

















Aston (Advanced Manufacturing Hub) Draft Development Framework

Contact:

Planning and Regeneration Economy Directorate Birmingham City Council

Click:

E:mail:

planningandregenerationenquiries@birmingham.gov.uk

Web:

http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/amhframework

Call:

Telephone calls to 0121 464 9871

Visit:

Office:

1 Lancaster Circus Birmingham B4 7DJ

Post:

P.O. Box 28 Birmingham B1 1TR

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Foreword

The Aston Regional Investment Site (RIS), designated as the Advanced Manufacturing Hub (AMH), is one of six economic zones within the City. These zones seek to attract investment and promote business growth in key target sectors, as part of our strategy for economic growth. With high quality sites that meet the needs of the market, Birmingham can nurture growing businesses, stimulate inward investment and generate much needed employment opportunities for both local communities and the wider region.

The AMH captures the importance of the advanced manufacturing sector to the wider West Midlands. The site seeks to provide opportunities for the growing automotive supply chain as well as other advanced manufacturing activity, which is forecast to accelerate given the successful performance of this industry across the region. In particular, the current success of car manufacturers such as JLR in Solihull and Castle Bromwich and SAIC Motor UK at Longbridge is putting pressure on supply chain companies to expand into more purpose built accommodation. The AMH is best placed to accommodate growth in this sector, given its size and accessibility at the heart of the motorway network.

Our commitment to delivering the AMH has already seen a significant amount of public sector investment in site assembly and access improvements to de-risk development plots, which will be offered to the market in three phases. The majority of the first phase, comprising 10.5 ha, is ready for development and a major occupier has recently been secured for part of the site, who will deliver a new 10,000 sqm facility and 500 new and safeguarded jobs. The City Council will work in partnership with education and training providers to ensure that future employees are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to secure employment locally in the advanced manufacturing sector.

This document will ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to new development. It places considerable emphasis on high quality design and place making, to create an attractive business environment for both new businesses and the wider community.

Councillor Tahir Ali

Cabinet Member for Development, Transport and the Economy Birmingham City Council

Introduction

The Aston Regional Investment Site (RIS), also known as the Advanced Manufacturing Hub (AMH), is designated in the adopted Aston, Newtown and Lozells Area Action Plan (AAP, 2012). It comprises a 20 hectare site, directly adjacent to the M6, and offers the potential for state of the art accommodation, supply chain opportunities and access to a skilled workforce that will be attractive to international, national and regional investors.

Purpose

Policy R5 within the adopted AAP refers to the preparation of a Development Framework for the RIS-AMH to ensure a comprehensive and coordinated approach to new development.

The Development Framework will sit alongside the AAP and Aston AMH Local Development Order (LDO). The latter has been prepared and adopted for the majority of the AMH, and this document illustrates how the LDO requirements can be applied. It also sets out development guidance for the areas not covered by the LDO which include sensitive boundaries with conservation and residential areas.

Given the diversity of land uses within the immediate area and the presence of historic and environmental assets, the Framework seeks to ensure that these are protected and enhanced as part of new development.

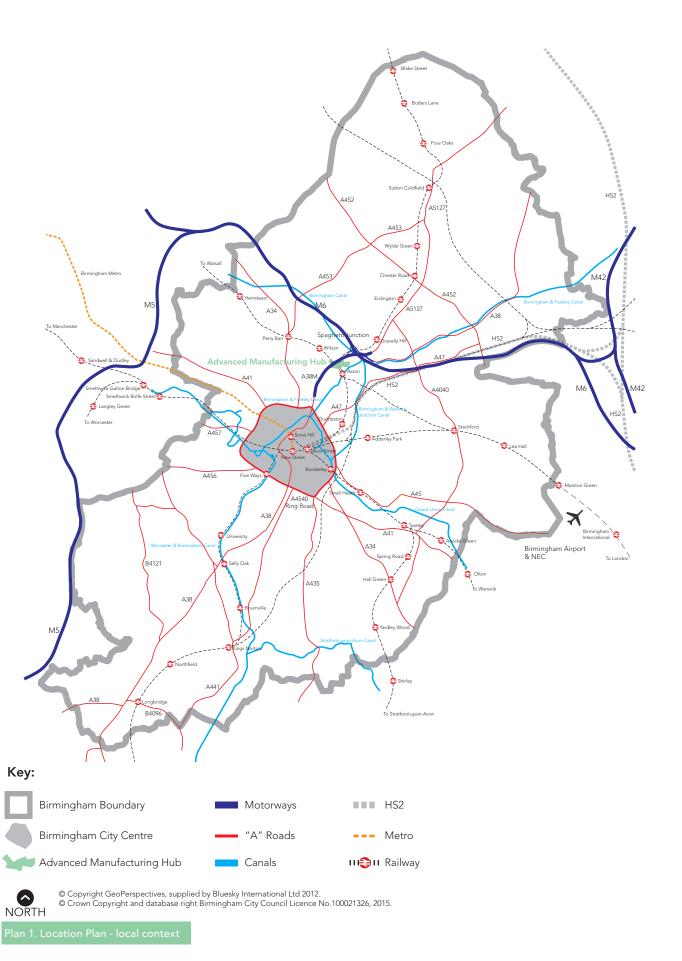
Guidance within this Framework includes:

- An indicative spatial framework showing development layout and connections with the local area.
- Building heights parameters plan.
- General development principles applicable to the whole RIS-AMH area.
- Additional site specific guidance.

Status

The RIS is a key policy in the Aston, Newtown and Lozells Area Action Plan (AAP), which was adopted by the City Council in 2012. The AAP specifically refers to the preparation of a Development Framework to guide and inform new development.

The Framework has been endorsed by the Cabinet Member for Development, Transport and the Economy. Although the document is non statutory, it is expected that all parties will commit to it and use it as a means of guiding and encouraging ongoing investment in the site.



Policy context

The planning policy context for the site is clearly outlined in the adopted AAP and submission version of the Birmingham Development Plan.

Birmingham Development Plan (BDP, 2014)

The Aston RIS-AMH is one of two Regional Investment Sites (RIS) in the City, which are identified in the submission version of the BDP. Both of these sites support the provision of a portfolio of key employment sites across Birmingham, which is especially important given the need to compete for investment in new employment sectors, and to provide opportunities for Birmingham-based companies to expand.

Aston AMH Local Development Order (LDO, 2014)

A LDO was adopted in 2014 to cover the majority of the AMH, including most of the Phase 1 area. The LDO grants planning permission for operational development within use classes B1 (b), B1 (c) and B2. Given the nature of the AMH, it does not include use class B1(a), and a formal planning application would need to be submitted for this type of use.

To expedite development, the LDO specifies maximum building heights; landscape buffers between the development and Salford Park/Aston Hall and Church Conservation Area; pedestrian routes; flood risk mitigation measures; energy standards; and noise mitigation measures.

Birmingham's Economic Zones Prospectus (2012)

The City Council's Economic Zones Prospectus promotes the site as Birmingham's Advanced Manufacturing Hub (AMH), which supports the growth of advanced manufacturing within the local and international automotive and aerospace sectors, aiming to build on the current success of vehicle manufacturing in the region.

Aston, Newtown and Lozells (AAP, 2012)

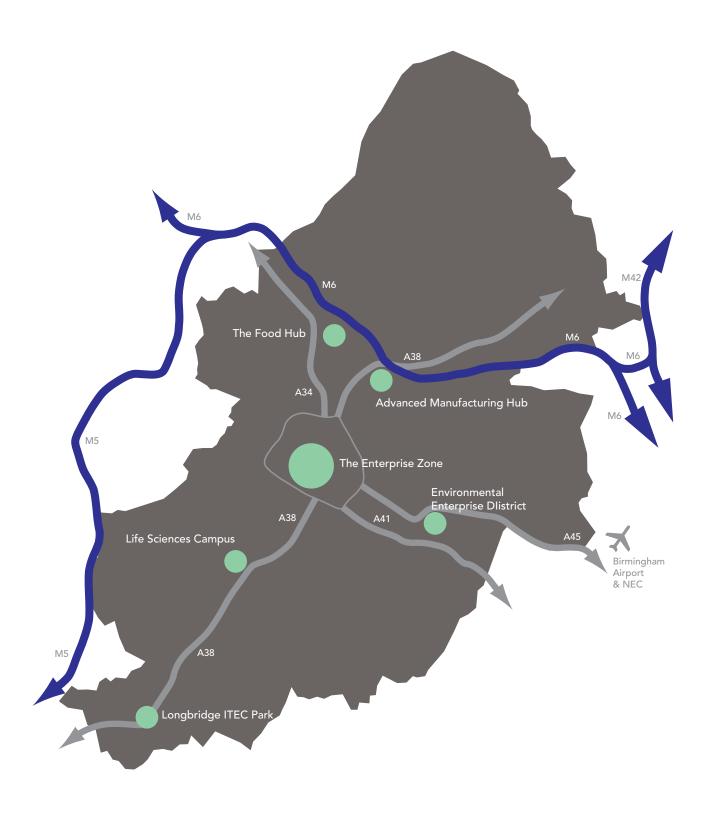
The adopted Aston, Newtown and Lozells Area Action Plan (AAP) contains detailed policies on the RIS (R1 - R6). These policies relate to appropriate land uses, the environment, design and massing and delivery.

Policy R1 within the AAP supports the following land uses on the site:

- B1(a) offices.
- B1(b) research and development of products and processes.
- B1(c) light industry.
- B2 general industry (high quality).
- Supporting uses, such as conference facilities, small scale retail of no more than 2,000 sqm gross floorspace, cafes, crèche, gym and hotel of an appropriate scale and ancillary to the main use of the site will also be acceptable.

Birmingham Mobility Action Plan (BMAP, 2013)

The Birmingham Mobility Action Plan (BMAP) presents a twenty year vision for improving transport in the City. It seeks to reinvent the City's transport system, meeting current and future mobility challenges, to facilitate strong and sustainable economic growth. This draft Development Framework recognises the importance of promoting all modes of travel to/from the RIS-AMH, including road, rail, walking and cycling.





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Plan 2. Economic Zones

Place context

The AMH occupies a strategic and prominent location immediately adjacent to Junction 6 of the M6 (Spaghetti Junction) and the A38 Aston Expressway. Together these provide a unique urban setting for realising the RIS concept.

The site

The 20 hectare site is bound by Queens Road to the south, Lichfield Road to the east, Aston Hall and Church Conservation Area to the west and the Walsall-Birmingham railway line and River Tame to the north. The AMH is crossed by the elevated Aston Expressway and railway line. The site currently comprises mainly industrial uses, with some small scale retail, leisure and community uses. It also incorporates large pieces of vacant land on the former Holte and Priory housing estates and the Serpentine site. It is intended that all of the AMH land will be redeveloped, with the exception of Astra Engineering, which is a wellestablished manufacturing use on Queens Road.

Access to the site is primarily from Aston Hall Road, which will benefit from an upgraded junction with Lichfield Road. There are good bus and rail connections to the city centre and surrounding areas. Aston railway station is within a 5 minute walk, and Witton and Gravelly Hill stations are also close by. There are frequent bus services with stops along Lichfield Road.

Local area

The area around the AHM includes residential, commercial, institutional and industrial uses, as well as environmental, recreational and heritage assets. These include Salford Park, the River Tame, Aston Hall and the Church of St Peter and St Paul. New development will need to protect local place quality and amenity and take opportunities to enhance built character and connectivity to enhance the AMH offer.

The following opportunities and constraints need to be taken into account when considering development proposals for the site.

Salford Park and River Tame

Salford Lake and Park and the River Tame Wildlife Corridor and Site of Local Importance for Nature Conservation (SLINC) are located adjacent to the northern boundary of the site. The park is an important recreational asset that could be enjoyed by workers and visitors to the AMH, using an enhanced pedestrian link between the park and Aston Hall Road. The LDO requires a 10-15m wide landscaped buffer to be established alongside the park and river.

Aston Park, Aston Hall and the Church of St Peter and St Paul

Aston Hall (Grade I listed) and the Church of St Peter and St Paul (Grade II* listed) fall within Aston Hall and Church Conservation Area, to the west of the AMH.

The church and churchyard are of medieval origin, and the spire is a local landmark which provides the focus for views along Aston Hall Road. The church grounds border the Serpentine site and the LDO requires a 15m wide landscaped buffer to be created along this edge, including a new pedestrian and cycle route.

Aston Hall is a magnificent Jacobean mansion and an important visitor attraction. Aston



Aston Ha

Park, bordering the AMH, is a 22 hectare remnant of the former deer park and formal gardens surrounding the Hall that now offers an oasis of calm and tranquillity that can be freely enjoyed by everyone.

The Aston Tavern public house, at the main entrance to the Serpentine site has recently been restored and extended having been derelict for over 20 years. The building now positively contributes to the surrounding historic environment and is an attractive building and resource within the local area.

Residential areas

Parts of the AMH are in close proximity to existing residential

properties, and as such, the layout, scale and design of new development will need to protect the amenity of occupiers.

The AMH sites most affected are (see Plan 6 on page 10 for site references):

- Site B, where AMH development will face houses on the opposite side of Waterworks Street.
- Site C, where a 15m wide landscaped buffer is required behind houses on Serpentine Road.
- Site D, which is overlooked by houses set back behind a green verge on the opposite side of Queens Road.

• Site E, which abuts the rear gardens of houses fronting Sutherland Street.



Plan 3. Local context

Development principles

Good design is essential to the success of the AMH, to create an attractive business environment.

Design objectives include:

- Creating a strong identity as a high quality business environment.
- Place that is easy to move around in and accessible by walking, cycling, public transport and by road.
- A compatible mix of business and ancillary uses.
- Built to high environmental standards- carbon efficient, flood resilient and providing green infrastructure.
- Respect and enhancement of existing land uses, character and the historic environment within and around the site.
- Design for long-term success

 well managed, flexible and adaptable.

The indicative spatial framework (Plan 4) shows locations within the AMH where development will need to have particular regard to views and to sensitive uses nearby, alongside new and improved connections to ensure good pedestrian accessibility.

In order to deliver the above design objectives, the following principles should be applied to all development across the area. Reference is made to LDO requirements where relevant.

Movement

Create a clear hierarchy of routes, as reflected in Plan 4, which will make a place that is easy to navigate (legible) for pedestrians and cyclists first and foremost, and motorists. These routes should contribute to a strong sense of place:

- Reinforce the hierarchy of routes through the design of plot boundary treatments and landscaping.
- Provide pedestrians and cyclists with safe and convenient access to Salford Park, Aston Park,
 Aston Railway Station, bus stops and ancillary uses within the site.
 Promote walking and cycling for employees, including sufficient cycle parking (LDO, B15).
 Developers and/or occupiers of the RIS will be required to sign up to and implement the Framework Travel Plan produced by the City Council.
- The package of highway improvement works currently being delivered at the junction of Aston Hall Road/ Lichfield Road will enhance the primary access into the AMH.

Layout

- Arrange buildings to reinforce the movement hierarchy, to mark key junctions and to form the focus of significant views.
- Protect important existing views, particularly to Aston Hall and Church Conservation Area.
- Maximise the potential for buildings to overlook main vehicular, walking and cycling routes
- Clearly define public and private spaces.
- Screen service yards, storage and refuse areas from the public realm using buildings wherever possible, or where necessary, by landscaping.

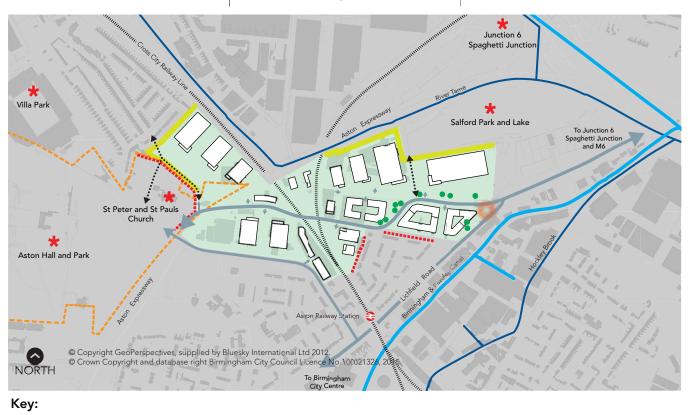


andscaping and public realm.

Landscape

- Retain existing trees that contribute to public amenity wherever possible (LDO, B10).
- Landscape buffer planting is to be provided to enhance landscape quality and mitigate the visual impacts of new development: 10m wide along Salford Lake frontage, 15m wide along River Tame corridor, 15m wide between Serpentine site and Aston Hall and Church Conservation Area/ residential properties to the north (LDO, A6 and Appendix C).
- Buffer planting will be required in areas where new development will be delivered in proximity to housing.
- The minimum width of perimeter landscaping adjacent to public highways should be 4m (LDO, A4). For other locations, boundary treatment will be appropriate to building location, scale and use.
- Use of site perimeter security fencing should be minimised.
 Where required, it must be of an attractive design and set back

- at least 2m from the edge of the public highway and its visual impact reduced by landscaping (LDO, A4).
- Landscape planting within individual units should soften the appearance of the buildings, security fencing and parking.
- Opportunities should be taken to integrate planting with sustainable drainage systems.





Gateway location

Indicative only Aston Hall and Church

Landmarks

Conservation Area

Advanced Manufacturing Hub Redevelopment blocks Landscape Buffer

Existing significant trees

Sensitive edges

Public realm

 Upgrade the streetscape with coherent, good quality footway materials, street lighting and street furniture to reinforce the identity of the site as a hub for advanced manufacturing.

Building design

- Buildings are to be of high quality design and materials to promote a coherent identity for the site as a centre for modern industry and employment.
 Buildings should meet BREEAM standard 'very good' as a minimum (LDO, A7).
- All buildings are to be designed with main entrances and glazed elevations fronting on to street frontages (LDO, A2). Main entrances are to be clearly expressed and identifiable from public streets.

Offices and other active elements within buildings should overlook and enliven public streets and spaces.

- Buildings should contribute visual interest to the public realm. Simple, modern forms with good quality detailing and facing materials will generally be appropriate.
- Buildings (including plant and machinery) within the LDO area are to be a maximum of 15m high (LDO, A3). The height of other buildings will be assessed on a site by site basis depending on their local context.
- Seek to use sustainable drainage systems and be flood resilient.

Car parking

- Car parking areas of 900 sqm or more are to incorporate high quality landscaping including trees and indigenous planting (LDO, A5). Car parks are to be sufficiently screened from the public realm so that they are not visually dominant.
- Porous paving materials should be used as these can contribute to minimising surface water runoff

Archaeology

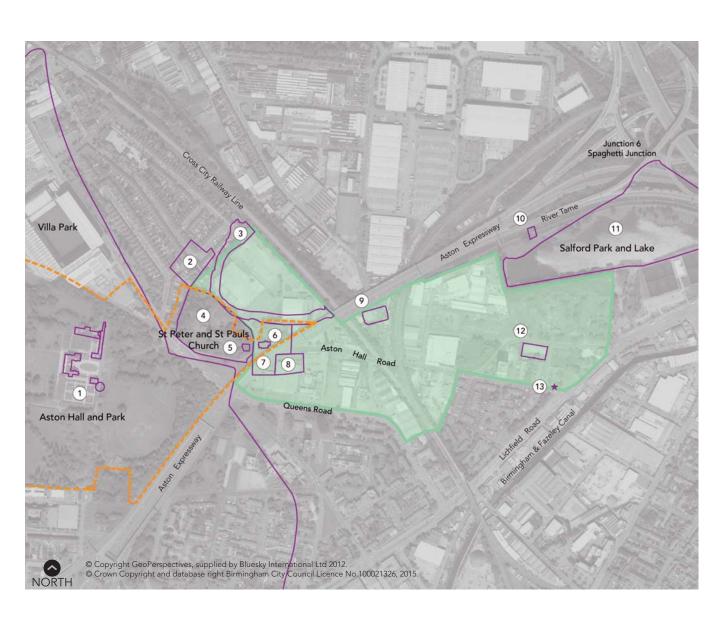
The main surviving elements of the area's historic development are:

- Archaeological remains of the manor house, village and Priory Road most and the alms-houses.
- Aston Hall Road represents a medieval road line.
- Queens Road is located on line of 17th century avenue running from Aston Hall.

An archaeological evaluation is required as part of any development proposals in proximity to the Electric Avenue medieval moated site.



Artist impression of industrial building



Key

Advanced Manufacturing Hub

Historic Environment Record

Aston Hall and Church
Conservation Area

- (1) Deer Park
- 2 Aston Old Hall and Moat
- 3 Former course of River Tame
- (4) St.Peter's & St. Paul's Church
- (5) Westbrook House
- (6) Aston Tavern
- (7) Aston Medieval Village
- 8 Holte Almshouses
- 9 Electric Avenue Moat
- (10) Corn Mill
- (11) Salford Reservoir
- (12) 157 179 Aston Hall Road
- (13) The Church Tavern

Development opportunities

The design of new development will need to respond to site specific factors such as location within the AMH, size, topography and the nature of surrounding uses.

A number of character areas have been identified in Plan 6. The following design guidance relates to these areas.

Area A - Land to the south and west of Salford Lake (majority covered by LDO).

- To enhance the setting of Salford Park, a 10m wide landscaped buffer of largely native tree species and hedge planting is to be provided along the northern site perimeter, reinforcing existing planting within the park. A 15m wide buffer is required to the River Tame corridor site boundary (LDO,A6).
- Buildings are to be a maximum of 15m high (LDOA3).
- Building design will depend on the type of development. Those with a high proportion of active frontage (such as offices) could take advantage of views over the park. Industrial buildings with largely blank facades must be designed to minimise visual impact from the park.
- The main entrances to buildings are to be positioned in the most publically prominent parts of the site and create an attractive and coherent sequence of buildings and landscaped spaces along Aston Hall Road.
- Retain existing trees of significant amenity value along Aston Hall Road and complement with additional tree planting.
- Enhance the existing pedestrian route between Salford Park and Aston Hall Road. The path is to be a minimum of 1.5m wide, set within a wider landscaped corridor and overlooked from adjacent buildings.

Area B - Land at junction of Lichfield Road and Aston Hall Road

- Provide landmark building at the realigned Lichfield Road/Aston Hall Road junction, with sufficient height and architectural quality to mark this prominent location at the 'gateway' to the AMH (see sketch below).
- Location and adjacency to existing residential properties mean that this area is most appropriate for B1 (such as offices) and ancillary/ supporting uses such as a hotel and/or retail.
- Building form and/or landscaping at the southwest

- corner of the area should provide an attractive focus for views eastwards along Aston Hall Road.
- Buildings are to have active frontages to Lichfield Road and Aston Hall Road. Retain significant existing trees where possible.
- Treatment of the Waterworks
 Street edge will depend on
 type of development. Buildings
 fronting and overlooking the
 street are encouraged (3 storeys
 maximum facing existing
 houses). A less active but well
 landscaped edge may be
 acceptable.



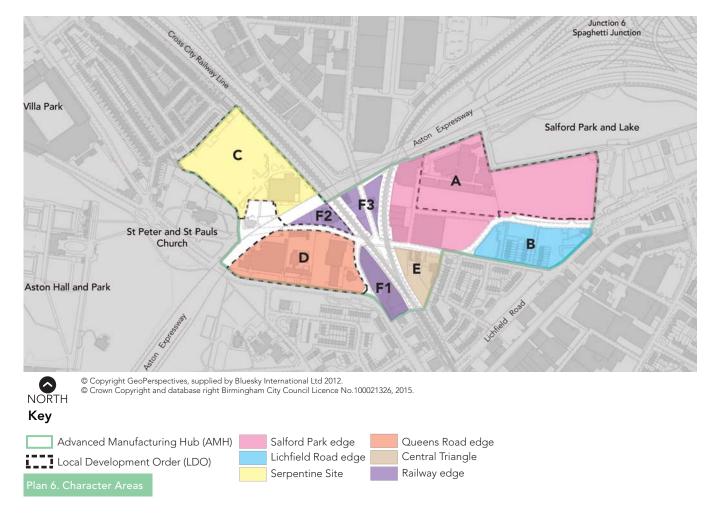
Area C - Serpentine site adjacent to Aston Hall and Church Conservation Area.

This 3.5 ha site is located at the western edge of the AMH and is bordered by the Church of St Peter and St Paul, rear gardens of houses on Serpentine Road, the railway line and the elevated Aston Expressway. It was previously occupied by a supermarket and is now vacant and ready for development.

 A 15m wide landscaped buffer and new boundary wall/ railings are to be provided alongside the church boundary, which is a Grade II* listed building. The landscaped

- area is to incorporate a cycle and pedestrian path linking Serpentine Road, Aston Hall Road and the churchyard (LDO, A6), see Plan 7.
- Buildings are to be set back from the church to protect the character of the Conservation Area, and main entrances and offices are to face the site access and new landscaped walking and cycling route. The siting, massing and design of buildings must respect views of the landmark church spire.
- A 15m wide landscaped buffer is also to be provided alongside the rear boundaries of houses on Serpentine Road (LDO, A6).

- Vehicular access to the site will be from Aston Hall Road, between the church and Aston Tavern public house. Treatment of the access is to be sympathetic to the historic setting of these buildings.
- Seek to retain a safe and attractive walking and cycling route through the site linking Aston Hall Road and Waterworks Street towards Aston rail station



Site D - Land to the north of Queens Road.

Site bound by Aston Hall Road, elevated Aston Expressway, Queens Road and Grosvenor Road. Astra Engineering occupies the western part of the site and is to be retained. Improvements will be sought to the appearance of the site below the Expressway where it faces the Conservation Area.

- Vehicular access is to be from Aston Hall Road. Buildings are to overlook this road and contribute to an attractive, landscaped street frontage.
- Grass verges along Queens
 Road to the south of the area are
 to be maintained and enhanced
 by tree planting (subject to any
 below-ground services).
- Enhance the appearance of the site facing the Grosvenor Road/ Queens Road junction through appropriate building design and/ or landscaping.

Area E - Land adjacent to Sutherland Street.

- This is a triangular area of land accessed from Aston Hall Road and borders the railway viaduct and rear gardens of houses on Sutherland Street.
- Development must protect the amenity of residential occupiers through the development of appropriate land uses, site layout and building massing, scale and outlook.
- Buildings are to provide good levels of enclosure, overlooking and activity to Aston Hall Road.

Areas F1, F2 and F3 - Land along Grosvenor Road and Electric Avenue.

These are relatively small, narrow, linear sites that back on to railway embankments.

Buildings are to overlook streets.
 Parking should be located to the rear of buildings or at the side if appropriately landscaped to be a discreet part of the streetscape.





Plan 7. Indicative plan showing landscaped buffer at Serpentine Road and Aston Hall Road

16 Delivery

Delivering high quality and integrated development on the AMH requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach and the provision of supporting infrastructure and services.

Partnership working

The AMH is being taken forward jointly by the City Council and Homes and Communities Agency (HCA). This partnership approach is key to delivering the site, and to realising the policy objectives in the adopted AAP.

A wider partnership approach with potential occupiers and education and training providers is also necessary, to ensure that future employees are equipped with the required knowledge and skills to secure employment locally in the advanced manufacturing sector. The City Council's Employment Access Team (EAT) will work with prospective occupiers to help satisfy their recruitment requirements, which will help to address unemployment in the City.

Phasing of development

The phasing for the site is shown in Plan 7. The fragmented ownership of the AMH means that there are challenging issues to resolve. However, a significant advantage is that the majority of Phase 1

falls within the ownership of the City Council and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), and development can be delivered in the short term on sites that have been cleared in preparation for development.

In terms of Phases 2 and 3, a clear strategy is in place to progress land assembly to enable new development. The City Council is currently working with landowners to facilitate future redevelopment, and where necessary, will use compulsory purchase powers to enable the RIS-AMH vision to be realised.

Planning process

Sites located within the LDO boundary benefit from a simplified planning regime that enables operational development for use classes B1 (b), (c) and high quality B2, subject to conditions. Sites outside of the LDO will be subject to the normal planning process, and proposals will need to enhance the existing urban context.

Supporting infrastructure and funding

The Aston, Newtown and Lozells AAP highlights requirements for new and enhanced infrastructure to support the level of development proposed on the RIS-AMH (Appendix 1).

The City Council will seek to enter into legal agreements with developers (including section 106/ 278 agreements) to ensure that the necessary infrastructure to support new development is delivered. Whilst planning obligations cannot be secured for development delivered as part of the LDO, funding could be secured for new development outside of the LDO boundary.

In addition, funding has been allocated through the Growing Places Fund (GPF) to contribute towards the cost of environmental enhancements and highway improvement works at the junction of Lichfield Road/ Aston Hall Road, which is now complete. These works were also part funded by the Local Pinch Points programme. The Highways Agency has recently delivered a further £1m improvement scheme at Salford Circus (Junction 6, M6), which has helped to address traffic congestion, providing journey time savings in peak periods.

With regard to the GPF, a £2m loan has been allocated for Phase 1. with £2.36m being match funded by the City Council and HCA. This public sector investment has been used to progress site assembly and the access improvements referred to above. An additional allocation of £3.1m has also been approved to unlock land in Phases 2 and 3, which will enable plots to be assembled and brought to market.



The LDO also contains conditions that require landscaped buffer zones to be provided to sensitive boundaries and the creation of key pedestrian routes. Measures and funding are therefore in place or in the pipeline to ensure that the necessary infrastructure works are delivered.

Support for businesses

The City Council is currently offering a number of business support initiatives, which are

designed to stimulate business growth across Birmingham. These initiatives can be accessed at: http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/supportforbusinesses

The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS) also provides business support through its Regional Growth Fund; further information can be accessed at: http://centreofenterprise.com/rgf/

If you are interested in locating your business on the RIS-AMH,

please contact the City Council, who will provide further information on the financial support packages available.

Waheed Nazir

Director of Planning & Regeneration Birmingham City Council



NORTH

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Key:

Advanced
Manufacturing Hub

Phase 2
Priory Road 2016 - 2020

Phase 1
Holte, Priory and Serpentine 2012-2015

Queens Road 2021 - 2026

Plan 7. Phasing

18 Appendix 1 Infrastructure requirements to support the RIS-AMH

Project	Means of delivery
Lichfield Road/ Aston Hall Road junction improvements	A package of highway improvement works are currently being delivered on site, which will be completed by July 2015. The scheme is fully funded with contributions from the HCA and GPF.
Improved bus links between the residential areas of Newtown, Lozells and South Aston and the RIS-AMH.	Review existing services in collaboration with Centro to determine any gaps in provision.
Improved bus stop facilities near the site	Works will be funded through the section 106 agreement for the Sainsbury's approval (Hamstead).
Enhancements to Aston railway station.	Station has benefited from public realm enhancements and lift access is provided. Engage with Centro to identify further improvements.
Enhancements to Aston Churchyard.	Landscaped buffer within the boundary of the Serpentine site (as specified in the LDO). The existing wall between the churchyard and Serpentine site will be demolished and replaced with a more sympathetic design, enabling views across the churchyard. A pedestrian and cycle route between Serpentine Road and Aston Hall Road will form part of the buffer, with a new link through the churchyard. Works will be funded through the GPF allocation and potentially the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF).
Traffic management measures (inc. pedestrian and cycling facilities).	Section 106 monies and funding from the GPF will deliver these works.
Environmental improvements inc. improvements to Salford Park and access to the River Tame Corridor.	Section 106 monies and funding from the GPF will deliver these works.
An appropriate local employment and training package.	The City Council's Employment Access Team (EAT) will work with developers/prospective employers to help satisfy their recruitment requirements. An emphasis is placed on assisting local people with securing new employment and training opportunities.



