

# BROWNSHILL GREEN

## CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL



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# Part 1 CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

## 1. INTRODUCTION

*What is this appraisal for?*

- 1.1 A conservation area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, usually the historic part of a town or village, where we wish to preserve or enhance its character or appearance. It is proposed to designate part of Brownhill Green as a Conservation Area
- 1.2 Under Section 72 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 we must pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the conservation area. This appraisal identifies the special interest and character of the Brownhill Green Conservation Area and provides guidance on how the preservation or enhancement of its character or appearance can be achieved. The first part of the appraisal identifies its special interest and character. The second part sets out management proposals for addressing the issues identified in the appraisal.
- 1.3 Brownhill Green is under consideration for designation as a conservation area. The Proposed Conservation Area Map is shown in [Plate 1](#).
- 1.4 The conservation area appraisal should be read in conjunction with the conservation area management plan.



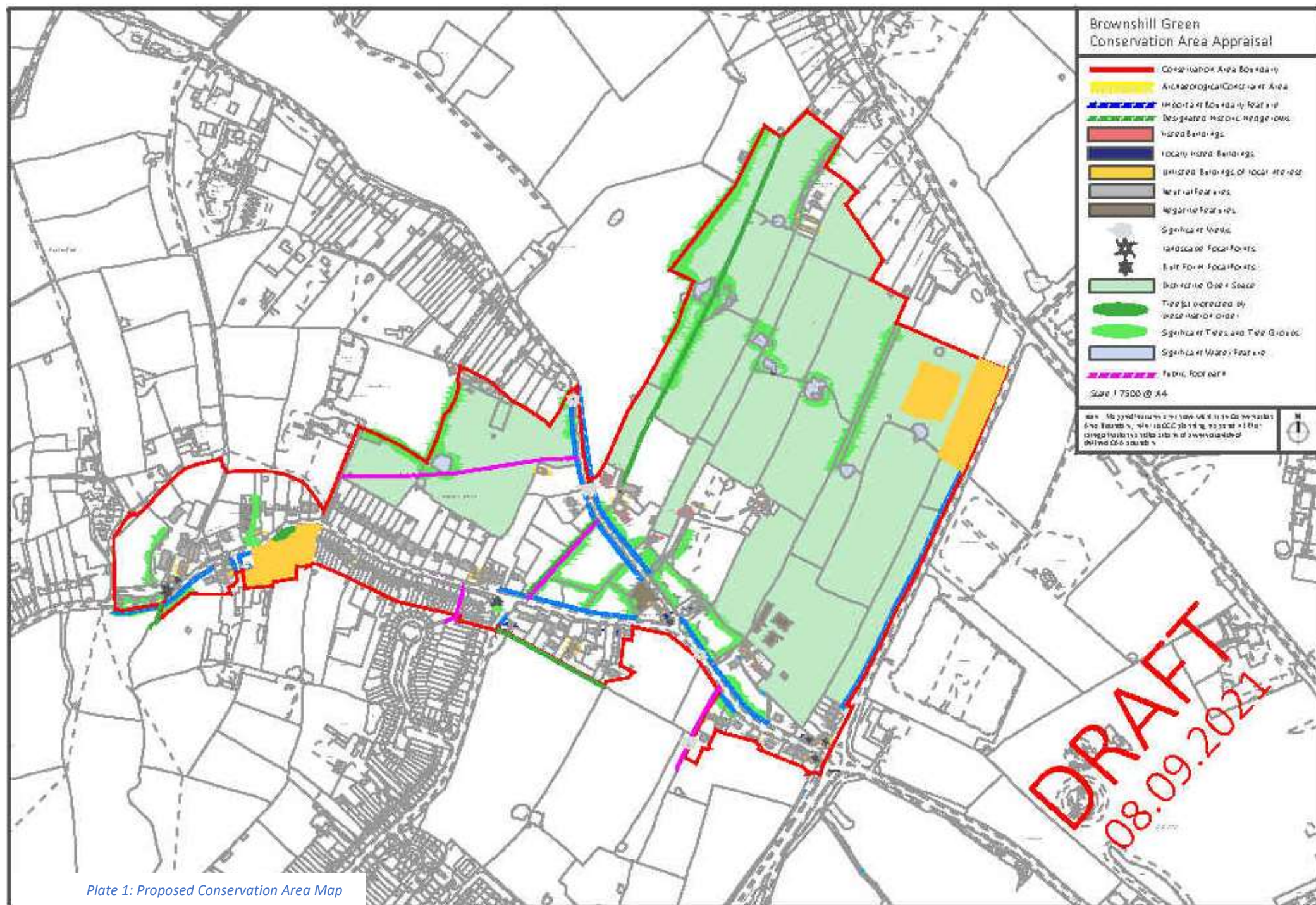


Plate 1: Proposed Conservation Area Map

## *National Planning Policy Framework*

- 1.5 Conservation Areas are designated under the provisions of Section 69 of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. A Conservation Area is defined as, 'an area of special architectural interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. Section 71 of the same Act requires Local Planning Authorities to formulate and publish proposals for the preservation and enhancement of any parts of their area which are Conservation Areas.
- 1.6 Section 72 specifies that, in making a decision on an application for development in a Conservation Area, special attention shall be paid to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of that area. This Conservation Area Appraisal should be read in conjunction with the principles and policies set out in Section 17 of the National Planning Policy Framework; Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

## *Local Policy*

- 1.7 The 2016 local plan outlines Coventry City Council's policies intended to support the development of the city through to 2031.

### **Creating an attractive, cleaner and greener city.**

- Policy GB1 - Green Belt and Local Green Space
- Policy GE1 - Green Infrastructure
- Policy GE2 - Green Space
- Policy GE3 - Biodiversity, Geological, Landscape and Archaeological Conservation
- Policy GE4 - Tree Protection

### **Design**

- Policy DE1 - Ensuring High Quality Design

### **Heritage**

- Policy HE1 - Conservation Areas
- Policy HE2 - Conservation and Heritage Assets

- 1.8 Broadly, these policies seek to ensure that the conservation area is preserved by: Refusing permission for:

- the demolition of any building or structure if its loss would damage its character or appearance
- the extension or alteration of a building where the change would damage its character or appearance
- development within the conservation area which would be harmful to its setting or character or appearance
- development which would adversely affect or result in the loss of historic plots, layouts and street pattern, important views, open spaces, tree cover or boundary features within the conservation area
- signage which would be harmful to the character or appearance of the conservation area, and

and requiring new development within or adjoining the conservation area to:

- respect its context in design, including scale, form, proportion and detailing
- Use materials in accordance with those traditionally used in that particular part of the conservation area, and maintain a similar mix
- be located on their sites in a similar way to the general pattern of building in that part of the conservation area
- Boundary walls, railings and hedges should be incorporated in the development in a similar way to those already in existence in that part of the conservation area, and these should use similar materials and detailing, or species, and
- Shop signs to respect the character of the buildings and quality of the historic environment in their siting, size, materials and design

## 2. SUMMARY OF SPECIAL INTEREST

- 2.1 Behind Hawkes Mill Lane to the north side of Brownhill Green are a series of distinctive, long and narrow enclosures oriented to the north west, meeting at the rear gardens of houses along the Tamworth Road, this unusual set of enclosed strips of asserted land are very rare and would have formed part of the much larger Brownhill Green Common which was crossed by Wall Hill Road and Hawkes Mill Lane. The field pattern and enclosures probably date back to the medieval period, with hedges and veteran trees lining the field boundaries. This field pattern illustrates the agricultural practices and development of the area which contribute to the historic and evidential significance of Brownhill Green.
- 2.2 Brownhill Green is a small rural hamlet, the roads in the village have been in existence since the early 1400's. The Tamworth Road, along the north side of Brownhill Green was turnpiked in 1761 and remains one of the busier roads in the area, the roads within Brownhill Green, although old, have never developed into main roads. A hamlet developed in the late 18th century, with the smithy at the west end of Wall Hill Lane marking its entrance. In 1875 apart from the agriculture, there were a handful of businesses recorded, including two shops, a beerhouse, a tailor, a flour dealer, a cater and a smith.<sup>1</sup> Pieces of common land were still in use in Brownhill Green during the mid-19th century. Smallholdings built along the roads edge developed into farms, which remain today. The village never contained a church, which would have provided a focus for the community, and only in the 19th century was a small Non-Conformist Chapel built along Hawkes Mill Lane. Instead Brownhill Green was a small farming community that it existed as a satellite to the nearby Coundon and Kersley and villages to the west, which contained grander houses including Coundon Court, Kersley Hall and Kersley Grange. The population of Brownhill Green during the 19th century is grouped with nearby Allesley which was a much larger parish and recorded at around 500 people in 1820, and stayed relatively static to 1920, when the population rose steeply to over 3,000 in 1960.<sup>2</sup>
- 2.3 This was due in a large part the housing boom that occurred after the first world war and specifically for Coventry the car and munitions factories that dominated the cities industry, providing new employment and requiring new homes for employees. This is especially apparent on maps of Brownhill Green from the 1930's onwards, where

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/warks/vol8/pp50-57#p42>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10293479/cube/TOT\\_POP](https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10293479/cube/TOT_POP)

previously undeveloped land contains new ribbon development housing and estates, and in particular beyond the White Lion located along the south and north side of Hawkes Mill Lane and Browns Lane, giving access to the Daimler Shadow Factory, which in the 1950's became the Jaguar Plant. Amongst the 1930's homes are a scattering of historic buildings; identified on the 1841 tithe map and the first edition 1889 25in OS maps. There are five grade II listed buildings within the settlement, and a six high quality locally listed buildings.

2.4 The special interest of Brownhill Green that justifies its designation as a conservation area includes:

- Its long history, still evident in the layout of the village, in its buildings
- The distinctive long, narrow enclosures present today to the north of the settlement
- Survival of historic identity of village, plots and layout
- The significant contribution of the natural environment in trees, gardens, open spaces, hedges

The conservation area boundary is drawn to reflect this special interest.

### 3. ASSESSING SPECIAL INTEREST

#### *Location*

3.1 Brownhill Green is a suburban hamlet 4.75 km north west of Coventry city centre, within a short distance of the villages of Allesley, Coundon and Keresley. From the Village of Coundon the Brownhill Green Road takes a north east route, crossing Coundon Wedge Drive and Long Road, and joins with Wall Hill Road which forks by the White Lion Pub, the south side becomes Hawkes Mill Lane. Both roads are of medieval origin, dating back to the early 1400's. The bedrock is sandstone and the ground is 122 metres above sea-level to the south west rising to 145 metres to the north east.

#### *Landscape Setting:*

3.2 The Character Area predominantly comprises fields with post-medieval houses along Wall Hill Road with some 1930s ribbon housing development along the Tamworth Road, Hawkes Mill Lane and Browns Lane. The morphology of the fields within the Character Area is distinctive and unique to the Coventry area. Field boundaries have a strong NNE – SSW alignment and are long and narrow in shape. The field boundaries are formed by thick hedges with many veteran trees. Housing in the area is set far back from the road with spacious gardens creating a secluded atmosphere. There is some footpath access to the fields which are located behind private housing. Despite the proximity of dwellings there is a rural and tranquil atmosphere.

#### *Historical Development and Archaeological Background:*

3.3 Brownhill Green is a village located within the north-western part of the City of Coventry, with the village centre approximately 4.7km northwest of Coventry City Centre. The settlement is located on a bedrock geology of the Keresley Member, a sandstone sedimentary bedrock, with this or other types of sandstone geology a common feature across the Coventry district. The superficial or drift geology is comprised of the Thrussington Member, a deposit formed of brown to reddish brown diamicton. Topographically, the landscape broadly slopes from north to south, with the



higher areas of the settlement along Tamworth Road, 156m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), dropping to 144m aOD at the junction of Tamworth Road and Long Lane, whilst Long Lane at the junction with Wall Hill Road is only 119m aOD. The junction of Wall Hill Road and Hawkes Mill Road is 122m aOD and this rises to 130m aOD at Hawkes End. The River Sherbourne runs to the west of Hawkes End in a north-south direction and the North Brook originally running along Wall Hill Road and then turning in a southerly direction past the junction with Coundon Wedge Drive.

- 3.4 Brownhill Green was included in the manor of Coundon, which was historically within the Knightlow Hundred and was not included within the land covered by the County of Coventry City in 1451 when it was created by Henry VI (Stephens 1969). The villages and areas included within the City were Radford, Keresley, Foleshill, Exhall, Ansty, Shilton, Caludon, Wyken, Henly, Wood-end, Stoke, Biggin, Whitley, Pinley, Asthill, Harnell, Horwell and Whoberley and parts of Walsgrave-on-Sowe and Styvechale (McGrory 2003).
- 3.5 Coundon itself was surveyed as a separate settlement within the Domesday Survey, as it was held in part by the Prior of Coventry during the 11th century. Brownhill Green was not mentioned in the Domesday Survey however and would have come under the Coundon entry.
- 3.6 Despite this, settlement activity at Brownhill Green is thought to date back to the medieval period. It was likely a small hamlet or several farms and cottages clustered around an area of common land, crossed by Wall Hill Road and Hawkes Mill Lane. Although much of the visible built heritage in Brownhill Green dates from the 18th century onwards, the road layout and field systems are much earlier, with the parish boundary between Coundon and Allesley dating back to the Saxon period.
- 3.7 This early recorded evidence within Brownhill Green is contained within a Saxon Charter describing the boundaries of Coundon (MCT 2012), which bisects the modern-day Brownhill Green settlement (Plate 2). The later parish boundary between Coundon and Allesley follows this approximate alignment. However, there are no recorded physical remains of this date within the proposed Conservation Area boundary.

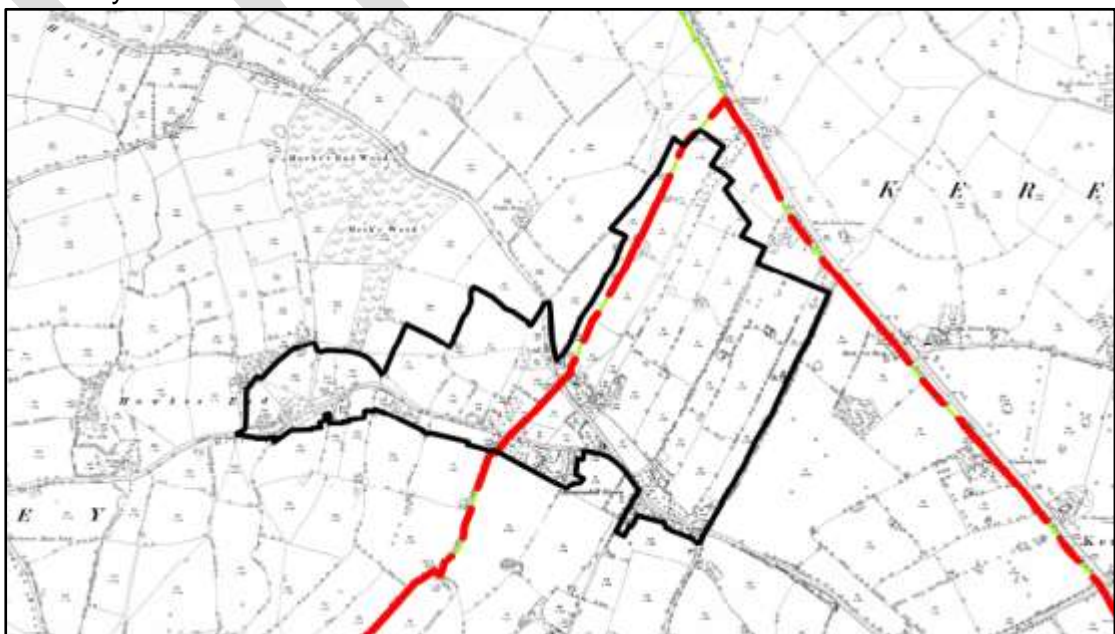
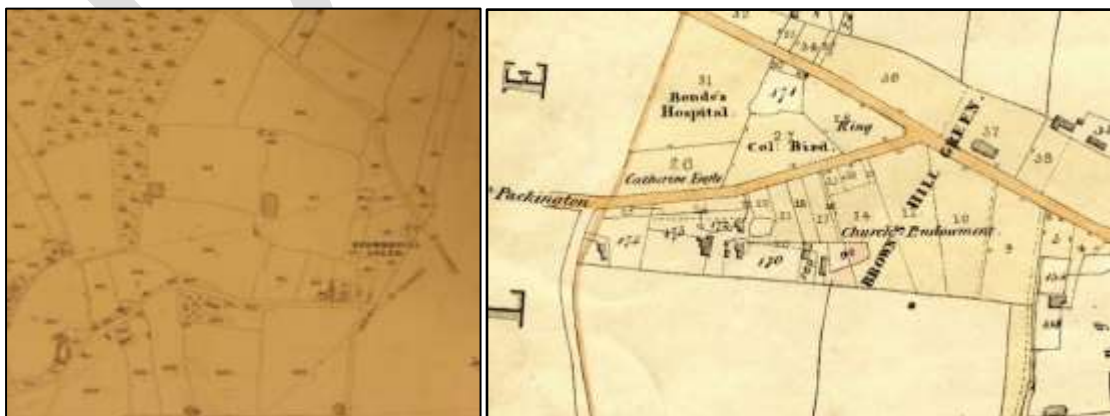
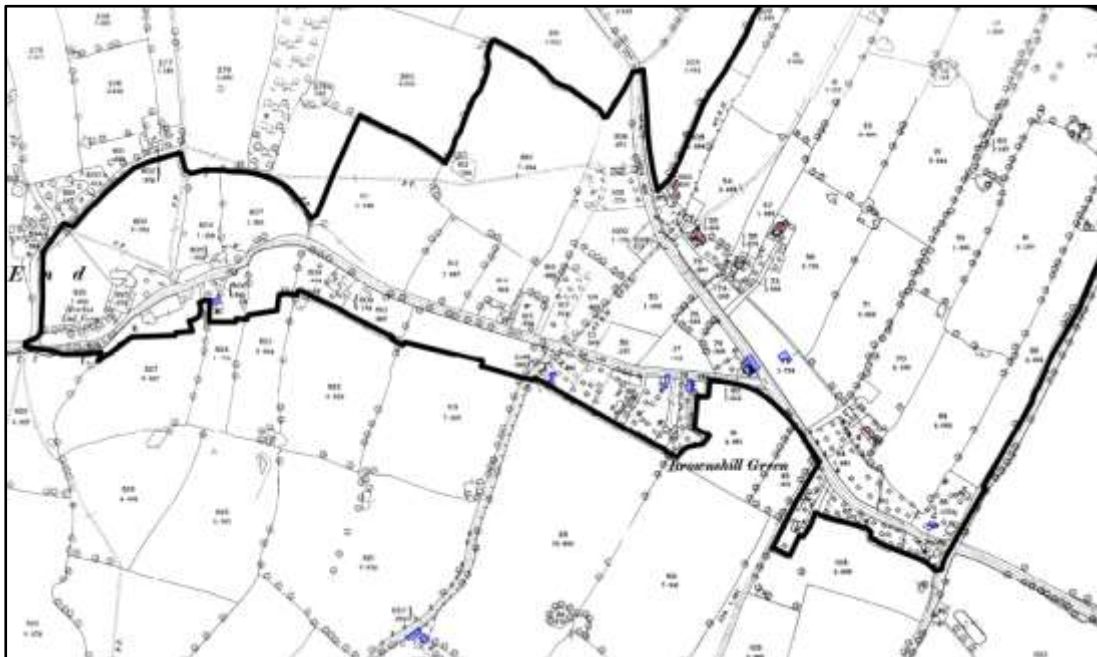


Plate 2: Brownhill Green in 1884-89, with Coundon Boundary according to Saxon Charter in red and Conservation Area in black.

- 3.8 The archaeological record for Brownhill Green is sporadic, which in part reflects the limited development and therefore opportunities for any formal archaeological work. Many of the sites known have been identified as part of the Coventry Historic Environment Project (CHEP), which undertook fieldwalking and recorded a number of examples of ridge and furrow cultivation as well as findspots of prehistoric flints and pottery of medieval and later date. Within the proposed Conservation Area boundary, an enclosure of unknown date has been identified from aerial photographs southwest of the junction of Long Lane and Tamworth Road (MCT 11511). This could be prehistoric or later in date but no intrusive archaeological investigations have occurred to confirm the origins and function of the possible enclosure. The site is one of a number of Archaeological Constraint Areas identified within the vicinity of Brownhill Green although only three of these are within the proposed Conservation Area boundary. The other two are areas of medieval ridge and furrow. Further areas of activity have been identified to the north and northwest of the settlement, including an Iron Age 'D' shaped enclosure located north of Wall Hill Road, although this is beyond the Conservation Area boundary.
- 3.9 Whilst archaeological evidence of medieval activity is lacking, the roads and field systems appear to date back to the medieval period, with many of these referenced in the 1410-11 St. Mary's Priory Cartulary and are detailed further below.
- 3.10 The settlement is a scattering of dwellings prior to the expansion in the 20th century, with no obvious foci except along the main routes Wall Hill Road, Hawkes Mill lane and, to a much lesser degree, Tamworth Road. With the parish boundary running through Brownhill Green, the settlement was divided onto two separate Tithe Maps, Allesley and Coundon. The Tithe Maps ([Plate 3](#)) illustrate the rather haphazard and isolated nature of the habitation of Brownhill Green during the mid-19th century, a pattern that had likely existed for a number of centuries with the dwellings forming along the road network. This settlement pattern is a loose collection surrounding the green. The formation of villages was at its peak during the 9th and 10th centuries in the midlands (Historic England 2018) and it is possible that Brownhill Green may have such early origins although physical evidence is so far absent.
- 3.11 There was no chapel or church within Brownhill Green or Manor House, each of which could have been a focus for the settlement. Instead, the settlement grew organically around the green and along the road network.



*Plate 3: Allesley Tithe Map 1841 (left) and Coundon Tithe Map 1844 (right)*



*Plate 4: Listed and Locally Listed Buildings within Brownshill Green, overlain onto 1884-89 OS Map.*

- 3.12 The road network, as mentioned earlier, is likely to be of at least medieval origin. Rural medieval roads were little more than a compacted dirt country lane used by carts, riders, pedestrians and livestock, with little in the way of cobbles or other surface treatment. Two of these lanes are mentioned in the St Mary's Cartulary. These was a road or lane called Le Brounselane and a second one called le Pokelane.
- 3.13 Le Brounselane is likely to have been Browns Lane and according to the 1410-11 cartulary separated the lordships of hallesley (Allesley) and Coundulne (Coundon) and Prior and Convent's land. Le Pokelane that is mentioned several times in the Cartulary. By the 19th century the lane was called Wash Brook Lane. The lane is depicted on the Coundon Inclosure map and recorded in the schedule as Wash Brook Lane.
- 3.14 Elsewhere lanes existed which have now been lost but are still reflected in today's landscape by existing property boundaries. One is located to the south of Wall Hill Lane and runs parallel to Coundon Wedge Drive. It was called Ball's Lane (MCT 2268) in a document of 1646 and is shown on the 1844 Tithe Map as a thin strip of common adjoining Brownshill Green. It too can still be recognized in the present landscape as a thin strip of enclosed land running south from Wall Hill Road ( [Plate 7 4](#)).
- 3.15 The etymological origins of the place name Brownshill Green is uncertain. Whilst a number of the early villages and manors within the areas surrounding Coventry have well documented place name, Brownshill Green is less clear cut. The Place Names of Warwickshire records the first mention of Brownshill Green to be in 1411, as le Brounehulfelde, which is presumably the St Mary's Cartulary. It was named Bronshilfeld in 1538 and the more familiar Brownshall Green in 1752. Research by Philpott found that the secretary of the English Place Name Society suggests that the name is "Brown shelf (ridge) field" from Old English "seylf" Middle English "shilf", "shulf" meaning a ridge (Allesley & Coundon Wedge Conservation Society 2009). There is no suggestion of any personal name, as can be found elsewhere, such as Allesely, which derived from the Old English Alleslega, meaning "woodland clearing of a man named Ælla" (Mills 1991).

### *Plan Form*

- 3.16 Wall Hill Road branches by the White Lion into Hawkes Mill Lane. The proposed Conservation Area measures 0.96 km from north to south and 1.07 km east to west, the small settlement has evolved around the two medieval roads and common land of Brownhill Green with fields to the north east extending the settlement edges, and a small number of historic pathways that connect the fields of Brownhill Green across the roads.
- 3.17 The buildings are in roughly linear pattern, with no uniformity in spacing between buildings or in their relationship to the road. The buildings carry their ridges in approximate alignment, with only occasional older buildings presenting their gables to the road. Some of these buildings sit immediately on to the road with gardens at their rear; others are set back with gardens and driveways extending to the front, sides and rear, so that there is no hard delineation of a consistent building line. Plot sizes vary throughout the settlement, the farms benefitting from the largest plots, linear plots are more evident in ribbon development to the west.
- 3.18 The individual dwellings are closely grouped at the entrance to the conservation area to the east and become more loosely scattered along Wall Hill Road to the NW beyond the White Lion Pub, where there are four farms incorporating ancillary buildings to the rear. The farms are all situated on the north side of the settlement and back onto the surviving medieval field systems of Brownhill Green. The setting is more rural, with the road becoming single track road and houses and farms sitting some distance from the roads edge, the front gardens, with hedges and orchards blend with the fields to the rear. The conservation area ends as the road widens again, 1.1 km to the NW of the entrance of Wall Hill Lane.
- 3.19 The entrance to Hawkes Mill Lane opens with views across the fields to the south and the White Lion Pub to the east, both sides of the road are bounded by hedges. The east side of the road is built up, with a combination of modern and historic dwellings fronting the road, some development to the rear has taken place in the form of small cul-de-sac's, this building line is not linear with buildings set back from the roads edge, and in some locations historic dwellings are aligned with their gables facing the road. The plots are generously spaced with open fields to the rear. The north side of the road is bounded by trees which hide a green wedge between Wall Hill Road and Hawkes Mill Lane.
- 3.20 The density of houses increases to the west end of Hawkes Mill Lane where there is 1930's ribbon development. The buildings tend to be identical in size and plot formation, carrying their ridges in alignment, with a handful of older building presenting their gables to the road. The buildings are set back behind gardens, many now containing parking bays.
- 3.21 Notably Poors Farm, Grove Farm, 112 Wall Hill Road and Hillside Farm along Wall Hill Road are situated along the edges of the old Brownhill Green common land within substantial plots, while the remaining farms, smaller houses and cottages line the roads and lanes, reflecting the historic status and function of these principal buildings and historic social hierarchy of the settlement.

### *Spaces*

- 3.22 There are significant areas of open space within the Brownhill Green Conservation Area which are key to its historic form, character and appearance.



- 3.23 Paddocks, fields, large gardens and the distinctive Brownhill Green common land which sits to the rear of Birch Tree Farm, Grove Farm and Poors Farm along the Wall Hill Road. The space around these buildings is visible from nearby roads, lanes and footpaths. These open undeveloped spaces are very tangible evidence of the rural and early agricultural settlement origin of the village. They provide the settings of and give clear views to some of its principal historic buildings. Together these areas form a swathe of green open space which carries through the village from north to south and forms a significant element to its character and special interest.
- 3.24 Wall Hill Road and Hawkes Mill Lane to the south are separated by a fork of green paddocks with horses and footpaths, providing a very human scale accessible space, that connects the two parts of the village. The low-level and regular ridgeline of 1930's bungalows along Hawkes Mill Lane, increases the perceived proximity of the countryside to the properties.
- 3.25 On the south side of Hawkes Mill Lane the two storey semis, gain open views over the countryside. At street level, there are wide verges with pathways, the gardens tend to be mature and well maintained, however the gardens are increasingly being replaced with hard landscaping for car parking.

#### *Key Views & Vistas*

- 3.26 The views at the entrance to Wall Hill Road to the SE are semi enclosed with a loose grain of properties and mature trees and hedges, providing glimpsed views to the rural hinterland beyond, these views continue along Wall Hill Road, up to the White Lion Pub, a local landmark, located prominently in view at a junction where the road forks.
- 3.27 From the public footpath and trackway that leads from 131 Wall Hill Road to the outside of the village, the track slowly inclines giving slightly elevated views back over the village and houses and beyond towards the tree lined hills of Brownhill Green common.
- 3.28 From the north eastern edge of the Brownhill Green Conservation Area is the gently curving Wall Hill Lane with open views to countryside and fenced paddocks, this is a particularly attractive rural situation, further enhanced by the wooded hillside and small number of historic farmsteads demarking the edges of the settlement.
- 3.29 Entering from the south east end of the Conservation Area, deep hedges of the sunken Hawkes Mill Lane provide channelled views into the conservation area. Hawkes End Farm sits in an elevated position, offering gradually unfolding views to a cluster of historic farm buildings and modern barn conversions before reaching the 1930 ribbon development, which draws countryside green edges to the interior of the settlement.
- 3.30 Further notable views include the built form focal point at the entrance to Wall Hill Lane from Coundon Wedge Drive and the built form focal point at the junction of Browns Lane and Hawkes Mill Lane.
- 3.31 The identification and respectful consideration for key views is crucial to the character and appearance of the conservation area.

## 4. CHARACTER ANALYSIS

### *General*

- 4.1 The character of Brownhill Green Conservation Area is a rural settlement developed from a disbursed hamlet, which grew around common land, and a medieval road pattern. Containing a scattering of historic buildings, with 1930's ribbon development towards the west end.

### *Character Areas*

- 4.2 There are three distinct character areas within Brownhill Green:

- Wall Hill Lane to the east.
- Wall Hill Lane to the northwest
- Hawkes Mill Lane to the southwest

### *Wall Hill Road*

- 4.3 The entrance to Wall Hill Road is located on the east side of Allesley roundabout, the B4076 joins Long Lane to the north east to Coundon Wedge Drive to the south west.
- 4.4 Coundon Wedge Drive was built as an extension to North Brook Road in the 1980's to provide access to the Jaguar Plant, which was previously arrived at from Browns Lane, within Brownhill Green. The Jaguar Plant, was originally built as a Second World War Shadow Factory, producing aircraft technology, adopted from Daimler Company car manufacturers. In 1951 the site was taken over by the Jaguar Factory as their primary site for manufacturing, it remained such until 2005 when the factory moved to Castle Bromwich. The modern-day site is roughly rectangular shaped measuring one mile in length and half a mile wide and is located half a mile to the south west of Wall Hill Lane. The Jaguar Land Rover Sports and Social Club is still in Lyons Park, but the Jaguar Heritage Museum now displays their classic car collection at Coventry Transport Museum. The site was renamed Lyons Park in 2010 and is now the home to several industrial and logistics businesses including an Amazon Distribution Centre and a variety of high-tech automotive companies. To the north of the site is the RSPCA Coventry and district branch.
- 4.5 There is a small number of buildings on the north and south sides Wall Hill Road, which mark the entrance to the proposed Conservation Area. The north side of the road is lined with a mixture of trees and dense hedgerows, contributing to the rural feel of the area. On the corner of Long Lane and Wall Hill Lane is no. 1 Long Lane ([Figure 1](#)) this building appears on the 1st edition OS map, and the parcel of land it is located within also contains the property to the rear, a locally listed building known as Smithy Cottage.
- 4.6 1 Long Lane is a two storey brick built house, under a machine tiled roof, with central chimney stack, the building has been modernised, and now comprises a two storey extension to the rear and along the north side joins into a single storey white rendered building which may originally have been a barn or garage, containing a large gallery window at the front.
- 4.7 The house is joined into the single storey building via an outshot roof, with entrance door in between the junction of the two buildings. Scarring in the brickwork on the south elevation is a blocked door, revealing that the main orientation of the house has been changed to face east.



*Figure 1: 1 Long Lane*

- 4.8 The building line continues up Long Lane, the remaining houses beyond this point are modern buildings, constructed over the last fifty years, and are not considered to be of heritage significance.



*Figure 2: Smithy Cottage*

- 4.9 On north side, located next to the corner of Wall Hill Lane is a locally listed building; Smithy Cottage, [DCT663] ([Figure 2](#)) Described as a shop owned and occupied by Elizabeth Sparrow on the 1844 Coundon Tithe Map, it was associated to Smithy Garage across the road and both buildings are evident on 1884-89 OS map ([Plate 5](#)) with records from 1878 indicating the smithy was run by Joseph Sparrow (McGrory 2003). It was taken over 1906 by Mr Camwell ([Figure 4](#)) who continued to run the

Smithy until he passed away in 1966. The forge was demolished in 1969 to make way for a modern car garage (Figure 3). The Herbert Galley in Coventry holds some of the workshop items from the Brownhill Green Smithy.



Figure 3: Brownhill Green 1962 © 2010 Joy Shakespeare.



Figure 4: Mr Thomas Camwell (1890-1966) Brownhill Green Smithy, Coventry. c1930's © 2010 Joy Shakespeare.

- 4.10 As noted earlier this building would originally formed part of the same parcel of land associated to 1 Long Road, suggesting that Smithy Cottage may have been ancillary



to 1 Long Lane. The property is stepped back from the roads edge on slightly elevated ground behind a low modern brick wall.

- 4.11 The dwelling has seen single storey extensions to the rear; however, the footprint of the main dwelling has not altered significantly in recent times. The dwelling is one and a half stories of a brick construction and grey rendered. There is a tall pitched and machine tiled roof with dentil brickwork under the eaves and central chimney stack. To the east side the roof sections are split, suggesting that this element of the building may have been added slightly later than the central part of the house. The main entrance is formed by a pitched roof porch on the west end of the building. The building is punctuated by a series of irregular windows, which may reflect changes to the internal space arrangement over time.
- 4.12 Historic maps show that the adjoining land to the east contained an orchard and was bounded on to the east by a small brook that now runs beneath Wall Hill road and emerges along the east side of Coundon Wedge Drive.

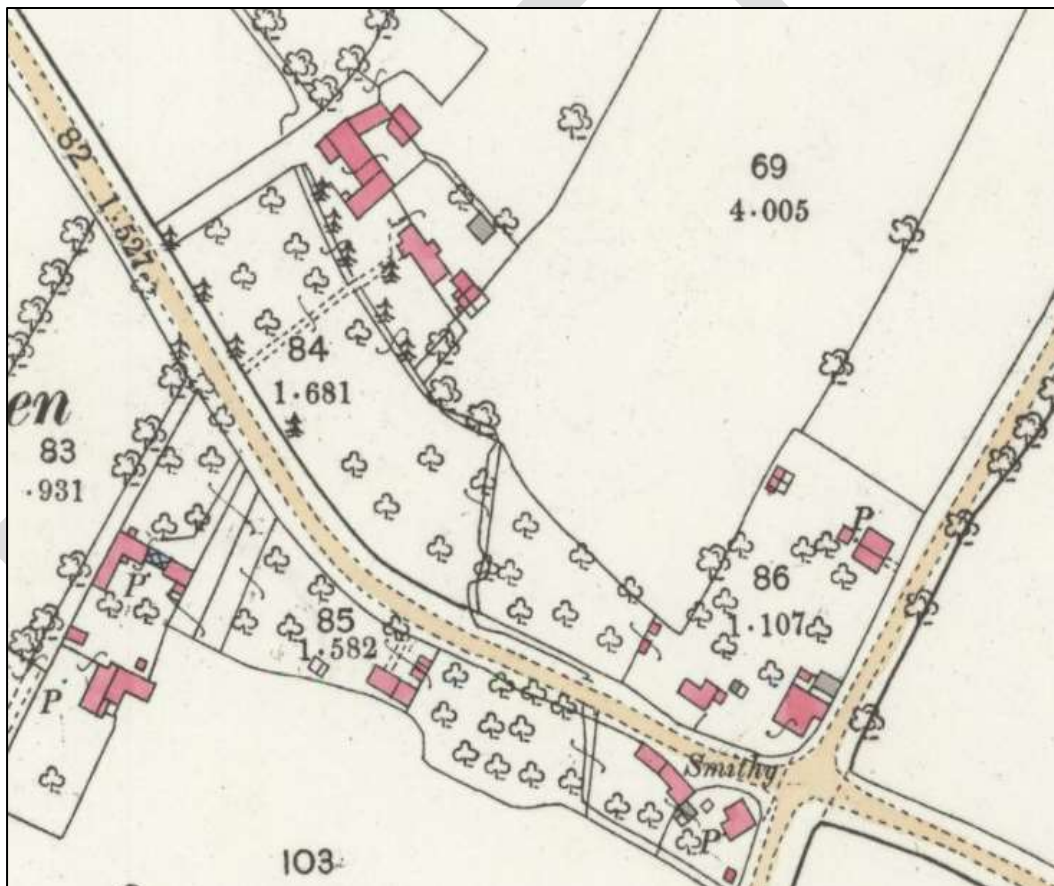


Plate 5: 1884-89 OS map Brownhill Green © 2021 National Library of Scotland

- 4.13 The land braces which connect the Smithy Cottage (2 Long Lane) with 1 Long Lane, can also be seen to connect to the land surrounding Birch Tree Farm to the north east. Showing that the site including the smithy was part of the same parcel of land with the same owner.



*Figure 5: Grade II Listed Birch Tree Farm*

- 4.14 Birch Tree Farm ([Figure 5](#)) is Grade II listed building (NHLE: 1076571) of red brick construction, with machine tiled roof and legible extension to the west side, built using a different shade of red brick. Within the roof is a gable end chimney, now forming part of the main roof. The extension is entirely sympathetic to the original house, with a cambered arched window at ground floor level. There are three flush triple wooden casement windows with slightly cambered arched heads to the ground floor and bricked porch with gabled roof to the east.
- 4.15 Within the curtilage of the building are a selection of historic buildings, including an attractive large two storey barn with narrow arched headed window, under a clay tiled roof, which sits at a right angle to the farmhouse, creating a level of enclosure to the farmhouse to the west side. There are other barns connected to the north east side, forming an H-plan arrangement. The farm has low visibility from the roads due to a high level of tree coverage.
- 4.16 Prominently located on the south corner is No. 1 Wall Hill Road ([Figure 6](#)), this is a north east facing vernacular cottage which overlooks the roundabout. The rectangular plan form contains a front range and double pile ranges set at right angles to the rear. The building has a plain tile roof with finials denoting the line of the rear ranges, and two symmetrical, tall, corbelled chimney stacks at either end of the property. Built of attractive Flemish bond brickwork with yellow headers, and red clay stretcher bricks. A large wisteria grows over the front of the cottage, its picturesque appearance positively contributes to entrance to the Conservation Area.





Figure 6: No. 1 Wall Hill Road

- 4.17 Brace symbols shown on the 1889 first edition 25-inch OS Map connect land along the south side of Wall Hill Road, from No. 1 Wall Hill Lane, and up to the unnamed road to the east. This suggests one landowner with tenanted land including No. 1 Wall Hill Lane.
- 4.18 There are two modern dwellings neighbouring, these were built on the site of former Smithy Garage after 2005 as a pair of dwellings. They are similar in size and appearance. One contains a projecting gable from the main range. Both are built using dark brown brick with their main ranges are road facing and situated behind a joined low brick wall topped with metal railings. These properties are taller than the neighbouring 1 Wall Hill Road and sit within generous plots. The buildings are of no historic merit, but their appearance sits comfortably with the dispersed historic buildings along this length of Wall Hill Road. A modest bungalow built during the 1950's is adjacent, sited behind of a small ornamental garden.
- 4.19 Continuing along the south side of this section of Wall Hill Road, is number 17 Wall Hill Road, an isolated historic building. The 25 in. OS 1886 map of Brownhill Green ([Plate 5](#)) shows a building on a very similar footprint to the building that exists today. The map shows a long ranged road facing building, with a vertical line through the right hand side suggesting that the length was made up of two separate buildings, this would also correlate to the plan form that we see today with the two storey cottage and a single storey extension to the right hand side of the building. As with many other properties along this stretch of road in the late 19th century there were also wells in the building's grounds.

- 4.20 17 Wall Hill Road ([Figure 7](#)) has segmental arched window heads, not dissimilar to the neighbouring Grade II listed Birch Tree Farm. It is likely these windows would have contained side hung triple casement windows, with central horizontal glazing bars, this style was typical of domestic vernacular buildings during the 18th century. The property has been modernised with a concrete tiled roof and the fenestration is entirely modern. Historically the windows on the building would have been triple casements, each with six lights and glazing ([Figure 8](#)).



*Figure 7: 17 Wall Hill Road*



*Figure 8: 17 Wall Hill Road, Brownhill Green. 1956 © 2010 Joy Shakespeare.*



- 4.21 The following two plots along the Wall Hill Road contain modern dwellings built during the 1970's, these buildings are not of any intrinsic historic value, but the generously spaced plots, and fields visible to the rear positive contribution to the roads edge.
- 4.22 29, 31 & 33 Wall Hill Road ([Figure 9](#)) are not listed nor locally listed but they do have some significance as original historic buildings, appearing on the first edition 1886 25 in OS maps and reflective of the regional vernacular character of Brownhill Green. The properties are located in the middle of a strip of land, with a long front garden containing a number of mature trees, and a driveway. The rear courtyard garden is also large but is flanked on three sides by buildings. The footprint of the buildings has not changed since the late 19th century.



*Figure 9: 29, 31 & 33 Wall Hill Road*

- 4.23 No. 29 addresses the road, the main elevation contains two ground floor and two first floor modern top hung casement windows and a central gabled porch, under a clay tiled roof with dentiled brickwork under the eaves. Single level storage buildings extend from the main dwelling to the east, stretching across the width of the plot.
- 4.24 To the south west side is a two-storey barn, converted into two dwellings, no's 31 & 33, they have irregular windows placed along the west elevation facing the private road. The interior of the courtyard reveals buildings with an entirely domestic rather than agricultural appearance, with a series of windows west elevation and sharing a white render finish with the main dwelling. Along the south gable end of no. 33, is a single storey lean to porch.
- 4.25 The setting of these historic buildings is particularly positive in contribution to the local character, with tall hedges bounding the north side of a narrow dirt track alongside of no's 31 & 33. The properties are appreciable from the roadside with glimpsed views to buildings between the heavy canopies of the trees, and the public footpath that follows the private lane through the fields to the south.
- 4.26 Behind number 33 Wall Hill Road is a modern replacement dwelling, located on a similar sized footprint to the previous house. This is the possible site of a 17th century messuage barn and garden associated with the Bonds Grove Piece lands.



*Figure 10: Brownhill Green Public Footpath towards 29, 31 & 33 Wall Hill Road*



*Figure 11: Brownhill Green Farm Public Footpath looking north*

- 4.27 The public footpath leads out to the old Brownhill Green Farm (Figures 10 & 11), now the R.S.P.C.A., Coventry and District Branch, the farm buildings comprise of a L-shape arrangement of buildings, and sit at the brow of the hill to the east side. From along this stretch of pathway there are views into the conservation area across the tree and hedge lined fields toward the White lion Pub along the Wall Hill Road and further west to Hawkes Mill Lane. Further afield to the north are views to the rising hilltop of



Brownshill Green Common with a dense coverage of trees. The public footpath reaches over the crest of the hill and down to Sayer Drive nearby to the entrance of Lyons Park.

- 4.28 This view will be vulnerable to change as a result of the proposed housing allocation (H2:6 Land at Browns Lane), the proposal site extends to the hedges seen in [Figure 11](#). Coventry City's Local Plan 2016 – 2033, contains policies HE1, HE2, DE1 & GB1 designed to provide protection against unsympathetic development within the setting of conservation areas and the green belt.
- 4.29 The White Lion Public House (DCT 661) ([Figure 12](#)), is a later addition to the village, being built sometime after 1844 as the plot appears vacant on the Coundon Tithe Map from that year. It is Locally Listed and is an attractive building, formerly a private house in prominent position on road junction of Wall Hill Road and Hawkes Mill Lane. Patterned roof tiles, arched sash windows to first floor with bays on ground floor frontage. The original building appears to be the main elevation with two right angled ranges to the rear, forming a U-shape, the pointed arch window heads on the main elevation are carried around the to the rear wings. ([Figure 13](#)), The building then drops down to single level with elaborate raised window heads which sit within the roofline on the to the rear extensions. There are a series of single level buildings which wrap around the rear of the property and form together to create an internal courtyard.



*Figure 12: Locally Listed the White Lion Public House*



*Figure 13: Locally Listed White Lion Pub, north west elevation*

- 4.30 Opposite is the early 20th century pumping station (DCT 662), also Locally Listed. Pumping Station (City of Coventry Waterworks) ([Figure 14](#)) 1930, red brick with stone dressings, 12 light windows to main block and interesting pattern of glazing bars to windows on side wing. Added mainly for group value.



*Figure 14: Locally Listed Pumping Station*

- 4.31 The north section of Wall Hill Road, has a different character to the other areas in the village, becoming immediately more rural with tree and hedge lined road. The properties are hidden from view behind mature gardens. The farms along the road, which backed onto the historic Brownshill Green field system would have developed from small holdings, located to take advantage of the fertile land they were built on.
- 4.32 A track leads to the Grade II listed Hillside Farm (110 Wall Hill Road) ([Figure 15](#)), The two-storey farm was built between the 17th century with some alterations, brick built with tiled roof, two flush casement windows with glazing bars. Lower wing on left with exposed timber framework to side gable and modern gabled porch. There is a single storey wing to the right, and a narrow two storey cottage built against the south facing gable of the farm from the late 1960's.



*Figure 15: Grade II listed Hillside Farm*

- 4.33 The farmhouse sits on the west side of a large plot of land, containing a large informal group of buildings with two separate focal points. The farmhouse overlooks a septate courtyard with a low set of barns located at a right angle to the farmhouse, forming an



L-plan. There are a number of disconnected metal framed barns with corrugated roof coverings spread across the site. There is a track that connects the farm to the remaining outbuildings, this was introduced after the 1930's.

- 4.34 To the east side of the building group is an attractive double height brick-built combination barn with projecting porch and plain clay tile roof with one smaller single storey barn at a right angle, opening out onto a large courtyard. This is also brick built but with corrugated roof coverings.
- 4.35 The large combination barn is seen on late 19th century maps is particularly typical of post mechanisation which occurred in mid-19th century, necessitating the need for larger entrances to provide access for machinery needed for arable farming. The site also includes two ponds.
- 4.36 There are several ponds along the field edges in Brownshill Green, some of these are known to be marl pits which were formed at the edges of fields so the marl, which was used as a fertiliser could be spread over the neighbouring fields. Over time the pits have filled with water becoming landscape features and represent remnants of agricultural history.



*Figure 16: Grade II listed 112 Wall Hill Road*

- 4.37 Grade II listed 112 Wall Hill Road ([Figure 16](#)), sits to the back of a large garden and entrance, within a strip field to the rear. Built in the century 16th and 17th, with whitewashed plaster finish and tiled roof. Containing flush casement windows. There is a modern porch with single storey wing on the right and large side chimney breast with offsets on left.
- 4.38 Blantyre Farm, not visible from the road, is a new farmhouse with historic barns to the west and modern agricultural buildings behind, the site is located between 112 & 122 Wall Hill Road.

- 4.39 The Grade II listed 122 Wall Hill Road ([Figure 17](#)), was built between the 17th or 18th century the property has seen alterations. It is a two-storey dwelling with cement render finish, grey tiled roof and flush casement windows. Historically there was a large L-shaped barn to the north east of the property, this was separated from the ownership of the 112 Wall Hill Road a number of years ago, and now forms part of the neighbouring Blantyre Farm.



*Figure 17: Grade II listed 122 Wall Hill Road*

- 4.40 128 Wall Hill Road ([Figure 18](#)), formerly Poors Farm (now Fearn's farm) is a Grade II listed building (NHLE:1342933), it has an equestrian background with outbuildings. A two-storey property, the external walls are sand/cement render, painted white with some brickwork at low levels, pitched clay tiled roofs with and timber flush casement windows. The property has been extended. There is a converted double garage to the side. The rear of the site contains private stables and a yard, together with a garden to the rear of the main house. To the front is a driveway with a mainly gravel finish and the site boundaries consist of fencing, hedgerows and brick buildings.



Figure 18: Grade II listed 128 Wall Hill Road

- 4.41 This group of listed buildings along Wall Hill Road (Nos 110, 112, 122 & 128) are the oldest set of buildings in Brownshill Green with dates ranging from 16th century through to the 18th century, they are listed for their rarity, their individual architectural interest and their group value as an informal group of vernacular buildings, the properties are all relatively similar in size and appearance. The properties contain evidence of timber framing and use of Arden brick, all have strong agricultural connections to their immediate setting, having all developed from smallholdings.
- 4.42 To the left of the roadside is number 91 Wall Hill Road, this is an extended bungalow, built in the latter part of the 20th century, and of no historic merit. The building sits in a generous plot, with front lawn and gate with piers and picket fence, its plot form is characteristic of other properties along the Wall Hill Road. Set back from the road edge is 101 Wall Hill Lane, built in the early part of the 20th century, similarly not of note historically, but also within a large plot typical of Wall Hill Road.
- 4.43 To the west is the boundary of the conservation area, which is edged by a green wedge of land located between Wall Hill Road and Hawkes Mill Lane. This area of land is used for pasture for horses and contains a public footpath into Hawkes Mill Lane, connecting across the historic common land of Brownshill Green. The rural and unspoilt nature of this pastureland contributes positively to the setting and appearance of the conservation area, and forms part of the unique identity of Brownshill Green.

#### *Hawkes Mill Lane*

- 4.44 There is a combination of historic and newer properties at the entrance to Hawkes Mill Lane, the buildings differ in their appearance with definite styles and ages apparent. The buildings genially address the roadside with a small number of carefully designed courtyard developments behind the main building line.





*Figure 19: Locally listed 39 Hawkes Mill Lane*

- 4.45 The locally listed 39 Hawkes Mill Lane (DCT659) ([Figure 19](#)), is a small brick and tile detached house with its gable end facing the road, probably dating from c.1860. It has a doorcase and casement windows with cambered brick arches and has been added to the Local List for its contribution to the character of the old village centre of Brownhill Green, as a relatively unspoiled example of the vernacular architecture of the area. The insertion of modern uPVC windows has somewhat detracted from the appearance of the building, spoiling the balance that would have been seen with traditional multi pane wooden casement windows.





*Figure 20: Locally Listed United Reformed Church, Hawkes Mill Lane.*

- 4.46 The United Reformed Church (Figure 20) is a locally listed (DCT1371) building. The Victorian chapel was opened as Brownhill Green Congregational Chapel in 1887 by the larger Vicar Lane Congregational Chapel in Coventry city centre, probably as a means of expanding their congregation in Coventry's rural hinterland. The foundation stone was laid by George Singer the prominent Coventry industrialist and philanthropist who lived nearby at Coundon Court. The chapel building is a small red brick building measuring approximately 12m by 7m in plan with dentilated eaves and gables, arched windows and an inscribed sandstone name plaque and foundation stone on the north wall. The roof is slate with decorative ceramic ridge tiles with a finial at the southern end. The front porch is a modern addition along with a red brick lean-to at the rear. To the rear of the chapel was a larger detached church hall dating from the early 1970's which was not of any historical or architectural interest and was demolished in 2015. The church closed to worship in 2014.
- 4.47 It is an unusual example of a rural non-conformist chapel established as a satellite of a larger city centre church and illustrates the development of non-conformism in Coventry; the quality of its design and materials used; its association with the prominent Coventry industrialist George Singer who lived locally; it contributes to the character of Brownhill Green as an Ancient Arden settlement with varied buildings built of local materials and set within a mature landscape of small pasture fields bounded by thick hedgerows with trees.

## Browns Lane



*Figure 21: Locally Listed the Cottage, Browns Lane*

- 4.48 The Cottage ([Figure 21](#)), on Browns Lane is a locally listed building (DCT660). The listing entry indicates the property might date from as early as the 16th century; though the first definitive date for its construction is Victorian around 1844. It is a simple vernacular structure, potentially a historic farmhouse decorated only with a dentil course to the eaves level and retains historic material such as an intact clay tile roof. There is also front porch extension with vernacular style outshut roof.

### *Hawkes Mill Lane (west end).*

- 4.49 At the junction of Browns Lane and Hawkes Mill Lane begins a section of road that contains ribbon development from the 1930's, the properties on the south side of the road are semi-detached two storey dwellings houses within generous plots, on the north side are a series of gable facing bungalows of one and a half storeys. The houses follow a strong built line, with mature front gardens, containing trees and laurel hedgerows. Many however have been lost to hardstanding for car parking. There is also a selection of new builds; some replacement bungalows and other two storey dwellings, these have been carefully integrated into their surroundings so as not to interrupt the existing built line or massing, with respectful designs of a similar character.



*Figure 22: Crooks Farm, Wall Hill Lane*

- 4.50 Crooks Farm (Figure 22), is halfway down Hawkes Mill Lane and is located between two relatively modern dwellings, the property appears on first edition OS maps from 1889 and is clearly of a vernacular design. It is of a T-shape plan with the main range overlooking a large front garden. Brick built under a clay tile roof. The building is of one and a half storey with two gabled dormer windows neatly placed within the eaves. The front elevation has three cambered arched windows at ground floor level, with a modern gabled porch. The building is historic but not listed or locally listed, it stands out because of its individual vernacular design.



*Figure 23: Locally listed Old Cottage Hawkes Mill Lane*

- 4.51 The locally listed Old Cottage (DCT1048) (Figure 23) probably 18th century in date is timber framed with modern UPVC windows inserted between panelling. The two extensions to the front follow the same plan form as the original property but appear to have been rebuilt. The house sits in a generous plot with garden and drive to the front bounded by a mature hedge.





*Figure 24: 172 Hawkes Mill Lane*

- 4.52 172 Hawkes Mill Lane ([Figure 24](#)), is not listed or locally listed but is a characterful vernacular property, with shed dormer in the roofline and half-hipped roof and lean-to extension to the left side. The right side has two later extensions with stepped roofline. The porch also has a shed roof sloping towards the front door. Historic maps show a series of outbuildings to the rear which are no longer extant.



*Figure 25: Hawkes Mill Farm, Hawkes Mill Lane*

- 4.53 On the edge of the proposed conservation area are a set of farm building associated to Hawkes Mill Farm ([Figure 25](#)), the buildings at least date to the late 19th century, with the farmhouse of a simple Victorian design, a rectangular plan with modern casement windows with flat stone lintels and stone cills around the windows. The barns are arranged to the rear of the farmhouse on two sides to create a semi-enclosed courtyard area. There are a series of other outbuildings to within the setting of the farmhouse, contributing positively to the agricultural and rural qualities of the conservation area.



## *Notable buildings*

### 4.54 Listed Buildings

Wall Hill Road;

- Grade II listed Birch Tree Farm and curtilage listed barns
- Grade II listed 112 Wall Hill Road
- Grade II listed Grove Farm (122 Wall Hill Road) and curtilage listed Barns
- Grade II listed Hillside Farm and curtilage listed barns
- Grade II listed Poors Farm (128 Wall Hill Road)

### 4.55 Locally Listed Buildings

Wall Hill Road;

- Smithy Cottage
- Pumping Station
- White Lion Public House

Hawkes Mill Lane;

- 39 Hawkes Mill Lane
- The Cottage
- The Old Cottage

### 4.56 Buildings of interest

Wall Hill Road;

- 17 Wall Hill Road
- 29, 31, 33 Wall Hill Road
- 101 Wall Hill Road

Hawkes Mill Lane;

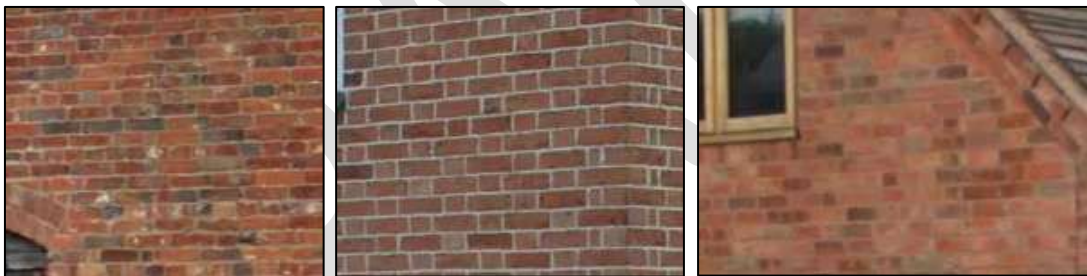
- 39, 45, 47, 51, 53 Hawkes Mill Lane
- 104, 106, 108 Hawkes Mill Lane
- 110 Hawkes Mill Lane
- 147 Hawkes Mill Lane
- 172 Hawkes Mill Lane
- Hill Top Farm, Hawkes Mill Lane
- Hawkes End Farm

## Materials

- The area of Brownhill Green demonstrates a broad consistency in external materiality which contributes to a distinctive local identity and should be used to inform future development proposals in the context of the conservation area.
- As noted in section 4.2, a variety of periods of development are evident within the area, and as such materiality and construction methods can be seen to vary, however Brownhill Green maintains a recognisable local palette which should be respected and protected.
- Noted in building element sections, the distinctive material palette of the primary character of the conservation area is outlined below and should be used for reference in the assessment of appropriateness for proposals within, or immediately adjacent to the conservation area.

### *Brickwork Facades.*

- 4.57 With variation in bond and mixture seen in the conservation area, the use of deep red facing brick is an important characteristic of the local material palette, evidence of stretcher and Flemish bonds are present with some agricultural examples also inclusive of blue brick types within the brickwork mix ([Figure 26](#)).



[Figure 26: Brick Types](#)

### *Rendered Facades*

- 4.58 Of note in an informal group of vernacular properties on Wall Hill Road, the use of render is less common in the conservation area, however still of significant use. The inclusion of rendered types alongside red brick palette adds a variety and richness to the local palette, and when used in a well-considered manner in context with an assessment of local palette is seen as a positive contributor to local character ([Figure 27](#)).



[Figure 27: White render](#)

## *Secondary External Materials – Architectural Features*

- 4.59 Enriching elevational treatments in the conservation area are notable uses of secondary elevational materials, delivered in the form of decorative soldier coursing, dentil details, stonework detail, brickwork arch forms and blue brick detailing. Examples of such characteristic elements are shown below in [Figure 28](#).



*Figure 28: Enriching elevational treatments*

## *Window and Door Details & Materiality*

- 4.60 The detailing, proportion and materials of fenestration arrangements in the conservation area is of high importance in the conservation area and should be preserved where positive examples are seen to exist and promoted when replacement is sought. Both sash and casement window types are noted in the conservation area currently, with the best examples showing a symmetry of opening arrangement and consistency of frame thickness. A number of examples also utilise window glazing bar detailing which may be referenced, whilst characterful entrance doorways are seen to be solid in form with modest glazing elements, utilising a stained timber finish or heritage pastel paintwork tones, positively contributing both to the individual identity of a property and the wider distinctiveness of Brownhill Green ([Figure 29](#)).



*Figure 29: Window and Door Details*

### *Roofing Materials*

- 4.61 Throughout the conservation area two forms of roof covering are prevalent in those properties which are seen to make positive contribution to the character of the area, those being of natural slate finish and clay tile finishes (Figure 30). Whilst examples of concrete roof tiling are evident on later properties this is not seen as appropriate in response to the positive characteristics of the conservation area and should therefore be avoided. In addition to the primary roof finish, a number of properties also demonstrate decoration at high level through the use of detailed ridge tiles and finials, delivering an upper level of architectural interest to properties.



*Figure 30: Roofing Materials*

### *Eaves Detailing and Rainwater Arrangements*

- 4.62 Corbelled eaves details and pinned rainwater gutters (Figure 31) are noted as the most common and positive contributor to character in the conservation area in respect of rainwater goods, arrangement of downpipes should also be carefully considered in order to respect elevational design. Boxed UPVC types are noted on later development but not endorsed and seen as detrimental to the quality of the conservation area.



*Figure 31: Eaves Details*

### *Boundary Treatments*

- 4.63 Evident in the Brownhill Green conservation area is a variation in disposition to the public realm of properties and as such the definition between public and private realms can be notably varied. Along Wall Hill Road, frontages within the conservation area are largely defined by mature landscape features of formal hedgerows set to the boundary of the public footpath, however along Hawkes Mill Lane where density of development is higher, low level boundary walls, changes in hard landscape surfacing and evidence of metal railings can all be seen to defined the public and private realms (Figure 32). As such the assessment of appropriate boundary forms must be made in respect of the immediate context, with a variety of solutions potentially appropriate.





Figure 32: Boundary Treatments

### *Local Details*

- 4.64 There are local building details and other features in Brownshill Green which contribute to its character and special interest and which are important to retain. These include:

### *Landform*

- 4.65 Much of the field systems around Brownshill Green have been assessed as part of the Coventry Historic Landscape Characterisation (Markwick et al 2013). The field systems around Brownshill Green reflect the history of the area, with the fields enclosed by Wall Hill, Long Lane and Tamworth Road of particular significance, potentially representing a rare (in Coventry) example of surviving medieval field system, whereas in most places post-medieval enclosure and modern agricultural practices have led to the loss of these systems.
- 4.66 According to the Cartulary, the area to the north of Wall Hill Road was a common during the medieval period known as Herneiswast (MCT 2309) and Bradnokwast (MCT 2305). The distinctive long, narrow enclosures present today to the north of the settlement stretching towards the Tamworth Road are very unusual. The field pattern is first depicted on the 1841 Allesley Tithe Map but it may well be significantly older and of medieval origin and identifiable as those fields mentioned in the 1410-11 Cartulary. The medieval green would probably have been considerably larger but has been encroached upon by housing throughout the post-medieval period. This is probably the result of otherwise landless squatters building cottages on the common land and the process is clearly shown to be well advanced on the Tithe Maps.
- 4.67 To the south of Wall Hill Road are four enclosed fields and the remnants of a wood, the remains of a field pattern dating back to at least 1581 when a survey recorded these fields as 'Warding's Grounds'. Several of the field boundaries survive as

hedgerows, as do those running along the former medieval parish boundary of Coundon and are likely to be ancient, potentially early medieval even.

- 4.68 The Historic Environment Record details several areas of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation within the area (MCT1097, MCT1101, MCT14349 and MCT10868). One area has now been partially built on (MCT14349) along Hawks Mill Lane but survives in the fields south of the new dwellings.

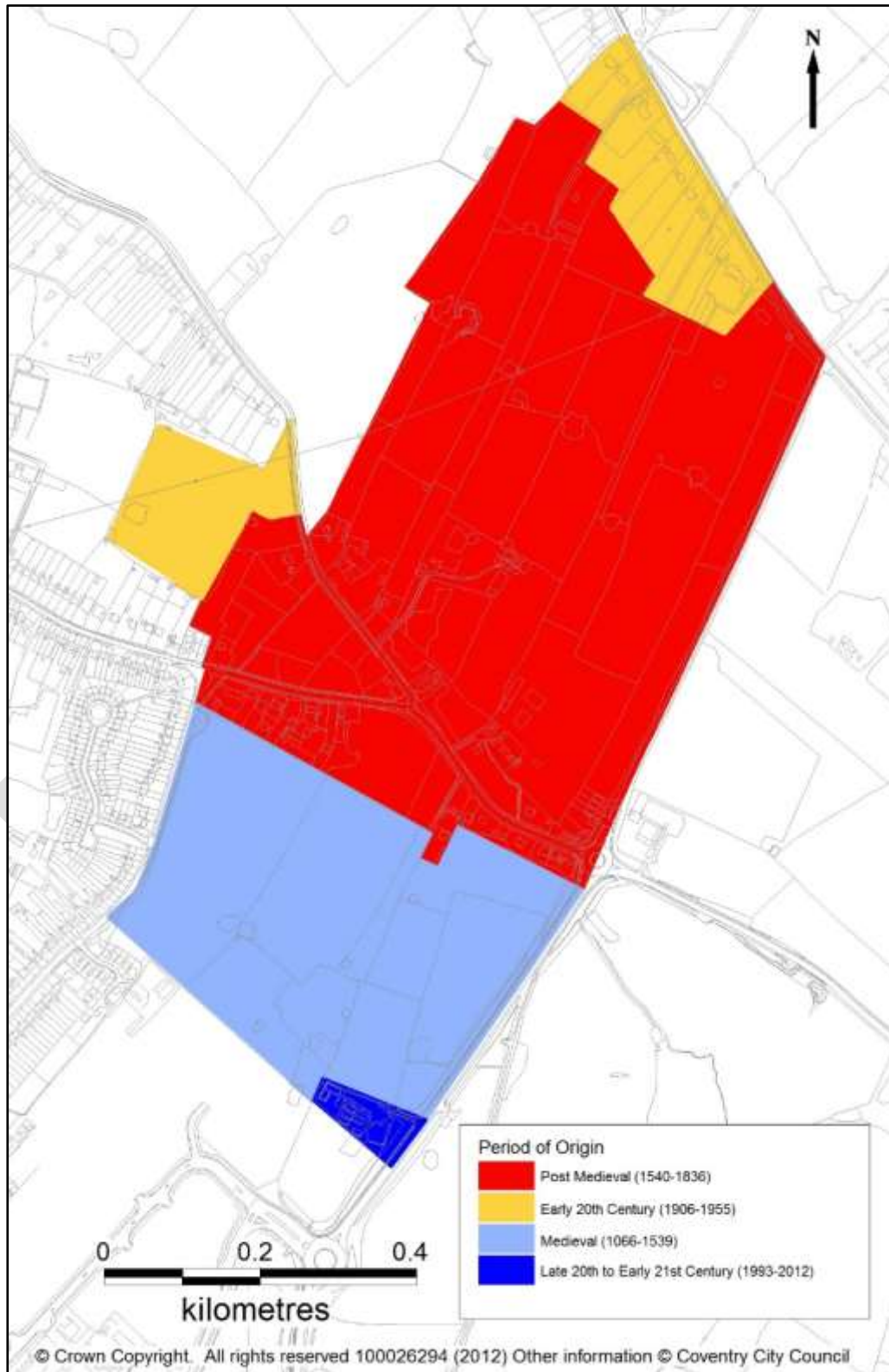


Plate 6: HLC Area 37 Map showing dates of origin for field boundaries

- 4.69 The green and road layout have thus had a considerable hand in how the settlement has evolved at Brownhill Green and contributes to its significance. The fieldscape is also an important relict of the early farming economy of Brownhill green and a rare surviving example of this within Coventry and the West Midlands. Where surviving, the historic hedgerows are not only valuable for the ecological contribution but the historic legibility of the medieval field system.

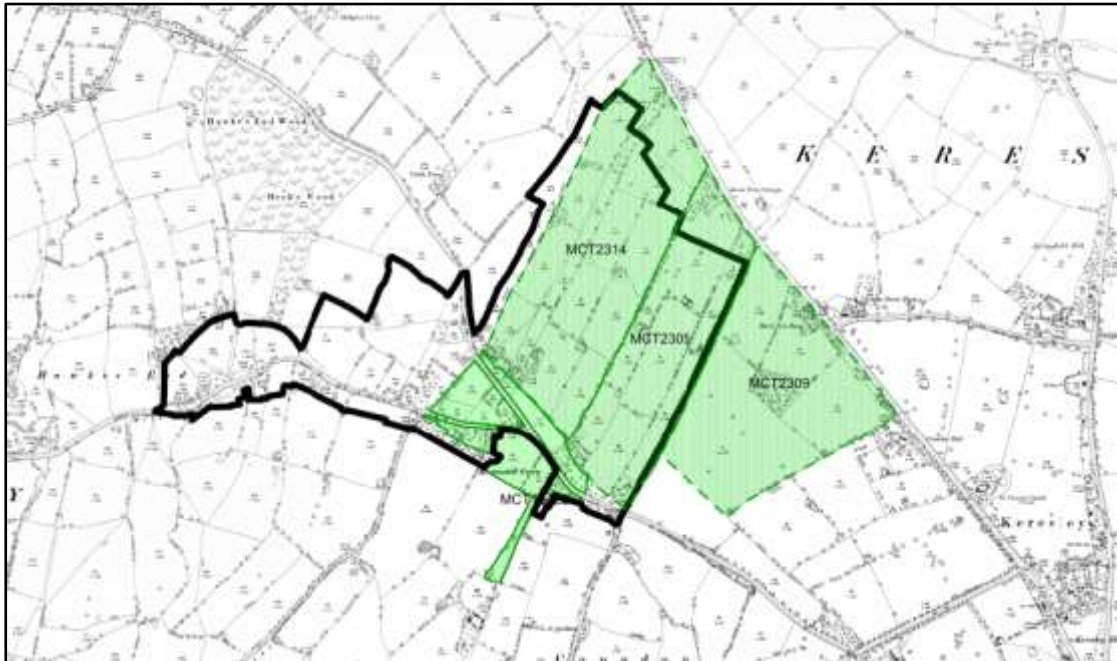


Plate 7: Medieval fields named in the 1410-11 St Mary's Priory Cartulary in green with Conservation Area in black, on 1884-89 OS Map.

- 4.70 It is advised that LiDAR data should be obtained, if available, to establish where the early field boundaries and parish boundary is demarked by any ditches or banks, as was sometimes the case in medieval boundaries.

#### *Natural Environment*

- 4.71 Arden farming was traditionally based on grass rather than grain, so that the all-abiding image of the landscape was of a mosaic of enclosed and unenclosed pasture, intermixed with substantial areas of woodland. In a few places, however, crops were grown in small groups of open fields, which were divided into unhedged strips and famed communally (eg Allesley). These, along with some small Arden commons and greens (e.g. Brownhill Green, Coundon Green, Keresley Green and Heath, and Corley Moor), were enclosed piecemeal over the centuries, to complete the intricate pattern of hedged enclosures.

#### *Distinctive Local Character*

- 4.72 Despite some suburban ribbon development, the historic farmland and highway patterns are for the most part still remarkably intact in this part of Coventry. As a result, the area retains a strong rural character and local identity. The landscape is characterised by a wide range of historic features. These include:

- a mature and varied undulating landscape;
- many irregularly shaped deciduous Ancient Woodlands, remnant of the Forest of Arden;
- a well-defined irregular pattern of small to medium sized fields with mature hedgerows;



- thick roadside hedgerows, with mature native trees (especially oaks) and adjoining spinneys;
- narrow winding country lanes, with small triangular grassed islands at road junctions;
- sunken lanes and trackways, often with high hedge-banks;
- a complex network of public footpaths of local historical significance;
- dispersed settlement pattern of hamlets, farmsteads and roadside houses;
- vernacular style brick, stone and timber buildings reflecting local character, which blend with the landscape, particularly after years of weathering and mellowing;
- small permanent pastures enclosed by thick hedgerows;
- ridge-and-furrow meadows; and
- field ponds often fringed with trees and scrub.

### *Negative Features & Neutral Areas*

- 4.73 Brownhill Green is fortunate in retaining much of its historic form and fabric. There are, however, features that compromise or detract from its character and appearance. These include:
- 4.74 **Setting.** There has been some development at the fringe of the historic settlement area, so that in parts of the village the close relationship between the settlement and its rural hinterland has been compromised. In some parts this is still preserved in undeveloped fields and woodland and in outward views to more distant countryside. Some views will be vulnerable to change as a result of the proposed housing allocation (H2:6 Land at Browns Lane) where sensitive, responsive consideration of the characteristics of the conservation area will need to be carefully considered. Coventry City's Local Plan 2016 – 2033, contains policies HE1, HE2, DE1 & GB1 designed to provide protection against unsympathetic development within the setting of conservation areas and the green belt.
- 4.75 **New buildings.** Brownhill Green has seen some new development in recent years, and some developments integrate better into the historic environment than others. Most exhibit design characteristics that are quite different to the established characteristics of the area. The purpose of highlighting features is not necessarily to aim at their re-development where present, but to guard against such features being repeated to an extent the conservation areas characteristics may be undermined. Where negative features are identified, these and similar elements will not be regarded by the Council as a guide or precedent for future development proposals.
- 4.76 **Occasional sites,** such as the parking area to rear of the White Lion off Wall Hill Road detract from the appearance of the conservation area
- 4.77 **Poor quality re-pointing of fine historic brickwork** in hard cement mortars
- 4.78 **Replacement doors and windows.** A number of properties have had replacement windows and/or doors in uPVC, stained timber or double-glazed units. Window and door replacements with new ones of a different design, detail, opening arrangement, materials or finish, erodes local building detail, which is an essential part of the distinctive character and appearance of the conservation area.

- **Replacement roof coverings in interlocking or plain concrete tiles or reconstituted slate**, which are poor substitutes for clay and natural slate
- **Surface materials.** The use of concrete block paving for the surfacing of footways, drives and yards is an inappropriate material for the conservation area and the setting of its historic buildings
- **Fences.** Some properties have modern timber panelled or boarded fences which jar with the prevailing character and appearance of the conservation area.

4.79 We would welcome the opportunity of discussing the scope for improving these features.

#### *Neutral Areas*

4.80 There are some parts of the conservation area which, in their present form, neither enhance or detract from its character or appearance. Some of the new houses are set in good-sized plots with gardens, boundary hedges and planting which softens their appearance and helps to integrate them into the historic environment.

4.81 We will be careful, however, to guard against these properties and areas becoming too dominant through future additions or alterations.

#### *Issues*

- Encroachment of peripheral new developments on its setting
- Design quality of new buildings
- Visual intrusion of occasional sites
- Introduction of modern paving materials and timber panelled fences

#### *Note*

4.82 Although it is intended that this appraisal should highlight significant features of the conservation area which are important to its character or appearance, omission of a particular feature should not be taken as an indication that it is without merit and unimportant in conservation and planning terms.