

## **Land off Hunts Lane, Desford**

Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment

Client: Peveril Homes

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Author: David Carter CMLI

Golby + Luck Ltd

**Midlands**

Wilson House  
207 Leicester Road  
Ilstock  
Leicestershire  
LE67 6HP

**York**

Suite 2.2  
Innovation Centre  
Innovation Way  
York  
YO10 5NY

t: 01530 265688

e: [info@golbyandluck.co.uk](mailto:info@golbyandluck.co.uk)

w: [www.golbyandluck.co.uk](http://www.golbyandluck.co.uk)





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## 1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This landscape and visual impact assessment (LVIA) has been prepared by Golby + Luck Landscape Architects following instruction by Peveril Homes to assess, in landscape and visual terms, land off Hunts Lane, Desford (the Site); see **GLY0225 LV01** and **LV02**. The following assessment has been carried out in accordance the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment - Third Edition (2013), published by the Landscape Institute and Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (GLVIA3). An assessment methodology is set out in **Appendix 1**.

1.2 This assessment is supported by a series of drawings that identify:

- Site location and context;
- Designations and policy context;
- Topography; and
- Landscape character.

1.3 Site work has been completed in November 2025 with limited autumn leaf cover. Consideration has been given to seasonal variation. This assessment considers a study area of approximately 2km radius from the Site. In the production of this assessment, reference has been made to the following documents and information:

- Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities – National Planning Policy Framework (December 2024) (the NPPF);
- Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Plan 2006 to 2026;
- Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan (2025);
- Desford Neighbourhood Plan 2018 to 2036 (2021);
- Hickley & Bosworth Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2017);
- Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment (2017);
- Hinckley & Bosworth Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020);
- Desford Conservation Area Appraisal (2010);
- Historic England National Heritage List;
- DEFRA Magic environmental data base; and
- Ordnance Survey Mapping - Promap.



## 2 SITE CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION

### Site Description

- 2.1 The application site ('the Site' – red boundary) occupies approximately 4.9ha of a larger field used for arable farming that extends to approximately 14.7ha in area as a whole ('the wider field' – blue boundary); see **GLY0225 LV01 & LV02**. The Site is situated at the northwest of Desford adjoining the junction of Hunts Lane and Newbold Road. The boundaries of the overall field are defined by a watercourse to the north ('the watercourse'), existing hedgerow, fields and residential gardens off Newbold Road to the east; existing hedgerow, Newbold Road and Hunts Lane to the south; and existing hedgerow, including tree and hedgerow cover associated with Desford Cemetery to the west. Existing agricultural access is present to the southwest corner of the Site, alongside an area of parking for the cemetery. A further field access is present to the southeast corner off Newbold Road. The boundaries of the Site that intersect the internal area of the wider field are open and undefined.
- 2.2 There are open views across the Site from gaps in hedgerows on Hunts Lane, adjoining the access gate to Desford Cemetery, and from the field access on Newbold Road. These offer visibility towards the wider setting of farmland north and west of Desford, with distant views towards the Charnwood Forest to the northeast. Similar visibility is experienced by existing properties that overlook the Site.
- 2.3 A review of historic Ordnance Survey mapping has identified that the Site and wider field historically formed part of 6no separate fields. Hedgerows were removed in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century to make way for modern agricultural practices.

### Settlement

- 2.4 Desford is a service village. Its historic context dates to the Domesday Book, originating as small agricultural village on elevated land overlooking surrounding tributary valleys, its historic core focused along High Street, Main Street and Church Lane, where farms, cottages and later framework-knitting workshops formed a compact linear settlement typical of Leicestershire's villages. Growth remained modest until the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when incremental estate development expanded the village southwards and eastwards, gradually infilling former agricultural land. Much of this growth was associated with the prevalence of the coal industry. To the south of the settlement, former RAF Desford was redeveloped as the Caterpillar works.



- 2.5 More recently, more substantial residential expansion has occurred around the settlement edge, reflecting its role as a commuter village within the Leicester area, with modern housing estates extending the built form to the immediate south of the Site off Hunts Lane, and at the wider east and south settlement edge off Leicester Lane and Peckleton Lane, Newbold Road and Kirkby Road. The immediate context of the Site is one of predominantly modern housing, comprising recent development off Lockymead Drive and Gables Close and earlier 20<sup>th</sup> century housing off Newbold Road and Manor Road.
- 2.6 Despite this growth, Desford retains a readable historic core, shaped by its topography and a clear transition from older village fabric to more contemporary residential suburbs radiating from the original core. The historic-core is well contained from the Site by intervening modern housing. The south of the Site lies between existing settlement land-uses, comprising residential development to the east and south and Desford Cemetery to the west. Hunts Lane Garden Allotments are located approximately 50m southwest of the Site, immediately south of Desford Cemetery. The intervening land between the allotments and housing off Gables Close is subject to planning permission for residential development; see **GLY0225 LV03**.
- 2.7 In terms of wider settlement, the landscape is characterised by frequent small to medium sized villages, including but not limited to Botcheston located approximately 1.5km to the northeast; Newton Unthank approximately 1km to the northeast; Peckleton approximately 2km to the south; Kirkby Mallory approximately 3.2km to the southwest; and Newbold Verdon approximately 2km to the west. Leicester is located approximately 5km to the east. Merry Lees industrial area is located approximately 2km north of the Site, comprising industrial buildings and the Forterra brickworks and quarry.

### **Infrastructure**

- 2.8 Highway infrastructure comprises major and minor roads linking Desford and surrounding villages. Hunts Lane forms part of the B582 that provides the main vehicular access into the settlement from the west, continuing east towards Leicester where wider connections to main transport corridors are available. The Leicester to Burton upon Trent railway is present approximately 800m of the Site at its nearest point.
- 2.9 Energy infrastructure is a common feature of the landscape setting to the north, with a series of large wind turbines being detracting features, with more distant visibility of pylons in the wider setting. A solar farm is present approximately 1.3km northwest of the Site.



### **Land-Use & Vegetation Cover**

- 2.10 Outside the settlement, agriculture is the principal land-use, characterised mainly by arable production with areas of grazing and pasture. Wider land-uses in the landscape setting are limited to isolated solar arrays and minerals extraction, as noted above.
- 2.11 The prevailing agricultural field pattern is irregular to rectilinear and medium to large in scale, reducing to smaller, more enclosed fields along the northern and northeastern settlement edge. The Site and wider field form one in a sequence of open and expansive arable fields extending north from Hunts Lane, bordered by small to medium pasture enclosures to the east and west. In this context, the Site is visually and functionally distinct from the smaller, well-treed field pattern at the settlement's northern fringe, where modern agricultural intensification is far less pronounced. Desford Cemetery is enclosed by mature hedgerows and regular broadleaf trees, including a distinctive lime avenue visible alongside Hunts Lane.
- 2.12 The majority of fields are bound by intact hedgerows, with mature tree cover and woodland strengthening over distance from the Site. In particular, around the smaller-scale field pattern north of the settlement and associated with watercourses in the wider setting to the north. Lindridge Wood and Great Fox Covert are notable woodland blocks.
- 2.13 In terms of arboriculture and ecology, the Site is comprised principally of arable farmland of low ecological distinctiveness, with some neutral grassland of medium distinctiveness to the north. Hedgerows and trees are present at the Site boundary, identified predominantly as low and moderate quality in supporting assessments.

### **Landform & Watercourses**

- 2.14 Desford occupies an area of gently elevated ground forming part of a broad interfluvium between local watercourses, with the village itself sitting around the 120–130m contours, but largely contained above the 125m contour; see **GLY0225 LV04**. From this higher plateau, the land falls away most noticeably to the north into a series of shallow but clearly defined tributary valleys, varying between approximately 100m and 130m AOD. These drain towards the Rothley Brook to the east, creating a rolling pattern of farmland, more undulating than plateau to the south of Desford. Further east, landform descends further around the Rothley Brook to approximately 80m. The resulting topography gives long views from the settlement edge to the north.
- 2.15 The Site and wider field reflect these characteristics, descending from approximately 132m at its south boundary to 104m AOD to the northeast. The south of the Site exhibits a gentler,



plateaued gradient near to the settlement edge, becoming steeper over distance and forming a more pronounced descent to the watercourse.

### **Access & Recreation**

- 2.16 In terms of access, public right of way (PRoW) R90 crosses the north of the Site, providing countryside access between Newbold Verdon and Desford and connections to the wider PRoW network to the north; see **GLY0225 02**. Beyond this footpath, the Site is maintained as privately-owned farmland and does not provide any public recreation function. Similar levels of countryside access are available to the east, south and west of the settlement. Tropical Bird Land is a local visitor attraction, located approximately 400m east of the Site.

### **Designations & Planning Policy**

- 2.17 In terms of planning designations, there are no environmental designations that cover the Site that would suggest an increased value or sensitivity to change. There are no formal or statutory ecological designations near to the Site, with exception to historic potential Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) which relate principally to hedgerows, grassland and woodland in the farmland setting to the north and west (see Ecological Appraisal). The nearest designated site is Botcheston Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest, located approximately 1.35km northeast of the Site. Lindridge Wood and woodland near Tropical Bird Lane is identified as Ancient Woodland by Natural England; see **GLY0225 LV03**.
- 2.18 In terms of heritage, the historic-core of the settlement is afforded protection by the Desford Conservation Area designation, which includes the majority of properties adjoining Main Street, the junction of Lindridge Lane and Main Street, and Church Lane. The agricultural landscape beyond the settlement does not form part of the Conservation Area. A series of Grade II listed properties are present within the designation, together with the Grade II\* listed Parish Church of St Martin. A moated site is present approximately 700m north of the Site at Lindridge Fields Farm, designated as a Schedule Monument.
- 2.19 In terms of adopted planning policy, the Site is not within the National Forest, but located near to the fringe of this policy area that seeks to provide afforestation and landscape enhancement across a 200 square mile area within the Midlands, initially pioneered to restore landscapes damaged by the mining industry.





### 3 LANDSCAPE PLANNING CONTEXT

- 3.1 The Site is within the jurisdiction of Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council, with the relevant landscape planning policies set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Local Plan 2006 to 2026.

#### **National Planning Policy Framework 2025 (NPPF)**

- 3.2 The Department for Communities and Local Government issued the most recent update to the National Planning Policy Framework in December 2024. The Framework sets out the national planning policy for achieving sustainable development that includes the economic, social and environmental objectives. This assessment is primarily concerned with the policies relating to the environmental objective set out under paragraph 8(c) that states:

*“**an environmental objective** - to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.”*

- 3.3 Paragraph 10 of the NPPF sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development stating:

*“So that sustainable development is pursued in a positive way, at the heart of the Framework is a **presumption in favour of sustainable development** (paragraph 11).”*

- 3.4 Paragraph 11 of the NPPF sets out the application of decision making:

*“Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development.”*

*For **plan-making** this means that:*

- a) all plans should promote a sustainable pattern of development that seeks to: meet the development needs of their area; align growth and infrastructure; improve the environment; mitigate climate change*



*(including by making effective use of land in urban areas) and adapt to its effects;*

- b) strategic policies should, as a minimum, provide for objectively assessed needs for housing and other uses, as well as any needs that cannot be met within neighbouring areas,, unless:*
  - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for restricting the overall scale, type or distribution of development in the plan area; or*
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole.*

For **decision-taking** this means:

- c) approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay; or*
- d) where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, granting permission unless:*
  - i. the application of policies in this Framework that protect areas or assets of particular importance provides a strong reason for refusing the development proposed; or*
  - ii. any adverse impacts of doing so would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits, when assessed against the policies in this Framework taken as a whole, having particular regard to key policies for directing development to sustainable locations, making effective use of land, securing well-designed places and providing affordable homes, individually or in combination."*

3.5 Footnote 7 of the NPPF sets out a list of identified areas or assets of particular importance that includes habitat sites as listed under paragraph 194 of the NPPF, Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), Green Belt, Local Green Space, National Landscapes, National Parks, Heritage Coast, irreplaceable habitats, designated heritage assets including assets listed under footnote 68 of the NPPF, and areas at risk of flooding and coastal change.

3.6 The Site is not covered by any of these identified areas or assets of particular importance.



3.7 Section 12 of the NPPF sets out policy in relation to achieving well-designed places. Paragraph 135 states that planning decisions should ensure that developments:

- a) *“will function well and add to the overall quality of the area, not just for the short term but over the lifetime of the development;*
- b) *are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping;*
- c) *are sympathetic to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change (such as increased densities);*
- d) *establish or maintain a strong sense of place, using the arrangement of streets, spaces, building types and materials to create attractive, welcoming and distinctive places to live, work and visit;*
- e) *optimise the potential of the site to accommodate and sustain an appropriate amount and mix of development (including green and other public space) and support local facilities and transport networks; and*
- f) *create places that are safe, inclusive and accessible and which promote health and well-being, with a high standard of amenity for existing and future users; and where crime and disorder, and the fear of crime, do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion and resilience.”*

3.8 Section 15 of the NPPF is concerned with conserving and enhancing the natural environment. Paragraph 187 of the NPPF states that planning decision should contribute to and enhance the natural environment by:

- a) *“protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, sites of biodiversity or geological value and soils (in a manner commensurate with their statutory status or identified quality in the development plan);*
- b) *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;*



- c) maintaining the character of the undeveloped coast, while improving public access to it where appropriate;*
- d) minimising impacts on and providing net gains for biodiversity, including by establishing coherent ecological networks that are more resilient to current and future pressures and incorporating features which support priority or threatened species such as swifts, bats and hedgehogs;*
- e) preventing new and existing development from contributing to, being put at unacceptable risk from, or being adversely affected by, unacceptable levels of soil, air, water or noise pollution or land instability. Development should, wherever possible, help to improve local environmental conditions such as air and water quality, taking into account relevant information such as river basin management plans; and*
- f) remediating and mitigating despoiled, degraded, derelict, contaminated and unstable land, where appropriate."*

3.9 The following assessment will consider the value of features and assets associated with the Site and its local setting alongside an assessment of its susceptibility to the development proposal. This will provide an understanding of landscape sensitivity that will inform the overall assessment of landscape effects.

3.10 Paragraph 188 of the NPPF states:

*"Plans should: distinguish between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites; allocate land with the least environmental or amenity value, where consistent with other policies in this Framework; take a strategic approach to maintaining and enhancing networks of habitats and green infrastructure; and plan for the enhancement of natural capital at a catchment or landscape scale across local authority boundaries."*

3.11 Paragraph 189 of the NPPF identifies the landscapes with the highest status of protection stating:

*"Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscape and scenic beauty in National Parks, the Broads and National Landscapes which have the highest status of protection in relation to these issues. The conservation and enhancement of wildlife and cultural heritage are also important considerations in these areas, and should be given great weight*



*in National Parks and the Broads. The scale and extent of development within all these designated areas should be limited, while development within their setting should be sensitively located and designed to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on the designated areas."*

- 3.12 The Site is not located within or near any such designations.

**Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Local Plan 2006 to 2026**

- 3.13 The Local Plan comprises key Development Plan Documents (DPD) including the Core Strategy DPD and Site Allocations & Development Management Policies DPD. The Site itself is located within the Open Countryside adjoining Desford, adjoining the settlement boundary to the south.
- 3.14 The Core Strategy DPD sets out the spatial strategy for the plan period. Policy 7 identifies Key Rural Centres that include Desford. More specifically, Policy 8 identifies Key Rural Centres Relating To Leicester, providing detailed policy requirements for Desford. Of relevance to this proposal, these seek to address existing deficiencies in accessible green space and play provision in Desford, deliver strategic green infrastructure as detailed in Policy 20, and require new development to respect the character and appearance of the Desford Conservation Area.
- 3.15 Policy 20: Green infrastructure sets out strategic aims across the Borough. In particular, these include delivery of the Ratby to Desford Multifunctional Corridor, creating a recreational corridor along Rothley Brook. More broadly, the policy seeks to promote settlements on the fringe of the National Forest, including Desford, as gateway villages, promoting environmental improvements and access to extend the benefits of the National Forest initiative beyond its boundary. Policy 20 is underpinned by the Council's Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) that sets out strategic aims for the Borough. None relate specifically to the Site, however, overarching themes seek to limit the impacts of agricultural diversification, seek woodland creation beyond the National Forest and improve countryside access and biodiversity.
- 3.16 The Site Allocations & Development Management Policies DPD allocates land to meet the Borough's development requirements, together with defining the policies that applications will be determined against.
- 3.17 Section 13 of the DPD concerns the natural environment. Policy DM4: Safeguarding the Countryside and Settlement Separation states:



*"To protect its intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character, the countryside will first and foremost be safeguarded from unsustainable development. Development in the countryside will be considered sustainable where:*

*a) It is for outdoor sport or recreation purposes (including ancillary buildings) and it can be demonstrated that the proposed scheme cannot be provided within or adjacent to settlement boundaries; or*

*b) The proposal involves the change of use, re-use or extension of existing buildings which lead to the enhancement of the immediate setting; or diversification of rural businesses; or*

*c) It significantly contributes to economic growth, job creation and/or*

*d) It relates to the provision of stand-alone renewable energy developments in line with Policy DM2: Renewable Energy and Low Carbon Development; or*

*e) It relates to the provision of accommodation for a rural worker in line with Policy DM5 - Enabling Rural Worker Accommodation and:*

- i) It does not have a significant adverse effect on the intrinsic value, beauty, open character and landscape character of the countryside; and*
- ii) It does not undermine the physical and perceived separation and open character between settlements; and*
- iii) It does not create or exacerbate ribbon development; with Core Strategy Policies 6 and 9; and*
- iv) If within a Green Wedge, it protects its role and function in line*
- v) If within the National Forest, it contributes to the delivery of the National Forest Strategy in line with Core Strategy Policy 21"*

3.18 This Assessment will consider the effects of the proposal on the character and appearance of the Site and its local setting. The Site does not perform any function in the separation of settlements.



- 3.19 Policy DM6: Enhancement of Biodiversity and Geodiversity seeks to safeguard the Borough's ecological and geological resource, including the hierarchy of internationally and locally designated sites and irreplaceable habitats. The Site is not subject to any designations and supporting ecological assessment has confirmed there are no irreplaceable habitats within or adjoining it.
- 3.20 Policy DM8 & DM9 aim to safeguard existing open spaces identified on the Policies Map. The Site is not part of any identified open space. The adjacent cemetery is designated as open space.
- 3.21 Section 14 of the DPD considers the built environment. Policy DM10: Development and Design sets out overarching design requirements for new development. Amongst other considerations, this policy seeks to ensure proposals respect the amenity of neighbouring land-uses and buildings, complements or enhances the character and appearance of the area and incorporates high quality landscaping.

#### **Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan 2025**

- 3.22 The Council has published a further draft of the new Hinckley & Bosworth Local Plan (hereafter referred to as 'the Local Plan' or 'the Plan'), under Regulation 18 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. This document is for consultation purposes only and is not a decision-making document.

#### **Desford Neighbourhood Plan 2018-2036**

- 3.23 The Neighbourhood Plan was made in 2021 and identifies policies for development within the settlement.
- 3.24 Policy H1: Settlement Boundary defines the settlement limits at Figure 2, stating that all land outside the defined boundary will be treated as open countryside and any development will be carefully controlled in accordance with local and national policy. The Site is located within the open countryside.
- 3.25 Section 5 of the Neighbourhood Plan considers that natural and historic environment. Policies ENV1: Protection of Local Green Space identifies open space within the Plan Area. The Site is not identified as open space. The adjoining cemetery is identified as open space 215.
- 3.26 The Plan text continues to describe the Environmental Characteristics of the Plan Area, stating:



*"The parish is characterised by a few distinctive environmental features. Taken together, the policies in this chapter will help to protect the details of the parish's environment and thus contribute to preservation of the whole landscape and 'sense of place' of Desford.*

*" Open, 'breezy' aspect with long views*

*Steep-sided, wooded valley divides the parish into two halves*

*Varied built environment of Desford village centre, with intermixed buildings of all ages from 17th century to modern"*

- 3.27 An Environmental Inventory was prepared to inform the Neighbourhood Plan, including a review of designations and fieldwork to identify sites of natural and historic significance in the Plan Area. Figure 8 identifies sites and features of environmental significance, which largely relate to historic potential LWS, including the hedgerow that adjoins the northeast corner of the Site. Policy ENV2 seeks to protect these features and identifies they are locally valued. The Site is not identified as a feature of environmental significance and is not subject to the provisions of this policy.
- 3.28 Policy ENV3: Biodiversity General seeks to conserve and enhance biodiversity, with particular reference to a wildlife corridor identified at Figure 10. The Site is not part of this wildlife corridor, however, more generally the policy states that developments that conserve or enhance biodiversity, and incorporate biodiversity in and around them, will be supported.
- 3.29 Policy ENV4: Ridge and Furrow identifies areas of surviving ridge and furrow at Figure 11. These do not include the Site but reflect the smaller, historic field enclosures to the north of the settlement which, unlike the Site, have not been influenced by modern farming.
- 3.30 Policy ENV5: Local Heritage Assets identifies designated and non-designated assets in the Plan Area. The closest non-designated asset is the Roebuck Inn that adjoins the southeast corner of the Site. Heritage matters are addressed in the supporting Heritage Impact Assessment.
- 3.31 Policy ENV6: Safeguarding Important Views seeks to protect views considered locally important and valued. The policy wording states:

*"Development that adversely affects the identified locally important and valued views (list above, and Fig. 13) will not be supported unless the proposal*





*includes effective site specific mitigation measures. Development shall be designed to sustain significant views that contribute to the character and appearance of the area"*

3.32 Figure 13 identifies View 2 as being within the Site. The view description states:

*"From footpath through very large field 214 behind cemetery and across field from corner of Hunts Lane and Newbold Road, looking NW, N and NE"*

3.33 This policy indicates there is local value associated with open visibility across the Site, though largely experienced from the adjoining highway setting due to the Site being maintained as private land. This Assessment will consider these views, their overall sensitivity and opportunities for mitigation and enhanced public access to experience the open aspect beyond the Site.

3.34 Wider policy in the Neighbourhood Plan considers Transport. Community Action T1: Footpaths, Bridleways and Cycle Routes supports the maintenance, upgrading and, where appropriate, extension of the pedestrian footpath network in order to:

*"a) Service new developments and connect them to the existing pedestrian footpath network;*

*b) Encourage walking over car use for making journeys within the Parish; and*

*c) Provide an improved and more extensive footpath network to support exercise and leisure activities for Desford Parish residents and visitors"*

3.35 The Site and wider land within the Applicant's control offer potential for connections to public footpath R90, increasing recreational provision at the settlement edge in accordance with parts a) and c) above.



## 4 LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL BASELINE

4.1 The following section of this appraisal considers the baseline landscape setting of the Site covering issues relating to character and appearance. When considering character, published landscape character documents have been referenced alongside a more detailed consideration of the Site and its settlement and landscape context.

4.2 When considering the appearance of the Site, representative views have been identified through field work that provide an accurate representation of its visual setting. Views have been taken from publicly accessible locations and for each the likely receptors have been identified.

### **Natural England National Character Area Profiles 2014**

4.3 At a national level Natural England have divided England into 159 National Character Areas. The Site is located at the fringe of National Character Area Profile 71: Leicestershire and South Derbyshire Coalfield (NCA71) and National Character Area Profile 94: Leicestershire Vales (NCA94). National Character Area Profile 73: Charnwood occupies the wider setting to the northeast.

4.4 The key characteristics of NCA71 are described as:

- *"The landscape is unenclosed with shallow valleys, subdued sandstone ridges and a gently undulating plateau.*
- *There are heavy, poorly draining soils over the Coal Measures and mudstones of the Mercia Mudstone Group, and free-draining soils on the sandstone ridges.*
- *The area forms part of a regional watershed between the River Mease to the south and the River Soar to the east and has many minor, swiftflowing streams draining the area, for example Saltersford Brook and Rothley Brook. Flooded clay pits and mining have resulted in many subsidence pools or flashes, which in combination with Thornton Reservoir provide valuable open water sites for nature conservation and recreation.*
- *The area has a developing woodland character that is heavily influenced by the work of The National Forest initiative, which augments*



*locally dense riparian woodland and prominent amenity trees around settlements with developing woodland on former colliery sites.*

- *Small- to medium-sized fields occur with a wide variation in field pattern, including some narrow, curved fields that preserve the strips of the open field system. Where arable production predominates, fields have been enlarged. Hedgerows are low with a few scattered hedgerow trees and in places show the effects of former open cast workings.*
- *Agriculture comprises a mixture of arable and mixed sheep and beef units and, to a lesser extent, dairy. Combinable crops are grown on the freer-draining soils. Potatoes are grown in rotation on the heavier soils around Measham and Packington.*
- *There is remnant acid grassland over sandstone with neutral grassland in the valleys, and acid heathland on open mosaic habitats on previously developed land, particularly colliery spoil. The River Mease SSSI and SAC has internationally important spined loach and bullhead fish and nationally important white-clawed crayfish, otter, and aquatic plants such as water crowfoot.*
- *Rich heritage assets include Ashby-de-la-Zouch medieval castle and industrial heritage including the Ashby Canal and Moira Furnace, one of the best examples of an early 18th-century blast furnace. Archaeological assets include a moated medieval village at Desford and the Roman town at Ravenstone.*
- *Traditional vernacular is predominately locally manufactured red brick with tile or slate roofs. Some older buildings are of stone. Locally characteristic around Measham is a double-sized brick of the late 18th century known as the 'Measham gob'. There are many three-storey brickbuilt farmhouses.*
- *The settlement pattern is dominated by mining settlements. Isolated hamlets along the roadsides and small villages centred on a church contrast with extensive areas of 20th-century housing and prominent industrial and commercial distribution warehouses at the edge of larger centres, notably Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Measham and Coalville.*



- *Around Coleorton, a more dispersed pattern of settlement associated with small-scale bell pit mining of the 13th century, spoil heaps, small fields, a dense network of footpaths and a fine example of historic parkland landscape contribute to the distinctiveness of this part of the coalfield landscape.*
- *The area is easily accessible by major roads and rail and is close to East Midlands Airport. Long-distance recreational routes include the Ivanhoe Way, the Leicestershire Round, and a wide network of local trails and footpaths associated with the recreational assets of The National Forest. The Ashby Canal also provides a link to the wider area."*

4.5 Strategic Environmental Opportunities are set out for NCA74 that aim to support biodiversity, water quality and recreation; to conserve existing woodlands while creating new, well-planned woodland and restoring hedgerows to boost climate resilience and biodiversity; to protect the region's industrial and mining heritage while balancing forestry, industry, agriculture and tourism with good public access; and to manage the environment in an integrated way that reflects the influence of geology on landscape, wildlife and settlement, recognising the value of former extraction sites for both geodiversity and biodiversity.

4.6 The key characteristics of NCA94 are described as:

- *"An open landscape of gentle clay ridges and valleys underlain by Mercia Mudstone and Lias groups bedrock but with an extensive cover of superficial deposits occasionally giving rise to moderately steep scarp slopes. There is an overall visual uniformity to the landscape and settlement pattern.*
- *Land use characterised by a mixture of pasture and arable agriculture that has developed on the neutral clay soils.*
- *Distinctive river valley of the Soar and Swift, with flat flood plains and gravel terraces together with tributaries including the Sence. Riverside meadows and waterside trees and shrubs are common, along with waterbodies resulting from gravel extraction.*



- *Woodland character derived largely from spinneys and copses on the ridges and the more undulating land and from waterside and hedgerow trees and hedgerows. The density, height and pattern of hedgerows varies throughout.*
- *Diverse levels of tranquillity associated with contrasts between busy urban areas and some deeply rural parts. Large settlements dominate the open character of the landscape. Leicester, Lutterworth, Hinckley and Market Harborough and related infrastructure, including major roads, are often visually dominant.*
- *Frequent small towns and large villages often characterised by red brick buildings and attractive stone buildings in older village centres and eastern towns and villages. Frequent, imposing spired churches are also characteristic, together with fine examples of individual historic buildings.*
- *Rich and varied historic landscape, with the nationally important Bosworth Battlefield near Sutton Cheney, prominent historic parklands and country houses, ridge-and-furrow earthworks and important medieval settlement remains, for example at Wistow Hall, Gumley, Knaptoft and Peatling Magna"*

4.7 Both NCAs represent broad geographic areas, with many of the described characteristics being remote from the Site. The landscape setting around Desford is transitional. It exhibits common characteristics of both NCAs in terms of land-use, landform and vegetation cover. However, the local setting shares stronger physical, visual and cultural links with the coalfield landscape, with Desford having been a significant mining village contrasting the village character and architecture of the Leicestershire Vales.

#### **Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment (2017)**

- 4.8 At a local level, the Council's evidence base comprises the Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment and Landscape Sensitivity Assessment, prepared by Land Use Consultants.
- 4.9 The Landscape Character Assessment (the HBLCA) identifies the site as being within character area D – Newbold & Desford Rolling Farmland, describing the area as lying on gently undulating farmland in the east of the Borough between the Charnwood Fringe to



the north and the Stoke Golding Rolling Farmland in the south. The Assessment sets out key characteristics for the character area:

- *“Gently rolling landform rising to the north from the lower lying land around the River Soar;*
- *Clustered villages of varying size centred on crossroads;*
- *Predominantly arable farmland with clustered areas of industry and recreational facilities near to the village fringes;*
- *Tree cover is limited, with scattered trees and small linear woodland copses;*
- *Larger to medium-sized field pattern defined by single species hawthorn hedgerows;*
- *Good network of footpaths link settlements;*
- *Few major roads;*
- *Open views where hedgerows have been removed, giving an impression of a large scale landscape; and*
- *Electricity pylons and wind turbines are often prominent vertical features in this open landscape.”*

4.10 The landscape is described in more detail as a gently undulating, predominantly rural area underlain by Triassic Mercia Mudstone with slowly permeable clay soils, pockets of more free-draining loam, and alluvium along a tributary of the River Soar. It is characterised by medium to large scale arable and pasture fields, scattered farmsteads, hedgerows with trees, small linear woodlands, and some industrial elements such as quarrying and the Caterpillar works. Settlement consists mainly of clustered villages, most notably Desford. The area contains some culturally significant sites including Anglo-Saxon earthworks at Kirkby Moats, the historically evolving Mallory Park circuit, the locally notable fused “oak and ash” tree near Peckleton (a tree that is apparently a fusion of an oak and an ash, planted by two lovers who were forced apart), and several moated medieval sites, including the Scheduled Monument approximately 700m north of the Site near Lindridge Fields Farm. These are remote from the Site. Despite minor urban influences from roads, energy infrastructure and industry, the landscape is noted to retain areas of tranquillity, dark skies, long-distance views, and ecological interest within scattered deciduous woodlands and Local Wildlife Sites.

4.11 The Assessment more clearly defines Key Sensitivities and Values of the character area:



- *"The remaining areas of ridge and furrow which create a sense of historic time depth;*
- *The rural settlement pattern of compact and nucleated agricultural settlements connected by a network of rural lanes and minor roads is largely unspoiled. The rural landscape and sense of tranquility is sensitive to change from further development;*
- *Isolated farmsteads interspersed throughout the farmland contribute to the historic rural character and provide continuity to the past;*
- *The estate at Mallory Park has strong historic and cultural associations and provides a nationally-popular attraction;*
- *Long distance and panoramic views from the elevated land in the north creates a high scenic quality and adds to the visual amenity;*
- *Relatively small communities of mesotrophic grassland and deciduous woodland provide valuable habitat and a predominantly agricultural landscape; and*
- *The areas which provide a rural setting to the settlements are sensitive to changes as a result of new development, as well as views from the wider landscape to church spires."*

4.12 The HBLCA concludes with the following Landscape Strategies for the Newbold & Desford rolling farmland character areas:

- *"Conserve historic field patterns where possible and the agricultural setting to isolated farmsteads;*
- *Conserve the relatively small-scale villages and ensure any new development contributes positively to the character and built vernacular;*
- *Conserve and enhance pedestrian access between adjacent villages including the recreational and ecological corridor of Rothley Brook;*
- *Conserve Mallory Park and its predominantly rural setting;*
- *Conserve and enhance the long, panoramic views from higher ground of uncluttered skylines and church spires, and consider the visual impact of vertically prominent elements in any new development;*
- *Conserve and enhance the biodiversity of the landscape through a mosaic of habitats;*



- *Identify opportunities for replacement of hedgerows along roadsides and their future management as landscape features; and*
- *Promote regeneration and enhancement of tree cover through establishment of linear copses and hedgerow trees within field boundaries and around urbanising influences."*

4.13 The HBLCA goes on to identify Urban Character Areas, including UCA 2: Desford. It describes the key characteristics of the urban character area as:

- *"A compact nucleated settlement with the historic core on the northern edge;*
- *Built form of largely two storey terraced cottages, often with prominent red brick chimneys and small subdivided windows;*
- *Residential properties surround the central core whilst the 1940s – 1950s dwellings extend to the south;*
- *Mixed building materials used include red brick, rough cast rendering and slate roofing, with some timber framed thatched buildings;*
- *The Church of St Martin forms a local landmark with its distinctive spire; and*
- *Minimal frontages and narrow lanes create a small compact streetscape which then opens out to a later, wider street pattern with winding cul-de-sacs within the twentieth century development areas."*

4.14 The HBLCA sets out key sensitivities and values of the urban character area:

- *"The historic character of small terraced cottage and large detached cottages arranged in a medieval street pattern and connected by an extensive network of jitties provides a sense of place and a link to the past;*
- *Medieval, Georgian & Victorian building styles and materials contribute to the visual amenity and provide a sense of historic time depth;*
- *The colliery wheel at the centre of the village provides continuity to the landscape's industrial past and provides a link with other nearby mining settlements;*
- *Small pockets of enclosed green space provide intimate areas within the enclosed built form and contribute to the recreational value;*





- *Distinctive asymmetrical streetscape largely influenced by the hilltop topographic and historic buildings as the Old Manor House on the High Street.*
- *The Parish Church of St Martin which forms a local landmark and focal point at the centre of the historic core; and*
- *Occasional open views of the countryside which provide a reminder of settlement's origins as an agricultural settlement."*

4.15 The assessment concludes with Townscape Strategies for the Desford urban character area:

- *"Retain listed building and buildings of local interest wherever possible;*
- *Ensure any new developments respect the rural setting of the village and the Conservation Area in terms of siting, scale, design and materials used;*
- *Retain and enhance important views of the church and other key visual buildings and spaces in the Conservation Area;*
- *Encourage proposals to provide landscape enhancements, including tree planting to the settlement edge;*
- *Enhance pedestrian links between adjacent village and consider potential as key gateways to the National Forest; and*
- *Build upon and improve Desford's sense of place and individual identity through sensitive design and appropriate materials."*

4.16 In summary, beyond the visual function of the Site in offering open views of the wider agricultural setting, the Site makes a limited contribution to the key sensitivities of the Newbold and Desford Rolling Farmland LCA or the settlement character as described in the HBLCA. The prevailing settlement context adjoining the Site is one of modern residential development of the south of Hunts Lane, together with earlier 20th century development off Manor Road and Newbold Road. Of relevance to the Site and wider land within the Applicant's control, are opportunities for reinstatement of historic field pattern lost in the 1970s, opportunities to improve public access to the countryside, including increasing public access to experience long panoramic views from the settlement edge, and enhancement of tree cover to deliver wider environmental benefits associated with integrating built form into the landscape, enhancing ecological connectivity and reinforcing tree cover around a gateway settlement to the National Forest.



### **Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (2017)**

- 4.17 The Landscape Sensitivity Assessment (the HBLSA) includes a range of study areas across the Borough and considers their sensitivity to residential housing (two to three stories) and commercial development (small and large scale).
- 4.18 The study area around Desford did not consider the Site, but assessed land to the south of the settlement; see **GLY0225 LV05**. The HBLSA concluded that the study area was of medium sensitivity to residential development. The judgement set out:

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

- 4.19 While the assessment does not directly consider the Site and land to the north of Desford, the characteristics and landscape resource are comparable with the study area considered in the HBLSA. There are no distinguishing features that would suggest an increased value or susceptibility to change. In terms of visual setting, similar long distance views are available from the wider settlement edge, with 'Important Views' also identified to the east and southeast of the settlement in the Neighbourhood Plan.

### **Assessment of Landscape Value**

- 4.20 In addition to the published assessments that form part of the Local Authority's evidence base it is important to provide an independent assessment of value as part of the baseline assessment, later combined with susceptibility to the proposed change to inform overall landscape sensitivity. The factors set out under Box 5.1 of the GLVIA provide a basis for determining landscape value and are supplemented by Technical Guidance Note 02/21 – Assessing landscape value outside national designations (TGN 02/21).
- 4.21 This Assessment will consider 3no landscape receptors;
- The Site – the existing landscape features of the Site and its immediate boundaries;
  - Local Setting – the landscape setting to the north and west of Desford within an approximate 1km radius of the Site; and
  - LCA D: Newbold & Desford Rolling Farmland – the character area as a whole.



Table 1 – Evaluation of Landscape Value

Contributing Factor	Evaluation	Site	Local Setting	LCA D
Natural heritage	Natural or semi-natural features within the Site comprise hedgerows, watercourse and tree cover at its boundaries, together with its landform. The main body of the Site is maintained as a cropland of limited value. The Local Setting and LCA share the rolling landform of the Site, set over shallow tributary valleys with a coherent pattern of farmland and woodland. Pockets of ancient woodland are present, but sparse.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Cultural heritage	Historic mapping indicates the Site and wider field have lost its historic field pattern to intensive agriculture. The Roebuck Inn is a non-designated local asset adjoining the southeast of the Site. Scattered heritage assets, such as the moated site at Lindridge Fields Farm are present across the Local Setting and LCA and offer some limited time depth. Ridge and furrow survives in fields to the north and northeast of the settlement, where there is also a more immediate relationship with the settlement Conservation Area. However, the agricultural land at the settlement edge is not part of the designation. Cultural heritage varies over the wider LCA.	Low/ Medium	Medium	Medium
Landscape Condition	The hedgerows at the Site boundaries are in an intact and well-managed condition. Trees are assessed mostly as low and moderate quality. While much of the Site is intensively farmed, this remains representative of its historic land-use. The Local Setting and LCA are in similar condition, with regular detracting elements including wind turbines, pylons and communication masts.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Associations	The Site is not known to have any associations with famous people, works of art, literature, events or folklore. There are associations of local recognition associated with the settlement, notably the 'Great Fire	Low	Low	Low



	of Desford' in 1657, where villages petitioned Oliver Cromwell for charitable assistance, and the former RAF Desford associated with both World Wars, though now developed as the Caterpillar works. The 'Oak and Ash tree' is local folklore associated with an individual tree at Peckleton. These are not associations of common knowledge or national recognition.			
Distinctiveness	The Site does not contain any features that are rare or unusual. Its distinctive qualities are limited to its landform and openness that offer long distance views. Within the Local Setting and LCA there are localised increases in distinctiveness. For example, surviving ridge and furrow to the north of the settlement and Ancient Woodland, however, these features are isolated and as a whole these landscapes represent a commonplace and ordinary character.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Recreational	The Site has a single public right of way crossing its northern extent but is otherwise maintained as private land. There is a typical level of countryside access in the Local Setting that is consistent across the wider LCA.	Low/ Medium	Medium	Medium
Perceptual (Scenic)	The Site facilitates long distance views to the north, including towards the Charnwood Forest, that are recognised to be of local value. Similar views are experienced across the Local Setting. Detracting features are present in the views. The Caterpillar works is a dominant feature to the south of Desford. Elevated land affords similar long views in the wider LCA, but detracting features are common.	Medium	Medium	Medium
Perceptual (Wilderness and tranquillity)	The Site immediately adjoins the modern settlement edge with light pollution and a noisy public highway at Hunts Lane, limiting tranquillity. The cemetery supports a sense of relative tranquillity. Tranquillity increases over distance from the settlement edge in the tributary valleys, but there is a widespread appreciation of human activity. The Local Setting and LCA are not	Low/ Medium	Low/ Medium	Low/ Medium



	landscapes that possess qualities of wilderness.			
Functional	The Site has no particular function beyond its use for agriculture. Within the Local Setting and LCA, local policies promote green infrastructure initiatives and wildlife corridors associated with Rothley Brook and its tributaries. While the Site is not within the National Forest, local strategies recognise its function as a fringe settlement and promote opportunities for it to function as a 'gateway' and reflect wider environment enhancement initiatives.	Low/ Medium	Low/ Medium	Low/ Medium

4.22 In summary, the Site is not part of a designated landscape and has few features of note within its main body. The Site provides long-distance views to the north, but these are limited to gaps in the existing southern boundary hedgerow and there is no public access for such views to be obtained and appreciated from within the Site. PRow R90 occupies lower landform with a more contained visual setting. While some indicators (associations, cultural, functional) are low to low/medium, these have limited influence on the overall perceptual and physical qualities of the landscape, which, due to natural heritage, scenic quality and condition, support a medium landscape value judgement. In overall terms, the Local Setting and LCA are considered to be of **medium** landscape value, accepting there may be localised increases in value where associated with designation in the wider setting of the LCA. The Site is a component of this wider landscape context and also considered to be of **medium** landscape value. These landscapes are not considered to be *valued landscapes* in the context of the NPPF.

### Visual Setting

4.23 The following section of this assessment considers the appearance of the site and wider setting referencing a number of representative views. A summary of each view is set out with an assessment of value that is determined with reference to:

- Planning designations specific to each view;
- Views that are important to the special qualities of a designated landscape, or recorded in published documentation;
- Views recorded as being important to cultural heritage assets;



- Views recorded in guidebooks or on maps, and/or where special provision has been made in the landscape for the appreciation of a view; and
- Judgements made on site as to the specific quality of a view.

4.24 Representative view locations are identified on the Site Location and Site Context plans; see **GLY0225 LV01 & LV02**. A Zone of Theoretical Visibility (ZTV) model has been prepared to inform the visual baseline. This considers a bare-earth scenario and does not take into account limitations on visibility by existing vegetation and settlement. The ZTV indicates potential visibility to the north, northeast and west, reflecting local landform. Field work has been undertaken to verify the potential visibility of the Site. This has confirmed that beyond the immediate settlement edge, the Site is well contained to the east and south by intervening settlement and landform. The primary visual envelope extends to the north of west and can be summarised as:

- Short distance views from the settlement edge at Hunts Lane, Newbold Road, Manor Road, Lockymead Drive and Gables Close;
- Short and medium distance views from Desford Cemetery;
- Short and medium distance views from public footpaths R90 and R95;
- Medium distance views from public footpaths R75 and R90 to the north and west; and
- Long and very long distance views from the public rights of way network to the north and west, including public bridleway R74 and public footpaths R75, R88, R89, R90, S7 and S9, together with potential visibility from Merry Lees Road.

4.25 The private receptor groups most likely to be affected by the proposals include:

- Group A – Receptors of properties immediately adjoining the Site off Newbold Road, including but not limited to 102 Newbold Road and the Roebuck Inn; and
- Group B – Receptors of residential properties off Manor Road, Lockymead Drive and Gables Close.

4.26 The following table summarises each representative view making an assessment of value; see **GLY0225 LV08 to LV13**.



Table 2 – Summary of representative and assessment of sensitivity

View	Distance	Description	Value	Receptors and Susceptibility	Sensitivity
1	0m	From this location, there is an open view across the Site to the northwest through an existing field access, experienced from the highway footpath on Newbold Road. The view affords a broad appreciation of the rolling farmland setting to the north of the settlement. The Charnwood Forest is partly visible, forming a treed backdrop beyond undulating farmland. Scattered settlement and farmsteads are visible. Wind turbines are a detracting feature, with pylons visible distantly. A communications mast is visible on Hunts Lane. Mature tree cover at Desford Cemetery is visible at the west boundary of the Site. This view reflects Important View 2 from the adopted Neighbourhood Plan that is considered to be of local value.	Medium	Vehicle users are considered to be of low susceptibility. Pedestrian users are considered to be of medium susceptibility.	Low/Medium
2	10m	From this location, there is an open view across the Site from the existing field access and cemetery parking on Hunts Lane, experienced by users of the highway setting, where public footpath R95 adjoins the road and people arriving at the cemetery. The view affords a broad appreciation of the rolling farmland setting to the north of the settlement. The Charnwood Forest forms an elevated and treed backdrop, view with local highpoints of Bardon Hill and Beacon Hill visible in clear conditions. Scattered settlement and farmsteads are visible. Communication masts are a distant skyline feature. Highway signage and lighting form part of the wider view and detract. This view reflects Important View 2 from the adopted Neighbourhood Plan that is considered to be of local value.	Medium	Vehicle users are considered to be of low susceptibility. Pedestrian users are considered to be of medium susceptibility. Visitors to the cemetery and users of public footpath R95 are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High
3	35m	From this location, views are contained to the immediate setting of the cemetery grounds, bound by an attractive mature setting of evergreen holly hedgerow and trees. The internal area of the Site is not directly visible, but there is filtered visibility across the skyline between existing trees. There are glimpses of houses off Gables Close and of 102 Newbold Road beyond. Tree cover off Newbold Road forms a backdrop beyond the boundary hedgerow. These are contained views offering an appreciation of the cemetery.	Medium	Users of the cemetery are considered to be of high susceptibility.	High
4	310m	From this location, existing housing off Gables Close is a dominant feature of the view, visible across an intervening arable field (now subject to planning permission for residential development). Two communication masts are visible adjoining Hunts Lane. The view offers	Low	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium



		a relatively limited appreciation of the landscape, with modern housing being a dominant feature.			
5	0m	From this location, there is an open view into the south of the Site from the public footpath, with visibility across the lower slopes of the wider field and across adjoining farmland. Buildings off Hunts Lane are visible in the distance. Much of the higher plateau of the Site is contained by landform. A wind turbine is a prominent feature.	Medium	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High
6	300m	From this location, the Site and wider field are visible, with its sloping landform containing the settlement from view. Tree cover at Desford Cemetery is visible at the top of the field. The open, farmed setting of the watercourse is visible alongside the footpath, with mature tree cover near Tropical Birdland, and more recent woodland planting, visible beyond.	Medium	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High
7	145m	From this location, there are open views across the shallow setting of landform at the toe of the Site, with its rising slopes leading to a backdrop of the settlement roofscape. Housing is visible beyond the Site, with a framework of mature vegetation cover to its immediate east and west, along field boundaries and at Desford Cemetery. Recent planting is visible in the fields adjoining the footpath, beyond which smaller, well-treed grassland fields form the immediate setting to the settlement edge off Newbold Road. There is incidental visibility towards the Conservation Area when looking southeast. The view offers an appreciation of the landscape setting at the settlement edge, and the framework of mature vegetation cover and descending landform that contains it.	Medium	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High
8	1.1km	From this location, there is a broad view of open undulating farmland extending towards the settlement. Mixed broadleaf and coniferous tree cover is visible along the access track to Lindridge Hall farm. Tree cover punctuates the lower setting of the tributary valley and skyline, providing an impression of a well-treed, farmland setting. A wind turbine is a prominent feature.	Medium	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High
9	1.1km	From this location, there is a broad view of open undulating farmland extending towards the settlement. Agricultural buildings at Lindridge Hall Farm are visible. Tree cover punctuates the lower setting of the tributary valley, filtering views towards the Site. A wind turbine is a prominent detracting feature. Filtered and distant views of the Site are obtainable, with it being well contained by intervening vegetation cover. The settlement edge is glimpsed beyond the Site.	Medium	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High





10	1.25km	From this location, there is a broad view of open undulating farmland extending towards the settlement. The lower valley is well treed along the watercourse and at Lindridge Wood, with more open views towards the settlement. The settlement edge itself is well-treed to the northeast, characterised by a smaller scale pattern of mature field boundaries. These filter views towards the Conservation Area. St Martin's Church spire can be seen distantly above the settlement roofscape. The Site is visible more openly, with its upper plateau viewed against the backdrop of housing beyond Hunts Lane. A wind turbine is a prominent detracting feature.	Medium	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High
11	1.85km	From this location, there is very long distance visibility across the farmland setting between Merrylees Road and Desford. Buildings at Lindridge Farm are visible, along with more distant views of scattered farmsteads and the settlement roofscape of both Desford and Newbold Verdon. Two wind turbines are prominent detracting features, with wider distant visibility of energy infrastructure. The view offers a broad appreciation of the landscape setting with some detracting features. This view is also representative of receptors from Merrylees Road itself and the wider public rights of way network to the northwest (notably footpaths S7/S9 that are 2km+ from the Site).	Medium	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High
12	600m	From this location, there is an open view across pastoral fields alongside Hunts Lane, descending into the shallow tributary valley associated with the watercourse at the south of the Site. The sloping landform of the Site and wider field are openly visible, with its upper plateau contained in part by intervening field trees and vegetation cover at Desford Cemetery. These give way to glimpses of the settlement edge beyond the Site. This view is also representative of views from Hunts Lane, approaching Desford from the west. A wind turbine is a prominent detracting feature.	Medium	Users of the public footpath are considered to be high susceptibility.	Medium/High
<b>Private Receptor Groups</b>					
A	0-40m	From these properties, there are likely to be a combination of open and filtered views across the Site to the farmland setting to the north and northwest. These views are likely to be experienced from both primary and secondary rooms. The most open views are likely to be experienced by 102 Newbold Road.	Medium	Residential receptors and users of the public house are considered to be of high susceptibility.	Medium/High
B	25-100m	There are likely to be a combination of open views across the Site to the farmland setting to the north and northwest. The most open views are likely to be experienced by	Medium	Residential receptors and users of the public house	Medium/High



		from properties directly opposite the Site off Gables Close, Lockymead Drive and Newbold Road. These views are likely to be experienced from both primary and secondary rooms.		are considered to be of high susceptibility.	
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## 5 DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

### Landscape Constraints & Opportunities

5.1 The key landscape and visual constraints of the Site can be summarised as:

- Existing trees and hedgerows at the boundaries of the Site;
- Locally valued views across the Site from Hunts Lane and Newbold Road, identified as 'Important View 2' in the adopted Neighbourhood Plan, offering long, panoramic views recognised as part of local landscape character in the HBLCA;
- The elevated landform of the Site and its open setting at the settlement edge. The north of the existing settlement is largely contained by the 125m and 130m contours, with sloping landform descending beyond into the tributary valley;
- The visual amenity of PRow R90 that crosses to the northern boundary of the Site and wider field, together with visibility of the Site from the wider public rights of way network to the north and west;
- The amenity of existing properties at the settlement edge neighbouring the Site; and
- The amenity of Desford Cemetery.

5.2 The key landscape and visual opportunities for the Site and wider field within the Applicant's control can be summarised as:

- Where possible, to bring forward development in accordance with the published HBLCA recommendations for LCA D, that will:
  - Preserve the stock of hedgerow trees through management to ensure their longevity;
  - Restore historic field boundaries, which have been lost over time to intensive farming;
  - Conserve and enhance the appreciation of long panoramic views from higher ground, towards the north of Desford;
  - Promote the regeneration of tree cover through the establishment of linear copses and hedgerow trees within field boundaries and around urbanising influences; and
  - Encourage implementation of good management practices and promote biodiversity.



- These measures assist in defining the key landscape strategy objectives that seek to:
  - Reinststate hedgerows to reflect historic boundaries lost to intensive agriculture, helping to reinforce the medium-scale field pattern north of the settlement and along Hunts Lane;
  - Contain built development on the upper plateau within the existing settlement framework, linking mature vegetation east-west through characteristic hedgerow, tree and woodland planting to soften the settlement edge;
  - Enhance the riparian corridor with new planting to diversify landscape and ecological interest and continue recent woodland initiatives to the east;
  - Maintain visual connections to the countryside, creating clear links to new greenspace and improved rural access connecting to footpath R90;
  - Provide new greenspace and footpath routes that enable long, panoramic views northwards so Important View 2 can be appreciated from a countryside setting rather than busy highway; and
  - Secure long-term landscape quality through a landscape and ecological management plan.

5.3 These measures are illustrated on the Landscape Strategy that has informed the iterative design process; see **GLY0225 LV07**.

#### **Development Proposal**

5.4 The development proposal is an outline planning application for the construction of up to 75 dwellings with associated landscaping, open space, drainage infrastructure and associated works (with all matters reserved except access from Hunts Lane). The proposed scheme includes landscaping and ecological enhancement works within the application boundary forming part of the Site's Biodiversity Net Gain commitments, together with off-site landscaping measures delivered as part of a wider landscape strategy that seeks the delivery of the above-mentioned measures within the wider field ('the off-site landscaping measures').

5.5 The application is supported by a Parameter Plan and Illustrative Masterplan. The development parameters secure access from Hunts Lane, together with defining the



extent of residential development (2.55ha) which is contained adjacent to the settlement at the Site's higher plateau to the south. This forms the key primary landscape mitigation measure for this scheme, ensuring any new housing relates well to existing settlement and limits perceived encroachment into the countryside.

5.6 The remaining Site and wider field is set out as greenspace that will deliver public open space, structural planting, sustainable drainage and play. An outline development scenario is shown on the Illustrative Masterplan. Sustainable drainage will be provided as a field ditch alongside the east boundary of the Site, connecting to a pond in the northeast corner. An informal footpath connection will be provide linking to public footpath R90.

5.7 This development framework is underpinned by an Illustrative Landscape Masterplan that outlines landscaping within the Site and wider field; **GLY0225 MP01**. Collectively, these measures will:

- Define a new boundary to the settlement that connects the existing established mature vegetation cover to the east and west of the Site and integrates housing in a locally characteristic framework of field hedgerow and woodland;
- Secure hedgerow planting in the wider field that reflects the historic landscape and smaller scale enclosure of the wider settlement edge;
- Secure new grassland field margins, tree, woodland and scrub planting, in particular along the riparian corridor of the watercourse, in line with the objectives outlined above;
- Integrate sustainable drainage into the agricultural landscape and riparian setting of the watercourse through careful design and structural planting;
- Deliver informal footpath links to public footpath R90, in turn creating a new circular work of approximately 1.2km at the settlement edge, with wide appreciation of long views to the north from a countryside setting;
- Positive management of the existing hedgerow adjoining Hunts Lane and Newbold Road, increasing its height and providing infill planting;
- Within the application boundary, deliver approximately 2.35ha of green infrastructure, equating to 48% of the total application site area; and
- Within the application boundary, contribute to a Biodiversity Net Gain of approximately 20% in habitat units, with wider ecological benefit associated with the off-site landscaping measures.



- 5.8 These measures will be bought under effective long-term management through the preparation of a Habitat Management and Monitoring Plan (application site only) and Landscape Management plan relating to the off-site landscaping measures.
- 5.9 The development framework and landscaping shown on the Illustrative Landscape Masterplan form the basis of the following landscape and visual assessments.



## 6 ASSESSMENT OF LIKELY LANDSCAPE AND VISUAL EFFECTS

### Landscape Effects

- 6.1 The following table considers the susceptibility of the receiving landscape to the proposed changes, taking into consideration its individual elements and overall appearance and condition. Judgements of susceptibility are then combined with value as identified in the baseline assessment to identify an overall sensitivity.
- 6.2 A judgement is then made as to the likely magnitude of effect. This includes the consideration of the features and elements of the site to be affected; the size or scale of those effects; the geographic extent of the effects; and the duration and reversibility of the effect.
- 6.3 The sensitivity of the receiving landscape is then considered against the likely magnitude of effect to make an overall judgement of significance. The effects highlighted in blue are those considered to be of particular relevance to the planning decision making process.
- 6.4 Unless otherwise stated, all effects identified are considered to be permanent and adverse.



Table 3 – Assessment of likely landscape effects

Landscape Receptor	Sensitivity	Magnitude of effect	Short-term (Year 1)	Long-term (Year 15)
Site	<p>The Site forms part of a wider field that in overall terms makes a positive contribution to the open character of the settlement edge and views experienced from it. Built development is located only within the south of the Site, in the immediate context of existing modern housing, highways, adjoining rear gardens to the east and a cemetery to the west. The Site has a moderate strength of character and moderate tolerance to the proposed change.</p> <p>In overall terms, it is considered to be medium susceptibility to the proposed change and of <b>medium</b> landscape sensitivity.</p>	<p><b>Short-term (Year 1):</b></p> <p>The proposed development will introduce residential development to approximately 2.55ha of the application total site area (4.90ha), located to the south within the existing framework of settlement. A swale will be introduced along the east field boundary, along with an attenuation pond to the north of the public footpath. Views across the Site from the settlement edge will largely be lost, with channelled visibility remaining along on-street visual links within the development. Housing will enclose the setting of Hunts Lane and Newbold Road. 1no tree will be removed to facilitate highways access, with all other hedgerows retained. Arable land-use will cease within the Site, with the wider application site given over to landscaping and sustainable drainage. This is likely to result in a <b>high</b> magnitude of change and adverse effect that is direct, permanent and adverse.</p> <p><b>Long-term (Year 15):</b></p> <p>Over time, structural landscaping will have established. These measures will extended avenue tree planting along Hunts Lane, reinforcing an attractive continuation of the lime avenue within the cemetery. Landscaping in the wider field will have reinforced a framework of grassland field margins and treed riparian features. Open space will have established functional, well-used recreational links to the local footpath network where the open setting of farmland to the north of the settlement can continue to be</p>	Major/moderate adverse	Moderate adverse





		appreciated. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>medium</b> .		
Local Setting	<p>The Local Setting comprises the setting of open farmland to the north and west of the settlement. This area has a moderate strength of character. The proposed change is remote from the historic settlement and adjoins part of the settlement where modern housing is a dominant characteristic. This is a settled farmland landscape with some detracting elements. In overall terms, the Local Setting is considered to have moderate capacity to accommodate the proposed change, and is of medium susceptibility.</p> <p>In overall terms, the Local Setting is considered to be medium susceptibility to the proposed change and of <b>medium</b> landscape sensitivity.</p>	<p><b>Short-term (Year 1):</b></p> <p>The Site will introduce 2.55ha of residential development at the settlement edge, along with sustainable drainage and landscaping across the application site and wider field. The perception of the settlements expansion will be relatively limited, with the Site being located between existing settlement land-uses and occupying the higher plateaued crest of the Site, maintaining the setting of descending farmland beyond the north of the settlement. There will be a noticeable change to the setting of the settlement edge adjoining the Site, but with open views to the north remaining available from within the Site's open space network and footpath connections. This is likely to result in a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change and adverse effect that is direct/indirect, permanent and adverse.</p> <p><b>Long-term (Year 15):</b></p> <p>Over time, structural planting will have established. Within the wider field, new hedgerows will reinstate field boundaries reflective of the Site's historic enclosure, reducing the scale of the wider field to assimilate with the medium scale field pattern otherwise present to the north of Hunts Lane and Desford. Tree planting and grassland will have established a more ecologically and visually diverse riparian corridor to the watercourse. These measures will have delivered objectives of the overarching LCA and strengthened recreational provision and countryside</p>	Moderate adverse	Moderate/minor adverse



		access at the settlement edge. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>low</b> .		
LCA D: Newbold & Desford Rolling Farmland	<p>The LCA as a whole has a moderate strength of character and is in moderate condition. Settlement is a common feature of the landscape and the proposed development occupies an immediate settlement edge context. The susceptibility of this landscape to the proposed change is considered to be medium within the study area.</p> <p>In overall terms, LCA D is considered to be medium susceptibility to the proposed change and of <b>medium</b> landscape sensitivity.</p>	<p><b>Short-term (Year 1):</b></p> <p>The proposed development will have introduced approximately 2.55ha of new housing into the otherwise extensive geographic extent of the LCA. The development will have affected a key sensitivity of the LCA through the loss of panoramic views from the settlement edge. However, this baseline resource will not be entirely lost, but displaced through new public access where similar views will remain appreciable. The off-site landscaping measures will have been implemented. This is likely to result in a <b>low</b> magnitude of change and adverse effect that is direct/indirect, permanent and adverse.</p> <p><b>Long-term (Year 15):</b></p> <p>Over time, structural planting will have established. Within the wider field, new hedgerows will reinstate field boundaries reflective of the Site's historic enclosure, reducing the scale of the wider field to better assimilate with its historic context and the medium scale field pattern otherwise present to the north of Hunts Lane and Desford. Tree planting and grassland will have established a more ecologically and visually diverse riparian corridor to the watercourse. These measures will have delivered objectives of the overarching LCA and strengthened recreational provision and countryside access at the settlement edge. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>very low</b>.</p>	Moderate/minor adverse	Minor adverse



### **Visual Effects**

- 6.5 The following tables consider the magnitude of effect the development is likely to have on each of the identified representative views that includes the consideration of the features and elements of the site to be affected; the size or scale of those effects; the geographic extent of the effects; and the duration and reversibility of the effect.
- 6.6 The sensitivity of the visual receptor is then considered against the likely magnitude of effect to make an overall judgement of significance.
- 6.7 Unless otherwise stated, all effects identified are considered to be permanent and adverse.



Table 4 – Assessment of likely visual effects

View	Magnitude of effect	Sensitivity	Short-term effect (Year 1)	Long-term effect (Year 15)
1	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, open views across the Site will be lost due to the introduction of housing. The foreground setting of the view will be dominated by highways, incidental open space and housing. Existing hedgerows will remain alongside the road. The existing open view will become largely curtailed by housing. This is likely to result in a <b>high</b> magnitude of change.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, planting within the greenspaces at the south of the development will have established, infilling the gap in the existing hedgerow and softening the built form with tree planting. Positive management of the hedgerow will have reinforced vegetated enclosure along the roadside that is not discordant with the wider setting of the existing highway in this location. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>medium</b>.</p>	Low/Medium	Major/moderate to Moderate adverse	Moderate to Moderate/minor adverse
2	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, open views across the Site will be lost due to the introduction of housing. The new agricultural access, greenspace and highway are likely to be visible at the Site boundary, with housing beyond. In the wider highway, the new site access will be visible with associated removal of an existing lime tree. Existing hedgerows will otherwise be retained. Glimpses to the countryside setting may remain along the cemetery boundary. This is likely to result in a <b>high</b> magnitude of change.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, planting within the greenspaces at the south and west of the development will have established, offering softening to the built-form. An avenue of trees will have established along the site frontage, continuing the existing pattern of tree cover in the cemetery and creating an attractive gateway feature. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>medium</b>.</p>	Medium/High	Major to Major/moderate adverse	Major/moderate to Moderate adverse
3	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, there are likely to be views of housing beyond the cemetery, filtered by existing trees and restrict from visibility in part by the existing holly hedgerow. This will introduce housing in close proximity to the</p>	Medium/High	Major/moderate to Moderate adverse	Moderate to Moderate/minor adverse



	<p>cemetery boundary, over part, but not all, of its perimeter. The foreground setting of the cemetery will remain unchanged, but the new development will have an urbanising effect in views. This is likely to result in a <b>medium</b> magnitude of change.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, new tree planting along the cemetery boundary will have established, further filtering views of housing and reinforcing the existing treed setting of the cemetery. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>low</b>.</p>			
4	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, there is likely to be views of new housing experienced in the context of residential development that is a dominant characteristic of the existing view. Long distance glimpses across the Site towards the Charnwood Forest will be lost. The magnitude of change is likely <b>low to medium</b>, increasing as the footpath approaches Hunts Lane (see View 2).</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, tree planting at the southwest of the Site will have begun to establish, softening views of housing and integrating the development with existing settlement edge. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>low to very low</b>.</p>	Medium	Moderate to Moderate/minor adverse	Moderate/minor to Minor adverse
5	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, there is likely to be no clear appreciation of the housing within the Site due to intervening landform. In the foreground of the view, sustainable drainage and new landscaping will have been introduced, with associated earthworks and headwall features. These features will be uncharacteristic to the existing farmland setting, but will be landscaped with grassland and structural planting, constituting limited built elements and largely comprising surface-level features that allow for continued visibility across the adjoining fields. The drainage/wetland function will not be entirely alien to the riparian setting of the watercourse, and the swale will reflect a field ditch set within a grassland field margin. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>medium</b>.</p>	Medium/High	Major/moderate to Moderate adverse	Moderate to Moderate/minor adverse



	<p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, structural landscaping measures within the Site and wider field will have established, introducing a greater level of visual diversity to the view and visually integrating sustainable drainage features into a well-treed riparian setting. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>low</b>.</p>			
6	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, housing is likely to be visible at the top of the Site, although partly contained by landform and affecting a small part of the view. New tree and hedgerow planting in the wider field is likely to be visible, together with the sustainable drainage pond and associated landscaping. The broader, open setting of the wider field and sloping, shallow valley setting of farmland will remain a dominant component of the view. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>low</b>.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, proposed landscaping within the application site and wider field will have established, creating an attractive pattern of hedgerows and tree cover that is characteristic of the local landscape visible within views and the wider setting of the footpath. Woodland and treed hedgerows will have established on the development fringe, softening housing. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>very low</b>.</p>	Medium/High	Moderate to Moderate/minor adverse	Moderate/Minor to Minor adverse
7	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, housing is likely to be visible at the top of the Site, viewed in the context of existing housing at the settlement edge. New tree and hedgerow planting in the wider field is likely to be visible, together with the sustainable drainage pond and associated landscaping. The broader, open setting of the wider field and shallow valley setting of farmland will remain a dominant component of the view. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>low</b>.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, proposed landscaping within the Site and wider field will have established, creating an attractive pattern of hedgerows and tree cover that complements the adjoining setting of smaller field enclosures with mature hedgerows and trees. In combination with the establishment of recent planting in adjoining land east of</p>	Medium/High	Moderate to Moderate/minor adverse	Moderate/Minor to Minor adverse



	the footpath, the landscape will have transitioned to a more treed appearance throughout. Woodland will have softened and screen housing. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>very low</b> .			
8	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, there are likely to be distant and filtered views of housing at the top of the Site, viewed in the context of existing housing at the settlement edge. There is likely to be a relatively limited appreciation of new tree and hedgerow planting in the wider field and the sustainable drainage features. This will result in a particularly limited change in the overall composition of the view. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>very low</b>.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, proposed landscaping within the Site and wider field will have established, visible only distantly but contributing to the treed setting of farmland visible in the view. Housing will have become screened and softened by woodland, integrating it with existing views of the settlement. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>negligible</b>.</p>	Medium/High	Moderate/minor to Minor adverse	Negligible
9	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, intervening tree cover and woodland is likely to restrict clear views of landscaping and sustainable drainage in the wider Site. Housing at the top of the Site is likely to be seen in filtered views, against the backdrop of the existing settlement. This will result in a particularly limited change in the overall composition of the view. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>low to very low</b>, varying along the footpath.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, landscaping at the residential development edge will have established, softening housing and reinforcing the existing intervening vegetation cover that filters visibility towards the settlement. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>very low</b>.</p>	Medium/High	Moderate to Minor adverse	Moderate/Minor to Minor adverse
10	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, new housing will be visible at the top of the Site, viewed in the context of the existing settlement. New landscaping in the wider field is likely to be visible distantly, with the sloping landform of the wider field remaining open and free of built development. The main composition and characteristics of the view will be</p>	Medium/High	Moderate to Minor adverse	Moderate/Minor to Minor adverse



	<p>subject to limited change, with new housing introducing a new but not discordant feature to the view, visible only over long distance. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>low to very low</b>, varying along the footpath.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, new woodland planting at the development edge will have established, integrating housing into the existing pattern of vegetation cover at the settlement edge in combination with planting in the wider field. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>very low</b>.</p>			
11	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, there is likely to be a very long distance view of new housing, visible in the context of the existing settlement. The intervening setting of farmland will remain unchanged. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>very low</b>. Similar magnitude is likely to be experienced by potential receptors in the wider setting of footpath S7/S9 and Merrylees Road.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b> Over time, new woodland planting at the development edge will have established, integrating housing into the existing pattern of vegetation cover at the settlement edge, in combination with planting in the wider field. This change is likely to become barely appreciable and magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>negligible</b>.</p>	Medium/High	Moderate/Minor to Minor adverse	Negligible
12	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b> From this location, there are likely to be partial views of new housing at the development edge, filtered in part by intervening tree cover at field boundaries and Desford Cemetery. These views will be experienced in the context of the existing backdrop of settlement and properties off Hunts Lane. New landscaping and sustainable drainage in the wider field will be visible. The rolling pattern of fields approaching the settlement will remain a dominant characteristic of the view. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>low to very low</b>, decreasing as the footpath descends into the valley floor.</p>	Medium/High	Moderate to Minor adverse	Moderate/minor to Minor adverse





	<p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b></p> <p>Over time, new woodland planting at the development edge will have established, integrating housing into the existing pattern of vegetation cover at the settlement edge in combination with planting in the wider field. This change is likely to become barely appreciable and magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>very low</b>.</p>			
<b>Private Receptor Groups</b>				
<b>A</b>	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b></p> <p>From these properties, there is likely to be a significant change in visual setting, resulting from the introduction of housing into an otherwise open aspect experienced from primary and secondary rooms looking north and west across the Site. Housing will curtail views across the Site. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>high</b>.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b></p> <p>Over time, there is likely to be limited capacity to mitigate the influence of development on these views owing to the immediacy of new housing to the properties. The magnitude of change is likely to remain <b>high</b>.</p>	Medium/High	Major to Major/moderate adverse	Major to Major/moderate adverse
<b>B</b>	<p><b>Short term (Year 1):</b></p> <p>From these properties, there is likely to be a significant change in visual setting, resulting from the introduction of housing into an otherwise open aspect experienced from primary and secondary rooms looking north across the Site. Housing will curtail views across the Site. The magnitude of change is likely to be <b>high</b>.</p> <p><b>Long term (Year 15):</b></p> <p>Over time, the positive management of the existing hedgerow alongside Hunts Lane and Newbold Road, together with new tree planting, is likely to soften views of housing. The magnitude of change is likely to reduce to <b>medium</b>.</p>	Medium/High	Major to Major/moderate adverse	Major/moderate to Moderate adverse



## 7 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 This Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) has been prepared in relation to an outline planning application for residential development on Land off Hunts Lane, Desford. The assessment has been undertaken using a transparent methodology to evaluate the baseline conditions, sensitivity of the landscape and visual receptors, and the likely landscape and visual effects.
- 7.2 The baseline study has confirmed that the Site is not covered by any landscape designation that would suggest an increased value or sensitivity to change, and is not covered by any statutory or non-statutory designation that would prohibit its development for residential purposes. The Site, Local Setting and LCA D reflect a landscape that is considered to be of medium sensitivity.
- 7.3 The landscape strategy responds to the Site's elevated landform, open settlement edge character and the locally valued long-distance views identified in the Desford Neighbourhood Plan and HBLCA. The strategy adopts robust primary mitigation measures by containing development on the upper southern plateau, where it relates well to existing modern settlement form. Secondary planting mitigation seeks to reinstate historic field boundaries, enhance tree and hedgerow structure and strengthen the riparian corridor of the watercourse. Extensive green infrastructure provision equating to nearly 50% of the application site area is provided, comprising new hedgerows, woodland and scrub planting, grassland margins, sustainable drainage and a 1.2km circular walk connecting to public footpath R90. These measures contribute to integrating the scheme into the wider landscape and retain public visibility of Important View 2 through a new accessible network of greenspace and paths.
- 7.4 In landscape terms, the effects at a site-level would be **major/moderate adverse** in the short-term (year 1), reducing to **moderate adverse** in the long-term (year 15). This level of effect is commonplace for development on greenfield land. Similar effects would likely be reported for any future development around the wider settlement edge, that the HBLSA identifies also identifies as medium landscape sensitivity.
- 7.5 In the Local Setting, the introduction of housing at the settlement edge creates a perceptible but geographically contained extension of the village, occupying the plateau above the tributary valley. Although it alters the character at the immediate interface between settlement and countryside, open farmland to the north remains largely unchanged and the settlement remains bound by descending farmland. This results in a

medium magnitude in the short-term, resulting in a **moderate adverse** effect. In the long-term, this is likely to reduce to **moderate/minor adverse** as mitigation measures take effect.

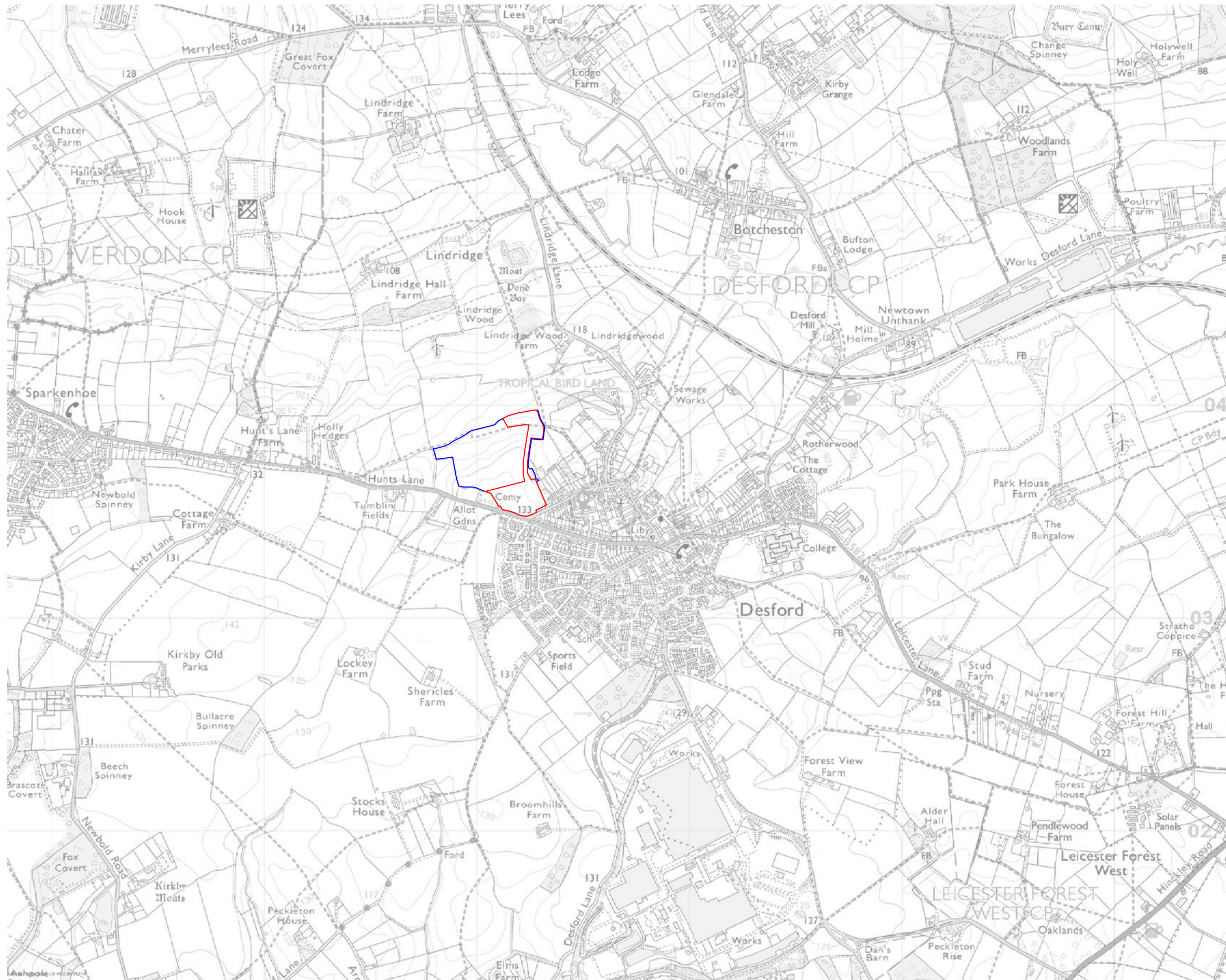
- 7.6 Similarly, within LCA D, only a small proportion of the LCA is affected, with change limited to part of one field at the settlement edge. Although the loss of panoramic views from the road edge affects one identified local sensitivity, similar views will remain available from countryside access paths provided in the wider Site. Given the scale of the LCA, the magnitude of change is low and the resulting effects are **moderate/minor adverse** in the short-term, reducing to **minor adverse** in the long-term as mitigation measures take effect.
- 7.7 In visual terms, the receptors most likely to be affected are those at the immediate boundaries of the Site. Views 1 and 2 correspond to Important View 2 in the Neighbourhood Plan and are experienced by users of the public highway, walkers on footpath R95 at its junction with Hunts Lane, and visitors arriving at Desford Cemetery. These locally valued views are of medium value. Highway receptors have low to medium susceptibility, giving rise to low/medium sensitivity for views from Hunts Lane, Newbold Road and the junction with Manor Road and Lockymead Drive. Susceptibility is higher for receptors at the cemetery entrance and footpath R95, consistent with the baseline assessment which identifies View 2 as having medium/high sensitivity.
- 7.8 The open setting of these views will be lost, resulting in **major/moderate to moderate adverse** short-term visual effects for highway users, increasing to **major to major/moderate adverse** for footpath users and visitors to the cemetery. Over time, the establishment of structural landscaping will soften the appearance of new housing, reducing effects to **moderate to moderate/minor adverse** for highway users and to **major-moderate to moderate adverse** for cemetery visitors and footpath users. While the visual setting of the settlement edge will become enclosed in this location, the introduction of new countryside access along the development boundary and into the wider field will create greater opportunities for these views to be appreciated as part of the farmland context and local countryside walks.
- 7.9 Users of Desford Cemetery are likely to be subject to **major/moderate to moderate adverse** effects in the short-term, reducing to **moderate to moderate/minor adverse** in the long-term as new planting reinforces the cemetery's treed boundary.
- 7.10 Private receptor groups at the immediate settlement edge will be subject to effects of a similar level. Group A represents the properties neighbouring the site boundary, likely to be subject to **major to major/moderate adverse** effects which would persist in the short and

long-term due to the immediacy of the development to property boundaries. Group B is also likely to be subject to **major to major/moderate adverse**. These effects are likely to reduce to major/moderate to moderate adverse in the long-term, with effective management of the existing hedgerow adjoining Hunts Lane and Newbold Road, supplemented with new structural planting. Any potential visibility from private receptors in the wider setting to the north is likely to be consistent with the effects report for footpath users in these locations.

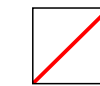
- 7.11 Users of public footpath R90 within and close to the Site (Views 5 and 6) are likely to be subject to **major/moderate to moderate/minor adverse** effects in the short-term, reducing to **moderate to minor adverse** in the long-term. In the most part, new housing will not be visible from the footpath due to the containment offered by and landform in the wider field, with the development edge only becoming visible further west on the footpath. There will be a more open appreciation of sustainable drainage features, but with these becoming integrated as part of the fields agricultural management and riparian corridor over time.
- 7.12 Over distance, users of the wider public footpath network and Merrylees Road (Views 7 to 12 inclusive) are likely to be subject to **moderate to minor adverse** short-term effects, reducing to **moderate/minor to negligible** in the long-term, with effects reducing relative to the distance of receptors. These relatively limited effects reflect the robust mitigation measures that have been adopted.
- 7.13 Overall, the proposed development represents a well-considered landscape-led scheme that responds positively to the recommendations of the Newbold & Desford Rolling Farmland character area and local green infrastructure objectives. While the introduction of new housing results in some localised landscape and visual change, especially in the short term, the strategy delivers meaningful mitigation that, over time, will integrate the development into its setting, retain the legibility of the wider tributary valley landscape, preserving opportunities to experience locally valued views, and providing long-term ecological and recreational improvements.

# Figures

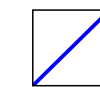




## Key

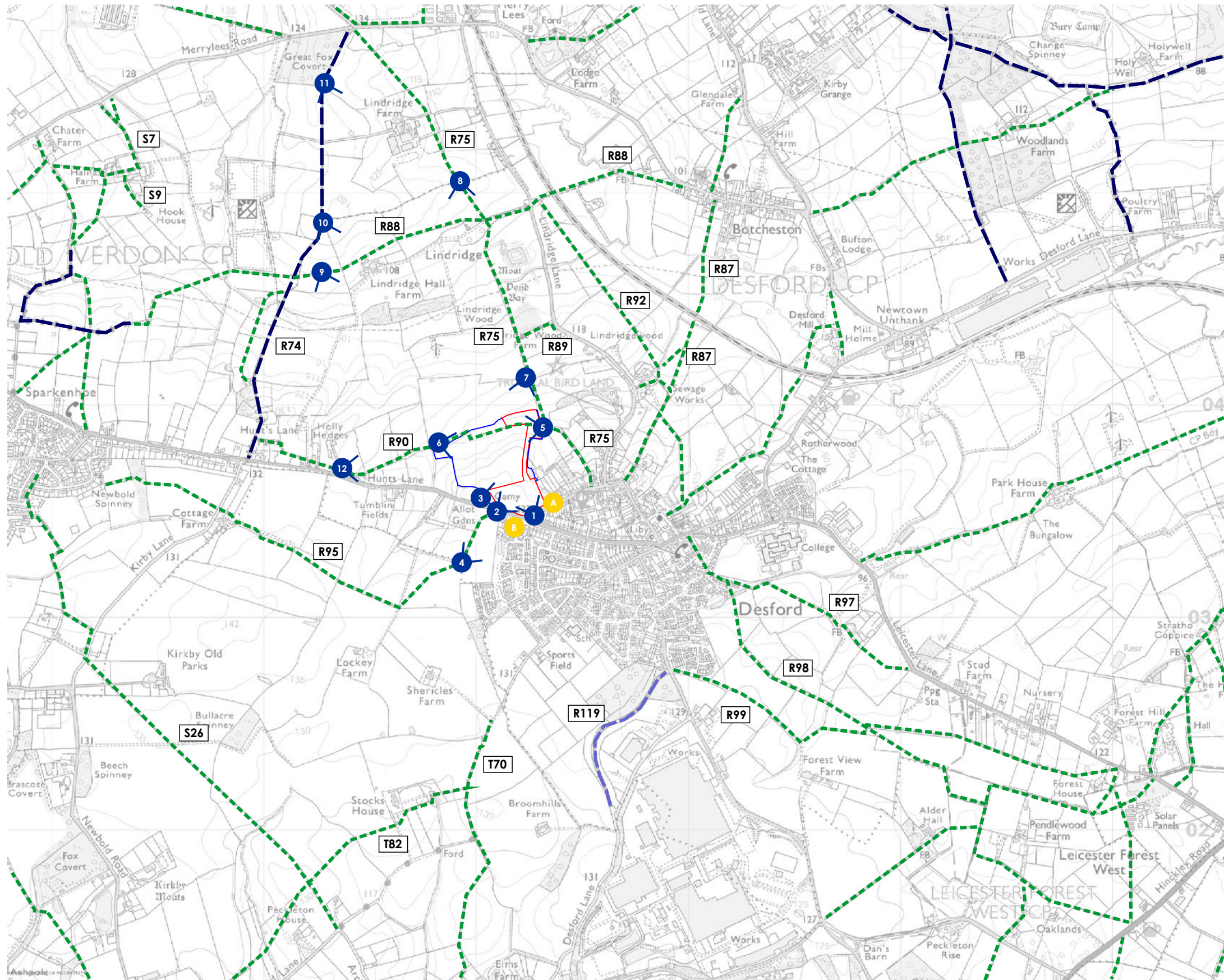


Site Boundary









Land within Applicant's Control

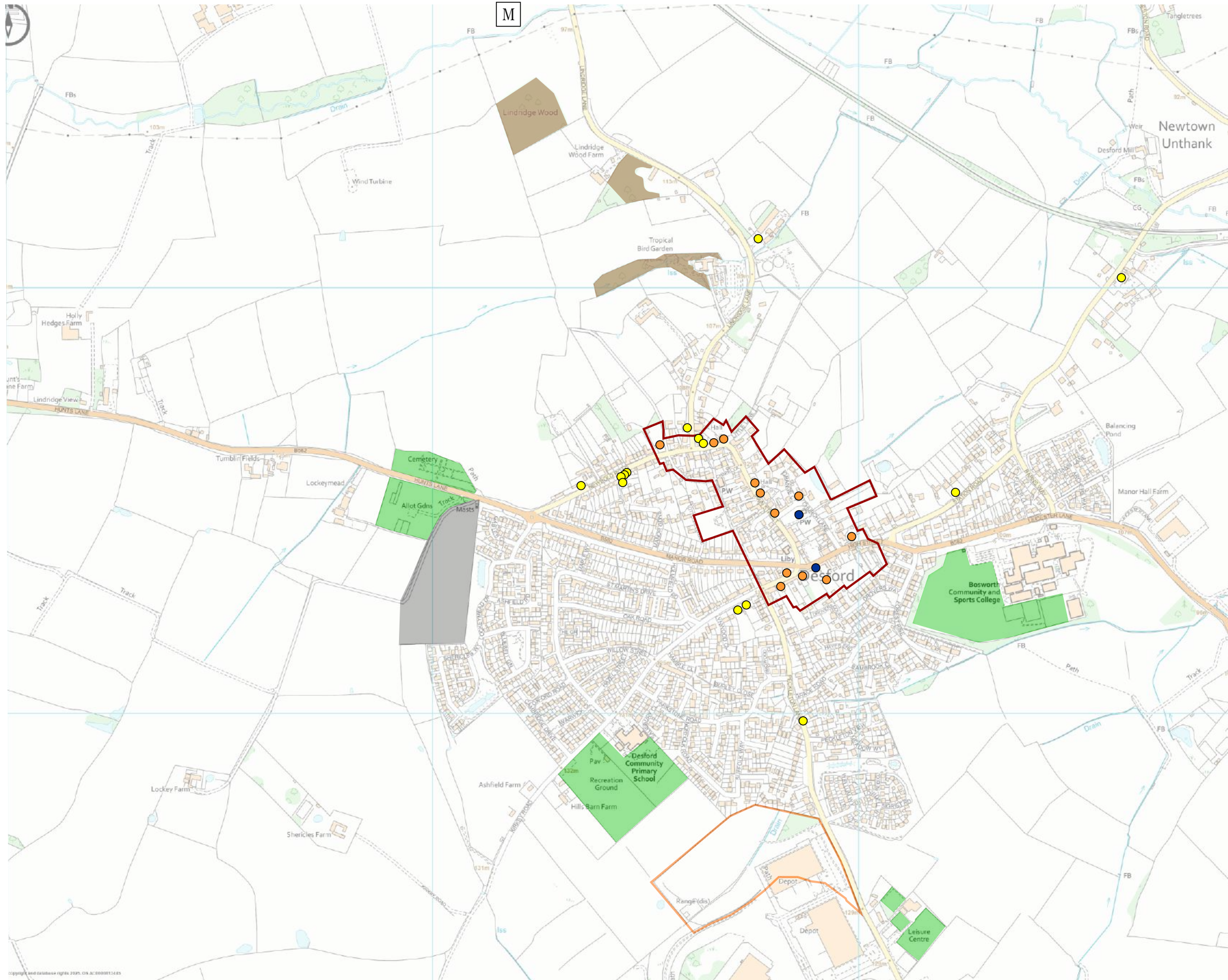














## Key

-  Site Boundary
-  Land within Applicant's Control
-  Representative View Locations
-  Private Receptor Groups
-  Public Footpaths
-  Public Brideway





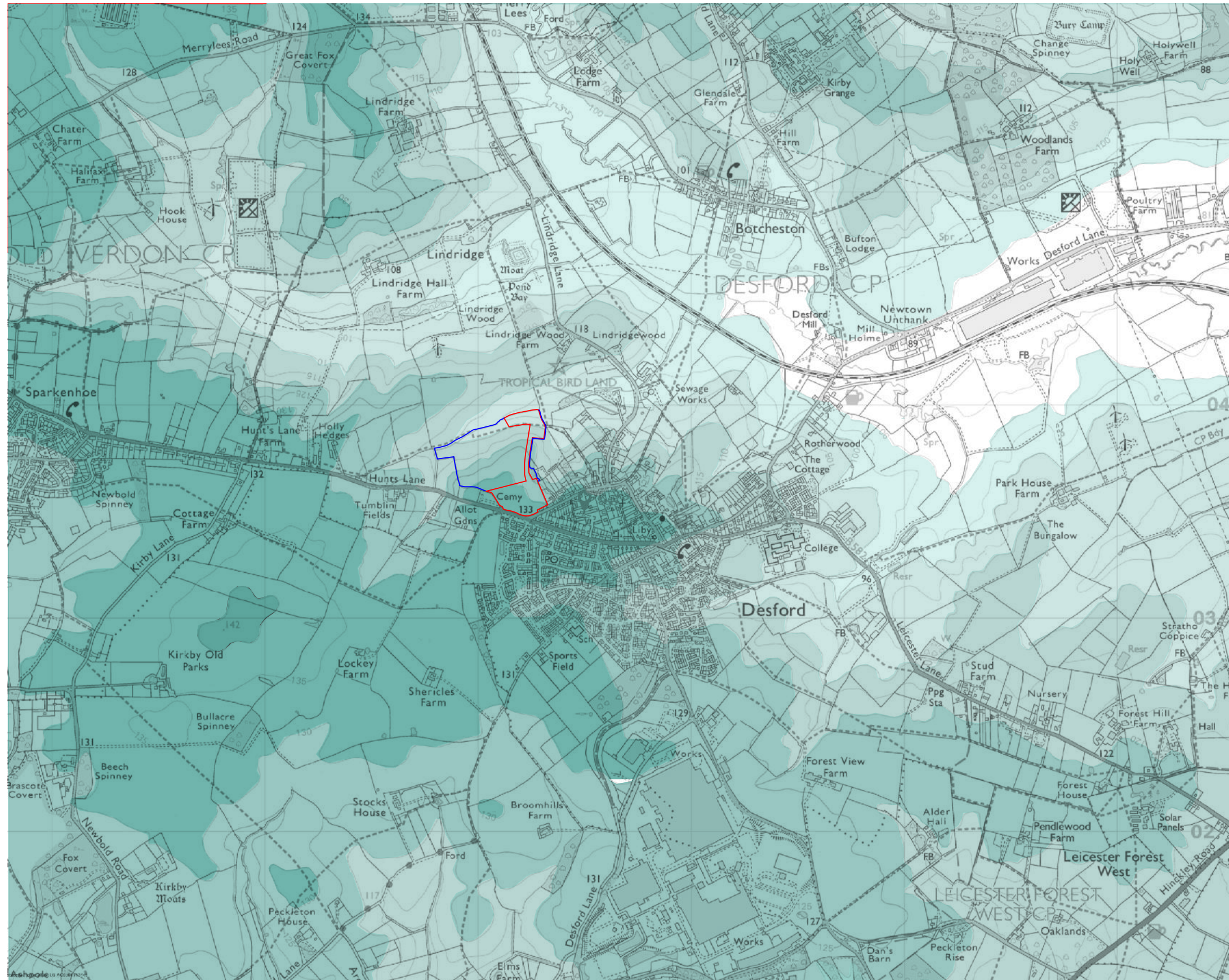
## Key

-  Site boundary
-  Desford Conservation Area
-  Area of Separation
-  Scheduled Monument
-  Grade II\* Listed Building
-  Grade II Listed Building
-  Local Heritage Assets (Neighbourhood Plan)
-  Ancient Woodland
-  Local Green Space
-  Consented Residential Development

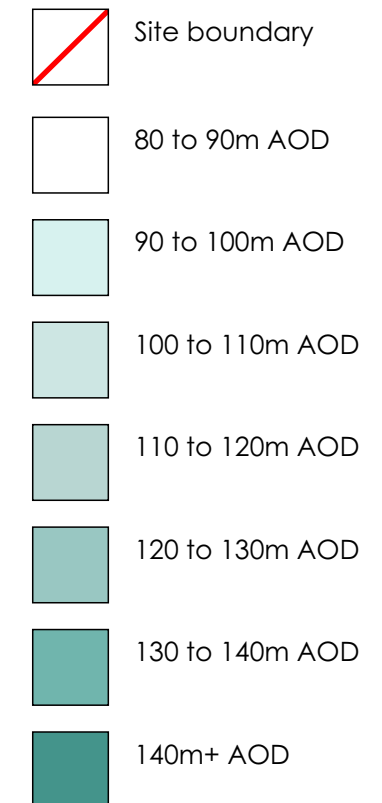
Refer to Ecological Appraisal for details of statutory and non-statutory ecological designation.

Number/Figure <b>GLY0252 LV03</b>	Project Land off Hunts Lane, Desford
Scale 1:10,000@A3	Drawing title <b>Planning Context</b>
Date 26/11/2025	Client Peveril Homes
Checked DC	

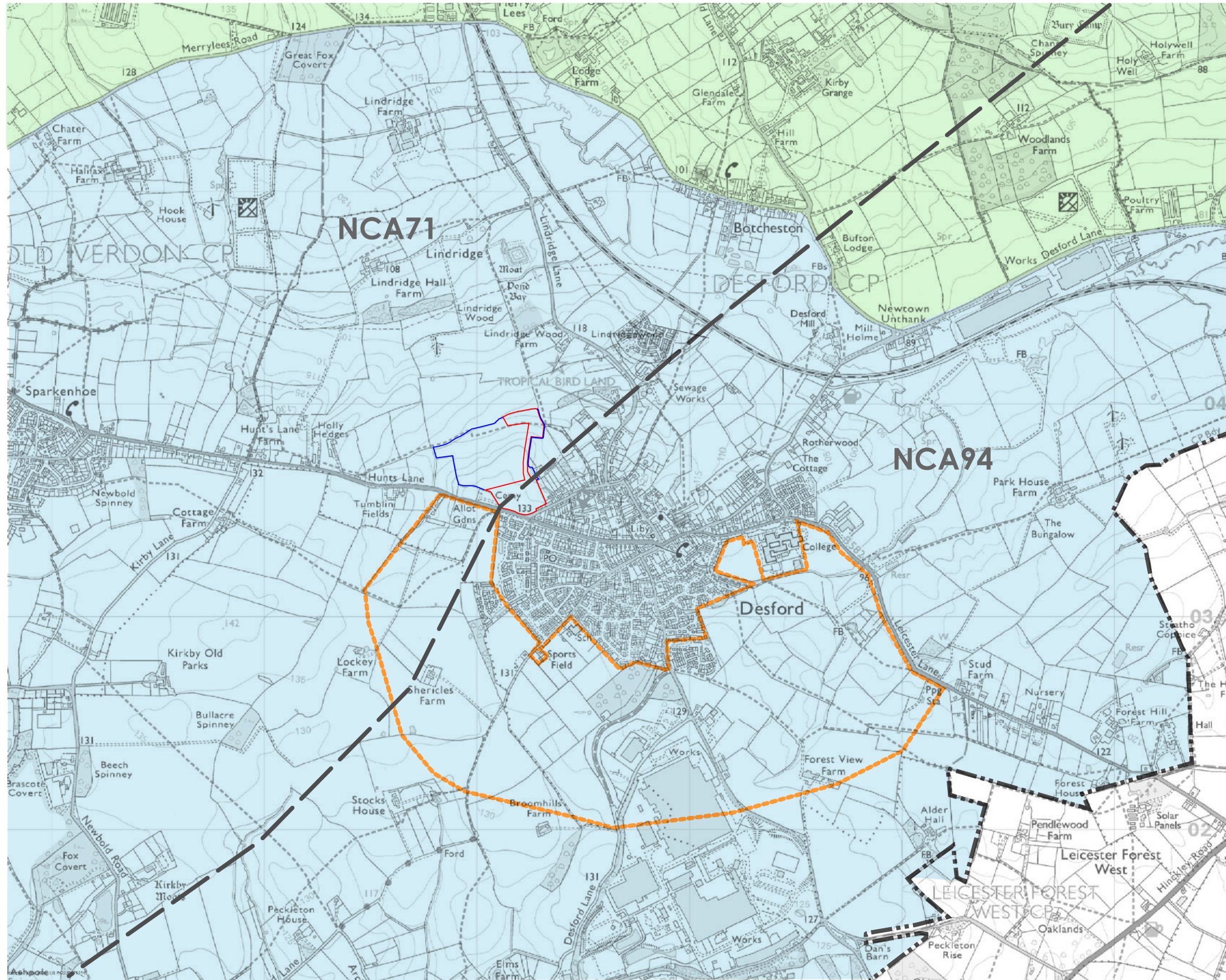




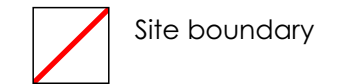
## Key







## Key



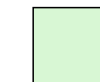
Site boundary

## Natural England National Character Area Profiles 2014



Character Area Boundaries (approximate)

## Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Character Assessment 2017



LCA B: Charnwood Fringe

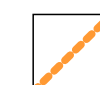


LCA D: Newbold & Desford Rolling Farmland



Landscape Character Assessment boundary

## Hinckley & Bosworth Landscape Sensitivity Assessment 2017



Desford Study Area



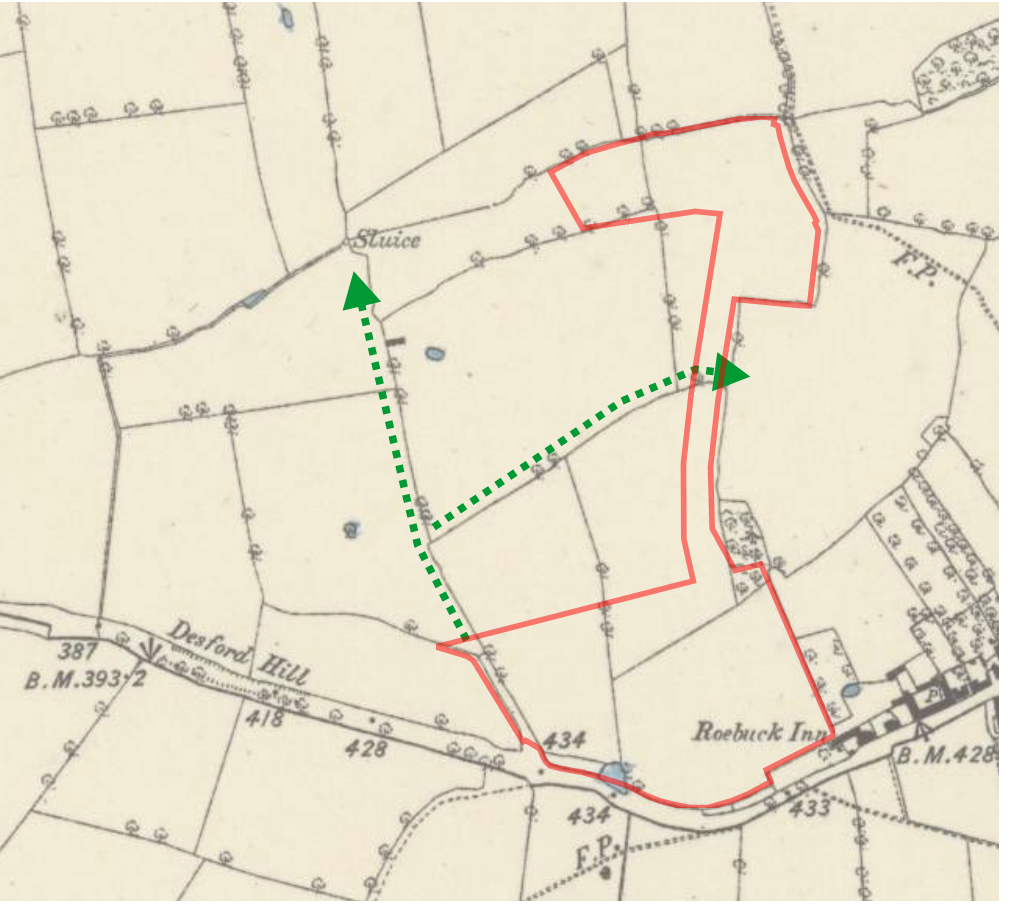






Key

- 130m contour defines broad plateau with capacity to accommodate development in line with adjacent settlement land-uses.
- Existing vegetation that defines settlement land-uses and provides opportunity for strategic planting to connect development fringe.
- Existing woodland planting initiatives located to the east of the site.
- Proposed 10m meadow grassland field margin and trees along watercourse.
- Proposed hedgerows will partially restore historic field boundaries and pattern.
- Development cell contained within buffer planting linking existing framework of vegetation cover.
- Potential connections to existing PROW to enhance countryside access and offer long views beyond the site.
- Panoramic wider landscape views made accessible for continued enjoyment by the public.
- SuDS located in low-lying land adjacent to watercourse to avoid intrusive earthworks being visible on higher topography.



1885 Ordnance Survey

- Historic field boundaries to be restored





View 1 - Taken from Newbold Road at the Site boundary looking northwest.



View 2 - Taken from Hunts Lane and public footpath R95, approximately 10m from the Site looking northeast.



Approximate Extent of Application Site



View 3 - Taken from within Desford Cemetery, approximately 35m from the Site looking east.

Approximate Extent of Application Site



View 4 - Taken from public footpath R95, approximately 310m from the Site looking northeast.



Approximate Extent of Application Site



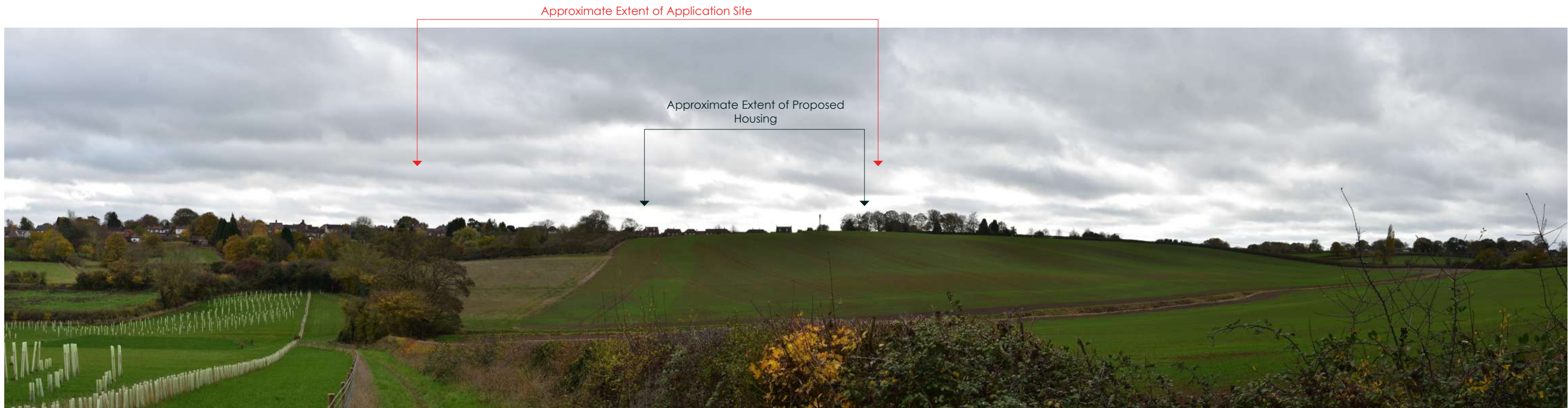
View 5 - Taken from public footpath R90, within the Site looking northwest.

Approximate Extent of Application Site



View 6 - Taken from public footpath R90, approximately 300m from the Site looking southeast.





View 7 - Taken from public footpath R75, approximately 145m from the Site looking southwest.



View 8 - Taken from public footpath R75, approximately 1.1km from the Site looking southwest.



north

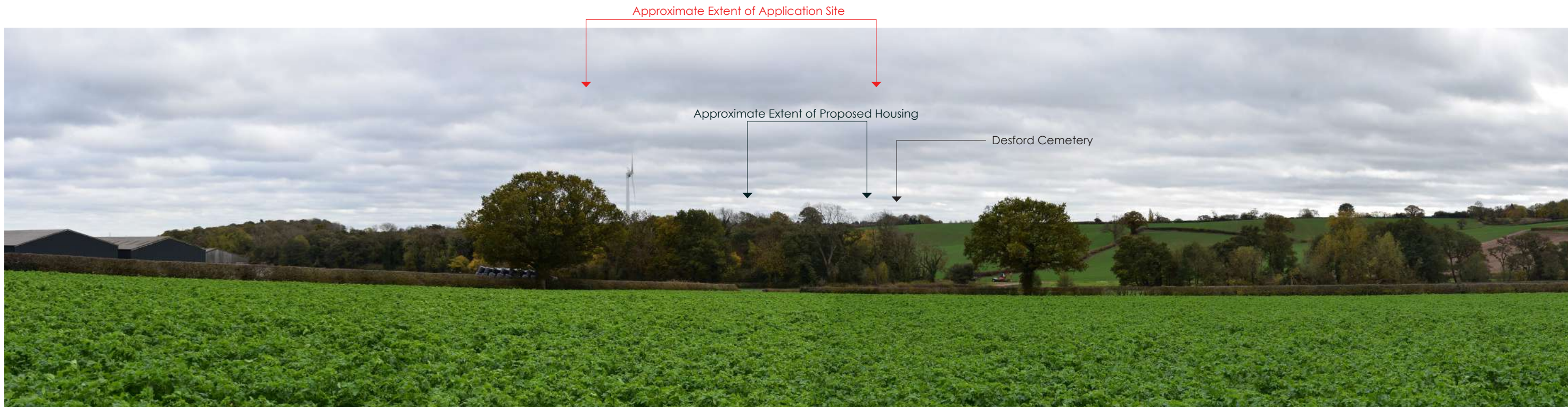
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Number/Figure <b>GLY0225 LV11</b>	Project Land off Hunts Lane, Desford
Scale nts @ A3	Drawing Title Photographic View 7 & 8
Date 25/11/2025	Client Peveril Homes
Checked DC	







View 9 - Taken from public footpath R88, approximately 1.1km from the Site looking southeast.

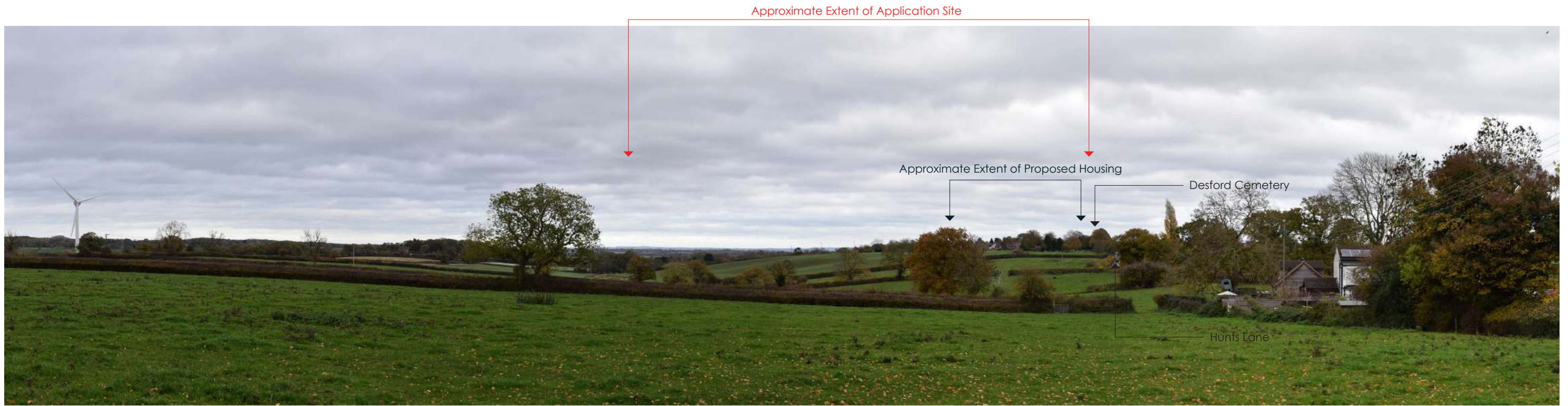


View 10 - Taken from public bridleway R74, approximately 1.25km from Site looking southeast.





View 11 - Taken from public bridleway R74, approximately 1.85km from the Site looking south.



View 12 - Taken from public footpath R90, approximately 600m from the Site looking east.



# Appendix 1

## Landscape and Visual Appraisal Methodology





## 8 ASSESSMENT METHODOLOGY

8.1 This assessment/appraisal methodology is based on the guidance set out in the Guidelines for Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment' 2013 published by the Landscape Institute and the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment (GLVIA), and Technical Guidance Note 02/21 – Assessing landscape value outside national designations 2021 published by the Landscape Institute (TGN 02/21).

8.2 The following terms are used throughout the assessment and are defined in the GLVIA as:

**Landscape:** An area, as perceived by people, the character of which is the result of the action an interaction of natural and/or human factors.

**Landscape Character:** A distinct, recognisable and consistent pattern of elements in the landscape that makes one landscape different to another, rather than better or worse.

**Landscape Effects:** Effects on the landscape as a resource in its own right.

**Landscape Receptors:** Defined aspects of the landscape resource that have the potential to be affected by a proposal.

**Landscape Value:** 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.

**Magnitude** (of change): 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.

**Mitigation:** Measures designed to avoid, reduce, remedy or compensate for landscape or visual effects (not taken from GLVIA).

**Sensitivity:** A term applied to specific receptors, combining judgements of the susceptibility of the receptor to the specific type of change or development proposal and the value related to that receptor.

**Significance:** A measure of the importance or gravity of the environmental effect, defined by significance criteria specific to the environmental topic. The use of the word significance in this assessment/appraisal is replaced by the word importance, a measure of the importance to be placed on an identified effect in the planning decision making process. This is to avoid conflict and confusion with the use of the word significance and



the identification of “significant effects” in the framework of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).

**Visual Amenity:** 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 the area.

**Visual effects:** Effects on specific views and on the general visual amenity experienced by people.

**Visual Receptors:** Individuals and/or defined groups of people who have the potential to be affected by the proposal.

### **Landscape Baseline**

8.3 The landscape baseline seeks to establish the value associated with the site, its local landscape setting, and its associated features. To understand value the assessment considered several factors when describing the Site context and location that includes:

- Land use;
- Vegetation;
- Topography;
- Water features;
- Public access; and
- Local key characteristics

8.4 Landscape planning designation and published landscape assessments are used to inform the landscape baseline.

8.5 As part of the landscape baseline an assessment of value is made. Box 5.1 in the GLVIA sets out a range of factors that can help in the identification of valued landscape and therefore inform a judgement as to their sensitivity. This has been updated in TNG 02/21 that sets out the following factors and definitions under Table 1:

- **Natural heritage:** Landscape with clear evidence of ecological, geological, geomorphological or physiographic interest which contribute positively to the landscape.
- **Cultural heritage:** Landscape with clear evidence of archaeological, historical or cultural interest which contribute positively to the landscape.



- **Landscape condition:** Landscape which is in a good physical state both with regard to individual elements and overall landscape structure.
- **Associations:** Landscape which is connected with notable people, events and the arts.
- **Distinctiveness:** Landscape that has a strong sense of identity.
- **Recreational:** Landscape offering recreational opportunities where experience of landscape is important.
- **Perceptual (Scenic):** Landscape that appeals to the senses, primarily the visual sense.
- **Perceptual (Wilderness and tranquillity):** Landscape with a strong perceptual value notably wildness, tranquillity and/or dark skies.
- **Functional:** Landscape which performs a clearly identifiable and valuable function, particularly in the healthy functioning of the landscape.

8.6 TGN 02/21 provides the following guidance on the practical application of these factors:

- The factors to be considered are not fixed as they need to be appropriate to the particular project and location. It is recommended that the factors used to assess landscape value in a particular assessment are, where appropriate, discussed with the relevant planning authority or statutory consultees.
- The indicators of value should be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, taking into account what they contribute (positively or negatively) to a specific landscape. The relative importance to be attached to each indicator is likely to vary across different landscapes. Once evidence for each factor has been collated and assessed, it is important to step back and judge the overall 'weight of evidence' in coming to an overall judgement on landscape value.
- There are likely to be overlaps between the factors, as well as overlaps with other specialist studies for example in relation to natural and cultural factors. These overlaps should be acknowledged and considered when presenting conclusions on the overall value of the landscape.
- While condition/intactness of a landscape is one factor that can influence value, poor landscape management should not be a reason to deny a landscape a valued status if other factors indicate value. Deliberately neglecting an area of landscape and allowing its condition to deteriorate should not be allowed to diminish its value in a planning context.



- When assessing landscape value of a Site as part of a planning application or appeal it is important to consider not only the Site itself and its features/elements/characteristics/qualities, but also their relationship with, and the role they play within, the site's context. Value is best appreciated at the scale at which a landscape is perceived – rarely is this on a field-by-field basis.
- Landscape function can influence value, but the presence of a spatial designation (e.g. Green Belt or Green Gap) is not in itself an indicator of high landscape value.
- The presentation of information about landscape value should be proportionate to the task at hand.
- Landscape value, and the way in which landscapes are valued by people, is a dynamic process, and can change over time. Any value assessment will be a snapshot in time.

8.7 At varying levels communities and individuals will have differing perceptions as to the value of a landscape. However, for the purposes of landscape assessment it is important to set out a reasoned hierarchy of criteria for assessing value. Value is essentially concerned with the importance or rarity of a landscape and its ability to be substituted or replicated. Value can be categorised as follows:

- **Very High Landscape Value** – landscapes of great importance or rarity that would have limited potential for substitution or replication. Such landscapes will include features and characteristics that combine to create areas of outstanding landscape quality with a value that extends to a national/regional level. Such landscape will generally be identified by designation but not exclusively or may be undesignated but provide a critical setting to a highly valued landscape/features such as National Parks, Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Grade I and II\* Listed Buildings and/or Registered Parks and Gardens;
- **High Landscape Value** – landscapes of regional/local value that are of good condition with a strong strength of character with some potential for substitution or replication. This will include landscapes with strong local cultural associations, and landscapes with high concentrations of designated features in close proximity (such as heritage assets) where the landscape between them makes an important contribution to their setting and interrelationship;
- **Medium Landscape Value** – landscapes of local value that are of moderate condition with a moderate strength of character with potential for substitution or replication. Such landscapes will have a cohesive and recognisable character.



They may provide the wider setting to locally valued features but will not be important to their special interest. These landscapes may also have detracting elements that are notable but not dominant;

- **Low Landscape Value** – landscapes of local value with a weakening condition and strength of character considered to be of more limited value or rarity that can be enhanced or restored. Such landscapes will be declining through lack of management resulting in the fragmentation and weakening of its character. These landscapes are unlikely to be designated with detracting elements and/or will have been eroded/modified; and
- **Very Low Value** - landscapes of local value with a very weak condition and strength of character considered to be of limited value or rarity that can be enhanced or restored. Such landscapes will have declined through lack of management resulting in the fragmentation and weakening of its character. These landscapes are unlikely to be designated with detracting elements and/or will have been eroded/modified.

### Visual Baseline

8.8 In establishing the visual baseline, a series of representative views towards the Site covering a range of visual receptors will have been identified through field survey work. The selected viewpoints can typically cover three types of views that are described in the GLVIA as:

- **Representative viewpoints** – selected to represent the experience of different types of visual receptor, where large numbers of viewpoints cannot be included individually and where the significant effects are unlikely to differ;
- **Specific viewpoints** – chosen because they are key and sometimes promoted viewpoints within the landscape, including for example specific local visitor attractions, viewpoints in areas of particularly noteworthy visual and/or recreational amenity such as landscape with statutory landscape designations, or viewpoints with particular cultural landscape associations. Specific views include those from recreational spaces, cemeteries, public footpaths, open access land, and promoted trails.
- **Illustrative viewpoints** – chosen specifically to demonstrate a particular effect or specific issues, which might, for example, be the restricted visibility at certain locations.





- 8.9 Not all of these types of viewpoints will be present or need to be considered in all of the assessment. The majority of viewpoints will be representative but not exclusively. All of the viewpoints considered are taken from publicly accessible locations. The likely effect of the development proposal on private locations, such as houses, is made through professional judgement based on views from publicly accessible locations nearby.
- 8.10 The representative views are described as part of the visual baseline assessment and consider the following criteria:
- Location of the viewpoint;
  - Type of existing view;
  - Distance between the observer and the site; and
  - Extent and context of the Site and/or likely view of development proposal observed.
- 8.11 With specific regard to the extent of the site/development observed the following descriptions are used:
- Open views – uninterrupted views into the site;
  - Filtered views – views partially obstructed by vegetation, landform, built-form or combinations of each; and
  - Glimpsed views – fleeting views of the Site afforded through a break in vegetation cover, from field access gates, views from a transport route where intervening landform/vegetation cover provide an intermittent appreciation of the site, or from within the urban area where the Site is glimpsed between breaks in the intervening built-form.
- 8.12 As part of the baseline assessment judgements must be made about the value attached to a view. Value may be attached to views that relate to designated landscapes and heritage assets. Value may also be attached through appearance in guidebooks, on maps, and through the provision of facilities specific to the enjoyment of a view such as benches or interpretation boards. Value may also be attached to views associated with heritage assets, these are often identified in heritage assessments and conservation area appraisals. Value can be categorised as:
- **Very High Visual Value** – These are the highest value views that will be promoted on maps, or local walks/guides and are likely to include notable (often designated) natural features, structures, houses, heritage assets, designed views or exceptional landscapes. These views are considered to be of national/regional value and are



likely to be marked by signs, seating, or features that promote them, or recognised in works of art and literature;

- **High Visual Value** – Views from publicised vantage points, or to a landscape of notable importance, or highly popular visitor attractions where the view forms an important part of the experience or has important cultural associations. This may include particularly noteworthy views from identified trials, designated landscapes, and heritage assets. These views are considered to be of regional/local value with evidence they are regularly visited. This may also include views that provide a valuable appreciation of a landscape, for instance open and elevated panoramic views that provide a wide appreciation of a notable landscape, or conversely a focussed/channelled view of a specific feature or valued asset. Private views may include notable properties specifically designed to take advantage of a notable view;
- **Medium Visual Value** – Locally known or valued viewpoints. Views from promoted public rights of way/public access land with clear evidence of regular use. Views from regularly used rooms or living spaces. Important views from active recreation land and highways. Such views will provide a wider appreciation of the landscape and its character with few detracting elements;
- **Low Visual Value** – Views that are not published and/or where there is limited evidence of regular use, and/or views that do not provide a wider appreciation of the landscape and its character. Such views will often include modified landscapes and/or detracting elements. Views from secondary windows not forming the main living or working spaces in properties. Views of little noteworthiness from active recreation land, or highways; and
- **Very Low Visual Value** – Views that are not published and/or where there is limited evidence of regular use, and/or views that do not provide a wider appreciation of the landscape and its character. Such views will almost entirely be defined/dominated by modified landscapes and/or detracting element;

### **Assessment of Landscape Effects**

- 8.13 The initial stage of the assessment of landscape effect is to determine the susceptibility of the receptor to the proposed change, and an overall assessment of landscape sensitivity.
- 8.14 The following criteria are used to establish landscape susceptibility. Whilst these are typical examples it does not always follow that a Site within a specific landscape designation will automatically fit with this categorization. Much will depend on the specific Site conditions.



- **Very High Susceptibility** – A landscape possessing a strong and defined character of notable scenic quality, in good condition with a very low tolerance to the proposed change;
- **High Landscape Susceptibility** - A landscape possessing a defined character of good scenic quality, in good condition with a low tolerance to the proposed change;
- **Medium Landscape Susceptibility** – A landscape possessing a moderate strength character and scenic quality, in moderate condition with a moderate tolerance to the proposed change;
- **Low Landscape Susceptibility** – A landscape possessing a weak and undefined character of limited scenic quality, in poor condition with a high tolerance to the proposed change; and
- **Very Low Landscape Susceptibility** – A landscape possessing a very weak fragmented character of very limited scenic quality, in very poor condition with a very high tolerance to the proposed change.

8.15 Judgements of value and susceptibility are then combined as an assessment of overall sensitivity. This process is guided by the sensitivity matrix set out in **Table A** in this Appendix.

8.16 The following stage of the assessment process considers the magnitude of change imposed by the proposed development on each landscape receptors. Issues that inform this judgement include:

- **Size or scale:** The amount of change resulting from the proposal to features, or key characteristics and attributes of the landscape type or area.
- **Geographic extent:** Determines the extent to which the landscape type or area will be affected by the proposed development.
- **Duration and reversibility of the landscape effect:** The timeframe, or duration of the effect by the proposed development, and whether the effect is permanent or temporary. This assessment criteria is considered separately as a temporary change may last for many years and result in a significant change relevant to the decision-making process.

8.17 The likely magnitude of change of the development proposal can be guided by the following criteria:

- **Very High Magnitude of change** – a change resulting in the total loss of character/features affecting a large geographic area or appreciated by a large



number of people. This type of change will introduce new and discordant elements at odds with the established landscape character;

- **High magnitude of change** – a change resulting in the substantial loss of character/features affecting a large geographic area or appreciated by a large number of people. This type of change will introduce new and discordant elements at odds with the established landscape character;
- **Medium magnitude of change** – a change/alteration in the key characteristic of the landscape, will introduce new but not uncharacteristic attributes of the receiving landscape, and/or will result in loss, or alteration to key elements/features;
- **Low magnitude of change** – a partial change to the key characteristics of the landscape, will introduce elements that are not uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving landscape, and/or will result in the minor loss, or alteration to key elements/features;
- **Very Low magnitude of change** – a very limited change to the key characteristics of the landscape, will introduce elements that are not uncharacteristic to the attributes of the receiving landscape, and/or will result in the minimal loss, or alteration to key elements/features; and
- **Negligible magnitude of change** – a change in landscape character that is barely appreciable regardless of the sensitivity of the receiving landscape.

8.18 The combined judgements on the nature of the receptor (sensitivity) and the nature of the impact (magnitude) are combined to arrive at a clear and transparent judgement of significance. The significance of landscape effects is described in the assessment text and guided by the significance matrix set out in **Table B** in this Appendix.

8.19 For the purpose of this assessment, effects that are of very major, major, and major/moderate significance (highlighted in blue) are those considered particularly relevant to the planning decision making process. When considering the development of green field sites for residential or commercial development effects of this significance are not uncommon or unexpected at a Site level, and should not make a development unacceptable in landscape terms per se. Moderate effects (highlighted in green) are considered to be less relevant. Moderate/Minor, Minor, and Minimal effects are those considered least relevant to the planning decision making process and are not highlighted.

### **Assessment of Visual Effects**



- 8.20 The initial stage of the assessment of visual effect is to determine the susceptibility of the receptor to the proposed change, and an overall assessment of landscape sensitivity.
- 8.21 GLVIA describes the susceptibility of different visual receptors to changes in views and visual amenity as a function of:
- the occupation or activity of people experiencing the view at particular locations; and
  - the extent to which their attention or interest may therefore be focussed on the views and the visual amenity they experience in particular locations.
- 8.22 The GLVIA goes on to categorise those receptor groups that are likely to be most susceptible to change:
- residents at home;
  - people, whether residents or visitors, who are engaged in outdoor recreation, including people using public rights of way, whose attention or interest is likely to be focussed on the landscape and on particular views;
  - visitors to heritage assets, or to other attractions, where views of the surroundings are an important contributor to the experience;
  - communities where views contribute to the landscape setting enjoyed by the residents in the area.
- 8.23 Whilst this covers a number of potential visual receptors it does not automatically make them all highly susceptible to change. Susceptibility can be categorised as follows:
- **Very High Susceptibility** – Views that provide a critical understanding and appreciation of valued landscapes (most notably National Parks and AONB's), notable (and often designated) natural features, or historic structures/properties. These are very important views that have little or no tolerance to the proposed change.
  - **High Visual Susceptibility** - Primary views from residential properties; users of public rights of way, informal footpaths, cycleways and public open space where the appreciation of the wider landscape setting is critical to its function and enjoyment; visitors to local attractions and heritage/wildlife assets where views of the wider landscape are important to its setting.
  - **Medium Visual Susceptibility** - Secondary/restricted views from residential properties; users of public rights of way, informal footpaths, cycleways, lanes and



public open space where the appreciation of the wider landscape setting is moderately important to its function and enjoyment; and visitors to local attractions and heritage/wildlife assets where views of the wider landscape makes a contribution to their setting but are not critical to its appreciation and enjoyment;

- **Low Visual Susceptibility** – Views from outdoor sport and recreation areas where the appreciation of views is not critical to their enjoyment; or views from the workplace where the setting is not important to the quality of working life, and views from roads or footpaths where the wider landscape makes a limited contribution to their setting; and
- **Very Low Visual Susceptibility** – Views from outdoor sport and recreation areas where the appreciation of views is of little importance to their enjoyment; or views from the workplace where the setting is not relevant to the quality of working life, and views from roads or footpaths where the wider landscape make almost no contribution to their setting.

8.24 In terms of views from residential properties it is important to note that the planning system does not serve to protect private interests. The key issue in considering residential views is not whether an occupier would experience financial or other loss from development but whether such development would unacceptably affect the residential amenity of the property and associated land holding. A number of Local Authorities have adopted residential amenity standards for new development that have been specifically implemented to protect residential amenity. Where such standards exist, these will be relied upon and not replicated through further assessment.

8.25 Judgements of value and susceptibility are then combined as an assessment of overall sensitivity guided by the sensitivity matrix set out in **Table A** in this Appendix

8.26 The following stage of the assessment process considers the magnitude of change imposed by the proposed development on each visual receptor. Issues that inform this judgement include:

- **Size or scale:** This includes the loss of important features to the character and composition of the views, the degree of consistency between the proposals and visual setting of the receiving landscape, and the extent of the view and proportion of that view the proposals in likely to influence or change.
- **Geographic extent:** The extent of the area in which the proposed change will be visible.



- **Duration and reversibility of the visual effect:** The timeframe, or duration of the effect by the proposed development, and whether the effect is permanent or temporary. This assessment criteria is considered separately as a temporary change may last for many years and result in a significant change relevant to the decision-making process.

8.27 The likely magnitude of change of the development proposal can be guided by the following criteria:

- **Very High magnitude** - a total change to the character and composition of the view, introducing new and discordant elements, completely altering its appreciation for local receptor groups.
- **High magnitude** - a substantial change to the character and composition of the view, introducing new and discordant features, substantially altering its appreciation for local receptor groups;
- **Medium magnitude** – a clearly noticeable change or contrast to the view, which will alter its character and composition through the loss or addition of new but not discordant features, altering its appreciation for local receptor groups;
- **Low magnitude** - a noticeable change or contrast to the view, seen over middle distance or resulting in a relatively small alteration in character and composition through the loss or additional new but not discordant features, altering its appreciation for local receptor groups;
- **Very Low magnitude** - a restricted change or contrast to the view, seen over long distance or resulting in a very small alteration in character and composition through the loss or additional new but not discordant features, altering its appreciation for local receptor groups; and
- **Negligible magnitude** - a change in visual character that is barely appreciable regardless of the sensitivity of the receiving landscape.
- **No change** – no part of the scheme or associated works will be discernible in the view.

8.28 The judgements on the nature of the receptor (sensitivity) and the nature of the impact (magnitude) are combined to arrive at a clear and transparent judgement of significance. The significance of visual effects is described in the assessment text and guided by the significance matrix set out in **Table B** in this Appendix.

### **Assessment Matrix**



8.29 The following matrix are used to guide the assessment of sensitivity and overall importance of effects. These tables are used as a guide with final judgements set out by the assessor with a full explanation.

Table A – Matrix of Sensitivity

		SUSCEPTIBILITY				
VALUE		VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	VERY LOW
	VERY HIGH	Very High	High/Very High	High	High/Medium	Medium
	HIGH	High/Very High	High	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low
	MEDIUM	High	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low	Low
	LOW	High/Medium	Medium	Medium/Low	Low	Low/Very Low
	VERY LOW	Medium	Medium/Low	Low	Low/Very Low	Very Low

Table B – Matrix of Importance

		SENSITIVITY				
MAGNITUDE OF CHANGE		VERY HIGH	HIGH	MEDIUM	LOW	VERY LOW
	VERY HIGH	Very Major	Very Major/Major	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate
	HIGH	Very Major/Major	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor
	MEDIUM	Major	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor
	LOW	Major/Moderate	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor/Minimal
	VERY LOW	Moderate	Moderate/Minor	Minor	Minor/Minimal	Minimal
	NEGLIGIBLE	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible	Negligible

8.30 All effects are considered to be of importance to the planning decision making process. The effects considered to be of most importance to the planning balance are highlighted in blue, effect of moderate importance highlighted in green, and effect of limited importance highlighted in white.

### Criteria of Other Factors Assessed

8.31 The assessment also considers the following aspects;





- **Directs and indirect effects** – direct effect effects are those directly attributable to the development. These include changes to features, character, and views. Indirect effects are those resulting indirectly from the development. These effects may result as a consequence of direct effects over distance from the site, or a sequence of change over time or distance;
- **Permanent and temporary effects** – development proposals are considered permanent or temporary (this is normally defined under the Town and Country Planning Act). Whilst this nature of effect forms part of the assessment of magnitude a temporary effect may be active for many years, and it is therefore more helpful to the decision making to simply state the duration of effects rather than include it in the assessment of magnitude. Where the duration of a temporary effect is known this should be stated in the assessment.
- **Seasonal variation** – due to the role that vegetation can play in preventing or limiting views, or influencing the character of the landscape, the difference between winter and summer needs to be considered. Assessments completed during spring and summer months should include a prediction of winter effects with limited leaf cover to ensure the worst-case scenario has been considered.
- **Beneficial, neutral, or adverse effects** - adverse effects are those that would be damaging to the quality, integrity, or key characteristics of the landscape and/or visual resource. Beneficial effects are those that would result in an improvement in the quality, integrity, or key characteristics of the landscape and/or visual resource. Neutral effects are those effect that would maintain, on balance, the existing levels of quality, integrity, or key characteristics of the landscape and/or visual resource.
- **Neutral effects** – where mitigation is effective to the point where any adverse effect is considered neutralised and/or where the development is unlikely to result in any effect on the identified receptor (i.e. no change).



Tel: 01530 265688 Web: [www.golbyandluck.co.uk](http://www.golbyandluck.co.uk)

Email: [info@golbyandluck.co.uk](mailto:info@golbyandluck.co.uk)

Office: 207 Leicester Road, Ibstock, Leicestershire, LE67 6HP  
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