

Warwick Independent Schools Foundation

King's High School Town Centre Site

Development Brief

REP/DB/001

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This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client.

It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

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1 Introduction

Warwick Independent Schools Foundation (WISF) plan to move the King's High School for Girls (KHS) from the current Warwick town centre site on Smith Street. The Girls School will be relocated to the Foundation's main campus at Myton Road approximately 1.2km further out from the town centre, as shown in Figure 1. The purpose of this document is to provide a development framework which will help guide proposals for the re-development of the town centres King's High School for Girls site.

This Development Brief seeks to establish the development principles for the KHS site which is proposed to Warwick District Council (WDC) Executive Committee for agreement. The development principles proposed seek the Council's support, beyond which, the brief will have the potential to be adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) by the Council. At which point the Development Brief will be a material consideration in the determination of any future planning application relating to the site.

This Development Brief has been developed following engagement with WDC Heritage Officer and Historic England, and other key stakeholders including Warwickshire County Council (WCC) Archaeology and Highways Departments. Further engagement with Conservation Area Forum (CAF) and Warwick Town Council is anticipated as part of the proposal to submit this brief to the Planning Committee in 2016.

As part of the proposed relocation of the Girl's School, WISF have developed a timeframe for the project which will see a planning application submission in November 2016 to WDC seeking planning permission to relocate KHS onto the existing Warwick School site at Myton Road. Subject to planning permission being granted in spring 2017, it is anticipated that the town centre site will be vacated by 2020.

1.1 The Site

The current KHS occupies a strategic site in Warwick town centre. Once vacated, the site will be considered a significant brownfield regeneration opportunity within the centre of Warwick. It is important that the development site attracts appropriate future uses which will help to both maintain and contribute to the vitality and function of the town centre, in line with WDC's emerging Local Plan.

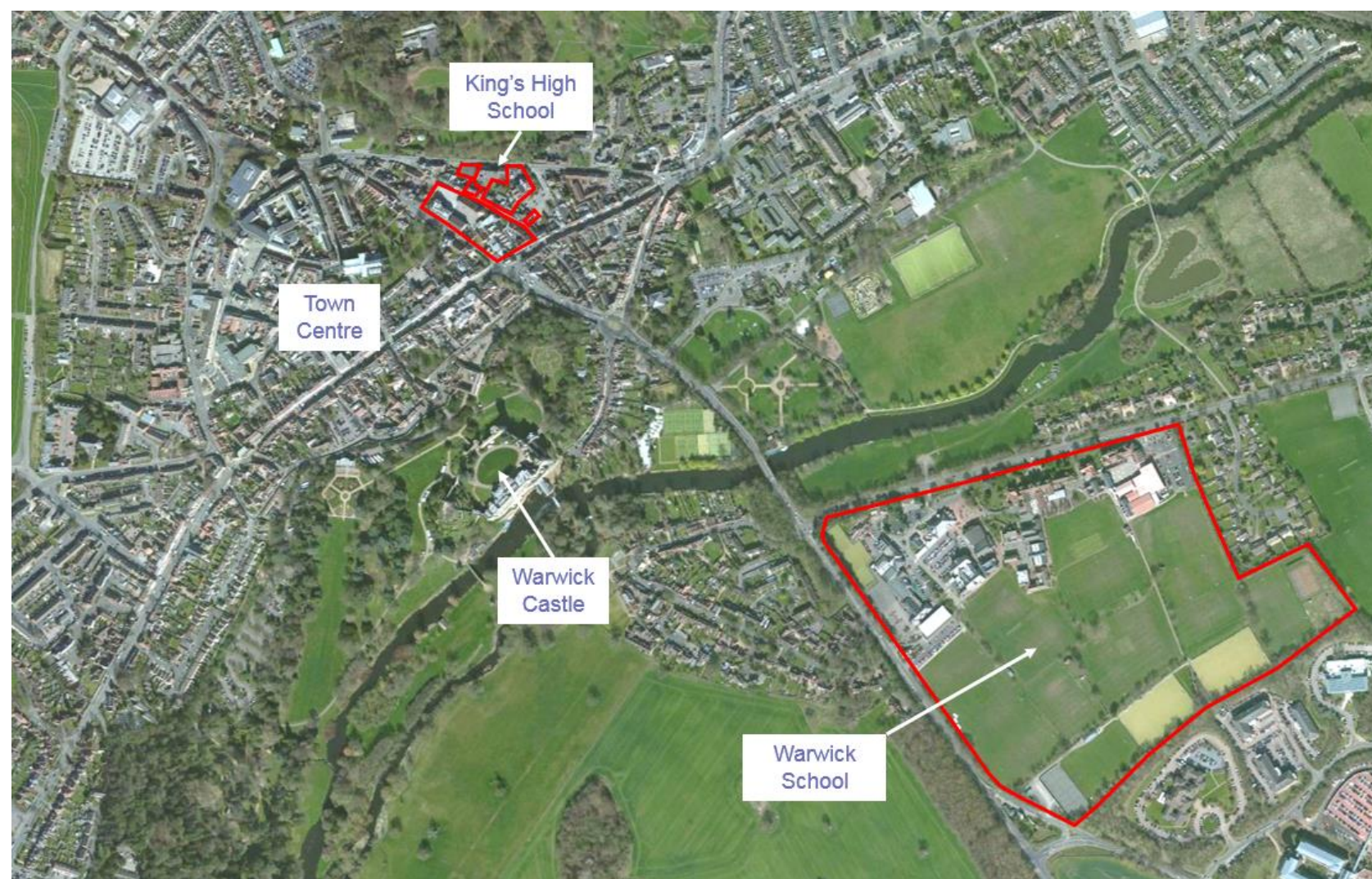


Figure 1: Map showing Warwick Independent Schools Foundation sites

2 Key Objectives

WARWICK INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS FOUNDATION



WISF is a major employer and provider of education in Warwick. As a Charitable Foundation, WISF is keen to create a legacy, in the form of a high quality and sustainable residential and/or mixed-use development which will help to both maintain and improve the vitality and viability of Warwick town centre beyond KHS.

The Foundation sees the creation of a single campus for all their schools and the redevelopment of the town centre site as an opportunity which benefits the aims and objectives for Warwick town centre. A number of these key objectives are:

- Provide a sustainable mix of land uses which might include provision for residential, employment, leisure, commercial and cultural space
- Support WDC in meeting its housing needs/requirements by making provision for additional residential development
- Support the town centre in continuing to be an attractive and safe place to both live and work
- Protect, support and contribute to the existing strong tourism sector
- Protect and enhance the character of Warwick town centre conservation area
- Continue to uphold and protect the amenity of nearby occupiers and other uses of the land.

WDC advocate the importance of supporting sustainable development in the town centre whilst protecting the amenity of nearby occupiers. The Council both recognise and acknowledge that in order to create a diverse and active town centre, there must be the opportunity to live in the town itself.

WISF seek to support WDC in meeting its aims and objectives for Warwick town centre, as set out within the emerging Local Plan. Development of the site should aim to complement and contribute towards the need for future residential, employment, leisure, retail and cultural growth in the town centre.



Figure 2: WISF: Warwick School

3 Context

3.1 The Site Surrounding

Warwick is a historic town located approximately 4km from Royal Leamington Spa, 13km from Stratford-upon-Avon and 15km from Coventry. Warwick is the administrative centre for WCC.

The proposed development site is located in Warwick town centre and covers an area of approximately 1.1 hectares across a number of plots located on Smith Street and Chapel Street.

KHS currently occupies four individual sites in Warwick town centre as shown Figure 3, and are described as follows:

- Site 1: The main school site is bounded by The Butts (A425), Smith Street, Chapel Street and Mitchell House and currently comprises a main hall, dining hall, gymnasium, sixth form centre and classroom blocks. (A row of houses along The Butts does not form part of the development as shown on following plans).
- Site 2: Bounded by Chapel Street and Priory Road and is situated adjacent to the Telephone Exchange. The site comprises the Priory building and school playground.
- Site 3: Bounded by Chapel Street, Chapel Row and Priory Road and comprises the former Borough School, two residential properties and school car park.
- Site 4: Bounded by Chapel Street, residential development, Smith Street commercial property and WDC Smith Street public car park.

3.2 Socio-economic Context

Warwick is located within the West Midlands conurbation. The West Midlands economy has grown quickly within recent years and the region is becoming an increasingly popular place for businesses to invest¹. However, the region is still constrained in part by availability of land for employment and residential uses, and opportunities for business start-ups and expansions².

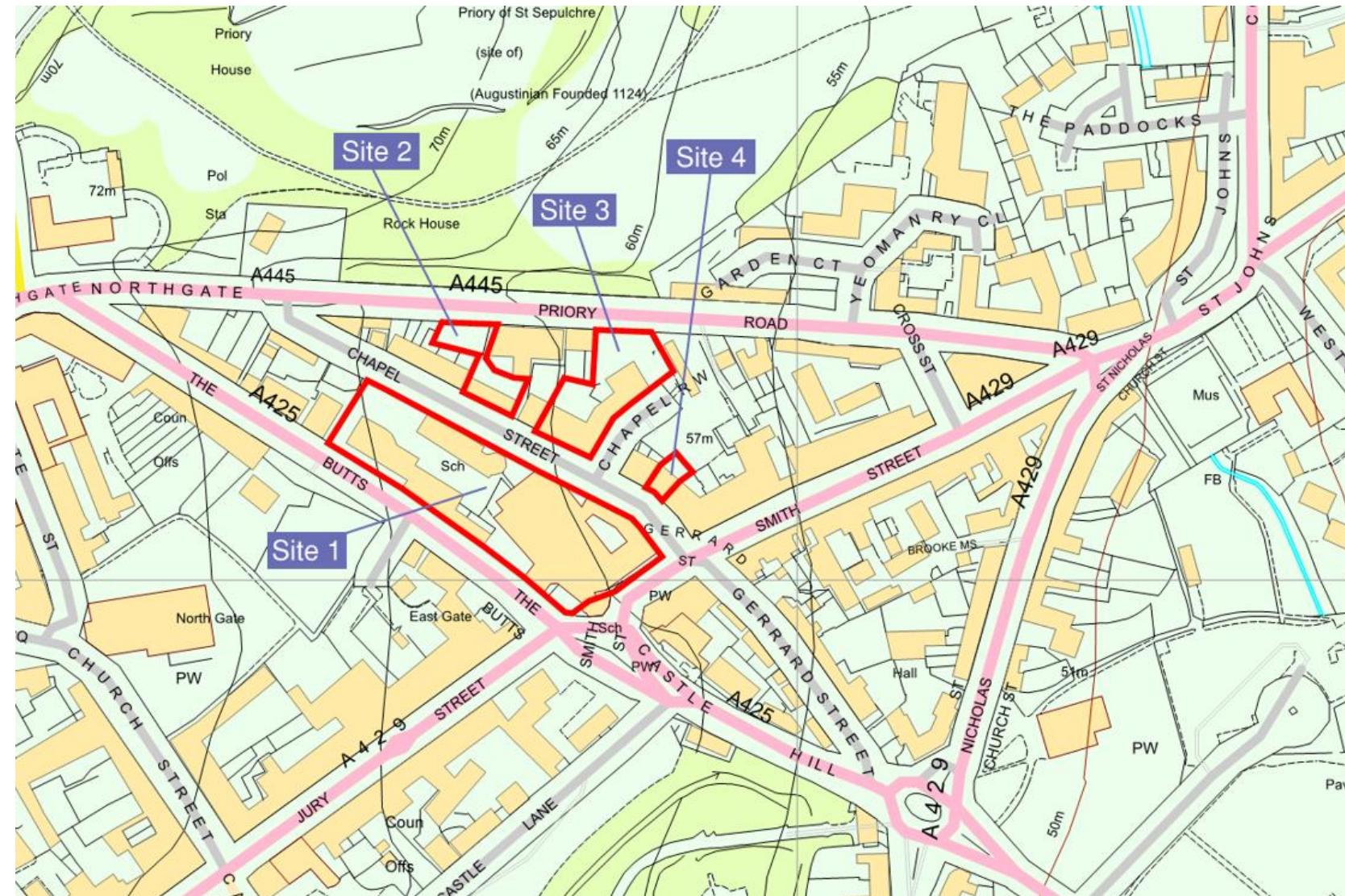


Figure 3: Existing KHS Sites

Warwick town centre has experienced an increase in vacancy levels and a drop in rental prices in recent years³. It is expected that the town centre could continue to lose trade to larger, more dominant town centres such as Leamington Spa, threatening its vitality and viability³. Securing new investment in the town centre will be important to reverse these trends.

The town centre is perceived to have good opportunities given its high quality and unique environment but the historic nature and street pattern has also limited investment in the town³.

A key challenge in Warwickshire is housing provision. In line with the emerging Local Plan WDC needs to deliver a minimum of 16,776 dwellings by 2029⁴. The other challenges include an ageing population and the economic legacy of the recent recession⁴. In particular, consultation undertaken by WDC has shown that improvement to traffic congestion is a key priority for the local community⁵. Development of the site should seek to help to alleviate these challenges where possible.

¹ West Midlands Combined Authority (2016) **About the area** [online] available at: <https://westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/about/about-the-area/>

² West Midlands Combined Authority (2016) **Strategic Economic Plan** [online] available at: <https://westmidlandscombinedauthority.org.uk/media/1238/final-making-our-mark.pdf>

³ Warwick District Council. (2014) **Warwick District Council: Retail & Leisure Study Update** [online] available at: <https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/evidencebase>

⁴ Warwick District Council. (2016) **Table of Proposed Modifications to the Publication Draft Local Plan (Part 1)** [online] available at: https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/info/20410/new_local_plan/1066/proposed_modifications_-_feb_2016

⁵ Warwick District Council. (2011) **Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report Appendix 3: Locality Profiles** [online] available at: https://www.warwickdc.gov.uk/downloads/file/2281/sa01_-_sustainability_appraisal_scoping_report_-_march_2011

3.3 Historical Context

Warwick town centre is characterised by its historic street pattern and architecture.

The KHS sites are situated within Warwick's Town Centre Conservation Area and within the historic town road pattern. As shown in Figure 4, there are several statutorily protected heritage assets within and surrounding the development sites. A breakdown of these assets can be found in section 3.8.

3.4 Conservation and Planning

The town centre sites are all located within the Warwick Conservation area. Proposals need to be judged to protect and enhance the amenity of the Conservation area.

- The main school site (site 1) is in the vicinity of two Scheduled Ancient Monuments (Eastgate and the site of the former College of Vicars Choral and St.Mary's College)
- A number of the buildings on the sites are listed, the most important of which is Landor House which is grade II* listed
- A number of the Victorian extensions to Landor House and Landor Cottages are deemed to be within the curtilage of the listed buildings and therefore are protected by association
- Residential properties on Chapel Street and Mitchell House overlook the main site, their amenity will need to be protected within the development of proposals
- There are a limited number of existing vehicle access points on to the sites.



Figure 4: Site Constraints

3.5 Archaeology

Historic maps of the sites have been sourced in order to understand the earlier urban fabric. Maps from 1711 to 1952 are shown in Figures 5 and 6.

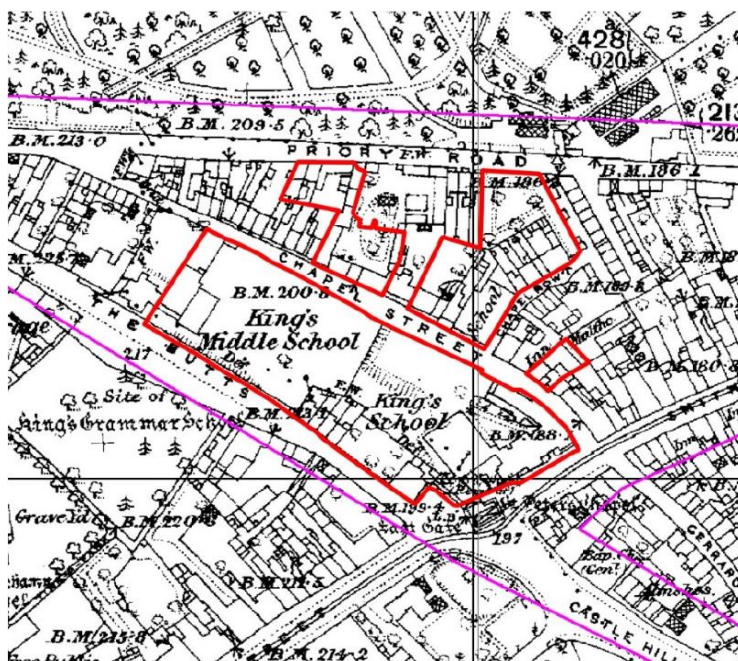


Figure 5: Historic Maps of Warwick c 1711 and 1889

Our analysis of the historic maps has identified that the southern boundary of the main site runs parallel with the assumed location of the town wall and the main site has been used principally as open space and then more recently as the site of the school.

It is anticipated that redevelopment of the site would be accompanied by desktop and possibly invasive archaeological studies. Specifically where the proposed scheme involves a change in existing site levels or significant excavation.

The boundary wall which defines the north eastern boundary of the main site (site 1) playground along Chapel Street is of interest historically, given its apparent age. Future development should consider a sensitive approach to ensure this historical element is protected.

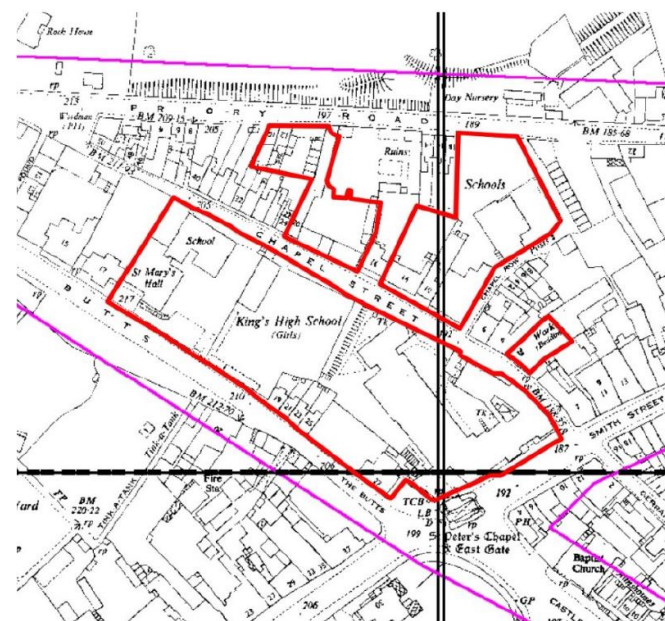
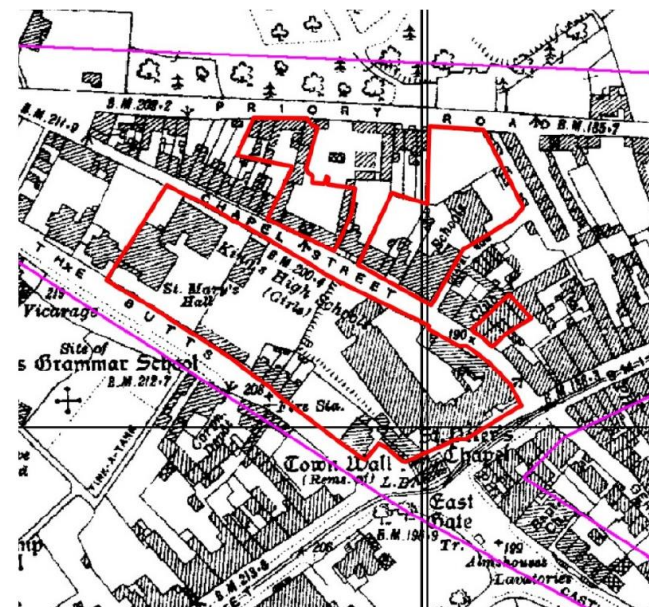


Figure 6: Historic Maps of Warwick c 1925 and 1952

3.6 Physical

3.6.1 Landscape

The landscape treatment of the site will be an important factor for any future development. The site is contained within a conservation area, which acknowledges and protects the special architectural and historic interest of the townscape. The site is positioned at an important junction within the town and as such is a key contributor to the character of the urban fabric of Warwick. The site contains a variety of architectural styles and materials within the layers of buildings and external walls, this layering adds to the historic townscape character of the site. Future development should consider visually the scale of the surrounding buildings and the mix of building materials to ensure cohesion with the existing townscape.

3.6.1 Ecology

No statutory site designations for nature conservation occur within the development site boundary or on adjacent land.

The site is dominated by buildings and hardstanding with no areas of semi-natural habitat present. A line of five semi-mature broadleaved trees are located to the west of the site adjacent to The Butts, which are of ecological value in this urban context. Ideally, these trees would be retained or replaced alongside any future development of the site.

Other vegetation is limited to small garden areas which comprise amenity grassland and landscape planting with occasional trees and shrubs. Development is likely to require removal of this vegetation. Development proposals will deliver a net gain in garden area and numbers of trees and shrubs, which has the potential to enhance biodiversity at the site, subject to an appropriate planting scheme.

There are foraging habitats for bat species in close proximity to the site in the form of Priory Park to the north and the churchyard to the south. As such the buildings at the site could potentially offer opportunities for roosting by legally protected bat species. The presence or absence of bat roosts within the buildings and trees at the site will be established through surveys to inform the detailed development design prior to a planning application. There is ample opportunity to incorporate new features for bat roosting into the development scheme for ecological mitigation and/or enhancement as required.

4 King's High School Site(s)

4.1 Site 1

The main school complex (Site 1) contains:

- One Grade II* listed building (Landor House) as shown in Figure 10.
- Two Grade II listed buildings as shown in Figure 11 (Nos.1 and 3 Smith Street).



Figure 11: Grade II* Listed Building Landor House



Figure 12: Grade II listed buildings
(Image Capture: July 2016 © 2016 Google)

A number of Victorian extensions have been made to Landor House and to nos. 1 and 3 Smith Street, these extensions are considered to be within the curtilage of listed buildings. The site is partly bounded by the 'Great Wall' and lies adjacent to the Eastgate Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM).



Figure 13: Grade II Listed Buildings
(Image Capture: July 2016 © 2016 Google)

4.2 Site 2

Site 2 site does not contain any listed heritage assets but lies adjacent to eight Grade II listed buildings (Nos.26 - 40 Chapel Street).



Figure 14: Street View alongside Site 2
(Image Capture: July 2016 © 2016 Google)

4.3 Site 3

Site 3 contains three Grade II listed buildings (Nos.10, 12 and 14 Chapel Street) and is located adjacent to a further Grade II listed building (No.16 Chapel Street).



Figure 15: Street View alongside Site 3
(Image Capture: July 2014 © 2016 Google)

4.4 Site 4

Site 4 does not contain any listed heritage assets but is located opposite Landor House (Grade II* listed building) off Chapel Street.



Figure 16: Street View alongside Site 4
(Image Capture: July 2016 © 2016 Google)

There are several other listed heritage assets within the vicinity of the four sites, including:

- A scheduled monument (St Mary's College) on the western side of The Butts; and
- Several Grade II listed buildings north-west of the site on either side of The Butts, southern side of Smith Street and on the northern side of Jury Street.

4.5 Consideration of Individual Buildings (Development Opportunities)

The urban grain of Warwick would suggest a finer textured approach to the re-development of the site, which is woven into the existing building fabric and re-uses buildings where appropriate. Therefore, it is reasonable to consider the individual buildings within the site as well as the site as a whole, given the varied character of the properties in-situ.

The following section describes each of the sites and a series of analysis maps are provided below which consider heritage, use, massing and movement on the existing sites.

The current King's High School Site and surrounding areas are a combination of 2 to 3 storey buildings as can be seen in Figure 17, which provides an indication of the existing massing.



Figure 17: Existing Massing



Figure 19: Heritage Assets



Figure 18: Existing vehicle and pedestrian movements

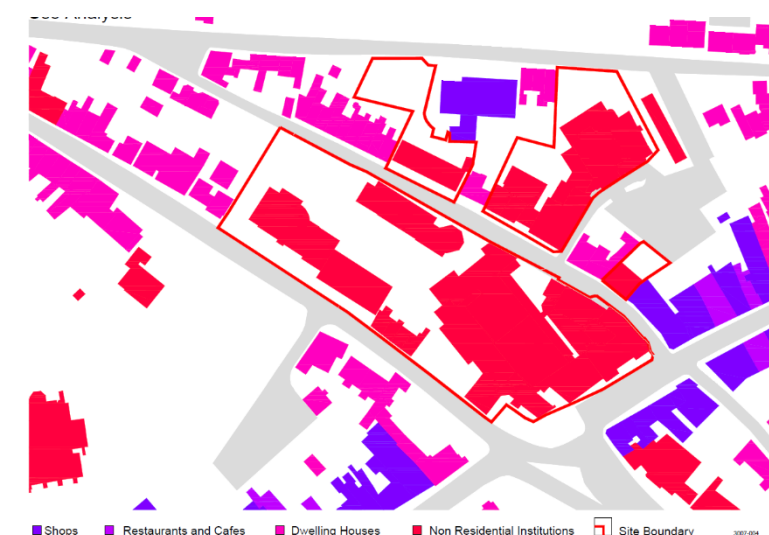


Figure 20: Existing land uses

4.5.1 Site 1

Landor House

Grade II* listed, the building's interior and exterior must be maintained, albeit modern sub-divisions could be removed with approval. Appropriate uses are likely to be those that retain the integrity of the internal spaces, residential conversion is realistic although sub-division to form apartments might lead to conflict with the conservation authorities. Alternatively as part of a wider scheme, the existing house could be part of a commercial use such as a hotel. To create rear gardens for a residential property will require demolitions, which will require listed building consent.

Landor Cottages (Nos.1 and 3 Smith Street)

As with Landor House the external and internal historic features will need to be maintained although modern additions could be stripped away to create opportunities to improve the layout. Residential uses would be compatible with the building fabric although the creation of rear gardens would require careful analysis of the rear extensions to understand which elements could be removed.

The Red House

Although not listed the house adds to the conservation area and is part of the streetscape. Its internal layout is largely unaltered from its earlier use as a dwelling and combined with garden to the north could quite feasibly be a single dwelling once again.

Nos.19-25 The Butts

Listed terrace houses with rear extensions of various ages, these lend themselves to re-use as individual dwellings. WDC have stated that they would resist significant further extension to the rear thereby retaining the existing 'back yard' spaces. These are not proposed for redevelopment as part of this brief and are assumed to remain as presented.

Main Hall and Adjacent Teaching Rooms

This overall description encompasses the complex combination of spaces to the rear of Landor Cottages. The building has evolved over the last 200 years including additions and alterations made in the last ten years to enlarge the main hall. It potentially represents the most challenging part of the estate to understand from a development perspective as all areas are deemed protected by proximity to the listed Landor House and Cottages.

It consists of areas which will require retention such as the remaining parts of the hall space and those which can be stripped away. The depth of the plan will make residential conversion challenging due to the need for daylight and ventilation, however a detailed study of this building may identify opportunities to remove modern elements and create courtyards and atria which can provide the environment to create a residential or quasi-residential scheme.

Dining Hall

This space is again deemed to receive the same level of protection as the listed buildings which are adjacent. However, the recent refurbishment demonstrates that a sensitive scheme can be successfully incorporated into the building fabric. A scheme which uses the space as a single volume such as a restaurant or small office use could be foreseen within this area, as could a residential open-plan use.

Gymnasium

A brief review suggests that conversion into any other use (residential or commercial) would be economically unattractive due to the existing building's fabric and services. WDC have confirmed that the gymnasium could be demolished to create a development site which would contribute to the overall scheme.

Sixth Form Centre

Constructed recently the interior and exterior of the building is of high quality and therefore conversion into a commercial or residential use is possible. The challenges of conversion will be the existing structure and the location of the stair core. WDC have confirmed that although they would support conversion they would not rule out a high quality replacement building.

Playground

This is the principle open space in the town centre estate however the constraints of potential existing archaeology, site levels and the adjacent boundary wall with Chapel Street will make its development the source of detailed engagement with WDC. This space is also overlooked by the residential properties on Chapel Street and Mitchell House. However, there is a strong urban design case to use this area to create a denser more coherent street frontage to the adjacent narrow street.

Modern Languages and Octagon

Constructed recently the interior and exterior of the building is of high quality and therefore conversion into a commercial or residential use is possible. The challenges of conversion will be the existing structure and the location of the stair cores. WDC have confirmed that although they would support conversion they would not rule out a high quality replacement building.

Site 2

Priory Building

A concrete framed, 20th century building the Priory building makes a poor contribution to the streetscape and WDC have confirmed that its replacement would be encouraged. However, conversion of this type of structure could also be considered, although the roof, windows and walls would need to be substantially upgraded to meet modern environmental expectations. Examples of successful office conversion (the original use) into residential uses are evident in Warwick and Leamington Spa.

4.5.2 Site 3

Creative Arts (former Borough School)

The former Borough school was substantially extended and converted recently, WDC have stated that in its current state it makes a positive contribution to the conservation area and therefore would resist its substantial redevelopment. A detailed review would need to take place, however conversion into residential accommodation is a possible use, along with bespoke uses which might use the open volumes within the existing building.

Nos.10-14 Chapel Street

As listed buildings the exterior and interiors would need to be retained, however the 20th century rear additions could be removed and replaced by a more sensitive extension which would enhance the accommodation. The most sensitive use would be adaption into three townhouse with rear gardens, however other uses which retain the existing rooms could be considered for example a small hotel or small office units.

4.5.3 Site 4

No.2 Chapel Street

Further research needs to be undertaken to demonstrate that the building is not evidence of early work by a well-known modern architect, however it is considered to make an insensitive contribution to the street scene and therefore could be replaced or converted. Residential, small scale office uses or potentially a retail use at ground floor could be considered given its proximity to Smith Street.

5 Development Opportunities

Through dialogue with Warwick District Council initial development opportunities for the King's High site have been developed. The site has a number of constraints which have been specifically considered and will have an impact on the redevelopment.

The development potential has been formed by Robothams Architects based on:

- Visits to site
- Meetings with Warwick District Council
- Meetings with English Heritage
- Meetings with Warwickshire County Council Archaeology
- Meetings with Warwickshire County Council Highways
- Research using the English Heritage National Heritage List for England
- Analysis of the historic maps
- Engagement with Arup's archaeology team to identify historical mapping
- Experience of similar projects in Warwick and Leamington town centres.

Although WDC will be seeking a comprehensive approach to the redevelopment of the individual components that make up the King's High town centre estate, the urban grain of Warwick would suggest a finer textured approach which is woven into the existing building fabric and re-uses buildings where appropriate.

Given the varied character of the properties it is reasonable to consider the buildings and sites individually and as well as in the whole.

Typically, a number of the heritage buildings offer opportunities for conversion to low density residential developments whilst the more recent additions and new buildings offer opportunities for mixed uses such as commercial offices, retirement apartments, boutique hotel, etc.

With this approach in mind the following section outlines the potential opportunities for development of the King's High School site.

5.1 Concept

The design of the master plan proposals takes into account the fabric of the existing buildings across the four sites, the context created by neighbouring buildings and the topography of this part of the town centre. It seeks to develop a finely textured redevelopment of the sites, which knits with the intimate scale of the existing context.

The master plan proposals are not prescriptive in terms of the detailed design of the redevelopment scheme, apart from seeking a high quality design, which respects the context and meets the needs of the local community.

5.2 Layout

Of the four sites the most significant opportunity exists on the main school site (No. 1) between The Butts and Chapel Street. The listed status buildings of Landor House and the adjacent houses which face Smith Street, would be retained and enhanced with existing modern additions removed to return the buildings to a close resemblance of their original layouts.

At the rear later Victorian additions would also be retained and refurbished to create characterful accommodation that complements the adjacent listed properties. The removal of late 20th century extension would also create areas of landscaping and introduce more daylight into the deep plan buildings.

Within the north western part of the site a more invasive approach would create parking areas integrated with landscaping behind new additions to the street frontages to the Butts and Chapel Street. New groups of terrace houses would reflect the rhythm of adjacent listed properties reinforcing the urban grain and defining the defensible boundary of the site.

Access to the main site would be in the form of a new ingress point close to the end of the existing terrace, No.19 – No.25 The Butts, and an exit point adjacent to the north western boundary. Both access points would be controlled to provide secure parking partly concealed behind the frontages.

The Priory building site on chapel Street (site 2) also offers an opportunity to develop a scheme, which could integrate more successfully into the street scene. By removing the

existing 20th Century flat roofed building and replacing it with terrace houses with gardens and parking to the rear (accessed from Priory Road).

The Old Borough School site (site 3), combined with listed No.10 – 14 Chapel Street makes a positive contribution to the conservation area and would be retained and refurbished to accommodate a range of potential uses. Space to the rear accessed from Priory Road would be reused for parking.

No.2 Chapel Street (site 4) would be removed and replaced with a building with more reference to its context, facing the road with parking at the rear as existing.

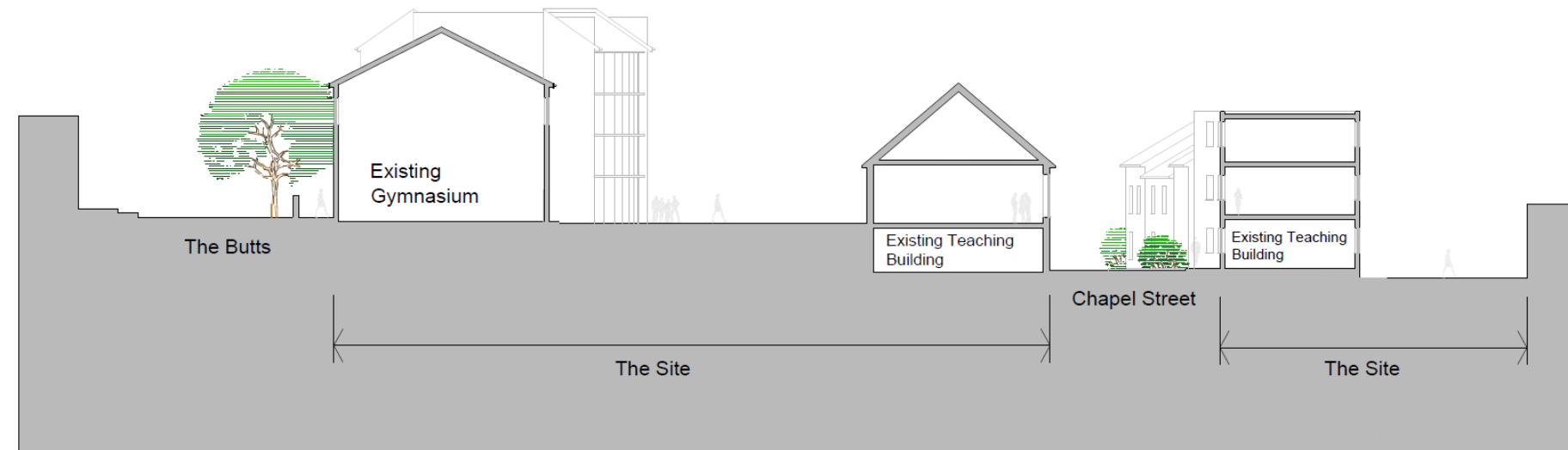


Figure 21: Residential Development Layout

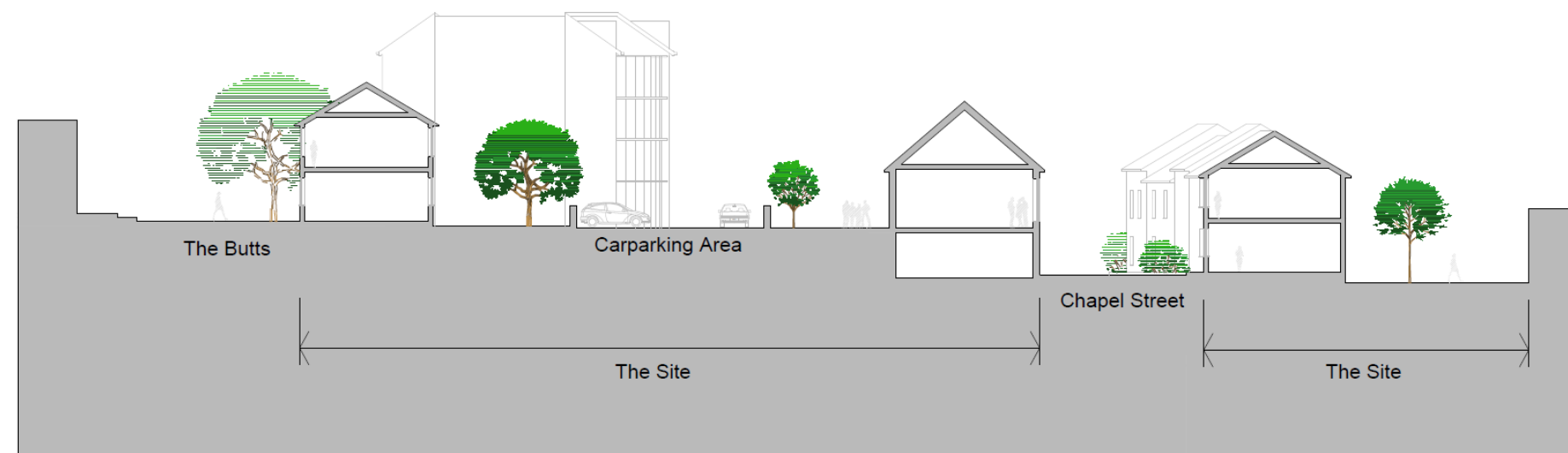




Figure 23: Alternative Residential Development Layout



Existing Section A-A



Proposed Section A-A

Figure 24: Section through the site

5.3 Massing and Scale

The existing buildings range from one to four storeys, and the redevelopment proposals would reflect this existing massing to create a varied roof-scape. The close proximity of neighbouring residential properties would constrain the development to respect the amenity of the residents although creative solutions including the use of level changes would allow the scheme to provide the intimate scale of the existing street patterns.

Initial studies suggest that the site could accommodate up to 70-80 residential dwellings ranging in size between 1 bed apartments and 4/5 bed townhouses. Density would be subject to agreement with the planning authority appropriate levels parking for the scheme, however there is assumed to be a degree of flexibility given the sustainable location of the site including proximity to the town's railway station and bus stops. Other uses would require consideration given to parking and servicing which will dictate the scale and type of activities suitable for the site.

5.4 Materials

As stated this document does not seek to limit the range of creative, high-quality design responses that might come forward to redevelop the sites. However developers would be encouraged to consider the local palette of materials, including red brickwork and render, tiled or slate roofs and give careful consideration of proportions and fenestration.

More importantly the choice of materials and elevational composition should create buildings with a scale that harmonises with adjacent buildings.

5.5 Parking and Access

Development opportunities whether residential and/or mixed use will need to be served by appropriate and suitable accesses. As described previously, the main site is historic in nature and is situated within a town centre location. Whilst the historic fabric presents an opportunity in many regards, in terms of site access it creates a challenge. In addition to the historic fabric, level changes across the site will also need to be assessed prior to establishing suitable access points which meet modern standards.

There is scope to introduce new and improved access points both into and out of the site. Potential access/egress across the main site was discussed with Warwickshire County Council as the Highway Authority. It was agreed that there is potential to construct new access points on the perimeter of the site subject to appropriate engineering works. Based on typical highway standards a visibility splay of 2.4m x 40m should be provided at any new access, although the visibility splay requirements could potentially be reduced at the planning application stage in discussion with the Highway Authority.

Warwickshire County Council is considering making The Butts one-way in a westbound direction (together with footway widening) as part of the Warwick Town Centre improvements. This change would significantly reduce the impact of the visibility splay requirements and hence separated access and egress points onto The Butts is probably the most suitable solution if The Butts becomes one-way. An outbound site egress onto The Butts towards the north-western corner of the site is suitable with an inbound access between No.25 The Butts and the side garden of The Red House, although both will be subject to ongoing discussion at the planning application stage with the council.

Any access point at the west end of the site from The Butts will need ramps into the site in order to accommodate the changes in height; the extent of these ramps will vary depending on cut and fill within the site and the gradient of the ramps.

Access into/out of the site from Chapel Street has some potential but is unlikely to be achieved given the more extreme level difference between Chapel Street and the current ground level within the site. It is likely that a 1 in 10 ramp would be necessary in addition to a reduction in ground level. Although this ground level reduction could potentially take the form of terracing as the site falls from west to east, which would minimise the extent of the ramp.

The three sites to the north of the main development site are served by suitable existing access arrangements onto Priory Road which could be maintained.

5.6 Local Socio-Economic Context

Development of the site will provide both direct and indirect economic benefits.

The development site is currently in employment and residential use. The King's High School currently employs circa 170 people. These jobs will be relocated to the Myton Road Campus subject to planning permission being granted. Development of the site has the potential to create additional employment opportunities within the sustainable town centre location. These opportunities are likely to attract small businesses requiring starter units. In addition, construction of the development sites will provide the opportunity to employ local contractors.

Alternatively residential development will support local businesses including shops and services.

6 Planning Policy

Planning ensures that the right development happens at the right place at the right time, benefiting communities and the economy. It plays a critical role in identifying what development is needed and where, what areas need to be protected or enhanced and in assessing whether the proposed development is suitable.

The key policy and guidance at both the National and Local Level relevant to the development site is therefore set out below.

6.1 National Policy and Guidance

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) sets out the planning policies for England, and how they should be applied. The NPPF is an important material consideration in the determination of any planning application.

6.2 Local Policy

The Development Plan that sets out the policies relevant to the development of the site is the Warwick District Local Plan 1996-2011 (adopted September 2007). Warwick District Council (WDC) is currently preparing a new Local Plan which if adopted will replace the existing plan. Whilst not yet adopted, the emerging Local Plan (Publication Draft, February 2015 and Proposed Modifications, February 2016) is due to be re-examined in public and will therefore carry an amount of weight in the determination of any planning application.

Other guidance and standards relevant to the development site are set out within the:

- Sustainable Buildings Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)
- Affordable Housing SPD
- Open Space SPD
- Vehicle Parking Standards SPD

6.2.1 Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

The NPPF (paragraph 6) clarifies that *“the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development”* and that a presumption in favour of sustainable development (paragraph 14) *“should be seen as a golden thread running through both plan-making and decision taking”*.

In alignment with the NPPF, a general presumption in favour of sustainable development is set out at Policy DS5 of the emerging Local Plan.

6.2.2 Town Centres

The proposed development site is located within Warwick town centre and as such town centre policies are relevant in considering future development of the site.

The NPPF (paragraph 23) recognises town centres as the heart of their communities and states that Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) should pursue policies to support their viability and vitality. Whilst neither the adopted Local Plan nor the emerging Local Plan allocate the development site for a specific land use, both align with the NPPF’s objective to enhance town centres.

Key policies of the adopted Local Plan relevant to development within the town centre are: Policy TCP1 (Protecting and Enhancing the Town Centres) and Policy TCP9 (Protecting Employment Land and Buildings).

The key policy within the emerging Local Plan relevant to development in the town centre is Policy TC1 (Protecting and Enhancing the Town Centres). Paragraph 3.51 and 3.52 of the emerging Local Plan support Policy TC1 and state that:

“It is important that the town centres remain an appropriate location for the broad range of main town centre uses...including retail, leisure and entertainment facilities, appropriate sport and recreation uses, offices, arts, culture and tourism and housing.

It is important that opportunities for development improve the town centres, adding to their vitality and vibrancy, whilst retaining or enhancing important characteristics. These important characteristics include the residential areas...”

Both national and local policy therefore support the delivery of a range of land uses at the development site subject to their compatibility.

6.2.3 Heritage & Conservation

The current school site lies within Warwick’s Town Centre Conservation Area and includes several listed buildings.

Paragraphs 131 and 132 of the NPPF are relevant in considering future uses of the site, with regards to potential impacts on heritage assets within the site and the surrounding locality.

Paragraph 131 states that “in determining planning applications, local planning authorities should take account of:

- The desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;
- The positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and
- The desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness.”

Paragraph 132 states that “When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation. The more important the asset the greater the weight should be...”.

Key policies of the adopted Local Plan relevant to heritage and conservation are Policy DAP4 (Protection of Listed Buildings), DAP5 (Changes of Use of Listed Buildings) and DAP8 (Protection of Conservation Areas).

Key policies of the emerging Local Plan relevant to heritage and conservation are Policy HE1 (Protection of Statutory Heritage Assets), HE2 (Conservation Areas) and HE6 (Archaeology).

There is an opportunity to work with the existing historic fabric on-site which should be seen as a positive asset, in order to develop a sensitive and sympathetic scheme which complies with the above listed policy requirements and continues to preserve and enhance the setting of the Conservation Area.

6.2.4 Affordable Housing

In considering residential development for the development site, affordable housing contributions will need to be a consideration.

Paragraph 47 of the NPPF states that in order to boost housing supply LPAs should “use their evidence base to ensure that their Local Plan meets the full, objectively assessed needs for market and affordable housing in the housing market area.”

Table 1: Sets out the affordable housing standards outlined in the adopted and the emerging Local Plan.

WDC Adopted Local Plan
Development of 10 or more dwellings, or sites of more than 0.25 hectares (irrespective of the number of dwellings) will not be permitted for residential development unless provision is made for a minimum of 40% affordable housing.
WDC Emerging Local Plan
Residential developments on sites of 11 or more dwellings, where the combined gross floor space is more than 1,000 sqm will not be permitted unless provision is made for a minimum of 40% affordable housing to meet local needs.

Table 1: Affordable Housing Standards

The Council’s SPD on Affordable Housing offers further guidance on when affordable housing will be sought, and the type and quantity required.

6.2.5 Transport, Access & Parking

Paragraph 32 of the NPPF is relevant in considering access and highway impact. It states that:

“All developments that generate significant amounts of movement should be supported by a Transport Statement or Transport Assessment. Plans and decisions should take account of whether:

- The opportunities for sustainable transport modes have been taken up depending on the nature and location of the site, to reduce the need for major transport infrastructure
- Safe and suitable access to the site can be achieved for all people
- Improvements can be undertaken within the transport network that cost effectively limit the significant impacts of the development. Development should only be prevented or refused on transport grounds where the residual cumulative impacts of development are severe.”

Key policies of the adopted Local Plan relevant to traffic, access and car parking are Policy DP6 (Access), DP7 (Traffic Generation) and DP8 (Parking).

Key policies of the emerging Local Plan of relevance are Policy TR1 (Access and Choice), TR2 (Traffic Generation), TR3 (Transport Improvements) and TR4 (Parking).

Applying modern highway standards to a historic town centre site is a challenge. However, re-development of the site beyond the school use is essential for the town centre and therefore access arrangements including on-site parking have been both explored and discussed with Warwick District Council. There are opportunities both in and around the site to create suitable access/egress arrangements, which are explored when developing potential redevelopment plans.

Replacing a town centre school site with a another land use, is considered to be a positive benefit for the town centre, in terms of future vehicle movements associated with the locality as an overall reduction in vehicle movements will be almost certain.

6.2.6 Design

The NPPF places emphasis on good design as a means of delivering sustainable development, this will be an important consideration for the development of the KHS site. Paragraphs 56 and 57 of the NPPF state that:

“The Government attaches great importance to the design of the built environment. Good design is a key aspect of sustainable development, is indivisible from good planning, and should contribute positively to making places better for people.”

“It is important to plan positively for the achievement of high quality and inclusive design for all development, including individual buildings, public and private spaces and wider area development schemes.”

Policy DP1 (Layout and Design) of the adopted Local Plan states that “development will only be permitted which positively contributes to the character and quality of its environment through good layout and design.”

The principles of Policy BE1 of the adopted Local Plan are echoed within Policy BE1 (Layout and Design) of the emerging Local Plan.

Given the sensitivity of the locality, quality design, which is both inclusive and sympathetic to the surroundings will ensure that any future scheme or proposal will be supported by relevant key stakeholders.

6.2.7 Protecting Amenity

Protecting local amenity of adjoining and nearby residents and/or other uses will be an important consideration in the development of the KHS site.

Policy DP2 (Amenity) of the adopted Local Plan states that “development will not be permitted which has an unacceptable adverse impact on the amenity of nearby uses and residents and/or does not provide acceptable standards of amenity for future users/occupiers of the development.”

The principles of Policy DP2 of the adopted Local Plan are continued within Policy BE3 (Amenity) of the emerging Local Plan.

Future land uses will need to be understanding of the requirement to protect local amenity.