



NEW ARDEN ACADEMY

THE CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY LEARNING

Your support for the KN2 Arden Triangle proposals comprising 600 new homes and a new Arden with co-located primary school is hugely important, bringing extensive educational, economic and social benefits to our community.

INTRODUCTION

Arden Academy is in full and wholehearted support of the proposals to develop the area surrounding the current school grounds, identified in the Solihull Local Draft Submission Plan as 'KN2' Arden Triangle and its sister site, 'KN1' at Hampton Road. Backed by overwhelming local support, the school believes that this policy offers a wonderful opportunity to not only replace and enhance Arden's outdated facilities, but also to provide a prestigious community-led solution for living and learning for Knowle.

Alongside delivering much needed housing on an under-utilised area of semi-urban land to the south east of Knowle, the plan includes the development of a separate, completely new Arden Academy elsewhere within KN2. As a result of this innovative solution, the existing school will remain open with little or no disruption throughout the new facility's construction phase.

Whilst it continues to achieve exemplary performance through the hard work and determination of its staff and students, the sad fact is that, in its current state, Arden simply cannot meet the long-term, or even medium-term educational, social and economic needs of the local community. With the highly disruptive remedial works essential to bring it up to modern baseline standards, projected to take several years and cost in excess of £18m, evidence of just how unrealistic the idea of attempting to retain the old Arden is compelling.

Originally constructed in the late fifties for just 600 pupils, today Arden is designated '10 Form Entry' and is home to over 1800 students. Classrooms running at an unsustainable 96% occupancy have forced sports facilities, important for health and wellbeing, to be repurposed as teaching spaces. There are insufficient washrooms and little or no indoor social space; students have to queue outside in all weathers for lunch and, with no lifts in the main building, the upper floors are inaccessible for those with mobility issues. In fact, with a capacity of just 250, the school hall isn't actually big enough to accommodate a single year group.

An additional aim of KN2 is the provision of a completely new '2 Form Entry' Primary school to meet the current and projected requirements of a growing local population. Constructed in close proximity to the new Arden buildings, it is envisaged that the school will significantly benefit from sharing facilities. These would include a new gymnasium, sports hall, specialist drama and music rooms, floodlit sporting facilities and all-weather multi-use games areas, all of which will also be available for community use.

Needless to say of course, KN1 and KN2 are not solely about improving local educational provision; Arden is in full support of the wider aims of the Solihull Local Plan to deliver much needed community regeneration and additional housing for the area. With new builds ranging from starter homes and apartments to premium developments, singletons, downsizing older residents, house sharers and families will especially benefit from affordable housing set within attractive areas of green space, yet conveniently close to local amenities and Knowle High Street.

Please show your positive support for these exciting proposals for Arden and the local community by completing the REPRESENTATION FORM. Either via the Parent/Guardian's letter and Reference Sheet provided with the SMBC Local Plan Publication Stage Form OR by visiting www.solihull.gov.uk/lpr



What is required for Knowle?

The KDBH Neighbourhood Plan and the Solihull Local Plan identified the following key needs:

- **Housing:** *Developing housing needs across the Borough; in particular providing more affordable housing and smaller homes.*
- **Transport:** *Delivering improved public transport, reduced parking issues, highway improvements and better traffic flow.*
- **Open Spaces:** *Protecting and enhancing Green Belt land between urban areas, as well as providing additional accessible open space for children to play and families to utilise.*
- **Education:** *The provision of two superb new schools for primary and secondary students.*
- **Community:** *Improve health and well being through the provision of significantly better sporting and recreation facilities.*

The Draft Submission Plan has proposed two development sites; KN1 at Hampton Road, Knowle and KN2 to the south of Knowle, known as the 'Arden Triangle'.

These two sites deliver a scale of development that is capable of supporting new infrastructure provision that could play a pivotal role in dealing with existing issues, as well as providing the necessary facilities for future residents.

The school is in strong support of plans for the development of both Hampton Road (KN1) AND the Arden Triangle (KN2).

Two sites are currently under consideration for development. These are designated 'KN1', located in the north east of Knowle at Hampton Road, and 'KN2', the area surrounding Arden Academy just south of the village centre. As previously stated, the school is in strong support of plans for the development of the 'Arden Triangle' identified as KN2, as well as KN1, as vehicles which will address numerous issues raised by the Solihull Local Plan and KDBH Neighbourhood Plan.

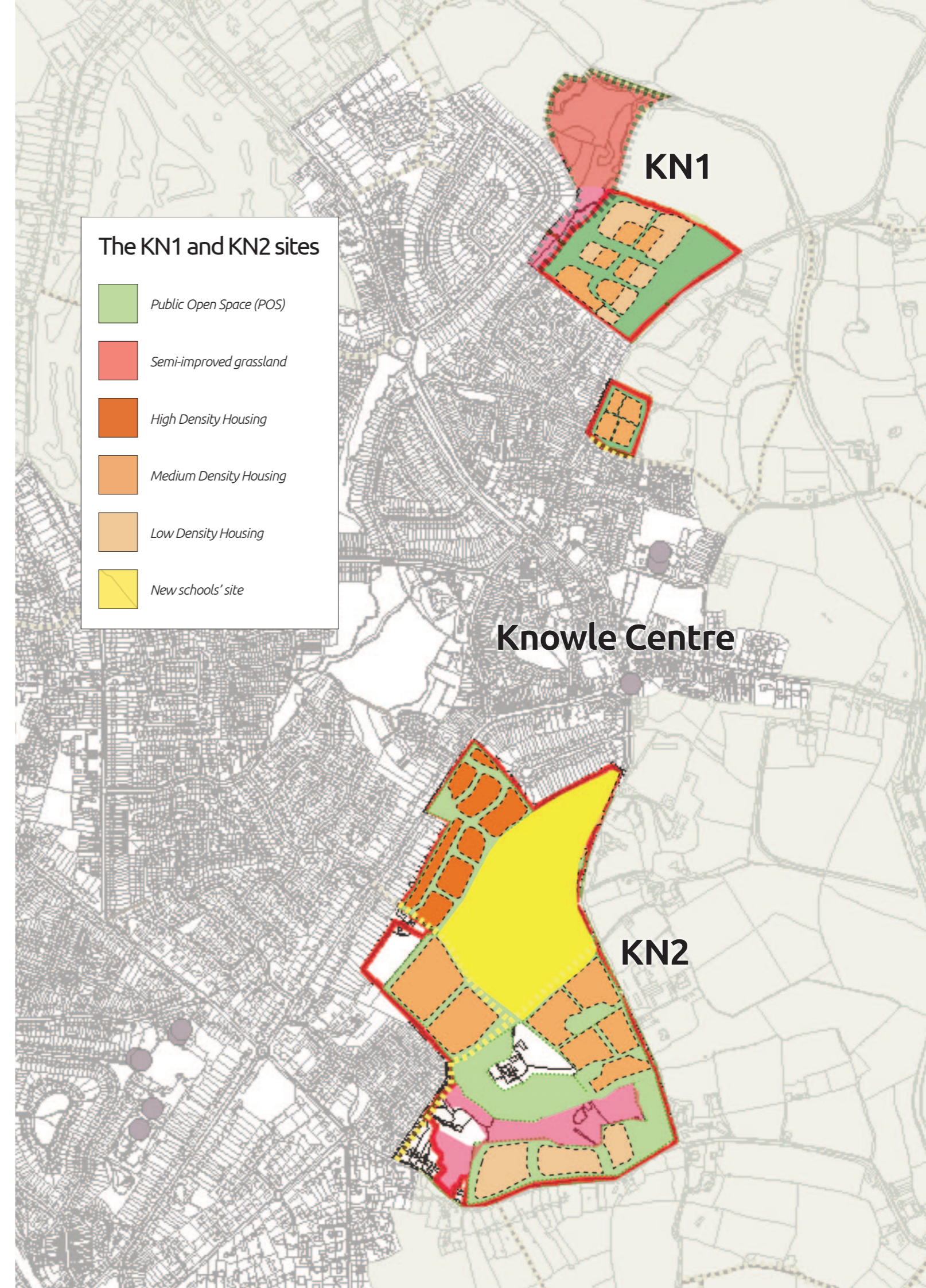
KN1 Hampton Road

- The smaller of the two sites, KN1 is made up of two separate development blocks on land on the north east edge of Knowle at Hampton Road.
- Plans for the site comprise primarily mid-range and high end housing.
- There is also significant provision for amenity land and wildlife surrounding the developments which will benefit existing residents of the north Knowle area.

KN2 The Arden Triangle

- KN2 'fills in' a substantial pocket of part-developed land already surrounded on two sides by housing and bounded to the east by a major 'A' road. KN2 is located close to Knowle high street to the south east of the village centre.
- Housing plans on the KN2 site include substantial provision for smaller starter homes ideal for young families, downsizers and house sharers, as well as mid-range houses and premium properties.
- The transfer of access to Arden from Station Road, east to Warwick Road, will help substantially reduce local congestion and parking issues during peak periods.
- Close proximity to Knowle centre, with easy pedestrian and cycle access, will encourage much greater use of shops and businesses on our high street with minimal increase in car journeys.
- As with KN1, extensive green amenity space and wildlife areas, particularly towards the south of the site, are included in the proposals.
- The construction of two new schools within the site provides superb educational facilities and will offer excellent, much needed amenities for the local community. Since they will be constructed adjacent to the existing school there will be little or no disruption to education during construction.

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Arden's proposals for KN2 Arden Triangle plans improve local availability of affordable, environmentally sustainable housing, as well as encouraging footfall in the local high street through improved cycle and pedestrian access and reduced congestion.

KN2 Arden Triangle proposals feature extensive corridors of wildlife space with unbroken links to rural green belt.

Arden's proposals for a low carbon school and KN2 plans for extensive amenity and wildlife space help deliver on the environmental elements of Solihull's 'Key Things To Do'.



KN2 Site development features

In line with the concept masterplan, development of the KN2 Arden Triangle site will include:

- Provision of substantial open space, including play areas and a green link to the Middlefield Development. Heritage assets and the MIND Garden, as well as important landscape features, including the Local Wildlife Site, will also be retained.
- Site enhancements will see improved landscaping, with woodland planting and biodiversity enhancements, as well as public open spaces and better access to Green Belt beyond the site boundary.
- Highway improvements to the site layout that prioritise pedestrians and cyclists, providing safe, direct routes into the village and links into both existing and proposed footpaths and cycleway networks.

The two proposed new schools:

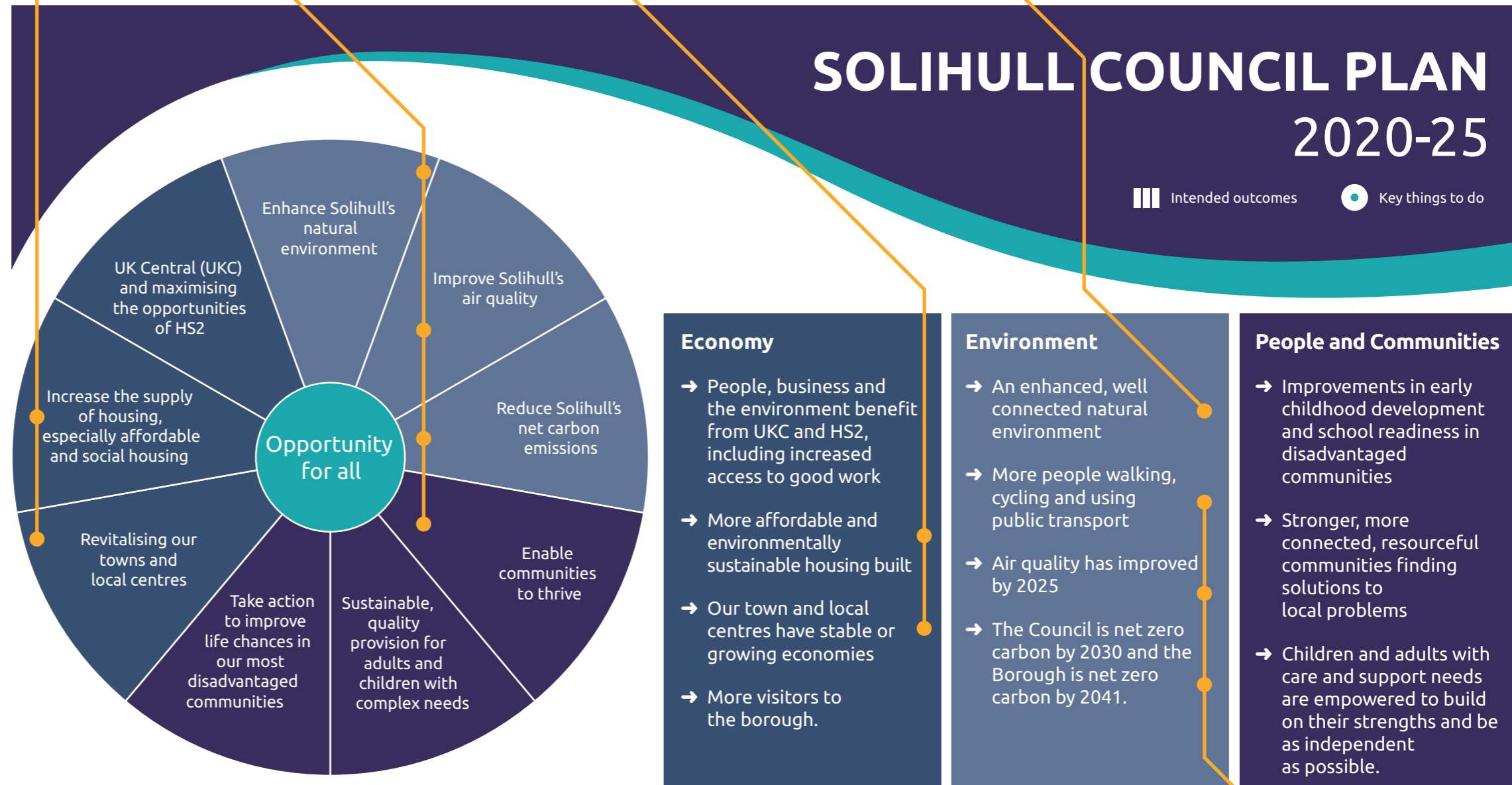
- The new, co-located 'all through' school will provide both primary and secondary education at the site with shared, modern facilities, many of which are rarely available to children attending a standalone primary school.
- These schools will also be available for use by the wider community, not only supporting education and increasing opportunities for the pupils, but also providing facilities that can be used and enjoyed by the wider community.
- The relocated school site will be accessed from Warwick Road. This will displace traffic from Station Road, reducing congestion in the area.
- School relocation will enable higher density residential development to take place on one of the most accessible parts of the site, facilitating more sustainable access to central Knowle and public transport, as well as reducing local car use.

Pictured right: Our sustainable ambitions are fully compliant with the Solihull Local Plan and Town Planning Policy - delivering biodiversity and habitat, landscape, urban design, transport and highway improvements, as well as suitable modern sporting provision for the school and the community. The proposals for KN2 don't just provide superb new modern educational facilities for primary and secondary age youngsters, but also deliver a broad spectrum of new homes, improved public access to sporting facilities, and new wildlife and amenity space for the whole Knowle community.

Arden's proposals are fully in line with the five building blocks of inclusive growth.

SOLIHULL COUNCIL PLAN 2020-25

Intended outcomes Key things to do



Everything that we do contributes to one or more of the five building blocks of inclusive growth:

Building a vibrant economy

Promoting & delivering social value

Enabling communities to thrive

Actioning our climate change declaration

Improving skills and access to good work

Enablers of Council efficiency and value for money:

Engagement | Use of Digital | The Employee Journey | Robust Finance | Use of Our Physical Assets

Ongoing delivery of the Solihull plan for recovery from Covid-19

Proposals for KN2 could play a key role in sustainable recovery from COVID-19 and the regeneration of our local community.

Arden's proposals for KN2 are in line with Solihull's environmental plans, with a significantly improved network of footpaths and cycleways and better access to public transport.

Key benefits of the proposals

The concept masterplan follows a place-based approach that will benefit all parts of the local community. These proposals will:

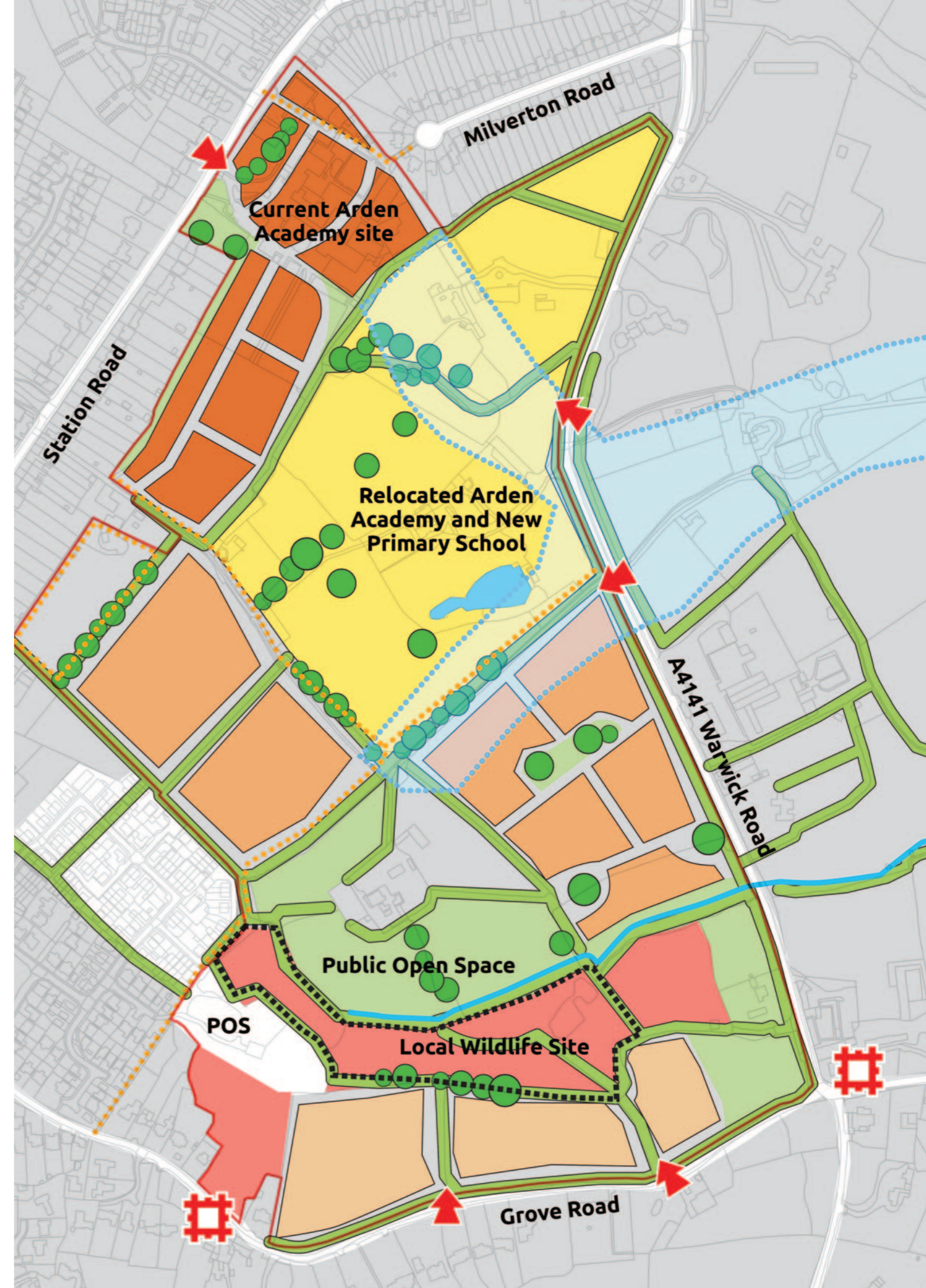
- Improve Education:** Meet the educational needs of both primary and secondary pupils in the settlement in a single location, utilising shared and modern facilities: Providing a purpose-built educational setting to replace the out-dated, ageing fabric of the existing Arden Academy; much of which is increasingly difficult to maintain and service, energy inefficient, with poor infrastructure and lacking community facilities.
- Provide Community Amenities:** Delivering improved and modern infrastructure that will support education and increase opportunities for pupils at all stages of their learning, as well as providing better sport, leisure and learning facilities that can be used and enjoyed by the wider community, young and old alike.
- Reduce Congestion:** The new Arden will be located away from Station Road, with vehicular access moved to Warwick Road. This will displace traffic and improve highway safety, allowing through traffic to flow more freely, reducing current peak time congestion and alleviating local parking problems.
- Make Walking and Cycling Safer:** Creating a safer environment for local residents and for students travelling to and from school, with good pedestrian and cycling connectivity through the site to the schools and the village centre.
- Increase Affordable Housing:** Upon completion of the new Arden, the old school site will be utilised for higher density affordable residential development, close to the village centre and public transport links, in what is perhaps the most accessible and sustainable part of the 'Arden Triangle'.
- Improve Housing Choice:** Development proposals envisage a mix of market and affordable homes, including smaller houses and apartments for young people and specialist homes to meet the needs of older people, as well as mid-range and premium developments.
- Support Local Businesses:** Improved access to Knowle centre from the new homes planned for the KN2 site via footpaths and cycleways, as well as reduced congestion for drivers. This will also help support local businesses seeking increased footfall along the high street, maintaining local economic strength and viability.

SMBC's Illustrative Concept Masterplan for the KN2 site

The illustrative concept masterplan opposite is intended to be an exact reproduction of the SMBC Illustrative Concept Masterplan featured on page 87 of the Solihull Local Plan Concept Masterplans (October 2020) document. Any slight variation from the original is unintentional and purely coincidental.

	KN2 Boundary		Public Open Space (POS)
	Future Access		Semi-improved grassland
	Significant Road		High Density Housing
	Existing Hedgerow		Medium Density Housing
	Existing Trees		Low Density Housing
	SuDS Feature		New schools' site
	Local Wildlife Site		Flood risk assessment required at detailed design stage
	Footpath		
	Listed Building		

Pictured below: An example of a typical attractive, modern environmentally friendly school similar to the aspirations for the new Arden and its sister primary school. Please note that this image is STRICTLY FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY and is not intended to represent or propose specific home or schools designs for the sites.





The new schools will help reduce Solihull's net carbon emissions and fully support SMBC's 'Net Zero Carbon' target for 2030. We already know modern insulation and heating will cut Arden's CO₂ emissions by over 60% and the annual energy bill to less than half current costs, saving in excess of £50k per year. Nevertheless, it is our aim to achieve even greater efficiencies through use of the most up-to-date technologies, making the new, sustainable Arden a centre for green technology in the West Midlands.

A new, greener, more sustainable Arden

Whilst parts of the existing school are notoriously draughty and badly insulated, making it chilly in winter and sweltering during the summer months, efficiency of heating and ventilation and environmental factors will be pivotal in the development of the new site.

We will be seeking to introduce as many innovative green design solutions as possible into the new Arden Centre for Community Learning.

Sustainable Design Options

'Sustainable design' maximises conservation of finite resources, cutting waste and reducing water, energy and materials usage during both construction and operation. Central to the aims of sustainable design is a process of evaluation that encompasses the entire school's 'footprint', analysing lifecycle and sustainability to establish the most sustainable materials for construction.

Building Orientation and Layout

Our plans will utilise a building layout with optimal southern exposure, keeping mechanical heating and cooling requirements to a minimum by achieving maximum natural heating through solar gain and exploiting prevailing wind flow through the building for ventilation.

Carbon Reduction

New construction materials will be selected for their durability and their potential reuse/recycling. Composite products that incorporate high insulating/low carbon impact properties will be used extensively.

Wherever possible materials will also be locally sourced, minimising transport emissions of both CO₂ and pollutants, seeking out 'materials that don't have to travel far which are also environmentally responsible' as opposed to simply what is easy to procure, regardless of environmental impact.

Electrical and Gas Usage

Electrical and gas usage is one of the main areas of carbon emissions in the day to day operations of the school. Opportunities to utilise modern low energy technology for heating, lighting and ventilation will be diligently explored and applied wherever practicably possible.

Technologies of interest range from use of photovoltaic solar panels, lithium and hydrogen batteries in energy generation and storage, to low energy heating and lighting solutions, including radiant infrared heating and LED lighting, as well as motion controlled lighting in areas of low footfall.

Water Usage

Water conservation technologies have undergone major changes over the past few years. We will look to integrate low-flow toilets, zero-flow urinals and shut-off controls in the lavatories and changing rooms.

Flood Prevention and Mitigation

The proposed site has very limited flooding issues. Where there is the potential for areas to flood, prevention and mitigation measures will be introduced including SUDS and water flow measures.

Protecting Nature

Protecting and restoring the natural environment will be an important aim of development at Arden's new Centre for Community Learning. This positive aim will form an important element of our teaching modules. Wherever practically possible we will maintain natural habitats on the site, such as ponds and hedgerows and utilise them for study purposes.

Trees at the site will be retained wherever possible. A new tree will be planted for every one used for the construction of buildings. In addition, it is our aim that every student and staff member should plant their own tree upon the opening of the new school.

Congestion Solutions

- Whatever the outcome of plans for the KN2 site, a long-term traffic and infrastructure plan addressing the issues surrounding Arden is essential. The expected increase in travel demand arising from local population growth and HS2 will further compound transport issues on Knowle's already crowded roads.
- With over 2000 students and staff arriving and leaving the site every day, Arden is a particular focus of local congestion during the start and end of the school day. Six reported RTI near-misses last year alone (pupils hit by cars and buses) reflect seriously inadequate pedestrian access.
- An additional crossing is urgently needed, whilst hedgerow over-growth means pavements are getting progressively narrower. Though traffic calming measures are being reviewed, the current site offers no space to increase the extremely limited parking and no provision of drop-off points, exasperating local peak time congestion.
- Any of the essential improvement work to be carried out at the current Arden site to bring it up to baseline standards will require significant heavy vehicle access. This will inevitably badly affect school operations, introducing serious noise and safety issues, as well as reducing already extremely limited site parking.
- In contrast, the construction of a new school site within KN2 will facilitate fully planned traffic management. The plan to move main site access from Station Road eastwards to Warwick Road is an excellent option. Aside from avoiding the need to mix children with heavy plant, development of a new site will also enable the installation of separate commercial access and ample parking, as well as coach and parental drop-off bays.

Arden at the Community's Heart

Our vision of Arden's future is for a vibrant learning and social amenity at the heart of our community.

A number of significant issues have been identified by the KDBH People Survey and Neighbourhood Plan. These community problems primarily centre on a lack of Community Sport, Health and Social facilities. Our exciting plans introduce new high quality sports facilities that meet Sport England as well as DfE guidelines and will be available for our community to access and enjoy. Indoors, our new hall and meeting rooms will also act as a focal point for community social activities. As a campus 'for the future' we won't stand still either, with the aim to seek further funding in the future to enhance and develop our facilities for all. We aspire to make the following additions to the current KN2 proposals:

- **Swimming Pool:** Swimming is widely recognised as one of the best forms of exercise for health and wellbeing. There is currently no pool at the school, or within Knowle, Dorridge or Bentley Heath. In fact, the nearest swimming pool is Tudor Grange, 4 miles away. This is not an easy journey for the local community OR for Arden students.
- **Gym and Gymnastics Centre:** The school currently does not have a dedicated gym, the nearest being a commercial facility, once again with limited public transport available from Arden to the site.
- **Day Nursery:** There is a shortage of high quality Day Nursery Places.
- **Youth Zone:** Providing a safe out-of-school-hours resource where young people can be active and learn.

The proposed two new schools will provide a unique opportunity to offer widespread community access for learning for young and old members of our community, new floodlit sports facilities, both grass and artificial surfaces, will offer much needed facilities.

The planned KN2 developments represent a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet the fundamental community needs identified in KDBH People Survey and Neighbourhood Plan. Once plans are adopted by SMBC we will liaise with our many partners to secure the funding needed to ensure this site is an inspiring centre for COMMUNITY LEARNING, LEISURE AND LIVING.

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ARDEN FULLY SUPPORTS THE VISION OF THE SOLIHULL LOCAL PLAN TO MAKE THE KN2 ARDEN TRIANGLE - A NEW CENTRE FOR LEARNING AT THE HEART OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY: AN INSPIRING RESOURCE FOR KNOWLE, DORRIDGE AND BENTLEY HEATH WITH SUPERB NEW FACILITIES THAT WILL ENABLE THE INCREDIBLE ATTAINMENT POTENTIAL OF THE AREA'S YOUNG PEOPLE TO BE FURTHER REALISED, WHILST ALSO FULFILLING THE DEVELOPING HOUSING, LEISURE AND LEARNING NEEDS OF OUR COMMUNITY.



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Arden is part of the Arden Multi-Academy Trust
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