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# **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

## **The sensitivity of areas of pressure**

**Final Report**

**Prepared by LUC**

**September 2017**



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**Project Title:** Landscape Sensitivity Assessment

**Client:** Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

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# INTRODUCTION

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## 1) INTRODUCTION

### BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE OF THE LANDSCAPE SENSITIVITY ASSESSMENT

- 1.1 Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council commissioned LUC in October 2016 to review and update the existing landscape character evidence base, and produce an updated landscape character assessment and landscape sensitivity assessment. The landscape character assessment is presented as a separate report and should be read as context to this landscape sensitivity assessment.
- 1.2 This landscape sensitivity assessment is intended to provide context for policies and proposals within the emerging Local Plan, in particular in relation to built development (both housing and commercial). It is at a landscape character area scale and therefore is intended to provide a general overview of comparative landscape sensitivity around the key settlements based on landscape character. The information within each assessment can be used to identify key sensitivities in each assessment area, and to achieve best integration of built development in each area. It is too broad a scale to make judgements on the appropriateness of specific developments on individual sites (and does not consider specific development proposals where these might exist), but can provide the context for more detailed studies of individual sites.

### HOW TO ASSESS SPECIFIC SITES

- 1.3 This assessment considers sensitivity of relatively broad areas to the 'principle' of development. As well as providing an overall indication of relative landscape sensitivity of different areas, it provides guidance about what sort of locations might be most appropriate for development. This information provides useful context for a more detailed assessment of specific site options. The following questions provide a structure for appraising a specific site within each area:

Which assessment area does the site lie in and what is the sensitivity level for the assessment area?



Are there any indications of which areas would have higher or lower sensitivity and how does the site fit with this?



Would development on the site affect any of the 'key sensitivities'?



Would development on the site be in line with the 'guidance' provided for the area?



How should the development respond to the sensitivities highlighted?

# INTRODUCTION

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## STRUCTURE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.4 This report comprises:
- **Section 1** (this section) which sets out an introduction and background;
  - **Section 2** which presents the methodology; and
  - **Section 3** which presents the results.
- 1.5 This report is supported by the following appendices:
- **Appendix 1** provides a glossary of terms.

# METHODOLOGY

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## 2) METHODOLOGY

### IDENTIFYING THE AREAS FOR ASSESSMENT

- 2.1 A list of key areas for assessment was provided by Hinckley and Bosworth Council, based on existing and future pressures for development in the borough. This resulted in the following areas of pressure focus the assessment:
- Orton on the Hill to Twycross
  - Sheepy Magna & surroundings (north of B5000)
  - Witherley & surroundings (south of B5000)
  - Mira & surroundings
  - Higham on the Hill
  - Hinckley west & north
  - Sketchley
  - Burbage south and east
  - Land south of M69
  - Earl Shilton north and Barwell west
  - Earl Shilton east
  - Desford
  - Ratby
  - Markfield
  - Bosworth Battlefield
- 2.2 The assessment areas are shown in **Figure 2.2** and in more detail at the beginning of each assessment.

### TYPES OF DEVELOPMENT TO BE CONSIDERED

- 2.3 This assessment considers sensitivity to the most likely type of development to come forward in Hinckley and Bosworth, that is:
- Residential development – defined as 2/3 storey properties;
  - Commercial development (small scale) – defined as small-scale office, light industry or small sheds (B1/B2); and
  - Commercial development (large scale) – defined as large scale distribution warehouses and open air storage (B8).
- 2.4 The assessment considers sensitivity to the 'principle' of these development types, without knowing the specific size or location of potential development. Sensitivity ratings relate to field-sized extensions rather than single houses and it should be noted that larger scale development is likely to have a higher sensitivity in landscape terms. Therefore the sensitivity score can only be an overall indication of relative landscape sensitivity. Sensitivity often varies across the area and the evaluation/ landscape sensitivity judgement sections give an indication of higher or lower sensitivity areas.

### APPROACH TO ASSESSING SENSITIVITY

- 2.5 There is currently no published methodology for evaluating the landscape sensitivity of different types of landscape to development. However, the *Landscape Character Assessment Guidance for England and Scotland Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Capacity and Sensitivity*

# METHODOLOGY

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(Scottish Natural Heritage and the former Countryside Agency, 2002) is a discussion paper on landscape sensitivity and capacity and has informed LUC's approaches over the years. The methodology used in this study builds on LUC's considerable experience from previous and on-going studies of a similar nature.

- 2.6 Landscape sensitivity is a measure of the resilience of the landscape to change. *Topic Paper 6: Techniques and Criteria for Judging Sensitivity and Capacity* defines landscape sensitivity to a specific type of change or development as follows:

*'It should be defined in terms of the interactions between the landscape itself, the way that it is perceived and the particular nature of the type of change or development in question.'*

- 2.7 In this study the following definition of landscape sensitivity has been used:

***Landscape sensitivity is the extent to which the character of the landscape or characteristics of the landscape are susceptible to change as a result of introducing a particular type of development, in principle.***

- 2.8 Landscape sensitivity in this study is a relative measurement of the extent to which the character of the landscape is likely to change as a result of proposed development within it.
- 2.9 For example, a higher sensitivity area would likely result in greater adverse impacts on landscape features and character while a lower sensitivity site would likely be more able to accommodate that change without such adverse effects. However, there are always cases where good development can be sensitively accommodated into high sensitivity landscapes, and cases where poor development will result in adverse impacts even in low sensitivity landscapes. The guidance provides information as to how to minimise adverse effects.
- 2.10 It should be noted that the term 'sensitivity' in this study is equivalent to term 'susceptibility' as defined in the Landscape Institute and IEMA's 'Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' (Third Edition).
- 2.11 Landscape and visual sensitivity has been assessed for each 'assessment area' with reference to six criteria, set out in **Table 2.1** overleaf.

**Table 2.1: Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria**

Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria				
<p><b>Physical character</b></p> <p>This considers the shape and scale of the landform, landscape pattern and landscape elements in relation to the scale of potential development. It also considers the presence of landscape features if they are important to landscape character (i.e. the representation of elements which are key characteristics or valued features, with reference to the Landscape Character Assessment) because these would potentially be liable to loss.</p>				
Lower sensitivity		→	Higher sensitivity	
<i>Eq the landscape has smooth, gently undulating or featureless landform; the area has fewer landscape features that are characteristic or valued.</i>		<i>Eq the landscape has an undulating landform and some distinct landform features within it; the area has some landscape features that are characteristic or valued.</i>		<i>Eq the landscapes has dramatic landforms or distinct landform features that contribute positively to landscape character; the area has a high density of landscape features that are characteristic or valued.</i>
<p><b>Settlement form and edge</b></p> <p>This considers the overall settlement form and character of the settlement edge and considers whether development in the assessment area would be in accordance with the general settlement form/ pattern, and how it might affect the existing settlement edge.</p>				
Lower sensitivity		→	Higher sensitivity	
<i>Eq development in the assessment area would have a good relationship with the existing settlement form/ pattern, and could provide the opportunity to improve an existing settlement edge.</i>		<i>Eq development in the assessment area may be slightly at odds with the settlement form/ pattern, and may adversely affect the existing edge to some extent.</i>		<i>Eq Development in the assessment area would have a poor relationship with the existing settlement form/ pattern, and would adversely affect an existing settlement edge (the settlement edge may be historic or distinctive and have an important relationship to the adjacent countryside). The area may provide an important separation between adjacent settlements.</i>



## Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria

### Settlement setting

This considers the extent to which the assessment area contributes to the identity and distinctiveness of a settlement, by way of its character and/or scenic quality, for example by providing an attractive backdrop/ setting to the settlement, or playing an important part in views from a settlement. This also considers the extent to which the area contributes to a perceived gap between settlements (the loss of which would increase coalescence).

Lower sensitivity



Higher sensitivity

*Eg the area does not contribute positively to the setting of the settlement or play a separation role.*

*Eg the area provides some contribution to the setting of the settlement by providing, or plays some part in views from the settlement, or play a role in the perception of a gap between settlements.*

*Eg the area provides an important setting to the settlement by providing an attractive backdrop/ setting to the settlement, or playing an important part in views from the settlement, or an area which plays an important part in the perception of a gap between settlements.*

### Visual character

This considers the visual prominence of the assessment area, reflecting the extent of openness or enclosure in the landscape (due to landform or land cover), and the degree of intervisibility with the surrounding landscape (i.e. the extent to which potential development would be visible). It also considers the skyline character of the area including whether it forms a visually distinctive skyline or an important undeveloped skyline.

Lower sensitivity



Higher sensitivity

*Eg the area is enclosed/ visually contained and/or has a low degree of visibility from surrounding landscapes, and the area does not form a visually distinctive or important undeveloped skyline*

*Eg the area is semi-enclosed or has some enclosed and some open areas. It is likely to have some inter-visibility with surrounding landscapes, and may have some visually distinctive or undeveloped skylines within the area.*

*Eg the area is open and/ or has a high degree of visibility from surrounding landscapes, and/ or the area forms a visually distinctive skyline or an important undeveloped skyline.*

## Landscape and Visual Sensitivity Assessment Criteria

### ***Perceptual qualities***

This considers qualities such as rurality (traditional land uses with few modern, human influences), sense of remoteness or tranquillity. Consistently high scenic value, perceived naturalness, freedom from human activity/disturbance and 'dark skies' would all add to sensitivity in relation to this criterion.

Lower sensitivity



Higher sensitivity

*Eg the area is significantly influenced by development/human activity, where new development would not be out of character.*

*Eg A landscape with some sense of rurality, but with some modern elements and human influences.*

*Eg A tranquil or highly rural landscape, lacking strong intrusive elements. Dark skies and a high perceived degree of rurality/naturalness with few modern human influences. High scenic value.*

### ***Historic character***

This considers the extent to which the landscape has 'time-depth' (a sense of being an historic landscape, with reference to the Historic Landscape Characterisation) and/or the presence of heritage assets that are important to landscape character (i.e. Conservation Areas, Scheduled Monuments, listed buildings or other features listed in the landscape character assessment such as ancient routeways and historic farmsteads).

Lower sensitivity



Higher sensitivity


*Eg A landscape with relatively few historic features important to the character of the area and little time depth (i.e. large intensively farmed fields).*


*Eg A landscape with some visible historic features of importance to character, and a variety of time depths.*

*Eg A landscape with a high density of historic features important to the character of the area and great time depth (i.e. piecemeal enclosure with irregular boundaries, ridge and furrow)*

## Hinckley and Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment

**Figure 2.2: Assessment Areas**

 Hinckley and Bosworth District boundary

 Urban Character Area

1: Burbage

2: Desford

3: Groby

4: Hinckley

5: Markfield

6: Market Bosworth

7: Newbold Verdon

8: Ratby

9: Barwell


10: Earl Shilton

11: Bagworth

12: Barlestone

13: Stoke Golding

14: Thornton

 Landscape Character Area

A - Charnwood Forest Settled Forest Hills

B - Charnwood Fringe Settled Forest Hills

C - Bosworth Parkland

D - Newbold and Desford Rolling Farmland

E - Stoke Golding Rolling Farmland

F - Burbage Common Rolling Farmland

G - Sence Lowlands


H - Twycross Open Farmland


I - Gopsall Parkland


J - Barton Village Farmlands


### Assessment Area


 01. Orton on the Hill to Twycross


 02. Sheepy Magna & Surroundings (north of B5000)


 03. Witherley & Surroundings (south of B5000)


 04. Mira

 05. Higham on the Hill


 06. Hinckley West & North


 07. Sketchley


 08. Burbage South and East


 09. Land south of M69

 10. Earl Shilton north and Barwell west

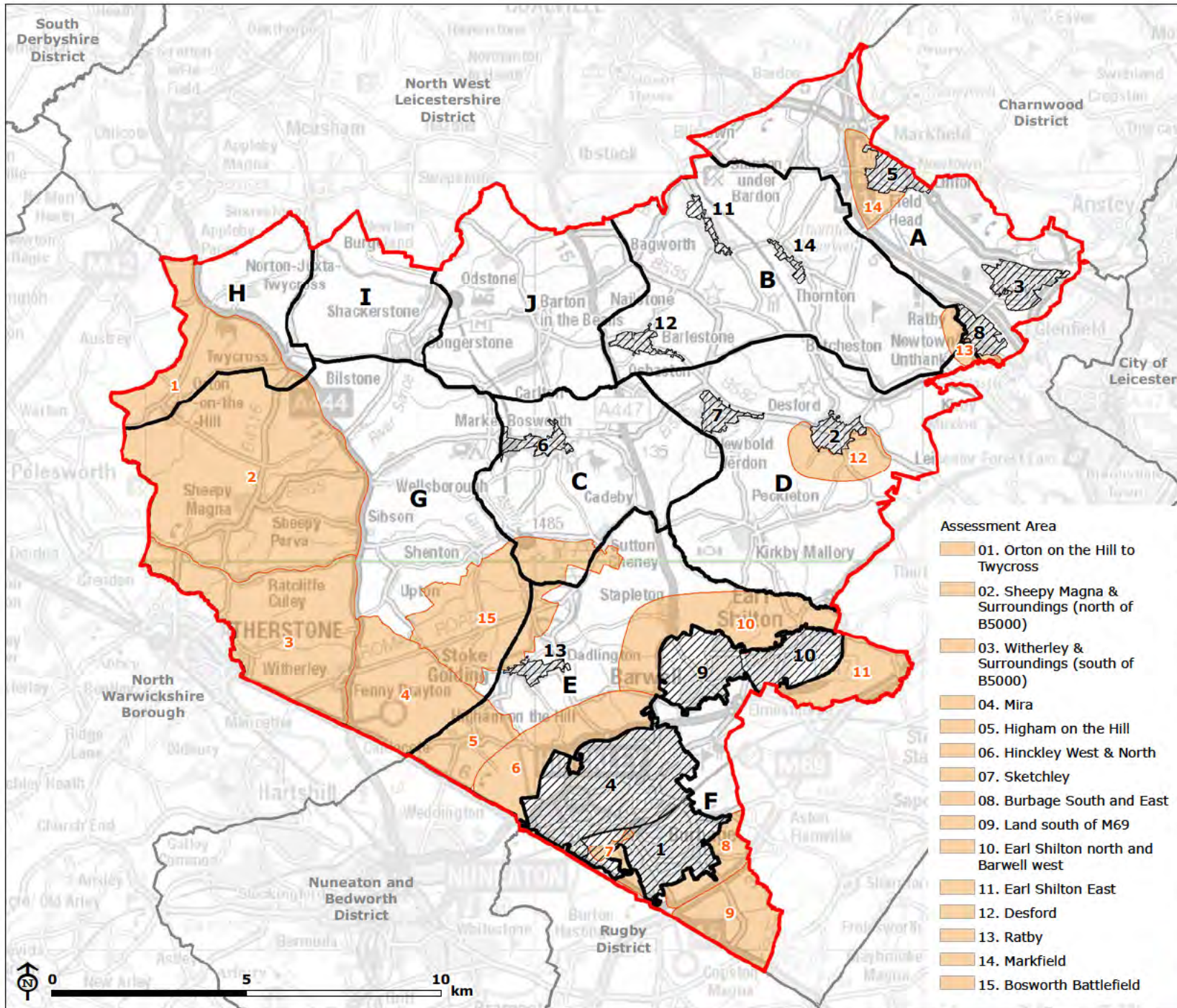
 11. Earl Shilton East

 12. Desford

 13. Ratby

 14. Markfield

 15. Bosworth Battlefield



# METHODOLOGY

## SENSITIVITY JUDGEMENTS

- 2.12 A rating for landscape sensitivity has been provided in relation to each of the development types, according to the five point scale set out below:

**Table 2.2: Sensitivity Rating Definitions**

Sensitivity	Definition
High	The character and quality of the landscape or characteristics of the landscape are highly susceptible to being changed as a result of introducing the development type, in principle.
Medium-high	The character and quality of the landscape or characteristics of the landscape are moderate-highly susceptible to being changed as a result of introducing the development type, in principle
Medium	The character and quality of the landscape or characteristics of the landscape are moderately susceptible to being changed as a result of introducing the development type, in principle
Low-medium	The character and quality of the landscape or characteristics of the landscape are low-moderately susceptible to being changed as a result of introducing the development type, in principle
Low	The character and quality of the landscape or characteristics of the landscape have a low susceptibility to being changed as a result of introducing the development type, in principle

- 2.13 An area rated as having *high* sensitivity may do so because it has a relatively high sensitivity to a number of different criteria but it may also do so because of a particularly high sensitivity to just one criterion.

## PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

- 2.14 Each assessment area starts with a map showing the area being assessed and its relationship with the landscape character areas and key environmental constraints. Following this is a short summary of the landscape character and a couple of representative photos from the area.
- 2.15 This is followed by an evaluation of the assessment area using the sensitivity assessment criteria set out in the methodology, and then an overall evaluation of sensitivity with reference to these criteria, providing an assessment rating on a five point scale. The assessment reports on overall sensitivity for the majority of the area, but also includes details of higher and lower sensitivity areas where this can be determined at this scale.
- 2.16 This is followed by key landscape sensitivities to development which aims to set out those features and characteristics that are most sensitive to built development, and this is followed by guidance for any potential development.

# RESULTS

## 3) RESULTS

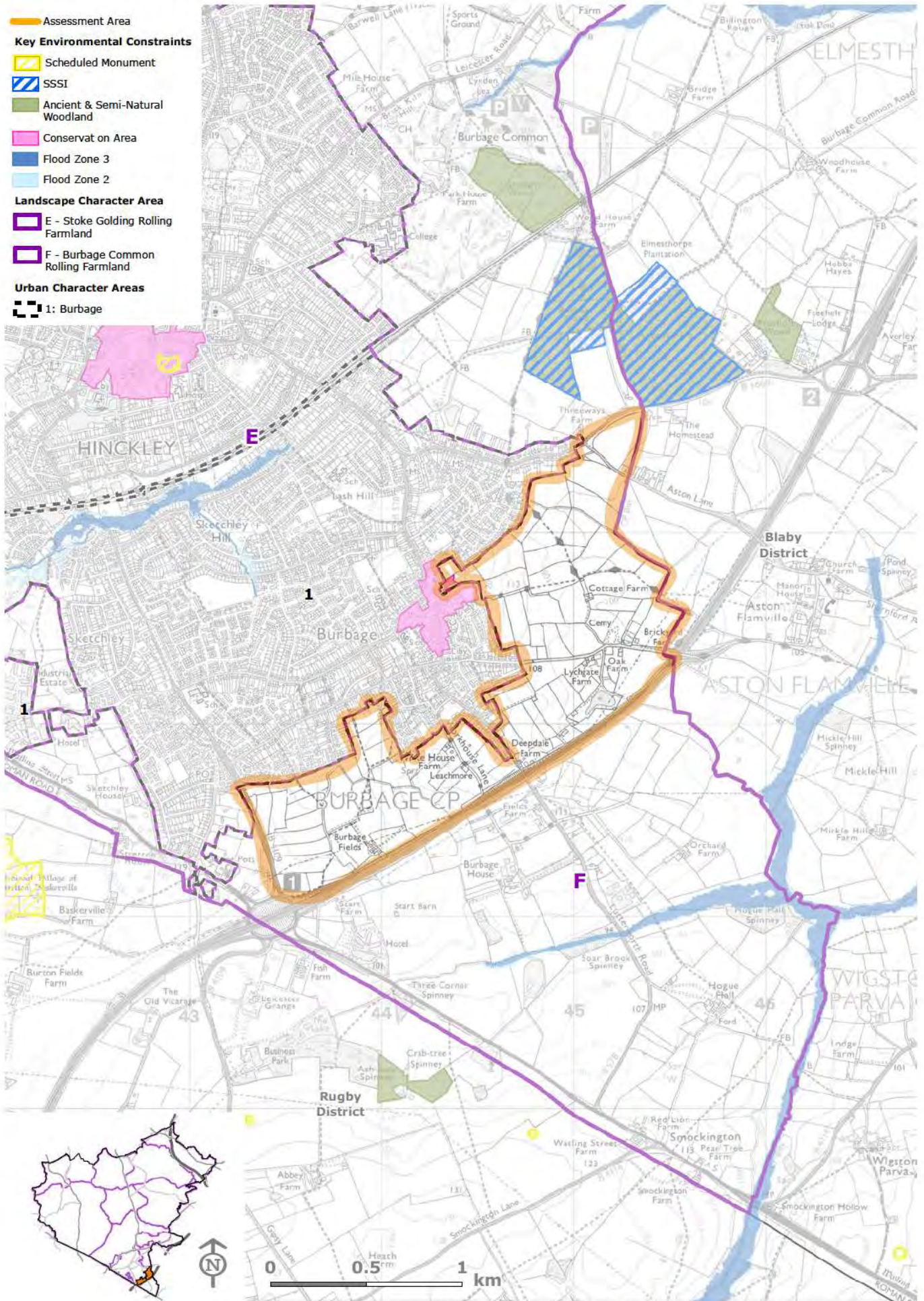
### SUMMARY TABLE OF RESULTS

3.1 The table below gives a summary of the comparative landscape sensitivity of each assessment area for residential and commercial development. It should be noted that this reports on overall sensitivity for the majority of the area but does not include variation of sensitivity within the area.

**Table 3.1 Landscape Sensitivity Assessment Summary**

Area No.	Area Name	Residential development	Commercial development (B1/B2)	Commercial development (B8)
1	Orton on the Hill to Twycross	M-H	M-H	H
2	Sheepy Magna & surroundings (north of B5000)	M	M-H	H
3	Witherley & surroundings (south of B5000)	M	M	M
4	MIRA & surroundings	M	M	M-H
5	Higham on the Hill	M-H	M-H	H
6	Hinckley west & north	M-H	M-H	H
7	Sketchley	L	M	M
8	Burbage south and east	L-M	M	M-H
9	Land south of M69	M-H	M-H	M-H
10	Earl Shilton north and Barwell west	M-H	M-H	H
11	Earl Shilton east	L-M	L-M	M
12	Desford	M	M-H	H
13	Ratby	M	M	H
14	Markfield	M	M-H	H
15	Bosworth Battlefield	H	H	H

# Sensitivity Area 08: Burbage South and East

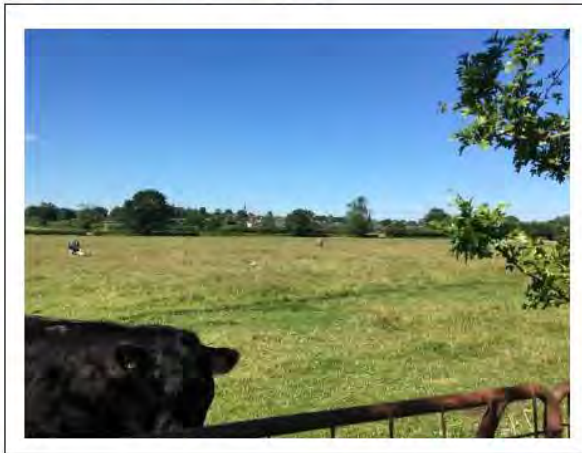


## 8. BURBAGE SOUTH AND EAST

### Summary

This area is situated within LCA F: Burbage Common Rolling Farmland, along the southern edge of Burbage, extending to the M69, and comprising 189.1 hectares of medium to large scale pasture fields. There are a few isolated farmsteads and houses scattered throughout the landscape. These are accessed from a network of rural lanes defined by grass verges and mature hedgerows. Mature trees are also frequent in hedgerows which provide strong definition to the predominantly rectilinear field pattern.

### Representative photographs



### Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character	The area comprises medium to large scale pasture fields in a predominantly rectilinear pattern, bound by low hedgerows. The landform gently slopes away from the settlement edge, with the settlement being evident on the ridge. Trees are typically found within mature hedgerows in field boundaries and along roadsides. Small areas of semi-naturalistic woodland are also present around the settlement and occupying the banks of a small pond at Lychgate Farm which form more sensitive features.	L-M
Settlement form & edge	The settlement of Burbage is situated on higher ground with strong visual connections with the area. To the north, the Conservation Area at the historic centre of Burbage has a direct boundary with this area, with the graveyard and field forming a rural setting for the church. Elsewhere, the edge character is mostly open with tree planting limited to those within private gardens. In some places linear development has extended out from Burbage along roads and small residential closes. More recent residential development has also crossed the established settlement boundary in places and there are further physical connections in the form of adjoining sports pitches.  The M69 running along the southern edge of the area has embankment running along much of its route which is planted with trees and understorey providing a dense visual screen from the motorway and the landscape further south. This has the potential to create a relatively	L-M

## 8. BURBAGE SOUTH AND EAST

	strong and robust edge to the settlement.	
Settlement setting	The landscape contributes to the agricultural rural setting of Burbage and notably for the historic core and the area around St. Catherine's church. However, the M69 interrupts the flow of pasture fields and forms a detracting feature in the landscape within views from the edge of settlement. Small villages, such as Aston Flamville, lie beyond the M69, and as such this area does not form a key rural gap separating settlements.	<b>L-M</b>
Visual character	The hedgerows and hedgerow trees defining the field boundaries provide visual containment and together with the landform prevent much intervisibility with the wider landscape. There is some intervisibility with Burbage which occupies a higher position and forms a developed skyline in views to the north. The church spire is a feature in some views.	<b>L-M</b>
Perceptual qualities	Despite its sparse settlement pattern, the area is influenced by its position adjoining the open settlement edge, with small modern urban edge extensions and suburban land uses falling within the area. Overhead lines and auditory intrusion from the M69 in the south also have an adverse effect on the rural character.	<b>L-M</b>
Historic character	The area lacks any designated heritage assets. The HLC indicates the presence of some fields of small to medium-sized piecemeal type enclosures with at least two s-curved or dog-leg boundaries. These are of historic and visual interest and of higher sensitivity.	<b>M</b>

### Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **low-medium** sensitivity to residential development due to the strong influences of the existing settlement edge and the M69 on the rural agricultural character. Part of the area makes a positive contribution to the setting of Burbage, notably the rural setting to the historic core (Conservation Area). Hedgerows and hedgerow trees demarcate a historic piecemeal enclosure pattern and provide visual containment. The M69 restricts intervisibility with the wider landscape to the south.

The landscape is considered to have overall **medium** sensitivity to small scale commercial development because of the relationship the area has with adjacent residential development and the lack of commercial development in the area. The area is considered to have a **medium-high** sensitivity to large scale development because of the detracting features it would have to the important rural setting.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing 2-3 stories (C3)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>
Commercial development Small scale (B1/B2)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>
Commercial development Large scale (B8)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>



## 8. BURBAGE SOUTH AND EAST

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### Key sensitivities and values

- Low hedgerows to field boundaries reflecting the post-medieval field pattern and form part of the overall ecological network.
- The semi-rural character of the area and its role as the setting to Burbage historic core.
- Woodland spinneys, streams and small water bodies in the area around Lutterworth Road provide ecological interest.

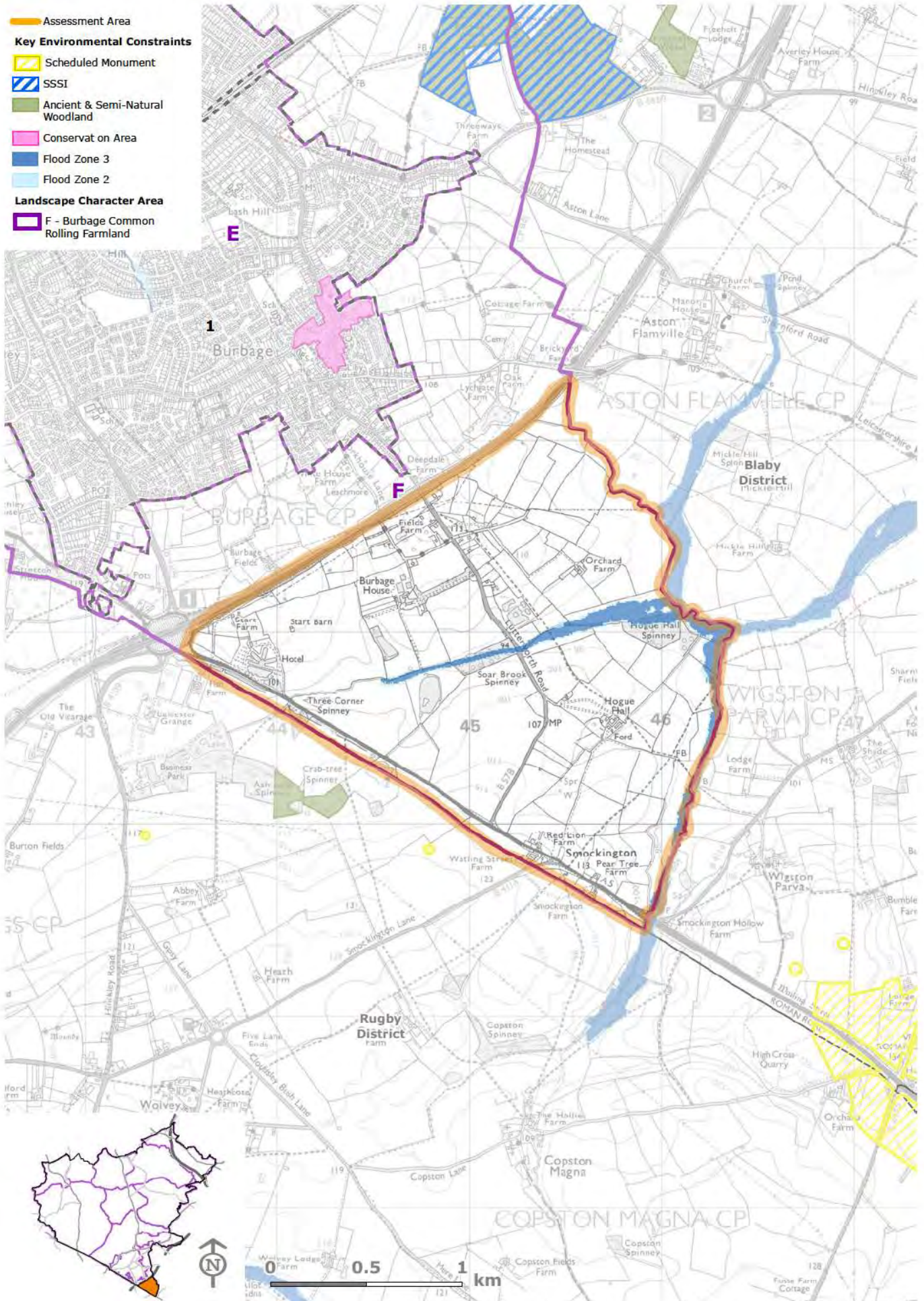
### Guidance

Any new development should:

- Seek to avoid development on the higher ridge top area adjacent to the cemetery which forms the immediate rural setting to the historic core of Burbage – and maintain this area as a rural green wedge.
- Plan for successful integration of development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of appropriate materials and landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Seek to retain historic field patterns where distinctive s-shaped or dog-leg boundaries remain.
- Retain the pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and incorporate further buffer planting to major transport corridors and new development.
- Promote opportunities to maintain and enhance the network of rights of way and consider opportunities to create and promote an integrated green infrastructure network around the Burbage, Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton urban edge.
- Protect localised areas that retain a natural character, notably the small areas of semi-natural woodland, plus the streams and small waterbodies.

# Sensitivity Area 09: Land south of M69

- Assessment Area
- Key Environmental Constraints**
- Scheduled Monument
- SSSI
- Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodland
- Conservaton Area
- Flood Zone 3
- Flood Zone 2
- Landscape Character Area**
- F - Burbage Common Rolling Farmland



## 9. LAND SOUTH OF M69

### Summary

This area is located within LCA F: Burbage Common Rolling Farmland, to the south of Burbage extending from the M69, to the administrative boundary with Blaby District. It comprises 405.4 hectares of predominantly medium to large scale arable fields forming an area of undulating farmland. There is little in terms of development within the area with a small number of farms concentrated along Lutterworth Road which bisects the area from north to south, plus development associated with the M69 junction to the west. Woodland spinneys, streams and small waterbodies are also common, including the Soar Brook.

### Representative photographs



### Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character	The area has an undulating landform influenced by small streams which cut across the landform. It is characterised by large scale arable fields defined by low hedgerows providing a well-defined and intact field pattern. Field ponds are common around farmsteads and small spinneys and copses interspersed throughout the landscape contribute to the strong rural character.	<b>M-H</b>
Settlement form & edge	The area is separated from the built edge of Burbage by the M69 and forms a large area of farmland; there is therefore a limited relationship with the existing settlement.  In the west of the area alongside the M69 junction there is a small area of hotel development which has a more urban character.	<b>M-H</b>
Settlement setting	The landscape provides an agricultural setting to Burbage with its characteristic features including large scale arable fields, sparse settlement and spinneys along small streams. It is located a short distance from the settlement so plays a minimal role in views from the built edge, although a number of key transport routes into Burbage pass through or close to the area. It also forms a large expanse of open land which contributes to the wider separation between Burbage and small villages in Blaby district.	<b>M-H</b>

## 9. LAND SOUTH OF M69

Visual character	The large scale fields and undulating landform result in an open character with long sweeping views over the surrounding landscape, particularly from the more elevated land in the south. However, tree planting in and around the farmsteads along Lutterworth Road provide some localised visual containment near to the M69.	<b>M-H</b>
Perceptual qualities	Although the M69 and A5 run along the northern and western boundaries respectively, the area has a strong rural character with a relative sense of tranquillity. The motorway is largely in cutting and is heavily treed for much of its route which limits its influence over the wider landscape. There is however some views of traffic passing along the A5 which introduces movement and noise into the landscape. There is also some noise intrusion from the adjacent motorway junction. The hotel development around the junction also creates a more urban character.	<b>M</b>
Historic character	The former north and south lodges to Burbage House and the milepost along Lutterworth Road are Grade II listed features within the area. The HLC indicates the presence of some fields of small to medium sized piecemeal type enclosures with at least two s-curved or dog-leg boundaries which are still evident in the north of the area. It also highlights the area around Burbage House as a park and garden which contains intact parkland features in the form of designed ponds, specimen trees and sheep grazing. These surviving features are the most sensitive in terms of historic character.	<b>M</b>

### Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The landscape is considered to have overall **medium-high** sensitivity to residential and commercial development due to the strong rural character with intact historic landscape features which is detached from existing settlement and creates separation between Burbage and the smaller villages within Blaby District.

Despite its minor urbanising influences from the A5 and lesser so, the M69, it has a strong separation from the settlement and has wide intervisibility with the surrounding landscape.

Development in this area would 'leapfrog' the M69 and be dissociated with the existing settlement form. This would require a carefully planned new development with a separate identity to Hinckley and Burbage.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Residential housing 2-3 stories (C3)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development Small scale (B1/B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development Large scale (B8)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

## 9. LAND SOUTH OF M69

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### Key sensitivities and values

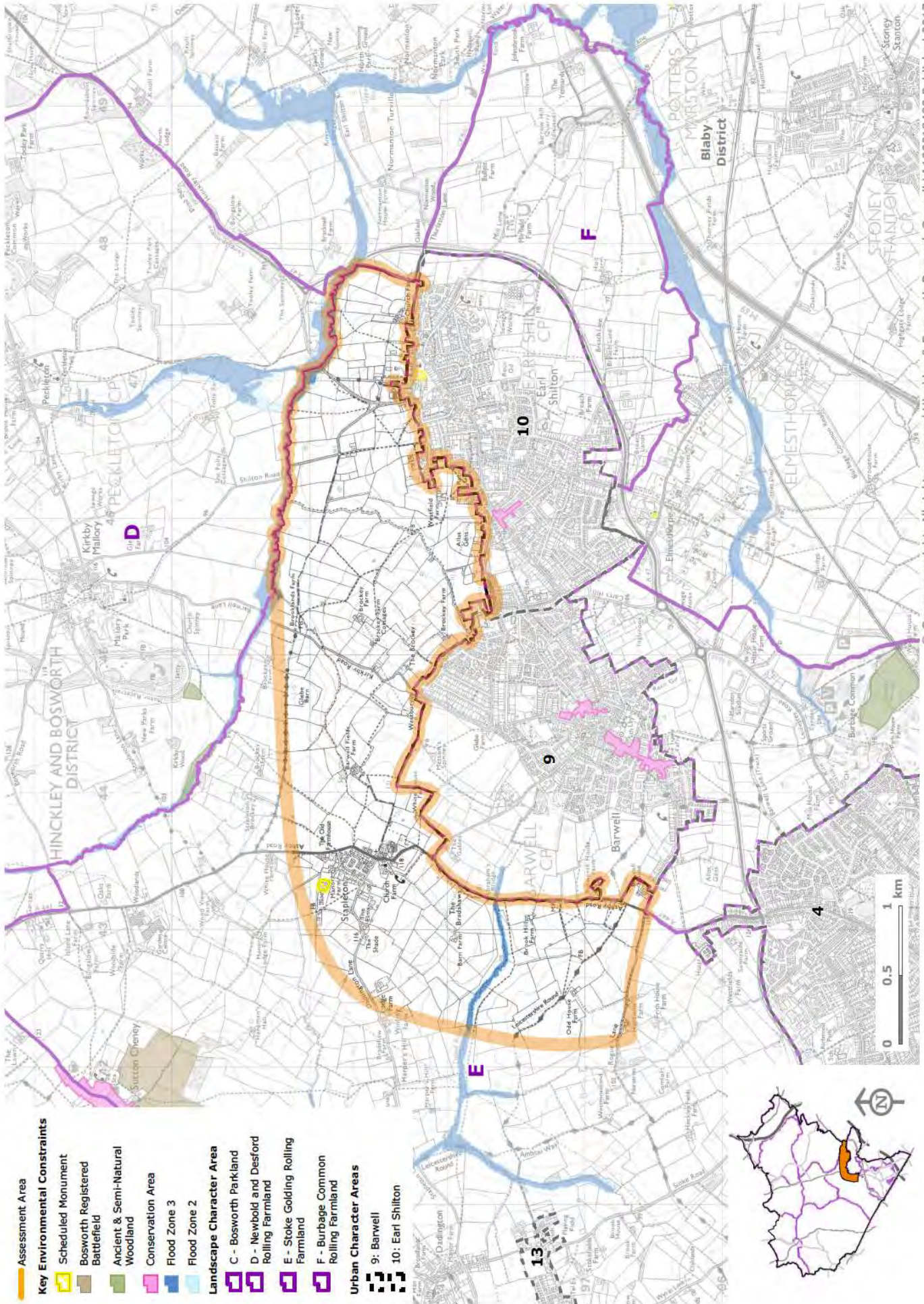
- The strong and intact rural character of the area.
- The lack of connection to the existing settlement of Burbage and separation by the M69.
- The long distance and wide views across open expanses of rolling farmland.
- Low hedgerows to field boundaries reflecting the post-medieval field pattern and forming part of the overall ecological network.
- Field ponds, specimen trees and rectilinear pasture fields reflecting the historic parkland and providing visual amenity.
- Isolated farmsteads scattered through the farmed landscape reflecting the agricultural origins.
- Woodland spinneys, streams and small water bodies in the area around Lutterworth Road provide ecological interest.

### Guidance

Any new development should:

- Consider the importance of existing levels of landscape visibility in siting and design of new development and incorporate screening to existing and potential future visual detractors where appropriate and ensure any new built development is well-integrated into the landscape.
- Seek to retain historic field patterns and conserve and enhance the character of the historic parkland in and around Burbage House.
- Retain the pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and incorporate further buffer planting to major transport corridors.
- Maintain the separate identity of Burbage.
- Consider opportunities to create and promote an integrated green infrastructure network around the Burbage, Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton urban edge.

# Sensitivity Area 10: Earl Shilton north and Barwell west



## 10. EARL SHILTON NORTH AND BARWELL WEST

### Summary

This assessment area is located within LCA E: Stoke Golding Rolling Farmland to the north of Earl Shilton and wraps around the west of Barwell. It comprises 720.6 hectares of small to medium scale rectilinear fields divided by low hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. It covers the small rectilinear village of Stapleton which includes a Scheduled Monument moated site. Many isolated farms buildings are scattered throughout the landscape, whilst the River Tweed and small streams flow through the lower, flatter land to the north.

Land to accommodate a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) is allocated to the west of Barwell and the A447. The SUE is allocated as part of the Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan DPD (adopted September 2014) which provides a concept masterplan. This has been used to inform this assessment.

### Representative photographs



### Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character	The Tweed River and its tributaries flow through the area which creates an undulating landform that generally slopes away from the settlement edge. The area comprises a simple pattern of small to medium mixed arable and pasture fields divided by low hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees, and occasional woodland clumps along the watercourses.	<b>M-H</b>
Settlement form & edge	<p>The merged settlements of Earl Shilton and Barwell occupy an elevated ridgeline to the south of the assessment area. The northern settlement edge of Earl Shilton is closely associated with the contours of higher ground and has limited tree planting which creates a sense of openness, with the church a prominent feature. Sports playing fields and allotment gardens located to the north-east of Earl Shilton create a blurring of the settlement boundary.</p> <p>The Barwell SUE will create a stronger, more robust boundary to the west of Barwell which will be largely defined by the A447 Ashby Road and landscape enhancements to existing hedgerows forming field boundaries.</p>	<b>M</b>

## 10. EARL SHILTON NORTH AND BARWELL WEST

Settlement setting	<p>The area has a rural character, with low hedgerows and hedgerow trees combining with smaller, more naturalistic areas around the watercourses to provide a simple and unified landscape. This scenic quality contributes to the attractive setting of the settlements from the many public footpaths that transect the area and country lanes leading into the settlement. Views to the countryside from the north-east of Barwell (e.g. from Kirkby Road) and from the north-eastern edge of Earl Shilton (from the area of the church and castle site) are important elements of their rural settings.</p> <p>There are smaller areas to the north of the Earl Shilton that are less characteristic of the wider agricultural landscape and so contribute less to the settlement setting.</p>	<b>M-H</b>
Visual character	<p>The low hedgerows forming the field boundaries allow for long wide views across the agricultural landscape to a wooded skyline contributing to a rural backdrop. In views towards the settlement, church spires form landmarks on an uncluttered skyline. Views are more transient where mature hedgerow trees are common close to the settlement edge and Stapleton. Undulations in landform reinforce the sense of openness although swathes of woodland along watercourses provide some localised enclosure, particularly to the west of Barwell.</p>	<b>M-H</b>
Perceptual qualities	<p>The area is tranquil and sparsely settled with only isolated farmsteads and the small rural community of Stapleton providing built development in the landscape. Local variations in landform and mature vegetation within field boundaries also contribute a strong sense of rurality and sense of remoteness.</p>	<b>M-H</b>
Historic character	<p>The historic features are concentrated in and around Stapleton with the Grade II* listed Church of St Martin in the centre of the village having origins dating back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. There are also a small number of farmhouses and stables around the village including one associated with the church that is Grade II listed. The moated site in the north survives in good condition and was originally one of two in the locality. The island has associations with the development of the nearby manor house.</p> <p>The HLC identifies some of the farmland as post medieval piecemeal and planned enclosure. The piecemeal enclosure is recognised by its small to medium sized irregular fields with at least two boundaries being s-curve or dog leg, whilst the planned enclosure demonstrates small or large field with geometric boundaries.</p>	<b>M</b>

### Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The assessment area is considered to have overall **medium-high** sensitivity to residential and commercial development and **high** sensitivity to larger commercial development, due to the rural and relatively tranquil character and the great intervisibility with the wider countryside from local highpoints. The settlement edge is relatively open with some small urbanising land uses located adjacent however, the simple pattern of agricultural fields provides an attractive setting to the settlement with great views experienced from the many public footpaths that extend from the built edge and connect with neighbouring towns and villages. Some historic features still remain in the landscape and contribute to the character of the area.



## 10. EARL SHILTON NORTH AND BARWELL WEST

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Residential housing 2-3 stories (C3)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development Small scale (B1/B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development Large scale (B8)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

### Key sensitivities and values

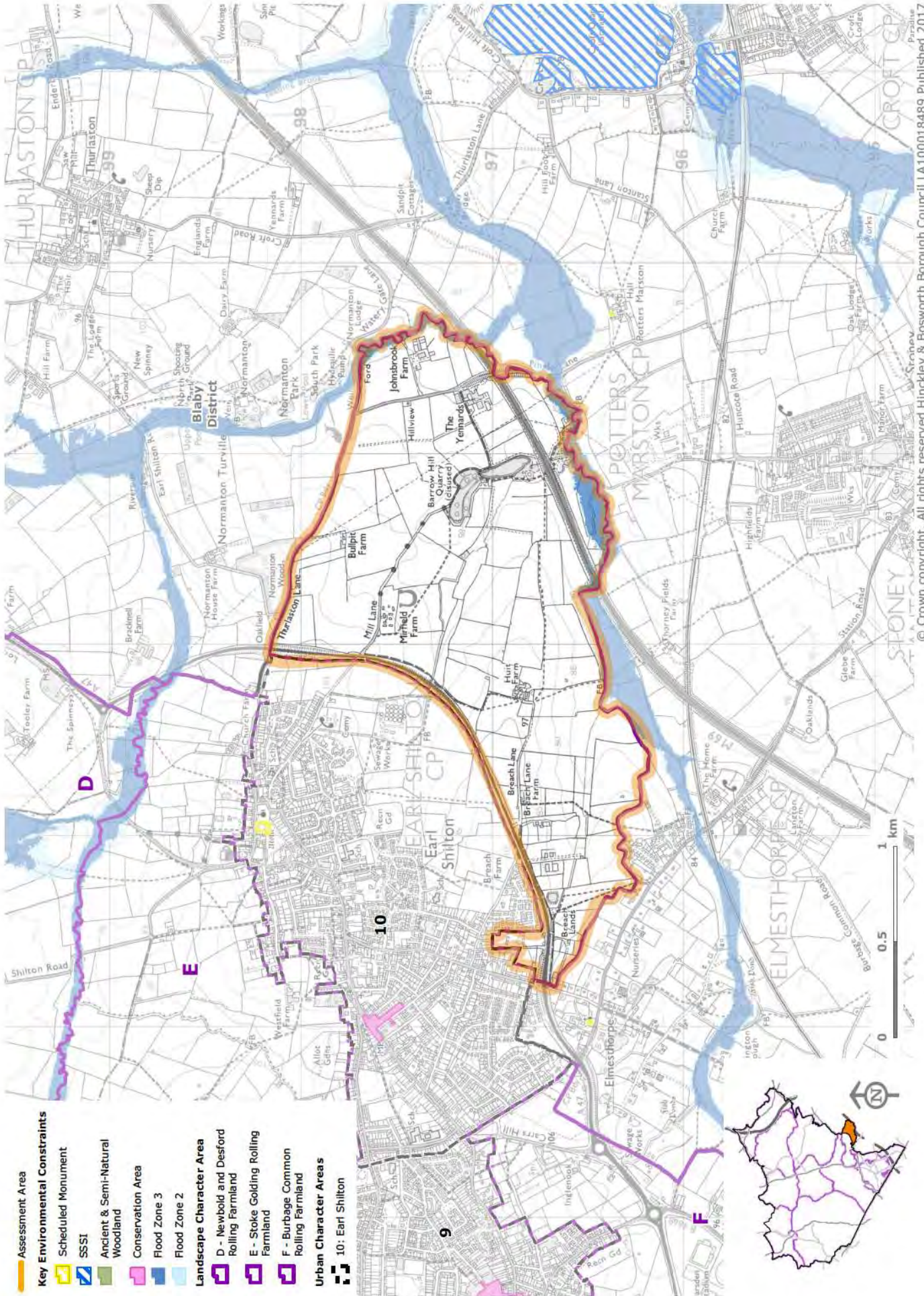
- The rural and sparsely settled character of the landscape with a relative sense of tranquillity.
- Low hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees define historic field patterns and form part of the overall ecological network.
- The naturalistic areas of deciduous woodland along the watercourses provide ecological linkages to the wider landscape and are important because of the relatively low level of woodland.
- The uninterrupted views over undulating farmland which contribute to the high scenic quality and attractive setting to Earl Shilton and Barwell.
- Uncluttered rural views of church spires within the settlement contribute to the sense of place.
- Footpaths including the Leicestershire round provide recreational connections to the wider landscape and neighbouring villages.

### Guidance

Any new development should:

- Seek opportunities to maintain the rural character of the landscape and, where possible, conserve rural views and the setting of settlement.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Seek to retain the pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees where possible.
- Protect localised areas that retain a natural character and encourage tree planting to replace mature/veteran trees as they begin to deplete.
- Seek to conserve rural views and maintain views to church spires and towers on the wooded skyline.
- Aim to maintain and enhance historic assets and their surrounding environment.
- Seek to maintain and enhance the recreational assets including rights of way network.
- Consider opportunities to create and promote an integrated green infrastructure network linking with the waterways with the urban area.

# Sensitivity Area 11: Earl Shilton East



## 11. EARL SHILTON EAST

### Summary

Located within LCA F: Burbage Common Rolling Farmland, this area extends to the east of Earl Shilton, mainly between the A47 and the M69, and comprises 335.9 hectares of predominantly large scale arable fields. There are occasional farm buildings interspersed through the landscape while tree planting is limited to woodland around the disused Barrow Hill Quarry. It lies adjacent to land allocated to accommodate a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE), west of the A47. The SUE is allocated as part of the Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan DPD (adopted September 2014) which provides a concept masterplan. This has been used to inform this assessment.

### Representative photographs



### Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character	This area comprises large scale agricultural fields arranged in a rectilinear pattern defined by low hedgerows, and is situated on rolling farmland gently sloping away from the settlement edge. Tree planting is limited to a small number of mature trees present in hedgerows around the farms and a copse around the small lake at the former Barrow Hill Quarry. These form sensitive features in the landscape.	<b>L</b>
Settlement form & edge	The illustrative masterplan of the Earl Shilton and Barwell Area Action Plan indicates development extending as far east to the A47 with a considerable landscape buffer of tree planting to the west of the road. This has been considered during this assessment.  The settlement of Earl Shilton occupies a ridgetop position and has expanded from a linear form defined by primary access routes. The A47 will define the settlement edge (following construction of the SUE) and the road will therefore form a distinct edge to the east and south of the settlement. Lengths of dense tree planting will run along the roadside and combine with embankments in the north and in the west around Breach Lane, to provide a strong degree of containment. The containment provided by the road and separation from the wider rural landscape gives this area a higher sensitivity.	<b>M-H</b>

## 11. EARL SHILTON EAST

Settlement setting	The landscape provides the rural surroundings to Earl Shilton, with characteristic features including sparse settlement and large scale arable fields. It also contributes to the wider separation between small villages in the district of Blaby such as Stoney Stanton. The M69 does however disrupt the flow of agricultural fields and forms a considerable detracting feature in the landscape. The landscape extends a considerable distance from the existing edge of Earl Shilton and is separated from the town by the A47, although there is some intervisibility with the higher lying land in Earl Shilton and the farmland in the north.	<b>L-M</b>
Visual character	The large fields in this area have an open character with long sweeping views across rolling farmland and hence greater sensitivity. The land to west of the A47 is higher lying and therefore has greater intervisibility with the surrounding landscape compared to the lower slopes around the M69 which are partially contained by roadside buffer planting.	<b>M-H</b>
Perceptual qualities	The area has a semi-rural character – it is an intensively managed agricultural landscape with limited connection to existing settlement. Large scale infrastructure includes the A47 to the east and the M69 in the west, which introduce movement and noise and together with pylons which punctuate the skyline in the east, are detracting features in the rural landscape.	<b>M</b>
Historic character	The area does not contain any designated heritage assets. The HLC indicates the presence of some fields of small to medium sized piecemeal type enclosures with at least two s-curved or dog-leg boundaries. These are of historic and visual interest and are of higher sensitivity. In general, fields are much larger scale where boundaries have been lost to farming intensification.	<b>L-M</b>

### Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

Although the well-treed A47 will provide a clearly defined edge to Earl Shilton, development and other major infrastructure has a strong influence over the area. The open expanse of farmland allows for intervisibility with the wider landscape but is punctuated by pylons and dissected by the M69. Intensive farming also reduces the landscape sensitivity. Overall, the landscape has a **low to medium** sensitivity to residential housing and commercial developments and a **medium** sensitivity to large scale commercial development. Any new development should be carefully planned and could be located within the existing settlement form, potentially associated with Elmesthorpe, or as a new development separate to Earl Shilton with its own centre and unique identity.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing 2-3 stories (C3)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>
Commercial development Small scale (B1/B2)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>
Commercial development Large scale (B8)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>

## 11. EARL SHILTON EAST

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### Key sensitivities and values

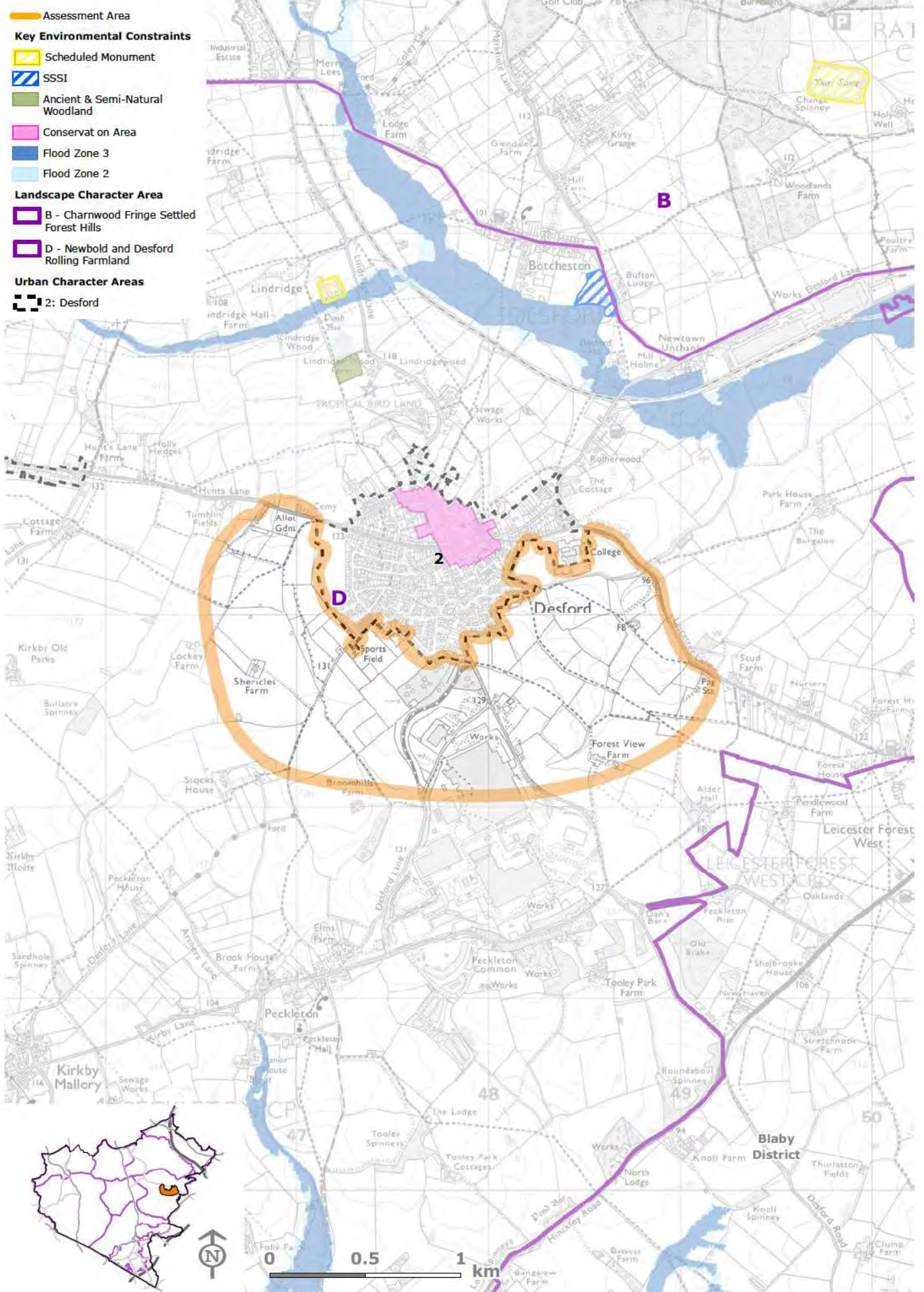
- The lack of connection to the existing settlement of Earl Shilton and separation by the A47. If development extended across the A47, it would potentially overwhelm the size of the existing market towns of Earl Shilton and Barwell.
- Low hedgerows to field boundaries reflecting the post-medieval field pattern and forming part of the overall ecological network.
- The semi-rural character of the area.
- The long distance, wide views across open expanses of rolling farmland.
- Isolated farmsteads scattered throughout the farmland landscape reflecting the agricultural origins.
- Woodland and wetland habitats associated with Barrow Hill Quarry and its fishing and recreational uses, as well as the minor stream corridors that cross this area (Soar Brook).

### Guidance

Any new development should:

- Consider the extensive visibility of the area in siting and design of new development and incorporate screening to existing visual detractors where appropriate and ensure any new built development is well-integrated into the landscape.
- Seek to retain historic field patterns where distinctive s-shaped or dog-leg boundaries remain.
- Retain the pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and incorporate further planting of trees and vegetation.
- Maintain the separate identity of Earl Shilton and prevent gradual incremental extension eastwards, considering opportunity for a carefully planned new development with its own separate identity.
- Seek to maintain and enhance the network of rights of way and consider opportunities to create and promote an integrated green infrastructure network around the Burbage, Hinckley, Barwell and Earl Shilton urban edge.
- Conserve and enhance woodland and wetland habitats associated with Barrow Hill Quarry.

# Sensitivity Area 12: Desford



## 12. DESFORD

### Summary

This assessment area is located to the south of Desford within LCA D: Newbold and Desford Rolling Farmland, and wraps around the eastern and western edge of the village. It comprises 233.2 hectares of medium to large scale arable fields defined by hedgerows with small linear woodland copses containing built development around the Caterpillar Works to the south and Bosworth Community College to the north east. A modern residential development at The Paddocks, west of Desford is located in the north of the area extending along Hunts Lane although the assessment area is mostly undeveloped and crossed by few roads, connecting to Desford.

### Representative photographs



### Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character	A gently rolling landform sloping away from the adjacent settlement edge with small streams in the east flowing along the lower-lying land towards Rothley Brook beyond. Medium to large arable fields characterise the landscape and are arranged in a rectilinear pattern defined by maintained hedgerows. Tree cover is concentrated between Desford and the Caterpillar Works with small woodland copses and occasional hedgerow trees scattered throughout.	<b>M</b>
Settlement form & edge	Desford is a compact nucleated settlement located on steeply sloping land. The back gardens of adjacent residential properties with low hedgerows characterise much of the settlement boundary with limited tree planting which creates a relatively open and irregular edge. A primary school and community college adjoin the urban edge, and together with the large scale Caterpillar Works to the south slightly obscures the defined settlement form.	<b>M</b>
Settlement setting	The area has a relatively strong rural character with rolling arable fields defined by low hedgerows playing an important part in views from the public footpaths and rural lanes that extend from the settlement edge. Despite the location of the Caterpillar works to the south of the settlement, the area maintains a rural setting.	<b>M</b>

## 12. DESFORD

Visual character	<p>There are open views where hedgerows have been removed which give an impression of a large scale landscape. Local high points allow for great intervisibility with the wider landscape, where long distance views can be obtained across undulating farmland punctuated only by small woodland copses and some mature hedgerow trees.</p> <p>Some buildings at the Caterpillar Works can be seen on the skyline in local views although woodland and mature tree planting around the boundary generally contains the development from the wider views.</p>	<b>M-H</b>
Perceptual qualities	<p>The area is rural and generally lacks development with the exception of the Caterpillar Works to the south of Desford, however woodland and tree planting around the boundaries limit its urbanising influence. The large scale field pattern and limited woodland cover also create a sense of openness with big skies.</p>	<b>M</b>
Historic character	<p>The area does not contain any designated heritage assets.</p> <p>The HLC highlights much of the land as late post medieval planned enclosure which is identified by small or large fields with geometric boundaries. Post medieval piecemeal enclosure also occupies a small area to the north east, which can be seen in small to medium sized irregular fields with at least two boundaries being of s-curve or dog leg form.</p>	<b>L-M</b>

### Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The assessment area is considered to have overall **medium** sensitivity to residential development due to the rural character with limited urbanising influences so that it provides an attractive setting to the settlement of Desford. Historic field systems remain largely intact in the area; the field pattern is generally smaller scale near to the settlement edge and the limited tree planting in adjacent back gardens results in a stronger relationship between existing residential development and the assessment area.

The landscape is considered to have overall **medium-high** sensitivity to small-scale commercial and **high** sensitivity to large-scale commercial development because despite the Caterpillar Works in the south, development is generally well-contained by mature woodland and tree planting. The area is otherwise sparsely settled with wide intervisibility with the wider landscape. Views are typically long ranging and rural with little influence from built development. Mature woodland and trees in the area are limited to small woodland copses and occasional hedgerow trees which constrains the potential to provide any large scale mitigation planting.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing 2-3 stories (C3)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development Small scale (B1/B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development Large scale (B8)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H



## 12. DESFORD

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### Key sensitivities and values

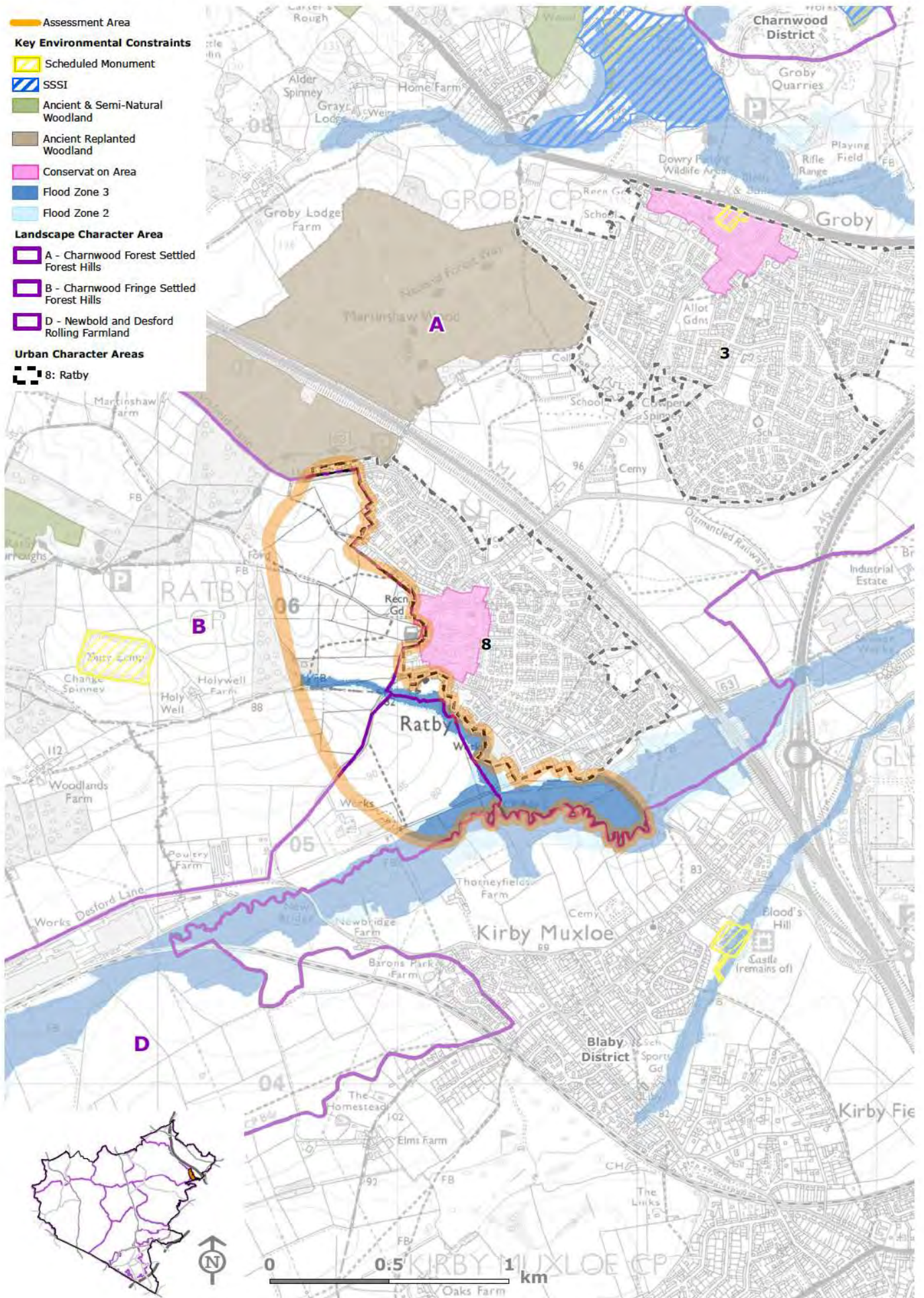
- The rural and sparsely settled character of the landscape with a relative sense of tranquillity.
- Long distance views from relatively elevated areas creates a high scenic quality and adds to the visual amenity.
- Role of the landscape as the rural setting to Desford.
- Low hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees define historic field patterns and form part of the overall ecological network.

### Guidance

Any new development should:

- Seek opportunities to maintain the rural character of the landscape and, where possible, conserve rural views and the setting of settlement.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Seek to retain the pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and encourage the use of traditional Midlands-style hedgelaying for management.
- Seek to protect localised areas that retain a natural character and encourage tree planting to replace mature/veteran trees as they begin to deplete.
- Aim to maintain and enhance the recreational assets including rights of way network.
- Consider opportunities to create and promote an integrated green infrastructure network linking the waterways with the urban area.

# Sensitivity Area 13: Ratby



## 13. RATBY

### Summary

This assessment area extends along the south western edge of Ratby, spanning across LCA B: Charnwood Fringe and LCA D: Newbold and Desford Rolling Farmland. It comprises 84.4 hectares of arable and pasture farmland defined by hedgerows and tree belts and is predominantly undeveloped, crossed by a small number of roads.

### Representative photographs



### Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character	An elevated and undulating valley landform sloping down to a small stream that flows towards Rothley Brook and its associated tributaries which is a distinctive feature. The area is characterised by small to medium rectilinear fields, defined by hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees with some linear swathes of woodland. Mature trees can also be found along the watercourses that run through the area and define the southern edge.	<b>M-H</b>
Settlement form & edge	Ratby is a small hilltop settlement which has expanded beyond its original core in a linear fashion. There are small areas of residential and commercial development abutting the assessment area which creates an irregular settlement edge. The area to the north including the recreation ground has a relatively strong relationship with the settlement although the settlement is generally enclosed by mature tree planting within field boundaries.	<b>M</b>
Settlement setting	The area creates a relatively strong rural setting to the historic core of Ratby (Conservation Area) with mature trees lining roadsides and watercourses providing a wooded transition from the agricultural fields in the west. The semi natural areas of woodland and tree planting punctuating farmland also contribute to the scenic quality of the area.	<b>M-H</b>
Visual character	The well-treed field boundaries delineating a small scale field pattern restrict intervisibility with the wider landscape in the north. Despite the land being more elevated, views are cut short by woodland in and	<b>M</b>

### 13. RATBY

	<p>around Martinshaw Wood which provides strong visual containment.</p> <p>In the south, long distance and panoramic views can be obtained across open farmland with Kirby Muxloe occupying the lower slopes of the adjacent valley side and sitting below a well wooded skyline.</p>	
Perceptual qualities	The landscape is predominantly rural with arable fields defined by natural and semi natural field boundaries. There are urbanising influences from the open settlement edge in the north and views to overhead pylons as well as noise intrusion from the nearby motorway.	<b>M</b>
Historic character	<p>The area does not contain any designated features of historic interest although the Ratby Conservation Area covers the historic core of the village and shares its boundary with the assessment area.</p> <p>The HLC highlights small areas of farmland in the north as post medieval field systems comprising piecemeal and planned enclosure. The piecemeal enclosure is evident in the small to medium sized irregular fields with at least two s-curve or dog leg boundaries, whilst the planned enclosure demonstrates small or large fields with geometric boundaries.</p>	<b>L-M</b>

#### Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

Despite its intact rural character providing an attractive setting to the settlement, the assessment area is considered to have overall **medium** sensitivity to residential and commercial development due to the relationship it has with built development and the visual containment from existing woodland in the north.

The landscape is considered to have overall **high** sensitivity to large scale commercial development because of the small to medium scale field pattern and the wider intervisibility to the south.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing 2-3 stories (C3)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>
Commercial development Small scale (B1/B2)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>
Commercial development Large scale (B8)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>

#### Key sensitivities and values

- The rural and undeveloped character of the landscape with a relative sense of tranquillity.
- Mature hedgerows and trees define historic field patterns and form part of the overall ecological network.
- Semi-improved grasslands and lowland meadow habitats which are particularly valued in the area due to the relative scarcity of biodiversity assets.
- Long distance and panoramic views from the elevated land creates a high scenic quality and attractive setting to Ratby.

## 13. RATBY

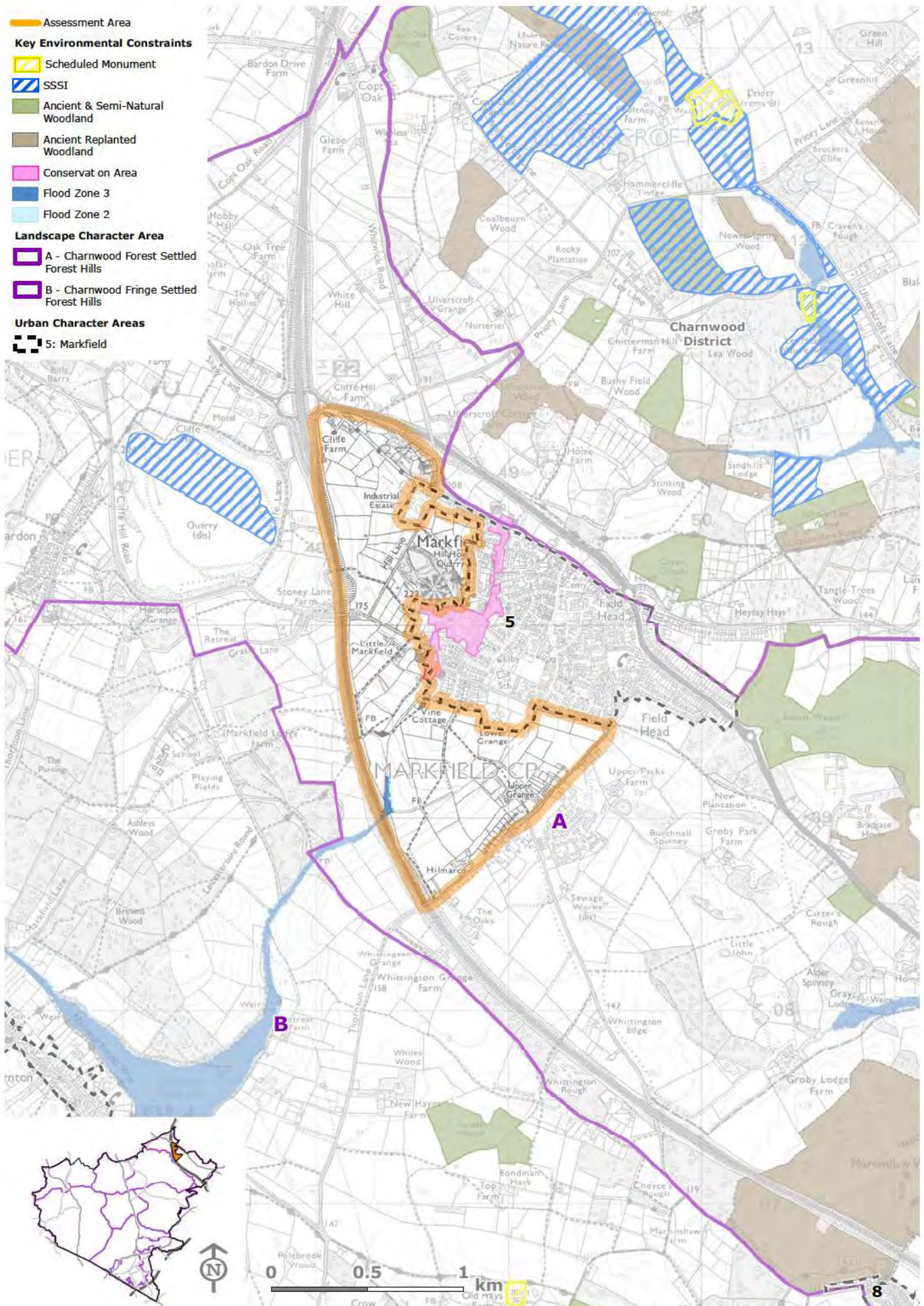
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### Guidance

Any new development should:

- Seek opportunities to maintain the rural character of the landscape and, where possible, conserve rural views and the setting of settlement.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Seek to retain the historic pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees where possible.
- Conserve and enhance the long, panoramic views from higher ground of uncluttered skylines and avoid vertically prominent elements within any new development.
- Conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the landscape and its mosaic of habitats.
- Support the vision of the National Forest Strategy and promote regeneration and enhancement of tree cover through establishment of linear copses and hedgerow trees within field boundaries and around urbanising influences.
- Seek to maintain and enhance recreational assets including the rights of way network.
- Consider opportunities to create and promote an integrated green infrastructure network linking with the waterways and the urban area.

# Sensitivity Area 14: Markfield



## 14. MARKFIELD

### Summary

This assessment area extends from the west of Markfield up to the M1 and is situated within LCA A: Charnwood Forest. It wraps around the northern and southern settlement edge and comprises 157.1 hectares of pasture fields divided by hedgerows with frequent mature hedgerow trees. Small wooded copses are found on the most elevated land and a linear swathe of woodland runs along the eastern bank of the motorway.

### Representative photographs



### Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character	The area has an elevated landform, sloping steeply away from the settlement edge. It is characterised by small to medium arable and pasture fields well-defined by hedgerows and mature hedgerow trees. Small areas of woodland are also found on the higher land and a small stream also runs down the slopes from north to south, flowing into Thornton Reservoir beyond.	<b>M-H</b>
Settlement form & edge	Markfield forms a large clustered settlement situated on rising, sloping land. The settlement edge is defined primarily by minor roads and rural lanes, which creates a regular, well-defined edge. A small amount of development has extended south of this limit including a small industrial estate in the north but these areas are generally visually contained by mature tree planting and woodland.	<b>M-H</b>
Settlement setting	The wooded slopes provide a strong rural setting to Markfield and contribute to the well-wooded character of the settlement. The sparsely settled landscape with intact field boundaries provides an attractive scenic quality in edge of settlement views. The well-defined farmland also provides a rural setting to the many footpaths extending from the built edge, including the Leicestershire Round.	<b>M-H</b>
Visual character	The elevated position of this area allows for vast intervisibility with the wider landscape. The mature trees within field boundaries soften views of the built edge and although the settlement of Markfield is situated on	<b>M-H</b>

## 14. MARKFIELD

	higher ground, development sits below the wooded hills beyond.	
Perceptual qualities	The area is predominantly undeveloped, crossed by few roads and despite some noise intrusion from the M1, mature screening planting along the roadside helps to maintain a high scenic quality. Mature tree planting occupying the sloping land also provides a degree of naturalness and a sense of rurality with long views out over the Charnwood Forest.	<b>M</b>
Historic character	Other than Little Markfield Farm and attached buildings which are Grade II listed, the area does not contain any designated heritage assets.  Post medieval field systems are evident in the area and are highlighted by the HLC as piecemeal and planned enclosure. The planned enclosure is recognised by small or large fields with geometric boundaries and is often associated with purpose-built historic farm complexes. The piecemeal enclosure is less regular and is characterised by small to medium irregular fields with at least two s-curve or dog leg boundaries.	<b>M</b>

### Key sensitivities and values

Despite its rural and intact character providing an attractive setting to Markfield, the assessment area is considered to have overall **medium** sensitivity to residential development due to the relatively strong relationship it has with built development in the east. There are also opportunities to provide landscape enhancements in this area with characteristic woodland planting.

The landscape is considered to have overall **medium-high** sensitivity to commercial development because of its distinctive landform allowing for great intervisibility with the surrounding countryside. Although there is a small industrial estate in the north of the area, rooftops of residential properties can be seen within Markfield within a well-wooded context which creates a rural village character.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing 2-3 stories (C3)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development Small scale (B1/B2)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H
Commercial development Large scale (B8)	L	L-M	M	M-H	H

### Key sensitivities and values

- The rural and sparsely settled character of the landscape with a relative sense of tranquillity.
- The well-wooded slopes providing a strong sense of place and ecological linkages to the wider landscape.
- The long distance and panoramic views from elevated vantage points towards the Charnwood Forest which contribute to the high scenic quality and attractive setting to Markfield.
- Footpaths including the Leicestershire round provide recreational connections to the wider landscape and neighbouring villages.



## 14. MARKFIELD

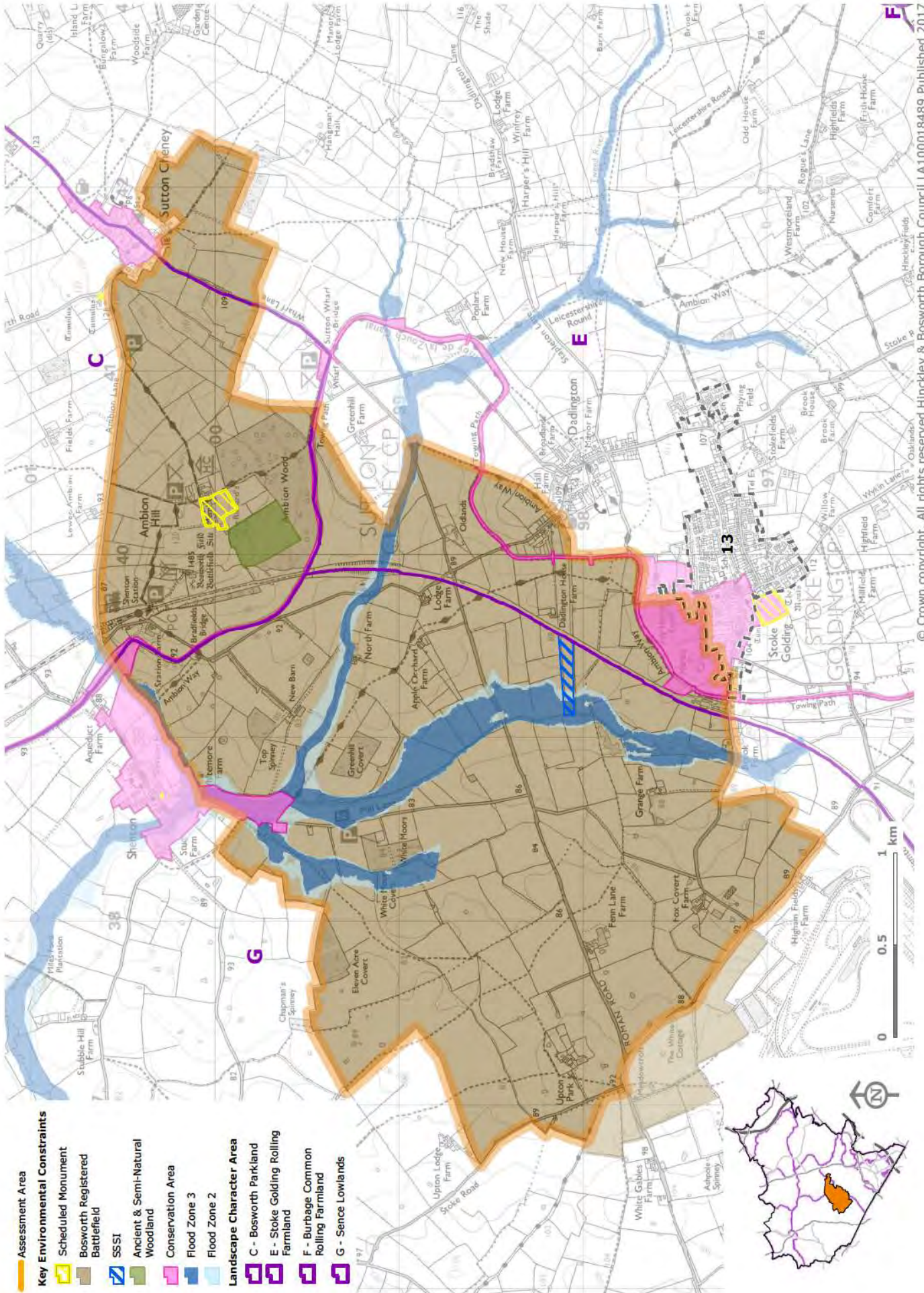
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### Guidance

Any new development should:

- Seek opportunities to maintain the rural character of the landscape and where possible conserve rural views and the setting of settlement.
- Seek to conserve and enhance the well-wooded character of the landscape and protect areas that retain a naturalistic character and replace mature/veteran trees as they begin to deplete.
- Seek to retain the pattern of hedgerows and hedgerow trees and encourage the use of traditional Midlands-style hedgelaying for management.
- Plan for successful integration of potential new development in the landscape through sensitive design and siting, including use of sensitive materials and use of landscape mitigation to enhance sense of place.
- Consider opportunities to maintain and enhance the recreational assets including rights of way network.
- Consider opportunities to create and promote an integrated green infrastructure strategy linking with the urban area.

# Sensitivity Area 15: Bosworth Battlefield



## 15. BOSWORTH BATTLEFIELD

### Summary

This assessment area is located in the centre of the borough and comprises the designated site of Bosworth Battlefield, excluding the small area of the designated site south of Higham Fields Lane (which is assessed as part of the sensitivity area 4, MIRA). The area covers 1031.9 hectares of land spanning parts of three Landscape Character Areas: LCA G: Sence Lowlands, LCA C: Bosworth Parkland, and LCA E: Stoke Golding Rolling Farmland.

### Representative photographs



### Description by evaluation criteria

Criteria	Description and indication of sensitivity	Rating
Physical character	Flat to gently rolling landform in the south-west with distinctive hills at Ambion Hill and Sutton Cheney in the north-east. Relatively large scale landscape but with human-scale features such as trees, hedgerows, woodland blocks and farm buildings, which are also key characteristics of the wider landscape. Field pattern is medium scale, generally regular and with a strong structure of tree and hedgerow field boundaries.	<b>M</b>
Settlement form & edge	Small to medium-sized villages of Stoke Golding, Dadlington, Sutton Cheney and Shenton lie on the edges of the area, forming part of the dispersed rural settlement pattern typical of the character of the wider area. Development within the area would therefore have a poor relationship with existing settlement pattern.	<b>H</b>
Settlement setting	The area provides a rural setting to the villages of Stoke Golding, Dadlington, Sutton Cheney and Shenton (all but one of which are Conservation Areas). The open landscape provides continuity with the agricultural origins of the villages.	<b>H</b>
Visual character	There are long, open views from higher ground around Ambion Hill and Sutton Cheney, as well as across the flatter landscape over low hedgerows. The views across the Bosworth Battlefield enable an appreciation of the understanding of the evolution of the landscape and events of the battle and are therefore also historically important.	<b>H</b>

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Perceptual qualities	This is a tranquil, rural landscape with high scenic quality and lacking significant intrusive elements.	<b>H</b>
Historic character	Bosworth Battlefield is designated a Registered Battlefield by English Heritage. It is a nationally significant historic site marking the battle which was a turning point in English history. The cultural associations with the Battle of Bosworth give the area a strong sense of place and identity. The Heritage Centre and Country Park provide facilities for visitors to understand the historic events and experience the present day landscape through views and walking routes.	<b>H</b>

### Evaluation of criteria and landscape sensitivity judgement

The assessment area is considered to have overall **high** sensitivity to all types of development due to the national historic significance and cultural associations of the Bosworth Battlefield, the rural and tranquil character and its role in the rural setting of surrounding villages.

Development scenario	Sensitivity				
Residential housing 2-3 stories	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>
Commercial development Small scale (B1/ B2)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>
Commercial development Large scale (B8)	<b>L</b>	<b>L-M</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>M-H</b>	<b>H</b>

### Key sensitivities and values

- Historic value associated with the nationally important Bosworth Battlefield as well as Ambion medieval deserted village Scheduled Monument and historic buildings.
- Rural character with a lack of significant intrusions or light pollution resulting in a sense of tranquillity.
- Dispersed settlement pattern of small historic villages which is sensitive to change as a result of development pressure.
- Character of nearby villages including Shenton, Sutton Cheney and Stoke Golding, and the Ashby Canal, all of which are designated Conservation Areas.
- The extensive views, flat and open character of the landscape, meaning that vertical features tend to be visually prominent.
- Recreational value of the area for walking and cycling, as well as local visitor attractions at the Heritage Centre and Country Park.
- Biodiversity value of the grass verges and species-rich grassland which is important in this area which is increasingly dominated by agricultural intensification.
- The relatively intact field boundary pattern, areas of remnant ridge and furrow and medieval field pattern and the hedgerows with hedgerow trees which add texture and interest to the

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landscape.

- Church spires and towers which form distinctive landmarks in a rural setting, and are prominent in extensive views across the landscape.
- Mature trees and ancient woodland at Ambion Wood as important features, creating structure and pattern to the landscape.

### Guidance

Any new development should:

- Promote the strong historic character and heritage in the landscape, including connections with the Battle of Bosworth.
- Seek to maintain the rural character of the landscape, and where possible ensure development is fully integrated into and informed by the landscape, respecting the harmonious pattern and local vernacular styles and materials.
- Conserve and enhance views to church spires and towers.
- Respect and enhance the rural setting of surrounding settlements including Market Bosworth, Stoke Golding, Dadlington, Sutton Cheney and Shenton.
- Retain hedgerows and replace hedgerow trees where possible.
- Seek opportunities to create new and conserve existing notable habitats where possible, in particular lowland wood pasture and parkland, wet woodland and grazing marsh.
- Any new development associated with existing built up areas should consider low heights and dark or muted colours.

# APPENDICES

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## 4) APPENDICES

4.1 The supporting appendices to the Landscape Sensitivity Assessment are as follows:

**Appendix 1: Glossary**

# Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
AOD	Above Ordnance Datum (sea level).
Agricultural Land Classification	The classification of agricultural land in England in Wales.
Ancient woodland	Woods that are believed to have been continuous woodland cover since at least 1600 AD.
BAP Priority Habitat	UK Biodiversity Action Plan priority species and habitats were identified as being the most threatened and requiring conservation action under the UK BAP. The original lists of UK BAP priority habitats were created between 1995 and 1999 and were subsequently updated in 2007. See <a href="http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155">http://jncc.defra.gov.uk/page-5155</a> for further information.
Condition	A judgement on the intactness and condition of the elements of the landscape.
Covert	A thicket in which game can hide.
Heathland	A shrub land habitat found mainly on free-draining infertile, acidic soils, characterised by open, low-growing woody vegetation.
HLC	Historic Landscape Characterisation.
Jitty	The narrow passage between rows of terraced houses, or a fenced or hedged pathway linking two areas of a village.
Landscape character	The distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements that occurs consistently in a particular landscape and how these are perceived. It reflects particular combinations of geology, landform, soils, vegetation, land use and human settlement.
Landscape character areas (LCA)	Single unique areas that are the discrete geographical area of a particular landscape type.
Landscape character types (LCT)	Distinct types of landscape that is relatively homogenous in character. They are generic in nature in that they may occur in different areas in different parts of the country, but share broadly similar combinations of geology, topography, drainage patterns, vegetation, historic land use and settlement pattern.
Landmark	An object or feature of a landscape or town that is easily seen and recognized from a distance, especially one that enables someone to establish their location.
Landscape Strategy	Principles to manage and direct landscape change for a particular landscape type or character area including identification of any particular management needs for specific elements.

Midlands-Style Hedge Laying	Also known as The Midland Bullock. An ancient rural craft that involves driving stakes into the ground behind the line of roots facing the road or plough land, with brush on the animal side to stop them from eating new growth. The hedge slopes towards the animals, and strong binding is woven along the top providing additional strength so that bullocks cannot twist it off with their horns.
Natural Character	Character as a result of natural or semi-natural features such as woodland, grassland, hedgerows etc.
NCA	National Character Area – defined within the <i>National Character Area Study, Natural England (2013)</i> - NCAs divide England into 159 distinct natural areas. Each is defined by a unique combination of landscape, biodiversity, geodiversity, history, and cultural and economic activity.
Nucleated Settlements	A settlement that is clustered around a centre, in comparison to a linear or dispersed settlement.
Outcrop	A rock formation that is visible on the surface.
OS	Ordnance Survey.
Perceptual	The ability to interpret or become aware of something through the senses.
Sensitivity	A judgement of how sensitive or vulnerable a landscape component is to change.
SSSI	Site of Special Scientific Interest.
Till	Unsorted glacial sediment, derived from the erosion and entrainment of material by the moving ice of a glacier.