



Hinckley & Bosworth
Borough Council

A Borough to be proud of



Green Wedge Review



December 2011

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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The aim of the Green Wedge Review is to assist the Council in determining the boundary of the green wedge. The need for such a review was underlined at the Examination in Public of the Hinckley and Bosworth Core Strategy which took place in May and October 2009.
- 1.2 The purpose of the review is to assess the two green wedges within the Borough which are known as the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge and Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge. These are currently shown on the Key Diagram of the Adopted Core Strategy. The detailed outline of the green wedges within the Borough are contained on the Local Plan Proposals Map and contained in Appendix A of this document.
- 1.3 Areas of green wedge primarily seek to guide the development form of urban areas. The presence of the green wedge helps to maintain settlement identity whilst providing green infrastructure links between settlements.
- 1.4 This assessment takes a full review of the green wedges which fall within Hinckley and Bosworth Borough and will recommend where boundary amendments could be made. This document will inform the preparation of the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) which will define the boundaries of green wedges. It is not the purpose of this document to amend the green wedge boundary this is done through the above DPD and will be consulted upon as part of the production process. The green wedge area on the Local Plan Proposals Map will be in place until the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD is adopted.
- 1.5 The document has been separated into sections that follow the methodology which has been undertaken for the assessment. The format is as follows:
 - Background – Sets out the formulation of the green wedge and an overview to the functionality of the Green Wedge.
 - Policy Context – Outlines the policies that have informed the production of the review.
 - Methodology – Explains the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Methodology.
 - Desktop Survey – Sets out the desk top analysis.
 - Site Surveys – Outlines the observations from the site investigations and makes an initial assessment of these findings.
 - Consultation Report – Outlines the findings of the stakeholder consultation.
 - Evaluation – Brings together the findings of the desk top survey, stakeholder consultation, and site investigations linking to the objectives of the Methodology.
 - Conclusions and recommendations – Sets out some concluding points and makes recommendations that could be carried forward through the site allocations process.

2. BACKGROUND AND OVERVIEW OF GREEN WEDGE

2.1 FORMULATION OF THE GREEN WEDGE

- 2.1.1 Green Wedge policies were introduced in Leicestershire in the Leicestershire Structure Plan (1987). The Secretary of State's approval makes it clear that Green Wedges were considered to be '*...policies for protecting structurally important areas of open land which influence the form and direction of urban development in Leicester...*'
- 2.1.2 The Leicestershire Structure Plan (1994) maintained green wedge policies. It highlighted that '*Green Wedges around Leicester and Loughborough have proved to be effective in retaining open areas both between settlements and extending into the main built-up areas*'.
- 2.1.3 The Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Structure Plan (2005), Strategy Policy 5, lists the purposes of Green Wedges. There are subtle differences to the aims given in the 1994 Structure Plan, particularly with regard to "strategic landscape and wildlife links". Strategy Policy 6 lists the general location of green wedges. The policy states that '*The defined boundaries of Green Wedges in the following general locations will be reviewed as part of local plan reviews...*'. The supporting text states that this must not compromise any of the 4 purposes of Green Wedges set out in Strategy Policy 5 which are:
- (a) '*Protecting structurally important areas of open land which influence the form and direction of urban development;*
 - (b) '*Ensuring that open land extends outwards between the existing and planned development limits of the urban areas;*
 - (c) '*Preserving strategic landscape and wildlife links between the countryside and urban open spaces; and*
 - (d) '*Preventing the coalescence and maintaining the physical identity of settlements adjoining the main urban areas*'.
- 2.1.4 The 2007 Structure Plan was superseded by the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009).
- 2.1.5 The green wedge was defined on the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan (2001) Proposals Map and Policy NE3 applied to the green wedge. Policy NE3 has subsequently been superseded by policies 6 and 9 of the Core Strategy. As part of the Core Strategy examination the Borough Council put forward the justification for the green wedge policies and argued that in respect of national guidance the Government recognises and accepts that there are areas of landscape outside nationally designated areas that are particularly highly valued locally (PPS7 para 24). It was noted that this is the case in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough where the two separate green wedges were proposed to be retained. The Authority highlighted during the examination that the Core Strategy makes clear that the basis of the green wedge designation is, amongst other things, to provide easy access from the urban areas into green spaces which contribute towards the quality of life for local residents. Further, that the green wedges proposed will provide an important element of green space infrastructure (recognised through the Landscape Character Assessment and the Green Infrastructure Strategy) that

will provide opportunities for enhancement to local amenity and ecological value of the landscape.

- 2.1.6 A proposed change as a result of the examination was to insert a reference that a review of the green wedges will take place through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD; this document will inform this requirement.

3. POLICY CONTEXT

3.1 PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT 7 (PPS7): SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN RURAL AREAS

- 3.1.1 Paragraph 26 of PPS7 states *'local planning authorities should ensure that planning policies in LDDs address the particular land use issues and opportunities to be found in the countryside around all urban areas, recognising its importance to those who live or work there, and also in providing the nearest and most accessible countryside to urban residents. Planning authorities should aim to secure environmental improvements and maximise a range of beneficial uses of this land, whilst reducing potential conflicts between neighbouring land uses.'* The green wedge seeks to provide a recreational resource and act as a green lung for residents residing in the settlements of Hinckley, Earl Shilton, Burbage, Barwell and Elmesthorpe.

3.2 CONSULTATION DRAFT PLANNING POLICY STATEMENT: PLANNING FOR A NATURAL AND HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT (2010)

- 3.2.1 The Policy Statement makes it clear that key priorities are the natural environment, green infrastructure, open space and quality of public rights of way. This relates to the objectives of the green wedge which promotes providing a green lung into the countryside and recreational opportunities.

3.3 EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL PLAN (2009)

- 3.3.1 Although the Government has announced its intention to abolish regional spatial strategies, the East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) still provides the most recent policy context for green wedges which informed the Core Strategy as they are not recognised at the national level.

- 3.3.2 The East Midlands Regional Plan (2009) does not contain a policy on Green Wedges. Instead, it emphasises that a review of existing Green Wedges or the creation of new ones in association with development will be carried out through the local development framework process. Paragraph 4.2.18 of the supporting text states that:

'Green Wedges serve useful strategic planning functions in preventing the merging of settlements, guiding development form and providing a 'green lung' into urban areas, and acts as a recreational resource. Although not supported by government policy in the same way as Green Belts, they can serve to identify smaller areas of separation between settlements. Provision will be made in Green Wedges for the retention or creation of green infrastructure or green links between urban open spaces and the countryside, and for the retention and enhancement of public access facilities, particularly for recreation.'

- 3.3.3 The Regional Plan sets out key planning functions for green wedges namely: preventing the merging of settlements; guiding development form; providing a 'green lung' into urban areas; and acting as a recreational resource.

- 3.3.4 The East Midlands Regional Plan Panel Report identifies that:

Para 14.47 '*...there is general support for their continuation but that does not mean to say that regional strategy, even sub-regional strategy, is the right place for a policy relating to them*'.

Para 14.48 '*Green wedges do not have the national policy status of the Green Belt and it seems to us that there is justifiable concern that they should not be regarded as unduly restrictive and must be subject to review in order to accommodate new development*'.

Para 14.50 '*We accept that green wedges are not "local landscape designations" as referred to in PPS7 but they are essentially a local policy tool. Green wedges clearly fulfil a useful function in helping to define the structure of urban areas. However, we consider that the justification for the retention of existing green wedges, as well as for the creation of new ones in association with new development and urban extensions, should be a matter for local development framework core strategies in the context of draft strategy Part 1 Policy 4. They need also to be related to green infrastructure in the terms of Policy 27*'.

- 3.3.5 The Panel Report clearly outlines that it is the role of the Local Development Framework to review green wedges and that they should not be looked upon in terms of local landscape designations but to help guide the form of urban areas. It is in this context that Policy 9 of the Core Strategy was formulated.

3.4 ADOPTED CORE STRATEGY (DECEMBER 2009)

- 3.4.1 The Core Strategy identifies that a review of the boundary of the green wedge will be carried out through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD. Policies 6 and 9 of the Core Strategy replaced policy NE3 of the Local Plan and outline the policy for the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge and the Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge.
- 3.4.2 The Core Strategy makes clear that the basis of the green wedge designation is, amongst other things, to provide easy access from the urban areas into green spaces which contribute towards the quality of life for local residents. It proposes that the green wedges will provide an important element of green space infrastructure (recognised through evidence based studies, Landscape Character Assessment and the Green Infrastructure Strategy) that will provide opportunity for enhancement to local amenity and ecological value of the landscape. It notes that a Green Wedge Management Plan will be produced to ensure appropriate future management of this important area.

Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge

- 3.4.3 Policy 6 and the supporting text of the Core Strategy states:

Para 4.28: '*The green wedge between Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton protects the separation of the three settlements, helping to protect their individual identities and provides easy access from the urban areas into green spaces, contributing towards the quality of life for residents in these urban areas. Maintaining the Green Wedge is an important part of protecting the green infrastructure of the borough. There are opportunities within the green wedge for enhancement to further increase its amenity as well as ecological value. A green wedge management plan will be produced to ensure appropriate future*

management of this important area. A review of the boundary of the green wedge will take place through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

Policy 6: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge

'Within the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge uses will be encouraged that provide appropriate recreational facilities within easy reach of urban residents and promote the positive management of land to ensure that the Green Wedge remains or is enhanced as an attractive contribution to the quality of life of nearby urban residents'.

'The following land uses will be acceptable in the Green Wedge, provided the operational development associated with such uses does not damage the function of the Green Wedge:

- (a) Agriculture, including allotments and horticulture not accompanied by retail development*
- (b) Recreation*
- (c) Forestry*
- (d) Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways*
- (e) Burial grounds*
- (f) Use for nature conservation*

Any land use or associated development in the Green Wedge should:

- (a) Retain the function of the Green Wedge*
- (b) Retain and create green networks between the countryside and open spaces within the urban areas*
- (c) Retain and enhance public access to the Green Wedge, especially for recreation and*
- (d) Should retain the visual appearance of the area'*

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

3.4.4 Policy 9 and the supporting text of the Core Strategy states:

Para 4.38: 'The Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge protects the green infrastructure of the borough, and considerable work has already been carried out along the Rothley Brook corridor to improve its recreational and biodiversity function. There are however still opportunities within the green wedge for enhancement to further increase its amenity as well as ecological value and its value as a functional floodplain. A review of the boundary of the green wedge will take place through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies Development Plan Document.

Policy 9: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

Within the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge uses will be encouraged that provide appropriate recreational facilities within easy reach of urban residents and promote the positive management of land to ensure that the Green Wedge remains or is enhanced as an attractive contribution to the quality of life of nearby urban residents. The following land uses will be acceptable in the Green Wedge, provided the operational development

associated with such uses does not damage the function of the Green Wedge:

- (a) Agriculture, including allotments and horticulture not accompanied by retail development;*
- (b) Recreation*
- (c) Forestry*
- (d) Footpaths, bridleways and cycleways*
- (e) Burial grounds and*
- (f) Use for nature conservation*

Any land use or associated development in the Green Wedge should:

- (a) Retain the function of the Green Wedge*
- (b) Retain and create green networks between the countryside and open spaces within the urban areas*
- (c) Retain and enhance public access to the Green Wedge, especially for recreation*
- (d) Retain and enhance function as a floodplain and infiltration basin*
- (e) Retain the visual appearance of the area'*

- 3.4.5 The Core Strategy went through a public examination, the Inspectors Report (2009) identified that the Borough Council should remove reference to landscape character, the Inspector noted that this change '*brought the text and policies more into line with the guidance in PPS7 Sustainable Development in Rural Areas, which advises that Councils should not maintain local landscape designations*'. The Borough Council were also asked to indicate that a review of the green wedge boundaries would be carried out through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD.

3.5 SITE ALLOCATIONS AND GENERIC DEVELOPMENT CONTROL POLICIES DEVELOPMENT PLAN DOCUMENT (DPD)

Issues and Options (August 2007)

- 3.5.1 The Issues and Options Document identified the intention of the Council to protect open countryside and prevent the merging of separate settlements. The document raised a number of questions in relation to the green wedges to invite comments. Leicestershire County Council responded to this consultation and noted that a review of green wedges should be undertaken in line with the Structure Plan (subsequently superseded) and at the time, the emerging Regional Plan. A comment was made in relation to green wedges is that they provide green access corridors and should be designated in all built areas to ensure the preservation of attractive access routes from the urban centre to open countryside.

Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge

- 3.5.3 No comments were made specifically in relation to this green wedge.

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

- 3.5.2 One comment was made in relation to the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge. The comment outlined that site 173B, Land off Groby Road; Ratby does not meet the objectives or purposes of green wedge policy.

Preferred Options Report (February 2009)

- 3.5.2 The Preferred Options Report went out for public consultation from 9th February to 6th April 2009 and sets out the proposed boundary for the green wedge.

Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge

- 3.5.3 There were no amendments proposed to the existing Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge.

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

- 3.5.4 The Report made minor amendments to the boundary of Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge that was identified in the Local Plan. Further information on the Preferred Options Consultation is provided in the Rothley Brook Meadows desktop survey.

3.6 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT (JULY 2006)

Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge

- 3.6.1 The Landscape Character Assessment identifies the area as 'Hinckley, Barwell and Burbage Fringe Character Area'. It identifies the overall strategy for the area is to conserve and enhance. It notes that the area contains important open green spaces within this area which should be conserved as they protect the separation between settlements and form the local landscape framework. It identifies the following key characteristics:

- Gently rolling landform with some areas of flat land such as Burbage Common.
- Mix of arable and pasture land with isolated areas of woodland.
- Medium sized rectilinear field pattern bounded by mixed hedgerows and few hedgerow trees. Agricultural land provides open areas of separating landscape between Barwell, Earl Shilton and Hinckley.
- Landscape heavily influenced by established settlements, often situated on higher ground.
- Significant transport infrastructure sub-divides area.
- Distinctive landscape features such as Burbage Common and Wood have local and national importance as ecological and recreational resources.
- Localised containment provided by woodland, but urban areas frequently visible from ridgelines.

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

- 3.6.2 The Landscape Character Assessment identifies the area as 'Charnwood Fringe Character Area'. It identifies that the area has a prominent landform with localised steep slopes. There are diverse land uses which relate to the varied geology. It notes that it is dominated by pasture and woodland with quarries, pools and outcrops. There is a medium to small sized field pattern interspersed with large areas of woodland cover. It highlights that views can

either be limited due to land form or panoramic from high vantage points. In summary it notes that it is '*a particularly distinctive character area, with much popular appeal. Diverse and sometimes dramatic features result in high sensitivity*'.

3.7 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY (OCTOBER 2008)

3.7.1 The Green Infrastructure Strategy looks at existing assets/resources, functions and public benefit assessments in order to effectively map the current state of the boroughs Green Infrastructure and to look at potential opportunities to expand and improve. Key drivers of this study revolve around tourism, access and recreation, biodiversity and addressing and establishing potential strategic access routes.

3.7.2 The Green Infrastructure Strategy notes that green wedges are an important part of the Borough's and County's green infrastructure resource.

Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge

3.7.3 The Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge falls within the southern green infrastructure zone; it highlights that this zone has the '*highest population density, along with the highest levels of multiple deprivation and poor health in the Borough. The need for green space in this area is higher, in part because of the recreational needs of residents but also to combat the negative effects of climate change that will be felt most in the urban areas*'. Burbage Common and Woods is identified as a strategic intervention and highlights that it is possibly the most important site in the Borough in terms of functional value to the local communities

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

3.7.4 The Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge falls within the north eastern green infrastructure zone; it highlights that this zone has a unique topography in the Borough and a landscape character defined by the National Forest, the Charnwood Fringe and the main transport infrastructure routes. Groby Pool is identified as being a site of Biodiversity interest; it is also a SSSI and is adjacent to the green wedge. 'Rothley Brook Corridor Management' is identified as a strategic intervention corridor. The green wedge also falls in the 'Tourism Support' intervention area. This highlights the need for the continuation of the relationships with the three major initiatives; the National Forest, Stepping Stones Project, and Charnwood Forest. Working together will achieve common aims for protecting biodiversity, providing access and recreation, and increasing the tourism offer of the area.

3.8 6Cs GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY (JULY 2010)

3.8.1 The 6Cs Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy provides a long term vision and strategic framework for delivery of green infrastructure across the 6Cs Growth Point which encapsulates all Leicestershire, Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire authorities.

Hinckley/Burbage/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge

3.8.2 The Strategy identifies a proposed green way through the green wedge known as 'Dunton Bassett to east Hinckley and the Ashby Canal'. The

greenways are proposed to link settlements, continuing through communities to join other routes, and providing a linear transport routes from settlements into the wider countryside or to demand destination, they generally follow existing rights of way, cycle routes and/or recreational routes.

- 3.8.3 Opportunity areas were identified in the Strategy; the green wedge falls within the ‘Hinckley Urban Fringe: Barwell to East Hinckley Countryside Gap’. It identifies it as *‘an area which provides opportunities for creating, restoring, and extending habitat types including lowland mixed deciduous woodland, dry meadows and acid grassland. As well as being in an area with fairly high potential for delivering combined multiple public benefits through GI provision/enhancement, it could bridge a gap in the provision of accessible natural green space sites of varying sizes on the door step of communities including Hinckley and Barwell, and also within 2-10km of a broader range of communities’*.
- 3.8.4 The Green Wedge falls within an ‘Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone’ which incorporates land that represents a significant resource for urban communities and the immediate landscape setting for the principle urban area which links town and country. The ‘Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone’ has the opportunity to deliver a range of economic, environmental and social benefits.

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

- 3.8.5 The Strategy identifies green infrastructure corridors, the Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge falls within the National Forest and Charnwood Forest Green Corridor. It identifies the following key opportunities for delivering green infrastructure benefits:
- *‘Access and movement – potential to establish traffic free multi-user greenways that link key green infrastructure assets with local communities. Opportunities to create new open access through woodland creation and a National Forest long distance trail. ...There are opportunities for the existing network of strategic green spaces and access routes within Charnwood Forest to be enhanced with new green spaces and access routes, created to remedy gaps in current provision and provide for future need, to maximise access to and from the settlements surrounding Charnwood Forest, and to link to other sub-regional and local green infrastructure assets;*
 - *Biodiversity – opportunities for landscape-scale habitat management, creation, restoration and extension for all key habitat feature. ...From its original 6% woodland cover, the National Forest’s eventual wooded area will spread over about a third of the area. The National Forest planting strategy is to create 16,500ha of new woodland and a minimum of 1,000ha of other habitats within the National Forest’s boundary;*
 - *Natural processes – opportunities for water management through appropriate land management e.g. nitrate management work on Charnwood Forest Farms;*
 - *Cultural heritage – opportunities to enhance management, presentation, accessibility and interpretation of historic environment assets...;*
 - *Landscape – opportunities to enhance the character the and distinctiveness of the landscape through positive landscape intervention*

measures and land management actions informed by landscape character assessments...; and

- *Geo-diversity – opportunities to promote geo-diversity features for scientific research and education at all levels and to link geo-diversity with the landscape.’*

3.8.6 The Green Wedge falls within an Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone which incorporates land that represents a resource for urban communities and the immediate landscape setting for the principle urban area which links town and country. The Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone has the opportunity to deliver a range of economic, environmental and social benefits.

3.9 OPEN SPACE, SPORT AND RECREATION FACILITIES STUDY (2011)

3.9.1 The Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study sets out the key findings of the open space, sport and recreation assessment and has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance Note 17 (PPG17) and its Companion Guide (September 2002) as well as the Best Practice Guidance for the preparation of open space strategies (CABE Space and Mayor of London May 2009).

3.9.2 This Assessment identifies the important role that a green wedge can play in providing natural and semi-natural open space as a recreational amenity and highlights them as a strategic green asset. It notes that a key issue to maximise usage of natural open space is improvements to access routes to and within existing natural and semi-natural spaces (as well as to the nearby accessible countryside). It highlights that the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge also offers the opportunity to provide recreational natural and semi-natural open space.

3.9.3 The Study highlights that where there is a deficiency in allotment provision it is possible to allow this land use within the green wedge. It also highlights the important role that the green wedge has in providing green corridors, in terms of footpaths, cycle ways and bridleways.

3.10 BIODIVERSITY ASSESSMENT (2009)

3.10.1 The Biodiversity Assessment provides a baseline of the biodiversity and nature conservation interest of the Borough. Further information is provided in Chapters 6 and 12, in the desktop survey.

3.11 JOINT STRATEGIC FLOOD RISK ASSESSMENT (NOVEMBER 2007)

3.11.1 The Joint Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) was produced jointly commissioned by Oadby and Wigston Borough Council and Blaby District Council in partnership with the Environment Agency and Leicestershire County Council.

3.11.2 It was produced in line with Planning Policy Statement 25 and is a planning tool that enables local authorities to select allocations away from flood risk areas.

3.11.3 The SFRA is expanded on further in Chapters 6 and 12, in the desktop survey.

3.12 ROTHLEY BROOK MEADOWS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY (NOVEMBER 2005)

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

- 3.12.1 Munro + Whitten Ltd were appointed by Stepping Stones Countryside Management Project to carry out a study of Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge. It was produced in partnership with Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, Blaby District Council and Leicestershire County Council. The purpose of the study was to formulate an overall strategy, which can be adopted to guide future management of the wedge. A desk-based study was carried out to gather background information on landscape, access, local plan designations, wildlife, countryside stewardship and archaeological records. It separated the green wedge into character areas. The Character areas which apply to the area of study are: Groby Fields, The Ponds, Martinshaw Fringe and a small section of the Brook Pastures Character Area. Information contained within this report will be utilised as part of this review.

3.13 THE NATIONAL FOREST STRATEGY (2004-2014)

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

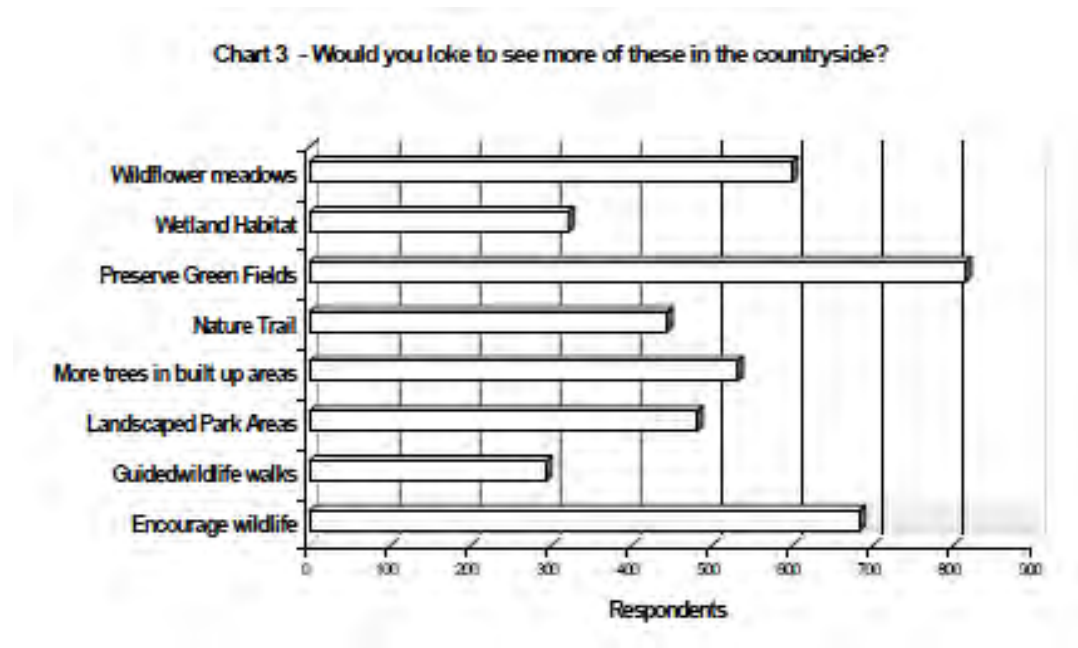
- 3.13.1 Part of the Green Wedge falls within the area known as The National Forest. It envisages forestry being multi-purpose as '*a new resource for recreation and tourism, creating rich new wildlife habitats, restoring damaged landscapes and offering an alternative, productive use of farmland.*' This complements the role and objectives of the Green Wedge.

3.13 RATBY PARISH PLAN (2004)

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

- 3.13.1 The Ratby Parish Plan was launched on the 22nd June 2004. It has identified that the preservation of the countryside is important. A questionnaire was issued to residents, the findings identified that '*the surrounding countryside was highly valued, with 964 (98%) respondents in favour of its preservation for future generations.*' The chart below is from the Ratby Parish Plan and illustrates that residents identify the preservation of Greenfield sites as important as well as encouraging wildlife and wild flower meadows.

Figure 1: Extract from Ratby Parish Plan



Source: Ratby Parish Plan (2004) page 8

3.14 GROBY PARISH PLAN: THE REPORT OCTOBER 2005 AND BEYOND

Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge

3.14.1 The Groby Parish Plan identified that *'residents enjoy the good access to the countryside, living near Groby Pool, lovely gardens and open spaces, fantastic road network and low crime rates'*. It was also established through the Plan that *'most people feel Groby is a village rather than a suburb or town and that it is traffic noise from the A46, A50 and M1 being the worst problem'*.

4. METHODOLOGY

4.1 BACKGROUND

- 4.1.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011) is being utilised to carry out this review. The Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology has been agreed by the following six local authorities of Charnwood, Harborough, Hinckley & Bosworth, Leicester, North West Leicestershire and Oadby & Wigston, which form part of the Leicester and Leicestershire Housing Market Area. A Joint Methodology was prepared as many green wedges cross administrative boundaries. Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge falls within Hinckley and Bosworth, and Blaby and therefore using this methodology will ensure a consistent approach is taken by the authorities.
- 4.1.2 The Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Methodology was first produced in August 2009 in accordance with the East Midlands Regional Plan. On the 6th July 2010 the Government announced that it was to abolish Regional Spatial Strategies and in light of this the Methodology was amended and republished in July 2010. Due to the ongoing changes to the planning system it has become necessary to amend the Methodology in light of the outcome of the CALA Homes High Court Judgement (February 2011) and the emerging Localism Bill (December 2010). This Green Wedge Review commenced prior to the July 2011 amendments, the Local Authority are satisfied that the Review follows the amended Methodology.
- 4.1.3 The Methodology identifies that a review could be undertaken at a macro and micro scale; this Review assesses the green wedge at both of these scales. The evaluation assesses the green wedge in its entirety and future recommendations are set out at a micro scale.
- 4.1.4 The following assessment criteria have been identified for the Review of the Green Wedge.

Preventing the merging of settlements

- 4.1.5 Green Wedges will safeguard the identity of communities within and around urban areas that face growth pressures. The coalescence of settlements should be considered in terms of both physical separation and the perception of distance between the settlements.

Guiding Development Form

- 4.1.6 Green Wedges will guide the form of new developments in urban areas. Consideration will be given to designating new green wedges or amending existing ones where it would help shape the development of new communities' such as potential sustainable urban extensions.

Providing a Green Lung into urban areas:

- 4.1.7 Green wedges will provide communities with access to green infrastructure and the countryside beyond. They are distinct from other types of open space in that they provide a continuous link between the open countryside and land which penetrates deep into urban areas. Green wedges could also provide multi-functional uses such as:

- Open space, sport and recreation facilities
- Flood alleviation measures
- Improving air quality
- Protection/improvement of wildlife sites and the links between them
- Protection/improvement of historic/cultural assets and the links between them
- Links to green infrastructure at both a strategic and local level
- Transport corridors

Acting as a recreational resource

4.1.8 Green wedges will provide a recreational resource. This will include informal and formal facilities now and in the future. Public access will be maximised.

4.1.9 The individual Green Wedge Reviews will be produced in the following stages.

4.2 DATA COLLECTION/ DESK TOP SURVEY

4.2.1 Data has been collected about the Green Wedge in respect of:

- Public rights of way and permissive routes (footpaths/bridleways/cycleways). Degree of access to and from surrounding urban areas and access to strategically important access routes which provide connectivity across the wider area
- Historical landscapes and archaeological remains
- Findings of the Minerals and Waste Plan
- Land use within the Green Wedge (including open space, sports and recreation, the location of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Local Wildlife Sites and Nature Reserves)
- Ecology (assessing whether green wedges form part of an important wildlife corridor)
- Development Control decisions within the green wedge since adoption of the Local Plan, including Appeals.
- Socio-economic data (for example, within close proximity to Priority Neighbourhood Areas)
- Agricultural land quality
- Air Quality Management areas (AQMA's) and the proximity of the green wedge to these (the ability of green wedges to act as a 'green lung')
- Water management (areas of flood risk)
- Connection to green infrastructure in the wider area
- Evidence of development pressures
- Transport routes and infrastructure.

4.3 ON SITE SURVEYS

4.3.1 A visual appraisal on site of the Green Wedge has been carried out in terms of:

- topography

- identification of key physical features within and out of the Green Wedge
- Significant hedgerows/hedgerow trees/woodlands
- the extent of built development within Green Wedges
- perception of separation from several points within and on the boundaries of settlements (intervisibility and intravisibility (see glossary))
- Visible informal uses through the Green Wedge
- Consideration of whether the green wedge could fulfil other functions not yet identified.

4.3.2 For assessment purposes the Green Wedge has been split into areas for the purpose of the survey so that the assessment captures the different roles and character of the green wedge. A map of the assessment areas are contained in Appendix A.

4.4 CONSULTATION

4.4.1 The Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review identifies that local authorities could undertake consultation on the preparation of their green wedge reviews. Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council felt that consultation on the preparation of the Review was essential to allow for early engagement and undertaking consultation was emphasised in the appeal decision for land east of Groby village cemetery, Groby Road, Ratby. The findings of the Green Wedge Review will also be consulted upon as part of the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD.

4.4.2 The Borough Council organised a stakeholder consultation event which took place on Monday, 21st March 2011. The following consultees were invited to attend the consultation event:

- Barwell Town Council
- Barwell Ward Members
- Blaby District Council
- Burbage Parish Council
- Burbage St Catherine's & Lash Hill Ward Members
- Burbage, Sketchley & Stretton Ward Members
- Campaign for the Protection of Rural England, Hinckley and Bosworth
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Country and Land Association
- Earl Shilton Town Council
- Earl Shilton Ward Members
- Environment Agency
- Groby Parish Council
- Groby Ward Members
- HBBC Development Control Team
- HBBC Green Spaces Team
- Hinckley De Monfort Ward Members
- Home Builders Federation
- Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust

- Leicester City Council
- Leicestershire County Council Access Team/Countryside Services
- Leicestershire County Council Policy Team/Better Places Team
- Leicestershire Local Access Forum
- National Farmers Union
- Natural England
- Oadby and Wigston Borough Council
- Ratby Parish Council
- Ratby, Bagworth and Thornton Ward Members
- Rural Community Council
- Stepping Stones

4.4.3 Consultees were issued with an invite letter and Background Paper. The purpose of the Background Paper was to:

- Provide context for the workshop consultation event
- Outline the formulation of green wedges
- Summarise the review methodology
- Set out a brief description and overview of the green wedges

4.4.4 Consultees who confirmed attendance to the workshop were provided with a Topic Paper prior to the event which set out:

- Data collection/Desktop Survey
- Site Assessment Analysis
- Evaluation Criteria

Consultation Event

4.4.5 The following consultees attended:

- Barwell Parish Council
- Barwell Ward Member
- Blaby District Council
- Charnwood Borough Council
- Environment Agency (2 representatives)
- Green Spaces, HBBC
- Groby Parish Council
- Groby Ward Member
- Hinckley De Monfort Members (2 representatives)
- Leicestershire County Council
- Oadby and Wigston
- Ratby Parish Council

4.4.6 In absence of attending the meeting English Heritage provided information to feed into the desktop survey. Comments were also received from Carlton Parish Council.

4.4.7 The consultation event comprised of two presentations and two workshop exercises.

4.4.8 The comments received through the consultation exercise will be fed into the evaluation. Some comments made were in regards to the desktop review and policy context providing additional clarification and suggestions and where relevant these have been considered and the review updated.

4.4.9 The findings of the consultation event are set out in chapters 8 and 14.

4.5 EVALUATION

4.5.1 The Green Wedge will be evaluated against the criteria set out in the Methodology using the information from the data collection on site surveys and consultation. The criteria is: Preventing the merging of settlements; guiding development form; providing a green lung into urban areas; and a recreational resource.

4.5.2 The evaluation is at a macro and micro scale. Paragraphs 3.2.2 and 3.2.3 of the Joint Methodology states:

‘3.2.2 When assessing a green wedge (on a macro scale) in its entirety, or when identifying a new green wedge; a green wedge should achieve all of the mentioned evaluation criteria, or be capable of fulfilling all criteria in the future.

3.2.3 A micro-scale review, could be undertaken by an Authority through the creation of sub-areas within the green wedge to enable a detailed analysis. If this type of review were to be undertaken the smaller areas would be determined by the Local Authority. Sub areas within a green wedge may not meet all of the four functions. The four functions were established for the purposes of evaluating the strategic designation of an entire green wedge. When assessing these sub areas, the Authority should identify how these smaller areas function in the context of the wider strategic designation and make a judgment using the evaluation criteria below. The Authority would need to consider the relationship that individual sites have on the role and function of the green wedge as a whole’.

4.5.3 Paragraph 3.2.3 of the Methodology therefore means that for the purposes of evaluating the green wedge, any sub area does not need to meet all four of the evaluation criteria.

4.6 OUTPUTS

4.6.1 The assessment will form an important part of the evidence base for the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD recommending potential boundary amendments.

PART A

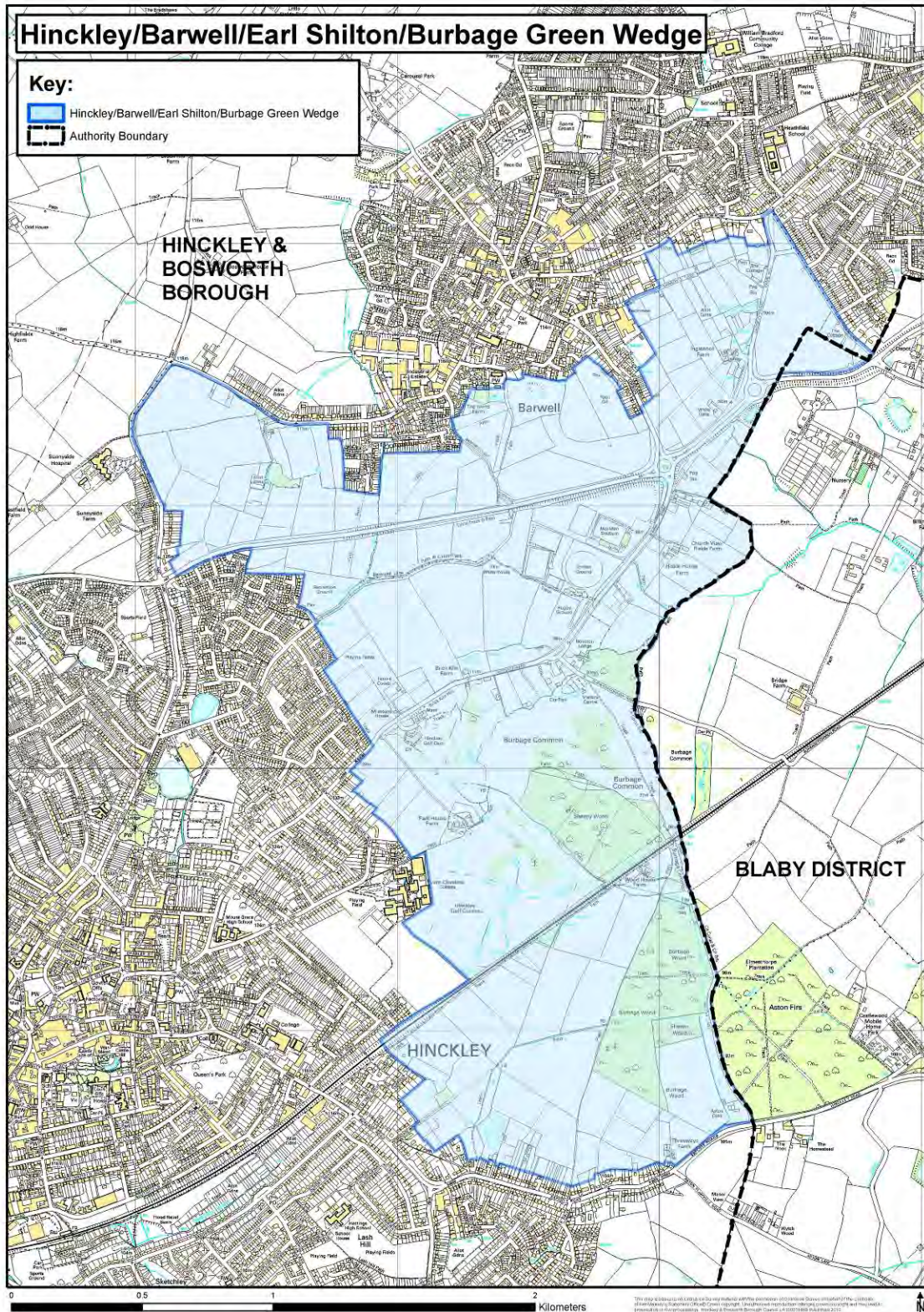
HINCKLEY/BARWELL/EARL SHILTON/BURBAGE



5. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE OVERALL GREEN WEDGE

- 5.1.1 The extent of the green wedge lying in Hinckley and Bosworth Borough covers an area of 438 hectares and a further 3 hectares within Blaby District. The green wedge extends from the south of Barwell and stretches across to the settlement boundary of Earl Shilton. The green wedge spreads southwards following the boundary to the east and the built form of Hinckley to the west. The southern most boundary abuts Burbage. Figure 2 contains a map of the overall green wedge.
- 5.1.2 The Green Wedge is small in nature in comparison to Rothley Brook Green Wedge which spans a number of administrative districts. There are two narrow sections of the green wedge which includes the housing area accessed off Barwell Lane, Hinckley and the southern tip of St Mary's Avenue, Barwell. It is also narrow between Elmesthorpe Lane, Earl Shilton and the properties off Shilton Road, Barwell.
- 5.1.3 The part of the Green Wedge which falls within the Blaby administrative area is a small triangular area that is north of the Earl Shilton Bypass following the Borough Boundary as illustrated in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Map of the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge (including Blaby District Council area)



6. DESKTOP SURVEY

6.1 INTRODUCTION

- 6.1.1 The desktop survey is undertaken at a borough wide level. Assessment areas have been identified and these are mapped in Appendix A, these areas are sometimes referenced to aid the evaluation in the latter part of the review.

6.2 ACCESS

- 6.2.1 There are a number of public rights of way, footpaths, cycle ways and a bridleway that run through the Green Wedge and these are set out in Figure 3.

Barwell to Hinckley

- 6.2.2 There are a number of routes between Barwell and Hinckley. Two public rights of way can be accessed from Waters End which both connect to Barwell Lane, which in turn connect to the Hinckley urban area.



Around Barwell

- 6.2.3 One of the public rights of way accessed off Waters End provides a direct link onto Barwell Lane which then connects to another right of way off Church Lane adjacent to St Mary's Church. This connectivity enables a circular route whilst also providing a link to Hinckley, as outlined above.

Barwell Lane

- 6.2.4 Barwell Lane is an off road cycle track with shared use for pedestrians. It runs between Barwell and Hinckley and has a number of public rights way and a bridle path connecting to it. These connection points link to Barwell, Hinckley and the B4668 which in turn leads to Burbage Common and Woods.

Earl Shilton to Barwell

- 6.2.5 There is a public right of way with two access points via Carrs Hill connecting to Dawsons Lane, Barwell.

Burbage Common and the surrounding area

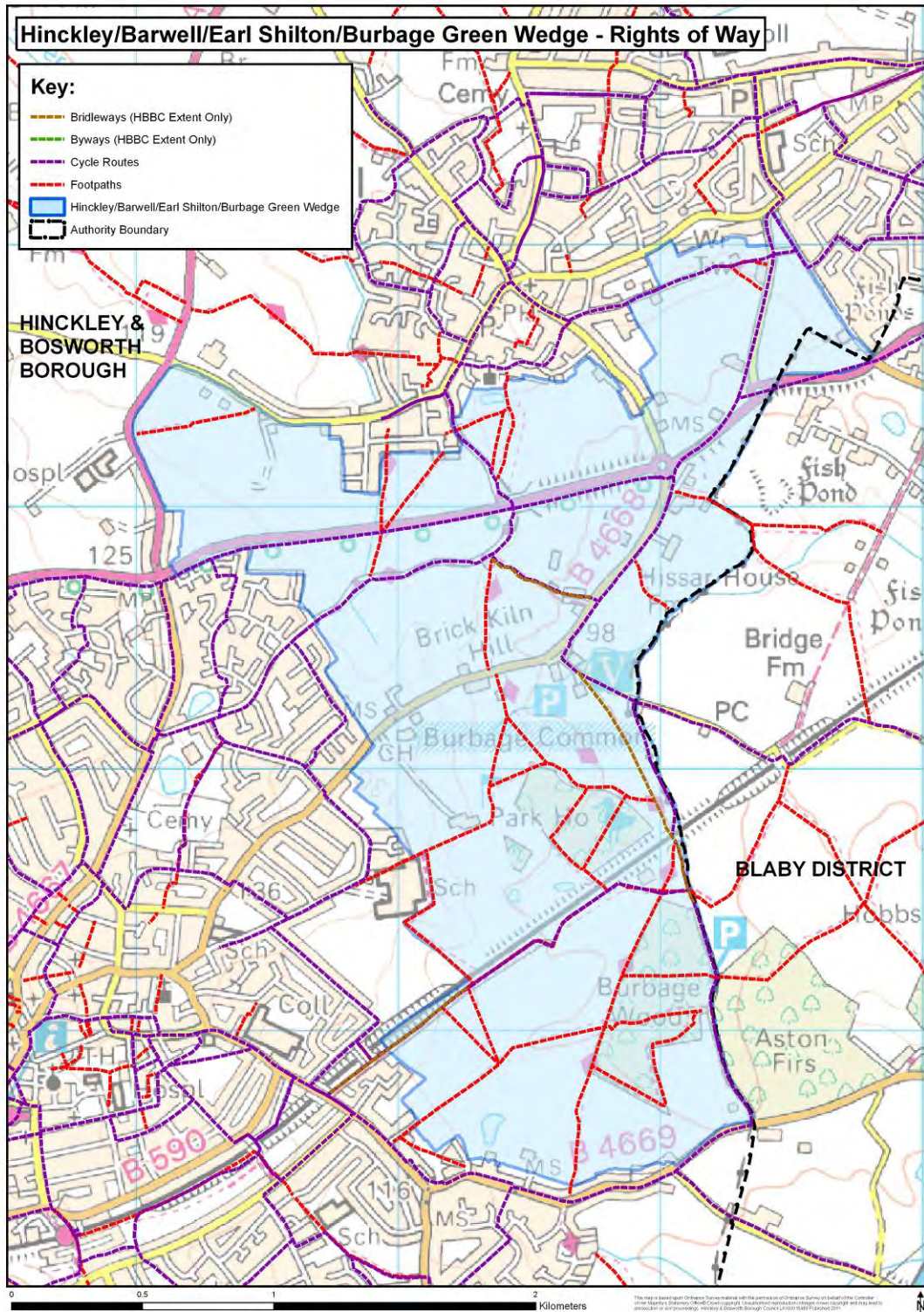
- 6.2.6 Burbage Common has a network of paths which can be accessed via the B4668, Bradgate Road/Butt Lane (via Golf Course). The network of paths at Burbage Common lead onto a larger network of route ways which lead to access points from The Outwoods, Burbage; Woodgate Road, Burbage; Sapcote Road, Burbage; Smithy Lane, Burbage, Hinckley Road, Burbage; and Bridle Path Road, Elmesthorpe. In short, the network of



paths provides connections to the settlements of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell, Earl Shilton and Elmesthorpe. As well as the golf course and Burbage Common there are also access routes to Burbage Wood and Aston Firs.

- 6.2.7 Cutting through the green wedge is a number of key roads (e.g. A47, and Leicester Road) which have pedestrian footpaths and cycle paths. This means that the green wedge is used by many people daily as part of journeys to and from the four settlements and in and around the green wedge.

Figure 3: Map illustrating access routes within and around the green wedge



6.3 HISTORICAL LANDSCAPES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

- 6.3.1 Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) in this area defines the majority of fields as either 'planned' or 'piecemeal' enclosure. 'Piecemeal' enclosure is an earlier (16th/17th Century) form of informal enclosure, where open land was divided up into fields. 'Planned' enclosure is later (18th/19th Century) and was a more formalised process. Other HLC types within the area include 'golf course', 'other commons' and 'broadleaved ancient woodland'.
- 6.3.2 The medieval open field system that existed prior to enclosure is still visible in part due to surviving ridge and furrow earthworks. These earthworks, particularly noticeable in fields adjacent to Barwell, were created by medieval ploughing.
- 6.3.3 The area includes Burbage Wood and Sheepy Wood, both of which have been characterised as 'broadleaved ancient woodland'. Ancient semi-natural woodland sites are defined by Natural England as sites which have had continuous woodland cover since at least the beginning of the 17th century. These sites retain native tree and shrub cover that has not been planted, although they may have been managed by coppicing or felling and allowed to naturally regenerate. Both Burbage and Sheepy Woods appear to have been held subject to common rights as early as the mid-thirteenth century.
- 6.3.4 Between Burbage and Sheepy Woods a small triangular area has been identified as Small Assarts. Small Assarts are characterised as small irregular or rectilinear fields which appear to have been created through woodland clearance. This character type will often border or occur in close proximity to areas of ancient woodland. In Leicestershire the process of woodland assartment is likely to have been underway during the 12th and 13th centuries although some examples may have much later, possibly 16th century origins.
- 6.3.5 Sheepy Wood is bounded on its north-eastern and north-western sides by Burbage Common which is recorded in the Domesday Book as providing shared common grazing rights. The common is a valuable site for wildlife.
- 6.3.6 The area contains many archaeological sites. Of particular note is a possible Roman villa site south of Park House, Hinckley; which was discovered during an informal watching brief in the 1980s, a possible medieval moated site near Hall Close, Barwell; which is visible as ponds etc, and post-medieval brickworks at Barwell Lane, Barwell and Outwoods Brickyard, Brick Kiln Hill, Hinckley.

6.4 MINERALS AND WASTE

- 6.4.1 There is potential for mineral reserves within the green wedge, e.g. sand and gravel reserves in the western fringe of the green wedge, however there is no information as to the type/volume/viability of such reserves.

6.5 LAND USE

- 6.5.1 There are a range of land uses within the green wedge including:
- Cricket Ground

- Green King Stadium
- Burbage Common
- Woodland
- Hinckley Golf Course
- Farmland
- Allotments
- Rear gardens
- Rugby Ground
- Roads
- Recreation Grounds
- Rights of way and cycle tracks



6.6 ECOLOGY

6.6.1 The Biodiversity Assessment (March 2009) found evidence of the following species:

- Pipistrelle Bat
- European water vole
- Badger sighting or sett
- Birds on the amber list with schedule 1 status
- Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)
- Site of Important for Nature Conservation

6.6.2 Burbage Wood and Aston Firs are identified as a SSSI; the site comprises one of the best examples of ash-oak-maple woodland in Leicestershire and is representative of semi-natural woodland on underlying Glacial Boulder Clay in eastern England.

6.7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA

6.7.1 Leicestershire County Council have produced area profiles based on the 2001 Census the main findings are below:

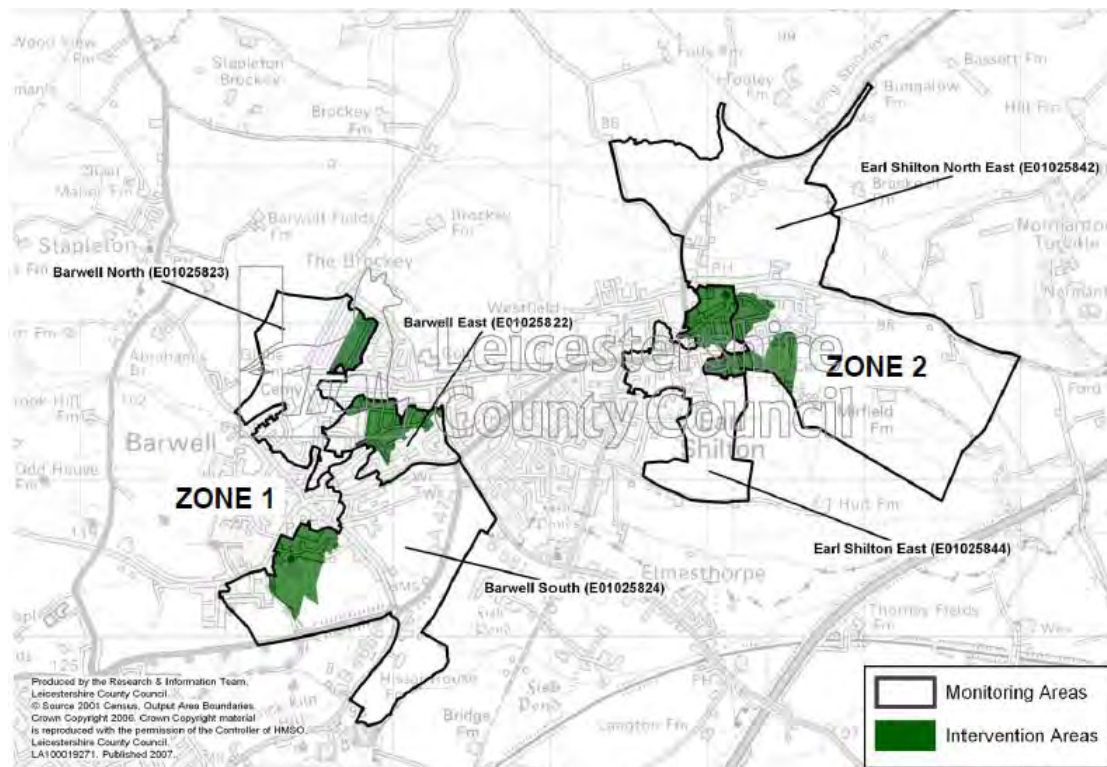
Table 1: Parish Profile

	Ward				
	Barwell	Earl Shilton	Hinckley De Monfort	Burbage St Catherine's	Hinckley and Bosworth
Total Population	8,781	9,065	9,312	5,811	100,141
Age Structure (%)					
0-4 years	6.35%	5.88%	5.13%	4.08%	5.53%
5-9 years	6.69%	5.90%	5.64%	4.63%	5.90%
10-15 years	8.26%	7.88%	7.50%	6.40%	7.63%
16-19 years	4.73%	5.23%	5.16%	4.31%	4.62%
20-29 years	12.32%	11.04%	10.52%	9.12%	10.58%
30-44 years	24.05%	21.46%	22.34%	19.43%	22.59%
45-59 years	20.40%	20.98%	22.23%	21.89%	21.99%
60-64 years	4.21%	4.83%	5.13%	6.57%	5.14%
65-74 years	6.61%	8.80%	8.52%	12.15%	8.60%
75 and over	6.38%	7.99%	7.85%	11.43%	7.42%

Health					
People with a limiting long-term illness	15.90%	17.41%	15.69%	21.55%	16.33%
People with 'not good' general health	8.15%	9.12%	7.08%	10.51%	7.85%
Economic Activity (All people aged 16 to 74)					
Economically active	74.21%	70.23%	73.94%	66.79%	72.43%

6.7.2 Zone one of the Earl Shilton and Barwell Priority Neighbourhood Area falls within the Green Wedge, particularly Barwell South. A Priority Neighbourhood Area is an area which performs significantly worse than other parts of the County across a basket of deprivation indicators. Burbage St Catherine's; and Hinckley priority neighbourhoods are within close proximity to the green wedge.

Figure 4: Map showing Barwell and Earl Shilton Priority Neighbourhoods



SOURCE: Neighbourhood Priority Areas (October 2007) Leicestershire County Council

6.8 AGRICULTURAL LAND QUALITY

6.8.1 There is no Grade I or Grade II agricultural land within the green wedge.

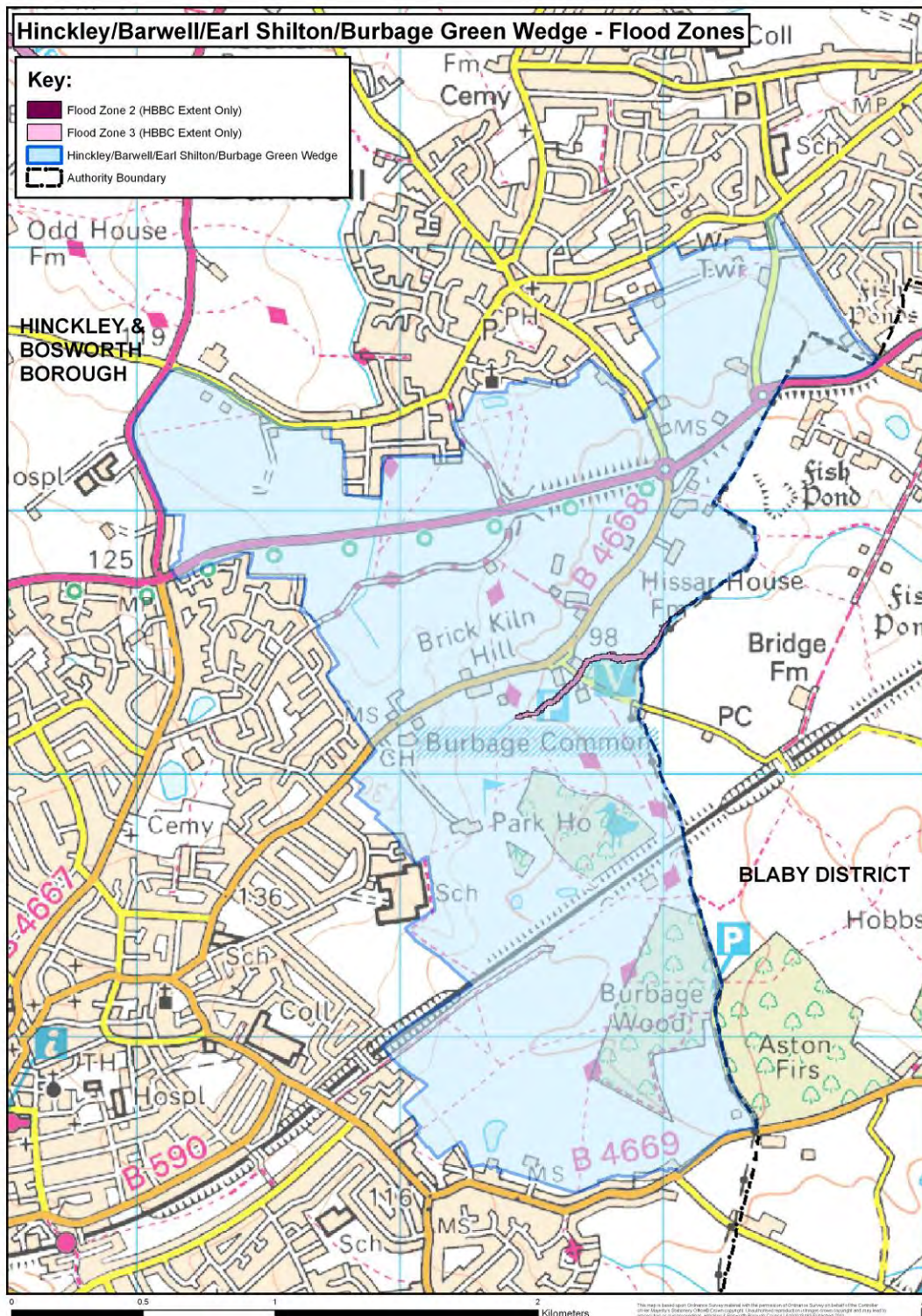
6.9 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS (AQMA'S)

6.9.1 There are no AQMA's within the Borough of Hinckley & Bosworth.

6.10 WATER MANAGEMENT

- 6.10.1 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (November 2007) identifies that an area to the east of the Green Wedge close to Burbage Common and Leicester Road/Burbage Common Road falls within flood zone 3 and to a lesser extent flood zone 2. This is illustrated in Figure 5.
- 6.10.2 The type of flooding is fluvial from Thurlaston Brook tributary. The source of flooding is from surface water run off which could be an issue due to the low permeability of the wet clay soil present which in turn could potentially lead to ground water flooding problems. There are no historical flooding records; however the site may be susceptible to flooding and/or have flooded in the past.
- 6.10.3 The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment was jointly produced with Blaby District and Oadby and Wigston Borough and identifies that Flood Zone 3a runs along the boundary of Hinckley and Bosworth. These flooding issues would have an impact on guiding any development and reinforces the need to retain these areas as green wedge to limit any impact on flooding.

Figure 5: Flood Zones identified in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (2007)



6.11 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

6.11.1 As highlighted in Chapter 3 the Borough Council have produced a Green Infrastructure Strategy (October 2008). The following interventions and features have been identified within the green wedge area:

- Burbage Common and Woods Strategic Intervention Area

- Cross-boundary cooperation
- Biodiversity Area
- Main access arteries
- Access and Recreation
- Potential strategic access route

6.11.2 The Burbage Common and Woods Strategic Intervention Area are identified as being potentially one of the most important areas in the Borough due to its functional value to the local communities. It notes as the population expands the site will become even more valuable. Indeed the Sustainable Urban Extensions (SUE's) proposed for Barwell and Earl Shilton



providing 4500 homes in total; and the identification within the Core Strategy for 1120 homes in Hinckley and 295 homes in Burbage will mean that Burbage Common and Woods will increasingly be an important asset to both existing and new residents to the area. A shortfall identified is access to the site and it is proposed to increase the size of the site to increase community and biodiversity value and to improve access to the site for cyclists and pedestrians.

6.11.2 Cross-boundary cooperation is identified as important due to the proximity of the urban area to neighbouring districts, for instance, Burbage Wood continues into Aston Firs woodland, Elmesthorpe Plantation and Smenell Field which fall within Blaby District. Access from Earl Shilton to Burbage Common and Woods is also via public rights of way which are within Blaby District.

6.11.3 Access and recreation is identified as important as it is essential that existing and potential green infrastructure assets are retained and enhanced to provide for population demands for green and open space. Accessibility to sites should be enhanced and extended, particularly circular routes to incorporate green infrastructure assets. Burbage Common and woods provide a number of circular routes. Circular routes are also present south of Barwell through public rights of way and the pedestrianised Barwell Lane.

6.11.4 Biodiversity is highlighted to be protected, enhanced and increased, Burbage Common and Woods is identified as such an area.

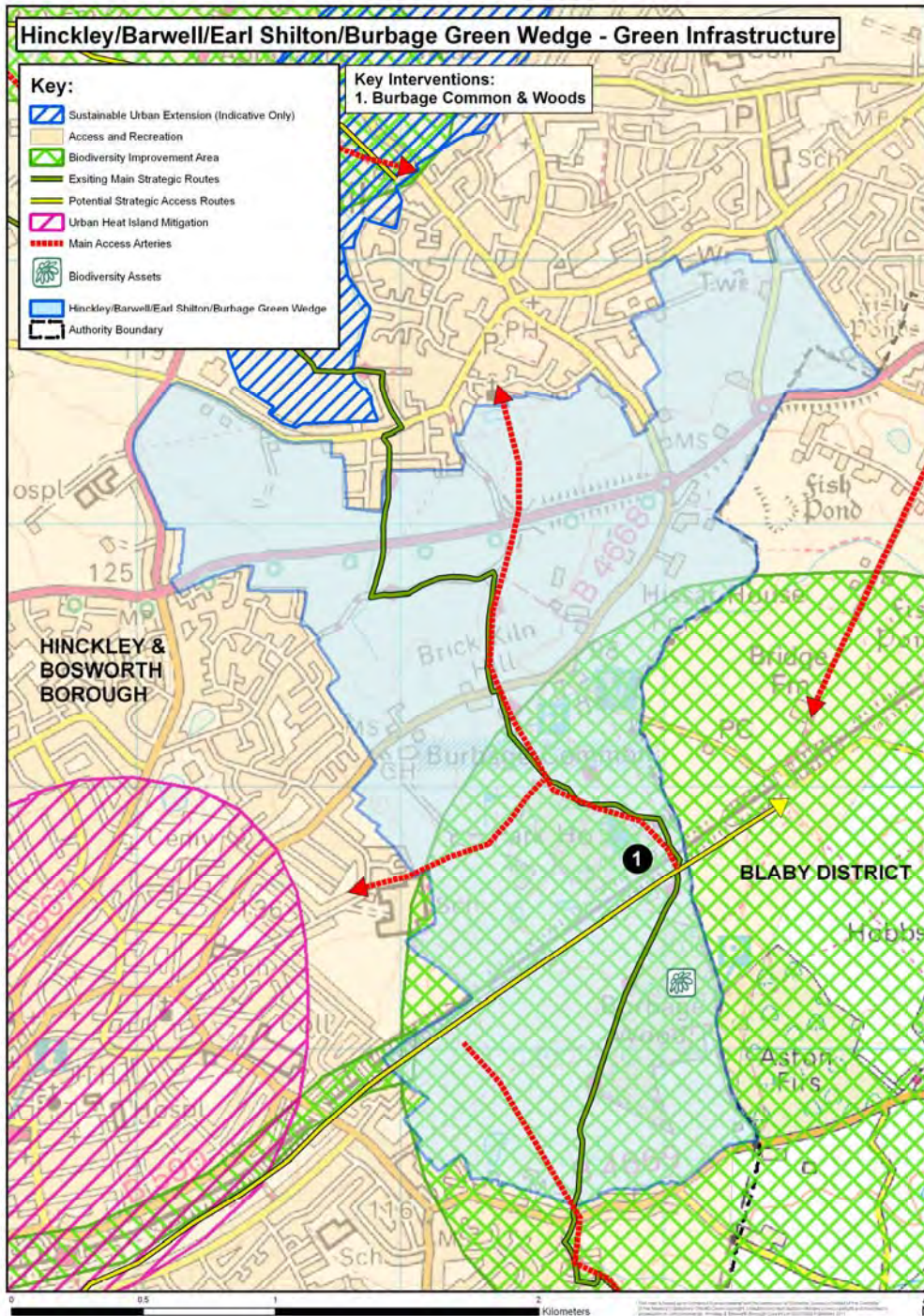
6.11.5 Potential Strategic Access Routes are identified so that green infrastructure assets have improved access routes. One such route aims to improve access from Hinckley town centre to Burbage Common and Ashby Canal to benefit wildlife in and around the towns, providing a natural corridor which compliments that which already exists alongside the railway.

6.11.6 The 6C's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2010) identifies similar goals for the Green Wedge identifying it as an area to create, restore and extend habitat types whilst delivering public benefits through green infrastructure. The green wedge is within the 'Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zone'

and incorporates land that represents a significant resource to urban residents.

6.11.7 The review of green infrastructure highlights the important role that Burbage Common and Woods provides in terms of access to green space for residents whilst providing an area of high biodiversity value. It shows that this area of the green wedge is a vital green infrastructure asset that provides positive benefits to residents and flora and fauna alike.

Figure 6: Core Strategy Green Infrastructure designations



6.12 DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES AND PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Development Control

- 6.12.1 There have been a number of minor planning applications within the green wedge and these are set out in Appendix B. Planning applications of note includes; 98/00810/DEEM which included the erection of a bird hide for public use at Burbage woods. Although this application was before the Adopted Local Plan (2001) it shows the clear intention that this area could be utilised for recreation purposes.
- 6.12.2 There are a number of other applications within the green wedge that have been granted which demonstrates the recreational offering within the area including: a manège; farm shop; netball courts; football ground and stadia; and minor applications for Hinckley Golf Course and Hinckley Cricket Club.
- 6.12.3 A number of applications refer to waste facilities; these applications are determined by Leicestershire County Council. The Borough Council are treated as a consultee for these applications.
- 6.12.4 An application of particular note is 10/00405/OUT which is for outline planning permission for residential development off Leicester Road. This application was withdrawn and resubmitted (10/00661/OUT). The application was refused at Planning Committee on Tuesday, 2nd November 2010. The applicant appealed this decision and a public inquiry took place from the Tuesday, 14th June to Thursday, 16th June 2011. The decision was issued on the 22nd July 2011 and concluded that the appeal should be allowed and planning permission granted for an outline application for residential development.
- 6.12.5 In terms of the green wedge the Inspector concluded that the development of the site would *'not reduce the current minimum distance between Hinckley and the other two settlements'*. The Inspector also noted that the site did not include any recreational facilities, is *'not accessible to the public and therefore does not fulfil the functions of providing a green lung' or a recreational resource'*. It was highlighted by the Inspector that the adjacent *'golf course, sports grounds, Sheepy Wood and Burbage Common'* do achieve the green wedge function and noted further along in the Report that the site *'is surrounded by defensible boundaries... and would not diminish its ability to guide development form'*. In the Inspectors concluding remarks on the green wedge section of the decision it was noted that the release of this area of green wedge *'would not necessarily result in pressure to release other parts of it, which are materially different'* and *'would not harm the character and appearance of the surrounding area, including the green wedge'*.

Planning Policy

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

- 6.12.6 A number of sites have been put forward as expressions of interest and these have been assessed through the Review of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2009).
- 6.12.7 The sites contained in Table 2 were assessed through the SHLAA.

Table 2: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Sites

SHLAA Ref	Assessment Area	Location	Overall Assessment
AS61	B	Land off St Mary's Court, Barwell	Developable
AS62	B	Site to the south of St Mary's Court, Barwell	Developable
AS64	C	Land east of The Common/South of Dawsons Lane, Barwell	Non-Developable
AS65	C	White Oaks, Leicester Road, Barwell	Non-Developable
AS66	C	Land South of Shilton Road, Barwell	Non-Developable
AS67	C	Land between Dawson's Lane and Leicester Road/Carrs Hill, Barwell	Non-Developable
AS84	C	The Common	Site under-construction
AS102	C	Land between Leicester Road and Elmesthorpe Lane, Barwell	Non-developable
AS136	I	Land east of Burbage	Non-developable
AS137	I	91 Sapcote Road, Burbage	Non-developable
AS138	I	Land off Sapcote Road, Burbage	Non-developable
AS139	I	Land to the rear of 47 and 49 Sapcote Road, Burbage	Developable
AS140	I	Land Off Sapcote Road, Burbage	Non-developable
AS141	I	Land between The Coppice and Woodgate Road, Burbage	Developable
AS301	A	Land adjacent to 258 Ashby Road, Hinckley	Non-developable
AS302	A	Land at Normandy Way, Hinckley	Non-developable
AS303	F	Old Tennis Courts and playing fields, Leicester Road/Laneside Drive, Hinckley	Non-developable
AS304	H	Land to the east of Leicester Road, Hinckley	Developable
AS305	H	Land adjacent to 129 Leicester Road, Hinckley	Developable
AS384	H	Football Ground, Middlefield Lane, Hinckley	Development complete
AS600	C	Land at Inglenook Farm, Barwell	Non-developable
AS602	H	Land south of Leicester Road, Hinckley	Non-developable
AS606	D	Land at Elmesthorpe Lane, Earl Shilton	Non-developable

Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD

6.12.7 The Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD was published in January 2009 for public consultation. It made no recommendations in terms of amending the boundary of the green wedge. A summary of the comments received on the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge are below.

- There should be a more general review to the green wedge boundary to ensure that it is clearly and properly defined and defensible.
- Paragraph 4.2.18 of the RSS defines green wedges. It would be worth referring to the fact that they are not supported by government policy in the same way as Green Belts.
- The key role of the green wedge has historically been to prevent the coalescence of settlements and retain a strategic gap – the gap is particularly vulnerable to the south west of Barwell. In contrast the land to the south east of Barwell adjacent to Earl Shilton serves no purpose in this context. PPS7 does not intend for local landscape designations to be retained and favours criteria-based policies.
- No formal assessment of the contribution individual land parcels towards the proposed functions of the Green Wedge allocation. A comprehensive review is required to enable any land not positively adding to the function of the green wedge to be considered for alternative designation. The position of any such land means that it will be sustainably located, and thus failure to undertake an adequate review may lead to less sustainable locations.
- Support the Green Wedge Policy that is to retain fields and open space between Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton. This is especially important close to Barwell Lane, which is well used green walking and cycling track between Hinckley and Barwell. The creation of the Northern Perimeter Road with its noise levels has had a terrible detrimental effect on Barwell Lane. Any further intrusion on this country lane would be unacceptable.
- It is considered that the green wedges are an important component of the overall green space provision for the Borough and that they will come under increasing pressure as a result of development pressures over the life of the Plan and beyond. Accordingly it is entirely appropriate that this provision should be identified in this Allocations document and the Green Wedges safeguarded, and enhanced, for the range of benefits that they provide.
- A comprehensive review of the Green Wedge will indicate potential for developing land north of the A47 east of The Common, Barwell. This land currently provides no benefit to the function of the Green Wedge. The Green Infrastructure Strategy does not formally assess the green wedge. The land to the south of Barwell east of The Common makes no positive contribution towards either function of the Green Wedge and does not have high landscape value.

6.12.8 These comments support the need to carry out a full review and this document fulfils this.

Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan Inspectors Report

6.12.9 The Local Plan Inquiry took place between Tuesday, 29th October 1996 and 26th June 1997. During the preparation of the Local Plan objections were received in relation to the allocation of the green wedge, the Inspector notes that these objections were generally site specific also relating to policy RES1 which sets out the residential site allocations. The 'Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan: Report of a Public Local Inquiry into objections to the plan' (1998) sets out the recommendations made to the Council by the Inspector in respect of the objections received. There were a number of site specific objections that were considered by the Inspector, the Inspectors comments and recommendations are summarised in table 3.

Table 3: Summary of the Local Plan Inspectors Comments and Recommendations

Location	Inspector's Comment	Inspector's Recommendation	Assessment Area¹
Land between Carrs Hill/Elmethorpe Lane, Barwell; East of The Common and South of Dawsons Lane, Barwell; North of Leicester Road, Barwell; and west of Burbage Wood ND East of Bradgate Road, Hinckley.	Main objections raised in relation to Policy RES1. The function of the green wedge is to separate these settlements by remaining open. The objection sites are large and highly visible. To release the sites for housing would weaken the structure and function of the green wedge. Housing supply recommendations can be met elsewhere and do not outweigh the desirability of maintaining the boundaries of the green wedge.	No modifications be made to the Plan in respect of this objection.	C, D, H and I
Land north of the Perimeter Road, Barwell	The objection sites are extensive areas of open farmland between the settlement edge of Barwell and the A47 Bypass. Both sites play a vital part in separating the built up areas of Barwell, Earl Shilton and Hinckley. The green wedge is narrow here especially to the south west of Barwell where the St Mary's Avenue estate forms an incursion into the open countryside. To develop the objection sites for the purposes other than stated in the green wedge policy would compromise the openness and would reduce the effectiveness of the green wedge. Housing and employment can be met elsewhere and do not out weigh the desirability of maintaining the green wedge.	No modifications be made to the Plan in respect of this objection.	A and B

¹ The related Assessment Areas have been identified through the description provided by the Local Plan Inspectors Report.

6.13 TRANSPORT ROUTES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

6.13.1 The A47 runs through the green wedge area, this is a key route which connects to the A5 and continues into the City of Leicester. It also contains a number of route ways into the settlements which connects them to one another. This includes Leicester Road, Hinckley; The Common, Barwell; and Carrs Hill, Earl Shilton.



7. SITE SURVEYS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

7.1.1 Site assessments were carried out on the green wedge in September/October 2010. The pro forma set out in the Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Methodology was used. The Green Wedge was split into 9 areas so that a micro analysis could be undertaken on site. A map of the areas is contained in Appendix A the areas identified are listed as follows:

- A South of Hinckley Road and north of Normandy Way
- B South of Barwell and north of Normandy Way
- C East of The Common and south of Shilton Road
- D Land between Leicester Road (Carrs Hill) and Elvesthorpe Lane
- E Land off Leicester Road
- F Land between Normandy Way and Leicester Road
- G Land east of Leicester Road and North of Burbage Common Road
- H Land off Leicester Road including Burbage Common and Hinckley Golf Course
- I Land south of railway line and north-east of Burbage

7.1.2 This chapter sets out the main findings of the on site surveys, the full site pro formas are contained in Appendix C.

7.2 AREA A: SOUTH OF HINCKLEY ROAD AND NORTH OF NORMANDY WAY

Description

7.2.1 The area is used predominately for agricultural purposes and the road that runs alongside the area links Hinckley to settlements such as Market Bosworth. The site rises upwards slightly to Hinckley Road, Barwell. Two settlements are visible from Ashby Road including, Barwell and Hinckley which are within walking distance. Sunnyside Hospital overlooks the area and there is a bus stop adjacent.



Assessment

7.2.2 If development were to occur on this site it would have a significant visual impact due to the openness of the area to the east of Ashby Road. It provides an important visual amenity between the settlements of Hinckley and Barwell. Furthermore this area contains one of the narrowest points of green wedge separating the two settlements.

7.2.3 There is a public right of way which cuts through the area. The public right of way is linear in nature and appears to be well trodden. An informal walkway is evident however; it is unclear of the level of use of this.

7.3 AREA B: SOUTH OF BARWELL AND NORTH OF NORMANDY WAY

Description

- 7.3.1 The area is mainly used for agricultural purposes although there is also a recreation ground within the Green Wedge off Dovecote Way. The area is characterised by hedgerows, scattered trees, grazing land and ploughed fields. St Mary's Church, Barwell is of particular note as it holds a prominent position abutting the boundary of the green wedge. There is a fairly significant rise in topography towards Barwell which provides views towards Hinckley. Hinckley is not visible from this area as there is significant tree coverage which screens the built form of Hinckley. The area is in fairly close proximity to Hinckley and Earl Shilton. The area has various points of access via cycle ways, public rights of way and a recreation ground.



Assessment

- 7.3.2 There would be a significant impact on the area if development were to occur. It is an important recreational amenity for residents and plays an important role in connecting Hinckley and Barwell by means of a public footpath/cycleway. Feeding off the main pedestrianised route way of Barwell Lane is a good network of public rights of ways which are



in a good condition and provide circular routes. From the site visits it was evident that the rights of way were well used. Any built development would have a significant visual impact, mainly due to the topography rising towards Barwell and particular concern is raised in relation to the impact on the historic setting of St Mary's Church, Barwell. This area provides a positive green lung for residents of Barwell and provides a green infrastructure linkage between the settlements of Hinckley and Barwell.

7.4 AREA C: EAST OF THE COMMON AND SOUTH OF SHILTON ROAD

Description

7.4.1 This area consists of a range of land uses. This includes allotments, agriculture, farm buildings, paddocks and grazing land. The allotments appear to be well used and are accessed via Dawsons Lane. There is a track that runs a short distance from Dawsons Lane which leads to a small, narrow, enclosed walkway which is well tracked but of poor quality surface. The small track does open up towards Earl Shilton and the right of way is well kept with a grassed walkway.



7.4.2 The topography slopes upwards towards Barwell and views to Burbage, Elmesthorpe, and the church spire in Stoney Stanton are evident.

Assessment

7.4.3 This area provides multi-functional uses as outlined above enabling the green wedge to be well-utilised. The narrow track which forms part of the public right of way is of poor quality and enclosed which does not make the walkway convivial or comfortable. Improvements to this track would improve connectivity between Earl Shilton and Barwell. Any significant built development would have an impact on the coalescence of Barwell and Earl Shilton with particular reference to the area close to Carrs Hill. It would also have a significant impact on the visual amenity of the wider green wedge area as it provides a continuous linkage to the wider area from Barwell into the countryside.



7.5 AREA D: LAND BETWEEN LEICESTER ROAD (CARRS HILL) AND ELMESTHORPE LANE

Description

7.5.1 This area lies between Carrs Hill and Elmesthorpe Lane. The triangular piece of land north of Elmesthorpe Lane is grassland and visible from the road. There is a strong tree line to the east of this area of land where as to the south and west there are scattered trees which gives a sense of openness on the approach to Earl Shilton. Part of the land to the north west includes an area of grassland which contains a sign for Earl Shilton which allows for a sense of arrival and place and a gateway into the town. The triangular piece of land to the south can be described as scrubland and is a natural area. It is not publically accessible, although there does seem to be some informal route way to the north abutting Elmesthorpe Lane. This area slopes southwards towards the A47 and there are open views towards Hinckley and a predominant skyline. A small section of this area falls within Blaby District.



Assessment

7.5.2 This area is not publically accessible and therefore does not provide a recreational amenity. The site does provide remote access as it provides a visual green space to the community with distinct sightlines. To some extent it provides conditional access because of its informal access although it was not evident of the level of use. It plays an important part in preventing the coalescence of Barwell and Earl Shilton where the green wedge is at its narrowest point. Any development would have a significant impact on the visual amenity on the wider green wedge area as there is a wide panorama from the elevated position of this area. It provides a continuous linkage to the wider area from the countryside into the urban areas of Earl Shilton and Barwell. The edge of this area plays an important role in the settlement pattern of Earl Shilton and has a local prominence to the entrance of the settlement.



7.6 AREA E: LAND OFF LEICESTER ROAD

Description

- 7.6.1 This site consists of a Sustainable Urban Drainage System put in place during the construction of the Earl Shilton Bypass. A lot of the area is covered by grassland although there is a small track leading off Leicester Road giving access to a Severn Trent Facility. There are a number of scattered mature trees and shrubs and the majority of the area is a natural habitat. There are a number of newly planted trees off the A47. The site is relatively flat and is at the base of the sloping topography towards Earl Shilton and Barwell. The far boundary of the site abuts the administrative area of Blaby District and is close to the village of Elmesthorpe. Properties are visible from the Earl Shilton Bypass, as the raised screening for the road ends at the edge of the green wedge.



Assessment

- 7.6.2 There is no public access to the site although there is private access to a Severn Trent water facility. The site provides remote access as it provides important views towards Burbage Common and Woods and there are distinct sightlines. Remote access means that the area provides a valuable, visual green space resource which provides a panorama to the community
- 7.6.3 Any development would have a significant impact on the visual amenity on the wider green wedge towards Burbage Common and Woods. It would impact on the rural nature and character of the western fringes of Elmesthorpe which is already sensitive due to the construction of the bypass. It provides a continuing green route way from Area C and into Area G which provides the linkages to Burbage Common.



7.7 AREA F: LAND BETWEEN NORMANDY WAY AND LEICESTER ROAD

Description

- 7.7.1 This area contains a range of uses including a football ground (Green King Stadium), cricket ground, tennis court, recreation ground, dwellings, agriculture and the A47. There are also a number of public rights of ways and informal walkways providing numerous access routes to the green wedge area. The topography gradually slopes downwards towards Leicester Road and



this makes the flood lights from the football stadium quite evident from the more elevated position, this is also true from other view points. This area abuts the built form of Hinckley and is in close proximity to Barwell. This area has the most built development in the green wedge which are structures related to the recreational uses within the area, the built development is focussed off Leicester Road. It is more agricultural in nature to the west of the area. To the western fringe is a recreation ground and between the A47 and Barwell Lane there are a number of smaller enclosed fields.

Assessment

- 7.7.2 The public rights of way are well utilised and this is visible from the condition of the track and the level of use whilst on site. Access to the right of way off Leicester Road is via a stile with a muddy descent which isn't user friendly. This is an important access point as the right of way connects Barwell Lane to Burbage Common and Woods. A barrier to accessing the Common and Woods for walkers is navigating across Leicester Road which is a busy road between Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton making this connection hazardous. Although there are a number of recreational opportunities within this area they are privately owned and therefore do not have open public access. To the west of Area F the green wedge is at one of its narrowest points between Hinckley and Barwell and therefore sensitive in relation to the coalescence of these settlements.



7.8 AREA G: LAND EAST OF LEICESTER ROAD AND NORTH OF BURBAGE COMMON ROAD

Description

7.8.1 This area is on the fringe of Burbage Common and abuts the boundary of Blaby District. The frontage onto Leicester Road is tree-lined and contains a number of farm buildings/residential properties. The area is relatively flat although there is a slight incline towards Elmesthorpe. It is within close proximity to Barwell, Earl Shilton and



Hinckley. A public right of way runs along the northern edge of this area and leads to Elmesthorpe and Burbage Common and Woods. The area is predominately agricultural in nature although there is an area of dense woodland to the south. There are various private access points along Leicester Road and the only public access is via the public right of way, which is signposted off Leicester Road.

Assessment

7.8.2 This area contributes towards the network of paths that connects to Burbage Common and Woods, the entrance to the right of way is close to Barwell increasing access to the natural environment for residents. The tree lined frontage blocks views into the countryside beyond, although this may be seasonal and views may be evident in the winter months. There are some



gaps along the tree lined road which provides view points giving the perception that this area is within the countryside. The area of woodland provides a positive setting for Burbage Common and Woods adding to the natural environment. This area contributes to the function of the green wedge as it plays a role in the separation of Barwell/Earl Shilton to Burbage Common and Woods and Hinckley, whilst providing a valuable footway linking to the Common and Woods.

7.9 AREA H: LAND OFF LEICESTER ROAD INCLUDING BURBAGE COMMON AND HINCKLEY GOLF COURSE

Description

- 7.9.1 This area consists of Burbage Common and Visitor Centre, a golf course with associated facilities, woodland, scrubland, agriculture and a scrap yard. This area provides a key open space giving access to an important natural environment. There is a network of pathways through the woodland and common which connects beyond the area to Hinckley, Burbage, Elmeſthorpe and to a further extent Earl Shilton via a number of public rights of ways. The area is relatively flat although it does slope upwards towards Hinckley from the golf course. It is an important recreational resource both public and private and appears to be well utilised whilst on site. The scrap yard has a negative impact on the ambience of the area and is visible at the entrance of Burbage Common and a footpath that connects to Leicester Road.



Assessment

- 7.9.2 This area is an important open space that provides a green lung for residents and a valuable habitat for flora and fauna. It was evident from the site visits that both Burbage Common and the Golf Course were well utilised, providing an important recreational amenity. The car park at Burbage Common was very busy which suggests a number of people drive to the open space. This could show that Burbage Common draws people from a larger catchment area demonstrating its importance locally and further afield. Any development would have an impact on the setting of Burbage Common, currently there is a scrap yard at the entrance of Burbage Common which already has a negative impact as it is visually intrusive and provides a disturbance in terms of noise. The sign posts were of good quality in and around Burbage Common with maps of the area dotted around at regular intervals. However, legibility of the right of way between Burbage Common and John Cleveland College is poor and better sign posting is required. The agricultural land to the north is not accessible and does not provide a recreational role.



7.10 AREA I: LAND SOUTH OF RAILWAY LINE AND NORTH-EAST OF BURBAGE

Description

- 7.10.1 This area consists of Burbage Wood, agriculture, recreation, paddock and railway line (Leicester to Birmingham line). This area of the green wedge abuts Burbage and the administrative boundary of Blaby District. This area provides a key open space with car parking off Smithy Lane; the woodland connects to Burbage Common (Area H) which is via tunnels



underneath the railway line. There are public rights of way off Sapcote Road and Woodgate Road, Burbage which provide a connection into Burbage Wood. On site visits these were well utilised and sign posted. The topography rises towards the railway line and it is possible to view Burbage and Hinckley from this area (John Cleveland College is particularly visible). This area is also rich in biodiversity due to the nature of the woodland and a small watercourse runs through this section of the green wedge. A vast amount of the area is in agricultural use; however, the rights of way penetrate into the land providing good recreational opportunities. There is a tea room with picnic benches at Woodhouse Farm, on the site visits there were a number of visitors using the facility.

Assessment

- 7.10.2 This area is an important open space that provides a green lung for residents and a valuable habitat for flora and fauna. It provides access to natural open space for residents of Burbage and the public rights of way provide good connectivity into a key recreational resource. It is evident from the site visits that the area is well utilised and parking at Smithy Lane was busy. As Area H this could show that Burbage Common and Woods draws people from a larger catchment area demonstrating its importance locally and further afield for example, Sapcote and Stoney Stanton. Any development would have an impact on the setting of Burbage Wood. Similar to Area H the sign posts were of good quality in and around Burbage Common and woods with maps of the area dotted around at regular intervals. The tracks were of a good quality within the woodland although the access from Woodgate Road was very wet and boggy and downhill leading it to become poor quality.



8. CONSULTATION

8.1 INTRODUCTION

8.1.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire Joint Green Wedge Review Methodology enable the option to undertake consultation when preparing the green wedge review. Chapter 4 (paragraph 4.4) of the Review sets out the background to the consultation event undertaken on Monday, 21st March 2011. This Chapter sets out the findings of the consultation event.

8.2 EXERCISE 1

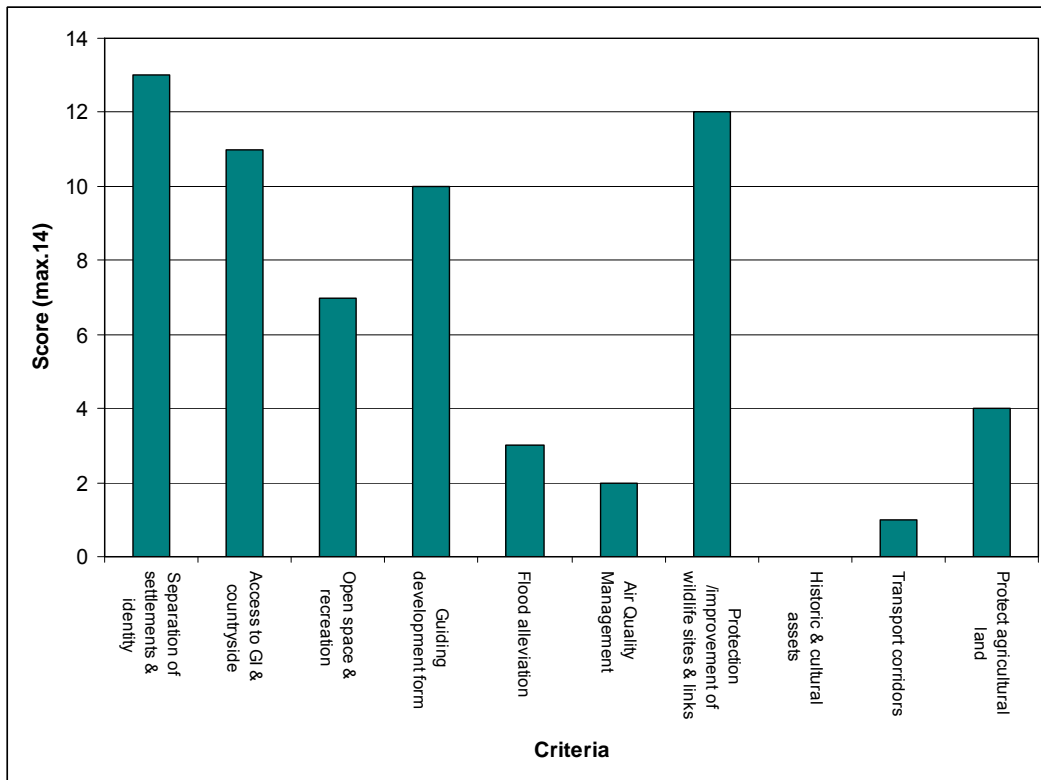
8.2.1 Prior to the first exercise a presentation was given to set the framework for the event outlining the role and policy context for green wedges and the Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Methodology Paper.

8.2.2 The presentation set the foundations for the first exercise where attendees were asked to discuss the generic purpose and function of green wedges. The discussions were based around a number of criteria which were taken from the Methodology these included:

- Physical separation of settlements and community identity
- Providing access to green infrastructure and the countryside
- Providing open space and recreational facilities
- Guiding development form
- Flood alleviation
- Air Quality Management
- Protection /improvement of wildlife sites and links between them
- Protection/improvement of historic and cultural assets and links between them
- Transport corridors
- Protect agricultural land including allotments and horticulture

8.2.3 After the discussion, attendees were given five dots so that they could select their top five priorities for the green wedge, these results are set out in the graph below.

Graph 1: Graph showing attendees top five priorities for the green wedge.



8.2.4 This exercise clearly shows that there are a number of functions which are thought of as being the most important, these include:

- Physical separation of settlements and community identity
- Protection /improvement of wildlife sites and links between them
- Providing access to green infrastructure and the countryside
- Guiding development form
- Providing open space and recreational facilities

8.2.5 These findings will aid the evaluation of the green wedge ensuring that the review places weight on these elements in terms of ensuring the green wedge satisfies these functions whilst weighing up against the other findings of the assessment to ensure that the boundary is strong and defensible.

8.2.6 In addition to this, the findings reaffirm the evaluation criteria which are being utilised to assess the green wedge strengthening the approach being taken.

8.2.7 In identifying the priorities the following points were raised through discussion:

- There was general consensus that 'preventing the merging of settlements' was one of the main purposes of the green wedge.
- Recreation and providing access to the open space is important.
- It was noted that the green wedge provides the wider function of improving air quality and reducing noise.
- It is important to be mindful of why we have a strategic green wedge.
- Wildlife corridors and links were identified as important, in particular preserving and enhancing biodiversity.

- Cycle corridors were identified as being important.
- Guiding form and separation are fundamental reasons underpinning the green wedge designation.
- Private ownership and rights of way should not define a green wedge.

8.3 EXERCISE 2

- 8.3.1 The second part of the consultation workshop focused on the individual green wedges. To set the scene for the interactive exercise a presentation was given on the main findings of the desktop survey and site assessments which built upon the topic papers provided to attendees prior to the event.
- 8.3.2 Attendees were allocated a table which related to the particular area they were interested in and to ensure that there was a spread of people with different expertise spread evenly. Group A focused on the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge and Group B the Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge.
- 8.3.3 There were two stages to the exercise; the first task was to look at the individual role and function of the green wedges to establish what is considered to be important. The discussion was focused around the priorities identified in exercise 1 but were applied at the local level. A map was placed on the table which attendees could annotate. For the second part of the exercise, the evaluation criteria were looked at in turn and attendees were asked how they would apply the evaluation criteria to the green wedge.
- 8.3.4 Only the findings of exercise 2 for Group A are outlined below. The findings for Group B are included within the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Review.

Group A – Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge

Stage 1 – explored the role and function of the Green Wedge

Role and function	Comments
Physical separation of settlements and community identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area around Carrs Hill/Leicester Road acts as separation between Barwell and Earl Shilton. • Important views across the valley from Barwell. • Potential for expanding towards Elmesthorpe and Barwell towards Stapleton.
Providing access to green infrastructure and the countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • River Tweed corridor - needs to be more user-friendly providing a through corridor. It also runs up to Stapleton. • Burbage Common is common land. • Sheepy Wood is a local nature reserve.

<p>Providing open space and recreational facilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key recreational resources include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Area of open space behind St Mary's Avenue (currently outside the green wedge). ○ Sports facilities off Leicester Road. ○ Burbage Common and Woodland. ○ Harwood Drive Recreation Ground. ○ Church View Fields Farm, Leicester Road, Hinckley – Fly ball Training Centre • Fishing ponds off Leicester Road/Carrs Hill. • The recreational fields close to Milestone House, Leicester Road, Hinckley is used by Mount Grace High School.
<p>Guiding Development Form</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Steep gradient between Leicester Road, Hinckley and Burbage.
<p>Flood alleviation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area of flood risk to the south of Barwell Lane adjacent to the Hinckley urban area.
<p>Air Quality Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North of Hinckley Road/Ashby Road – The green wedge alleviates some noise and air quality concerns.
<p>Protection /improvement of wildlife sites and links between them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of wildlife and SSSI around Burbage Common and Woodland.
<p>Protection/improvement of historic and cultural assets and links between them</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motte within the green wedge to the south of Hinckley Road, Barwell.
<p>Transport corridors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads are a physical barrier and needs better surfacing.
<p>Other comments</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning permission for a site north of Sapcote Road was refused. • Field to the south of Bradgate Road – only part where the rural area can be seen. • The SUE may impact on the landscape character, especially regarding development form.

Stage 2 – application of the evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Comments
Preventing the merging of settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extend the green wedge north of Hinckley Road, Barwell and both sides of Rogues Lane. • No development to the west of the A447. • Consider the separation between Barwell and Stapleton. • Concern was raised over coalescence between Stoke Golding and Hinckley.
Guiding development form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The A447 and the top of Barwell should guide development form. • No development to the west of the A447. • There should be protection to the north of the Northern Perimeter Road.
Providing a green lung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the potential to extend the National Forest. • Link Burbage Common with other areas of open space and woodland. • Burbage Common is an important recreation resource.
A recreational resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barwell Lane has an inappropriate surface for cyclists (particularly in winter) and is an important wildlife haven. Good access established. • Prevent erosion of character of the countryside and settlements. • The golf course is not enough of a barrier. • Potential for eco burial sites in the green wedge.

9. EVALUATION

9.1 INTRODUCTION

9.1.1 The evaluation criteria set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Joint Green Wedge Methodology Paper will be used to assess the green wedge and the findings are set out below. A small section of Area D falls within Blaby District and this will be a consideration throughout the evaluation. These observations will be provided in liaison with officers at Blaby District to ensure this document is produced in cooperation with the Authority who also attended the consultation event.

9.2 PREVENTING THE MERGING OF SETTLEMENTS

9.2.1 The green wedge acts as a buffer between the urban areas of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton. It is evident that there is intravisibility (can see more than one settlement from any one point in the green wedge) in sections of the green wedge including Area A: South of Hinckley Road and north of Normandy Way, Area D and Area I. Due to the level of tree coverage between Barwell/Earl Shilton and Hinckley/Burbage it meant that the built form of the settlements were often not visible. The topography of this area results in the A47 acting as a valley floor and the tree coverage provides screening between the areas providing a valuable contribution in providing the perception of distance between settlements when in reality they are in close proximity.

9.2.2 There are some areas within the green wedge which are particularly sensitive. This includes: Area A and Area D. Area A is in close proximity to Barwell and Hinckley. Any development north of the A47, east of Ashby Road, and south of Hinckley Road would have an impact on this objective as it would reduce the already slim open gaps between the settlements.

9.2.3 Area D is also susceptible to the merging of Barwell and Earl Shilton and this was raised at the consultation event. Barwell and Earl Shilton is a single urban form and this is due to the industrial boom of the boot and shoe trade within the area with the construction of factories for the trade with the associated workers houses rapidly being constructed by the 1930s, where in the space of 50 years the two villages tripled in size. An argument could be put forward that Barwell and Earl Shilton have already merged to an extent but that does not mean it is acceptable to allow this further. Carrs Hill is an important approach into Earl Shilton from Hinckley and the A47, and this area plays an important role in the separation of Barwell and Earl Shilton and retaining their settlement identity. This is supported by the 6C's Green Infrastructure Strategy that highlights that green infrastructure can provide a gateway to cities and towns by providing an improved image, experience and sense of place. The settlement boundary between the towns is as small as the triangular field to the north and the distinction between the settlements is of local importance. This area is considered to have an important role in the separation of the two settlements. There is intervisibility (seeing one settlement from the edge of the other) at numerous points within the green wedge, for example, Area D.

9.2.4 In relation to areas that perform poorly, the recent planning appeal decision for the site abutting Hinckley off Leicester Road in Area H, the Inspector

commented that the development of this site would not reduce the current minimum distance between Hinckley and the other settlements. The Inspectors remarks relates this evaluation criteria as it was not identified that the development of this site would lead to coalescence, this is partially due to the adjacent land uses which are discussed in 'Guiding Development Form'.

- 9.2.5 At the consultation event a number of suggestions were made in relation to future measures to prevent the merging of settlements and these are considered in Chapter 8.
- 9.2.6 At a macro scale the green wedge does prevent the merging of settlements. It is true to say that some sections are more sensitive than others, it is important to ensure that any review would not compromise the strength of the green wedge in preventing coalescence.

9.3 GUIDING DEVELOPMENT FORM

- 9.3.1 The uses on the perimeter of the green wedge are predominately agricultural, resulting in the built form to be open beyond the settlement boundaries as opposed to being bordered by major roads which is evident in the Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge. This makes the green wedge particularly vulnerable to encroachment beyond the current boundaries. The recreation ground off Harwood Drive helps guide development form to some extent to the east and this is in the vicinity of the area close to Barwell. It is also evident in other sections containing recreational activities that this could guide development form including Hinckley Golf Course and the recreation ground off Dovecote Way, Barwell. It was highlighted through the consultation event that the Hinckley Golf Course was not a sufficient barrier. In contrast to this the Inspector for the recent planning appeal concluded that the appeal site was surrounded by defensible boundaries including the golf course. The Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) highlights maintaining the green wedge between Hinckley and Barwell as it is important in protecting green infrastructure.
- 9.3.2 The consultation event identified that the A447 and the top of Barwell Lane should guide development form. The A447 acts as a strong barrier for the green wedge, to the west of the road the area becomes rural in nature and there is the sense that this is the edge of the urban area. Countryside policy would apply to this area.
- 9.3.3 The consultation event also noted that the area to the north of the Northern Perimeter Road needs to be protected.
- 9.3.4 There are fluvial flooding issues around Thurlaston Brook tributary in Area G. Within Blaby District Flood Zone 3a runs along the boundary of Area E. These flooding issues would have an impact on guiding any development and reinforces the need to retain these areas as green wedge to limit any impact.
- 9.3.5 The Core Strategy allocates housing requirements for each settlement which creates the need to identify land outside of the settlement boundary on green field sites. The housing allocations for Barwell, Earl Shilton and Burbage should not impact on the green wedge other than an increase in the population of the settlements which may lead to a rise in those utilising the area. The fringes of Hinckley have faced development pressure and this is evident through the recent planning appeal decision and it will be necessary

to review the green wedge boundary to incorporate this appeal decision. The Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD will identify land to meet the housing requirements set out in the Core Strategy, as acknowledged previously there are development pressures facing Hinckley and a shortage of land. If it is identified through the investigation of sites for the Site Allocations DPD that suitable and viable sustainable sites cannot be identified within the settlement boundary it may be necessary, having exhausted the review of all brownfield sites, to consider as a last resort investigating alternative land outside the settlement boundary to meet this requirement. These investigations will be informed by this Review as part of the evidence base.

- 9.3.6 The green wedge is important in terms of protecting the historic nature of Elmesthorpe which is highlighted in Appendix 8 of the Blaby District Landscape and Settlement Character Assessment which notes that the *'Earl Shilton Bypass could have a marked influence on the western fringes of the settlement [Elmesthorpe]. The new road would be an urbanising influence in a fairly rural landscape'*. The 6C's Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies that it is important to provide a cultural legacy in terms of increasing awareness of historic features in the urban fringe landscape. Elmesthorpe was expanded and developed largely by the Land Settlement Association during the 1930s to provide small holdings to enable workers to start a rural life and be self sufficient working off their land. Areas within the Review which could have particular impact on the rural nature of Elmesthorpe are Areas D and E. The other settlements adjacent to the green wedge are very urban in nature, Earl Shilton is particularly close and there is a Sustainable Urban Extension planned abutting the bypass which could further impact on the rural nature of Elmesthorpe. This demonstrates further the need to maintain the countryside within the green wedge in areas D and E.
- 9.3.7 The green wedge also helps guide the development of the north east of Burbage as its traditional pattern of development has been linear along Sapcote Road with the exception of properties off Burbage Road. It helps to guide development form to ensure the recreational resource and green lung are not compromised.
- 9.3.8 Guiding development form is an important element of the green wedge as it allows the other three functions to play their role in ensuring it prevents the merging of settlement, provides a green lung and recreational resource. Some areas may contribute to this function less due to strategic assets being within close proximity which potentially could perform this role. As highlighted above there are areas of sensitivity and the green wedge enables the protection of these structurally important areas of land.

9.4 PROVIDING A GREEN LUNG INTO URBAN AREAS

- 9.4.1 The green wedge provides the communities of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell, Earl Shilton and Elmesthorpe with access to green infrastructure and countryside. These settlements are interlinked via route ways through the green wedge enabling connectivity between the settlements and countryside beyond.
- 9.4.2 The green wedge helps to preserve and promote wildlife and landscape character. In particular, Burbage Common and Woods is an important resource, the woodland is characterised as 'broadleaved ancient woodland'

and identified as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) playing an important role in supporting flora and fauna. The Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies Burbage Common and Woods as one of the most important sites within the Borough in terms of functional value for the local community and a biodiversity asset. From the level of use identified on the site visits this would support the findings of the Strategy. During the consultation event it was highlighted that Burbage Common was an important open space and it performs the role of a green lung. To improve the functionality of Burbage Common as a green lung it was suggested that linkages to other areas of open space and woodlands are improved. It was suggested that the extension of the National Forest should be investigated; this is something that the National Forest Company would lead on and is out of the jurisdiction of this Review.

- 9.4.3 The Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies the green wedge as important in terms of access and recreation especially as demand for development occurs. It notes that the value of open landscape should be recognised for visual, quality of life and broader biodiversity reasons and the planning system must continue to protect the open landscape features. This is particularly evident from Barwell and Earl Shilton when looking towards Burbage and Hinckley. One example of such an important vista is on the urban fringe of Barwell from Shilton Road; from this location it is possible to see Burbage, Elmesthorpe, the church spire of St Michael's Church in Stoney Stanton, and Burbage Common and Wood is also prominent. Planning Policy Statement 7 states that there should only be local landscape designations in exceptional circumstances, this section is important in landscape terms as the view reflects the local character of Elmesthorpe.
- 9.4.4 The 6C's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2010) also recognises the need for green infrastructure including providing a bridge to the countryside and accommodating a nature reserve to strengthen biodiversity in and around the urban areas.
- 9.4.5 Although there are no air quality management areas within the Borough the green wedge provides a green lung due to the busy road infrastructure present (A47, B4668 and Carrs Hill) as it provides a green buffer.
- 9.4.6 There is a broad range of open space and recreational facilities within the green wedge which draw people into using the area. Recreation will be considered in the criteria below.
- 9.4.7 It is evident that the green wedge does provide a green lung for both the immediate green wedge area and at the wider level sustaining positive green infrastructure routes and aids connectivity into the countryside from the urban areas of the Borough. Due to the nature of Burbage Common and Woods it is recognised that this can also provide a green lung to communities beyond the immediate urban areas potentially at a sub-regional area due to its wide appeal and strategic importance.

9.5 A RECREATIONAL RESOURCE

9.5.1 There are a number of public and private recreational amenities within the green wedge which can be accessed from each of the settlements. These include:

- Recreation Grounds
- Allotments
- Tea rooms and picnic areas
- Paddocks
- Woodland walks
- Burbage Common and Woods (plus visitor centre)
- Football ground (stadium)
- Cricket Ground
- Squash Courts
- Bridleways
- Golf Course
- Rugby Pitches
- Tennis Course
- Public rights of way

9.5.2 These recreational amenities provide opportunities not only for residents close to the green wedge but also draw people in from beyond the immediate area to use these sites.

9.5.3 It was made clear through the consultation event that there were a number of key recreational resources in the green wedge (see Chapter 8). The range of resources that were stated during the event highlight the multiple uses that can be utilised by the community and are identified as important.

9.5.4 There is a good network of public rights of way which encourages people into the green wedge (Section 6.2 and Figure 3). The majority of the public right of ways were of good quality with clear signage to aid the legibility of the routes, they also appeared to be well utilised. Informal routes were evident which diverged from the more formal routes. It was highlighted through the consultation event that Barwell Lane had a poor surface for cyclists.

9.5.5 Abutting the boundary of the Green Wedge in Blaby District there were further recreational amenities which provides a continuation of Burbage Common and Woods. The woodlands known as Aston Firs and Elmesthorpe Plantation accessed off Smithy Lane broaden this recreational offering.

9.5.6 A Priority Neighbourhood Area exists within the green wedge and there are a number of recreational facilities within close proximity and therefore the recreational value of the green wedge is of importance to these neighbourhoods.

9.5.7 The importance of the green wedge in terms of recreation is evident in the Hinckley and Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy. It highlights that as the population increases it is important green infrastructure assets are retained and enhanced. Strategically important sites such as Burbage Common and

Woods are of particular note and it recommends where possible it is expanded to accommodate the needs of the growing population and wildlife.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

10.1 INTRODUCTION

10.1.1 Strategically at the wider area level the green wedge fulfils the objectives set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology Paper; however, at the Borough level there are small pockets that do not fully perform the role set out in the methodology. From the evaluation a number of observations and recommendations have been identified and are outlined below.

10.2 AREA A: SOUTH OF HINCKLEY ROAD AND NORTH OF NORMANDY WAY

10.2.1 Area A forms part of the strategic role in guiding development form and preventing the coalescence of Barwell and Hinckley. With the development of the Barwell SUE it will be of even more importance to ensure that it provides a buffer between the two settlements, especially as it is at one of the narrowest points of the green wedge. It provides an important role visually in relation to the adjoining countryside and neighbouring properties. The site is publically accessible via public rights of way which are well utilised. It was highlighted through the consultation event that the area acts a green lung with particular regard to alleviating noise and air quality concerns for residents from the A47.

10.2.2 A Pipistrelle Bat has been sighted within this area, illustrating its importance to wildlife.

10.2.3 There are no boundary change recommendations for this assessment area.

10.3 AREA B: SOUTH OF BARWELL AND NORTH OF NORMANDY WAY

10.3.1 Area B enables connectivity between Barwell and Hinckley via Barwell Lane whilst also providing wider links to Burbage Common and Woods. In this area the topography plays an integral role in relation to any impact any built development would have on the green wedge. This is not only in terms of the impact it would have on the historic setting of St Mary's Church but also to the green linkage it provides for residents to and from Hinckley and Barwell. It is particularly relevant to the central/western side of the area where there are a number of rights of way which provide circular and linear walks to the south of Barwell. This link within the green wedge provides a key green lung for residents of Barwell whilst providing a link to Hinckley. This area also falls within the Barwell and Earl Shilton Priority Neighbourhood and therefore plays an important role in improving the quality of life of residents.

10.3.2 This area contains ridge and furrow and a number of archaeological remains have been found including; early 20th Century various Neolithic finds and features were recorded in the area of a sand pit, evidence of a Roman settlement, including a possible floor, several hundred potsherds, brick, tile, tesserae and a whetstone, and a possible medieval lime kiln constructed of granite blocks was found here in a sand pit in the early 20th Century. There has been a Pipistrelle Bat identified within the area.

10.3.3 The Common is a public open space and is identified as a recreational facility in the Local Plan (2001) (REC1). In the process of preparing the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD open spaces will be identified. It is recommended that although the open space is identified as recreation within the

development plan it should still remain within the green wedge boundary as it also contributes to the other functions of the green wedge.

10.4 AREA C: EAST OF THE COMMON AND SOUTH OF SHILTON ROAD

- 10.4.1 This area is multi functional, guide's development form and contributes collaboratively to the prevention of the merging of settlements. It provides access via public rights of way, allotments and horse paddocks, performing the role of a green lung and a recreational resource. It was highlighted through the consultation event that there are fishing ponds off Carrs Hill/Leicester Road which provide a recreational opportunity and in addition a biodiversity amenity.
- 10.4.2 Topography is important to consider in this area. The topography enables a unique character to the edge of Barwell; there are long distance views from Shilton Road. From this vantage point it is possible to view Burbage, Elmesthorpe and the spire of the church in Stoney Stanton. This was also expressed during the consultation event highlighting the important views across the valley from Barwell.
- 10.4.3 The area is particularly sensitive to coalescence and providing a green lung and recreational resource. It also plays a fundamental role in connecting Barwell to Earl Shilton and providing intravisibility between a number of the settlements. It was highlighted during the consultation event that the area around Carrs Hill and Leicester Road plays an important role in maintaining the physical separation of settlements and community identity.
- 10.4.4 There are no suggested boundary amendments for this assessment area.

10.5 AREA D: LAND BETWEEN LEICESTER ROAD (CARRS HILL) AND ELMESTHORPE LANE

- 10.5.1 Area D adjoins Blaby District and prevents the merging of Earl Shilton and Barwell. As outlined in paragraph 9.2.3, over the years the northern parts of Barwell and Earl Shilton have coalesced and for visitors to the area it would be difficult to know where the boundary lies. This has reduced the sense of settlement identity within the existing built form of the two settlements. As a result, this area is important to prevent the further coalescence to the south of the settlements to protect their identities at one of the main approaches into Earl Shilton. This is further supported as it was highlighted during the consultation event that the area around Carrs Hill and Leicester Road is important in maintaining the physical separation of settlements and community identity. It provides a visually important continuous link into the countryside and prevents the urbanisation of the main approach into Earl Shilton.
- 10.5.2 Archaeological remains have been found in this area which includes a late medieval mirror case which was recorded in 2004.
- 10.5.3 It also guides development form as Elmesthorpe Lane acts as a strong boundary to the Earl Shilton built up area. This also re-enforces the sense of arrival into Earl Shilton and a clear divide between the settlement, Area D and Area C/Barwell.
- 10.5.4 This area of the green wedge acts as a green lung as it provides the visual link to the countryside beyond which penetrates into Barwell, Hinckley and Burbage. Although there are no air quality management areas in the Borough the area does provide a buffer between the built up area and the two busy route ways of the A47 and Carrs Hill.

10.5.5 An area to the south of Area D falls within Blaby District. The Blaby District Green Wedge Review (June 2009), states that:

4.6.1 However, this Green Wedge as a whole is important in terms of fulfilling the East Midlands Regional Plan objective of preventing coalescence between settlements, in this case, between the south of Earl Shilton and Barwell.

4.6.2 This land was not identified as being a particularly sensitive area of Green Wedge, or as an area where the Green Wedge boundary should be reviewed within the Designations and Allocations Development Plan Document’.

10.5.6 Paragraph 4.6.2 makes the concluding the remark that it is not identified to be reviewed in the Blaby District site allocations document. The findings of the Blaby Study ties in with this Reviews assessment and overall recommendation that there are no suggested boundary amendments.

10.6 AREA E: LAND OFF LEICESTER ROAD

10.6.1 Area E plays an important role in terms of the wider green wedge role as it provides the green link from the A47 towards Burbage Common and the public right of way which runs alongside the northern boundary of Area E towards Elmesthorpe and Burbage Common and Woods. There is mature vegetation within this area and the poplar trees are particularly prominent. The Sustainable Urban Drainage System is the main feature visible from the A47 roadside and was put into place as a mitigation measure from the development of the A47 bypass. It now provides an aesthetic, wildlife habitat within the area whilst performing the green lung function in terms of flood alleviation.

10.6.2 This area offers the role of preventing the merging of settlements in relation to the wider context, whilst guiding development form beyond the A47 limiting any potential impact on the rural character of Elmesthorpe and its unique morphology. There is public access through the green wedge in terms of the A47 transport corridor which penetrates between Area E and C contributing towards separation and acting as a green lung. The A47 has a pavement that leads to Leicester Road and The Common, this allows pedestrian connectivity between Earl Shilton, Hinckley and Barwell.

10.6.3 There are no boundary amendments proposed for the assessment area.

10.7 AREA F: LAND BETWEEN NORMANDY WAY AND LEICESTER ROAD

10.7.1 This area is multifunctional and provides a range of recreational opportunities. A number of the recreational opportunities are privately owned although still provide an important resource to the community. The public rights of way within this area provide good connectivity to Hinckley, Barwell and Burbage Common and Woods. These route ways are integral in allowing the links across the green wedge as a whole and this leads to the area achieving the function of a green lung. Having said this, it was highlighted through the consultation that Barwell Lane had an insufficient surface for cyclists, particularly in winter, which suggests that if improvements were made to the quality of the surfacing the route way through the green wedge may be utilised more.

10.7.2 The area acts as a green lung as there is a link to green infrastructure which is of sub-regional importance. Leicester Road is a key transport route that runs from the A47 to Hinckley which enables a pedestrian link between Barwell, Earl Shilton and

Hinckley whilst giving pedestrian access to the recreational opportunities provided within and adjacent to Area F. At the consultation event it was highlighted that Barwell Lane is a haven for wildlife, the contribution of Barwell Lane is therefore functional in providing connectivity between settlements whilst also providing a green corridor.

- 10.7.3 The green wedge guides the development form of Hinckley. In particular the north west of area F is within close proximity to Barwell and therefore prevents the coalescence of settlements.
- 10.7.4 There are a number of private access points into the green wedge from Leicester Road.
- 10.7.5 Harwood Drive Recreation Ground is a public open space and is identified as a recreational facility in the Local Plan. It performs the role of the green wedge in terms of a recreational resource, green lung, guiding development form and preventing the merging of settlements. REC1 of the Local Plan applies to Harwood Drive Recreation Ground and the site allocations process will also identify open spaces. It is recommended that although the open space is identified as recreation within the development plan it should still remain within the green wedge boundary as it also contributes to the other functions of the green wedge.
- 10.7.6 There are no boundary amendments suggested for this area.

10.8 AREA G: LAND EAST OF LEICESTER ROAD AND NORTH OF BURBAGE COMMON ROAD

- 10.8.1 The southern tip of this Area contains a public right of way to the northern tip which links to Elmesthorpe and Burbage Common and Woods providing a green lung to green infrastructure of sub-regional significance. A watercourse runs into this area and as a result it is in a flood zone. There has also been a European water vole identified within the area, demonstrating that it is important in wildlife terms. There is also woodland which abuts Burbage Common Lane.
- 10.8.2 This area provides recreational opportunities as there is a horse riding paddock. This is a private facility but remains a recreational facility all the same. The public right of way also affords recreational amenity value.
- 10.8.3 At the consultation event it was highlighted that Church View Fields Farm, Leicester Road, Hinckley also provides a recreational resource as it runs a Fly ball Training Centre.
- 10.8.4 The area serves the role of preventing the merging of settlements in the wider context when considered alongside the other areas.
- 10.8.5 There are no boundary amendments suggested for this assessment area.

10.9 AREA H: LAND OFF LEICESTER ROAD INCLUDING BURBAGE COMMON AND HINCKLEY GOLF COURSE

- 10.9.1 There are two predominant uses within this area. Burbage Common and Hinckley Golf Course with a smaller area used for agricultural purposes. The area acts as both a recreational resource and a green lung. Burbage Common is an important green infrastructure asset along with Burbage Wood and is a popular recreational area which was evident during the site visit. Burbage Common provides a popular area for the community and wildlife. In contrast the golf course is characterised by manicured

lawns and rises to the north. What is evident from site visits on the northern side of the A47 (close to Barwell and Earl Shilton) is that there is significant tree coverage within this area.

- 10.9.2 The area is some distance from Barwell and Earl Shilton although when considered alongside the other areas it does serve the role of preventing the merging of settlements in the wider context. The Golf Course and Burbage Common are of a considerable size and by their very nature aid the separation of settlements and guide development form. The recent planning decision for the planning application off Leicester Road, Hinckley will mean that the green wedge boundary will need to be amended to reflect the boundary of the residential development through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD.
- 10.9.3 During the consultation event it was highlighted that Burbage Common and woodland was an important wildlife and recreational resource. It was noted that Sheepy Wood was a Local Nature Reserve. This illustrates the important role that Burbage Common and Woodland has in terms of providing a green lung to the urban area.
- 10.9.4 Burbage Common should be supported and sensitively managed to ensure it remains a positive green infrastructure resource and links to the asset should be maintained and improved to maximise access. This should be investigated as part of the site allocations process.

10.10 AREA I: LAND SOUTH OF THE RAILWAY LINE AND NORTH-EAST OF BURBAGE

- 10.10.1 This area is similar to Area H as it contains Burbage Wood which forms part of the Burbage Common and Woods open space. Access between the two is via tunnels underneath the railway line.
- 10.10.2 Through the consultation event it was identified that Burbage Common and Woodland was important for the protection of wildlife and a key recreational resource.
- 10.10.3 This area does not perform a very strong role in preventing the merging of settlements as it is some distance from Barwell and Earl Shilton. In relation to the coalescence of Hinckley and Burbage the railway line acts a divide between the two. John Cleveland College School Playing fields (outside of green wedge) provide an open aspect from Area I which gives the feel of separation between the two.
- 10.10.4 The properties on the northern side of Sapcote Road have been built in the form of ribbon development and there is an open aspect to the rear of the properties. In contrast properties off Burbage Road have encroached further into the countryside. This is evident from the modern properties on Elm Tree Drive and The Coppice. The green wedge therefore successfully guides development form of Burbage.
- 10.10.5 In relation to this, there are development pressures on the edge of Burbage north of Sapcote Road, which could lead to significant backland development. It is important to consider impact of tandem development and how this could be repeated where development pressures do not already exist. The Green Wedge does guide the development form of Burbage in this location as the establishment of a line of sporadic backland development that causes a detrimental change to the character of the green wedge. The recent amendments to Annex B of PPS3 (2011) has now amended the status of *'land in built-up areas such as private residential gardens'* to Greenfield land which gives these areas extra prominence in terms of their undeveloped nature.

- 10.10.6 Area I provides both a recreational resource and green lung. The area is an important recreational resource and this was evident from the level of use of Burbage Woodland (including picnic area) and connecting rights of ways during the site visits. This was further supported through the consultation event. It acts as a green lung as it is an area important to wildlife and Burbage Wood and Aston Firs are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). It provides links to green infrastructure at both a strategic and local level whilst providing a good recreational facility.

10.11 EXTENSION TO THE GREEN WEDGE

- 10.11.1 The eastern boundary of the Green Wedge is formed by the administrative boundary of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council with Blaby District Council and therefore no extensions are recommended as it is outside of the jurisdiction of this Report.

- 10.11.2 St Mary's Church, Barwell is adjacent to the current green wedge boundary. Cemeteries and churchyards are recognised as a recreational facility in the Open Space, Sports and Recreational Facilities Assessment (2011) following the PPG17 typology. The churchyard also provides a green lung as it is a historical asset, supports biodiversity and is an open space. A right of way runs alongside the churchyard/cemetery providing the green linkage into the countryside beyond.



- The area does not lend itself to guiding development form or preventing the merging of settlements when looking the site in isolation but looking at it at a macro scale it does achieve this when looking at it in its entirety. It is suggested that churchyard/cemetery lends itself naturally to an extension to the green wedge.
- 10.11.3 During the consultation event concern was highlighted regarding coalescence between Barwell and Stapleton once the Barwell Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) has been developed. When looking at the development framework in the Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (AAP) for the SUE the physical distance between Barwell and Stapleton will be significantly reduced. It is not possible to comment on what the perception of distance will be as the development has not been built. The establishment of a new green wedge within this area will be explored through a separate paper.
- 10.11.4 The area of open space behind St Mary's Avenue was identified as being a key recreational resource during the consultation event, known as Waterfall Way in the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study. This area is currently outside the green wedge area, it is recognised that this space provides a recreational resource. It has a limited role in providing a green lung. It performs little in the way of preventing the merging of settlements, the open space does however, act as a green finger penetrating into the urban area of Barwell. It does not guide development form. As the site is identified as recreational resource in the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study, it would be more appropriate to allocate this land as open space in the Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan (AAP). Other areas of open space adjacent to the built form of Barwell are outside the settlement boundary, this should be investigated further through the AAP.

- 10.11.5 John Cleveland College Playing Fields are not part of the green wedge and have been suggested as an extension to the green wedge. The school playing fields are visible from Ambion Way, Sandford Close, and within Area I. The prominence of its appearance from Area I is because of its rising topography from the railway line to Butt Lane, this steep gradient was also identified through the consultation. The golf course is adjacent to the playing fields, it is not possible to comment on the visual appearance from the golf course as this is private land. If development were to occur it would reduce both the physical and perception of separation between Hinckley and Burbage. The Playing Fields are a community resource as identified on John Cleveland College's website which states: *'more than 40 clubs and societies use the facilities at John Cleveland College on a regular basis. These groups include: Football, Cricket, Rugby'*, the rugby pitches, football pitches and astro-turf pitches (football, hockey) are also available for hire. The Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study recognises the fields as a recreational resource identifying Football, Cricket, Tennis and Athletics as the main uses for outdoor sport. The playing fields act as a green lung as they penetrate into the urban area and act as a sports facility. In addition to this, the Green Infrastructure Strategy and subsequently the Core Strategy identifies the area as a 'Biodiversity Improvement Area'. The playing fields at John Cleveland College meet the criteria for green wedge, both at a macro and micro scale and it recommended that this area is extended into the green wedge.
- 10.11.6 During the consultation event concern was also raised in relation to the coalescence of Hinckley and Stoke Golding, this will be considered further through a separate evidence base document.

10.12 CONCLUDING POINTS

- 10.12.1 From this review it is evident that the green wedge is a multi-functional designation. It provides the following uses:
- Recreational opportunities for the local and wider community;
 - Performs an agricultural role;
 - Haven for flora and fauna; and
 - Provides links into the countryside from the urban areas providing connectivity.
- 10.12.2 The recommendations in this assessment do not revise the adopted boundary of the green wedge. The revision of the boundary will be carried out within the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD and this document will be used as an evidence base for this process. The findings of the Review will be consulted upon as part of the preparation of the DPD. As a result the Green Wedge boundary identified on the Adopted Proposals Map will remain in place until the DPD is adopted.

PART B

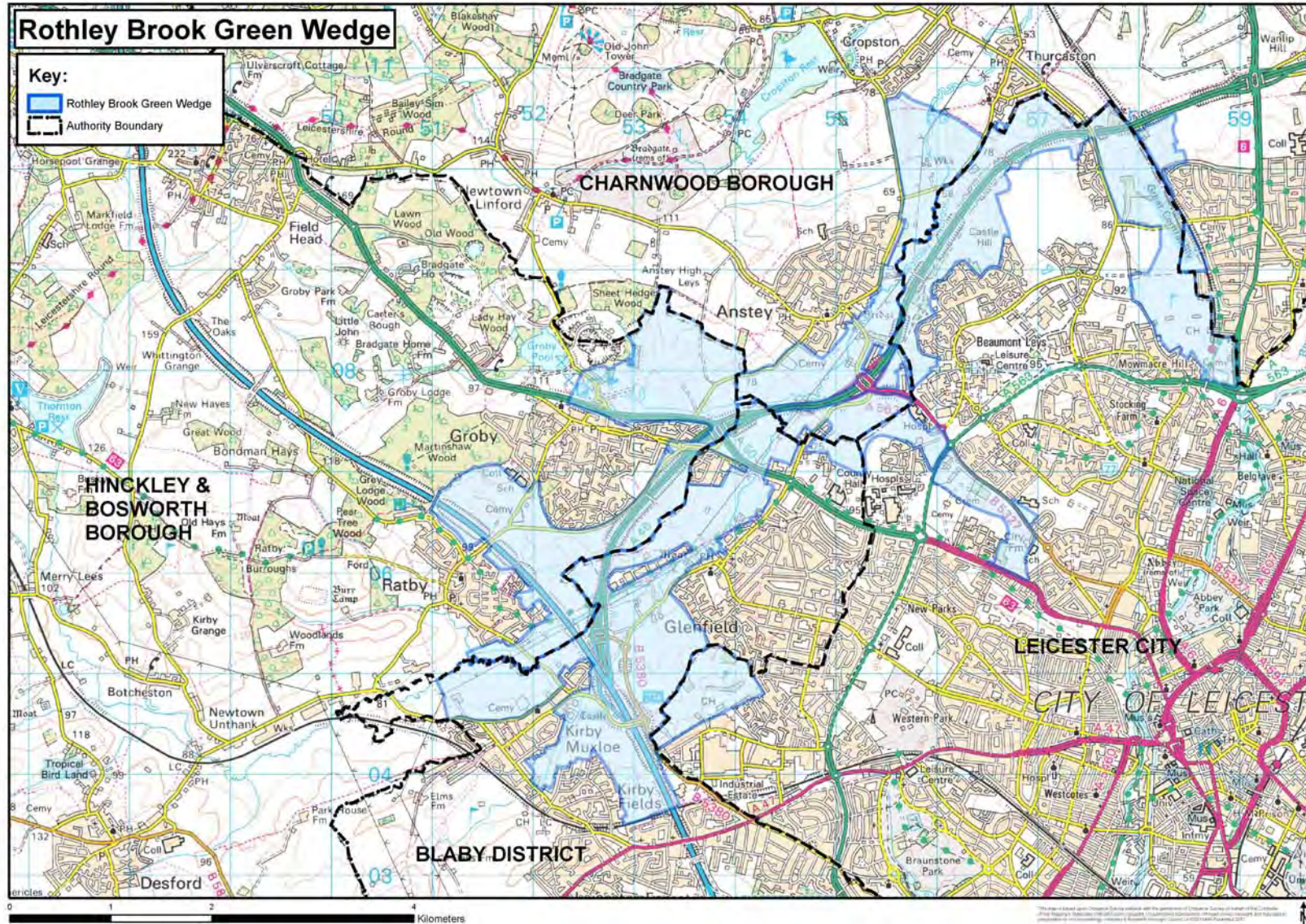
ROTHLEY BROOK MEADOW



11. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ROTHLEY BROOK MEADOW GREEN WEDGE

- 11.1.1 The extent of the green wedge is 1375 hectares of which 336.96 hectares is within Hinckley and Bosworth Borough. The green wedge extends into Charnwood Borough Council, Blaby District Council and Leicester City Council administrative areas. It extends down towards the A50 at Groby in the south (lying within Hinckley and Bosworth). From Groby it extends in two directions, firstly, southwards towards Ratby, Kirby Muxloe, Glenfield and Braunstone Frith and secondly, northwards in an arc following the built up edge around Beaumont Leys and Ashton Green in the Leicester City. The green wedge then arcs back towards the City in-between Ashton Green and Birstall. A map of the overall green wedge is contained in Figure 7.
- 11.1.2 The Green Wedge is large in area but is relatively narrow in some places, particularly in the sections between Ratby and Groby, Ratby and Kirby Muxloe, Anstey and Beaumont Leys, between Thurcaston and Ashton Green, and between Birstall and Ashton Green. The area between Ratby and Kirby Muxloe falls within Hinckley and Bosworth Council and Blaby District Council administrative areas. The whole area of the Green Wedge that lies between Thurcaston and the City is within the administrative area of Leicester City Council. For the Green Wedge that lies in between Birstall and Ashton Green, the vast majority is within the City Council's boundary, although small parcels of land lie within Charnwood Borough. The part of the Green Wedge from Anstey to Groby, includes higher land at the edge of along with parts of the lower Rothley Brook Valley.

Figure 7: Map of the entire Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge



12. DESKTOP SURVEY

12.1 INTRODUCTION

12.1.1 The desktop survey is undertaken at a Borough Wide level, although it includes some information which falls within neighbouring authority areas. Assessment areas have been identified and these are mapped in Appendix A, these areas are sometimes referenced to aid the evaluation in the latter part of the review.

12.2 ACCESS

12.2.2 There are a number of public rights of way, footpaths, cycle ways and a bridleway that run through the Green Wedge and these are set out in Figure 8.

Groby/Anstey

12.2.2 To the north of the A50 there is a good network of footpaths that connects Groby to Anstey and further afield to Newtown Linford. It also provides a circular walking route for users of the network.

Groby/Glenfield

12.2.3 The pathway to the east of Groby connects to Glenfield with a footbridge across the A46. There is a circular route within Blaby District that connects back to the footbridge.

Groby/Ratby

12.2.3 There are three route ways connecting Groby and Ratby, two of which are off road. Firstly, there is a public right of way accessed from Sacheverell Way that connects to Ratby via a footbridge across the M1. The footpath takes you into a modern housing development and leads to Ferndale Park.

12.2.4 The second route runs alongside the boundary of Martinshaw Wood, from Markfield Road, Ratby and through Martinshaw Woods (outside the green wedge) onto Woodbank Road, Groby. These provide good access ways serving different sections of Groby and Ratby.

12.2.5 The third route is via the public highway; Groby Road. This is the only vehicular route between the two settlements. There is a public footpath on this road.

Ratby/Glenfield

12.2.6 There is an off-road cycle way (Ivanhoe Route) and bridleway that links the southern side of Ratby to Glenfield.

Ratby/Kirby Muxloe

12.2.7 There is a footpath that runs from

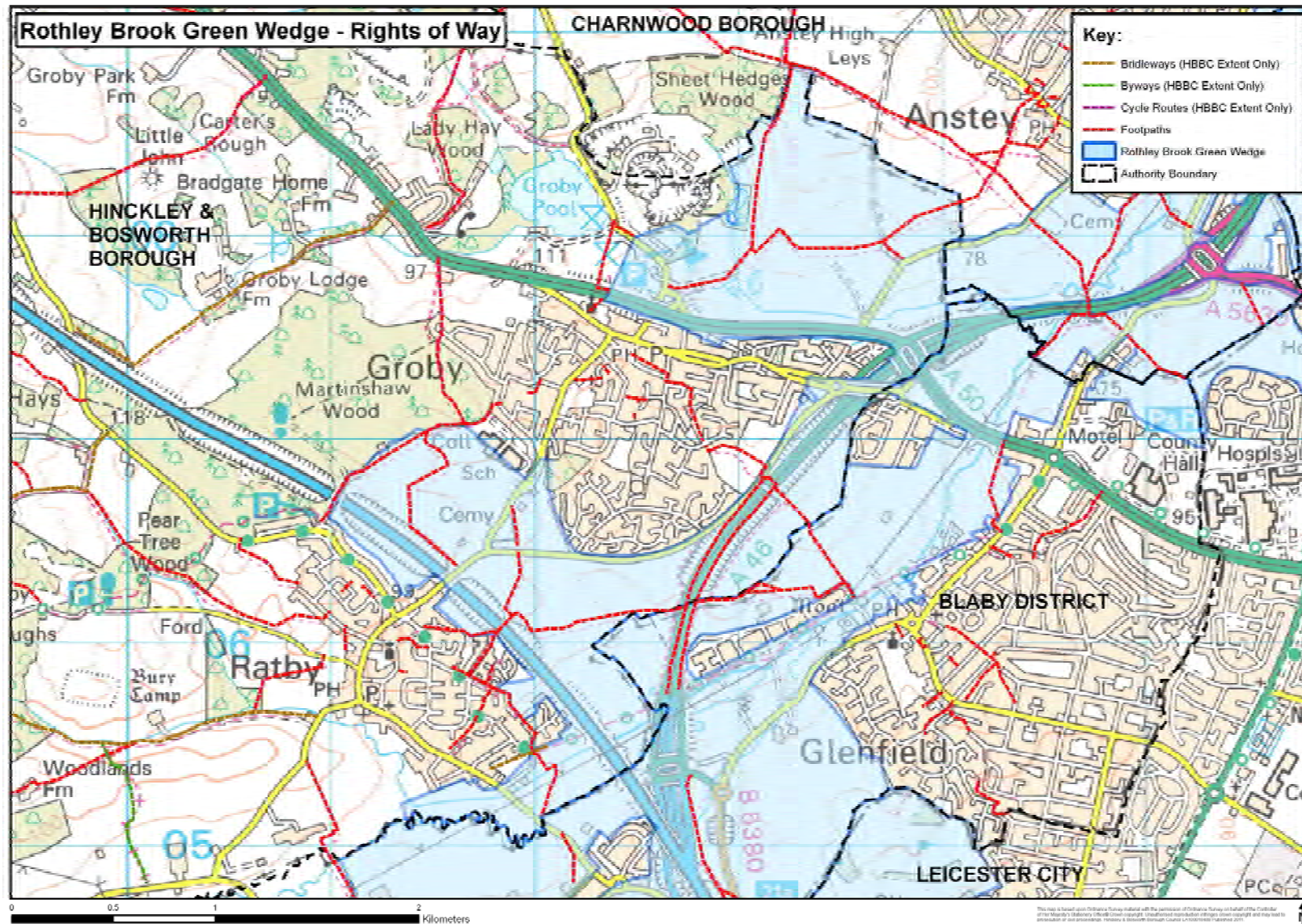


Taverner Drive, Ratby to Desford Lane, Kirby Muxloe. Part of this route is along Station Road/Ratby Lane. An alternative route to take connecting these settlements is along Station Road/Ratby Lane which provides better connectivity to the settlements than the right of way.

12.2.8 In summary, the green wedge provides positive connectivity between the rural settlements of Groby, Ratby, Anstey, and to a further extent Newtown Linford. It provides green linkages from the urban settlements of Glenfield and Kirby Muxloe that form part of the Leicester conurbation into the countryside and rural centres.

12.2.9 There is an off-road cycle route known as Ivanhoe Way between Ratby and Glenfield. This is an all weather surfaced route way which is approximately 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ miles, this provides a safe environment for cyclists away from traffic. The cycleway is in close proximity to the Ratby/Thornton cycleway which provides greater connectivity to other rural areas that fall within the Borough for residents of the Leicester conurbation.

Figure 8: Map illustrating access routes within and around the green wedge



12.3 HISTORICAL LANDSCAPES AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL REMAINS

- 12.3.1 Historic Landscape Characterisation in this area defines the majority of fields as either 'planned' or 're-organised piecemeal' enclosure with areas of 'very large post-war fields'. 'Piecemeal' enclosure is an earlier (C16th/C17th) form of informal enclosure, where open land was divided up into fields; 're-organised piecemeal' enclosure is 'piecemeal' enclosure that has lost some field boundaries. 'Planned' enclosure is later (C18th/C19th) and was a more formalised process. 'Very large post-war fields' are C20th fields where most field boundaries have been removed. Other Historic Landscape Character types within the area include 'planned woodland clearance' and 'parkland'.
- 12.3.2 The medieval open field system that existed prior to enclosure is still visible in part due to surviving ridge and furrow earthworks. These earthworks are particularly noticeable in fields between Ratby and Groby, and were created by medieval ploughing.
- 12.3.3 The area contains many archaeological sites. Of particular note is a Roman site south-east of Sheet Hedges Wood; remains associated with Groby Castle (e.g. fishponds) to the north of the A50; and Martinshaw Lodge, which is a listed post-medieval hunting lodge.

12.4 MINERALS AND WASTE

- 12.4.1 The Adopted Leicester and Leicestershire Waste Core Strategy (October 2009) identifies a small section of the Green Wedge on the Key diagram as a 'Broad location for Strategic Waste Management Sites'. The Core Strategy identifies that *'strategic sites are defined as sites located near to the centres of high population density (Leicester City, Loughborough and Coalville) which will divert a significant proportion of either municipal and/or Commercial and Industrial waste away from landfill by value and/or energy recovery'*. There have been no specific site allocations for a strategic site.
- 12.4.2 The Adopted Leicester and Leicestershire Minerals Core Strategy (October 2009) Key Diagram Aggregates Spatial Map indicates that there are Igneous Rock Resources within the area to the north of the A50 and sand and gravel resources to the south of M1. The Waste Site Allocations DPD will include specific proposals and policies for the release of sites. Groby Quarry is just outside the green wedge boundary.
- 12.4.3 Although the Waste and Minerals Core Strategy identifies the green wedge as containing minerals and locating a potential waste site there are no site specific proposals impacting upon the green wedge.

12.5 LAND USE

- 12.5.1 There are a number of different land uses within the green wedge these include:
- Agricultural land
 - Major roads which includes: M1; A46; and A50
 - Fishing lakes
 - Car park
 - Public house

- Public rights of way
- Paddocks
- Cemetery
- School playing fields
- Grassland
- Riding School
- Ferndale Park
- Scrubland
- Wildlife Conservation Area
- Flood Relief Basin
- Informal Public Open Space
- The Klondike


12.6 ECOLOGY



12.6.1 The Rothley Brook Management Strategy undertook an ecological survey. A summary of the documents findings are contained in Table 4.


12.6.2 The Biodiversity Assessment (March 2009) identified that the following species were within the green wedge area:

- Birds on the amber list with LBAP status
- Birds on amber list with schedule 1 status
- Birds on red list
- Badger sighting or sett
- Pipistrelle Bat

Table 4: Ecology Survey (Source: Rothley Brook Meadows Management Strategy)

Character Area	Review Assessment Area	Findings
Groby Fields	Area A Area B	<p>Majority of hedgerows are intact with scattered trees. Some unsprayed field margins whilst some are ploughed. Unsprayed margins are important buffer zones for hedgerows and as a resource for insect's, mammals, and birds. Hedgerows are not species rich; they will be used as wildlife corridors and habitats. There are some mature trees and a few stag headed oaks. The Groby Rifle Range has been designated as a SINC site. There are two SSSI's outside the study area in close proximity: Groby Pool and Sheet Hedges Wood. The south of the area is bounded by an unnamed watercourse. Not especially important in terms of nature conservation, although it surrounds Groby Fishery's and may affect the quality of the ponds environment. Good network of hedgerows and trees allow for species such as bats, voles and mice to move around and attract other species such as owls and birds of prey. These wildlife corridors will help to connect Groby Fields and the ponds with the wider Leicestershire countryside.</p> 

<p>The Ponds</p>	<p>Area C</p>	<p>Situated in a dip. A good emergent flora of reeds, irises and reed mace surrounds the ponds. Drier ground there is dense scrubland. Discrete blocks of willow, alder, ash and oak surround the ponds. Mature and veteran oaks along boundary of the northern pond. Islands in the ponds allow safe refuge for waterfowl and mammals such as water vole. Great habitat for insects, bats and birds. The brook that connects the pond is clean and fast flowing; it is lined with trees, scrub species such as hawthorn. Excellent habitat for aquatic insects, fish, mammals and birds. Two ponds designated as wildlife sites. The Brook is important to the Rothley Brook and flood plain. Close proximity to Groby Pool SSSI and Sheet hedges wood. The diversity of the habitat all contribute to the increasing biodiversity. The connection will allow species to move from one area into another allowing mixture of gene pool.</p>	
<p>Brook Pastures (East of A46)</p>	<p>Area D</p>	<p>The fields surrounding Rothley Brook will have an impact on it due to water run-off. Arable fields are dominant on the higher ground and surrounded by hedgerows. The area to the north of the A46 is designated at parish level as semi-improved woodland and also a district level as damaged unimproved grassland. There is mature scrub and woodland planting along the A46 corridor.</p>	

<p>Brook Pastures (West of A46)</p>	<p>Area J</p>	<p>There is an area of wet meadows between the M1 and A46 which is important as most wet grassland in England has been drained. Flood relief basins around the M1 contain reeds and bull rushes creating extra habitat for insects, birds and mammals. Corridors used by wildlife still exist along the Ivanhoe Trail. The wet meadow area has been designated as important at a parish level to nature conservation. Between Ratby Lane and the M1 there are three watercourses that pass through improved grassland, with stands of woodland. Rothley Brook is tree lined, designated as a parish level site of importance. The two other watercourses have no buffer zone. To the west of Ratby Lane the Rothley Brook meanders and is tree lined its entire route. It is a mixture of arable and pasture land. The Environment Agency has records of white-clawed crayfish in the Rothley Brook at Ratby. Rothley Brook along most of its length has been designated as important for nature conservation. Some stretches are of parish level importance and others at district. M1 and A46 corridors verges are scrub and woodland or grassland, with little human disturbance to verges. Diversity of habitats in this area makes it important for nature conservation from the abundant water, numerous ditches, moat and ponds; to woodland and hedgerows; and to grassland both semi-improved and improved. The range of habitats encourages species and spreads into the area to feed and perhaps breed.</p>	
<p>Martinshaw Fringe</p>	<p>Area E Area F Area G Area H Area I</p>	<p>Majority of land is arable fields with hedgerows which are of a poor quality for species. There are few semi-improved grasslands. No designated parish or district level sites of importance were discovered in this area. Martinshaw Wood adjacent is designated at District level. Fields to the south of Martinshaw Wood are semi-improved grassland with ridge and furrow. Small bands of recently planted woodland in the arable fields along the M1 corridor. The hedgerows in this area are closely cut and average 1 metre high. None of the arable fields in this area have field margins of any size. Much of the area to the west is dominated by school playing fields. These are amenity mown with overgrown hedges along the boundary. The fields are of low value to nature conservation, although the hedgerows are of value to birds, mammals and insects as a wildlife corridor.</p>	

12.6.3 The Ecology Surveys carried out for the Rothley Brook Meadows Management Strategy highlights that the green wedge has a diverse range of habitats and species within its area. It is evident that the green wedge is an important wildlife corridor. Areas of high biodiversity and ecological value are vital in supporting wildlife on the edge of the Leicester conurbation. There is also a range of land uses that adds to its diversity.

12.7 SOCIO-ECONOMIC DATA

12.7.1 Leicestershire County Council have produced area profiles based on the 2001 Census. The main findings are below:

Table 5: Parish Profile

	Parish	
	Groby	Ratby
Total resident population	7,301	3,862
Age Structure		
0-4 years	5.4%	6.1%
5-15 years	14.7%	14.1%
16-24 years	9.5%	9.2%
25-44 years	27.4%	30.0%
45-64 years	28.4%	24.9%
65-74 years	8.4%	8.7%
75 and over	6.2%	7.0%
Mean age of population in the area	39.2	38.9
Median age of population in the area	40.0	38
All people aged 16 and over in households	5,832	3,074
Health		
All people whose health was good	74.3%	70.7%
Economic Activity (All people aged 16 to 74)		
All people aged 16 to 74	5,382	2,809
Employed	70.4%	70.6%
Unemployed	1.9%	1.9%
Economically inactive	25.2%	25.7%

12.7.2 The green wedge is not located next to a priority neighbourhood within Hinckley and Bosworth.

12.7.3 The characteristics of both parishes are similar with the average age of residents being in the late 30's. There is a high economic activity rate which relates to the level of people at working age. The area does not fall within or adjacent to any indices of deprivation these identify areas of multiple deprivation at the small area level.

12.8 AGRICULTURAL LAND QUALITY

12.8.1 Grade II Agricultural Land is designated within assessment areas G, F and E. The designation does not cover the entirety of these areas, indeed only a small section of area E falls within the classification.

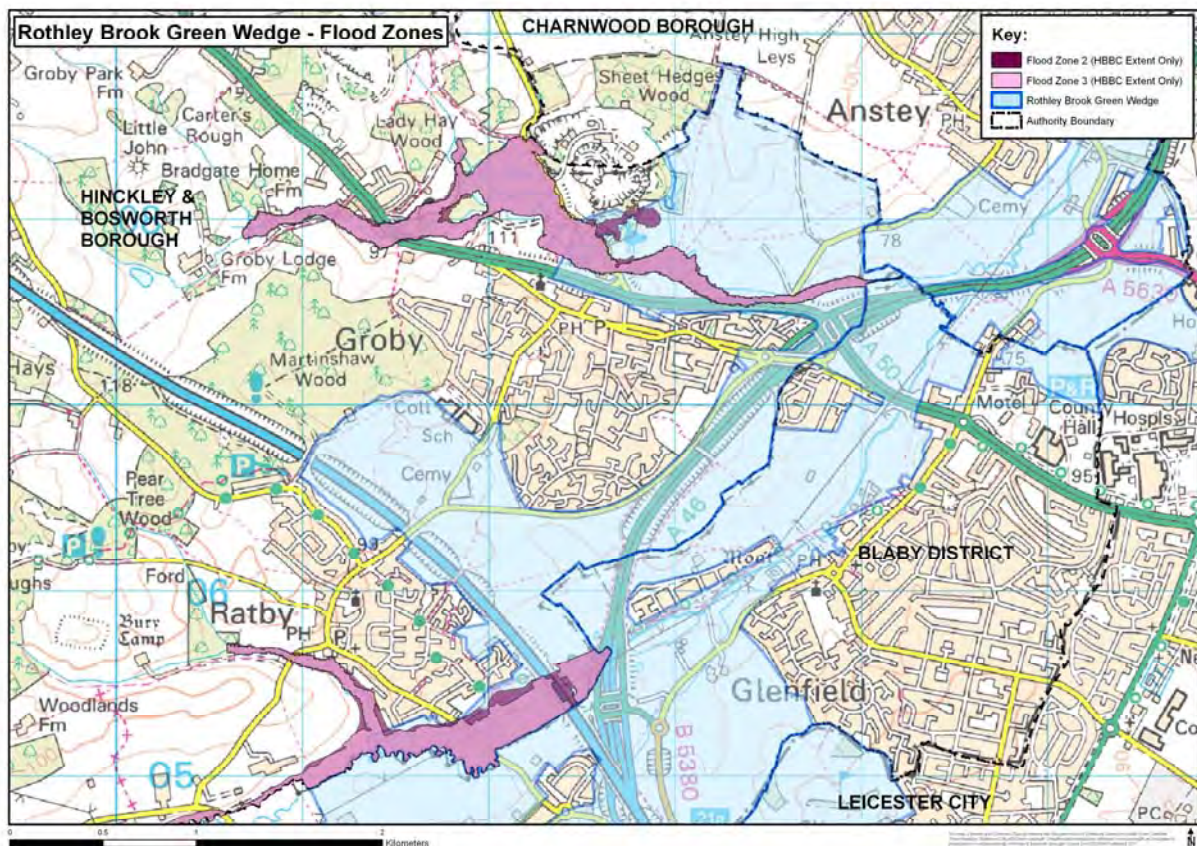
12.9 AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREAS (AQMA'S)

12.9.1 There are no AQMA's within the Borough of Hinckley & Bosworth.

12.10 WATER MANAGEMENT

- 12.10.1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment identifies that an area to the north of the A50 (assessment areas A, B and C) falls within Flood Zone 3, the zone follows the line of the Slate Brook. The type of flooding is fluvial from Slate Brook and Rothley Brook. Surface water run-off is identified as a potential problem due to the wet clay soil which could lead to ground water flooding. The geology of the area is Triassic mudstones and the soil has low permeability due to the clay content.
- 12.10.2 Flood Zones 2 and 3 are also identified towards the south of Ratby (Area J); this follows the Rothley Brook. The type of flooding is fluvial from Slate Brook and Rothley Brook. Surface water run-off is identified as a potential problem due to the wet clay soil which could lead to ground water flooding. The geology of the area is Triassic mudstones and the soil has low permeability due to the clay content.
- 12.10.3 There are two clear parts of the green wedge which suffer from potential flood risk, which is due to the presence of watercourses.

Figure 9: Flood Zones identified in Flood Risk Assessment



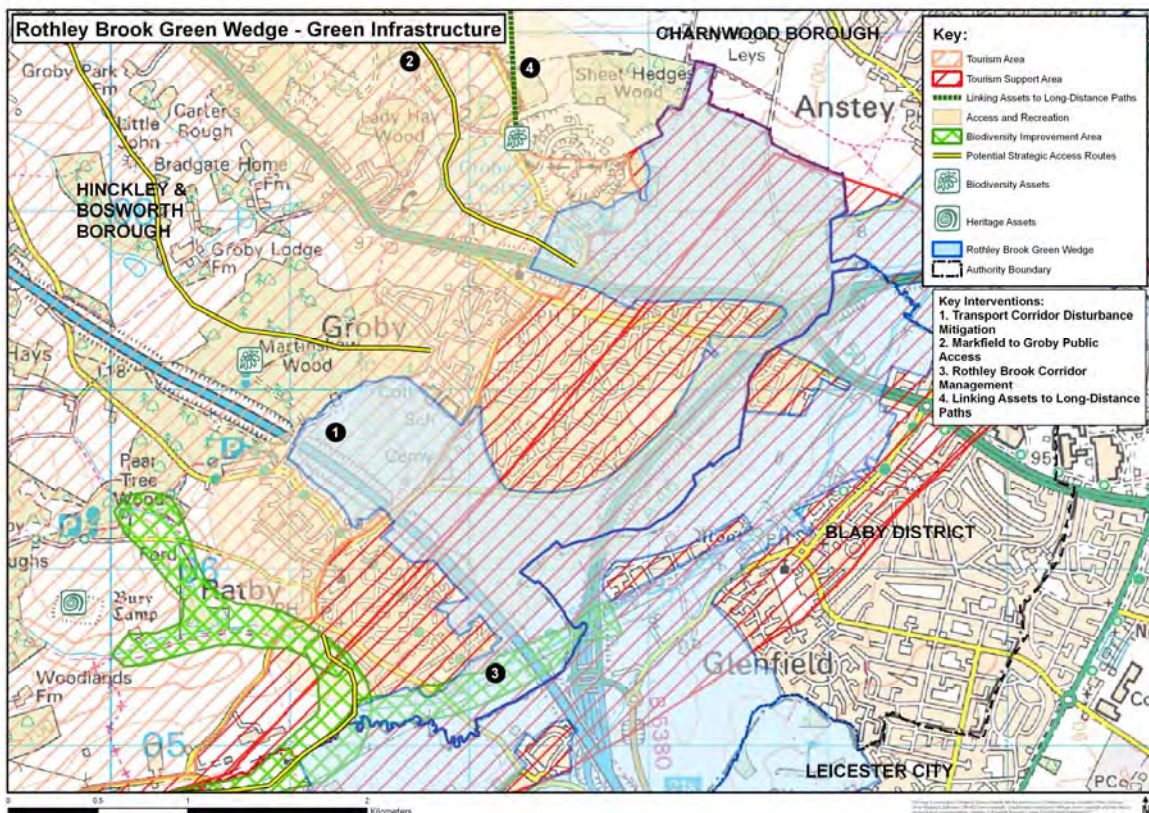
12.11 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

- 12.11.1 The Borough Council have produced a Green Infrastructure Strategy. A strategic intervention corridor was identified known as 'Rothley Brook Corridor Management'. It aims to improve green infrastructure linkages across Rothley

Brook up to its main source at Thornton Reservoir and encourage its use as a recreational resource.

- 12.11.2 The 6C's Strategy will aim to protect, enhance and extend networks of green spaces and natural elements in and around the three cities, connecting with their surrounding towns and villages. The Strategy also aims to facilitate a major step-change in the scale, quality and connectivity of green infrastructure assets across the 6C's area, to match the scale of new growth proposed and provide a focus for attracting and retaining sustainable development and investment. This will be achieved by protecting and enhancing existing assets and creating extensive new green infrastructure, and finding suitably resourced mechanisms for the long term management of both.

Figure 10: Core Strategy Green Infrastructure designations



12.12 PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND APPEALS

- 12.12.1 The Planning Applications contained in Table 6 have been identified as having a potential impact on the Green Wedge, applications which were perceived to have little impact on the green wedge or were withdrawn have not been included within the table.

Table 6: Planning Applications of note within the Green Wedge since the adoption of the Local Plan (2001)

Application number	Location	Proposal	Decision
02/00267/FUL	Land adjacent to Taverner Drive, Ratby	Erection of Bungalow and additional open space	Planning permission
05/00366/COU	Allotment Gardens, Newtown Linford Lane, Groby	Change of use of land to permanent residential for the siting of six caravans and three toilet blocks.	Refused
06/00095/COU	Land adjacent to Ratby Co-op Band, Taverner Drive. Ratby	Change of use to allotment gardens	Planning Permission
07/00848/FUL	Allotment Gardens Newtown Linford Lane Groby	Extension of boundary wall	Withdrawn
07/01241/COU	Klondyke Farm Newtown Linford Lane Groby	Change of use of allotment gardens to create farm space and erection of day centre and stables	Application Returned
08/00411/COU	Former Pick Your Own Building, Newtown Linford Lane, Groby	Change of use and extension of former pick your own building and car park to facilities building with associated car parking in connection with fisheries enterprise.	Planning permission
09/00211/FUL	Land adjacent to M1, Ferndale Drive, Ratby	Development of 36 dwellings, 14 apartments	Planning Permission
09/00798/FUL	Land East of Groby Village Cemetery, Groby Road, Ratby	Development of 133 dwellings	Refused
10/00140/TEMP	Land off Newtown Linford Lane, Groby	Erection of a log cabin for a period of 3 years for the residence of the fishery manager and herdsman	Refused

12.12.2 Planning applications of note include 02/00267/FUL and 06/00095/COU as these proposals both included open space. The change of use to allotments increases the functionality of the green wedge and provides a positive recreational resource. There has been one application approved for a large residential development recently and this was for 36 dwellings and 14 apartments.

12.12.3 Another application which was refused for residential development is 09/00798/FUL. The applicant appealed against the decision and the Inquiry took place between 12th October and 20th October 2010. The Inspector dismissed the appeal noting that the effect of development on the character and appearance of the green wedge was of particular importance. The Inspector noted that the appeal site *'has an open and largely rural aspect'*; however he also recognised that the *'rural feel is somewhat tempered by the*

surroundings by formal managed areas such as the cemetery and school playing fields. In addition, Groby Road and Sacheverell Way with their hard surfacing and managed verges, add to the suburbanising effect'. The Inspector referred to the supporting text to Policy 9 of the Core Strategy that identifies that a review of the green wedge is to take place to inform the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD. The Inspector gives little weight to the green wedge assessments made on the planning application as they had not gone through the consultation process identified in the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Methodology Paper. This Review has undertaken consultation and details are included in Chapter 7.

- 12.12.4 It was identified during the consultation event (Chapter 7) that as the green wedge spans across administrative boundaries the Review should take note of the 'Glenfield Park' planning appeal which falls within the wider green wedge in Blaby District. The appeal is for a mixed use scheme which consists of employment development (B1, B2 and B8) (maximum 30ha), residential development (maximum 250 dwellings), provision of a local retail/community facility (maximum 1400 sq m), with associated landscaping, open space and infrastructure. The application site is known as Glenfield Park and is 62.2 hectares and is located between Western Park Golf Course to the south, Glenfield to the north east, Mill Lane Industrial Estate to the north and the significant road corridors of the M1 and A46 to the west.
- 12.12.5 The planning application was considered at Blaby District Council Planning Committee on the 13th May 2010 and was refused. The Committee Report identified the green wedge as a reason for refusal.
- 12.12.6 Subsequently, the applicant appealed the decision and a Public Inquiry took place in March 2011. The Planning Inspector determined that the appeal should be allowed within the green wedge and this was supported by the Secretary of State. The impact of this decision will be discussed in sections 15 and 16.
- 12.12.7 There are other no significant planning appeals within the area.

12.13 PLANNING POLICY

Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment

- 12.13.1 A number of sites within the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge have been put forward as expressions of interest and these have been assessed through the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2010).
- 12.13.2 The following sites were assessed through the SHLAA:

Table 7: Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) Sites

SHLAA Ref	Assessment Area	Location	Overall Assessment
AS254	E	Land at Sacheverell Way	Developable
AS255	D	Land at Sacheverell Way	Non-developable
AS267	C	Land adjacent to Rifle Range, Newtown Linford Lane	Non-developable

AS487	I	Rear of Groby Road	Developable
AS496	H	Land to the rear of Markfield Road	Non-developable
AS497	G	Land to the north of M1/Groby Road	Non-developable
AS498	F	Land at Sacheverell Way	Developable
AS499	E	Land at Sacheverell Way	Non-developable
AS611	D	Land at Junction 21a of the M1	Non-developable
AS620	A	Land west of Anstey Lane	Non-developable
AS668	C	The Klondike	Non-developable
AS673	H	Land to the rear of 2-28 Markfield Road	Non-developable
AS680	D	Land at the Brant Inn	Developable
AS682	G	Land at Martinshaw Lodge	Non-developable
AS705	D	Land south of Leicester Road	Developable
AS830	I	Fielding Lane	Deliverable and Developable

Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD

12.13.3 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) informed the preparation of the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD: Preferred Options Report. This recommended amendments to the green wedge for consultation purposes. The following quote is taken from the DPD:

'There have been minor amendments to the Groby/Ratby Green Wedge. These amendments are to allow for new allocations GRO02, GRO21, and RAT02. These amendments are necessary within Groby as there are no other reasonable alternatives adjacent to the settlement to fulfil the housing allocation. RAT02 is the preferred option within Ratby as there is not a significant visual impact on the surrounding area; the M1 to the east of the site acts as a physical barrier and prevents the development expanding into the green wedge.'

12.13.4 A summary of the comments which were received on the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge allocation are as follows:

- Boundaries should be determined having regard to landscape and visual impacts and coincide with key natural or man-made features.
- Green wedge should be amended so it follows the M1. This will involve removing a minor slither of land from the Green Wedge.
- Paragraph 8 of the RSS defines green wedges. It would be worth referring to the fact that they are not supported by government policy in the same way as Green Belts.
- No formal assessment has been undertaken of the contribution of individual pieces of land.

- A comprehensive review is required to enable any land not positively adding to the function of the green Wedge to be considered for alternative designation.
- Green Wedges are an important component of the overall green space provision.
- Helps to maintain settlement identity.

12.13.5 The representations highlighted above support the need to carry out a full review of the green wedge, these comments have been taken on board and this review addresses the concerns raised in relation to this. The first bullet point is a site specific representation, since the consultation on the Preferred Options Paper this site has received planning permission for residential development (see paragraph 5.12.3).

12.13.6 There is development pressure around Groby and the majority of the expressions of interest for the settlement are within the green wedge. The village is constrained by the road network which borders the village such as the A50 and Sacheverell Way and the A46 and M1 which are in close proximity and these act as physical buffers.

Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan Inspectors Report

12.13.7 The Local Plan Inquiry took place between Tuesday, 29th October 1996 and 26th June 1997. During the preparation of the Local Plan objections were received in relation to the allocation of the green wedge, the Inspector notes that these objections were generally site specific also relating to policy RES1 (residential proposals for allocation) which sets out the residential site allocations. The 'Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan: Report of a Public Local Inquiry into objections to the plan' (1998) sets out the recommendations made to the Council by the Inspector in respect of the objections received. There were a number of site specific objections that were considered by the Inspector, the Inspectors comments and recommendations are summarised in Table 8.

12.13.8 It is important to consider the Local Plan Inspectors Report to provide a local historic context to the green wedge. Having said this, it is also necessary to note that there have been significant changes to the planning system since 1998 and in light of this the review should also take into account the current evidence base and adopted planning policy such as the Core Strategy which replaced Local Plan Policy NE3 (Green Wedges) and includes the housing requirements for the Borough to 2026.

Table 8: Summary of the Local Plan Inspectors Comments and Recommendations

Location	Inspector's Comment	Inspector's Recommendation	Assessment Area ²
Land adjacent to the M1 motorway, Ratby	Also rose in relation to RES1. To allocate for housing purposes would virtually eliminate open land from the green wedge on the Ratby side of the motorway. Ratby would lose an important element of its motorway setting and its identity as a village. The objection site should remain open in order to maintain its visual contribution to the structure and function of the green wedge.	Housing Allocation RES1 (ah) be deleted from the plan and replaced by the green wedge designation.	I
Land to the north of Groby	At first sight of the Structure Plan key diagram it does appear, as the objector maintains to suggest that the land between Groby and Anstey is intended to be designated as an Area of Particularly Attractive Countryside rather than green wedge. However there are inconsistencies with the key diagram due to its diagrammatic nature. The green wedge on the proposals map conforms to the definition of the green wedge in the Structure Plan. To restrict the green wedge as Charnwood BC suggests to the south of Groby Road/Anstey Lane alone would not sufficiently separate the two settlements.	No modifications to be made to the Plan in respect of this objection.	A and B
Land at Ratby Road, Groby	The objection site is a substantial and highly visible area of land which occurs at the narrowest point of the green wedge between Groby and Ratby. Development could not be adequately contained in the lowest-lying part of the site, but would intrude	No modifications to be made to the Plan in respect of this objection.	F

² The related Assessment Areas have been identified through the description provided by the Local Plan Inspectors Report.

	into the open wedge at this structurally vital and most vulnerable point. Its roofscape, at the very least would obscure the fine backdrop of trees on the northern edge of the site.		
Land south of Sacheverell Way	The objection site constitutes a substantial portion of the green wedge at its narrowest, most open and most vulnerable point. Development here would severely undermine the structure and function of the green wedge in separating the settlements of Groby and Ratby. Housing and employment land requirements can be met within the Plan period on land which does not have the disadvantage of the objection site.	No modifications to be made to the Plan in respect of this objection.	E

12.14 TRANSPORT ROUTES AND INFRASTRUCTURE

- 12.14.1 A number of strategic transport routes run through the Green Wedge including; M1, A46 and A50. These roads act as a physical man made barrier dividing the green wedge. There are however vehicular and pedestrian bridges/tunnels that provide connectivity.
- 12.14.2 The Enderby to Ratcliffe (4YZ) 400,000 volt transmission power line goes through Area J which is visually intrusive on the green wedge.

Summary

- 12.14.3 It is evident that transport routes and major infrastructure impacts on both the functioning and landscape of the green wedge. It is important to lessen the impact of these barriers through suitable screening and good links across transport routes. Due to the scale of the power line it is a major obstacle to the visual amenity of the area and it is difficult to reduce its visual impact.



13. SITE SURVEYS

13.1.1 INTRODUCTION

13.1.1 Site assessments were carried out on the green wedge in April 2010. The pro forma set out in the Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Methodology was used. The Green Wedge was split into 10 areas so that a more detailed analysis could be undertaken on site. A map of the areas is contained in Appendix A. The areas identified are listed as follows:

- Area A: Land adjacent to A46 and A50
- Area B: North of A50, adjacent to quarry and Sheet Hedge Wood
- Area C: The Fisheries
- Area D: Land adjacent to the A46
- Area E: Land south of Sacheverell Way
- Area F: Land north of Sacheverell Way
- Area G: West of Ratby Road
- Area H: South of the M1/North-East Ratby
- Area I: Ferndale Park
- Area J: Taverner Drive and north/south of Station Road

13.1.2 This chapter sets out the main findings of the on site surveys, the full site pro formas are contained in Appendix B.

13.2 AREA A: LAND ADJACENT TO A46 AND A50

Description

13.2.1 The area is used for agricultural purposes and the road that runs alongside the field links the A50 to Anstey. There is a watercourse that runs through the site. The site rises upwards from Anstey Lane. Two settlements are visible from Anstey Lane, Groby and Glenfield. These are within walking distance. The site lies adjacent to the districts of Charnwood and Blaby.



Assessment

13.2.2 If development were to occur on this site it would have a significant visual impact due to the rising topography. The assessment area provides a visual green space prior to reaching the A50, however there is no public access onto the site.

13.2.3 Although the site is not publically accessible it is important to the visual amenity when approaching the A50 from Anstey and The Brantings. It also provides a green link to the green wedge beyond which falls within Charnwood Borough and Blaby District.

6.3 AREA B: NORTH OF A50, ADJACENT TO QUARRY AND SHEET HEDGE WOOD

Description

- 13.3.1 The area is predominately used for agricultural purposes. Some areas adjacent to the A50 are used as grazing land for horses. There are a number of scattered trees and fields are divided by mature hedgerows. There is a watercourse running to the south of the area. The topography rises upwards from the fisheries and there are prominent views of Bradgate



Park, Glenfield and Groby from the more elevated positions. The topography falls slightly towards Anstey Lane. Dependent on the location within this area it is possible to walk to Groby and Anstey. Newtown Linford is also in close proximity to the area via public rights of way. The area is bounded by Sheet Hedge Wood and Groby Quarry to the west and the A50 to the south which acts as a strong boundary. Ridge and Furrow is present to the north of Area B close to Sheet Hedge Wood. There is a small derelict brick built structure on one of the fields fronting Anstey Lane.

Assessment

- 13.3.2 It is an important recreational amenity for residents of both Groby and Anstey. There is a good network of public rights of way which are in a good condition and provide circular routes. From the site visits it was evident that the rights of way were well used by joggers, dog walkers and ramblers. Although the rights of way were well used, some of the directional markers were poorly positioned making it difficult to navigate. Any development would have a significant visual impact. This area forms an important view from Groby to Bradgate Park, this is particular the case at Marina Park Public Open Space. In conclusion, this area provides a positive green lung for residents of both Groby and Anstey and provides a green infrastructure linkage between the settlements connecting to the wider Leicestershire countryside. There would be a significant impact on the area if development were to occur.



13.4 AREA C: THE FISHERIES

Description

13.4.1 This area consists of a range of land uses, including grazing land for cows and agricultural fields. The Fisheries is an important recreational resource which appears to be well utilised. There is vehicular access into this area from Newtown Linford Lane which is in close proximity to Groby village centre. To the western side of Newtown Linford Lane there is a public car park for Groby Pool which is in a



good condition and well-maintained. To the rear of the car park there is an area of grassland used for walking which connects to a walkway which forms part of the disused railway line. This walkway leads to a pedestrian access to the A50 and leads onto public rights of way which provide a circular route to Groby Pool (these rights of way fall outside of the green wedge boundary). The A50 forms a strong physical barrier to the south of the area and due to its elevated position it has a strong visual impact. The area is predominately flat, although rises slightly toward Groby Quarry.

Assessment

13.4.2 This area facilitates access to the green wedge providing multiple uses including fishing, walking and access to the Groby Pool SSSI. Improvements could be made to the entrance to The Fisheries from Newtown Linford Lane as presently it is via a cattle grid and a poor quality stile. As a result, it does not have a user friendly access for all, for instance it would be problematic for dog walkers and families with young children to navigate the entrance. Once past the entrance the quality of surfacing improves. Groby Pool car park is suitably landscaped and is sympathetic to the surroundings. There is an area to the rear of Groby Pool car park which provides for informal open space, the connection to the public rights of way adjacent to this open space could be improved to increase the recreational value of this area.



13.5 AREA D: LAND ADJACENT TO THE A46

Description

13.5.1 This area straddles the A46. On the western side of the A46, the uses in the area comprise a paddock and an area of mature trees and shrubbery which acts as a barrier to the A46. Sacheverell Way runs along this section of the green wedge which is an arterial route providing access points to a modern housing estate and continues through



to Ratby. There is a footbridge which crosses the A46, which can be accessed adjacent to Marina Park Open Space and provides a public right of way through to Glenfield. On the eastern side of the A46 there are cultivated fields which roll downwards from the A46 to the large industrial units located in Glenfield. The A46 does not impact visually on the green wedge as it is sunken into the landscape and there is mature screening to limit the impact. It is possible to hear the A46 from Sacheverell Way and therefore the road does impact on the amenity value of the area. There is a public house known as 'The Brant Inn' within the green wedge which is accessed via The Brantings housing estate. The area borders Blaby District.

Assessment

13.5.2 When assessing this area with the section of the green wedge that falls within Blaby District it acts as a green buffer between Glenfield and the A46/Groby. It provides green linkages between the two settlements providing access to Marina Park Open Space for residents of Glenfield. There are circular rights of way providing a walking amenity. The Brant Inn falls within the green wedge; however, this is a brownfield site and therefore does not achieve the objectives of the green wedge.



13.6 AREA E: LAND SOUTH OF SACHEVERELL WAY

Description

13.6.1 This area is agricultural in nature (arable and grazing land); there is also a horse paddock adjacent to Groby Road. There are scattered trees and mature hedgerows demarcating the fields. Trees and shrubbery provide positive screening of the M1 from the more elevated positions. Where the topography slopes down towards Glenfield the M1 is clearly visible. It is



possible to view Groby, Ratby and Glenfield from this position. The public right of way provides a good walking route between the two villages which is possible due to a pedestrian footbridge. There is good signage that clearly shows that there is a right of way to Ratby from Sacheverell Way. This route would provide a green linkage for residents of Ratby to travel to Groby College and Brookvale High School and residents of Groby to access Ferndale Park. A dismantled railway running from the Leicester to Swannington Line to Groby Quarry crosses this section of the green wedge and continues north abutting Area F. This section of the green wedge borders Blaby District. Landscaping adjacent to the M1 provides screening of the motorway. Sacheverell Way and the M1 provide clear boundaries of the green wedge. Ridge and Furrow is present in different sections of Area E including both sides of the Ratby to Groby Public Right of Way and adjacent to the M1 to the south-east of the area.

Assessment

13.6.2 The public rights of way are popular. This is visible from the condition of the track and the level of use witnessed whilst on site by both dog walkers and walkers. The rights of way provide a circular walkway. It is also evident that there are informal route ways. This area provides a positive area of recreation which is also functional in terms of providing a green route connecting the settlements of Groby and Ratby. The area serves as a buffer between Groby and the M1 limiting any potential impacts. It is clear that this area provides a green lung for the two communities of Ratby and Groby.



13.7 AREA F: LAND NORTH OF SACHEVERELL WAY

Description

13.7.1 This area contains a range of uses including a cemetery, private grassland, public right of way and a Parish Council owned area of land which provides an informal/semi-natural recreational opportunity. There is a wooded walk to the east of this green wedge area which provides a link from the modern housing estate to the schools on Ratby Road. There are a number of mature trees which provide a boundary between the Parish Council owned recreation area and a well maintained hedgerow which denotes the boundary of the cemetery.



Assessment

13.7.2 The public right of way is well used and this is visible from the condition of the track. The entrance to the Parish Council site from Sacheverell Way is of good quality with kissing gates to the two access points. It provides a positive recreational opportunity to the residents of Groby which can be accessed from the modern housing estate through a wooded walk. The wooded walk to the east is well used, which was evident from the site visits with dog walkers and school children. There is an area of land which is not publically accessible and is fenced off to all sides.



13.8 AREA G: WEST OF RATBY ROAD

Description

13.8.1 The area consists of school playing fields, a paddock, and grassland/grazing land. It is bordered by Martinshaw Woods, the M1, Cemetery and Brookvale High School/Groby College. There are a range of landscape features within this area. Hedgerows and shrubbery denote field boundaries and there is a small drainage ditch that runs from Martinshaw Woods down towards Groby



Road/Ratby Road. There are two public rights of way. One runs to the north-west of the site following the boundary of Martinshaw Woods and connects Markfield Road, Ratby to the woods on the northern side of the M1. There are numerous access points to the woods (both formal and informal) from the right of way. There is good signage for this right of way and a parking area off Markfield Road, Ratby. It provides a connection between the settlements of Ratby and Groby and appears to be well utilised. The second right of way is accessed off Groby Road. There is good signage to this right of way and a good quality kissing gate. However, at the time of the site visit the right of way was blocked with hardcore forcing users to deviate from the route way. During wet periods this would make the right of way undesirable as the area would be quite boggy and muddy. There is some built development including a Grade II Listed Building known as Martinshaw Lodge.

Assessment

13.8.2 The area provides a green buffer between the M1 and Groby. The area is important in terms of providing a link for residents of both Ratby and Groby to woodland and natural open space. The rights of way provide connections beyond the green wedge boundary into the wider Leicestershire countryside. The rights of way provide a positive recreational resource which appear to be well utilised and the connectivity into the woodlands broadens the recreational offering. This is a multifunctional area of green wedge which provides a range of opportunities to users including horse riding, walking, cycling, and jogging.



13.9 AREA H – SOUTH OF THE M1/NORTH-EAST RATBY

Description

13.9.1 The main land use of this area is a riding school and paddock with the M1 to the north of this. The adjacent land uses to this area are residential properties and Martinshaw Woods. A right of way runs between the Paddock and Martinshaw Woods leading to Area G. The public right of way is a hard surface in good condition, the bridge across the M1 is also of a good standard. In addition to the M1 other built development includes the horse riding centre and associated amenities.



Assessment

13.9.2 This area provides a recreational resource, however, this is a privately run horse riding school and therefore the vast majority of the site is not openly accessible. The M1 forms a strong barrier and dissects this section of the green wedge away from Area G. The public right of way provides a positive function in providing a route to natural open space.



13.10 AREA I – FERNDALE PARK

Description

- 13.10.1 This area is split into two distinct parts. The section that can be accessed via Groby Road is scrubland and a section of the area received planning permission for residential development in 2009. At the time of the site visit the footpath to this section was closed. Ferndale Park forms the other part of this area; the Park is a formal park and provides multi-functional uses. There is a nature conservation area that abuts the boundary of the M1. The M1 acts as a barrier and separates this area from Area E.



Assessment

- 13.10.2 The area with planning permission for residential development no longer performs the role of the green wedge. Ferndale Park is an important recreational amenity for residents of Ratby and provides an open space for residents of the village. The Park is identified in the Local Plan as a recreational space and Saved Local Plan Policy REC1 is relevant. The Park does perform some of the roles of a green wedge in providing a recreational resource and green lung; it does not prevent the merging of settlements or guide development form due to the positioning of the park being adjacent to residential properties and the M1. The Local Plan designation provides alternate planning policy for Ferndale Park.



13.11 AREA J – TAVERNER DRIVE AND NORTH/SOUTH OF STATION ROAD

Description

- 13.11.1 This area consists of a variety of land uses including; informal open space, the M1, flood relief basin, community orchard, allotments, Severn Trent Water facility and the Cooperative Band building. There are a number of landscape features; significant features include the M1 and Transmission Towers. The Enderby to Ratcliffe (4YZ) 400,000 volt transmission



power line goes through this area and has a significant visual impact on the green wedge. In addition, the transmission line is visible from a number of points across the green wedge. The M1 takes an elevated position in this area and has a visual impact looking across towards Glenfield. Kirby Muxloe is visible from this area and it acts as a green buffer between the two settlements. The area appears to be well used by the public which was evident from the level of use observed whilst on the site visit including cyclists, dog walkers and joggers. Rothley Brook flows through this area. The area to the south of Station Road is more agricultural in nature and serves less of a recreational resource.

Assessment

- 13.11.2 This area of the green wedge provides a valuable recreational and environmental resource on the edge of the village. It provides a green buffer between Ratby and Kirby Muxloe. The publically accessible land uses include: a hard-surfaced cycle route, open space, a community orchard and allotments; from the site visits it is evident that these areas are well used providing an important amenity space for residents.



14. CONSULTATION

14.1 INTRODUCTION

14.1.1 The Leicester and Leicestershire Joint Green Wedge Review Methodology enable the option to undertake consultation when preparing the green wedge review. Chapter 4 (paragraph 4.4) of the Review sets out the background to the consultation event undertaken on Monday, 21st March 2011. This Chapter sets out the findings of the consultation event.

14.2 EXERCISE 1

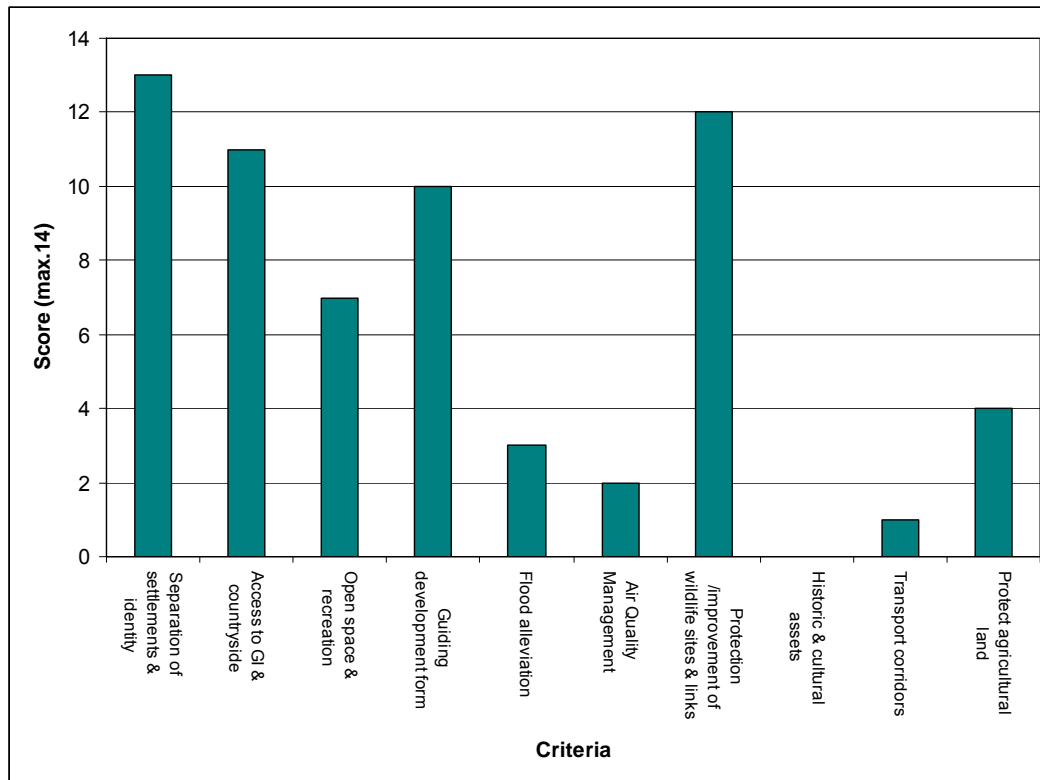
14.2.1 Prior to the first exercise a presentation was given to set the framework for the event outlining the role and policy context for green wedges and the Joint Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Methodology Paper.

14.2.2 The presentation set the foundations for the first exercise where attendees were asked to discuss the generic purpose and function of green wedges. The discussions were based around a number of criteria which were taken from the Methodology these included:

- Physical separation of settlements and community identity
- Providing access to green infrastructure and the countryside
- Providing open space and recreational facilities
- Guiding development form
- Flood alleviation
- Air Quality Management
- Protection /improvement of wildlife sites and links between them
- Protection/improvement of historic and cultural assets and links between them
- Transport corridors
- Protect agricultural land including allotments and horticulture

14.2.3 After the discussion attendees were given five dots so that they could select their top five priorities for the green wedge, these results are set out in the graph below.

Graph 2: Graph showing attendees top five priorities for the green wedge



14.2.4 This exercise clearly shows that there are a number of functions which are thought of as being the most important, these include:

- Physical separation of settlements and community identity
- Protection /improvement of wildlife sites and links between them
- Providing access to green infrastructure and the countryside
- Guiding development form
- Providing open space and recreational facilities

14.2.5 These findings will aid the evaluation of the green wedge ensuring that the review places significant weight on these elements in terms of ensuring the green wedge satisfies these functions whilst reinforcing the boundary to assure that it is strong and defensible.

14.2.6 In addition to this, the findings reaffirm the evaluation criteria which are being utilised to assess the green wedge strengthening the approach being taken.

14.2.7 In identifying the priorities the following points were raised through discussion:

- There was general consensus that 'preventing the merging of settlements' was one of the main purposes of the green wedge.
- Recreation and providing access to the open space is important.
- It was noted that the green wedge provides the wider function of improving air quality and reducing noise.
- It is important to be mindful of why we have a strategic green wedge.
- Wildlife corridors and links were identified as important, in particular preserving and enhancing biodiversity.

- Cycle corridors were identified as being important.
- Guiding form and separation are fundamental reasons underpinning the green wedge designation.
- Private ownership and rights of way should not define a green wedge.

14.3 EXERCISE 2

- 14.3.1 The second part of the consultation workshop focused on the individual green wedges. To set the scene for the interactive exercise a presentation was given on the main findings of the desktop survey and site assessments which built upon the topic papers provided to attendees prior to the event.
- 14.3.2 Attendees were allocated a table which related to the particular area they were interested in and to ensure that there was a spread of people with different expertise spread evenly. Group A focused on the Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge and Group B the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge.
- 14.3.3 There were two stages to the exercise; the first task was to look at the individual role and function of the green wedges to establish what is considered to be important. The discussion was focused around the priorities identified in exercise 1 but were applied at the local level. A map was placed on the table which attendees could annotate. For the second part of the exercise, the evaluation criteria were looked at in turn and attendees were asked how they would apply the evaluation criteria to the green wedge.
- 14.3.4 Only the findings of exercise 2 for Group B are outlined below.

Group B – Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge

Stage 1 – explored the role and function of the Green Wedge

Role and function	Comments
Physical separation of settlements and community identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Land adjacent to Cowpen Spinney identified as a pinch point. • Narrow between Groby and Glenfield.
Providing access to green infrastructure and the countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gateway to the National Forest and Charnwood Forest. • Green infrastructure should be viewed as a mosaic of sites across a large area. • The green wedge between Ratby and Groby should be considered a key green infrastructure corridor/gateway into Charnwood Forest and the National Forest.
Providing open space and recreational facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ferndale Park included within green wedge, but Marina Park is not. • The site adjacent to Cowpen Spinney was used for informal recreation and this is evident from aerial

	photography.
Flood alleviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water quality and flood alleviation is important. Access to water courses is also important and should be taken into account.
Air Quality Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Air quality in Groby/Ratby could be improved as part of an Air Quality Management Plan. Noise pollution should also be considered as part of this process.
Protection/improvement of historic and cultural assets and links between them	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cowpen Spinney is ancient woodland.
Transport corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If a road is stated as a natural barrier this could imply that development could go up to this point.
Protect agricultural land including allotments and horticulture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is no shortfall in allotments in Groby as plots have been subdivided to back fill. There is a need for allotments in Ratby, which could be included within the green wedge.
Other comments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groby Quarry is active, with a recent planning application allowing more traffic movements. The 'Klondike' is within the green wedge. The proposed 'Glenfield Park' development within Blaby District may have an impact on the green wedge. The green wedge north of Groby stops at the Hinckley and Bosworth boundary and does not continue towards Anstey. Green wedges should be considered as 'black wedges' at night with no man-made lights causing light pollution in such areas. The green wedge must be retained in its entirety. The Ratby Parish Plan identifies that the surrounding countryside was highly valued, with 98% of respondents in favour of its preservation for future generations.

Stage 2 – application of the evaluation criteria

Evaluation criteria	Comments
Preventing the merging of settlements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Area adjacent to Cowpen Spinney was identified as a pinch point and if developed could lead to coalescence. • Narrow between Groby and Glenfield. • Narrow parts of the green wedge susceptible to loss should be protected.
Guiding development form	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site between Ratby and the M1 is under-construction for residential development and should be removed. • The Brantt Inn should not be included within the green wedge as it is a brownfield site.
Providing a green lung	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green infrastructure was described as a mosaic of sites across an area and not every site within the mosaic will meet all of the four evaluation criteria. • Ferndale Park acts as a green lung
A recreational resource	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marina Park should be included within the green wedge.

15. EVALUATION

15.1 INTRODUCTION

15.1.1 The evaluation criteria set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Joint Green Wedge Methodology Paper and outlined in Chapter 4 of this Review will be used to assess the green wedge. This evaluation will consider each of the criteria in turn and therefore this chapter is set out in the following sections:

- Preventing the merging of settlements
- Guiding development form
- Providing a green lung
- A recreational resource

15.1.2 The findings are set out below and are set out in two parts. Firstly, the wider green wedge area is considered, this looks at the green wedge over its entire area which expands into Charnwood Borough, Blaby District and Leicester City administrative areas and secondly, it assesses the green wedge at a Borough level concentrating on the section that falls within the Hinckley and Bosworth administrative area.

15.2 PREVENTING THE MERGING OF SETTLEMENTS

'Green Wedges will safeguard the identity of communities within and around urban areas that face growth pressures'³.

Wider Green Wedge Area

15.2.1 The strategic role of the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge is to ensure clear separation between the Leicester urban area (including suburbs) and the surrounding rural centres as it extends outwards from the urban area providing a rural buffer. To some extent the A46 and M1 motorway provide a physical barrier between the urban core and the rural settlements of Ratby and Groby; however, this often reduces the perception of the separation between settlements. Having said this, there are a number of access points across these roads which provide infiltration into the green wedge both out of and into the urban core.

15.2.2 The visual perception of the green wedge is that there is intervisibility (seeing one settlement from the edge of the other) within the green wedge which is evident in a number of locations across the green wedge.

15.2.3 Emerging evidence from the Green Wedge Review carried out by Charnwood Borough Council indicates that the Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge achieves the function of preventing the merging of settlements, specifically the separate identities of Birstall, Anstey, Thurmaston and the City of Leicester.

15.2.4 The Blaby District Council Strategic Green Wedge Review (June 2009) recognised the importance of this Green Wedge in preventing the

³ Definition contained within the 'Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011)

coalescence of settlements in respect of Glenfield and Kirby Muxloe within the District of Blaby, as well as in neighbouring authorities with the settlements of Ratby, Groby and Anstey and their relationships to Leicester.

- 15.2.5 As highlighted in paragraph 12.12.2 the Glenfield Park development is a significant encroachment into the existing green wedge within Blaby District and this will result in the urbanisation of this area which will consequently dramatically alter the landscape to the west of the M1 and A46 and the green wedge boundary will need to be revised to take account of this development by Blaby District. The function of the surrounding green wedge will intensify the need to retain the green wedge around the conurbation of Leicester, Groby and Ratby due to the reduction in the separation between the villages from the urban area.
- 15.2.6 The green wedge therefore provides a strategic role in preventing the merging of the Leicester urban core to the rural settlements.

Borough Green Wedge

- 15.2.7 In Hinckley and Bosworth Borough the green wedge acts as a buffer between rural centres and the Leicester Urban Core. Area J: Taverner Drive and north/south of Station Road provides a buffer between Ratby and Kirby Muxloe which forms part of the wider principle urban area. It is evident that there is intravisibility (can see more than one settlement from any one point in the green wedge) in this area of the green wedge. Area A: Land adjacent to A46 and A50, Area B: North of A50 and Area D: Land adjacent to the A46 relates more to the Leicester Core and this is evident when on site when the urban area is observed from numerous points in these areas.
- 15.2.8 Through the consultation event it was highlighted that Areas F and E were pinch points and could lead to coalescence; it was also noted that the area between Groby and Glenfield was narrow. One point which was highlighted was that these narrow points which are susceptible to loss should be protected.
- 15.2.9 There is the threat of coalescence between Ratby and Groby. The traffic movement between the settlements and the M1 reduces the perception of a gap between the settlements in particular this occurs between Sacheverell Way and the motorway. A particular location where this could occur is along Groby Road either side of the M1 (areas E and G). There is the need to restrict ribbon development at this point as there is potential from the sprawl of these settlements and it is important that the separate identities of these settlements is preserved and there is a sense of leaving one village and entering the other.
- 15.2.10 It is important to prevent the coalescence of settlements; however, it will be necessary to look at sites within the green wedge to allow for the development requirements set out in the Core Strategy for Groby. This will require a balanced approach to identify land which will have a limited impact on the green wedge whilst being in a sustainable location in terms of access to services and highways for instance to find the most suitable site.

15.3 GUIDING DEVELOPMENT FORM

*'Green Wedges will guide the form of new developments in urban areas, Consideration will be given to designating new green wedges or amending existing ones where it would help shape the development of new communities' such as potential sustainable urban extensions*⁴.

Wider Green Wedge Area

- 15.3.1 The green wedge guides the development form of Leicester City and its wider area. It provides a structurally important area of open land between the conurbation and the satellite villages around the City.
- 15.3.2 Emerging evidence from the review carried out by Charnwood Borough Council indicates that the green wedge in this location guides development form of Leicester City, particularly developments in the Ashton Green and Beaumont Leys area.
- 15.3.3 The Blaby District Council Strategic Green Wedge Review (June 2009) acknowledged the importance of this Green Wedge in guiding development form, particularly the emphasis on the Green Wedge around Glenfield leading out from the City past Glenfield, and out to the countryside beyond Ratby and Groby. This is important in ensuring green space penetrates through the urban area.
- 15.3.4 The Green Wedge therefore enables the shape of growth and ensuring that any development is sensitive the wider countryside.

Borough Green Wedge

- 15.3.5 As previously stated in the desk top review, to a large extent the road network guides the current development form of Groby. Sacheverell Way and the A50 are of particular note as they contain the settlement to the north, east and south. Sacheverell Way sweeps around the modern housing estate to the east and south of the settlement, there are no properties that face onto the road and the boundary treatment of the dwellings on the fringe of the estate give the sense of enclosure and that it is the edge of Groby. The A50 is a dual carriageway which clearly separates Groby from the open countryside beyond. The road network provides a logical boundary to the development form of Groby and the green wedge prevents the settlement from breaching the roads retaining the feeling of openness beyond the village.
- 15.3.6 In relation to Ratby, the M1 and Ferndale Park appears to guide development form to the north east of the settlement rather than the green wedge. In contrast, in the south of the settlement the green wedge does guide the development form of Ratby and the modern development that has taken place over recent years.
- 15.3.7 When evaluating the green wedge against this criteria in the consultation workshop two areas were identified as no longer performing the role of guiding development form these include: The Brantt Inn; and the site currently

⁴ Definition contained within the 'Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011)

under-construction between Ratby and the M1. These areas do not guide development form as they are built development and therefore by the very nature fail the remit of the green wedge.

15.3.8 Green wedges do not have the same national planning policy status or function as green belts (PPG2), in that they do not aim to restrict the growth of an urban area. This is something that was outlined in the East Midlands Regional Plan Panel Report and previous structure plans. Instead green wedges aim to seek to ensure that, as urban development extends, open space is incorporated within it providing a recreational resource and acting as a green lung, whilst at the same time having regard to the coalescence of settlements. Guiding development form becomes an important element to any review of the green wedge boundary which is amended to allow for future development requirements. The next section will examine the individual areas considering their role in guiding development form alongside the other criteria to see whether there are any areas which could be released if the Core Strategy requirements for a settlement can not be accommodated in more appropriate locations. This is where the consideration of development form is important in meeting the future requirements. It may be necessary to revise the green wedge boundary around Groby to accommodate the level of housing growth required in the Core Strategy, if a suitable and viable site outside the green wedge boundary can not be identified. Indeed, the green wedge should be the minimum to provide the functions of the green wedge and this is an important element to consider when reviewing the boundary.

15.4 PROVIDING A GREEN LUNG INTO URBAN AREAS

*'Green Wedges will provide communities with access to green infrastructure and the countryside beyond. They are distinct from other types of open space in that they provide a continuous link between the open countryside and land which penetrates deep into urban areas. Green Wedges will also provide multi-functional uses...'*⁵

Wider green wedge area

- 15.4.1 The green wedge abuts the conurbation of Leicester and expands outwards providing a green lung for the community. It is an important designation as it provides landscape and wildlife links between the Leicester conurbation and rural areas. It enhances the attractiveness of the urban fringe whilst enabling urban residents to take advantage of the countryside beyond improving the quality of life of residents.
- 15.4.2 The green wedge is of strategic importance as it preserves the links from outside of Leicester and its suburbs and contains the environmental asset of Rothley Brook. It plays an important role in providing the functions identified in the 6C's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2010) for the 'Urban Fringe Green Infrastructure Enhancement Zones for example: linking urban centres to the existing access network to connect with accessible green spaces in the wider countryside; provides a gateway into town and cities; contributes to health improvements; urban fringe farmland; increasing awareness of historic features in the urban fringe landscape; and strengthening biodiversity, geological and geo-morphological conservation management.

⁵ Definition contained within the 'Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011)

- 15.4.3 The green wedge contains a number of water courses with Rothley Brook being of particular note; the green wedge is a positive tool in terms of surface water run off. The green wedge is of ecological value which is partly due to the location of Rothley Brook and its tributaries. Around the M1 there are a number of wetlands, woodlands and wet grassland that are of importance and remain relatively undisturbed. There is the potential to support a number of important species which is evident through the Hinckley and Bosworth Biodiversity Assessment. There are also a number of historical assets that fall within the green wedge which includes Kirby Muxloe Castle and Kirby Frith Hall on the Western Golf Course and Martinshaw Lodge.
- 15.4.4 Emerging evidence from the review carried out by Charnwood Borough Council indicates that the green wedge functions as a green lung. Specifically it penetrates into the urban area, has recreational value, provides an important wildlife function and is located within an area of sub regional importance for Green Infrastructure.
- 15.4.5 The Blaby District Council Strategic Green Wedge Review (June 2009) found this Green Wedge to be a green lung with respect to it being an important green corridor from the city centre through urban areas out to the countryside beyond, providing a corridor for wildlife, as well as providing recreational value (to differing extents), thereby improving the quality of life for local residents.
- 15.4.6 The green wedge provides a positive environmental, social, and recreational amenity for its users and the flora and fauna contained within it.

Borough green wedge area

- 15.4.7 The green wedge provides the communities of Ratby, Groby, Kirby Muxloe, Glenfield and Anstey with access to green infrastructure and countryside. These settlements are interlinked via route ways through the green wedge enabling connectivity between the settlements and countryside beyond. The M1 and A46 are major roads and are key transport corridors. The verges of the roads provide habitats and mitigate the impact of the land use.
- 15.4.8 The green wedge helps to preserve and promote wildlife and landscape character. In particular, the fisheries to the north of the A50 provide a rich environment and habitat for a number of different species. Rothley Brook runs through Area J, the majority of the Brook has been identified as important for nature conservation.
- 15.4.9 The Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) identifies the majority of the green wedge as a tourism support area to encourage people into the area. It also defines it as an area for transport disturbance mitigation as it is partly defined by the transport corridors with high levels of traffic which directly impact on the quality of life for residents of Ratby and Groby. Pollution is not restricted to vehicle emissions but also the level of noise and light has a negative impact. Green infrastructure intentions such as habitat creation and varied tree and shrub planting should be implemented. Area J is identified as a green infrastructure intervention area through the management of the Rothley Brook Corridor to improve its recreational and biodiversity function.

- 15.4.10 The Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) recognises the important role green corridors play in providing access to open space and recreational opportunities and highlights the green wedge for aiding this access. As highlighted in the desk top survey there are numerous footpaths, bridleways and cycle ways within and around the green wedge; these encourage walking and cycling which in turn brings positive health benefits through enabling physical activity in the community. This was evident during the site visits carried out with particular reference to the area of the green wedge north of the A50 with the network of footpaths been well used by both walkers and joggers.
- 15.4.11 There are a number of historical assets including: Martinshaw Lodge (Grade II) and potential medieval and prehistoric sites which adds to the cultural heritage within the green wedge.
- 15.4.12 Through the consultation event attendees felt that the green wedge between Ratby and Groby should be considered a key green infrastructure corridor/gateway into the National Forest/Charnwood Forest. Attendees also identified that green infrastructure should be considered as a mosaic of sites across a large area.
- 15.4.13 It was also noted through the consultation event that the green wedge plays an important role in air quality management due to the road network around Ratby and Groby.
- 15.4.14 There is a broad range of open space and recreational facilities within the green wedge which draw people into using the area. Recreation will be considered in the criteria below. It is evident that the green wedge does provide a green lung for both the wider green wedge area and at the Borough level providing positive green infrastructure routes and provides connectivity into the countryside from the Leicester Conurbation and satellite villages

15.5 A RECREATIONAL RESOURCE

'Green wedges will provide a recreational resource. This will include informal and formal facilities now and in the future. Public access will be maximised⁶.

Wider Green Wedge Area

- 15.5.1 The green wedge provides a number of recreational opportunities, there are a number of public rights of way that go through the green wedge area which provide circular routes for users. In addition there are a number of cycle routes; this includes part of the National Cycle Network providing a route way that connects beyond the green wedge area itself. The cycle ways penetrate the Leicester urban conurbation and rural villages providing connectivity. There are also a number of large areas of open space including Western Golf Course, for outdoor recreational opportunities and Kirby Muxloe which provides walking opportunities and areas for picnics. There is also informal use of the area and it is clear that the green wedge has high recreational value.

⁶ Definition contained within the 'Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Review Joint Methodology (July 2011)

- 15.5.2 Emerging evidence from the review carried out by Charnwood Borough Council indicates that the green wedge performs an important recreational function. Specifically there is a degree of public access across the green wedge which links into surrounding communities. There is more formal areas of recreations such as Castle Hill Country Park, as well as evidence of more informal access to the areas immediately West / South West of Birstall. The current and potential recreational resource of the area is underlined by its identification as part of the 6Cs Strategic Green Infrastructure network. The recreational value of green wedge is reinforced by its proximity to priority neighbourhoods in Beaumont Leys.
- 15.5.3 The Blaby District Council Strategic Green Wedge Review (June 2009) found this Green Wedge valuable in terms of recreational opportunities. There is an extensive Public Rights of Way network through this Green Wedge, which for the most part, is easily accessible and well used. In addition, there are many paths across the Green Wedge that are not formally designated, but are also well used. There are other recreational opportunities in the form of a designated cycle route running through the area, as well as others including a golf course, allotments and more formal tourist attractions such as Kirby Muxloe Castle, although clearly some of these are privately run, and so public access is limited. However, the recreational opportunities available are considered important for the local communities.

Borough Green Wedge Area

- 15.5.4 There are a number of public and private recreational amenities within the green wedge. These include:
- Ferndale Park;
 - Allotments;
 - Ratby Community Orchard;
 - Horse Riding School;
 - Paddocks;
 - Parish Open Space (Sacheverell Way);
 - The Fisheries; and
 - Rifle Range.
- 15.5.4 These recreational amenities provide opportunities not only for residents close to the green wedge but also draw people in from further a field to use these sites.
- 15.5.5 The Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) recognises the important role that the green wedge plays in providing a recreational resource. In particular, it notes that the green wedge enables access to semi-natural and natural open space. As highlighted previously this is evident in the Rothley Brook Meadows Green Wedge; particularly to the north of the A50.
- 15.5.6 Ferndale Park was assessed as part of the Study; it identified the park as providing green space for children and young people and performing the role of a formal park. Formal parks usually contain a variety of facilities, and may have one or more of the other types of open space within them with their primary purpose is informal recreation. This illustrates that Ferndale Park provides a multi-functional recreational resources for a range of people and uses.

- 15.5.7 There is a good network of public rights of way which encourages people into the green wedge. The majority of the public right of ways were of good quality with clear signage to aid the legibility of the routes, they also appeared to be well used. Informal routes were evident which diverged from the more formal routes.
- 15.5.8 There are a number of recreational opportunities which abut the boundary of the green wedge, the green wedge enables greater connectivity to these areas and improves access and usage. These open spaces include:
- Martinshaw Woods;
 - Groby Pool (SSSI); and
 - Marina Park Open Space
- 15.5.9 Each of these open spaces were considered as part of the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study. Martinshaw Woods and Groby Pool were identified as areas of natural and semi-natural open space and Marina Park was identified as providing open space for children and young people and acting as a formal park (the same as Ferndale Park).
- 15.5.9 The consultation event identified that access to recreation was important and the inconsistency of the current green wedge was discussed in terms of the inclusion of Ferndale Park in the green wedge and the exclusion of Marina Drive. The final consensus was that Marina Park should be included within the green wedge due to it performing the same role as Ferndale Park.
- 15.5.10 There are a number of cycle routes through the green wedge including a route on the national cycle network. Functionally the cycle routes enable connectivity between the rural villages and into and out of the Leicester urban area, they also serve a recreational facility with cycle routes going beyond the green wedge to Thornton Reservoir.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

16.1 INTRODUCTION

16.1.1 Strategically at the wider area level the green wedge fulfils the objectives set out in the Leicester and Leicestershire Green Wedge Methodology Paper; however, at the Borough level there are small pockets on the edge of the green wedge that do not perform this role. Recommendations in relation to boundary amendments for the green wedge within the Borough are set out below.

16.2 AREA A: LAND ADJACENT TO THE A46 AND A50

16.2.1 Area A forms part of the strategic role in guiding development from preventing Groby from breaching the A50 and preventing the coalescence of Groby, 'The Brantings' and Anstey. The area abuts the boundaries of Blaby District and Charnwood Borough and therefore this area has an important role in relation to the wider green wedge outside of the Borough boundary. The rising topography of this area from Anstey Lane towards the A50/A46 makes this area particularly sensitive to change.

16.2.2 Although not publically accessible, Anstey Lane falls within this area providing remote access, the topography rises to such an extent that 'The Brantings' is visible from Anstey Lane.

16.2.3 It provides a green lung in relation to the area being within a flood risk zone (see Figure 4) and links to green infrastructure both locally and strategically. Furthermore, it was identified through the consultation event that water quality and flood alleviation is an important element of the green wedge. It forms part of the National Forest and identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) as a 'Tourism Support' intervention area to work towards protecting biodiversity and extending the initiative beyond its current boundary. This could be achieved through green wedge management.

16.2.4 Although the area does not provide a recreational resource it does guide development form, prevents the coalescence of settlements (see figure 1) and acts as a green lung. It was identified through the consultation event that green infrastructure should be considered as a mosaic of sites and not every site within the mosaic will meet all of the four criteria and this is true with this area as its location adjacent to two different administrative districts demonstrates the strategic role this area has for the overall green wedge. There are no boundary change recommendations for this assessment area.

16.3 AREA B: NORTH OF THE A50, ADJACENT TO QUARRY AND SHEET HEDGES WOOD

16.3.1 Area B abuts the boundary of Charnwood District Council and acts towards the prevention of coalescence between Groby and Anstey. It guides the development form of Groby so that development does not breach the A50. There is intravisibility of Groby and Glenfield from certain points of this green wedge area. This intravisibility is due to the rising topography of this area from the A50 towards Anstey making this area particularly sensitive to change.

16.3.2 It is a key green lung for residents of Groby and Anstey whilst providing a link to Newtown Linford. As with Area A, this Area falls within a flood risk zone (see Figure 4) and flood alleviation was identified as being important during the consultation event. This area also forms part of the National Forest and identified in the Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) as a 'Tourism Support' intervention area. The 'Tourism Support' intervention area to work towards protecting biodiversity and extending the initiative beyond its current boundary and this could be achieved through green wedge. A

watercourse runs to the south of the area and there are a number of hedgerows which provide habitats and wildlife corridors into the wider countryside.

16.3.3 It provides good recreational opportunities with a good network of public rights of way which provide circular routes and connectivity to other settlements which are well utilised.

16.3.4 This area achieves all four functions of the green wedge. There are no boundary amendments suggested for this area.

16.4 AREA C: THE FISHERIES

16.4.1 This area guides development form and prevents the merging of settlements as it prevents Groby breaching the A50 which defines the development form of the settlement.

16.4.2 It is a multi-functional area which acts as a green lung and recreational resource for residents. It provides recreational opportunities (such as fishing and walking), flood alleviation (see Figure 4), and links to green infrastructure. Through the consultation event it was identified that water quality and flood alleviation was an important aspect of the green wedge. It also enables the protection of historic assets in relation to a possible site for one of the two medieval watermills dated between 1279 and 1445; a dam which formed a fishpond known as Nere Mulnepol in 1371 that could be the site of the fishpond; and a medieval earthwork bank that once crossed a valley floor to form a fishpond. As highlighted above the site does provide recreational opportunities in terms of the fisheries and links to a number of footpaths both within and outside of the green wedge. Access to the rights of way is in need of improvement from Newtown Linford Lane to maximise the usability of the green wedge.

16.4.3 This area achieves all functions of the green wedge and there are no suggested boundary amendments for this assessment area.

16.5 AREA D: LAND ADJACENT TO THE A46

16.5.1 Area D adjoins the administrative area of Blaby District and prevents of the merging of Glenfield to the A46 which abuts Groby. It was identified through the consultation event that this area between Groby and Glenfield was very narrow and a pinch point.

16.5.2 In terms of guiding development form, it achieves this when including the neighbouring authorities green wedge area abutting Glenfield as it is providing accessible open space between the settlements through public rights of way.

16.5.3 It acts as a green lung as it provides connectivity between Glenfield and Groby. There are wildlife corridors and habitats as a result of the screening for the A46. It also provides recreational opportunities through the public rights of way in this area which connects to the wider area outside of the green wedge such as Marina Park Open Space off Sacheverell Way, Groby.

16.5.4 The Glenfield Park development will further reduce the gap between Glenfield, Groby, and Ratby and this area (along with area E) of the green wedge will be vital in preventing any further coalescence between the settlements. The topography falls down towards the existing industrial units within Glenfield and this results in the perception of the settlements being within close proximity. The area also plays an important role as a noise buffer and air quality management for residents of Groby and 'The Brantings' from the A46.

16.5.5 'The Brantings' is a small residential development that abuts the boundary of Area D. 'The Brant Inn' is a Public House which falls within the green wedge area and adjoins the built up area of 'The Brantings' and the A46. It was highlighted through the public consultation that 'The Brant Inn' fails the evaluation criteria; it is agreed that this is the case and the site does not accord with the objectives of the green wedge. As a result it is recommended that 'The Brant Inn' and its associated car park should be considered for removal from the green wedge as part of the site allocations process. This should be done in consultation with Blaby District Council as part of the site falls within their district.

16.5.6 Other than the removal of the 'Brant Inn' there are no further boundary amendments to the green wedge within this area.

16.6 AREA E: LAND SOUTH OF SACHEVERELL WAY

16.6.1 Area E prevents the merging of Groby and Ratby protecting the separate identities of the two villages. It guides development form by preventing the breaching of Sacheverell Way which acts as a strong physical edge to Groby.

16.6.2 The Area provides a green lung for residents of both Groby and Ratby and falls within the Green Infrastructure Strategy (2008) as a 'Tourism Support' intervention area. The area serves as a buffer between Groby and the M1 limiting any adverse impacts from this land use such as air quality and noise pollution. It includes historical assets such as the dismantled railway running from the Leicester to Swannington Line to Groby and ridge and furrow. It provides recreational opportunities in relation to public rights of way providing connectivity between the two settlements and more informal routes within the area.

16.6.3 This area of land was considered by the Local Plan Inspector which highlighted that this area was at the narrowest, most open and vulnerable point of the green wedge and that the housing requirements can be met elsewhere.

16.6.4 The consultation event identified that this area was particularly sensitive to coalescence and as highlighted in Area D the Glenfield Park development will make this area become even more crucial in preventing coalescence between Glenfield, Groby and Ratby.

16.6.5 As part of this Review it has emerged that this area performs a crucial role in preventing the merging of settlements and abuts Sacheverell Way which guides the development form of Groby. The area is open land with far reaching views towards Glenfield and Martinshaw Woods. From both the desktop review and site visits it is clear that this area performs the role of a green lung and a recreational resource. The right of way linking Groby to Ratby is important in providing a green corridor between the settlements and this aids the separation of the settlements and enhances the feeling of community identity whilst providing connectivity.

16.6.6 For the reasons outlined above this area is considered particularly sensitive and there are no boundary amendments proposed for the assessment area.

16.7 AREA F: LAND NORTH OF SACHEVERELL WAY

16.7.1 This area will be considered in two parts as they act differently due to accessibility.

16.7.2 Groby Cemetery and the Parish Council owned area of open space fall within this area. There is also a public right of way adjacent to the cemetery and Cowpen Spinney adjacent to the housing estate providing connectivity from Sacheverell Way towards the school entrances. These elements act positively in terms of providing a green lung and

recreational resource and achieve these objectives of the green wedge. As highlighted previously, the development form of the south and east of Groby is guided by Sacheverell Way.

- 16.7.3 A large section of land in Area F is not publically accessible and in private ownership, although it is recognised that it was formerly accessible to the public which is clearly shown in aerial photography. As this area is no longer accessible as an informal open space it is not recognised in the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study; and this plot of land therefore can not be classed as performing a recreational function. In terms of the role of the plot in guiding development form and merging of settlements, the recent Planning Appeal decision within the area should be considered. One of the reasons the appeal was dismissed was due to its impact on the green wedge, the Inspector highlighted that the appeal site had an open and largely rural aspect recognising that it was tempered by the surroundings identifying that the surroundings added to suburbanising and semi-rural feel of the area. One of the main criticisms was that a thorough green wedge review (including consultation) had not been undertaken and therefore arguments in relation to the removal of the green wedge were not robust. It is important to consider the recent appeal decision at Glenfield Park. The appeal site is visible from Area F particularly from the inner edge of the Parish Council owned area of open space. The built development will dramatically change the current landscape and there will be a significant reduction in the separation of the area between Groby and Glenfield.
- 16.7.4 The Local Plan Inspector also considered this parcel of land and highlighted that development would intrude into the green wedge at this structurally vital and vulnerable point. At this time there was a preferred site for development which was not within the green wedge which also added to the dismissal of this parcel land.
- 16.7.5 Now that this review has been undertaken for the entire green wedge it is acknowledged that this plot of land does provide a sense of openness highlighted in the planning appeal decision, however, the Inspector was considering this planning application in isolation and an 'open aspect' is not one of the functions of the green wedge set out in the Methodology. The Inspector was also not considering the green wedge at a strategic level as this assessment has. Ratby and Groby are within close proximity although there is not intervisibility between the settlements. It is anticipated that the development as a result of the Glenfield Park Appeal will mean that there will be intervisibility between Area F and Glenfield over the plan period. The consultation event and appeal decision have highlighted that the area of green wedge performs the separation of settlements and helps to guide development form.

16.8 AREA G: WEST OF RATBY ROAD

- 16.8.1 Area G prevents the merging of Groby and Ratby and also helps to guide development form, particularly the potential for development fronting Ratby Road, the playing fields at Groby College and Brookvale High School which add to this remit.
- 16.8.2 The Area provides an important role as a green lung and recreational resource with public rights of way from both Groby and Ratby which lead to Martinshaw Woods which is beyond the green wedge boundary. It includes a historical asset in terms of Martinshaw Lodge a Grade II Listed Building originally built c.1880 for the Earl of Stamford and Warrington as a hunting lodge. It is also sympathetic to Martinshaw Wood a Planted Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS) and a Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance. The rising topography makes the area particular sensitive in relation to the setting of Martinshaw Woods adjacent to which is a key recreational asset for the community and provides access beyond the green wedge into the wider Leicestershire countryside.

During the consultation event it was identified that the green wedge between Groby and Ratby should be considered as the gateway to The National Forest. This area clearly achieves this and is evident due to the distant views towards Martinshaw Woods from Ratby Road.

- 16.8.3 This area achieves the functions of the green wedge and there are no boundary amendments suggested for this assessment area.

16.9 **AREA H: SOUTH OF THE M1/NORTH-EAST RATBY**

- 16.9.1 The area provides a recreational resource, the predominant use is a Horse Riding School with associated uses, it is a privately run facility and is not publically accessible.
- 16.9.2 The area has a limited role in terms of acting as a green lung as it provides a buffer between the M1 and Ratby aiding air quality. It also aids links to green infrastructure at a local and strategic level. As the area abuts Martinshaw Woods this also softens the impact of existing built development on the biodiversity and historic asset of Martinshaw Woods.
- 16.9.3 It contributes little to guiding development form and the merging of the settlements as this is achieved by the physical barrier of the M1. As part of the consultation event the area between Ratby and Groby was identified as being narrow.
- 16.9.4 There is a public right of way to the north which abuts Martinshaw Woods and leads to Area G. This public right of way is the mechanism to access the wider green wedge from the northern part of Ratby if Area H was removed from the green wedge this link would remain.
- 16.9.5 The area does not contribute significantly to the roles of the green wedge and this area could be removed. If this area is removed it would make the revised boundary more defensible and strengthen the role of Area G as a green wedge.

16.10 **AREA I: FERNDALE PARK**

- 16.10.1 It is necessary to consider this area of green wedge in two sections. Firstly, the section to the of this area has gained planning permission for residential development and therefore does not achieve the role of the green wedge. This area should be removed from the green wedge boundary.
- 16.10.2 Ferndale Park is a public open space and is identified as a recreational facility in the Local Plan and the Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Study (2011) and therefore performs the role of the green wedge in terms of a recreational resource. It also provides a limited role in terms of a green lung as it acts as a buffer from the M1.
- 16.10.3 The area does not achieve the prevention of the merging of settlements or guiding development form. This is partly due to the site being identified as open space; REC1 of the Local Plan applies to Ferndale Park. The site allocations process will identify open spaces, it is recommended that Ferndale Park could be removed from the green wedge and allocated for recreation in the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD.

16.11 AREA J: TAVERNER DRIVE AND NORTH/SOUTH OF STATION ROAD, RATBY

- 16.11.1 Area J prevents the merging of Ratby and Kirby Muxloe and guides the development form of the southern tip of Ratby and there is intervisibility between both settlements.
- 16.11.2 It provides a green lung and recreational resource for residents. In terms of recreation the area has the following land uses; allotments, open space, and community orchard. This area is also important as a green lung. In terms of biodiversity, Rothley Brook runs through the area which is tree lined, and designated as a parish level site of importance. In addition the Environment Agency has records of white-clawed crayfish in the Rothley Brook at Ratby. There is a diversity of habitats in this area making it important for nature conservation from the abundant water, numerous ditches, moat and ponds; to woodland and hedgerows; to grassland both semi-improved and improved. The area also falls within flood zones 2 and 3 and the Borough Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy identifies the Rothley Brook Corridor Management Strategic Intervention Area. Through the consultation event it was identified that water quality and flood alleviation was an important aspect of the green wedge.
- 16.11.3 There are no boundary amendments suggested for this assessment area.

16.12 EXTENSION TO THE GREEN WEDGE

- 16.12.1 Three possible extensions to the green wedge were considered as part of this Review and these are discussed below.



- 16.12.2 One of the extensions considered was to include Groby Pool (*picture, right*) however, the site does not prevent the merging of settlements or guide development form. Groby Pool is also a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and therefore is protected under a separate designation. For these reasons this was dismissed as an extension.

- 16.12.3 A second extension considered was to the west of Area C and to the rear of Groby Pool car park there is an area of grassland used for walking which connects to a walkway which forms part of the disused railway line. This walkway leads to a pedestrian access to the A50 and leads onto public rights of way which provide a circular route to Groby Pool (these rights of way fall outside of the green wedge boundary). The area provides a green lung and a recreational resource for residents to the north west of Groby through the access points off the A50 and providing connectivity into the existing green wedge and recreational opportunities contained within it. It also provides a sympathetic surrounding use to the Groby Pool SSSI providing wildlife corridors and a positive environment for biodiversity. It can also guide development form through preventing the breaching of the A50 which could impact on Groby Pool SSSI. This proposed extension should be considered further as part of the site allocations process.
- 16.12.4 It was highlighted through the Consultation Event that Marina Park Open Space (*picture, right*) was not included as part of the green wedge designation. Assessing this area it can be identified as a recreational resource and it provides a green lung for residents by providing an open space which links into the wider green infrastructure network through the public right of way which runs through the site and beyond to Glenfield. It also guides

the development form of Groby as development has occurred around this open space to maximise connectivity for residents. To a small extent it helps prevent the merging of settlements. Although the site has a limited role in preventing the merging of settlements, it achieves the other functions of the green wedge and acts as a multi-functional space. It is recommended that the Marina Park Open Space is considered further through the site allocations process.



- 16.12.5 An extension to include Martinshaw Wood was also considered but discounted. The woods are a Planted Ancient Woodland Site (PAWS) and also a Site of Local Nature Conservation Importance. They also form the south-eastern boundary of the National Forest and form the largest continuous area of woodland in the National Forest. The woods are therefore subject to other designations, and Policy 21 of the Adopted Core Strategy supports the implementation of the National Forest.

16.13 CONCLUDING POINTS

- 16.13.1 From the Assessment it is evident that the green wedge is a multi-functional designation. It provides the following uses:

- Recreational opportunities for the local community
- Performs an agricultural role
- Prevents the merging of settlements
- Acts as a green lung
- Biodiversity resource
- Links to the wider Leicestershire countryside.

- 16.13.2 The different uses outlined above achieve the function of the green wedge. It is important to note however, that green wedges do not perform the same function as a green belt, in that they do not restrict the growth of an urban area. Instead they aim to ensure that as urban development grows, open space is incorporated providing a recreational resource and acting as a green lung, whilst at the same time having regard to the coalescence of settlements and this is where the consideration of development form is important in meeting the future requirements. As a result, it may be necessary to allocate land within the current green wedge boundary to ensure that future development requirements set out in the Core Strategy can be met, where they can not be accommodated elsewhere. In considering the Core Strategy housing requirements, it is noted that it may be necessary to revise the green wedge boundary around Groby to accommodate the level of growth required, if a suitable and viable site outside the green wedge boundary can not be identified. It is important to highlight at this stage that the green wedge should be the minimum to provide the functions of the green wedge and

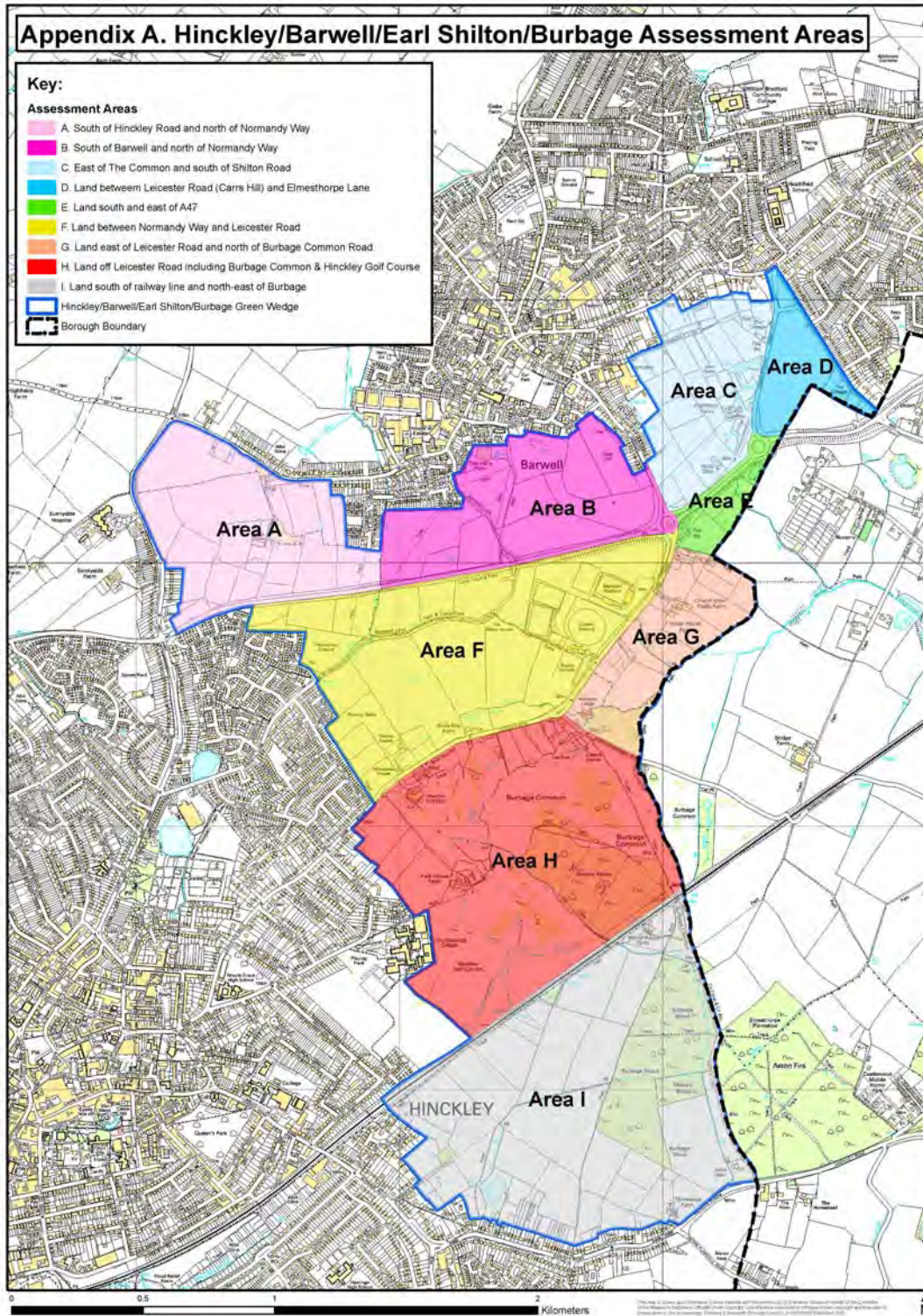
this is an important element to consider when reviewing the boundary as it will ensure that the border identified is robust and defensible if future development pressures arise.

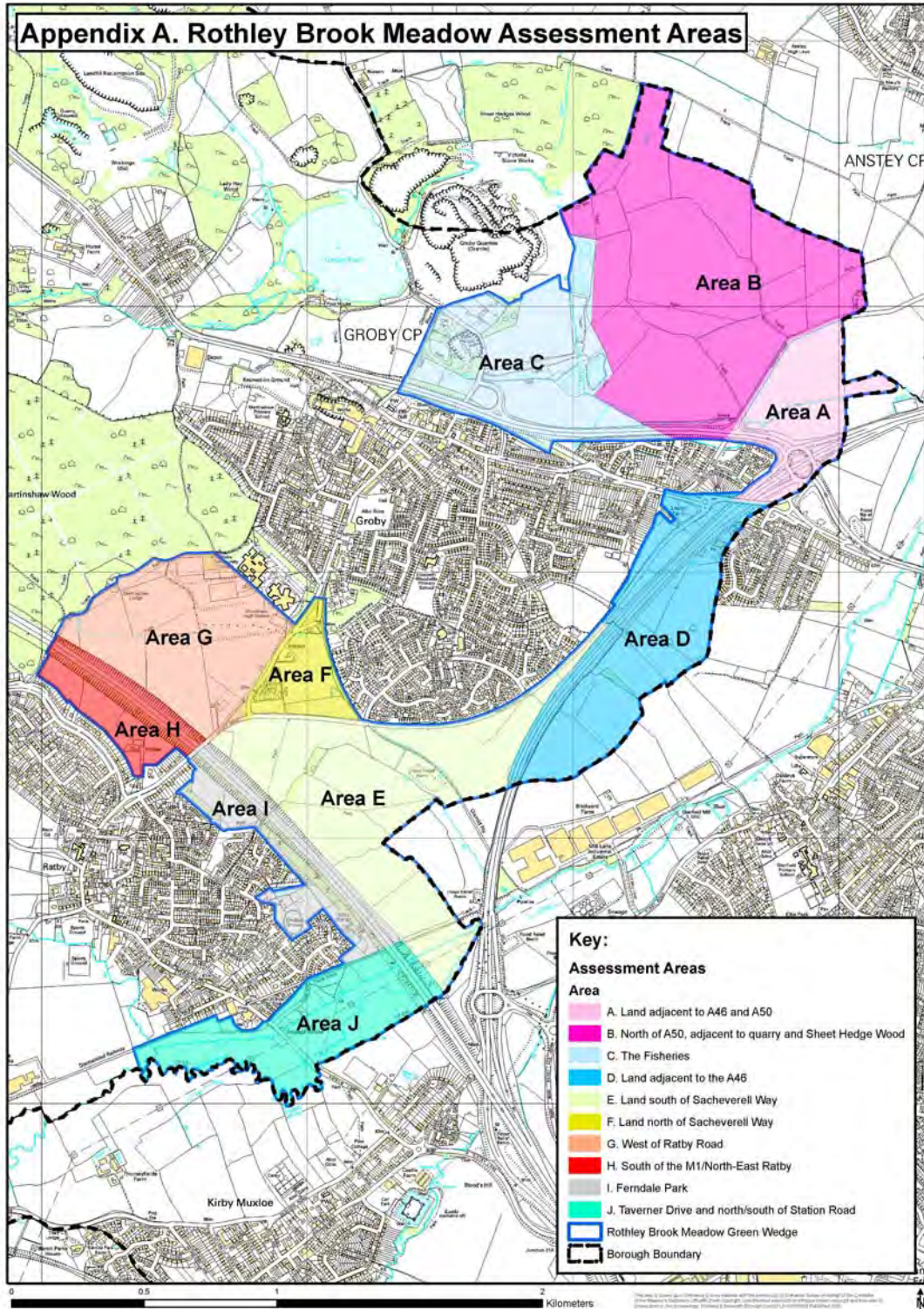
- 16.3.3 The recommendations in this assessment do not revise the adopted boundary of the green wedge. The revision of the boundary will be carried out within the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD when development requirements can be considered in conjunction with this review which will be used as one of the evidence base documents for this process. Any boundary amendments that may be made will go through a full public consultation process through the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD. As a result the Green Wedge boundary identified on the Adopted Proposals Map will remain in place until the above DPD is adopted.

17. OVERALL CONCLUSION

- 17.1 This Review has evaluated both Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge and Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge. The Review has demonstrated that both of the green wedges have a multi-functional role which are well used by the communities they abut.
- 17.2 The outcomes of the review will inform the preparation of the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD to assist in the green wedge boundary allocation. From the assessment it is evident that boundary amendments will need to be made to ensure that the boundary is robust and defensible whilst maintaining the four functions of the green wedge.
- 17.3 It is important to re-iterate that the recommendations in this assessment do not revise the adopted boundary of the green wedge. The revision of the boundary will be carried out within the Site Allocations and Generic Development Control Policies DPD and this document will be used as an evidence base for this process. The findings of the Review will be consulted upon as part of the preparation of the DPD. The Green Wedge boundary identified on the Adopted Proposals Map will remain in place until the DPD is adopted.

APPENDIX A: ASSESSMENT AREAS





APPENDIX B: PLANNING APPLICATIONS WITHIN THE HINCKLEY/BARWELL/EARL SHILTON/BURBAGE GREEN WEDGE FROM 1990 TO SEPTEMBER 2010

Please note; Codes used for decision are as follows:

PP – Planning Permission

REF – Refused

REC – Recommendation

GDO – General Development Order

County – Leicestershire County Council Decision

Outline PP – Outline Planning Permission

WDN – Withdrawn

CLU – Certificate of Lawful Use

TEMP – Temporary Planning Permission

APPLICATION NUMBER	ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	DECISION
90/00232/4	SWALLOWS GREEN RECREATION GROUND BARWELL LANE, HINCKLEY	RETENTION OF SPORTS PAVILION	PP
90/00641/4D	FORMER SITE OF SEWAGE WORKS LEICESTER ROAD, BARWELL	NEW CREMATORIUM	PP
91/00061/4	THE GAME KEEPER LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	EXTENSION TO PUBLIC HOUSE	PP
91/00202/4D	PUMPING STATION LEICESTER ROAD, BARWELL	ERECTION OF HOARDING	PP
91/00791/4	INGLENOOK FARM LEICESTER ROAD, BARWELL	CHANGE OF USE OF LAND FOR THE STORAGE OF TOURING CARAVANS AND ALTERATION TO VEHICULAR ACCESS	REF
91/00847/4	LAND ADJ LINDEN LEA LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	TEMPORARY WINTER QUARTERS FOR SHOWMENS CARAVANS AND EQUIPMENT	REF
91/01098/4	BRAEMORE HINCKLEY ROAD, BARWELL	REAR EXTENSION TO DWELLING	PP
93/00965/4	HILLSYDE LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF DETACHED GARAGE	PP
94/00104/FUL	CREMATORIUM SITE, LEICESTER ROAD, BARWELL	CREMATORIUM AND ASSOCIATED CAR PARKING AND ACCESS	PP
94/00324/FUL	F E DOWNES SPORTS LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF CLUBHOUSE AND CHANGING FACILITIES	PP
94/00345/FUL	INGLENOOK FARM LEICESTER ROAD,	AGRICULTURAL BUILDING	PP

Appendix B: Planning Applications within Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge from 1990 to September 2010

	BARWELL		
94/00815/FUL	WEST GREEN COTTAGE, HINCKLEY ROAD, BARWELL	EXTENSION TO DWELLING	PP
94/00863/FUL	FIELD ADJACENT TO 171 SAPCOTE ROAD, BURBAGE	ERECTION OF TWO HORTICULTURAL POLYTUNNELS	PP
95/00211/OUT	HINCKLEY TOWN CRICKET CLUB, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF BUILDING FOR INDOOR CRICKET NETS AND ASSOCIATED FACILITIES	OUTLINE PP
95/00588/FUL	GAMEKEEPER RESTAURANT, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ALTERATION TO PUBLIC HOUSE INCLUDING FORMATION OF FIRST FLOOR FLAT	PP
95/00605/FUL	STABLES - LAND OFF LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF STABLES	PP
96/00148/FUL	PENRYL , LEICESTER ROAD, BARWELL	EXTENSION TO DWELLING	PP
96/00433/ALTDEV	FIELD (OS 1029) ADJ LEICESTER ROAD, BARWELL	CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATE DEVELOPMENT	REF
97/00590/DEEM	LYNDEN LEA LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	RETENTION OF EXISTING SCREENING BUND AND REVISED INTERNAL ENTRANCE LAYOUT	COUNTY
97/00746/C	LYNDEN LEA LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	RETENTION OF EXISTING SCREENING BUND AND REVISED INTERNAL ENTRANCE LAYOUT	COUNTY
98/00268/FUL	FAIRWAYS COTTAGE, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	VEHICULAR ACCESS	PP
98/00470/FUL	HILLSIDE BUNGALOW, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF A TIMBER GARAGE	PP
98/00538/TEMP	TOOL SHED BURBAGE WOODS, SMITHY LANE, BURBAGE	RETENTION OF TOOL SHED	TEMP
98/00810/DEEM	BIRD HIDE BURBAGE WOODS, SMITHY LANE, BURBAGE	ERECTION OF BIRD HIDE FOR PUBLIC USE	RES
99/00769/GDO	HINCKLEY GOLF CLUB, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF 15M TALL LATTICE TOWER 3 ANTENNA AND 2 MICROWAVE DISHES	GDO
00/00991/FUL	GAMEKEEPER RESTAURANT, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF TEACHING BAY	PP

Appendix B: Planning Applications within Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge from 1990 to September 2010

01/00618/OUT	HINCKLEY GOLF CLUB, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF ADDITIONAL BEDROOM ACCOMODATION IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE ADJACENT RESTAURANT	REF
02/00291/FUL	BARWELL COMMON RECREATION GROUND, DOVECOTE WAY, BARWELL	INSTALLATION OF FLOODLIGHTING AND FORMATION OF ALL-WEATHER TRAINING SURFACE	WDN
02/00295/FUL	FAIRWAYS COTTAGE, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	EXTENSION TO DWELLING TO PROVIDE ANCILLARY LIVING ACCOMMODATION	REF
02/00600/C	LYNDEN LEA , LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	EXTENSION OF EXISTING WASTE RECYCLING FACILITY INCLUDING ERECTION OF BUILDING AND SITE INFRASTRUCTURE	COUNTY
02/00863/FUL	F E DOWNES SPORTS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	CHANGE OF USE TO FOOTBALL GROUND AND ERECTION OF STADIA AND ANCILLARY BUILDINGS INCLUDING CAR PARKING	PP
03/00396/COU	GAMEKEEPER RESTAURANT, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	CHANGE OF USE FROM CLASS A3 TO CLASS B1 (OFFICES)	PP
03/01064/FUL	HILLSIDE BUNGALOW, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	PROVISION OF FIRST FLOOR STEWARDS FLAT TO SOCIAL CLUB	PP
03/01084/CONDIT	F E DOWNES SPORTS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	VARIATION OF PLANNING CONDITION 1 APPLICATION NUMBER 98/00470/FUL TO PERMANENT CONSENT FOR TIMBER GARAGE	PP
03/01209/ADV	F E DOWNES SPORTS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	TWO FLAGPOLES	PP
03/01452/CTPO	SWALLOWS GREEN RECREATION GROUND, HARWOOD DRIVE, HINCKLEY	WORKS TO ONE ASH TREE	REC
04/00469/FUL	PENRYL, LEICESTER ROAD, BARWELL	EXTENSIONS AND ALTERATIONS TO DWELLING	PP
04/00470/FUL	SCROPTON, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	EXTENSION AND ALTERATIONS TO DWELLING	WDN
04/01146/C	LYNDEN LEA, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF BUILDING TO STORE AND PREPARE VEHICLES FOR SCRAP DISPOSAL	COUNTY
04/01200/TEMP	N AND L BUILDING CONTRACTORS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	TEMPORARY STORAGE	PP
05/00069/GDOT	LAND OFF NORTHERN PERIMETER ROAD WEST, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF 15 METRE TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT CABINET	GDO

Appendix B: Planning Applications within Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge from 1990 to September 2010

05/00137/C	LYNDEN LEA, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	RELOCATION OF LANDSCAPE BUND	COUNTY
05/00138/C	LYNDEN LEA, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	VARIATION OF CONDITION TO ALLOW RELOCATION OF WASTE TRANSFER BUILDING	COUNTY
05/00323/FUL	LYNDEN LEA, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF OFFICE AND AMENITY BLOCK	WDN
05/00432/GDOT	LAND OFF NORTHERN PERIMETER ROAD WEST, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF 15M TELECOMMUNICATIONS MAST AND ASSOCIATED EQUIPMENT CABINETS (REVISED SCHEME)	REF
05/00752/FUL	MARSTONS STADIUM, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	NETBALL COURT WITH FENCING AND FLOODLIGHTING	PP
06/00034/FUL	N AND L BUILDING CONTRACTORS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF STORAGE UNITS	PP
06/00413/C	FIELD ADJ LYNDEN LEA, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	EXTENSION OF WASTE RECYCLING BUILDING	COUNTY
06/01237/CLU	INGLENOOK FARM, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL EXISTING USE FOR THE MANÉGE	REF
06/01238/CLU	INGLENOOK FARM, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL EXISTING USE FOR A FARM SHOP FOR THE SALE OF FRUIT, VEGETABLES, PET AND ANIMAL FOODS, EGGS AND DOMESTIC FUELS DURING THE HOURS 9.00AM TO 6.00PM MONDAY TO SATURDAY AND 9AM TO 4.00P	CLU
07/00099/C	LYNDEN LEA, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	REGULARISATION OF WASTE TRANSFER SITE AND ERECTION OF ASSOCIATED BUILDINGS	COUNTY
07/00261/CLU	INGLENOOK FARM, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL EXISTING USE FOR MANÉGE	CLU
07/00407/FUL	MARSTONS VIEW, MARSTONS STADIUM, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF CLOSE BOARDED TIMBER FENCE	REF
07/00840/CONDIT	N AND L BUILDING CONTRACTORS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	VARIATION OF CONDITION 19 OF PLANNING PERMISSION 02/00863/FUL TO RETAIN EARTH BUND IN LIEU OF FENCE ALONG NORMANDY WAY	INV

Appendix B: Planning Applications within Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton Green Wedge from 1990 to September 2010

07/01033/FUL	N AND L BUILDING CONTRACTORS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF TWO STORAGE UNITS	WDN
07/01266/FUL	N AND L BUILDING CONTRACTORS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF TWO STORAGE UNITS	REF
07/01482/FUL	INGLENOOK FARM, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF CHICKEN PENS, FENCE AND REPLACEMENT STABLES	PP
08/00807/FUL	INGLENOOK FARM, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	PROPOSED NEW STABLE AND RETENTION OF EXISTING STABLE	PP
08/00956/FUL	BRAEMORE, HINCKLEY ROAD, BARWELL	ERECTION OF GARAGE	PP
08/01170/FUL	INGLENOOK FARM, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	RETENTION OF HORSE EXERCISER	PP
09/00290/FUL	N AND L BUILDING CONTRACTORS, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	ERECTION OF 2NO. WORK UNITS AND FORMATION OF STORAGE FACILITY	REF
09/00466/C	LYNDEN LEA, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	PARTIALLY RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION TO CONSOLIDATE EXISTING PREMISES INCLUDING DEMOLITION OF A DWELLING AND THE REGULARISATION OF BUILDINGS AND BUNKERS COUNTY COUNCIL ID NUMBER 2009/C072/04	COUNTY
10/00301/FUL	LAND OFF DAWSONS LANE, BARWELL	RETROSPECTIVE APPLICATION FOR THE DEMOLITION AND ERECTION OF A STABLE BLOCK AND FORMATION OF NEW ACCESS	PP
10/00405/OUT	LAND ADJACENT TO HINCKLEY GOLF CLUB, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (OUTLINE - ACCESS ONLY)	WDN
10/00661/OUT	LAND ADJACENT TO HINCKLEY GOLF CLUB, LEICESTER ROAD, HINCKLEY	RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT (OUTLINE - ACCESS ONLY)	TBD

APPENDIX C: HINCKLEY/BARWELL/EARL SHILTON/BURBAGE SITE GREEN WEDGE ASSESSMENT PRO FORMAS

Location: Area A – South of Hinckley Road and North of Normandy Way

Date of site visit: 6 October 2010

Land use description	Agriculture, Allotments, Grassland, and A47	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, agriculture, and hospital	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Trees, hedgerows, and ploughed fields	
Topography	Small incline towards Hinckley Road, Barwell with some undulation.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	From the western edge of this area, it is possible to see properties in Hinckley located on the Ashby Road. Mature trees fronting Normandy Way block views towards Hinckley.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	The area abuts the built form of Barwell and Hinckley. This area is one of the narrowest area within the green wedge between two settlements. It is possible to walk between the settlements.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Properties on Hinckley Road, Barwell	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	There are some farm related buildings.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	It would impact on the separation between Barwell and Hinckley having a significant visual impact.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a	Yes	No

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

predominantly urban environment?		
Details	This area is mainly agricultural in nature.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No
Details	There is a public right of way that runs across the site from Hinckley Road to Ashby Road.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Via public right of way	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	It is a relatively small right of way, but is well signposted from the access points. There is no stile or kissing gate to access.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	The right of way looked fairly well trodden.	
What visible informal uses are there?	There appears to be an informal walkway between Hinckley Road and Normandy Way.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Limited recreational opportunity on this area although it is being actively farmed so it would have an impact on this. It would also have an impact on the visual break between Hinckley and Barwell.	

Location: Area B - South of Barwell and north of Normandy Way

Date of site visit: 6 October 2010

Land use description	Agriculture, Recreation ground and A47	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, place of worship, Football Stadium, and Agriculture.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows, trees, grazing land and ploughed fields. Church has a prominent position on the edge of the green wedge.	
Topography	A fairly significant incline towards Barwell, peaking at the edge of the green wedge abutting the properties on Church Lane.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details		
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	It is estimated that this area is within equal distance to Hinckley and Earl Shilton. The distance to Hinckley would be approximately 10 minutes as the pedestrianised footway of Barwell provides a good link. Walking distance to Earl Shilton would be slightly longer as rights of way and pathways aren't as well connected to one another.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Built form of Barwell	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	None	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	The rising topography from the A47 would mean that there would be a significant impact if development were to occur.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban	Yes	No

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

environment?		
Details	Recreation ground	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No
Details	Cycleway, pedestrianised Barwell Lane and rights of way across fields.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	The green wedge can be accessed at numerous points due to the number of public rights of ways that cut through this area.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Hard surface footpath linking Hinckley and Barwell. Signposts are highly visible. Access to the rights of way across the fields is via sties and a kissing gate.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Whilst on site there was a good level of use of the Barwell Lane footpath.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Barwell Lane provides a green walkway. The recreation ground is also allocated as open space and therefore allocated as two different things in the local plan	

Location: Area C - East of The Common and south of Shilton Road

Date of site visit: 6 October 2010

Land use description	Allotments, agriculture, farm buildings, paddocks and grazing.	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture, residential and employment.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Paddocks, mature trees, and shrubs.	
Topography	Rolls downwards towards the A47	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details	It is possible to see Burbage, Earl Shilton, Elmesthorpe and church spire in Stoney Stanton.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Within close proximity to Earl Shilton.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Residential properties off Shilton Road.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Allotment sheds, paddocks, farm buildings, electricity transmission box.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Due to the topography of the green wedge would have a visual impact and bring development closer to the A47.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details	Provides an open view from Shilton Road towards Burbage Common.	

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No
Details	Public rights of way, paddocks and allotments	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details		
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Public rights of way, paddocks and allotments	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good level of use, tracks look well trodden. The allotments also looked well utilised.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Allotments are not allocated in the current local plan.	

Location: Area D – Land between Leicester Road (Carrs Hill) and Elmeſthorpe Lane

Date of ſite viſit: 6 October 2010

Land use deſcription	Scrubland	
Adjacent land uses	Residential and agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Scattered trees around the edge.	
Topography	Rolls downwards towards the A47	
Can more than one ſettlement be ſeen from current poſition?	Yes	No
Details	Earl Shilton and Barwell	
Perception of diſtance to neighbouring ſettlements	Adjacent	
Does the current green wedge have a ſtrong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Abuts Elmeſthorpe Lane. To the ſouth the boundary is the administrative area of Hinckley and Boſworth.	
Does an alternative ſtrong defensible boundary exiſt?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Transmission Station	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Impact the viſual approach to Earl Shilton	
Does this green wedge provide green open ſpace in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details		
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle	Yes	No

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

paths)		
Details		
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details		
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	There were informal tracks around the perimeter of the lower field however not evident to the level of use.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Currently no recreational opportunity.	

Location: Area E – Land off Leicester Road

Date of site visit: 6 October 2010

Land use description	Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDs) and grassland	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	SUD, scattered mature trees, and hedgerows.	
Topography	Relatively flat	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details		
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Close to both Barwell and Earl Shilton	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	The administrative boundary	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	An access route is evident to a Severn Trent facility.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Impact on view towards Burbage Common.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details		
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle	Yes	No

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

paths)		
Details		
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details		
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	N/A	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	N/A	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	N/A	

Location: Area F – Land between Normandy Way and Leicester Road

Date of site visit: 6 October 2010

Land use description	Football ground (Marston Stadium), Cricket Ground, Agriculture, Tennis Courts, A47, Recreation Ground.	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture and Burbage Common.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Ploughed fields, high hedgerows, scattered trees.	
Topography	Rising towards Hinckley/Barwell Lane	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details		
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	In close proximity to Hinckley and Barwell. Abuts Hinckley.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Residential properties within Hinckley and Leicester Road abutting Burbage Common.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Sports Stadium, sports facilities, dwellings, bridge, A47, squash courts, cricket pavilion and Rugby facilities.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	There is currently low level built development within the green wedge providing recreational opportunities. The topography falls downwards towards the A47 so there would be a greater impact if development occurred towards Hinckley.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details	Recreation opportunities, see below. Public rights of way.	

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	No
Details	Football, Rugby, cricket, tennis and squash. Public rights of way.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Public rights of way and recreational opportunities	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Barwell Lane is a hard surface of good quality. Poor signage from the public right of way onto Barwell Lane as to where the lane goes.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good use by dog walkers and residents passing between Hinckley and Barwell.	
What visible informal uses are there?	Informal walkways around field.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	The recreational opportunities are within private ownership.	

Location: Area G – Land east of Leicester Road and North of Burbage Common Road

Date of site visit: 6 October 2010

Land use description	Agriculture, Farm buildings, woodland, kennels and cattery.	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture, Burbage Common, Football Stadium, Cricket Ground and Rugby Ground.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	High hedgerows, scattered trees, shrubs and woodland.	
Topography	Relatively flat, slight incline towards Elmesthorpe.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details		
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Close proximity to Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Administrative boundary of Blaby District.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm buildings.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	The area is not very visible from Leicester Road due to high hedgerows/trees.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details		
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle	Yes	No

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

paths)		
Details	Public right of way abutting Area E	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Public right of way	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Good sign post from Leicester Road.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Relatively well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	No, provides the green connection.	

Location: Area H – Land off Leicester Road including Burbage Common and Hinckley Golf Course

Date of site visit: 6 October 2010 and 26 September 2010

Land use description	Burbage Common and Visitor Centre, golf course, scrubland, woodland and scrap yard.	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, school and playing fields, railway line, agriculture.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Grassland, woodland, scattered trees, manicured lawns within Golf Course.	
Topography	Relatively flat.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	No
Details		
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Close to Hinckley and Burbage.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	Yes	No
Details	Should be investigated further as part of the comprehensive green wedge review	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	No
Details	Potentially golf course	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Visitor Centre and Golf Club facilities.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Dependent on location of development, there would be more of an impact if development occurred close to Burbage Common.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	Yes	No
Details	Burbage Common.	
Does this green wedge	Yes	No

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)		
Details	Golf course, public rights of way, woodland walks, bridleway.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	No
Details	Numerous access points, very good access.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	Yes	No
Details	Very good, maps of the walkways at various points, good signage. However navigation for the public right of way across the golf course is poor.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Extremely good use.	
What visible informal uses are there?	Some informal walkways	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Burbage Common is designated as open space and the golf course is an important asset. These are two important assets providing a crucial role for the green wedge.	

Location: Area I – Land south of railway line and north-east of Burbage

Date of site visit: 26th September 2010 and 7th October 2010

Land use description	Woodland, agriculture, recreation, paddock, tea room and associated picnic area. Railway line (Leicester to Birmingham line). Pond close to properties off Sapcote Road.	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, woodland, playing fields, golf course, agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Woodland, mature trees and shrubs border fields, brook	
Topography	Relatively flat, rising gently to the railway line which abuts John Cleveland Playing fields and the rear gardens of properties on Ambion Way	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Hinckley and Burbage	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Close within walking distance	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	To the east of the green wedge the boundary the Hinckley and Bosworth administrative boundary. The residential properties off Sapcote Road, Woodgate Road and The Coppice.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	The boundary of Aston Firs Woodland could potentially be an alternative boundary; however, this is within the administrative boundary of Blaby District and therefore is not within the remit of this study.	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Farm buildings, tea room, small pedestrian bridges over the brook sympathetic to the woodland, railway line and tunnel under the railway to access Area H.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Significant impact on the recreational amenity of the area.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No

Appendix C: Hinckley/Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge Assessment Pro formas

Details	Burbage woodland walks, areas of grassland close to the tea rooms at Wood House Farm	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Woodland walks, public rights of way, tea rooms	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Numerous access points from Sapcote Road and Smithy Lane. Access from Burbage Common.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc.)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Good signposts, the surfacing of the woodland walks is of a good quality and the bridges over the brook are sympathetic to the environment and well maintained.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good level of use. There were a number of cars parked on the Smithy Lane parking areas.	
What visible informal uses are there?	Some evidence of walking off the main tracks	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	The green wedge provides the links from the main urban areas to Burbage common and woods.	

APPENDIX D: ROTHLEY BROOK MEADOW GREEN WEDGE SITE ASSESSMENT PRO FORMAS**Area A – Land adjacent to A46 and A50**

Time and date of site visit: 28 April 2010

Land use description	Agricultural, roads	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, Agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Watercourse, hedgerows, some mature trees	
Topography	Rises from Anstey Lane	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Groby and Glenfield	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Walking distance to Groby and Glenfield	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Green Wedge goes into adjacent Districts – Charnwood and Blaby	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	None	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Impact visually due to the rising topography	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban	Yes	<u>No</u>

Appendix D: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Site Assessment Pro formas

environment?		
Details	Visual green space	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details		
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	No public right of way	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	Yes	No
Details	Not applicable	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Not applicable	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Due to the topography of the land it has a positive visual impact, both from Groby and Area B.	

Area B – North of A50, adjacent to quarry and Sheet Hedge Wood

Time and date of site visit: 28 April 2010

Land use description	Predominately used for agricultural – crops. Small parts towards A50 used for grazing land. Horses grazing in adjacent fields. A50	
Adjacent land uses	Fishing lakes, Sheet Hedge Wood, Quarry, Agriculture, and Residential.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows, watercourse and scattered trees	
Topography	Rises upwards from fishing lakes, having prominent views to Bradgate Park, Glenfield and Groby due to the elevated position. Topography falls slightly towards Anstey Lane.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Groby and Glenfield	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Dependent on location. Walling distance to Groby and Anstey. Close proximity to Newtown Linford.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Sheet Hedge Wood, Quarry and residential development. The Green Wedge continues into neighbouring district.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	There is a small derelict brick built structure on field adjacent to Anstey Lane at Borough Boundary.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Impact on access to the countryside. Visual impact due to topography. Area visible from Marina Park in Groby	

Appendix D: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Site Assessment Pro formas

Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Anstey and Groby	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Two rights of way that connect to a number of others which fall outside of the Borough boundary that connects to Anstey, Sheet Wood and Newtown Linford.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public right of way providing a circular route.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	In some areas yellow markers are poorly situated. Rights of way well tracked.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good use, when on site users included joggers, dog walkers and walkers.	
What visible informal uses are there?	Some informal walkways.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Would impact on access to countryside and have a significant visual impact.	

Area C – The Fisheries

Time and date of site visit: 28 April 2010

Land use description	Agriculture – cows grazing and crops. A50. Fisheries. Car park. Vehicular access. Rifle Range.	
Adjacent land uses	Groby Pool (SSSI), Quarry, Agriculture, residential.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows, A50 in elevated position, watercourse, fishing ponds.	
Topography	Flat	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Due to the A50 being raised it is not possible to see a settlement. Restricted view of Groby from Newtown Linford Lane through A50 Tunnel.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Adjacent to Groby. 15-20 minute walk to Anstey via public right of way and 20 minute walk to Newtown Linford via Newtown Linford Lane.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Quarry and residential development.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Car park, buildings associated to the Rifle Range	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Impact on recreational value	

Appendix D: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Site Assessment Pro formas

Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details		
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Fishing, right of way, access to countryside. Public right of way sign. Sign to Groby Pool Car Park.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public right of way, the fisheries and Groby Pool Car Park.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Entrance to the fisheries is via a cattle grid or a stile which may limit users and make it difficult for dog walkers.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good use, links to area B. Fisheries being actively used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Would impact on access to countryside and recreational value.	

Area D – Land adjacent to A46

Time and date of site visit: 27 April 2010 and 6 December 2011

Land use description	A46 runs through this site. There is a public right of way connecting Sacheverell Way to Glenfield. This crosses the A46 via a bridge. To the north of area D to the west of Sacheverell Way there is a paddock with horses. On the eastern side of the A46 there are ploughed fields with the public right of way running through the fields. There is a public house on the northern tip of Area D to the east of the A46 which adjoins a residential area (The Brantings). This area abuts the boundary of Blaby District Council.	
Adjacent land uses	Marina Park Public Open Space. Residential to the west of Sacheverell Way, and abutting the boundary at the north-eastern section (known as The Brantings). Agricultural fields continue outside of the Borough boundary and beyond the fields. To the east of the A46 are large industrial units which are clearly visible.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Fields separated by hedgerows and large shrubs. Some mature trees. Noise bunding either side of the A46 which is sunken into the landscape.	
Topography	To the west of the A46 the land slopes downwards towards a mini-island. The A46 is sunken. To the east of the A46 the land rolls downwards from the A46 towards the industrial units which are within the settlement of Glenfield.	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	To the east of the A46 it is possible to view Glenfield and Groby. The view towards Groby is masked however, via vegetation.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	The settlements are within walking distance using the footbridge.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	The area has a defensible boundary to the west in the form of residential development. Marina Park Public Open Space provides a softer boundary to the wedge. To the east of the A46 the borough boundary determines the edge of the green wedge for the Borough. However, it continues into Blaby District and the built form of Glenfield provides a boundary. The	

Appendix D: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Site Assessment Pro formas

	Brantings provides a boundary to the north-east. The Glenfield Park development will significantly reduce the area of separation.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	A46, public house and footbridge.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Development would be close to the A46, it currently provides a buffer. The noise from the road is quite evident from the site visits. Sacheverell Way is a defensible boundary to the built up area of Groby.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Provides a green link to Glenfield rather than crossing a busy roundabout.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Provides routes for dog walking, joggers and walkers	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Via public rights of way and bridge over the A46	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	There is good signage and gates are of a good quality.	

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	Yellow markers to guide the way are located at appropriate places to navigate.
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	There is a good level of use of the right of way which is evident via the tracked rights of way and users whilst out on site visits including joggers and dog walkers.
What visible informal uses are there?	None.
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	There would not be a green link between Groby and Glenfield. There are no informal uses on this area and therefore there would be a limited impact in regard to this. It provides a good green infrastructure route. Positive area for biodiversity adjacent to Groby.

Area E: South of Sacheverell Way

Time and date of site visit: 27 April 2010 and 6 December 2011

Land use description	Agriculture – Arable and grazing land. Paddock	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, M1, A46	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Flood basin, Hedgerows, scattered trees	
Topography	Undulating	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Groby, Ratby and Glenfield (industrial units within Glenfield are particularly prominent.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Walking distance between Groby and Ratby. Provides access to modern housing development within Ratby and Ferndale Park.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Sacheverell Way, M1	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	The green wedge continues into Blaby District	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	M1 and bridge over the motorway	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this	Visual impact on the areas of raised topography.	

Appendix D: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Site Assessment Pro formas

location have?		
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Provides a green amenity route for residents of Groby and Ratby. It also provides a linkage for residents of Groby to access Ferndale Park. If the link was not there access would be via a longer route.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Provides walking opportunities which was very evident whilst on site. Opportunities for joggers. Paddock for horses	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Access via public rights of way.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Tracks are well used and are left visible as they are not used for farming. Sign posts are of good quality, sign indicates that the route goes to Ratby improving legibility. Yellow markers on site are well positioned for navigational purposes.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good level of use evident from the condition of track. Whilst on site evidence of dog walkers and walkers.	
What visible informal uses are there?	There are informal tracks on site	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	This provides a positive green link between settlements with the opportunity for children in Ratby to use the route to access Groby College and Brookvale High School.	

Area F – North of Sacheverell Way

Time and date of site visit: 27 April 2010 and 6 December 2011

Land use description	Cemetery, grassland/grazing land. Public right of Way. Parish Council owned area of land providing informal/semi natural recreation opportunity. Wooded Walk (Spinney) to the east.	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, Agricultural fields, Schools	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Mature trees, hedgerow – well maintained denoting the boundary of the cemetery. Brook running along the east of the area.	
Topography	Slight incline from Sacheverell Way	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details		
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Walking distance to Ratby	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Residential development to the east	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Should be investigated further as part of this full review.	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Detached dwelling to the west of the site. Row of terraced houses to the northern side located on slip road.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this	Area north of the Parish Council owned land is well screened from hedgerows/trees to the south and west of the site on the April site visit, however when visited in	

Appendix D: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Site Assessment Pro formas

location have?	December the screening was less successful and open views more evident. There would be a visual impact from the cemetery and any development would need to be sensitive to this.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Limited open space to the south of the site off Sacheverell Way. Majority of area of land is in private ownership and not accessible by the public.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public right of way to the west of area. Wooded walk to the east.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	The cemetery, Parish Council owned land to the south and wooded walk to the east and right of way.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	The footpath is not as well demarcated as other areas in the green wedge. The wooded walk is well utilised however there is no signage to this amenity.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	The wooded walk is well utilised by school children accessing Groby College and Brookvale High from the modern housing development. Also evidence of dog walkers using the walkway.	
What visible informal uses are there?	There is evidence that informal access to the area of private land was available however, fencing that visually looks recent has now blocked this informal use.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes, the public right of way would be protected by other legislation. The trees at Cowpen Spinney are protected by Tree Preservation Order 0801/09/01. The Parish Council owned land is abutted by mature trees which during the April site visit blocked the view of the private area of land, limiting visual impact of this area from the open fields to the south. However, this was not the case when the site was re-visited in December 2011 to assess the impact of the Glenfield Park development.	

Area G – West of Ratby Road

Time and date of site visit: 27 April 2010

Land use description	School Playing Fields. Brookvale High School. Paddock for horses. Grassland. Grazing horses	
Adjacent land uses	Martinshaw Woods, M1, Cemetery, Schools	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Playing fields, hedgerows and shrubbery denote boundary, trees form boundary towards the north-west of the site. Drainage ditch.	
Topography	Incline towards Martinshaw Wood	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Ratby – however view is restricted via screening of the M1.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Walking distance	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Martinshaw Wood to the north-west and M1 to the south-west.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	There is a dwelling toward the north-west abutting the Martinshaw Wood, including a small workshop. Stable. Tennis/netball courts. Astro turf pitch with floodlights	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Remove a recreational asset providing a green link from Ratby and Martinshaw Woods in Groby. The public right of way off Groby Road also provides a link from the south of Groby to Martinshaw Woods. Access points	

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	along the perimeter of the right of way into Martinshaw Woods. Visual impact.	
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	To the south of the area there is a paddock. There is an Astroturf pitch and tennis courts/netball courts. These are however, part of the school and therefore not freely available.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Provides public rights of way connecting Ratby and Groby to Martinshaw Woods.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Provides public rights of way connecting Ratby and Groby to Martinshaw Woods. Various access points connecting Martinshaw Wood to the Green Wedge.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	The public right of way accessed via Groby Road has good signage and entrance gate. However, at the time of the site visit the right of way was blocked by hardcore meaning that users would have to deviate from the route. When wet the entrance would not appeal to users as it would be quite muddy and boggy. Access to the right of way to the north-west is good with signage from Markfield Road, Ratby and access from Martinshaw Wood. Yellow markers are placed at convenient locations making it easy to navigate.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	No evidence of use from the Groby Road access point due to the surfacing condition. There appears to be good use of the north-west public right of way	

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What visible informal uses are there?	Some informal tracks.
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	The view to Martinshaw Wood which is a positive recreational and landscape asset to Groby and Ratby would be impacted upon. Also impact on visually on the schools and reduce biodiversity in the area.

Area H – South of the M1/North-East Ratby

Time and date of site visit: 27 April 2010

Land use description	Riding School, M1 and Paddock	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, Martinshaw Woods	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Hedgerows, trees line next to the M1	
Topography	Flat	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Trees screening the M1 block any view towards Groby.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Walking distance to Groby from entrance to riding school on Groby Road. The area is in close proximity to Groby to the northern side; however this access is via public rights of way and Martinshaw Wood.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Residential development.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	The M1, this should be investigated further as part of the review.	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Horse riding centre and associated amenities.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Limited impact visually	

Appendix D: Rothley Brook Meadow Green Wedge Site Assessment Pro formas

Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Visually it provides a green link when using the public right of way to the north however the open space is not available to the public to access.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Public right of way to the north. Horse riding recreational opportunity although in private ownership.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Public right of way to the north.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Good signs from Markfield Road, Ratby with car parking. Hard surfacing. Bridge over the M1	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Footpath is a hard surface so not able to make judgment, however the footpath leads to area G and the footpath here look well used.	
What visible informal uses are there?	None.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	There is a recreational facility in terms of the horse riding centre, again this is in private ownership.	

Area I – Ferndale Park

Time and date of site visit: 27 April 2010

Land use description	Public open space with play equipments. Scrubland, currently being built on. Conservation area abutting the M1. M1	
Adjacent land uses	Residential, agriculture	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Varied. Tree's screening the M1. Newly planted trees to the south of the development site. Nature area. Large grassed area. Flood relief basin.	
Topography	Flat	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details	Trees screening the M1 block any view towards Groby.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Walking distance to Groby from entrance from Groby Road entrance to the development site and using the footbridge to access right of way in area E.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Residential development.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	The M1, this should be investigated further as part of the full review.	
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	Currently being developed for residential development. Ferndale park has play equipment.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this location have?	Limited impact visually. Built development on Ferndale Park would have a negative impact on the community as it would be the loss of an important recreational facility.	

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Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Ferndale Park offers formal and informal play.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Ferndale Park. Footpath across the development site was closed when site visit took place.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Public right of way from the footbridge over the M1. Ferndale Park is publically accessible.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Walkways around Ferndale Park are of good quality. Public right of way to Groby is poorly signposted.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good use. Dog walkers and children.	
What visible informal uses are there?	Informal area of open space.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Ferndale Park could be allocated as an open space through the LDF process.	

Area J – Taverner Drive and north/south of Station Road

Time and date of site visit: 27 April 2010

Land use description	Informal open space, M1 Flood relief basin and grassland. Community orchard. Allotments. Ratby cooperative band building. Severn Trent facility.	
Adjacent land uses	Agriculture, Residential, sports field.	
Landscape features (high hedgerows etc)	Transmission Towers, mature trees, brook, M1 raised. Fruit trees. Grassland.	
Topography	Flat	
Can more than one settlement be seen from current position?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Due to the M1 being raised cannot see neighbouring settlements of Groby or Glenfield. Kirby Muxloe is visible from Station Road.	
Perception of distance to neighbouring settlements	Walking distance to Kirby Muxloe. Glenfield is 1 ½ miles to Glenfield via Ivanhoe cycle way.	
Does the current green wedge have a strong defensible boundary?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Residential. The green wedge area goes into Blaby District Council's administrative area.	
Does an alternative strong defensible boundary exist?	Yes	<u>No</u>
Details		
Extent of built development within the Green Wedge	M1.	
What effects would built development in the green wedge in this	Impact on the green buffer between Ratby and Kirby Muxloe. Remove a recreational amenity.	

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location have?		
Does this green wedge provide green open space in a predominantly urban environment?	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Area to the north of Station Road. Community orchard and allotments located within the area promoting an active community.	
Does this green wedge provide recreational opportunities? (including footpaths / cycle ways / bridle paths)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Ivanhoe cycle way connecting to Glenfield. Walkway through the area of informal open space and bridge over the brook. Good signage.	
Can this green wedge be accessed by the public?	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Details	Area to the south cannot be accessed. The area to the north of Station Road has good public access.	
Are the footpaths and bridleways of a good quality? (signposted, stiles / gates, surface condition etc)	<u>Yes</u>	No
Details	Sign posts are of a good quality and make the area legible. Walk way through the informal area of open space and the cycle way are of good quality and have appropriate surfacing for the uses.	
Is there any evidence of the level of use on the footpaths / bridleways?	Good level of use of both walkways and cycle ways.	
What visible informal uses are there?	Some informal routes tracked out.	
Could the integrity and quality of the recreational opportunity be maintained if the green wedge boundaries were moved?	Yes.	

APPENDIX E: GLOSSARY

Ancient Woodland

Woodland that is believed to have existed from at least medieval times.

Archaeological Sites

Archaeological remains are important resources often containing valuable information about the past. They are part of the areas heritage and are of great historic value. The Borough contains many sites of archaeological interest ranging from roman coins found off Barwell Lane to possible medieval moated sites near Hall Close, Barwell.

Coalescence

The merging or coming together of separate towns or villages to form a single entity.

Core Strategy

Sets out the long-term spatial vision for the local planning authority's area, the spatial objectives and strategic policies to deliver that vision. The Core Strategy will have the status of a Development Plan Document.

Development Plan Document

Spatial planning documents that are subject to independent examination, and form the Development Plan for a local authority area. They can include a Core Strategy, Site Specific Allocations of land, and other Development Plan Documents, such as generic development control policies. They will all be shown geographically on an adopted Proposals Map. Individual Development Plan Documents or parts of a document can be reviewed independently from other Development Plan Documents.

Green Infrastructure (GI)

A term encompassing all physical resources and natural systems, including ecological, geological and historical assets.

Historic Landscape Characterisation

Framework to aid our understanding of the landscape as a whole and provide us with an important tool that will contribute to the decision making process especially where issues affecting the landscape, both rural and urban are to be considered. Produced by Leicestershire County Council.

Intervisibility

It is possible to see one settlement from the edge of the other.

Intravisibility

It is possible to see more than one settlement from anyone point in the green wedge.

Issues and Options

The preparation of issues and options papers is the first step in preparing the Local Development Framework. They suggest different ways to address the issues facing the borough and help guide the preparation of Local Development Documents. All Issues and Options papers are open for public comment before the Preferred Options stage is reached.

Local Development Document (LDD)

The collective term covering Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning

Documents and the Statement of Community Involvement.

Local Development Framework (LDF)

The name for the portfolio of Local Development Documents. It consists of Development Plan Documents, Supplementary Planning Documents, a Statement of Community Involvement, the Local Development Scheme and Annual Monitoring Reports. Together these documents will provide the framework for delivering the spatial planning strategy for a local authority area and may also include Local Development Orders and Simplified Planning Zones.

Sites and Monument Record (SMR)

Detailed records of the known archaeological investigations (sites or events), remains (monuments), findspots, buried deposits, and areas of archaeological potential of various kinds.

Remote Access

The site provides a valuable, visual green space resource to the community along a number of distinct sightlines and at a distance.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) are protected by the Statute under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and usually managed by Natural England. Their designation provides protection to features of regional/national biodiversity. There are seven Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) within the Borough

Site Specific Allocations

Allocations of areas of land for specific purposes (e.g. housing, green wedge or employment land) or for mixed uses or development to be contained in Development Plan Documents. Policies will identify any specific requirements for individual proposals.

Sustainable Urban Drainage System (SUDs)

Sustainable Urban Drainage System is a sequence of management practices and control structures designed to drain surface water in a more sustainable fashion than some conventional techniques

Urban area

The urban area consists of Hinckley, Burbage, Barwell and Earl Shilton as identified in the Core Strategy