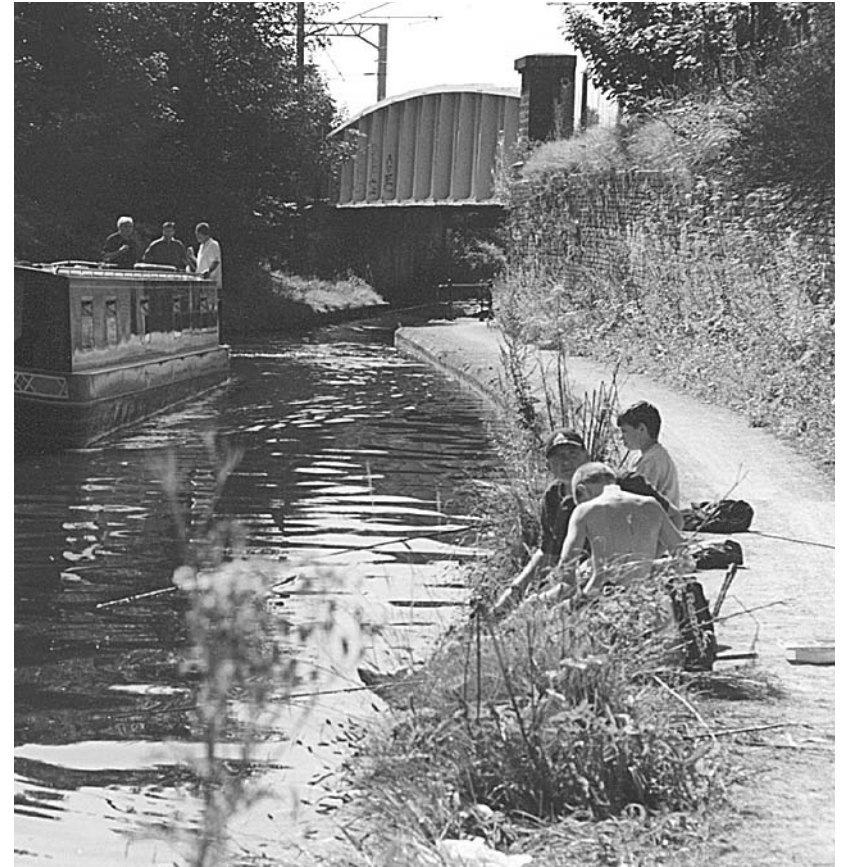


MILLPOOL HILL MARINA

Development Brief

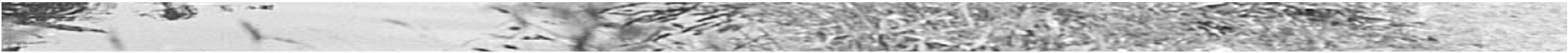
February 2005



Supplementary Planning Guidance



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 This development brief has been prepared by the City Council to provide planning and urban design guidance for the development of a marina and ancillary uses at land at Millpool Hill and adjacent to the Stratford-Upon-Avon Canal in Brandwood.



Aerial view of of the Development Brief area

2.0 Status of the brief

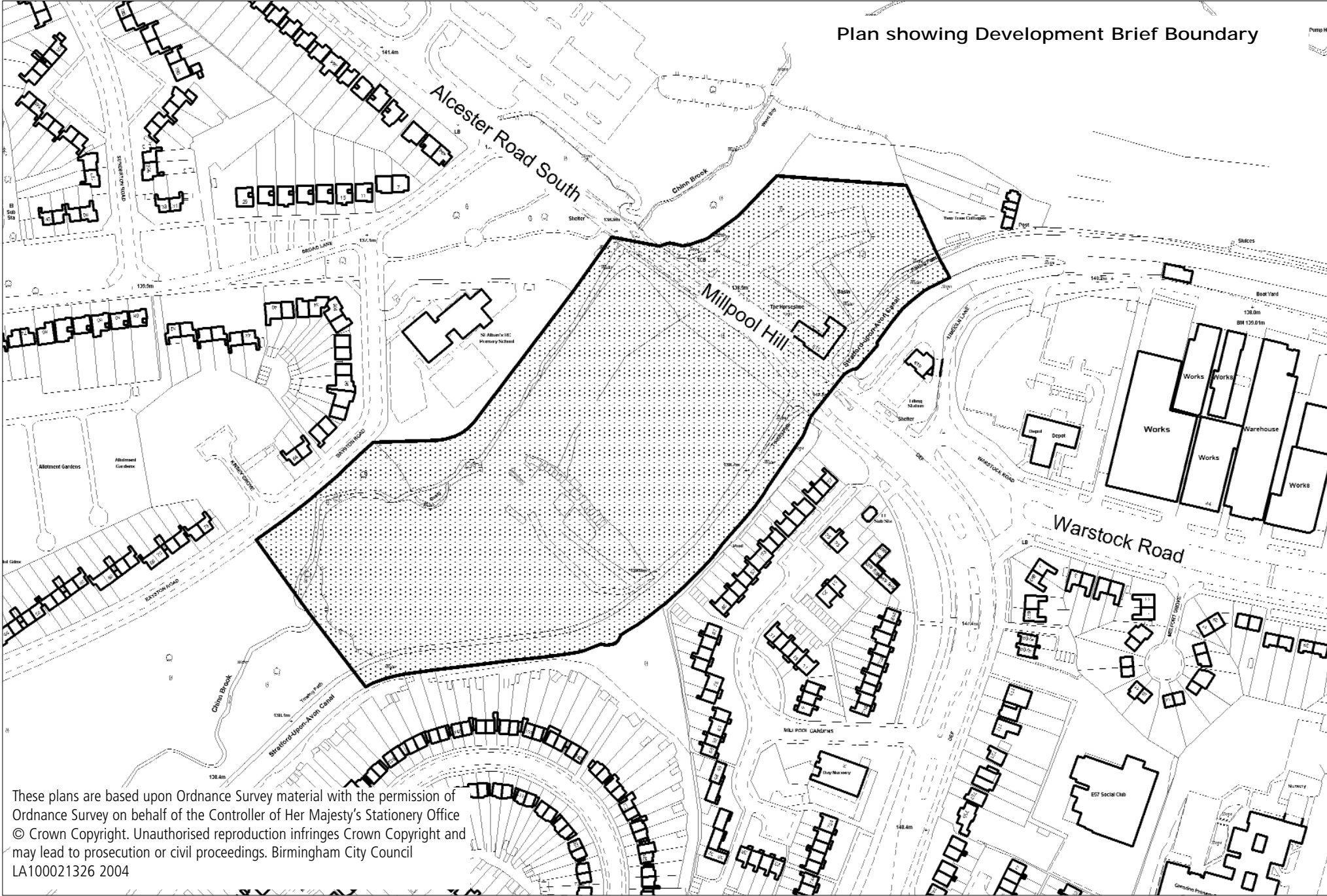
2.1 The brief has been approved by Birmingham City Council (February 2005) as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Birmingham Plan and will be used when marketing and determining planning applications relating to the site. This follows public consultation on a draft published in March 2004

3.0 Purpose of the brief

3.1 The purpose of the brief is to provide a detailed planning framework for the future development of the land including advice on:

- Appropriate land uses
- Access and servicing arrangements
- Built form, layout and design
- Landscape, archaeology and nature conservation
- Relationship of the development with adjacent uses

Plan showing Development Brief Boundary



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4.0 Planning policy framework

National Planning Policy Guidance

4.1 This brief is consistent with guidance set out in PPG17 Planning for Open Space, Sports and Recreation (2002). In regard to sports and recreation requiring natural features and water, PPG17 states that "local authorities should recognise their actual and potential recreational value, possibly to more than the local population." (Paragraph 31). Facilities should be planned carefully and the visual amenity, heritage and nature conservation value of water resources should be protected.

4.2 PPG17 states that open space land should not be built on unless an assessment has been undertaken which shows it to be surplus to requirements. The brief area includes open space that is not formalised and under-used. In relation to this, PPG17 states that local authorities should seek opportunities to improve the existing facilities. It states that, equally, development may provide the opportunity to exchange the use of one site for another to substitute for any loss of open space through planning obligations or conditions.

4.3 The brief also takes account of relevant Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) Note 1 "General Policy and Principles"; Draft PPS 1 "Creating Sustainable Communities"; PPG9 "Nature Conservation"; PPG13 "Transport"; PPG21 "Tourism" and PPG16 "Archaeology and Planning".

Local Planning Policy

4.4 The brief has been prepared in accordance with the adopted Birmingham Plan 1993 and the Birmingham Plan Alterations Deposit Draft 2001, which both make specific reference to the location. Policy E116 states "At Millpool Hill, adjacent to the Stratford-Upon-Avon Canal, and near to Cocks Moors Woods Leisure Centre, the development of a marina or other water based tourist facility will be encouraged".

4.5 Canals offer great potential for leisure, tourism and recreation, as well as transport. The Birmingham Plan encourages proposals that seek to promote these activities. The City Council is also currently preparing a City-wide Canals Action Plan, which has a likely plan period to 2007. In this document, Millpool Hill is identified as a development opportunity for a marina.

4.6 There are two Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) within the study area: (a) Chinn Brook (land off Chinn Brook) and (b) the Stratford-Upon-Avon Canal. The Canal is also designated as a "Key Wildlife Corridor" in the Nature Conservation Strategy for Birmingham (1996). See Appendix A.

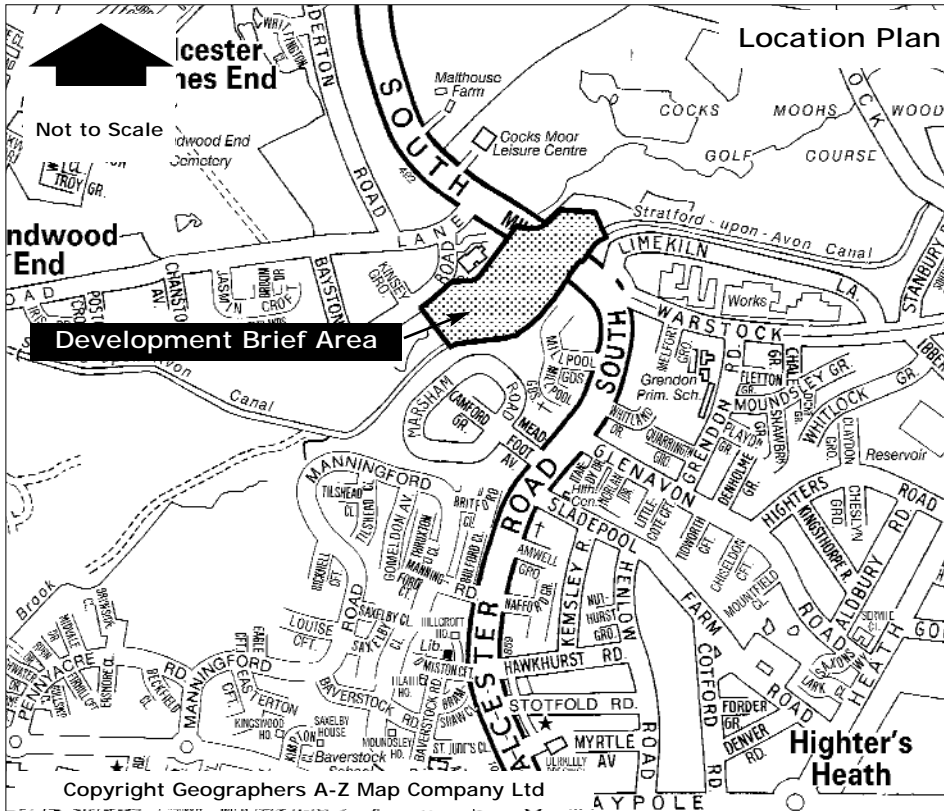
4.7 Canals are an important part of the City's network of open space and nature conservation. The aquatic habitat of the canal and associated habitats of the canal towpath form part of an interlinked network of open space through the City.

4.8 To ensure high quality development all new canalside developments should be designed in accordance with the guidelines set out in "Canalside Developments in Birmingham - Design Guidelines Draft" 1996; "Places for All" 2001 and Development Control Guidelines on "Houseboat Moorings" (adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Birmingham Plan).

4.9 Part of the site is affected by a road improvement line on Alcester Road South (A435) for public transport improvements to the Number 50 Bus Showcase route. (West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2000). See Appendix A.

5.0 Site Location and Description

5.1 The site is located in Brandwood and Billesley Wards to the south of the city and fronts onto the A435 Alcester Road South. The land west of Millpool Hill is owned by the City Council and recognised as a SLINC in parts. The Chinn Brook lies to the north of the site and is also recognised as a "Wildlife Corridor" in Birmingham's Nature Conservation Strategy.



5.2 There are two archaeological sites within the brief area (See Appendix A):

- Bayston Road Burnt Mound
- Limekilns near Horseshoe Pub

5.3 The land adjacent to Millpool Hill is public open space and included in the figures of public open space for Brandwood Ward. The site falls within the Birmingham Plan and PPG17 definition of public open space. However, it is not formalised, difficult to access and unused by the general public.

5.4 The Horseshoe pub and land surrounding is privately owned. It occupies a key location on the Alcester Road South and the Stratford-upon-Avon Canal, but it's full potential has not yet been realised. A small basin extends from the canal next to the pub garden. This basin is currently unused and enclosed by a tall fence. There is potential for much better utilisation of this resource. There is scope to improve the relationship of the pub to the canal.

5.5 There are a number of mature trees surrounding the pub and the basin which are protected by Tree Preservation Orders. Part of the land is also designated as SLINC.

5.6 The development brief area is divided by Alcester Road South, which runs north-south and over the canal.

5.7 The towpath adjacent to the pub and under the road bridge has been recently regraded and resurfaced.



The Horseshoe PH - Alcester Road South

6.0 Character of the area

6.1 The neighbouring uses of the site include St. Alban's (RC) Primary School, which lies north of the Chinn Brook and residential dwellings in Bayston Road and Kinsey Grove. Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the majority of the defective houses in Sunderton Road, Bayston Road and Kinsey Grove, and the redevelopment of 248 new dwellings.

6.2 Within Bayston Road and Kinsey Grove the scheme includes a mixture of bungalows and 2 and 3 storey houses. The proposal will have a positive impact on the environment, both aesthetically and in sustainability terms. Development reflects the principles set out in the "Brandwood End Smiths: Design Guidance."

6.3 The high quality parkland of Cocks Moors Woods Leisure Centre and Golf Course lies north and north-east to the Horseshoe Pub. On the south of the Stratford Canal there are various industrial uses and a boat yard at Limekiln Lane. These properties back onto the canal creating the impression of a "backyard" element in this location. However, the Lyons boat yard and private informal moorings provides a colourful and interesting feature along the canal corridor. The Lyons boat yard is an important use and only one of two left in the City. The boatyard has served the area for many years, and the City Council would wish to see this use continue.

6.4 The Chinn Brook, which runs north of the site, is a naturally flowing watercourse supporting aquatic flora and fauna. Mature trees and shrubs line the Brook and provide natural screening from the school. Both the Brook and canal are recognised as SLINC and wildlife corridor due to their high ecological value, aquatic supporting habitats and associated canalside vegetation. An ecological appraisal would be required. Section 11 provides further information on this issue.

6.5 The Stratford-Upon-Avon Canal stretches from Kings Norton to Stratford-Upon-Avon. It is a major asset in terms of a

recreational and wildlife link between the built up area of Birmingham and the countryside of Warwickshire. It is also a popular boating route well used for informal recreation, but with potential for being of even greater value. The canal provides an attractive corridor for the leisure user, whether travelling by boat, or by foot on the towpath. The Stratford-Upon-Avon Canal, along with the Grand Union and Worcester and Birmingham Canals forms an important leisure route in and to the South of Birmingham and provides links to the wider canal network.



Lyons Boat Yard - rear of Limekiln Lane



Stratford-Upon-Avon Canal at Millpool Hill

6.6 The mature vegetation that lines much of the canal provides interest as well as conservation value. The canal is used for a variety of boating activities, with permanent moorings at five locations and use of the waterway by hire boats based elsewhere. Residential properties along the canal clearly benefit from their canal side location.

6.7 Overall, the surrounding area of the site is characterised by an intrinsic semi-rural quality rich in nature conservation and amenity value.

7.0 Vision for the Future

7.1 Millpool Hill is the only location identified as having potential for a marina development or other water based tourist facility in the Birmingham Plan. It presents a unique opportunity to meet the high demand for moorings in south Birmingham, thus further enhancing the canal corridor as a visitor attraction.

7.2 It is envisaged that a high quality marina for residential, short and long stay moorings in harmony with its intrinsic semi-rural setting and supported by ancillary boating facilities and other water-based tourist and leisure facilities, is appropriate for this site. There is potential to extend the Horseshoe Pub, bring the existing basin back into positive use and make better use of the under-utilised land surrounding the building. However, it is envisaged that the marina and ancillary facilities would serve local boating needs rather than being a major road traffic generator in their own right.

7.3 To the north of the pub lies Cocks Moors Woods Leisure Centre and Golf Course. Improved pedestrian linkages from the leisure centre to the canal, marina site and any new water based tourist/ leisure facilities will create an attractive hub for tourists, boaters, and equally benefit local residents.

7.4 The enhancement of the environment must be central to any proposals submitted for this site. Opportunities for partnership working with British Waterways, the local community, interested groups and existing businesses must be explored.

8.0 Land uses

8.1 Appropriate uses:

- A marina for residential, short and long stay boaters with a total of up to 70/80 moorings
- Small scale water based tourist facilities e.g. canoeing; boating; angling; water sport shop; boat shop; chandlery; pump-out and toilet facilities; café; restaurant; visitor facility. Such uses should be ancillary to the principle use of a marina and appropriate in size to a marina.
- Repair and maintenance facilities are already provided locally at the Lyons Boat Yard. Working links with this facility should be explored.

9.0 Planning and Urban Design Principles

9.1 Any development must enhance the existing character of the canal environment. Any proposal must follow the planning and design principles set out below.

- The proposal must provide safe and secure moorings for short and long stay boaters with full ancillary boating facilities.
- The proposal must provide a percentage of residential moorings with supporting facilities including mooring points with water, electric and telephone facilities where appropriate.
- There would be potential for on-line moorings that could use the facilities of the Marina.
- The marina/ moorings should be located on land to the west side of Millpool Hill.
- Any other uses must be ancillary/ associated to the primary use of the marina (See 8.1)
- Any new buildings must be designed to a high quality. New development adjacent to the canal should relate to it by fronting onto or overlooking the canal corridor.
- The scale and massing of any new buildings should respect the context and character of the area and be no more than 2/3 storeys. Development must address amenities of nearby housing and the primary school - particularly with respect to noise and light. The City Council would expect that potential marina operators, through good management, maintain good relations with adjoining residents. This should extend to encouraging proper control of dogs within and around the site.
- Residential moorings should comply with Birmingham City Council's Development Control Guidelines for Residential Moorings.
- The pub's relationship with the canal and existing basin should be enhanced by allowing direct access from the towpath to the pub garden, cleaning out the basin and bringing it back into use.
- Enhance the under-utilised land surrounding the Horseshoe Pub.
- Proposals should improve pedestrian linkages from the marina site to Cocks Moors Woods Leisure Centre.
- Continuous pedestrian/ cycle movement along the towpath should not be impeded by the development. Any overbridge across the entrance channel to a marina should be appropriate in design to its setting and surroundings.
- Provide appropriate signage and interpretation/educational information.
- Towpath access to the site should be retained and improved where possible.
- The proposal must address the area's important nature conservation and wildlife attributes.
- An ecological appraisal is required to include a fresh survey of species. Where habitat is lost/ adversely affected by development, the proposal must include appropriate mitigation measures.
- Any development must minimise its impact on the Bayston Road Burnt Mound and Limekilns near the Horseshoe Pub. Any development must be sited at least 10 metres away from the Chinn Brook in order to allow satisfactory retention of trees, shrubs and wildlife habitats.
- Proposals should promote an integrated approach across the whole development brief area.
- Create links to and enhancement of adjacent public open space.
- Full consideration of safety and security issues.
- Further consultation should take place with the Environmental Agency regarding potential flooding issues.

10.0 Road & Pedestrian Access and Servicing

10.1 The site is located adjacent to the A435 Alcester Road South, which is a part of the City Councils Strategic Highway Network (SHN). There is existing good public transport accessibility and the A435 has been identified as a bus showcase route of which several sections have been implemented in recent years. The section south of the canal bridge was completed in 1999 and the detailed design for the continuation of the existing dual carriageway is in hand. Highway Improvement Lines affect the frontage of the site between the canal bridge and the junction with Broad Lane (See Appendix A).

10.2 It is anticipated that the level of traffic to and servicing the marina proposal will not be high, although there will be a requirement to demonstrate this.

10.3 Two access options to the site have been explored:

- Alcester Road South
- Broad Lane/ Bayston Road

Issues and constraints are associated with both of these options and the developer will need to demonstrate a suitable solution.

10.4 In transport terms, it is desirable to limit direct access to the SHN (Alcester Road South) from individual developments. The standard of the access would have to be appropriate to a strategic network road. There would be difficulty in meeting visibility requirements with the site being close to the canal bridge and in a bend in the Alcester Road South. Whilst left in, left out movements could possibly be accommodated, measures would have to be taken to prevent right turning vehicles entering or leaving the access. Any scheme must not jeopardise the Bus Showcase route.

10.5 Access using the present junction with Broad Lane and Bayston Road is possible, but would require bridging over the Chinn Brook. Care must be taken to minimise impact on Bayston Road Burnt Mound Archaeological Site, wildlife habitat along the Chinn Brook and residents in Bayston Road and Kinsey Grove. Some improvement to the junction of Broad Lane and Alcester Road South, including pedestrian/ cyclist facilities may be required. In summary, potential access arrangements should address all safety, environmental and archaeological issues.

10.6 Provision of safe pedestrian and cycle links between the site and nearby facilities such as the canal towpath will be essential. There would be an opportunity to provide a (restricted) pedestrian access from the marina direct to Alcester Road South.

10.7 All parking provision related to the development should be on site and in accordance with PPG13. The maximum number of spaces will depend upon the mix of residential and casual berths, allowance for visitors, servicing requirements etc.

10.8 A transport assessment and safety audit for the proposals will be required. This must include demonstration of junction safety and particularly in the vicinity of St. Albans primary school.

10.9 The access and other needs of the emergency services must be accommodated.

11.0 Ecology

11.1 An ecological appraisal should be undertaken as part of any planning application or proposal due to the SLINC status of the site. This should also address the likelihood of Water Vole presence on the site. Since 1998 the Water Vole has received legal protection through its inclusion on Schedule 5 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. A fresh field survey should be carried out to check for the presence of Water Voles. All reasonable steps should be taken to minimise impact on water vole habitats. Appropriate mitigation measures should be included in the ecological appraisal.

12.0 Landscaping

12.1 Existing natural landscaping should be protected and managed wherever possible. In addition, a high standard of new landscaping is required to integrate the development into its high quality setting, and contribute to the open space/wildlife corridor.

12.2 Good hard and soft landscaping should be used to form circulation areas and to link the various parts of the development and linear open spaces. A comprehensive strategy for landscape and nature conservation would be required.

12.3 There will be opportunities to introduce habitat creation and native plants as part of the soft edged design where this can also form an appropriate solution to bank erosion.

13.0 Detailed design

13.1 Any new development should respect the character of the area and minimise impact on the SLINC and TPOs. There is no distinguishing architectural vernacular in the area, although the housing redevelopment at Bayston Road/Sunderton Road has set new standards of local design. Buildings should relate to the canal and, where possible, form a frontage onto the water. Original high quality design and the use of high quality materials will be favoured. Any new building should be no more than 2/3 storeys high. The siting of buildings must protect the linear open space network and maintain the predominantly open character of the site. Changes of levels across the site must be satisfactorily addressed.

13.2 "Places for All" 2001 and "Canalside Developments in Birmingham - Design Guidelines" Draft 1996 provide additional advice. It is also advisable to consult British Waterways at an early stage.

14.0 Archaeology

14.1 Part of the site, along the Chinn Brook and highlighted in Appendix A is a site of archaeological interest known as Bayston Road Burnt Mound. Burnt mounds date to between 1500 and 1000BC and are thought to be the debris from cooking or bathing using heated stones. Excavation of these sites often reveals hearths, pits and remains of timber buildings. There may be more burnt mounds along the brook. Any development near the brook could, therefore, damage archaeological remains.

14.2 Before any development commences a detailed assessment of impact of proposals on archaeological remains must be undertaken, including an archaeological evaluation. Further archaeological work may be required in advance of and/ or during development.

14.3 Any development must be sited at least 10 metres away from the Chinn Brook where the Bayston Road Burnt Mound is located (See Appendix A).

14.4 In addition to the burnt mound, there is the site of limekilns near the Horseshoe Pub. This was originally served by the canal basin. Limekilns are very rare in Birmingham so it is important that remains of the limekilns are protected and preserved. In advance of consideration of any development proposals in the area of the former limekilns, an archaeological assessment and evaluation will be required. Dependant on the results of this assessment, the remains of the limekiln may be required to be preserved in situ within the development. This should not preclude development and could also act as an additional feature within the development.

15.0 Ground conditions

15.1 Developers will need to carry out a detailed site investigation of ground conditions prior to any development commencing. Detailed proposals must also be drawn up in consultation with the Environment Agency. As far as the City Council is aware, part of the site (land west of Millpool Hill) has been tipped on in the last ten years.

16.0 Land ownership

16.1 Birmingham City Council owns part of the site (See Appendix B) All other land is in private ownership. The Canal and towpath are owned by British Waterways.

17.0 Planning obligations

17.1 In order for the development to proceed, it may be necessary for the City Council to enter into a legal agreement with prospective developers under section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. This may include:

- highway modifications, public transport improvements and associated traffic management measures
- environmental and landscaping improvements
- enhancement/ provision of pedestrian and cyclist facilities
- canal habitat enhancement/replacement measures
- towpath access improvements
- public interpretation of the archaeology and history of the site (burnt mounds and limekilns)
- public interpretation and signage to towpath and areas of new development
- any other matters directly related to the proposed development

18.0 Planning history

Outline planning permission was granted for a marina, sale of boats, and a restaurant on 6th January 1977. The permission was renewed until 6th January 1987, but the scheme was never progressed.

19.0 Limitations of liability

19.1 Information contained in this brief is to the best of the City Council's knowledge, correct at the time of writing. The City Council advises developers that it is their responsibility to check the site conditions and the availability of services prior to entering into any negotiations. Any view expressed by the Local Planning Authority are those which represent current policy at the time and may be varied by the Local Planning Authority as a result of any reassessment of appropriate planning policies.

20.0 Useful documents

- Birmingham Plan (adopted) 1993
- Birmingham Plan - Second Deposit Draft 2002
- Canalside Developments in Birmingham - Design Guidelines Draft 1996
- Places for All (adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the Birmingham Plan 2001)
- West Midlands Local Transport Plan 2000
- Nature Conservation Strategy for Birmingham (1996)
- Waterways for Tomorrow (DETR June 2000)
- British Waterways Manual - Volumes 1-3
- Biodiversity Action Plan for Birmingham and the Black Country (July 2000)
- Water Vole Guidance for Planners and Developers 1999 (English Nature)
- Archaeology Strategy (adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance December 2003)
- Brandwood End Smiths: Design Guidance May 2001

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




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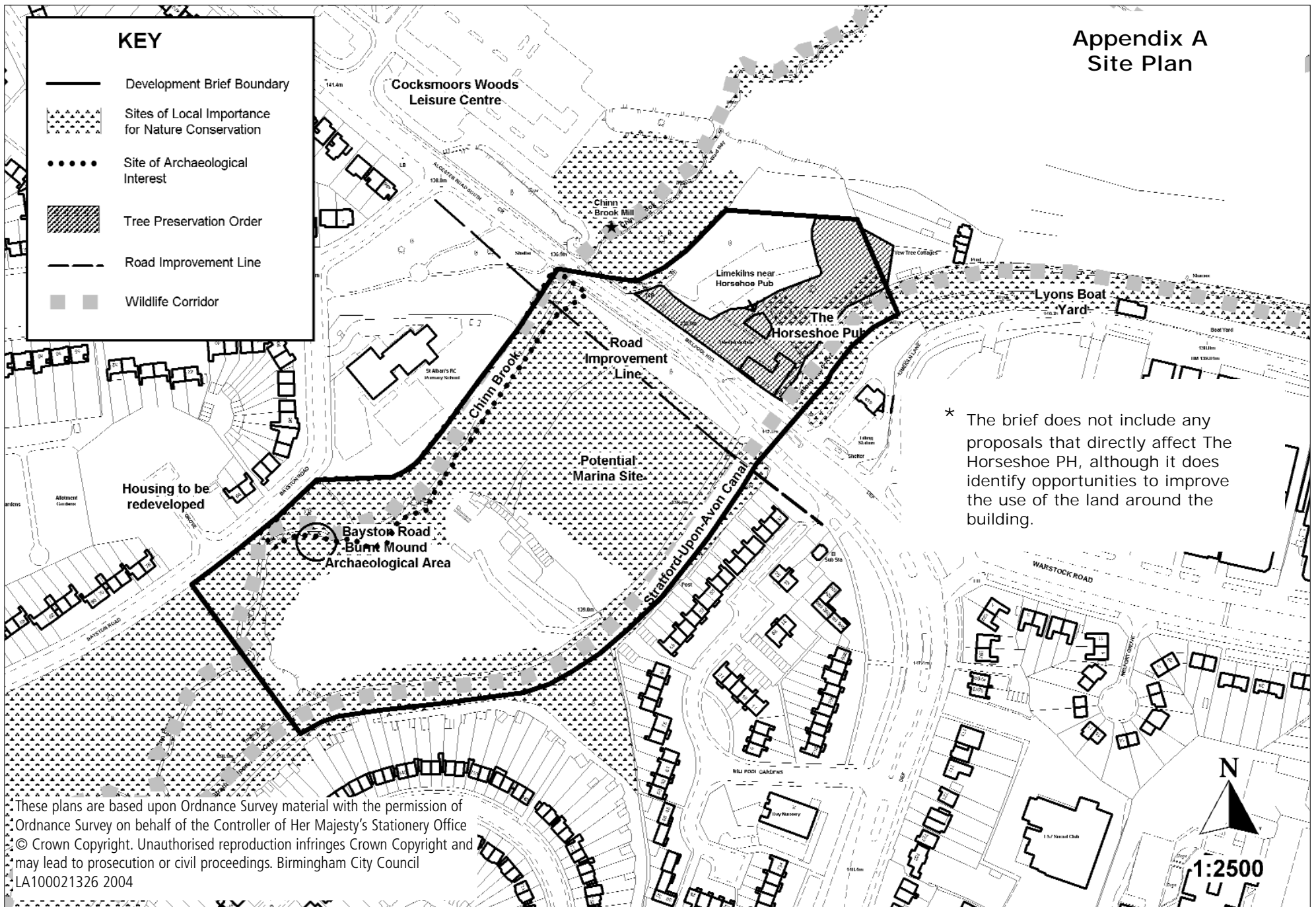
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Appendix A Site Plan

KEY

-  Development Brief Boundary
-  Sites of Local Importance for Nature Conservation
-  Site of Archaeological Interest
-  Tree Preservation Order
-  Road Improvement Line
-  Wildlife Corridor



* The brief does not include any proposals that directly affect The Horseshoe PH, although it does identify opportunities to improve the use of the land around the building.

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