





# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## Land east of Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

R002f\_2220 Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

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Taylor Wimpey UK Limited.



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*The contents of this report are valid at the time of writing. Leyton Place shall not be liable for any use of the report other than for the purposes for which it was produced. Owing to the dynamic nature of landscape resources, if more than 12 months have elapsed since the date of the report, further advice must be taken before you rely on the contents of the report. Notwithstanding any provision of the Leyton Place Limited terms and conditions, Leyton Place Ltd shall not be liable for any losses (howsoever incurred) arising incurred as a result of reliance by the client or any third party on the report more than 12 months after the date of the report.*



Section 1: Introduction

- 1.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Leyton Place Limited (LPL) on behalf of Taylor Wimpey UK Limited (the applicant) in respect of development of land at Ratby Lane, Markfield (the Site).
- 1.2 The Site is centered on National Grid Reference SK 49755 09519 and is within the administrative boundary of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council. The site extends to 6.39 ha.
- 1.3 An outline planning application, with access in detail (and all other matters reserved), is being made in the following manner:
  - Up to 135 new homes
  - The proposals include 1.64 hectares of new green infrastructure of which 1.22ha consists of equipped and informal play space and accessible natural green space.
- 1.4 Due to the outline nature of the scheme the assessment of effects is based on the illustrative masterplan (Appendix 1) which accompany the application. Furthermore, of relevance to this assessment is the landscape strategy relating to the provision and distribution of multifunctional green open space and the accompanying design intent as articulated in the DAS relating to specific aspects of the proposals, namely:

**Land Use & Amount** - the building / Site use or uses proposed for the development & the maximum amount of development.

**Scale of Development** - the maximum and minimum height limits for each development zone in relation to their surroundings; and

**Layout of Development** - the way in which development zones or building plots, routes and open spaces are provided, situated, and orientated in relation to each other.
- 1.5 The purpose of this LVIA is to describe the landscape and visual baseline situation, set out the construction and operational impacts of the project, including mitigation

measures.<sup>1</sup> and provide information regarding the likely consequences on the landscape and visual resources arising from the impacts identified. This report also considers further mitigation measures that are not integrated within the development proposals.

- 1.6 The objective of the assessment process has been to ensure that the analysis of the landscape and visual context (baseline situation) informs and guides the iterative design process.
- 1.7 As noted at paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 in the *Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment*, third edition (GLVIA 3), the interrelated design and assessment process has strength, as it links the analysis of environmental issues with steps to improve the siting, layout, and design of the scheme.

Scope of the assessment and consultation

- 1.8 The methodology adopted in this assessment is based on guidance published by the Landscape Institute and developed from extensive professional experience.
- 1.9 The published guidance ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’, third edition (GLVIA 3) is not prescriptive, however the methodology adopted in this LVIA has been developed to systematically address each stage of the process as set out in the guidance; cognisant of changes in approach and technical guidance which has emerged over the past 10 years; and drawing on the 30+ years of experience of the author in the production of landscape and visual impact assessments prepared for planning applications and appeals.
- 1.10 The Landscape Institute has prepared a variety of other technical notes to support the assessment of valued landscapes, townscape and landscape character and green infrastructure. Those of relevance are listed in the bibliography.
- 1.11 As noted in Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment, technical Guidance Note LITGN 2024/01, published August 2024:

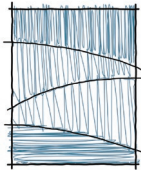
*GLVIA3 is guidance aimed at experienced practitioners to ensure a degree of consistency in what is taken into account in reaching professional judgements and how*

*those judgements are documented. It is not a textbook to teach the inexperienced, a detailed recipe for the perfect assessment, nor intended to describe exactly how assessments should be undertaken and presented. Overly restrictive guidance would prevent improvement and innovation, and variation and debate are to be expected rather than discouraged.*

*GLVIA3 provides a structured process for assessing effects on landscape and visual resources. The responsibility of the assessor is to tailor it to the place and project under consideration, supported by an explanation of the rationale behind the approach taken.*

- 1.12 The purpose of this LVIA is to describe the landscape and visual baseline situation, inform the scheme design, set out the construction and operational impacts of the project, including mitigation measures and provide information regarding the likely consequences on the landscape and visual resources arising from the impacts identified. This report also considers further mitigation measures that are not integrated within the development proposals.
- 1.13 The objective of the assessment process has been to ensure that the analysis of the landscape and visual context (baseline situation) informs and guides the iterative design process.
- 1.14 As noted at paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 in GLVIA 3, the interrelated design and assessment process has strength, as it links the analysis of environmental issues with steps to improve the siting, layout, and design of the scheme.

<sup>1</sup> For the purposes of this report there is a distinction in terminology between impacts - the action being taken, and effects - the result of that action.





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- 1.15 In preparing this document, reference has been made to the officer's comments on the landscape and visual issues in respect of a previous application [15/00889/OUT] in the same location, and more recent comments made for the permitted development to the south of Markfield [20/01283/FUL], to determine the scope of this assessment.
- 1.16 The Study Area for the project is shown on Figure 1.1 and has been informed by the Zone of Theoretical Visibility and fieldwork.
- 1.17 Critically the proposed development does not trigger the preparation of an Environmental Statement. The significance of effects should be appreciated in this context. The text which follows explains where the author of this report has determined those matters which are scoped out of the assessment process.
- 1.18 The glossary of terms is set out in **Appendix 2. Appendix 3** contains the bibliography.

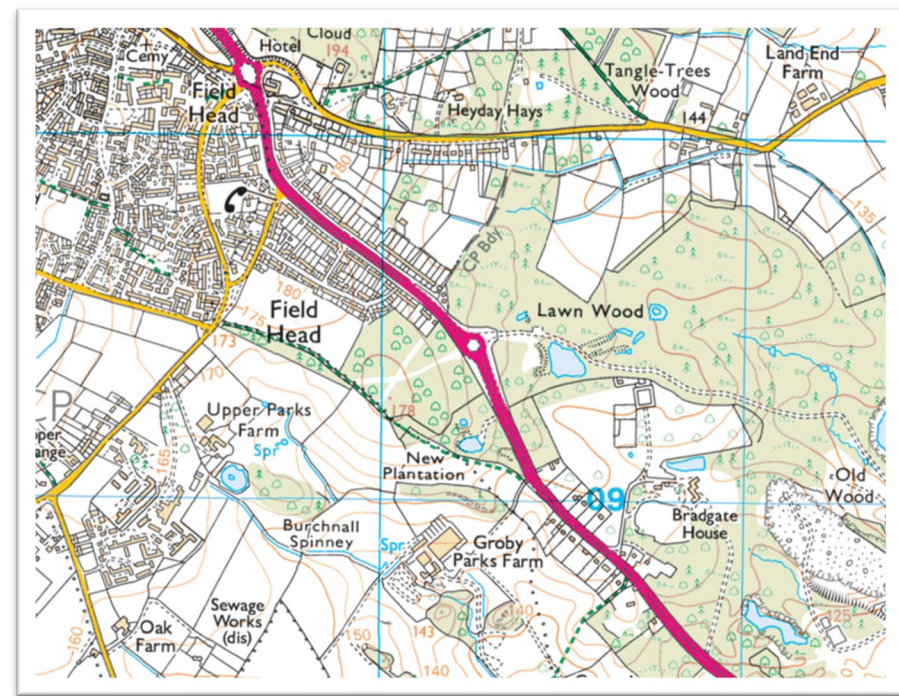


Figure 1.1: Study area

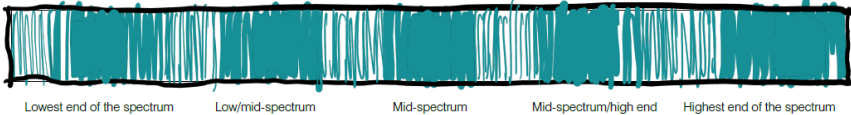
Methodology

- 1.19 This assessment has been written on the basis that the primary audience will be the determining authority and the statutory and non-statutory consultees. It is therefore assumed that the

publicly available and published documents referred to within this LVIA, such as the landscape character assessments, will be familiar and available to the reader. Footnotes are provided to assist.

- 1.20 It is important to acknowledge that GLVIA, paragraph 3.33, states:
- “It is not essential to establish a series of thresholds for different levels of significance of landscape and visual effects, provided that it is made clear whether or not they are considered significant.”*
- 1.21 The simple point is to make clear judgements as to whether the effects are significant or not significant. Notably the word ‘harm’ is not contained in the GLVIA, any judgements on ‘harm’ are planning judgements and would be addressed in the appropriate forum.
- 1.22 This assessment therefore comments on the nature of the changes and whether the changes will be significant in the determination of the application.
- 1.23 Reflecting the guidance in ‘Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment’ (GLVIA), throughout this assessment, judgements underpinned by the informed professional experience of the author, are made on where the value, susceptibility, sensitivity, magnitude lie on a spectrum ranging from low to high. To assist the reader the ‘grading’ relating to the spectrum will refer to:

- A. Lowest end of the spectrum
- B. Low/mid-spectrum
- C. Mid-spectrum
- D. Mid-spectrum/high end
- E. Highest end of the spectrum



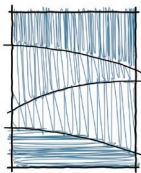
- 1.24 This ‘threshold-free’ approach is adopted by LPL because typically the definitions and criteria used in determining thresholds may either be limited to using the threshold to define itself, e.g. a High sensitivity relates to a high value and high quality and medium sensitivity is medium value and medium

quality and so on and so forth, which in turn needs definition as to what is high and how this is differentiated from medium; or the criteria are described in absolute terms such as change being large scale, with effects over a wide geographic area and total loss of contributory components, when in fact there may be a large scale change but only experienced locally with a moderate change to components. The spectrums used in this assessment are set out in each relevant section and explain where the low and high points are and possible factors in their determination. Professional judgement is then made as to the subtleties and variation in the combined factors.

Consequence of development

- 1.25 It is important to acknowledge that GLVIA, paragraph 3.33, states:
- “It is not essential to establish a series of thresholds for different levels of significance of landscape and visual effects, provided that it is made clear whether or not they are considered significant.”*
- 1.26 The simple point is to make clear judgements as to whether the effects are significant or not significant. Notably the word ‘harm’ is not contained in the GLVIA, any judgements on ‘harm’ are planning judgements and would be addressed in the appropriate forum. This is important when considering the Pre App response (23/10154/PREMAJ, dated 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023) which notes that:

*In order to be fully compliant with Policy DM4, in my view, there should be no landscape or visual effect that is moderate or above. This is on the basis that in landscape and visual terms, any impact that is moderate or above is a significant adverse effect. Where this policy threshold is exceeded, the harm will be weighed into the planning balance.*





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- 1.27
- There is no standard methodology and therefore the term 'moderate' in this context is meaningless<sup>2</sup>
- 1.28
- This assessment therefore comments on the nature of the changes and whether the changes will be significant in the determination of the application.
- 1.29
- The author of this LVIA visited the Site in September 2022, the weather was fair, becoming overcast with good visibility.
- 1.30
- This LVIA considers the inter-related but distinct issues of the effects on the landscape, its character and resources and the views and visual amenity experienced by people.

Baseline analysis

- 1.31
- The starting point of the process is to understand the 'Baseline Situation' in respect of the landscape and visual environment against which any changes are assessed. The contextual analysis considers the physical and perceptual aspect of the landscape, and the value attached to it, the views from where the changes are visible, and the people affected.
- 1.32
- The description of the established context has been derived from:

A review of published material, particularly in respect of Landscape Character Assessments (See Appendix 3: Bibliography).

Consideration of the planning policy context (as related to the assessment process<sup>3</sup>).

The adjacent allocations and planning consents.

Zone of Theoretical Visibility mapping.

Review of historic maps and images available online.

Consideration of current mapping (plan and digital) and aerial photography; and

Observations made in the field.

1.33

The viewpoints which form the basis of the visual analysis in this assessment have been determined by reference to the
- mapping shown on the Zone of Theoretical Visibility, and field verification undertaken by the author.
- 1.34

LP was initially appointed during the summer, photography was taken at the time of the appointment (Appendix 5) and subsequently retaken during the winter months (Appendix 6) to represent the worst-case visual scenario.
- Sensitivity of resources and receptor
- 1.35

Having determined the baseline situation against which the effect of development is measured, the sensitivity of the landscape and visual resources to the change is considered and classified. This considers the value of the resource and the susceptibility to accommodate the proposed changes.
- Consideration of the development
- 1.36

The assessment process then considers the Development Inherent Mitigation Measures (Section 4) so that the magnitude of the change can be described and assigned.

1.37

Throughout the assessment a subjective judgement, underpinned by an informed professional opinion against the criteria as to where the sensitivity of receptors or magnitude of changes lies on a spectrum from low to high. The narrative which supports the conclusion drawn is provided to explain the rationale of the assessor.

1.38

Of relevance to the judgements made, 'Notes and Clarifications on Aspects of Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment Third edition,' LI Technical Guidance Note – 2024-01 records:
- “LVIA is a skill to be learned and mastered. It should always be remembered that the purpose for undertaking LVIA (or LVA) is to express clearly to decision-makers the landscape professional's judgement about changes to the landscape and views. In particular, the purpose is to explain which aspects of landscape and visual change are more important to the decision to be made (and why). Achieving this
- outcome is more fundamental to good LVIA than the detailed mechanics of specific assessment methodologies.
- Landscape and visual recourses (and changes to them) are not easily measurable. Therefore, those undertaking LVIA have to proceed by a process of description, analysis, and reasoning, leading to assessment conclusions.
- GLVIA3 is guidance aimed at experienced practitioners to ensure a degree of consistency in what is take into account in reaching processional judgements and how those judgments are documented...”.
- 1.39

In respect of this project the credentials of the author of this LVIA are set out in paragraphs 1.41 – 1.42 below.
- Context to this assessment
- Planning context
- 1.40

GLVIA does not require that an assessment of planning policies be a component of the LVIA process. The assessment of landscape and visual effects is prepared independent of the planning considerations which are made based on merit, compliance, and balance assessed by the determining authority. However, it is recognised that designations and policies may provide an indication of the 'value' of landscape and visual assets.

1.41

In this context, a review of the local landscape and townscape designations has not identified any 'valued' or protected landscapes within the Study Area (Adopted Core Strategy, Key Diagram).
- Credentials of assessor<sup>4</sup>
- 1.42

This LVIA has been prepared by a Chartered Member and Fellow of the Landscape Institute (FLI) with more than 30 years' professional experience in the field of landscape planning. The assessor has a BSc (Hons) degree in Landscape Management from the University of Reading, a Post Graduate diploma in
- <sup>22</sup> On what methodology and defined thresholds does the council determine Moderate as being the limit of effects? Every consultancy uses different processes and definitions, and the published guidance does not have any such prescriptions. The interpretation of moderate being an absolute constraint is one of personal opinion (in my view) and not actually stated in the policy.
- No new development on a Greenfield Site has effects which are below Moderate across the board– this is evident by PINS decisions; such effects are weighed in the planning balance.
- <sup>3</sup> IEMA – Impact Assessment Outlook Journal, Volume 11: October 2021 The relationship between planning policy and LVIA (Paul Macrae and Edward White)  
<sup>4</sup> As required under the EIA Regs 2017.
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Landscape Architecture, she achieved chartered status with the LI in 1991.

- 1.43 The assessor has prepared more than 100 LVIA's in her career and has appeared at more than 80 planning inquiries as an expert witness on Landscape and Visual matters. Her approach to assessing landscape and visual effects has been subject to scrutiny by her peers and the planning inspectorate.
- 1.44 The approach adopted in the drafting of this report has been scrutinized by an independent chartered member of the Landscape Institute using the LI's Technical Guidance Note 1/20, 2020 and has been subject to review by landscape advisors to other Council's and the Planning Inspectorate.

## Collaboration in the design process

- 1.45 The author has engaged with the client team to achieve a successful design solution which responds to the local landscape and visual constraints, and other technical issues.
- 1.46 The assessor has provided input on the design evolution throughout the iterative process prior to submission of the application.

## Deficiencies/omissions

- 1.47 Apart from the Application Site itself, no access to private land or property was obtained during the assessment.
- 1.48 The remainder of this Landscape and Visual Assessment is structured as follows:

**Section 2:** Baseline Situation

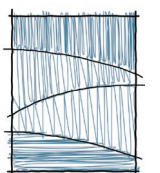
**Section 3:** Evaluation of Resources and Receptors

**Section 4:** Design Evolution and Mitigation Measures

**Section 5:** Magnitude of Change

**Section 6:** Consideration of effects of development

**Section 7:** Summary





## Section 2: Baseline situation

- 2.1 The *European Landscape Convention – A Framework for Implementation*, October 2007<sup>5</sup>, contains the short definition of 'landscape' and provides supporting text at paragraph 1.2. The ELC definition is short, yet comprehensive, namely:

*“ ‘landscape means an area, as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors’ The definition applies to the whole territory of states including all urban and peri-urban landscapes, towns, villages and rural areas, the coast, and inland areas. It applies to ordinary or even degraded landscape as well as those area that are outstanding or protected.”*

- 2.2 This interpretation is embedded in GLVIA 3 (paragraph 2.3).
- 2.3 Landscape character assessments are typically limited to the 'landscape' beyond the settlement boundaries. By their nature they describe and reference undeveloped landscapes and tend to understate the inter-relationship of townscape and landscape on settlement edges. In respect of this project the council has helpfully published townscape assessments.
- 2.4 This is noted in the Landscape Institute's Technical Information Note (TIN) 05/2017, revised April 2018 (paragraph 2.4 and 2.5):

*“A townscape character assessment may present a description of the townscape that is distinctive to that place, supported by materials such as maps, illustrations, and photographs. It can provide an understanding of how a place has evolved and developed over time to respond to natural, social, and economic drivers, and how this is reflected in the layout of streets, the architecture of buildings and the materials used. Historic Area Assessments may also be used to inform the historic environment aspects of the townscape character assessment.*

*This understanding of the intrinsic character and qualities of the place can then be used to guide the location, design, scale, massing, and type of development that can be accommodated, such as public realm improvements, new buildings, or an urban park. A townscape character assessment can also form the basis for assessing the effects of change, to help decision-takers decide whether a new development is appropriate in its context, for example.”*

- 2.5 This LVIA recognises that landscape and visual effects need to be considered separately, however the character of the landscape has aesthetic aspects which are experienced visually, this is acknowledged, as appropriate.

### Landscape character

- 2.6 Landscape Characterisation is the process whereby areas are identified and classified into distinct, recognisable, and consistent patterns of elements and features. This is a value-free process and does not provide for comparison of areas being 'better' than others. The determination of 'value' primarily comes through the process of determining and applying designations, policies, or local expressions of value.
- 2.7 Published characterisations cascade from the National Character Areas (NCA), prepared by Natural England, though to regional and local Landscape Character Areas (LCA) and Landscape Character Types (LCT) prepared by County and District Councils. Typically, the smaller scale, local assessment is most relevant to small-scale projects.
- 2.8 The relevant extracts (regional to local level) are contained within **Appendix 4 (Appendices 4a-4d)**. To avoid duplication, the text which follows summarises those matters described in the appendices pertinent to the application site.
- 2.9 Landscape Character Assessments typically classify and describe the countryside beyond settlement boundaries (**Appendices 4a-4c**), sometimes referencing the presence of settlements. As a result, the descriptions do not consider or focus on the character of the peri-urban areas or specific townscapes. However, the approach adopted in Leicestershire

includes townscape analysis which is welcomed and assists the understanding of the current sense of place.

### National scale

- 2.10 For the purpose of assessing the effects of development National Character Areas (NCA) are relevant; however, they are broad and set out the key characteristics of large geographic areas. Whilst NCAs do not provide an appreciation of the site-specific issues which need to be taken into account in the determination process, it should be noted that some of the characteristics are discernible in relation to the wider landscape surrounding the site.
- 2.11 The site lies within the **NCA 73 Charnwood** published by Natural England.

### Regional scale

#### *East Midlands Regional Character Assessment, 2010*

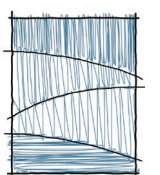
- 2.12 The site is located within the area classified as **10D: Forested Ancient Hills**. The apparent characteristics are underpinned by the igneous geology which appear as rocky outcrops and knolls rising out of the low-lying farmland.
- 2.13 The character is distinctly well-wooded, albeit the lowland farmlands include pastures with mature hedgerow providing containment.
- 2.14 Continued need for large scale development to meet housing requirements is recognised as a force for change. Advice to limit landscape and visual impacts includes locating new development on previously developed land, or close to existing settlements, and to include tree and woodland planting to integrate development into the landscape.

#### *Charnwood Forest Landscape Character Assessment, 2019<sup>6</sup>*

- 2.15 This document considers the landscape of the Charnwood Forest, as part of the National Forest project. Of relevance this document provides:
- (i) an overarching description of the character of Charnwood Forest. Describing the main physical features of the area as

<sup>5</sup> Although the UK has left the EU the definitions are still valid and relevant to the LVIA process.

<sup>6</sup> This document was prepared with reference to the regional and Hinckley and Bosworth characterisations. This is the most up to date assessment of the landscape associated with the site.



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- well as human influences which have influenced the character of the area over time; and
- (ii) a review of the 19 settlements located within Charnwood Forest which were included within the original 2009 study. Local scale

- 2.16 The Site lies at the most westerly edge of the landscape character area classified as **Area 5: Groby Estate Woodland**. This is a discreet parcel of land, predominantly comprising a mature estate landscape with grassland, ancient woodland and former quarrying and large waterbodies.
- 2.17 The site lies beyond the woodland, and it is the only field which abuts Markfield's settlement edge. Field observations indicate that there is a degree of inconsistency between the description of the character area and the character of the application site.
- 2.18 In terms of the settlement character, it is recognised that Markfield is a clustered settlement. Its outer form typically is defined by the linear features comprising hedgerows and roads, this is subject to change with the implementation of planning consent 20/01283/FUL.
- 2.19 Recommendations for accommodating change including enhancing urban edges through additional planting and consideration of new development design. Development should be in keeping with the existing settlement vernacular.

## *Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Landscape Character Assessment 2017*

- 2.20 The Borough Council's assessment similarly addresses the landscape and settlement character.
- 2.21 This document preceded the analysis prepared in 2019 for the Charnwood Forest. The extent of character areas, nomenclature and descriptions are not the same, but this document generally identifies the same key features and attributes of the other publications. Within this assessment the landscape character area is classified as being **LCA A: Charnwood Forest**.

## *Landscape Sensitivity Study 2017*

- 2.22 The assessment of sensitivity does not extend to the Site as the analysis was applied to those areas subject to pressures arising

from settlement growth. At the time of its preparation, the land to the east of Markfield evidently was not considered to be subject to the same pressures.

- 2.23 The settlement character description provides more detail than the 2019 document, albeit the general sensitivities and recommendations are reflected in the 2019 advice. Specifically pertinent to the site is the townscape strategy to ensure future development respects the setting of the village and its rural interface and enhances the urban edge, primarily through the provision of additional planting.

## Site specific landscape components

- 2.24 The Study Area shown in Figure 1.1 was revisited after the fieldwork and confirmed as being appropriate for the scale and nature of the development in terms of the character of the area.
- 2.25 The application site and its context share some characteristics with the wider landscape. The following site-specific observations are based on reading the published material and field work:
- (i). **Landform** – At a local scale there is no evidence of the dramatic landform features which are notable within the wider landscape and arise from the underlying igneous rock. Whilst the bedrock of the Site comprises igneous bedrock (outcrops shown in cerise – Figure 2.1) it is overlain by superficial sedimentary deposits (green).



*Figure 2.1: Geology*

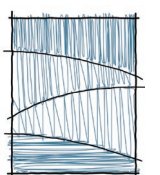
The landform is gently undulating with a local ridgeline along the northern boundary of the site, occupied by the existing properties on Jacqueline Road (see Figure 2.2).

From the highest point in the northwestern corner of the Site the land falls to the south and southeast.

- (ii). **Hydrology** – there are no water features within or bounding the Site.
- (iii). **Land cover** – The Site is a single rectangular agricultural field. It is used for growing crops rather than a pasture for grazing. As a result, it has a uniform and uninteresting appearance.

The wooded features to the south and east comprise predominantly deciduous species and have a sense of rurality to their sense of place, which contrasts with the distinctly sub-urban environment to the north and west

<sup>7</sup> <https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>





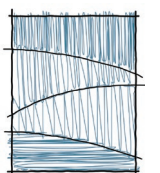
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which is dominated by residential development and road infrastructure.

- (iv). **Associations** – Due to the existing development, presence of woodland and severance within the landscape caused by the A50, the Site has no physical, cultural, or visual associations with the Markfield Conservation Area or Bradgate Park Registered Park and Garden. It is perceived alongside the exiting settlement edge.
- (v). **Enclosure** – the wider landscape context is typically open in character. Unlike areas to the south of the Site and Markfield village the site is a highly enclosed area of land. With open, unvegetated boundaries to the north and west the Site is most strongly associated with and perceived as being influenced by the immediate townscape areas. Woodland to the south and east enclose the site and imbue a sense of separation and detachment from the wider countryside to the south.
- (vi). **Access** – There is a public right of way (PRoW) to the south of the Site. There is no permitted access within the Site. The PRoW is contained with a strong tree belt, so visual access is restricted.
- (vii). **Relative tranquility** – Despite the extent of countryside to the south of the Site there are a number of activities and land uses which detract from the over sense of rurality and level of tranquillity experienced with the Site and associated with its immediate context. These uses include the operational quarrying (i.e. Bardon Hill and Stanton under Bardon), highways network (M1 and A50 corridor), local roads and construction works associated with the consented development to the southwest.
- (viii). **Townscape character** – The residential development in proximity to the Site is distant from and lacks any observable connection with the historic core and Conservation Area of Markfield. Whilst the wider settlement has a diversity of architectural styles and age ranges to the housing stock, there is a uniformity and modernity to the townscape associated with the Site.

Properties are predominantly two-storey, with some clusters of bungalows. They are arranged in a regular, linear pattern fronting the internal and distribution roads. Front gardens tend to be small with minimal landscape features. Tree cover is minimal and primarily restricted to rear gardens.

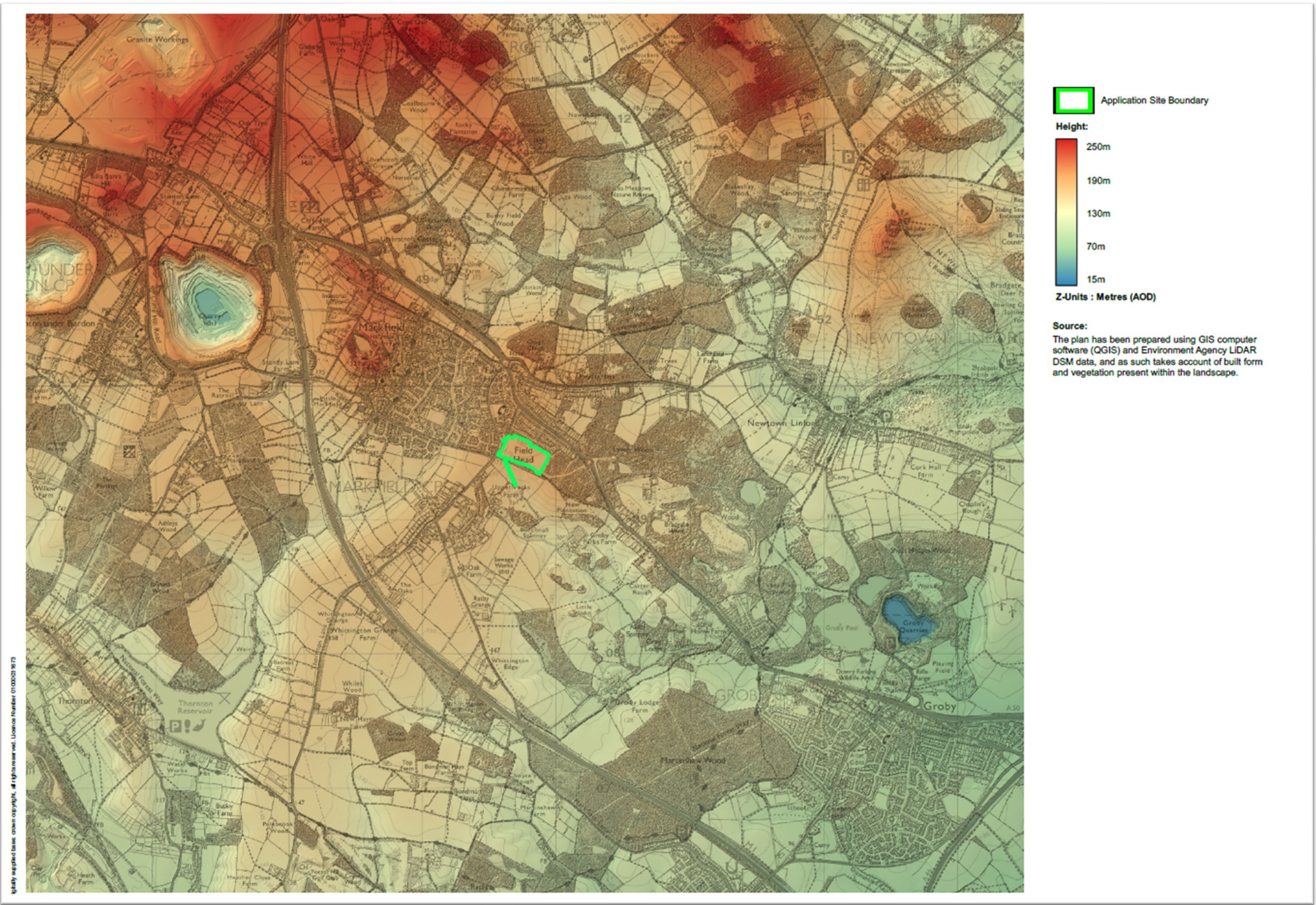
- 2.26 Overall, the Site is situated in a peri-urban location and has a character and appearance consistent with the peri-urban qualities of this settlement edge location. The existing townscape is evident and has a strong influence over the Site.



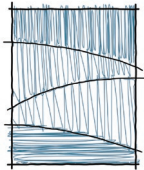


Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 2.2: Topography



Map data supplied by Ordnance Survey. All rights reserved. Licence Number 01000018673





# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## Visual character and views

### Extent of visual envelope

- 2.27 The analysis of views relates to more than what is visible and the appreciation of the apparent character of the landscape. Annotations and descriptive text are provided for each photoviewpoint.
- 2.28 The photography included in this report complies with the LIs technical guidance<sup>8</sup>. It was taken during the winter months, on a clear day using a Canon EOS, 6D digital camera with a fixed 50mm f/1,5 prime lens. The photography is included at A3 to fit the format of the report as an *aide memoir*. These images do not negate the need to visit the site and viewpoints.
- 2.29 The area within which people are likely to experience a visual change resulting from development has been mapped to create a Zone of Theoretical Visibility<sup>9</sup> (ZTV, Figure 2.4). The mapped ZTV utilises data which includes buildings and vegetation and therefore the visibility shown has a high degree of accuracy as to the geographic extent of visibility of new housing within the Site.
- 2.30 Fieldwork has enabled the assessor to confirm that the ZTV is a fair representation of the extent of the Visual Envelope and identify the representative viewpoints<sup>10</sup> (Figure 2.5) which form the basis of the assessment contained within this LVIA. The Study Area shown in Figure 1.1 was revisited after the fieldwork and confirmed as being appropriate for the scale and nature of the development in respect of visibility and views.
- 2.31 The key elements in the landscape which limit the extent of the Visual Envelope principally comprise the enclosing built form and boundary vegetation. The southern boundary is a substantial woodland belt which forms a visually impenetrable barrier when in leaf. The depth of this feature and the inclusion of understory planting indicates that the sense of visual enclosure continues to be experienced in the winter months.
- 2.32 There are some glimpsed views from the residential streets through gaps between buildings if one views directly through the gaps. When travelling along the road the views are oblique, the site is not visible to the same degree when moving along

the road. The existing properties dominate the foreground and provide an urban context to the views, changes experienced from these roads (Jacqueline Road and Charnwood Drive) are scoped out of the assessment process.

- 2.33 Similarly, from elevated viewpoints; the site, or the features on boundaries, form components in the overall visual composition (e.g. Hill Hole Nature Reserve and Bradgate Country Park). Any change will be a small change in the view, consistent with the content, without affecting balance of elements or creating a prominent feature. These views are also scoped out of the assessment.
- 2.34 No access was made into private properties, views across the site have informed the assessment of private views.



Figure 2.3: Private views across the site.

### Representative viewpoints

- 2.35 The relevant local vantage points and the people likely to experience visual change resulting from the proposals (shown on Figure 2.4) can be summarised as:
- Users of road network, specifically Ratby Lane, Launde Road (**Photoviewpoints 7-10**)
  - Those walking along PRow R21 (**Photoviewpoints 1-3**); and
  - Occupants of properties which abut and back onto the application site along Jacqueline Road (no photographs taken from private properties, interpolated from views across the site and **photoviewpoints 4 and 6**).

### Visual composition

- 2.36 The visual composition is illustrated by photography and supporting narrative contained in **Appendix 4**.
- 2.37 The following viewpoints have been scoped out of this assessment:

**Photoviewpoint 5 – Leicester Road**

**Photosviewpoints 11 and 12 - Hill Hole Nature Reserve**

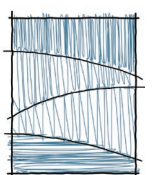
**Photoviewpoint 13 – Bradgate Country Park**

<sup>8</sup> Landscape Institute, Technical Guidance Note 06/19

<sup>9</sup> The ZTV mapping has been prepared with Mapinfo and Vertical Mapper utilising 2m resolution terrain data derived from aerial photography. These datasets contain

information on buildings and trees. The 'tree' data sets do not include the full tree canopy; therefore, the mapping is a worse-case scenario, the trees actually provide greater screening than the mapping indicates.

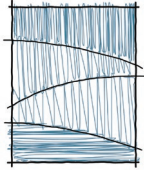
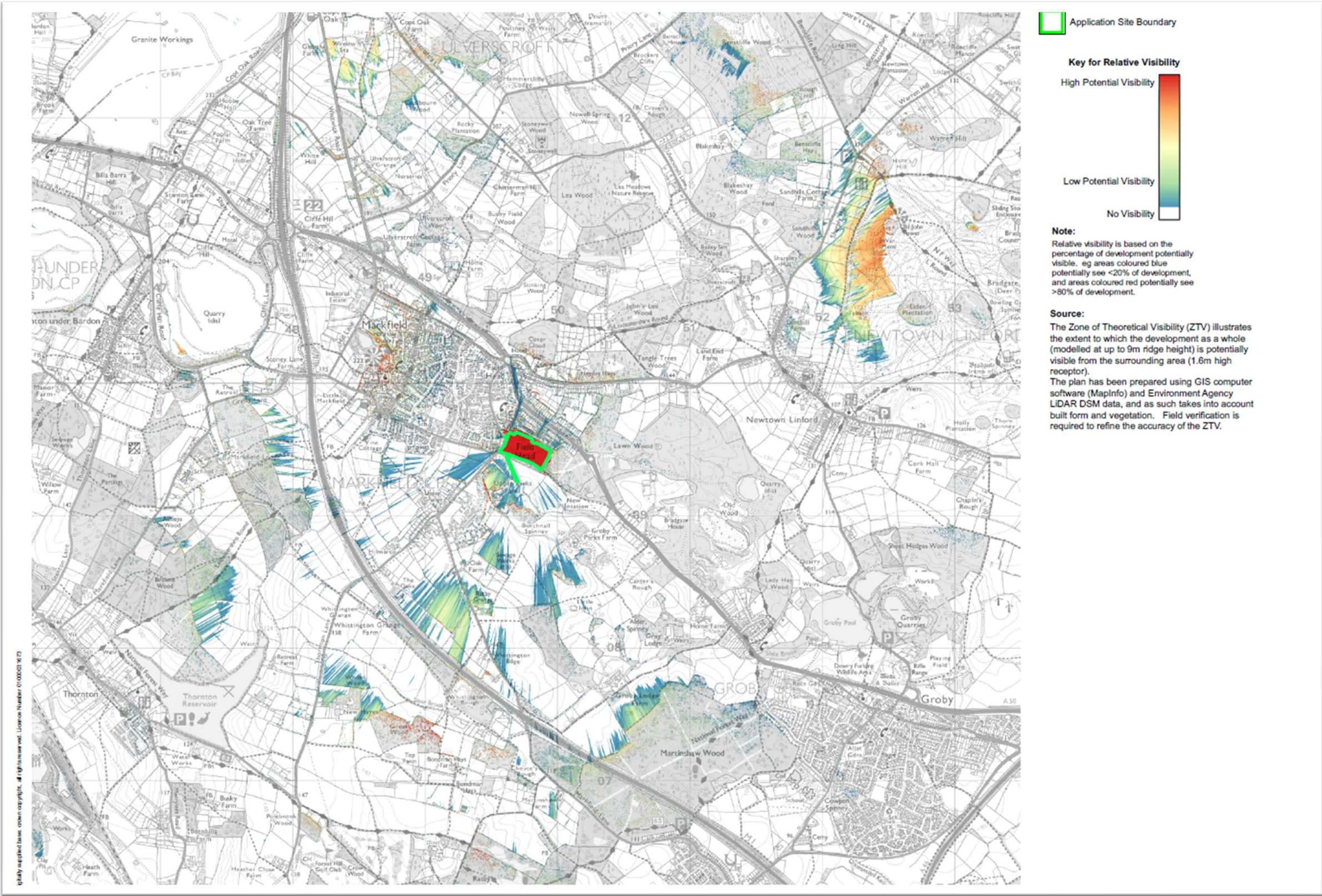
<sup>10</sup> The photographs have been taken with a Canon 5DS R DSLR Camera and 50mm f/1.4 prime lens.





# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

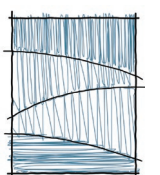
Figure 2.4: Zone of Theoretical Visibility





# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Figure 2.5: Photographic viewpoints





## Section 3: Evaluation of the Sensitivity of Resources and Receptors

- 3.1 The sensitivity of the landscape (resource) and people experiencing the views (receptors) is established by considering both the value of the resource/view and the susceptibility of each to accommodate the proposed without undue<sup>11</sup> negative consequences.

### Landscape value

- 3.2 This aspect relating to 'sensitivity' is "*the relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society*" (GLVIA, 3, Glossary and further explored in *Assessing landscape value outside national designations*, LI Technical Guidance Note 02/21).
- 3.3 Landscape Value is rated, for the purposes of this assessment on the following scale:
- National/International – Designated landscapes which are nationally or internationally designated for their landscape value – including National Parks, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, World Heritage Sites, Heritage Coast and National Scenic Areas.
  - District– Locally or regionally designated landscapes (e.g., Area of High Landscape Value, Regional Scenic Areas); also, areas which local evidence (such as tourism guides, landscape character assessments or other documentary information) indicates as being more valued than the surrounding area.
  - Local – 'everyday' landscape which is appreciated by the local community but has little or no wider recognition of its value.
- 3.4 As noted above, the landscape characterisation process does not assign 'value' to the landscape. Information which may contribute to the understanding of value may include:

- Areas recognised by statute.
- Local Plans (extent of policies for local landscape designations)
- Information regarding individual elements such as Conservation Areas, TPOs etc.
- Art and literature
- Material on landscape or local of community interests, such as local green spaces, village greens or allotments.

### National value

- 3.5 In this instance the application site is not directly affected by designations or policies such as:

- SSSI.
- Habitat Sites.
- Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
- National Park.
- Heritage Coast.
- Irreplaceable habitats.
- Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change; and
- Designated heritage assets<sup>12</sup>.

- 3.6 Furthermore, the site does not lie within the setting of any of these designations.

- 3.7 In respect of the townscape, the historic core is designated as a Conservation Area. There is no physical or visual inter-relationship between the site and the CA. This designation does not confer value onto the Site.

### District value

- 3.8 The local plan does not include policies pertinent to landscape value beyond those identified at a national level.
- 3.9 Whilst Policy DM4 of the adopted SADMP seeks to protect the **intrinsic value**, beauty and open character and landscape character through safeguarding the countryside from unsustainable development. This does not mean the landscape is a 'Valued Landscape,' having value and being valued are different propositions.

- 3.10 It has been suggested by another authority (Charnwood Borough) that the inclusion of land within the Charnwood Forest is an indicator which elevates the land to a NPPF, paragraph 187 a) 'Valued Landscape'.

- 3.11 In the opinion of the author of this report, upheld by the conclusions of Inspector Morgan, Charnwood Forest is not a non-statutory designation<sup>13</sup>.

- 3.12 The National Forest is an environmental regeneration project covering 200 square miles of Leicestershire, Staffordshire, and Derbyshire'. It is managed by a not-for profit company. Charnwood Forest is 'recognised as a Regional Park, providing a focus for leisure and conservation activity.'

- 3.13 By contrast the Local Plan is clear when other matters are designations, such as green wedge and conservation areas.

### Local value

- 3.14 In the absence of a designation that indicates value, there may be instances where local landscapes or Sites are 'Valued Landscapes'.
- 3.15 Having considered the committee reports for the refusal for development within the Site, [15/00889/OUT] and the consented development off London Road, Markfield [20/01283/FUL]<sup>14</sup> it is noted that the Council has never determined that the landscape to the south of Markfield or the specific sites are NPPF 'Valued Landscapes'.

### Interim conclusion on landscape value

- 3.16 The landscape value of the site and its immediate countryside and settled context is at the lower end of the spectrum, having some local value to the nearby community simply by open areas of undeveloped agricultural land. No value has been expressed by the community to elevate the value of the landscape.

### Landscape susceptibility

- 3.17 Susceptibility indicates the ability of a defined landscape or visual receptor to accommodate the proposed development:

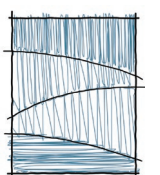
<sup>11</sup> Undue being defined as - unwarranted or inappropriate because excessive or disproportionate.

<sup>12</sup> NPPF, paragraph 11, footnote 7

<sup>13</sup> Appeal Ref: APP/X2410/W/21/3281964

Land to the west of Iveshead Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire, LE12 9ER

<sup>14</sup> The character and value of the landscape is unaffected by the decision to allocate land for development. It retains its intrinsic character and value.





*“without undue consequences for the maintenance of the baseline situation and/or the achievement of landscape planning policies and strategies.” (GLVIA 3, paragraph 5.40).*

- 3.18 At the highest end of the ‘susceptibility spectrum’ is a landscape wherein changes in terms of the proposed development would be entirely at odds with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale, and mass. The development would require extensive change to the topography, vegetative cover, or form of buildings.
- 3.19 Mid-way on the spectrum is a landscape wherein the proposed development has a degree of consistency with the existing scale, pattern, grain, land use of the prevailing character, although mitigation may be appropriate to enhance assimilation.
- 3.20 At the lower end of the spectrum the proposed development is entirely consistent with the character of the local area, related to matters including pattern, grain, use, scale, and mass.
- 3.21 Given the fact that housing is located on two sides of the site, and consent has been granted for new development, alongside infrastructure and open space, to the south of London Road (300m from the Site), it is clear the provision of new homes is entirely consistent with the land use, pattern and grain of the settlement and the landscape components which prevail in the local area, beyond the built up area boundary.
- 3.22 The proposed land use, scale of development and nature of the associated infrastructure, including Green Infrastructure (GI) reflects the existing immediate and wider landscape and townscape context.

**Interim conclusion on landscape susceptibility**

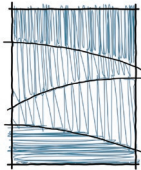
- 3.23 The susceptibility of the landscape to the type of change proposed is at the lowest end of the spectrum.

**Landscape sensitivity of the site and its context**

- 3.24 At the lower end of the spectrum (low sensitivity) resources may be; low valued/undesignated landscapes, with no distinctive or sensitive features, with the potential to accommodate appropriately design development, and where adverse effects can be mitigated for. At the higher end of the range are; those highly valued/designated landscapes recognised in policy, may

contain landscape features that cannot accommodate development of the type proposed, and where mitigation measures are unable to avoid, compensate or offset the undue consequences which would arise.

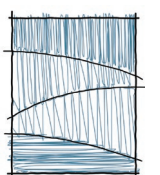
- 3.25 The analysis of the sensitivity of the landscape character and its components is set out in Table 3.1.
- 3.26 In the case of the site at Ratby Lane the overall sensitivity to the change proposed is at the lower end of the spectrum. The nature of the development proposed is consistent with its immediate context in terms of the housing elements, with a pattern and grain that complements the existing settlement edge in the vicinity of the site.
- 3.27 Mitigation measures include elements which reflect the existing landscape framework and increase the tree cover and accessible natural green spaces.



# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Table 3.1: Landscape Sensitivity Evaluation

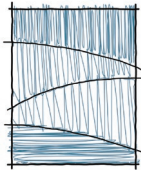
Landscape Receptor–	Value	Susceptibility –	Sensitivity
National and regional landscape character areas	These classifications do not denote or establish the value of the landscape. There are no national, regional, or local protected landscapes.	The landscape contained a variety of land uses, at the broad scale of these assessments there is evidence that the inclusion of housing in the landscape is a component of the landscape and therefore at this scale the susceptibility to housing is at the lowest end of the spectrum.	The sensitivity of the broader landscape context of the scale of development proposed is negligible.
The site as a parcel of land on the edge of the settlement, peri-urban in character.	As recorded above, the value is at the lowest end of the spectrum.	Housing is a component of this landscape/townscape and therefore the susceptibility to change is at the lower end of the spectrum.	Based on the above conclusions, taking account of the value of the landscape and the nature of the proposed development, consistent with its immediate environs is within the lower range of the spectrum of sensitivity (A).
<b>Attributes of the Site</b>			
Landform	No value	The settlement is overlain across the underlying landform, the areas of high ground in the local area are most susceptible to change. The site is at a relatively lower topographic level than the settlement to the west. The susceptibility to change is towards the lower end of the spectrum.	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum, with the northern edge being slightly more sensitive to development, albeit still at the lower end of the range of sensitivity (A).
Hydrology	No discernible hydrology associated with the site.		
Land cover	<p>The agricultural land use results in a transitory cover within the site which has little ecological or landscape value.</p> <p>The external tree belts and woodlands are of locally high value, contributing to the amenity of the landscape, the sense of place and other GI functions.</p>	As noted above, development has occurred and more recently been permitted on open agricultural land. The susceptibility is at the lower end of the range.	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum (A)
Associations/Townscape	The site is closely associated with the housing immediately to the north and west. This is not a valued townscape, albeit the residents will value their properties and neighborhood. This value is at the lower end of the spectrum.	The nature of the change proposed is consistent with the context. Housing is a component of this landscape/townscape and therefore the susceptibility to change is at the lower end of the spectrum.	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum (A)
Enclosure	The degree of enclosure is of local value; it ensures that the settlement edge is well defined and contained.	Loss of this aspect of the landscape would result in a fundamental alteration of the settlement edge, this is at the mid to high end of the spectrum of susceptibility.	The sensitivity of the enclosed character and features which determine the level of enclosure are at the mid-range of sensitivity (C).





Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Receptor–	Value	Susceptibility –	Sensitivity
Access	The footpath network (rights of way and roadside pavements) are important assets and of high local value to the community.	These assets are susceptible to change and considered to be at the mid-range of the spectrum	This attribute is considered to be at the mid-range of sensitivity to change (C).
Relative tranquility	In this disturbed landscape the relative tranquility of the site will be locally valued, but at the mid to low end of the spectrum in the context of the range of relative tranquility of the area.	Given the settled character and proximity to the road network the susceptibility to change is towards the lower end of the spectrum.	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum (A).



# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## Value attached to the views

3.28 The value of views should take account of:

- Recognition of value attached to a particular view, associated to a heritage asset, or planning designation; and/or
- Indicators of the value through guidebooks, tourist maps, or historic references.

3.29 There are no designed views, or vantage points protected by policy associated with the application site.

3.30 As noted above, those viewpoints, typically associated with more elevated locations and areas of recreational value, do not form part of this assessment.

3.31 The OS mapping indicates a panoramic viewpoint to the northwest of the site. This provides an indication of a valued vantage point which extends beyond the local community. However, as demonstrated by the visual analysis, development within the site will not be visible from this location.

3.32 For those residents who overlook the Site the views will be of personal value, any such value must be considered in the context of the hierarchy of views and value placed on them.

3.33 The viewpoints which form the basis of this assessment are of value to the local community. Their value lies at the lower end of the spectrum.

### *Interim conclusion on the value of views*

3.34 Those people who experience immediate change to their visual environment are those who occupy the adjoining properties, to

these individuals the views are likely to be of high value on a personal level.

3.35 There are no vantage points of recognised or acknowledged value affected by the proposals.

## Susceptibility to visual change

3.36 For the purposes of this assessment, the susceptibility of people to changes in their views and visual experience is a function of the occupation of the people, the extent to which their attention or interest is focused on the views and the visual amenity they experience at a particular location.

3.37 It is noted that none of the vantage points identified by this assessment are either acknowledged or protected in policy as an important or key view, nor are any views recorded in published material on maps as being of local value or associated with an important landmark.

3.38 Those people engaged in open air recreation, typically associated with open spaces and public rights of way, are most likely to focus on their context, perceptually and visually. They will be most susceptible to change.

3.39 In addition, people who live in adjacent properties experiencing the view daily, even as a backdrop to their activities will be susceptible to visual change.

### *Interim conclusion on the susceptibility of people to visual change*

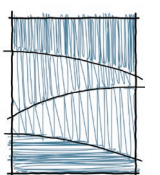
3.40 Of the potential locations and people likely to be affected by the proposals, the adjacent residents will be most susceptible to visual change.

## Visual sensitivity

3.41 At the lower end of spectrum may be those people engaged in an activity which is not focused on the landscape or context of the person/people, where the views are infrequent, the representative or specific viewpoints are not associated with a valued landscape or asset. At the higher end of the spectrum people are engaged in an activity whereby the focus of the visual experience is linked to the landscape context, the views are associated with a valued landscape or important assets/landmarks, and the number or people and frequency of the visual experience is high.

3.42 In the case of the site and relevant visual receptors the sensitivity assigned, for the purposes of this assessment, is set out in Table 3.2. This includes the rationale to the classification of the value and susceptibility of each visual receptor, and ultimately the sensitivity by way of reference to the spectrum (A-E).

3.43 People on the immediate boundary of the site will be most sensitive to the visual change wither when walking along the footpath or looking out from the existing properties. The geographic extent relating to the most sensitive visual receptors is highly localised and contained to the immediate environs of the site.

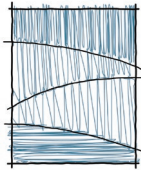




Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Table 3.2: Visual Sensitivity Evaluation

Visual Receptor –  This refers to the people not the location – the viewpoints which represent the groups of people are noted	Value	Susceptibility –  In respect of people being susceptible to the introduction of housing within the application site there is a low-medium susceptibility to the change. The current visual experience includes being able to see housing. The landform of the surrounding area dictates how the much housing is visible and the way it is revealed in the view.	Sensitivity
People using the local public rights of way network and pedestrian footpaths alongside roads. <b>Representative viewpoints 1 to 3 and 7 to 10.</b>	There is some local value to these routes as they connect people to the wider countryside and provide for daily walks to local facilities and part of circular routes used for recreation such as dog-walking. The value is in the <b>mid-range</b> of the value spectrum.	Typically, people will be using the routes as part of a recreational experience or daily moving around the local area. People are likely to be engaged with their visual environment. The susceptibility of these people lies between the <b>high and mid-range</b> of the spectrum.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid-high range</b> of the spectrum (D).
Users of road network, specifically Ratby Lane and Launde Road <b>Representative viewpoints 7 to 10.</b>	There is <b>no value</b> associated with views from the road network. The road network is used for commuting and general movement through the area and not part of a 'scenic' network for pleasure travel.	Whilst views may be experienced daily, the visual context is the background to travel activities which are the prime focus of those people. These people have the <b>lowest</b> level of visual susceptibility to change.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>lowest</b> end of the spectrum (A).
Occupants of properties which abut the application site. No photography from private properties.  See Figure 2.3 and photoviewpoints 4 and 6.	Properties benefit from an 'inward' facing position on the edge of the settlement, rear gardens back onto the Site but fencing impede ground level views. Occupants of two-storey properties will enjoy some longer ranging views but to a lesser degree from rooms used during the daytime. For this group of people, the value of the view will be at the <b>mid-range to the higher end</b> of the spectrum. This level of value diminishes beyond the immediate neighbours, albeit those properties to the north of Jacqueline Road may have some views across the site from first floor windows.	Residents experience their environment daily; they will be susceptible to change viewed from those rooms occupied in daylight hours. These people will be at the <b>higher end</b> of the range of susceptibility to visual change.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid to high range</b> of the spectrum (D).



## Section 4: Design evolution and mitigation measures

### Design evolution and recommendations

- 4.1 The application proposes the delivery of
- Up to 135 new homes
  - The proposals include 1.64 hectares of new green infrastructure
- 4.2 Mitigation measures are those measures, both incorporated into, or dismissed during the design process to:
- Prevent/avoid adverse effects,
  - Reduce effects; and, where possible,
  - Offset or remedy (or compensate for) any significant adverse landscape and visual effects.
- 4.3 Enhancement measures are subtly different, as they seek to improve the landscape resource and the visual amenity of the proposed development site and its wider setting, over and above its baseline condition.
- 4.4 The approach of the applicants and their advisors has been to 'design-in' the mitigation strategy both in terms of designed and created solutions and long-term management to minimise the overall effects.
- 4.5 The baseline analysis (landscape **and** townscape) is a critical component of the design process and achieving a successful outcome in respect of the masterplan.
- 4.6 The existing character is important. By understanding the existing sense of place and relationship of buildings to the spaces they are adjacent to and within, the approach to delivering a landscape-led scheme emerges and ensures that the new development complements its context and is anchored to its location.
- 4.7 This is an issue considered in GLVIA 3, Chapter 4: The Proposed Development, Design and Mitigation. Paragraphs 4.5 and 4.6 state:

*"Design plays an increasingly important part in the development planning process. This has been emphasised*

*by the introduction of statutory requirements for the production of design statements, or design and access statements, for many planning proposals in different parts of the UK. Such Statements explain the design principles and concepts underpinning the proposal and process through which it has evolved. This includes the ways in which the context of the development, including the landscape, has been appraised or assessed and how the design of the development takes that context into account in relation to its proposed use."*

*"EIA itself can be an important design tool. It is now usually an iterative process the stages feed into the planning and design of the project. The iterative design and assessment process has great strength because it links the analysis of the environmental issues with steps to improve the siting, layout, and design of a particular scheme."*

- 4.8 This contextually informed iterative process is essential in understanding the baseline situation, interplay of components, sense of place and delivering an appropriate and complementary settlement expansion scheme.
- 4.9 As noted above, Leyton Place has worked with the masterplanners to understand the townscape and landscape character and qualities to inform the development of the masterplan. The applicant's team has worked in a fully collaborative manner to achieve an appropriate design outcome.

### Design approach and integration – landscape and visual character

- 4.10 Based on the published analysis, GI principles and policies and site observations the following were recommended to be considered in the development of the masterplan:
- 4.11 By way of reference to Figure 4.1 the following approach is recommended to enable assimilation of the development into the settlement edge, responding to the landscape, townscape, and visual context.

- [1] To integrate with the settlement edge, consistent with the townscape elements provide housing backing onto the rear gardens of the existing properties. Cluster bungalows in locations where they are already present in the townscape to demonstrate how the new housing will minimise impacts

on the high ground and overlooking with the adjacent properties.

- [3] Expand the open space, retaining the trees and creating breaches in the hedgerow so that the open space is consolidated, and its functionality can be increased. Provision of informal and linked pedestrian links (including play provision) and fruiting species will provide Green Infrastructure benefits. The approach to this space should be to form the transition zone where the existing and new settlement come together as a means of physical, visual, and perceptual integration, akin to a village green/gateway.
- [4] Feathered edge to development. Properties to face outwards to positively address the open space and the transition to the wider countryside, avoiding a hard and fenced edge in this location.
- [5] Green spaces areas to include SUDs, ecological habitats, and tree planting to filter and soften the appearance of the settlement edge.
- [6] Provide links to the existing footpath to enhance connectivity for the existing and new community, providing more options for circular walks.
- [7] LEAP including appropriate buffers to be located centrally to the community and set back from the footpaths so that the existing levels of tranquillity are not substantially eroded.
- [8] Provision of new tree planting to ensure longevity of the tree belt and reinforce the separation between the settlement and the wider countryside.

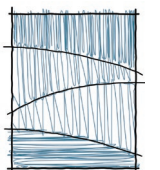
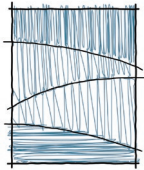
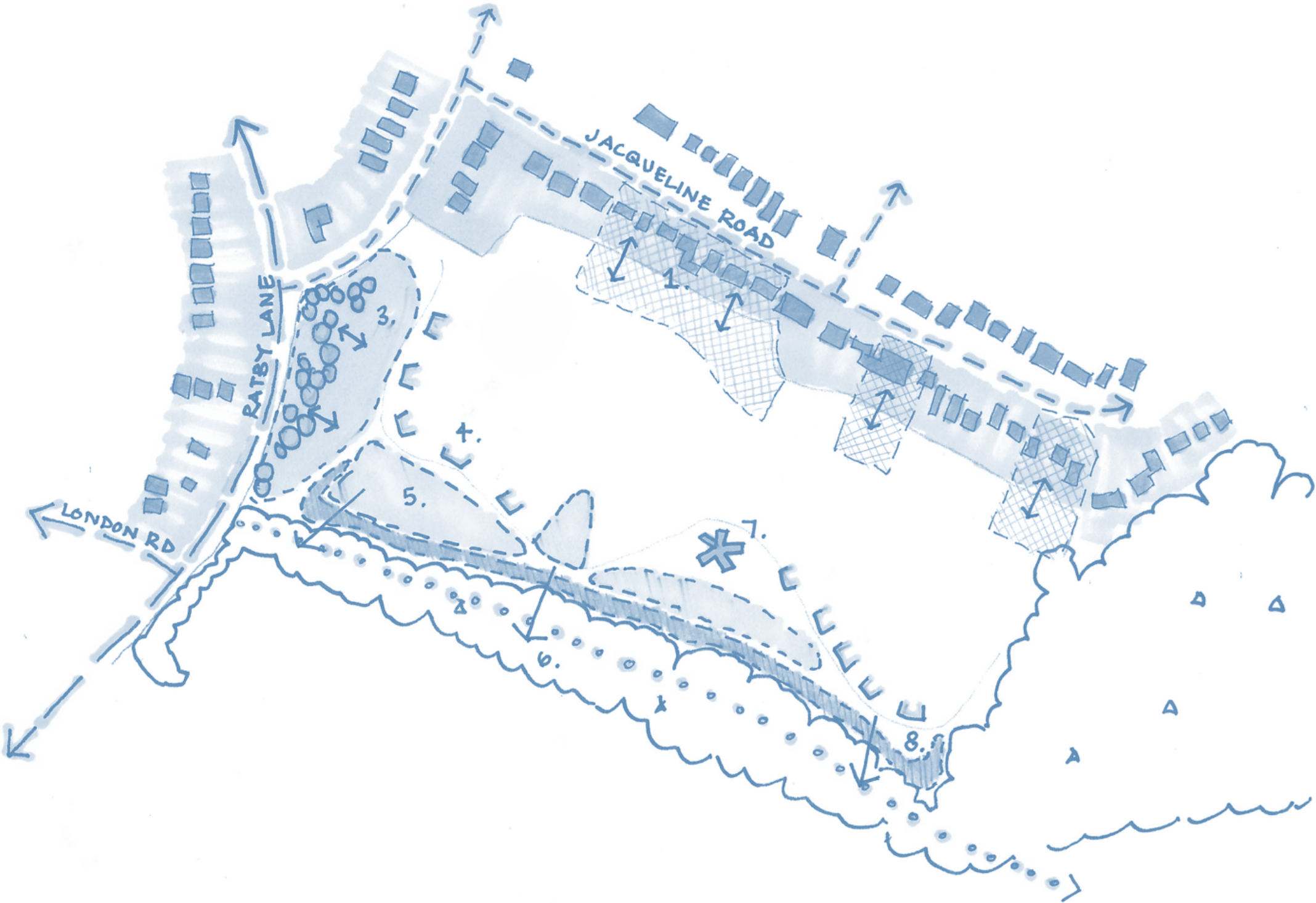




Figure 4.1: Landscape and visual recommendations



# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## Green Infrastructure

### *Hinckley and Bosworth Green infrastructure Strategy (July 2020)*

- 4.12 Within Figure 5.1 of this document, the Green Infrastructure assets (GI) associated with the application site are the tree belt on the southern boundary and the woodland to the east.

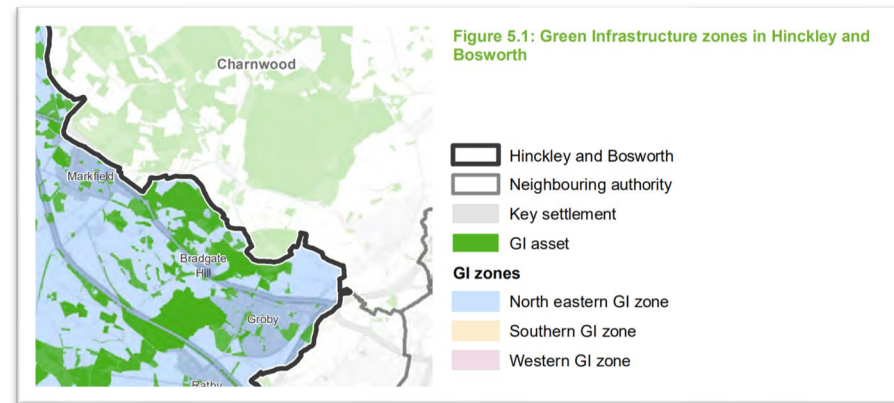


Figure 4.2: Extract of Figure 5.1 GI strategy

- 4.13 There are seven guiding principles for provision of GI in the borough:

1. Delivery of multifunctional benefits and essential services
2. Planning, design, connectivity
3. Creating value.
4. Funding, stewardship, and governance
5. Climate change resilience and mitigation
6. Supporting the recovery of biodiversity network
7. Partnership working and stakeholder engagement.

### *Hinckley and Bosworth Adopted Core Strategy 2009*

- 4.14 The core strategy, policies 19 and 20 seek to deliver specific elements/quantum of GI. In respect of Markfield the objectives relate to promotion of the settlement for tourism and increase tree planting alongside the A50 and promoting traffic free access between Markfield and Groby. All of these fall outside of the scope of this planning application.

- 4.15 These specific matters are set within the context of the overarching objective recorded in paragraphs 4.60 to 4.62, namely:

*Green infrastructure is a network of multi-functional green spaces. This network of both public and privately owned land and water supports native species, maintains natural*

*and ecological processes, protects, and enhances the historic environment and landscape character, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life of people and communities.*

*The growth proposed in Hinckley & Bosworth provides an opportunity to plan for a green infrastructure network, serving the needs of both rural and urban communities and strengthening the links between them. It must link in with the wider green infrastructure framework for the Leicestershire region and will provide important green corridors to enable wildlife migration and protection and enhancement of biodiversity.*

*An important component of green infrastructure is the green spaces and play areas that are integral to both urban and rural communities. The provision of high quality green spaces and play areas in the right areas can have significant benefits in relation to health, community cohesion and general well being.*

- 4.16 In addition to the general GI requirements, the National Forest is a component of the GI strategy. Policy 21 is supportive of development provided that:

- *The siting and scale of the proposed development is appropriately related to its setting within the Forest.*
- *The development respects the character and appearance of the wider countryside and*
- *The development does not adversely affect the existing facilities and working landscape of either the Forest or the wider countryside.*

*Within the National Forest new developments will be required to reflect the Forest context in their accompanying landscape proposals. Developments shall provide on-site or nearby landscaping that meets the National Forest development planting guidelines. Landscaping will generally involve woodland planting but can also include creation and management of other appropriate habitats, open space provision and the provision of new recreational facilities. The appropriate mix of landscaping features will depend upon the setting and the opportunities that the site presents.*

## Design approach and integration – Green Infrastructure

- 4.17 In respect of the approach to integrate the development with its landscape and townscape context, a number of the new assets will contribute to enhancement of the GI functionality of the site and this edge of settlement location, through:

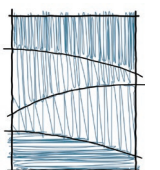
1. Provision of new pedestrian routes facilitating greater levels of access for the community to open spaces and the opportunity to enjoy informal recreation and connect with the environment.
2. Soft engineering approach for the purpose of water management, which will serve to diversify the type of grassland and habits. Using sustainable means for controlling run off coupled with enhanced biodiversity also makes a positive contribution to the recreational environment.
3. Inclusion of an equipped play area, this can use natural material to reflect the woodland context to the south and east. Provision of new recreational assets in close proximity to people's homes is critical in providing a positive environment for the health and wellbeing of the community.
4. Increased tree cover will provide ecological benefits, enhance the environment for the residents, and contribute to Climate Change adaptation – a modest increase in tree canopy cover will have a positive effect on the urban heat island effect through evapotranspiration and shading.
5. The enhanced provision and greater variety of interconnected habitats, including grassland, scrub, tree groups and water features will enable species to diversify and migrate.
6. Sense of place - Creation of a network community open space, play area and woodland fringe directly accessible from the settlement edge, allowing the community to recreate, engage and connect to the landscape beyond and increase opportunity to enjoy the landscape and wider National Forest.

## Summary of mitigation measures

### *Prevention/avoidance*

- 4.18 As a starting point, the site avoids impacts on sensitive and highly valued locations. Specifically, the site is:

- Outwith any national statutorily designated landscape.





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- Not within or near a Registered Historic Parks and Gardens.
- Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area; and
- Located in a settled landscape.

4.19 The site is located adjacent to the settlement edge in a location where it would form a natural extension to Markfield. Access would be achieved from the existing road network, thereby avoiding impacts on the character of the local road network beyond those already established.

## *Reduction/minimisation*

4.20 Where hedgerows are lost in the creation of access, new tree planting is provided within the open space, in a quantum greater than that lost to the development proposals. The qualitative aspect of this provision is addressed in the ecology assessment.

4.21 Impacts on the mature trees are minimised extensively through their retention within an appropriate buffer during both the construction and development phases of the project.

4.22 During the construction phase the following measures will be adopted to minimise the likely effects:

- Existing trees and hedgerows that are to be retained within the Proposed Development will be protected.
- Measures will be implemented to ensure that trees / hedgerows which will not be removed do not suffer direct damage through operations on Site or indirect damage from spillages within the root zone or storage, causing root compaction, in accordance with BS 5837:2012 and the Habitat Regulations, 1997.

4.23 Lighting that is necessary during the winter months of construction will be designed to minimise sky glow, light spill, and glare. The following mitigation should be delivered through an appropriately worded condition:

- Lighting will only focus on the area needed for construction activity, public amenity, and safety.
- Up lighting will be kept to a minimum. Lighting equipment will be chosen to minimise the upward spread of light where possible, minimising the use of lighting columns; and

- To reduce the glare of lighting, the main beam angle will be adjusted so as not to be directed towards potential observers.

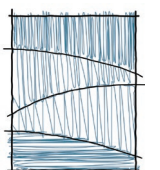
## *Enhancement measures*

4.24 The following, additional measures are provided to enhance the settlement edge character and ensure longevity of notable and characteristic elements. These are shown on the Landscape Strategy plan which accompanies the planning application.

- New habitats and multifunctional green infrastructure, these are described in full in the DAS.
- The GI assets will be expanded above those found in the baseline situation to include a greater number of trees, sustainable drainage features, public access, increased provision of informal and formal recreation facilities.

4.25 Due to mitigation measures being designed into the scheme proposals, there are no predicted residual effects which require further mitigation.

4.26 The arrangement of the landscape elements, coupled with the treatment and functionality of the open space, are fundamental to the proposals to ensure appropriate assimilation and integration with the wider settlement edge and townscape character.



Section 5: Magnitude of change

- 5.1

GLVIA3 recognises the importance of professional judgement in undertaking the assessment of effects in determining the likely significance of effects. To overcome the potential problems associated with the over-reliance on matrices and tabular summaries of effects, which have typically been used in the past, in the latest guidance there is a greater emphasis on the need for narrative text describing the landscape and visual effect and the judgements made on their significance.
- 5.2

The significance of the effect is a function of the sensitivity of the resource or receptor and the magnitude of the change. Having determined the sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors in section 3 above, Tables 5.5-5.8 set out the degree to which the landscape and visual environment is changed (magnitude of change) and how these changes are brought about.
- 5.3

GLVIA3 (paragraph 6.29) states:  
  
*“...effects can be described as positive or negative (or in some cases neutral) in their consequences for views and visual amenity.”*

- 5.4

GLVIA3 does not, however, state how negative or positive effects should be assessed and therefore becomes a matter of subjective judgement rather than reasoned criteria.

Magnitude of landscape change

- 5.5

At the lower end of the spectrum the degree of change may be small, and the loss/addition of landscape features affecting only a limited proportion of the total extent which the resource contributes to the character. The changes are entirely consistent with the context, and the geographic extent over which the effects occur may be localised.
- 5.6

At the higher end of the spectrum the change may be over an extensive area with a high proportion of landscape elements which contribute to the character of the area being lost or altered. The change may be at odds and incongruent with the context within which it occurs.

Lighting effects

- 5.7

At this stage it is appropriate to touch on the issue of lighting and night-time effects. This does not form part of this LVIA for the following reasons:
  - Leyton Place Limited is not a lighting consultancy.

- The application is made in outline and there is no lighting strategy at this stage, this will be the subject of the reserved matters application/discharge of conditions.

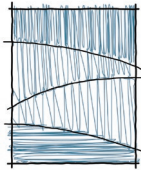
- 5.8

The Site is located on the immediate edge of the settlement and as such the following are existing sources of illumination in the vicinity of the Site:
  - Lighting on roads and junctions
  - Traffic headlights travelling along the local roads.
  - Light spill from properties abutting and in close proximity of the Site.
- 5.9

This is not a dark environment, changes to the lighting character will be consistent with the setting of the Site, albeit without the need for security/flood lighting, found elsewhere in views.

Table 5.1: Magnitude of Landscape Change

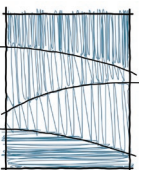
Landscape Resource	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Description of change Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
National and regional landscape character areas		Given the scale of the published assessments and the localised geographic extent of change there will be no discernible change to the character and qualities of The Culm landscape character area.		No change to the character of these large-scale character areas.
Landscape at the edge of Markfield (the application site and its immediate environs)	Lowest end of the spectrum (A)	<p>During the construction phase the character and appearance of the Site will completely change. The dynamic activities in the site clearance, preliminary works, presence of construction traffic and changes to the components of the landscape will be incongruent to the baseline situation and nearby townscape and adjoining open landscapes.</p> <p>Beyond the red line area there will be no physical change to the landscape and townscape components. Noise emanating from the construction activities will</p>	Following the completion of the development the character of the site, whilst altering from its current condition and character will complement and reflect the adjoining and established settlement edge (comprising residential and commercial uses). The changes are consistent with the townscape context of Markfield and contained in the application site.	<p>During the construction phase the magnitude of change to the character of the site will be localised, phased, short term and <b>adverse</b>. The change lies towards the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E).</p> <p>On completion the primary change will be the introduction of elements consistent with the established context. Whilst the character of the site will change, as with the current</p>





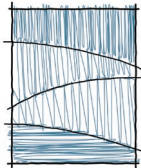
# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Landscape Resource	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Description of change Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
		<p>influence the levels of relative tranquility in adjoining land uses, particularly.</p> <p>The construction phase will be experienced for a period of 48 months following grant of permission, albeit areas of completed development will increase in terms of the proportion of the site affected over this timeframe.</p>		<p>settlement, it will become assimilated in the physical and perceptual environment of the town. The magnitude of change is in the <b>mid-high</b> part of the spectrum (D). The effect in terms of the components complementing and reflecting the context will be <b>neutral</b>, as places people live, work, and socialise in are not in themselves harmful. The proposals will contribute to the character and sense of place relating to the new settlement edge.</p>
<b>Attributes of the Site</b>				
Landform	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum, with the northern edge being slightly more sensitive to development, albeit still at the lower end of the range of sensitivity.	Localised changes in levels relating to groundwork and the creation of building foundations will occur. However, the underlying form of the topography will be unchanged.	The resulting settlement extension will relate to the underlying and principal landform consistent with the existing settlement. The form of development in terms of verticality and 'shape' will complement its context.	<p>The changes both in the construction phases and at completion are highly localised.</p> <p>The magnitude of change once the construction phase is complete, will be at the <b>mid-range</b> of the spectrum and <b>neutral</b> in nature (C).</p>
Hydrology	No discernible hydrology associated with the site.	During the construction phase there will be new features created to accommodate the drainage strategy for the proposals. There will be localised disruption through groundworks but no impact on existing water features.	The proposals incorporate sustainable urban drainage features which also provide for ecological and amenity benefits.	<p>The provision of new SUDs features is beneficial to the environment and people using the spaces within the settlement edge.</p> <p>The magnitude of change is at the <b>higher</b> end of the range, <b>beneficial</b> magnitude of change (E).</p>
Land cover	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum	Existing vegetation – this will be retained within appropriately constructed tree protection fencing.	As part of the landscape strategy new hedgerows and groups of trees will be incorporated into the scheme, primarily within the open spaces, and along the line of the principal access road. There is scope in the reserved matters application to provide additional hedges within the internal housing layout, subject to design and approval. These will mature within a	<p>During the construction phase the impacts on existing vegetation and grassland will be adverse, short-term, and localised. The magnitude of effect is <b>mid-range</b> and <b>adverse (C)</b>.</p> <p>Post construction and with the completion of the development the</p>



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Landscape Resource	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Description of change Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
			<p>reasonable timeframe, particularly in the lifespan of development.</p> <p>From a landscape perspective these new elements will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Compensate for any loss in the construction phase– therefore neutralising the adverse effects from the construction phase.</li><li>• Enhance the provision of such features in the landscape, acknowledging that the integrity of these features has been in decline over a period of years.</li><li>• Reflect the historic field pattern, anchoring the new housing to its landscape context.</li><li>• Provide connectivity of habitats and wildlife corridors (see Ecological Impact Assessment for more detail).</li><li>• Increase the level of tree cover and enhance functionality in respect of climate change.</li><li>• Provide compartmentalisation within the development to assist with creating localised character and assisting with legibility within the new settlement edge.</li><li>• Filter internal views of the housing.</li></ul>	<p>provision of new hedgerows and tree belts results in a <b>mid-high, beneficial</b> magnitude of change (D).</p>
Associations/Townscape	The sensitivity of the townscape is at the lower end of the spectrum	The existing townscape will not experience direct effects because of the construction phase. Nearby new greenfield development (to the southwest of the site) is occurring on a greater scale than required for this project.	The new housing will complement the existing townscape, whilst providing new spaces and landscape elements to enhance the settlement edge and provide a sensitive and transitional change rather than the abrupt ‘hard edge’ currently experienced.	<p>During the construction phase the impacts on the character of the townscape will be in-direct, localised and will relate to off-site traffic movements. The magnitude of effect is <b>mid to low-range</b> and <b>adverse</b> (B).</p> <p>Post construction and with the completion of the development the provision of a considered housing and green infrastructure strategy the magnitude of effects will be <b>mid-range, and beneficial</b> (C).</p>





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Landscape Resource	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Description of change Completed Development	Magnitude of effect on landscape character/resource
Enclosure	The sensitivity of the enclosed character and features which determine the level of enclosure are at the mid-range of sensitivity.	The degree of enclosure will remain unchanged during the construction phase.	The completed and established development will improve the degree of enclosure of the settlement edge due to the increase in tree cover and framed open space.	During the construction phase the effects will be negligible.  Post construction, and with the completion of the development, there will be a <b>mid-high, beneficial</b> magnitude of change in respect of enclosure (D).
Access	This attribute is at the mid-range of sensitivity to change.	No existing recreational access/routes will be lost during the construction phase.  Temporary closure of the pedestrian footpath for the implementation of the site access will occur.  The public right of way beyond the southern boundary will be unchanged, but people on the route will experience increased noise and activity.	On completion of the development there will be new accessible space for the local community.	During the construction phase the impacts on existing paths/recreational routes will be adverse, short-term, and localised. The magnitude of the effect is <b>low to mid-range</b> and <b>adverse</b> (B).  Post construction, and with the completion of the development, the provision of new spaces and areas for children's play results in a <b>mid-high, beneficial</b> magnitude of change (D).
Relative tranquility	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the groundworks and site activities will cause localised disruption. The need for lighting during the winter months will affect the night-time conditions	The new housing and open space will result in no discernible change in the relative tranquility, being compatible with the baseline situation.	During the construction phase the magnitude of change to the character of the site will be localised, phased, short term and <b>adverse</b> . The change lies towards the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E).  On completion the new land uses will be consistent with the established context. The magnitude of change is in the <b>low</b> range of the spectrum (A).

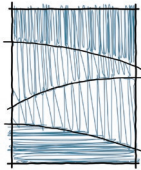
Magnitude of visual change

5.10 At the lower end of the spectrum the visual change may be small scale with no notable loss or addition to the view, the change is consistent with the baseline context and will not give

rise to a contrast in elements, form, colour and line, whilst the views are likely to be fleeting, glimpsed, or viewed infrequently.

5.11 At the higher end of the spectrum the changes will be large scale, with losses of key elements in the view and/or additional features which may be incongruent in the composition. There is

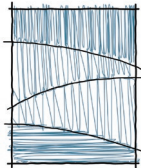
likely to be a contrast in scale, form, line and colour and the changes will affect a sizable proportion of the view, be fully visible. The duration of the view is likely to be prolonged and frequent.



Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Table 5.2: Magnitude of visual change

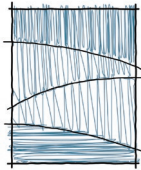
Visual Receptor	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect
People using the local public rights of way network and pedestrian footpaths alongside roads. Representative viewpoints 1 to 3 and 7 to 10.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid-high range</b> of the spectrum (D).	<p>During the construction phase the views will be the subject of regular change, including seeing activities and elements which are incongruent with the baseline situation from the immediate boundaries of the site.</p> <p>Beyond the site the visual change will not be discernible.</p>	Once complete the nature of the visual change will be barely discernible when viewed against the context of the established settlement. The components of the views will be consistent with the baseline situation, albeit housing will appear closer to those walking or driving on the local routes immediately abutting the site.	<p>The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E) and <b>adverse</b> in nature when seen from close views.</p> <p>From more distance vantage points the visual change will not be apparent. The overall composition and balance of elements will be unchanged. From these locations the magnitude of change during the construction phase will be at the <b>lower</b> end (A) of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b>.</p> <p>On completion of the development the nature of the change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature and in the <b>low to mid</b>-part of the range.</p> <p>From the distant vantage points the magnitude of the change is negligible.</p>
Users of road network, specifically Ratby Lane and Launde Road Representative viewpoints 7 to 10.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>lowest</b> end of the spectrum (A).	<p>During the construction phase the views will be the subject of regular change, including seeing activities and elements which are incongruent with the baseline situation.</p> <p>The visual change will be limited to a small component of a wider and unchanged view.</p>	Once complete the degree of change will be barely discernible against the context of the established settlement.	<p>The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E) and <b>adverse</b> in nature.</p> <p>From more distance vantage points the visual change will not be apparent.</p> <p>The overall composition and balance of elements will be unchanged. From these locations the magnitude of change during the construction phase will be at the <b>lower</b> end (A) of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b>.</p>





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Visual Receptor	Sensitivity – set out in Section 3 above	Description of change Construction Phase	Completed Development	Magnitude of effect
				<p>On completion of the development the nature of the change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature.</p> <p>From the distant vantage points the magnitude of the change is negligible.</p> <p>From those close to the site the magnitude of the change is at the <b>mid-range</b>.</p>
<p>Occupants of properties which abut the application site. No photography from private properties.</p> <p>See Figure 2.3 and photoviewpoints 4 and 6.</p>	<p>The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid to high range</b> of the spectrum (D).</p>	<p>Construction activities, equipment and the phasing of change will result in notable and frequent changes in views. The views will be affected in phased manner with changes in the visual composition across the site for the 48-month construction phase.</p> <p>The change in view will be primarily experienced from first floor windows, as people look above fences and through tree canopies. However, the visual and perceptual change is likely to be experienced from ground floor rear facing windows to some degree.</p>	<p>For immediate residents the change will be a complete change in outlook, open farmland will be replaced by housing and gardens. In planning terms there is no right to a view, but the detailed design will need to ensure no impacts on the residential amenity of the existing properties</p>	<p>The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> (E) end of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b> in nature.</p> <p>On completion the magnitude of change will be <b>adverse</b> in nature (foreshortening views and changing the visual composition and balance of elements) and at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E).</p>



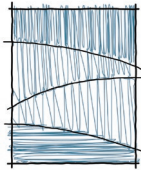
Section 6: Consequence of development

(section 3) and the magnitude of change that resource or receptor experiences. These issues are combined to inform the judgement on the overall significance of effect. A summary of landscape and visual effects is set out in **Tables 6.1 and 6.2**

6.1 The determination of the significance of the effect is a function of the sensitivity of the landscape resource or visual receptor

Table 6.1: Significance of effect – Landscape

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change	Significance of effect – completed development
National and regional landscape character areas		No change	Not significant
Landscape at the edge of Markfield	Lowest end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the change lies towards the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum.  On completion the magnitude of change is in the <b>mid-high</b> part of the spectrum.	Significant resulting from the loss of open countryside to housing development. The effect is localised to the application site. Wider context is unchanged by the proposals.
Landform	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum.	The magnitude of change once the construction phase is complete will be at the <b>mid-range</b> of the spectrum and <b>neutral</b> in nature.	Not significant
Hydrology	No discernible hydrology associated with the site – negligible.	The magnitude of change is at the <b>higher</b> end of the range, <b>beneficial</b> magnitude of change.	Significant resulting from the diversification of habitats and amenity elements enhancing the character of the settlement edge and creating an appropriate transition. The effect is localised to the application site. Wider context is unchanged by the proposals.
Land cover	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the magnitude of the effect is <b>mid-range</b> and <b>adverse</b> .  Post construction the development will result in a <b>mid-high, beneficial</b> magnitude of change.	Not significant
Associations/Townscape	The sensitivity of the townscape is at the lower end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the magnitude of effect is <b>mid to low-range</b> and <b>adverse</b> .  Post construction and with the completion of the development the magnitude of effects will be <b>mid-range, and beneficial</b> .	Not significant



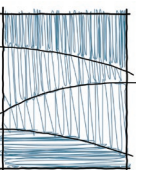


# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Enclosure	The sensitivity of the enclosed character and features which determine the level of enclosure are at the mid-range of sensitivity.	During the construction phase the effects will be negligible.  Post construction, there will be a <b>mid-high, beneficial</b> magnitude of change in respect of enclosure.	Not significant
Access	This attribute is at the mid-range of sensitivity to change.	During the construction phase the magnitude of the effect is <b>low to mid-range</b> and <b>adverse</b> .  Post construction, the development results in a <b>mid-high, beneficial</b> magnitude of change.	Significant resulting from the increase of accessible space and connecting routes. The effect is localised to the application site. Wider context is unchanged by the proposals.
Relative tranquility	The sensitivity is at the lower end of the spectrum	During the construction phase the change lies towards the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E).  On completion the magnitude of change is in the <b>low</b> range of the spectrum (A).	Not significant

Table 6.2: Significance of effect – Visual

Receptor	Sensitivity of receptor	Magnitude of change	Significance of effect – completed development
People using the local public rights of way network and pedestrian footpaths alongside roads. <b>Representative viewpoints 1 to 3 and 7 to 10.</b>	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid-high range</b> of the spectrum (D).	The construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E) and <b>adverse</b> .  On completion of the development the nature of the change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature (comprising mixed elements with a 'green' aspect).	Not significant
Users of road network, specifically Ratby Lane and Launde Road <b>Representative viewpoints 7 to 10.</b>	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is within the <b>mid-range</b> of the spectrum (C).	The construction phase will be at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E) and <b>adverse</b> in nature.  On completion of the development the nature of the change will be <b>neutral</b> in nature at the <b>mid-high range</b> .	Not significant
Occupants of properties which abut the application site. No photography from private properties.  See Figure 2.3 and photoviewpoints 4 and 6.	The sensitivity of these people to visual change is at the <b>higher range</b> of the spectrum (E).	The magnitude of effect during the construction phase will be at the <b>higher (E)</b> end of the spectrum and <b>adverse</b> in nature.  On completion the magnitude of change will be <b>adverse</b> in nature (foreshortening views and changing the visual composition and balance of elements) and at the <b>higher</b> end of the spectrum (E).	Significant resulting from the reduction in open views from the properties.



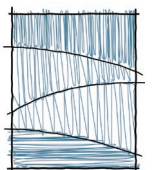
- 6.2 As expected, the greatest degree of change and disruption will be experienced during the construction phase, both in respect of the landscape, character, its features, and elements, and the visual environment for people living and moving around the area.

## Significance of landscape effects

- 6.3 During the construction phase of the development programme there will be continuous change to the landscape (in terms of both construction on site and construction movements in the local area). It is recognised that this is the most disruptive phase of development. In terms of the character of the site and its immediate context, the character of the area will experience localised and notable change with the introduction of elements and features associated with the construction process which are uncharacteristic. The construction activities will give rise to significant and adverse effects. This disruption will last for the duration of the build programme. The construction effects for all of the landscape receptors will be temporary in nature.
- 6.4 The permanent (post implementation and establishment of the landscape measures – years 5 onwards) significant landscape effects identified by this assessment process relate to:
- ADVERSE Change to the landscape character and land use limited to the extents of the application site.
  - BENEFICAL through the provision of SUDs
  - BENEFICAL Public rights of way and public access – provision of new open space
- 6.5 The landscape effects will be localised and not experienced beyond the application site and local landscape.
- 6.6 The adverse effect on the character of the site, through the development of the settlement expansion, is balanced against the creation of a character of townscape which draws from and complements the local context. Furthermore, the new settlement edge provides for enhanced landscape features and greater public access.
- 6.7 The landscape effects are highly localised, and the changes are consistent with the established settled character of this part of the River Axe floodplain.

## Significance of visual effects

- 6.8 During the construction phase of the development programme there will be continuous change to the views experienced by residents and those moving around the area. It is recognised that this is the most disruptive phase of development. The views will include incongruent elements, such as scaffolding, construction vehicles and plant. The viewers will experience frequent change on a daily basis; however, the duration of this change during the construction phase is temporary and short-term.
- 6.9 The degree of change diminishes with distance, so the greatest effects are experienced from those places in close proximity to the application site.
- 6.10 Significant, adverse, and permanent visual effects will occur in respect of those residents adjoining or in close proximity to the site.

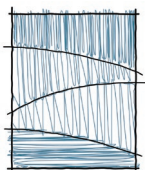




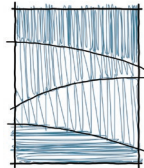
## Section 7: Summary

- 7.1 It is acknowledged that any development of greenfield locations for new housing will give rise to landscape and visual change. This can be experienced to the southwest of the site, as new housing is being constructed. The fact that change will occur is not in itself harmful or adverse, such change has created the settlements and street scenes that are valued by communities and the people that live in them. It is inevitable that the most appropriate location for new homes, of the scale required, will be in the 'open countryside' abutting settlements across the district.
- 7.2 In respect of the natural environment, as a point of fact, the site is not covered by specific policies listed in the NPPF, paragraph 11, footnote 7, including:
- SSSI.
  - Habitat Sites.
  - Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.
  - National Park.
  - Heritage Coast.
  - Irreplaceable habitats.
  - Areas at risk of flooding or coastal change; and
  - Designated heritage assets.
- 7.3 In respect of NPPF Paragraph 187 b) the landscape character of the area has been recognised in the development of the proposals. This is not a valued landscape (NPPF 187 a)
- 7.4 The locational benefits of the Site can be summarised as:
- Located abutting the settlement edge, utilising the existing infrastructure.
  - Outwith any national statutorily designated landscape.
  - Not within or near other designated landscapes, such as Ancient Woodland or Registered Historic Parks and Gardens.
  - Not within or adjacent to a Conservation Area.
  - Not within an NPPF 'valued landscape.'
- 7.5 The applicant has commissioned a wide range of technical specialists to evaluate the site's capacity and the most appropriate development response.

- 7.6 The masterplan has been informed by extensive, comprehensive, and detailed technical analysis across a range of disciplines, cognisant of the council's previous concerns in respect of alternative scheme proposals. The team's collaborative design approach has sought to respond positively to the environmental constraints. The new settlement edge is permeable in terms of access and visibility, rich in landscape assets and delivers a variety of spaces, functions, and environmental benefits.
- 7.7 This approach enables a design solution which embraces the aims of paragraph 103 of the NPPF, namely:
- "Access to a network of high quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and physical activity is important for the health and well-being of communities and can deliver wider benefits for nature and support efforts to address climate change. Planning policies should be based on robust and up-to-date assessments of the need for open space, sport, and recreation facilities (including quantitative or qualitative deficits or surpluses) and opportunities for new provision. Information gained from the assessments should be used to determine what open space, sport and recreational provision is needed, which plans should then seek to accommodate."*
- 7.8 The applicant's team has taken a robust approach to the analysis of the locale, its technical constraints and relationship with the settlement edge, to create a complementary area of new housing within a connected framework of multifunctional green infrastructure serving the local and wider community. The collaborative approach to the project is important as it enables a comprehensive solution to growth.
- 7.9 The proposals for this application have been approached with new consultants to ensure that the proposals respond positively to their location and are landscape-led, to minimise the adverse effects and maximise benefits to the landscape and the local community.



Appendix 1: Building Heights Plan





1. Landscape Framework and The National Forest

The Site lies within the National Forest, which has shaped the design of the proposal. This included retaining the majority of the existing vegetation, providing a strong landscape structure. The existing vegetation will be extended with extensive tree planting within the new areas of open space. The open space will be planted with a mixture of native trees and thicket planting strengthened with wildflower grassland, creating a woodland edge habitat for the new local biodiversity.



2. SuDS Strategy

Two large drainage basins are proposed along the southern boundary of the Site, designed to form an integral part of the open space. The basins will retain and disperse surface water across the Site and their surrounds will be sown with a native grassland/ flora mix, wet thicket and aquatic planting, providing seasonal interest and wildlife habitat.



3. Play Area and Recreational Strategy

The play strategy will comprise a Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) located south of the residential area, allowing natural surveillance over them from the new housing. It will have a strong woodland play theme relating to the Charnwood Forest. The design will include a range of play equipment providing different play experiences. It will adjoin areas of amenity grass, offering a flexible recreational space for children and adults.

A recreational route would be created along the eastern, southern and western boundaries of the Site to make the proposed development more accessible to open spaces and provide the opportunity to enjoy informal recreation along the new basins to the south and through the new forest expansion.



4. Residential Planting

A variety of planting across the new residential area will achieve a high-quality landscape design and help to integrate the new development into the existing landscape framework. The proposed planting will reflect the character of the area and provide an attractive place to live while softening the built form throughout the development and its surroundings. Native hedging will be used alongside the development edge where it adjoins the new open space. Within the development area a more ornamental palette of trees and shrubs will be used to provide seasonal interest and colour. Small green spaces will be proposed across the development area, avenue trees planted along the main access road of the development area to provide interest as well as shade. The proposed planting will be easily maintained and compliment the setting of the new residential development.

Indicative Residential Planting Palette

Street/ Avenue Trees :

*Acer platanoides* 'Globosum'  
*Prunus cerasifera* 'Nigra'  
*Carpinus betulus* 'Frans Fontaine'  
*Betula albosinensis* 'Fascination'

Bullet Maple  
Purple-leaved Cherry  
Hornbeam 'Frans Fontaine'  
Chinese Red Birch 'Fascination'

Ornamental Shrubs:

*Skimmia x confusa* 'Kew Green'  
*Choisya ternata* 'Sundance'  
*Viburnum tinus*  
*Mahonia aquifolium*  
*Aucuba japonica* 'Rozannie'  
*Cornus Sanguinea* 'Midwinter Fire'  
*Nandina domestica*

Skimmia 'Kew Green'  
Mexican orange (Sundance)  
Laurustinus  
Oregon grape  
Japanese laurel 'Rozannie'  
Dogwood 'Midwinter Fire'  
Heavenly bamboo

Native Hedgerow :

*Ligustrum vulgare*  
*Viburnum opulus*  
*Crataegus monogyna*  
*Corylus avellana*

Common Privet  
Guelder Rose  
Common Hawthorn  
Common Hazel



Indicative Open Space Planting Palette

Native Trees :

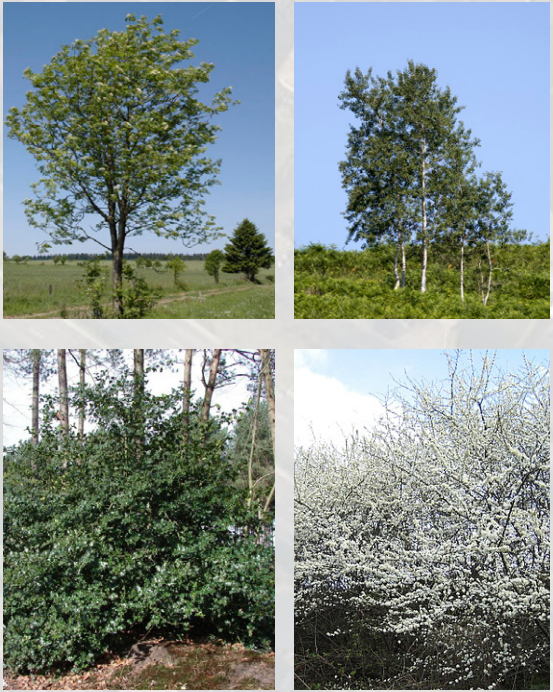
*Aesculus hippocastanum*  
*Tilia platyphyllos*  
*Populus tremula*  
*Sorbus aucuparia*

Horse chestnut  
Large-leaved lime  
Aspen  
Rowan

Native Thicket :

*Ulex europaeus*  
*Ilex aquifolium*  
*Crataegus monogyna*  
*Prunus spinosa*

Common gorse  
Common holly  
Common hawthorn  
Blackthorn



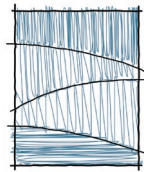
- Site Boundary
- Existing Vegetation
- Existing Vegetation Removed
- Amenity Grass
- Meadow Grassland
- Native Tree Planting
- Street Tree Planting
- Native Hedge Planting
- Woodland Planting
- Thicket Planting
- SuDS Basin
- Wet Thicket Planting
- Play Area (LEAP)
- Recreational Footway
- Public Right of Way (PROW)
- Reinforced Grass - treatment to be agreed at RM stage



B	24/06/25	TV	Minor update to text
A	29/05/25	TV	Updated Red Line Boundary
Rev	Date	By	Description
Drawing Status			
FOR ILLUSTRATIVE PURPOSES ONLY			
CSA environmental			
Dixies Barns, High Street, Ashwell, Hertfordshire SG7 5NT			
01462 743647 ashwell@csaenvironmental.co.uk csaenvironmental.co.uk			
Project Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield			
Title Illustrative Landscape Strategy Plan			
Client Taylor Wimpey UK Ltd			
Scale	1:1000 @ A1	Drawn	TV
Date	June 2025	Checked	BS
Drawing No.	CSA/2550/128	Rev	B



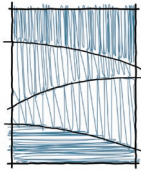
Appendix 2: Glossary



# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

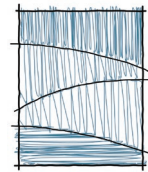
## Glossary

<b>Character</b>	A distinct, recognisable, and consistent pattern of elements, features and qualities in the landscape that makes one landscape different from another, rather than better or worse.	<b>Landscape</b>	An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors.	<b>Significance</b>	proposed and the value related to that receptor.
<b>Characteristics / elements</b>	Features and qualities which make a particular contribution to distinctive character.	<b>Landscape Character Areas</b>	These are single unique areas which are the discrete geographical areas if a particular landscape type.	<b>Susceptibility</b>	A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic.
<b>Characterisation</b>	The process of identifying areas of similar character, classifying, and mapping them and describing their character.	<b>Landscape effects</b>	Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.	<b>Visual Amenity</b>	The ability of a defined landscape and visual receptor to accommodate the specific proposed development without undue negative consequences.
<b>Effects</b>	These are the effects that result from the impacts (changes) of the proposed development. Direct effects are directly attributable to the proposed development, Indirect effects result indirectly from the proposed project but are because of the direct impacts, often occurring away from the Site, or because of a sequence of interrelationships or a complex pathway. They may be separated by distance of in time from the source of the impacts.	<b>Landscape quality (condition)</b>	A measure of the physical state of the landscape. It may include the extent to which typical character is represented in individual areas, the intactness of the landscape and the condition of individual elements.	<b>Visual effects</b>	The overall pleasantness of the views people enjoy of their surroundings, which provides an attractive visual setting or backdrop for the enjoyment of activities of the people living, working, recreating, visiting, or travelling through an area.
<b>Element</b>	Individual component parts of the landscape such as field boundaries, woodlands, patches of similar vegetation, outbuildings, structures, and rock outcrops.	<b>Landscape Value</b>	The relative value that is attached to different landscapes by society. A landscape may be valued by different stakeholders for a whole variety of reasons.	<b>Visual Envelope</b>	Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.
<b>Feature</b>	Particularly prominent or eye-catching elements e.g., wooded hilltop or chapel, or a particular aspect of this project.	<b>Magnitude (of effect)</b>	A term that combines judgements about the size and scale of the effect, the extent of the area over which it occurs, whether it is reversible or irreversible and whether it is short or long term in duration.	<b>Visual receptors</b>	An area validated by fieldwork from which the Proposals are visible from, typically informed by the ZTV (see below).
<b>Impacts</b>	The changes occurring because of the proposed development, the causation of effects.	<b>Sense of Place</b>	The unique experience that arises because of being in or walking through a particular locality, generally as a response to the specific characteristics and quality of the area.	<b>Visualisation</b>	Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by a proposal
<b>Land Cover</b>	Combinations of natural and man-made elements including vegetation that cover the land surface.	<b>Sensitivity (of Landscape)</b>	The unique experience that arises because of being in or walking through a particular locality, generally as a response to the specific characteristics and quality of the area.	<b>Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV)</b>	A computer simulation, photomontage or other technique illustrating the predicted appearance of a development.
			The inherent sensitivity of the landscape itself, irrespective of the type of change that may occur. In this project, it is divided into cultural, ecological, and visual sensitivity. A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgments of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development.		A map showing areas of land within which a development is theoretically visible.





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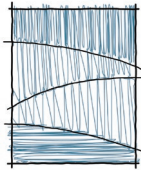
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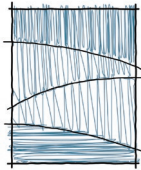
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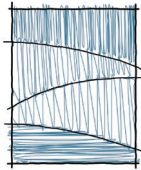




**Appendix 4: Extracted material from  
published characterisations**



**4a: East Midlands Regional Landscape  
Character Assessment**





# EAST MIDLANDS REGIONAL LANDSCAPE CHARACTER ASSESSMENT

East Midlands Regional Landscape Character Assessment

Incorporating the Peak District National Park and Lincolnshire Wolds AONB

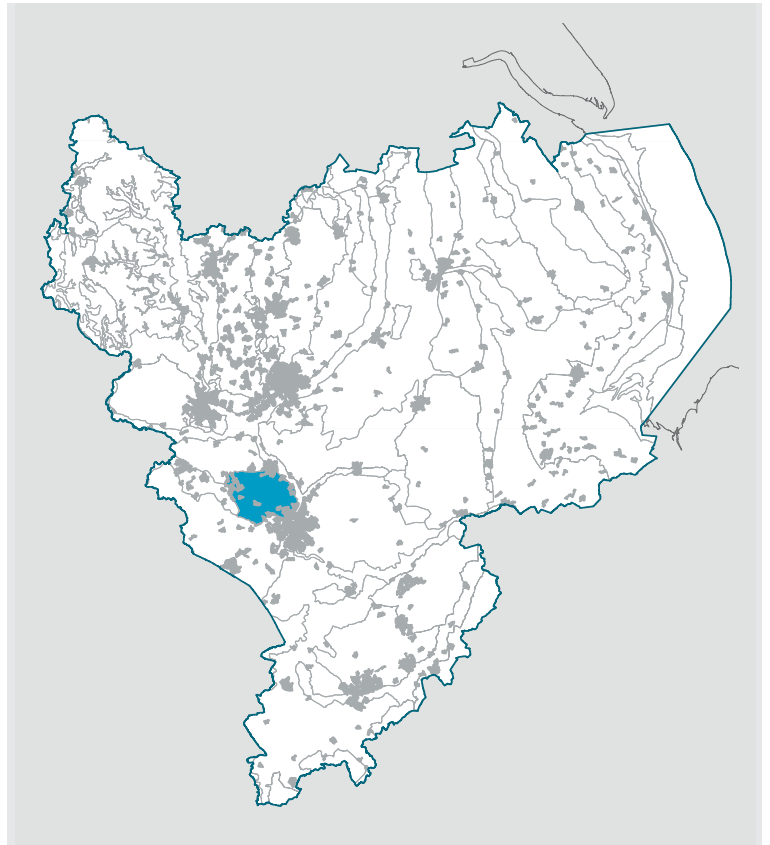
*Shaping the Region's Future Landscape*



## 10D: FORESTED ANCIENT HILLS



*Distinctive mixture of woodland and farmland  
(© Leicestershire County Council)*



### KEY CHARACTERISTICS

- Upland landscape of ancient Pre-Cambrian igneous rocks, rising out of lowland farmland;
- Distinctive rocky outcrops and knolls on elevated slopes and summits with extensive open areas;
- Clear, fast flowing streams on upper slopes that support an abundance of wildlife;
- High proportion of woodland cover;
- Land use is a distinctive mixture of woodlands, predominantly pastoral farmland, heathland, and parkland;
- Strongly rectilinear patterns of parliamentary enclosure fields and roads bounded by a mix of dry stone walls and hedges;
- Remnant historic parks and associated houses;
- Large reservoirs and pools are common landscape features; and
- Occasional villages and scattered farmsteads within the upland area, often constructed in the dark local stone, in contrast to larger villages and settlements located mainly at the edge of the elevated ground.



## LANDSCAPE CHARACTER

The Forested Ancient Hills Landscape Character Type is confined to a single area within the East Midlands Region comprising the Charnwood Forest area. The uniqueness of this Landscape Character Type is attributable to the underlying Pre-Cambrian geology which only occurs in this part of the region and has given rise to a distinctive area of elevated land with exposures of rugged rocky outcrops that rise above the surrounding lowland plain.

Overall, the Forested Ancient Hills has a well wooded character derived from the many areas of mixed deciduous and coniferous woodlands that are present, including ancient and wet woodlands. Within this pattern of woodlands, a mosaic of land uses extends across this elevated and dissected Landscape Character Type, comprising more open upland areas with heathland, mixed arable and pasture farmland, and remnant medieval parks, which together contribute to the diversity of the area. There is a notable concentration of SSSIs within the Forested Ancient Hills which is indicative of the high biodiversity value of many parts of the area it covers. The network of hedgerows and associated hedgerow trees that extends across the predominantly pastoral farmland contributes further to the sense of a well-wooded character.

The more elevated and open areas of the Forested Ancient Hills Landscape Character Type command expansive views to the surrounding lowland plain and distant horizons. In contrast, at lower elevations views are contained by the intricate pattern of woodlands and farmland and convey a secluded and intimate character.

## PHYSICAL INFLUENCES

The Forested Ancient Hills has a distinctive geological history. The underlying structure of the landscape is formed by Pre-Cambrian and Cambrian rocks which have been folded to form a series of semi-elliptical outcrops, interrupted by faulting and partially obscured by later Mercia Mudstone strata of the Triassic Period and more recently by superficial deposits (head) in the Holocene. These ancient rocks comprise a complex mixture of slates, volcanoclastic sandstones, breccias, tuffs and intrusive igneous rocks that have all been extensively quarried. The discovery in 1957 of a Charnian fossil in the ancient volcanoclastic rocks was of international importance as it provided evidence that primitive life forms existed in Precambrian period. Recent new discoveries have established Charnwood Forest as having one of the best Precambrian fossil assemblages in the world.



*Beacon Hill (© Leicestershire County Council)*

Charnwood Forest offers great potential for geodiversity interest with extensive natural and man made exposures. The geology is varied with many RIGS / Local Geological Sites and also many SSSIs for both geodiversity and biodiversity. The uniqueness of the landscape also offers great potential for geomorphological features. As well as the Precambrian rocks, many of the quarries also expose a spectacular unconformity with the overlying Triassic rocks and Pleistocene sediments. Relict landscapes and geomorphological features are also preserved such as the fossil Triassic tors at Budden Wood

Quarry, Mountsorrel. In view of the wide range of geodiversity and geomorphological features, it is important that practices are in place for their care, maintenance and management, and the promotion of their educational and interpretational interest.

The elevated core of the Forested Ancient Hills follows a broadly north west – south east orientated spine rising to summit areas of 278m at Bardon Hill and 245 m at Beacon Hill. The drainage pattern generally follows this north west to south east landform trend with wider and more open valley sections within areas underlain by the Mercia Mudstone in contrast to the deep gorge-like valleys where watercourses have cut through the harder Pre-Cambrian rocks.

At the heart of the Forested Ancient Hills the older rocks give rise to the thin, infertile and stony acidic soils that support a heathland vegetation but where Mercia Mudstone is present the land is more fertile. In contrast to the surrounding lowland areas, which have a predominant pattern of either urban or agricultural land cover, the Forested Ancient Hills has a more complex pattern with a mosaic of woodland, parkland, heathland and farmland. The woods are predominantly secondary. Oaks are the main deciduous tree but there are conifer woodlands and mixed plantations together with ancient woodlands, such as at Buddon and Swithland. Here, sessile oak and birch are characteristic of the thin acid soils rocks and pedunculate oak and ash are characteristic of the deeper soils on the mudstones.

Overall, the woodland cover is much greater than in the neighbouring lowland areas and is likely to increase within the western part of Charnwood Forest that is located in The National Forest. The parks are characterised by their mature oaks. Bradgate is the largest, and it is here and at Beacon Hill that the two main areas of heathland, now substantially invaded by bracken, can be found. However, there are patches elsewhere which typically include heather, bilberry and dry heathland grasses, with purple moor grass on the wetter areas.

Much of the agricultural land is divided up by a regular pattern of hawthorn hedges with oak trees together with dry stone walls but there is also the much less regular pattern and mixed hedges of ancient enclosure. Pasture is the predominant land cover but there are occasional patches of arable.

There are a number of large reservoirs within the Landscape Character Type which are an important water resource for the surrounding urban sub region. The hard rock resources have also resulted in a number of large quarries on the outer rim of the area, although the oldest of these are now partially encroached upon by scrub vegetation.



*Bradgate Park near Leicester (© Leicestershire County Council)*

## CULTURAL INFLUENCES

There is evidence of occupation of the Forested Ancient Hills and exploitation of the natural resources since Neolithic times. The exceptionally hard stone present together with the wood from the forests provided the resources for making hand-axes and finds date from this period. The discovery of a late Bronze Age hoard (1700 – 600BC) provides further evidence of prehistoric occupation, although this is likely to have been limited to localised focal points. An Iron Age hill fort dating from 600BC to AD43 is located at Beacon Hill, one of the highest points in Charnwood Forest, and attributable to the Coritani tribe which occupied this area at the time of the Roman Invasion.



Use of the Landscape Character Type's resources continued in the Roman Period with quarrying of the local Mountsorrel granite, and also the Swithland Slate, for roofing. There is evidence of these materials in Roman remains in the local area including the Roman military outpost of Ratae Corieltauvorum, the site of which is now occupied by the city of Leicester as well as sites in the wider area extending into Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire, where transportation of these quarried materials was facilitated by the Roman road network. The Anglo Saxons also continued to exploit these resources.

The forested character of the Landscape Character Type is formally recorded in the Domesday Book, identified as the woodland tract of Hereswode. The area remained generally uninhabited, with only one small settlement recorded at Charley. Thus, by the end of the 11th century much of the Forested Ancient Hills remained unclaimed and it was not until the 12th and 13th centuries that the land began to be cleared and settled. The surrounding villages located beyond the core of the Forest area each had a proportion of the extensive wooded area. As new villages were created, principally in the lower and more fertile valleys, each took substantial areas of land out of the Forest for agricultural use. A settlement pattern therefore began to evolve with a ring of villages surrounding the higher ground together with a smaller number of villages in the core of the Landscape Character Type.

A secluded location and cheaply available land for cultivation favoured the establishment of monastic settlements within the Landscape Character Type in the medieval period. These included Garendon Abbey and Ulverscroft Priory, established in 1133 and 1150 respectively, an Augustine Priory at Charley Hall in 1190, and Alderman's Haw in 1220. These establishments resulted in the reclamation of the higher land beyond the valley bottoms and clearance of the forest so deforestation was a notable process during this period. During this period a number of medieval hunting parks were also established around the core of the forested upland area utilising land that was too poor for agriculture but ideal for game hunting by the Lord of the manor and his guests. Examples include Groby, Bradgate,

Quorndon, Beaumanor and Bardon.

A number of larger country houses and associated parklands were established towards the end of the medieval period. The 15th century Bradgate House and Park (now Bradgate Park) is a notable example and also retains the mosaic of woodland and clearings that was typical of its earlier use as a medieval hunting forest.

From 1600 to the early 19th century there was very little change or colonisation within the Forested Ancient Hills and the area remained largely unenclosed. By this stage, however, the woodland cover that once extended across much of the Landscape Character Type was depleted and many of the hunting parks had also gone leaving large areas of moorland, heathland and pasture.

The combination of the effects of the 1829 Enclosure Act and the establishment of commercial quarrying of the granite brought significant changes to the landscape. The Enclosure Act was the final stage in the gradual piecemeal enclosure of the forest lands that had been progressing since the 16th century and a culmination of a process that has brought the most significant man made change in the evolution of this Landscape Character Type. The remaining unenclosed woodland, moorland / heathland, and open farmland was divided up into many privately owned farming units marked out with hedges or stone walls together with a rationalisation of the roads and trackways within the forested areas. According to the Enclosure Award Map of 1829, almost 11,000 acres of open moorland within Charnwood Forest were enclosed and brought into cultivation.

At various times in the past, the Precambrian rocks were worked for building stone. The expansion of quarrying in the late 18th century, and into the 19th to 20th centuries, introduced major change to the landscape, focused at sites such as Mountsorrel and Shepshed initially producing granite setts but subsequently principally for roadstone aggregate. The Soar and Wreake Navigations and Charnwood Forest Canal (now defunct) enabled the aggregates to be transported countrywide. In addition Swithland Slate was quarried commercially from

the mid 18th century when, with the introduction of gunpowder, quarries were workable to a far greater depth. Competition from roofing tiles and Welsh slate quarries forced the Swithland Slate industry into decline, eventually ceasing at the end of the 19th century. The quarrying activity has left a significant industrial heritage footprint within the area. Further 19th century landscape change associated with the effects of the industrial revolution was the construction of Swithland, Cropston, Blackbrook and Thornton Reservoirs and the introduction of railways with branch lines to serve the quarries.

From the 20th century to the present day the Forested Ancient Hills Landscape Character Type has continued to change and evolve. The progressive expansion of the settlements on the perimeter of the upland areas and consequent loss of farmland and open areas is particularly notable. There has also been a reduction in grazing of the surviving heathland areas and a change from pasture to arable farming in response to the period of agricultural subsidies as well as a reduction in hedgerows and hedgerow trees due to intensified farming practices. Infrastructure developments have also had their effect notably the construction of the M1, telecommunication masts and the more limited presence of small and localised wind turbines.



*Forested Ancient Hills (© Roger Rixon)*

## AESTHETIC AND PERCEPTUAL QUALITIES

The elevated landform of this Landscape Character Type, with its exposed rocky outcrops and crags, and the perception of a well wooded cover provides a strong sense of place and identity that distinguishes it from the surrounding lower lying plain. Overall it is a colourful, peaceful and unified type.

The mosaic of woodland cover, interspersed with farmland, heathland and parkland, and rocky summits results in a range of experiences. Thus, an enclosed and secluded character pervades where there is a high concentration of woodland, balanced by a gentler and more pastoral experience within the rural agricultural landscape that prevails on the lower lying vales that extend through the area. In further contrast, the more elevated areas with their open summit areas and rocky crags and areas of heathland afford extensive views across the surrounding lowland landscape providing a sense of exhilaration and expansiveness, as well as remoteness.

The peacefulness of this predominantly rural landscape is sometimes broken or interrupted by infrastructure elements that serve as reminders of the pace and effects of evolving technology and progress. These comprise the M1 motorway, transmission lines along the Rothley Brook, prominent adjacent telecommunication masts and some localised wind turbines.

The ancient settlement pattern of villages that ring the upland area, the remnants of the former medieval forests and heathland, and the pattern of quarries, both active and disused, provides a tangible reminder of the historic development of the area.



## LANDSCAPE CHANGE AND MANAGEMENT

### BUILT DEVELOPMENT

#### *Forces for Change*

Large scale modern development is damaging landscape character, creating visual intrusion, resulting in the loss of surrounding landscape features and increasing the risk of coalescence of outlying villages. This trend looks set to continue, with 17,800 homes to be built in and around Leicester as part of the 'Three Cities Growth Point'. Proposals also include sustainable urban extensions at Coalville and Loughborough. More minor but suburbanising influences through farm building conversions and enclosure of large gardens by railings are also damaging character.

#### *Shaping the Future Landscape*

The aim should be to protect the character of the landscape and limit the visual impact of any new development by locating it on previously developed land or close to existing settlement. Mechanisms include Design Statements for those villages and towns most prone to infill development and expansion, the use of best practice innovative architectural ideas and planning solutions that minimise impact on local landscape and townscape character and tree and woodland planting around settlement fringes to help integrate new development into the landscape.

### MINERALS AND WASTE

#### *Forces for Change*

The hard stone of the Forested Ancient Hills has been quarried for centuries, and there are currently a number of quarries within this landscape. These are generally well hidden within the landform but can be visually intrusive from some viewpoints. There is a high demand for aggregates, and Charnwood Forest is a major source of hard rock aggregate for central and southern England. Therefore, pressure for new and expanded quarries, is likely to create further visual intrusion, while reducing the sense of tranquillity and remoteness.

#### *Shaping the Future Landscape*

The aim should be to manage mineral extraction, ensuring activity is located away from visually prominent locations. Planning guidance for the design of quarries should be produced at the county and/or district level where necessary, establishing the most appropriate sites for development and setting out proposals for after-use. Restoration plans for quarries also need to ensure that the geodiversity resource is protected and managed, including access to sites and areas for their valuable educational and interpretational interest.

### AGRICULTURE AND LAND MANAGEMENT

#### *Forces for Change*

There is marked evidence of agricultural and forestry intensification resulting in the loss or damage of many typical landscape features, including pasture, heathland and field boundaries. This weakens patterns of land use and contributes to a more homogenous landscape.

Proposals for the '6Cs Growth Point' include a major sub-regional Green Infrastructure (GI) Strategy, which seeks to enhance the network of green spaces and natural elements in and around the three cities of Leicester, Nottingham and Derby. The Consultation Draft of the 6Cs GI Strategy recognises Charnwood Forest as being a key element of sub-regional strategy.

### *Shaping the Future Landscape*

The aim should be to protect existing landscape features, whilst encouraging positive management of those features lost or under threat, creating a stronger and more mixed pattern of land use. The restoration of hedgerows including new hedgerow oaks and stone walls should be given priority particularly around urban areas, helping to integrate new development into the landscape. Furthermore, grazing should be reintroduced where appropriate, increasing the extent and quality of heathland.

The aim should also be to contribute to the green infrastructure vision, managing change to ensure the most valuable areas are protected and that new green infrastructure increases the occurrence of traditional land-uses, such as woodland and heathland.

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## FORESTRY AND WOODLAND

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### *Forces for Change*

Woodland forms a significant component of this landscape, and new woodland planting would be generally appropriate, making a contribution to increasing the overall woodland coverage in the region and integrating new development into the landscape. Indeed, much of this landscape is within The National Forest, which encourages new planting and appropriate management.

### *Shaping the Future Landscape*

The aim should therefore be to plan for new woodlands, ensuring new planting schemes take full advantage of opportunities to enhance nature conservation and recreation. However, care should be taken to ensure new woodland does not damage the area's traditional land use mix. Consideration should also be given to the management of existing trees and woodland. Existing woodlands are typically mixed plantations, and the opportunity exists to enhance biodiversity value through conversion to broadleaved woodland and creation of woodland edge habitats, which along with the restoration of heathlands, will help to enhance visual and biodiversity interest.

Such proposals should be undertaken in collaboration with the Forestry Commission and local landowners, and financial support may be available through the English Woodland Grant Scheme.

For those areas in the Forested Ancient Hills that lie within The National Forest, design guidance for woodland creation should be in accordance with the National Forest Strategy, 2004-14 that has been consulted on and endorsed at the national level. Much of the area includes the 'Wooded Parkland' and 'Enclosed Farmlands' landscape types identified in the National Forest Strategy, together with a smaller area of Coalfield Village Farmlands. With this mosaic of landscape types at the more local scale, a range of woodland planting options is appropriate. In general smaller scale mixed broadleaved woodlands are considered appropriate in the Wooded Parkland that respect the historic landscape character. Elsewhere, larger scale woodlands are promoted with a range of estate farmland and farm woodlands as well as areas of commercial plantations, together with small-scale planting in remnant pastoral landscapes around villages and linked to estates.



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## TOURISM AND LEISURE

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### *Forces for Change*

Charnwood Forest is a popular leisure destination, containing a number of country parks and reservoirs. Some of these sites experience considerable visitor pressure, resulting in a loss of tranquillity, and many sites include infrastructure such as car parks, picnic sites, and viewpoints, which can result in the damage, loss and fragmentation of natural features.

There are plans for Charnwood Forest to be developed as a Regional Park. Such a designation may increase visitor pressure and therefore potential damage to the natural environment. However, it would also benefit nature conservation, landscape and access and a mechanism for securing additional resources.

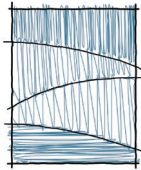
### *Shaping the Future Landscape*

The aim should be to protect the distinctive character of the landscape and consider the visual and environmental impact of any new or extended visitor facilities. The management of public access should be encouraged, helping to conserve the natural environment whilst enhancing Charnwood Forest as a recreational and educational resource. This should be undertaken in coordination with the sub-regional green infrastructure strategy, using less vulnerable assets to accommodate leisure activities and encouraging sustainable access.

The aim should be to continue to promote Charnwood Forest as a Regional Park that recognises its special character, particularly in respect of its international geological significance, whilst ensuring appropriate management strategies are in place in the interim.

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**4b: Charnwood Forest Landscape  
Character Assessment**

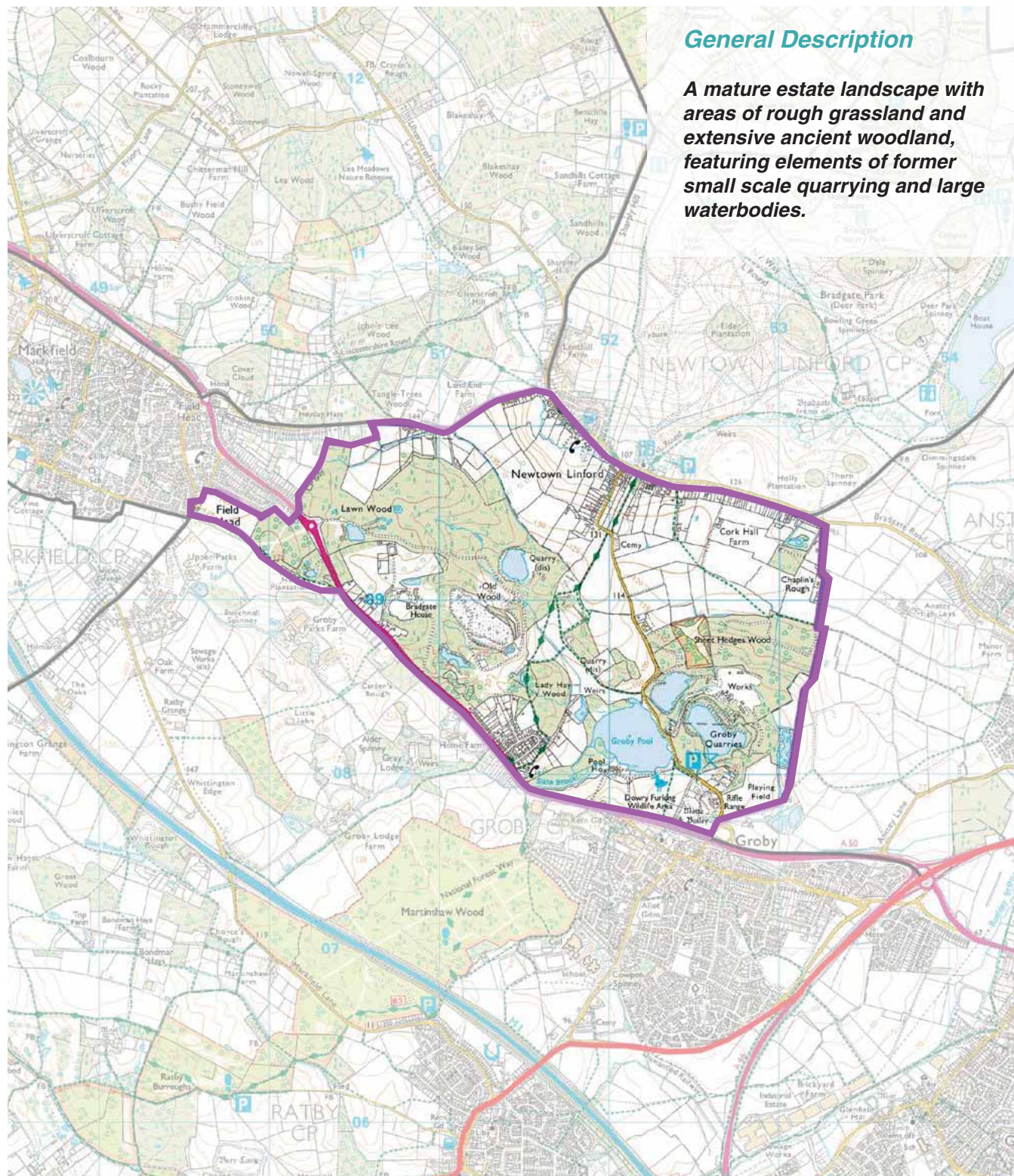




## Chapter 5.0

# LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

## Area 5: Groby Estate Woodland





# LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

## Area 5: Groby Estate Woodland

### Key Characteristics

- A locally undulating landform which includes a number of small field ponds and large pools including Groby Pool, fed by the Slate Brook.
- Heavily wooded with extensive ancient woodland interspersed with open rough grassland. Some arable fields on the eastern edge. Evidence of historic quarrying with some rock faces overgrown by trees.
- Field pattern is medium to small with a linear pattern, especially on the outskirts of Newtown Linford. Fields enclosed with a mix of hedgerows and post and rail fences.
- Includes the edge of Groby and Newtown Linford village. A50 forms main road corridor defining the area with few road connections through the area. Network of PRow including National Forest Way.
- Numerous listed buildings in Newtown Linford although heritage interest is also associated with Groby Pool House. The pools and some woodland at Groby Pool are a SSSI.
- A generally open, rural landscape, but enclosure is created by the undulating landform and large areas of woodland. The area has a managed estate feel and is quite tranquil, but affected by underlying noise from the M1.

### Specific Characteristics

#### Landform and Hydrology

This relatively small character area has a locally undulating landform which reflects the historic quarrying which has occurred in the area. Disused quarries have resulted in a number of large pools. Groby Pool is a large pool fed by the Slate Brook. Smaller water courses and field ponds are also scattered within the woodland areas.

#### Landcover and Vegetation

The area features a high proportion of deciduous woodland, the majority of which is ancient woodland. Within the woodland are areas of open, rough grassland. Pastoral fields with tree lines and scattered trees are located towards the edge of the area, for example on the south western edge of Newtown Linford, while arable fields are located towards the north eastern edge and south eastern edge of Newtown Linford. Around the former quarried areas are some rock faces, often with trees growing out of the exposed rock surfaces.

Woodland is mostly mature broadleaved species.



View to Lady Hay Wood



## Chapter 5.0

# LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

### Area 5: Groby Estate Woodland

#### Field Pattern and Enclosure

Fields, where present, are small to medium in size and form a linear pattern on the outskirts of Newtown Linford. Arable fields in the north eastern corner are of a slightly larger size. Field boundaries are formed of native hedges with hedgerow trees or timber post and rail fences.

#### Settlement Pattern, Roads and PRow

The area falls between settlements and includes the edges of Groby and Newtown Linford villages. Other buildings include Bradgate House and Groby Pool house. The A50 forms the southern boundary to the area with Bradgate Road forming the northern boundary. A network of public footpaths cross the area with the National Forest Way leading through the woodland, north into Newtown Linford. Other informal tracks also lead through the woodlands.

#### Cultural Heritage

The area has a history of small scale quarrying with a number of disused sites and subsequent pools. Groby Pool House and Bradgate House are listed buildings while a number of further listed buildings are located within Newtown Linford. The pool and some associated woodland at Groby Pool are SSSIs.

#### Perceptual Qualities

The area is of small scale with enclosure associated with the undulating landform and extensive woodland. More open areas of farmland are located towards the north of the area. The area is relatively peaceful, although does experience some underlying background noise from the M1. The mature woodland and disused quarries give a mature feel to the landscape.



*View from National Forest Way*

# LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS

## Area 5: Groby Estate Woodland

### Management Recommendations

#### Summary of Landscape Condition

This area is a mature landscape with mature trees and areas of open grassland which has the feel of an estate. The condition of this area is generally good with evidence of management of key areas such as Groby Pool.

#### Forces for Landscape Change

- Potential loss of woodland if not managed appropriately.
- Loss of hedgerows which are replaced by fencing in some areas.
- Increase in visitor pressure to Groby Pool.

#### Sensitivities for Key Landscape Characteristics

Much of the woodland and trees are mature and should be effectively managed to ensure longevity. Bracken is encroaching into some areas of open grassland and exposed rock faces which should be managed to maintain the prominence of these features.

The current management regimes should be continued to retain the estate character of this relatively small area.

- **Manage encroachment of bracken and scrub to maintain areas of open grassland, exposed rock and former quarries to ensure longevity of the habitats.**
- **Gap up hedgerows and replant where lost to ensure habitat connectivity through the area.**
- **Maintain lifecycle of ageing woodlands by replanting and manageing.**
- **Continue to protect and sensitively manage heritage features and SSSIs including ancient woodland habitat and built features at Groby Pool.**
- **Ensure visitor facilities are suitably managed to avoid urbanising influences.**



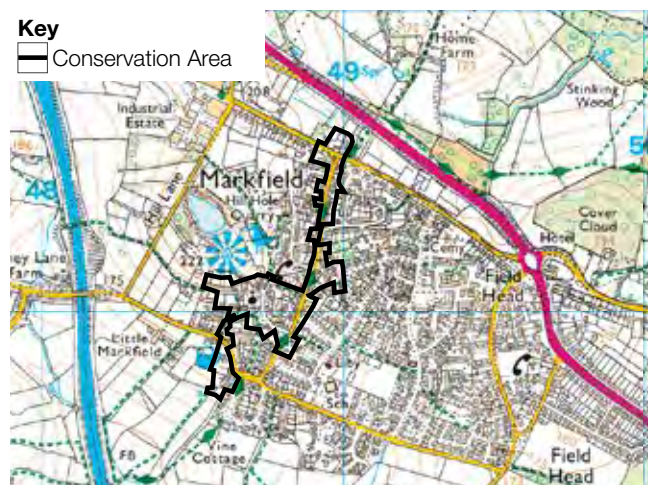
*Groby Pool*



## Chapter 6.0

# SETTLEMENT CHARACTER

### vi. Markfield



Location Plan



Aerial Photograph

### Location and Context

Markfield is a unique village within Charnwood Forest as it has a large clustered form, located on high ground at the centre of the forest. The village is located between the M1 and A50, to the north west of Leicester. The historic core is focussed on the western side of the village, with modern development to the east and some new development to the south. It is influenced by the road network and immediate surrounding landscape which is contained and small scale to the south but more extensive and open to the west.

### Built Form and Settlement Pattern

The historic core of the village is located on the western edge of the settlement, focussed around Hill Hole Quarry. Markfield Parish Church and some of the settlements older stone and red brick buildings are located here, around a small village green. A larger green is located further down the hill, which features a row of mature pollarded trees which provides a focus for stone and red brick properties. The settlement has expanded east and south and is now constrained by Leicester Road, with the A50 beyond to the north and east. Open fields lie to the west and south with the M1 beyond. Hill Hole Quarry is an important feature in the local landscape. There is a wide range of building forms and materials however most are two storey. Red brick and stone are common with slate and granite also evident.



View towards The Green



The Green

# SETTLEMENT CHARACTER

## vi. Markfield

### Sense of Place

#### Gateway Features

The main routes through the settlement do not lead through the historic core but instead skirt through the peripheries. The entrances to the settlement are not particularly distinctive and lack any notable features.

#### Landmark Features

St Michael and All Angels Church is a large granite church located in the Conservation Area.

Trinity Methodist Church, Hill Hole Quarry and the two village greens are also important features.

#### History and Heritage

The settlement dates back to at least Norman times and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The name suggests that the settlement is Anglo-Saxon.

Framework knitters and agricultural labourers appear to have been the key employment types in the early 1800s. Markfield is also associated historically with the quarrying industry. Billa Barra Quarry opened in the mid 1800s with Hill Hole and Cliffe Hill following. Hill Hole Quarry is located to the north west of the settlement. By the late 1800s a considerable number of residents are shown as working in the quarrying industry as miners or blacksmiths or in other associated work.

The two village greens provide a sense of place and contribute positively to the character of the settlement. Markfield has been developed more significantly during the 19th century.

### Key Characteristics

- Large clustered settlement.
- Landcover in the surrounding area is predominantly woodland with land rising to the north.
- From higher points in Markfield there are views to a rolling and wooded landscape to the north.
- The character of Markfield is enhanced by two village greens.
- Building materials are predominantly red brick and stone.
- The north eastern boundary is defined by the A50.
- Historic core is located around the north western corner with newer development spreading out over flatter ground to the east.



*St Michaels and All Angels Church*



## Chapter 6.0

# SETTLEMENT CHARACTER

### vi. Markfield

#### Setting in the Landscape

##### Topography

The local topography within the settlement slopes gently south east. Higher ground lies to the north west around Hill Hole Quarry. The quarry has been worked and now forms a deep pool. This higher ground is the location of the older more historic part of the settlement with development expanding down towards the south east. The Rothley Brook corridor lies to the south east. Land to the north is higher and becomes more rolling and wooded. The highest point within the settlement is shown at 222m AOD making it the most elevated of the settlements within the forest. Evidence of this is provided in views from the Hill Hole Quarry edge at Hill Lane which look over Bardon Hill Quarry and the surrounding landscape.

##### Roofline

The roofline consists of predominantly two storey properties. The church spire punctures the skyline but is not dominant due to the number of mature trees in the area. Properties in the area are older and consist of more natural materials. As development has spread south east, materials have become more modern with less intermittent mature vegetation.

##### Key Views

The elevated position at Hill Hole Quarry provides views across the settlement. The closer and older part of the settlement is broken up by a number of mature trees. The newer development can be identified spreading south east with less mature vegetation to break up the built form. Views within the settlement are more restricted along roads with some views across the settlement available from higher points. Hill Hole Quarry is a landmark within the local landscape, visible from a number of locations.



*View of Hill Hole*



*View of Markfield*

# SETTLEMENT CHARACTER

## vi. Markfield

### Settlement Edge

The A50 forms the northern edge of the settlement and has an urbanising effect. The M1 lies to the south east and forms a strong boundary which influences the adjacent countryside.



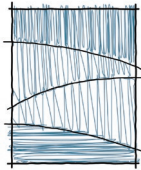
*Track to Hill Hole*

### Recommendations

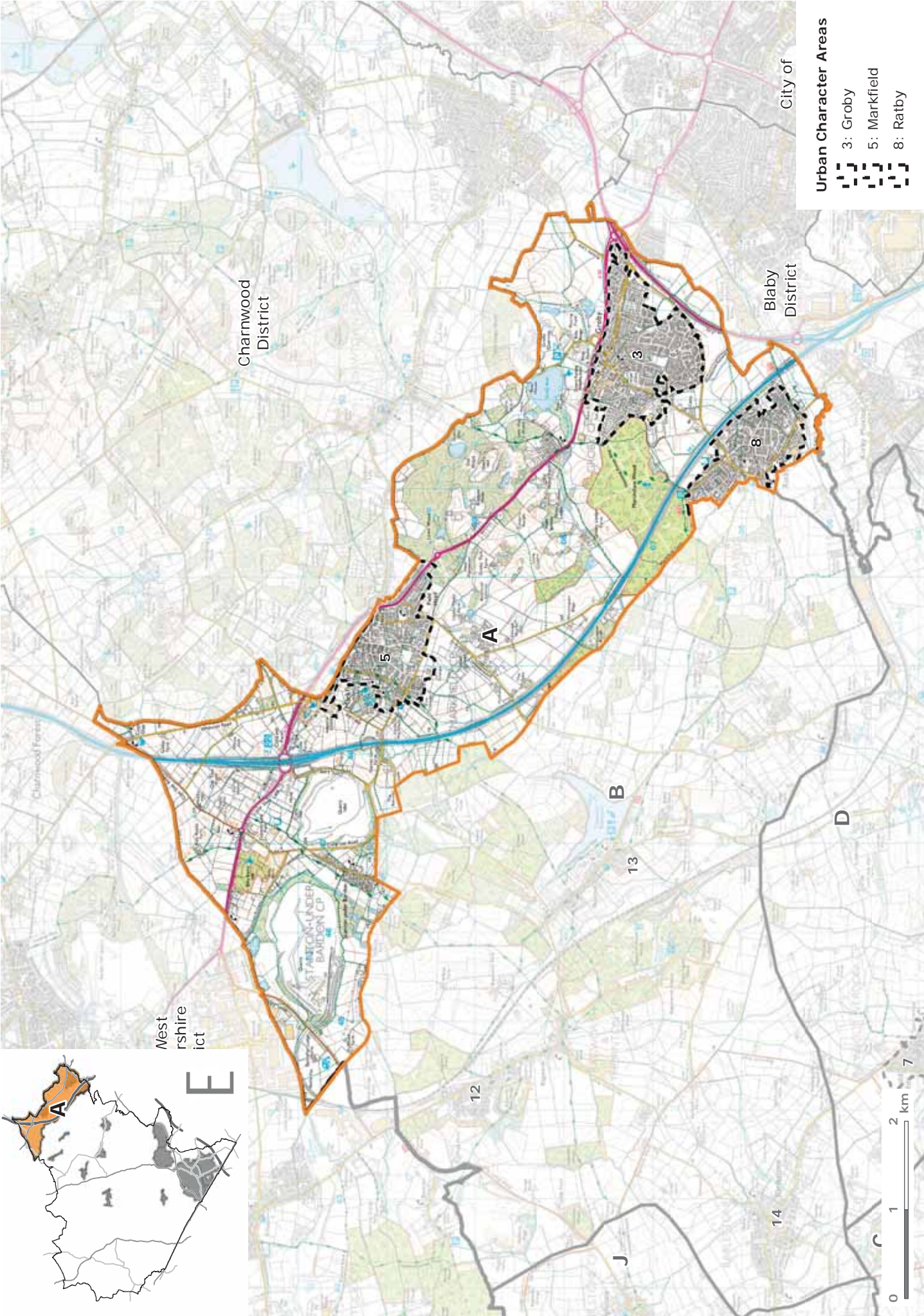
- Create a sense of arrival by improving entrance and gateway features.
- Create focal point to main street to create gateway feature to the village core.
- Protect the character of the village greens and historic core.
- Enhance urban edges to soften their impact on the wider landscape through additional planting and considered new development design.
- Conserve Hill Hole Quarry and Nature Reserve viewpoint ensuring long distance views are not screened by vegetation.
- Ensure new development is in keeping with existing style of the settlement. Granite and brick are commonly used materials.



**4c: Hinckley & Bosworth Borough  
Landscape Character Assessment**



# LCA A: Charnwood Forest Settled Forest Hills





# LCA A: CHARNWOOD FOREST



## Location and Boundaries

- 5.4 This character area covers the more elevated land in the north eastern part of the Borough, adjacent to Leicester to the south-east. It is defined by the igneous geological outcrops, urban settlements and concentration of infrastructure which makes it distinct from LCA B Charnwood Fringe area to the west.
- 5.5 The district of Charnwood is located beyond the administrative boundary to the north east. The area forms the western part of the Charnwood Forest, an area of similar rugged 'upland'

character recognised in local planning policy, and the National Forest which covers almost all of the character area and extends outside the borough to the north.

5.6 Towns/ villages within the character area:

- *Groby*
- *Ratby*
- *Markfield*
- *Stanton under Bardon.*

## Key Characteristics

- 1) **Prominent elevated landform - the highest land in the Borough. Localised steep slopes around rocky outcrops.**
- 2) **Distinctive pockets of igneous rock which appear as rocky outcrops. Granite quarries can appear dramatic in the landscape with cliff faces and deep pools.**
- 3) **Diverse land uses which relate to the varied geology. Dominated by pasture and woodland with quarries, pools and outcrops.**
- 4) **Woodland cover of varying age from mature ancient woodland to new National Forest plantations.**
- 5) **Small to medium scale field pattern interspersed with large areas of woodland cover.**
- 6) **Large clustered villages with strong suburban influences.**
- 7) **Distinctive local assets for recreation and biodiversity such as Groby Pool and Billa Barra Hill and network of public footpaths.**
- 8) **Distant views to the urban edges of Leicester and woodland edges of the surrounding National Forest.**
- 9) **Diverse range of woodland habitats due to variable land use types.**
- 10) **Proximity to Leicester City and major transport infrastructure.**
- 11) **Long established aesthetic appeal created by its rugged, 'upland' and wooded character.**



### Landscape Character

- 5.7 Distinct to this area are pockets of igneous rock which appear as rocky outcrops and have resulted in the local granite quarries that can appear dramatic in the landscape with cliff faces and deep pools. Elsewhere the geology is Triassic Mercia Mudstone with bands of Quaternary boulder clay and alluvium associated with water courses. The landform is distinctive; upland, rugged and rolling with areas of rocky outcrops. Small streams are incised within folds in the land, and the Rothley Brook forms a distinct river corridor to the east of the area, extending into Blaby district. Soils are mostly fine loamy/clayey soils which are slowly permeable and seasonally waterlogged. Reddish, fine loamy, slowly permeable, calcareous clayey soils are also found on the slopes.
- 5.8 The majority of the Borough's woodland is found within this character area with large mature woodlands at Martinshaw Wood and Lawn Wood around Ratby and Groby. Rectilinear agricultural fields make up much of the land cover in the area and these are arranged in an irregular pattern, well-defined by hedgerows and hedgerow trees, which add to the perception of a well-wooded context. Smaller blocks of deciduous woodland plantations also break up the expanse of agricultural fields, as well as frequent historic quarries which are scattered throughout the landscape.
- 5.9 The M1 motorway runs through the area north-south, as well as the A50, another strategically important transport route, resulting in substantial traffic movement through the area. The proximity and ease of access to the urban centre of Leicester to the south-east means that the area becomes busy with people and traffic, particularly during commuting hours, and increasingly influenced by nearby development and development pressures. Wind turbines and solar farms around Groby and Ratby are increasingly common. The concentration of quarrying and industrial areas around Stanton under Bardon results in urban influences in the north-west of the character area. However, much of the countryside remains hidden, feeling remote and quiet particularly in the east and around Groby Pool where woodland cover is more concentrated.
- 5.10 There are a number of local countryside sites including Groby Pool, the Alter Stones and Billa Barra Hill. These are connected via a comprehensive network of public footpaths and bridleways, including the Leicestershire Round and the Ivanhoe Way. There are also elements of changing landscape, with some working quarries, areas of restoration and new planting.
- 5.11 The open dramatic landform creates contrasting areas of elevated openness and strong enclosure, increased by the frequent presence of mature woodland and trees. It is a predominantly peaceful and unified landscape but is sometimes interrupted by infrastructure. Views can be either limited by landform and vegetation or contrastingly panoramic, especially from high vantage points such as at Hill Hole Quarry and Billa Barra Hill. Long distance views of Leicester are also possible from the north. Bardon Hill, the highest point in Charnwood Forest, lies just outside the borough to the north.
- 5.12 The main settlements are Groby, Ratby and Markfield, which have recently expanded to accommodate new development. Groby and Ratby are situated on the river corridor of Rothley Brook. These villages still exhibit locally distinctive characteristics, especially as a result of their 'organic' settlement cores and the frequent use of local stone as a building material. The settlements are well integrated in the landscape because of the rolling topography and wooded character and are





well connected by a good road network with links to Leicester via the M1, A46 and A50.

- 5.13 **Groby** is a large clustered settlement characterised by red brick or local granite terraced housing. It is largely influenced by major transport corridors and twentieth century development, mostly of anonymous vernacular. Groby is described in more detail in Urban Character Area 3.
- 5.14 **Markfield** is another large clustered village in the north eastern area of the borough with a historic

core rich in architectural styles. This is described within Urban Character Area 5.

- 5.15 **Ratby** is medium sized village with origins dating back to medieval times. It is situated on rising landform with the church at the top forming a local landmark. Urban Character Area 8 describes the character of the village in more detail.
- 5.16 **Stanton-under-Bardon** is a small linear village in the north of the area near to Cliffe Hill Quarry and is characterised by red brick, terraced housing.



## Historical and Cultural Influences

- 5.17 The field systems that characterise the landscape date back to the post-medieval period whereby medieval fields were organised by informal agreements between neighbouring farmers. Some later enclosure is present around Markfield, evident in the geometric and planned appearance. These are defined by hedges and are typically a result of acts of parliament. Small areas of ridge and furrow are also located around the village edges which were created through open-field or strip-cultivation. Woodland of varying scale has also been cleared to accommodate agricultural fields in the form of assarts with irregular and rectilinear boundaries.
- 5.18 Ratby Camp, more commonly known as Bury Camp, comprises an Iron Age hill fort to the west of Ratby. It is formed by a rectangular earthwork consisting of an enclosure formed by a large single rampart bank and outside ditch, with four openings in the middle of each side likely to be the original entrances. Archaeological digs have uncovered Late Bronze Age and Iron Age pottery as well as sherds dating back to the Roman period and the historical importance is recognised through the Scheduled Monument designation.
- 5.19 Old Hays moated site is also located a short distance from the village and includes the remains of a medieval moated enclosure and associated manorial earthworks. The rectilinear enclosure includes the remains of the Grade II listed Old Hays farmhouse and outhouse building and is surrounded by a partially dry moat of varying depth. The importance of this site is greatly increased by the vast historical documentation relating to the manorial complex and its association with Leicester Abbey.

## Natural Influences

- 5.20 Deciduous woodland is abundant throughout the Charnwood Fringe and includes considerable areas of Ancient Woodland at Martinshaw Wood and Lawn/Old Woods, situated to the north of Groby and Ratby. The character area is one of the most

biodiverse within the Borough with areas of high ecological and geological importance. This is recognised through the SSSI designations at Groby Pool and Woods as well as Cliffe Hill Quarry.

- 5.21 Groby Pool and Woods comprise examples of alder wood, dry and wet grassland, marsh, reedswamp and open water. Additional interest is provided by the significant numbers of wintering wildfowl using the area, the variety of the breeding bird community and by the diversity of the invertebrate fauna. Cliffe Hill Quarry also represents important geological exposures of markfieldite and the volcanic and sedimentary rocks coming into contact with each other.



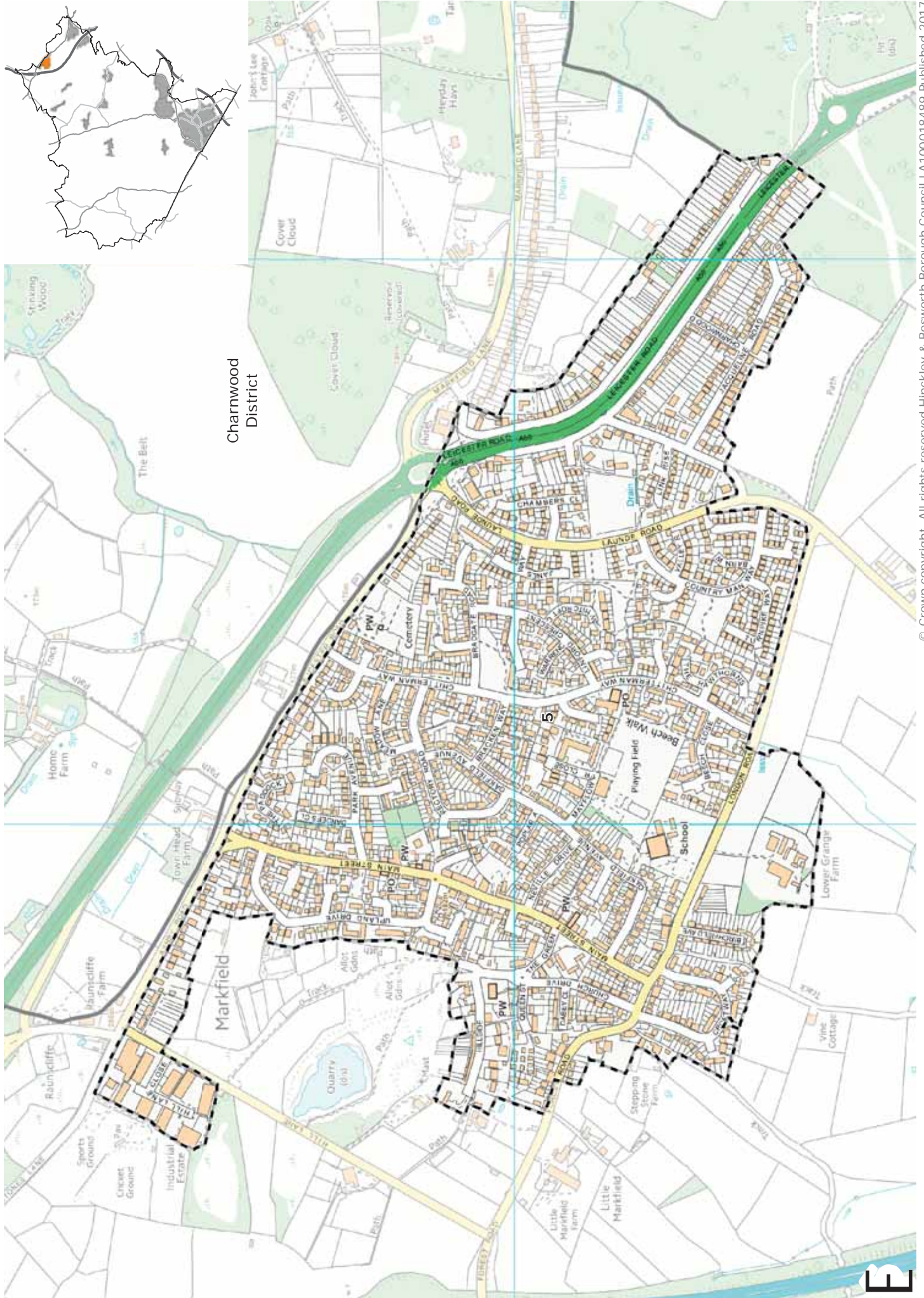
## Key Sensitivities and Values

- 1) Rocky outcrops on the elevated land together with past and former quarries provide exposures of great geological interest.
- 2) Late to post medieval enclosure, ridge and furrow as well as some assarts in and around Ancient Woodland contribute to the sense of place and provides continuity to the agricultural past.
- 3) Large mature woodlands and newer woodland plantations interspersed throughout the landscape create a well-wooded context and create relatively tranquil subareas away from the busy roads.
- 4) The distinct historic cores of the villages with an abundance of local building stone provide a strong sense of place and a sense of time depth.
- 5) The long distance and panoramic views to Leicester from the more elevated vantage points combine with contrasting contained views to provide a high scenic quality.
- 6) Bury Camp and the Old Hays moated site have strong cultural associations and provide a sense of historic time depth.
- 7) Groby Pool and Woods and Cliffe Hill Quarry have high biodiversity value and provide areas of ecological and geological importance.
- 8) Valued for recreation, with local attractions including Groby Pool, the Alter Stones and Billa Barra Hill connected via a comprehensive network of public footpaths and bridleways, including the Leicestershire Round and the Ivanhoe Way.

## Landscape Strategies

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Conserve and enhance the historic core of village settlements and ensure extensions are well integrated within this wooded landscape. Promote characteristic building forms.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5) Conserve rocky outcrops and semi-natural vegetation in disused quarries. Promote amenity and biodiversity through quarry restoration schemes.</li> </ol>  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2) Support the vision of the National Forest Strategy by planting native and mixed species woodland, linking areas beyond the National Forest boundary.</li> </ol>                         | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6) Conserve and enhance the well wooded character of the landscape. Promote woodland management such as coppicing and ground flora diversification, as well as hedgerow tree planting.</li> </ol>                              |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3) Conserve the distinct and separate identity of Groby and Ratby, including the rural gap that separate the villages.</li> </ol>  | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7) Promote a positive landscape strategy, including woodland planting, around Stanton-under-Bardon to help integrate the industrial units, quarries and development pressures associated with the M1 (junction 22).</li> </ol> |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4) Locate solar farms and wind turbines in the least sensitive areas.</li> </ol>   |   |

A map of the north-east of the Iberian Peninsula, showing the outline of the region. A small orange-shaded area in the north-west corner indicates the location of the study area. Major roads and rivers are depicted with grey lines.





## UCA 5 : MARKFIELD



### Location and Setting

- 6.81 Markfield is a historic village located in the north eastern extent of the Borough along the administrative boundary with Charnwood District. and is surrounded by the rolling wooded landscape to the north and the flat floodplain fields to the south.
- 6.82 It is situated on rising, sloping landform within the National Forest and the Charnwood Forest, 6.83 Markfield lies within LCA A: Charnwood Forest.

### Key Characteristics

- 1) **A large, clustered settlement with a distinctive linear historic core containing a rich mix of well related architectural themes.**
- 2) **The historic core nestled around the base of rising land in the north west of the village, with modern development spreading over flatter land to the east.**
- 3) **Varied architectural styles and a broad age range and complex mix of housing, even within the older central core.**
- 4) **Retail facilities concentrated along Main Street and Chitterman Way, with employment located towards the north-western edge of the village.**
- 5) **Materials dominated by either red brick or granite or a mix of both. Some rendered or painted properties provide variation.**
- 6) **Outcrops of rock together with granite cottages and boundary walls are the key component of the village streetscape.**
- 7) **Small frontages often bounded by stone walls within the historic core.**
- 8) **Views to the rolling and wooded landscape to the north from higher points in the village.**
- 9) **Hill Hole Quarry, a key feature to the west of the settlement.**



### Townscape Character

- 6.84 Markfield is a relatively large, clustered village which gradually expanded from a small linear agricultural settlement to accommodate the increasing numbers of workers at nearby quarries of (Old) Cliffe Hill and Hill Hole. Both sites are now closed although the associated cottages are still evident at Hill Lane and date back to the early 19th century. The village has developed over the years from the historic core along Main Street and around St Michael's Church, which still retains its dominant position around the village green, forming a landmark from many vantage points in and around Markfield. The end of the 20th century saw the selling of village farms and the development of residential properties and other inappropriate buildings in their place. This fragmentation is particularly evident at Main Street where traditional 19th century cottages, stone boundary walls and modern infill make up the continuous building line.
- 6.85 Buildings are typically one to two storeys with low eaves and steeply pitched roofs, made up of stone or brick and render usually concealing stone facades. Many properties front immediately on to the edge of the pavement or have small front gardens with stone walls which contribute to the predominance of stone in the streetscape.
- 6.86 The village retained its linear form centred on the village green up until the 1960s when it underwent expansion spreading over the flatter land to the east. By the 20th century, the village had more than doubled its original size and had little relation to the character of the historic core. The construction of the M1 and subsequently the A50 bypass also produced significant changes by removing traffic from the core of the settlement. The village has continued to develop with construction of dwellings off London Road during the 1980s and 90s creating a second village centre with a surgery, post office and local shop on Chitternman Way.
- 6.87 Within the settlement the undulating landform channels most views along streets, however, the higher points offer longer views over the

settlement. The southern slopes and peak of Hill Hole Quarry are prominent in views from within the settlement on the lower land to the east. There are also views from these slopes looking over the village roofscape and across to the rolling, wooded landscape in the distance. Distant views from Hill Hole Quarry viewpoint are wide ranging and include views of Bardon Hill, Billa Barra and views into the surrounding districts.

- 6.88 The M1 introduces movement into the landscape with glimpses being afforded from the southern edge. The noise from the motorway is also discernible throughout the village.
- 6.89 The most prominent building is the Church of St. Michael set within the village green, which forms a local landmark. Originally dating back to the 12th century, the church was restored in 1865 and is constructed of random coursed Mountsorrel granite, ashlar dressings, slate roofing and stone coped gables. The Old Rectory, a three storey, Grade II listed building located on The Nook on the edge of Main Street provides a second landmark building, set amongst the surrounding small cottages and terraced buildings.

### Materials and Local vernacular

- 6.90 There is a diverse architectural heritage within the village. The old quarry houses comprise small terraced cottages of varying styles, typically brick and render or local stone and surround the church. The retail buildings on Main Street include several old converted cottages retaining original lintel and sill features interspersed with late 1960s units. The historic core of the village consists of predominantly terraced cottages constructed of granite with red brick detailing and slate roofing.
- 6.91 More recent expansion typically consists of winding cul-de-sac roads serving bungalows, semi-detached and detached dwellings in a variety of architectural styles and a wide range of building materials. There is little response to local character however more recent developments within the Conservation Area on the site of a





former factory have been more sympathetic in approach, following local building styles.

### Green Spaces

- 6.92 There are two greens within the village core which create a local sense of openness and are a key focal point for the settlement. Large areas of public open space can be found at Alter Stones Lane which is thought to be the site of ancient druid worship and Hill Hole. The restored areas of the former quarry are open for nature walks and rocky outcrops often used by climbers. A large public open space and play area is located adjacent to the Community Centre, with additional small areas of green space located throughout the 20th century development areas.

### Historical and Cultural Influences

- 6.93 Markfield was recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 and was formerly known as Mercenfeld in Anglo-Saxon times. It is also one of the highest villages in Leicestershire being located approximately 190m Above Ordnance Datum.
- 6.94 The village developed to serve a small community of farmers and tradesmen and by the early 18th century this included a millwright, a carpenter, a mason, a blacksmith, shoemaker, grocer and several framework knitters. The linear historic core of the village is covered by Conservation Area status and encompasses the Church, the Old Rectory, the Bulls Head and cottages on the Nook. St Michael's Parish Church was also where the non-conformist John Wesley first came in the mid to late 1700s to preach to the village.

### Key Sensitivities and Values

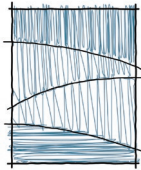
- 1) Old quarry houses, converted cottages and religious buildings create a diverse architectural heritage and a strong sense of place.
- 2) Traditional building materials and the predominance of local stone contribute to the sense of place and create continuity to the past.
- 3) The Greens contribute to the visual amenity of the historic core and the sense of place and open space linkages particularly to the west provide an important setting to the village.
- 4) Hill Hole Quarry considered locally as a beauty spot with long views from the elevated land across the village adding to the visual amenity and the sense of place.
- 5) St. Michaels Church provides a key landmark on the skyline and provides a sense of historic time depth.

### Townscape Strategies

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Protect the historic character of the village core and of the two village greens.</li> <li>2) Ensure important views of the church and other key landmarks are protected.</li> <li>3) Ensure any new development is in keeping with the existing style of the settlement and encourage the reuse of traditional building materials.</li> <li>4) Create a focal point at the entrance to the main street to improve gateway features to the village core and a definite sense of arrival.</li> <li>5) Conserve and enhance the distinctiveness and diversity of public open space.</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>6) Ensure that future new development respects the setting of the village and its rural interface and enhance the urban edges, especially those to the south and east, to soften their impact on the landscape, through additional planting and careful design of any new development.</li> <li>7) Enhance pedestrian links between adjacent villages and consider potential as key gateways to the National Forest.</li> </ol> |
|--|--|



**4d: Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape  
Sensitivity Study**





[www.landuse.co.uk](http://www.landuse.co.uk)

# **Landscape Sensitivity Assessment**

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

**Final Report**

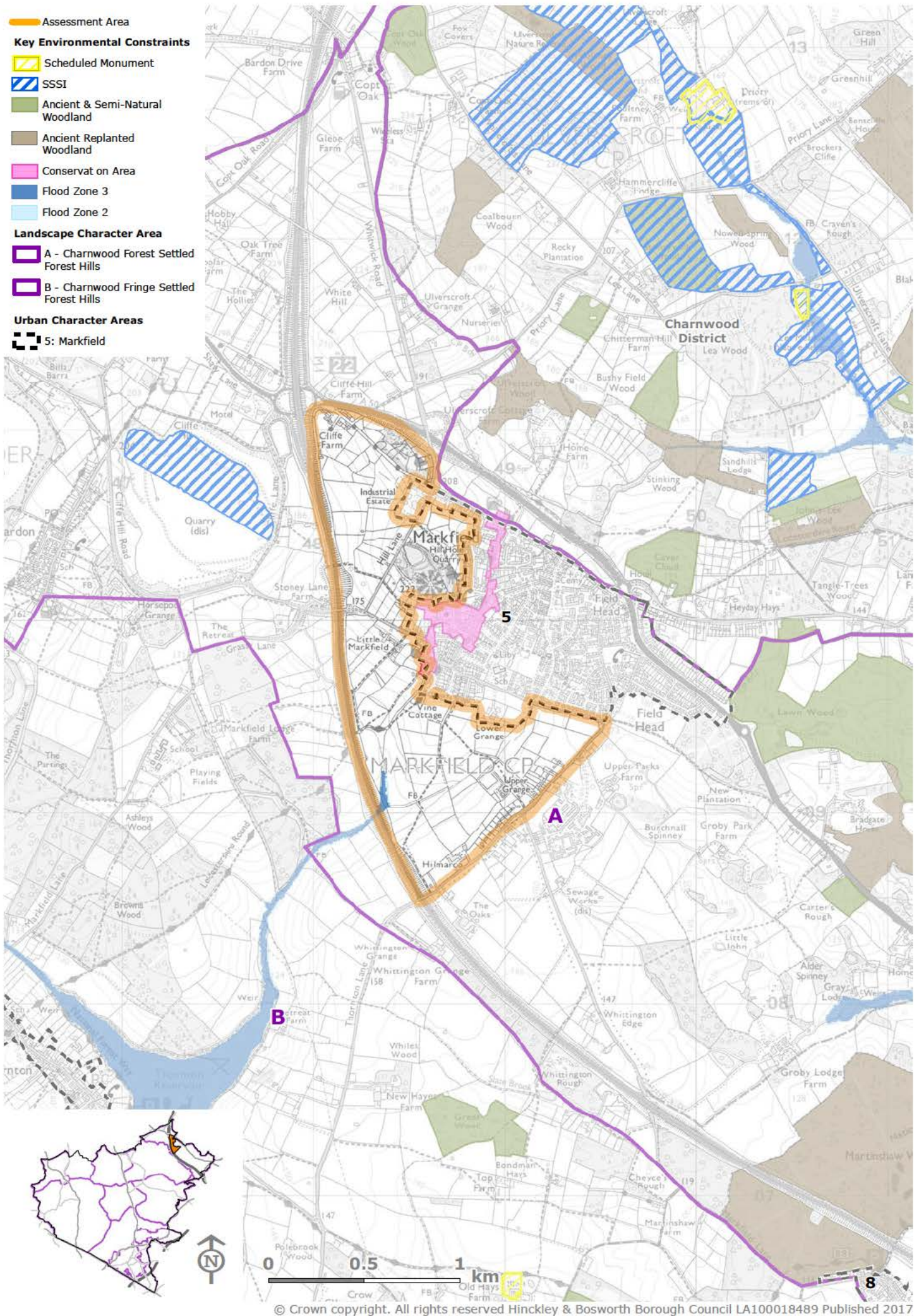
**Prepared by LUC**

**September 2017**





# 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)	<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 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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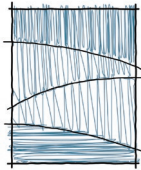
### Guidance

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.



Appendix 5: Photoviewpoints 1-13 (Summer views)



**Photoviewpoint 1**



Orientation: East  
Distance From Site: 0m  
Grid Reference: SK 49577 09482  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 10:57

**Photoviewpoint 2**



Orientation: North east  
Distance From Site: 0m  
Grid Reference: SK 49617 09470  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:03

**Photoviewpoint 3**



Orientation: North west  
Distance From Site: 0m  
Grid Reference: SK 49878 09343  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:11

**Photoviewpoint 4**



Orientation: South  
Distance From Site: 50m  
Grid Reference: SK 49957 09541  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:25

**Photoviewpoint 5**



Orientation: South  
Distance From Site: 160m  
Grid Reference: SK 49906 09703  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:29

**Photoviewpoint 6**



Orientation: South  
Distance From Site: 50m  
Grid Reference: SK 49704 09679  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:33

**Photoviewpoint 7**



Orientation: South  
Distance From Site: 40m  
Grid Reference: SK 49644 09665  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:35

**Photoviewpoint 8**



Orientation: South east  
Distance From Site: 50m  
Grid Reference: SK 49577 09612  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:36

**Photoviewpoint 9**



Orientation: East  
Distance From Site: 40m  
Grid Reference: SK 49568 09568  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:39

**Photoviewpoint 10**



Orientation: East  
Distance From Site: 35m  
Grid Reference: SK 49536 09499  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 11:41

**Photoviewpoint 11**



Orientation: South east  
Distance From Site: 1110m  
Grid Reference: SK 48754 10298  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 12:17

**Photoviewpoint 12**



Orientation: South east  
Distance From Site: 1160m  
Grid Reference: SK 48642 10213  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 12:21

**Photoviewpoint 13**



Orientation: South west  
Distance From Site: 2930m  
Grid Reference: SK 52441 11083  
DateTaken: 28/09/2022  
Time Taken: 13:09

**Refer to full photosheets for descriptions and representation of view.**

**Visualisation Type:** Type 1  
**Camera:** Canon EOS 6D Mark II  
**Lens Focal Length:** 50mm  
**Weather Conditions:** Fine and clear day



**Photoviewpoint 1:** From the public right of way immediately south of the Site looking eastward, views are substantially constrained by the dense and mature tree and shrub belt through which the footpath is aligned. There are few glimpsed views through the tree cover (see Photoviewpoint 2), where this occurs one has to divert from the footpath. The visual environment is verdant and contained and offers a sense of rurality in contrast with the settlement edge. This image demonstrates those immediate neighbours who have uninterrupted open views across the site. Notably it is primarily first floor rooms which benefit from open views, single storey properties and ground floor windows tend to be screened by garden fencing and shrubs/trees.



Photoviewpoint 1

**Photoviewpoint 2:** Offline from the public right of way, the site provides an open and agricultural foreground to the view. The existing housing forms an urban skyline, being located on a local high point in the landscape. The field of view is limited by the presence of housing and woodland in the landscape.



Photoviewpoint 2



**Photoviewpoint 3:** On the public right of way looking westwards this image illustrates that the visual enclosure along the route is continuous.



Photoviewpoint 3

**Photoviewpoint 4:** For those living to the north of Jacqueline Road or walking on the pavement there are no views into the site due to the oblique nature of the visual experience. Only when directly opposite gaps between properties are there view of the open sky beyond the properties and gardens which back onto the Site. The visual experience and appearance are suburban in character.



Photoviewpoint 4



**Photoviewpoint 5:** At this crossing point (Leicester Road) this is a direct vista towards the site, framed by the housing east and west of Charnwood Drive. However, due to the landform and the fact the housing on Jacqueline Road is located along a local ridge there are no views into the site.



Photoviewpoint 5

**Photoviewpoint 6:** The visual character and opportunities to see the site are defined by the housing south of Jacqueline Road. As with the views illustrated by photoviewpoint 4, the housing obscures views when viewed obliquely travelling along the road. There are no opportunities for public views across the site and out towards the open countryside.



Photoviewpoint 6



**Photoviewpoint 7:** From the pavement alongside Ratby Lane, south and beyond the junction with Jacqueline Road, there are vies of the woodland to the south of the settlement. The foreground is suburban in appearance with the amenity grass and tree planting in the verge reducing the depth of the field of view. The extent of views is constrained by the existing housing and tree planting.



Photoviewpoint 7

**Photoviewpoints 8, 9 and 10:** From the pavement alongside Launde Road/Ratby Lane the visual experienced is characterised by the urban edge and road corridor. The wide verge to the east of the road is densely planted with amenity grassland which reinforces the settled appearance of this edge of Markfield location. The depth of the field of view eastwards is limited by the presence of the maturing trees, the site is not openly visible, although its open character is apparent as a backdrop to the views.



Photoviewpoint 8





Photoviewpoint 9



Photoviewpoint 10



*Photoviewpoints 11 and 12: From the hill to the west of Markfield there are few opportunities to see the Site, the hill is densely wooded along its flanks. Where views out from the trees are possible the site is not clearly discernible as it is concealed within the wooded area east of the settlement.*



Photoviewpoint 11



Photoviewpoint 12

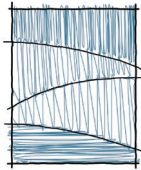




**Photoviewpoint 13:** The visual composition from Bradgate Park is of expansive areas of countryside with areas of dense woodland. Settlement to the west is typically well concealed within the wooded landscape. The site is not discernible from this elevated and open vantage point.

**Photoviewpoint 13**

Appendix 6: Photoviewpoints 1-13 (Winter views)





Baseline Viewpoint: 01





Baseline Viewpoint: 02





Baseline Viewpoint: 03





Baseline Viewpoint: 04









Baseline Viewpoint: 06





Baseline Viewpoint: 07





Baseline Viewpoint: 08





Baseline Viewpoint: 09





Baseline Viewpoint: 10





Baseline Viewpoint: 11A









Baseline Viewpoint: 12



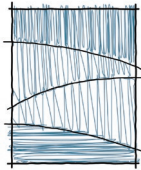


Baseline Viewpoint: 13





Appendix 7: Consideration of policy matters





# Land at Ratby Lane, Markfield, Leicestershire: Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

## The landscape policy context and scheme design

A.1 As noted in the IEMA publication, ‘Impact Assessment Outlook Journal, Volume 11: October 2021, The relationship between planning policy and LVIA’

*“The judgements made in an LVIA should be based by the assessor on the nature of the receptors, and the nature of the change arising from the development, as GLVIA3 recommends. Policy sets the context for these judgements but should not directly influence them. To do so could result in no significant effects being found, regardless of the quality of the proposal or the effects arising from it. If a development of a site would lead to significant effects, surely these should be reported whether the site is allocated or not. Finding no significant effects would suggest that the development is ‘acceptable,’ which is rightly a matter for the decision maker to consider in the round, taking account of all the evidence in front of them. Mitigation, in the form of design enhancements, is generally developed in response to significant effects. If the application of policy led to no significant effects, it would be difficult to justify such measures.*

*Policy may indicate the in-principal acceptance of landscape change, but it is for the LVIA to quantify this change as a judgement of effects, and to focus on the iterative design process to ensure the development is integrated into the landscape in the best possible way.”*

A.2 Simply, compliance with policy does not influence the judgements made in respect of the degree of change and its significance.

A.3 This short appendix sets out how the landscape policy context has influenced the masterplan. From a landscape and visual perspective, the relevant policies are:

### National Planning Policy Framework

A.4 Paragraph 187 (b)<sup>16</sup> states decisions that should contribute to and enhance the natural and local environment by:

*“recognising the intrinsic character and beauty of the countryside, and the wider benefits from natural capital and*

*ecosystem services – including the economic and other benefits of the best and most versatile agricultural land, and of trees and woodland”*

A.5 The masterplan has been informed by, and responded to, a range of environmental issues which have been assessed by a team of specialist consultants. The council has published its evidence base, including the assessment of the landscape character of the area. This information and site-specific assessment of the landscape and ecological character and assets of the area has driven the principle spatial distribution of development within the site and the provision of enhancement measures.

A.6 Woodland and tree cover is retained and increased and new areas of wetland, which complement the existing character and natural capital are provided.

## Hinckley and Bosworth adopted Core Strategy

### THE ENVIRONMENT

*Spatial Objective 9: Identity, Distinctiveness and Quality of Design To ensure development contributes to the local distinctiveness of the borough and enhances both settlement identity and the environment through the quality of sustainable design. Design and other measures will be used to develop strong community identities and neighbourhood pride.*

A.7 The masterplan has been informed by the analysis undertaken by the consultant team, in particular the landscape planning consultant, urban designer and ecologist. The proposals respect the existing settlement context in terms of the character of the house, pattern, grain and arrangement of dwellings within the landscape framework and deliver a soft transitional edge to Markfield through the inclusions of multifunctional Green Infrastructure.

*Spatial Objective 10: Natural Environment and Cultural Assets To deliver a linked network of green infrastructure, enhancing and protecting the borough’s distinctive*

*landscapes, woodlands, geology, archaeological heritage, and biodiversity and encourage its understanding, appreciation, maintenance, and development.*

A.8 The masterplan provides for a variety of new habitats which enhance the existing natural assets and link and connect the functional Green Infrastructure.

*Spatial Objective 11: Built Environment and Townscape Character To safeguard, enhance and where necessary regenerate the borough’s distinctive built environment including its wider setting particularly that associated with Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, and historic industries.*

A.9 There are no historic assets or conservation areas affected by the proposals. The townscape which provides the context to the site is not valued and has few notable and positive attributes. The proposals seek to draw on the positive qualities that exist in the immediate vicinity of the site and enhance the townscape with new architecture and landscape elements.

<sup>16</sup> 187 a) is addressed in the LVA in respect of the value of the landscape

