

3 THE APPLICATION SITE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

3.1.1 This chapter provides a description of the Application Site and its surrounding context.

3.2 APPLICATION SITE

3.2.1 The Site subject to EIA is within the administrative boundary of Coventry City Council (CCC) and adjoins the northern built up area of Coventry north of Keresley, north west of the city centre. The Site forms the northern part of the allocated Strategic Housing Site H2:1, Keresley Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE), which includes a number of separate house builders/land promoters across its extent. Information on the extent of the SUE is provided in Chapter 2, Assessment Scope and Methodology under Cumulative Impacts.

3.2.2 The boundaries of the site are defined as follows:

- Northern edge – defined by existing hedgerows and tree planting, with Keresley Rugby Football Club, farms and associated farmland beyond;
- Eastern edge – the majority is defined by the backs of properties (typically 2 storey houses) fronting onto Bennetts Road North;
- Southern edge – defined by the rear of properties (typically 2 storey houses) fronting Thompsons Lane, and also the retained Thompsons Farm and associated land; and
- Western edge – defined by an existing hedgerow and farmland beyond.

3.2.3 The Site extends to approximately 20.7 hectares, as identified on the Site Location Plan (**Figure 1.2**) and is comprised predominantly of arable land within broadly rectangular parcels, with a number of field boundary hedgerows, trees and a pond. Two buildings are located in the eastern area of the site, these comprise a two-story dwelling, Thompsons Cottage and an associated single-story outbuilding. The Site occupies a north-east facing slope that rises gradually from ca. +120-130m Above Ordnance Survey (AOD) towards the western edge at ca. +140-150m AOD, where the western boundary lies just below a local ridgeline.

3.2.4 From a review of the historical maps, the Site has been in agricultural use since at least the mid-1800s. The solid geology of the Site is mapped as Kerseley Member argillaceous rocks, sandstone and conglomerate.

3.2.5 The Site is not located in the Green Belt however the southern boundary of the Birmingham Green Belt does coincide with the northern boundary of the site.

3.2.6 The vast majority of the Site is considered to be of low to negligible ecological value, being dominated by intensively managed arable land. Other habitats are therefore largely limited to the existing field boundary hedgerow and associated trees, a pond and associated vegetation, a residential property (Thompsons Cottage) and associated outbuilding, along with small areas of amenity grassland, scrub, tall herb vegetation and Bramble. There are no identified statutory ecological designations or designated heritage assets located within the Site or immediately adjacent.

3.2.7 The Site, according to the Environment Agency Flood Map, is located wholly within Flood Zone 1 (low risk) in terms of fluvial flooding. There are a number of ditches

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and small watercourses within and adjacent to the Site that are too small to feature on the Flood Map.

- 3.2.8 The Application Site lies within the designated Coventry city-wide Air Quality Management Area (AQMA), which was declared by CCC in 2009 for the whole administrative boundary.

3.3 APPLICATION SITE CONTEXT

- 3.3.1 The Site is within the administrative boundary of Coventry City Council (CCC) and adjoins the northern built up area of Coventry north of Keresley, north west of the city centre. The closest settlements in proximity of the Application Site are Keresley End to the east and Corley to the north west. Other areas of note are the Prologis Park Industrial Estate to the south east and the M6 c. 0.7km north of the Site. The city centre of Coventry lies circa 6km south east of the Site.

- 3.3.1 The Site lies to the south west of Bennetts Road North and to the north of Thompsons Road (which turns into Thompsons Lane). Bennetts Road North is a single carriageway road approximately 6m in width, operating in a north/south alignment, and is subject to a 30mph speed limit. This speed limit increases to 40mph to the north of the Bennetts Road North/Grove Lane priority junction. Bennetts Road North meets Thompsons Lane to the south by means of a priority junction. There are pedestrian footways on both sides of the carriageway until approximately 100m to the north of Bennetts Road North/Howat Road priority junction where the footway on the western edge ends. A zebra crossing is located on Bennetts Road North, 100m to the south of the site access. This facility provides a safe crossing point between the existing North Keresley estate and local shops.

- 3.3.2 Thompsons Road is a single carriageway road, operating in an east/west alignment. The road is approximately 6m in width and is subject to a 30mph speed limit. The initial 280m of Thompsons Road is adopted highway, it then forms Thompsons Lane, a private drive and footpath/track (currently subject to a Definitive Map Modification Order).

- 3.3.3 There are a number of Public Rights of Way (PROWs) in the vicinity of the Site. Public Footpath No. M310b runs along the northern edge of the site, in an east to west alignment. There are also a series of footpaths to the south of the Site within and around Bunsons Wood – M309 and M311. PROW footpath M311 meets Thompsons Lane to the northeast of Bunsons Wood.

- 3.3.1 The Coventry Local Cycle Route 1 starts approximately 1km to the southeast of the Site, within Prologis Park. This route provides a mixture of on and off-road cycle sections from Keresley (Prologis Park) to Coventry City Centre, serving the Arena Shopping Park, Ricoh Arena and Coventry Area station. The route provides connections onto Local Cycle Route 2 in the vicinity of the Arena Shopping Park.

- 3.3.2 Bus stops are located within the vicinity of the Site on Howat Road, Exhall Road and Bennetts Road, approximately 250m, 400m and 500m from the site access point respectively. Services from these stops provide connections to Nuneaton, Hinkley, Bedworth and Coventry. A number of existing shops also lie in close proximity to the Site along Bennetts Road North, including a post office, convenience store, pharmacy, village fish bar and Keresley Newlands Primary School.

- 3.3.3 The closest railway station, Bedworth, is approximately 5.2km to the northeast of the site. The station is served by West Midlands Trains services between Nuneaton and Coventry. The station is served by one service per hour in each direction. Coventry

station is located approximately 6.8km to the south of the site. Although located further from the site, Coventry station offers a wider range of services

3.3.4 In terms of designations, no ecological statutory designations have been identified within or adjacent to the Site. The nearest identified statutory ecological designation to the Site is Bedworth Sloughs Local Nature Reserve, located approximately 3.8km north east of the Site. Ensor's Pool Special Area of Conservation (SAC) also lies approximately 6km north east of the Site. To the south of the site and Thompsons Road/Lane lies an area of Ancient Woodland known as Bunsons Wood.

3.3.5 No designated heritage assets are located within the Site, nor are there any World Heritage Sites or sites included on the Tentative List of Future Nominations for World Heritage Sites (July 2014), Conservation Areas, Grade I Listed buildings, Registered Battlefields or Registered Parks and Gardens recorded within the study area. One Scheduled Monument, *Corley Camp*, is located within the study area, c.420m north-west of the Site and two Grade II* Listed buildings are recorded within 2km of the Site, Church of St Mary and Corley Hall and Attached Wall and Gatepiers. The locally listed *Keresley House* is also located c.690m south-west of the Site, although there is no inter-visibility between the two.