is needed to serve existing and proposed developments in Walsall and includes water supplies and waste water, energy supplies, and telecommunications. Based on our evidence as set out in Chapter 11 of the main Issues and Options Report, we do not think that there will be any major issues in providing the utilities infrastructure needed to support development in the Borough and have not therefore asked questions about this. However, we do think that we need to ask questions about the provision of renewable energy development as this might require a specific land allocation to facilitate such development.

Please note that this document is only a summary of the information contained within the main Site Allocation Document (SAD) report and you should refer to Chapter 11 (Utilities Infrastructure) of the report if you would like to find out more about the evidence we have used, view the full list of questions and view details of the existing Utilities Infrastructure that we have identified on Map 11.1 below.

### Key Issues

<b>1</b>	<b><i>Lack of evidence about the quality of discharges into the water course.</i></b>
<b>2</b>	<b><i>Uncertainty about the future of Willenhall Sewage Works.</i></b>
<b>3</b>	<b><i>Some sites in Darlaston for particular industrial development may need new connections to gas and electricity.</i></b>
<b>4</b>	<b><i>The potential for renewable and low carbon energy development is low.</i></b>
<b>5</b>	<b><i>Conflicting evidence about future supply of potable water.</i></b>

### What are the options?

<b>UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE OPTION 1</b>	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b>  Renewable energy generation could be
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Allocate land for large-scale renewable energy (wind and biomass) generation projects.	increased through larger scale projects; however possible adverse impacts on the environment and on land availability for other important uses would have to be taken into account.
<p><b>UTILITIES INFRASTRUCTURE OPTION 2</b></p> <p>Do not allocate land for renewable energy generation but address policy requirements through individual development proposals.</p>	<p><b>IMPLICATIONS</b></p> <p>Land would not be taken up for such projects but achieving higher renewable energy generation could lead to more requirements for the design or energy efficiency of individual buildings within certain land-uses.</p>

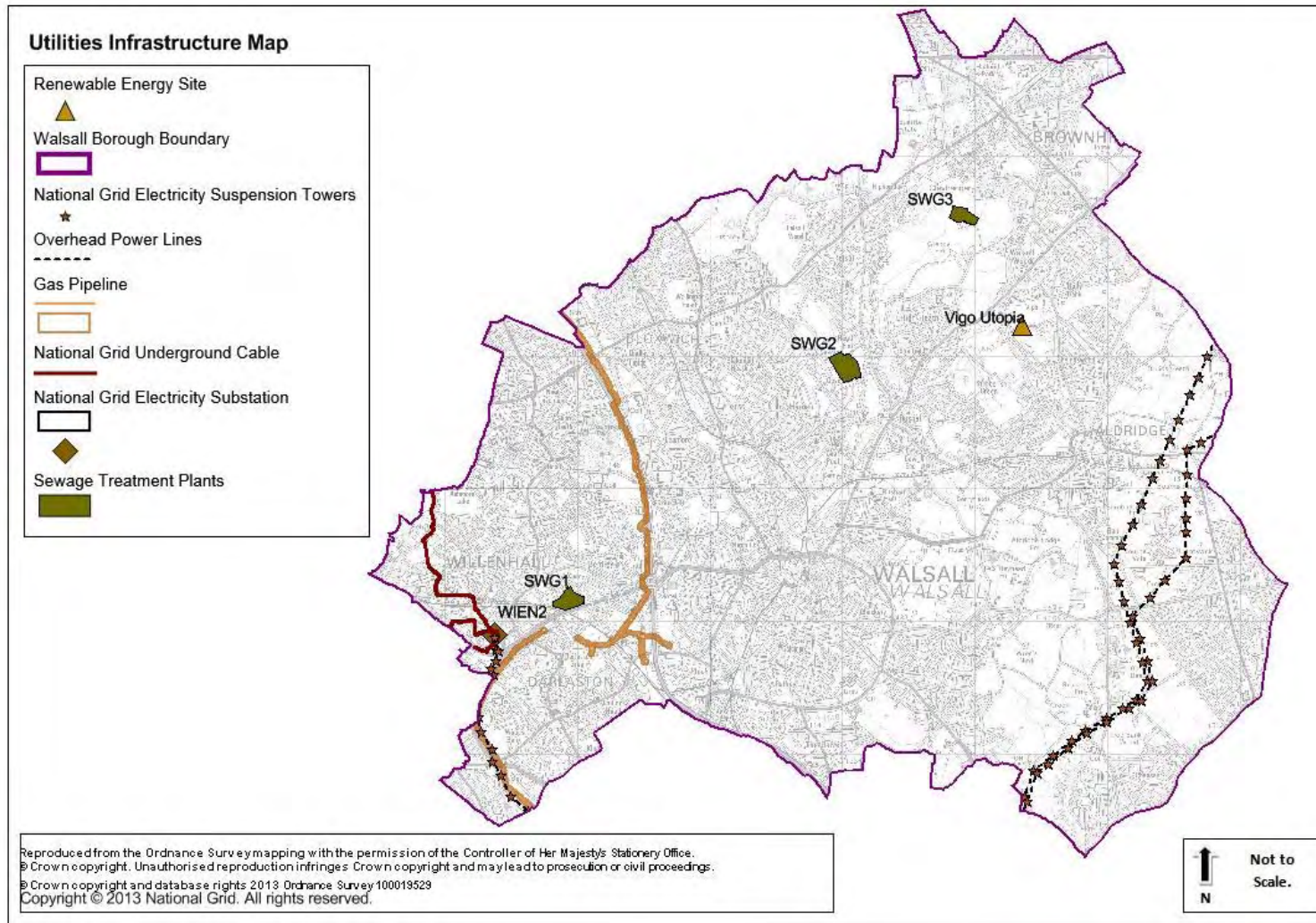
The full list of questions can be viewed in Chapter 11 of the main report, only the key questions we think you might wish to answer are listed below.

<b>UI:Q2</b>	<b>Do you know of any sites in the Borough that would be appropriate for renewable energy generation (wind and biomass)? If yes, please provide details.</b>
<b>UI:Q3</b>	<b>Are there any specific proposals or allocations for land-uses in Chapter 12 (Site Selection) of the SAD that would require a site to be allocated for renewable energy generation to serve the development, i.e. a combined heat and power facility? If yes, please provide details.</b>
<b>UI:Q4</b>	<b>Which option do you prefer? Please explain why and how you think this could be delivered.</b>
<b>UI:Q6</b>	<b>Are you aware of any up-to-date baseline information that sets out current and projected provision of the utilities infrastructure we have identified? If yes, please tell us where this information can be found?</b>
<b>UI:Q7</b>	<b>Are you aware of any potential deficits in utilities infrastructure that could affect the deliverability of any of the sites being considered for allocation in Chapter 12 of the SAD? If yes, please provide supporting evidence and tell us which sites you think would be affected.</b>



**Map 11.1 – Utilities Infrastructure.**

Details of the Utilities Infrastructure identified on the map below can be viewed in Chapter 11 of the main Site Allocation Document



## 12. Sites, Choices and Constraints Summary

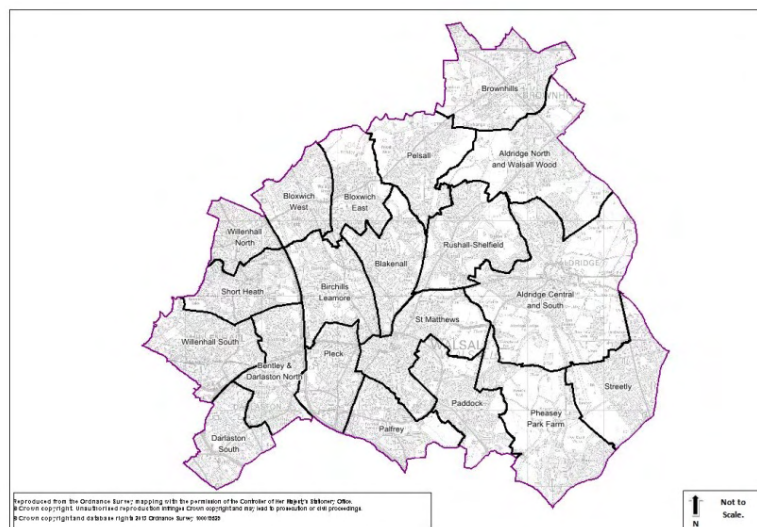
This section covers an explanation of where the sites have come from including Call for Sites, the sites we need to make key decisions on (“Choices sites”), the constraints we will consider, and issues around the BCCS Regeneration Corridors.

### How we have presented the ‘Sites’

Maps have been shown at a Borough scale within each topic chapter in the Issues and Options document to show how our various options for site allocations impact on other areas of Walsall. The details of each site have been set out in summary tables and provided in an appendix to each chapter, including unique IDs and addresses that will assist you in identifying sites of particular interest to you throughout the document. We have also provided ward based maps and associated site tables in an appendix to enable you to view the specific location of any site(s) you are interested in whilst also being able to view the key assets, constraints and other existing and potential uses at a local scale.

The wards are set out in Map 12.1 below should you wish to refer to them when navigating individual ward maps. However, it must be explained that the ward based maps are for presentational purposes only and we will be considering the Borough-wide perspective when carrying forward our options to the next stage – the Preferred Options document.

**Map 12.1 – Walsall Wards**



## Call for Sites (2011-2012)

Walsall Council held a 'Call for Sites' which closed in November 2012. This enabled landowners to submit information on sites they owned that they wished to be considered to be allocated for new development. Through the Call for Sites, landowners could say what types of development they thought appropriate on their site(s).

In most cases these sites will be considered in more detail at the Preferred Options document for the SAD, following consultation at the Issues and Options stage. However in some cases there are sites that do not accord with existing planning policies and therefore we do not think should progress beyond the Issues and Options stage. Please see the Call for Sites Initial Assessment document at [www.walsall.gov.uk/planning\\_2026](http://www.walsall.gov.uk/planning_2026) for the details of each site submitted through **Choices Sites**.

**SCC:Q2 Do you agree with our initial response to the Call for Sites submissions? If not, why not?**

There are many sites where more than one potential future use has been identified for which a decision on the most appropriate allocation through the SAD has not yet been made. Most often this is where some existing open space or employment land might be able to be considered for other new development such as housing. In these circumstances, and at this stage of the development of the SAD, the Council does not have a preferred allocation for these sites. Therefore more than one allocation could still be considered as appropriate at this stage.

The Choices Sites are shown on Map 12.2 below. These are detailed further in the summary table in Chapter 12 of the main Issues and Options document and can be cross-referenced using the Choices Site (CH) ID numbers. The Choices Sites are also shown at a larger scale on the Ward Maps at [www.walsall.gov.uk/planning\\_2026](http://www.walsall.gov.uk/planning_2026), should you need to see site allocation proposals and constraints in the immediate surroundings of these Choices Sites.

**SCC:Q3 From the list of sites we have identified as 'Choices Sites', do you have any views about which use(s) you would prefer?**

## **Site Constraints**

There are a number of physical or policy designation constraints to allocating land around the Borough for certain land uses. Sites being proposed for allocation at the Preferred Options stage of the SAD will be assessed in more detail against different constraints. Examples of these constraints include: flood risk; areas of poor air quality; poor grounds conditions / land contamination; and Green Belt designation.

**SCC:Q4 Do you know of any other key constraints we should be considering?**

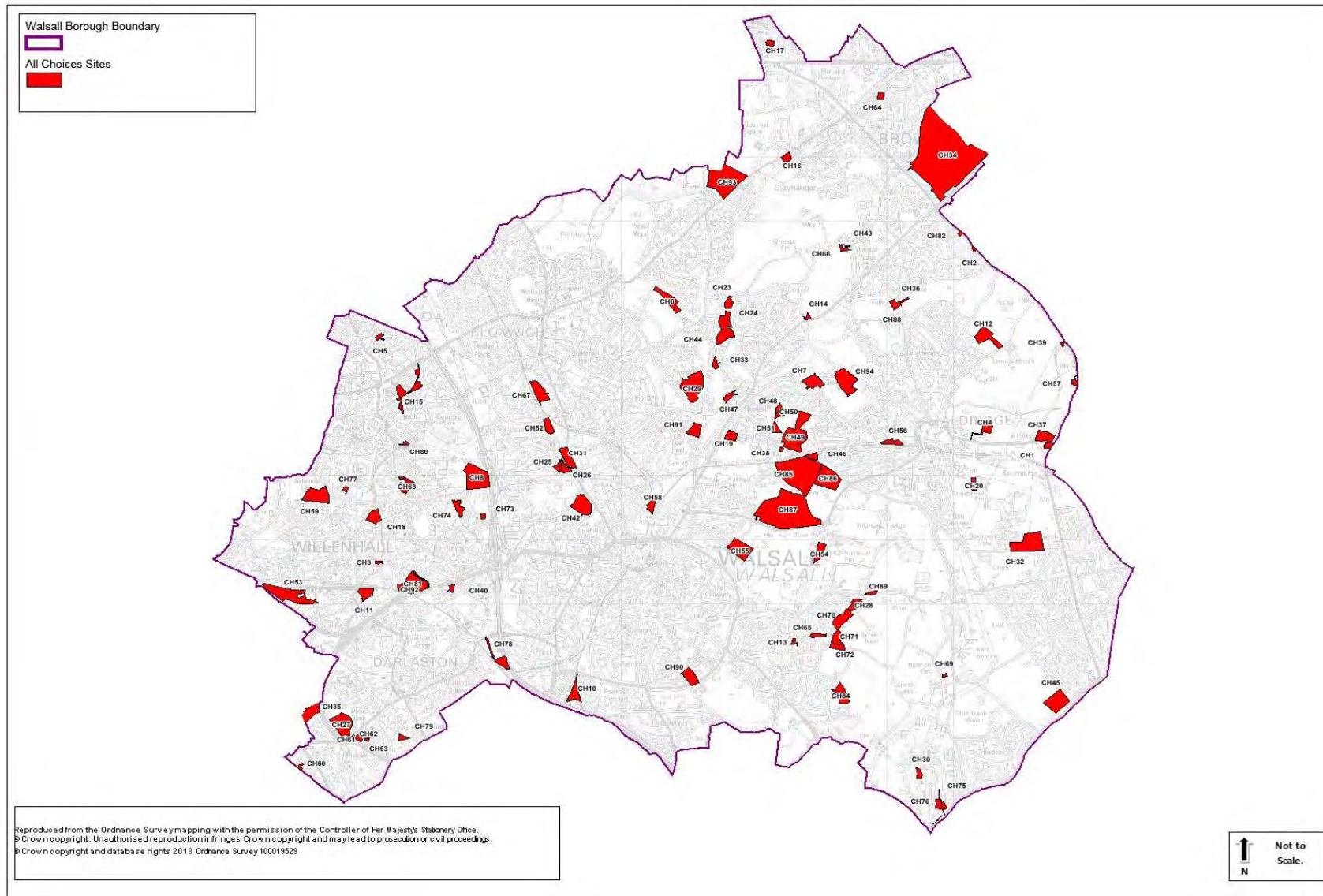
## **Regeneration Corridors**

Many of the sites proposed for allocation in the Site Allocation Document will be located in Walsall's Regeneration Corridors (see the BCCS Key Diagram, in Chapter 2 of the main Issues and Options report, showing the broad location of regeneration corridors). We need to refine the boundaries of these regeneration corridors. We think the following principles should be used in defining the boundaries:

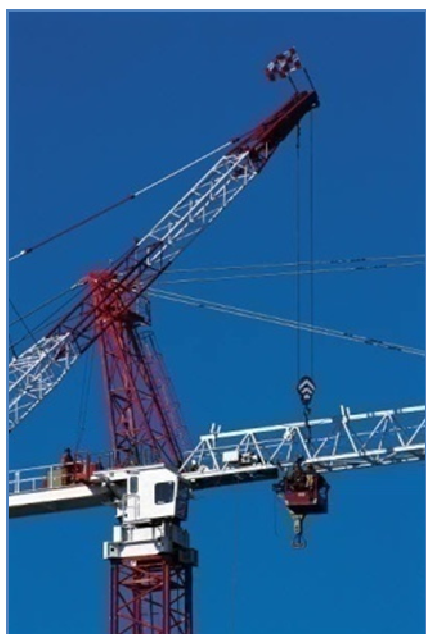
- Current geographical features should be used, such as site boundaries, roads or administrative boundaries.
- The boundaries should not cut across significant land uses where change is expected or that are important to the delivery of the BCCS, such as employment areas.

**SCC:Q5 Do you agree with the criteria above? What other criteria should we use to define the precise boundaries of the Regeneration Corridors?**

### Map 12.2 – Choices Sites



### 13. Delivery and Viability Summary



Delivery mechanisms and viability are key considerations when allocating sites for development. The Site Allocation Document (SAD) will help to deliver the sites and infrastructure needed to support the BCCS, at least up to the end of the plan period (2026).

The industrial heritage of the Borough means that we have to consider the ground conditions at many previously developed sites as this can have an impact on development viability, particularly where contamination is present from previous industrial uses and is required to be treated before re-development can take place. This will be an important factor as we work through the allocation of sites in the SAD, particularly where industrial land is considered to be released for other uses such as housing. A study undertaken for the BCCS<sup>1</sup> showed that housing development can be viable in most cases, although the ability to pay for planning obligations or to support Community Infrastructure Levy funding in future might be limited. It showed also that there are issues about the ability to deliver viable development for industry, but nevertheless industrial development is taking place in the borough. A comprehensive study will need to be undertaken to provide an up-to-date assessment of development costs and development viability across the whole Borough to ensure the sites we take forward for allocation in the SAD can be delivered.

When considering viability there will be a need to take account of the suitability and attractiveness of individual sites for particular uses, as well as to account for the

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<sup>1</sup> Sample Sites Viability Study (Mott MacDonald/GVA Grimley, October 2009), available to download from <http://blackcountrycorestrategy.dudley.gov.uk/evidencesa/>

impacts that different uses and planning requirements might have on each other. Details of some of the issues are given in the SAD Main Document.

Here, the future of industrial sites can serve as an example of the issues. Access to some sites is good, reflecting Walsall's central position, close to the hub of the motorway network. However some Victorian-era transport links, particularly canals and railways in the Darlaston area, tend to cut across rather than aid access to industrial sites. The Council is taking action to improve this situation, notably through the Darlaston Strategic Development Area Access Project. Other industrial sites have poor access, sometimes through residential areas. Here, there could be opportunities to release the site to housing and other uses if and when industry vacates the site in question. Some additional sites that we have identified do not have adequate access for potential new industry uses and this will be another key delivery factor to consider. Walsall also has a number of smaller sites across the Borough that may no longer be suitable individually for certain types of development, but could collectively provide a larger sized site for development by combining certain parcels of land, potentially through the use of Compulsory Purchase Order powers.

This means that we have to consider delivery and viability on a site-by-site basis and do not therefore propose to include any options on it. Where the public sector takes a role in supporting the delivery of development projects, the mechanisms and funding opportunities can be subject to change, therefore we have published on our website currently identifiable mechanisms to ensure the list can be updated when necessary. The funding and delivery mechanisms are available to view at [www.walsall.gov.uk/planning\\_2026](http://www.walsall.gov.uk/planning_2026)

For many of the uses we are considering, development would be as a result of private sector investment and the purpose of the SAD is to allocate land that can deliver viable development, albeit with the use of available resources (including for infrastructure) to support this.

The Government's 'Localism' agenda is also encouraging us to explore whether some activities and facilities might be managed, operated and / or owned by

community groups. This might be most applicable for community facilities and open spaces.

**DV:Q1 Have we identified all issues that might affect the delivery of sites? Please list any others.**

**DV:Q2 Have we identified all potential funding streams and delivery mechanisms that might be used to address site difficulties? Please list any others.**

**DV:Q3 Do you agree that the mechanisms we have identified might be appropriate to use for some sites (for example Compulsory Purchase Orders)?**

**DV:Q4 Is there an area of open space or community facility that you would like to manage? Please provide details.**



## 14. Get Involved and Next Steps

We want our residents and other interested parties to inform the development of our plans. Your views (wherever possible, supported by evidence) are important, and the Council wants to receive them during the 6 week consultation period from 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2013 – 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2013.

You can view these documents and respond online by visiting [www.walsall.gov.uk/planning\\_2026](http://www.walsall.gov.uk/planning_2026). Paper copies of the documents are also available to view at your local library.

### What happens next?

Following the consultation period, a consultation report will be produced which will outline the comments which were received and how they have been used to inform the next stage of the Site Allocation Document. This document will be available to view on the 'Planning 2026' web page as in the box above.

The responses received during consultation will be an important source of information which will be used to help shape our more specific proposals in our Preferred Options. The Preferred Options report will be published in 2014 and this will also be made available for public consultation for your comments. Your views on the Preferred Options will then be used to produce the final Site Allocation Document. This will be submitted to the Secretary of State and will be subject to an Examination by an independent Planning Inspector who will test the soundness of the Plan and produce a report setting out what changes, if any, are required.

Throughout the process the Council will continue to collect evidence, react to currently unknown development proposals and evaluate the options. This will help to ensure that the emerging planning policy is up to date, robust and deliverable.



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